ANNUAL REPORTING OF PRISON SERVICE RESEARCH

1.1 This order:

- provides details of the audit of local research commissioned at the end of 2000
- introduces new procedures for reporting research which:
  - require Governors to nominate a Research Contact for the establishment:
  - introduce annual reporting procedures for local research;
  - advise on best practice in considering applications to conduct research in the establishment.
gives information about how research findings can be shared across the Service.

BACKGROUND

Audit of local research

2.1 In December 2000 Research & Development Section of Planning Group wrote to each establishment with a proforma requesting details of research conducted within the establishment in the past financial year. This was requested by the recently relaunched Prison Service Research Committee. 52 establishments responded, with 27 establishments reporting local pieces of research had been commissioned in their establishments and 83 separate projects were identified. A summary of the areas of research reported is attached at Appendix A to this PSO. The Committee concluded that the audit demonstrated the wide range of research required by local managers, but noted that the results of local research could also be of great use to other establishments and to policy leads in Headquarters.

Research Database

3.1 Planning Group is responsible for maintenance of the PANDORA database, which contains details of approximately 900 research projects conducted over the past sixty years, the majority being from the past decade. Please see Appendix B for details of the database.

REPORTING RESEARCH FOR THE PANDORA DATABASE

Establishment Research Contacts

4.1. All establishments must nominate a Research Contact and notify their details, by 1st April 2002, to the Area Psychologist who will provide details to Planning Group on the proforma contained in Appendix C. Within establishments, this person will normally be located within the Psychology Unit. However, the Governor may nominate another member of staff in the absence of Psychologists or if this is more appropriate. Area Psychologists and Planning Group must be informed of any subsequent change of nominee. The person nominated will:

- be responsible for submitting the establishment’s return in the annual survey of local research;
- receive six monthly research updates, research briefings, details of research seminars etc. from Planning Group
- normally act as the contact point for applications from outside researchers

4.2. Area Psychologists will be responsible for ensuring each establishment in their area has nominated a Research Contact, and collate and forward completed Research Contact forms, and annual proformas detailing research conducted at that establishment. They will provide advice on request on the suitability of outside research requests.
4.3. Planning Group will also co-ordinate, through Heads of Groups, similar arrangements in Headquarters.

Annual reporting of research

5.1 Planning Group will commission the survey of local research via the Area Psychologists on an annual basis. All establishments must submit a report of any research projects recently completed, currently planned or in progress within their establishment, within the current financial year. This includes research by prison staff of any discipline e.g. psychology, healthcare, probation or education, and also research completed by external academics/consultants (including those for undergraduate and postgraduate theses). Planning Group will directly co-ordinate the survey for Headquarters groups.

5.2 Research projects on the PANDORA database of Prison Service research vary widely. The term “research” should be interpreted broadly. Some examples of needs analyses conducted by establishments which might not normally be classified as research demonstrate effective models for data collection and analysis (for instance projects evaluating the prevalence of bullying) and prove very useful when included in the database. The broad criteria for reporting research in the annual survey are therefore that the project:

- involved investigating an issue through methodologies such as a literature review, participant interview, process review, statistical analysis or administration of psychometric tests
- sought to produce generalisable conclusions for the work of the establishment and
- may be of use to other establishments interested in addressing similar questions or to policy leads in Headquarters.

5.3 Where there is doubt whether a project should be reported, Area Psychologists should be consulted. Reports must be submitted using the proforma in Appendix D, providing details of each of the research projects. Each proforma must contain details of only one piece of research. Where no research has taken place and none is planned, the ‘nil return’ form (appendix E) must be completed and returned. Please refer to Appendix F for guidance in the completion of this proforma.

Consideration of applications to conduct research in establishments

6.1 Prison Governors are responsible for granting access to researchers to their establishments, and for commissioning research by staff within their establishments. Where there are questions about the desirability or methodology of the research, it is good practice to seek the advice of the Area Psychologist. They may advise on the ethics and methodology of the research, and whether it is best placed to meet Prison Service needs. It is recommended that all external research applications are routed through the Research Contact. This will assist in identifying applications which are made to multiple points in the Service.

Contact points:
NOTE FOR ESTABLISHMENT LIAISON OFFICERS

ELOs must record the receipt of the Prison Service Order - Annual Reporting of Prison Service Research in their registers as issue 144 as set out below. The PSO must be placed with those sets of orders mandatorily required in Chapter 4 of PSO 0001.

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Julian Le Vay
Director of Finance and Procurement
Conclusions from 2000/01 Local Research Audit

1. In December 2001 all establishments were requested to provide details of research projects conducted/planned during the financial year 2000/01. Fifty-two establishments responded, with twenty-seven establishments reported having conducted research in the given period or had commenced a piece of research. Eighty-three projects were reported in total.

2. Many research proposals contained themes which attempted to address current and new problems within establishments. Commonly researched themes included bullying, with ten projects focusing on this, many of them devoted to its prevalence. Sex offenders were also thoroughly investigated, particularly their allocation on cognitive behavioural programmes and the Sex Offender Treatment Programme. Needs analyses of particular groups such as juveniles and drug users were also a common thread, as were therapeutic communities, much of the latter work being conducted at HMP Grendon.

3. With regards to the impact of the research, the majority of the research is still in progress, therefore it is difficult to quantify its impact. However, reports suggest the research has influenced local policy in areas such as anti-bullying strategy and drug use, provided suggestions for improvement to aspects of the regime and informed those responsible for allocation of offenders on Offending Behaviour Programmes.

4. The audit revealed that a considerable amount of research was taking place in prisons, mainly within Psychology units and also within multi-disciplinary teams. This information provided feedback to the Prison Service Research Committee who requested a formal procedure for identifying such research which could be of use throughout the Service.
PANDORA Research Database

1. **What is PANDORA?**
   PANDORA is an acronym for Providing A National Database of Research Articles. It is a database containing the details of research projects conducted within or on behalf of the Prison Service over the past sixty years. Copies of these articles are stored within the Research & Development department.

2. **What can it be used for?**
   The research can be used in the preparation of literature reviews for new areas of research. It can also assist the researcher in the selection of appropriate research methodologies and strategies to be considered. Governors may consult staff to provide expertise in a specific area and the research available can provide a starting point.

3. **Who can access PANDORA?**
   Any Prison Service employee who is interested in conducting a piece of research. External academic researchers conducting research within the Prison Service may also use the provision following referral from the establishment where the research is taking place.

4. **Who are the authors of the research?**
   Most are written by Forensic Psychologists employed by the Prison Service, although other Prison Service staff and academics have also made contributions.

5. **What sort of research does it contain?**
   There are currently details of nearly 900 articles although Research & Development section regularly receives new articles. Common themes include bullying, sex offences, drug related issues and Offending Behaviour Programmes. Some of the research concentrates on the needs of specific groups, for instance, sex offenders, violent offenders and those who self-harm. There are research articles which address more than one theme, for example needs analyses of juvenile offenders who are drug users.

6. **How do I access it?**
   Contact Linda Palethorpe, Higher Psychologist, Planning Group on the telephone number provided in this document. Titles of suitable research articles including author and year of publication will be provided. Copies of articles which may be of relevance are then made available on request.
Research Contact Details

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<td>(2) ESTABLISHMENT &amp; AREA:</td>
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<tr>
<td>(3) TITLE &amp; DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT INCLUDING AIMS, OBJECTIVES, METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION &amp; SAMPLE SIZE (PLEASE CONTINUE ON ADDITIONAL SHEETS IF NECESSARY)</td>
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Prison Service Research Survey – Nil Return
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PLEASE TICK IF NO RESEARCH HAS BEEN CONDUCTED OR IS PLANNED FOR THE NEXT FINANCIAL YEAR
Notes for Completion of Proforma

Please complete one copy of the proforma for each individual piece of work, providing:

1. Details of individual completing the form.

2. Establishment(s) and area (e.g. South West) where the research was/is to be conducted.

3. Provide details of the research project including the title and a brief description of its aims, objectives and the methodology employed.

4. Provide name, grade and organisation of individual who requested the research be conducted. In cases of academic qualifications this may be the researcher him/herself.

5. Provide details of why the research was commissioned.

6. Name & department of researcher(s). If external academics/consultants, provide name of organisation by whom they are employed.

7. Provide the month and year the project started or is intended to start.

8. Provide the month and year by which it is anticipated the research will be completed.

9. If the research has been completed please provide details of its impact i.e. has knowledge gained from the research impacted on local policy or led to improved changes in the regime?

10. Please state if the research was completed as part of an academic qualification e.g. BA/PhD, and in what subject e.g. Psychology.

11. If the piece of research has been published e.g. Prison Service publication/academic journal, please provide details of location, year of publication and details of any co-authors.

12. If the research has been completed please provide a copy, details of which can be inputted onto the PANDORA database and copies distributed within the Prison Service upon request.

13. Details of the Copyright of the report if it is not the property of the Prison Service.