

Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction Population Projections, September 2003

Introduction

This report summarizes the September, 2003 Bureau of Research population estimates for the period January 2004 through July 2012. Although this forecast is based on a comprehensive analysis of system flow, population composition, and length of stay patterns, **it does not model the impact of the recent Layne Supreme Court decision on projected population levels.** Those estimates will be produced through a separate, revised forecast following systematic analysis of the Parole Board's Layne tracking database. In the interim, the projections presented below should be treated as a "pre-Layne" forecast that may be adjusted post-hoc to demonstrate the short-term effects of the decision.

There are three major reasons for making separate forecasts. First, the current model uses a lagged start date (January 2003) to validate forecasted numbers against actual population levels and movements for the first six months of 2003. It is important to establish and document the model's initial performance without introducing the potentially confounding effects of abrupt changes in release patterns. More importantly, hearing outcomes among more than half the cases the Parole Board considers Layne-eligible are still unknown, with hundreds of Layne hearings scheduled through late 2003. Since most post-Layne actions to date have affected above-guideline range inmates, it is difficult to extrapolate from these outcomes to those cases not yet heard. Finally, the current projections provide a long-term baseline forecast against which to separately gauge the overall impact of the Layne decision.

Projections Summary

Table 1 summarizes pre-Layne projections for males, females and total population. The projections estimate a January 1, 2004 population of **45,316**. The population is forecasted to rise very modestly over the next three years to **45,744** on July 1, 2004, **46,527** by July 1, 2005, and **47,350** by July 1, 2006. Thereafter, population levels will gradually increase to a forecasted high of **51,312** by July 2012. The current FY 04-FY 06 year-end numbers represent only a very minor downward revision (about 100 per year on average) from the last set of projections published in December 2002.

Forecasted population totals for August 1 and September 1, 2003, exceed actual population counts by roughly 200 and 300, respectively, and correspond with the emerging effects of post-Layne Parole Board actions that have resulted in the release or pending release of nearly 300 inmates to date. An additional 100-200 are scheduled to be paroled through October 2003, with the overall release rate expected to decline gradually as more cases are heard. Based on current patterns, it is reasonable to estimate that actual population levels will be **500-600 lower** than the forecasted total of 45,316 on January 1, 2004. An expected overall release rate of approximately 40% among the roughly 2,350 Layne-eligible inmates would indicate a total additional release of 900-1000 inmates by year-end FY 2004 that are not accounted for by the current forecast. However, such estimates are crude and require a more comprehensive analysis, especially of changes in length of stay among Layne-eligible inmates not immediately released at the time of re-hearing.

The sections below discuss prison admissions assumptions and describe the most recent population trends on which the current forecast is based.

Intake Estimates and Assumptions

New court admissions to ODRC totaled 22,411 in CY 2002, an 8.4% increase over CY 2001. Intake through July 2003 is up 2.3% compared to the same period in CY 2002, down slightly from the 3.5% growth estimated in the previous set of projections. Still, the current model assumes increases of about three percent, on average, over CY 2003-2004, followed by slightly slower growth (2.5% and then one percent) during the next two years. Thereafter, stable admission rate increases of 1.5% are estimated through 2012. The estimated CY 03-04 rates are thus minor downward revisions from last year, based on slower than expected growth in recent months. But overall, the current

projections assume a similar growth pattern, supported by demographic trend analyses and linear extrapolation models. And although reported levels of violent crime in 2002 show a mixed pattern among larger cities in Ohio (from recently released UCR data), criminal case filings in Ohio courts are up 2.5% in 2002 and felony indictments in Franklin County in 2003 are approaching record levels.

Population Analysis and Modeling Assumptions

This section summarizes the results from analyses of the CY 2002 admission and January 2003 currently incarcerated (stock) populations. These analyses form the basis of revisions to composition and length of stay parameters used throughout the movement and parole fields of the projections model. The results reveal that several factors are combining to limit population growth in the short term, even as intake growth remains relatively strong.

While the proportion of SB2 felony 4 and 5 admissions in CY 2002 (as a percentage of all SB2 admissions) declined nearly three percentage points from FY 2001, sentences are generally shorter, especially among 1st degree felony offenders. There is still no evidence that judges are imposing additional penalty time for PRC felony violators, and the enhancements available under SB2 are rarely used. Further, the model is based on revised discretionary PRC counts per recent changes in screening policy, constraining growth in the PRC supervision population and yielding fewer returns in the long term. On the other hand, the proportion of inmates exiting under judicial release continues to decline gradually. The current model incorporates this trend, which, in part, yields a stronger growth projection among the female prison population.

The model revisions are also based on detailed analysis of the January 2003 parole-eligible stock population with respect to guidelines actions and hearing status. That analysis revealed that continuation actions are more likely among 1st degree felony males at their first guidelines hearing, but that lengths of continuation have declined over the past year. Further, lengths of projected stay and continuation among all felony categories of post-guidelines inmates have generally declined, while parole rates have increased independent of the Layne reconsideration process. These trends are generally consistent with those reported in the last set of projections. The Layne decision is

expected to accelerate projected release dates among Layne-eligible inmates who are denied immediate release.

Finally, the model uses updated recidivism data to estimate violator returns and length of time to return among parole and PRC releases. These numbers show stable felony re-commission rates for both groups based on two and three-year follow-up periods. However, two-year return data for 1998, 1999 and 2000 releases show steady declines in the technical violation rates among PRC releases, which may be due in part to compositional changes in the PRC supervision population. The current model incorporates this trend, although the long-term effects of policy changes such as substantially fewer discretionary PRC releases remains unknown.

Additional Assumptions

These projections are based on the most recently available admission data and the felony composition of those admissions. As is customary, they assume no dramatic changes in crime rates or revisions to sentencing code that would affect overall numbers or composition of admissions or their length of sentence. No additional community diversion slots are anticipated over the course of the projection model. The model also assumes no further changes in PRC release policies or changes in APA supervision policy that might affect sanctioning patterns or violation rates.

Please contact Brian Martin (8-1191) or Steve Van Dine (2-1269) if you have any questions about these projections.

Table 1. ODRC Prison Population Projections, by Sex, for January 1, 2004 - July 1, 2012*

Date	Male	Female	Total
9/2/03**	41953	2816	44769
1/1/2004	42299	3017	45316
7/1/2004	42596	3148	45744
7/1/2005	43269	3258	46527
7/1/2006	44033	3317	47350
7/1/2007	44394	3432	47826
7/1/2008	44916	3517	48433
7/1/2009	45266	3564	48830
7/1/2010	46226	3662	49888
7/1/2011	46832	3728	50560
7/1/2012	47524	3788	51312

*** These projections do not reflect the impact of the Layne V APA Supreme Court Decision (see attached memorandum)**

**** Actual population from September 2, 2003 Weekly Population Count**

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