

## **CRIMINAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE**

### *El Dorado County Jail, South Lake Tahoe*

#### **Reason for the Report**

The California Penal Code authorizes and directs Grand Juries to 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 made an announced inspection of the South Lake Tahoe Jail facility on August 15, 2001.

- Members of the Grand Jury were given a comprehensive tour of the jail by the Administrative Sergeant.
- Members of the Criminal Justice Committee had a post-tour meeting with the Jail Commander.
- The following written materials were reviewed by the Committee and discussed with the Jail Commander:
  - Policy and Procedures Manual;
  - Inmate Orientation booklet;
  - Job Description Manual;
  - Statistical Reports regarding Inmate Population;
  - Board of Corrections Inspection Report.
- Grand Jury Reports for 1998/99, 1999/00, and 2000/01 were reviewed.

#### **Findings**

- F1: All areas of the jail were exceptionally clean.
- F2: The jail is generally well maintained – painting, equipment, appliances, etc.
- F3: Staff was well groomed and cooperative.
- F4: When arrestees are received and booked, the process is taped.
- F5: Personal visits are restricted to immediate family members; the visits are non-contact.
- F6: Staff training appears to be adequate.

- F7: Every security position has written orders, which are reviewed by the assigned correctional officer, and are signed and dated by that officer.
- F8: Non-lethal weapons, such as gas, are stored in a locked room – only staff have access. Within the room, the non-lethal weapons are in a locked locker – only the Jail Commander and the Sergeants have keys. Note: The 00/01 Grand Jury found a problem with weapons storage. The problem has been corrected.
- F9: Staffing appears adequate considering the type of facility, construction, and numbers and kinds of inmates:
- 1 Lieutenant
  - 6 Sergeants
  - 26 Correctional Officers
  - 7 Sheriff's Assistants
  - 1 Aide
- Note: Only the Lieutenant is a peace officer. Therefore, the Sergeants and Correctional Officers cannot use lethal weapons (i.e. guns).
- F10: The medical program is provided by a contract company – RN on days, LVN at night, and an MD always on call.
- F11: Programs such as AA, Narcotics Anonymous, and Anger Management are provided to inmates by volunteers from the community.
- F12: Inmate appeals and discipline are handled appropriately as prescribed by the Board of Corrections, Title 15, California Code of Regulations.
- F13: No “musty odor” was noticed. The 00/01 Grand Jury Report documented a “musty odor” especially in the access area.
- F14: All members of the Grand Jury were impressed by the knowledge, dedication, and high level of interest of the Jail Commander.
- F15: Cracks in the concrete were observed in various parts of the jail. Of special concern were the cracks found in the kitchen.
- F16: The ADA pedestrian ramp located in the front of the jail is cracked and buckling. This is an obvious safety issue. Approval was granted to fix the ramp in 1998 and no action has been taken.

### **Recommendations**

- R1: The cracks in the concrete found in various parts of the jail need to be repaired, especially the one in the kitchen.
- R2: The ADA pedestrian ramp located in front of the jail should be removed, redesigned and replaced. In addition, a canopy should be placed over it so in the winter ice and snow are not a problem. This project has been authorized and approved since 1998, however has still not been started. This creates a hazard for all who need to use the ramp and a potential liability for the county. It is strongly recommended that this project be completed before winter of 2001-2002.

### **Commendations**

The Grand Jury again commends the Jail Commander, Lt. Lovell, and his staff for the outstanding work they are doing. The jail is clean, orderly, and the staff performs many tasks in a professional manner.

### **Responses Required for Findings**

F1 through F16      El Dorado County Board of Supervisors  
El Dorado County Sheriff

### **Responses Required for Recommendations**

R1 through R2      El Dorado County Board of Supervisors  
El Dorado County Sheriff