

Inmate on Inmate Assaults – Numbers, potential causes, lessons learned

Included in the Department of Corrections' (SCDC) July 2, 2019 letter to the House Legislative Oversight Committee (LOC). This information was provided in response to the following question in LOC's June 13, 2019 letter to the Department of Corrections: "24. In regard to the increase in inmate on inmate assaults in 2016-17, please provide the following: (a) potential causes; (b) any lessons learned as a result; and (c) any actions to help decrease those numbers."

24. In regards to the increase in inmate on inmate assaults in 2016-17, please provide the following:

a. potential causes;

- There are multifaceted reasons for the increase in inmate on inmate assaults, including, but not limited to, the following:
 - Implementation of the new Mental Health policy with the reduction of Restricted Housing Unit beds and disciplinary policy;
 - Misunderstanding of Use of Force and implementation of new policy;
 - A large increase in the number of cellphones; and
 - A significant decrease in front line officers due to the improved economy.
 - Inmates sentenced to the SCDC are more violent.

Additionally, one of the main causes of increased assaults is a significant decrease in front line staffing (Correctional Officers). The loss of the staff decrease began during the loss of restrictive housing beds. Also, SCDC has achieved a significant reduction in contraband. We surmise this has created a struggle between security threat groups to control the reduced contraband that still enters the institution and thus results in increased inmate on inmate assaults.

See applicable charts on next pages

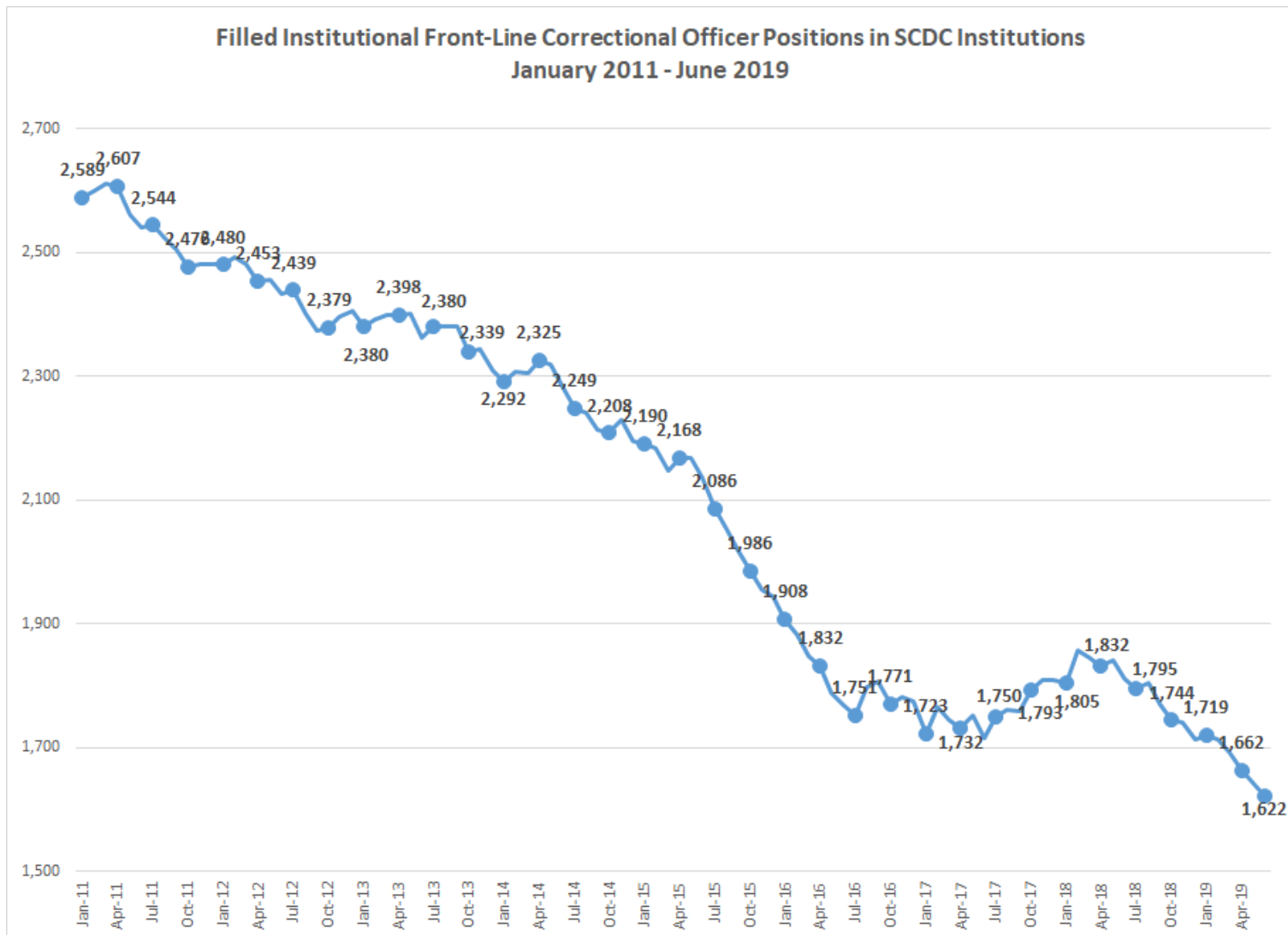
b. any lessons learned as a result; and

- Staff is the most important asset in SCDC. SCDC must focus on staff retention, which will be discussed in the Division of Administration's presentation.
- SCDC has learned that when introducing new policies that have a direct impact on institutional operations, the intent of the new policy needs to be adequately relayed to staff and significant training conducted on said policies. This should include follow up to ensure the policies are being implemented correctly.

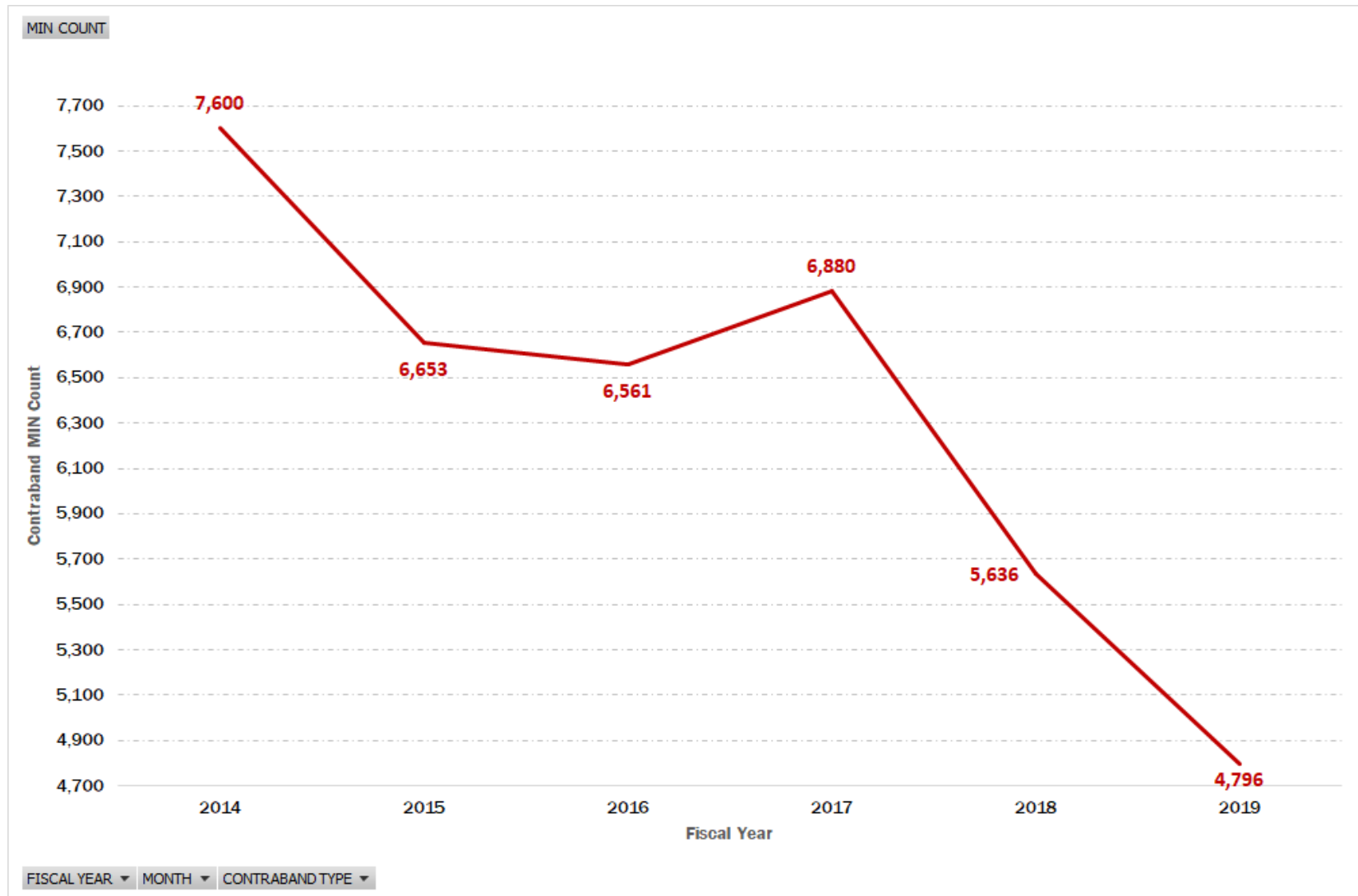
c. any actions to help decrease those numbers.

- The introduction of netting, body scanners, and other security measures were implemented and are having a positive effect. Serious assaults are down this fiscal year. If micro-jamming of cell phones were approved, it is anticipated this would further disrupt the Security Threat Groups ability to communicate and control contraband; thus, furthering a reduction in serious assaults.

Loss of Front-Line Staff



Total Amount of Contraband Seized



Number of Inmate on Inmate Assaultive Incidents with Serious Injury

*Serious injury denotes the inmate went to “outside” medical for treatment at time of the incident.

	# of Assaults	Filled Front-Line Correctional Officer Positions	Contraband MIN Counts
FY 2012	61		
FY 2013	69	2,399	
FY 2014	68	2,334	7,600
FY 2015	52	2,204	6,653
FY 2016	88	1,953	6,561
FY 2017	134	1,744	6,880
FY 2018	117	1,795	5,636
FY 2019 (thru 6/23/19)	57	1,708	4,796