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P E R S O N A L

SELECCIÓN Y FORMACIÓN DEL PERSONAL PENITENCIARIO
EN BOLIVIA

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NACIONES UNIDAS

SUMMARY

I. DESCRIPTIVE PART

1. Bolivia has no special legislation governing the organization, work, rights and duties of penitentiary staff. The legislation relating to the police and the general provisions concerning civil servants apply.

2. Penitentiary staff are under the administrative jurisdiction of the Ministry of the Interior and Justice.

3. There are no legislative provisions laying down conditions for the recruitment of penitentiary staff or for the duration of employment or the promotion of such staff. No competitions, proficiency examinations or competitive examinations are held for any of these purposes. Appointments and dismissals of penitentiary officials are within the discretion of the higher authorities.

4. Staff are not divided into categories; in other words there is no scale of promotion for career officials. With regard to internal organization in departmental prisons the official in charge is the Governor. He is assisted by two wardens responsible for law and order and security; the guards on duty; a chaplain; a medical officer; workshop foremen; basic education teachers; and social workers. In many cases this organization laid down by the prison legislation is purely nominal. It does not, of course, apply to provincial prisons.

5. There is no special school for the training of staff of penal institutions. As a rule the civilian officers have no specialized knowledge, and the same applies to the subordinate guards. The officers are members of the corps of Carabineros, who attend a special police training school, at which some subjects of interest from the point of view of this investigation are taught but which are really intended to train policemen. Medical officers, chaplains and social workers, even though they work in prisons, are not specially trained.

6. Owing to our unitary system of government the organization just described is national, but there is no Directorate-General of Prisons to make it so in practice and consequently as a rule, each institution governs itself in its own way.

II. ANALYTICAL PART

1. The existing system of recruitment, employment and promotion of penitentiary staff incurs the general disapproval of the public.

2. In view of this the results achieved in penal institutions cannot be considered as satisfactory.

The organization of institutions depends entirely upon the honesty, knowledge and understanding of their staff; it has not proved possible to institute any penitentiary system; there is no scientifically planned and applied system of discipline; facilities for the rehabilitation of prisoners are almost non-existent.

3. No professional service has been established; recruitment and dismissal are governed by general administrative regulations. There is no trained staff; the pay is not sufficient to attract the best qualified persons to the service.

4. In some departmental prisons, though not in all, there are medical officers, chaplains, social workers and teachers, but they are not specially trained. There are no criminologists or psychiatrists on prison staffs.
As a rule provincial prisons are staffed only by guards.

5. The proportion of staff to prisoners is probably one to eight.

This archiving project is a collaborative effort between United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and American Society of Criminology, Division of International Criminology. Any comments or questions should be directed to Cindy J. Smith at CJSmithphd@comcast.net or Emil Wandzilak at emil.wandzilak@unodc.org.