



# COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

Recently I spoke before a City Council committee about the Financial Plan. I want to share what I said with you. The plan calls for a \$31 million DOC reduction in this fiscal year. That will annualize to \$58 million in subsequent fiscal years. These are significant reductions, *but they will not dis-able this Department.*

Meeting these reduction targets will be accomplished, in part, through the elimination of 897 uniformed positions and 403 civilian positions and through lowering Other Than Personal Services expenditures by \$1.8 million.

These cuts, while difficult, have forced us to re-examine priorities and more creatively manage limited resources. We are learning how to do more with less. Let me describe how we will accommodate these reductions:

First, to incorporate the proposed reduction of uniformed staff, Chief of Department Taylor has initiated a comprehensive survey to identify uniformed posts which can be eliminated. We are also aggressively seeking ways to incorporate advanced technology as a means both to reduce the need for staffing and to increase facility security. Let me emphasize that in no way will we compromise security of staff, the public or inmates.

Second, we will petition federal court for relief from various burdensome mandates. Example: DOC is under a court order to wash all windows in our facilities four times a year. This costs \$400,000 annually and exceeds reasonable expectations as a minimum standard. To help reduce uniformed posts, we will petition the court to allow us to change the inmates' lock-in schedule, and reduce law library hours -- all currently governed by court decree.

Third -- and this is unfortunate, but necessary -- we will terminate or drastically reduce virtually all non-mandated program services including substance abuse services, non-mandated educational services, the inmate farm, Fresh Start, correctional counseling, and alternatives to incarceration programs including HIIP, STEP, inmate monitoring, and work-release.

I realize these programs have merit. In fact, I had once hoped to expand such services to inmates. However, we can no longer afford to do everything we would like. We must determine priorities. For DOC, as a public safety agency, these priorities begin with performance of our core responsibilities - that is, to maintain a safe and secure environment for the care and control of inmates in our custody. In evaluating programs, it is significant

to note that the average length of stay per inmate has dropped from 66 days in fiscal year 1993 to a current 49 days in October 1994. In fact, over 50% of inmates stay less than seven days in DOC custody. As a result of this trend towards shorter stays, the potential impact of programs is diminished. As this happens, the role of the city and the private sector must be expanded. Deputy Commissioner for Programs, Fred Patrick, is currently working with the DOC's Community Advisory Board members to

## Cuff 'em!

Commissioner Schembri has directed his staff to draft legislative proposals for mandating consecutive prison terms on any inmate convicted of assaulting a Correction officer with a weapon. The Commissioner also has initiated action seeking to keep shackled those inmates so charged.

identify appropriate community-based services for released inmates.

Finally, in addition to the 168 civilian positions reduced by eliminating certain programs, an additional 235 civilians will be eliminated from non-mandated functions to reach our target of 403. I hope this can be achieved through the city's severance program. However, since this program is highly reliant on personal situation and choice, we cannot predict who will opt to leave. Therefore, the operational impact on particular areas in the department is unknown. I do know, however, that the loss of an additional 235 civilians, whether through attrition, severance or redeployment, will significantly challenge the management of this agency.

Together, we will manage the department with the resources available. Unfortunately, at this time, resources are limited. We have been forced to make some difficult decisions. For my part, I assure you, in making decisions, my first priority is safety in our jails. Staff safety and public safety are essential elements of jail safety, not just inmate safety.

## SEVERANCE RE-OPENER

Deadline for new applications to the Severance II Program is COB, Friday, Dec. 2. Those accepted will be notified Monday, Dec. 5.

## Update on OT

The Mayor's Office of Management and Budget reassessed DOC's need for overtime and increased the allocation for FY95 from \$49 million to \$110 million. Meanwhile, OT expenditure, which totaled \$4.9 million for a single pay period only about one month ago, is now running about \$3.8 million per pay period, a 22% reduction due to tighter overtime control.