
Secretary of State

State of Oregon

OREGON YOUTH AUTHORITY

Security and Safety at Youth Correctional Facilities



Audits Division

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Auditing for a Better Oregon

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During its 1995 session, the Oregon Legislative Assembly passed Senate Bill 1 (SB1) providing for sweeping changes to the state's juvenile justice system. One of the main purposes of this bill was to improve the protection of the public from dangerous young criminals. SB1 also reorganized juvenile corrections and created a single new state agency, the Oregon Youth Authority (OYA), with over-all responsibility to address juvenile crime. We have completed this review of security and safety at OYA as the first part of a comprehensive, multi-part review of Oregon's juvenile justice system. SB1 mandated such a review to establish the system's effectiveness in "providing public safety and preventing a child's return to criminal behavior."

In consultation with OYA, we contracted with the American Correctional Association (ACA), to obtain the special expertise necessary for this project. ACA administers the only nationwide accreditation program for all components of adult and juvenile correction facilities. We also reviewed agency data pertaining to runaways from Oregon Youth Authority custody, inspected records, and interviewed key administrators. We found that:

- Conditions of confinement at three major youth correctional facilities were generally good; however, ACA reviewers identified numerous security and safety related issues that OYA needs to address; and
- Strengthened security at OYA youth correctional facilities has resulted in fewer runaways in recent years; however, our review showed an ongoing problem with unauthorized absences among youths still in OYA's legal custody but on parole or probation in community settings.

Managing security is an increasingly difficult task, due to the growing number of violent young offenders being assigned by Oregon courts to OYA custody. While this is a big challenge, by implementing our recommendations, OYA can improve its management of security and safety matters, thus reducing the risk of lawsuits, increasing the accountability of program managers, and reducing the risk that young offenders will commit further crimes.

OREGON AUDITS DIVISION

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Fieldwork Completion Date:
April 15, 1997

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SUMMARY

During its 1995 session, the Oregon Legislative Assembly passed Senate Bill 1 (SB1) providing for sweeping changes to the state's juvenile justice system. One of the main purposes of this bill was to improve the protection of the public from dangerous young criminals. SB1 reorganized juvenile corrections and created a single new state agency with overall responsibility to address juvenile crime. SB1 also required juvenile corrections officials to be accountable for the effectiveness of their programs and required the auditing of those programs by the Secretary of State.

In October 1996, the Oregon Audits Division completed a preliminary assessment of risks associated with managing the state's juvenile facilities and decided to review security and safety procedures. This review of security and safety at the Oregon Youth Authority (OYA) is the first part of a comprehensive, multi-part review of Oregon's juvenile justice system. SB1 mandated such a review to establish the system's effectiveness in "providing public safety and preventing a child's return to criminal behavior."

In consultation with OYA, we contracted with the American Correctional Association (ACA), to obtain the special expertise necessary for this project. ACA administers the only nationwide accreditation program for all components of adult and juvenile correction facilities.

ACA reviewers checked for compliance with ACA standards relevant to security and safety at juvenile training schools. We also reviewed agency data pertaining to runaways from OYA custody, inspected records, and interviewed key administrators. The results of our review are as follows:

- Security and safety reviews at three major youth correctional facilities found the condition of confinement in these institutions to be generally good. Nonetheless, ACA reviewers found numerous security and safety issues that OYA needs to address.
- Strengthened security at OYA youth correctional facilities has resulted in fewer runaways in recent years. However, our review showed an ongoing problem with unauthorized absences among youths still in OYA's legal custody but on parole or probation in community settings.

Managing security is an increasingly difficult task due to the growing number of violent young offenders being assigned by Oregon courts to OYA custody. While this is a big challenge, by implementing our recommendations, OYA can improve its management of security and safety matters, thus reducing the risk of lawsuits, increasing the accountability of program managers, and reducing the risk that young offenders will commit further crimes. These conditions occurred because OYA has not developed needed policies and procedures to ensure acceptable performance on security and safety matters, including adequate training for its staff. Further, OYA has not focused its attention on security problems in its community placements.

INTRODUCTION

During its 1995 session, the Oregon Legislative Assembly passed Senate Bill 1 (SB1) providing for sweeping changes to the state's juvenile justice system. A primary feature of the reorganized juvenile corrections system under SB1 was the creation of a single new state agency with overall responsibility for addressing juvenile crime. This new agency, the Oregon Youth Authority (OYA), is an independent department whose purpose is to protect the public, hold young offenders accountable for their actions, and provide adjudicated youths with opportunities for reform.

Although this was a comprehensive bill addressing a broad spectrum of issues related to juvenile crime, one of its main purposes was to improve the protection of the public from dangerous young criminals. This act also required juvenile corrections officials to be accountable for the effectiveness of their programs, including their security and safety programs, and called for the auditing of the program by the Secretary of State. This is the Oregon Audits Division's first review since the bill's enactment.

OYA is responsible for young offenders convicted in either the juvenile or adult court systems. Juvenile courts turn over legal and physical custody of young offenders to OYA; the agency retains these offenders until the court involved rescinds its original order. Legal custody of youths convicted in adult courts, however, is the responsibility of the Oregon Department of Corrections (Corrections). Corrections may transfer physical custody to OYA, depending on the age of the individual involved. State statutes allow OYA to hold youths up to age 25. OYA's custody arrangements include its secure facilities and community placements for youths placed on either probation or parole.

OYA intends to deliver services that give equal emphasis to community protection, youth accountability, and treatment and skill building, so that young offenders may assume productive and responsible roles when they return to community life. To achieve its goals, OYA supports a broad continuum of youth services. These services consist of OYA programs, as well as local programs put in place through active partnerships between OYA and communities and counties through out the state. OYA also supports juvenile crime prevention activities.

BACKGROUND

OYA Facilities

Under the community protection mandate of SB1, OYA operates its juvenile corrections programs within a system of secure custody facilities. These facilities include secure regional youth correctional facilities, work study camps, and accountability camps (boot camps). OYA places youths requiring the most secure placements either at its MacLaren facility in Woodburn, or its Hillcrest facility in Salem. New secure regional facilities are currently under

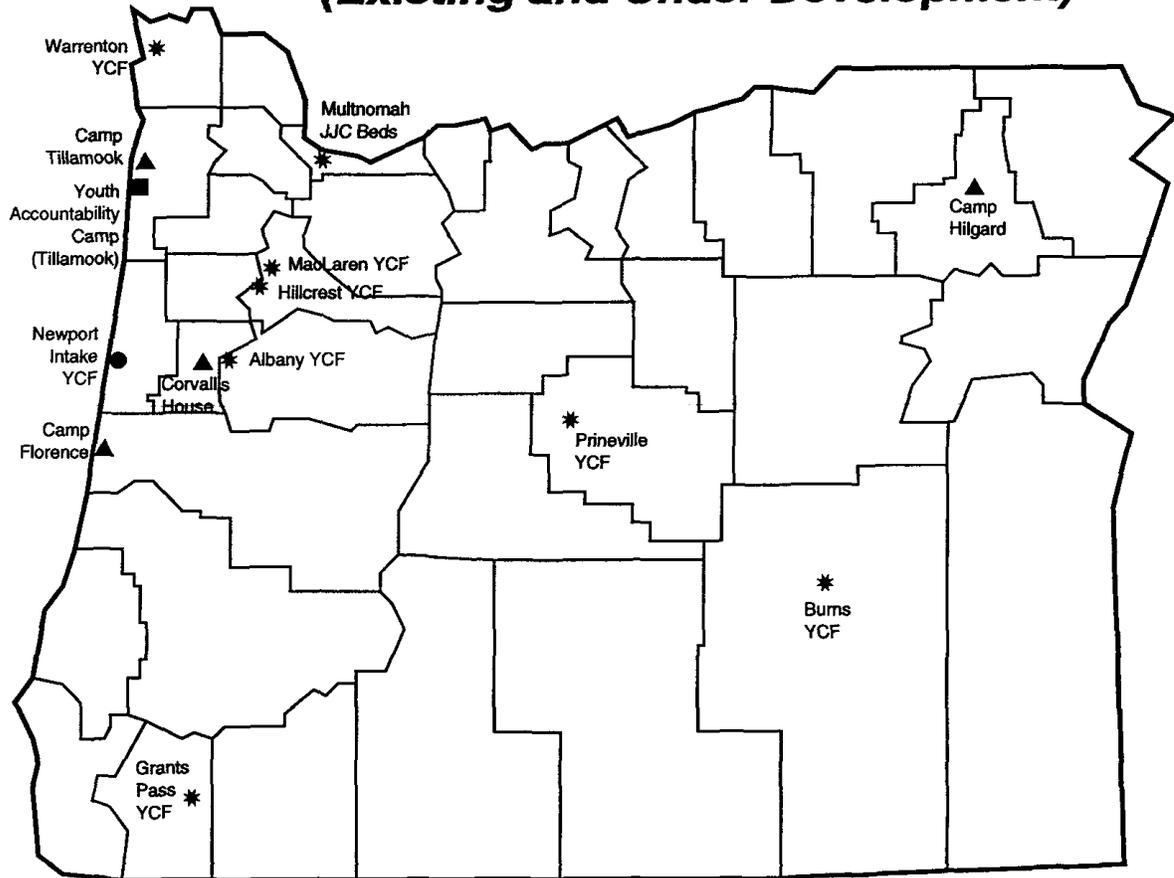
development in Warrenton, Prineville, Burns, Grants Pass, and Albany. Youth correctional facilities provide secure confinement through a high level of staff supervision, intensive treatment, education, and some vocational training. Until its new regional facilities are completed, OYA has contracted with Multnomah and Lincoln Counties for additional beds.

OYA's work study camps are located in Tillamook, LaGrande, Corvallis, and Florence. Youths placed in these camps continue with the treatment, education, and vocational programs they began while in secure facilities. While there, these individuals prepare for their transitions back to their home communities, earn money to pay restitution, and perform community services.

In early 1997, OYA opened youth accountability camps (boot camps) in Tillamook, adjacent to its existing facility, and outside Bend. Designed for non-violent offenders, their programs emphasized a strict regimen of physical training and military drills. The youth accountability camps (boot camps) also provide short, intensive, highly structured treatment programs, and they offer educational opportunities. Land use interpretations, however, resulted in the closure of the Bend facility. According to OYA's Director, at the time of this report, the agency was seeking an alternative location in the central or eastern regions of the state. Figure 1 shows the location of OYA facilities, including existing facilities and those under development.

Figure 1

OYA Secure Facilities and Work/Study Camps (Existing and Under Development)



*** Youth Correctional Facilities**

Salem:

- Hillcrest YCF

Woodburn:

- MacLaren YCF

Portland:

- 32 Contracted Beds at Multnomah County Juvenile Department

YCF Sites Under Development

Albany (Linn County)

Burns (Harney County)

Grants Pass (Josephine County)

Prineville (Crook County)

Warrenton (Clatsop County)

▲ Work/Study Camps

Corvallis:

- Corvallis House

Florence:

- Camp Florence

LaGrande:

- Camp Hilgard

Tillamook:

- Camp Tillamook

■ Youth Accountability Camp (Boot Camp)

- Adjacent to Camp Tillamook (Tillamook County)

● Intake Centers

Newport

Youths Served in OYA Facilities

Commitment to OYA facilities may be the result of a youth's conviction in either juvenile or adult courts. The passage of Measure 11 by Oregon voters in 1994, which required minimum sentence lengths for serious person-to-person crimes for both juveniles and adults, has had a major effect on OYA. Under Measure 11, youths aged 15, 16, or 17 at the time of an offense are prosecuted as adults in criminal court. If convicted, the youth may be placed in OYA's physical custody until age 25; however, they remain in the legal custody of the Department of Corrections. Courts sentenced 135 youths for Measure 11 offenses during the 16-month period from July 1995 through October 1996. Minimum sentences under the measure range from nearly six years up to 25 years.

As of January 1, 1997, there were 872 youths in OYA secure facilities. At that time, OYA was housing 450 of these young offenders at its MacLaren site, 244 at Hillcrest, 100 at the four work study camps, and 78 at temporary facilities or the Tillamook youth accountability camp (boot camp). Only 62 of these individuals were female; 117 were known gang members. Figure 2 shows the age distribution of the youths in these facilities and Figure 3 shows the number of incarcerated youths by offense committed.

Figure 2
 Number of Youths in OYA Facilities by Age
 As of January 1, 1997

Age	Number	Percent
13 - 14 years	79	9%
15 - 16 years	332	38%
17 - 18 years	366	42%
19 - 25 years	95	11%
Total	872	100%

Figure 3
Number of Youths in OYA Facilities by Offense Committed
As of January 1, 1997

Offense Committed	Number	Percent
Burglary and Robbery	262	30%
Sexual Offenses	244	28%
Assault	131	15%
Auto and Other Theft	105	12%
Homicide Related	44	5%
Arson Crimes	17	2%
Drug Crimes	17	2%
Other Offenses	52	6%
Total	872	100%

OYA Programs

All committed youths are assessed in OYA intake centers to determine the appropriate level of placement and treatment needs. Assessments use information concerning previous criminal behavior and social history in addition to commitment offense. OYA officials assess young males who are committed by juvenile courts at the MacLaren youth correctional facility. Until new regional facilities are completed, placement options for males include MacLaren, Hillcrest, one of the four work study camps, or the accountability camp (boot camp). All females are assessed and placed at OYA's Hillcrest facility. Both males and females convicted in adult court are processed through the Newport intake center. These youths may be sent directly to the Department of Corrections if assessment officials determine that OYA cannot provide for their reform needs.

Youths with similar treatment needs are usually placed together in living units specializing in a particular treatment area. For example, OYA provides intensive treatment programs for youths convicted of violent

offenses, sexual offenses, and offenses related to the abuse of alcohol and drugs. All living units offer training in anger management, anti-social and criminal thinking errors, life skills, victim empathy, and general substance abuse.

Department of Education officials conduct assessments of the educational needs of youths committed to OYA facilities. Using the California Achievement Test, these officials determine a youth’s appropriate grade level. Incarcerated youths receive individualized instruction within correctional facilities, where the time spent in class is similar to that for non-incarcerated youths. Youths work toward either a high school diploma, GED, or college credit. Youth correctional facilities also provide vocational training options in cosmetology, food service, welding, woodworking, and landscaping for youths as part of their educational training.

OYA Budget and Staff

OYA’s legislatively adopted budget for the 1995-97 biennium was \$180,967,331 and it authorized 843 full time equivalent positions (FTE), as shown in Figure 4 below.¹

Figure 4
 OYA Legislatively Adopted Budget
 1995-97 Biennium

Program Area	Amount	Percent	FTE
Institutional Programs	\$66,188,540	37%	654
Community Programs	\$62,359,511	34%	153
Administration	\$7,498,652	4%	36
Capital Construction	\$44,920,628	25%	0
Total	\$180,967,331	100%	843

For the 1995-97 biennium, general funds comprised the bulk of OYA’s revenues, providing \$122,216,140 (68 percent). The balance of the agency’s revenues came from \$12,966,017 in federal funds (7 percent) and

¹ An FTE is any staffing combination equal to one person working a regular 40-hour week. For example, two people working 20-hour work weeks would be the equivalent of one FTE.

\$45,785,174 from other funding sources (25 percent). Since the 1995-97 budget cycle, emergency board and other administrative actions have added \$9,575,395 to OYA's legislatively approved budget and increased staff by 22 FTE.

New Construction Program

So that it can provide services in appropriately secure surroundings to the increasing number of adjudicated youths committed to its facilities, OYA is in the midst of expanding its facilities. Temporary facilities for nearly 300 youth offenders have already been erected or rented. Five new regional facilities are scheduled to open in the fall of 1997 in four of OYA's five service regions. These new facilities are as follows:

Northwest area, in Warrenton, 72 state beds and 20 detention beds.²

Southern valley area, in Albany, 72 state beds and 20 detention beds.

Southern area, in Grants Pass, 96 state beds.

Eastern area, in Prineville, 48 state beds; and in Burns, 40 state beds and 10 detention beds.

After the completion of these new facilities, the MacLaren and Hillcrest facilities will function as the regional youth correctional facilities for OYA's northern Willamette Valley area. Plans call for temporary structures to be used for additional youth accountability beds and other uses.

Officials have estimated cost to build the five new regional facilities at \$42 million, with all of the money coming from the sale of certificates of participation. The accountability camps (boot camps) will cost approximately \$6 million more, paid for with both federal and state general fund dollars. When OYA completes all of these construction projects, its system will include 1,139 statewide beds and 50 detention beds.

² We use the term "state beds" to mean beds used to accommodate convicted youths; "detention beds" are beds used to hold youths pending court actions.

SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

This review of security and safety at OYA facilities is the first part of a comprehensive, multi-part review of Oregon's juvenile justice system. SB1 mandated such a review to assess the system's effectiveness in "providing public safety and preventing a child's return to criminal behavior." In October 1996, we completed a preliminary assessment of risks associated with managing the state's juvenile facilities and decided to review security and safety procedures.

In consultation with OYA, we contracted with the American Correctional Association (ACA) to obtain the special expertise necessary for this project. ACA administers the only nationwide accreditation program for all components of adult and juvenile correction facilities.

OYA management backed the approach, voicing a commitment to further strengthen its operations. Agency management also expressed an interest in achieving a level of performance necessary to obtain accreditation by ACA at some future date. Accreditation is not an easy process. It can require substantial changes in traditional operating procedures.

Through an ongoing development process, ACA has identified standards for juvenile facilities by which to evaluate facility operations against national standards. These standards are described in the ACA's Standards for Juvenile Training Schools, third edition, and the 1996 Standards Supplement. These consist of both mandatory and non-mandatory standards, and they allow for the measurement of acceptable performance in achieving objectives. In order to achieve ACA accreditation, facilities must meet all mandatory standards without exception. In addition, for accreditation purposes, facilities must meet 90 percent of all remaining non-mandatory standards. Although accreditation was not the purpose of this review, ACA's standards provide benchmarks from which responsible officials may compare their facilities with national standards.

ACA representatives, who were themselves juvenile corrections professionals, spent the week of February 17, 1997, visiting OYA's MacLaren, Hillcrest,

and Tillamook facilities. The ACA reviewers conducted physical inspections of the facilities, reviewed policies and procedures, and interviewed OYA managers and staff. They checked for compliance with all 27 of ACA's mandatory standards for juvenile training facilities. Additionally, the reviewers checked on 260 out of 398 non-mandatory ACA standards that were relevant to security and safety. We monitored the ACA reviewers' work, reviewed their working papers, and wrote this report in which we discuss the results of their review. Finally, we analyzed data and talked to agency managers about runaway youths from OYA custody. Appendix A summarizes the ACA reviewers' findings in the area of mandatory standards, and shows problem areas identified at each facility.

This audit was conducted in accordance with generally accepted government audit standards. We limited our review to those areas specified in this section of the report.

CHAPTER I

SECURITY AND SAFETY REVIEWS OF THREE OREGON YOUTH TRAINING FACILITIES IDENTIFIED AREAS NEEDING IMPROVEMENT

Security and safety reviews of the MacLaren, Hillcrest, and Tillamook juvenile training facilities found the conditions of confinement in these institutions to be generally good. Nonetheless, reviewers from the American Correctional Association (ACA) found numerous improvements that could be made. While many of these issues simply point the way to more humane conditions and better professional practices, others could potentially lead to serious consequences. For example, as we discuss below, Oregon facilities did not adhere to all applicable fire codes, nor did they have in place the equipment and procedures necessary in the event of a major emergency.

Compliance with ACA standards can provide a stronger defense against potential lawsuits, increase the accountability of facility managers, and establish measurable criteria for upgrading programs, personnel, and physical plants on a continuing basis. OYA's lack of compliance with these recognized standards indicates there is room for improvement in its management of security and safety matters at Oregon's juvenile training facilities.

ACA STANDARDS OUTLINE MINIMUM PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

ACA standards offer administrators the opportunity to evaluate their facilities against national standards, remedy deficiencies, and upgrade the quality of youth training programs and services. ACA's standards for juvenile training schools provide criteria that reflect the consensus of professionals on modern correctional techniques. These standards reflect contemporary correctional practices throughout the United States. They consist of both mandatory and non-mandatory standards, and ACA views them as minimal to be exceeded whenever possible.

Mandatory standards address conditions or situations that could become hazardous to the life, health, and safety of offenders, employees, or the public. Because of the potential for serious consequences, a facility's failure to comply with mandatory standards presents a potentially dangerous situation. Lack of compliance in these areas indicates that a facility is unprepared to deal with situations that have led to tragedies in other similar facilities. For example, all three facilities failed ACA's

fire safety standard intended to prevent the use of materials that produce toxic smoke when burned. Facilities seeking ACA accreditation must meet all mandatory standards without exception.

While problems with non-mandatory standards are not as serious as those relating to mandatory standards, their resolution would upgrade the quality of facility security and safety. At a minimum, 90 percent of the non-mandatory standards need to be met, for purposes of accreditation.

ACA standards provide benchmarks for managers to gauge facility performance, whether or not they choose to pursue accreditation. Although ACA extends accreditation invitations to all facilities for which it has standards, it is up to administrators to voluntarily initiate this process. ACA standards address services, programs, and operations essential to good youth training management including, but not limited to:

- Administrative and fiscal controls;
- Staff training and development;
- Physical plant, safety and emergency procedures;
- Sanitation, food service, rules and discipline;
- Medical practices³; and
- Other various subjects that make up good youth training practice.

ACA standards are under continual revision to reflect changing practice, current case law, new knowledge, and agency experience. According to ACA officials, administrators from around the country are using these standards to upgrade the operation of juvenile facilities, allowing them to work more effectively with courts, state legislatures, and the public.

SECURITY REVIEWS FOUND AREAS NEEDING IMPROVEMENT

³ The MacLaren facility is currently accredited with the National Commission on Correctional Health Care.

In February 1997, ACA reviewers found numerous security and safety problems at the Oregon juvenile training facilities they visited. The reviewers checked for compliance with all mandatory standards and those non-mandatory standards applicable to security and safety issues. As shown in Figure 5 below, reviewers found the MacLaren and Hillcrest facilities each failed to comply with 13, or 48 percent, of ACA's 27 mandatory standards for juvenile training schools. They noted the Tillamook facility did not comply with 22, or 81 percent, of the 27 mandatory standards.

Figure 5
Areas of Non-Compliance with ACA Standards
As of February 1997

Facility	Mandatory Standards ⁴	Non-mandatory Standards ⁵
MacLaren	13 of 27 (48%)	36 of 260 (14%)
Hillcrest	13 of 27 (48%)	43 of 260 (17%)
Tillamook	22 of 27 (81%)	72 of 260 (28%)

Additionally, reviewers determined that the MacLaren facility did not comply with 36, or 14 percent, of the 260 non-mandatory standards related to facility security and safety. Hillcrest fell short on 43, or 17 percent, of the non-mandatory standards; Tillamook was deficient on 72, or 28 percent, of these non-mandatory standards.

All together, the reviewers found 199 areas needing improvement at the three Oregon facilities. The following sections provide information on each of the three Oregon facilities reviewed.

**SECURITY AND SAFETY AT
TILLAMOOK'S WORK
STUDY CAMP**

⁴ All 27 mandatory ACA standards are relevant to security and safety.

⁵ Only 260 of the 398 ACA non-mandatory standards are relevant to security and safety.

ACA reviewers rated the overall quality of life as “good” at the Tillamook work study camp. However, they noted substantially more problems at the Tillamook work study camp than at either of the other two Oregon facilities. In the areas of building safety and emergency procedures, Tillamook failed to comply with nine, or 82 percent, of eleven mandatory standards. Among the problems identified, reviewers found the Tillamook camp had no safety and emergency policies or procedures, had very poor evacuation plans, had weak control over flammable, toxic and caustic materials, and had not conducted required annual fire and safety inspections.

ACA reviewers also failed Tillamook on all eight mandatory standards relating to food services, sanitation, and hygiene; reviewers determined non-compliance with five, or 63 percent, of the eight mandatory standards relating to facility health care services. The reviewers found Tillamook’s policies and procedures provided inadequate guidance for facility operations.

SECURITY AND SAFETY AT MACLAREN AND HILLCREST

As noted above, ACA’s review of the MacLaren youth training facility showed problems in 13, or 48 percent, of the 27 areas in which mandatory standards exist. Among these, the reviewers noted: a lack of periodic fire and safety inspections, very poor control of flammable, toxic, and caustic materials, out-of-date fire extinguishers, no written evacuation plan, and no overall safety and emergency plan.

At Hillcrest, reviewers also found problems relating to 13, or 48 percent, of the 27 mandatory standards. Similar to MacLaren, the reviewers noted: a lack of fire and safety inspections, very poor control of flammable, toxic and caustic materials, and no written plan in the event of a fire. However, ACA reviewers also commended staff for their caring attitudes toward youths housed at the facility and management for providing good direction to employees.

Also commendable is OYA’s improved record in the area of runaways, or “unauthorized absences,” from its close-custody facilities. OYA tracks the number of unauthorized

absences from these facilities as a performance measure. OYA's data shows a big improvement in dealing with this problem in recent years. From 1990 through 1992, the rate of unauthorized absences was about 4 to 6 percent of the total population of all close-custody facilities. By 1993 through 1996, this rate had dropped to only 1 to 2 percent. OYA officials attributed this improvement to an increase in the number of high-security beds and to heightened security procedures.

CONCLUSION

As the state agency with authority over youth training facilities, OYA is responsible for the security and safety of incarcerated youths, staff, and members of the public. This responsibility is becoming increasingly difficult, due to the growing number of violent young offenders being sentenced by Oregon courts to OYA facilities. Also, in the near future, OYA will add several major new youth training facilities to its system. For these reasons, it is critical for OYA to effectively manage security and safety matters at its youth training facilities.

ACA reviewers rated the conditions of confinement and overall quality of life at the three Oregon facilities as good or very good. However, the ACA reviewers noted numerous security and safety issues at all three of the facilities they visited. Moreover, the reviewers found OYA had not developed needed policies and procedures to ensure acceptable performance on security and safety matters, including adequate training for its staff.

While resolution of the problems documented by this review is important, it is also necessary for OYA to develop an ongoing process to prevent and resolve future security and safety problems. Accreditation through ACA would be one way for this to occur. While the decision to pursue accreditation is always up to responsible youth training administrators, we believe accreditation can offer many benefits. This process could provide important quality assurances for Oregon's youth training programs and facilities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To enable it to improve security and safety at youth training facilities statewide, **we recommend** OYA:

1. Develop and implement new policies and procedures to upgrade facility operations in accordance with sound security and safety practices as illustrated by ACA standards.
2. Augment existing training and development programs to improve staff familiarity with sound security and safety practices as illustrated by ACA standards.
3. Consider pursuing formal accreditation through the ACA for all OYA youth training facilities, including developing a plan to maintain ongoing compliance with ACA standards in future years.

CHAPTER II

OTHER MATTERS

During the course of this audit, we found an additional area of concern regarding youths in the custody of the Oregon Youth Authority (OYA). This matter came to our attention as we reviewed escapes from OYA's close-custody facilities. We reviewed OYA data showing the number of unauthorized absences from close-custody facilities and community placements. These are instances in which a young offender in OYA's legal custody either ran away from a close-custody facility, or absconded from a community setting while on parole or probation. Court orders make OYA responsible for maintaining the custody of youths committed to its facilities, as well as youths placed on probation or parole in community settings.

As we discussed in Chapter I, OYA officials report that stronger security at close-custody facilities has resulted in fewer unauthorized absences from facilities in recent years. Notwithstanding this improvement, our analysis showed an ongoing problem with unauthorized absences among youths still in OYA's legal custody but on parole or probation in community settings. This is important because it means that some youths convicted of a wide range of serious crimes are going unsupervised. As a result, OYA has exposed these youths, the community, and the state to unnecessary risks.

For several years, OYA officials report being concerned about the number of youths who were running away from close-custody facilities. In response, officials implemented new security measures designed to curtail this problem. Officials also designed a performance measure and collected data to obtain feedback on the effectiveness of their actions. This data shows significant improvement in OYA's handling of this problem in recent years.

As shown in Figure 6 below, the median number of unauthorized absences from OYA's close-custody facilities was 92 per quarter in 1990. By 1996, this number had decreased to 20, a 78 percent decrease. While the problem of unauthorized absences has not been eliminated, this was an impressive improvement, especially considering that the close-custody population grew by 44 percent during this period.

Figure 6
 Unauthorized Absences from OYA Custody
 Median Episodes Per Quarter
 Calendar Years 1990 through 1996

Calendar Year	Close-Custody Facilities	Community Placements
1990	92 episodes	180 episodes
1991	69 episodes	152 episodes
1992	63 episodes	164 episodes
1993	47 episodes	192 episodes
1994	51 episodes	176 episodes
1995	19 episodes	203 episodes
1996	20 episodes	217 episodes

No similar improvement, however, has occurred for youths in community placements. As Figure 6 shows, from 1990 through 1996, the median number of unauthorized absences from community placements grew from 180 episodes per quarter to 217, a 21 percent increase. Even so, because the population of young offenders grew at about the same pace, the rate remained nearly constant. This information indicates an ongoing problem with unauthorized absences from community parole and probation placements.

EFFECTS OF UNAUTHORIZED ABSENCES FROM COMMUNITY PLACEMENTS

To obtain some indications of the risks posed by youths who abscond from community custody arrangements, we conducted a file review of 28 randomly selected cases. We selected our sample from among 252 episodes in which OYA listed youngsters as missing from community placements during the first quarter of 1996.

We found that OYA had never located three, or 11 percent, of the 28 missing youngsters at the time we did our work in April 1997. One of these individuals had been missing for

more than three years, one for over two years, and the last for over a year. Of the remaining 25: 10, or 40 percent, had been gone for a week or less; nine, or 36 percent, had been missing for more than a week but less than two months; and six were missing for between 161 and 468 days.

Additionally, we found indications of further law violations for six, or 24 percent, of the 25 located youths. In one case, the youth involved was subsequently convicted of assault. In addition, one of the individuals attempted suicide while on unauthorized absence.

While we noted no additional convictions for the other five cases, the criminal matters involved in these cases ranged from assault, stealing a car, and possession or use of alcohol, marijuana, and crack cocaine. Several of the records showed a pattern of multiple runaways by some individuals. When we asked about the limited number of convictions among those cases, an OYA official explained there may be many reasons that further charges are not vigorously pursued. According to this official, since the youths involved are already committed to OYA's custody, usually until their twenty-first birthday, prosecutors frequently see little or no reason to pursue convictions on additional charges.

One OYA administrator summed up the risks involved by commenting, "they (the youths) are in a desperate situation. The youths that run away have not completed their treatment plans. Naturally, they are more likely to commit an offense in these circumstances. Their judgment is impaired, under these circumstances. They may break into a home to get food. They may steal a car to get transportation."

FURTHER STUDY IS NEEDED

OYA officials report that stronger security at their close-custody facilities has resulted in fewer unauthorized absences from these settings in recent years. These improvements were the result of concerned OYA officials analyzing this problem, developing strategies to address it, measuring results, and using feedback to improve their security procedures. We commend OYA for the improvements achieved in this area. However, our review

of OYA information suggests that similar improvements are not occurring for community placements.

OYA officials point out that unauthorized absences from community probation and parole are difficult to control. Security steps that were possible in institutional settings are frequently not possible in community placements. They point out that responsibility for security is also more diffuse in these setting, making a solution more difficult.

We agree that managing security within community settings is a difficult task. Further, we acknowledge that it may not be possible to achieve the same high level of control in community settings as has been achieved within OYA's close-custody facilities. Nevertheless, we found that OYA lacks a systematic approach to this problem. It was apparent during our review that OYA has not focused its attention on this aspect of security, nor has it established a performance measure for community placements like it has for its close-custody facilities. Security reports are provided to area managers who are responsible for reviewing them on a case-by-case basis. No individual or section, however, has been given the task of addressing this problem.

We believe additional review and analysis by OYA is warranted. With additional study, it may be possible for OYA to make changes to its security procedures that will reduce the overall number of unauthorized absences from community probation and parole settings.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To enable it to improve security and reduce the risk of unauthorized absences within community parole and probation settings, **we recommend** OYA:

1. Conduct additional research and analysis of youths who have absconded from custody while in community placements to determine specific problem areas to be addressed.
2. Develop a performance measure and collect data in this area to obtain feedback necessary to gauge progress in improving security in community settings.

REPORT DISTRIBUTION

This report is a public record and is intended for the Oregon Youth Authority management, the governor of the state of Oregon, the Oregon Legislative Assembly, and all other interested parties.

COMMENDATION

The courtesies and cooperation extended by officials and staff of the Oregon Youth Authority were commendable and sincerely appreciated.

AUDIT TEAM

Gary Colbert, Audit Administrator, CGFM, CFE
David Dean

Summary of ACA Review of 27 Mandatory Standards

Areas Noted As Needing Improvement

ACA Standard for Juvenile Training Schools

MacLaren

Hillcrest

Tillamook

PART TWO: PHYSICAL PLANT			
Section A: Building and Safety Codes. Compliance with professional building and fire safety codes helps ensure the safety of all persons within the facility.			
Standard 2A-03, Fire Codes: Requires documentation of conformance with applicable fire safety codes.	x	x	x
Standard 2A-04, Fire Codes: Requires documentation that interior finishing materials comply with recognized codes.	x	x	x
PART THREE: INSTITUTIONAL OPERATIONS			
Section B: Safety and Emergency Procedures. The facility adheres to all applicable safety and fire codes and has in place the equipment and procedures in the event of a major emergency.			
Standard 3B-01, Fire Safety: Requires written fire prevention and control policies, procedures, and practices.	x	x	x
Standard 3B-02, Fire Safety: Requires written policies for monthly inspections by facility fire and safety officers.	x	x	x
Standard 3B-03, Fire Safety: Requires documentation that facility furnishings meet fire safety requirements.	x	x	
Standard 3B-04, Fire Safety: Requires facilities to provide non-combustible receptacles for smoking materials.		x	x
Standard 3B-05, Flammable, Toxic, Caustic Materials: Requires policies to control the use of such materials.	x	x	x
Standard 3B-11, Emergency Power, Communications: Requires written emergency evacuation plans.	x	x	x
Standard 3B-12, Emergency Plans: Requires training for facility personnel on written emergency plans.	x	x	x
Standard 3B-13, Emergency Plans: Requires policy for releasing youth from locked facilities during emergencies.			
Standard 3B-14, Threats to Security: Requires plans for riots, hunger strikes, disturbances, and taking of hostages.	x		x
PART FOUR: FACILITY SERVICES			
Section A: Food Service. Meals are nutritionally balanced, well planned, and prepared and served in a manner that meets established governmental health and safety codes.			
Standard 4A-04, Dietary Allowances: Requires documentation of compliance with dietary standards.		x	x
Standard 4A-07, Special Diets: Requires policies covering special therapeutic diets.			x
Standard 4A-10, Health and Safety Regulations: Requires documentation of food services compliance with codes.	x		x

Summary of ACA Security Audit of Select Oregon Youth Correctional Facilities

Areas Noted As Needing Improvement

<u>ACA Standard for Juvenile Training Schools</u>	<u>MacLaren</u>	<u>Hillcrest</u>	<u>Tillamook</u>
Standard 4A-15, Meal Service: Requires appropriate health protection policies, procedures, and practices	x	x	x
Section B: Sanitation and Hygiene. The facility's sanitation and hygiene program complies with applicable regulations and standards of good practice to protect the health and safety of juveniles and staff.			
Standard 4B-02, Sanitation Inspections: Requires documentation of compliance with applicable codes.	x	x	x
Standard 4B-03, Water Supply: Requires documentation of good water control practices.			x
Standard 4B-04, Waste Disposal: Requires approved plans for facility waste disposal systems.			x
Standard 4B-05, Housekeeping: Requires vermin and pests control policies, procedures, and practices.			x
Section C: Health Care. The facility provides comprehensive health care services by qualified personnel to protect the health and well being of juveniles.			
Standard 4C-01, Responsible Health Authority: Requires a written agreement with a designated health authority.			x
Standard 4C-12, Administration of Treatment: Requires health care authorization policies and procedures.			x
Standard 4C-19, Pharmaceuticals: Requires policies for proper management of pharmaceuticals.	x		x
Standard 4C-22, Health Screenings & Examinations: Requires health screenings policies and procedures.			
Standard 4C-24, Health Screenings & Examinations: Requires policies covering intrasystem transfers.			x
Standard 4C-27, Dental Screenings & Examinations: Requires policies covering dental care and hygiene.			x
Standard 4C-28, First Aid: Requires policies for first aid training for all juvenile care staff.		x	
Standard 4C-45, Juvenile Participation in Research: Policy prohibiting youth participation in research required.			
Total:	13 of 27	13 of 27	22 of 27

Note: X denotes improvement needed.

AGENCY'S RESPONSE TO THE AUDIT REPORT

June 6, 1997

John Lattimer
Oregon Audits Division
255 Capitol St NE
Salem, OR 97310

RE: Response to Audit

Dear Mr. Lattimer:

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the Security and Safety Audit of the Oregon Youth Authority conducted by your office. We very much appreciate the work of the Audits Division and believe the results of the Security and Safety Audit provides the OYA and the public a very clear understanding of our success implementing the public safety mandates of Senate Bill 1 and also gives us a very strong management tool to improve the administrative oversight of our facilities.

The OYA requested the use of the American Corrections Association Standards so that we may use the results of the audit as guidelines to seek accreditation. Because of the use of the ACA standards in this audit OYA now has clearly definable goals to achieve accreditation and information on how to best achieve those goals.

We believe that it is significant that the audit reviewed our close custody population management practices and found that we reduced the number of runaways 78 percent over that past six years while our population grew by 44 percent. It is important that the public knows that our facilities are safe because the OYA continues to grow and to build more facilities in communities around the state. As the number of serious violent offenders increases in Oregon it is important the facilities we build and manage to house them in are protecting the public from these offenders.

The OYA agrees with the need to improve security over youth placed in community settings and agrees with the recommendation of the audit to conduct further analysis to determine specific problems with community placements and to develop performance measures to gauge progress in improving security in community placements. Youth placed in community programs have been determined by administrative or judicial review to pose a low risk to public safety. These placements can include placements with parents or other family members, foster or group homes, residential programs and independent living arrangements. The ability to control runaways from these placements is obviously much less than in a secure facility.

The OYA agrees that we need to improve policies on fire codes, emergency plans, food services, and sanitation, and health care at our facilities to reach ACA accreditation. In many areas the OYA was not meeting ACA standards because no written policies were in place, not because of a lack of practice or procedure. As a new agency, we are currently in the process of writing many of these policies right now. In fact many of those policies not in place at the time of the audit have



John A. Kitzhaber
Governor

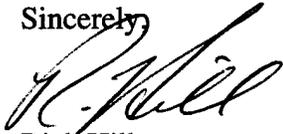
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now been completed and we believe we are already in compliance with several critical safety concerns of the audit.

We have begun a corrective action plan in each of our facilities as well as our training division. Included for your review is the corrective action plan from our Hillcrest Youth Correctional Facilities.

Finally, I want to acknowledge the professional manner in which Gary Colbert, David Dean, Kay Boeder and your other staff have conducted themselves during the first phase of this audit. I think OYA staff have responded in kind.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Hill", written in a cursive style.

Rick Hill
Director
Oregon Youth Authority

May 15, 1997

To: Rick Hill, Director
Oregon Youth Authority

From: Mary Ellen Eiler, Superintendent
Hillcrest Youth Correctional Facility

Subject: Secretary of State Audit: Safety and Security

On behalf of Hillcrest, my response to the draft report from the Secretary of State regarding safety and security at Hillcrest is as follows:

Response to Mandatory Items Needing Compliance:

Hillcrest staff appreciated the review conducted by the Secretary of State's Office and, particularly, the expertise provided by the reviewers, Al Bennett and Jim Martins. In their review, they noted that "The audit team believes that Hillcrest could be accredited by ACA if there was a rewriting of the policy and procedures using the ACA standards. Staff need to be trained on the purpose of the standards and expected to operate accordingly." In developing the corrective action that Hillcrest would need to take to meet ACA standards, we agree that we are particularly deficient in the areas of written policy and procedures and training.

Corrective Action Plan: A Corrective Action Plan, thus, for all of the mandatory requirements listed below shall include:

- 1) Working with the OYA Training Academy Manager and the OYA Program and Evaluation Assistant Administrator to ensure the availability of training to meet the requirements of the mandatory standards; and
- 2) Working with the OYA Program and Evaluation Assistant Administrator to ensure the development of OYA policy to meet the requirements of the mandatory standards and to ensure that Hillcrest's policies are in compliance with OYA standards.

1. Standard #3-JTS-2A-03: Building and Safety Codes

"The facility conforms to applicable federal, state, and/or local fire safety codes. Compliance is documented by the authority having jurisdiction. A fire alarm and automatic detection system are required as approved by the authority having jurisdiction or there is a plan for addressing these or other deficiencies within a reasonable time period. The authority approves any variances, exceptions, or equivalencies that do not constitute a serious life safety threat to the occupants of the facility."

Visiting Committee Finding: "The facility needs fire inspections; there have not been any for several years."

Corrective Action Plan: Shortly after the audit by the ACA reviewers, Hillcrest Maintenance Supervisor Joe Hovley telephoned Dave Fields of the State Fire Marshall's office and requested an inspection. A partial inspection has been done at this time and we anticipate that the Fire Marshall will complete the inspection shortly.

Mr. Hovley will send a letter to the State Fire Marshall confirming the need for completion of the inspection. Timeline: By May 31, 1997.

2. Standard #3-JTS-2A-04: Building and Safety Codes

“There is documentation by a qualified source that the interior finishing materials in juvenile living areas, exit areas, and places of public assembly are in accordance with recognized codes.”

Visiting Committee Finding “There is no documentation on interior finishing according to fire codes.”

Corrective Action Plan: Hillcrest property specialist and the Maintenance Supervisor will receive documentation by a qualified source that the interior finishing materials are in accordance with recognized codes. In addition, they will develop a system to ensure such documentation of new materials as they are purchased. Timeline: By December 31, 1997.

3. Standard #3-JTS-3B-01: Safety and Emergency Procedures

“Written policy, procedure, and practice specify the facility’s fire prevention regulations and practices. These include provision for an adequate fire protection service, including but not limited to the following:

- a system of fire inspection and testing of equipment at least quarterly or at intervals approved by the authority having jurisdiction, following the procedures stated for variances, exceptions, or equivalencies
- an annual inspection by local or state officials or other qualified person(s)
- availability of fire protection equipment at appropriate locations throughout the facility.”

Visiting Committee Finding: “There is no fire protection plan for inspections.”

Corrective Action Plan: Hillcrest does have a fire protection plan for inspections, as follows:

- Hillcrest Policy VII-A-2, dated March 22, 1996, which includes requirements for:
 - monthly fire drills in all areas occupied by residents, including cottages, school, cafeteria, with a report sent to the Superintendent;
 - monthly automatic door lock and fire inspections/safety inspections, with a report sent to the Campus Coordinator;
 - review of the fire drill, automatic door lock, fire inspection/safety inspection reports monthly at the Hillcrest administrative meeting;
 - training in fire safety provided to all new staff by the Hillcrest Fire Marshall;
 - responsibility designated to the Hillcrest Fire Marshall for keeping all safety equipment inspected and in good order.
 - notification of the Salem Fire Department one week in advance of the monthly fire drills in our two modular units so that the Fire Department may choose to participate in these drills.
 - an evacuation plan for each cottage and area that may be occupied by residents.

Hillcrest also has a fire alarm system that automatically signals the Campus Security Office if heat or smoke is detected anywhere on campus. This system indicates the location of the problem and also automatically signals the Salem Fire Department.

In addition, Hillcrest has a Facility Inspection policy (II-B-2), dated December 13, 1996, which requires routine inspections by a Facility Inspection Team of all facilities on campus to ensure safety, security, and sanitation. Members of the team include a representative from the Clinic, Maintenance, Campus Security, Food Service, and a member of the Hillcrest Safety Committee. A report on the inspection, which includes fire safety

inspection, is provided to the Superintendent who reviews that with management staff weekly. Each site on the Hillcrest campus receives such an inspection quarterly.

Despite the above-cited current policies and procedures that address fire and safety issues, Hillcrest is eager to improve its fire safety policies and procedures and to meet the specifics of the ACA requirements for fire safety. Thus, the Hillcrest Unit Director in charge of Campus Security will be responsible for developing policy and procedure sufficient to meet this mandatory ACA standard. Timeline: December 31, 1997.

4. 3-JTS-3B-02 Safety and Emergency Procedures

“Written policy, procedure, and practice provide for a comprehensive and thorough monthly inspection of the facility by a qualified fire and safety officer for compliance with safety and fire prevention standards. There is a weekly fire and safety inspection of the facility by a qualified departmental staff member. This policy and procedure is reviewed annually and updated as needed.”

Visiting Committee Finding: “There are no weekly and monthly inspections.”

Corrective Action:

Please refer to the Corrective Action Plan in 3-JTS-3B-01 above. In addition, the Hillcrest Unit Director in charge of Campus Security will be responsible for securing a monthly inspection of Hillcrest by a qualified fire and safety officer. Timeline: December 31, 1997

5. 3-JTS-3B-03 Safety and Emergency Procedures

“Specifications of the selection and purchase of facility furnishings indicate the fire safety performance requirement of the material selected.”

Visiting Committee Finding: “There are no specifications on the facility furnishings to indicate the fire safety performance.”

Corrective Action Plan: The Unit Director in charge of the Property Specialist program shall develop policy and procedure consistent with this mandatory standard. Timeline: December 31, 1997

6. 3-JTS-3B-04 Safety and Emergency Procedures

“Facilities are equipped with noncombustible receptacles for smoking materials and separate containers for the combustible refuse at accessible locations throughout living quarters in the facility. Special containers are provided for flammable liquids and for rags used with flammable liquids. All receptacles and containers are emptied and cleaned daily.”

Visiting Committee Finding: “There is a need to work on safety issues in the shops.”

Corrective Action Plan: The Unit Director in charge of the Safety Committee shall work with the OYA Facilities Manager to develop policy and procedure for Hillcrest which will bring Hillcrest maintenance staff in compliance with this standard. Timeline: September 30, 1997.

7. 3-JTS-3B-05 Safety and Emergency Procedures

“written policy, procedure, and practice govern the control and use of all flammable, toxic, and caustic materials.”

Visiting Committee Finding: “There is very poor control of flammable, toxic and caustic materials. The shop need attention.”

Corrective Action Plan: The Unit Director in charge of the Safety Committee shall work with the OYA Facilities Manager to develop policy and procedure for Hillcrest which will bring Hillcrest into compliance with this standard. Timeline: September 30, 1997.

8. 3-JTS-3B-11 Safety and Emergency Procedures

“The facility has a written evacuation plan prepared in the event of fire or major emergency that is certified by an independent, outside inspector trained in the application of appropriate code. The plan is reviewed annually, updated if necessary, and reissued to the local fire jurisdiction. The plan includes the following:

- location of building/room floor plan
- use of exit signs and directional arrows for traffic flow
- location of publicly posted plan
- monthly drills in all occupied locations of the facility
- staff drills when evacuation of dangerous residents may not be included.”

Visiting Committee Finding: “Most of this standard is in non-compliance. There is no written plan in the event of a fire.”

Corrective Action Plan: Please refer to the response in the corrective action plan for the first mandatory item addressed in this report regarding the extant Hillcrest plans regarding safety and emergency procedures. In addition to the policies and procedures referred to there, Hillcrest also has a policy and procedure (VII-A-1) entitled “Disaster Emergency Plan,” which addresses the requirements in this standard, including provisions for emergency housing arrangements for residents at two nearby churches.

To meet the portions of this standard which we do not now meet, the Hillcrest Unit Director in charge of the Safety Committee shall develop policy and procedure to meet all of the requirements of this standard, particularly the requirement for certification of the plan by an independent, outside inspector. Timeline: December 31, 1997.

9. 3-JTS-3B-12 Safety and Emergency Procedures

“All facility personnel are trained in the implementation of written emergency plans. Work stoppage and riot/disturbance plans are communicated only to appropriate supervisory or other personnel directly involved in the implementation of those plans.”

Visiting Committee Finding: “There is a need to improve the emergency plans and training.”

Corrective Action Plan: The Unit Director in charge of Security shall develop policy and procedure to meet this requirement.

10. 3-JTS-4A-04 Food Service

“There is documentation that the facility’s system of dietary allowance is reviewed at least annually by a dietitian to ensure compliance with nationally recommended food allowances.”

Visiting Committee Finding: “There is no documentation available.”

Corrective Action Plan: The Unit Director in charge of Food Service shall secure approval annually of Hillcrest menus by a registered dietitian, as currently required by Hillcrest policy V-A-1.

11. 3-JTS-4A-15

Food Service

Written policy, procedure, and practice provide for adequate health protection for all juveniles and staff in the facility and juveniles and other persons working in food service, including the following:

1. Where required by the laws and/or regulations applicable to food service employees in the community where the facility is located, all personnel involved in the preparation of food receive a preassignment medical examination and periodic reexaminations to ensure freedom from diarrhea, skin infections, and other illness transmissible by food or utensils; all examinations are conducted in accordance with local requirements.

2. When the facility's food services are provided by an outside agency or individual, the facility has written verification that the outside provider complies with the state and local regulations regarding food service.

3. All food handlers are instructed to wash their hands on reporting to duty and after using toilet facilities.

4. Juveniles and other persons working in food service are monitored each day for health and cleanliness by the director of food services (or designee)."

Visiting Committee Finding: "There are no medical exams for staff or juveniles."

Corrective Action Plan: The Unit Director in charge of Food Service will work OYA Office of Employee Services to develop position requirements and funding for preassignment medical examination and periodic reexaminations to ensure freedom from illness referred to in the standard. Timeline: December 31, 1997

12. 3-JTS-4B-02

Sanitation and Hygiene

The facility administration complies with applicable federal, state, and local sanitation and health codes."

Visiting Committee Finding: "There is a food service inspection only. There needs to be a total facility inspection."

Corrective Action Plan: The Unit Director in charge of the Clinic shall develop a method to ensure compliance with this standard.

13. 3-JTS-4C-28

Health Care

"Written policy, procedure, and practice provide that careworker staff and other personnel are trained to respond to health-related situations within a four-minute response time. A training program is established by the responsible health authority in cooperation with the facility administrator that includes the following:

- recognition of signs and symptoms and knowledge of action required in potential emergency situations
- administration of first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR)
- methods of obtaining assistance
- signs and symptoms of mental illness, retardation, and chemical dependency
- procedures for patient transfers to appropriate medical facilities or health care providers

Visiting Committee Finding: "There is good response time. None of the staff on the night shift have CPR training."

Corrective Action Plan: The Unit Director in charge of Training for Hillcrest shall work with the OYA Training Academy Manager to develop a CPR training program so that sufficient night staff have CPR training to meet this standard. Timeline: By September 30, 1997.

