

Forecast/Research Workgroup Meeting

DOC – 1153 East Street South, Suffield

MacDougall-Walker

June 11, 2008

10:00 AM to 12:00 noon

Chair: Linda DeConti, Research Unit Manager (OPM)

Present: John Forbes, Assistant Division Director, Kelly Sinko, Intern, Cody Hyman, Intern, CJPPD, (OPM); Steve Cox, SAC Director, Connecticut SAC Director, Institute for the Study of Crime and Justice (CCSU); Judith P. Lee, Esq., Case Flow Mgmt. Specialist, (Court Operations); Brian Hill, Manager, Center for Research, Program Analysis and Quality Improvement (CSSD); Fred Levesque, Director of Offender Classification & Population Management, Cheryl Cepelak, Director of Organizational Developments and Strategic Planning, Jody Barry, Associate Research Analyst in the MIS/Research Unit (DOC); Richard Sparaco, Parole/Community Services Mgr, Jerry Stowell, Consultant (BOPP); Al Bidorini, Director of Planning, (DMHAS); Gary Lopez, Planning Specialist, Crime Analysis Unit, (DPS).

Excused: Lyndsay Ruffolo, Research Specialist, Aileen Keyes, Research Specialist; Institute for the Study of Crime and Justice (CCSU); Susan C. Glass, Program Manager, Center for Research, Program Analysis and Quality Improvements (CSSD); John Lahda, Executive Director (BOPP); Lois Desmarais, Planning Specialist, Tom Myers, IT Analyst 2, Crime Analysis Unit (DPS)

Guest: Mary Lansing, MIS/Research Unit (DOC)

AGENDA ITEM	DISCUSSION	ACTION ITEMS and DELIVERABLES	DATE
Acceptance of Minutes:	The Minutes from the May meeting were accepted as written.		
Announcements:	Linda distributed the Correctional Population and Parole Eligibility report along with the drafted memo to be sent to the SAC directors from other states. She also reminded the group of the CJPAC meeting on Thursday, June 12.	Send the SAC directors the finalized email	Friday, June 13

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<p>Agency Updates Continued:</p>	<p>BOPP: Rich explained the Board’s continued efforts to get a handle on the backlog of parole hearing cases since the ban was lifted in Feb 2008. One of the main problems still facing the BOPP is the lack of information necessary to proceed with the parole hearings. The main reason for continuances still remains “lack of court transcript(s)”. Collaboration continues with both the Courts Support Services and Court Operations of the Judicial Branch who are faced with high volume requests from the Board. CSSD staff additionally been helpful in obtaining Police Reports.</p> <p>Regarding the request and receipt of information pertinent to offenders YO status or Juvenile record, the process is very slow. This is largely due to the fact that many records have to be manually retrieved and forwarded to the Board. Many of these cases continue to be moved to the following months. Also, during the actual hearings, the Board must now adjourn into “executive session” to discuss confidential information such as offenders YO or Juvenile status. The hearing make-up has been changed and is now more similar to court proceedings and can be very lengthy.</p> <p>Summary (MAY 2008 and JUNE2008):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were approximately 500 cases scheduled for hearings in May that had to be continued into June for lack of transcripts. • The average number for parole hearings is typically 300 cases per month. • Currently, there are 2,485 scheduled for June hearings. • Effective 7/1/98, per PA 08-01, the Administrative Review process will no longer be available. This process where parole officers interview “non-violent” offenders and make recommendations to a panel of the Board without the inmate being present was established by the 		

	<p>legislature in 1996, expanded in 2004 and eliminated in January 2008 special session. Therefore, ALL hearings must be face to face with the Board and offender present.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To counter this change, the BOPP has doubled the number of hearing dates for ARs before the June 30th deadlines, holding hearings in new locations, and scheduling hearings on every day of the week.• Staffing Concerns:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Currently there are 7 part-time Board members who sit exclusively on parole release panels. On July 1, the structure of the Board changes to include 5 full time members and 7 new part time members (to be named). A full panel Board consists of three members: the chairman or designee, a full time Board member, and one part time member. It is still uncertain if any of the current members will be retained;• To date, 4 full time members (one of who does not start until 6/20/08) and 3 part-time members have been appointed;• All new positions require extensive training that may impact scheduled hearing dates for July;• Facility Parole Officers must be present at all the hearings and there are only 18 Facility Parole Officers whose duties also include compiling all required paperwork, interviewing all offenders prior to the hearings and presenting cases for processing 10 days prior to the scheduled hearings. This will potentially further create additional institutional backlog due to the fact that POs will now be at more hearings taking time institutional caseload;• Insufficient support staff to cover a second shift to help ease the backlog.• Deficiencies remain in the following areas:<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Staffing2. Information3. Board members.		
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HEARING STATISTICS (Historical FACTS)

AUGUST 2006 through JULY 2007 - Full Panel (Violent Offenders) and Administrative Reviews (Non-Violent Offenders)

- Average 8.8 FULL panel hearing dates per month (106 hearing dates per year);
 - Average of 119 cases per month/13.4 cases per full panel hearing;
 - Average of 4 Administrative Reviews (AR) dates per month
 - Average of 203 cases per month /51 cases per AR date.
- TOTAL of 322 new cases heard per month.

ADDITIONALLY, Average of 107 REVOCATION AND RESCISSION cases heard per month conducted by Hearing Examiners who then presented findings and recommendations through Administrative Reviews.

JULY 2008:

- Currently 29 full panel hearings scheduled for a total of 532 cases with an average of 18.3 cases per hearing;
- Historical average is only 13.4 cases heard per full panel hearing. This would reduce Boards capability to only 389 cases for the month;
- In order to keep up with “normal” case-flow, the Board will need to hear 322 cases per month or 11.1 cases per scheduled hearing in July;
- If Board actually were able to hear all 532 cases, the backlog would be cut by approximately 210 cases.
- If the Board does not hear at least 322 cases in the month of July, the backlog will actually increase.

Current Backlog is estimated to be approximately 1500

cases.

Average caseload of Facility Parole Officers is 150.

Average number of cases Facility Parole Officers can complete per monthly is estimated to be 15-20.

Jerry explained the following: There were 376 releases to TS for the month of May. This represents a slight decline from April 2008 when 383 persons were released to TS. It is expected that TS releases will remain high (60% higher) compared to the monthly releases that occurred in FY2007 but the number of releases will not increase much beyond the current level. Due in part to a greater effort by facilities to increase TS releases, the technical violation rate for TS during April and May 2008 is higher than it was in April and May of 2007. The good news is the criminal and escape violation rates have not increased. The high technical violation rate has also been ameliorated to some extent by the establishment of a new technical violators unit for TS persons that was established in March at the Carl Robinson Correctional Institution. Policies and procedures have been developed whereby all TS technical violators are flagged as they re-enter the system and where appropriate are transferred to the CRCI TVU. Since it began in early March 2008, well over 100 persons have been referred to the program and nearly 40 persons have successfully completed the 60-day program and have returned to TS supervision.

Releases to parole increased consistently between October 2007 and April 2008. In April the number of persons released to parole reached 80 percent of the FY2007 monthly average. However, in May the number of releases to discretionary parole dropped from 163 to 112, which represents 58 percent of the FY2007 monthly average. We may see some surge in the number of releases in the next two months due to an increased parole hearings schedule for June 2008. However, due to the elimination of AR hearings after

	<p>July 1, no staff increases and additional staff time required to deal with this and additional case information requirements, we expect a steady and sharp decline in the number of persons released to discretionary parole after July 2008.</p> <p>The prison population forecast model currently in use depends in part on discretionary parole numbers returning to pre Cheshire levels in 2008. Under the best of circumstances that was unlikely to happen prior to October 2009 and the current situation with parole hearings does not represent the best of circumstances. Under the circumstances as they currently exist, we expect the prison population to peak in September or October 2008 at between 20,000 and 20,300.</p> <p>What happens with parole hearings in July and beyond is critical to the future prison population. It is clear that without the addition of trained hearing officers to BOPP there will be fewer cases heard and there are already indications that the parole-granting rate will decline. The grant rate for administrative reviews declined from 84 percent in April 2008 to 79 percent in May and for full board hearings the granting rate dropped from 82 percent to 73 percent.</p>		
<p>Agency Updates Continued:</p>	<p>CSSD: Brian explained that CSSD is waiting to see the hiring appropriations as a result of the Regular Session Crime Bill. CSSD is also working out logistics on the two bills passed in the Special Session.</p> <p>Additionally, CSSD is working with CCSU on the evaluation of the adult probation special projects and the effect of the raise the age legislation in New Haven.</p> <p>The hiring freeze may delay the hiring of adult probation staff appropriated in the crime bills.</p>		

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<p>Agency Updates Continued:</p>	<p>Court Ops: Court Operations is busy implementing new legislation. A new diversionary program for those with psychiatric disabilities is being developed with CSSD and DHMAS. New legislation has also prompted us to automate the 6 housing courts in the state.</p> <p>There are currently 3500 active violations of probation warrants in PRAWN. VOPs have been in PRAWN since mid-March. Of the warrants that were served since March about half were served by police departments.</p> <p>With quality assurance continuing to be at the top of our agenda, court operations is preparing a training for those hired prior to the hiring freeze</p>		
	<p>DPS: Gary reminded the group of the FBI training session for UCR and NIBRS to be held on July 21-24, 2008.</p> <p>He also reported that data entry is currently “up-to-date” and that the error rates have been improved substantially to an acceptably low level. They are continuing to work on issues with the data quality and error rates for homicide cases.</p> <p>The DPS Crimes Analysis Unit also has one (1) open position which it cannot fill due to the hiring freeze.</p>		
	<p>DOC: Fred provided the May numbers. The number of unsentenced males has increased by 50 and sentenced is up 100 males. 1. TS has increased by 20 and Parole has decreased by 50.</p> <p>With a slow parole, DOC has been countering this affect with TS increases. They have been getting more offenders serving sentences of two years or less into treatment programs. Also, DOC is working towards overriding higher level security sentencing so that low risk inmates can get increased treatment and be reassigned to lower level facilities when they reach 50% of the sentenced served, they are already prepared by completing treatment programs instead of starting or working at the point of parole review.</p>		

	<p>DOC is also investigating assessment and risk tool (LSI-R) that has been used in Pennsylvania. In PA, once an offender is identified as low risk population, they can be approved for TS presumptive released after completing treatment program for anger management, domestic violence, etc to increase turn around. This has been approved for TS.</p>		
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	<p>CCSU: Refer to the notes on the presentation by Steve Cox on the Recidivism study.</p>		
	<p>DMHAS: Al began by thanking workgroup members for sending their data sets for the upcoming Probabilistic Population Estimation (PPE) analysis for State Fiscal Years 2006 and 2007. PPE is used to estimate the overlap of shared populations between various state agencies including criminal justice and health and human services with those</p>		

	<p>persons treated for a substance use disorder, as reported to DMHAS. The PPE analyses should be available for review by state agencies and the Judicial Branch's CSSD by end of summer. An added analysis this year will look at rates of treatment among DOC released inmates by those with a history and/or current violent offense vs. those without.</p> <p>DMHAS' Research Division is exploring the possibility of applying for a National Institute on Mental Health grant regarding evaluation of mental health policies and practices, linking administrative data across DMHAS and other state agencies. Several areas of interest have been discussed including jail diversion.</p> <p>Lastly, DMHAS continues to explore, both through the Alcohol and Drug Policy Council and the CJ-PAC Behavioral Health Subcommittee ways to better share client level clinical information. A search of other states and counties practices demonstrates the limit success most have had in this matter. Kansas has enacted state statutes regarding protected information for persons receiving mental health and/or addictions treatment with exceptions for cross state agency data sharing for care coordination. Oklahoma is in the process of crafting a Qualified Service/Business Association Agreement between their lead state agency for behavioral health and their correctional department. These and other methods are under review.</p>		
<p>OPM Monthly Correctional Population Indicators Report:</p>	<p>Kelly distributed the drafted monthly; Jerry made the only changes to the report. Jerry's concerns regarded the facility population projections. He claims the prison population will exceed the 18,762 noted in the report for December 2008. He attributes this to delays in parole.</p> <p>Parole dropped in May and may surge in the summer months, but there is an expected decline due to staffing limitations associated with the backlog and removal of administrative reviews.</p> <p>For more details refer to the BOPP Update.</p>		

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<p>Recidivism Study:</p>	<p>Steve then presented an explanation of what/how SAC conducted the study. He noted that there were a few edits left to be made, and then he would remove confidential data and post the syntax file for review. There was some concern as to whether the IRB would allow inmate numbers to be associated with the data, but the group determined that another numbering process would suffice in the event that DOC numbers were not allowed.</p> <p>The process Steve defined basically begins with a data request from DOC on movements and sentencing, and DC arrest history (as shown in 4 files with either 1 inmate or 1 movement per line). Exit data can be determined from the movement code data. CSSD matches the information in an SPSS file with the arrest histories. SAC compiles the 5 files into 1 through SPSS and simplifies the file to contain only the needed information. Steve wants to work on time served, incorporating unsentenced time, as in pre-trial data, which is difficult.</p> <p>With the formatting restrictions eased, Steve wants to reformat the report. He asked for input on formatting and additional data to be included. He intends to have data track for a full 36 months for every released individual.</p> <p>Linda invited Jody and Mary to participate in weekly meetings between SAC and OPM, starting June 20. They can help determine what data is available and share file layouts. This is particularly important as some files contain historic data while others, the Master file, are more recent.</p> <p>Jerry showed interest in knowing the percent of sentence served when an inmate is released on parole. There was concern whether this information would cover the data parole was decided or enacted. It was determined that release data would be more easily obtained.</p>		

	<p>Rich also wondered whether the number of sentences was the number of actual sentences or the number of separate sentences and incarcerations. If a person is sentenced for multiple crimes committed within the same day, he received multiple sentences but only one block of jail time, as he is not released into the community between sentences. The information is currently a presentation of the number of incarcerations. Also, Steve will look at incorporating second and third releases: jail to halfway house to parole for example.</p> <p>Al wanted to make sure we focus on using the report to accomplish change and to reduce recidivism rather than just collecting data.</p>		
<p>Forecasting:</p>	<p>Fred Levesque mentioned that, in addition to OPM emailing and calling SAC Directors, he would get in touch with the Commissioner to see if the information on simulation models could be obtained through correctional system networking via ASCA. We are unsure who the target audience would be in the individual state, but this could be helpful to determine how the models are used by the state.</p>		
<p>Meeting Schedule:</p>	<p>July 9, 2008 – CVH, Page Hall, Rm. 217, Middletown</p> <p>August 13, 2008 – CVH, Page Hall, Rm. 217 Middletown</p> <p>September 10, 2008 – CVH, Page Hall, Rm. 217 Middletown</p> <p>October 8, 2008 – CSSD, 4th Floor Conference Room, Wethersfield</p> <p>November 12, 2008 – CSSD, 4th Floor Conference Room, Wethersfield</p> <p>December 10, 2008 – CSSD, 4th Floor Conference Room, Wethersfield</p>		