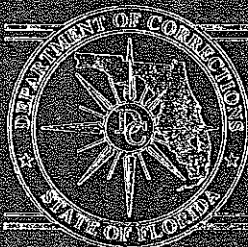


Office of the Inspector General  
Bureau of Internal Audit

**Follow-up of OPPAGA Report #09-44  
Department of Corrections Should Maximize  
Use of Best Practices in Inmate Rehabilitation  
Efforts**

**Report #A10031F**

**June 22, 2010**



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State of Florida  
Department of Corrections

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**STATE OF FLORIDA  
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS  
OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL**

**TO:** Walter A. McNeil  
Secretary

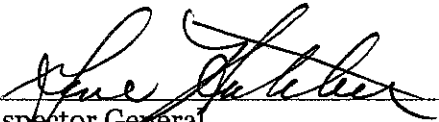
**FROM:** Gene Hatcher  
Inspector General

**DATE:** June 22, 2010

**SUBJECT:** FOLLOW-UP AUDIT REPORT # A10031F – OFFICE OF PROGRAM POLICY ANALYSIS & GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY (OPPAGA) DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS SHOULD MAXIMIZE USE OF BEST PRACTICES IN INMATE REHABILITATION EFFORTS, REPORT NUMBER 09-44

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The Bureau of Internal Audit performed a follow-up audit to OPPAGA's Department of Corrections Should Maximize Use of Best Practices in Inmates Rehabilitative Efforts, Report # 09-44, issued in December 2009. The objective of this follow-up was to determine the corrective actions taken on reported audit findings and whether actions taken achieved the desired results as intended by management. The scope of our follow-up consisted of obtaining from the Office of Re-Entry a written response of actions taken to correct reported findings. The follow-up response was then evaluated to determine if management's actions were adequate and timely. We have evaluated the response to each finding and have assessed that appropriate action has been taken or is being taken to address the issues identified in the report. No further follow-up is necessary for this audit.

  
Inspector General

GH/PS/jc  
Attachment

Richard D. Davison, Deputy Secretary  
Bonnie Rogers, Chief of Staff  
George Sapp, Deputy Secretary of Institutions & Re-Entry  
Franchatta Barber, Assistant Secretary of Re-Entry  
Kathy DuBose, Director of Joint Legislative Auditing Committee

## FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

**Follow-up of OPPAGA Report #09-44**  
**Department of Corrections Should Maximize**  
**Use of Best Practices in Inmate Rehabilitation Efforts**

*Gene Hatcher, Inspector General*

*Report #A10031F*

*Paul R. Strickland, Chief Internal Auditor*

*June 22, 2010*

## BACKGROUND

The mission of the Department of Corrections is to protect the public and department personnel, provide proper care and supervision of inmates, and assist inmate re-entry into society. Most inmates who enter Florida's correctional system lack basic educational and employment skills and many have substance abuse and mental health problems. National studies have shown that rehabilitative programs that address these problems can help prepare inmates for a successful return to society and reduce the likelihood of their recidivism.

As of September 30, 2009, the department housed 101,251 inmates in 146 facilities throughout the state, at an average cost of \$20, 272 per inmate per year. Most (88%) of these inmates eventually will be released from prison and data indicates that approximately one-third will return to prison within three years of their release. Programs that reduce recidivism can help reduce state costs.

In Fiscal Year 2009-10, the Legislature appropriated \$29 million for inmate education and drug treatment programs. Due to the state's budget constraints, funding for these programs has declined by nearly \$10 million over the last three years. Given these limited resources, it is important for the department to use its funds for rehabilitative programs that have the greatest impact on reducing recidivism.

In December 2009, the Office of Program Policy Analysis & Government Accountability (OPPAGA) published a report, Department of Corrections Should Maximize Use of Best Practices in Inmate Rehabilitation Efforts, Report # 09-44.

## OBJECTIVES

Our follow-up objectives were to determine:

- what corrective actions were taken on reported audit findings, *and*
- whether actions taken achieved the desired results as intended by management.

## SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

A request was made to the Office of Re-Entry for a written response on the status of corrective actions taken.

## RESULTS OF FOLLOW-UP

**Finding:** The department is implementing a new research-based instrument to better target rehabilitative services to inmates with the highest risk of reoffending following release. The department also is providing rehabilitative programs that address most inmate criminogenic needs (i.e., attributes directly linked to recidivism). However, it provides limited therapy to address criminal thinking.

**Recommendation:** To enhance the Department of Corrections' rehabilitative program services and administration, we recommend that the department periodically validate its Correctional Integrated Needs Assessment System (i.e. at least once every five years) using a standard research-based methodology that compares projected outcomes to actual results.

**Management's Original Response:** *Concur. We agree that the Correctional Integrated Needs Assessment tool should be validated using standard research-based methodology that compares projected outcomes to actual need. The operation of the system will be monitored to ensure that data is collected and results are monitored to ensure results are analogous to projected outcomes. The department will validate this instrument every five years.*

**Management's Follow-Up Response:** *Since publication of report # 09-44, in December 2009, the Correctional Integrated Needs Assessment System (CINAS) was implemented on March 1, 2010. The Department needs to collect data (actual results) for at least 1 to 2 years that will be used for purposes of validation. The Department is currently in the data collection phase.*

**Recommendation:** To enhance the Department of Corrections' rehabilitative program services and administration, we recommend that the department supplement its 100-hour transition course with coursework on how to change criminal thinking, and, as funding permits, increase the number of inmates receiving the course via a facilitator to ensure that inmates understand the course's content.

**Management's Original Response:** *Concur. The 100-hour transition course curriculum has been updated to include 40 hours of criminal thinking principles. Each lesson contains possible errors in thinking associated with the given topic and common techniques for overcoming each error. The Department plans to release the new 100-Hour transition curriculum in January or February 2010.*

*The Department also concurs that it would be beneficial to increase the number of inmates receiving the course via live instruction and will do so as funding becomes available. In the interim, the Department will use the newly developed recidivism index to place inmates with a higher risk to reoffend into facilitated classes and lower risk inmates into the self-study program.*

**Management's Follow-Up Response:** *The 100-hour curriculum has been approved through all Departmental subject-matter experts. It is scheduled to be released on July 1, 2010.*

*The Department is much closer to statewide implementation of the recidivism index. Although the system (CINAS) has been developed, before it is used for 100-Hour program placement, inmates within 18 months of release will need to be entered into the system and be assigned a score. In addition, staff will need to be trained on how to use the system/assessment. The Department's goal is to be able to use this valuable tool within approximately 6 months.*

**Finding:** The department collects inmate-specific data and has conducted several reviews of rehabilitative programs over the last 10 years. However, it does not routinely measure the effectiveness of these programs.

**Recommendation:** To enhance the Department of Corrections' rehabilitative program services and administration, we recommend that the department routinely evaluate its key rehabilitative programs, including tracking the outcomes of participants over time, and use the data to provide cost-effectiveness analyses similar to those included in the Department of Juvenile Justice's Program Accountability Measures report. To augment its research resources, the Department of Corrections should cultivate partnerships with the state university system.

**Management's Original Response:** Concur. *The effectiveness of the Department's inmate substance abuse treatment programs is routinely measured and reviewed both quarterly and annually. The Department's Bureau of Research and Data Analysis and the Bureau of Substance Abuse Program Services compile program data and outcome data annually and includes in its Annual Report which includes demographics, numbers served, completion rates, and comprehensive recommitment data by programs and facilities. The report also reflects the provider for each facility. Data is reviewed by Department staff and treatment providers to determine areas for improvement. The Department also collects data relating to its educational and vocational programs and uses this data to track recidivism rates and identify areas for program improvement.*

**Management's Follow-Up Response:** As stated in the Department's response to Recommendation 3 much is already being done routinely across program areas to measure and review program effectiveness, success, and need for improvement. This includes the tracking of program participation to determine program-specific recidivism rates. A recent step taken to enhance these efforts was the placement of specific program participation data into the latest, updated recidivism model used to generate the soon-to-be published 'Recidivism Report'.

In response to OPPAGA's recommendation to "...provide a cost-effectiveness analyses similar to those included in Department of Juvenile Justice's Programs Accountability Measures report," such an effort would require an intensive effort by staff with results that may not apply or be relevant to our organizational processes and procedures. The Department will consult with all areas to determine if an effort is applicable, appropriate and needed to improve the Department's inmate programs.

*Also, the Department has a long history of partnerships with the university system to include the University of South Florida (USF) and Florida State University (FSU). Recent efforts with the USF include a study on 'FDOC Medicaid Eligibility Analysis' (in process). With FSU, the Department is currently working on validating the initial results of the implementation of the Department's new risk system for probationers.*