

**FINAL REPORT**  
**CASE #0604 SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY JAIL**

**REASON FOR INVESTIGATION:**

The 2004-2005 Grand Jury chose to review the final report on case #0203, San Joaquin County Sheriff's Department, written by the 2003-2004 Grand Jury. Final report, case #0203 focused on the booking unit and medical unit located at the San Joaquin County Jail. The Sheriff's Department responded to all findings and recommendations in the report. Our goal is to review the report and the written responses from the Sheriff's Department in order to improve the department's policies and procedures and to monitor the department's progress. Our report is not a re-investigation of case #0203, thus the 2004-2005 Grand Jury is not reviewing the actions of the staff present during the incidents involving Mr. Denmon and Mr. Scott.

**BACKGROUND:**

Arresting officers from various agencies transport arrestees to the County Jail's booking unit. The booking unit is where inmates are received and processed for incarceration. Arrestees are screened for mental and physical impairments, intoxication, and special housing needs. Pre-Booking Officers must complete a computer-generated report for each arrestee.

The Pre-booking Officer must enter the arrestee's responses as given even if the Pre-Booking Officer believes the arrestee is being dishonest. The computer program includes fields where data is entered before continuing to the next screen. The officer can enter his or her observations in one of these fields, though it is not required.

The Pre-Booking Officer directs arrestees needing medical attention to the nurse's station located in the booking unit. The nurse in the booking unit examines the arrestee to determine if the arrestee should be transported to the County Hospital or if the County Jail's medical unit can provide the medical attention needed. The County Jail's medical unit houses inmates with less severe conditions. The medical unit has four observation cells. Each observation cell is equipped with a five-point restraint bed used to immobilize uncooperative inmates. The mattress is approximately 12" above the floor with belts to secure the inmate's wrists, ankles, and waist.

**METHOD OF INVESTIGATION:**

The 2004-2005 Grand Jury focused its investigation on the following:

- Alternative materials for restraint belts

- Positioning of inmates in a five-point restraint system
- Procedures for restraint belt maintenance
- Policy and procedures for restraint belt replacement
- Pre-booking screening questions
- Policies and procedures for a Custody Emergency Response Team (C.E.R.T. team.)

The 2004-2005 Grand Jury's investigation included a review of the following:

- The final report of case #0203 written by the 2003-2004 Grand Jury
- The responses from the Sheriff's Department
- Policies and procedures from the Sheriff's Department
- Video tapes of inmates being restrained

We also interviewed management and staff members of the San Joaquin Sheriff's Department and toured the jail facility including the booking and medical areas.

### **FINDINGS:**

The 2004-2005 Grand Jury finds the following:

1. Procedures are now in place to maintain restraint belts.
2. Alternative belt styles and belt materials are being evaluated.
3. Alternative positions are being used in the five-point restraint bed. Inmates are placed on their backs unless a medical condition exists. A foam wedge is used to elevate the inmate's head. The inmate's hands are secured at the sides of the bed rather than at the upper corners of the bed.
4. Sergeants in command must approve all plans of action.
5. All incidents requiring action by the C.E.R.T. team are being video taped.
6. Additional questions have been added to the pre-book screening process to address possible infection of communicable diseases and drug use.
7. An arrestee's medical history cannot be included in the pre-book process without violating Federal medical privacy rules.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

The 2004-2005 Grand Jury recommends the following:

1. Develop and implement a time schedule for replacing restraint belts.
2. Program the pre-booking screening questionnaire to require a mandatory response in the "Officer's Observation" field. The Pre-Booking Officer should

not be allowed to complete the pre-booking screening without entering a response in the "Officer's Observation" field.

**RESPONSE REQUIRED:**

*Pursuant to Section 933.05 of the Penal Code:*

The San Joaquin County Sheriff's Office shall report to the Presiding Judge of the San Joaquin Superior Court, in writing and within 90 days of publication of this report, with a response as follows:

As to each finding in the report a response indicating one of the following:

- a. The respondent agrees with the finding.
- b. The respondent disagrees with the finding, with an explanation of the reasons therefore.

As to each recommendation, a response indicating one of the following:

- a. The recommendation has been implemented, with a summary of the action taken.
- b. The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be with a time frame for implementation.
- c. The recommendation requires further analysis, with an explanation of the scope of the analysis and a time frame not to exceed (6) six months.
- d. The recommendation will not be implemented, with an explanation therefore.