

**Office of the Auditor General**  
Performance Audit Report

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**Oaks Correctional Facility**  
Department of Corrections

December 2015

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**The auditor general shall conduct post audits of financial transactions and accounts of the state and of all branches, departments, offices, boards, commissions, agencies, authorities and institutions of the state established by this constitution or by law, and performance post audits thereof.**

*Article IV, Section 53 of the Michigan Constitution*

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Office of the Auditor General

## Report Summary

*Performance Audit*  
*Oaks Correctional Facility*  
*Department of Corrections*

**Report Number:**  
**471-0222-15**

**Released:**  
**December 2015**

Oaks Correctional Facility is located in Manistee, Michigan. The Facility opened in 1992 and has the capacity to house 1,152 prisoners. For fiscal year 2015, the Facility's General Fund appropriation was \$34.1 million to support 291.4 full-time equated positions.

Audit Objective			Conclusion
Objective: To assess the Department of Corrections' (DOC's) compliance with selected policies and procedures related to safety and security at the Facility.			Complied
Findings Related to This Audit Objective	Material Condition	Reportable Condition	Agency Preliminary Response
The Facility did not document security camera checks for 5 (14%) of 36 security checks reviewed. Security cameras help ensure that prisoners are contained, unauthorized persons are denied access, and contraband does not enter the facility ( <u>Finding #1</u> ).		X	Agrees

A copy of the full report can be obtained by calling 517.334.8050 or by visiting our Web site at: [www.audgen.michigan.gov](http://www.audgen.michigan.gov)

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# OAG

Office of the Auditor General

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**Doug A. Ringler, CPA, CIA**  
Auditor General

December 15, 2015

Ms. Heidi E. Washington, Director  
Department of Corrections  
Grandview Plaza Building  
Lansing, Michigan

Dear Ms. Washington:

I am pleased to provide this performance audit report on Oaks Correctional Facility, Department of Corrections.

Your agency provided a preliminary response to the recommendation at the end of our fieldwork. The *Michigan Compiled Laws* and administrative procedures require an audited agency to develop a plan to comply with the recommendations and submit it within 60 days of the date above to the Office of Internal Audit Services, State Budget Office. Within 30 days of receipt, the Office of Internal Audit Services is required to review the plan and either accept the plan as final or contact the agency to take additional steps to finalize the plan.

We appreciate the courtesy and cooperation extended to us during this audit.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Doug Ringler'. The signature is written in a cursive style.

Doug Ringler  
Auditor General



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# AUDIT OBJECTIVES, CONCLUSIONS, FINDINGS, AND OBSERVATIONS

## **SAFETY AND SECURITY**

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### **BACKGROUND**

Oaks Correctional Facility operates under policy directives and operating procedures established by the Department of Corrections (DOC) in addition to operating procedures developed by the Facility. These policies and procedures were designed to have a positive impact on the safety and security of the Facility as well as to help ensure that prisoners receive proper care and services. They address numerous aspects of the Facility's operations, including:

- Arsenal
- Gate manifests\*
- Key control
- Tool control
- Medication inventory
- Prisoner counts
- Radio checks
- Prisoner shakedowns\*
- Cell searches\* and area searches\*
- Metal detector calibration
- Custody and perimeter security
- Firearm security
- Employee and visitor searches
- Security monitoring exercises\*
- Prisoner drug testing
- Sanitation and food service inspections
- Preventive maintenance
- Fire safety

Although compliance with these policies and procedures contributes to a safe and secure prison, the nature of the prison population and environment is unpredictable and inherently dangerous. Therefore, compliance will not entirely eliminate the safety and security risks.

### **AUDIT OBJECTIVE**

To assess DOC's compliance with selected policies and procedures related to safety and security at the Facility.

### **CONCLUSION**

Complied.

### **FACTORS IMPACTING CONCLUSION**

- Substantial compliance with most DOC policies and procedures and Facility procedures relating to safety and security as identified in our audit methodology.
- A reportable condition\* related to undocumented security camera checks.

\* See glossary at end of report for definition.

## **FINDING #1**

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### **Improvements are needed for documenting security camera checks.**

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The Facility did not consistently document all required security camera checks. Security cameras are an integral part of the Facility's perimeter security system to help ensure that prisoners are contained within the perimeter, unauthorized persons are denied access, and contraband\* does not enter the facility. Periodically testing the security cameras provides assurance that the camera equipment is in working order.

DOC policy directive 04.04.100 states that security cameras shall be checked to assure that they are operational once per shift and that checks shall be logged in the control center logbook.

We reviewed security camera check records for the periods April 20, 2015 through April 21, 2015; June 11, 2015 through June 15, 2015; and June 28, 2015 through July 2, 2015. Our review disclosed that the Facility did not document that it conducted 5 (14%) of 36 required security camera checks.

The Facility indicated that although the security camera systems are constantly monitored, the action of logging a system check in the control center logbook is a new practice required by a policy directive update as of April 2015. The combination of a recent change in practice and Facility staff who have become conditioned to logging the same information for the past several years caused inconsistencies in recording security camera checks.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

We recommend that the Facility consistently document all required security camera checks.

## **AGENCY PRELIMINARY RESPONSE**

DOC provided us with the following response:

*The Facility agrees and complied by assigning staff to monitor the log entries to ensure that security camera checks are documented in accordance with policy.*

\* See glossary at end of report for definition.

## AGENCY DESCRIPTION

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DOC's mission\* is to create a safer Michigan by holding offenders accountable while promoting their success. DOC's Correctional Facilities Administration is responsible for the operation of all DOC correctional facilities.

Oaks Correctional Facility is located on 76 acres in Manistee, Michigan. The Facility opened in 1992 and has the capacity to house 1,152 prisoners. The Facility has 7 housing units: 2 level II\* general population, 2 level IV\* general population, 2 segregation units, and 1 specialized housing unit.

The Facility offers academic programs, including adult basic education, General Educational Development (GED), and introduction to computers. The Facility also offers re-entry programming, including violence prevention; evidence-based cognitive thinking courses, such as Thinking for a Change and Cage Your Rage; stress management; and substance abuse services. In addition, the Facility offers activities that include several self-help programs, participation in athletics, and religious services.

For fiscal year 2015, the Facility's General Fund appropriation was \$34.1 million to support 291.4 full-time equated positions. As of September 17, 2015, the Facility housed 1,122 prisoners.

\* See glossary at end of report for definition.

## **AUDIT SCOPE, METHODOLOGY, AND OTHER INFORMATION**

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### **AUDIT SCOPE**

To examine the program and other records of Oaks Correctional Facility. We conducted this performance audit\* in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our finding and conclusion based on our audit objective. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our finding and conclusion based on our audit objective.

### **PERIOD**

Our audit procedures, which included a preliminary survey, audit fieldwork, report preparation, analysis of agency responses, and quality assurance, generally covered the period October 1, 2013 through September 30, 2015.

### **METHODOLOGY**

We conducted a preliminary survey to gain an understanding of the Facility's operations and activities in order to establish our audit objectives, scope, and methodology. During our preliminary survey, we:

- Interviewed various staff regarding their functions and responsibilities.
- Observed various Facility operations.
- Examined Facility records and reviewed policy directives and operating procedures.
- Reviewed warden's monthly reports to the DOC director, critical incident reports, and self-audits\* of the Facility.

### **OBJECTIVE**

To assess DOC's compliance with selected policies and procedures related to safety and security at the Facility.

To accomplish this objective, we reviewed policies and procedures, examined records, and assessed DOC's compliance with policies and procedures related to safety and security at the Facility, including:

- Arsenal inventories and operations
- Gate manifests
- Key control
- Tool control
- Medication inventory
- Prisoner counts
- Radio checks

\* See glossary at end of report for definition.

- Prisoner shakedowns
- Cell searches and area searches
- Metal detector calibration
- Custody and perimeter security
- Prisoner drug testing
- Food service
- Housekeeping sanitation
- Preventive maintenance

## **CONCLUSIONS**

We base our conclusions on our audit efforts and the resulting material conditions\* and reportable conditions.

When selecting activities or programs for audit, we direct our efforts based on risk and opportunities to improve State government operations. Consequently, we prepare our performance audit reports on an exception basis.

## **AGENCY RESPONSES**

Our audit report contains 1 finding and 1 corresponding recommendation. DOC's preliminary response indicates that it agrees with the recommendation.

The agency preliminary response that follows the recommendation in our report was taken from the agency's written comments and oral discussion at the end of our audit fieldwork. Section 18.1462 of the *Michigan Compiled Laws* and the State of Michigan Financial Management Guide (Part VII, Chapter 4, Section 100) require an audited agency to develop a plan to comply with the recommendations and submit it within 60 days after release of the audit report to the Office of Internal Audit Services, State Budget Office. Within 30 days of receipt, the Office of Internal Audit Services is required to review the plan and either accept the plan as final or contact the agency to take additional steps to finalize the plan.

## **PRIOR AUDIT FOLLOW-UP**

We released our prior performance audit of Oaks Correctional Facility, Camp Pugsley, and Camp Sauble, Department of Corrections (47-222-99), in May 2000. Within the scope of this audit, we followed up 3 of the 6 prior audit recommendations. The Facility complied with all 3 recommendations.

\* See glossary at end of report for definition.

## **GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS AND TERMS**

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area search	The act of searching common areas of the prison for contraband.
cell search	The act of going through a prisoner's cell and belongings looking for contraband.
contraband	Property that is not allowed on facility grounds or in visiting rooms by State law, rule, or DOC policy. For prisoners, this includes any property that they are not specifically authorized to possess, authorized property in excessive amounts, or authorized property that has been altered without permission.
DOC	Department of Corrections.
gate manifest	A record used to control materials and supplies entering and leaving a facility through the front gates and sallyport.
level II	A security classification assigned to a facility or a prisoner. The facilities are transitional prisons where prisoners who show good institutional adjustment and have a low security risk go to complete programs and prepare for eventual release. Long-term or prisoners sentenced to life terms may also qualify for level II facilities if their security and management risks are low.
level IV	A security classification assigned to a facility or prisoner. The facilities are general population medium-high security prisons for new commitments and prisoners who are a higher management and/or escape risk. Level IV facilities may have less mass movement, more restricted programming, and fewer group activities than lower level classifications.
material condition	A matter that, in the auditor's judgment, is more severe than a reportable condition and could impair the ability of management to operate a program in an effective and efficient manner and/or could adversely affect the judgment of an interested person concerning the effectiveness and efficiency of the program.
mission	The main purpose of a program or an entity or the reason that the program or the entity was established.
performance audit	An audit that provides findings or conclusions based on an evaluation of sufficient, appropriate evidence against criteria. Performance audits provide objective analysis to assist

management and those charged with governance and oversight in using the information to improve program performance and operations, reduce costs, facilitate decision making by parties with responsibility to oversee or initiate corrective action, and contribute to public accountability.

reportable condition

A matter that, in the auditor's judgment, is less severe than a material condition and falls within any of the following categories: an opportunity for improvement within the context of the audit objectives; a deficiency in internal control that is significant within the context of the audit objectives; all instances of fraud; illegal acts unless they are inconsequential within the context of the audit objectives; significant violations of provisions of contracts or grant agreements; and significant abuse that has occurred or is likely to have occurred.

security monitoring exercise

A systematic method of safely and effectively testing and monitoring security standards of a facility to enable staff to have an opportunity to practice the standards under controlled conditions.

self-audit

An audit performed by facility staff that enables management and staff to ensure that an operational unit complies with policy directives and takes proactive steps to correct any noncompliance. Performing self-audits is intended to maximize safe and efficient operations by DOC.

shakedown

The act of searching a prisoner, an employee, or a visitor to ensure that he/she does not have any contraband in his/her possession.









