



CALIFORNIA CORRECTIONAL CENTER

**WARDEN RON BARNES
ONE-YEAR AUDIT**

**OFFICE OF THE
INSPECTOR GENERAL**

**DAVID R. SHAW
INSPECTOR GENERAL**

STATE OF CALIFORNIA

SEPTEMBER 2010



September 21, 2010

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 Ron Barnes at the California Correctional Center. The purpose of the audit was to satisfy our statutory requirement to audit each warden's job performance one year after appointment.

The report concludes that under Warden Barnes' leadership, the prison functioned well in the areas of safety and security, inmate programming, and business operations. However, OIG inspectors heard several complaints from employees concerning errors by the institution's personnel department that negatively affected employee pay and benefits. The warden should continue to monitor the personnel department's performance and take corrective action as necessary.

If you have any questions concerning this report, please contact Jerry Twomey, Chief Assistant Inspector General, Bureau of Audits and Investigations, at (916) 830-3600.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "D.R. Shaw".

David R. Shaw
Inspector General

cc: Scott Kernan, Undersecretary, Operations, CDCR
Elizabeth Siggins, Chief Deputy Secretary, Adult Programs, CDCR
George Giurbino, Director, Adult Institutions, CDCR
Kim Holt, External Audits Manager, CDCR

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Results in Brief

Overall, Warden Ron Barnes receives high marks as warden

From its review, the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) found that Warden Barnes has successfully performed his job as warden at California Correctional Center (CCC). With over 27 years of correctional experience in the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR), he has obtained the skills necessary to manage an institution.

Most CCC employees we interviewed told us the institution's employee-management relations have improved since Ron Barnes became warden in 2008.

During our review, we surveyed CCC employees, key stakeholders, and department executives; analyzed operational data compiled and maintained by the department; interviewed CCC employees, including the warden; and toured the institution. We compiled the results 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. On average, the warden's managers and employees rated him between very good and outstanding.

One-Year Evaluation of Warden Ron Barnes

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 Barnes' performance at California Correctional Center (CCC) since his appointment.

CALIFORNIA CORRECTIONAL CENTER FACTS AT A GLANCE

Location: Susanville, CA

Opened: 1963

Mission: To train and place inmates into one of 18 Northern California conservation camps.

Inmate Population: 5,482

Designed Capacity: 4,096 inmates

Employees: 1,081

Budget: \$104 million, FY 2009/10



Warden Ron Barnes

Background of Warden Barnes

Warden Barnes began his CDCR career in 1983 as a correctional officer at Folsom State Prison (FSP). He promoted to sergeant and worked at both CCC and FSP from 1989 to 1993. From 1993 to 1999, Ron Barnes served as a lieutenant at four separate prisons. From 1999 to 2003, he served as special assistant to the undersecretary for the Youth and Correctional Agency, and from 2003 to 2004 he worked as a correctional captain at FSP. Barnes was promoted to associate warden at High Desert State Prison in Susanville where he worked from 2004 until 2006 when he accepted the chief deputy warden position at CCC. He has served as acting warden of CCC since 2008 and was appointed warden of CCC by Governor Schwarzenegger in March 2009.

Institution Overview

California Correctional Center opened in 1963. The prison has 1,081 employees and had an adjusted operating budget of \$104 million (excluding medical, dental, and mental health services) in fiscal year 2008-09. Designed to house 4,096 inmates, CCC had custody over 5,482 male inmates, including 1,964 serving in 18 conservation camps as of April 25, 2010. There are four facilities housing inmates at CCC generally holding inmates of the following security levels: Arnold (Level I), Cascade and Sierra (Level I and II), and Lassen (Level III). CCC is located next to High Desert State Prison (HDSP) and covers approximately 1,100 acres within the Honey Lake Valley area of Northeastern California, roughly seven miles east of Susanville in Lassen County.



Figure 1 – Aerial view of California Correctional Center

Institutional Mission

The prison's primary mission is receiving, housing, and training minimum-custody inmates for placement into one of the institution's 18 Northern California conservation camps. These camps are located throughout the north state to provide fire suppression crews, labor for public conservation projects, and work crews to meet emergency response needs throughout the state. CDCR estimates that the services provided by the statewide fire camp programs have historically saved California taxpayers over \$80 million annually. Conservation camps support municipal, county, state and federal governmental agencies by performing work projects for schools, parks, cemeteries and public recreation areas. For those inmates unable to meet the criteria for assignment to conservation camps, CCC's mission is to provide meaningful work, training and education programs.

Rehabilitation Programs

Due to budgetary constraints, CCC has lost numerous vocational programs once offered to inmates. These lost programs include air conditioning and refrigeration repair, auto body construction and painting, auto mechanics, dry cleaning, electronics, and janitorial services. CCC currently offers inmate Alcoholics and Narcotics Anonymous programs in both English and Spanish, literacy programming, Veterans in Prison, Alternatives to Violence Support and college learning programs. Volunteer programs currently offered within the prison include Conflict Resolution Options for Peace Program (CROPP) as well as Resources and Options for Parent Effectiveness (ROPE).

Budget and Staffing

CCC's fiscal year 2009-10 adjusted budget for institution and education operations was \$104 million, which excludes medical operations. The institution has 1,208 budgeted positions, 780 of which (65 percent) are custody positions. The table below compares CCC's budgeted versus filled positions as of December 31, 2009. Overall, the institution filled 89 percent of its total budgeted positions.

Table 1: Staffing Levels at California Correctional Center

Position	Filled Positions	Budgeted Positions	Percent Filled
Custody	697	780	89%
Education	34	39	87%
Medical	79	89	89%
Support	145	163	89%
Trades	113	122	93%
Management	13	15	87%
Total	1,081	1,208	89%

Source: California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, COMPSTAT ending December 31, 2009, California Correctional 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 by comparing it with the averages for General Population, level 2 and 3 institutions and all institutions statewide.¹ Additionally, we reviewed relevant reports prepared by the department or other external agencies. Finally, we visited the institution, interviewed various employees and representatives from the Men’s Advisory Council, and followed up on noteworthy concerns identified from the surveys, operational data, and reports.

To understand how the staff members and other stakeholders view the warden’s performance, we sent surveys to three distinct groups: department and CCC managers, CCC employees, and key stakeholders outside the department. For the employee survey, we randomly selected 252 institution employees and sent each a questionnaire requesting an anonymous response. The survey provides 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 analysis of the survey results, we asked respondents to broadly classify their job positions. From this information, survey respondents were grouped 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 responses to our questions as either positive or negative. For example, if the respondent ‘agreed’ or ‘strongly agreed’ with a question, we classified it as positive response, and if the respondent ‘disagreed’ or ‘strongly disagreed’ with a question, we classified it as a negative response.

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

¹CDCR - Division of Adult Institutions is comprised of five mission-based disciplines. CCC is included in General Population, level 2 and 3 institutions, along with Avenal State Prison, California Rehabilitation Center, Correctional Training Facility, Chukawala Valley State Prison, Folsom State Prison, Ironwood State Prison, Sierra Conservation Center and California State Prison, Solano.

While visiting CCC, we gained insight into the warden's work environment. We interviewed both targeted key employees and randomly-selected employees, using information gathered from our analysis of statistical information and employee surveys to identify potential issues for review. Our interviews involved employees in various operational areas throughout the prison, including:

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

We performed a site visit beginning April 26, 2010 and interviewed 47 individuals throughout the prison to describe and rate the warden's performance. These individuals included custody employees, executive management, education and health care professionals, as well as inmate representatives from the Men's Advisory Council.

Review Results

We found that most responding stakeholders, including CDCR management, and institutional managers, believe the warden is doing an outstanding job. In interviews, CCC employees rated the warden’s overall performance as “very good”; although just over half of the employees believe the warden is doing an outstanding job. The inmates from the Men’s Advisory Council whom we interviewed also believe he is doing a very good job. In the four categories of safety and security, inmate programming, business operations, and employee-management relations, most respondents provided positive answers.

Category 1: Safety and Security

The department’s primary mission is 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

Table 2: Safety and Security – Employee Survey Results

Responses	Positive	Negative
Custody	91%	9%
Health Care	96%	4%
Admin, Plant Operations, and Other	92%	8%
Weighted Average	92%	8%

Source: OIG survey of CCC employees. See Appendix for details.

custodial security and the safety of staff, inmates, and the public must take precedence over all other considerations in the operation of the department’s programs and activities. As shown in Table 2 above, 92 percent of the survey responses had positive opinions about the safety and security of the institution. Furthermore, we heard mostly favorable opinions from the employees we interviewed during our field visit.

After considering the interviews in conjunction with comments from the warden, the results from our employee survey, and departmental data on segregation housing and use-of-force incidents, we identified six areas worthy of further discussion: Contraband, Food Service Safety, Inmate Escapes, Use of Force, Administrative Segregation Unit, and Overall Safety and Security.

Contraband

According to the department’s Operations Manual, Article 20, Section 52051.4, contraband is any unauthorized property, materials, supplies, items, commodities, and substances received or obtained by inmate(s) from any source. The introduction of contraband, including cellular phones, into a prison environment is a continuous concern within all California prisons. During the 2009 calendar year, CCC discovered 113 cellular telephones within the prison and its 18 camp facilities. According to the prison’s Investigative Services Unit Sergeant, in the first half of 2010, CCC staff discovered 215 cellular telephones, nearly double last year’s total. This increase in cellular phone seizures is especially concerning within a camp environment due to the phones’ usefulness in planning and facilitating escapes. OIG inspectors discussed with CCC management an inmate escape that occurred in April 2010 at one of its 18 camps, Ishi Conservation Camp in Payne’s Creek, Tehama County. Management informed OIG that

the inmate appeared to have contacted his spouse via a contraband cell phone to arrange his pickup from outside the conservation camp. The CDCR Fugitive Apprehension Team captured the inmate at a Stockton home where he was found within two days of his escape.

The warden noted that the level of punishment for being caught with a cell phone was insufficient to act as a deterrent. According to the California Code of Regulations, Title 15, section 3323 (h), a cell phone discovery results in a division “F” offense which provides for loss of privileges for up to 30 days. CCC currently has inmates at their camps arrested by the local county sheriff for possession of a cell phone. The inmates are then transported back to CCC from the county jail to serve their 30 days loss of privileges.

Food Service Safety

A survey response from a culinary and food services employee stated that CCC staff hand out knives to inmates daily while food services employees are without a stab-resistant vest or radio. Also, an interviewed employee recalled a stabbing by an inmate at the CCC snack bar years ago due in part to access to an un-tethered knife. When our inspectors reviewed the working area within the main kitchen’s vegetable cutting area, they found large kitchen knives locked in a security container in accordance with Department Operations Manual section 52040.13.5. However, custody



Figure 2 - Photograph of un-tethered kitchen knives used by inmates at CCC.

staff mentioned that having the knives tethered to the work table during use by inmate workers would be preferable for staff and inmate safety. We learned that a work order had been submitted approximately two years ago for a stainless steel bar on which to anchor the tethered knives, but the work order was never processed. When our inspectors mentioned this to the warden, he had maintenance workers promptly install a metal bar in the cutting area so that knives are now safely tethered to a secure work station. This safety improvement benefits both inmates and correctional staff, and is an example of the wardens’ commitment to the safety and security of the institution.

Inmate Escapes

The California Correctional Center manages 18 conservation camps located throughout Northern 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. Conservation camps, often referred to as fire camps, are correctional institutions holding inmates in a dormitory setting without a secured fence or perimeter. Due to the lack of a secured setting, inmates can more easily attempt an escape from a conservation camp. According to our review of CCC's daily status reports, during the 2009 calendar year, six inmates escaped from fire camps managed by CCC staff and each was subsequently apprehended. However, in addition to the camp escapes, a sixty-six year old inmate escaped from CCC's Cascade Yard which houses level 1 and 2 inmates in October 2009 and was apprehended the day following his escape.

The escape prompted numerous security changes by the warden. To begin with, the warden implemented an "inside" then "out" process in which facilities staff installed razor wire (See Figure 3), and secured all areas in close proximity to inmate housing areas. Once the inside perimeter areas were secured, razor wire was installed on top of the exterior walls to further secure the prison. Members of the executive management team identified the incident as an opportunity to learn valuable lessons and as an example of how staff came together as a cohesive group to correct identified deficiencies.

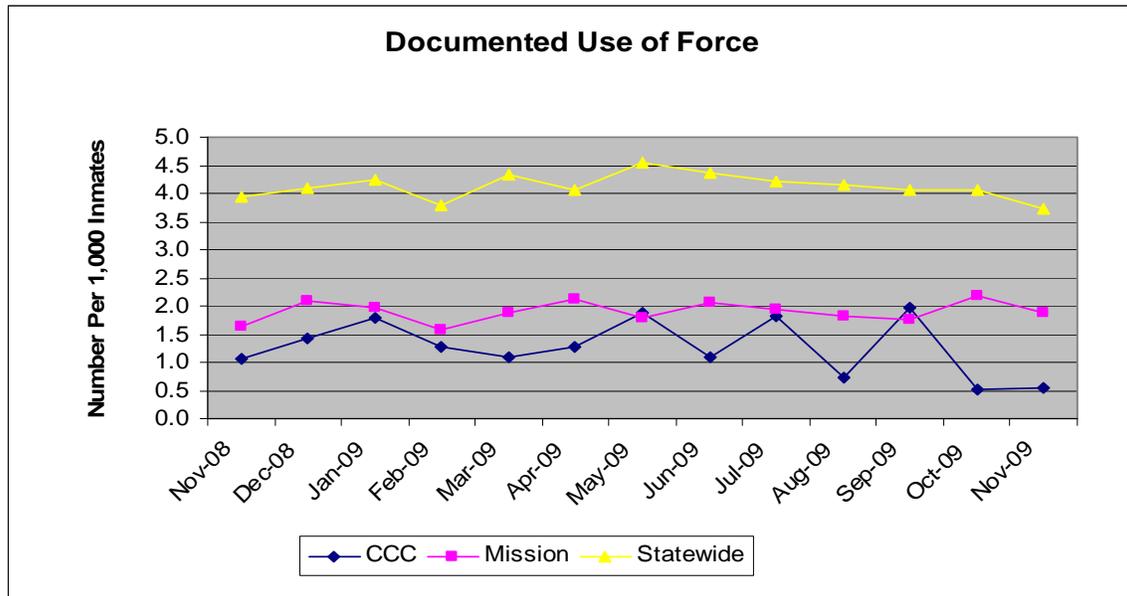


Figure 3 – Razor wire recently installed near Tower 4 after the inmate escape from Cascade Yard at CCC.

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 incarcerate inmates safely. To assess CCC's use of force (UOF), we reviewed the department's use of force data for the 13-month period from November 1, 2008 through November 30, 2009. As shown in Chart 1, documented uses of force were lower than both the statewide average and the average for General Population, levels 2 and 3 mission institutions for 11 of the 13 months in our review period. According to the UOF coordinator, the prison has been proactive in creating a culture at CCC to prevent the use of force by communicating with the inmates to ensure their needs are being met. The low level of use of force incidents may also be indicative of the lower custody level of inmates, as more than 60 percent of inmates housed at CCC and its 18 camps are Level I.

Chart 1:



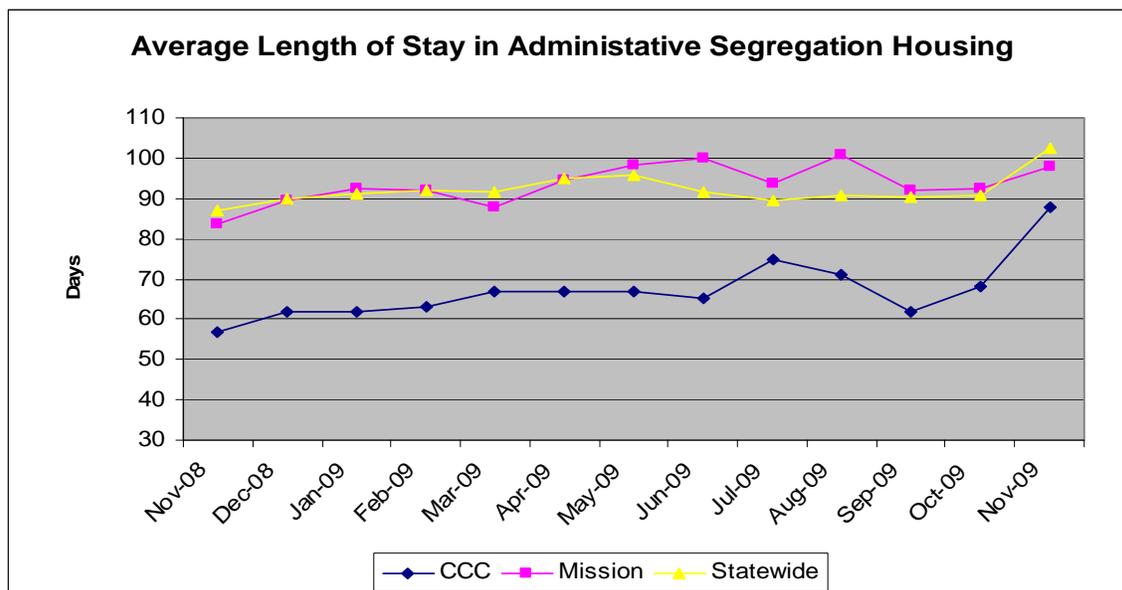
Source: California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, CompStat ending November 30, 2009, California Correctional Center. Unaudited data.

Administrative Segregation Unit

Inmates that are either disruptive to other inmates or victimized by other inmates are temporarily placed in segregated housing areas known as Administrative Segregation Units (ASU) until employees investigate the level of threat to the institution or inmate. ASU housing areas are more expensive to operate than general population housing units because they have increased security requirements. Effectively managing the time required by the institution to investigate the threat level can significantly reduce the average length of inmates' stay in, and proportionately, the cost of housing inmates in ASU. The average length of stay in ASU is thus both an indicator of how well an institution is managing its resources, and is protecting inmates' due process rights.

Our review of departmental data in Chart 2 reveals that the average ASU length of stay at CCC was lower than both the statewide average and the average for other General Population, levels 2 and 3 mission institutions for each of the 13 months in our review period. A Supervising Correctional Counselor in the prison's ASU indicated he feels three things have contributed to keeping the average length of stay low: 1) timely investigations for those inmates placed into ASU for investigation; 2) proactive approach by institutional records staff to get those inmates endorsed to other institutions promptly; and 3) keeping only those inmates in ASU that actually need to be segregated for safety and security purposes.

Chart 2:



Source: California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, CompStat ending November 30, 2009, California Correctional Center. Unaudited data.

Overall Safety and Security

Many employees we interviewed said they feel secure or had no significant issues with Warden Barnes' policies regarding safety and security. As previously mentioned, 92 percent of all survey responses were favorable concerning safety and security. The warden made several tangible improvements to improve security. For example, staff told us about the addition during Warden Barnes tenure of a secured manned gate through which all staff must pass to enter the prison. In addition to that gate, numerous prison staff commented that prison facilities staff installed a substantial amount of razor wire throughout the institution. Further, the institution's mission has a bearing on the level of security at CCC. According to several staff we interviewed, the prison has an inmate security level I and II focus with a primary mission of providing enough inmates to fill and support its 18 camps.

Category 2: Inmate Programming

Research shows that inmate programs can reduce the likelihood that offenders will commit new crimes and 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.² 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 provides inmates a more structured day and less idle time. 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 available inmate programming.

Table 3: Inmate Programming – Employee Survey Results

Responses	Positive	Negative
Custody	82%	18%
Health Care	83%	17%
Admin, Plant Operations, and Other	78%	22%
Weighted Average	81%	19%

Source: OIG survey of CCC employees. See Appendix for details.

Overall, as shown in Table 3 above, 81 percent of all responses were favorable regarding inmate programming. Analysis of information gathered from departmental statistics, employee survey results, and employee interviews reveals two areas for additional comment: Inmate Program Attendance and Deletion of Vocational Programming.

Inmate Program Attendance

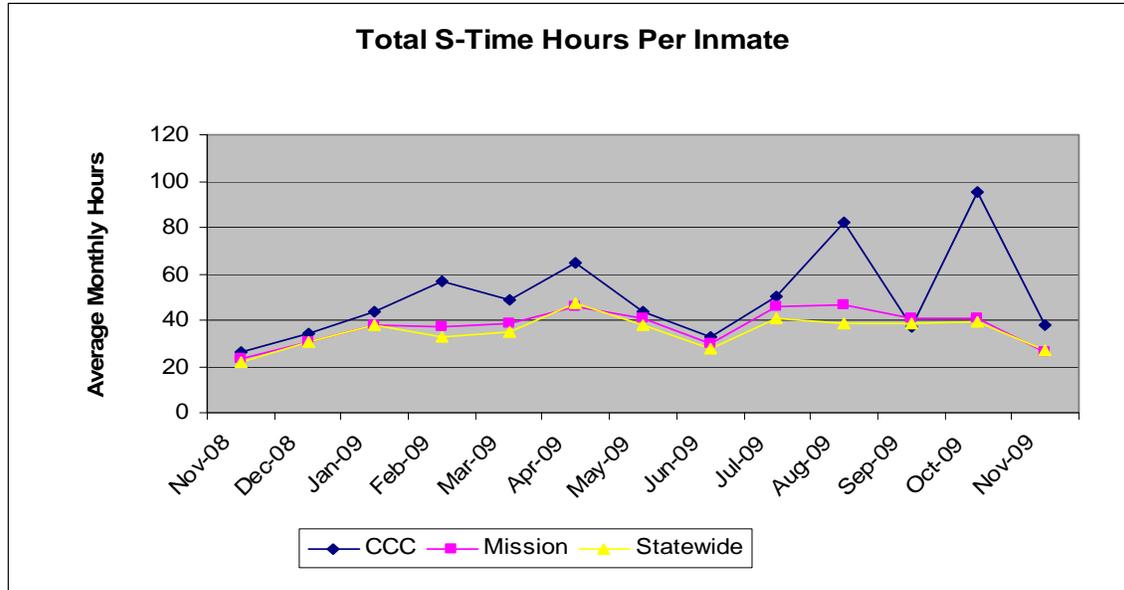
The department establishes the amount of time that assigned inmates must attend academic and vocational training classes each day. As a result, because administrators must track inmate class absences, each institution can be evaluated as to how effectively it complies with school-day attendance requirements.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

Our analysis of survey responses, interviews and departmental data summarized in Chart 3 found the average S-time at CCC is often higher than those within the General Population, levels 2 and 3 mission institutions, and also higher than statewide averages. According to an Associate Warden, the high amount of S-time in October 2009 was due to the lockdown of all units after the inmate escape from Cascade Yard. The warden cancelled educational classes pending the installation of additional razor wire around the perimeter of the facilities to prevent further escapes. According to the prison’s education principal, facility lockdowns were also the primary reasons for increased S time in February, March, April and August 2009. The Use of Force Coordinator confirmed these

² Washington State Institute for Public Policy, “Evidence-Based Adult Corrections Programs: What Works and What Does Not,” January 2006.

lockdowns and stated that the lockdowns were due to an attempted murder (between inmates), inmate riot, and threats to staff.

Chart 3:



Source: California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, COMPSTAT ending November 30, 2009, California Correctional Center. Unaudited data.

Deletion of Vocational Programming

Overall, the interview responses we received regarding inmate programming were generally favorable. One area of concern raised by a few employees from our surveys was the reduction of available programming for inmates. Due to budgetary constraints CCC has lost a substantial number of vocational programs once offered to inmates. Some of these lost programs include air conditioning and refrigeration repair, auto body, auto mechanics, dry cleaning, electronics and janitorial services. The programming area identified by various staff members as valuable to inmates and the state, is firefighting training. CCC staff cited Warden Barnes as being instrumental in keeping the camp program operating sufficiently even though it’s becoming more difficult to obtain low level security (e.g., camp eligible) inmates.

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

Responses	Positive	Negative
Custody	79%	21%
Health Care	84%	16%
Admin, Plant Operations, and Other	71%	29%
Weighted Average	77%	23%

Source: *OIG survey of CCC employees. See Appendix for details.*

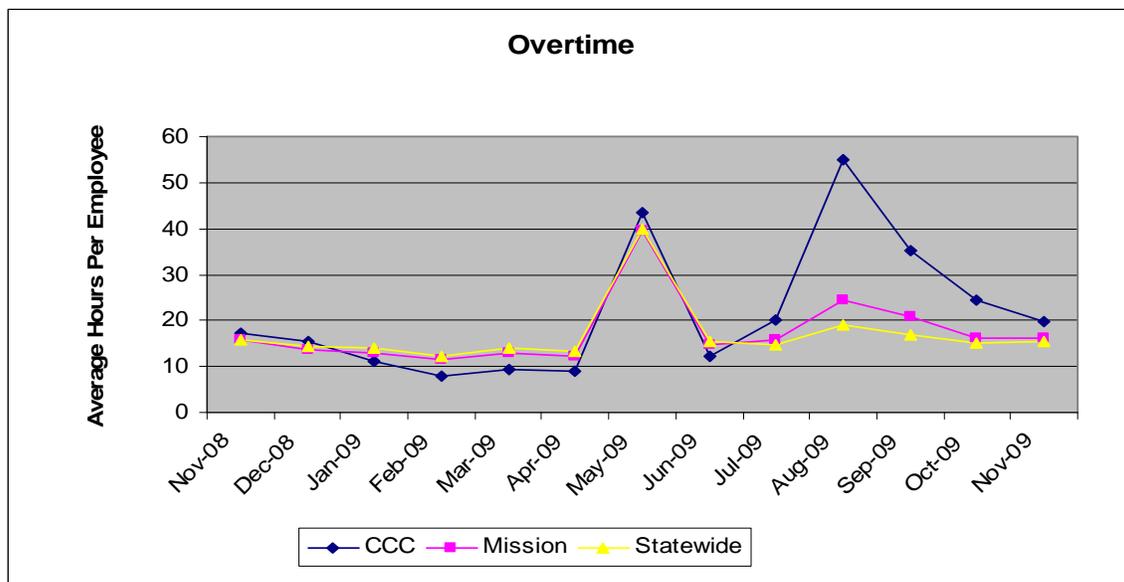
Table 4 shows that on average 77 percent of the prison’s employees had positive responses about the institution’s business operations. Analyzing the information gathered from departmental data, employee survey responses, and employee interviews uncovered four areas we discussed with the warden and other management team members: Overtime Usage, Budget and Staffing, and Plant Operations and Maintenance.

Overtime Usage

Control of overtime is one indicator of a warden’s ability to manage an institution’s operations because it requires that good budgeting, planning, and personnel administration practices are in place. To assess CCC’s overtime usage, we compared its overtime statistics to both the statewide average for all prisons, as well as the average for the other prisons within the General Population, levels 2 and 3 mission. The overtime hours, summarized in Chart 4, include correctional staff assigned to fire camps. During fire season, personnel use considerable overtime hours as inmates work on the fire lines. The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) reimburses the Department of Corrections for overtime costs thus incurred. As Chart 4 shows, the heaviest use of staff overtime coincides with the fire season, which peaked in August 2009. Excluding fire season, CCC’s overtime usage is consistent with both the statewide and mission averages.

One CDCR program was recently initiated to help reduce overtime and create a salary savings – the 3 percent reduction plan. The warden mentioned that salary savings have been created due to CDCR's redirection plan, in which three percent of its custody employees are moved from their regular “non-critical” assignments to fill in behind positions that would normally be filled through overtime.

Chart 4:



Source: California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, COMPSTAT ending November 30, 2009, California Correctional Center. Unaudited data.

Budget and Staffing

During surveys and interviews, some CCC employees were concerned about the impacts of the state budget crisis and employee furloughs but understood they were largely outside of the wardens' control. Some staff members were concerned that the substantial number of retirements, coupled with the slowdown in staff hiring will lead to a severe shortage of correctional officers at the prison. Some staff also expressed concern about mandatory holdovers at the prison, causing potential safety problems due to long work hours.

Warden Barnes noted a large number of staff have retired in the past 12 to 18 months. The warden stated he has recruited retired annuitants to get experienced employees back into state service. Management staff also acknowledged the wardens' focus on obtaining cadets through the Basic Correctional Officer Academy. Additionally, the warden has approved dual appointments (e.g. lieutenant working as a sergeant, sergeant working as a correctional officer) to lessen the impact of shortages amongst custody staff.

Plant Operations and Maintenance

Sixty-nine percent of employees responding to our survey favorably assessed plant operations and its ability to address facility repairs and operational needs of staff. Our inspectors received primarily positive responses regarding the quality of plant operations staff, but we were told that few applications are received for vacancies in trades such as plumbing and carpentry. According to the In-Service Training Lieutenant, plant operations recently installed a modular building for the In-Service Training Unit and our inspectors received several positive comments about the facility. OIG investigators did not note any areas of disrepair while inspecting Cascade, Sierra and Lassen yards and the facilities were clean and well-kept. In summary, plant operations and maintenance appears to be performing well despite difficult budgetary constraints.

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.”³ 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 departmental headquarters, as well as the surrounding community.

Table 5: Employee-Management Relations – Employee Survey Results

Responses	Positive	Negative
Custody	85%	15%
Health Care	93%	7%
Admin, Plant Operations, and Other	92%	8%
Weighted Average	88%	12%

Source: OIG survey of CCC employees. See Appendix for details.

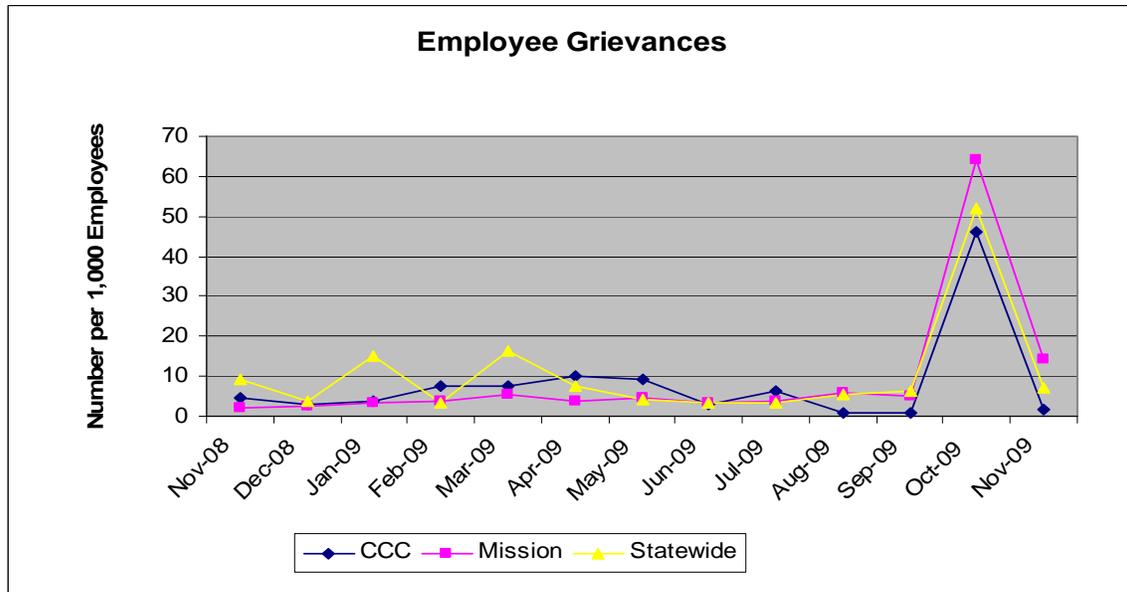
³ *Correctional Leadership Competencies for the 21st Century*, U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Corrections (December 2006).

As shown in Table 5 above, 88 percent of the responses by prison employees were positive 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. Analysis of employees’ responses to our surveys, interviews with the warden’s management team and other employees, and statistics on employee grievances identified four topics for further consideration: Employee Grievances, Personnel Office, Improvements in Staff Morale and Communication, and Survey and Interview Comments.

Employee Grievances

All employees have the right to express their grievances through established departmental procedures. The employee grievance process is one way employees have to file complaints against the employee investigation and discipline process. The grievance process can also be used to file complaints regarding general workplace conditions. When we reviewed the grievance statistics summarized in Chart 5, we noticed that grievance levels from November 1, 2008 to November 30, 2009 were either at or below those of statewide and General Population, levels 2 and 3 mission institutions. According to the prison’s Employee Relations Officer, the high number of grievances filed in October 2009 were due to the state’s elimination of the Columbus Day holiday.

Chart 5:



Source: California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, COMPSTAT ending November 30, 2009, California Correctional Center. Unaudited data.

Personnel Office

We spoke to the warden about one significant employee-management relationship issue that several custody and management staff raised during both our surveys and interviews – the institution’s personnel office. The survey and interview responses mentioned difficulties with the personnel office about a perceived staffing shortage and complained of slow response times or errors on inquiries regarding issues with pay, timekeeping, and benefits. During our interviews, we asked employees about the biggest problem that the warden has not yet addressed, and many responded that it was personnel-related items. Several employees claimed they or their family members have been negatively impacted by errors which, in their opinions, were caused directly by the personnel office. The type of issues discussed included problems with:

- Pay matters such as salary calculations, merit salary adjustments, overtime payments, and child support deductions.
- Timekeeping matters, including timely receipt of leave balances, and employee attendance records.
- Benefits such as dental plan eligibility.
- Emergency notifications and concealed-weapon permits for retired correctional officers.

Also, during our site visit, a few custody staff expressed frustration about having to complete and sign employee attendance records dating back to 2008. When we asked the personnel manager about this, she explained that an operational peer review conducted by the department’s Office of Audits and Compliance found that 32 percent of custody staff did not submit their required attendance record in May 2009. According to OAC if a custody employee fails to provide attendance records, the personnel department may establish an accounts receivable against the employee per Section 15.12 of the memorandum of understanding with the employee’s bargaining unit. OAC stated within other peer reviews that this condition could result in the loss of state funds, financial hardship, unauthorized use of time, difficulty detecting errors, and additional workload for personnel staff due to increased workloads.

We found that the warden was well aware of problems within the personnel department. The warden acknowledged concerns by staff regarding salary calculations when employees did not receive the maximum pay grade when they received a promotion. The warden stated that State Personnel Board rules often prevented a salary increase to the maximum pay range and personnel was correct in their calculations. During our interviews, we heard that in the past two years there have been three separate Associate Wardens over Business Services, which is responsible for Personnel. Also, the Personnel Manager noted that currently eight personnel employees have fewer than three years of work experience each. This turnover may have been a factor contributing to employee concerns. During OIG’s exit interview with the warden, he stated that he had very few formal grievances filed against personnel and feels that they have made great strides.

Improvements in Staff Morale and Communication

Warden Barnes received an overall positive rating of 93 percent from the total employee responses. When we spoke with employees and asked them what the warden's biggest accomplishment was, many cited the overall improvement in staff morale and communication. Employees attributed the warden's positive effect on staff morale to his character, strong leadership abilities, and management style. Various employees stated the warden is very visible and frequently walks the prison grounds communicating with staff. Several employees said that the warden has a true open door policy and is accessible and approachable by everyone. A couple of employees commented that they were willing to work above and beyond their duties as Warden Ron Barnes has brought improved staff unity.

Staff members said the following about the warden: “staff are more forthcoming and willing to be team players”; “[he is] more accessible to rank and file staff, when we all lost our 15% salary [he] reduced the prices in the snack bar”; and “the warden has unified staff, people want to work for him, [they are] willing to work above and beyond”. Other employees recognized the warden for his ability to improve training facilities with a new IST building (see Figure 4). CCC management stated the prison received several donated hallways from a trailer that were refurbished by CCC plant operations staff to construct a modular building. The IST Lieutenant stated the IST building became operational in October 2009. Additionally, when we interviewed representatives from the inmate men's advisory committee (MAC) they responded that the operations of the prison are better since the warden was appointed. One of the MAC representatives was involved as a facilitator in the Career Responsible Opportunity Program (CROP) and the inmate believed he was learning skills that would help him after his release.



Figure 4 – Modular building for CCC's In-service Training (IST).

When we separately surveyed the warden's management team about the warden's communication skills, they responded very favorably. As shown in Table 6, the management team rated Warden Barnes overall performance as outstanding in all management categories. The results of this survey are consistent with the comments we received from employees during our site visit. For example, managers indicated that the warden keeps them updated and informed both on institutional and departmental issues. Positive comments included: the warden “supports all staff, custody or non-custody [in] the same [manner]”; “possesses those rare qualities that make him an excellent administrator and person - outstanding in all areas”; and “his morals, integrity, and ethics

are respected and admired by all who work under his direction, this is reflected by the moral and efficient manner in which CCC operates during these hard fiscal times.” Additionally, custody staff mentioned an improved working relationship between the California Correctional Peace Officer’s Association and management due to Warden Barnes’ communication efforts.

Survey and Interview Comments

We surveyed 15 department officials and CCC managers, asking them to evaluate the warden on six management skills and qualities and to rate his skills as either unacceptable, improvement needed, satisfactory, very good, or outstanding. As shown in Chart 6, survey responses indicated that Warden Barnes is performing at an outstanding level in all management categories. The results of this survey are consistent with most of the comments we received from employees during our site visit.

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

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

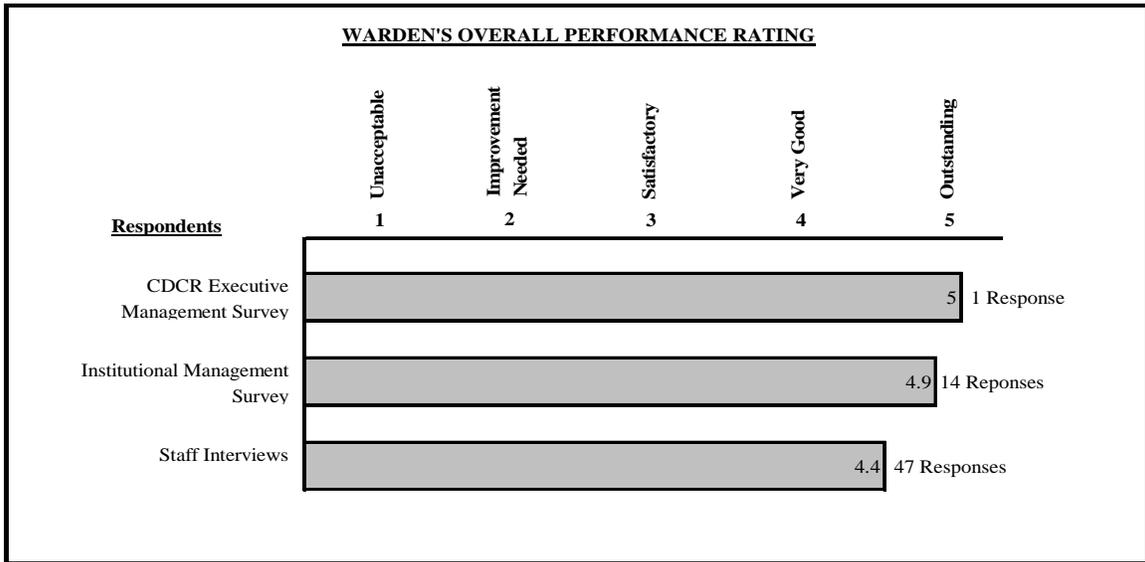
Source: OIG survey of CDCR and CCC management.

Overall Summary

The employee survey asked respondents to rate the warden’s overall performance on a range from “outstanding” to “unacceptable.” Of the employees that responded, 93 percent rated the warden either “very good” or “outstanding.” The remaining 7 percent rated the warden as either “improvement needed” or “unacceptable.”

In addition to our review of the four key areas identified previously (Safety and Security, Inmate Programming, Business Operations, and Employee-Management Relations), our assessment of the warden’s performance also included an overall performance rating. We based the rating on survey responses from department officials, CCC managers, and from interviews we conducted with CCC employees during our site visit. As shown in Chart 6 below, those individuals rated Warden Barnes’s overall performance between “outstanding” and “very good.”

Chart 6:



Source: CDCR and CCC management survey results and CCC employee interviews.

The one person from the department’s executive management team that responded to our inquiries regarding the warden’s performance indicated that the warden is doing an outstanding job. In addition, almost all of the 14 persons responding to our institutional management survey gave the warden a rating of outstanding. Finally, of the 47 interviews we conducted with both CCC management and non-managerial employees, the average response rating for the warden was “very good.”

In conclusion, according to the institution’s employees and CDCR management, Warden Barnes is doing a very good job at managing the prison’s operations. More importantly, 93 percent of employees who responded and 89 percent of employees we interviewed rated the warden’s overall performance either “outstanding” or “very good.” One area where improvement could be made is in the area of Employee-Management Relations,

specifically the Personnel Office. Based on staff members' concerns raised during the survey and interview process it appears that problems currently still exist. The warden should continue to monitor performance of the Personnel Office and consider providing further training to existing staff. Additionally, future stability in staffing and in leadership positions over Personnel should improve management's ability to build relations with staff and provide consistent policy direction over personnel-related items.

Appendix

Employee Survey Results

To prepare for the site visit of CCC, we randomly selected 252 of the institution's employees and sent them a survey. The survey provides 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 twenty one employees responded to our survey, a 48 percent response rate. To simplify the analysis of the survey results, we grouped survey respondents by category and identified response trends. We did not, however, ask for employees' names, wanting their responses to be anonymous.

Specifically, we grouped 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 questions as either positive or negative. For example, if the respondent 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' with the question, we classified the response as positive. If the respondent 'disagreed' or 'strongly disagreed' with the question, we classified the response as negative. Passive responses, such as employees responding that they were 'neutral,' or responses such as 'unknown' were not included in our survey results.

Results are reported in the table on the following page.

Appendix: Compilation of Institutional Employee Survey Responses - California Correctional Center (CCC)

Operational Area/Question	Respondents' Employment Category						Total Responses			
	Custody		Health Care		Other					
	Pos	Neg	Pos	Neg	Pos	Neg	Pos	(%)	Neg	(%)
<u>Safety and Security</u>										
1. The institution is meeting its safety and security mission.	55	5	17	0	36	2	108	94%	7	6%
2. Employees effectively respond to emergencies.	61	1	17	0	37	0	115	99%	1	1%
3. You are issued or have access to all safety equipment you need.	61	1	17	0	36	1	114	98%	2	2%
4. You receive all required safety training.	59	3	17	0	38	0	114	97%	3	3%
5. The CDC-115 inmate disciplinary process modifies inmate misbehavior.	44	16	12	4	18	12	74	70%	32	30%
6. The CDC-602 inmate appeal process provides inmates an effective method for airing their grievances.	56	5	17	0	32	3	105	93%	8	7%
7. Safety and Security has improved since the warden's appointment.	40	8	12	0	24	2	76	88%	10	12%
Totals	376	39	109	4	221	20	706		63	
<i>Percent of Respondents by Category</i>	<i>91%</i>	<i>9%</i>	<i>96%</i>	<i>4%</i>	<i>92%</i>	<i>8%</i>	<i>92%</i>		<i>8%</i>	
<u>Inmate Programming</u>										
8. The institution is meeting its inmate programming mission.	53	4	12	1	21	4	86	91%	9	9%
9. The inmate assignment process places the right inmate into the right rehabilitative program.	42	8	7	3	15	9	64	76%	20	24%
10. Inmate programming is adequate for the number of inmates at the institution who would benefit from the education or work experience.	39	13	8	2	15	5	62	76%	20	24%
11. Inmate programming has improved since the warden's appointment.	29	10	7	1	13	0	49	82%	11	18%
Totals	163	35	34	7	64	18	261		60	
<i>Percent of Respondents by Category</i>	<i>82%</i>	<i>18%</i>	<i>83%</i>	<i>17%</i>	<i>78%</i>	<i>22%</i>	<i>81%</i>		<i>19%</i>	
<u>Business Operations</u>										
12. Plant operations employees are able to meet maintenance and repair needs in your assigned area.	43	15	13	4	23	17	79	69%	36	31%
13. Your assigned area has enough employees to get all of the required work done.	48	14	14	3	31	10	93	78%	27	23%
14. Your work area operates without waste of resources.	50	10	14	2	29	12	93	79%	24	21%
15. Business operations have improved since the warden's appointment.	38	9	10	1	22	3	70	84%	13	16%
Totals	179	48	51	10	105	42	335		100	
<i>Percent of Respondents by Category</i>	<i>79%</i>	<i>21%</i>	<i>84%</i>	<i>16%</i>	<i>71%</i>	<i>29%</i>	<i>77%</i>		<i>23%</i>	
<u>Employee-Management Relations</u>										
16. The warden is knowledgeable about the day to day operations in your work area.	51	7	12	1	29	4	92	88%	12	12%
17. The warden welcomes feedback, including criticism from employees.	48	5	13	0	34	0	95	95%	5	5%
18. The warden does not abuse his or her power or authority.	55	4	13	0	31	0	99	96%	4	4%
19. The warden works effectively with the local bargaining unit representatives.	43	4	10	1	16	1	69	92%	6	8%
20. The warden is ethical, professional, and motivated.	54	4	15	0	36	0	105	96%	4	4%
21. The warden is in control of the institution.	54	6	15	0	38	2	107	93%	8	7%
22. The management team keeps employees informed about relevant issues.	48	13	14	1	33	4	95	84%	18	16%
23. The employee investigation/disciplinary process is fair, effective, and timely.	37	15	8	1	21	6	66	75%	22	25%
24. The employee grievance process is responsive to employee complaints, is fair in its application, and does not result in retaliation.	36	15	9	4	25	4	70	75%	23	25%
25. Employee-management relations have improved since the warden's appointment.	41	11	12	1	22	3	75	83%	15	17%
Totals	467	84	121	9	285	24	873		117	
<i>Percent of Respondents by Category</i>	<i>85%</i>	<i>15%</i>	<i>93%</i>	<i>7%</i>	<i>92%</i>	<i>8%</i>	<i>88%</i>		<i>12%</i>	
<u>Overall Warden Rating</u>										
26. Considering all institutional challenges, how would you rate the warden's performance?	49	7	15	0	35	1	99	93%	8	7%
<i>Percent of Respondents by Category</i>	<i>88%</i>	<i>12%</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>0%</i>	<i>97%</i>	<i>3%</i>	<i>93%</i>		<i>7%</i>	

Source: OIG, institutional employee survey results for CCC.

California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation's Response

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

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



September 13, 2010

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 *California Correctional Center (CCC) Warden Ron Barnes, One-Year Audit*, and agree with your assessment that Warden Barnes does an outstanding job. Warden Barnes actively deals with overtime issues, has recruited retired annuitants to bring experienced employees back into State service, and has lessened the impact of shortages among custody staff by approving dual appointments to reduce the need for overtime. These cost saving actions are significant in this critical budget atmosphere. Additionally, Warden Barnes' strong leadership, open communication, and accessibility to all staff is appreciated by all.

We would like to thank the OIG for this report. If you should have any questions or concerns, please call my office at (916) 323-6001.

Sincerely,



SCOTT KERNAN
Undersecretary, Operations

cc: Ron Barnes