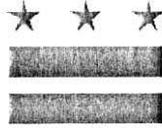


Appendix 13

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 14th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20005

RE: *Management Alert Report 03-I-010 (Fire Safety Problems)*

Dear Mr. Anderson:

This correspondence is transmitted to you in response to Management Alert Report 03-I-010 dated December 31, 2003, in which the Office of the Inspector General ("OIG") makes three sets of observations and eight recommendations to the Youth Services Administration ("YSA") in connection with fire safety deficiencies identified by your inspection teams at the Oak Hill Youth Center ("OHYC").

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

1. *Ensure that all employees have access to fire extinguishers at all times.*

YSA follows American Correctional Association ("ACA") standards pertaining to ensuring the safety and well being of its residents and staff at OHYC. To that end, all fire extinguishers are concealed in locked wall areas on each unit. The unit manager and supervisory youth correctional officer on each unit have keys to open the locked wall boxes. In order to provide additional safety measures to each housing unit, YSA will install a lock box in each of the security office's to ensure that the keys are available on the unit should a fire emergency occur.

2. *Ensure that the fire extinguishers in the gymnasium are removed from the closet and re-installed on the wall mounts.*

Please see the response above to recommendation 1. YSA cannot permit fire extinguishers to be readily available where residents can reach them as they pose a security breach and can be used as weapons.

3. *Ensure that all deficiencies cited by FEMS Fire Prevention Bureau are abated immediately.*

Your letter notes that YSA abated 68 of 88 deficiencies identified by the D.C. Fire and Emergency Medical Services Departments ("FEMS") in its fire safety inspection report dated October 8, 2003. FEMS issued the attached misdated reinspection report from December 2003 that itemizes eight unabated deficiencies from the original list. Until last week, four of these items (*i.e.* the fire-rated separation and the door hardware listed in items 4-7) remained unabated. However, the door hardware has been installed and the installation of the fire-rated separation for laundry in the sprinkler room was completed last week with the exception of the door itself which should be completed by February 19, 2004.

4. *Ensure that emergency evacuation plans are posted publicly in all key areas of OHYC.*

YSA will post emergency evacuation plans in every location within the classrooms, vocational buildings, housing units, gymnasium and Administration buildings.

5. *Ensure that fire drills are conducted and documented quarterly as required.*

YSA conducts fire drills in all of the housing units; however, effective immediately, YSA will conduct fire drills in all of the housing units on a quarterly basis and during all three shifts. This procedure will be documented in the weekly fire inspection reports.

6. *Hire a trained Health and Safety Officer or provide adequate training to the designated OHYC employee who conducts monthly fire safety inspections.*

YSA is in the process of recruiting to fill the position of Health and Safety Officer.

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

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.

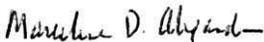
Mr. Austin A. Anderson
Interim Inspector General
February 13, 2004
Page 3

8. *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.*

See response to recommendation 7 above.

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

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
FIRE AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20001



October 20, 2003

John Manuel
Deputy Administrator
Oakhill Youth Detention Center
8300 Riverton Ct.
Laurel, Maryland
20724

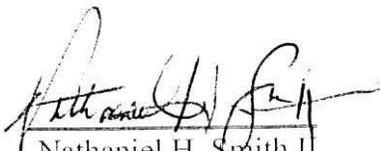
Dear Administrator

On December 18 and 19, 2003 a fire safety re-inspection was conducted at your facility for the Oakhill Youth Detention Center. The inspection was conducted to determine your facility's compliance with the 1996 Fire Prevention Code and the 1999 DC Construction Codes Supplement. The vast majority of violations were abated except for the following items:

- 1) blocked exit in the woodshop f605.1
- 2) 911 placard in modular 2 f322.3
- 3) missing sprinkler wrench in mod 2 F501.1
- 4) no fire rated separation for Laundry in sprinkler room bc711.2
- 5) no door hardware at Cottage 9 F303.4
- 6) no door hardware at Culinary F303.4
- 7) no door hardware at main entrance to Hall A f303.4
- 8) provide written copies of fire evacuation plans for your facility f705.1

Your compliance time is extended until after the 1st of the year, after which time myself and Inspector Farrior will re-inspect. If there are further questions, please call at your convenience.

DWAYNE FARRIOR
Dwayne Farrior
Fire Inspector


Nathaniel H. Smith II
Fire Investigator
Fire Prevention Bureau
(202) 727- 1874

cc: Nathaniel Williams