

FINAL REPORT
November 19, 1999

PIERCE COUNTY
JAIL STAFFING ANALYSIS

Conducted for
Performance Audit Committee
Pierce County Council

by

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SUMMARY

The Pierce County Jail has an annual budget (1999) of \$27.5 million. Of the 343 authorized FTE staff positions, 279 (81 percent) are uniformed staff (captains, lieutenants, sergeants, and officers). This report focuses on the deployment of uniformed staff and overtime controls. It includes an analysis of scheduling processes, coverage requirements of the Main Jail and Annex, and measures that will help manage overtime.

This report proposes a new scheduling method and recommends new officer positions to reduce the need for overtime. The report includes a total of 19 recommendations for more efficient staffing and overtime control.

The long-term value of the recommendations is in refining the *process* for determining how many uniformed staff are needed. We have developed this process in electronic format for use by the Corrections Bureau and the Budget and Finance department.

CURRENT PRACTICES

Scheduling

The current scheduling method is an ongoing time-intensive process. Vacation scheduling occurs at the start of the year, but staff also make additional requests for vacation and other leave during the year. Another factor is that staff days-off change every 28 days by rolling forward two days; for example, an officer with Saturday and Sunday off this month will have Monday and Tuesday off next month. Further scheduling changes are required for unplanned absences such as sick leave. In short, scheduling is a highly complex process.

The current 28-day schedules are simply a list of all the staff, their days off, and assignment to a particular shift in either the Main Jail or Jail Annex. Then, one lieutenant from each shift makes-up the daily schedule and assigns officers and sergeants to particular locations (known as posts).

In place of the 28-day rotating schedule, we propose that staff days off change every six months. Within that framework, we propose weekly schedules that do the following:

- Assign staff to specific posts.
- Designate which posts must always be filled.
- List relief staffing positions according to the budgeted level of relief.

In other words, the schedule should be tied to the budget. One benefit of this approach is that the lieutenants can glance at the schedule and know which posts must be filled and how much relief is available without using overtime.

Special Assignments

The Corrections Bureau has 60 special assignment positions. Most positions appear to be properly classified as uniformed. However, 14 positions in the areas of Classification, Commissary, Information Services, and Background do not perform security duties on a routine basis and could be re-classified to civil service positions. We recommend evaluating potential savings in salaries, uniforms, and training.

Radios

The jail has a shortage of properly-functioning radios for officer communications. We recommend purchasing an additional 42 radios so that one can be personally assigned to each officer. This investment will increase officer safety, encourage better care of the equipment, and prolong the life of the radio.

Training

With some exceptions, jail staff receive minimal in-service training. We recommend enhancing in-service training and establishing a training contract with a local community college.

Post Orders

Post orders are documents that list the duties to be performed at each location in the jail, help to define job requirements, and provide an accountability tool. At the main jail, post orders are not easily available and known to most of the staff. We recommend that post orders be up-dated and made available in a consistent format. Staff should read and sign post orders on a regular basis.

STAFFING LEVELS

Number of Uniformed Staff Members

Two areas of the jail appear to be understaffed. Unit 5-West at the Main Jail is isolated and houses some of the highest security inmates. We recommend adding one officer on Day Shift and one officer on Swing Shift. At the Annex, no one was available to take inmates to community-based hospitals without the use of overtime; however, documentation is lacking as to how often this occurs, and thus justification for another post is not clear. We recommend documenting the frequency of overtime for off-ground hospital escorts.

Other issues that cause insufficient staffing levels include vacancies and too many people on vacation. Through enhanced recruitment efforts, the hiring lag has been reduced from six months to four. We tentatively recommend the addition of five positions (to be spread among the three shifts) so that overtime due to vacancies will be reduced.

Vacations have a definite impact in the area of staffing calculations and overtime control. The 1999 budget differs on vacation coverage from the provisions of the collective bargaining agreement (CBA). The budget provides for an average of 9 people on vacation at one time, while the CBA says that up to 17 can be on vacation. We recommend hiring five additional officers in April of each year for vacation relief during the summer months (2.2 FTEs). These positions could then be used to fill vacancies in the fall.

Calculating Staffing

To assist jail administrators, the report includes calculations of how many uniformed staff are needed to operate the facility. The staffing components are as follows:

- ❑ Uniformed staff by jail post (location) and by shift
- ❑ Relief positions to cover for unscheduled staff absences (e.g., sick leave)
- ❑ Positions to cover for scheduled absences (e.g., vacation)
- ❑ Over-hiring to compensate for vacant positions
- ❑ Expanded staffing in unit 5 West.

The result is the total number of FTEs needed to operate the jail. Compared to the 1999 budget, our result is 12.2 FTE higher, with an estimated net annual saving of \$50,000 in overtime payments for vacations and vacancies. The use of these positions and overtime should be carefully tracked. If the savings are not produced, the positions should be eliminated.

Court Escort

The jail's Court Escort staff includes 26 positions (25 officers and one sergeant) at an annual cost of \$1.6 million, including an estimated \$103,000 in overtime. The 25 officers amount to about 10 percent of all jail officers. The high staffing level and costs seem disproportionate to the jail's mission.

District Court No. 1 uses video arraignment for jail inmates. Superior Court does not. It appears likely that use of video arraignment in Superior Court could greatly reduce court transport costs and also help to reduce court congestion. We recommend evaluating the feasibility and fiscal impact of video arraignment in Superior Court.

OVERTIME

Jail overtime payments for 1999 are estimated at \$1.4 million. This figure is similar to the 1997 level and about \$460,000 less than in 1998. The decrease in overtime coincides with the appointment of an administrative lieutenant for managing the schedule within the budgeted positions. As discussed in the report, it is difficult to analyze the reasons for overtime because overtime is currently tracked by area (e.g., Care and Custody) but not by reason (e.g., sick leave).

Overtime is assigned to staff via a volunteer sign-up list. Overtime appears to be fairly distributed across the various levels of seniority, rather than assigned to the most senior and highest paid officers.

Overtime cannot be fully eliminated, but it can be managed. We recommend a number of management practices that will enhance the efforts of the current administration in controlling overtime:

- ❑ Periodically analyze overtime
- ❑ Pay for holidays worked rather than provide time off
- ❑ Reduce the number of days positions are left vacant
- ❑ Periodically examine leave usage
- ❑ Use on-call (reserve) officers
- ❑ Revise the scheduling process so that it identifies which posts must always be filled and also identifies relief positions by category of relief.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Scheduling

1. Use 7-day schedules, rather than 28 days.
2. Change days-off every 6 months, rather than every 28 days.
3. Assign staff to the same building or general area on a regular basis.
4. Develop a scheduling system that reflects mandatory posts, optional posts, and relief positions.
5. Complete a shift summary report after each shift and enter it into the scheduling system, so that the reasons for overtime can be analyzed.

Post assignments and staffing levels

6. Develop post orders in a consistent format that staff read and sign on a regular basis.
7. In Unit 5-West, add one officer to Day Shift and one officer to Swing Shift.
8. Document the days and times when an additional officer is needed at the Annex for off-grounds hospital escorts.

9. Evaluate the feasibility and fiscal impact of video arraignment in Superior Court, in order to reduce prisoner transport costs and help to reduce court congestion.
10. Hire five additional correctional officers in April of each year for vacation relief during the summer months. Use them to fill vacancies in the fall.
11. Add a 24-hour post for vacancies and determine if it reduces the need for overtime due to vacant positions. If it does not, discontinue the practice.
12. Develop an in-service training program with a local community college that has a criminal justice department.
13. Purchase 42 additional radios and the associated equipment, for personal assignment to correctional officers.
14. Consider re-classifying 14 uniformed positions to non-uniformed positions.

Overtime assignment and management

15. Pay holiday overtime rather than provide time off, thus eliminating the risk of additional overtime.
16. Re-negotiate the CBA to reflect the average rate at which annual leave is earned.
17. Develop policies and procedures that encourage staff to use earned annual leave at the same rate at which it is accrued.
18. Use on-call (reserve) officers so that less overtime is needed.
19. Employ the management practices that are listed in the Overtime section of the report.

AGENCY RESPONSE

The Pierce County Sheriff addresses the recommendations in a letter that starts at page 23 below. Following at page 28 is a response by the consultant team.

Table of Contents

SUMMARY	i
Table of Contents	vi
Exhibits in the Report	vii
Chapter 1 - INTRODUCTION	1
Chapter 2 - CURRENT PRACTICES	2
Budgeting	2
Scheduling	2
Current Method	2
Schedules Should Reflect the Budget	3
Recommended Scheduling Method	4
Assignments	5
Work Locations	5
Post Orders	5
Special Assignments	5
Staff Training	6
Chapter 3 - STAFFING LEVELS	7
Number of Uniformed Staff Members	7
Vacancies	7
Calculating Staffing	8
Organizational and Other Issues	12
Court Escort	12
Radios	12
Chapter 4 - OVERTIME	15
Overtime Costs	15
Understanding the Reasons for Overtime	16
Controlling Overtime	17
Chapter 5 - RECOMMENDATIONS	19
Appendix 1 - Evaluation Objectives	21
Appendix 2 - Agency Response by Pierce County Sheriff	23
Appendix 3 - Consultant Comments	28

Exhibits in the Report

	Page
1. Corrections Bureau Uniformed Staff, 1999	1
2. Recommended Scheduling Method	4
3. Post List of Uniformed Staff	9
4. Uniformed Staff Calculations	11
5. Organization Chart	13
6. Jail Overtime, 1997-1999	16

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The Pierce County jail is operated under the Corrections Bureau of the Pierce County Sheriff Department. Its 1999 budget is \$27.5 million and includes 343.3 full-time equivalent staff (FTEs). Uniformed staff (Captains, Lieutenants, Sergeants and Officers) make up 279 FTEs, or 81 percent of the total staffing (Exhibit 1). The jail has an inmate population of up to 772 people at the Main Jail and another 500 people at the Jail Annex.

Exhibit 1
Corrections Bureau Uniformed Staff, 1999

JOB CLASS	FTEs
CAPTAINS	3
LIEUTENANTS	7
SERGEANTS	15
OFFICERS	254
TOTAL	279

Pierce County officials requested a staffing analysis to better understand the jail's staffing methods and efficiencies. Although the scope of the analysis is limited to the present jail, officials further wanted an information base for understanding staffing implications for a new jail that is currently being planned.

Appendix 1 includes the evaluation goals and objectives. The report focuses on budgeting, scheduling, and overtime controls of uniformed staff.

Acknowledgments

We were pleased to find a forward-thinking jail administration that understands staffing issues and recognizes the potential benefit of an outside staffing analysis. We want to express sincere thanks to the following individuals who have generously donated their time and insights: Chief George Wigen; Marvin Spencer, Administrative Lieutenant; Hal Stewart, Shift Lieutenant; Ken Matthews, Budget and Finance; and, Connie Vaughn and her staff at the Sheriff's Budget Office. Sheriff Mark French was most cooperative and ensured that his staff were responsive to data requests. We also want to thank Matt Temmel, Performance Audit Coordinator. Besides overseeing the project, he assisted with data collection and helped us explain in plain English the complex technical issues addressed in the report.

Chapter 2

CURRENT PRACTICES

Budgeting

Note: The following comments refer to the 1999 budget. They do not consider the 2000 preliminary budget submitted to the Council by the Executive in October 1999.

The 1999 method for budgeting uniformed staff included the following steps:

1. Developing a list of locations in the jail that must be staffed (referred to as a post list)
2. Averaging the number of days per year that staff are absent (including days off, vacations, sick leave, holidays, and other leave)
3. Determining how many FTEs all of the absences represent (known as relief FTEs)
4. Adding the relief FTEs to the total number of areas on the Post List
5. Adding overtime dollars to the total FTEs.

We found one problem with the 1999 budgeting approach. Determining the needed amount of relief staffing should not be based solely on the history of absences but must consider changes in the collective bargaining agreement, management practices, and other factors. In 1998 an average of about 9 staff (13 FTEs over three shifts) were on vacation each day, and that figure became the basis for 1999 funding. However, the collective bargaining agreement that took effect in 1999 specified that up to 17 people can be on vacation each day (28 FTEs over three shifts). This mismatch is certain to create overtime.

Vacation relief budgeting should be based on a combination of factors, such as the history of vacation use, the terms of the collective bargaining agreement, and management controls that may mitigate the need for additional relief staff.

Scheduling

Current Method

In May 1998, the new Corrections Chief appointed an Administrative Lieutenant. A primary duty of the position is to produce work schedules that utilize the staff in an efficient manner. The scheduling process begins with the largest section of uniformed staff, Care and Custody. This group of over 200 employees is responsible for providing the basic floor coverage of the Main Jail and Annex. It is composed of shift lieutenants, shift sergeants, and correctional officers. The separate support squads (Court Liaison, Classification, Booking and Release, and Reception) currently make their own schedules, although that function may eventually be transferred to the Administrative Lieutenant.

The Administrative Lieutenant uses a software called Visual Scheduler Pro to produce a schedule for a 28-day cycle. Then the 28-day schedule is distributed to the shift lieutenants, who make adjustments as changes become known. The shift lieutenants produce daily schedules and assign overtime.

Although Visual Scheduler Pro is an automated scheduling system, it requires a substantial investment of time for the following reasons:

- ❑ Scheduled leave. Although vacation scheduling occurs at the beginning of the year, staff can also make additional requests for vacation and other leave throughout the year.
- ❑ Staff days off change every 28 days. An officer with Saturday and Sunday off this month will have Monday and Tuesday off next month, and Wednesday and Thursday off the following month.
- ❑ The staffing needs of the jail change slightly according to the day of the week (dental escorts, visiting, etc.). Staff days off do not match the activity schedule of the jail.

Based on our experience with other jails, the consulting team believes that a 28-day schedule is not the most efficient use of resources. Between the first day and the 28th day, many scheduling changes are made that could be avoided by using a weekly schedule. While officers reported liking the current system because it gives them a weekend off every three months, it requires additional scheduling time to match the days off with the varying staffing needs of the jail. We know of no other jail in which staff change days-off every 28 days. Most jails change days-off every 6 to 12 months.

Schedules Should Reflect the Budget

It is critical that relief positions are managed on the schedule according to the amount of budgeted relief per category (such as vacations and sick leave). A relief factor is part of the budget, but it can also be utilized for scheduling purposes and thereby become a management tool.

For example, if the budget includes six positions for vacation leave, three for sick leave, and one for personal holidays, these positions would appear at the bottom of the schedule. When leave is approved, the relief officer's name is moved from the bottom of the schedule to the assigned post. In this approach the shift lieutenants would know the authorized staffing levels for each shift, including scheduled and unscheduled absences.

Additionally, minimum staffing levels should be documented on the schedules. One should be able to look at the schedule and determine which posts must be filled at all times (mandatory posts), and which ones can be vacant for certain hours, a whole shift, or longer (optional posts). Documenting which posts are mandatory and which ones are optional would help the schedulers determine minimum staffing levels and avoid unnecessary overtime.

Recommended Scheduling Method

In the current scheduling method, staff are assigned to each unit, followed by a list of unassigned staff. The relief factor is simply a budget calculation and plays no role in scheduling.

Exhibit 2 shows the recommended scheduling method. An “X” indicates that the person works on those days. For example, Smith works in Unit 1 on Monday through Friday. The letters “RDO” mean Regular Day Off. In the example, James would be working in Unit 1 on Smith’s days off (Sunday and Saturday). Additional staff positions are listed (after Unit 5) in accordance with the various relief factors. In other words, the relief factor is both a budgeting tool and a scheduling tool. This is critical to managing overtime.

Notice in Exhibit 2 that the Unscheduled Leave staff (Meyer and Dunn) remain unassigned until an unscheduled absence occurs. If Smith calls-in sick, Meyer could be assigned to Unit 1. Dunn would be assigned to the next scheduled absence. When the available relief positions are exhausted, the schedulers will know that overtime is needed if a further absence occurs at a mandatory post.

Exhibit 2 Recommended Scheduling Method

Post Title	Name	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
Unit 1	Smith	RDO #1	X	X	X	X	X	RDO #1
Unit 2	Jones	X	RDO #1	RDO #1	X	X	X	X
Unit 3	Wilson	X	X	RDO #2	RDO #2	X	X	X
Unit 4	Arbey	X	X	X	X	RDO #2	RDO #2	X
Unit 5	Charm	VAC	VAC	VAC	VAC	VAC	RDO #1	RDO #2
Regular Day Off (RDO) #1	James	Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 2	OFF	OFF	Unit 5	Unit 1
Regular Day Off (RDO) #2	Milton	OFF	OFF	Unit 3	Unit 3	Unit 4	Unit 4	Unit 5
VACATION (VAC)	Lott	Unit 5	Unit 5	Unit 5	Unit 5	Unit 5	OFF	OFF
UNSCHELV	Meyer	OFF	OFF					
UNSCHELV	Dunn			OFF	OFF			

A specific benefit to specifying the number of budgeted relief positions on the schedule is in the area of vacations. We previously noted that the 1999 budget will support 9 people per day on vacation, while the collective bargaining agreement allows up to 17 people on vacation at a time. The problem may be greater than appears on the surface. Based on our interviews with jail supervisors, it appears that they do not have a common understanding of this aspect of the collective bargaining agreement and could inadvertently approve vacation for up to 21 officers at a time. This situation could be controlled by adopting the recommended scheduling approach. Vacation relief positions should be shown on the schedule, as illustrated in Exhibit 2.

Assignments

Work Locations

By virtue of being assigned to work in various locations, the correctional officers have been cross trained through experience. It appears that officers work in so many locations they do not become expert in any one area. Assigning staff to the same building or general area is likely to increase performance.

Post Orders

Post orders are documents that list the duties to be performed at each location in the jail. They help to define the staffing requirements of a post, give written guidance to staff duties, and provide an accountability tool.

At the Main Jail, most of the officers we interviewed did not know where to find a post order. They sometimes referred (mistakenly) to the one-page daily schedule posted in the housing unit. At the Annex, in contrast, the staff were able to find current post orders with no difficulty. The post orders that are available come in a variety of formats, making it more difficult to identify the documents as post orders. A consistent format would be helpful. Besides post orders for officers, similar documents should be available for sergeants and lieutenants.

Special Assignments

The jail has special assignment staff, including both correctional officers and sergeants who are their supervisors. The staff are selected for rotation into special assignment areas, usually for a three-year term. One purpose is to provide specialized skills that may lead to career advancement. The jail currently has 60 special assignment staff positions in the following areas:

- Classification
- Commissary
- Court Liaison
- Home Detention
- Information Services
- Medical Transport
- Booking and Release
- Reception
- Road Litter Crew
- Supply Officer
- Training/Background Officers

In our opinion, 46 of the 60 special assignment positions are properly classified as uniformed personnel because they perform security duties on a regular basis. In the other 14 positions, the staff do not appear to perform security duties, and those positions could be re-classified to civil service positions. The 14 positions are as follows:

- Classification (8 officers and 1 sergeant): this is primarily work with records to determine the custody level of inmates
- Commissary (1 officer): this is the inmate canteen
- Information Services (1 officer): this position provides computer support
- Background (3 officers): investigate the backgrounds of job applicants

Savings from reclassification are difficult to quantify. However, there would likely be some savings in salary, uniforms, academy, and yearly training.

Staff Training

New correctional officers attend the 4-week Correctional Officer Academy and then spend ten weeks in on-the-job training prior to be assigned to a post. This 14-week training program is consistent with officer training programs in other jails.

With few exceptions, officers are assigned to posts throughout the facility. Although staff reported they know how to work at any post, formal training for posts is provided only at the initial time of employment. On-going training is minimal. This opinion is based on a random sample of every tenth training record and looking for training between 1996 and 1998. Virtually all recent training is limited to weapons qualification, defensive tactics, and first aid, except for court transport officers, who typically receive more tactical training. Excluding new staff and court transport staff, most correctional officers received 20 hours or less training in 1997 and 10 hours or less in 1998. The 1999 budget provides 30 hours of training per employee.

The Corrections Chief is in the process of developing an enhanced in-service training program. It is apparent that enhanced training could increase staff safety and morale.

Some other correctional facilities have arranged with local colleges to provide staff training while awarding college credits. This approach provides high quality instructors and often motivates non-college bound employees to re-engage in formal education. Pierce College is an example.

Chapter 3

STAFFING LEVELS

Number of Uniformed Staff Members

We were asked to analyze post assignments and staffing levels in relation to the mission of the facility. The jail's mission statement includes statements about the safety of the public, staff, and inmates; it also mentions that incarceration itself is the punishment. The implication is that no further punishment is required and that inmates should be provided opportunities for self-improvement. In some jails, treatment programs can have impacts on uniformed staffing requirements. We did not find this to be the case in Pierce County.

Two areas of the jail appear to be understaffed—one at the Main Jail and one at the Annex. At the Main Jail housing unit 5-West is located on the roof level. It is the only housing unit on that level and is staffed with one officer on each shift. The unit has a capacity of 90 inmates that are classified at levels two and three. (Level one is the highest custody and level eight is the lowest.) Single-officer staffing would probably be adequate with a lower level of inmates or a more accessible location. To reach 5-West, staff must ride an elevator to respond to a call for assistance. In this situation, with high custody inmates in a remote location that is difficult to access quickly, it appears that the unit should have two officers on day and swing shifts. This opinion is based on our observations as well as unsolicited comments from staff of all ranks expressing concern for the safety of officers in 5-West.

At the Annex, two officers are required for transporting inmates between the Main Jail and the Annex. If an inmate is taken to a community-based hospital, one of the transport officers takes the inmate. This means another officer has to be pulled from his/her assigned post to assist with transports between the Main Jail and the Annex, leaving a gap in staffing. A possible solution would be to add a post that could serve as an additional escort, on or off-grounds. However, documentation is lacking as to how often this situation occurs. The jail should document the frequency of overtime for off-ground hospital escorts.

Vacancies

Vacant staff positions can easily lead to overtime payments. We received confusing and contradictory information about vacancies in correctional officer positions. Initially, we were told that the labor demand in the local area made recruiting difficult and that the high vacancy rate was causing overtime. However, it was later reported to us that enhanced recruitment efforts have succeeded in reducing the time that positions remain vacant. The time has been reduced from six months to four months.

Caution must be exercised when considering adding vacancy rates to relief requirements. One problem is that vacancies do not happen evenly throughout the year. Sometimes one or two positions are vacant, while at other times there are many more vacancies. It is also impossible to predict which shift will have the next vacancy, so it is unclear where an additional filled position should be placed.

To address these complexities, we evaluated the current and estimated number of days positions that have been vacant. This resulted in about 19 FTEs for the year. As an alternative to adjusting the relief factor, we recommend adding one 7-day officer post to each shift for vacancies. Jail administrators should track the use of these positions in relation to vacancies and determine any net savings. If the positions have the opposite effect (that is, they increase costs), the positions should be eliminated. A full-year of experimentation will be needed prior to determining their value.

Calculating Staffing

We followed a systematic approach in estimating the jail's need for uniformed staff. The first step is to identify where and how often staff members are needed.

Exhibit 3 lists the uniformed staff posts for the facility, whether they should be staffed for 5 or 7 days per week, and how many people should be on each shift. The exhibit does not include the relief positions that will be needed to cover for staff's regular days-off, scheduled and unscheduled leave. The only difference between existing posts and these numbers is our addition of one officer at Unit 5-West on Day Shift and one on Swing Shift.

**Exhibit 3
Post List of Uniformed Staff**

Excludes Relief Positions

Job Class	Post Title	5 Day (Mon-Fri)	7 Day (Sun-Sat)		
		Day Shift	Day	Swing	Night
Captain	Services Captain	1	0	0	0
	Operations Captain	1	0	0	0
	Programs Captain	1	0	0	0
	Subtotal	3	0	0	0
Lieutenant	Shift Commander	0	1	1	1
	Administrative Lt.	1	0	0	0
	Special Investigations	1	0	0	0
	Subtotal	2	1	1	1
Sergeant	Main Jail	0	1	1	1
	Jail Annex	0	1	1	1
	Reception/Release	1	0	0	0
	Classification	1	0	0	0
	Courts	1	0	0	0
	Training	1	0	0	0
	Subtotal	4	2	2	2
Officer	Main Jail				
	3 East	0	2	2	1
	3 North (female)	0	1	1	1
	3 South	0	2	2	1
	3 West	0	2	2	1
	4 East	0	1	1	1
	4 North	0	1	1	1
	4 South	0	1	1	1
	4 West	0	1	1	1
	Trustee Quarters	0	1	1	1
	5-West (1999 budget)	0	1	1	1
	5-West (recommended)	0	1	1	0
	Central Control	0	1	1	1
	Print/Photo	0	1	1	1
	Clinic Security	0	1	1	0
	Booking	1	3	4	4
	3rd Floor Escorts	0	2	2	2
	4th Floor Escorts	0	2	2	2
	Visiting/Arraign/Dental	1	0	0	0
	3 North	1	0	0	0
	Classification	8	0	0	0
	Court Liaison	22	0	0	0

Post List of Uniformed Staff (continued)

Job Class	Post Title	5 Day (Mon-Fri)	7 Day (Sun- Sat)		
		Day Shift	Day	Swing	Night
Officer (cont.)	Main Jail (cont.)				
	Electronic Home Detention	3	0	0	0
	Reception/Release	4	0	0	0
	Litter Crew	1	0	0	0
	Inmate Work Crew	1	0	0	0
	Commissary	1	0	0	0
	Information Services	1	0	0	0
	Training	1	0	0	0
	Background	4	0	0	0
	Subtotal (Main Jail 1999)	49	23	24	20
	Subtotal (Main Jail recommended)	49	24	25	20
	Jail Annex				
	Central Control	0	1	1	1
	Intake/Release	0	1	1	1
	Reception Desk	0	1	1	0
	Medical Escort	0	1	0	0
	Floor Escorts	0	4	4	3
	A Unit	0	1	1	0
	B Unit	0	1	1	0
	A/B Units	0	0	0	1
	C/D Units	0	1	1	1
	E Unit	0	1	1	1
	F Unit	0	1	1	0
	G Unit	0	1	1	0
	F/G Unit	0	0	0	1
	H Unit	0	1	1	0
	I Unit	0	1	1	0
	H/I Units	0	0	0	1
	Transports	0	1	1	1
	Subtotal (Annex)	0	17	16	11
	Subtotal-Current (All CO Posts)	49	40	40	31
	Subtotal-Recommended (All CO Posts)	49	41	41	31
	SUMMARY		1999 BUDGET RECOMMENDED		
Captains		3	3		
Lieutenants		5	5		
Sergeants		10	10		
Officers		160	162		
TOTAL		178	180		

Exhibit 4 (below) uses the above post list as a basis for determining the total staffing needs of the facility (including two additional posts for Unit 5 West). It compares the recommended total staff to the 1999 level, and states the difference between the two figures. To the basic posts we added the following positions:

- a. Relief positions for regular days off, scheduled and unscheduled leave.
- b. Five additional vacation relief positions to be hired in April and used during the summer months (peak vacation season) (2.1 FTEs). They should be used to fill vacancies after September 1.
- c. 5 additional positions for vacancies (5 FTEs).
- d. Holiday pay that is separate from relief positions. (See the Overtime chapter)

Exhibit 4 does not include overtime payments.

**Exhibit 4
Uniformed Staff Calculations**

	RECOMMENDED			1999 BUDGET	VARIANCE
JOB CLASS	STAFF FTEs	HOLIDAY PAY	TOTAL FTEs	FTEs	FTEs
CAPTAIN	3.40	0.17	3.57	3	-0.57
LIEUTENANT	7.09	0.34	7.43	7	-0.43
SERGEANT	14.05	0.68	14.73	15	0.27
OFFICER	254.29	12.15	266.44	254	-12.44
TOTALS	278.83	13.34	292.17	279	-13.17

In comparing Exhibit 3 to Exhibit 4, it can be seen that 292.17 FTEs are required to provide full staffing for 180 posts. Once again, the purpose of providing FTEs that exceed the number of posts is to avoid the use of overtime. In this case, the additional FTEs recommended for vacations and vacancies (a total of 7.2) should result in direct savings in overtime. The cost of the seven positions (approximately \$300,000) is offset by approximately \$350,000 in overtime costs for the same number of hours. This represents a \$50,000 (15%) savings. Paying for holiday hours rather than providing time-off is also likely to reduce overtime, although the data required for an estimate are not available.

Organizational and Other Issues

Exhibit 5, on the next page, is the jail's organization chart. The chart contains a few minor inaccuracies:

- ❑ In the Training area, there is one officer and a sergeant, rather than one officer.
- ❑ Information Services has one officer and a sergeant, rather than one officer.
- ❑ Background, which screens potential new employees, has four Correctional Officers, not three.

Court Escort

The Court Escort staff includes 26 FTE positions (25 officers and one sergeant) at an annual cost of \$1.6 million, including an estimated \$103,000 in overtime. The primary function is to transport prisoners between the jail and the courts for court appearances.

The 25 officers assigned to court escort duty amount to about 10 percent of all jail officers. The high staffing level and costs seem disproportionate to the jail's mission.

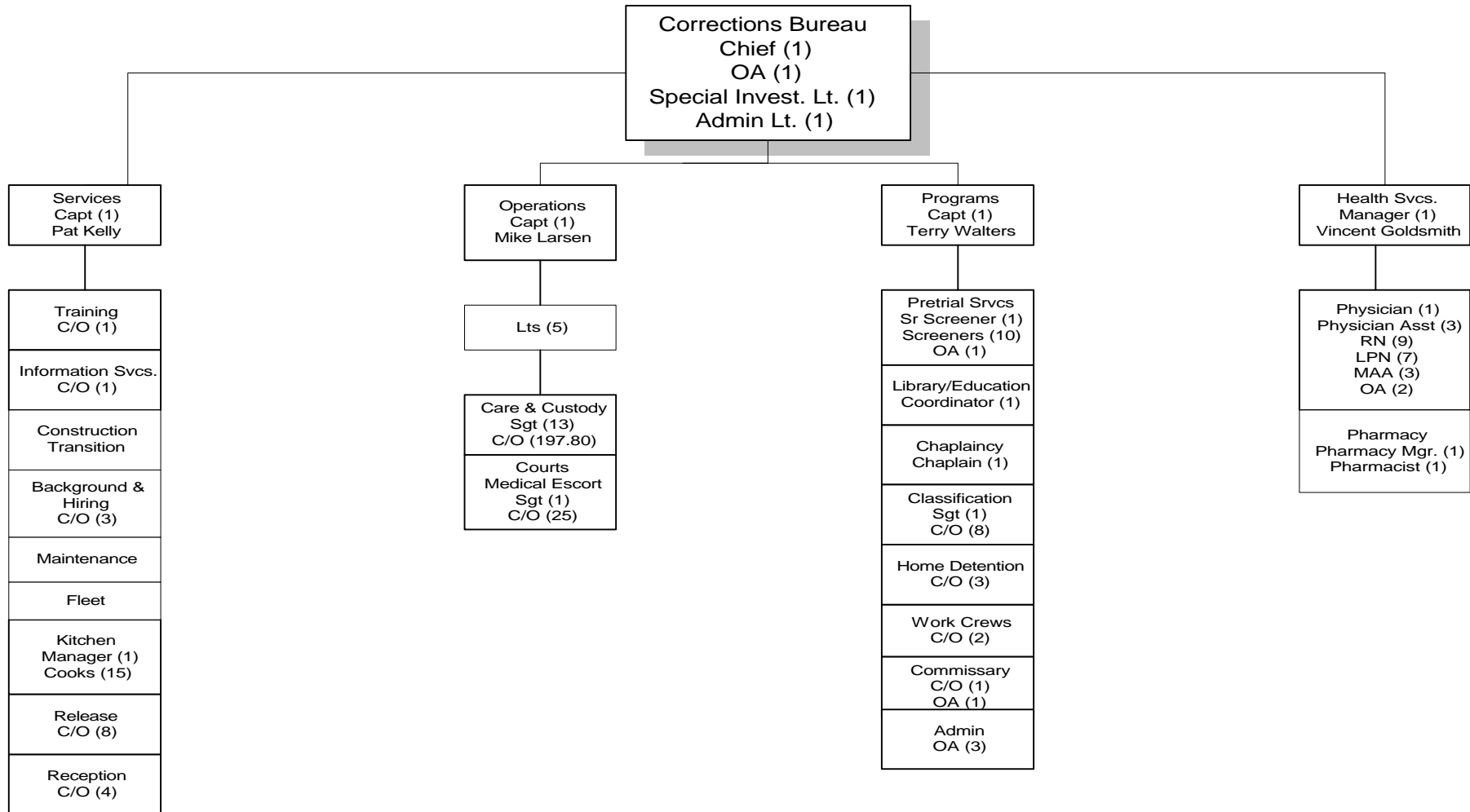
District Court No. 1 uses video arraignment for jail inmates. Superior Court does not. It appears likely that use of video arraignment in Superior Court could greatly reduce court transport costs and also help to reduce court congestion. We recommend evaluating the feasibility and fiscal impact of video arraignment in Superior Court.

Radios

Two-way radios in a jail are the staff's lifeline to communicating emergencies and requesting assistance. In interviews with us, many floor officers commented on worn-out radios and batteries at both the Main Jail and the Annex. We also observed that some batteries had to be changed about once an hour, a condition caused by old or mistreated equipment.

Jail staff expressed the belief that the problem would be solved by assigning a radio to each officer, who would be personally responsible for the equipment. We agree. Investing in radios, besides increasing staff safety, teamwork, and morale, would reinforce the message from the administration that line officer safety is of primary importance. It also will likely extend the life of the equipment if it is issued to an individual rather than an entire shift.

Exhibit 5 ORGANIZATION CHART



Chapter 4

OVERTIME

Overtime Costs

Overtime payments for 1999 are estimated at \$1.4 million. This figure is similar to the 1997 level and about \$460,000 less than in 1998. The decrease in overtime coincides with the appointment of an administrative lieutenant for managing the schedule within the budgeted positions.

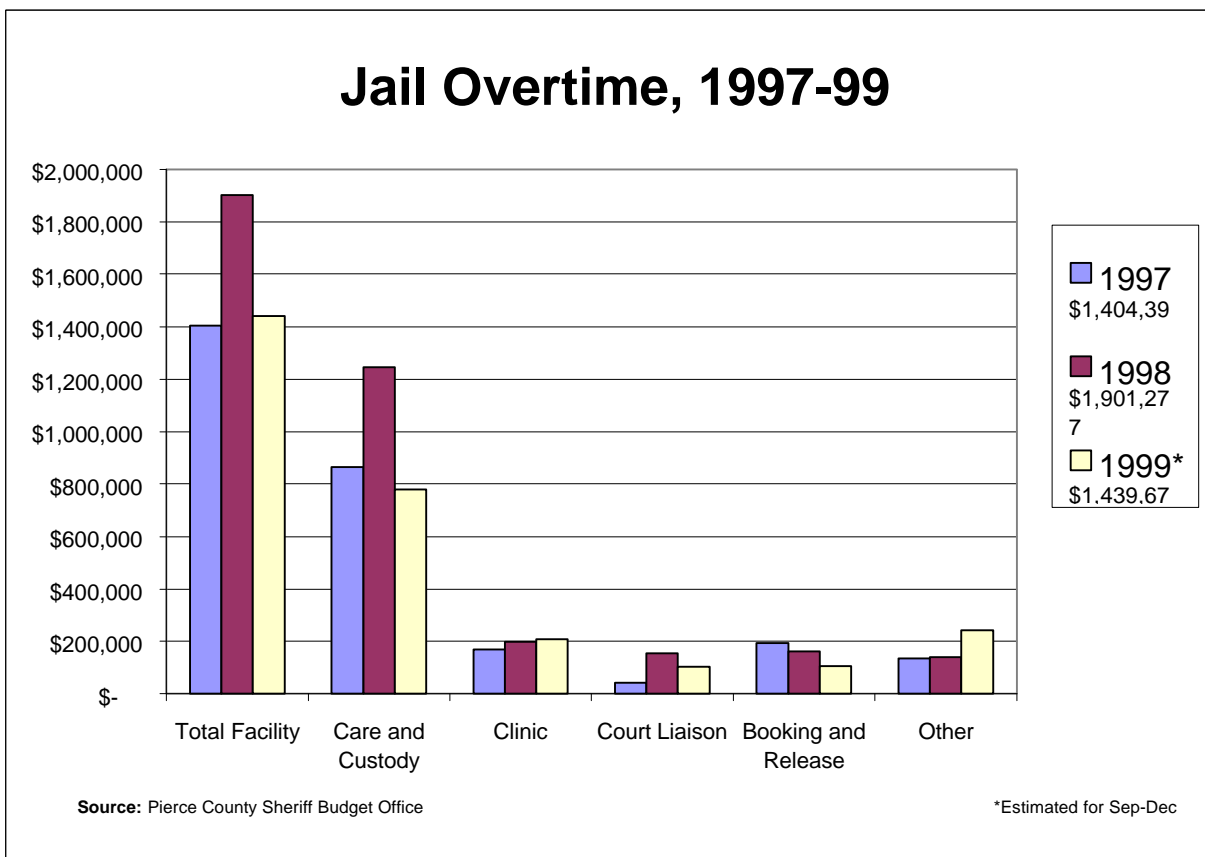
We analyzed overtime by each 14-day pay cycle from January 1996 through August 1999. (Our 1999 annual estimate is based on the first eight months of the year.) No seasonal patterns emerged from analyzing overtime by pay cycle; that is, overtime was not different from month to month in any predictable way. The only striking observation is a spike in overtime at the end of August 1998. Supervisors indicate that many people were on vacation at that time, and overtime was needed to provide security during a trial in connection with the murder of a Pierce County deputy sheriff.

Exhibit 6 shows the three-year history of overtime payments for the jail staff. The term "overtime" includes various payments in addition to regular salaries, including overtime, holiday pay, being on-call, and shift extension (premium pay for employees held past the end of their shift without prior notice).

Some main points from Exhibit 6 are as follows:

- ❑ Overtime for 1999 is estimated to be at about the same level as 1997.
- ❑ Overtime in Care and Custody is roughly proportionate to its percentage of total staffing, and the trend in Care and Custody is consistent with that of the entire facility.
- ❑ Overtime is decreasing in Booking and Release.
- ❑ Overtime in the Clinic is rising (due to vacancies)
- ❑ "Other" includes Pretrial Services, Electronic Monitoring, Classification, and a few other areas. The overtime is rising (for unknown reasons).

Exhibit 6



Understanding the Reasons for Overtime

Although providing relief positions theoretically eliminates the need for overtime, jails will always have some overtime because relief is based on averages and absences do not happen evenly throughout the year. Overtime may also be needed as a result of a temporary need for increased security. Periodic analysis and reporting on overtime can illuminate the reasons for overtime and assist in developing management controls that will mitigate the need for overtime.

Two factors make it difficult to analyze jail overtime at the present time.

1. Reasons for overtime are not coded. The jail tracks overtime by program area (Care and Custody, Clinic, and so forth) but not by reason. (Tracking by reason is currently being developed.) We know *how much* overtime there was in Care and Custody, for example, but there is no data that explains *the reason why* the overtime was necessary. Additionally, the overtime for the Main Jail and the Annex is not broken out in jail records; this is particularly regrettable because the information is basic. In the past, overtime for the Armory jail (now closed) was identifiable, but this practice was not continued when the Annex opened in 1996.

2. Ripple effects: It is not practical to track overtime by reason under the current system because the scheduling method does not identify the relief positions. Overtime tracking by reason under the current scheduling method would produce misleading data. For example, if six people are scheduled for vacation when only three relief positions are funded, three relief positions from another category will be used to cover the vacations. Then, when someone calls in sick, it will appear that overtime was caused by excessive sick leave, not inadequate vacation relief. Thus there is a ripple effect in the reasons for overtime, once the relief pool has been exhausted.

Controlling Overtime

Overtime cannot be fully eliminated, but it can be managed and strictly controlled. We believe that the following management practices will enhance the efforts of the current administration in controlling overtime.

Scheduling practices that reflect the budget. Identifying mandatory posts, optional posts and relief positions has the potential for enhancing the efficient use of overtime. This way, shift commanders would be able to quickly glance at the schedule when leave is requested, know if the post is mandatory, and know if non-overtime relief is available. They would also know when granting leave will create overtime.

Periodically analyzing overtime. Overtime should be monitored, analyzed, and reported on a regular basis, at least every six months. It is important to track overtime in the various budget areas (Care and Custody, Booking, and so forth) and make comparisons to previous periods. The analysis should also include reasons for overtime. The reason data will be meaningful if the jail adopts the recommended scheduling method (Exhibit 2 above), completes a shift summary, and enters the data into the automated scheduling system.

Paying for holidays worked. Employees are granted 10 holidays and 2 personal holidays each year. Presently, officers who work holidays are compensated at the rate of time-and-one-half and are given eight hours off. Providing the time off runs the risk of not having the relief available and having to use overtime to cover the absence. In essence, overtime is being used to pay overtime. An alternative would be to automatically pay all of the overtime each time a holiday is worked. This way, the facility can be guaranteed it will stay within the budgeted funds and scheduling would be simplified. (Note: the staffing calculation in Chapter 4 includes paying for the holiday coverage rather than using relief positions.)

Filling vacancies as soon as possible. When positions become vacant, there is a significant time lag until a replacement can be found and trained. Besides delays inherent in the hiring process, the new officer must complete 14 weeks of academy and on-the-job training. Positions are said to remain vacant for about four months, down from six months last year; the improvement is apparently due to assigning a sergeant and four officers to work on recruiting and hiring.

When positions are vacant, overtime must be used to fill mandatory posts for which no relief is available. An alternative is to over-hire. The calculations for Exhibit 4 (above) include five officer positions for filling vacancies. This is only about 25 percent of the current vacancy rate, but it is not possible to predict with accuracy when and on what shifts vacancies will occur.

Balancing Resources and Expenditures. Using a relief factor to minimize overtime means that the relief must always be used as it is intended. Specifically, there should theoretically never be a time when there are extra staff members for any shift. All of staff's hours are part of the total budget. In other words, if there are five vacation relief positions, five people should be using vacation. If not, the vacation relief hours will be wasted and will not be available when needed. Overtime is likely to occur when budgeted relief goes unused.

One also has to consider the possibility that increasing relief staffing without specifically designating how additional positions are to be utilized may also increase absences that generate overtime payments. For example, if the relief factor is inadequate because sick leave has increased dramatically due to wide-spread abuse of the policy, adding positions will probably only add to the problem. On the other hand, if the relief factor is inadequate because training requirements have increased and additional positions are specifically used for training relief, overtime will probably decrease for training.

It is easier to balance the use of relief with scheduled leave than for unscheduled absences. For example, three sick leave relief officers may be present when only two posted officers call-in sick. It is also possible that two will call-in sick one day and five will call-in sick the next day, when only three relief officers are available. This situation calls for examining any particular patterns of sick leave on days of the week or certain shifts, and trying to imitate that pattern with the relief staffing. For example, many facilities experience more sick leave on weekends, versus mid-week. In these cases, it would make sense to schedule the bulk of the sick leave relief positions to work on weekends.

Employing On-Call Officers. Some correctional facilities first try to avoid the need for overtime by utilizing on-call officers (also known as reserve officers). These are trained officers that have successfully completed the Criminal Justice Training Commission Officer Academy, but have no guaranteed schedule. There are strict parameters established in terms of where reserve officers can be assigned and the duties they can perform. The officers are paid at the regular hourly rate.

Chapter 5

RECOMMENDATIONS

Scheduling

1. Use 7-day schedules, rather than 28 days.
2. Change days-off every 6 months, rather than every 28 days.
3. Assign staff to the same building or general area on a regular basis.
4. Develop a scheduling system that reflects mandatory posts, optional posts, and relief positions.
5. Complete a shift summary report after each shift and enter it into the scheduling system, so that the reasons for overtime can be analyzed.

Post assignments and staffing levels

6. Develop post orders in a consistent format that staff read and sign on a regular basis.
7. In Unit 5-West, add one officer to Day Shift and one officer to Swing Shift.
8. Document the days and times when an additional officer is needed at the Annex for off-grounds hospital escorts.
9. Evaluate the feasibility and fiscal impact of video arraignment in Superior Court, in order to reduce prisoner transport costs and help to reduce court congestion.
10. Hire five additional correctional officers in April of each year for vacation relief during the summer months. Use them to fill vacancies in the fall.
11. Add a 24-hour post for vacancies and determine if it reduces the need for overtime due to vacant positions. If it does not, discontinue the practice.
12. Develop an in-service training program with a local community college that has a criminal justice department.
13. Purchase 42 additional radios and the associated equipment, for personal assignment to correctional officers.
14. Consider re-classifying 14 uniformed positions to non-uniformed positions.

Overtime assignment and management

15. Pay holiday overtime rather than provide time off, thus eliminating the risk of additional overtime.
16. Re-negotiate the CBA to reflect the average rate at which annual leave is earned.
17. Develop policies and procedures that encourage staff to use earned annual leave at the same rate at which it is accrued.
18. Use on-call (reserve) officers so that less overtime is needed.
19. Employ the management practices that are listed in the Overtime section of the report.

Appendix 1

EVALUATION OBJECTIVES

Purpose: To assist in determining the appropriate staffing level and assignments for the present adult jail facility (Main jail and Annex).

1. Analyze security staffing rosters and scheduling.

- A. Does the number of staff on the roster balance with the number and rank of authorized positions?
- B. Do the number and type of staff on the rosters balance with the number and type of staff observed on post?
- C. What is the level of and operating procedures for relief of planned absences such as regular days off, vacations, holidays, training, and other pre-authorized leave?
- D. Is the use of this relief efficient?

2. Analyze post assignments and staffing levels in relation to the mission of the facility.

- A. Have essential tasks been defined (perhaps in the form of post orders)?
- B. Do minimum staffing levels in all areas of the facility accomplish essential tasks?
- C. Is the jail adequately staffed to fill all posts using minimum overtime?
- D. Do staff have adequate equipment to perform needed tasks?
- E. Is there adequate back up for quick response to emergencies?
- F. Do the assignments allow for cross-training?
- G. Do management procedures provide for assignment of post coverage in an efficient manner? Does management have adequate flexibility in daily assignments?

3. Analyze the assignment, management, and use of overtime.

- A. Are minimum staffing levels defined so that non-mandatory posts are used to fill in for mandatory posts?
- B. Are on-call staff available for unplanned absences?
- C. When overtime is necessary, how is it assigned?
- D. How is the use of overtime tracked and reported? Are trends analyzed? Is action taken in response to the analysis?
- E. Do management procedures allow for efficient use of overtime?
- F. Using historical and 1999 year expenditure data as well as knowledge of jail operations, analyze use of overtime for the following Corrections Bureau staff: Care and Custody, Clinic, Court Liaison, and Booking/Release. What can be done to reduce overtime costs while complying with the needs of the jail and of external customers such as the courts and the police?

4. Assess job classifications.

- A. Is the current system in compliance with the collective bargaining agreements?
- B. Are special assignment positions in need of re-classification into civilian positions?
- C. Does the official chain of command provide for proper supervision and emergency response?

Appendix 2

AGENCY RESPONSE

November 12, 1999

Matt Temmel
Performance Audit Coordinator
Pierce County-Council

Dear Matt:

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the DRAFT Performance Audit report on the jails staffing. In general, we believe the report to be accurate and sound. The report reinforces our belief that the jail is being professionally managed and operated. It also provides constructive suggestions for future implementation.

We do wish to comment on several of the report's recommendations. They are:

1. *Use 7-day schedules, rather than 28-day schedules.*

We currently use both schedules. The Administrative Lieutenant publishes a 28-day schedule that notes days off, etc. The Shift Lieutenants then develop weekly working rosters for post assignments, etc. Many of the variations that occur in the rosters require a seven-day notice to the employee, by union contract. We are still in the process of developing variations of this process that we hope will minimize confusion and promote communication.

2. *Change days off every six months, rather than every 28 days.*

There would be some advantages, from a managerial standpoint. On the other hand, it would reduce the number of weekends that an employee would have off, annually. I believe it advantageous for morale and stress/burnout reduction to have weekends off at our current rate. In any event, this is a mandatory subject of bargaining.

3. *Assign staff to the same building or general area on a regular basis.*

In general, staff are assigned to either the Main Jail or the Annex. There is the flexibility, given to each Shift Lieutenant, to assign staff between buildings to meet vacancy needs or special assignments. This reduces overtime. This past year, contrary to prior practice, we have been monthly rotating staff into the Jail Annex to provide direct supervision training. The new jail will be direct supervision, thus

reducing our training requirements/time/cost now to further buy down the costs of the new jail. If the County Council decides not to build the jail, we'll re-evaluate this.

4. *Develop a scheduling system that reflects mandatory posts, optional posts, and relief positions.*

The current jail staffing level, as this and other studies show, is inadequate. Thus our schedules reflect only mandatory posts. We have no optional or relief positions. We utilize one mandatory post for relief, another for lunch, etc. There are few occasions when there may be extra officers on shift. When there are, they are used to fill vacancies before using overtime.

5. *Complete a shift summary report after each shift and enter it into the scheduling system, so that the reasons for overtime can be analyzed.*

This is an excellent suggestion that we are in the process of implementing!

6. *Develop post orders in a consistent format that staff read and sign on a regular basis.*

While we think this beneficial, this is a time-consuming project and we have lacked the resources to accomplish it. Absent additional staffing, we will explore using a student intern, volunteer, etc.

7. *In Unit 5-West, add one officer to Day Shift and one officer to Swing Shift.*

Corrections staff has been concerned about this unit for some time. As this study shows though, we are inadequately staffed. 5-West lends itself to housing high security inmates. Unfortunately, on the fifth floor, it's isolated from other parts of the jail. This reduces emergency response time. The inmates here are potentially more threatening and when disruptions occur, it tends to be more severe. The addition of these two, seven-day posts would provide additional staff safety and closer supervision of this high-risk population. We recommend implementation. This would require 3.5 FTEs.

8. *Document the days and times when an additional officer is needed at the Annex for off-grounds hospital escorts.*

This regularly happens. We will document its occurrence. It should be noted that a position of transport officer was removed from the Annex approximately three years ago to reduce costs. Were that position reinstated, this issue would be moot.

9. *Evaluate the feasibility and fiscal impact of video arraignment in Superior Court, in order to reduce prisoner transport costs and help to reduce court congestion.*

The reduction in staff requirements for video arraignment would be minimal. We estimate that this may save one FTE. It would, however, reduce court congestion and improve safety since we would transport fewer inmates through public areas.

Implementation will require the support of Superior Court, which in the past has been withheld.

10. *Hire five additional correctional officers in April of each year for vacation relief during the summer months. Use them to fill vacancies in the fall.*

These officers would have to be hired in February, not April, in order to complete training prior to the vacation season. These positions would, no doubt, be absorbed by later vacancies, which have averaged about 21 per year for the last several years. Five such positions may not be sufficient to keep up with vacancies.

11. *Add a 24-hour post for vacancies and determine if it reduces the need for overtime due to vacant positions. If it does not, discontinue the practice.*

We interpret this to mean three, seven day posts. This would require 5.5 FTEs. While this would reduce overtime, we must point out that it will not result in dollar for dollar savings. We concur this is a good start to addressing the relief factor issue.

12. *Develop an in-service training program with a local community college that has a criminal justice department.*

We have been in the process of developing an annual training program utilizing in-house resources. We have engaged the union in discussions about modifying leave for certain time frames so training can be accomplished without overtime. This should meet our in-house annual training needs. To contract out such training would most likely require funding. If such funding were forthcoming, we'd be happy to consider this.

13. *Purchase 42 additional radios and the associated equipment, for personal assignment to correctional officers.*

We have already been given authorization from Budget & Finance to order these radios. They should arrive shortly.

14. *Consider re-classifying 14 uniformed positions to non-uniformed positions.*

We recognized the need to do so prior to this study. We notified the Corrections Officers Union of our intent in June 1999. They invoked their right to bargain this issue and negotiations are underway.

15. *Pay holiday overtime rather than provide time off, thus eliminating the risk of additional overtime.*

The current contract allows for six holidays to be sold back in March of each year and an additional five at the end of the year. This will be allowed if requested by staff. Any other scheduling of holidays will be accomplished provided it does not incur overtime.

16. *Re-negotiate the CBA to reflect the average rate at which annual leave is earned.*

The rate at which annual leave is earned is set by County policy and labor agreements. This would require negotiations.

17. *Develop policies and procedures that encourage staff to use earned annual leave at the same rate at which it is accrued.*

Annual leave is earned at a rate set by County policy and CBA's. Same governs its use. Courts have long held that annual leave is a right and any changes in such policy will require negotiations. That said, we support the recommendation and encourage the County to consider bargaining this issue.

18. *Use on-call (reserve) officers so that less overtime is needed.*

This too would require labor negotiations. In addition, the County must recognize that these individuals would have to be hired and undergo the entire training process while earning partial/full pay and benefits. We also question the availability of candidates as we relate that to the difficulty in hiring staff for full-time positions. More discussion may be needed.

19. *Employ the management practices that are listed in the Overtime section of the report.*

Many of the recommendations have already been addressed in our previous responses to individual notations. In addition, we point out that the Corrections Bureau initiated monthly budget meetings in 1999 to more closely monitor overtime and funds accounting. Part of the overtime reduction can be attributed to these meetings. As indicated, the hiring time has been reduced and we are working with the rest of the Department to refine it even further.

In addition to these recommendations we want to discuss some additional issues. We were disappointed that the study did not evaluate the jail's supervisor/subordinate ratio. For instance, in the Court Escort Unit, we have one supervisor supervising about 23 officers. In addition, she also "dispatches" those same officers to the 20+ courts we serve. This concern was addressed in the NIC staffing study. We believe there are other jail operations areas adversely effected by the lack of supervision.

Another area concerns the calculation of relief factor. The report discusses additional staff to provide relief and reduce overtime but fails to make a specific relief factor recommendation. The report mentions relief factors less vacancy rates as they have a tendency to vary. However, we should point out that our vacancy rate has remained consistent at 21 for the past three years. The NIC survey specifically recommended a relief factor of 1.86, which they consider to be an industry standard. This has and continues to be a concern.

We believe the report provides a starting point for addressing some of our operational and staffing concerns. We appreciate the opportunity to provide initial input, as well as, being able to address the findings.

We trust this information will be beneficial to the Performance Audit Committee. I will be out of town on November 19th, 1999. Chief Wigen will represent the Department at the Committee meeting. Please call George, or me 3101, if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Mark P. French, Sheriff

Phone 253-798-7258

C: Chuck Robbins

Appendix 3

CONSULTANT COMMENTS

We appreciate Sheriff French's saying in his response that the preliminary report is generally accurate and sound, and we agree that the jail is being professionally managed and operated. It is also clear that many recommendations require discussion or negotiation with the unions, as we pointed out on October 29 in our presentation to the Performance Audit Committee.

This appendix offers comments on selected points in the Sheriff's response. We focus on two kinds of issues. First, the Sheriff takes a different approach to certain issues that should be considered. Second, in a few other cases the response does not seem to address the major part of a recommendation. This is partly a communication problem. Some of the recommendations contain "shorthand" phrasing, rather than repeating material that was fully laid out in the preceding parts of the report. A full reading of the report is needed to understand the specific meaning and basis of the recommendations.

It is our hope that these comments bring more clarity to the recommendations. The interested reader is advised to review the specific sections of the report that deal with the issues.

Scheduling

Recommendation 1 is to use a 7-day schedule in lieu of a 28-day schedule. No other jail known to the consultant team uses the Pierce County approach, that is, a 28-day schedule with weekly and daily adjustments. Since many changes occur over a 28-day period, it would be more efficient to work within the framework of a 7-day schedule. The Sheriff points out in his response that, under the union contract, many of the variations that occur in the rosters require a seven-day notice to the employee. Such notice can be given simply by publishing the seven-day schedule a week or more in advance of the workweek.

On *recommendation 4*, the response claims that the work schedule reflects only mandatory posts and no optional or relief positions. The report suggests otherwise. The jail budget includes positions for covering regular days off as well as scheduled and unscheduled leave.

The major point in recommendation 4 is to adopt the scheduling method shown in Exhibit 2 (on page 4), so that the scheduling approach matches the budget. That approach will become essential if the new recommended positions are added, since most of them are optional and relief positions.

Video Arraignment

Recommendation 9 is to evaluate the feasibility and fiscal impact of video arraignment in Superior Court. The recommendation is intended to address the jail's court escort costs of \$1.6 million per year, including 26 FTE positions (25 officers and one sergeant), or about 10 percent of the jail staff. That staffing level seems disproportionate to the jail's mission.

The Sheriff's response says that video arraignment "may save one FTE" of the court escort staff and does not provide the basis for that determination. We have not seen the data to support that view, which strikes us as premature.

On a related issue, the response expresses disappointment that the report does not recommend adding another court escort supervisor, in order to reduce the high officer/supervisor ratio. Rather than increasing the number of supervisors, we think it is better to focus on reducing the workload. Adding a sergeant would not address the root problem.

Vacation Relief

On *recommendation 10*, the Sheriff states that additional officers for summer vacation coverage would have to be hired in February in order to complete training prior to the vacation season. We recommended hiring the staff around April 1, in order to provide 14 weeks of initial training prior to mid-June. Hiring the officers in February would provide 20 weeks of employment prior to June 15.

Vacancies and Relief Factor

On *recommendation 11*, the response states that creating a 24-hour, 7-day post for vacancies is a good start towards addressing the relief factor. Near the end of the memo, the Sheriff's response adds that the report fails to recommend a specific relief factor, such as 1.86 recently recommended by the National Institute of Corrections.

In our calculations, we used averages of absences for specific categories and then added positions for areas that are seasonal (vacations) and less predictable (vacancies). We deliberately avoided the alternative approach of increasing the relief factor across the board, because it would probably increase costs. If averages are applied across the board for categories of absences that do not occur evenly throughout the year, overtime is likely to increase. Furthermore, if the relief factor were increased, there would be no incentive to keep controllable absences to a minimum.

The report calculates the number of needed positions in a conservative manner, in an effort to provide additional staff resources without increasing overtime. If the County Council funds the recommended number of positions, it is advisable to include a budget proviso requiring the Corrections Bureau to use the new positions as intended and to track the reasons for overtime.

Training

On *recommendation 12*, the Sheriff indicates that additional funding would be needed to develop a training contract with a local college. This does not accord with the information we received during the audit. Current funding was said to support training each officer an average of 32 hours per year. According to training records, most training relates to weapons and first aid, and most officers receive training of 10 to 20 hours per year. Thus it is not clear to us why additional funding would be needed to increase training and to do it through a contract with a local college.

Holiday Overtime

Recommendation 15 is to pay overtime for holiday work, rather than continue the current system of providing a large amount of time off. The Sheriff's response appears to favor continuing to provide time off for holidays worked. We believe that approach has a high risk of using overtime to pay for overtime. In other words, if an officer is scheduled for the day off and later another officer calls in sick, overtime may be needed in order to give the first officer the day off. In our opinion, it would be better simply to pay for holiday work at the holiday rate in the next paycheck, rather than allow compensation for holiday work to complicate future scheduling.

Number of Staff on Vacation

Recommendation 16 is to re-negotiate the collective bargaining agreement (CBA) to reflect the average rate at which annual leave is accrued. The phrasing of this recommendation left too much unsaid. The problem, as explained in the report, is that the CBA allows vacation for up to 17 officers at one time, whereas the budget funds vacations at a lower rate. This "mismatch" creates overtime during vacation months. The recommendation was intended to address that problem. It was not intended to suggest renegotiating the rate at which county employees earn annual leave. The issue is balancing the number of jail officers that are allowed to be on vacation at once with the number of budgeted vacation relief positions.

On-Call Officers

Recommendation 18 calls for developing a pool of on-call (reserve) officers to fill in at the jail on short notice in order to reduce overtime. The Sheriff's response says that few such candidates are available. We believe the recommendation is sound and should be pursued. In our experience, good candidates may be found by periodically telephoning teachers in college criminal justice programs and contacting military retirement centers. On-call officers are people who may or may not want to work full-time. Although there is an initial training cost, one purpose of on-call officers is to pay straight-time hours in lieu of overtime. Another purpose is to provide a work-ready hiring pool as vacancies occur, so that training costs are not sunk.