

SAC Meeting

Meeting Summary

May 23, 2008

9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

Present: Linda DeConti, Research Unit Manger; Steve Cox, CT SAC Director; Lyndsay Ruffolo, Program Administrator; Institute for the Study of Crime and Justice; John Forbes Assistant Director of CJPDD; Kelly Sinko, Research Analyst Intern; Cody Hyman, Research Analyst Intern; and Kyle Chaffee, Research Analyst Intern.

Purpose: Review information for 2004 Recidivism Study and presentation to be made at the next Forecast Research Workgroup (FRW) on June 11th at 10:00AM. Discussed the involvement of the FRW and their need for input on the recidivism studies, population forecasting simulation models and length of stay/time served data.

It was agreed to hold regularly scheduled SAC meetings on Fridays from 9-12 a.m. starting June 6th, with the exception of the weeks when there is a Thursday CJPAC meeting (6/12), then Friday SAC meeting will not be held.

Recidivism Master Files and SPSS Syntax File

- Dr. Cox demonstrated the revised SPSS syntax file for creating the data variables for the recidivism study master file.
 - Developed from 4 DOC Files
 1. Demographic file
 - One line per inmate
 - Includes: Name, SSN, DOB, name of town resided in before arrest
 2. Classification file
 - One line per inmate
 - Includes: Risk scores and assessments to determine what type of facility the inmate needs
 3. Movements
 - One line per movement
 - Unique movement codes that describe the movement and whether sentenced or unsentenced
 - Input where the person is incarcerated
 4. Dockets
 - One line per prison sentence
 - Does not represent time IN PRISON, but the amount of prison sentence
 - Master syntax file converts all data so that there is one line per inmate, represents data from all four files

Dr Cox places a copy of current version of syntax files in Research directory at N:\JUSTICE\Research\P_Recidivism\RecidivismMasterFiles

Recidivism Study: Outstanding Modifications, Documentation and Data Needs

- SPSS syntax files: Once the model is thoroughly tested Dr. Cox will combine the multiple syntax files into one Master file; but has kept these separate during its development for testing and diagnostic purposes.

- Dr. Cox will request two additional fields of data for final DOC Recidivism data request: 1) Maximum Release Date (End Date) and 2) identifier for Split Sentence Offenders
- Dr. Cox will ask CSSD for methodology and documentation for matching inmates with their Criminal History records.
- SPSS syntax analysis file: in addition to the data syntax file, Dr. Cox wants to create an analysis file that would automate the analyses, but also discussed the importance of cross-checking and manual hand calculations to perform the analyses.

Recidivism Study: Timeframe 36 Months and Template Development

- Developing the standard recidivism template (this summer start with 1997): Dr. Cox suggested creating a historical report based on the 1997 data to be able to show the 36 month longer trends AND to compare with the 1997 data used in PRI 2001 Recidivism Study.
- Dr. Cox explained that although it is customary in **recidivism reports to follow-up for 36 months (3 years), in Connecticut**, it is important to wait four (4) years because the Connecticut dockets *are slow* and it often takes 6 to 8 months to dispose of a court case. Other states *use waivers* that would cut this delay time in half. John questioned why this occurred and Dr. Cox referred to Kevin Kane in order to get details on the matter.
- For the upcoming 2009 Annual Recidivism Study: Based on what the FBI does, Linda suggested producing 1) a preliminary report for the upcoming 2005 year data that would cover the 24 month period and 2) a FINAL report for the 2004 calendar year data that would cover the nationally accepted standard of 36 months.

Recidivism Study: Calculation of Length of Stay and Time Served

- We need to know the actual **Time Sentenced to** and how much **Time Served**.
- Dr. Cox will investigate if DOC has a field for Jail Credit or Good time served.
- Dr. Cox will investigate why total time served for one inmate is over 67K; this calculation needs to be adjusted since it may include multiple dockets that run concurrent.
- John emphasized the importance of determining the feasibility of obtaining data that is based on an inmate's actual length of stay in a prison facility compared to merely a length of sentence data. This information is critical to forecasting, and this summer should be spent determining whether we can actually retrieve that sort of data or whether we need to develop a system that can make an educated estimate.
- Docket file: 3 fields represent sentence length in years, months, and days, but sometimes the months did not translate to years, explore why
 - Ex) 3 years, 18 months, 45 days

Recidivism Study: Other Issues

- Linda suggested exploring whether there are any historical anomalies in data pertaining to movement codes
- Linda asked about youthful offender data, Lyndsay will get more information

Prison Population Forecast Methodology:

This summer, develop a concept of what data we do and do not have, whether we can feasibly retrieve that data or must use estimates, and make a decision on whether to build our own model, or collaborate on an existing model.

- Explore the simulation models that are currently being used in other states, and find out if they are also having this precision and validity problem. John suggested devoting a meeting to review this information.
- The next presentation in front of the legislature he wants to show them an actual projection model instead of trend lines based on time series. We have the funds available to purchase a simulation model, but not necessarily the training to use it.
- Dr. Cox explained that a simulation model typically only needs one year of data in order to run.
- John requested a working copy and manual of the PROPHET simulation/forecast model that he has on disk that will not read on any computer. Dr. Cox will contact West Virginia and see if they have something they can share with us. Linda brought up that a key indicator in the Colorado model is largely dependent on their growth in population. Connecticut's population has been proven not to any correlation with our prison population.
- Linda expressed the need to retool the monthly indicator report in order to show a better forecasting model. At some point we need to setup a meeting with DOC to retool the Monthly indicators report to balance the inputs/outputs for this report. This could be the foundation for the monthly figures used to improve both the monthly forecast and the annual forecast.

SAC Grant and MOU Administration

- **CCSU must send us the Cash Request for the MOU by June 5th** in order to secure these State funds before they lapse.
- The Cash Request for the 2007 SAC Grant is completed and has been processed by Ann Kerr at OPM, it is currently waiting for John Forbes signature. Ann Kerr will coordinate with Cody Hyman on the closeout of this grant.
- The 2008 SAC Grant application is complete and we are waiting to hear back about the USDOJ award from Vicky at BJS. Cody Hyman will follow-up with CCSU once the funds are in place.

Next SAC Meeting will be held on June 6th at 10:00 a.m.

- This next meeting is intended to be a planning meeting.
- After Linda returns from vacation, she and John will develop draft timelines and dates for deliverables to meet our summer goals, including the deliverables of the MOU and share these with the team before our meeting.
- Cody and Kelly may begin to DRAFT this with John Forbes before Linda returns.