

**A report by the Inspector of Prisons  
Judge Michael Reilly into the circumstances  
surrounding the death of Prisoner G  
on 16<sup>th</sup> April 2012  
while on temporary release**

**\*Please note that names have been removed to anonymise this Report**

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**A report by the Inspector of Prisons Judge Michael Reilly  
into the circumstances surrounding the death of Prisoner G  
on 16<sup>th</sup> April 2012 while on temporary release**

Presented to the Minister for Justice and Equality pursuant to  
Part 5 of the Prisons Act 2007

Judge Michael Reilly  
Inspector of Prisons

29<sup>th</sup> October 2013

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## **Preface**

Prisoner G was a 24 year old man who took his own life on the 16<sup>th</sup> April 2012 while on temporary release.

I offer my sincere condolences to the deceased's family.

There are no matters of concern disclosed in this Report.

I would like to point out that names have been removed to anonymise this Report.

Judge Michael Reilly

Inspector of Prisons

29<sup>th</sup> October 2013

# **Inspector of Prisons Investigation Report**

## **General information**

1. The deceased was a 24 year old single man at the time of his untimely death. He came from the Munster area. He is survived by his mother and one sibling. He was committed to prison on the 5<sup>th</sup> June 2009. His release date was to be the 27<sup>th</sup> December 2012.
2. As part of his sentence plan the deceased was moved to the Training Unit.
3. On the 20<sup>th</sup> March 2012 the deceased was granted Reviewable Temporary Release from the Training Unit.
4. On the 16<sup>th</sup> April 2012 the deceased took his own life.
5. I did not meet with any of the family members but did speak to the deceased's mother on the telephone. His mother did not feel that a meeting could progress matters further and I accepted this.

## **Circumstances of temporary release**

6. The deceased was initially sentenced to Cork Prison. As part of the prison plan for his ultimate reintegration into society he was transferred to the Midlands Prison, then to Portlaoise Prison and ultimately to the Training Unit on the 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2011.
7. The deceased engaged with the therapeutic services while in prison.
8. On the 30<sup>th</sup> January 2012 following a review meeting in the Training Unit the deceased was referred for assessment as to his suitability for the Community Return Scheme.
9. At the meeting referred to at paragraph 8 it was disclosed that the deceased had been previously assessed for PACE (a community based work and training scheme for offenders and ex-offenders) but he was described as

vulnerable and the consensus of the meeting was that he would benefit more from the Community Return Scheme rather than PACE. It was stated that the Community Return Scheme would give him some structure as he would be living at home and would be conversant with his environment unlike PACE, where he would have to return to the Prison each evening.

10. On the 7<sup>th</sup> March 2012 the Prison was informed that the deceased was deemed suitable for inclusion in this scheme.
11. On the 20<sup>th</sup> March 2012 the deceased was granted Reviewable Temporary Release to participate in the Community Return Scheme.
12. The deceased's position on the Community Return Scheme required him to attend at a site not far from his home for two days each week. The work he was required to undertake involved ground maintenance of a public amenity there.
13. The deceased was directed to attend an appointment with the Probation Service in his home town at 3:00pm on 21<sup>st</sup> March 2012.
14. While in the Training Unit the deceased had been linked in with a Drugs Counsellor as he had disclosed previous drug use. The Probation Officer in the Training Unit made a referral to an Addiction Counsellor in the deceased's home town in order that he would have supports in place on his release. The Addiction Counsellor was familiar with the deceased as he had worked with him prior to his imprisonment. It should be noted that contact with the Addiction Counsellor was not a specific condition on which the deceased was given Temporary Release.
15. When he was released from the Training Unit the deceased was transferred on paper only to Cork Prison for signing on purposes.
16. The deceased was to reside at his home where he had the usual family supports.

**Interaction with relevant agencies while on temporary release.**

17. On the 21<sup>st</sup> March 2012 the deceased met with the Probation Service as referred to in paragraph 13. He was advised as to what was expected of him and in particular his obligations under the Community Return Scheme.
18. The deceased did attend his place of work and his Supervisor was pleased with his work noting that he was a good worker, punctual and co-operative.
19. On the 26<sup>th</sup> March 2012 the deceased attended a meeting with the Addiction Counsellor when issues relating to the preparation of a Care Plan were discussed. The addiction counsellor had known the deceased in a professional capacity prior to his imprisonment. The deceased did not keep follow up appointments on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and the 9<sup>th</sup> April. However, he did attend a meeting with the Addiction Counsellor on the 11<sup>th</sup> April 2012 after his mother had contacted the Addiction Counsellor stating that she was concerned for her son.
20. On the 13<sup>th</sup> April 2012, when the deceased reported for work on the Community Return Scheme, his Supervisor was concerned that he may have been under the influence of some substances as his eyes were glazed and he was not fully attentive. When spoken to about his condition he stated that he was not feeling well, that he had not slept the night before as he felt ill and may have the flu. His Supervisor advised him under the Health and Safety Guidelines to leave the site and to attend his Doctor if he was unwell. The Supervisor advised him to get a Medical Certificate and assured him if he did so that his position would be secure.
21. On the 14<sup>th</sup> April 2012 the deceased did not report for work. His Supervisor telephoned him. The deceased told him that he was still ill and that he had a Medical Certificate to cover his absence. The Supervisor stated that he did not notice anything unusual when having this discussion with him.
22. On the 16<sup>th</sup> April 2012 the deceased had a follow up meeting with the Addiction Counsellor. At this meeting the deceased agreed to go for residential treatment for his addictions. The necessary appointment was made

for an assessment at a recognised drug treatment centre for the following day – the 17<sup>th</sup> April 2012.

23. On the evening of the 16<sup>th</sup> April 2012 the deceased took his own life by hanging himself at his home while he was in the house alone.

### **Contact with the family**

24. In paragraph 5, I stated that I had telephone contact with the mother of the deceased. I explained my role as Inspector of Prisons and especially my role in investigating certain deaths of prisoners released on temporary release.
25. The deceased's mother informed me that her son had suffered depression before he had been imprisoned but that she had no concerns for him on his release and welcomed such release. The deceased did reside at home and gave no indication that he was in any way troubled.

### **Findings**

26. I am satisfied that the Irish Prison Service carried out the correct procedures prior to releasing the deceased on temporary release in that they:-
- Carried out a full assessment on the deceased prior to his release.
  - Ensured that the deceased had a verified home to go to – his mother's and that he was welcome there.
  - Organised a meeting with his probation officer for the day following his release.
  - Ensured that his probation officer explained his obligations under the terms of the Community Return Scheme to the deceased.
  - Ensured that the deceased had a supervisor to supervise him while on the Community Return Scheme.
  - Linked the deceased with the addiction services in his area prior to his release.

27. I am satisfied that when the deceased did not attend for meetings or work as disclosed in this report he gave explanations which I consider plausible.
28. In view of my finding at paragraph 27, I consider that the actions taken by the Supervisor, the Probation Service and the Addiction Counsellor to have been reasonable.
29. I am satisfied that there are no further issues that I should investigate having regard to my mandate.
30. I am satisfied that my investigation coupled with the Coroner's investigation addresses all issues in this unfortunate case.