Cayman Islands Prisons

MQPL and SQL Feedback report

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Summary

A short study was undertaken in the three Cayman Islands prisons, at the request of the Cayman Islands Portfolio of Internal and External Affairs responsible for the Prison Service. Using quantitative surveys and qualitative data with prisoners and staff (generated by observation and informal discussions), this report outlines the findings of that research.

The Cayman Islands prisons face a number of challenges, including the tropical climate, the variety of prisoners held within a limited estate (men and women, adults and young offenders, remand and sentenced prisoners, long and short sentences), and overcrowding. Despite this, the prisons were characterised by a relaxed atmosphere and relatively good/informal staff-prisoner relationships. Such relationships were negatively affected by a minority of 'provocative' officers and broader issues of a lack of procedural justice and inconsistent treatment. Prisoners believed that the power held by certain prisoners affected staff decisions not to punish their behaviour. Staff maintenance of boundaries was weak, but line officers' feelings of being unsupported by management and a lack of available systems for policing low level rule breaking behaviour may have contributed to the way in which staff under-policed the environment.

The Cayman Islands prisons could be characterised as a 'low trust environment', as at all levels individuals reported feeling unable to trust others. Some trust, even in prison, is important for the purpose of 'social co-operation' and particularly, in this context, for human 'flourishing' in prison (Liebling, assisted by Arnold 2004: 241). Whilst prisoners felt that being in prison offered them time to 'rethink' their behaviour and potentially to reform, they described the rehabilitation provision offered by the prison as 'limited'. Prisoners called for greater accessibility to education and skills training, particularly for those with literacy problems, and for initiatives which would ease their reintegration back into the community. High levels of staff commitment and support for rehabilitation programmes suggest that staff would welcome and encourage developments in this area. Existing resources and facilities could be further utilised and prisoners could be encouraged to participate more actively in each prison regime, for example offering peer support for learning, through programmes such as Toe-by-toe.

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Introduction: Invitation for the research

This report outlines the findings of a small study of the quality of life for prisoners and staff in Cayman Islands prisons. The research was commissioned by the Cayman Islands Portfolio of External and Internal Affairs (department responsible for the Prison Service), as part of a review of the Strategic Plan 2006-2009. One of the recommendations from that plan involved surveying prisoners and prison staff to determine 'a true picture of what is happening within the prison system' (pers. communication 2011). The results of the surveys, alongside local and institutional data, were expected to inform a future Strategic Plan.

The Portfolio of Internal and External Affairs approached the Prisons Research Centre (PRC), at the Institute of Criminology (University of Cambridge), to discuss the prisoner (MQPL) and staff (SQL) surveys developed by the PRC and used nationally by the Prison Service of England and Wales. Following discussions, the PRC was commissioned to supervise administration of the surveys in all prisons in the Cayman Islands and to provide analysis of the data, culminating in the production of this report. Locally, the Portfolio of Internal and External Affairs would review the surveys prior to implementation and the National Drug Council (NDC), an independent statutory body based on Grand Cayman, would undertake changes to the surveys, lead their implementation and input the survey data.

Context

The Cayman Islands

The Cayman Islands are made up of three islands in the Caribbean Sea – Grand Cayman, Cayman Brac and Little Cayman. The population of the islands is estimated at 54,397 (October 2010), with the majority of people living on Grand Cayman (52,120) (CIA 2011). They experience a tropical climate with warm, humid and wet summers (May to October) and drier, cooler winters (November to April).

The Cayman Islands are an overseas territory of the UK (Foreign and Commonwealth Office 2011). A Governor, appointed by the Crown, appoints the Cabinet on the advice of the Premier, who represents the head of Government (CIA 2011). The primary industries in the Cayman Islands are the financial services, tourism and real estate sales and development (Cayman Islands Government 2011).

Her Majesty's Cayman Islands Prison Service

The first prison on the Cayman Islands was built in 1981 (HMP Northward); previously prisoners were held in police stations or sent to Jamaica (HMCIP 2001). Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons (HMCIP) of England and Wales carried out an inspection of the Cayman Islands prisons in 2001, following a serious disturbance at the prisons, during which full control was lost for a total of 52 days. Increasing population pressures had led to additional accommodation being built (on the same site of HMP Northward), but the system continued to suffer from serious overcrowding. The riot in 1999 resulted in female prisoners being relocated to HMP Fairbanks (previously an immigration centre) and prison staff from England and Wales being transferred to support and train local staff (HMCIP 2001). Since the riot, further problems have included a number of escapes and a serious offence committed by prisoners on day release to work.

In 2011, the Cayman Islands Prison Service continue to face the challenges associated with holding a diverse population of 220 prisoners in a prison estate with limited resources (including its infrastructure). The prisons accommodate: men and women; young offenders and adults; remand and

sentenced prisoners; and prisoners who have committed a variety of offences (from overfishing of conch, a sea animal, to rape and murder) and represent a continuum of risk (categorised from A to D).

HMP Northward, HMP Eaglehouse and HMP Fairbanks

There are three prisons on the Cayman Islands: HMP Northward, HMP Eaglehouse and HMP Fairbanks. HMP Northward and HMP Eaglehouse are adjacent to one another on the same site and hold male prisoners (HMP Eaglehouse is sometimes referred to as the 'C wing' of HMP Northward). HMP Fairbanks accommodates female prisoners. Each of the prisons are described below.

HMP Northward and HMP Eaglehouse

HMP Northward contains five 'wings', alongside the single unit accommodation at HMP Eaglehouse. The design of each of the wings is different, probably due to the ad hoc nature of the building works, which responded to the growing prison population.

All HMP Northward wings, and HMP Eaglehouse, are situated within the parimeter fence, accessed via external, uncovered areas. Inside the prison, accommodation is mixed: consisting of single cells, doubles cells and dormitories. Air conditioning is limited to areas such as staff offices and education. Fans, provided by prisoners' families and friends, are allowed in cells. All cells have in-cell sanitation, although many toilets were uncovered (prisoners had created their own covers with cardboard) and no privacy screens were provided (many prisoners had attached sheets or towels to their cell doors, although these were often positioned in a manner that concealed much of the cell – see Prisoner results below). Additional facilities include a chapel, laundry, education block and gymnasium. A small visits room contains long tables in a 'U' shape: prisoners sit on the inside and visitors on the outside.

HMP Northward

A wing
A wing holds around 35 prisoners in total:
* The 'basic' unit holds 12 prisoners (remand and sentenced) in single cells. Prisoners are locked in their cells for 23 hours per day, with one hour allocated to exercise in a caged yard (supervised by three prison officers). Cell doors are metal with small windows or tight mesh.
* A dormitory holds 12 prisoners.
* A further 'spur' of cells holding 12-14 prisoners on normal location.

A wing offers staff limited sight lines. Vision into the dormitory is difficult due to the darkness of the room. There is no social area inside the wing. A small yard at the front of the wing contains a bench.

B wing
B wing holds around 60 sentenced prisoners in double cells on two spurs. At the end of one spur is a large social area for prisoners. A large yard area outside the wing includes a covered area with tables.

D wing
D wing accommodates prisoners on two landings:
* Around 35 prisoners are held downstairs in cells and in a small dormitory. Prisoners are mainly on remand, with some Category A prisoners and others who may be vulnerable or cannot mix with the general population on other wings. On this landing a small communal area contains a phone and showers that are curtained off. Corridors are used as social areas - televisions are located here.
* The High Risk Unit, located upstairs, holds around 10-12 Category A prisoners who are locked in their cells for 23 hours per day.

Outside of D wing is a small yard area with a bench.

E wing
E wing is a very small self-contained building, previously used as a medical centre, which holds up to four prisoners. Prisoners enjoy privileges such as a microwave and a pet cat, according to one prisoner.

F wing
F wing is the 'enhanced' wing, holding around 26 prisoners, who are required to be Category D and drug free for 6 months. It is a long building with high ceilings. 'Cell' doors are made from wooden slats, so offer greater privacy than many other cells in the prison and prisoners have keys to their rooms. Other privileges include access to telephones, fridges and in-cell TV's and computers. There is a communal kitchen, in which prisoners can cook their own food delivered by family or friends during visits. There is also a music room on the wing and one long-term prisoner runs a youth organisation from here.

A hostel is also situated on the HMP Northward site, on the outside of the parimeter fence. It holds a small number of prisoners, often who have served many years of a life sentence (in the Cayman Islands currently a life sentence means whole life).

HMP Eaglehouse

HMP Eaglehouse is accessed via the HMP Northward site. Intended to hold young offenders and juveniles, at the time of the research it housed juveniles, young people and adult prisoners. One spur holds around 35 prisoners with a classroom, a large social room (with a television) and other small rooms, which appeared to be unused at the time of the research. In an outside area, plants are grown by 'trusted' prisoners (the yard borders the road from which drugs have been supplied in the past).

HMP Fairbanks

At the time of the research, nine women were housed at HMP Fairbanks. The majority were held in three large dormitories, each containing a closed toilet cubicle. Mesh walls provide staff with relatively clear vision into the dorms (although prisoners had attached blankets to the wall to shoulder height). Two Category A prisoners and a prisoner with mental health problems were currently being held in the High Security Area (three gated cells), although the cell doors remained open all day as staff felt that they did not represent a threat (the prisoner with mental health problems had been found to be coping better in a single cell).

At the centre of the main accommodation is a caged, social area. Prisoners were allowed outside of their dormitories for the majority of the day, but were only able to go outside for one hour a day between 5-6pm (this was limited by wet weather). The prison provided a gym, a sewing room, a 'beauty salon' (with hairdressing stations and a massage area), a library and classrooms (one containing computers). A volleyball court in the exercise yard looked overgrown. The visits room - a large room with seats, a sofa and a TV in the corner – had been decorated by prisoners.

Governance

The prison Director is responsible for all three prisons, although is physically based outside the parimeter fence at HMP Northward. Day-to-day operations are controlled by a senior officer located at Northward and at Fairbanks.

Research Methods

Following preparation and consultations, a Research Associate from the PRC spent four days in the Cayman Islands prisons (6-9 June 2011) assisting the NDC with the implementation of surveys and carrying out observation and informal discussions with prisoners and staff. The information contained in this report draws on both the quantitative and the qualitative data collected during the visit.

The surveys administered during this study were the latest versions of a prisoner questionnaire (the MQPL) and a staff questionnaire (the SQL), used in research conducted by the PRC (see Liebling et al, in press for details of the development and rationale for the survey) and by the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) Audit and Assurance team in England and Wales. Small changes were made to language, where necessary, to ensure local sensitivity and understanding, and in the SQL, demographic groups were amended, to minimise the possible identification of individuals.[1] The surveys were reformatted locally by the NDC, to allow for automated input of the data (see Appendix 1 and 2).

MQPL – surveys with prisoners

The 'Measuring the Quality of Prison Life' (MQPL) survey was originally developed based on prisoner evaluations of 'what mattered most' during a study of quality of life in five prisons in England in 2000-2001 (see Liebling, assisted by Arnold, 2004). Since its original use, the survey has been revised and adapted in a number of further studies. It has proved a useful tool for measuring the social 'climate' of prisons, for identifying subtle differences in the quality of life for prisoners in different environments, and it has been used to predict and explain prisoner distress (Liebling et al 2005).

Methodology
The methodology used in this study replicated, as closely as possible, that used in research studies conducted by the PRC and in assessments undertaken by NOMS in the UK. Surveys were to be administered in groups of 10-12 prisoners (selected by wing staff),[2] allowing for questions to be asked, help to be provided to those with limited literacy skills, and discussions to be held with prisoners at the end of survey completion, about their quality of life. This methodology was adopted where possible, but see 'Limitations' (page 9).

Prisoner survey sample
In total, 150 prisoners participated in the MQPL survey, which represents 68% of the Cayman Islands prison population. Table 1 shows the number and proportion of prisoners who participated on each wing.[3]   See Appendix 3 for full details of prisoner demographics.

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[1] For example, the PRC advised that the 'Director' option was amalgamated with other senior managers on the question asking for 'job role'. Due to the management structure operating in the Cayman Islands the final survey option was 'Director/Deputy Director'.

[2] Note in the UK, prisoners are selected randomly from a list of the prison population at the time of the survey. Such a list was unavailable for use here.

[3] All surveys were analysed. Three prisoners failed to answer around 80% of the survey statements and a further ten (approx) only responded to around 50% of the survey.

Prison/Wing	Number in sample	Proportion of wing population
Northward – A wing	18	51%
Northward – B wing	38	63%
Northward – D wing	29	62%
Northward – E wing	3	75%
Northward – F wing	22	85%
Northward – hostel	1	25%
Eaglehouse	21	60%
Fairbanks	8	89%

SQL – surveys with staff

The staff survey (SQL) is grounded in studies conducted in prisons in England on staff morale, staff-prisoner relationships and the quality of life for staff (Muir and Liebling 1995, Liebling et al 1999, Liebling and Price 2001, Liebling, assisted by Arnold, 2004). The survey was developed for use by the Prison Service in a pilot study during 2005-6 (see Gadd et al 2007).

Methodology
In the UK staff surveys are generally administered during full staff meetings, as this tends to provide the highest completion rates by large numbers of staff. This method was adopted here. The majority of staff (96%) participated during a full staff meeting called specifically for the purpose, with a small number approached by researchers in addition during visits to individual wings.

Staff survey sample
In total 94 staff members from the Cayman Islands prisons took part in the staff survey, 65% of the total number of staff at that time (144 staff). Of these, 88.6% were discipline staff (Line officers, Supervisors and Unit Managers), 10.2% were non-discipline staff (including those working in Education, Stores and Psychology), and one was a manager. Staff were relatively experienced, all having worked for the Prison Service for at least a year, 84% having worked for 5 years or more and 50% having ten years or more experience, although the majority had only worked in the current prison (76.8%) (see Appendix 4 for full details of staff demographics and work experience).

Analysis of the surveys – MQPL and SQL

Reponses to the statements (or items) in the survey range from 1 to 5 on a Likert Scale (from strongly agree to strongly disagree). Some statements are worded positively and some negatively (to minimise response bias, where respondents tend to agree with statements). During analysis items worded negatively are recoded so that a higher score on an item (and dimension) reflects a more positive response. Therefore, when reading the item and dimension means, note that a *higher score always indicates a better result* regardless of how each item was worded. A score of 3.0 is generally interpreted as a neutral score (on average respondents neither agree nor disagree). It is rare to score lower than 2.0 or higher than 4.0, so that a score below 2.0 is generally considered a particularly poor score and a score above 4.0 is particularly good score.

Limitations - Cautionary note

There are a number of limitations to the surveys conducted for the purpose of this survey, which should be borne in mind when reading the data.

Prior to the study, it was hoped that all prisoners and staff would participate in the surveys. In terms of the MQPL, staff facilitation was generally good and groups ran well when senior management engaged directly with prisoners: the Director had reportedly gathered prisoners on one wing to generate interest; and one senior officer was observed using impressive negotiation skills to encourage prisoners individually to participate and to engage 'influential' prisoners to encourage others. However, a number of barriers to administering surveys to all prisoners emerged:

- There was evidence to suggest that a minority of staff were unsupportive of the research. Notices informing prisoners of the surveys were said to have been removed by staff at HMP Fairbanks, whilst male prisoners reported staff discouraging them from participating.
- Many prisoners reported that they chose not to engage in the survey due to the perceived links between the 'system' and the research. These prisoners expressed anger and frustration with the Criminal Justice System: sentencing was described as biased, dependent on the 'whim' of the presiding judge; prisoners felt they were the 'scapegoats' for politicians and judges who were attempting to ensure 'positive public opinion'; and frustrations were directed at the re-categorisation system that prisoners felt lacked due process.
- Prisoners conveyed apathy about the possibility of their opinions being taken seriously and a sense of 'survey fatigue', as they had failed to see improvements following similar surveys. Participating in the survey was judged to be 'pointless' as it 'wouldn't change anything'. One prisoner commented: 'These surveys continue, however nothing [is done] about the prison, the condition of it, the 'military-like' regime that is more concerned with 'control' than 'reform', none of this is changing – in spite of the continual surveys.'
- High levels of illiteracy amongst prisoners may have deterred some.
- One researcher heard that prisoners refused to respond due to anger directed at the research team for the prison having been locked down for the day to allow staff surveys to be implemented during the full staff meeting.

In practice, the survey samples were 'opportunity' samples: samples of individuals who were available and willing to assist during the study. They cannot be considered truly *representative* of the prisoner or staff population at the Cayman Islands prisons. The results, however, do represent a 'best attempt' (particularly at short notice) to reflect the perceptions of a large proportion of those who live and work in the prisons at the time of the research and therefore can be considered a good source of information.

The ability of staff and prisoners to understand the surveys may have been impaired by issues of illiteracy amongst prisoners, typology errors generated by the reformatting of the surveys (to allow for automated input)[4] and language differences between prisoner and staff culture in the UK and in the Cayman Islands.[5] Attempts to minimise such issues included reading surveys aloud to prisoners who identified themselves as experiencing problems with literacy, informing respondents of items that required corrections, altering language where possible, and explaining key words/phrases.

Reliability measures the extent to which the survey instrument produces consistent results. Reliability tests conducted on the Cayman data show lower reliability scores on *some* dimensions, compared to UK data. This suggests that some dimensions worked less well in Cayman, particularly those

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[4] For example, one statement on the SQL included only half the statement (item qq94 in the Stress dimension).

[5] For example, the MQPL included a statement asking if staff talk to prisoners 'on a level'.

containing items using more colloquial terms,[6] as stated above, although correlations (between the item and dimension) were also low elsewhere.[7] Despite this, the dimensions do still 'work' as all reliabilities in the MQPL were over .45 and for the SQL were over .42 (see Appendix 5 and Appendix 6).

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[6] For example, 'In this prison, things only happen for you if your face fits' has a low reliability in Fairness.

[7] For example, 'Anyone who harms themselves is considered by staff to be more of an attention-seeker than someone who needs care and help' in Decency (.029).

Results

In this section, the results of the quantitative surveys with prisoners (MQPL) and staff (SQL) are outlined alongside qualitative data obtained during the four day visit to the Cayman Islands prisons. The results are reported by theme (the themes also broadly reflect the dimension groups – see Appendix 5 and 6). A full outline of the MQPL and SQL survey results are available in Appendix 7 and Appendix 8, respectively. The prisoner findings are discussed first, followed by the staff results.

## Prisoner Quality of Life in Cayman Islands Prisons

Table 2 shows the prisoner survey dimension scores, for all prisons and by individual prison (scores above three – the neutral score – are highlighted). The asterisk in the table show where scores significantly differ between prisons, for example HMP Fairbanks scored significantly higher than HMP Northward on the dimension Drugs and exploitation.[8] Figure 1 illustrates the scores graphically.

Table 2 - Prisoner survey (MQPL) dimension scores for all prisons and for individual prisons

| | N=150 | N=106 | N=21 | N=8 |
	ALL	**NORTHWARD**	**EAGLEHOUSE**	**FAIRBANKS**
Harmony Dimensions				
Entry into custody	**2.82**	2.78	2.98	2.81
Respect/courtesy	**3.09**	3.08	3.12	2.96
Staff-prisoner relationships	**2.96**	2.93	2.90	2.93
Humanity	**2.87**	2.87	2.82	2.98
Decency	**2.92**	2.95	2.86	2.54
Care for the vulnerable	**2.78**	2.75	2.97	2.53
Help and assistance	**2.92**	2.89	3.06	2.81
Professionalism Dimensions				
Staff professionalism	**3.04**	3.01	3.03	2.96
Bureaucratic legitimacy	**2.44**	2.40	2.52	2.64
Fairness	**2.57**	2.51	2.77	2.38
Organisation and consistency	**2.41**	2.36	2.59	2.19
Security Dimensions				
Policing and security	**3.04**	3.10	2.96	2.87
Prisoner safety	**2.98**	2.93	3.05	3.45
Prisoner adaptation	**3.16**	3.19	3.02	3.58
Drugs and exploitation	**2.64**	2.58	2.64	3.33*NW
Conditions and Family Contact Dimensions				
Conditions	**3.53**	3.54	3.65	3.56
Family contact	**3.09**	3.08	3.12	2.63
Well-being and Development Dimensions				
Personal development	**2.90**	2.85	3.11	2.91
Personal autonomy	**2.81**	2.80	2.83	2.77
Well-being	**2.22**	2.17	2.36	2.54
Distress	**3.51**	3.60	3.41	3.19

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[8] Statistical significance (*p*) means that the difference between the scores has not emerged by chance (* *p*<.01, ** *p*<.05 and *** *p*<.001). It is less likely to occur where sample sizes are small. As a guide to reading the scores, a difference of .10 is substantial, e.g., the difference between Eaglehouse (3.06) and Fairbanks (2.81) on Help and assistance is worthy of note.

Figure 1 – Prisoner survey dimension scores for the three Cayman Islands prisons: HMP Northward (male), HMP Eaglehouse (male) and HMP Fairbanks (female)
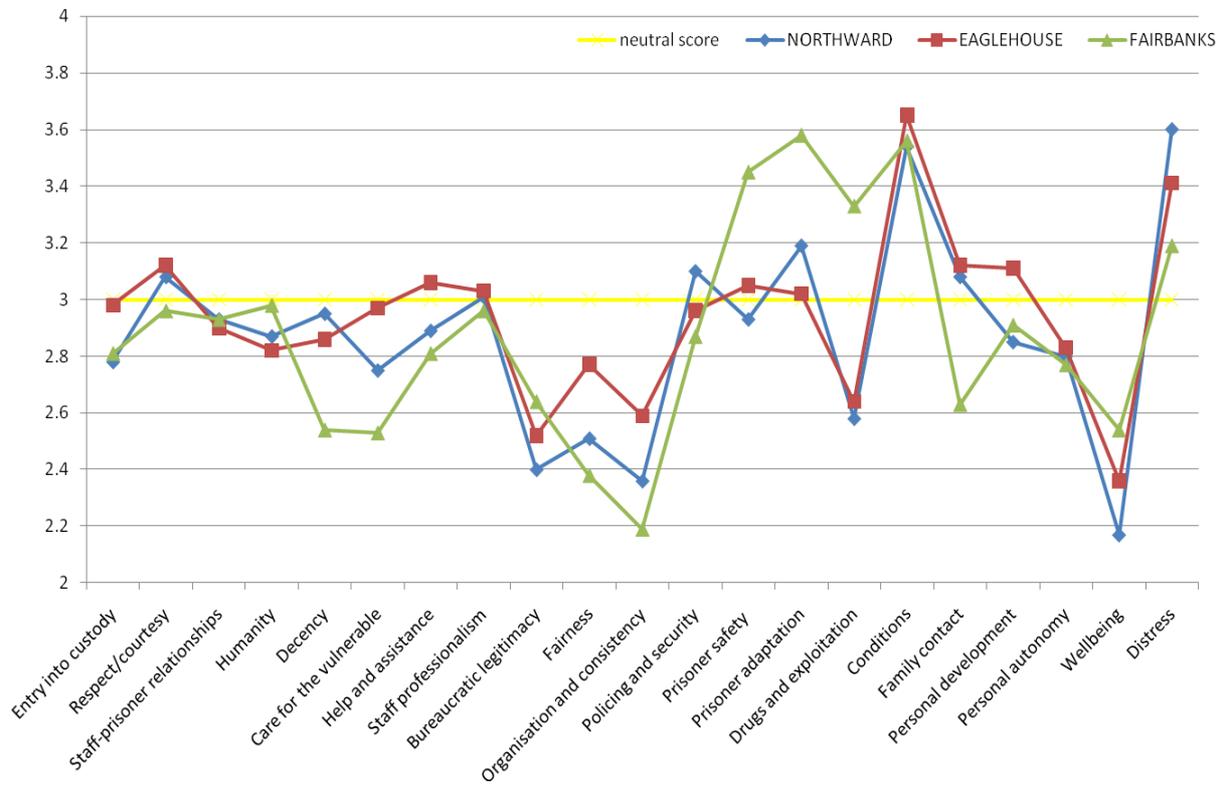
The dimension scores for each prison, detailed in Table 2 and illustrated in Figure 1, show that overall the prisons score above 3 (the neutral score) on seven out of 21 dimensions. The male prisons have similar scores on many dimensions, although HMP Eaglehouse scores higher on around half of the dimensions, particularly those in the 'Harmony' and 'Professionalism' dimension groups. We know from other research that Harmony and Professionalism dimensions are closely related: staff communicate professionalism through procedures *and* relationships with prisoners. As a result, relationships are more positive in prisons where staff are more professional. Whist female prisoners in HMP Fairbanks report lower scores in areas such as Decency, Care for the vulnerable, Organisation and consistency and Family contact, they score higher on many of the Security dimensions.[9]

Figures 2 and 3 compare the results at the male and female prisons in the Cayman Islands (respectively) with comparator prisons in the UK. Care should be taken when comparing prisons from different jurisdictions and differences in function should be borne in mind. Whilst prisons in the Cayman Islands serve both local and long term functions, and accommodate prisoners from all categories, serving a breadth of sentences, prisons in the UK tend to specialise. The prisons in England chosen for comparison here are those deemed the closest match, due to their multi-function status. The functions of each of the prisons in England are shown in detail in Table 3.

Table 3 - details of function served by the English prisons used as comparators for the Cayman Islands prisons in this analysis

Male prisons		Female prisons	
HMP Norwich	**HMP Bullingdon**	**HMP Low Newton**	**HMP Styal**
Adults and young offenders	Adults	Adults and young offenders	Adults and young offenders
Remand and sentenced	Remand and sentenced	Remand and sentenced	Remand and sentenced
Cat C and Cat D prisoners	Cat B and Cat C prisoners	All categories	All categories
Life sentenced prisoners		Life sentenced prisoners	
Sex offenders			

Figures 2 and 3 show that the pattern of dimension scores in the Cayman Islands prisons match that seen in prisons in England and Wales, although the Cayman prisons generally appear at the lower range of the scores. The male scores, shown in Figure 2, are similar to the English prisons on Policing and security, Conditions and Distress. More specifically, Northward prison scores significantly higher than Norwich prison on Decency, but significantly lower than Bullingdon on Help and assistance, Fairness, Organisation and consistency, Personal autonomy and lower than both English prisons on Care for the vulnerable, Prisoner safety, Drugs and exploitation and Well-being. The Well-being score is particularly low at the male prisons on the Cayman Islands.

In Figure 3 the scores in the female prisons in Cayman and in England follow a similar pattern but are generally lower at Fairbanks, except on Entry into custody, Humanity, Bureaucratic legitimacy, Prisoner safety, Well-being and Distress where scores are similar. Fairbanks scores well on dimensions in the 'Security' group, scoring significantly higher than Low Newton on Drugs and exploitation (prisoners report less access to drugs and lower levels of bullying at Fairbanks), but less well on dimensions in the Harmony, Professionalism and Conditions and Family Contact groups. Specifically, Fairbanks scores relatively low on Organisation and consistency and significantly lower than both English prisons on

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[9] Note, differences in sample sizes between the prisons make comparisons difficult.

Care for the vulnerable.[10] These results suggest that prisoners at Fairbanks rate security and conditions relatively well but dimensions relating to care and fairness are evaluated negatively.

Figure 2 - Dimension mean scores at Cayman Islands male prisons (HMP Northward and HMP Eaglehouse) and comparator prisons in England (HMP Norwich and HMP Bullingdon)
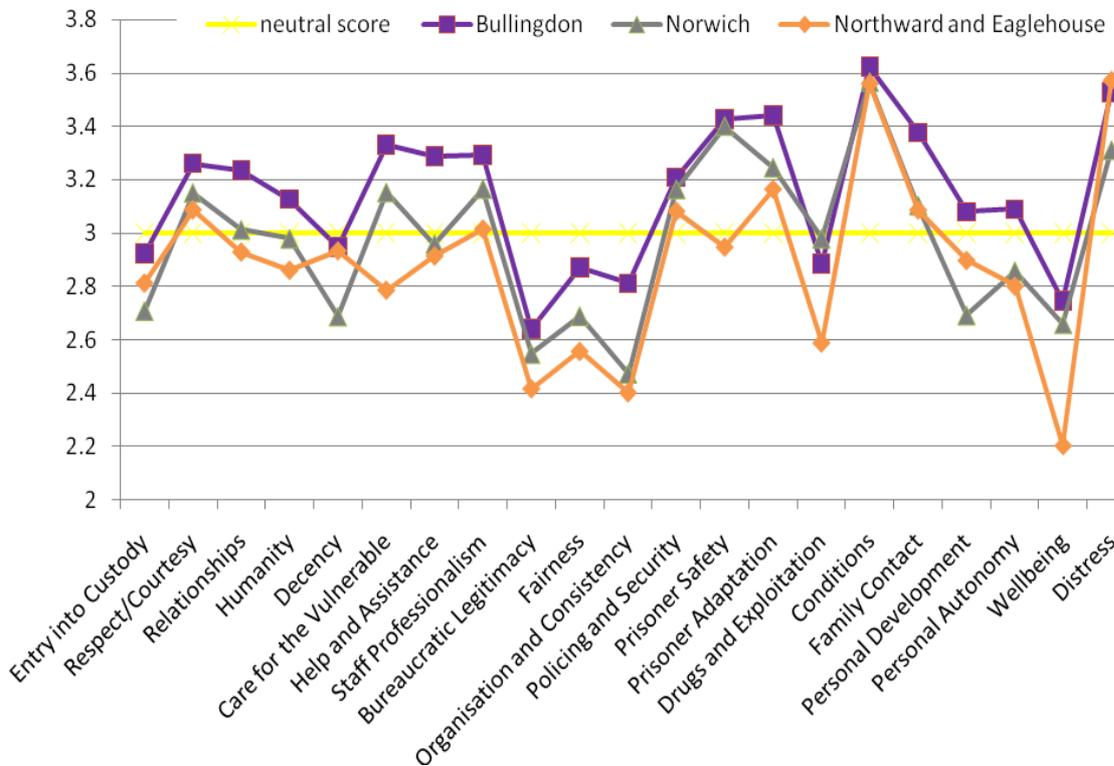
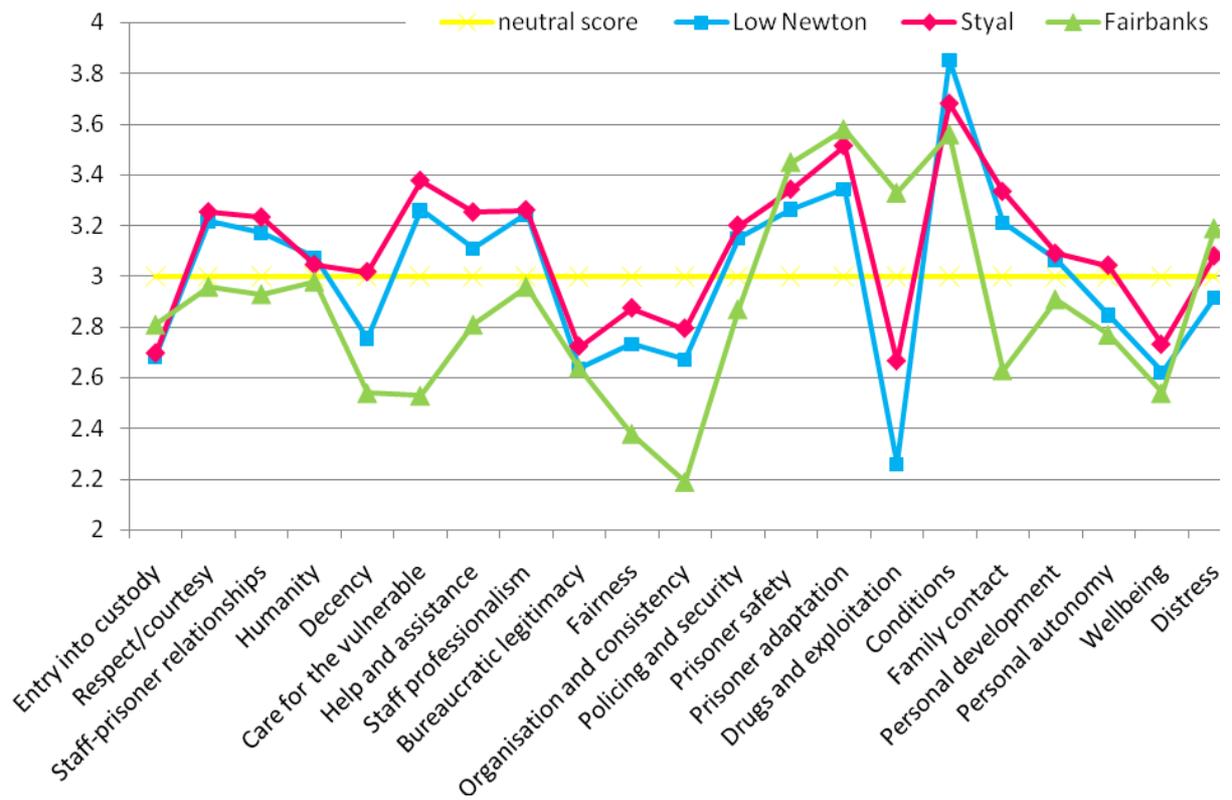

Figure 3 - Dimension mean scores at Cayman Islands female prison (HMP Fairbanks) and comparator prisons in England

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[10] There are few significant differences between scores but this is likely to be due to the small sample at Fairbanks.

More detailed findings regarding the experiences of prisoners in the Cayman Islands prisons are discussed in the following sections, based on themes that emerged from the survey results and the fieldwork undertaken at the prisons.

Staff-Prisoner Relationships

Staff-prisoner relationships at the Cayman Islands prisons appeared generally relaxed. Staff in the male establishments were observed interacting with prisoners informally, positively and respectfully. For example, on D wing, staff mixed with prisoners watching television and chatted casually. In places, negotiation skills were considerate and effective, for example impressive skills were demonstrated by a Senior Officer when encouraging prisoners to engage in the MQPL survey. Around two thirds of prisoners reported that 'most staff address and talk to me in a respectful manner' and 'personally I get on well with the officers on my wing'. However, prisoners' experiences of relationships varied: almost equal numbers of prisoners strongly agreed/agreed (38.4%) and strongly disagreed/disagreed (41.8%) with the statement 'relationships between staff and prisoners in this prison are good'.

The quality of staff-prisoner relationships varied by location. At Northward, scores were significantly lower on A wing, where only 17.6% of prisoners strongly agreed or agreed that 'relationships between staff and prisoners in this prison are good' or that 'staff speak to you on a level in this prison', compared to between 45% and 72% of prisoners on B, D and F wings.[11] At Fairbanks, the mean score for Respect/courtesy was lower (2.96) than at the male prisons (Northward 3.08; Eaglehouse 3.12), although Staff-prisoner relationships score was the same (Fairbanks 2.93; Northward 2.93; Eaglehouse 2.90). Here, female prisoners described relationships with staff as generally positive, with the majority of staff being said to demonstrate effective communication skills. However, some officers were described as lazy, failing to interact with prisoners instead preferring to congregate outside the main living area frequently on their mobile phones.

Across all prisons there was evidence that positive, respectful staff-prisoner relationships were undermined by a few officers. Prisoners identified a number of officers, including some senior officers, who were described as confrontational, provocative and intent on ensuring prisoners served their sentence in a manner that was 'as difficult as possible'. 57.1% of prisoners strongly agreed or agreed that 'staff are argumentative towards prisoners in this prison'. Attitudes towards the 'provocative' officers may have contributed to the relatively high numbers of prisoners (39.6%) who disagreed with the statement 'I feel safe from being injured, bullied or threatened by staff in this prison'.

There were broader issues that threatened staff-prisoners relationships, specifically a lack of consistent treatment and a lack of trust. Prisoners repeatedly referred to favouritism amongst staff who would do more for prisoners with whom they had stronger relationships (often those who behaved well or were deemed to be 'powerful'): 56% of prisoners strongly agreed or agreed that 'in this prison things only happen for you if your face fits'. Those who felt that they were disliked (or perhaps disrespected) by staff complained of being ignored, left unassisted and punished in informal, subtle and inadvertent ways (as opposed to physical means).

As stated, issues of trust emerged: almost half the prisoners strongly disagreed or disagreed with the statements 'staff in this prison often display honesty and integrity' and 'I trust the officers in this prison'. This reflects a much broader issue with trust across the prison (see also staff section below), so that

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[11] For the item 'relationships between prisoners and staff in this prison are good', 44.7%, 51.7% and 65.0% of prisoners on B, D and F wing respectively strongly agreed or agreed. For the item 'staff speak to you on a level in this prison', 51.4%, 55.6% and 72.2% of prisoners strongly agreed or agreed on B, D and F wing respectively. See Appendix 7.

the Cayman Islands prisons could be considered 'low trust environments'. It is particularly interesting to note the inconsistencies in perceptions of trust between prisoners and staff, as 78.7% of discipline staff strongly agreed or agreed that 'I am trusted by prisoners in this prison'. Many prisons are 'low trust environments', but in a healthy prison *some* trust flows (see Liebling, assisted by Arnold, 2004).

Authority

The Cayman Islands prisons did not feel chaotic, despite the large number of prisoners out of their cells for around eight hours a day. However, staff were often 'absent' during observation periods: communal areas on particular wings (primarily those not directly outside staff offices) and outdoor spaces were often unsupervised by staff in both the male and female establishments. Low level rule breaking behaviour was common and the maintenance of boundaries was weak. For example, during the fieldwork, prisoners were observed smoking directly in front of a 'no smoking' sign, towels and sheets (used as privacy screens) were pinned far higher than the accepted level (highlighted by painted lines on cell doors) and instances of cannabis smoking were unchallenged. A third of prisoners agreed or strongly agreed that staff 'turn a blind eye when prisoners break the rules' and 41.5% felt that supervision of prisoners was 'poor'. Prisoners perceived that the under-enforcement of rules reflected officers' desire for 'an easy life', but it may have represented efforts by staff to maintain broader compliance in the context of the large number of prisoners under the supervision of a small number of staff (three to four officers supervised each wing). Strategic underenforcement is a common strategy amongst staff for whom 'peacekeeping' is a critical aspect of their work – to avoid tension and conflict they must hold power in reserve by maintaining control without relying on the austere powers available (Liebling et al 2011). Indeed, 'the 'un-exercise' of power in prison is hugely significant – and often constitutes both 'the best' and 'a worst' form of practice' (Liebling et al 2011: 131). Whilst some staff may have used their discretion self-consciously and professionally, tolerating certain behaviour to avoid escalation, prisoners felt that for others it was a sign of 'fear' or 'avoidance' (Crewe et al 2011: 109). Staff were thought to fear reprisal from prisoners whom they felt intimidated by (such as those deemed particularly powerful and/or violent). Whilst almost half of prisoners did not feel that the prison was 'run by prisoners rather than staff', there was evidence that some prisoners had *too much power,* that they were an intimidating presence, not only to staff but to their peers, and their behaviour went unchallenged (see Prisoner Relationships and Safety below).

Inconsistencies in the use of authority affected perceptions of fairness. Half the prisoners strongly agreed or agreed that the disciplinary system was unfair and described many of the procedures associated with punishment as unjust. Similar offences were perceived to be punished differently depending on those involved, and adjudication judgements were said to be determined before the prisoner had an opportunity to speak during the hearing. Punishment was allocated arbitrarily and without due process, so that prisoners felt that they were 'guilty until proven innocent'. This was the case for less serious rule breaking behaviour too. The lack of formal disciplinary system available,[12] other than the more severe consequences of charging prisoners and using the basic unit, meant that staff used informal powers to punish prisoners at their discretion. For example, prisoners reported that lower level offences, such as an argument between prisoners, would often result in those involved being locked in their cells until they cooled down or staff refusing to let prisoners go to work. Such responses lacked procedural rigour and felt unjust. This broader sense of procedural injustice, where regardless of the outcome the process of decision making is seen as unfair, can have a profound, and negative, impact on the response to that decision (see Tyler 1990). Similarly, examples of collective punishment led to frustration amongst prisoners, who felt that the prison reacted with an 'iron fist' to

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[12] For example, the Incentives and Earned Privileges scheme (IEP) used in the UK (see Liebling et al 1997; Liebling, assisted by Arnold, 2004).

some incidents. For example, following an incident involving two prisoners on day release, all non-Caymanian prisoners were banned from going on home visits.   The lack of official justification of such decisions (and particularly the lack of consistent imposition of the rule on *all* prisoners) exacerbated perceptions of injustice.

Prisoners currently experiencing the sanction of the Basic Unit, where they were locked in their cells for 23 hours a day, were frustrated and angry. Some felt that their allocation to the unit was illegitimate and based on resentment by staff to their behaviour on previous incarcerations, whilst others simply felt their treatment was unfair stating that rather than receiving 'firm but fair' treatment, 'we just get the firm part'. No prisoner on the Basic unit *disagreed* with the statement 'the disciplinary system in this prison is unfair'. One prisoner commented: 'The prison system is biased, unfair and unconstructive. I am presently locked down for 23 hours approx daily with nothing to do of any kind. I have nowhere to go except court and to my cell. I receive treatment and quick punishment. I am oppressed'.

Prisoner Relationships and Safety

Relationships between prisoners were tense: 82.6% of prisoners strongly agreed or agreed that the best way to do their time was to 'mind their own business and have as little to do with other prisoners as possible'. The survey results suggest that the avoidance of peers was, at least in part, due to power differentials between prisoners. Almost half of prisoners strongly agreed or agreed that 'certain prisoners run things on the wings' and 60% strongly agreed or agreed that 'weak prisoners get badly exploited and victimised in this prison'. The ability of some prisoners to wield greater power may have been facilitated by the lack of enforcement of boundaries and the alleged intimidation of staff by such prisoners (as suggested above and see Staff section below).

For many prisoners, physical safety did not seem to be a concern (42.5% did not fear for their physical safety), but threats and intimidation were: 65% strongly agreed or agreed that they had to be 'wary of everyone' around them; 51% strongly agreed or agreed that 'there is a lot of threats/ bullying in this prison'; and 43.3% strongly disagreed or disagreed that they did not feel safe from being injured, bullied or threatened by other prisoners.

Prisoners did not necessarily adapt to this environment by forming or joining groups (only 16.2% agreed that they 'had to be in a group to get by'). Some prisoners traded goods to 'get by' (47.8% strongly agreed or agreed that they had to 'buy and sell things in order to get by'), which may have included drugs. 42.2% of prisoners had a drug and/or alcohol misuse problem before entering the prison and, within the prison, drug use was considered 'quite high' by half of prisoners. Cannabis use was common and allegedly tolerated by staff, and crack cocaine, whilst used more discretely, was also widely available. In discussions, prisoners described preferring to continue to use drugs or alcohol within the prison, due to availability and the lack of support for detox.[13] The supply of drugs was facilitated by the location of the prisons (with exercise yards close to public roads), the poor physical security of the prisons and, in some cases, according to prisoners, staff corruption.

Progress and Rehabilitation Opportunities

Prisoners described the process by which they could progress through the prison system as unfair and inconsistent. Procedures for re-categorisation were opaque and decisions were perceived to be arbitrary and biased. One prisoner, sentenced to eight years (of which he expected to serve 4-5 years

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[13] Prisoners mentioned Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous meetings but access to them did not seem common.

before parole), described how he had progressed from Category B to Category D in 20 months due to 'favouritism'. Prisoners felt powerless in this process: around half of prisoners strongly agreed or agreed that to progress they had to meet 'impossible expectations' and that 'decisions were made about them that they could not understand or influence'. This caused frustration and may have contributed to the feeling, that 59.2% of prisoners shared, that they were 'stuck in the system'.

Around three quarters of prisoners identified themselves as being engaged in work and/or education and many of those described such activities as the most positive aspects of the prison. The education opportunities at the prisons included English and maths, and correspondence courses in subjects such as bible study, computers and business communication. Prisoners complained that English and maths were not mandatory and correspondence courses required a certain standard of literacy, as well as financial dependence, as those who were eligible were required to pay for their own exams (equivalent to around 1-2 weeks of prisoners' wages). Prisoners were frustrated with what they perceived to be a general lack of investment in their rehabilitation. In other subject areas, such as art and woodwork, tutors were not available so that prisoners could only engage if they already had some experience in the area. Elsewhere, existing resources were underused. Facilities including a hairdressing salon with beauty treatment facilities and a sewing room in the female prison were described as simply 'for show'. As prison staff had been the primary tutors in some of these subject areas, staffing levels may have affected the ability of the prison to continue with such training. In Fairbanks, the prison also required interest from a minimum number of prisoners before investing in courses, which proved difficult in prison with such a small population.

Prisoners did feel that the prison experience offered them the opportunity to personally reform and rethink their future. In comments regarding the 'most positive' things about the prison in the survey, prisoners often referred to their time in prison as 'a chance to change my life' or an opportunity to 'reflect on my past', 'realise my mistakes', and 'help me to be a better person'. Such views were supported in the quantitative data, as over half of prisoners strongly agreed or agreed with the statements: 'my time here feels like a chance to change' and 'this regime encourages me to think about and plan for my release'.

Research suggests that in order for prisoners to personally develop, such internal motives are essential *as well as* provision of education and training opportunities and staff encouragement. Two thirds of prisoners strongly agreed or agreed with the item 'on the whole I am doing rather than using time' (66.7%) and only a third believed that the regime was constructive (34.1%). Half of prisoners strongly agreed or agreed that they were encouraged to work towards goals and targets, but during discussions, many felt that personal motivation to develop was all that could be relied upon in an environment in which staff were, in some cases, obstructive.[14] In Fairbanks, some of the female prisoners explained that they did not believe that staff were interested in their needs. Prisoners repeatedly expressed their longing for an officer to sit down with them and ask what it was they wanted to do with their future.

Many of the prisoners believed that the biggest challenge to their desistance was the lack of employment prospects. Employment across the Cayman Islands had been effected by the economic recession, particularly in those industries most accessible to prisoners, such as construction. Despite this, skills training in such areas were available in the prison but were limited and access was perceived to be inequitable. One prisoner reported that, due to the interest in construction at the senior management level, prisoners who offered such skills progressed through the categories at an

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[14] At Northward, a male prisoner described the obstructive behaviour of an officer, who he felt he had to beg to call a teacher in order for him to go to education (the teacher has to request the prisoner to attend the class).

accelerated rate so that they could be located on F wing (the enhanced wing), where they could participate in the 'construction party'.

The availability of offending behaviour courses also seemed limited in the prisons: only 39.4% of prisoners had ever done or were doing an offending behaviour course. A sex offending treatment course was available, and there was a 'behaviour modification' programme, known as 'Constructs'. The latter required a basic standard of literacy and prisoners stated that, as the course was often required for parole, those who failed to meet such standards were disadvantaged and required to serve their full sentence.

For category A prisoners, accommodated on the HRU and on the Basic unit, development provision was very limited or entirely unavailable. The numbers of these prisoners who participated in the survey were small (six prisoners in HRU and four on Basic), but Table 4 shows the proportion of prisoners located in the HRU, on Basic unit and elsewhere in the male prisons who *strongly disagreed* or *disagreed* with three items representing key aspects of the prisons provision of development opportunities.[15]

Table 4 - proportion of prisoners who strongly disagreed or disagreed with statements in the Personal development dimension related to prison provision by self-reported location (all prisons)[16]

	HRU	Basic	Other
I am being helped to lead a law abiding life on release in the community	83.3	75.0	34.4
Every effort is made by this prison to stop offenders committing offences on release from custody	83.3	50.0	43.4
The regime in this prison is constructive	83.3	75.0	33.3

Table 4 shows that that prisoners in the HRU and on Basic unit were particularly likely to feel that their rehabilitation needs were not being addressed. One prisoner on the HRU commented: 'There is no rehabilitation for high risk prisoners here, we sit in a cell all day, no work, no school, no church. We are being treated with 'control' rather than 'reform'.'

When asked, prisoners suggested many ways in which the prisons could support personal development and rehabilitation. Table 5 outlines the ideas suggested by male prisoners at Northward and Eaglehouse and the female prisoners at Fairbanks. Many of the suggestions reflected previous experiences: prisoners recalled a 'reintegration programme', which they thought was in place around 2004 but no longer existed, where links were made with outside businesses and category D prisoners were allowed to go out to work in the community, returning to the prison in the evening. For those involved, bank accounts and housing were also organised, as required on release.[17] A number of prisoners described this period in the prison's history as the most positive in terms of rehabilitation.

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[15] The data is for male prisons only, as only male participants identified themselves as being in HRU or basic units.

[16] Data is shown for illustration, caution should be taken when comparing proportions of small groups against large groups.

[17] Prisoners believed that the following people were involved in this programme: John Forrester, Ron Oldfield and Frank Marshall.

Prisoners felt that staff could take a key role in sentence planning and needs assessment. Both male and female prisoners appealed for officers to personally discuss prisoners' individual needs and encourage and motivate prisoners to get involved in their education and skills training.

Table 5 - prisoners' suggestions of provision required to support rehabilitation

	Male prisoners	Female prisoners
Sentence/care plan	• Develop a plan - based on discussions with an individual prisoner regarding their personal needs.	• Develop a 'care plan' – based on discussions with an individual prisoner about their individual needs both related to work and life skills.
Education	• Prisoners suggested that education should be mandatory.	
Offending behaviour courses	• Anger management (none available despite prisoners believing that parole was often refused for prisoners who had not demonstrated that they had dealt with their anger).	
Vocational training	• Courses in mechanics, electrics, plumbing, navigation and boat mechanics, marine engineering, hotels and tourism.	• Courses in computing, cookery and hotels and tourism.
Reintegration programme	• Category D prisoners to be allowed day release to work, to make links with outside businesses to improve opportunities on release.	• Partnerships with employers outside prison, to improve opportunities on release. • Support on return to the community e.g. food vouchers.
Life skills training		• First aid and cookery courses. • Officers supporting the improvement of prisoner's self esteem.
Psychological support	• One on one counselling	
Detox	• Drug treatment (see Prisoner Subculture section).	

Well-being

Prisoners' scores on the Well-being dimension were very low (mean 2.22). One prisoner commented: 'how you deal with the mental stress and pain everyday is your key to survival. Only the strong survive.' Overall, in all three prisons, between 65% and 75% of prisoners strongly agreed or agreed with the following statements: 'my experience in this prison is painful', 'I feel tense in this prison', 'my experience of imprisonment in this particular prison has been stressful' and 'my time in this prison feels very much like a punishment'.

It is difficult to know why prisoners reported such low levels of well-being, without more extensive fieldwork. We know that the prison experience is often painful but that some prison environments can impact more positively than others on feelings of well-being (Liebling, assisted by Arnold 2004). In comments about the most negative aspects of the prison experience, prisoners most commonly referred to time away from family, which reflects research elsewhere (Liebling, assisted by Arnold 2004). In the Cayman Islands prisons, this may be exacerbated by the opportunities available for contact with families: although 54.1% of prisoners felt that visits were often enough, only 23% thought that the time available was sufficient. Prisoners also described frustration in regard to recent changes

to home visits.[18] Other comments about the 'most negative' aspects of this prison referred to poor relationships with staff, feeling unsafe, the high level of drugs, the lack of opportunities for rehabilitation and conditions (in particular the hot temperature in the cells and the poor diet available, although note that conditions in general were rated well by prisoners).

Of particular concern were Well-being scores on Northward's A wing and E wing, which were below 2 (1.65 and 1.67 respectively).[19] The basic unit on A wing accounts in part for the very low scores here: prisoners accommodated on the Basic unit consistently score lower on Well-being and all items within it compared to prisoners located elsewhere on A wing (although note that the other prisoner scores are all below 2 also). *All* prisoners on the Basic unit who responded to the survey strongly agreed or agreed that their prison experience had been 'painful', that they felt tense and that their time felt 'very much like a punishment'. Conditions in the Basic unit and the High Risk Unit were described by prisoners as 'oppressive'. Although scores on D wing, which houses the High Risk Unit, were averagely low compared to the rest of the wings on Well-being, prisoners currently being held there were more likely to strongly disagree or disagree with the statement 'Prisoners are treated decently in the High Risk Unit' (83.3% compared to 21.9% of those elsewhere in the prisons). It is worth noting that low well-being scores are associated with higher levels of suicide risk in prison (see Liebling et al 2005).

In terms of self-harm and suicide, although a minority of respondents had ever self-harmed (13.7%) or attempted suicide (10.2%), 14.2% reported that they had 'thought about suicide in this prison' but very few reported having attempted suicide (6.1% and 5.4% respectively). Staff voiced concerns in this area, as 75.7% of discipline staff felt that dealing with suicide and self harm was extremely stressful and 92.3% agreed that more training and support in dealing with the effects of suicide and self harm on staff was needed.

Summary of MQPL results

The male prisons MQPL scores were relatively similar, although on a number of dimensions HMP Eaglehouse scored slightly higher. HMP Fairbanks' scores were slightly lower than the scores at the male prisons in areas such as Decency, Care for the vulnerable, Organisation and consistency and Family contact, but were higher on many of the Security dimensions. Compared to prisons in England and Wales, the Cayman Islands prisons scores are generally lower.

Whilst, in general, prisoners reported that staff spoke to them respectfully and staff-prisoner relationships were, in places, good, a minority of provocative officers negatively impacted on prisoners perceptions of fairness and safety. Maintenance of boundaries, by staff, was weak and broader issues of procedural justice were described, as staff used informal punishment strategies inconsistently and tolerated certain prisoners to wield power. Prisoners involved in education and work were particularly positive about their experiences, but all prisoners called for greater rehabilitation opportunities, including a reintegration programme and the individual assessment of prisoners' needs. Low levels of well-being were associated with missing one's family and being accommodated on the Basic Unit.

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[18] Prisoners reported that Caymanian prisoners are allowed supervised visits to their family outside the prison. However, this right was removed for non-Caymanian prisoners, even for those whose family live within Cayman. No reason had been given so prisoners relied on rumours, including that it was because on day release (to work) two prisoners allegedly committed murder. This was thought to be why family visits had been reduced from 8 hours to 4 hours. Previously, the prisoner's family could collect prisoners from the prison and go out for the day, now an officer has to supervise the prisoner and they needed to remain within their home parameter.

[19] Note: caution should be taken reading scores for E wing, as it represents only three respondents (four prisoners are accommodated on the unit).

Staff Quality of Life in Cayman Islands Prisons

This section focuses on the experience of staff in the Cayman Islands prisons. Table 6 shows the overall SQL survey dimension scores for all staff and for discipline and non-discipline staff: these results are also illustrated in Figure 4.[20] In Table 6, an asterisk shows where differences between the scores for discipline and non-discipline staff are statistically significant, scores over three (more positive evaluation) are highlighted in yellow.

Table 6 - Staff dimension scores for all staff and for discipline and non-discipline staff at the Cayman Islands prisons

	N=94	*N=78*	*N=9*
	ALL STAFF	**Discipline Staff**	**Non-Discipline staff**
Management dimensions			
Attitudes towards the Governor/Director	**3.28**	3.19	3.81
Attitudes towards SMT	**2.81**	2.78	3.07
Treatment by senior management	**3.54**	3.52	3.48
Treatment by line management	**3.67**	3.65	3.60
Relationships with line management	**3.68**	3.68	3.59
Job Satisfaction dimensions			
Relationship with the organisation	**3.61**	3.58	3.73
Commitment	**4.35**	4.31	4.43
Recognition and personal efficacy	**2.87**	2.84	3.07
Involvement and motivation	**3.80**	3.72	4.28*
Stress	**2.37**	2.36	2.86
Relationships with peers	**3.71**	3.70	3.91
Authority dimensions			
Safety, control and security	**2.83**	2.72	3.73**
Punishment and discipline	**2.36**	2.30	3.10*
Dynamic authority	**2.99**	2.94	3.39
Prisoner Orientation dimensions			
Professional support for prisoners	**3.98**	3.94	4.22
Positive attitudes to prisoners	**2.92**	2.84	3.12
Trust, compassion and commitment towards prisoners	**3.75**	3.76	3.49
Relationships with prisoners	**3.89**	3.87	3.88

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[20] Discipline staff: Line Officer, Supervisor and Unit Manager. Non-discipline staff: Education, Kitchen, Stores, Accounts/Admin/HR, Driver and Forensic Psychologists. Manager: Director/Deputy Director (see Appendix 4 for sample demographics).

Figure 4 - Staff survey dimension scores for discipline and non-discipline staff at Cayman Islands prisons
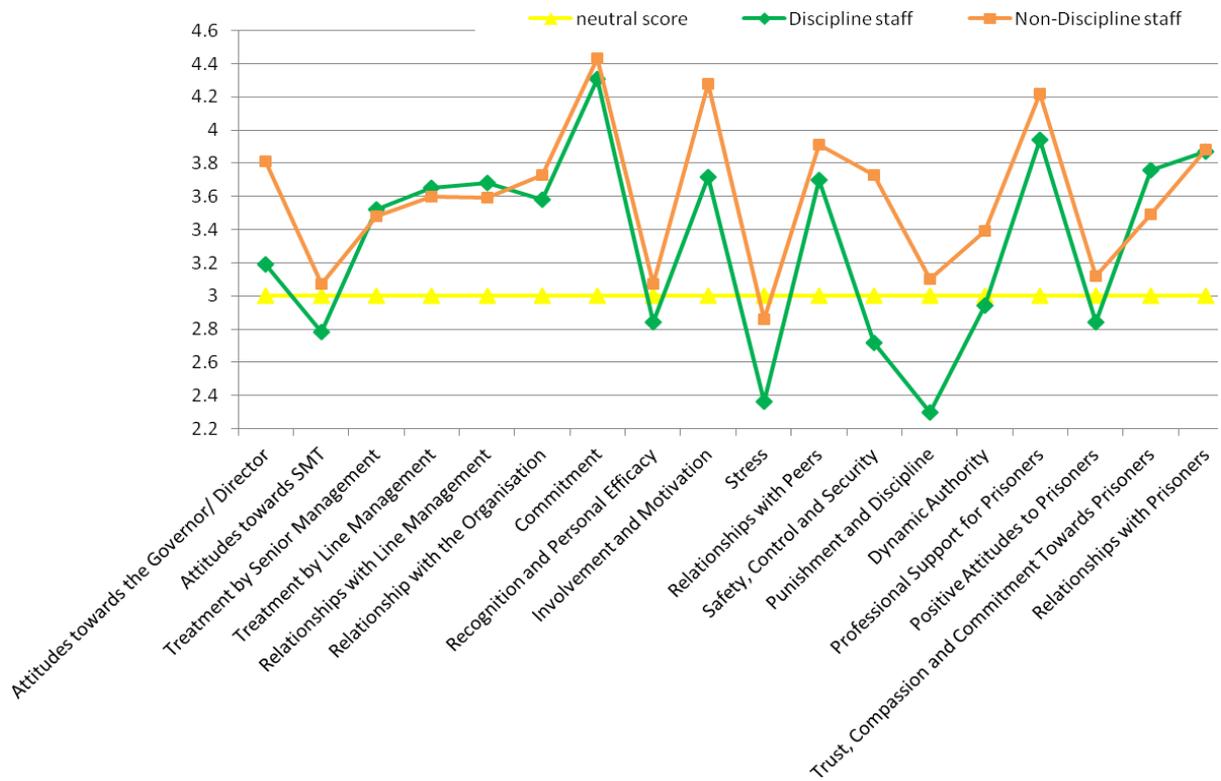
Table 6 shows that 'all staff' score above the neutral score of three for 11 out of 18 dimensions, although non-discipline staff score above three on all dimensions. Figure 4 illustrates that non-discipline staff scores are generally higher than for discipline staff – a pattern that is common in prisons. In particular, discipline staff score particularly low on the Authority dimensions, Safety, control and security and Punishment and discipline, suggesting that they have concerns about their safety, levels of control and discipline in the prisons. There are also indications that staff morale is lower amongst discipline staff, as their Involvement and Motivation score was significantly lower than for non-discipline staff. Comparatively however, discipline staff rate their relationships with line management and Trust, compassion and commitment towards prisoners a little better.

Comparisons with prisons in England and Wales are difficult, limited due to the differences in the function and context of the prisons. Bullingdon prison is used as a comparator here (for details on the functions of Bullingdon see Table 3), as a 'best attempt' to provide some context to the surveys. Figure 5 shows the dimension mean scores for all staff in the Cayman Islands prisons and Bullingdon and Figure 6 shows the scores for discipline staff in each prison. These figures illustrate that the pattern of results in the Cayman Islands are typical. Scores for all staff suggest that staff in the Cayman Islands rate their experiences as less positive than those in the English prison. However Figure 6 shows that, once non-discipline staff are removed from the results (who typically score higher than discipline staff), the figures are much more similar. Discipline staff in the Cayman Islands scored lower for Stress, Safety, control and security and Discipline and punishment, but scored considerably higher on Relationship with the organisation and Commitment. In the Cayman Islands prisons, staff reported their overall quality of life as 7.11, on a scale of one to ten, where one was low and ten was high. This is high, compared to Bullingdon, where staff scored their quality of life as 6.81.[21]

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[21] The relationships between staff found that staff have to be *somewhat* uncomfortable in order to perform their highly demanding work to be a good standard. See Liebling 2011.

Figure 5 - Dimension mean scores for all staff at the Cayman Islands prisons and at an English comparator prison (HMP Bullingdon)
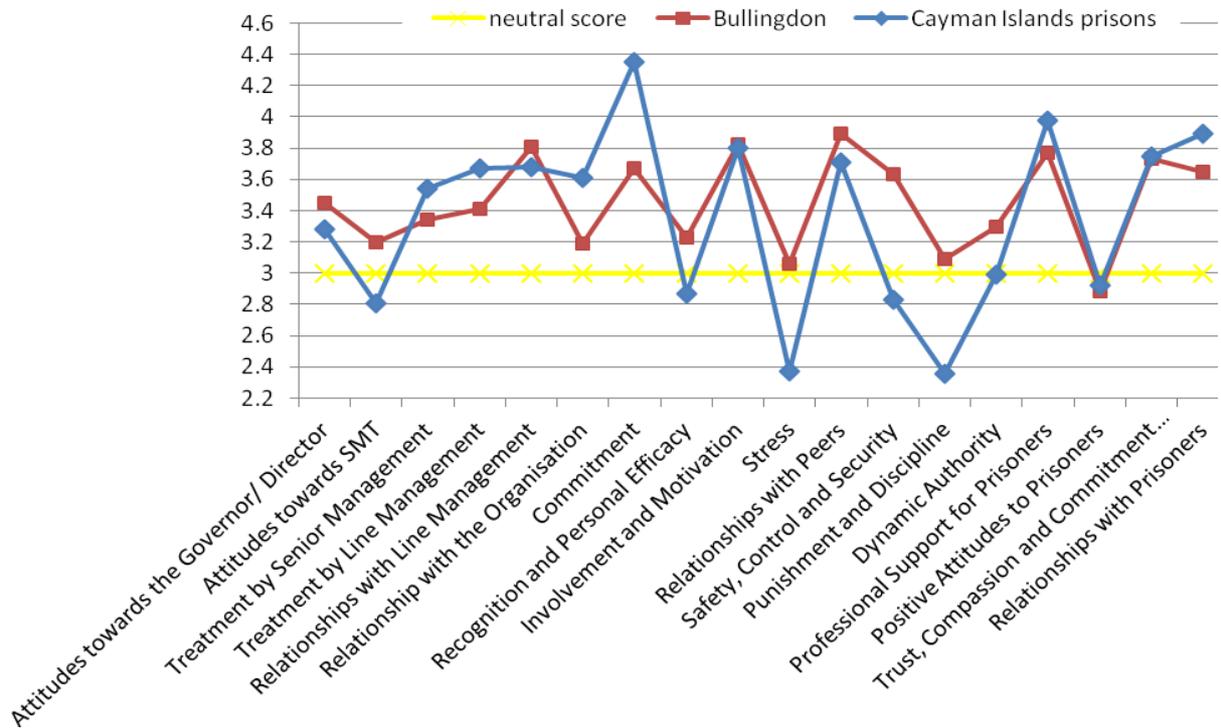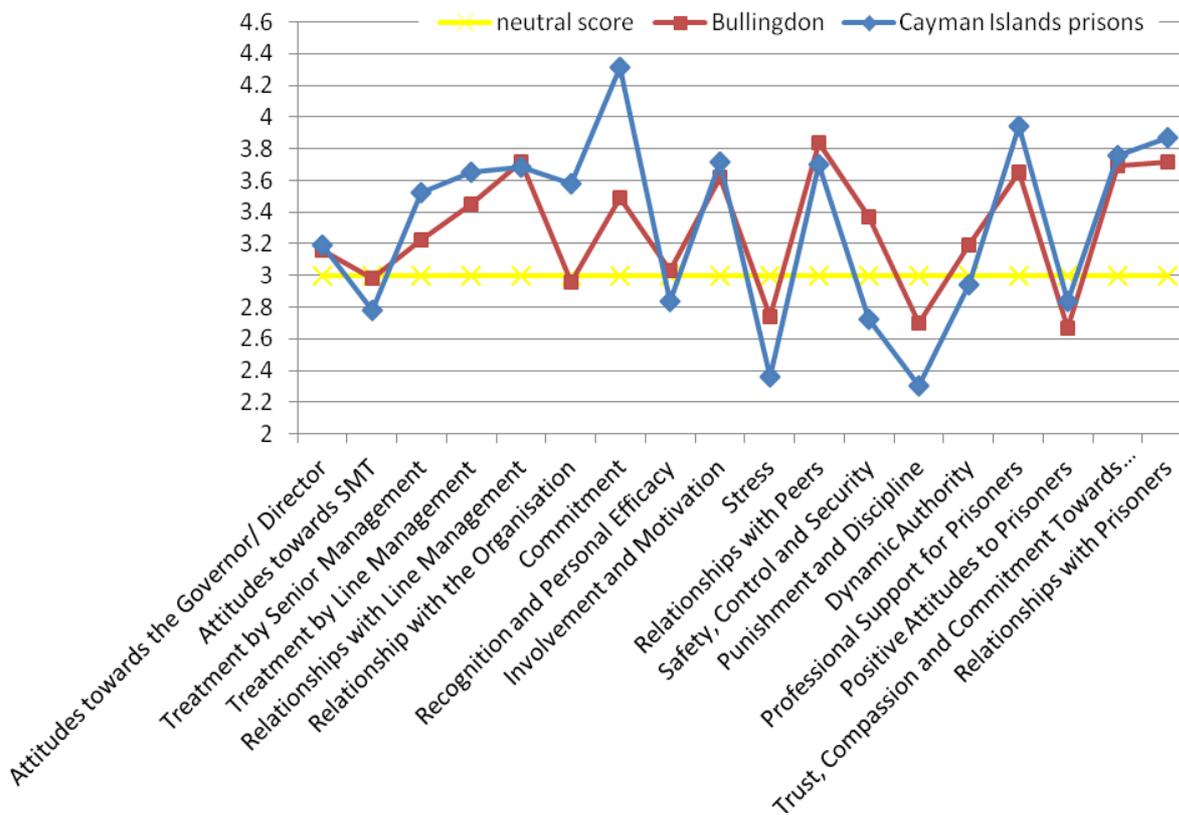

Figure 6 - Dimension mean scores for Discipline staff at Cayman Islands prisons and at an English comparator prison (HMP Bullingdon)

The following discussion outlines the findings of the research on the experience of Cayman Islands prison staff in more detail. Themes are based on the survey findings alongside observation and discussions with staff undertaken during the fieldwork in the prisons.

Relationships with and attitudes towards management

Staff attitudes towards the Director of the prison were generally positive. Three quarters of staff felt 'a sense of loyalty' to the Director and almost half believed that the prison had 'the right kind of Director for its current needs', although 41.2% strongly agreed or agreed that they 'tried not to get involved in the Director's agenda' in the prison.

Relationships between senior management and discipline staff, in particular, were generally good. Staff felt valued and respected by senior managers (74% and 56% strongly agreed or agreed respectively) and 88.9% strongly agreed or agreed that 'the Director is concerned with the well-being of staff'. However, failures by management to support staff emerged as one of the most stressful aspects of the job and the quantitative data suggests that this was in relation to discipline, in particular. Although 47.4% of discipline staff felt supported by senior management, 62.2% felt that there were times when the Director/ Deputy Director 'failed to support staff dealing with prisoners'. The issue of distrust also emerged: whilst two thirds of staff strongly agreed or agreed that they felt trusted by senior managers, the feeling was reciprocal for only around a third of staff who trusted senior managers.

Relationships with line managers were consistently more positive than those with senior managers (this is typical): 57.1% of discipline staff felt supported by their supervisor and around 70% to 80% of both discipline and non-discipline staff felt valued by Unit Managers and Supervisors. However, disparities in feelings of trust also appeared here: 50.5% of all staff trusted their line managers, compared to 77.5% who felt trusted by supervisors

Job satisfaction – motivation and commitment

Staff reported very high levels of commitment towards the Prison Service and the prisons. Nine out of ten discipline staff strongly agreed or agreed that they felt 'a sense of loyalty and commitment to the service and to the prison'. This sense of commitment may be generated by the pride taken in the job and the value placed upon it, as again around 90% of discipline staff agreed that they 'felt proud of their job' and that it was 'meaningful'. The most satisfying aspects of the job cited by staff included references to helping society and improving the security of the country, as well as helping prisoners.

The strong sense of commitment, pride and loyalty did not necessarily translate into high levels of enjoyment or motivation, however, particularly amongst discipline staff: 52% of discipline staff strongly agreed or agreed that they got 'a lot of enjoyment from their work' (compared to 88.9% of non-discipline staff) and 44% agreed that they did not feel 'motivated to do more than the minimum required in their work' (compared to no non-discipline staff).

Low staff morale may be associated with the lack of recognition they felt that they received (as well as the lack of support, referred to above). Around two thirds of discipline staff strongly agreed or agreed with the items 'Praise for my work and achievements is rarely given to me' and 'I rarely feel involved in the decision-making processes in this prison'. 42.1% of discipline staff agreed that it was 'not worth putting in extra effort in the prison because it would go unrecognised', compared to no non-discipline staff who agreed with this statement. Staff identified a lack of praise and recognition as one of the most stressful aspects of the job, for example comments included 'not being appreciated for my work' and 'not being recognised for my efforts'.

Stress levels were high amongst staff, particularly discipline staff (mean score 2.36). This is common; prison officers often suffer stress as a result of their working environment and the conflict involved in undertaking a role that requires elements of both 'custody' and 'care' (Liebling, assisted by Arnold, 2004). Large proportions of discipline staff reported that the stress they encountered caused them concern (68.4% strongly agreed or agreed, compared to 25% of non-discipline staff) and that working in the prison was highly emotionally demanding (72.6% strongly agreed or agreed, compared to 42.9% of non-discipline staff).

In contrast, relationships with other staff, working as a team and supporting one another were cited as amongst the most satisfying aspects of the job. Relationships with peers scored very high (3.70). Over three quarters of staff felt that relationships with colleagues were good and that they were supported, respected and valued by them. Interestingly 38.5% strongly agreed or agreed that they trusted their colleagues, compared to 78.7% who felt trusted by peers.

Authority and safety

Despite feeling that the atmosphere in the prison was relaxed during the research, almost half the discipline staff respondents strongly agreed or agreed that it was 'tense' (compared to no non-discipline staff who agreed with this statement). Discipline staff were concerned about levels of safety and control within the prisons: around half strongly disagreed or disagreed that the prison is well-controlled and that they felt safe. Staff seemed to feel that power was in the wrong place: 82.9% of discipline staff strongly agreed or agreed that 'the level of power prisoners have in this prison is too high'. This may be linked to 'real institutional circumstances' (Crewe et al 2011: 111), such as understaffing (Shefer and Liebling 2008) and long periods out of cell for most prisoners. Indeed, 54.7% of discipline staff strongly agreed or agreed that 'prisoners spend too much time out of their cell in this prison'. In this context, there was a sense of relative powerlessness amongst discipline staff who may have felt intimidated by powerful prisoners (as suggested above) and unsupported by the disciplinary system: 70.1% of discipline staff strongly agreed or agreed that 'the adjudication system did not teach prisoners anything'. In this environment staff may be more likely to resort to informal mechanisms for punishment, such as those highlighted in the prisoner discussion, including locking prisoners up to 'cool down'.

Staff had mixed feelings about Dynamic Authority: 'a form that is used prior to disciplinary action in order to prevent its necessity, and [which] is generally invisible' (Liebling 2011; Crewe et al 2011:109). Around half both agreed and disagreed that: 'Friendly relationships with prisoners undermine your authority' and 'the best way to deal with prisoners is to be firm and distant', whilst half also agreed (and 36.8% disagreed) that they tend to keep conversations with prisoners short and business-like.

By using an additional dimension, we can explore this area of the work of officers further. 'Punitiveness' (see Table 7) is a post-analysis composite measure of items related to attitudes towards prisoners and the use of authority. Staff in the Cayman Islands prisons scored 2.52 on this dimension.

Table 7 - Punitiveness dimension

Punitiveness (reliability: α = .635)
This prison is too comfortable for prisoners
Prisoners spend too much time out of cell in this prison
The adjudication system in this prison does not teach prisoners anything
Prisoners should be under strict discipline
There are times where the Director/Deputy Director fails to support staff in dealing with prisoners

Most prisoners are decent people

If a prisoner lies to me, I don't make an effort to help them

Staff attitudes to prisoners have been found to impact on the way they use their authority. 'Punitive' behaviour can include staff being provocative and over-exerting power (Crewe et al 2011), the vision of safety and order they work to, and their handling of prisoners (see further important distinctions in the work of prison officers, Liebling 2011). This may account for some officers being identified by prisoners as argumentative and provocative.

Attitudes towards prisoners

As suggested above, staff attitudes towards prisoners were a combination of punitive and supportive. Despite the negative score on Punitiveness, high proportions of discipline staff felt that their role required them to support, care for and take an interest in prisoners. Between 76% and 95% strongly agreed or agreed with the statements: 'I enjoy helping prisoners to work towards goals and targets', 'I am prepared to do more than is required of me because I care about prisoners' and 'It is important to take an interest in prisoners and their problems'.

During fieldwork staff were heard describing prisoners as 'troubled souls' who needed 'looking after' who had simply 'made the wrong decision'. Indeed, perceptions of prisoners as reported in the survey were relatively positive, compared to results seen elsewhere in UK prisons. Positive attitudes were also apparent in staff perceptions of rehabilitation and their role in this process: 72.4% of discipline staff strongly agreed or agreed that 'most prisoners can be rehabilitated' and 92.1% agreed that 'officers should be involved in the rehabilitation process'. Helping prisoners to develop, achieve goals and rehabilitation was amongst the 'most satisfying' aspects of the job reported by staff in the SQL.

However, as elsewhere in the prison staff feelings of trust towards prisoners were very low. Only one discipline staff member (1.3%) strongly agreed or agreed that they trusted prisoners. Whilst in prisons trust is difficult to establish, it is 'essential for social co-operation' (Liebling, assisted by Arnold 2004) - there can be both too much and too little trust in prisons. Still, 78.7% of discipline staff believed that they were trusted by prisoners, despite only 28.4% of prisoners agreeing that they trusted staff.

Some confusion of role and purpose among prison officers, as well as orientation towards rehabilitation, emerged in this study. Officers may require clearer leadership and more support in this area of their work.

Conclusion

This short study of prisoner and staff experiences in the Cayman Islands prisons, involving quantitative and qualitative data, revealed a number of strengths and weaknesses in the prisons studied.

The prisons felt relaxed (although this was not necessarily the perception of staff). Staff generally spoke to prisoners respectfully and were observed interacting in a manner that was informal. Highly skilled officers were seen effectively negotiating with prisoners and attending to their needs in an efficient and effective manner. Relationships were tainted however, by inconsistent and unfair treatment by some staff and by the provocative and confrontational behaviour of a minority of officers. Perceptions of procedural injustice amongst prisoners were widespread – from re-categorisation decisions to disciplinary issues on the wings. The combination of the lack of formal disciplinary system (with process checks) for low level rule breaking behaviour, with appropriate accountability, and the lack of confidence in and support offered by the formal mechanisms of punishment, may have discouraged staff from using formal options. Staff use of more subtle and informal punishment techniques felt unfair and inconsistent to prisoners.

Staff felt unrecognised and unsupported by senior management, particularly in relation to the discipline system, which they saw as the key to their discontent. This lack of confidence in the system may have contributed to the weak enforcement of boundaries on the wings. Prisoners complained that staff felt intimidated by powerful prisoners, who staff sometimes 'under-policed'. Given the relatively punitive attitudes of staff, care should be taken in encouraging staff to use their power. Staff should not be encouraged to use *more* power, but to administer a certain *type* of power that is consistent and applies the principles of 'procedural justice', by ensuring the process of decision making is fair (Tyler 1990). Staff may require clear leadership and support in prioritising 'dynamic authority', where the *right kind* of authority is delivered through strong and positive staff-prisoner relationships.

Trust within relationships, between various groups in the Cayman Islands prisons, was particularly low, despite prisons being generally characterised as 'low trust environments' (Liebling, assisted by Arnold 2001: 246). At every level individuals felt somewhat trusted but felt unable to bestow trust on others, including managers, staff and prisoners. The presence of trust is a highly valued aspect of prison life for prisoners, linked to dignity, respect and humanity, it supports 'flourishing' within an individual and can affect compliance (Liebling, assisted by Arnold 2001). Yet, a third of prisoners felt that staff lacked integrity and honesty.

As the strategic review which led to this study was particularly concerned with developing the rehabilitative potential of the prisons it seems that improvements are necessary in a number of areas. Attempts to improve the levels of trust at every level are important as is the development of a broad sense of 'respect' between staff and prisoners (see Hulley et al 2011). The interpersonal respect demonstrated by staff, whilst good, must extend to staff taking a personal interest in prisoners and their needs, and 'getting things done' for prisoners in terms of supporting their progress and development. In order for staff to be able to signpost prisoners to relevant opportunities for personal development, improvements to the range of, and access to, activities (education, work skills and offending behaviour courses) is necessary. Fairness should be prioritised in the access to provision, and for those with limited literacy skills plans should be developed to encourage and support participation. Existing resources are underutilised (such as treatment and sewing facilities in the female prison) and further investment in courses and skills development may be necessary for any attempts to improve rehabilitation. High levels of staff commitment, loyalty and support for rehabilitation could be harnessed to maximise the more efficient use of resources. Prisoners' enthusiasm for their own development and

their own creative ideas could also be used to encourage participation in any learning opportunities implemented. In the UK, for example, prisoners mentor others and teach them to read through the 'Toe By Toe' (2009) initiative, and prisoner 'councils' are being introduced as one mechanism to encourage both prison legitimacy and civic engagement (see User Voice 2011). Many of the prisoners who engaged in this study demonstrated the enthusiasm, and the ability, to inform discussions about potential improvements to rehabilitative opportunities within Cayman Islands prisons.

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