



Douglas A. Ducey
Governor

Office of the State Forester

Arizona Department of Forestry and Fire Management



David Tenney
State Forester

April 29, 2019

Director Charles Ryan
1831 W Jefferson
Phoenix, AZ 85007

RE: Padlocks at ASPC Lewis

Dear Director Ryan,

The Office of State Fire Marshal (OSFM) is aware of the situation the Department of Corrections is facing at ASPC Lewis, in the close custody areas. Today, I was invited to attend a meeting with ADOA, which included State Risk as well as General Services Division, members of the Department of Corrections, as well as myself. In this meeting we discussed the current situation with the door locking system mentioned above, some possible solutions and best case scenario timelines.

During this meeting, it was stressed that the padlocking of doors is meant as a temporary solution to a very difficult issue. Whereas the State Fire Code does not permit the locking systems that have been put into place, with proper safety measures, under a temporary condition; there are means of accepting the processes that have been implemented. It is fully understood that there is a need to balance life safety as well as general safety when it comes to institutional facilities and the Codes do allow for locking arrangements that may otherwise be prohibited.

After the meeting, State Risk, General Services and DFFM made a site visit to ASPC Lewis to be able to view exactly what has been put into place and to confirm information with onsite staff. We met with Warden Thompson and Regional Operations Director Trujillo. After confirming information such as emergency response procedures and local issues regarding overall "assaults" and fire incidents we were taken out to look at a couple of pods that had the locks in place. We also provided some on site concerns to review and take into consideration.

Although, the implemented solution is not ideal; based on my observations and information provided today, OSFM is willing to accept the procedures that are being put into place. For security purposes, specific details will not be mentioned but the current procedures include: installing additional fire protection devices, adequate personnel with keys to open cell locks and doors, alternative methods to open the locks, and regular drills to ensure proficiency in opening the cell doors. It is also understood that the locking systems are still currently being installed and no additional training has been conducted as of today. Per Warden Thompson, regular training will be implemented effective tomorrow to establish a level of proficiency in opening the cell doors with padlocks on them. OSFM will allow time for training of personnel, but will return in approximately one week to evaluate the evacuation procedure and the effectiveness of the process. At that time, additional recommendations may be made regarding the locking arrangement.

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1110 West Washington Street, Suite 100 ♦ Phoenix, Arizona 85007 ♦ Main: (602) 771-1400 ♦ Fax: (602) 771-1421

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We look forward to your cooperation in this matter. If there are any changes to the proposed plans please notify my Office as soon as possible. If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Josiah Brant
Acting Assistant Director- Office of the State Fire Marshal