

Fatal Incidents Review and DVD launched

The Prisons and Probation Ombudsman's (PPO) office is releasing a report and an awareness DVD on custodial fatal incidents investigations today, Monday 8 March 2010.

The report entitled 'Fatal incident reports from September 2008 to August 2009' provides a review of the 160 reports on deaths of prisoners that were published in the 12 months to 31 August 2009. The report contains new insights and statistics on fatal incidents in prisons including:

- Nearly half of prisoners who took their lives were remand prisoners
- 25 per cent of prisoners who took their lives had been in prison for less than three months
- 94 per cent of self-inflicted deaths were by hanging
- 82 per cent used bed sheets as a ligature
- Over half of self-inflicted deaths were of those who had already been identified as 'at risk' by prison staff

The DVD entitled 'Investigating fatal incidents' shows how each fatal incident investigation addresses the concerns of the bereaved family, while assisting the authorities to learn the lessons and improve the care they offer. The DVD will increase understanding of the role of the fatal incidents investigation team amongst bereaved family members, coroners, safer custody officers and prison staff as a whole.

Hard copies of the report and DVD are being distributed to stakeholders today.

The FII report is written by David Ryan-Mills, Research Officer (FII), with a foreword by Stephen Shaw the Ombudsman.

A digital copy of the report and a link to the PPO YouTube channel can be found on our website. Visit www.ppo.gov.uk.

NOTES TO EDITORS

- 1) **Investigating Fatal Incidents DVD:** The Prisons and Probation Ombudsman (PPO) investigates deaths that occur in prison, immigration detention or amongst the residents of probation approved premises. The film shows how each investigation addresses the concerns of the bereaved family, while assisting the authorities to learn the lessons and improve the care they offer. The DVD was produced through the Central Office of Information (COI).

- 2) Fll report:** The Prisons and Probation Ombudsman's fatal incidents team investigates deaths of prisoners, the deaths of residents of probation approved premises, and the deaths of those held in immigration removal centres or subject to managed escort. At the Ombudsman's discretion, they also investigate the deaths of those who have been released from custody or detention, whether temporarily or permanently, where the case raises issues about the care provided.

The PPO's investigation reports are issued to the bereaved families, to HM Coroners, to the services in remit, and to the relevant Primary Care Trust. Anonymised versions of the reports are put on the PPO website after the inquest. This report is based on the 160 reports of deaths of prisoners that were published in the 12 months to 31st August 2009.

- 3) Contact us:** Ries-William Lamont, PPO Communications Officer, T: 0207 035 2038 E: ries-william.lamont@ppo.gsi.gov.uk can provide further information and further copies of the report and DVD. Alternatively please send requests or feedback to Prisons and Probation Ombudsman's Office, Ashley House, 2 Monck Street, London, SW1P 2BQ.