



## UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS TASK FORCE RELEASES FINAL REPORT

Over the past year, drones have become a major topic of conversation amongst corrections officers. From member engagement sessions across the state to legislative town halls, officers are clearly worried about the continual threats drones pose to the safety and security of correctional institutions.

In October, MCO took a [formal position on this issue](#) and made a statement to the governor's Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) Task Force, laying out corrections officers' concerns about drone usage over and around prisons.

The task force wrapped up their work last month, and their final report includes concerns about drones above prisons, tourist destinations, major bridges, and other locations designated as "key and unique facilities." [Read the full report here.](#)

In the report, the task force discussed the possibility of restricting drone activity

near these locations through legislation and the creation of an Unmanned Aircraft Systems Traffic Management system. Federal Aviation Administration regulations may preempt state law when it comes to airspace restrictions, but state legislation could prohibit "certain conduct such as 'interference,'" according to the report.

An Unmanned Aircraft Systems Traffic Management system could work within FAA guidelines to support the safety of critical key facilities.

The task force also noted a lack of information on any laws or restrictions governing drone use in Michigan. They recommended an Unmanned Aerial System Joint Program Office "to coordinate public agency efforts and to provide a unified voice for Michigan's citizens seeking UAS information."

Current law does not allow for strict penalties for flying drones near prisons.

The Honorable Judge Ronald Schafer, who is presiding over charges against three men accused of using a drone to smuggle contraband into MTU in August, [was surprised at the low sentencing guidelines.](#)

At this point, Gov. Rick Snyder and other legislative leaders are reviewing the report and will decide whether to move forward with the task force's recommendations.

Due to the seriousness of this threat, MCO is continuing to reach out to legislators concerning drones. This week, Brent Kowitz, MCO Executive Board member and MCO's representative on the MCO/MDOC joint Health and Safety Committee, met with state representatives to share our concerns.

MCO will keep members posted as we continue this conversation and work toward creating the safest environment possible for those who work behind the walls.

## AROUND THE STATE: DRF CO ASSAULTED; MCF OFFICERS GRAPPLE WITH SEVERAL FIGHTS

**A Level IV Carson City inmate punched an officer after he found spud juice in his room.**

The assault happened Dec. 1 in the Level IV 1200 unit. The officer found spud juice during a shake down.

The CO was treated at a hospital and returned to work. The inmate – who has a long prison rap sheet including substance abuse and threatening behavior – was transferred to another facility.

**Twenty-seven Muskegon inmates were sent to segregation in a four-day period due to fighting.**

Officers responded to four fights Dec. 2-3, two involving weapons. Four more fights broke out over the next two days. Two prisoners received treatment at a hospital. One of them was stabbed near the eye. No staff members were seriously injured.

Because segregation was full, lockers and desks were removed from traditional cells to accommodate all the prisoners moved to seg status.

Officers say gang power struggles and theft caused the fighting.

Muskegon is a Level II prison.

**During the daily outside unit activities, a CFP patient climbed over the interior unit yard fence and tried to climb the exterior security fence.** FSAs are saying it was an escape attempt.

The patient climbed about five feet up the exterior fence, lost his grip, and fell. While FSAs were responding, he ran about 50 feet to another section of the fence and attempted to climb the fence again with the same results.

Under the direction and observation of the responding FSAs, the patient proceeded to climb back over the interior fence

and was escorted back into his unit without further incident. The patient was placed on no outside activities restriction for the next 30 days.

### MOVE FORWARD FEATURED ON MDOC FIELD DAYS PODCAST

In this week's [Field Days podcast](#), MCO staff talk about Move Forward, MCO's campaign to promote corrections and forensic officers and the values and standards that set them apart in the criminal justice system.

Andy Potter, Vice President/Chief of Staff, and Jeremy Tripp, Government and Political Affairs Director, are interviewed. Thanks, MDOC, for promoting Move Forward!

Read more on [Move Forward at mco-seiu.org](#) and look for the next poster in your facility in the coming weeks.