West Virginia Correctional Population Forecast 2004-2014

A Study of the State's Prison Population

Criminal Justice Statistical Analysis Center
West Virginia Division of Criminal Justice Services

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By

Theresa K. Lester, M.A.
CJSAC Research Analyst

Stephen M. Haas, Ph.D.
CJSAC Director

Criminal Justice Statistical Analysis Center
West Virginia Division of Criminal Justice Services
Department of Military Affairs and Public Safety
1204 Kanawha Boulevard, East
Charleston, WV 25301
(304) 558-8814
www.wvdcjs.com/statsanalysis/index.html

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Division of Criminal Justice Services Administration
J. Norbert Federspiel, *Director*
Michael Cutlip, *Deputy Director of Programs*

Data Assistance Provided By:
Brad Douglas, Division of Corrections, *Director of Research*

Forecast Consultant:
Wendy P. Naro, JFA Associates, LLC, *Vice President & Forecasting Specialist*

Consensus Group Members

Name	State Agency	Title
Joe Altizer	House Judiciary Committee	*Counsel*
Linda Richmond Artimez	Supreme Court of Appeals	*Administrative Director*
Steven D. Canterbury	Regional Jail Authority	*Executive Director*
Brad Douglas	Division of Corrections	*Director of Research*
Wyetta Fredericks	Division of Corrections	*Deputy Commissioner*
Tom Smith	Senate Judiciary Committee	*Counsel*
John L. King, II	Regional Jail Authority	*Chief of Operations*
Fred Lewis	House Finance Committee	*Fiscal Analyst*
Evelyn Moore	Senate Finance Committee	*Chief Clerk*
Benita Murphy	Parole Board	*Chairman*
Jim Rubenstein	Division of Corrections	*Commissioner*

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Executive Summary

West Virginia has one of the smallest but fastest growing prison populations in the nation. According to recent figures provided by the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS), West Virginia's prison population was ranked 39th in the nation in 2003. The rate of growth, however, was substantially greater than many other states. According to BJS, WV was ranked 3rd nationally at 8.3% in terms of average percent change in the state prison population between 1995 and 2003.

West Virginia also has one of the lowest rates of incarceration in the nation. For instance, WV was ranked 40th in the nation with 260 incarcerated persons per 100,000 resident in 2003. As a result, WV's rate of incarceration for 2003 remained considerably less than the national average of 482 inmates per 100,000 U.S. residents. Between 1996 and 2003, however, WV's rate of incarceration grew at a much faster pace compared to other states. Nationally, the prison incarceration rate increased by 12.9% from 1996 to 2003. During this same time, however, WV experienced a 73.3% increase in the incarceration rate, from 150 to 260 inmates per 100,000 residents.

In light of the growth in the correctional population over the past several years, this report provides a comprehensive examination of the past, present, and future correctional population in West Virginia. The West Virginia Division of Criminal Justice Services, in conjunction with the Criminal Justice Statistical Analysis Center, submits this report to the WV State Legislature on a bi-annual basis to assist public officials and correctional administrators in the development of strategies to manage future correctional populations. This report also provides the statistical information necessary for the development of research-based policies to deal with the continued growth in the correctional population.

Prior to the presentation of the current forecast projections, this report presents a detailed description of the past and current correctional population. Since forecast projections are based primarily on current admission and sentence information, the presentation of results begins with a description of the number and type of commitments and admissions to the Division of Corrections (DOC). The discussion highlights both current patterns and historical changes in the demographic and offense characteristics of offenders admitted to DOC facilities.

The analysis of commitments clearly shows that the number of offenders committed to DOC custody continues to increase. However, the analysis also demonstrates that the rate of growth since 2000 is considerably less than what was observed in the mid to late 1990s. Between 1994 and 1999, for instance, the number of new DOC commitments doubled with an average annual growth rate of 15.0%. In comparison, the number of new commitments increased by only 26.0% for an average annual growth rate of 5.6% between 2000 and 2004.

During this period of growth in the late 1990s and the early part of this decade, there was also a change in the nature of offenders being admitted into DOC facilities. For example, there was a general increase in the number property offenders admitted into DOC facilities between 1998 and 2003. This trend in the increase of property offenders was coupled with a decline in the proportion of new admissions that contained violent offenders. If this trend remains stable over the coming years, it suggests that violent offenders may constitute less of the prison population in the future. Despite this decline in the proportion of violent offenders being admitted to DOC facilities, violent offenders continued to comprise 55.9% of all inmates housed in DOC facilities at midyear 2004.

Due to the persistent increase in the commitments to DOC custody, however, the confined inmate population was at its highest level at the end of 2004. According to DOC figures, there were 5,067 inmates in DOC custody at years end. The correctional population contained 309 additional inmates compared to end-of-the year figures for 2003. This corresponded to an annual increase of 6.5% in the number of inmates under DOC custody between 2003 and 2004.

Since 2000, the number of offenders released from DOC custody has also continued to increase. For the period between 2000 and 2004, the number of inmates released from DOC custody increased from a total of 1,278 in 2000 to 1,953 in 2004. This translated to a 52.8% increase in the number of inmates being released from DOC custody over this four-year period.

Of the 1,953 inmates released from DOC custody in 2004, most were granted release by a parole board. Approximately 4 in 10 prisoners were granted release by a parole board in 2004. An additional one-third of prisoners were discharged as a result of a court order or due to the completion of their sentence. However, in spite of a steady increase in the number of parole interviews and decisions between 2000 and 2004, the proportion of cases granted parole remained rather stable. With the exception of 2001, roughly one-third of all interviews resulted in the granting of parole over this four-year period. Nevertheless, parole releases were more common for some offenders compared to others. Parole releases were most prevalent for burglary, property, and drug offenders. While sex offenders were the least likely group of offenders to receive a parole release in 2004.

A central purpose of this report is to generate a forecast for the State correctional population between 2004 and 2014. Previous forecasts have estimated that the correctional population will continue to grow. Performance evaluations have confirmed the continued growth in the correctional population over the past four years and validated the accuracy of prior forecast projections. As anticipated, the current forecast continues to projects that WV's correctional population will increase over the next decade.

The correctional population is expected to grow at an average annual growth rate of 3.2% over the next ten years. The population is forecasted to reach 6,010 inmates by the end of 2009 and 6,992 inmates by the end of 2014. This corresponds to a 38.0% increase in the correctional population from 2004 to 2014. In addition, the forecast estimates a reduction in the proportion of violent offenders that is accompanied by an increase in the proportion of nonviolent offenders serving time in prison. While the growth in the correctional population is forecasted to be less than what was observed in the 1990s, the current projections imply that public officials and correctional administrators should plan for larger correctional population in the future.

Report Highlights

* The WV prison population is growing at faster pace compared to other states. In 2003, WV ranked 3rd in the nation in terms of annual percent change since 1995 at 8.3%.

* The number of offenders committed to the Division of Corrections continues to increase, but the average annual growth rate is much smaller than what was observed in the mid to late 1990s.

* Between 1998 and 2003, there were general increases in property offense admissions, coupled with reductions for all violent offenses.

* In 2003, nonviolent offenders comprised 71.9% of all new admissions.

* In 2004, 55.9% of the confined prison population was serving time for a violent offense.

* Sentence lengths for most violent offenses declined while property offenders' sentence lengths increased between 1998 and 2003.

* In 2003, 51.3% of the total number of releases were placed on parole supervision.

* In spite of an increase in the number of parole decisions between 2000 and 2004, the proportion of cases granted parole remained rather stable. Roughly one-third of all interviews resulted in a decision to grant parole.

* In 2004, a total of 5,067 inmates comprised the confined correctional population in West Virginia.

* The correctional population is forecasted to grow at rate less than what was observed in the mid to late 1990s.

* The correctional population is expected to reach 6,010 inmates in the year 2009 and 6,992 inmates in 2014. This corresponds to an annual growth rate of 3.2% over the next decade.

Introduction

The purpose of this report is to describe the current correctional population in West Virginia and provide policy-makers with a 10-year correctional population forecast. This report offers evidence that the adult correctional population in WV has grown in recent years and will continue to grow over the next decade. As the correctional population continues to expand, it is important for agency representatives and policy-makers to appreciate the nature and magnitude of the growth. It is anticipated that the information provided in this report will assist public officials and agency representatives in planning for the future and developing policies for the management of the WV correctional population.

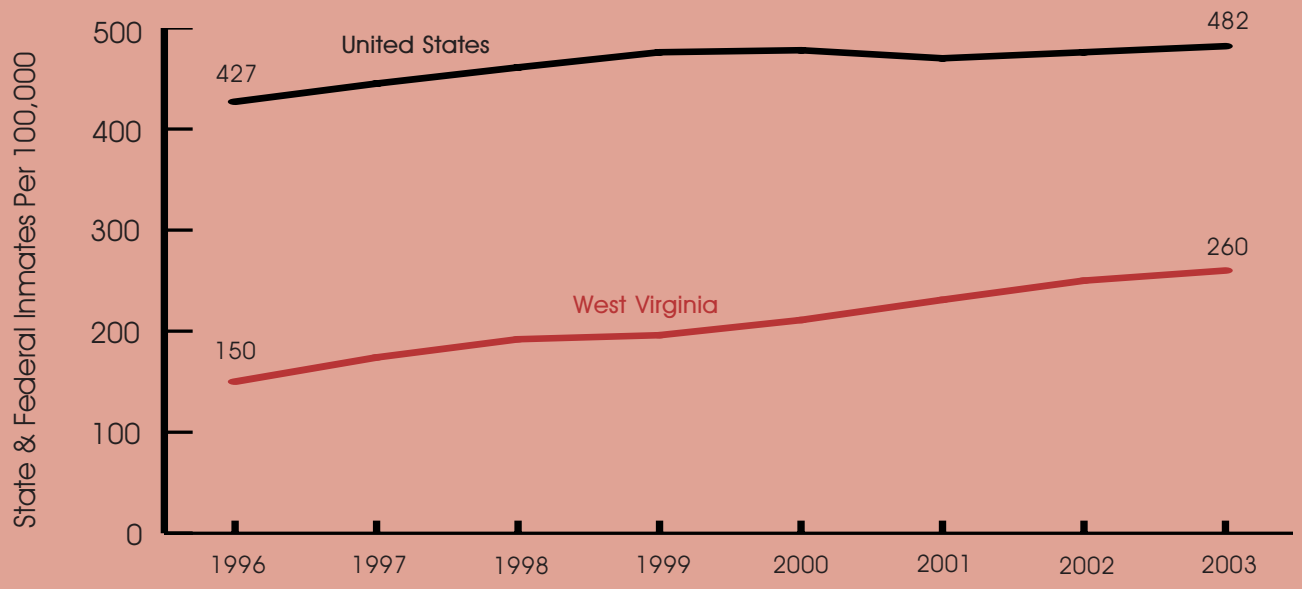
By providing an accurate assessment of the current correctional population as well as population estimates for the future, this report seeks to provide the statistical information necessary for making research-based policy decisions. This report provides information on both past and present correctional populations. Notable trends in admissions, stock, and release populations are also highlighted. A special emphasis is placed on describing the 2004 correctional population and the characteristics of 2003 admissions and releases. Finally, using patterns of admissions and releases for 2003, this report provides correctional population forecast projections for 2004-2014.

The forecast projections contained in this report should provide policy-makers with the capacity to make informed decisions that pertain to the management of the future correctional population. This report highlights not only the magnitude of the projected growth, but also seeks to describe what the correctional population may "look like" in five and ten years. The current forecast includes a description of the 2009 and 2014 correctional populations in terms of gender, offense types, and security or classification levels. This information should assist policy-makers in determining both the number and types of beds and facilities that may be required in the future. In addition, such information may help in the development of policies and strategies to meet future programming needs and maximize the impact of available alternatives to incarceration.

The Criminal Justice Statistical Analysis Center (CJSAC) provides a new correctional population forecast to Legislature on a bi-annual basis. In addition, the Center evaluates the performance of each forecast it produces. Previous forecasts have projected continued growth for

Graph 1

Prison Incarceration Rates, 1996-2003
National and State Trends



Source: "Prisoners in 1996-2003." Bureau of Justice Statistics, U.S. Department of Justice

Notes: Incarceration rates are shown for the number of sentenced inmates incarcerated under State and Federal jurisdiction per 100,000 persons. Data represents both jail and prison populations at midyear, June 30th.

the WV correctional population in the coming years. At the same time, performance evaluations of previous forecasts have confirmed the continued growth in the correctional population and validated the accuracy of those projections.

West Virginia currently uses a widely accepted model to forecast the adult correctional population in WV. The model produces projections based on subpopulations of offenders or ID groups. For the West Virginia model, the ID groups represent offenders with similar admission offenses. Projections of the correctional population are calculated by estimating the number of offenders in each offense category or ID group who are expected to be in a DOC custody at different points in time over the next ten years. The current population forecast assumes that patterns of admissions and releases in 2003 will carry over to the next year. This "growing admissions assumption" is assumed to continue throughout the forecast period.

Regardless of the method used to generate a forecast, the implementation of new policies that significantly change the nature of offenders admitted to correctional facilities and/or the amount of time offenders spend incarcerated can have a substantial impact on the accuracy of such projections. Given that such changes can occur over time, short-term projections are believed to be more accurate than long-term projections. Thus, it is important to continually monitor changes in sentencing practices as well as trends in admissions and releases that may impact the accuracy of such projections. In addition, the known impact of such changes illustrates the importance of reassessing population growth on a periodic basis.

In short, the current correctional forecast provides estimates of population growth from 2004 to 2014.

Table 1

Top Ten Highest and Lowest Jurisdictions for Selected Characteristics of the Prison Population, Year end 2003

Total Prison Population[a]		Incarceration Rates, 2003[b]		1-Year Growth, 2002-2003 Percent Change		Average Percent Change Since 1995[c]	
Ten Highest							
TX	166,911	LA	801	ND	11.4%	ND	9.8%
CA	164,487	MS	768	MN	10.3%	OR	8.7%
FL	79,594	TX	702	MT	8.9%	WV	8.3%
NY	65,198	OK	636	WY	7.8%	MS	7.7%
MI	49,358	AL	635	HI	7.5%	MT	7.7%
GA	47,208	SC	551	IN	6.7%	CO	7.5%
OH	44,778	GA	539	AZ	6.2%	IN	7.4%
IL	43,418	MO	529	ME	5.9%	TN	6.6%
PA	40,890	AZ	525	FL	5.8%	UT	6.4%
LA	36,047	DE	501	OR	5.2%	MN	6.2%
Ten Lowest							
ND	1,239	ME	149	CT	-4.2%	MA	-2.1%
WY	1,872	MN	155	NY	-2.8%	NY	-0.6%
VT	1,944	ND	181	MI	-2.4%	OH	0.0%
ME	2,013	RI	184	NJ	-2.3%	NJ	0.1%
NH	2,434	NH	188	OH	-1.9%	NC	0.5%
SD	3,026	VT	226	MD	-1.5%	RI	1.0%
RI	3,527	NB	228	MA	-0.9%	MD	1.6%
MT	3,620	MA	233	NH	-0.7%	IL	1.8%
NB	4,040	UT	240	GA	-0.5%	MI	2.3%
AK	4,527	WV	260	NB	-0.4%	NH	2.4%

Source: " Prisoners in 2003." November 2004.
Bureau of Justice Statistics, U.S. Department of Justice

Notes: [a] The total number of inmates under state and federal jurisdiction at the 2003's year end. The data for AK, CT, HI, RI, VT includes prisons and jails as they both comprise one system in these states.
[b] The number of prisoners with a sentence of more than 1 year per 100,000 residents in the state population. WV tied with WA with an incarceration rate of 260.
[c] The, average annual percent change, from 1995 to 2003 in sentenced prisoners. There are some inmates that have been sentenced to one year or less in the figures for NJ, IL, OH, OK, TN, and TX.

Table 2

Percentage of Sentenced Inmates by Broad Offense Group (US versus WV)

Broad Offense Group	United States 2001	West Virginia 2002	West Virginia 2004
Violent	49.3%	56.1%	52.2%
Property	19.3%	27.4%	27.2%
Drug	20.4%	7.4%	10.0%
Public Order	11.0%	9.2%	10.6%

Source: U.S. figures: "Prisoners in 2002." July 2003. Bureau of Justice Statistics, U.S. Department of Justice. W.V. figures: DOC Automated Inmate Information Tracking System, and CJISD Database for June 30,2002 and 2004

Notes: West Virginia figures include both Anthony Center and jail populations.

Estimates of the correctional population in terms of gender, type of offense, and security level are also provided. We anticipate that this report will be useful to corrections administrators, public officials, and other policy-makers as they establish working plans for the management offenders under criminal justice supervision. This report begins with a brief description of the WV correctional population and a comparison of WV to other states and the nation.

The WV Correctional Population in a National Context

West Virginia's rate of incarceration continues to be considerably less than the national average. Compared to other states, WV consistently has one of the lowest rates of incarceration in the nation. In 2003, WV ranked 40th in the nation at 260 inmates incarcerated per 100,000 residents (see Table 1). In contrast, the national rate of incarceration was 482 persons per 100,000 persons in 2003. In addition, WV has the lowest rates of incarceration among southern states.

Similar to national trends, WV's rate of incarceration increased at a rapid rate over the past decade. However, WV's rate of incarceration increased at a considerably faster pace than the national average. Between 1996 and 2003, for instance, the incarceration rate for the nation increased by 12.9%, from 427 to 482 persons per 100,000 residents. During this same period of time, the incarceration rate in WV increased by 73.3%, from 150 to 260 inmates per 100,000 residents.

West Virginia also has one of the smallest prison populations in the nation. In 2002 and 2003, WV prison population ranked 39th in the nation (see Table 1). When compared to states in the region, WV has the smallest prison population among southern states.

West Virginia's prison population is growing at a greater rate compared to other states. Between 1995 and 2003, the nation experienced an average percentage increase of 3.3% in the prison population. During this period, fifteen states experienced at least a 5.0% increase in the average percent change in the prison population. WV was one of the fifteen states to experience such a large increase in annual growth. In fact, WV ranked 3rd in the nation with an average percent increase of 8.3%. Only Oregon and North Dakota had higher average percent increases in their prison population during this period (see Table 1). Among the southern states, WV had the highest average percent increase from 1995 to 2003.

Compared to national estimates, a greater proportion of offenders in WV prisons are serving time for violent and property offenses (see Table 2). The differences are most pronounced for property offenders. The most recent figures from the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) indicate that property offenders comprised 19.3% of prisoners nationally in 2001. Meanwhile, property offenders made up 27.4% and 27.2% of WV's prison population in 2002 and 2004, respectively. On the other hand, WV prison population tends to comprise a smaller percentage of drug offenders compared to national estimates. National

estimates for the percentage of offenders serving time for drug offenses is more than double the percentage in West Virginia.

Summary of Correctional Forecasts, 2000-2003

The following discussion provides a summary of previous population forecasts and performance evaluations results. Two previous forecasts have been published by the Division of Criminal Justice Services and the Criminal Justice Statistical Analysis Center. The performance of each population forecast has been monitored since the publication of the first forecast in February 2001. Performance evaluation results for each correctional population forecast have been disseminated through two bi-annual update reports.

The *Correctional Population Forecast 2000-2010* report found that West Virginia's adult correctional population had been consistently growing since 1993. In 1999, at the national level WV had a low prison population, ranking 9th in the nation, along with a low incarceration rate, ranking 6th in the nation. By the end of 1999, more than half of those in the Division of Corrections (DOC) custody (57.3%) were confined for violent offenses. Those in the property, burglary, DUI, and drug offense categories were admitted and released more often, serving less time in custody. During this same time period the majority of inmates were released to be supervised under parole. It is noteworthy that the 54.8% of sex offenders in 1999 were discharge per expiration of their sentence with no parole supervision. The forecast produced at this time, projected that West Virginia's correctional population would increase to 4,936 by 2005 year's end.

The *Correctional Population Forecast 2001 Update* report found that the forecast was performing well, and that the state's prison population was steadily increasing. Average sentence lengths were fluctuating on an 10.6% average. This was reported to be over the national averages and common in states with no sentencing guidelines. Within the confined population more than half were serving sentences for violent offenses and or life sentences. In December 2001, the actual population was 4,008 and the forecasted population was 3,934. The population difference was 74 inmates or a 1.8% rate of difference.

The *Correctional Population Forecast 2002-2012* report noted that West Virginia's prison population had the highest annual growth rate in the nation between 2000-2001, at 9.3%. The forecast had been performing fairly well, actually underestimating the actual prison population by 2.0%. Similar to the previous forecast projections, the trend in commitments to DOC was that they are increasing. Parole decision rates were found to have been higher in the 1990s than in early 2000s. Nationally, West Virginia continued to have one of the smallest prison populations along with one of the smallest incarceration rates. The new forecast projected the prison population to be at 5,853 by 2007 year's end.

The *Correctional Population Forecast 2003 Update* report documented that the state's adult correctional population had been continuing to grow as projected. At the end of 2003, the actual population was 3.4% less than the forecast estimates at that time. Trends remain consistent for those committed to DOC custody. The property offense category made up the largest portion of those admitted in 2002. Parole decision rates remained stable for 2002 and 2003. There was a 10.2% increase in the percentage of offenders released from 2002-2003. The performance evaluation of the forecast showed that in December 2003 the actual population was 4,758 and the forecasted population was 4,918. Thus, the forecast overestimated the actual population by 160 inmates for a 3.4% rate of difference.

The current *West Virginia Correctional Population Forecast 2004-2014* report builds on previous forecast produced in recent years. Similar to previous forecasts, this report provides an estimate of the size of the correctional population over a ten year period. This report, however, also seeks to describe the future correctional population in terms of selected demographic and admission characteristics. The following section describes the methodology used to generate the current population forecast.

Methods

This section of the report describes the data sources, assumptions, and statistical model used to produce the current 2004-2014 projections. Variable definitions and calculations are also provided. This section begins with a technical description of the forecast model and the various assumptions used to generate and interpret the correctional population projections.

Technical Description of Model

The forecast of the state correctional population was completed using Wizard 2000 projection software. This computerized simulation model mimics the flow of offenders through the state's correctional system over a ten-year forecast horizon and produces monthly projections of key inmate groups.

The Wizard 2000 simulation model utilizes a technique that is consistent with that of a stochastic entity simulation model. It is stochastic, or probabilistic, in the sense that random numbers are used in the modeling process, and an entity simulation in the sense that the model is conceptually designed around the movement of individuals through the correctional system. The model is also generally an example of a Monte Carlo simulation technique, again because random numbers are used in the process of simulating the system. Individual cases (offenders admitted to supervision in West Virginia) are processed by the model through a series of possible statuses (e.g., awaiting trial, prison, parole, and parole violation) based upon the transition probabilities fed in by the researcher.

Once the simulation model has moved the case to its new status, the process is repeated over and over until the case either reaches the end of the projection period, or enters what is referred to as a terminal. Terminal status signifies a complete exit from the system being modeled.

When a model is loaded with accurate data, it will prove to be quite reliable in forecasting a population, as it will mimic the actual flow of cases through the correctional system being modeled. The model operates under the notion of a "growing admissions assumption." This assumes, as stated in the introduction, that what happened last year will carry over to the next year. In order for the simulation model to work to its full potential, information must be gathered describing all of the entries and exits from the actual system for a previous one-year period. This applies to all offenders sentenced to the DOC custody. Additional data must be gathered describing the characteristics of the admission, confined, and release populations, parole hearings outcomes, and parole revocations. This information is then entered into the simulation model.

The Wizard 2000 simulation model for West Virginia was used to generate a ten-year prison population forecast. After several preliminary models, one model was produced to model the population accurately. The resulting model forecasts the state sentenced offender population according to their most serious offense; murder, sex crimes, robbery, assault, burglary, property, drug, DUI, and other. The Anthony Center, and diagnostic inmates are entered separately into the model. The model is unable to provide forecast projections on specific characteristics of the Anthony Center and diagnostic populations, due to their small sample size. This can be considered a limitation of the model.

Sentencing information is vital to the simulation model. There are a variety of descriptive statistics (minimums, maximums, and means) required from the sentencing data. These sentencing calculations are described later in this section.

Forecast Assumptions

The inmate population projections contained in this report were completed using the Wizard 2000 simulation and projection model. This model simulates the movements of inmates through the prison system based on known and assumed factors affecting both the volume of admissions into the system and the lengths of stay for inmates who are housed in prison. It simulates the movements of individual cases, by offense category, and projects each separately.

The forecast model assumes that various factors known to impact trends in admissions and releases of inmates will remain relatively stable over time. It is assumed, for instance, that the sentencing composition for new commitments will remain the same as in the 2003 admissions. In addition, forecast projections assume that decision rates, which result in the granting of parole, will remain somewhat constant. The accuracy of the

correctional population projections are contingent upon these assumptions holding true over the forecast period.

Data Sources and Providers

This report was completed using the forecasting model just described in conjunction with data analyses of current inmate population trends. A variety of data sources were analyzed. Data was provided by the West Virginia Parole Board and by the Division of Corrections (DOC). The sources of the data are described below. The National Corrections Reporting Program (NCRP) data files were provided for both admissions and releases. The 2003 NCRP admission and release data and information extracted from DOC's Automated Inmate Information Tracking System on the confined prison population for 6/30/04 did not contain data on the inmate diagnostic population. These data sources also did not include the jail inmates awaiting transfer to a DOC facility.

National Corrections Reporting Program (1998-2003)

The National Corrections Reporting Program (NCRP) is a federal program coordinated by the U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics used to collect data from state's correctional systems. Each institution submits standard NCRP forms for every inmate admitted to and released from physical custody of the DOC. There are three reports that comprise the NCRP: Prisoner Admission Report, Prisoner Release Report, and the Parole Release Report. These forms are collected and entered by the DOC Central Office, then forwarded to U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census.

Automated Inmate Information Tracking System "Tracking" (1995-2004)

The DOC maintains an Automated Inmate Information Tracking System to record information about inmates in the physical custody of the DOC. Institutional staff members use this system to manage the prison population with such tasks as classification, movement, programming, sentencing, and date calculations. The name, DOC number, date of birth, sex, race, highest grade completed, GED earned, marital status, commitment type, crime, sentence, conviction county, minimum release date, maximum release date, first parole eligibility date, next parole eligibility date, order received date, effective sentence date, intake date and location are recorded in the database for each inmate.

Commitments and Releases Log (1998-2004)

The Division of Corrections (DOC) Central Office maintains a Commitments and Releases Log (CRL). It includes information on the commitments to DOC, the releases from DOC, and parole hearings held for DOC inmates. Commitments to DOC are tallied by month, type, and gender. The commitment information is obtained monthly from the County Jail Inmates Sentenced to DOC (CJISD) database. The database includes information on all inmates sentenced to DOC, regardless of their physical location. Releases from DOC are tallied by month and type. This information is collected by the Division of Corrections Central Office from the facilities housing DOC inmates in a monthly report titled "Monthly Report of Activities." Parole hearings are tallied by month and outcome. Parole hearing outcomes include grants and denials. This information is provided by the WV Parole Board through their monthly report.

End-of-Month Log (1998-2004)

The DOC Central Office maintains an End-of-Month Log (EML). It includes the number of inmates in DOC custody at the end of each month by gender, physical location, and commitment type. Two types of physical locations are recorded, jail or DOC prison. The commitment types include normal, Anthony Center, and diagnostic. The information is submitted to the Central Office by each institution housing DOC inmates. Data from the month of December is used as the end-of-year tally, for a specified year.

Parole Hearing Database (2001-2003)

The DOC Central Office maintains a Parole Hearing Database (PHD). It includes the inmate name, inmate number, interview number of the inmate, parole revoked, times parole revoked, interview date, months until next interview, parole decision, offenses committed, minimum sentence, maximum sentence, race, gender, and institution. Each Institutional Parole Officer provides this information to the Office of Research after each visit by the Parole Board. The information obtained from this database is compared with information obtained from the WV Parole Board's monthly reports.

Formation of Offender Groups

The statistical model used to generate the correctional population forecast requires the formation of offense categories, also referred to as ID groups. It is assumed that offenders within in each of the identified ID groups are handled by the criminal justice system in a similar fashion. In particular, it is assumed that offenders within each offense category are treated similarly in terms of factors related to sentencing, time served, and release decisions. Thus, specific offense categories or ID groups form the basis for all of the analysis contained in this report including the population forecast.

These offense categories are murder, sex crimes, robbery, assault, burglary, property, drug, DUI, and other offenses. Each offender's most serious offense was used to construct the ID groups. For the admission and release data, National Crime Reporting Program (NCRP) codes were used to identify the most serious offense committed, which was then collapsed into the appropriate offense category. The most serious offense is already determined in the data file for the confined population.

Several data sources were used to describe the 2003 correctional population. Inmate admission and release information was obtained from NCRP data provided by DOC. DOC's offender "tracking" system provided the data used to describe the 2003 stock population at midyear. The distribution of specific offenses included in each offense category or ID group for all 2003 admissions, releases, as well as confined inmates at midyear 2003 are reported Appendix A and B.

Some analyses are reported in terms of the following broad offense categories: violent, property, drug, and public order offenses. The violent offense category includes murder, sex crimes, robbery, and assaults. Property offenses include both property and burglary offenses. The drug offense category includes all drug-related offenses including trafficking and possession. All other and DUI offenses form the public order offense category.

Definitions and Calculations

Current Prison Population. Discussions and analyses of the current prison population include the Anthony Center inmates, unless otherwise noted. The diagnostic inmates are not included in the current admission, release, or confined population analyses due to constraints on data availability. The prison population data also does not include jail inmates sentenced to DOC custody awaiting transfer to a DOC facility.

Anthony Correctional Center. Offenders sentenced to the Anthony Correctional Center (ACC) have shorter length of stay, as compared to other DOC facilities. Young offenders are typically sentenced to 6 months to two years. Given that this population is handled differently from the general population of inmates, offenders sentenced to the Anthony Correctional Center are separated from the general population in some analyses as well as the forecast projections.

Diagnostics. These offenders can be sentenced to 60 days for a diagnostic evaluation.

Commitments. This term used to describe the number of offenders that are ordered by the court to the custody of the Division of Corrections. Commitments include all offenders sentenced to DOC custody, including those who may be housed in regional jails awaiting transfer to a DOC facility.

Admissions. This is a term refers to offenders who are sentenced to a DOC facility *and* physically enter a DOC facility. Admissions differ from commitments in that they do not include inmates housed in regional jails pending transfer to a DOC facility.

Security or Classification Level. Inmates are assigned to security or classification levels based on assessments of risk. There are five levels of security assigned to offenders admitted to DOC facilities. These security levels include:

Maximum (Level 5): Most severe and restrictive custody relating to housing and movement. Includes segregation, administrative segregation, detention units and inmates ineligible for parole or discharge.

Close (Level 4): Next to most severe and restrictive custody; including special management status (Protective Custody) and behavior improvement units.

Medium (Level 3): Permits inmates to function somewhat freely within the confines of the institution/facility/center.

Minimum (Level 2): Allows for more freedoms within the confines of the facility. Includes inmates eligible for work crew or job assignment outside the confines of the institution/facility/center and possibly work release.

Community (Level 1): Least restrictive; includes inmates

eligible for community programs or work release placement.

Annual Growth Rate. Annual growth refers to the difference in total number of inmates from one year to the next.

Average Annual Growth Rates. The average annual growth rate is calculated by summing or adding the annual growth rates for each year over a span of time. This number is then divided by the total number of years in the time frame being calculated.

Average Maximum Sentence. This is a conversion of the total maximum sentence given for all offenses into months. Anthony Center and diagnostic populations are not included in the calculation of the average maximum sentence length. Maximum sentences that exceeded 1,000 months or more were excluded due to historical methodology (see Table 6).

Length of Stay. This represents the total time spent in DOC custody. This is calculated by taking the total time spent in prison and adding it to any previous time spent in jail. This figure is then converted into months.

Mean Time Served. This is the average time served in a DOC facility, converted to months. This is calculated by subtracting the release date from the date of admission. This calculation does not include any time previously spent in jail, prior to admission into prison.

Mean Percent of Maximum Sentence Served. This represents the average percent of the maximum sentence served in a DOC facility, converted to months. This is calculated by taking the total time served in prison and dividing that by the total maximum sentence for all offenses. Cases with zero time served and equal to 250 months or greater are excluded from total maximum sentence calculation.

Parole Decision Rates. The parole decision rates are calculated by taking the total number of cases granted and dividing that by the total number of all cases in which the outcome was either a grant or denial of parole.

West Virginia Correctional Population

Admissions to Corrections

This section provides a general description of the number and type of commitments and admissions to the Division of Corrections (DOC). It is designed to provide an overview of the characteristics of offenders who entered the state correctional system in 2003 and point to important trends that have occurred over recent years. We begin with a brief account of both current and historical trends in commitments to corrections. *Commitments* refer to all offenders that are ordered by the court to the custody of DOC, but may or may not be currently house in a DOC facility.

Our discussion of commitments is followed by a more comprehensive examination of both current patterns and historical changes in the demographic and offense characteristics of offenders admitted to DOC. *Admissions*, in contrast to commitments, refer to all offenders who are committed *and* are physically housed in a DOC facility. Admissions do not include offenders who are housed in local or regional jails awaiting transfer to a DOC facility. This section concludes with an analysis of maximum sentence lengths given to offenders admitted to DOC by type of offense.

Commitments to Custody

In 2004 the total number of new commitments was 2,468, up from 2,242 offenders in 2003, see Table 3 below. Over two-thirds (74.8%) of new DOC commitments in 2004 were for new felons. Other types included commitments to Anthony Center (9.3%), diagnostic units (6.8%), and offenders returning as a result of a parole violation (9.1%). Between 2003 and 2004, the largest increase occurred among those committed for new felonies. There was a 18.3% increase from 2003 to 2004 among this type of commitment. The largest decrease between 2003-2004 occurred among the Anthony Center commitments. There was a 12.9% decrease in those committed to Anthony Center in 2004.

Although the number of offenders committed to DOC custody continues to increase, the rate of growth is much smaller than what was observed in the mid to late 1990's. During the later part of the 1990s, the number of offenders committed to DOC more than doubled (Table 3). New commitments increased by 100.2%, from 938 offenders in 1994 to 1,878 offenders in 1999. This growth translated into an average annual rate of growth of approximately 15.0% over the five-year period. However, since the 1990's the number of new commitments and the average annual rate of growth has slowed considerably. Between

Table 3

Annual Change in Commitments to the Division of Corrections Custody, 1994-2004

Year	New Felons	Anthony Center	Diagnostic	Parole Violators	Total	Total Annual Change N	Total Annual Change %
1994	864	31	43	N/A	938		
1995	814	55	58	178	1,105	+167	17.8%
1996	920	82	47	188	1,237	+132	11.9%
1997	1,166	194	21	161	1,542	+305	24.7%
1998	1,185	205	143	214	1,747	+205	13.3%
1999	1,381	194	106	197	1,878	+131	7.5%
2000	1,436	199	110	214	1,959	+81	4.3%
2001	1,363	240	158	228	1,989	+30	1.5%
2002	1,508	267	179	207	2,161	+172	8.6%
2003	1,560	264	189	229	2,242	+81	3.7%
2004	1,846	230	167	225	2,468	+226	10.1%
Average						153	10.3%

Source: DOC Commitment and Release Logs

Notes: The 1994 data did not allow for the number of parole violators to be separated from the number of new felons.

2000 and 2004, there was only a 26.0% increase in the number of DOC commitments. In 2004 there were 2,468 new commitments, up from 1,959 in 2000. For this time period, the average annual rate of growth was only 5.6% annually.

Over the past ten years, increases have occurred in every type of new commitment. As shown in Table 3, the most frequent type of commitment was for new felons. Since 1994, the number of new felony commitments has increased by 80.6%. Similar to the trends observed for total commitments, the largest increases in new felony commitments occurred during the 1990s. Between 1994 and 1999, the number of new felony commitments increased by 37.2%, compared to only 8.6% since 2000. Although fewer in number, there have also been large percentage increases in the number of new Anthony Center and diagnostic commitments over the past ten years. The number of parole violators committed to DOC custody has fluctuated over the years from a low of 161 in 1997 to a high of 229 offenders in 2003.

Table 4

Demographic Characteristics of Inmates Admitted by Year, 2001-2003

	2001		2002		2003	
Gender	N	%	N	%	N	%
Male	1,234	85.6	1,331	91.3	1,503	86.4
Female	207	14.4	127	8.7	237	13.6
Total	1,441	100.0	1,458	100.0	1,740	100.0
Race						
White	1,254	87.2	1,236	84.8	1,460	83.9
Black	177	12.3	211	14.5	269	15.5
Other	7	0.5	11	0.8	11	0.6
Total	1,438	100.0	1,458	100.0	1,740	100.0
Age						
24 years/under	517	35.9	532	36.5	600	34.5
25-34 years	414	28.7	434	29.8	502	28.9
35-49 years	431	29.9	417	28.6	541	31.1
50 years/over	79	5.5	75	5.1	97	5.6
Total	1,441	100.0	1,458	100.0	1,740	100.0
Age						
Mean	31.7		31.5		32.1	
Standard Deviation	10.5		10.2		10.4	
Education						
8th grade or lower	153	10.6	133	9.1	153	8.8
9th - 11th grade	408	28.3	458	31.4	535	30.8
12th grade or GED	783	54.4	775	53.2	907	52.1
Some College	78	5.4	69	4.7	110	6.3
College Degree	18	1.3	18	1.2	35	2.0
Total	1,440	100.0	1,453	100.0	1,740	100.0

Source: NCRP Prisoner Admission Reports

Notes: The other subcategory of race includes American Indian, Alaskan Native, and Asian or Pacific Islander. In 2001, there were 3 cases missing from the race category and one unknown case existed in the education category. In 2002, there was one missing case and 4 unknown cases in the education category. Percentages may not total to 100.0% due to rounding.

Characteristics of Admissions to Facilities

Table 4 displays the demographic characteristics of offenders admitted to DOC facilities between 2001-2003. Offenders admitted to DOC facilities over this three-year period were largely young white males with a high school education (or equivalent) or less. As shown in Table 4, white males constituted a vast majority of DOC admissions over the three-year period, regardless of the year examined. In 2003, 86.4% of admissions involved males, while 83.9% of admissions were made up of white offenders. Other minority race or ethnic groups comprised less than 1.0% of all DOC admissions in 2003.

Admissions during this time frame also tended to be made up of young and uneducated offenders. The mean age for offenders admitted to DOC facilities over the three-year period was approximately 31 to 32 years old. Nearly two-thirds (63.4%) of offenders admitted in 2003 were below the age of 35. Of the two-thirds of offenders below 35 years old, 34.5% were 24 years old or younger. Only 5.6% of admitted offenders were 50 years old and over.

In terms of education level, roughly half of all offenders admitted to DOC facilities in 2003 had at least a 12th grade education or GED. However, nearly forty percent (39.6%) of admissions were comprised of offenders with less than 12 years of education. Just under ten percent (8.8%) of the offenders had completed less than 9 years of education. Roughly the same percentage reported having attended some college (6.3%) or having obtained a college degree (2.0%).

Only slight changes in the distribution of demographic characteristics occurred between 2001 and 2003 for DOC admissions. There were small, but steady changes in the proportion of black and educated offenders admitted to DOC over the three-year period. The proportion of black offenders increased from 12.3% in 2001 to 15.5% in 2003. Meanwhile, the proportion of offenders who had attended some college or received a college degree increased slightly during this period. In terms of gender and age, there was little or no overall change in the distribution of offenders admitted to DOC facilities. Although there was a reduction in the number and percentage of females admitted in 2002, their proportion returned to approximately 14.0% of all admissions in 2003.

Admissions by Offense Category

The percentage distribution of admissions by offense type for 1998-2003 are presented in Table 5. In 2003, the property offenses continued to represent the largest group of admissions. Nearly forty percent (39.0%) of DOC admissions were for property and burglary offenses. Drug and DUI offenses comprised 15.5% and 10.3% of admissions, respectively. As a result, offenders sentenced for burglary, property, drug, DUI, and other nonviolent offenses represented over seventy percent (71.9%) of admissions in 2003. Thus, less than thirty percent (28.1%) of all 2003 admissions were comprised of offenders sentenced for the commission of a violent offense.

Between 2002 and 2003 the largest percent increase occurred in the property offense category. There was a 2.5% increase in those offenders admitted for property offenses. This category was followed by increases in admissions for murder (1.6%), robbery (1.2%), burglary (0.9%), and sex crimes (0.9%). The largest reductions occurred in the DUI and "other" nonviolent offenses, with 5.0% and 1.7% decline in 2003, respectively. The assault and drug offense categories both also had slight decreases of 0.2%.

The results shown in Table 5 also point to five-year trends in DOC admissions. A comparison of 1998 and 2003 admissions figures by offense category reveal a general increase in admission for property offenses coupled with reductions for all violent offenses. During this period, admissions for property crimes (including burglary) increased by 10.0% while violent crime admissions for such offenses as murder, sex crimes, robbery, and assault declined by 8.6%. The property offense category showed the largest increase in admissions at 7.7%. The sex crimes and DUI offense categories experienced the largest declines at 4.0% and 4.9%, respectively.

Admissions by Offense Category, Gender and Race

The distribution of 2003 admissions by offense category for gender, and race are shown in Graphs 2 and 3. Although the majority of offenders admitted to DOC facilities were white and male, these analyses highlight the differences in the type of offenses for which these groups were admitted into DOC facilities in 2003. For both gender and race, the results indicate that there were considerable differences between gender and race groups

Table 5

Inmates Admitted by Offense Category and Year 1998-2003

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	% Change 2002-2003	% Change 1998-2003
Murder	7.2%	3.9%	5.1%	3.9%	3.3%	4.9%	+1.6%	-2.3%
Sex Crimes	12.7%	11.5%	11.3%	10.6%	7.8%	8.7%	+0.9%	-4.0%
Robbery	6.8%	5.0%	4.0%	6.0%	5.5%	6.7%	+1.2%	-0.1%
Assault	10.0%	10.2%	9.4%	8.1%	8.0%	7.8%	-0.2%	-2.2%
Burglary	13.6%	15.3%	15.1%	19.8%	15.0%	15.9%	+0.9%	+2.3%
Property	15.4%	16.8%	16.1%	17.4%	20.6%	23.1%	+2.5%	+7.7%
Drug	15.2%	14.8%	13.9%	10.9%	15.7%	15.5%	-0.2%	+0.3%
DUI	15.2%	17.7%	18.6%	13.4%	15.3%	10.3%	-5.0%	-4.9%
Other	4.0%	4.7%	6.5%	9.8%	8.8%	7.1%	-1.7%	+3.1%

Source: NCRP Prisoner Admission Reports

Note: Anthony Center inmates are not included in these figures, in order to allow for a historical comparison. See Appendix C for total number of admissions for 1998-2003, excluding Anthony Center. Percentages may not total to 100.0% due to rounding.

in terms of admission offense.

As shown in Graph 2, a higher proportion of female offenders were admitted for murder as well as property and drug offenses. In particular, females were twice as likely to be admitted to DOC for a property offense such as forgery/fraud or grand larceny and over three times more likely to be admitted for murder. Almost fifty percent (40.9%) of all females were sent to a DOC facility for a property offense (excluding burglary), compared to only 20.3% of male offenders. In the same regard, over ten percent (10.1%) of all female offenders compared to only 3.6% of male offenders were admitted to corrections for murder in 2003.

Males were more likely than females to be admitted to DOC custody for most violent offenses as well as burglary and DUI offenses. With the exception of murder, a greater proportion of males were sent to DOC facilities for sex crimes, robbery, and assault. The greatest difference in the distribution of male and female offenders occurred in the sex crimes category. Males were nearly four times as likely to be admitted for a sex crime. In the same regard, males were three times more likely to be admitted for burglary and approximately two and one half times more likely to be admitted for a DUI offense.

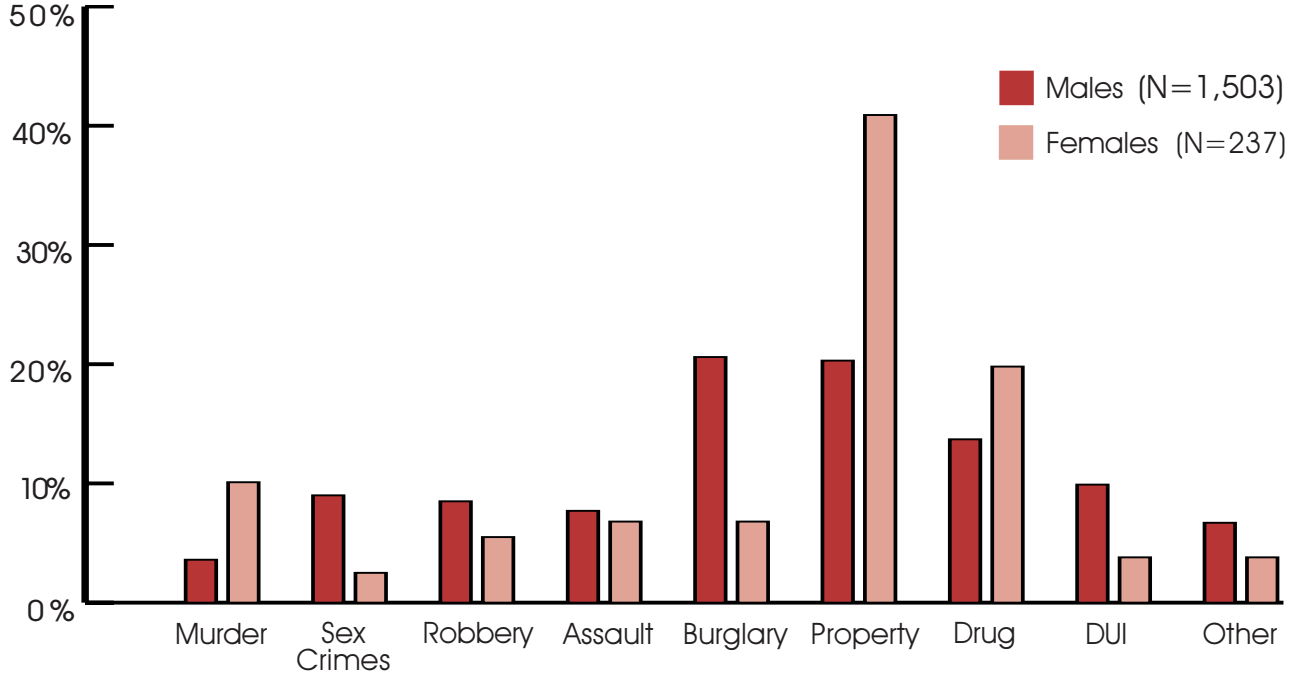
In terms of admissions by offense and race, black offenders were more likely to be admitted to DOC facilities for the commission of violent and drug offenses. This disparity is particularly large for drug offenses (Graph 3). Black offenders were slightly more than three times as likely to be admitted for a drug offense. Over one-third (34.2%) of all black offenders were sent to DOC facilities for a drug offense, compared to only 11.0% of white offenders. A greater proportion of African-American offenders were also admitted for violent offenses, in 2003. Just over one-quarter (27.3%) of all white offender were admitted to DOC facilities for a violent offense, compared to roughly one-third (32.7%) of all black offenders. With regard to the specific offense distribution for violent offenses, black offenders were most likely to be admitted for robbery and assault offenses. Of black offenders, 45.5% were admitted for robbery offenses. While 25.3% of whites were admitted for these same types of offenses. African -Americans were least likely to be admitted for sex crimes, at 11.4%. While white offenders were almost three times as likely, at 32.6%, as black offenders to be admitted for a sex crime. White offenders were around two times more likely to be sent to DOC facilities for property and public order offenses.

Average Maximum Sentences by Offense Category

The average maximum sentence lengths by offense category and admission year are presented in Table 6. For the most part, violent offenses received the longest maximum sentence lengths in 2003. One notable exception was for assaults. In 2003, offenders admitted to DOC facilities for sex crimes as well as the offenses of murder

Graph 2

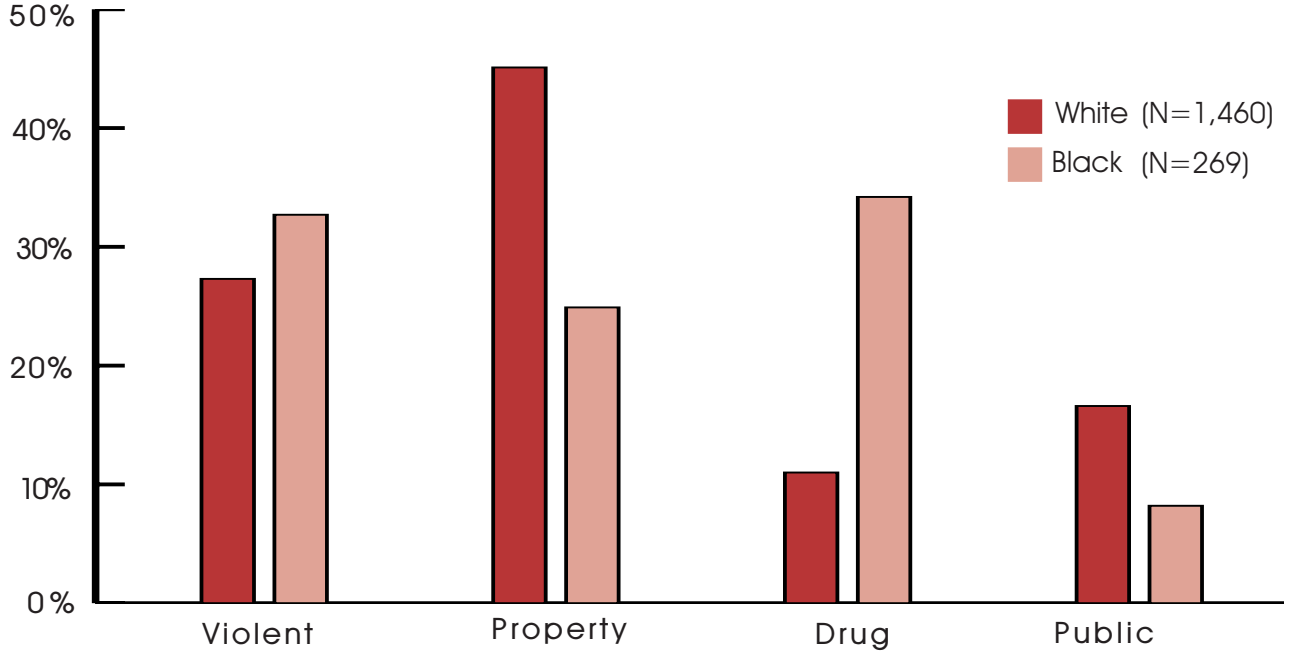
Percentage of Admissions by Offense Category and Gender, 2003



Source: 2003 NCRP Admission Report

Graph 3

Percentage of Admissions by Broad Offense Category and Race, 2003



Source: 2003 NCRP Admission Report

Notes: There are 10 cases that makeup the "other" category. Races included are American Indian and Alaskan Native. This category is comprised of 4 cases within the violent , 4 within the public order, one within property, and one within the drug broad offense categories. There was one missing case, in which the origin of race was unknown. Due to the small sample size of the other category it was not included in this graph.

and robbery received somewhat similar sentence lengths. Average maximum sentences of 240 and 245 months were given to offenders sentenced to robbery and murder or sex crimes, respectively. Offenders sent to DOC facilities for assault were given an average maximum sentence of approximately 96 months.

Property and drug offenses followed violent crimes in terms of the longest average maximum sentence lengths in 2003. Offenders sent to DOC facilities in 2003 for burglary and other property offenses such as forgery/fraud and grand larceny received average maximum sentence lengths of 189 and 145 months. Meanwhile, all drug offenders admitted to DOC in that year received an average maximum sentence length of roughly 128 months. The shortest sentence lengths were given to DUI offenders at approximately 42 months.

Between 2002 and 2003, seven of the nine offense categories had a reduction in average maximum sentence lengths. The largest declines occurred in murder and robbery. Over this one-year period, the average maximum sentence length for offenders sent to DOC facilities for murder decreased by nearly 140 months from the peak that occurred in 2002. Likewise, there was roughly a 55 month decline in the average maximum sentence length given to robbery offenders.

There were also declines in the sentence lengths for offenders admitted to DOC custody for "other" nonviolent offenses (19 months) as well as burglary (10 months), assault (7 months), DUI (4 months), and drug offenses (1 month). The largest increase sentence length occurred for offenders sent to DOC facilities for a sex crime. From 2002-2003, there was a 64 month increase in the average maximum sentence given to offenders admitted for these offenses.

An interesting pattern emerges when maximum sentence lengths for admissions are examined over a five-year period. The results displayed in Table 6 below, show reductions in sentence lengths for most violent offenses from 1998-2003. Over the same period, however, an examination of the average maximum sentence lengths points to increases for offenders admitted for burglary, property, drug, and DUI offenses. For instance, there was a 42 month reduction in the average maximum sentence length given to offenders admitted to DOC for murder and assault offenses and a 21 month reduction in the sentence length given to robbery offenders. In comparison, there was a 20 month and a 5 month increase in the average maximum sentence lengths given to burglary and property offenders over the same period.

Table 6

Average Maximum Sentences (in Months) by Offense Category and Admission Year

Offense Category	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	Change 2002-2003	Change 1998-2003
Murder	287.8	246.3	258.0	247.4	384.9	245.4	-139.5	-42.4
Sex Crimes	232.8	228.3	257.4	237.7	181.0	245.2	+64.2	+12.4
Robbery	260.3	239.0	447.0	244.7	294.4	239.7	-54.7	-20.6
Assault	138.9	103.1	103.6	108.8	103.3	96.2	-7.1	-42.7
Burglary	168.6	167.9	191.8	215.8	198.4	188.5	-9.9	+19.9
Property	139.5	136.9	138.3	142.9	142.9	144.5	+1.6	+5.0
Drug	125.8	124.5	121.7	123.5	128.9	127.5	-1.4	+1.7
DUI	39.6	37.6	41.3	45.9	45.8	42.3	-3.5	+2.7
Other	88.4	67.7	63.8	70.8	73.4	54.1	-19.3	-34.3

Source: NCRP Prisoner Admission Reports

Notes: Anthony Center and Diagnostic Populations are not included in this table. Maximum sentences that exceeded 1,000 months or more were excluded based on historical methodology. As a result, 21 cases were excluded from the murder category in 2003. Of these 21 cases 8 of them received 1,116 months, 12 received 1,152 months, and 1 received 1,164 months as the average maximum sentence. In the sex crimes category 2 cases were excluded. One case was for the offense of sexual offense/minors with a sentence of 1,104 months. The other was for first degree sexual abuse with a sentence of 1,152 months. The robbery category had 2 cases excluded. One was for the offense of armed robbery with a sentence of 1,152 months. The other was for robbery with a sentence for 1,152 months. Lastly, the assault category also had 2 cases excluded. Both cases were for kidnapping offenses receiving sentences of 1,152 months. See Appendix C, for total number of admissions for 1998-2003, excluding Anthony Center.

Confined Inmate Population

The first part of this section describes the general growth of the state's *total correctional population*, gathered from DOC's end-of-year figures. This includes all inmates in DOC custody. Those in DOC custody include: inmates housed in local/regional jails awaiting transfer to a DOC facility, as well as those already confined to a DOC facility (prison). Current and historical trends are discussed.

The majority of this section, however, describes the state's total confined population at midyear 2004. The purpose is to describe the demographic and offense characteristics of inmates serving time in WV state prisons as well as those inmates housed in local and regional jails awaiting transfer to prison as of June 20, 2004. In an effort to provide a detailed description of offenders across different settings, descriptive statistics are provided for: (1) the *total prison population* which includes all offenders housed in DOC facilities (2) the population of offenders serving time in *Anthony Correctional Center*; and (3) the *local and regional jail population* pending transfer to a DOC facility. All of these various analyses are presented to depict an image of who is currently serving in our state's correctional population.

Correctional Population Growth

The correctional population, which includes all inmates in DOC custody, has steadily increased over the past decade. As a result, the confined inmate population was at its highest level in eleven years at the end of 2004 (Table 7). According to DOC figures, there were 5,067 inmates confined in the state correctional system at 2004 year's end. This was 309 additional inmates than existed in 2003, resulting in a 6.5% annual growth rate between 2003-2004.

Between 1994 and 2004, West Virginia's correctional population more than doubled in size. During this ten year period, the number of offenders confined in DOC custody increased by 117.9%. This corresponded to an average annual increase of 269 inmates per a year. Although the annual growth rate of the confined correctional population has been generally declining since 2000, the actual number of prisoners confined from year-to-year has continued to increase. As shown in Table 7, the confined correctional population has increased on average by 305 inmates per a year since 2000. This is compared to an average annual increase of 239 inmates per a year between 1994 and 1999.

Table 7

Confined End-of-Year Population 1993-2004

Year	Population	Annual Change N	Annual Change %
1993	2,110		
1994	2,325	+215	10.2%
1995	2,517	+192	8.3%
1996	2,832	+315	12.5%
1997	3,198	+366	12.9%
1998	3,535	+337	10.5%
1999	3,543	+8	0.2%
2000	3,870	+327	9.2%
2001	4,215	+345	8.9%
2002	4,544	+329	7.8%
2003	4,758	+214	4.7%
2004	5,067	+309	6.5%
Average		269	8.3%

Source: DOC End-of-Year Tallies (Tracking)

Generally speaking, despite the steady growth in the number of inmates imprisoned over the past decade, the *annual* growth rate has continued to decline. Previously, in 2002 West Virginia had one of the nations fastest annually growing correctional populations, ranking sixth in the nation, in terms of annual growth rates. Then in 2003, West Virginia followed the nation with a declined in its annual growth rate. At this time, the annual growth rate for the state went down 3.1% from the previous year, ranking 11th in the nation. The annual growth rate increased by 1.8% for 2004. However, this does not negate the fact the state's annual growth rate has clearly slowed down since 1998. This can viewed as a reflection of the same trend found in the annual growth rate for commitments discussed earlier in this report.

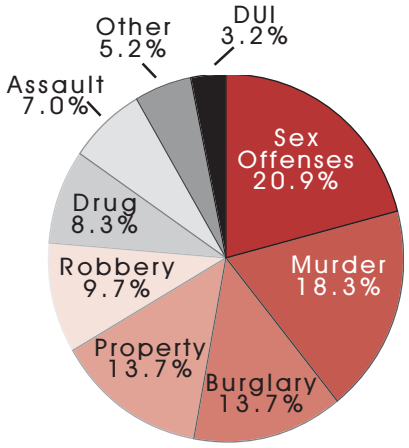
Total Prison Population Characteristics

The total prison population includes all inmates who are housed in DOC facilities, excluding those confined in local and regional jails. A total of 3,942 offenders were confined in DOC facilities in 2004.

As shown in Graph 4, over one-half (55.9%) of the confined prison population was serving time for a violent offense in 2004. Meanwhile, nearly one-third (27.4%) of inmates were confined for a property offense and less than ten percent (8.3%) were housed in DOC facilities

Graph 4

Total Confined Prison Population by Offense Category (N=3,942)



Source: DOC Automated Inmate Information Tracking System for 6/30/04

Notes: Percentages may not total to 100.0% due to rounding.

for a drug offense. Slightly greater than eight percent (8.4%) of the prison population was confined for a DUI and "other" offense in 2004.

Inmates confined for sex crimes and murder comprised the largest groups of offenders at 20.9% and 18.3% of the total prison population in 2004. These offender groups were followed by prisoners confined for property crimes (13.7%), burglary (13.7%), robbery (9.7%), and drug offenses (8.3%). Less than four percent (3.2%) of the confined prison population was serving time for a DUI offense in 2004.

In terms of demographic characteristics, the confined prison population in 2004 was largely comprised of white middle-aged males (See Table 8). Males accounted for over ninety percent (91.1%) of the inmate population, while females constituted less than ten percent (8.9%) of the state prison population. Similar to the distribution for 2003 admissions, African-American inmates were overrepresented in the state prison population by approximately four and one half times their proportion in the general population of WV residents. Black inmates comprised 14.0% of the confined prison population in 2004, while making up only 3.0% of the WV population, according to 2000 Census estimates. Finally, over two-thirds of the state prison population was made up of offenders between the ages of 25 and 49 years of age. Fourteen percent of the confined prison population was 50 years old and over.

As shown in Table 8, the distribution of offenses for which inmates were confined varied by the demographic characteristics of offenders in 2004. For instance, males were considerably more likely to be confined for a violent offense, while females were more likely to be confined for property and drug offenses. Nearly sixty percent (57.5%) of confined males were in prison for a violent offense. This is compared to only 39.0% of female inmates. On the other hand, approximately forty percent (41.3%) of female inmates were in prison for a property offense, compared to only 26.1% of males. Likewise, female inmates were nearly twice as likely to be confined for a drug offense compared to male inmates.

As for race differences in commitment offense, black inmates were slightly more likely to be confined for a violent offense and over four times more likely to be imprisoned for a drug offense. As shown in Table 8, roughly one-quarter (23.1%) of the confined black population of prisoners were serving time for a drug offense. In contrast, only 5.9% of white inmates were in prison for a drug-related offense. On the other hand, white inmates were over twice as likely to be serving time in prison for a property offense. While only 12.8% of black inmates were confined for a property offense, nearly one-third (30.0%) of white inmates were imprisoned for a property offense. White offenders were also slightly more likely to be serving time for a public order offense.

The results presented in Table 8 further shows that the types of offenses for which inmates are confined also varies by the age of the offender. Older offenders were more likely to be serving time for a violent offense compared to younger inmates in 2004. This statistic most likely reflects that fact that violent offenders tend to both receive and serve longer prison terms compared to inmates committed for other crimes. Over eighty percent (81.9%) of inmates 50 years old and older were serving time for a violent offense. Similarly, two-thirds (60.9%) of offenders between the ages of 35-49 years were confined for a violent offense. In contrast, slightly greater than sixty percent (60.9%) of the inmate population younger than 25 years of age was serving time for a property, drug, or public order offense.

A vast majority of inmates confined in DOC facilities in 2004 were classified in minimum, medium, and close security settings. In fact, 92.5% of the confined inmate population was placed in one of the above three security levels. Less than ten percent (6.1%) of inmates were

placed under maximum security supervision while less than the two percent (1.3%) of prisoners were placed in a community security level. Although the frequency of a community security classification is low, nearly fifty percent (47.9%) of inmates given this security classification were serving time for a violent offense. Meanwhile, over eighty percent (82.2%) of inmates under close security and 54.8% of maximum security inmates were confined for a violent offense. Most inmates given a minimum security classification were imprisoned for a property offense.

The frequency and percentage of inmates by security level and year are presented in Table 9. For the most part, classification levels remained relatively stable of the three-year period. Between 2002 and 2004, approximately one-third of the total prison population was classified in either a close or medium security setting. An additional one-quarter of the confined population was placed in minimum security. Inmates in a community level of security comprised the smallest proportion of confined inmates in all three years. For 2002-2004 the percentage of inmates in maximum security decreased by 5.0%, from a peak of 11.1% in 2002 to only 6.1% in 2004.

Anthony Center Population Characteristics

While the Anthony Correctional Center (ACC) inmates are part of the total confined prison population, they are unique in that they are younger and serve shorter prison sentences compared to inmates housed in the general population (see Methods section). Given the

Table 8

Characteristics of Total Confined Prison Population (6/30/04) by Broad Offense Category

	Total N=3,942	Violent		Property		Drug		Public Order	
Gender	N	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Male	3,593	2,066	57.5	937	26.1	280	7.8	310	8.6
Female	349	136	39.0	144	41.3	47	13.5	22	6.3
Race									
White	3,355	1,858	55.4	1,005	30.0	197	5.9	295	8.8
Black	553	319	57.7	71	12.8	128	23.1	35	6.3
Other	34	25	73.5	5	14.7	2	5.9	2	5.9
Age									
24 years/under	629	246	39.1	260	41.3	62	9.9	61	9.7
25-34 years	1,279	601	47.0	472	36.9	120	9.4	86	6.7
35-49 years	1,481	902	60.9	305	20.6	116	7.8	158	10.7
50 years/over	553	453	81.9	44	8.0	29	5.2	27	4.9
Security Level									
Community	48	23	47.9	19	39.6	4	8.3	2	4.2
Minimum	846	220	26.0	382	45.2	131	15.5	113	3.4
Medium	1,257	731	58.2	315	25.1	97	7.7	114	9.1
Close	1,229	1,010	82.2	165	13.4	25	2.0	29	2.4
Maximum	221	121	54.8	76	34.4	10	4.5	14	6.3

Source: DOC Automated Inmate Information Tracking System

Notes: The other subcategory of race includes Alaskan, Asian, Hispanic, Native American and multiracial. There were 341 cases missing from the security level variable. Percentages may not total to 100.0% due to rounding. Refer to Appendix D for a breakdown of characteristics by specific offense categories.

substantive differences between Anthony Center inmates and the general DOC prison population, this section provides a brief description of the demographic characteristics of Anthony Center inmates. Table 10 displays the distribution of the confined Anthony Center population at midyear 2004.

There were a total of 172 inmates confined in the Anthony Correctional Center as of June 30, 2004. This figure represented 4.4% of the total DOC prison population. Compared to the general prison population, a greater percentage of ACC inmates were male, younger in age, and serving time for a nonviolent offense. In addition, a smaller proportion of ACC inmates were black when compared to the general prison population.

In accordance with the requirements set forth in State Code Chapter 25, Section 4, Article 6, all of the inmates housed in ACC were between 18 and 25 years of age. Approximately two-thirds (61.6%) of the confined ACC population were between 18 and 21, and the mean or average age was 21 years old. Meanwhile, just over ninety-five (95.3%) of the ACC population was comprised of male offenders at midyear 2004, compared to 91.1% of inmates in the total prison population.

In regard to the racial distribution of ACC inmates, the majority of inmates were white (88.4%), followed by African American (11.0%) and "other" (0.6%) racial/ethnic backgrounds. However, in comparison to the racial distribution for total prison population, black inmates comprised a smaller proportion of the ACC population. While blacks comprised approximately 14.0% of the total DOC population in 2004, they made up only 11.0% of the ACC population.

The ACC population also differs from the total prison population by offense. It is clear that the ACC population is comprised of fewer violent offenders. At midyear 2004, violent offenders comprised over half (55.4%) of the total prison population. In comparison, slightly below one-third (32.0%) of ACC inmates were serving time for a violent offense. Instead, over forty percent (41.3%) of ACC inmates were serving time for a property offense, compared to only 27.4% of offenders in the total prison population. Likewise, 14.0% and 12.8% of ACC offenders were serving time for drug and public order offenses. This is compared to only 8.3% of the total prison population serving time for a drug crime and 8.4% for a public order offense.

Characteristics of Jail Population

The confined jail population at midyear 2004 included a total of 1,013 inmates awaiting transfer to a DOC facility. In terms of the race and gender distributions, there were only slight differences between the jail population and the total state prison population. Similar to the total state prison population, the majority of offenders confined in regional jails were white males. Males comprised over ninety percent (91.2%) of the jail population, compared to 91.1 % of the total state inmate population. For those cases in which race was known, whites comprised 83.8% of all jail inmates , compared to 85.1% of all state prisoners. African-Americans comprised 15.0% of all jail inmates, compared to 14.0% of all state prisoners. The race of the offender, however, was missing for 401 or 39.6% of the inmates housed in the regional jails.

Table 9

State Prison Confined Population by Security Level and Year

Security Level	2002		2003		2004	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Maximum	349	11.1%	286	8.7%	221	6.1%
Close	947	30.0%	1,024	31.1%	1,229	34.1%
Medium	1,072	34.0%	1,157	35.1%	1,257	34.9%
Minimum	725	23.0%	765	23.2%	846	23.5%
Community	60	1.9%	65	2.0%	48	1.3%
Total	3,153	100.0%	3,297	100.0%	3,601	100.0%

Source: DOC Annual Report and DOC Automated Inmate Information Tracking System

Notes: In 2002, there were 320 missing cases. For 2003, there were 451 missing cases. In 2004, there were 341 missing cases. Percentages may not total to 100.0% due to rounding.

Table 10

Characteristics of Confined Anthony Center Population (6/30/04)

	Total N=172	
Gender	N	%
Male	164	95.3%
Female	8	4.7%
Race		
White	152	88.4%
Black	19	11.0%
Other	1	0.6%
Age		
18-21 years	106	61.6%
22-25 years	66	38.4%
Broad Offense Category		
Violent	55	32.0%
Property	71	41.3%
Drug	24	14.0%
Public Order	22	12.8%

Source: DOC Automated Inmate Information Tracking System for 6/30/04

Notes: Percentages may not total to 100.0% due to rounding.

In terms of offense characteristics, a greater proportion of the 2004 jail inmate population was confined for drug and public order offenses compared to the total state prison population. At midyear 2004, the proportion of inmates confined in jails for a drug offense (16.7%) was double that of the proportion of prisoners confined in state prisons (8.3%). Likewise, the percentage of inmates committed to jails for public order offenses (20.1%) was over double the proportion serving time in state prisons.

As a result, violent offenders made up a smaller percentage of the jail population compared to the total state prison population in 2004. Slightly below forty percent (37.0%) of jail inmates were serving time for a violent offense as of June 2004, compared to over fifty percent (55.9%) of the total population of inmates in state prisons. On the other hand, the proportion of jail inmates serving time for a property offense (26.3%) was similar to the proportion confined in the state prison population (27.4%). Offense information was missing for 79 of the 1,013 inmates serving time in jail while awaiting transfer to a DOC facility.

Releases from Corrections

Based on a variety of data sources, this section of the report provides estimates on the number and type of releases from DOC custody and facilities. The characteristics of inmates released as well as the mechanisms by which they were released are described. Statistics are reported for the number of releases, the type of releases, parole decision rates, and the amount of time served by offenders upon release from DOC custody and DOC facilities. Historical comparisons and data that pertain to the most current release population are examined. This section begins with a brief overview of number and type of releases from DOC custody between 1998 and 2004.

Releases from DOC Custody

The number and type of releases from DOC custody between 1998 and 2004 are presented in Table 11, below. This figures include inmates housed in local and regional jails, as well as those confined in DOC facilities. In 2004, a total of 1,953 prisoners were released from the custody of DOC. Of the 1,953 inmates released in 2004, most were granted release by the parole board. A total of 773 or 39.6% of all inmates released in 2004 were granted parole. Another 573 or 29.3% were discharged as a result of a court order or the completion of their sentence. Other types of releases included diagnostic (7.8%), Anthony Center (15.0%), jail (7.0%), and "other" miscellaneous (1.2%).

Between 2003-2004 most release categories increased in number. Those released to parole decreased by 4.1%. Those released in the diagnostic category decreased by 16.4%. There were 102 more inmates released in 2004, resulting in an annual growth rate of 5.5%.

Since 2000, the number of offenders released from DOC custody has continued to increase. For the period between 2000 and 2004, the number of inmates released from DOC custody increased from a total of 1,278 in 2000 to 1,953 in 2004. This translated into a 52.8% increase in the number of inmates being released from DOC custody over this period.

For any given year, a vast majority of inmates released are discharged or granted parole. Since 1998, however, the proportion of all offenders released from DOC custody as a result of a parole decision has declined slightly. For example, of the 4,062 inmates released from DOC custody between 1998 and 2000, 2,162 or 53.2% were granted parole while 1,452 or 35.7% were discharged as a result of a court order or having served their sentence. In comparison, of the 6,831 inmates released between 2001 and 2004 less than forty percent (39.7%) comprised parole releases while the percentage of discharged inmates (32.3%) remained relatively stable. During this same period, there was also an increase in

Table 11

Annual Change in Releases from the Division of Corrections Custody, 1998-2004

Year	Discharge	Parole	Anthony Center	Jail	Diagnostic	Other	Total	Annual Change N	Annual Change %
1998	480	713	-----	N/A	143	N/A	1,336		
1999	517	825	-----	N/A	106	N/A	1,448	+112	8.4%
2000	455	624	-----	N/A	86	113	1,278	-170	-11.7%
2001	626	480	-----	21	165	56	1,348	+70	5.5%
2002	489	650	233	120	177	10	1,679	+331	24.6%
2003	519	806	247	78	183	18	1,851	+172	10.2%
2004	573	773	293	137	153	24	1,953	+102	5.5%

Source: DOC Commitment and Release Logs

Notes: The figures prior to 2001 do not include those offenders in DOC custody who were released from jail while awaiting transfer to a DOC facility, due to data availability issues. Prior to 2002 the Anthony Center releases were unable to be distinguished, due to constraints with the data. The Anthony Center figures above include both those that complete the program, as well as those who do not. Those inmates who fail the Anthony Center program are released from DOC custody and returned to the court's jurisdiction for assessment and appropriate placement. The *discharge* category includes those whose sentence has expired and court ordered releases. The *other* category includes: escapes, medical respite, and deaths.

Table 12
Parole Decisions by Type and Year

Year	Denied	Granted	Total	% Granted
2000	1,226	679	1,905	35.6%
2001	1,514	492	2,006	24.5%
2002	1,414	723	2,137	33.8%
2003	1,483	838	2,321	36.1%
2004	1,625	799	2,424	33.0%

Source: DOC Commitment and Release Logs and Parole Board Activity Sheets

Note: The total column represents the sum of all cases in which the outcome was either a grant or denial of parole.

the number and proportion of inmates released from the Anthony Correctional Center (11.3%). Those released from local or regional jails experienced a little more fluctuation over this time period (5.2%).

Parole Decisions and Hearings

Table 12 above, displays the total number of parole decisions by type and year. In the strictest sense, these numbers do not constitute parole grant rates, but only the outcomes of cases in which a decision was made to either grant or deny an inmate parole. Other types of outcomes for interviews may include holding a case open for further consideration, rescinding, or reinstating a parole decision.

Of the 2,832 interviews conducted by the parole board in 2004, a total of 2,424 resulted in a decision to either deny or grant an inmate parole. A decision to grant parole was made in 33.0% of these interviews conducted in 2004. This corresponded to a 3.1% decrease between 2003-2004 in the proportion of cases that received a granting of parole.

Between 2002 and 2004, there was a steady increase in the number of parole interviews and decisions handed down by the parole board. During this time period, the number of parole decisions resulting in either a granting or denying of parole increased from 1,905 in 2000 to 2,424 in 2004. This resulted in a 27.0% increase in the number of parole decisions over this four-year period.

In spite of the overall increase in the number of parole decisions between 2000 and 2004, the proportion of cases granted parole has remained rather stable. With the exception of 2001, roughly one-third of all interviews have resulted in a decision where parole has been granted. For example, a total of 1,905 interviews resulted in a decision to either grant or deny parole in 2000. Of these 1,905 interviews, a decision was made to grant parole in 35.6% or 679 of the cases. In a similar manner, of the 2,424 interviews in 2004, a decision was made to grant parole in 33.0% or 799 of the cases.

Over the past four years there have been two incidences of declines in the percentage of those cases granted parole. In 2001, only one-quarter (24.5%) of parole board decisions resulted in the granting of parole. Resulting in a 11.1% decline from the previous year. The decrease that took place in 2004 was not as great, at 3.1%.

Characteristics of Prisoners Released From DOC Facilities

Of the 1,851 inmates released from DOC custody in 2003, a total of 1,537 inmates were released from a DOC facility. This represented 83.0% of all offenders released under DOC custody in 2003. In terms of demographic characteristics, most of the 1,537 offenders released from DOC facilities were young, white males, with at least a 12th grade education or equivalent. Over ninety percent (91.5%) of inmates released in 2003 were male. Moreover, white offenders comprised 83.2% of prisoners released from DOC facilities while black offenders made up 16.5%. Fewer than one half of one percent of inmates released from DOC facilities in 2003 were comprised of "other" racial or ethnic groups.

Over two thirds of all inmates released in 2003 were below the age of 35 years. The average age for those inmates released in 2003 was 33 years old. The largest percentage of offenders released were 35-49 years old at 33.1%. Of those released 6.5% were 50 years of age and older. Slightly over one half (51.2%) of prisoners released in had completed 12 years of education or obtained a GED. However, roughly 4 out of 10 inmates released in 2003 did not have a high school degree or equivalent. Less than ten percent of all released inmates had attended some college (6.1%) or received a college degree (1.4%).

There were only slight changes in the demographic distribution of inmates released from DOC facilities between 2002 and 2003. During this period, a smaller proportion of released inmates were comprised of females. For instance, female prisoners constituted 11.9% of

released offenders in 2002 compared to only 8.5% in 2003. On the other hand, black inmates made up a larger percentage of released inmates in 2003 compared to 2002 figures. Black offenders constituted 16.5% of all releases from DOC facilities in 2003, up from 14.5% in 2002. Lastly, prisoners released in 2003 were slightly younger and more educated than the inmates in the previous year.

Graph 5 below, displays the percentage distribution of releases from DOC facilities by type of release and offense. Over one half (51.3%) of the total number of releases in 2003 were placed on parole supervision, compared to less that half (48.4%) of all releases in the previous year. Prisoners discharged as a result of completing their sentence represented 26.3% of all releases in 2003. This represented a 4.0% decrease from 2002. Court ordered releases comprised 20.8% of the releases in 2003 while "other" types of release accounted for only 1.4% of total releases.

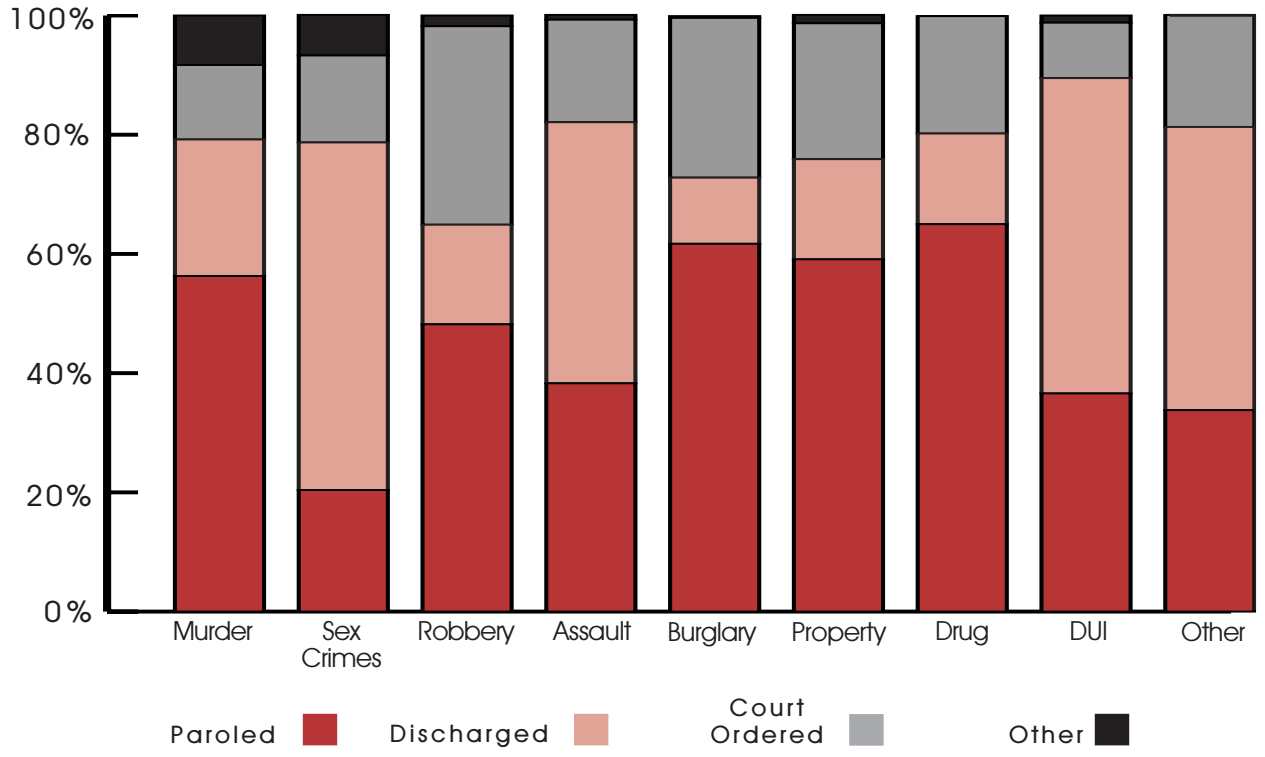
Parole releases were most prevalent for burglary, property, murder, and drug offenses. A parole release constituted roughly sixty percent of all releases for the above four offenses. Of the four offenses, drug offenders were most likely to receive a period of supervised release on parole. Nearly two thirds (65.0%) of drug offenders released from DOC facilities in 2003 were granted parole.

Prisoners serving time for a sex crime, assault, DUI, or "other" offenses were least likely to be paroled in 2003. In particular, sex offenders were considerably less likely to receive a period of supervised release on parole. Only 1 in 5 released from DOC facilities in 2003 were paroled. Instead, roughly sixty percent (58.3%) of all sex offenders released from DOC facilities in 2003 were discharged for having completed their sentence. This was followed by offenders serving time for DUI. Approximately, one half (52.9%) of all DUI offenders released from DOC facilities in 2003 were discharged at a result of completing their sentence.

Graph 5

Type of Release by Offense Category in 2003

(N=1,535)



Source: NCRP 2003 Prisoner Release File

Notes: The *parole* category includes parole board decision and mandatory parole release. The *discharge* category includes expiration of sentence. *Court ordered* includes probation release, other conditional release, and release to custody/detainer/or warrant. *Other* includes other conditional release, death, and suicide. There were 2 missing cases for release type in this file.

Time Served in DOC Facilities

The mean number of months served by inmates released from DOC facilities in 2003 is presented in Graph 6. The mean number of months served refers to the total time spent in a DOC facility at the time of release. This measure of time served is calculated simply by subtracting the release date from the admission date into a DOC facility. This figure is then converted into months. However, this estimate of time served does not include time spent in jail prior to admission into a DOC facility. In addition, Anthony Correctional Center inmates are distinguished from the general population of DOC prisoners given the restriction on sentence lengths for this population mandated by the West Virginia Legislature. An average amount of time served (in months) is calculated for the total Anthony Center population, separate from the general population.

As shown in Graph 6, offenders imprisoned in DOC facilities for the commission of the violent offenses such as murder, sex crimes, and robbery spend the greatest amounts of time in prison. With the exception of assaults, inmates serving time for violent offenses tend to serve twice the amount of time as property offenders, three times the amount of time of drug offenders, and four times the amount of time of DUI and "other" offenders. Murderers served the greatest amount of time in prison at 76.0 months, followed by robbery (50.2 months) and sex offenders (49.7 months).

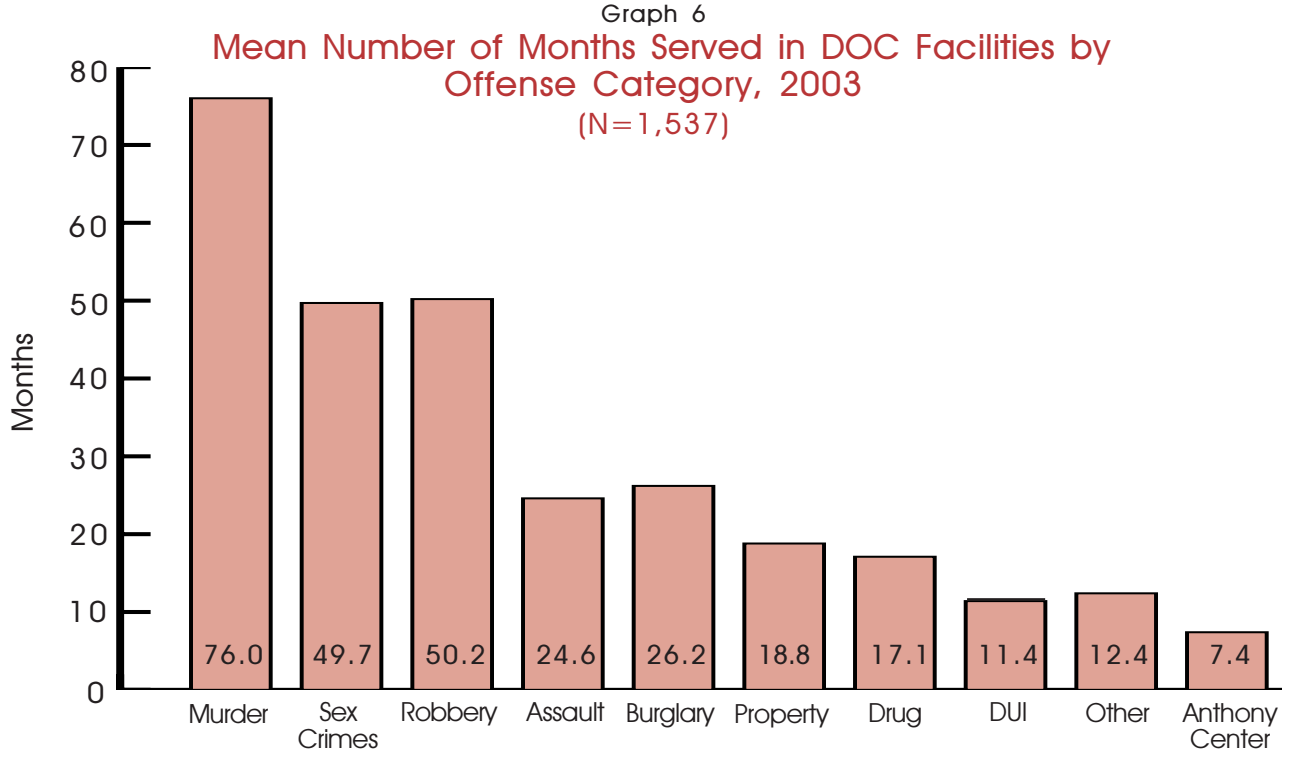
Property and burglary offenders served the second longest amount of time in DOC facilities. On average, burglary and property offenders served 26.2 months and 18.8 months in 2003, respectively. The length of time served for property offenders was followed by inmates confined in DOC facilities for drug, DUI, and other offenses. Drug offenders served an average of 17.1 months in 2003. As anticipated, the shortest sentence lengths (in months) was served by inmates serving time in the Anthony Correctional Center. The mean time served for all ACC inmates was 7.4 months.

The percentage of maximum sentence served provides an estimate of the actual amount of time offenders served by inmates in DOC facilities in relation to the maximum sentence they received by the courts. The percentage of maximum sentence served by offense category in 2003 is presented in Graph 7.

Inmates confined in DOC facilities for sex crimes serve the greatest proportion of their maximum sentence compared to all other offenses categories. On average, sex offenders served roughly one-third or 31.8% of their maximum sentence in 2003. For all other violent offenses, inmates tended to serve approximately one-quarter of their maximum sentence. Murderers served 27.2% of their maximum sentence in 2003, followed by prisoners serving time for assault (25.3%) and robbery (21.4%).

Property and drug offenders served the smallest percentage of their maximum sentence in 2003. In terms of property offenses, burglary offenders had served 16.6% of their maximum sentence while offenders confined for other property crimes such as larceny/theft and forgery had completed only 15.7% of their maximum sentence upon release from DOC facilities. In a similar manner, inmates imprisoned for a drug offense served an average of 16.2% of their maximum sentence in 2003.

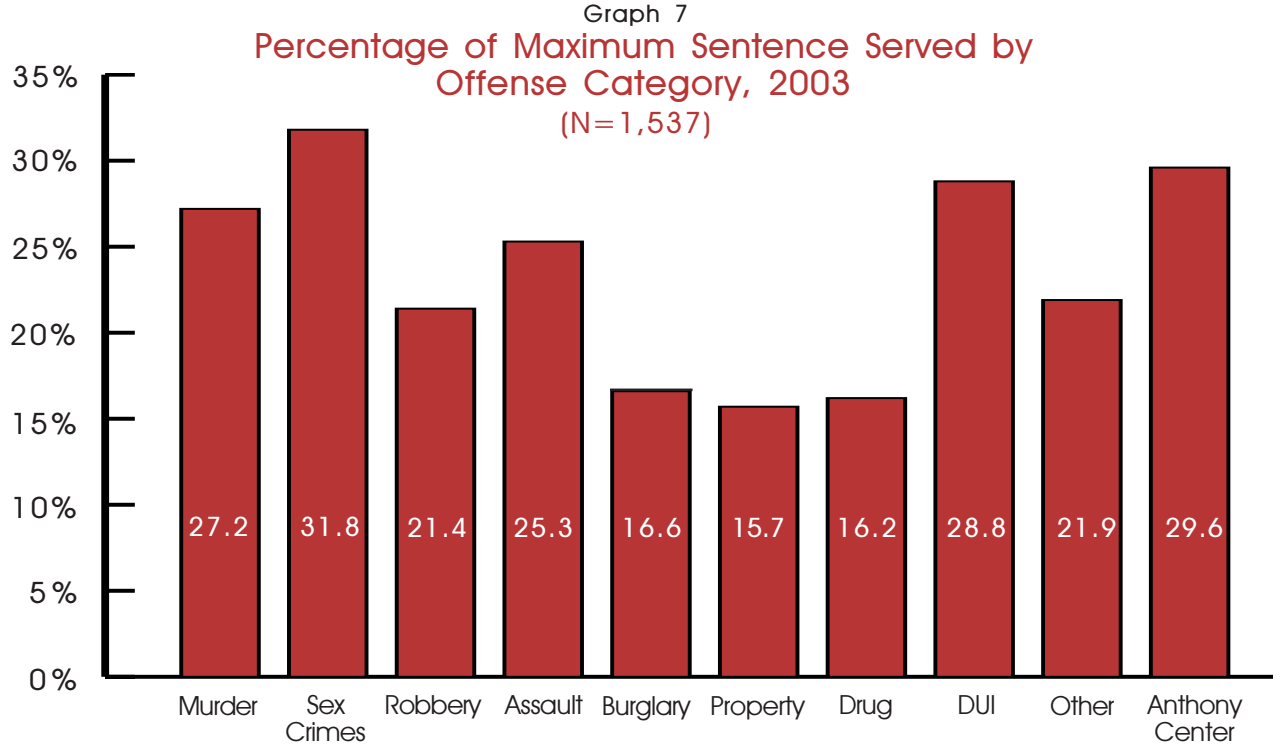
Graph 6



Source: NCRP 2003 Prisoner Release File

Notes: The mean time served for those in DOC facilities does not include any time previously spent in jail, prior to admission into prison.

Graph 7



Source: NCRP 2003 Prisoner Release File

Notes: The mean percent of maximum sentence for those in DOC facilities does not include any time previously spent in jail, prior to admission into prison. Maximum sentences that were equal to zero or were greater than or equal to 250 months were excluded, based on historical methodology.

Correctional Population Forecast

This section of the report presents the current forecast projections. Based on 2003 admission and release trends, correctional population projections are provided for a ten-year period between 2004 and 2014. Since the forecast projections are based on a single year of admission and release data, future correctional population estimates do not take into account the five- and ten-year trends reported in other sections of this report. The following forecast projections assume that future admissions and releases "look like" 2003 admissions in terms of offenses, sentence lengths, and other factors known (or assumed) to effect both the volume of admissions and length-of-stay for inmates admitted into corrections. This section begins with a brief overview of the 2002 forecast and 2003 performance evaluation results.

Performance Evaluation of 2002 Forecast

Correctional forecast performance evaluations or update reports are produced on a bi-annual basis to assess the accuracy of forecast projections. These performance evaluations are designed to examine the accuracy of the forecasted population in relation to the known, actual population at a given period in time. In March 2004, the *Correctional Population Forecast - 2003 Update* was released. As the latest performance evaluation, this update report assessed the accuracy of the forecasted projections for the period between July 2002 and December 2003.

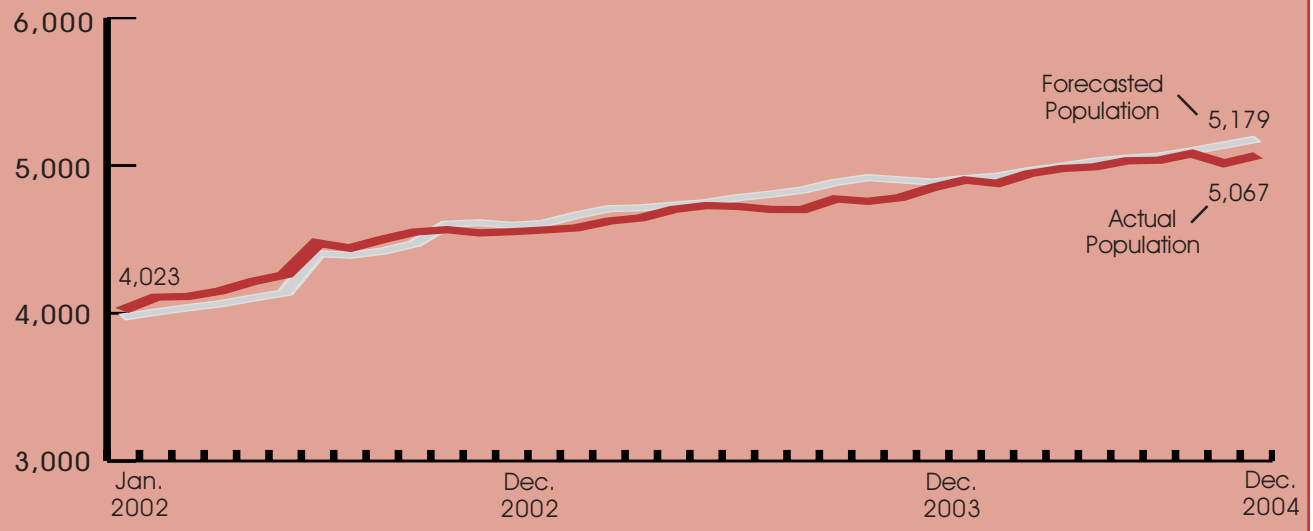
The results of the 2003 performance evaluation indicated that the population projections contained in the 2002 forecast report were rather accurate. For any given month during the 18-month period between July 2002 and December 2003, forecasted population estimates fallen within +/- 3.4% of actual population counts. The largest difference between the forecasted and actual population figures occurred in December 2003.

According to end-of-year population figures provided by DOC, that actual population in December of 2003 was comprised of 4,758 inmates. For this same month, the forecast estimated that 4,918 inmates would make up the correctional population. Thus, the forecast projected that there would be 160 additional inmates in the correctional population than were actually confined as of December 2003. The difference of 160 inmates translated into a 3.4% difference between the forecasted and actual population of inmates.

Prior to the calculation of forecasted projections for 2004-2014, the accuracy of the 2002 population forecast was assessed for the 2004 calendar year. Although the monthly differences are small, a comparison of forecasted population estimates and actual inmate populations indicate

Graph 8

Actual versus Forecasted Populations
January 2002-December 2004



Source: DOC End-of-Year Tallies (Tracking) for January 2002-December 2004 and 2002 Simulated Forecast

that the forecast consistently over estimated the number of inmates in DOC custody. The percentage difference ranged from a high of 2.5% in January and November 2004 to a low of 0.2% in March 2004.

For December 2004, a total of 5,067 inmates comprised the actual correctional population (see Graph 8). Forecast projections for this same month and year estimated that 5,179 inmates would make up the correction population. As a result, the forecast projections slightly overestimated that number of inmates that would comprise the correctional population at the end of 2004. The forecast projections overestimated the actual correctional population by 112 inmates, a difference of 2.2%. Thus, given our knowledge of the small amount of error associated previous forecast projections, it is reasonable to anticipate that current population projections will be within +/- 3.4% of the actual prison population over the next year.

Current Forecast Projections, 2004-2014

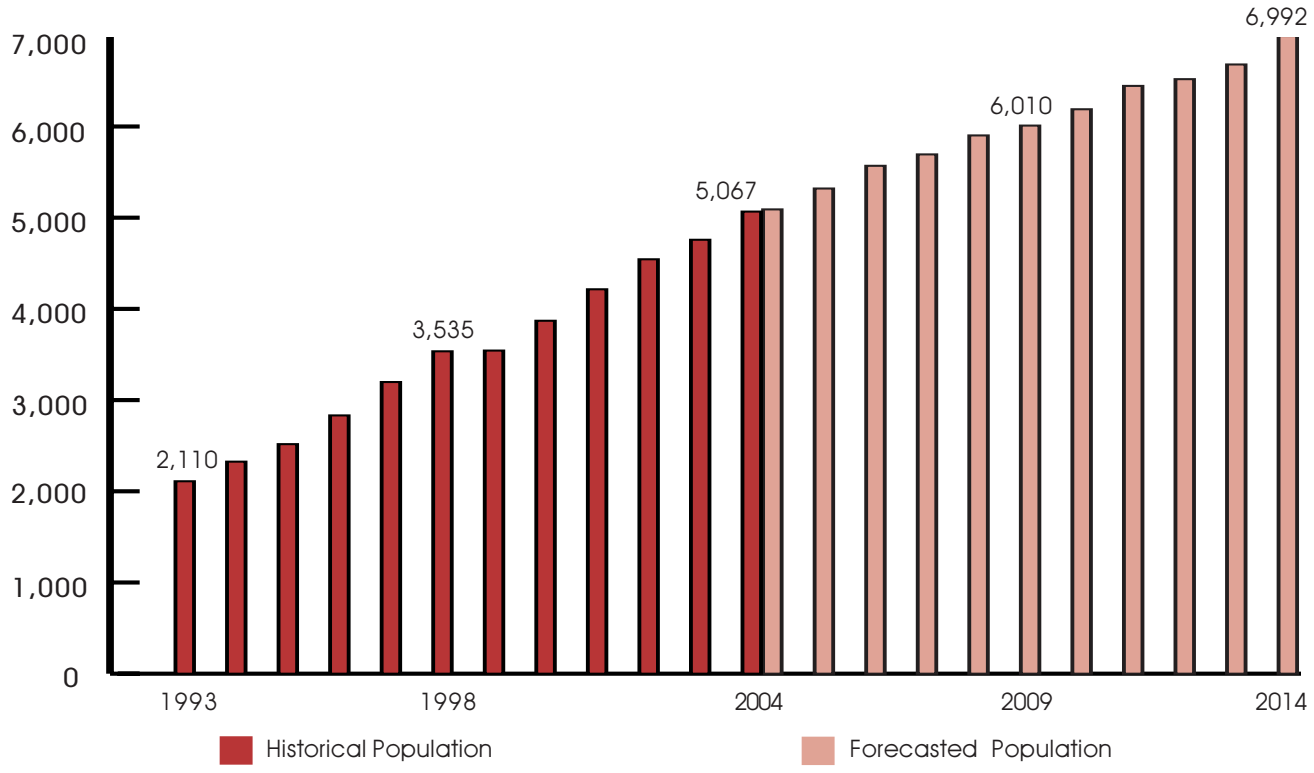
The results of the 2004-2014 correctional population forecast are presented in Graph 9. The forecast projections shown in Graph 9 include all offenders in DOC custody, including inmates housed in Anthony Correctional Center as well as diagnostic inmates and those offenders being held in local/regional jails. The demographic and admission characteristics of the forecasted population presented in Table 13 exclude Anthony Correctional Center and diagnostic inmates.

As shown in Graph 9, the actual correctional population was comprised of 5,067 inmates at the end of 2004. The correctional population is expected to grow at an average annual growth rate of 3.2% over the next decade. As a result, the population is forecasted to reach 6,010 inmates by the end of 2009 and 6,992 inmates by the end of 2014. This growth in the correctional population translates into a 38.0% increase in the total number of inmates confined in West Virginia's adult correctional population between 2004-2014.

Given an average annual growth rate of 3.2% over the next decade, DOC can expect to receive on average 190 additional inmates per a year. If we take into account the known error associated with previous forecast estimates since January 2001, it is likely that the true average will be between 183 and 197 additional inmates over the next few years.

Graph 9

2004 State Correctional Population Forecast



Source: DOC End-of-Year Tallies (Tracking) and 2004 Simulated Forecast

Despite the projected increases in the correctional population over the next ten years, the current forecast estimates suggest that the State can expect the rate of growth to be less than the growth experienced in the previous decade. Between 1994 and 2004, the correctional population increased on average at a rate of 8.3% or an 265 additional inmates per year. As a result, the correctional population more than doubled. During this ten-year period between 1994 and 2004, there was an 118.0% increase in the number of inmates in DOC custody. This is compared to a forecasted average annual growth rate of 3.2% and a total increase of 38.0% over the next ten years.

Characteristics of Forecasted Population

Selected characteristics of the forecasted population by year are presented in Table 13. This analysis is designed to illustrate anticipated changes in the correctional population, if any, over the next ten years. All of the statistics presented in Table 13 are based on forecasted population estimates.

Our initial efforts to make comparisons between the actual characteristics of the 2004 correctional population and forecast projections for 2009 and 2014 were hampered by a couple data limitations. First, available data did not allow for characteristics of the jail population to be incorporated into our description of the current

Table 13

Characteristics of Forecasted Population by Year

	2004		2009		2014	
Population Type	N	%	N	%	N	%
General Population	4,842	95.1%	5,682	94.5%	6,562	93.9%
Anthony Center	216	4.2%	291	4.8%	372	5.3%
Diagnostics	33	0.6%	37	0.6%	58	0.8%
Total	5,091	100.0%	6,010	100.0%	6,992	100.0%
Gender						
Male	4,408	91.0%	5,087	89.5%	5,849	89.1%
Female	434	9.0%	595	10.5%	714	10.9%
Total	4,842	100.0%	5,682	100.0%	6,562	100.0%
Broad Offense Category						
Violent	2,661	55.0%	3,046	53.6%	3,403	51.9.%
Property	1,262	26.0%	1,446	25.4%	1,740	26.5%
Drug	387	8.0%	454	8.0%	569	8.7%
Public Order	532	11.0%	736	13.0%	850	13.0%
Total	4,842	100.0%	5,682	100.0%	6,562	100.0%
Security Level						
Community	64	1.3%	76	1.3%	88	1.3%
Minimum	1,201	24.8%	1,415	24.9%	1,689	25.7%
Medium	1,719	35.5%	2,007	35.3%	2,320	35.4%
Close	1,565	32.3%	1,839	32.4%	2,065	31.5%
Maximum	293	6.1%	345	6.1%	400	6.1%
Total	4,842	100.0%	5,682	100.0%	6,562	100.0%

Source: Simulated Forecast for December 2004, 2009, and 2014

Notes: Total population figures include all offenders in DOC's custody. This includes Anthony Center inmates, diagnostic inmates, and those inmates housed in local or regional jails. Anthony Center and diagnostic inmates are not included in figures for the gender, broad offense categories, and security level characteristics due to the limitations of the forecast model's ability to handle small populations. Percentages may not total to 100.0% due to rounding.

confined prison population. Second, Anthony Correctional Center population and diagnostic inmates could not be forecasted by specific characteristics due to the small population size of these two groups. Thus, the projected population characteristics for gender, offense type, and security level do not include Anthony Correctional Center and diagnostic inmates.

As shown in Table 13, the proportion of the correctional population serving time in the general population is forecasted to decrease slightly between 2004 and 2014. The 2004 estimates indicate that the general population of inmates should account for approximately ninety-five (95.1%) of the total DOC population. By 2014, these inmates are projected to account for 93.9% of the correctional population. At the same time, however, an increase in the Anthony Correctional Center population is projected over the next ten years. Anthony Correctional Center inmates are expected to comprise slightly above five percent (5.3%) of the correctional population in 2014, up from 4.2% in 2004.

In terms of gender, current forecast projections indicate that there will be a slight increase in the female correctional population. In 2004, females were expected to account for 9.0% of the general population of DOC inmates. However, the percentage of females housed in the general population of DOC inmates is anticipated to increase by 1.5% over the next five-years. By 2009, slightly above ten percent (10.5%) of the general population of inmates are expected to be female. Between 2009 and 2014, this figure will increase by an additional 0.4%. As a result, women will comprise nearly eleven percent of the general population of DOC inmates by 2014.

Perhaps the most pronounced changes occur in the type of offenses for which inmates will be serving time in DOC's general population. If current admission and release trends remain stable over the next ten years, the forecast projects a decrease in the proportion of offenders serving time for violent offenses. This trend is accompanied by a slight increase in the proportion of offenders serving time for nonviolent offenses.

Forecast estimates for 2004 indicate that violent offenders will comprise 55.0% of the general population of inmates. However, inmates serving time for violent offenses are expected to decline by 1.4% between 2004 and 2009. The proportion of violent offenders will continue to decrease an additional 1.7% between 2009 and 2014. As a result, the general population of DOC offenders in 2014 is projected to comprise 3.1% less violent offenders compared to 2004 estimates.

Over the same forecast period, the decreases in the proportion of violent offenders are accompanied by increases in nonviolent offenders. Property, drug, and public order offenders are anticipated to make up a larger proportion of the prison population compared to 2004 estimates. In particular, the proportion of offenders serving time for public order offenses are expected increase by 2.0% over the next ten-years. By 2014, public order offenders are projected to comprise 13.0% of the DOC general population. In light of recent trends in new admissions by offense category, the current projections may offer a conservative estimate of the changes over the next ten years.

The changes in the offense distribution of offenders serving time in DOC's general population appears to be coupled with adjustments in security level or classification projections. Given the changes in the offense distribution, it is anticipated that a greater proportion of offenders will be placed on a minimum level of security. As shown in Table 13, the proportion of offenders placed in minimum levels of security are anticipated to increase while the proportion of inmates on close supervision are projected to decrease.

Between 2004 and 2014, the proportion of offenders placed on a minimum level of security is anticipated to increase by 0.9%. Meanwhile, the proportion of offenders serving time on close supervision is projected to decline 0.8%. Very little change is projected for the other classification types. No change in the proportion of offenders placed on community and maximum levels of supervision are forecasted.

Appendices

Appendix A:
Distribution of 2003 Admissions and Releases by Offense Category

Appendix B:
Distribution of the Confined Prison Population at Midyear 2004 by Offense Category

Appendix C:
Total Number of Admissions by Offense Category and Year

Appendix D:
Characteristics of the Confined Population at Midyear 2004 by Offense Category

Appendix A: Distribution of 2003 Admissions and Releases by offense category.

Admissions and Releases by Offense Category, 2003

	Admissions (N=1,740)		Releases (N=1,537)	
	N	%	N	%
MURDER				
Murder	44	56.4	25	52.1
Voluntary Manslaughter	12	15.4	4	8.3
Child Abuse/Neglect Causing Death	4	5.1	0	0.0
DUI Causing Death	12	15.4	17	35.4
Other	6	7.7	2	4.2
TOTAL	78	100.0	48	100.0
SEX OFFENSES				
1st Degree Sexual Abuse	62	43.7	47	45.6
2nd Degree Sexual Assault	10	7.0	10	9.7
3rd Degree Sexual Assault	42	29.6	32	31.1
Sex Abuse By Parents/Guardian/Custodian	20	14.1	7	6.8
Other	8	5.6	7	6.8
TOTAL	142	100.0	103	100.0
ROBBERY				
Aggravated Robbery	34	24.1	40	35.1
Armed Robbery	57	40.4	56	49.1
Robbery	34	24.1	1	0.9
Non-Aggravated Robbery	5	3.6	12	10.5
Other	11	7.8	5	4.4
TOTAL	141	100.0	114	100.0
ASSAULT				
Aggravated Assault	23	17.6	27	21.1
Malicious Wounding	19	14.5	21	16.4
Unlawful Wounding	34	26.0	36	28.1
Child Abuse/Neglect w/ Injury	23	17.6	14	10.9
Domestic Battery	10	7.6	14	10.9
Kidnapping	10	7.6	3	2.3
Other	12	9.2	13	10.2
TOTAL	131	100.0	128	100.0
BURGLARY				
Burglary	232	71.4	204	68.2
Breaking & Entering	83	25.5	90	30.1
Other	10	3.1	5	1.7
TOTAL	325	100.0	299	100.0
PROPERTY OFFENSES				
Arson	18	4.5	19	5.1
Forgery/Fraud	203	50.5	130	35.3
Grand Larceny	116	28.9	119	32.2
Larceny/Theft	1	0.2	12	3.3
Receiving/Transferring Stolen Property	16	4.0	21	5.7
Petit Larceny	14	3.5	12	3.3
Uttering	0	0.0	23	6.2
Shoplifting 3rd Offense	20	5.0	17	4.6
Other	14	3.5	16	4.3
TOTAL	402	100.0	369	100.0

Source: NCRP 2003 Prisoner Admission and Release Reports

Note: Percentages are rounded and may not total to 100.0%.

Appendix A: Distribution of 2003 Admissions and Releases by Offense Category. (Continued)

Admissions and Releases by Offense Category, 2003

	Admissions (N=1,740)		Releases (N=1,537)	
	N	%	N	%
DRUG OFFENSES				
Trafficking/Possession/Fraud/Forgery	253	100	216	96.4
Other	0	0.0	8	3.6
TOTAL	253	100.0	224	100.0
DUI				
3rd Offense DUI	133	84.2	143	83.1
Fleeing w/ DUI	24	15.2	21	12.2
Driving on Revoked (DUI)	1	0.6	8	4.7
TOTAL	158	100.0	172	100.0
OTHER OFFENSES				
Wanton Endangerment	10	9.1	14	17.5
Driving on Revoked License	12	10.9	4	5.0
Failure To Pay Support	11	10.0	2	2.5
Failure To Appear	8	7.3	3	3.8
Attempt to Commit a Felony	20	18.2	19	23.8
Conspiracy	32	29.1	14	17.5
Other	17	15.5	24	30.0
TOTAL	110	100.0	80	100.0

Source: NCRP 2003 Prisoner Admission and Release Reports

Note: Percentages are rounded and may not total to 100.0%.

Appendix B: Distribution of the Confined Prison Population at Midyear 2004 by Offense Category.

Confined Prison Population (6/30/04) by Offense Category

	Stock (N=3,942)	
	N	%
MURDER		
First Degree Murder	505	69.9%
Second Degree Murder	133	18.4%
Voluntary Manslaughter	43	6.0%
DUI With Death	31	4.3%
Other	10	1.4%
TOTAL	722	100.0%
SEX OFFENSES		
1st Degree Sexual Assault	264	31.1%
2nd Degree Sexual Assault	130	15.8%
3rd Degree Sexual Assault	104	12.7%
1st Degree Sexual Abuse	105	12.8%
Sexual Abuse By Parent/Guardian/ Custodian	146	17.8%
Incest	64	7.8%
Other	9	1.1%
TOTAL	822	100.0%
ROBBERY		
Aggravated Robbery	228	59.7%
Armed Robbery	18	4.7%
Robbery	136	35.6%
TOTAL	382	100.0%
ASSAULT		
Malicious Assault/Wounding	69	25.0%
Unlawful Assault/Wounding	76	27.5%
Child Abuse/Neglect Resulting in Injuries	44	15.9%
Domestic Violence (Assault, Battery, Stalking)	22	8.0%
Kidnapping	51	18.5%
Other	14	5.1%
TOTAL	276	100.0%
BURGLARY		
Burglary	313	58.0%
Breaking & Entering	200	37.0%
Entering W/out Breaking	19	3.5%
Other	8	1.5%
TOTAL	540	100.0%

	Stock (N=3,942)	
	N	%
PROPERTY		
First Degree Arson	18	3.3%
Second Degree Arson	14	2.6%
Third Degree Arson	8	1.5%
Forgery/Uttering	220	40.7%
Grand Larceny	139	25.7%
Embezzlement	5	0.9%
Fraudulent Schemes	32	5.9%
Rec./Trans. Stolen Goods	7	1.3%
Rec./Trans. Stolen Vehicle	11	2.0%
Bringing Stolen Property into the State	7	1.3%
Obtain Money/Property By False Pretenses	35	6.5%
Petit Larceny	5	0.9%
Third Offense Shoplifting	22	4.1%
Other	18	3.3%
TOTAL	541	100.0%
DRUG OFFENSES		
Manufacturing/Delivering/Possession	294	89.9%
Obtaining Drugs by Misrepresentation	18	5.5%
Other	15	4.6%
TOTAL	327	100.0%
DUI		
Driving Under the Influence (DUI)	127	100.0%
TOTAL	127	100.0%
OTHER OFFENSES		
Pornography of Minor	6	2.9%
Wanton Endangerment w/Firearm	33	16.1%
Resisting Arrest	12	5.9%
Escape	6	2.9%
Driving on Susp./Revoked License	17	8.3%
Failure to Pay Child Support	6	2.9%
Failure to Appear	4	2.0%
Other Traffic Violations	4	2.0%
Conspiracy/Attempt to Commit a Felony	76	37.1%
Other	41	20.0%
TOTAL	205	100.0%

Source: DOC Automated Inmate Information Tracking System for 6/30/04

Note: Percentages may not total to 100.0% due to rounding.

Appendix C: The Total Number of Admissions by Offense Category and Year.

Number of Admissions by Offense Category and Year

Offense Category	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Murder	81	30	48	49	40	71
Sex Crimes	142	100	107	130	93	125
Robbery	76	40	38	59	66	96
Assault	112	95	89	106	96	112
Burglary	152	117	142	209	179	229
Property	173	182	152	217	247	333
Drug	170	146	131	138	188	223
DUI	170	194	175	178	183	149
Other	45	82	61	85	62	102
Total	1,121	997	943	1,172	1,197	1,440

Source: NCRP Admission Reports

Note: In 2002, those admitted for parole revocations are included in accordance with the data provided. Parole revocations are not reported in this table for 1998-2001. Anthony Center inmates are not included in these figures. In 1999, there were 11 missing cases. For 2001, there was one missing case. In 2002, there were 43 missing cases. Minor differences between the percentages reported and the total number of cases reported here may exist due to missing data. Totals represented here were compiled through a historical search.

Appendix D: Characteristics of the Confined Prison Population at Midyear 2004 by Offense Category.

Confined Population (6/30/04) by Offense Category

	Total N = 3,942	Murder		Sex		Robbery		Assault		Burglary		Property		Drug		DUI		Other	
Gender	N	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Male	3,593	(663)	18.5	(806)	22.4	(355)	9.9	(242)	6.7	(518)	14.4	(419)	11.7	(280)	7.8	(122)	3.4	(188)	5.2
Female	349	(59)	16.0	(16)	4.6	(27)	7.7	(34)	9.7	(22)	6.3	(122)	35.0	(47)	4.9	(5)	1.4	(17)	4.9
Race																			
White	3,355	(609)	18.2	(758)	22.6	(267)	8.0	(224)	6.7	(504)	15.0	(501)	14.9	(197)	5.9	(119)	3.5	(176)	5.2
Black	553	(107)	19.3	(59)	10.7	(109)	19.7	(44)	8.0	(34)	6.1	(37)	6.7	(128)	23.1	(7)	1.3	(28)	5.1
Other	34	(6)	17.6	(5)	14.7	(6)	17.6	(8)	23.5	(2)	5.9	(3)	8.8	(2)	5.9	(1)	2.9	(1)	2.9
Age																			
24 years/under	629	(51)	8.1	(54)	8.6	(91)	14.5	(50)	7.9	(154)	24.5	(106)	16.9	(62)	9.9	(9)	1.4	(52)	8.3
25-34 years	1,279	(209)	16.3	(151)	11.8	(136)	10.6	(105)	8.2	(242)	18.9	(230)	18.0	(120)	9.4	(25)	2.0	(61)	4.8
35-49 years	1,481	(284)	19.2	(391)	26.4	(127)	8.6	(100)	6.8	(133)	9.0	(172)	11.6	(116)	7.8	(83)	5.6	(75)	5.1
50 years/over	553	(178)	32.2	(226)	40.9	(28)	5.1	(21)	3.8	(11)	2.0	(33)	6.0	(29)	5.2	(10)	1.8	(17)	3.1
Security Level																			
Community	48	(23)	47.9	(0)	0.0	(0)	0.0	(0)	0.0	(11)	22.9	(8)	16.7	(4)	8.3	(1)	2.1	(1)	2.1
Minimum	846	(51)	6.0	(79)	9.3	(46)	5.4	(44)	5.2	(178)	21.0	(204)	24.1	(131)	15.5	(68)	8.0	(45)	5.3
Medium	1,257	(187)	14.9	(289)	23.0	(136)	10.8	(119)	9.5	(150)	11.9	(165)	13.1	(97)	7.7	(33)	2.6	(81)	6.4
Close	1,229	(396)	32.2	(402)	32.7	(145)	11.8	(67)	5.5	(91)	7.4	(74)	6.0	(25)	2.0	(0)	0.0	(29)	2.4
Maximum	221	(54)	24.4	(25)	11.3	(24)	10.9	(18)	8.1	(48)	21.7	(28)	12.7	(10)	4.5	(3)	1.4	(11)	5.0

Source: DOC Automated Inmate Information System (Tracking) for 6/30/04

Notes: There are 341 cases missing from the security level category. Percentages may not total to 100.0% due to rounding.