

# 1977 Assessment

## Vermont Adult Corrections

45488

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**NCJRS**

**MAR 7 1978**

**ACQUISITIONS**

**STATE OF VERMONT**  
Governor Richard A. Snelling

**AGENCY OF HUMAN SERVICES**  
Secretary Elizabeth Candon

**DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS**  
Commissioner Cornelius Hogan

Montpelier, Vermont

December 1977

*Special credit for this report is due to  
Martin Fitzgerald, Deputy Commissioner,  
Robert Squires, Director of Research and Planning, and  
Marna Chater, Consultant.*

## FOREWORD

*During the past five months the Department of Corrections has dedicated much time and energy to complete a reassessment mandated by Governor Richard A. Snelling.*

*This assessment deals primarily with adult corrections - probation, institutions, and parole. The last major reassessment of adult corrections was in 1972. Juvenile services have been under intensive review over the past several years, resulting in a new design and approach, therefore, juvenile services are not a major focus of this report.*

*The formal reassessment began with a meeting of Governor Snelling and Department managers in April. Issues were defined and committees selected to work on each of them. The committees made initial recommendations which were then reviewed by the Department managers. The major approach was to gain the broadest perspective and to use support of the best possible data in making judgements and decisions. A questionnaire, interviews, and small group discussions with offenders broadened and complemented the findings of staff. The concerns of the public were reflected by Governor Snelling, the states attorneys, and the district judges. We reviewed the survey of Vermont communities conducted by the Justice Commission. Finally, three previous Vermont Corrections Commissioners were brought together to discuss the report. Charles Adams, Lawrence Bershad and Kent Stoneman added their unique state and national perspective to the reassessment effort.*

*We present in this document the process, findings, and our recommendations. We recognize that assessment does not end but must be an ongoing process to evaluate our goals, operations, problems, and options.*

*Cornelius Hogan*

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## DEFINITIONS

### Agency of Human Services

The umbrella agency established in government to help individuals. Departments and offices in this Agency include: Aging, Child Development, Children & Youth, Comprehensive Employment & Training, Corrections, Economic Opportunity, Health, Mental Health, Social & Rehabilitation Services, and Social Welfare.

### Case Information Development

A project funded by an LEAA discretionary grant to study and revise the offender records system for the Department of Corrections. The project is addressing the basic purposes and requirements of correctional case data, and designing a revised system which can serve both probation and parole and adult institutions. The goals are to increase functional and cost efficiency of record keeping, and to support better case management, programming, and decision making.

### Classification

A process designed to develop the best program for an offender, consistent with protecting the public, and utilizing a full range of available community base programs. The classification process provides the initial review and ongoing major decisions for each inmate from commitment to release. The classification team consists of institution and field staff and community resource people.

### Criminal Justice System

The various agencies and individuals involved with the offender in the process of apprehension, prosecution, adjudications and sentencing, and corrections. In Vermont, four elements are interconnected and interdependent in this function:

- Law enforcement agencies - federal, state, county (sheriffs and deputies), municipal (police departments) and town (constables).
- Prosecution - (state's attorneys); Defense (legal aid, public defenders, and attorneys).
- Criminal court - (judges, juries).
- Corrections - including probation, incarceration and parole.

### "D" Wing

The short term high security unit located within the St. Albans Correctional Facility with the capability to hold up to 20 offenders. The offenders are separated from other residents of the St. Albans Facility.

### Furlough

An approved temporary absence from a correctional facility with the appropriate level of supervision provided that may range from escort to supervision by a field officer. The length of time may vary from one hour up to fifteen days away from the facility. Furloughs are granted to a specific location for purposes that are consistent with the plan for an offender to reenter his community. Eligibility for furlough is determined by the classification team.



### **Good Time**

Offenders in correctional facilities in Vermont receive up to ten days per month off the time they must serve by obeying the rules and not committing any disciplinary infractions.

### **LEAA**

The Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, created by the Safe Streets Act of 1968, allows law enforcement agencies to receive financial assistance through grant aid. In 1974, an additional act, the Juvenile Justice Delinquency and Prevention Act was created to allow LEAA to give additional support through grant aid in the youth area. In Vermont, LEAA funds have supported training, research, purchase of equipment, direct services to offenders, staff development and systems support in virtually every component of the criminal justice system. LEAA money is funnelled into Vermont by the Governor's Justice Commission. The criminal justice system relies upon LEAA almost exclusively as its federal supporting agency. LEAA is part of the U. S. Department of Justice.

### **Out-of-State Transfer (OOS)**

The process by which selected Vermont offenders are transferred to correctional facilities outside of Vermont. These transfers are a result of either a requirement for long term maximum security supervision, protective custody, or lack of in-state treatment or rehabilitative programs.

### **Policy**

A Department statement that establishes minimum standards, sets guidelines, and defines specific coordination mechanisms between divisions, with other agencies, or with outside groups. All policy statements must be approved by the Commissioner. Published policies have the force of law.

### **Pre-Release**

Term which describes an offender who is approaching his parole eligibility date and is also eligible for participation in community based programs. Planning at this point concentrates on getting the offender involved in things that will continue after he leaves the facility and is supervised on parole.

### **Program**

Word that encompasses everything that is planned in supervising an offender's case. It is structured to provide a clear opportunity for an offender to change in a positive way and is measurable. The offender participates in the case plan which is designed to meet his needs and goals as they relate to the Department's operating principles.

### **Probation**

Probation is the most frequent alternative to incarceration. A sentence is specified but suspended by the court. The offender is supervised by a probation/parole officer in the community, and he must abide by specified conditions of probation, such as paying fines and restitution, maintaining contact with the officer, and participating in programs specified by the court or officer. The case is closed at the discretion of the judge, generally upon the recommendation of the probation/parole officer.

### **Parole**

Parole is the release of offenders to the community after they have served at least their minimum sentence. The Vermont Parole Board is the only authority which can grant parole or revoke it, usually upon the recommendation of the institutional supervisor and the probation/parole officer. The offender is supervised in the community by a probation/parole officer and must abide by specified conditions of parole such as maintaining contact with the officer and participating in programs specified by the Parole Board or officer. The case terminates automatically when the offender has spent the remainder of his maximum sentence in the community.

### **Release on Recognizance (R.O.R.)**

Occurs when the court accepts a defendant's signature as surety for appearance rather than demanding cash or property.

### **Sentence (Minimum and Maximum)**

In Vermont, when an offender is sentenced, the judge imposes a minimum term and a maximum term. Upon completion of the minimum, the offender is eligible for parole. If he is not paroled at the time or subsequently, he must be released upon completion of his maximum. Both the minimum and the maximum may be reduced by good time and time held in pre-trial detention.

Zero Minimum - No minimum sentence is imposed by the judge. The resident is eligible for consideration for parole on this sentence from the date it is imposed.

### **Supervision**

Service provided to the community and offender as the result of a plan that is designed to reduce the chances for continued criminal behavior. It includes personal contact with the offender and is supplemented by information received from others such as employees, family, friends, and community service providers. It ranges from seeing the offender on a daily basis to occasional contact to collect a fine. The intensity is adjusted as performance and behavior in the community changes.

### **Supervised Community Work Crews**

Small groups of offenders, usually three to eight, working under the direct supervision of a Department employee in such activities as forest improvement, highway and cemetery repair activities, brush cutting, right-of-way maintenance, etc.

BACKGROUND

Historical Perspective .....1  
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HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Crime is a universal phenomenon. Every human society devises means for dealing with crime and the criminal offender. No community known to mankind lacks a criminal justice system.<sup>1</sup> Every society has required conformity to laws through customary penalties which have depended upon the varied social and political forces of the time.

Our penalties during the colonial times were based on English traditions. Criminals were harshly punished by physical abuse and death. The concept of imprisonment as punishment in place of corporal or capital punishment took hold in Revolutionary America. With heavy Quaker influence, Pennsylvania was the first to propose prison reform. The reform arguments were so persuasive that the American penal system abolished the practice of physical abuse as the primary method for dealing with crime. The new method relied on penitentiary solitary confinement with labor performed by the inmate in his cell.

The 19th century saw major adaptations. Inmates were allowed to work together during the day with an effort toward increasing productivity. Calculated humiliation to break the inmates spirit was emphasized in the approach.

The Vermont State Prison at Windsor, completed in 1810, was built in the style of those times. The fortress type structure of the prison was built to stand for hard labor, deprivation, monotony, degradation, and punishment in the context of maximum security.

<sup>1</sup>*Two Hundred Years of American Criminal Justice, An LEAA Bicentennial Study, 1976.*

During this century a new approach with rehabilitation as a goal brought libraries, recreation, schools, psychiatrists, social workers, vocational training and "good time" laws into corrections. Close security remained a primary concern. Through the mid 1960's Vermont reflected these values. The adult penal system consisted of the State Prison at Windsor for offenders with sentences in excess of one year and the House of Corrections, also at Windsor, for minor offenders. Other offenders were housed in local county jails which were run by elected sheriffs.

About 1966 impetus for major change began to occur because of problems in local Vermont jails, an increasing sense of a need for constructive change, and the beginning of active and intrusive court decisions. Federal funds became available to facilitate the changes, and Vermont began to develop a new approach based on community corrections.

Four regional correctional centers were established in the old county jails in Woodstock, Burlington, Rutland and St. Johnsbury under direct control of the Department. These centers kept the prisoner closer to his place of residence and enabled him to maintain significant personal and work relationships. A medium security facility for youthful offenders was built in St. Albans.

A Department wide classification method was developed. Teams met monthly to determine where an offender could most productively serve his time. Community services offered significantly greater program options. Probation and parole services were expanded by the addition of new staff, and services were enhanced by requiring new and higher standards.

Plans were developed for each offender to move back into his community under the supervision of a probation and parole officer, using existing community opportunities for support.

In 1972 volunteer services became active in each district in order to help meet the individual needs of each offender and increase community involvement.

At the prison an institutional classification team regularly reviewed all prisoners, recommending their transfer back to community corrections when appropriate. Because most Vermont offenders did not require maximum security this new range of programs greatly reduce the Windsor Prison population.

By late 1974, 24% of the Department's budget was being spent on only 2% of the entire population. Future projections of greatly increased cost for the small number of offenders requiring maximum security, resulted in a decision to close Windsor Prison. With this, new strategies had to be developed for Corrections in Vermont.

In early 1975, a replacement facility for the old Burlington jail was opened. The St. Albans facility expanded. A contract with the Federal Bureau of Prisons began to provide custody, care, and programs for offenders who could not remain in the Vermont system.

New problems arose including rising crime and an economic recession, increasing institution populations, hardening of the public attitudes toward offenders, and occasional highly visible failures by inmates in community programs. The overall effectiveness of corrections was being challenged throughout the nation. By early 1977 serious symptoms of overcrowding were being felt in our institutions. Clearly, it was time for a reassessment of corrections in Vermont, and in a constructive spirit, Governor Snelling called for this fresh look on March 28, 1977.

*DEPARTMENT MESSAGE TO OFFENDER*

*"You have committed a crime and have been sentenced for that crime. Accept that fact and begin working toward the time when you will again have full responsibility for your life.*

*During this time, we expect you to earn your way by responsible behavior and activity, and productive work.*

*Many people will be involved in decisions that affect you. Your full participation in those decisions is expected, and you will be held accountable for them.*

*Crime is not acceptable in Vermont society. We can help you help yourself to become a productive citizen."*

## A DIRECTION FOR VERMONT CORRECTIONS

This presentation of Department direction and philosophy is significant because it is a distinct broadening of emphasis and focus from that in the past. It recognizes a wider range of legitimate interests and viewpoints. It emphasizes a sharing of responsibility for the offender among others in the criminal justice system and the community beyond the primarily rehabilitative interest and focus in the past. This approach preserves the basic strengths and potential of the regionalized community corrections system for Vermont as envisioned by its legislative and administrative designers in the mid 1960's.

### MANDATE

The Department has the statutory mandate to protect the public by providing offenders necessary supervision and opportunity, incentive, and direction for personal change.

We have adopted the following working principles in order to accomplish this mandate. These principles form the base for the Department's goals and operations.

### WORKING PRINCIPLES

- The public has a right to be protected from criminal acts.
- The responsibility for criminal acts must be borne primarily by the offender. The responsibility for dealing with the offender constructively must be shared among the offender, the criminal justice system, and the community.
- The long term potential for effective correctional programming in Vermont lies primarily in a regionalized approach. This approach can emphasize the use of community based programs and services, encourage citizen participation, and promote offender accountability.
- Correctional programs must reflect traditional Vermont values including - work as a central concern, a dignified and humane approach to dealing with persons in trouble, and care in planning and spending public monies.

**MESSAGE TO CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM**

*We must work more closely. We share the responsibility in dealing with offenders and protecting the public. Although we have different roles, we can help each other to be more effective.*

## OPERATING ASSUMPTIONS

These principles are now expressed in the form of assumptions for operating a contemporary, common sense correctional system.

- Crime and its causes are not well understood, nor is it fully known what is and is not effective in producing change in people. Therefore, the goal of finding a single solution and approach to this complex problem must be avoided.
- Corrections is only one crucial part of the criminal justice system geared to prevent crime and apprehend, judge, and effectively deal with offenders who have committed crimes. In this regard Corrections has a role in the rehabilitation, punishment, deterrence, reform, reintegration, and in a few cases, separation from society of the offender, and crime prevention.
- The Department of Corrections shares the common inclusive purpose with other departments and offices in the Agency of Human Services, namely, to increase the client's ability to function as a whole person and a productive member of the community. The Department must carry out this purpose in ways which are humane, efficient, effective and responsive. A comprehensive and integrated Agency of Human Services system is essential to move toward this purpose.
- Offenders should function at the highest level of community involvement possible, consistent with public safety. Most offenders can, if proper attention and supervision are provided, live successfully in a community or in a community-based program.
- Historically, closed institutions have weakened an offender's ability to function in the open community. Therefore, offenders should be incarcerated only as long as necessary.
- Social and rehabilitative services should be obtained from local communities. This approach has the advantages of increasing the offenders ability to successfully relate to the open community expanding the varieties of available services, reducing the need for specialized correctional staff, controlling costs, and increasing the credibility of the services in the eyes of the offender.
- Victims have been almost completely overlooked in the criminal justice process. There are ways to develop constructive connections between the criminal, the criminal justice system, the community, and the victim.
- Tax dollars for government programs and services will be increasingly scarce. Therefore, program managers must be responsible for performing their roles. Accountability can be achieved through maintaining sufficient information about programs and performance to permit solid managerial control.
- Active community participation in correctional programs is crucial to promote the sense of shared responsibility with the community.



*MESSAGE TO VERMONT COMMUNITIES*

*Vermont is committed to the regional community based corrections system. This approach allows offenders to remain in your area during the period when we have temporary responsibility for them. This is important because most offenders will return to their home communities. You share the responsibility in dealing with the offender constructively.*

## WHO HAS RESPONSIBILITY?

If these assumptions were accepted and consistently acted on by all concerned, behavior by offenders, the Department of Corrections, and the community would demonstrate progress.

### THE OFFENDER WOULD

- Participate in decision making as it effects them and be held accountable for those decisions.
- Utilize opportunities for positive change.
- Be responsible members of a community, the open community as well as the correctional community.

### THE COMMUNITY WOULD

- Recognize its vital role in the correctional process.
- Accept offenders as part of the community.
- View and use correctional facilities and programs as a resource.
- Participate with the Department of Corrections at all levels of programs and activities.

### THE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS WOULD

- Recognize that there are many legitimate philosophies and methods appropriate for different offenders.
- Provide adequate levels of custody and supervision.
- Share responsibility for positive change with the offender and community.
- Develop staff that reflect the values of the community in response to the joint needs of the community and the offender.
- Inform, include, and utilize the community in the correctional process.
- Comply with judicial and statutory mandates in humane, effective, efficient, and responsive ways.
- Relate positively and effectively with the criminal justice system.
- Provide information and leadership for the general public and legislature.
- Provide the necessary support and training to the staff to do their job.
- Participate with other departments, community groups, and citizens to prevent crime.

DEPARTMENT STRUCTURE AND PROGRAMS

OVERVIEW

Vermont is one of only a few states where all correctional functions are handled by one department<sup>2</sup> using a primarily, regional approach. Because of our size, the type of offender, and the rural nature of our state, this unique approach serves us best. The Department's dual role of protecting the public and providing incentive and opportunity for offender change is exemplified by our dual placement in the criminal justice system and the Agency of Human Services.

The Department is an integrated, co-ordinated system of corrections. Serving both field and institutional populations, the Department is responsible for the following functions: probation, pre-trial detention, supervision, care and treatment of sentenced offenders, and parole.

In this unified system probation and parole officers have an active role in program development and implementation for all offenders including those who are incarcerated. Probation and parole officers serve as the field arm of the correctional center and the classification team.

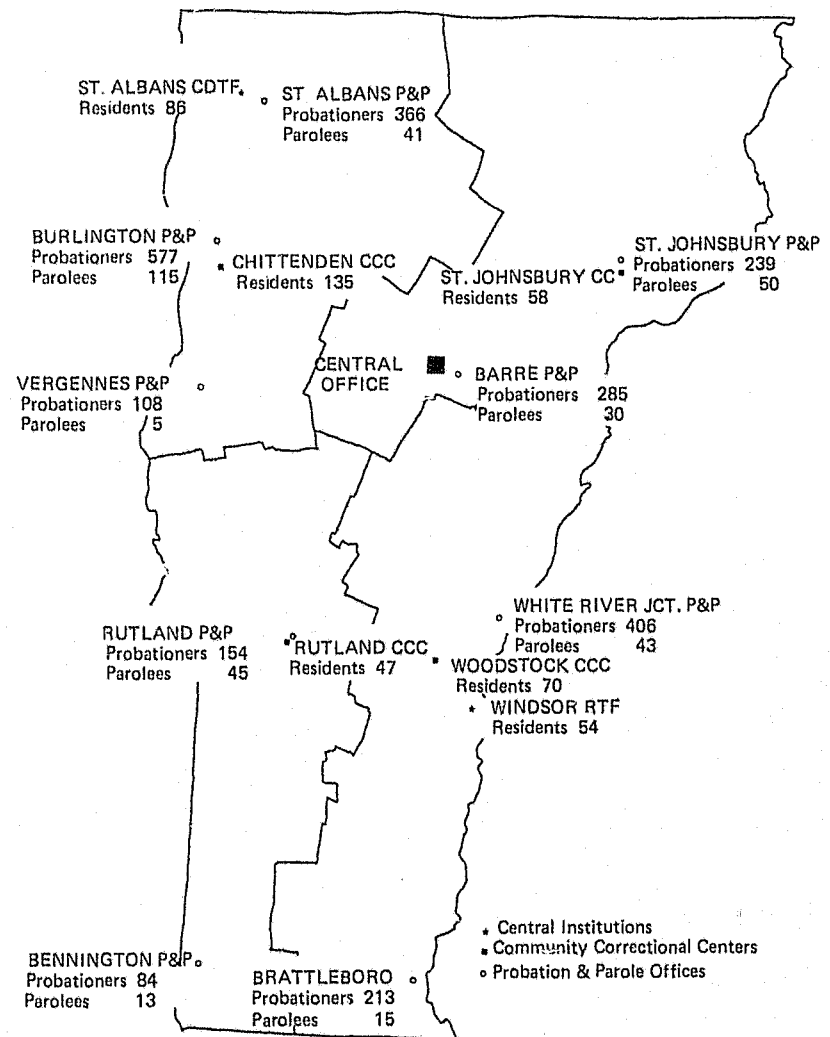
Upon commitment offenders are placed in the nearest regional facility. Placement and program recommendations are made by a local committee consisting of Community Correctional Center superintendent, Probation and Parole district supervisor and representatives from local community mental health, job related services, or other service agencies. These recommendations are implemented only after the personal approval of the Commissioner. Vermont's approach to classification has been cited as a national model.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup>Juvenile and Adult Correctional Departments, Institutions, Agencies and Paroling Authorities, United States and Canada, 1975-1976 edition, published by American Correctional Association, College Park, Maryland, 1976.

<sup>3</sup>Corrections, National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice System Standards and Goals, Washington, D.C., 1973, p. 305.

Figure 1  
Department of Corrections Services, Populations & Locations

Institutions - Average Population April, 1977  
Probation and Parole - Adults Supervised April 30, 1977



Probation and Parole has the sole responsibility for 85% of the correctional population. Two thirds of the incarcerated population are housed in regional facilities. The remaining third are in Vermont's two central institutions or placed in out-of-state facilities through contracts with neighboring states and the Federal Bureau of Prisons. The following map shows the location of Vermont Department of Corrections programs and the number of persons served.

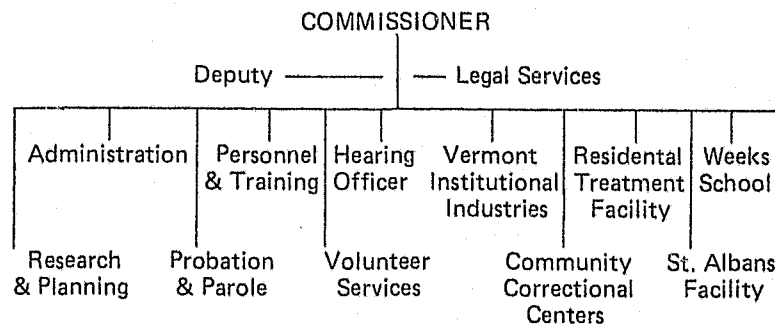
In the early spring of 1977, the Department planned and has since implemented a management reorganization.

This resulted in field and juvenile services joining to form a new division. Reporting to this division are probation and parole, volunteer, and juvenile services. This consolidation allows the required administrative attention to juvenile services which is now in a developmental period without creating another entire division with administrative support services.

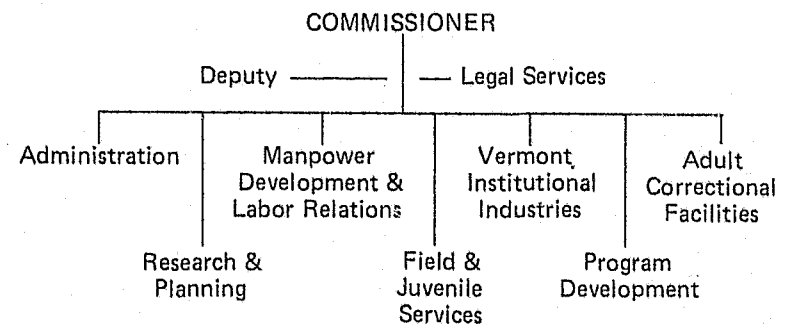
All adult facilities, now come under a new division of adult institutions. During the current period of overcrowding management within facilities can be more effectively handled by one division.

The reorganization was designed to promote efficiency accountability and consistency.

**Figure 2**  
Department Organization Prior to July 1977



**Figure 3**  
Current Department Organization



*DIVISION OF FIELD AND JUVENILE SERVICES*

FIELD SUPERVISION, JUVENILE, VOLUNTEER SERVICES ARE FUNCTIONS OF THIS DIVISION . . . NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED FOR USE OF VOLUNTEERS AND PURCHASE OF SERVICES. . . 3,200 PERSONS SUPERVISED . . . FIFTY-SEVEN OFFICERS IN 10 LOCATIONS PROVIDE SUPERVISION AT 1/20TH THE COST OF INCARCERATION . . . VOLUNTEERS PROVIDE 50,000 SERVICE HOURS PER YEAR . . . TOTAL BUDGET-\$1,341,800.

*Field Supervision*

This division has been nationally recognized for its probation and parole practices. It has high credibility and a solid reputation with other components of the criminal justice system. Responsibilities and services of a typical probation and parole officer are extremely varied. Officers collect fines and restitutions in the total amount of \$160,000 annually. Also, they write or update thorough pre-sentence investigations for the courts in all felony cases. These reports are the fundamental information source for ongoing decision making by courts, the Department and the Parole Board. Officers assist in planning furlough and parole placements and provide direct supervision of persons on extended furlough and on parole.

The responsibilities of this division have grown significantly and presently about 3,200 persons are supervised. The number of officers delivering services has increased from 37 to 57 in the past five years.

The division needs to improve and expand its present capability to provide: supervision seven days a week, 24 hours a day, a wider range of diversion service, more creative use of volunteers and case management that features varying degrees and levels of supervision. For example, some offenders need daily supervision while others who report faithfully to pay their fines need less intensive supervision.

*Volunteer Services*

At this time the volunteer program is providing almost 50,000 hours per year of free, useful, and needed citizen services conservatively valued at \$200,000. Volunteers provide a diversified range of services including transportation for offenders, being a "big brother", and helping offenders find employment. Volunteers are the key people in the development of an emphasis on work by identifying community projects where offenders can work as volunteers and by assisting in the public understanding of the Department. Supervision of volunteers by this division integrated the regional administration of the Department.

*Juvenile Services*

Improvement of juvenile services is currently a priority of the Agency of Human Services. The Department of Corrections and the Department of Social and Rehabilitative Services are the line departments, who have the primary responsibility in this area. Current efforts include better casework, early diversion of youth from the criminal justice process, juvenile probation, purchase of needed services and help for juveniles who are placed in residential and special treatment settings. The Weeks School is the only state level residential program.

Five local diversion projects operate in different locations in the state. The Department's role is to provide information and recommendations to the state's attorneys who are actively involved in these diversion programs. Approximately 300 juveniles are on probation. Also at any given time during the year between 50 and 100 youths are at the Weeks School, and about 50 more are in group and foster homes. Another 50 youths are being supervised after their release from the Weeks School.

By purchasing services the Department is able to address the individual needs of juveniles that would otherwise go unmet. These include residential placement, Outward Bound type experiences, alcohol, drug and mental health treatment, alternative education programs, and other varied services available in the community.

A unique project now underway to further expand juvenile services is an effort by the Department of Corrections and the Department of Social and Rehabilitative Services to develop community based alternative detention facilities. These homes offer short-term shelter care for juveniles who have appeared before the juvenile court and who would normally be sent to Weeks School. This option provides a low cost, more sensible alternative for juveniles who might otherwise be transported hundreds of miles for a few hours stay at Weeks School. Again the emphasis is in keeping juveniles in their communities whenever possible.

A pilot project in the Rutland and Bennington area will serve as an alternative to Weeks School placement for juveniles from those counties. It will include community case planning teams, improved casework services, a residential juvenile service center and caseworkers who serve both delinquent and unmanageable children. The Department is also developing a special program for "hard to control" youths at Weeks School. An Outward Bound-type project is being considered.

The emphasis on improving services for juveniles as the potential for positive impact on adult corrections. First, techniques and approaches can be tested with juveniles and when found effective, can be selectively applied to the young adult population. Secondly, an effective juvenile service system will bear ultimate fruit by diverting increasing numbers of juveniles from becoming enmeshed in adult corrections.

## FACILITIES

### *Regional Community Correctional Centers*

**COMMUNITY BASED CORRECTIONS ESTABLISHED IN 1969, STATE TOOK OVER OLD COUNTY JAILS IN BURLINGTON, ST. JOHNSBURY, RUTLAND, AND WOODSTOCK . . . . BURLINGTON REPLACED IN 1975 . . . RUTLAND REPLACEMENT APPROVED IN LAST LEGISLATIVE SESSION . . . 4 REGIONAL COMMUNITY CORRECTIONAL CENTERS AVG. POP. 308; BUDGET OF \$1,980,000 WITH 109 STAFF.**

### *Chittenden Community Correctional Center*

The old Burlington jail, built in 1888, served as the community correctional center for the northwest quadrant of the state from 1969-1975, when it was replaced by a new facility. The new Chittenden Center, located in South Burlington, was designed for 88 persons. It now has an average population of 132. The levels of program opportunities and activities have not kept pace with these population increases.

*Rutland Community Correctional Center*

The Rutland Center, built in the late 1800's, is a two story brick building. It is located on Center Street in a business and residential district. The facility has had an average population of 49 for the past fiscal year. The age and condition of the physical plant preempt humane living conditions and inhibit sound community correctional practices. Legislature has approved the replacement of this center. Construction will begin in the spring of 1978.

*St. Johnsbury Community Correctional Center*

The St. Johnsbury Center, built in the late 1800's is a three story brick building. It is located on Cherry Street in a residential area. The conditions of the facility parallel those at Rutland. Compounding that problem is the fact the center is frequently filled to capacity and offenders from the north-east area are placed in other centers around the state. The average population was 59 for the past fiscal year.

*Woodstock Community Correctional Center*

The Woodstock Center, a two story brick building, is located in a business and residential area. The facility was built in 1936 and designed to house 60 persons. Additional space, originally built as a sheriff's home and administrative offices, is now used by the center for residents. The facility is adequate and shown to be flexible in terms of its use as a community correctional center. The average population has been 69 for the past fiscal year.

The Community Correctional Centers are the heart of the community based institutional program. The quality of these programs has seriously suffered as a result of increased population. The regional centers have been pressed beyond their capacity as a result of the hardening of community attitudes and the rising institutional populations. The activities that make up strong community base programs, such as furlough and extensive use of community resources, are reduced and are not the primary focus they once were. Presently the concerns are more on day to day operations.

The regional centers are overcrowded. Some offenders are inappropriately placed at those centers. The staff must deal increasingly with the problems of overcrowding - idleness, boredom, and unacceptable behavior. Population, programs, and facilities must be brought back into balance.

*St. Albans Correctional Facility*

40 MAN UNIT BUILT AS A MEDIUM SECURITY, YOUTHFUL OFFENDER FACILITY IN 1969 . . . DOUBLED IN SIZE IN 1975 . . . THREE KINDS OF PROGRAMS . . . DIAGNOSTIC WORK FOR THE COURTS AND THE DEPARTMENT . . . MEDIUM SECURITY INCENTIVE-BASED PROGRAM FOR SENTENCED OFFENDERS . . . SHORT TERM HIGH SECURITY - AVG. POP. 82 . . . BUDGET-\$1,067,800 WITH 67 STAFF.

St. Albans serves the entire state. The facility was built as a medium security youthful offender institution and has weathered a difficult transition after the closing of the prison.

It is a neat, clean institution that uses the daily incentive program to motivate offenders to keep busy and measure progress as they earn their way. It has provided a useful diagnostic service to the courts and the Department over the years and maintains that capability. Also, the facility has a well developed work and treatment program. The staff is well balanced and possesses the necessary experience and qualifications.

The need for a short-term high security capability within the State surfaced with the closing of the prison. The 'D' Wing section of the St. Albans facility was renovated to serve this purpose. It is clearly unacceptable. This area was never intended to be what it is and no matter what is done to it, it will never be what it should be. It is a result of a short-term attempt to deal with a problem and will not meet the need.

The changing role of the St. Albans facility has contributed to strained community relations. The department's efforts will be to provide the necessary security and deal with the anxieties of the local community.

*Residential Treatment Facility at Windsor*

BEGAN AS WINDSOR FARM FOR TRUSTEES IN 1927 FOR UP TO 70 INMATES . . . POPULATION DECLINED WHEN VERMONT BEGAN REGIONAL COMMUNITY CORRECTIONAL CENTERS - 1969 REOPENED IN 1973 AS A PLACE FOR ALCOHOL TREATMENT AND MINIMUM SECURITY PLACEMENT . . . AFTER THE CLOSE OF THE PRISON 1975 BECAME THE MAJOR LOCATION OF VERMONT INSTITUTIONAL INDUSTRIES . . . SITE OF DEMONSTRATION LOGGING CAMP . . . RTF AVG. POP. 49 . . . BUDGET \$337,800 . . . 19 STAFF.

The Residential Treatment Facility at Windsor, like the St. Albans facility, serves the entire state. It provides full time work for every resident. The farm offers work opportunities in an open setting and an alcohol treatment program for those who recognize their problem, are willing to address it and can be housed in this setting. Vermont Institutional Industries is based at this facility. In recent years, Vermont Institutional Industries has employed a small number of offenders but has the potential to become a major source of employment of offenders and to be of greater service to the State of Vermont. The Department has the chance to experiment with a new logging camp and sawmill operation to determine its potential as a correctional option in the future. This low-cost wood heated camp may have significant implications for Department work programs and as a future option in corrections.



*MANAGEMENT AND SUPPORT SYSTEMS*

OVERALL DIRECTION . . . RESEARCH . . . PROGRAM PLANNING . . . LEGAL SERVICES . . . ADMINISTRATION OF THE OPERATING DIVISIONS . . . INSTITUTIONAL INDUSTRIES . . . FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT . . . PERSONNEL AND TRAINING . . . 4.3% OF TOTAL DEPARTMENT BUDGET \$370,000 . . . 45 STAFF.

*Overall Direction*

It is the job of the Department's top managers to create and maintain a flexible correctional system which can change to better reach its goals. The commissioner, deputy, division heads and managers of the Department of Corrections must accurately understand what is happening in the correctional programs throughout the state, and at the same time be aware of new ideas and approaches which could improve operations. The decisions and actions of these managers must consistently reflect the direction of the Department.

*Research and Information*

Since 1969 the Research Division has developed a data collection and analysis capability. The division has been closely involved in all phases of the planning-management-evaluation cycle. It has developed the tools for providing management information (such as, the financial monitoring system, automated training reports, population accounting, furlough monitoring) as well as the tools for individual case tracking. The division has been directly involved in the Department's reorganization efforts through special one-time planning and research studies and through participation in the planning process itself. It will continue in these roles, but the primary task for the immediate future will be expanding the program monitoring and evaluation capability for the division.

*Program Development and Planning*

The Division of Program Development is responsible for ongoing planning in all major program areas. Work, education, medical services, decision making and case planning are all areas which are affected by this division. It is here that an idea is turned into a specific plan of action. Many of the recommendations in this report are already being translated into program plans. This division is also responsible for maintaining an ongoing search for new ideas, approaches and resources which can help our system function better.

*Legal Services*

All correctional systems are facing unrelenting and in many cases successful challenges. For example our neighbors in Rhode Island, New Hampshire, and New York are facing immediate effects of wide ranging federal court decisions that have gone as far as ordering the closing of institutions. The Vermont Department has been severely tested in almost every aspect of operation and, through its legal staff, has passed those tests. In addition to the early involvement of the legal division in potential problems, the effectiveness of this division is, in large part, the product of good judgment and the common sense approaches by Department staff in dealing with the problems.

In the courts this division has successfully defended the Department and its staff in hundred of lawsuits requesting millions of dollars in damages and major injunctive relief that if granted could seriously impede many aspects of Department operations.

### *Vermont Institutional Industries*

The Division of Vermont Institutional Industries is responsible for creating healthy, productive work programs which allow offenders to work and learn useful skills.

Vermont Institutional Industries produces goods for use by the State or local Vermont communities. Printed forms, stationery, milk, pork, guardrail posts, highway signs, and license plates are provided to the State at a substantially reduced cost. The purpose of the division is (1) to provide work programs and training for offenders, and (2) to provide low cost needed goods to state and local governments.

Vermont Institutional Industries work programs are located in the Department facilities. Each facility superintendent supervises the work programs at that center. The division managers provide technical support, production goals, assistance in ordering and bookkeeping, and training for technical personnel.

### *Financial Management*

The Department can achieve its goals only if it can continually find ways to increase productivity and financial accountability. Financial management at the central office level provides continuous information on the status of individual appropriations throughout the Department. Analysis of expenditures helps to find ways to reduce or control costs. Program developers must get accurate predictions of cost for alternative approaches before they can make final program choices which are economically sound.

With the help of the research unit, the financial managers have developed a cost monitoring system. Institutional costs for operations and staff, always difficult to control, have put even more pressure on this system as populations near capacity.

### *Administration of Operating Divisions*

In addition to managing the traditional field supervision of probationers and parolees, the Director of Field and Juvenile Services is responsible for the relationship of community services and the correctional facilities which depend upon probation and parole officers to investigate potential parole placement and supervise offenders on furlough. This division also manages funds for the purchase of essential services for the non-incarcerated offender.

Since the creation of the Community Correctional Centers in 1969, the Division of Adult Facilities has evolved into centralized facility management for the entire adult system of six institutions. Both operating problems (such as feeding, clothing, and housing of over 400 people) and program issues are handled at this level. The division is also responsible for inspecting local lockups to determine if they meet Department standards.

At present the staff spend a substantial part of their time managing the immediate problems which result from overcrowding.

### *Personnel and Training*

The Department can pursue an overall direction only through the efforts of its staff. To do their jobs, staff must have support in the form of training, career planning, counseling, and fair handling of their complaints.

The Department has an extensive training program, supported through Law Enforcement Assistance Administration funds, which provides employees with needed skills. The standards are now being developed which clearly define minimum skills required of each employee. Employees have plans and aspirations, and formal career planning and counseling are a responsibility of this division.

## FACTS AND FINDINGS

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## CORRECTIONAL POPULATION

*PROFILE*

As an initial step in the reassessment of Department operations, a review of the correctional population was undertaken. This involved collection of new data and reanalysis of existing data, allowing consideration of the current population and recent trends which may have changed the offender profile since 1971. Most available data concerns the committed population.

*Institutional Population*

In 1971, the "Comprehensive Proposal for Corrections in Vermont" was prepared. Based on data collected on admissions to the correctional facilities, the following summary of the institutional population appeared:

"The inmate profile that emerges shows young offenders, committed primarily for crimes not involving violence, who are under-educated and unskilled, and have had a significant incidence of prior contact with the correctional system."

Generally this description of committed offenders has not changed. Youthful males, mostly under-educated and unskilled, who are not violent but have previously failed in the criminal justice system continue to make up the majority of the institutional population. However, significant changes have occurred.

The most significant changes are a further increase in the percentage of inmates under 27 (they now constitute over two thirds of the institutional population); a decline in the percentage of residents over 37; a doubling in the proportion of property offenders; and the reduction by over half of the incidence of minor public order crimes (intoxication and disorderly conduct).

**Table 1**  
Age, Offense Types  
and Education Level

Comparison of 1971 and Current Population

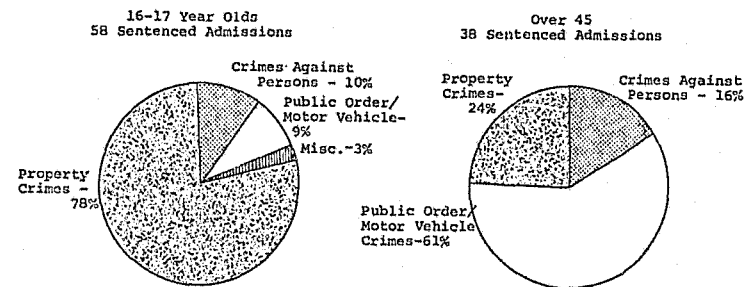
| AGE                                    | 1971<br>Admissions<br>Percent | FY1976<br>Admissions<br>Percent |
|--|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Under 27                               | 55%                           | 69%                             |
| 27-37                                  | 20                            | 19                              |
| Over 37                                | 25                            | 12                              |
| <b>OFFENSE TYPES</b>                   |                               |                                 |
| Property Crimes                        | 26%                           | 52%                             |
| Crimes Against Persons                 | 15                            | 15                              |
| Intoxication and Disorderly<br>Conduct | 24                            | 11                              |
| Motor Vehicle                          | 13                            | 15                              |
| Misc.                                  | 22                            | 7                               |
| <b>EDUCATION (GRADES COMPLETED)</b>    |                               |                                 |
| Less than 10                           | 31%                           | 45%                             |
| Less than 12                           | 73                            | 72                              |
| More than 12                           | 18                            | 4                               |

These changes reflect two underlying changes. First, the disproportionate increase in young property offenders reflects a general increase in property crime which has been well documented nationally and in Vermont. Second, the use of the correctional centers for minor public order crimes has decreased markedly. In 1971, there were 231 sentenced admissions for intoxication and disorderly conduct. The FY1976 admissions were 68, a decrease of 71%.

The shift downward in the age distribution since FY1971 is a reflection of these two factors. The correlation between age and offense type was identified in 1971 and is even more apparent now. The proportion of property crime convictions (51% overall) is very high for young offenders and relatively low for the oldest age category.

In FY1976, 61% of residents over 45 years old were committed for motor vehicle or public order offenses. Only 9% of the 16-17 year olds were sentenced for these offenses. During that same year, only 24% of the older offenders were convicted of property crimes, while 78% of the younger group were.

Figure 4  
Comparison of Offense Types  
Youngest and Oldest Sentenced Admissions FY1976

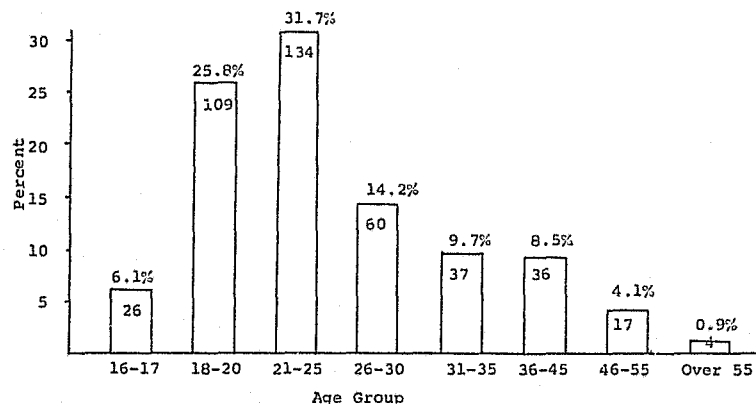


Crimes against persons constitute a relatively constant portion of the total in all age groups over 20 years old. Below that age the frequency is less.

Table 2  
Offense Types By Age Groups  
All Sentenced Admissions, FY1976

| Age Group    | Total Sentenced Admissions | Property Crimes | Minor Public Order/Motor Vehicle | Crimes Against Person | Other     |
|--------------|----------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------|
| 16-17        | 58                         | 78%             | 9%                               | 10%                   | 13%       |
| 18-20        | 170                        | 64              | 11                               | 11                    | 14        |
| 21-25        | 197                        | 48              | 27                               | 17                    | 8         |
| 26-30        | 76                         | 39              | 30                               | 24                    | 7         |
| 31-35        | 43                         | 44              | 35                               | 16                    | 5         |
| 36-45        | 44                         | 36              | 41                               | 18                    | 5         |
| Over 45      | 38                         | 24              | 61                               | 16                    | 0         |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>626</b>                 | <b>51%</b>      | <b>26%</b>                       | <b>15%</b>            | <b>8%</b> |

**Figure 5**  
Age Distribution of Committed Adults  
Number and Percent of Total  
(Sentenced Population of 3/31/77=423)



A census survey of sentenced offenders in Vermont correctional institutions on March 31, 1977 supported this general profile. Over 60% of this group were under 26 years old; and half of these (30%) were under 21. Only 26 (6.1%) offenders were under 18 years old.

About one third of the residents on that day had been convicted of crimes against persons. Just over 50% were convicted of property crimes. Looking at the population on a single day weights more serious cases because during a year there are approximately 600 admissions and a great share of these have short sentences.

**Table 3**  
Most Serious Offense  
Sentenced Population Profile  
March 31, 1977

|                           | Number     | Percent     |
|---------------------------|------------|-------------|
| Property Crime            | 216        | 51.1%       |
| Crime Against Persons     | 146        | 34.5        |
| Driving While Intoxicated | 10         | 2.4         |
| Other Motor Vehicle       | 13         | 3.1         |
| Public Order Crimes       | 10         | 2.4         |
| Drug Offense              | 11         | 2.6         |
| Escape                    | 15         | 3.5         |
| Misc.                     | 2          | 0.5         |
| <b>Total</b>              | <b>423</b> | <b>100%</b> |

An examination of the literature and recidivism studies shows that while some offenders commit both crimes against persons and property crimes, most offenders consistently commit only one type of crime.

The average educational level has remained low. Approximately 40% of the committed offenders report no education beyond the ninth grade, and 70% did not complete high school. About 4% of the residents have some college experience.

**Table 4**  
**Education Level**  
**March 31, 1977**

| (Self-reported) |            |             |
|-----------------|------------|-------------|
| Grade Level     | Number     | Percent     |
| Up to 6th Grade | 17         | 4.0%        |
| Grades 7-9      | 176        | 41.6        |
| Grades 10-11    | 113        | 26.7        |
| Grade 12 or GED | 102        | 24.1        |
| Some College    | 15         | 3.6         |
| <b>Total</b>    | <b>423</b> | <b>100%</b> |

**Table 5**  
**Marital Status**  
**March 31, 1977**

| Status       | Number     | Percent     |
|--------------|------------|-------------|
| Single       | 269        | 63.6%       |
| Divorced     | 51         | 12.1%       |
| Married      | 102        | 24.1        |
| Unknown      | 1          | 0.2         |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>423</b> | <b>100%</b> |

The great majority of the sentenced offenders had experiences with the criminal justice system. Almost 90% had either juvenile or adult convictions, over 70% had been on probation, over half had previously been sentenced to adult institutions. Nearly one quarter of the residents had been in the Weeks School.

**Table 6**  
**Prior Criminal History**  
**Sentenced Residents - March 31, 1977**

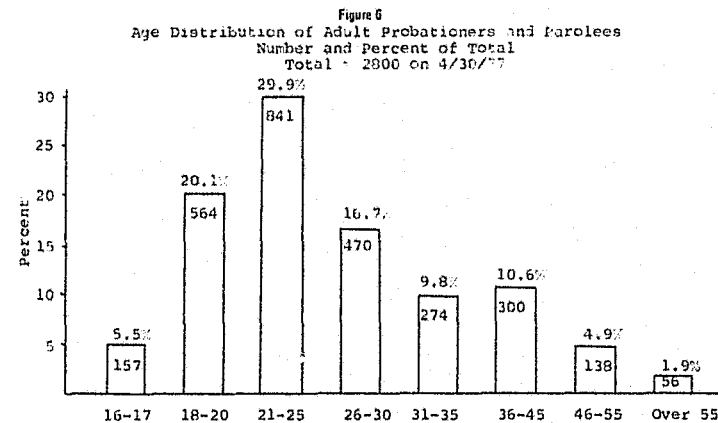
| Criminal History                           | Number | Percent |
|--|--------|---------|
| <u>Juvenile</u>                            |        |         |
| Prior Juvenile Probation                   | 82     | 19.4%   |
| Prior Juvenile Commitments to Weeks School | 99     | 23.4    |
| <u>Adult</u>                               |        |         |
| Prior Adult Convictions                    | 349    | 82.5    |
| Prior Adult Probations                     | 299    | 70.7    |
| Prior Adult Incarcerations                 | 228    | 53.9    |
| Prior Felonies                             | 183    | 43.2    |

Substance abuse is characteristic of the great majority of sentenced residents and alcohol abuse most common. Over 60% of the offenders sentenced to over a year either have a history of excessive alcohol use or were intoxicated at the time of the offense. For less serious crimes, such as disorderly conduct and motor vehicle offenses, alcohol involvement is even higher.

Use of other drugs has steadily increased in recent years. A review of recent parole cases shows that now over 40% of parolees had used drugs to some degree. Given the changing social patterns in recent years, this is not surprising. Three recent high school surveys show that well over half of all high school students try marijuana by graduation. The use of drugs is much less frequently clearly related to the offense than is alcohol.

*Probation Population Profile*

A census survey of the probation population is being conducted but a few facts are already apparent. The clients under field supervision also tend to be young and non-violent offenders. Their age distribution is similar to that for sentenced offenders. There are approximately 350 female probationers and parolees, comprising about 11% of the field population. Less than 3% of the institutional population are women.





**Table 7**  
OFFENSE DISTRIBUTION FOR 1976 PROBATION CASES

| Offense Type           | N           | Percent       |
|------------------------|-------------|---------------|
| Crimes Against Persons | 220         | 7.8%          |
| Property               | 1092        | 39.0          |
| Public Order*          | 426         | 15.2          |
| Motor Vehicle          | 960         | 34.3          |
| Drugs                  | 104         | 3.7           |
| <b>TOTAL</b>           | <b>2802</b> | <b>100.0%</b> |

\*Mainly Disorderly Conduct and Intoxication.

As the above table shows, people are placed on probation for a broad range of offenses and for a variety of reasons. In 1976, nearly 35% of all probation cases resulted from conviction for motor vehicle offenses, including driving while intoxicated. Nearly 40% of the total probation cases (over 1,000 convictions) were for property offenses. Only 7.8% of the convictions resulted from crimes against persons, and only one quarter of these were felonies. Less than 15% of all offenses were felonies. This broad spectrum of offenders requires varying levels of supervision.

**Table 8**  
Education Level  
Probationer Sample - April 30, 1977

(Self-reported)

| Grade Level      | Percent of Total |
|------------------|------------------|
| Up to 6th Grade  | 3%               |
| Grades 7-9       | 30               |
| Grades 10-11     | 33               |
| Grades 12 or GED | 25               |
| Some College     | 9                |
| <b>Total</b>     | <b>100%</b>      |

The average educational level for probationers is also similar to that for committed offenders. One third of the probationers in the sample report no education beyond the ninth grade; over two thirds have not completed high school.

Probationers, of course, have criminal records less often than sentenced offenders. Over half of the sample of probationers had no criminal history, about one in three had been on probation before, about 15% had been incarcerated.

### Problems plague state prisons

Federal courts have ordered prison improvements in a number of other states, among them Oklahoma, Delaware, and Alabama.

Oklahoma is acting to reduce its inmate population at the same time it is appealing a June federal court order. More inmates will be eligible for early release under a policy adopted in September by the Oklahoma pardon and parole board. Prison conditions are being investigated by a committee of state legislators and citizens. The group was told that the inmate population at McAlester prison had fallen to 1,242 in September, a decrease of 266 in three months.

Alabama, under an August 1975 federal court order not to accept new prisoners until its prison population is reduced to 2,600, is struggling to find locations for new prisons. Local protests have eliminated several proposed sites.

Delaware Governor Pierre S. du Pont announced a master corrections plan recently which includes two new prisons. He appointed a committee to select locations. A federal court February 16 ordered an end to overcrowding at the state prison.

Georgia Governor George Busbee announced that the state's share of federal funds under the Local Public Works Act, some \$8.1 million, would go to rehabilitation programs for youthful offenders in state prisons.

Michigan plans to use a portion of a closed down Air Force base as a medium security prison for up to 700 inmates. The correctional facility will employ 268 persons and help the Upper Peninsula economy recover from the military base closing.

In Maine...

### REPORT RECOMMENDS REGIONAL JAILS TO RELIEVE PRISON OVERCROWDING

## Prison To Close In Rhode Island

PROVIDENCE (AP)—A federal judge said today Rhode Island's maximum security prison "presents an imminent public health fire and safety hazard" and must be closed within 90 days.

WILLIAM P. FRANK

J.S. Judge Murray M. Schwartz yesterday gave the state until Monday to submit a plan to reduce the population of the Delaware Correctional Center near Smyrna by 20 per cent "as soon as possible."

Otherwise, Schwartz indicated he will consider a petition to admit new prisoners from the prison population of the jail until the total population drops below 331.

The population of the five-year-old 112 million prison is now about 745, with scores of inmates sleeping on floors in day rooms and in

### Old, crowded jails are common in U.S.

Rhode Island is not the only state with outdated, crowded prison facilities. Prisons more than 50 years old now house more than 42 percent of all federal and state inmates, and prisons more than 100 years old house one third of all maximum security inmates, according to a report to Congress by the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA).

ly 16 states have surplus prison space of more than 100. Prisoners and staff have been endangered by crowding two and more inmates in cells designed for one, the report commented. It cited deplorable prison conditions and noted that most maximum security prisons provide less than the recommended 60 square feet of space per inmate.

### MARYLAND'S TROOP SHIP PRISON IDEA SUNK BY BUREAUCRATIC MUMBO-JUMBO

Desperate To Relieve Inmate Overcrowding Maryland Seeks To Lease Army Stockade Prisons Now 'Squeezing All The Beds We Can In All The Available Space'

The idea of converting a mothballed Navy troop carrier into a floating prison, for months the brightest hope of Maryland's Division of Correction in relieving its now acute prison overcrowding, is one of Washington's

Prison

### Crowding Dangerous

BOSTON (AP)—A governor's advisory panel is warning the state there will be a rising tide of "rape and death" in Massachusetts prisons unless overcrowding is alleviated.

"Men are packed in like rats, and that means rape and death," said Robert Palmer, chairman of the Governor's Advisory Committee on Correction. "Within a few weeks there will be major trouble in the institutions."

the National Clearinghouse for Criminal Justice, Planning and Architecture. Ranked as the top five in rate of commitment in 1976 were the District of Columbia, North Carolina, Delaware, South Carolina, and Georgia. The number of prisoners committed to state institutions has risen from 132,463 in 1974 to 156,965 in 1976.

*CURRENT POPULATION LEVELS**Institutions*

The national prison population has been rapidly increasing over the past five years. The implications of national overcrowding are staggering. The human waste, financial cost, loss of potential for offender rehabilitation, risk to inmates and staff, and the disruption of the criminal justice system are deplorable.

In some states this has caused problems beyond the crisis level. Many states are under court order to relieve overcrowding on constitutional grounds. Unforeseen measures are being implemented to meet the space requirements, such as employing trailers, old hospitals, even attempts to use surplus U.S. troop ships.

Vermont is also experiencing substantial increases in its committed correctional population. Major negative effects on the operations of the Department have resulted from overcrowding. To date, overcrowding has not directly reduced this Department's ability to protect the public. But the cost has been directly at the expense of providing adequate opportunities to offenders. Institutional staff must spend more and more energy in maintaining order and discipline. Residents are transferred to balance weekend populations. This transient population prevents orderly program implementation for other residents as well as requiring a non-productive investment of staff energy at all levels. Under these conditions, the Community Correctional Centers are not adequate to provide needed program opportunities.

Several levels of capacity are defined to reflect varying degrees of program capability.

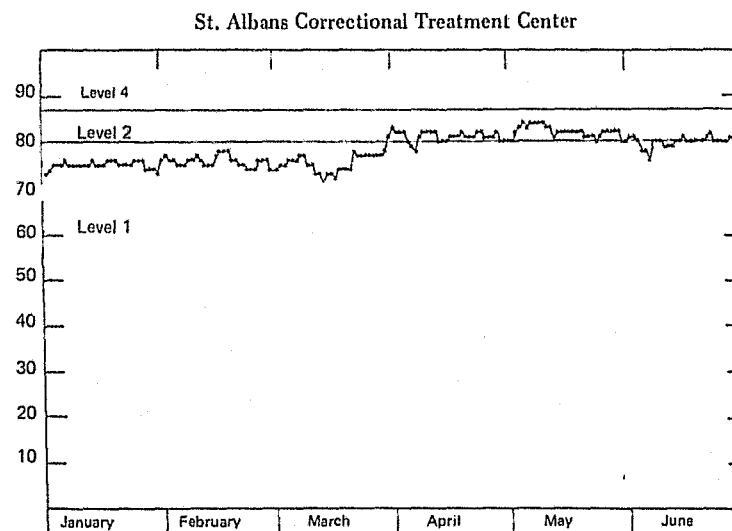
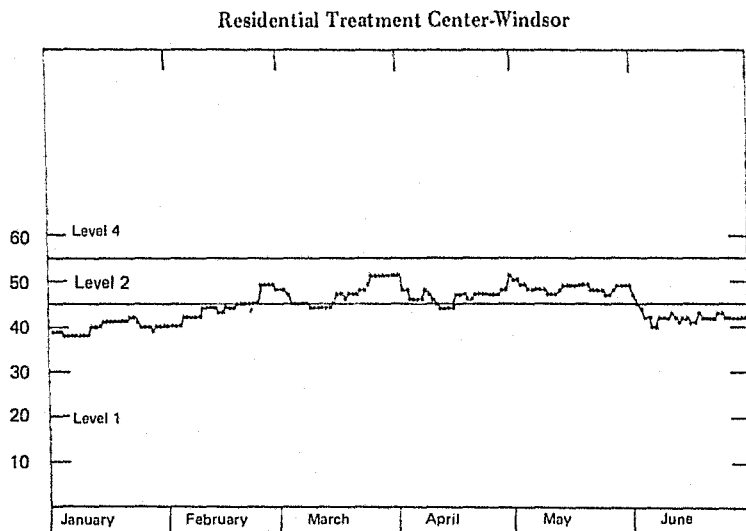
- Level 1 - **Full Program Opportunities:** Level within which current staff, management systems, and facilities can fully meet the Department goals for committed offenders.
- Level 2 - **Declining Program Opportunities:** From Level 1 to this point, program options and effectiveness decline. Symptoms of overcrowding such as idleness and negative behavior occur.
- Level 3 - **Minimal Program Opportunities:** Individual program and offenders opportunities are severely limited. Resources must go to maintaining security and order. Population between levels 2 and 3 have substantial budgetary impact as facility superintendents must exceed staff allocations (through use of overtime or temporaries) to meet program and security standards.
- Level 4 - **Unsafe Operations:** All but a minimal safety margin of bed space is occupied. There is a potential danger to staff and inmates.

Various factors were considered in defining each facility's capacities at these four levels: size, age, condition of physical plant, staffing patterns, and program opportunities.

System-wide, if all institutions were at population Level 1 the total population would be up to 365; at Level 2, beyond which most resources must go to maintaining security and order, the capacity is 430. The average adult in-house population has averaged 416 over the last six months. However, the average total system population is a misleading measure of the population level because it does not show the regional imbalances, the disruptive transfers that correct those imbalances, or the day to day variation in populations that occur particularly on weekends.

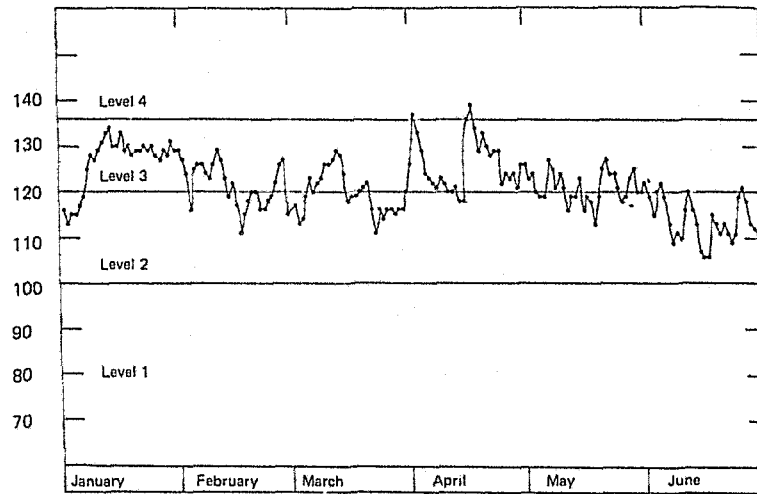
The figures which follow show these four capacity levels for each of the institutions and the daily population for each from January to June 1977.

**Figure 7**  
**VERMONT ADULT INSTITUTIONS**  
**IN-HOUSE POPULATION**  
 January - June 1977

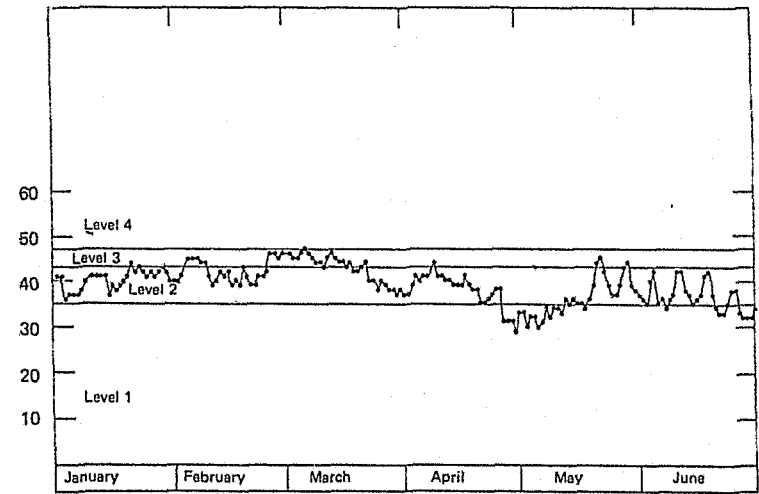


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- Level 2 - **Declining Program Opportunities:** From Level 1 to this point, program options and effectiveness decline. Symptoms of overcrowding such as idleness and negative behavior occur.
- Level 3 - **Minimal Program Opportunities:** Individual program and offenders opportunities are severely limited. Resources must go to maintaining security and order. Population between levels 2 and 3 have substantial budgetary impact as facility superintendents must exceed staff allocations (through use of overtime or temporaries) to meet program and security standards.
- Level 4 - **Unsafe Operations:** All but a minimal safety margin of bed space is occupied. There is a potential danger to staff and inmates.

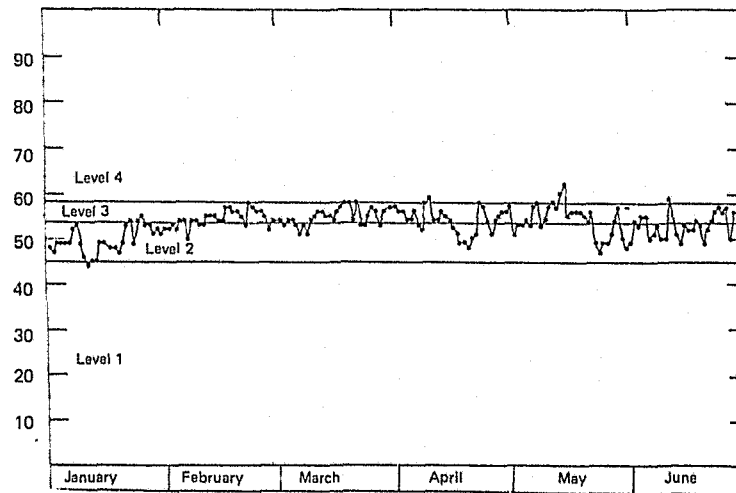
Chittenden Community Correctional Center



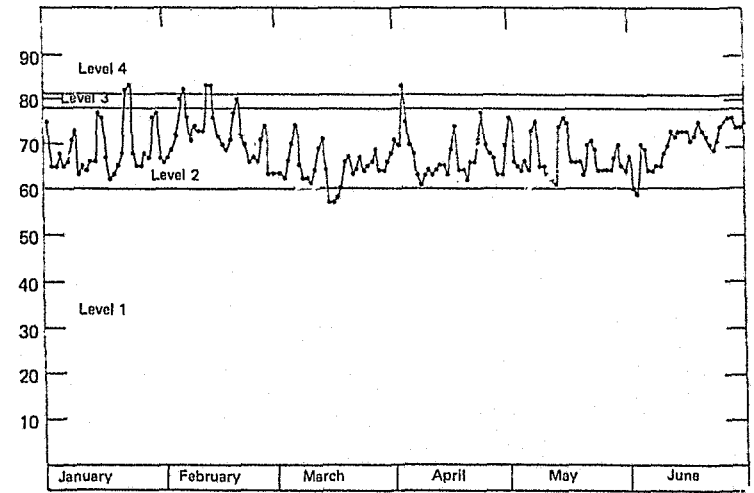
Rutland Community Correctional Center



St. Johnsbury Community Correctional Center



Woodstock Community Correctional Center



Defining these capacity levels facilitates an understanding of the dimensions of overcrowding and the opportunities for managing the current population levels.

Roughly 30% of the time the Community Correctional Centers were at population levels for which current resources and programs can provide only minimal opportunities for change. On thirteen occasions they were beyond safe operating levels. Nearly two thirds of the days the Correctional Centers were at the Level 2 range of declining opportunities. The central institutions, St. Albans and Windsor, are in relatively good shape although recent population expansions at those facilities may mean some program deterioration because staff allocations have not increased.

Table 9  
PERCENT OF DAYS IN POPULATION LEVELS BY INSTITUTION  
January - June, 1977

| Institution       | (1) Full Program Opportunities | (2) Declining Program Opportunities | (3) Minimal Program Opportunities | (4) Unsafe Operations |
|-------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Chittenden CCC    | .0%                            | 47.0%                               | 51.0%                             | 1.1%                  |
| Rutland CCC       | 19.3%                          | 62.4                                | 18.2                              | 0                     |
| St. Johnsbury CCC | 2.2                            | 55.2                                | 39.8                              | 2.8                   |
| Woodstock CCC     | 3.3                            | 92.3                                | 1.1                               | 3.3                   |
| All CCC's         | 6.2%                           | 64.2%                               | 27.8%                             | 1.8%                  |
| Windsor RTP       | 55.8%                          | 44.8                                | 0                                 | 0                     |
| St. Albans CDRF   | 68.0%                          | 32.0                                | 0                                 | 0                     |
| All Institutions  | 24.8%                          | 55.5%                               | 18.5%                             | 1.2%                  |

The Chittenden facility is new and can have greater flexibility in responding to population pressure. Improved program opportunities can substantially increase these Levels 1 and 2. Woodstock Community Correctional Center physical plant also has the capacity to raise the level beyond which programs suffer. The Rutland and St. Johnsbury Community Correctional Centers are, however, severely restricted by their physical structure. Although program opportunities at either facility can be improved, they will remain inadequate for any population over Level 1 as currently identified.

Figure 7 does not show the capacities available in each of the facilities for each of three defined security levels, namely minimum, medium, and high security. Although there is a need for minimum security space, particularly in Rutland and St. Johnsbury, the Correctional Center superintendents have indicated a pressing need for more medium security space. There is currently a waiting list of over 20 for the medium security incentive program at the St. Albans facility. The St. Albans facility is currently operating at or near capacity. Expansion of the program is needed. A survey of the Community Correctional Center superintendents has indicated there is additional need beyond the waiting list.

The population levels are monitored closely from the central office and transfers of residents to adjust regional imbalances are common. If these did not occur, many more days at unsafe levels would be evident. Planning to resolve the overcrowding situation must consider these regional overflows as well as actual institution population.

Looking to each region, we find that the St. Johnsbury area is the most overburdened and is having the largest impact on the system. During a three month period this facility transferred twenty two residents to other centers and received only six. On the day of the sentenced offender survey, a substantial number of northeast residents were in the centers in Chittenden and Woodstock. A disproportionate number was also at the Windsor Residential Treatment Facility.

Current population levels at the Chittenden Center also are having effects on the system, but on balance the effect is not as severe as the St. Johnsbury Center. The transfers to and from Chittenden are roughly equal, and most of the residents from the Chittenden region remain at that Center.

The Rutland facility is continually full, but to date it has not seriously impacted on the other institutions as much as St. Johnsbury or Chittenden.

Woodstock has had to bear much of the excess in population. So far the facility is large enough and adequate to maintain this large population but, given current staffing levels, the population during January to June, 1977, has been in the Level 3 (Minimal Program Opportunities) over 90% of the time. These dislocations and transfers are summarized in Figure 8.

Figure 8  
HOME REGION OF CORRECTIONAL CENTERS  
SENTENCED POPULATION 3/31/77

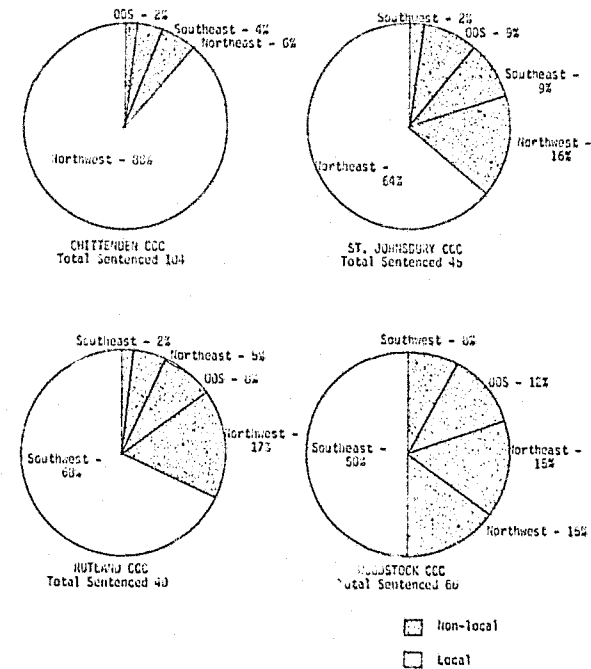


Table 10  
LOCATION OF SENTENCED POPULATION  
RELATIVE TO THEIR HOME REGION

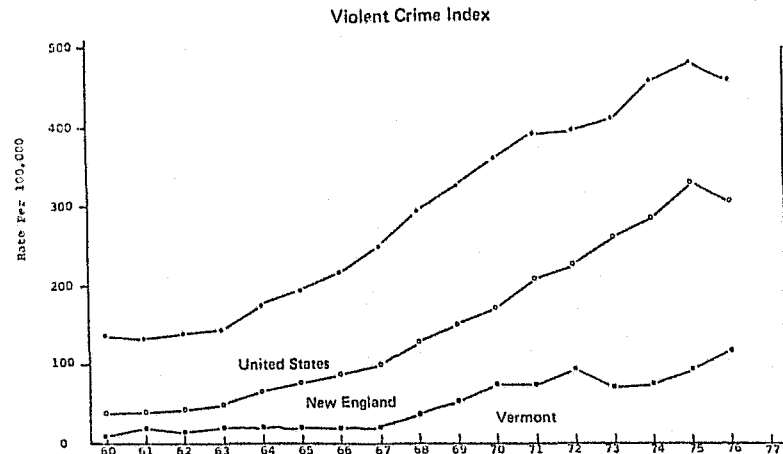
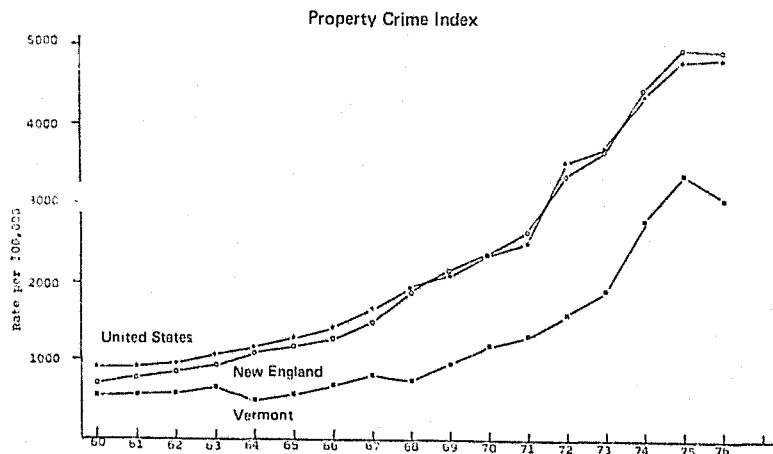
| Institution         | Northwest | Northeast | Southwest | Southeast |
|---------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Nearest CCC         | 47%       | 36%       | 57%       | 47%       |
| Other CCC           | 12        | 22        | 13        | 13        |
| Central Institution | 41        | 42        | 30        | 40        |
| Total Number        | 197       | 81        | 47        | 70        |

POPULATION TRENDS

National

There are many explanations offered for the recent rapid increase in institutional populations across the nation. Rising crime has certainly been a national problem and a Vermont problem over the last decade, particularly in property crimes.

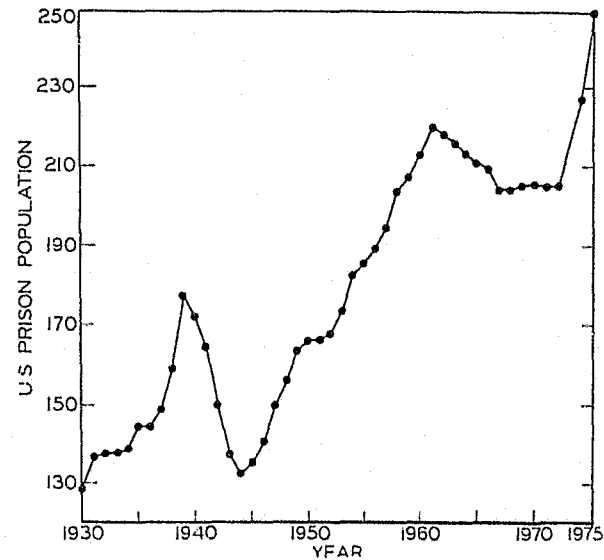
Figure 9





The end of the Vietnam war, the recession, and continuing high unemployment rates have occurred over the last five years. A large majority of offenders are 17-30 year old males, and this population has grown dramatically in the last decade as baby boom children reach this age. Crime has been a significant political issue for several years, and hard-line approaches receive more support. All these factors and others may be involved in the inmate population increase, nationally and in Vermont.

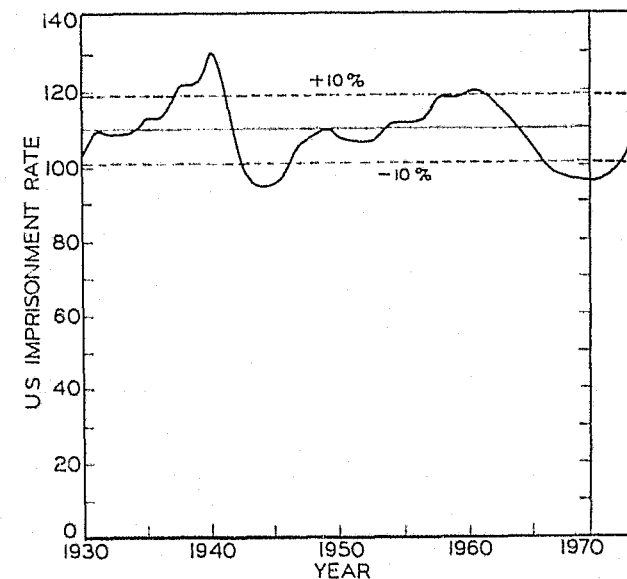
Figure 10  
U.S. PRISON POPULATION IN THOUSANDS



<sup>4</sup>Proceedings of the 106th Congress on Corrections, American Correctional Association, 1976, p. 56-57.

This is not a new phenomenon. In fact, the proportion of citizens in prison at any one time nationally has gone through similar cycles within a relatively narrow band. Since at least 1930 the proportion of United States residents in prison has been about one per thousand total population, and it rarely deviates from the figure by more than plus or minus 10%. At this time the national imprisonment rate has again increased to the upper part of this range. Whatever the explanation, there appears to be a self limiting system for this imprisonment rate.

Figure 11  
IMPRISONMENT RATE IN THE UNITED STATES  
PER 100,000 POPULATION (1930-1970)



*Vermont - Institutions*

Whatever the underlying causes of increasing crime and response to the increase there are two factors that directly determine the Vermont institutional population, each with contributing variables.

- 1) Number of Admissions
  - a) Crime rate
  - b) Conviction rate for those crimes
  - c) Commitment rate (use or non-use of alternatives such as fines, restitution, probation, diversion, etc.)
- 2) Length of Time Served - Sentencing Patterns
  - a) Sentence length
  - b) Offense type
  - c) Department furlough policy
  - d) Parole Board policies

Lacking a unified criminal justice information system, crime, arrest, diversion, conviction, probation, and commitment rates are not all known so that simulation of the criminal justice system is not now possible. The Department is particularly interested and committed to cooperating in the development of a data system to provide such information.

Using a variety of indicators and evidence, however, a clear picture of the trends in these rates emerges.

*Number of Sentenced Admissions* - The number of sentenced admissions has not increased greatly during recent years. However, there has been a shift in the kinds of offenses leading to incarceration which was mentioned in the *Profile* section. In particular the steady increase in property crimes and the decrease in public order offenses is striking.

The FBI major property crime index would certainly lead one to expect this increase. From 1970 to 1975 that index increased over 150%.

The 80% increase in probation cases opened in Vermont for property crimes since 1973 indicates that the increase in commitments is not just a reflection of hardening attitudes, although that certainly may be a contributing factor.

Table 11  
COMPARISON OF SENTENCE MINIMUMS & MAXIMUMS  
FY 1973 and FY 1976  
Number of Total, Average Minimum, Average Maximum

| OFFENSE TYPE           | ADMISSIONS |      |        | PERCENT OF TOTAL |        | AVERAGE MINIMUM (DAYS) |       |        | AVERAGE MAXIMUM (DAYS) |       |        |
|------------------------|------------|------|--------|------------------|--------|------------------------|-------|--------|------------------------|-------|--------|
|                        | FY73       | FY76 | %      | FY73             | FY76   | FY73                   | FY76  | %      | FY73                   | FY76  | %      |
| Property Crimes        | 178        | 322  | +80.9% | 30.5%            | 51.5%  | 231.74                 | 177.8 | 44.1%  | 689.57                 | 602.1 | -12.7% |
| Crimes Against Persons | 65         | 96   | +47.7  | 11.1             | 15.4   | 344.138                | 375.9 | 9.1    | 934.43                 | 952.2 | 3.0    |
| Public Order Crimes    | 152        | 68   | -55.3  | 26.1             | 10.9   | 0                      | 5.9   | ***    | 10.77                  | 44.9  | 139.3  |
| DWI                    | 33         | 17   | -48.5  | 5.7              | 2.4    | 31.05                  | 18.07 | -41.6  | 195.12                 | 53.6  | -72.5  |
| Other Motor Vehicle    | 86         | 82   | -4.6   | 14.8             | 13.1   | 15.93                  | 29.9  | 87.0   | 122.20                 | 105.8 | -13.4  |
| Drugs                  | 17         | 16   | -5.9   | 2.9              | 2.5    | 31.76                  | 83.1  | 160.5  | 569.8                  | 510.4 | -10.4  |
| Escape                 | 25         | 22   | -12.0  | 4.3              | 3.5    | 99.4                   | 218.0 | 119.3  | 649.2                  | 829.7 | 27.8   |
| Arson                  | 2          | 0    | -100.0 | 0.3              | 0      | 73.0                   | ---   | ---    | 2037.5                 | ---   | ---    |
| Misc.                  | 25         | 4    | -84%   | 4.3              | 0.6    | 68.4                   | 0     | -100.0 | 201.6                  | 22.5  | -88.6  |
| TOTAL                  | 523        | 625  | +19.3% | 100.0%           | 100.0% | 90.7                   | 164.3 | 81.2%  | 405.8                  | 526.4 | 27.3%  |

*Length of Time Served*

*Sentence length* - Over the last several years, the average length of time served by committed offenders has increased from 4.5 to 5.6 months, 24%. The distribution of times served for the two comparison periods (FY1973 and 3/76 to 2/77) has changed somewhat. Since FY1973 there have been relatively more short commitments, up to 6 months, and relatively more long commitments.

**Table 12**  
COMPARISON OF TIME SERVED - ALL RELEASES FY1973  
MARCH 1976 TO FEBRUARY 1977

| Length of Commitment | % of all Releases<br>FY 73 | % of all Releases<br>3/76-2/77 | % Change in Proportion<br>of all Releases |
|----------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|---|
| Up to 1 mc.          | 49.2%                      | 44.4%                          | - 9.8%                                    |
| 1-2 months           | 11.0                       | 9.9                            | - 10.0                                    |
| 2-3 months           | 8.8                        | 5.9                            | - 32.5                                    |
| 3-6 months           | 12.8                       | 12.2                           | - 4.7                                     |
| 6 mo. - 1 yr.        | 10.0                       | 14.2                           | +42.0                                     |
| 1-2 years            | 5.4                        | 8.4                            | +55.8                                     |
| Over 2 years         | 2.8                        | 5.0                            | +76.8                                     |
| No. of Releases      | 500                        | 606                            | +21.2%                                    |

Note the dramatic increase in incarceration of greater than six months to two years. Even with these increasing sentence lengths, nearly 90% of all persons were incarcerated for less than one year.

A trend in sentencing patterns was clearly visible when a survey of the sentenced inmates incarcerated on March 31, 1977 showed that only 13% had sentences with a zero minimum. On a typical day in FY1973 nearly half (48%) had a zero minimum sentence.

1. The use of zero minimums (when a resident receives a zero minimum, he is eligible for parole at any time) has decreased markedly.
2. Average minimum is up 81% and average maximum is up 27%.

Censuses of all sentenced offenders incarcerated on a given day were collected in FY1973 and FY1977. The impact of these changes in sentencing patterns is clearly visible as we find the percentage of offenders with specified minimums has increased from 48% to 87%; the average minimum has increased from 1.5 to 2.0 years.

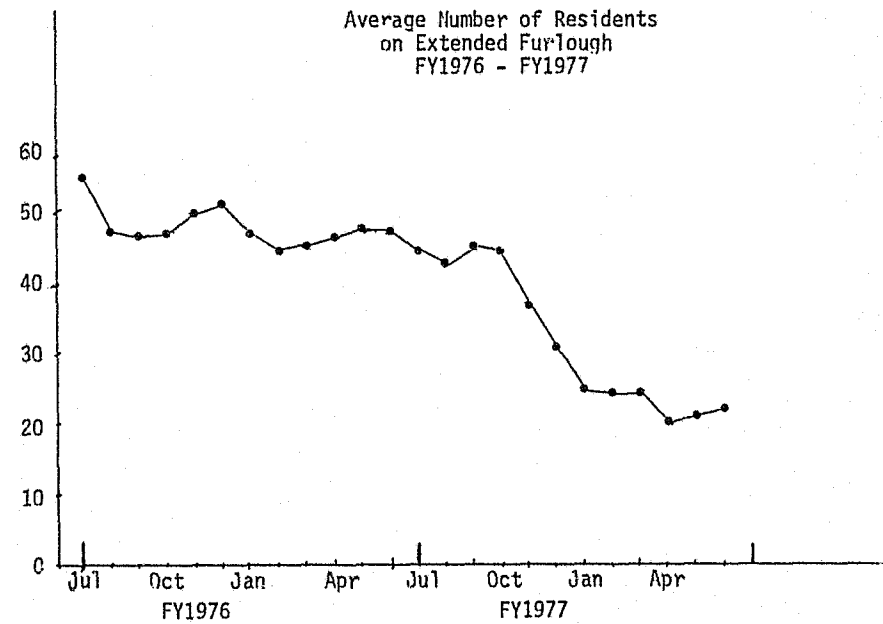
*Offense Type*

Again, one points to the change in the committing offense as a primary cause of the increase in sentence length. The greater incidence of property offenders, whose average sentence length is well above average, has increased that average. This is not, however, a full explanation as we find a major increase (44%) in the average minimum sentence for property crimes, and, in fact, a decrease in zero minimums in all offense groups. This represents a stiffer response to all crimes, and must be seen as a significant factor in the institutional population increase.

Figure 12

*Department furlough policy*

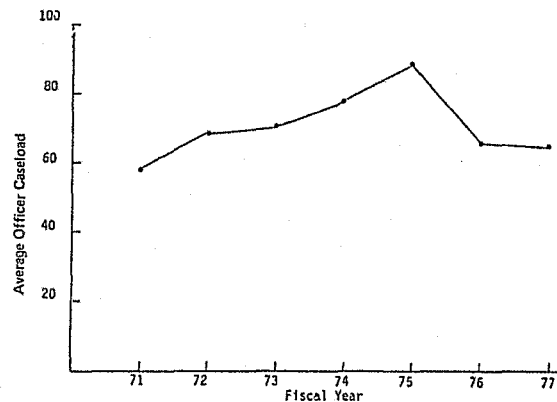
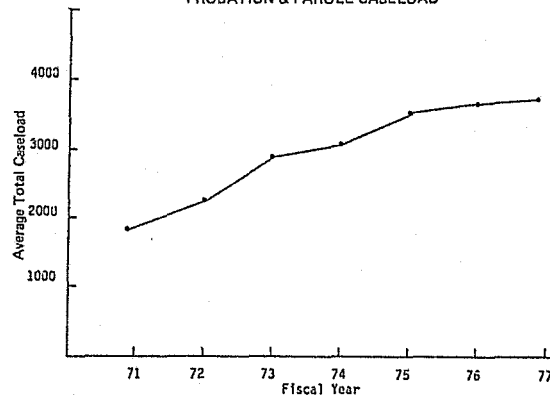
A compounding problem for overcrowding has been the Department's own increasing rigidity in granting furloughs, particularly residential furloughs of greater than 72 hours. Two years ago an average of 50 inmates were residing in the community on extended furlough under the supervision of probation and parole officers while reporting to their institutions at least every two weeks. Many of these were in a half-way house situation. Now, because of public concern over some furlough violations and some admittedly poor Department decisions regarding these furloughs, the program has been substantially reduced and the direct result is an additional 25-30 residents in centers every day.



*Vermont - Probation & Parole*

The total adult probation and parole caseload has experienced 100% growth in the last four years. Reasonable officer caseloads have been maintained through improved case management and the transfer of resources to probation and parole made possible by the closing of Windsor Prison.

Figure 13  
PROBATION & PAROLE CASELOAD



The most significant changes in the caseload are shown in Table 13. The number of persons placed on probation for property crimes has increased substantially so that now almost 40% are property offenders. There has also been a large decline in the proportion of probation cases for motor vehicle offenses, most notably DWI. We do not see large changes in crimes against persons, public order crimes, or drug offenses. These changes are consistent with the changes in the offenses of offenders who are incarcerated.

Table 13  
COMPARISON OF ADULT PROBATION CASES  
OPENED DURING FY1973 and 1976

| Offense Type           | % of Cases | % of Cases | % Change in Proportion of Total |
|------------------------|------------|------------|---------------------------------|
| Property Crimes        | 28.3%      | 39.0%      | +37.8%                          |
| Crimes Against Persons | 8.2        | 7.9        | - 3.7                           |
| Public Order           | 15.4       | 15.2       | - 1.3                           |
| Motor Vehicle          | 43.5       | 34.3       | -21.1                           |
| Drugs                  | 4.6        | 3.7        | - 19.6                          |

## POPULATION PROJECTIONS

### *Long Term*

There are many costs associated with inadequate or excessive institutional capacity. The costs of overcrowded facilities have been described. Also, if excess space is available, there are always pressures to use it. Every effort consistent with the public's safety should be made to limit the number of persons in correctional institutions. These efforts should include resisting construction of unneeded space.

With these guidelines in mind, the necessity for careful planning is apparent. Accurate predictions of future resident populations is the ideal solution, but to the degree that these populations cannot be predicted accurately, common sense and incremental additions should be the approach to this problem.

Straight line population projection is clearly not appropriate over the long term, just as it would not be for predicting general population growth, economic trends, or energy consumption. The longest range experience we have seen is evidence that there may be natural counter pressures on the incarceration rate, and that over the long run, perhaps 15 years, the Vermont institutional population will not increase at a rate much greater than the general population.

The population at risk, young males between 17 and 30 years old, is leveling off and is expected to decline in Vermont beginning in 1982. For several years we have seen empty classrooms and the same possibility exists for correctional beds in the future.

Another major factor in the incarceration rate is the crime rate. According to past FBI statistics Uniform Crime Reports, there have been unrelenting crime increases over the last 15 years. Recent data indicated major changes in this trend.

The national Uniform Crime Reports data for 1976 showed no significant changes in serious crime rates since 1975.\* Violent crime rates declined 4.5% and the property crime rate increased 0.1%. The overall change was a 0.3% decrease in the major crime rate.

According to this report, the Vermont major crime rate decreased over 8% in 1976 giving Vermont the fifth lowest major crime rate in the country. (In 1975, it was ninth.) The property crime index declined 9.2%, largely because of decreases in reported burglaries and larcenies. The major violent crime rate, however, increased 24%, mainly because of increases in aggravated assaults reported to the police. Even the violent crime rate in Vermont is relatively low. Only two states (New Hampshire and North Dakota) have lower violent crime rates. In fact, the Vermont violent crime rate is one-fourth the national average. There are twenty-five major property crimes for every major crime against person in Vermont.

Thus, the national crime rate apparently leveled in 1976 and in Vermont it even declined. In the first three months of 1977, preliminary data indicates a further decline of 9% nationally. It remains to be seen how the severity of last winter may have influenced this decrease.

The Federal Law Enforcement Assistance Administration has for three years sponsored a survey of criminal victimization in the United States, by which a large random selection of citizens are asked if they have been victimized during the previous year. This provides a somewhat different measure of the crime rate (e.g. "victimless" crimes are not reported), but the methodology is more sound than self-reporting to state and local police departments.

\*Major violent crimes are murder and non-negligent manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault. Major property crimes are burglary, larceny and motor vehicle theft.

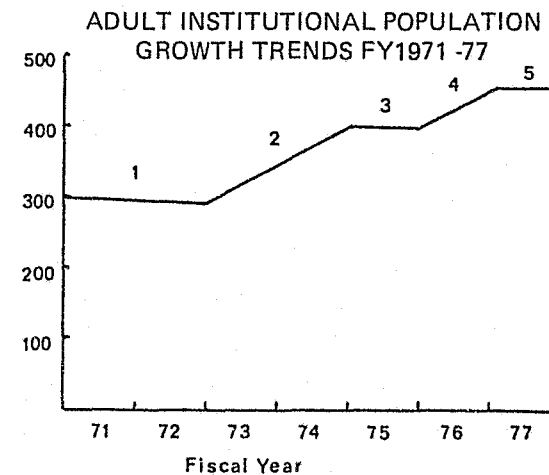
Although in 1975, the Uniform Crime Reports indicate a 9.8% increase in major crimes the victimization study showed no statistically significant increases. A possible explanation is that with its sounder methodology, the victimization survey was able to detect a change in the trend of growing crime rates sooner than the FBI reports. Regardless of the explanation, the signs are encouraging.

In summary, our best long range prognosis for institutional population growth is that there will be relief from the growth we have seen over the last several years. In fact, most of the factors which we identify with incarceration rates are abating or seem to be near a limit. Given an annual projected state population growth rate of 1.2% - 1.5%, a 3% growth rate for the incarcerated population has been chosen for long range planning purposes. Should this prove high or low, our plans are designed to be flexible enough to accommodate lesser or greater growth.

#### *Short Term*

Over the last seven years there have been five discernible growth trends in Department population. FY1971 through FY1972 was a time of no expansion. Then followed 24 months of rapid growth. There was another period of level population during FY1975, followed by substantial growth in FY1976. Through FY1977 the population has remained relatively stable, showing only small increases.

Figure 14







**CONTINUED**

**1 OF 2**

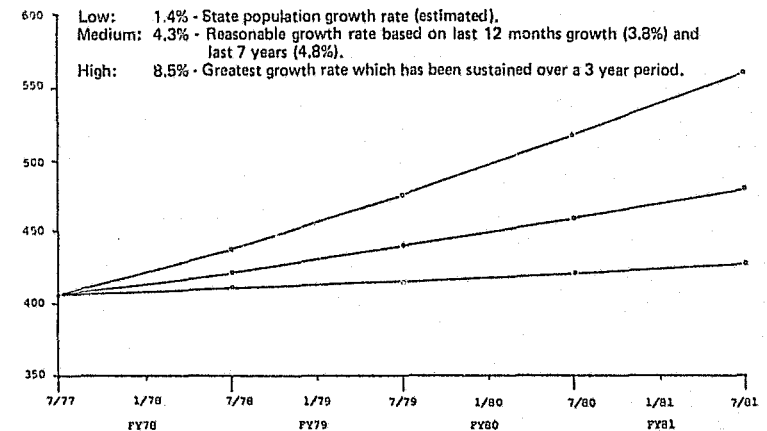
These rapid changes in growth rate indicate the difficulties in predicting growth even over the next few years. The Department's facility replacement plan is to be completed over the next three years. This will provide the secure, flexible facilities needed over the long run as we perceive the long range trends. During the interim, careful planning and flexible approaches will be required to address the regional imbalances and overcrowding. Our approaches are described in *Managing Overcrowding Over the Next Three Years*.

The most optimistic estimate for growth over the next four years would be that the growth would match that of the general population, 1.4% annually.

The most pessimistic rational estimate for three year growth would be that the next three years would be as bad as the last three year period; this would be a growth rate of 8.5% annually. We do not expect this rate of increase, for the reasons above, but it would be irresponsible not to have contingency plans available.

Based on the last six months experience, we would anticipate only a 3.8% annual growth; over the last 10 years we have seen an average annual growth rate of 4.8%. An average of these two figures provides our best projection for growth over this difficult interim period.

Figure 15  
Short Range Projections for In-House Adult Institutional Populations



*MESSAGE TO SCHOOLS  
AND SOCIAL SERVICE PROVIDERS*

*Most offenders have been your clients and students.  
Answering the economic and educational needs of our  
society is most effective at an early and preventative stage.*

From the *Profile* section:

- The largest single group in Vermont corrections is young, male property offenders. This group has increased dramatically since the last major planning effort in 1971.
- This increase has taken place both in the institutions and field population. It is a reflection of a large increase in property crimes as well as a reaction to that increase.
- Most offenders are unskilled and under-educated. Work programs and vocational training are clear program priorities.
- The Department's approaches must be expanded beyond the recent primary focus on counseling. Many of these offenders have been through the system before - no one approach is successful with all offenders. New approaches are needed.
- The unskilled and under-educated quality of those for whom we are responsible suggests that there is a relationship between the offender's situation and his public school experience and achievement.
- Because the offenders are young, programs that feature a high level of activity are very important.
- Expansion of victim compensation and restitution programs for persons in institutions and under field supervision in conjunction with work programs are natural avenues for the future.
- Only limited information is currently available on the work histories and vocational skills of persons under supervision. Because of the central role planned for work in Department programs, an extensive survey in those areas as well as current work opportunities is needed.
- Many offenders on probation require minimal supervision to protect the public (i.e., the purpose of probation in many cases is simply fine collection). Whenever possible, systems should support the probation officer so that he can devote maximum time to cases requiring intensive supervision.
- Most offenders are substance abusers, and alcohol abuse is the most serious problem. An area of primary concern to the Department is the provision of effective alcohol treatment programs.
- The Department of Corrections is the last agency in a long series of encounters for many individuals. In most cases, public schools and other social service agencies have had contact with these offenders long before intervention by the criminal justice system. There are implications for preventative programs and action by state, regional and local agencies.

From the *Current Population* section:

- Currently the institutions are overcrowded to the degree that opportunities for change are not available to all residents. Overcrowding may worsen and threaten the safety of staff and inmates, but we are not there yet.
- At this time the primary need is to increase the capacity of the Community Correctional Centers to provide those program opportunities.
- The northeast quadrant of the state is the most seriously overburdened and contributes the most to system overcrowding. Efforts concentrating on that region will reduce the problem system-wide.
- There is apparently a need for expanded medium security capacity. This may result from a general lack of program opportunities for the increased number of young property offenders, and may be resolved as the program capacity at the Community Correctional Centers is increased.

From the *Trends and Projections* sections:

- Correctional population trends are extremely difficult to predict. Given current trends and conditions we anticipate that the present period of rapid increase will end and that institutional growth will not greatly exceed state population growth in the long run. In order to avoid the high cost of building and maintaining unnecessary space a deliberate, incremental approach to the problem is appropriate.
- The projected annual state growth is 1.5%; allowing for annual growth of 3.0% in the institutional population should be adequate over the next 10 -15 years.
- Short run predictions can be even more hazardous than long run. However, based on recent experience and evidence of leveling crime rates, an annual increase of 4.3% over the next four years is our best estimate. This would mean an average daily in-house population of 480 by 1981.
- Based on experience, the fastest sustained annual growth that we estimate might be expected is 8.5%. Contingency plans to deal with such growth should be available.

## PROGRAM OPPORTUNITIES

*INTRODUCTION*

The opportunities which the Department provides for offenders to change were a major focus of the reassessment. This section briefly describes how the Department provides opportunities, and what needs to change if this element of our basic goal is to be accomplished. It reflects the understanding, gained in part through reassessment, that work needs to be a central focus of our efforts, not for its own sake, but because it constitutes a major part of almost everyone's life, and for many offenders, has been a source of trouble and failure in the past.

*WORK**Community Based*

Like non-offenders, the vast majority of offenders are involved with work as a central part of their daily lives, providing money to buy food and shelter. Probationers and parolees have more than the usual difficulties in achieving this kind of work situation, in part because they tend to be under-educated and unskilled, and in part because of their legal status. The Department is actively working with CETO to develop work related programs. The programs will, hopefully, be expanded state-wide to provide more employment and work training opportunities during the next year.

The Department uses the mechanism of work release to allow inmates to work at a regular full time job and return to a facility at night. Work release has been nationally recognized as a useful approach since the beginning of the century. Its benefits in Vermont include board payments to the Department, payment of state and federal income taxes, and payment of support for offenders' families, which reduces welfare costs.

However, the following chart clearly shows that inmate contributions in each of these areas have declined in the last several years. This requires attention.

**Table 14**  
Work Release Earnings  
and Payments  
FY 1970-FY 1976

| FY    | Gross Earnings | Maintenance Paid to State | Family Support | Fines  | Debts   | State & Federal Taxes |
|-------|----------------|---------------------------|----------------|--------|---------|-----------------------|
| 1970  | \$121,354      | \$20,856                  | \$23,473       | \$ 449 | N/A     | \$25,087              |
| 1971  | 90,134         | 16,351                    | 16,098         | 650    | N/A     | 14,489                |
| 1972  | 100,746        | 15,437                    | 14,625         | N/A    | N/A     | 13,667                |
| 1973  | 112,420        | 17,411                    | 16,934         | 1,367  | \$3,845 | 16,624                |
| 1974  | 96,597         | 12,957                    | 23,996         | 0      | 1,066   | 12,145                |
| 1975  | 66,158         | 8,859                     | 12,865         | 769    | 1,554   | 6,340                 |
| 1976  | 73,752         | 7,721                     | 12,008         | 184    | 572     | 8,097                 |
| Total | 661,161        | 83,292                    | 119,999        | 2,419  | 7,037   | 97,049                |

*Facility Based*

Providing work within correctional facilities is an area which has had little attention. As a result, confined men and women spend many idle hours while needed tasks are left undone.

Vermont Institutional Industries is the only significant source of offender employment in the Department. The average inmate earns 33 cents an hour. V.I.I. now employs less than 10% of the incarcerated population. A small number of offenders at St. Albans are paid by the Department of Forests and Parks for working in supervised crews doing forest improvement projects.

Work crews have been organized at the Woodstock Correctional Center to carry out community projects. During the summer and fall of 1977 work crews greatly improved the appearance and condition of over fifty cemeteries in the area. In addition, they have painted town halls, fire houses, and completely restored a church of historical significance.

Facility superintendents feel that many of the residents could be doing productive work, either in the facility or in supervised crews working in the community. Experience with this approach has been positive. The inmate survey conducted as part of the reassessment indicates that offenders would rather work than be idle.

*TREATMENT PROGRAMS**Community Based*

Providing offenders with opportunities to change, often hinges on the ability to provide specific services, education, job training, mental health counseling, medical services, or others. For probationers and parolees, initial case planning identifies and prioritizes such needs, and purchase of service funds provide a way to obtain these from local services. Similar planning is done with incarcerated offenders, and contracts with people already providing the services allow us to obtain them cost effectively. Adult Basic Education, CETO, community mental health, local medical centers, and comparable providers are some of the groups involved in such contracts with the Department. As a result the Department pays only for services received, but at the same time, maintains access to a full range of services. It has the added benefit of supporting existing services, and helping the community to maintain a broader range than might otherwise be available.

Volunteers are playing a major role in providing opportunities for change. This effort is based on matching the skills of the volunteer with the needs of the offender. The Department is effective in using volunteer talents, and broader public understanding of offender needs could further increase the impact of volunteers.

Table 15  
ADULT PURCHASE OF SERVICE USAGE\*  
July, 1976-May, 1977

|                        | Group Home | Spec. Ed<br>& Sports | Mental<br>Health | Medical | Personal<br>Contact | Spec.<br>Needs | Other | Totals   |
|------------------------|------------|----------------------|------------------|---------|---------------------|----------------|-------|----------|
| \$                     | \$78,397   | 1,038                | 8,544            | 374     | 3,983               | 2,594          | 120   | \$95,050 |
| % of Total             | 82%        | 1%                   | 9%               | 1%      | 4%                  | 4%             | 1%    | 100%     |
| # Clients<br>(approx.) | 99         | 6                    | 130              | 10      | 28                  | 85             | 2     | 360      |

\*Adapted from an Evaluation Report of the program by the Governor's Commission on the Administration of Justice, July 8, 1977.

Table 15 shows the usage of purchase of service money for adult probationers, parolees, and furloughees. Note that over 80% of these funds go for alternate placements in group homes. In addition, nearly \$200,000 is budgeted by the adult institutions for contracts with local teachers, social service agencies, medical and dental service providers, and mental health organizations.

#### *Treatment Provided by Department*

In-house treatment programs exist at two levels in the Department. Where a specialized treatment need is shared by a number of offenders, and the need can not be met in the community, the Department has attempted to develop a program to address the need. Examples include the alcohol treatment program at the Farm and the incentive program at St. Albans. Such programs require a structured setting.

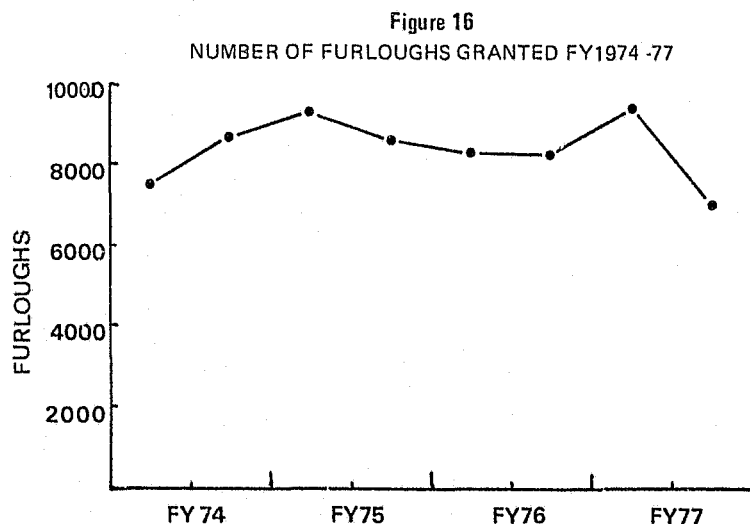
Another way for the Department to provide programs is by the ad hoc development of specific programs needed for a period of time. These programs get organized locally in response to identified needs of offenders, often using volunteer resources. When the need disappears, so does the program. Examples of such programs range from consumer education to woodworking, from arts and crafts to self-help counseling groups.

Vermont does not operate a facility which provides the broad range of treatment programs associated with large central traditional institutions. For offenders with extremely long sentences, whose program and/or security needs can not be met in Vermont, transfer to other states with central institutions or to the Federal Bureau of Prisons offers a wide range of internal program options.

### FURLOUGHS

The majority of the program opportunities available to offenders in the system can be used only through the mechanism of furlough. Furloughs are granted under a wide range of conditions, ranging from constant observation by a staff member to regular contact with a probation officer. Many furloughs are granted for a few hours to allow use of community programs like those described previously. Others are granted for longer periods, to allow offenders to benefit from community operated residential units which have well developed approaches to dealing with special problems, including alcohol abuse, drug abuse, and a variety of problems with human relationships.

The furlough mechanism is essential for providing opportunities to change in a community based program. The graph shows changes which have occurred in the furlough program since July of 1973.



Furlough violations have a negative impact on the entire furlough program and the opportunities it provides. In the six months from July to December 1976, the number of furloughs granted increased 14%. The largest increase was in work release furloughs; the number of overnight and longer furloughs was in fact cut substantially. This shift in the length of furloughs, plus some combination of improved supervision and decision making, led to a 50% reduction in furlough violations during that period. However, in the following six months, still reacting to earlier, higher violation rates, institutions became more restrictive in granting furloughs, resulting in a 30% decrease in total furloughs. This did not reduce violations further.

The task we now face is to maintain the low violation rate which has been accomplished, while returning the program to a level which provides the needed opportunities for offenders. The potential exists to safely return to the level of furlough activity of late 1976, if decisions are made more carefully and accurately.



**IMPLICATIONS**

- Community work programs such as work release offer clear benefits to the inmate, the Department, and the community, and could provide development of a useful relationship between the offender and the victim, through programs like restitution.
- Work release is an under-utilized program. Directing resources toward increasing job availability would benefit everyone involved.
- Facility based work programs have had very little attention, and have the potential to reduce idleness, improve the cleanliness of facilities, provide useful community services, and generally reduce the symptoms of overcrowding.
- Community based treatment programs exist to meet a broad range of needs. Better utilization of these programs is essential if offender needs are to be met. Such improved utilization can be accomplished only if decision making is improved to safely place the offender in the right program at the right time.
- Purchase of service and furlough capabilities are critically important to providing opportunities for change, and must be continued and expanded. Decision making must be improved to continue the lowered violation rate and increase community program opportunities.
- Even though program opportunities, such as furlough, exist and have been used in the past, an incentive system which promotes constructive participation by offenders at all levels and types of programs is essential if these programs are to be effective.

## PROTECTION OF THE PUBLIC

One of the Department's mandates is to conduct its operations in ways that adequately protect the public.

Two major indicators that begin to describe the Department's performance are numbers of escapes and furlough incidents. A third facet involves the Department's use of security space both in and out-of-state. Lastly, recidivism rates are used by many persons as an indicator of program success.

*ESCAPES*

The Department is expected to provide adequate security environments for the persons in its custody. This involves the hiring and training and proper supervision of qualified personnel. Further, it is expected that decisions about the placement of individuals within these various security environments are made for reasons of protection of the public as well as resident program needs.

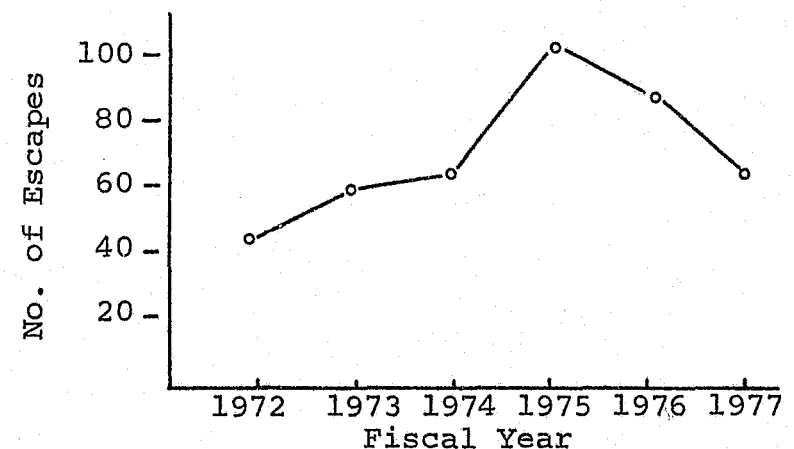
There are three categories of escapes: escapes from custody; walk-away from a minimum security setting; and failure to return from furlough. The table shows the escapes by category over the last several years.

Of primary concern are escapes from custody. Sound procedures for maintaining adequate security can reduce these escapes. Escapes from minimum security and failure to return from furlough will happen as long as minimum security and furlough programs are continued, but they too can be minimized by realistic decisions about the participants in the programs and by firm responses when escapes do occur.

**Table 16**  
ESCAPES BY CLASS  
FY 72 - 77

|                     | FY72 | 73 | 74 | 75  | 76 | 77 |
|---------------------|------|----|----|-----|----|----|
| Escape from custody | 19   | 27 | 16 | 33  | 5  | 16 |
| Walk-away           | 14   | 13 | 15 | 20  | 33 | 20 |
| Failure to return   | 13   | 18 | 31 | 50  | 48 | 27 |
| Total               | 46   | 58 | 62 | 103 | 86 | 65 |

**Figure 17**  
Total Escapes FY1972-1977



The overall number of escapes from the Department, after showing a substantial rise between FY1974 and FY1975, a period of Windsor Prison instability and major change in the Department, has now shown an equally substantial decrease for FY1976 and FY1977. The Department is committed to further improve this record.

*"Police Department apprehend escapee at his home and returned to facility."*

*4/4 "...failed to return from Family Visit Furlough"*

*4/5 "...phoned and asked to be returned. Escape filed prior to voluntary return."*

*7/24 - 11 p.m. "...escaped through air vent."*

*7/28 - 9 a.m. "...turned self in at front door of Community Correctional Center."*

*7/9 - 4:30 p.m. "...failed to return from furlough."*

*9/4 "...called center expressing desire to surrender voluntarily. Upon being advised this would be satisfactory, the escapee returned on own volition."\**

*\*Excerpts from Department escape reports.*

*FURLOUGH INCIDENTS*

Furloughs are a crucial part of the community based corrections system. Most inmates are eventually released, they must be prepared to participate in the community. Reintegration of inmates prior to release is a basic concern in protecting the public.

Overcrowding is now a fact of life in Vermont correctional facilities. An inactive furlough program results in increased internal pressures. By policy, however, the Department of Corrections is not affected by this in making furlough decisions. The only acceptable use of furlough is offender reintegration. Still, unnecessary restrictions on furloughs do contribute to the negative effects of overcrowding.

Vermont is known for its active and varied furlough program. What little national evidence exists, suggests that Vermont performs well with comparatively few violations. A review of the past four years (see table below) illustrates that only 4 out of 1,000 furloughs resulted in any violation. Even though there have been some recent problems, there have also been real improvements. Over the last several years, procedures have been developed to minimize violations on recent years furlough violation data have shown a pattern similar to the escape statistics presented earlier; that is, a significant decline in incidents.

A furlough is considered in violation if the person fails to return (this results in escape charges), does not meet the specific conditions of his furlough (not being in the specified place at the specified time), or otherwise breaks rules associated with the furlough (coming back to the facility under the influence of drugs or alcohol).

Table 17  
SUCCESS RATES  
VERMONT FURLOUGH PROGRAM  
FY1974-FY1977

| FY   | No. of Furloughs     | No. of Residents Participating in Furlough Program | Violations <sup>1/</sup> |                    | Success Rates  |                  |
|------|----------------------|--|--------------------------|--------------------|----------------|------------------|
|      |                      |  | No.                      | Residents Involved | % of Furloughs | % of Furloughees |
| 1974 | 16,342               | 506  | 36 <sup>2/</sup>         | 35 <sup>2/</sup>   | 99.8%          | 93.1%            |
| 1975 | 17,968               | 543  | 58                       | 56                 | 99.7%          | 89.7%            |
| 1976 | 16,536               | 492  | 58                       | 56                 | 99.6%          | 88.6%            |
| 1977 | 16,488 <sup>3/</sup> | N/A  | 28                       | 28                 | 99.8%          | N/A              |

<sup>1/</sup> Violations include any failure to return from furlough, or new offense committed on furlough.

<sup>2/</sup> Estimated

<sup>3/</sup> Preliminary data. Number of participants not yet available.

Most furlough violations are not a threat to the safety of the community but rather involve non-compliance with Department furlough policy or institution rules.

Incidents involving escapes and new offenses, however, can pose a danger to the community. These types of incidents have been sharply reduced during the past year, mostly as a result of close control and scrutiny of the furlough decision making process. As a result, the number of furloughs granted during the last year for overnight and extended situations has greatly declined.

The implications of this information are severalfold. First, decision making about who receives furloughs for what purposes must remain selective so offenders who chronically fail are dealt with more carefully. This process must not, however, be so controlled that it precludes useful program options from a great many residents. Secondly, furloughs are a fundamental step in reintegrating offenders into the Vermont community and the discretion now employed by the Department should be maintained, particularly in light of this recent evidence which shows that the Department is using this discretion wisely.

### *MAXIMUM SECURITY*

#### *Out-of-State*

The closing of the Windsor State Prison in 1975 was made possible in part by an agreement with the Federal Bureau of Prisons whereby they house up to 40 Vermont inmates who for reasons of security or treatment cannot be placed in Vermont institutions. Also, other New England states have accepted some Vermont residents under the New England Corrections Compact.<sup>5</sup> This alternative to construction of a maximum security facility has proven satisfactory. Cooperation with the Federal authorities has been excellent; their commitment to making the arrangement viable has been complete.

As predicted, the number of Vermont inmates who are placed out-of-state has increased to approximately 35 to 40 and has remained at that level. As of this writing there were 33 residents with the Federal Bureau of Prisons, and five in other New England states.

Ideally, all offenders committed to the Department of Corrections should be served in the State of Vermont. However, given the small number of Vermont inmates who require maximum security, their diverse needs, the expense of building and maintaining a maximum security facility, the current solution remains the best at this time.

<sup>5</sup>*Federal Bureau of Prisons, Title 28 Vermont Statutes Annotated, Section 706A, March 31, 1975, and 18 U.S. Code, Section 5003(a).*

*Northeast Corrections Compact, Title 28, Vermont Statutes Annotated.*

The decision to transfer a resident out-of-state is regarded as very serious. A resident can be transferred to an out-of-state facility only if one or more of the following criteria are met:

1. All in-state treatment and rehabilitative programs available for that individual have been considered and determined unsuitable.
2. All in-state alternatives in the area of security have been considered and found unsuitable for providing the required degree of security or protective custody for a particular resident.
3. A resident voluntarily requests transfer.<sup>6</sup>

Formal procedural safeguards have insured that all out-of-state placements have met these criteria and that there has been no abuse. Residents out-of-state are visited at least twice annually, by the Parole Board and the Department representatives to determine if and when return to Vermont is appropriate.

This system and the placements have been repeatedly challenged and in each case the Department has been upheld by state and federal courts.

An absolute limit to the number of out-of-state placements has a generally positive effect on the Department. It insures that all alternatives are considered and that residents are returned to Vermont as soon as possible, consistent with public safety.

The major question at this time is whether the current arrangement will meet future needs. For a variety of reasons, we feel there are good reasons not to commit to construction of a maximum security facility in Vermont at this time.

<sup>6</sup>Policy No. 891, Out-Of-State Transfer.

The upper limit of 40 placements with the Federal Bureau of Prisons plus placements with other states is currently adequate. The experience to date since the closing of Windsor Prison indicates that roughly half the out-of-state placements return within a year, the rest do not return for substantially longer periods. If out-of-state transfers continued at the same rate during the next two years as they have over the last two years, the limit would be exceeded; however, this is not expected for two reasons. The initial period included a backlog of inmates from Windsor. In the future the transferees will be primarily new commitments. Most of the transferees fit into one of three categories:

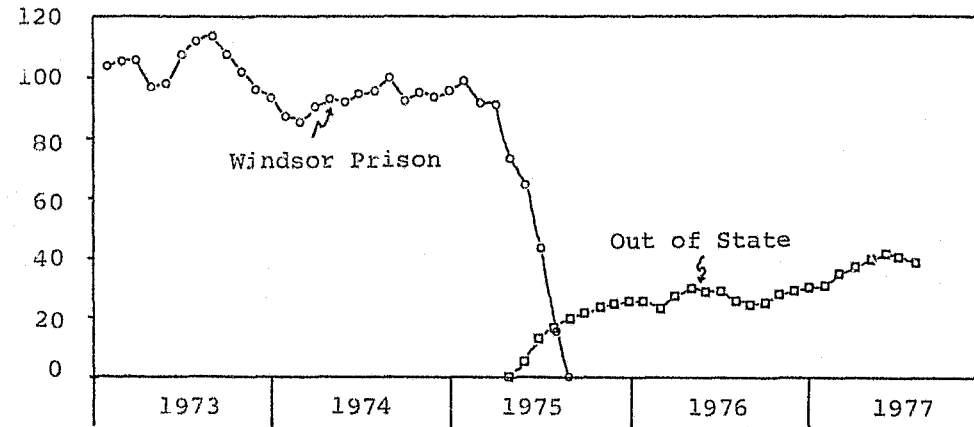
- (1) Serious offenders against persons with long term treatment needs, not ready for any community involvement, who require isolation but are not serious security threats (criteria 1).
- (2) Serious violent offenders with long term treatment needs, actively dangerous, who require long term maximum security (criteria 1 and 2).
- (3) Offenders requiring maximum security primarily because of institutional behavior (criteria 2).

Inmates in the first category are currently placed out-of-state. With increased in-state opportunities, such as the logging camp project, fewer will require out-of-state placement. Similarly expansion of medium security at St. Albans will provide other in-state options.

Inmates in the second category require isolation. There are no programs or security expansion plans to meet the needs of this group beyond the current arrangement.

Inmates in the third category are, in large measure, a symptom of an unhealthy correctional system. The system has been unable to effectively deal with the behavioral problems of this group. This may in part be attributed to overcrowding, inadequate security flexibility, and poor decision making. It is hoped that the impact of this reassessment and replacement facilities in Rutland and St. Johnsbury will reduce the number of inmates in this group who are transferred out-of-state.

Figure 18  
MAXIMUM SECURITY POPULATION  
1973-1977



The future emphasis will be to transfer Vermonters to the Federal Bureau of Prisons only when they present a clear and current danger to the community. Providing broader program options and improving our capacity to deal with behavioral problems, will, hopefully, permit this new emphasis.

There are a number of variables which may prove these predictions are optimistic. Department resources may not prove adequate to deal with maximum security needs. The cost of Federal placements (currently about \$12,500 per man-year) could change drastically. Replacement of the Rutland and St. Johnsbury facilities may not provide additional security space soon enough. Overcrowding in other states may harm the Department's relationship with the Federal Bureau of Prisons. This situation is a matter of continuous review.

However, at this time, given the success of the program to date, its low cost, the value of requiring that decisions to use maximum security be closely scrutinized, the current adequacy of available space, and the opportunities to reduce further the need for such space, no change in the current arrangement for meeting our long term maximum security needs is recommended.

*HIGH SECURITY - IN-STATE*

Inmates requiring high security for limited periods of time, not for long term programing, are currently housed at the St. Albans Correctional Facility in 'D' Wing, which was converted from a medium to high security area when Windsor Prison closed. Current 'D' Wing capacity is 20, while the average daily population during FY1977 was 17. Since two cells are usually kept empty for emergency situations, utilization of this area has been very close to capacity.

Most placements in 'D' Wing are for short term housing of persons in pretrial status for high bail, offenders awaiting out-of-state placement or who have recently returned from the Federal system, St. Albans program failures, and emergency transfers from other correctional centers for security reasons (escapt attempts, assaults, etc.).

These last two groups comprise a third to one-half of the 'D' Wing population. They are also symptomatic of an unhealthy system. Increased work opportunities at all facilities and improved security flexibility at the Rutland and St. Johnsbury replacement facilities will reduce these program failures and discipline problems while improving the regional centers' ability to deal with the remainder. Thus, although 'D' Wing is currently near capacity, its size will remain adequate as other system improvements are implemented.

The physical structure of 'D' Wing, however, is not adequate for high security for the following reasons. It was originally built as a medium security facility for youthful offenders and only later renovated for high security usage. It is concrete block construction. Staffing requirements are greater than they should be because of structural weaknesses. A review of the 'D' Wing inmates during FY1977 showed about half stayed for more than two months and about one in six stayed for five months to more than a year. The current area is restrictive for these lenghts of stay.

This wing has experienced serveral very serious escapes, the most recent being in June 1977. The unit has been viewed by an independent observer contracted by the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration of the U.S. Department of Justice. The report documented the inadequacies of 'D' Wing for its present use.<sup>7</sup> This issue must be dealt with if the Department's ability to protect the public from persons housed in that unit is to be improved.

<sup>7</sup>Kolinchak, Michael, *Evaluation of Security Capability - High Security 'D' Wing - St. Albans Correctional Center, Vermont Department of Corrections, St. Albans, Vermont, July 1977.*



*OFFENDER QUESTIONNAIRE*

*DO YOU EXPECT TO RETURN TO JAIL?*

*21 year old, aggravated assault "I've never been here before and it's quite an experience. I realize what this place deprives you of and any person who would do this to him or herself twice in one lifetime needs help."*

*17 year old, larceny "I did do the things I am in here for but jail isn't going to help me. Jail makes everybody worry about me and it makes me very ugly and very short tempered."*

*25 year old "I've had enough of this senseless life. I've wasted the useful years of my life."*

*"I hope I don't. Sobriety is the key for me, I'm a useful and productive citizen as long as I stay sober."*

*RECIDIVISM*

The recidivism rate is the rate at which ex-offenders commit new offenses. There are numerous ways to estimate this rate (generally followup studies of rearrest or reconviction), but the precise rate is never known. It is generally not a useful indicator of correctional progress, because the rate is effected by many variables besides correctional programs such as changes in the law, the courts, or the economy.

Useful measures of correctional progress reflect accomplishment of specific program objectives, developed through a sound planning process, and monitored through carefully designed information systems. Such measures might include adequacy of diagnostic services, low escape rates, or usage and effect of diversionary programs. This Department fully supports the Agency of Human Services Policy Bulletin 1.6, which will require program design, evaluation, and control plans for all Human Service Agency programs.

The recidivism rate in Vermont is, however, a matter of public concern and, often, public confusion. Frequently one hears that two thirds of all ex-offenders are recommitted. In fact, the reconviction rate is closer to one third for offenders who are released from incarceration and significantly less for probationers.

Vermont participates in a national recidivism study of parolees in which all parole cases are tracked for up to three years or termination of parole. The table shows that generally 80% of all parolees are not recommitted for sentences over 60 days during the first year following release, and that over two thirds have not been recommitted by the end of three years. Also note that the Vermont parole success rate is usually about the same or better than the national average.

Table 18

MALE PAROLEE SUCCESS RATES  
(No difficulty and no sentences over 60 days)

| Year of Release | 1 Year Follow-up |      | 2 Year Follow-up |      | 3 Year Follow-up |      |
|-----------------|------------------|------|------------------|------|------------------|------|
|                 | VT.              | U.S. | VT.              | U.S. | VT.              | U.S. |
| 1967            | 77%              | 71%  |                  |      |                  |      |
| 1968            | 79               | 71   | 79%              | 63%  |                  |      |
| 1969            | 78               | 72   | 66               | 64   | 64%              | 63%  |
| 1970            | 79               | 73   | 73               | 73   | 72%              | 69%  |
| 1971            | 82               | 77   | 67               | 71   |                  |      |
| 1972            | 75               | 79   |                  |      |                  |      |
| 1973            | 83               | 81   |                  |      |                  |      |
| 1974            | 79               | 81   |                  |      |                  |      |

Vermont probationers have considerably higher success rates, as demonstrated in a followup study conducted in 1975 of FY1973 probationers. Using the same definition of failure employed in the parole study (incarceration for sentences greater than 60 days) probationers demonstrated a 95% success rate over two years. In fact, 75% of the probationers after two years had received no conviction more serious than a fine. Probationers with less serious prior criminal histories have been found to have a greater chance of success.

**Table 19**  
PROBATION SUCCESS RATES AND PRIOR RECORD  
FY1973 PROBATIONERS

| Prior Record         | Success Rate<br>After 1 Year | Success Rate<br>After 2 Years |
|----------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| No Prior Convictions | 88.5%                        | 87.0%                         |
| Prior Convictions    | 77.5                         | 71.3                          |
| Prior Probation      | 67.8                         | 56.2                          |
| Prior Incarceration  | 62.6                         | 51.6                          |
| All Probation Cases  | 80.2                         | 75.2                          |

#### IMPLICATIONS

- Increased emphasis on maintaining security has successfully reduced escapes by over 35% over the last two years. Further emphasis can improve the record still further, particularly when facilities not built with adequate security are replaced.
- Reductions in escapes and furlough violations were achieved in spite of larger institutional populations. The emphasis on security has reduced staff resources for providing program opportunities.
- Last year the Department reduced the furlough violation rate by half. This reduction indicates that the Department has the capability to maintain and improve the success of the furlough program further within the current legal mandate.
- The present arrangements with the Federal Bureau of Prisons and other New England states are adequate to meet our maximum security programming requirements for the foreseeable future.
- The Department does need to begin to develop programs for serious offenders with long term treatment needs who require isolation but are not serious security threats.
- The current maximum security detention unit, the 20 man 'D' Wing at St. Albans, is grossly inadequate. Except through costly high staff allocation, adequate security cannot be maintained there.

HOW THE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS SHOULD  
RELATE TO THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM AND  
THE VERMONT COMMUNITY

IMPROVEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

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Greater involvement and increased communication with the other components of the criminal justice system and the Vermont community are essential goals of the reassessment.

The criminal justice system has never functioned as such but rather as separate components. The Department has not in the past provided enough leadership to make our full contribution toward bringing the criminal justice system together. At this time we recognize, through past experience, the need for a more unified effort on the part of components of the criminal justice system. To effectively deal with offenders, the criminal justice system must relate a consistent message. To begin working more closely with the courts, the prosecutors, sheriffs and law enforcement agencies the Department will adopt Policy 340, which will call for the development of procedures on a regional basis.

Each facility and probation and parole supervisory area will work together with area members of the criminal justice system. The policy includes the following elements:

- Joint meetings with other components of the criminal justice system on a regular basis.
- Sharing of information with components of the criminal justice system regarding:
  - 1) Department goals and philosophies
  - 2) Programs available
  - 3) Decision making in the crucial areas of classification, furlough, and release
  - 4) The status and progress of offenders

A number of benefits result from working more closely with other components of the criminal justice system:

- Offenders will receive clearer, more consistent messages.
- The Department and other members of the criminal justice system will gain mutual respect and trust.
- The community will be better protected through these joint efforts.

The Department needs to provide the Vermont public with more information. Since 1969 with the implementation of a community based approach, the need for citizen participation has increased. We have operated without regularly and systematically informing and involving the public during this crucial time. We have taken for granted that the public not only knew but understood and supported this approach to corrections.

An increased community awareness of the goals and philosophies of the Department would greatly improve the public's understanding of the programs offered to accomplish these goals. The lack of consistent communication from the Department to the public has resulted in the public basing their opinions on specific incidents. The media quickly informs the public of failures in the system, thus the public is continually and appropriately aware of the Department's shortcomings. A more balanced view of successes as well as failures would generate trust and respect from the public and produce more helpful and useful community concerns.

Clearly citizen participation is important in the achievement of the Department's goals and philosophy. At least 90% of the offenders in Department custody and general supervision deal regularly with the local community. Public support is fundamental.

Mutual respect should result from shared knowledge and familiarity. Sincerity, honesty, and the portrayal of real and well balanced information is essential. We must listen to and understand the concerns of the public and address these concerns. If the public is to join with us in our over all corrections effort, we must share our programs, their intent, successes and failures.

Public involvement is not a one-time effort but must be ongoing to be effective. Information should be shared in a manner that is interesting to citizens and understood by them.

To accomplish this, the Department must develop a capability to emphasize public information and education. We recognize that public education is a part of all Department employees' jobs and we must help employees develop more skills in this area.

Public information and education requires the ongoing concentrated effort at the central office. When this task is merely added to an employee's task, it can be too easily overlooked or forgotten. One person must be responsible for co-ordinating this effort and keeping other staff abreast of developments.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Develop and implement regional efforts at coordination with the criminal justice system.
- Identify public concerns on a regular bases and provide information that clarifies the areas of concern.
- Develop a public education/information capacity.
- Train staff in the area of public education.

## THE VICTIM IN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE PROCESS

Victims have been almost completely overlooked in the criminal justice process. There are ways to develop a constructive connection between the victim, the criminal justice system, the offender, and the community. The response of government at federal, state and local levels to the problems of crime has been overwhelmingly directed toward the offender. Increasing interest at both the state and federal level is now being directed toward the victims of crime.

Restitution as a penalty imposed on the offender is an old concept which has been generally ignored in contemporary corrections. The goal of restitution must be aimed at both restoring the victim and aiding in the rehabilitation of the offender.

There is a growing emphasis on building for the offender a direct sense of responsibility for his offense and the pain and expense it has caused someone else. More alternatives beyond financial restitution must be developed. Restitution in the form of work for the victim or the community offers greater and more meaningful options. This type of restitution is a clear extension of Vermont's traditional self-sufficient, self-responsible way of life.

The effects of a new style of restitution have a two-fold impact. The offender gets a direct sense of responsibility for his actions and the victim receives a direct benefit. Several states now have a victim assistance program in some form. It seems clear that growing interest at the federal level will result in the availability of funds to help support such a program. The creation of a victim assistance program would require active support from all the affected criminal justice agencies. Programs in other states range from special counseling centers for rape victims to a compensation fund for victims in certain situations.

The Department wishes to further explore the development of victim services. Referral of victims to services, broader restitution alternatives, and a victims' compensation fund are some important aspects.

*" . . . was transferred to the St. Albans facility in June 1976 because of his lengthy sentence and his continued failure at Community Correctional Centers. As usual, he has been the model resident and complies with the rules of the facility. He has resisted some program involvement but generally has been actively involved in sensible programs primarily those associated with alcohol abuse. He is rapidly approaching acceptance into Level IV and he is working well in the print shop. His eventual program goal at this point is the Residential Treatment Facility to continue with alcohol programing and printing.*

*. . . is to be complimented for his good productive use of his time at St. Albans to date and is scheduled for a further review in May."*

*Commitment - 10 days*

*"Due to the length of . . . 's sentence, he will spend his 10 days in the block, 4 days served at St. Johnsbury Transferred to Chittenden - Lack of space."*

*" . . . is a 49 year old repeat offender who is serving a two to five year sentence for false token. This conviction also constituted a violation of probation. . . 's prior record dates back 30 years, is non-violent in nature, and involves primarily larcenty and check-type offenses. Needless to say, . . . has been incarcerated many times, including numerous terms at the former State Prison in Windsor. Alcohol appears to play a major part in his deviant behavior.*

*. . . is now approximately six months away from his earliest release date, and has managed to keep himself actively involved in programing inside, I concur with Chittenden's request and have verbally approved community programing to include work release, as well as continued alcohol counseling. I would also ask, however, that the Chittenden Team be particularly cognizant of this individual's activities in the community in that it appears he may prefer institutional life, as evidenced by his many prior incarcerations."\**

*This individual escaped recently. He failed to return from furlough. Indeed he does seem to prefer institutional life. His "escape" came at a time when he was preparing for parole and life on the outside. The situation was threatening. His escape was not an expression of his wanting to leave but rather to stay. Escape charges will result in another sentence.*

*\*Excerpts from Department reports.*

## HOW DECISIONS ARE MADE ABOUT OFFENDERS

The Department is responsible for making numerous decisions about 2,800 adult offenders under the Department's supervision. An additional 400 offenders are in institutions. Decisions concerning people, their attitudes and behavior, are difficult to make. People are not always predictable and it must be understood that decisions concerning them are not infallible. The staff must always consider its dual role of protecting the public and providing the offender an opportunity to change.

The following are examples of the kinds of primary decisions that are made by Department staff about offenders that have major impact on the offender's life.

- What should we recommend to the courts regarding a sentence of an offender?
- When should the community release program, including furloughs, begin for an offender?
- What shall we recommend to the Parole Board regarding the offender's release?
- Should a parolee be returned to an institution?
- Should a probationer be referred back to the court?

There are other kinds of decisions which are much less visible, but in the eyes of the offender and correctional staff are also important. These decisions have to do with day-to-day behavior, performance, adjustment, and accountability of the offender. The decisions involve all line staff on a day-to-day basis. These decisions are vital to getting the job done and often go unrecognized.

For example,

- How much day-to-day supervision is necessary on probation?
- Who in the community and the offenders' lives can help?
- What other agencies and services can be brought in to deal with the offender and his problems?
- When should a disciplinary report be issued?
- What kinds of work should be assigned?

The list could go on but it does begin to give a sense of the complexities involved when a government agency bears a major responsibility for the decisions in a person's life. How we make decisions, who makes them, how they relate to the past and future is central to the performance of the Department.

We recognize the need for improved decisions, however, the Department confirms that it has the capability to make responsible decisions and the necessary latitude within legal bounds.

There is no specific way to determine how effective each and every decision is. However, there are indicators which begin to give a sense of system effectiveness such as parole and probation success rates. This documentation helps put the failures in the proper perspective. Most people do not return after they are released from supervision or custody. This positive message must replace the myth that most offenders fail.

However, the decisions that do become visible to the community and the press are the failures - escapes, serious furlough violations, new crimes committed while on parole are all examples of unsuccessful decisions. There is no doubt that we have begun to improve our decision making in these areas and we are committed to continue.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- Decision making about offenders should be broadened to include the views of other persons and agencies with interest and concern.
- Where possible and appropriate faster, better decisions must be made to promote cause and effect relationships. This will result in more clean, clear messages to the offender about why he is in the system and what is expected of him. This should promote better accountability of both the offender and the Department.
- Through training, procedures, and regulation, factors supporting sound decision making will be defined in more standard and concrete terms. The decisions will be more easily understood by staff, offender and others involved.



## HOW OFFENDERS SHOULD USE THEIR TIME

How offenders use their time is a primary concern of the Department of Corrections. One way to effectively use time is to take advantage of opportunities that are provided for offenders to effect personal change. Activities such as education, community mental health and psychiatric counseling, alcohol and drug treatment and family therapy are all important tools to effect that personal change. These treatment opportunities are currently available and will continue to be.

However, the Department of Corrections' programs have not stressed work. Historically, penal work has been designed for punishment, or facility self-sufficiency. These approaches were stressed to such a degree that prison work became viewed as demeaning and punitive.

As more modern correctional philosophy emerged, emphasis was placed on rehabilitation and treatment through support systems such as education, counseling, and mental health services. Personal growth was the desired result. *The work ethic is now viewed by the Department as a cornerstone to achieving personal growth.*

Work is a focal point in the lives of most adults in our society. We value the productivity, the opportunity to express ourselves and the chance to share accomplishments. Work is a vital element in our daily life and persons who are incarcerated also need this essential experience. Offenders are basically dependent upon the Department programs to keep busy and provide activities which lead to an improved ability to function in the community.

The Department has a limited capability to provide work opportunities. At this time the Department provides for work release in the community but not all offenders are eligible to participate. The Department must develop work activities for all levels of custody and supervision. Over two hundred offenders responded to questionnaires and interviews. Generally they agreed with the problem. Overall they felt they did nothing for a great part of the day and preferred to become involved in activities or work. Over 40% wanted more to do. In a way one might wonder why 'doing nothing' is so hard and frustrating. Leisure time is appreciated when it is sparse and balanced with a full and active schedule but it becomes meaningless when it's abundant.

The Department has begun to develop some clear programs to emphasize work and increase opportunities. The chart on the following page shows what will be expected of each offender, what opportunities will be available and the rewards for participation. As always all offenders in institutions regardless of custody level and program will be expected to maintain their immediate living area in a clean and orderly manner. The Department now views the development of values reflecting pride and positive sense of self as fundamental.

There are several major benefits to adopting an overall work program of this proportion.

- 1) Most offenders will spend a substantial part of their day involved in healthy productive work.
- 2) Symptoms of overcrowding, such as idleness, boredom, hostility, and vandalism, will be relieved.
- 3) The offender's productivity will be of direct benefit to himself, the State, and Vermont communities.
- 4) The potential for applying the concept of restitution to victims and communities can be realized.

Table 20

KINDS OF WORK NEEDED FOR OFFENDERS

| Type of Work                                     | High Security   | Medium and Minimum Security at   |   | Probation & Parole Supervision |
|--|---|--|---|--------------------------------|
|  |   | St. Albans & Windsor   | Regional Community Correctional Centers |                                |
| Immediate living area (cleaning, painting, etc.) | All inmates regardless of facility and security must maintain their immediate living area in a clean and orderly manner. Earned time received for their efforts.  |  |   |                                |
| Institutional support services                   | Persons in high security do not participate in work programs beyond their immediate living units.   | Inmates share responsibility for the support of the institution by work involving food service, maintenance, and grounds. Earned time is received for their efforts. |   |                                |
| Vermont Institutional Industries                 |   | Plate, print, farm, and sawmill operations at Windsor and St. Albans. Regional centers develop in-house work opportunities. Inmates receive small \$ incentive.      |   |                                |
| Supervised crews outside of facilities           |   | Forestry, logging, farming, railroad, public service, and road crews. Inmates receive small \$ incentive.  |   |                                |
| Work training in community                       |   | Work in community situation initially for stipend then to receive prevailing wages in community  |   |                                |
| Work release in community                        |   | Gainfully employed and financially self-supporting.  |   |                                |
| Restitution                                      | Provide volunteer efforts to nonprofit public service sector for sentence reduction and to meeting fine and court restitution obligation. Potential for developing constructive relationship between offender and victim. |  |   |                                |

Department Message to the Offender and the Community

WORK COUNTS

#### OFFENDER QUESTIONNAIRE

*In response to: "List 5 most important problems you have here." - residents from the Correctional Centers referred to:*

|                                      | <i>Number</i> | <i>Percent</i> |
|--------------------------------------|---------------|----------------|
| <i>1. Things to do</i>               | <i>341</i>    | <i>43.1</i>    |
| <i>2. Immediate living situation</i> | <i>173</i>    | <i>21.9</i>    |
| <i>3. Staff related problems</i>     | <i>129</i>    | <i>16.3</i>    |
| <i>4. Work (need and desire to)</i>  | <i>100</i>    | <i>12.6</i>    |
| <i>5. Personal problems</i>          | <i>57</i>     | <i>7.2</i>     |

Few work opportunities exist and there is little incentive to become involved in work. An expansion of the work programs available within the facilities and under direct supervision of staff is essential in this new emphasis for the Department. Vermont Institutional Industries provides work opportunities for only about 10% of the inmates. Authority will be requested to promote more work opportunities for offenders. New contracts with the Forests and Parks Department will provide work outdoors. Proposals are being developed with the Department of Bus, Rail, Waterways, and Motor Carriers Services to upgrade railroad right of ways. Other special projects directed at public services will expand the type and amount of work situations.

These proposals are geared to use state resources to meet state needs. Offenders will be cutting trees from state-owned land, preparing the lumber, and providing guard rails and railroad ties for state services.

Certain offenders will be eligible for participation in the furlough program. A function of this program is to provide opportunities for offenders to become involved in community based work programs. This program is a key ingredient in the reintegration process for offenders. Upon release they can be employed and self-supporting during the important initial period of parole. An expanded work release program is an essential element in the overall expansion of work programs.

The opportunities for more work in both community and non-community settings with various levels of supervision must have a direct link to benefits and rewards for the inmate. Increased work opportunities will now shift much of the responsibility to the offender.

Inmates now receive 'good time' when no misconduct has occurred. They do not have to earn it by positive actions. For the most part those who are productive both for themselves and their community are not distinguished in regard to 'good time' credit from offenders who 'do nothing'. Overcrowding has added an increased burden to the need for good active programs. The symptoms resulting from overcrowding within the facilities can best be addressed by activities to promote constructive use of time.

Rewards, benefits, and privileges must be associated with the offender's positive use of time. Currently 10 days of 'good time' is awarded an offender for each month in which no negative behavior has occurred. The recommended change would still allow an offender to receive credit for the same number of days for 'good time' but the conditions will be more demanding. Up to five days will be awarded for acceptable participation in work. The burden for quality participation is on the offender - he must take the responsibility. Offenders in the Vermont correctional system will work a major portion of their day. This work will earn privileges, levels of custody, and 'earned time'.

### *FACILITY REPLACEMENT & IMPROVEMENT*

The State of Vermont is committed to a regionalized community corrections approach as its primary method. To promote this direction the Department of Corrections will continue to develop and solidify its already existing programs at the regional level. The use of community based resources is vital to this approach. The programs must serve many different needs and purposes while protecting the public. The environment within the facilities must provide offenders with the proper level of custody and supervision along with program options that provide opportunities for change.

The Department is presently suffering the pains of overcrowding in its facilities particularly at the Community Correctional Centers. This creates an environment that supports negative behavior and discipline problems. It can compromise good decisions or prevent immediate action on good decisions. As an example offenders now are displaced to regions where they do not have community ties thus defeating this aspect of community corrections. The Department is further limited with badly inadequate, antiquated facilities in the Rutland and St. Johnsbury regions.

The average population within all facilities from January to June 1977 has been 416. We are fast approaching the level at which maintaining custody and order have to be the primary emphasis.

Long range recommendations to effectively deal with this overcrowding problem include replacement of the Regional Community Correctional Center in Rutland and St. Johnsbury as the Department's highest priority. The long range recommendations must also include provision for adequate high security, short term detention for a small number of offenders in Vermont.

Also, a wood-heated logging camp in Windsor is scheduled to be available for use in the spring of 1978. It will be an exclusively non-community program that will develop opportunities to work primarily in the logging and sawmill industry with products being sold to the State of Vermont. This program will add space and allow a healthy productive way to house 15 long term prisoners who can live in this kind of setting.

The new Rutland Community Correctional Center, currently in the design phase, is scheduled to be completed in the summer of 1979. The facility will house a maximum of 98 inmates and will provide necessary space for the foreseeable growth in that region.

The St. Johnsbury facility, like Rutland, presents similar environmental factors that require its replacement. It is small and not designed for the community corrections approach. Evidence used in determining the location of the St. Johnsbury replacement is mixed. Popular belief has in the past pointed to the greater Barre-Montpelier area as the replacement site. However, when the facts are reviewed, we can find no compelling reason to move the facility out of St. Johnsbury. Current data indicates that the new facility could easily be located in St. Johnsbury. However, the final selection of a site to serve the northeast quadrant of the state must be open to examination so that other crucial factors such as site availability and updated information can be considered in making this decision. In any event the plans for Rutland will be adopted for the 98 bed northeast facility.

Since the closing of the Vermont State Prison at Windsor the Department of Corrections experiences have indicated that we do not need a maximum security prison. However, the Department has confirmed the need for incrementally increased high security space in our institutions. The current arrangement at the St. Albans 'D' Wing is an unacceptable long-term solution. It continues to present problems associated with high operational costs, increasing building maintenance expenses, and ever increasing demands of both staff and structure to maintain an acceptable level of security. Individuals confined here are judged to be high security risks and may be sentenced or unsentenced. Many are awaiting transfer to a facility in another state. It is recommended that provision for short term high security for a small number of persons be built into the replacement facilities in Rutland and St. Johnsbury and to correspondingly reduce the use of 'D' Wing at St. Albans. This approach should provide the necessary short term security needs to be met and allow the Department to get on with the major program improvements in areas of work, offender incentives, and its relationship to the criminal justice system.

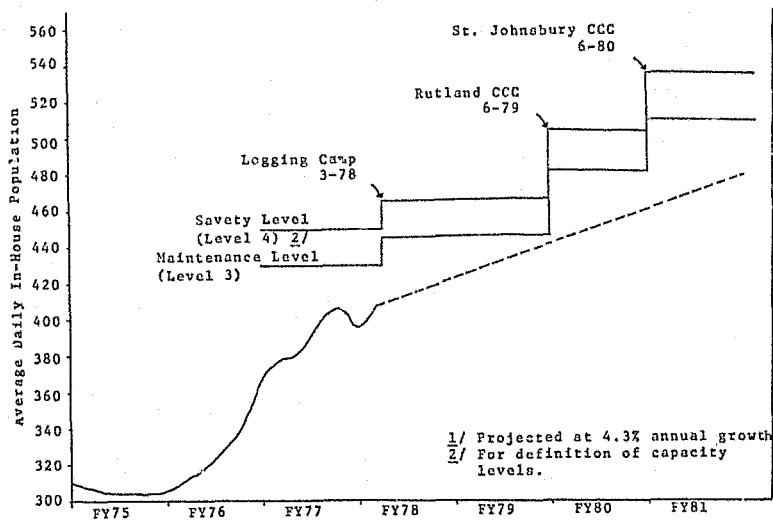
Also needed at St. Albans is work space to accommodate 20 more inmates in the Vermont Institutional Industries program. Consideration should also be given to upgrading existing space at the Woodstock and Chittenden Correctional Centers to allow light industrial work programs. This will promote the overall work program outlined previously in this report.

These longer term physical facility improvements will place the Department once again in the position where effective programs can be pursued in an environment that is not restricted by a general lack of space. It will also result in being able to conduct institutional programs at any level required, ranging from open community access to secure areas and units. These programs to replace community correctional centers will complete the establishment of a sound regional network. The role and major emphasis of these facilities will remain intact.

These proposals do not forecast our needs beyond 1982. Decisions about future needs should be delayed until more is understood about changing crime rates, population levels, and the effect of current actions and proposals.

However, should the population increase be substantially above projected levels, the Department will develop other alternatives such as development of a network of small forestry work camps in regions of the state where needed. These work camps would be satellites of the regionalized correctional facilities and be tied to Vermont Institutional Industries work programs.

Figure 19  
ACTUAL AND PROJECTED <sup>1/</sup> IN-HOUSE INSTITUTIONAL POPULATION  
AND PLANNED CONSTRUCTION/RENOVATION THROUGH FY81



### MANAGING OVERCROWDING OVER THE NEXT THREE YEARS

The problem of dealing with overcrowding over the next three years will be addressed by expanding the use of existing programs available to offenders at many different levels consistent with protecting the public. The directions will be to divert offenders away from the facilities through increased probation and parole services in the community. This effort can be expanded through the prudent purchase of needed services, use of available community resources, and improving the present method of classifying the types of probation and parole cases to levels of supervision. With a shared effort of the courts, probation and parole, and the correctional center personnel, effective bail release programs could reduce the number of offenders held in detention status. The use of volunteers to provide necessary support for people released on their own recognizance (ROR) will continue.

A sound method to classify the types of probation and parole cases will promote better case planning and more efficient use of the officers' time. The design will be to ensure that the greatest amount of officers' time is directed toward those offenders who require the most attention while developing efficient methods for handling those offenders who clearly do not present a danger to the community but have problems meeting their probation obligation such as fines and restitutions. Case classification is integral to effective caseload management and efficient use of time. Probation officers time and energy can be most effectively used toward fulfillment of Department goals. Levels of field supervision will be defined and implemented ranging from persons requiring intensive supervision to persons needing only minimal contact.



Table 21

## PROPOSED ACTIONS TO ALLEVIATE

| Goals to be promoted  | Action | Release on Recognizance and Bail Release Programs   | Expand Probation & Parole Supervision   | Add Purchase of Service Capabilities   |
|---|--------|---|---|--|
| Promote offender accountability                                 |        | Offenders are made responsible to meet the clear conditions of release.   | Increase offender accountability by making field supervision more effective, particularly furlough & parole.                      | Provides more ways to provide good residential supervision outside of correctional facilities                                    |
| Serves various correctional philosophies                        |        | Offenders can continue to be productive members of the community. This promotes restitution and rehabilitation philosophies.  | Could promote opportunity for offender restitution. More careful reintegration could occur.                                       | Could provide shelter care as base for offender restitution program. Can provide alcohol, drug, and specialized health services. |
| Provides service for State or community                         |        | Providing service could be a condition of release, furlough or parole.  |   |  |
| Care and planning in spending of public monies                  |        | Low cost  | 1/20 the cost of institutional care.  | No in-house duplication of services which are already available in the community.  |
| Share responsibility with criminal justice system and community |        | Court makes decision with input from states attorney. Department monitors case to see if conditions of release are being met. | Volunteers, local police, community agencies all have a role.   |  |
| Provide adequate levels of custody and supervision              |        | Conditions of supervision are clearly spelled out in release agreement.   | Allows for better supervision and support.  | Allows for better supervision and support in residential group or treatment facilities.  |
| Provide offenders opportunity for change                        |        | Opportunity for offender change continues in community, "real world" setting.<br>Provides realistic assessment for future.    |   |  |
| Effects on overcrowding   |        | Provides more good possibilities for a non-facility placement and thereby could limit intake.                                 | Increase likelihood of better performance by offender and thereby reduces chances of incarceration.                               | Between 20-40 beds may now be available in communities.  |
| <b>TOTAL EFFECT</b>   |        | <b>Non-dangerous offenders remain in community supporting self and family, street supervision 1/20 cost of incarceration.</b> | <b>Level of supervision allows for greater community participation, more program options, and better offender accountability.</b> | <b>Low cost alternative to incarceration. Can provide needed help for offender with good supervision at lower cost.</b>          |

**OVERCROWDING OVER NEXT THREE YEARS**

| Better faster decisions   | Increase work opportunities   | Define new programs for offenders with similar needs   | Establish a pre-release center   | Logging sawmill operations  |
|---|---|--|--|---|
| Offender becomes part of decision making process and held accountable.  | Offenders responsible for work. Work earns credit for earned time.  | Strong potential for developing new accountabilities for the type of offender who in the past has done "dead time".            | Provide more ways for good residential supervision outside of correctional centers.                | Work, supervision, and structure demands responsibility.  |
| Whichever philosophy is being served, the message to the offender becomes more consistent.  | Clearly serves purposed of restitution rehabilitation and reintegration.  | Can promote short-term punishment, deterance and restitution.  | Provides supervised reintegration of offender and promotes continuation of rehabilitation program. | Will provide productive work for long-term offenders. Could provide opportunities for restitution.                              |
| Promotes efficiency   | Offenders can pay Statu. for services receive. Can also pay debts, taxes, fines and restitution. Work can defray welfare costs. Offenders can provide direct services to State and community. |  |  | Provide wood products-State highways, railroads, and parks.<br>Use State resources to meet State needs. Lowest per capita cost. |
| Right person to right place, CJS and community input.   | Work available in community settings.   |  | Community shares responsibility for reintegration of the offender.                                 |   |
| Allow for most appropriate supervision.   | Active healthy work reduces need for direct expensive supervision.  | Supervision for this type of offender is generally no problem.   | Opportunity in 'real world' with supervision and support.  | Careful screening will result in proper placement in the program.   |
|   | Develops work skills and habits.  | Positive peer reinforcement.   |  | Work skills.  |
| There will be less frustration on the part of the offender, thereby reducing some of the symptoms of overcrowding such as hostility, vandalism, idleness and boredom. |   | This target could be served in a minimum security setting. This would free between 15-20 beds at any given time in our system. | A center of this type can optimally handle up to 15 persons.                                       | Will create 15-18 more beds in the system, thus contributing to the overall reduction of overcrowding.                          |
| More efficient system meets Department purpose and gets results.  | Major new emphasis of Department (see section on Offender Use of Time)  | There is a potential for developing new programs for offenders as needed.  | Would promote community corrections by providing timely pre-release at low cost.                   | Provide low cost humane alternative for offenders to work.  |

Another group to be addressed will be those offenders who need to make fine and restitution payments to meet their probation obligation. A monthly billing capability can provide a routine accounting system for officers of the probationers who are making regular payments. Other groups will be identified and the means to deliver appropriate supervision will be developed.

In reviewing the present overcrowding dilemma regionally it is apparent that the northeast sector is an area of primary concern. There are 81 sentenced offenders from this region in our present facility population. Less than 40% of those residents are housed in the region. A significant number have been displaced to other regional correctional centers and central institutions. This situation presents a serious problem in carrying out the community corrections mandate. The Department will deal with this problem regionally and consider a number of temporary solutions within the framework of its philosophy and goals.

The Department is considering a pre-release center in Washington County to serve the reintegration phase for offenders from that area and to relieve overcrowding in St. Johnsbury. Hopefully, with a pre-release center, increased probation and parole supervision, and a volunteer supported recognizance program, the need for additional space will be answered over the short-term period.

Should this plan to manage overcrowding on a short-term basis not meet expectations, contingency plans have been explored. A Department study committee visited available county jails to examine them for possible use. A thorough examination for operation of these facilities reveals that the use of these jails, for purposes beyond their present use is not feasible. They would require major renovation and would not be operationally cost effective. However, if growth occurs at the highest levels, the Department would consider operating the Newport jail as a satellite facility of the St. Johnsbury Center until a replacement is on line. This effort would retain the regional approach. Although a satellite can manage overcrowding, it will temporarily increase cost until the new regional center is built. This potential solution is not desirable, but might be unavoidable when considering the pressures of overcrowding.

### *CONCLUSIONS*

The Department has presented two distinct approaches to the problems of overcrowding. Basically we believe that the appropriate replacement and expansion to two regional centers (Rutland and St. Johnsbury), and the onset of the logging sawmill operation should meet our needs. Because of the delay between planning and implementation we have developed some short-term strategies to deal with our immediate problems. The options outlined are consistent with developing low-cost, humane, and effective programs which have the potential to serve us for some time.

## EMPLOYEE EFFECTIVENESS

The Department of Corrections is confident that its employees have the potential to carry out the wide range of programs and requirements necessary to effectively pursue to goals and programs outlined in this report. However, the employees generally need a better sense of the Department's direction, what strategies we will be employing, and solid training in the skills and attitudes necessary to accomplish our mandates.

Over the past four years the Department has developed policies and procedures and although some major policies must still be developed, a timely review of existing policies and procedures is due to avoid inconsistencies and contradictory applications.

Communication at all levels throughout the Department needs to be improved. The information necessary to make decisions at various levels must be available, consistent, and in a usable format. The information must be shared among central office, field and institution units. A uniform client-oriented record keeping system is badly needed. It will allow accessibility to essential information for decision making about offenders.

Staff training is the backbone of employee performance and morale. The staff knowledge and understanding of the Department's goals and operating philosophy is essential. Only with this knowledge can the staff perform to achieve the results. At this time the Department is undergoing much tension and change due to the pressures of overcrowding. The staff must have the skills to discharge their responsibilities under these adverse conditions. High staff turnover is a frequent occurrence when a staff has to weather a difficult problem. A solid training program increases personal commitment that employees have for their jobs and can reduce turnover significantly.

A demanding training program is the foundation for staff performance and accountability. Skilled corrections workers can have greater impact on the offender and return to the community persons who are better able to function.

A training program directed toward employee growth is most effective in making a total impact on the system. The Department is giving more attention to staff needs and professional development. The Department has already begun to document past training and develop minimum standards. Staff development, "in-house" opportunities, job rotation and swapping, and career counseling are avenues for further development.

Current training priorities have been set by the Department:

1. Training in specialized skills to deal with the symptoms of overcrowding and ways to alleviate this problem.
2. Implementation of minimum training standards for all skill levels within the Department. (Presently basic minimum standards have been proposed for workers at the six adult institutions. Probation and Parole has completed the preliminary assessment of past training and will soon develop minimum standards).

Reassessment has given the Department an opportunity to address its needs. Although the primary focus of the Department is on offenders, it is essential to recognize the needs of employees. A stable, motivated, corrections-oriented staff can best accomplish the goals of the Department.

## SUMMARY OF MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS

The Department of Corrections has undertaken a broad ranging self-assessment. This assessment produced the facts at hand to develop recommendations and an overall approach to developing a flexible system which can meet the known difficult demands of today in a way that promotes progressive correctional and criminal justice goals in the future.

The recommendations are based on a working philosophy that recognizes the fundamental relationship between the offender and the community. This is a confirmation of the idea of a primarily regionally based community corrections system.

The key recommendations indicate ways to deal with many kinds of offenders, including young property offender, in sensible ways.

The essential ingredient for an improved Department is improved decision making. The need for solid and broad based decisions throughout the criminal justice system will promote both system and offender accountability. Good decisions also imply that there is a full range of workable program options and incentives along with the needed levels of supervision. Improved decision making also provides a basis for recommendations and an improved relationship between the Department, the other components of the criminal justice system, and the greater Vermont community.

A second major theme in the recommendations deals with how offenders should use their time. Specifically, recommendations for productive work at all levels, the support needed for those programs, including an incentive system, and suggestions as to how a work program can promote a visible economic relationship between the offender, the victim, and the community.

Finally, there are facility recommendations which, if implemented, would greatly improve the flexibility of the Department to deal with offenders primarily in their own region and at the level of supervision consistent with both program and public safety.

If these recommendations are seriously debated and considered, then the reassessment has served an important purpose.

## KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Continue careful program development of regional community correctional centers as the primary approach in Vermont.
- Broaden Department philosophy to achieve many legitimate purposes of the criminal justice system and share this position with the greater Vermont public.
- Project clear messages to offenders about why they are in the system and what is expected of them. Systematic redevelopment of operating relationships with other elements of the criminal justice system is a key to working toward more common goals.
- Continue the development of employees through training and development of career ladders in order to obtain the skills and attitudes needed to help us through the current difficult period and to reach longer term goals and aspirations.
- Improve the operation and case management through advanced techniques so the ongoing case management and decisions are based on accurate and current fact.
- Develop powerful incentives and messages to offender that productive work is important.
- Replace Rutland and St. Johnsbury facilities which will have impact on the overall ability of the Department to carry out its mandate.
- Through case audit techniques and systematic review of programs - explore and implement alternatives to reduce overcrowding pressures, especially in the northeast quadrant.
- Examine the upcoming sawmill logging camp project at the Windsor Farm as a low cost prototype for the future. This is particularly important because after the Department's facility replacement program in 1982, it may offer a cost-effective way to deal with future space requirements if they materialize.

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