



Office of the Inspector General

David R. Shaw, Inspector General

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PRISON SECURITY HOUSING MISMANAGEMENT COSTS STATE MONEY AND VIOLATES INMATE RIGHTS

SACRAMENTO—Inspector General David R. Shaw today issued the results of a review into the management of administrative segregation units in selected California prisons and identified repeated failures to comply with California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation policies. The review found that some inmates are held in segregation units longer than required, resulting in unnecessary operating costs and the denial of inmates' due process rights. The additional custody costs for inmates held in administrative segregation are estimated to be \$14,600 per inmate annually, and better management could save the department as much as \$10.9 million each year systemwide.

"Segregation unit placement is a complex process with myriad procedures and rules," said Shaw. "However, all inmates in administrative segregation are entitled to their procedural rights. If some prisons fail to follow the rules, those violations affect the entire department, and the California taxpayer is left holding the bill when the department faces a lawsuit or must pay for an inmate's extra time in segregation."

Inmates who threaten a prison's safety and security are placed in segregation units while the staff evaluates the threat posed. Certain prisons often violate policies intended to provide inmates with due process and timely release from administrative segregation. Today's report highlights the problems discovered at three of eight prisons reviewed—California State Prison, Los Angeles County; California State Prison, Solano; and San Quentin State Prison.

Due process errors cause unnecessary delays in releasing inmates from segregation units. Besides violating procedural requirements, delayed release from segregation units needlessly increases a prison's operating costs. The average cost of housing an inmate in administrative segregation is higher than housing a general population inmate because of the extra officers and isolated cells required.

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The California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation could not provide statewide costs for operating administrative segregation units at its 33 adult prisons. The Inspector General's office estimated from a sampling of prisons that the average annual custody cost for an administrative segregation bed is \$14,600 more than the average general population bed. The administrative segregation management problems the Inspector General's office found at the sample prisons are likely to be indicative of problems in prisons throughout California. Therefore, if inmates in segregated housing statewide were released on schedule, it could eliminate the need for emergency or overflow beds and staff overtime and potentially save the department as much as \$10.9 million annually.

"The administrative segregation problems are indicative of problems in prisons throughout California," said Shaw. "Therefore, I expect these problems to be addressed not only at the three prisons cited in our report, but at the highest level of department management."

The entire report may be viewed and downloaded from the Office of the Inspector General's Web site at <http://www.oig.ca.gov/>.

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