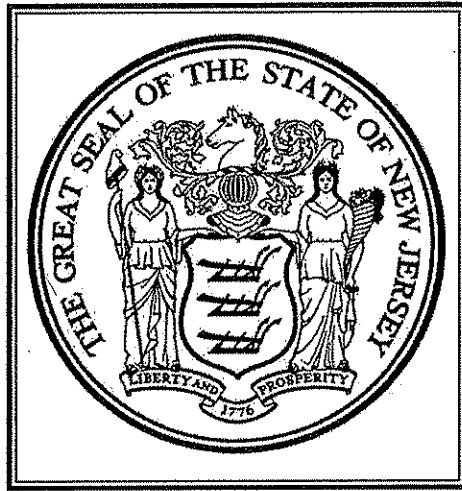




Assembly Prison Gang Violence Task Force

FINAL REPORT

December 12, 2006

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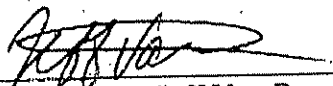
New Jersey State Legislature
ASSEMBLY PRISON GANG VIOLENCE TASK FORCE
STATE HOUSE ANNEX
PO BOX 068
TRENTON NJ 08625-0068

December 12, 2006

Honorable Joseph J. Roberts, Jr.
Speaker of the General Assembly

Speaker Roberts:

The Assembly Prison Gang Violence Task Force, created by Assembly Resolution No. 240 to review and study security and safety in the State's correctional facilities, hereby respectfully submits its final report in compliance with the provisions of its enabling legislation.



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Chairman

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December 12, 2006

Honorable Joseph J. Roberts, Jr.
Speaker of the General Assembly

Speaker Roberts:

I am pleased to transmit with this letter the final report of the Assembly Prison Gang Violence Task Force. The task force was created to review and study issues related to the safety and security of this State's correctional facilities.

This report represents a comprehensive review of issues related to the safety and security of the employees and inmates in the State's correctional facilities, particularly as they relate to inmate gang violence. After considering the testimony presented during three public hearings, the task force is proposing a number of recommendations to fight gang violence. These proposals touch on a variety of safety issues, including better training for corrections officers, enhanced communications among personnel and between facilities, equipment upgrades, and improved recruitment methods.

I would like to thank each of the task force members for the time and effort they dedicated to assisting the task force in its proceedings. I also would like to thank all the witnesses who took the time to appear before the task force to contribute their thoughts and ideas for improving prison safety. Also, a special thanks goes out to the members of the Prison Gang Violence Policy Commission for educating me on this very important issue.

Respectfully,

Assemblyman Jeff Van Drew
Chairman

ASSEMBLY PRISON GANG VIOLENCE TASK FORCE

MEMBERS*

Jeff Van Drew, Chairman
Kerry Riebe, Vice-Chair
Bob Balicki
Joseph Butler
Frank Crose
Michael Debellis
Mike Makara
Tom Moran
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*Former Assemblyman John C. Gibson was a member of the task force through 2005

INTRODUCTION

On New Years Day 2005, a serious disturbance likely involving inmate gang members occurred in the Bayside Correctional Facility. Twenty-nine corrections officers were injured, six inmates were charged with assault and 20 inmates were transferred to other institutions. The incident has brought to the attention of the Legislature the proliferation of gangs and gang activity in this State's correctional facilities and the effect of these activities on the safety and security of employees and inmates in these facilities.

In light of the concerns regarding increased gang activity in this State's prison system, the General Assembly approved on March 14, 2005 Assembly Resolution No. 240, which established the Assembly Prison Gang Violence Task Force. The task force was charged with reviewing and studying the issue of security and safety in New Jersey's correctional facilities. Among the topics the task force was specifically directed to address were: administrative segregation for dangerous inmates; corrections officers' safety equipment; adequacy of training of corrections officers; prevalence of gangs in State correctional facilities; intelligence gathering methods; and State policies governing investigations of incidents and riots posing threats to the safety of correctional facility employees and inmates.

The Assembly Prison Gang Violence Task Force consisted of 12 members. Assembly Speaker Joseph J. Roberts appointed Assemblyman Jeff Van Drew and Assemblyman John C. Gibson as the legislative members of the task force. Also appointed were: current corrections officers Kerry Riebe, Tom Moran and Michael DeBellis; retired corrections officers Fred Vineyard and Bruce Sapp; current civilian employee Mike Makara; gang expert Bill Paglione; correctional facility safety experts Bob Balicki and Frank Crose; and correctional facility operation expert Joseph Butler.

The Assembly Prison Gang Violence Task Force held three public hearings. The first meeting was held in Millville at Millville City Hall on September 27, 2005. The members of the task force appointed Assemblyman Jeff Van Drew as Chairman and Kerry Riebe as Vice Chairman. The task force then took testimony on the training of State corrections employees, including corrections officers, and on gang violence and related issues. Several corrections officers, some with extensive experience in training, testified on the problem of gangs and lack of gang training.

Also present at the meeting were members of the Prison Gang Violence Policy Commission, an informal group of advisors to Assemblyman Van Drew. In addition to the two members who testified, Danny K. Opperman and Thomas J. Wilson, the commission is comprised of the following corrections officers: George Adams, William Ballard, Robert Barker, Dennis Bindewald, Steve Brzdek, Greg Cuchino, William Davis, Larry Evans, Francis Fiore, Stu Harris, Robert Hencken, Russell Leak, Fred Parker, Frank Preston, Ronald Riggins, Rick Roberts, George Russell, Tim Shields, Michael Simmerman, Richard Souder, and William Sparrow.

The second meeting of the Assembly Prison Gang Violence Task Force was held on January 12, 2006 at the State House Annex in Trenton. The task force heard testimony concerning communications and intelligence gathering in State correctional facilities. Persons testifying included: Matthew Clark, Senior Investigator in the Special Investigations Division of Bayside State Prison; Ron Holvey, Principal Investigator from the Gang Intelligence Unit of the State Department of Corrections; Richard Norcross, Commander in the Intelligence Services Unit in the Camden County Prosecutor's Office; and several current and retired corrections officers.

The third meeting of the Assembly Prison Gang Violence Task Force was held on May 9, 2006 at the University of Medicine and Dentistry (UMDNJ) of New Jersey in Newark. The task force took testimony concerning safety issues at State correctional facilities. After welcoming remarks from Cecile A. Feldman, Dean of the Dental School at UMDNJ, several current and one former corrections officer testified.

SUMMARY OF ISSUES

Many issues concerning the problem of gang violence in this State's prisons were raised during the hearings. The main topics were: professional training of corrections officers and civilian staff; institutional conflict; lack of information sharing, including the elimination of line-ups; need for equipment; recruitment; and payments to inmates.

PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

Professional Training for Corrections Officers

Testimony concerning the lack of professional training provided to custody officers by the Department of Corrections (DOC) was pervasive throughout the hearings. Much of the testimony centered on the need for formal gang awareness training in particular, such as how to identify gang members, what their gang signs and nicknames are, how they move and with whom they associate. There also was testimony about the need for training in other areas, such as communication skills, report writing, self-defense, handcuffing and firefighting.

According to the DOC, mandatory annual in-service training currently consists of: eight hours firearms training, which includes yearly range qualification and use of force principles; eight hours CPR and first aid training, including use of a defibrillator, which is necessary for certification purposes; and eight hours blood-borne pathogens training. Additionally, the DOC is required by executive order to provide National Incident Management Systems (NIMS) training on preventing, preparing for, responding to, and recovering from domestic security incidents. The DOC also provides light suppression firefighting training, during which corrections officers are trained to contain fires and evacuate inmates to prepare the facility for the arrival of the local fire department.

Currently, the NIMS and light suppression training is subject to available overtime funding. There is no mandatory in-service training on gangs.¹

Corrections officers testified that they receive very limited in-service training, such as in firearms, and what they do receive is provided by the DOC only because it is required to do so by the courts. They have received absolutely no gang training. When a lieutenant from South Woods was asked by more than one task force member what gang training the corrections officers in his facility received, his response was “[n]one” and that “[t]he only training we actually receive is something that’s mandated by the courts, whether it be first aid, fire, whatever. That’s the only training we’re receiving. That’s it. If something comes down from the courts, we get that training.”

Even if a corrections officer is willing to use his own personal time and money, he must still obtain DOC approval before attending certain training. An example of relevant available training, which is free-of-charge to all law enforcement officers, including corrections officers, is Middle Atlantic Great Lakes Organized Crime Law Enforcement Network (MAGLOCLEN) training. This federally funded networking and training group meets monthly and valuable information concerning gangs is shared amongst the attendees. But only a few corrections officers are approved by the DOC to attend this training.

Other valuable training not being made available by the DOC to rank and file corrections officers is “Security Threat Group” training. The Special Investigations Division (SID) of the DOC is responsible for administrative and criminal investigations of inmates, employees, and visitors. The Intelligence Section, one of four specialized units in SID, was created to address the growing problem of gangs. The Intelligence Section identifies those groups that constitute security threat groups, identifies members of gangs during the inmate’s reception, makes recommendations as to which inmates should be placed in a special unit for gang members located at Northern State Prison and maintains a gang database. The Intelligence Section provides Security Threat Group training to selected personnel. There was testimony that the DOC should “train the trainers,” at the facilities, so that this training could be provided to more corrections officers.

The American Correctional Association (ACA) recommends that each corrections officer receive 40 hours of annual in-service training. According to testimony at the hearings, it appears corrections officers are not being provided with this level of training because of the overtime costs to the DOC. According to an experienced trainer who testified, an estimate of the cost of such training to the DOC in 1999 would have been \$7.5 to \$10 million; the DOC’s estimate was higher, at \$10 to \$12.5 million. The DOC is not accredited by the ACA because of the inadequate training provided to corrections officers.

¹ Upon being hired, corrections officers receive twelve weeks training at the New Jersey Corrections Staff Training Academy and an additional two weeks training in the institution. Six hours of this initial training is dedicated to gang training.

The task force finds that the rank and file corrections officers are not receiving the training necessary for them to adequately perform their employment responsibilities, particularly as it applies to dealing with the proliferation of gang activity in the correctional facilities. Forty hours annual in-service training for all State corrections officers, in addition to currently required training, should be mandatory. Of these forty hours of required training, sixteen hours should cover institutional safety; gang management and intelligence; riot control; contraband interdiction; and counterterrorism issues. The remaining twenty-four hours of the training should be dedicated to topics determined by the training department of each facility.

Professional Training for Civilian Staff

The overtime costs associated with training custody staff do not apply to noncustody civilian staff, such as teachers and social workers. Mike Makara, a noncustody staff task force member, noted that he and his colleagues have received Security Threat Group training through SID's Intelligence Section. The training, which is offered at the discretion of the administrator, occurred in place of routine classes or activities. While the staff was being trained, the inmates were not called out for activities, such as vocational training. Mr. Makara stated that because of the training, noncustody staff is better informed and more alert to signs of gang membership. Thanks to the training, noncustody staff has been able to go in confidence and report observations to superiors, custody officers, and SID. The need for this training is underscored by testimony from an investigator at SID who reported that in his experience most of the civilian staff would not know to call SID to report something or to obtain information.

The task force finds that because of the importance of gang awareness training, all civilian staff must have a minimum of four hours of gang training in addition to any other required training.

INSTITUTIONAL CONFLICT

The Special Investigations Division (SID) is charged with investigating all acts of wrongdoing inside the Department of Corrections, including investigations of alleged wrongdoing by corrections officers. In addition to these internal investigations, SID's Intelligence Section gathers information about gangs and gang members, validates inmates as gang members and conducts training and educational programs. The Intelligence Section liaisons with Institutional Intelligence Committees, which are established in each of the DOC's fourteen correctional facilities. Each intelligence committee is assigned an SID Institutional Intelligence Officer. As each facility is unique, the remaining staff members of each intelligence committee are determined by the administrator of the facility.

The Intelligence Section of SID uses three methods to gather gang information. Information is obtained from custody staff, through institutionally approved mail monitoring, and through inmate informants. A representative from SID noted that

custody staff is one of the most important sources of information on gangs and gang activities. During the course of the hearing, it became clear that because SID conducts internal investigations of corrections officers, there is tension between custody staff and SID investigators which impedes the collection of gang information.

A representative from SID stated he was aware that some custody staff do not want to be involved in the Institutional Intelligence Committee because they do not want to deal with SID. One custody officer testified "[C]ustody and Internal Affairs are never going to work together. When we are all dead and buried, it's still going to be the same way because they investigate the staff. No one trusts them and that's the way it is." In response to the suggestion that SID be provided more officers to gather gang information one corrections captain exclaimed "I don't think we need to hire more people for us not to talk to." Another officer illustrated the deep tension towards SID and the resistance to share information with SID by saying "You do need SID. You did need a special investigations to investigate allegations on staff. (sic) But you can't have a working relationship between the two, especially when it comes to sharing information. It would be like me sitting here and accusing you of murdering somebody, and you did this, and you did that. I'd get all done beating you up and say "Hey, how do I get down to that corner restaurant there on the street?" What are you going to tell me? You're going to send me all around the other way."

The task force finds that because that because of the tensions between corrections officers and SID special investigators, gang investigators must be separate from SID. Separating the two functions would open the doors of communication and provide for a better flow of information. Further, a separate division would encourage corrections officers to be more forthcoming with information about gangs and gang activity.

LACK OF INFORMATION SHARING

Much of the testimony centered on available information that is not being disseminated to the rank and file officers. For example, there is no formal mechanism for forwarding information concerning an incident at one facility, such as a gang uprising, to any of the other 13 State correctional facilities. Accentuating this lack of communication is the fact that information is being shared among gang members in the various facilities through a sophisticated gang network.

Another example of the lack of information sharing is that the rank and file corrections officers are rarely apprised of what supervisory officials have learned at the monthly MAGLOLEN meetings. What little information does trickle down depends on who attended the monthly meeting. SID intends for the information to be dispersed throughout the facilities, however, an investigator testified that it is unclear whether this dissemination ever takes place. When information haphazardly reaches the rank and file level, there is often such a lag that the information is no longer useful.

There was conflicting testimony regarding what information is shared. A representative from SID stated that a list of gang members is distributed to custody supervisors, but a retired lieutenant stated that in over ten years as a shift commander he had never seen a list of gang members.

The task force heard an array of information sharing options. Some of this information concerned programs that were already in place, while others were still ideas that could be implemented.

There was testimony that gang information could be distributed through the use of computers. For example, a morning recap could be made available to supervisory personnel, who could then be responsible for forwarding that information to the rank and file officers. This is an option at facilities equipped with computers, but not every facility is equipped with computers accessible to the necessary personnel. For facilities without computers, one witness suggested simple low technology ideas such as posting important observations or events on a write on/wipe off board.

Representatives from SID spoke about two important programs. First, SID has implemented an "all fax" system. This system is used when there is a major disturbance that would require all the prisons to be apprised. When an event occurs, a SID investigator would fill out a form and that form would be faxed to all the institutions. The all fax system is not used for routine type notifications, but only for major events. Second, SID reported that the DOC has been working on a state of the art information system for over three years. The program will be designed to report on individual gang members and their position, identify rank structures and provide access to incident reports. Due to security concerns, the system will be closed and will be accessible only to certain uniformed staff members.

The Commander of the Intelligence Services Unit of the city and county of Camden testified that his jurisdiction uses a customized database to address day to day needs. The database is attached to a Digital Information Gateway System which connects intelligence on both sides of the Delaware. Camden also uses the Statewide Intelligence Management System (known as SIMS or Memex) created by the New Jersey State Police and the Division of Criminal Justice. The witness noted that the SIMS program is still in its infancy stages but was optimistic that when all the bugs have been worked out the program would provide vital information sharing services.

The commander noted that instead of using internal affairs officers to collect and share intelligence information from the database, they have trained selected rank and file detectives. The commander stated no person in a supervisory position is ever selected to serve as a gateway to the information contained in the database. This eliminates any natural barriers inherent in supervisor and supervisee relationships.

Camden also employs a news brief to disseminate information. The Camden County E-News Brief is a weekly email which includes information on criminal activity and criminal intelligence that is suitable for widespread dissemination.

The task force finds that when a lockdown is ordered or another major incident occurs in one of the State's correctional facilities, all rank and file officers in every other institution should be notified of that lockdown or incident.

Line-Ups

According to testimony, a proven method of effective information dissemination is line-ups. A line-up consists of corrections officers standing in a line while roll call is taken. This is an ideal time for supervisory personnel to distribute to the rank and file officers any information they need to know, for example what occurred during the previous shift or the day before. There was testimony that at one time, 20 minute line-ups were held throughout DOC facilities. The line-ups were reduced to 15 minutes, then to 10 minutes. The line-ups were eliminated completely in the late 1990s. As the time spent in line-up was in addition to the corrections officer's regular, eight hour shift, the officer received overtime pay for line-up time. The line-ups apparently were eliminated due to this cost.

The task force believes these line-ups are necessary to effectively fight the gang problem in this State's prison facilities and therefore they should be permanently reinstated.

NEED FOR EQUIPMENT

Improper or inadequate equipment can impede communications in a prison and leave corrections officers in dangerous situations.

According to testimony, there are many areas in prisons where there are no duress buttons or telephones. Some of these areas are remote and not easily seen from common areas. In these remote areas, inmates could commit violent acts upon officers without being observed. A properly charged and operating radio would enable an officer to signal distress from a remote area or any area that is not equipped with a duress button. Underscoring the importance of these radios was testimony about a female officer who was beaten and raped in a remote area of a prison.

Currently, not every officer on duty is equipped with a radio. In the northern region of the State, there is on average one radio for every five officers on duty. Those who testified agreed that every officer should have a radio, even if they are in a public place, as officers may be called upon to perform relief or to travel into remote areas.

Of course, a radio is only as good as its battery and a witness testified that batteries frequently run out and there are no battery chargers in the prison wings. An individual testified that the chargers used by the DOC are not adequate. Upgraded chargers can be ordered, but there would be an additional cost. Further, one witness

reported that the radios are purchased for approximately \$2,500. This price includes maintenance and software, but the witness testified that the State does not need to pay for maintenance, as all maintenance is handled in house.

The task force finds that a sufficient number of radios should be made available to all custody personnel for each shift.

RECRUITMENT ISSUES

Gangs benefit when their members procure staff positions in the Department of Corrections (DOC). These positions would allow gang members to provide special treatment to their members and gain information used by the DOC. Since corrections officers are afforded civil service protections, including the right to appeal disciplinary and termination decisions, it is often difficult to remove a corrections officer. Therefore, applicants must be carefully screened so that only high quality, honest applicants are hired.

Currently, the DOC conducts home interviews of corrections officer applicants. Testimony was taken stating that the DOC is considering terminating the home interview.

A home interview is an interview conducted in the home of the correction officer applicant. Experienced recruiters report that applicants are more comfortable and therefore more willing to talk openly and perhaps carelessly when they are being interviewed in their own home. Careless applicants have made incriminating statements which have disqualified them from being hired. While conducting a home interview, the recruiting officer will have the opportunity to observe any signs of gang or drug related activity. In addition, the recruiting officer has an opportunity to obtain information from the applicant's family members and neighbors.

Home interviews also allow the recruiting officer to verify applicant information, such as their address. While the correct address may appear to be a trivial detail, the residency requirement of certain facilities makes the home address a crucial piece of information. In several communities, addresses must be closely inspected. For example, applicants for employment in South Woods State Prison in Bridgeton sometimes reside in a trailer park community, half of which is in Bridgeton City, and half of which is out of the city.

According to testimony, recruiting officers who perform home interviews do not receive formal training on gangs and gang related issues. Training in this area would enable recruiters to better spot gang members who are attempting to procure a position as a corrections officer. Lack of adequate information on gang symbols, colors, and codes makes it markedly more difficult for a recruiting officer to detect a gang member and therefore prevent that member from infiltrating the facility.

There was some testimony that due to the importance of hiring qualified applicants, recruitment should be done only by trained custody staff with a minimum of five years of experience. This is critical as those who are doing the hiring must be experienced and well trained in identifying gang symbols and recognizing gang activity.

The task force finds that custody staff who make recruitment and hiring decisions should have at least five years experience and that recruitment should be separate from the academy or the academy should appoint an assistant director to be responsible for recruitment. If the academy appoints an assistant director, he should have a custody background and head recruitment at the academy.

PAYMENTS TO INMATES

Maintaining order is essential in operating a prison. The use of both positive and negative incentives allows corrections officers to elicit positive and appropriate behavior from the inmates. Because jails are self sufficient, each inmate receives a minimum of \$1.20 a day for their labor. At a minimum, inmates are expected to keep their cells clean. Inmates may have a higher paying job, such as working in the facility's food service or landscaping industry, but no inmate receives less than \$1.20 a day. While this amount may seem nominal, it is meaningful to the inmates as they use the money to make purchases in the commissary.

During the hearings, it was revealed that even those inmates who assault a civilian or custody staff member continue to receive the \$1.20 daily payment. In effect, this rewards inmates for their bad behavior. The task force was troubled by this testimony and agreed that certain inmates who have committed serious disciplinary or gang related offenses should not receive this payment.

The task force finds that inmates with disciplinary problems should be penalized and not compensated \$1.20 daily.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This section outlines the findings of the Assembly Prison Gang Violence Task Force resulting from the testimony heard in the three public hearings. Following each finding is the task force's recommendation to address the finding. The findings and recommendations are not intended to be in order of priority.

1. FINDING: Rank and file corrections officers are not receiving the training necessary for them to adequately perform their employment responsibilities, particularly as it applies to dealing with the proliferation of gang activity in the correctional facilities. It should be noted that the American Correctional Association recommends 40 hours of annual in-service training for every corrections officer.

RECOMMENDATION: Legislation should be enacted requiring 40 hours annual in-service training for all State corrections officers, in addition to the training currently being provided by the Department of Corrections. Of these forty hours of required training, sixteen hours should cover institutional safety; gang management and intelligence; riot control; contraband interdiction; and counterterrorism issues. The remaining twenty-four hours of the training is to be dedicated to topics determined by the training department of each facility.

2. FINDING: Gang awareness is critical to identification. Currently, there is no system in place to ensure that all civilian staff receive training about gangs. If the civilian staff are properly trained, they will be an important source of information on gang patterns and activity in the prison system.

RECOMMENDATION: Legislation should be enacted to require civilian staff to receive at least four hours of gang training, in addition to any other training that is currently required.

3. FINDING: Historically, conducting line-ups between shifts in the correctional facilities proved to be an invaluable opportunity for supervisory personnel to share pertinent information with rank and file officers concerning the happenings in the institution during the previous shift or previous day. In light of the growing gang problem, reinstituting line-ups would greatly enhance the dissemination of information concerning gang activity among inmates.

RECOMMENDATION: Legislation should be enacted requiring the Commissioner of Corrections to permanently institute a line-up program in this State's correctional facilities for the specific purpose of information dissemination to rank and file officers.

4. FINDING: Gangs employ a sophisticated intelligence network and are able to transmit information from one prison to another. Riots or incidents that occur in one prison may be a part of a larger chain of events. In order to effectively maintain control in a prison, officers must be informed of certain events that occur in other facilities.

RECOMMENDATION: When a lockdown is ordered or another major incident occurs in one of the State's correctional facilities, all rank and file officers in every other institution should be notified of that lockdown or incident.

5. FINDING: There is an inherent barrier between corrections officers and the investigators who are called upon to investigate complaints against the corrections officers. Using these investigators to collect gang information from the corrections officers is detrimental to the information gathering process as corrections officers are reticent to talk openly with the investigators.

RECOMMENDATION: Legislation should be enacted to remove the Intelligence Section from the Special Investigations Division (SID) of the DOC and make it a separate unit.

6. FINDING: Corrections Officers have civil service protection and therefore enjoy a certain level of job security. Because of this security, new officers must be carefully selected because they will likely remain with the department for an extended period of time. Seasoned corrections officers are the most qualified to determine what traits are desirable in a corrections officer.

RECOMMENDATION: Legislation should be enacted to require custody staff who make recruitment and hiring decisions to have at least five years experience.

7. FINDING: Because several of the institutions will reach their 25th year anniversary, there will be a large number of retiring officers who must be replaced. Because officers enjoy civil service job protection, they must be carefully selected. Home interviews allow an interviewer to obtain a great deal of information that cannot be obtained in a more traditional interview setting. Eliminating the home interviews would result in a "watering down" of the hiring process.

RECOMMENDATION: Home interviews should continue to be done for all prospective DOC employees.

8. FINDING: Gangs benefit when their members can obtain staff positions in the Department of Corrections. Therefore, all applicants must be carefully screened so as to prevent gang members from obtaining staff positions. In order to carefully screen the applicants, all members of the Custody Recruitment Unit and any other personnel making hiring decisions must be trained in how to identify a gang member and recognize gang activity.

RECOMMENDATION: All members of the Custody Recruitment Unit and any other persons making hiring decisions should be trained in gang activity.

9. FINDING: The use of both positive and negative incentives allows corrections officers to elicit positive and appropriate behavior from the inmates. Currently, the DOC pays inmates a minimum of \$1.20 a day. Inmates receive this money regardless of any disciplinary charges against them. Withholding this money would serve to penalize inmates who are disciplinary problems.

RECOMMENDATION: Inmates with disciplinary problems should be penalized and not compensated \$1.20 daily.

10. FINDING: There are many areas in prisons where there are no duress buttons or telephones available. Some of these areas are remote and not easily seen from common areas. In these remote areas, inmates could commit violent acts upon officers

without being observed. Corrections officers must have the ability to contact others at any time.

RECOMMENDATION: A sufficient number of radios should be made available to all custody personnel for each shift.

11. FINDING: The Custody Recruitment Unit was recently merged with Sea Girt Academy. Currently, the academy's director does not have any custody background and therefore does not have the experience needed to handle recruitment for DOC.

RECOMMENDATION: Recruitment should be separate from the academy or the academy should appoint an assistant director to be responsible for recruitment. If the academy appoints an assistant director, he should have a custody background and head recruitment at the academy.