

Case: 201103837, Scottish Prison Service
Sector: scottish government and devolved administration
Subject: policy/administration
Outcome: not upheld, action taken by body to remedy, no recommendations

Summary

Mr C, who is a prisoner, complained that the prison switched off the cell heating overnight. He also said that heating in cells on his side of the hall was faulty, but had not been fixed. The prison had explained to him that the hall was maintained at an average temperature of 20 degrees Celsius (C). If the temperature dropped below this, the heating would come back on. Mr C had also asked for information about minimum heating standards. SPS confirmed that the minimum recommended temperature in a cell was 19 degrees C.

We asked the prison about this. They explained that the heating is not switched off, but it is optimised. This means the system heats an area to 19/20 degrees C and once this is achieved, the system stops adding further heat to the area. When the temperature drops below this, the system begins heating the area again. They said that they had checked the heating system several times and were satisfied that it was operating properly. They confirmed that if Mr C asked for an additional blanket, they would consider this.

We did not uphold Mr C's complaint. Although he is clearly unhappy about the level of heat in his cell overnight, the information we have seen suggests that the heating system is operating appropriately. The evidence also shows that the prison investigated his concerns appropriately and they have confirmed that he can request an additional blanket, which we consider to be a reasonable solution.