

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Commissioner Hall Announces More Changes at SMCI

JACKSON –A public mass notification system for emergencies is being set up at the South Mississippi Correctional Institution in Leakesville, Commissioner Pelicia E. Hall announces.

Also, approximately 26,000 feet of additional razor wire has been installed around the top of all housing units, perimeter fences, and the inner main perimeter. In addition, citizen advisory committee meetings will be held, with the first set for next week.

“We are constantly assessing our operations, looking at how we can do things more efficiently,” Commissioner Hall said. “These changes do not mean we have done something wrong, but that we have identified areas where we can improve. Whenever there is an extraordinary occurrence, as in the escape at SMCI in July, in addition to an investigation, we conduct an assessment that can affect other facilities as well.”

The mass alert system will include using Code Red and IPAWS (Integrated Public Alert and Warning System) to notify Greene County residents by landline phone or wireless cell phone of emergency situations at the prison.

New Superintendent Joe Errington will discuss the changes and others at the 9 a.m. meeting he will host at the prison on Tuesday. He is from Greene County and has spent his entire MDOC career at SMCI, where he was a deputy warden before his promotion in August. He also has been the liaison between local officials and the MDOC for the last 15 years.

“This administration is focused on being positive in everything we do,” Errington said. “Our supervisors will treat our staff in a professional and respectful manner. We are working hard to maintain a good relationship with the community through direct communications.”

Commissioner Hall said the department takes seriously its responsibility to ensure public safety and to be a good community partner. “Our goal is to protect our staff, the individuals in our custody, and the general public,” she said.