



Above: The TCF laundry scanner, with Manager Ron Damuth at end of belt during inspection

LAUNDRY SCANNER LOWERS RISK OF CONTRABAND

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Contraband presents a safety and health risk to both staff and incarcerated individuals in correctional facilities throughout the country. Contraband is both smuggled into facilities and improvised inside the facilities themselves from materials that are not in and of themselves contraband (e.g., dining utensils or woodshop scraps turned into weapons). Any blind spots in CI laundering operations' security policies and procedures can affect sales and customer service, and the introduction of illicit goods into our prisons facilitates escapes, compromises staff, and lowers morale. The existence of contraband also shatters the public's perception of security.

Michigan State Industries' laundry operations located at Thumb Correctional Facility in Lapeer, MI (TCF) and Brooks Correctional Facility in Muskegon, MI launder millions of pounds daily for prison facilities throughout the state as well as statewide non-profit medical organizations. TCF's laundry operations faced high security risks transporting laundry from Henry Ford Hospital (HFH), a major cus-

tomor account located in Detroit, MI. The trauma facility services hundreds of patients and turns over 100 beds per day. HFH assigned a 75-person team to handle laundry and sorting for a 350-bed unit before the laundry is transported to TCF. The employees are paid minimum wage, and some have cognitive disabilities. Environmental management staff was assigned at various locations within the facility and were also responsible for laundry services at 35 satellite locations.

One of the most common hazards with laundry customer partnerships can occur when a customer's staff underestimates the far-reaching nature of seemingly harmless, but forbidden goods that can make their way into laundry bins during transport. There are also premeditated incidents set up as part of a scheme to get prohibited items inside. Contraband is power for incarcerated individuals — it allows them to gain power over others. For enterprising incarcerated individuals, trade in illicit goods and the performance of prohibited services are the building blocks

of power. With planning and work, the smallest gambling enterprise has the potential to develop into a large trading empire inside the walls. With such an empire, incarcerated individuals can procure weapons, narcotics, loyalty and outside help, all of which can destabilize the security of any institution and CI operation.

Increasing incidents at TCF's Laundry operations raised red flags with MDOC administration officials, and MSI hosted a crucial lean process improvement brainstorming session to gather information and discuss alternatives to TCF's current laundry services for Henry Ford Hospital. In the original transport process, laundry workers would sort, screen, and launder incoming items from the hospital. The goal of the meeting was to implement a solution to provide the highest quality and level of service to the customer while adhering to MDOC security policies and procedures. A collaboration between MDOC, MSI, and HFH was imperative for a timely resolution.

A meeting was held with stakeholders at every level. TCF's Warden and Deputy Warden; MSI's Administrator, Operations Manager, and Laundry Manager; HFH's EMS Manager, Supply Chain Manager, and Deputy Supply Chain Manager; and MDOC's Inspector attended to find solutions together. They collaborated on an action plan to list remedies that could be implemented to ensure safety, security, and quality customer service.

- Training for HFH staff and EMS staff on new supply chain procedures
- X-ray scanning of all laundry after transport and incoming to TCF
- Restricted access to soiled linen rooms, camera installation and surveillance
- Labeling of all carts and hampers (source, destination, etc.)
- Daily security huddles with administration and line staff
- Incentive program for all employees (gifts cards, food credits, awards)
- Pre-screening of all staff at HFH
- Linen-only hampers, piloted hospital-wide

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Above: Laundry bins at HFH

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The staff at TCF laundry operations and HFH implemented and strictly adhered to trainings for the new supply chain and security procedures. All laundry bins and hampers with soiled linens contained new labeling with room numbers to track initial locations, and surveillance cameras were installed to monitor access to restricted areas. HFH staff was encouraged to notify their administration of any prohibited contraband items prior to being transported to TCF laundry, and employees enjoyed new incentive programs. TCF installed a new hi-tech x-ray scanner at its laundry operation as an additional security measure to detect any incoming prohibited items that may have made it through during transport.

Christopher Kamrada, MSI Administrator, visited TCF laundry operations to view the new security sorting process in action. As laundry arrived at the facility, workers placed each bag on a conveyor belt to be scanned, very similar to a baggage scan at the national airports. The scanner successfully located contraband items missed during the HFH sorting process. MDOC security staff monitored each bag of laundry as it passed through the scanner with a computer screen showing various color densities and outlines of objects. Ron Damuth, TCF Laundry Manager, was satisfied at how well the scanner picked up images of objects that might otherwise have made their way into the facility. MSI filmed the new process and shared the video with MDOC Director, Heidi Washington, along with a synopsis of the implementation plan.

TCF laundry operations is also looking into a future partnership with Boom Recycling LLC, a member company of NCIA. MSI is looking to introduce a recycling business that will establish a new industry within TCF's laundry operation, creating work opportunities for incarcerated individuals and bringing new revenue to MSI. The recycling opportunity is environmentally friendly, with sound results for landfills and a business model that does not take away from the private sector. Boom Recycling LLC, DBA TSS (Tennessee Sustainable Service) currently operates successfully in the state of Tennessee and has a 5-year partnership with TRICOR Industries. MSI is looking forward to exploring this new venture and partnership, and TCF laundry operations will be ready thanks to its new security policies and procedures.

Below: MSI Administrator Chris Kamrada at TCF Laundry

