



LEGISLATIVE  
AUDITOR  
GENERAL

# Influencing Criminal Justice Policy

National Academies of Science,  
Engineering, and Medicine

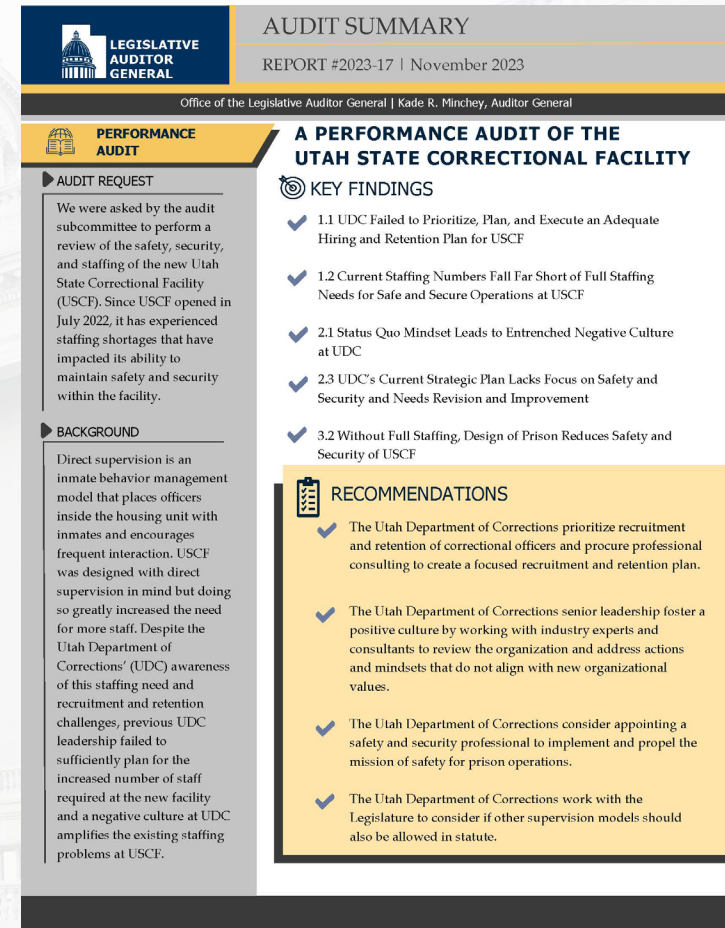
March 22, 2024



# Prison Safety

# Limited Attention and Cognition

- One-page summaries
- Reports written at an 8<sup>th</sup> grade level
- Use power style (lead with conclusions)



**LEGISLATIVE AUDITOR GENERAL**

**AUDIT SUMMARY**  
REPORT #2023-17 | November 2023  
Office of the Legislative Auditor General | Kade R. Minchey, Auditor General

**PERFORMANCE AUDIT**

**AUDIT REQUEST**  
We were asked by the audit subcommittee to perform a review of the safety, security, and staffing of the new Utah State Correctional Facility (USCF). Since USCF opened in July 2022, it has experienced staffing shortages that have impacted its ability to maintain safety and security within the facility.

**BACKGROUND**  
Direct supervision is an inmate behavior management model that places officers inside the housing unit with inmates and encourages frequent interaction. USCF was designed with direct supervision in mind but doing so greatly increased the need for more staff. Despite the Utah Department of Corrections' (UDC) awareness of this staffing need and recruitment and retention challenges, previous UDC leadership failed to sufficiently plan for the increased number of staff required at the new facility and a negative culture at UDC amplifies the existing staffing problems at USCF.

**A PERFORMANCE AUDIT OF THE UTAH STATE CORRECTIONAL FACILITY**

**KEY FINDINGS**

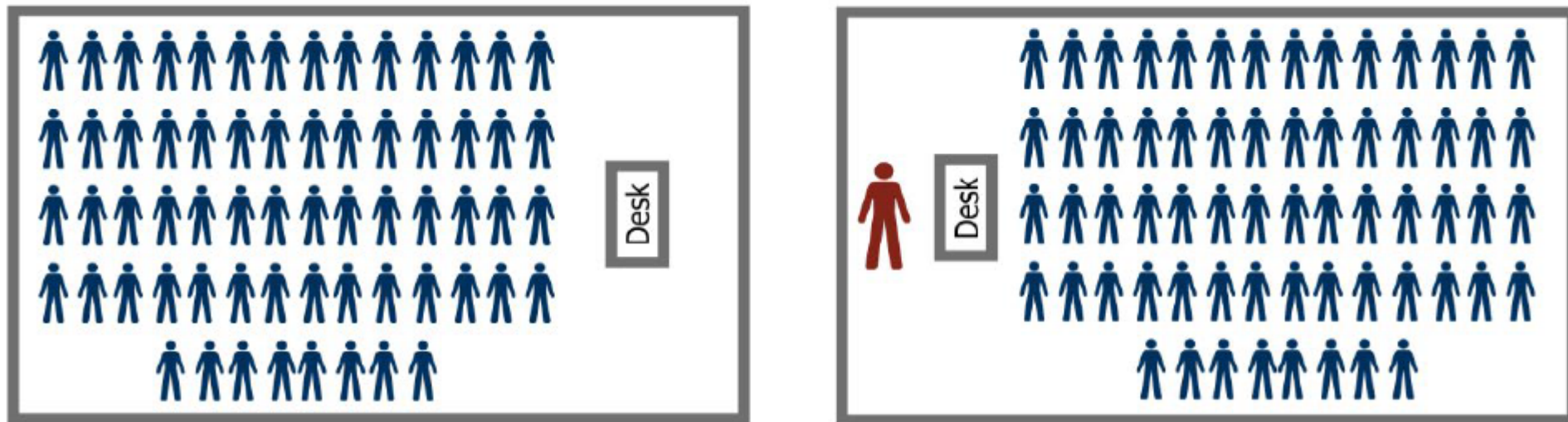
- ✓ 1.1 UDC Failed to Prioritize, Plan, and Execute an Adequate Hiring and Retention Plan for USCF
- ✓ 1.2 Current Staffing Numbers Fall Far Short of Full Staffing Needs for Safe and Secure Operations at USCF
- ✓ 2.1 Status Quo Mindset Leads to Entrenched Negative Culture at UDC
- ✓ 2.3 UDC's Current Strategic Plan Lacks Focus on Safety and Security and Needs Revision and Improvement
- ✓ 3.2 Without Full Staffing, Design of Prison Reduces Safety and Security of USCF

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

- ✓ The Utah Department of Corrections prioritize recruitment and retention of correctional officers and procure professional consulting to create a focused recruitment and retention plan.
- ✓ The Utah Department of Corrections senior leadership foster a positive culture by working with industry experts and consultants to review the organization and address actions and mindsets that do not align with new organizational values.
- ✓ The Utah Department of Corrections consider appointing a safety and security professional to implement and propel the mission of safety for prison operations.
- ✓ The Utah Department of Corrections work with the Legislature to consider if other supervision models should also be allowed in statute.

# Limited Attention and Cognition

**Modified Staffing Plan Increases Risk of Incidents at USCF.** The modified staffing plan removes multiple supervision posts. As a result, one officer supervises two sections at once in most housing units. This results in one officer supervising a total of 128 inmates in a general population area, as shown below:



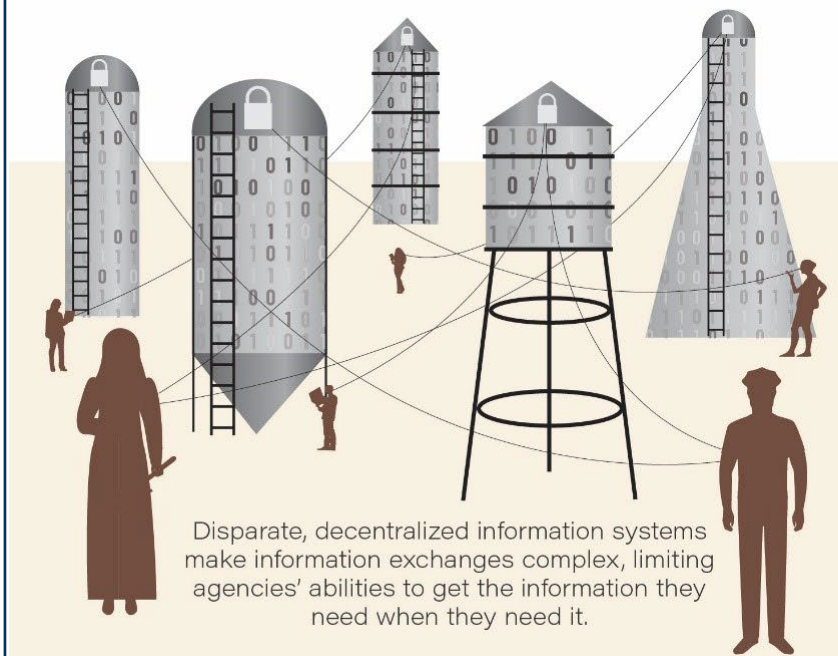


# Criminal Justice Reform

# Limited Attention and Cognition

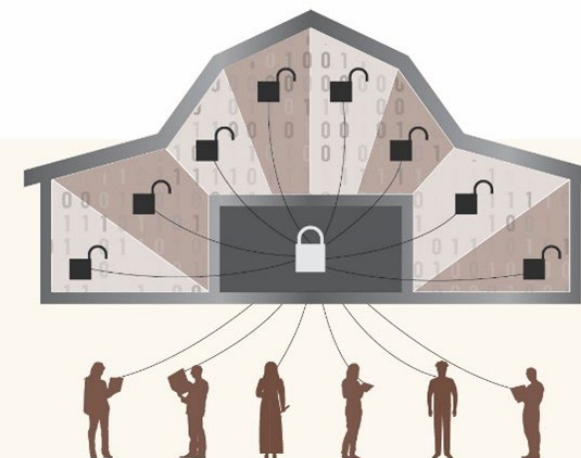
## DATA SILOS

interfere with timely, accurate, and reliable sharing of information.



## AN INFORMATION SHARING ENVIRONMENT

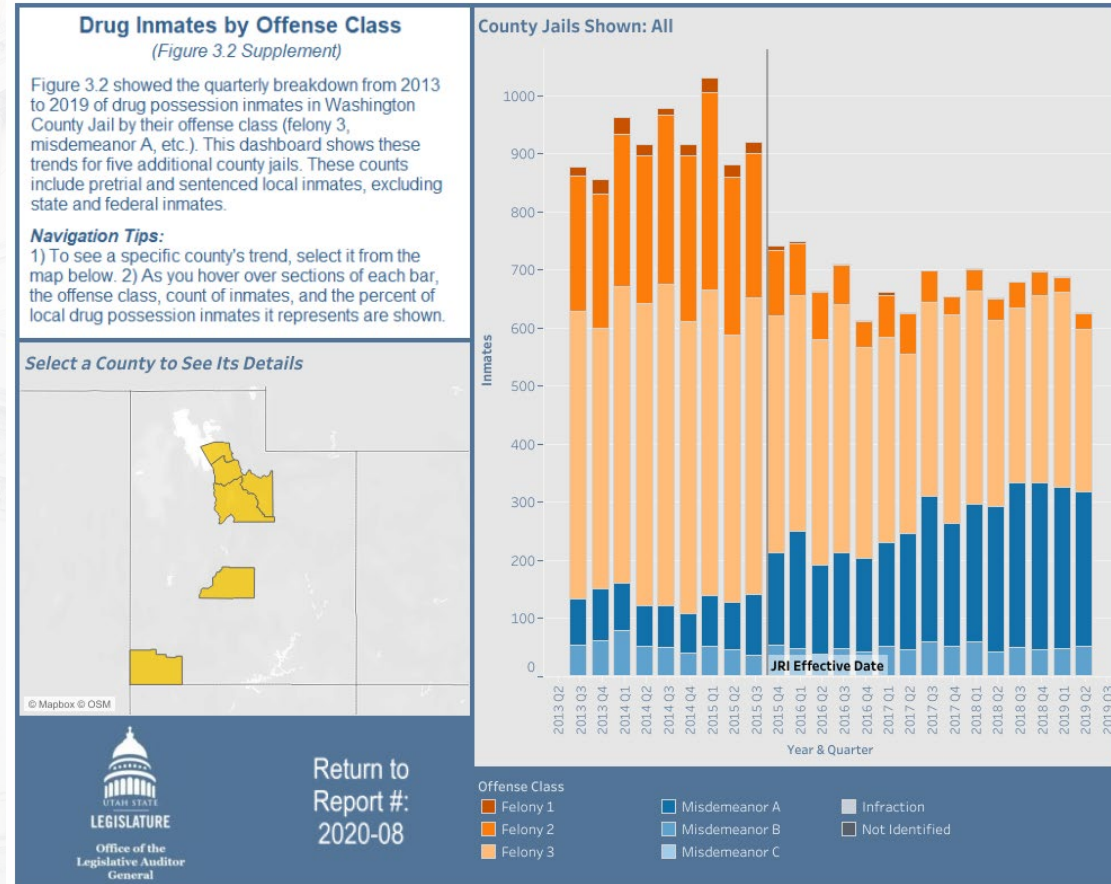
Would give agencies the timely, accurate, and reliable information they need.



Standards and common procedures accompanied by a technological infrastructure would enable the seamless and secure sharing of information—information that would still securely reside with the originating agency.

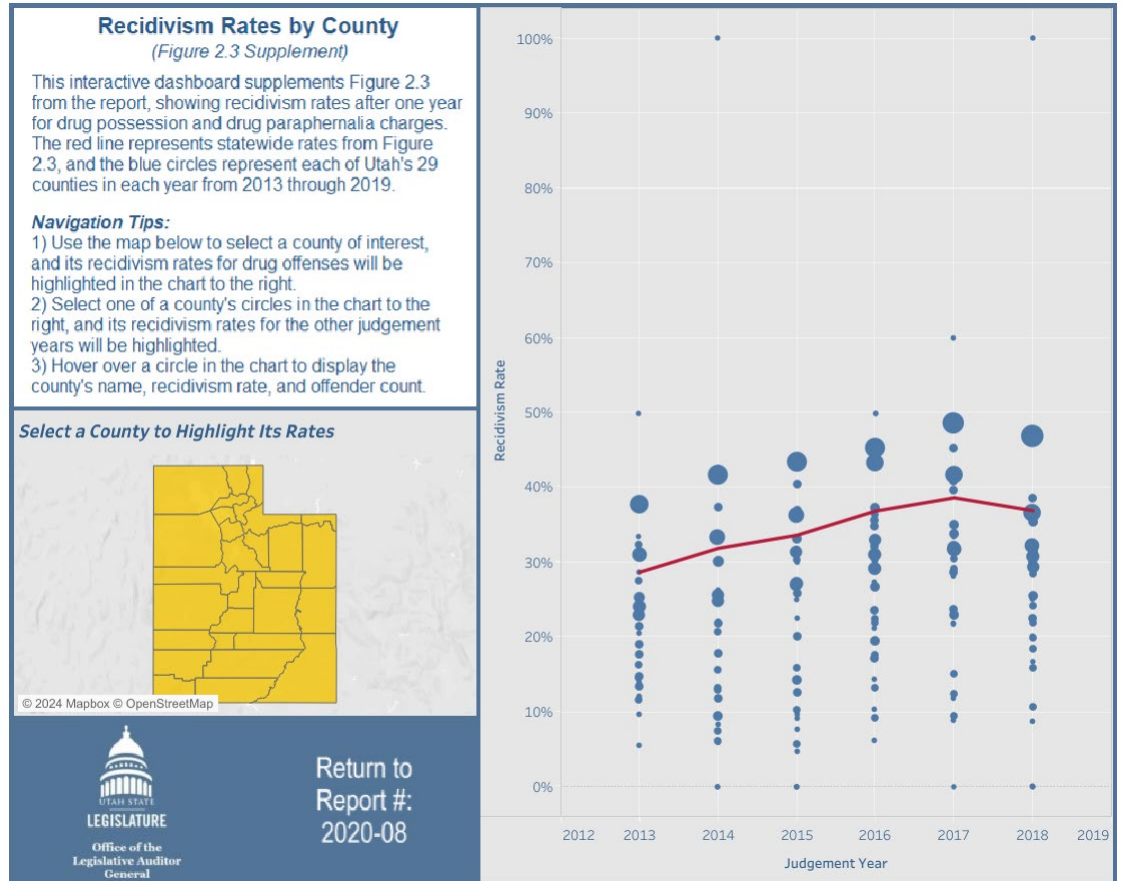
# Inaccurate Beliefs

## De-Biasing



# Social Preferences and Social Norms

## Social Comparisons



# Policy Changes

## **Bills Passed (2021-2023):**

- SB159 – creation of Information Sharing Governance Board
- SB139 – requires the Department of Corrections to implement evidence-based programs
- SB403 – requires creation of a criminal justice database
- SB179 – creation of local criminal justice coordinating councils
- HB352 – defined recidivism terms in statute and established reporting standards
- HB246 – prioritized public safety in making offender decisions
- SB150 – creation of a criminal justice data management task force
- HB44 – requires annual report to Lawn Enforcement and Criminal Justice Interim Committee

# Thank you

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