

**ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS  
OFFENDER OPERATIONS  
MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Robert Patton, Division Director, Prison Operations  
**FROM:** Ivan C. Bartos, Northern Region Operations Director  
**DATE:** August 20, 2010  
**SUBJECT:** Executive Summary Perimeter Security Assessment

In accordance with your explicit instructions, I personally toured every Level III/Medium Custody facility in both regions in five days and conducted an assessment of key perimeter security components.

Included in this review was an assessment of:

- Perimeter Patrols-post orders, vehicles, weapons/ammunition and practices
- Sand Traps
- Fencing, razor wire type, placement and condition, no-climb and fencing hardware
- Perimeter alarm systems, type, testing methodologies and documentation
- Procedures, practices and oversight of systems related to response, testing, maintenance and coordination between unit and complex elements needed to address alarm response and maintenance issues
- Knowledge and awareness levels of key staff in perimeter security systems; workplace practices, written and unwritten, that impact the effectiveness of a given unit's ability to respond quickly and effectively to alarms, breaches in no-man's land areas, secure perimeter zones or exterior fences.

Along with relevant findings, I am including what I feel are "best practices" in key areas, as well as general recommendations based on the unique perspective that this very narrow and focused task gave me about this most fundamental aspect of our responsibility to the Arizona taxpayer.

**A. Perimeter Patrols**

All medium-custody units are patrolled by armed perimeter patrols 24/7. Most have a dedicated patrol that continuously patrols the perimeter of one unit. Three larger complexes, (Lewis, Perryville and Tucson) have a complex perimeter fence inside of which several units are situated, designed to share perimeter patrols. While efficient from a staffing perspective, this physical configuration requires multiple patrol elements due to the size of these shared perimeters and its impact on response times.

**Concern:** Patrols required to leave perimeter to perform other tasks. At Yuma, this caused the assigned patrol to be absent from Cheyenne Unit perimeter for approx. 45 minutes.

**Recommendation:** Perimeter patrols should be continuous, with relief coverage provided during bathroom breaks or for meals or refueling. Requirements to intentionally abandon the perimeter can be noted and considered by inmates plotting an escape.

**Concern:** The vast complex perimeter at Perryville requires two perimeter patrols to respond effectively to alarms. Despite what appeared to be an abundance of staff, one of two perimeter patrols necessary to cover the common exterior perimeter was collapsed, leaving only one. The one lone perimeter patrol was also required to leave on occasion and patrol the minimum units across the street leaving no armed coverage on the external perimeter.

**Concern:** The relief process is a concern across the board. Most complexes carry over all weapons and ammunition from one shift to the next. Most perimeter patrol officers indicated they relied on the magazine indicator on the back of each magazine instead of physically unloading and reloading their weapons and magazines. Thus, on most of our perimeters we may go days before a missing round is detected.

**Best Practice:** ASPC-Tucson and ASPC-Safford, who affords their oncoming perimeter officers fresh weapons, magazines and ammo.

**Recommendation:** Require oncoming shifts to obtain a new issue of weapons and ammo, which they then must count and load personally. Off-going patrols must then unload their weapons and count before turning them into the armory.

**Concern:** Less-lethal capability in perimeter patrol vehicles. Most perimeter patrols now have [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] issued to perimeter patrols, and ASPC-Lewis had [REDACTED] in addition to the [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. Every location in which this is in place expressed concerns about the mixed munitions types and what circumstances these [REDACTED] options would be employed, the fear of using the wrong type of munitions, or what should be loaded in the [REDACTED]. Post orders do not contain instruction on how this affects the use of force continuum.

**Recommendation:** While no one seems to be able to recall when or why those less lethal options are part of the perimeter patrol inventory, it is truly hard to envision a scenario in which the perimeter patrol is likely to need and use a less than lethal force option. Standardize the issue of weapons for perimeter patrols to lethal force only, acknowledging that the perimeter patrol is the last defense against an attempted escape.

**Concern:** Weapons handling issues. At Yuma, one perimeter officer left her [REDACTED] in the center console, spare magazine on the passenger seat. At Perryville, only [REDACTED] magazines are issued. At Eyman, a perimeter officer kept her spare magazines in a paddle style magazine carried, on the passenger seat, claiming the paddle hurt her waist.

**Recommendation:** As most of these staff when questioned, indicated that they had been visited on post during their shift by the supervisor, all of these sloppy habits could have been detected and corrected. Quality of supervision is the key.

## **B. Fencing**

Much like the units themselves, our medium custody units have many differences in the perimeter fencing designs. All medium custody units have at least one 14' candy cane fence around the perimeter. Nearly all have 3 stacked coils of 30" razor ribbon or detainer hook-barb razor wire at the bottom of the external perimeter fence, and a single coil at the top. After that, the fence configuration varies dependant on the type of alarm system, the availability of a patrolled exterior perimeter, or age of the facility.

**Concern:** Due to the wear and tear of years of maintenance, older units show signs of significant degradation of the bottom coil of the outer fence. In extreme cases, there was a significant gap between the ground and the bottom coil of razor wire. This was noted at Florence, Eyman and Douglas.

**Recommendation:** Map out and replace razor wire that is not structurally sound. Supervise inmate work crews closely when clearing out between the zones. Chief of Security should include the integrity of the fences, alarms, razor wire and gates in his monthly security device inspection.

**Concern:** At South Unit, there are significant blind spots in sections of the perimeter where the bottom half of the perimeter is a wall topped with a fence. This is an antiquated design which appears to depend on several towers to be manned, as the patrol cannot see into the zones if activated. Presently they drive to a spot that affords them a view to clear the zone, but this might be some distance from the alarm.

**Recommendation:** Install cameras to provide coverage in the blind spots. Tear down the walls and replace with prototypical fencing.

**Concern:** Some locations do not have a system to inspect the exterior fence hardware, relying instead on the observations of perimeter patrols.

**Recommendation:** Require a dismounted, close inspection of the integrity of all perimeter fences, at least weekly.

**Concern:** Sandtraps are an important part of our perimeter security systems. The native soil in some locations is not well-suited for showing tracks in the perimeter. This was especially true at Douglas, Perryville and Tucson.

**Recommendation:** As noted previously, SDI's which are normally centered on inside the unit security devices and features, should specifically include all aspects of perimeter security, including the suitability of sand traps. Locations with inferior native soil should procure sand and continually assess the usefulness of the sand traps.

**Concern:** Excessive gates into "no-mans-land" or affording access to the alarm zones between the fences.

**Recommendation:** Every gate is a potential vulnerability in a prison, and as such should be limited to the bare minimum needed to operate-a single access point for pedestrians or vehicles. Convenience-based gates should be eliminated completely, not just chained or spot welded shut.

### **C. Alarms and Perimeter Security Systems**

**Concern:** Perimeter officers responding to the wrong zone. Zones are not labeled.

**Recommendation:** All unit perimeter zones should be clearly labeled on the side the response is expected, which in some units may be on both sides of the exterior fence. While this is the case at most locations, it is not universal and should be, even at those locations that are fortunate enough to have integrated lighting in zones that are active.

**Concern:** Automated print outs are not available at all locations. In some cases, such as Cook Unit, this is due to an inoperable printer. In others, such as the brand new Cibola Unit, the Captain advised that he must request alarm information from the vendor, Norment Security Systems, and this could take several days. Even where alarm reports are available, this resource is not universally used to assess our response capability.

**Recommendation:** Require that alarm print outs be attached to shift report and that alarm reports be reviewed for trouble areas and response time information. Require that every alarm is logged in the service journal of the alarm monitor (usually main control) and the responder (perimeter patrol and/or yard officer). Use alarm printout to reconcile alarm responses (spot check)

**Concern:** Faulty alarms or false alarms cause staff to clear them without dispatching a patrol. This was observed at Perryville. The staff member indicated that she knew what the problem was (tree branches blowing into a microwave zone on the roof). Per the officer on post, this had been happening for weeks. According to the Major, this had not been reported to him.

**Recommendation:** As stated above.

**Concern:** At Cibola, the new alarm system and call buttons have the same, irritating tone. During a test, it was noted that the officer cleared the alarm before the perimeter patrol arrived at the zone. While the officer monitoring the alarms in control was new, a visit on post revealed that this alarm tone was almost constant with staff waiting to access secure areas of the facility.

**Recommendation:** Configure alarm panel to produce a distinctive tone when a zone goes into alarm mode as opposed to someone waiting to enter a building.

**Concern:** At Perryville, routine tests of the microwave zones for the expansive no-mans-land were not conducted; relying instead on frequent inmate work crews to provide feedback on the condition of the zones.

**Best Practice:** At Perryville, the shaker wire alarms at the medium unit fences are tested every shift with a 3 chime tool that not only tests the zones, but affords input on the sensitivity of each zone. The officer tests by using 3 chimes that are progressively larger, and require most stimulation to set off the alarm.

**Recommendation:** Test zone alarms on every shift, every day, without exception. Large zone areas such as is the case at Perryville can simply be driven thru to check the working conditions of the zones, as is the case at Tucson. Adopt the 3 chime testing implement at all units using shaker wire.

#### **D. Supervision**

**Concern:** Many Captains, some Majors, and some Deputy Wardens were very uninformed about their perimeter security system, how it works, and how it integrates with complex security.

**Recommendation:** Enhance existing physical plant standards for every aspect of medium custody, inclusive of fences, razor wire, alarms, etc. Make these standards easily accessible via intranet to every employee. Afford extensive training in physical plant standards, alarm systems and other aspects of perimeter security, and train every chief of security in the technical aspects of their duties. Develop a punch list of items related to perimeter security with universal inspection intervals and incorporate into security device inspection process.