



Doras Calls for the Immediate Closure of Mount Trenchard Direct Provision Centre

Media statement: 9th December 2019

Doras has released findings of research conducted on Mount Trenchard Direct Provision Centre which demonstrates the damaging effects that living there has on residents. Despite making a range of short-term priority recommendations to the Department of Justice's Reception and Integration Agency (now the International Protection Accommodation Service) earlier this year, there has been no improvement in conditions there. Because of this, Doras is now calling for its immediate closure.

The research, which was completed in Spring 2019, raises serious concerns in four key areas. These are: safety and well-being of residents; the isolated location of the centre; physical living conditions; and operational and staff issues. In relation to all of these, the final report notes that 'criticism of Mount Trenchard from the public, community organisations, politicians, the media and, most importantly, residents, have been well established and persistent.'

"Many of the issues raised in this research were raised in the 2015 McMahon Report" said Doras director John Lannon. "Despite this, the living conditions and standards in Mount Trenchard remain largely the same".

"Some of the most vulnerable people we work with are in Mount Trenchard" said John Lannon. "It is generally understood to have the most challenging conditions of all direct provision centres in the country, and our research indicates serious concerns in relation to safety, security and involuntary transfers. The fact that the most vulnerable international protection applicants are put into conditions that do not even meet minimum standards has been a concern of ours for a long time. It is apparent now that the centre needs to be closed down and residents moved to appropriate accommodation."

The Doras report includes testimony from residents, covering multiple inter-related issues. These include the isolated location, shared living arrangements and lack of support services. The impact on residents' mental health lead one former resident to say that for any new resident "after one year he is not normal. He's braindead."

A draft of the Doras Mount Trenchard report was presented to RIA in July of this year. A period of 3 months was then allowed for changes to be made, following which residents were again consulted. This follow-up investigation indicated that none of the essential changes highlighted by Doras had been implemented.

According to Lannon, the publication of National Standards for Direct Provision Centres in August of this year has not improved conditions in Mount Trenchard. "Since the standards will not be legally binding until January 2021 they will do nothing to improve the situation there for the current residents" he said.

"We believe that that the situation in Mount Trenchard is too urgent to wait for the National Standards to be implemented, or for groups like the government interdepartmental group or advisory group chaired by Dr Catherine Day to meet and review the direct provision system. Since living there is putting vulnerable people at great risk, it should be closed without delay."

The full report can viewed at: ([link](#))

Contact: John Lannon, Director. E: j.lannon@doras.org Tel: 0878225087