

MEET & CONFER MEETING
October 1, 2010

Kingman Escape

Director Ryan provided a detailed overview of the Kingman escape. In terms of significance, this is the worst escape in 32 years, since Gary Tyson absconded and murdered six people. That incident resulted in the implementation of a standardized, statewide inmate classification system.

During the course of the onsite review and audits, no less than 50 major security issues were noted. As a result, the Peer Audit System implemented by the previous administration is no longer in use. A new auditing system is being developed which will incorporate state of the art wireless PDA systems/technology and provide instantaneous results. The audit instrument, currently undergoing field testing, includes approximately 16 competencies and 230 line items. It is designed to provide factual, instant reporting of issues by classifying findings as green, yellow or red. Any findings falling under the red category will automatically trigger a notification to the Warden, Division Director and Director.

Previously, the onsite contract monitor duties were assigned to an Associate Deputy Warden. As a result of the review/audits, these responsibilities are now assigned to a Deputy Warden, Rick Sullivan. Additionally, monitors will rotate every year to two years in order to prevent stagnation.

Q – Will private prison staff receive more training?

A – Private prison security employees receive the same training as departmental employees.

STAFFING ISSUES

Staff Rotation

Director Ryan discussed a current issue pertaining to the process of regaining RDO's lost during a unit transfer. Employees who do not maintain their current shift or RDO should submit a memo to their supervisor in order to be placed on the waiting list. Discussion ensued regarding seniority and the need for a consistent approach and interpretation of the policy. Director Ryan agreed to convene a committee to discuss the issues and develop recommendations. The committee will be chaired by Division Director Patton and consist of officers Shultz, Block, Potteiger, Wallace, Ball, Christy and Adams.

Overtime/Compensatory Time

In order to alleviate staffing shortages caused by the previous administration's decision to abolish 565 CO positions, the department requested to fill approximately 200 CO positions. Additionally, the Director will request some positions be restored to ADC. Until staff are hired and trained OT/COMP is authorized to increase security within the housing units/dorms, where statistics and reports show an increase in both inmate and staff assaults.

Q – Can Sergeants and Lieutenants fill overtime slots if there are no CO's available?

A – OT is to be scheduled in advance. Sergeants and Lieutenants may be authorized, but ONLY after the OT opportunity has been posted and discussed in briefings to ensure there are no CO volunteers available on that date.

Q – Can Parole Officers work OT at the unit.

A - No

Q – What about no shows for OT?

A – A consistent system will be developed and implemented through a DI/DO update.

Q – ASPC-Tucson continues to experience staffing shortages due to having to provide hospital coverage for numerous inmates. The secure ward is not being used because only inmates not requiring telemetry can be placed there and the ward is only used if there are four or more inmates assigned to it. OT is being used to cover the slots for cross-leveling.

A - Dr. Adu-Tutu, Health Services Division Director, will research and respond to this issue. The Deputy Director is also part of this review process.

Q – Transportation teams are experiencing issues with inmate medical appointment scheduling and inmates refusing to report for medical appointments.

A – The department is charged for appointments which are not canceled. The policy is being modified. Inmates who refuse to report for medical appointments will be billed. This change will require a 30-day notice to inmates prior to implementation.

Q – Is the Department planning to pay off comp time?

A – Paying down comp levels is dependent upon funding availability; employees and supervisors need to schedule and monitor leave use so hours are not forfeited at the end of the year.

Q – SMU and Browning units need two Sergeants for each shift. Is there any plan to increase the number of Sergeant at these units?

A – The issue will be researched and the Division Director for Offender Operations will make a recommendation.

Post Coverage – 4/10's vs 5/8's

There has been discussion regarding phasing out 4/10 schedules due to the expense of funding the relief factor. Manning a 4/10 schedule is more expensive than a 5/8 schedule as it requires more FTE's. No decision has been made as of yet. It is being evaluated and, not unlike the rotation policy, a broad cross-section of employees including teachers, CO III's, CO IV's and Mental Health staff are involved. Discussion ensued regarding the benefits of a 4/10 schedule for CO III's, Mental Health and Teachers as it pertains to their ability to provide services to the inmate population, regardless of custody level, as well as perform required administrative functions during regular business hours.

Q – Are you aware that it is being implemented at Safford/Ft. Grant?

A – No, it is under evaluation.

LEXAN

Director Ryan circulated photographs of the lexan cell barrier prototype for cells within SMU, Browning and detention areas. The prototype was developed in an effort to reduce staff assaults by inmates throwing hazardous liquids, etc. Previous screens inhibited cell airflow/circulation and were unsanitary. The new style, which includes hinges and angle iron framing, provides circulation and easy access for cleaning. Not all cells will be retrofitted with the screens and the screens will not change the requirement for staff to wear body armor and use shields, but will enhance staff safety and reduce an inmate's ability to "throw" on staff.

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ISSUES

The last two suicides were both pending placement into Protective Segregation. Studies show this population to be more susceptible to self-harm/suicide. While Arizona ranks well below the national average for inmate suicides, ADC is re-establishing a Behavioral Health Unit at the Eyman complex in order to expedite evaluations and improve access to services for this specialized population.

UNIFORMS

Correctional employees receive a uniform allowance to enable them to replace worn items and maintain a professional appearance. Supervisors need to enforce the dress standards.

MISTAKE VS. MISCONDUCT

While there may be some disagreement on the definitions of a mistake and of misconduct, problems should be corrected at the lowest possible level. Supervisors should use the PACE as a tool to provide feedback on an employee's job performance. Comments and notations, both positive and negative, should be annotated within two weeks of the action/incident.

While a 601 sounds bad, it is just another tool to investigate an incident, if needed. If an employee responds to a 601 and admits to committing the infraction, there is no need for further investigation. Discipline should be imposed in accordance with policy. Not every infraction justifies/requires a suspension; review the Discipline Chart and take into account the employee's past history; a Letter of Reprimand is also a disciplinary sanction.

Q – Do investigators have to notify an employee when they are under investigation?

A – If an employee is initially classified as a witness, but in light of new information becomes a principle in the case, yes.

PAROLE OFFICERS (PO's) WEARING WEAPONS

This issue surfaced approximately 20 months ago. Since that time, office security has been enhanced by including lockers, metal detectors and/or hand-held wands, cell phones, laptops and tasers. Employees received appropriate weapons/taser training and are authorized to carry their weapons for personal safety. That being said, PO's are not authorized to wear a weapon inside the office, as they have not been trained in drawing/using a weapon in an office setting. Only sworn peace officers may remain armed. Additionally, if police assistance is required in the performance of their duties, the PO becomes secondary to the police officer.

Q – What is the purpose of the PRI unit doing intakes for Parole?

A – This is a new unit and the bugs are still being worked out. Eventually, 95% of pending releases will be processed through this unit, including all community placement notifications/reviews.

Q – What about restroom facilities for parolees at the 801 building?

A – The restrooms are public facilities. If they need to use the restroom, escort them.

CELL PHONES & COMMUNICATION DEVICES

Cell Phone Use

As of July 29, 2010, possession of a cell phone on State Prison grounds is a class 5 felony. Violators will be prosecuted. Additionally, staff assigned to hospital coverage and transport runs should not carry personal cell phones as they are a distraction and not work related. State issued cell phones will be provided for transportation teams and hospital runs.

Radio Batteries

Staff assigned to control rooms need to be trained in the proper use of the tri-analyzers. Batteries must be tri-analyzed in order to maintain the ability to hold a charge.

YUMA ROOFING ISSUES

There are two buildings which suffered severe damage to the roofs. The Warden, Deputy Wardens and Associate Deputy Wardens are working to correct and manage the repair/replacement. Correcting the issue is a priority as the cost of plastic and styro foam containers is .5 million per year.

QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

Q – What is the status on the Taser vs. Hazardous Chemicals pilot project?

A – The pilot project is going well; we are at the 90-day mark. After the results are reviewed, a recommendation for implementation will like be forthcoming.

Q – Are probationary employees authorized to make transportation runs/work hospital duty? Currently the policy states employees must be permanent status.

A – Yes, the policy will be updated to reflect the change.

Q – How long will the furloughs last?

A – They are scheduled for two years.

Q – Will correctional supervisors be excluded from the furloughs?

A – For the present, supervisors will continue to be furloughed. I may recommend that Sergeants be excluded in the future, but funding will need to be located.

Q – Is there a plan to cut salaries by 5%?

A – I'm not aware of any such plan.