

# SUCCESS STORY

## **NORTHERN IRELAND PRISON SERVICE** Prisoner Records & Information System



As Managed Service Partner we've developed and support PRISM enabling NIPS to manage inmates throughout their life in prison from committal through to final discharge.

### Background

The Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS) is an agency within the Department of Justice. It is responsible for the operation and delivery of services within the Northern Ireland prison system. NIPS is responsible for the care and rehabilitation of 1,500 high, medium, and low security prisoners at three prison facilities.

In 2002 a contract was awarded to Sopra Steria to develop the Prison Record and Information System (PRISM) which is a bespoke information system designed for the management of the prison population.

PRISM is a critical operational system within NIPS which delivers the following business functions to around 1,500 employees from Prison Officers to Senior Management

- Efficiency in the management of inmates in an increasingly diverse prison environment
- Compliance with stringent data access, protection, and information security standards
- Sharing of information electronically with other criminal justice agencies
- Access to inmates via a modern and efficient Visits System

- Accurate and up-to-date Management Information
- Business Intelligence to improve prison operations and influence policy and strategies within the service.

### Solution

Because Sopra Steria supports businesses in the full technology lifecycle - from the definition of strategies through to their implementation, we were chosen as NIPS managed service partner.

One of the key aspects of the project was the security of the sensitive information that would be stored within the system. Consequently, information security experts were involved from the outset, and at the integration stage, a final IT health check of the entire system was undertaken to certify that it was compliant with the required "Confidential" classification.

A Sopra Steria team was based on site in Northern Ireland to work closely with NIPS throughout the duration of the project and this continues with the team providing support and development in partnership with NIPS staff. The system was built using Sopra Steria's flexible delivery model. When implementing the system, data migration was carried out from the existing systems and user manuals were drawn up to help train key users.

#### Causeway Interface

Sopra Steria customised PRISM processes and developed an interface to connect with Causeway. This interface now allows NIPS to share information with Causeway and joins up criminal justice in Northern Ireland. Causeway enables the secure transfer of case data from NIPS with the other criminal justice organisations.

#### Modern and Efficient Visits System

Sopra Steria has evolved PRISM to enhance visits, bookings and information management. This includes a biometric infrastructure, which manages and controls inmate and visitor movement within the Visits Centres in each establishment.

#### Technical Refresh Project

Sopra Steria conducted a review of the existing high availability architecture and proposed that NIPS undertake a technical refresh to maximise current investments in PRISM infrastructure and deliver a future growth environment.

Sopra Steria worked closely with NIPS to ensure a smooth migration of the existing application and data to the new platform and ensured minimal impact on business operations. The refreshed PRISM environment has been operational since late November 2015.

## Benefits

PRISM has enabled NIPS to manage inmates throughout their life in prison from committal through to final discharge by providing the following:

- Real-time information: providing every user with online, real-time access to relevant and job-specific information
- Standardisation: processes in PRISM that are now standard across all establishments, but are flexible enough to deal with the specific needs of each establishment
- Enriched reporting with near real time operational management information to support both day to day operations and strategic planning
- Greater integration opportunities within the Department of Justice through support for other agencies to share Criminal Justice information.
- A platform to build on for the future

Sopra Steria continue to work in partnership with NIPS to deliver solutions that contribute to the reduction of reoffending and building of safer communities in Northern Ireland.

“ Sopra Steria has played a key role in helping NIPS design, deliver and support modern, innovative IT solutions for over 15 years. Sopra Steria works in partnership, delivering solutions that focus on results, led by the business need and not technology trends. If I was asked to sum Sopra Steria up in two words I would say 'Sopra Steria Delivers!' ”

Head of ICT,  
Northern Ireland  
Prison Service



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