



## Cayman Islands Human Rights Commission

*promoting, protecting and preserving human rights*

Ref: HRC-COMP-2016-027

Mr Neil Lavis  
Director of Prisons  
Her Majesty's Prison Service  
PO Box 1807  
Grand Cayman KY1-1109  
CAYMAN ISLANDS

Via E-mail: [Neil.Lavis@gov.ky](mailto:Neil.Lavis@gov.ky)

7 October 2016

Dear Mr Lavis,

The Commission has received a submission from a prisoner HMP Northward alleging a breach of his human rights under the Constitution, specifically s.3 providing freedom from torture and inhuman treatment and s.6 regarding the treatment of prisoners. The complainant alleges these breaches relate to sanitation and infrastructure at HMP Northward, and complains of leaky roofs, cockroach and fly infestation, foul odours in general and especially emanating from the toilets, hot temperatures, unappealing food, and poor ventilation in the cell blocks.

The Commission understands that you are aware of the shortcomings of the prison facilities, particularly as they have been identified in two inspection reports (issued in 2013 and 2015) by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons ("HMIP"). We also note that funding issues have been identified as the primary barrier to implementing HMIP's remedial recommendations.

Notwithstanding this, the Commission would be grateful for an update on the current status of the much needed improvements, specifically:

1. what improvements have been made at HMP Northward since the publication of the 2015 HMIP report;
2. what amount in the 2016/2017 HMPS budget has been allocated to making any further improvements to the prison facilities;
3. what is the current strategic plan for improvements to the prisons and the projected costs for implementing the plan; and
4. whether there are plans for HMIP to return or to be updated on the progress towards meeting their recommendations.

Given the importance and on-going nature of these issues the Commission would appreciate a response at your earliest convenience and in any event within fourteen (14) days.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Austin-Smith', written in a cursive style.

James Austin-Smith  
Chairman, Human Rights Commission