

Transcript: “A Message from IG Horowitz: BOP’s Contract to Operate the Adams County Correctional Center,” December 2016

Hello. I’m Michael Horowitz, Inspector General for the U.S. Department of Justice.

Today, our office released an audit of the BOP’s contract to house federal inmates at the Adams County Correctional Center in Natchez, Mississippi. In May 2012, an inmate riot at that facility resulted in a correctional officer’s death and injuries to approximately 20 staff and inmates. A BOP after-action report cited systemic staffing deficiencies and a lack of Spanish-speaking staff as contributing factors to the riot.

Today’s report found that, more than four years after the riot, the facility was still plagued by significant staffing deficiencies.

For example, in the critical area of correctional services, we found that in 19 out of 38 months after the riot, staffing levels at the prison were actually *lower* than they were when the riot occurred.

And in health services, we found that there was often only one doctor and one dentist on staff, even though the facility housed around 2,300 inmates. Those inmate-to-provider ratios are about double what BOP policy calls for.

Moreover, we found that just 4 of the 367 staff members spoke fluent Spanish, even though the inmates at the prison were predominately Mexican nationals.

Today’s report also identified other concerns, including:

- First, that the contractor, CoreCivic, formerly known as CCA, sent staffing reports to BOP that were based on headcounts. These reports regularly showed higher staffing levels than what we calculated based on actual time and attendance records.
- Second, CoreCivic altogether omitted 5 critical health services positions from its staffing reports, and as a result BOP was unaware of the vacancies in those positions.
- Third, CoreCivic employs correctional officers who would not qualify for employment at BOP-managed institutions, and pays them far less than BOP Correctional Officers.
- And finally, the BOP did not implement appropriate performance standards to measure and evaluate CoreCivic’s performance.

To learn more about our findings and our 9 recommendations, or to read our other reports on private contract prisons, please visit our website, oig.justice.gov.

Thank you for joining us.