

ALASKA LEGISLATURE COMMITTEE FILES 1991-1992 8672

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ALASKA CORRECTIONAL INDUSTRIES COMMISSION

FEASIBILITY ANALYSIS

PROPOSED INDUSTRY

TRAVEL TELEMARKETING, RESERVATION, AND MAIL FULFILLMENT SYSTEM

EFFECTIVE DATE: January 10, 1992

FEASIBILITY ANALYSIS

I. PROPOSED INDUSTRY - TRAVEL TELEMARKETING, RESERVATION, AND MAIL FULFILLMENT SYSTEM

A. INDUSTRY CONCEPTUALIZATION

The proposed purpose of this correctional industry would be to allow Alaska Correctional Industries to assist other state agencies in conveying information to the general public, inside and outside the State of Alaska, in order to answer questions regarding the state services and/or information now provided. This proposed service industry would respond to requests for travel and tourism information in Alaska. A proposal to also establish a reservation system to secure reservations on any of the state operated transportation systems may be considered. The telemarketing of this information would also be considered as a potential function of this industry.

B. POTENTIAL MARKET

Four state agencies have expressed an interest in securing services potentially offered as part of this industry from the Alaska Correctional Industries program. The Alaska Marine Highway System/Department of Transportation, the Alaska Railroad Corporation (a quasi-state agency), the Division of Tourism/Department of Commerce and Economic Development, and the Alaska Tourism Marketing Council are considered as the initial markets for this service.

Currently, all four agencies offer their unique services through in-house staff positions and/or through contracts with private sector vendors. Due to the extensive travel boom to Alaska over the last decade and a reduction in the availability of state general fund resources, these agencies have found it difficult to keep pace with the public's increased inquiries for their services and information. Delays in responses, unavailability of adequately staffed offices, and the inability to follow up on late schedule changes have created complaints from in-state residents and potentially a loss of revenue from out-of-state residents unable to plan and/or schedule their vacations.

Therefore, the initial defined target market for this industry would be for Alaska Correctional Industries to provide a level of supplemental services to those state agencies that can not be currently met by their existing level of staffing. Consideration must also be given to capturing any

business that has consistently been awarded to a private vendor out of state if correctional industries can provide a cost efficient alternative with comparable service.

C. PROPOSED SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED

Four types of services have been identified by the four state agencies initially involved in this feasibility study. All or some level of the following services could be provided by Alaska Correctional Industries to assist the state in its current level of service. The following is the description and definition of the services under discussion:

1) Informational Mailing Service- Alaska Correctional Industries could operate a mail fulfillment operation. State agencies would forward lists of addresses and identify what type of packaged information should be forwarded to their customers and/or customer mailing lists.

2) Toll Free Information Line- Alaska Correctional Industries could establish a toll free national 800 telephone number which would be advertised in all State of Alaska promotional travel brochures. All inquiries would be answered by ACI inmate employees. Programmed information prepared by the state agencies would be disseminated over the telephone. Any free published information requested could be forwarded by the ACI Informational Mailing Service. Those customers requiring assistance from specific agencies could be advised of the proper telephone contact for direct assistance.

3) Reservation System- A reservation system to allow the state's customers to secure reservations on any of the state operated transportation services would be operated by Alaska Correctional Industries. The ACI staff would supplement existing state agency personnel in peak high demand times and/or be charged with specific functions (for example...schedule delays or cancellations notices). The ACI staff would require access to the state agency's existing reservation system.

4) Telemarketing Services- State agency promotional campaigns that identify a target market where telephone solicitations would be effective could contract with the Correctional Industries Program for telemarketing services. The agency would prepare the marketing presentation and ACI would be responsible for the delivery of the presentation to the specified market.

D. SUGGESTED SALES APPROACH

One sales approach would be to complete a product line

determination for review by GS&S in order to utilize the "state use law" that is currently in effect within Section 33.32.030 of the Alaska Statutes. It is anticipated that Alaska Correctional Industries would be effective in providing a better than comparable service at fair market value. Under this scenario, state agencies would then be required to purchase the service as provided by Alaska Correctional Industries in the contract awards manual. Some quasi-state agencies (ie. the Alaska Railroad) are not required to purchase under the requirements of the contract awards manual.

Another approach, and probably more effective, would be to have the state agencies that are currently interested in some level of service develop a memorandum of understanding with Alaska Correctional Industries to describe and define the services they would be interested in securing. A fair market price for the program's services could then be established in conjunction with a pricing determination by the Division of General Services and Supply, Department of Administration.

E. IDENTIFICATION OF ANY POTENTIAL CONFLICTS

Existing research of this service occupation indicates that the state agencies currently service their reservation needs and information processing within their own agencies utilizing state positions. However, private sector contracts, both in-state and out-of-state have been established in some instances to assist in providing the following services:

Marine Highways System -AMHS currently provides all their own information mailing with their existing reservation staff. All of their telephone inquiries are routed to their reservation clerks who also currently answer general tourism related questions.

According to George Foster, Reservations and Marketing Manager, AMHS for the first time has secured a private sector contract with the advertising firm of Bradley and Associates (an in-state vendor) to complete a telemarketing survey.

Alaska Railroad Corporation -ARRC has completed most of the noted service functions in-house with no assistance from private sector businesses and/or contracts. The ARRC does however purchase mailing lists from the Alaska Visitors Association (20,000 addresses) and other related travel sources for direct mail marketing campaigns. During the past, these mailings have been accomplished through an in-state mail fulfillment house.

Division of Tourism -The Division of Tourism employs staff in Juneau that primarily process mail and telephone inquiries in-

house from the public. In providing information to answer these inquiries, the division also provides documentation in support of the Alaska Railroad, the Alaska Marine Highways,as well as federal and other state agencies (ie. Fish and Game, Job Service, etc.).

Alaska Travel and Marketing Council -In previous years, the Council has contracted with an in-state private vendor to compile a computerized listing of individuals that had initiated requests for the Alaska Travel Planner. The private vendor then forwarded the computerized listings to a mail fulfillment house in Portland, Oregon for the actual mailing of the planner. This arrangement experienced problems when the in-state private vendor was unable to maintain and process an up-to-date current listing of interested parties that would allow for the mailing of the planners in a timely manner. Highly fluctuating demands on the vendor's data entry workloads caused delays. According to Tina Lindgren, Executive Director of the Council, this contract has not been continued this year.

Currently, the Council maintains a contract with the out-of-state informational mail forwarding house in Portland, Oregon. This vendor now receives post cards direct from the interested parties for the travel planners and then the vendor mails the travel planners directly to the interested parties. The vendor also is responsible for providing computerized reports and data base lists to tourism partners. Services are also secured from a Canadian mail fulfillment house to provide the information to Canadian consumers utilizing Canadian postage in a cost efficient manner.

Approximately 720,000 travel planners were forwarded last year to consumers planning trips to Alaska and travel agencies that facilitate travel plans for tourists. Ms. Lindgren has indicated that the Council has not been able to award the printing contract for the travel planners to a commercial printer in Alaska. She indicated that up to this point in time, it has not been cost effective to ship the printed planners from the "lower 48" printer to Alaska, warehouse the planning books, and then ship the planners back to locations in the "lower 48".

In the past there has been some criticism regarding the use of an out of state mail fulfillment house to answer Alaskan travel inquiries. In addition, there have been inquiries on why an out of state printer has been utilized. Cost efficiencies and quality of service have been the controlling principals attributing to these decisions.

F. IMPLEMENTATION BY OTHER STATES

According to the 1991 Correctional Industries Directory as produced by the Correctional Industries Association, Inc., there are at least 15 states involved in some form of data entry, record conversion, mail surveys/marketing, telemarketing, and/or travel information assistance.

A New York Times article (attached) published on 11/24/91 indicates that approximately one dozen states have used inmates to answer travel and tourism inquiries or are considering doing so. Another New York Times article (attached, 1/2/92) indicates that approximately 15 states have set up telemarketing centers where inmates dial or receive business calls.

According to a 1990 update to the Guidelines for Prison Industries, Institute for Economic and Policy Studies, Inc., January 1990, 9 states are actively involved in telemarketing activities for either state agencies or in cooperative ventures with the private sector. Among these 9 states, there are 15 individual telemarketing operations either servicing state and/or private sector needs. In total, 318 inmates were employed in these telemarketing operations.

ACI staff has noted that successful reservation systems have been implemented in the Arizona and California correctional systems. Best Western Hotels will be celebrating their tenth anniversary by expanding their operation at the Arizona State Penitentiary for Women. Mary Drummond (602-255-1464), a contracts administrator for the industries program in Arizona has informed staff that their operation has been very successful for both Best Western and the Arizona Department of Corrections. TWA has implemented a reservation system within the California Youth Authority. Mr. Fred Mills (916-427-6682), the correctional industries administrator for the youth authority, has offered any support he could provide if ACI was to implement a reservation system employing inmates.

II. STAFFING REQUIREMENTS

A. SUPERVISORY STAFF

Three approaches could be utilized to supervise the ACI inmate staffing that would be employed within this correctional industry service industry:

- 1) Under ACI supervision, one Production Manager II would be required to supervise this operation.

2) If individual agencies wanted closer control of the operation, they could provide their own supervisor to train inmate employees and manage their individual operations.

3) A private vendor could be contracted to supervise the operation for all state agencies.

Given the defined circumstances, that at least four state agencies will be involved in this venture and their workloads are seasonal, it is suggested that ACI employs one full time production manager to manage this operation and coordinate the training of inmate employees. Unfortunately, no vacant production manager positions currently exist within the Department of Corrections.

B. INMATE STAFFING

Seasonal workload demands are customary in all four referenced state agencies. The Marine Highways System typically incur their heaviest workloads in December (when their initial bookings are opened) and April through September. However, unlike previous years, AMHS recently has been experiencing a full workload throughout the year. The Alaska Railroad's workload increases in March and extends at its highest levels through August. The Division of Tourism and the Alaska Tourism Marketing Council receives most of its demands in the off tourism season ...October through April.

The interested agencies are now being surveyed to approximately project the number of positions and approximated time-frames that would be required of ACI staff, if ACI was assisting their individual agencies. This information will provide the basis for the projected required level of inmate staffing. Preliminary data suggests the following staffing levels:

ALASKA MARINE HIGHWAYS

AMHS currently maintains a national 800 number that was implemented to provide a toll free reservation system for the ferry system.

In conversations with Mr. George Foster, Reservations and Marketing Manager for AMHS, he has indicated that approximately 55% to 60% of their reservation calls are for tourism related information. A new telephone reservation system to be installed within a month will provide their staff with the capabilities of automatically sorting their incoming calls through touch tone dialing. General information calls that do not require reservations can then be specifically routed to any location.

Mr. Foster has indicated that it would be beneficial for ACI to provide assistance in answering the tourism related inquiries. If that assistance was provided, then AMHS could be effective in providing their reservations and related scheduling information.

ESTIMATED SERVICE STAFF YEARS- ALASKA MARINE HIGHWAYS SYSTEM

Information Mailing-	Function performed by existing staff
Toll Free Information-	Approx. 4.0 full time positions
Reservation System-	Pending additional analysis
Telemarketing Services-	Private sector vendor under contract

Total Projected Staff- 4.0 full time positions

ALASKA RAILROAD CORPORATION

ARRC currently maintains a national 800 number that was implemented to provide a toll free reservation system for the railroad system.

Staff was copied on a letter (attached, 11/25/91) from Mr. Richard Knapp, Vice President, Marketing and Sales of the Alaska Railroad, to Senator Pearce. Mr. Knapp suggested the establishment of a 800 number for all tourism related "information only" calls. Mr. Knapp indicated that during the first 10 months of 1991, their Passenger Service staff responded to approximately 87,000 telephone calls. He estimates that as many as 40% of the calls are for information only. If ACI was to service the information only calls and effectively assist ARRC in reducing the number of non-reservation related calls, we can project that this would establish approximately 3.0 seasonal related jobs within the service functions of Toll Free Information and Information Mailing.

In conversations with Mr. Knapp, he has indicated that if the "information only" service was successful, then the Alaska Railroad might further evaluate the possibility of ACI being actively involved in processing actual reservations for railroad travel. The Alaska Railroad is actively reviewing their in-house reservation system to determine the costs of a new reservation system in comparison with a third party vendor.

ESTIMATED SERVICE STAFF YEARS-ALASKA RAILROAD CORPORATION

Information Mailing-	Function performed by existing staff
Toll Free Information-	Approx. 3.0 positions, March-Aug.
Reservation System-	Pending additional study
Telemarketing Services-	Not applicable at this time
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Total Projected Staff-	3.0 positions for 6 months

DIVISION OF TOURISM/DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Division of Tourism employs 4 staff in Juneau that primarily process mail and telephone inquiries from the public. Their in-house staff processed approximately 125,000 telephone and letter inquiries last year. The division is focused to provide a one stop shopping outlet for a variety of tourism information with governmental (state and federal) publications that includes information on the Alaska Railroad and the Alaska Marine Highways. By policy, the division is not allowed to forward private sector brochures and/or recommend specific private vendors unless they are a sole private vendor source (for example, the White-Pass Railroad). These procedures are designed to avoid unfair competition by the division between competing private sector vendors.

The division does not maintain an 800 informational number to answer tourism questions but there is currently a test being conducted on the use of a 800 number by the Alaska Tourism Marketing Council. This 800 number only provides travel planners to all individuals that call and leave their addresses on the recording system with a request for that information. This test may indicate the need for a full service toll free tourism information 800 number.

The Division of Tourism staff has indicated that at this time all of their inquiries are being answered in a timely manner. Consideration could be given to moving the data entry functions back to an in-state vendor and/or ACI if the service could be provided in a timely and efficient manner. Any service would best be closely coordinated with the current efforts provided by the Tourism Marketing Council. At this time, the value of any ACI assistance is under evaluation.

Conn Murray, Director of the Division of Tourism, in a letter to Senator Pearce (attached, 12/18/91) suggested that the use of ACI inmates should be used in conjunction with central state 800 information number with an appropriate voice and FAX tree. He indicated that the mail fulfillment of the

requests for information be included as part of the overall commitment.

ALASKA TOURISM MARKETING COUNCIL

The ATMC operates as a quasi state agency representing both the private sector and state government. ATMC is a 21 member council consisting of 10 private sector members and 10 members appointed by the Governor. All of the members are associated with and/or operating within the tourism industry. The Director of the Division of Tourism acts as chairperson of the council. The council members make the final determination on the distribution of the Alaska Travel Planners. While the council dedicates no staff to mail fulfillment operations, its' function is to facilitate the associated contracts and coordinate the distribution of funding (both private and state) in marketing Alaska tourism. Any considered Alaska Correctional Industries involvement with this agency would be through a contractual arrangement replacing the services now provided by the private sector.

ESTIMATE SERVICE STAFF YEARS-DIVISION OF TOURISM

Information Mailing-	Under evaluation
Toll Free Information-	Under evaluation
Reservation System-	Not applicable
Telemarketing Services-	Under evaluation
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Total Projected Staff-	To be determined

STATE AGENCY SUMMARY

A full spectrum of services and levels of involvement for correctional industries exists and have been discussed by the individual agencies and interested parties. It will be necessary for a final determination to be completed by the involved state agencies in order to finalize what functions could be provided by Alaska Correctional Industries. This information and a contractual financial commitment to Alaska Correctional Industries by the interested parties would be necessary to make the final determination as to whether this industry can be feasible and could operate in a cost efficient manner.

The initial evaluations with the agencies indicate that there is active interest in providing initial employment for 4 full time and 3 seasonal (6 month) inmate employees in this service industry. A core inmate staff of approximately two inmates would be necessary to maintain continuity of service, counterbalance attrition, and allow for the efficient training of employees. It is also anticipated that after the initial implementation, the services provided by this operation could be expanded to be utilized by other state agencies that need supplemental assistance in meeting project and/or seasonal workload demands in the aforementioned functions. Some type of additional state government workload and/or private business would have to be identified and secured to make this ACI operation cost efficient.

C. INMATE SKILL LEVELS

Basic office and computer skills would be needed and/or developed to maintain the functions of this service operation. Most of these functions are currently being performed in our existing ACI operations by inmate clerks who support the production managers with bookkeeping, purchasing, marketing, CAD efforts, etc.. The TIE concept could be utilized to maintain a sufficient level of trained inmate staff.

D. TRAINING REQUIRED

Currently, the state agencies providing these services primarily utilize seasonal employees and entry level positions making turnover sometimes prevalent. Employees are trained to become productive in a relatively short term (3 to 4 weeks). An adequate level of training could be provided to inmate employees through two basic methods:

1) It is suggested that the production manager supervising this operation would train within the individual agencies to fully understand their requirements and service needs. The production manager would then be responsible for the training new ACI employees as they were hired.

2) The serviced agencies could also provide training seminars to ACI inmate employees on site to increase productivity and maintain the quality of service.

All ACI inmate employees would be closely supervised and counseled on site to maximize quality control in all the services provided.

III. Investments

A. EQUIPMENT COSTS

Proper investment costs for equipment can only be established after a determination on the final level of services has been provided and an estimated ACI work force is established. However for discussion purposes and a general evaluation, an initial investment that would allow the capability of an informational mailing service, a toll free information line, and the capability of telemarketing can be generally approximated. Equipment for an on-line reservation system will not be considered at this time since that function was not identified as an intended need by the potential user agencies. The types of anticipated costs depending upon workload are as follows:

(10) office panel system work stations	\$10,000
(2) personal computers	6,500
(1) FAX system	2,500
(1) Copier (\$180/MTH for 3 years or purchase)	4,500
(1) Mail Machine with Postage Meter	4,000
(1) Postage Scale	1,800
(1) Folder/Inserter	3,300
Miscellaneous mail room equipment (sorting racks, mail carts, tape dispenser, bags, etc.)	2,500
Miscellaneous office equipment/supplies (file cabinets, chairs, tables, etc.)	4,000
(1) ACD telephone system -initial 10 stations with expansion	N/A
Total Estimated Equipment	\$39,100

Priority on all equipment to be secured would be ACI manufactured and/or state surplus, if available, to reduce the initial investment. The ACD telephone system is currently under evaluation and discussed in section V.-B Technical Problems.

B. BUILDING

This operation is estimated to require approximately 2,000 square feet for the individual work stations, production manager's office, mail room, processing area, storage of

associated information, and break room. Additional storage may be required for finished mailing lots depending on logistical requirements.

The facility requirements would be basic to any office area and would include adequate access to power (110 volt/clean lines for computer access), adequate access to telephone lines and potentially dedicated lines, office lighting, loading dock or loading area with double door access, and rest rooms access. No extenuating ceiling height requirements are anticipated.

As previously indicated, any available space within our Alaska correctional centers is at a premium and very scarce. If we are anticipating to identify space to implement this service industry in the short term, staff has identified only two potential facility options at the current time:

1) Approximately 2300 square feet of space could be made available within the correctional industries building at the Lemon Creek Correctional Center, in Juneau. This space was the former location of the ACI Bakery Operation and the Alaskans Leather MFG. cooperative venture which has discontinued operations. 110/220 volt electricity is in and the plant could be easily renovated to accommodate a service industry of the type described.

The institutional maintenance staff has informed ACI that an adequate telephone trunk line capable of at least 40 lines is currently installed to the correctional industries building. Switching equipment would have to be evaluated. Part of this space is currently being utilized to warehouse the Alaska Marine Highways laundry inventory in the off season. Some bakery equipment (including a rotary oven), a refrigeration unit, and supply storage is also currently occupying this location.

2) Current state negotiations for securing additional space is underway for the Wildwood Correctional Center. A plan to reallocate existing and potential new space is now being evaluated. There is at least the possibility that space could be identified for implementing a service industry to meet the required needs. The implementation time-frame would possibly be delayed in required renovations. The proposed customer service unit might operate in conjunction with the telemarketing industry.

The Division of Institutions, Department of Corrections, will have to be part of the reviewing process for evaluating the feasibility of this industry and identifying a potential site. A final evaluation would have to include their comments

regarding the potential location of this industry. Their evaluation and needs assessment would insure that an adequate level of properly classified inmates is available to provide the necessary work force for this potential correctional industry operation.

If existing adequate space can not be identified, a possibility of requesting capital funds for construction could be examined as part of the FY 93 budgeting process. This of course would delay any short term implementation of an initial operation.

IV. EMPLOYMENT POTENTIAL

Opportunities for employment after incarceration in the tourism and/or office vocation are well above average. The operation of a reservation system, personal computer skills, telephone etiquette, etc. presentation, are all skills that are readily transferable to many vocations in Alaska and the lower 48 states.

V. ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

A. SECURITY CONCERNS

The correctional officer in charge of jobs at any potential institutional work site would have the responsibility of identifying a list of potential inmate employees with proper security classifications prior to their interview and selection by the production manager. As previously indicated, it would be necessary for the Division of Institutions/DOC to provide an employment needs assessment of any potential sites to insure the availability of an adequate inmate work force.

Depending on the selected location, it may be necessary for DOC to identify the availability and/or funding requirements for an additional correctional officer to manage the security needs of this new industry. If the industry was operated in conjunction with an existing industry, adequate security staffing may be available. The Division of Institutions would make the final determination for any security requirements.

B. TECHNICAL PROBLEMS

The type of telemarketing functions being evaluated for implementation will require a state of the art telephone system to assure a quality level of service and security control. Such a system is called Auto Call Distribution or ACD. An ACD system is typically utilized when a large number of incoming calls (possibly related to a "toll free" 800 number) need to be distributed on a first come first serve basis to your in-house staff. A system of this type would also provide the following benefits:

- control on out-going calls
- monitoring device to control and measure employee performance
- statistics generation to include which operators serviced incoming calls, average call length, number of calls, etc.
- individual access codes for control purposes

The exact location of this industry may identify and determine specific requirements and different equipment needs. Installation and equipment costs may vary. An ACD may possibly be obtained as an option to an already existing telephone system (already located at the correctional facility) and/or be available from the local telephone company.

Currently, the State of Alaska has awarded a bid for a telephone system that could have the ACD capability available for the Juneau area. The Division of Information Services, Department of Administration has been notified of our proposal to evaluate telemarketing and is already working with the Alaska Marine Highways system. Additional information has been requested on the types and costs associated with ACD systems for our requirements and may be available for consideration at the public hearing. The specific correctional center location of the proposed industry would however determine the requirements for an ACD system.

C. IMPLEMENTATION TIME-FRAMES

The development of realistic time-frames for implementation of the proposed system is of concern to the agencies potentially involved in this service industry. These agencies have already been active in planning for the upcoming tourism season. A description of services to be provided with a tentative time-frame for implementation would have to be established and identified by the participating agencies.

The available space at the Lemox Creek Correctional Center has been the only space currently identified that could potentially be utilized to house an operation in the short term without considerable renovations. Additional locations

may require the identification of capital funding.

As indicated previously in this analysis, no vacant production manager positions currently exist within the Department of Corrections operating budget. In order to create a new position, a revised program and/or an increment would have to be introduced in the FY 93 budgeting process. At this point in time no action has been finalized or is in process

A recent review of the classified registers for the Production Manager II job class indicates that there are no qualified applicants that could be considered for immediate employment in such an industry. Vacancy based recruitment could be initiated for such a position after a vacant position has been established. Standard time-frames for a processing a 30 day vacancy based recruitment with central personnel, advertising, initiating a recruitment process, and finalizing a selection would take at a minimum2 months.

The participating agencies would have to be involved in the initial training of the production manager. The manager at some point would be required to attend the Corrections Academy and/or at a minimum the department's supervisory security training.

In all probability, implementation of this service industry after a suitable site has been identified could realistically take 3 months barring any unforeseen problems. Less implementation time might be possible provided that a very high priority be assigned to the development of this project.

D. PRIVATE SECTOR CONCERNS

Public comments have been requested for the proper evaluation of this industry.

Section 33.32.015 of the Alaska statutes allows the "Commissioner of Corrections to authorize a prisoner to engage in productive employment within or outside a correctional facility for the employment of a prisoner if the Correctional Industries Commission determines that the employment will have minimal negative impact on an existing private industry or labor force in the state."

A public hearing has been tentatively scheduled for January 16, 1992 so that the Correctional Industries Commission may hear public comment on the potential establishment of this service industry. The Commissioner of Corrections would then review the commission's recommendations before making a final decision on the implementation of this industry.

Adequate public notice will be provided through newspaper advertisements and a notification to all state local Chamber of Commerce chapters will be issued.

E. QUALITY CONTROL OF SERVICES

Quite naturally there is some anxiety and concern over the possibility of utilizing inmate workers to interact telephonically with the public and that the level of quality control will not be sufficient to maintain an effective operation. However, it has already been indicated that this type of service is currently being provided through several other state correctional systems.

As part of this fact finding process, the states that have similar correctional industries operations as the one proposed will be contacted to gain additional insights into their operations. This additional information may offer to reference their successes and identify any problems they have encountered. Staff contacts and additional information will be forwarded as provided from these sources.

Inmates Fill the Front Lines for Tourism

*In Prisons, States Find
Way to Keep Up With
Requests by Public*

By EDWIN McDOWELL

Special to The New York Times

RALEIGH, N.C. — If North Carolina had a booster club, Cornelia Margaret Gonzalez would be well qualified to be its president. Instead, she channels her enthusiasm into answering inquiries from people who telephone North Carolina's toll-free number for tourist information.

Yet the 53-year-old Ms. Gonzalez had never set foot in this state until about four years ago, when she was brought here from Florida in handcuffs.

She still has not seen any of the state, except through bars or a barbed wire fence. But while serving a 22-year sentence for drug trafficking, the voluble Ms. Gonzalez is one of 10 inmates here at the Correctional Institution for Women who handle the almost 23,000 calls a month to the toll-free number, (800) VISIT NC.

Just down the hall from the telephone room, in the shadow of the death row building that currently houses six convicts, five other female inmates in this maximum-security prison are busy stuffing and labeling some of the 250,000 packets of tourist information that will go out this year. All the participants in the 4-year-old program are volunteers, as well as "long termers," felons sentenced to 15 years or more.

Plans for Tourism Job

"I love this job, and I think I do it well because of my gift of gab," Ms. Gonzalez told a visitor recently. "When I get out of here the first thing I'm going to do is travel around the state; then I'm going to settle here and get a job in tourism."

While the prospect of rehabilitating prisoners helped inspire the program, budgetary considerations also played a part both in North Carolina and in about a dozen other states from Maryland to Oregon that have also turned to inmates to help with their travel and tourism inquiries or are considering doing so.

"We estimate we save about \$150,000 a year in salaries and benefits," said

Continued on Page 15, Column 3



Dunes Hall for The New York Times

Cornelia Gonzalez, an inmate at the Correctional Institution for Women in Raleigh, N.C., handles tourists' inquiries for the state.

Behind Bars, but Filling the Front Line for Tourism

Continued From Page 1

Thomas Harper, supervisor of the inquiry section of North Carolina's Travel and Tourism Division, which has a 1991-1992 budget of \$5.2 million.

There were other considerations as well. "Before this program, we just could never keep up with the inquiries," said Lynda Simmons, the director of the division's visitor services. "Many phone calls went unanswered and we were days behind in mailing our travel packages."

No More Delays of Packages

Such delays were not only inconvenient for potential tourists but costly for North Carolina, which earned an estimated \$7 billion from visitors in 1990, 70 percent of that from out-of-state visitors. Now most travel packages — as many as 2,000 a day from January through April — are shipped within two days.

Similarly, Oregon's Division of Tourism once used staff members to field telephone calls and mail promotional packets. "But we began getting so many requests that we started subcontracting parts of the program," said Julie Curtis, the assistant director. "Then we heard about programs in other states that used inmates, so in February 1990 we moved our fulfillment operation to our toll-free number in the Women's Correctional Center" in Salem.

Betty Allred, the assistant education director at the 650-inmate prison in this North Carolina city, said that while inmates volunteer for the program, telephone operators must have a friendly speaking voice and some knowledge of the state's geography. Hotel and airline reservation agents have come to the prison to help train the inmates.

Everyone connected with the program says problems with inmates have been minimal; two were dropped when their family members phoned them on the toll-free number. In a related program in California, an inmate received an additional two-year prison term for running up thousands of dollars worth of bills for jewelry and other purchases with stolen credit card numbers.

Some Pay for Inmates

Turnover is low for most such programs, for obvious reasons, but some participants have been dropped, others have dropped out and still others could not keep pace.

Participants are paid from \$1 a day

For \$1 a day, touting the wonders of places they are not free to visit.

in North Carolina to 45 cents an hour or less in Montana, and state officials said they had never received complaints from public employee unions. James Andrews, the secretary treasurer of the AFL-CIO in Raleigh, said his organization "might have taken action if it had been a bigger program or if they displaced employees who were part of our union."

Two states have even forged travel-related partnerships between prisoners and private enterprise: About 30 inmates in Phoenix are paid the minimum wage for helping to take hotel reservations in peak holiday periods on the toll-free line that Best Western set up in the Arizona Center for Women. And 70 inmates of the Ventura School in Oxnard, Calif., a correctional institution for youthful offenders of both sexes, earn a minimum of \$5.67 an hour



North Carolina is one of a dozen states using prison inmates to help with tourism inquiries. Teresa Teasley, left, and Patricia Childress, right, inmates at the Correctional Institute for Women in Raleigh, N.C., answering phones for the state's tourist line. With them was Gail Frazier, a prison guard.

helping to book reservations by telephone for Trans World Airlines. About 20 of them have gone to work for the airline after leaving the institution.

At the mention of her \$1 a day wage, a sum required by North Carolina law, Patricia Childress smiles at her work cubicle here in the prison, flanked by a state map and a hand-lettered reminder: "Be polite. Be patient. Have a smile in your voice."

"Everybody's wanting somebody to work without paying them," the 43-year-old former truck driver said with a laugh. But Ms. Childress, who is serving a life sentence for first-degree murder, said she was proud to answer calls from tourists.

"It brings me back into contact with the public, and that's important because I'd never been in prison before four years ago," said Ms. Childress, who earned a high school diploma here. "It was real shocking to me."

She and her four co-workers, dressed in the blue shirts of medium-security prisoners, usually greet each caller: "Thank you for calling North Carolina. How may I help you?" They enter callers' names and addresses in a computer, and they answer a range of questions.

As representatives of a state agency, inmates may not recommend one destination over another, but they can respond to inquiries. And since most questions are about temperature, distances or destinations, the answers are usually within easy reach in the listings of toll-free numbers for North Carolina cities, in weather and highway mileage charts, or in The North Carolina Gazetteer or a dictionary of geographical names and places.

Several cubicles are decorated with postcards from grateful users of the toll-free line, and Teresa Teasley's cubicle also displays a photograph of her 7-month-old son, who was born in prison. "That's the hardest part about being here, not being able to be with him," said the soft-spoken Ms. Teasley, 25, who is serving a minimum 15 years sentence on drug-related charges.

After answering a Florida caller's questions about the weather in Ashe-

Armed with phones and facts, inmates sell their states.

ville, Ms. Teasley added: "But I enjoy this job. I'm always learning something new. A lot of girls in the dorm are asking, 'Do you have openings?' and I tell them no."

Because the inmates are prohibited from leaving the prison, tourism officials come here from around the state to familiarize the inmates with what they have to offer. On this day, 10 telephone operators and packers gathered in a classroom to hear presentations by Jane Peterson, the president of the Cape Fear Coast Convention and Visitors Bureau in Wilmington, and Marylou Webber Baggett, general manager of the Blockade Runner hotel in Wrightsville Beach Island, 10 miles from Wilmington.

Ms. Peterson showed a 12-minute

tape of Wilmington's tourist attractions. And Ms. Baggett, who gave each inmate a colorful beach towel bearing the name of her family-owned resort, spoke of the island's 30 restaurants, its proximity to several of North Carolina's 400 golf courses, and told her audience that the Blockade Runner was on a north-south beach "so that you can see both sunrise and sunset over the water."

Later the enthusiastic Ms. Baggett remarked, with no apparent irony, "It's so nice to go to a place where they want to hear you."

The inmates also look forward to such visits. "We're here, yes, but we're still people," Ms. Gonzalez said, "and we're trying to learn all we can so we never have to tell a caller we don't know something."

There was also an unexpected benefit to this visit. "When I was brought to North Carolina from Florida," Ms. Gonzalez said, "I was in jail near Wilmington. So I know something about the city, at least what was in the papers, but I never really saw it. What I saw of it today is a pretty good substitute, at least until I get out and see it with my own eyes."

...to about 100,000 dollars from more than 50,000 dollars. It also operates 10 repair facilities and six wheel remanufacturing shops. GE Capital said its fleet would be "the most diverse and youngest in the industry."

The transaction is a 21-year lease with a fixed price purchase option, effectively combining the railcar operations of the two companies. Rod Dammeyer, ITEL's president, said proceeds "will be used to reduce existing higher cost debt on both the railcar fleet and other debt of ITEL Corp., as well as for general corporate purposes."

In what it calls an effort to simplify its capital structure and trim its debt load, ITEL has recently been shedding assets at a rapid pace.

Slightly more than a year ago, it sold GE Capital its container-leasing assets for about \$500 million, recording a hefty gain in the deal. The company has also sold its 1% stake in American President Cos. for 78.7 million, booking a loss. Also in 1991, it sold its Great Lakes Dredge & Dock unit to a limited partnership for about \$165 million. And in October, it sold its 15% stake in Santa Fe Pacific Corp. through a public offering. And on its books, ITEL lists the merchant-banking portfolio of Signal Capital Corp., with a book value of about \$35 million, as an asset for sale.

An ITEL spokeswoman stressed that the move announced Tuesday isn't part of that asset-disposition effort. "The assets remain on our books," she said. "This is not a sale, strictly a lease agreement."

While ITEL's holdings are subject to frequent changes, reflecting Mr. Zell's varying investing interests, the railcar leasing unit has for a long time been a core company holding. ITEL's principal other remaining operation is its Amstar wire-and-cable distribution unit.

Disclosure of the agreement with GE sent ITEL shares up 12.5 cents in composite New York Stock Exchange trading Tuesday, to a close of \$18.75.

Standard & Poor's Corp.'s reacted positively to the ITEL announcement, saying it cut about \$950 million of ITEL's subordinated debt and convertible preferred stock, as well as other debt, on its CreditWatch list with positive implications. S&P said the proposal will "greatly enhance liquidity and allow ITEL to prepay high cost existing debt."

S&P said the rentals would support about \$250 million of noncallable ITEL Rail debt and up to \$900 million of new notes to be issued through a trust.

ITEL said the amount of debt to be offered depends upon interest rates, and the extent to which creditors of the railcar fleet elect to continue their loans or be paid with proceeds of the new debt. Principal and interest of the new debt, as well as existing fleet debt not prepaid, will be paid from about \$150 million in annual lease payments from the GE unit. GE Railcar will have the option to purchase the fleet for about \$500 million.

GE's unit leases a wide variety of railcars such as tankers, hopper cars and box cars for periods from six months to five years. As with other equipment leasing ar-

...to Senator Bentsen, but which was prompted by Mr. Madanski's personal time to magazine employees. Mr. Mullane said in an interview that

...of employees, but that he had sold off assets and would stay afloat.

That Sales Pitch During Dinner May Be Made by a Real Con Man

Continued From First Page
prison, he has had four incidents of credit-card abuse.

Mr. Braun says TGS interviews inmate applicants and generally tries to screen out anyone guilty of fraud, but otherwise doesn't care what kind of crime they committed. "If I'm sitting across from one guy who's in there for tax evasion and one who murdered 15 people, I don't want to deny either one the opportunity," he says. Sometimes criminals with longer sentences tend to make more devoted telemarketers, he says: "They're looking for something stable to hang onto in their lives."

At the minimum-security Omaha prison, TGS's 16 telemarketers sit in khaki uniforms behind steel desks covered with spider plants, index cards, and phone books. At one end of the room is a radio and a coffee pot; at the other, a notice with detailed instructions for what to do if guards burst in to take a head-count during a telemarketing session.

On a recent night, the room is crackling with sales pitches, which the inmates carefully read from a book full of scripts.

"How are you tonight, sir? I'm calling from TGS in Omaha, Nebraska..."

"If I called back at 8 o'clock, would that be too late? OK, I don't want to interfere with supper..."

"None of these ladies want to let me talk to their husband," grumbles one inmate. A TGS supervisor strolls through the room cheering the troops on: "Don't be afraid to dive in! Keep dialing!"

The most intense salesman in the room is Kim Britt, a burly 36-year-old with thick curls and a deep voice. He paces back and forth and pumps his fist in the air as he gives the hard-sell to Mark Parrish, the farm contractor.

"Hey understand this, Mark, I'm not sugar-coating this, you're actually gonna use less of this rod because of the tensile strength. All I ask you to do is trust me on this. Let me get it out to you, try it—if it doesn't work, I'll buy it back."

TGS pays its inmate employees the same 17.5% commission its other telemarketers earn. The inmates must pay \$1.25 an hour back to the prison and another 5% of their wages to a state fund for crime victims. Still, on a good week, Mr. Britt pockets about \$140. He credits his success in part to some important sales lessons he learned in his drug-dealing days.

"You got to have a gift for gab," he says with a big smile. "And be real nice to your customers."

Some inmates say working the phones makes prison more bearable. But it also presents special difficulties that most telemarketers don't face. Kenneth Lehr, a for-

mer insurance salesman serving six to 18 years for theft by deception, recently dialed a prospect and found himself talking to an old family acquaintance.

"He said, 'Hey, you used to come out to my Dad's place hunting—when are you coming out here?' I just said, 'Oh, I'll get out there one of these years. I haven't been out that way for a while.'"

At the Shakopee, Minn., women's prison, the inmate telemarketers work at a sleek new center that wouldn't look out of place in a modern office building. Twelve young women—many with acid-washed jeans, massaged hair and polished nails—sit with phone-head-sets in two rows of cubicles. Some have their legs curled under them or stretched out on the desk.

Should anyone ask where they are calling from, the women are instructed to say "from Chicago" or "from the Midwest." Roger Vahl says that is a standard practice so competitors can't figure out which company is conducting the survey.

Though the calls consist of polite questions about grocery products, they sometimes provoke unexpected emotions.

"The other night I called three minutes where I live, the phone first three digits I could have called my home," says Parrish. (The prison consented to inmate interviews only if last names weren't used.) She says she is serving 21 months for her role in a fatal car accident.

"I've called areas where they really wanted to talk—maybe they're dying. I had to learn to cut them off, and that was really hard for me," says Sara, a 23-year-old who stabbed her mother to death.

To the telemarketing targets, the fact that prisoners are on the other end of the line may not be that alarming.

"It really doesn't make any difference to me," says Mr. Parrish, whom Mr. Britt tried to sell TGS's welding-rod, ultimately without success. He was surprised to learn that TGS employs prisoners, but not particularly upset. "Telemarketers are aggravating," he says. "It's no worse if they're in prison."

Honda Renews Platinum Pact

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa—Rustenburg Platinum Ltd., the world's largest platinum producer, said it renewed a long-term contract to supply platinum metals to Japan's Honda Motor Co.

The daily Business Day quoted Chairman Pat Retief as saying that the agreement had been "extended into the future." A company spokesman declined to specify details of the contract.

ALASKA RAILROAD CORPORATION



P.O. Box 107500 • Anchorage, Alaska 99510-7500

November 25, 1991

JNO CENTRAL
NOV 27 1991

The Honorable Drue Pearce
Senator, Alaska State Legislature
3111 C Street, Suite 150
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Dear Senator ^{Drue} Pearce:

Mr. Hatfield has requested that I respond to your letter to him of November 5, 1991 and to provide you with an update of our progress regarding prison inmates or some other third party doing Alaska Railroad telemarketing.

To date, Passenger Service Department personnel have contacted Mr. Wally Roman of the Department of Corrections to express interest and explain our existing reservation system. Mr. Roman has informed us that he will be contacting your staff and Mr. Conn Murray of the Division of Tourism within the next week in an attempt to coordinate our efforts. Additionally, we have formed an in-house team that is taking an in-depth look at the entire Passenger Services reservation system. This team's objective is to determine the costs of a new reservation system compared with the costs and benefits of a third party contractor taking over all Alaska Railroad reservation functions.

During the first ten months of 1991, Passenger Service staff responded to approximately 87,000 telephone calls. We estimate that as many as 40% of the calls are for information only. The large percentage of "information only" calls directly competes with the caller wanting to book a reservation or tour.

With this in mind, we suggested to Mr. Roman that possibly some arrangement could be made with the Department of Corrections to respond, on a statewide basis, to all tourism related "information only" calls. Conceptually, a well-publicized 800 number could be established and advertised, for example, 1-800-VISIT and prison inmates trained to answer tourism-related questions covering the entire state.

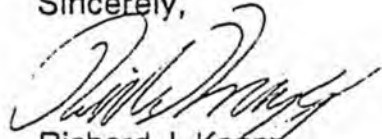
We believe that a pool of clients sponsored by the Division of Tourism, representing the full spectrum of tourism vendors, could be formed. This client pool might include the National Park Service or Holland America Westours, the Marine Highway System, or a small independent whitewater raft company from the Mat-Su Valley.

The Honorable Drue Pearce
November 25, 1991
Page Two

Once this program is successfully established, we could then explore the possibility of prison inmates taking the actual reservation for travel.

We look forward to further discussions on this matter. Should you have additional questions, please do not hesitate to contact me directly at 265-2428.

Sincerely,



Richard J. Knapp
Vice-President, Marketing and Sales

cc: R. S. Hatfield, Jr.
ARRC, President and CEO
Mr. Wally Roman
Dept. of Corrections
Mr. Conn Murray
Division of Tourism
Mr. Larry Houle
ARRC, Mgr., Passenger Services

JNO CENTRAL

DEC 23 1991

December 18, 1991

Honorable Drue Pearce
Alaska State Senate
3111 C Street, Suite 150
Anchorage, AK 99504

Dear Drue,

Okay, all parties have been heard from on the subject of inmates handling some of the state's telephonic correspondence.

I believe this system would be not only feasible but also cost effective. But I would particularly like to see it functioning in conjunction with a central state 800 information number with an appropriate voice and fax tree. I am sending you some information from Point to Point Communications in Santa Ana, California, which is one firm designing such systems. In fact, I would urge you to call their demo line to get an idea of how it works. I think that, probably, all state agencies would have the same experience Dick Knapp reports, forty percent of all calls would be for information only, i.e., soliciting schedules for the railroad or marine highway, the travel planner, basic information for prospective new residents (which we normally obtain from local CVBs and chambers), fish and game information and regulations, and so forth. An appropriate system would permit a caller requesting only schedule information for the ferries or the railroad, for example, to punch in his fax number and have the appropriate information faxed to him instantly and automatically. If the parties wished to have the information mailed, they would simply leave their name and address. If they wished to speak to an operator, the system would automatically switch the call to an appropriate operator at the Department of Corrections.

As you can see, I am thinking in broader terms than just tourism.

Jim Ayers mentioned a new telephone system for the state, which is due to be operational by early spring. I have heard nothing about such a system, which is surprising in view of the fact that if an 800 number is utilized - and it would be folly not to do so in my opinion - then the heaviest use would undoubtedly be by tourism. While I realize that many of the senior citizens who make up the core of our tourism market tend to resist innovation, I believe we can design an automated system that is not only user friendly, but is just plain friendly enough to overcome objections.

December 18, 1991

A concomitant of this program, of course, would be the mail fulfillment of requests for information. We currently handle telephonic requests from our offices in Juneau. Responses to the business reply cards included with our media advertising are handled on a contract basis through a direct mail house in Portland, Oregon. I personally believe the latter task could also be taken care of by inmates.

I note with interest the report in the news clips that other states' organized labor has never questioned the practice of using inmates for work of this nature. I am not so sure we will be that fortunate in Alaska, but even if the state were required to pay minimum wage, I believe we would still get superior service while saving money. As for training the inmates, I am certain that between our efforts and those of the private sector, as well as CYBs and chambers, we would have no problem developing a well-informed sales staff.

Drue, I think that now that we are all more or less singing from the same song sheet, the interested participants should get together to see what steps need to be taken to convert this idea into a reality. Perhaps your office could take the point on this. I am prepared to meet anytime, at any place, because I am convinced that our existing set up is costing us visitors and their cash.

Very truly yours,

Connel Murray
Director

CM/rs2236s

121391b

Enclosure

cc: Lloyd F. Hames, Commissioner
Department of Corrections

Glenn A. Olds, Commissioner
Department of Commerce and Economic
Development

Wally Roman, Correctional Industries Manager
Department of Corrections
Division of Statewide Programs

James R. Ayers, System Director
Alaska Marine Highway System

Richard J. Knapp, Vice President
Marketing and Sales
Alaska Railroad

Representative Tom Hoyer, Chairman
House Special Committee on International Trade
and Tourism

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS RESPONSE TO PEAT MARWICK STUDY

The Department responses to the recommendations from the Peat Marwick study are given below. The responses follow the order and layout of the recommendations as presented in that report.

3.1 GENERAL ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

Recommendation: The Department should consolidate responsibilities for department evaluation, planning and research.

Response. This recommendation has been implemented, with the creation of the Office of Technical Services. The staffing and duties of this office are still under review, and it will take some time for this office to set up data gathering mechanisms and begin policy review.

Recommendation: Departmental policies and procedures must be brought up to date and maintained on an annual basis.

Response: The Department concurs with the recommendation, and has assigned this responsibility to the Office of Technical Services. Implementation of this recommendation will take time, as this Office is newly established and has more work to do than the assigned staff can do in a short time frame.

Recommendation: An internal audit fund should be established.

Response: The Department concurs with this recommendation and will implement this program as soon as funds and positions are identified for this purpose. Funding and positions will either be available from the organizational changes emanating from this study, or else will be requested in the budget process.

Recommendation: The Division of Statewide Programs should be eliminated and the related programs be reassigned to the appropriate Divisions.

Response:

The Department is still analyzing this recommendation. The consultant's recommendation, if implemented, will not result in the savings that the consultant projects. The functions of the Director of Statewide Programs will continue, whether the division remains as is, or is restructured into a section within the Division of Institutions.

Recommendation: Increase staffing in the Director of Institutions office as proposed in the departmental reorganization.

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Response: This recommendation has been implemented.

Recommendation: The department should implement the transfer of the Classification and Transportation component to the Division of Institutions.

Response: This recommendation has been implemented.

3.2 CLERICAL

Recommendation: Clerical procedures should be reviewed and revised to ensure that they are relevant and applicable to the current operations of the Department.

Response: The Department concurs with this recommendation. Clerical procedures will be reviewed in general during the updating of the policy and procedures manual (currently underway). The allocation of clerical functions will be studied as a part of the non-clerical/clerical review described in the response to the next recommendation.

Recommendation: Existing clerical staff should have their duties reallocated within Institutions as needed to replace Correctional and Probation Officers performing routine clerical functions.

Recommendation: Clerical staff should be used to replace Correctional Officers in certain functions including inmate records, complaint and grievance logging, inmate commissary records and accounts, and booking.

Response: The Department generally concurs with these recommendations. It is presently undergoing a review of all clerical functions in the institutions, to determine which functions can be streamlined, which can be performed by clerical staff rather than correctional officers, and which can be automated. Streamlining should reduce the clerical costs. Transferring duties from non-clerical to clerical staff will require the creation of additional clerical positions, and should also reduce overall employee costs. Automating various clerical functions will reduce some clerical costs and will increase the availability of data, but will require a capital expenditure. The Department requests the assistance of OMB and Legislative Audit staff in conducting these reviews.

Recommendation: Clerical pools in both the Anchorage and Juneau offices should be eliminated and the staff should be reassigned both organizationally and budgetarily.

Response: Clerical pools were eliminated during reorganization.

3.3 PRISONER SUPERVISION AND SECURITY

Recommendation: The department should hire additional Correctional Officer staff to serve as relief workers in the various Institutions.

Response: The Department agrees that additional Correctional Officers are needed to reduce the amount of overtime. However, the consultant's analysis showing at least 30 additional Correctional Officers needed for relief is overstated. Efficient use of relief staff would call for 15-20 additional Correctional Officers.

It is anticipated that the studies being conducted on the use of clerical personnel will identify positions that are currently filled by Correctional Officers that will be replaced with clerical positions. The Correctional Officers in these positions will then be transferred into shift or relief positions. There will be cost savings with each clerical position added, to the extent that the Correctional Officer displaced is used primarily for relief or overtime coverage. One way of achieving efficient use of relief personnel in the Anchorage area may be the establishment of a relief pool to serve all the institutions in the Anchorage, Eagle River, and Palmer areas.

Recommendation: Administrative staff should be reduced in certain institutions.

Response: The use of the ratio "Inmates per Administrative Staff Position" as a measure of efficiency does not reflect the fact that institutional populations range from 60 to over 450. Every institution has a superintendent, assistant superintendent, and administrative officer. The function of each of these positions is separate, but critical for the operation of each institution. In smaller institutions, these positions may have adequate time to assume additional duties, but this is reflected in the overall staffing of each institution.

The Department is examining the feasibility of eliminating the position of assistant superintendent at the Wildwood and Matanuska-Susitna pre-trial facilities. Each of these facilities have adjacent or nearby correctional facilities, which would allow adequate coverage of the management responsibility at all times, without these two positions.

Recommendation: Time accounting procedures, policies and manuals should be revised or written as soon as possible.

Response: The Parole Board is currently monitoring a contract for a rewrite of the time accounting manual. This should be complete in the near future.

Recommendation: Time accounting procedures should be revised to

classify cases which require review by more experienced officers.

Recommendation: A sample of time accounting records should be audited each year from each institution.

Response: The Department agrees that a procedure needs to be established for difficult cases to be reviewed by experienced personnel. It also agrees that time accounting records should be audited on a regular basis. To accomplish these steps, a Central Records Control position with adequate clerical staff needs to be created.

Recommendation: Increase the proper usage of the OBSCIS system for recording sentencing data.

Response: The Department agrees that better sentencing data needs to be maintained in OBSCIS. The new policies and procedures will address this issue. Revising the staffing pattern for clerical functions should allow for more consistent entry and review of information after it is entered. The long term, and most economical solution, would be for Corrections to share sentencing data already entered into a computer data base by the Court System, Public Safety, or Department of Law.

Recommendation: Establish clear staffing standards based on the actual number of time accounting cases expected for a particular institution.

Response: This issue will be included in the review of all clerical functions in the institutions.

3.4 PRISONER SERVICES

Recommendation: Responsibility for collecting, logging and reporting on prisoner complaint and grievance activity should be transferred to existing clerical or administrative staff within the institutions to relieve security and management staff of these responsibilities.

Response: The clerical aspects of grievance and compliance procedures will be reviewed as part of the overall study of clerical duties that can be assigned to clerical staff rather than Correctional Officers. These duties can be reassigned to existing clerical or administrative staff only where procedural efficiencies create additional available time for these staff. Otherwise, additional clerical positions will be required to accommodate this recommendation.

Recommendation: Duties of the Compliance Officers should be integrated into the responsibilities of the line management of the institutions.

Response: The Department disagrees with this recommendation. The Consultant does not fully understand the grievance/compliance function in the institutions. If he did, he would be recommending strengthening, not eliminating this critical function.

Grievances will continue in each institution, regardless of how well it is run. Inmates have a right to grieve any condition of their care and custody that they believe is improper. The way that these grievances are handled is critical to the operation of the institutions and the relationship of the inmates to the staff. A clearly defined and efficient process allows for expedient handling of complaints, whether the result is dismissal of the complaint as unwarranted or corrective steps are taken to cure the cause of the complaint.

Many of the compliance officers already have excessive workloads, and are not able to adequately investigate all grievances. By shifting some of the clerical functions associated with these positions to clerical staff, the compliance officers will have more time to properly report and investigate grievances. These functions can not be assigned to line staff who already are fully occupied in the daily operations of the institutions.

In the smaller institutions, it may be possible to assign additional duties to the compliance officers, particularly if additional clerical support for the compliance function is available. The Department will be examining the workloads of the compliance officers and other administrative staff, as part of the study on reassigning clerical functions. It may be possible to reassign some of the Correctional Officers from administrative duties to relief or shift work. This issue will be examined on a institution by institution basis.

Recommendation: Establish a meaningful internal audit procedure to inspect and review the operations of each institution on at least an annual basis.

Response: This is a duplicate of the recommendation made in section 3.1.

Recommendation: The Department must establish clear standards for "jail" facilities and "prison" facilities for all required prisoner programming.

Response: This issue is being addressed in the Master Plan currently being developed by Chris Murray and Associates.

3.5 Health Services

Recommendation: The Department should consider consolidation of the Pharmacy with the state/local health providers to achieve better

1

efficiency and higher service.

Response: The Department agrees with this recommendation, and requests that an interagency coordinating group be established to develop plans for and implement a State Pharmacy. An alternative to be examined is the privatization of the pharmacy function.

Recommendation: Documentation and inventory controls for the Pharmacy should be put in place immediately.

Response: The Department has instituted procedural changes to address some of the problems noted here. A longer term solution is the development or purchase of adequate computer software to track drug inventory and usage, either by this pharmacy or in a new State Pharmacy.

Recommendation: The Department should revise its Reimbursable Services Agreement for the Pharmacy to ensure that all the relevant costs are being recovered.

Response: This issue will be resolved in the creation of a State Pharmacy. Otherwise, the Department will revise its RSA with the Department of Health and Social Services to recover the overhead costs.

3.6 FOOD SERVICES

Recommendation: Procurement for food service should be centralized to increase efficiency and promote better control.

Response: This recommendation has been implemented. Cost savings, if any, will be determined over the next two order cycles.

Recommendation: Food service staffing levels should be established for the Department.

Response: Food service staffing levels must be established separately for each institution, just as security staffing levels are unique for each institution. The inmate population size, the extent of use of inmates for food service staff, and the mission of the institution all reflect on the staffing levels for food service staff. The Department will review the current staffing levels at each institution to determine if any adjustments are necessary.

Recommendation: The Department should consolidate the kitchen operations at the Palmer Correctional Center.

Response: This issue will be reviewed in the Master Plan currently being developed by Chris Murray and Associates.

3.7 HUMAN RESOURCES

Recommendation: The Personnel office should be consolidated in a central location to provide for more efficient operation.

Response: The Department agrees with this recommendation. However, it is difficult to combine all services in Anchorage, due to the need to communicate regularly with the Payroll Section and Personnel Division in the Department of Administration in Juneau. Combining the offices into one Juneau office would remove the ready access to personnel functions by the division directors and other programs operating in Anchorage. This issue will need to be studied further before a final plan can be implemented. Any decision may also be impacted by the outcome of the organizational changes currently taking place in the Division of Personnel in the Department of Administration.

3.8 FINANCE

Recommendation: The unreconciled differences in the inmate trust account should be researched and, if necessary, monies should be authorized to cover any deficiency in the inmate trust account.

Response: The Department agrees with this recommendation, and requests assistance from the Division of Audit and Management Services to reconcile the inmate trust account.

Recommendation: Department of Corrections management should monitor accounting activity in the inmate trust accounts to ensure that established procedures are followed and that appropriate reconciliations are performed for both cash and tokens.

Response: The Department agrees with this recommendation. Once an internal audit section is established, one of the positions will be utilized for financial auditing services.

Recommendation: Departmental policies and procedures should be formalized to require that all cash draws, reset requests be made in writing and be authorized by the Superintendent or his designee.

Response: The Department agrees with this recommendation, and department policies will be rewritten to reflect this procedure.

Recommendation: The Department should review the segregation of duties for inmate accounting at each facility.

Response: The Department agree with this recommendation and requests

the assistance of the Division of Audit and Management Services to review the segregation issue. Once an internal audit section is implemented in the Department, the financial auditor will monitor the ongoing issue of segregation of duties.

Recommendation: The existing policy regarding prisoner intake should be closely followed to obtain existing OBSCIS numbers to reduce duplication.

Response: The Department agrees with this recommendation. As part of the review of clerical procedures and staffing in the institutions, functions such as obtaining OBSCIS numbers and entering inmate data will be assigned to clerical staff who will follow existing policies. There will also be additional policies established to assure the accuracy of data input into OBSCIS.

Recommendation: In order to meet the requirements that all monies due an inmate upon release are paid, the releasing officer should inquire if the inmate has payroll coming for a recent pay period and adjust his or her account accordingly.

Response: The Department agrees that inmates should be paid all that is due them at release. However, many inmates are "released" from custody from jail or multi-use facilities, or directly from court. There is often no time allowed for pre-release planning. Therefore, there will often be a gap of time between release and final settlement of outstanding inmate pay. The Department will attempt to enforce Policy 803.1 whenever and wherever possible.

Recommendation: Existing policies to verify inmate account balances must be enforced to ensure sufficient balances are available at such time a transaction occurs to prevent the accumulation of insufficient funds commissary request slips.

Recommendation: The Palmer Minimum Security Commissary should enforce the Department's policy prohibiting the extension of credit by the Commissary.

Recommendation: The commissary checking accounts should not be used for unrelated transactions.

Recommendation: Internal and external audits required on all commissary accounts, as described by Departmental policy, should be performed regularly by appropriate individuals.

Response: The Department agrees that management of commissary funds needs further review. Once the internal audit section is established, commissary operations will be included in on-site audits. The practice of extending credit to inmates for commissary items has been discontinued.

Recommendation: The costs of operating the inmate commissaries should be carefully calculated and considered in pricing merchandise for sale.

Response: The Department agrees with this recommendation, and requests help from the Division of Audit and Management Services in developing the appropriate pricing policies.

Recommendation: Existing inventory procedures should be enforced to ensure that the required commissary inventories are conducted in accordance with standard accounting practices and made under the supervision of the Commissary Officer.

Response: The Department agrees with this recommendation. Future monthly inventories will be conducted according to existing procedures. A periodic audit of these inventories will be a part of the on-site reviews by the internal audit staff.

Recommendation: The Palmer Correctional Center should enforce existing procedures to require oversight by the Commissary Officer in ordering merchandise for sale in the minimum security commissary.

Recommendation: Existing policy to record prisoner purchases of audio/visual, recreational or other high value commissary items should be enforced to the degree necessary to ensure that accurate records of prisoner personal property are kept.

Recommendation: Consolidation of inventory orders for the Palmer Minimum and Medium Security Commissaries could reduce charges by approximately half.

Recommendation: Existing policies should be enforced to prohibit the use of the inmate commissaries by staff personnel. [At the Palmer Correctional Center]

Response: The Department agrees with these recommendations, and has directed that these procedures be followed. This is another area that will be covered in the periodic on-site reviews by the internal audit staff.

Recommendation: A cooperative effort by Department of Corrections personnel within the Juneau Central Accounting Office and the facilities must be made to increase the efficiency of invoice processing.

Response: The Department agrees that steps need to be taken to reduce processing time for vendor payments. Vendors expect to be paid in a timely manner, and vendor relations suffer when payments are delayed unreasonably (though the actual cost to the State is not the estimated \$760,000 in late fees computed by the Consultant, since

1

most vendors do not bill the State for late fees.)

The Department will implement the steps suggested by the Consultant to better monitor the payment cycle. In addition, the Department is examining the feasibility of processing payments directly in each institution, thereby eliminating one entire step in the payment process.

Recommendation: Revenues should be recorded in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.

Response: The Department agrees that moneys received for inmate care from other governmental agencies should be broken out separately for each agency. There is no revenue accounting purpose in keeping revenue records by institution. The Department requests that the Division of Audit and Management Services assist in setting up the proper account structures and procedures for reporting these revenues.

Recommendation: A cooperative effort by Department of Corrections personnel and Office of Management and Budget personnel should be used to produce realistic appropriation levels during the budget development process which can be successfully defended before the Legislature.

Response: The Department agrees with this recommendation. It has started and will continue to work closely with OMB staff to arrive at the proper budget levels for an FY'92 supplemental budget and an FY'93 operating budget that will not require further supplemental appropriations. One of the major priorities of the Department is to establish a reasonable base appropriation that allows it to plan and manage its finances in a proper manner.

Recommendation: Appropriate cash drawer levels should be determined for each facility, taking into account the nature of the facility and the turnover of the prisoner population.

Response: The Department agrees with this recommendation. Regular audits by the internal audit staff will help to verify compliance with the established limits.

Recommendation: Consideration should be given to changing Departmental policies with respect to the payment of prisoner account balances upon release.

Response: The Department will consider changes to its policies to reflect the intent of this recommendation.

Recommendation: In order to control a situation with a potential loss

of an undetermined amount, the Palmer Correctional Center must ensure that existing procedures to collect fees for meals served to staff and visitors are adhered to and that accountability for discrepancies, which are currently nearly impossible to determine, is clearly established.

Recommendation: Departmental policy, such as the collection of the \$2 meal fee for facility employees and visitors, should be enforced uniformly and it should not be possible for a Superintendent to waive requirements at his discretion.

Response: Departmental policies will be enforced, to the extent possible. These areas will be part of the audit review at each institution.

Recommendation: The Department should adhere to State law regarding the number of hours inmates are allowed to work, as well as specific provisions for approving overtime by inmates.

Response: The Department will make every effort to enforce the State law and Department regulations. Use of inmate labor is another area that will be reviewed on a regular basis by the internal audit group, once it is established.

Recommendation: The fiscal responsibilities of the Department should be carried out by individuals knowledgeable in accounting matters and in the proper use of internal controls.

Response: The Department concurs with this recommendation. The review of clerical functions in the institutions will be expanded to include accounting functions. This review will hopefully allow the Department to realign duties to the proper positions/job classes and to establish reporting relationships that reflect the accounting requirements of many of these positions.

3.9 PHYSICAL PLANT AND FACILITIES

Recommendation: Facilities planning should be integrated into the departmental planning process.

Response: This recommendation is referencing a need for the Department to contract with professional facility planners to assist in planning facility modifications and new facility projects. An RFP for a facility master plan was already being prepared when the Consultant started his study of the Department. The firm of Chris Murray and Associates is well underway with their preparation of a facility master plan, and the completed product is expected this spring. The facility planning unit has been transferred from the Director of Administrative Services to the Director of Institutions, which will further the integration of this function into the planning process.

3.10 TRANSPORTATION

Recommendation: The transportation function should be more centrally controlled and coordinated to allow for better management and more efficient use of resources.

Response: The issue of prisoner transportation is being studied jointly by the Department and the Department of Public Safety. It is anticipated that all prisoner movements will be coordinated by one agency, most likely the Department of Corrections. Issues such as the use of Palmer transportation staff will be resolved as part of this restructuring.

Recommendation: The Department should reduce its use of Corrections Officers on non-security delivery and other errands.

Response: The issue of non-correctional work being performed by Correctional Officers will be studied as a part of the review of clerical work in the institutions. It may be possible that adding positions for functions such as non-security deliveries can reduce the overall cost to the Department.

Recommendation: The Department should establish a procedure to ensure that transportation staff and medical scheduling staff coordinate their efforts to avoid cancellations and missed appointments.

Response: The Department concurs that prisoner movement scheduling can be improved. Most problems in this area result from communication problems between medical staff and prisoner transportation staff. The use of a properly configured computer scheduling program could eliminate most of this communication problem. As part of the study of the consolidation of prisoner transportation between Corrections and Public Safety, the issue of scheduling software will be an important element.

Recommendation: Budgeting and management of prisoner transportation costs should be consolidated.

Response: The Department agrees with this recommendation. This issue was preliminarily analyzed this summer through a technical assistance grant from the National Institute of Corrections. The Department expects to work with the Department of Public Safety to develop a consolidated approach to prisoner transportation.

Recommendation: The Office of Management and Budget should reduce the Department's prisoner transportation authorization.

Response: The Department does not agree with this recommendation.

Travel funds for prisoner transport, budgeted by Corrections and Public Safety, are just adequate to cover all prisoner movements. There has existed some confusion between the departments about who is budgeting for which travel, and which travel is being reimbursed. This issue will be resolved if a consolidated approach to prisoner movement is implemented.

Recommendation: The Department must prevent further miscoding of invoices and misreporting of expenses.

Recommendation: Unit supervisors and managers must be provided with reports and training to effectively monitor and manage their budgets.

Response: The Department agrees with these recommendations. The budget preparation, monitoring and expenditure processes in the Department are currently undergoing review, and changes will be made to assure that these problems are not recurring.

3.11 MATERIAL MANAGEMENT

Recommendation: The Department should centrally manage the use and procurement of all departmental forms.

Response: The Department agrees with this recommendation and will take the actions necessary to ensure that forms are managed properly.

Recommendation: Warehouse inventories should be reduced to a two-week supply and warehousing operations should be eliminated or reduced.

Response: The Department agrees with the policy of reducing food supplies in the institutions. This policy has been changed as part of the centralized food procurement process already underway. The Department disagrees with the Consultant that this change in policy will eliminate the need for twelve employees, one in each institution. Reducing food inventory levels from three months to ten days will not eliminate a major portion of the supply function.

3.12 COMMUNICATIONS

Recommendation: Increased communications with field staff should be initiated promptly to help ensure that policy and procedural changes are adequately disseminated and understood before being adopted.

Response: The Department concurs with this recommendation. To eliminate most of this problem, the Department proposes returning to the monthly shift briefings, in which each shift reports a half-hour early, and the Department management and/or institution management spend this time in discussing proposed or enacted policy changes. These shift briefings were eliminated due to contract/budgetary constraints. If these can be reinitiated, most of these

communications problems can be eliminated.

3.13 DATA PROCESSING

Recommendation: The OBSCIS and HOFA systems require major redesign or replacement in order to meet the operating needs of the Department.

Response: The Department agrees that these information systems need extensive updating, if they are to adequately meet the needs for departmental information. The problem of an inadequate information base is hindering the efforts of the Office of Technical Services; it also creates inefficiencies in data management at the institution level. If adequate resources can be directed toward this problem, the long-term cost savings to the Department could be significant. The Consultant suggests that clerical positions can be eliminated by discontinuing duplicate records systems. This is true, but elimination of functions or positions can only be accomplished after the information systems have been properly redesigned.

CORRECTIONS/MARWICK

	1/15/92	ASSIGNED TO	ASSISTED BY	NOTES
1	Policies and procedures brought up to date	Office of Policy/Plan/Res		
2	Internal Audit function established.		DAMS	
3	Clerical procedures-Review.		DAMS	
4	Correctional officers/clerical functions Analyze positions.		DAMS	
5	Relief officers for overtime reduction.		DAMS	
6	Admin staff-reduce in some institutions.			
7	Time Accounting policies-update manual.		Parole Board	
8	Time Accounting-revise procedures to classify cases requiring special review.			
9	Time Accounting-annual audit			
10	OBSCIS- proper reporting of sentencing data.			
11	Staffing-for time accounting by institution		DAMS	
12	Programming standards for "jail" and "prison" facilities		Chris Murray	

CORRECTIONS/MARWICK

	1/15/92	ASSIGNED TO	ASSISTED BY	NOTES
13	Pharmacy-consolidate with other agencies			
14	Pharmacy- inventory controls		DAMS	
15	Pharmacy- revise RSA for overhead		DAMS	
16	Staffing- food service workers		DAMS	
17	Kitchens-consolidate at Palmer		Chris Murray	
18	Personnel Offices-consolidate			
19	Inmate Trust Account-Reconcile		DAMS	
20	Inmate Trust Account-monitor regularly			
21	Cash drawer resets-policy. In writing and authorized by superintendent	Office of Policy/Plan/Res		
22	Inmate accounting-policy for segregating duties		DAMS	
23	OBSCIS numbers- do not duplicate			
24	Inmate pay-timely on release			
25	Commisary- no nsf request slips -checking accts not use for other purposes -audit accounts		DAMS	

CORRECTIONS/MARWICK

	1/15/92	ASSIGNED TO	ASSISTED BY	NOTES
	-policy for pricing merchandise			
	-monthly inventory			
	-no use by staff personnel			
	-Palmer Commissary Officer oversee purchasing			
	-Palmer-consolidate orders			
	-record purchase of high value items on inmate records			
26	Bill Paying-make timely			
27	Revenues-accounted for properly		DAMS	
28	Budget-set reasonable level		OMB	
29	Cash drawers-set appropriate levels		DAMS	
30	Cash payouts to inmates upon release-set a standard amount of cash vs. check	Office of Policy/Plan/Res		
31	Fees for meals- collect from employees and visitors, and account for the money		DAMS	
32	Inmate labor-limit hours according to regulations.			
33	Accounting by trained personnel-report to admin officers		DAMS	

CORRECTIONS/MARWICK

	1/15/92	ASSIGNED TO	ASSISTED BY	NOTES
34	Transportation-central control of Palmer staff. (should be part of larger trans study)			
	-use of CO's for deliveries and errands			
36	Transportation for medical-coordination with medical scheduler			
37	Transportation-Corrections/Public Safety -proper accounting and management			
38	Accounting- miscoding of invoices			
39	Budget-monitoring and info to managers			
40	Forms- centrally buy and distribute			
41	Food- reduce warehouse inventories			
42	Communications with field staff-improve			Shift Briefings, Video
43	OBSCIS and HOFA redesign or replace			

TASK FORCE
ON
COMMUNITY RESIDENTIAL CENTERS



TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

Submitted

January 22, 1992

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ATTACHMENT A:	Departmental Questionnaire Survey Results
ATTACHMENT B:	Community Questionnaire Survey Results
ATTACHMENT C:	Community Residential Center Program Statistics
ATTACHMENT D:	Susan J. Ford memo (November 6, 1991)

MISSION STATEMENT

The Task Force on Community Residential Centers will review current community residential center definitions and functions, and will propose changes to statutes, regulations, and policies as needed to maximize the use of community residential beds within acceptable levels of risk to the public.

INTRODUCTION

The Task Force on Community Residential Centers was created by Deputy Commissioner J. Frank Prewitt on July 1, 1991. The Deputy Commissioner charged the Task Force with reviewing current departmental utilization of Community Residential Centers (CRC) and departmental furlough policies for the purpose of maximizing the utilization of the CRC's within acceptable levels of risk to the public.

The Alaska Department of Corrections currently has, under contract with private for-profit and private non-profit agencies, two hundred fifty-seven (257) general use CRC beds statewide and sixteen (16) specialized CRC beds for the chronically mentally ill. In addition, one fifteen (15) bed substance abuse program is administered through an inter-agency agreement with the Department of Health and Social Services.

During FY91 (July 1, 1990 through June 30, 1991) the Alaska Department of Corrections contracted for 94,327 bed-days of "general use Community Residential Center services, of which 71,045 bed-days were actually utilized. This represents a 75.32% utilization ratio statewide (see Attachment C: CRC Program Statistics). The utilization ratio varied from a statewide high of 83.68% in Fairbanks to a statewide low of 48.42% in Bethel. A total of \$ 3,957,900.00 in operating costs were expended for a per diem cost (based on full occupancy) of \$ 41.96/bed day. The cost to the State of Alaska, based on actual occupancy, was \$ 55.71/bed day.¹

At the time this report was prepared, the statewide occupancy rate for correctional centers statewide was in excess of 90%. Given stringent court mandates, and possible ramifications of violating the population limitations for correctional centers statewide, a need to determine ways of increasing the utilization of community residential center beds statewide was apparent. In addition to reviewing the current utilization of community residential center beds, the Task Force has been charged with determining whether a need exists for additional community residential center beds and, if the need exists, which population of offender should be targeted.

It is not anticipated that achieving full utilization of Community Residential Center beds will result in a decrease in the State of Alaska correctional budget. Recent studies indicate that a reduction in the correctional budget through diverting offenders to less-costly community programs only occurs "when enough inmates are diverted so that a prison wing or an entire facility can be closed down. And that's a tall order."²

¹ Figures do not include the Maniilaq Social Rehabilitation Center, Kotzebue, Alaska.

² The Next Best Thing to Prison, Penelope Lemov, *Governing*, (December 1991).

(3) For the furlough process to be successful, eligible individuals must be allowed to participate in community residential center programs for a period of time sufficient to allow adequate programming. For individuals who have been incarcerated for lengthy periods of time, the need for reintegration planning is particularly acute. Individuals must have sufficient time to develop a community support system (i.e. residence, financial resources, etc.) to maximize the possibility of successful reintegration into the community. The length of time for furlough placement, and furlough plan, should be determined on an individual basis and be consistent with good correctional management as it relates to the impact on the community and the needs of the offender.

This programming should include, but may not be limited to, vocational training, job search, required treatment, etc. All individuals should be assisted in developing a support system in the community which will be available to the individual as they progress through the release process. Access to programming must be available to allow offenders to adequately meet the requirements of an approved furlough plan and to allow continuation of institutional treatment where necessary.

To enable this process to work efficiently, a coordinated effort between the Department of Corrections and contract personnel is necessary. Community Residential Centers, as an end to institutional confinement, must not also signify an end to Department of Corrections involvement with the offender. In delegating the day-to-day operational responsibility to contract facilities, it is important to remember that the Department of Corrections does not also delegate the responsibility of insuring that needed services are provided and that the mandates for protection of the public are met.

On-going participation by Department of Corrections personnel after placement in a Community Residential Center is necessary to monitor continued progress and possible graduation into other less restrictive sanctions consistent with good correctional management. The presence of departmental staff on a regular basis should also increase the likelihood of successful furlough placement by serving as a reminder that the individual is still under the strict supervision of the Department of Corrections.

(4) There exists a need for effective and efficient community based correctional programs in Alaska. These programs, whether they are Community Residential Centers, Day Reporting Centers, electronic monitoring, home confinement, etc., will likely play an increasingly important role due to the uncertainty of available funding levels for coming fiscal years. Alaska prisons are currently running at or near capacity and the likelihood of funding for the construction of additional prisons (as well as on-going operational expenditures) is unknown.

Prison beds must be viewed as a finite resource and reserved for those offenders who constitute the most serious risk to the community. Offenders who can reasonably be expected to comply with conditions of release should be managed in the community with appropriate structure and surveillance requirements imposed and enforced.

CORRECTION

**THIS DOCUMENT
HAS BEEN REPHOTOGRAPHED
TO ASSURE LEGIBILITY**

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It is not anticipated that achieving full utilization of Community Residential Center beds will result in a decrease in the State of Alaska correctional budget. Recent studies indicate that a reduction in the correctional budget through diverting offenders to less-costly community programs only occurs "when enough inmates are diverted so that a prison wing or an entire facility can be closed down. And that's a tall order."²

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It is anticipated, through implementation of the recommendations which follow, that maximum utilization of Community Residential Center programs will affect the Department of Corrections' budget in subsequent fiscal years by reducing the need for new prisons. It is, therefore, the goal of this Task Force to initiate recommendations which will result in the most effective Community Residential Center programs (from both a programmatic and fiscal perspective).

The following recommendations are based on several primary assumptions which have been identified by the Task Force as being the primary basis for (and to serve as the operating philosophy of) Community Residential Center programs. These primary assumptions are as follows:

(1) Existing departmental Policy and Procedure (818.05) is specific regarding the philosophy of "Graduated Release Through a Systematic Decrease in Supervision". Departmental policy provides a program of release preparation designed to enhance the prospect for successful re-integration to the community. The release program, as currently established, will systematically reduce supervision while increasing individual prisoner responsibility and expectations for conduct. Reduced supervision must be consistent with the custody level of the prisoner. Custody level reduction must not be more rapid than one (1) level at a time, and the time period of each custody level must be of sufficient length to provide a reasonable assessment of behavior. The prisoner, thus, will be placed in the least restrictive level of security and custody consistent with good corrections management.

The furlough process should be an integral part of a gradual-release process which assists offenders in the transition from institutional supervision to successful reintegration into the community. All offenders who attain community custody through a systematic reduction in supervision (and not through a process of classification overrides) should be assumed eligible for participation in the furlough process, unless they represent an unacceptable risk to the community. Denial of participation in the furlough process must be for specific, objective criteria which are not subject to individual interpretation. The assumption for furlough eligibility should not be construed as compensation for all offenders, but rather as a "reward" for those offenders who have earned the privilege of participating in the process through their institutional conduct, participation in treatment, etc.

(2) A graduated release plan should not end at community placement. Individuals who are able to obtain eligibility for community placement should have a furlough plan developed to allow for a continuation of a graduated release plan with the least restrictive level of supervision consistent with departmental mandates for public protection. Placement should be made initially in a Community Residential Center for a period of time sufficient to provide an assessment of behavior. Individuals who successfully complete Community Residential Center level programs could move through other available programs such as Day Reporting Centers, electronic monitoring, home confinement, etc. (see Task Force on Intermediated Sanctions report).

(3) For the furlough process to be successful, eligible individuals must be allowed to participate in community residential center programs for a period of time sufficient to allow adequate programming. For individuals who have been incarcerated for lengthy periods of time, the need for reintegration planning is particularly acute. Individuals must have sufficient time to develop a community support system (i.e. residence, financial resources, etc.) to maximize the possibility of successful reintegration into the community. The length of time for furlough placement, and furlough plan, should be determined on an individual basis and be consistent with good correctional management as it relates to the impact on the community and the needs of the offender.

This programming should include, but may not be limited to, vocational training, job search, required treatment, etc. All individuals should be assisted in developing a support system in the community which will be available to the individual as they progress through the release process. Access to programming must be available to allow offenders to adequately meet the requirements of an approved furlough plan and to allow continuation of institutional treatment where necessary.

To enable this process to work efficiently, a coordinated effort between the Department of Corrections and contract personnel is necessary. Community Residential Centers, as an end to institutional confinement, must not also signify an end to Department of Corrections involvement with the offender. In delegating the day-to-day operational responsibility to contract facilities, it is important to remember that the Department of Corrections does not also delegate the responsibility of insuring that needed services are provided and that the mandates for protection of the public are met.

On-going participation by Department of Corrections personnel after placement in a Community Residential Center is necessary to monitor continued progress and possible graduation into other less restrictive sanctions consistent with good correctional management. The presence of departmental staff on a regular basis should also increase the likelihood of successful furlough placement by serving as a reminder that the individual is still under the strict supervision of the Department of Corrections.

(4) There exists a need for effective and efficient community based correctional programs in Alaska. These programs, whether they are Community Residential Centers, Day Reporting Centers, electronic monitoring, home confinement, etc., will likely play an increasingly important role due to the uncertainty of available funding levels for coming fiscal years. Alaska prisons are currently running at or near capacity and the likelihood of funding for the construction of additional prisons (as well as on-going operational expenditures) is unknown.

Prison beds must be viewed as a finite resource and reserved for those offenders who constitute the most serious risk to the community. Offenders who can reasonably be expected to comply with conditions of release should be managed in the community with appropriate structure and surveillance requirements imposed and enforced.

Expansion of community based correctional programs is likely given the finite resources anticipated in the future. Expansion of these programs, however, must be well planned with sufficient departmental involvement to insure that public safety is not unduly impacted and that these programs are not jeopardized by inappropriate utilization.

(5) The State of Alaska has a unique geographical configuration which prohibits the establishment of community residential centers in all areas of the State. The need, however, exists statewide to have these programs (both transitional and as Intermediate Sanctions) available to all offenders, not just to offenders in major metropolitan areas. Creative means are necessary to make the programs available to all offenders.

The most effective reintegration programming occurs when offenders are able to develop their community support system (i.e. employment, residence, etc.) in the area where they will ultimately be residing. Due to the size and population configuration of Alaska, this local reintegration programming cannot always be accomplished. Financial resources must be concentrated where they are most effective, however, creative means must be developed to expand reintegration programming to areas where they are not currently available.

METHODS OF RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

Task Force members were selected with the goal of having adequate representation from all departmental and non-departmental groups involved and/or effected by Community Residential Center programs. As such, personnel from Central Office, Institutions, and Community Corrections were appointed to represent the Department of Corrections. Personnel were appointed to represent each Contractor currently providing Community Residential Center services to the Department of Corrections. In addition, representatives from the Alaska State Legislature, Victims For Justice and Community Councils also participated in the Task Force process.

In order to identify problems related to current utilization patterns of community residential centers, the Task Force initially researched Departmental data bases to determine what statistical information was available to assist in the analysis of current utilization patterns. It was determined that, although some data has been compiled at specific correctional centers, there does not exist a central data base upon which to make reasoned judgement on the success of current utilization.

Although Task Force membership included representatives from Departmental and private agencies involved in and/or effected by Community Residential Center programs the Task Force decided that an "outreach" to field personnel within the Department of Corrections could help the Task Force identify problems (and possible solutions) to the under-utilization of Community Residential Center programs statewide. A questionnaire was developed for distribution to Departmental personnel statewide, as a means of determining from Community Corrections and institutional personnel if there were any common problems and/or proposed solutions which could be identified statewide. The questionnaire was distributed to seventy-eight departmental personnel (Community Corrections, institutional and administrative) in positions of supervision and having direct knowledge of the programs. (See Appendix A: Departmental Questionnaire Summary). In addition, twelve questionnaires were distributed to specific members of the Alaska State Legislature, Department of Law and Victims For Justice. A total of ninety (90) questionnaires were issued and forty-two (42) responses received for a response rate of 47%. Considering that the questionnaire was very lengthy and asked for written comments to every question, the rate of response was much higher than anticipated, indicating that Departmental personnel felt strongly about the issues addressed in the questionnaire.

Recognizing that Community Residential Center programs, by definition, have direct impact on the community in which they operate, the Task Force developed a second questionnaire designed to determine the level of knowledge of current Community Residential Center programs as well as the level of acceptance for possible changes in the current programs. (See Appendix B: Community Questionnaire Summary). A total of 1,797 questionnaires were issued with a total of 478 responses received for an overall response

rate of 27%. Again, the response rate was much higher than anticipated indicating that many members of the distribution audience felt strongly concerning the issues addressed in the questionnaire.

The Task Force, pending return and summarization of the Departmental Questionnaire, was divided into three sub-committees as follows: (1) Furlough Policies and Procedures; (2) Current Programs and Changes; and (3) Specialized Utilization. Each Sub-committee was asked to identify problems and make recommendations consistent with the mission of the Task Force. Sub-committees drafted initial recommendations, reviewed the results of the Departmental Questionnaire (when this data became available), and then submitted finalized draft recommendations to the Task Force "at-large" for discussion and final adoption.

The results of the Community Questionnaire have been incorporated into Task Force recommendations (where applicable) as implications to the recommendations. The Task Force felt that information of this nature was important to the Executive Committee in deciding the possible impact on the community for acceptance (or rejection) of any Task Force recommendation.

Recommendations have been divided into subject categories as specified above. An attempt has been made to place recommendations in an order which reasonably flows from one to another. Recommendations are not prioritized as to the relative importance of each as recommendation. Each recommendation generated extensive discussion by the Task Force at large. Although opinions varied on the final language for many of the recommendations, the following recommendations have been adopted unanimously by the Task Force "at-large" and submitted to the Executive Committee for review and acceptance.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND DISCUSSION

Furlough Policies and Procedures

1. **RECOMMENDATION:** Offender furlough placement in CRC's should be predicated on the basis of mandated eligibility for those classified as community custody, with denial by exception.

Justification: Currently the furlough process is one in which offenders who are classified community custody and apply for furlough are reviewed, and justification established, to warrant placement in the community. This process results in a pre-disposition that offenders are ineligible unless documentation can be provided (i.e. institutional conduct, treatment progress, etc.) to warrant their placement in the community.

If community custody is obtained through proper implementation of departmental policy and procedure (and not through a system of classification overrides) then offenders who obtain community custody should, by definition, be eligible for community placement unless there is clear and overriding reason for non-placement. The Task Force recognizes that there are factors unrelated to the systematic reduction of institutional custody status which exist for some offenders and which make them inappropriate for community furlough placement. Reasons identified by the Task Force include offenders who do not want a furlough (due to institutional employment, etc.), individuals with specific medical (or program) needs which can only be met in the community, individuals providing public presentations, etc.

Mandatory placement of all community custody offenders is not recommended, however, mandatory eligibility is recommended as a critical change in philosophy. Objective criteria must be clear and documented to deny furlough application for individuals who are otherwise eligible for community placement based on their classification.

Implications: A clear statement of the change in philosophy will need to be presented to institutional personnel responsible for furlough application, review, and approval. On-going training will be necessary to ensure statewide consistency in furlough practices. Procedures will need to be developed to ensure that objective criteria which is acceptable for furlough denial is consistent statewide and that subjective basis for denial is minimized in the review and approval process.

2. **RECOMMENDATION:** All CRC program placements should be placed for a sufficient length of time to maximize the chance for a successful outcome. Placements will have a plan and program goals and objectives established prior to entry.

Justification: Establishing realistic and attainable community goals is an important component of pre-release planning. Offenders, working with their institutional probation officer, should begin this planning process well in advance of anticipated release to the community residential center. In order to be successful, the offender must have sufficient time to realize the goals established. This may mean seeking and finding an appropriate job, entering into out patient treatment or enrolling and completing vocational or educational programs. Task Force members recommend that CRC offender placement be made with at least enough time for the offender to progress through the established level system. This generally takes at least six months. For many offenders, however, a longer period of time may be necessary for successful community transition.

Implications: Furlough policies and procedures will need to be modified to direct institutional staff to begin pre-release planning well in advance of anticipated furlough requests. Institutional probation officers will need to assist offenders in developing realistic and acceptable goals for furlough placement. It is anticipated that a standardized format for the furlough plan will also need to be developed.

- 3. RECOMMENDATION:** Superintendents and all line program staff should receive training regarding existing departmental policies and procedures regarding Classification (735 series), Furlough (818.02) and Release Preparation and Temporary Release (818.03).

Justification: Over the course of the past several years, it has become apparent that inconsistencies in the interpretation of various classification policies has resulted in equally inconsistent placements of offenders in the community. Practice has not always been consistent with policies and procedures, regulations and statutes. This was very evident in the review of Departmental questionnaires returned to the Task Force.

Because of the high turnover in key institutional staff positions, it is unclear whether adequate initial training has been done with staff to make them cognizant of relevant policies, regulations and statutes governing community placement. It is recommended that initial and up-date training be done with all staff responsible for classification actions associated with community placements.

Implications: The Training Center should develop a plan to provide this initial and on-going training in all aspects of community placement. This training should also include review of the Department's Standards for Community Residential Centers.

- 4. RECOMMENDATION:** Superintendents' authority be expanded to allow authorization of furlough placements, regardless of the nature of the offense, for up to one (1) year prior to the prisoner's projected release date.

Justification: Operating on the assumption that community custody is obtained through a systematic reduction of supervision which is earned through institutional conduct, offenders classified as community custody should be low-risk placements in the community. Superintendents' should be allowed to authorize furlough placements for these offenders based on comprehensive furlough plans and the review of necessary factors prior to furlough approval.

The Task Force believes that, although Departmental Policy and Procedure does not specifically give superintendents the authority to authorize furloughs, the authority has been delegated to superintendents for non-violent offenders with six months (or less) remaining on their sentence. Expanding this authority with regard to all offenders with up to one year remaining to the projected release date would enable those offenders who have obtained community custody and developed furlough plans to be placed in Community Residential Centers in less time, and thus provide for additional time for programming and reintegration procedures to be effective.

Over three-quarters (76.2%) of Departmental personnel responding to the questionnaire indicated that they were in favor of superintendents having the authority to authorize furloughs. Of the respondents in favor of superintendent approval of furloughs, 34.3% indicated that the authority should be for non-violent offenders only while 46.9% indicated that the authority should be for all offenders. The Task Force believes that the classification system, if operating as designed, should remove the distinction between violent and non-violent offenders if they are able to obtain community custody.

Implications: On-going review and monitoring of the furlough process will be necessary to ensure statewide consistency and to ensure that the approval process is functioning to maximum efficiency. Initiation of furlough applications, review and approval will need to be accomplished from all correctional centers and pre-trial facilities. Sufficient central office review of furlough statistics will be necessary to ensure statewide consistency and that community protection mandates are being met at all facilities.

5. **RECOMMENDATION:** For requested furlough placements longer than one (1) year, a designee from the Division of Institutions should be assimilated into the planning process. The designee should participate telephonically with institutional line staff and CRC personnel to assess potential problem areas and appropriate time lines for approval. Following joint approval between the designee, CRC staff and/or institutional staff, the furlough application should be forwarded under existing methods for furlough application.

Justification: By utilizing a long-term action plan, furlough applications for longer than a twelve (12) month placement should be reviewed by all concerned parties. A representative from the Director of Institutions' office should analyze the length of the placement and prepare a realistic approach for long-term community referrals.

Institutional staff, administrators and Community Residential Center staff will receive a clear picture regarding acceptable candidates for long-term community placement.

Prior to furlough application a clear understanding of expectations and conduct will need to be presented to the applicant. Victims' comments can be documented and incorporated into the furlough review process (as required by statute). Although the Task Force believes that the number of placements to be made in excess of twelve months will be minimal (at least initially), a review by institutional staff, Community Residential Center staff, and departmental administrators can ensure a smooth transition for long-term community placements and thus the risk to the community will be minimized.

If furlough application is denied, the reason(s) for denial should be clearly articulated and appropriate plans of action (including time-lines) should be established to allow appropriate community integration for the offender.

Implications: A method of (and standards for) appropriate review and placement for long-term furlough candidates will need to be established. Policy and Procedure should be established to document the review and placement process and appropriate forms developed to ensure statewide consistency.

6. RECOMMENDATION: A central data tracking system for monitoring the number of furloughs submitted to all levels of approval should be established. The data system should track, by institution, the number of denials, reasons for denial and the number of denials which are appealed, upheld upon appeal, or reversed upon appeal.

Justification: The Task Force was unable to develop sufficient data on past furlough applications and approvals to make a definitive statement on many key issues which relate to the furlough system. Fifteen of twenty-two institutional respondents indicated that this data was not available. They did not know such basic information as: the average time left to serve for individuals classified community custody; the number of furloughs initiated; approved; denied; appealed, etc.

This information is necessary to evaluate statewide consistency and to identify areas which can be improved in the furlough system. This will be particularly critical if Task Force recommendations are initiated to expand superintendents' authority for furlough approval. Careful monitoring of data would insure statewide consistency and facilitate the most effective utilization of the pre-release process.

Implications: Additional funds will be necessary to purchase computer hardware and software for all institutions to develop a departmental furlough data base. Possible interface with OBSCIS should be analyzed. Methods for monitoring furlough success (i.e. recidivism, program completion, attitudinal changes as determined by accepted testing procedures) should be incorporated into the tracking system if feasible.

7. **RECOMMENDATION:** All superintendents shall be accountable for utilization of a graduated release through a systematic decrease in supervision by implementing current Departmental Policy & Procedure 818.05.

Justification: Superintendents are required to implement a variety of Departmental Policies and Procedures. The implementation of these policies should clearly demonstrate consistency on a statewide basis. With a central tracking system in place for monitoring requests for furlough, the Director of Institutions will be able to ensure that offenders are classified at the appropriate custody level and are allowed an opportunity to request community placement.

Implications: The Division of Institutions will need to create a statewide tracking system (not necessarily a data base management system) that identifies all furloughs initiated and follows them through to conclusion. This recommendation also assumes that superintendents will be adequately trained in the policies.

8. **RECOMMENDATION:** The planning and documentation sections regarding release procedures should be expanded. An individualized comprehensive action plan should be developed throughout the pre-release process.

Justification: Current policy requires that institutional staff establish a pre-release plan for each prisoner. Consideration of furlough placement and a thorough review of all problem areas need to be identified during the pre-release program and evaluation process.

The Task Force recommends that the planning and documentation sections regarding release procedures be expanded with a comprehensive individual action plan being developed throughout the pre-release process. This plan would enable specific time line criteria to be followed, establish a method of tracking prisoners through the system, and reduce administrative concerns regarding the furlough process.

A long-term "outline of action" program plan should be submitted for review to establish a time frame for approval into the furlough process which would enable the Department to project expanded furlough placements prior to actual furlough application. Furlough placement can then be systematically tracked during the pre-release portion of a prisoner's sentence. This documentation will ensure that policy and procedure objectives are met as well as provide record of compliance with mandates of the Clery Final Settlement Agreement (CFSA).

The Task Force believes that pre- and post-application staffing sessions with institutional, contract and applicant participation would help eliminate any misconceptions about the primary purpose and rules of the Community Residential Center and thus stimulate furlough placements. More offenders would apply for

furlough if the advantages are clearly presented and fewer problems would develop after placements if there were no misconceptions about the restrictions imposed upon the individual after placement.

Implications: Training regarding departmental policy and procedure would be necessary for institutional personnel regarding the long-term planning for furlough placement. Additional personnel may be necessary at some institutions to allow for efficient and effective pre-release planning for all offenders. Coordination with contract and institutional (as well as community corrections personnel) would be necessary to establish a meeting schedule for staffing sessions. Review of resources at each institution would be necessary to determine the capabilities for data tracking and furlough placements projections.

9. **RECOMMENDATION:** Offenders whose length of incarceration has been insufficient to allow for participation in, or completion of, institutional treatment programs must have an established community treatment plan and meet the criteria established in departmental furlough policy and procedures.

Justification: Offenders with required or mandated treatment needs should not be placed in the community until a verified plan is in place that ensures their treatment needs will be met. Without a verified plan in place, the offender could be in the community without appropriate treatment, thereby creating an unnecessary risk to the community. These treatment needs include substance abuse, mental health and/or sex offender treatment. In order to be eligible for a furlough, this comprehensive plan must be part of the Furlough Agreement.

The Task Force recognizes that not all offenders receive sentences that allow them to meet all their varied treatment needs. Offenders have frequently been released prior to completion of programs and have had to continue treatment as a condition of probation. This is not the ideal, however. If we are to best utilize our community residential centers, we need to ensure that the offenders placed are geared to fulfill all mandated requirements.

Implications: A greater burden will fall on institutional treatment providers to establish community treatment plans for offenders. In the case of contract treatment providers, this may mean that additional funding will be necessary.

10. **RECOMMENDATION:** Regulations authorizing the possibility of a three-year furlough should remain unchanged to allow greater latitude in furlough utilization and possible integration with Day Reporting Centers (DRC), electronic monitoring, and other intermediate sanctions.

Justification: Under the current departmental furlough system, the placement of an individual on furlough status in a Community Residential Center in excess of one year

is very rare. It appears that current furlough patterns may be a reflection of past policy and procedure changes, a tendency to anticipate whether furlough applications will be approved, and some misconceptions concerning when eligibility for furlough application occurs. The net result has been shorter term furloughs. The Graduated Release procedure established in departmental policy and procedure, when functioning as designed, should result in approval of longer duration furloughs than are currently experienced.

It is doubtful if a three-year furlough to a Community Residential Center will ever become an accepted practice even under an efficiently functioning Graduated Release System. The Task Force believes, however, that the possible implementation of other Intermediate Sanctions (i.e. Day Reporting Centers, electronic monitoring, home confinement, etc.) could likely result in furloughs in excess of two years, with a period in a Community Residential Center and then graduation unto other less restrictive means of supervision (dependent on Community Residential Center conduct). Even under the best of circumstances, a three-year furlough should always be an exception to the rule and not a normal occurrence in release planning.

Implications: There are not anticipated to be any short-term implications of this recommendation, as the possibility of a three-year furlough is currently in effect. Furlough procedures, and review of the recommended departmental data base relating to such, should be carefully reviewed periodically to determine whether the three-year authority currently granted to the Department of Corrections through regulations is necessary to adequately meet the needs of the Graduated Release System.

11. RECOMMENDATION: The Department of Corrections should seek statutory change to eliminate restitution placements as a furlough category. Placements currently being made as "Restitution" placements should be made either as confined misdemeanants or furlougees through the classification process.

Justification: Existing policies and procedures give the Department adequate latitude to place offenders in the community. Offenders are either placed through the designation process or through the furlough process, both of which are classification actions. Language in the statutes and regulations pertaining to "restitution" placements actually hinder the department in making the best use of community beds.

From a community safety viewpoint, it is more desirable to utilize the furlough mechanism to place offenders who can work in the community. A furlough, unlike a restitution placement, requires a full classification hearing and requires the offender to develop and sign off on furlough conditions. Offenders are in the community, therefore, meeting verified treatment needs and employment needs. Furlougees work within a program that allows them to advance through the level system (gaining

privileges for appropriate behavior) as well as working with a budget that mandates payment for court ordered child support, fines, restitution, etc. Restitution placements, however, are only allowed out of the Community Residential Center to work (or seek work) and therefore do not participate in any treatment. Restitution placements frequently have Court ordered treatment, however, due to the nature of the placement procedures they cannot participate in this treatment.

Implications: This recommendation will require that the Department and interested parties work with the legislature to change the statutes. In addition, changes will need to be made to existing regulations and Departmental Policy and Procedure.

Current Programs and Proposed Changes

12. **RECOMMENDATION:** The operational purpose of CRC's be defined to follow two tracks, as follows:

- (1) To provide reintegration or rehabilitation services to offenders; and
- (2) As Intermediate Sanctions.

Justification: The most common responses to the Departmental Questionnaire relating to the primary purpose of Community Residential Centers were (1) Reintegration, (2) Rehabilitation and (3) Intermediate Sanctions for Probation/Parole technical violations.

Although recognizing the need to relieve institutional over-crowding, the Task Force does not believe that the primary purpose of Community Residential Centers should be as such. In addition, the operation of Community Residential Centers strictly for more cost-effective beds is a benefit, and not a primary purpose.

Defining the operational purpose of Community Residential Centers as an essential phase in the pre-release process (reintegration and rehabilitation) and also as an Intermediate Sanction (Probation/Parole technical violations and designees) allows the utilization of the centers to relieve institutional over-crowding while still maintaining a philosophy of longer term placement based on the needs (and suitability) of the offenders.

Implications: Utilizing Community Residential Centers for longer term placements as well as Intermediate Sanctions for Probation/Parole violations should result in a decrease in the institutional population. This may result in a decreasing need for utilization of Community Residential Centers as a relief for institutional over-crowding. One possible implication which the Task Force is unable to predict, would be the increased prosecution by the State of Alaska for offenders who are currently not prosecuted based solely on the lack of available bed space in correctional centers. Discussions with the Attorney General's office relating to this matter leads the Task

Force to believe that additional bed availability in correctional centers may quickly be filled by District Attorneys who are currently not prosecuting individuals because of the premium placed on institutional beds.

13. **RECOMMENDATION:** The Department of Corrections should clearly identify and support the primary purpose of Community Residential Centers within Policy and Procedure and within Community Residential Center Standards. Policies and standards should be revised to clearly reflect this purpose.

Justification: Historically, community residential centers have been used by the Department in a variety of ways and for a variety of reasons. These variations are a result of both changes in inmate population and overcrowding and changes in management philosophy. There are no statements either in policy or in the CRC Standards that clearly state the purpose of CRC's. There was strong consensus within the Task Force that the Department establish within regulations and policy and procedures a clear mission statement for CRC's. A clear mission statement would both guide future administrations and protect the integrity of the CRC's.

It is apparent that the community at large is uninformed about the Department use of contract community residential centers. It is our obligation to educate the public about the mission and extent of community placements and to be responsive to their concerns.

Implications: Establishing clear utilization guidelines for CRC's could to some extent hamper the department in meeting emerging overcrowding needs. If Community Residential Centers' are fully utilized by appropriate placements, overcrowding problems would have to be solved in other ways.

14. **RECOMMENDATION:** The Department of Corrections should establish target populations for each Community Residential Center in order to clearly set populations and priorities for placement.

Justification: Current contractual language states "The Department will establish target population configurations for each category of offenders housed in the Community Residential Center based on an annual review of departmental utilization of community beds." The review and establishment of population configuration is necessary to allow adequate planning at Community Residential Centers and determinations on the number of case managers, security staff, and supplies to adequately meet the needs of the Department of Corrections.

Statistics are currently being compiled on the number of admissions to each Correctional Center (by placement category). However, a systematic review and revision of estimated configurations for each center has not been done. The result is

either unnecessary resources being provided at centers or unavailable resources for the population being served.

Systematic planning on the utilization of each Community Residential Center (particularly in areas where multiple facilities are operating) would result in more efficient and effective programs. Additional confidence in placement would be obtained and an increase in the furlough placements would result as the ability of the Community Residential Centers to handle the population which they are designed would be increased.

Implications: Additional departmental staff time would be required to review population configurations in Correctional Centers statewide, in conjunction with the utilization of Community Residential Centers by Community Corrections, to develop action plans for placement of offenders for each fiscal year. Allowances would still be necessary for revisions in the population configurations due to any emergent needs of the Department of Corrections. Additional communication between the Department of Corrections and Community Residential Centers would be necessary if any major swing in the utilization by institutions or community corrections was anticipated which could result in a change in the established population configuration of the Community Residential Center.

15. **RECOMMENDATION:** The duties of the Institutional Furlough Officer should be clearly defined, and expanded as necessary, to allow for greater involvement and authority in case management decisions. Community Residential Center Standards should be amended to clearly reflect the role and responsibility of the Institutional Furlough Officer.

Justification: The institutional furlough officer has case management responsibility for all offenders placed in community residential centers by institutions. At this time, very little authority exists to support this responsibility. The furlough officer position was created in Anchorage to ensure probation supervision of offenders was in place and that required case management activities occurred. No written description of the role or responsibility of this position was developed. Nor were uniform procedures for preliminary hearings, removal from placement, etc. developed. This has resulted in a great deal of confusion and some case mismanagement. The furlough officer should have adequate authority to call and conduct preliminary hearings, advise CRC staff of case management questions and to generally have greater involvement in case management decisions. The resultant efficiency in furlough placement success would increase confidence and stimulate additional furlough placement.

Implications: New and revised policy and procedures will need to be developed. Revisions to the CRC Standards will also need to be completed to meet this recommendation. At this time, Anchorage is the only community with an identified furlough officer. In other communities, probation officers from the local correctional facility place and supervise offenders in community placement. The furlough officer

must have a comprehensive knowledge of both institutional and field probation policies, as well as applicable parole and probation requirements. Additional training for these probation staff may be necessary for them to meet the demands placed upon them.

16. **RECOMMENDATION:** Ongoing staffing conferences should be held following CRC placement. Staffing would include the Furlough Officer, CRC staff, and regular reviews with institutional staff.

Justification: The current tracking mechanism for monitoring furlough placements is inadequate, due to the number of furloughs and the fact that the Probation Officer assigned to monitor departmental furloughs continues to carry an institutional case load.

Currently the Departments' monitoring of the offenders' behavior at the CRC is primarily accomplished by telephone interviews with CRC staff. The Task Force believes that the presence of departmental staff, especially DOC personnel who have worked with the offenders while institutionalized, helps offenders succeed during placement as a visible reminder of their status in the correctional system.

An ongoing staffing process would enable all involved parties to interact on a regular basis regarding the furlough placement. Conditions specific to the furlough may be discussed and reinforced when appropriate. Progress can be documented and provisions modified. The interaction between all involved parties is essential for providing the level of supervision and monitoring needed.

Implications: The implementation of on-going staffing meetings at Community Residential Centers would require an additional Furlough Officer in the Anchorage area to adequately meet the demands for community placements. The Task Force does not believe that additional positions would be necessary in other communities where Community Residential Centers are located at this time.

17. **RECOMMENDATION:** Policies must be developed that establish screening, referral and placement procedures for probation placements. These policies must include review by supervisors, a placement plan and regular case management meetings with supervising probation officers as identified in the Community Residential Center Standards.

Justification: Only one community corrections policy exists that addresses supervision of probation/parole offenders in contract facilities. Although this policy does address case management responsibilities, it gives individual probation officers no direction in placing these offenders. Currently, individual probation officers can place offenders in contract facilities without supervisory review or approval. Because of this lack of direction, probation placements have frequently been made without adequate thought given to the overall placement plan. As statistics indicate, there have been

a high number of probation placements that have failed, perhaps due to this lack of planning in placement.

The Task Force believes these placements should be given as much consideration as those coming from the institution. This would include establishing screening and referral mechanisms, as well as higher level review of potential placements. Current policy dictates that probation officers are the primary caseworkers for their placements. They would interface more frequently with contract staff regarding their clients and problems and concerns would be more successfully dealt with than is currently the case.

Implications: Community Corrections policies and procedures will need to be developed that address placement of offenders in contract facilities. Obviously, supervisors will be required to take a more active role in these placements. Both probation officers and supervisors will be more accountable to ensure that active case management occurs with offenders placed in contract facilities.

With more careful review of placements, there is the potential that more offenders might be revoked and returned to custody. This could create a short term increase in probation officer workload and institutional crowding. In the long run, however, it should stabilize, as there should be fewer walkaways from placement, and therefore fewer violations.

18. **RECOMMENDATION:** A travel fund should be established for utilization by community corrections in locations where a Community Residential Center is not operating to allow for the transfer to, and placement in, a Community Residential Center.

Justification: Currently Community Residential Centers are established and operating in four communities in the State of Alaska: (1) Anchorage; (2) Juneau; (3) Fairbanks; and (4) Bethel. The Department of Corrections operates Probation/Paroles offices in thirteen (13) communities within the State. In many cases, as identified by Community Corrections field personnel, when a probationer/parolee commits a technical violation of probation/parole conditions, the P.O. has little alternative but to file for revocation and have the offender re-incarcerated. Although offenders with sufficient financial resources to pay for transportation to a community in which a Community Residential Center is operating are permitted to do so (in lieu of re-incarceration) few offenders in "bush" communities have the financial resources available and are subsequently institutionalized.

Placement in a Community Residential Center is less costly than institutionalization (approximately \$ 50.00 less per day of placement). The cost of the transportation would quickly be recovered by the cost savings of community vs. institutional placement. Deductions from earnings made while the offender resides in the center could also help defray the cost to the State for travel to the center.

Implications: Additional funding will be needed by the Alaska State Legislature. The exact amount of funding will need to be determined through an analysis of offenders currently institutionalized (for technical violations of Parole/Probation conditions) in areas where Community Residential Centers are not operating to estimate the number of offenders for which this travel fund could be utilized.

19. RECOMMENDATION: Policies and Procedures should be developed to clearly specify violation procedures relating to probation/parole placements and designees. The Community Residential Center Statement of Standards should be revised to incorporate new Policy and Procedure and to clarify Departmental Policies & Procedures relating to furlough placements.

Justification: Existing regulations, policies and procedures and CRC Standards clearly outline procedures to be followed prior to returning furlough offenders to custody after an alleged violation. Much less clear are the procedures to be followed when returning a confined misdemeanant or a probationer to custody. Practice statewide has been inconsistent and at times poorly handled. Good management dictates that clearly established procedures and guidelines be developed and implemented that guide both Departmental and contract staff. With the recent Ferguson decision (1991), this becomes even more imperative.

Implications: As noted in a previous recommendation, the role and responsibilities of the furlough officer should be expanded to meet identified needs. With more attention to implementing uniform procedures, it is apparent that one furlough officer alone is inadequate to meet the needs of offenders in community placement.

The Department will need to review existing statutes, regulations and court decisions in order to construct policies and revise Standards.

20. RECOMMENDATION: The Parole Board should mandate placement for a sufficient length of time in a Community Residential Center placement to enable offenders to secure employment, establish treatment plans and work through the Community Residential Center level system to adequately address their transition needs.

Justification: Establishing realistic and attainable community goals is as important for discretionary parolees as it is for furloughees participating in a pre-release program. In order to be successful, the parolee must have sufficient time to realize the goals established. This may mean seeking and finding an appropriate job, entering into outpatient treatment or enrolling and completing vocational or educational programs. Task Force members recommend that parolees be required to participate in a Community Residential Center program with placement time sufficient to allow progress through the established level system. The actual period of time must be determined by individual needs.

Implications: To accomplish this goal, the Parole Board will need to review existing guidelines for Parole Progress Reports completed by institutional probation officers. It may also be necessary to provide training for probation officers in constructing parole plans that allow sufficient time to accomplish goals established.

Specialized Utilizations

21. **RECOMMENDATION:** An admissions committee should be established to review, and approve as appropriate, all furlough applications for "specialized populations" who, due to the nature of their specializations will be unable to achieve community custody status and thus will be ineligible for furlough through normal classification procedures.

Justification: Currently some offenders who have specialized treatment needs (i.e. Sex Offender Treatment, Mental Illness, Substance Abuse, etc.) are ineligible for participation in the Graduated Release process due to the nature of their offense which prohibits the individual from obtaining community custody status (despite good institutional conduct). Many of these offenders have participated in (and sometimes completed) institutional treatment programs and are left in a "maintenance" status until mandatory release to community supervision.

A notable example of a current population which is experiencing this difficulty is Native offenders. Discussions with institutional personnel indicate that these offenders often have exemplary institutional records but, due to the nature of the offense which is often substance abuse related, are unable to obtain community custody status and thus are ineligible for participation in a Graduated Release System. Other offenders (sex offenders and the chronically mentally ill) also experience the same inability to participate in the pre-release process (despite good institutional conduct).

The Task Force believes that a method needs to be developed to allow offenders who warrant participation in a pre-release system (based on institutional conduct and treatment participation) access to the system.

The Task Force recognizes that community acceptance of certain populations such as sex offenders would be minimal (at least in general population Community Residential Centers). Thus, specialized Community Residential Centers need to be developed to meet the needs of specialized populations (see subsequent recommendations under Specialized Utilizations). Specialized Community Residential Centers would need to have programming developed to meet the needs of the population to be placed and have tighter security standards to ensure that the departmental mandate for protection of the public is not unduly impacted.

A method of allowing offenders into these programs needs to be developed. The Task Force believes that an Admissions Committee made up of treatment professionals with knowledge of the individuals and the programming available in the

Community Residential Center should review all applications for furlough into the center. The decision, while taking into consideration security concerns, would need to be based primarily on the treatment needs of the individual and the final decision for placement would need to be by a treatment authority.

Implications: The method for placing the individuals into the specialized Community Residential Centers would be through a classification override. Extensive planning and specific objective criteria would need to be developed to ensure that the placement of individuals was appropriate and consistent with good correctional management.

The Task Force is unable to predict the impact of the classification review currently underway on this recommendation. The necessity for the Admissions Committee may be somewhat diminished as a result, should a determination be made that the current departmental classification matrix tends to over-classify offenders addressed by this recommendation.

22. **RECOMMENDATION:** A specialized Community Residential Center(s) should be developed for female offenders with programs focusing on issues which are particularly important to this population.

Justification: Research strongly indicates that current substance abuse and accompanying social and psychological problems will typically be associated with a history of physical and sexual abuse in females. Treatment modalities specific to this specialized population are necessary. In addition, this population typically has particular problems related to pregnancy, child care, child custody, employment and employment training. Frequently these special needs cannot be effectively addressed in a coed living program due to a lack of safety (emotional and sometimes physical) for the female resident.

Recently the Department of Corrections has experienced an increased number of furlough applications from women with infants and preschool children. These requests are often two-fold, with a period of inpatient substance abuse treatment (where they are allowed to have their children) followed by a work-release placement (in a Community Residential Center) where they cannot have children with them.

The Department of Corrections currently has "soft-beds" in two Community Residential Centers in the Anchorage area specifically designated for female offenders. By separating these beds into a separate facility specifically for female offenders the Department will be able to better meet the special needs of female offenders. Many problems which are inherent with coed programs will be avoided (or eliminated) and the vacated "soft-beds" can be utilized for male offenders.

Implications: The establishment of a Community Residential Center for female offenders will need a population base sufficient to fiscally justify its implementation. This would mandate the facility be located in the Anchorage/Mat-Su Valley area. Additional funding will also be necessary from the Alaska State Legislature for the establishment of the facility and on-going operational costs.

23. RECOMMENDATION: A specialized Community Residential Center(s) should be developed for offenders convicted of sexual offenses with programming specific to this population.

Justification: The State of Alaska spends in excess of \$ 900,000.00 on sex offender treatment in both institutional and community based setting. During the next five years an increasing amount of funds will probably be devoted to community based supervision and treatment. Currently the number of offenders incarcerated for sexual offenses in the State of Alaska represents approximately 74% of the total prison population. According to a report prepared by Susan Ford, PO III, Kenai, approximately five hundred offenders currently on probation and/or parole are sex offenders, of which only slightly more than 50% are in treatment (see Attachment D: Susan Ford memo).

Offenders completing institutional treatment can be furloughed to a Community Residential Center (if eligible under the current classification system). The majority of offenders, however, are ineligible for placement due to the nature of their offense, the length of their sentence, or to other factors which are beyond their control. This means that the majority of sex offenders leaving institutions have received little to no transitional services and may therefore be at greater risk of reoffending than those sex offenders given the opportunity to furlough and experience gradual transition into the community.

A Community Residential Center for sex offenders is needed to allow the initiation of treatment for those offenders who (1) are released prior to final institutional program completion, (2) are ineligible for institutional program participation due to the short length of their sentence, and (3) require continued treatment after having achieved maximum institutional program benefit but who are ineligible for community placement due to the nature of their offense. In addition, it would provide more structured supervision and community transition planning than currently exists within the State of Alaska.

A Community Residential Center for sex offenders would also serve an additional purpose of providing more intensive and structured supervision of sex offenders who are having difficulty on probation or parole. Presently, sex offenders experiencing difficulty in the community either remain in the community with limited supervision by a probation or parole officer, or they are violated due to a lack of other resources and thus re-institutionalized. A Community Residential Center for sex offenders

would serve to eliminate jail time and/or reincarceration for such offenders at an average cost savings of approximately \$ 50.00/day to the State of Alaska. Employment could be continued and collections from wages earned would further help defray the cost to the State of Alaska.

Departmental personnel rated the need for a specialized facility for sex offenders as the third greatest need overall in the State of Alaska (with a 6.85 rating). The need for such a facility has been further identified by contract consultant William Pithers in his October 1991 report. The placement of the offender in a Community Residential Center is identified as one step in a structured release program which is designed to "enhance maintenance of therapeutic change and community safety" (page 38).

The establishment of a specialized Community Residential Center for sex offenders is necessary to afford these individuals with the same opportunity for successful reintegration into the community as other offenders while still maintaining an adequate level of structure and surveillance to minimize the risk to the public.

Implications: Respondents to the Community Questionnaire rated the establishment of a specialized program for sexual offenders as the least acceptable of eight possible specialized programs (with an overall rating of 3.38 and a Federation of Community Council rating of 2.85). To establish a program of this nature, a significant amount of public relations work would be necessary to gain public acceptance. In addition, a Statement of Standards for operation of a facility of this nature would need to be developed to address the additional program and security requirements inherent with this population.

Funding would be needed from the Alaska State legislature to implement and operate the facility. It is anticipated that funding levels in excess of what is normally required to operate a similar sized Community Residential Center will be needed to provide the necessary treatment and security requirements of this specialized population.

24. RECOMMENDATION: Day Reporting Centers should be implemented for untreated sex offenders and other offenders who have refused institutional treatment, to include ISSP monitoring as necessary. Day Reporting Centers should be operated through Community Residential Centers where possible.

Justification: Currently untreated sex offenders, and other offenders who have refused institutional treatment, are ineligible for furlough to a Community Residential Center and thus are Mandatorily Released (MR) into the community under the supervision of Probation/Parole. These offenders often need additional structure and supervision over what normal probation and parole can provide.