

**SUMMARY OF THE OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL  
ACCOUNTABILITY AUDIT (JANUARY 2005)<sup>1</sup>**

This review summarizes audits of the California Youth Authority over the period from 2000-2003. It may be helpful to demonstrate the CYA's pattern of failing to comply with state-mandated reforms.

Wards are confined to their cells for unduly long periods.

Large numbers of wards are confined to their cells 23 hours a day, some for extended periods, with limited access to education, training, or counseling. (This policy is known as "23-and-one.") At the five facilities audited, 9% of the youth were confined 23 hours a day. Specifically:

- at the N.A. Chaderjian Youth Correctional Facility in Stockton, 39 wards had been on 23-and-1 confinement for at least 30 days. In the special management program at Chaderjian, youth are allowed out of their cells for 3 hours a day, but they spend these three hours alone or in pairs in 10' x 16' fenced asphalt enclosures without water or restroom facilities.

- at the Herman G. Stark Youth Correctional Facility in Chino, 103 youth were on 23-and-1 confinement for the sole reason that the facility lacked teachers to run mandated education programs

(p. ES-1)<sup>2</sup>

- at the Stark facility, 27 youths were not allowed out of their cells at all, except for five minute daily showers. (P. 10)

Long periods of confinement to cells deprives wards of access to education and treatment

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<sup>1</sup>Available at <http://www.oig.ca.gov/reports/pdf/AccountabilityAudit-CYA.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup>Page numbers preceded by "ES" are located in the executive summary at the beginning of the audit report.

programs, increases their susceptibility to mental health problems, and is generally “inefficient and dehumanizing.” (P. 7)

The CYA/DJJ has failed to provide state-mandated education for its wards.

- at the Southern Youth Reception Center and Clinic, wards received 40% of their mandated education hours in fiscal year 2003-2004

- at the Stark facility, wards received only 30% of their state-mandated education hours in FY 2003-2004. This represented a 7% drop from FY 2002-2003.

- at the Ventura Youth Correctional Facility, 30% of scheduled classes were cancelled between April and August, 2004.

(P. ES-2)

The CYA/DJJ has failed to provide state-mandated diagnosis and treatment services.

- at the Stark facility, only 33% of the wards had received required counseling in 2004, and none had received the minimum levels of counseling. This represents a sharp decline from previous years: in 2000, 56% had received the minimum level of counseling.

- at the Southern center, 82% of initial diagnostic assessments were not performed within the required 45-day time period. Also, of a random sample of wards, 25% had received no counseling in the previous year.

(P. ES-2-3)

The CYA/DJJ has failed to comply with previous audits and reviews

- of 241 specific recommendations, the CYA fully implemented 43%, substantially implemented 14%, partially implemented 24%, and failed to implement 17%. (2% are no longer applicable.) (P. ES-3)

The CYA had been dishonest with respect to its compliance with recommendations

- in August 2004, the new CYA director claimed that 23-and-1 confinement policy had ended; however, the audit found that 9% of wards in the five facilities visited were

under 23-and-1 confinement.(P. ES-4)

- at the Stark facility, a log indicated that one ward had received services on 11 out of 14 days reviewed; however, further investigation revealed that the ward had been in court for the entire period. (P. ES-4)

- similar discrepancies were found at El Paso de Robles Youth Correctional Facility and the Chaderjian Facility. (P. 12)

CYA performance has remained substandard or declined further in recent years

- in 2000, an audit revealed that the Stark facility provided unsatisfactory levels of education and treatment. The facility failed to implement many of the recommendations, and in 2004, compliance rates were “significantly lower” than the unsatisfactory 2000 rates. Specifically:

- Instruction time fell
- class closures increased (from 460 per month in 2002-2003 to 540 per month in 2003-2004)
- standardized test scores declined
- school absenteeism increased dramatically (from 24% in 2000 to 45% in 2004)
- special education compliance declined
- counseling compliance declined dramatically (from 56% in 2000 to 0% in 2004)

(pp. ES 5-7)

- in 2004, an audit revealed that despite recent improvements, the Southern facility still failed to provide adequate education and mental health services. Specifically:

- instruction time fell
- standardized test scores declined
- school absenteeism increased
- wards did not receive prompt diagnostic assessments

- special education needs were not met
- wards received psychotropic drugs in violation of policy
- staff attendance at meetings and training sessions was poor

(pp. ES 9-10)

- the Ventura facility improved in some respects, but still was deficient in others.

Specifically:

- a substantial percentage of wards continued to receive late diagnostic assessments or none at all
- teacher vacancy rates remain high

(pp. ES 12-14)

The CYA has failed to provide sufficient mental health treatment to wards

- the CYA has failed to provide prompt diagnostic assessments to new wards and parole violators to determine whether they need mental health services. In 2004, 114 new wards did not receive assessments within the mandated 21 days, and some went as long as 10 months without being assessed. Also, in 2004, 637 wards who had been returned to the CYA after violating parole received no treatment needs assessments at all.(P. ES-15-16).