

RESEARCH & EVALUATION
AT A GLANCE

QUASI-EXPERIMENTAL EVALUATION OF VIRGINIA'S JAIL BASED REENTRY PROGRAMS

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Abstract: The quasi-experimental study of Virginia's reentry programs compares recidivism results of reentry participants with a matched control group of offenders released to communities that did not offer reentry programs. The quasi-experimental study focuses on the question "Do Jail-Based Reentry Programs impact recidivism rates of released inmates?"

A total of 160 offenders who had completed all three phases of their reentry program and had been released no later than August 31, 2004 were selected from the five oldest reentry programs (Albemarle/Charlottesville, Chesapeake, Hampton Community Corrections, Henrico, and Riverside). Using the R program statistical matching software, each reentry participant was paired with their best match on demographic, criminal history, and "time out" variables. After controlling for the effects of age and prior arrest history, the reentry group was found to have significantly fewer felony arrests when compared to the control group. These results are encouraging to the Virginia Department of Corrections' goal of reducing post-incarceration recidivism of offenders.

Introduction: The number of inmates released from Virginia's prisons has steadily increased from 8,997 prisoners in 1999 to 12,227 in 2005. Two recidivism studies of inmates released in 1998 and 1999 revealed a consistent 29% recidivism rate when measured over a three year post-release time period. In an attempt to reduce the number of recommitments, DOC implemented jail-based reentry programs for prisoners. Reentry refers to an inmate's process of community reintegration after leaving institutional confinement. Those inmates selected for the jail re-entry pro-

grams leave prison just before the end of their sentences and are housed in local jails to finish their remaining sentences. This period in local jails can range from 45 days up to a year. During this time, jail staff, DOC reentry staff, community agency workers, and volunteers offer education and services that facilitate the inmate's successful reintegration into the community. The variety and intensity of services offered vary depending on community resources, but all programs offer intensive supervision, referral for job training and job placement, housing assistance, referral for mental health, substance abuse and physical health needs, and various other educational and personal growth opportunities. Some reentry programs offer work release opportunities. There are currently ten jail-based reentry programs located in Albemarle/Charlottesville Regional Jail, Arlington County Jail, Chesapeake City Jail, Danville Adult Detention Center, Hampton Community Corrections, Henrico County Jail, New River Valley Regional Jail, Norfolk City Jail, Riverside Regional Jail, and Roanoke City Jail. The earliest re-entry program was started by Hampton Community Corrections on November 19, 2003.

Research Questions: For this study, researchers chose a quasi-experimental design using a matched control group. This quasi-experimental evaluation study compares offenders who completed all three phases of the Jail Reentry Program and a matched group of offenders who did not participate because they returned to a locality that did not have a reentry program. The research question was whether there were differences in the post-release arrest rates of offenders emerging from reentry programs and a matched group

of offenders who did not participate in reentry programs due to a lack of program opportunity.

Methodology: The participants in this study consisted of 320 offenders who had been released from Virginia Department of Corrections' institutions. The "prison time out" ranged between sixteen months and two years. The release dates of treatment and control groups were between January 14, 2004 and August 31, 2004. The Treatment group was composed of former Reentry Program participants and the Control group was composed of released offenders who returned to communities that did not offer Reentry programs.

Treatment Group: The Reentry Transition Coordinators supplied the names of all participants in their programs. Researchers selected those who had completed all three phases of the reentry program by August 31, 2004 for a total of 160 in the treatment group. Reentry participants from the five earliest reentry programs (Albemarle/Charlottesville, Chesapeake, Hampton Community Corrections, Henrico, and Riverside) were selected for the study.

Control Group: The control group was selected from localities with similar offender demographic and crime characteristics as those offenders in the Treatment group. The two groups were matched on race, age, gender, most serious committing offense, and date of release from DOC. Because the DOC database does not provide the home destination of returning inmates, the location of the committing court was used. Albemarle-Charlottesville was matched with Staunton and Lynchburg combined; Chesapeake was matched with Portsmouth; Henrico and Riverside were matched with Richmond City; and

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Hampton was matched with Newport News. The Virginia Department of Corrections' OBSCIS (Offender Based State Correctional Information System) was used to retrieve the data needed for the control group sample.

Participants were matched by means of the R program, a matching program that simultaneously pairs participants across several variables. Subjects were matched on most serious committing offense, age, race and gender. There were no significant differences between the treatment and control groups on matching criteria.

The Virginia Department of State Police provided the criminal histories of the selected population by querying the automated Virginia Criminal Information Network (VCIN).

Major Findings and Implications of Findings: The quasi-experimental study used re-arrest, considered the broadest definition of recidivism, because researchers believed this measure would

best give an indication of post-release re-offending. The reader is cautioned not to compare these results of this study with other recidivism studies that use reconviction or recommitment as the recidivism measure. There is substantial shrinkage as the recidivism measures progress from arrest to recommitment (a smaller number of people are convicted than are arrested and a smaller number of people are institutionalized than are convicted). The analysis indicated that participation in a reentry program has a positive effect on subsequent criminal activity. Reentry program participants had significantly reduced numbers of felony arrests.

Researchers recommended that subsequent evaluations be conducted on the growing number of Virginia reentry programs. Because reentry programs are fairly new (the oldest program was implemented only three years ago) a longer window of release time is needed to measure the long-term effects of reentry programs. With greater population totals, researchers will be able to use the more constrictive dependent variable of recidivism – recommitment to the DOC. With larger study populations, analysis of differences between the various jail-based reentry programs is also possible.

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Felony Arrests for Treatment & Control Groups

	Felony Arrests Total	Percent of Felony Re-arrests
Control Group	302	64.5%
Reentry Participants	166	35.5%

*Significant difference between control group and reentry group (p<.10)

METHAMPHETAMINE USE IN VIRGINIA

Methamphetamine is a highly addictive central nervous system stimulant whose future impact on Virginia is still unknown. Although the Commonwealth has passed numerous laws to combat meth's use and manufacture, little demographic data on the user population has been reported. Knowing more about meth users will be important for their future supervision and treatment needs. This study seeks to provide information on meth users and how they differ from users of other stimulants. Using descriptive statistical data and logistic regression analysis it was found that meth users in Virginia not only differ significantly from users of other stimulants, they also differ from meth users at the national level. According to the Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring Program (ADAM), approximately 4.7 percent of male and 8.8 percent of female arrestees tested positive for meth in 2003. This drug is known to provide a cheaper, longer lasting high than other stimulants. Physiological changes in the brain that take place during detoxification make it one of the most difficult drug habits to overcome. Those addicted to meth often take longer to 'hit bottom' than users of other types of drugs. They tend to enter treatment at a later stage in their addiction and require

longer, more intense outpatient programs. Virginia's methamphetamine problem, though not as severe as that experienced by some other states, continues to grow. Between the years 2000 and 2003 the number of meth users receiving Pre/Post Sentence Investigation (PSI) Reports in Virginia increased by more than 50 percent and meth clandestine laboratory incidents increased 30 fold. These alarming increases have resulted in the passage of 16 separate meth related laws in Virginia since 2004. These laws increase penalties on meth related crimes and limit the availability of precursor chemicals. However, little is known about meth abusers in the Commonwealth. As a relatively new, but rapidly rising drug in Virginia, knowledge about meth abusers will be important for supervision and treatment of offenders with issues associated with meth abuse. In addition to information about meth abuse and policy issues, this study examined characteristic differences of those convicted of methamphetamine related crimes compared to those convicted of cocaine related crimes in Virginia. PSI Reports completed for drug cases from fiscal year 2000 through 2003 were used to determine characteristic differ-

ences between meth offenders and cocaine offenders. PSI's are completed for approximately 93 percent of convicted felons. Because of the confusion in identifying actual meth cases versus other drugs with similar chemical nomenclature, meth cases were initially identified in the PSI database, and then confirmed through the actual case narrative. The resulting data contained 511 meth cases and 16,075 cocaine cases¹. Multinomial logistic regression analysis was performed using meth offense vs. cocaine offense as the dependent variable and race, marital status, employment, age, education and former incarcerations as independent variables. Due to meth cases accounting for less than three percent of the sample, logistic regression was performed on all of the meth only² cases (n=321) and a random sample of cocaine cases (n=321).

The information gathered from this study suggests that Virginia's population of meth offenders is similar to those that abuse meth in other parts of the country, with several interesting differences. Virginia meth offenders are more likely to be male, 81 percent, than in other parts of the country where only 55 percent are male.

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Meth offending in Virginia is much more prevalent among whites, 92 percent, while nationwide more than 27 percent are of other races/ethnicities. Additionally, a larger percentage of meth offenders in Virginia had evidence of a prior criminal offense, 87 percent, compared to 45 percent nationally³. Similarities between Virginia meth offenders and users at the national level included age, where 70 percent were 34 years of age or younger versus 66 percent nationally, and education, where 55 percent were high school graduates versus 60 percent nationally. Results of regression analysis suggest that meth users are more likely than

crack/cocaine users to be Caucasian, married, skilled and regularly employed. Meth users are more likely than cocaine users to be between the ages of 19 and 30 and are more likely to have graduated from high school. Conversely, methamphetamine users are less likely than cocaine users to be college graduates or incarcerated previously⁴. Independent variables that were found not to be significant included other admitted drug use, the offenders' living arrangements, prior misdemeanor or felony events and first time offender status. This study suggests that although Virginia is yet to experience the "meth epidemic" that has ravaged other parts of the country, at the demographic level,

the Commonwealth's offenders are similar enough to warrant preemptive action. Probation officers should be aware of the characteristics of meth abuse and realize that meth addicted individuals, though similar to other stimulant abusers, have unique treatment and supervision needs. For more information, contact Tama Celi at tama.celi@vadoc.virginia.gov or John Turner at john.turner@vadoc.virginia.gov

¹Data does not total to 100 percent due to cases involving multiple drugs.
²Offender's drug charge involved methamphetamine exclusively.
³Differences could be due to Virginia numbers representing those meth offenders, while national numbers represent meth users.
⁴All independent variables in this regression analysis were significant at the 0.05 level.

ANNUAL SEX OFFENDER CONTAINMENT SURVEY

The annual survey of the nine sex offender containment units was conducted in July 2006. Containment unit sites differ from other probation and parole districts by offering a more structured and coordinated supervision program specifically for sexual offenders. The containment model was developed by Kim English (1996), and relies on three central components: intensive supervision, polygraph testing, and regular mental health treatment aimed at sexual offending behaviors. Regular and detailed communication among all three segments and with community connections (churches, family, and employers) is essential to the success of the sex offender containment model. Since the inception of containment units, an annual progress report has been distributed. A brief survey is used to track the containment population at each Probation and Parole district office. The survey also gathers information about treatment participation, successful completions, and supervision failures. All nine containment districts (Richmond, Sussex, Danville, Roanoke, Newport News, Bedford, Virginia Beach, Fairfax, and Manassas) responded to the survey. The survey requests information about active probationers and parolees, treatment participation and completion numbers, successful completion numbers, new arrest and technical violation counts, and updates on the number and identity of staff members at each containment site. Findings indicated overall increases in the number of supervised sex offenders.

Additionally, between 2005 and 2006, there was an increase in the number of successful discharges. The increase in successful discharges has been a trend since the inception of the programs in 2001. The districts reported a combined total of 832 sex offenders under supervision, up from 809 in fiscal year 2005. In fiscal year 2006, 174 sex offenders were discharged successfully from supervision, up from 171 in fiscal year 2005. New sexual felony and sexual misdemeanor arrests decreased in 2006 in comparison to the fiscal year 2005 data. Other types of felony and misdemeanor arrests increased during fiscal year 2006. Technical violators decreased by 3 from 2005 to 2006, and accounted for 54.5 percent of the unsuccessful

discharges. The nine containment districts reported substantial increases in their use of initial polygraphs, though only one district uses polygraphs for revocation when a new crime is admitted. Six of the containment districts reported hiring new staff in the 2006 fiscal year. The containment model has been piloted in nine Virginia sites since 2001 and another three Probation & Parole District offices plan to implement sex offender containment programs in 2007. For more information, contact Walt Pulliam at walt.pulliam@vadoc.virginia.gov or Allison Stone at allison.stone@vadoc.virginia.gov

Table 1. Containment unit numbers for FY 2005 and FY 2006

Containment unit survey items	2005	2006
Number of active total cases	969	977
Number of offenders receiving sex offender treatment	569	596
Number of offenders who completed treatment	198	188
Number of offenders who were successfully discharged	171	174
Number of new sexual felony arrests	7	4
Number of new sexual misdemeanor arrests	2	2
Number of new non-sexual felony arrests	25	35
Number of new non-sexual misdemeanor arrests	40	53
Number of technical violators	116	113
Number of absconders	24	21
Number of initial polygraphs given	177	249
Number of follow-up polygraphs given	366	582

IDENTIFICATION OF TECHNICAL PROBATION VIOLATORS

Abstract

Distinction between technical probation violator versus new crime violators has been accomplished within the Virginia (VA) DOC new court commitment population. This development has resulted in historical data needed to conduct a technical violator forecast as well as information on technical violators for those involved in policymaking and planning.

Introduction

Since 2005, the Code of VA has required the forecast for state responsible adult offenders to include an estimate of probation violators who may be appropriate for alternative sanctions.

Determination of appropriateness for alternative sanctions began with the distinction of “technical violators” from “new crime” violators. Technical violators are those who have violated a condition of supervision that may not otherwise have been prosecuted as a crime. New crime violators have been convicted of a new offense while on supervision. Previously, it was not possible to separate technical violators from new crime violators within existing data. An offender is clearly a new crime violator if the conviction of the new offense occurred prior to the revocation. But often times, an offender is returned to court for the violation prior to pending new crime charges being resolved. In these instances the offender appears to be a technical violator at the time of the revocation, but in fact may be a new crime violator prior to being received into the DOC population.

In 2005, data from a special study conducted by the Virginia Criminal Sentencing Commission (VCSC) was used to estimate violators. In 2006, a methodology was devised to specifically identify probation violators among DOC new court commitments (NCC) and then within that group, distinguish who had been violated for a technical reason versus those who had been violated as a result of a new offense.

Research Question

To meet the legislative requirement, first probation violators had to be determined, then from that group, violators who were appropriate for alternative sanctions had to be identified. Specifically, technical violators needed to be distinguished from new crime violators. Then from the technical violators, an estimate of how many were eligible for alternative sanction was considered.

Methodology

This study utilized DOC Time Information Processing System (TIPS) Sentence data as the primary source of data and supplemented through use of State Police Rap Sheets and VCSC Sentencing Revocation Reports (SRR) data. The primary analysis was based on CY2004 data because this was the most current SRR data available. Sentence information in DOC data lists each crime separately. During the traditional “flattening” process, information on only one crime is kept; thus it was impossible to determine if an offender had convictions for both new crimes and probation violations. To overcome this obstacle, two binary variables were created; one to determine conviction of a probation violation and the other to determine convictions of crimes other than a probation violation. The data was then aggregated so that there was only one record per offender, while maintaining both of the binary variables. Code was applied to distinguish technical violators from new crime violators. A new crime conviction without a violation conviction indicates the offender is not a probation violator. A new crime conviction in conjunction with a violation indicates that the offender is a new crime violator. Finally, a violation without the accompaniment of a new crime indicates that the offender is a technical violator.

Once the aggregation process is complete, SRR data is matched to NCC files to identify additional new crime violations. In addition, State Police rap sheets are used to verify that additional new crime convictions did not occur between the time of the probation violation conviction and the inmate being received by the DOC.

Once the CY2004 technical violators were identified, actual technical violators were identified in CY2002 - CY2005 TIPS Sentence data for NCC. The number of

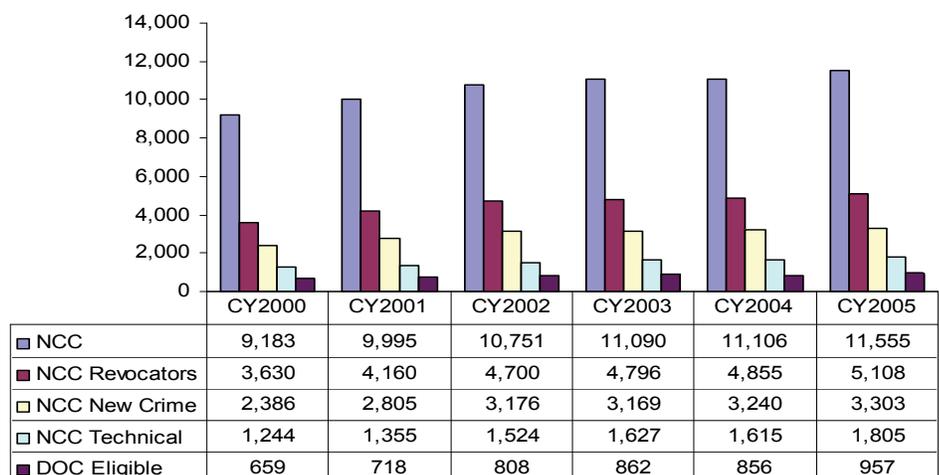
additional cases identified through use of SRR and rap sheets was then estimated for each of the years using a percent basis.

Offenders who would be ineligible for alternative sanctions were then estimated. For example, violent offenders, because of insufficient security in alternative sanctions are often not accepted. It is estimated that 22% of technical violators would have a violent offense. In addition, alternative sanctions often times lack the facilities or staff to treat offenders with serious mental illness or who require medical intervention. It is estimated that 15% of technical violators have a serious mental illness and 10% require medical intervention, or a total of 47% would be ineligible for diversion.

Major Findings and Implications of Findings

Of the CY2004 NCC, 4,855 were identified as probation violators. Of those, 1,615 were determined to be technical violators. From tips_sen analysis, 2,680 of the violators were found to also have a new crime conviction. New crimes were also identified from SRR data, 236 (4.9%), and from rap sheets, 324 (6.7%). It is estimated that 53%, or 856, of the technical violators may be eligible for alternative sanctions. This analysis was then expanded to complete the table below, to provide the historical foundation for the technical violator forecast.

Prior to this analysis, SRR data had been thought to be principle source of probation revocation data. However, of the 4,855 probation violators identified, 54 percent did not have an SRR. Hence, this process has revealed that DOC TIPS Sentence data is the most complete source for DOC committed probation violators. For more information contact Tama Celi at tama.celi@vadoc.virginia.gov or Warren McGehee at warren.mcgehee@vadoc.virginia.gov



CRIMINAL JUSTICE FORECASTS USE CONSENSUS PROCESS

Abstract: The 2006 legislative Acts of Assembly require the Secretary of Public Safety (SPS) to present revised offender population forecasts through FY2012 to the Governor and General Assembly Committees. Forecasts are produced in a "consensus approach" for the adult prison state responsible (SR), the adult jail local responsible (LR), the juvenile SR and the juvenile LR populations. An estimate of the number of adult technical probation violators who may be appropriate for alternative sanctions is provided as well. The accuracy of these forecasts can affect the success of planning and resource allocation. Over-projection may result in needless appropriation of resources to criminal justice institutions, while under-projection can compromise a correctional system's ability to adequately ensure public safety.

Introduction: Since the late 1980's, Virginia has used a participative approach that involves scrutiny by policy makers, administrators and technical analysts from all branches of government to develop prisoner forecasts. This past forecast cycle involved three SPS Forecast Committees referred to as: Technical, Liaison and Policy groups. The Technical Committee members were with criminal justice, budget and legislative agencies and provided statistical and quantitative analysis that developed and recommend baseline forecasts to the Liaison Committee. The Liaison Committee, chaired by Deputy Secretary of Public Safety Cristman, included deputy directors and senior managers of criminal justice agencies and budget agencies, and General Assembly staff. This Committee discussed numerous issues and received feedback regarding two special studies completed by the DOC Research and Forecast Sections on probation technical violators and an impact of non-violent risk assessment on the SR New Court Commitment (NCC) population. The SPS Policy Committee, chaired by Secretary of Public Safety Marshall, reviewed the recommended forecasts and set the official forecast for each offender population. They can also adjust forecasts to account for recent trends or policy changes that are not incorporated in the data used to issue the respective forecasts. Through this participatory, consensus process, involving more than 32 members among 18 agencies on one of three Committees that met over a dozen times, the SPS oversees the forecasting process essential for criminal justice budgeting and planning of capital and operational expenditures and presents updated annual forecasts. The time

from the end of the fiscal year in June to October 15th, when the SPS is legislatively mandated to provide updated forecasts, is the crunch time for the production, analysis, review and approval of offender forecasts.

At least two forecast models (using time series and/or simulation models) are produced for each of the four primary offender populations and compared. Normally, the Department of Planning and Budget (DPB) produces time-series models for all four forecasts which are compared to the model(s) produced by the lead agency. DOC uses both time-series for the number of NCC by gender and offense type (violent, nonviolent and drugs) and also runs simulation models by gender to arrive at the SR offender population forecast. This article focuses on the adult SR DOC forecasts produced.

Methodology: Within the realm of SR adult populations, there are actually two distinctive DOC forecasts that are done. One estimates the total number of NCC that will come to DOC over the next six years and the other is a forecast of DOC's total population that would need to be confined at any one time over the next six years. To do the total population forecast, one needs to accurately know the number of offenders that are expected to come to DOC and their expected length of stay.

The NCC forecast is the most significant factor driving the long-term population projections of the state-responsible population. The commitment forecast is the total of six separate commitment forecasts developed by offense type and gender (nonviolent-male, violent-male, drug-male, nonviolent-female, violent-female, and drug-female). The NCC forecast adopted last year proved to be extremely accurate. The actual CY2005 population was 11,555 and the forecast was 11,618 or only 63 or 0.5% high. In the consensus approach used this year, one of DPB's proposed ARIMA streams for male violent and five of DOC's NCC forecast streams were adopted and aggregated to arrive at the SPS's Consensus SR NCC forecast. In total, new court commitments to prison are projected to grow by an average of 3.3% annually from CY2006 through CY2012. This is comparable to the 3.4% average annual growth experienced from 1998 through 2005. The CY2006 projected number of commitments is 11,886 and is forecast to increase to 14,487 by CY2012.

Each year, in the forecast process, the SPS Committee's adopt a forecast of offenders. The forecast adopted in 2005

proved to be exceptionally accurate for FY2006. The actual inmate population the end of June 2006 was 36,579 and the projected population for the end of FY2006 was 36,667 or the forecast was only 88 or 0.2% high. DOC has used simulation software since 1986 to generate such inmate population forecasts. This computerized simulation model, referred to as Prophet (Wizard is the newer version), mimics the flow of male and female offenders through the DOC correctional system over a six year forecast horizon and produces separate monthly forecasts for 81 individual inmate groups (57 male and 24 female groups). The number of offenders projected to be in each group, are separated by offenses, their sentences, length of stay, credits and other elements which govern how long offenders remain in prison are different for each group. A critical input to the population simulation model is the six-year SPS consensus approved male and female NCC forecasts. Hence the NCC forecast must be adopted before the simulation model can be finalized. To accurately simulate the movement of offenders through the system, data describing "who" is admitted to prison and "how long" inmates remain confined must be compiled, analyzed and input into the simulation model. The current projections are based on data for offenders admitted, released and confined during CY2005. The simulation period begins January 1, 2006 and ends December 2012.

Major Findings and Implications of Findings: The actual forecast is summarized and reported in a FY fashion to comply to the standard FY budget cycle. The SR Population Forecast for FY2007 is projected to be 37,547 and to increase by FY2012 to 42,201. This forecast which was produced by simulation methodology, was compared to ARIMA male and female models produced by DPB in the Technical Committee meeting and the simulation model figures were recommended to the Liaison and Policy Committees for adoption. This SR population forecast that was adopted projects that the Commonwealth does expect a growth in prison population sufficient to continue its capital outlay construction program for new prisons. Finally, a special technical probation violator study was done by DOC, that identified approximately 2,600 technical

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SEXUALLY VIOLENT PREDATOR FORECAST

Abstract: For the first time, the 2006 Appropriations Act directed that the Secretary of Health and Human Resources in collaboration of the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) and the Secretary of Public Safety (SPS), present a six-year forecast of the adult offender population presently incarcerated in the Department of Corrections (DOC) and approaching release who meet who may be eligible for evaluation as sexually violent predators (SVPs). The Secretary was to report on the number of current SVP cases and a forecast of SVP eligibility, civil commitments, and SVP conditional releases and include projected bed space requirements, to the Governor and Senate Finance, and House Appropriations Committees by October 1 of each year. This study presents a forecast based on a documented 350% growth in SVP eligibility among inmates approaching release from the DOC brought about by recent legislative changes and the parallel increase in census growth at the state's secure SVP facility, the Virginia Center for Behavioral Rehabilitation (VCBR). At the present rate, both the existing Petersburg VCBR and the new VCBR Nottoway facility, will reach capacity in about 2012. The forecasted rate of census growth in the SVP civil commitment program has long-term implications for the Commonwealth.

Introduction: In 1997 the Commonwealth took steps to protect its citizens from sexual victimization by enacting several key pieces of legislation. This was enacted through the so called "Megan's Laws", a system for tracking known sex offenders through mandatory registration and notification of local law enforcement of their presence in the community. The Commonwealth has also enacted stiffer sentences for all types of sex offenders. In 1999 legislation was enacted to civilly commit sexually violent predators and in 2003, the Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation, and Substance Abuse Services (DMHMRSAS) developed a civil commitment program for individuals found to be sexually violent predators and in October that year, opened the VCBR to house and treat SVPs. The first civilly committed SVP resident arrived at the 96 capacity program on the campus of Central State Hospital in Dinwiddie during the first week of December 2003. A new secure SVP 300-bed facility is currently under construction on the grounds of the Piedmont Geriatric Hospital in Nottoway County.

The 2006 General Assembly replaced the Rapid Risk Assessment for Sexual Recidivism (RRASOR) with the Static-99 risk-screening instrument effective for July 1, 2006. The Legislature also expanded the

list of predicate crimes that make individuals eligible for SVP civil commitment. This provision goes into effect on January 1, 2007. Changing to the Static-99 increased the number of inmates becoming eligible for SVP civil commitment by approximately 350 percent. It is anticipated that adding new predicate crimes in January 2007 will also increase the number of inmates who become SVP-eligible.

Methodology: The Health and Human Resources Secretary instructed the DMHMRSAS to complete this SVP forecast. In response, a multi-agency work group was created including stakeholders from DMHMRSAS, the DOC, the Commitment Review Committee (CRC) and the OAG. The latter two stakeholders provided information to the work group on cases under active consideration for SVP civil commitment. DOC identified the potential SVP-eligible inmates, currently incarcerated and in the Virginia DOC database who had release dates over the next six years (through June 2012). The Research and Reporting Section identified and verified selected offense codes with the OAG that were used to count SVP eligible cases. The identified cases were checked against Pre-Sentence Investigation (PSI) Report and the Sentencing Guidelines (SG) databases to verify SVP-eligibility in accordance with VCC (Virginia Crime) codes. Where a VCC code could not be obtained automatically, the PSI Reports for these offenders were researched on the web-based PSI Report databank. Where a VCC code could not be obtained using this method, the offenders' files were manually searched. A total of 4,931 offenders or about 13.5% were identified as potential SVP civil commitment candidates out of an incarcerated population of 36,017 on 8/11/06. Of these, 2,128 (43.2%) of these 4,931 offenders were identified via automated matches to the PSI and/or SG databases. Another 1,155 (23.4%) of these offenders were identified through manual searches of inmate folders. For 1,648 (33.4%) of these offenders, a VCC code could not be located either electronically or manually. They are still potential SVPs because their NCIC code is either Kidnapping or Rape/

Sexual Assault. Most of these cases however had release dates beyond 2012; efforts to verify their offenses continues. The focus for this study was on the 2,158 SVP-eligible inmates (out of the 4,931) scheduled to be released between FY2007-FY2012.

Major Findings and Implications of Findings: The 350% increase in SVP eligibility is created by two factors; changing from the RRASOR to the Static-99 and increasing the number of qualifying crimes for SVP eligibility. On a month-to-month basis, this increase is from approximately 4 CRC evaluations to about 12; from less than one commitment to the VCBR per month to about 5. At the same time, CRC recommendations for SVP conditional release are also increasing; from five cases between April 2003 and July 2006 to more than one per month. Utilization of SVP civil commitment and conditional release is rising along with their accompanying costs. The table below summarizes that the SVP release forecast was based on using 13.5% of the official SPS State Responsible Adult Forecast for FY2007 through FY2012 to represent the number of projected SVP population in DOC. Based on current data, an estimated 8.9% of the SVP population are expected to be released annually and 27.7% of them are estimated to go to the CRC for civil commitment review. Of these, based on current practice for the months of July and August 2006, the first two months of the Static-99 use, 42.1% of CRC review cases, are estimated to become civil commitments. Current practice also indicates that 11% of the cases reviewed by the CRC would be recommended for conditional release and 47% for full release. In summary, in FY2007, the forecast expects 52 offenders to be civilly committed annually and for this number to increase annually to 59 by FY2012. If nothing in these patterns of SVP eligibility changes, the Commonwealth will run out of available SVP civil commitment bed space by approximately 2012.

For more information, contact Steve Wolf at steve.wolf@co.dmhmsas.virginia.gov or Helen Hinshaw at helen.hinshaw@vadoc.virginia.gov

SVP Release Forecast using 13.5% of SR Offender Forecast

Fiscal Year	FY2007	FY2008	FY2009	FY2010	FY2011	FY2012
SPS SR Forecast Population	37,547	38,143	38,883	39,908	40,991	42,201
Projected SVP Population 13.5%	5,069	5,149	5,249	5,388	5,534	5,697
Estimated SVP Releases 8.9%	451	458	467	479	493	507
Estimated CRC Review 27.6%	125	126	129	132	136	140
Civil Commitment Estimate 42.1%	52	53	54	56	57	59

CRIMINAL JUSTICE FORECASTS USE CONSENSUS PROCESS

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probation violators were included among the 37,547 inmates. The study cited approximately 53% (or 1,378) of the technical violators might be suitable for alternative programs. DOC concluded that approximately 47% are likely not good candidates for alternatives due to convictions for violent offenses (22%), mental health issues (15%) or medical conditions (10%). By FY2012, the estimate of total technical probation violators increases to 3,039 and 53% of these, or 1,610, might be suitable for alternative

programs. There is concern that many of the probation violators who are counted as technical violators and potentially perceived as less serious recidivists, are really 'habitual' offenders who were sentenced for technical violations to get the offender off the street and avoid them potentially committing a serious new crime. Thus diversion from incarceration might not be in the best interest of community safety. Nonetheless, the SPS Forecast process required this subgroup to be identified with the possibility of diverting such offenders from taking up more costly beds in DOC if

another less costly sanction or program might suffice. For more information regarding all the forecasts produced and the process involved, the reader is referred to the official SPS's "Report on the Offender Population Forecasts (FY2007 to FY2012) to the Governor and General Assembly" dated October 15, 2006 available on the RMS internal website at http://docnet/v3/administration/rms/Publications/CY06SPS_Forecast07-12.pdf For more information, contact Helen Hinshaw at helen.hinshaw@vadoc.virginia.gov

GLOSSARY OF EVALUATION TERMS

ARIMA - a statistical forecasting technique that analyzes time series data and produces future values based on known historical values. ARIMA captures the historic correlations of the data and extrapolates them forward. Formal name for ARIMA is "Auto[regressive] Integrated Moving Average."

Benefit-Cost Analysis uses basic program accounting techniques to document and compare the costs & benefits of correctional programs to costs/benefits of alternatives. The analysis produces a benefit to cost ratio (\$5 saved for every \$1 invested).

Control group is a group of people who did not receive the treatment or services given to the experimental group (incarcerated substance abusers not participating in the Therapeutic Community may be selected as a *control group* to Therapeutic Community participants). Evaluation may examine whether the *experimental group* fares better on post-release recidivism than the *control group*. The basic characteristics of the control group (i.e., age, race, gender, criminal history, etc.) are matched as closely as possible to the experimental group characteristics.

Delphi Study involves repeated rounds of questioning to experts to define the dimensions of a question or problem (i.e., treatment professionals may be asked to describe cognitive behavioral therapy. In repeated rounds of questioning, the strategies, approaches, and procedures of cognitive behavioral therapy are compiled and benchmarked).

Dependent Variables are *outcome factors* such as recidivism, sobriety, enhanced cognitive skills and other outcomes. Independent variables affect dependent variables (e.g., cold weather (independent variable) impacts the sales of winter coats (dependent variable) but winter coats do not affect cold weather).

Experimental group is the group of people who receive treatment or services with the hope that such services will produce a better outcome (i.e., Therapeutic Community participants would make up an *experimental group* of incarcerated substance abusers).

Impact Evaluation assesses bottom-line results to assess the ability of the program to achieve the stated purposes.

Independent Variables are *personal characteristics* (age, race, gender, criminal history, etc.) or *treatment interventions* (intensive supervision, therapeutic programs, etc.) that may impact outcome measures (dependent variables). For example, gender (an independent variable) impacts violent offending (dependent variable) with males committing more violent offenses than females.

Non-experimental Study is a type of study that lacks two or all three of the elements required for a true experiment. A non-experimental study is useful to describe phenomena, but not to discern cause and effect relationships.

Process Evaluation describes program content, policies, procedures & participant characteristics

Program Fidelity refers to how well a program does what it purports to do (i.e., Do program components effectively address criminal drivers? Does the program deliver the services they promise? Does the program design need revisions to increase effectiveness?).

Qualitative Evaluations examine questions such as staff/participants perceptions about program effectiveness, the work environment, employee morale, leadership adequacy, etc.

Quasi-experimental Research Design is a type of study that lacks one or more of the three required elements of a true-experiment. Because of this, causal conclusions are not possible. Methods (such as matching subjects) are available to improve upon the strength of results found in such studies.

Random Assignment refers to the process of arbitrarily or *by chance* assigning subjects to different types of services or treatment interventions. In a medical study, patients with the same disease may be arbitrarily assigned to a new drug treatment, standard treatment methods, or a placebo "sugar pill". Which treatment the person gets is *randomly* decided by the order they walked in the doctor's office.

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"Research and Evaluation At a Glance" is the newsletter produced by the Virginia Department of Corrections Agency Evaluation Committee to disseminate findings from evaluation projects performed by internal DOC and external researchers. This newsletter is published twice per year and made available on the Department of Corrections internal and external web sites. For more information about this newsletter or the Agency Evaluation Committee, you may contact the Research and Management Services Unit at rms@vadoc.virginia.gov or 804-674-3268 x1248.

- Plan to Attend -

The next AEC Meeting is
Thursday, March 22, 2007

10:00am-12:30pm
DOC Atmore Headquarters
Third Floor Conference Room

GLOSSARY OF EVALUATION TERMS

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Reliability refers to the *consistency* of a rating (i.e., if the same test or rating tool is given to a person at two different times, the test or rating system is reliable if the same person scored the same or nearly the same on both occasions).

Significance: The level of significance indicates the probability that groups being compared are truly different. For instance, a significance level of 5% ($p < .05$) indicates that the groups are significantly different from each other, and that there is less than a 5% chance that this difference occurred due to random elements.

Simulation Model - an analytical tool designed to mimic the flow of offenders through the correctional system by allowing the entry of offender profile information relative to sentencing, length of stay, earned credits and parole grant rates. The model then generates hypothetical cases and traces the progress of each of these cases along the established flows and through each status change until they exit from the system.

System Impact Studies ask questions about the impact of the program on agency systems (i.e., how is this program affecting the costs of operating prisons, probation, parole, and collateral systems?).

Time Series Data - a distribution of values based on a regular interval (day, month, quarter, year, etc.).

True Experimental Research Design uses random assignment of subjects to different groups, manipulates an independent variable, and controls for confounding variables. Under these three conditions, causal conclusions can be made (such as "Program X causes a reduction in recidivism.").

Validity questions if a test or evaluation tool accurately measures what it is supposed to measure (i.e., if a depression scale accurately separates people taking antidepressants from those not on antidepressant drugs, faith in its validity is strengthened).

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