

Grand Jury Report SDOB Member Responses

Findings:

F1:

City and County leadership would benefit from first-hand knowledge obtained through inspection of the jail facilities and operations to enable them to better understand how policy changes affecting budget and operations for the Jails impact the operation of the Jails.

Lozano:

Finding Response Agree/Disagree: Agree

Finding Response Text:

The SDOB members should visit the jails on a regular basis pursuant to the schedule required by the Board. Other leaders should also visit the jails periodically. An Inspector General would be an ideal person to coordinate with the various entities who should be visiting the jails.

Rosboro:

Finding Response Agree/Disagree:

Finding Response Text:

- Oversight is stronger when policymakers see jail operations firsthand.
- Facility visits provide context that reports and budget documents cannot
- Visits should include movement, programming, health services, visitation, classification, and facility conditions
- Hear directly from both frontline staff and people in custody

Dignan:

Finding Response Agree/Disagree: Agree

Finding Response Text:

Board members lack direct visibility into how budget and staffing decisions play out on the ground. Regular inspections would let SDOB assess conditions independently rather than relying solely on SFSO-provided data.

Soo:

Finding Response Agree/Disagree: Mostly Agree

Finding Response Text:

During the 2023-24 and 2024-25 terms, then-President Julie D. Soo assigned three Sheriff's Department Oversight Board (SDOB) members at a time to visit the jail facilities at least once every other month and coordinated those visits with the Sheriff's Chief of Staff. The visits included personnel from the Department of Police Accountability (DPA)—the chief attorney and a senior investigator who handles most Sheriff's Office complaints as defined under an MOU between the Sheriff's Office and the DPA.

For calendar year 2024, SDOB had the benefit of Terry Wiley, the inaugural Inspector General, who made regular visits to the jails, spoke with incarcerated individuals, and met with the Sheriff and the Sheriff's command staff. The Inspector General was quite effective and as former prosecutor with over three decades of experience, accomplished more in one year than someone with a lesser background could accomplish in three.

The Inspector General did inspect living conditions at least monthly. However, both the IG and SDOB understood that the facilities and any repairs, particularly at CJ #1 and CJ #2, were very much under a band-aid approach.

The City is in need of a new jail for humane conditions for both the incarcerated and Sheriff's Office staff.

The 2025-26 SDOB leadership has not coordinated any regular jail visits among SDOB members with the Sheriff's Chief of Staff. Five of the seven members are newer and have not yet gone through a minimum of 20 out of 80 hours of training on jail operations. This is to occur within the next two months. Jail visits and inspections should be coordinated with the Sheriff's Chief of Staff and resume by February 1, 2027. Though the Civil Grand Jury recommends at least every two years, SDOB members had visited and inspected the jails at least every other month in the past.

F3:

The Jails are dangerously close to capacity, and SFSO has not convened the Crowding Committee despite meeting the capacity triggers outlined in the SFSO Custody and Court Operations Manual, Policy 511.2.

Lozano:

Finding Response Agree/Disagree: Unsure

Finding Response Text:

We need more data from the SFSO. Without knowing if “book and release” inmates are counted towards the capacity limits, we do not know if capacity has been reached or if the Crowding Committee should be convened. If capacity has been reached or is dangerously close, the Crowding Committee should be convened. An Inspector General would be helpful with this data determination.

Rosboro:

Finding Response Agree/Disagree:

Finding Response Text:

- We need current, facility-level data on population and functional capacity.
- Physical bed capacity is not the same as usable capacity because of classification, medical, behavioral-health, and security needs - How many beds are actually available for the current population given the different housing and safety requirements?

Dignan:

Finding Response Agree/Disagree: Agree

Finding Response Text:

Policy 511.2 sets an 80%-occupancy-for-a-year trigger that was met in 2025 and is on pace again in 2026, yet no committee has convened. This is a policy compliance failure the Board should press ISFSO to correct.

Soo:

Finding Response Agree/Disagree: Agree

Finding Response Text:

SFSO should convene the Crowding Committee and include persons specified in Policy 511.2(a)-(g), with invitations directed to representatives of the District Attorney, San Francisco Sheriff's Department Oversight Board, and the Board of Supervisors.

Without accurate data, SFSO and SDOB cannot accurately assess to what degree the jails are close to capacity. SDOB has urged the Board of Supervisors to have earmarked funding for desperately needed technology to capture data. Many of the reports requested of SFSO come from different silos and are often kept on paper or a computer system that is not unified. Pulling together reports can require several deputies and can be time consuming, exacerbating staffing shortages. Not having a unified system or paper systems impact accuracy and uniformity of reporting. Additionally, SFSO should also work to determine if some reporting functions and data analysis could be performed by civilian staff.

F13:

Incidents of below minimum staffing result in facility lockdowns or lesser mobility restrictions, cause suspended programming, reduce out-of-cell time, interrupt access to health services, impede visitation, and have other negative impacts on inmates, yet data on lockdowns is unavailable.

Lozano:

Finding Response Agree/Disagree: Agree

Finding Response Text:

Data around lockdowns and the specific impacts of the lockdowns should be collected and shared. An Inspector General could assist with this work.

Rosboro:

Finding Response Agree/Disagree:

Finding Response Text:

- Ask for current data on lockdowns: frequency, duration, reason, staff level, facility and services affected.

Dignan:

Finding Response Agree/Disagree: Agree

Finding Response Text:

Absence of systematic tracking (despite a 2019 Controller recommendation to fix this) makes it impossible for oversight bodies to gauge the real impact of understaffing on inmates' access to care, programming, and visitation.

Soo:

Finding Response Agree/Disagree: Only Partly Agree

Finding Response Text:

After complaints, SFSO staff more carefully tailored lockdowns even as SFSO is still building up its sworn ranks. This has allowed programs to continue in part of the jail not directly affected by an incident of an exigent nature.

Recommendations:

R1-B:

All members of the Sheriff's Department Oversight Board should inspect the San Francisco and San Bruno Jails by February 1, 2027 and at least once every two years thereafter. Any inspections involving one or more members of the Sheriff's Department Oversight Board should be conducted so as not to conflict with the Brown Act or Sunshine Ordinance.

Lozano:

Recommendation on Response (Implementation): Schedule will be implemented

Recommendation Response Text:

The SDOB is implementing a training schedule and a visitation policy/schedule around the visitations in compliance with the Brown Act and Sunshine laws.

Rosboro:

Recommendation on Response (Implementation): Support

Recommendation Response Text:

Regular inspections would strengthen direct oversight of jail operations and provide the Oversight Board with first-hand information regarding facility conditions and the delivery of services.

Dignan:

Recommendation on Response (Implementation): Will implement

Recommendation Response Text:

SDOB will coordinate a schedule for all members to complete inspections of SF and San Bruno facilities by the deadline, consistent with Brown Act/Sunshine Ordinance requirements.

Soo:

Recommendation on Response (Implementation): Mostly Agree

Recommendation Response Text:

Answer combined with F1

R3-A:

By November 1, 2026, SFSO should convene the Crowding Committee. In addition to the persons specified in Policy 511.2 (a)-(g), representatives of the District Attorney, San Francisco Sheriff's Department Oversight Board, and the BOS should also be invited.

Lozano:

Recommendation on Response (Implementation): Information from SFSO by 10.1.26

Recommendation Response Text:

This cannot be done until we have accurate data. The SDOB will need to meet with the SFSO to make this determination, no later than the October SDOB board meeting.

Rosboro:

Recommendation on Response (Implementation): Support

Recommendation Response Text:

Convening the Crowding Committee with the additional stakeholders identified in the recommendation would provide a coordinated forum to monitor population, capacity, and operational pressures and develop responses before conditions become a crisis.

Dignan:

Recommendation on Response (Implementation): Will support/monitor

Recommendation Response Text:

SDOB will request SFSO provide committee formation status and will confirm a Board representative is designated to participate once convened.

Soo:

Recommendation on Response (Implementation): Agree

Recommendation Response Text:

Answer combined with F3

R13-A:

By March 1, 2027, the SFSO should implement a standardized tracking and reporting system that captures data: (1) for each lockdown or service reduction related to reasons other than subminimum staffing and, (2) for each lockdown or service reduction attributed to below minimum staffing. This system should include data on the affected facility, unit, date and duration of lockdown or service reduction, reason for lockdown, lockdown level and the staffing level at time of lockdown or service reduction, as well as the activities and services that were reduced, delayed, canceled, or suspended.

Lozano:

Recommendation on Response (Implementation): The ability to provide this data and the cost of such should be provide to SDOB no later than 12.1.26

Recommendation Response Text:

A review of existing SFSO data collection systems must occur first. If the existing system cannot provide this data, then a cost analysis needs to occur. Funding and staffing must exist for this before the SDOB can make such a requirement or recommendation.

Rosboro:

Recommendation on Response (Implementation): Support

Recommendation Response Text:

A standardized system for tracking lockdowns and service reductions is necessary to establish reliable data regarding their causes, frequency, duration, staffing levels, and impact on programs and services.

Dignan:

Recommendation on Response (Implementation): Will support/monitor

Recommendation Response Text:

SDOB will request quarterly progress updates from SFSO on system design and implementation status ahead of the deadline.

Soo:

Recommendation on Response (Implementation):

Recommendation Response Text:

By March 1, 2027, SFSO should be able to at least outline a standard tracking and reporting system that captures data: (1) for each lockdown or service reduction related to reasons other than subminimum staffing and, (2) for each lockdown or service reduction attributed to below minimum staffing. And, agreed that the data should include the affected facility, unit, date, and duration of lockdown or service reduction, reason for lockdown, lockdown level and the staffing level at time of lockdown or service reduction, as well as the activities and services that were reduced, delayed, canceled, or suspended.

To have a "reporting system" that should be through technology hinges on earmarked funding for technology. Since SDOB convened in 2021 / 22, SDOB has advocated to the Board of Supervisors for an upgrade to SFSO's antiquated technology to no avail.

R13-B:

This data generated by the system described in R13-A should be captured in dashboards and reported quarterly to the BOS and the Sheriff's Department Oversight Board, and published monthly on the Sheriff's website and on Data SF | OpenData Portal at data.sfgov.org.

Lozano:

Recommendation on Response (Implementation): Same as above for R13-A

Recommendation Response Text:

Same as above for R13-A

Rosboro:

Recommendation on Response (Implementation): Support

Recommendation Response Text:

A standardized system for tracking lockdowns and service reductions is necessary to establish reliable data regarding their causes, frequency, duration, staffing levels, and impact on programs and services.

Dignan:

Recommendation on Response (Implementation): Will implement

Recommendation Response Text:

SDOB will add this dashboard as a standing quarterly agenda item once R13-A data collection begins, and will verify monthly publication on the Sheriff's website and DataSF.

Soo:

Recommendation on Response (Implementation):

Recommendation Response Text:

Having data described in R-13 captured in dashboards and quarterly reports for the Board of Supervisors and SDOB, and published month on the Sheriff's website and on Data SF | OpenData Portal at data.sfgov.org would be ideal. Again, SFSO needs the necessary technology.

The Department of Police Accountability on a shoestring did create a functional data infrastructure for the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) that included the following:

- Website to inform the public, report data, and centralize available online resources;
- Case Management System (CMS) by replicating DPA's CMS architecture and drawing upon DPA's technical experience and expertise to develop a secure, versatile, and customized OIG CMS on a Salesforce platform and migrating historic data from DPA's investigations about SFSO misconduct and improper conduct into the new CMS that serves to manage and track OIG's work, analyzed and report on OIG's data, and capable of interfacing with other systems through application programming interfaces;
- Online Complaint System that is user-friendly dedicated to complaints against SFSO members with multilingual support and data integration with CMS;

- Complaint Portal to provide complainants with a portal to track individual case progress through the investigatory phases. Accessible using a system-generated unique number; and,

Paperless Operations through transition to a cloud-based file system for enhanced security and accessibility.