

## SPSO decision report



**Case:** 201807167, Scottish Prison Service  
**Sector:** Scottish Government and devolved administration  
**Subject:** progression  
**Decision:** upheld, recommendations

### Summary

Mr C complained about the delay by the Scottish Prison Service (SPS) to provide him with a Psychological Risk Assessment (PRA). Mr C had been assessed by the prison Risk Management Team (RMT) to require a PRA but had not yet received this years later. He complained that there was an undue delay in him receiving his PRA and he noted that this impacted on his progression and chance of parole.

We found that as a result of several factors, there was a significant delay in providing Mr C with his PRA. The SPS advised that the psychologist involved in the RMT meeting would normally set and communicate the timescale to start and complete the PRA but this was not done in Mr C's case and there was no explanation for this. The SPS also noted that as part of his PRA, Mr C needed a particular assessment which only certain members of the psychology department were trained to undertake and, as a result of staffing issues, there was not an available psychologist to complete this assessment. The SPS further noted that due to having to prioritise work on statutory obligations relating to management of other prisoners, outstanding work such as Mr C's PRA, were put on a waiting list. While staff issues as the result of vacancies and sick leave would be hard to predict, there was also a shortage in staff trained in the tool needed to complete part of Mr C's PRA and we were also critical of the failure to set and communicate the timescale for the PRA to be completed in line with normal practice. Therefore, we found that there was an unreasonable delay by SPS to provide Mr C with a PRA and upheld his complaint.

### Recommendations

What we asked the organisation to do in this case:

- Apologise to Mr C for the unreasonable delay in providing his PRA. The apology should meet the standards set out in the SPSO guidelines on apology available at [www.spsso.org.uk/information-leaflets](http://www.spsso.org.uk/information-leaflets).

What we said should change to put things right in future:

- Review PRA process and give consideration to whether formal guidance is required for staff and whether there are enough appropriately trained staff to deliver the process.

We have asked the organisation to provide us with evidence that they have implemented the recommendations we have made on this case by the deadline we set.