

Inspection visit to the Valga and Võru cellblocks of the Detention Block of the Law Enforcement Office of the Southern Prefecture of the Police and Border Guard Board

On 3 April 2014 advisors to the Chancellor of Justice paid an unannounced visit to the Valga and Võru cellblocks of the Detention Block of the Law Enforcement Office of the Southern Prefecture of the Police and Border Guard Board. The Chancellor of Justice invited a rescue officer to join the inspection as an expert and his task was to inspect adherence to fire safety requirements in both buildings.

The Chancellor of Justice had inspected the Võru and Valga cellblocks on three previous occasions (22 August 2007, 15 October 2009 and 1 March 2011).

As the result of the inspection the Chancellor of Justice made five proposals and one recommendation to the Southern Prefecture of the Police and Border Guard Board to guarantee fundamental human rights:

- to continue improving the detention conditions in the Valga cellblock and to consider the establishment of a walking yard;
- to point out to the officers working in the Valga and Võru cellblocks that the documents related to the detainees (especially those concerning the introduction of their rights, informing their family members and specifying their health status) must be filled in correctly;
- to take account of the fire safety observations made by the expert and improve the fire safety accordingly, especially in the Valga cellblock, but to also consider the observations made by the currently used Võru cellblock until the construction of the new Võru police building;
- if possible, to hold the detainees in the cellblocks in the Võru and Valga police buildings in which the conditions are better, and to avoid detaining persons for a long time in said buildings.