

# **DETENTION FACILITIES REPORT**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Under California Penal Code Section 919(b), county grand juries "...shall inquire into the condition and management of the public prisons within the county." This report contains results of inspections of the jails, detention facilities, and the coroner's facility by the 2015-2016 Santa Barbara County Grand Jury (Jury). These facilities include the following categories:

Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office:

- Coroner's Office
- Santa Barbara County Main Jail

Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Substations:

- Santa Maria Sheriff's Substation
- Isla Vista Foot Patrol Substation
- New Cuyama Substation
- Solvang Substation
- Lompoc Substation

Court Holding Facilities:

- Santa Barbara Court Holding Facility, Figueroa Street
- Santa Maria Court Holding Facility, Cook Street
- Lompoc Court Holding Facility, Cypress Avenue

Santa Barbara County Probation Department:

- La Posada Juvenile Hall, Santa Barbara
- Los Prietos Boys Camp
- Susan J. Gionfriddo Juvenile Center, Santa Maria

Municipal Jails:

- City of Lompoc Jail
- City of Santa Barbara Jail
- City of Santa Maria Jail
- City of Guadalupe "Secure Bench"

## **METHODOLOGY**

In 2015-2016, members of the Jury visited each of the facilities listed in this report. Deputies, police officials, and on-site staff were interviewed and each facility was inspected. The Jury reviewed previous detention facility reports prior to the inspections in order to confirm that issues raised by previous Juries were addressed.

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### **OBSERVATIONS**

#### **General Observations**

##### **Staffing**

The hiring process for all law enforcement agencies is lengthy due to the stringent qualifications for the positions. Recruitment has become more challenging. There are fewer applicants now than in the past. It was reported to the Jury that, out of approximately one hundred applicants who apply for vacant positions, 75 may qualify and of those 75 who pass the initial screening, 80 percent may be eliminated due to failed background checks or medical issues.

The staff interviewed at all facilities were professional, courteous, and knowledgeable. The Jury recognizes the challenges that the decreased staffing has created and commends the staff for the professional manner in which they handle their law enforcement duties. Finally, the jury learned the main jail has a need for more correctional staff, especially female custody officers.

##### **Monitoring**

All facilities appear to make good use of video monitoring equipment, however, not all areas of the facilities have monitoring equipment installed.

#### **Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office**

##### **Coroner's Office**

In 1987 the County of Santa Barbara's (County) Board of Supervisors (BOS) identified an "emergency need" to build a Coroner's Office. The facility was built with County inmate labor. It has been in continuous operation since 1988.

The forensic pathologist who had been commuting to Santa Barbara from Chicago weekly, or as needed, has been hired to work here full time. He is medically licensed in New York, Illinois, and California.

The Jury was informed that autopsies are performed on victims of homicide, infants, and adults (under 55 years of age), with no known medical history and as requested. Approximately 120 autopsies are performed each year.

The 2014-15 Grand Jury wrote a report identifying several issues with the existing Coroner's Office facility. A few of the minor findings and recommendations from that Jury's report were addressed. For example, the opening that previously existed between the office and lab has been walled off. TB testing is now in place and the staff is immunized against common pathogens. There is a backup generator that is adequate to keep refrigeration functioning during a power failure.

However, the Coroner's Office facility remains inadequate in many respects. Most importantly, the ventilation in the autopsy room continues to be deficient and the system has not yet been updated. The Jury learned that the stench can be so bad that employees have had to stand in the parking lot in order to continue working. The BOS has authorized funds to replace the ventilation system, but it is not clear at this time if it will be enough to properly retrofit the current building. Some progress has been made to

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assess the adequacy of the electrical system for the proposed air handling system. Additionally, there is no transition room for staff to remove protective clothing and clean up. At this time, the staff does this outside the building in the open.

These minor corrective actions already taken and those in the planning stages are not adequate long term solutions to the poor condition of the Coroner's Office. The Jury was told that planning for a new Coroner's Office facility has been raised to the top of the County's capital improvement project request list.

### **Santa Barbara County Main Jail**

The Main Jail (Jail) houses pretrial detainees as well as sentenced inmates. Pretrial detainees are arrestees awaiting to post bail, appear in court for arraignment, or stand trial. During the Jury's inspection of the Jail the Jury learned that up to 75% of the inmates in jail at any time are in this classification. It is a facility with male and female offenders housed separately. While the Jail population fluctuates, the final report by CGL Companies dated October 22, 2015 states that the Jail had a rated capacity of 847 with an average daily population of 834<sup>1</sup>. The Jail receives prisoners from all areas of Santa Barbara County.

The oldest section of the jail is dated and overcrowded. It has insufficient video monitoring as only the main corridors are monitored. Some inmates are sleeping in plastic structures that are on the floor and are commonly called "boats" as (see Figure 1). The Jury noted the presence of bedding on the floor in the hallway of one of the newer sections.



*Figure 1. A Typical "Boat"*

The Medium Security section was crowded and hot as there is no air conditioning in this section.

Other items the Jury noted include:

- No drug screening, even though they have admitted drug use in the facility
- Fire inspections are done annually
- Religious services are provided by volunteer religious leaders

The staff was professional and the jail seemed to be well run.

### Kitchen

The newly remodeled kitchen is well designed. It is clean, has new equipment, with ample room to work, and substantial refrigeration and dry storage space. The Sheriff's Office contracts with a private company, Aramark, for food services. The Jury learned that this service works well, with excellent staff and inmate workers.

### Medical Services

Services for inmates are contracted through Corizon Health and provided by: "one full time administrator; one full time Director of Nursing; one on call physician; one subcontracted backup physician; seven full time Registered Nurses; two part time Registered Nurses; three full time Licensed

<sup>1</sup> Jail Staffing and Cost Analysis Santa Barbara County Final Report, CGL Companies, October 22, 2015

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Vocational Nurses; one part time Licensed Vocational Nurse; one full time Administrative Assistant; and three full time Medical Records Clerks. Complete dental facilities are provided for a dentist who is scheduled at the Jail once a week<sup>2</sup>.” The medical facility has at least one nurse on duty 24 hours a day, seven days a week. A doctor is at the facility three half days a week and on call 24 hours a day for the rest of the week. All inmates are expected to be medically screened on intake. There is no medical dorm, but because the South Dorm is located close to the medical clinic and has wider doors, it is used to house inmates with medical needs and those with limited mobility. This area was in disarray when the Jury visited. Inmates were just standing around with bedding on the floor and the room was generally unkempt. Some inmates were sleeping on the floor with “boats” for beds. The Sheriff’s custodial staff interviewed was satisfied with the job that Corizon Health is doing, stating that “they are as good as any of the other medical service vendors.”

### Other

As in past years, the Jury was notified of and observed overcrowded conditions in the Jail. The new Northern Branch Jail, currently scheduled to be open in 2018, will ease overcrowding. Once the new facility is operational, sections of the existing Jail may be shut down. There is a need for a rehabilitation program for long-term inmates due to AB 109 realignment. The only real job training that they can get in the facility is in the kitchen.

## **Santa Barbara County Sheriff’s Substations:**

### **Santa Maria Sheriff’s Substation**

The Santa Maria Sheriff’s Substation is an older facility built in the 1950’s. It is slated for retirement when the Northern Branch Jail is built. The building shows signs of wear (chipped paint, dated equipment). However, it was serviceable, clean, and well maintained for the age of the structure. It was designed to house up to 40 inmates, but is currently only used to house up to ten arrestees (for a maximum of 12 hours) awaiting transfer to the Jail. Since it was downgraded to a holding facility, last year’s Jury recommendations are no longer applicable. The day of the Jury’s visit there was one arrestee with a second being processed. Both were scheduled for transfer to Santa Barbara that day. Two to three custody officers are normally on duty to handle and process the arrestees.

### Medical Services

Along with visual observation, a medical questionnaire is completed during intake. Arrestees with a medical condition such as diabetes are not held in this facility but are immediately transferred to the Jail. Any arrestee needing urgent medical care is taken to Marian Regional Medical Center. If this occurs, medical clearance is obtained prior to transfer to the Jail. Custody officers also look at available previous booking histories for medical problems.

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.sbsheriff.org/mainjail.html>

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### Kitchen

A fully equipped kitchen is available, but is unused due to reduced numbers of inmates. Inspection records indicated that the kitchen had not been used since April, 2015. Bag meals consisting of two sandwiches, fruit, and milk were available and provided daily by the Jail. During the Jury visit, labeling on packages indicated that they had been prepared that morning.

### Other

It was observed that a medication drop box was overflowing outside the main door to the jail. This was brought to the attention of the jail staff. A follow up that day by a Jury member indicated that the drop box was still full. The Jury member followed up again the next morning, and the drop box had been emptied. The Jury is pleased that since its visit, new medication drop boxes (see Figure 2) have been installed at all County locations.



*Figure 2 New Medical Dropbox*

### **Isla Vista Foot Patrol Substation**

The Isla Vista (IV) Foot Patrol facility has two holding cells that are seldom used because detainees are transported to the Santa Barbara County Jail. The facility is relatively new, well-kept, and located strategically near the border with the University of California at Santa Barbara (UCSB). There are 21 Sheriff's Deputies and office staff members assigned to the station, including two deputies on bike patrol. California Highway Patrol Officers and UCSB Campus Police collaborate on a daily basis.

A new email system has been established by the IV staff called Property Email Notification (PEN) to notify property owners in advance of large gatherings in IV. This allows property owners time to place temporary protective fencing around their property to protect against vandalism.

Isla Vista Halloween activities in 2015 were kept under control. Local, regional and state law enforcement were activated as in past years to deal with potentially large groups. UCSB sponsored several concerts on campus that presented alternative activities for the students. The City of Goleta and IV Foot Patrol enforced restricted parking, which provided an additional deterrent for out of town visitors. Members of the Jury who observed the Halloween activities found law enforcement personnel to be professional and patient in doing a difficult job.

### **New Cuyama Substation**

There are two Sheriff's Deputies assigned to the facility. Both were raised in New Cuyama and are active members of the community. Hence, they have a higher awareness of community problems and can quickly address them. It was reported to the Jury that although they have the same problems as the rest of the county proportionally speaking, they make fewer arrests. This is attributed to their involvement with the community. Law enforcement in New Cuyama could be used as a model of true "community policing."



*Figure 3 New Cuyama Sheriff's Substation*

The substation is an adequate facility for its use. It

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is a rustic looking facility, reminiscent of an old west sheriff's office (see Figure 3) with the brands of the local ranches burned into the weathered wood paneling. The single holding cell is in good condition. No discrepancies were noted. The last time the holding cell was used was in 2011 and that was for less than one hour. The officers usually transport arrestees directly to the Santa Maria Sheriff's Substation.

### **Solvang Substation**

The Solvang Sheriff's Substation consists of a single holding cell. The facility was clean with no discrepancies noted. The facility is adequately staffed. The staff is satisfied with the facility and stated that it fulfills its purpose. The interview room doubles as a holding cell when there are females or juveniles that need to be separated from other arrestees.

### **Lompoc Substation**

The Lompoc Sheriff's Substation is located on Harris Grade Road just outside the city limits of Lompoc. Built in 2008, it is a fairly new facility. There are two interview rooms that are used as holding cells. They are secure, but since they are interview rooms, they have no toilet or washbasin. The arrestee has to be escorted to the restroom across the hallway from the interview rooms. It was reported to the Jury that the maximum hold time for an arrestee is six hours.

## **Court Holding Facilities**

### **Lompoc Court Holding Facility, Cypress Street**

The holding facility consists of five cells. Three of the cells are used to separate inmates who cannot be housed with others due to gender, medical or other reasons. There is video monitoring of all the cells, but no recording capability. Other than this one issue, no other deficiencies were noted.

### **Santa Barbara Court Holding Facility, Figueroa Street**

The holding facility is used to hold inmates while they wait for arraignment or trial. It is located in the basement of the Figueroa Street Courthouse. The inmates are brought from the transport vehicle through a secure area. The deputies constantly have to shuffle the inmates due to lack of space. Inmates in restraints have to be walked across Figueroa Street to the courtroom, posing a security and safety risk to the public. The facility is old and in need of updating. It is an inadequate facility.

### **Santa Maria Court Services Holding Facility, Cook Street**

The Santa Maria court holding facility is an old but serviceable facility that serves the courthouse in downtown Santa Maria. The facility is only open on court days and can accommodate up to 110 inmates. No deficiencies were noted during the grand jury visit.

## **Santa Barbara County Probation Department:**

### **La Posada Juvenile Hall, Santa Barbara**

La Posada is currently used as a temporary holding facility in Santa Barbara for the South County juvenile offenders held at the Santa Maria Juvenile Justice Center while they wait to attend court. There is a small courtroom used several times a week for the juveniles. This facility was previously the juvenile facility for the entire county.

The facility has 60 cells which can accommodate up to six juveniles each, if needed. This facility has

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also been used when the Los Prietos Boys Camp was evacuated due to fires. There is a large modern kitchen which can prepare a large number of meals three times a day.

### **Susan J. Gionfriddo Juvenile Justice Center, Santa Maria**

This is a maximum security facility for youthful offenders, both male and female, ranging from 12 to 18 years of age. The facility has six units with a total capacity of 140. At the time of the Jury's visit, there were 54 minors in custody with an average age of 16 years. Medical services are available seven days per week and are contracted with Corizon Health. The facility has an extensive video surveillance system that is monitored centrally by a Sheriff's Deputy who also controls the movement at each doorway.

The Juvenile Justice Center is sufficiently staffed. All areas were clean and well maintained. The older section is used for special group programs for females. No discrepancies were noted.

### **Los Prietos Boys Camp**

Los Prietos Boys Camp was established in 1944. It is located on seventeen acres in the Los Padres National Forest. It is a correctional/treatment program for males between the ages of 13 and 18. The facility is clean, in good condition, and well organized. The camp is well-staffed and well-run. It currently has 47 staff members who supervise approximately 50 boys. It was reported to the Jury that the camp has the capability of housing approximately twice that number of youth and is underutilized. The youth are remanded by the court for either a 120 day or 180 day program. However, they can be there for up to a year depending on their behavior.

The camp is run in a military style with a rigid schedule. This provides structure in the lives of boys who may not have had such structure before. The Santa Barbara County Education Office operates Los Robles High School onsite. The school provides remedial education and helps the youth to continue their high school education while at the camp. High school graduates are offered online college course work. In addition, there is work experience and vocational training in the areas of culinary arts, forestry, wood cutting and splitting for resale, and print shop operations. Scholarships offered by local service organizations are available for camp youth to continue their education.

The camp has many counseling programs and services to help the boys prepare to reenter society. Medical and mental health services are contracted through Corizon Health. It was reported to the Jury that almost all of the boys at the camp are there for drug related offenses. Los Prietos Boys Camp is a model for what can be done to help troubled youth in contrast to incarceration only.

## **Municipal Jails**

### **City of Lompoc Jail**

This facility was opened in 1959, has seven cells and is rated for 23 beds. Three cells are designated for females, one of which is a sobering cell. Four cells are designated for males, one of which is a sobering cell. There is also a booking area, a small kitchen, and a sally port which is a secure, controlled entryway for the intake and transfer of prisoners. Meals are commercial, retail, prepackaged, and frozen (TV dinners). The Jury was told a new software system is scheduled to be installed that would update their booking process. There is a motion sensing video monitoring system for the hallways that only comes on and records when it senses movement.

On December 3, 2015, the staff of the California Board of State and Community Corrections conducted

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its 2014-2016 biennial inspection of the Lompoc City Jail. It was found to be compliant with fire inspection, health inspection, and physical plant inspection. The inspection found the facility to be compliant in all areas in regard to policies, procedures, and practices. It was noted that “The Jail was clean and well-kept.”<sup>3</sup>

### **Lompoc Police Department**

The Lompoc Police Department building was built in 1987 around the preexisting jail. The building has exceeded its planned operational capacity. Several closets have been converted to offices. Dispatch has two workstations that are so close to each other that conversations can be heard over both telephone lines when operators are communicating with officers and callers. The furniture and equipment in dispatch needs to be replaced. There is not enough storage space in the evidence room. Several home style refrigerator/freezers are being used and are full. The evidence room needs commercial sized refrigerated storage.

The Lompoc Police Department has difficulty recruiting new officers because they cannot offer the wages and benefits competitive with departments in other areas of the county and state. The department is using interns to convert all their hardcopy records to digital.

All of these issues need to be promptly addressed by the Lompoc City Council who should begin planning to update and or replace this structure.

### **City of Santa Barbara Jail**

The Santa Barbara Police Department has two holding cells which are clean, but dated. There is acoustical foam on the ceiling to limit the noise. There is video surveillance of the cells. The cells are used to detain arrestees until they can be transported to the Jail. There are several interview rooms which are small, but serve their purpose. Arrestees with medical issues are taken to Cottage Hospital for evaluation and treatment prior to final processing. No discrepancies were noted.

### **City of Santa Maria Jail**

The Santa Maria Police Department that serves a population of over 102,000 people is located in a new, state of the art facility converted from a former aerospace building. The City Council of Santa Maria and the police chief have shown fiscal responsibility in the funding and use of the facility. The department receives additional funding by leasing server space and communication bandwidth to other public service entities. The facility is not completed. It is operational; but cameras, a shooting range, and a few minor projects are still in progress. The facility represents a huge improvement over the old facility, which was built in 1953 for a community of less than 15,000 people.

The holding facility is used for booking and short-term holds until the arrestee can be transferred. The two cells, designed to hold up to eight arrestees, were unoccupied at the time of the Jury’s visit. The medical intake procedure consists of a verbal questionnaire form as well as observations by the processing officer. The detainees with medical issues are referred to Marian Regional Medical Center. No food is served at the facility since arrestees are only there for a few hours.

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<sup>3</sup> Board of State and Community Corrections, 2014-2016 Biennial Inspection, Lompoc Police Department, January 7, 2016

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### City of Guadalupe “Secure Bench”

The City of Guadalupe does not have a holding cell but has a secured bench, (see Figure 4) that is used to restrain arrestees while they are being booked. The arrestees are processed and transported directly to the Santa Maria Sheriff's Substation or the Jail. If an arrestee is violent or uncooperative, they are kept in a patrol vehicle until transported. The area that includes the bench has video surveillance.

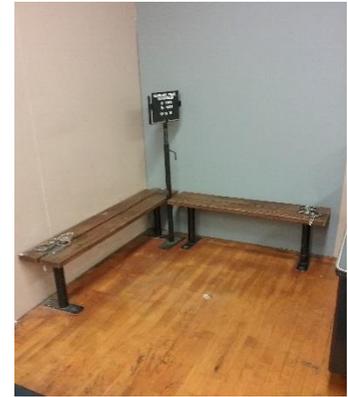


Figure 4 The “Secure Bench”

The only issue noted was the transport time, which can take a police officer out of the city for extended periods. It was reported to the Jury that on the day before its visit, the turnaround time to take an arrestee to the Jail took nine hours due to the travel distance and the time it took to obtain medical clearances. When the Northern Branch Jail is built, it will alleviate the extended turnaround time problem

## CONCLUSIONS

The 2015-2016 Santa Barbara County Grand Jury wishes to express its appreciation to the law enforcement officers and support personnel that aided the Jury in the inspections of the detention facilities within Santa Barbara County. The Grand Jury inspected detention facilities throughout Santa Barbara County and was impressed with the new City of Santa Maria Police Station. However, the Grand Jury found that some of the issues identified in past years continue to be unresolved, such as overcrowding at the Santa Barbara County Main Jail, and the dismal and unhealthy condition of the Coroner's Office facility. In addition, there were several new areas identified by this year's Jury that need improvement, such as the police department facility in Lompoc and the Lompoc Court holding facility.

## FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Finding 1

The drug drop box at the Santa Maria Sheriff's Substation was not properly maintained.

### Recommendation 1

That the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's staff regularly monitor and maintain the new drug drop off boxes throughout the County.

### Finding 2

The Coroner's Office urgently needs a new facility.

### Recommendation 2

That the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors immediately allocate funding for a new facility.

### Finding 3

The Lompoc Court Holding Facility does not have recording capability on its video surveillance system.

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### **Recommendation 3**

That the Santa Barbara County Sheriff obtain and install video recording equipment in the Lompoc Court Holding Facility.

### **Finding 4**

The Lompoc Police Department refrigerated storage for evidence is inadequate.

### **Recommendation 4**

That the Lompoc City Council provide funding for the Police Department to purchase commercial grade refrigeration and freezer units that will meet the current and future needs for evidence storage.

### **Finding 5**

The City of Lompoc's Police Department building is inadequate for its operational needs.

### **Recommendation 5**

That the Lompoc City Council update or replace the Police Department building.

## **REQUEST FOR RESPONSE**

Pursuant to *California Penal Code Section 933 and 933.05*, the Jury requests each entity or individual named below to respond to the enumerated findings and recommendations within the specified statutory time limit:

### **Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors – 90 days**

Finding 2

Recommendation 2

### **Santa Barbara County Sheriff – 60 days**

Findings 1 and 3

Recommendations 1 and 3

### **City of Lompoc City Council – 90 days**

Findings 4 and 5

Recommendations 4 and 5