



SIERRA CONSERVATION CENTER
WARDEN IVAN D. CLAY
ONE-YEAR AUDIT

**OFFICE OF THE
INSPECTOR GENERAL**

**DAVID R. SHAW
INSPECTOR GENERAL**

STATE OF CALIFORNIA

AUGUST 2009



August 25, 2009

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

Dear Mr. Cate:

Enclosed is the Office of the Inspector General's audit report concerning the performance of Warden Ivan D. Clay at the Sierra Conservation Center (SCC). The purpose of the audit was to satisfy our statutory requirement to audit each warden one year after appointment.

Our review found that Warden Clay is a knowledgeable and well respected leader who demonstrates a personal commitment to carrying out SCC's mission. Many institutional employees view him as one of the top wardens at the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation.

If you have questions concerning this report, please contact Jerry Twomey, Chief Assistant Inspector General, Bureau of Audits and Investigations, at (916) 830-3610.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "David R. Shaw", is written over a horizontal line.

David R. Shaw
Inspector General

cc: Scott Kernan, Chief Deputy Secretary, Adult Operations
Suzan Hubbard, Director, Adult Institutions
Elizabeth Siggins, Chief Deputy Secretary (A), Adult Programs
Kim Holt, External Audits Manager

Enclosure


Arnold Schwarzenegger, Governor

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Results in Brief

Overall, Ivan D. Clay is a knowledgeable and well respected warden

From its review, the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) found that Ivan D. Clay has successfully transitioned to his role as warden. With over 27 years of experience with the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (department) and a reputation for integrity and professionalism, Warden Clay has gained the respect of his employees, managers, and external stakeholders. Sierra Conservation Center (SCC) employees told us the operations of the institution have improved since Clay became warden in July 2007. Moreover, many of the employees we spoke to told us that Clay is the best warden for whom they have ever worked.

SIERRA CONSERVATION CENTER FACTS AT A GLANCE

Location: Jamestown, CA

Opened: 1965

Mission Group: General Population I/II/III and Camps

Inmate Population: 5,973

Designed Capacity: 3,736 inmates

Employees: 1,101

Budget: \$151 million

During our review, we surveyed SCC employees, key stakeholders, and department executives; analyzed operational data compiled and maintained by the department; interviewed SCC employees, including the warden; and toured the institution. We compiled the results of our review and categorized them into four areas: safety and security, inmate programming, business operations, and employee-management relations. We received mainly positive responses regarding the warden's performance. In areas where the warden scored low, such as business operations, the warden appears to be addressing employee concerns. Overall, the warden's managers and employees as well as department executives rated his overall performance between very good and outstanding.



Warden Ivan Clay

One-Year Evaluation of Warden Ivan D. Clay

California Penal Code section 6126(a)(2) requires the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) to audit each warden of an institution one year after his or her appointment. To satisfy this requirement, we evaluated Warden Clay's performance at the Sierra Conservation Center (SCC) since his appointment.

Background of Warden Clay

Warden Ivan D. Clay began his career with the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (department) in April 1982 as a correctional officer at SCC. He was promoted to correctional sergeant in July 1986 then transferred to the Deuel Vocational Institution in Tracy as a correctional counselor in August 1988. In December 1989, he was promoted to correctional lieutenant at Mule Creek State Prison in Ione. Clay transferred back to the SCC as a correctional lieutenant in December 1990. He later transferred to Mule Creek State Prison, where he was promoted to correctional captain in April 1997. In March 1999, Clay transferred to the Northern California Women's Facility in Stockton, and in July 2002 he was promoted to correctional administrator at SCC. In this capacity, Clay served as associate warden of central operations and housing, and he participated on the institution classification committees.

In April 2006 Clay was promoted to the position of chief deputy warden at SCC and was directly responsible for the day-to-day operations of the institution. In May 2006, Clay became the acting warden at SCC, and Governor Schwarzenegger appointed him as warden on July 17, 2007.

Institution Overview

SCC is one of the 33 adult prisons operated by the department. The institution, which opened in 1965, houses Levels I and II general population inmates and Level III sensitive needs inmates.¹ In addition, SCC manages 19 male fire camps located in southern California and is one of only two prisons in the state responsible for the training and placement of male inmates in the Conservation Camp Program. SCC functions as the center for training staff and inmates in firefighting techniques. SCC was designed to hold 3,736 male inmates.



Sierra Conservation Center

¹ Because of their crimes, notoriety, or gang affiliations, inmates placed on sensitive needs yards cannot mix with general population inmates.

However, as of January 31, 2009, SCC housed 5,973 inmates: 2,067 classified as camp; 1,275 classified as Level I; 1,429 classified as Level II; and 1,202 classified as Level III sensitive needs.

Inmate Housing

SCC is separated into two dormitory-type facilities for minimum and low-medium custody (Levels I and II) inmates; and a separate facility for high-medium custody (Level III) inmates. The 19 conservation camps are self contained “prisons without walls.” The camps are sited in rural or wilderness areas for fire suppression. Inmates assigned to camps are dispatched to fight wild fires and other emergencies when needed; and perform a variety of community work projects.



Inmates on fire line

SCC is one of two state prisons that first implemented the department’s integrated housing policy (IHP) in

October 2008. This policy resulted from litigation that challenged the department’s previous policy of using race as the primary factor in housing its inmate population. To address this litigation, the department developed new procedures to integrate inmates in celled and dormitory housing. The department operations manual (DOM) section 54055.1 states:

It is the policy of the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation that race will not be used as a primary determining factor in housing its inmate population. All inmate housing assignments shall be made on the basis of available information and individual case factors necessary to implement an integrated housing plan.

Inmates who refuse to participate in the IHP may receive disciplinary action and may lose privileges, such as telephone, personal property, and canteen, for up to 90 days.

Rehabilitation Programs

SCC offers various work, education, and self-help programs designed to increase inmates’ social awareness and personal responsibility. For example, the prison offers vocational opportunities in textiles, auto mechanics, auto body, office services, graphic arts, and carpentry. Academic offerings include adult basic education, General Educational Development (GED), firefighter training, and reentry classes. Self-help programs include substance abuse and religious counseling. SCC also offers college programs in landscaping and printing.

Budget and Staffing

For fiscal year 2008–09, SCC’s budget was approximately \$151 million. This includes \$125 million for institution and education operations plus \$26 million for medical operations, of which \$19.8 million is under the control of the federal receiver. SCC has 1,184 budgeted positions, of which 749 (or 63.3 percent) represent custody staff members. Table 1 compares SCC’s budgeted and filled positions as of December 31, 2008. Overall, the institution filled 93 percent of its total budgeted positions.

Table 1: Staffing Levels at Sierra Conservation Center

Position	Filled Positions	Budgeted Positions	Percent Filled
Custody	705	749	94.1%
Education	42	46	91.3%
Medical	94	109	86.2%
Support	142	155	91.6%
Trades	105	112	93.8%
Management	13	13	100%
Total	1,101	1,184	93.0%

Source: California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, CompStat for December 31, 2008, Sierra Conservation Center. Unaudited data.

Objectives, Scope, and Methodology

To fulfill our objective of assessing the warden’s performance, we employed a three-part approach. First, we used surveys to solicit opinions and comments from employees, department management team members, and other stakeholders. Next, we analyzed operational data maintained by the department and compared it with the averages for like institutions² and all institutions statewide. In addition, we reviewed relevant reports prepared by the department or other external agencies. Finally, we visited the institution, interviewed various employees and inmates, and followed up on noteworthy concerns we identified from the surveys, operational data, or reports.

To understand how the staff members and other stakeholders view the warden’s performance, we sent surveys to three distinct groups: department and SCC managers, SCC employees, and key stakeholders outside the department. For our employee survey, we randomly selected 303 of the institution’s employees and sent them a survey. The survey provides us with information about employees’ perception of the warden’s overall performance plus information about specific operational areas at the prison—Safety and Security, Inmate Programming, Business Operations, and Employee-Management Relations.

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

² Institutions with a similar mission include: Avenal State Prison, California Correctional Center, California Rehabilitation Center, California State Prison – Solano, Chuckawalla Valley State Prison, Correctional Training Facility, Folsom State Prison, and Ironwood State Prison.

we classified it as positive; and, if the respondent ‘disagreed’ or ‘strongly disagreed’ with our question we classified it as negative.

Our inspectors also analyzed operational data maintained by the department (called CompStat – comparable statistics) and analyzed the responses to our surveys. We also reviewed relevant reports related to the institution’s operations prepared by the department or external agencies. From these efforts we identified strong trends or patterns – either negative or positive – or other issues to help us identify topics for further review and evaluation during our on-site visit to SCC.

During our visit to SCC, we gained insight into the work environment where the warden must perform. We interviewed employees in certain key positions plus several random employees, utilizing information gathered from our analysis of statistical information and from employee surveys to identify potential issues for review. Our interviews involved employees in various operational areas throughout the prison, including:

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

We performed a site visit the week of January 19, 2009. During our visit, we interviewed 56 individuals throughout the prison and asked them describe and rate the warden’s performance. These individuals included custody employees, executive management team members, education and health care professionals, and inmate representatives from the Inmate Advisory Council.

Review Results

We found that, since Warden Clay’s appointment, most responding stakeholders including department management, institutional managers, and employees believe the warden is doing a very good to outstanding job overall. In the four categories of safety and security, inmate programming, business operations, and employee-management relations we received mainly positive answers with the exception of business operations, which had some negative comments.

Category 1: Safety and Security

The department’s mission is, in part, to enhance public safety through safe and secure incarceration of offenders. The importance of safety and security is embodied in the department’s requirement that custodial security and the safety of employees, inmates, and the public take precedence over all other considerations in the operation of all the department’s programs and activities. As shown in Table 2 above, 86 percent of the prison employees we surveyed had positive opinions about the safety and security of the institution.

Table 2: Safety and Security – Employee Survey Results

Respondents	Positive	Negative
Custody	81%	19%
Health Care	97%	3%
Admin, Plant Operations, and Other	85%	15%
Weighted Average	86%	14%

Source: OIG Survey of SCC Employees. See Appendix for details.

During our review of the safety and security category, we heard mostly favorable opinions from employees interviewed during our field visit. However, after considering the interviews in conjunction with comments from the warden, results from our employee survey, and departmental data on segregation housing and use of force incidents, we identified five areas for additional evaluation: Custody Staffing, Administrative Segregation, Use of Force, Integrated Housing, and Other Safety and Security Issues.

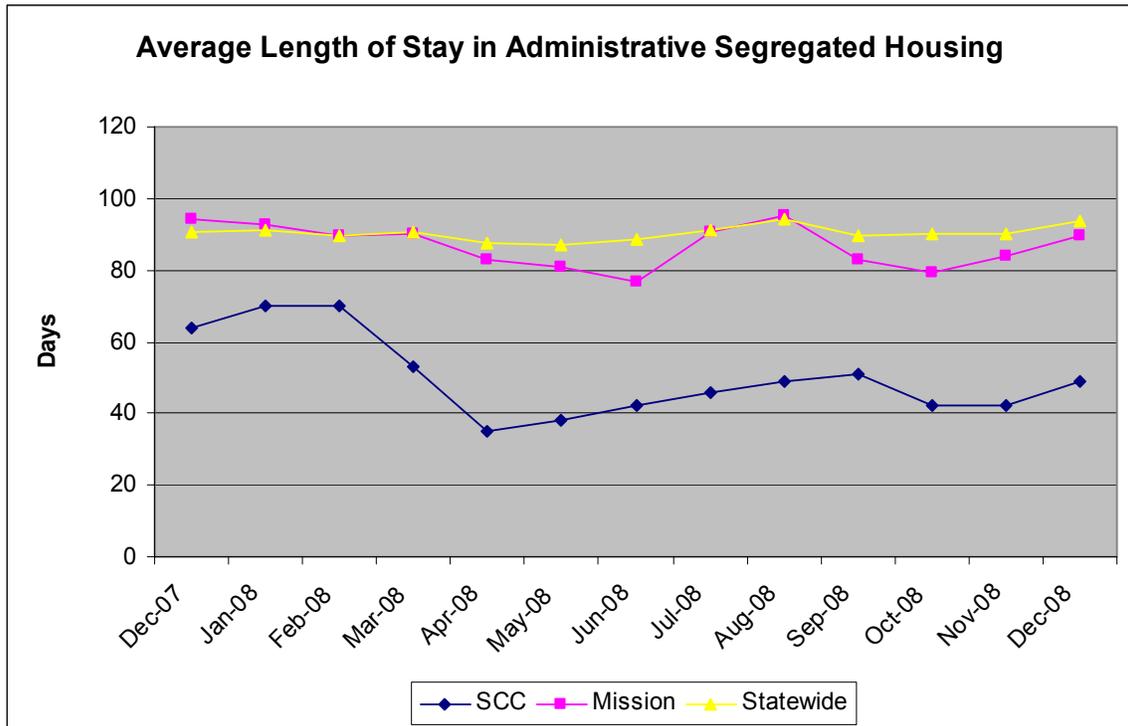
Custody Staffing

Our analysis of data gathered from employee surveys noted that, of the responses to the statement “*Your assigned work area has enough staff to get all of the required work done,*” 53 percent of custody employees (officers, sergeants, lieutenants, and above) were positive while 47 percent were negative. However, of the responses to the statement, “*You are able to complete required (mission critical) assignments in your work area*” 95 percent were positive and 5 percent were negative. Although custody employees expressed concern about the shortage of staff members, they believe they can accomplish their job. In addition, during our visit to the institution, interviews with custody employees did not reveal concerns about a lack of employees within their work areas. Further, staffing data does not indicate a significant vacancy issue for custody staff at SCC.

Administrative Segregation

California prisons temporarily segregate inmates who threaten the institution’s safety and security. These inmates are placed in administrative segregation units (ASUs) while prison employees evaluate the threat they pose to prison security. The number of days an inmate spends in ASU may be an indication of how effective an institution manages their ASU. As shown in the chart below, at SCC, the average length of stay of inmates housed in ASU is much less than the statewide average as well as comparable mission-based institutions. Therefore, it appears that SCC conducts the required evaluations of inmates housed in ASU in a timely manner.

Chart 1:

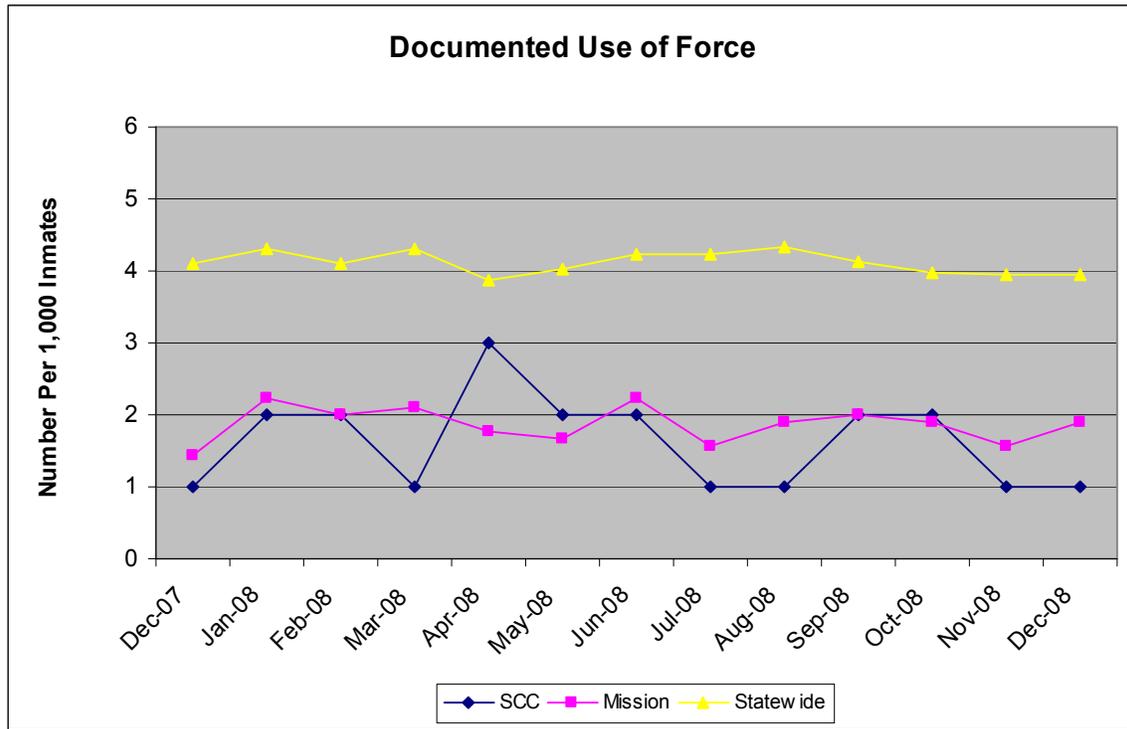


Source: California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, CompStat for December 31, 2008, Sierra Conservation Center. Unaudited data.

Use of Force

The number of incidents where force is necessary to subdue an attacker, overcome resistance, effect custody, or gain compliance with a lawful order is a measure of inmate behavior and the institution’s ability to safely incarcerate inmates. To assess SCC’s use of force, we reviewed the department’s use of force data during the 13-month period from December 1, 2007 through December 31, 2008. As shown in Chart 2, during the month of April 2008 there was an increase in the documented use of force at SCC. Per SCC staff, the increase was a result of two riots and various inmate disturbances at the institution. Aside from that increase, the documented use of force at SCC is similar to other comparable mission-based institutions and much less than the statewide average.

Chart 2:



Source: California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, CompStat for December 31, 2008, Sierra Conservation Center. Unaudited data.

Integrated Housing

The implementation of the IHP in October 2008 has created many challenges for Warden Clay and his employees because inmates are not complying with the IHP. Many inmates refuse to share a double bunk bed with an inmate of a different race in fear of retaliation from gang members. A few employees told us the implementation of the IHP puts their lives in danger, and they expressed concerns because they are forcing inmates to do something opposed by gang leaders.

Despite these challenges, Warden Clay was successful in implementing the IHP without serious incident. In fact, he actively engaged department management in developing a successful strategy for meeting its litigation requirements and then oversaw the execution of that strategy at SCC. The dorms at SCC are now considered to be integrated under the department's IHP.



Figure 1 – Typical Dorm Room

Employees identified the implementation of the IHP as one of the warden's biggest

accomplishments within the past year. One employee described the implementation as “successful with no serious violence.”

Other Safety and Security Issues

During our site visit we asked employees whether they had any concerns about the safety and security of the prison. Several employees we interviewed described SCC as being a sound security environment. However, other employees told us they are concerned about the introduction of contraband into the institution: specifically cell phones. The introduction of cell phones into prisons poses a serious threat to institutional security and public safety when inmates continue criminal activity by making unmonitored calls. The warden told us that he is also concerned about the increase in cell phones found in the institution. His employees are conducting additional searches and he also told us the department is developing a strategic plan to address the cell phone issue.

Category 2: Inmate Programming

Research shows that rehabilitative programming can reduce the likelihood that offenders will commit new crimes and thus return to prison. In fact, a 2006 Washington State Institute for Public Policy study of adult basic and vocational education programs found that such programs reduce inmate recidivism by an average of 5.1 percent and 12.6 percent, respectively.³ The department recognizes these benefits and provides academic and vocational training and a number of self-help and self improvement services including substance abuse programs to inmates. An added benefit is that programming requires inmates to have a more structured day and less idle time while in prison. As a general rule, inmates with a structured day tend to be easier to manage. As a result, the institution’s safety and security can be affected by the amount of inmate programming available.

Table 3: Inmate Programming – Employee Survey Results

Respondents	Positive	Negative
Custody	86%	14%
Health Care	97%	3%
Admin, Plant Operations, and Other	81%	19%
Weighted Average	87%	13%

Source: OIG Survey of SCC Employees. See Appendix for details.

Overall, as shown in Table 3 above, 87 percent of all respondents gave favorable ratings to questions related to inmate programming. After our analysis of the information gathered from departmental statistics, employee survey results, and employee interviews we found three areas for more detailed evaluation and comment: Inmate Program Attendance, Fire Camp Impacts, and Other Inmate Programming Issues.

Inmate Program Attendance

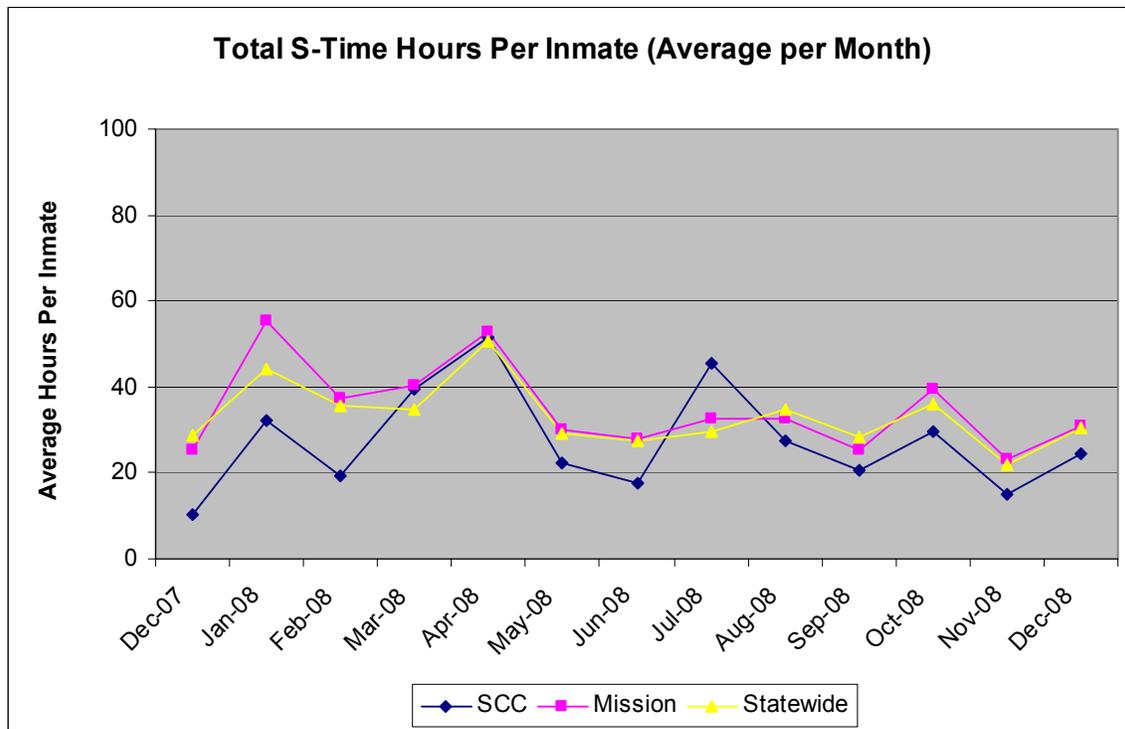
The department establishes the amount of time that assigned inmates must attend academic and vocational training classes each day. As a result, each institution can be evaluated as to how effectively it complies with school-day attendance requirements because administrators must track inmate class absences. The department refers to absences caused by circumstances beyond the inmate’s control as “S-time.” Such

³ Washington State Institute for Public Policy, “Evidence-Based Adult Corrections Programs: What Works and What Does Not,” January 2006.

absences may result from security-related needs such as lockdowns, modified programming, investigations, and inmate medical appointments. Education-related absences, such as teachers calling in sick also contribute to S-time. Institutions with high or increasing patterns of S-time indicate that prison management may be ineffectively using their academic and vocational programs, or even wasting the resources that give the inmates what they need to succeed upon parole.

Maximizing an inmate’s exposure to rehabilitative programming is a positive step towards reducing recidivism. Conversely, the amount of time that inmates do not receive normal programming can indicate an inefficient use of both institutional teaching resources and available inmate programming time. The lost time is measureable and is tracked by the department. Chart 3 below reflects the average per inmate S-time at SCC, which is generally less than the average of other comparable mission-based institutions as well as the average of all institutions statewide. However, during the months of April 2008 and July 2008 there were increases in S-time. An SCC employee told us that inmate absences during those months were caused by the annual inmate tuberculosis testing, an unplanned search of the housing units, and chicken pox outbreaks.

Chart 3:



Source: California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, CompStat for December 31, 2008, Sierra Conservation Center. Unaudited data.

Fire Camp Impacts

SCC is one of only two prisons in the state responsible for the training and placement of male inmates in the Conservation Camp Program, a program that teaches inmates firefighting and other skills. SCC administers 19 male camps located from Central

California to the California-Mexico border. As of January 31, 2009, there were over 2,000 inmates assigned to a fire camp.

During our site visit, some employees told us they had concerns about the implementation of the IHP and its possible negative impact on the fire camp program. As mentioned earlier, if an inmate refuses to participate in the IHP, the inmate is given disciplinary action which may result in the loss of privileges for up to 90 days. This type of discipline would make an inmate ineligible for the fire camp program. In turn, this could reduce the number of eligible and available fire camp participants, which impacts the inmate population within the fire camps and ultimately, the department’s ability to help fight fires.

As discussed earlier, the warden met with department management and ultimately the department clarified how the IHP rules apply to dorm housing. Specifically, SCC’s dorms are now considered to be integrated—effectively eliminating the earlier inmate disciplinary problems related to the IHP.

Other Inmate Programming Issues

Overall, we found many positive comments related to inmate programming. Specifically, 84 percent of employees we surveyed responded that inmate programming is adequate with a sufficient number of education and work placement opportunities. Also, 82 percent indicated that the inmate assignment process works as intended with appropriate inmate placements. Moreover, employees we interviewed told us that Warden Clay is very supportive of rehabilitation programs. In fact, a few employees identified the implementation of a self help program called Freedom of Choice as one of his major accomplishments.

Category 3: Business Operations

An institution’s business operations include budget planning and control; personnel administration; accounting and procurement services; employee training and development; and, facility maintenance and operations. It is important for the warden to be knowledgeable in these areas to effectively perform his duties.

Table 4: Business Operations – Employee Survey Results

Respondents	Positive	Negative
Custody	61%	39%
Health Care	81%	19%
Admin, Plant Operations, and Other	71%	29%
Weighted Average	68%	32%

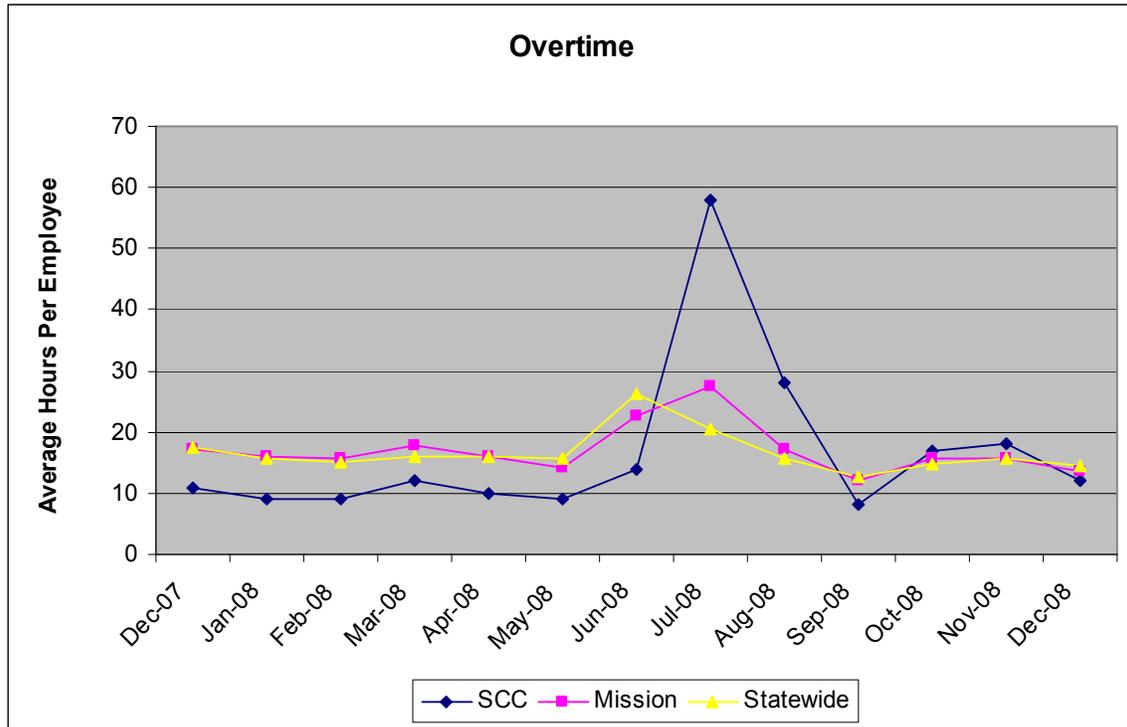
Source: OIG Survey of SCC Employees. See Appendix for details.

As shown in Table 4 above, 68 percent of the employees had positive responses about the institution’s business operations and 32 percent had negative responses. Our analysis of the information gathered from the department’s data, employee survey responses, and employee interviews uncovered three specific areas that we evaluated and discussed further with the warden and other management team members: Personnel Administration, Facility Maintenance, and Other Business Operations Issues.

Personnel Administration

As displayed in the chart below, SCC’s average overtime hours per employee is generally below both comparable mission-based institutions and statewide institutions. However, employee overtime significantly increased during the months of July 2008 and August 2008. Business Services’ staff members told us that fire camp employees worked additional overtime hours because of the increase in fires. Employees also told us that the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection reimbursed the SCC for the overtime expenses incurred to fight fires.

Chart 4:



Source: California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, CompStat for December 31, 2008, Sierra Conservation Center. Unaudited data.

Of the employee survey responses, 65 percent felt that their assigned work area had enough staff members to complete the required work while 35 percent did not. During our interview with the warden, Clay identified the lack of staff as one of his biggest challenges. He told us that he must find ways to “do more with less.” He said that he often solicits input from employees to seek creative solutions. Given the state’s current budget situation, this seems to be a common problem at most institutions statewide and not one directly within Warden Clay’s control.

Facility Maintenance

Some employees told us that facility maintenance and repair needs within their assigned work area are not being addressed. Our analysis of data gathered from employee surveys noted that of the responses to the statement “Plant operations is able to meet maintenance/repair needs in your assigned work area,” 65 percent were positive while

35 percent were negative. During our on-site visit, institution managers told us that some of these concerns are out of the warden’s control because maintenance and repair projects have been approved but not yet funded by the department. Employees told us that the warden is supportive of maintenance needs and is doing the best he can to acquire additional funding from the department.

Other Business Operations Issues

A few employees expressed concerns to us about the warden’s lack of business experience. During our interview with the warden, he told us that he does not consider himself to be a business operations expert. Therefore, he consults with business services’ employees regularly and asks questions so that he has a good understanding of how his institution is operating. During our site visit at the institution, many people told us that the warden seeks their input so that he can make informed decisions.

Category 4: Employee-Management Relations

“Successful leaders invite communication, listen well, and prove themselves trustworthy by exhibiting rational, caring, and predictable behavior in their interpersonal relationships.”⁴ The warden’s ability to communicate plays an important role in employee relations and is vital in implementing the department’s vision and mission at the institution level. Not only must the warden interact with employees at all levels and communicate instructions and directions clearly and effectively, but the warden must also communicate effectively with department headquarters as well as the surrounding community.

Table 5: Employee-Management Relations – Employee Survey Results

Respondents	Positive	Negative
Custody	84%	16%
Health Care	97%	3%
Admin, Plant Operations, and Other	87%	13%
Weighted Average	88%	12%

Source: OIG Survey of SCC Employees. See Appendix for details.

As shown in Table 5 above, 88 percent of the prison employees had positive opinions about various areas related to employee-management relations. Although the opinions of employees and other stakeholders provide one measure of the warden’s employee-management relations, another measure can be found in the number of grievances filed by the institution’s employees. Our analysis of employees’ responses to our surveys; interviews with the warden’s management team and other employees; and statistics on employee grievances formulated the collective basis of our conclusions in the three areas discussed below: Employee Grievances, Communication, and Other Employee-Management Relations Issues.

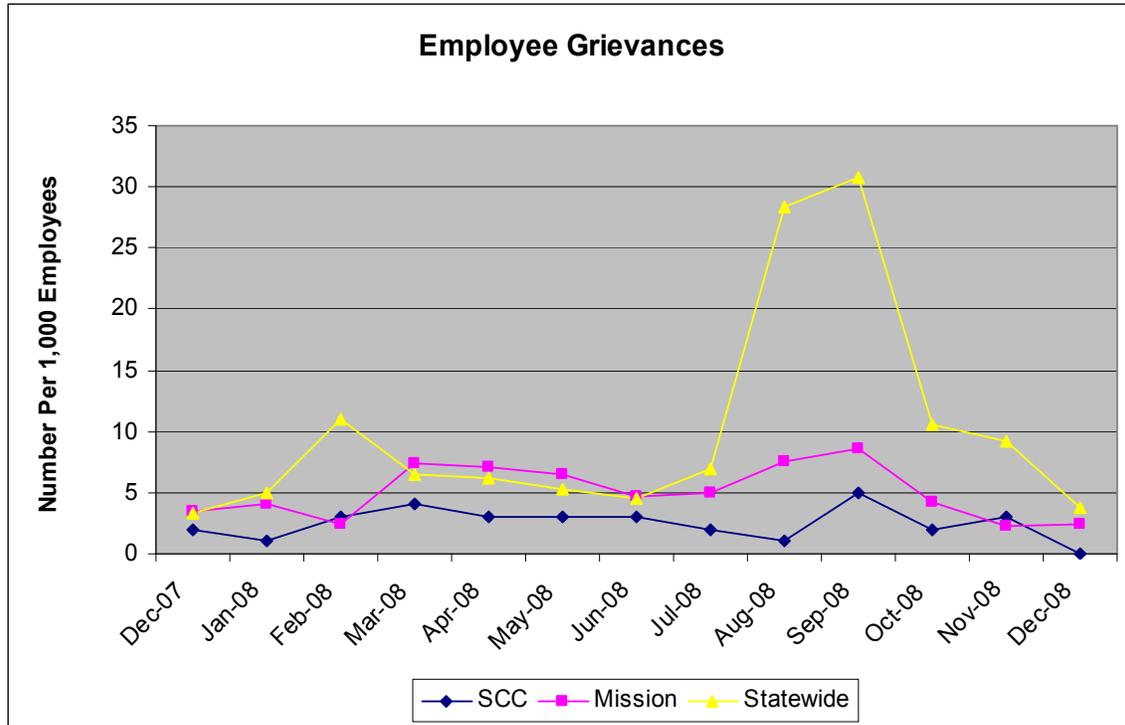
Employee Grievances

Employee grievances often arise from perceived departures from established union agreements, department operating procedures, and either labor laws or fair labor practices. All employees have the right to file a grievance relating to their employment.

⁴ *Correctional Leadership Competencies for the 21st Century*, U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Corrections (December 2006).

Our review of the employee survey results indicates that some employees may have concerns about the grievance process. Twenty-seven percent of the responses to the statement “*The employee grievance process works as intended (is appropriate and timely)*” were negative. However, those employees interviewed during our site visit did not express any concerns to us about the process. In fact, employees told us there were very few grievances filed by SCC employees. This comment is supported by the graph below, which shows that grievances at SCC is much less than the statewide average as well as comparable mission-based institutions.

Chart 5:



Source: California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, CompStat for December 31, 2008, Sierra Conservation Center. Unaudited data.

Communication

Our analysis of data gathered from employee surveys noted some concern related to communication. Of the responses to the statement “*You are kept up to date on issues that affect CDCR as a whole,*” 73 percent were positive while 27 percent were negative. However, other contacts from department management, employees, and stakeholders praised Warden Clay for being an excellent communicator, active listener, and sound decision maker. In addition, during our site visit, several employees told us the prison operates better because the communication has improved. Many people we spoke to said they feel well informed about what is going on in the prison as well as in the department.

Other Employee-Management Relations

Warden Clay is highly respected by nearly all of the individuals we contacted. Employees complemented him on his professionalism and extensive custody knowledge. They told us that since the warden “came up through the ranks,” he can relate to what employees experience on a regular basis. The employee survey identified that 94 percent of responses were positive to the statement “*The warden is knowledgeable about the day to day operations.*”

Many employees told us that Clay has great people skills and has developed positive relationships with employees, inmates, and labor union representatives. Those we interviewed further noted that he tries to bring everyone together to work as a team to accomplish the department’s goals. For example, prior to the implementation of the IHP, Clay wanted everyone to be involved. He met with his management team members on several occasions to gather input from all affected parties to develop an implementation plan. Also, Clay scheduled special sessions for employees and inmates to keep them informed of the institution’s progress.

Also, during our site visit, several employees told us that Clay is approachable and has an open door policy. Our review of the employee survey results identified that 93 percent of responses to the statement, “*The warden is accessible to you to discuss issues*” were positive and only 7 percent were negative. In addition every person we spoke to said that the warden tours the prison on a regular basis. Warden Clay told us he tries to walk around and talk to employees and inmates as much as possible. He said that walking around his institution provides him the opportunity to find out what is really going on in his prison.

In addition, department officials and SCC managers we surveyed rated Clay favorably for his management skills and qualities.

In our survey, we asked the officials and managers to consider the warden’s

performance in six management skills and qualities and rate the performance as either unacceptable, improvement needed, satisfactory, very good, or outstanding. As shown in Table 6, the survey results indicate that Warden Clay is performing, on average, at a level of “very good” to “outstanding” in various management related categories.

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

Category	Average Rating
Personal Characteristics/Traits	Outstanding
Relationships with Others	Outstanding
Leadership	Outstanding
Communication	Outstanding
Decision Making	Very Good
Organization/Planning	Very Good

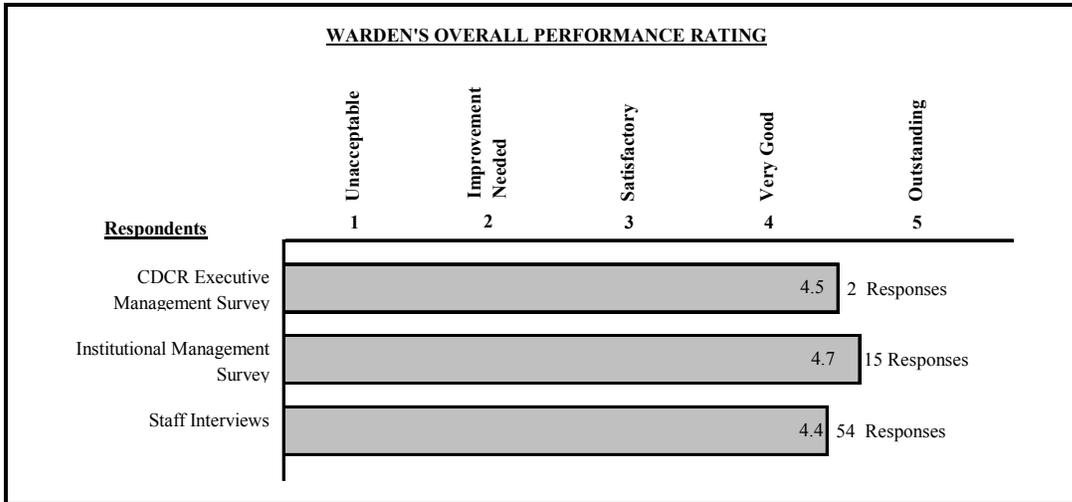
Source: OIG Survey of CDCR and SCC Management.

Overall, the results of this survey are consistent with many comments we received from employees during our site visit. For example, one employee told us that Clay is an excellent communicator and that he gets information to all levels of staff. Another employee said that Clay is the most mobile warden they have ever seen. Lastly, an employee told us that Clay is one of the best wardens they’ve ever worked for.

Overall Summary

In addition to our review of the four key areas identified above, our assessment of the warden’s performance included an overall performance rating. We based the rating on survey responses from department officials and SCC managers, and from interviews we conducted with SCC employees and inmates during our site visit. As shown in the chart below, those individuals rated the warden’s overall performance between “very good” and “outstanding.”

Chart 6:



Also, based on our review of the employee survey responses, 97 percent of employees said that Warden Clay is an effective leader.

In summary, Warden Clay has over 27 years of experience with the department, and employee comments indicate that he demonstrates a personal commitment to carrying out SCC’s mission. In fact, 96 percent of employee survey respondents said the institution is meeting its mission under the leadership of Warden Clay. Moreover, the survey results also indicate that 95 percent of respondents felt that Clay emphasizes an institutional culture that calls for staff to have integrity and to be highly ethical, professional, honest, motivated, and respectful. Many employees used those same words to describe Clay’s character. Employees also told us that Clay leads by example and that he is one of the top wardens currently at CDCR. In fact, one employee said, “the warden doesn’t need CDCR; CDCR needs him.” During our interview with Warden Clay we asked him what has made him successful and his response was: “You have to treat people like you want to be treated.”

Appendix

Results from our survey of institution employees

To prepare for our site visit, we sent a survey to 257 institution employees. The survey provides us with information about employees' perception of the warden's overall performance plus information about specific operational areas at the prison—Safety and Security, Inmate Programming, Business Operations, and Employee-Management Relations. One-hundred and seven SCC employees responded to our survey—a 42 percent response rate. To simplify our analysis of the survey results, we grouped survey respondents by category and identified response trends.

Specifically, we grouped the respondents into three employment categories: Custody; Health Care; and Other, which includes employees in education, plant operations, administration, clerical, and other non-custody/non-health care positions. Then, to identify strong trends or patterns, we classified the responses to our questions as either positive or negative. For example, if the respondent 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' with our question, we classified it as positive; and if the respondent 'disagreed' or 'strongly disagreed' with our question, we classified it as negative. We did not include passive responses. For example, if employees responded that they were 'neutral' or responded 'unknown' to our question, we excluded their response. We reported those results in a table on the following page.

Appendix: Compilation of Institutional Employee Survey Responses - Sierra Conservation Center

Operational Area/Question	Respondents' Employment Category						Total Responses			
	Custody		Health Care		Other		Pos	(%)	Neg	(%)
Safety and Security										
• You are able to complete required (mission critical) assignments in your work area.	35	2	19	0	27	2	81	95%	4	5%
• You have been issued or have access to all of the safety equipment you need.	39	4	21	0	25	4	85	91%	8	9%
• You receive all required (mandatory) training.	40	5	19	1	30	3	89	91%	9	9%
• The employee investigation/disciplinary process works as intended (is appropriate and timely).	10	17	9	1	13	5	32	58%	23	42%
• The CDC-115, inmate disciplinary process works as intended (is appropriate and timely).	39	5	13	0	17	6	69	86%	11	14%
• The CDC-602, inmate appeal process works as intended (is appropriate and timely).	31	10	17	1	11	2	59	82%	13	18%
• The use and duration of inmate lockdown time or modified program time is appropriate.	18	12	13	0	13	2	44	76%	14	24%
• The institution is meeting its mission(s) under the current warden's leadership. ¹	39	2					39	95%	2	5%
Totals	251	57	111	3	136	24	498		84	
<i>Percent of Respondents by Category</i>	<i>81%</i>	<i>19%</i>	<i>97%</i>	<i>3%</i>	<i>85%</i>	<i>15%</i>	<i>86%</i>		<i>14%</i>	
Inmate Programming										
• The inmate assignment process works as intended (appropriate placement).	26	3	12	0	15	9	53	82%	12	18%
• Inmate programming is adequate (sufficient number of education and work placements).	31	6	8	0	15	4	54	84%	10	16%
• The institution is meeting its mission(s) under the current warden's leadership. ¹			15	1	26	0	41	98%	1	2%
Totals	57	9	35	1	56	13	148		23	
<i>Percent of Respondents by Category</i>	<i>86%</i>	<i>14%</i>	<i>97%</i>	<i>3%</i>	<i>81%</i>	<i>19%</i>	<i>87%</i>		<i>13%</i>	
Business Operations										
• Your assigned work area has enough staff to get all of the required work done.	23	20	16	4	23	9	62	65%	33	35%
• Plant Operations is able to meet maintenance / repair needs in your assigned work area.	18	14	10	3	21	9	49	65%	26	35%
• Plant Operations is able to meet maintenance / repair needs in inmate areas.	23	7	9	1	13	5	45	78%	13	22%
Totals	64	41	35	8	57	23	156		72	
<i>Percent of Respondents by Category</i>	<i>61%</i>	<i>39%</i>	<i>81%</i>	<i>19%</i>	<i>71%</i>	<i>29%</i>	<i>68%</i>		<i>32%</i>	
Employee-Management Relations										
• The warden is knowledgeable about the day to day operations in your work area.	27	7	19	0	22	6	68	84%	13	16%
• The employee grievance process works as intended (is appropriate and timely).	14	7	9	1	14	6	37	73%	14	27%
• The warden works effectively with the local bargaining unit representatives.	14	1	11	0	20	2	45	94%	3	6%
• The warden regularly speaks or meets with inmates.	8	1	3	0	4	0	15	94%	1	6%
• You are kept up to date on issues that affect CDCR as a whole.	31	12	15	3	22	10	68	73%	25	27%
• The warden regularly visits your workplace.	24	13	19	1	21	8	64	74%	22	26%
• The warden welcomes feedback, including criticism from institution staff.	32	4	19	0	26	4	77	91%	8	9%
• The warden is knowledgeable about the day to day operations.	28	3	20	0	31	2	79	94%	5	6%
• The warden is accessible to you to discuss issues.	33	4	20	0	29	2	82	93%	6	7%
• The warden does not abuse his/her power or authority.	29	2	18	0	27	0	74	97%	2	3%
• The warden emphasizes an institutional culture calling for staff to have integrity and be highly ethical, professional, honest, motivated, and respectful.	36	3	19	0	28	1	83	95%	4	5%
• The warden emphasizes an institutional culture calling for cultural sensitivity and discrimination prevention, including sexual harassment prevention.	33	4	19	0	27	1	79	94%	5	6%
Totals	309	61	191	5	271	42	771		108	
<i>Percent of Respondents by Category</i>	<i>84%</i>	<i>16%</i>	<i>97%</i>	<i>3%</i>	<i>87%</i>	<i>13%</i>	<i>88%</i>		<i>12%</i>	
Overall Warden Rating										
Considering all institutional challenges, the current warden is an effective leader.	35	2	21	0	32	1	88	97%	3	3%
<i>Percent of Respondents by Category</i>	<i>95%</i>	<i>5%</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>0%</i>	<i>97%</i>	<i>3%</i>	<i>97%</i>		<i>3%</i>	

Source: OIG, Institutional Employee Survey Results for SCC

¹ This question applies to more than one operational area.

California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation's Response

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

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



August 19, 2009

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

Dear Mr. Shaw:

We are pleased to submit this response to your draft report entitled *Sierra Conservation Center, Warden Ivan D. Clay, One-Year Audit*, and agree with your acknowledgement that Warden Ivan Clay has a reputation for integrity and professionalism and has gained the respect of staff, managers, and external stakeholders.

According to your report, Warden Clay received assessments of very good to outstanding, with many staff stating that Mr. Clay is the best warden for whom they have ever worked. This effort is underscored by your report's conclusions that under Warden Clay, Sierra Conservation Center (SCC) is meeting its inmate programming; that staff overtime hours are generally below comparable mission-based and statewide institutions; and SCC's use of force is much less than the statewide average. In addition, we are pleased the Office of Inspector General (OIG) recognized that Warden Clay's implementation of integrated housing was a tremendous accomplishment for SCC as well as for the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR). We are encouraged that your report praised Warden Clay for being an excellent communicator, active listener, and sound decision maker. We readily concur with this assessment, and appreciate the positive review and strong indication of Warden Clay's skill set and commitment to CDCR.

We would like to thank the OIG for this outstanding report on one of 33 wardens tasked with the most difficult job in CDCR, managing a prison's operations. If you should have any questions or concerns, please call my office at (916) 323-6001.

Sincerely,

SCOTT KERNAN
Undersecretary, Operations

cc: Ivan Clay, Warden, Sierra Conservation Center