

ACTION PLAN – Report on an inspection visit to court custody facilities

CLUSTER: Lancashire and Cumbria

TIMETABLE	DATE
Date of inspection	July/Aug 2022
Report published	19 October 2022
Action plan submitted	11 January 2023

Rec. no	Concern	Accepted / Rejected	Response / action taken or planned	Action owner	Update / target date for completion
	Priority Concerns				
1	Where custody facilities did not have secure vehicle bays, detainees alighted in public areas or areas that could be overlooked, which was undignified and embarrassing.	Accept	<p>GeoAmey will endeavour where possible, to use smaller vehicles at some sites that could reduce detainees being overlooked by the public.</p> <p>HMCTS will further review where privacy is an issue whether there are any suitable adaptations based on solutions provided elsewhere nationally which could be considered where it is safe and proportionate to do so.</p>	<p>GeoAmey</p> <p>HMCTS</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>30.06.2023</p>
2	Some custody facilities, particularly in Lancashire, were not sufficiently clean, safe, or well-maintained.	Accept	<p>The custody facilities will be cleaned to the British Institute of Cleaning Science (BICS) standards and will be maintained by daily cell inspections and the use of the cleaning schedules.</p> <p>HMCTS will ensure the custody facilities are clean, safe, and always well maintained. All defects will be</p>	HMCTS/GeoAmey	<p>On going</p> <p>Ongoing, will be monitored</p>

			<p>logged with EQUANS helpdesk by HMCTS staff and escalate if necessary before it becomes an issue. Also, the introduction of the "Communications Book" will assist with the improvement of communications between the cleaning supplier (EQUANS), GeoAmey and HMCTS staff.</p> <p>GeoAmey will ensure all court custody managers are briefed to ensure the need for timely reporting of defects.</p> <p>Progress against each issue can be monitored by both stakeholders at weekly and monthly meetings between supplier and HMCTS Managers.</p>	<p>GeoAmey</p> <p>HMCTS/GeoAmey</p>	<p>31.01.2023</p> <p>31.01.2023</p>
3	Serving prisoners who had been released by the court, and who were subject to a prison governor's authority (see Glossary) to release, often had long waits in cells before they were allowed to leave custody.	Accept	<p>GEOAmey monitor monthly data to identify HMPPS sites that are not releasing within the one-hour time frame. The data will be taken to the operational meetings between HMPPS, PECS & GEOAmey to drive performance and influence change.</p> <p>PECS will escalate to Prison Group Directors Offices if establishments fail to authorise release within the specific timescale.</p> <p>PECS participate in MOJ Cross working groups focusing on release in error and unlawful detention.</p> <p>Whilst the MOJ consider the feasibility of new initiatives PECS</p>	<p>GeoAmey/PECS</p> <p>PECS</p>	<p>31.03.2023</p> <p>31.03.2023</p>

			<p>are working with HMPPS to review release procedures to ensure that these are completed in a timely manner whilst ensuring all appropriate release checks and public protection measures are completed. Recognising the timeframe for a decision is proportionate to risk and often reliant on additional partner agencies PECS have committed to review the escalation for PECS suppliers.</p> <p>HMCTS will ensure that staff follow the Resulting Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) which require notifications and documents to be produced within 60 minutes of the case being dealt with. This is done as part of HMCTS assurance and governance control procedural checks.</p> <p>The roll out of Common Platform will assist with data sharing between the court and Stakeholders. The Prison will have access and will be able to get the information in real time as soon as the case is completed.</p>	HMCTS	31.03.2023
	Key Concerns				
4	There was not always an effective shared strategic focus on the provision of court custody. HMCTS, PECS and GEOAmey were not always properly sighted on	Accept	<p>GeoAmey and HMCTS to improve communication links to ensure any faults/failures to the fabric of the custody suite are expedited and addressed.</p> <p>HMCTS and GeoAmey to discuss and share information daily at their morning briefing to identify</p>	<p>GeoAmey</p> <p>HMCTS/GeoAmey</p>	<p>31.03.2023</p> <p>31.03.2023</p>

	areas where treatment of and conditions for detainees needed to be better.		<p>individuals who should be dealt with as a priority.</p> <p>Quarterly stakeholder meetings are in place to discuss the treatment and conditions of detainees. With the use of supporting data from GeoAmey, a specific agenda item will be added to the meeting in relation to any court custody suites that regularly experience delays with listings, hearings, and collection times.</p> <p>HMCTS & GeoAmey at their monthly meetings will discuss and review outcome from check & test reviews and agree mitigations to address any issues. Issues that cannot easily be resolved will be escalated to the quarterly stakeholders' meetings where necessary.</p> <p>HMCTS and GeoAmey to ensure working together and effective communication in place to sufficiently focus on outcomes for detainees, such as making sure they are dealt with promptly or as a priority.</p>	<p>HMCTS</p> <p>HMCTS/GeoAmey</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>31.01.2013</p> <p>31.03.2023</p>
5	Accurate data concerning the treatment of detainees was not collated or used to	Accept	GeoAmey HSQE department has amended its procedures and now captures data on prisoner incidents to improve its audit and data requests process.	<p>GeoAmey</p> <p>GeoAmey</p>	<p>31.01.2023</p> <p>Completed (ISO 9001)</p>

	inform organisational learning or to improve outcomes.		<p>GeoAmey newly formed compliance and auditing department aims to improve the consistency of data across its business and striving to obtain ISO 9001 accreditation (data is consistent across the business).</p> <p>The improved data set will be submitted and reviewed at key contract management boards and stakeholders' meetings.</p>	HMCTS/PECS/ GeoAmey	31.03.2023
6	Women and children continued to be transported in the same vehicles as men, particularly when collected from police stations.	Partially Accept	<p>GEOAmey will endeavour where possible to deliver this requirement, however the PECS Generation 4 contract and vehicle specification allow this to occur when collecting from Police custody with the use of a separation screen / panel.</p> <p>PECS monitor compliance for children being escorted separately from Secure Training Centres, Secure Children's Homes and YOI establishments.</p> <p>GEOAmey complete monthly assurance checks including CCTV checks.</p>	<p>PECS</p> <p>PECS</p> <p>GeoAmey</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p>
7	Training and ongoing development activity to help custody staff to identify and meet diverse needs was weak.	Accept	GEOAmey learning and development and training departments in the process of developing a diversity training package.	GeoAmey	30.06.2023

8	Preston Crown Court housed the only designated court custody facility across Lancashire and Cumbria for detainees with impaired mobility.	Accept	<p>Funding has been granted for a new build courthouse in Blackpool which will double the current provision for detainees with mobility issues across Cumbria and Lancashire. This is proposed to open in 2025/2026.</p> <p>In the meantime, other options (such as the use of CVP) are explored for each case between HMCTS, PECS and the local constabularies.</p>	HMCTS	31.03.2023
9	Telephone interpretation services were not always used when necessary and some custody facilities had no access to the service.	Accept	<p>Focus is being driven by local GeoAmey managers to ensure the services are being used when / where necessary. A localised spreadsheet has been developed to track big word usage to inform change</p> <p>GeoAmey monthly SCCM court visits are utilised to further communicated the importance and process for using the Big Word services.</p>	GeoAmey	31.01.2023
			<p>Management Information relating to telephone interpreter services is provided by the PECS performance team. This data is reviewed and monitored at contract management boards. PECS will engage with "The Big Word" to improve data quality.</p>	PECS	31/01/2023
			<p>GeoAmey to escalate to HMCTS where telephone provision is not in place.</p>	GeoAmey	31.03.2023

			HMCTS to liaise with Regional IT to identify if there is infrastructure in the Mediatrix Box to enable ports and proceed to procure equipment from the IT Catalogue. If no Ports are available, Regional IT to escalate and get approval for BT to attend site and address the issue.	HMCTS	31.03.2023
10	Custody staff did not always complete an initial assessment with detainees to explore risks or welfare issues.	Accept	Individual risk assessments should always be carried out to manage detainees safely. GeoAmey acknowledge that reception interviews, handcuffing and Cell Share Risk Assessment (CSRA) should be completed to suit individual needs & characteristics. GEOAmey managers do attend each court custody suite monthly and complete management checks.	GeoAmey	
11	A range of factors led to some detainees being held in court custody for longer than necessary.	Accept	<p>GEOAmey will provide key delay data identifying arrivals to court, to first dock appearance to departure. This data will be shared with members of the quarterly Stakeholders meetings.</p> <p>HMCTS will continue to work and share information, such as listings, prioritising and any late notes from Police, with GeoAmey at the daily morning phone conference calls.</p>	<p>GeoAmey/PECS</p> <p>HMCTS</p>	<p>31.03.2023</p> <p>31.03.2023</p>
12	Only a very limited supply of reading materials and other	Accept	GeoAmey's Safeguarding team are reviewing the contents of the distraction packs to include reading materials.	GeoAmey	30.03.2023

	distraction activities, such as puzzles and word searches, were readily available.				
13	Care for children was not always good enough. (Non-preplanned moves)	Accept	<p>When collecting from Police custody suites, GeoAmey will endeavour to collect children & young people with appropriately trained staff. When a Young Person arrives at any court location without an ECO/DBO, GeoAmey will request deployment of suitable trained staff as a matter of urgency.</p> <p>In September 2022 GeoAmey conducted a briefing across England and Wales to give a specific instruction on the process to follow.</p> <p>PECS monitor performance relating to non-pre-planned moves from police stations to identify trends. PECS monitor performance relating to non-pre-planned moved from police stations to identify trends.</p>	<p>GeoAmey</p> <p>PECS</p>	<p>Completed- September 2022</p> <p>Completed- September 2022</p>
14	Custody staff completed first-aid training only every three years, which was not sufficient to maintain a level of confidence and competence.	Reject	GEOAmey are delivering to their regulatory requirements, that is mandatory with the governing body. This consists of a 3-year training programme.	GEOAmey	Completed 05/12/2022
15	Automated external defibrillators were not	Accept	HMCTS is in the process of reviewing the custody suites within the Region to identify any sites that	HMCTS	31.03.2023

	readily available in custody in the event of a cardiac arrest.		are not currently compliant with Policy and proceed to procure AED where required.		
	Outstanding recommendations from previous inspection				
16	Instances when detainees are brought to court in the morning but are not listed to stand trial until the afternoon should be monitored and the source of such delays resolved.	Accept	<p>Prisoner Escort & Custody Services Supplier (GEOAmey) will provide data detailing custody time of arrival in the Court Custody suite to 1st dock appearance and final dock appearance to departure. The data will be shared with all members of the regional stakeholder boards to review custodies impacted by long delays.</p> <p>This collaborative review will enable agreed actions to resolve delays from root cause, where possible. This process will initially focus on the vulnerable cohorts, Children & Young People and Women with the final aspect incorporating adult males. (As per action 4)</p> <p>HMCTS to monitor data with PECS and discuss possible solutions</p>	PECS/HMCTS	31.03.2023
17	Hearing loops and Braille versions of key information for detainees should be available.	Accept	Hearing Loop: HMCTS to review and identify sites that do not have a system in place and proceed to procure where required.	<p>HMCTS</p> <p>GeoAmey/PECS</p>	<p>31.03.2023</p> <p>28.02.2023</p>

			GEOAmey to procure Braille versions of information and make available.		
18	Mattresses, and blankets or warm clothing should be made available at all courts.	Reject	Rejected due to the limited length of time detainees are in the cells (no detainees kept overnight), self-harm risks identified by GEOAmey/PECS with provision of such items.	PECS/GeoAmey	Completed

Recommendations	
Accepted	14
Accepted Subject to Resources/Partially Accepted	2
Rejected	2
Total	18