

Arizona Department of Corrections



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CHARLES L. RYAN
DIRECTOR

September 21, 2011

Debra K. Davenport, CPA
Auditor General
Office of the Auditor General
2910 North 44th Street, Suite 410
Phoenix, Arizona 85018

Dear Ms. Davenport:

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the Sunset Review for the Arizona Department of Corrections (Department).

In addition to an analysis of the twelve sunset factors, two prior performance audits, the Prison Population Growth Performance Audit, September 2010 – Report No. 10-08 and the Oversight of Security Operations Performance Audit - Report No. 11-07, provided information for this report. The Auditor General's findings and recommendations for both audits were discussed and responded to separately, with identification that the findings of the Auditor General are agreed to and the recommendations will be implemented.

The Sunset Review report also includes findings and recommendations related to an audit of the Department's inmate store (commissary). The findings of the Auditor General are agreed to and the recommendations will be implemented. Specifically:

Sunset Factor # 2:

Recommendation: The Department should ensure it follows its new procedures for checking and documenting compliance with inmate store statutory pricing requirements.

Department Response: The Department has followed a standardized internal process for ensuring that inmate store prices did not exceed retail prices for similar products as statutorily required. In April 2011, this process was codified in a written procedure. The Department will continue to comply with statutory requirements and to follow its procedures. The finding of the Auditor General is agreed to and the recommendation will be implemented.

Sunset Factor # 2:

Recommendation: The Department should ensure that expenditures of inmate store proceeds continue to comply with requirements.

Department Response: As noted in the Sunset Review report, the Department's expenditures have always complied with statutory requirements. In March 2011, the Department revised related policies and procedures to better conform to statutory language. The Department will continue to comply with statutory requirements and to follow its procedures. The finding of the Auditor General is agreed to and the recommendation will be implemented.

The Department provides a vital service that increases the public's safety. The mission of the Department is to serve and protect the people of Arizona by securely incarcerating convicted felons, by providing structured programming designed to support inmate accountability and successful community reintegration, and by providing effective supervision for those offenders conditionally released from prison. The Department's highest priority is maintaining effective custody and control over inmates in an environment that is safe and secure for staff and inmates.

On behalf of the Arizona Department of Corrections and its staff, I extend thanks to your audit staff for their professional work throughout the audit process.

Sincerely,

Charles L. Ryan
Director

cc: File