



Deborah Bodden
Secretariat
Human Rights Commission
2nd Floor Artemis House,
Fort Street, George Town,
Grand Cayman

17 December, 2018

Dear Ms. Bodden,

Complaints by Detainees at Immigration Detention Centre

Thank you for your correspondence of 13th December 2018, advising that you had received a note of complaints from detainees, currently residing at the Immigration Detention Centre (IDC).

I have responded to each of the points raised in your letter below:

1. All of the detainees are provided with a range of toiletries to help them to maintain appropriate levels of personal hygiene. This is issued to them as they need it and at least weekly. Shoes and clothes were also provided to them when they arrived at the IDC. Prison staff have also donated some clothing to them. I will have a further stock check carried out to establish that we do, in fact, have adequate supplies of clean clothing and footwear and where any deficient stock is noted, will ensure that appropriate items are sourced either by way of donations or by direct purchase.
2. I acknowledge the facilities for dining, and for general lounging are not as we would like. Quotations for the procurement of 3 x dining tables have been sought and we are now awaiting those so that the procurement process can be completed.
3. The complaint about not having a working washing machine is utterly false. The washing machine at the IDC is working and has done since it was initially installed.
4. I am advised by Immigration colleagues that information about the asylum process was provided to the detainees as part of their induction and that additional information about the process has been provided orally by immigration department staff. I can also confirm that information about that process has also been provided orally by the prison manager with operational oversight of the facility.

I met with Immigration colleagues on Friday, 14 December to discuss this issue and I have asked that notices and booklets, written in Spanish, are provided to the IDC to enable unfettered access to such information.

5. Detainees were permitted to use the telephone located in the staff office to make outgoing calls; an officer is present when calls are being made. However, as of 17 December, 2018 the detainees will no longer require to use the staff office telephone as the telephone system within the facility is being upgraded. The prison will also provide \$*** of weekly credit to enable the detainees to make calls. An additional telephone is also installed within the detainees living area which cannot make outgoing calls but which is able to receive unfettered incoming calls.
6. Historically the surrounding area of the IDC, is prone to rat infestation and where we can, we take steps to address the issue. In this particular case, I am advised that the current group of detainees have not made any complaint of rat infestation and certainly on my visits to the facility I have not found any obvious signs of rat presence (droppings etc.). In response to this complaint we have contacted the Department of Environmental Health and they are expected to attend the facility week commencing 17 December, to place rat traps.
7. Conditions at the IDC are not as I would like and the facility as a whole is in urgent need of significant upgrading. I have had the facility deep cleaned and staff deployed to the IDC are required to ensure that basic housekeeping by the detainees is carried out daily.

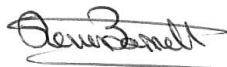
With regard to the area being under repair, there is conversion work being carried out at the facility to provide a separate section of the building for convicted low-risk prisoners. The work in this area does not in any way impact upon the living quarters of the detainees.

I have shared to contents of the detainees complaints with the manager responsible for the operational oversight of the facility and asked that I have primary assurance with regard to the matters noted above; I will upon receipt of this, conduct my own secondary assurance checks.

In conclusion, I am grateful to the Commission for raising the issues reported to them for my attention. I appreciate that the facilities in general at the IDC are not the best but I have an obligation to ensure that we do the best that we can with it and that includes ensuring that the rights of those detained are upheld. I would also wish to advise the Commissions that I have initiated steps to install an internet service within the facility that will enable access to current affairs and provide an additional platform for maintaining family contact. It is expected that the internet service will be in place by Friday 21 December 2018. I will require to build some safeguards around the use of this facility however I will share those safeguarding arrangements with you once they are developed.

I hope this is helpful

Sincerely



Steve Barrett
Director of Prisons