

Department of Corrections Facility Assessment Report

2010 Virginia Acts of Assembly Chapter 874, Item 379 L



Virginia Department of Corrections

***Institutions
Community Corrections
Inmate Work Programs***



**2010 Virginia Acts of Assembly
Chapter 874, Item 379 L**

Purpose

This report responds to the 2010 Virginia Acts of Assembly, Chapter 874 Item 379 L, which states:

The Department of Corrections shall prepare an assessment of which correctional facilities that it may be appropriate to close in the future. The assessment shall take into account the inmate population forecast, the condition of physical plants at various correctional facilities and the projected cost to maintain those facilities, the projected need by the department for beds by security level, the relative operating costs of various facilities, the net savings that may be realized from any closing, and the contribution of each facility under consideration to the various functions of the agency. The assessment shall include the advantages and disadvantages of closing any specific facility. The department shall report results of its assessment to the Secretaries of Finance and Public Safety and the Chairmen of the Senate Finance and House Appropriations Committees by November 1, 2010.

Background

The number of state responsible inmates housed in local jails past their sixty-first day (defined “out of compliance”) is between 3,400 to 3,500 inmates. This “back-up” into local jails is due to revenue issues forcing prison closings and renting of beds to other states.

In the past, this number of “out of compliance” inmates would not have been tolerated. The recent jail construction, jail population decline, revenue shortfalls facing both State and localities, and close cooperation between sheriffs, regional jails, and State officials, are allowing the arrangement to work temporarily.

Inmate population forecasts are down; however, this trend will not continue. When the trend reverses, the number of “out of compliance” State responsible inmates may increase and depending on the local inmate population at that time, the number of “out of compliance” inmates may become problematic. Therefore, continuing to “back up” State responsible

inmates in local jails is not a long term solution to housing State responsible inmates. In addition, the Department continues to use a large number of beds added, referred to as “Temporary/Emergency beds”, which were approved by the Legislature to be taken off line when Green Rock and Pocahontas Correctional Centers came on line. Due to budget issues at that time, this action had been delayed.

The bed capacity needs for State responsible inmates do not presently support, nor by the above rationale is it trended to support additional facility closing(s). Despite this, the Department of Corrections faces potential budget issues which cannot be resolved without closing(s).

Inmate Population and Security Level

Legislation (Item 379 L), requires the Department to consider the inmate population forecast and the projected need for beds by security level. The primary indicator of security level in prisons is behavior in prison. For that reason, forecasts are not done by security level. The current State population and the anticipated long term bed requirements counter indicate any facility closure, as all beds at all levels are full. There is a current backlog awaiting assignment to level 2 beds at this time.

Facility Age and Facility Condition

By the legislation, the Department shall consider the condition of physical plants and the projected cost to maintain those facilities.

The Department operates 49 facilities statewide. Facilities vary greatly in age and physical plant condition. The newest prison in Grayson County was completed this year and there are 29 facilities older than 40 years. Within the “40 and older” set constructed since the mid 1970s, maintenance requirements are greater now and will continue in the future¹.

Based on an analysis of the deferred maintenance and upcoming system renewal costs over the next 10 years¹, facilities older than 40 years show a marked increase in maintenance requirements. Therefore, facilities built before the mid 1970s are near the end of their serviceable life. Facilities built after the mid 1970s listed in the following table range from “fair” to “good” condition and are screened from further consideration for closure

based on age, condition, and projected maintenance and system renewal costs.

Institution Name	Date Built	Facility Type	Security Level
Mount Rogers Correctional Center	2010	Major	3
Green Rock Correctional Center	2007	Major	3
Pocahontas Correctional Center	2007	Major	3
St. Brides Correctional Center	2007	Major	2
Wallens Ridge State Prison	1999	Major	5
Lawrenceville Correctional Center	1998	Major	3
Red Onion State Prison	1998	Major	Segregation
Sussex I State Prison	1998	Major	5
Sussex II State Prison	1998	Major	4
Fluvanna Correctional Center	1997	Major	3
Lunenburg Correctional Center	1996	Major	2
Brunswick Work Center	1995	Work Center	1
Cold Springs Work Center	1995	Work Center	1
Deerfield Work Center	1995	Work Center	1
Greensville Work Center	1995	Work Center	1
James River Work Center	1995	Work Center	1
Nottoway Work Center	1995	Work Center	1
Deerfield Work Center	1977	Work Center	1
Coffeewood Correctional Center	1994	Major	2
Deerfield Correctional Center	1994	Major	2
Indian Creek Correctional Center	1994	Major	2
Dillwyn Correctional Center	1993	Major	2
Haynesville Correctional Center	1993	Major	2
Greensville Correctional Center	1990	Major	3
Keen Mountain Correctional Center	1990	Major	4
Augusta Correctional Center	1985	Major	3
Nottoway Correctional Center	1984	Major	4
Deep Meadow Correctional Center	1989	Major	2
Buckingham Correctional Center	1982	Major	3
Mecklenburg Reception Center	1976	Major	All

Facility Function and Specialization

By the legislation (Item 379 L), the Department must consider the contribution of each facility to the functions of the agency. Some facilities provide special services which are required to accomplish the Department's statewide mission: reception and classification, medical services, mental health services, segregation, death row, agribusiness, corrections construction, central warehouse, and inmate industries. Specialized facilities

are difficult to duplicate and a sound correctional system cannot operate without them.

A few of the specialized facilities have aged physical plants but their mission is unique or their services cannot be interrupted or discontinued. Duplicating those services would be costly and disruptive to operations. Therefore, these facilities are not considered candidates for closure. These institutions can be logically eliminated from further consideration for closure due to their unique missions.

Marion Correctional Center in Marion houses all male inmates who have been committed to the mental health system. The facility is rated to house 226 inmates and is funded to expand to accommodate additional cadre inmates to assist in the facility operation. It is the Department's only facility of this kind and requires specially trained staff to operate. There are good relations between the facility management and local government, and adequate specialized mental health staff available to work. The facility is extremely well managed as evidenced by their continuous certification by the Joint Commission on Hospital Accreditation. While the physical plant has some needs, facility closure is not possible.

Virginia Correctional Center for Women in Goochland houses 496 medium to low security women. The facility staffs the Virginia Correctional Enterprises laundry services. The facility management has an excellent relationship with the locality and shares critical infrastructure. The site is recognized as significant by the Department of Historic Resources. Virginia Correctional Center for Women is one of only two facilities for women, and as a result, these female beds cannot be closed. It has been the goal of the Department to maintain the historic character by some future renovation.

Powhatan Correctional Center including reception and classification houses 1,327 inmates. By the Department's inventory of deferred maintenance needs, these buildings are in the poorest condition. On the other hand, the staff and inmates at Powhatan perform vital Department-wide functions that cannot be interrupted; relocation of these functions would be costly. Powhatan's central location makes it ideal as both a statewide transportation hub and medical services hub. The Department performs statewide inmate exchange through Powhatan three times per week, and transports inmates to/from the Virginia Commonwealth University Secure Care Unit at least once daily. The facility provides inmate

labor for the Department's dairy, meat plant, and farm operation, making a significant contribution to an efficient statewide operation by reducing inmate food costs. Thanks in large part to the Department's agribusiness program, the daily inmate meal cost is \$3.20 (statewide average including \$1.88 food cost and \$1.28 labor cost from the Department of Corrections' 2010 Fiscal End of Year Food Report). This facility is discussed in more detail in a report titled *James River – Powhatan Complex Consolidation Study*, also submitted November 1, 2010.

James River Correctional Center houses 464 inmates. James River Correctional Center buildings also are some of the oldest in the Department, but James River is an integral part of the Department's bed needs as a level 2 facility. James River Correctional Center is also an integral component of the agribusiness program and is not considered appropriate for closing without replacement. This facility is discussed in more detail in a report titled *James River – Powhatan Complex Consolidation Study*, also submitted November 1, 2010.

There is a complex interdependency between James River Correctional Center, James River Work Center, Powhatan Correctional Center, the Academy for Staff Development, and the infrastructure that serves these facilities and Virginia Correctional Center for Women, Beaumont Juvenile Correctional Center, Powhatan Regional Juvenile Detention Center, and Goochland County. The Department's facilities at James River and Powhatan provide vital services to each other, the Department's statewide operation, adjacent State facilities, and the Localities.

Bland Correctional Center is rated to house 652 inmates. Bland is one of the oldest facilities but is relatively well maintained. Inmates at Bland staff the farming and cattle operations which reduce the Department's operational cost. The facility is also an important part of the local economy. Bland also houses level 2 inmates. It is an important component of the agribusiness program and is also not considered appropriate for closure without replacement.

These facilities are key components of the Department's operation which save the taxpayers of Virginia hundreds of thousands of dollars each year in inmate food costs, medical services and transportation costs, and building and grounds maintenance costs. Inmate labor programs generate revenue for

the State General Fund. Interruption of these programs would be costly and is not recommended.

Each of these facilities is considered a major institution in that they contribute a significant portion of the overall bed space capacity required to operate an effective, safe correctional system in Virginia. Because of their capacities, their specialized missions, and contribution towards the statewide interdependencies in the Department's operation, these facilities are candidates for replacement, but not closure.

Remaining Facilities

A small group of facilities remains. Most of these are field units, generally small by today's standards. The oldest is Cold Springs Correctional Unit constructed in 1953. The newest are Rustburg Correctional Unit and Patrick Henry Correctional Unit #28, both constructed in 1969. These are all minimum security, level 1, facilities where inmates work outside the fence.

<u>Facility Name</u>	<u>Facility Location</u>
Cold Springs Correctional Unit #10	Augusta County
Halifax Correctional Unit #23	Halifax County
Haynesville Correctional Unit #17	Richmond County
Wise Correctional Unit #18	Wise County
Rustburg Correctional Unit #9	Campbell County
Baskerville Correctional Unit	Mecklenburg County
Patrick Henry Correctional Unit #28	Henry County
Caroline Correctional Unit #2	Caroline County

By the legislation, (Item 379 L) the Department must consider the cost to maintain these facilities, their relative operating costs, the net savings that may be realized from closure, and the contribution of each facility to the functions of the agency.

Despite their age and predicted maintenance costs, and relatively high operating cost, each location makes important contributions to the Department, the State, and the community.

Inmates provide labor to the Virginia Department of Transportation, and other state and local agencies, school systems, and other nonprofit

organizations. These relationships create a positive and productive presence in the community.

The interdependent statewide agribusiness program feeds State responsible inmates at the lowest possible cost by raising crops for inmate consumption, sale, or onsite animal feed. Inmates care for domestic livestock which provide dairy and meat products for inmate consumption and for sale. Inmates staff textile operations that make correctional officer uniforms, inmate clothing and bedding, and clothing used by other State agencies. Inmates work at nearby high security facilities, without which high security / high cost beds would be ineffectively committed to house cadre. Inmates provide laundry services, work in commissaries and kitchens, clean, and perform building and grounds maintenance.

The following sections are intended to identify the contribution of each facility to the functions of the Department and the State, and to provide the cost to maintain and operate the facilities. For the purpose of this report, the maintenance costs include maintenance and system renewal requirements, both deferred and projected over the next 10 years. Operational cost is the current year operating cost/per inmate.

Ultimately, the degree to which the correctional units' costs are mitigated by their contributions is a value judgment, not formula.

Cold Springs Correctional Unit #10

Contributions

- Inmate work crews support the Virginia Department of Transportation. Multiple crews depart daily.
- Inmate work crews support the Department's agribusiness operation at Cold Spring and Augusta producing alfalfa hay, vegetables, and beef cattle.
- Inmate work crews perform building and grounds maintenance at Augusta Correctional Center.
- Inmate work crews support the community by providing labor to Augusta County school system, Augusta County Government Center, Weyer Cave Airport, and various nonprofit organizations.
- Cold Springs provides inmate firefighting crews to the US Forestry Service.

Costs

- The Department estimates maintenance and system replacement costs at \$5,192,928 over the next 10 years.
- The Department incurs \$29,978/(inmate-year) in operating costs.

Summary

- This is the oldest field unit, constructed in 1953.
- The Unit provides 114 inmate beds.
- The location is highly productive. Inmates support the Virginia Department of Transportation, Augusta Correctional Center, the Department's agribusiness and the localities.

Halifax Correctional Unit #23

Contributions

- Inmate work crews support the Virginia Department of Transportation.
- Inmates work in Virginia Correctional Enterprise shops making shorts, t-shirts, socks, and bedding for inmate use statewide.
- Inmate work crews support the Department's agribusiness program to produce hay for animal feed and vegetables for inmate consumption.
- Inmates work crews support the locality by tending the fairgrounds and county athletic fields.

Costs

- The Legislature has funded the construction of a new kitchen and inmate dining facility at Halifax. The project appropriation is \$4,061,000.
- The Department estimates maintenance and system replacement costs at \$6,366,000 over the next 10 years.
- The Department incurs \$22,464/(inmate-year) in operating costs.

Summary

- This facility was constructed in 1955.
- The Unit provides 248 inmate beds.
- The location is highly productive. Inmates support the Virginia Department of Transportation, the Department's agribusiness program, the Virginia Correctional Enterprises, and the localities.
- Halifax is located in Southside Virginia, an area with high unemployment.

Haynesville Correctional Unit #17

Contributions

- Inmate work crews support the Virginia Department of Transportation.
- Inmate work crews support the Department of Conservation and Recreation by nurturing Westmoreland State Park.
- Inmate work crews cultivate greenhouse vegetables for inmate consumption.

Costs

- The Department estimates maintenance and system replacement costs at \$6,574,000 over the next 10 years.
- The Department incurs \$25,057/(inmate-year) in operating costs.

Summary

- The facility was constructed in 1959
- The Unit provides 114 inmate beds.
- The location is productive for the Virginia Department of Transportation the Department of Conservation and Recreation, and the Department's agribusiness program.

Wise Correctional Unit #18

Contributions

- Inmate work crews perform building and grounds maintenance at Red Onion and Wallens Ridge State Prisons. This is an important function. Using Red Onion and Wallens Ridge beds to house "cadre" would be an inefficient use of segregation beds as it requires devoting an entire pod to lower security inmates even if fewer beds are needed. Using high security Prison inmates to perform building and grounds maintenance is an unacceptable security risk and would not be done.
- Inmate work crews support the Virginia Department of Transportation.
- Inmate work crews tend an apple orchard and apiary in Wise.

Costs

- The Department estimates maintenance and system replacement costs at \$4,830,000 over the next 10 years.
- The Department incurs \$26,968/(inmate-year) in operating costs.

Summary

- The facility was constructed in 1960
- The Unit provides 114 inmate beds.

- The location is necessary for the efficient operation of Red Onion and Wallens Ridge State Prisons.
- The location supports the local Virginia Department of Transportation.
- There is no other level 1 facility in the western region that could perform maintenance and grounds maintenance duties at the maximum security facilities.

Rustburg Correctional Unit #9

Contributions

- Inmate work crews provide support the Virginia Department of Transportation.

Costs

- The Legislature has funded a window replacement project at Rustburg. The budget is part of a larger umbrella project. The cost estimate for the Rustburg portion is about \$700,000.
- The Department estimates maintenance and system replacement costs at \$4,788,000 over the next 10 years.
- The Department incurs \$20,389/(inmate-year) in operating costs.

Summary

- The facility was constructed in 1969
- The Unit provides 153 inmate beds.
- The location supports the Virginia Department of Transportation.

Baskerville Correctional Center

Contributions

- Inmates tend a cattle herd on 120 acres of pasture. Inmates tend 12 acres as vegetable garden, and grow greenhouse vegetables for inmate consumption.

Costs

- The Department estimates maintenance and system replacement costs at \$11,461,000 over the next 10 years.
- The Department incurs \$18,364/(inmate-year) in operating costs.

Summary

- The facility was constructed in 1962
- The Center provides 488 inmate beds
- The location supports a cattle farm and vegetable production.

Patrick Henry Correctional Unit #28

Contributions

- Inmates tend 25 acres as vegetable garden for sale and inmate consumption.

Costs

- The Legislature has funded a plumbing replacement project at Patrick Henry. The budget is part of a larger umbrella project. The cost estimate for the Patrick portion is about \$500,000.
- The Department estimates maintenance and system replacement costs at \$5,979,000 over the next 10 years.
- The Department incurs \$21,430/(inmate-year) in operating costs.

Summary

- The facility was constructed in 1969
- The Unit provides 138 inmate beds
- Inmate labor supports a minor Department agribusiness operation.
- Patrick Henry is located in Southside Virginia, an area with high unemployment.

Caroline Correctional Unit #2

Contributions

- Caroline is the most important location for agribusiness. Inmates work 50 acres of produce for sale, and provide labor to the Pamunkey Farm.

Costs

- The Department estimates maintenance and system replacement costs at \$4,577,000 over the next 10 years.
- The Department incurs \$26,798/(inmate-year) in operating costs.

Summary

- The facility was constructed in 1964.
- The Unit provides 138 inmate beds
- The facility agribusiness program is very productive.

Summary

Cold Springs Correctional Unit is important to the adjacent Augusta Correctional Center, the Department's agribusiness program, and the Virginia Department of Transportation. Wise Correctional Unit is important to the Department's adjacent high security prisons: Wallens Ridge State Prison and Red Onion State Prison. Caroline Correctional Unit is important

to the Department's agribusiness program. Haynesville Correctional Unit is productive for the Virginia Department of Transportation, the Department of Conservation and Recreation, and the Department's Agribusiness program. Halifax Correctional Unit supports the Virginia Department of Transportation, the Department's agribusiness program, Virginia Correctional Enterprises, and the locality. Rustburg Correctional Unit supports the Virginia Department of Transportation, the Department's agribusiness program, and is a transfer point for the transfer of inmates between facilities. Patrick Henry and Baskerville Correctional Centers support the Department's agribusiness program.

All of these facilities may prove to be of use in the Re-entry efforts currently at the forefront. They are of the proper size and are set up to accommodate a large turnover of population. While their locations are not ideal for re-entry, the location constraint may be addressed by an appropriate transportation solution. Given that we are currently own and operate these facilities, it may be efficient to simply change their mission to re-entry if other factors support their use in that program.

With the closing of any one of these facilities, the Department would be less able to staff agribusiness programs, provide cadre at other Department facilities, and perform maintenance and construction tasks with inmate labor. Agribusiness, Virginia Correctional Enterprises, and the Corrections Construction Unit would compete for a smaller pool of minimum security inmates, their abilities and productivity would diminish, which results in increased costs to taxpayers.

As evidenced by the 'out of compliance' count relayed above, any closure will increase the number of inmates 'backed up' in the jails. Identifying the break point of this trend is beyond the scope of this study.

There would be an impact on the Virginia Department of Transportation which depends on inmate labor to accomplish their mission. There would also be an impact to localities which rely on inmate work crews.

While further closures may be potentially necessary to resolve current budget issues, they will further diminish the long term operational efficiency of the Department of Corrections, and are therefore not recommended.

Note 1

The Department of Corrections maintains a database of deferred maintenance. The database system used to track these requirements is part of a capital planning tool called “Facility Inventory Condition Assessment System (FICAS)” developed by VFA, Inc. The system predicts future capital needs based on building system age and condition, and thereby projects maintenance and system renewal requirements for years into the future. “System renewal” is defined as a complete replacement of major building system such as the electrical, plumbing, heating and ventilation systems. For the purposes of this report, the facility maintenance costs were derived from FICAS as the deferred maintenance cost plus the projected maintenance and system renewal costs over the next ten years. FICAS was a starting point for staff familiar with the facilities and the FICAS database to augment the data. Maintenance and renewal costs that are not cataloged in FICAS, such as water and wastewater treatment plant renewal requirements, were added.