

# **Delta Fire Camp**

## **2003-2004 Grand Jury Report**

### **I. Reason for Investigation**

The California Penal Code §919 (b) mandates that the Grand Jury inquire into the conduct and management of public prisons within the County.

### **II. Procedure**

The Grand Jury:

- Interviewed management personnel, staff and inmates
- Inspected the facility
- Reviewed vocational and educational programs

### **III. Background**

1. The Delta Fire Camp is a joint venture of the California Department of Forestry (CDF) and the California Department of Corrections (CDC).

2. There are 12 fire captains, eight correctional officers, one lieutenant, two sergeants and an administrative assistance.

3. The camp has the capacity of 132 inmates. There are six fire crews of 17 inmates each and 30- 45 inmate support staff. The fire crews are trained and certified in fire fighting.

4. For Northern California Fire Camps, minimum security inmates are recruited only from the Susanville Prison. Inmates convicted of violent or sex crimes are not eligible for the program.

5. Statewide, there are 38 camps: 22 camps throughout Southern California and a total of 16 camps throughout Northern California.

6. Inmates receive \$1.47 per day for work, such as community service, with an additional \$1.00 per hour when working on a fire line.

7. Inmates receive two days off their sentence for every day served in the program.

8. Fire Camp policy provides a positive family visitation program, which includes multi-day visits in an on-site facility.

### **IV. Findings and Recommendations**

*Each finding is referenced to the background paragraph number.*

**Finding #1** - The benefits of being in this program are very desirable to inmates, and thus, minimal security is required at the facility. (3)(4)(6)

**Recommendation #1** – None

**Finding #2** - A house is maintained on site for family visitations. The Fire Camp has a limited budget for furnishings. The camp relies on donations to augment the budget. (8)

**Recommendation #2** – Solicit donations from local service groups and non-profit organizations.

**Finding #3** - Inmates are certified in fire fighting and are eligible to be employed by CDF upon release. (3)

**Recommendation #3** – None

**Finding #4** - When not on the fire lines, inmates perform community service such as roadside clean up, removing vegetation from creeks, etc. In addition, inmates make signs for non-profit and governmental agencies. (6)

**Recommendation #4** – None

## **V. Comments**

The Delta Fire Camp is a good alternative placement for those inmates who meet the qualifications. Inmates who are assigned to this facility experience more privileges than in state correctional facilities.

## **VI. Affected Agencies**

- California Department of Forestry
- California Department of Corrections