



## RESPONSES TO INFORMATION REQUESTS (RIRs)

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The Board		21 April 2005
About the Board	<b>ISR43504.E</b>	
Biographies		
Organization Chart	Israel: Locations and conditions of military prisons for persons who refuse to perform military service (2003-April 2005)	
Employment	Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board, Ottawa	
Legal and Policy		
References	Information on the locations of, and conditions in, military prisons for persons who refuse to perform military service was scarce among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.	
Publications		
Tribunal		
Refugee Protection Division		
Immigration Division	Similar to information found by the Research Directorate in ISR33210.E of 19 November 1999, sources noted that military prisons No. 4 and No. 6 are detention centres where individuals such as those who refuse to perform military service, are detained after sentencing by military tribunals (WRI 11 Feb. 2003; Refusers Parents' Forum n.d.b.). Contrary to information found in ISR33210.E, Amnesty International noted in January 2003 that military prison No. 4 was located at the Tzrifin military base in the vicinity of Tel Aviv and military prison No. 6 was situated near the town of Haifa (AI 29 Jan. 2003).	
Immigration Appeal Division		
Decisions		
Forms		
Statistics		
Research		
Research Program		
National Documentation Packages	War Resisters' International (WRI) described military prison No. 6 as having "very bad" conditions for conscientious objector (CO) prisoners Hillel Goral and Dror Boimel (11 Feb. 2003). In particular, WRI noted that in military prison No. 6	
Issue Papers and Country Fact Sheets	[t]he toilet facilities are open, so there is no privacy. It is very cold in the cells, there are no heaters of any kind, and rain gets through to the cells. Hillel Goral's blankets were taken from him, because he refused to fold them in a military fashion. There is also no hot water in the showers, so that they have to bath in freezing cold water. They are not allowed any writing materials, and only a handful of books. They only get one hour of sunlight per day, and a neon light is put on in their cells for 24 hours per day. These conditions don't meet the minimum standards for prisons (WRI 11 Feb. 2003).	
Responses to Information Requests		
Recent Research		
Media Centre		
News	According to CO prisoner Noam Bahat's experience in military prison No. 4, conditions were difficult as he was denied "[a]ll his writing material," prevented from sending mail, and deprived of two family visits "because of 'misbehavior'," reportedly because Bahat did not say "Sir" when responding to a prison guard (WRI 11 Feb. 2003). In 2004, Daniel Tsal's experience in military prison No. 4 was described by WRI as being "extremely difficult," as he was held in a "small, dirty and stinking cell" with 40 other prisoners during the first 2 days of his prison sentence (WRI 2 Aug. 2004). Tsal was eventually moved to a "more reasonable" section of the prison (ibid.).	
Information Sheets		
Media Relations		
Proactive Disclosure		

The Refusers Parents' Forum, a non-governmental organization consisting of parents and family members of student COs and "people from different parts of the Israeli Peace Camp" (n.d.a.), provided the following descriptions of military prisons No. 4 and No. 6:

Prison camp #4 is famous as the "hard" military prison. The prisoners are confined in a mixture of tents and wooden planked rooms built by the British in the Second World War. The place (like most army camps) smells of open sewers - but this is worse. Discipline is tough but "legal". Generally - 48 hours leave every month starting on the 3rd month. Letters tend to go missing - half hour family visits permitted generally every week to two weeks. This can be hard on families who may have to wait some hours for their half-hour 'window'.

Prison Camp #6 is considered relatively "soft". [...] Same leave conditions as described for Camp #4 - but easier discipline and rather less cramped and smelly than #4. Parents like it for the better organized visiting facilities -- one tends to wait less than 90 minutes for the half hour access. The Military Police and the other prisoners seem to be getting on well with the COs which may be cause for worry for the authorities (Refusers Parents' Forum n.d.b).

In addition, the Refusers Parents' Forum noted that a number of COs were placed in "isolation" cells at various points in their time spent in the military prisons (ibid.). These cells were reportedly small and windowless and prisoners held there were denied "exercise privileges" and interaction with other inmates (ibid.).

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of additional sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

#### References

Amnesty International (AI). 29 January 2003. UA 30/03 Prisoners of Conscience/Conscientious Objectors. "Israel." (MDE 15/016/2003). <<http://web.amnesty.org/library/print/ENGMDE150162003>> [Accessed 14 Apr. 2005]

Refusers Parents' Forum. n.d.a. "Refusers Parents' Forum." <<http://www.refuz.org.il/Default.aspx?tabid=97>> [Accessed 18 Apr. 2005]

\_\_\_\_\_. n.d.b. "Frequently Asked Questions." <<http://www.refuz.org.il/Default.aspx?tabid=99>> [Accessed 18 Apr. 2005]

War Resisters' International (WRI). 2 August 2004. "Israel: Fifth Prison Term for Conscientious Objector Daniel Tsal." <<http://www.wri-irg.org/news/htdocs/20040802a.html>> [Accessed 14 Apr. 2005]

\_\_\_\_\_. 11 February 2003. "Israel: Update on Imprisoned Conscientious Objectors." <<http://www.wri-irg.org/news/htdocs/11022003a.html>> [Accessed 14 Apr. 2005]

#### Additional Sources Consulted

Two oral sources did not respond within time constraints

**Internet:** Center on Conscience & War, *Country Reports 2004*, Freedom House, Human Rights Watch, *Jerusalem Post*, Jewish Peace Fellowship, New Profile, Refuser Solidarity Network.

  
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