



Lynn Emslie
Chair of IAPDC
7th floor
102 Petty France
London
SW1H 9AJ

12 December 2024

Dear Lynn,

Thank you for your letter of 29 July about the work of the Independent Advisory Panel on Deaths in Custody (IAPDC) in which you raise concerns about the needs of vulnerable individuals detained in immigration removal centres (IRCs) and preventing future deaths in detention. I apologise for the delay in responding.

We are committed to safeguarding individuals in detention. This is an important issue and I share your commitment to ensuring that IRCs are a safe environment for all residents.

I am aware that Frances Hardy, the Deputy Director of Detention Services wrote to you on 21 November 2024 to set out the progress made with regards to the consideration and implementation of improvements as a result of Brook House Inquiry (BHI) recommendations and continues to meet monthly to consider and monitor delivery of the Inquiry's recommendations, providing oversight and overarching governance to monitor Inquiry recommendations. 30 out of the 33 recommendations made have been accepted or partially accepted, with 12 recommendations met and closed as of October 2024. The remaining recommendations remain on track for closure by summer 2025.

We remain committed to progressing the remaining accepted BHI recommendations. This includes a review of the Adults at Risk policy, which is currently ongoing. The scope of the review includes Detention Centre Rules 34 and 35 and has also recently been expanded to include the Statutory Instrument laid in April 2024. The Assessment Care in Detention and Teamwork (ACDT) Detention Services Order is also under review, with learning from the BHI, inspectorate and Independent Monitoring Board reports and the department's lessons learned reviews, being included in the new operational guidance.

My officials are also continuing to progress wider work to learn from deaths and near-miss events, including from the sad deaths of Mr Ospina and Mr Dosku last year. Amongst other positive changes to safeguard vulnerable people in detention, these lessons learned reviews have resulted in new guidance for staff on quality observations for those being managed by ACDT and guidance on the possession of personal items for those at high risk of self-harm or suicide.

A further lessons learned review is being scheduled following the death of Mr Kaliviotis at Brook House in October 2024 and I understand that representatives from the IAPDC will be invited to engage in this session. Data on near-miss events is also being reviewed on a monthly basis as a means to identify trends or further areas for learning.

Our learning from the data has led to some recent positive work such as new guidance on the management of razor blades and an initiative to assess (and where appropriate, replace) existing TV fixtures which may be used as ligature anchor points, across the detention estate.

I am confident that the Minister for Policing, Fire and Crime Prevention, Dame Diana Johnson, provides sufficiently strong and decisive ministerial representation for the Home Office at the Ministerial Board on Deaths in Custody. We work closely to ensure immigration detention matters are incorporated into discussions regarding the reduction of deaths in custodial settings. My officials will continue to work collaboratively with Home Office colleagues in the Public Safety Group to ensure that Minister Johnson is fully informed about key issues and updates in the immigration detention estate ahead of each Board.

I am grateful to you and other members of the panel for your work to prevent deaths in detention. Due to diary pressures, I am currently unable to schedule a meeting, however, I look forward to meeting you in due course and to working in collaboration with the IAPDC to address emerging issues and build on key themes to prevent further deaths in or following immigration detention.

You are welcome to contact my office at any time if you have an urgent issue you would like to raise.

Thank you again for taking the time to write.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Angela Eagle".

Dame Angela Eagle DBE MP
Minister for Border Security & Asylum