

**MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION  
REVIEW OF CURRENT RESEARCH-1988**

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## INTRODUCTION

During 1988, the Research Division of the Massachusetts Department of Correction (DOC) conducted several special research projects and produced a number of statistical reports describing the DOC inmate population. This report presents a review of the research that stemmed from these projects and from the annual statistical reports. The abstracts reproduced in this report summarize specific findings from each of the studies and statistical reports cited.

This report is divided into three major sections reflecting the different areas of research conducted by the Research Division in 1988. The first section covers a series of statistical descriptions of the state prison and county facility populations. The second section includes abstracts of findings from special evaluative and descriptive projects completed in 1988. The third section includes abstracts from research in progress in 1988.

The first section of this document consists of abstracts from reports which the Research Division produces annually. The reports in this section present updated information on the status and characteristics of the state and county prison population. The first in this series of reports is a statistical description of the 6,265 residents in DOC facilities as of January 1, 1988. The next report provides a statistical description of the offenders committed by the courts to a Massachusetts county facility (jail or house of correction) during 1987 and presents information on institution committed to, court committed from, month of commitment, offense, sentence length, sentence type, age, sex, race, marital status, education, place of birth and residence. The third report presents a statistical description of individuals committed by the court to county correctional facilities in Massachusetts for Operating Under the Influence of Alcohol

(O.U.I.) during 1987, trends in commitment for this offense, and some comparative information on the O.U.I. population and county offenders committed for other offenses.

The fourth statistical report is a description of the individuals committed by the courts to a term of incarceration in the Massachusetts Department of Correction during 1987, including information on the nature of the present offense, personal background characteristics and criminal history of these individuals. The fifth report assesses population change and summarizes all movement of offenders in DOC custody during the calendar year of 1987. The tables in this report reveal the numbers of new court commitments, paroles, returns on parole violation, discharges, escapes, deaths, transfers to other correctional facilities both within and outside the state and temporary releases to hospitals and courts broken down according to institution of admission or release. The sixth and seventh reports present statistical descriptions of offenders released to the street from Massachusetts Correctional Institutions and Massachusetts Pre-Release facilities during 1985 with corresponding recidivism rates. The eighth report is a statistical bulletin on escapes and returns from escape that occurred during 1987 and contains descriptive information on returns and escapes including institution and security level from which the escape occurred, type of escape, current status of the escape, length of time at large, and characteristics of the individual escaping. The ninth report contains an analysis of disciplinary reports issued during 1986. The tenth report contains a statistical description of the number, distribution, and outcomes of furloughs for the year 1987 as well as a trend analysis of furloughs since the inception of the program in 1972.

Information in each of the annual reports is institution-specific; that is, the data are reported by the institution where the inmate is a resident, released from, or admitted to. Consequently, much of the information in each annual report is

available for the entire correctional system as well as individual institutions.

Studies summarized in the second section present findings from special evaluations and descriptions of DOC-sponsored programs and selected prison populations. The first study is a process evaluation of two substance abuse treatment programs offered to inmates at MCI-Cedar Junction: The Program Unit for Substance Abusers, and SPAN, Inc. The two programs are described in terms of their origins, goals, activities, staff, and participant characteristics. The study concludes with a discussion of the results the researchers obtained by monitoring the two programs and with a list of recommendations for program improvements. The second study explores the effects of the Department's community reintegration programs (particularly the furlough program, and pre-release activities) on recidivism rates of offenders released from 1971 to 1985. The results of the statistical analyses performed in this study support the Department's position that participation in pre-release programming and in the furlough program are associated with reduced recidivism. The third study reports the results of a survey administered to Directors of Classification and other classification staff concerning their perceptions of the classification system and particularly of Classification and Program Agreements (CAPA). The fourth study summarized in this section is from an article written by Dr. Daniel LeClair that was published in the December 1988 issue of Federal Probation. This article is based on an evaluation of the Longwood Treatment Center for multiple O.U.I. offenders.

The next section of this report contains brief descriptions of eight research studies that were in progress during 1988. The first study is a process evaluation of the Substance Abuse Program Unit at MCI-Shirley. The second is a recidivism study of multiple O.U.I. offenders released from the Longwood Treatment Center, Western Massachusetts Correctional Alcohol Center and, Billerica House of Correction. The third project is an evaluation of the Norfolk Fellowship Program -

a program where inmates and volunteers from the local community gather to discuss a broad range of issues. Fourth is an evaluation of Massachusetts Correctional Industries which will evaluate the impact of work in prison on discipline and post-release integration. The fifth project is a continuation of the evaluation of the DOC inmate classification system. The next two phases of this project will include a cross-validation where the DOC method of classification is compared with the National Institute of Correction's Model Systems Approach, and an impact evaluation of Classification and Program Agreements (CAPA). The sixth project is a series of research briefs concerned with describing sex offenders committed to the DOC. During 1988, the first research brief in this series, "How Many Sex Offenders Are There? And, Where Are They?" was completed. Subsequent reports will provide further descriptions of this population. The information presented in this series will be useful in the development of special programs for sex offenders. While the first six projects reviewed in this section are evaluations of programs designed for inmates of the Department of Correction, the seventh and eighth projects address programs and activities targeted toward victims and Department staff. The seventh project is a description of the Department's activities that address the concerns of crime victims. The eighth project is a study of the extent of Workers' Compensation leave used by DOC staff at several of the Department's facilities.

In addition to the annual reports, the Research Division also produces quarterly reports on the status of prison overcrowding, and monthly statistical reports on admissions to and releases from the Department of Correction. Information on participation in selected inmate programs (furloughs, state hospital, education release, and work release) are included in the monthly statistical reports as well.

Copies of the full reports and studies may be obtained by writing to:

**Massachusetts Department of Correction  
Research Division -22nd Floor  
100 Cambridge Street  
Boston, Massachusetts 02202**



## **ANNUAL STATISTICAL REPORTS**

**A STATISTICAL DESCRIPTION OF  
RESIDENTS OF MASSACHUSETTS CORRECTIONAL  
INSTITUTIONS ON JANUARY 1, 1988**

#328

May 1988

Lisa Lorant

This report presents a statistical description of the 6,265 individuals in the custody of the Massachusetts Department of Correction (DOC) on January 1, 1988. The report contains information on present offense and sentence, personal background characteristics, criminal history, and furlough program participation. The information is presented for the DOC population as a whole and for each facility separately. Changes in the population over the last five years are also given. Some of the highlights of the information presented in this report are:

- The 6,265 inmates in the DOC represent an increase of 11 percent over 1987 and an increase of 44 percent over 1983.
- Eleven percent were in maximum security facilities, 62 percent in medium security, 5 percent in minimum security, 15 percent in minimum/pre-release security, and 7 percent in pre-release security.
- Fifty-two percent of the population were incarcerated for an offense against the person, 14 percent for sex offenses, 15 percent for property offenses, 14 percent for drug offenses, and 5 percent for other offenses.
- There were 730 lifers in the DOC, including 306 first-degree lifers and 424 second-degree lifers.
- The median age of the population was 30 years.
- Forty-nine percent were serving their first adult incarceration and 51 percent had a previous incarceration as an adult.

**COURT COMMITMENTS TO  
MASSACHUSETTS COUNTY FACILITIES  
DURING 1987**

#325

May 1988

Linda K. Holt  
Alicia McCarthy

This report provides a statistical description of the 10,818 offenders committed by the courts to Massachusetts county facilities (jail or house of correction) during 1987. The report presents information on institution committed to, court committed from, month of commitment, offense, sentence length, sentence type, age, sex, race, marital status, education, place of birth and residence.

Some highlights of the statistics presented in this report are:

- In 1987 there were 10,818 commitments to county facilities. This represents an increase of 3 percent over the number of commitments in 1986.
- In terms of general categories of offenses, 11 percent were committed for offenses against the person, 2 percent for sex offenses, 28 percent for property offenses, 9 percent for drug offenses, 24 percent for Operating Under the Influence (O.U.I.), and 25 percent for all other offenses.
- Specifically, the most common offenses for which offenders were committed were O.U.I. (24 percent), motor vehicle violations (13 percent), and burglary (9 percent).
- The median sentence length was three months. Twelve percent were committed in lieu of payment of a fine. One percent were serving weekend sentences.
- The median age of offenders committed to county facilities was 26 years.
- Seventy-six percent of the offenders were white, 16 percent were black and 8 percent were Hispanic.
- The median educational level was 12th grade.
- Seventy percent of the offenders were single, 17 percent were married and 13 percent were separated, divorced or widowed.
- Seventy percent were born in Massachusetts, 18 percent were born in other states, 8 percent were born in U.S. territories and 4 percent were foreign-born.

**1987 COURT COMMITMENTS TO  
MASSACHUSETTS COUNTY FACILITIES  
FOR OPERATING UNDER THE INFLUENCE  
OF ALCOHOL**

#326

June 1988

Linda K. Holt  
Alicia McCarthy

This report presents a statistical description of individuals committed by the courts to county correctional facilities in Massachusetts for Operating Under the Influence of Alcohol (O.U.I.) during 1987. This report also presents some information on trends in commitments for this offense and some comparative information on the O.U.I. population and county offenders committed for other offenses. Some highlights of the information contained in this report are:

- In 1987, there were 2,607 commitments for O.U.I. in Massachusetts county facilities. This is a decrease of 3 percent or 80 from the 2,687 commitments for O.U.I. in 1986.
- The median sentence length for O.U.I. commitments was 3 months. This is an increase from the median sentence length of 1986 commitments (2 months), and a large increase from the median sentence length of those committed in 1983 (10 days).
- The 2,607 commitments for O.U.I. represent 24 percent of all offenders committed to the counties in 1987. This is a decrease from 1986, when 26 percent of all commitments were for O.U.I.
- Commitments for O.U.I. varied by county. Commitments ranged from ten percent of commitments in Suffolk County to 38 percent of all commitments in Norfolk County.
- The typical offender committed for O.U.I. was white, 29 years old, male, single and a high school graduate.

**1987 COURT COMMITMENTS TO THE  
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION**

#329

June 1988

Linda K. Holt

This report is a statistical description of the 2,848 individuals committed by the courts to a term of incarceration in the Massachusetts Department of Correction during the year 1987. The tables in this report contain information on the nature of present offense, personal background characteristics and criminal history of these individuals. Some highlights of the statistics presented in this report are:

- There was a 12 percent increase in the number of commitments during the year, from 2,533 in 1986 to 2,848 in 1987. The 2,848 commitments in 1987 represent the highest level of commitments in DOC history.
- There were 1,250 commitments to Cedar Junction (21 percent higher than 1986), 701 commitments to Concord (6 percent higher than 1986), and 897 commitments to Framingham (7 percent higher than 1986).
- Males are committed to Cedar Junction or Concord while females are committed to Framingham. Overall, there was a 15 percent increase in male commitments and a 7 percent increase in female commitments from 1986 to 1987.
- The median minimum sentence for Cedar Junction commitments was five years; the median maximum sentence for Concord commitments was eight years; and the median maximum sentence for Framingham commitments was less than 1 year. Sentence lengths for new court commitments were similar in 1986 and 1987.
- Violent offenses (person and sex) accounted for 52 percent of all male commitments and 10 percent of all female commitments. Non-violent offenses (property, drug and "other") represented 90 percent of all female commitments and 48 percent of all male commitments. From 1986 to 1987 there were increases in commitments for drug offenses (up 42 percent), property offenses (up 12 percent), person offenses (up 7 percent), and sex offenses (up 1 percent). There were decreases in commitments for other offenses (down 6 percent).
- The median age at commitment was 27 years.

- Fifty-eight percent of the commitment population were white (including white Hispanics); 62 percent were single; 10 percent had been in the military; 43 percent came from the Boston SMSA; most had limited work experience concentrated in the areas of manual labor and services; the median educational level was twelfth grade; and, 41 percent had a self-reported history of drug use.
- Fifty-seven percent were serving their first adult incarceration. The median age at first court appearance was eighteen.

**POPULATION MOVEMENTS IN THE  
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION,  
1987**

#324

March 1988

Linda K. Holt

This report summarizes the movement of offenders in the custody of the DOC during 1987. While the focus of the analysis is on calendar year 1987, trends in population movement over the period 1982 to 1987 are also discussed, particularly in relation to population growth during the period.

Some of the highlights of the information presented in this report include:

- There were 16,742 admissions and 16,133 releases of all types to DOC facilities during 1987.
- The continued pattern of admissions surpassing releases was related to population growth in the agency.
- The major sources of new offenders entering the DOC include: commitments (N=2,852), parole/probation violators (N=1,001), and county transfers (N=443).
- The major sources of offenders leaving the DOC include: paroles to street (N=1,729), discharges to street (N=1,106), and expirations of sentence to street (N=269).

**STATISTICAL TABLES DESCRIBING THE BACKGROUND CHARACTERISTICS AND  
RECIDIVISM RATES FOR RELEASES FROM MASSACHUSETTS  
CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTIONS  
DURING 1985**

**#321**

**January 1988**

**Lisa Lorant**

**and**

**STATISTICAL TABLES DESCRIBING THE BACKGROUND CHARACTERISTICS AND  
RECIDIVISM RATES FROM MASSACHUSETTS  
PRE-RELEASE FACILITIES DURING 1985**

**#322**

**January 1988**

**Lisa Lorant**

These two reports present information on recidivism rates of offenders released from Massachusetts Correctional Institutions and Pre-Release Centers during 1985. In addition to providing recidivism rates, the tables in these two reports present statistical descriptions of the releasees as well. Some highlights from these two reports include the following:

- The recidivism rate in 1985 was 27%. This is higher than the rates from 1984 (25%) and 1983 (21%).
- The increase in recidivism rates occurred at the same time that the number of releases increased, from 1,726 in 1983; to 1,888 in 1984; and 1,979 in 1985.
- The recidivism rate varied by security level of the institution from which the offender was released: 36% for maximum, 32% for medium, 28% for minimum, 19% for minimum/pre-release, 19% for state pre-release and 21% for contract pre-release.
- From 1984 to 1985 the recidivism rate for releases from maximum or medium security institutions stayed the same at 32%, while the recidivism rate for releases from lower security facilities increased from 16% in 1984 to 20% in 1985.
- The recidivism rate for males was 26%, an increase from the 1984 figure of 24% and the rate for females was 30% an increase from last year's figure of 29%.
- Among males, the recidivism rate was 27% for those serving a Walpole sentence (compared to 24% for 1984) and 27% for those serving a Concord sentence (compared to 24% for 1984).



- Recidivists were returned for a variety of reasons: 19% for technical parole violations, 48% for a parole violation involving a new arrest, and 32% for re-incarceration on a new offense.
- Offenders released by parole had a higher recidivism rate (29%) than those who were discharged (21%).
- For males, those committed for property offenses had the highest recidivism rate (33%); for females, those committed for "other" offenses had the highest recidivism rate (34%).
- The recidivism rate for those released with no prior adult incarcerations was lower (21%) than for those with a history of one (27%) or more than one (36%) prior adult incarcerations.
- The recidivism rate for offenders with no furloughs prior to release was 31% and the recidivism rate for individuals with furloughs prior to release was 16%.

**STATISTICAL BULLETIN ON ESCAPES FOR 1987:  
A PROFILE OF ESCAPES AND RETURNS FROM ESCAPE  
DURING 1987 AND INDIVIDUALS ON ESCAPE STATUS  
ON DECEMBER 31, 1987.**

#331

June 1988

Linda K. Holt

This statistical bulletin presents information on escapes and returns from escape that occurred during 1987. The bulletin contains descriptions of the escapes and returns including: institution and security level from which the escape occurred; type of escape; current status of the escape; length of time at large; and characteristics of the individuals escaping. Some highlights of the information contained in this report are:

- During 1987 there were 241 escapes and 258 returns from escape, a decrease of 65 escapes and 47 returns from the previous year.
- The escape rate in 1987 was 2.4 per 100. The escape rate is the lowest of the last eleven years.
- Almost all escapes occur from lower security facilities and are walk-aways from those facilities or failures to return from release programs such as furloughs or work release. In 1987 there were only 13 escapes from secure custody (including transportation) and many secure facilities had no escapes at all.
- Most escapes are resolved quickly. Sixty percent of the escapes were returned within one week of escape. Eighty-eight percent of all 1987 escapees were returned to the DOC or known to be in the custody of another correctional agency at the end of the year.
- At the end of the year there were 87 individuals at large from the DOC, including 30 who escaped in 1987.

**DISCIPLINARY REPORTS ISSUED IN THE  
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION,  
1986**

#332

July 1988

Linda K. Holt  
Ramon V. Raagas

During 1986 there were 20,321 disciplinary reports issued involving 4,457 different individuals. This bulletin contains a statistical description of these disciplinary reports including: reporting institution, offense, finding, sanction and characteristics of the offenders incurring the reports. Some highlights of the findings in this bulletin are:

- There were 20,321 disciplinary reports issued in 1986. This represents an increase of 6 percent (N=1200) over the 19,121 disciplinary reports written in 1985.
- The number of disciplinary reports written in 1986 ranged from 31 at Medfield to 9,577 at Cedar Junction. Two facilities (Cedar Junction and Norfolk) accounted for 61 percent of all reports.
- Over half of the individuals (52 percent) in the DOC during 1986 incurred one or more disciplinary reports. Among the 4,457 offenders who received at least one disciplinary report, the number of disciplinary reports incurred ranged from one to 93 and the median for this group was two.
- Seventy-five percent of the disciplinary reports were classified as major, 25 percent as minor, and less than one percent were referred to the District Attorney.
- Of the 31 offenses involved in disciplinary reports, the three most frequently cited were: number 2, violating rules; number 1, disobeying, lying or insolence; and number 8, disrupting order.
- Sixty-five percent of all disciplinary reports resulted in a guilty finding.
- The most common sanctions imposed were isolation time, extra work, room restriction, and loss of privileges.
- Eighty-seven percent of all sanctions were invoked and 13 percent were suspended.
- Eight percent of all disciplinary report findings were appealed.

## 1987 ANNUAL STATISTICAL REPORT OF THE FURLOUGH PROGRAM

#334

December 1988

Lisa Lorant  
John Sherwood

The first furlough was taken by an inmate of the Massachusetts Department of Correction on November 6, 1972. Since the inception of the program until December 31, 1987, a total of 121,133 furloughs have been granted to 10,835 individuals. There have been 650 escapes since the inception of the program, yielding an overall escape rate per furlough of 0.5 percent.

- From January 1, 1987 to December 31, 1987, a total of 5,859 furloughs were granted to 1,161 individuals. This is a decrease of 34 percent from the 8,896 furloughs granted during 1986; and a decrease of 29 percent from the 1,645 individuals furloughed during 1986.
- The median number of furloughs per furloughed offender for 1987 was three. This is lower than the 1986 median of four furloughs per furloughed offender.
- Of the furloughs taken, 96 percent were unescorted furloughs and 4 percent were escorted or emergency furloughs.
- The median number of hours of leave per furlough during 1987 was 19 hours. The median number of hours of leave per furlough during 1986 was 24 hours.
- There were 5 escapes from furlough during 1987, resulting in an escape rate per furlough of 0.1 percent.
- The number of individuals released from the Department of Correction who have participated in the furlough program has steadily declined over the years. During 1987, 27 percent of the males, and 5 percent of the females released had one or more furloughs.
- More than half (56 percent) of the furloughs were taken by offenders with no prior adult incarcerations.
- During 1987, 48 percent of all furloughs were from pre-release facilities; 29 percent were from mixed minimum/pre-release facilities; 19 percent were from minimum security facilities; and 4 percent were from maximum or medium security institutions.

## **EVALUATIVE AND DESCRIPTIVE STUDIES**

**EVALUATION OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE  
PROGRAMMING AT MCI-CEDAR JUNCTION, VOLUME 1:**

**PROCESS EVALUATION  
OF THE PROGRAM UNIT FOR SUBSTANCE  
ABUSERS AND SPAN, INC.**

**#327**

**June 1988**

**Ann Marie Rocheleau,  
Michael W. Forcier, Ph.D.**

Incarcerated offenders have high rates of alcohol and drug abuse which have been shown to be related to criminal behavior. In recognition of this, the Massachusetts Department of Correction implemented the Program Unit for Substance Abusers at MCI-Cedar Junction, the state's maximum security facility. A cellblock was designated for those inmates who volunteered to enter the program. Those inmates selected to reside in the unit must agree to a classification contract which outlines program requirements and generally designates transfer to a medium security facility after a specified period of time. Program requirements include work, educational programming, substance abuse treatment, and urinalysis. In addition to the Program Unit, another program, SPAN, Inc., offers treatment groups to inmates who are approaching release and is run by a private, non-profit agency that is contracted by the Department of Correction.

This report presents the results of a process evaluation conducted on the Program Unit and SPAN in terms of their origins, goals, activities, staff, and participant characteristics. Results from an impact evaluation of the Program Unit focusing on impacts on the institutional alcohol and drug use behavior of inmates are presented in a separate report.

Program Unit and SPAN participants were similar in terms of social demographics (race, age, and marital status) although Program Unit participants were slightly more educated. Although SPAN participants had slightly more serious criminal histories than Program Unit participants, their present offenses were similar with the majority of both groups incarcerated for offenses against the person.

SPAN participants had more extensive and serious substance abuse histories than Program Unit participants as indicated by prior drug and/or alcohol charges. SPAN participants were also significantly more involved in institutional substance abuse than Program Unit participants as indicated by substance abuse-related disciplinary reports, positive urinalysis tests, reclassifications for substance abuse, and other indicators. At the same time, more SPAN participants than Program Unit participants had been involved in substance abuse programming both prior to and during their incarceration.

Program Unit participants had a longer average length of participation than SPAN participants. This is likely attributable to the fact that SPAN has no specified length of program participation and is aimed at those nearing release whereas the Program Unit has a specified period of participation and is aimed at inmates in the early to middle stages of their incarceration. The level of attendance at program sessions was found to be stable for both groups.

Five major conclusions arose from the process evaluation. First, program implementation obstacles led to program misconceptions. Second, there was evidence of inadequate staffing levels and poor treatment-client match. Third, flawed program recruitment criteria resulted in a population with less severe substance abuse histories and problems entering the Program Unit. Fourth, there was a low rate of program completion and retention in the Program Unit. Finally, prison overcrowding had effects on program retention.

In response to these conclusions, the following recommendations are offered. First, there needs to be a clarification of the Program Unit mission. Second, there is a need to increase the number and type of treatment staff assigned to the Program Unit. Third, substance abuse assessment and diagnosis should be conducted on all offenders entering the Department of Correction. Fourth, efforts should be undertaken to increase rates of program retention and completion. Finally, transfer decisions should be more closely tied to treatment needs.

**THE EFFECT OF COMMUNITY REINTEGRATION ON RATES  
OF RECIDIVISM: A STATISTICAL OVERVIEW OF  
DATA FOR THE YEARS 1971 THROUGH 1985**

# 330

July 1988

Daniel P. LeClair, Ph.D.

The Research Division of the Massachusetts Department of Correction routinely collects and publishes on an annual basis data on rates of recidivism. In these reports a series of descriptive variables on all individuals released from Massachusetts Correctional Institutions is correlated with rates of recidivism. Comparisons between current findings and trends discerned in prior studies are made. Additionally, comparisons between specific correctional institutions of varying security levels and comparisons between varying modes of correctional programming are also made. The state correctional institutions include maximum, medium and minimum security facilities as well as state run prerelease centers and sub-contracted privately operated halfway houses. From these studies data are currently available for the releasee cohorts for the years 1971 through 1985. This report attempts to draw together data generated from the recidivism studies of the past 15 years and to present a summary statistical overview of the findings.

The annual statistical monitoring of recidivism data since the year 1971 has led to the detection of a number of significant trends occurring within the Massachusetts correctional system. Dominant among these trends was the occurrence of a systematic reduction in the recidivism rates from 1971 through to 1978. For example, in the year 1971 the recidivism rate for the combined population of state prison releases was 25%; in 1973 it had dropped to 19%; and in 1976 it had dropped to 16%. By 1977, the recidivism rate was 15%. Later data, however, revealed that a reversal had occurred in this historical trend. The 1979 and 1980 releasee populations represented the first statistically significant increase in recidivism rates in a nine year period. However, 1981 through 1983 data have shown a modest but consistent drop in recidivism rates.

A second major trend concerned the home furlough program in the Massachusetts correctional system, a program begun in and expanded subsequent to the year 1971. Recidivism studies demonstrated that inmate participation in the furlough program may be an important variable in accounting for the systematic reduction in recidivism rates occurring in Massachusetts. The data revealed that those individuals who had experienced a furlough prior to release from prison had significantly lower rates of recidivism than did individuals who had not experienced a furlough prior to release. When selection factors were controlled, the relationship remained positive. This trend continued in a consistent pattern for the eleven successive years for which data were available.

Recidivism studies have also revealed that participation in prerelease programs prior to community release leads to reduced rates of recidivism. Again, when selection factors were controlled the relationship remained constant.



A final documented trend that has emerged from the recidivism studies focused on the process of graduated movement among institutions in descending level of security and size. Analyses revealed that individuals released from prison directly from medium or minimum security institutions (including prerelease centers and halfway houses) had significantly lower rates of recidivism than did individuals released directly from a maximum security institution. Again, this relationship held even when selection factors were controlled.

When follow-up periods were extended from one to two and then to five years, the above findings with respect to furloughs, prerelease centers, and security level of releasing institution remained constant.

The major findings of the research were collectively interpreted as tentative evidence of a positive effect of the reintegrative community based correctional programming. That is, correctional programs operating in the Massachusetts system which are geared to maintain, to establish, or to reestablish general societal links such as family, economic, political, and social roles may be associated with a subsequent reduction in recidivism. Also associated with the reduction in recidivism is the graduated societal reintroduction of the offender. This is accomplished through a series of movements among institutions in descending levels of security and size along with the awarding of increased increments of community contacts through participation in furloughs, education release, and work release programs.

The above conclusions hold through the documented trend of increased recidivism and the more recent drop in the rates. Despite the fluctuations in overall recidivism, participation in reintegration programs remains associated with lower rates of recidivism.

## **SURVEY OF DOC STAFF PERCEPTIONS OF THE INMATE CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM**

**# 333**

**August 1988**

**Michael W. Forcier, Ph.D.**

Since 1972, the Massachusetts Department of Correction (DOC) has experimented with different inmate classification systems. In 1985, the DOC implemented a new system built around a concept called "Classification and Program Agreements" or CAPA. The CAPA is a voluntary program agreement offered to eligible and suitable inmates during a classification hearing where the DOC and inmate agree to a scheduled reduction in security contingent upon positive institutional adjustment and program participation for the duration of the agreement.

In September 1987, the DOC Research Division began a three phase evaluation study of the classification system. Phase 1, Survey of DOC Staff, consisted of on-site observations of the classification process at MCI-Concord and interviews system-wide with classification staff in order to obtain their perceptions of the system. Phase 2, Validation of the DOC Classification System, will address whether the items used in initial and subsequent classification are predictive of inmate behavior. Phase 3 of the study will consist of an impact evaluation of CAPA specifically.

This report presents the results of Phase 1. Sixty respondents involved with inmate classification were interviewed in order to obtain their perceptions of the system's processes, strengths, weaknesses, and needed changes. A ten item, semi-structured interview schedule was developed and administered to correction counselors, supervising correctional counselors, program treatment staff, Unit Managers, Directors of Classification, Directors of Treatment and Deputy Superintendents.

Six major problems were identified with the current classification system. These were: too rapid movement of inmates; overcrowding wreaks havoc with classification; inconsistency in the classification process; too much paperwork and too few staff; need for modification of the Standard Movement Chronology; and, a flawed CAPA process at MCI-Concord.

Despite calls for its modification in various directions, a majority of survey respondents believe that the Standard Movement Chronology is an objective and consistent method for placing inmates in the appropriate security level.

The majority of survey respondents felt that CAPA was an effective mechanism for forecasting and managing bed space needs at each security level although a sizable minority said that it did not accomplish this because of overcrowding.

Although a majority felt that CAPA did help to reduce disciplinary reports, many noted it was dependent on several factors. Similarly, although a large majority of survey respondents stated that CAPA has made inmates more responsible in terms of institutional adjustment, program participation and completion, this was also dependent on several factors.

Survey results indicate that the large majority of staff have no knowledge as to whether or not inmates comply with their classification agreements when they leave an institution. Rather classification staff at each institution operate in their "own worlds" with little or no feedback on the classification agreements they develop and negotiate.

The majority of survey respondents prefer a subjective classification system which is what they perceive the current system to be, although a sizable minority would like to see a combined subjective and objective point-based system. Few prefer an exclusively objective, point based-system.

Major changes or improvements suggested for the classification system included the following: addition of bed space to improve classification flexibility; additional staff, reduced case loads, and a reduction in paperwork; more timely sign-offs on classification boards from Central Office; improved monitoring of CAPA compliance; more training; and, better organization of Central Office records.

The majority of survey respondents believe that inmates do understand CAPA and are committed to the agreement. However, a sizeable number questioned the level of commitment and stated that inmates only see the transfer schedule and sign to get a move.

A number of reasons were cited by respondents as to why inmates choose not to sign a CAPA including: inmate cynicism about CAPA when the DOC does not honor its part of the agreement; inmate laziness, an unwillingness to get programmatically involved, and denial of program needs; distrust of the Department of Correction; and a perception by inmates that they can "cut a better deal" without CAPA and will move quicker especially in light of overcrowding.

The overall picture which emerges from this survey of DOC classification staff is that of a classification system beset by a number of problems but yet at the same time, one with which staff are fairly satisfied and comfortable. Many of the problems with the classification system identified by survey respondents either were or could be attributed to overcrowding leading to the frequently-heard statement that the system "works in theory but not in practice because of overcrowding." Ironically, survey respondents frequently complained about inconsistency in classification decision-making, yet argued for the preservation of those principles which classification experts say most contribute to inconsistency, namely, subjectivity and discretion.

## **THE USE OF PRISON CONFINEMENT IN THE TREATMENT OF DRUNKEN DRIVERS**

**#FP1**

**December 1988**

**Daniel P. LeClair, Ph.D.**

In March 1985, the Massachusetts Department of Correction opened Longwood Treatment Center, the state's first minimum security prison designed exclusively to detain and provide alcoholism education and treatment to multiple drunken driving offenders. A process evaluation of the program revealed that the program was implemented as planned and served the intended target population. Preliminary outcome measures revealed that 6% of program participants were returned to prison within one year of release, compared to a department-wide recidivism rate of 25% and to a rate of 19% for other low security institutions similar to Longwood. Issues raised from the evaluation resulted in recommendations that aftercare services be strengthened, counseling and correction staffs be restructured, and operating costs be reevaluated. The findings suggest that the program was effective in reducing recidivism among repeat drunk drivers and in impacting on offenders' alcoholic behaviors.

This article is a summary of a lengthy report recently completed by the Research Division of the Massachusetts Department of Correction: "The Use of Prison Confinement for the Treatment of Multiple Drunken Driver Offenders: An Evaluation of the Longwood Treatment Center" by D. LeClair, L. Felici, and E. Klotzbier, June 1987 (Publication number 311).

## **RESEARCH IN PROGRESS**

## EVALUATION OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE PROGRAM UNIT AT MCI-SHIRLEY

Michael W. Forcier, Ph.D.

Incarcerated offenders have been found to have histories and rates of alcohol and drug abuse substantially greater than the general population. The relationship between substance abuse and criminality has come under increased attention as research has revealed that one third to one half of incarcerated offenders reported that they were under the influence of an illegal drug or had been drunk before they committed the crime for which they were incarcerated.

At MCI-Shirley, a minimum security level facility, in 1987 approximately 245 or 63% of the 389 inmates had a present offense or criminal history involving drugs and/or alcohol. Moreover, this has apparently carried over into the institution as 34% (174) of the 507 disciplinary reports written at Shirley in 1985 were for offenses involving alcohol/drugs, misuse of medication, or refusing a drug test.

Recognizing the seriousness of the problem, MCI-Shirley established in 1988 a 39-bed Substance Abuse Program Unit based on a therapeutic community model for housing and treating inmates with substance abuse problems.

The Research Division will undertake a process evaluation of this Program Unit in order to examine if the program is implemented as intended, targets the substance abusing population, and provides the designated services. Part of this evaluation will consist of the administration of a program intake screening and assessment form in order to determine which of the 245 inmates with alcohol and/or drug problems should be housed in this unit. This form will obtain information on inmate demographic characteristics, criminal history, alcohol and drug use behavior, and substance abuse treatment history.

This study will begin in January 1989 and is scheduled for completion in December 1989.

## **ALTERNATIVES TO INCARCERATION FOR MULTIPLE OUI OFFENDERS: ARE THEY SUCCESSFUL?**

**Julie M. Nardone**

Emerging in the wake of more stringent Massachusetts drunk-driving controls has been a new breed of correctional facility -- the correctional alcohol treatment center. The correctional alcohol treatment center merges correctional measures with alcohol treatment in the hopes of alleviating the drinking-driver's problem and deterring him or her from committing further acts of drunk driving.

At present, three such facilities exist in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts: the state-run Longwood Treatment Center in Jamaica Plain, the county-run Western Massachusetts Correctional Alcohol Center in Springfield and the county-run Eastern Massachusetts Correctional Alcohol Center in New Bedford.

Since both the Longwood Treatment Center and the Western Massachusetts Correctional Alcohol Center are still in an experimental stage, a post-program evaluation will be conducted in order to assess their effectiveness. This follow-up evaluation will focus on recidivism rates and post-release rearrest for OUI and non-OUI related offenses. The Billerica House of Correction will serve as a comparison group.

The final report will be available in April 1989.

**THIRTY YEARS LATER:  
AN EVALUATION OF THE NORFOLK FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM**

**Julie M. Nardone**

September 1987 marked the 30th anniversary of the Norfolk Fellowship program. The Norfolk Fellowship, a non-sectarian community-based volunteer program, was established in 1957 by the Chaplain at MCI Norfolk, Reverend Robert F. Dutton. Over the years, the Fellowship program has spread to five other correctional facilities: MCI-Cedar Junction, MCI-Lancaster, the Medfield Prison Project, the Northeastern Correctional Center, and the Bay State Correctional Center.

Past evaluations of the Fellowship Program have been largely quantitative in nature, relying solely on recidivism rates as a measure of treatment success. The present study will utilize both quantitative and qualitative research techniques. Quantitative techniques will be used in order to compare the recidivism behavior of Fellowship participants with the recidivism behavior of the overall population of inmates released from the DOC. The data for this aspect of the study will be obtained from DOC record files and probation checks on Fellowship participants released between December 1983 and December 1986.

Qualitative research methods will be used in order to identify purposes served by the Fellowship program besides those which would impact on recidivism rates of participants. Through the use of qualitative methods the researcher will be able to examine the process of the Fellowship program.

The qualitative data will be obtained from several sources, including interviews with 20 former Fellowship participants and 5 former Fellowship volunteers, observations of Fellowship meetings at MCI-Cedar Junction, MCI-Norfolk, and Northeastern Correctional Center, and observations from the annual Fellowship conference.

The recidivism data will be collected in April and May 1989. The data will be analyzed in June 1989 and the final report will be completed during the summer of 1989.



## **WORK IN PRISON AND ITS EFFECTS ON INMATES' MORALE AND POST-RELEASE INTEGRATION**

**Darek Niklas, Ph.D.**

Presently about 8% of inmates in Massachusetts Department of Correction custody participate in prison industries. This research will evaluate the impact of work in prison on discipline and post-release integration. Moreover, it will add a descriptive analysis of work environments and show the contribution of different work settings and programs to the predictions of recidivism and disciplinary problems. Two processes in the system of prison industries are specifically amenable to control by the authorities -organization of the work process; and -selection of inmates for work programs. Inquiry into both is incorporated in this research.

Under the pressure of different policy factors, most eminently overcrowding and the general trend towards privatization, prison industries may become exposed to pressures towards change. This research project will result in establishing an information system which will allow policy oriented current monitoring of the developments in prison industries.

## **EVALUATION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM: PHASES 2 AND 3**

**Michael W. Forcier, Ph.D.**

Since 1972, the Massachusetts Department of Correction has experimented with different inmate classification systems. Most recently, the DOC implemented a new system built around a concept called "Classification and Program Agreements" or CAPA. The CAPA is a voluntary program agreement offered to some inmates during a classification hearing when the DOC and inmate agree to a scheduled reduction in security levels according to a "standard movement chronology" contingent upon positive institutional adjustment and program participation for the duration of the agreement.

The primary objective of the present study is to evaluate the overall classification system and CAPA specifically. The present study consists of three phases. Phase 1, completed in 1988, was a Survey of DOC Staff Perceptions of the Inmate Classification System. Phase 2 is a comparative cross-validation study of the DOC system compared to the National Institute of Correction's Model Systems Approach to classification. Phase 3 will examine the impacts of CAPA by comparing the institutional adjustment and program participation of inmates who have a CAPA with those who are not eligible/suitable for a CAPA and those who choose not to participate in CAPA.

The study is scheduled to begin in January 1989 and is scheduled for completion in December 1989.

**SEX OFFENDERS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION:  
DESCRIPTION OF THE POPULATION AND IMPLICATIONS  
FOR TREATMENT**

**Linda K. Holt  
Lisa Lorant**

During 1988, the Research Division continued progress on a six part series of research briefs devoted toward describing the Department of Correction's sex offender population. Highlights from the first research brief in this series, "How Many Sex Offenders Are There? And, Where Are They?" include the following:

- On January 1, 1988, the DOC had a population of 1012 sex offenders, representing 16.2% of the total population.
- 42.4% of the sex offenders in DOC custody are incarcerated as a result of at least one offense involving a minor.
- The number of sex offenders has tripled over the last ten years, and the proportion of sex offenders has increased from 12.5% of the DOC population in 1978 to 16.2% of the DOC population in 1988.
- The proportion of sex offenders whose victims were minors has increased from 26.4% in 1978 to 42.4% in 1988.

The topics of the five forthcoming research briefs in this series are

Historical and Legal Perspectives on the Sex Offender Population.

Sentencing Patterns Among Sex Offenders

Comparative Analysis of Rapists, Child Molesters, Other Violent Offenders, and Non-Violent Offenders

Descriptive Analysis of Sex Offenders: The Offense and The Offenders

Recidivism Rates of the Sex Offender Population

Progress on this series will be continued throughout 1989.

## **VICTIM SERVICES IN THE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION: A DESCRIPTION OF CLIENTS AND ACTIVITIES**

**Michael White**

Before the mid 1970s, the scope of activities performed by criminal justice agencies focused almost exclusively on criminal offenders with barely any attention at all devoted to addressing the needs of crime victims. It has been only in the past 15 years that this has begun to change as a result of the growth of victim advocacy groups and the passage of legislation which has afforded certain rights to crime victims, witnesses and the family members of crime victims. In Massachusetts, these rights were incorporated as the Victim Bill of Rights in 1984 (Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 258B). Although most of the items included in this legislation address services which the District Attorneys' offices are required to provide to victims and witnesses while a case is being investigated and tried, one item included in this legislation is especially relevant to the Department of Correction. This item provides victims with the opportunity to request to be notified of the convicted offender's temporary, provisional, or final release from custody, and when necessary, the offender's escape from custody. Actually, the Department had been providing this service to victims upon request, under the authority of the laws covering Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) (MGL, Ch.6, Section 172) several years before the Victim Bill of Rights was enacted. Passage of the Victim Bill of Rights led to greater publicity about the availability of this service and this ultimately led to a dramatic increase in certifications for CORI authorizations during the past 5 years.

The two objectives of this study are to describe the CORI notification process carried out by institutional staff, and to describe the operations of the recently created Victim Services Unit located in the DOC's Central Office. The program descriptions will include information concerning the origins, structure, goals, and implementation of each program. Demographic profiles of the clients who receive the programs' services and of the offenders who are the subjects of the clients' petitions will be included in the report.

This study is scheduled for completion in November 1989.

## **WORKERS' COMPENSATION USAGE BY DOC CORRECTION OFFICERS**

**Michael White**

This report will monitor three measures of workers' compensation usage by correction officers at 10 DOC facilities for the period of November 1, 1986 - February 28, 1989. Three measures will be monitored:

1. The number of correction officers receiving indemnity payments during each month,
2. The total dollar cost of all indemnity payments to correction officers receiving workers' compensation during each month, and
3. The number of correction officer days lost due to workers' compensation leave for each month.

The project is scheduled for completion in December 1989.