

## **Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry**

Witness Statement of

IGL

Support person present: Yes

1. My name is IGL although I've always been known as IGL. My date of birth is 1954. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

### **Background/Qualifications**

2. I left school with enough 'O' levels and Highers to go to university, but my father convinced me I needed to get an apprenticeship first. I trained as a vehicle builder and essentially built buses for a company in Falkirk, but I didn't stay for any longer than a year. It wasn't for me.
3. I then joined the Royal Marines and was there for ten years. I did a junior command course and was a corporal when I left.

### **Working at Barlinnie Prison**

4. After the Marines, I joined the Scottish Prison Service and was initially based at Barlinnie Prison. I was thirty-one years old. My job title was 'residential officer'.
5. I decided to join the prison service partly because I had spent the previous ten years in uniform. I had a young family and needed a job. I think moving from one uniform into another, felt like a comfort zone. I understood the principles of a rank structure and understood what responsibility meant. In hindsight, I may have made a different decision. I wouldn't recommend working in a prison for thirty years to anybody. I could

never say I enjoyed my job and I don't suppose I ever experienced job satisfaction. If you are the type of person where that is enough for you, then that's fine.

6. I was in the Marines where your best was required at all times. I was disappointed with the prison service because the pursuit of your best wasn't always there. That's my opinion and not a criticism of anybody else. I would say no one in the prison service worked to their full potential.
7. Barlinnie was designated as a local prison and took prisoners with sentences below eighteen months. It was overcrowded beyond belief. It was a complete and utter culture shock for somebody who thought he had seen a bit of the world. I had never seen that horror before.

#### **Working at Polmont Young Offenders 1984 - 2014**

8. By the time I started at Polmont Young Offenders, it had changed from the borstal system to the young offender's system. That was young offenders from the age of eighteen up to twenty-one or even twenty-three if there wasn't space in an adult estate. I wasn't given any further training to deal with young offenders.
9. On my first day, I met up with the staff training officer. He essentially showed me round the prison. They had already picked out a position they needed filled. At the end of the tour, he took me to the area I was going to be working.
10. I have no idea who my line manager was when I started in Polmont, other than it would be the principal officer in the hall at that time. They were normally quite a bit older. I would have been around thirty-two years old when I started there. I worked in Polmont from the end of 1984 until I retired in [REDACTED] 2014.
11. Polmont changed hugely over that time. I went from dealing with one hundred and twenty prisoners on the gallery at Barlinnie to thirty-six young offenders on my flat or 'gallery' at Polmont.

12. There's no way I could give you an accurate timeline on where I worked in the prison over my thirty years, other than to say I worked in every area of the prison at some point.
13. Two of the main halls at Polmont were the Allocation Centre and a hall called North Wing. They were Victorian buildings with galleries very similar to Barlinnie.
14. There were also two halls called East Wing and West Wing. The galleries in those wings were on four floors but all built at an angle to each other. It was a peculiar design. West Wing was a training hall and where most of the workers were sent. East Wing was a privileged hall for the better behaved and long-term prisoners.
15. The old Allocation Centre and North Wing were demolished in the early two thousands. They built two new halls, the Iona Hall first and then the Munro Hall. That had taken them a long time. I know it cost a lot of money but they should have tried working in the old halls. The Iona Hall had untried prisoners on the bottom flat, long-term prisoners on the second flat and general population prisoners on the top flat.
16. Munro Hall had general population on the bottom flat, long-term prisoners on the second, trustees and passmen on the third flat and sex offenders on the top. Trustees and passmen were generally long-term or trusted and well behaved prisoners who were given various duties to carryout for prison staff
17. There was an old segregation unit, which was different to the new one. I never did work in the old one so anything I said about that would be second hand knowledge.
18. Employees go about their job in different ways. It doesn't matter what job you are doing. Comparing PT staff in the prison service to PT staff in the Marines, is the wrong thing to do. The difference in commitment is astounding. For me, the PT staff in the prison service carried out a number ticking exercise. They needed so many prisoners to be in the PT department per day. I could never buy into that. I had been trained by people who approached their job differently. My time in the Marines clouded everything I thought about. I put it down to settling into civilian life after a period in the

forces. I never felt people tried enough. That was a big thing for me. I hated anybody's attitude of, '*it's just prisoners*'. That annoyed me intensely. It got my back up because I knew I couldn't do anything about it. I was within an organisation that couldn't care less about what I cared about.

19. I never voiced these concerns. I was a good boy and kept my mouth shut. In later years, when I came into a more combative area with management, I did voice certain concerns then. That was through my role as a union representative.
20. The politics of the prison drove me crazy. To try and change something you first need to understand it and know it's workings. Only from that position can you affect any change. There were multiple things I was unhappy about which were to do with the running of the prison. We don't have enough time for me to go into that today.

#### **Time working at HMP Barlinnie and YOI Polmont**

21. I saw an advert for the job in the prison service in a newspaper. I applied and they contacted me. I had an initial interview with someone and was put forward for a test. If you managed to get through that, you underwent a medical examination which was quite stringent. It was a general health check, hearing and eye check.
22. The interview process was at Barlinnie Prison. I can't remember the names of the people on the panel in 1984 but it was a Governor and a chief officer, who was the most senior rank on the uniform side of the prison service. There was also a human resource person who was called a personnel officer at the time.
23. I wasn't required to bring any specific experience to the role. I think I was of an age where I was quite mature. I'm assuming that maturity was what they wanted me to bring to that type of work. I had no specific experience, who would have experience of that type of job until they actually did it?

24. I had a discharge record from the Marines and they contacted my ex-commanding officer. I have no idea whether they contacted them by phone or letter. I couldn't be sure if there was a disclosure check carried out at the time. I assume so but it never came up in the interview process.
25. I was given initial training when I started. I was sent to the prison service college. That was a compulsory six-week residential course to get people used to being in uniform. People came from various prisons and brought their own experiences with them. The tutors were all relatively experienced people. They would give you lectures on certain things I never used again in my service. They would give their perception on how to deal with a violent prisoner but I could never follow their way of dealing with it.
26. I tended to look back on some of the training as a waste of time and I did that regularly. It was a tick list for six weeks, which said we had been taught various things but we hadn't. I was eighteen months in basic training in the Royal Marines before they allowed me anywhere near a responsible company. Six weeks training didn't equate to me.
27. These are personal opinions but I never felt they prepared me to work on a gallery at Barlinnie with one hundred and twenty prisoners. I had two other officer's working with me. Three officers into one hundred and twenty prisoners doesn't equate. They never prepared me for that. It was on the job training, picking things up from other officers, usually officers who had worked in Barlinnie for a while. All the experience at Barlinnie was with officers on the galleries.
28. I started off on 'C' hall which was the untried hall. There were four galleries in the hall with one hundred and twenty prisoners on each. Most of the cells had two prisoners in them, in bunkbeds. Prisoners on the bottom gallery had protection, mainly sex offenders and there were maybe fifty prisoners on there.
29. The young offenders were on a gallery of their own. They tried to separate them from the older prisoners mainly because they were noisy and prisoners hate noise unless they are causing it. I had no specific training in how to deal with young offenders.

30. There was an annual fitness test for officers. I was quite fit at the time I joined, I used to spend a lot of time running in the gym. I thought the fitness tests were a bit of a joke. They were geared towards the older officers who had maybe put on a few pounds. If you failed a fitness test in the forces, they made sure you were trained up to the required standard or they would look at putting you out the door. The prison service didn't work like that.
31. My residential officer's role at Barlinnie was essentially working with prisoners every day. Whatever their routine was, you were at the centre of it. If it was showering, slopping out, visits, any problems that occurred you were the first officer the prisoner would come to. You were expected to sort it out. You had to use your experience if you had any, you had to be flexible. You would have prisoners coming to you saying that they thought about committing suicide the previous night. I wasn't trained to deal with that, but I was expected to talk to them about it, initially at least.
32. In the hall, I had a senior officer and a principal officer. If I had a problem I couldn't sort out, I took it to them. They had more experience than me.
33. At that time, I was commuting from Stirling to Barlinnie, which is at the Stirling end of Glasgow. I had been living in married quarters in the forces but had moved back to Stirling before I got the job. I didn't want to move through to Glasgow, so decided to take the hit and travel.
34. It didn't matter where in the prison estate you worked, you were still employed by the Scottish Prison Service. I was at Barlinnie for just under one year before being transferred to Polmont Young Offenders. It was a compulsory transfer, which was explained to me by the staff training officer as for career development. A catchall phrase. My only option was to go or resign. I thought I was beginning to settle in at Barlinnie before I was transferred. It was a bit of an upheaval but being transferred was a risk that every officer took in the job. You could be transferred at any time, they told you that in the interview process.

35. Every prison had a staff training officer who was recruited from the body of the institution staff. You had to express an interest, have a fair level of experience and you had one or two tests to do. There was also a probationary period where they were shadowed by the previous staff training officer to see if they were suited to the job. Some training officers were less adequate than others. It was a fulltime job and their sole function was staff training. When an officer moved prison, their training record was forwarded to the training officer at the prison the officer was moving to. I was asked to be a staff training officer at one point but I was far too opinionated to be in that job. I felt I would have got myself into bother.
  
36. Not long after I started in the prison service in 1984, I did a part time degree in politics at Stirling University. That would have been in the late eighties. I couldn't give up my job so completing it on a parttime basis was the only way I could do it. I always had an interest in politics, it intrigues me and always has done.

#### **Structure and Recruitment of Staff**

37. The Governor's position at Polmont changed on a regular basis. The Governor in charge of Polmont, which was the biggest young offender's institution in Scotland, was a fairly transient position. Any Governor leaving Polmont was getting promoted. Adult establishments were seen as areas with more responsibility attached to them. The direction Polmont took largely depended on the Governor in charge. Changing the Governor every few years could be a positive thing, it really depended on who you got as a new Governor.
  
38. Some Governors had worked their way up through the ranks. They tended to be listened to more and commanded more respect. Some Governors came in as university entrants and didn't have a clue. Some of these were responsive to staff and would take guidance from them if they felt it was sensible. Others ploughed on regardless and they were a problem.

39. In the old system, Governors were required to come through the ranks. To even work for a period to allow them to understand the rank structure from the other end.
40. In North Wing there were two members of staff on each flat, top, middle and bottom, so six members of staff in each hall. The two members of staff on the bottom flat were the senior officer and the principal officer. All the other staff were residential officers.
41. I was never involved in the recruitment process.

### **Training**

42. I did a lot of staff training jobs. When the Human Rights Act started to affect prisons and they changed the slopping out process I was asked to update the staff on the act. Prison officers weren't really interested in that so I tried to make it is entertaining, interesting and controversial as I could.
43. I was given that job by the staff training officer at the time. He knew I was interested in politics and wanted to use my experience. He felt I had a good way of speaking to people and felt we would complement each other.
44. I worked with sex offenders. We initiated discussion groups, involved psychiatrists, clinical psychologists and it was seen as revolutionary. I thought it was common sense. The court would appoint a prison psychiatrist to look at a certain individual. The psychiatrist would determine what level of treatment or communication he would have with the prisoner. I wasn't involved with that.
45. We initiated discussion groups. Not to undermine the psychiatrist, we felt that we had to understand the prisoners better. We found that sex offenders needed to trust you before they would speak to you. That doesn't mean to say they are weak, in some cases they have strong personalities but if they don't trust you, they won't say a word to you. The discussion groups were our idea to try and get to understand them better. This would ultimately make our job easier. A positive by-product of this was that some



of the psychiatrists told us that the prisoners were more forthcoming in their private discussions with them. I felt we had done something positive and I felt good about it and was proud of the way I dealt with it.

46. I had a grim view of sex offenders but I was able to put that aside. I wasn't the judge, I was the prison officer. My job was to deal with prisoners and the issues they brought up on a day-to-day basis. That was the case throughout my service. Sex offenders were by far the most difficult prisoners I ever had to deal with. I think because of the complexities of their issues. That was a difficult period in my service.
47. I don't know whose idea it was initially but I was involved and helped set it up. I was walking in to deal with prisoners who were doing life, serious offenders with horrendous rap sheets without having been provided with training for the role. That was a bugbear of mine.
48. I was solely dependent on the staff who worked there and their experience, it was a sink or swim job. I resented that. I felt it was unfair and that I had been dropped in at the deep end. I was never asked if I was struggling with the job. Not that I was, I was leaning heavily on the staff in there. They were fantastic and what I thought prison officers should be. They were unconventional but had a great rapport with the prisoners and the prisoners trusted them. I hadn't seen that before. That was down to their approach and the way they spoke to the prisoners.
49. Maybe that was down to the officer's ages and life experience. They could evaluate things better than younger officers who were not far off the ages of the young offenders themselves. I believe the minimum age of a prison officer should be thirty. That's not to say there isn't exceptional prison officers who are under that age. I am throwing a generality blanket over it, which may be grossly unfair but that's what I want to say. I don't believe you have explored life until you're thirty. You're still learning and haven't made very many mistakes in life, which is where you learn. Again, just my opinion.
50. I did some training on being a bullying coordinator. That was through the social work department and was a complete waste of time. The social workers involved were

outside social workers and had never been in a prison before. I subsequently learned that they were referring to a book verbatim. They were teaching me from a book, not from any knowledge.

51. I worked in a good team at Polmont. We all knew our job, were fair-minded and I liked the way we worked. We all talked to each other and once the prisoners were locked up at night we would spend ten minutes talking about how the day had gone. Any concerns were raised and I liked that way of working. I liked someone coming in with an idea I hadn't thought about, an idea that would ultimately make my life easier. It was in our best interest to discuss things and take on board what people were saying. That fair-mindedness surprised me because I had met quite a few unfair-minded officers in Barlinnie. The officers in Polmont were under less pressure. Having to work with those numbers at Barlinnie was a terrible pressure.

#### **Supervision / appraisal / evaluation**

52. When you first join the prison service you are under a probationary period of one year. In that first year you kept your nose clean and made sure there were no official discretions. You would then speak to the staff training officer and the principal officer from the hall you were working in. If there were no issues they would officially recommend that you become a substantive grade. Your probationary period would then be over.
53. I don't remember who signed me off. It would have been the staff training officer and my line manager at that time but I don't remember who that was.
54. The senior officer would give you your six-monthly appraisal. That would either be signed off by the principal officer or he might want to talk to you to address certain concerns they had. You would also be able to raise any of your own concerns.
55. I think for the first five years I was at Polmont, I didn't see many new staff coming in. Certainly not in my hall. The first new officer I can remember coming in was a young

ginger haired lad and he had a brilliant personality. I really took to him. I was asked to shadow him. That was the 'on the job' training I mentioned. I wasn't telling him what to do, just pointing out things and showing him better ways of doing things. If you had encountered a situation before, then you would try and share your experience with them. Then let them make up their mind. I spent a lot of time shadowing people over my thirty years. I became one of the more senior officers in the jail.

## **Policy**

56. I was never involved in policy making. That took place in 'sleepy hollow', what is what I call the department, the prison service headquarters. They sleepwalked through everything and had no concept of what was happening in prisons. They sent a succession of people through to update us on policy. They didn't send someone through to gather the real workers opinions on any policy change, just to inform us of the change. They had no experience of what it was like to work in a prison.
57. I tried my best to change things at ground level. I always tried to give guidance to staff and prisoners. If I ever felt a member of staff or a prisoner was in the wrong, I would challenge them on it. I had no problem doing that. I never had the opportunity to challenge the people who made the decisions.
58. Something that changed was my job title. I was employed as a residential officer but they changed that title to 'personal officer'. I'm assuming they wanted prison officers to engage with prisoners more, you would have to ask the policy makers about that.
59. Policy changes would also be communicated in writing. They used to have a Governor's orderly book. Orders would come through from headquarters and you could read about policy changes, changes to standing orders. Eventually these matters were conveyed to the staff on the SPS computer system and via internal email. Then someone would be sent through from headquarters to enlighten you on the policy you had just read.

60. There was never a requirement to sign anything to say we had read and understood a particular order or policy. The only way they knew was by a senior officer asking staff if they had read it. The prison service was living in the dark ages.
61. I thought the recreation periods were mind numbingly boring and they wondered why the prisoners were slapping each other, arguing with each other. It was because they were bored. When they built the new halls at Polmont, they increased the recreation area, which meant we could do different things. I had been asking for that for twenty years by that time. The prisoners were no longer restricted to an area which was used as a dining hall. The hall was bigger, there were more phones for the prisoners to use. There was only one in the old hall with sixty prisoners wanting to use it. The showering facility was better. Instead of having to go back onto the flat, they could bring their towel down with them, have a game of pool then go for a shower. I would say there was more normalisation.
62. I understand budgetary pressures and that building new prisons isn't exactly the most politically enhancing project but if you're the guy in the hall and you see the problems created by something not changing, your frustration builds up over the years.
63. I would ask prisoners how they would like the recreation to change. The first thing they would say was give us more phones, access to more showers.

#### **Young Offenders – Polmont YOI**

64. The Allocation Centre was where prisoners went when they arrived at Polmont. Length of sentence and where vacancies were within the working estate, would decide what hall the prisoner went to. They generally sent them to North Wing to further assess them. If they were only doing a thirty-day sentence, they would be liberated before they were fully assessed.
65. A prisoner would stay in the Allocation Centre for a maximum of seven days. There was a constant admissions process with sometimes thirty or forty admissions per day.

I wouldn't like to guess how many prisoners were in the Allocation Centre at one time, but they had to double the prisoners up in the cells. I believe they had bunkbeds in every cell. Other than the occasional shift covering for sickness or on an overtime post, I never actually worked in the Allocation Centre.

66. In North Wing we had thirty-six prisoners on the top flat, thirty-six on the second flat and maybe ten cells on the bottom flat. They were all aged between eighteen and twenty-three. There was no grouping prisoners by age, it would depend on behaviour. Some eighteen-year-olds were quite mature and others were immature, so it depended on behaviour. It had to be that way.
67. There was a whole range of sentences. Normally when a young offender turned twenty-one they were sent to an adult estate. Sometimes we had prisoners aged twenty-three and even twenty-four until a vacancy became available in an adult estate. I'm assuming the Governors would confer and decide who was getting transferred.
68. It would be difficult to put a time limit on how long a prisoner stayed in North Wing. It depended on vacancies. We may have had a prisoner on North Wing who wanted to be a joiner or a welder. When a vacancy came up, the usual process was that he would get a trial period. If the work party officer liked him and decided to take him on, we would try and move him to West Wing. That was where most of the workers were.
69. We called prisoners by their first name. Their designation was that of a young offender but we called them by their name. They would refer to me as Mr [IGL]
70. I always understood teenagers. I was an eighteen-year-old once. I wasn't under the influence of drugs but I understood them. They said things because they didn't use what was between their ears. No one's ever asked them to use their brain. I asked them questions all the time and they used to hate that but I wanted to know what they were thinking.

### *Prisoner cells*

71. In each cell, the prisoners had a unit with a table, a couple of drawers and, if it hadn't been broken, a mirror. There was a bed, a chamber pot and a chair. At that time there was no televisions in the cells.
72. On the late shift you usually tried to get what we called security checks done. We searched rooms. We tried to search four or five rooms every day. Checking bars, windows, locks to make sure nobody was trying to dig their way out. That wasn't a search of the prisoner, that was a search of the room.
73. We had a search book. If we suspected somebody had something that they shouldn't have had, we could come out of our search pattern, search that prisoner's room and record it. When it came round to that prisoner's turn, their room wouldn't be searched again and duplicate our work. That's the way we operated in North Wing.

### *Recreation*

74. During the recreation period, which was generally after the staff's evening break and roughly until 9:30 pm, there would be a television in the hall. You don't get a lot of prisoners watching television. They're not soap fans. If there was a football game on, different story, they were all there. Generally, there was darts, pool and snooker, table tennis and we managed to get a second-hand computer from the education department. Over my time, I worked in all the halls and they all had similar approaches to recreation.
75. They tried to make it inclusive and keep eighteen-year-olds as occupied as they could for the recreation period, which was two and a half hours long. That was quite difficult but by and large it worked okay.
76. There was a desk at the end of the gallery where I would keep fifty or sixty magazines. If they wanted one they could take it. If their folks sent in a magazine on what we called a pro-form, it would be handed to them. They would share it about and when

they were finished, I would get it. That's how I operated, I operated like that for thirty years.

77. It wouldn't be my decision to move someone on my flat if there was a problem. I would talk it over with the senior officer and principal officer but they weren't on the gallery so they would accept what I was saying about the situation unless I wasn't being particularly sensible about it. By the age of thirty-two I would like to think I had a bit of common sense.

*Passman / Trustee*

78. We used the bottom flat for trustees, passmen or anybody else we felt was struggling on the other flats. We had manual hotplates where the food would come in from the kitchen. These guys would help to dish it out to the prisoners. On the bottom flat of North Wing, we had a dining hall. The prisoners would come down at mealtimes and the passmen would dish out the food. When everybody had eaten and were back in their cells, the passmen would clean the dining room.
79. They were invaluable to the running of the hall. If an officer managed to get himself good passmen, then the hall ran smoothly and there was less bickering between prisoners. Prisoners look for any excuse to complain but you could nullify that if you managed to get your routine working properly. I saw that as one of my main roles, to make sure I picked the right passmen and my routine was running smoothly.
80. A passman's door was open all the time. The only time they were locked up was when staff went for their lunch break or tea break and overnight. Other than that, they had free access on the bottom flat. They weren't allowed to go up to other flats but they were free to move around on the bottom flat.
81. There were Governor's passmen, social work passmen, education passmen. These were classed as trustee positions. They did general duties, cleaned and whatever the staff required. The education passman worked in the school area and did whatever

the educational staff required of them. The trustees were prisoners who were trusted to work outwith the hall.

*Morning / late shift routines*

82. We worked shifts and did a nightshift every twelve weeks. On an early shift you would normally be on your flat by 6:00 am. First thing you would do was check everybody was there. A number's check. I would walk round and ask prisoners if they were going to make their bed. I believe in the borstal days, which I never worked in, the prisoners had to make bed blocks. Similar to what we had to do in the forces. That practice was abolished when the young offender's designation came in. We tried to encourage bed making and tell them it was in their best interest or to roll the cover back to give it an airing, open their window.
83. Then we would start the process of slopping out the flat which could take all morning. At that time there was no internal sanitation in the prison. They used chamber pots for prisoners who had been locked up from 9:30 pm the previous night. That took most of the morning. Generally, before you had finished the slop out, you had to get everybody down for their breakfast in the dining hall. After that, you had to get them back up and continue with the slopping out process.
84. If there were no issues with slopping out, by 11:00 am, you would start the exercise period. There was an outside exercise yard and you would exercise one flat at a time. Sometimes you wouldn't manage to finish the exercise or the slopping out by the time your shift was finished. In that case, the late shift would have to carry it on until it was finished.
85. In the mornings, agents and social workers would come up and want to see certain prisoners. Officers had to facilitate that, although a designated officer from the operations group would normally take the prisoner to the visitors' rooms.



86. The late shift would start at 1:00 pm. That would start with a follow up of what had been happening in the morning. The change over where you would discuss this was a bit like nurses on a ward. They would pass information on to their opposite number.
87. Late shift would have things like canteen, laundry. These were done on the late shift because essentially there was more time. The agent visits, social work visits and other visits would carry on throughout the day.

*Visitors*

88. Some prisoners saw their social workers quite regularly, it depended on their cases. Agents would visit usually when it was coming up to a trial date. It was normally outside social workers that visited. If it was the prison social workers and they were compiling a report, they might ask me how I found a particular prisoner and I would be happy to tell them and they could read the prisoner's record.
89. If a prisoner was coming up to a release date, their file would be looked at by the principal officer. If he felt other agencies had to be involved in that, he would contact them. I wasn't part of that process.
90. For family and friend's visits, we had a visitor's passbook. On a prisoner arriving in the hall, I would give him a visitor's list sheet. He would list everybody who was likely to visit him. If someone was visiting who wasn't on the list, the prisoner would generally tell me beforehand and I would add the name.
91. Generally, at the end of the week, a Thursday or Friday, prisoners would ask me when I was opening up in the morning, if they could have a visit pass. I would make a note of all the prisoners who wanted one. I would write out a visit pass and it would be handed to the gate. A copy of that would be sent out to the visitor and they would come up with the pass. They would be taken to the visit room and have their visit. I think the limits of visits was two per month.

### *Dress code*

92. When I first started at Polmont, the prisoners dressed in heavy woollen jumpers. It looked terrible and dirty. Eventually they moved them into jeans and t-shirts which was much better. Prison officers are now dressed in combat trousers. In my day we wore dark blue tunics, uniform trousers and a hat and tie.

### *Laundry*

93. Prisoner's clothes were laundered once a week, as was bedding. They were done on separate days as it was the full prison's laundry. We gave the prisoner's bags to put their own clothes in. The bag had his cell number on it. We didn't have too many issues with clothes going missing despite the prison housing four hundred and ninety-nine prisoners.

### *Food*

94. The food was prepared by the kitchen staff, designated trained chefs. All food came from the kitchen, no one else prepared anything. Some of the cooks were trustees, they generally came from East Wing, the privileged hall and were usually prisoners doing long sentences.
95. The food looked okay, bearing in mind I had spent ten years in the forces. It wasn't anything glamorous and was presented on steel trays with compartments. Food was a constant source of complaint from the prisoners. Every day. I remember phoning one of the chefs and asking why they never did beans on toast. The number of prisoners who asked for it was unbelievable but it never appeared in my time.
96. I'm not sure how they constructed the diets. It would have been based on what a young adult needs but I don't know how they broke that down. I wasn't in the job very long before they started bringing out diet sheets. Similar to what patients get in a hospital. You could tick what you wanted. The understanding was that it would be more economical for the kitchen and would save them preparing food that was wasted.

97. That seemed to work okay although I had to fill out most of the diet sheets because the prisoners couldn't read them. Why they didn't take that into consideration, I'll never know. They had a choice of main meals, two choices. There was always soup on the menu and some sort of pudding but usually two choices for the main meal. There was no one forced to clear their plate, how could you force an eighteen-year-old to do that? I never saw that happening. They ordered it and it was up to them whether they ate it or not.
98. The kitchen was centrally situated in the prison. They had what were called 'hot boxes'. The food was placed in these and the trustees would bring them to the hall. The food was then put into our hotplates until it was time to feed the prisoners. We usually sent the prisoners up a table at a time. It was more controllable that way. The hotplates had the same diet sheets and the chefs generally knew what the prisoners had ordered. Apart from some teething trouble, it worked well. I had to stop phoning the chefs with the prisoner's complaints about the food because they said I was starting to sound like a prisoner. Everybody got the same food, there was only one kitchen in the prison. I never ate in the prison, I took my own food in.

### *Bathing*

99. The prisoners could shower everyday if they wanted. If I was on the late shift, I would start a shower list. Prisoners would come and ask me if they could have a shower. On the flat I was on there was three showers on one side and three showers in what we called the heads, which was the toilets, a naval term. I could essentially shower six prisoners at a time on the flat and could get through most of the prisoners who wanted a shower. I would be in prisoners ears every day, trying to get them to take a shower but nobody was ever forced. Nobody was forced to do anything other than behave. That's all I ever asked of them, just to behave.
100. The showers were in cubicles with doors. Although old, someone had built them properly and the prisoners could go in and have a shower in privacy. In the newer halls, when they were built, they had the showering facilities down to a tee.

101. I did monitor the prisoners when they were showering. I would take some paperwork down there and sit updating my paperwork. I would be talking to them half the time they were having their shower.

#### *Work Parties*

102. From memory there were two vocational training painter shops, there was a joiner's shop, a welder's shop, a vocational engineering shop, a vocational mechanic's shop, a textile shop and a laundry. Prisoners could be employed in the laundry. The prisoner's decided what they were interested in. If they worked they got paid but it wasn't compulsory. We never forced anybody to work although I would be in their ear every day. I would try to encourage them to work, tell them it was better than lying in their bed all day. I found you got further with that approach rather than to tell them they had to work. Then you would have a confrontational situation, which was what you always tried to avoid.
103. Normally a work party was run by a single officer. That would be a prison officer who was qualified in that particular trade. They had to have certain qualifications to run a work party and an interest in teaching young lads. I remember the officer who ran VT mechanics. His name was McConnell and he was tremendous. Every prisoner who came out of that work party said Mr McConnell was different class.
104. If the prisoner was a troublemaker, the officer wasn't going to take him because he was in there on his own with up to twenty prisoners. Their behaviour was a factor, it had to be. In all good conscience, I wouldn't put a troublemaker into a work party and just absolve myself from the repercussions. That wouldn't be a responsible way to do your job.

#### *Health*

105. If a prisoner said he was feeling unwell in the morning, I would note his name and pass it to the duty nurse. At some juncture in the morning, when the nurse did her round of

the halls, she would speak to the prisoners who had reported sick that morning. That was a daily occurrence.

106. In terms of a prisoner being taken to see a doctor or to a hospital, that would be medical policy. I have no idea how they escalated that but it was all done initially through the nurse doing her round in the hall.
107. The dentist would come round one day a week. Again, the prisoner could report dental sick and he would be seen by the dentist. I don't know how many the dentist would see, I was never there when they treated prisoners. I couldn't tell you who the dentist was.
108. In paragraph 105 of IFM ██████████ statement to the Inquiry, he states, "*There were horror stories about the dentist.*"
- You need to understand the psyche of the prisoner, he's in prison and going to complain about everything. That's an insight you must be sensitive towards or you'll not understand what complaints are from their point of view.

#### *School*

109. Some of the prisoners hadn't spent long at school and couldn't read or write. The education officer would come into North Wing and ask me if I had anyone on my flat I thought might benefit from some education. Some prisoners would approach me and ask if there was any chance of them going to school. I would put their name forward in that case and the education officer would take the names away. His numbers were quite badly curtailed because the school wasn't a big building. He would have a waiting list. Quite a lot of the lads wanted to go to school. I don't think there was quite the same pressure on them there as maybe there was on the outside in the sense of drugs or whatever they got up to on the outside. Because it was a more controlled environment they might have been able to listen to what the lessons were about.

110. The schooling had quite a good success rate as far as City and Guilds went. Some prisoners studied for 'O' levels. I recollect one or two prisoners really did quite well at the school. Whether that helped them when they were released, I don't know.
111. I used to pay attention to the education side of things. It dismayed me and upset me if a young offender came to me and asked me to write a letter for him. I hated that scenario. I was lucky when I left school, I could read and write and was ready to explore the world. Those guys weren't ready to do that and I didn't like that. If a prisoner came to me and asked me to write him a letter, he moved to the top of my education list. I would tell him I was doing that and I would let him know why.
112. A lot of the prisoners didn't want education and I wasn't going to force the issue. I would try to outline the benefits of reading and writing.
113. Without giving a general criticism of social workers, they didn't exactly pursue educational needs, they were more interested in the benefit systems. These prisoners were expert in benefits but couldn't write out the form to apply, someone had to do that for them.
114. I was at the last leg of these young offender's fledgling criminal careers. I was the last post. I realised that quite early in the job and took that responsibility exceptionally seriously. I never expressed that concern to anybody but in hindsight, I wish I had. I don't know how much help I would have been given. Hindsight gives you an acutely accurate picture sometimes. There wasn't a process in place for me to expand on the level of concerns I'm explaining to you this morning.
115. The knowledge of that pushes you further into your shell. You may have felt your principal officer wasn't really interested in what you had to say. Maybe it was that he had never told you that if you had that level of concern, you could go to him.

## *Release*

116. There was support for prisoners due for release. It was largely dependent on the sentence they were doing. A prisoner serving a ten-year sentence at that time would have come up for remission after approximately seven years. We had a training for freedom hostel where outside work parties would prepare them for going out. They would have a travel warrant if they needed to go on a bus. They would have petty cash to buy themselves lunch. I never worked in there so I couldn't tell you anymore about it.

## **Discipline and punishment**

117. In terms of discipline of the young offenders, that was a Governor's remit, solely a Governor's responsibility.
118. When working in the segregation unit, you were administering the Governor's punishment. Other than that, I didn't have the remit or the authority to punish prisoners. Even taking away a prisoner's privileges was a Governor's decision. I was able to put a prisoner on the Governor's orderly book because of his behaviour. If he perhaps wasn't listening, kept doing the same things wrong after being told about it, then I could put him on the Governor's orderly book. I would explain my case to the Governor, then the prisoner had the chance to respond. The Governor would then decide on any punishment on the balance of probabilities.
119. Even if it was something minor, like stopping a prisoner going to the recreation hall, that would have to come from the Governor. I didn't have the authority to do that. I do think it would have been a good idea to give the officers some authority. The prison officer would know the prisoner better than the Governor would. His bad behaviour could have been a one off or an established pattern of behaviour.
120. Personally, I didn't often put prisoners on the Governor's orderly book. I felt that I wanted to do my job. I didn't want the Governor doing it. That's maybe a negative way of looking at it, but that was the way I saw it. If a Governor had to punish a

prisoner in a situation I couldn't control, I felt it was a failure on my part. Nine times out of ten over my thirty years in the service, I controlled prisoners by talking to them. Some people may not believe that, but that's how it was.

121. I very rarely had to intervene in a physical way. Again, I saw it as a failure if I had to intervene in that way. That can happen if you watch a situation escalate and do nothing about it. The expression 'turn a blind eye', I never turned a blind eye. Most problems are sorted if you can get there early. If you know anything about body language, you can tell straight away. There are hundreds of pointers, especially if you know somebody, that makes it easier. You've listened to them, watched them under pressure and have knowledge of the problems they have, bad relations at home, girlfriend being unfaithful. You become a good listener too.

### **Restraint**

122. I became a control and restraint instructor in the early nineties. I was trained myself at Polmont. The control and restraint techniques were brought over from the prison service in Canada. I can't remember the date that happened but there was a whole influx of Canadian prison officer's instructing on this new restraint technique.
123. They asked for volunteers to train the staff when the Canadian's went back to Canada. I volunteered and was trained by the Canadians in the techniques. That was the first official training I had in restraining prisoners. I was not designated as a specific control and restraint instructor. These instructors were given specific training to carry out that role on a full time basis. Of course, I had to break up fights and move prisoners around prior to that, but I had been in the riots whilst in the forces in Northern Ireland, I knew how to move people. I can't speak about other staff.
124. As time went on, the control and restraint teaching was given to the recruits by staff at the prison college. Once control and restraint had been introduced, every member of staff at Polmont was trained. It was a requirement of your employment status.



125. There was an official document book. If a prisoner had to be restrained or re-located, then that had to be documented. As a result of that documentation, that prisoner would find himself in front of the Governor for adjudication. One was to see if the removal was justified and two, to answer any complaint that was made against the prisoner.
126. If there was a fight on the top flat and the two officers were involved, the first officer would try and break the fight up whilst the other officer would try to lock up as many prisoners as they could. At the same time, me and my partner would be trying to lock up prisoners on the second flat. That's to minimise the risk of escalation. If you had to move the prisoner involved in the fight, then you needed three members of staff. It's difficult to explain how it would happen in real time. You need three members of staff unless you told someone to go to his room and he went. Some prisoners just walked, other prisoners were up for a fight and saw the officers as a legitimate target.
127. In a situation where a prisoner was to be moved to the segregation unit, the number one officer takes charge of the prisoner's head. If the prisoner received an injury to his head that was caused by us moving him, then the number one would have to answer as to why that happened. The other two officers were employed close to either side of the number one and would be responsible for securing the prisoners arms and legs.
128. There were three phases to the restraint situation. There were passive locks where you could put a lock on an arm that would stop the prisoner moving anywhere but wouldn't cause him any pain. There was an escalation of that passiveness to an increased restraint. This would indicate to the prisoner, that any further struggle and he was going to feel a bit of pain. In the final stage, you really had to ground the prisoner until you got control of the situation. It was your job to be in control, that's why it was called control and restraint. Some young offenders were head and shoulders bigger than me, some weighed seventeen or eighteen stone and they took a bit of restraining. It just depended, every situation was different.
129. If I was breaking up a fight in a hall then moving someone to the segregation unit, then I wouldn't have a shield. Not unless I had moved him to a room and he had smashed

up the room and weaponised himself with a piece of chair or a part of the bed. Then I would have to get protection.

130. In this three-man team situation, the number one would have a shield. The three officers in the team would have body armour on.
131. Control and restraint refresher training was twice per year. You weren't deemed as being competent unless you kept up to date with your refresher training. I couldn't sign you off unless you were competent and I wasn't going to sign you off until you were. That was my commitment to the Governor.
132. I had to go through to Redford Barracks in Edinburgh once a year to carry out my refresher training. That was for a full week at a time. There were national control and restraint instructors there from Scotland and England and we went through a whole programme of re-training with them. I was never a national control and restraint instructor only a local one at Polmont.
133. I had to carry out my control and restraint training around my own duties. I tended to train in blocks. I would set aside a week and try and get as many officers trained in that week as I could. I kept accurate logs of all training. Staff grades could be reduced if they didn't keep their level of competency up. I thought that was a great thing because it meant it wasn't only up to me, they had an incentive to keep their level of competency up.
134. I have read the statement <sup>IFM</sup> [REDACTED] provided to the Inquiry. In paragraph 112 he states, "*Staff were very physical in those days. If I was cheeky to one prison officer, they would press a button and the whole lot would come. One would say 'locks on' and they would put the locks on, pressure point locks. Your arm would be put up your back and they had a lock they would put on your legs. When your arms were twisted in a certain way and put up your back, they only had to touch your thumb, you got a jolt, a pain through your whole body. It was grim, they called it getting carted.*"

135. If I pressed a button every time a prisoner was cheeky, I'd be pressing the button every minute of the day. That's a total distortion of what happened. Again, from a personal point of view and as a control and restraint instructor, what I tried to convey to staff was that it was in everybody's best interest, that you do not escalate a situation. De-escalation was the approach.
136. If a prisoner was throwing his arms in the air saying he was going to smack a chair over my head, my first thought wasn't to press an alarm. The first thing I would do was try and find out what the problem was. Why does he want to hit me over the head with the chair? Surely that's common sense. You would escalate your response depending on what you were getting from a prisoner. If he was hellbent on smacking me over the head with the chair, I would know that because I'm watching him. I've seen enough to know how these guys act. They're quite spontaneous young men.
137. They flair up like a roman candle, they do something, then they're back down just as quickly. That's what they do and you must be aware of that. It doesn't mean to say that everyone who is cheeky to me gets carted. That's complete nonsense. Getting carted is quite a long way down the escalation stair where I have to restrain a prisoner. Then I'd have to escalate it again to move the prisoner to the segregation unit.
138. Mr IFM [REDACTED] seems to be suggesting locks were used other than to restrain. I don't recognise what he is talking about. That isn't my experience and I trained for a long time how to do these things properly. I won't go into individual cases but I've stood in court and defended myself. Prisoners make complaints and their lawyers escalate the complaints and you have to answer why you put someone in a lock, why you felt it necessary to move them to the segregation unit. It was a legally defensible technique, which was signed off by the Scottish Office.
139. Any restraint was recorded in a control and restraint book. The Governor saw that at the earliest opportunity and I would have to answer as to why I had to do it. Standard procedure.

## Reporting of complaints/concerns

140. If a prisoner made a complaint, the procedure was to note it in the complaint's book and tell the principal officer. The principal officer would then go and speak to the prisoner. He would then decide where it went from there and note his decision in the complaint's book. He could either deal with it informally or make it official, in which case it would involve one of the Governor grades. If it still couldn't be resolved, it would go to the Governor in charge.
141. If the complaint was about me, the procedure would be for me to ask my opposite number to note it and take it to the principal officer.
142. I never had a prisoner make an official complaint about me in thirty years. I know any number of prisoners who were deeply unhappy with my approach to things, but they never made an official complaint. If they had an issue with how I was dealing with something, I wanted them to say it to my face. I could then deal with it there and then. I was fortunate in the sense that prisoners did complain to my face, "Mr IGL I'm not happy." Sometimes I would tell them to stop moaning and other times, if I thought they had a point, I would consider it. I tried not to make things official, informality was my best tool.
143. There was never any guidance on when I had to record a complaint.
144. If a staff member had an issue with their own line manager there would be alternative managers brought in. I was comfortable with the process and knew what the structure was.
145. During my involvement with the prison union, I was an industrial negotiator and was involved in dispute resolutions. If there was a problem with a certain line manager, we would get everybody round the table, see what the problem was, and attempt to find a solution. We tried to resolve it before it became official with official sanctions. That wasn't always possible.

## **Abuse / Bullying**

146. No one ever approached me with a complaint of having been abused by a staff member. I don't know how I would have handled that. Abuse is a stinging word and could mean all sorts of things. There wasn't a definition of what was regarded as abuse, no training on abuse, nothing written down about abuse and the staff never discussed it.
147. In terms of prisoner-on-prisoner abuse, we certainly had to take cognisance of that because it could escalate into a bigger problem. We had gang factions, we had people who had contracts out on them. They would be isolated for their own protection, moved to other parts of the prison. It depended on the situation and how much information we had. We had situations where old scores were being settled, family feuds. These guys lived nefarious lives outside of prison.
148. I recall a prisoner who was a known drug dealer. We had to move him prisons for his own protection. We were told that he had a contract out on him for fifty thousand pounds. Whether that was true or not, but the prison had to act on the information it had. I can't imagine there would be any guidance or training you could put in place that would prepare you for that.
149. You learn what constitutes bullying over the years working in a prison. What forms it takes. You are reliant on your own observations, on prisoners coming to you and telling you they were being bullied. There are also physical things, a prisoner buying two ounces of tobacco every week at the canteen and having no tobacco when you next saw him. That would give you an indication it had been taken off him. I would be asking him where his tobacco was. Whether he would tell you is another discussion. That's where your knowledge of the prisoners helps you.
150. Can you imagine being in a work party all week, keeping your nose clean, doing what the prison officers were telling you, and somebody taking what you had worked all week for off you? What do they do, deal with the prisoner and take their tobacco back

or go into their shell? If they do that, every week that prisoner will take their tobacco off them until they do something about it. That's the reality of prison life.

151. In that scenario, I would go to the canteen officer and tell him not to issue the prisoner with any tobacco. Once the canteen was closed, I would go to the canteen, collect his tobacco and take it to his room. Then I know he's got it and I would make sure there was no one going into his room. That's not to say that at some point in time, he would be told to hand his tobacco over. I couldn't watch him 24/7 and it wouldn't matter what procedures and processes were in place. These prisoners are skilful thieves and manipulators.

### **Child protection arrangements**

152. Until today, I didn't think I had ever worked with children. I was never given any guidance on child protection at all. We never considered these prisoners as children. They were young offenders and that is how they were viewed.

### **External monitoring**

153. The prison would be inspected once a year. That was the inspectorate of prisons, political appointees, I believe. We would be informed via the Governor's orderly book with the date of the visit included. The prison inspector would select who he wanted to speak to. There would be no prescribed list, he would come in and talk to prison officers and he would talk to prisoners. There was nowhere he couldn't go. He could talk to prisoners on their own if he wanted.

### **Record-keeping**

154. There were numerous records staff were required to keep. We had to keep an up-to-date record of all prisoners on our gallery. When I worked on the gallery with thirty-six prisoners, me and my colleague had eighteen prisoners each to record. I would

keep individual files on each of my prisoners. If they had a bad visit with their mother for instance and came back to the hall irate, I would record that. I can only speak for myself and my opposite number, but we updated our files daily. I would take files down to where the showers were and update them whilst I monitored the prisoners. If a prisoner went to the segregation unit, his record would go with him. These records were used by prison social workers if they were compiling a report on a prisoner.

155. We had other books where we recorded every cell search we carried out, every restraint situation, a book for official complaints, visits from social work, agents, family and friends. There was a Governor's orderly book where we recorded any disciplinary issue for the Governor's attention. There were also medical records completed by medical staff.

### **Segregation unit**

156. The time a prisoner could be in the segregation unit was determined by a Governor. The times I was rostered to work in there, the maximum time was fourteen days. At that time, it would be reviewed by the Governor who had placed the prisoner in there. Again, it solely depended on behaviour and was the Governor's decision as to when the prisoner was let out. We had no input in that decision.
157. Their time out of the cell was basically the same as in the hall. The only difference was they ate in their cell. The Governor saw these prisoners every day. The duty Governor would come round and the first thing he would ask me was whether the prisoner had any complaints. If there was, I would tell him. Everywhere had CCTV. If I entered a cell, someone could look at the CCTV and ask me why I was going in there. That's why we always had one officer standing at the door and two in the cell. Even if we were giving them their meals, we would do that.
158. There was a toilet and a sink in the cell. There was also an integrated concrete block with a mattress with their bedding on it. Every day they had to clean their cell. They

had to take their bedding and put it on a rack that we had. They would clean their cell, go back and get their bedding and return it to their cell. That was the routine.

159. Once a prisoner was in the segregation unit, they were the responsibility of the segregation staff. The unit was designed in an 'L' shape. There were four cells one way and six the other way. There was what they called a 'strong cell' and there was a 'silent cell'. The strong cell had nothing in it whatsoever. Some prisoners could rip the sink and toilet off the wall and did do on occasions. Prisoners in this cell would be escorted to the toilet. The silent cell was only used on the advice of the medical officer.
160. I remember one prisoner just kept pounding his head on a wall. He had to be moved to the silent cell, which was a padded cell. If he continued to try and hurt himself the medical officer could sanction a body restraint. In some cases, the medical officer could involve a suppressant injection. It depended how much the prisoner was hurting himself. They would only go to the silent cell when they were doing themselves damage. It had all round observation and we had to check the prisoner every fifteen minutes. I don't know why they wanted to hurt themselves, they generally didn't tell you why they were doing it.
161. There were three officers in the segregation unit, one was a senior officer. They weren't specialist officers. I couldn't give you a date but I was rostered to work in the segregation unit for a couple of years. That would have been in the nineties. I think I was put in there because I was a control and restraint instructor. I used to give the staff 'on the job' training in there. That was off my own back and wasn't official.
162. If a prisoner had to go to the strong cell, say they had pulled the sink off the wall, we would phone the duty Governor. He would come down and try to speak to the prisoner through the door. If the prisoner wasn't communicating and the Governor couldn't make headway with him, he would sanction any move to the strong cell. Normally, if that was the situation, they weren't hurting themselves but were posing a problem for us, they would go to the strong cell.



163. There was a nightshift Governor who was on-call but there was also a duty Governor who was in the prison overnight.
164. The silent cell was totally different. The medical officer would decide if a prisoner was to be taken there. He was independent to the Governor and would decide if there was a medical need for the prisoner to go to the silent cell. We could summon the medical officer if we thought the prisoner was a danger to himself.

### **Prison Union Representative**

165. I was a prison representative for twenty years. Before I started in that role, the union people never gave me answers to my questions. It was pointed out to me that if I wanted answers, maybe I should stand for election. That's how I initially became involved.
166. The role was a go-between, between the staff and management. Both, with equal impunity, would have a go at me. It wasn't an easy role but it was interesting.
167. The second part of my role involved the discipline code that all staff had to adhere to. There were many indiscretions in this code that a prison officer could fall foul of. If found guilty of one of these indiscretions, you could get a slap on the wrist or if it amounted to gross misconduct, you could be dismissed. It was my job to monitor that and act as a defence agent if a member of staff was accused of certain indiscretions.
168. That's why the union helped me with course fees when I studied for my law degree at Glasgow University. I had to give them something back. By that time, I had been in the job for twenty years and I would like to think I knew the rudiments of the job.
169. There were certain things within the discipline code that I thought were illegal. I challenged them from an illegality point of view and ended up in front of the justice committee on numerous occasions. To my eternal shame, I brought about very little change and it is still an inherently unfair discipline code.

170. At the first level, the discipline code is dealt with at Governor level. If there is no resolution there, it goes to a tribunal at the Scottish Prison Headquarters. If there is no resolution there, it goes national and to the national civil service tribunal in London.
171. The code is adjudicated and decided on the balance of probabilities. The code is brought to the attention of staff only when a problem arises, which is unfair. Nobody knows anything about it until they fall foul of it. Things like misplacement of keys, missing a peg on a night shift, where you clock in to show you were in a certain area would see you on the discipline code. Sanctions started from a slap on the wrist, then a written warning. Misconduct can stay on your record for up to one year, if adjudged to be gross misconduct, you can be summarily dismissed.
172. I'm glad I don't need to face that anymore. It was torturous at times. These staff members had families. Depending on what I said, might well determine whether his whole family suffered. That was some pressure to be under and I couldn't talk to anybody about it. These cases lasted, on average, six months at a time. The discipline code was written to be obstructive and awkward in the sense, you could see where it should go but there would be a rule that said it couldn't go there.
173. Towards the end of my time in Polmont, I was not being rostered posts because I was so busy. The union job had become fulltime.

#### **Investigations into abuse - personal involvement**

174. I was never involved in any investigation on behalf of Polmont into allegations of abuse, ill-treatment or inappropriate behaviour by staff or others towards young offenders.

#### **Reports of abuse and civil claims**

175. I was never aware or involved in the handling of reports or civil claims made against the prison by former inmates concerning historical abuse.

## **Police investigations/ criminal proceedings**

176. I was a national negotiator for hostage situations, where a prison officer had been taken hostage by a prisoner. Unfortunately, I was involved in quite a few of these. I went through rigorous training for the role via Grampian Police and could be deployed anywhere in Scotland. I volunteered for the role, I had issues with how the prison service dealt with things and you can't improve it if you're not involved.
177. On a few occasions, I was required to give evidence in court but that's as much as I'm at liberty to tell you.
178. As a member of the union committee, I was informed of any police investigation ongoing and whether the police intended talking to prison staff. I'm not prepared to say anything further about these matters.
179. A prisoner set himself on fire one night. He died. There was a Fatal Accident Inquiry set up and I gave evidence at that. The prisoner set himself on fire during our break period. When we came back the flames were streaming out of his cell. He was dead before we got to him. I provided a statement to the police. That stayed with me for a long time. The outcome of the Inquiry was accidental death. It was another day in the life of the prison service. The whole operation is dispassionate.
180. I was never offered any support after that, none of us were. My intransigent standpoint was, who could counsel me on looking through a spy hole and watching someone burn to death. I now think about it more expansively than that. Counsellors under whatever guise are trying their best to help you because you have a problem and you're not dealing with your problem too well. Looking back, I would have liked someone to have tried to help.
181. I've been retired for ten years, and I have never spoke about that to anybody. I haven't even told my wife about it. I didn't tell her half the things that went on in the prison. I didn't want to concern her. I couldn't have relayed them accurately enough. That's how I always felt about the prison. What kind of job puts you in that mindset. I'm not a stupid man, I've proved myself in lots of situations but I never defeated that one. I

never got to grips with it and still haven't. Today has regurgitated a lot of bad memories for me. Memories I had put aside into a more manageable place. I hope I can get them back there. This is no criticism to the inquiry, but I thought this would happen today.

182. I've been to a few Fatal Accident Inquiries, not always as a witness. I just wanted to get an understanding of what they were about. They are sterile affairs, very dispassionate. People come to these inquiries with huge concerns, parents coming to know why their offspring is dead. I can't begin to imagine what that is like. It must be horrendous.

183. I was asked to give guidance to a prison officer who found an inmate hanged. The officer managed to get into the cell and cut the lad down but they couldn't save him. That officer was so badly affected that he never came back to his work. The Governor at the time was a Governor who had come up through the ranks and he understood the trauma that the officer had gone through. I asked him if the prison service were doing anything for the officer and he said that he was ashamed to say, no. Wherever that boy is now, he had to deal with that trauma and we just let him go.

#### **Convicted abusers**

184. I don't know of any person who worked at Polmont during my time who was convicted of the abuse of a young offender at Polmont.

#### **Knowledge of Specific alleged abusers**

185. I have been informed that the Inquiry has received evidence of allegations about staff who may have been employed at Polmont at the same time as me. I have been asked if I know these people and if so what I know about them.

Mr HJX

186. I knew HJX, he's dead. He died of Cancer. I didn't work with him, I just knew him. He was quite a bit younger than me, twenty years younger probably.
187. The following passage is from paragraph 128 of IFM statement to the Inquiry, "One of the officers who used to assault me was Mr HJX. They called him HJX. He was a big six-foot blonde-haired guy. He was well built and apparently a Scottish Champion kickboxer. He loved to hit us. He was always trying to goad people into hitting him but no one could get near him before he reacted and put you in a hold and physically beat you. I don't remember his first name."
188. HJX was a control and restraint instructor along with me. He was a fellow prison officer at Polmont and had no special designation. HJX was a staff member at Polmont. I couldn't give you a date as to when that was.
189. HJX had an infectious personality and I don't think anybody had a bad word about him. This allegation is so far-fetched, I would never recognise HJX from what is being described here. I think IFM is a fantasiser, whatever axe he has to grind, he's going to grind it at every opportunity he gets. That's fine, in this country you are entitled to say whatever you want.

GIH

190. I have been told that GIH may have been a PT instructor. I do remember an officer who worked in. I don't know how he got that job. That may be GIH but I can't say that with any certainty. This officer was an ex-paratrooper.
191. Everybody who went to came back with positive vibes from him. If ever I started a list of prisoners who wanted to go to, I was quickly over-subscribed. was something prisoners wanted to do. I have no idea what went on in. I was never in there for one of his classes.

192. I knew him in the passing, not particularly well. He would come up to the old North Wing and collect those going [REDACTED]. He would generally go to wherever [REDACTED] [REDACTED] were and collect them from their hall. He would also bring them back afterwards. If I asked the prisoners how [REDACTED] had gone, they were always positive about it. I think the [REDACTED] officer used to put the prisoners through awards [REDACTED] and all sorts of things. He seemed to have a positive influence on the prisoners.

193. When they demolished the old North Wing and Allocation Centre, they also demolished [REDACTED] and the [REDACTED] officer retired.

### **Alleged abuse**

194. I don't remember IFM [REDACTED]. I dealt with thousands of prisoners in thirty years. If IFM [REDACTED] came in here and sat down, I might recognise him but I have no recollection of his name. I've gone over his statement and there are a lot of things in there that are nonsense.

195. What I took from his statement was that he was in Polmont between 1991 and 1994. He mentions having to make bed blocks. Bed blocks were long abolished by the time he was in there. As I've said, I believe bed blocks were done in the borstal days. Maybe there was a more pragmatic approach taken to the young offenders. If prisoners had slept in their bed that night, they just rolled out of it in the morning. What member of staff would have instructed them to make a bed block? Some maybe could have, I could have done that but to routinely go round getting prisoners to make bed blocks, you just didn't have the time. I can't speak for all members of staff, but I would severely doubt it. Let's just say he is inaccurate, he's mistaken.

196. Within IFM [REDACTED] statement to the Inquiry, he refers to the segregation unit. At paragraph 115, he says, "*You were put in there for three months at a time and you were in your cell twenty-four hours a day*". In paragraph 117 he says, "*They would come in on a regular basis at night and beat the shit out of me.*"

197. He speaks about being locked in a cell for twenty-four hours a day. There are situations where prisoners can be locked up for lengthy periods of time. I can't give you individual instances of that, but on a general basis, it is in every prison officer's interest, where they can get a prisoner out from behind their cell door, to do it. For a multitude of reasons. Without going into the Human Rights Act and time in the fresh air, there are all sorts of issues I studied long and hard over. Segregated prisoners were allowed to shower, the time they were out of their cell depended on how long they took in the shower. They were allowed an hour's exercise, outside if they wanted.
198. There were instances where prisoners were either a threat to themselves, a threat to staff or a threat to other prisoners. These situations arose very rarely but these prisoners were isolated. Where they were isolated would depend on their behaviour. Everything escalates and de-escalates and everything in a prison centres around behaviour. If, for instance, a prisoner assaulted another prisoner, it would be my job to break up the fight. If the prisoner then tried to assault me, it would be my job to restrain him in such a way we could move him back to his own cell. Nine times out of ten, he would be so high after the incident he would smash his cell up. He would then be armed. He then had to go to the segregation unit. That would be a standard observation about escalation.

### **Life after Polmont**

199. I could have retired at fifty-five but my youngest daughter was still at university so I couldn't afford to retire. I had to work another five years until I was sixty. That was the worst five years of my life. I didn't want to be there. I was working with sex offenders and it felt like I was pushing against a locomotive.
200. When my sixtieth birthday came about, I made a pact with myself. When I walked out the gate for the last time I wouldn't look back and I never have, until today. I would never recommend anyone becomes a prison officer.

## Helping the Inquiry

201. I wouldn't dream to presume why IFM ██████ said the things he has said. I don't know and coming to assumptions is something I try to avoid in life. I think it's quite dangerous to do it and generally they're quite inaccurate.
202. I'm not the all-seeing eye and I didn't know everything that went on in the Prison. One thing I can tell you, there wasn't very much that went on in Polmont that I didn't get wind off. You're not in a place for thirty years without knowing what's going on. Prisons are littered with informants, staff and inmates.

## Applicant Allegations

203. I have been informed that I have been named as an alleged abuser by IFM ██████  
IFM ██████  
IFM ██████
204. Within IFM ██████ statement to the Inquiry, he refers to me as, Mr IGL ██████. That was the name I was known by to the prisoners.
205. At paragraph 121 of IFM ██████ statement, he says, "*You could get beaten anywhere in the prison but solitary officers were called the 'mufti mob'. They were the riot squad. They would come in and kick the utter shit out of you.*"
206. At paragraph 122, he says, "*I met one of them at a later date, Mr IGL ██████. He told me that he wasn't proud of himself. He was honest and quite likeable but he hated Catholics and was really biased. He wouldn't even speak to Catholics. My best friend in there was Catholic and when Mr IGL ██████ found out, he opened my cell door and said, that he had thought I was alright until he found this out. He actually got to like my friend in the end.*"



207. At paragraph 123, he says, "Mr IGL used to be solitary staff. He opened up to me to me and told me that he used to ask specifically for night shift work. He told me that he used to come into work drunk, walk about solitary looking for Catholics. He never actually assaulted me."
208. At paragraph 124, IFM says, "I could be lying on my bed in solitary and my cell door would open and I would get booted up and down the cell. Sometimes I used to think I would die. It was systematic. They would strip me naked, take everything out my cell and leave me lying on a concrete floor for thirty minutes before they came back. I would rather they had kicked me between the legs there and then and not have to wait for them to return. After a few times I knew what the plan was, I knew what was coming."
209. At paragraph 125, he says, "They would come in with shields as well. Three of them would pile in the cell door and spread out. I knew one of them was going to put their shield back and whack you with their truncheon. Either that or they would corral you into a corner with the shields and press you down. Then you would get battered."
210. At paragraph 126, he says, "One time they broke a bone in my elbow. I lay overnight and I knew something was wrong. I just knew I had a broken bone. I wasn't one to complain normally so they knew something was wrong. I got to see a nurse and she put a cast on it. That was all done in solitary confinement, I wasn't getting out of there."
211. The segregation unit was centrally located, not far from the kitchen. The way the prisoner was escorted to the segregation unit, depended on his behaviour. If he was violent then he would have to be restrained and moved along in control and restraint locks. That would be carried out by a minimum of three officers. That's a legally defined and court tested minimum. That was always adhered to. I was a control and restraint instructor, everything was documented, everything could be seen on the CCTV cameras and everything would be investigated.
212. I don't recognise the term 'mufti mob', that's a new one on me. There were no riot squads in Polmont. In a riot situation, I would have a nine-man team. In Barlinnie,

they were throwing sinks at us from the galleries and we had shields on our heads. In Shotts there were over a hundred prisoners involved in the riot.

213. There were no specialist squads at Polmont, as I've said, every prison officer had to be trained in control and restraint. IFM ██████████ statement is fanciful. He's been reading to many novels or watching too many TV programmes.
214. In terms of the beatings, he talks about in the segregation unit, I can say without fear of contradiction it didn't happen. There are around eight or nine CCTV cameras in the segregation unit. It would be nigh on impossible to conduct yourself in the way IFM ██████████ suggests. I knew hundreds of prison officers and no one thought like that. Prison officers certainly wouldn't subscribe to that situation.
215. I must have dropped the one about the Catholics because I married one and my two daughters went to a Catholic school. I'm not going to try and get into his head, I have no idea where that came from.
216. The only prisoners I ever bumped into was at a ██████████ football game and they asked me how I was doing. I don't recall their names but think they were from Glasgow. I don't recollect any of this. I don't recall IFM ██████████ and have no recollection of meeting him or him saying what he thinks I said to him. He suggests I was wandering about drunk on a nightshift. He suggests that I requested nightshift work, something I know I never did. In thirty years, I certainly wasn't drunk on duty.
217. If someone was taken to solitary confinement, they were searched to see if they had any weapons on them. They were asked to strip, it was a strip search. Then they were given clothes that we kept in the unit. Their clothes were put in a bag. That's the only time they were naked. They were given a different colour of t-shirt, a sweat top and joggers.
218. I don't remember anything about a IFM ██████████ I have no recollection of him whatsoever. I think he's a fantasiser and I have no idea where he is cooking all this up from.

219. My recollection of my time working in Polmont is as good as can be expected. I would accept without a doubt that any such treatment of a prisoner would be abusive. I would be absolutely abhorred if a member of staff, a colleague of mine, would conduct himself like that. I would certainly have something to say to him and if it ever went official, I would decline to be involved in any defence of that situation. I served my country and I served the Crown in the prison service. I knew what my duties were and that wasn't part of them. That's why I say it's fantasy land. How could staff go into his cell as he says? Why would they decide just to go into his cell and beat him up, for no reason? We need to look at this sensibly. It's all very well making an allegation, but again, unsupported, unsubstantiated.
220. Every officer carried a truncheon. Being on duty without your truncheon was an indiscretion against the discipline code. He fails to tell you how the bone was broken but suggests it was in the process of being beaten up. Any hands on in the segregation unit was done with control and restraint. Nobody was hit with a truncheon and certainly nobody was corralled into a corner with a shield. A nurse wouldn't put a cast on a broken bone, he would have had to go to hospital. Again, it's inaccurate. The fantasy is inaccurate. If any prisoner had a broken bone, it would be recorded in their medical file.

#### **Lessons to be learned**

221. I've thought about how we could improve prisons. I think we have to start on the outside. As I tried to explain earlier, prison is the last stage before you hit the abyss. I've spoken to social workers over the years about this. You need to nip it in the bud. You need to get these guys early. They're taking drugs at ten and eleven years old. That's when you have to start intervening and give them some structure to their life.
222. Like many people, I take my upbringing for granted. I had structure, a sister and a brother and my mum and dad were scrupulously fair with us. If we crossed the line, my mother especially would let you know it. She didn't work on violence, she would shame you. I could never handle criticism from someone who cares about me.

223. Don't assume that prison officers don't care because that is inaccurate. You are a human being locking up other human beings and I always found that difficult. I know the court decided that was where they should be. I get it, I've studied the legal system and agree with it but it's different when you have that key and you're shutting that door. You know there is somebody behind the door struggling.

224. I really hope that your enquiry gets under peoples noses so bad that they are compelled to do something about it. You'll forgive me when I say I don't hold out a lot of hope. I take my hat off to you for even trying.

**Other information**

225. I have no objection to my witness statement being published as part of the evidence to the Inquiry. I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

Signed..... IGL [Redacted Signature] .....

Dated..... 29/11/23 .....