DATE: September 23, 2008

TO: George H. Sheldon
    Interim Secretary

FROM: Sheryl G. Steckler
       Inspector General

SUBJECT: Six-Month Status Report for OPPAGA Report No. 08-10

In accordance with Section 20.055(5)(g), Florida Statutes, enclosed is our six-month status report on OPPAGA Report No. 08-10, “The Delays in Screening Sexually Violent Predators Increase Costs; Treatment Facility Security Enhanced.” The report shows OPPAGA’s original recommendations and the Department’s status and comments, taken from representations made by management.

If I may be of further assistance, please let me know.

Enclosure

cc: Terry Shoffstall, Staff Director, Joint Legislative Auditing Committee
SIX-MONTH STATUS REPORT:
OFFICE OF PROGRAM POLICY ANALYSIS &
GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY
REPORT #08-10
"The Delays in Screening Sexually Violent
Predators Increase Costs; Treatment
Facility Security Enhanced"

Report #E-07-0708-025

PURPOSE
This report provides a written response to the Secretary
on the status of corrective actions taken six months after
the Office of Program Policy Analysis & Government
Accountability published Report #08-10, "The Delays in
Screening Sexually Violent Predators Increase Costs;
Treatment Facility Security Enhanced."

REPORT FINDINGS, COMMENTS &
STATUS
Presented below are the up-to-date corrective action
comments and status for the four recommendations (2, 4, 5 and 6) directed to the department, taken from
representations made by the Mental Health Program office
(PDMH) staff.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 2: We also recommend that
the Department of Children and Families refine its process
for working with DOC to request law enforcement records
from other states in a timely manner.

Status (per Mental Health staff): Partially Completed

DCF is currently working with the Department of
Corrections (DOC) to facilitate the Sexually Violent
Predator Program’s (SVPP) requests for out-of-state
information when agencies will only send information to
another law enforcement agency. Quarterly meetings
have been scheduled between DCF and DOC to address
this and other issues (such as improving the
documentation sent to SVPP by DOC). The last meeting
was held June 9, 2008. The next meeting was scheduled
for September 15, 2008.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 4: To ensure that all persons
committed to the Florida Civil Commitment Center [FCCC]
for Sexually Violent Predators can participate in treatment,
we recommend that DCF ensure that GEO’s plans to
provide specialized treatment for developmentally disabled
residents occurs by January 31, 2008.

Status (per Mental Health staff): Completed

All persons civilly committed to the FCCC are afforded an
equal opportunity to engage in treatment. Currently, there
are three specialized tracks: (1) traditional - for the
majority of our clientele, (2) specialized - for clients with
entrenched antisocial values and attitudes, and (3)
"special needs" - for developmentally disabled residents
who have intellectual and other cognitive challenges. The
latter track includes specialized training provided by two
clinicians internationally-recognized for their expertise in
the provision of treatment services to "special needs"
clients. This track, temporary suspended due to loss of
team facilitator, was reinstated in July 2007. The program
is now fully functional.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 5: To improve the treatment
program and enhance public safety, we recommend that
DCF provide suggested statutory language to the
Legislature to create a community-based treatment re-
entry component for individuals committed under the
Jimmy Ryce Act and an estimate of associated costs.
These provisions should specify which entity would
provide monitoring, treatment, and supervision of
individuals released from civil commitment and criteria
for the length of such treatment and supervision.

Status (per Mental Health staff): Completed

SVPP has proposed revision to, and creation of, several
sections of Chapter 394, Part V, F.S., the Sexually Violent
Predator Act. Proposed changes include provisions for
creating a community-based treatment re-entry
component and associated costs to the Department.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 6 To improve program
monitoring, we recommend that DCF revise its
performance measures to report more distinct categories
such as use of force, assaults on staff, resident injuries,
escapes, crimes, and the introduction or detection of
contraband.

Status (per Mental Health staff): Anticipated
Completion 10/1/08

The contract required reports have been revised to better
monitor the specific areas recommended (including the
use of force, assaults on staff, resident injuries, escapes,
crimes, and the introduction of contraband). The revised
sections will be amended into the contract which will go
into effect October 1, 2008. Until then, GEO has agreed
to implement revisions to the contract voluntarily.

"Provide leadership in the promotion of accountability and integrity of State Government"