

EXECUTIVE DIGEST

RIVERSIDE CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTIONS

INTRODUCTION

This report, issued in February 1999, contains the results of our performance audit* of the Riverside Correctional Institutions (RCI), Department of Corrections (DOC).

AUDIT PURPOSE

This performance audit was conducted as part of the constitutional responsibility of the Office of the Auditor General. Performance audits are conducted on a priority basis related to the potential for improving effectiveness* and efficiency*.

BACKGROUND

RCI includes Riverside Correctional Facility (RCF) and Ionia Temporary Facility (ITF), which are located in Ionia. The warden of each facility is its chief administrative officer. The DOC director appoints the wardens, who are classified employees under the State civil service system.

The two facilities share the business office, personnel office, and school principal. In addition, RCF prepares food for both facilities.

The mission* of RCI is to protect society by providing a secure setting for prisoners. RCF opened in 1977 and occupies 69 acres with over 21 acres within a secured,

fenced perimeter that is guarded by four staffed gun towers. RCF houses approximately 970 close custody and medium security male prisoners. ITF opened in 1985 and occupies 30 acres with approximately 13 acres within a secured, fenced perimeter. ITF houses approximately 960 minimum security male prisoners.

For fiscal year 1996-97, RCF and ITF operating expenditures were approximately \$29 million and \$15 million, respectively. As of June 30, 1998, RCF and ITF had 521 and 229 employees, respectively. RCF operating expenditures included approximately \$7 million paid to the Department of Community Health (DCH) under a contract to deliver mental health services to prisoners. As of June 30, 1998, DCH had 58 employees at RCF.

**AUDIT OBJECTIVES
AND CONCLUSIONS**

Audit Objective: To assess the effectiveness of RCI's safety and security operations.

Conclusion: We concluded that RCI's safety and security operations were generally effective in preventing escapes and protecting employees and prisoners from serious injury. However, we noted reportable conditions related to RCF and ITF gate manifests* and prisoner shakedowns and cell searches and to RCF weapons qualification and employee shakedowns (Findings 1 through 4).

Audit Objective: To assess the effectiveness and efficiency of RCI's prisoner care and maintenance operations.

Conclusion: We concluded that RCI's prisoner care and maintenance operations were generally effective and efficient. However, we noted reportable conditions related

to RCF cash receipts, emergency power generator, work orders, and preventive maintenance (Findings 5 through 8).

**AUDIT SCOPE AND
METHODOLOGY**

Our audit scope was to examine the program and other records of the Riverside Correctional Institutions. Our audit was conducted in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* issued by the Comptroller General of the United States and, accordingly, included such tests of the records and such other auditing procedures as we considered necessary in the circumstances.

Our audit procedures included examination of RCI's records and activities for the period October 1995 through June 1998. Our audit methodology included a preliminary review of RCI's operations. This included discussions with various RCF and ITF staff regarding their functions and responsibilities and review of program records and DOC, RCF, and ITF policy directives and procedures. In addition, we reviewed ITF's goals and objectives, various RCF and ITF committee meeting minutes, and ITF's Commission on Accreditation for Corrections evaluation report to gain an understanding of RCF and ITF activities and to form a basis for selecting certain operations for audit. We conducted tests of records related to safety and security, prisoner care, and preventative maintenance activities for compliance with applicable policies and procedures and overall program effectiveness and efficiency.

In addition, we developed a survey (see supplemental information) requesting input from certain individuals and businesses regarding their association with RCF and ITF.

AGENCY RESPONSES

Our report contains 8 findings and 9 recommendations. RCI indicated that it has either complied with or taken steps to comply with all the recommendations.