

August 26, 2004

Honorable Marie Silveira  
Presiding Judge  
Superior Court of Stanislaus County  
P.O. Box 1011  
Modesto, CA 95353-1011

*Re: Statutorily Required Response to the Stanislaus County Civil Grand Jury 2003-2004 –  
Final Report*

Dear Judge Silveira:

This response is in compliance with Section 933(c) and 933.05 of the California Penal Code and is made as a response to the recommendations and findings of the Civil Grand Jury 2003-2004, part 04-46 as contained in pages 30 through 34 of the Grand Jury report.

### ***Findings***

The Grand Jury finds that the Honor Farm is an aging facility. The erosion of land beneath the facility is a major concern and must be addressed in a timely manner to avoid serious consequences. Contraband remains a problem at the Honor Farm because of the security level and its rural location. The Sheriff agrees with these findings.

The Grand Jury finds that the Men's Jail is an aging facility in need of refurbishment or replacement. During the initial inspection of the Men's Jail, the Civil Grand Jury was denied access to portions of the facility housing high profile inmates but during a subsequent, unannounced inspection, they were allowed access to the previously denied areas and were issued an official apology by facility staff. The supervisory staff at the Men's Jail is not properly trained on procedure involving the Civil Grand Jury. The Sheriff partially agrees with these findings

The Grand Jury finds that the Public Safety Center is a modern facility with up-to-date equipment. The facility has the capacity to prepare and provide food to detention centers that it currently does not service. The Sheriff agrees with these findings.

### ***Recommendations***

- The Grand Jury recommends that the Honor Farm regularly monitor the state of land erosion beneath the facility and take appropriate action to combat it.

The land around the Honor Farm did suffer some erosion during the floods in the 1990s. It has been stable for some time now and none of the buildings have been damaged due to the erosion. On the south side of the Honor Farm property, where most of the damage was done, there is now a cornfield. The ground is settled and stable for now. There is a plan in place to begin replacement of the cement footings holding the fence along the south side of the property.

- The Grand Jury states that the proximity of the activities yard to the public access areas allows for contraband to be thrown in. Moving the yard or providing some structure such as a wall would help to stop this.

The recreation yard is exposed to some extent but most of the inmates go out into the community to work so they have access to contraband on a daily basis. Regular searches of the yard and the inmates are conducted to reduce the amount of contraband that is introduced into the barracks. Moving or enclosing the activities yard would not significantly reduce the amount of contraband brought into the facility.

- The Grand Jury recommends that the policies and procedures regarding Civil Grand Jury visits be communicated to the supervisory staff at the Men's Jail.

The supervisory staff at the Men's Jail is aware of the policies and procedures pertaining to Civil Grand Jury visits.

- The Grand Jury recommends that the County should look at renovation or replacement of the Men's Jail Facility.

The Men's Jail is a maximum-security facility over 45 years old, labor intensive, outdated and requiring frequent maintenance and repair. The Sheriff is doing everything possible to maintain this facility in operable condition. Renovations occur on an on-going basis as needs arise. In recent years, plumbing underneath the facility was completely gutted and replaced and this past year, plumbing fixtures in the Inmate Workers Quarters were replaced. The housing areas of the Inmate Workers Quarters were renovated during this past year also. In order to eliminate a pervasive odor throughout the facility, an enzyme program has been implemented for the kitchen drains. New fire hoses have been purchased and installed throughout the facility. During this last year, the facility's safety cells were also upgraded. To improve the safety and security of visitors, security cameras have been installed at the perimeter entrances to the facility. The visiting area of the facility, recently seen as cramped and dirty, has been cleaned, painted and additional seating for visitors has been arranged for outside the facility. Measures are being taken on the exercise yard located on the roof of the facility to

prevent visual observation of inmate activity from the building under construction across the street.

There are expansion plans in place for the Public Safety Center that will provide for additional inmate population housing while allowing the Jail to be renovated. The eventual goal of the Sheriff is to convert the downtown Men's Jail into a court holding facility as expressed in the 20-year plan that was devised prior to the opening of the Public Safety Center in 1993.

- The Grand Jury recommends that the County should look into expanding the food preparation of the facility into areas not currently serviced as a means of generating revenue.

The Central Kitchen provides over 4,500 meals a day to three detention facilities as well as to Amador County through a contract for meal services. Nutrition Services is dedicated to providing meals that comply with dietary guidelines of applicable federal, state and local laws, mandates, and the requirements of their clients as well as meeting the average daily nutritional requirements needed. This past fiscal year, the kitchen produced, packaged and delivered 1,778,399 meals with a budget of \$3,313,591.

We will continue to implement innovative strategies to increase revenue.

***Conclusion***

It has been a pleasure to work with the Civil Grand Jury of 2003/2004 and to see their findings and recommendations as listed in the Grand Jury Final Report.

Sincerely,

LES WEIDMAN, Sheriff-Coroner  
Stanislaus County

By: Mark Puthuff, Assistant Sheriff  
Adult Detention Division

LW:MP:bb

Copy to: Grand Jury Office  
Paul W. Caruso, Chair, Board of Supervisors  
Lee Lundrigan, County Clerk-Recorder