

## **TDCJ Statement**

On the night of May 19th, two groups of offenders displayed aggression towards each other and refused orders to return to their bunks in a housing area. After numerous orders were issued and many offenders failed to comply with instructions, authorization was given to use chemical agents to prevent the disturbance from escalating further. A Lieutenant at the unit entered the housing area and administered chemical agents through a single shot delivery system. An offender was struck by the cartridge and suffered minor injuries. He was transported to a local hospital for treatment and returned to the unit the following day.

While the use of chemical agents in this type of incident was justified, the initial use-of-force review conducted at the unit revealed several mistakes. The cartridge used is designed for outdoor areas and not authorized for use in indoor areas. The ranking officer should have ensured that the proper cartridge was utilized. The Lieutenant was disciplined after the incident, and unit administrators immediately conducted additional training for correctional officers. The Lieutenant was recently assigned to administrative duties. It has also been noted that chemical agents should have been administered through the door rather than in the middle of the housing area.

The use-of-force process routinely includes multiple reviews, the first by unit administration, and is still ongoing. In response to this incident, training regarding the use of chemical agents given to new correctional officers during in-service as well as to current officers annually is being emphasized to ensure this does not happen again.

**Jason Clark**  
**Director of Public Information**  
**Texas Department of Criminal Justice**