

Inspection visit to the detention cell at the Pärnu Police Station of the West Prefecture of the Police and Border Guard Board

On 14 July 2015, the Chancellor of Justice went on an unannounced inspection visit to the detention cell at the Pärnu Police Station of the West Prefecture of the Police and Border Guard Board. The Chancellor of Justice involved in the inspection visit an official of the Rescue Board as a specialist expert and a family physician as a healthcare expert.

As a result of the inspection visit, the Chancellor of Justice issued the West Prefecture of the Police and Border Guard Board with the following recommendations:

- continue the modernisation of the detention cells in the existing building and try to identify opportunities for improving the arrangements for short-term meetings;
- revise the existing procedure for the preparation of an initial medical examination record and ensure that a report, in particular concerning any health damage sustained by a detainee, is prepared as clearly and unambiguously as possible;
- draw the attention of police officers preparing a report on the detention of a suspect in the prefecture to the fact that this document, too, should appropriately record the existence or absence of any injuries sustained by the suspect;
- in the event of the use of special equipment, also note in the detention record of a suspect the period of the application of the equipment;
- see to it that the fire safety deficiencies pointed out by the official of the Rescue Board are remedied in collaboration with the owner of the Pärnu police building (Riigi Kinnisvara AS).

In her opinion, the healthcare expert involved in the inspection visit pointed out that the facilities in the Pärnu cell may be judged unsatisfactory in healthcare terms in the following respects:

- ventilation and passive smoking: whilst smokers and non-smokers are placed in separate cells, there is nonetheless a heavy stale cigarette stench also in 'smoke-free' cells and in other rooms (for example, the library and hallway). Ventilation is inadequate and the air is not fresh;
- detainees have no opportunity whatsoever to spend time in the fresh air or to take even the lightest exercise, which in the case of an adult should be at least 30 minutes daily in the interests of health.