

## Detainee rights charity comments on HM Inspectorate of Prisons report on immigration removals

Amanda Shah, Assistant Director - Policy, comments:

*The HM Inspectorate of Prisons report confirms what organisations like BID have been saying for some time – that there are inadequate safeguards to protect immigration detainees during Home Office enforcement action.*

*People frequently tell us about their experiences of long and exhausting journeys between detention centres, being unable to access medication and possessions when they are detained, of not being able to communicate with Home Office staff or complain about their behaviour, and even of being subjected to the unreasonable use of force.*

*The report also shines a spotlight on Home Office attempts to remove people from the UK without proper documentation, resulting in people being 'bounced back' to the UK. We have witnessed this in our work supporting immigration detainees. Not only is this a waste of taxpayers' money but it causes serious and avoidable trauma to the individuals involved.*

*This report is important evidence of practices which are largely invisible to the general public. We believe the findings demand urgent action from the Home Office to ensure people are protected from unnecessary distress and suffering by accessible and robust safeguards during removals.*

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### Notes for editors

1. Bail for Immigration Detainees (BID) is an independent charity working with asylum seekers and migrants in removal centres and prisons to secure their release from immigration detention. BID's report 'Out of sight, out of mind: experiences of immigration detention in the UK' (July 2009) contains evidence from immigration detainees about practices documented in the HM Inspectorate of Prisons report – copies available from [www.biduk.org](http://www.biduk.org)
2. A copy of 'Detainee escorts and removals: a thematic review' is available online at the Inspectorate of Prisons website [www.inspectorates.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmiprison](http://www.inspectorates.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmiprison)s
3. Nearly 30,000 people every year are held in immigration detention in the UK, in eleven detention centres known as 'Immigration Removal Centres' as well as prisons and police cells.
4. Held without time limit and without automatic access to the courts, immigration detainees include British citizens wrongly identified as foreign nationals; asylum seekers who have fled to the UK seeking sanctuary; children detained with their families; the partners of British citizens; and long-time British residents who have served custodial sentences for driving offences or petty theft.

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