



**CENTRAL CALIFORNIA
WOMEN'S FACILITY**
WARDEN MARY LATTIMORE
ONE-YEAR AUDIT

**OFFICE OF THE
INSPECTOR GENERAL**

**DAVID R. SHAW
INSPECTOR GENERAL**

STATE OF CALIFORNIA

JULY 2010



July 22, 2010

Matthew L. Cate, Secretary
California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation
1515 S Street, Room 502 South
Sacramento, California 95814

Dear Mr. Cate:

Enclosed is the Office of the Inspector General's audit report concerning the performance of Warden Mary Lattimore at the Central California Women's Facility. The purpose of the audit was to satisfy our statutory requirement to audit each warden one year after appointment.

The report concludes that under Warden Lattimore's leadership, the prison functioned satisfactorily in the areas of safety and security, inmate programming, and business operations. Within these areas, however, we identified some issues that the department and warden should address. Specifically, the department should review the operational policies that allow inmates from throughout the prison to commingle on the main yard on weekends and holidays. Moreover, the department and warden should ensure that staff members working with mentally disordered inmates receive training to help reduce tensions in confrontational situations and talk through issues rather than use force. In the area of employee-management relations, we found that the prison does not have cohesive communication among its managers, especially between the chief deputy warden and the warden. The poor communication affects the accuracy, consistency, and reliability of directions and guidance given to employees resulting in inefficient operations.

At the end of April 2010, Warden Lattimore retired from state service and the department is pursuing a permanent replacement. Regardless of who is appointed warden, the new warden and department should consider our recommendations for improving prison operations.

Mr. Matthew L. Cate, Secretary
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If you have any questions concerning this report, please contact Jerry Twomey, Chief Assistant Inspector General, Bureau of Audits and Investigations, at (916) 830-3600.

Sincerely,



David R. Shaw
Inspector General

cc: Scott Kernan, Chief Deputy Secretary, Adult Operations, CDCR
Elizabeth Siggins, Chief Deputy Secretary, Adult Programs, CDCR
George Giurbino, Director, Adult Institutions, CDCR
Kim Holt, External Audits Manager, CDCR

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Results in Brief

Warden Mary Lattimore

Office of the Inspector General (OIG) found that Warden Mary Lattimore has satisfactorily performed her job as warden at Central California Women's Facility (CCWF). However, our surveys and interviews of prison employees revealed some problems that the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) and warden should address.

Many interviewees and survey respondents voiced concerns that management does not work together as a team and is often fragmented. While many factors can influence the ways that staff and management view themselves, it is clear that Warden Lattimore must further her efforts to build a cohesive team through better communication with her managers.

Our review also noted that although CCWF employees rated the prison's safety and security overall as average, CCWF has had riots in the main yard and more use-of-force incidents than in many male institutions. According to the warden and custody staff we interviewed, women's prisons are less violent than comparable men's prisons; moreover, at women's prisons, incidents and fights usually do not result in serious injury to inmates or employees. Yet employees at CCWF frequently use force to maintain security. One alternative identified by the use-of-force committee to decrease the need for force was additional education and training for staff working with mentally disordered inmates so that tensions may be defused without resorting to force.

During our review, we surveyed a broad range of CCWF employees, executives of CDCR, and key stakeholders. We analyzed operational data compiled and maintained by the department, interviewed over 50 CCWF employees, including the warden, and toured the prison. We categorized the results of our review into four areas: safety and security, inmate programming, business operations, and employee-management relations. Overall, the warden's managers and employees rated her slightly above satisfactory.

CENTRAL CALIFORNIA WOMEN'S FACILITY FACTS AT A GLANCE

Location: Chowchilla, CA

Opened: October 1990

Mission: Level I to IV (Low to Maximum Security) and Reception Center

Inmate Population: 3,814

Designed Capacity: 2,004 inmates

Employees: 1,202

Budget: \$122 million, FY 2009/10



**Central California Women's
Facility Warden Mary
Lattimore. Photo: CDCR**

During our interview with Warden Lattimore, we learned that she would retire at the end of April 2010. After our fieldwork was completed, a CDCR official confirmed that the warden did retire at the end of April 2010. While many of the issues raised in this report pertain specifically to Warden Lattimore's performance and leadership style, this evaluation will nonetheless benefit CDCR and the future CCWF warden, since some of the issues examined in this report will require resolution from the prison's next warden.

We recommend that CDCR and the next warden take the following actions:

- Improve communication among management employees by providing clear, written direction whenever possible. Also, seek input from relevant management employees before filling vacancies.
- Improve safety and security by reevaluating the practice that allows inmates from different yards to commingle on weekends and holidays.
- Examine whether use-of-force incidents can be reduced by training staff to work with mentally disordered inmates.
- Repair defects in critical areas of the prison's physical plant.

One-Year Evaluation of Warden Mary Lattimore

California Penal Code section 6126(a)(2) requires the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) to audit each warden of an institution one year after his or her appointment. To satisfy this requirement, we evaluated Warden Mary Lattimore's performance at Central California Women's Facility (CCWF) since her appointment in March 2009.

Background of Warden Lattimore

Warden Lattimore, who has over 27 years of correctional experience, began her CDCR career as a correctional officer in 1982. She promoted to sergeant in 1987 and was made Lieutenant in 1993. In 1998, she was promoted to correctional captain at Sierra Conservation Center. In 2002, she obtained a position as captain at Mule Creek State Prison. She became Chief Deputy Warden at CCWF in 2006, and was selected as acting warden in 2008. In March 2009, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger appointed her warden of CCWF.

Institution Overview

Central California Women's Facility opened in October 1990 on 640 acres in Chowchilla, California. It is one of three women's prisons in California and is located next to Valley State Prison for Women. CCWF contains four multi-level facilities referred to as A, B, C, and D.



Central California Women's Facility. Photo: CDCR

All facilities house a range of inmates classified from Level I (low security) to Level IV (maximum security). Facilities B, C, and D are all made up of dormitory housing and consist of 32 dorm rooms each. Facility A has two dormitory units for the institution's reception center and celled housing for the institution's administrative segregation unit, as well as an enhanced outpatient unit and a condemned inmate unit.

Rehabilitation Programs

At one time, the prison offered its inmates more than 20 programs in vocational training, education, and rehabilitation, including courses in computer technology, cosmetology, electronics, graphic arts, landscaping, office services, adult basic education, high school diploma/GED, pre-release, and English as a Second Language. However, recent statewide programming cuts due to state budget deficits have reduced the available vocational programs to four and educational programs to a few basic courses, including two adult basic education and three high school/GED courses.

Budget and Staffing

CCWF's projected 2009-2010 fiscal year budget for prison and education operations is approximately \$79 million, plus \$43 million for medical and dental operations. The prison has 1,202 budgeted positions, of which 608 (or 51 percent) are custody positions. The table below compares CCWF's budgeted and filled positions as of November 30, 2009. Overall, the prison filled 92 percent of its total budgeted positions.

Table 1: Staffing Levels at Central California Women's Facility

| <i>Position</i> | <i>Filled Positions</i> | <i>Budgeted Positions</i> | <i>Percent Filled</i> |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Custody | 567 | 608 | 93% |
| Education | 58 | 65 | 89% |
| Medical | 206 | 232 | 89% |
| Support | 178 | 189 | 94% |
| Trades | 84 | 95 | 88% |
| Management | 11 | 13 | 85% |
| Total | 1,104 | 1,202 | 92% |

Source: California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, CompStat ending November 30, 2009, Central California Women's Facility. Unaudited data.

Objectives, Scope, and Methodology

To fulfill our objective of assessing the warden's performance, we employed a three-part approach. First, we used surveys to elicit opinions and comments from employees, CDCR management team members, and other stakeholders. Next, we analyzed operational data maintained by CDCR by comparing it with the averages for like prisons¹ and for all prisons statewide. In addition, we reviewed relevant reports prepared by the CDCR or by other external agencies. Finally, we visited the prison, interviewed various employees and representatives from the Women's Advisory Council, and followed up on noteworthy concerns identified from the surveys, operational data, or reports.

To understand how the staff members and other stakeholders view the warden's performance, we sent surveys to three distinct groups: CDCR and CCWF managers, CCWF employees, and key stakeholders outside of the CDCR. For the employee survey, we sent questionnaires to 239 randomly selected prison employees and requested an anonymous response. The survey provides information about employees' perceptions of the warden's overall performance as well as information about specific operational areas at the prison: Safety and Security, Inmate Programming, Business Operations, and Employee-Management Relations.

To simplify the analysis of the survey results, we requested respondents to broadly classify their job positions. From this information, we grouped survey respondents into three employment categories: Custody, Health Care, and Other (which includes employees in education, plant operations, administration, and clerical positions.) Then, to identify strong trends or patterns, we classified responses to our questions as either positive or negative. For example, if the respondent 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' with a

¹ Institutions with a similar mission include California Institution for Women and Valley State Prison for Women.

question, we classified it as positive, and if the respondent ‘disagreed’ or ‘strongly disagreed,’ we classified it as negative. We excluded passive responses such as “neutral” or “unknown.”

Our inspectors analyzed the responses to the surveys as well operational data from CompStat (comparative statistics) maintained by CDCR. We also reviewed relevant reports related to the prison’s operations prepared by CDCR or by external agencies. In analyzing these sources, we looked for strong trends or patterns, either negative or positive, or other issues that would help us identify topics for further review and evaluation during our on-site visit to CCWF.

During our visit to CCWF, we gained insight into the warden’s work environment. We used information gathered from our analysis of statistical information and from employee surveys to identify potential issues for review. Then we interviewed certain key employees and other employees selected at random. Our interviews involved employees in various operational areas throughout the prison, including:

- Business services
- Educational programs
- Employee/labor relations
- Food services
- Health care
- Housing units
- Human resources
- Information technology
- Inmate assignments
- Inmate case records
- In-service training
- Investigative services
- Litigation
- Personnel assignment
- Plant operations
- Receiving and release
- Use-of-force review
- Warehouse management

We performed a site visit during the week of March 22, 2010, and interviewed 53 individuals throughout the prison to describe and rate the warden’s performance. These individuals included custody employees, executive management, health care professionals, two inmate representatives from the Women’s Advisory Council, and one community partnership representative.

As noted previously, Warden Lattimore retired from state service at the end of April 2010.

Review Results

We found that responding stakeholders, including CDCR management, prison managers, and employees, believe, on average, that the warden is performing satisfactorily overall. In the three categories of safety and security, business operations, and employee-management relations, most respondents provided positive answers. However, there was a significant amount of negative responses under the business operations and employee-management categories. In-person interviewees provided more positive responses to business services than did the survey respondents. In the inmate programming category, most respondents provided negative responses.

Besides some safety and security issues, such as grouping together inmates on the main yard and the high number of incidents in which staff had to use force to control inmates, the main problem facing the warden is communication. Several managers and staff told us that the warden does not give clear direction and changes her mind frequently. We were also told that the chief deputy warden and the warden give conflicting instructions to employees. These communication problems, unless corrected, diminish the prison's ability to effectively and efficiently deal with its problems.

Category 1: Safety and Security

California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation's primary mission is to enhance public safety through safe and secure incarceration of offenders.

Table 2: Safety and Security – Employee Survey Results

| Respondents | Positive | Negative |
|------------------------------------|------------|------------|
| Custody | 68% | 32% |
| Health Care | 78% | 22% |
| Admin, Plant Operations, and Other | 70% | 30% |
| Weighted Average | 71% | 29% |

Source: OIG survey of CCWF employees. See Appendix for details.

The importance of safety and security is epitomized in CDCR's requirement that custodial security and the safety of staff, inmates, and the public must take precedence over all other considerations in the operation of CDCR programs and activities. As shown in Table 2 above, 71 percent of the employees' responses were positive about the safety and security of the prison. We also heard mostly favorable opinions from the employees we interviewed during our field visit.

After considering the interviews in conjunction with comments from the warden, results from our employee survey, and CDCR data on segregation housing and use of force incidents, we noted three areas for discussion: Use of Force, Administrative Segregation Unit, and Main Yard and Overall Safety and Security.

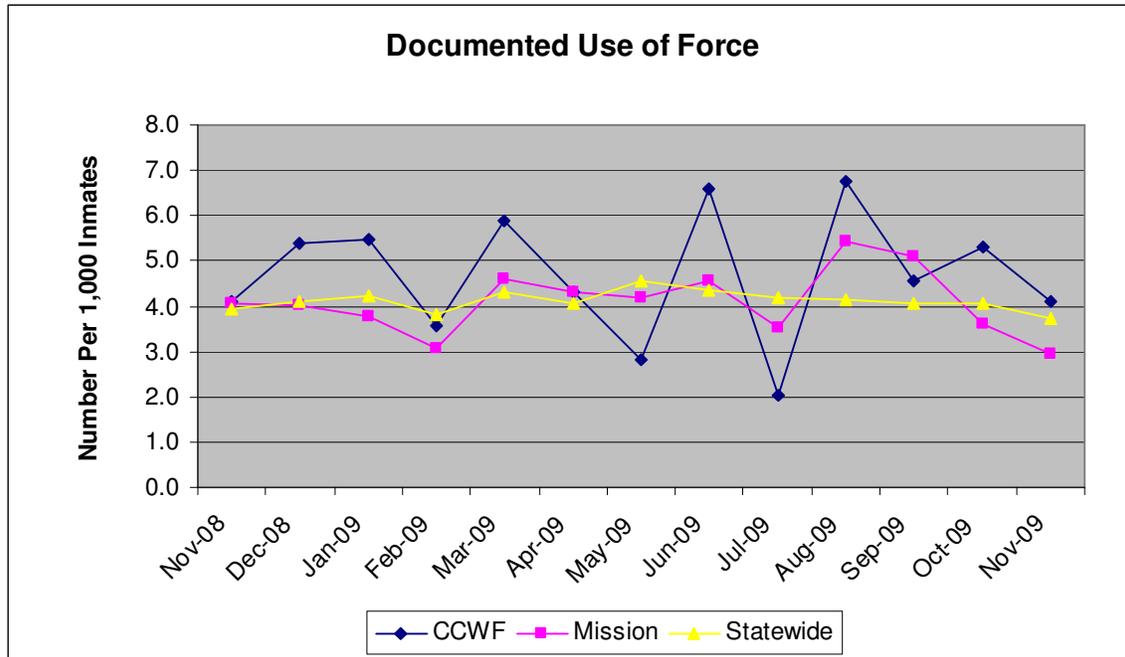
Use of Force

The number of incidents in which force is necessary to subdue an attacker, overcome resistance, effect custody, or gain compliance with a lawful order is a measure of inmate behavior and of the prison's ability to safely incarcerate inmates. To assess CCWF's use of force, we reviewed CDCR's use-of-force data during the 13-month period from November 1, 2008, through November 30, 2009. As shown in Chart 1, CCWF's rates of

documented use-of-force incidents were higher than both the statewide average and other similar prisons for seven months during our review period. The prison's use-of-force coordinator speculated that CCWF's use of force (UOF) rates may be higher than those of other similar prisons and statewide averages because there are a significant number of UOF incidents with the Enhanced Outpatient Population (EOP) inmates. These inmates have severe mental disorders and generally take medication for various mental conditions. According to the UOF coordinator, the UOF committee has recommended that EOP unit staff receive training to help diminish tensions in confrontational situations and talk through inmate issues rather than use force.

To reduce the number of UOF incidents, Warden Lattimore arranged gender-responsive training to help employees deal with the unique issues facing female inmates. Furthermore, when we asked the warden about UOF incidents, she said that "female inmates love to fight and even though things get heated and verbal there are very few serious injuries" and noted that employees never have had to use lethal options to quell a fight. However, she added that employees still resort to using physical force or "pepper spray" to stop an incident such as fighting.

Chart 1



Source: California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, CompStat ending November 30, 2009, Central California Women's Facility. Unaudited data.

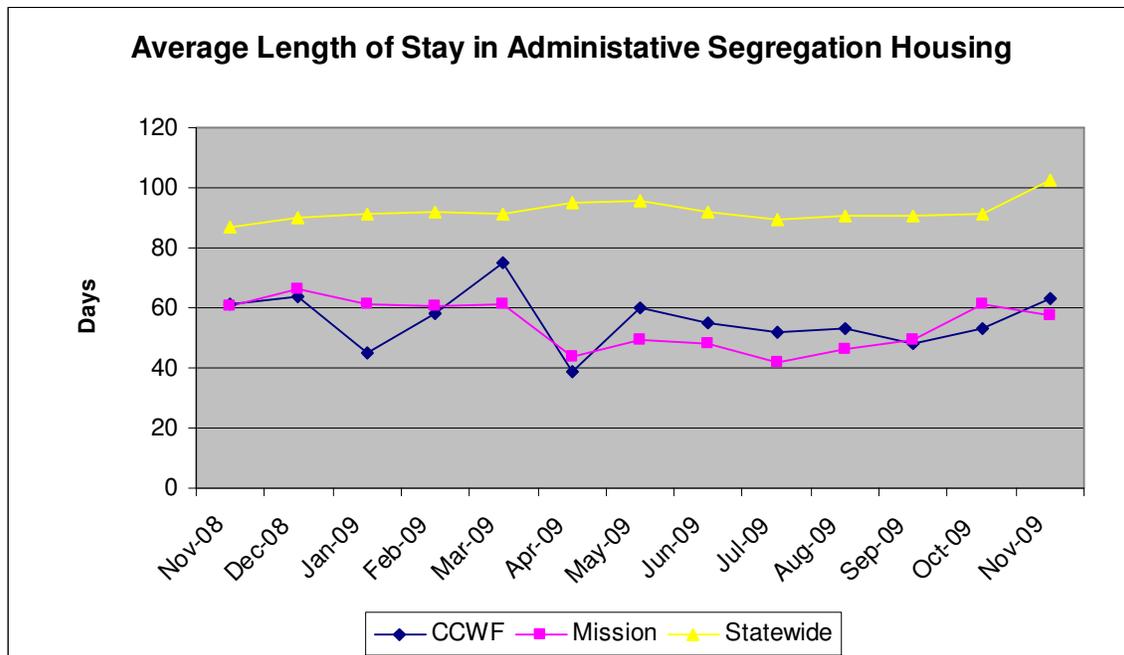
Administrative Segregation Unit

Inmates that are disruptive to other inmates or victimized by other inmates are temporarily segregated from the inmate population by being placed in housing areas known as Administrative Segregation Units (ASU) while employees investigate the level of threat to the prison or inmate. ASU housing areas are more expensive to operate than general population housing units because they have increased security requirements.

Effectively managing the time it takes the prison to investigate the threat level can significantly reduce the average length of stay, and in turn, reduce the cost of housing inmates in ASU. As a result, the average length of stay in ASU is both an indicator of how well a prison manages its resources and of how well it protects inmates' due process rights.

Our initial review of CDCR's data in Chart 2 revealed that the average ASU length of stay at CCWF was lower than the statewide averages and only slightly higher than the averages of other prisons with similar missions. When we asked the warden why her average ASU length of stay was lower than statewide averages, she stated that female inmates are less violent and that CCWF quickly moves inmates to Security Housing Unit (SHU) yards and out of ASU.

Chart 2



Source: California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, CompStat ending November 30, 2009, Central California Women's Facility. Unaudited data.

Main Yard and Overall Safety and Security

Most employees said they feel secure or had no issues with Warden Lattimore's policies regarding safety and security, especially if they had worked at male institutions prior to working at CCWF. However, some interviewees and survey respondents felt that other CCWF employees are too complacent about their jobs and thus compromise the safety and security of the prison. For example, one employee told us that some officers allow visitors with body piercings through the prison's security screening even though the rules specify that visitors cannot bring body piercings (metal) into the prison.

One of the biggest concerns expressed by employees we spoke to was the safety of inmates and employees on the main yard (Figure 1). During weekends and holidays, inmates from other yards are allowed to congregate on the main yard, where they have the option to engage in recreation and exercise. Even inmates who have enemies or have fought with



Figure 1 – Main Yard. Photo: OIG March 2010

other inmates on different yards come together on the main yard. According to many interviewees, including one inmate, this arrangement presents the potential for major fights and riots. In fact, about two weeks before our on-site interviews, approximately 20 to 30 inmates rioted on the main yard. The riot included inmates from different yards and inmates associated with different disruptive groups. According to one captain and another custody employee, prison staff members have brought this issue up to the warden without any results or constructive response. One union representative and a sergeant also noted that officers constantly respond to smaller fights, especially near the bathrooms on the back side of the library building in the main yard.

When we asked the warden about using the main yard on weekends and holidays, she responded that the main yard had opened in 1992 and has been open ever since. After further inquiry about the issues of fighting and other disturbances on the main yard, the warden said that inmates often agree to have arguments and fights but that their level of violence rarely reaches the level of violence typical of a men's prison. While the level of force required to subdue fights and arguments among female inmates may only require physical restraint or "pepper spray," we don't agree that that these incidents should be taken so lightly. One custody employee in the Investigative Services Unit said that female inmates may not be as violent as men but that CCWF has seen an increase in the number of female inmates associated with disruptive groups. This is a potential problem for the safety and security of the prison, especially when different female groups are present on the same yard.

We told the warden about the captain's and other employees' comments regarding the possibility of closing down the yard when they had safety concerns or at least allowing only the inmates of one of the facilities at a time to come out to the main yard. Warden Lattimore said that the inmates have no place to run, jog, or play sports on the smaller facility yards but that she would look into it and consider the suggestion. However, because the warden retired at the end of April, 2010, she will not be able to give the main yard issue the consideration and attention it deserves. We suggest that CDCR and the future warden reevaluate this issue and determine whether the prison's practice should be amended.

Category 2: Inmate Programming

Research shows that inmate programs can reduce the likelihood that offenders will commit new crimes and return to prison. In fact, a 2006 Washington State Institute for Public Policy study of adult

Table 3: Inmate Programming – Employee Survey Results

| Respondents | Positive | Negative |
|------------------------------------|------------|------------|
| Custody | 49% | 51% |
| Health Care | 56% | 44% |
| Admin, Plant Operations, and Other | 30% | 70% |
| Weighted Average | 46% | 54% |

Source: OIG survey of CCWF employees. See Appendix for details.

basic and vocational education programs found that such programs reduce inmate recidivism by an average of 5.1 percent and 12.6 percent, respectively.² The department recognizes these benefits and provides academic and vocational training and a number of self-help and self-improvement services to inmates, including substance abuse programs. An added benefit is that programming provides inmates with a more structured day and less idle time. Generally, inmates with a structured day tend to be easier to manage. As a result, the prison's safety and security can be affected by the amount of available inmate programming.

Overall, as shown in Table 3 above, only 46 percent of the employees' responses were favorable to questions regarding inmate programming. The employee survey specifically asked employees whether inmate programming has improved since the warden's appointment. Only 33 percent responded positively. These results can be explained by state budget cuts and the resulting reduced programming opportunities available to inmates. Analysis of the information gathered from CDCR statistics, employee survey results, and employee interviews revealed two areas for more detailed comment: Classroom Attendance and Overall Inmate Programming.

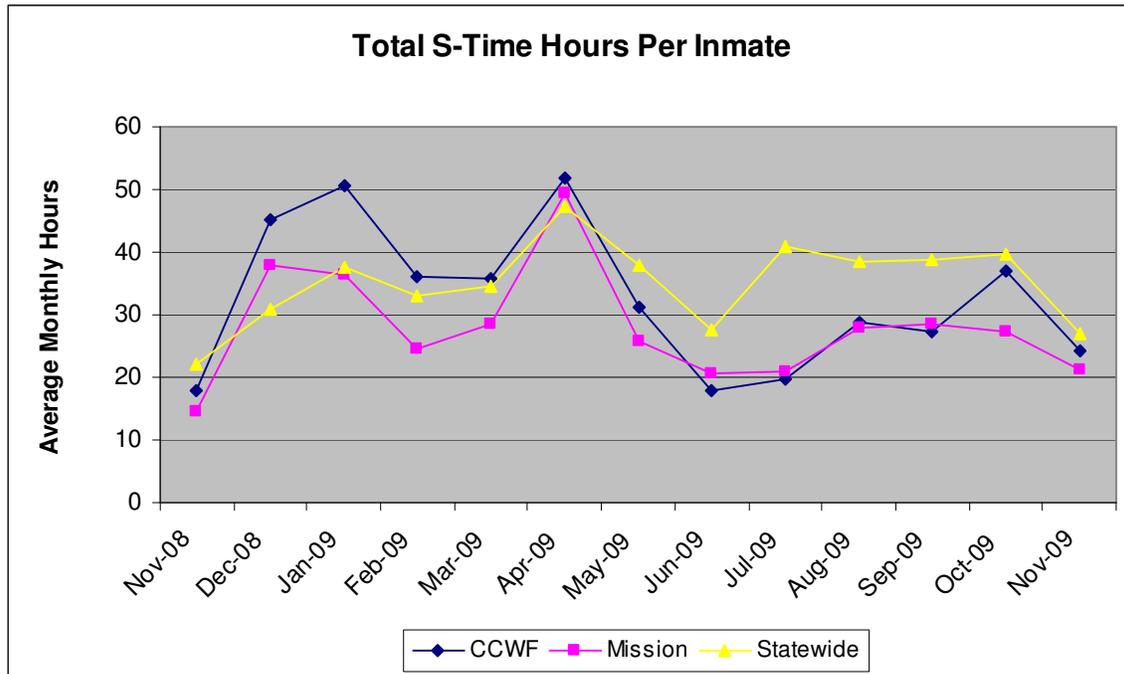
An interesting observation that we noted during our on-site interviews was that a majority of interviewees said they felt that CCWF maximizes opportunities for inmate programming despite any budget issues or other challenges. Their responses are positive compared to the random employee survey, perhaps because respondents were able to give us additional feedback that CCWF was doing a good job at programming despite overall programming budget cuts.

Classroom Attendance

CDCR establishes the amount of time that assigned inmates must attend academic and vocational training classes each day. Since administrators must track inmate class absences, each prison can be evaluated on how effectively it complies with school-day attendance requirements. CDCR refers to absences caused by circumstances beyond the inmate's control as "S-time." Such absences may result from security-related needs such as lockdowns, modified programming, investigations, and inmate medical appointments. Education-related absences, such as teachers calling in sick also contribute to S-time. Prisons with high or increasing patterns of S-time indicate that prison management may be using their academic and vocational programs ineffectively.

² Washington State Institute for Public Policy, "Evidence-Based Adult Corrections Programs: What Works and What Does Not," January 2006.

Chart 3



Source: California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, CompStat ending November 30, 2009, Central California Women's Facility. Unaudited data.

Our analysis of CDCR data in Chart 3 found the average S-time at CCWF during the first six months of our review period was higher than both the statewide and mission-specific averages. However, S-time significantly decreased for the remaining review period and was slightly lower than other mission specific averages for at least two months. When we inquired about the high S-time, the education principal said that the biggest problems facing CCWF are reduced staffing and recent teacher layoffs. In fact, several classrooms currently stand vacant because the prison does not have enough teachers to teach the classes (Figure 2). The education principal also noted that there are only four academic and six vocational programs left at CCWF. The education programs include adult basic education and high school courses, and the vocational programs include electronics, cosmetology, office services, and auto body shop. In response to teacher layoffs, Warden Lattimore has counseled and helped place teachers in other non-teaching positions throughout the prison.



Figure 2 – Vacant Classroom.
Photo: OIG March 2010

To clarify how classroom closures affected S-time, we spoke with the captain responsible for inmate assignments. The captain explained that most inmates were reassigned to different educational programs and other assignments as classes closed, but that a significant portion of those inmates went on program waiting lists. According to the captain, when inmates are removed from the classroom roster and are placed on waiting lists for various educational programming activities, they still earn sentence-reducing credits, recorded as S-time, because the inmate’s absences are caused by circumstances beyond the inmate’s control. As a result, the prison’s S-time increases.

The principal recognized that the educational programming challenges result from a CDCR and state budget issue and are not the warden’s fault. Warden Lattimore agreed that budget and staffing cuts are largely out of her control. However, she also observed that there are three main reasons for the high S-time:

- First, she confirmed that classroom closures have increased S-time. Without teacher positions, she had to close classrooms. Even though CCWF greatly increased the inmate-to-teacher ratio, there still were not enough teachers, so some inmates subsequently went on waiting lists and earned S-time.
- Second, recent retirements and teachers' long-term sick leave has contributed to the closures of approximately four to five classrooms.
- Finally, CCWF often experiences heavy fog, especially in cooler months. This requires that classroom and other educational programming opportunities be stopped in order to restrict inmate movement and maintain the safety and security of the prison.

Category 3: Business Operations

A prison's business operations include budget planning and control; personnel administration; accounting and procurement services; employee training and development; and facility maintenance and operations. It is important for the warden to be knowledgeable in these areas to effectively perform her duties.

Table 4: Business Operations – Employee Survey Results

| Respondents | Positive | Negative |
|------------------------------------|------------|------------|
| Custody | 52% | 48% |
| Health Care | 53% | 47% |
| Admin, Plant Operations, and Other | 63% | 37% |
| Weighted Average | 56% | 44% |

Source: OIG survey of CCWF employees. See Appendix for details.

As shown in Table 4, 56 percent of the prison employees’ responses were positive about the prison’s business operations and 44 percent were negative. Our analysis of the information gathered from CDCR's data, employee survey responses, and employee interviews uncovered three specific areas that we discussed further with the warden and with other management team members: Overtime Usage, Staffing and Vacancies, and Plant Operations and Maintenance.

Overtime Usage

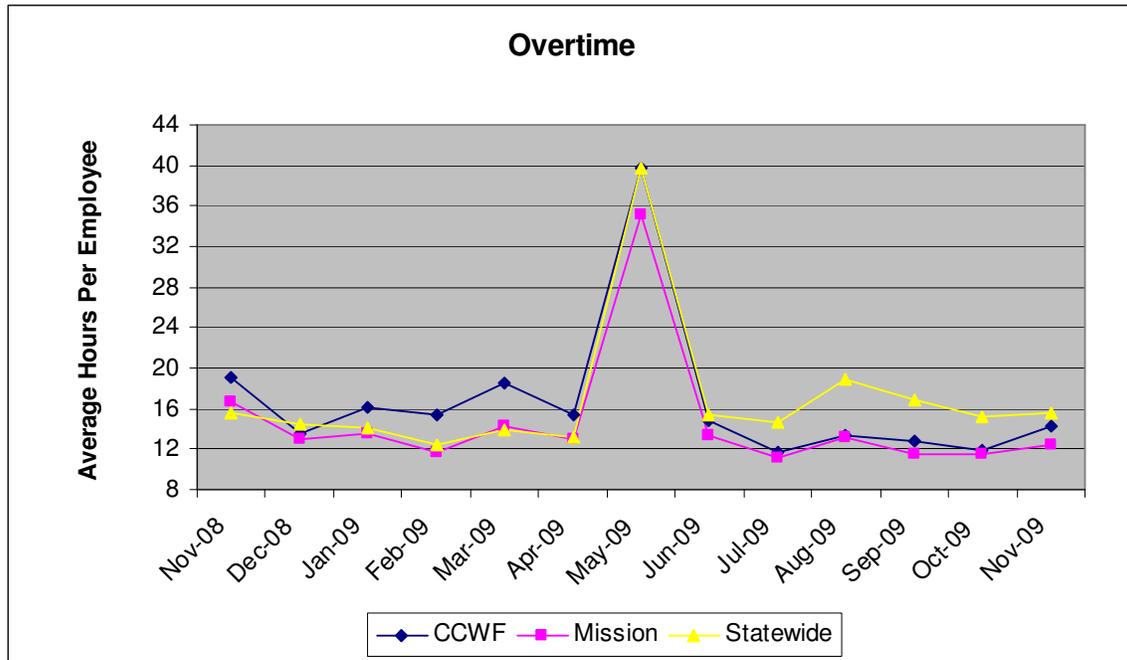
The control of overtime is one indicator of a warden's ability to manage a prison's overall operations because it requires the warden to ensure that good budgeting, planning, and personnel administration practices are in place. To assess CCWF's overtime usage, we compared its overtime to both the statewide average for all prisons, as well as to the average for similar prisons.

As displayed in Chart 4, the first eight months of our review period indicated that overtime usage at CCWF was either at or above the average overtime for prisons statewide and for similar prisons. Normally, this could indicate possible mismanagement of prison resources, but improvement occurred later during our review period. When we asked the warden about the high overtime, she explained that because of overcrowding, they had to use the CCWF gym and reception center day room for housing until May 2009. This required them to bring in additional custody staff on overtime to provide adequate coverage. The overtime dropped significantly once the prison deactivated the gym and reception day room. The warden further identified two prison programs that helped to reduce overtime:

- First, CDCR's sick leave management program has significantly reduced overtime. According to the warden, when officers call in sick the prison must have other officers cover their shifts, which usually results in overtime compensation. Initially, CCWF issued Letters of Instruction (LOI) as a formal reprimand to officers using 80 days of sick leave or more per year. Currently, the prison has further tightened the process and is now issuing LOIs to officers that take 30 days of sick leave or more per year.
- Second, at CDCR's request, the prison redirected three percent of its employees to other posts to fill in for absent or ill employees. The warden notes that this has prevented overtime and is projected to save CCWF hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Warden Lattimore said that because of the efforts listed above, overtime has significantly dropped since she took over as warden.

Chart 4



Source: California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, CompStat ending November 30, 2009, Central California Women's Facility. Unaudited data.

Staffing and Vacancies

During our surveys and interviews, staffing and vacancies surfaced as another area of concern at CCWF. Prison employees were very concerned about vacancies in key positions, especially in captain and sergeant positions. One custody management employee said that vacancies are causing difficulties because employees don't know who is in charge from day to day. Another management employee further observed that Warden Lattimore does not involve supervisors and managers with filling vacancies and that they have no voice in hiring employees who report to them.

While some interviewees felt that a hiring freeze contributed to the problem, other interviewees said that the warden had the ability to get exemptions if needed. Further review in this area revealed that the warden allowed captain and public information officer positions to be vacant for at least nine months. Personnel employees confirmed that one of the five captain positions was vacant for at least nine months but added that they had received no response for at least two of the periods during which the prison advertised the vacancy and only one or two applications on subsequent advertisements.

When we asked Warden Lattimore about her hiring practices, she said that sometimes she cannot disclose her reasons to staff for hiring or not hiring a candidate because the information is confidential. While we agree that this may be the case sometimes, whenever possible, the warden should involve her management more in the recruitment and selection process.

Plant Operations and Maintenance

Sixty-five percent of employees responding to our survey had favorable responses about plant operations and its ability to meet their needs. As we assessed plant operations and maintenance issues during our fieldwork, many CCWF employees gave positive responses about plant operations. One nurse commented that plant operations is “always on top of it” when the medical program needs any work completed.

However, the correctional plant manager believed that plant operations are worse because of budget limitations. He notes that the lack of funds hurts his ability to make all needed repairs and only allowed him to buy the very minimum amount of supplies needed to function. In some cases, he explained, plant operations staff can not even make simple or critical repairs. For example, the roofs on several buildings are in serious disrepair and leak excessive water during winter months (Figure 3 and 5). Some of the leaking water drains into light fixtures and creates electrical hazards (Figure 4).

When we asked Warden Lattimore about this maintenance issue, she said that she had submitted an emergency roof repair request on April 17, 2008, but that as of March 22, 2010, she had not received any funding to fix the roofs.



Figure 3 – Major leaks in administration building. Photo: CCWF Plant Operations



Figure 4 – Water leak in light fixture. Photo: CCWF Plant Operations



Figure 5 – Buckets catching water from major water leaks in the central kitchen area. Photo: CCWF Plant Operations

Category 4: Employee-Management Relations

According to the U.S. Department of Justice, successful leaders “invite communication, listen well, and prove themselves

trustworthy by exhibiting rational, caring, and predictable behavior in their interpersonal relationships.”³ The warden’s ability to communicate plays an important role in employee relations and is vital in implementing CDCR’s vision and mission at each prison. Not only must the warden interact with employees at all levels and communicate instructions and directions clearly and effectively, but the warden must also communicate effectively with CDCR headquarters and the surrounding community.

Table 5: Employee-Management Relations – Employee Survey Results

| Respondents | Positive | Negative |
|------------------------------------|------------|------------|
| Custody | 33% | 67% |
| Health Care | 77% | 23% |
| Admin, Plant Operations, and Other | 67% | 33% |
| Weighted Average | 55% | 45% |

Source: OIG survey of CCWF employees. See Appendix for details.

As shown in Table 5 above, 55 percent of the prison employees’ responses regarding employee-management relations were positive. Although the opinions of employees and other stakeholders provide one measure of the warden’s employee-management relations, another measure can be found in the number of grievances filed by the prison’s employees. Our analysis of employees’ responses to our surveys and statistics on employee grievances, as well as our interviews with the warden’s management team and other employees, identified three topics for further consideration: Institutional Communication, Employee Grievances, and Survey and Interview Comments.

Institutional Communication

Warden Lattimore received, overall, a 55 percent positive rating in employee-management relations. Many interviewees said that the warden mainly communicates orally and rarely puts things in writing. According to one custody manager, lack of clear written communication often creates ambiguity and confusion about prison policies. Another manager said, “We receive more information from management at the prison across the street than we do from her.” Further questions about the warden’s communication revealed that she often gives conflicting direction. For example, after one employee was hired for a specific job, the warden informed everyone during a staff meeting that the employee was being assigned to a different job. The newly hired employee was shocked that with no warning whatsoever her job was changed. The employee later found out that someone else was also doing the same job that the warden had assigned to her. In another example, one management employee related that during an executive staff meeting, the warden gave direction to management, then reversed the direction, but then soon thereafter reversed her direction again. According to the same manager, the warden changes her mind frequently, and the management team is often confused about what the warden really wants.

When we asked the warden about the communication issues with her management team, she acknowledged that communication with them is her most challenging area. She

³ *Correctional Leadership Competencies for the 21st Century*, U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Corrections (December 2006).

further explained that some of her managers and employees want her to put everything in writing, but she said that would be extremely burdensome.

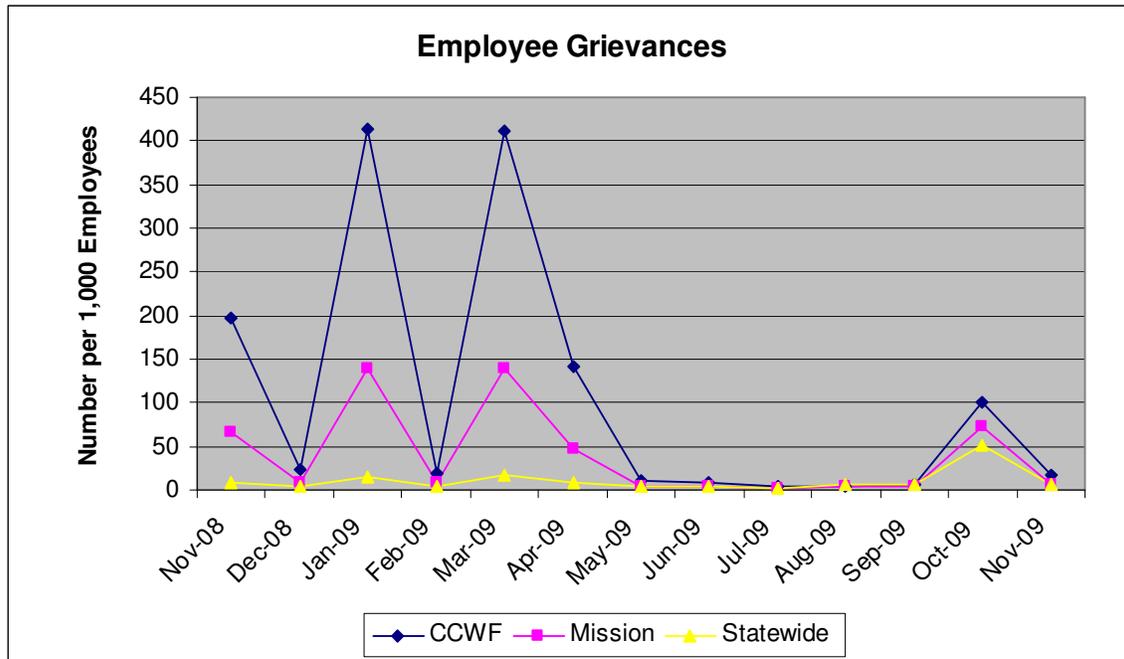
Warden Lattimore further commented that several management employees also want her to check with them before she makes any decision. Her response to them was that she could not do that but will consider all their ideas and suggestions. For example, when staff members responsible for the Enhanced Outpatient yard wanted to institute a gardening program for the inmates, the warden told them to submit a plan to her. Once she received the plan, she gave it to her associate wardens to provide input and direction. Warden Lattimore also noted that even though she can not put all direction in writing, she does put all important issues in writing, such as addendums to the Department Operations Manual operating procedures, and other important policies.

Another matter that may be causing frustration for managers and affecting their opinions is the lack of training for those who want to be promoted. Warden Lattimore told us that the Associate Director of female prisons came to CCWF to help the management team with succession planning, which helps employees develop skills for future promotional opportunities. Unfortunately, according to Warden Lattimore, CDCR had limited training funds because of budget problems and could not provide CCWF employees with the training. Nevertheless, the prison, on its own, has started to provide on-site training to its staff. The warden also said that succession planning and training has not happened fast enough for some managers who want to be promoted, but that CCWF is actively working toward the goal of providing succession planning and training and has developed four training phases for interested employees.

Employee Grievances

All employees have the right to express their grievances through an established CDCR procedure. The employee grievance process is the way employees file complaints regarding general work place disputes and disciplinary matters. When we reviewed the grievance statistics in Chart 5, we noticed that grievance levels during the period of November 1, 2008 to November 30, 2009 were higher for CCWF than for both the statewide and mission-specific prisons.

Chart 5



Source: California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, CompStat ending November 30, 2009, Central California Women's Facility. Unaudited data.

Specifically, the months of November 2008, January 2009, March 2009, April 2009, and October 2009 were extremely high in grievances. To determine the possible causes of the high grievances, we spoke with the CCWF CompStat coordinator, who provided two main reasons for the high grievances.

- First, California Peace Officers Association (CCPOA) members at CCWF filed hundreds of grievances regarding overtime hiring. They alleged that they were by-passed for overtime or that positions were left vacant. As a result, CCWF administration informed CCPOA on August 29, 2008, that CCWF would stop accepting grievances for this issue, but CCPOA continued to file grievances anyway. Subsequently, the Department of Personnel Administration denied en masse all of CCPOA's grievances regarding overtime hiring filed prior to June 9, 2009.
- Second, Service Employees International Union disagreed with the state's elimination of the Columbus Day holiday in October 2009, so they filed 99 grievances to show their protest of the change.

According to one administrative employee, the CCPOA members were unhappy about losing overtime pay. When we asked the warden about this issue, she said that CCWF had modified programs to save money and that the CCPOA members were unhappy about losing overtime. During modified programs, like the three percent redirection of staff program mentioned in the overtime usage section of this report, CDCR saves money by redirecting staff and leaving posts vacant. For example, the prison closed three

dayrooms per day for each shift and then sent the employees to cover other critical areas. The warden said that a huge percentage of CCPOA members filed grievances for every vacant post under the modified programs, but that the Department of Personnel Administration denied all CCPOA grievances en masse.

Survey and Interview Comments

Many employees said that they liked Warden Lattimore, and some employees even said that it was amazing that she can remember employee names so clearly. However, CDCR officials and CCWF managers

Table 6: Rating of Warden’s Management Skills and Qualities

| Category | Rating |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| Personal Characteristics/Traits | Satisfactory |
| Relationships with Others | Satisfactory |
| Leadership | Satisfactory |
| Communication | Satisfactory |
| Decision Making | Satisfactory |
| Organization/Planning | Satisfactory |

Source: OIG survey of CDCR and CCWF management.

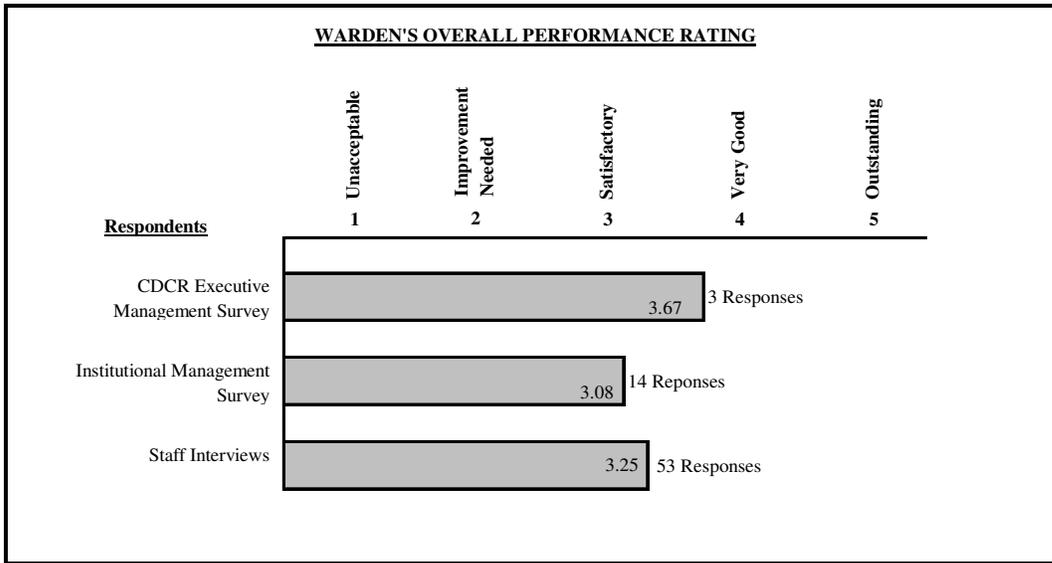
only rated Lattimore satisfactorily on her management skills and qualities. We surveyed 10 CDCR officials and 20 CCWF managers, asking them to consider the warden’s performance in six categories of management skills and qualities and to rate her performance as either unacceptable, improvement needed, satisfactory, very good, or outstanding. As shown in Table 6, the survey respondents indicated that Warden Lattimore is performing at a satisfactory level in all management categories. The results of this survey are consistent with many comments we received from employees during our site visit.

Overall Summary

In our survey, we asked employees, given all of the challenges that the prison faces, to rate the warden’s performance from outstanding to unacceptable. Of those respondents providing either a positive or a negative opinion, only 56 percent rated the warden positively. The remaining 44 percent rated the warden negatively.

In addition to our review of the four key areas identified above, our assessment of the warden’s performance also included an overall performance rating. We based the rating on survey responses from CDCR officials, CCWF managers, and from interviews we conducted with CCWF employees during our site visit. As shown in Chart 6, those individuals at the prison rated Warden Lattimore’s overall performance as slightly above satisfactory.

Chart 6



Source: *OIG survey of CDCR and CCWF management and CCWF employee interviews.*

While only three people from CDCR’s executive management team responded to our survey regarding the warden’s performance, most of them gave higher scores, indicating that they believe the warden is doing a very good job overall. In contrast, the 14 surveyed prison managers who rated the warden’s overall performance gave responses that ranged from unacceptable to outstanding, which averaged to a satisfactory score. Similarly, of the 53 interviews we conducted with employees who rated the warden’s overall performance, the scores also ranged from unacceptable to outstanding and averaged to a rating slightly higher than satisfactory. Thirty percent of those employees interviewed who work on a daily basis with the warden believe that Warden Lattimore is performing below a satisfactory level.

In conclusion, we found that Safety and Security, Inmate Programming, and Business Operations to be operating at a satisfactory level in those areas within the warden’s control. Nevertheless, improvements can be made. For example, in the area of staffing and vacancies, the warden should involve management more in filling positions. The warden should also address staff members' concerns about grouping together inmates from different yards on the main yard and should consider providing training to staff members who work with mentally disordered inmates. Repairing the physical plant may be difficult for CDCR and the warden because of the current budget problems, but continued efforts are needed. In the area of Employee-Management Relations, the prison does not have cohesive communication among its managers, especially the chief deputy warden and warden, and that affects the directions and guidance given to staff. Consequently, employees sometimes have to redo or undo work because decisions are changed. The new warden will need to address the communication problems within the management team in order for the prison to run effectively and efficiently.

Appendix

Employee Survey Results

To prepare for our site visit to CCWF, we randomly selected 239 of the prison's employees and sent them a survey. The survey provides information about employees' perceptions of the warden's overall performance as well as information about specific operational areas at the prison: Safety and Security, Inmate Programming, Business Operations, and Employee-Management Relations. Ninety CCWF employees responded to our survey—a 38 percent response rate. To simplify the analysis of the survey results, we grouped survey respondents by category and identified response trends. We did not, however, ask for the employee's name as we wanted their responses to be anonymous.

Specifically, we grouped the respondents into three employment categories: Custody, Health Care, and Other (which includes employees in education, plant operations, administration, and clerical positions.) Then, to identify strong trends or patterns, we classified the responses to questions as either positive or negative. For example, if the respondent "agreed" or "strongly agreed" with the question, we classified it as positive. If the respondent "disagreed" or "strongly disagreed" with the question, we classified it as negative. Passive responses were not included. If employees responded that they were "neutral" or responded "unknown," we excluded their response.

Results are reported in the table on the following page.

Appendix: Compilation of Institutional Employee Survey Responses - Central California Women's Facility

| Operational Area/Question | Respondents' Employment Category | | | | | | Total Responses | | | |
|--|----------------------------------|------------|-------------|------------|------------|------------|-----------------|------------|------------|------------|
| | Custody | | Health Care | | Other | | Pos | (%) | Neg | (%) |
| <u>Safety and Security</u> | <i>Pos</i> | <i>Neg</i> | <i>Pos</i> | <i>Neg</i> | <i>Pos</i> | <i>Neg</i> | | | | |
| 1. The institution is meeting its safety and security mission. | 22 | 12 | 22 | 4 | 17 | 9 | 61 | 71% | 25 | 29% |
| 2. Employees effectively respond to emergencies. | 31 | 3 | 23 | 4 | 21 | 5 | 75 | 86% | 12 | 14% |
| 3. You are issued or have access to all safety equipment you need. | 29 | 5 | 24 | 3 | 21 | 7 | 74 | 83% | 15 | 17% |
| 4. You receive all required safety training. | 27 | 7 | 26 | 1 | 26 | 3 | 79 | 88% | 11 | 12% |
| 5. The CDC-115 inmate disciplinary process modifies inmate misbehavior. | 14 | 20 | 12 | 14 | 9 | 13 | 35 | 43% | 47 | 57% |
| 6. The CDC-602 inmate appeal process provides inmates an effective method for airing their grievances. | 26 | 8 | 18 | 7 | 18 | 5 | 62 | 76% | 20 | 24% |
| 7. Safety and Security has improved since the warden's appointment. | 9 | 21 | 12 | 5 | 8 | 10 | 29 | 45% | 36 | 55% |
| Totals | 158 | 76 | 137 | 38 | 120 | 52 | 415 | | 166 | |
| Percent of Responses by Category | 68% | 32% | 78% | 22% | 70% | 30% | 71% | | 29% | |
| <u>Inmate Programming</u> | | | | | | | | | | |
| 8. The institution is meeting its inmate programming mission. | 21 | 8 | 15 | 7 | 9 | 10 | 45 | 64% | 25 | 36% |
| 9. The inmate assignment process places the right inmate into the right rehabilitative program. | 10 | 20 | 12 | 8 | 4 | 16 | 26 | 37% | 44 | 63% |
| 10. Inmate programming is adequate for the number of inmates at the institution who would benefit from the education or work experience. | 18 | 11 | 10 | 11 | 4 | 14 | 32 | 47% | 36 | 53% |
| 11. Inmate programming has improved since the warden's appointment. | 7 | 20 | 7 | 9 | 4 | 8 | 18 | 33% | 37 | 67% |
| Totals | 56 | 59 | 44 | 35 | 21 | 48 | 121 | | 142 | |
| Percent of Responses by Category | 49% | 51% | 56% | 44% | 30% | 70% | 46% | | 54% | |
| <u>Business Operations</u> | | | | | | | | | | |
| 12. Plant operations employees are able to meet maintenance and repair needs in your assigned area. | 22 | 12 | 14 | 12 | 20 | 6 | 56 | 65% | 30 | 35% |
| 13. Your assigned area has enough employees to get all of the required work done. | 21 | 12 | 11 | 15 | 18 | 9 | 50 | 58% | 36 | 42% |
| 14. Your work area operates without waste of resources. | 17 | 17 | 17 | 10 | 15 | 11 | 49 | 56% | 38 | 44% |
| 15. Business operations have improved since the warden's appointment. | 7 | 20 | 9 | 8 | 6 | 9 | 22 | 37% | 37 | 63% |
| Totals | 67 | 61 | 51 | 45 | 59 | 35 | 177 | | 141 | |
| Percent of Responses by Category | 52% | 48% | 53% | 47% | 63% | 37% | 56% | | 44% | |
| <u>Employee-Management Relations</u> | | | | | | | | | | |
| 16. The warden is knowledgeable about the day to day operations in your work area. | 9 | 20 | 11 | 6 | 8 | 9 | 28 | 44% | 35 | 56% |
| 17. The warden welcomes feedback, including criticism from employees. | 9 | 19 | 12 | 5 | 14 | 2 | 35 | 57% | 26 | 43% |
| 18. The warden does not abuse his or her power or authority. | 14 | 12 | 17 | 1 | 16 | 1 | 47 | 77% | 14 | 23% |
| 19. The warden works effectively with the local bargaining unit representatives. | 4 | 22 | 11 | 2 | 6 | 2 | 21 | 45% | 26 | 55% |
| 20. The warden is ethical, professional, and motivated. | 14 | 11 | 17 | 1 | 21 | 0 | 52 | 81% | 12 | 19% |
| 21. The warden is in control of the institution. | 15 | 17 | 16 | 2 | 16 | 5 | 47 | 66% | 24 | 34% |
| 22. The management team keeps employees informed about relevant issues. | 9 | 23 | 18 | 9 | 13 | 12 | 40 | 48% | 44 | 52% |
| 23. The employee investigation/disciplinary process is fair, effective, and timely. | 6 | 21 | 14 | 6 | 9 | 9 | 29 | 45% | 36 | 55% |
| 24. The employee grievance process is responsive to employee complaints, is fair in its application, and does not result in retaliation. | 10 | 20 | 10 | 5 | 9 | 8 | 29 | 47% | 33 | 53% |
| 25. Employee-management relations have improved since the warden's appointment. | 4 | 25 | 9 | 4 | 8 | 10 | 21 | 35% | 39 | 65% |
| Totals | 94 | 190 | 135 | 41 | 120 | 58 | 349 | | 289 | |
| Percent of Responses by Category | 33% | 67% | 77% | 23% | 67% | 33% | 55% | | 45% | |
| <u>Overall Warden Rating</u> | | | | | | | | | | |
| 26. Considering all institutional challenges, how would you rate the warden's performance? | 12 | 20 | 15 | 6 | 13 | 5 | 40 | 56% | 31 | 44% |
| Percent of Responses by Category | 37% | 63% | 71% | 29% | 72% | 28% | 56% | | 44% | |

Source: OIG, institutional employee survey results for CCWF.

California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation's Response

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

P.O. Box 942883
Sacramento, CA 94283-0001



July 12, 2010

Mr. David R. Shaw
Inspector General
Office of the Inspector General
P.O. Box 348780
Sacramento, CA 95834-8780

Dear Mr. Shaw:

We were pleased to meet with representatives from the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) on July 1, 2010 to discuss your draft report entitled, *Central California Women's Facility Warden Mary Lattimore, One-Year Audit*. With more than 25 years of experience, Ms. Lattimore has been an effective leader, responsive to institution problems, and proactive as related to Female Offender Reform efforts. Your report's overall assessment of Warden Lattimore indicates that she has performed her tasks as warden satisfactorily and we agree with that assessment.

We recognize the concerns noted regarding the communication between Ms. Lattimore and the managerial staff at CCWF. Prior to her retirement, Ms. Lattimore made significant strides to improve communications with the management team. Further, the current warden has worked diligently to establish a cohesive management team, providing clear direction and instruction regarding institutional operations.

We concur with the OIG's findings that the safety and security, inmate programming and business operations at CCWF are functioning at an overall satisfactory level. However, your report lists a concern regarding CCWF's main yard policy that allows inmates from different yards and various disruptive groups to intermingle on weekends and holidays, and you suggest that the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) reevaluate that policy. While we may not agree with the OIG premise that female offenders from various yards cannot safely engage in group exercise activities, this practice is currently under Departmental review.

Lastly, we would like to thank the OIG for allowing CDCR the opportunity to provide comment on the recommendations identified in this report. Your continued professionalism and guidance in CDCR's efforts to improve its operations is appreciated.

If you should have any questions or concerns, please call my office at (916) 323-6001.

Sincerely,

SCOTT KERNAN
Undersecretary, Operations

cc: Mary Lattimore, Warden, California Correctional Women's Facility