



Minimum Standards for Training in Managing Difficult Inmates

EPTA Special Interest Group



Seirbhís Phríosúin
na hÉireann
Irish Prison Service



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Minimum Standards for Training in Managing Difficult Inmates

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The EPTA Network was founded in 2010 by heads of the European Penitentiary Staff Training Academies to create a structure that supports the sharing of training methodologies and content across Europe.

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Photograph depicts a simulation with trainers acting in the role of the prisoner — France/ENAP



Introduction

In this context, the phrase 'minimum standards' refers to the lowest levels of the recruitment procedure and training that prison officers who work with difficult inmates should complete in order to effectively carry out their duties. This document outlines a number of issues that should be considered in developing training for such staff. These issues should inform the training provided. It also provides prison service training institutes with an opportunity to compare their current practice with what has been agreed by an international panel of experts as the minimum standards. By adopting these standards an institute can improve the professional practice, broaden the range of skills and professional behaviours acquired by staff, and increase the confidence in and safety of the work they complete.

Reading this guide should be considered a prerequisite for the development of training in this field. It should be available to training institutes to positively influence the quality of prison officer training and work with violent prisoners. It is hoped that by providing a system of professional benchmarking, a coherent view and common methodology for training staff who work with difficult inmates can be developed across European countries.

The objectives of applying specialised methods and techniques when working with difficult inmates are:

- a) Reducing violent behaviour;
- b) Improving positive behaviour;
- c) Encouraging a return to normal socialisation.

Frequently, services have chosen to remove such inmates from general detention and place them in a specific unit designed to ensure security and manage violent behaviours. However, management of the inmate cannot be limited to isolation strategies because as much as it might reduce and control violent behaviour, it cannot achieve objectives b and c. In order to achieve those goals, staff provide dynamic risk assessment and support to the inmate. This is most effective when a multi-disciplinary approach, as enshrined in various guidance documents including the European Prison Rules, has been employed.

The overarching themes of the training should encompass the acquisition of ethical and regulatory knowledge, operational and

psychological skills, in addition to physical safety considerations and restraint techniques. More specifically, the training modules focus on the knowledge of the regulatory framework, understanding violence in detention (causes, manifestations, types, consequences, etc.), evaluation of violence, prevention of violence, conflict management and the care of violent prisoners. In addition to these modules, prison officers must be trained in the use of restraint and intervention techniques to avoid using more force than necessary.

Staff selection

The role of prison officers is a vital one as they are tasked with ensuring the safe management in custody of often vulnerable individuals. These individuals also frequently present a significant risk to the safety of the community both within and outside of the prison. Research shows that, at best, prison officers contribute significantly towards prisoner rehabilitation through the provision of trauma-informed custody. At worst, interactions with prisoners can increase the risk of anti-social behaviour and serious security boundary breaches in prison and reoffending post release. Thus, it is accepted that training for prison officers, particularly, those who work with difficult inmates, is imperative to the success of their work. Additionally, it has been suggested that the selection of appropriate staff is also essential for this success. It is important that this selection is carried out with input from the multi-disciplinary team (MDT).

According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes (UNODC) Handbook on the Management of High-Risk Prisoners, "recruitment and selection procedures should be explicit, clear, scrupulously fair and non-discriminatory; based on the knowledge, skills, and abilities of applicants; and ensure that only persons with the right qualities are selected to work in prisons" (Atabay & Byans, 2016, p.19). The handbook also emphasises diversity in terms of gender, race and ethnicity with regard to staff selection with a special effort being made to recruit staff who are representative of the diverse cohorts of prisoners with whom they work. While these guidelines apply to recruitment within the wider prison service, they must also be applied to staff selection for smaller teams in discrete units which are often employed to manage difficult inmates.

The following additional minimum standards are recommended for the selection of staff who work with difficult inmates:

- Officers should have successfully completed basic training and have passed the appropriate physical tests (the content of such tests differs between countries);
- Officers should have previous operational experience including direct contact with inmates and experience working as part of a team.

The Council of Europe (CoE) Guidelines (Adams & Carr, 2019) recommend that recruitment processes take into account the

skills and values required of staff working in a prison context. These include "motivation, flexibility, assertiveness, maturity, capacity for reflection, integrity, teamwork and social and communication skills" (Adams & Carr, 2019, p.3).

As working with difficult inmates is considered a specialist proficiency that requires high levels of the above skills, it has been suggested that psychometric measures be employed to assess these during the specialist training phase and that a decision be made about the individual's suitability to work with difficult inmates based on these measures, as well as on the continuous assessment of their abilities during training. The measures should be selected from a multi-disciplinary perspective and will vary internationally based on what measures have been translated into the relevant languages and which ones are considered best practice by each service.

Specific ethical considerations

In prison services, the term 'ethics' refers to the statement and implementation of professional duties and rules across various categories of staff to ensure they perform their work appropriately. Such duties and rules protect both staff and prisoners and while codes of ethics may vary between countries, they typically have some commonalities as they are based on international and European as well as national legal texts.

The CoE Code of Ethics for Prison Staff, which reiterates the essential standards for the treatment of prisoners, must also be adhered to:

- 1) Prison staff shall maintain and promote high standards of personal honesty and integrity.
- 2) Prison staff shall endeavour to maintain positive professional relationships with prisoners and members of their families.
- 3) Prison staff shall not allow their private, financial or other interests to conflict with their position. It is the responsibility of all prison staff to avoid such conflicts of interest and to request guidance in case of doubt.
- 4) Prison staff shall oppose all forms of corruption within the prison service. They shall inform superiors and other appropriate bodies of any corruption within the prison service (Council of Europe, 2011, p.2).

Many countries have incorporated these rules into their national prison rules and reworded versions of the above are commonly found.

However, there are a number of other sources and rules that may apply in the specific instance of staff who work with difficult inmates as this work is so specialised in nature. Thus, each prison administration should develop a written regulatory code for staff carrying out this role in addition to the service-wide code of ethics. A clear understanding on the part of staff of what standards of professional behaviour are expected of them in working with such prisoners reduces incidents of misconduct that could result in violent incidents. Sources of information used in the development of this specific code include the UNODC Handbook on the Management of High-Risk Prisoners (2016), Nelson Mandela Rules (United Nations, 2015) and the European prison rules (Committee of Ministers, 2006).

Rule 72.4 of the European prison rules confirms that: "Staff shall operate to high professional and personal standards" (2006, p.29) and the following is stated in the commentary:

This rule underlines the ethical context of prison management. Without a strong ethical context, the situation where one group of people is given considerable power over another can easily become an abuse of power. This ethical context is not just a matter of the behaviour of individual members of staff towards prisoners. Those with responsibility for prisons and prison systems need to be persons who have a clear vision and a determination to maintain the highest standards in prison management. Working in prison therefore requires a unique combination of personal qualities and technical skills. Prison staff need personal qualities which enable them to deal with all prisoners in an even-handed, humane and just manner (Committee of Ministers, 2006, p.86).

An example of the need for a specialist code of ethics for such staff lies in the recognition of the importance of the relationship that exists between prison officers and difficult inmates. This relationship is essential to achieving the three objectives set out in the introduction.

Rule 74 of the European Prison Rules specifies that "Particular attention shall be paid to the management of the relationship between first

line prison staff and the prisoners under their care" (Committee of Ministers, 2006, p.29) and in the commentary, the following is stated: "This rule concerns the relationship between first line prison staff and the prisoners under their care. Special attention has to be paid to these staff members because of the human dimension of their contacts with prisoners" (2006, p.87).

This is confirmed in the UNODC Handbook on the Management of High-Risk Prisoners on the importance of interpersonal skills and guidance:

Staff should know and understand how behaviour, communication and interpersonal skills affect an individual's expectation. They should be aware of barriers that may interfere with communication and they must also be aware of how their non-verbal behaviour is interpreted during communication with prisoners. Communication, both verbal and non-verbal, is a two-way process. The behaviour of prison staff can affect the expectations of individuals and groups, both positively and negatively. Different forms of non-verbal communication can have an impact: for example, exaggerated hand movements or invading someone's personal space may aggravate a situation. While staff cannot always overcome barriers, they can minimize their effects. Behaviour can prevent conflict within the prison (Atabay & Bryans, 2016, p.27).

It may be essential to include these points in a specialist code of ethics so that the officer understands that they are required to adapt their communication to the personality of the inmate in order to develop a constructive relationship.

The officer should take an oath when receiving his first assignment within the prison administration. This swearing-in consists of a solemn commitment to comply with the rules of ethics in relation to the agent's missions. What will count is the nature of the text and/or the missions that are assigned to a public official on which the

official takes an oath. This should be done before the judicial authority of the country that has jurisdiction over the agent's workplace.

Development and evaluation of training

In the development of training programmes for staff who manage difficult inmates, professionals with relevant expertise or experience should be consulted to ensure that modules adhere to best practice in each area. Training programmes should be regularly evaluated via feedback from training facilitators and participants. Programmes should be continuously updated to incorporate useful feedback, emerging research and best practice. The training evaluation should also improve professional practices and procedures.

Continuous training

Training is crucial for all prison officers who work in a prison environment, and especially for those who work with high-risk prisoners, where some prisoners will be manipulative, combative, assaultive or threatening. To work in this high-risk environment, prison staff need proper training in the principles which should underlie their work and in the human and technical skills which are required (Coyle & Fair, 2018).

Rule 75 of The United Nations (UN) Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules) states that:

- 1) All prison staff shall possess an adequate standard of education and shall be given the ability and means to carry out their duties in a professional manner
- 2) Before entering on duty, all prison staff shall be provided with training tailored to their general and specific duties, which shall be reflective on contemporary evidence-based best practice in penal sciences
- 3) The prison administration shall ensure the continuous provision of in-service training courses with a view to maintaining and improving the knowledge and professional capacity of its personnel, after entering on duty and during their career (United Nations, 2015, p.23).

Rule 76 states: (2) "Prison staff who are in charge of working with certain categories of prisoners, or who are assigned other specialized functions, shall receive training that has a corresponding focus" (2015, p.23).

In the UNODC Handbook on the Management of High-Risk Prisoners (Article 1.8.), it is also mentioned that "special training to work with high-risk prisoners" (UNODC, 2016, p. 15) is needed. Therefore, it is a necessity to provide this group of staff with additional and ongoing training given the risk involved and the increased challenges of the environment.

Mental health

Officers who work continuously with difficult (high-risk/violent) inmates are more vulnerable to higher stress levels and are at increased risk of experiencing burn-out or post-traumatic stress disorder following a violent incident and other mental health concerns. Thus, it is imperative to pay special attention to educating prison officers in managing their mental health.

As mentioned above, Rule 75, Article 3. of the Mandela rules specifies that "The prison administration shall ensure the continuous provision of in-service training courses with a view to maintaining and improving the knowledge and professional capacity of its personnel, after entering on duty and during their career" (United Nations, 2015, p.23).

This is also mentioned Article 2.8 of the UNODC Handbook on the Management of High-Risk Prisoners: "Continuing training for staff working with high-risk prisoners can have the added benefit of enabling them to get a break from the stress of daily work and to reflect on their role and its challenges" (Atabay & Bryans, 2016, p.31). In the same article, it is recommended that the following be provided to ensure good mental health:

- Continuous training courses to maintain and improve the knowledge and professional capacity (training and stress reduction classes to help staff handle the work environment);
- Regular individual and group supervision sessions;
- Job rotation, rotation of assignments within the unit or prison, periodic rotation out of the unit or facility;
- Peer support;
- Confidential counselling sessions for staff who are suffering from mental health issues, feeling stressed or are suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder following an incident in the prison.

A trauma-informed approach

A trauma informed approach to custody embodies two components; recognising that people in prison are often traumatised and recognising that staff who work in prisons can become traumatised through their work. This is of particular importance when working with difficult inmates as their rates of trauma and mental health disorders are even higher than those of the general prisoner populations.

In prisons, it is vital to recognise and understand the role that trauma plays in contributing to an individual's journey toward imprisonment and the role that imprisonment can have in perpetuating trauma is vital. The effects of trauma place a heavy burden upon prison service staff, prisoners, their families and their communities because of the behavioural problems that it creates. In order to rehabilitate prisoners, protect prison service staff from physical and emotional harm and reduce the risk of reoffending post release, basic training in trauma-informed custody is recommended.

The minimum standards of training in the trauma-informed approach should encompass the following elements:

- An understanding of the impact of trauma on an individual's pathway to crime including the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs);
- An understanding that transitioning through the criminal justice system can exacerbate trauma and other mental health problems;
- An understanding that prison staff are frequently traumatised through their work with difficult inmates and information as to how they can access help if they experience it.

Communication and interaction with prisoners and others

The UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules) and in particular, Article 77, state that, "Prison staff shall at all times so conduct themselves and perform their duties as to influence the prisoners for good by their example and to command their respect" (United Nations, 2015, p.23). It is indicated in Article 7 of the *UN code of conduct for law enforcement officials* that, "Law enforcement officials shall not commit any act of corruption. They shall also vigorously oppose and combat all such acts" (United Nations, 1979, p.3). Thus, the code of ethics of each country must state that prison staff must maintain high standards of probity and personal integrity, especially when interacting with difficult inmates. Officers must refrain from performing any act, making any statements or writing anything which would likely jeopardise the security and the orderly operation of the establishments and provision of services. The staff of the prison administration owe each other and inmates in their custody, mutual respect, help and assistance at the very least.

Article 54 of the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners Adopted by the First United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (1955), states that:

- 1) Officers of the institutions shall not, in their relations with the prisoners, use force except in self-defence or in cases of attempted escape, or active or passive physical resistance to an order based on law or regulations. Officers who have recourse to force must use no more than is strictly necessary and must report the incident immediately to the director of the institution.
- 2) Prison officers shall be given special physical training to enable them to restrain aggressive prisoners.
- 3) Except in special circumstances, staff performing duties which bring them into direct contact with prisoners should not be armed. Furthermore, staff should in no circumstances be provided with arms unless they have been trained in their use (United Nations, 1955, p.8).

Each country and organisation should reinforce through training that prison officers may only use force in self-defence or in the event of an attempted escape, or if a prisoner resists an order that was given in accordance with legislation or regulations. Force is justified in the last case when security and order are

required or a person's safety is threatened. It is imperative that prison staff have the requisite communication, relational and physical skills to enable them to deal with aggressive detainees. This is confirmed by Recommendation No.R (82) 17 of the Committee of Ministers of the CoE to Member States concerning the Custody and Treatment of Dangerous Prisoners: "9. to ensure, when they exist, that reinforced security units have the appropriate number of places, staff and all necessary facilities; 10. to provide suitable training for all staff concerned with the custody and treatment of dangerous prisoners" (Committee of Ministers, 1982).

Whilst training may cover very explicit topics such as values and ethics, the legal framework and service objectives, caring for people, professional relationships and practices, it should not just be limited to the acquisition of knowledge. Whilst this is complex to assess, the training should help strengthen the officers' analytical and decision-making skills and, importantly, their confidence in their judgement. This will allow them to assess the challenges of each professional situation they experience, taking into account the various risk factors and allow them to respond consistently and appropriately.

As mentioned in the UNODC Handbook on the Management of High-Risk Prisoners:

Prisoners may attempt to undermine the professionalism of staff and seek to exploit weak staff to obtain illicit goods, to assist with an escape attempt or to act as a conduit to criminal groups outside of the prison. Prison staff need, therefore, to meet high standards of professional and personal conduct at all times. They should carry out their duties loyally, conscientiously, honestly and with integrity. Staff should be courteous, reasonable and fair in their dealings with all prisoners, colleagues and members of the public. They should treat people with decency and respect. All staff should comply with policies and procedures. Managers should ensure that standards of behaviour and conduct are maintained. Staff should take responsibility and be accountable for their actions (Atabay & Bryans, 2016, p.26).

Officers should be encouraged through training to take responsibility and be accountable for their professional behaviour. This requires that training teaches them good interpersonal skills for handling conflicts and also allows time for staff recognition by their superiors.

Accreditation of trainers

The management of difficult inmates poses significant challenges to all prison authorities. In order to manage difficult inmates in a safe and secure manner whilst also respecting the fundamental human rights of prisoners, prison training academies must ensure that staff selected to work with these prisoners benefit from a holistic and tailored training curriculum informed by national and international best practice (Adams & Carr, 2019). Individual jurisdictions must ensure that this type of training is part of a specific program designed with, and for, prison authorities, which is then provided to target groups such as prison officers who work with difficult inmates and/or other in specialist areas.

To achieve a high level of service, protective measures, policies and specialised training informed by research and national and international best practice must be developed and delivered to prison officers managing difficult inmates. These training packages should be specifically designed to give staff working with this prisoner cohort the necessary operational knowledge, skills and abilities which would enable them to work in a highly physical and personally challenging environment. The training curriculum should also teach prison officers the psychological skills which will enable them to understand violent behaviour, its roots and effects, and how to manage the risks posed by this prisoner cohort and reduce their violent behaviour in order to reintegrate them into the wider prison population (Atabay & Bryans, 2016).

Personnel who give prison-specific training modules should consist of qualified and experienced technical, operational and security tutors, trainers and instructors, accredited by each jurisdiction's prison training academy, as well as other similar international professional bodies. This category should include experts in control and restraint, intervention techniques, dynamic security and prison craft, admin and IT specialists, etc. Other modules such as those pertaining to legislation and the rule of law, human rights, psychology, etc., should be provided by qualified tutors from recognised higher education institutions (third-level colleges/universities) accredited according to national and international frameworks (Adams & Carr, 2019).

Risk assessment and management of difficult inmates

Best international practice dictates that the most effective way to manage difficult inmates is via adoption of a holistic multi-disciplinary risk approach consisting of prison officers and management, a psychology, mental health and healthcare team, professionals in education and chaplaincy, etc. (Atabay & Bryans, 2016). Members of the MDT should meet regularly and each should contribute information relevant to their role, which in turn informs the decision-making process regarding each prisoner's risk, care and management plan. The purpose of these meetings is to ensure that key changes in a prisoner's risk and/or behaviour are discussed collectively, sound decisions are made and prisoners are informed of those decisions and what they mean for their future management. Furthermore, these forums are designed to support improved communication and consistency in the approach taken, and serve to support the entire MDT as well as the prisoners in their care. Given that prison officers manage these prisoners on a daily basis, their role on the frontline of MDTs cannot be underestimated.

In order to assist in determining regime arrangements for difficult inmates, prison officers who work with this particular prisoner cohort should receive training in risk assessment and risk management. Training modules should include how to use security and operational information to assess the risk that an individual will perpetrate violence against staff or other prisoners or disrupt orderly operations, and apply this knowledge to inform decisions regarding the number of personnel required to manage prisoners, their access to visits and activities, internal movements and mixing, and escorts, as well as how to best respond to unexpected dynamic changes in a prisoner's behaviour and risk.

In addition to operational and security risk assessment training, prison officers should receive psychological training which will allow them to understand an inmate's historical development and pathway to violence, as well as training on how to formally consider prisoners' risk of harm to self as well as others (known as formulation). Prison officers will then be able to incorporate information, guidance and targets designed to maximise prisoners' quality of life, in addition to maintaining the appropriate links with external sources of support (pro-social relationships) and assisting the prisoners in their charge in developing their own individual care and management plans (Coyle & Fair, 2018).

Equality, diversity and inclusion

The promotion of equality, diversity and inclusion within prisons is not only a moral obligation but a legal one. Prison authorities have a responsibility to ensure that neither staff nor prisoners are discriminated against on the grounds of gender, race, ethnicity or religion. This includes wider organisational discrimination and discrimination by individuals. Equality, diversity and inclusion are enshrined in international legislation and guidance documents such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations, 1948/2015), the Council of Europe Guidelines regarding Recruitment, Selection, Education, Training and Professional Development of Prison and Probation Staff (Council of Europe, 2019), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (United Nations, 1966) and the Standard Minimum Rules for the treatment of Prisoners (United Nations, 2015).

Article 14 of the European Convention on Human Rights and the European Prison rules stress that:

[There] should be no discrimination on grounds of sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other status. Account shall be taken of the diversity and of the distinct individual needs of prisoners". Council of Europe guidelines echo this including gender responsiveness and anti-discriminatory practices as key training components for staff. It is recommended that staff who work with difficult inmates receive additional training in diversity taking into account the minority groups who are most represented within their country and culture and those that experience the most discrimination (European Court of Human Rights, 2010, p.13).

Security training

Maintaining a proper balance between security measures and obligations enshrined in international law, especially those related to prisoners' fundamental human rights and treatment in custody, can be a challenge for prison authorities dealing with prisoners who are difficult to manage due to their violent and disruptive behaviour (Coyle & Fair, 2018). In order to achieve this, a proper balance should be maintained between the physical, procedural and dynamic security in relation to all prisoners, including difficult or violent and disruptive prisoners. Furthermore, in order to achieve a high level of service, protective measures, policies and specialised training informed by national and international best practice must be developed and provided to prison officers who manage difficult inmates (Adams & Carr, 2019).

As mentioned previously, in order to manage difficult inmates in a safe and secure manner whilst at the same time respecting their fundamental human rights, prison training academies must ensure that staff selected to work with this prisoner cohort benefit from a holistic and tailored training curriculum. In order to safeguard prison staff and prisoners alike, individual jurisdictions must ensure that in addition to the basic training provided to all prison officers, an advanced level of training (including security-related modules) is provided to prison officers who work with difficult inmates.

The security training curriculum should be specifically designed to give staff working with this prisoner cohort the necessary operational knowledge, skills and abilities to understand violent behaviour and how to safely manage difficult inmates, which will in turn enable them to work effectively in a highly physical and personally challenging environment (Atabay & Bryans, 2016). Qualified and experienced technical, operational and security tutors, trainers and instructors, accredited by each jurisdiction's prison training academy, as well as other similar international professional bodies, must provide these training modules. This category should include experts in control and restraint, intervention techniques and procedural and dynamic security, as well as specialists in legislation and rule of law, human rights, etc. (Adams & Carr, 2019).

Recommended security training modules Using physical security aids

Security training curriculum must include training modules in the use of physical security aids such as locks, alarm systems, metal detectors and x-ray machines, radios, firearms (where applicable), CCTV and body-worn cameras (BWCs), etc. as well as training in the use of physical security instruments such as chains and handcuffs (Committee of Ministers, 2006, pp.27-28).

Procedural security

Security training should include modules on how to apply policies and procedures and protective measures, as well as security and operational information in order to manage prisoners who are at a high risk of committing violent acts against staff or other prisoners or of disrupting orderly operations. Prison/unit managers will then be able to apply this knowledge to inform decisions regarding the number of personnel required to manage prisoners, their access to visits and activities, internal movements and mixing, and escorts, as well as how best to respond to unexpected dynamic changes in a prisoner's behaviour and risk (Atabay & Bryans, 2016).

Security and operational procedures can cover many aspects of security-related work and good practice suggests that staff who manage difficult inmates should receive training covering:

- a) Searching (personal & cell/property); accounting for items presenting a risk;
- b) Monitoring prisoners;
- c) Assessment and classification of prisoners;
- d) Monitoring prisoners' contact with the outside world (phone, mail, visits, etc.);
- e) Communications and surveillance (radios, CCTV, BWC); and
- f) Information gathering and security intelligence systems.

Dynamic security and control & restraint procedures

Security training must also include training modules in dynamic security and advanced control and restraint techniques. Where possible, these modules should combine the use of practical training with simulation exercises replicating actual incidents/events involving difficult inmates, in order to enhance the operational capabilities of officers managing this particular prisoner cohort. Organisations should consider providing training on the following subjects to staff who manage difficult inmates:

- a) Human rights and the use of force
- b) Conflict resolution and de-escalation techniques
- c) First responder training (incidents, firefighting, etc.)
- d) Control and restraint techniques (using security aids and instruments, cuffing/un-cuffing, escorts, confronting armed/unarmed violent inmates, intervening as part of a team, etc.)

Conclusion

The purpose of this guide for minimum standards is to enhance the ability of each European prison administration to improve the training they provide to officers who work with difficult inmates. Having a better understanding of what the minimum standards to be achieved entail will improve staff performance and enable the service to better fulfil its dual mission of public security alongside rehabilitation for violent prisoners. It aims to provide professional benchmarks based on international texts and European prison rules as well as on data from research.

It also draws on numerous methodological achievements already implemented in certain countries. This translates into the need for a knowledge of the legislative and regulatory framework, a respect for ethics, the implementation of a positive relationship to establish the appropriate professional positioning, a respect for safety procedures, a multidisciplinary approach, mastery of assessment tools to develop a support plan for the detained person and the appropriate care of the person based on a knowledge of biological, psychological and social mechanisms.

To guarantee this competence is acquired in the long run within these units, this group of experts believes that it is imperative for staff to be able to be accompanied by a psychologist or a specialist in supervision, depending on the country. This supervision will allow the agents to uncover the potential difficulties in the care of prisoners, but also to define specific methods of care in case of difficulties. In this sense, the psychological support from which the personnel working in these specific units benefit should make it possible, when this can be a key to success in care, to deepen reflection on their interactions with prisoners. It is also underlined by the experts that it is essential to provide this support to staff due to their exposure to complex and stressful situations. This must therefore be taken into account in the training of personnel and has also been mentioned by the UN:

The United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners - Mandela Rules Article 75 states that in-service training for staff working with high-risk prisoners can have the additional advantage of allowing them to free

themselves from the stress of daily work and to reflect on their role and its challenges (United Nations, 2015, p.23).

Officers who work continuously with difficult prisoners (high-risk or violent) are more vulnerable, as they are under higher levels of stress and are at increased risk of burnout. In order to better understand their daily work, it is important for staff to be aware of their limits, their responsibilities and their role within the MDT.

In view of the qualities required, these standards stress that each country must guarantee quality recruitment, before training, taking proven professional experience and physical and psychological skills required for working with difficult prisoners and teamwork capacities into account, while respecting everyone's missions. In addition, the key to success lies in specific units for the care of detained persons and dedicated staff who are subject to rigorous monitoring.

This is why at the end of the training, continuing professional development opportunities must be provided to allow staff to complete their professional knowledge and get to know themselves better. These opportunities must be formalised by each country for the professional well-being of staff and to guarantee the quality of service. Learning one's trade is no longer enough, one also has to learn to live one's trade.

Abbreviations

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| ACEs | Adverse Childhood Experiences |
| BWCs | Body-worn cameras |
| CoE | Council of Europe |
| EPTA | European Penitentiary Training Academy Network |
| EU | European Union |
| EuroPris | European Organisation of Prison and Correctional Services |
| MDT | Multi-Disciplinary Team |
| NHC | Netherlands Helsinki Committee |
| OSCE | Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe |
| SIG | Special interest group |
| UN | United Nations |
| UNODC | United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime |

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