

# Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department

Audit and Accountability Bureau



**Closed Circuit Television System  
Audit** – Custody Services Division  
– Specialized Programs –  
Twin Towers Correctional Facility  
Audit No. 2020-1-A



Alex Villanueva, Sheriff

August 19, 2020

**LOS ANGELES COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT**  
**Audit and Accountability Bureau**

**CLOSED CIRCUIT TELEVISION SYSTEM AUDIT**  
**CUSTODY SERVICES DIVISION – SPECIALIZED PROGRAMS**  
**TWIN TOWERS CORRECTIONAL FACILITY**  
**Project No. 2020-1-A**

**PURPOSE**

The Audit and Accountability Bureau (AAB) conducted the Closed Circuit Television System Audit – Twin Towers Correctional Facility (TTCF) under the authority of the Sheriff of Los Angeles County. The audit was performed to determine how the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (Department) complied with the United States Department of Justice (DOJ) Settlement Agreement<sup>1</sup> (Agreement) and the Department's Custody Division Manual (CDM) pertaining to the Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) system.

The AAB conducted this audit under the guidance of the Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards.<sup>2</sup> The AAB determined the evidence obtained was sufficient and appropriate to provide reasonable assurance for the results based on the audit objectives.

**BACKGROUND**

The intent of the settlement agreement is to build upon existing measures and sustain systemic improvements designed to protect inmates from conditions in custody which place them in unreasonable danger.

The Agreement outlines a series of provisions which are intended to provide adequate care, treatment, and living conditions for inmates in the Los Angeles County jail system. In particular, Agreement Recommendation No. 83, addresses the installation of closed circuit security cameras throughout the Department's jail facilities including housing and common areas. According to the Agreement, the Department will install a sufficient number of cameras in jail facilities to ensure that common areas of the facilities are equipped with security-camera coverage.

Video surveillance is an "invaluable tool for objective accounting and insight."<sup>3</sup> The use of surveillance cameras serve as a deterrent for unnecessary and excessive force, assaults, and unlawful injuries. Surveillance cameras enhance the reliability of investigations by allowing the Department the ability to store and review camera

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<sup>1</sup> The Department entered into a joint settlement agreement with the United States DOJ, which was filed as a complaint in the United States District Court, Central District of California, Western Division, Case No. CV 15-5903, regarding the Los Angeles County Jails.

<sup>2</sup> United States Government Accountability Office, Government Auditing Standards, July 2018.

<sup>3</sup> Reports of the Citizens' Commission on Jail Violence, September 2012.

## **CLOSED CIRCUIT TELEVISION SYSTEM AUDIT - TTCF**

### **Project No. 2020-1-A**

footage for the analysis of an incident. Use of these cameras is not simply an invaluable evidentiary tool, but they promote jail order, security, and can quickly absolve jail personnel of frivolous claims by inmates that would otherwise take time to resolve.

### **PRIOR AUDIT**

The AAB has conducted one prior audit of the CCTV at TTCF. The previous audit (Project No. 2015-6-A) had four recommendations, three of which have been implemented. For the remaining recommendation, CCTV personnel stated “Data System Bureau will not be able to implement this recommendation do to its restraints.”

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **Scope**

The audit encompassed three main objectives regarding the review of CCTV:

- Objective No. 1 - Continuous Recording of Use of Force Incidents - To determine if the cameras continuously recorded use of force incidents.
- Objective No. 2 - Continuous Recording of Allegations of Force Incidents - To determine if the cameras continuously recorded allegations of force incidents.
- Objective No. 3 - Watch Commander Responsibilities - To determine if the Watch Commanders documented the CCTV inspection during each shift, a camera malfunction, and notification of the malfunction to the video manager.

#### **Audit Time Period**

The audit time period was from January 1, 2019, through July 31, 2019.

#### **Audit Population**

Auditors identified varying populations in order to examine the different aspects of the three main objectives, which are described in the Audit Objectives and Results section of this report.

**CLOSED CIRCUIT TELEVISION SYSTEM AUDIT - TTCF**  
**Project No. 2020-1-A**

**AUDIT OBJECTIVES AND RESULTS**

**Objective No. 1 – Use of Force Incidents are Continuously Recorded on the CCTV System**

**Objective No. 1(a) – To Determine if the Use of Force Incident are Recorded on the CCTV System**

Criteria

Custody Division Manual, Section 7-06/010.00, Video and Audio Recording Procedures (March 2019),<sup>4</sup> states:

*Fixed Video Surveillance*

*Fixed video surveillance involves camera permanently or temporarily mounted in designated locations which continuously record all activities in the cameras' view.*

*The Sheriff's Department's primary objectives with fixed video surveillance are to:*

- *Record/document events as they occur*
- *Provide video evidence of actions by inmates and staff*
- *Provide for post-incident analysis*

Procedures

Auditors compiled a population of use of force incidents that occurred at TTCF during the audit time period. A statistically random sample of 71 use of force incidents were identified for review.<sup>5</sup> Auditors evaluated the CCTV system to determine if the use of force incident was recorded.

Results

Seventy of the 71 (99%) incidents met the criteria. One incident did not meet the criteria because footage of the incident was not recorded on the CCTV system.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> The policy was revised March 12, 2019. Although the policy revision was during the audit time period, it did not have an effect on the population or change the population for this audit, therefore, it did not affect the testing of this objective.

<sup>5</sup> Using a statistical one-tail test with a 95% confidence level and a 4% error rate, a statistically valid sample was identified.

<sup>6</sup> The watch commander log documented that cameras were inoperable because they were being replaced with new cameras, however the log did not indicate which cameras were inoperable.

**CLOSED CIRCUIT TELEVISION SYSTEM AUDIT - TTCF**  
**Project No. 2020-1-A**

**Objective No. 1(b) – To Determine if the Use of Force Incident Recording is Retained for Twelve Months**

Criteria

Custody Division Manual, Section 7-06/010.00, Video and Audio Recording Procedures (March 2019), states:

*Retention of Recordings*

*...Fixed video surveillance cameras will record continuously and the contents shall be retained in electronic storage devices for a minimum of twelve (12) months...*

Procedures

Auditors compiled a population of use of force incidents that occurred at TTCF during the audit time period. A statistically valid sample of 71 use of force incidents were identified for review. Auditors evaluated the CCTV system to determine if recorded footage was retained for the required 12 month time period. Some recorded footage was not available for review because the audit time period was beyond the 12 month retention period. Therefore, based upon the audit time period, auditors evaluated records that ranged from eight to 14 months of the date of the incident.

Results

Seventy of the 71 incidents were applicable to this criteria. One incident was not applicable because footage of the incident was not recorded on the CCTV system (see footnote no. 6). All 70 (100%) incidents met the criteria.

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**CLOSED CIRCUIT TELEVISION SYSTEM AUDIT - TTCF**  
**Project No. 2020-1-A**

**Objective No. 1(c) – To Determine if the CCTV System Continuously Recorded the Use of Force Incident**

Criteria

Custody Division Manual, Section 7-06/010.00, Video and Audio Recording Procedures (March 2019), states:

*Retention of Recordings*

*...Fixed video surveillance cameras will record continuously...*

Procedures

Auditors compiled a population of use of force incidents that occurred at TTCF during the audit time period. A statistically valid sample of 71 use of force incidents were identified for review. Auditors evaluated CCTV footage of the identified use of force incidents to determine if they were recorded in their entirety.

Results

Sixty-nine of the 71 incidents were applicable to this criteria. One incident was not applicable because footage of the incident was not on the CCTV system (see footnote no. 6). One incident was not applicable because the applicable cameras in the incident location were inoperable at the time of the incident.<sup>7</sup> All 69 (100%) incidents met the criteria.

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<sup>7</sup> The inoperable cameras were documented on the Watch Commander Log and notification was made to the video manager.

**CLOSED CIRCUIT TELEVISION SYSTEM AUDIT - TTCF**  
**Project No. 2020-1-A**

**Objective No. 1(d) – To Determine if the Recording of the Use of Force Incident was Included in the Investigation Package**

Criteria

Custody Division Manual, Section 7-06/020.00, Use of Force Package (March 2019), states:

*In addition to the required items set forth in the Manual of Policy and Procedures (MPP) Use of Force Policies, Custody Services Divisions force review packages shall include the following items:*

- *Audio and/or video recordings (including all viewpoints of Closed Circuit Television [CCTV] or hand-held camera and radio transmissions) of the incident, if applicable...*

Procedures

Auditors compiled a population of use of force incidents that occurred at TTCF during the audit time period. A statistically valid sample of 71 use of force incidents were identified for review. Auditors reviewed the investigation packages of the identified force incidents to determine if CCTV recordings of the incident were included.

Results

Sixty-nine of the 71 incidents were applicable to this criteria. One incident was not applicable because footage of the incident was not on the CCTV system (see footnote no. 6). One incident was not applicable because the applicable cameras in the incident location were inoperable at the time of the incident (see footnote no. 7). All 69 (100%) incidents met the criteria.

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**CLOSED CIRCUIT TELEVISION SYSTEM AUDIT - TTCF**  
**Project No. 2020-1-A**

**Objective No. 1(e) – To Determine if the Recordings of All Viewpoints were Included in the Investigation Package**

Criteria

Custody Division Manual, Section 7-06/020.00, Use of Force Package (March 2019), states:

*In addition to the required items set forth in the Manual of Policy and Procedures (MPP) Use of Force Policies, Custody Services Divisions force review packages shall include the following items:*

- *Audio and/or video recordings (including all viewpoints of Closed Circuit Television [CCTV] or hand-held camera and radio transmissions) of the incident, if applicable...*

Procedures

Auditors compiled a population of use of force incidents that occurred at TTCF during the audit time period. A statistically valid sample of 71 use of force incidents were identified for review. Auditors reviewed the investigation packages for the identified force incidents to determine if they included CCTV recordings of all viewpoints.

Results

Sixty-nine of the 71 incidents were applicable to this criteria. One incident was not applicable because footage of the incident was not on the CCTV system (see footnote no. 6). One incident was not applicable because the applicable cameras in the incident location were inoperable at the time of the incident (see footnote no. 7). Forty-one of the 69 (59%) incidents met the criteria. Twenty-eight investigation packages did not contain all videos.

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**CLOSED CIRCUIT TELEVISION SYSTEM AUDIT - TTCF**  
**Project No. 2020-1-A**

**Objective No. 2 – Allegations of Force Incidents are Continuously Recorded on the CCTV System**

**Objective No. 2(a) – To Determine if the Allegations of Force Incident are Recorded on the CCTV System**

Criteria

Custody Division Manual, Section 7-06/010.00, Video and Audio Recording Procedures (March 2019), states:

*Fixed Video Surveillance*

*Fixed video surveillance involves cameras permanently or temporarily mounted in designated locations which continuously record all activities in the cameras' view.*

*The Sheriff's Department's primary objectives with fixed video surveillance are to:*

- *Record/document events as they occur*
- *Provide video evidence of actions by inmates and staff*
- *Provide for post-incident analysis*

Procedures

Auditors compiled a population of alleged force incidents that occurred at TTCF during the audit time period. A population of 13 allegations were identified for review. Auditors evaluated the CCTV footage for the incidents to determine if they were recorded.

Results

Twelve of the 13 incidents in the population were applicable to this criteria. One incident was not applicable because there were no CCTV recordings due to the fact they could not be located. All 12 (100%) incidents met the criteria.

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**CLOSED CIRCUIT TELEVISION SYSTEM AUDIT - TTCF**  
**Project No. 2020-1-A**

**Objective No. 2(b) – To Determine if the Allegation of Force Incident Recording is Retained for Twelve Months**

Criteria

Custody Division Manual, Section 7-06/010.00, Video and Audio Recording Procedures (March 2019), states:

*Retention of Recordings*

*...Fixed video surveillance cameras will record continuously and the contents shall be retained in electronic storage devices for a minimum of twelve (12) months...*

Procedures

Auditors compiled a population of alleged force incidents that occurred at TTCF during the audit time period. A population of 13 allegation of force incidents were identified for review. Auditors reviewed the CCTV system to determine if recorded footage was retained for the required 12 month period.

Results

Twelve of the 13 incidents were applicable to this criteria. One incident was not applicable because there were no CCTV recordings due to the fact they could not be located. All 12 (100%) incidents met the criteria. The auditors evaluated the retention of the recordings on the CCTV system, therefore, based upon the audit time period, this evaluation ranged from eight to 14 months from the date of the incident.

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**CLOSED CIRCUIT TELEVISION SYSTEM AUDIT - TTCF**  
**Project No. 2020-1-A**

**Objective No. 2(c) – To Determine if the CCTV System Continuously Recorded the Allegation of Force Incident**

Criteria

Custody Division Manual, Section 7-06/010.00, Video and Audio Recording Procedures (March 2019), states:

*Retention of Recordings*

*...Fixed video surveillance cameras will record continuously...*

Procedures

Auditors compiled a population of alleged force incidents that occurred at TTCF during the audit time period. A population of 13 allegation of force incidents were identified for review. Auditors evaluated CCTV footage of the identified alleged force incidents to determine if they were recorded in their entirety.

Results

Twelve of the 13 incidents were applicable to this criteria. One incident was not applicable because there were no CCTV recordings due to the fact they could not be located. All 12 (100%) incidents met the criteria.

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**CLOSED CIRCUIT TELEVISION SYSTEM AUDIT - TTCF**  
**Project No. 2020-1-A**

**Objective No. 2(d) – To Determine if the Recording of the Allegation of Force Incident was Included in the Investigation Package**

Criteria

Custody Division Manual, Section 7-06/000.00, Use of Force Reporting Procedures (March 2016),<sup>8</sup> states:

*Allegations of Force*

*Allegations of force, whether made by the person upon whom the alleged force was used or by a third party, shall be investigated in a timely manner similar to a force investigation (e.g. interview the complainant and witnesses, collect evidence, gather documents, respond to the scene, take photographs, etc.)...*

*The supervisor conducting the inquiry shall adhere to the following guidelines:*

- *Collect evidence and take statements...*

Custody Division Manual, Section 7-06/020.00, Use of Force Package (March 2019), states:

*In addition to the required items set forth in the Manual of Policy and Procedures (MPP) Use of Force Policies, Custody Services Divisions force review packages shall include the following items:*

- *Audio and/or video recordings (including all viewpoints of Closed Circuit Television [CCTV] or hand-held camera and radio transmissions) of the incident, if applicable...*

Procedures

Auditors compiled a population of alleged force incidents that occurred at TTCF during the audit time period. A population of 13 allegation of force incidents were identified for review. Auditors reviewed the investigation packages of the identified alleged force incidents to determine if CCTV recordings of the incident were included.

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<sup>8</sup> This policy was revised April 24, 2020. The population for this audit was outside of the effective date for the policy revision, therefore, it did not affect the testing of this objective.

**CLOSED CIRCUIT TELEVISION SYSTEM AUDIT - TTCF**  
**Project No. 2020-1-A**

Results

Twelve of the 13 incidents were applicable to this criteria. One incident was not applicable because there were no CCTV recordings due to the fact they could not be located. All 12 (100%) incidents met the criteria.

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## **CLOSED CIRCUIT TELEVISION SYSTEM AUDIT - TTCF**

### **Project No. 2020-1-A**

#### **Objective No. 2(e) – To Determine if the Recordings of All Viewpoints were Included in the Investigation Package**

##### Criteria

Custody Division Manual, Section 7-06/000.00, Use of Force Reporting Procedures (March 2016), states:

##### *Allegations of Force*

*Allegations of force, whether made by the person upon whom the alleged force was used or by a third party, shall be investigated in a timely manner similar to a force investigation (e.g. interview the complainant and witnesses, collect evidence, gather documents, respond to the scene, take photographs, etc.)...*

*The supervisor conducting the inquiry shall adhere to the following guidelines:*

- *Collect evidence and take statements...*

Custody Division Manual, Section 7-06/020.00, Use of Force Package (March 2019), states:

*In addition to the required items set forth in the Manual of Policy and Procedures (MPP) Use of Force Policies, Custody Services Divisions force review packages shall include the following items:*

- *Audio and/or video recordings (including all viewpoints of Closed Circuit Television [CCTV] or hand-held camera and radio transmissions) of the incident, if applicable...*

##### Procedures

Auditors compiled a population of alleged force incidents that occurred at TTCF during the audit time period. A population of 13 allegation of force incidents were identified for review. Auditors reviewed the investigation packages for the identified alleged force incidents to determine if they included CCTV recordings of all viewpoints.

##### Results

Twelve of the 13 incidents in the population were applicable to this criteria. One incident was not applicable because there were no CCTV recordings due to the fact they could not be located. Eight of the 12 (67%) incidents met the criteria. Four investigation packages did not contain available incident recording of all viewpoints.

**CLOSED CIRCUIT TELEVISION SYSTEM AUDIT - TTCF**  
**Project No. 2020-1-A**

**Objective No. 3 – Watch Commander Responsibilities**

**Objective No. 3(a) - To Determine if the Watch Commander Log Documented the CCTV System Inspection**

Criteria

Custody Division Manual, Section 7-06/010.00, Video and Audio Recording Procedures (March 2019), states:

*Fixed Video Equipment Inspection*

- *The watch commander shall confirm all surveillance cameras are properly functioning and recording at the beginning of each shift by logging into the system...*
- *...The fixed video equipment inspection shall be documented in the facility's Watch Commander's Log*

Procedures

Auditors compiled a population of Watch Commander Logs for the audit time period. A statistically valid sample of 84 logs were identified for review. Auditors evaluated the logs to determine if the Watch Commanders documented the inspection of the CCTV system.

Results

All 84 (100%) logs met the criteria.

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**CLOSED CIRCUIT TELEVISION SYSTEM AUDIT - TTCF**  
**Project No. 2020-1-A**

**Objective No. 3(b) – To Determine if the Watch Commander Log Documented any Camera Malfunctions**

Criteria

Custody Division Manual, Section 7-06/010.00, Video and Audio Recording Procedures (March 2019), states:

*Fixed Video Equipment Inspection*

- *...The watch commander shall notify the designated video manager of any malfunctions,...and document all actions taken in the Watch Commander's Log, including who was notified...*

Procedures

Auditors compiled a population of Watch Commander Logs for the audit time period. A statistically valid random sample of 84 logs were identified for review. Auditors reviewed the Watch Commander Logs to determine if the watch commander documented any camera malfunctions.

Results

Eighty of the 84 logs were applicable to this criteria. Four logs were not applicable because the log did not indicate a camera malfunction. Fifty-four of the 80 (68%) logs met the criteria. Twenty-six logs did not meet the criteria because the logs indicated there were malfunctioning cameras, however, the documentation did not provide information so that the video manager could identify which cameras were malfunctioning.

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**CLOSED CIRCUIT TELEVISION SYSTEM AUDIT - TTCF**  
**Project No. 2020-1-A**

**Objective No. 3(c) – To Determine if the Watch Commander Log Documented Any Malfunctions and the Notification to the Video Manager**

Criteria

Custody Division Manual, Section 7-06/010.00, Video and Audio Recording Procedures (March 2019), states:

*Fixed Video Equipment Inspection*

- *...The watch commander shall notify the designated video manager of any malfunctions,...and document all actions taken in the Watch Commander's Log, including who was notified...*

Procedures

Auditors compiled a population of Watch Commander Logs for the audit time period. A statistically valid sample of 84 logs were identified for review. Auditors reviewed the Watch Commander Logs to determine if the watch commanders documented a notification to the video manager when a camera malfunction occurred.

Results

Eighty of the 84 logs were applicable to this criteria. Four logs were not applicable because the log did not indicate a camera malfunction. Sixty-eight of the 80 (85%) logs met the criteria. Twelve did not meet the criteria because notification to the video manager were not documented on the logs.

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**CLOSED CIRCUIT TELEVISION SYSTEM AUDIT - TTCF**  
**Project No. 2020-1-A**

**SUMMARY OF RESULTS**

The audit yielded the following results:

<b>Objective No.</b>	<b>Audit Objectives</b>	<b>Met the Criteria</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>CONTINUOUS RECORDING OF USE OF FORCE INCIDENTS</b>	
1(a)	<i>To Determine if the Use of Force Incident are Recorded on the CCTV System</i>	<b>99%</b>
1(b)	<i>To Determine if the Use of Force Incident Recording is Retained for Twelve Months</i>	<b>100%</b>
1(c)	<i>To Determine if the CCTV System Continuously Recorded the Use of Force Incident</i>	<b>100%</b>
1(d)	<i>To Determine if the Recording of the Use of Force Incident was Included in the Investigation Package</i>	<b>100%</b>
1(e)	<i>To Determine if the Recordings of All Viewpoints were Included in the Investigation Package</i>	<b>59%</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>CONTINUOUS RECORDING OF ALLEGATION OF FORCE INCIDENTS</b>	
2(a)	<i>To Determine if the Allegations of Force Incident are Recorded on the CCTV System</i>	<b>100%</b>
2(b)	<i>To Determine if the Allegation of Force Incident Recording is Retained for Twelve Months</i>	<b>100%</b>
2(c)	<i>To Determine if the CCTV System Continuously Recorded the Allegation of Force Incident</i>	<b>100%</b>
2(d)	<i>To Determine if the Recording of the Allegation of Force Incident was Included in the Investigation Package</i>	<b>100%</b>
2(e)	<i>To Determine if the Recordings of All Viewpoints were Included in the Investigation Package</i>	<b>67%</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>WATCH COMMANDER RESPONSIBILITIES</b>	
3(a)	<i>To Determine if the Watch Commander Log Documented the CCTV System Inspection</i>	<b>100%</b>
3(b)	<i>To Determine if the Watch Commander Log Documented any Camera Malfunctions</i>	<b>68%</b>
3(c)	<i>To Determine if the Watch Commander Log Documented Any Malfunctions and the Notification to the Video Manager</i>	<b>85%</b>

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## **CLOSED CIRCUIT TELEVISION SYSTEM AUDIT - TTCF**

### **Project No. 2020-1-A**

#### **OTHER RELATED MATTERS**

Other related matters are pertinent issues discovered during the audit or requested by the auditee, but were not objectives which were measurable against Department policies and procedures.

##### *Quality of Video Recordings*

Auditors evaluated the quality of the CCTV footage during the review of the use of force and alleged force incidents in Objective Nos. 1 and 2. It was observed that the overall quality of the footage appeared adequate. Auditors noted no blurry, grainy, or obstructed footage, and all footage was uninterrupted.<sup>9</sup>

##### *Camera Identification*

Auditors conducted a physical inspection of the CCTV system at the TTCF on February 19, 2020. During the inspection of the cameras, auditors noted that the cameras were not labeled with their respective CCTV system identification number. This condition makes it difficult to perform an inspection of the system when service or a physical count needs to be performed.

#### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

##### *Camera Upgraded to New Cameras*

Auditors found that during the audit time period, multiple CCTV cameras at TTCF were out of service and being upgraded to new cameras. The auditors were still able to obtain sufficient and appropriate evidence to support the audit results.

##### *Watch Commander's Log Documentation*

During the review of the Watch Commander's Logs, auditors noticed in many instances that the information documented in the "Inspection" section was not consistent with the related information documented in the "Significant Incidents" section of the log. The log should be thoroughly reviewed to ensure accurate information is being documented.

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<sup>9</sup> Auditors noted that camera 114 had a slight obstruction of its viewpoint, however upon a recent view of camera 114 on the CCTV, there was no obstruction present.

## **CLOSED CIRCUIT TELEVISION SYSTEM AUDIT - TTCF**

### **Project No. 2020-1-A**

#### **CONCLUSION**

Auditors performed analyses and made assessments to identify areas in need of improvement. The AAB considers the results of this audit to be a helpful management tool for all Department personnel. The evidence presented provides reasonable assurance that Department personnel are not strictly adhering to policies and procedures regarding the CCTV system at TTCF.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

When Departmental policies and procedures are not adhered to, it results in an increased risk to the Department. Department management should disseminate the results of this audit to its personnel. Additionally, as best practice, Department management is encouraged to conduct recurring and ongoing briefing of policies and procedures. The AAB considers the results of this audit to be a helpful management tool and therefore, makes the following recommendations:

1. To ensure compliance with the CDM, Section 7-06/020.00, it is recommended that TTCF personnel include recordings from the CCTV into the investigation package. This footage should include all viewpoints of the incident. Compliance with this policy requirement will enhance the thoroughness and reliability of the Department's investigations. (Objective No. 1 and Objective No. 2)
2. It is recommended that watch commanders document the specific cameras that have a malfunction on the Watch Commander's Log, and document the notification of the malfunction to the video manager. (Objective No. 3)
3. It is recommended that TTCF operations staff conduct regular audits of the Watch Commander's log to ensure accuracy of camera related documentation. (Additional Information)
4. To ensure efficiency and effectiveness of inspections and physical inventory count of the cameras, it is recommended that the CCTV cameras in TTCF are labeled with their respective CCTV system identification number. (Other Related Matters)

#### **Views of Responsible Officials**

On August 14, 2020, Custody Services Division command staff submitted a formal response to the AAB concurring with the audit results.

**CLOSED CIRCUIT TELEVISION SYSTEM AUDIT - TTCF**  
**Project No. 2020-1-A**

This audit was submitted on this 19<sup>th</sup> day of August 2020, by the Audit and Accountability Bureau.

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