

13 February 2024

Reference: FOI 533 Freedom of Information Request

Thank you for your emails, which we received on 24 January 2024 and 12 February 2024. Your request has been handled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

You asked us:

To provide information showing complaints from individuals detained under immigration powers that relate to overheating at immigration removal centres received by the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman (PPO) between 2004 and 2023, including:

- A monthly breakdown of when each complaint was made.
- The site at which the individual making the complaint was detained.
- Details of the cause of each complaint, such as the impact of infrastructure (e.g. broken radiators, old heating systems).
- Which of the complaints were eligible for investigation and which were upheld by the PPO.

To provide information showing any deaths and/or health problems for individuals detained under immigration powers that were linked with overheating at immigration removal centres in the same period, including:

- The month and year in which the death occurred.
- The location of the death.
- The circumstances that led to overheating.

Our response:

Following a search of our records, the information you requested is not held by us.

The PPO began investigating complaints from and deaths of individuals detained under immigration powers or those held at immigration removal centres from 2006 onwards. We have searched our records for complaints received from immigration removal centres from 2006 onwards and found that none related to overheating. However, due to migrating to a new case management system in 2019, it is possible that not all cases have been identified.

We suggest you contact the Home Office, as they may be able to provide this data, and their details are as follows:

Direct Communications Unit
2 Marsham Street
London

SW1P 4DF
United Kingdom

Alternatively, their email address is foirequests@homeoffice.gov.uk

You have the right to appeal against our response if you think it is incorrect. Details can be found in the 'How to Appeal' section attached at the end of this letter.

We may use or share your data only to the necessary extent when conducting our independent investigations in the exercise of our official authority. We will share your data with third parties (e.g. the prison) in order to make sure the information is accurate; to prevent or detect failings; and to identify lessons learnt. We may sometimes need to share your data with third parties if required by law. We only keep your personal data for as long as it is needed, as set out in our data retention policy. If you need any further information about how your data is used, please contact us.

The Prisons and Probation Ombudsman (PPO) carries out **independent investigations** into complaints and deaths in custody. The detailed role and responsibilities of the PPO are set out in our office's Terms of Reference. The PPO has three main duties:

- to **investigate complaints** made by prisoners, young people in detention (prisons and secure training centres), offenders under probation supervision and individuals detained under immigration powers (detained individuals)
- to **investigate deaths** of prisoners, young people in detention, approved premises' residents and detained individuals due to any cause, including any apparent suicides and natural causes
- to **investigate deaths** of **recently released prisoners** that occur within 14 days of release from prison (except homicide)

The purpose of these investigations is **to understand what happened, to correct injustices** and **to identify learning** for the organisations whose actions we oversee so that the PPO makes a significant contribution to safer, fairer custody and offender supervision.

How to Appeal

Internal Review

If you are not satisfied with this response, you have the right to an internal review. The handling of your request will be looked at by someone who was not responsible for the original case, and they will make a decision as to whether we answered your request correctly.

If you would like to request a review, please write or send an email to the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman's office **within two months of the date of this letter**, at the following address:

Prisons and Probation Ombudsman
Third Floor
10 South Colonnade
Canary Wharf
London
E14 4PU
E-mail: Mail@ppo.gov.uk

Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)

If you remain dissatisfied after an internal review decision, you have the right to apply to the Information Commissioner's Office. The Commissioner is an independent regulator who has the power to direct us to respond to your request differently, if he considers that we have handled it incorrectly.

You can contact the ICO at the following address:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Internet address: <https://ico.org.uk/>