

**A report by the Inspector of Prisons  
Judge Michael Reilly into the circumstances  
surrounding the death of Prisoner K  
on 9 July 2015 at the Mater Hospital  
while in the custody of Arbour Hill Prison**

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

Office of the Inspector of Prisons  
24 Cecil Walk  
Kenyon Street  
Nenagh  
Co. Tipperary

Tel: + 353 67 42210  
E-mail: [info@inspectorofprisons.gov.ie](mailto:info@inspectorofprisons.gov.ie)  
Web: [www.inspectorofprisons.gov.ie](http://www.inspectorofprisons.gov.ie)

**Office Ref: 2015/K**

**A report by the Inspector of Prisons Judge Michael Reilly  
into the circumstances surrounding the death of Prisoner K  
on 9 July 2015 at the Mater Hospital while in the custody of  
Arbour Hill Prison**

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

Judge Michael Reilly  
Inspector of Prisons

12 April 2016

© Inspector of Prisons 2016

## **Preface**

The deceased was a 52 year old single man who came from the Connacht area.

He is survived by his sisters, brothers and extended family.

I did not meet with the family of the deceased but wish to offer my condolences.

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

Judge Michael Reilly  
Inspector of Prisons

12 April 2016

# **Inspector of Prisons Investigation Report**

## **General Information**

1. The deceased was a 52 year old man who came from the Connacht area.
2. The deceased was committed to prison on 29 January 2013 and had a remission date of 27 July 2017.
3. The deceased, who shared a cell, became ill in his cell on the morning of 7 July 2015 at approximately 08.00 hrs. His cell mate activated the 'call bell' alarm which was immediately responded to by Officer A.
4. Officer A acted quickly in notifying the prison medical staff who attended to the deceased in his cell before he was removed to the Mater Hospital by ambulance where he passed away on 9 July 2015.

## **Status of the deceased while in Prison**

5. The deceased was an Enhanced Regime level prisoner who worked as a cleaner in Arbour Hill prison. He had no disciplinary reports and did not require protection.
6. The deceased was well thought of by prison staff and his fellow prisoners who found him respectful, hard working and always in good spirits.
7. The deceased had regular contact with a number of his siblings.

## **Medical History**

8. The deceased attended the prison doctor intermittently over a number of years with, *inter alia*, chest related complaints which included, cough, bronchitis

and general flu like symptoms, for which he was prescribed ongoing medication.

9. He had been referred for external medical investigation on a number of occasions.

### **Relevant dates and occurrences**

10. Prisoner A and the deceased shared Cell 1 on East 2 landing for a month and a half prior to his death. Prisoner A stated that *“the deceased often awoke during the night and would be coughing. He often said to me that he was going to hit the red light (cell call) but he never did hit it”*.
11. Prisoner A went on to state that the deceased got up at approximately 07.45 hrs on the morning of 7 July and *“started coughing blood”* so he (Prisoner A) called for help by *“hitting the red light”* (cell call alarm system).
12. I had the benefit of viewing CCTV for East 2 Landing and can confirm that the cells were checked every hour during the night with the last check at 07.58.38 hrs.
13. Officer A, who was on duty on the morning of 7 July, answered the ‘cell call’ light at 08.00.02. He was asked by Prisoner A to call for medical help for the deceased. Officer A immediately alerted the medical team.
14. At 08:00:40 hrs Nurse Officers A and B who were nearby entered the cell and provided medical assistance to the deceased.
15. At 08:02:12 hrs Chief Nurse Officer A entered the cell with the emergency equipment.
16. The deceased was placed on Oxygen Therapy by the Nursing staff who decided that the deceased should be removed to hospital by ambulance.

17. At 08.14 hrs the ambulance arrived at the prison.
18. The deceased walked to the Ambulance accompanied by Chief Nurse Officer A. The Ambulance crew then took charge of the care of the deceased and conveyed him to the Mater Hospital where he died on 9 July 2015.
19. Prison management apprised the family when the deceased became ill, of his transfer to hospital and of his passing.

### **Findings**

20. I am satisfied that the Prison staff immediately responded to the 'call bell' when activated and swiftly notified the Medical staff who provided medical assistance to the deceased while awaiting the arrival of the ambulance.
21. I am satisfied that the medical staff in Arbour Hill Prison acted promptly on 7 July 2015, in referring the deceased to Hospital.
22. The cause of death is a matter for the Coroner.
23. I am satisfied that there are no further issues which I should investigate.