

PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT

Using Inmate Labor for Construction And Remodeling Projects

**A Report to the Legislative Post Audit Committee
By the Legislative Division of Post Audit
State of Kansas
March 1986**

Legislative Post Audit Committee

Legislative Division of Post Audit

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OBTAINING AUDIT INFORMATION

This audit was conducted by Rick Riggs, Auditor, of the Division's staff. If you need any additional information about the audit's findings, please contact Mr. Riggs at the Division's offices.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SUMMARY OF AUDIT FINDINGS

**USING INMATE LABOR FOR CONSTRUCTION
AND REMODELING PROJECTS**

How Cost Effective Has Inmate Labor Been for Construction
And Remodeling Projects?1

What Plans Are There, If Any, for Using Inmate Labor On A
Broader Scale for State Construction and Remodeling
Projects, and What Are the Limitations of Doing So?4

Conclusion9

Recommendation9

**APPENDIX A: Some Major State Facilities Within 60 Miles
Of State Correctional Institutions.....11**

APPENDIX B: Agency Response13

USING INMATE LABOR FOR CONSTRUCTION AND REMODELING PROJECTS

Summary of Legislative Post Audit's Findings

From July 1982 to December 1985, the Department of Corrections spent more than \$25 million on 30 major construction and remodeling projects in Kansas correctional institutions. A major portion of these projects were done with inmate labor, a practice that Department officials say saves money and reduces inmate idleness. This audit was requested to determine how cost effective inmate labor has been, the limitations of the practice, and the Department's future plans for using inmate labor.

How cost effective has inmate labor been for construction and remodeling projects? Inmates did at least some work on most of the Department's construction and remodeling projects in the last few years. For the smaller projects, inmates frequently provided all the labor. The auditors' review showed that using inmate labor saved the Department from 29 percent to 84 percent of the projects' estimated cost; the average saved was 45 percent for the work examined. Department officials use a 40 percent average savings figure as a guide when estimating the cost of inmate-labor projects. Doing construction and remodeling with inmate workers may result in less money being spent, or in getting more for the same money.

What plans are there, if any, for using inmate labor on a broader scale for State construction and remodeling projects, and what are the limitations of doing so? The Department plans to continue using inmates on a number of future construction and remodeling projects at correctional institutions, but has no plans to greatly expand the use of inmate labor for other State projects. Use of inmate labor is severely limited by several factors including availability of skilled inmates and supervisory staff, funding, and the availability of housing and meals for inmates away from the institution. Keeping these limitations in mind, the auditors were able to identify a number of potential job sites at State universities, hospitals, and other institutions within a reasonable distance from State correctional facilities. The audit recommends that the Department work with the Division of Architectural Services to identify other possible jobs for inmate workers.



USING INMATE LABOR FOR CONSTRUCTION AND REMODELING PROJECTS

From July 1982 to December 1985, the Department of Corrections spent more than \$25 million on 30 major construction and remodeling projects in Kansas correctional institutions. A major portion of the work on many of these projects was done with inmate labor, a practice that Department officials say saves money and reduces inmate idleness. The apparent savings stemming from the use of inmate labor has drawn legislative interest in its cost effectiveness and limitations, and in any plans the Department may have to expand the use of inmate workers in construction and remodeling projects. As a result of this interest, the Legislative Post Audit Committee directed the Legislative Division of Post Audit to conduct a performance audit addressing the following questions:

1. **How cost effective has inmate labor been for construction and remodeling projects?**
2. **What plans are there, if any, for using inmate labor on a broader scale for State construction and remodeling projects, and what are the limitations of doing so?**

To answer these questions, the auditors interviewed officials of the Department and directors of Kansas correctional facilities, and reviewed Department and institution budget documents. In general, the auditors found that inmate labor has been very cost effective for the Department, although its use is limited by a variety of factors. They also found that the Department plans to continue using inmates for institutional construction and renovation projects. The Department has no immediate plans to use inmate labor on a broader scale, although the auditors determined that other State projects may exist for which the use of inmate labor could be considered. These findings are discussed in detail in the following sections.

How Cost Effective Has Inmate Labor Been For Construction and Remodeling Projects?

To answer this question, the auditors reviewed the cost estimates for the Department's capital improvement projects prepared by the Division of Architectural Services, private architects, or the Department. The auditors then compared these estimates with actual total costs for the projects. Inmates did at least some work on most of the Department's projects; for the smaller ones, inmates frequently provided all the labor. Department officials say that the use of inmate labor generally saves about 40 percent of total costs on construction and renovation projects; the auditors' comparison showed actual savings ranging from 29 percent to 84 percent. Use of inmate labor does not always result in less money being spent; sometimes, the Department has been able to get more facilities for the same money.

Using Inmate Labor Has Resulted in Significant Savings

Kansas prison inmates have done demolition, site preparation, and much of the basic construction and finish work for most of the prison facilities built and remodeled in the past few years. Department officials have also used inmates for most of the facilities' special and routine maintenance. Inmates are paid a daily wage, called incentive pay, of 45 cents to \$1.05 depending on their skill level, ability, and the nature of the job assignment. The Department pays inmates for each day they are available for work regardless of the amount of work available. For this reason, the Department considers inmate pay to be an overhead

cost, and normally does not figure it into the cost of construction projects. In the same way, institutional engineering and maintenance staff who supervise the inmate workers are also paid their normal salary, which is not figured into the cost of the project. Therefore, materials represent the main cost of projects done with inmate labor.

By reviewing institution records and interviewing Department officials, the auditors found that actual savings from the use of inmate-labor varied. The following table shows for a number of recent construction and renovation projects the architects' estimated contract cost, the appropriated amount, and the actual amount spent by the Department.

**Recent Inmate-Labor Projects: Actual Costs Compared To
Architects' Original Estimates**

<u>Construction/ Remodeling Project</u>	<u>Architects' Estimated Cost</u>	<u>Appropriated Amount</u>	<u>Estimated or Actual Total Cost</u>	<u>Percent Savings Over the Architect Estimate</u>
<u>Penitentiary</u>				
C Cellhouse renovation:	\$ 1,049,248	\$ 695,915	\$ 619,984	41 %
Inside Service Bldg. renovation:	1,455,278	850,000	639,796	56
North Tower relocation:	89,750	81,000	14,498	84
<u>Medium Security Facility</u>				
Vocational Education Building	493,400	423,400	266,100	46
<u>Industrial Reformatory</u>				
96-bed Minimum Security Facility:	<u>1,014,229</u>	<u>995,000</u>	<u>716,365</u>	<u>29</u>
Total:	\$ 4,101,905	\$ 3,045,315	\$ 2,256,743	45 %

As the table shows, the projects completed using inmate labor for which an architect's estimate was available cost from 29 percent to 84 percent less with an average savings of about 45 percent. In some cases, the actual amount appropriated was based on the assumption that inmate labor would be used on at least some parts of the project. For example, the appropriation for renovating "C" cellhouse was 66 percent of the architect's estimate, a cutback that assumed extensive use of inmate labor for the renovation. Many recent construction and renovation projects are not included in the table because the Department always intended to complete them with inmate labor; thus, no contract cost estimate was ever prepared.

The 45 percent average savings figure shown in the table is consistent with Department estimates. Taking into account architects' fees and any other skilled work that must be contracted out, Department officials estimate that using inmate labor generally saves the State about 40 percent of a project's cost. This average savings figure is used when requesting appropriations to reduce the "contract cost" estimate of the project, prepared by

the architect, to the estimated actual cost. Department officials with prison construction experience in other states say that the 40 percent savings figure generally holds true elsewhere as well.

Use of Inmate Labor May Result In Less Money Being Spent, Or In Getting More For the Same Money

The cost effectiveness of inmate labor can take different forms. Department officials noted that when appropriations are made for a specific and limited project such as a dormitory renovation, extra moneys are not spent, resulting in an actual savings to the State. On the other hand, the use of inmate labor for major construction projects may result in getting more facilities for the same money. In discussions with Department officials, the auditors noted the following examples:

- At the medium security facility under construction at Kansas State Penitentiary, officials said it became apparent to them during construction that the facility needed a temporary visitor's building, something not provided for in the facility's original plan. Because inmate labor had been used on some portions of the project originally budgeted for construction by contract workers, enough extra money was available to construct the needed building--using all inmate labor.
- Savings from inmate labor allowed officials of the Kansas State Industrial Reformatory to get more than 10,000 additional square feet of floor space within the budgeted cost of the 96-bed minimum security facility. Officials said that the original plan--estimated at \$1,014,000 using contractors--called for 14,900 square feet of modular housing units with a seven-year life expectancy. The project's total appropriation was \$995,000. By doing the job entirely with inmate labor, officials said that the institution got 25,500 square feet of permanent housing space, with an indefinite lifespan, within the appropriated amount.
- Sometimes the use of inmate labor allows the Department to do the budgeted construction while avoiding cost overruns. At the Correctional Institution at Lansing, officials used inmate labor to complete the 1984 renovation of "B" building's third floor within the allocated \$124,000. By doing an estimated \$23,700 worth of work, inmate labor kept the project within its budget.
- When the El Dorado honor camp was being built, some originally planned construction had to be curtailed because of inflation. Department officials said that using inmate labor stretched the money available for construction, although it did not result in any fewer dollars being spent.

Inmates Have Participated In Most Recent Construction And Remodeling Projects

Depending on the skills they possess, inmates can handle many parts of a construction and remodeling project. For example, under supervision of prison engineering staff, inmates have erected entire new buildings, such as the Penitentiary's new visitor's building and the Reformatory's new housing unit. For these buildings, they poured the foundations, performed rough and finish carpentry, installed much of the roofing, wiring, and plumbing, painted all walls, and did most other finish work. At the Penitentiary's medium-security facility, inmates paved all roads, sidewalks, and parking lots, pouring and forming the concrete by hand. They installed the fencing around the new institution, and finished the interior of the warehouse and one of the two 64-seat dining halls. Inmates even took down the Penitentiary's north guard tower, poured a new foundation, and moved the tower to its new location. The cost of moving the tower: \$14,500, 16 percent of the estimated cost if contractors had done the job.

**What Plans Are There, If Any, For Using Inmate Labor On a Broader Scale
For State Construction and Remodeling Projects,
And What Are the Limitations of Doing So?**

In general, the auditors found that the Department plans to continue to use inmates for Department construction and remodeling projects, and plans in a few instances to provide inmate labor for non-Department projects. However, the use of inmate labor is limited by inmate skill levels, the availability of security and work supervision personnel, and by other factors. These findings are discussed in detail in the following sections.

**The Department Has No Plans To Greatly Expand
The Use of Inmate Labor**

The Department plans to continue using inmates internally for current and future Department construction and remodeling projects. The following table lists the major Department construction and remodeling projects, and the degree to which inmate labor will be used.

Use of Inmate Labor On Future Department Projects

Planned Capital Improvement Project	Proportion of Inmate Labor
Topeka Pre-Release Center-- Addition of 16-bed dormitory	All
Reception and Diagnostic Center-- new office building; renovate third floor	90 percent
Ellsworth institution-- all construction	some; exact amount unknown
Oskaloosa meat packing plant-- complete renovation (if obtained)	all
Industrial Reformatory-- renovate infirmary	all
Correctional Institution at Lansing-- construct new 120-bed housing unit, and food service/ support services building	some; exact amount unknown

As the table shows, all the Department's currently planned major building projects will involve the use of at least some inmate labor. In addition, the Department is considering other possible projects, including remodeling jobs at the Wichita State Office Building and Law Enforcement Training Center, restoration of a railroad tourist attraction, and creation of permanent inmate work crews.

Wichita State Office Building. Honor camp officials are considering doing some demolition and remodeling at this facility. The work would involve demolition of existing walls, reinstallation of new walls and ceilings, and so on, along with painting and other remodeling tasks. Officials at the Division of Architectural Services could not provide the auditors with a firm estimate, but said that the use of inmates could result in

"meaningful" savings. Honor camp officials are also considering doing some landscaping at the Wichita campus of the University of Kansas Medical Center.

Law Enforcement Training Center. Department officials say that they are considering a proposal to do some renovation work at the Center, and that inmates might be able to do many, but not all, of the needed remodeling and construction tasks. Department personnel say that inmates could do needed demolition and concrete work, for example, but probably could not replace the roof. Officials caution that a number of security concerns, such as the storage of ammunition at the Center, remain to be resolved.

Rail line restoration. Local officials in Ford County have proposed that El Dorado honor camp inmates repair a 26-mile stretch of railroad track between Dodge City and Buckland, and restoration of an old locomotive and rail cars for use as a tourist attraction. Repair of the track and restoration of the equipment could take a year or more according to Department officials.

Creation of permanent roving work crews. Members of the Legislature's Joint State Building Construction Committee have reportedly discussed with the Department the possibility of creating permanent inmate razing crews and roofing crews, and even a mobile honor camp, designed to do demolition and roofing on government buildings and groundskeeping at State parks and rest areas.

In the past, Department officials have generally not been receptive to the idea of permanent mobile work crews, citing concerns about inmate safety, funding for staff subsistence and equipment, and a shortage of skilled inmates. During the course of this audit, however, the Secretary of Corrections said he has again been investigating the possibility of creating permanent mobile work crews. Such inmate crews have a potential to be cost effective, but the cost effectiveness of inmate labor has inherent limitations. These limits are even more pronounced when considering construction and remodeling projects away from the correctional institution.

The Kinds of Jobs For Which Inmates Can Be Used Are Sharply Limited By a Number of Factors

Although Department officials are enthusiastic about potential cost savings using inmate labor, they caution that inmates are not suitable for all kinds of work and all work settings. Officials pointed out a number of limiting factors, briefly described below, that limit the effectiveness of inmate labor in all work settings.

Many inmates lack adequate skills. Some prison directors expressed reservations about the level of work they would trust to inmates. With the possible exception of the Penitentiary, few inmates at the correctional institutions have building trades experience. Further, institutional training programs are not designed to produce journeyman-level skills. Because even relatively simple remodeling jobs often involve critical electrical or plumbing work, many construction and renovation projects contain elements beyond the ability of most inmates. Also, because each inmate must be supervised, one institution director said that for small jobs it may be faster and more cost effective to just have the supervisor do the work in the first place.

Most institutions have too few maintenance staff to take on the additional job of supervising large inmate crews. Inmates require more supervision than contract workers; one director said that in his opinion 10 inmates are the most it is safe to have under each supervisor, and most institutions have a very limited number of maintenance and engineering workers. Using these staff to supervise inmate

construction and remodeling crews often results in deferral of needed institutional maintenance. For major projects, such as the new medium security prison, additional personnel are usually hired to supervise inmates.

Institutions generally do not have the tools and equipment needed for most construction and remodeling jobs. Although most institutions have hand and power tools normally needed for routine maintenance, they do not have heavy equipment or specialized tools. In some cases, institution staff rent any required special equipment or purchase it as a budgeted expense of the project. In these instances, the equipment is then available for future jobs.

Inmate workers may take longer than contract workers to do the same job. A North Carolina study reviewed by the auditors concluded that the usefulness of inmate labor is limited by the extra time required. Kansas prison officials acknowledged that in some cases inmates require more time to do a job, because they are often less proficient than their counterparts in the private sector. On the other hand, Department officials said that because of the extra time taken and the additional supervision, the quality of inmate work is often as good as, or better than, the work of contractors.

Construction and Remodeling Projects Away From the Institution Impose Additional Limitations On Inmate Labor

For those construction and remodeling jobs that take place away from a correctional institution, Department officials also pointed out a number of additional limitations that should be considered when evaluating the cost effectiveness of inmate labor.

The time and vehicles required for transporting inmates to the job site often reduces the number of inmates who can be assigned, and shortens their workday. Most institutions have a limited number of vehicles. Many of the ones used to transport inmate crews are older-model buses or trucks that are often unreliable at highway speeds or over long distances. Also, a long daily drive shortens the workday, and may require subsistence pay for institution staff.

Some institutions cannot spare correctional officers to accompany work crews. Outside the institution, security personnel must accompany all inmate crews. In some cases, a shortage of available officers may curtail the number of inmates who can leave the grounds. For example, one institution director said that he had recently been forced to deny a funeral pass because he did not have sufficient correctional personnel to escort the inmate.

Providing meals and lodging to inmates away from the institution is difficult and expensive. For worksites within driving distance, the inmates usually receive breakfast and supper at the institution. The institution provides a sack lunch. Projects that involve an overnight stay are more difficult to arrange. Inmates must be housed and fed at other State facilities or at the county jail at the State's expense.

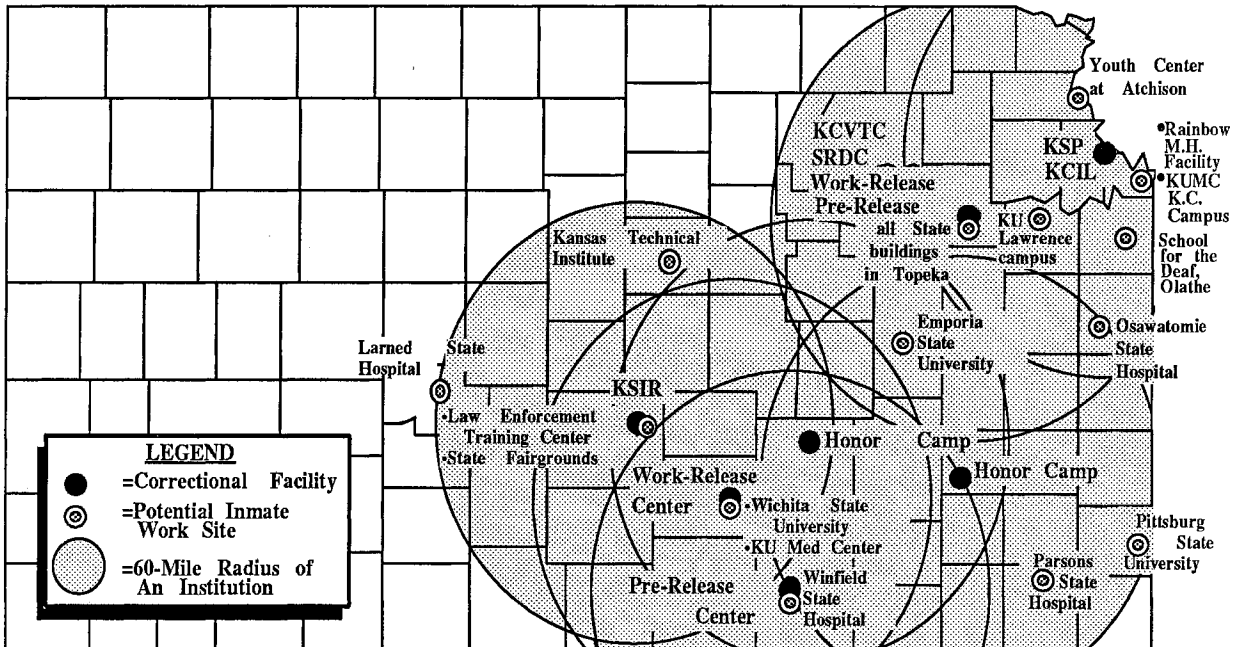
In Addition To Those Projects Identified By the Department, Other Uses For Inmate Labor May Be Possible

As noted earlier in this report, the Joint State Building Committee has discussed with the Department the idea of creating one or more roving work crews. If the inherent problems of funding, training, and staffing were solved, such crews could potentially be a cost-effective way of maintaining State and local public facilities. The auditors attempted to

identify other possible construction and renovation projects that might be appropriate for inmate labor.

One source of possible projects is the State facilities within driving distance of each correctional institution. The map below shows a number of possible worksites within a one-hour drive of each.

State Facilities Within A One-Hour Drive From Each Correctional Institution



This map shows the principal State facilities within a 60-mile radius of each main State correctional institution. The Penitentiary at Lansing and the Industrial Reformatory at Hutchinson each have comparatively large numbers of inmates and personnel; the other institutions, including the work-release and pre-release centers, the Reception and Diagnostic Center, and the Correctional Training Center, have small or special populations that might be unsuitable for many inmate labor jobs in the surrounding area. These smaller institutions could, however, provide housing and meals in some cases for inmates from the larger institutions.

As the map shows, at least 17 principal State facilities are located within an approximate 60-mile radius of one or more correctional institutions. These 17 sites do not include the many State buildings in the Topeka area. Appendix A lists the correctional institutions, cities, and State facilities shown on the map.

The auditors reviewed the fiscal year 1987 budgets of a sample of these facilities, and found that a number of capital improvements are planned that inmates might be able to handle. The projects, listed briefly below, have been budgeted by the institutions and recommended by the Governor.

Emporia State University. The University's fiscal year 1987 budget proposes a total of \$391,500 to remodel Plumb Hall and to make parking lot improvements.

Cost Effectiveness of Using Inmate Labor for Groundskeeping: Some Examples

INMATES AT TORONTO AND EL DORADO HONOR CAMPS maintain Toronto and El Dorado State Parks, the I-35 "canal route" in Wichita, and seven highway rest areas. According to figures supplied by the Kansas Department of Transportation, it would cost \$572,000 a year to maintain the canal route and rest areas with State employees. Under the current arrangement, the Department of Transportation only provides equipment maintenance and pays half the salaries of three correctional officers. The auditors estimated that, by using inmates, the State saves about 95 percent, or about \$545,000 a year. In addition, officials of both Departments say that inmates maintain the rest areas at a higher standard than would be possible with the more limited number of State workers.

Besides maintaining the parks and rest areas, the honor camps provide a total of eight work crews to the cities of Toronto, El Dorado, Greeley, and the surrounding areas. Honor camp officials say that the availability of a sizable number of minimum security inmates often makes

up for the lack of sophisticated tools or heavy machinery. They say that potential exists for inmates to take on additional work at State parks, rest areas, and buildings if enough supervision and funding were available.

THE TOPEKA PRE-RELEASE CENTER is located on the grounds of Topeka State Hospital. Officials of the two institutions have reached a tentative agreement to have the Center's minimum-custody inmates assume most groundskeeping duties at the State Hospital effective July 1, 1986. According to Hospital officials, the agreement hinges on approval for reclassification for three supervisory personnel for the Center. These supervisors would be trained by the Department and paid by the Hospital, and would oversee the inmate work crews. Hospital officials told the auditors that the annual cost of the current six-member groundkeeping crew is about \$104,200. Reallocating these positions to provide three supervisors would save the State at least \$45,400, a savings of 44 percent, according to Hospital officials.

Larned State Hospital. The Hospital has requested \$90,500 to enclose the Beers Building fire escape and to add acoustical ceilings to the day halls of Dillon Building. In addition, the Hospital requested planning funds for a new treatment facility to replace Rush and Pinel buildings.

Osawatomie State Hospital. For fiscal year 1987, the Hospital has requested appropriations of \$994,200 for an addition to Biddle Building and remodeling of the admissions building.

Parsons State Hospital. Officials have budgeted \$194,300 to renovate Ash Cottage.

Another source of potentially cost-effective inmate projects is grounds work at State parks, rest areas, and institution grounds. Although not involved with construction or remodeling, these jobs are often ideal projects for inmates because they are labor-intensive and do not normally require high skill levels. As the accompanying profiles show, using inmates for groundskeeping can be very cost effective.

Finally, the auditors determined that facilities reviewed in two recent performance audits could probably be upgraded using inmate labor. First, the April 1985 audit of the Soldier's Home at Fort Dodge showed that the facility needs additional buildings and fire-safety equipment, including sprinklers and new fire doors. Second, the December 1985 audit of the Law Enforcement Training Center in Hutchinson showed that the Center's five-year plan proposes \$600,000 to \$900,000 worth of capital improvements, including a metal expansion building with new gymnasium, training tank, and classrooms, and

improvements to the firing and driving ranges. Various repairs to the existing buildings are also needed. As noted earlier in this report, Industrial Reformatory officials are considering using inmates to do some of the needed work on the Law Enforcement Training Center, but they expressed reservations about security problems and about the kinds of work that inmates were capable of doing. However, it seems reasonable that inmates could do at least some of the needed work at the Center.

Conclusion

The Department has made extensive use of inmate labor in its recent construction and remodeling projects, which has proven to be very cost effective. Cost savings average about 45 percent, and recent actual savings have been as high as 84 percent. The Department plans to use inmate labor on a number of future jobs, but no broad plan exists to greatly expand the scope of inmate-labor projects. Considerable potential exists to use inmates for other State and local projects, but these possibilities are tempered by the inherent limitations of inmate labor. These limitations include lack of staff and skilled inmates, equipment, transportation, and funding.

Recommendation

The Department, in cooperation with the Division of Architectural Services, should systematically review all planned State capital improvements and identify those that appear to be appropriate inmate-labor projects. By identifying possible jobs early in the planning process, Department officials will be better able to identify the staff, equipment, and funding they need to participate.

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APPENDIX A

Some Major State Facilities Within 60 Miles of State Correctional Institutions

<u>Institution</u>	<u>Cities with Facilities</u>	<u>Facility Name</u>
El Dorado Honor Camp	Emporia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emporia State University
Reformatory	Hutchinson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State Fairgrounds • Law Enforcement Training Center
	Larned	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Larned State Hospital
	Salina	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kansas Technical Institute
	Wichita	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • K.U. Medical Center [Wichita campus] • Wichita State University
Penitentiary	Atchison	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth Center at Atchison
	Lawrence Kansas City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kansas University • K.U. Medical Center • Rainbow Mental Health Facility
	Olathe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kansas School for the Deaf
	Oswatomie	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Osawatomie State Hospital
	Topeka	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All State facilities
Toronto Honor Camp	Parsons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parsons State Hospital
	Pittsburg	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pittsburg State University
Winfield Pre- Release Center	Winfield	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Winfield State Hospital



APPENDIX B

Agency Response

Copies of the draft audit report were sent to the Department Administration and the Department of Corrections for their review and comments on March 13, 1986. The responses to the audit are included in this Appendix.

STATE OF KANSAS



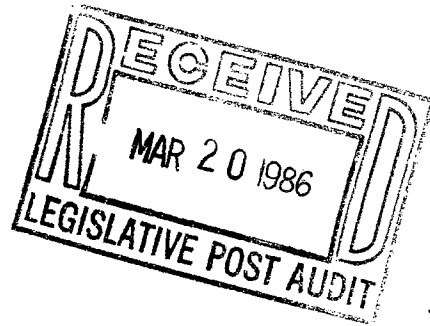
DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION
Office of the Secretary

JOHN CARLIN,
Governor
ALDEN K. SHIELDS,
Secretary of Administration

March 20, 1986

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Mr. Meredith Williams
Legislative Post Auditor
109 West 9th, Suite 301
Mills Building
BUILDING MAIL



Dear Mr. Williams:

I have reviewed the draft copy of the Using Inmate Labor for Construction and Remodeling Projects performance audit report. I believe that this report provides an accurate representation of the cost effectiveness and limitations of using inmate workers on State construction and remodeling projects. I have no criticism with the report.

As the result of this report, the Division of Architectural Services plans to work in conjunction with the Department of Corrections in systematically reviewing all planned State capital improvements for the potential use of inmate labor.

I or an appropriate member of my staff would be pleased to appear before the Legislative Post Audit Committee if requested.

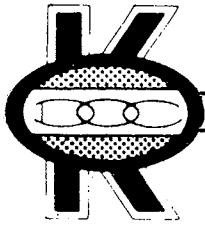
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Alden K. Shields".

Alden K. Shields
Secretary of Administration

AKS:mkr

cc: John Hipp, Director
Division of Architectural Services



KANSAS DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

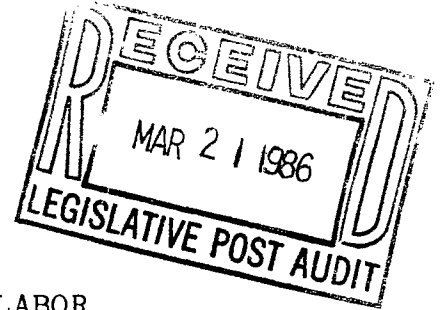
JOHN CARLIN — GOVERNOR

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March 21, 1986

Mr. Rick Riggs, Auditor
Legislative Division of Post Audit
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Topeka, Kansas 66612



RE: PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT USING INMATE LABOR
FOR CONSTRUCTION AND REMODELING PROJECTS

Dear Rick:

I have reviewed the draft of the above-captioned performance audit report, and I am satisfied that it provides a general picture of the extent to which inmate labor has been utilized for construction and remodeling projects in recent years.

It is very important that the legislature clearly understand the operational limitations presented by using inmate labor on state renovation and construction projects. For example, while it is feasible to undertake large renovation projects with inmate work crews within the walls of the State Penitentiary or the State Reformatory, many of our most experienced inmate construction workers could not be utilized outside of a maximum or medium custody facility due to their custody classification. Additionally, it should be pointed out that inmate workers may take longer than contract workers to do the same job due to security considerations, i.e., inmate counts, institution lock downs, etc.

I believe it should also be pointed out that any savings generated by use of inmate labor on state construction projects must be offset by the costs of additional staff needed to supervise the inmate workers. This limitation is further complicated by the fact that the Department's inmate population continues to rise at a projected +36 inmates per month. Given this fact, additional staffing becomes essential.

I appreciate the time and effort that went into the preparation of this performance audit and would like to compliment you on a thorough and professional job.

Sincerely,



RICHARD A. MILLS

Secretary of Corrections

RAM:dja

