

SPSO decision report

Case: 201406469, Scottish Prison Service
Sector: Scottish Government and devolved administration
Subject: Complaints Handling
Outcome: upheld, recommendations

Summary

Mr C complained that the prison's handling of his complaint about an officer was poor. In particular, he said the prison agreed to arrange a meeting between him and the officer in an effort to resolve his concerns but that did not happen.

Our investigation confirmed that the initial meeting did not take place and Mr C was not given any explanation for that. When he escalated his complaint, it was agreed that the meeting would be rescheduled. However, that meeting also did not go ahead because the officer was not available but the prison informed Mr C that it had been rearranged for a later date.

In line with good complaints handling, we felt it would have been appropriate for the manager to follow up with Mr C to find out whether he was satisfied following the outcome of the meeting. If that had happened, the manager would have identified at an earlier stage that the meeting had not taken place and steps could have been taken to reschedule it without Mr C having to escalate his complaint. Therefore, we upheld the complaint.

Recommendations

We recommended that Scottish Prison Service:

- apologise to Mr C for the failures we found with the handling of his complaint; and
- offer Mr C the opportunity to meet with the officer to discuss his concerns as outlined in his initial complaint.