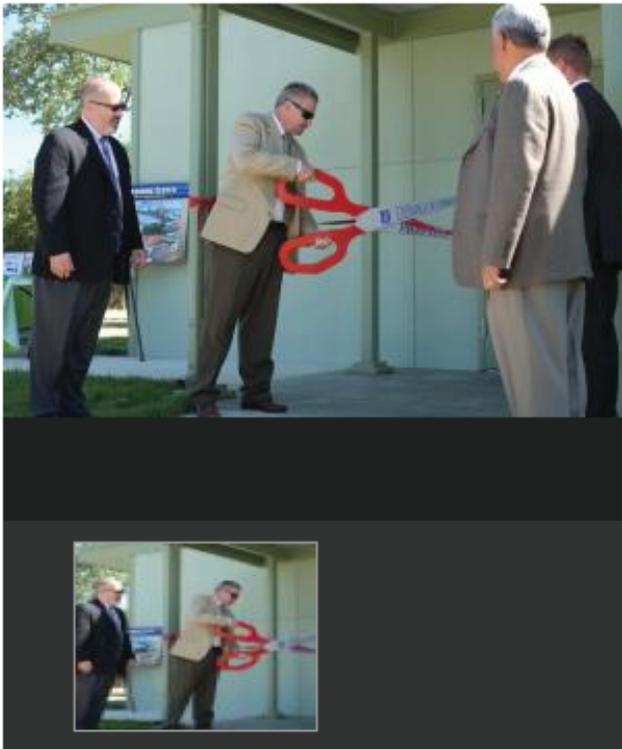


The Folsom Telegraph

New emergency center unveiled at prison grounds in Folsom

Constructed by prisoners in the job training program, center could be re-sold throughout state

By: Eyragon Eidam, Telegraph Correspondent



FOLSOM, CA – The California Prison Industry Authority and the California Department of Corrections unveiled the newest addition to the Green Valley Training Center near Folsom Prison during a ribbon cutting ceremony Thursday morning, May 23.

Measuring in at 1,440 square feet, the state-of-the-art Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is built for a wide range of agencies and emergency responders to train for, and respond to, catastrophic events.

Charles Pattillo, general manager of California Prison Industry Authority, said the prototype will not only serve as a training facility, but also as a fully operational command center during an emergency.

“The whole idea is to resell these throughout the state,” said Pattillo. “They’re built right here in lower Folsom, trucked here, and put together.”

The new facility houses three conference rooms, a large staff work area, bathrooms, a kitchen, and a communications room. The unit is designed to support 50 staff members with everything they would need to organize an emergency response.

The Green Valley Training Facility sits at the highest point in Sacramento County, a location officials see as a strategically advantageous position.

Anthony Chaus, chief of the Office of Correctional Safety, said facilities like this one are vital to the preparedness of emergency services.

"In some aspects this EOC ... is more advanced than the existing DOC [Departmental Operation Center] that we have downtown," said Chaus. "Due to its modular design, it can be reproduced and placed almost anywhere."

Chaus said the need for a training facility which could be used without impacting the daily operations of the Sacramento location made the modular training facility an ideal choice.

"Cal-PIA is providing a solution that meets our criteria and is also less expensive than other options," said Chaus in a press release.

The Emergency Operations Centers are produced by inmates as a part of the Career Technical Education program and are being offered to agencies to improve their response abilities to natural and man-made disasters.

Chaus cites a recidivism rate of less than 15 percent within the vocational program and said the program offers substantial advantages for both inmates and the community.

"The offenders that participate in this program have a recidivism rate of less than 15 percent," said Chaus. "This building is also increasing public safety by keeping many offenders from being idle and getting them skills they can use on the outside."