

SPSO decision report

Case: 201205062, Scottish Prison Service
Sector: scottish government and devolved administration
Subject: personal property
Outcome: upheld, recommendations

Summary

Mr C, who is a prisoner, complained that the prison would only allow him to purchase a Playstation 2 instead of a Xbox games console. The prison advised Mr C that Xboxes were not allowed as they can be modified for internet provision, which was a security risk. Mr C said that the prison were acting unreasonably because, to enable internet connectivity, a phone line, modem router and high speed broadband would all have to be installed in the cell.

Our investigation found that although prison governors have the discretion to refuse certain items in a prisoner's cell for the security and good order of the prison, Scottish Prison Service headquarters had issued advice to all prisons in March 2010 and May 2013 that certain Xboxes could be allowed but not the Xbox 360, which has wireless connectivity capabilities. In view of this, the prison reconsidered their original position and now allow prisoners to purchase Xbox consoles (with the exception of Xbox 360).

Recommendations

We recommended that Scottish Prison Service:

- provide the Ombudsman with a copy of the prison's revised 'articles in use' policy.