



Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services

Office of the Secretary

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Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services
Administration - Q00A
Fiscal Year 2022 Operating Budget
Response to Department of Legislative Services Analysis

Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
Public Safety, Transportation and Environment Subcommittee
Senator Cory McCray, Chair
February 18, 2021

House Appropriations Committee
Public Safety and Administration Subcommittee
Delegate Keith Haynes, Chair
February 18, 2021

Contraband:

Issue: DPSCS should comment on the 230% increase in drug contraband finds and provide information on contraband interdiction initiatives, specifically the Drone Detection program and other changes not reflected in the October 5, 2020 report on contraband issued in response to the 2020 Joint Chairmen's Report (JCR).

Response: The increase in drug contraband finds is attributable to an increase in mailroom finds due to the suspension of in-person visitation, the ease by which the predominant contraband interdicted can be concealed, and how the agency reports contraband finds. The Department experienced a 230% increase in contraband recoveries in FY20 largely due to the significant increase in successful, and high volume mailroom interdiction, as well as consolidation of inflow of contraband, particularly with recoveries of diverted prescription buprenorphine film (Suboxone). The challenge of buprenorphine film as a form of contraband is not limited to the Department; smuggling Suboxone into correctional facilities is a national trend. The increase in mailroom recoveries in FY2020 was a response to the elimination of in-person visitation and work release in Spring 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In-person visitation has historically contributed to a significant amount of contraband introduction and requires a robust array of security measures to counteract. In light of the loss of this avenue of entry, outside actors attempting to introduce contraband into DPSCS facilities have

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turned to utilizing mail, especially legal mail, as the most accessible avenue of introducing contraband.

Buprenorphine is available as a sublingual and buccal film, which due to a small and thin design, can be easily concealed in large quantities, even amongst paper products. This has resulted in not only an increase in mailroom recovery occurrences (or finds), but also an increase in the quantity of contraband recovered in a given occurrence. Some reasons for the increase in contraband recovered between FY18 through FY20 included the fact that the Department counts controlled dangerous substances by piece in contraband seizure reporting. In FY19 there were three large-volume seizures of Suboxone that totaled 513 pieces and in FY20 there were 12 large-volume seizures of Suboxone that totaled 2,337 pieces.

In terms of contraband interdiction efforts, the Department has expanded its K-9 Unit from 18 K-9 handlers and 19 K-9s in 2019 to 26 K-9 handlers and 28 K-9s in 2020. This expansion assisted the agency in conducting more K-9 scans in institutional mailrooms for the anticipated increase in contraband smuggling attempts through the mail. The Department also criminally prosecuted significant criminal enterprises through its Investigative and Intelligence Division (IID). During 2020, IID detectives arrested/charged 22 individuals for controlled dangerous substance related violations involving agency facilities. Of the 22 individuals arrested/charged, 14 were current or former correctional officers, five (5) were outside facilitators, and three (3) were inmates.

The Department continues working towards implementation of a drone detection program to further disrupt the potential for contraband smuggling. The program will be used to detect unmanned aerial vehicles that may pose a threat to the safety and security of facilities, persons, or operations of the State and its residents. This will consist of: procurement, installation, testing and deployment of a functioning unmanned aerial vehicle detection system; training on the operation of the System; and maintenance of the System.

The Department of Information and Technology (DoIT) was initially responsible for the project, including the development of the request for proposals. However, the project was transferred to the Department in summer of 2019. Unfortunately, the scope of work and specs developed by DoIT did not take into account certain, specific needs and intricacies involved in operations of correctional facilities.

After conducting additional research, the Department was able to create a more complete and current request for proposals, which included a requirement for onsite

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demonstrations. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, these site demonstrations were delayed due to travel restrictions. They are currently scheduled for March. The vendor selected will be required to provide a timeline for completion.

NG911:

Issue: DPSCS should comment on any new changes to the planned implementation of NG911 across counties, including the number who have achieved full or conditional approval and those who have successfully completed the “go-live” stage.

Response: The Maryland 9-1-1 Board (Board) has provided conditional approval to 10 counties to migrate to NG911. There were delays in vendor interoperability testing that was required by the Board. Lab testing is completed, and testing with the “as built” systems is currently ongoing. Once that testing is done, it should be complete for all Maryland counties. It is anticipated that the first counties will “go-live” in April 2021, barring any complications found during interoperability testing.

One Eastern Shore county has been given conditional approval by the Board. That county issued a request for proposals that the eight (8) other Eastern Shore counties agreed to use. Those counties are currently negotiating contracts with that vendor, and should be submitting their requests to modify their county 9-1-1 plans soon.

At the end of last calendar year, there were six (6) counties that had not selected a vendor. The Board issued deadlines for each of the six (6) counties. Each county met the December 2020 deadline of selecting a procurement process. The second deadline is to begin the procurement process by March 1, 2021. One (1) county has submitted their request for Board consideration at the Board’s February 25, 2021 meeting. The other five (5) are reviewing vendor proposals, and believe that they will meet the Board’s goals.

Recommended Actions

1. **Adopt committee narrative requesting a report on the Justice Reinvestment Act.**

Response: The Department concurs.

Since the full enactment of the Justice Reinvestment Act, the Department has annually reported on the individual performance of its provisions that impact the Department’s

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population. The Department has no issues in compiling the data required in this report, including language on earned compliance credit cost avoidance. Additionally, the Department is compliant with quarterly reporting to the JRA Oversight Board on JRA-related performance measures.

2. Adopt committee narrative requesting a report on position abolishments and reclassifications.

Response: The Department concurs.

3. Adopt committee narrative requesting a report on recidivism.

Response: The Department concurs.

The Department currently provides single year recidivism as part of its comprehensive single year outcomes reported in the Managing for Results, and will continue to do so. In addition to normal annual reporting, the Department agrees that the reinstatement of annual reporting on 3-year recidivism cohort outcomes will be a necessary point of comparison with other state and federal data.