



Prison Act 1952

1952 CHAPTER 52

Central administration

1 General control over prisons

All powers and jurisdiction in relation to prisons and prisoners which before the commencement of the Prison Act, 1877 were exercisable by any other authority shall, subject to the provisions of this Act, be exercisable by the Secretary of State.

2 The Prison Commissioners

- (1) Her Majesty may, on the recommendation of the Secretary of State, by warrant under the sign manual appoint persons to be Commissioners during Her Majesty's pleasure for the purpose of assisting the Secretary of State in the performance of his functions relating to prisons.
- (2) The number of Commissioners so appointed shall not at any time exceed five.
- (3) There may be paid out of moneys provided by Parliament to the Commissioners so appointed such salaries as the Secretary of State may with the consent of the Treasury determine.
- (4) The Commissioners so appointed shall be a body corporate with power to hold land so far as may be necessary for the purposes of this Act and shall be called the Prison Commissioners.
- (5) The Secretary of State may appoint one of the Prison Commissioners to be their chairman.
- (6) Anything required or authorised to be done by the Prison Commissioners may, if the Secretary of State so directs either generally or in any special case, be done by any one or more of them.
- (7) The Prison Commissioners shall exercise their functions in accordance with any general or special directions of the Secretary of State.

3 Officers and servants of Prison Commissioners

- (1) The Secretary of State may appoint such inspectors and the Prison Commissioners may, with the approval of the Secretary of State, appoint such other officers and servants of the Prison Commissioners as the Secretary of State may, with the sanction of the Treasury as to number, determine.
- (2) There shall be paid out of moneys provided by Parliament to the inspectors and other officers and servants of the Prison Commissioners such salaries as the Secretary of State may with the consent of the Treasury determine.

4 General duties of Prison Commissioners

- (1) The Prison Commissioners shall have the general superintendence of prisons and shall make the contracts and do the other acts necessary for the maintenance of prisons and the maintenance of prisoners.
- (2) The Prison Commissioners, by themselves or their officers, shall visit all prisons and examine the state of buildings, the conduct of officers, the treatment and conduct of prisoners and all other matters concerning the management of prisons and shall ensure that the provisions of this Act and of any rules made under this Act are duly complied with.
- (3) The Prison Commissioners may exercise all powers and jurisdiction exercisable at common law, by Act of Parliament, or by charter by visiting justices of a prison.

5 Annual report of Prison Commissioners

- (1) The Prison Commissioners shall make to the Secretary of State an annual report on every prison and the Secretary of State shall lay the report before Parliament.
- (2) The report shall contain—
 - (a) a statement of the accommodation of each prison and the daily average and highest number of prisoners confined therein;
 - (b) such particulars of the work done by prisoners in each prison, including the kind and quantities of articles produced and the number of prisoners employed, as may in the opinion of the Secretary of State give the best information to Parliament;
 - (c) a statement of the punishments inflicted in each prison and of the offences for which they were inflicted, with particulars of every case in which an order for corporal punishment was made and of the grounds upon which it was made.