

SPSO decision report

Case: 201301653, Scottish Prison Service
Sector: Scottish Government and devolved administration
Subject: bullying/victimisation
Outcome: upheld, recommendations

Summary

Mr C, who is a prisoner, complained that the Scottish Prison Service did not highlight on his computer records the names of prisoners who assaulted him in a particular prison. He said this was necessary so that staff would always be aware that he was to be kept separated from them. He was also unhappy that another prison did not fully respond to his complaint about this.

Our investigation found that the day after the assault Mr C was transferred to a second prison for his safety. Staff at the first prison had recorded the incident in his security file, to which only certain staff had access. We also found that it was normal practice after an assault for an entry to be made in a prisoner's computer records so that prison officers in any establishment would be aware of known enemies and whether they should be kept separated. Although Mr C was relocated the next day, the first prison had not made this link on Mr C's records. Staff there could not input this information because he had transferred, but they should have contacted staff at the second prison to have this done. We also identified that another prison took steps to have Mr C's computer records updated with his known enemies after he complained. However, there was insufficient evidence to show that this had been properly explained to him.

Recommendations

We recommended that the Scottish Prison Service:

- draw to the attention of relevant staff in the first prison the importance of ensuring that steps are taken to update a prisoner's computer records with information about known enemies and whether they have to be kept separated; and
- share our findings with staff at the prison who dealt with Mr C's complaint.