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ABSCONDERS AND PAROLEES FROM WORK RELEASE

JANUARY-JUNE 1993

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ABSCONDERS AND PAROLEES FROM WORK RELEASE

JANUARY - JUNE 1993

This report presents a six month overview of absconders and parolees from DOCS long term release facilities. During this time period, there were 14,910 inmates in work release. Of this number, 1,907 were declared absconders, producing an overall abscondence rate of 12.8. Contained in this report is selected information concerning the demographic and legal histories of absconders and parolees.

DIVISION OF PROGRAM PLANNING, RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

1993

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**ABSCONDERS AND PAROLEES FROM WORK RELEASE
JANUARY - JUNE 1993**

SUMMARY

1. In the first six months of 1993, 14,910 inmates participated in work release. Of this number, 1,907 were declared absconders. The overall abscondence rate was 12.8 absconders per hundred participants (see Table 1.1, p.5).
2. Traditional work release participants had the highest rate of abscondence at 16.0. The abscondence rate for CASAT day reporters was 13.4 absconders per hundred participants. For CASAT graduates assigned to residential treatment, the rate of abscondence was 11.4. Regular day reporters had the lowest rate of abscondence (6.6) of all temporary release program types (see Table 1.2,p.6).
3. Fifty percent of absconders were committed to DOCS for drug offenses, while slightly less than half (48%) of parolees were (see Table 2, p.7).
4. Close to 66% of all absconders had served a prior jail or prison sentence compared with roughly 54% of parolees. Conversely, a larger proportion (21%) of parolees had no prior arrests or convictions than did absconders (14%). Almost a quarter of parolees had a criminal conviction that did not result in jail time in comparison to 20% of absconders (see Table 4, p.9).
5. Parolees served longer in general confinement facilities than did absconders. On average, parolees spent an additional 7.0 months in general confinement (see Table 6, p. 11).
6. The proportion of women paroled from work release (11%) was higher than the percentage which absconded (5%), with the opposite being true for men (see Table 7, p. 12).
7. The racial/ethnic composition of the absconder population is approximately 7%, white; 54%, black and 40%, Hispanic. In contrast, the parole population is 15%, white; 50%, black and 35%, Hispanic (see Table 10.1, p. 16).

8. Twenty-one percent of all absconders and parolees reported using cocaine prior to incarceration. Proportionately, more absconders than parolees used crack or opiates (see Table 16, p. 23).
9. The majority of absconders (52%) and parolees (56%) scored in the non-alcoholic category of the Michigan Alcoholism Screening Test. A somewhat greater proportion of absconders (28%) than parolees (25%) scored alcoholic (see Table 17, p.24).

INTRODUCTION

The New York State Department of Correctional Services'(DOCS) Division of Temporary Release administers a variety of programs designed to ease the transition of inmates into the community prior to their release. These programs are operated at a number of long term release facilities.

In the past, almost all inmates assigned to these facilities were on work release with a few inmates participating in educational release. Inmates participating in work release were absent from correctional facilities for the length of their working day, plus necessary travel time. Many work release inmates were also granted weekend furloughs with family members.

In an effort to ease overcrowding in general confinement facilities, the Department began altering the work release program in 1990. The Department's first initiative was to increase the number of inmates in work release by shortening the time the inmates spent in correctional facilities. Successful work release participants were required to stay only three or four nights at facilities, and on the nights they were living home, other inmates used the facility's beds.

The day reporting program, started in December 1990, further expanded participation in work release by permitting eligible inmates to live at home but requiring that they report to designated correctional facilities for counseling and drug testing.¹

In 1991, the Department began contracting with a number of non-profit organizations to establish residential drug treatment housing for inmates graduating from drug and alcohol programs operated at specialized correctional facilities. Inmates living in these residential treatment centers are still in the custody of DOCS and are assigned a correctional facility for accountability purposes.

All inmates in the long term release program, whether it be educational leave, traditional work release, day reporting or residential treatment, must meet applicable eligibility guidelines and must follow all program rules and regulations. Participants failing to report to assigned correctional facilities or residential treatment centers at agreed upon times are subject to arrest for abscondence. If the inmate returns voluntarily within ten hours, the inmate may be declared a late return rather than an absconder. After ten hours, the inmate is declared an absconder and a warrant is issued for his or her arrest.

The focus of this report is absconders from the long term release component of Temporary Release. Since the majority of inmates assigned to long term release facilities are participants in the work release program, the term work release as used in this report, includes all long term release participants. By way of comparison to the larger work release population, data on parolees from the program are also presented. This report covers all absconders and parolees from the long term release program for the period January through June 1993.²

ABSCONDENCE AND PAROLE RATES

Participant and absconder figures for each work release facility are displayed in Table 1.1. Work release facilities are grouped by location and gender of the inmate served. All downstate male facilities are located in New York City. In the upstate male category, Buffalo and Rochester are located in large urban centers, while the remaining facilities are situated in rural areas or small cities.

In the first six months of 1993, 14,910 inmates participated in work release. Of this number, 1,907 were declared absconders (see Table 1.1, p.5). The overall abscondence rate was 12.8 absconders per hundred participants. Abscondence rates were highest in the downstate male category (14.7 absconders per hundred participants) and lowest in the upstate male category (4.5 absconders per hundred participants).

Tables 1.2 and 1.3 provide participant and absconder data by type of temporary release program. Inmates involved in traditional work release must be within 24 months of earliest release from the Department and are housed at correctional facilities at least three nights a week, with some inmates reporting to a facility each night after work. In contrast, regular day reporters are within six months of release from the Department and all must have approved residences and employment. Day reporters return to correctional facilities twice a week for drug testing and counseling sessions.

Graduates of the Department's Comprehensive Alcohol and Substance Abuse Treatment Program (CASAT) are placed in a variety of temporary release programs.³ Unlike other day reporters, CASAT graduates do not need to be within six months of release, rather they may be within 18 months of earliest release to parole. CASAT graduates are also placed in residential treatment centers where they continue to receive substance abuse counseling, while beginning their reintegration to the community through employment and the re-establishment of family ties.

The majority of inmates in temporary release are participants in the traditional work release program. During the first six months of 1993, there were 8,887 traditional work release participants and 1,424 absconders (see Table 1.2, p.6). This group had the highest rate of abscondence at 16.0.

Regular day reporters accounted for another 4,434 participants. With 282 absconders, this group had the lowest rate of abscondence (6.6) of all temporary release program types. In contrast, the abscondence rate for CASAT day reporters was 13.4 absconders per hundred participants.

Another 623 CASAT graduates were assigned to residential treatment during the six month period covered by this report. Of this number, 117 participants absconded. The rate of abscondence (11.4) for these CASAT graduates was slightly lower than that for CASAT day reporters.

Table 1.3 further breaks down the various temporary release program absconders through the addition of the facility from which the abscondence occurred.

Table 1.1
 Participants, Absconders and Abscondence
 Rates in Long Term Work Release Facilities
 January - June 1993

FACILITY	PARTICIPANT	ABSCONDER	RATE
DOWNSTATE MALE			
Edgecombe	2,562	404	15.8
Fulton	2,488	375	15.1
Lincoln	2,332	381	16.3
Queensboro	4,375	573	13.1
Subtotal	11,757	1,733	14.7
UPSTATE MALE			
Buffalo	554	25	4.2
Fishkill	265	7	2.6
Hudson	418	23	5.5
Mt. McGregor	117	1	.8
Rochester	484	27	5.6
Subtotal	1,838	83	4.5
FEMALE			
Albion	219	1	.4
Bayview	254	16	6.3
Parkside	842	74	8.8
Subtotal	1,315	91	6.9
TOTAL	14,910	1,907	12.8

Table 1.2
Participants, Absconders and Abscondence
Rates by Program Type
January - June 1993

PROGRAM TYPE	PARTICIPANT	ABSCONDER	RATE
Traditional Work Release	8,887	1,424	16.0
Regular Day Report	4,434	282	6.6
CASAT Day Report	966	130	13.4
Residential Treatment	623	71	11.4
TOTAL	14,910	1,907	12.8

Table 1.3
Absconders by Program Type and Release Facility
January - June 1993

FACILITY	TRADITIONAL WORK RELEASE	REGULAR DAY REPORT	CASAT DAY REPORT	RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT	TOTAL
Albion	0	1	0	0	1
Bayview	16	0	0	0	16
Buffalo	23	1	1	0	25
Edgecombe	282	61	42	19	404
Fishkill	4	3	0	0	7
Fulton	269	74	27	5	375
Hudson	15	5	0	3	23
Lincoln	272	43	32	34	381
Mt. McGregor	1	0	0	0	1
Parkside	47	16	3	8	74
Queensboro	480	69	22	2	573
Rochester	15	9	3	0	27
TOTAL	1,424	282	130	71	1,907

CRIME CATEGORY

Fifty percent of absconders were committed to DOCS for drug offenses, while slightly less than half (48%) of parolees were (see Table 2).⁴ Absconders (15%) were also more likely to be committed for property offenses than were parolees (13%). Proportionally, more parolees were committed for violent/coercive offenses (37%) than were absconders (34%).

Table 2
Crime Category by Release Status
Absconders and First Releases to Parole Supervision
January - June 1993

Crime Category	Abscond	Parole
Violent/Coercive	642 33.7%	1,353 37.2%
Drug Offenses	951 49.9%	1,751 48.2%
Property and Other	292 15.3%	473 13.0%
Youthful Offender	21 1.1%	56 1.5%
TOTAL	1,906 100.0%	3,633 100.0%

MINIMUM SENTENCE

The median minimum sentence for both absconders and parolees was 24.0 months (see Table 3). There was variation in the average minimum sentence, with parolees generally receiving slightly longer sentences (2 months, on average).

Table 3
Minimum Sentence by Release Status
Absconders and First Releases to Parole Supervision
January - June 1993

Minimum Sentence	Abscond	Parole
12-17 Months	295 15.5%	672 18.5%
18-23 Months	421 22.1%	759 20.9%
24-35 Months	742 38.9%	1,233 33.9%
36-47 Months	287 15.1%	505 13.9%
48-71 Months	121 6.3%	292 8.0%
72-119 Months	33 1.7%	131 3.6%
120-179 Months	6 .3%	27 .7%
180-239 Months	0 .0%	10 .3%
240 + Months	1 .1%	4 .1%
TOTAL	1,906 100.0%	3,633 100.0%
Average	26.6	28.6
Median	24.0	24.0

PRIOR CRIMINAL RECORD

The most serious prior adult criminal record for the two study populations is displayed in Table 4. Examination of the data reveals a correlation between prior involvement in the criminal justice system and release status, with absconders more likely to have experienced greater criminal sanctions than parolees.

For example, close to 66% of all absconders had served a prior jail or prison sentence compared with roughly 54% of parolees. Conversely, a larger proportion (21%) of parolees had no prior arrests or convictions than did absconders (14%). Almost a quarter of parolees had a criminal conviction that did not result in jail time in comparison to 20% of absconders.

Table 4
Prior Criminal Record by Release Status
Absconders and First Releases to Parole Supervision
January - June 1993

Prior Record	Abscond	Parole
No Prior Arrest	154 8.1%	434 12.0%
No Prior Conviction	122 6.4%	341 9.4%
Conviction No Jail	374 19.6%	888 24.5%
Prior Jail Term	720 37.8%	1,121 30.9%
Prior Prison Term	536 28.1%	844 23.3%
TOTAL	1,906 100.0%	3,628 100.0%

INITIAL SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

The security classification the inmate received at initial intake appears in Table 5. Irrespective of release type, most absconders and parolees were originally classified as minimum security, followed closely by medium A and then medium B.

Table 5
Initial Security Classification by Release Status
Absconders and First Releases to Parole Supervision
January - June 1993

Initial Security	Abscond	Parole
Maximum A	32 1.7%	124 3.5%
Maximum B	58 3.1%	137 3.8%
Medium A	740 39.4%	1,384 38.7%
Medium B	256 13.6%	478 13.4%
Minimum	791 42.1%	1,451 40.6%
TOTAL	1,877 100.0%	3,574 100.0%

TIME SERVED BEFORE PROGRAM ENTRANCE

Table 6 indicates the length of time absconders and parolees spent in general confinement facilities before transfer to work release. On average, parolees spent an additional 7.0 months in general confinement. Looking at median time served, the distance between the two groups was not as large, with parolees spending 14.0 months in general confinement before transfer to work release, while absconders spent 10.4 months.

Table 6
Time Served Before Program Entrance by Release Status
Absconders and First Releases to Parole Supervision
January - June 1993

TIME SERVED	ABSCOND	PAROLE
0-5 MONTHS	510 26.8%	428 11.8%
6-11 MONTHS	612 32.1%	1011 27.8%
12-17 MONTHS	386 20.3%	864 23.8%
18-23 MONTHS	168 8.8%	441 12.1%
24-29 MONTHS	94 4.9%	280 7.7%
30-35 MONTHS	64 3.4%	201 5.5%
36-41 MONTHS	23 1.2%	94 2.6%
42-47 MONTHS	22 1.2%	87 2.4%
48-59 MONTHS	12 .6%	81 2.2%
60-71 MONTHS	7 .4%	40 1.1%
72-119 MONTHS	7 .4%	81 2.2%
120-179 MONTHS	1 .1%	20 .6%
180 + MONTHS	0 .0%	5 .1%
TOTAL	1906 100.0%	3633 100.0%
AVERAGE	13.0	20.0
MEDIAN	10.4	14.0

GENDER

The proportion of women paroled from work release was higher than the percentage which absconded, with the opposite being true for men (see Table 7). The overall contribution of men to the absconder population was 95%, while their membership in the parole group was 89%.

Table 7
Gender by Release Status
Absconders and First Releases to Parole Supervision
January - June 1993

Gender	Abscond	Parole
Male	1,815 95.2%	3,243 89.3%
Female	91 4.8%	390 10.7%
TOTAL	1,906 100.0%	3,633 100.0%

AGE AT RELEASE

The overall median age for absconders was 29 and for parolees it was 30 (see Table 8). Similarly, parolees were, on average, one year older than absconders (average age for parolees was 31 years versus 30 years for absconders).

Table 8
Age at Release by Release Status
Absconders and First Releases to Parole Supervision
January - June 1993

AGE AT RELEASE	ABSCOND	PAROLE
16-18 YEARS	46 2.4%	76 2.1%
19-20 YEARS	102 5.4%	196 5.4%
21-24 YEARS	334 17.5%	617 17.0%
25-29 YEARS	529 27.8%	900 24.8%
30-34 YEARS	423 22.2%	837 23.0%
35-39 YEARS	283 14.8%	482 13.3%
40-44 YEARS	117 6.1%	265 7.3%
45-49 YEARS	49 2.6%	136 3.7%
50-54 YEARS	16 .8%	61 1.7%
55-59 YEARS	2 .1%	39 1.1%
60-64 YEARS	4 .2%	18 .5%
65+ YEARS	1 .1%	6 .2%
TOTAL	1906 100.0%	3633 100.0%
AVERAGE	29.8	30.9
MEDIAN	29.0	30.0

COUNTY OF COMMITMENT

One of the principal goals of the work release program is the successful reintegration of the participant to his community. To accomplish this, participants are transferred to the facility nearest their homes. County of commitment is used in Table 9 as an indicator of the inmate's community.

The majority of all absconders and parolees were committed from New York City, however, a greater proportion of absconders (83%) were committed from this area than were parolees (73%) (see Table 9, p.15).

Table 9
County of Commitment by Release Status
Absconders and First Releases to Parole Supervision
January - June 1993

COUNTY	ABSCOND	PAROLE
NEW YORK CITY		
KINGS	345	669
NEW YORK	641	921
QUEENS	243	446
RICHMOND	14	53
BRONX	347	569
SUBTOTAL	1590	2658
	83.4%	73.2%
SUBURBAN		
NEWYORK		
NASSAU	64	195
ROCKLAND	10	24
SUFFOLK	98	120
WESTCHESTER	43	123
SUBTOTAL	215	462
	11.3%	12.7%
UPSTATE URBAN		
ALBANY	13	49
BROOME	5	21
ERIE	11	54
MONROE	14	75
ONEIDA	2	23
ONONDAGA	7	30
RENSSELAER	4	7
SCHENECTADY	4	19
SUBTOTAL	60	278
	3.1%	7.7%
UPSTATE RURAL		
ALLEGANY	0	1
CATTARAUGUS	0	4
CAYUGA	1	6
CHAUTAUQUA	0	6
CHEMUNG	1	13
CHENANGO	0	2
CLINTON	1	1
COLUMBIA	0	11
CORTLAND	1	2
DELEWARE	0	2
DUTCHESS	5	29
FRANKLIN	1	2
FULTON	0	3
GENESEE	2	8
GREENE	1	1
HAMILTON	0	1
HERKIMER	0	3
JEFFERSON	1	3
LIVINGSTON	1	6
MADISON	0	1
MONTGOMERY	1	5
NIAGRA	2	9
ONTARIO	1	16
ORANGE	9	27
ORLEANS	1	6
OSWEGO	3	5
OTSEGO	0	4
PUTNAM	0	5
ST. LAWRENCE	0	3
SARATOGA	1	9
SCOHARIE	1	0
SCHUYLER	0	1
STEBEN	0	4
SULLIVAN	0	10
TIOGA	0	2
ULSTER	2	12
WARREN	0	2
WASHINGTON	1	2
WAYNE	4	5
WYOMING	0	1
SUBTOTAL	41	233
	2.2%	6.4%
GRAND TOTAL	1906	3631
	100.0%	100.0%

RACE/ETHNIC STATUS⁵

The racial/ethnic composition of the absconder population is approximately 7%, white; 54%, black and 40%, Hispanic (see Table 10.1). In contrast, the parole population is 15%, white; 50%, black and 35%, Hispanic.

Table 10.2 is a compilation of Tables 9 and 10.1 and shows that within each ethnic category, a greater proportion of participants committed from New York City abscond than are paroled, with this being particularly true for Hispanics and blacks. For example, 52% of white absconders were committed from New York City but only 35% of white parolees were. Similarly, 95% of all Hispanic absconders were committed from this region while 90% of this group's parolees were. The second largest group of white absconders was committed from the suburban New York area (30%) and among white parolees, an equal percentage (23%) came from the suburban New York and upstate rural areas.

In conclusion, in keeping with the findings in Table 9, commitments from the New York City and suburban New York areas account for the majority of all absconders and parolees, although among whites, the distribution of parolees by region of commitment is more evenly spread.

Table 10.1
Race/Ethnic Status by Release Status
Absconders and First Releases to Parole Supervision
January - June 1993

Race/Ethnic	Abscond	Parole
White	128 6.7%	541 14.9%
Black	1,021 53.6%	1,803 49.8%
Hispanic	755 39.7%	1,279 35.3%
TOTAL	1,904 100.0%	3,623 100.0%

Table 10.2
County of Commitment by Release and Ethnic Status
Absconders and First Releases to Parole Supervision
January - June 1993

COMMITMENT COUNTY	ABSCOND			PAROLE		
	WHITE	BLACK	HISPANIC	WHITE	BLACK	HISPANIC
NEW YORK CITY						
KINGS	20	192	133	44	335	289
NEW YORK	17	311	312	61	464	392
QUEENS	19	163	61	52	293	101
RICHMOND	6	6	2	13	26	14
BRONX	4	132	211	17	198	352
SUBTOTAL	66	804	719	187	1316	1148
	51.6%	78.7%	95.2%	34.6%	73.1%	89.8%
SUBURBAN						
NEWYORK						
NASSAU	13	47	4	50	118	27
ROCKLAND	0	8	2	11	8	5
SUFFOLK	17	69	11	40	59	21
WESTCHESTER	8	29	6	21	79	23
SUBTOTAL	38	153	23	122	264	76
	29.7%	15.0%	3.0%	22.6%	14.7%	5.9%
UPSTATE URBAN						
ALBANY	0	11	2	16	26	7
BROOME	1	4	0	13	6	1
ERIE	0	8	3	22	23	9
MONROE	2	12	0	20	41	14
ONEIDA	0	2	0	6	16	1
ONONDAGA	0	6	1	13	16	1
RENSSELAER	2	1	1	6	1	0
SCHENECTADY	0	3	1	10	7	2
SUBTOTAL	5	47	8	106	136	35
	3.9%	4.6%	1.1%	19.6%	7.6%	2.7%
UPSTATE RURAL						
ALLEGANY	0	0	0	1	0	0
CATTARAUGUS	0	0	0	3	1	0
CAYUGA	0	1	0	4	2	0
CHAUTAUQUA	0	0	0	2	1	3
CHEMUNG	1	0	0	6	7	0
CHENANGO	0	0	0	2	0	0
CLINTON	1	0	0	1	0	0
COLUMBIA	0	0	0	2	8	1
CORTLAND	1	0	0	1	1	0
DELEWARE	0	0	0	2	0	0
DUTCHESS	1	4	0	7	19	3
FRANKLIN	1	0	0	2	0	0
FULTON	0	0	0	3	0	0
GENESEE	2	0	0	5	3	0
GREENE	1	0	0	1	0	0
HAMILTON	0	0	0	1	0	0
HERKIMER	0	0	0	3	0	0
JEFFERSON	1	0	0	3	0	0
LIVINGSTON	0	0	1	5	0	1
MADISON	0	0	0	1	0	0
MONTGOMERY	0	1	0	3	0	2
NIAGRA	0	2	0	2	5	1
ONTARIO	0	1	0	11	5	0
ORANGE	3	3	3	11	12	3
ORLEANS	1	0	0	1	5	0
OSWEGO	3	0	0	5	0	0
OTSEGO	0	0	0	4	0	0
PUTNAM	0	0	0	3	2	0
ST. LAWRENCE	0	0	0	3	0	0
SARATOGA	1	0	0	8	1	0
SCOHARIE	1	0	0	0	0	0
SCHUYLER	0	0	0	1	0	0
STEBEN	0	0	0	3	1	0
SULLIVAN	0	0	0	1	6	3
TIOGA	0	0	0	2	0	0
ULSTER	0	1	1	6	3	3
WARREN	0	0	0	1	1	0
WASHINGTON	1	0	0	2	0	0
WAYNE	0	4	0	3	2	0
WYOMING	0	0	0	1	0	0
SUBTOTAL	19	17	5	126	85	20
	14.8%	1.7%	.7%	23.3%	4.7%	1.6%
GRAND TOTAL	128	1021	755	541	1801	1279
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

REGION OF BIRTH

The inmate's place of birth is divided into three categories which appear in Table 11. Approximately, 78% of absconders and parolees were born in the United States. Births in U.S. Possessions accounted for another 14% of absconders and 13% of parolees.

Table 11
Region of Birth by Release Status
Absconders and First Releases to Parole Supervision
January - June 1993

Region of Birth	Abscond	Parole
United States	1,494 78.4%	2,833 78.0%
U.S. Possessions	268 14.1%	478 13.2%
Other	144 7.6%	321 8.8%
TOTAL	1,906 100.0%	3,632 100.0%

DOMINANT LANGUAGE

English is the primary language for the majority of all absconders (87%) and parolees (90%) (see Table 12). Thirteen percent of absconders cited Spanish as their dominant language in comparison to 9% of parolees.

Table 12
Dominant Language by Release Status
Absconders and First Releases to Parole Supervision
January - June 1993

Language	Abscond	Parole
English	1,632 86.6%	3,262 90.4%
Spanish	237 12.6%	326 9.0%
Other Language	1 .1%	3 .1%
No Preference	14 .7%	18 .5%
TOTAL	1,884 100.0%	3,609 100.0%

MARITAL STATUS

Sixty-eight percent of absconders and 65% of parolees indicated that they had never married (see Table 13). Roughly one quarter of absconders (23%) and parolees (26%) were married or involved in common law relationships. Only 8% of absconders and 9% of parolees claimed that they were either separated or divorced.

Table 13
Marital Status by Release Status
Absconders and First Releases to Parole Supervision
January - June 1993

Marital Status	Abscond	Parole
Never Married	1,298 68.5%	2,360 65.3%
Married	239 12.6%	611 16.9%
Common Law	203 10.7%	314 8.7%
Separated/Divorced	146 7.7%	315 8.7%
Widowed	10 .5%	15 .4%
TOTAL	1,896 100.0%	3,615 100.0%

CHILDREN

Table 14 displays the number of living children reported by the inmate at initial classification. About 40% of both study populations stated they had no children. Proportionally, more absconders (27%) had one child than did parolees (24%) while 38% of parolees had two or more children compared with 34% of absconders.

Table 14
Number of Living Children by Release Status
Absconders and First Releases to Parole Supervision
January - June 1993

Children	Abscond	Parole
None	735 39.0%	1,352 37.7%
1 Child	512 27.2%	877 24.4%
2 Children	324 17.2%	670 18.7%
3 Children	142 7.5%	338 9.4%
4 or more	172 9.1%	350 9.8%
TOTAL	1,885 100.0%	3,587 100.0%

VETERANS STATUS

As indicated in Table 15, the proportion of absconders and parolees claiming veteran's status was almost identical.

Table 15
Veterans Status by Release Status
Absconders and First Releases to Parole Supervision
January - June 1993

Veterans Status	Abscond	Parole
Veteran	143 7.5%	274 7.6%
Non-Veteran	1,758 92.5%	3,333 92.4%
TOTAL	1,901 100.0%	3,607 100.0%

SELF-REPORTED DRUG USE

Inmates are asked at initial classification what, if any, drugs were used in the six months prior to their last arrest.⁶ The results of this question appear in Table 16. Note that 36% of parolees and 29% of absconders reported that they did not use drugs.

Cocaine was the most commonly used drug by both absconders and parolees, with 21% of both groups citing its usage. Marijuana was the next most commonly used drug and again, the proportions of the two groups using the drug were the same (17%). Absconders and parolees differed when it came to the use of crack and opiates, with absconders more likely to use these drugs than parolees.

Table 16
Self-Reported Drug Use by Release Status
Absconders and First Releases to Parole Supervision
January - June 1993

Drug Use	Abscond	Parole
Cocaine	396 20.8%	756 20.8%
Crack	284 14.9%	347 9.6%
Opiates	298 15.6%	459 12.6%
Marijuana	316 16.6%	612 16.8%
Other Drugs	25 1.3%	66 1.8%
No Drugs Used	548 28.8%	1,303 35.9%
Unknown	39 2.0%	90 2.5%
TOTAL	1,906 100.0%	3,633 100.0%

MAST SCORE

The Michigan Alcoholism Screening Test (MAST) is routinely given to most inmates at initial classification. The results for the two study populations appear in Table 17.

The majority of absconders (52%) and parolees (56%) scored in the non-alcoholic category. A somewhat greater proportion of absconders (28%) than parolees (25%) scored alcoholic. Roughly, another 20% of both groups fell in the suggestive abuse category.

Table 17
Mast Score by Release Status
Absconders and First Releases to Parole Supervision
January - June 1993

Mast Score	Abscond	Parole
Non-Alcoholic 0-4	864 51.9%	1,833 55.6%
Suggestive Abuse 5-8	334 20.1%	632 19.2%
Alcoholic 9+	467 28.0%	832 25.2%
TOTAL	1,665 100.0%	3,297 100.0%

CONCLUSION

This report presented a six month overview of absconders and parolees from DOCS long term release facilities. During this time period, there were 14,910 inmates in work release. Of this number, 1,907 were declared absconders, producing an overall abscondence rate of 12.8. It was found that abscondence rates varied by type of temporary release program, with CASAT traditional work release participants having the highest rate at 29.5 absconders per hundred participants while regular day reporters had the lowest rate (6.6). The overall parole rate was 24.5 parolees per 100 participants.

In terms of the demographic and legal characteristics of the two populations, absconders and parolees, there were a great deal more similarities than differences. Most notable among the differences were prior involvement in the criminal justice system, time served in general confinement facilities, gender, drug usage and race/ethnicity. Absconders were more likely than parolees to have serve prior jail or prison sentences, to have spend less time in general confinement facilities before transfer to work release facilities, to be male, to have used crack or opiates and to be Hispanic or black.

To conclude, this report has offered only a descriptive profile of the work release absconder and parolee populations, and as such, should not be viewed as an evaluation report of the DOCS work release program. Adjustment to the work release program may be associated with a number of factors not discussed here, such as, prior participation in drug treatment and counseling programs, overall adjustment to incarceration, employment opportunities and stability of home environments.

NOTES

1. For complete information on the DOCS day reporting program see *Day Reporting Program Profile*. New York State Department of Correctional Services, 1992.
2. For information on absconders in earlier years, please see *Absconders and Parolees from Work Release: 1988 -1992*. New York State Department of Correctional Services, 1993.
3. For more information on the DOCS CASAT program see *The Comprehensive Alcohol and Substance Abuse Treatment Program: As of October 1992*. New York State Department of Correctional Services, 1992.
4. Absconder and parolee totals are not identical in each table due to missing variable data. Throughout the remainder of this report, data on absconders and parolees from Mt. McGregor is unavailable.
5. Ethnic affiliation is self-reported by the inmate at initial DOCS reception.
6. If an inmate reports using more than one controlled substance, the controlled substances are then ranked by a DOCS seriousness of use scale. The seriousness scale, derived from the controlled substances schedule used by the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA), provides no information regarding frequency or duration of drug usage.