



**An Roinn Dlí agus Cirt
agus Comhionannais**
Department of Justice
and Equality

PRISONER ESCORTS IN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

VALUE FOR MONEY AND POLICY REVIEW

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List of Acronyms

AGS	An Garda Síochána
C&AG	Comptroller and Auditor General
CCJ	Criminal Courts of Justice
COPFS	Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Services
CS	Courts Service
DJE	Department of Justice and Equality
IPS	Irish Prison Service
NIPS	Northern Ireland Prison Service
NOMS	National Offender Management Service
PASO	Prison Administrative and Support Officer
PCU	Policy Custody Unit
PFOC	Proposal for Organisational Change
PIMS	Prisoner Information Management System
PECCS	Prisoner Escorting and Court Custody Service
PECS	Prison Escort and Custody Service
PSEC	Prison Service Escort Corps
PSNI	Police Service of Northern Ireland
SCS	Scottish Courts Service
SPS	Scottish Prison Service
VFMPR	Value for Money and Policy Review



Executive Summary

1. Background and Introduction

This is the Final Report of a Value for Money and Policy Review (VFMPR) of Prisoner Escort Services in the Criminal Justice Sector, undertaken between January 2017 and August 2018 under the direction of a Steering Committee comprising representatives of the Department of Justice and Equality (DJE), the Irish Prison Service (IPS), An Garda Síochána (AGS), and the Courts Service (CS), and with an independent chair.

The physical movement of detained persons is necessary in a range of circumstances, and their safe, secure and timely transportation is a statutory duty of both the IPS and AGS. Where it is required, prisoners must be escorted in a manner that ensures their secure detention while on escort, their safety, the safety of the public, and the safety of prison officers and Gardaí providing the escort and transportation service, while at all times upholding the human rights and dignity of the detainees and complying with the law. Provision of such prisoner escort services is a distinct public service delivered within the criminal justice system, and one requiring skill, time, human resources, the means of transport, management, administration and other inputs.

As with all Value for Money and Policy Reviews, the purpose of the present Review has been to examine:

- what is the rationale and the objectives for the scheme?
- are the objectives still relevant, in light of evolving policy priorities?
- has the scheme achieved its objectives?
- how efficiently has the scheme been delivered?
- how does the scheme rate against alternative ways of achieving the same objectives?

The full Terms of Reference and review methodology are set out in the main report.

2. Existing Service Provision

Service Objectives

Escort services are delivered with the objective of providing for the safe, secure, timely and consistent transportation of persons held in custody under provisions of criminal justice legislation, where their movement is necessitated for administrative, legal, managerial or policy reasons. Wider objectives relate to public and staff safety, secure prisoner detention in transit, prisoner care, meeting the needs for which the journey has arisen, legal compliance and service effectiveness and efficiency.

Organisation of Services

In general terms prisoners are escorted as follows:

- in cases of initial District Court hearings that follow arrest and detention by AGS, prisoners are escorted to the sitting Court by AGS;

- for onward transportation to prison if detained on remand or committed, prisoners are escorted either by the IPS or AGS, depending on circumstances;
- when already held on remand in prison and required to attend court hearings, escorts are typically provided by AGS (except in “double” remand cases where they may already be serving an unrelated sentence or are being held on remand in relation to a number of unrelated charges or cases, in which case the escort is provided by the IPS);
- prisoners serving a sentence at prison who are required to attend court hearings are escorted by the IPS;
- prisoners detained at prisons (whether sentenced or on remand) who require hospital or external medical attention are typically escorted by IPS. Such escorts can take the form of transportation to and from a hospital, as well as the provision of “bedwatch” custody/security when a prisoner has been admitted to a hospital (with phases/shifts of prison officers’ such work regularly involving no prisoner transportation when the hospital admission is prolonged);
- prisoners in custody at a prison requiring transfer to another prison for operational reasons are escorted by IPS; and
- in other very rare cases, escorts are typically provided by IPS.

Escorts delivered by the IPS are provided by the Prison Service Escort Corps (PSEC), as well as by prison-based officers and staff, and the former also has responsibility for prisoner flows and management within the Criminal Courts of Justice (CCJ) in Dublin.

Previous Reviews

PSEC was established in 2005, on foot of the Proposal for Organisational Change (PFOC) in the IPS. While prisoner escorting roles and responsibilities were considered under that agreement as well as a number of reviews and assessments since, none has overtly examined outputs, inputs, effectiveness or efficiency of the service. There have been wider reviews meanwhile of the efficiency of criminal justice procedures, most notably under the Working Group on Efficiency Measures in the Criminal Justice System. Its findings and recommendations have been considered under the present Review.

Review Scope

The scope of the current review extends across escorts of sentenced prisoners and those detained on remand, principally for court hearings, for hospital appointments and in-patient medical care, and as inter-prison transfers (transfers between prisons). While it does not include the transportation of prisoners from Garda stations to court venues for initial hearings following arrest, the routine collection of prisoners from a number of Garda stations in Dublin and their transportation to the CCJ is included given its scale and regularity. The management and flow of prisoners within the CCJ and Cloverhill Courthouse, is also included given PSEC’s role and responsibilities.

Activity outside the scope of the review includes:

- Garda transportation of detained persons to District Court hearings following arrest (except for the routine collection of such cases in Dublin by the Garda escort unit at Ronanstown as described above);



- the transportation by AGS of persons seeking asylum, or persons involved in extradition cases; and
- the movement of persons in state care but outside the criminal justice system, where carried out by or supported by AGS.

A review logic model, setting out objectives, inputs, activities, outputs and impacts, is presented in the main report.

3. Outputs, Inputs, Effectiveness and Efficiency

Outputs

In 2016, there were:

- 9,412 cases of prisoners being transferred between prisons;
- 27,099 occasions where prisoners were escorted on journeys to courts to appear; and
- 4,617 occasions where prisoners were escorted to hospitals for medical reasons.

Of the total of 41,128 such cases, court appearances account for approximately two thirds (65.9%), while inter-prison transfers and hospital appointments account for 22.8% and 11.2% respectively.

Trend analysis indicates that the volumes have fluctuated only marginally over the period 2012-2016, showing both years of small increase and decrease. The mix, in terms of court appearances, hospital appointments and inter-prison transfers, has also been quite stable.

The incidence of inter-prison transfers and court appearances relative to the underlying prison population showed some level of moderate increase, particularly between 2012 and 2015, before flattening or declining again somewhat in 2016. While there are many reasons that may be influencing this, there is evidence of growing numbers of appeals, as well as very marginally growing proportions of all prisoners that were detained on remand. Other factors that might be relevant in explaining increasing court attendances by those in custody are firstly a perceived increase in the extent of prosecution of minor offences committed by those already serving sentence for more serious ones, and secondly a perceived growing complexity and length of criminal trials in serious cases, particularly due to increased volumes and complexity of evidence.

Inputs

Based on the live recording of escort activity in a number of contexts and categories, the direct resource inputs and associated costs of escorts have been estimated. The estimated unit costs and overall costs of the service are shown in Table 1.

The different unit costs of the different providers, and therefore different contributions to both needs and overall costs of servicing them, reflect the different mixes of escorts typically provided by PSEC, prisons and AGS. While it is highly-active in country-wide escorts on a daily-basis, PSEC for example contributes disproportionately to the high volume of Dublin escort needs centred on Cloverhill remand prison, the other large Dublin prisons and the CCJ, which are more predictable, involve shorter distances, and more prisoners requiring the same journeys, and can therefore be provided in large



cellular vehicles, with higher prisoner-staff ratios and lower time in transit. Prison-only escorts on the other hand contribute disproportionately to hospital escorts (which can require unscheduled provision and in cases highly time- and cost-intensive inpatient escort duties), and to the geographically-disperse court venues and Districts particularly for which Cork, Limerick and Castlerea serve as committal prisons, and the escorts to which typically involve fewer prisoners each time, higher staff-to-prisoner ratios, and longer distances and durations. The AGS contribution to the overall escort task covers the full range of court-related escort types and distances, however much of it is also centred on Dublin-based work between Dublin Garda stations, the CCJ and Cloverhill prison.

Table 1. Estimated Total Costs of Prisoner Movement and Management, 2016

	Total Prisoner Journeys	Estimated Proportion to CCJ/Cloverhill Courthouse	Total Prisoner Journeys not accounted for in CCJ/Cloverhill Costs	Unit Cost per Prisoner (€)	Total Cost (€)
PSEC-Only	12,141	0.30	8,499	417	3,544,002
PSEC-Assisted	15,834	0.46	8,550	408	3,488,514
Prison Only	6,011	n/a	6,011	664	3,991,304
AGS	7,142	n/a	7,142	200	1,428,400
Sub-Total	41,128				12,452,220
Prisoner Escorts and Management - CCJ/Cloverhill Courthouse					4,830,000
Total Costs of Prisoner Movement and Management Outside Prison Settings					17,282,220

As part of the process of measuring live escort activity, the Review also captured information on the opportunity cost of escort provision – i.e. the typical duties from which non-PSEC prison officers and members of AGS were redeployed in order to carry out prisoner escorting. In the case of prison-based staff, this showed that over a single month, staff were redeployed to escort duties on 764 occasions, with a range of prison officer functions affected including prison divisions and landings stations, work training, prison gym, prison visits, staff detail, surgery, in-reach (services in preparation for release), library, and school. In the case of AGS, core functions most frequently impacted by the need to provide escorts were community policing units, regular units, detective units, and warrants units.

Efficiency and Effectiveness

The efficiency of provision reflects the inputs required and their costs under the current delivery model, as well as how well resources are deployed to match demand, allowing for route-optimisation and the greatest number of required prisoner movements per vehicle journey (load factors). How seamlessly resources are aligned with and deployed to needs relates directly to the predictability of needs and the



scope to plan the allocation of escort capacity. While a proportion of needs are generally predictable, a significant proportion are unpredictable and arise at short notice for a host of reasons.

It is unclear how optimal route scheduling and planning is in practice. While it undoubtedly takes place in constantly changing contexts and in response to short-term changes in needs, present practices rely on IPS managerial structures and on flexibility and effective interaction between functional units in different settings, and do not involve sophisticated capabilities or systems typical of short-notice logistics management operations. Such systems in other settings benefit from predictive technologies, live GPS tracking of vehicles and operations, real-time traffic information, and other features of contemporary advanced logistics management.

Neither the IPS nor AGS collect data to measure or monitor the effectiveness of routine escort provision. In the case of the IPS, there are no records kept regarding the extent to which escorts meet their scheduling requirements or fail to do so. The available evidence points to general service effectiveness under a number of criteria (e.g. timeliness, safety, security), although stakeholders raise concerns regarding service lapses, however rare.

4. Stakeholder Perspectives

During the consultative phase of this review, the Department of Justice and Equality invited a number of stakeholders in the criminal justice sector to make written consultative submissions to the review. These were:

- the Association of Garda Superintendents;
- the Association of Garda Sergeants and Inspectors;
- the Bar Council;
- the Garda Representatives Association
- the Garda Síochána Inspectorate;
- the Irish Penal Reform Trust;
- the Law Society of Ireland;
- the Legal Aid Board;
- the Office of the Inspector of Prisons;
- the Policing Authority;
- the Presidents of the District, Circuit, and High Court, and the Court of Appeal; and
- the Prison Officers' Association.

A wide range of perspectives and viewpoints were fed back, which were considered and taken account of in the Review. They are summarised in the main report under the headings of rationale, efficiency, effectiveness, and performance indicators.

In addition, to ensure the perspectives of prisoners were also appropriately considered as part of the review, a short survey of a sample of prisoners at a number of prisons – Castlerea, Cloverhill, Cork, Limerick and Midlands prisons – was undertaken with the support of IPS personnel in each location. This survey should not be interpreted as a scientific or representative survey of prisoners' perspectives,



rather it is a relatively small sample of attitudes where prisoners were asked about their experience of past prison escorts, the typical reasons they had for requiring such escorts, their recollections on the typical duration of escorts, and their reflections on the escort experience and their perspectives regarding escort circumstances in the future.

5. Continued Relevance, Alternative Approaches and Service Performance

Relevance and Rationale

There are no countries where the administration of justice and the lawful detention of prisoners operates in the absence of any need for their transportation and movement while in custody, and the rationale for the public funding and resourcing of prisoner transportation is the same as that for the public funding of the administration of criminal justice in the wider sense – namely that it represents a “public good”, the benefits of which are made available to many when made available to one, and for which there are no means to exclude non-payers as beneficiaries. As long as persons continue to have their right to appear in person when appearing in court, all types of prisoner escorts are likely to be continuously required, even if their volumes fluctuate or wider practices and policies alter trends within different categories.

In the case of escorts for court appearances, the greater use of technology to allow appearance by video-link (considered further in Section 5.5) has the theoretical ability to reduce the need for appearance in person, however there is in reality always likely to be court proceedings where appearance in person is either required or the preferred option. Inter-prison transfers arise for a wide range of reasons which will continue to exist or even strengthen (including risk management, and prisoner welfare, human rights and safety), while escorts for hospital or other medical treatment will remain necessary irrespective of the quality and quantity of medical services that may ever be feasible to provide within prisons.

International Practice

Systems in Northern Ireland, Scotland, and England and Wales were examined, and the Review has found that such services have similarities to those in Ireland in that the services:

- relate to escorts necessitated for court appearances, for hospital visits, and for inter-prison transfers;
- generally incorporates elements of prisoner management and supervision in court venues; and
- are generally organised and in places outsourced on a cross-agency basis, and include police as well as prison escorts.

The cost-effectiveness of the escort service has been the subject of ongoing examination and review in all UK jurisdictions, and has been a central determinant of changes in delivery models. Some elements of private or outsourced provision feature in all three of the UK regional contexts (Northern Ireland, Scotland and England/Wales). Unlike in Ireland, prisoner escorting is also subject to independent inspection in the UK.



Finally, the evidence of unit costs available in both Scotland and England/Wales suggests lower average per-prisoner journey costs of outsourced providers in the UK than for services provided in most categories in Ireland. However no direct comparability of the services is implied.

Alternative Approaches

Seven alternative organisational approaches are described in the main report, and their potential merits and demerits briefly described under the criteria of service effectiveness, efficiency, cost, wider impacts, and feasibility and risks.

Demand Management

The Review also examined how prospective legislative and other changes might serve to reduce the demand for prisoner escorts and escort resources. Much wider adoption of prison to court video-link has the potential to very substantially reduce the need for escorts and the resources devoted to it, with between 40% and 70% of escorts for court appearances potentially avoidable.

The findings also point to clear efficiencies and savings likely to arise from changes to the legislation concerning warrants and committals.

Performance Indicators

Escort provision is not currently the subject of any systematic or formalised system of performance measurement and monitoring. A range of potential indicators that would serve such a purpose is identified and proposed in the main report.

6. Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions

The Review presents conclusions in respect of all issues raised in the Terms of Reference. Key among these are the following:

- the service rationale and objectives are valid but not documented, and technological advancements and legislative reform need to be utilised to reduce the volumes of escorts required;
- numerous features of the existing organisational approach are sub-optimal, including the service personnel deployed and non-core aspect of escort work, a disjointed delivery model, the non-equipping of PSEC with logistical management expertise and systems, and poor information and data systems;
- system efficiency, savings and enhanced value for money are dependent on changing the escort volumes needed as well as the approach to those that are required;
- there is however no framework of performance measures, standards of service or quality benchmarks applied, and no means of examining trends in performance nor its achievement in relation to different types of escorts or in different operational contexts;
- the present arrangements in place for the provision of prisoner escorts in the criminal justice system have many strengths, including their effectiveness, the professionalism applied, the understanding and capability of the providers in respect of what is a challenging and unique

set of responsibilities, their responsiveness to demands that change constantly, and their integration with wider IPS and AGS services that allows for resource inputs to respond quite directly to needs as presented, but to be redeployed to wider duties when surplus to escorting needs;

- international evidence points to private service provision in Scotland, and England and Wales, and continued public sector provision in Northern Ireland but where the public-sector providers have been required to establish and demonstrate their greater cost-effectiveness and value for money in comparison to private service models, and do so on a recurring basis;
- such approaches may have the capacity to generate cost efficiencies in Ireland, although estimating the extent in the absence of market testing or market sounding has not been possible within the scope of this Review. The evidence of unit costs in other jurisdictions would suggest however that their levels, comparability and drivers in the UK warrant deeper investigation by the IPS;
- however there are reforms and service management improvements underway, in prospect, or necessary in Ireland, that firstly may reduce the levels of escorts required, and secondly would be necessary to implement and deliver before any examination of private or public-private models would have a sound basis to proceed with. Until a service need is sufficiently specified or capable of detailed specification, quantitatively understood, open to demand planning with reasonable levels of certainty, the subject of proven performance measurement and management protocols, and capable of reasonable and objective risk assessment and risk pricing, models of private delivery carry as much risk of cost-ineffectiveness as any public ones.

Recommendations

The Review recommendations, along with organisational implementation responsibilities and timeframes, are shown below.

No.	Recommendation	Lead Responsibility	Timetable
1	The present model of service delivery should be maintained pending a number of initiatives (set out in further recommendations) to reduce escort demand and enhance service provision and service information. Following such initiatives an update review should take place to consider the scope of lower cost alternative models. Consideration should in the meantime be given to a model of resourcing prisoner management at (and only at) the CCJ, and Cork, Limerick and Waterford criminal courts that does not involve fully-trained and serving prison officers or members of AGS, thereby ensuring the latter's availability for deployment to core functions.	DJE/IPS/AGS/PSEC	Ongoing, with a target update review date of 2021
2	The provisions of the Criminal Procedures Bill with respect to video-link should be reviewed with a view to maximising the extent of its wider adoption in the face of the prisoner escort costs identified in this report	DJE	End-2018



3	The IPS should draw up a strategy for a phased deployment of staffing and infrastructure resources to prison-based video-link suites and the management of prisoners using them. This strategy should allow for the redeployment of resources to align with and allow for changing demand patterns between traditional escort duties and video suite management. This should be exchequer neutral.	IPS	Q2 2019
4	The Criminal Procedures Bill provisions regarding the electronic transmission of warrants, should be enacted	DJE	2019
5	The legislative proposals to amend Section 17 of the Criminal Justice Administration Act, concerning the committal of prisoners to prisons at which they may already be serving sentence, should be enacted	DJE	
6	A review of PSEC logistics management and service delivery should take place, to examine and establish the scope for enhanced systems of journey scheduling and resource deployment. A two-phased approach involving initial set up of service demands data capture and vehicle GPS, staff and prisoner tracking, followed by a later phase of efficiency and system analysis, should be adopted. Pending the outcome of, or in parallel with such a review, consideration should be given to appointing a logistics manager or external logistics management expertise to PSEC from within existing resource allocations.	IPS	Review Complete by mid-2019
7	The anticipated savings in recurring vehicle maintenance expenditure arising from recent investments in the fleet should be set out and their achievement monitored and reported.	PSEC	Initial report by end-2018, and ongoing reporting thereafter
8	Given that escort activity impacts on operational police deployment and is not a core policing function, there is a strong argument for the IPS taking responsibility for a range of escorts currently provided by AGS in the short to medium term. This could be achieved in the main through changing the current responsibility definitions. Other mechanisms could also be used including enhanced co-ordination, and utilising any surplus IPS capacity on shared routes. The practical steps to achieve this should be formally examined by the DJE in conjunction with AGS and IPS. Such a revised approach should be exchequer neutral.	DJE	Q2 2019
9	Escort activity, outputs, and inputs in all categories and provided by each entity involved, should be recorded routinely, and reported comprehensively and periodically.	IPS/AGS	Ongoing
10	IPS Management should engage with colleagues in the Home Office as well as the devolved Governments in Scotland and Wales to ascertain the comparability of prisoner escort services		



	between Ireland and these jurisdictions with a view to establishing the scope for the transferability of any efficiency measures.		
11	A detailed framework governing the performance of prisoner escorting services should be established, including the measurement, monitoring and reporting of performance under a range of established indicator. The starting point for indicators to be included within this framework should be the suggested indicators as set out in Section 5.6 of this report.	IPS	Framework Adopted Q3 2019



Balanced Scorecard

The aim of the balanced scorecard for Value for Money Reviews is to allow for an overall standardised quality score to be designated for programmes. Such ratings are intended to be of use to policy makers and to those – including Oireachtas Committees and the general public – scrutinising the cost effectiveness of spending. The Prisoner Escorts programme scores highly in some areas but poorly in others. Overall, it could be considered to have an intermediate or “amber” rating.”

Prisoner Escorts in the Criminal Justice System VFMPR Balanced Scorecard	
Quality of Programme Design	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are the programme objectives clearly specified? Objectives are not clearly specified or documented, however they are relatively clear, and widely understood by service providers. Are the objectives consistent with stated Govt priorities? Is there a clear rationale for the policy approach being pursued? The objectives are consistent with long-standing criminal justice principles and practice, and are not in conflict with Government policies or priorities in relation to the criminal justice system. Are performance indicators in place from the outset, to allow for an assessment of programme success or failure in meeting its objectives? If not, can such success/failure indicators be constructed ex post? To date escorting of prisoners has not been subject to performance measurement or the use of any formal performance indicators, and ex-post analysis of performance has not generally been possible or easily ascertainable. The analysis and recommendations in this Review provide a basis for future performance measurement and assessment. Have alternative approaches been considered and costed, through cost-benefit analysis or other appropriate methodology? Alternative approaches have been considered in the past, although not through formal cost comparisons, cost-benefit analysis or similar methodologies. Are resources (financial, staffing) clearly specified? Resources are clearly specified in relation to PSEC (the dedicated IPS unit that was intended to be the predominant escort service provider). However inputs from wider sources are regularly required but are not clearly specified. 	
Implementation of Programme / Scheme	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent have programme objectives been met? In particular, what do the success/failure indicators show? There are no success/failure indicators recorded to confirm the meeting of objectives. However available evidence suggests objectives are met to a high degree, and the day-to-day smooth 	



operation of the criminal courts system occurs in part due to the effective provision of escort services.

- **Is the programme efficient in terms of maximising output for a given input and is it administered efficiently?**

There is an absence of clear data on service efficiency. The Review has established unit costs of activity but without an historical trend nor clear benchmarks against which to compare them. However the international benchmarks identified suggest similar services are delivered at lower unit costs elsewhere, and other findings suggest there may be significant scope for greater efficiency in Ireland, through reducing the demand for escorts and minimising or eliminating the occurrences requiring the most costly types, through enhancing their delivery model and administration, and through greater use of supporting technological and logistical systems. Recommendations provide the scope to review and enhance efficiency further where possible.

- **Have the views of stakeholders been taken into account?**

Stakeholder perspectives have been considered and taken into account in the review

Cross-cutting aspects

- **Is there overlap / duplication with other programmes?**

There is no overlap with other programmes or services. However there is a risk of service duplication in the organisational responsibilities in place. Its extent has not been possible to establish, and there is evidence of substantial co-ordination efforts to eliminate or confine it to unavoidable cases given wider service objectives.

- **What scope is there for an integrated cross-departmental approach?**

There is great scope for an integrated and cross-agency approach. Currently services are provided by PSEC, non-PSEC prison officers and AGS, and each interact continuously with Courts Service personnel in delivering the service. There is over-reliance on informal means of co-ordination and no use of modern logistical and fleet management systems. Service enhancement will affect or depend on all of these agencies adopting more integrated and best practice approaches.

- **Are shared services / e-Govt channels being used to the fullest extent?**

There is scope for greater use of technology to enhance service efficiency, management and monitoring, and recommendations are made in this respect.

- **Can services be delivered more cost-effectively by external service providers?**

External service providers may be in a position to provide some services more cost-effectively, however it is premature to seek to adopt such a model. Improvements to the existing model are recommended after which the comparison with alternatives should take place.

1. Background and Introduction

1.1 Introduction

This is the Final Report of a Value for Money and Policy Review (VFMPR) of Prisoner Escort Services in the Criminal Justice Sector. The review is one of a number being undertaken within the Justice family (the Department of Justice and Equality and agencies under its aegis) in the current round of VFMPRs agreed under the multi-annual budgetary process and in compliance with the Public Spending Code. The review was undertaken between January 2017 and August 2018 under the direction of a Steering Committee comprising representatives of the Department of Justice and Equality (DJE), the Irish Prison Service (IPS), An Garda Síochána (AGS), and the Courts Service (CS), and with an independent chair.

1.2 Programme Overview and Review Scope

The physical movement of detained persons is necessary in a range of circumstances, and their safe, secure and timely transportation is a statutory duty of both the IPS and AGS. The most common situations that require transportation are the movement of prisoners to and from court venues, to and from prison venues, and between prisons and hospitals, although other circumstances can give rise to an escort requirement. In all such circumstances prisoners must be escorted in a manner that ensures their secure detention while on escort, their safety, the safety of the public, and the safety of prison officers and Gardaí providing the escort and transportation service, while at all times upholding the human rights and dignity of the detainees and complying with the law.

Provision of such prisoner escort services is a distinct public service delivered within the criminal justice system, and one requiring skill, time, human resources, the means of transport, management, administration and other inputs. Its effectiveness and efficiency is therefore important to measure, review and record as part of good practice in public policy management and delivery.

1.3 Value for Money Review Process

The VFMPR Initiative is a well-established part of the Public Spending Code that seeks to examine and secure improved value for money from public expenditure. VFMPRs seek to examine exchequer spending in specific areas so as to provide a basis on which more informed decisions can be made on priorities within and between programmes. In overall terms the purpose of any VFMPR is to address a set of standard questions, including:

- what is the rationale and the objectives for the scheme?
- are the objectives still relevant, in light of evolving policy priorities?
- has the scheme achieved its objectives?
- how efficiently has the scheme been delivered?
- how does the scheme rate against alternative ways of achieving the same objectives?

The VFMPR process is one of a range of initiatives aimed at increasing the level of information available to improve decision making and to assist in the implementation of evidence-informed policies.

1.4 Terms of Reference for Review

The Terms of Reference for the Review are as follows:

- i. Assess the rationale for and objectives of prisoner escort services, the extent to which the objectives are clearly specified and the validity of those objectives including their compatibility with overall Government priorities and those of the Department of Justice and Equality;
- ii. Assess the justification for the organisational approach taken to delivery of prisoner services and whether alternative approaches have been considered and costed;
- iii. Examine whether inputs and resources (financial, staffing) are clearly specified, analyse their level and trend and assess the efficiency of the programme, including with respect to inter-agency co-operation and co-ordination;
- iv. Identify and analyse outputs associated with the escort services and the level and trend of those outputs;
- v. Examine the extent to which service objectives have been achieved, and the effectiveness with which they have been achieved;
- vi. Evaluate the degree to which the objectives warrant the allocation of public funding on a current and ongoing basis, consider international best practice, and examine the scope for alternative policy or organisational approaches to achieving these objectives on a more efficient and/or effective basis including, among others, a cross departmental approach; use of shared services / eGovernment channels and external service provider provision;
- vii. Examine performance indicators in place to allow for assessment of programme success or failure; and
- viii. Make recommendations for the future operation and delivery of escorting services and specify potential future performance indicators that might be used to better monitor and manage service performance.

1.5 Methodology

The methodology has comprised:

- a review of relevant recent documentation and literature pertaining to escort provision in the criminal justice system;
- collection and analysis of centrally-held data on prisoner movements requiring escort, from the IPS;
- collection and analysis of centrally-held data on the Prison Service Escort Corps (PSEC), including its activity, resourcing and expenditure;



- planning, implementing and supporting a process of “live” escort measurement and monitoring in a range of prison and Garda settings over the course of a full month, the collation and aggregation of the data, and its subsequent analysis and review;
- consultation with PSEC management;
- consultation with IPS and AGS personnel active in escort management;
- consultation with personnel active in escort provision in a number of regional settings;
- a process of wider stakeholder consultation involving the invitation and subsequent review of written submissions from a range of parties;
- an informal survey of prisoners; and
- an examination of escort practice and provision in other jurisdictions.

1.6 Structure of Report

The report is structured as follows:

- Section 1 introduces the review, and sets out its objectives;
- Section 2 describes escort service provision, including its rationale and objectives, how and by whom it is provided, the public service outputs and inputs typically involved, and the logic model that has therefore informed the review;
- Section 3 presents findings regarding escort outputs, inputs, effectiveness and efficiency;
- Section 4 presents stakeholder perspectives as gathered from review consultations and a survey of prisoners;
- Section 5 considers the ongoing relevance of the services, international practise, potential alternative approaches to service provision, and future performance indicators; and
- Section 6 presents conclusions and recommendations.

2. Service Provision and Review Logic Model

2.1 Introduction

This section provides an overview of prisoner escort provision in Ireland. It begins by describing it and the most typical circumstances where escorts are provided. It then sets out generally recognised service objectives of the principal providers (the IPS and the AGS). Section 2.4 describes the organisation of escort provision in terms of agency responsibilities, escort categories, and prison service provision. Section 2.5 summarises the outcomes of previous reviews, while Section 2.6 describes standard operating processes and procedures that accompany the escorting of prisoners. Section 2.7 describes escorting activity within and outside the scope of the review, and finally, Section 2.8 considers service outputs and inputs, and the logic model that has informed this VFMPR.

2.2 The Requirement to Escort Prisoners

The movement and transportation of persons lawfully detained is a feature of every country's criminal justice system, and typically arises where such detainees require transportation to and from courts, to and from hospitals and other places where medical assistance is provided, between different prisons and places of detention, to attend to other requirements of court orders (e.g. to attend external assessments), or more rarely for humane and compassionate reasons such as to attend funerals or visit dying relatives.

In Ireland where such journeys are required, detainees are escorted by Prison Officers or members of AGS.

2.3 Service Objectives

The service objectives relating to prisoner escorts encompass security, legal, duty of care, and efficiency concerns. The overall aim of prisoner escorts in the Criminal Justice system is to provide for the safe, secure, timely and consistent transportation of persons held in custody under provisions of criminal justice legislation, where their movement is necessitated for administrative, legal, managerial or policy reasons.

Other general objectives include to ensure:

- public safety and the safety of officers providing the escorts;
- that prisoners are kept in secure custody;
- the care, safety and wellbeing of prisoners while being escorted;



- where escorts take place to facilitate court appearances, to ensure prisoners are produced in a timely manner, at the time and location required, in accordance with the law, the legal requirements of court hearings, and the continued lawful detention of individuals;
- the escorting agency is fully compliant with its legal duties and obligations; and
- escort services are provided effectively and efficiently.

2.4 Organisation of Escort Provision

2.4.1 Overview

In general terms prisoners are escorted as follows:

- in cases of initial District Court hearings that follow arrest and detention by AGS, prisoners are escorted to the sitting Court by AGS;
- for onward transportation to prison if detained on remand or committed, prisoners are escorted either by the IPS or AGS, depending on circumstances;
- when already held on remand in prison and required to attend court hearings, escorts are typically provided by AGS (except in “double” remand cases where they may already be serving an unrelated sentence or are being held on remand in relation to a number of unrelated charges or cases, in which case the escort is provided by the IPS);
- prisoners serving a sentence at prison who are required to attend court hearings are escorted by the IPS;
- prisoners detained at prisons (whether sentenced or on remand) who require hospital or external medical attention are typically escorted by IPS. Such escorts can take the form of transportation to and from a hospital, as well as the provision of “bedwatch” custody/security when a prisoner has been admitted to a hospital (with phases/shifts of prison officers’ such work regularly involving no prisoner transportation when the hospital admission is prolonged);
- prisoners in custody at a prison requiring transfer to another prison for operational reasons are escorted by IPS; and
- in other very rare cases, escorts are typically provided by IPS.

Another category is the escort of high-security prisoners particularly those posing unique security risks, and those detained at Portlaoise Prison (the only high-security prison in the State), in which case armed escorts are provided by AGS, or escorts are provided by IPS with active support of AGS and in some cases military support. Finally, the need occasionally arises for the secure escort of prisoners held in the Central Mental Hospital to attend court sittings.

2.4.2 Prison Service Escort Corps (PSEC)

The responsibilities of Irish prison authorities and AGS in the area of prisoner transportation have been the subject of study and review dating back to the 1990s, and beyond. The Prison Service Escort Corps

(PSEC) was established in 2005 under the auspices of the Proposal for Organisational Change (PFOC)¹, as a dedicated prisoner escort and transportation service, as the preferred response to what was considered a need to address what had been found to be the highly-resource intensive, poorly managed and ill-equipped escorting function then in place, and in response to practice observed in other jurisdictions. Its establishment saw it take responsibility for some escort functions previously provided by AGS, and also had the intention of providing dedicated resources and predictability, addressing inefficiency and duplication, and assisting prison authorities to deploy non-escort resources exclusively towards orderly and progressive prison management.

As well as for day-to-day organisation and delivery of escort services, PSEC management have responsibilities that include:

- staff supervision and management;
- fleet management and maintenance;
- prisoner security, processing, management and administration at destinations (courts and hospitals predominantly); and
- external stakeholder engagement.

It should be noted that while PSEC was established with a core escorting role and set of objectives, the legal responsibility of ensuring prisoners in custody attend court when required, remained and continues to remain with prison Governors.

Escort provision today extends across PSEC, non-PSEC personnel in the IPS, and Gardaí within and outside a number of Garda escort units. However only PSEC has exclusive responsibility, and is exclusively active, in prison escorts and the management of prisoners while away from prison.

In 2016 the staff complement of PSEC was approximately 142 officers. The 2016 grade structure was as shown below.

Table 2.1 PSEC Staff Complement, 2016	
Governor III	1
Assistant Governor	1
Chief Officer 2	3
Assistant Chief Officer	7
Assistant Chief Officer - Detail	1
Prison Officer	125
Prison Administrative and Support Officer (PASO) 3	4
Total	142
Source: IPS	

The staffing complement and grade structure has changed very little over the years. On its establishment in 2005 the PFOC agreement was that the Corps would comprise a Governor, Deputy

¹ The agreement reached setting out revised working arrangements which resulted from facilitated negotiations between the Irish Prison Service and the Prison Officers' Association at the Labour Relations Commission.

Governor and 140 personnel, of which 124 were prison officers, which mirrors very closely the position in 2016.

The opening of the Criminal Courts of Justice (CCJ) at Parkgate Street in Dublin in 2009, and its effective centralisation of all central Dublin criminal court business in a modern and purpose-designed facility, led to the need to deploy PSEC staff (and occasional prison-based staff) resources to permanent tasks of managing the intake, flow, appearance and outflow of high daily numbers of prisoners across numerous individual courts which cover various jurisdictions (District Court, Circuit Court, Central Criminal Court, High Court (Extradition), Special Criminal Court, and Court of Appeal (Criminal)).

In addition to the management and flow of sentenced prisoners arriving from prisons to attend court hearings, in accordance with the Courts and Courts Officers Act 2009, IPS (typically PSEC) officers take custody of arrested persons brought to the CCJ by AGS, and manage their custody and movement to appear in court, as well as their further transportation to Cloverhill Prison if remanded in custody.

The staffing resources required can vary moderately depending on the level of court activity taking place, and also on the time of the day. However such staffing resources are required in the underground custody area, for the orderly movement of prisoners between the custody suite and individual courtrooms, and for the purposes of “manning the dock” within courtrooms.

In the case of custody, the posts are required for purposes such as:

- receiving prisoners at a reception area in the custody area brought from prisons or Garda stations, where searches and property storage are necessary;
- cell monitoring and management of three corridors of holding cells;
- monitoring of additional holding cells located alongside courtrooms in the upper levels of the building, while prisoners are waiting to appear;
- managing the process of prisoner consultation with legal practitioners in the custody area;
- control room management;
- accompanying prisoners in a secure manner from the custody area to and from up to 22 courtrooms;
- liaising with court registrars as regards court lists and outcomes;
- releasing persons from custody where bail is granted; and
- prisoner security and management while appearing or waiting to appear, and the noting of results and the obtaining of any warrants or other documentation.

On Saturday and Bank Holiday court sittings at the CCJ, members of AGS currently have responsibility for prisoner management at the facility.

PSEC also resources the permanent prisoner flow and management within Cloverhill Courthouse when it is sitting, also requiring a relatively fixed resource input that is therefore unavailable for external transportation duties elsewhere, while a much smaller similar input is required to manage criminal court activity at Cork and Limerick court buildings. In total it is estimated that the PSEC servicing of

these court venues (external prisoner flows, internal flows and internal static posts), require a full-time equivalent staffing of approximately 60 officers, equivalent to some 42% of total PSEC staff.

The remainder of PSEC personnel are fully-deployed in the active management and provision of nationwide escorting services to and from different prisons and places of detention.

In 2016, expenditure incurred by PSEC amounted to approximately €13.05m, of which €1.5m related to vehicles as capital expenditure. Within recurrent expenditure, salaries (including various allowances), and overtime and additional hours, typically represents 80-90% of costs, with fleet management/vehicle operating costs, staff travel and subsistence, and other operational costs (predominantly digital radio) the main other cost categories (Table 2.2).

Table 2.2 PSEC Expenditure, 2012-2016 (€, 000)					
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Salaries	8,103	8,046	8,168	7,989	7,780
Allowances and Additional Hours	1,689	1,761	1,663	1,719	1,733
Fleet Management (Recurrent)	625	601	901	901	1,257
Travel and Subsistence	589	591	559	546	504
Operational Services (Non-Fleet)	92	119	159	158	164
Catering and Prisoner Meals ²	110	96	65	52	49
Incidental Expenses	21	49	38	79	23
Other Miscellaneous Expenses	38	32	10	11	15
 Vehicles (Capital) ³	 109	 124	 124	 136	 1,525
Total	11,376	11,419	11,687	11,592	13,050
Total (Non-Capital)	11,267	11,294	11,564	11,456	11,525
Source: IPS					

Recurrent PSEC costs have varied only marginally over the period 2012-2016.

2.4.3 Wider Escort Provision by IPS

Escort provision by PSEC was never expected to serve the needs of the criminal justice system comprehensively, and from the outset it was expected that cases such as the movement of persons arrested and detained by AGS to their initial District Court hearings would remain the function of AGS⁴, as would the provision of special category high-risk escorts. Similarly, the PFOC agreement that established PSEC, included the following statement:

² Declining PSEC expenditure on catering and prisoner meals reflects the process whereby Arbour Hill Prison took responsibility for providing much of the catering needs of prisoners escorted by PSEC, particularly those attending the CCJ which is located close to Arbour Hill Prison. Catering costs at Arbour Hill increased over the same period.

³ A significant number of new prison vehicles was purchased in 2016

⁴ With the exception of custody management at the CCJ as referenced earlier.



“Escorts liability of Prisons

Where PSEC staff are fully deployed and there are no PSEC staff available to perform any remaining escorts which need to be covered, then the prisons in question will be required to cover those escorts. For example, it is expected that, in exceptional circumstances, court demands may exceed PSEC capacity and in such circumstances, the individual institutions will be required to facilitate such peak demands. The extent to which this situation arises will be reviewed on a regular basis by the Monitoring and Review Group.

Other circumstances where individual institutions may have to facilitate escorts would include urgent hospital escorts, hospital in-patient cover particularly at night and temporary release escorts as necessary. Such circumstances will be reviewed on a regular basis by the Monitoring and Review Group.”⁵

While numbers have fallen in recent years, the average number of persons in prison increased each year between 1995 and 2011, which contributed to increasing volumes of escorts required in the early years following the establishment of PSEC. Following the opening of the Criminal Courts of Justice (CCJ) in 2009 - which centralised and modernised criminal court facilities serving the bulk of Dublin District and Circuit, and (national) Central Criminal and Special Criminal Court business, and its need of permanent prisoner management resourcing, PSEC staff were given new CCJ responsibilities. Over the period therefore prisons have also been required to perform increasingly significant volumes of escorts, as the volumes required nationally grew, and the evolving functions of PSEC staff, made the circumstances necessitating it more frequent and less exceptional than anticipated in the PFOC.

As well as those of PSEC, other staff resources based within individual prisons are deployed to escort duties in two sets of circumstances:

- to assist PSEC officers with escorts they are providing (i.e. to accompany PSEC on individual escort journeys); and
- to carry out additional escorts, without any involvement of PSEC staff or vehicles (i.e. fully delivered by prison personnel and prisoner transportation vehicles attached to the prison itself, rather than to PSEC).

2.4.4 Escort Provision by An Garda Síochána

As already mentioned, AGS continues to provide for the escorting of prisoners between Garda stations and District Court venues for their prisoners’ initial hearing, and such services are generally organised using Divisional and District personnel and vehicles as required. AGS also undertakes and supports the escorting of special category high security prisoners held at Portlaoise Prison from the Garda District Office at Portlaoise.

However beyond these categories, AGS also remains primarily responsible for the escorts of all remand prisoners in custody, which it serves via four (dedicated) Garda Escort Units, located in alignment with

⁵ Proposal for Organisational Change in the Irish Prison Service, Revised – July 2005, p.20

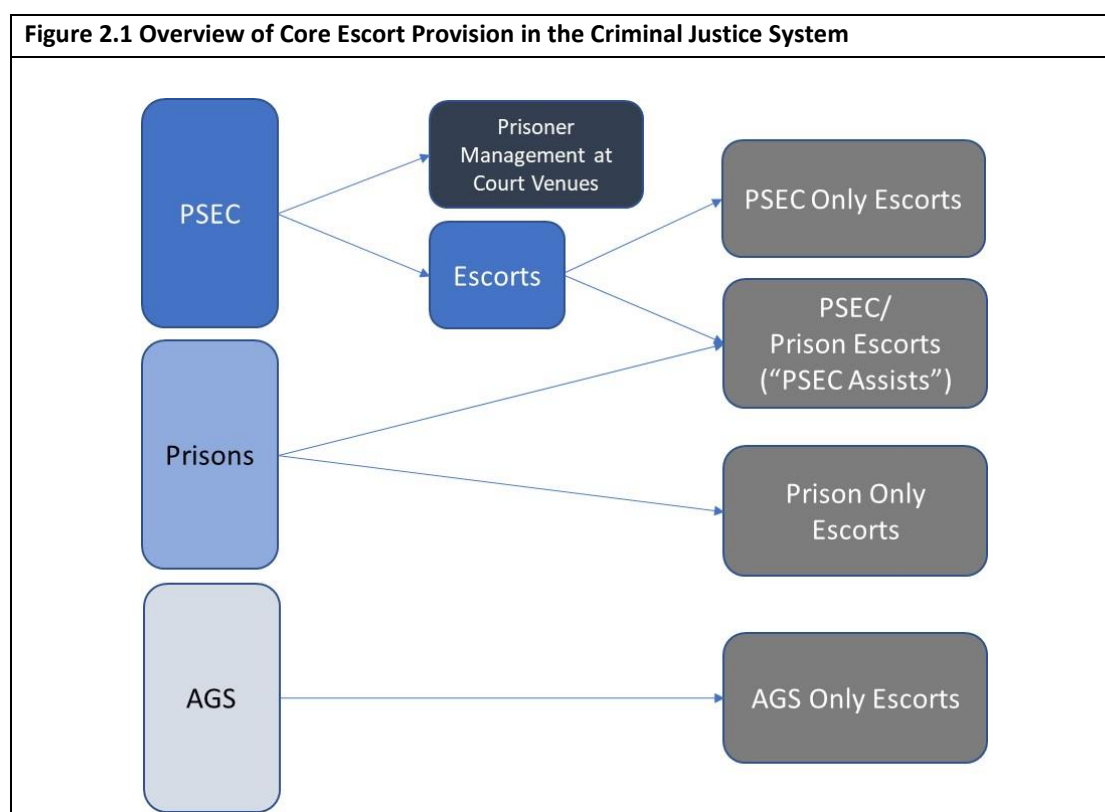
major needs (i.e. in the Garda Districts that prisons with high volumes of remand prisoners requiring escort are located) – Ronanstown/Lucan (Cloverhill Remand Prison and CCJ), Limerick, Cork, and Castlerea. Each AGS escort unit has staff and vehicles dedicated to this escort function, and each works almost exclusively on escorts between prisons and courts. As required, each unit draws on officers from outside the dedicated escort units that work in other roles.

2.4.5 Summary of Escort Provision

In summary, prisoner journeys that require the great bulk of prisoner escorts in the criminal justice sector fall into four categories:

1. Those provided by PSEC (and that involve PSEC resources beyond any deployed as static posts in court venues, particularly the CCJ);
2. Those jointly provided by PSEC and personnel drawn from individual prisons;
3. Those provided by prison personnel only; and
4. Those provided by AGS.

Figure 2.1 summarises this organisation of escort services.



2.4.6 Court Appearance by Video-Link

As well as appearing in person, a court can order prisoners to appear by video-link from prisons in accordance with Section 33 of the Prisons Act 2007. In general terms the Act provides for appearance

by video-link where the application (made by either the accused or the Director of Public Prosecutions) relates to:

- an application for bail or free legal aid;
- any other proceedings on indictment, or any other application, except
 - applications made at the commencement of a trial;
 - hearings addressing arraignment or sentencing; or
 - any other application that may require the presence of the prisoner in the view of the court, for example in respect of assessing the capacity of the prisoner to stand trial, or an application to dismiss the charges on the grounds of insufficient evidence.

A Judge can direct for the use of video-link in such circumstances, if satisfied that doing so would not be prejudicial to the prisoner, would serve the interests of justice equally to having a prisoner present, that the technical infrastructure is in place and fit for the purpose, and that to do so is otherwise appropriate in the specific circumstances of the case and in light of the age, mental and physical capacity of the prisoner, and other circumstances surrounding the case and the hearing.

The first video-link sitting in the State took place in May 2009, and the technical infrastructure has been put in place in increasing numbers of prisons and court venues since then. Most prisons now have facilities to provide for external video-link to courts, and court venues with the infrastructure in place include the CCJ, Cloverhill Courthouse, Limerick District Court, Galway District Court, the Court of Criminal Appeal, Ennis District Court, and a number of others. New courthouses currently under construction or modernisation including in Limerick, Cork, Letterkenny, Drogheda, Wexford, Mullingar and Waterford are all expected to incorporate video-link capabilities when complete.

Data provided by PSEC show that:

- a total of 2,955 court appearances took place via video-link in 2016 (which is less than 10% of all prisoners movements necessitated for court appearances, notwithstanding that all of the latter would not be eligible for potential appearance by video-link);
- these took place between nine different court venues and nine different prisons;
- Cloverhill Prison and Cloverhill Courthouse were the most active venues facilitating such services; and
- the use of video-link has increased each year since 2009.

2.5 Previous Reviews

Proposal for Organisational Change in the Irish Prison Service (2005)

As discussed earlier, PSEC was introduced on foot of the PFOC Agreement of 2005, which described its role and purpose as follows:

“The purpose of the Prison Service Escort Corps (PSEC) will be to provide a prisoner escorting service, including inter prison escorts, planned out-patient, and in-patient, hospital escorts

(conditional on the availability of resources as priority will be given to court escorts) and, where necessary, a “manning the dock” service. The PSEC will carry out its business in an effective and efficient manner with all escorts co-ordinated and properly structured.”

The agreement provided that the Corps would operate on an independent basis within the IPS, and that it would be based at Cloverhill Prison but with 4 regional units based at Cork, Limerick, Castlerea and the Portlaoise/Midlands complex.

The PFOC also included a number of provisions in relation to staffing issues (e.g. reporting, hours of attendance, allowances, leave, training, gender balance and selection), general provisions regarding operational risk management, along with provisions already referred to relating to the ongoing escort liability of prisons. No reference was made to efficiency or effectiveness measurement, indicators or targets in the PFOC agreement.

Comptroller and Auditor General Review of Annualised Hours in the Prison Service (2016)

The Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG) undertook a review of Annualised Hours in the Irish Prison Service in 2016. While it noted the separate status of PSEC from prisons and reported on aspects of its experience with annualised hours alongside those of all prisons, it made no specific findings nor recommendations in relation to PSEC nor to prisoner escorts.

Joint Task Review under Public Service (Croke Park) Agreement (2016)

Under the Croke Park Agreement it was agreed that a joint task review of PSEC would be undertaken as a stand-alone IPS function. The purpose was to review and reform staffing configurations and task lists in PSEC similar to reviews elsewhere in the IPS. The scope of the review included consideration of:

1. staffing levels in each (PSEC) location;
2. the number and destination of escorts from each prison;
3. the court infrastructure and facilities in each region;
4. legislative issues with regard to warrants, committals and bails;
5. interaction with the Courts Service, the State Solicitors, and An Garda Síochána;
6. use of video-linking for court appearances;
7. efficiencies in the operation of the CCJ;
8. logistical and administrative efficiencies;
9. management structure;
10. expansion of court sittings, esp. Saturday and Bank Holiday courts.

The review involved consideration of the following aspects of the escort function at each PSEC base:

- staffing numbers and configuration;
- number and destination of daily escorts;
- number of assists required;
- operation of local courts, including building facilities;
- centralisation of local courts;
- level of video-linking;

- barriers to carrying out daily duties;
- management and oversight;
- training and skills requirements, including driving.

The Review was also informed by a separate task review of the PSEC function at the CCJ undertaken in 2012.

The Review concluded with the proposal for a revised staffing complement of 162, of which 142 would be at Prison Officer grade (an increase of 17 on the pre-existing complement). This number would include 49 staff serving the CCJ, of which approximately 15 would be static posts serving predominantly the custody area, and the remainder involved in internal and external prisoner flows and transit.

The Task Review report did not set out any detail on escort volumes, unit costs, nor effectiveness or efficiency indicators or targets.

The Working Group on Efficiency Measures in the Criminal Justice System (District and Circuit Courts) was established in November 2011 at the request of the Chief Justice and the Minister for Justice and Equality. The remit of the Group has been to identify and report on how greater efficiencies and cost reduction measures could be achieved in the operations of the Circuit and District Courts, with particular emphasis on how the agencies in the sector interact with the courts and with each other. Since 2011 it has reported on a number of occasions setting out specific proposals, initiatives and policy plans under implementation or development that seek to address District and Circuit Court efficiencies in line with its remit.

The most recent report was published in October 2015⁶, and summarised progress with respect to a range of initiatives and measures, including:

- the Criminal Procedure Bill;
- video-link;
- pre-trial procedures;
- centralised custody;
- alternative courts;
- court presenters;
- Précis of evidence;
- Probation service.

Several of these have implications for or seek to reduce the requirement for prisoner escorts:

- the Criminal Procedure Bill (which remains in place as proposed legislation) includes
 - provisions aimed at extending substantially the use of court-prison video-link as the default option for criminal hearings in many categories;

⁶ Available at <http://www.justice.ie/en/JELR/Efficiency%20Working%20Group%20Report%202013-14.pdf/Files/Efficiency%20Working%20Group%20Report%202013-14.pdf>

- legislatively providing for the electronic transmission of warrants, seeking to allow shorter periods spent by escorting officers at court venues awaiting the issue of paper-based warrants;
- the extent of use of video-link has obvious implications for prisoner escort requirements, and the Working Group has overseen and monitored its widening application under the provisions of existing legislation;
- the Working Group has overseen a pilot initiative to centralise custody hearings in one court venue within a court District, with a view to reducing the extent of prisoner transportation and to contribute to public safety at court venues.

2.6 Escort Processes and Procedures

The responsibilities of officers providing prisoner escorts are numerous, and extend beyond the duration of any journey. At a general level they include ensuring:

- each prisoner is identified, searched, and risk assessed prior to transit;
- journeys are planned in respect of prisoner numbers, profile, risks, routes, stops, and schedules;
- escorts have possession of relevant and appropriate documentation, medication, and prisoners' personal property prior to departure;
- appropriate provision for prisoners in special categories (e.g. those with special needs, those with untypical healthcare requirements, vulnerable prisoners, or those with other requirements);
- contingency plans are in place in the event of any incident or accident;
- documentation is passed on where prisoners are handed over at destination;
- prisoners are observed and checks conducted as appropriate during journeys;
- appropriate rest, hydration, nutrition and toiletry needs are provided to prisoners over the course of the journey;
- any restraints are used appropriately;
- prisoners are communicated with as appropriate;
- prisoners are not photographed nor paraded unnecessarily in the public domain;
- different categories of prisoner are not escorted together (e.g. male/female, adult/juvenile, high and low security status);
- female officers are involved in the escort of female prisoners;
- prisoners' medical needs are provided for while in transit, and appropriate procedures are followed if non-routine needs or medical symptoms occur while on escort; and
- court outcomes are noted and warrants are collected and lodged.

2.7 Review Scope

The scope of the current review extends across escorts of sentenced prisoners and those detained on remand, principally for court hearings, for hospital appointments and in-patient medical care, and as inter-prison transfers (transfers between prisons). While it does not include the transportation of prisoners from Garda stations to court venues for initial hearings following arrest, the routine collection of prisoners from a number of Garda stations in Dublin and their transportation to the CCJ as a single journey is carried out by the Garda escort unit at Ronanstown, and is a significant and regular feature of its work. As such it differs from the transportation of Garda detainees to District court venues in other nationwide locations, by virtue of its scale, regularity, and ability to be anticipated and planned in advance as part of a regular escort function. It is therefore included within the scope.

While the intention had been to focus the analysis only on prisoner transportation to the exclusion of prisoner management within court settings, the fact that in such a majority of court venues across the country, such prisoner management is undertaken almost exclusively by escorting officers as part of the escort function, meant that it was not possible to effectively measure the resourcing of escort transit in isolation from prisoner management at court venues. However the management of prisoners at the CCJ is quite unique given its scale, and requires a high number of fixed posts in addition to transportation roles. Cloverhill Courthouse is a second such special case, which while much smaller than the CCJ, is located adjacent to and linked to Cloverhill (Remand) Prison, and therefore requires relatively little vehicular movement of prisoners but significant management of prisoners on site. In both of these latter cases, the analysis seeks to estimate prisoner management inputs and costs separately from escort activity elsewhere.

Activity outside the scope of the review includes:

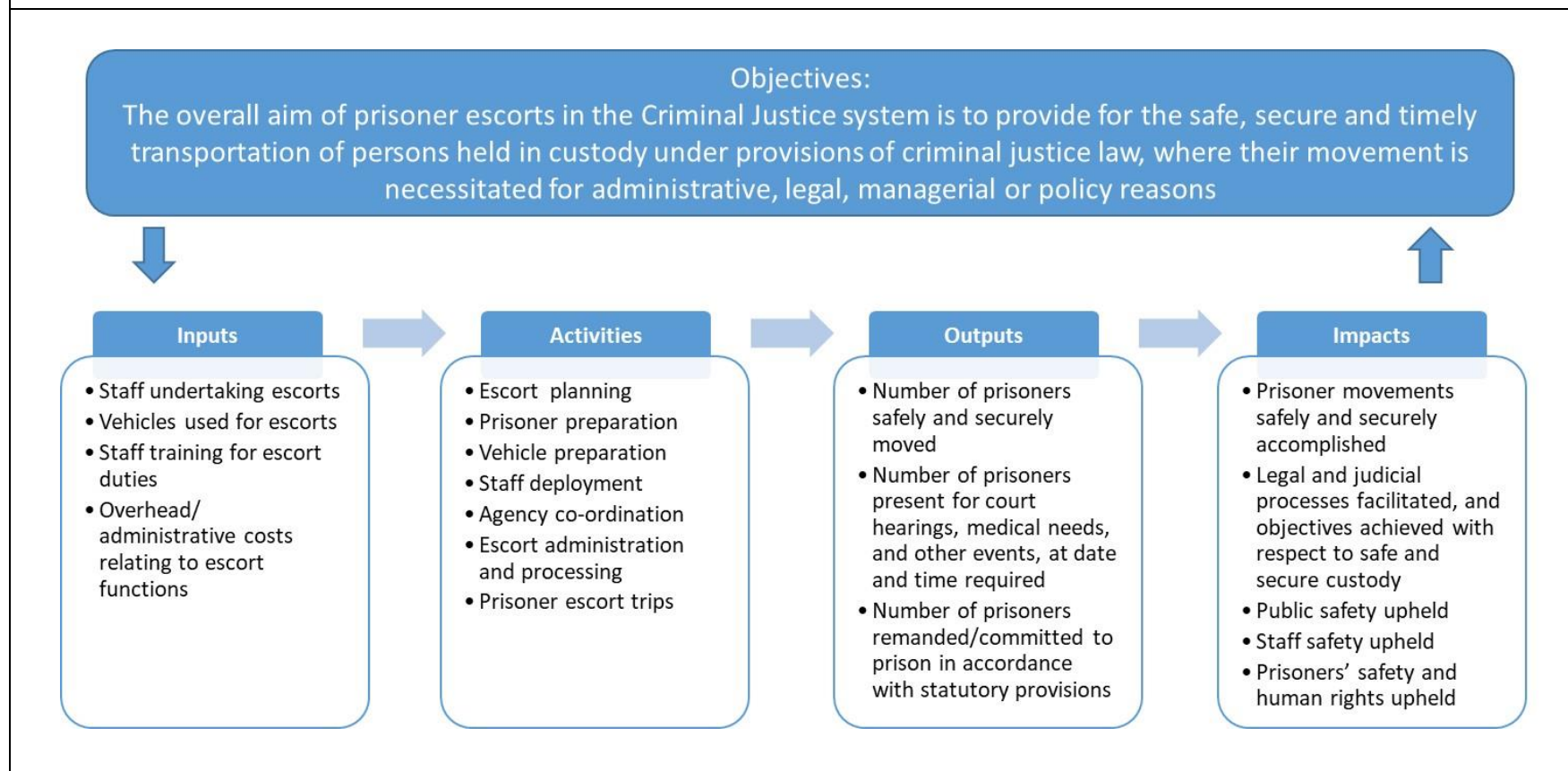
- Garda transportation of detained persons to District Court hearings following arrest (except for the routine collection of such cases in Dublin by the Garda escort unit at Ronanstown as described above);
- the transportation by AGS of persons seeking asylum, or persons involved in extradition cases; and
- the movement of persons in state care but outside the criminal justice system, where carried out by or supported by AGS.

2.8 Service Outputs, Inputs and Review Logic Model

A logic model for prisoner escorts in the criminal justice system, setting out service outputs, inputs, outcomes and impacts, which has informed the VFMPR, is shown in Figure. 2.2.



Figure 2.2 Prisoner Escorts in the Criminal Justice System – Review Logic Model





3. Outputs, Inputs, Effectiveness and Efficiency

3.1 Introduction

This Section addresses escort activities, their outputs, inputs, effectiveness and efficiency. As the metrics for which the most systematic and comprehensive data is available, Section 3.2 begins by addressing outputs, and profiles escort volumes, patterns and trends, including in overall terms and relative to underlying prison populations. Section 3.3 then turns to inputs, and presents data and findings on typical resources required, unit costs and the opportunity costs in terms of wider functions and responsibilities affected when resources are diverted to prisoner escorting. Section 3.4 considers evidence and findings regarding service efficiency while Section 3.5 considers the effectiveness of escort provision.

3.2 Outputs

3.2.1 Data Sources

To measure outputs, recorded data on the number of occasions prisoners are moved, either by way of inter-prison transfers, for court appearances, or for hospital appointments, are utilised. Occasions in which a prisoner may be moved under escort from a prison other than for these reasons are extremely rare (and include for example for humane reasons such as to attend a family funeral, for non-hospital health assessments, or for pre-release assessment).

The data comes from the IPS PIMS (Prisoner Information Management System), and covers all prisoners committed or remanded to any prison in the country. As such it includes escorts provided by the IPS as well as the bulk of Garda escorts (i.e. those involving the movement of remand prisoners between prisons and court settings).

Full data is available for 2016 (i.e. all such transfers arising at all prisons). Data for previous years is available for the larger prisons and those most active therefore in prisoner transfers.

3.2.2 Overall Escort Volumes

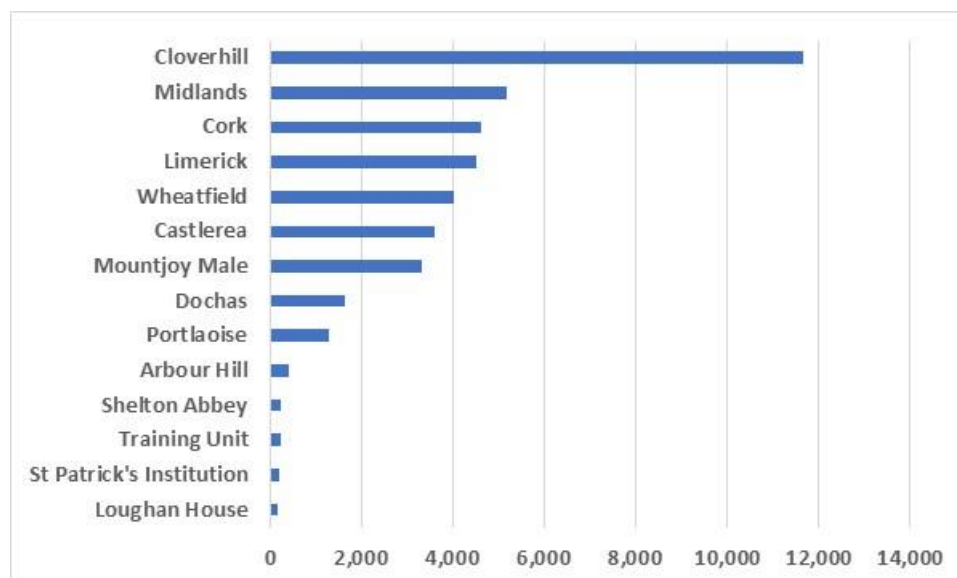
In 2016, there were:

- 9,412 cases of prisoners being transferred between prisons;
- 27,099 occasions where prisoners were escorted on journeys to courts to appear; and
- 4,617 occasions where prisoners were escorted to hospitals for medical reasons.

Of the total of 41,128 such cases, court appearances account for approximately two thirds (65.9%), while inter-prison transfers and hospital appointments account for 22.8% and 11.2% respectively.

Figure 3.1 shows the breakdown of overall 2016 outputs according to prison/place of detention⁷.

Figure 3.1 Prisoners Escorted on External Journeys, 2016



Source: IPS PIMS System

As would be expected the largest prisons account for the bulk of escort activity. Amongst them Cloverhill Prison is very dominant, reflecting its status as the only remand prison in the country, which results in it having prisoners accommodated for much shorter average durations than others (and hence higher inter-prison transfer rates where remand prisoners are subsequently sentenced), as well as higher relative incidences of prisoners making court appearances (as unlike those sentenced, remand prisoners' cases are ongoing while they are in custody).

The prisons at the lowest end of the scale (e.g. Arbour Hill, Shelton Abbey, the Training Unit and Loughan House⁸) are smaller prisons, more typically used to accommodate low risk prisoners and those nearing the end of their sentences, and hence have low levels of escort requirements relative to others.

How escort types differ across the prisons is shown in Figure 3.2. It shows that:

- the high volume of escort requirements at Cloverhill prison is driven largely by prisoner court appearances;
- court appearances are also very significant contributors at the Dochas Centre (a female prison that also accommodates female prisoners on remand), and the regional prisons at Cork, Limerick and Castlerea;

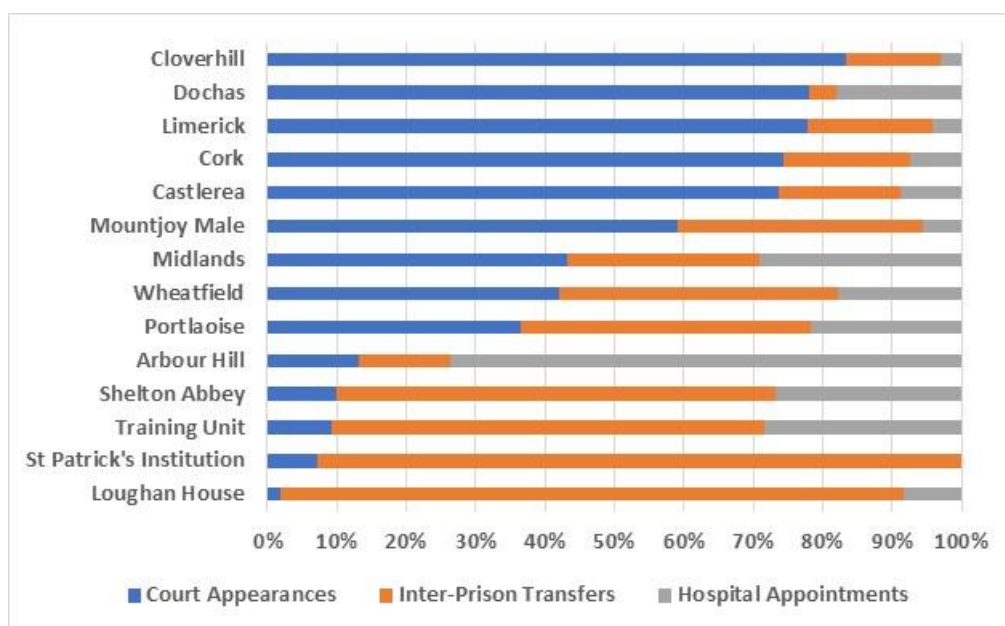
⁷ PIMS data for each prison includes occasions both of prisoners being transferred into and out of the prison. For the system as a whole, transfers "out" have a corresponding transfer "in" at another location, represent a single prisoner transfer and escort, and equate to each other. The number of inter-prison transfers is calculated as the average of transfers "in" and transfers "out".

⁸ St Patrick's Institution officially closed in April 2017.



- no single type dominates escort requirements at the Midlands prison (the largest prison in the country);
- the requirements at smaller prisons are more typically driven by inter-prison transfers than court appearances; and
- hospital appointments account for similar shares across all prisons, with the exception being Arbour Hill, a prison that disproportionately accommodates older and infirm prisoners.

Figure 3.2 Share of Transfer Types by Prison, 2016



Source: IPS PIMS System

3.2.3 Annual Output Trends

Annual trends in the number of prisoner transfers requiring escorts (for all three categories of journey) are available for Castlerea, Limerick, Cork, Midlands, Cloverhill and Mountjoy (Male) prisons (which together accounted for 80% of the national total in 2016, and generally dominate activity every year).

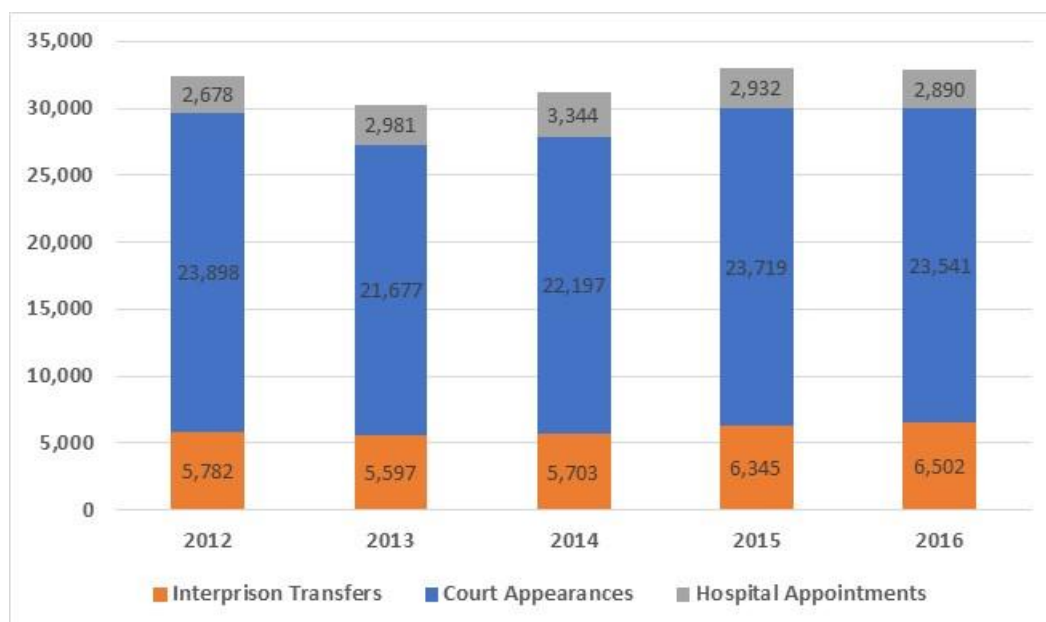
Figure 3.3 shows the trend for these prisons between 2012 and 2016, and indicates that the volumes have fluctuated only marginally over the period, showing both years of increase and decrease. In total the six prisons accounted for:

- 32,932 prisoner transfers in 2016;
- 32,995 in 2015;
- 31,243 in 2014;
- 30,255 in 2013; and
- 32,357 in 2012.



Figure 3.3 also shows that the types of transfers have also remained relatively consistent in their relative contribution to the total volumes.

Figure 3.3 Trend in Annual Prisoner Journeys, 2012-16 (Selected Prisons)



Source: IPS PIMS System

3.2.4 Escort Trends throughout the Year

The pattern of prisoner transfers and movements throughout the year is also observable using PIMS data. Figure 3.4 shows the monthly share of annual transfers, in total as well as in each category, for 2016 (across all prisons).

The patterns show:

- relatively steady and consistent numbers arising for hospital appointments throughout the year;
- quite steady volumes of inter-prison transfers throughout the year, with discernible falls in August and September; and
- more fluctuating volumes arising for court appearances, but with August and September showing significant falls relative to other months.

The pattern of escorts for court appearances is obviously highly-dependent on sitting court terms (although escorts for court appearances are required outside of sitting court terms⁹). Court terms vary

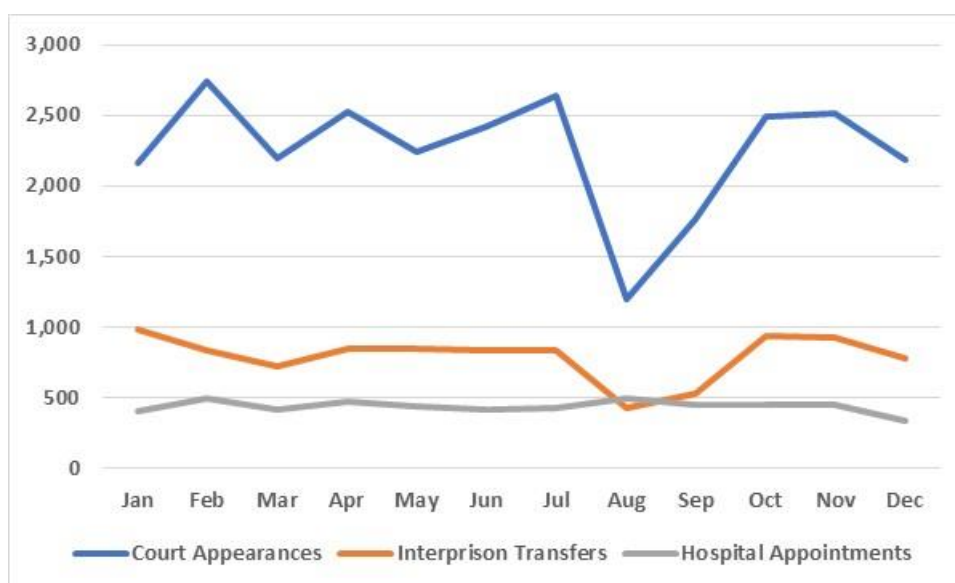
⁹ Strictly speaking the District Court sits throughout the year other than on Good Friday and Christmas Day. These are therefore the only days when prison escorts for court appearances are definitively not required.



slightly depending on location and the jurisdiction of the court in question, however short periods around Easter, June, and year-end are typically non-sitting periods, as well as during August and part (or all) of September.

The falls in levels of inter-prison transfers in August and September are felt to reflect the proportion of such transfers that take place to facilitate prisoners' attending court sittings in jurisdictions other than those of their "home" prison, the necessity of which decline outside of court terms.

Figure 3.3 Monthly Prisoner Journeys 2016 (All Prisons)



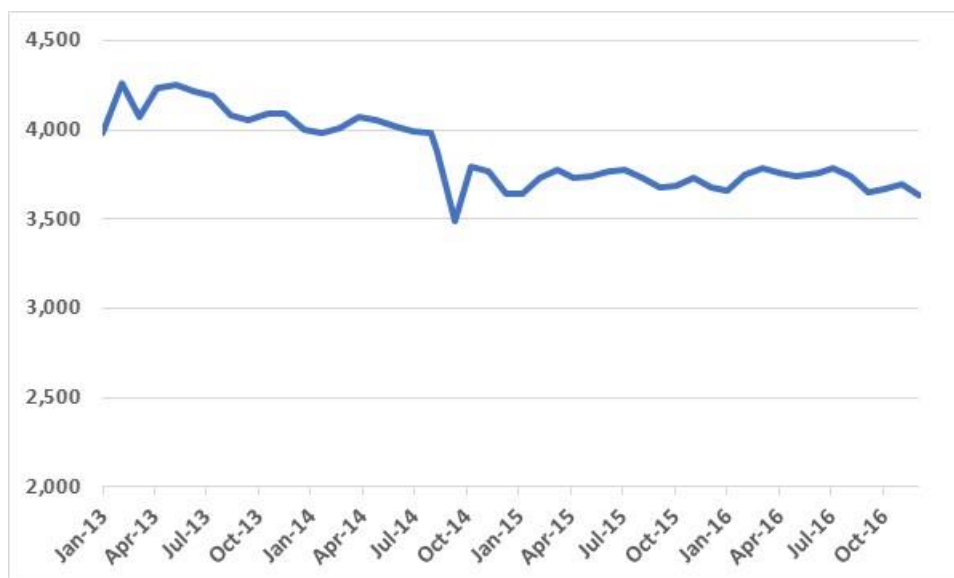
Source: IPS PIMS System

3.2.5 Escort Volumes Relative to Prison Populations

While it increased annually for many years up until 2011, the total prison population has been falling each year since then. Figure 3.4 shows the trend in the average daily number of prisoners in custody over the period 2013-2016.



Figure 3.4 Total Prison Population, 2012-2016



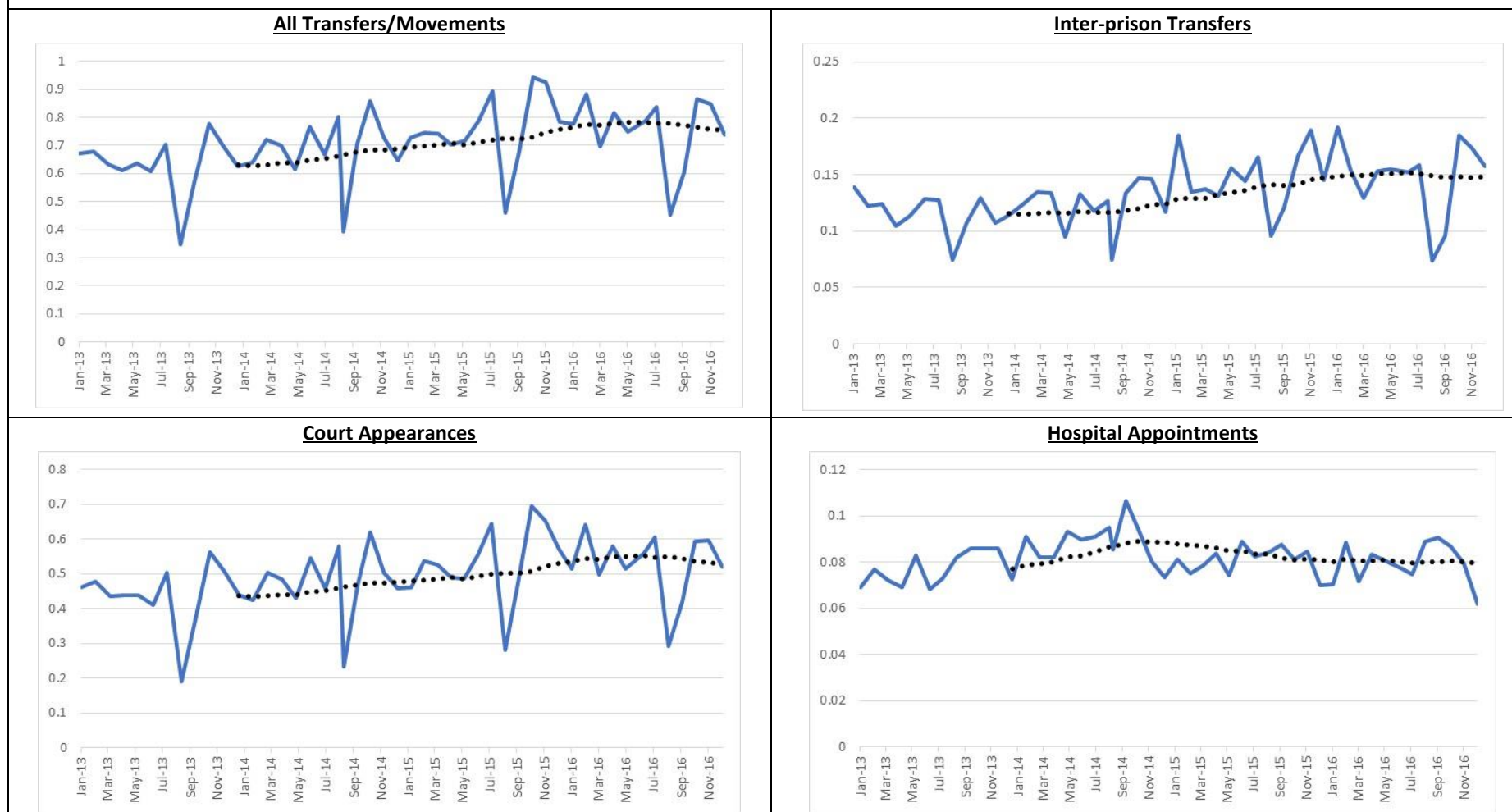
Source: IPS

To further explore any change in the “intensity” of prisoner escort activity, it has been compared to overall prison populations.

Figure 3.5 shows the absolute trend in the number of overall prisoner transfers/movements, inter-prison transfers, court appearances, and hospital appointments, each relative to the numbers of people in custody, for the years 2013-2016.¹⁰ The trendline depicts the 12-month moving average.

¹⁰ Transfer data includes the 6 dominant prisons rather than all prisons.

Figure 3.5 Prisoner Transfers per Person in Custody 2013-2016



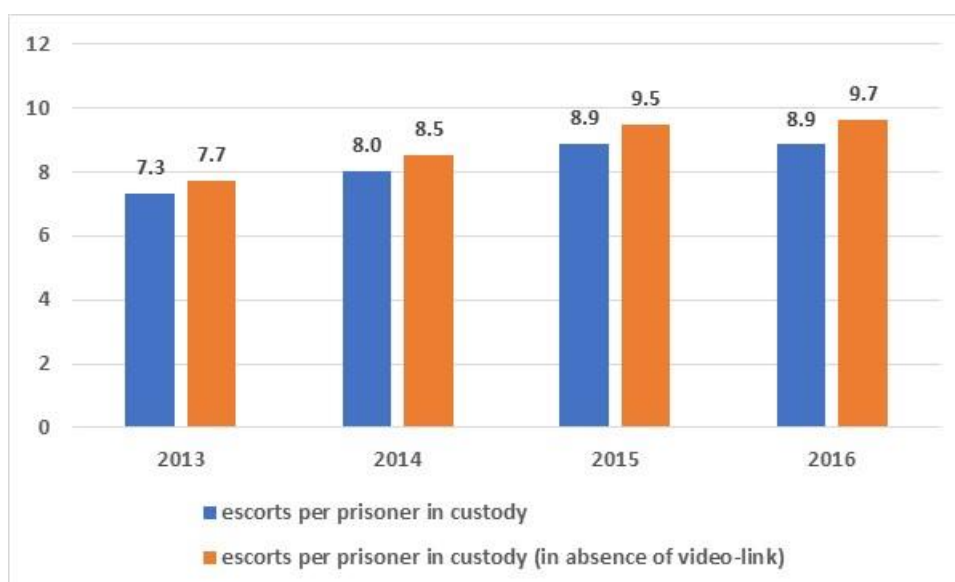
Source: IPS



While the numbers vary month by month (due to monthly variations in both population and transfer levels), the incidence of inter-prison transfers and court appearances relative to the underlying prison population showed some level of moderate increase, particularly between 2012 and 2015, before flattening or declining again somewhat in 2016. In the case of hospital appointments, a very moderate increase was evident in 2013 and 2014, while 2015 and 2016 returned to a more steady and consistent rate of activity.

To further identify an underlying trend in the intensity of escorts (or escort numbers per prisoner in custody), the annual number of escorts in the years 2013-2016 (for the six main prisons for which the data is available) is compared to the total prisoner population, both in actual terms and in the hypothetical scenario of no video-link appearances having taken place. Figure 3.6 shows the respective trends.

Figure 3.6 Prisoner Escorts per Prisoner in Custody 2013-2016



Source: IPS

There are many underlying reasons that might give rise, individually or in combination, to increases in the numbers of court appearances (necessitating escort journeys) of a fixed number of prisoners in custody, that may relate to crime patterns and the criminal charge case-mix associated with the prisoner population, the seriousness of prisoners' crimes and the volumes of court business such crime gives rise to, the investigation and prosecution of that criminal activity, the length of criminal trials and the volumes of evidence and witness testimony, the incidence of recourse to appeal and/or legal challenge, and the extent of necessary court attendance by prisoners on non-criminal business, such as in family law cases, High Court bail, judicial review or Habeas Corpus¹¹ applications.

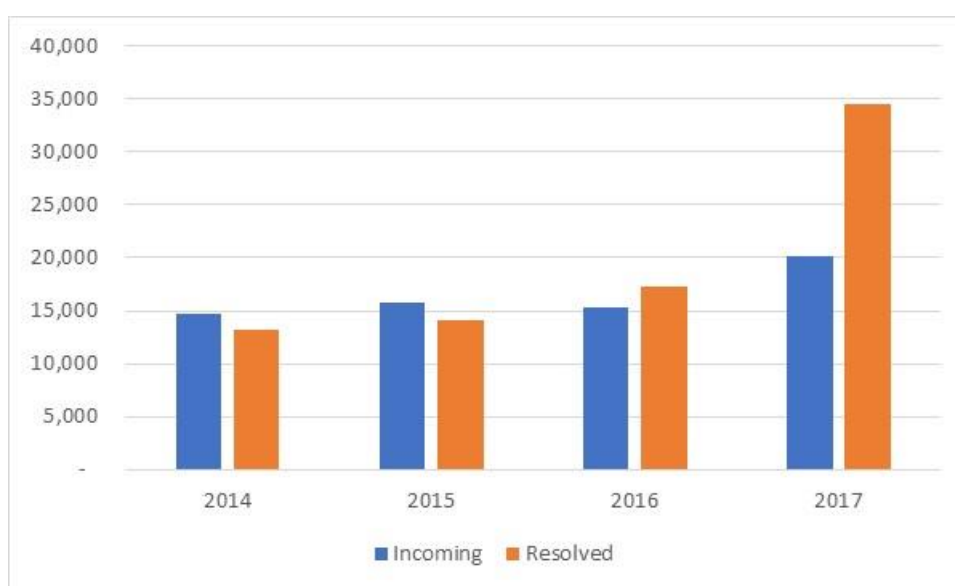
¹¹ Applications to have a court determine the legality of an applicant's detention.



A detailed examination of any underlying trend in court-attendance trends among detained prisoners and its potential causes has been beyond outside the scope of the current Review, however a number of factors are widely considered relevant even if their distinct contribution is unknown.

Firstly, there is evidence of growing incidence of appeals in the criminal court caseload. Figure 3.7 shows the numbers of incoming and resolved criminal case appeals in the Circuit Court, Appeals Court and Supreme Court for the years 2013-2016¹².

Figure 3.7 Circuit Court, Court of Appeal, and Supreme Court Appeals in Criminal Cases, 2014-2017



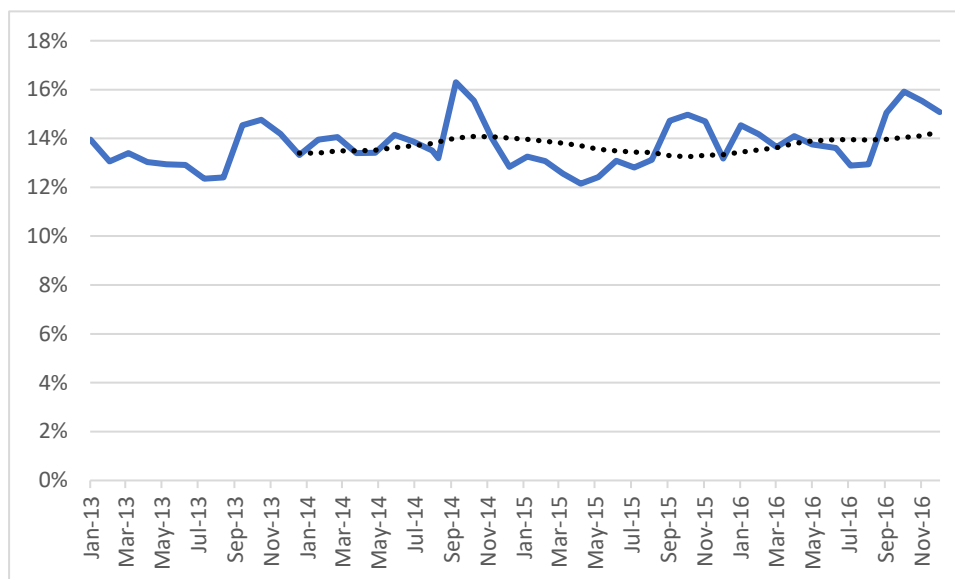
Source: Courts Service Annual Reports

Secondly, there was a very slight upward trend in the proportion of total prisoners in custody that were on remand and awaiting trial over the same years (Figure 3.8). While only a very marginally-increasing share of the total (the 12-month moving average percentage share increased from 13.4% of the total to 14.3% over the period January 2014 to December 2016), the court attendance of remand prisoners is much more frequent than those of sentenced persons.

¹² Higher numbers of resolved than incoming cases in any one year reflects cases carried over from previous years.



Figure 3.8 Remand Prisoners as % Total Numbers in Custody, 2013-2016



Source: IPS

3.3 Inputs

3.3.1 Inputs and Unit Costs – Irish Prison Service

As discussed earlier, the IPS provides escorts in three ways:

- exclusively by PSEC;
- by PSEC but with the assistance of non-PSEC staff drawn from prisons on any given day, specifically for that purpose; and
- by prison staff only.

PSEC resources do not capture all escort activity and inputs. Non-PSEC escorts on the other hand are not clearly measured and reported on as a matter of routine.

In order to effectively record and measure the inputs involved in non-PSEC escorts, and to be in a position to measure their unit costs (as measured on the basis of prisoners moved and journeys undertaken), it was decided for the purposes of the Review to actively measure and record “live” escort activity taking place at a number of prisons over the course of a full month. Furthermore it was decided that this should cover escorts in the categories of PSEC-assists and non-PSEC escorts. This approach was favoured as:

- it would allow the resource inputs into a high number of “typical” non-PSEC escorts to be measured (and hence their unit costs estimated), and therefore facilitate the estimation their inputs and unit costs of such escort provision; and



- it would allow the “opportunity cost” within prisons arising from their need to provide either PSEC-assistance or escorts with no PSEC assistance, to be examined in live prison scenarios.

Table 3.1 shows PSEC-assisted and non-assisted escort activity across a number of prisons in the month of April 2017.

Table 3.1 PSEC-assisted and Unassisted Escort Activity, Various Prisons, April 2017							
	Journeys	Prisoners	Total KM	Travel Duration (hrs)	average per journey		
					prisoners (no.)	distance (km)	duration (hrs)
Limerick	109	179	10,084	798	1.6	92.5	7.3
Castlerea	64	98	11,224	476	1.5	175.4	7.4
Cork	80	151	6,800	651	1.9	85.0	8.1
Cloverhill	42	45	1,908	325	1.1	45.4	7.7
Midlands	134	169	7,295	746	1.3	54.4	5.6
Total	429	642	37,311	2,996	1.5	87.0	7.0

Whether providing assistance to PSEC or not, in the month of April 2017 the five prisons above engaged in some 429 escort journeys, that transported 642 prisoners a total of 37,311 km, involving time in transit of some 2,996 hours.

The data also show that:

- the average number of prisoners per journey was 1.5 (ranging between 1.1 and 1.9);
- the average distance per journey was 87km (ranging between c.45km to c.175km); and
- the average time in transit (rounded to the nearest hour) was 7 hours (ranging between 5.6 and 8.1hrs).

The variability in average numbers of prisoners per journey and distances travelled, reflects the geography of the prison and the court venues local escort providers typically serve, and the nature of escorts that fall outside core PSEC capacities (which is frequently a reflection of their advance notification as well as their routine or exceptional nature). The underlying case mix (e.g. prisoners, their genders, their escort needs, court venues, etc.) is also quite variable in different settings and time periods. Variability in the average duration of journeys meanwhile, as well as reflecting the nature of the underlying business mix, is also a reflection of the incidence of hospital escorts in any period, although they may not involve long journeys they can involve extended periods of duty (both in-patient and frequently where visiting accident and emergency Departments).

The number and grade of prison staff deployed to assist or undertake these escorts is shown in Table 3.2 (the staff numbers represent occasions when staff at each grade were deployed to an individual escort).



Table 3.2 Staff Deployed to PSEC-assisted and Unassisted Escorts, Various Prisons, April 2017					
	Chief Officer	Assistant Chief Officer	Prison Officer	Work Training Officer	Total
Limerick	4	18	191	21	234
Castlerea	0	25	93	19	137
Cork	0	5	161	11	177
Cloverhill	0	13	105	4	122
Midlands	0	0	94	0	94
Total	4	61	644	55	764

The 429 escort journeys involved at the prisons in question in April 2017 required 764 deployments of prison (i.e. non PSEC) staff, with the grade dominated by Prison Officers, although also with deployment of Work Training Officers and Assistant Chief Officers. It should be noted however that this does not suggest a total of 764 prison personnel on the 429 journeys, as PSEC personnel also took part in “PSEC assist” journeys.

Prisons report that the grade mix of staff deployed is not the subject of any overt or routine prison policy or procedure. Typically it simply reflects day-to-day decisions about the needs of particular escorts, the staff duties and needs of the prisons themselves on those same days, and the alternative (or lack of alternative) escort staffing options.

To facilitate estimation of unit (and total) costs of the escort activity, over the course of April 2017 the prisons in question also recorded the staff hours that were allocated to this escort activity, whether they were regular or additional hours, and the staff subsistence costs the escorts gave rise to for the staff deployed.

Measuring the total resources devoted to “average” or “typical” escorts, requires focus on the “prison-only” (i.e. PSEC-unassisted escorts that form part but not all of the escort activity profiles in Tables 3.1 and 3.2, as the extent of PSEC inputs into “assisted” escorts was not recorded by the prisons). Table 3.3 shows the average staff hours, subsistence, and distance travelled, both per journey and per prisoner escorted for “prison-only” escorts.

Table 3.3 Estimated Average Inputs per Escort			
	Staff Hours	Distance (km)	Subsistence (€)
per escort journey	23.9	110.4	71.5
per prisoner escorted	17.2	79.3	51.4

Moving from these measurements of typical escort inputs, to estimations of typical unit costs, requires three steps:

1. calculation of the remunerative costs of the staff time input;



2. calculation of any additional “overhead”, for given levels of staff time; and
3. estimation of the vehicle transportation costs associated with the travel involved.

In the first instance, the staff cost per hour is assumed to be as follows:

- average remuneration costs of PSEC officers (including basic pay, overtime, all allowances and employer’s PRSI) is currently estimated at €67,000 per annum;
- assumed total hours per annum per staff member is 2,000; and
- total hourly remunerative cost is therefore €33.50 for IPS staff typically deployed to escort duties.

In 2016, the total overhead costs per PSEC officer, beyond remuneration, travel and subsistence, and the operating or capital costs of vehicles, amounted to approximately €1,781 per person, or €0.89 per staff hour.

Transportation costs are estimated using the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport’s guidelines for vehicle fuel and non-fuel operating costs parameter values¹³, for given distances of travel and for relevant categories of vehicle. The great bulk of prisoner escorting takes place in secure vans and cellular trucks¹⁴.

In this case the estimates are as follows:

- average fuel consumption across light and ordinary goods vehicles¹⁵ per 100km - 12.34 litres;
- current assumed market cost of 1 litre of diesel fuel - €1.20; and
- total fuel costs per 100km travel of a fleet of light and ordinary goods vehicles or equivalent - €14.81.

The guidance for non-fuel vehicle costs (oil, tyres, maintenance and depreciation) is €0.129 per km across the same categories of vehicle.

In total therefore the transportation costs per 100km travelled of vehicles that generally reflect the IPS escort fleet mix, are estimated at €27.71 per 100km.

Applying these cost values to the inputs shown in Table 3.3 yields unit cost estimates of all IPS escort activity, broken down across staff hours, subsistence, overheads, and transportation (Table 3.4).

¹³ See http://www.dttas.ie/sites/default/files/publications/corporate/english/common-appraisal-framework-2016/common-appraisal-framework2016_1.pdf

¹⁴ Taxis are occasionally used for prison escorts, however the extent was not possible to record in the “live” activity record used for this analysis, so it is assumed that such transportation costs are similar on a per-prisoner basis to more typical transportation costs.

¹⁵ The categories most representative of the PSEC fleet



Table 3.4 Estimated Unit Costs of Prison Escorts (€)

	<u>Staff Cost</u>	<u>Subsistence</u>	<u>Overhead</u>	<u>Transportation</u>	<u>Total</u>
per escort journey	800.75	71.5	21.28	30.93	924.48
per prisoner escorted	575.13	51.4	15.28	22.21	663.99

3.3.2 Inputs and Unit Costs - An Garda Síochána

While also a permanent task of AGS and one to which resources are exclusively devoted, prisoner escort activity undertaken by AGS is on a much smaller scale than that of IPS, and it is not recorded systematically as a matter of routine. For this reason for the purposes of the current review a process of measuring and recording “live” escort activity across a range of Garda Divisions and Districts most active in escort provision, was also initiated over the month of April 2017.

Escort activity delivered by AGS that is within the scope of the present study (and dominates all AGS escort functions), relates predominantly to the escorting of prisoners detained on remand, between prisons and court settings, following, or in order to appear at, court hearings. A proportion of the routine escort activity also relates to the transportation of persons held at Garda stations in Dublin to the Criminal Courts of Justice for District Court hearings. Garda escort units are therefore attached to Divisions and Districts in which prisons requiring high volumes of AGS escorts are located.

Table 3.5 shows the levels of escort activity as recorded at some of the main Garda Districts providing formal prisoner escorts in April 2017.

Table 3.5 AGS Escort Activity, Various Districts, April 2017

	Journeys	Prisoners	Total KM	Travel Duration (hrs)	average per journey		
					prisoners (no.)	distance (km)	duration (hrs)
Castlereagh	19	35	3,986	142	1.8	209.8	7.5
Portlaoise	41	61	3,989	151	1.5	97.3	3.7
Ronanstown	60	326	5,526	447	5.4	92.1	7.5
Roxboro	32	76	3,902	338	2.4	121.9	10.6
Mountjoy	14	20	1,285	85	1.4	91.8	6.1
Total	166	518	18,688	1,163	3.1	112.6	7.0

From the five bases shown above, a total of 166 escort journeys were undertaken in the month, in which 518 prisoners were transported a total of just under 19,000km. The total time in transit was 1,163 hours.

The data on AGS escorts indicate that:

- the average number of prisoners per journey was 3.1 (ranging from 1.4 up to 5.4);



- the average distance travelled per journey was 112.6km (ranging from 91.8km to 209.8km); and
- the average duration of journeys was 7 hours (ranging between 3.7 and 10.6hrs).

The generally higher average number of prisoners per journey (average of 3.1) than for PSEC-assisted and unassisted (IPS) escorts shown in Table 3.1 (average of 1.5), reflects the high ratio of prisoners per journey on regular single-journey Garda escorts between a number of Dublin Garda stations and the CCJ.

Only officers at Garda or Sergeant grades were involved in these escorts, and the former dominated. Sergeants took part in just 11% of the escorts journeys, and mainly those provided at Portlaoise (which supports the IPS or exclusively undertakes armed escorts of high security prisoners to and from Portlaoise prison).

The estimation of inputs and unit costs in relation to Garda escorts follows the same approach as with prison escorts. Table 3.6 shows average inputs per escort, with the latter expressed on a per-journey and per-prisoner basis.

Table 3.6 Estimated Average Inputs per Escort			
	<u>Staff Hours</u>	<u>Distance (km)</u>	<u>Subsistence (€)</u>
per escort journey	16.7	112.6	36.8
per prisoner escorted	5.4	36.1	11.8

In the case of staff costs, input values are converted into unit costs via the following steps and assumptions:

- the average annualised remuneration including base pay, overtime and allowance is estimated; and
- a total annual work contribution of 2,000 hours is assumed, resulting in an hourly staff cost of €30.25.

Transportation costs are calculated in the same way for AGS escorts as for IPS escorts, as the mix of vehicles would generally be similar. An overhead figure of €2.94 per hour is estimated (equal to average non-pay administration costs per person in 2016, and assuming 2,000 hours of work per person per annum).

Table 3.7 shows the resulting estimates of the unit costs of Garda escorts.

TABLE 3.7 Estimated Unit Costs of IPS Escorts (€)					
	<u>Staff Cost</u>	<u>Subsistence</u>	<u>Overhead</u>	<u>Transportation</u>	<u>Total</u>
per escort journey	506.5	36.8	49.2	31.5	624.0
per prisoner escorted	162.3	11.8	15.8	10.1	200.0



3.3.3 PSEC Costs

Given the high volumes of escorts provided by PSEC in general, rather than for the full month, a detailed “live” record of activity was collated for four selected dates in April 2017 – April 3rd, 5th, 14th and 27th. In aggregate, the resulting record of total escort activity was considered likely to reasonably reflect the general pattern of its work and thereby allow average inputs and costs to be estimated.

In assessing PSEC escorts, care also needed to be taken in relation to the CCJ. Officers involved in escort transportation to and from the CCJ are typically involved in the management of prisoners at the location during the day (including their custody and their internal movement between custody areas and court areas), and while many are involved in external movement, they fulfil the duties of the fixed posts at the CCJ and Cloverhill Courthouse, which together account for approximately 42% of PSEC staff (as shown in Section 2.4.2). Much of this input is therefore associated with the management of prisoners at quite untypical court venues, rather than the transportation and escorting of prisoners to and from the venues.

To consider the inputs, unit costs and total costs of PSEC escort activity, the analysis is limited here to PSEC escorts other than those to the CCJ or Cloverhill Courthouse. Table 3.8 shows the record of such PSEC escorts in aggregate for the dates selected. These exclude those associated with Cloverhill Courthouse, but for illustrative purposes provide a breakdown between those associated with the CCJ and those involving other locations.

Table 3.8 PSEC Escort Activity, April 2017							
	Journeys	Prisoners	Total KM	Travel Duration (hrs)	average per journey		
					prisoners (no.)	distance (km)	duration (hrs)
PSEC Only – CCJ	3	10	82	25	3.3	27.3	8.5
PSEC Only – Non CCJ	46	95	8,515	406	2.1	185.1	8.8
PSEC Assisted – CCJ	14	63	377	280	4.5	26.9	20.0
PSEC Assisted – Non CCJ	33	74	3,514	246	2.2	106.5	7.5
Total	96	242	12,488	958	2.5	130.1	10.0

On the dates selected, PSEC provided 96 such escort journeys transporting 242 prisoners. Of these, just over half of the journeys and slightly below half of the prisoners, were accounted for by escorts involving assistance from prison-stationed staff. Of the total for those dates, around one quarter of the journeys and prisoners escorted were movements to and from the CCJ.

The record also shows that

- the average number of prisoners per journey was 2.5;
- the average distance travelled per journey was 130.1km; and
- the average duration of journeys was 10 hours (i.e. 10 hours from first departure to final return).



Moving to the measurement of costs, average inputs are examined for non-CCJ escorts only. Table 3.9 shows average staff hours, distances and subsistence costs arising for such PSEC-provided escorts.

Table 3.9 Estimated Average Inputs per Escort			
	<u>Staff Hours</u>	<u>Distance (km)</u>	<u>Subsistence (€)</u>
PSEC Only			
per escort journey	21.8	185.1	60.6
per prisoner escorted	10.6	89.6	29.4
PSEC-assisted			
per escort journey	23.5	106.5	76.4
per prisoner escorted	10.5	47.5	34.1

Average costs per PSEC escort are from this point calculated on the same basis as previously, with respect to remuneration, overheads, and transportation. Table 3.10 shows the results for PSEC escorts.

Table 3.10 Estimated Unit Costs of PSEC Escorts (€)					
	<u>Staff Cost</u>	<u>Subsistence</u>	<u>Overhead</u>	<u>Transportation</u>	<u>Total</u>
PSEC Only					
per escort journey	730.08	60.62	19.40	51.29	861.39
per prisoner escorted	353.51	29.35	9.39	24.84	417.09
PSEC-assisted					
per escort journey	788.37 ¹⁶	76.40	20.94	29.51	915.22
per prisoner escorted	351.57	34.07	9.34	13.16	408.14

3.3.4 Total Costs

Based on the foregoing, Table 3.11 shows the estimated total costs of overall 2016 escorting of prisoners in transit as well as their management at court venues. The estimate follows the following steps:

1. The total number of annual prisoner movements as per the PIMS system is broken down into those provided by prisons only and the AGS, based on comparison of April 2017 live records from prisons and AGS, with PIMS data on total national movements;
2. The remaining number of movements as recorded by PIMS is assumed to represent the total PSEC escorts, which are further broken down into PSEC-only and PSEC-assisted escorts based on the proportions recorded in PSEC live data in April 2017;

¹⁶ The higher staff cost associated with PSEC-assisted escorts simply reflects variation in the nature of escorts that fall outside PSEC-only capability or capacity in any period (which can be similar to those that do not, or can typically be those providing less advance notification, or be of a more exceptional nature).



3. The estimated proportion of the remaining PSEC escorts associated with the CCJ and Cloverhill Courthouse are removed (as they are costed elsewhere);
4. All remaining escorts are multiplied by their estimated unit costs; and
5. The resulting total costs are then added to the estimated total costs of prisoner movements to and management at the CCJ and Cloverhill Courthouse.

Table 3.11 Estimated Total Costs of Prisoner Movement and Management, 2016					
	Total Prisoner Journeys	Estimated Proportion to CCJ/Cloverhill Courthouse	Total Prisoner Journeys not accounted for in CCJ/Cloverhill Costs	Unit Cost per Prisoner (€)	Total Cost (€)
PSEC-Only	12,141	0.30	8,499	417	3,544,002
PSEC-Assisted	15,834	0.46	8,550	408	3,488,514
Prison Only	6,011	n/a	6,011	664	3,991,304
AGS	7,142	n/a	7,142	200	1,428,400
Sub-Total	41,128				12,452,220
Prisoner Escorts and Management - CCJ/Cloverhill Courthouse					4,830,000
Total Costs of Prisoner Movement and Management Outside Prison Settings					17,282,220

From Table 3.11 it can be seen that:

- the total costs of prisoner movement and management outside prison settings is estimated at €17.8m in 2016; and
- these costs are incurred as follows:
 - PSEC only escorts (non CCJ/Cloverhill Courthouse) – 21%;
 - PSEC-assisted escorts (non CCJ/Cloverhill Courthouse) – 20%;
 - Prison-only escorts – 23%;
 - AGS escorts – 8%; and
 - escorts and management at CCJ/Cloverhill Courthouse – 28%.

The different unit costs of the different providers, and therefore different contributions to both needs and overall costs of servicing them, reflect the different mixes of escorts typically provided by PSEC, prisons and AGS. While it is highly-active in country-wide escorts on a daily-basis, PSEC for example contributes disproportionately to the high volume of Dublin escort needs centred on Cloverhill remand prison, the other large Dublin prisons and the CCJ, which are more predictable, involve shorter distances, and more prisoners requiring the same journeys, and can therefore be provided in large cellular vehicles, with higher prisoner-staff ratios and lower time in transit. Prison-only escorts on the



other hand contribute disproportionately to hospital escorts (which can require unscheduled provision and in cases highly time- and cost-intensive inpatient escort duties), and to the geographically-disperse court venues and Districts particularly for which Cork, Limerick and Castlerea serve as committal prisons, and the escorts to which typically involve fewer prisoners each time, higher staff-to-prisoner ratios, and longer distances and durations. The AGS contribution to the overall escort task covers the full range of court-related escort types and distances, however much of it is also centred on Dublin-based work between Dublin Garda stations, the CCJ and Cloverhill prison.

3.3.5 *Opportunity Costs*

In measuring and monitoring escort activity during the course of April 2017 prison officials and members of AGS were requested to record the typical duties from which staff were redeployed in order to carry out prisoner escorting. In the case of prison staff, as the escort activity in question represented PSEC-assisted escorts or those provided exclusively by prison personnel, all such activity had such an “opportunity cost” as personnel would all have been active in other duties in the prison had they not been required to carry out escorts (only PSEC personnel are deployed effectively full-time to escorting functions).

In the case of AGS, while a number of personnel are attached to Garda escort units, they are actively deployed to other duties should escorting work not be required. Furthermore, when escorting requires it, personnel unattached to the formal escort units are assigned to escort duties. All members of AGS deployed to escort functions therefore have duties and tasks to which they would be assigned in the absence of escort work, and escorting prisoners by AGS always has opportunity costs in terms of resource utilisation.

In the case of prisons, escorting requirements affect a very wide range of alternative staff duties and functions. It was shown earlier that staff within the prisons included redeployed staff to escort functions on 764 occasions during April 2017. The following internal functions were most affected (in order of the frequency with which each was reported):

- prison divisions and landings stations;
- work training;
- prison gym;
- prison visits;
- staff detail;
- surgery;
- in-reach (services in preparation for release);
- library;
- school;
- censors;
- console (the prison communications and control centre);
- prisoner reception;
- prisoner phones; and
- Doctor’s parade.



In respect of AGS, staff in the five bases that recorded escort activity in April 2017 took part in escorting journeys on 414 occasions (covering 166 journeys) during that month. In the bases with formal escort units (Castlereagh, Roxboro Road and Ronanstown), the ratio of staff deployed from the escort units to those deployed from elsewhere was approximately 67/33 (although the data was not complete in all cases). Overall however the deployment of Garda members unattached to escort units occurred more than twice as frequently as members attached to them, particularly given the lack of any formal escort unit at Portlaoise and the scale and regularity of its escort work.

The AGS functions and duties most frequently reported as being affected (in order of their frequency) were:

- community policing units;
- regular units;
- detective units; and
- warrants units.

3.4 Efficiency

In relation to efficiency, the unit costs per escort journey or per prisoner moved have been measured, and reflect:

- (a) the geographical mix of journeys required;
- (b) the mix of prisoner numbers sharing individual journeys;
- (c) the minimum number of staff required per prisoner and per journey for safety and security reasons;
- (d) the time required in transit;
- (e) the time required at court and hospital venues;
- (f) the vehicles used and their running costs; and
- (g) the average costs of staffing escort officers.

Efficiency is also a function of how well resources are deployed to match demand, allowing for route-optimisation and the greatest number of required prisoner movements per vehicle journey. The management of the escort function by PSEC, and to the extent of their involvement, prison-based staff, generally involves the following processes:

- advance notice of upcoming requirements is received by management and detail officers in the case of court lists, inter-prison transfers and planned/scheduled hospital appointments;
- the deployment of resources, by way of vehicles, journeys, drivers and accompanying escorting officers is planned against these upcoming needs, with a one-, two- or three-week advance horizon of scheduled movements known and the typical period over which the deployment of resources may be generally planned;
- the further preparation and change of deployment plans continues up to, including and throughout the day of journeys, as the profile of scheduled journeys needs to adapt to changing requirements and unanticipated demands that occur with shortening notice (e.g. new prisoners recently brought into custody and scheduled for swift court appearances at any



court locations, unexpected production orders, urgent hospital appointments, unexpected guilty pleas of those on bail, unanticipated trials brought forward due to early completion of prior ones, etc.);

- communication between IPS headquarters, PSEC and prisons regarding both upcoming needs, short-term unanticipated requirements, the units being deployed to respond and the timing of journeys, etc, takes place largely via email and telephone communication between detail offices;
- escort units (drivers, accompanying officers and vehicles) are deployed to escorts tasks each day by PSEC or prison management, and communication during journeys is possible via Tetra radio or mobile phone;
- the main PSEC office at Cloverhill has access to a map-based live IT system showing the location of vehicles (however this is a dated system with many functional limitations, including dated maps, an inability to locate vehicles that don't have engines on, no information on prisoners, prisoner numbers or staff in the vehicle, etc.).

How seamlessly resources are aligned with and deployed to needs relates directly to the predictability of needs and the scope to plan the allocation of escort capacity. While a proportion of needs are generally predictable, particularly scheduled court business in the higher courts and many inter-prison transfers, many escort needs can be inherently difficult to anticipate, and many features of the system they serve are quite unpredictable by their nature. PSEC management estimate that for the escort demands that it typically exclusively provides (non-AGS and the more routine and non-exceptional court business), approximately 85% are reasonably predictable or are notified in advance, while approximately 15% are unanticipated and involve much less advance notice. Escort planning changes constantly therefore, and the need to meet both predictable and unpredictable requirements within a fixed set of resources and logistical capabilities, is widely reported as the core challenge in management of overall provision.

Unpredictable events that regularly occur and increase the challenges for efficient escort planning include:

- unpredictable criminal activity requiring court-prison transit shortly after the arrest/detention of suspects;
- the appearance or potential non-appearance of non-detained defendants at court hearings that may require their subsequent custody (and hence that require an escort capacity at a court sitting that may ultimately not have been needed);
- the potentially changing risk or vulnerability profile of prisoners scheduled for escort (and hence the type of escort that may be required);
- the conduct of prisoners at court, the Judges' response to it, and the response necessary from Prison Officers on escort (e.g. where a prisoner must only be detained having been found in contempt of court, and hence having an escort requirement that could not have been anticipated);
- the plea behaviour of prisoners at court (e.g. where an early guilty plea results in an escort requirement not anticipated at a given hearing);
- unanticipated events that result in cases being pushed into second sittings on given days, including legal consultation;



- normal but unpredictable court adjournments;
- the custodial or non-custodial sentencing decisions of Judges;
- the speed with which court business at a venue is generally dealt with on any given day, and its determination of when any specific prisoner may ultimately need to be present (and the time at which they can be transported afterward);
- the speed with which documentation, in particular warrants, are issued following case hearings;
- short-notice escort requirements e.g. production orders or body warrants requiring prisoners to appear at case hearings that may be unrelated to those for which they are sentenced;
- the unexpected onset of illness/health concerns for prisoners, requiring external medical attention;
- the time required at hospitals for prisoners' medical attention, treatment and discharge; and
- the potential need of in-patient care when prisoners are brought to hospital.

It is unclear how optimal route scheduling and planning is in practice. While it undoubtedly takes place in constantly changing contexts and in response to short-term changes in needs, present practices rely on IPS managerial structures and on flexibility and effective interaction between functional units in different settings, and do not involve sophisticated capabilities or systems typical of short-notice logistics management operations. Such systems in other settings benefit from predictive technologies, live GPS tracking of vehicles and operations, real-time traffic information, and other features of contemporary advanced logistics management. The 2016 PSEC Joint Task Review recognised such concerns:

"The detailing of PSEC staff, unlike that of static prison locations, varies from day-to-day in accordance with the escorts' demands. The distribution of staff and vehicles also must take account of the varying locations and routes to which staff should be directed to ensure the most efficient movement of prisoners – that is, every effort needs to be made to ensure that the maximum utility is gained from each escort journey.

In order to achieve this, a logistics function should be introduced to work in conjunction with the Detail function in PSEC (and centralised detailing as required). This logistics function should be capable of directing escort vehicles on the most efficient routes and of predicting levels of escorts and staff requirements over time. Staff will be expected to facilitate the use of technology for the purpose of security, effectiveness and supervision. This may include GPS, and Satellite Navigation systems".

The efficiency of provision, whether for a given level of escort need, or where reduced needs can also support enhanced efficiency in provision, is considered in the conclusions and recommendations.

3.5 Effectiveness

Neither the IPS nor AGS collect data to measure or monitor the effectiveness of routine escort provision. In the case of the IPS, there are no records kept regarding the extent to which escorts meet their scheduling requirements or fail to do so. Officials report that the great majority of escorts to court sittings or scheduled external medical appointments are delivered on time, although occasional lateness can arise, and that on rare occasions Governors have been summoned to court to explain the late- or non-appearance of prisoners for hearings (PSEC management estimate that this typically arises on no more than five occasions in any given year, and reasons can be related to exceptional road traffic conditions, or on very rare occasions unanticipated illnesses en-route).

Records of prisoner incidents that occur on escort are maintained by PSEC. Data reported for this Review indicate very low numbers relative to the numbers of prisoners taking journeys, with the 2016 numbers of “incidents” only reaching double digits for the least serious categories. Very serious incidents on escort such as escapes or serious assaults are reported to be extremely rare.

In the case of AGS, practitioners also report that the great majority of escort provision is timely and the scheduled times of court appearances are generally met. However here too the record is not perfect. All escort units report that they must respond to demanding and varying schedules with finite resources, and that the requirements are unpredictable and continuously change, so meeting the times required for court appearances can in cases be difficult and in some cases impossible.

Arriving late for court appearances does not always mean a prisoner is late for their personal appearance as all cases are generally listed for the same time in District Court sittings. Both IPS and PSEC escorts can have prisoners on time for their appearance by virtue of the caseload being attended to by a Judge on any given day. Furthermore, many Judges and Court Registrars work co-operatively with escorting officers, particularly in remote regional court venues at a significant distance from the main prisons. However such cases depend on goodwill, and the formal responsibilities of the prison authorities or Gardaí may still not have been met.

In terms of safety and security, assaults by prisoners are one of the most prominent incidents that take place in any context of imprisonment. In 2016 the State Claims Agency undertook a review of assaults by prisoners in the Irish prison system¹⁷, on foot of concerns that their extent was increasing and representative of a new culture of violence in prisons. The review identified scope for improved risk management at numerous levels, but in relation to the problem of assaults it found that “there is some evidence to suggest that the number of assaults is increasing, but this evidence is not compelling”, and that “the ratio of (these) assaults to the numbers of prisoners in the system is very low”. Specifically in relation to prisoner escorts, while it identified the management of assault risks having scope for improvement, it also found that “assaults while on escort account for relatively small percentage of the total number”, and that the majority of its findings and recommendations “relate to the risk of assaults in the prison complex, and particularly in areas like landings, cells and recreation areas”.

¹⁷ “Review of Assaults on Operational Prison Staff by Prisoners”, State Claims Agency, 2016 (<http://stateclaims.ie/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Review-of-Assaults-on-Operational-Prison-Staff-by-Prisoners-November-2016.pdf>)



Concerns raised by stakeholders regarding the effectiveness of escort provision include the following:

- the insufficiency of PSEC resources (i.e. those resources primarily responsible for escorting) to fulfil the requirement, and the need for additional resourcing of the function at the expense of other duties and functions;
- further to the above, the short notice in which prisons must release staff to support PSEC escorts, or to provide escorts independently of PSEC;
- occasional lateness for medical appointments or treatment, and/or slow responsiveness to medical emergencies due to lack of sufficient escorting capacity;
- occasional missing or being late for court appearances;
- not meeting appropriate standards of care during prisoner transit, including the standards of prisoner comfort, health and safety, and risk management during travel; and
- the lengths of time prisoners must remain in escort vehicles when attending court venues that lack custody facilities (or sufficient facilities for the number of prisoners attending at any one sitting).



4. Stakeholder Perspectives

4.1 Introduction

This section summarises the results of consultations with external stakeholders the views of whom were sought in written submissions to the review. It then provides a summary of the results of an informal survey of prisoners regarding escort experiences and preferences, undertaken by staff in a number of prisons.

4.2 Issues Raised in Stakeholder Submissions

During the consultative phase of this review, the Department of Justice and Equality invited a number of stakeholders in the criminal justice sector to make written consultative submissions to the review. These were:

- the Association of Garda Superintendents;
- the Association of Garda Sergeants and Inspectors;
- the Bar Council;
- the Garda Representatives Association
- the Garda Síochána Inspectorate;
- the Irish Penal Reform Trust;
- the Law Society of Ireland;
- the Legal Aid Board;
- the Office of the Inspector of Prisons;
- the Policing Authority;
- the Presidents of the District, Circuit, and High Court, and the Court of Appeal; and
- the Prison Officers' Association.

The Presidents of the District, Circuit and High Courts, and the Court of Appeal, were also invited to provide observations.

Below is a summary of responses, organised under the following key considerations reflecting the Terms of Reference:

- rationale;
- efficiency;
- effectiveness; and
- performance indicators.



4.2.1 *Rationale*

Stakeholders in general recognise the rationale for providing escorts, and none call its need into question in principle. However, a number of stakeholders (Irish Penal Reform Trust, Law Society of Ireland) stress that any review must ensure that the legal and human rights of prisoners are protected, and that such rights should not be compromised in favour of cost reductions or to gain further operational efficiencies. This includes continued access to legal professionals, health professionals and other services that might be necessary for a prisoner to obtain off-site, and a “duty of care” to ensure that the safe and secure custody of prisoners is an over-arching objective of all prisoner escort services. In this regard, it was also stressed (by the Irish Penal Reform Trust) that health-related appointments should be given equal weight to court appointments when providing prisoner escort services, and that recommendations of medical professionals regarding provision of healthcare should not be made dependent on operational considerations.

4.2.2 *Efficiency*

Stakeholders did not express strong concerns about the efficiency of escort provision, reflecting perhaps the already-stated view of some regarding their unavoidable necessity, perhaps a lack of information regarding the resources involved, and perhaps the absence of suggestions as to how greater efficiency could be created. Some however raised some noteworthy points:

- some stakeholders (Irish Penal Reform Trust, Office of the Inspector of Prisons) expressed concerns about whether or not prison escort services are adequately resourced. In particular, concerns were expressed regarding cases where other prison resources were being diverted to cover prison escort service shortages, sometimes at short notice. In these cases, it was suggested that other prison activities (e.g. access to education and training activities, prisoner visits, recreational facilities) were then being negatively impacted, due to non-availability of prison staff that were temporarily redeployed to prison escorts¹⁸;
- similarly, some stakeholders (Garda Inspectorate, Policing Authority) highlighted that prison escort services are a non-core police task, which absorbs significant Garda time;
- frustrations were expressed (Office of the Inspector of Prisons, Prison Service Escort Corps) regarding procedures for the issuing of committal warrants. In particular, stakeholders pointed to undue delays in escorting prisoners back from court appearances to prison due to the non-availability of court clerks to issue warrants (e.g. in instances where clerks are still in court attending other ongoing cases). Also, it was suggested that committal warrants are sometimes only issued for the designated prisons of the various respective District Courts, even in cases where prisoners are already in custody in another prison; and
- in addition, it has been suggested that the practice of remanding prisoners to various District Courts throughout the country might not be maximising efficiencies in prison escort services (Office of the Inspector of Prisons).

¹⁸ It should be noted that adequacy of resourcing is a separate issue to that relating to the efficiency with which existing resources are being used and is outside the scope of a VFMPR.



4.2.3 Effectiveness

Issues raised by stakeholders regarding the effectiveness, or the appropriateness, of the existing provision of prisoner escort services largely relate to the existing service's fit with a wider rationale of providing for the safe and secure movement of prisoners. In this regard, stakeholder views on the effectiveness of prison escort services, in the main, focus principally on issues of concern for prisoner safety and well-being while under escort. Some of the main issues raised include:

- the condition of escort vehicles, with concerns being raised including lack of space in vehicles, lack of ventilation or lack of toilet facilities (or alternatively, the lack of standard provision for toilet or food breaks). Also, concerns were raised regarding the use of Garda patrol cars in some cases for prison escort purposes, and their lack of suitability for such uses (Irish Penal Reform Trust, Office of the Inspector of Prisons, Policing Authority);
- allied to this, concerns were raised regarding the use of handcuffs as a standard procedure during prison escorts, with a view expressed that such practice should instead be based on individual risk assessment. Also, the possible health and safety implications of the lack of seat belts in prison escort vans were considered to be worthy of review (Irish Penal Reform Trust); and
- finally, concerns were raised about the practice of holding prisoners for excessively prolonged periods in prison escort vans, in cases where holding cells were not available at court (Irish Penal Reform Trust, Office of the Inspector of Prisons).

The call for submissions elicited a variety of suggestions as to how the efficiency and effectiveness of prison escort services might be improved. A common suggestion among virtually all stakeholders was to further explore the potential for the use of video-link facilities as a means to reduce the volume of prison escort services required (which is returned to in Section 5.5). In particular, stakeholders were in broad agreement that the use of such facilities reduces the need for escorts, reduces the risks associated with escorting prisoners and/or improves the efficiency of the courts process more generally. At the same time, it was asserted by some that the prisoner's right to attend court appearances or other appointments in person must be retained, and must not be challenged or compromised by resource or operational concerns. In addition, some stakeholders pointed to the need to ensure that the technology used is constantly updated and monitored so as to ensure high quality communication services and safety (Law Society of Ireland, Bar of Ireland), while a need for increased inter-agency consultation and co-ordination of video-link facilities, as they become more common, was also noted (Office of the Inspector of Prisons, Courts Service).

More generally, several stakeholders have suggested that better co-operation and co-ordination, as well as better standardisation of procedures, could be employed in order to improve prison escort services. Suggested examples of this include:

- standardised operating procedures to be consistently applied across the prison estate (Irish Penal Reform Trust), more co-operation to ensure seamless processes for escort arrangements (Law Society of Ireland), and the provision of a written service level agreement between the PSEC and the Courts Service;



- agreed protocols for the production and return of remand prisoners so as to reduce the required number of court appearances (Office of the Inspector of Prisons);
- an agreed policy, and a centralised and co-ordinated arrangement, for the prioritisation of custody cases, so as to facilitate early return of both prisoner and prison staff;
- the possible implementation of a centralised transfer co-ordination unit to avoid unnecessary duplication in providing for transfer of prisoners (Office of the Inspector of Prisons);
- more inter-agency consultation between the Irish Prison Service and An Garda Síochána in order to co-ordinate resources for the supervision of prisoners in court (Office of the Inspector of Prisons); and
- the development and implementation of specific protocols to ensure the safety of vulnerable cohorts of prisoners due to illness, age or status (Irish Penal Reform Trust).

Other suggested means to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of prison escort services include:

- to review staffing arrangements for prison escort services, not only to assess the extent to which it is adequately resourced but also to examine further means to improve staff resources, e.g. use of panel systems, use of staff secondments rather than permanent transfers, review of duties that could potentially be carried out by administrative grades (Office of the Inspector of Prisons);
- provision of regular independent inspections of prison escort services, including possible expansion of the remit of the Office of the Inspector of Prisons to facilitate this (Irish Penal Reform Trust);
- full transfer of responsibility for prison escort services for remand prisoners to the Irish Prison Service, but with adequate resources made available to facilitate such a transfer (Garda Inspectorate, Office of the Inspector of Prisons, Policing Authority);
- alternative means to speed up the committal warrant process, such as (a) the assignment of designated personnel to issue committal warrants immediately following a judge's decision or (b) the issuing of electronic warrants, similar to those used in other jurisdictions (Office of the Inspector of Prisons, Prison Service Escort Corps);
- examination of the potential for more in-sourcing of healthcare services in prisons, for more routine appointments, so as to reduce the need for prison escort services (Irish Penal Reform Trust, Office of the Inspector of Prisons);
- examination of the scope for greater use of "alternative court locations" such as Cloverhill Courthouse and Harristown Courthouse, which are on-site or near-site facilities that reduce the time necessary for court appearances of persons held at the respective prisons;
- investigation of the possibility of introducing a "single case fee" under the Criminal Legal Aid Scheme, or other more nuanced arrangements to pay for court adjournments, so as to reduce the incidence of court adjournments, thereby reducing demand for prison escort services (Legal Aid Board); and
- review of how the ongoing development of a new IT inter-operability Hub for State bodies in the criminal justice sector might be used to assist the day-to-day delivery of prison escort services (Legal Aid Board).



4.2.4 Performance Indicators

Finally, future potential performance indicators suggested by stakeholders for prisoner escort provision include the following:

- escort and prisoner numbers, frequency, distance, purpose, etc.;
- analysis of any impact on local prison staffing and regimes;
- recording of delays or cancellations of court, hospital or other external appointments;
- lengths of time that individual prisoners spend away from their prison establishment;
- lengths of time that individual prisoners are held in cellular vehicles;
- adequate provision of refreshment and rest breaks;
- frequency of use of handcuffing while under escort;
- condition of vehicles;
- any road traffic or other incidents;
- incidents of injury to prison staff or prisoners while under escort; and
- complaints received, including outcomes.

4.3 Prisoners' Perspectives

To ensure the perspectives of prisoners were also appropriately considered as part of the review, a short survey of a sample of prisoners at a number of prisons – Castlerea, Cloverhill, Cork, Limerick and Midlands prisons – was undertaken with the support of IPS personnel in each location. This survey should not be interpreted as a scientific or representative survey of prisoners' perspectives, rather it is a relatively small sample of attitudes where prisoners were asked about their experience of past prison escorts, the typical reasons they had for requiring such escorts, their recollections on the typical duration of escorts, and their reflections on the escort experience and their perspectives regarding escort circumstances in the future.

In total 186 prisoners participated – 32% of respondents were held at Limerick prison, 23% at the Midlands prison, 22% at Cloverhill, 15% at Cork and 9% at Castlerea. About 96% of survey respondents were male, with 4% female.

Prison Escorts – Number and Duration of Trips

Participants were firstly asked to estimate the number of times that they have been required to leave and return to prison on a given day, whether for court appearances, for medical appointments, or for other reasons. In this regard, it found that the vast majority of prisoners have made such trips on multiple occasions. For example, some 32% of prisoners have made more than 10 such trips, another 29% have made 5-10 trips, while 33% have made 2-5 trips. Only 5%, on the other hand, have made just a single trip, while just 2% claim to have never made such a trip.



Table 4.1 Typical Number of Previous Escorted Journeys of Prisoners

	Number of Respondents	% of Respondents
Never	3	1.6%
Once	10	5.4%
2-5 times	61	32.8%
5-10 times	53	28.5%
More than 10 times	59	31.7%
TOTAL	186	100.0%
Source: Survey of Prisoners		

The participants were asked how much time such journeys have typically taken based on their own recollection, and stated in terms of time away from the prison where they stayed the night before the journey. Results here found that nearly half of all respondents (46%) suggested that such journeys typically take 4-8 hours. Another 29% of respondents indicated that journeys typically take 2-4 hours, 15% of respondents indicated that typical journeys take more than eight hours, while 11% of respondents suggested that journeys typically take 1-2 hours.

Table 4.2 Typical Duration of Escorted Journeys

	Number of Respondents	% of Respondents
1-2 hours	19	10.5%
2-4 hours	52	28.7%
4-8 hours	83	45.9%
More than 8 hours	27	14.9%
TOTAL	181	100.0%
Source: Survey of Prisoners		

Respondents were also asked how much time these journeys/trips have typically taken, in terms of days transferred away from their “home” prison, if temporarily transferred to another prison due to the need to appear at a court in its catchment area. In such cases, the survey found that 36% of respondents were typically transferred for 1-2 days, another 31% were transferred for 2-4 days, 21% were transferred for 4-7 days, while just 11% were transferred for more than seven days.



Table 4.3 Typical Duration of Escorts

	Number of Respondents	% of Respondents
1-2 days	51	36.4%
2-4 days	44	31.4%
4-7 days	29	20.7%
More than 7 days	16	11.4%
TOTAL	140	100.0%

Source: Survey of Prisoners

Typical Reasons for Prison Escorts

More than half of the respondents (56%) indicated that trips were mainly made for attendance at court appearances. Just 9% of respondents suggested that prison escorts were mainly made for attendance at medical appointments for to receive medical attention, with just 1% suggesting that trips were mainly made for other reasons. About one-third of all respondents indicated the reasons had been some combination of these.

Table 4.4 Typical Reasons for Prison Escorts

	Number of Respondents	% of Respondents
Mainly for court appearances	100	55.6%
Mainly for medical appointments/medical attention	16	8.9%
Mainly for other reasons	2	1.1%
A mixture of all of the above	62	34.4%
TOTAL	180	100.0%

Source: Survey of Prisoners

While 16 prisoners indicated that their previous reasons for having been externally escorted were *mainly* medical, a much higher number had *ever* been escorted for medical reasons. In the case of any trips related to medical assistance, 33% of respondents reported their medical trips had been for routine appointments related to pre-existing medical conditions, 32% made trips for emergency medical care, 10% made trips for exploratory non-emergency assistance for a new condition, while 26% made trips for a combination of such reasons or for other reasons.



Table 4.5 – Main Reasons for Prison Escorts Related to Medical Assistance

	Number of Respondents	% of Respondents
Routine appointments regarding a pre-existing condition	56	32.6%
Exploratory non-emergency assistance for a new condition	17	9.9%
Emergency care	55	32.0%
A combination of these/other reasons on different occasions	44	25.6%
TOTAL	172	100.0%

Source: Survey of Prisoners

Use of Video-Link

While a majority of prisoners indicated they had never used video-link facilities, nearly half of the respondents (45%) indicated that they had on at least one occasion in the past, with most having done so 1-5 times.

Table 4.6 – Use of Video Link for External Appointments

	Number of Respondents	% of Respondents
Never	102	55.1%
Once	23	12.4%
2-5 times	43	23.2%
5-10 times	9	4.9%
More than 10 times	8	4.3%
TOTAL	185	100.0%

Source: Survey of Prisoners

Satisfaction and Preferences

Respondents were asked to rate their past experience of external escorted journeys on a scale of 1-5, in terms of a number of different considerations, with “1” indicating a high level of dissatisfaction and “5” indicating a high level of satisfaction.

In this regard, average ratings for different issues tended towards mid-points on the scale, with treatment and care during journey, food, drink and toiletry needs, and staff checks and communication each receiving an average of 3 or more out of 5. All aspects received an average scoring above the mid-point on the scale, with the lowest ranking aspect the only exception - time spent in prison vehicles – while the disruption to regime and activities at prison was the second lowest ranking aspect.



Table 4.7 Satisfaction Rating of External Escorted Journeys – Key Aspects

	Average Rating (1-5, with 5 highest satisfaction)
Treatment and care during journey	3.4
Food, drink and toilet allowances/provision	3.1
Checks by/communication with officers during journey	3.0
Prior communication about journey	2.9
Efficiency of process/time needed at destination versus time away from prison	2.8
Disruption to regime and activities at prison	2.5
Time spent in vehicle	2.2
Source: Survey of Prisoners	

Finally, respondents were asked to rate their future preferences as regards remaining in prison rather than being escorted to attend to external appearances or appointments in person, if reasons for leaving a prison could be overcome without leaving in future (e.g. through video-link, or through having more legal or health related consultations on-site). In this case, respondents were again asked to rate on a scale of 1-5, but where “1” indicated a strong desire to remain in prison and “5” indicated a strong desire to appear or attend externally.

In this case average ratings suggest:

- slight preferences to conduct legal consultations within the prison;
- mixed preferences regarding court appearance by video-link or in person; and
- reasonably clear preferences for out-of-prison rather than in-prison medical appointments.

Table 4.8 Preference Rating – In-Prison Appointment and External Journey

	Average Rating (1-5 with 5 strongest preference for external journey)
Medical appointments	3.4
Court appearances	2.4
Legal consultations	2.1
SOURCE: SURVEY OF PRISONERS	

5. Continued Relevance, Alternative Approaches and Service Performance

5.1 Introduction

This section considers the existing public policy rationale for prisoner escorts and the continued relevance of the service objectives and public funding of the system. It then summarises international approaches to prisoner escorting and transportation. Section 5.4 considers alternative organisational approaches, while Section 5.5 considers the distinct issue of demand management. Finally, Section 5.6 addresses service performance indicators.

5.2 Continued Relevance and Funding Rationale

There are no countries where the administration of justice and the lawful detention of prisoners operates in the absence of any need for their transportation and movement while in custody. The relevant public policy principles – justice, penalty, crime prevention, crime deterrence, public safety and security, and humanity – are cornerstones of criminal justice systems throughout the world, and humane imprisonment remains a central form of penalty in response to criminal conduct. The movement of prisoners while in custody is a necessary process in various circumstances, and will remain necessary in many contexts under the international norms associated with contemporary criminal justice systems.

The rationale for the public funding and resourcing of prisoner transportation is the same as that for the public funding of the administration of criminal justice in the wider sense – namely that it represents a “public good”, the benefits of which are made available to many when made available to one, and for which there are no means to exclude non-payers as beneficiaries.

As long as persons continue to have their right to appear in person when appearing in court, all types of prisoner escorts are likely to be continuously required, even if their volumes fluctuate or wider practices and policies alter trends within different categories. In the case of escorts for court appearances, the greater use of technology to allow appearance by video-link (considered further in Section 5.5) has the theoretical ability to reduce the need for appearance in person, however there is in reality always likely to be court proceedings where appearance in person is either required or the preferred option. Inter-prison transfers arise for a wide range of reasons which will continue to exist or even strengthen (including risk management, and prisoner welfare, human rights and safety), while escorts for hospital or other medical treatment will remain necessary irrespective of the quality and quantity of medical services that may ever be feasible to provide within prisons.

5.3 International Practice

5.3.1 Overview

Most countries provide for the secure transportation of prisoners within their criminal justice system either through direct provision by the most relevant authorities (police forces, prison authorities, etc.), or the contracting of such services or elements of the service needs to private providers through competitive procurement processes. Different organisational approaches tend to depend on features of the wider custodial system (such as its federal or state-led delivery as in the US and Germany for example), and the different justice and courts systems, legislative codes, custodial structures, and the different systems of organisational responsibility for different categories of prisoner (such as female or juvenile detainees, for example).

5.3.2 Approaches in UK Jurisdictions

Systems in Northern Ireland, Scotland, and England and Wales, are described below.

Northern Ireland

In Northern Ireland prisoner escorts are provided by four agencies¹⁹:

- the Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS) Prisoner Escorting and Court Custody Service (PECCS);
- the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI);
- private contractors working on behalf of the (Northern Ireland) Juvenile Justice Centre; and
- private contractors working on Northern Ireland on behalf of United Kingdom Visas and Immigration (what was previously the UK Border Agency).

PECCS is the main provider of escort services. It is responsible for prisoner transport and prisoner escorting services for adult males, females, young people and children within the Criminal Justice System, as well as the safe operation of the cell holding areas in each Courthouse throughout Northern Ireland and for producing prisoners in court rooms when required.

PECCS has its genesis in evolving arrangements for prisoner escorting in Northern Ireland dating from the period 2005 to 2007. Prior to 2007, a Prisoner Escorting Group, made up of prison officers based at Maghaberry Prison was responsible for prison-court escorts in Northern Ireland, including supervision within court venues. A private contractor had responsibility for prisoner management within Magistrates Courts, as well as for supporting the former in relation to court-prison movements when required. The PSNI was responsible for conveyance to Magistrates' Courts for initial hearing following arrest.

In 2006 it was decided that the full service should once again be centralised, and "Prison Custody Officers" previously employed by the private contractor were offered the option of transferring to

¹⁹ The findings in relation to Northern Ireland draw on "An inspection of Prisoner Escort and Court Custody arrangements in Northern Ireland", Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland, October 2010, as well as "Prisoner Escort and Court Custody Arrangements in Northern Ireland - A follow-up review of inspection recommendations", April 2014, Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland



employment by the Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS), facilitating the redeployment of Prison Escorting Group staff back to standard prison officer duties. PECCS became this new agency within the Prison Service, and took responsibility for undertaking all prisoner conveyance and supervising prisoners while in both Crown Courts and Magistrates' Courts.

The decision to give PECCS its responsibilities in respect of prisoner escorting followed its own analysis and submissions regarding its cost-effectiveness relative to a private contracting arrangement, although an actual market tendering process did not feature. Subsequently NIPS has examined and reported on the cost effectiveness of the PECCS operations and of its value as a shared resource across criminal justice agencies, and improvements to its evident cost-effectiveness have been acknowledged by oversight bodies.

Scotland

In Scotland, the Scottish Prison Service (SPS), acting on behalf of itself as well as a number of other agencies, has contracted an external private company (G4S) to provide a range of escort and court custody services over an eight-year period that began in 2011.

The partner agencies are:

- the Scottish Court Service (SCS) which administers and has responsibility for the management of the courts estate and the procurement of facilities management services for a range of Scottish Courts; and
- eight regionally-differentiated Scottish police forces, which operate Police Custody Units (PCU) premises throughout the country.

Furthermore, the private provider is required to liaise closely with the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Services (COPFS) to handle the relevant processes, warrants, and paperwork associated with managing persons in custody.

The services covered by the contract include:

- “core” services in two categories:
 - management and supervision of prisoners in courts and court custody suites;
 - prisoner escorting across Scotland to and from courts, inter-police force transfers, and prisoner movements to places of custody;
- “non-core” services in three categories:
 - primarily prisoner movements to/from prisons to prescribed locations to enable the prisoners to attend activities such as funerals, marriages, and day-patient hospital appointments, or other relevant authorised activities;
 - inter-prison transfers, inter-prison visits, and escorts necessary to enable certain prisoners to travel to community based work placements; and
 - hospital escort and bedwatch activity where prisoners require a period of supervision and confinement (including maternity) in hospital either for a scheduled in-patient procedure or following an emergency.



The contract is subject to performance measurement through explicit criteria under two categories:

- time-sensitive requirements relating to the collection, arrival, departure and return of prisoners; and
- wider performance standards relating to the general management, care, custody and welfare aspects of the service provisions.

In discharging the services, the overriding priorities for the service provider are the prevention of escape, protection of the public, and the security, safety and welfare of the prisoners in custody.

Pricing and financial arrangements and mechanisms under the contract are organised as follows:

- fixed monthly prices are agreed from the outset for fixed baseline annual volumes of activity in each of the main (core and non-core) categories;
- unit-prices are agreed for additional volumes of activity within certain bands above those baselines;
- hourly prices are agreed for specific types of activity such as in-patient bedwatch; and
- a number of pricing parameters are indexed for future years following contract agreement.

The current contract is the second generation of privately-contracted escort provision in Scotland, the first having been in place between 2005 and 2011. Prior to that, prisoners were escorted by either police or prison officers.

England and Wales

In England and Wales the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) is responsible for:

- running prison and probation services;
- rehabilitation services for prisoners leaving prison;
- making sure support is available to stop people offending again; and
- contract managing private sector prisons and services (including escorting and electronic tagging services).

The Prison Escort and Custody Service (PECS) is part of NOMS, and it has oversight responsibility in England and Wales in relation to prison escorting service delivery, and for monitoring escort contracts and ensuring contract compliance. Its scope covers the escorting of detainees between police stations, courts and prisons, transfers to and from hospital, and inter-prison movements.

The first generation of PECS contracts ran from 1999, the second from 2004 and the third generation began in 2011, when contracts were placed in four regions (which currently remain in operation). The Prison Service maintains responsibility for the escorting of prisoners of highest risk to the public.

The existing contracts cover the period 2011-2018, and their scope covers the movement of prisoners and provision of custody services at locations including police stations, prisons, Magistrates' Courts,

Crown Courts, the Appeal Court, Tribunals, and County Courts. The service includes the care and supervision of prisoners in custody in court cell suites, custody of prisoners in court docks, and transfer of prisoners between prisons. The four contracts cover:

- the South West and South East;
- the North West;
- the East Midlands; and
- London.

The payment mechanism operated under the existing contracts has numerous dimensions, including the following:

- fixed payments which cover the Contractor's management overhead, central operations and administration staff, ICT (including technology refresh and life-cycle costs during the services period), vehicles (including purchase and financing costs and vehicle leases), vehicle maintenance and all premises, utilities and insurance, as well as other specified costs;
- a custody and dock fixed payment covering the Contractor's costs arising out of or in connection with all custody services in courthouses and courtrooms and all custodial dock services;
- journey payments which cover the Contractor's costs of escort staff and escort staff related costs;
- a crown court dock-only payment;
- a management fee payment in respect of the Contractor's profit margin any operational and performance risk provision;
- pass through costs which cover flights, fuel, food, prisoner medical expenses, tolls, bus and rail travel warrants, discharge grants, congestion charge fees, low emission zone fees and a number of variable costs;
- safeguard, tornado²⁰ and bedwatch payments;
- operational court cell payments;
- "learning curve discounts" that relate to savings made by the contractor over the duration of the contract;
- "gainshare" arrangements that seek to incentivise and share the benefits of further efficiencies achieved by the contractor; and
- mobilisation and transition payments.

Several elements of the pricing arrangements are subject to annual indexation.

The contracts are subject to detailed performance measurement and management, with a range of pre-specified "contract delivery indicators" in place in the categories of custody, prisoner welfare, service delivery, and the quality of compliance (with a range of wider requirements). Performance is subject to monthly reporting, improvement notices and improvement plans, and rectification procedures.

²⁰ "Tornado" is the term given to circumstances involving emergency prison evacuation.



5.3.3 Service Costs

Evidence of the costs of outsourced services in both Scotland and England and Wales is publicly available in a number of respects.

In Scotland, the SPS publishes monthly data on the number of prisoner movements and the payments made to the private escort service provider in respect of each month's escorts.²¹ In the year to March 2018, the total value of payments made was Stg£25.8m, and the total number of prisoner journeys was 128,234. The payment per prisoner journey was therefore Stg£200.9 (or €227.5²²). The average cost in each of the 12-month periods moreover varied between a low of £180 and a high of £231, suggesting significant variation in the case mix and volumes on which pricing mechanisms are based.

In England and Wales, the total costs of the current suite of private escorts contracts are as follows (expressed as net present values over seven years):

- London: £280m
- East Midlands: £177m
- North West: £217m
- South West: £178m
- Total: £852m.

Evidence of average or unit costs in the case of England and Wales, suggests slightly lower unit costs than in Scotland, although less recent:

- according to a 2014 report by HM Inspectorate of Prisons, between October 2013 and September 2014 there were 818,168 escorted journeys of men, women and children provided by PECS at a cost of £128.2 million (£156.69 per journey)²³;
- according to a major Review of Criminal Proceedings, the average prisoner journey cost across England and Wales in 2011 was approximately £161²⁴.

It should be noted that there is no attempt here to suggest any direct comparability of these costs with those identified earlier in the case of escort services in Ireland. The scope and nature of service requirements, the scale, structures and geography of relevant courts and custody locations (and how these affect the typical numbers of prisoners per vehicle journey, as well as travel distances), and the nature of regulations, procedures, and working arrangements for meeting service needs, may all be markedly different, while the pricing mechanisms for outsourced contracts in the UK, as discussed, are complex.

5.3.4 Lessons for Ireland

Service provision across the various UK jurisdictions has similarities to that in Ireland:

²¹ See <http://www.sps.gov.uk/Corporate/Information/Prisoner-Escorts.aspx>

²² Using the average exchange rate during March 2018

²³ "Transfers and escorts within the criminal justice system: a thematic review", HM Inspectorate of Prisons, December 2014. Available at <https://www.bl.uk/collection-items/transfers-and-escorts-within-the-criminal-justice-system-a-thematic-review>

²⁴ "Review of Efficiency in Criminal Proceedings by The Rt Hon Sir Brian Leveson", January 2015. Available at <https://www.judiciary.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/review-of-efficiency-in-criminal-proceedings-20151.pdf>



- it relates to escorts necessitated for court appearances, for hospital visits, and for inter-prison transfers;
- it generally incorporates elements of prisoner management and supervision in court venues; and
- services are generally organised and in places outsourced on a cross-agency basis, and include police as well as prison escorts.

The cost-effectiveness of the escort service has been the subject of ongoing examination and review in all UK jurisdictions, and has been a central determinant of changes in delivery models. Some elements of private or outsourced provision feature in all three of the UK regional contexts (Northern Ireland, Scotland and England/Wales). It is also worth noting that services in some of these jurisdictions benefit from economies of scale in organising prisoner escorts.

Unlike in Ireland, prisoner escorting is subject to independent inspection in the UK.

Finally, the evidence of unit costs available in both Scotland and England/Wales suggests lower average per-prisoner journey costs of outsourced providers in the UK than for services provided in most categories in Ireland. While no direct comparability of the services is implied, this analysis nonetheless raises interesting questions regarding the possibility of an efficiency gap between jurisdictions. It would be worthwhile for IPS management to investigate the extent to which the services are comparable across jurisdictions and the contributory factors to these lower unit costs. This could yield transferable lessons to drive efficiencies in Ireland.

5.4 Alternative Approaches

There is a range of alternatives to the present organisation and delivery of prisoner escorts in Ireland, which reflect its unique characteristics how aspects of the approach that has evolved could be altered, as well as alternative approaches adopted internationally. The broad range of meaningful options is described below (elements of each of which are not mutually exclusive).

- **Option 1: No Change**
As in any examination of future options, a baseline or default option exists to “do-nothing”.
- **Option 2: Improve System but Maintain Delivery Model**
There is a range of measures that could be taken to seek to reduce the need for escorts in their current volumes, reduce the resource inputs they require, improve their planning and management, and improve their effectiveness and performance management, all of which can be considered independently from any decisions to alter the delivery arrangements.
- **Option 3: Transfer Main AGS Responsibilities to IPS**
The option exists to transfer responsibility for the main and routine escorts currently provided by AGS to the IPS. Generally these would include routine and planned prison-to-court journeys for persons detained on (single-case) remand, and would not include non-routine journeys



from Garda stations to District Courts for initial hearings. Garda responsibilities and activities in relation to high-security and high-risk escorts would not generally be considered appropriate for any such transfer.

Proponents of such an option would point to the limited proportion of routine escorts which the Gardaí provide relative to the total number delivered, and the scope for potential enhanced efficiency which an approach involving a single organisation would encompass. Secondly the view is held that such escorts are not core policing duties and detract police resources from front-line work.

- **Option 4: Merge PSEC back into IPS**

PSEC is a unit within the IPS, and prior to its establishment the IPS provided escorts from within resources aligned to individual prisons. Today prison Governors continue to have the legal responsibility for the escort of prisoners in their custody, in which they are assisted by PSEC. The extent to which escorting requirements have surpassed those PSEC effectively provides, and the necessity for prison Governors to deploy non-escort staff to escort duties, often at very short notice, involving substantial interaction and co-ordination, and with consequent disruption to prison operational and service planning, have been factors which consultees have pointed to that might justify an examination of this option.

Merging escort resources back within prisons it is argued would eliminate the need for PSEC interaction, and would, it is felt, enhance Governors' ability to plan based on greater knowledge of escort and non-escort service needs and resources.

- **Option 5: Re-align PSEC as Predominant Service Provider**

This option would seek to align PSEC as the central provider of escorts within the criminal justice system, taking responsibility for both routine AGS escorts as well as the escorting duties of the IPS which it is currently unable to deliver independently of prison-deployed resources (with necessary exceptions likely to include emergency escorts from prisons to hospitals).

The predominant attraction of such an option is the scope to maximise efficiency by virtue of a single organisational approach.

- **Option 6: Identify Elements for New or Private Resourcing**

Further options might involve identifying elements (rather than overall) services that could advantageously be resourced under new public or private arrangements. An example is the establishment of "custody officer" roles and staffing within large court venues that would not be filled by qualified existing Prison Officers, and that could theoretically be provided at less cost. As well as the CCJ, recently completed new and modernised criminal court facilities in Cork, Limerick and Waterford, are appropriate candidates for such a model given their scale, and the long-term approach to resourcing prisoner management at these venues is understood to be under consideration presently by a wider group.



- ***Option 7: Contract Escort Services from Private Providers***

Finally, as in other jurisdictions, there is the option of procuring the main categories of routine escort provision from specialist private contractors, with a view to effecting cost efficiencies in their provision as well as the scope to have IPS and AGS resources deployed more fully to traditional core duties.

The seven options are briefly considered in Figure 5.1 against the following criteria:

- service effectiveness;
- efficiency;
- cost;
- wider impacts; and
- feasibility and risks.



Figure 5.1 Alternative Service Delivery Approaches – Key Considerations

	Effectiveness	Efficiency	Cost	Wider Impacts	Feasibility and Risks
Option 2 Improve System and Maintain Delivery Model	No major implicit change or threat to service effectiveness, although improved information on effectiveness may provide lessons for improvement.	No directly implicit efficiency gain, although reduced demand and improvements to systems might provide opportunities for enhanced journey planning and scheduling	Some costs to implement improvements but modest and likely non-recurring. Efficiency gains may offset such costs.	Enhanced planning and co-ordination may reduce reliance on non-PSEC escort providers at the margins, but limited advantages possible	No significant risks, but requires political and legislative change
Option 3 Transfer Main AGS Responsibilities to IPS²⁵	Potential for a more uniform and systematic approach to effectiveness monitoring or measurement, but no evidence to suggest a clear advantage or gain pending more detailed analysis	Theoretical improvements to efficiency where separate responsibilities currently result in service duplication (the incidence of which is however unknown). A single agency would mean staff and fleet management functions could be centralised.	Absent other changes this would unlikely to be exchequer-neutral. Prison services would require resources for additional responsibilities while AGS would gain no advantage and possibly disadvantages from any proportionate resource surrender.	AGS gains from the return of escort resources to core policing functions with the possibility of reducing overtime costs to the extent that this arises on AGS escort activity. Freeing up Garda time also has benefits for core operational policing work e.g. investigations, detections etc.	The funding of any related costs for this option would fall to be addressed by the IPS but could be financed by wider efficiencies within the IPS prisoner escort activity, among others. (see option 2)
Option 4 Merge PSEC Back into IPS	No evidence to suggest a clear gain in terms of effectiveness, and co-ordination may be negatively impacted through the more disjointed approach	Uncertain impact. A more disjointed delivery model involving every prison might reduce co-ordination, however prisons might be better able to plan resource deployment in absence of need to co-ordinate with PSEC	No major cost implication.	No significant wider impacts absent other changes or resource enhancements	Uncertain attitude of staff representatives and prison Governors in aggregate

²⁵ This has been recommended in the past by the Garda Síochána Inspectorate (see for example “Policing in Ireland—Looking Forward”, p. 27)

Figure 5.1 Alternative Service Delivery Approaches – Key Considerations

	Effectiveness	Efficiency	Cost	Wider Impacts	Feasibility and Risks
Option 5 Re-align PSEC as Predominant Service Provider	Potential effectiveness advantages due to a more uniform and comprehensive service responsibility, however no evidence of a substantial improvement likely	A single agency approach would have strong opportunities to optimise efficiency through having comprehensive responsibility and very limited reliance on external co-ordination, however no evidence of a clearly-available efficiency gain	No major cost implication except via a realignment of Garda responsibilities (see points under Option 3)	AGS gains from the return of escort resources to core policing functions and possible overtime reductions, however no wider prison impacts absent any resource enhancements	Any attempt to do so at no net exchequer cost likely to be problematic. The funding of any related costs for this option would fall to be addressed by the IPS but could be contributed to by wider efficiencies within the IPS prisoner escort activity (see option 2)
Option 6 Identify Elements for New or Private Resourcing	Little evidence of a potential service effectiveness gain or advantage, and would add to the number of agencies involved and with responsibilities	Efficiency gains over the status quo could be made a precondition of any outsourcing approach	Unlikely to be exchequer neutral but could potentially reduce opportunity costs current practice gives rise to, by re-directing IPS and AGS resources to core duties	IPS and AGS potential advantages from scope to realign resources to core duties	Potential industrial relations challenge, while private market untested in Ireland
Option 7 Contract Escort Services from Private Providers	Little evidence of a potential service effectiveness gain or advantage	Efficiency gains over the status quo could be made a precondition of any outsourcing approach	Unlikely to be exchequer neutral in short term, but could potentially reduce opportunity costs current practice gives rise to, by re-directing IPS and AGS resources to core duties, and facilitate net exchequer benefits over time	Immediate and substantial wider gains for IPS and AGS through scope for resources to be realigned to core duties	Potential industrial relations challenge, while private market untested in Ireland



5.5 Demand Management

To investigate the effects of a number of existing practices on escort demand and resource implications in a live court setting, a record of prisoner and court activity was kept by PSEC personnel at the CCJ over the course of a full week (the week 18-22nd June 2018) in order to inform this Review. Personnel recorded prisoner appearances at five individual courts:

- Court 3 (Dublin District Court);
- Court 5 (Dublin Circuit Criminal Court);
- Court 6 (Central Criminal Court);
- Court 7 (Dublin Circuit Criminal Court); and
- Court 11 (Special Criminal Court).

The research sought to examine the nature of escort activity to which the court business gave rise, and the degree to which some proposed changes to procedural regulations might have reduced escort demand and resource inputs necessary. As such it recorded:

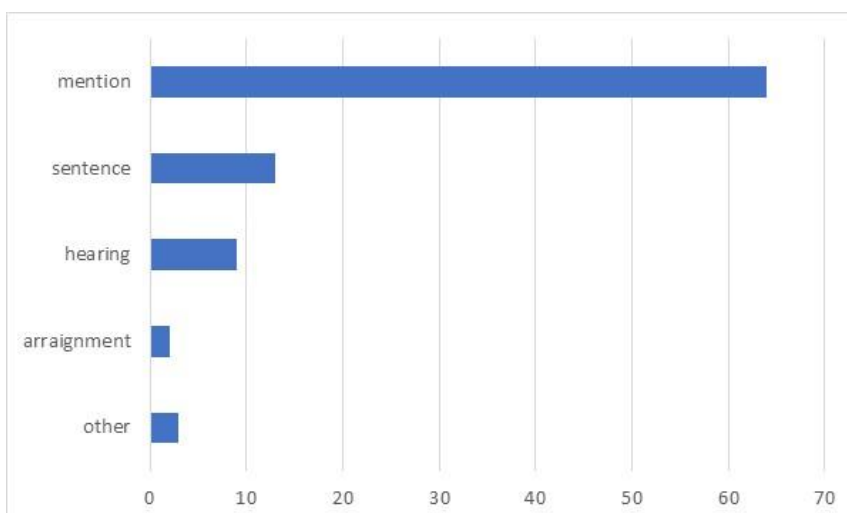
- the number of appearances at each court by persons already in custody and therefore necessitating an escort from prison;
- the prison of origin;
- the result or outcome of the appearance with respect to the individual's continued custody;
- the time each prisoners' court business was complete;
- the time any hard copy warrant was issued to the IPS;
- the time of departure from the CCJ;
- whether the return trip to prison involved a "turnaround" (i.e. a need to have the warrant served first at a prison other than the ultimate appropriate destination prison, necessitating an unnecessary journey to the former);
- whether the appearance would have been potentially suitable for video-link from prison (i.e. did the appearance involve an arraignment, a sentencing, or other apparent reason it might not have been suitable for appearance by video-link from prison).

Table 5.1 summarises the numbers of detained prisoners that appeared at the various courts over the course of the week.

Table 5.1 Prisoner Appearances at CCJ (Various Courts), 18-22 June 2018						
	<u>Mon</u>	<u>Tues</u>	<u>Wed</u>	<u>Thurs</u>	<u>Fri</u>	<u>Total</u>
Court 3 District Court	1	1	5	7	6	20
Court 5 Circuit Court	8	9	4	7	13	41
Court 6 Central Criminal Court	3	0	1	0	1	5
Court 7 Circuit Court	2	2	4	2	2	12
Court 11 Special Criminal Court	3	3	3	2	2	13
Total	17	15	17	18	24	91

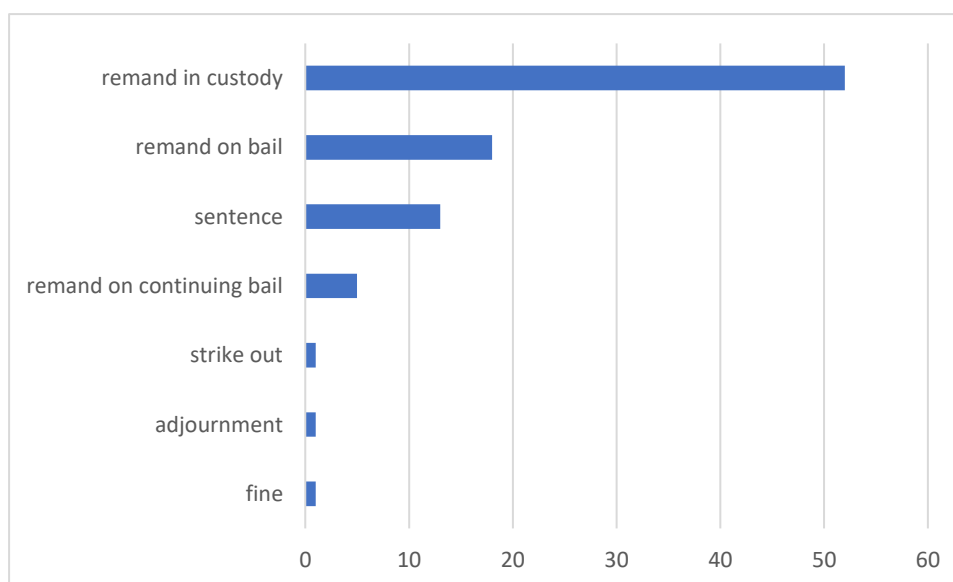
A majority of the appearances were for the purposes of “mentions” (where the court is informed about relatively small/procedural matters regarding the case, but there is no attempt to bring the case to a conclusion). Figure 5.2 shows the breakdown of appearances according to the purpose.

Figure 5.2 Purpose of Appearances



The outcome of the hearings in all cases are categorised in Figure 5.3.

Figure 5.3 Hearing Outcomes



Some 52 of the 91 appearances resulted in orders to remand the prisoner in custody, while a further 13 resulted in prison sentences. A majority of those that resulted in remand on bail or remand on continuing bail outcomes required the further detention of the prisoner (perhaps due to their inability to meet their bail bond requirements or their already being in custody on other charges or under an



unrelated sentence). Of the 91 appearances, just 8 resulted in no further detention requirement, and hence 83 required an escort journey to prison later that day. If appearances for either arraignment or sentence are excluded on the grounds of being inappropriate for appearance by video-link, some 68 appearances might have been suitable for appearance by video-link, or 3 out of 4 of the appearances over the course of the week.

The total elapsed time between any prisoner's court business being dealt with and the warrant being issued was 119 hrs 30 mins (or approximately 1hr 45mins per prisoner).

Finally, of the 83 cases or prisoners being escorted to prison later on during the day in question, nine cases involved "turnarounds" (prisoners being brought to the prison to which they were committed in court that day only to serve the warrant issued, before being brought on an onward journey immediately afterwards to a different prison at which they were already being detained prior to the court appearance). Such cases were:

- 4 cases of escorts to Cloverhill and onward to Wheatfield;
- 1 case of an escort to Cloverhill and onward to Portlaoise;
- 1 case of an escort to Cloverhill and onward to the Midlands;
- 2 cases of an escort to Mountjoy and onward to the Midlands; and
- 1 case of an escort to Portlaoise and onward to Mountjoy.

A second recent examination of the potential effects of legislative change on the volume of required escort journeys was recently undertaken internally by PSEC. Based on all appearances in person during the 2017 Michaelmas legal term (2/10/17 – 21/12/17), this analysis estimated the combined potential impact of the extension of video-link capabilities to additional courts and its significantly increased adoption across all courts with such facilities, based on assumptions regarding the practical implications of the enacting of the relevant provisions in the Criminal Procedures Bill.

In this case the following assumptions were made:

- in the case of any individual appearing 2 or more times in the District Court, all but one are assumed to take place via video-link. Single appearances (e.g. for sentencing) are assumed to take place in person;
- given the jury trial nature of much of its business, in the case of individuals appearing 2 or more times in the Circuit Court, only one of the additional appearances are assumed to take place via video-link;
- in the Central Criminal Court, some 75% of appearances are assumed to be by video-link; and
- in the case of any individual appearing 2 or more times in the Special Criminal Court, it is assumed that 50% of additional appearances would be via video-link.

The results were that the numbers of video-link appearances would have been 11,954, instead of the 3,094 estimated to actually have occurred. Some 70% of the increase would have been due to the legislative change, while 30% would have been due to widening the number of court venues using the technology. The implied total of 11,954 was equivalent to 44% of the 27,099 such instances of prisoners being transported to court in 2016 (see Section 3.2.2). These findings are reflected in later recommendations of the Review.



5.6 Potential Future Performance Indicators

The provision of escort services in Ireland is not subjected to any formal performance management framework or set of performance indicators, standards, or targets. While there are procedures in place to record security incidents while on escort, and trends in such occurrences are therefore capable of measurement and analysis, there is in reality little collection or examination of data on the performance of escorting services in the widest sense. The achievement of performance is more often assumed by the absence of serious incidents, and by the very limited evidence of failures, of lateness, or other consequences of poor performance that would otherwise arise.

It is clear that a more structured and formalised performance measurement and monitoring framework could utilise a range of indicators, and that these would most likely break down into those relating to service effectiveness and efficiency, and those relating to security, public and prisoner welfare.

It is clear that a more structured and formalised performance measurement and monitoring framework could utilise a range of indicators, and that these would most likely break down into those relating to service effectiveness and efficiency, and those relating to security, public and prisoner welfare.

Potential performance indicators relating to effectiveness and efficiency include:

- non-production of prisoners in court at specified times;
- non-arrival of prisoners at court venue at specified time;
- late presentation of prisoners in court at specified times
- non- or late-presentation of prisoners at hospital/medical centre for pre-planned consultation/procedure, at specified times;
- elapsed time taken to present prisoner at hospital emergency department from time of decision/direction to do so;
- number of escort journeys avoided due to prisoner appearances by video-link; and
- avoidable delays in arrival of prisoners transferring from other prisons on escort.

Potential performance indicators relating to security, public and prisoner welfare include:

- avoidable deaths in escort custody;
- avoidable escapes from escort custody;
- releases from escort custody in error;
- incidences of prisoner self-inflicted injury while on escort;
- assaults on staff;
- assaults on prisoners;
- assaults on others;
- extent of compliance with escorting protocols with respect to prisoner age, gender and/or health status;



- extent of compliance with established protocols regarding nutrition and comfort breaks for all prisoners while on escorted journeys;
- elapsed durations prisoners are detained within vehicles in transit without stops/breaks; and
- elapsed durations prisoners are detained within stationary vehicles without periods of exercise/fresh air (e.g. when held at court venues which do not have any or sufficient custody facilities); and
- the overall time spent in stationary vehicles compared to the time spent in transit.



6. Conclusions and Recommendations

6.1 Conclusions

6.1.1 *Rationale and Objectives*

The rationale for prisoner escorts in the criminal justice system – to provide for the safe, secure, timely and consistent transportation of persons held in custody under provisions of criminal justice legislation, where their movement is necessitated for administrative, legal, managerial or policy reasons – is generally clear, widely understood, and both appropriate and valid in the criminal justice context. Its specific objectives revolve around ensuring public, prisoner, and staff safety, ensuring secure detention, prisoner care, and the effective and efficient meeting of the requirement to which any escort journey gives rise, and these specific objectives are equally legitimate.

While valid and widely understood, these aims and objectives are not specified firmly in documentary form, rather they are self-evidently understood by the agencies providing escort services, and have an historical basis. The lack of clear and contemporary documentation of the objectives reflects the historical evolution of the service provision, their self-evident nature, as well as the lack of a single organisation or organisational unit providing the service, within which such responsibilities might more ordinarily take documentary form. The organisational arrangements in place for escort provision are disjointed, and involve PSEC, non-PSEC prison staff in up to 12 separate prisons (often working independently from each other), and many members of AGS, both attached and unattached to formal Garda escort units. However it is evident from consultations with stakeholders and engagement with the IPS and AGS service providers that service objectives and responsibilities are quite firmly understood by all of those delivering the role, irrespective of their documentary status.

The service aims and objectives are also clearly aligned to wider criminal justice principles, policies and objectives, including the independence of the judiciary and judicial process, the rights of any persons accused of a crime, the respect for and compliance with established law and legal procedure, the upholding of prisoners' dignity and rights, the protection of the public, the proper execution of court sentences and sanctions, and the duty of effectiveness and efficiency in the delivery of public service. Service goals and objectives as stated depart in no way from Government policies or priorities in relation to criminal justice, nor the policies or priorities of the Department of Justice and Equality.

6.1.2 *Organisational Approach*

There have been numerous historical occasions when the organisational approach to escort provision has been examined, and much of the existing approach has a justified historical basis. For example, the IPS has the greatest responsibility, reflecting its remit and responsibilities in relation to persons sentenced to imprisonment. PSEC is a dedicated unit within the IPS, established for the purpose of escorting prisoners, and which continues to provide the greatest volume of escorting services. The role of AGS is more limited, and is at least intended to be confined to escorting prisoners on remand, which reflects the principle of differentiating the treatment of those charged with crimes from those

sentenced and committed to prison following trial, and the agencies responsible for detention in both cases.

However the last systematic examination of the overall organisational model probably pre-dated the establishment of PSEC in 2005. A period of at least 13 years has elapsed since then, and alternative approaches have not been objectively or systematically examined nor costed in the interim.

The Review has found numerous features of the existing organisational approach that may be sub-optimal:

- escorts in the main are provided by trained and established prison officers and members of AGS, and substantial costs of prisoner escorts reflect the costs of personnel intended to deliver and support core prison and policing work. In other jurisdictions core prison and police officers have been relieved of the escort responsibility, to reduce its cost and allow them to be deployed to their core responsibilities and those for which they have been trained;
- the organisational delivery model remains disjointed, with PSEC, individual prisons, and AGS, each responsible for prisoner escorting in different contexts. This raises the need for co-ordination and the risks of overlap, and carries a high opportunity cost for prison-based and AGS resources and work;
- the day-to-day responsibilities of PSEC are akin to those of a sizeable transport and logistics business operating to strict deadlines across a national distribution network. It is managed, staffed and resourced by trained prison officers however, without logistics management, experience, qualifications or modern IT systems;
- escort information and data systems are poor, and incapable of measuring or informing the system's effectiveness or efficiency, or serving its optimal management.

6.1.3 Inputs and Efficiency

Service inputs are only clearly specified in respect of PSEC itself, which has well-documented staffing levels, and for which costs and expenditure are recorded and reported in isolation from wider IPS resources and activity. PSEC resources and costs have remained generally stable over the last five years, particularly in respect of staff and operational expenditure.

Wider inputs into escort provision are not clearly specified, and prison-stationed officers and resource inputs, as well as Garda officers and resources deployed to escorting duties, fluctuate and respond to changing needs at short notice, and are drawn from wider resource pools from which they are not administratively differentiated. Such (non-PSEC) escorting resources and inputs are not recorded and reported as a matter of routine, and these inputs have become much more significant in addressing overall escorting service needs, alongside PSEC itself, although there is no statistical record of the evolving contributions. Duplication of service is likely to be rare, but the disjointed organisational approach cannot fully rule it out. Given their responsibility for escorting remand prisoners, it is possible for AGS to need on occasion to mirror simultaneous prison- or PSEC-led escort trips carrying sentenced prisoners on identical journeys, where only one vehicle journey could have met all needs. Local AGS/IPS co-ordination, which may or may not always be possible or effective, is presently the only means to minimise any such duplication.



The efficiency of escort provision can be considered at a number of levels:

- the extent to which the demand for prisoner escorts can be reduced so as to reduce costs;
- whether the required level of prisoner escorts can be delivered at lower cost; and
- whether service needs themselves optimally allow for an efficient service response.

In the main, prisoner escorts are provided in response to the needs for prisoners to attend court, to attend hospitals and to transfer from one prison to another. For any given level of such journeys necessary, their costs are predominantly a function of the number, time required, and remuneration of the prisoner officers or Gardaí providing the escort, which in turn reflect security risks and protocols, categories of prisoners, journey load factors, locations and travel distances, time periods required at destination, and the advance planning possible in each case (which influences the scope for shared journeys, larger vehicles and optimal escort staff to prisoner ratios). The unit costs of escorts are a function of all of these variables, as well as the degree to which vehicle and staff resources are deployed to meet demands. While individual escort journeys have high unit costs in themselves, they reflect how and where escort needs arise, how efficiently resources are deployed to meet them, and the de-facto costs of the inputs needed from those agencies currently responsible for providing them. Data constraints have not allowed examination of the efficiency of journey scheduling, deployment, nor an examination of de-facto unit costs over time. It is also not clear if the variation between unit costs of journeys between the providers of transport (individual prisons, PSEC and AGS) are solely explained by differences in the transport parameters described above as opposed to efficiency reasons. Accordingly, there could be scope for further efficiencies, particularly with the introduction of modern fleet and logistics management methods.

System efficiency on the other hand is as much a function of the level and pattern of escort demand, the necessity of all escorts, optimal co-ordination and economy in provision, the use or non-use of modern logistical systems, and arguably the proportionality of the objectives served as against the costs incurred. Escorts carry a high direct cost which reflect the inputs required, but also a high indirect or opportunity cost in terms of the diversion of `prison and Garda resources from other functions. There is widespread dissatisfaction regarding how features of the system give rise to time and resource inputs that either seem disproportionate to the objectives they serve, or for which changes in the pattern and form of service needs seem evidently needed when considered against the direct and opportunity costs at play. An extreme but not unusual example of current practice is illustrative (see below).

Given Limerick Prison's legal status as the committal prison for court venues in Munster, it would not be unusual for the following to occur:

- a prisoner serving a sentence in the Midlands Prison is summoned to appear at Waterford District Court;
- PSEC is unable to resource that escort;
- non-escort staff from Limerick Prison travel to the Midlands Prison in Portlaoise, collect the prisoner and bring them to Waterford District Court (or to ensure the prisoner's arrival on time, the prisoner is transferred from the Midlands Prison to Limerick Prison on the previous day);



- the prisoner appears before the court (often such appearances can take a matter of minutes only);
- following receipt of a hard copy warrant (which may be several hours after the prisoner's appearance has ended), the prisoner is driven back to Limerick Prison, where legally the warrant must be served;
- following the serving of the warrant at Limerick (which may take only minutes), the prisoner is returned once again to the Midlands Prison;
- what may have been a five-minute court appearance for a single prisoner will have involved four different journeys and travel of over 400km in total, along with the requisite staff and travel costs, and opportunity costs in terms of the alternative tasks the staff would have fulfilled at Limerick Prison had no escort been required.

System improvements and enhanced value for money are therefore widely seen in terms of the extent and pattern of escort needs as much as in any improvements and efficiencies in how those needs are met, and a number of recommendations are made that reflect this. Measures to reduce escort demand have been identified in the past and the escort costs identified in this Review add to the urgency of their implementation. In particular the analysis in Section 5.5 backs up this conclusion as it shows that up to 75% of recorded prisoner appearances in court could potentially have been organised through video-link based on the sample review of prisoner and court activity over the course of a full week at the CCJ (covering five individual courts). Finally, PSEC's own analysis shows that the number of video link appearances could have been almost four times higher for the 2017 Michaelmas legal term based on an examination of the potential effects of legislative change on the volume of escort journeys.²⁶

6.1.4 *Outputs and Effectiveness*

In 2016 there were more than 41,000 occasions in which prisoners were physically moved and required an escort, with court appearances giving rise to the majority of such occasions, followed by inter-prison transfers and hospital appointments. While the data is not comprehensive for previous years, there is reliable evidence suggesting broadly similar volumes of activity over the last 5 years. However, the evidence also points to moderately increasing numbers of court appearances arising on a per-prisoner basis. While the numbers of movements requiring escort has remained stable, this has happened alongside a declining prisoner population and a growing number of court appearances from prisons by video-link, for which no external movement arose. There may be many factors contributing to this moderate upward trend in the incidence of escort journeys for given numbers of prisoners.

While its effectiveness is not measured or assessed routinely, systematically and objectively, the evidence suggests effective service delivery. While 100% success in every respect is neither achieved nor claimed by escort providers, very high numbers of journeys are continuously undertaken that meet all security, safety, timing, procedural and other service requirements. The limited formal evidence of any failure to meet objectives (major lapses in security or safety, or frequency of court summonses of

²⁶ As noted in the Section, this combined the potential impact of the expansion of video link capabilities to additional courts and its significantly increased adoption across all courts with such facilities based on assumptions regarding the practical implications of the enacting of the relevant provisions in the Criminal Procedures Bill.



Prison Governors), as well as all anecdotal evidence, suggest such failure is very infrequent, usually explainable, and rarely of very serious consequence. Lapses that have serious consequences are subject to formal processes of inquiry and examination. Consultative feedback from wider stakeholders in the criminal justice system also supports the general finding that service provision is effective, when considered in the round.

The effectiveness of the service provided most directly results reflects the priority and resources devoted to it, by both the IPS and AGS. In both cases the need to escort prisoners is treated as an obligatory and time-critical responsibility, and in both cases resources are often deployed from wider responsibilities, that as such are effectively treated as less so.

There is however no framework of performance measures, standards of service or quality benchmarks applied, and no means of examining trends in performance nor its achievement in relation to different types of escorts or in different operational contexts, other than in respect of security incidents, which are recorded as a matter of course.

6.1.5 Ongoing Rationale

The ongoing requirement and rationale for escort service provision is clear. While developments such as prison-to-court video-link, or changes to the range of medical in-care services provided within prisons, may affect the volumes of escorts needed, there are no developments in prospect likely to end, or radically (or suddenly) reduce the need for prisoner escort services in any foreseeable timeframe, and there is no international jurisdiction known to the authorities where it doesn't continue to feature as a permanent requirement within criminal justice systems.

6.1.6 Performance Indicators

Escort provision is not currently the subject of any systematic or formalised system of performance measurement and monitoring. A range of potential indicators that would serve such a purpose has been identified in Section 5.6.

6.1.7 Future Delivery of Services

The present arrangements in place for the provision of prisoner escorts in the criminal justice system have many strengths, including their effectiveness, the professionalism applied, the understanding and capability of the providers in respect of what is a challenging and unique set of responsibilities, their responsiveness to demands that change constantly, and their integration with wider IPS and AGS services that allows for resource inputs to respond quite directly to needs as presented, but to be redeployed to wider duties when surplus to escorting needs.

However escort services as shown in this review carry substantial costs, and within the criminal justice system there is little consideration of these costs (beyond those most directly involved in delivery), understanding of their level, systematic monitoring of them, cross-agency incentives to reduce them, nor processes of comparison with alternative approaches that might be less costly.

International evidence points to private service provision in Scotland, and England and Wales, and continued public sector provision in Northern Ireland but where the public-sector providers have been



required to establish and demonstrate their greater cost-effectiveness and value for money in comparison to private service models, and do so on a recurring basis.

Such approaches may have the capacity to generate cost efficiencies in Ireland, although estimating the extent in the absence of market testing or market sounding has not been possible within the scope of this Review. The evidence of unit costs in other jurisdictions would suggest however that their levels, comparability and drivers in the UK warrant deeper investigation by the IPS.

However there are reforms and service management improvements underway, in prospect, or necessary in Ireland, that firstly may reduce the levels of escorts required, and secondly would be necessary to implement and deliver before any examination of private or public-private models would have a sound basis to proceed with. Until a service need is sufficiently specified or capable of detailed specification, quantitatively understood, open to demand planning with reasonable levels of certainty, the subject of proven performance measurement and management protocols, and capable of reasonable and objective risk assessment and risk pricing, models of private delivery carry as much risk of cost-ineffectiveness as any public ones.

The recommendations from the review therefore focus on (a) improving the service as it is currently delivered, (b) reducing where possible and appropriate the levels of escort requirements in the criminal justice system, (c) improving service management and information, and (d) thereafter formally assessing the scope for greater cost-effectiveness under alternative delivery models. While the first set of processes are considered necessary prior to any decision to fundamentally alter the delivery model, particularly through consideration of outsourced or privately-contracted provision, the review Terms of Reference, and the international evidence, leads inevitably to a necessity for much greater cost measurement, monitoring, and objective and detailed comparison with alternatives.

6.2 Recommendations

Review recommendations, along with the appropriate lead responsible agencies and implementation timetables, are set out below.

No.	Recommendation	Lead Responsibility	Timetable
1	The present model of service delivery should be maintained pending a number of initiatives (set out in further recommendations) to reduce escort demand and enhance service provision and service information. Following such initiatives an update review should take place to consider the scope of lower cost alternative models. Consideration should in the meantime be given to a model of resourcing prisoner management at (and only at) the CCJ, and Cork, Limerick and Waterford criminal courts that does not involve fully-trained and serving prison officers or members of AGS, thereby ensuring the latter's availability for deployment to core functions.	DJE/IPS/AGS/PSEC	Ongoing, with a target update review date of 2021



2	The provisions of the Criminal Procedures Bill with respect to video-link should be reviewed with a view to maximising the extent of its wider adoption in the face of the prisoner escort costs identified in this report	DJE	End-2018
3	The IPS should draw up a strategy for a phased deployment of staffing and infrastructure resources to prison-based video-link suites and the management of prisoners using them. This strategy should allow for the redeployment of resources to align with and allow for changing demand patterns between traditional escort duties and video suite management. This should be exchequer neutral.	IPS	Q2 2019
4	The Criminal Procedures Bill provisions regarding the electronic transmission of warrants, should be enacted.	DJE	2019
5	The legislative proposals to amend Section 17 of the Criminal Justice Administration Act, concerning the committal of prisoners to prisons at which they may already be serving sentence, should be enacted	DJE	
6	A review of PSEC logistics management and service delivery should take place, to examine and establish the scope for enhanced systems of journey scheduling and resource deployment. A two-phased approach involving initial set up of service demands data capture and vehicle GPS, staff and prisoner tracking, followed by a later phase of efficiency and system analysis, should be adopted. Pending the outcome of, or in parallel with such a review, consideration should be given to appointing a logistics manager or external logistics management expertise to PSEC from within existing resource allocations.	IPS	Review Complete by mid-2019
7	The anticipated savings in recurring vehicle maintenance expenditure arising from recent investments in the fleet should be set out and their achievement monitored and reported.	PSEC	Initial report by end-2018, and ongoing reporting thereafter
8	Given that escort activity impacts on operational police deployment and is not a core policing function, there is a strong argument for the IPS taking responsibility for a range of escorts currently provided by AGS in the short to medium term. This could be achieved in the main through changing the current responsibility definitions. Other mechanisms could also be used including enhanced co-ordination, and utilising any surplus IPS capacity on shared routes. The practical steps to achieve this should be formally examined by the DJE in conjunction with AGS and IPS. Such a revised approach should be exchequer neutral.	DJE	Q2 2019
9	Escort activity, outputs, and inputs in all categories and provided by each entity involved, should be recorded routinely, and reported comprehensively and periodically.	IPS/AGS	Ongoing



10	IPS Management should engage with colleagues in the Home Office as well as the devolved Governments in Scotland and Wales to ascertain the comparability of prisoner escort services between Ireland and these jurisdictions with a view to establishing the scope for the transferability of any efficiency measures.		
11	A detailed framework governing the performance of prisoner escorting services should be established, including the measurement, monitoring and reporting of performance under a range of established indicator. The starting point for indicators to be included within this framework should be the suggested indicators as set out in Section 5.6 of this report.	IPS	Framework Adopted Q3 2019



Annexes

Annex 1 Terms of Reference for Review

- i. Assess the rationale for and objectives of prisoner escort services, the extent to which the objectives are clearly specified and the validity of those objectives including their compatibility with overall Government priorities and those of the Department of Justice and Equality;
 - ii. Assess the justification for the organisational approach taken to delivery of prisoner services and whether alternative approaches have been considered and costed;
 - iii. Examine whether inputs and resources (financial, staffing) are clearly specified, analyse their level and trend and assess the efficiency of the programme, including with respect to inter-agency co-operation and co-ordination;
 - iv. Identify and analyse outputs associated with the escort services and the level and trend of those outputs;
 - v. Examine the extent to which service objectives have been achieved, and the effectiveness with which they have been achieved;
 - vi. Evaluate the degree to which the objectives warrant the allocation of public funding on a current and ongoing basis, consider international best practice, and examine the scope for alternative policy or organisational approaches to achieving these objectives on a more efficient and/or effective basis including, among others, a cross departmental approach; use of shared services / eGovernment channels and external service provider provision;
 - vii. Examine performance indicators in place to allow for assessment of programme success or failure; and
 - viii. Make recommendations for the future operation and delivery of escorting services and specify potential future performance indicators that might be used to better monitor and manage service performance.
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Annex 2 Membership of Steering Committee

- Mr Tom Ferris, Independent Chairperson
- Ms Clare Droney, Secretary, Department of Justice and Equality
- Mr Peter Mullan, Assistant Secretary, Crime and Security, Department of Justice and Equality
- Mr Tim Maverley, Head of Financial Management, Department of Justice and Equality
- Ms Caron McCaffrey, Director, Staff and Corporate Services, Irish Prison Service
- Mr Trevor Jordan, Staff and Corporate Services, Irish Prison Service
- Mr Jack Nolan, Assistant Commissioner, An Garda Síochána²⁷
- Mr Michael Culhane, Director of Finance, An Garda Síochána
- Ms Geraldine Hurley, Assistant Secretary, The Courts Service
- Mr Eoin Dormer, Assistant Principal Officer, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform
- Mr Brendan Shiels, Consultant, Evaluator

²⁷ Assistant Commissioner Nolan was replaced by Assistant Commissioner Patrick Leahy during the course of the review.

