

COUNTY JAIL, JUVENILE HALL AND HOLDING CELLS: INSPECTION AND INFORMATION REPORT

INTRODUCTION

The 2013-2014 San Luis Obispo County Grand Jury (Grand Jury) conducted an inquiry into the condition and management of the San Luis Obispo County Jail (Jail), San Luis Obispo County Juvenile Hall (Juvenile Hall) plus city and county temporary holding facilities. This report presents the results of that inquiry and is based on jurors' observations, interviews and informal discussions with correctional officers, other local law enforcement officials and information obtained from the Sheriff's Office.

AUTHORITY

California Penal Code section 919(b) mandates, "The Grand Jury shall inquire into the conditions and management of the public prisons within the County." Authorization extends to interviewing inmates and staff and reviewing inmates' grievances.

METHOD

Members of the Grand Jury conducted the following inspection tours:

- Juvenile Hall - September 18, 2013.
- County Jail and Women's Honor Farm - November 20, 2013.
- Men's Honor Farm - December 4, 2013.
- Holding Cells in the County Court House and Arroyo Grande, Atascadero, Grover Beach, Morro Bay, Paso Robles, Pismo Beach and San Luis Obispo city police departments – August 28 through September 25, 2013.

Documents reviewed included:

- *County Jail, Juvenile Hall and Holding Cells: Inspection and Information Report - 2012-2013 San Luis Obispo County Grand Jury, Final Report.*
- San Luis Obispo County Jail Inmate Rules.
- San Luis Obispo County Sheriff's Office 2012 Annual Report.

Staff interviews included:

- County Sheriff/Coroner.
- Undersheriff and Chief Administrator of the Jail.
- Correctional Services Lieutenant, Supervisor of the Honor Farms.
- Jail Program Manager.
- Director of Probation and Chair of County Community Correction Partnership Executive Committee.
- Chief Deputy Probation Officer, Superintendent of Juvenile Hall.
- Police Chiefs, Watch Commanders and/or Lieutenants of the seven San Luis Obispo County police departments.

Two-person Grand Jury teams spoke with four inmates including two male inmates from the Men's Honor Farm and one male and one female youth at Juvenile Hall.

NARRATIVE

County Jail

The Jail is located west of Highway One at 1585 Kansas Avenue. It is nearly 94,000 square feet in size with about 7,400 square feet used for administrative offices. As stated in the San Luis Obispo County Sheriff's Office Annual Report 2012: "The primary purpose of the County Jail is to house pretrial arrested and sentenced inmates in a safe and secure environment providing protection of the community. The Jail houses both male and female inmates in maximum, medium and minimum security housing locations. It also provides for the health and welfare of the inmates and has the responsibility of transporting those inmates to and from locations outside of the Jail."

The Board of State and Community Corrections rates the Jail at a capacity of 526 inmates, but by adding double bunks in some of the housing units it is "self-rated" at 637 inmates. Even with double bunking, the current average inmate occupancy of 732 requires many inmates to sleep in portable plastic sleeping modules with mattresses known as "boats" placed on the floor. The current average inmate population is a 2% increase over last year's average population of 717.

Overcrowding at the Jail is due in large part to the 2011 Public Safety Realignment Act (AB 109) which resulted from a mandate by the United States Supreme Court to reduce overcrowding in the California State Prison system. Historically, the Jail housed inmates convicted of either felony or misdemeanor crimes with sentences of one year or less. Under AB109 three major changes took place effective October 1, 2011:

- Felony offenders who have never been convicted of a serious or violent crime and are not required to register as sex offenders will now serve their sentences in local custody.
- Most offenders released from prison will now be subject to local “post-release supervision” rather than state parole.
- Parolees who violate a condition of release will no longer be returned to prison but will be required to serve out any custodial supervision in county jail.

Currently, 47% of the Jail inmates are awaiting sentencing. Appendix I provides a more complete breakdown of the inmate population.

Budget: The 2013-2014 budget for the Jail is \$23.6 million, an increase of about 2% over last year’s budget. That figure includes \$2.6 million received from the state to cover the additional cost of AB109 requirements. The legislature has incorporated language in the state Constitution that ensures the additional funds will continue as long as AB109 is in effect. The Sheriff’s Office has concerns, however, that cuts may be made in other areas that could offset that funding.

The Sheriff noted a high number of inmates are repeat offenders and believes the most cost-effective way to reduce Jail overcrowding is to reduce the number of repeat offenders. Accordingly, he has directed a portion of County AB109 funds towards efforts to reduce repeat offender numbers. A Jail Program Manager has been hired and is instituting a series of programs aimed at changing offenders’ behaviors (including substance abuse), teaching life and job skills and preparing offenders for reentry into society at large. See Appendix II for a more complete list of inmate programs.

Expansion: Physical changes that will assist in handling the overcrowding include the construction of a Women's Jail. The Board of Supervisors awarded the construction contract for the Women's Jail on December 17, 2013. The state has approved the contract, a Notice to Proceed has been issued and groundbreaking has taken place. Construction of the Women's Jail will be in two phases. The first phase will include the inmate housing and property area and the second phase will be the medical and programming area. The Women's Honor Farm will be moved from its current location to an area adjacent to the Men's Honor Farm, allowing further expansion of male inmate housing into that vacated area. The Women's Honor Farm relocation is described in more detail in the Women's Honor Farm section.

Mental Health/Medical: Mental health is a significant issue in the Jail. Approximately 40% of the inmates receive medication for mental health disorders such as schizophrenia, depression and bipolar disorder. While no suicide attempts were successful in 2013, staff made 85 safety cell placements for attempted self-harm. To serve inmates with mental health disorders, five mental health technicians provide Jail coverage and two psychiatrists provide a total of ten clinic hours per week.

Medical care has become more of an issue in the Jail as AB 109 has resulted in inmates being housed for much longer sentences. To meet that need, one additional doctor, one and one-half full-time equivalent Mental Health Technicians and one full-time Administrative Assistant have been added to staff. Coverage hours for a Supervising Correctional Nurse and a Correctional Nurse have been increased. Currently, the Jail medical staff consists of three medical doctors providing ten to fifteen clinic hours per week, a staff of twelve registered nurses, five licensed vocational nurses and two administrative assistants providing 24 hour Jail coverage.

Staffing: Jail operations are staffed by 176 correctional personnel. Appendix III has a complete breakdown of the custody staff by position.

Attacks on staff have increased and become more violent with the increase in inmates and sentence length and the addition of felony offenders. Incidents occur on a nearly daily basis, and one correctional officer was hospitalized in 2013. Because of that assault, a Custody

Emergency Response Team (CERT) consisting of twenty intensively trained and specially equipped deputies has been formed to respond to combative inmates. At any given time a minimum five member team can be assembled in minutes for cell extraction, riots, clearing and searching day rooms, hostage recovery and other situations that would endanger a deputy beyond the course of normal duty.

Intake: Each individual booked into the Jail is fingerprinted and has his/her photo taken. During the intake process, if an inmate appears to be under the influence of drugs/alcohol or exhibits violent or suicidal behavior, he/she is placed in a special designated cell for observation until stabilized.

As part of the intake process, individuals that are housed at the Jail go through the Classification Office where a detailed screening is performed to determine the inmate's security classification. Classification is based on the charges, previous arrest history, substance abuse problems, mental health issues, sexual orientation, history of violence, gang affiliations, need for protection from other inmates, and any other factor that, in the experience of the screener, will cause the inmate to need special handling. The inmate's classification will determine cellblock assignment and indicates to staff the level of security needed when in contact with that inmate. A complete list of the Jail's Inmate Classification System is also included in Appendix I.

Contraband: Contraband continues to be a problem in the Jail. Staff thoroughly searches every inmate before he/she is placed in the general population. Searches can include: a metal detector/scanning device search, pat down search, strip search, visual body cavity search, and if court ordered and conducted by a doctor, physical body cavity search. The Jail recently acquired a canine trained to detect drugs, and staff makes random searches of the Jail with the animal.

Housing: Physically, the Jail consists of the older main Jail built in 1971 and the new Jail built in 1993. The main Jail has several components. While there are some single cells for inmates who are especially violent or have medical conditions, most inmates are housed in group cells with up to 10 inmates in each cell. Stahl Hall is the Jail's medical and mental health center and

is where inmates go when ill. The center dispenses medications; however, the Jail staff has no authority to forcibly medicate inmates having episodes associated with mental illness.

The new Jail consists of West Housing and West Dorm. In West Housing, each dorm is further divided into groups of cells allowing for segregation of prisoners by classification and special need such as high security risk, medication requirement, involvement with rehabilitation programs and any need for special protection.

Women inmates are currently housed in a separate section consisting of maximum security and dormitory units. The two dormitory style cells house lower to middle security inmates and average 30 inmates each. Dormitory #1 houses the lowest security risk inmates who are the source of most work details and Honor Farm candidates. The maximum security side of the Women's Jail houses higher security risk inmates including those who are mentally ill, suicidal, in protective custody or administrative segregation. Because these inmates require a greater degree of separation, no cell holds more than ten inmates.

Men's Honor Farm

The Men's Honor Farm (Men's Farm) is located about one-half mile east of the Jail complex on Oklahoma Avenue. The Sheriff has rated its capacity at 80 inmates in two barracks-type buildings.

On December 4, 2013, when the Grand Jury visited, 78 inmates were in residence. Inmates must apply to be placed on the Men's Farm. Applications are closely reviewed to determine eligibility that is based on the inmate's classification, charges against them and disciplinary history. Inmates with known gang affiliations are not placed in the Men's Farm. Inmate behavior is closely monitored and those who commit any infraction are returned to the general Jail population. Currently, the average stay is over one year, which is a sharp increase from the average of 20 days prior to AB 109.

The Jail kitchen is located within the perimeter of the Men's Farm and its inmates are the primary workforce. The kitchen serves the inmate population, the staff and Juvenile Hall, producing approximately 70,000 meals per month. Twenty-one inmates in two shifts, supervised

by seven paid cooks, make the two hot meals and box lunch daily with an average cost of about one dollar per meal. In response to increased religious diversity among the inmate population, the kitchen has stopped serving pork and, due to allergies, fish has also been removed from the inmate menu. All inmates working in the kitchen receive training and can take a test to receive the California Food Safety Manager Certification. A new program for inmates to receive a California Food Handlers Card has recently begun.

In November 2012, a fire destroyed the permanent laundry facility. Until that time, supervised inmates operated the laundry and were responsible for laundering all inmate clothing. Currently, laundry service is contracted out to the California Men's Colony and the Jail inmates can only receive, sort, deliver, and do limited washing and drying. All inmates in the Jail receive one full exchange of clothes per week and one partial exchange. Construction of the new laundry facility has begun.

The Men's Farm has fully functioning wood and metal shops, and the inmates do the majority of maintenance throughout the Jail. The inmates are also sent on work details. The Jail has standing agreements with Caltrans, Camp San Luis, the Courthouse, the county garage and trash services to provide inmate work details.

Men's Farm inmates assemble, paint, repair and refurbish bicycles that have been donated by the community and large retail stores such as Target, Costco and Wal-Mart. The bike program is quite popular with inmates and the community. The Sheriff's Office sponsors a bike give away at Christmas to local children and adults in need. During the rest of the year, bikes are available to charities by application and to probationers, if approved by the Probation Department, as part of the re-entry program.

Women's Honor Farm

The Women's Honor Farm (Women's Farm) was established in the modular units in 2012 with funding from the state as part of AB 109. It has a Sheriff-rated capacity of 24 inmates in two modular buildings adjacent to the Jail. When the Grand Jury visited on November 20, 2013, 20 women were in residence. Inmates must apply to be accepted to the Women's Farm.

Applications are evaluated to determine eligibility that is based on the inmate's classification, charges against her and disciplinary history. Inmates with known gang affiliations are not placed on the Women's Farm.

Inmates on the Women's Farm are involved in a rehabilitation program using staff facilitated training modules entitled "Thinking for a Change." Currently, two correctional deputies are trained program instructors. The program offers classes in life skills; this includes recognizing and changing negative behavior, alternatives to violence, improving parenting skills and ending substance abuse. Additionally, sewing classes are offered; one project undertaken by the women has been to sew colorful backpacks for children in the county foster care program to replace the plastic bags that they had been using.

Some of the women also participate in the Sheriff's Teen Outreach Program (STOP) for at-risk youth. The program educates the youth about the consequences of poor decision-making. Women inmates participating in the program share their personal stories with the youth and describe how their poor decisions led to arrest, jail and confinement. The deputies describe the program as having a powerful emotional impact on both the youth and the inmates. To be allowed to participate, the women must accept personal responsibility for their actions, which is a turning point in rehabilitation.

During the day, inmates participate in work programs with the largest number going to County Animal Services working as Kennel Assistants. The inmates assist with cleaning, feeding and socializing animals to make them more adoptable. Several inmates are responsible for cleaning the Emergency Operations Center and administrative offices. Other inmates assist in doing daily laundry for the Women's Honor Farm as well as washing and detailing department vehicles. One inmate assists the Commissary unit.

As part of the Sheriff's effort to deal with overcrowding at the Jail, the Women's Farm is being relocated to an area independently secured but within the perimeter of the Men's Honor Farm. A screened area contains two buildings that have been totally refurbished and are capable of housing 30 women each. At the time of this report, Jail staff anticipates state approval of the relocation. Once the women are relocated, the former Women's Farm will be further secured

and will be used to house male inmates currently sleeping in “boats.”

Holding Cells

Holding cells are temporary lockup facilities that house arrestees or inmates for a brief time before they are released or transported to the San Luis Obispo County Jail.

Historically, the County and each of the seven city police agencies (Arroyo Grande, Atascadero, Grover Beach, Morro Bay, Paso Robles, Pismo Beach and San Luis Obispo) have maintained holding cells. However, most of these agencies seldom use their holding cells as most offenders are either cited and released in the field or are immediately transported to Jail for booking. Arroyo Grande and Morro Bay police departments converted their holding cells to better utilize the space within their facilities. Arroyo Grande uses the space for property/evidence storage and Morro Bay uses the space as a property/evidence packaging area and armory. During special events, such as the July 4th celebration and the Mid-State Fair, when the number of arrests increases dramatically, the cities of Pismo Beach and Paso Robles, respectively, arrange with the Sheriff's Department to handle the processing and transportation of offenders. This arrangement has proved to be of mutual benefit to the agencies during these large special events.

The County Courthouse has the largest and most used holding facility in the county. Operating only on court days, it houses an average of 70 inmates and arrestees awaiting court proceedings.

Juvenile Hall

The San Luis Obispo County Probation Department operates the Juvenile Hall. Built in 1983, Juvenile Hall has a capacity of 50 youths, and is located on the Kansas Avenue campus. Section 208.5 of the California Welfare and Institutions Code allows detention of a youth (defined as 20 years of age or younger). At the time of the Grand Jury's visit, there were 19 youths in residence, 17 males and 2 females.

Upon arrival at Juvenile Hall, each arrestee is assessed by three professionals: a probation officer, nurse or nurse practitioner, and a mental health therapist. Great care is taken to separate those arrestees who require specialized housing due to their age, vulnerability, medical and/or mental health, or gang affiliation. If it is anticipated the youth will be in residence for more than

a day, he or she is also assessed by the educational staff. Education services are coordinated with the school in the youth's home community. The County Office of Education provides teachers and instructional aides.

Over 150 community member volunteers provide enrichment programs for those held in Juvenile Hall including but not limited to yoga, guitar lessons, and book club. The volunteer efforts are led by Sister Theresa Harpin, Director of Restorative Partners, a program that provides support to those in custody.

Juvenile Hall uses a "Coupon Reward System." Youths earn rewards for good behavior redeemable for inexpensive amenities such as stationery and healthy snacks. The staff reported this system has resulted in an overall improvement in the behavior of the youth. A new program, "Anti-Violence Program" was implemented in April 2014 facilitated by the volunteers from the Restorative Partners.

The Grand Jury conducted interviews with one female and one male incarcerated at the Juvenile Hall. They each reported the staff treats them fairly and with respect. One youth complained about visitor restrictions. Parental visits are allowed per the Juvenile Hall's handbook. All other visitors must have prior approval by the youth's probation officer; the potential positive or negative influence a visitor may have on the youth is always the highest concern.

Juvenile Hall is staffed by 24 Juvenile Services Officers, 5 Juvenile Services Officer IIIs and 3 Supervising Deputy Probation Officers. Juvenile Hall has one nurse practitioner, one nurse, a part-time nurse and an on-call pediatrician on staff to address the medical needs of the youths. Two mental health therapists and one part-time mental health therapist are also on staff for mental health needs. The therapists are proactive in their approach, frequently observing and talking with the youths rather than only providing services by appointment.

Construction of a new addition is expected to begin in 2015 and be completed the following year. The new addition will add 20 single beds, three classrooms, a gym/multi-purpose room and an administration wing located above the classrooms.

CONCLUSIONS

The Grand Jury found the Jail to be clean and functioning well. The inmates appeared to be safe, secure and orderly. Despite the recent increase in violence toward the staff, all indications were deputies were fully in charge of the facility and treated the inmates with dignity.

The Jail's population has changed in two ways since the implementation of AB109. It now houses a larger number of inmates and more of them are repeat offenders. The result is an overcrowded jail. The Sheriff believes the most cost-effective way to reduce Jail overcrowding is to reduce the number of repeat offenders and he has directed a portion of County AB109 funds toward those efforts. A Jail Program Manager has been hired and is instituting a series of programs aimed at changing inmates' behaviors (including substance abuse), teaching life and job skills, and preparing them for reentry into society at large.

The cost for medical care for inmates is increasing and is expected to continue to increase as the Jail population ages. Because 40% of the inmates require mental health care, it is a significant cost component of the Jail's budget. A hidden "medical" cost is the need for staff to transport and guard inmates requiring specialized care outside the Jail. Although this was recently contracted to a private company, it is still an expense in the budget.

The Grand Jury found all the existing holding cell facilities to be clean and safely operated. All policy and procedure manuals, state mandated health inspections and safety certifications were up-to-date and available for review.

The Grand Jury found Juvenile Hall to be clean and well maintained.

COMMENDATIONS

The Grand Jury commends the staffs of the Jail and Juvenile Hall for their professionalism.

REQUIRED RESPONSES

This is an informational report. No responses are required.

Presiding Judge	Grand Jury
Presiding Judge Dodie Harman Superior Court of California 1035 Palm Street Room 355 San Luis Obispo, CA 93408	San Luis Obispo County Grand Jury P.O. Box 4910 San Luis Obispo, CA 93403

APPENDIX I
JAIL STATISTICS ¹

Rated Capacity

Board of State and Community Corrections	526
Sheriff's Department	637

Current Population *

Males	670
Females	112

* Includes inmates in outside locations: Sheriff's Parole and Home Detention.

Average "Boat" Sleepers

Males	35
Females	14

Criminal Classification

Felony	592
Misdemeanor	146
Unknown	15

Inmate Classification System

- General Population
- Criminal Sophistication
- Administrative Segregation
- Protective Custody
- Medical
- Mental Health

¹ Statistics as of November 20, 2013.

APPENDIX II
JAIL INMATE PROGRAMS
FALL/WINTER 2013

General Education Development (GED) - Prepares inmates to take the test for a General Education Diploma. .

English as a Second Language – English instruction for non-native speakers.

Alternatives to Violence – Teaches methods of communication to resolve conflicts.

CA Certified Food Handlers Card Training – Inmates are taught how to safely handle food. Those completing training receive a Certificate needed to work in the food service industry.

Certified Food Safety Manager Training – Builds on and expands food handler lessons. Inmates that pass a written test obtain a nationally recognized certificate of competence.

Substance Abuse Treatment – Uses various curriculum including Anger Management, Relapse Prevention Education, Release Planning, Self Esteem, Perception Checking and more.

Planning for Change – Targeted at changing anti-social thinking and criminal behavior.

Parenting – Enhances parenting skills for creating a healthy family environment.

Alcoholics/Narcotics Anonymous – Twelve Step meetings in custody.

Garden Project, Men’s Honor Farm – Prepare, design and maintenance of garden areas.

Ministry – Coordinates religious activity within the jail and ensures inmates have access to ministers and spiritual volunteers.

Vets Helping Vets – One-on-one counseling for incarcerated vets by vets. Councilors will accompany vets to Vets Courts hearings.

Vocational Training – Work experience opportunities such as Humane Society and Jail Commercial kitchen.

Reentry Planning – Assesses inmates needs upon release and sets goals for obtaining assistance once released.

Post-release Case Management – For eligible inmates based on assessed level of need including housing, substance abuse, medical, transportation, etc.

Forensic Reentry Services – A program within the Mental Health Services Act to provide assistance to inmates with primary mental health disorders being released from custody. It connects the inmate with specialized community support services.

Forensic Coordination Team – Provides more intensive supervision of mentally ill offenders and assists in connecting with specialized support services.

APPENDIX III
JAIL CORRECTIONAL STAFF

Correctional Captain	1
Correctional Lieutenant	2
Correctional Sergeant	13
Senior Correctional Deputies	15
Correctional Deputies	104
Senior Correctional Technicians	3
Correctional Technicians	25
Program Manager	1
Supervising Legal Clerk	1
Legal Clerk	2
Food Service Supervisor	1
Cook	7
Storekeeper	1