

Appendix 5

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

Youth Services Administration



November 26, 2003

Mr. Charles C. Maddox
Inspector General
717 14th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20005

Dear Mr. Maddox:

I am in receipt of your Management Alert Report (MAR 03-1-007) dated October 9, 2003, in which you delineated some of the security breaches that your investigators observed during their investigation of the Youth Services Administration.

Since the issuance of this Management Alert Report, many security changes and enhancements have been made at the Oak Hill Youth Center. First of all, I am pleased to inform you that YSA has cancelled the security contract with the Office of Property Management's Protective Services Division effective November 15, 2003. In lieu of this contract, YSA has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the District of Columbia Department of Corrections.

The MOU with the Department of Corrections states that DOC will:

- Provide security at the Oak Hill Youth Center;
- Provide DOC Employees to man all security posts inside and outside of the facility;
- Institute security measures that prevent the introduction of contraband into the facility by searching bags, packages, containers and other personal items of employees and visitors entering the security detention facility;
- Ensure that all electronic equipment is being utilized in conjunction with ACA Standards at Juvenile Correction Facility, (metal detectors);
- Thoroughly frisk, pat search, and require all staff, and visitors entering the facility to empty their pockets when entering the facility;
- Provide at a minimum two correctional officers at the security check point at the Oak Hill Facility to ensure that appropriate security coverage is present at the check point and sally-port;
- Provide the appropriate number of security staff on each shift in order to provide relief for any security officer who might need to leave his/her post;

As it pertains to your concerns regarding the lack of criminal background checks, YSA does forward to the Metropolitan Police Department the names of newly hired individuals so that a security report can be run. The Youth Services Administration has requested on several occasions that we be granted access to the National Crime Information Center/Wales System (NCIC), in order to perform background checks on all of our employees. However, due to our status as a Human Services Department, we have not been given permission to obtain the equipment and/or access to NCIC processing. In order to ensure that we are cognizant of information about prospective employees, I have requested that funding be placed in the FY 2005 Budget so that we can contract with the Metropolitan Police Department to perform NCIC background checks on all YSA employees.

As you are aware, the Youth Services Administration is experiencing a restructuring and reorganization internally and externally; to that end, enhancements are being made consistent with ACA Standards and industry best practices. We are in the process of taking back all control regarding this agency and ensuring that our youth are provided with the appropriate level of services as well as ensuring that all matters associated with our youth meet industry standards.

Should you have any questions regarding these changes, I am available to discuss them with you.

Sincerely,



John Manuel
Deputy Administrator for Secure Programs (Acting)

cc: Carolyn Graham, Deputy Mayor, Children, Youth Families and Elders
Robert Bobb, City Administrator
Yvonne Gilchrist, Acting Director, DHS
Vanessa Chappell-Lee, Deputy Director, DHS
Rick Love, Corporation Counsel
Martha Mullens, Corporation Counsel
Peggy Massey, Chief of Staff, DHS