

## WRITTEN MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Thursday 6 February 2014

### MINISTRY OF JUSTICE

#### *Deaths in Custody*

**The Minister of State, Ministry of Justice (Lord Faulks):** My honourable friend the Secretary of State for Justice (Chris Grayling) has made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

“I am today announcing that the Government will be establishing an independent review into the self-inflicted deaths of 18-24 year olds in custody.

The Government is committed to the safety of offenders and in particular to reducing the numbers of deaths in custody. Although there are already comprehensive investigations into individual deaths we recognise there is benefit at this time in collating lessons that may be system-wide. The purpose of the review will be to make recommendations for reducing the risk of future deaths in custody. Although the review will focus on 18-24 year olds it will identify learning that will benefit any age group.

The review will be conducted by the Independent Advisory Panel on Deaths in Custody. I am grateful to Lord Harris of Haringey, Chair of the IAP, for agreeing to lead the review. The review will report by Spring 2015. Full terms of reference are available at <http://www.justice.gov.uk/about/deaths-in-custody-independent-review> and copies will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

The Youth Justice Board will also shortly be publishing a report setting out action taken and lessons learnt in respect of deaths in custody in the under-18 secure estate. A summary of some the key actions taken by the Youth Justice Board and the Government to respond to findings from the deaths of children in custody is available at the link above. The YJB’s report will be published after they have taken steps, where appropriate, to contact the families whose children are mentioned in the report.

The Government issued a consultation in November 2013 on Transforming Management of Young Adults (aged 18-20) in Custody. As the IAP review will focus on deaths in custody of this particular age group we want to receive the recommendations from the review before we respond to the consultation. We will consider the responses to the consultation alongside the outcome of the review process, and will issue the Government response to the consultation having taken into account the responses and the recommendations from the IAP’s review.

We will continue to make improvements to relevant operational practice as regards the current young adult estate, such as bolstering the system for young people transitioning from the youth to young adult estate.”