SELECTIVE EARLY RELEASE:

RESEARCH-BASED CRITERIA

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March 1985

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Introduction:

The Texas Department of Corrections is rapidly
approaching an overcrowding crisis quite similar to the
problem encountered in the Spring of 1983. Then, as now,
the inmate population was approaching 38,000. In 1983, the
primary methodology utilized to stabilize and reduce the
prison population was Early Mandatory Release.
Approximately 90% of all Mandatory releases in May and June
of 1983 were Early Mandatory releases.

It is apparent that some form of early release is going
to be inevitable to meet the current overcrowding crisis.
Research examining the 1983 early releases is now available
to aid in the selection process. This report will detail
specific populations that appeared to respond positively to
early release, as well as groups that should not be
considered favorably for early release.

While early release will never be popular, selection
criteria based on research experience insures a sound,
objective methodology for dealing with early release in a
responsible manner.

Methodology:

A sample of 2072 cases released from the Texas
Department of Corrections between January - June 1983 were
followed for one year to determine release outcome.
Approximately 55% of the sample were Parolees, 16% were

Mandatory cases, and 29% were Early Mandatory cases. This distribution accurately reflects the release population during this period.

It should be noted that special selection criteria were in effect for the Early Mandatory releases in 1983 that certainly influenced release outcome. Early Mandatory releases were released primarily to halfway houses under intensive supervision. Additionally, a majority of these cases had non-assaultive histories.

General Outcome:

Table 1 indicates that, although Early Mandatory cases had a high percent of cases in the "trouble" category (report of violation, arrest, pre-rev warrant not resulting in a return to T.D.C.), the percent returned to T.D.C. during the one year follow-up period was very similar to regular mandatory cases. This is similar to research regarding the 1981 Conditional Parole Program, where close supervision resulted in a high number of rule violations, but mitigated the new offense rate and return to T.D.C. rate.

This is also reflected in Figure 1, where Early Mandatory cases had a lower percent returned to T.D.C. for committing assaultive offenses than mandatory cases.
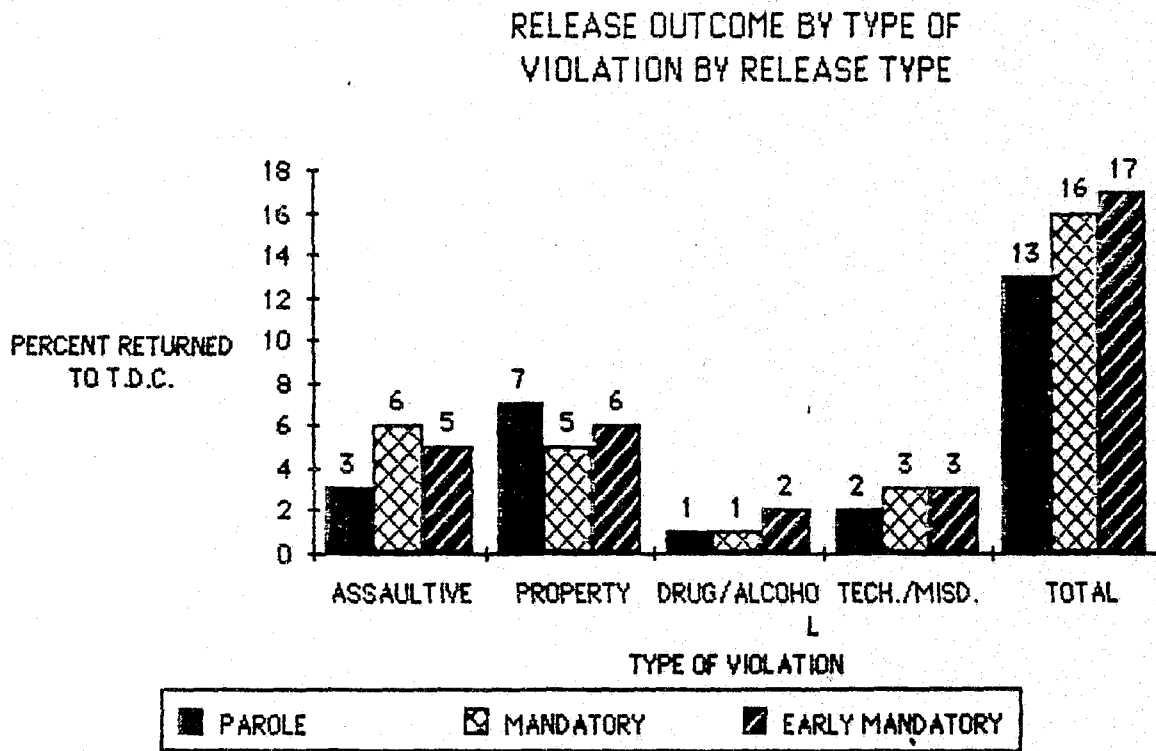
Selective Early Release Factors: Positive

Table 2 below documents specific populations that appealed to be positively impacted by Early Mandatory release. For each case type, the percent of Early Mandatory cases returned to T.D.C. is either comparable to or lower

TABLE 1:

RELEASE OUTCOME STUDY: RELEASE TYPE

Outcome	Parole	Mandatory	Early Mand.
Success	52% (589/1140)	48% (153/321)	42% (256/608)
Trouble	29% (334/1140)	25% (80/321)	31% (187/608)
Ret. to TDC	13% (145/1140)	16% (52/321)	17% (101/608)
Absconder	6% (72/1140)	11% (36/321)	11% (64/608)

Figure 1:

RELEASE OUTCOME BY TYPE OF
VIOLATION BY RELEASE TYPE

PERCENT RETURNED TO T.D.C.

TYPE OF VIOLATION

PAROLE   MANDATORY   EARLY MANDATORY

than the regular Mandatory release group.

Table 2:   Selective Early Release Factors: Positive

	Percent Returned to T.D.C.		
Case Type	Parole	Mandatory	Early Mand.
Salient Factor Score:			
Good (15-11)	7% (25/378)	8% (9/109)	8% (12/139)
Fair (10- 6)	15% (89/597)	23% (26/114)	16% (44/281)
Age at Release:			
18-21	23% (39/169)	31% (11/36)	15% (12/ 79)
26-30	13% (33/264)	17% (13/75)	13% (20/151)
41 +	5% (7/128)	16% (5/32)	8% (6/ 80)
Drug/Alcohol Abuse History:			
Drug Abuse	16% (39/250)	28% (17/60)	19% (26/139)
Alcohol Abuse	12% (20/170)	15% (11/71)	11% (14/122)
Education:			
12 or more	11% (54/506)	14% (14/98)	13% (29/219)

Selective Early Release: Negative

Table 3 below documents specific populations that appear to respond negatively to Early Mandatory release. For each case type the percent of Early Mandatory cases returned to T.D.C. is higher than the comparable Mandatory release group.

Table 3: Selective Early Release Factors: Negative

Percent Returned to T.D.C.

Case Type	Parole	Mandatory	Early Mand.
Salient Factor Score:			
Poor (5-0)	22% (28/126)	30% (10/ 33)	33% (29/ 89)
Age at Release:			
22-25	14% (40/285)	13% (12/ 94)	23% (44/158)
Drug/Alcohol Abuse History:			
None	10% (63/603)	10% (16/157)	15% (42/287)
Education:			
0-11	14% (91/634)	17% (38/223)	19% (72/389)

Summary:

   History appears about ready to repeat itself in the
Texas Prison overcrowding crisis. Some form of early
release appears imminent. However, past experience can
aid in selecting those cases that present the least risk to
society. The research data suggest a number of criteria
that would appear to be associated with positive and
negative release experience, and could be utilized in
conjunction with other criteria to effectuate early release.
While this information is certainly not the only factors to
be considered in a release decision, it does provide a
logical and objective aid in the release decision.

APPENDIX:

Each of the factors and release outcome discussed in
this report is detailed in this appendix.

Appendix A:

SELECTIVE EARLY RELEASE: POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE FACTORS

Positive Factors: In each of these categories Early
Mandatory cases had a lower percent return to T.D.C. than
Mandatory cases.

Salient Factor Score:

   Good or Fair

Age at Release:

   18 - 21

   26 - 30

   41 +

Drug/Alcohol Abuse History:

   Drug or Alcohol Abuse

Education:

   12 or more

Negative Factors: In each of these categories Early
Mandatory cases had a higher percent return to T.D.C. than
Mandatory cases.

Salient Factor Score:

   Poor

Age at Release:

   22 - 25
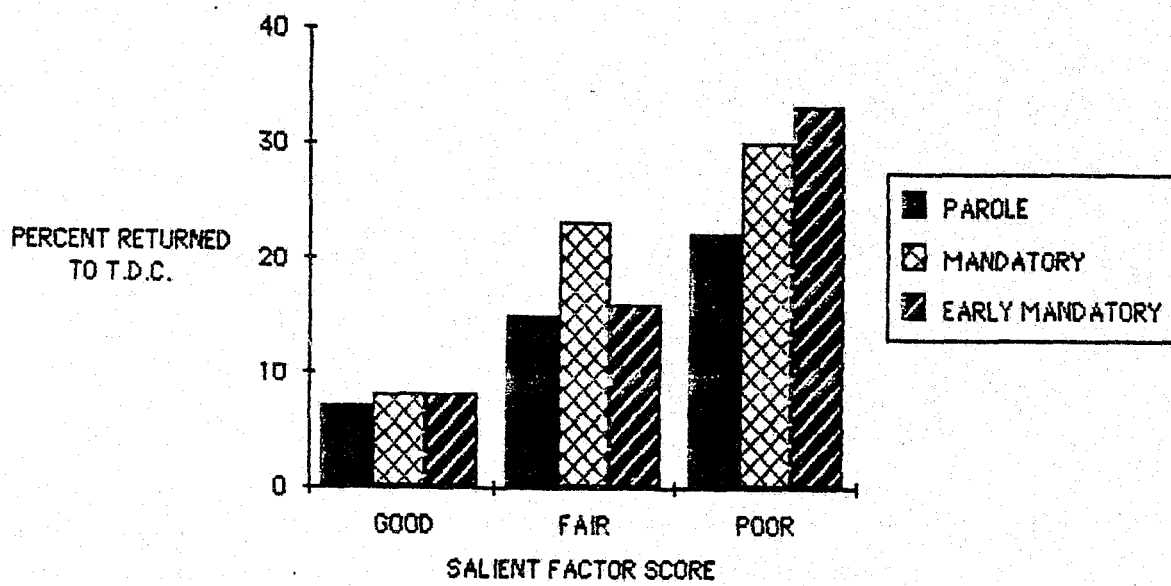
Drug/Alcohol Abuse History:

   None

Education:

   0 - 11

Appendix B:

SALIENT FACTOR SCORE AND
RELEASE OUTCOME

Appendix C:

AGE AT RELEASE AND RELEASE OUTCOME

PERCENT RETURNED TO T.D.C.

AGE AT RELEASE

PAROLE   MANDATORY   EARLY MANDATORY