

# PERFORMANCE AUDIT

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## Quehanna Boot Camp Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Department of Corrections

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March 2015



Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
Department of the Auditor General

Eugene A. DePasquale • Auditor General



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**EUGENE A. DePASQUALE  
AUDITOR GENERAL**

March 25, 2015

Honorable Tom W. Wolf  
Governor  
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17120

Dear Governor Wolf:

This report contains the results of a performance audit of the Quehanna Boot Camp (Quehanna) of the Department of Corrections for the period July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2013. The audit was conducted pursuant to Section 402 of The Fiscal Code, 72 P.S. § 402, and in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* as issued by the Comptroller General of the United States.

The report details the audit objectives, scope, methodology, findings and observations. Our findings indicate the following:

- Quehanna Boot Camp assigned overtime in accordance with the existing collective bargaining agreement.
- Quehanna ensured that inmates placed in the Boot Camp were eligible and were properly placed in behavioral and educational programs.
- Quehanna failed to assess whether the Boot Camp program met its objectives as provided in Act 33 of 2009.

The report also notes that the institution implemented our prior audit recommendations related to the security features of administering the General Education Development® testing on-site.

We discussed the contents of the report with the management of the institution, and all appropriate comments are reflected in the report. We would like to thank the management and staff at Quehanna Boot Camp for the courtesy and professionalism they extended to us during the audit.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eugene A. DePasquale". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Eugene A. DePasquale  
Auditor General

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**Background  
Information**

*History, mission,  
and operating  
statistics*

**Department of Corrections**

The Pennsylvania General Assembly created the Bureau of Corrections under the authority of the former Pennsylvania Department of Justice with the enactment of Act 408 of 1953. In December 1980, responsibility for the bureau was transferred to the Office of General Counsel under the Governor. On December 30, 1984, the Governor signed Act 245<sup>1</sup> and thereby elevated the Bureau of Corrections to cabinet level status as the Department of Corrections.

The mission of the Department of Corrections is as follows:

*Our mission is to reduce criminal behavior by providing individualized treatment and education to offenders, resulting in successful community reintegration through accountability and positive change.<sup>2</sup>*

The Department of Corrections is responsible for all adult offenders serving sentences of two or more years. As of January 6, 2014, it operated 25 correctional institutions, 1 motivational boot camp, 1 training academy, and 14 community pre-release centers throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. In addition to the 14 community pre-release centers, the Department of Corrections also had oversight of nearly 50 contracted facilities, all part of the community corrections program.<sup>3</sup>

Pennsylvania law has provided for motivational boot camps since December 1990.<sup>4</sup> The Quehanna Boot Camp, which is located in Clearfield County, opened its doors in June 1992 and allowed eligible inmates to serve a reduced six-month sentence if they successfully completed the program.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> 71 P.S. § 310-1.

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/about\\_us/20857](http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/about_us/20857), accessed January 6, 2014.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Act 215 of 1990, as amended, entitled, “Motivational Boot Camp Act” under former 61 P.S. § 1121 *et seq.*, which was REPEALED by Act 33 of 2009.

<sup>5</sup> See page 4 in the report available at the following link: <http://pcs.la.psu.edu/publications-and-research/research-and-evaluation-reports/state-motivational-boot-camp-program/what-have-we-learned-over-the-last-17-years-2011-report-to-the-legislature/view> accessed on February 7, 2014.

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However, in 2009, the General Assembly added a chapter<sup>6</sup> to the Prisons and Parole Code to authorize motivational boot camps through Act 33 declaring as follows:

- (1) The Commonwealth recognizes the severe problem of overcrowding in correctional institutions and understands that overcrowding is a causative factor contributing to insurrection and prison rioting.
- (2) The Commonwealth also recognizes that the frequency of convictions responsible for the dramatic expansion of the population in correctional institutions is attributable in part to the increased use of drugs and alcohol.
- (3) The Commonwealth, in wishing to salvage the contributions and dedicated work which its displaced citizens may someday offer, is seeking to explore alternative methods of incarceration which might serve as the catalyst for reducing criminal behavior.<sup>7</sup>

Statute requires that the sentencing judge recommend the offender for participation in the Boot Camp program and that the Department of Corrections make the final determination concerning which offenders will be admitted into the program. The Department of Corrections will notify the sentencing judge if a new inmate appears to be a good candidate for the Boot Camp. In such cases the judge will often provide a modification of sentence to enable the offender to participate in the program. The two primary reasons that offenders are rejected for the program by the Department of Corrections are outstanding detainers or medical problems. The Boot Camp program is voluntary and once admitted, an offender can withdraw from the program at which point he/she forfeits the right to immediate parole upon graduation from the program. Rather, the offender returns to the state correctional institution to serve the remaining portion of the minimum sentence prior to being reviewed for release by the Parole Board.

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<sup>6</sup> 61 Pa.C.S. § 3901 *et seq.* Chapter 39 (effective October 13, 2009).

<sup>7</sup> 61 Pa.C.S. § 3902.

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The specific steps involved in the selection of Boot Camp participants are as follows:<sup>8</sup>

1. The Pennsylvania Commission on Sentencing identifies appropriate Boot Camp candidates through the sentencing guidelines.
2. The sentencing judge, using the guidelines, indicates whether the defendant is to be considered for the Boot Camp program. The offender must meet the legislative criteria that are outlined in the previous section.
3. The judge indicates on the sentencing order and the Guideline Sentence Form the minimum and maximum sentence and whether the offender should be considered for the Boot Camp. By identifying an inmate as eligible for this Boot Camp Program, the judge is agreeing to allow the inmate to be released prior to the expiration of the minimum sentence.
4. Potential Boot Camp candidates go through an expedited classification process at SCI Camp Hill if the offender is a male, and SCI Muncy if the offender is a female.
5. The inmate must apply to the Department of Corrections for admission into the program.
6. The Department of Corrections makes the final determination as to who will be admitted into the program.
7. Upon successful completion of the six-month program, the inmate is to be released on intensive parole supervision.

**Quehanna Boot Camp**

The Quehanna Boot Camp or Quehanna or Boot Camp as it referred to throughout this report is a minimum-security facility for adult male and female offenders. It is located in the Township of Karthaus, Clearfield County, approximately 30 miles north of Clearfield and is situated on 30 acres of land. The physical plant consists of 11 housing units, education classrooms, control center, visiting room, dietary and dining halls, warehouse, laundry, infirmary and administrative offices.

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<sup>8</sup> Pennsylvania's Motivational Boot Camp Program: The Impact of Program Completion on Offender Recidivism, 2009 report to the Legislature pg.3.

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The Commission on Accreditation for Corrections, a part of the American Correctional Association (ACA), accredits the Boot Camp. The Commission on Accreditation for Corrections (CAC) serves as the body that measures the commitment of the candidate agencies and the extent of their compliance with ACA standards, its rules on applications for ACA accreditation, and it enforces ACA standards nationwide. Quehanna earned full accreditation in October 2012 with an expiration of September 2015.

During our audit period the Boot Camp had the following mission:

The boot camp's voluntary six-month program is designed to enforce positive life-building skills in a regimented, disciplined environment in concert with intense drug and alcohol therapy and educational classes, ultimately providing each inmate with the opportunity and mental tools for positive change.<sup>9</sup>

As of September 4, 2012, to qualify for the Boot Camp program subject to certain other exceptions, inmates must be less than 40 years old, with a term of confinement of at least two (2) but no more than five (5) years, or serving a term less than three years and be within two years of completing his/her minimum term.<sup>10</sup> Inmates who successfully complete the Boot Camp program are immediately released on parole notwithstanding any minimum sentence imposed in the case.<sup>11</sup>

In addition to the Boot Camp, Quehanna provides behavioral modification programming to State Intermediate Punishment (SIP) inmates. The Department's SIP program is an alternative sentencing program. The goal of the program is to combine an inmate's incarceration with rehabilitative drug and alcohol treatment.<sup>12</sup> In September 2011, the Boot Camp began to accept inmates assigned to the Recidivism Risk Reduction Incentive.<sup>13</sup> As

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<sup>9</sup> Performance Audit of Quehanna Boot Camp, Pennsylvania Department of Auditor General, page 4.

<sup>10</sup> 61 Pa.C.S. § 3903 (relating to Definitions). This provision of Act 33 of 2009 was amended by Act 122 of 2012, effective September 4, 2012.

<sup>11</sup> 61 Pa.C.S. § 3907 (relating to Completion of motivational boot camp program).

<sup>12</sup> [http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/gateway/PTARGS\\_0\\_0\\_252\\_0\\_0\\_47/http://pubcontent.state.pa.us/publishedcontent/publish/cop\\_public\\_safety/ova/faq/sip/announcement\\_with\\_edit\\_pencil.html?qid=85284574&rank=2](http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/gateway/PTARGS_0_0_252_0_0_47/http://pubcontent.state.pa.us/publishedcontent/publish/cop_public_safety/ova/faq/sip/announcement_with_edit_pencil.html?qid=85284574&rank=2) Viewed January 3, 2014.

<sup>13</sup> The Recidivism Risk Reduction Incentive enables nonviolent offenders to reduce their minimum sentences if they complete recommended programs and remain misconduct free during their incarceration. This definition is taken from the Department of Corrections website: [http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/gateway/PTARGS\\_0\\_0\\_252\\_0\\_0\\_47/http://pubcontent.state.pa.us/publishedcontent/publish/cop\\_public\\_safety/ova/faq/sip\\_rrri/rrri.html?qid=45874800&rank=1](http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/gateway/PTARGS_0_0_252_0_0_47/http://pubcontent.state.pa.us/publishedcontent/publish/cop_public_safety/ova/faq/sip_rrri/rrri.html?qid=45874800&rank=1) viewed January 13, 2014.



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a result, the Boot Camp opened two additional 50-bed units to accommodate these inmates.

The following table shows Quehanna's bed allocation for the types of inmates housed there:

<b>Quehanna Boot Camp Capacity By Bed Allocations as of June 30, 2013</b>	
<b>Type</b>	<b>Approximate Bed Allocation</b>
Boot Camp	300
State Intermediate Punishment	200
Recidivism Risk Reduction Incentive	50
Discretionary Placement <sup>14</sup>	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>565</b>

The table below presents unaudited Quehanna Boot Camp operating statistics compiled from Department of Corrections' reports for the fiscal years ended June 30, 2010 through June 30, 2013.

	<b>Quehanna Boot Camp Operating Statistics for Fiscal Years Ending June 30,</b>			
	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>
Operating expenditures <sup>15</sup>	\$18,102,534	\$19,046,744	\$20,422,451	\$20,859,613
Inmate population at year end	415	530	489	433
Inmate capacity at year end	464	464	565	565
Percentage of capacity at year end	89.4%	114.2%	86.5%	76.6%
Average monthly inmate population	423	426	482	485
Average Cost per inmate <sup>16</sup>	\$42,796	\$44,710	\$42,370	\$43,010

<sup>14</sup> Quehanna has 15 cells designated for housing high, medium and low risk inmates on an as needed basis.

<sup>15</sup> Operating expenditures were recorded net of fixed asset costs, an amount that would normally be recovered as part of depreciation expenses. In addition, regional level and indirect charges were not allocated to the totals reported here.

<sup>16</sup> Average cost per inmate was calculated by dividing total operating expenditures by the average monthly inmate population.

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**Objectives,  
Scope, and  
Methodology**

We conducted this performance audit in accordance with Government Auditing Standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

Our performance audit of Quehanna Boot Camp had two objectives. The specific audit objectives were as follows:

- One: To determine whether corrections' officers overtime scheduling was performed in accordance with Department of Corrections' and institutional policies and whether overtime has an impact on pension benefit calculations.  
(Finding 1)
- Two: To evaluate the effectiveness of Quehanna's Boot Camp program. (Finding 2)

The scope of the audit was from July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2013, unless indicated otherwise.

To accomplish our objectives, we obtained and reviewed records and analyzed pertinent policies, procedures, and agreements of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the Department of Corrections, and Quehanna Boot Camp and we interviewed various facility management and staff. The audit results section of this report contains more details on the specific inquiries, observations, tests, and analyses for each audit objective.

We also performed inquiries, observations, and tests as part of, or in conjunction with, our current audit to determine the status of the implementation of the recommendations made during our prior audit. Those recommendations addressed the failure to research inmate education history prior to General Education Development or GED® enrollment, lack of signatures on GED® documentation, and the failure to track graduates from the fiber optics program.

Quehanna Boot Camp management is responsible for establishing and maintaining effective internal controls to provide reasonable assurance that Quehanna is in compliance with applicable laws, regulations, contracts, grant agreements, and administrative policies and procedures. In conducting our audit, we obtained an understanding of Quehanna's internal controls. The controls included information systems controls we

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considered to be significant within the context of our audit objectives. We assessed whether those controls were properly designed and implemented. Any deficiencies in internal controls that were identified during the conduct of our audit and determined to be significant within the context of our audit objectives are included in this report.

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**Audit Results**

The audit results are organized into two sections. Each section is organized as follows:

- Statement of the objective;
- Relevant laws, policies, and agreements;
- Audit scope in terms of period covered, types of transactions reviewed, and other parameters that define the limits of our audit;
- Methodologies used to gather sufficient and appropriate evidence to meet the objective; and
- Finding(s) and Observations.

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**Audit Results for  
Objective One**

**The objective**

Objective one of this audit was to determine whether Quehanna Boot Camp maintained effective controls over employee overtime.

**Relevant laws, contracts, policies, and procedures**

The process of scheduling and accounting for employee overtime is covered under the guidelines of Commonwealth Management Directive 505.7 Amended, "Personnel Rules,"<sup>17</sup> Chapter Five of the directive, "Compensation", provides for the applicability of overtime, computation of overtime, approval of overtime, approval of pay for overtime, overtime pay rates and compensatory time in lieu of overtime. Also, the directive states that, in all cases, the terms of collective bargaining agreements will supersede this directive when in conflict with directive provisions.

During our audit period, two collective bargaining agreements were in effect with the Pennsylvania State Corrections Officers Association (PSCOA).<sup>18</sup> The first agreement covered the period of July 1, 2008, through June 30, 2011. The second agreement, covering the period July 1, 2011, to June 30, 2014, was a continuation of the prior agreement. The process for awarding and scheduling overtime is controlled by the terms of the collective bargaining agreement.

In addition, Quehanna Boot Camp entered into a separate agreement with the PSCOA for its covered officers.<sup>19</sup> The agreement provides operational procedures detailing overtime sign-up, assignment, and voucher usage at the Boot Camp and it addresses needs and operational issues that are unique to the corrections officers of the Boot Camp.

Employee overtime payments in Pennsylvania's correctional facilities represent a significant expenditure of taxpayer funds. Overtime expenditures at Quehanna have risen steadily in recent years as detailed in the chart on the following page.

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<sup>17</sup> Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Governor's Office of Administration, Management Directive 505.7, "Personnel Rules," November 9, 2010.

<sup>18</sup> [http://www.portal.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/collective\\_bargaining/20127](http://www.portal.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/collective_bargaining/20127). (Viewed October 31, 2013). (Pennsylvania Labor Relations Board, Case # PERA-A-10-380-E). Agreements cover corrections officer trainees, 1's, 2's, maintenance, trades, instructors, and food service workers.

<sup>19</sup> Covered officers include Corrections officer trainees, 1s and 2s.

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<b>Total Employee Overtime Costs For Fiscal Years Ending June 30,</b>	
2010	\$392,528
2011	\$446,728
2012	\$587,043
2013	\$589,018
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,015,317</b>

The \$196,490 increase from fiscal year 2009-2010 to fiscal year 2012-2013 represents a 50% increase in overtime expenditures. Boot Camp management indicated the increases in overtime expenses were due to a number of factors including an increase in the number of corrections officers on extended leave, military leave, and Quehanna being unable to hire additional officers due to system-wide hiring freeze imposed by the Department.

The majority of Quehanna's overtime expenditures were concentrated in the security operations of the Boot Camp (\$529,434 of \$589,018 or 90% expended on overtime during the 2012-2013 fiscal year). Management level corrections officer 3 and 4 positions are limited to 88 hours of overtime per year by department policy<sup>20</sup>. Therefore, we focused our examination on the corrections officers 1 and 2 positions. These positions are officers whose overtime is directed by terms and conditions of the collective bargaining agreement. They worked the majority of the overtime at the Boot Camp.

During the 2012-2013 fiscal year, 175 Quehanna employees earned overtime. The top 31 overtime earners from this group were corrections officer 1's and 2's. As of July 2, 2013, the top 31 officers earned \$313,387 or 53.2% of the \$589,018 total overtime paid out in the 2012-2013 fiscal year. These payouts ranged from a high of \$18,763 earned by one officer to a low of \$5,361.

**Scope and methodologies to meet our objective**

To accomplish this objective, we reviewed the collective bargaining agreement between the Commonwealth and the PSCOA, as well as the separate agreement that Quehanna entered into with the PSCOA for its covered officers at Quehanna.

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<sup>20</sup> Memorandum, dated March 20, 2012, from Shirley R. Moore Smeal, Executive Deputy Secretary, Department of Corrections, to all Department superintendents regarding Executive Board Resolution LE-12-002, "Corrections Officer 3 and Corrections Officer 4 Holiday and Overtime Pay."

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We also reviewed applicable Commonwealth management directives and other Corrections' policies related to overtime to gain an understanding of the overtime process that are applicable to all of its institutions.

We obtained the most recent department manpower staffing survey to determine the security staff levels approved for Quehanna and whether these levels are being met.

We conducted interviews with Boot Camp staff including the Captain of the Guard who is responsible for monitoring overtime usage and the facility's timekeeper. We also conducted an interview with the Director of the Bureau of Benefit Administration at the State Employees' Retirement System (SERS).

To determine whether overtime was accurately recorded in accordance with the policy, we selected the 18 highest overtime earning corrections officers 1's, and 2's, during fiscal years 2011-12 and 2012-13. We selected the three highest overtime pay periods for each of the 18 officers and compared the overtime paid to officers to manual timekeeping reports. In addition, we selected 40 individual overtime assignments<sup>21</sup> to review for accuracy and proper approvals.

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<sup>21</sup> The 18 corrections officers worked a total of 267 overtime assignments in their three highest overtime-earning pay periods. From the 267 assignments, we selected a test of 40 for further detailed review.

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**Finding 1**

**Quehanna Boot Camp assigned overtime in accordance with the existing collective bargaining agreement.**

Interviews with Quehanna staff indicated that Quehanna implemented a system to ensure that the recording of overtime is accurate and assigned in a manner consistent with the current collective bargaining agreement. Our testing confirmed that the system utilizes an overtime equalization spreadsheet that documents each officer's overtime hours' balance. Management uses this spreadsheet and an overtime assignment worksheet for each shift to assist them in the proper and accurate assignment of overtime.

We found overtime assignments are routinely filled on a voluntary basis by the shift commander. Corrections officers (1 and 2) were permitted to sign up one month in advance to be considered for available overtime shifts. Management is required, by the collective bargaining agreement, to award overtime work to volunteers who have the lowest overtime hours-worked balances. If two or more volunteers have the same total of overtime hours, employee seniority is the controlling factor in awarding the overtime.

Our review indicated that Quehanna's manual time records matched the overtime payroll records as entered into the Commonwealth's SAP accounting system. The detailed testing of overtime assignments that we conducted revealed that Quehanna issued overtime in accordance with the collective bargaining agreement. For 34 of the 40 overtime assignments tested, the corrections officers volunteered for the overtime and all were properly assigned. All 34 overtime assignments were awarded to the individual with the lowest overtime balances at the time the overtime was scheduled. The remaining six overtime assignments were related to overtime associated with training assignments that did not fall under the collective bargaining agreements. This overtime was assigned for staff in order to complete required training.



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**Audit Results for  
Objective Two**

**The objective**

The objective of this section of our audit is to evaluate the success of the Boot Camp program.

This evaluation included reviews of inmate eligibility for the Boot Camp program, inmate's level of education and General Education Development or GED® performance, inmate participation in specialized programming based on each inmate's assessed needs, reincarceration rates for inmates who graduate from the boot camp program and an attempt to compare Boot Camp program costs to costs of inmates housed in correctional institutions.

**Relevant laws, contracts, policies, and procedures**

As discussed earlier, in December 1990, Act 215, commonly known as the "Motivational Boot Camp Act," was signed into law.<sup>22</sup> The provisions of the Act were intended to:

Explore alternative methods of incarceration which might serve as the catalyst for reducing criminal behavior.

Act 215 was subsequently repealed and replaced by the General Assembly through Act 33 of 2009, as amended.<sup>23</sup>

During the audit period July 1, 2010 through September 3, 2012, Act 33, subject to certain other exceptions, stipulated that to qualify for the Boot Camp program, inmates (male or female) were required to be:

- Less than 40<sup>24</sup> years old.
- Be sentenced to a minimum sentence of no more than two years and the maximum which is five years or less.
- Not been found guilty of certain offenses pertaining to a current or prior conviction within the past ten years that would exclude their participation in Boot Camp.

Act 33 excluded inmates who were found guilty of specific offenses from Boot Camp participation. These crimes include, among others, murder, kidnapping, rape, involuntary deviate sexual intercourse,<sup>25</sup> and robbery.

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<sup>22</sup> Act 215 of 1990, as amended, as repealed by Act 33 of 2009.

<sup>23</sup> 61 Pa.C.S. § 3901 *et seq.* effective October 13, 2009, as amended by Act 122 of 2012. The General Assembly also added Section 3909 to the chapter through Act 95 of 2010.

<sup>24</sup> 61 Pa.C.S. § 3903.(relating to Definitions), as recently amended by Act 122, effective September 4, 2012, inmates who have not reached the age of 40 at the time he is approved for participation in boot camp are eligible.

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Act 33 further detailed that participation in the Boot Camp program lasts six months and involves the following regimens:<sup>26</sup>

- Rigorous physical activity;
- Intensive regimentation and discipline;
- Work on public projects;
- Substance abuse treatment;
- Continuing education;
- Vocational training ; and
- Pre-release counseling and community corrections aftercare.<sup>27</sup>

We also reviewed Department of Corrections' policy 11.2.1<sup>28</sup> which expands on the legislation and details the procedures for inmate acceptance into the program and the steps to be followed for initial reception, inmate classification, and pre-boot camp procedures.

**Scope and methodologies to meet our objective**

To accomplish our audit objective, we reviewed the statute that created the current Boot Camp program. We reviewed the department policy that specified the operational procedures that the department must follow concerning the placement of inmates at Quehanna.

We conducted interviews of various camp personnel, including the classification program manager and the Major of the Guard to gain an understanding of boot camp operations. Operations we discussed included: admissions procedures; inmate needs assessments; and the specialized programming available to the inmates. We also discussed the Boot Camp program's performance and its relationship to inmate education, reincarceration, and the cost effectiveness of the program.

To determine if the inmates were eligible to participate in the program, we selected a group of 50 Boot Camp participants who were in the program between January 1, 2010, and June 30, 2013.

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<sup>25</sup> Please note that Act 122 of 2012 amended this list to eliminate all the sexual offenses.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> 61 Pa.C.S. § 3903.

<sup>28</sup> Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of Corrections, Policy 11.2.1, "Reception and Classification," issued January 21, 2011, effective January 28, 2011.

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We reviewed the 50 inmate files for the following:

- Program eligibility - including age, length of sentence, type of offense committed.
- If inmates based on their educational background, were placed in the General Educational Development (GED®) program.
- If inmates were assessed and placed in the programs indicated by their needs assessments.

We obtained a listing of 1,189 inmates that were admitted to the program from July 1, 2010 through October 30, 2013, to determine the number of program graduates that re-offended and were reincarcerated back into the state's correctional system.

Using Department data, we compared the reincarceration rate of Boot Camp graduates to the rates of general population inmates to determine if the boot camp re-incarceration rate was lower than other state correctional institutions.

Using Department data, we calculated the cost savings associated with inmates successfully completing the Boot Camp program.

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**Finding 2**

**Quehanna ensured that inmates placed in the Boot Camp program were eligible and properly placed in behavioral and educational programs.**

Our review of 50 inmate files found that all 50 inmates met the eligibility requirements as provided in Act 33 of 2009. We found that all 50 inmates met age, conviction and sentencing guidelines of Act 33. Our review also disclosed that the Department conducted behavioral and educational assessments on the 50 Boot Camp inmates and Quehanna placed them in the proper programs based on assessment results.

***Inmate Needs Assessment Profile***

Our examination confirmed that, during the department's intake process, assessments<sup>29</sup> were completed that determined an inmate's programming at the Boot Camp. Each inmate was administered between one and four assessments. The results were used to determine the program(s) in which the inmates were enrolled. One of the assessments is the "Risk Screen Tool" or RST. This assessment was developed by the department as a risk screening tool that quantifies an offender's risk of committing another crime after release from the correctional system. The assessment "scores" each inmate based on the results of seven categories<sup>30</sup> with their cumulative score being either "High", "Medium", or "Low" risk to recidivate.

The other three assessments provided Boot Camp staff with a tool to determine an inmate's identification with criminal behavior, drug and alcohol abuse and hostility in social/work settings. The Boot Camp offered inmates programs to address needs identified by these assessments.

***Education Assessment***

The educational status of incoming inmates was determined by Boot Camp personnel at the time of the inmate's transfer to Quehanna. Our examination found that inmates who arrived without a high school diploma or who failed to pass the GED® program were placed in the Boot Camp's GED® program. This is an important aspect of the Boot Camp program and meets the "continuing education" requirement of the program's governance. We commend Quehanna for meeting this requirement.

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<sup>29</sup> Four standard assessment tools conducted by the Department are the Risk Screen Tool, Criminal Sentiment Scale–Modified, Texas Christian University Drug Screen II, Hostile Interpretation Questionnaire.

<sup>30</sup> The seven categories are current age, age at first arrest, prior criminal history, prior institutional misconducts, prior parole violations, educational level completed, and any history of drug abuse.

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**Finding 3**

**Quehanna and the Department failed to assess whether the Boot Camp program met its objectives as provided in Act 33 of 2009.**

***Boot Camp Program success has not been assessed***

Quehanna did not monitor or track inmates once they were released from the Boot Camp and did not communicate with other commonwealth agencies to obtain and analyze available data regarding the status of inmates once they left the Boot Camp. As a result, Quehanna did not monitor the integration of released inmates back into the community or determine if Boot Camp inmates were more or less successful than other inmates who were released from traditional state correctional institutions.

Quehanna's failure to monitor inmates once they were released from the Boot Camp left it unable to determine if the Boot Camp program met the Camp's objectives provided in Act 215 of 1990. Act 215, known as the Motivational Boot Camp Act, authorized the establishment of the Quehanna Motivational Boot Camp and provided three specific program objectives. Act 215 was subsequently repealed by Act 33 of 2009, however, the program objectives were not repealed or altered and they remain intact in Act 33. Quehanna Boot Camp's objectives are stated as follows:<sup>31</sup>

- (1) To protect the health and safety of the Commonwealth by providing a program which will reduce recidivism and promote characteristics of good citizenship among eligible inmates.
- (2) To divert inmates who ordinarily would be sentenced to traditional forms of confinement under the custody of the department to motivational boot camps.
- (3) To provide discipline and structure to the lives of eligible inmates and to promote these qualities in the post-release behavior of eligible inmates.

Specifically, the audit found that Quehanna's lack of communication and data on the status of inmates once released from the Boot Camp left it unable to assess whether objectives one (1) and three (3) were achieved by the Camp's programs.

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<sup>31</sup> Act 215 of 1990, as amended, entitled, "Motivational Boot Camp Act" under former 61 P.S. § 1121 *et seq.*, which was REPEALED by Act 33 of 2009§ 3905 Motivational Boot Camp Program, (b) Program Objectives, (1),(2),(3).

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Quehanna should develop a method that enables it to determine whether the Boot Camp program results in the objectives provided in Act 33 being met. Information useful for this purpose could include, but not be limited to, released inmates' arrests for new crimes, technical violations, parole violations, substance abuse, reincarceration, employment and income history, and housing history. Some of this information can be obtained from other state agencies such as the Department of Labor and Industry and the Board of Probation and Parole. If Quehanna determines the Boot Camp Program is not meeting its objectives, it needs to take corrective action or it should consider terminating the program.

Although Quehanna failed to monitor inmates after release, we did observe that Quehanna was successful in graduating inmates from the program. During our three year audit period, we calculated the Boot Camp's graduation rate at 83.6 percent. We determined the graduation rate by dividing the number of program admissions by the number of graduates over the same time period. The results of our review are contained in the following table.

<b>Quehanna Boot Camp Admissions and Graduates For FYE 2011 Through FYE 2013</b>			
<b>Fiscal Year Ending June 30</b>	<b>Camp Admissions in Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Camp Graduates</b>	<b>Percentage Graduated</b>
2011	333	274	82.3%
2012	418	353	84.4%
2013	469	393	83.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,220</b>	<b>1,020</b>	<b>83.6%</b>

However, Quehanna does not have any data to indicate that graduation from its program promotes discipline and structure in the post-release behavior of its graduates, promotes characteristics of good citizenship or reduces recidivism rates of its graduates.

We determined 48.25% of the 456 inmates who graduated from the Boot Camp between January 1, 2010, and June 30, 2011 were reincarcerated as of October 30, 2013. The details of our review are shown in the following table.

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<b>Reincarceration Rate of 456 Inmates Who Graduated From the Camp Program Between January 1, 2010, through June 30, 2011 as of October 30, 2013</b>			
<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>No. of Inmates Graduated</b>	<b>No. of Inmates Reincarcerated as of October 30, 2013</b>	<b>Percentage Reincarcerated as of October 30, 2013</b>
2009-2010 <sup>32</sup>	172	84	48.8%
2010-2011	284	136	47.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>456</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>48.25%</b>

Using the Department's "inmate locator"<sup>33</sup> Internet link, we verified that inmates who graduate from the Boot Camp were reincarcerated at a Department operated institution. The Department has not yet published the 3-year reincarceration rates for inmates who were released from state correctional institutions in 2009 or 2010. However, the three year reincarceration rate for all inmates released from Department institutions in 2008 was 43 percent<sup>34</sup>. Our analysis found an approximate 5 percent difference comparing the reincarceration rate of the Boot Camp inmates with inmates released from other Department institutions. Therefore, we have concerns on whether the Boot Camp is meeting its first objective of reducing recidivism and promoting characteristics of good citizenship among eligible inmates.

Finally our review of the Pennsylvania Commission on Sentencing's Report to the Legislature for 2011 provided the following in regard to the Camp and recidivism rates:<sup>35</sup>

Though we are cautious about concluding that the Boot Camp Program lowers recidivism, we can say with certainty that we have never found that offenders going to Boot Camp recidivate more than those going to prison. Since public safety is the primary concern of the criminal justice system, if the Boot Camp did result in increased recidivism, it would not serve as a viable option. Further, the Boot Camp Offender's sentence is reduced, on average, by 16 months, which results in significant cost savings to the Commonwealth.

<sup>32</sup> This only includes six months of fiscal year data, January through June 2010.

<sup>33</sup> The inmate locator is found on the Department's public website:  
<http://inmatelocator.cor.state.pa.us/inmatelocatorweb/> (viewed June 10, 2014)

<sup>34</sup> Pennsylvania Department of Corrections Recidivism Report 2013, page 11.

<sup>35</sup> Pennsylvania Commission on Sentencing, 2011 Report to the Legislature, pages 2 and 3.

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In our current study, Boot Camp offenders were less likely than prison releases to recidivate after three years [58% vs. 64%]. However, our examination of which factors best predict recidivism, Boot Camp did not contribute substantively to our understanding of recidivism beyond what was explained by legal factors. Current offense and prior record best predicted recidivism. Those offenders convicted of Vehicle Code violations were least likely to recidivate, as were those with a less serious prior record. Extralegal factors also helped to explain recidivism with offenders who were younger, male, black, and/or from a county other than Philadelphia and Allegheny being more likely to recidivate.

Although the Commission found a six percent difference in the recidivism rate between inmates released from the Camp and those inmates released from state prison, the Commission noted that their study used a different measure of recidivism than that used by the Department of Corrections, which uses reincarceration as the recidivism measure. Which is the rate we attempted to determine above through our efforts to track inmates through the Department's "Inmate Locator."

It is essential for Quehanna and the Department to implement procedures that will provide an annual evaluation of Boot Camp graduates. Quehanna must be able to provide the taxpayers with data that supports its viability as an effective alternative to leaving inmates to serve out their sentence in a correctional institution.

- Recommendations**
1. Quehanna should, on an annual basis, determine whether the Boot Camp program meets its objectives and to take appropriate action to achieve objectives that are not being met.
  2. Quehanna should communicate with other commonwealth agencies to obtain data needed to determine if its Boot Camp Program is meeting its objectives.

**Management  
Response**

- Going forward the PA Department of Corrections' Bureau of Planning, Research and Statistics will resume issuance of its Performance Analysis and Evaluation Report regarding the Quehanna Motivational Boot Camp. The Director of Research and Statistics for the PA Department of Corrections along with Sentencing Commission issued Performance Analysis and Evaluation reports on the Boot Camp in 2008 and 2010 that included recidivism analysis. Department staff, however,



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erroneously believed that the language of Act 95 of 2010, codified at 61 Pa. C.S. §3909, eliminated the Department's obligation to present such reports biennially to the Judiciary Committees of the House and Senate. Prior reports to the Committees conveyed the same findings each year; specifically that recidivism rates were lower for the Boot Camp as compared to traditional correctional institutions. The Director further indicated that the team worked on some special updated recidivism analysis in conjunction with this AG investigation, and those results were the same as the 2008 and 2010 reports; lower recidivism rates. As stated above, the Department and Commission will reinstitute submission of reports to the committees.

- There are specific statements in Finding #3 that we take issue with; specifically with a statement on Page 19 that reads, 'However, the three year re-incarceration rate for all inmates released from Department institutions in 2008 was 43%. Our analysis found an approximate 5% difference comparing the re-incarceration rate of the Boot Camp inmates with inmates released from other Department institutions.' We believe this is an unfair comparison and an inaccurate statement about the difference in recidivism rates between the Boot Camp and other institutions. We base our theory on the information outlined in the report. The report is comparing 2008 DOC data to 2013 QBC data that we believe is not appropriate. The data quoted (43%) includes all inmates released from Department institutions. To get a true comparison, the study needs to compare like variables. For example, criteria such as age, criminal charges, sentence structure, post-release residence (home plan vs. community correction centers), and release type (max-outs vs. parole) are all things that should be considered and compared equally. The analysis completed through the audit did not do this.
- Director Bucklin agrees that a proper comparison group is needed, since Boot Camp inmates are younger and are all paroled. The 2013 PA Recidivism Report released by the PA Department of Corrections states that younger released inmates are more likely to recidivate than older inmates. Also, the highest overall recidivism rates are for stolen property (79.6%) which is a category of inmates that may be eligible for the Boot Camp Program. The report also asserts that inmates who are released under parole supervision are more likely to be re-incarcerated. Every inmate that leaves the Boot Camp program is on intensive Parole Supervision. A final

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note on the 2103 PA Recidivism Reports is ‘those paroled to a Center (CC) still demonstrate a higher overall recidivism rate than those paroled directly home. Every inmate that completed the program during the time frame covered in the AG Audit was paroled to a CCC for 60 days.

- With regard to the audit statement that Quehanna must be able to provide the taxpayers with data that supports its viability as an effective alternative to leaving inmates to serve out their sentence in a correctional institution, the following response is being offered. The environment and experience of the Quehanna facility is indicative of change unlike other correctional facilities because that is the focus and mission. A study should be developed to measure the success of the graduates that takes into account other factors alongside re-incarceration statistics. Re-incarceration rates alone will not tell the whole story. Treatment is not always a one-time event for individuals. Using the analogy of diabetic disease, the disease can be addressed and stabilized with intense intervention; however, lifestyle changes, continued care, and maintenance are required to arrest the disease. Likewise, in the case of re-carceration, one must consider the overall circumstances or factors. Addicts who maintain sobriety or assaultive inmates who are not being violent, but are re-carcerated on a technical parole violation should not be considered total failures.
- Act 215 provides three specific objectives. The following comments relate to objectives 1 and 3. All Boot Camp inmates graduating from the program are given a QBC Evaluation Form to complete and the form includes two (2) questions: 1) what aspect of the program did you feel was most beneficial and why? And 2) what part of the program did you find most challenging and why? Most answers provided are in relation to learning self-discipline/control, specific treatment groups in which they participate, physical training, leaning character traits such as tolerance, patience, humility. These aspects are convincing foundations to building good citizenship.
- The Boot Camp program population is being confronted about their behavior and are being given information and skill-building opportunities in regard to the solution for behavioral change to promote good citizenship, discipline and structure to their lives for pre-release. Additionally, reentry factors of mentoring, positive peer association and family support of their new lifestyle along with continued development/reinforcement of refusal skills and

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character building are essential to continued behavioral/character change and maintenance of that change.

- To conclude, the Boot Camp respectfully request that you that the audit report be revised to account more accurate comparison groups as described herein. Such measure will yield a more accurate conclusion with regard to rates of re-incarceration for the Boot camp as compared to all state institutions. The Department is willing to provide any further information that would be necessary to facilitate this review.
- The evaluations and the report provided are appreciated and Quehanna Boot Camp plans to use the findings to work toward re-establishing an assessment system for the Boot Camp Program.

**Auditor's  
Conclusion**

We are pleased that the Department and Commission agree with our recommendations and that management will resume issuance of its Performance Analysis and Evaluation Report regarding the Quehanna Motivational Boot Camp. We encourage the Department and the Commission to fulfill their mandate by publishing a public report, which would be readily understandable to taxpayers and accessible on the Department's website, on at least an annual basis, with an evaluation/assessment of the Program.

We understand the Department's disagreement regarding the difference we cite between the recidivism rates of the Boot Camp and other Department institutions. The Department's disagreement supports our recommendation for an evaluation of the Program which would include a precise comparison of re-incarceration rates between Program graduates and a proper comparison group. We determined the reincarceration percentage using inmate graduation data provided by Quehanna and inmate information we obtained through the Department's "Inmate Locator" website. We used the website to determine what percentage of boot camp Program graduates were reincarcerated. We compared that percentage to 2008 reincarceration data which was the most current date made available by the Department. Unfortunately, the Department did not make other, or more current, reincarceration data available.

We are pleased that Quehanna recognizes the need for a comprehensive analysis of reincarceration rates that takes into account variables and circumstances that will provide it with a meaningful assessment. We agree that this type of analysis is necessary to assist the Department and the Commission to monitor and evaluate the Program to ensure that Program goals are being accomplished. We recommend that Performance Analysis

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and Evaluation Report include reincarceration rates that take into consideration all relevant variables. Again, without a comprehensive analysis of inmate recidivism rates, the Department and the Commission cannot provide a meaningful evaluation of whether the Program is meeting its programmatic objectives.

The QBC Evaluation Form the Department distributes to inmates who graduate from the program provides the Department with information. However, the evaluation is a self-assessment survey. Therefore the results are not sufficient or reliable to support a conclusion that the Program is meeting its objectives. The Department and the Commission should obtain data that can be validated and that is reliable to support the conclusion that the Program is meeting the objectives stated in Act 33 of 2009.

In conclusion, it is evident that the Department and the Commission are mandated to monitor and evaluate/assess the Program on a continuing basis, including an evaluation of recidivism rates, to ensure that its objectives are being met. Again, we encourage the Department and the Commission to fulfill their mandate by publishing a public report, which would be readily understandable to taxpayers and accessible on the Department's website, on at least an annual basis, with an evaluation/assessment of the Program. The analysis in this report is critical for making certain that state policy/decision-makers and taxpayers are given assurances that funds expended for the Program are funds well spent. During our next audit, we will determine whether our recommendations were implemented.

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**Status of  
Prior Audit**

The prior audit report of Quehanna covered the period July 1, 2006, through December 7, 2009, and contained 7 findings. However, only 2 of the findings contained recommendations. A summary of the findings, their accompanying recommendations, and the status of Quehanna's implementation of the recommendations are presented below.

**Scope and methodologies of our audit work**

To determine the status of the implementation of the recommendations made during the prior audits, we reviewed the Department of Corrections' written response to our prior report dated April 2, 2010. We also held discussions and made inquiries with appropriate institution personnel and performed tests as part of, or in conjunction with, the current audit.

**Prior Finding 1**

**The Boot Camp's education department did not verify inmates' graduation status and did not ensure compliance with all GED® testing center security procedures. (Resolved)**

The previous audit reported that Quehanna was not administering its inmate education programs as required by Department of Corrections and GED® policy requirements. Specifically, this finding disclosed the following:

- Quehanna could not provide evidence of a high school diploma or GED® certificate for inmates not enrolled in mandated GED® classes as required by Corrections' policy. In eight of 13 inmate files reviewed, our team found no evidence that the inmate had either a high school diploma or a GED®. Therefore, our team could not verify the education status of the eight inmates who were incarcerated at Quehanna.
- Quehanna did not have the required memorandums of understanding for the 26 selected inmates who took the GED® exam while at the Boot Camp. These forms are to be signed by the inmates and retained as required by the GED® licensing agency. In addition, Quehanna could not provide evidence of completed and signed verification of eligibility forms for 20 of the 26 inmates in the test group. This form is also required by the GED® licensing agency to be retained.
- Finally, 17 of the 26 inmate files reviewed did not have surveillance logs of tests to ensure the integrity of the test as required by the GED® licensing agency.

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We recommended that Quehanna management require staff to complete and retain all documentation to ensure that all procedures are followed. The recommendation further stated that documentation requirements should include:

- The verification and documentation for inmates who possess a high school diploma or GED® prior to incarceration at Quehanna Boot Camp.
- The completion and retention of the memorandum of understanding prior to the inmate taking the GED® examination.
- The completion and retention of the verification of eligibility forms.
- The completion and retention of surveillance logs to record the activity of each GED® testing session properly.

Quehanna responded by restating DOC policy 7.6.1, “Delivery of Educational Services”, which requires inmates to present verification of a high school diploma or a GED® to the academic counselor or school principal. If the inmate cannot furnish that verification, the inmate must fill out a Corrections Education Records Center form, which authorizes the facility to acquire the necessary information to verify either their high school diploma or GED®. Quehanna further stated that from the time of the audit, all inmates who are pre-selected to participate in the formal GED® testing have signed the memorandum of understanding. This is understood by each inmate as a direct order.

All inmates have read and signed the eligibility verification and authorization to release form since July 2008. The GED® site examiner will implement the placement of each eligibility verification and authorization to release GED® information form into the respective student file during the designated testing period.

Finally, the surveillance logs of Quehanna’s testing cycles have been placed in a centralized area within the academic counselor’s office.

**Status as of this audit.** During our current audit, through interviews and testing we found that Quehanna has complied with our prior audit recommendations. We examined the admissions files of four inmates who transferred to Quehanna the week of September 30, 2013. All four

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contained the required request for information forms. These forms were completed and signed by the inmate.

Our testing also included a review of the information available for the GED® examination administered in August 2013. A total of 22 inmates participated. All 22 files had the required memorandum of understanding and eligibility forms completed and signed. Finally, we reviewed the GED® surveillance log from this most recent GED® test and discovered the log properly completed as required.

Our interviews with Quehanna’s educational staff indicated that as of January 2014, the GED® process was being automated and that the paper forms that have been required will no longer be utilized.

Therefore, we determined that no further review of this objective was necessary.

**Prior Finding 2      Neither the Boot Camp nor the Department of Corrections could show the success rate of the federally funded fiber optics vocational program. (Resolved)**

During our prior audit, Quehanna offered a vocational program for inmates that taught inmates how to become a network cabling installer in the fiber optics field. The program was federally funded and administered by a contracted provider.

During our previous audit, we attempted to determine how many of the program’s 411 graduates had obtained employment in that field. However, Quehanna management informed our team that the Department of Corrections does not track the employment success rate of the candidates. Therefore, we concluded that Corrections has not developed a means to measure the success of the program or whether it should be continued.

We recommended that Quehanna and the Department of Corrections should develop a job placement tracking system that would allow them to monitor the success rate of the fiber optics program.

Quehanna and/or the Department of Corrections responded that Corrections intended to enter into an agreement with the Penn State University to “establish an offender workforce development specialist program/study.” One of the components targeted would involve a work study follow-up. Quehanna felt that this initiative would address our recommendations.

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**Status as of this audit.** The fiber optic program was terminated at Quehanna in August of 2012 when federal funding was eliminated. Therefore, we determined that this finding required no further review.



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**Audit Report  
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