



Annual Report of the North West and Midlands STHF Independent Monitoring Board

**For reporting period
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Contents

Introductory sections 1 – 3	4
1. Statutory role of the IMB	4
2. Description of the Short-Term Holding Facilities.....	5
2.1 Types of STHF monitored	5
2.2 Residential facility (Manchester Residential STHF)	6
2.3 Port holding rooms	8
2.3.1 Birmingham Airport.....	8
2.3.2 East Midlands Airport.....	9
2.3.3 Holyhead Port.....	9
2.3.4 Manchester Airport	10
2.4 Reporting centre holding rooms	12
2.4.1 Liverpool (Capital Building).....	12
2.4.2 Loughborough	13
2.4.3 Salford (Dallas Court).....	13
2.4.4 Solihull (Sandford House).....	14
3. Executive Summary	16
3.1 Background to the report.....	16
3.2 Key points	17
3.3 Recommendations	18
3.4 Progress since the last report	19
Evidence sections	20
4. Safety	20
5. Fair and humane treatment.....	21
5.1 Manchester Residential STHF (Building 302, Manchester Airport)	22
5.2 Ports.....	25
5.2.1 All ports	25
5.2.2 Birmingham Airport.....	28
5.2.3 East Midlands Airport.....	31
5.2.4 Holyhead Port.....	34
5.2.5 Manchester Airport	37

5.3	Reporting centres.....	40
5.3.1	All reporting centres.....	40
5.3.2	Liverpool reporting centre – Capital Building	43
5.3.3	Loughborough (East Midlands) reporting centre	46
5.3.4	Salford reporting centre – Dallas Court	49
5.3.5	Solihull (West Midlands) reporting centre – Sandford House	52
6.	Health and wellbeing	55
7.	Preparation for removal, transfer or release	56
8.	The work of the Independent Monitoring Board	57
8.1	Activities of the Board	57
8.2	Board statistics.....	57
8.3	Visits and phone calls made to STHFs	58
8.4	Other attendances	58
9.	Glossary.....	60
10.	Locations monitored by the North & Midlands STHF IMB.....	61

Introductory sections 1 – 3

1. Statutory role of the IMB

The North & Midlands Short-Term Holding Facility (STHF) Independent Monitoring Board is appointed by the Home Secretary to monitor and report on the welfare of people in a STHF through observation of their treatment and of the premises in which they are held.

The Board conducts its work in line with the STHF Rules, which place the day to day operations of STHFs on a statutory footing. Part 7 of the Rules sets out the responsibilities of the Independent Monitoring Board (referred to in the Rules as the Visiting Committee). The Board has unrestricted access to every detained individual and all immigration detention facilities and to most records. IMB members have access, at all times, to all parts of the facility and can speak to detained individuals outside of the hearing of officers. They must consider any complaint or request which a detained individual wishes to make to them and make enquiries into the case of any detained individual whose mental or physical health is likely to be injuriously affected by any conditions of detention. The IMB must inform the STHF manager about any matter which they consider requires their attention, and report to the Secretary of State about any matter about which they consider the Home Office needs to be aware.

The Board's duties also include the production of an annual report covering the treatment of detained individuals, the state and administration of the facility, as well as providing any advice or suggestions it considers appropriate. This report has been produced to fulfil that obligation.

The Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (OPCAT) is an international human rights treaty designed to strengthen protection for people deprived of their liberty. The protocol recognises that such people are particularly vulnerable and aims to prevent their ill-treatment through establishing a system of visits or inspections to all places of detention. OPCAT requires that states designate a National Preventive Mechanism to carry out visits to places of detention, to monitor the treatment of and conditions for detained individuals and to make recommendations for the prevention of ill-treatment. The IMBs are part of the United Kingdom's National Preventive Mechanism.

2. Description of the Short-Term Holding Facilities

2.1 Types of STHF monitored

The North and Midlands Board monitors three different types of STHF, each with its own requirements and challenges:

- Residential facilities
 - Manchester Residential STHF (RSTHF; known locally as MAN 302)
- Port holding rooms
 - Birmingham Airport
 - East Midlands Airport
 - Holyhead Port
 - Manchester Airport
- Reporting centre holding rooms
 - Liverpool (Capital Building)
 - Loughborough
 - Salford (Dallas Court)
 - Solihull (Sandford House)

A map of the above sites is shown in Section 10.

2.2 Residential facility (Manchester Residential STHF)

The North and Midlands Board monitors one residential facility, at Building 302 on the Manchester Airport site. Known locally as MAN 302, this facility opened in June 2018 and replaced Pennine House, which closed in March 2017. Like most sites monitored by the Board, MAN 302 is managed on behalf of Home Office Immigration Enforcement (HOIE) by Care & Custody, a subsidiary company of Mitie plc.

The facility is a purpose-built unit, located on the perimeter of Manchester International Airport, with a capacity for 32 people to be detained.

There are two floors. The ground floor contains the vehicle dock, which can accommodate two vans, with a toilet and a lift to the first floor. Visitor access is gained through a single door at the back of the building. Access to the first floor is then gained by either two flights of stairs or via the lift.

On the first floor, access is gained through a security-controlled door which leads into a short corridor, with the control room visible straight ahead through a security glass window. To the left, there is another security door leading to the main reception area; to the right, there is a toilet and another security door, which leads to the visitor area.

The visitor area has three rooms off a small reception corridor. Visitor Room 1 is the smaller of the rooms, measuring 10.5m², and contains a table and four chairs, used mainly for interviews with detained individuals. Visitor Room 2 is the larger room, measuring 14m², and is set up for family visits, with chairs and a settee, and also contains children's toys.

The main reception area measures 22.5m² and contains a searching area and a segregation room. There is an open desk area which accesses the control room, from where all areas of the facility are monitored on a continuous basis. Off the reception area is the medical reception/consultation area, which measures 18m² and contains an office and a searching area.

Once a detained individual has been processed in the reception area for admittance into the facility, they pass through two security doors, which lead into an 'L'-shaped corridor. Straight ahead are the showers and toilets for men, the kitchen and dining room, plus the majority of the bedrooms normally used for male detained individuals. Bedroom number 7 which has 4 beds has been designated as a female room if the bedrooms in the women's area are occupied. To the right, a corridor leads to the office of the detainee custody officer manager (DCOM), female area, main association area, multifaith room, laundry and store rooms, plus two single-occupancy bedrooms.

The main association room measures 59m² and contains four large three-seater settees, a table and four chairs, a wall-mounted television and a games console connected to another television screen. There is also a stock of portable DVD players, which the detained individuals can 'borrow' if required. There are also two computer consoles, which allow detained individuals access to the internet, and a good selection of reading materials. There are three standalone electronic games units.

A short corridor leading off the main association room gives access to the 'outside' area. This is an area measuring 59m² and gives detained individuals access to fresh air. It is a large area containing numerous heavy-duty tables and chairs, where part of the roof has been left open to the atmosphere. Two walls have been decorated with a colourful hand-painted mural depicting large bees, a symbol of Manchester, flying around and a world map.

The multifaith room, with an area of 12m², is located at the end of the main corridor. It contains numerous prayer mats and soft cushions. The laundry, which can be used by detained individuals, has two washing machines and two dryer machines.

There are also two single-occupancy bedrooms at the end of this corridor for any gender. Each contains a bed with two drawers beneath it and a safe where detained individuals can lock up their valuables. These rooms can be used for detained individuals considered to be vulnerable and contain an intercom that allows direct communication with staff on reception.

The separate female area covers an area of 71m² and contains three bedrooms, one of single occupancy and two of double occupancy. There is a separate association room with a settee, bean bags, a table and four chairs, and a television which is affixed to the wall. A computer terminal is also available. There is a shower and toilet cubicle, and a separate toilet facility.

The DCOM's office is located at the juncture of the two corridors and contains a duplicate of the closed-circuit television (CCTV) monitoring screens within the control room. Windows are positioned on each side of the office to give a view of each of the corridors.

The bedrooms designated for detained individuals are configured to house either four, three or two occupants. The four-person bedrooms occupy an area of 20m². Each room contains beds, drawers, and safes for personal effects. Every bedroom has windows which provide natural light, covered with an opaque film to ensure privacy.

The toilets designated for men contain three shower stalls, three toilets and three urinals and washbasins, and two electric hand dryers.

The dining room, with an area of 59m², has four tables for four people, two tables for two people and one table for eight people. There is a large glass-fronted refrigerator, a hot drinks machine and a television which is affixed to the wall. The serving hatch leads to the kitchen area and storerooms. The equipment in the kitchen includes an electric oven, a microwave oven and a dishwasher. Leading off the kitchen is a room which contains five upright and two chest refrigerators.

Translation devices are ~~now~~ available to allow detainee custody officers (DCOs) and detained individuals to communicate, irrespective of the detained individual's language – it is anticipated that these devices will also be available for Board members to be able to better communicate directly with detained individuals, although most communication is undertaken by members using "ice-breaker" cards written in a variety of languages.

2.3 Port holding rooms

2.3.1 Birmingham Airport

2.3.1.1 Overview

The airside holding rooms are situated within the secondary examination area (SEA), at the rear of the immigration hall, next to the United Kingdom Border Force (UKBF) offices. The holding rooms are used for the detention of passengers from both of the airport's terminals.

2.3.1.2 Holding rooms

The holding suite comprises three separate holding rooms:

- a family/television room, with an opaque glass frontage measuring approximately 6.7m × 2.4m, containing benched seating, bean bags, a folding recliner chair, a complaints box and a large wall-mounted television, with a 2.7m × 1.5m alcove fitted with a fixed picnic-style table and chairs. This room is typically used when families are detained, and there is a variety of children's items available, including play matting.
- an internal room (with no natural daylight) measuring approximately 3.7m × 2.4m, containing benched seating, a fixed recliner, a payphone and a complaints box.
- an internal room (with no natural daylight) measuring approximately 2.7m × 2.4m, containing benched seating and a complaints box.

None of these rooms contains any beds, but detained individuals may lie across the benched seating or on thin, soft foldable mattresses, and can be provided with washable pillows and blankets. Bean bags are available for detained individuals' use.

There are separate toilets/washrooms for males and females, with a shower facility. Detained individuals generally have freedom to move between any of the holding rooms and the toilet/shower facilities. There are also two interview rooms.

The small office area has basic office furnishings, with flight and CCTV monitoring displays, staff lockers, luggage storage racks plus a refrigerator. There is a microwave cooking facility, to enable the heating of meals, and other food can be obtained from the airport shops and cafés.

There is a large wall-mounted television in the family room, but there are no televisions in the two internal rooms, as there is no television aerial signal available, but there are portable DVD players with a selection of DVDs, and also a radio for live news stations and radio shows, available for use by detained individuals.

A payphone is situated in one of the internal rooms, so that detained individuals may make and receive telephone calls with some privacy. Mobile phones are available for use by detained individuals, using their own SIM cards, and detained individuals are sometimes allowed to make calls using the office telephone, though this obviously restricts the detainee custody officers (DCOs) in carrying out their normal duties.

2.3.1.3 Holding room staff

The holding rooms are normally staffed by two DCOs, normally with a gender mix. When detained individuals need to be taken to, or collected from, escort vehicles landside, or taken to removal flights, an officer from the adjacent UKBF offices will normally assist and monitor any remaining detained individuals while the DCOs are away from the holding rooms.

2.3.2 East Midlands Airport

2.3.2.1 Overview

The airside holding room is situated within the UKBF office suite, adjacent to the immigration hall.

2.3.2.2 Holding room

The Holding Room measures approx. 3m x 3m. There is a toilet cubicle in one corner of the room, a metal sink with hot and cold taps and a wall-mounted soap dispenser in the other corner, a table with 4 metal seats fixed to the floor against the right-hand wall. There is a fold-out camp-bed available for detained people to lie on, with disposable bed sheets, pillowcases and blankets available.

The walls of the room are painted white, with a number of notices and posters displayed on the walls. There is also a Complaints Box attached to the wall.

There is a TV box in the near top corner of the room, but no TV service was available throughout 2023.

Religious books are available on request and are kept in the monitoring area. But there are no other reading materials available in the Holding Room.

There is no CCTV within the Holding Room.

There is a heating control in the monitoring area, which appears to have direct and effective control over the temperature in the Holding Room.

Bottled water is available for detained people; hot drinks can be fetched from the adjacent BF office for detained people on request. Only ambient food (i.e: items that can be stored at room temperature and do not require refrigeration or heating) is available for detained persons. Until such time as the facilities can meet the current food standard requirements, the serving of hot food is not possible *[see section 5.2.3.2]*.

2.3.2.3 Holding room staff

The holding room is managed by UKBF officers – there is no Home Office contract for the running of the facility, and thus there are no dedicated DCOs to maintain the welfare of any persons being detained – it is the role of UKBF officers on duty to monitor and look after all persons being detained.

2.3.2.4 Controlled Waiting Area

The Controlled Waiting Area (CWA) is situated in the immigration hall. It consists of eight bucket seats adjacent to where arriving passengers queue for passport checks. The seating has no screening, and thus people who are detained in the CWA sit in full view of, and close by, other arriving passengers.

2.3.3 Holyhead Port

2.3.3.1 Overview

The holding room is located within the secure port area, close to the ferry passenger terminal and main access vehicular security gate. The gate area is manned by security staff on a 24-hour basis and access is only permitted to authorised pass holders. The holding room is a 'port-a-cabin' converted for the purpose and is manned on a 24/7 basis by Mitie Care & Custody staff. UKBF personnel are housed in their own offices a short distance away.

2.3.3.2 Holding room

The entrance to the holding room is through a gateway, which is locked using a keypad device. There is security fencing from the gate to the entrance door of the facility. There is no inner secure area (within the secure port area) for the vans that are used to transport detained people to and from the facility. The area is clearly visible to the public and passing vehicle traffic.

Entry through the main door leads to a corridor which runs the full length of the facility on the left-hand side.

The first door on the right leads to a store cupboard measuring approx. 1.5 metres by 1.5 metres. The second door on the right leads the first of the two holding rooms. It measures approximately 4.8 metres by 2.1 metres. It contains a table and four fixed chairs, and a three-seater bench seat also securely affixed to the floor. Amongst the equipment contained therein is a drinks dispensing machine, a water fountain and a television. The interior of this holding room can be seen from the corridor through glass windows. Leading from this holding room is a large shower and toilet area measuring approximately 2.4 metres by 2.8 metres.

The DCO office is situated between the two holding rooms, with glass windows through which the occupants of each room can be observed when needed. Two fixed desks are fitted below each wall and face into each holding room. A microwave oven is situated on the back wall within a small kitchen unit area. The CCTV control panel and monitors are also located within the office. The cameras cover the entrance, each holding room and the outside space.

The fourth door in the corridor opens into the second holding room which measures approximately 5.2 metres by 3.6 metres. It contains a fixed table and four chairs and a fixed three bench seat. There is a drinks machine and a television. The toilet and shower room leads off from the holding room and measures approximately 2.4 metres by 2.7 metres.

Within each of the holding rooms there is a supply of snack foods, and hot microwave meals can be provided by the DCOs if required.

Further along the corridor there is one more door, leading into the staff toilet.

At the end of the corridor is the final door, which leads into a small outside area. This space is surrounded by security fencing, with an outlook over the port area and the rear of the passenger terminal. It is not used by detained individuals.

There is no natural light within the holding rooms.

2.3.3.3 Holding room staff

The holding room is normally staffed by two DCOs working day and night shifts, and normally of a gender mix. The facility is open all year round on a 24/7 basis.

2.3.4 Manchester Airport

2.3.4.1 Overview

The holding room facility is in Terminal 2 and is in an airside secure area adjacent to the arrival entry immigration hall and desks. It accepts those being detained from Terminals 1, 2 and 3.

2.3.4.2 Holding room

Entry into the office is from a secure corridor running at right angles to the main immigration arrivals hall. Entry is via a door and keypad lock. The main office area measures approximately 15 metres by 6 metres. It contains three desks, the main CCTV monitors, a television, a flight arrivals and departures monitor, a sink and a microwave oven which is used to prepare hot food for those in detention. There are windows on each side of the office which overlook into each of the holding rooms. There is an area which can be curtained off to conduct body searches in private. There are various cupboards which contain copies of Care and Custody paperwork and stocks of microwave meals which the DCO prepare for those being detained. There are two baggage lockers for the luggage of those being held within the holding rooms. Each contains a window which allows those in either of the holding rooms to always observe their luggage.

There are two holding rooms, the main holding room located to the right of the office and to the left the family holding room. Each room can only be accessed by an electric keypad lock.

The holding room measures approximately 9 metres by 8 metres and contains fixed bench seating for eight persons and two fixed tables with bench seating for six to nine persons. There is a small refrigerator, a hot drinks dispenser and a water fountain. There is a television set and a BT telephone. There is a separate prayer room measuring approximately 5 metres by 3.5 metres. The toilets and shower are accessed via a vestibule measuring approximately 5 metres by 3 metres. The shower space measures approximately 7 metres by 1.5 metres and contains a shower head, a separate sink and a hot air electric dryer. The male toilet is approximately 3 metres by 1.5 metres and the female toilet is approximately 3 metres by 2 metres.

The family holding room is approximately 9 metres by 9 metres and contains fixed bench seating for eight plus two tables with bench seating for up to twelve persons. One corner area has been decorated specifically for children and contains a selection of toys and games. There is also a television, a separate games console and screen and a BT telephone. There is a separate prayer room which measures approximately 4 metres by 1.5 metres. The shower and toilets are accessed from a vestibule measuring approximately 4.5 metres by 3 metres. The baby changing room measures approximately 3 metres by 2.5 metres and contains fittings which allow for the care of small children and infants. The male and female toilets measure approximately 3 metres by 1.5 metres. The shower is contained within the area measuring approximately 3 metres square.

Folding mattresses and bedding are available for those being detained if required.

All lighting in the facility is motion sensor activated. The lighting for the holding rooms and office are controlled by dimmer switches. There is no natural lighting within the facility.

2.3.4.3 Holding room staff

There are normally at least four officers on duty day and night. This is normally a balanced gender mix. The duties of DCOs includes escorting from other terminals within the airport and to removal flights.

2.4 Reporting centre holding rooms

2.4.1 Liverpool (Capital Building)

2.4.1.1 Overview

The facility in the Capital Building is located on Floor –2, surrounded by other offices and corridors, and can only be accessed through secure corridors or a lift system, all of which preclude the provision of any natural light.

It is open from 9am to 5pm on three days per week, between Monday and Friday – the days may vary to suit the operational requirements of HOIE. Arrangements are in place with Care & Custody to staff it at other times if necessary. It is sometimes used by HOIE to hold people under an immigration officer's power of detention when Care & Custody staff are not present.

The facility is linked to the reporting centre through a secure corridor that has two interview rooms, a first-aid box and a set of 'modesty' screens. There is an office area, measuring approximately 6.1m × 4.6m, with a CCTV monitor, lockers for officers' personal effects, a drinks machine and a water dispenser. There is also a sink, a microwave oven and seating for staff. All microwave food available for detained individuals is stored in a cupboard within this area.

The office area has windows that overlook the two holding rooms, and also has hatches linked to each holding room. Detained individuals brought in by van are shielded from public view by opaque glass windows covering the offices that are passed.

2.4.1.2 Holding rooms

The larger room measures approximately 6.1m × 6.1m and is furnished with four metal bench seats for 16 persons and a table, with three chairs. All furniture is secured to the floor.

There are two toilets, marked 'Male' and 'Female', leading from the room.

The smaller, child-friendly room measures approximately 6.1m × 4.6m. It has two tables each with three chairs, and a single toilet with baby-changing facilities. Blankets, pillows and a prayer mat are available. The walls are decorated with colourful posters, and one wall has been decorated with a hand-painted mural depicting a colourful forest scene. A box of toys and colouring books is provided in the room, and a carrycot is available if needed. HOIE states that the intention is not to hold children in this room, and the facilities are provided on a contingency basis. Records indicate that no child has yet been held there.

Each room has a television and a BT telephone. There is a bookcase containing a variety of reading materials in each room. Bean bags are also provided for detained individuals' comfort.

Both holding rooms contain a suggestion/complaints box.

2.4.1.3 Holding room staff

The room is staffed by Care & Custody during the opening hours, and at other times, when requested, by HOIE. There are normally two members of staff on duty, with a gender mix.

2.4.2 Loughborough

2.4.2.1 Overview

The HOIE's Loughborough reporting centre is based in the town centre. Officers from the East Midlands local immigration team are based in the building and conduct operations in the community which lead to detentions. Others are identified for detention and/or removal upon reporting.

2.4.2.2 Holding room

The holding room typically opens four or more days per week (the actual days vary each week), from 9am to 5pm, according to demand forecast by local immigration officers (for example, for known enforcement visits, or individuals scheduled to report).

The holding room measures approximately 5.2m × 5.5m and is monitored and recorded by CCTV.

There is only one toilet cubicle, in the corner of the holding room, which is shared by males and females, and contains a very small basin with hot and cold running water. There are baby-changing facilities.

The room can accommodate 10 detained individuals. To facilitate this, there is one table with four fixed seats, and the remaining fixed seating is placed against two walls.

There is a BT telephone available, which accepts incoming calls, and a number of mobile phones are available for use by detained individuals using their own SIM card.

There are notices on the wall relating to 'brochures of information', which are available in 15 different languages.

There is a limited supply of books and magazines, in various languages, for adults. In addition, for children, there are activity packs, books and board games. A television is mounted high in one corner of the room, and a selection of DVDs are available.

A supply of croissants, biscuits and crisps is normally provided inside the holding room, to which detained individuals can help themselves; they are also regularly offered hot and cold drinks, and other food.

The holding room has two fans for air circulation.

There is a complaints box within the holding room. Complaint forms are available in many different languages. The box is opened by a Higher Executive Officer (HEO) on a daily basis.

2.4.2.3 Holding room staff

There are two DCOs based at Loughborough, one male and one female. Their working environment is very restrictive, with an office space measuring approximately 5.5m × 1.8m and containing filing cabinets and a desk, leaving little free space for searches and so forth.

2.4.3 Salford (Dallas Court)

2.4.3.1 Overview

Dallas Court is the HOIE's reporting centre based in Salford. Officers from the local immigration team are based in the building and conduct operations in the community which lead to detentions. Others are identified for detention on reporting at the Centre.

2.4.3.2 Holding rooms

The main holding area consists of two identical holding rooms. Each room has a toilet and hand-washing facilities, and there is also a baby-changing facility. There is a table with single seats for four, and a small flat-screen television is positioned on one wall. There is a BT telephone available, and also a mobile phone which can be used by detained individuals using their own SIM card.

There are notices on the wall relating to 'brochures of information', which are available in 11 different languages. There are adequate supplies of books and magazines, in various languages. In addition, there are jigsaw puzzles, puzzle books and children's toys.

CCTV covers both holding rooms and the area outside and is monitored by the staff.

There is a complaints box in each room, which is regularly checked and emptied by a member of BF staff.

2.4.3.3 Holding room staff

There are usually two DCOs on duty in the holding rooms, one male and one female.

2.4.4 Solihull (Sandford House)

2.4.4.1 Overview

Sandford House is the main reporting centre for the West Midlands, based at HOIE offices in Solihull town centre. People report at given intervals, pending resolution of their immigration cases, some of whom are identified for detention and/or removal upon reporting at the Centre. Officers of the Midlands Enforcement Unit are based in the building and conduct operations in the community that also lead to detentions. The holding rooms are open from Monday to Friday, staffed by DCOs from 8:30am to 5:30pm, and are also used by IE officers to hold detained persons under their own jurisdiction outside these hours (i.e. early mornings, late evenings and weekends).

2.4.4.2 Holding room

The facility has one holding room, which is used for men, women and, very occasionally, for families. It measures approximately 4.3m × 5.8m, and is covered by CCTV.

There are six seats, set around a fixed table in the middle of the room, with additional bench seating for four persons. There are also two bean bags for detained individuals' use.

There are separate toilet cubicles for men and women within the holding room, and baby-changing facilities are available.

The food provided comprises a range of filled croissants, biscuits and crisps, with the option of hot meals, and hot and cold drinks on request.

There is a complaints box, with complaint forms available in 16 different languages. The box is opened by a CIO regularly.

There is a BT telephone available, which takes incoming calls, and there are a number of mobile phones which can be used by detained individuals using their own SIM card.

Magazines, some in foreign languages, continue to be provided. Additional items include reading books, the Qur'an, the Bible, children's toys and activity packs.

The ventilation in the office area of the holding room is centrally controlled; the holding room ventilation is controlled by an air conditioning system that is adjustable by the DCO staff.

2.4.4.3 Holding room staff

There are three DCOs based at Sandford House, usually with at least one male and one female on duty. Their working environment is restrictive, with office space measuring approximately 5.8m × 1.8m, containing a desk and filing cabinets, leaving limited space for searches.

3. Executive Summary

3.1 Background to the report

- The number of Board members has increased since our last report, which is very positive for its effectiveness (*see section 8.2*)
- The number of face-to-face rota visits has dramatically increased which may be beneficial to persons being held in detention (*see section 8.3*). This also clearly demonstrates the commitment Board members have to their role.
- In the last quarter of the reporting year, the visit report format was amended to provide a more rights-based focus. This provides more scope for members to report on a greater number of issues.
- The only facility the Board monitors which is controlled by Border Force directly is the East Midlands Airport. The Board remains concerned that persons being detained there have no access to hot food. Also, the facility is not provided with televisions for the relaxation of those being held. A greater security risk for both those being detained and members of staff, is the lack of fitted and operational CCTV system.
- When people are detained within the Port of Holyhead facility, there is no secure vehicle bay within the secure port area for their transfer to and from the holding rooms. This could compromise the safety and dignity of detained people and staff.
- There has been a marked increase of charter flight departures emanating from Manchester Residential Short Term Holding Facility. This process involves bringing more foreign national offenders (FNOs) from the prison estate to the facility before flights depart. The result of these two factors is that more women from the IDE are housed together with FNOs in Manchester RSTHF. The Board considers this to be a high-risk strategy.

3.2 Key points

Safety

The Board does not conduct Health and Safety audits but during visits, but as evidenced in visit reports provide a 'safe' environment for persons being detained in the majority of facilities. In the final quarter of the year Manchester Residential Short-Term Holding Facility was being used to accommodate flight removals of Foreign National Offenders. These consist mainly of men who are transferred directly from prisons.

At East Midlands Airport, a greater security risk for both those being detained is the lack of fitted and operational CCTV system.

Holyhead does not have a secure area for vehicles to park within the secure port area for the transfer of detained people to and from the facility. The main gate to the facility is only a few metres away from the edge of the dock is only protected by a low rail which could easily be scaled with possible fatal consequences (*see section 2.3.3.2*).

On limited occasions Board members have observed the induction of individuals being detained – on each occasion, it was carried out with humanity and dignity and in a professional manner.

Fair and humane treatment

Whilst visits only provide a 'snapshot' of the treatment by which detained individuals are subjected to, visit reports give no indication of any mistreatment. Objective evidence of this is recorded within visit reports when members talk to persons being detained and have not received any negative comments regarding staff or conditions.

The Board remains concerned that, since July 2023, persons being detained at East Midlands Airport have no access to hot food.

During its visits, the Board has observed detained individuals being treated in a dignified manner, with consideration and courtesy being demonstrated by Care & Custody DCOs.

The Board is concerned about the time it takes to rectify deficiencies to the structure and equipment within all the facilities the Board monitors. An example of this is a light in the prayer room at Manchester Airport STHF needed to be modified to motion sensor activation - it was first reported in January 2022 and rectified in January 2024, two years later. However, it is understood that the airport operator is responsible for maintenance issues at this site, which can lead to such delays due to Care & Custody being unable to undertake such maintenance themselves. To highlight these issues the Board has introduced a record of deficiencies which are identified during rota visits. This is then discussed with all stakeholders at the monthly Board Meetings.

Health and wellbeing

The Board remains concerned that detained individuals are still being denied access to their prescribed medication while in holding rooms and, again, urges the Home Office to expedite their proposed solution.

The only facility that has a medical professional on duty full time is the Manchester RSTHF. All other facilities need to rely on the National Health Service (NHS) ambulance service if medical advice is needed. This is far from a satisfactory situation and can only add to the pressures on the ambulance service.

Preparation for removal, transfer or release

Visit reports indicate that when detained individuals arrive or are being transferred to other facilities, their treatment has always been with dignity, consideration and professionalism.

The Board has concerns that there is potential for foot ferry passengers, awaiting to board or disembarking from coaches transferring them from ferries, to have sight of those being detained at, or leaving, the Holyhead facility. They are also in full view of any vehicle traffic in the port area.

3.3 Recommendations

TO THE MINISTER

The Board seeks a response from the minister with respect to the following issues raised in this report.

- For the **sixth** year in succession, the Board repeats its concern at the lack of proper procedures which would allow DCOs or other qualified personnel to provide detained individuals with access to their prescribed medication. The Board continues to note that the welfare of detained individuals has been adversely affected by this situation. This occurs particularly in holding rooms and reporting centres. The Board understands that a process has begun to address this issue but is disappointed as to the amount of time that is being taken to solve this problem.

The Board were informed about an incident at Salford (Dallas Court) holding room from November 2023 – a detained person required his injection of insulin for diabetes. Staff could not administer it, an NHS ambulance was called, and the detained person was taken to the local A&E where staff refused to administer it on the detained person's behalf. He was allowed to administer it himself under their supervision.

- The Home Secretary visited the Liverpool Reporting Centre 8th June 2023 and very disappointedly did not visit the holding room. When this omission was questioned the Board was advised the Home Secretary was 'very busy'. The Board, whilst appreciating how busy Ministers are, would recommend that whenever Ministerial visits are arranged to any facility in the IDE, a period is allocated to meeting, if appropriate, persons being detained.
- The Board remains very disappointed that our Annual Report of 2022 was never even acknowledged or responded to by the minister. The Board continues to be assured that its work is valuable and appreciated, but this is questionable if our detailed reports are ignored. It is therefore our recommendation that all reports are responded to in good time.

TO UK BORDER FORCE/HOME OFFICE IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT

- Charter flight removals from Manchester normally consist of collecting detained who are to be removed and accommodating them in Manchester RSTHF. Most of these cohorts have been made up of male Foreign National Offenders from the prison estate. The Board is very concerned that the facility during this period also accepts detained persons from the wider immigration estate, both male and females thereby possibly introducing an unacceptable level of personal risk to these people. This risk has recently been exacerbated by a bedroom in the male

corridor of Manchester RSTHF being designated to females if their numbers in the establishment exceeds seven. The Board would recommend that to reduce this risk to as low as reasonably practicable when charter flights are arranged, the facility is 'closed' for detained people from the wider immigration estate.

- Hot food is not available for persons being detained at East Midlands airport (see *section 2.3.2.2*). The Board would recommend this is rectified.
- There is no CCTV available in the holding rooms at East Midlands airport. This omission poses a high risk to both persons being detained and to members of Border Force staff (see *section 2.3.2.2*). The Board recommends that CCTV is fitted.
- Television for use by persons being detained is not available for persons in East Midlands airport (see *section 2.3.2.2*). Television can have a calming effect and distraction for persons being detained. The Board recommends that a television is fitted.
- The Board is concerned at the practice of leaving detained persons in the Controlled Waiting Areas, and recommends that they should always be afforded the dignity, privacy and relative comfort of being moved into the Holding Room where there are toilets and other facilities to help them rest while being detained (see *section 2.3.2.4*).

TO THE DETENTION CONTRACTOR

- To increase the female bed capacity in the IDE bedroom 7 in Manchester RSTHF has been designated for their use. This bedroom is in the corridor where all the male bedrooms and male showers and toilets are located. The risk of possible physical harm and abuse to females in this location has therefore increased. The Board would recommend that the designation of bedroom 7 is rescinded.

3.4 Progress since the last report

- The number of Board members has increased and as a result a greater number of rota visits have been conducted.
- A board member has been recruited who resides in North Wales. This ensures the visits to the port of Holyhead are more frequent and more regular.
- The Care and Custody holding room log book has been amended to show the time a person being detained has spent both with the Home Office and Care & Custody.

Evidence sections

4. Safety

The Board does not conduct safety audits on the facilities that are monitored. Members during their visits note generally the overall safety aspects. For example, portable fire extinguishers are in place, there are no obvious trip hazards and the general cleanliness and tidiness. Visit reports have not highlighted any specific safety concerns relating to violence within the facility.

On limited occasions Board members have observed the induction of individuals being detained. On each occasion, it was carried out with humanity and dignity and in a professional manner.

Manchester residential-short term holiday facility (RSTHF)

The capacity at Manchester RSTHF means that on occasion, and when numbers in the establishment exceed seven, women are held in a room on the male accommodation corridor. The Board are very concerned by the risk to the safety of women in these circumstances and that being accommodated alongside men may leave women distressed or uncomfortable. Board members have spoken to women who have been housed in bedroom 7 and they have report the feel 'uncomfortable'. To use bathroom facilities they need to walk approximately 25 metres to the 'women's section'. The Board has made a recommendation to the Home Office to ensure that arrivals are planned in a way that ensures that women are not required to be accommodated alongside the male cohort at the facility.

East Midlands Airport holding room STHF

There is no fitted and operational CCTV system within the Holding Room at East Midlands Airport. The Board considers the lack of CCTV to pose a risk to the safety of people detained in the holding room.

Holyhead Port STHF

When persons being detained within the Port of Holyhead facility there is no secure vehicle bay for their transfer to and from the holding rooms. The main gate to the facility is only a few metres away from the edge of the dock and is only protected by a low rail which could easily be scaled. This could compromise the safety and dignity of detained people.

5. Fair and humane treatment

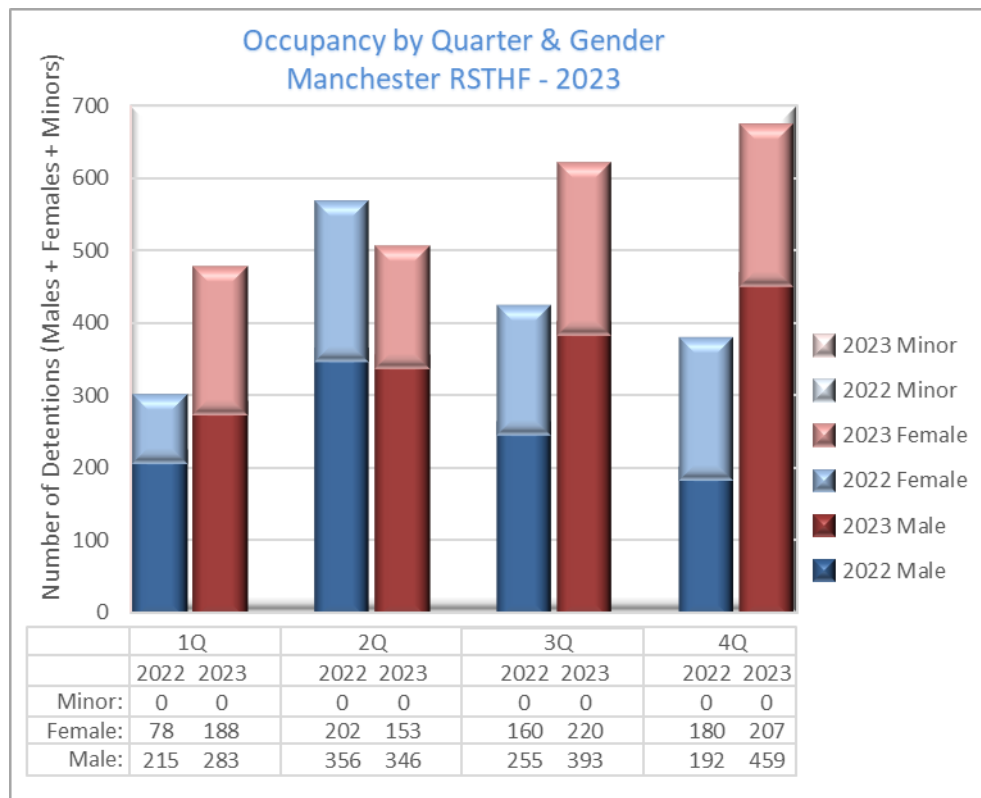
The Board provides the following evidence in terms of its work monitoring the fair and humane treatment of persons detained – in consideration of this, the Board regularly monitors a number of factors, including:-

- **Occupancy** – the number of persons detained in each facility.
- **Lengths of detentions** – to monitor whether persons are being detained in line with the guidance for each type of STHF, and that persons are not being detained for an unnecessarily long period.
- **Lateness of detention** – to monitor when people are detained in holding rooms beyond the scheduled closing time, and thus may arrive at an Immigration Removal Centre (IRC) at a late hour, when kitchens and other facilities may no longer be in operation.

5.1 Manchester Residential STHF (Building 302, Manchester Airport)

5.1.1.1 Occupancy

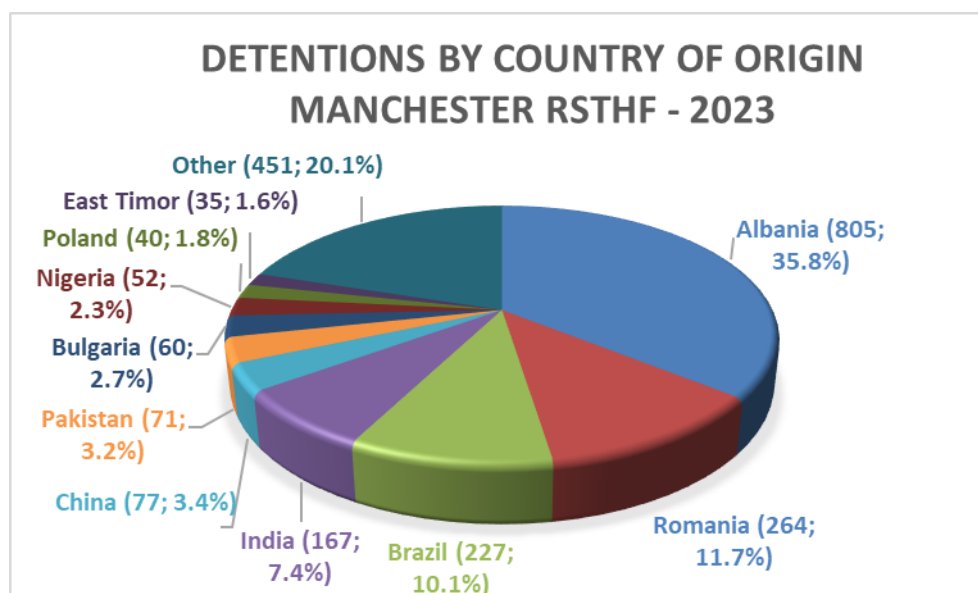
During 2023, 2249 people were detained at Manchester RSTHF - an increase of 611 (37.3%) compared with 1638 in 2022.



This equates to an Occupancy of 4151 Bed Nights - an increase of 824 (24.8%) compared with 3327 in 2022.

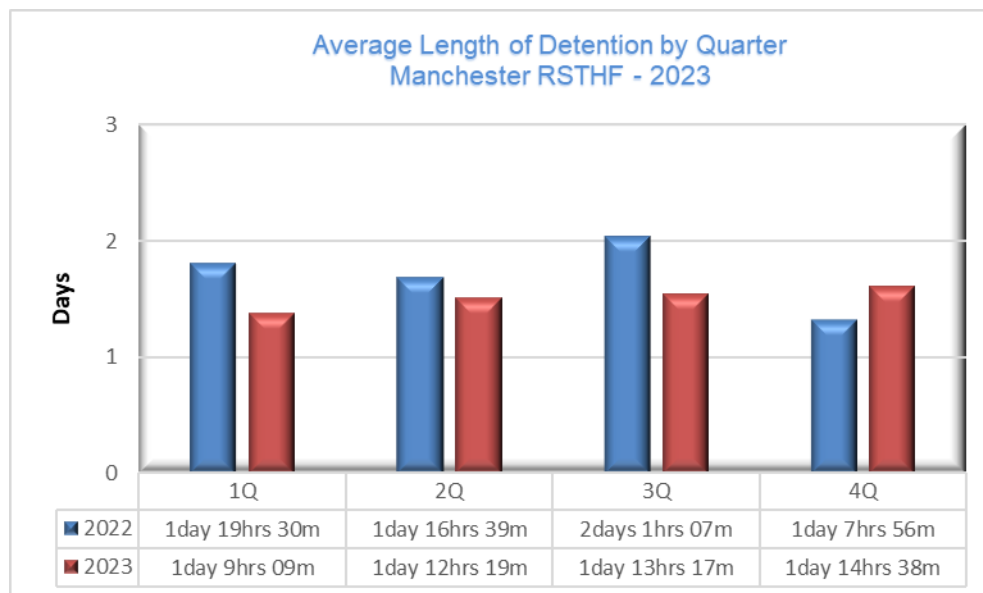
There were no minors detained in MAN 302 during 2022.

The 2249 people detained came from 85 different countries, with the largest proportion coming from Albania (805; 35.8%).

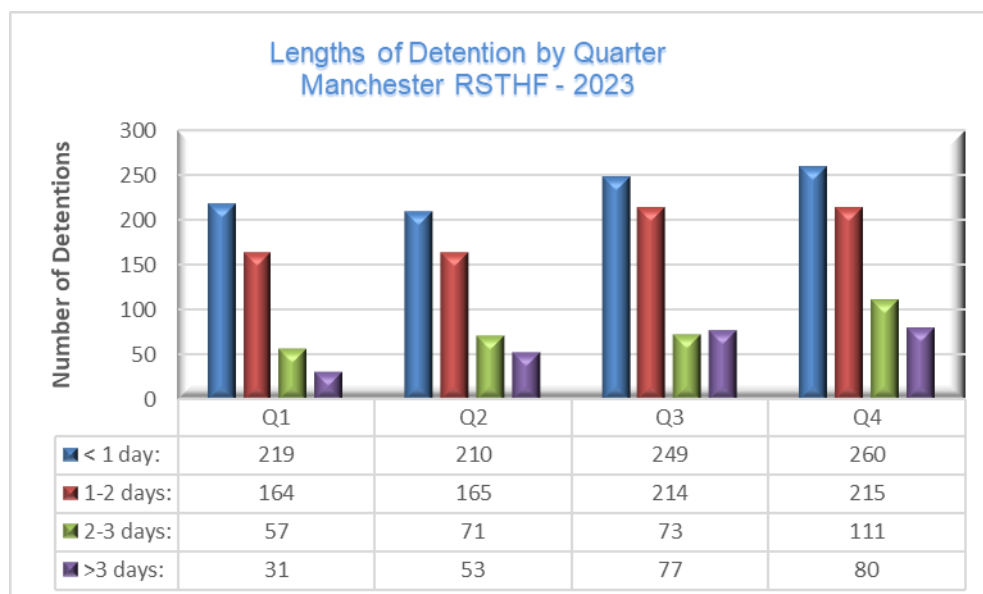


5.1.1.2 Lengths of detention

The average length of detention during 2023 was 1 day 12 hours 36 minutes, compared to 1 day 17 hours 20 minutes during 2022.



The lengths of detentions ranged from 0 hours 50 minutes to 7 days 10 hours 05 minutes (see section 5.1.1.3 below).



The number of detentions exceeding 5 days during 2023 was 19 (0.2%), compared with 34 (0.1%) during 2022.

The number of detentions exceeding 7 days during 2023 was 4 (0.2%), compared with 1 (0.1%) during 2022.

5.1.1.3 Serious and reportable incidents

There has been one incident of a contagious disease, scarlet fever, occurring during the reporting year. The facility was locked down for several days until it was deemed safe by medical personnel, resulting in 4 persons being detained in excess of the statutory limit of 7 days.

5.1.1.4 Number of visits

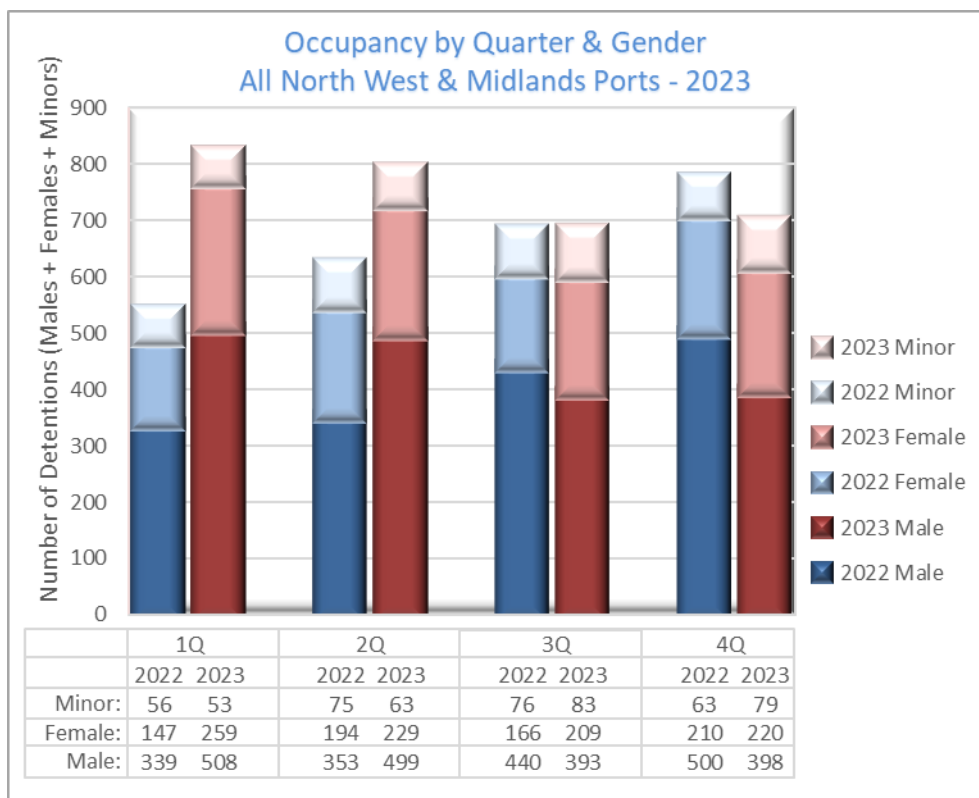
The Board aims to monitor the Manchester Residential STHF on a weekly basis. During 2023, it made a total of 53 monitoring visits and calls to the facility.

5.2 Ports

5.2.1 All ports

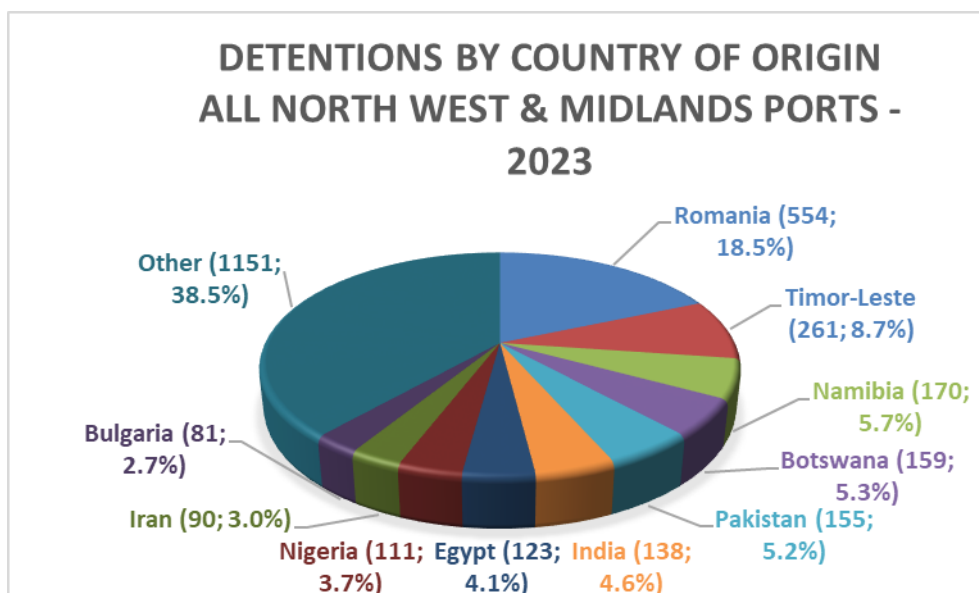
5.2.1.1 Occupancy

During 2023, 2993 people were detained at All North West & Midlands Ports (i.e: Birmingham Airport, East Midlands Airport, Holyhead Sea Port and Manchester Airport) - an increase of 374 (14.3%) compared with 2,619 in 2022.



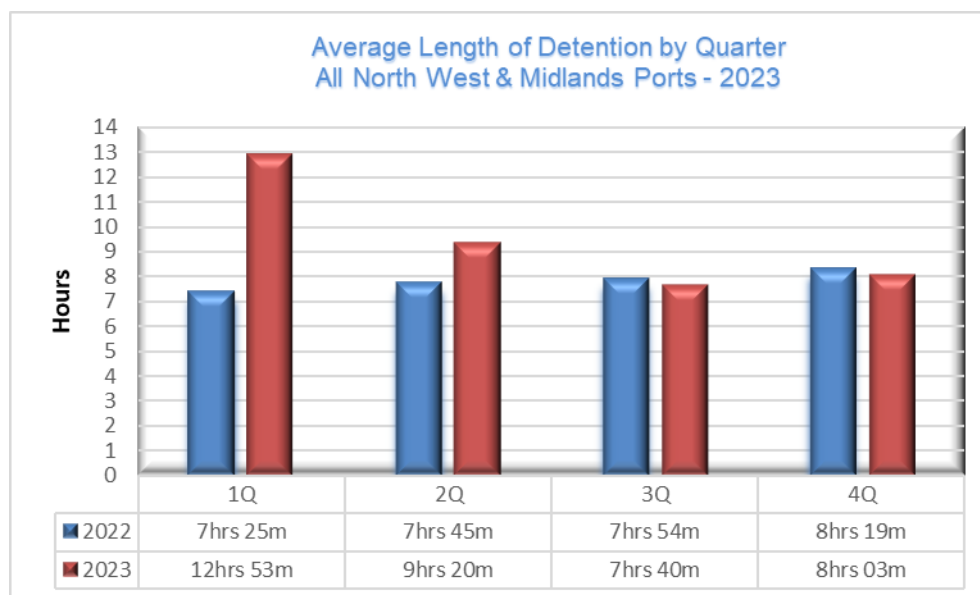
There were 278 minors detained in the holding rooms during 2023 - an increase of 8 (3.0%) compared with the figure of 270 in 2022.

The 2993 people detained came from 110 different countries, with the largest proportion coming from Romania (554; 18.5%).

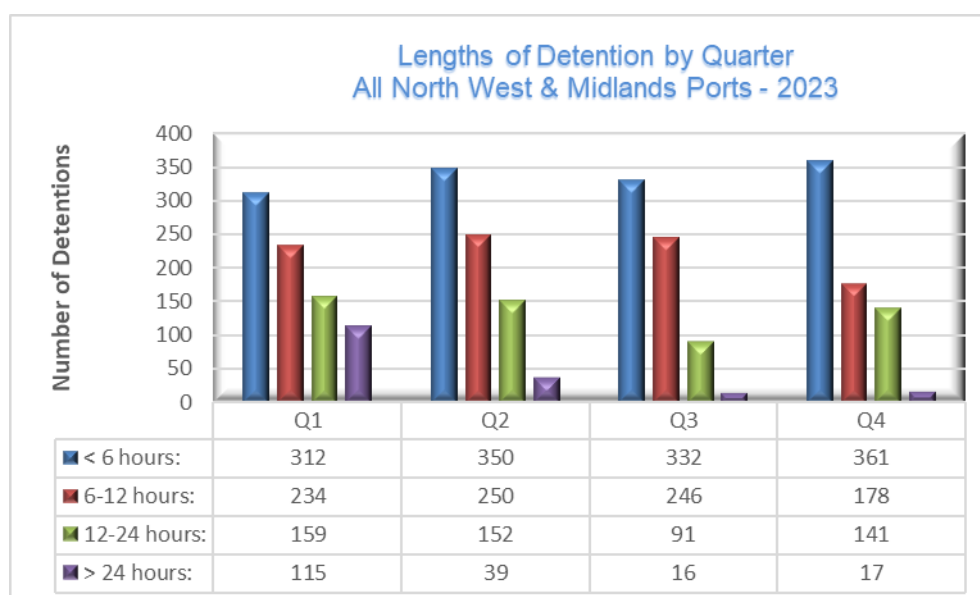


5.2.1.2 Lengths of detention

The average length of detention during 2023 was 9 hours 37 minutes, compared to 7 hours 53 minutes during 2022.



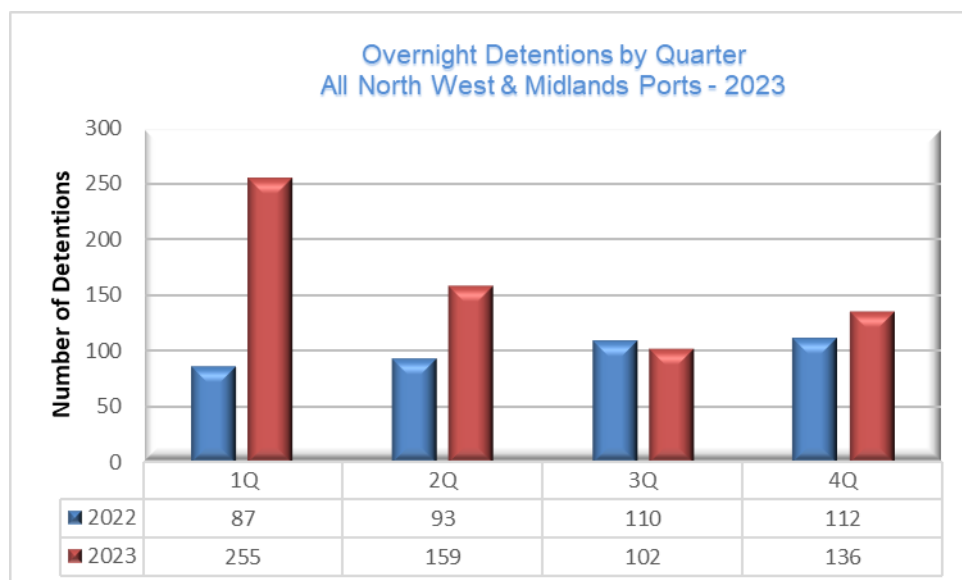
The lengths of detentions ranged from 0 hours 15 minutes to 109 hours 00 minutes.



There were 729 (24.4%) detentions in excess of 12 hours during 2023, compared with 487 (18.6%) in 2022.

The number of detentions exceeding 24 hours during 2023 was 187 (6.2%), compared with 62 (2.4%) in 2022.

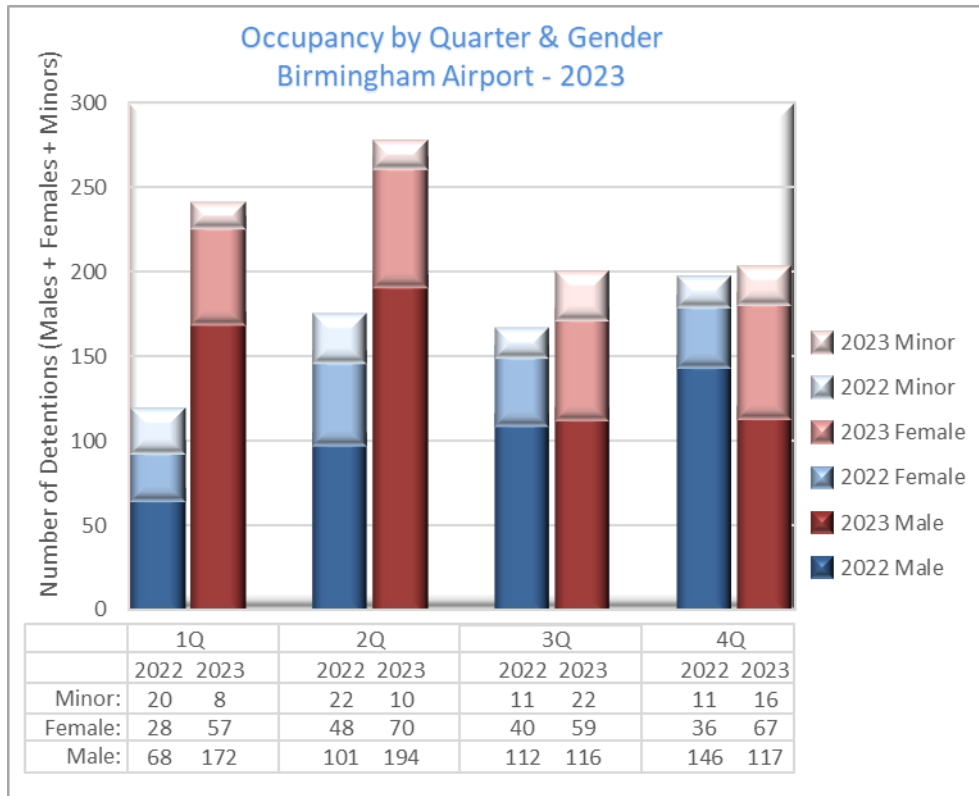
Of the 2993 people detained during 2023, 652 (21.8%) were held in the holding rooms overnight (i.e: detained before midnight and held until 05:00am), compared with 402 (15.3%) during 2022.



5.2.2 Birmingham Airport

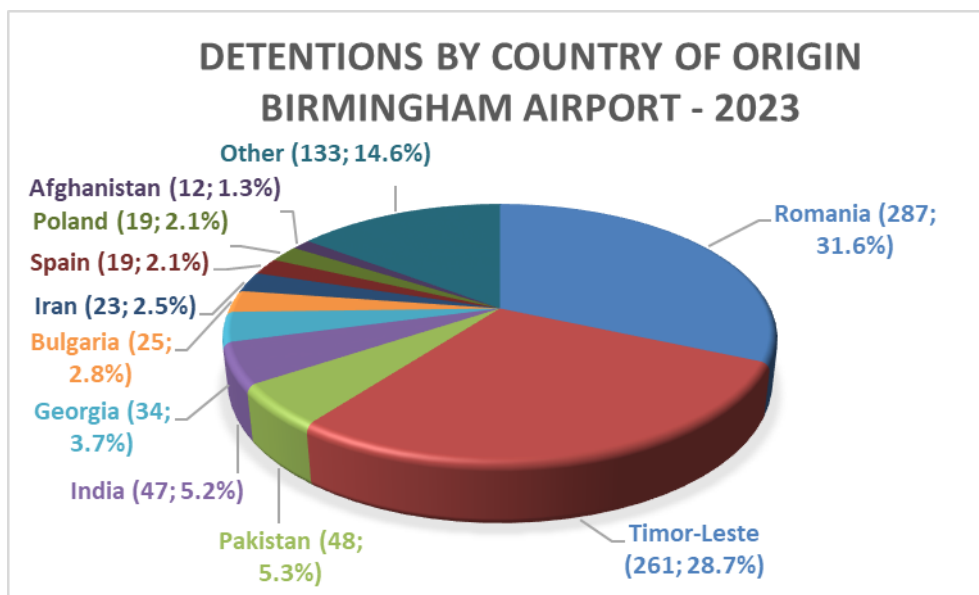
5.2.2.1 Occupancy

During 2023, 908 people were detained at Birmingham Airport - an increase of 265 (41.2%) compared with 643 in 2022.



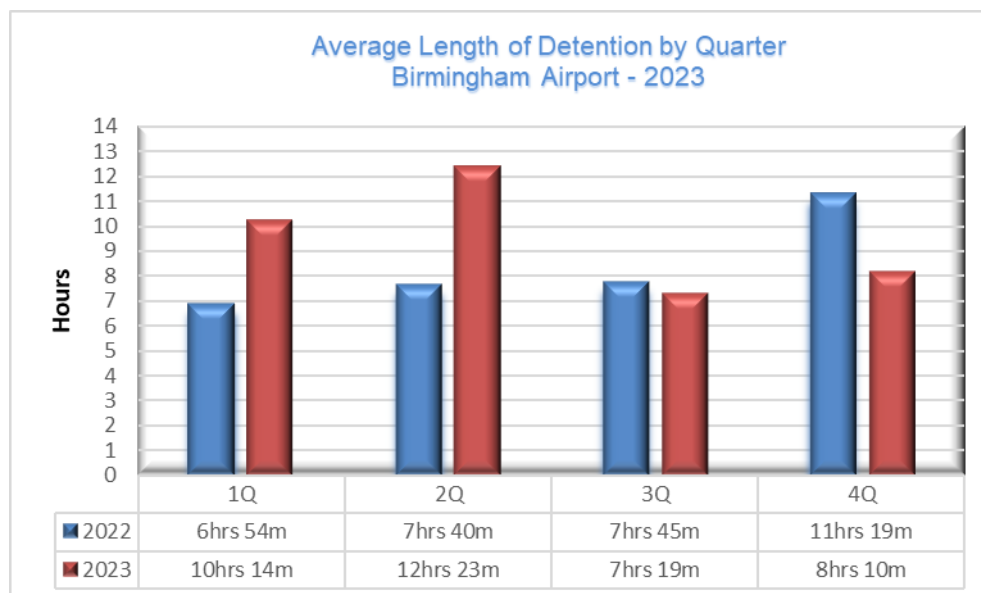
There were 56 minors detained in the holding rooms during 2023 - a decrease of 8 (12.5%) compared with the figure of 64 in 2022.

The 908 people detained came from 25 different countries, with the largest proportion coming from Romania (287; 31.6%).

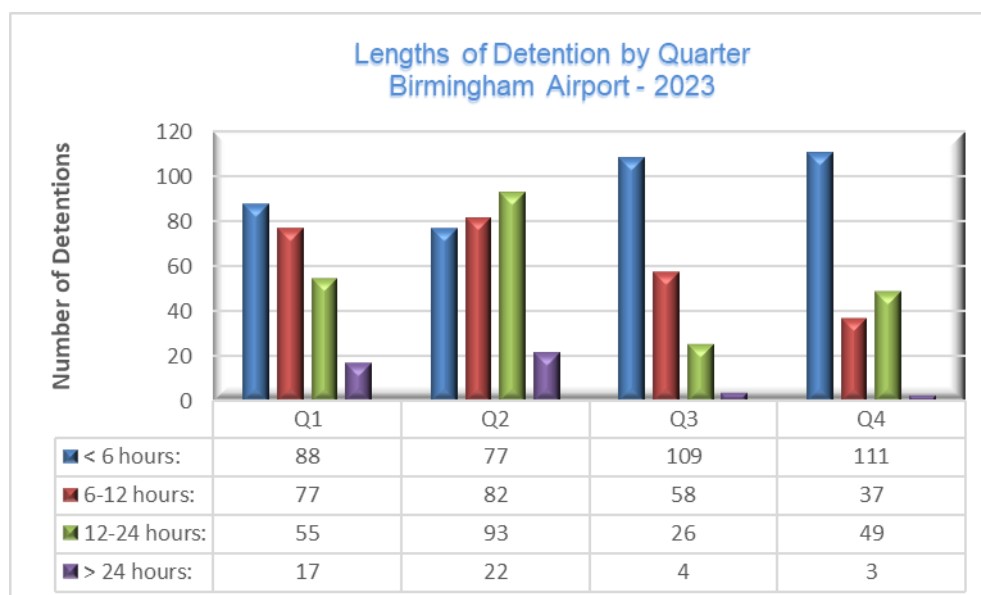


5.2.2.2 Lengths of detention

The average length of detention during 2023 was 9 hours 48 minutes, compared to 8 hours 39 minutes during 2022.



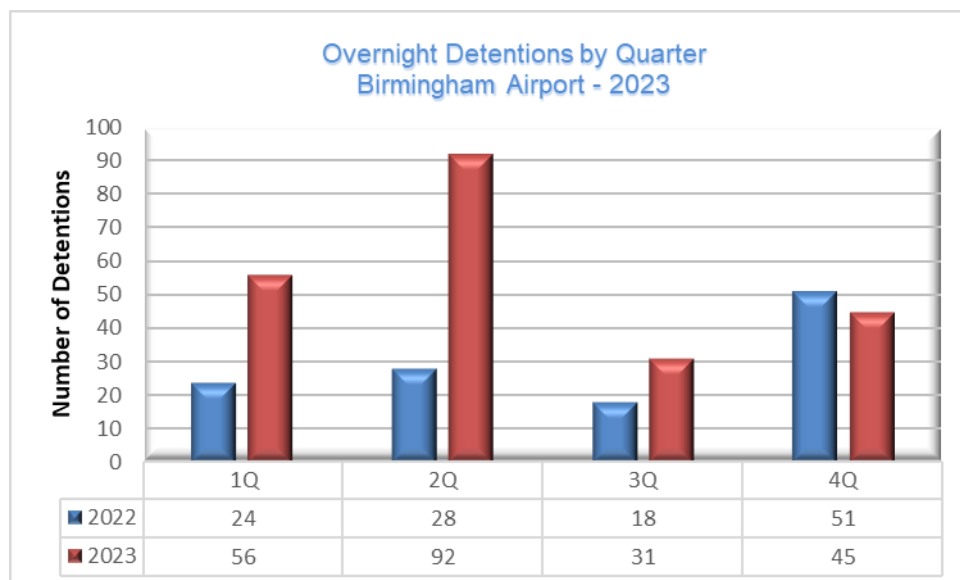
The lengths of detentions ranged from 0 hours 15 minutes to 46 hours 35 minutes.



There were 269 (29.6%) detentions in excess of 12 hours during 2023, compared with 158 (24.6%) in 2022.

The number of detentions exceeding 24 hours during 2023 was 46 (5.1%), compared with 25 (3.9%) in 2022.

Of the 908 people detained during 2023, 224 (24.7%) were held in the holding rooms overnight (i.e: detained before midnight and held until 05:00am), compared with 121 (18.8%) during 2022.



5.2.2.3 Serious and reportable incidents

There have been no serious or reportable incidents at Birmingham Airport during 2023.

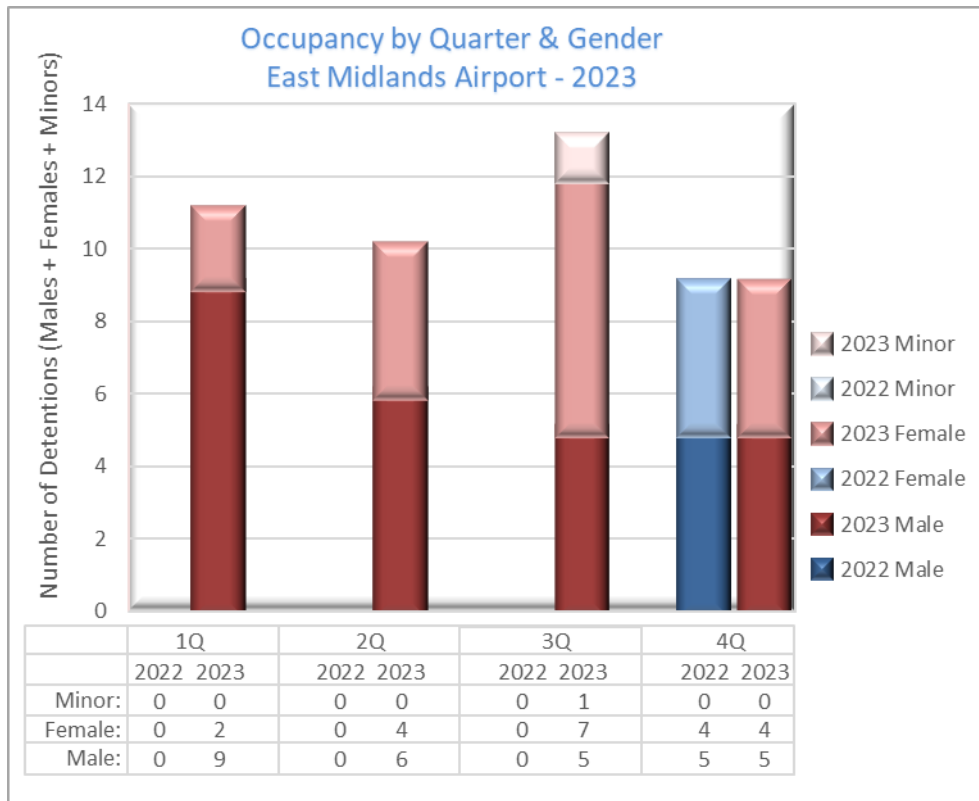
5.2.2.4 Number of visits

The Board aims to monitor the holding rooms at Birmingham Airport on a weekly basis. During 2023, it made a total of 54 monitoring visits to the airport.

5.2.3 East Midlands Airport

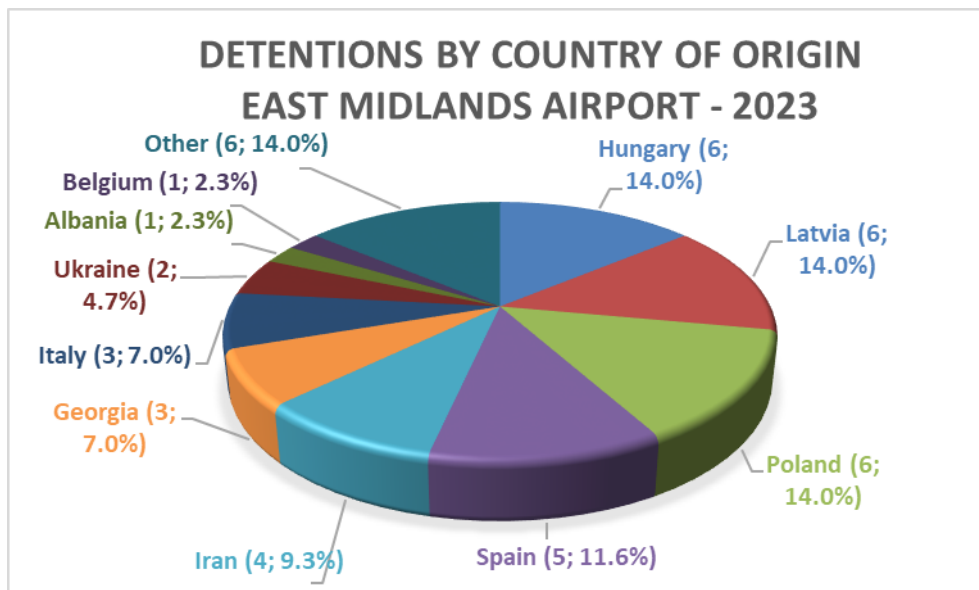
5.2.3.1 Occupancy

During 2023, 43 people were detained at East Midlands Airport.



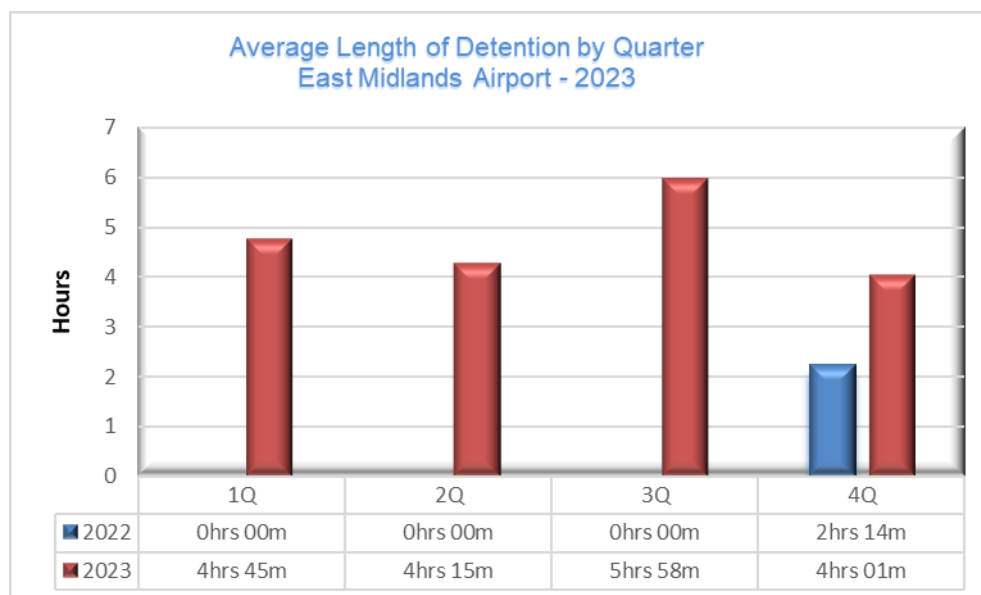
There was 1 minor detained in the holding rooms during 2023.

The 43 people detained came from 16 different countries, with the largest proportion coming from Hungary (6; 14.0%).

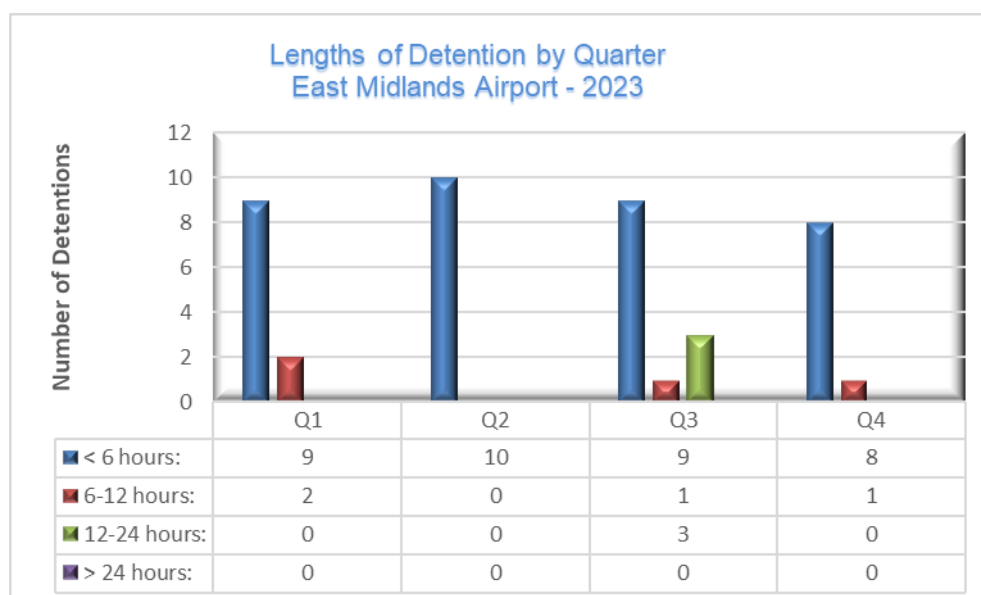


5.2.3.2 Lengths of detention

The average length of detention during 2023 was 4 hours 51 minutes.



The lengths of detentions ranged from 0 hours 20 minutes to 16 hours 55 minutes.



There were 3 (7.0%) detentions in excess of 12 hours during 2023.

There were no detentions exceeding 24 hours during 2023.

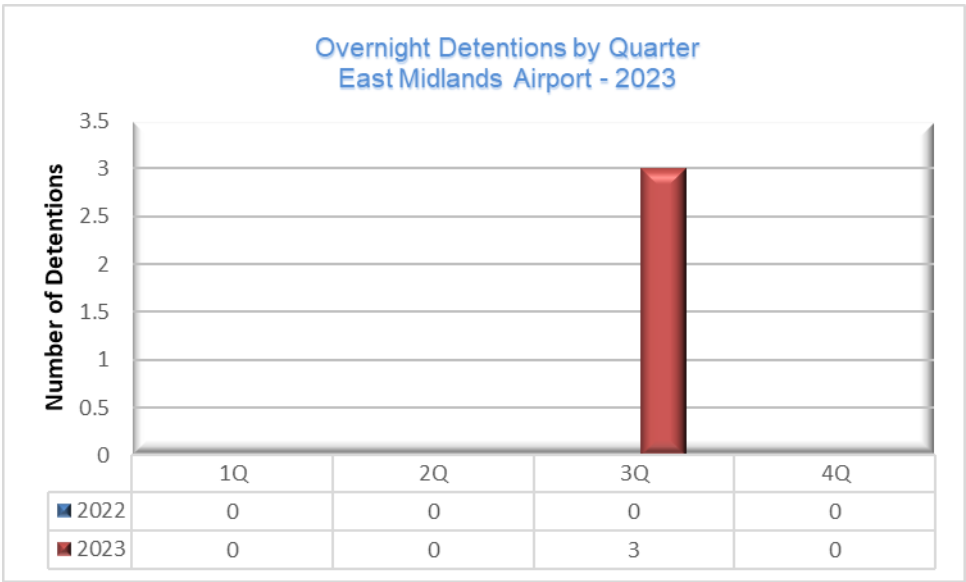
On a number of occasions, detained persons were left in the CWA for the full duration of their detention, rather than being afforded the dignity, privacy and relative comfort of being moved into the Holding Room where there are toilets and other facilities to help them rest. On one occasion (9th August 2023), two detained persons were left in the CWA for a total of 16 hrs 55 mins each – the Board was told this was because there were insufficient Border Force officers available to be able to assign two officers to monitor the Holding Room and carry out their other duties at the same time, hence the

persons were left in the CWA where officers could “keep an eye on them”.

Since July 2023, in order to meet the requirements of Local Authority Food Premises Registration, BF at East Midlands Airport have temporarily withdrawn the provision of hot food, whilst they introduce processes, training and governance for the serving of hot foods. This means that detained persons can only be provided with hot drinks (made with powdered or UHT milk) and cold snacks such as biscuits, crisps etc. Border Force are no longer able to provide hot food or sandwiches, even if purchased at a food outlet, until they have been able to introduce the necessary processes and hygiene requirements in collaboration with their Local Authorities. This is severely restrictive for anyone being detained for more than a few hours.

5.2.3.3 Overnight detentions

Of the 43 people detained during 2023, 3 (7.0%) were held in the holding rooms overnight (i.e: detained before midnight and held until 05:00am).



5.2.3.4 Serious and reportable incidents

There were no serious or reportable incidents at East Midlands Airport during 2023.

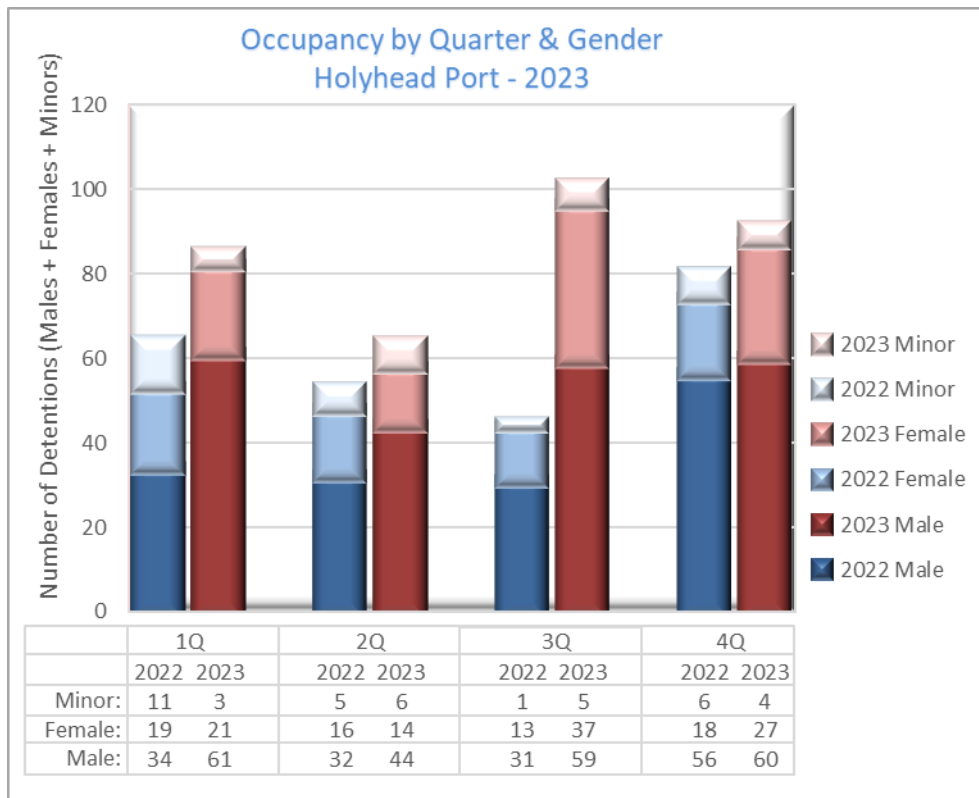
5.2.3.5 Number of visits

The Board aims to monitor the holding rooms at East Midlands Airport on a fortnightly basis. The Board made 26 monitoring visits to the holding rooms in East Midlands Airport during 2023.

5.2.4 Holyhead Port

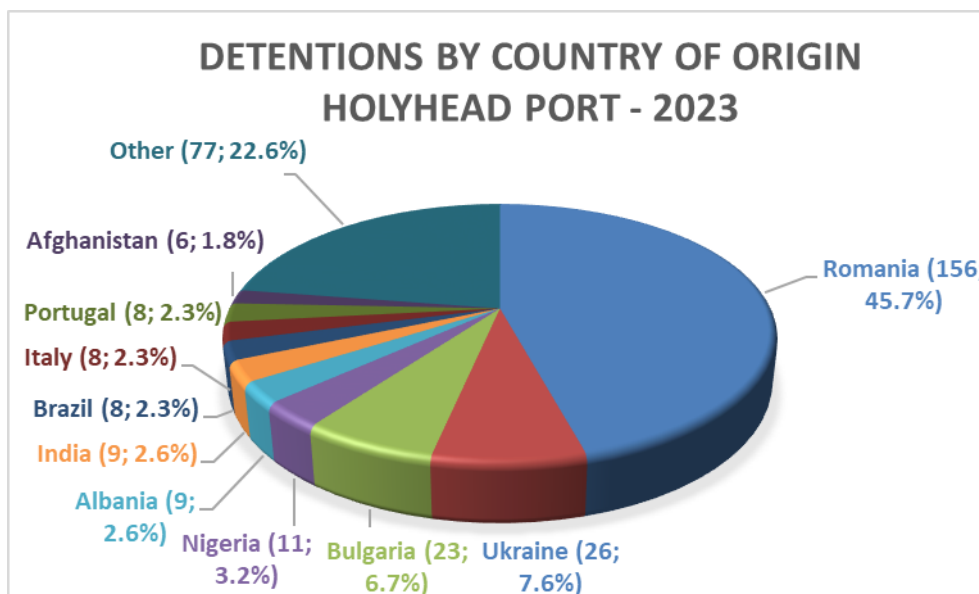
5.2.4.1 Occupancy

During 2023, 341 people were detained at Holyhead Port - an increase of 99 (40.9%) compared with 242 in 2022.



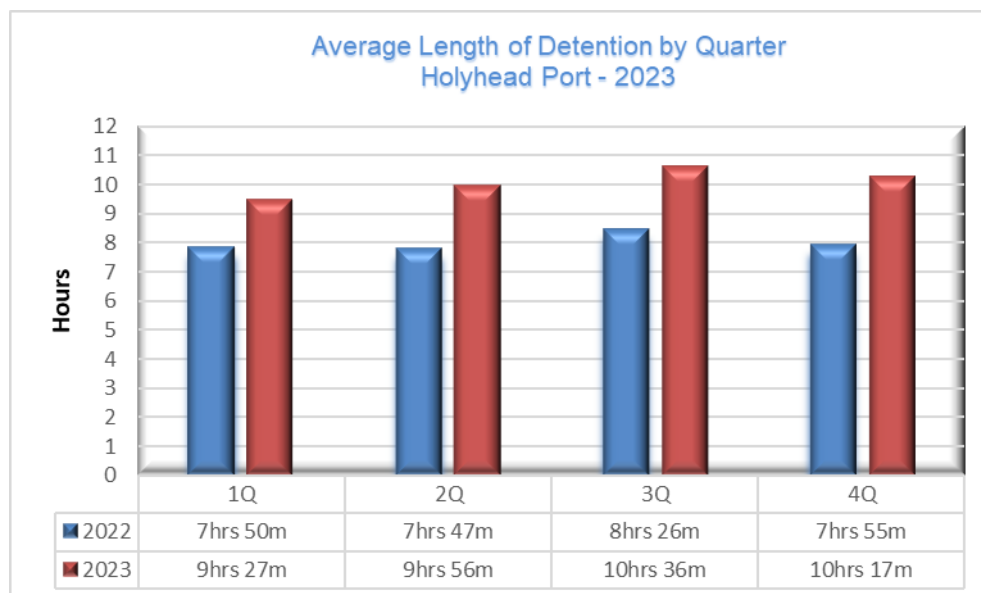
There were 18 minors detained in the holding rooms during 2023 - a decrease of 5 (21.7%) compared with the figure of 23 in 2022.

The 341 people detained came from 44 different countries, with the largest proportion coming from Romania (156; 45.7%).

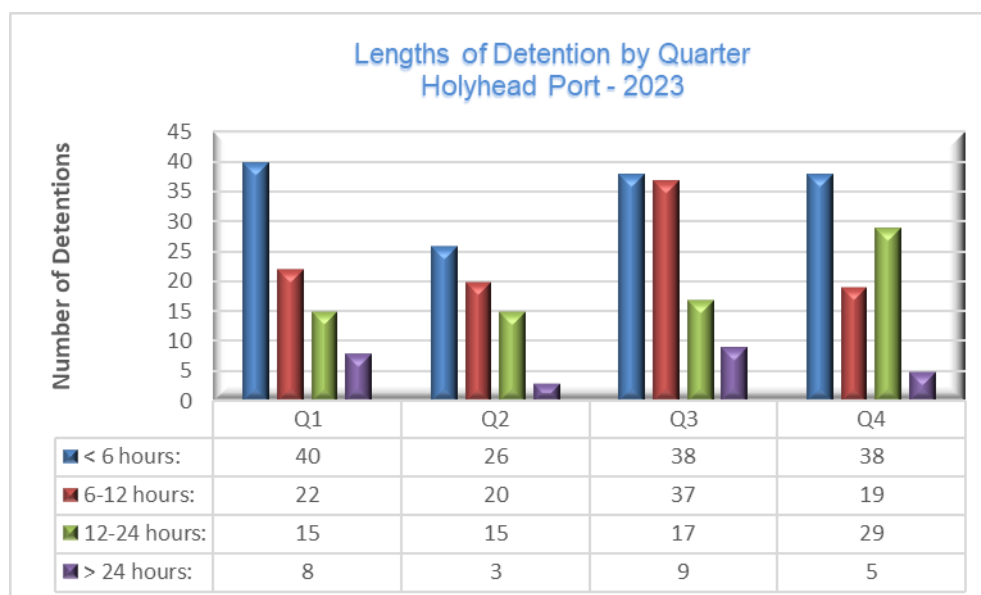


5.2.4.2 Lengths of detention

The average length of detention during 2023 was 10 hours 06 minutes, compared to 7 hours 58 minutes during 2022.



The lengths of detentions ranged from 0 hours 30 minutes to 39 hours 21 minutes.

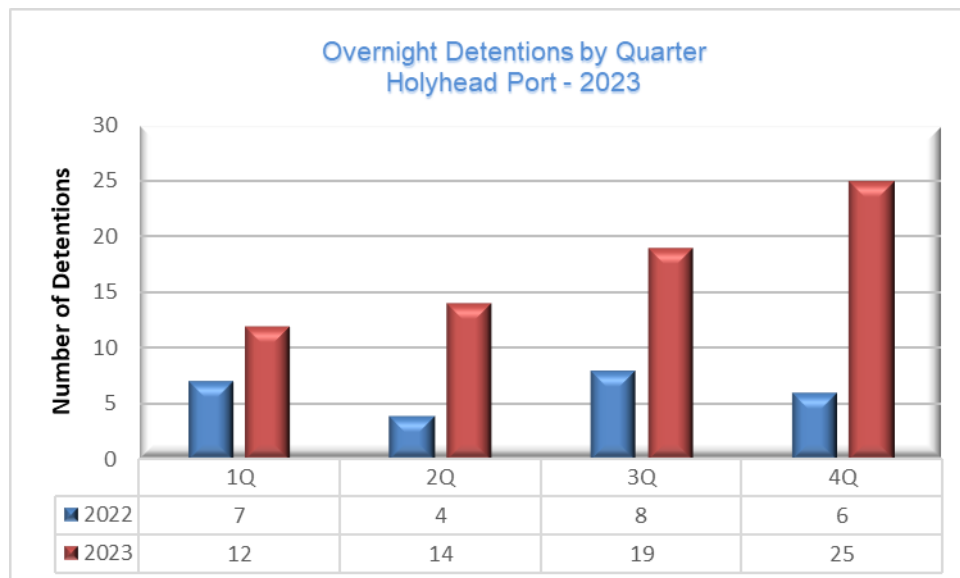


There were 101 (29.6%) detentions in excess of 12 hours during 2023, compared with 37 (15.3%) in 2022.

The number of detentions exceeding 24 hours during 2023 was 25 (7.3%), compared with 6 (2.5%) in 2022.

5.2.4.3 Overnight detentions

Of the 341 people detained during 2023, 70 (20.5%) were held in the holding rooms overnight (i.e: detained before midnight and held until 05:00am), compared with 25 (10.3%) during 2022.



5.2.4.4 Serious and reportable incidents

There were no serious or reportable incidents at Holyhead Port during 2023.

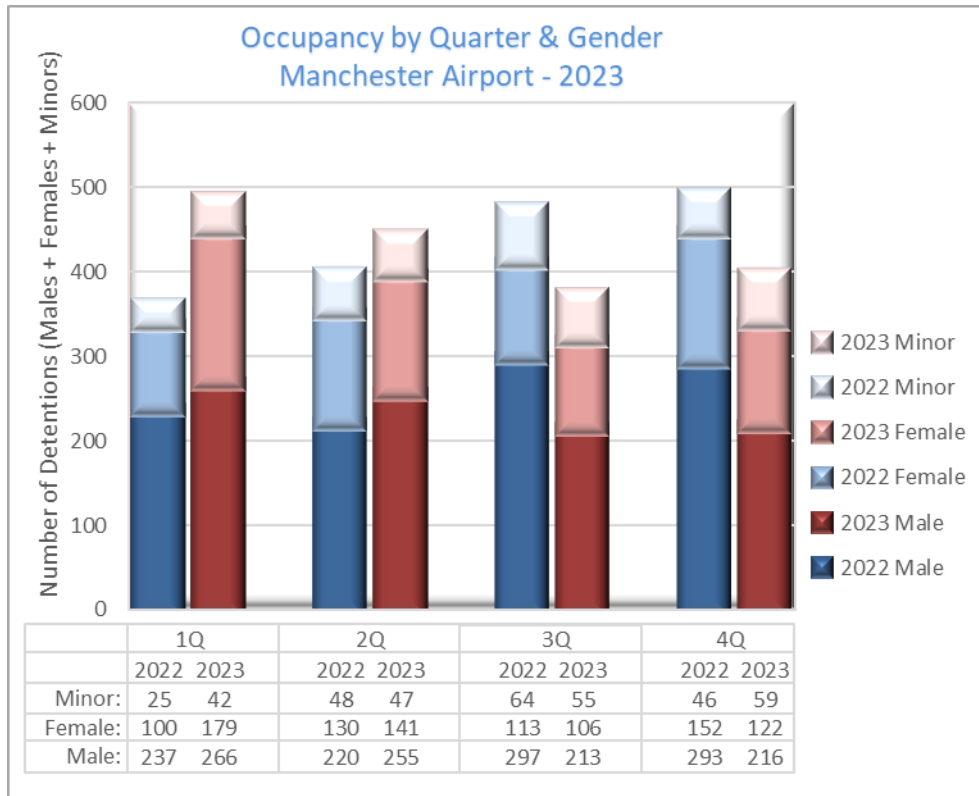
5.2.4.5 Number of visits

The Board made 23 monitoring calls and visits to the holding rooms in Holyhead Port during 2023. It aims to monitor the port ordinarily once per fortnight, but has been restricted in the number of visits made during 2023 due to the lack of members living within commutable distance to the port; a recent appointment to the Board is expected to increase the number of monitoring visits that will be made to the site.

5.2.5 Manchester Airport

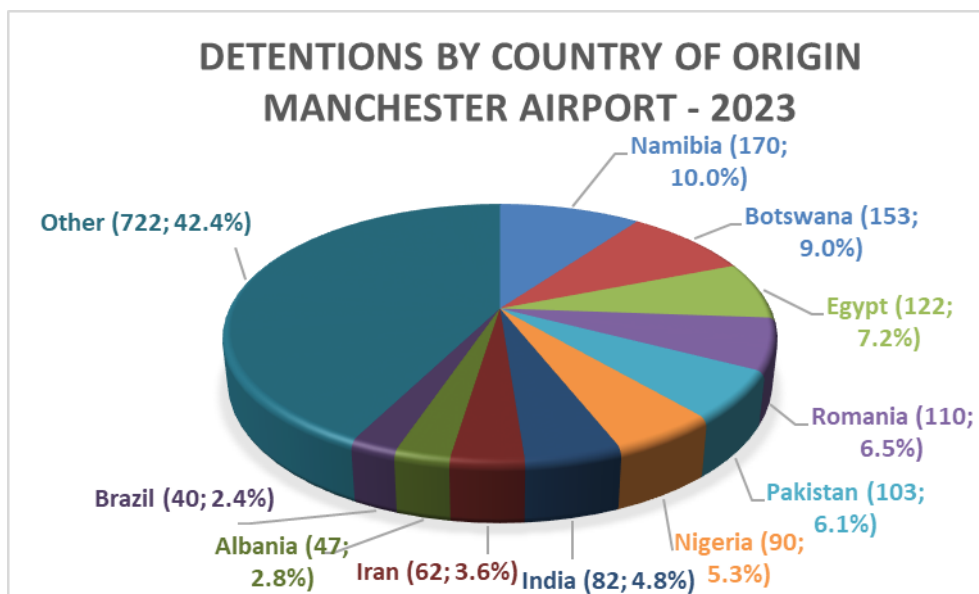
5.2.5.1 Occupancy

During 2023, 1701 people were detained at Manchester Airport - a decrease of 24 (1.4%) compared with 1725 in 2022.



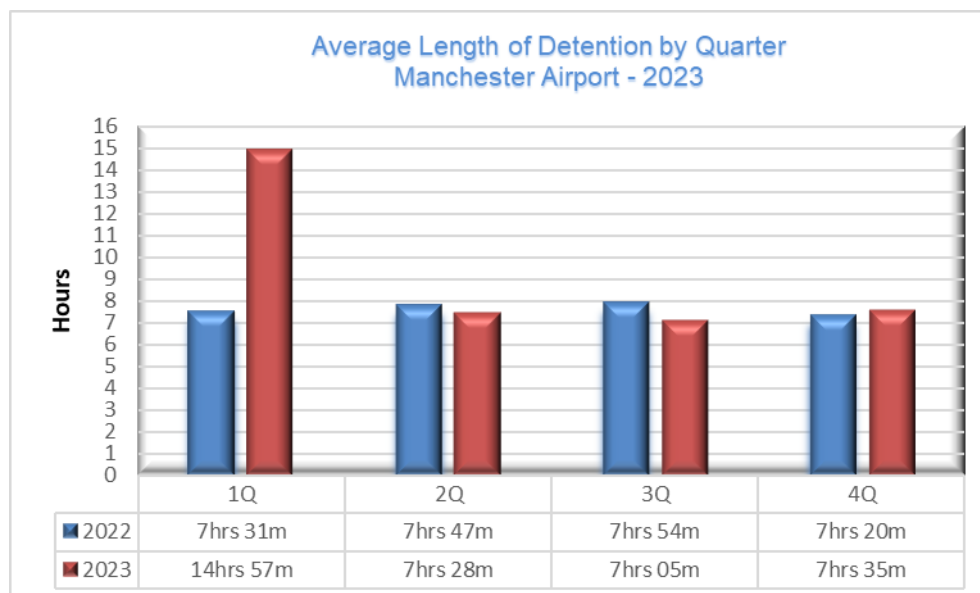
There were 203 minors detained in the holding rooms during 2023 - an increase of 20 (10.9%) compared with the figure of 183 in 2022.

The 1701 people detained came from 87 different countries, with the largest proportion coming from Namibia (170; 10.0%).

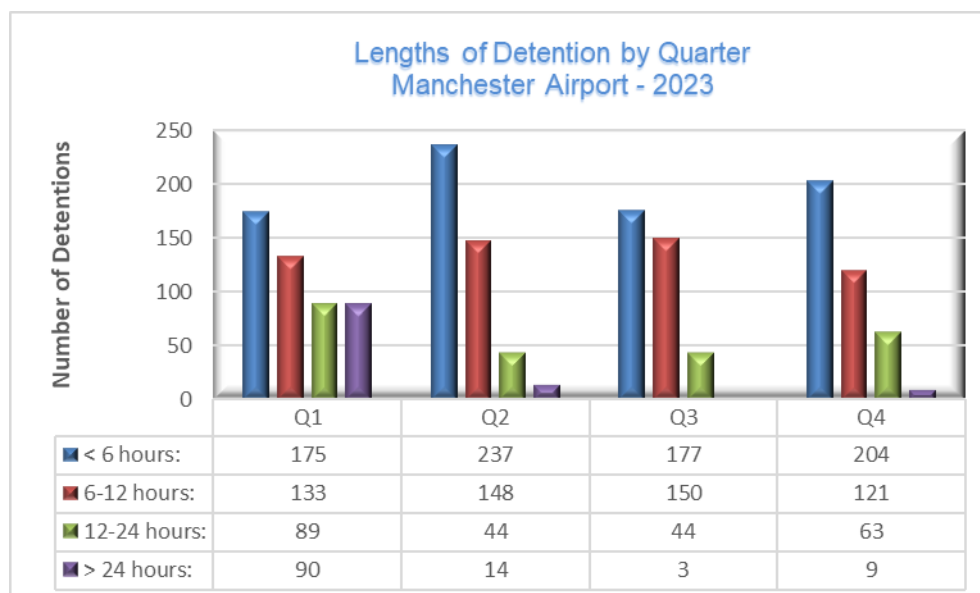


5.2.5.2 Lengths of detention

The average length of detention during 2023 was 9 hours 33 minutes, compared to 7 hours 38 minutes during 2022.



The lengths of detentions ranged from 0 hours 15 minutes to 4 days 13 hours 00 minutes.

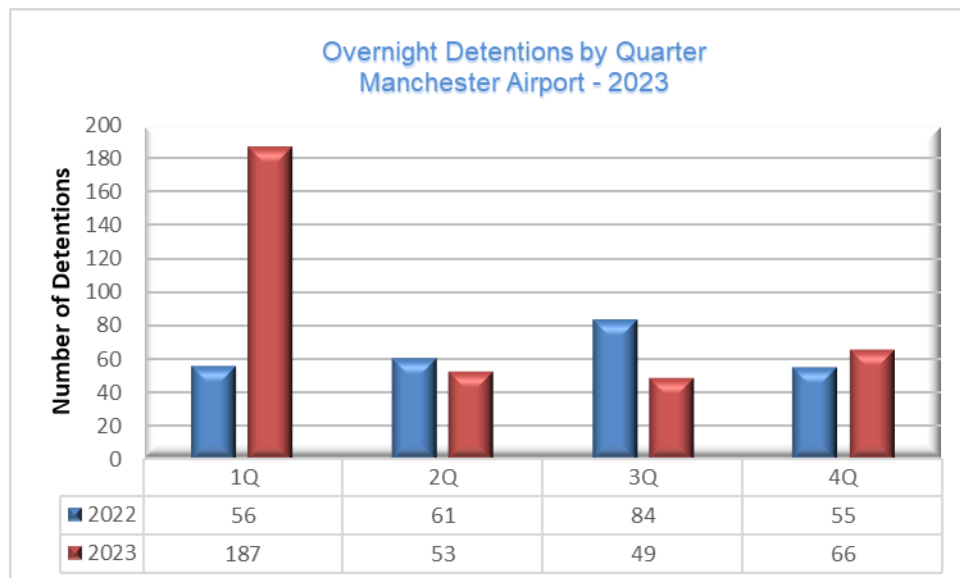


There were 356 (20.9%) detentions in excess of 12 hours during 2023, compared with 292 (16.9%) in 2022.

The number of detentions exceeding 24 hours during 2023 was 116 (6.8%) which included 2 minors for over 50 hours (a detailed response from BF as to the reasons was accepted by the board), compared with 31 (1.8%) in 2022.

5.2.5.3 Overnight detentions

Of the 1701 people detained during 2023, 355 (20.9%) were held in the holding rooms overnight (i.e: detained before midnight and held until 05:00am), compared with 256 (14.8%) during 2022.



5.2.5.4 Serious and reportable incidents

There were no serious or reportable incidents at Manchester Airport during 2023.

5.2.5.5 Number of visits

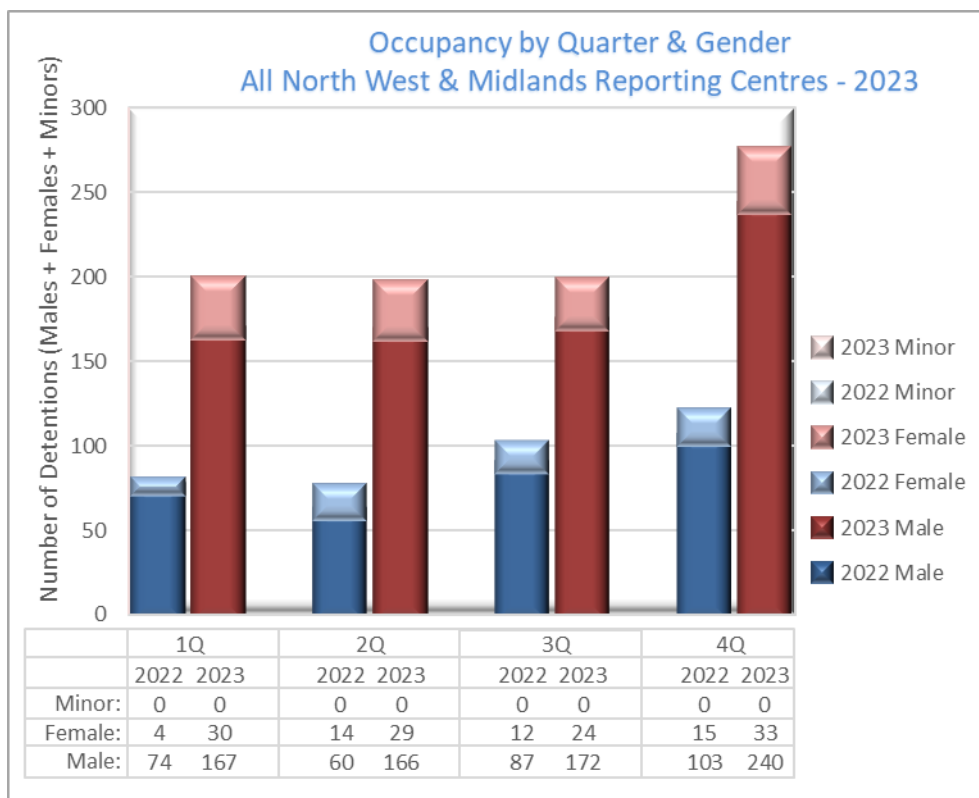
The Board aims to monitor the holding rooms at Manchester Airport on a weekly basis. The Board made 52 monitoring visits and calls to the holding rooms in Manchester Airport SEA during 2023.

5.3 Reporting centres

5.3.1 All reporting centres

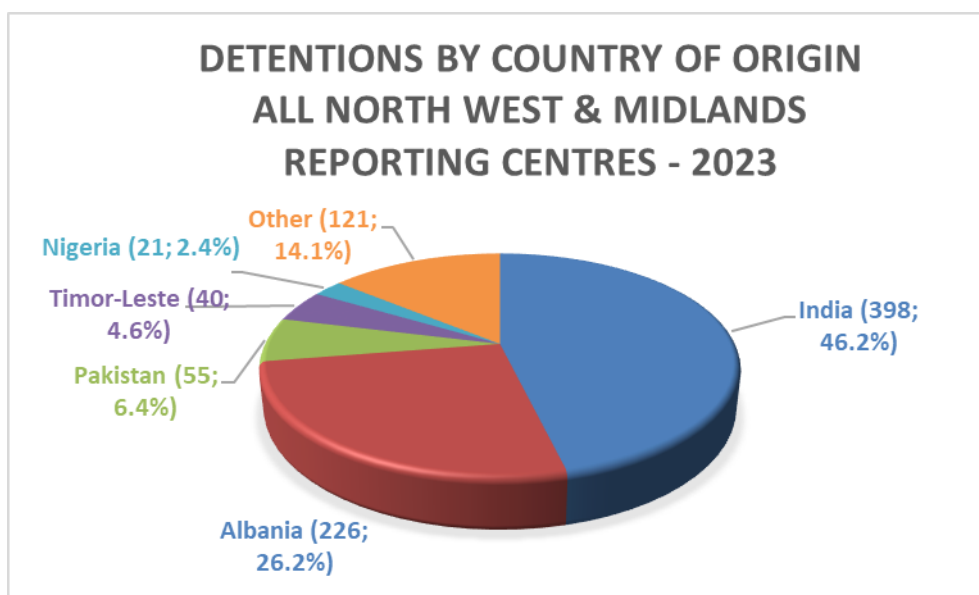
5.3.1.1 Occupancy

During 2023, 861 people were detained at All North West & Midlands Reporting Centres (i.e: Liverpool (Capital Building), Loughborough, Salford (Dallas Court) and Solihull (Sandford House)) - an increase of 492 (133.3%) compared with 369 in 2022.



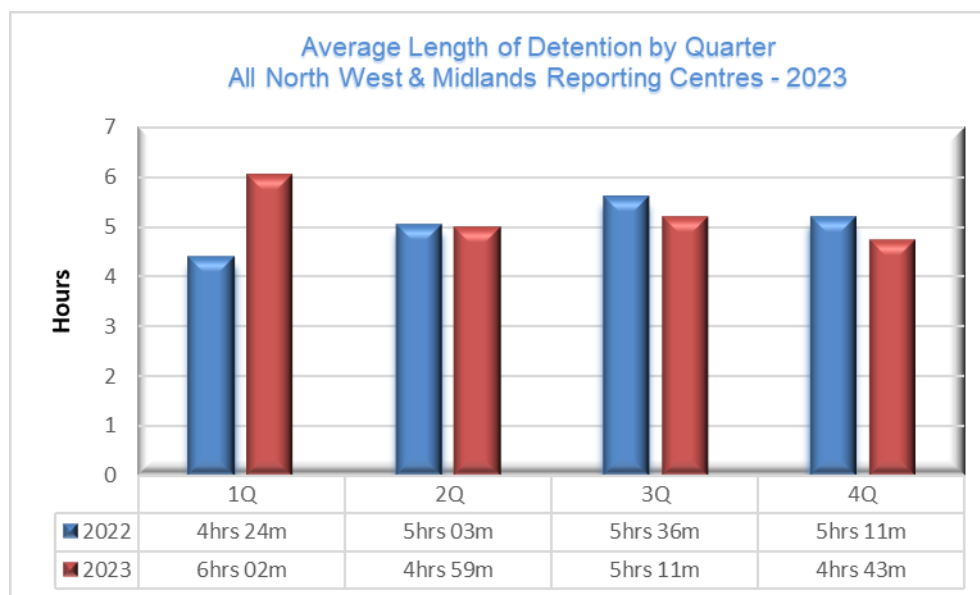
There were no minors detained in any of the Holding Rooms during 2023, as in 2022.

The 861 people detained came from 23 different countries, with the largest proportion coming from India (398; 46.2%).

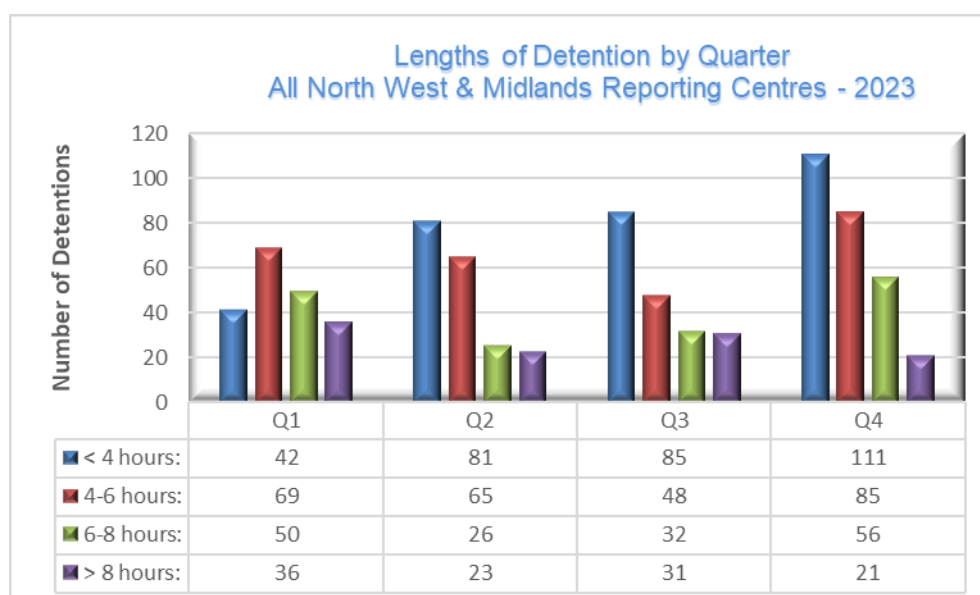


5.3.1.2 Lengths of detention

The average length of detention during 2023 was 5 hours 11 minutes, compared to 5 hours 06 minutes during 2022.



The lengths of detentions ranged from 0 hours 10 minutes to 14 hours 52 minutes.

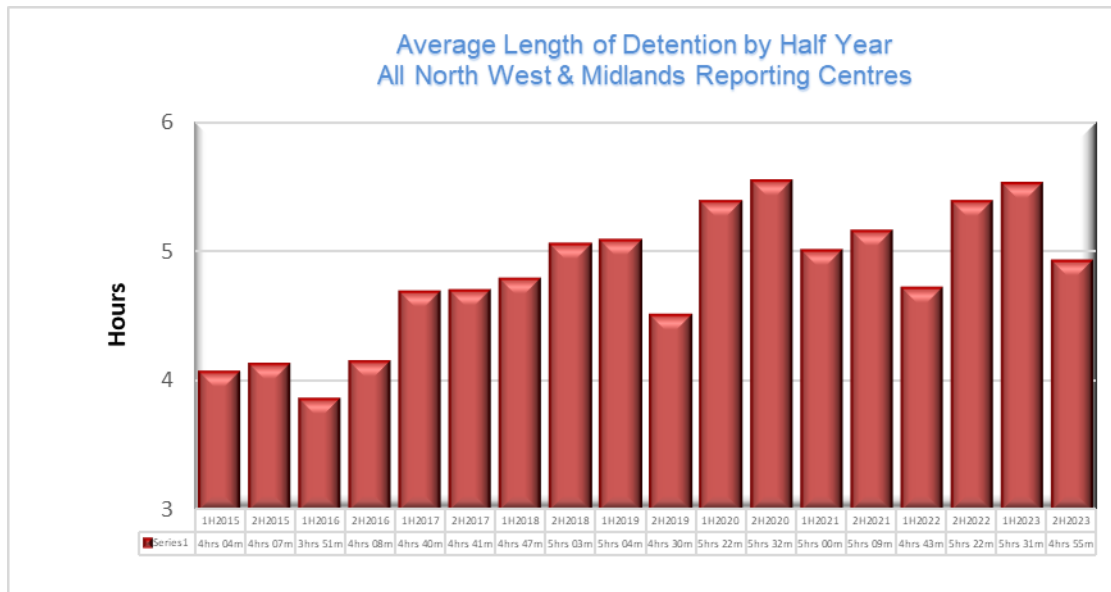


The number of detentions exceeding 6 hours during 2023 was 275 (31.9%), compared with 109 (29.5%) in 2022.

There were 111 (12.9%) detentions in excess of 8 hours during 2023, compared with 34 (9.2%) in 2022.

Of the 861 people detained during 2023, 212 (24.6%) were held in the holding rooms beyond the scheduled closing time, compared with 59 (16.0%) during 2022.

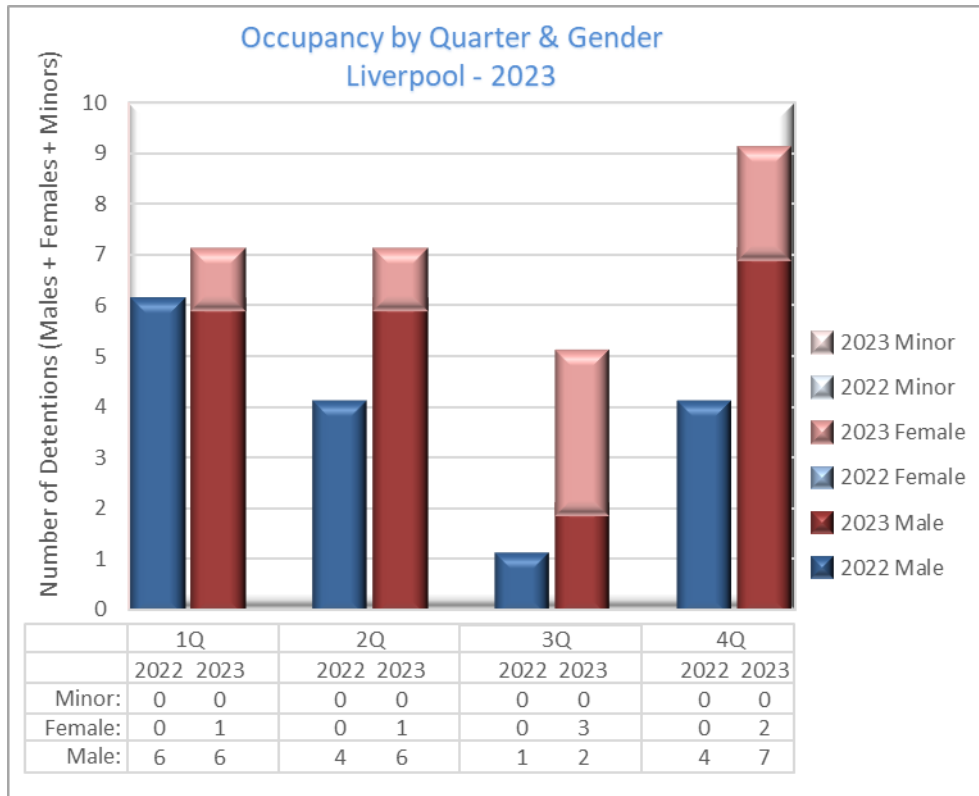
The following chart shows the average lengths of detention over the last nine years, from just over 3.5 hours in the first half of 2014 to over 5.5 hours in the first half of 2023, with a slight reduction to just under 5 hours in the second half of 2023.



5.3.2 Liverpool reporting centre – Capital Building

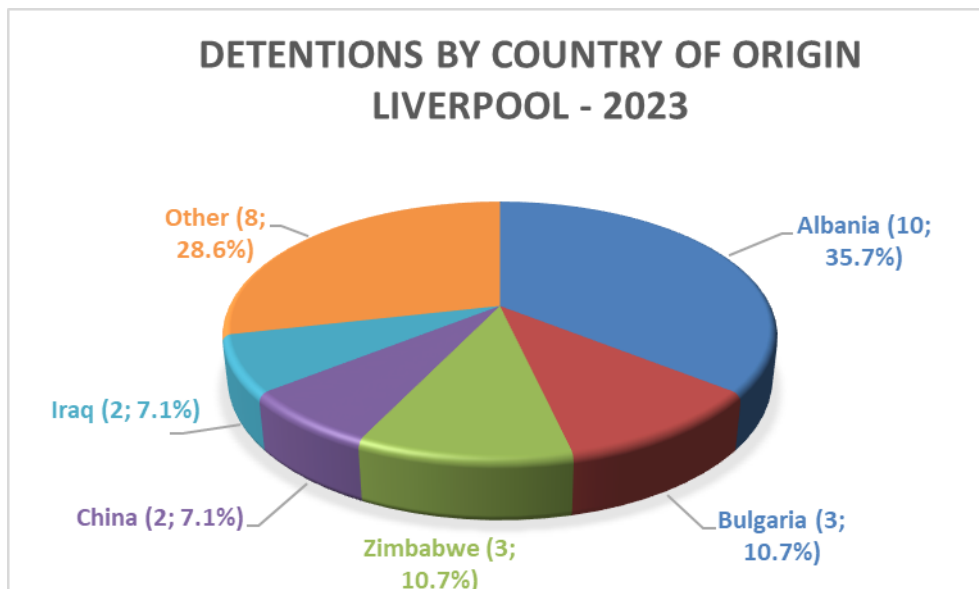
5.3.2.1 Occupancy

During 2023, 28 people were detained at Liverpool - an increase of 13 (86.7%) compared with 15 in 2022.



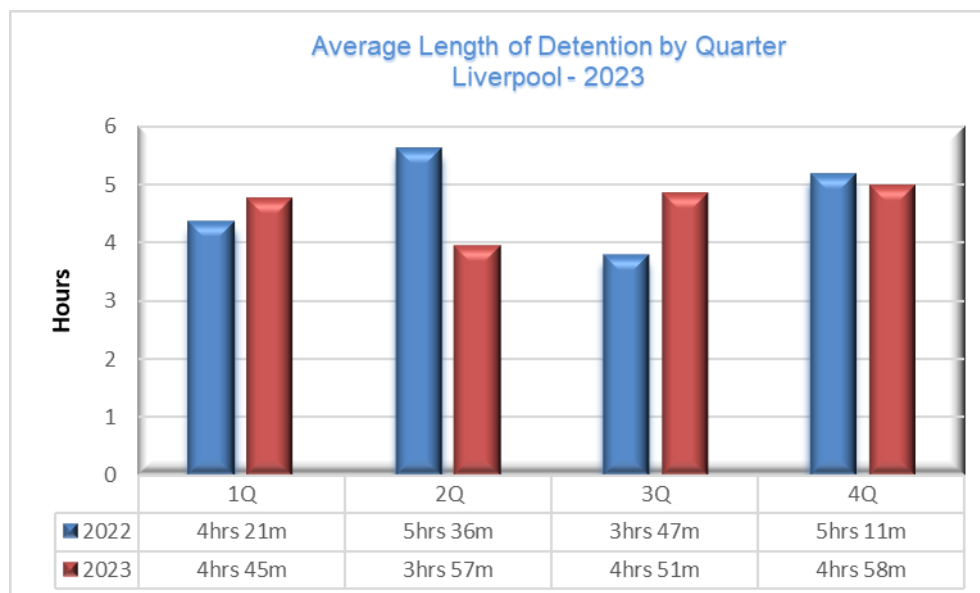
There were no minors detained at the Capital Building during 2023, as was the case in 2022.

The 28 people detained came from 14 different countries, with the largest proportion coming from Albania (10; 35.7%).

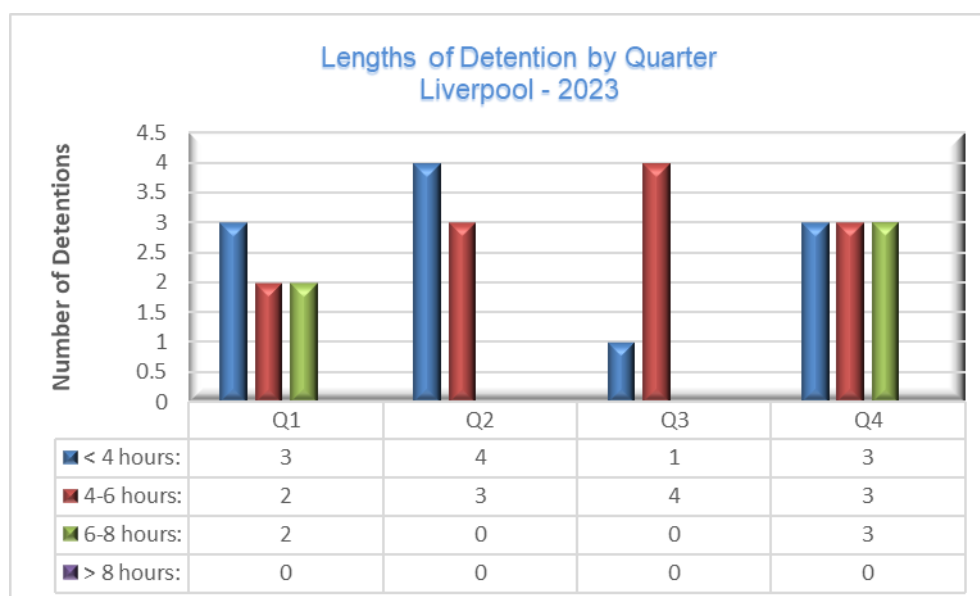


5.3.2.2 Lengths of detention

The average length of detention during 2023 was 4 hours 38 minutes, compared to 4 hours 52 minutes during 2022.



The lengths of detentions ranged from 2 hours 25 minutes to 7 hours 25 minutes.



The number of detentions exceeding 6 hours during 2023 was 5 (17.9%), compared with 4 (26.7%) in 2022.

There were no detentions in excess of 8 hours during 2023, as was the case in 2022.

Of the 28 people detained during 2023, 7 (25.0%) were held in the holding rooms beyond the scheduled closing time, compared with 4 (26.7%) during 2022.

5.3.2.3 Serious and reportable incidents

There have been no serious or reportable incidents at the Capital Building during 2023.

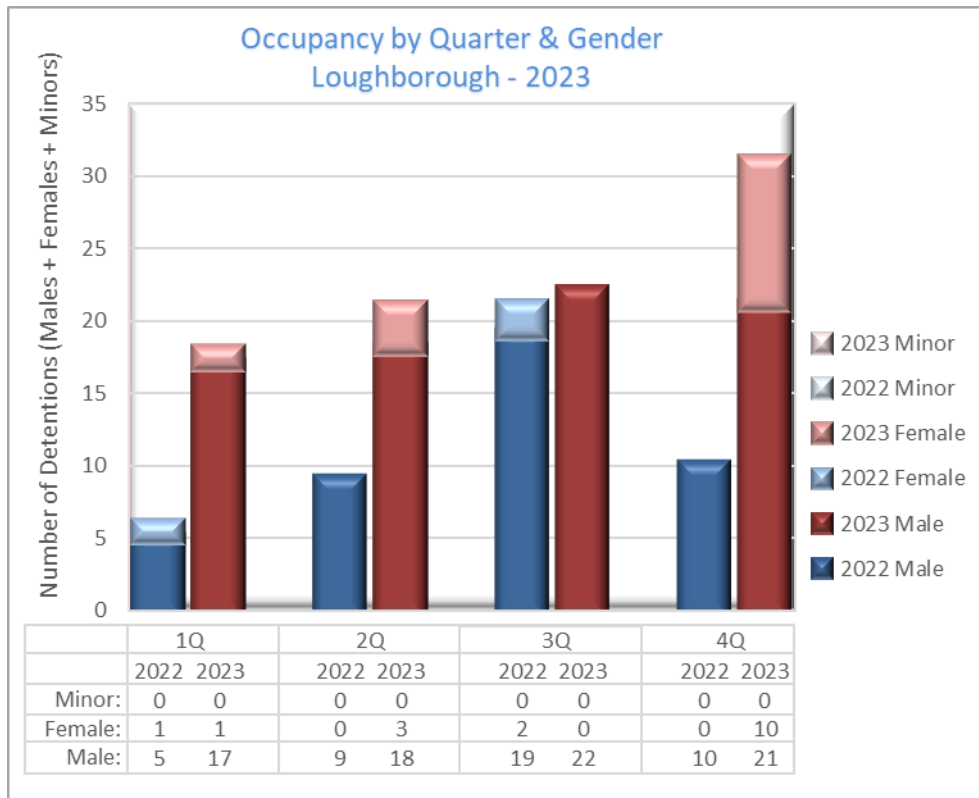
5.3.2.4 Number of visits

The Board aims to carry out fortnightly monitoring visits to the holding rooms in the Capital Building. During 2023, it made a total of 23 monitoring visits to the reporting centre.

5.3.3 Loughborough (East Midlands) reporting centre

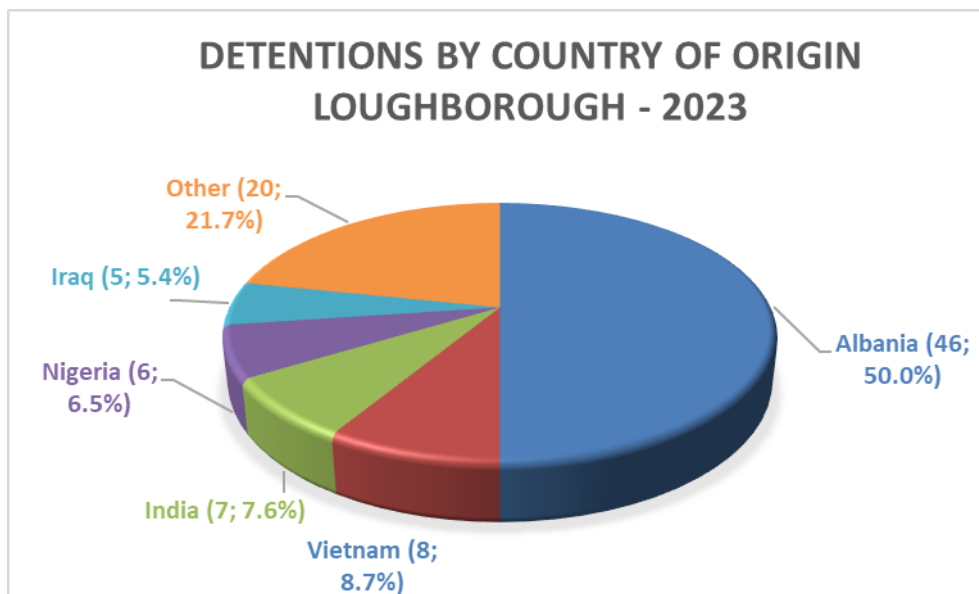
5.3.3.1 Occupancy

During 2023, 92 people were detained at Loughborough – a doubling of the numbers compared with 46 in 2022.



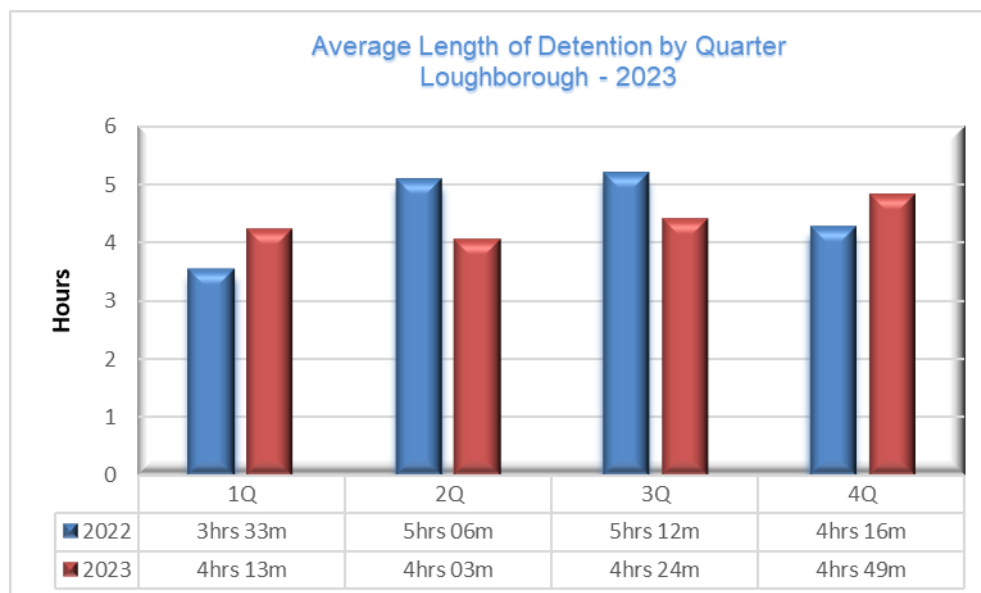
There were no minors detained in the holding rooms during 2023, as was the case in 2022.

The 92 people detained came from 15 different countries, with the largest proportion coming from Albania (46; 50.0%).

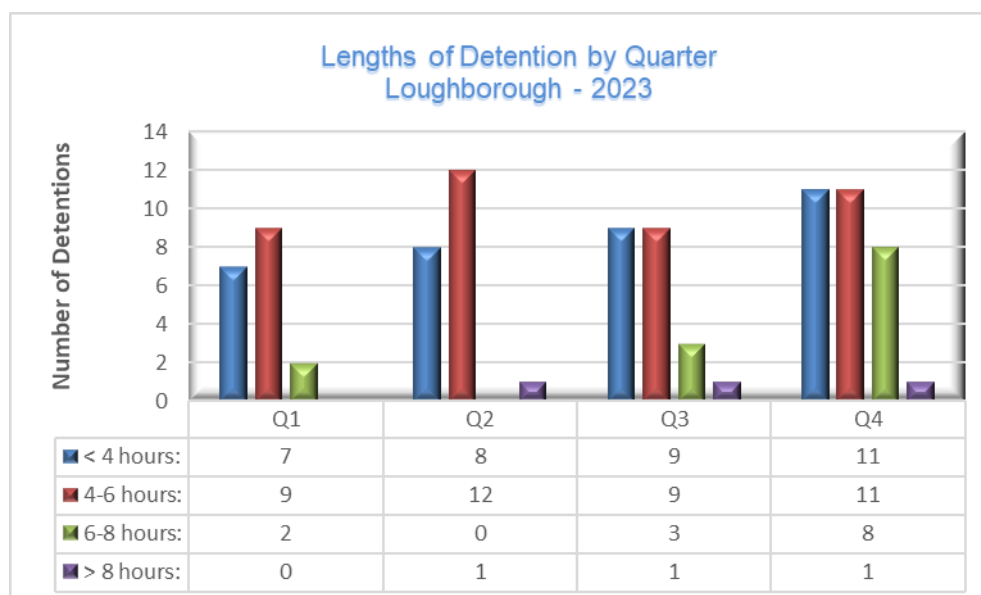


5.3.3.2 Lengths of detention

The average length of detention during 2023 was 4 hours 26 minutes, compared to 4 hours 46 minutes during 2022.



The lengths of detentions ranged from 0 hours 38 minutes to 8 hours 45 minutes.



The number of detentions exceeding 6 hours during 2023 was 16 (17.4%), compared with 8 (17.4%) in 2022.

There were 3 (3.3%) detentions in excess of 8 hours during 2023, compared with 2 (4.3%) in 2022.

Of the 92 people detained during 2023, 17 (18.5%) were held in the holding rooms beyond the scheduled closing time, compared with 10 (21.7%) during 2022.

5.3.3.3 Serious and reportable incidents

There have been no serious or reportable incidents at Loughborough during 2023.

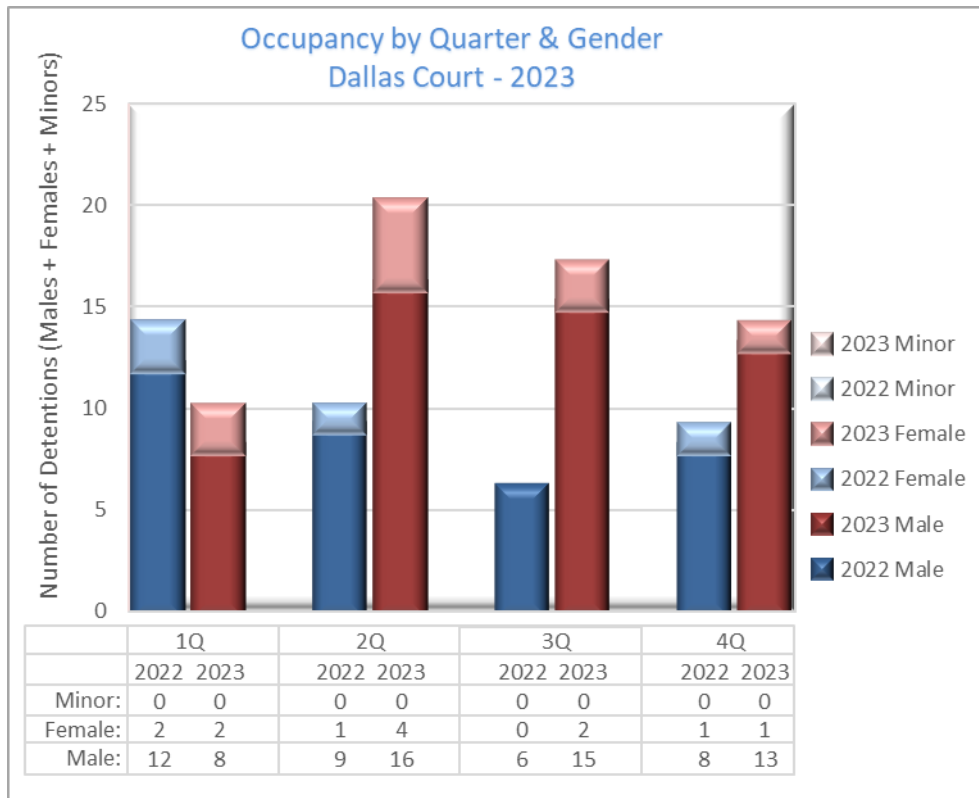
5.3.3.4 Number of visits

The Board aims to carry out fortnightly monitoring visits to the holding rooms in Loughborough. It made a total of 25 monitoring visits to the reporting centre in 2023.

5.3.4 Salford reporting centre – Dallas Court

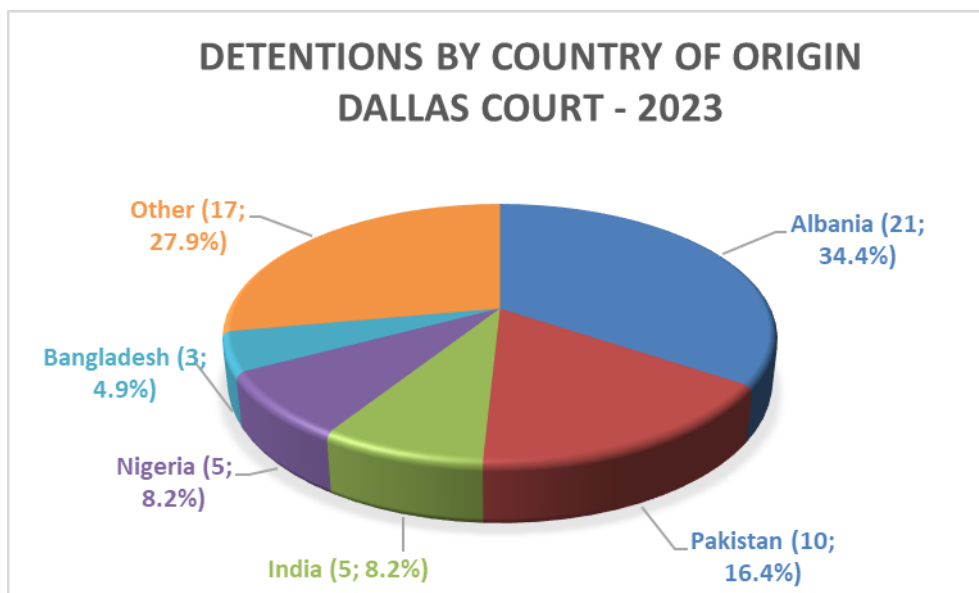
5.3.4.1 Occupancy

During 2023, 61 people were detained at Dallas Court - an increase of 22 (56.4%) compared with 39 in 2022.



There were no minors detained in the holding rooms during 2023, as was the case in 2022.

The 61 people detained came from 19 different countries, with the largest proportion coming from Albania (21; 34.4%).

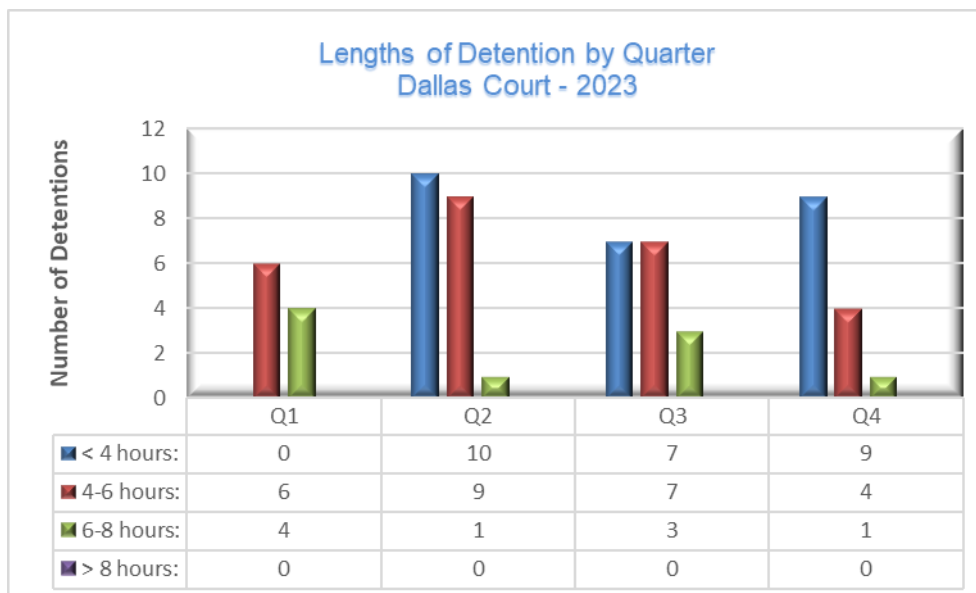


5.3.4.2 Lengths of detention

The average length of detention during 2023 was 4 hours 27 minutes, compared to 4 hours 06 minutes during 2022.



The lengths of detentions ranged from 1 hours 15 minutes to 6 hours 55 minutes.



The number of detentions exceeding 6 hours during 2023 was 9 (14.8%), compared with 4 (10.3%) in 2022.

There were no detentions in excess of 8 hours during 2023, as was the case in 2022.

Of the 61 people detained during 2023, 12 (19.7%) were held in the holding rooms beyond the scheduled closing time, compared with 4 (10.3%) during 2022.

5.3.4.3 Serious and reportable incidents

There have been no serious or reportable incidents at Dallas Court during 2023.

5.3.4.4 Number of visits

The Board aims to carry out fortnightly monitoring visits to the holding rooms in Dallas Court. It made a total of 20 monitoring visits and calls to the reporting centre in 2023.

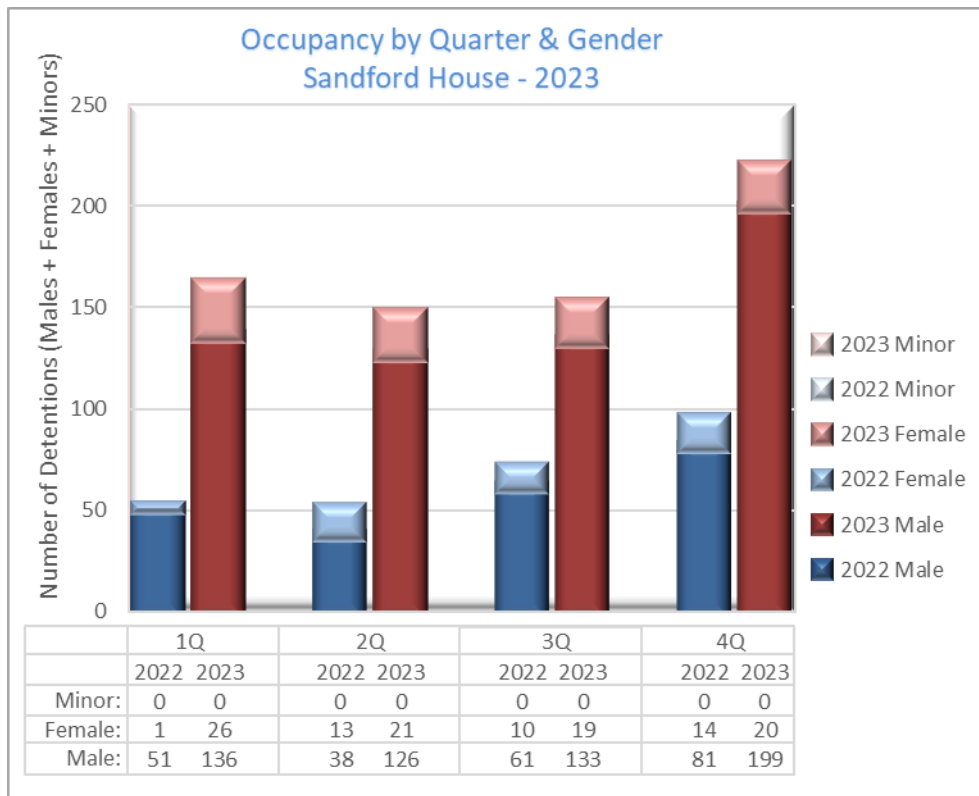
5.3.5 Solihull (West Midlands) reporting centre – Sandford House

5.3.5.1 Occupancy

During 2023, 680 people were detained at Sandford House - an increase of 411 (152.8%) compared with 269 in 2022.

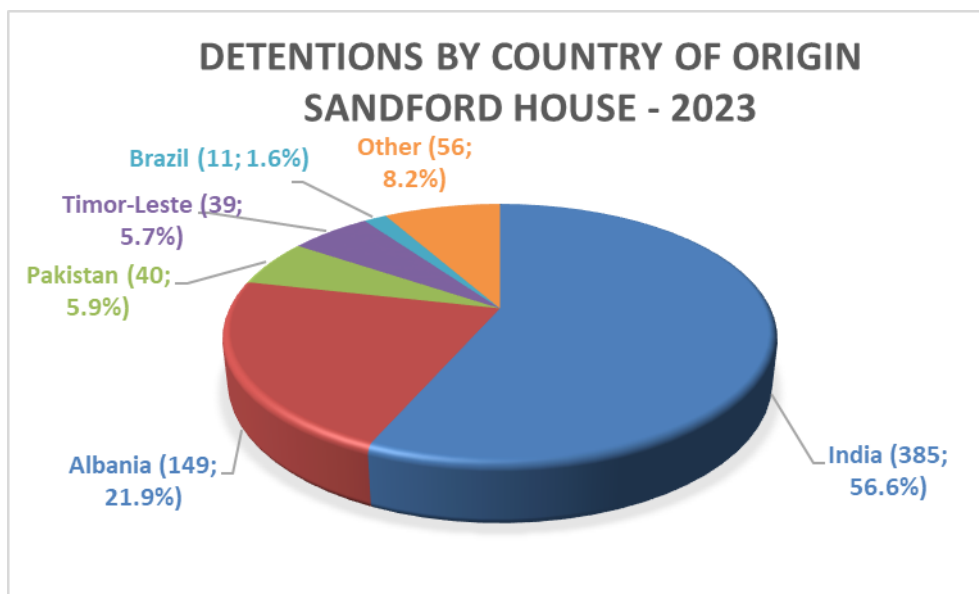
This figure includes 103 detentions in the holding rooms which were conducted solely by officers from Immigration Enforcement (IE), e.g: during evenings and weekends.

A further 98 of the detentions were initiated by IE officers prior to the scheduled opening time of the holding rooms, at which time the detained persons were passed into the jurisdiction of the DCOs when they commenced their shift.



There were no minors detained in the holding rooms during 2023, as was the case in 2022.

The 680 people detained came from 27 different countries, with the largest proportion coming from India (385; 56.6%).

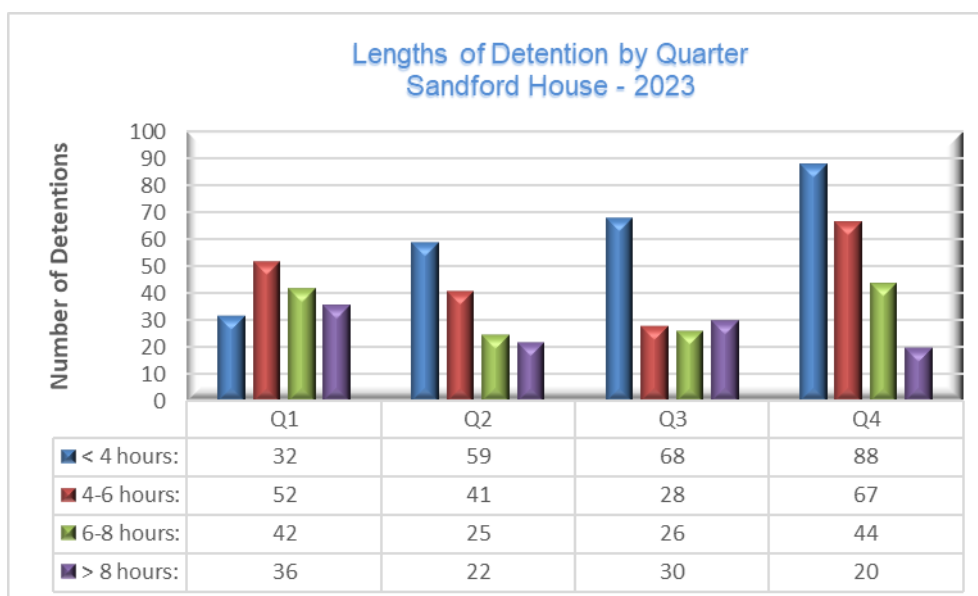


5.3.5.2 Lengths of detention

The average length of detention during 2023 was 5 hours 23 minutes, compared to 5 hours 19 minutes during 2022.



The lengths of detentions ranged from 0 hours 10 minutes to 14 hours 52 minutes.



The number of detentions exceeding 6 hours during 2023 was 245 (36.0%), compared with 93 (34.6%) in 2022.

There were 108 (15.9%) detentions in excess of 8 hours during 2023, compared with 32 (11.9%) in 2022.

Of the 680 people detained during 2023, 176 (25.9%) were held in the holding rooms beyond the scheduled closing time, compared with 41 (15.2%) during 2022.

5.3.5.3 Serious and reportable incidents

There have been no serious or reportable incidents at Sandford House during 2023.

5.3.5.4 Number of visits

The Board aims to carry out fortnightly monitoring visits to the holding rooms in Sandford House. It made a total of 28 monitoring visits to the reporting centre in 2023.

6. Health and wellbeing

The only facility within the remit of the Board that has a medical professional on duty full time is the Manchester RSTHF. All other facilities need to rely on services of the National Health (NHS) ambulance service if medical advice or treatment is needed. This is far from a satisfactory situation and can only add to the pressures on the ambulance service.

This has been the situation throughout the period of the report. Persons being detained are at constant risk if they do not have access to their prescribed medication. The Board is concerned by the lack of proper procedures which would allow Detention Custody Officers (DCOs) or other qualified personnel to provide detained individuals access to their prescribed medication. The Board note that the welfare of detained individuals has been adversely affected by this situation. This occurs particularly in holding rooms and reporting centres.

The Board were informed about an incident at Salford (Dallas Court) holding room from November 2023 – a detained person required his injection of insulin for diabetes. Staff could not administer it, an NHS ambulance was called, and the detained person was taken to the local A&E where staff refused to administer it on the detained person's behalf. He was allowed to administer it himself under their supervision.

7. Preparation for removal, transfer or release

Visit reports indicate that when detained individuals arrive or are being transferred to other facilities, their treatment has always been with dignity, consideration and professionalism. However, the Board are concerned that when detained people arrive or depart from Holyhead Port, there is no secure area for vehicles to park for the transfer of detained people to and from the facility. The main gate to the facility is only a few metres away from the edge of the dock, where there is potential for the public to see arrivals/departures of detained persons, and is only protected by a low rail that could easily be scaled with possible fatal consequences.

The Board also monitors Removals at Manchester and Birmingham Airports on an ad-hoc basis, but during 2023, no person was removed while a Board member has been present.

8. The work of the Independent Monitoring Board

8.1 Activities of the Board

- 2023 has seen a fairly successful recruitment for the Board. 5 new members were recruited to the Board during 2023, one of whom has subsequently resigned due to work commitments. 1 member transferred to the Board from the South & West STHF Board.
- The new appointments have provided for a more comprehensive coverage of monitoring in the Manchester area (i.e: Manchester RSTHF, Manchester Airport and Salford (Dallas Court) reporting centre), and also the commencement of regular monitoring visits to Holyhead port.
- All active members remain fully committed to their duties, to ensure that the care and welfare of detained individuals is adequately monitored, and are to be commended and thanked for their teamwork, and the support given to the Chair.

8.2 Board statistics

Recommended complement of Board members	12
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	4
Number of new members joining within the reporting period	6
Number of members leaving within reporting period	1
Number of members on long-term leave of absence	0
Number of active Board members at the end of the reporting period	9

8.3 Visits and phone calls made to STHFs

	Monitoring visits	Phone calls
Manchester Residential STHF (MAN 302)	51	2
Manchester Airport SEA	50	2
Birmingham Airport SEA	54	0
East Midlands Airport	26	0
Holyhead Port	14	9
Liverpool reporting centre – Capital Building	23	0
Loughborough (East Midlands) reporting centre	25	0
Salford reporting centre – Dallas Court	6	14
Solihull reporting centre – Sandford House	28	0
Total number of visits to the STHFs (<i>excludes Board and other meetings</i>)	277	27

8.4 Other attendances

Number of attendances at Board meetings (12 meetings held)	58
Number of claimable attendances at incidents	0
Number of attendances at meetings other than Board meetings and rota visits (for example, forums, secretariat and so forth)	6
Number of mentored visits	9

Note concerning the management information included in this report.

Data included in this report has been compiled from members' observations of holding room log sheets, maintained separately by both Mitie Care & Custody and UKBF, at those STHFs to which visits have been made. For the other sites, figures have been compiled from copies of holding room log sheets and other sources provided by Mitie Care & Custody.

Also, due to the cut-off dates on which the Mitie Care & Custody sheets are sent away to a central office, where they also undergo a data verification process, it is possible that the Board-collated figures may differ slightly from those supplied by Mitie Care & Custody to HOIE.

In addition, the Board monitors detentions and counts an overnight stay as one detention, whereas Mitie Care & Custody and/or HOIE systems monitor occupancy and may therefore count the same as two (or more) stays.

For and on behalf of the IMB North West & Midlands

Gill Tomlinson

Chair of the North West & Midlands IMB for short-term holding facilities

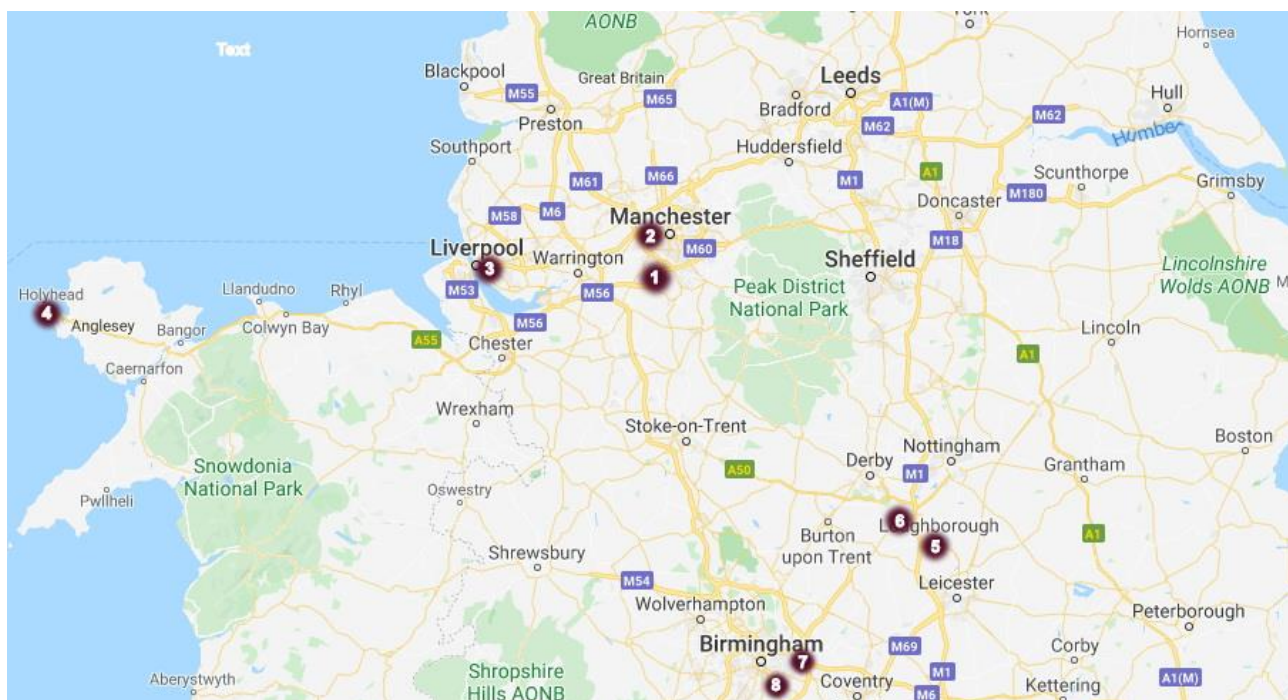
email: chair.north.midlands@imbnorthmidlands.cjsm.net

9. Glossary

GLOSSARY OF IMMIGRATION-RELATED ABBREVIATIONS USED

CAA	Civil Aviation Authority
CCTV	Closed-circuit television
CIO	Chief immigration officer
DCO	Detention custody officer
DCOM	Detention custody officer manager
DEPMU	Detainee escorting and population management unit
ECMT	Escorting contract monitoring team
FNO	Foreign National Offender
HEO	Higher executive officer
HOIE	Home Office Immigration Enforcement
IDE	Immigration detention estate
IMB	Independent Monitoring Board
IRC	Immigration removal centre
MAN 302	Manchester Residential STHF, Building 302, Manchester Airport
NPM	National Preventive Mechanism
OPCAT	Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment
RSTHF	Residential short-term holding facility
SEA	Secondary examination area (at airports)
STHF	Short-term holding facility
UKBF	United Kingdom Border Force

10. Locations monitored by the North West & Midlands STHF IMB



Scale: 25 miles 50 km

1. Manchester RSTHF
and
Manchester Airport
2. Dallas Court, Salford
3. Capital Building, Liverpool
4. Holyhead Port
5. Loughborough
6. East Midlands Airport
7. Birmingham Airport
8. Sandford House, Solihull



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