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TULARE COUNTY DETENTION FACILITIES

BACKGROUND

The Main Jail (MJ), located in central Visalia, was built in 1962. Most of the males arrested in Tulare County are booked at the MJ. It has the capacity to house 264 individuals, which includes the general population and gang members. As an older facility, it has a linear layout in which the cells are laid out along a central corridor. The layout precludes direct supervision, which requires the staff to regularly patrol the corridors. The MJ does not meet current jail standards. However, should it be closed temporarily it could not be reopened.

Bob Wiley Detention Facility (BWDF) is located north of Visalia and was built in 1987. This newer facility has a layout that permits direct supervision of the inmates. There are nine units, three of which are reserved for females. All female detainees are transported directly to and booked at the BWDF. It has the capacity to house 690 individuals, which includes the general population, gang members, and administrative segregation.

Adult Pre-Trial Facility (APTF) is located north of Visalia and was built in 2001. Like the BWDF, its layout permits direct supervision of the inmates. It was designed to be a primary booking facility and includes its own courtroom. This facility has the capacity to house 384 inmates. The APTF includes an infirmary, which is used for all of the detention facilities.

Men's Correctional Facility (MCF) is located north of Visalia. Using converted World War II barracks, the MCF began operating as a detention facility in 1960. Inmates use one of several programs available, one of which is a substance abuse program. MCF houses inmate workers who can work outside of the facility. The MCF transferred its 290 inmates to the APTF due to the necessity of inspection and possible repair/replacement of antiquated gas lines. It is anticipated that MCF will be reopened in mid 2011.

REASON FOR INVESTIGATION

California Penal Code §919 (b) states "The grand jury shall inquire into the condition and management of the public prisons within the county". The 2010-2011 Tulare County Grand Jury (Grand Jury) received complaints from detention facility inmates.

PROCEDURES FOLLOWED

1. Interviewed relevant personnel

2. Investigated detention facility inmate complaints
3. Obtained and inspected inmate grievance forms
4. Inspected the four detention facilities mentioned in the background
5. Inspected the BWDF cattle and swine facilities
6. Observed the slaughter of the BWDF cattle
7. Inspected the produce farming facility
8. Three members of the Grand Jury recused themselves

FINDINGS

1. A BWDF inmate complained of cockroach/fly infestations. Upon inspection of an inmate cell, the Grand Jury noted the following:
 - a. Inmates are given the opportunity to clean their cells on a daily basis.
 - b. The inmate-inspected cell had days old food, dishes, and utensils stockpiled.
 - c. The cell floor was covered with food and crumbs.
 - d. Each cell unit is fumigated on a bi-weekly basis and if needed is fumigated weekly.
2. An inmate complained the BWDF laundry supplies were inadequate. Clothing sizes were unavailable or dirty and sheets had blood on them. The Grand Jury visited the BWDF laundry and found the following:
 - a. All clothing sizes are available and surplus supplies are on hand.
 - b. Inmates exchange their clothing twice a week.
 - c. Any item, whether it is clothing or bedding, found with blood on it, is disposed of as hazardous material.
3. Inmates from the MCF are used for the BWDFs farming operations.
4. The Grand Jury did a surprise inspection of the BWDF cattle and hog facilities and noted the following:
 - a. Dirty sand in the hog pens is completely removed and replaced with clean sand on a daily basis.
 - b. Both areas were kept amazingly clean and no odors associated with cattle or hogs were detected.
5. The Grand Jury observed the slaughter of the cattle raised at the BWDF. The animals were slaughtered quickly and humanely.