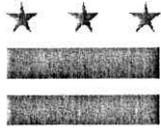


# Appendix 11

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
Department of Human Services  
Youth Services Administration



Marceline D. Alexander  
Interim Administrator

February 13, 2004

Mr. Austin A. Anderson  
Interim Inspector General  
Office of the Inspector General  
717 14<sup>th</sup> Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20005

RE: *Management Alert Report 03-I-009 (Deficiencies in Unit 6 at Oak Hill Youth Center)*

Dear Mr. Anderson:

This correspondence is transmitted to you in response to Management Alert Report 03-I-009 dated January 7, 2004, in which the Office of the Inspector General (“OIG”) makes seven sets of observations and ten recommendations to the Youth Services Administration (“YSA”) in connection with deficiencies identified by your inspection teams at the Oak Hill Youth Center (“OHYC”) in Unit 6 (Spruce Cottage).

In response to your specific recommendations, please be advised as follows:

1. *Ensure that each Youth Correction[al] Officer on duty in Unit 6 has a functional two-way radio for the duration of his or her shift.*

In the response to Management Alert Report 03-I-008, the Director of the Department of Human Services, Yvonne D. Gilchrist, advised OIG of certain new procedures to address communication equipment deficiencies at OHYC. YSA has issued four additional two-way radios to the Unit Supervisor in Unit 6. In the event additional radios are necessary, instructions have been given to the Officer of Day to ensure that any staff member who needs access to a two-way radio receives this equipment immediately.

2. *Ensure that a working telephone is installed in the YCO security office.*

Please see the response above to recommendation 1. In addition, please be advised that the telephone that was broken during your team’s visit has been repaired and is operational.

3. *Ensure that all YCOs on duty have a set of keys to all locks on the unit in order to promptly unlock doors in the event of a fire or medical emergency.*

YSA provided a response to an identical recommendation contained in Management Alert Report 03-I-010. YSA has advised OIG that, in order to provide additional security measures that will allow faster evacuation of the housing units, including Unit 6, YSA will install a lock box in the security office, and the unit manager, supervisory correctional officer and the officer of the day will have access in the event of a fire or other emergency.

4. *Explore the feasibility of a central locking and unlocking system for all doors in the residential areas so there can be quick egress in the event of a fire or other emergency.*

YSA provided a response to a virtually identical recommendation contained in Management Alert Report 03-I-010. OHYC is a facility that is in need of many capital improvements. We have and continue to investigate the feasibility of installing electronic door releases; however, due to the physical layout of OHYC, this plan has never been feasible. In order to provide additional security measures that will allow faster evacuation of the housing units, YSA will install a lock box in the security office, and the unit manager, supervisory youth correctional officer and the officer of the day will have access to the lock box in the event that an emergency occurs.

5. *Ensure that an emergency buzzer, direct phone line, or other notification device is connected between Unit 6 and the OHYC security control center to provide an alternative means of immediate communication in the event of an emergency.*

See responses to recommendations 1 and 2 above.

6. *Ensure that all electronic security monitoring equipment is repaired or replaced.*

YSA has repaired the electronic security monitoring system in Unit 6.

7. *Ensure that YCOs keep the metal detector activated at all times, that batteries are installed in the hand scanner, and that the scanner is used in accordance with procedures.*

The metal detector and hand wand equipment at Unit 6 have been replaced. The equipment is operational and the staff has been instructed to have this security equipment operational at all times.

8. *Ensure the installation of adequate lighting for the exterior building perimeter.*

YSA is aware of the need to upgrade the facility's exterior lighting, and arrangements are being made to upgrade the electrical power so that institutional lighting can be enhanced for Unit 6.

9. *Ensure that sufficient air conditioning and heating is provided in the YCO security office.*

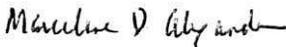
The heating and air conditioning ("HVAC") systems at Unit 6 are operational. However, due to the age of the HVAC system, there are no individual thermostats in the units that allow staff to regulate the temperatures in each unit. YSA currently is investigating ways in which we can provide facility enhancements that will address this situation.

10. *Ensure that YCOs are issued properly sized and seasonal uniforms.*

YSA provides all YCOs with agency-ordered uniforms. However, the uniforms that were purchased in the past were in large sizes. This problem is being corrected and the procurement staff has been instructed to purchase additional uniforms in the appropriate sizes. Once these uniforms are delivered, YCOs will be issued appropriate uniforms.

Should you have any questions regarding these responses, please contact Clydie A. Smith, Correctional Program Officer, Youth Services Administration, at (240) 456-5005.

Sincerely,

  
Marceline D. Alexander  
Interim Administrator

MDA/cas

cc: Robert C. Bobb, City Administrator  
Lori E. Parker, Acting Deputy Mayor for Children, Youth, Families and Elders  
Yvonne D. Gilchrist, DHS Director  
Vanessa Chappell-Lee, DHS Deputy Director  
Mark D. Back, YSA Interim Special Counsel  
Councilmember Kathleen Patterson, Chairperson, Committee on the Judiciary