

CRIMINAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE

El Dorado County Jail, Placerville

Reason for the Report

The California Penal Code requires that Grand Juries inspect and report annually on the operations of all public prisons located within the boundaries of each county.

Scope of the Investigation

Members of the Grand Jury toured and inspected the El Dorado County Jail in Placerville twice during January 2002. The tours were conducted by the Administrative Lieutenant and a Senior Sergeant. After the second tour, members of the Grand Jury and jail management met for a discussion and review of the following documents:

- Policy and Procedure Manual;
- Board of Correction Report (2001);
- County Health Inspection Report (2001);
- County Fire Marshal Report (2001);
- United States Marshal Report (2000);
- Jail statistical reports;
- Prior Grand Jury Reports for 98/99, 99/00, and 00/01;
- Monthly Jail Profile Survey, two reports dated July 17, 2001 and December 4, 2001;
- Jail Organizational Chart;
- Jail Budget; and
- Jail forms: Personnel Complaint, Classification Questionnaire, and Custody Assessment Scale.

Findings

F1: This Grand Jury notes the concerns of the 98/99 Grand Jury. Those concerns have apparently been addressed. One of the major concerns then was that the inmate count was high and increasing. It is now considerably lower. We concur that the facility is well managed with a minimum of problems.

F2: This Grand Jury agrees with the 1999/2000 Grand Jury's Report following Findings.

- The housing units were clean and the noise level was low.
- The kitchen and dining areas were clean and orderly, and the food adequate.
- The infirmary was in good shape.

- The Inmate Welfare Fund is adequate, providing telephones, the library and visiting amenities for families, e.g. vending machines, toys for the children, and athletic equipment, etc.
- Inmates may get some training in the kitchen.

F3: This Grand Jury agrees with the 2000/2001 Grand Jury's Report following Findings:

- The laundry and shower areas were clean.
- The medical room was clean, and well organized, with licensed medical staff on duty 24/7.
- Some cleanliness problems still exist in loading dock area.

F4: The Jail has 243 beds.

F5: On January 15, 2002, there were 161 inmates: 133 men and 28 women. The jail was, therefore, at 66% of capacity with over 80 beds available.

F6: The Jail is relatively new and is in very good condition.

F7: When the Jail was constructed, it was designed for additional housing units to be built in the future. The Jail has an oversized booking area and kitchen anticipating future expansion.

F8: The Jail was under a Federal Court Order to maintain the jail population at or below the 243-inmate capacity.

F9: The Jail is staffed by 2 Lieutenants, 7 Sergeants, and 51 Correctional Officers.

F10: The Jail was designed to be a "direct supervision" jail, and is staffed and supervised so that inmates are in direct contact with staff.

F11: The inmates were well groomed and their clothing was clean.

F12: Medical needs are met through a contract with a private medical services company.

F13: The Jail is inspected by management monthly and other times as necessary.

F14: There is an effective inmate grievance policy.

F15: Upon arrival, inmates receive an orientation of procedures and policies, and are given a copy of the rules.

F16: The Jail looks and smells clean and is well ventilated.

- F17: The voluntary jail education program had 34 students on the day the Committee toured. There is a teacher and several volunteers. Students may complete a GED or complete high school courses.
- F18: The Jail has an exceptional library, both in numbers of books and kinds of materials available including a law library.
- F19: Inmates assigned to the kitchen may receive training in culinary arts.
- F20: Some trusted inmates are assigned to jobs in the jail, e.g. janitorial, laundry, clerical, painting, and repairing, etc.
- F21: Male and female inmates are assigned to separate work duties.
- F22: Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, and a variety of religious programs are provided by volunteers from the community.
- F23: The booking area appeared cluttered.
- F24: The loading dock was not clean.
- F25: Overall, the management of the Jail appeared to be considerably above average.

Recommendations

- R1: During January 2002, over 80 beds were available. The County, therefore, should rent jail beds to defray the daily expenses associated with managing a facility of this size. Potential renters are the Federal Marshal, Immigration Department, neighboring counties, and the State Department of Corrections (for detained parolees).
- R2: The booking area should be better organized.
- R3: The loading dock should be clean.

Commendations

The Jail is a clean and well-managed facility. This can be attributed to the staff. Programs are available for interested inmates. The County is to be commended for its foresight in anticipating growth in the inmate population.

Responses Required for Findings

F1 through F25

El Dorado County Board of Supervisors
El Dorado County Sheriff

Responses Required for Recommendations

R1 through R3

El Dorado County Board of Supervisors
El Dorado County Sheriff