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N.J. women's prison was in chaos. The shocking takeaways from damning Edna Mahan report.

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Warning: This article includes graphic details of violence and sexual assault.

A new report released Monday concludes New Jersey prison leaders repeatedly failed to enact reforms and were often ignorant of their own policies and the violent histories of their staff, which set the stage for officers to severely beat several women in January at the state's only female facility.

The review also said officers used excessive force and filed false reports after a series of cell extractions at the Edna Mahan Correctional Facility in Hunterdon County, echoing details already publicized by prosecutors who have filed criminal charges against 10 officers so far.

Gov. Phil Murphy has announced the prison will shut down.

The 73-page investigation was led by former state comptroller Matthew Boxer from the firm Lowenstein Sandler LLP. Attorneys reviewed about 21,000 documents, watched more than 20 hours of footage and conducted two dozen interviews, according to the report.

Here are some of the conclusions.

Prison leaders didn't even know who had been in charge of the women's prison

Corrections Commissioner Marcus Hicks thought Erica Stem had taken over as the top official in November.

She hadn't, the report said.

Personnel records showed that Stem had been transferred to the facility but only as an associate administrator, not the acting administrator, investigators wrote.

The commissioner also believed another associate administrator, Sean St. Paul, reported to Stem.

He didn't, the report said.

Furthermore, Stem went on leave soon after New Year's Day, leaving decision-making to St. Paul — who has been repeatedly sued for alleged physical abuse or refusing to stop officers from hurting prisoners.

Leaders didn't know about other accusations against staff

Some of the officers who pulled women out of their cells had histories of alleged violence.

One was arrested in 2017 for punching a door during a “domestic violence incident,” the report said.

Another off-duty official reportedly fired his gun twice while driving. The official said another driver had drawn a weapon, “but witnesses said the other driver was unarmed and that the official shot at him as he drove away,” the report said.

Their bosses were in the dark.

“Senior NJDOC officials we interviewed were largely unaware of these allegations,” the report said, using the acronym for New Jersey Department of Corrections.

Other staff involved in the cell extractions had disciplinary histories. One had been repeatedly punished for failing to properly film extractions, while another had once failed “to conduct a cell search in a professional manner,” the report said.

Murphy's staff knew about the incident early, but the governor only ordered an investigation after media stories

The cell extractions began late Jan. 11 and lasted until the early hours of Jan. 12.

The governor's office was emailed four days later, and Murphy's chief counsel responded within minutes to confirm the state attorney general's office was involved, the report said.

But Murphy only ordered the outside investigation Jan. 27, two days after NJ Advance Media broke the story.

The commissioner's staff was called before the extractions

The commissioner also told the governor that the extractions “had not been authorized by anyone in NJDOC except the Associate Administrator” — yet the report said someone from Hicks' staff had been in contact with a facility representative before the extractions occurred.

Deputy Commissioner Michelle Ricci was called by the associate administrator, according to the report.

Details about their conversation were redacted.

Ricci has since taken personal leave, according to a prison spokeswoman.

Ricci has also faced criticism from the state's largest corrections union. In a March 3 letter obtained by NJ Advance Media, PBA Local 105 wrote to the commissioner that Ricci made "hasty and reckless operational decisions" that put "the health and safety of ... Correctional Police Officers in jeopardy."

Spokeswoman Liz Velez previously said union pressure did not force officials to replace Ricci.

The commissioner knew about the incident earlier than previously disclosed

The report says Hicks was first looped in hours after the extractions ended on Jan. 12.

A spokeswoman previously said the corrections commissioner reviewed "data from the initial investigation" on Jan. 14 and suspended staff the next day.

Prison officials weren't even sure who authorized cell extractions

Investigators said they got conflicting answers when they asked who had to give the green light to pull people out of their cells.

Hicks' staff had told facility administrators to get additional approval for late night extractions, and that planned extractions at the women's prison needed to specifically go through Ricci, the report said.

But that order was never put in writing and "its parameters are not entirely clear," according to the report.

What policies did exist weren't followed

To make sure extractions are conducted properly, each must be fully recorded by a supervisor.

That didn't happen on Jan. 11, the report found.

Videos that night "were frequently filmed in such a way that it was impossible to see what was happening," investigators wrote. One recording did not capture a prisoner being audibly punched by an officer for about a minute straight. Another cell extraction, which resulted in a skull fracture, was not recorded at all, the report said.

That was likely intentional, Hicks told investigators.

"There were instances where the camera was pointed at the floor, or it wasn't even on I don't think that was coincidental," Hicks said.

One former prison official said improperly filming extractions and telling compliant prisoners to “stop resisting” are “tactics sometimes used to avoid detection of excessive force or to justify an inappropriate use of force,” the report said.

The Jan. 11 cell extractions should never have taken place

Staff had good reason to be mad, the report said.

Women had repeatedly sprayed officers with unknown liquids, some of which may have been urine or feces, and employees had been hit in the eyes, investigators wrote. This qualified as assault, but prisoners were not being criminally prosecuted and some disciplinary charges were even downgraded.

That still didn’t justify a mass extraction, the report said.

“As opposed to an attempt to quell a legitimate emergency, the Cell Extractions were a misguided effort by frustrated employees to restore order and mete out discipline,” according to the report.

A former facility administrator told investigators she’d never heard of pulling so many women out of their rooms, and the report said fewer than two dozen extractions total have happened in the past three years.

The current administrator added that she’d witnessed late night riots that didn’t justify cell extractions.

Leaders were slow to implement reforms that might have prevented the violence

The prison has tried for years to add new security cameras, but hundreds have yet to be installed, the report said.

It’s also taken three years and at least two vendors to equip officers with body-worn cameras, and officials still aren’t finished.

The “failure to properly video record the Cell Extractions ... likely would not have occurred if officers were wearing” body cameras, the report said. “Indeed, we question whether, in that scenario, the Cell Extractions would have occurred at all.”

Medical staff sometimes appeared indifferent to injuries

After one extraction, video showed a nurse stopping to look at a prisoner with a black eye and a bloody face, the report said.

The nurse said she was going to get a blood pressure monitor, investigators wrote. She didn’t return.

Another prisoner told medical staff she'd been punched in the face and asked a nurse to wipe her face.

The nurse said she didn't even know if she had any bandages, the report said.

A woman can be heard saying she's being groped by an officer

Ajila Nelson, one of the women who reported being attacked, previously told NJ Advance Media that a male officer grabbed her breast and put his "fingers into my vagina."

Monday's report included almost identical details, although investigators did not name the woman.

The report said a prisoner refused to take her clothes off for a strip search and yelled, "It's in my (vagina) and y'all ain't getting it." It's not clear what she was referring to.

During the ensuing struggle, she was held down by several officers, including men. According to the report she yelled, "Why is it a man ripping my clothes off? Why is you grabbing my titties?"

She appeared to be alone and naked in a cell at the end of the video, investigators wrote. The woman was later found to have a broken arm.

No officers have been charged with any sexual offenses, although the criminal investigation is ongoing.

Taxpayers paid for the investigation

Monday's report was likely expensive, although the total cost is not yet known.

Boxer and his colleagues were paid \$400 an hour to investigate, according to a retention agreement obtained through a public records request. Paralegals could earn \$90 an hour.

The firm previously billed the state for more than \$630,000 for advising New Jersey officials amid a multi-year federal inquiry into sexual abuse at the same facility.