Justice Committee
Inquiry into purposeful activity in prisons

Supplementary written submission from HM Inspectorate of Prisons Scotland

Thanks very much for your help and support for the excellent Justice Committee this morning. All very useful. I have one issue which I failed to correct and which I guess can be officially corrected through the system, but I would be grateful if you could pass on my message to the Convenor.

There was discussion about ‘Pass Men’ at one stage and I felt the conclusion was that using ‘Pass Men’ was not sufficiently positive purposeful activity. I had wanted to counter that view, but I failed to because we had moved on to other matters. I would have said that, although not all prisons train, employ and supervise Pass Men well, most do. Prisoners acting as Pass Men will normally have received training to levels set out by the British Institute of Cleaning Services (BICS) and the officer carrying out this excellent training will also have a qualification as an Assessor.

Many Pass Men, if encouraged by the BICS trainer and if they get access to further training can become qualified in a range of areas such as food handling and hygiene, manual handling, ‘kinetic lifting’, and Health and Safety. These are the sort of qualifications that can lead to employment in the cleaning and catering industries.

My point would have been to say that being on ‘the Pass’ may actually be positive for getting employment (but, as we discussed in the Session, we don’t have the figures).

Brigadier Hugh Monro CBE
HM Chief Inspector of Prisons for Scotland
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