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*Research Report*

Guidelines for  
Developing,  
Implementing, and  
Revising an Objective  
Prison Classification  
System

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# Guidelines for Developing, Implementing, and Revising an Objective Prison Classification System

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## FOREWORD

As crowding in state and federal prisons has grown more severe and widespread, correctional agencies have increasingly turned their attention to classification as a means of ameliorating this problem. Classification is currently viewed as a cornerstone not only in managing inmates but also in planning facility construction or renovation.

During the 1980s, numerous correctional agencies have implemented objective approaches to classification; that is, systems which employ standardized, written decision-making criteria. Most of these systems, however, have not been evaluated to determine their usefulness in managing prisoners and agency resources.

Because sound classification is deemed essential to effective correctional management and planning, a national evaluation of objective classification systems, funded by the National Institute of Justice, was conducted by Correctional Services Group, Inc. The study's overriding concern was to determine "what objective approaches work, as well as which aspects of these approaches work best," in order to provide practical guidelines for agencies considering introduction of objective prison classification systems or revision of existing ones.

This guidebook is based on the results of this national evaluation. The guidelines that follow are intended for use by correctional administrators and classification staff. Consequently, the terminology used here is assumed to be familiar to the reader and is not defined.

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# Guidelines for Developing, Implementing, and Revising an Objective Prison Classification System

## INTRODUCTION

One of the most critical problems facing correctional agencies today is prison crowding. Overpopulation, however, is not a problem that exists in isolation. Its consequences spill over into all areas of correctional operations, arousing concern about such issues as the security of institutions, health and safety of staff and inmates, and compliance with court-mandated standards for care and control.

In response to the growing concerns of correctional administrators, as well as those of governmental officials, the National Institute of Justice has designated efforts to deal with prison crowding as its top priority. Improved classification of inmates is viewed as an essential component of this response. With proper classification, for example, only those inmates requiring high levels of security are placed in costly, tight custody facilities, while those evidencing less threat can be assigned to lower security institutions. Appropriate classification also can assist in determining which inmates can be considered for early release or for retention in the community with appropriate supervision. Most important, effective classification helps assure the safety of the public, agency staff, and prisoner population.

In recent years, numerous correctional agencies have turned to objective classification systems as a means of enhancing inmate classification. Objective classification is a decision-making approach characterized by such features as:

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- Use of instruments validated for prisoner populations;
  - Distinction between security (architectural constraints) and custody (staff supervision);
  - Assignment of inmates to security levels consistent with their behavior; and
  - Promotion of similar decisions among classification analysts on comparable offender cases.

Because relatively little is known about the effectiveness of these new systems, the National Institute of Justice funded a national evaluation of objective prison classification. This study consisted of two separate components: (1) a comprehensive survey of existing objective classification systems, and (2) an assessment of objective classification effectiveness.

Prior to conducting the comprehensive survey, it was necessary to identify those agencies employing objective classification approaches. In response to a preliminary questionnaire distributed to all state and federal correctional agencies, 40 jurisdictions reported use of objective classification systems. Project staff examined descriptions of these systems and, when necessary, made follow-up contacts to establish the existence of objective-based approaches. Those agencies determined to use some form of objective classification (39) were then sent a more detailed survey designed to obtain specific data concerning system development, implementation, and evaluation. Thirty-three agencies responded to all or part of this survey, depending on the completion status of their systems. Their responses were then supplemented by interviews conducted during site visits to eight agencies that have implemented objective systems.<1>

The second component of the study was an in-depth assessment of the effectiveness of the objective classification systems used in California, Illinois, and Wisconsin.

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<1> The on-site interviews were also used to prepare case studies of these eight objective classification systems. Case studies for three agencies are included in Appendix A: the Federal Prison System, which developed the first objective approach to classification; Kentucky, which adapted the National Institute of Corrections Custody Determination Model; and Missouri, which used a consensus-based approach to system development.

Statistical analyses were employed to examine the scoring processes of these systems; the validity of the individual items and scales used to score inmates; and the impact of these systems on inmate misconduct, escape, and fatalities.

The results of the comprehensive survey and the effectiveness assessment, along with experiences of project staff, were used to formulate the guidelines presented in this document. These guidelines are intended to assist agencies contemplating the initiation of objective prison classification systems or the revision of existing ones. They highlight some of the emerging trends in objective classification, aids to effective development and implementation--as well as common pitfalls to avoid, and issues to consider in designing or modifying an objective classification system. While individual agencies will need to particularize the guidelines to meet their unique needs, it is hoped that this guidebook will provide a practical framework for their development, implementation, and revision activities.

#### OVERVIEW OF CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM CHANGE

It is apparent from the comprehensive survey that an agency's approach to developing and implementing an objective prison classification system is as important or even more important than the type of objective system devised. Changing a state correctional agency's classification process is a formidable task, not only insofar as the new system is concerned, but because of classification's ripple effect in all areas of prison operations.

There appear to be four distinct stages in the change process:

- Development: Motivation for a new classification approach is generated, the objective system is created, and new forms and procedures are devised;
- Pilot testing: The new process is tried out, first "on paper" and later in one or more pilot institutions. Information obtained from this testing is then used to "de-bug" original procedures and modify forms.
- Implementation: The system-wide use of the new process is initiated, following explicit planning regarding how the "on-board" prisoner population will be brought into the new approach. Based on data gained through monitoring, "fine tuning" of the



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classification system occurs in an orderly fashion on a scheduled basis.

- Acceptance: The final stage is reached when both staff and inmates use the new classification system's language and the agency modifies the configuration of its institutions, staffing, and programs in light of the data received from the classification process.

Some agencies, however, do not pass through each stage successfully. For example, a number of jurisdictions that have developed and implemented objective classification approaches have now initiated or are considering revision of those approaches.

In many respects, agencies contemplating modification of their objective classification systems are in the same position as agencies considering introduction of an objective classification approach. Both groups will either modify their present systems to some extent, scrap their systems in lieu of another objective approach, or, as in the case of one agency, return to the former subjective classification approach. However, agencies revising their objective classification systems possess the advantage of having undergone the development and implementation process. It is likely that they have learned a great deal about the various benefits and problems of introducing an objective classification system. Nevertheless, agencies considering substantial modification of their objective systems are likely to profit from many of the recommendations presented in this guidebook.

The survey of correctional agencies instituting objective classification systems found that they approached the change process in a variety of ways, some quite effective and others not nearly as satisfactory. However, there does appear to be a commonality among successful approaches. Important to completion of the entire change process are a minimum of 13 steps that should be considered in developing and implementing an objective classification system. (See Figure 1.) These steps are discussed in the sections that follow.

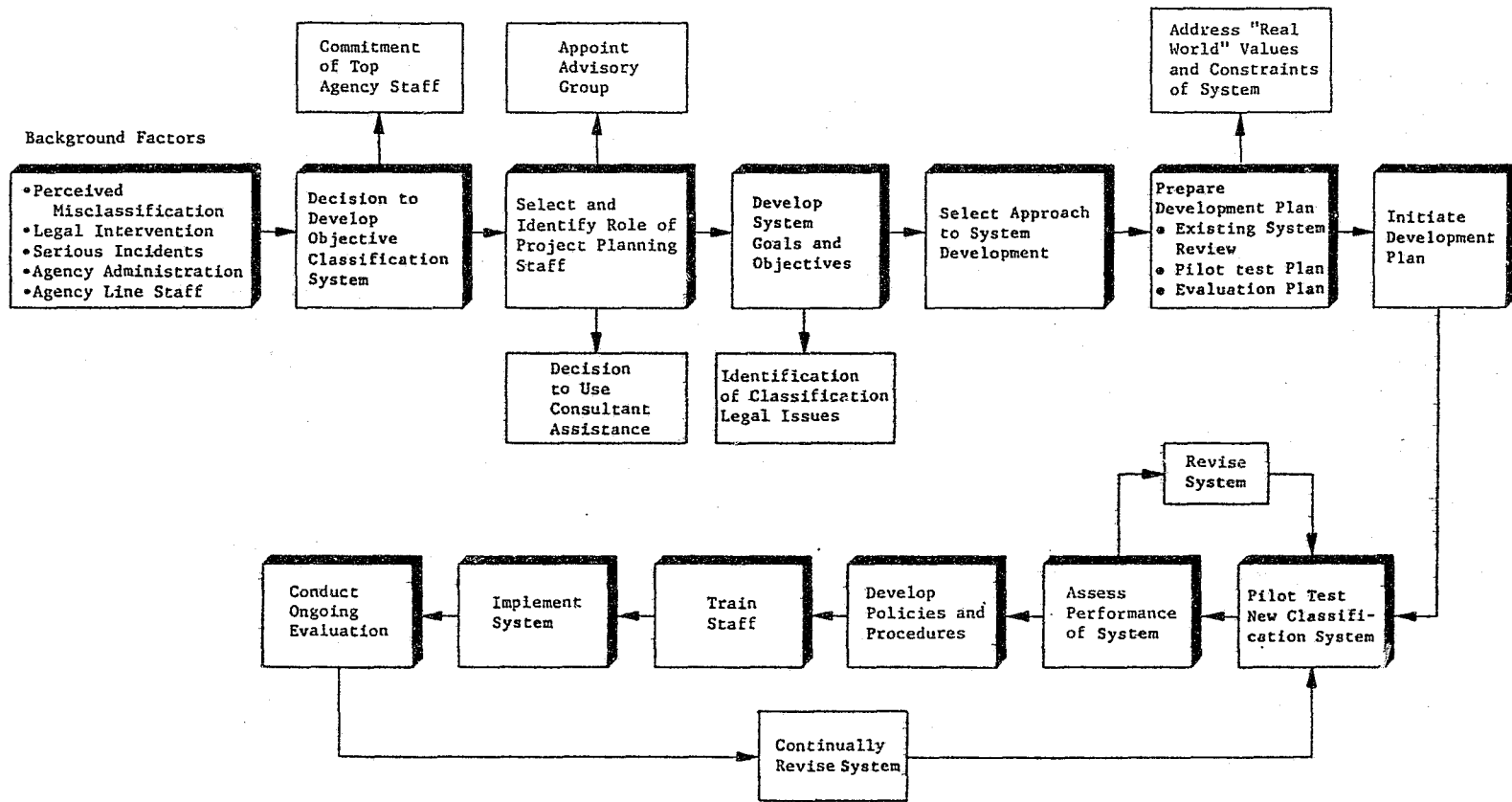


Figure 1

Suggested Process for Developing and Implementing An Objective Prison Classification System

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## Step 1: Decision to Develop an Objective Classification System

Some correctional agencies have no choice about whether to develop an objective classification system because the courts have mandated such a change. More often, survey respondents indicated, other factors (e.g., impetus from new administrators or perceived misclassification by staff) will lead an agency to think about altering its classification process. In such cases, the first activity is to determine whether it is prudent for the agency to embark upon development of a new system. In doing so, several questions must be answered:

- What short- and long-term purposes are to be served by the classification effort?
- How much will it cost to develop a new system and to operate it once implemented?
- To what extent will the new system reduce costs associated with over-building, transfers, escapes, etc.?
- Do top management staff and others responsible for overseeing the system's development understand the magnitude of the effort they are undertaking?
- Are there qualified and experienced staff available to design and implement an objective classification system?
- Does the agency have a real need for a new classification system, and is this need recognized by most staff and key officials outside the agency?
- Is there a clear understanding of the risk involved in not developing an objective system?
- How long is anticipated to develop and implement a new classification system?
- Can an organizational climate be created to support successful completion of the classification project?
- Is there an adequate experience base to sustain the development and updating of the objective system?

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## Step 2: Commitment of Top Agency Personnel

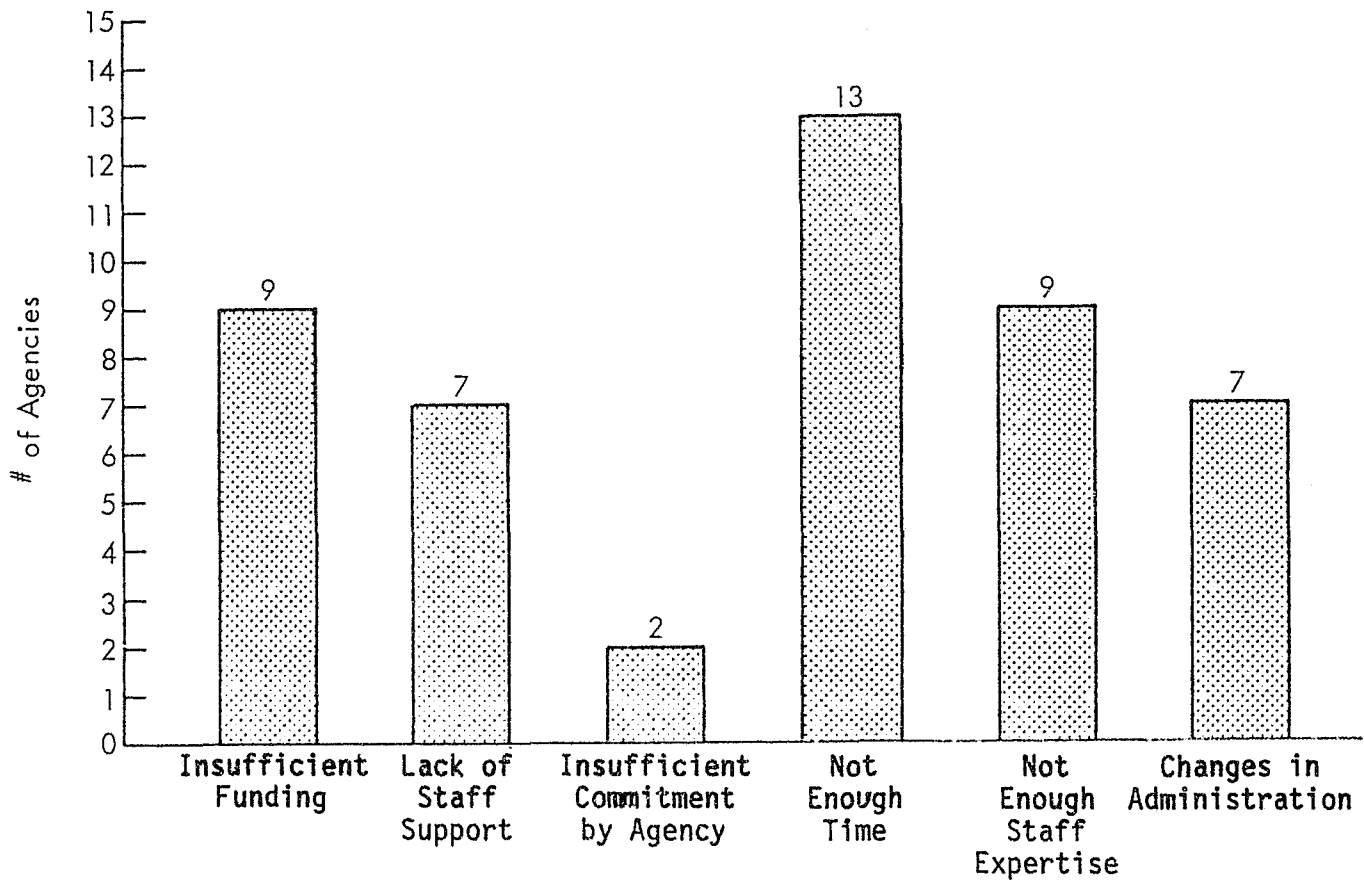
The agency director and other top level staff must be aware of the magnitude of the project in terms of staff time, funding, and time frame for development and implementation, or revision. More important, according to survey respondents, they must be committed to seeing the project through to completion. This is particularly true when it comes under attack, which it will, by those who continue to support the previous system. Missouri, New York, and Illinois, in particular, found that backing from top-level administrators helped to alleviate staff resistance to the new system.

In committing to such a weighty undertaking, administrative staff should determine the practical limitations that they will face. Responses to the comprehensive survey, for example, suggest that several major obstacles frequently crop up during the development process. (See Figure 2.)

Among the most serious limitations confronting the agency will be the budget and timetable for developing the classification system. They will have implications for the size and salary of planning staff, the caliber of resource persons to be utilized, the amount of effort involved in system preparation, and the number of subtopics to be dealt with in the developmental process.

Another constraint in most agencies is planners' practical knowledge and skill. Their expertise will determine the extent to which the agency will be able to actualize the system's goals and objectives, which should be set forth early in the developmental process. Planners need to be familiar with the problems and job realities of developing a classification system for an inmate population. They also need to know where to find resources for the developmental process, as well as be skillful in soliciting them. If planners have to develop this knowledge as they go along, many decisions will be made at the last minute in an uninformed manner. The result will likely be an ineffective classification system.

Several survey respondents also reported that their classification system planning personnel were constrained by the expectations of others. Top agency staff should determine what their expectations will be so as to minimize interference with planning staff. Planners must be aware



N = 33

Figure 2  
Major Problems Encountered During Development

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that they operate within an agency or institutional framework that has a general philosophical commitment and imposes certain restraints. These planners are accountable for funds from the agency, which believes that the planners' efforts should be congruent with its philosophy and purpose. Planners--with their own philosophical commitments--need to work out how they will address these various expectations.

### **Step 3: Selection of Project Planning Staff**

It is obvious that a number of systems developed by surveyed agencies were less than successful as a direct result of the selection of persons who were not sufficiently qualified or experienced to oversee such a complex and time-consuming undertaking. In fact, nearly one-third of the respondents indicated that lack of expertise constituted a major problem during system development. Agency administrators must put aside personal friendships and political considerations and retain staff who are either currently knowledgeable of objective approaches and their developmental processes or who possess the skills to acquire such knowledge through training, document review, and/or examination of other objective classification approaches.

Some agencies may find that they either do not employ such personnel or, if they do, are unable to commit them full time to the project. In this event, consultants familiar with objective classification system development should be retained, but only after determining that the consultants' knowledge, communication skills, and availability are such that their retention will assist rather than impede system development. It is also important that the agency maintain control over all project activities. The majority of agencies reporting the use of consultants in developing their systems believed such assistance to be of value. However, several agencies stated that the consultants were a detriment either because they did not possess the requisite skills, could not work cooperatively with agency staff, or were committed to so many other endeavors that sufficient time was not available for the classification project.

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#### Step 4: Identification of Role of Classification System Planners

Agency officials must decide what the role of project staff will be in developing the classification system. Their roles will be heavily dependent upon whether the system is statistically devised or developed through consensus.

The classification system, if based upon a consensus approach, may be designed exclusively to find and meet the needs and interests of agency personnel. In Missouri, for example, a variety of staff were involved in all stages of the process. The system's objectives, content, and implementation methods were tailored to their needs. The planners' role was to elicit staff opinions on what factors and weightings of factors were important. The planners then designed a system to meet these expectations, periodically asking agency personnel for additional feedback. Such staff involvement was also credited with increasing acceptance of the new system. In Florida, a task force, comprised of staff representing various disciplines within the agency, used a consensus approach to identify classification criteria.

Alternately, planners may decide that they have either a special expertise in classification system development or a statistically based approach that does not warrant other staff input. They would then structure the system without the involvement of other agency staff. Project planners in Illinois employed this approach to identify classification criteria that were significantly associated with dangerous behavior. Further, the Illinois planners believe that the use of such research in designing the new system enhanced its credibility among agency staff.

#### Step 5: Development of Classification System Goals and Objectives

The agency should develop a statement of purpose summarizing in one or two sentences the overall aim of the classification system and the general impact it is expected to have on the correctional system. Goals specify the major areas that the classification system will address, such as protection of the public, principle of least restrictive confinement consistent with prisoners' risk, etc. Objectives explicitly describe the results to be achieved, such as a 40% reduction in escapes during the

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next fiscal year, 25% reduction in the number of inter-institutional transfers, etc. The questions below are useful in selecting goals and objectives for the system:

- What is most relevant to the agency?
- What is most applicable to the overall goals of the agency?
- What will be most difficult to achieve?
- What will be most useful in classifying offenders?
- What is feasible?

Following selection, classification system goals and objectives must be formulated into written statements. Each major area included in the goals statement should be translated into specific objectives or outcome statements. To illustrate, an objective related to the goal of reducing major institutional disciplinary violations could be: "By January 1, 1988, 45% of all inmates with three or more such violations will be reviewed quarterly by the classification committee."

In preparing classification system objectives, attention should be afforded to the aims of the system (end-result objectives) and the process for accomplishing these objectives (process objectives). End-result objectives specify the impact of the system on inmate behaviors, while process objectives describe the implementation activities of agency staff.

Well-developed end-result objectives for a classification system should meet the following criteria:

- Specify the outcomes of the system;
- Specify the tasks and responsibilities staff are expected to undertake;
- Provide consistency and integration among the diverse elements of the system; and
- Establish a basis for evaluation.

#### **Step 6: Appointment of Advisory Group**

Results of the comprehensive survey suggest that most successful classification systems are the product of input



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from not only project staff but also an advisory group. For instance, California developers used advisory committees to develop goals for the new system, review its additive scoring process, and help weight classification variables. In New York, an advisory committee, composed of top-level personnel from various departments, assisted in developing classification guidelines.

Since any classification system planner's expertise and skills are limited, it is beneficial to form a group of "knowledgeable others" who embody the crucial viewpoints of the agency. It should include staff representing administration, security, programs, services, industries, planning, and information systems, as well as officials from other criminal justice agencies affecting the classification system's development and eventual implementation. They will be able to provide information that greatly improves the performance of the system while enhancing its acceptance by other agency personnel. They can assess the planners' development approach and suggest practical ways to strengthen the system's ability to classify inmates effectively.

By arranging regular advisory group meetings and calling special meetings if necessary, system planners can clarify the rationale for their decisions and give other staff a feeling of being part of the process. Wise use of the group will increase support for the completed system.

### **Step 7: Identification of Legal Issues**

Litigation pertaining to inmates' rights has become increasingly common in recent years, and the classification process has not been exempt from this trend. The judicial system has not only been carefully scrutinizing classification policies and procedures, but also directly involved in shaping classification practices.

Not surprisingly, many survey respondents identified the courts as one of the primary impetuses for developing their objective prison classification systems. Half of the respondents reported legal challenges to their previous classification processes. Alabama, for example, stated that the constitutionality of its entire correctional system, including classification, had been successfully challenged. An inmate suit in Idaho claimed that the lack

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of objectivity in classification procedures was unconstitutional, and two class action suits in Tennessee charged civil rights violations in classification decision-making.

In light of such litigation, correctional agencies should include minimal procedural safeguards in their classification systems to ensure that due process and equal protection, as well as other legal requirements, are met. This will extend to inmates those rights that seem justified and should limit litigation pertaining to classification following implementation of objective systems.

### **Step 8: Selection of Approach to System Development**

Most survey respondents indicated that they had adapted a system used in another jurisdiction. These correctional agencies elected to "borrow" another agency's classification system for a number of reasons, including:

- The apparent success of the system in improving classification decision-making;
- The time, effort, and cost of evaluating the current classification process;
- A lack of expertise on the part of correctional administrators relative to understanding the intricacies of an effective classification system; and
- The belief that other agencies often possess knowledge and experience above and beyond that of the agency considering a new correctional approach.

As can be seen in Table 1, the four most replicated systems are the National Institute of Corrections Custody Determination Model (adapted by 11 survey respondents); the Federal Prison System Security Determination/Custody Classification System (9 respondents); the Correctional Classification Profile (5 respondents); and the Uniform System of Inmate Custody Classification, the decision-tree approach developed by the Florida Department of Corrections (2 respondents).<1>

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<1> A comparison of the scoring factors employed by these systems, for both initial classification and reclassification, is presented in Appendix B.

**Table 1**  
**Type of Objective Prison Classification System by Agency**

| Agency               | Model Adapted  |
|----------------------|--|
| Alabama              | Original Model   |
| Alaska               | Federal Prison System                                      |
| Arkansas             | Correctional Classification Profile<a>                     |
| California           | Federal Prison System                                      |
| Colorado             | National Institute of Corrections                          |
| District of Columbia | Federal Prison System/National Institute of Corrections<b> |
| Florida              | Original Model   |
| Georgia              | Correctional Classification Profile<c>                     |
| Hawaii               | Federal Prison System                                      |
| Idaho                | National Institute of Corrections                          |
| Illinois             | Original Model   |
| Indiana              | Federal Prison System                                      |
| Iowa                 | Florida  |
| Kansas               | Florida  |
| Kentucky             | National Institute of Corrections                          |
| Maine                | Original Model   |
| Michigan             | Federal Prison System                                      |
| Minnesota            | Original Model   |
| Mississippi          | Illinois   |
| Missouri             | Correctional Classification Profile                        |
| Montana              | Federal Prison System/National Institute of Corrections    |
| Nebraska             | Federal Prison System                                      |
| Nevada               | National Institute of Corrections                          |
| New Mexico           | Federal Prison System                                      |
| New York             | Federal Prison System<d>                                   |
| North Carolina       | Federal Prison System/National Institute of Corrections    |
| North Dakota         | National Institute of Corrections                          |
| Ohio                 | Federal Prison System                                      |
| Oklahoma             | National Institute of Corrections                          |
| Oregon               | Original Model   |
| Pennsylvania         | Correctional Classification Profile                        |
| South Carolina       | Federal Prison System/Quay Model for Internal Assignment   |
| Tennessee            | National Institute of Corrections<e>                       |
| Utah                 | Federal Prison System/National Institute of Corrections    |
| Vermont              | National Institute of Corrections                          |
| Virginia             | National Institute of Corrections                          |
| Washington           | National Institute of Corrections                          |
| West Virginia        | Correctional Classification Profile                        |
| Wisconsin            | National Institute of Corrections                          |

<a> Model was introduced in 1982 but has yet to be fully implemented.

<b> A modification of these two models is being considered for use.

<c> Model is used only for institutional assignment.

<d> Model has been modified substantially to meet agency's needs.

<e> Model was developed in 1984 but has not been implemented.

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In adapting another system, a number of important questions must be answered to promote its effective use by the correctional agency:

- How well does the system address the agency's overall goals and objectives?
- To what extent does the system correlate with the purpose of the agency's classification system?
- Is the offender information available to the agency consistent with the informational requirements of the system?
- Are the criteria now employed by the agency to assess security and program needs consistent with those used by the system?
- Does the system facilitate housing assignment, custody needs, and program assignment, as well as security assessment?
- Does the system promote the matching of inmate needs and agency resources?
- Does the system promote policies and procedures that are capable of standardization?
- Does the system address classification legal issues?
- Is the system so complex as to require the use of outside consultants?
- Does the system incorporate a monitoring plan to permit periodic evaluations of classification decision-making and outcomes?
- Can the system be automated and incorporated into the agency's management information system?
- Finally, is the system consistent with the philosophy of agency classification and security staff; that is, is it an approach they will find acceptable and eventually become committed to?

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## Step 9: Preparation of Development Plan

Once the agency has determined whether it will adapt another system or develop its own classification approach, it is time to prepare a development plan. Planning the developmental process is a complex task, one that proved more problematic than many survey respondents expected. Thirteen agencies, for example, found that they did not allot enough time to system development. The experiences of these agencies suggest that any time frame under 12 months is unrealistic and likely to diminish the system's effectiveness.

To enhance the developmental process, the agency should prepare a plan that incorporates, at a minimum, the following elements:

- Development of a project management and reporting system;
- Preparation of a project budget;
- Establishment of a project timetable; and
- Development of a project work plan incorporating the following tasks:
  - . Analysis of existing and proposed system goals and objectives;
  - . Assessment of agency classification policies and procedures;
  - . Review of offender information and information sources;
  - . Assessment of offender measurement and testing instruments;
  - . Evaluation of staff discretion;
  - . Review of classification procedures for special management inmates;
  - . Analysis of agency's capabilities to assign inmates to appropriate housing and programs;

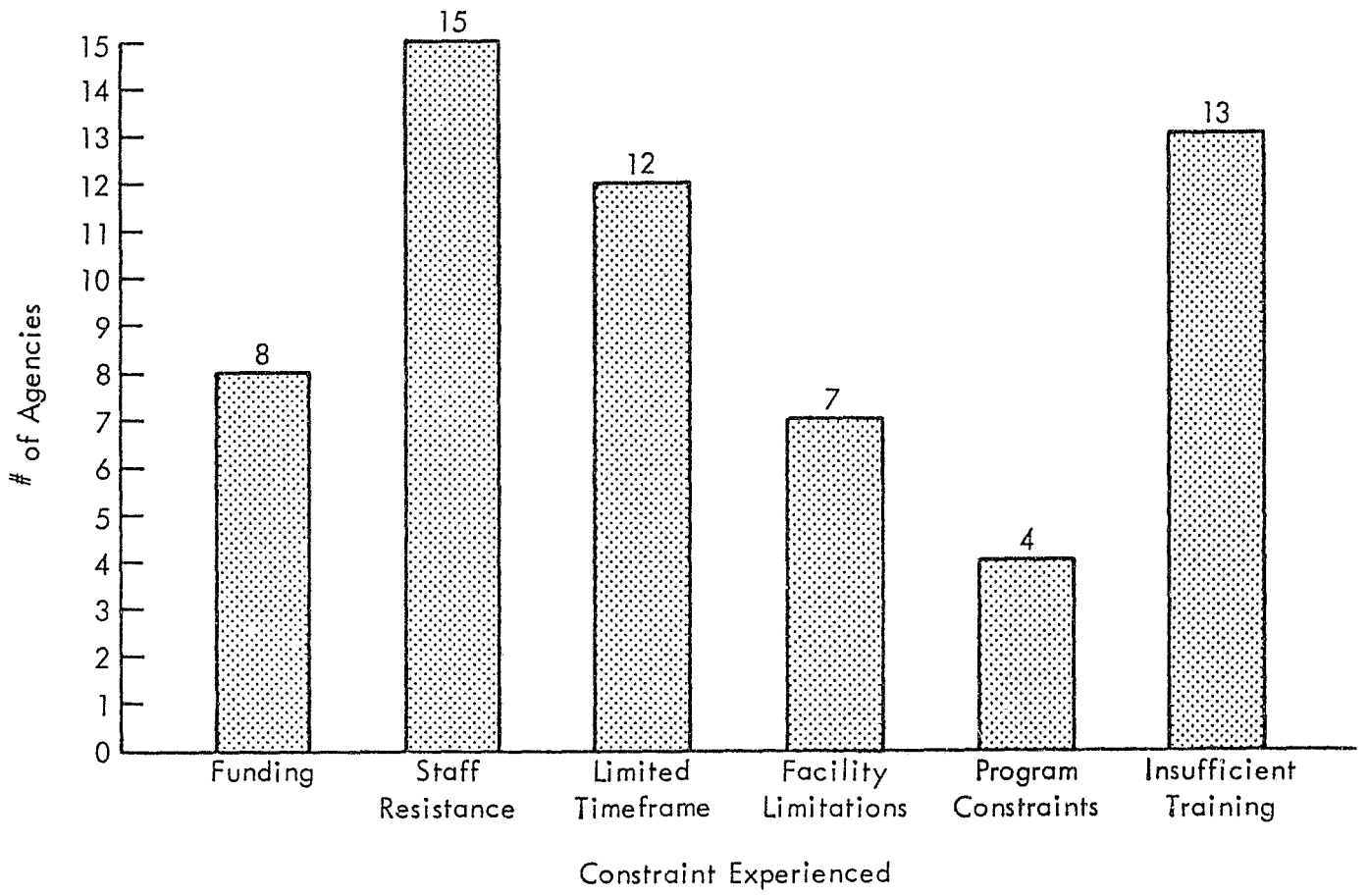
- . Review of present security and custody classification;
- . Review of procedures for updating classification system;
- . Evaluation of the relationship between the classification system and other components of the criminal justice system;
- . Development of uniform criteria for determining security and custody levels;
- . Preparation of draft security determination instruments;
- . Assessment of security and programmatic capabilities of agency institutions;
- . Preparation of pilot-test format; and
- . Development of evaluation and validation plan.

#### **Step 10: Preparation of Implementation Plan**

The successful introduction of an objective classification approach does not end with its development, for the new system must still be implemented. However, as evidenced in Figure 3, many survey respondents found that the implementation phase can be hampered by time and budgetary limitations, insufficient training, and staff resistance. It can also lead to redesign of the classification format and modification of classification criteria, further tightening budget and time constraints. For example, Oklahoma decided to include a "positive adjustment factor" in its reclassification instrument, Illinois altered its scoring instrument in order to eliminate an overconsideration of age.

To minimize such problems, the agency should prepare a comprehensive implementation plan that includes the following components:

- Pilot testing of classification instrument;
- Development of classification system policies and procedures; and
- Training of staff.



N = 31

Figure 3  
Constraints Experienced During Implementation

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Planning staff in Kentucky and Missouri also emphasize that agencies should avoid allowing too much time to elapse between system development and implementation since a long delay can dampen staff enthusiasm.

### **Step 11: Pilot Testing of New System**

It is important for an agency to pre-test its classification instrument. Pilot testing can help the agency avoid making piecemeal modifications to correct problems as they crop up following implementation of a new system. Consequently, it was surprising to find that only one-half of the survey respondents had tested their new systems before formal implementation. The experience of Kentucky serves to point up the usefulness of pilot testing. The agency tested its objective scoring instrument on the files of approximately one thousand inmates who had already been assigned to medium and maximum security. As a direct result of this testing, planning staff were able to make several important scoring adjustments prior to agency-wide use of the new system: the weight given disciplinary reports was increased, while the number of points allotted to education and employment was decreased. In assessing the various activities involved in system development and implementation, Kentucky planners view pilot testing as "a must."

Pilot testing will be either the last task in the development of the objective classification system or the first in the implementation phase. The testing process should include both a "paper" test of the process using available data and a formal pilot test of the system by institutional staff. The intent is to determine both how well the instrument performs using a sample of the present inmate population and what modifications may be necessary prior to implementation system-wide.

The pilot test of any objective classification instrument should be conducted with the established goals and objectives for the system in mind. For example, if an objective of the system is to distribute the inmate population proportionately among the various security and custody categories, the pilot test should measure the extent to which the new system addresses this objective. A correctional agency that is desirous of assigning approximately 20% of its inmate population to each of five designated



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security levels would not be satisfied with a classification approach that places 5% in maximum security, 35% in close security, 15% in medium security, 40% in minimum security, and 5% in community security. While this distribution may represent the actual security composition of the agency's inmate population, it does not adequately respond to the previously established objective. The agency has one of two decisions to make at this time: first, either alter or reweight the factors comprising the security scale, or, second, modify the original security assignment objective.

Other objectives for the classification system, such as matching inmate needs with agency resources, identifying program requirements, addressing the specific security and custody needs of special management inmates, and checking the reliability, validity, and timeliness of classification information, can also be evaluated through the pilot test.

Another method of pilot testing is to compare the new system via a simulation with an established classification system such as that developed by the Federal Prison System. In the simulation approach, a statistically representative sample of the agency's overall inmate population would be classified using both the new system and the validated system. The results of the two simulations would then be compared to examine the extent of misclassification. For example, should the Federal Prison System custody determination instrument assign 13% of the sample to a high security status, in contrast to 27% for the new system, several questions need to be answered. First, does the Federal Prison System security approach consider the unique characteristics of the particular agency's inmate population? Second, are there any criteria, such as gang affiliation and protective custody requirements, that influence the agency's system but are not included in the security determination section of the Federal model? Finally, by using another classification system, is the agency "comparing apples with oranges"? Specifically, are the security categories employed by the Federal Prison System correlated with those used by the agency? For example, Security Level Four (SL-4) in the Federal Prison System is comparable to upper medium or close security categories utilized by most state correctional systems. However, the approximate comparability may be lacking in the pilot test so as to depict some misclassification when in fact little or none exists.

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## Step 12: Development of Policies and Procedures

Written policies and procedures are necessary for the effective introduction of a new classification system. Without such written direction, staff may deviate from the structure of the system--to the detriment of the general public, other staff, and the inmate population.

Policies are necessary for the agency to adequately convey its objectives to all personnel. At a minimum, they should include direction for successfully interpreting the purpose, goals, and objectives of the new classification system. Policy statements should explain why the system does what it does.

In addition, written procedures should provide specific steps for carrying out the new classification system. They must state who will be responsible, what must be done, where the activity should occur, and in what time frame the task should be completed.

Policies and procedures should be incorporated into a comprehensive manual that prescribes initial classification, reclassification, and central office classification practices for all institutional settings and populations. It should also delineate areas of classification responsibility. This manual should be updated regularly to include all revisions in policies and procedures.

The classification manual should be completed prior to training in system use so that staff can be given a thorough introduction to the new classification process. An inadequate manual in Missouri, according to some agency personnel, created problems in training and ultimately impeded implementation of the new system. Because the manual was not sufficiently detailed or complete, some confusion regarding the scoring process arose among participants. This confusion was one of the reasons the agency conducted a second training session. Oklahoma encountered a similar problem. Its new policies and procedures were not officially approved until after training had been conducted. By then, some modifications had been made, resulting in temporary misunderstandings among staff.

Serious consideration should also be given to using the classification manual to orient inmates to the new system.

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## Step 13: Training of Staff

Training agency personnel at all levels is critical if staff are to be able to adequately understand and use the new classification system. Most survey respondents reported training supervisory and line staff prior to formal implementation of their new systems. Typically, this training lasted between 8 and 16 hours. However, since nearly 40% of the respondents indicated that insufficient training hindered effective implementation of their new systems, an agency instituting an objective system should consider a longer period of training.

For existing personnel, a comprehensive training program of at least 16 to 24 hours is recommended. Training should cover such topics as instrument use, information management, resource allocation, and program development decisions. It should also include, at least in the initial training sessions, an overview of how the system was developed so that staff who were not involved will be acquainted with its background.

In addition to this introductory program, training should be provided on both a pre-service and in-service basis for all agency personnel. Once the system is in place and accepted by staff, the necessity to discuss the background for its need and development generally decreases. A minimum of eight hours should be devoted to system training on the pre-service level and four hours on an in-service basis.

Methods for presenting the material will vary according to the nature of the information to be learned and the role of staff in the learning process. Subject matter may be taught in one-way presentations (lectures, symposiums, films, panels, debates) or in participatory methods (discussion and problem-solving groups, brainstorming sessions, role playing). In the former method, staff will assume a relatively inactive role, listening, watching, and taking notes. The presentation should be pre-determined in detail and, thus, will not be affected much by the audience. In the latter method, staff will be dynamically involved. They will bring up examples from their own correctional experience. Problems and solutions will be found collectively. Numerous survey respondents, such as the Federal Prison System, Kentucky, and Minnesota, also found it useful to involve staff in hands-on application of

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the scoring instrument, using case files. This activity would be followed by discussions to enhance interrater reliability. The interest and concerns of staff relative to the classification system and its eventual implementation should direct the course of the participatory approach.

Another important component of the training program is the selection of the instructional staff. Instructors should be chosen on the basis of their expertise and teaching ability. Involvement in developing the classification system, while helpful, does not necessarily mean that participants can translate that knowledge to agency staff. Instructors may be drawn from a variety of sources within the agency, such as the targeted staff itself and administrative personnel, and from professional fields outside the agency. Selecting instructors from each of these areas has advantages and limitations. An instructor from staff will be familiar with the other participants; however, fulfilling the role of both co-learner and instructor is difficult unless all staff are given the opportunity and this is clarified beforehand. The planners of the classification system run the risk of being unable to break out of their role as system developers, who are seen by other agency staff as having a vested, and possibly overly zealous, interest in the successful implementation of the classification system. Outside instructors can play the role of experts more easily, but they may be out of touch with both the classification system and the job reality of agency staff. Clear lesson plans, personal contacts with agency staff, and last-minute briefings will help minimize these risks.

#### **FINAL CONSIDERATIONS**

The national evaluation of objective classification systems yielded several findings that need to be highlighted to expedite system development and implementation.

First, planning staff should emphasize, particularly for classification approaches developed through consensus, that the system takes a fairly common-sense view of prediction and therefore is easy for agency personnel to recognize as a restructuring of their own experience.

Second, the criteria incorporated into the new system should generally be comparable to those factors previously employed by classification staff in deriving security assignments.

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Third, the system should attempt to mesh the perspective and inferences of staff with data used in deriving security decisions.

Fourth, the quantitative character of the objective approach should manifest risk as an interaction of factors along a continuum. This will permit the agency to conduct statistical analyses of consistency, analyze trends, and simulate the results of proposed modifications.

Fifth, careful consideration should be given to the design, or redesign, of reclassification instruments that are independent of initial scoring criteria. The effectiveness assessment that was conducted as part of the national evaluation found initial classification items, particularly those related to current offense, to be relatively weak predictors of behavior. Only age was shown to have even a moderate predictive capacity. Reclassification, consequently, should rely heavily on measures of in-custody conduct that promote a "just desserts" orientation to decision-making.

Sixth, the system should exclude factors that are legally vulnerable.

Seventh, to ensure effective operation of the new approach, the groundwork for monitoring and evaluation efforts should be laid during system development. Means for obtaining the quantifiable information needed to assess classification decision-making should be built into the system design.

Finally, the new system should be presented as a tool or guide to effective classification and not as the final word. The ultimate decision should belong to the classification officer, who can enact overrides when essential, assuring the responsible participation of staff in the classification process.

In conclusion, the development and implementation of an objective prison classification system is a complex process that depends upon the commitment of agency staff and resources, the support of key people outside the agency, the allocation of sufficient time to accomplish the agency's goals and objectives, and, most important, a well-conceived plan to guide the system's development and implementation.

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The preceding guidelines, while not inclusive, were prepared to help correctional agencies anticipate problems that may arise during system development and implementation, or revision, and to suggest strategies for addressing these issues before they become problematic.

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## **Appendix A**

# **Objective Prison Classification Case Studies**

## OBJECTIVE PRISON CLASSIFICATION CASE STUDY: FEDERAL PRISON SYSTEM

### INTRODUCTION

Unlike the circumstances that exist for many other jurisdictions, the Federal Prison System (FPS) was not in a crisis situation, (e.g., overcrowding, court order) when it decided to modify its classification procedures. The impetus for change came from observations of inconsistency in the custody classification process. A task force was subsequently established to look into ways to gain greater consistency in custody decision-making. It soon became apparent, however, that it was not possible to look at custody decision-making without also taking into consideration institution security. Consequently, the mandate given the task force was changed to allow it to review the FPS's entire classification process. Slightly more than two years later, in April 1979, the Federal Prison System instituted an objective classification process. Evaluations of the system indicate that it is effective in assigning prisoners to the least restrictive security level consistent with their needs and has enhanced use of available resources. It has also shown itself to be an invaluable tool in designing and planning for new FPS prisons.

### OBJECTIVE PRISON CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM DESCRIPTION

#### Origin and Development

Prior to the development of the new objective system, the FPS had policy and procedure that described its ongoing classification process. There was a generally accepted understanding as to what type of inmate went to which institutions; transfers "up or down" were usually arranged between wardens; custody levels were decided by each facility's classification team in accord with system-wide policy guidelines. However, it was observed that comparable institutions, which presumably housed similar inmates, actually had widely discrepant proportions of prisoners in the FPS's various custody levels. It had also been noted that inmates transferred from a higher to a lower security institution might be placed in a more restrictive custody status until staff at the new facility "got to know the prisoners."

As a result of these observations, the Classification Project Task Force was created in the spring of 1977 to examine means for improving custody decision-making. The task force consisted of ten FPS staff from both the central office and field institutions, representing a wide variety of disciplines and extensive corrections experience. Its co-chairmen were Assistant Directors, both members of the executive staff; they provided direct feedback to the Director and other top officials.

At its initial meeting the Classification Project Task Force realized that its mandate to review Federal Prison System custody procedures was too limited. Moreover, confusion between what was "custody" and what was "security" surfaced since the system used the terms interchangeably and also employed the same labels (maximum, medium, minimum) to describe both institutions and inmate custody levels.

The crucial role of classification (and the fact that in a correctional system "everything is connected to everything") led to the task force's mission being expanded to include a review of the FPS's total classification process.

In order to gain clarity and facilitate communication, the task force defined security in terms of the physical characteristics of institutions; custody was defined as the level of supervision, within a given facility, that a particular inmate required. Understanding was further enhanced by using different labels. Institutional security levels were given Roman numerals (from I to VI--least to most secure), while custody categories were assigned to inmates (COMMUNITY, OUT, IN, and MAXIMUM). Consistent, explicit definitions for each label were established (later incorporated into written policy).

The initial focus of the task force was to develop a designation process; that is, a consistent procedure for deciding how a newly admitted inmate would be assigned to a specific institution. Three procedures needed to be created: (1) a method for determining the security level of institutions, (2) a method for determining the security needs of every new inmate, and (3) a method for matching (1) and (2).

A search of existing literature and a visit to two state correctional systems (Michigan and Oregon) revealed a number of helpful ideas and suggestions; however, no existing classification approach fit the particular circumstances of the Federal Prison System. Therefore, the FPS developed its own system. A consensus approach was followed; widespread input was invited initially and comments solicited on preliminary documents as they were developed.

The developmental process--which included devising and revising a designation form, performing several "paper" validations, and developing a procedures manual--took a year. A second year was used to pilot test the new system in one of the FPS's five regions--the Western Region, then consisting of eight institutions.

Since many FPS staff viewed the existing classification process as "working," the decision to involve staff in the development of the new system proved very helpful in its implementation and eventual acceptance. Personnel were kept aware of the various stages of the system's development. Since many

contributed to the creation of the new classification approach, a sense of ownership and a desire to see the project succeed resulted.

### Classification System Implementation

Implementation of the objective classification system began in 1979, and approximately two years later the system was operational within all FPS institutions.

The key factor in implementing the new classification approach was the orientation and training offered to staff who would be using the system. In addition, information was widely disseminated to all categories of staff through periodic updates circulated in a system-wide newsletter. Information was also included in the regular training sessions held at each institution.

During the actual classification training, the focus was hands-on experience rather than classroom lectures. Sample cases were used; trainees worked in small teams. Several members from the task force were available throughout each session. Most important, top-level executives were in attendance to evidence their support for the project.

Implementing the system for use with newly admitted inmates was fairly simple. Staff functioned as if the new approach were the way the FPS always performed the designation function, and new admissions accepted it as part of the routine.

Implementation was more complicated for on-board inmates. They, too, had to be oriented to the new system. This was done by preparing articles for each institution's inmate paper. Prisoners also had opportunities to discuss the new system with their caseworkers, as well as during "town meetings" in their living units. Most difficult in the transition was the change in custody. The FPS moved from five custody categories--maximum, close, medium, minimum, community--to four--maximum, in, out, community. The change for the prisoners in maximum and close and those in minimum and community was straightforward. Those in medium presented a problem: they had to become either IN or OUT. At each inmate's scheduled institutional reclassification meeting, the new form was employed. Medium custody inmates were then categorized according to the findings on the new form. However, no inmate lost privileges if the individual had adjusted well since last appearing before the classification committee; that is, no prisoner was to lose privileges earned under the old system just because a form had been changed.

The development and implementation of the FPS's objective classification system was done entirely in-house. Task force members played the major role in all aspects of bringing the new system into being. Two-member teams from the task force went to the institutions to collect needed data. Members also helped conduct the training sessions. When problems arose, they were available for telephone consultation. They also participated in "fine-tuning"

sessions after pilot-test data had been collected and made the necessary modifications for the next revision. In great measure the success of the FPS's new classification approach is a consequence of the contributions and perseverance of the individuals who served on the Classification Project Task Force.

### Goals and Objectives

The initial mandate given the task force by the executive staff was to review custody procedures. This was later expanded to include the total classification process. But a more basic question remained: After the task force completed its work, would FPS operations be any better than before the classification project began? In other words, had anything been improved?

In order to answer this question, six criteria were established. The new classification system would have demonstrated its utility if it:

- (1) Confined inmates in the least secure facilities for which they qualified;
- (2) Kept the inmate population throughout the FPS in better balance;
- (3) Decreased the number of transfers, particularly for custody reasons;
- (4) Reduced the number of inmates seeking protective custody;
- (5) Eliminated "preferential transfers" between institutions; and
- (6) Made better use of available resources.

The developmental process was guided by three principles:

- I. Inmates should be confined in the least restrictive, appropriately secure facility.
- II. The best predictor of future behavior is past behavior.
- III. Recent behavior is a better predictor of future actions than far distant past behavior.

These principles provided a frame of reference for the task force's work. They helped both in developing the overall concept for the new classification system and in providing a focus for the details; that is, the assignment of point values within items on the newly devised forms.

### Classification System Description

The FPS's objective classification system consists of two forms: an initial designation form, which is used at the time of admission to the system (Figure 1) and a reclassification form, which is used for formal reconsideration of custody status (Figure 2). Separate forms, not developed by the task force, are used to record each prisoner's needs as determined by the unit classification committee.



|                      |                         |                     |                        |            |
|----------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|------------|
| INMATE LOAD DATA     |                         |                     | 1. REGISTER NO.        |            |
| 2. LAST NAME         |                         | 3. FIRST            | 4. MIDDLE              | 5. SUFFIX  |
| 6. RACE              | 7. ETHNIC ORIGIN        | 8. SEX              | 9. DATE OF BIRTH       |            |
| 10. OFFN/CHRG/SENT   |                         |                     |                        |            |
| 11. FBI NUMBER       |                         | 12. HEIGHT<br>FT IN |                        | 13. WEIGHT |
| 14. SOC. SEC. NO.    |                         | 15. HAIR            |                        | 16. EYES   |
| 17. STATE OF BIRTH   | 18. OR COUNTRY OF BIRTH | 19. CITIZENSHIP     |                        |            |
| 20. ADDRESS - STREET |                         |                     |                        |            |
| 21. ADDRESS - CITY   |                         |                     |                        |            |
| 22. ADDRESS - STATE  |                         | 23. ZIP CODE        | 24. OR FOREIGN COUNTRY |            |
| 25. REMARKS          |                         |                     |                        |            |

|   |  |  |                                  |                          |                          |             |
|---|--|--|----------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------|
| SECURITY DESIGNATION DATA   |  | IMPORTANT: Enter all CIM assignments in SENTRY before entering this portion of form. |                                  |                          |                          |             |
| 1. DESIGNATION LIMITATIONS  | 0 - NONE<br>1 - MISDEMEANOR                | 2 - NARA<br>3 - YCA  | 4 - STUDY<br>5 - SPLIT           | 6 - PSYCH<br>7 - MEDICAL | <input type="checkbox"/> |             |
| 2. ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS  | 0 - NONE<br>1 - MEDICAL HEALTH             | 2 - MENTAL HEALTH<br>3 - AGGRESS SEX BEHAVIOR  | 4 - DEPORTABLE ALIEN             |                          | <input type="checkbox"/> |             |
| 3. USM OFFICE   |  |  | 4. JUDGE                         |                          |                          |             |
| 5. RECOMMENDED FACILITY   |  |  | 6. RECOMMENDED PROGRAM           |                          |                          |             |
| 7. TYPE OF DETAINEE   | 0 - NONE<br>1 - LOWEST/LOW MODERATE        | 3 - MODERATE<br>5 - HIGH   | 7 - GREATEST                     |                          | <input type="checkbox"/> |             |
| 8. SEVERITY OF CURRENT OFFENSE  | 0 - LOWEST<br>1 - LOW MODERATE             | 3 - MODERATE<br>5 - HIGH   | 7 - GREATEST                     |                          | <input type="checkbox"/> |             |
| 9. EXPECTED LENGTH OF INCARCERATION   | 0 - 0-12 MONTHS<br>1 - 13-59 MONTHS        | 3 - 60-83 MONTHS<br>5 - 84 PLUS MONTHS   | MONTHS                           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |             |
| 10. TYPE OF PRIOR COMMITMENTS   | 0 - NONE<br>1 - MINOR                      | 3 - SERIOUS  |                                  |                          |                          |             |
| 11. HISTORY OF ESCAPES OR ATTEMPTS  | MINOR                                      | NONE<br>0  | >15 YRS<br>1                     | 10-15 YRS<br>1           | 5-10 YRS<br>2            | <5 YRS<br>3 |
| 12. HISTORY OF VIOLENCE   | SERIOUS                                    | 0  | 4                                | 5                        | 6                        | 7           |
| 13. PRE-COMMITMENT STATUS   | 0 - NOT APPLICABLE<br>3 - OWN RECOGNIZANCE | 6 - VOLUNTARY SURRENDER  |                                  |                          |                          |             |
| 14. VOLUNTARY SURRENDER DATE (MM-DD-YYYY)   |  |  | 15. VOLUNTARY SURRENDER LOCATION |                          |                          |             |
| 16. IF ELIGIBLE FOR SL-1, IS THERE ANY MEDICAL REASON THAT WOULD PRECLUDE DESIGNATING A CAMP? |  |  | Y - YES<br>N - NO                |                          |                          |             |
| 17. REMARKS   |  |  |                                  |                          |                          |             |

Figure 2

|                                |      |                 |                            |
|--------------------------------|------|-----------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Institution                 | Code | 2. Unit         | 3. Date<br>Mo - Date - Yr: |
| 4. Name, Last<br>First Initial |      | 5. Register No. |                            |

| SECTION A                            |  | SECURITY SCORING                         |                            |                     |                    |                 |
|--------------------------------------|--|--|----------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| 1. TYPE OF DETAINEE                  | 0 = None<br>1 = Lowest/Low Moderate                                    | 3 = Moderate<br>5 = High                 | 7 = Greatest               |                     |                    |                 |
| 2. SEVERITY OF CURRENT OFFENSE       | 0 = Lowest<br>1 = Low Moderate   | 3 = Moderate<br>5 = High                 | 7 = Greatest               |                     |                    |                 |
| 3. PROJECTED LENGTH OF INCARCERATION | 0 = 0 - 12 Months<br>1 = 13 - 39 Months                                | 3 = 60 - 83 Months<br>5 = 84 Plus Months | Ja. Number of months _____ |                     |                    |                 |
| 4. TYPE OF PRIOR COMMITMENTS         | 0 = None<br>1 = Minor  | 3 = Serious                              |                            |                     |                    |                 |
| 5. HISTORY OF ESCAPES OR ATTEMPTS    | None<br>MINOR<br>SERIOUS   | None<br>0<br>0                           | 15 yrs<br>1<br>4           | 10-13 yrs<br>1<br>5 | 5-10 yrs<br>2<br>6 | 5 yrs<br>3<br>7 |
| 6. HISTORY OF VIOLENCE               | None<br>MINOR<br>SERIOUS   | None<br>0<br>0                           | 15 yrs<br>1<br>4           | 10-13 yrs<br>1<br>5 | 5-10 yrs<br>2<br>6 | 5 yrs<br>3<br>7 |
| 7. PRE-COMMITMENT STATUS             | 0 = Not Applicable<br>-3 = Own Recognition<br>-6 = Voluntary Surrender |  |                            |                     |                    |                 |
| <b>8. BASE SCORE</b>                 |  |  |                            |                     |                    |                 |

| SECTION B   |  | CUSTODY SCORING   |  |  |  |  |
|---|--|---|--|--|--|--|
| 1. PERCENTAGE OF TIME SERVED                            | 3 = 0 thru 25%<br>4 = 26 thru 75%  | 5 = 76 thru 90%<br>6 = 91 plus %  |  |  |  |  |
| 2. INVOLVEMENT WITH DRUGS & ALCOHOL                     | 2 = Within past 5 years<br>3 = More than 5 years ago   | 4 = Never   |  |  |  |  |
| 3. MENTAL/PSYCHOLOGICAL STABILITY                       | 2 = Unfavorable<br>4 = No Referral or Favorable  |   |  |  |  |  |
| 4. TYPE & NUMBER OF MOST SERIOUS DISCIPLINARY REPORT(S) | 0 = Any Greater (100) within last 10 years<br>1 = More than one high (200) within last 2 years<br>2a = Only one high (200) within last 2 years<br>2b = More than one moderate (300) within last year | 3a = Only one moderate (300) within last year<br>3b = More than one low moderate (400) within last year<br>4 = Only one low moderate (400) within last year<br>5 = None |  |  |  |  |
| 5. FREQUENCY OF DISCIPLINARY REPORT(S) WITHIN LAST YR   | 0 = 6 Plus<br>1 = 2 thru 5   | 2 = 1<br>3 = None   |  |  |  |  |
| 6. RESPONSIBILITY INMATE HAS DEMONSTRATED               | 0 = Poor<br>2 = Average  | 4 = Good  |  |  |  |  |
| 7. FAMILY/COMMUNITY TIES                                | 3 = None or Minimal<br>4 = Average or Good   |   |  |  |  |  |
| <b>9. CUSTODY TOTAL</b>                                 |  |   |  |  |  |  |
| <b>9. CUSTODY VARIANCE (Circle Intersecting Point):</b> |  |   |  |  |  |  |

|              |              | CUSTODY TOTAL (Sec. B, Item 5) |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
|              |              | 10                             | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |
| SCORE        | 0 - 6 pts.   | +10                            | +9 | +8 | +7 | +6 | +5 | +4 | +3 | +2 | +1 | 0  | 0  | 0  | -1 | -2 | -3 | -4 | -5 | -6 | -7 | -8 |
|              | 7 - 9 pts.   | +10                            | +9 | +8 | +7 | +6 | +5 | +4 | +3 | +2 | +1 | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  | -1 | -2 | -3 | -4 | -5 | -6 | -7 |
|              | 10 - 13 pts. | +10                            | +9 | +8 | +7 | +6 | +5 | +4 | +3 | +2 | +1 | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  | -1 | -2 | -3 | -4 | -5 | -6 |
|              | 14 - 22 pts. | +10                            | +9 | +8 | +7 | +6 | +5 | +4 | +3 | +2 | +1 | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  | -1 | -2 | -3 | -4 |
|              | 23 - 29 pts. | +10                            | +9 | +8 | +7 | +6 | +5 | +4 | +3 | +2 | +1 | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  | -1 | -2 | -3 |
| 30 - 36 pts. | +10          | +9                             | +8 | +7 | +6 | +5 | +4 | +3 | +2 | +1 | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  | -1 | -2 | -3 |

9a. Custody Variance Score (+) or (-)

10. SECURITY TOTAL: Add or subtract the custody variance (above) to the Base Score (Sec. A, Item 8)

|                    |                                  |                                      |                                      |
|--------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 11. SECURITY LEVEL | 1 = 0 - 4 pts.<br>2 = 7 - 9 pts. | 3 = 10 - 13 pts.<br>4 = 14 - 22 pts. | 5 = 23 - 29 pts.<br>6 = 30 - 36 pts. |
|--------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|

12. CUSTODY CHANGE CONSIDERATION:  
 If Custody Variance Score (Sec. B, Item 9) is in the plus (+) range, consider a custody increase.  
 If Custody Variance Score (Sec. B, Item 9) is in the minus (-) range, a custody decrease may be considered.  
 If Custody Variance Score (Sec. B, Item 9) is Zero (0), present custody should continue.

| SECTION C   |  | INSTITUTION ACTION   |  |
|---|--|--|--|
| 1. TYPE OF REVIEW: EXCEPTION _____; REGULAR _____                     |  |  |  |
| 2. CURRENT CUSTODY: MAX _____; IN _____; OUT _____; COMM _____        |  | 3. NEW CUSTODY: MAX _____; IN _____; OUT _____; COMM _____ |  |
| 4. ACTION: APPROVE _____; DISAPPROVE _____                            |  | 5. DATE OF NEXT REVIEW: _____                              |  |
| 6. CHAIRPERSON'S NAME AND SIGNATURE _____                             |  |  |  |
| 7. FOR EXCEPTION REVIEW NAME (Warden or Designee) AND SIGNATURE _____ |  |  |  |
| 8. TYPE OF FINAL ACTION: LEVEL _____; CUSTODY _____                   |  |  |  |

The Federal Prison System's classification approach uses an additive process. On the designation form, each new commitment is awarded a number of points for six items: Type of Detainer, Severity of Current Offense, Expected Length of Incarceration, Type of Prior Commitments, History of Escapes or Attempts, and History of Violence. These points are added to obtain a Security Total. The range that the offender's Security Total falls within determines the security level to which the individual is assigned. Within that security level, the prisoner is sent to a specific institution, depending upon such considerations as proximity to the offender's home, level of overcrowding, and racial balance.

The six items on the designation form were developed from an initial list of 92, which the task force reduced to 47 potentially significant factors. A wide range of FPS staff then ranked these 47 items in terms of their importance to the classification process, and the six highest factors were incorporated into the designation form. (See Table 1.)

Reclassification involves the completion of a form by the prisoner's case manager, based on information gathered since the previous reclassification committee meeting. This two-part form is completed every time the individual is formally reviewed for reclassification.

Section A of the reclassification form repeats the six designation factors and scores the prisoner as to current security needs.

The second part of the form--Section B--consists of seven items: Percent of Time Served, Involvement with Drugs/Alcohol, Mental/Psychological Stability, Most Serious Disciplinary Report (past year), Frequency of Disciplinary Reports (past year), Responsibility Inmate Has Demonstrated, and Family/Community Ties. These points are added to arrive at a Custody Total. The range encompassing this score is then located on a grid. Three recommendations are possible: consider for a custody increase; continue present custody; consider for a custody decrease. The grid is arranged so that it requires greater effort for inmates with high security needs to be considered for reduced custody than is true for prisoners with low security needs.

Since the six items that determine a prisoner's security needs are based on pre-incarceration information, the Security Total rarely changes. Consequently, the major method by which inmates move to lower (or higher) security institutions is a change in custody level.

Each newly assigned offender automatically begins in the highest custody level at the designated institution. Thus, new prisoners who require either SL-VI or SL-V security begin their confinement with MAXIMUM custody; new commitments with SL-IV, III, or II security needs start with IN custody; and those with SL-I security requirements commence their sentences with OUT custody. (See Table 2 and note underlined "X" at each security level.)

TABLE 1  
RANKINGS ON DEGREE OF IMPORTANCE  
OF 47 VARIABLES (INITIAL CLASSIFICATION)

| <u>Ranking</u> | <u>Variable</u>                      |
|----------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1.5            | History of escapes/attempts          |
| 1.5            | History of violence                  |
| 3              | Detainers (number/type)              |
| 4              | Current offense                      |
| 5              | Length of sentence                   |
| 7              | Disciplinary reports                 |
| 7              | Prior arrests/commitments            |
| 7              | Notoriety (inmate/offense)           |
| 10             | FBI "rap" sheet                      |
| 10             | Staff judgment                       |
| 10             | Prior institutional adjustment       |
| 12             | Member in subversive organization    |
| 13             | Responsibility (shown by inmate)     |
| 14             | Involvement in alcohol/drug use      |
| 15             | Psychological test data              |
| 16.5           | Judicial recommendations             |
| 16.5           | Peer group associates                |
| 19             | Respect towards staff/others         |
| 19             | Cooperativeness of inmate            |
| 22             | Physical security (facility)         |
| 22             | Age at first commitment              |
| 24.5           | Work habits                          |
| 24.5           | Employment history                   |
| 26.5           | Family background                    |
| 26.5           | Age at first arrest                  |
| 28             | Age                                  |
| 29.5           | Length time at home residence        |
| 29.5           | Citizenship                          |
| 31.5           | Marital history                      |
| 31.5           | Home and neighborhood                |
| 33             | Institution (isolated-ness)          |
| 34.5           | Health of inmate                     |
| 34.5           | Education history                    |
| 36.5           | Interest in classification           |
| 36.5           | Physical stature or handicaps        |
| 38             | Programs (availability)              |
| 39.5           | Space available, camps, CTC, etc.    |
| 39.5           | Inmate skills                        |
| 42.5           | Work assignments available           |
| 42.5           | Personal hygiene                     |
| 42.5           | Overcrowding                         |
| 42.5           | Financial background                 |
| 45             | Living quarters (availability)       |
| 46             | Industrial assignment (availability) |
| 47             | Race                                 |

TABLE 2  
SECURITY LEVELS AND CUSTODY CATEGORIES

| <u>INMATE CUSTODY</u> | Institution Security |               |               |               |               |               |
|-----------------------|----------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
|                       | <u>SL-VI</u>         | <u>SL-V</u>   | <u>SL-IV</u>  | <u>SL-III</u> | <u>SL-II</u>  | <u>SL-I</u>   |
| MAXIMUM               | $\frac{X}{X}$        | $\frac{X}{X}$ |               |               |               |               |
| IN                    | $\frac{X}{X}$        | $\frac{X}{X}$ | $\frac{X}{X}$ | $\frac{X}{X}$ | $\frac{X}{X}$ |               |
| OUT                   |                      |               | $\frac{X}{X}$ | $\frac{X}{X}$ | $\frac{X}{X}$ | $\frac{X}{X}$ |
| COMMUNITY             |                      |               |               | $\frac{X}{X}$ | $\frac{X}{X}$ | $\frac{X}{X}$ |

A detailed classification manual was developed by the task force. In addition to citing appropriate authority to establish the manual as policy, it contains explicit instructions for completing all the forms, shows worked examples, and assigns specific responsibility for the various procedures. Thus, it is a ready reference for classification committee members. Further, it served as a basic training document during implementation of the new system and continues in this role with recently hired staff. The manual is also used as an explanation guide for newly received inmates.

#### Classification System Administration and Management

Because the Federal Prison System operates 46 institutions across the nation, better coordination required that regions be established. Accordingly, the FPS has created five regions, each containing approximately 10 institutions. The original concept called for each region to have at least one institution at each security level--except for the single SL-VI facility at Marion. Within each region is a regional office where a Regional Designation Officer serves as a coordination point for initial designations and intra-regional transfers. These staff also arrange inter-regional transfers.

The classification process begins when a Community Programs Officer (CPO) is informed by the court that a new prisoner has been sentenced to the FPS. The CPO obtains the information necessary to complete the initial designation form. That material is communicated to the regional office, where it is considered in light of other information concerning the Federal Prison System. The Regional Designation Officer then makes an assignment to a specific institution at the security level appropriate for the new inmate. Meanwhile, the CPO has forwarded the designation documentation to the receiving institution, which has been informed by the regional office to expect the new commitment.

During the admission and orientation phase the prisoner is interviewed, screened, and tested. After 30 days, the new admission is assigned living quarters. [Several FPS institutions employ an objective, consistent "internal classification" procedure to make living quarters assignment. (See Quay,

1984.))] He or she subsequently meets with the unit classification committee and participates in the development of an institutional program.

Depending on the individual's custody level, a formal reclassification session is scheduled: Maximum custody--9 to 12 months, In custody--6 to 9 months, Out custody--3 to 6 months; Community custody--at least once each year. (Program reviews are held by the unit classification committees every 90 days.) At the meeting a reclassification form is completed by the inmate's caseworker, using input from other team members as well as the prisoner's work and program supervisors. Based on performance since the last reclassification meeting, the form makes a recommendation as to whether the prisoner's custody should be increased, decreased, or remain the same. Staff make the final decision. If they decide to follow the recommendation, that is indicated and the form serves as documentation. However, if they decide to override the recommendation, they must remain within policy guidelines. For example, if the form recommends consideration for a lower custody category, the committee can disagree and keep the prisoner's custody at its current level, but cannot increase it to a higher category. They must also justify in writing the rationale for their disagreement.

In accordance with policy guidelines, the reclassification committee may decide to place an inmate in a custody classification that the current institution does not have. Such a decision triggers consideration for a move to a more (or less) secure facility with the appropriate custody category. This information is then communicated to the Regional Designation Officer, who arranges for all transfers.

In order to ensure that classification policy is being followed, on-site audits are conducted annually. These visits include a review of the records by the Regional Designation Officer, as well as observation of classification committees in action. Following the audit, a written report is prepared, signed by the Regional Director, and sent to the institution. Policy requires that a written response (signed by the warden) be prepared within 45 days. These procedures serve both as a quality control and as documentation that the facility is in compliance with the policies of the Federal Prison System.

#### Classification System Cost

No outside funding was used in developing the Federal Prison System's objective classification approach. However, since the developmental process involved personnel traveling to meetings and to gather data, there was a "cost" to the FPS for time away from their usual positions. However, the task force members' enthusiasm about their selection and participation in this project--several indicated it was the high point of their careers--may have served as a morale booster, leading to greater levels of productivity when they returned to their regular jobs.

Maintaining the system entailed no additional costs. The duties of on-board personnel were modified according to the new classification policy statement, but no additional staff were required.

### Classification System Effectiveness

The FPS's new classification system was evaluated at two levels. The first assessed the system as a whole: Were things better because a new system had been implemented? The second involved demonstrating that newly devised forms provided valid information.

Six criteria were established for assessing the first level of the evaluation. (These are listed in the section on Goals and Objectives.) The findings were (Levinson, 1980): (1) The new classification did confine inmates in less secure facilities without increasing assaults or escapes. (2) It also distributed the prisoner population more evenly and better balanced each facility's racial composition. (3) The system reduced the number of inter-institutional transfers. (4) A year-long assessment at one Western Region SL-V facility, during the pilot-testing phase (1978), indicated that the new classification approach did not reduce the number of inmates seeking protective custody. (5) Policy implemented as part of the new classification manual removed transfer authority from wardens, eliminating preferential transfers. (6) By providing more current, consistent, and relevant information to management, better-informed decision-making occurred; that is, type of needed facilities were precisely specified, staffing patterns were adjusted, and budget justification became more specific.

More recent data provide additional support regarding the improvements brought about by the new classification system. Comparing the distribution of the FPS's male prisoner population before and after implementation of the new approach reveals an overall "downshift"; that is, a greater proportion of inmates are now housed in less secure facilities--from 23% in 1977 to 33% in 1982. At the same time, the percent of prisoners in the FPS's maximally secure institutions (SL-V & VI) decreased from 38% to 20%. Significantly, this occurred while the percent of inmates incarcerated for crimes of violence increased from 23% to 31%. As shown in Table 3, this "downshift" was accompanied by a reduction in transfers and a lower rate of escape per 1000 prisoners.

TABLE 3  
 PRE- AND POST-IMPLEMENTATION OF NEW CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM:  
 PERCENT INMATES TRANSFERRED AND ESCAPE RATE/1000

|             | <u>1976</u> | <u>1977</u> | <u>1978</u> | <u>1979*</u> | <u>1980</u> | <u>1981</u> | <u>1982</u> |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Transfers   | 41%         | 43%         | 52%         | 50%          | 48%         | 42%         | 36%         |
| Escape/1000 | 14          | 15          | 14          | 14           | 15          | 10          | 6           |
| -----       |             |             |             |              |             |             |             |
| n =         | 42.4k       | 45.3k       | 46.6k       | 42.9k        | 40.0k       | 39.9k       | 44.9k       |

\*Transition year; new system began agency-wide on 4/79.

The second level of evaluation--form and item validity--began during the Western Region pilot-testing phase and has continued during post-implementation. "Fine-tuning" sessions have been held every 12 to 18 months to review accumulated information. Based on this material, modifications are made in procedures and/or scoring.

Table 4, using data from 1100 inmates randomly selected from 35 FPS institutions (Kane & Saylor, 1983), reveals that the items used to make initial security designations are significantly related to post-admission behavior. Each "X" indicates a significant relationship (at least .05) between Security Designation Item and Criterion.



TABLE 4  
 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SECURITY DESIGNATION ITEMS  
 AND SUBSEQUENT INSTITUTIONAL BEHAVIOR

|                            | <u>Criteria</u>                      |                 |                              |                        |             |                 |                |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------|------------------------------|------------------------|-------------|-----------------|----------------|
|                            | Disci-<br>plinary<br><u>Transfer</u> | <u>Violence</u> | Overall<br><u>Misconduct</u> | Severity of Misconduct |             |                 |                |
|                            |                                      |                 |                              | <u>Greatest</u>        | <u>High</u> | <u>Moderate</u> | <u>Low-Mod</u> |
| Type of<br>Detainer        | ---                                  | ---             | X                            | ---                    | ---         | X               | ---            |
| Severity of<br>Offense     | ---                                  | X               | X                            | X                      | ---         | X               | X              |
| Length of<br>Incarceration | X                                    | X               | ---                          | ---                    | ---         | ---             | ---            |
| Prior<br>Commitments       | X                                    | X               | X                            | ---                    | X           | ---             | ---            |
| Escapes or<br>Attempts     | X                                    | ---             | X                            | X                      | X           | X               | ---            |
| History of<br>Violence     | X                                    | X               | X                            | X                      | X           | X               | ---            |
| Total Score                | X                                    | X               | X                            | X                      | X           | X               | X              |

"Total Score," which Table 4 reveals to be the best predictor of the seven post-incarceration criteria, reflects the finding that the designation form is making useful distinctions.

Another perspective is provided by Table 5, which shows differences among the form-identified groups.

TABLE 5  
 AVERAGE NUMBER OF DAYS TO ACCUMULATE  
 100 MAJOR DISCIPLINARY "GUILTY" DECISIONS

| <u>Security Level*</u> | <u>Average Number of Days</u> |
|------------------------|-------------------------------|
| SL-I                   | 266                           |
| SL-II                  | 205                           |
| SL-III                 | 74                            |
| SL-IV                  | 74                            |
| SL-V                   | 45                            |
| SL-VI                  | 24                            |

\*Except for SL-VI, averages are based on data collected at three different facilities at each security level; the SL-VI figure is based on data gathered on two different occasions (eight months apart) at the single SL-VI institution.

The orderly progression depicted in Table 5 lends creditability to the grouping of inmates in accord with the security designation form.

The foregoing suggests that inmates designated to the different security level institutions are, indeed, distinguishable from each other in terms of subsequent behavior. Another way to determine if this is true is by examining what happens when "wrong" designations are made. Two studies were conducted-- one at a single SL-III institution (Mabli, 1982) and the other encompassing 35 different FPS facilities (Kane & Saylor, 1983).

Mabli reported that SL-3 inmates committed to an SL-III institution had the higher percentage with no disciplinary reports (during 12 months following admission) when compared with non-SL-3 inmates in the same facility.

The Kane & Saylor study, using multiple regression analysis, reported "the likelihood of a disciplinary transfer was found to be statistically significant for both over- and under-designated prisoners." Moreover, the greater the over- or under-designation, the more likely such a transfer would occur: "Plausibly, under-designated (inmates) were transferred for (their) exploitive action, whereas over-designated prisoners were moved after (being aggressed against) to prevent (further) exploitation."

While admittedly not a panacea, the FPS's new classification system does appear to be a valid approach that helps reduce some of management's problems.

#### Classification System and Special Management Inmates

The FPS's objective classification system was devised to assign prisoners to institutions based on their security needs. However, there are inmates for

whom other considerations outweigh (at least initially) security issues; for example, physically or mentally ill offenders. Specific provisions are incorporated into the FPS's approach to assist in properly managing these special cases.

In addition to the security scoring, the security designation form contains an "Additional Considerations" section that also must be completed. Eight categories of Special Offenders are listed: medical, psychiatric, aggressive sexual behavior, threat to government officials, offense in greatest severity category, high severity drug offense, deportable alien, and organized crime member. New admissions falling into any one or more of these categories may have their security-based institution designation overridden. Justification for such overrides must comply with policy guidelines and be documented on the form.

If the reason for the override is temporary (e.g., a curable medical problem), the designation officer indicates two institutions on the form. The first considers the prisoner's special need; the second is based on the security score. Once the special management problem has been rectified, the inmate is transferred to the appropriate security level institution. This procedure reduces attempts by prisoners to manipulate the system. It also expeditiously moves inmates through specialized facilities, thereby helping ensure that scarce bed space does not become clogged unnecessarily.

Classification System and Female Inmates

The FPS's objective classification system is also used with female offenders. While the range of institution security levels available for women prisoners is curtailed, effort is made to designate each new female admission to the least restrictive appropriately secure facility. Table 6, which compares the distribution of male and female prisoners in the Western Region, reveals a concentration of women inmates at the lower security needs levels.

TABLE 6  
COMPARISON OF MALE AND FEMALE PRISONERS--1/81  
INMATES' SECURITY LEVEL

|        | <u>SL-1</u> | <u>SL-2</u> | <u>SL-3</u> | <u>SL-4</u> | <u>SL-5</u> | <u>SL-6</u> |          |
|--------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|----------|
| Male   | 33%         | 16%         | 19%         | 24%         | 7%          | 1%          | (n=3456) |
| Female | 44%         | 24%         | 17%         | 12%         | 3%          | 0.4%        | (n=227)  |

## Classification System Use in Planning

At the time that the Federal Prison System began to review its classification system, serious thought was being given to making a budgetary request to build a second SL-VI facility. Moreover, while maximum and medium security institutions were overcrowded, unused bed space existed in minimum security camp facilities. Thus, the FPS was faced with the prospect of constructing highly expensive maximally secure beds, while underutilizing its least expensive living quarters.

The new classification system demonstrated what many staff suspected: prisoners were being overclassified. As a result of the new approach, the FPS did not build the second top-level security facility, but found a greater need for medium and minimum beds--a considerable savings for the taxpayer.

In addition, high-level administrators now have a more accurate, up-to-date picture of both new admissions and the current population. This enables managers to ascertain whether the incoming population is changing and to assess not only where new facilities might be needed but also what a new institution's security level should be to best meet commitment trends. Thus, management has better information, can more accurately forecast needs, and more comprehensively justify its budget requests.

Finally, the new objective system permits a more knowledgeable allocation of current resources. Consistent, early identification of which prisoners require maximal control and which do not allows differential staffing patterns to be implemented. It also leads to the "de-securitizing" of institutions; that is, not staffing every perimeter tower 24 hours per day. For example, the Federal Prison System was able to reduce the security levels of both Terre Haute (Indiana) and Otisville (New York) from SL-V to IV and from SL-IV to III, respectively. More homogeneous institutional populations and a better ability to predict where trouble may develop enable a more cost-efficient distribution of in-house resources.

## OBJECTIVE PRISON CLASSIFICATION CASE STUDY: KENTUCKY

### INTRODUCTION

The Kentucky Department of Corrections has adapted the National Institute of Corrections classification model in order to better respond to litigation and growing population pressures. In general, the development and implementation process was uneventful. The new system has met agency goals in that it is objective, appears to be defensible under litigation, and provides solid data for planning.

### OBJECTIVE PRISON CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM DESCRIPTION

#### Origin and Development

The previous classification system is described as subjective in nature. As each inmate entered the correctional system, he/she resided for a period of two to three weeks at the assessment center, where academic, medical and psychological testing was completed. The classification committee, composed of the Assessment Center Director, a classification officer, social worker, and representative of the custody staff, recommended placement based upon the charge, length of sentence, results of testing, and the inmate's behavior at the assessment center. This system required reclassification every six months using the same basic decision-making criteria. In reality, placement, as well as transfer, was often based on available bed space. The classification system did not utilize definite, measurable criteria, and no organized system for monitoring or evaluating data existed. Additionally, facilities often differed in the classification of similar cases.

Several factors contributed to the need for change. An inmate class action suit dealing with prison conditions, including population and classification, was initiated in 1977 and settled by consent decree in 1980. The consent decree called for major reductions in prison population and an outside audit of the classification system. A review of inmate cases indicated that the system was overclassifying inmates. During this time a number of laws were enacted mandating more prison time for various crimes, and an inadequate number of beds demanded more efficient management of the classification process.

The National Institute of Corrections custody determination model, introduced in late 1981, was viewed as a possible approach for addressing these problems, as well as for providing a defensible system in court. Although little was known about the NIC plan, a core team of eight persons, as

provided in an NIC grant, participated in the classification system training in Boulder, Colorado. This core team was composed of the Institutional Classification Officer, Director of Planning and Research, Assessment Center Director, Classification Branch Manager, Director of Operations, Institution Unit Coordinator, Warden of the Women's Prison, and Director of Training. With little knowledge of the NIC model and no obligation to adopt it, the core team received the training openly. During the training, the team decided to seriously consider adoption of the model. In the two weeks following the training, the core team modified the model to include an assessment of needs, a summary sheet, and a determination of overrides, and changed some point values in order to reflect the thinking and trends in statutory requirements. The team also developed an implementation plan, which was subsequently approved by the Commissioner of Corrections.

The development phase began with the creation of an automated data processing capability, revision of the classification manual, and conduct of a pilot test. The pilot test, which was performed at the assessment center by core team members, included classification of approximately one thousand files of inmates already assigned to maximum and medium security. This effort was valuable in establishing where inmates would score on security and custody levels. Only three areas of the classification model were modified as a result of the pilot test. The scoring of disciplinary reports was given additional weight, the number of points for education and employment was reduced, and statutory crimes were weighted according to the provisions of the law. The results of the pilot test were then automated, and the data were analyzed by the core team and key central office staff.

During this phase, contact with NIC project staff and consultants was continued to ensure that the integrity of the NIC model was maintained while the uniqueness of the Kentucky system was considered. The core team functioned productively, possibly due to its composition of similar-level management staff with prior institution experience and an avoidance of administrative intervention. Only when fully developed and ready for implementation was the new system openly discussed outside the core team. The team determined the key personnel who would need to be sold on the system and the most appropriate core team member to make the contact. The credibility of the team members with key staff in the correctional system, together with their thorough knowledge and belief in the new system's capability of providing relief from time-consuming litigation, proved an important factor.

On the whole, core team members are satisfied with the development process. They believe that it proceeded as efficiently as possible, given a bureaucratic setting, and that the new system is well adapted to agency needs. Of particular importance to the success of the development phase was the timeframe established by the core team. This schedule allowed sufficient time to devise the system but was not so long as to decrease enthusiasm. It also helped keep work on the system a high priority within the agency.

Although team members are pleased with the way the new classification system was developed, they feel the process could have been improved. For instance, it would have been helpful if the team had initially been able to visit agencies employing objective systems. (Very few objective systems were operational at that time, however.) This would have acquainted them with the strengths and weaknesses of various systems and allowed them to discuss Kentucky's unique needs and problems with staff experienced in objective classification. In addition, a more extensive pilot test would have enabled the team to identify and close more loopholes, thus facilitating implementation. Team members consider pilot testing a "must" for any agency developing a new classification system and recommend that sufficient time and effort be given to this crucial activity.

### Classification System Implementation

Eighteen months following the formal exposure of the core team to the NIC model, formal training for implementation began. The classification manual, along with the content of the training, was instrumental to successful implementation. The pilot test had provided a base of information, used to work out most of the bugs and potential problems that classification personnel would face.

The first phase of training involved twenty institutional personnel who would be scoring the classification instrument. This training included background on the system's development, discussion of each line item, viewing of summary sample files, and a hands-on classification scoring process comparing the old classification system to the new one. The entire core team actively participated in the training phase. Participants responded positively, and only minor changes in definition and classification resulted.

The second phase of training involved fifty participants in each of two eight-hour sessions. Wardens, deputy wardens, and selected custody staff participated in broad-based training that encompassed historical issues of classification, the process of developing the new system, and issues relative to the consent decree addressed by the new system. The participants also comparatively scored inmates, using both the old and new classification systems.

The third phase of training was a three-hour general employee orientation program that was provided to all existing institutional staff and included in the orientation program for all new employees.

Implementation was gradual. Since inmates were already being reclassified every six months using the old system, the new system was inserted into this existing time line. Each classification plan was reviewed for scoring accuracy by the institutional team committee, with a copy forwarded to the Director of Classification in the central office. Inmates received copies of their plans, along with an explanation of the new system.

During the initial classification process, inmates who were in minimum security but scored higher on the new instrument were grandfathered by exception into minimum custody level. Inmates who scored lower were, and continue to be, transferred according to available bed space or placed on a waiting list for such transfers.

The core team continued to monitor the process and made minor revisions of definition at six months, while a major review, including examination of data collected, was made at one year. Formal reviews are conducted annually according to the system design. The Director of Classification, as well as the Director of Planning and Research, continues to ensure that data are maintained, monitored, and reviewed.

Staff reaction to implementation of the new system has generally been favorable. Although line staff expressed some resistance initially, they soon saw the merits of a system that would reduce inconsistency, inmate dissatisfaction, and classification challenges. In fact, the core team reports that staff would like even tighter guidelines to be developed. Team members attribute such acceptance to their strategy of waiting until the system was completely developed and tested before presenting it to staff. This strategy enabled the team to better deal with any fears of change since staff could see how the whole system operated. It also precluded much of the controversy and criticism that occur when something new is introduced piecemeal.

#### Classification System Goals and Objectives

Based upon the issues arising at the time of the system's development, the core team established a number of goals. The primary goal was the development of an easily administered objective system that was defensible to litigation. This system was also to define custody and security levels and match the various classifications of inmates to the existing correctional system physical plant. Another important goal was the development of an automated information system that could ease data collection and retrieval, as well as project population and custody level needs.

Although no formal outside evaluation has occurred, ongoing internal review reveals that these goals have been met. Clearly, litigation has been reduced. Inmates understand the classification system and feel that it is fairly administered. The automated information system has enabled the correctional system to be more immediately responsive to problems and to better project future needs.

#### Classification System Description

The Kentucky correctional system has adopted the National Institute of Corrections classification model. Within the system, security is defined as the type of physical (architectural and environmental) constraints provided



by the institution. Custody is defined as the degree of supervision provided by staff. Security/custody labels of maximum, close, medium, restricted, and minimum are assigned to inmates. Institutional security/custody labels are maximum, medium, and minimum. All security/custody factors in the NIC model were used, employing the same definitions, with the following exceptions. Inmate program participation is a component of the reclassification process, but it is not used to determine custody level. The weights of reclassification factors were modified to give more points to disciplinary reports and fewer points for employment and education. It was also decided to continue the policy of prohibiting minimum security placement of inmates with more than 48 months to parole eligibility or release. In addition, for purposes of classification, the agency uses only the offenses for which the inmate was convicted, rather than the crimes with which he/she may have been charged.

Initial classification is conducted at the assessment center, using a three-part scoring form. (See Figure 3.) The first part of this form is used to determine a custody score based on factors such as history of institutional violence, severity of current offense, escape history, and detainers. The second part is designed to assess inmate needs in areas ranging from health and behavioral problems to educational and vocational status. The last part of the form is a summary sheet that presents the total custody score, override considerations, custody level and institutional assignments, and program recommendations. The summary sheet is completed in triplicate, with copies going to the inmate's file, the inmate, and the central office. In addition, summary data are entered into the management information system.

Reclassification occurs at the institutional level every six months. Again, a three-part form is used to score each inmate. (See Figure 4.) This form is similar to the initial classification instrument, with two significant exceptions. First, in the custody scoring section, factors related to substance abuse and stability have been replaced by factors concerned with institutional adjustment. Second, on the summary sheet, program participation has been substituted for program recommendations. Otherwise, the reclassification form is scored and processed in the same manner as the initial classification form.

Initially, there were fourteen override areas; however, after the review at one year, several were combined so that now there are eight override areas. Currently, overrides occur in approximately 20% of all decisions. Of this figure, 8% are to a higher custody level for statutory reasons, while 5% are for administrative reasons, primarily the 48 months to parole eligibility or release rule. Another 4% are to a lower custody level, with the remainder of the overrides--3%--encompassing various other reasons.

Using this classification system, the agency finds itself short of minimum placement beds. At initial classification, over one half of the inmates are assigned based upon their scores, while the remainder are placed on a waiting list.

Figure 3

CC-1020

INITIAL INMATE CLASSIFICATION

NAME ----- Last ----- First ----- MI ----- AGE ----- NUMBER -----  
 CLASSIFICATION OFFICER ----- CODE ----- DATE -----

1. HISTORY OF INSTITUTIONAL VIOLENCE  
 (Jail or Prison, code most serious within last five years)  
 None ..... 0 ----- score  
 Violence not involving use of a weapon or resulting in serious injury ..... 3  
 Violence involving use of a weapon and/or resulting in serious injury or death ..... 7

2. SEVERITY OF CURRENT OFFENSE  
 (Refer to the Severity of Offense Scale. Score the most serious offense if there are multiple convictions.) ----- score  
 Low ..... 1  
 Low Moderate ..... 2  
 Moderate ..... 3  
 High ..... 6  
 Highest ..... 7

3. PRIOR ASSAULTIVE OFFENSE HISTORY ----- score  
 None ..... 0  
 Low ..... 1  
 Low Moderate ..... 2  
 Moderate ..... 3  
 High ..... 4  
 Highest ..... 6

4. ESCAPE HISTORY (Rate last 5 years of incarceration.) ----- score  
 No escapes or attempts (or no prior incarcerations) ..... 0  
 An escape or attempt last five years resulting in administrative action only ..... 4  
 Escape II conviction within last five years ..... 6  
 Escape I conviction within last five years ..... 9

SCHEDULE A SCORE (add items 1 through 4)  
 (If score is 10 or over, use Schedule A for appropriate custody assignment. If score is 9 or under, use Schedule B for Custody assignment. In either case, complete all 9 questions.)

5. ALCOHOL/DRUG ABUSE ----- score  
 None ..... 0  
 Abuse causing occasional legal and social adjustment problems ..... 1  
 Serious abuse, serious disruption of functioning ..... 3

6. CURRENT DETAINER ----- score  
 None ..... 0  
 C or D felony detainer ..... 1  
 A or B felony detainer or detainer for 3 or more class C or D felonies ..... 6

7. PRIOR FELONY INCARCERATIONS ----- score  
 None ..... 0  
 One ..... 2  
 Two ..... 4  
 Three or more ..... 6

8. STABILITY FACTORS (check appropriate box(es) and combine for score.) ----- score  
 [ ] High school diploma or GED received ..... -1  
 [ ] Employed/attending school (full or part-time) six months or longer at time of arrest .. -1

SCHEDULE B SCORE (Add items 1 through 8.) -----  
 TOTAL SCORE

**Figure 3 (continued)**  
ASSESSMENT OF NEEDS

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ AGE \_\_\_\_\_ NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_  
 Last First MI

CLASSIFICATION OFFICER \_\_\_\_\_ CODE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

**HEALTH:**  
 1 Sound physical health; seldom ill      2 Handicap or illness which interferes with functioning      3 Serious handicap or chronic illness; needs frequent medical care          code

a. Observation    b. Self-report    c. Verified Medical History    d. Medical Exam

**ALCOHOL USAGE:**  
 1 No apparent problem      2 Occasional abuse, some disruption of functioning      3 Frequent abuse, serious disruption; needs assistance          code

a. Observation    b. PSI    c. Self-report    d. Other

**OTHER SUBSTANCE USAGE:**  
 1 No apparent problem      2 Occasional abuse, some disruption of functioning      3 Frequent abuse, serious disruption; needs assistance          code

a. Observation    b. PSI    c. Self-report    d. Other

**INTELLECTUAL ABILITY:**  
 1 Normal intellectual ability; able to function independently      2 Some need for assistance      3 Independent functioning severely limited          code

a. Self-report    b. Observation    c. BETA \_\_\_\_\_    d. WAIS \_\_\_\_\_

**BEHAVIORAL/EMOTIONAL PROBLEMS:**  
 1 Exhibits appropriate emotional responses      2 Symptoms limit adequate functioning; requires counseling; may require medication      3 Symptoms prohibit adequate functioning; requires significant intervention; may require medication or separate housing          code

a. Observation    b. PSI    c. Psychological/Psychiatric Evaluation    d. Other

**SEXUAL BEHAVIOR:**  
 1 No apparent dysfunction      2 Situational or minor problems      3 Real or perceived chronic or severe problems          code

a. Self-report    b. Observation    c. PSI    d. Psychological/Psychiatric Evaluation

**EDUCATIONAL STATUS:**  
 1 Has High School diploma or GED      2 Some deficits, but potential for GED      3 Major deficits in math and/or reading; needs remedial programs          code

a. Self-report    b. PSI    c. Educational Record    d. TABE: R\_\_\_\_ M\_\_\_\_ L\_\_\_\_

**VOCATIONAL STATUS:**  
 1 Has sufficient skills to obtain satisfactory employment      2 Minimal skill level; needs enhancement      3 Virtually unemployable; needs training          code

a. Self-report    b. PSI    c. Employment Record    d. Other

**JOB RELATED SKILLS:**  
 1 Has sufficient positive work to maintain employment      2 Some deficits; needs program to develop positive work habits      3 Work habits insufficient to maintain employment; needs strong work program          code

a. Self-report    b. PSI    c. Employment Record    d. Other

**LIVING SKILLS:**  
 1 Presents and expresses self appropriately to social context      2 Has mastered basic survival skills; needs enrichment      3 Lacks skills necessary for social survival          code

a. Self-report    b. Observation    c. PSI    d. Psychological Evaluation

**MARITAL/FAMILY:**  
 1 Relatively stable relationships      2 Some disorganization or stress, but potential for improvement      3 Major disorganization or stress          code

a. Observation    b. Self-report    c. PSI    d. Report from family

**COMPANIONS:**  
 1 No adverse relationships      2 Associations with occasional negative results      3 Associations almost completely negative          code

a. Observation    b. Self-report    c. PSI    d. Other

**Figure 3 (concluded)**  
**INITIAL CLASSIFICATION SUMMARY**

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ AGE \_\_\_\_\_ NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_  
 Last First MI  
 CLASSIFICATION OFFICER \_\_\_\_\_ CODE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

1. Override Considerations - Override: \_\_\_\_\_ code

- |   |                        |       |       |      |
|---|------------------------|-------|-------|------|
| 0. NONE   | TOTAL CUSTODY SCORE    | _____ | score | code |
| 1. Statutorially ineligible   | (from page one)        |       |       |      |
| 2. Protective custody   | ORIGINAL CUSTODY LEVEL | _____ |       |      |
| 3. Psychiatric needs  |                        |       |       |      |
| 4. Detainer   | OVERVERRIDE            | _____ | score | code |
| 5. Documented information of escape risk                                      |                        |       |       |      |
| 6. Lower level of custody indicated by documented evidence in the inmate file | FINAL CUSTODY LEVEL    | _____ |       |      |
| 7. Administrative override  |                        |       |       |      |
| 8. Other _____  |                        |       |       | code |

2. Custody Level Assignment:

|               |  |       |       |      |
|---------------|--|-------|-------|------|
| 1. Minimum    |  | _____ | score |      |
| 2. Restricted |  |       |       |      |
| 3. Medium     |  |       |       | code |
| 4. Close      |  |       |       |      |
| 5. Maximum    |  |       |       |      |

BETA \_\_\_\_\_ WAIS \_\_\_\_\_

3. Institution Recommended: \_\_\_\_\_ Institution Assigned: \_\_\_\_\_

score \_\_\_\_\_ code \_\_\_\_\_

4. Program Recommendations (next 6 months):  
 (In order of priority)

|       | Program Code | Enrollment Code* |                          |                        |
|-------|--------------|------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|
| _____ | _____        | _____            | <input type="checkbox"/> | code                   |
| _____ | _____        | _____            |                          |                        |
| _____ | _____        | _____            |                          |                        |
| _____ | _____        | _____            |                          | score _____ code _____ |

TABE: R\_\_\_ M\_\_\_ L\_\_\_

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

score \_\_\_\_\_ code \_\_\_\_\_

score \_\_\_\_\_ code \_\_\_\_\_

Inmate's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Code \_\_\_\_\_

\* ENROLLMENT CODE

|   |                       |             |      |
|---|-----------------------|-------------|------|
| 1 = Program available   | ( ) PSI available     | TOTAL SCORE | code |
| 2 = Program currently at capacity/unavailable                 | ( ) PSI not available |             |      |
| 3 = Program needed but does not exist at assigned institution | (Review in 60 days)   |             |      |
| 4 = Inmate refuses program                                    |                       |             |      |
| 5 = Program not available due to custody level                |                       |             | code |

Figure 4

CC-1021

INMATE RECLASSIFICATION

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ AGE \_\_\_\_\_ NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_  
 Last First MI

CLASSIFICATION OFFICER \_\_\_\_\_ CODE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

1. HISTORY OF INSTITUTIONAL VIOLENCE  
 (Jail or Prison, code most serious within last five years)

|  |   |       |       |
|--|---|-------|-------|
| None .....   | 0 | ----- | score |
| Violence not involving use of a weapon or resulting in serious injury .....          | 3 |       |       |
| Violence involving use of a weapon and/or resulting in serious injury or death ..... | 7 |       |       |

2. Did above violence occur within last six months?

|           |   |       |       |
|-----------|---|-------|-------|
| Yes ..... | 3 | ----- | score |
| No .....  | 0 |       |       |

3. SEVERITY OF CURRENT OFFENSE  
 (Refer to the Severity of Offense Scale.)

|                    |   |       |       |
|--------------------|---|-------|-------|
| Low .....          | 1 | ----- | score |
| Low Moderate ..... | 2 |       |       |
| Moderate .....     | 3 |       |       |
| High .....         | 6 |       |       |
| Highest .....      | 7 |       |       |

4. PRIOR ASSAULTIVE OFFENSE HISTORY

|                    |   |       |       |
|--------------------|---|-------|-------|
| None .....         | 0 | ----- | score |
| Low .....          | 1 |       |       |
| Low Moderate ..... | 2 |       |       |
| Moderate .....     | 3 |       |       |
| High .....         | 4 |       |       |
| Highest .....      | 6 |       |       |

SCHEDULE A SCORE (add items 1 through 4)  
 (If score is 10 or over, use Schedule A for appropriate custody assignment. If score is 9 or under, use Schedule B for Custody assignment. In either case, complete all 9 questions.)

---

5. ESCAPE HISTORY (Rate last 5 years of incarceration.)

|   |   |       |       |
|---|---|-------|-------|
| No escapes or attempts .....  | 0 | ----- | score |
| An escape or attempt within last five years resulting in administrative action only ..... | 4 |       |       |
| Escape II conviction within last five years.....  | 6 |       |       |
| Escape I conviction within last five years.....   | 9 |       |       |

6. NUMBER OF DISCIPLINARY REPORTS

|                                      |    |       |       |
|--------------------------------------|----|-------|-------|
| None in last 7 - 12 months .....     | -3 | ----- | score |
| None in last 6 months .....          | -1 |       |       |
| One in last 6 months .....           | 0  |       |       |
| Two in last 6 months .....           | 4  |       |       |
| Three or more in last 6 months ..... | 6  |       |       |

7. MOST SEVERE DISCIPLINARY REPORT RECEIVED (last 24 months)

|                    |   |       |       |
|--------------------|---|-------|-------|
| None .....         | 0 | ----- | score |
| Low Moderate ..... | 3 |       |       |
| Moderate .....     | 5 |       |       |
| High .....         | 7 |       |       |
| Highest .....      | 9 |       |       |

8. CURRENT DETAINER

|   |   |       |       |
|---|---|-------|-------|
| None .....  | 0 | ----- | score |
| C or D felony detainer .....  | 1 |       |       |
| A or B felony detainer or detainer for 3 or more class C or D felonies..... | 6 |       |       |

9. PRIOR FELONY INCARCERATIONS

|                     |   |       |       |
|---------------------|---|-------|-------|
| None .....          | 0 | ----- | score |
| One .....           | 2 |       |       |
| Two .....           | 4 |       |       |
| Three or more ..... | 6 |       |       |

SCHEDULE B SCORE (add items 1 through 9)

TOTAL SCORE

Figure 4 (continued)

ASSESSMENT OF NEEDS

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ AGE \_\_\_\_\_ NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_  
 Last First MI  
 CLASSIFICATION OFFICER \_\_\_\_\_ CODE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

**HEALTH:**  
 1 Sound physical health; seldom ill      2 Handicap or illness which interferes with functioning      3 Serious handicap or chronic illness; needs frequent medical care  
 a. Observation    b. Self-report    c. Verified Medical History    d. Medical Exam      code

**ALCOHOL USAGE:**  
 1 No apparent problem      2 Occasional abuse, some disruption of functioning      3 Frequent abuse, serious disruption; needs assistance  
 a. Observation    b. PSI    c. Self-report    d. Other      code

**OTHER SUBSTANCE USAGE:**  
 1 No apparent problem      2 Occasional abuse, some disruption of functioning      3 Frequent abuse, serious disruption; needs assistance  
 a. Observation    b. PSI    c. Self-report    d. Other      code

**INTELLECTUAL ABILITY:**  
 1 Normal intellectual ability; able to function independently      2 Some need for assistance      3 Independent functioning severely limited  
 a. Self-report    b. Observation    c. BETA \_\_\_\_\_    d. WAIS \_\_\_\_\_      code

**BEHAVIORAL/EMOTIONAL PROBLEMS:**  
 1 Exhibits appropriate emotional responses      2 Symptoms limit adequate functioning; requires counseling; may require medication      3 Symptoms prohibit adequate functioning; requires significant intervention; may require medication or separate housing  
 a. Observation    b. PSI    c. Psychological/Psychiatric Evaluation    d. Other      code

**SEXUAL BEHAVIOR:**  
 1 No apparent dysfunction      2 Situational or minor problems      3 Real or perceived chronic or severe problems  
 a. Self-report    b. Observation    c. PSI    d. Psychological/Psychiatric Evaluation      code

**EDUCATIONAL STATUS:**  
 1 Has High School diploma or GED      2 Some deficits, but potential for GED      3 Major deficits in math and/or reading; needs remedial programs  
 a. Self-report    b. PSI    c. Educational Record    d. TABE: R\_\_\_\_ M\_\_\_\_ L\_\_\_\_      code

**VOCATIONAL STATUS:**  
 1 Has sufficient skills to obtain satisfactory employment      2 Minimal skill level; needs enhancement      3 Virtually unemployable; needs training  
 a. Self-report    b. PSI    c. Employment Record    d. Other      code

**JOB RELATED SKILLS:**  
 1 Has sufficient positive work to maintain employment      2 Some deficits; needs program to develop positive work habits      3 Work habits insufficient to maintain employment; needs strong work program  
 a. Self-report    b. PSI    c. Employment Record    d. Other      code

**LIVING SKILLS:**  
 1 Presents and expresses self appropriately to social context      2 Has mastered basic survival skills; needs enrichment      3 Lacks skills necessary for social survival  
 a. Self-report    b. Observation    c. PSI    d. Psychological Evaluation      code

**MARITAL/FAMILY:**  
 1 Relatively stable relationships      2 Some disorganization or stress, but potential for improvement      3 Major disorganization or stress  
 a. Observation    b. Self-report    c. PSI    d. Report from family      code

**COMPANIONS:**  
 1 No adverse relationships      2 Associations with occasional negative results      3 Associations almost completely negative  
 a. Observation    b. Self-report    c. PSI    d. Other      code



## Classification System Administration and Management

Although the Director of Classification is charged with the administration of the classification system, core team members who participated in the initial development continue to be involved in various phases of administration and management by virtue of job function. The Director of Classification monitored the scoring of each inmate's classification for six months following implementation but currently reviews only exceptions and overrides. The core team still meets periodically on an informal basis at the request of any member. The Director of Classification and the Director of Planning and Research remain in close contact regarding data review and future budgetary planning. The core team continues to formally review the entire system annually. Team members feel comfortable with the review process but would like more time for data analysis.

## Classification System Cost

The cost for development and implementation of the system is described as minimal. The National Institute of Corrections provided a grant enabling the core team to receive initial training and consultation throughout the development and implementation process. The automated management information was already budgeted; therefore, the inclusion of data collection for this system was absorbed into the start-up costs. In addition, the assessment center staff and classification personnel were in place to administer the previous classification system. Core team members speculate that the new system may in fact be a cost savings to the agency due to its more efficient use of resources and improved ability to predict bed space requirements.

## Classification System Effectiveness

While no formal evaluation of the system has been conducted, core team review reveals a consensus that inmates are being placed in more appropriate custody and security levels. However, although the needs assessment instrument is being administered and scored, inmate placement may not correspond to program needs. It is hoped that data collection will influence the budget process so that more viable programs can be implemented. Institutional placements must currently be made on the basis of bed space available rather than program needs.

The system also provides clear-cut guidelines that have increased staff effectiveness and satisfaction with the system. Inmates understand the process and feel that their actions and progress can affect reclassification and, therefore, their custody and security levels. The system has been effective in reducing inmate grievances and general malcontent. While 15% more inmates are receiving minimum placements, the number of escapes has diminished. It is not clear, however, whether this decrease is a result of the classification process or other factors. The new system does not appear to have affected the number of serious incidents or disciplinary violations.



Staff have noticed some reductions in the number of institutional transfers. No reductions in costs for housing have been noted although the costs for facility planning are expected to decrease. Most staff also feel that the new system has reduced paperwork.

#### Classification System and Special Management Inmates

Although the needs assessment instrument provides adequate information to plan for male special management inmates, the inability of institutional budgets to provide corresponding programming, as well as the insufficient number of beds in the state system, prevents adequate service delivery. Placements for mental, medical, or protective services are generally provided through statutory or administrative overrides. An inmate whose reclassification results in a change in custody score may appeal the decision to the Director of Classification. The number of appeals has been minimal, however.

#### Classification System and Female Inmates

Female offenders are classified in the same manner as male offenders. However, the effects of classification differ greatly for females. For example, no women have ever been classified as maximum custody, and very few have required close custody. Consequently, custody has a lesser impact on programming for females. Moreover, as only one institution is available for placement of female inmates, resources are concentrated in one place rather than distributed among several facilities, ensuring that inmates have relatively equal access to available programs and services. Since there are significantly fewer females than males, women are also more likely to get into the programs of their choice. Perhaps the most important difference between the females and males is that the female facility is not overpopulated. As a result, the system works more effectively, enabling staff to assign female inmates to appropriate custody levels and better meet their needs.

#### Classification System Use in Planning

The automation of data in the classification system has improved the agency's planning ability. Easily accessible documentation can now project needed bed space in the various custody levels. Inmate programs are systematically known and can be projected in response to legislative requests and budgetary planning. Furthermore, the classification system facilitates provision of data concerning compliance with federally funded programs.

Although staff are positive concerning their ability to utilize the data that the classification system generates, they also see value in expanding the research component to serve as a planning tool for new facilities, programs, and services. At present, however, the system's planning potential remains largely untapped. For instance, the agency

recently constructed a new 500-bed medium security facility without using classification-derived data.

The classification system has generated much interest in regard to parole. The system interfaces well with, and provides better information for, parole supervision. Staff believe that continued research and planning would benefit both correction and parole components.

## OBJECTIVE PRISON CLASSIFICATION CASE STUDY: MISSOURI

### INTRODUCTION

To enhance the effectiveness of both its classification process and overall operations, the Missouri Department of Corrections and Human Resources has developed and implemented an objective classification system, which is based on the Correctional Classification Profile, a system designed to assess prisoners' risks to the public and the institution and then assign prisoners to the least restrictive custody level required for protection of the public, staff and other inmates, as well as themselves. The system also enables prisoners' needs to be matched with institutional resources. The new system has not been formally evaluated, but most staff believe prisoners are now being classified more appropriately, and a high degree of interrater reliability has been found.

### OBJECTIVE PRISON CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM DESCRIPTION

#### Origin and Development

Missouri's development of an objective classification system was a response to several factors. The tremendous overcrowding experienced by the state's correctional facilities during the late 1970's created conditions that led, in March 1979, to a federal court order limiting maximum security bed space. The subsequent backlog at the Reception and Diagnostic Center resulted in more rapid processing of prisoners, which tended to exacerbate the inadequacies of the old classification system, which was highly subjective. Having no well-defined written procedures, classification staff relied heavily on "professional intuition"--personalized assessments of such factors as prisoners' age, time to release, and institutional record, if any, and staff knowledge regarding each of the institutions in Missouri's correctional system. Numerous prisoners were inappropriately assigned security levels, a condition that led to management problems, escapes, and substantial movement of prisoners among institutions.

Eventually, a "worst-case" situation occurred when a prisoner confined for rape and escape was placed in a low security institution and repeated the offenses for which he was incarcerated before being recaptured. This incident, along with the resulting community outcry, led the governor to request a review of the classification system, including recommendations for its improvement.

In response to the governor's concerns, the National Institute of Corrections provided a short-term technical assistance grant to an outside

consultant, who was requested to conduct a thorough evaluation of the existing classification system and provide recommendations, if warranted, to improve prisoner security assessment. The consultant noted numerous inadequacies in the system and made several recommendations regarding the timely receipt and evaluation of classification information and the development of effective classification policies and procedures.

Based upon the success of the short-term technical assistance, the National Institute of Corrections made additional funds available for the development of a new classification system that would minimize subjective judgement while maximizing consistency in classification decision-making. A consultant firm was hired by the state to conduct the project.

Following a year-long study, the consultant firm provided the Department with an extensive list of recommendations and a classification system that included an objective approach to security and custody determination and a standardized process for matching inmate needs to Department resources.

The newly appointed Director of Corrections, a strong supporter of objective classification, initiated a two-phase process for translating the consultant's recommendations into a new classification system.

In the first phase, sixty administrative, supervisory, and line staff were divided into eight subcommittees. Each subcommittee was asked to examine a chapter from the consultant's report in light of questions developed by the Assistant Superintendent of Support Services.

The subcommittees met in February 1982 to discuss the consultant's recommendations. During the three-day session, each subcommittee presented material relating to the recommendation(s) in the chapter it had reviewed. Then the staff representatives met in small groups to discuss the recommendation(s). Relying on consensus, staff discarded numerous recommendations; others were accepted or modified.

Two other important decisions also resulted from this session. A coordinator was hired to guide development of the new system, and a timeframe of one year was established to complete development and begin implementation.

The second phase of development was then begun. A steering committee, appointed by the coordinator, met to determine goals and objectives for the new system. Later, committee members were assigned to head new subcommittees, which would address the components of the new system (e.g., initial classification, reclassification, education, staff training).

In October 1982, the subcommittees submitted their reports to the coordinator, and then assembled for a second meeting. As in the first

meeting, subcommittee reports were presented and discussed in small groups and, after reconvening, numerous recommendations were modified and/or adopted.

At the end of the session, a policy committee composed of administrative staff from the central office was established. This committee finalized issues that had been adopted and resolved issues on which consensus had not been reached. It also rewrote Department policies impacted by the new system, developed classification forms and a user's manual, and defined an implementation schedule. By February 1983, 13 months after development was begun, the stage was set for the implementation process.

In general, most staff express satisfaction with the development process. The in-house approach is viewed as an effective means of obtaining staff commitment and consensus. Still, some disagreement concerning development exists. While some staff believe the subcommittees were of workable size, others think they were too large and should have been reduced to facilitate discussion and decision-making. In addition, some staff think that the consultants should have been present at the first discussion session to provide a better understanding of their recommendations. It has also been noted that implementation of the new system would have been easier and more effective if training, educational, and vocational staff, along with additional caseworkers, had been involved more extensively in the development process. Another concern is the length of time that elapsed between the second discussion session and the eventual start of implementation. Although time was needed to resolve several policy issues and prepare a user's manual, some staff felt the seven-month delay was too long, resulting in a loss of commitment. A final issue is the classification instrument itself. A number of staff believe that the instrument should have been thoroughly pilot tested prior to implementation. Some also question the use of certain scoring factors, which seem to be based more on consensus than hard data. In addition, the instrument has proven problematic in addressing classification requirements for special management inmates.

#### Classification System Implementation

Implementation of the new system began in February 1983 at the Reception and Diagnostic Center, where staff started employing the objective scoring instrument to classify new prisoners.

Simultaneously, staff involved with classification at the institutional level were being trained to use the new instrument. A three-person team traveled to each institution to conduct a three-day training session based on lectures and scoring exercises derived from case files. After each exercise, results were discussed to ensure a high degree of interrater reliability and consistency with the objective system.

In April 1983, staff began reclassifying prisoners assigned to their institutions, although, administratively, it had been decided that no

immediate transfers would result from these new classifications. By May all prisoners had either an initial classification or a reclassification score.

At this time, copies of these scores were submitted to the data processing section for computer entry, and a specially designed program was used to analyze the scores for presentation to Department executive staff. The executive staff believed that the distribution of prisoners among classification categories was inconsistent with their knowledge of the inmate population. As a result, the classification instrument was modified. Scores for all inmates were readjusted, a new analysis performed, and the system finalized.

Due to the alteration of the scoring instrument and continuing confusion among classification staff, a second round of training sessions was conducted during October 1983. Following these sessions, staff continued to score prisoners consistent with the new objective system, and no further training was undertaken.

The most problematic aspect of the implementation process seems to have been the training component. Some staff, for example, feel that a longer training period was needed or that sessions should have included more scoring practice/discussion. Some also believe a larger training team was needed. Other staff think a key person should have been designated at each institution. This person would train other staff, particularly new ones. In contrast to the "key person" approach, some staff think regular training sessions should be instituted. Such sessions, they believe, would assure greater department-wide consistency than training conducted by supervisors, while also updating staff on any changes in the system. A few staff also expressed dissatisfaction that superintendents had received limited training and, consequently, did not seem to have sufficient understanding of the system. The greatest concern among staff, however, was that the administration had not been represented during the training sessions. Frequently, staff raised questions that required administrative interpretation, and the inability of the training team to respond created distrust in the new system.

Several other problems related to implementation have also been noted. The user's manual, according to some staff, could have been better developed, particularly in regard to specification, and more complete prior to the initial training sessions. Increased paperwork was another problem perceived during implementation. In addition, scoring was sometimes made difficult by a lack of information, such as presentence investigation reports, medical test results, and detainer and/or warrant verification. Finally, some staff believe that implementation would have been more effective if it had been done more slowly, with institutions coming on line one by one.

### Classification System Goals and Objectives

Early in the development phase of the new classification system, the steering committee adopted the following goals:

- "1. To provide for the development of sufficient prison capacity in appropriate locations.
2. To provide capacity that is sufficiently secure, consistent with professional classification, to protect correctional employees and the public at large.
3. To provide for the critical medical, educational, and vocational needs of prisoners and to ensure that once these needs are met, that prisoners are put to work to reduce the cost of operating the prison system.
4. To provide sufficient staff to safely and effectively operate each operation.
5. To provide a healthy, safe and humane environment in which inmate [sic] can discharge their obligation to society.
6. To provide adequate facilities in which to fulfill the previous basic objectives of the [Corrections Master] Plan."

Staff report that these goals proved very helpful in guiding initial planning efforts.

To date, no formal evaluation of the new system has been conducted, so it is not yet possible to determine the extent to which these goals have been met.

### Classification System Description

The new classification system is based on the Correctional Classification Profile, developed by Correctional Services Group, Inc., in 1981. The heart of this system is the Initial Classification Analysis (ICA) and the Reclassification Analysis (RCA), comprising eight factors of major importance in determining the appropriate institutional assignment of the inmate. (See Figures 5 and 6.)

Each of the factors on the ICA/RCA is scored on a range of "5" to "1," with "5" being the highest or most important need and "1" being the lowest or least important. The evaluator determines the appropriate value according to definitions provided for each factor. Examples of the instruments used to score the eight factors are presented in Figures 7 and 8, which

Figure 5

Missouri Department of Corrections & Human Resources  
 DIVISION OF ADULT INSTITUTIONS  
 INITIAL CLASSIFICATION ANALYSIS (ICA)

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

| FACTOR                                     | CODE | ICA SCORE | JUSTIFICATION | TREATMENT |
|--|------|-----------|---------------|-----------|
| Medical and Health Care Needs              | M    | 1 2 3 4 5 |               |           |
| Mental Health Care Needs                   | MH   | 1 2 3 4 5 |               |           |
| Security/ Public Risk Needs                | P    | 1 2 3 4 5 |               |           |
| Custody/ Institutional Risk Needs          | I    | 1 2 3 4 5 |               |           |
| Educational Needs                          | E    | 1 2 3 4 5 |               |           |
| Vocational Training Needs                  | V    | 1 2 3 4 5 |               |           |
| Work Skills                                | W    | 1 2 3 4 5 |               |           |
| Proximity to Release Residence/Family Ties | F    | 1 2 3 4 5 |               |           |

PROTECTIVE CUSTODY \_\_\_\_\_

INMATE SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_ SCORED: \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Name and Title)

DATE REVIEWED \_\_\_\_\_ ASSIGNED TO \_\_\_\_\_



### Figure 6

Missouri Department of Corrections & Human Resources

DIVISION OF ADULT INSTITUTIONS

### RE-CLASSIFICATION ANALYSIS (RCA)

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

| FACTOR                                     | CODE | RCA SCORE | JUSTIFICATION | TREATMENT |
|--|------|-----------|---------------|-----------|
| Medical and Health Care Needs              | M    | 1 2 3 4 5 |               |           |
| Mental Health Care Needs                   | MH   | 1 2 3 4 5 |               |           |
| Security/ Public Risk Needs                | P    | 1 2 3 4 5 |               |           |
| Custody/ Institutional Risk Needs          | I    | 1 2 3 4 5 |               |           |
| Educational Needs                          | E    | 1 2 3 4 5 |               |           |
|  |      |           |               |           |
| Vocational Training Needs                  | V    | 1 2 3 4 5 |               |           |
| Work Skills                                | W    | 1 2 3 4 5 |               |           |
| Proximity to Release Residence/Family Ties | F    | 1 2 3 4 5 |               |           |

PROTECTIVE CUSTODY \_\_\_\_\_

INMATE SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_ SCORED: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name and Title)

DATE REVIEWED \_\_\_\_\_ ASSIGNED TO \_\_\_\_\_

## Figure 7

Missouri Department of Corrections & Human Resources  
DIVISION OF ADULT INSTITUTIONS  
INITIAL CLASSIFICATION ANALYSIS

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Number \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

PUBLIC RISK ASSESSMENT  
(CODE P)

Instructions: Circle appropriate level and enter P-Score.

A. Extent of Violence, Current Offense

|        |          |                      |                              |                                    |
|--------|----------|----------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1-None | 2-Threat | 3-Injury<br>Provoked | 4-Unprovoked<br>Injury/Death | 5-Capital Murder/<br>Life Sentence |
|--------|----------|----------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------------|

B. Use of Weapon, Current Offense

|        |       |                      |
|--------|-------|----------------------|
| 1-None | 2-CCW | 3-Weapon<br>Involved |
|--------|-------|----------------------|

C. Escape History

|        |                                      |   |                                     |  |
|--------|--------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|--|
| 1-None | 2-Unsupervised<br>over 6 mos.<br>ago | 3-Unsupervised<br>less than 6<br>months ago | 4-Supervised,<br>over 2 yrs.<br>ago | 5-Supervised,<br>less than 2<br>yrs. ago |
|--------|--------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|--|

D. Violence by History

|        |                   |                    |                              |
|--------|-------------------|--------------------|------------------------------|
| 1-None | 2-One<br>Incident | 3-Two<br>Incidents | 4-Three or more<br>Incidents |
|--------|-------------------|--------------------|------------------------------|

E. Detainer/Holds

|        |   |   |  |  |
|--------|---|---|--|--|
| 1-None | 2-Misdemeanor<br>Detainer ex-<br>pected to in-<br>crease sen-<br>tence length<br>by less than<br>6 months | 3-Detainer, ex-<br>pected to<br>increase sen-<br>tence length<br>by more than<br>6 months,<br>Class D or<br>less felony | 4-Detainer, ex-<br>pected to in-<br>crease sen-<br>tence length,<br>Class C fel-<br>ony or above | 5-Detainer, cap-<br>ital offense,<br>or life<br>sentence |
|--------|---|---|--|--|

F. Time to Expected Release

|                    |                             |                             |                           |                         |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1-(0-12)<br>months | 2- 1-4<br>years to<br>serve | 3- 4-7<br>years to<br>serve | 4- 7-10 years<br>to serve | 5- 10 year+<br>to serve |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|

G. Community Stability, (from Client Analysis Scale)

|                                   |                                    |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1-Regular level<br>(16-31 points) | 2-Intensive level<br>(4-16 points) |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|

H. Sexual Offender

4-Current Sex  
Offense

P-Score   .  .  .

Figure 8

Missouri Department of Corrections & Human Resources  
DIVISION OF ADULT INSTITUTIONS  
INITIAL CLASSIFICATION ANALYSIS

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Number \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

INSTITUTIONAL RISK ASSESSMENT  
(CODE 1)

Instructions: Circle appropriate level and enter I-Score.

A. Prior Institutional Adjustment (Recidivists to be scored at no higher level than that assigned at time of release.)

1. Escapes, History

- |        |   |  |   |   |
|--------|---|--|---|---|
| 1-None | 2-Unsupervised escape over 6 months ago | 3-Unsupervised escape less than 6 mos. ago | 4-Supervised escape (C-2, C-5) over 2 years ago | 5-Supervised escape (C-2, C-5) less than 2 yrs. ago |
|--------|---|--|---|---|

2. Inmate Assault History

- |        |                                |                                  |   |                               |
|--------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|---|-------------------------------|
| 1-None | 2-Other, assaultive background | 3-Unprosecuted assault on inmate | 4-Prosecuted assault on inmate or unprosecuted assault on staff | 5-Prosecuted assault on staff |
|--------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|---|-------------------------------|

3. Other

- |                                |                                      |                                |   |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---|
| 1-No serious infractions noted | 2-Possession of dangerous contraband | 3-Major disciplinary violation | 4-Involvement in serious institutional disturbances, e.g., riot |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---|

B. Adjustment Under Probation and Parole Supervision

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1-No History of supervision or has successfully completed most recent period of supervision | 2-Most recent period of supervision revoked |
|---|---|

C. Alcohol/Drug Problems

- |              |   |   |
|--------------|---|---|
| 1-No history | 2-History, but has not interfered with institutional adjustment | 3-Has accumulated an average of one or more alcohol and/or drug related conduct violations during the last three years of most recent incarceration |
|--------------|---|---|

I-Score

deal with assessing an inmate's needs relative to public risk (security) and institutional risk (custody).

Factors are listed in order of priority, going from top to bottom. Thus, the first consideration to be made in determining an institutional assignment is that of the inmate's medical needs. This is followed by consideration of the inmate's mental health needs, etc. The factor having the highest score (among the first five factors) represents the greatest concern in assigning the inmate to an institution and becomes the primary factor in determining institutional assignment. Where more than one institution has the resources available to address the primary factor, the caseworker proceeds to pair the remaining factors with institutional resources, using the Institutional Resource Grid (Figure 9), until a "best match" is identified.

In order to assure that inmates continue to be housed at institutions that are compatible with public safety and meet the changing needs of inmates, a reclassification procedure has been established, based on the same considerations and factors used in determining initial classification.

Each inmate assigned to the Department of Corrections and Human Resources is periodically reviewed and rescored on the eight factors of major importance. These reclassification scores are entered on the Reclassification Analysis form and compared with institutions' resources to determine if the institutional assignment should be changed to better meet the inmate's needs. Reclassification thus reflects the inmate's movement through the correctional system to eventual release by regularly and objectively evaluating progress made by the inmate in the areas covered by the eight factors. This program also reflects the ability of the inmate to eventually be returned to society as a productive citizen.

#### Classification System Administration and Management

The initial component of Missouri's classification system is administered by the Department's Diagnostic Center Superintendent, whose staff complete all background interviews and perform educational and psychological testing of prisoners entering the state's correctional system. The Diagnostic Center Superintendent is administratively responsible to the Department's Director of Institutions.

Initial and reclassification decisions pertaining to security assignments and transfers are under the purview of the Central Transfer Authority (CTA). The CTA is a new office established in conjunction with the new classification approach. The Central Transfer Authority also is currently responsible to the Director of Institutions.

The classification system will soon come under the authority of a new Director for Classification and Treatment. This position, to be established in early 1985, will be responsible for overseeing all classification

Figure 9

Institutional Resources Grid

|                                       |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Missouri State Penitentiary           | 5 | 4 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 3 |
| Missouri Training Center for Men      | 3 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 5 | 4 |
| Missouri Eastern Correctional Center  | 3 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 5 | 4 |
| Central Missouri Correctional Center  | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 5 | 3 |
| Missouri Intermediate Reformatory     | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 5 | 5 |
| Renz Correctional Center/Male         | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 |
| Renz Correctional Center/Female       | 3 | 4 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 4 |
| Ozark Correctional Center             | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 5 |
| State Correctional Pre-Release Center | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| Boonville Correctional Center         | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 5 | 5 |
| Chillicothe Correctional Center       | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 5 | 5 |
| Ka Cee Honor Center                   | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | - | - |
| St. Mary's Honor Center               | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | - | - |
| Halfway House                         | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | - | - |

actions within the agency, as well as the delivery of all inmate rehabilitative programs.

#### Classification System Costs

The new Missouri correctional classification system was developed through funding by the National Institute of Corrections. The Institute funded, through a short-term technical assistance grant, the initial assessment of the former classification approach in late 1979 and, through its FY 1981 Program Plan, the eventual development of the present classification system.

While minimal Department funds were used directly for development of the system, a moderate amount of funding was expended for staff time and travel expenses to attend a series of workshops conducted by the consultant group. Considerable more funding was expended to develop the new classification approach, particularly to conduct the two discussion sessions during the development phase.

#### Classification System Effectiveness

As noted previously, Missouri's new classification system has not been formally evaluated. However, interviews with supervisory and administrative personnel, conducted eighteen months after implementation began, provide an indication of how effectively staff perceive it to be operating. A number of institutional staff have expressed frustration concerning the new system. Although the scoring instrument appears to be classifying inmates appropriately, inadequate bed space often thwarts appropriate housing assignments. Consequently, prisoners must frequently be housed according to available bed space, a situation that has led some staff to conclude the system does not work.

Other concerns have also been brought out. There is a general perception that continued viability of the system is dependent on the appointment of a single focus of control. This control appears necessary to interpret guidelines, monitor consistency of application, and decide whether suggested changes should be considered and incorporated into the system. This concern should be resolved with the appointment of the Classification and Treatment Director, as discussed earlier. In addition, as noted earlier, some staff believe that the new system does not adequately address special management inmates. Finally, parole staff express some dissatisfaction with the incompatibility between reclassification and community placement needs. However, they also acknowledge that since institutional and parole objectives are so disparate, compatibility is highly unlikely to occur.

Still, most staff appear relatively satisfied with the new system. They had perceived a need for objective classification and think the new system classifies prisoners much more accurately relative to their security,

custody, and program requirements. They also believe it has reduced management problems and transfers.

Such favorable views appear to have gained some support from a recent study conducted by the Department's research and planning unit. Although a direct relationship to the new classification system was not established, the study found that in 1984 the Department experienced its lowest escape rate in ten years, .34%. This finding is particularly noteworthy since the Department was simultaneously housing its largest population in over a decade.

In general, then, staff appear dissatisfied not so much with the new system as with the conditions under which it must currently operate.

#### Classification System and Special Management Inmates

Similar to most other objective classification approaches, the new Missouri system does not address itself directly to the security and custody requirements of special management prisoners. The unique housing requirements of administrative and disciplinary segregation inmates, protective custody and death row prisoners, and inmates subject to mental illness or substantial retardation often supercede the capabilities of the Department's objective scoring system. Given this limitation, the plan developed by the consultant group made several recommendations relative to the classification of special management prisoners. In response to these recommendations, the Department is establishing a centralized treatment unit for prisoners with serious mental health problems, and developed a special needs assessment program to identify and suggest programming for prisoners who may experience adjustment problems.

#### Classification System and Female Inmates

Female prisoners are classified under the same system as male prisoners. Although the system was easily adapted for use with females, some question about its appropriateness exists. For instance, female long-term inmates are significantly less likely than males to be violent, but the length of their sentences excludes them from lesser security levels, where they might benefit from greater programming and work opportunities.

At the time this case study was being prepared, an evaluation was being conducted by the University of Missouri-Columbia to validate the ability of the classification system to effectively identify the security and program needs of female inmates. Initial findings suggest the system does achieve both of these objectives.

### Classification System Use in Planning

The new classification approach was employed to provide an assessment of the types of prisoners in the Missouri correctional system now and those likely to be confined over the next decade. This effort was conducted as part of a ten-year master plan recently completed for the Department of Corrections and Human Resources. The findings of this analysis suggest that new construction should concentrate on lower and medium security beds, with lesser emphasis on high security prisoner housing requirements.



## ADDITIONAL CASE STUDIES

Case studies have also been prepared on the objective prison classification systems employed by the following state correctional agencies:

- California, which adapted the additive scoring scale developed by the Federal Bureau of Prisons;
- Florida, which designed a decision-tree approach that has been adapted for use in other jurisdictions;
- Illinois, which developed an additive scoring scale based on statistical analyses of factors predictive of dangerous behavior;
- New York, which adapted the Federal Bureau of Prisons Security Designation/Custody Classification System; and
- Wisconsin, which adapted the National Institute of Corrections Custody Determination Model.

Copies of these case studies can be obtained from the National Criminal Justice Reference Service, P.O. Box 6000, Rockville, Maryland 20880.

## **Appendix B**

# **Comparison of Decision-making Factors Employed by Five Major Objective Prison Classification Systems**

**Comparison of Initial Classification Factors Employed  
by Major Objective Prison Classification Models**

| <u>Factor</u>                                     | <u>NIC Model</u> | <u>FPS Model</u> | <u>Correctional Classification Profile</u> | <u>Illinois Model</u> | <u>Florida Model</u> |
|---|------------------|------------------|--|-----------------------|----------------------|
| Severity of Current Offense                       | x                | x                |  | x                     |                      |
| Degree of Violence in Current Offense             |                  |                  | x  |                       | x                    |
| Use of Weapon in Current Offense                  |                  |                  | x  |                       |                      |
| Nature of Sexual Offense                          |                  |                  | x  |                       |                      |
| Current Offense                                   |                  |                  |  | x                     | x                    |
| Type of Sentence<a>                               |                  |                  |  |                       | x                    |
| Length of Sentence                                |                  |                  | x  |                       | x                    |
| Expected Length of Incarceration                  |                  | x                |  | x                     |                      |
| Type of Detainer                                  | x                | x                | x  |                       |                      |
| Severity of Prior Commitments                     |                  | x                |  |                       |                      |
| Number of Prior Commitments                       |                  |                  | x  |                       |                      |
| Number of Prior Convictions                       |                  |                  |  | x                     |                      |
| Number of Prior Felony Convictions                | x                |                  |  |                       |                      |
| Number of Convictions for Violence Against Person |                  |                  |  | x                     |                      |
| Number of Convictions for Burglary/Theft          |                  |                  |  | x                     |                      |
| History of Violence                               | x                | x                | x  |                       | x                    |
| History of Institutional Violence                 | x                |                  |  |                       |                      |

| <u>Factor</u>                                    | <u>NIC Model</u> | <u>FPS Model</u> | <u>Correctional Classification Profile</u> | <u>Illinois Model</u> | <u>Florida Model</u> |
|--|------------------|------------------|--|-----------------------|----------------------|
| History of Escape                                | x                | x                | x  | x                     | x                    |
| History of Prior Supervision                     |                  |                  | x  | x                     |                      |
| Institutional Adjustment                         |                  |                  |  |                       | x                    |
| Behavior Characteristics During Incarceration<b> |                  |                  |  |                       | x                    |
| Demonstrated Skills in Escape/Assault<c>         |                  |                  |  |                       | x                    |
| Pre-commitment Status<d>                         |                  | x                |  |                       |                      |
| Psychotic  |                  |                  |  |                       | x                    |
| Substance Abuse                                  | x                |                  | x  |                       |                      |
| Age  | x                |                  |  | x                     |                      |
| Education  | x                |                  | x  |                       |                      |
| History of Employment                            | x                |                  | x  | x                     |                      |
| Program/Service Needs                            | x                | x                | x  | x                     | x                    |
| Other  |                  | <e>              |  | <f>                   |                      |

<a> I.e., death, life, or consecutive.

<b> Behavior observed during confinement in jail and/or reception center; e.g., suicidal, abusive, paranoid, manipulative.

<c> E.g., firearms, explosives, martial arts, electronics.

<d> I.e., own recognizance, voluntary surrender, not applicable.

<e> Includes types of sentence requiring a management designation (e.g., misdemeanor, narcotic addict, split sentence, psychiatric) and considerations such as medical health, mental health, aggressive sexual behavior, and involvement in disruptive group.

<f> Includes gang affiliation, protective custody, and underrated security designation score.

**Comparison of Reclassification Factors Employed by  
Major Objective Prison Classification Models**

| <u>Factor</u>                         | <u>NIC Model</u> | <u>FPS Model</u> | <u>Correctional Classification Profile</u> | <u>Illinois Model</u> | <u>Florida Model</u> |
|---------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|--|-----------------------|----------------------|
| Current Offense                       |                  |                  |  | x                     | x                    |
| Severity of Current Offense           | x                | x                |  |                       |                      |
| Degree of Violence in Current Offense |                  |                  | x  |                       | x                    |
| Use of Weapon in Current Offense      |                  |                  | x  |                       |                      |
| Nature of Sexual Offense              |                  |                  | x  |                       |                      |
| Type of Sentence                      |                  |                  |  |                       | x                    |
| Length of Sentence                    |                  |                  |  |                       | x                    |
| Expected Length of Incarceration      |                  | x                |  |                       |                      |
| Type of Detainer                      | x                | x                | x  |                       |                      |
| Severity of Prior Commitments         |                  | x                |  |                       |                      |
| Number of Prior Felony Convictions    | x                |                  |  |                       |                      |
| History of Escape                     | x                | x                | x  | x                     | x                    |
| History of Violence                   | x                | x                | x  |                       | x                    |
| History of Institutional Violence     | x                |                  |  |                       |                      |
| Percent of Time Served                |                  | x                |  |                       | x                    |
| Time to Release                       |                  |                  |  |                       | x                    |
| Disciplinary History                  | x                | x                | x  | x                     |                      |
| Current Security Level                |                  |                  |  | x                     |                      |
| Institutional Work Record             |                  |                  | x  |                       | x                    |
| Number of Program/Job Assignments     |                  |                  |  | x                     |                      |

| <u>Factor</u>                            | <u>NIC Model</u> | <u>FPS Model</u> | <u>Correctional Classification Profile</u> | <u>Illinois Model</u> | <u>Florida Model</u> |
|--|------------------|------------------|--|-----------------------|----------------------|
| Program/Service Needs                    |                  |                  | x  | x                     | x                    |
| Demonstrated Responsibility              |                  | x                |  |                       |                      |
| Substance Abuse                          |                  | x                | x  |                       |                      |
| Gang Activities                          |                  |                  |  | x                     |                      |
| Mental/Psychological Stability           |                  | x                |  |                       |                      |
| Psychotic                                |                  |                  |  |                       | x                    |
| Special Management Needs                 |                  |                  | x  |                       |                      |
| Demonstrated Skills in Escape/Assault<b> |                  |                  |  |                       | x                    |
| Institutional Adjustment                 |                  |                  |  |                       | x                    |
| Behavior During Current Commitment       |                  |                  |  |                       | x                    |
| Pre-commitment Status<c>                 |                  | x                |  |                       |                      |
| Age                                      |                  |                  |  | x                     |                      |
| Education                                |                  |                  | x  |                       |                      |
| Community Employment History             |                  |                  | x  |                       |                      |
| Family/Community Ties                    |                  | x                |  |                       |                      |
| Other                                    |                  | <d>              |  | <e>                   |                      |

- <a> I.e., death or life.  
 <b> E.g., firearms, explosives, martial arts, electronics.  
 <c> I.e., own recognizance, voluntary surrender, or not applicable.  
 <d> Includes types of sentence requiring a management designation (e.g., misdemeanor, narcotic addict, split sentence, psychiatric) and considerations such as medical health, mental health, aggressive sexual behavior, and involvement in disruptive group.  
 <e> Includes protective custody, major criminal charges pending, and underrated security designation score.