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13 October 2025

Audrey Nicoll MSP
Convenor, Criminal Justice Committee
Scottish Parliament
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Dear Ms Nicoll

**CRIMINAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE EVIDENCE SESSIONS 10 AND 17
SEPTEMBER - REQUEST FOR FURTHER INFORMATION**

Thank you for your email dated 23 September 2025 requesting further information following the recent evidence sessions held on 10 and 17 September. If I may, I will try to address each of the points raised in turn below, to provide Committee Members with a comprehensive response as possible. Again, we welcome the Committee's interest in this area and look forward to its findings.

Information on the quantities of drugs entering prisons before and after the introduction of preventative measures, such as X-ray body scanners

SPS has introduced several preventative measures to prohibit drugs entering establishments. Unfortunately, some within our prisoner population will continuously seek new and alternative methods to introduce such items (such as but not limited to use of Drones, Perimeter Wall throw overs, and via Visits). As was discussed during Committee, the challenges faced in prisons reflect those same challenges faced in our communities and we remain vigilant to the threat posed by new substances.

SPS records drug recoveries under two categories: (i) preventative; and (ii) in prison. Preventative recoveries are those which have been found and have not yet to have been in physical contact with a prisoner and includes the following categories: In Mail, On Visitor, Perimeter Wall & Prisoners Property (sent/handed in). 'In prison' recoveries include all other recoveries which have been found in prisoner contact areas e.g. prisoner searches, cell searches, residential hall searches etc.

Provided below is a year-on-year comparison of drug recoveries from 2021 to 2025:

	2021*	2022	2023	2024	2025**	TOTAL
Preventative Recoveries	2217	1982	1189	794	364	6546
In Prison Recoveries	980	1449	2188	2214	1587	8418
TOTAL	3197	3431	3377	3008	1951	14964

*Please note for 2021 figures, these are from 13/06/2021, which is 6 months prior to the implementation of the mail photocopying process.

**The 2025 figures include recoveries up to 30/09/2025.
The 2022, 2023 and 2024 figures are full calendar years.

The figures provided may be impacted by different measures. For example, a security measure being put into place may lead to higher figures of recoveries which would be a positive indication that SPS is recovering drugs before they enter circulation, i.e. through mail photocopying and the use of body scanners for those being admitted to custody.

A comprehensive range of robust security/preventative measures are in place to prevent the introduction of illicit items entering our prisons such as *Rapiscan itemiser technology and X Ray Body Scanners* which reduces the need for physical searching of those in our care, creating a more trauma informed approach to our security processes. Searching of all those individuals entering prison establishments is routinely carried out.

Long-term data trends in the use of MORS, in particular the number of people placed on it, including at weekends and evenings

The following data has been sourced from monthly submissions from each prison since 2023. Submissions are gathered manually from paper MORS documentation which is completed in residential areas. Due to the manual process, there may be some issues with data quality. Please note that if there are formatting issues, such as misspellings, these can mean that they are not included in the summary, so these figures may not be a full representative.

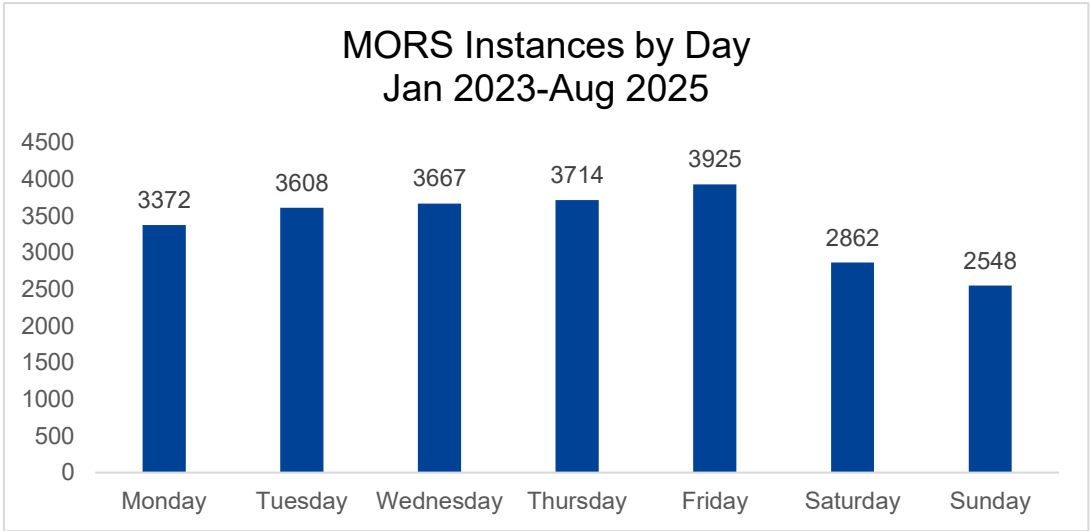
From the data collected in 2023, 2,919 people were managed under MORS in a total of 7,802 instances of MORS. In 2024, the number of people managed under MORS increased to 3,339 (14% increase) and the total instances increased to 9,360 (20% increase).

The following table gives the MORS instances, people managed under MORS, and people managed under MORS controlled for population size using the daily average estate population for each row period. The increase in individuals managed under MORS increased at a higher rate than the prison estate population between 2023 and 2024.

Year	MORS Instances	People managed under MORS	Individuals managed per 1000 Population
2023	7,802	2,919	377
2024	9,360	3,339	410
2025 to 31/08/25	6,534	2,689	327

Between January and August 2025, 2,689 people have been managed under MORS in 6,534 instances. This is an 11% increase from the 5,908 instances for the same 8 months in 2024 which suggests that it is likely that the final total for 2025 MORS instances will be greater than previous years.

The above figures are inclusive of MORS instances triggered at the weekend. The following chart shows the distribution of MORS instances by day of the week and shows an upward trend from Monday to Friday with a reduction in cases at the weekend.



End date of the review of the MORS policy and any next steps

As discussed, there is currently a national review of the Management of an Offender at Risk due to any Substance (MORS) Policy and a short life working group (SLWG) has recently been established.

SPS has agreed a tender for an independent Research and Evaluation Service to support the SLWG with the next stage of the review process. Specifically, this will involve taking the information gathered to date and working with the SLWG to develop a revised MORS pathway and process that integrates the new clinical guidance developed by the National Prison Care Network (NPrCN), while, as far as is possible, addressing challenges with the current process and balancing

operational practicalities with the need for robust assurance and execution of appropriate duty of care to prisoners in Scottish prisons.

On conclusion of the Independent Review the Contractor will produce a written report which will include a revised pathway; limitations of pathway e.g. any concerns raised about the current process that cannot be fully implemented; a list of supporting products required and recommendations for data collection to support the new pathway.

After consideration of the Report, the SLWG will agree and develop the products which will be required to support the implementation of a revised MORS Policy, which will be supported by updated training.

SPS Anti-Corruption Policy

As I requested, I have enclosed, for information, a copy of the current SPS anti-corruption policy.

While the vast majority of staff adhere to the highest standards of conduct, SPS is always vigilant to any potential corruption within establishments. Maintaining the safety and security of Scotland’s prisons is and remains, an absolute priority.

The aim of SPS Anti-Corruption Policy is to strengthen the SPS response for detecting, deterring and preventing all forms of staff corruption and to deal robustly with those discovered to be engaging in such activities. SPS also aim to ensure there are clear support mechanisms in place for those affected by corruption either directly or in-directly.

Available statistics or information regarding staff misconduct within the SPS, particularly in relation to instances of corruption within each prison in the estate

Instances of corruption fall under the category of Gross Misconduct under both the SPS and Civil Service Code of Conduct. Whilst SPS cannot offer detailed statistics relating to the types of gross misconduct charge, we can provide total Gross Misconduct figures since 2022, which will include any cases of corruption.

New Gross Misconduct Cases 2022 – Present

	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	01/04 – 01/10/2025
Number of New Cases in the Year	58	61	64	39

I hope the Committee finds the above information useful, should you require any additional information, SPS will of course accommodate where possible.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Linda Pollock". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Linda" and last name "Pollock" clearly distinguishable.

LINDA POLLOCK
DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

SPS Anti-Corruption Policy

This document outlines the Scottish Prison Service Policy in relation to Anti-Corruption.

Published by Public Protection Unit, Operations Directorate

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Unlocking Potential. Transforming Lives

Policy Number:

Directorate Owners:

Public Protection Unit

Policy Scope:

All Scottish Prison Service Employees and Specified Persons

Links to Other Policies:

SPS Intelligence Framework

RIP(S)A Codes of Practice

SPS Intelligence Retention

Civil Service Code

Employee Code of Conduct

Confidentiality and Official Information

Employee Wellbeing

SPS Whistleblowing Policy

Approved By:

Director of Operations

Effective Date:

16 January 2023

Review Date

15 January 2025

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1.0 Introduction

The majority of employees within Scottish Prison Service (SPS) undertake their duties honestly and with integrity, however, like all large organisations, there will be a small number who become compromised and potentially corrupt.

SPS recognises the need to maintain organisational and public trust and confidence in the integrity and impartiality of their service. We are committed to raising awareness of corruption prevention and ensuring that corruption, where suspected, is fully investigated and eliminated so that prisons remain a safe and secure environment for staff, prisoners and visitors.

SPS also recognises the need to provide staff with guidance and support for those wishing to raise concerns and for those staff who consider themselves vulnerable to corruption and those who may have been compromised.

2.0 Aim

The aim of SPS Anti-Corruption Policy is to strengthen the SPS response for detecting, deterring and preventing all forms of staff corruption and to deal robustly with those discovered to be engaging in such activities. SPS also aim to ensure there are clear support mechanisms in place for those affected by corruption either directly or indirectly.

3.0 Scope

This policy has been developed by Management and the Trade Union Side (TUS) working in Partnership. This policy applies to all SPS employees and specified persons regardless of the nature of their contract.

This policy is not designed as a stand-alone document and should be read in conjunction with the SPS Anti-Corruption Guidance Document and any other relevant SPS policies/guidance and legislation.

4.0 Definitions

For simplification, the following terms and definitions apply in this document:

- **Employee** - refers to any staff member of the SPS.
- **Specified Person** - refers to any persons providing contracted/voluntary services to the SPS, including Healthcare Professionals (i.e. NHS, Education providers etc.).

- **Corruption** - Corruption occurs when a person, in a position of authority or trust, abuses their position for their or another person's benefit or gain. In SPS, this would include the misuse of their role in order to plan or commit a criminal act, or a deliberate failure to act to prevent criminal behaviour.

5.0 Policy Statement

Organisational Responsibilities

SPS is committed to protecting the integrity of the organisation, its employees and partner organisations by preventing and detecting corrupt behaviours. To enable this, SPS will have in place procedures that:

- Identify and take appropriate action in relation to any SPS employee or specified person who engages in corrupt activities;
- Identify and take appropriate action in relation to those who seek to corrupt any SPS employee or specified person;
- Identify individuals, business areas, practices and processes within SPS that are vulnerable to corruption and ensure appropriate action is taken to mitigate the associated threat, risk and potential harm;
- Enhance information sharing to maximise all intelligence opportunities;
- Enhance the awareness, knowledge and understanding of organisational and personal vulnerabilities, potential threats to security and associated risks in order to prevent corrupt activities; and
- Ensure appropriate guidance and support is available for those staff who may be compromised, are vulnerable to corruption or who witness and report corruption.

In support of the foregoing, SPS will ensure structures are in place for employees to report any related suspicions or concerns confidentially.

SPS Employees/Specified Person Responsibilities:

Performing with integrity and preventing corrupt activities or behaviours is everyone's responsibility, regardless of position, location or seniority. This means that, irrespective of role or grade, you have a responsibility to:

- Take the initiative to educate yourself about policies and procedures that apply to you and your role;
- Carefully read, understand and acknowledge that you will comply with the Civil Service Code, the SPS Standards of Conduct or any other associated policies, procedures and legislation;
- Comply with all Health and Safety requirements, Equality & Diversity Policies, Information Security controls, IT Policies and any other policies, laws or regulations that may be attributable to your role;

- Ask questions if you are unsure or need guidance;
- Report, via the appropriate avenue, and never ignore, any known or suspected criminality or violations of the Civil Service Code, the SPS Code of Conduct, SPS Values & Behaviours or any other associated policies, procedures or legislation;
- Participate in any required training; and
- Lead by example, demonstrate integrity and promote compliance with the Civil Service Code, the SPS Code of Conduct and SPS Values at all times.

SPS Management Responsibilities:

If you are a manager, you have an additional responsibility to:

- Act as a role model by demonstrating a commitment to SPS culture of ethics, integrity and trust;
- Be an approachable, trusted and open resource for colleagues;
- Ensure colleagues have access to the information and training necessary to perform their work in compliance with the Civil Service Code, the SPS Code of Conduct, SPS Values & Behaviours and any other associated policies, procedures or legislation;
- Respond promptly and follow through on any concerns raised;
- Be appreciative and supportive to those who raise issues and concerns in an honest manner;
- Take appropriate action when concerns relating to corrupt activities or behaviours are identified; and
- Ensure that any concerning behaviours you witness are reported accordingly.

6.0 Reporting Corruption

SPS must fully consider any intelligence regarding the potential for corruption in order to identify those involved and take appropriate action. Effectively managing risks posed by corrupt staff is vital for ensuring the SPS operates efficiently, ensuring the safe management of those in our care, and for ensuring a safe environment for staff and to protect the public.

Corruption within the SPS will not be tolerated no matter what the form or motivation. SPS staff must not engage in corruption and they must report any corruption they witness, suspect or hear about without delay. This obligation arises from the core values of integrity and honesty expected of any public servant, which underpin the standards of behaviours set out in the Civil Service Code and in the SPS Code of Conduct for all contracted employees.

The reporting of corruption related matters could include unsubstantiated, unproven or unspecific information. SPS will fully evaluate this information and where possible seek

to corroborate or refute with other information that may already be held by SPS or other law enforcement agencies. In addition to this, approaches to staff by prisoners, colleagues, or others, to engage in corruption must be reported in line with this policy.

Failure to report corruption by others may itself be a disciplinary or even criminal offence.

Providing that reports are made in good faith, and in the reasonable belief that the information provided tends to demonstrate corruption, the person making the report will not be penalised if it turns out to be mistaken.

Reporting of concerns locally can be done through existing intelligence reporting channels or directly to the PPU via the anti-corruption telephone line (0131 330 3696) or by sending an Intelligence Information Report to the anti-corruption mailbox (SPSAntiCorruptionUnit@prisons.gov.scot).

All reports of corruption will be treated in the strictest of confidence and in line with the SPS Intelligence Reporting Framework Policy. Those reporting corruption can do so anonymously, however, it should be noted that by doing so the ability to evaluate, verify and take action on the information may be significantly limited.

7.0 Employee Support

It is important to ensure that appropriate support and protection is available to staff who report corruption. SPS also recognise that it can be a difficult and upsetting experience for those subject to corruption investigations or intelligence concern discussions. There are a number of support and advice avenues available to those who are affected by corruption related matters such as:

- Human Resources Team;
- The TUS or Trade Union Representatives,
- Employee's line manager;
- A Senior Manager;
- The Employee Assistance Programme;
- The National Anti-Corruption Manager.

All staff, irrespective of grade, must provide a supportive culture in which all employees and specified persons who may be vulnerable to corruption are encouraged to come forward and raise the matter with a relevant manager or directly with the National Anti-Corruption Manager. Staff who are aware that a colleague may be vulnerable must also be encouraged to come forward.

Further Information:

The SPS recognises that from time to time employees may have questions or concerns relating to this document. In certain situations employees' rights and obligations regarding this document may change. In these circumstances, the SPS will abide by any statutory obligations.

The SPS wishes to encourage open discussion with employees to ensure that questions and problems can be resolved as quickly as possible. Employees are encouraged to seek clarification on any issues with the appropriate Line Manager in the first instance.

Sustainability

Improving our environmental performance and doing things in a more sustainable way should be seen as integral to our core business practices.

In line with the SPS Sustainable Policy and to demonstrate compliance with the Scottish Government's commitment to improving environmental and sustainable development performance, please be mindful if printing this document – keeping paper usage to a minimum (print only version), printing on both sides, and recycling.

Equality Statement

The SPS is an equal opportunities employer where all employees are treated with dignity and respect. We are fully committed to equality, diversity and human rights and to ensuring our culture, working environment, policies, processes and practices are free from bias. This document applies to all employees regardless of protected characteristics, and, subject to any eligibility criteria, length of service, grade, working pattern or operational status.

Inclusive Communications

It is our ambition to ensure that SPS documents are readable, accessible and engaging for employees.

In formatting this document, good practice principles around engagement and inclusive communications have been adhered to.

If you require this document in an alternative format please contact Human Resources

Review and Monitoring

This document will be reviewed every 2 years or sooner where applicable to reflect changing business and legislative requirements.