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PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
SECOND ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM  
ON NEW GENERATION JAILS

National Institute of Corrections  
Jail Center  
Boulder, Colorado

May 8, 1987  
Clearwater, Florida

Edited by Richard Wener & Jay Farbstein

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## INTRODUCTION

In 1986 the National Institute of Corrections sponsored a one day symposium as a part of the annual conference of the American Jail Association, in Seattle, Washington. The goal of the full day meeting was to bring together people who are working in and with "New Generation"/direct supervision jails to share experiences, problems, and solutions. The genesis of the symposium came from a sense that greater interaction among practitioners was needed - that many problems were common, but solutions were not being shared. Facilities were often "re-inventing wheels" rather than learning from the experiences of others.

This first session was by invitation only, and limited to several dozen administrators, researchers, and designers. The goal was to gain the maximum opportunity for open exchange of information, and not to re-create direct versus indirect supervision debates. A proceedings of the meeting was compiled and is available from the NIC Information Center, Boulder, Colorado.

The evaluation of the session showed overwhelming positive response. Facility administrators welcomed the opportunity to speak with their peers and learn what others were doing. Uniformly they requested a repeat of the symposium at the next AJA conference. The only criticisms were from those seeking more detailed information on substantive issues - such as staff training - and from others at the AJA conference who wanted to be able to attend.

In response, the NIC again funded this forum, the **Second Annual Symposium on New Generation Jails**, at the annual AJA conference in Clearwater, Florida, May 1987. This time the session was made open to all who wanted to attend (there were over 100 in attendance). The goals were, again, to bring professionals in direct supervision management together to meet and share information, with a greater emphasis this year on providing greater detail on operation issues. This proceedings is a record of that session.

## ORGANIZATION OF THIS PROCEEDINGS

The symposium consisted of four group sessions and several individual papers, as well as a series of small group "break-out" sessions which were held over lunch. In this proceedings we provide a summary of each of the sessions, a report on the

NIC 2nd Annual Symposium on New Generation Jails  
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session evaluation forms, five presentation papers, and a list of all those attending the symposium. For additional copies of the proceedings of this or the previous symposium, and information about future symposia, please contact:

National Institute of Corrections - Jail Center  
1790 30th Street, Suite 140  
Boulder, Colorado 80301  
(303) 497-6700

VIDEO TAPES OF THE SESSION

The entire day's proceedings were videotaped and professionally edited. The three tape set is available for use and may be obtained by writing Dick Ford, American Jail Association, P.O. Box 2158, Hagerstown, Md. 21742.

**PANEL SUMMARIES**

**INTRODUCTION TO SYMPOSIUM - MIKE O'TOOLE, NIC JAIL CENTER**

The NIC Advisory Board has concluded that Direct Supervision has been very successful, especially in the Federal System and, at the county level, at Contra Costa Main Detention Facility. The NIC Jail Center has taken on the task of recommending that jurisdictions considering new facilities look into direct supervision. To support these jurisdictions, the NIC provides a variety of programs in training and technical assistance, of which this symposium is a part.

NIC has supported this symposium at AJA to:

1. Provide detailed information on important issues in Direct Supervision
2. Provide an opportunity for networking among operators of Direct Supervision facilities.
3. Provide information for those interested in exploring Direct Supervision.

**PANEL 1 STAFF SELECTION AND TRAINING**

**MODERATOR: RICHARD WENER**

**PANEL: SAM SAXTON, PRINCE GEORGES COUNTY, MARYLAND  
DON MANNING, SPOKANE COUNTY, WASHINGTON  
BEN MENKE, WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY, PULLMAN,  
WASHINGTON**

This session presented the experiences of two institutions in selecting officers for a new direct supervision facility. The issues they were responding to were: Do officers for a direct supervision facility need to be specially selected for particular skills? What are the qualities one looks for in officers for direct supervision? What kinds of selection procedures and criteria work best in selection?

Mr. Saxton's presentation described Prince Georges County's effort to review the hiring policies of a number of jurisdictions, and distill from them a set selection principles. They concluded that ideal officer candidates should have some college education; be more mature (over 19 or 20 years old); and be married. He also stressed the need to check references, and be wary of applicants who are looking for a stepping stone to the police force. An extended probationary period is critical in

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PANEL SUMMARIES

judging good candidates. Taking applicants on a facility tour, he noted, often weeds out those who do not really understand the nature of the job, from potential good candidates.

Don Manning and Ben Menke described their experience in designing a selection system for Spokane County jail. Mr. Manning noted that they had to more than double staff in moving to their new facility. Planning for selection began years in advance to the actual move, and made use of criminal justice researchers at the local campus of Washington State University (Ben Menke and Linda Zupan) with technical assistance funds from the NIC (see following summary and paper in proceedings). The traditional county personnel selection system has not proved effective for choosing correctional workers.

The goals of the selection project were to:

1. identify the qualities necessary for a Correctional Officer to work in Direct Supervision;
2. provide structure and training for the selection process;
3. design an evaluation system to measure employee performance and the selection/training process.

Prof. Ben Menke, from Washington State University, described the critical incident technique which was employed to do a job analysis for new generation jail correctional officers, focusing on specific job behaviors. A sample of officers and supervisors were interviewed to describe difficult situations with inmates which have occurred in the past six months, and describe behaviors which led to successful resolutions of incidents. This process revealed 7 dimensions of characteristics and 72 specific behaviors related to successful job performance (see paper in proceedings).

**PANEL 2 TRAINING MID LEVEL MANAGERS AND OFFICERS**

**MODERATOR: MIKE O'TOOLE**

**PANEL: SARAH HEATHERLY AND JEANNIE STINCHCOMB, DADE  
COUNTY, FLORIDA  
GUY PELLICANE, MIDDLESEX COUNTY, NEW JERSEY  
RUSSELL DAVIS, PIMA COUNTY, ARIZONA**

This session focussed on programs to train staff for working in direct supervision facilities. Mr. Pellicane discussed a new NIC supported program to train mid-level managers for their special duties, while Ms. Heatherly and Stinchcomb described the training procedures for officers in Dade County, Florida. The Dade County program, called "investment in excellence", is being used to select 1000 officers for their new detention center, as well as for the 1200 additional beds under construction. The interpersonal communications training program, which is at the core of the program, involves 584 hours of training at the academy, and role playing with staff and actual inmates (see paper in proceedings).

Mr. Pellicane noted that experience has shown that getting mid-level managers to 'buy-in' to the direct supervision model can be a major problem. Major Davis also commented that as the officer develops more control under direct supervision, the supervisor loses control over day to day operation of the living area, and must undergo a major role redefinition. In some ways, these managers have the most radical shift in level and type of responsibilities. In his project for the NIC, Mr. Pellicane's group developed a detailed job description for mid-level managers in direct supervision, based on interviews with line staff, mid-level managers, and administrators. A policy review committee of managers was formed to identify management needs, define job elements, roles, and responsibilities (see paper in proceedings).

**PAPER PRESENTATION**

**PRESENTER: BARBARA KRAUT, NIC JAIL CENTER  
DIRECT SUPERVISION JAILS: INTERVIEWS WITH  
ADMINISTRATORS**

Ms. Kraut described the results of her interviews with a eleven of wardens of direct supervision jails on the importance of maintaining the direct supervision philosophy, the need for training prior to opening, budget allocation for full time transition, the importance of communication, and problems with staff and mid-level managers. The transcripts of these interviews



are compiled in a publication available from the NIC Information Center.

**PANEL 3                    UNIT SIZE, STAFF RATIOS AND DIRECT SUPERVISION**

**MODERATOR: JAY FARBSTAIN**

**PANEL: STEVE CARTER, COLUMBIA, SOUTH CAROLINA**

**RAY NELSON, BOULDER, COLORADO**

**ALAN MINISH, FORT COLLINS, COLORADO**

**TOM BARRY, NEW YORK CITY**

**SAM SAXTON, PRINCE GEORGES COUNTY, MARYLAND**

This goal of this session was to discuss the relationships of unit size, staff-inmate ratio, and staffing levels. A key issue driving much of unit design and operational cost is the allowable population levels of a direct supervision living unit. Does a unit function differently with 48 inmates to 1 officer versus 65 inmates to 1 officer? At what levels do the principals of direct supervision break down? How can maximum efficiency of staff be achieved without sacrificing quality of operation?

The panel represented administrators from jurisdictions operating settings of various sizes - from 35 inmate units to unit with over 65 inmates, as well as planners and designers. Steve Carter discussed the process a jurisdiction needs to go through in approaching decisions on issues such as unit size. He noted the need to identified at what level basic decisions are being made (administration or vendors?), and what management goals the design must help achieve. Management goals must come first so that designs can be tested against operational scenarios (see paper in this proceedings).

Mike O'Toole commented that the number of inmates which one officer can supervise depends on other variables such as the competency of staff, classification procedures, and level of double bunking. Other presenters agreed and noted other related issues. Alan Minish and Tom Barry suggested that the degree of orientation to the institution, disciplinary procedures, and unit design (such as site lines) size of the day area, and shower locations were critical. Sam Saxton noted that the level of effort is greatly affected by the degree of medical care required. He suggested that the AIDS epidemic, and the related care needs it will generate, may overwhelm the ability of many institutions to operate.

PANEL 4                      OVERCROWDING IN DIRECT SUPERVISION

MODERATOR: RICHARD WENER

PANEL: ROGER ROSE, SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

LARRY ARD, CONTRA COSTA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

Like most other jails, direct supervision facilities are often populated beyond intended capacity, at times at double original intended levels. This session was created to bring administrators from facilities experiencing significant overcrowding to discuss its impact on direct supervision. Does overcrowding inhibit the effectiveness of direct supervision? Does direct supervision respond to overcrowding better or worse than indirect models? How can administrators effectively deal with overcrowding?

Roger Rose noted that the population of the San Diego MCC has doubled, to 96 inmates per unit, although facility is functioning well. Much of the population are immigration cases, creating high turnover (100% per month) and language barriers between staff and inmates. He said that rooms with single beds have less violence than those with double bunks, although he felt violence was more related to inmate characteristics than density levels. Their largest problems from crowding comes in the areas of dealing with the levels of attorney and social visits, storage space, and maintenance. He indicated that crowding increases the importance of management visibility on the living units.

Larry Ard noted that the Contra Costs Detention Facility had also doubled in population since opening. As the unit progressively increased in population, staff complained and felt each level (48, 65, and finally 85 inmates) was the maximum possible, but in each case staff adjusted and were able to reasonably handle the population. When the population reached 85 inmates a second officer was added to the unit.

He does not feel the increase in population is without significant consequences. Noise has become a major problem, tension is increased, and mental health and disciplinary problems have increased. He suggested that in dealing with crowding administrators need to increase the amount of televisions available, offer more programs, and work harder to better classify inmates. Planners, he added, should design new institutions so that equipment, space, storage, and other facilities are scaled to possible eventual population levels.

**PAPERS**

1ST PAGE OF MEET ARTICLES

## UNIT SIZE AND INMATE MANAGEMENT FOR DIRECT SUPERVISION

W. Ray Nelson, Criminal Justice Consultant, 3080 Flora Place,  
Denver, Colorado

[Editors' note: Because of time conflicts, Mr. Nelson was only able to submit an outline of his prepared presentation. We felt that his presentation was of sufficient importance to be included in this state.]

### I. Introduction

#### A. Why unit size and staff ratios are such important topics for this symposium.

##### 1. Major elements of two of the eight principles of direct supervision are impacted greatly by size and staffing ratios:

- a. Effective Control
- b. Effective Supervision

They also have significant influence on the other six principles.

- c. Competent Staff
- d. Classification and Orientation
- e. Effective Communication
- f. Safety of Staff and Inmates
- g. Manageable and Cost Effective Operations
- h. Just and Fair

##### 2. What answers should we look for in today's session and in the future?

- a. Would endorsement of an ideal or standard size be desirable?
- b. Would collective professional agreement on a maximum limit for one officer to directly supervise be useful?

- c. What are the measurable characteristics of an effective staff-to-inmate ratio for direct supervision housing units?

## II. Background

### A. General Historical References

1. Determination of effective group size to achieve a collective purpose was needed from the beginning of man's efforts to manage groups of people.
  - a. Roman Legions were organized along the decimal system with Centurions in command of 100 soldiers.
  - b. Most military organizations are organized around platoons of 12 and companies of approximately 50.

### B. Penological References

1. ACA standards - Institutions should not exceed 500. Preferably, prison dormitory should not exceed 16.
2. Conventional practice in western Europe is to limit new correctional institution size to 50.
3. Early unit management practices in California, at the Men's Colony for example, divided large institutions into units of 500.
4. Unit Management doctrine in the U.S. Bureau of Prisons sets 50 as the desirable unit size.

### C. Structural Influence on Unit Size

1. Construction economy considerations call for double decking housing units, two cells sharing a single pipe chase, one shower for eight cells.
2. These considerations normally result in housing units being designed in multiples of four or eight - 32, 36, 40, 44, 48, 52, 60, 64, etc.

### D. Direct Supervision Practice Since 1974

1. Most common size is 48 and most practitioners agree that 48 is a satisfactory span of control.
2. Texas State Jail Standard limits housing unit size to 48.
3. More effective supervision may be achieved with unit sizes less than 48.
  - a. Vancouver, Canada advocates a ratio of 1-24, referring to direct supervision as dynamic supervision, and indeed it is likely to be more dynamic than the practice in the U.S.
  - b. Great Britain's Home Office is introducing direct supervision in their prison system and they have expressed the concern that at some ratio the correctional officer becomes a "guard" rather than what is implied in the role of the correctional officer.
  - c. No doubt smaller size units such as 24 or 32 are more effective than units of 48 or 60, however, in contemporary U.S. correctional practice the standard most commonly striven for is "adequate" not "most effective".
4. Practitioner Perception of Appropriate Unit Size.
  - a. Hundreds of interviews with direct supervision practitioners in NIC audits of new generation jails revealed an almost universal response that the maximum size of a unit should not exceed the maximum size unit in the respondent's facility. The ideal size would be several beds under their maximum size unit. In view of the inconsistency of unit size among the facilities audited, the consistency of the practitioner's response only established a face validity that the maximum unit size is adequate.
  - b. Extreme jail crowding has tested the limits of unit size beyond that contemplated by facility designers. In cases where the extremes of unit size were reached in the Federal System and Contra Costa County, meaningful consistency of response appeared

to occur. The Federal Prison System reported that 90 prisoners on a unit called for a second officer because the administrative demands were too great for one officer. Contra Costa reported the same response at 85 prisoners on a unit.

5. Newer Facilities Increase Unit Size.
  - a. New Federal System facilities and the new Contra Costa facility have increased their unit size to 64.
  - b. The unit size for the new Genessee County Detention Facility in Flint, Michigan will be 62.

### III. Current Issues

- A. Size of the unit in relationship with the size of the facility.
  1. Classification and separation requirements of smaller facilities.
- B. Size of the housing unit in relationship to its function.
  1. Sentenced offenders engaged in programs during the day may function more effectively in a larger unit than pre-trial felony detainees who are on the unit all day long.
- C. Staffing impact of 64 bed units compared with 48 bed units.
  1. Using a 400 bed rated capacity facility as a hypothetical example, example A, with eight 48 bed units (plus a 16 bed medical unit) would require two posts more, or approximately 10 additional officers if the posts were staffed around the clock, than a comparable facility with six 64 bed units.
  2. While the above example applies to the facilities when they are at or around design capacity, the situation changes dramatically when the prisoner

population exceeds 140% of capacity. If the 140% of capacity is distributed evenly over the six 64 bed unit facility, there would be more than 90 inmates on a unit requiring two officers on each unit, for a total of four more posts, or approximately 20 positions, than required to supervise the same population in the eight 48 bed unit facility.

- D. There is a spatial relationship to unit size that needs to be carefully considered.
  - 1. At some point between 48 cells and 64 cells the core space of the unit becomes disproportionate and modifications are made to bring the size of the dayroom into proportions that have compromised sight lines and reduced the manageability of the unit.
  - 2. What physical distance between the officer and inmates being supervised affects the ability of the officer to effectively use his sensory capacity to supervise inmate activity?
- E. What is the relationship between effective staff training and the officer's ability to supervise larger units?

#### IV. Conclusion

While we may not need to arrive at absolute staff to inmate ratios (the military has not achieved that with regard to company or battery size in several millennium), we need to gain additional knowledge about the issues that have been raised.