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DC 31/04 and IMM 23/04

To: All Chairs and Board Members

13 December 2004

Dear Chairs and Board Members

UPDATE ON THE IMB COMMUNICATIONS REVIEW

We are writing to provide you with an update on the review of the communications strategy and materials for IMBs, which has recently been completed by COI Communications.

We should begin by expressing our sincere thanks to all the Board members who took part in the review. Over 40 of you spoke to Pat Johnstone and Jillian Cameron from COI at this year's annual conference, 25 attended a workshop and 30 returned a questionnaire. Your involvement in the process was invaluable and the comments you made will play a key part in the future direction of the IMB Communications Strategy.

The background to the review stems from the many changes that have occurred to IMBs in the last couple of years, not least the change of name from BoV and VC to IMB and the bringing together of Boards monitoring prisons and IRCs. It was decided by the NC that the time was right to review our communications strategy and materials and external consultants, COI Communications, were engaged to carry out this review. They provided a report to the National Council in November and their findings were discussed in detail by the NC at their meeting on 8 December.

A summary of COI's report is attached for your information (Annex A). The summary explains the background to the project, the methodology used and the key findings. You will see that COI mentioned the logo in their recommendations and reported that some Board members disliked the design and colour. At their meeting on 8 December, the National Council discussed the feasibility of changing the IMB logo. It was agreed at the meeting *not* to change the logo at this stage. This was mainly for practical reasons. A new logo would require amending all of our communications materials in a short time: there are over twenty items with the logo on, from the

members' handbook and headed paper to pens and name badges. The cost of changing the logo, plus the nuisance factor for Boards, was therefore considered to be prohibitive.

At the meeting the NC also agreed to set up a Communications Review Working Group, made up of Board members, to take forward and develop COI's recommendations. A 'job description' for the team is attached (Annex B) and we are inviting applications from members who would be prepared to take on this role during 2005 - 2006. We require four or five Board members to participate in the Group in collaboration with Norman McLean (Head of Secretariat), David Graham (National Council Member) and Clare Batt (Communications Manager). An application form is attached (Annex C), and candidates will be chosen on the basis of their paper applications only, with a view to the first meeting being held in late February / early March. The closing date for applications is **Friday 28 January 2005**.

Finally, we would like to take this opportunity to let you know that Janet Goddard is leaving the Secretariat at the end of the year as she is taking a career break from the Home Office. Clare Batt will be taking over her role as Communications Manager and Clare's current post will be advertised shortly.

If you have any comments about this letter or the COI's report, do write to us via Clare Batt at the Secretariat. We hope to include a more detailed progress report about the communications review in the next edition of *IMB News*, which is due in March next year.

Yours sincerely



David Graham
NC Member

&

Janet Goddard
Communications Manager
IMB Secretariat