

MEET & CONFER MEETING

September 18, 2014

Director Ryan greeted the group and addressed the following questions and agenda items.

SUBMITTED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

AZCPOA did not pose any questions. Questions one through four posed by Fraternal Order of Police, Lodge 44. Questions five through seven posed by ACA.

Question 1 – ASPC-Yuma: Cocopah and La Paz Units are most always running under their CORE, we are regularly told to collapse Officer posts in the dorms because we are a Minimum Unit. It was my understanding that we were not supposed to collapse posts. The staff is frustrated with this happening all the time and being cross-leveled to other units within the complex.

Answer 1 – Post charts are reviewed at every complex to adjust staffing and fill posts. If unable to fill posts, consideration of yard activity is taken into account to ensure basic needs are met. The philosophy used at all ten facilities is that minimum custody units have more posts to collapse. The Captains complete their staffing projections two weeks in advance to ensure they are meeting their unit's CORE staffing. If a shift is projected to be below their CORE staffing, then the Chief of Security will review the following options to meet their numbers:

1. Adjust shift RDOs
2. Adjust shift staffing
3. Preplanned cross leveling with other units

To review the system used for collapsing posts, contact your Supervisor or chain of command at complex level. At ASPC-Yuma, for example, the Major and Captains meet every Monday to discuss this; arrangements can be made for others to attend that meeting.

Question 2 - ASPC-PV & ASPC-Florence: Post orders for hospital transports need a bit of clarification. When ASPC-PV non-pregnant inmates are transported to the hospital, there seems to be an unwritten directive from the Warden that states, "Until inmates are admitted to the ADC Ward, they are not to be restrained while in the hospital awaiting intake." (No cuffing them to the bed, etc.). At the same time, if the inmates are transported from ASPC-Florence or Phoenix they are restrained as a standard practice. These dual directives cause confusion with not only Officers at the posts, but also the Supervisors at each respective complexes and the ADC Ward at the Hospital.

Answer 2 – Follow policy with respect to restraining inmates during transports, medical or otherwise.

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Question 3 – As a CIRT leader, I handle some Domestic Violence issues. A concern has been raised that both the victim of domestic violence and the perpetrator are disciplined by the Department (as employees), regardless of the outcome of the criminal investigation. This has led to the consensus among Staff that even as a victim of Domestic Violence; a victim should not report the abuse to the Department and or cannot defend themselves against the abuse, for the fear of losing their job or being disciplined by the Department. It is seen as a double jeopardy/re-victimized process. How are the rights of Domestic Violence victims (Staff) being insured by CIU/AIU and the Department in general?

Answer 3 – The Department is certainly concerned about the rights of employees who are victims of domestic violence. Each case that results in employee discipline is reviewed on the facts and the conduct of the employees involved. When an employee uses the grievance process, Employee Relations will work with the Director to ensure that the grievance policy process is administered consistently. Members of CIRT and others should be referring employees in these types of situations to our expanded Employee Assistance Program with ComPsych, at 1-800-877-327-2362. This number is staffed around the clock, 24/7. Up to six counseling sessions per issue are available for individuals as well as families and can often provide communication skills and other tools to enable all involved to find resolutions rather than resorting to violence. There is also a national domestic violence hotline, which can be contacted by anyone at any time by calling 1-800-799-7233.

Deputy Director Hood took a moment to explain the process for reviewing staff discipline actions to ensure fairness and consistency. For discipline up to 40 hours' suspension, Wardens prepare the recommendations and those are vetted by the RODS. Any discipline in the Offender Operations Division that is 40 hours and up is initiated by the Wardens, then reviewed and discussed by the Employee Relations Officers, Chief Human Resources Officer, and the Division Directors for Offender Operations and Support Services. The multiple levels of review are intended to ensure the same types of discipline are being administered Department-wide for similar behaviors.

Question 4 – Why does the promotion process for a Community Corrections Officer (CCO) not include the voluntary physical fitness test (FITPRO) administered at complex or COTA since the CCO is in the Correctional Officer Series? Successful completion of the FITPRO should be counted as extra promotional points as in other promotional series within the Department. Can this be added to the Community Corrections Officer process?

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Answer 4 – When the additional promotional points were first added to the Central Promotional Register process in 2004, all CPR classifications were included. In 2008, that was modified so only positions in the uniformed portion of the CO series were eligible for the additional promotional points for voluntary physical fitness testing, based on a belief that those positions' job tasks were more physical than the others. A consultant has been retained to assess the CO series for job fitness requirements, and that can be expanded to include an assessment of the CCO job's duties.

Question 5 – We would like to request approval for transparent Plexiglas to be installed on those control room windows facing the toilet/shower areas in lower-custody housing units.

Answer 5 – Installation of Plexiglas can be phased in at each complex over the next several months. Employees should present and elevate concerns that enhance security locally, such improvements are made at the complex level.

Question 6 – We would like to request staff have access to their attendance records, the same as those used by the shift commanders.

Answer 6 – Staff need to be able to know at all times exactly where they stand regarding their attendance. Staff should request time with their supervisor to jointly review attendance records. Keep in mind that the PAR signature is for the current two weeks, but also to verify the prior two weeks has been recorded correctly.

Question 7 – Utilizing “dream sheets” (or appropriate name of document) for annual leave requests at the end/beginning of each year for all affected staff

Answer 7 – The process of utilizing “dream sheets” for the purpose of planning annual leave calendars has been submitted to the policy unit and is being actively worked on for inclusion in Department Order #512. Employees are required to have adequate time on the books to submit a dream sheet request. Based on long-standing practice, seniority is the deciding factor when multiple requests are received for the same dates. The policy revision will include an option for a proxy to submit a dream sheet on behalf of an employee.

Additional Discussion:

Rotation Policy: When an employee is rotated from a support role to a unit, he or she will return to the shift and RDO he or she had before. The rotation period has been increased to five years. When an employee turns in a memo requesting a shift or RDO change, it will follow him or her until such time as it takes effect.

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Decision Packages: The Director shared that decision packages relative to the upcoming legislative session have been submitted. The inmate population continues to grow. The reality is that the system grew by more than 1,000 in FY14, with a projected zero growth rate. In FY15 and FY16 the projected growth was 0%, but new projections for both years indicate the inmate population will grow by 1,000. The Lewis Rast unit 500 beds will open in December. In January, 500 beds will be available in Eloy. Yuma Cheyenne facilities will be fully restored, opening up 324 temporary beds for potential use. Additional beds available may come from those red lined and temporary in medium and minimum dormitories. A request to pursue additional beds is being made. Currently, 78% of the beds are in minimum and medium dormitories. Close custody, double cell, is the footprint design used now for 25 years. Of these beds, 14% represent close custody. Currently 6.7% of our beds are maximum security beds. The request to legislators for an additional 3,000 beds is focused on the medium security cell or dormitory design.

ADC's number one budget priority in the FY16 request is a pay increase for the CO series. This past year we were able to add geographic stipends for hard to fill positions, eliminate salary compression in the CO series, and make market adjustments for Investigators. Additionally, several thousand employees received merit pay, using \$2.5 million in vacancy savings due to unfilled vacancies. In FY16, a forthcoming pay package is most critical with 615 vacant CO positions. Current CO salary range is \$32,000-\$40,000, while competitors from fifteen other county and private prison contractors offer a \$40,000 entry level salary. We are third from the bottom ranking in county and private prisons and second from the bottom ranking in Western states at current CO salary range. ADC will request a five percent pay package to help with recruiting and retention, moving the CO grouping up two positions to improve starting pay range. This does not place us in a top salary ranking but increases our competitiveness.

An additional consideration is implementing a recruitment bonus for referrals on a limited time basis, separate from the pay packages; this concept will require ADOA approval. We need officers and security staff to fulfill our mission and ADC's pay package needs to be competitive.

Close

We will meet again in three months. During this time, think of issues that affect our agency as a whole to be responsive to our employees. When bringing issues to this forum, please submit a thorough description of the issue, complete information about what you have done to try to resolve it (i. e. the who, what, when, where, etc.), and a proposed solution.

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The Director thanked those who attended.

cc: Executive Staff
Wardens
Paul O'Connell
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