

COMMISSION ON ACCREDITATION FOR CORRECTIONS STANDARDS

COMPLIANCE REACCREDITATION AUDIT

Arkansas Department of Corrections (ARDOC)
Training Academy (ARDOC)
England, Arkansas

March 11-12, 2021

VISITING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Brian A. Neagle, Chairperson
ACA Auditor

Gerald Carnes
ACA Auditor

A. Introduction

The audit of the Arkansas Correctional Training Academy [CTA], England, Arkansas was conducted on March 11-12, 2021, by the following team: Brian Neagle, Chairperson; Gerald Carnes, Member/Healthcare.

B. Facility Demographics

Rated Capacity:	N/A
Actual Population:	N/A
Average Daily Population for the last 12 months:	N/A
Average Length of Stay:	N/A
Security/Custody Level:	N/A
Age Range of Offenders:	N/A
Gender:	N/A
Full-Time Staff:	12

There are no part-time staff, only guest instructors, usually from within the agency. Of the full-time personnel, two-fifths are female, and one is a minority. The Training Director has the rank of Major, the Training Supervisors have the rank of Captain and the Training Instructors have the rank of Lieutenant. The Training Academy is under the Agency Assistant Director of Administrative Services who reports to the Director of the Arkansas Department of Correction [ADC]. On the days of the audit there were three staff vacancies, two instructors and one supervisor.

C. Facility Description

The Training Academy moved to its current location and became operational on 4/1/2014. The move provided more than double the space from the two previous academy sites. Formerly, the location was owned by the England School District and operated as a middle school. At some point it was abandoned and remained vacant for a number of years. With the assistance of several state legislators and the then governor, \$500,000 was allocated for its purchase and renovation. The agency used inmate labor to help off-set the cost to the taxpayers and transformed it into a professional, state of the art academy.

The complex, named the Willis H. Sargent Training Academy after one of the former Training Directors, sits on 5.27 acres of land on the outskirts of the town of England and comprises three mostly concrete and metal buildings connected by covered walkways. The structures known as the Education Building, Auditorium and Gymnasium consist of about 31,000 square feet of space. Also, located on the grounds are four dorms incorporated into two trailer-like structures, a trailer used for director’s housing and a storage shed.

The Education Building comprises a total of 14,000 square feet and has 5 classrooms along with a conference/meeting room which can also be used to train cadets. The space for training varies in size and can accommodate from 35-80 students.

These spaces are located off the single main corridor as is a computer lab with 30-student and one instructor station containing current computer systems used for classroom instruction as well as for online training programs. There are two conference rooms, known as the Director's Conference Room and the larger Barnes Hall. These rooms are utilized for meetings, private training exercises and as an employee lounge area. Within the former is a small self-contained library and a staff lavatory. The main office for the Director and an administrative assistant is located in the center of the building while offices for the Basic and In-Service Training Instructors are situated at opposite ends of the main corridor. Large restrooms for staff/trainees are located in the middle of the corridor as well.

The Auditorium consists of about 4500 square feet and contains a trainee break room/dining area where students may use the vending machines, refrigerators and microwave. This space is also open in the evenings for use by the residential students to watch TV and lounge. The main section of the structure is utilized for graduation ceremonies in inclement weather, large meetings and significant events, like accreditation exit conferences.

The Gymnasium contains 12,400 square feet of space and primarily serves multiple purposes. Within this area is the Uniform/Badge Issuance Office and an adjacent uniform storage area. There are nearby dressing and fitting rooms. The gym proper is used for physical training and defensive tactics. Located within are men's and women's locker rooms with lavatories, showers changing areas and lockers.

A large paved area adjacent to these buildings is used for roll call and morning inspection of the cadets. This space is also utilized for training in chemical agents as a decontamination line is mounted to the exterior wall of the gym.

The Director's Trailer is located immediately next to the paved area. It contains two bedrooms, a bath and a living area. It permits the Director to provide 24-hour on-site supervision of the area. Adjacent are two large trailer structures divided into two dorms each. The two Dorms are for males and a like number for female trainees who are staying overnight. Each dorm has ten beds, two toilets, two wash basins and two showers and a small living area. They also have an iron and ironing board for student use.

The Dorms are for students who live over 50 miles from the training site and are designated according to a priority listing. There are 4 additional trailers, capable of housing 6 persons each, near the Maximum-Security Unit. These are used for overflow housing needs and to house staff trainers who require housing during in-service training programs.

A stand-alone shed provides storage space for chemicals and miscellaneous items requiring secure storage.

A small parking lot is located in front of the Education Building for staff and visitors and a large parking lot is located near the Auditorium, primarily for student parking. The main buildings are connected by covered sidewalks.

Mission

The mission of the Arkansas Department of Corrections is to provide public safety by carrying out the mandates of the courts, provide a safe and humane environment for staff and inmates, strengthen the work ethic through teaching of good habits, and provide opportunities for staff and inmates to improve spiritually, mentally, and physically.

Training Academy Mission

The mission of the Arkansas Department of Corrections Training Academy is to instill knowledge and confidence to employees during pre-service and in-service training, providing them with a solid foundation to build a career in the Arkansas Department of Corrections.

D. Pre-Audit Meeting

The team members met at the hotel in White Hall, Arkansas the day before the site visit to briefly discuss the information provided by the Association staff and the officials from Arkansas Correctional Training Academy.

The chairperson divided standards into the following groups:

Standards # 1-CTA-1A-01 to 1-CTA-2D-03 to Brian Neagle, Chairperson
Standards # 1-CTA-3A-01 to 1-CTA-3F-04 to Gerald Carnes, Member

E. The Audit Process

1. Transportation

The team was escorted to and from the hotel and the academy by Shelly Lawrence, Agency ACA Coordinator, during the course of the audit.

2. Entrance Interview

The audit team arrived at the Arkansas Department of Corrections Training Academy at approximately 8:00am. The team was escorted to the conference room where we met with Training Director Randy Callas and some of his staff. The team expressed the appreciation of the association for the opportunity to be involved with the Reaccreditation of the A.D.C. Training Academy. At this time, all initial introductions were made.

The chairperson discussed the audit schedule which included but was not limited to the tour, standard review, classroom observations, and of any training activities that were scheduled while the audit was being conducted along with any revisits that may be needed. Director Callas then advised that the audit team would provide a daily informal briefing at the end of the audit days. This would be done with the staff of his choosing to discuss the progress and any concerns up to that point.

The chairperson stated that it was important for the team to observe the normal operations of the academy and requested that there be no changes to the daily operations or schedule while the audit team was present.

The chairperson made a request to staff that all interviews would be conducted without any monitoring. This would ensure the integrity of all interviews conducted. It was agreed that any monitoring would interfere in any interviews conducted with staff or recruits. The Director was asked if there was anything in which he was aware of that would interfere with the reaccreditation of the Academy? In which, his reply was no.

At approximately 9:00am Director Callas brought the rest of his staff to the conference room where a formal introduction took place.

The following persons were in attendance:

William Straughn - Deputy Director A.D.C.
Randy Callas - Training Director
Larry Cyr - Training Supervisor (Captain)
Kathleen Lowery - Training Instructor/ACA Manager
Ramone Woodall - Training Instructor
Sarah Apel - Training Instructor
David Farrier - Training Instructor
Melinda McClain - Admin II
Robyn Hawkins - Admin II
David Ruff - Inventory Control Sergeant
Adam Ryan - Training Instructor
Shelly Lawrence - ACA Coordinator
Byron Brown - Fire/Safety Coordinator (Lieutenant)

It was explained that the goal of the visiting team was to be as non-intrusive as possible during the conduct of the audit. The chairperson emphasized the goals of the accreditation toward the efficiency and effectiveness of correctional systems throughout the United States. The audit schedule was also discussed at this time.

3. Facility Tour

The team toured the entire academy from approximately 9:30am to 11:00am. The following persons accompanied the team on the tour and responded to the team's questions concerning facility operations:

Randy Callas - Training Academy Director
Larry Cyr - Training Supervisor (Captain)
Shelly Lawrence - ACA Coordinator
Byron Brown - Fire/Safety Coordinator (Lieutenant)

ACA notices were posted throughout the academy.

4. Conditions of Confinement/Quality of Life

During the tour, the team evaluated the conditions of confinement at the academy. The following narrative description of the relevant programmatic services and functional areas summarizes the findings regarding the quality of life.

Security:

There are no security personnel specifically assigned to the academy though all training staff are experienced and qualified security personnel themselves. Entrance is gained through an outside glass door into a small vestibule. Further access into the building is controlled by an administrative assistant. All visitors must produce a valid picture ID and in return will receive an official visitors pass. Only then are persons permitted to enter.

There are two cameras, one at each of the main entrances into the education building which have taping capability and are monitored by the administrative assistant. The doors can be locked and access is gained by a staff key swipe from the outside and push bar from the inside. All the other academy structures require a key.

In addition, security equipment, secured in a staff office in metal lockers, including camera equipment, bolt cutters, OC spray, batons, handcuffs and tasers is available for training purposes as well and is regularly accounted for by issue/return records and daily inventories.

There are 32 sets of keys located in the administrative office main key box. Twelve sets, one for each academy staff person, are assigned as take-home keys. There are issue/return records and daily inventories. There are three vehicles assigned to the academy, two vans and one car.

Environmental Conditions:

The environmental conditions of all the buildings were good. The temperatures throughout all the buildings were within normal comfort ranges. Noise levels throughout the complex were within acceptable ranges. The cadet housing areas were extremely clean, property neatly stored. The cadet uniforms were crisp and well maintained.

All interior and exterior fixtures observed were in good working order. The cadet housing units appeared to have adequate ventilation and there were no noticeable odors. Lighting levels throughout the academy were well within standards.

The general condition of the entire Training Academy was clean and in good repair. All conditions were very favorable to both staff and recruits alike.

There was no evidence of nor complaints about vermin and pests from staff or recruits. In fact, traps were observed in various locations throughout the complex. Potable water is provided by the nearby town of England. There is an emergency generator on the grounds which is routinely tested. Chemicals are stored in an outdoor storage shed away from the main structures. Safety Data Sheets were present as was an eyewash station.

Sanitation:

While the exterior of the buildings were basic, the interiors of all the buildings were extremely well maintained. There were three inmate workers responsible for the cleanliness of all the buildings. It was obvious that they took pride in their work. The exterior at the time of this audit was pretty bland and surely reflected the time of year. Regardless the grounds were very neat and organized and had very little debris or clutter. The lavatories were all spotless, well stocked with needed items. The common areas like corridors, gym and auditorium all exhibited continuous attention and were well maintained. The parking lots for staff, visitors and trainees were ample and appropriate for the need.

Fire and Safety:

The academy staff is in charge of all fire safety issues and ensuring compliance with all fire and safety inspections. Smoke detectors, fire extinguishers, pull stations and fire hydrants provide fire protection. Throughout the buildings there are approximately 10 pull stations, 1 hydrant, a minimum of 67 smoke detectors and approximately 22 fire extinguishers. During our tour spot checks were done to ensure inspections were being made to the fire extinguishers. Additionally, the eyewash was observed for the same purpose. No deficiencies were observed.

Staff interviewed were knowledgeable of the system and procedures to be followed in the event of an emergency. emergency exit signs were appropriately posted along with evacuation plans.

The Responding fire department is England Fire Department, located approximately ½ mile away. Fire inspections are conducted annually by the State Fire Marshall and the most recent one indicated no deficiencies. Fire safety inspections are regularly performed by academy staff and routine fire drills are conducted. Training staff, inmate workers and recruits are made aware of their required response to fire emergencies.

Food Service:

The Training Academy does not provide food service for recruits. There are restaurants in the nearby town of England. Recruits may use the several vending machines in the auditorium area or bring their meals and utilize the microwave and 3 refrigerators available for their use. There is also an ice machine provided. There is a break room with tables and chairs where they may sit and eat their meals.

The break room area has kitchen equipment and cooking space available for when the building was a public school, however, it is not currently being used or operational. Staff have the same option as the students when it comes to meals.

The Training Director informed me that he still has dialogue with the ADC administration in an attempt to make use of the kitchen for the recruit classes. Obviously this would, if successful, take some burdens off of the new hires.

Medical Care:

The Training Academy has no medical staff on grounds. In case of injury, there is a sealed first aid kit in the main corridor as well as an AED, which is routinely checked for operability. All training staff are trained in CPR/first aid as well as in the use of the AED. The England Fire Department is approximately ½ mile away and can be contacted via 911 in case of emergency. Otherwise, there is a contract with a nurse injury hotline to address non-life-threatening issues.

Recreation:

The academy has a large gymnasium with locker rooms for males and females inclusive of lavatories, showers and lockers. The gym area has a large bleacher section which can be used for graduations. This area is also equipped with mats to facilitate physical training and defensive tactics classes for the recruits. The area may be used by residential recruits for physical activity.

The auditorium has a common area with two large screen televisions and space for leisure time activities, which residential students may use up to 10:00 PM. after training classes have concluded for the day.

Religious Programming:

Recruits and staff may attend services in their local communities on weekends when classes are not in session. Inmate workers may attend services at their sending institution. Otherwise, there are no religious services on grounds.

Offender Work Programs:

The academy has 3 inmate workers assigned from the nearby Tucker Unit. They perform basic sanitation services and grounds clean up. They are also responsible for keeping the staff/recruit lavatories clean and stocked with appropriate supplies. In addition, they maintain the cleanliness of all the buildings which include corridor floors, classrooms and all other areas used in the academy operations.

Academic and Vocational Education:

At the time of the audit, there were two classes in session in the Basic Correctional Officer Training [BCOT] program. One was in week two with 17 recruits and the other recruit class is in their final week four with 31 recruits. Those in their final week will then go to a facility to start their on the job training.

The Training Academy provides state of the art training programs to Arkansas Department of Correction employees, volunteers and contractors in accordance with the ACA requirements. The curricula are developed and coordinated by Training Academy Instructors and Unit Trainers and supported by staff within the ADC who have completed the 40 hour Train the Trainers class.

The Basic Correctional Officer Training is designed to introduce new correctional employees to the field and profession of corrections through standardized basic training at a central location.

This training must be successfully completed before beginning duty at their work location. The core curriculum is comprised of 240 hours of instruction, primarily in security and safety related topics, but also inclusive of other subjects including but not limited to: standards of conduct/code of ethics, offender rights/employee liability, report writing, sexual harassment, interpersonal communication skills, inmate grievances, cultural awareness, PREA, suicide prevention, inmate disciplinary process, unit management and ACA accreditation.

Each student is given a Training Academy Basic Training Cadet Manual which is inclusive of rules and regulations, some policies and procedures and training exercises. Courses are both lectures and hands-on practical exercises allowing for students to practice what they have learned. Trainees/cadets spend 4 weeks in the classroom setting of the CTA and 2 weeks [week 2 and 5] at their work location for on the job training and one week after graduation at their unit in critical post training.

The trainees are supervised at their unit by Unit Training Supervisors and field training officers. This considerable effort of OJT is to hopefully address the concern of losing graduates soon after beginning the job assignment by giving them a “taste” of reality before committing to the career. Part of the BCOT curriculum is unarmed self-defense, PPCT, training in chemical agents and firearms training. Live round firearms training is held at the firing range nearest their work unit.

In-Service Training includes a diverse array of courses to meet the needs of correctional employees of all ranks and disciplines as well as to prepare qualified instructors to deliver training to staff at the unit/facility level. The subjects include but are not limited to: Computer training, Specialty training such as that for ERT/SORT units, Individual and Professional Development courses and Instructor training. Courses are offered at the CTA as well as at the units.

The CTA also coordinates on line training programs. The ADC partners with Relias Learning to provide this level of instruction. The learning management system is entitled eCADEMY. Employees are allowed to earn unlimited hours of training annually via this system. There are over 500 classes available in this system, most of which are accredited by ACA.

Social Services:

Employees/cadets have the opportunity to contact the designated Employee Assistance Program, if applicable to their status.

Visitation:

Those trainees living on campus go home on weekends so visitors are not allowed. Inmate workers are obviously not permitted to have visitors at the Training Academy but have normal visitation at their sending facility.

Library Services:

There is a well-stocked library room in the education building for staff/trainee use with books, videos and a computer available with online courses addressing a number of topics including safety and security, medical and mental health information for correctional staff, workplace issues etc.

Laundry:

The auditorium has a small laundry area with one washer and dryer, which is open from 4:30-7:00 PM daily for students to use at no charge. In the gymnasium area there is another washer/dryer used primarily to wash rags/mop heads.

F. Examination of Records

Following the academy tour, the team proceeded to the conference room to review the accreditation files and evaluate compliance levels of the policies and procedures. The academy has no notices of non-compliance with local, state, or federal laws or regulations.

1. Litigation

Over the last three years, the academy had no consent decrees, class action lawsuits or adverse judgments.

2. Significant Incidents/Outcome Measures

The training academy audit does not require the submission of Outcome Measures nor a Significant Incident Report, however, it ought be noted that, since the last audit, there have been no critical or otherwise significant issues of concern.

3. Departmental Visits

Team members revisited the following departments to review conditions relating to departmental policy and operations:

Academy Staff:

Randy Callas - Training Director
Shelly Lawrence - ACA Coordinator
Byron Brown - Fire and Safety Coordinator (Lieutenant)
Kathy Lowery - Academy Instructor/ACA Manager
Larry Cyr - Training Supervisor (Captain)
David Ruff - Inventory Control Manager
Melinda McClain - Admin II
Robyn Hawkins - Admin II
Ramone Woodall - Training Instructor
David Farrier - Training Instructor
Sarah Apel - Training Instructor
Adam Ryan - Training Instructor

4. Shifts

The normal business hours are Monday-Friday from 7:30 AM to 5:00 PM. During this time period, the team toured the entire facility, observed the two academy classes in session, interviewed all inmate workers, all staff and many of the cadets.

5. Status of Previously Noncompliant Standards/Plans of Action

The team reviewed the status of standards from the previous audit and found that there were no non-compliant findings, for which a waiver was not granted.

G. Interviews

During the course of the audit, team members met with both staff and offenders to verify observations and/or to clarify questions concerning facility operations.

1. Offender Interviews

The Chairperson interviewed all three inmate workers assigned to the academy in their break area. They all stated that they enjoyed working at the academy. They had absolutely no complaints about their assignment. They felt that staff and recruits treated them fairly and respectfully.

2. Staff Interviews

The team during the course of the audit had the pleasure in speaking to all the academy staff present. They all were extremely knowledgeable, dedicated and professional.

It was a pleasure to talk with staff that was truly dedicated in the preparation of new officers. Their enthusiasm and passion for the job was evident in the way they treated and communicated with the recruit classes. All the training instructors are very experienced in corrections in general and most have an extensive background in training/education. It was evident to this auditor that the Academy Staff worked very well together with a common goal.

They all stated that they enjoyed working at the academy. Overall, morale was good between staff and staff/ recruit. There appeared to be a very good working relationship between all the staff. There were no stated issues or concerns.

The team also had the opportunity to interview a number of trainees/recruits on an individual basis as well as in the classroom setting. There were two classes in session. They were divided into a freshman class which had 17 recruits and a senior class which had 31 recruits. All of the recruits were very courteous, respectful and professional. They all were excited for their upcoming careers but were nervous because of the unknown. All interviewed stated that they felt that the instructors were knowledgeable and more than willing to assist them in anything that they needed and in areas that they did not understand.

H. Exit Discussion

The formal exit interview was held in the Training Academy conference room.

The following persons were in attendance:

William Straughn - Deputy Director
David Ruff, Inventory Control Specialist
Randy Callas - Training Director
Larry Cyr - Training Supervisor (Captain)
Kathleen Lowery - Training Instructor/ACA Manager
Ramone Woodall - Training Instructor
Sarah Apel - Training Instructor
David Farrier - Training Instructor
Melinda McClain - Admin II
Robyn Hawkins - Admin II
Shelly Lawrence - ACA Coordinator
Byron Brown - Fire/Safety Coordinator (Lieutenant)

The chairperson explained the procedures that would follow the audit. The team discussed the compliance levels of the mandatory and non-mandatory standards and reviewed their individual findings with the group.

The chairperson expressed appreciation for the cooperation of everyone concerned and congratulated the facility team for the progress made and encouraged them to continue to strive toward even further professionalism within the correctional field.

It is noteworthy to indicate that this audit was the 8th re-accreditation for the academy.

AMERICAN CORRECTIONAL ASSOCIATION
AND THE
COMMISSION ON ACCREDITATION FOR CORRECTIONS

COMPLIANCE TALLY

Manual Type	Correctional Training Academies, 1 st edition	
Supplement	2016 Standards Supplement	
Facility/Program	Arkansas Correctional Training Academy	
Audit Dates	March 11-16, 2021	
Auditor(s)	Brian A. Neagle, Chairperson Gerald Carnes, Member	
	MANDATORY	NON-MANDATORY
Number of Standards in Manual	13	96
Number Not Applicable	1	5
Number Applicable	12	91
Number Non-Compliance	0	0
Number in Compliance	12	91
Percentage (%) of Compliance	100%	100%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of Standards <i>minus</i> Number of Not Applicable <i>equals</i> Number Applicable • Number Applicable <i>minus</i> Number Non-Compliance <i>equals</i> Number Compliance • Number Compliance <i>divided by</i> Number Applicable <i>equals</i> Percentage of Compliance 		

COMMISSION ON ACCREDITATION FOR CORRECTIONS

Arkansas Department of Corrections (ARDOC)
Training Academy (ARDOC)
England, Arkansas

March 11-12, 2021

Visiting Committee Findings

Mandatory Standards
Not Applicable

Standard # 1-CTA-3D-03

THERE IS DOCUMENTATION THAT THE ACADEMY'S DIETARY ALLOWANCES ARE REVIEWED AT LEAST ANNUALLY BY A QUALIFIED NUTRITIONIST OR DIETICIAN TO ENSURE THAT THEY MEET THE NATIONALLY RECOMMENDED ALLOWANCES FOR BASIC NUTRITION.

FINDINGS:

The academy does not prepare or serve food/meals.

COMMISSION ON ACCREDITATION FOR CORRECTIONS

Arkansas Department of Corrections (ARDOC)
Training Academy (ARDOC)
England, Arkansas

March 11-12, 2021

Visiting Committee Findings

Non-Mandatory Standards

Not Applicable

Standard # 1-CTA-1C-04

WRITTEN POLICY, PROCEDURE, AND PRACTICE PROVIDE THAT ALL PERSONNEL ARE SELECTED, RETAINED, AND PROMOTED ON THE BASIS OF MERIT AND SPECIFIED QUALIFICATIONS. NEW EMPLOYEES RECEIVE CREDIT FOR THEIR PRIOR TRAINING.

FINDINGS:

The academy personnel are not covered by merit systems, civil service regulations or union contracts.

Standard # 1-CTA-2A-01

THE ACADEMY CONFORMS TO APPLICABLE FEDERAL, STATE, AND/OR LOCAL BUILDING CODES. (RENOVATION, ADDITION, NEW CONSTRUCTION ONLY)

FINDINGS:

The academy is not new construction.

Standard # 1-CTA-3D-01

FOOD SERVICE OPERATIONS ARE MONITORED BY A STAFF MEMBER.

FINDINGS:

The academy does not prepare or serve food/meals.

Standard # 1-CTA-3D-02

THE FOOD SERVICE AREAS ARE INSPECTED AND COMPLY WITH THE LAWS AND REGULATIONS OF THE AUTHORITY HAVING JURISDICTION.

FINDINGS:

The academy does not prepare or serve food/meals.

Standard # 1-CTA-3D-02-1

ALL STAFF, CONTRACTORS, AND INMATE WORKERS WHO WORK IN THE FOOD SERVICE DEPARTMENT ARE TRAINED IN THE USE OF FOOD SERVICE EQUIPMENT AND IN THE SAFETY PROCEDURES TO BE FOLLOWED IN THE FOOD SERVICE DEPARTMENT.

FINDINGS:

The academy does not prepare or serve food/meals.