



Mr. Martin Hughes,
Clerk to the Committee,
Committee of Public Accounts.

By email only: pac@oireachtas.ie

17th December, 2021

Your reference: Ref: S0690 PAC33
Our reference: DJE-SG-00223-2021

Dear Clerk,

I refer to the Committee's letter of 14 December 2021 in relation to an update on the independent review of the Voluntary Mess Committees in the Prisons.

In the progress report provided in October, I referred to the fact that further Prison site visits were scheduled, by the independent reviewer, for October and November. The impact of the Covid pandemic in the interim, and in particular a number of Covid outbreaks in the prisons led to unavoidable delays in completing the site visits. This restriction was necessary for the health and safety of prisoners, staff and visitors, and has in turn impacted the delivery of the report. Notwithstanding this, I am informed that the review work, for the most part, is expected to be completed by the end of December, as scheduled.

The report will be finalised after the review work is completed.

In the absence of any other unavoidable delays, I expect the finalised report to be published and provided to Committee during the first quarter of 2022.

I hope this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely,

Oonagh McPhillips,
Secretary General.