

# STATE OF NEBRASKA

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## DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES

Scott R. Frakes

Director



Pete Ricketts  
Governor

May 12, 2015

**TO:** NDCS Staff

**FROM:** Scott Frakes

**SUBJECT:** UPDATE

On Friday, May 7<sup>th</sup> a staff member at NSP was assaulted by an inmate. He was treated for his injuries and returned to work. On Saturday, May 8<sup>th</sup> two staff assaults and a series of multi-man fights led to a lockdown at NSP. Both staff members were treated at a local hospital and then returned to work. On Sunday, May 9<sup>th</sup> two staff members were assaulted during the disturbance that occurred at TSCI. Both were treated and returned to work. In addition, a number of staff were trapped in areas within the facility and threatened with attack from inmates. All of the trapped staff members were ultimately escorted to safety. I have often used the words "minor injuries" or "no injuries" to describe the impacts of an assault or serious threat against staff. Those words unreasonably minimize what a person goes through when he or she is physically attacked or threatened.

The incidents that led to the lockdown at NSP are still under investigation. Staff did an excellent job managing the incidents and the subsequent lockdown. There was enough information about the incidents to allow for a fairly rapid return to restricted and then normal movement. NSP returned to normal operations on Monday, May 10<sup>th</sup>. The excellent support from Special Teams members contributed to the rapid resolution of the events at NSP.

The disturbance at TSCI was large in scope and duration. In addition to the violence against staff, there were injuries to four inmates and two inmates were killed. There was a significant amount of property damage, although none of it was structural. Most areas of the facility remain in good condition, and needed repairs should be completed fairly quickly. Investigations are underway and criminal charges will be pursued wherever possible. The inmate disciplinary process will be used to address misconduct that does not rise to the level of criminal charges.

The facility staff made a heroic effort to isolate and contain the inmates despite being greatly out-numbered. With assistance from additional staff, including Special Teams, control of the facility was regained early in the morning of May 10<sup>th</sup>. At this point in time all of the inmates at TSCI are secured in cells, and the facility remains on full lockdown.

On Wednesday the 13<sup>th</sup> the staff at TSCI will begin letting small numbers of inmates out for a 10 minute shower and 10 minutes of phone/dayroom access. During this time the cells of the inmates will be searched for weapons and serious contraband. All inmate movement outside of the living units will be done in restraints with a two-person escort. Bringing the facility off of lockdown will be done in small, measured steps – and will be in proportion to the behavior and cooperation of the inmate population. Keeping staff safe is the top priority.

An initiative to fill vacant positions at TSCI and NSP started several weeks ago. I'll be meeting with leadership from Governor's Office and DAS tomorrow to identify more strategies to recruit and retain staff. We will find solutions to this problem.

I am incredibly impressed by the work I've seen over the past few days. The employees of NDCS are outstanding. I will make the time to recognize work units and individuals in the near future. For now I will just thank you for all that you do. Thank-you!