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GEORGIA

Annual Trend Analysis Georgia's Offender Population

1976-1986

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DEPARTMENT of
CORRECTIONS

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**ANNUAL TREND ANALYSIS
GEORGIA'S OFFENDER POPULATION
1976 - 1986**

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Briefing Summary
Office of Evaluation and Statistics
Statistics Section

Title: Annual Trend Analysis: Georgia's Offender Population, 1976 - 1986

Authors: John P. Keenan and Betty J. Smith

Major Findings:

- * The average monthly prison and transitional center population increased from 12,754 in January 1982 to 17,702 by January 1987.
- * Admissions to probation have more than doubled in the eleven-year period, increasing from 20,684 in 1976 to 52,224 in 1986.
- * The percentage of the annual, year-end probation caseload revoked each year remained relatively stable between 3.7 and 4.6 percent during the study period.
- * The average sentence length for probationers convicted of felonies has increased 28% from 1976 when the average was 45.2 months to 1986 when the average was 57.9 months. Misdemeanor probationers' average sentence length remained steady between 14.3 and 15.6 months during the eleven-year period.
- * The length of supervision for misdemeanor probationers was very stable for the eleven-year time period, averaging between 10.8 and 12.7 months.
- * The average length of supervision for felony probationers, however, more than doubled during the same time span, increasing from an average 12.4 months in 1976 to an average 32 months in 1986.
- * The total number of admissions to Georgia's prisons has more than doubled in the years from 1976 - 1986, increasing from 6,466 to 14,040.
- * While court admissions seem to have risen and fallen in a roller-coaster fashion, admissions due to probation and parole revocations have steadily risen during the past ten years.
- * Offenders admitted on Drug Related (sales/possession) and Alcohol Related crimes are re-shaping the composition of Georgia's prison population; together, admissions for these crime types increased from 14% of all prison admissions in 1976 to 28% in 1986.
- * By 1986, paroles accounted for more than half of all releases, and maxouts for less than one-third--a marked contrast from 1976 when paroles comprised barely one-fourth of releases and maxouts, nearly one-half.
- * The average length of stay for felony inmates decreased by approximately four months from 1976 to 1986, while it remained relatively stable at approximately six months for misdemeanants.
- * The average sentence length increased by 3.5 months for felony inmates from 1976 to 1986. The average sentence length increased 3.9 months for misdemeanants over the period studied.
- * Since 1980, the average functional reading level for admissions has risen about seven months: from 5.9 to 6.7.

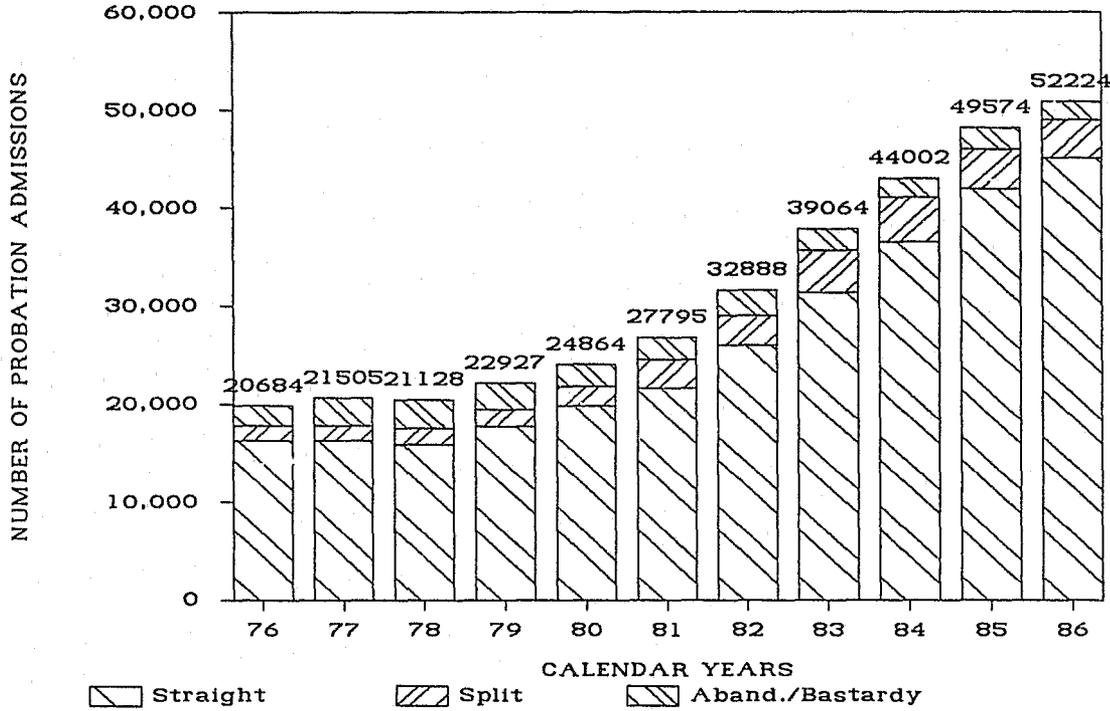
Introduction

Last year, the Statistics Section of the Office of Evaluation and Statistics produced the *Ten-Year Trend Analysis, Georgia's Offender Population, 1976 - 1985*. That document presented a collection of statistics describing the Georgia offender population during the ten year period from 1976 through 1985. The data and analysis was meant to provide managers and administrators a context for understanding the sized and complexion of the offender population in Georgia's prisons.

The *Annual Trend Analysis* continues the examination of data concerning Georgia's offender Population by adding information for calendar year 1986. Like the *Ten-Year Trend Analysis*, information is presented in graphs and tables with preliminary analysis of the data. Graphs are used to better understand visually changes in data over time. Tables are included to provide more detailed information on changes from year to year. Initial interpretation of the data in once again include to encourage the reader to guide the reader in further interpretation of the data. The statistics are again organized in broad categories such as admissions and releases, and then focus on the type of admission or the type crime of the offender.

Changes from last year's effort include the presentation of information describing probationers in Georgia. With over 100,000 Georgians currently on probation, it is certainly important to examine probationers in an examination of the offender population. Also, a couple of the items from last year's analysis have been dropped in that they were redundant or uninstrutive.

**Admissions to Probation, 1976 - 1986
Type of Case**



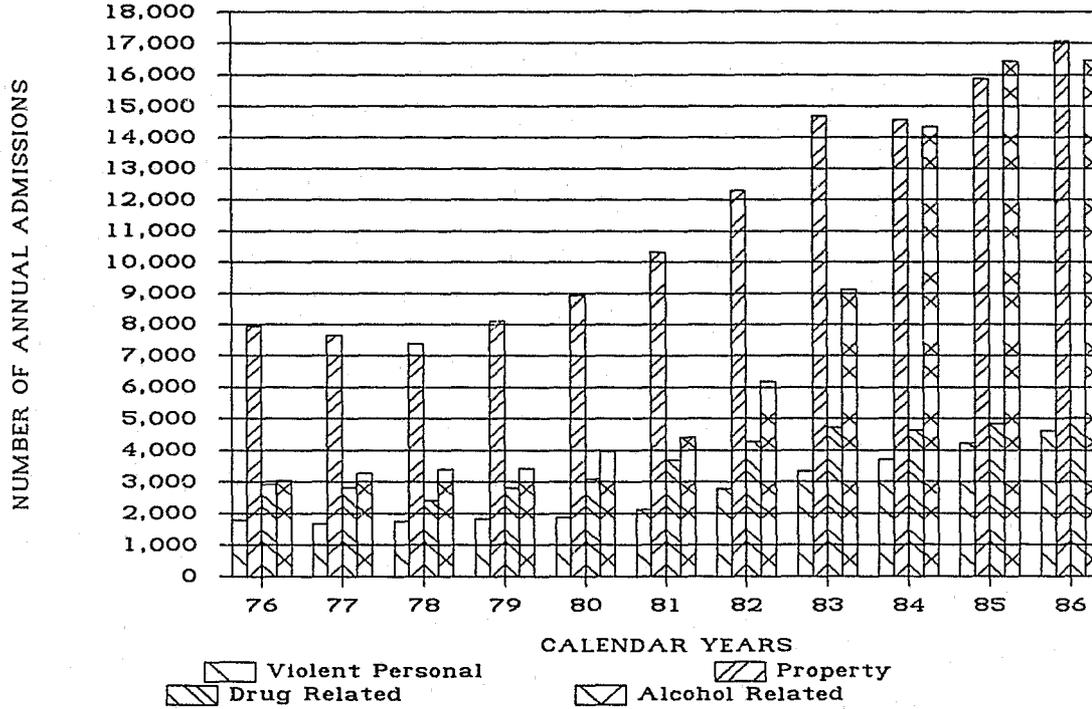
Calendar Years	Annual Totals	Straight Sentences	Split Sentences	Abandonment and Bastardy
1976	20684	16319	1490	2079
1977	21505	16310	1505	2839
1978	21128	15928	1666	2902
1979	22927	17765	1694	2704
1980	24864	19879	2006	2203
1981	27795	21680	2905	2236
1982	32888	26025	3067	2569
1983	39064	31373	4301	2194
1984	44002	36544	4580	1897
1985	49574	41937	4083	2183
1986	52224	45140	3875	1853

NOTE: Totals in above graph and table also include other types of cases (i.e., suspended sentences).

Admissions to Probation, 1976 - 1986
Type of Case

- Admissions to probation have more than doubled in the eleven-year period, increasing from 20,684 in 1976 to 52,224 in 1986. This growth has been particularly dramatic between 1980 and 1986 when the number of yearly probation admissions increased 110%.
- Admissions of straight probation sentences (those involving time on probation only) have increased as a proportion of all admits to probation (79% in 1976 to 86% in 1986). Admissions of probationers with split sentences (those involving prison and probation) have remained through the years studied at roughly 7%, while probationers with abandonment and bastardy sentences have actually decreased (10% in 1976 to 3.5% in 1986).

**Admissions to Probation, 1976 - 1986
Crime Type**



Calendar Year	Total Annual Admissions	Violent Personal	Non-Violent Personal	Property	Drug Related	Alcohol Related *	Other
1976	20684	1776	2390	7941	2933	3049	2594
1977	21505	1666	3164	7653	2820	3273	2929
1978	21128	1742	3180	7379	2393	3409	3022
1979	22927	1821	3090	8118	2791	3422	3686
1980	24863	1874	2659	8928	3082	3953	4367
1981	27795	2111	2646	10305	3691	4425	4617
1982	32888	2768	3061	12303	4261	6180	4317
1983	39064	3329	2860	14690	4724	9132	4326
1984	44002	3712	2652	14582	4642	14348	4061
1985	49574	4232	3037	15877	4843	16419	5173
1986	52224	4608	2787	17077	5031	16440	6480

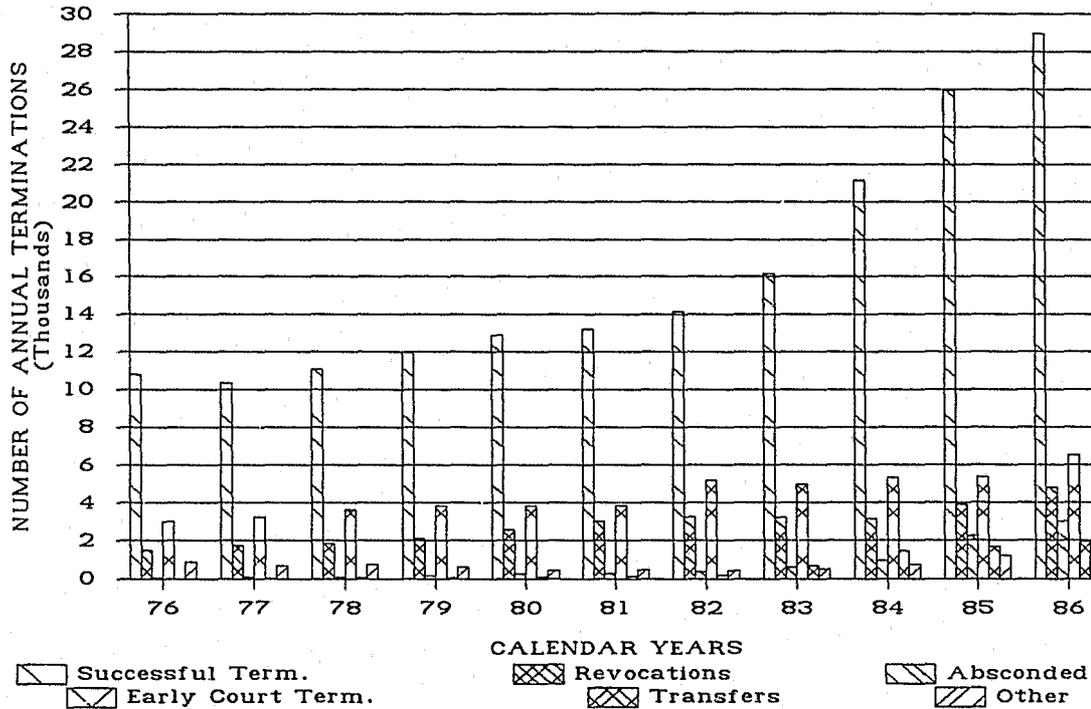
NOTE: Alcohol Related crimes include DUI and Habitual Traffic Violator

Admissions to Probation, 1976 - 1986
Crime Type

- Probationers admitted to probation for alcohol related crimes, in particular Driving Under the Influence (DUI) and Habitual Traffic Violator (HTV) may be re-shaping the composition of Georgia's probationer population. Admissions for these crimes increased from 15% of all probation admissions in 1976 to 31% in 1986.
- During the same eleven-year period, the proportion of admissions to probation for violent personal crimes, property, drug related and non-violent personal crimes declined or held steady:

Admission Crime Type	% Total Admits: 1976	% Total Admits: 1981	% Total Admits: 1986
Alcohol Related	15%	16%	31%
Violent Personal	8%	7%	9%
Non-Violent Personal	11%	9%	5%
Property	38%	37%	32%
Drug Related	14%	13%	9%
Other	12%	16%	12%

**Releases from Probation, 1976 - 1986
Type of Completion**



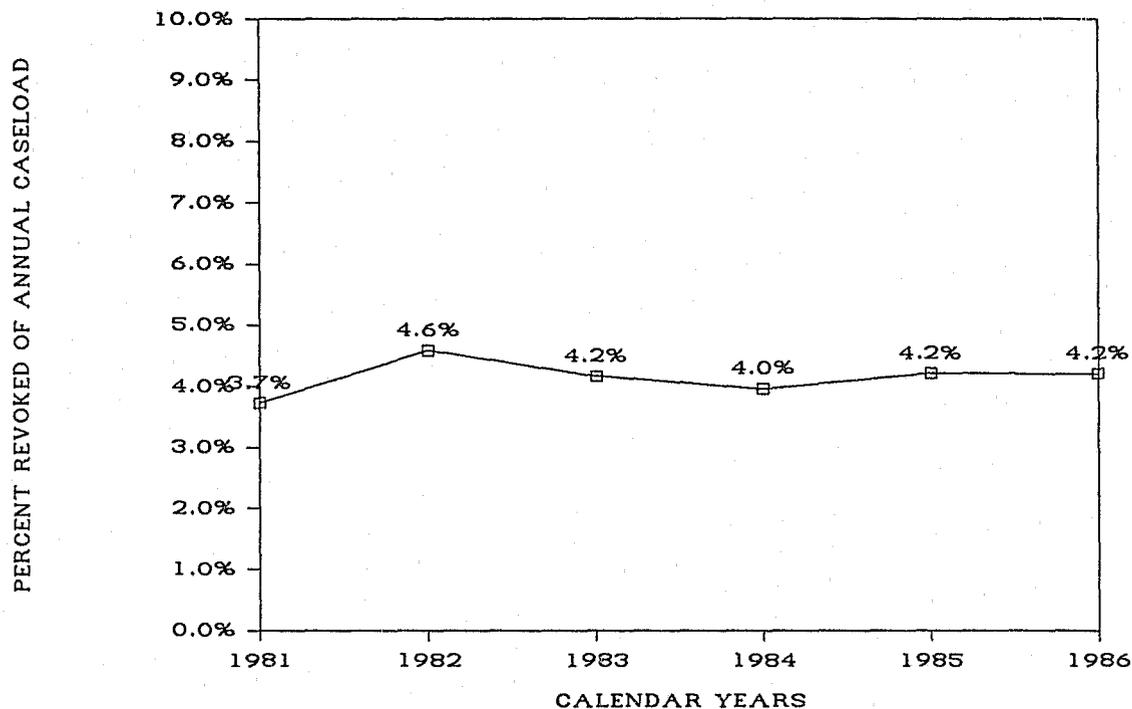
Termination Year	Totals	Successful Completions	Revocations	Absconded	Early Terminations By Court	Transfers	Other
1976	16257	10791	1512	35	3021	4	894
1977	16118	10344	1744	69	3269	15	677
1978	17419	11063	1850	94	3625	56	731
1979	18717	11967	2129	164	3830	32	595
1980	20017	12890	2572	241	3828	63	423
1981	20876	13194	3000	261	3847	112	462
1982	23539	14124	3244	361	5170	204	436
1983	26145	16169	3209	606	4978	672	511
1984	32771	21146	3147	937	5326	1469	746
1985	40400	25960	3920	2281	5341	1690	1208
1986	46836	28974	4818	3020	6516	1932	1576

Releases from Probation, 1976 - 1986
Type of Completion

- Terminations from probation, like admissions to probation, more than doubled in the eleven-year period.
- The proportions of the various types of completion did not vary a great deal during the same time period. Successful Completions decreased slightly (66% of all terminations in 1976 compared to 61% in 1986); revocations increased very little (9% in 1976 compared to 10% in 1986); and those who absconded increased slightly (less than 1% in 1976 compared to 6% in 1986).

Release Type	% Total Admits: 1976	% Total Admits: 1981	% Total Admits: 1986
Successful Completions	66%	63%	61%
Revocations	9%	14%	10%
Absconded	.2%	1%	6%
Early Term. by Court	18%	18%	13%
Transfers	.02%	.5%	4%
Others	5%	2%	3%

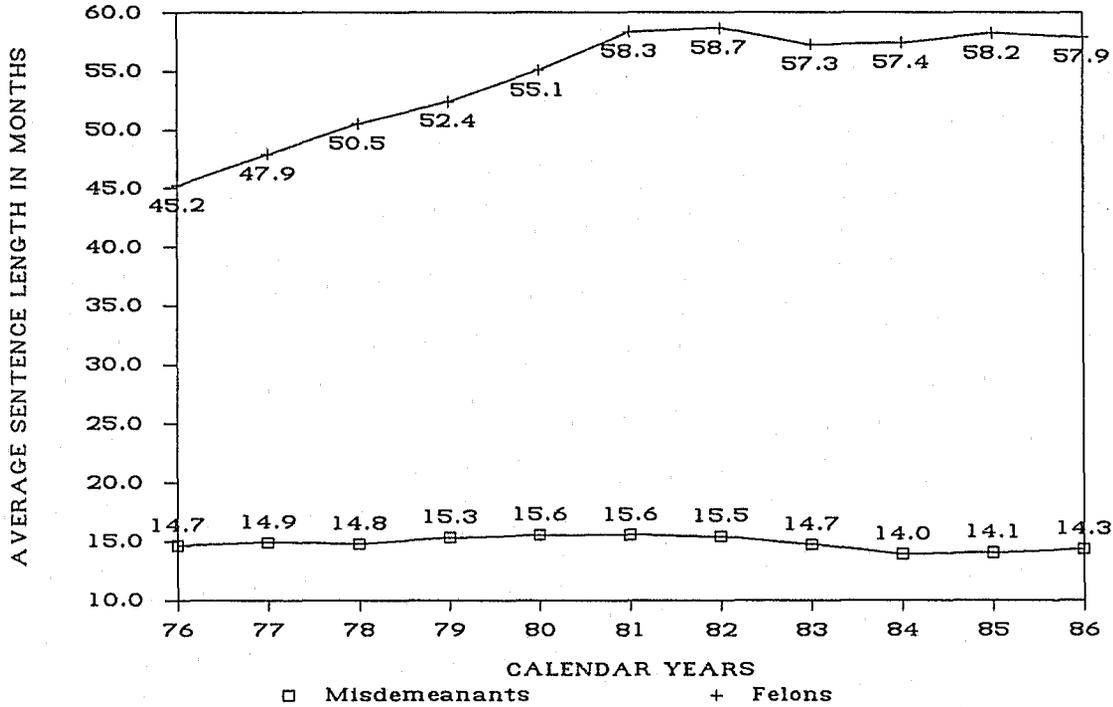
**Percent of Probation Caseload
Annually Revoked**



Calendar Year	Number on Caseload As of Dec. 31 of Each Year *	Number of Revocations	Percent of Cases Annually Revoked
1981	49239	1834	3.7%
1982	57444	2634	4.6%
1983	73257	3054	4.2%
1984	82012	3250	4.0%
1985	90513	3813	4.2%
1986	99471	4187	4.2%

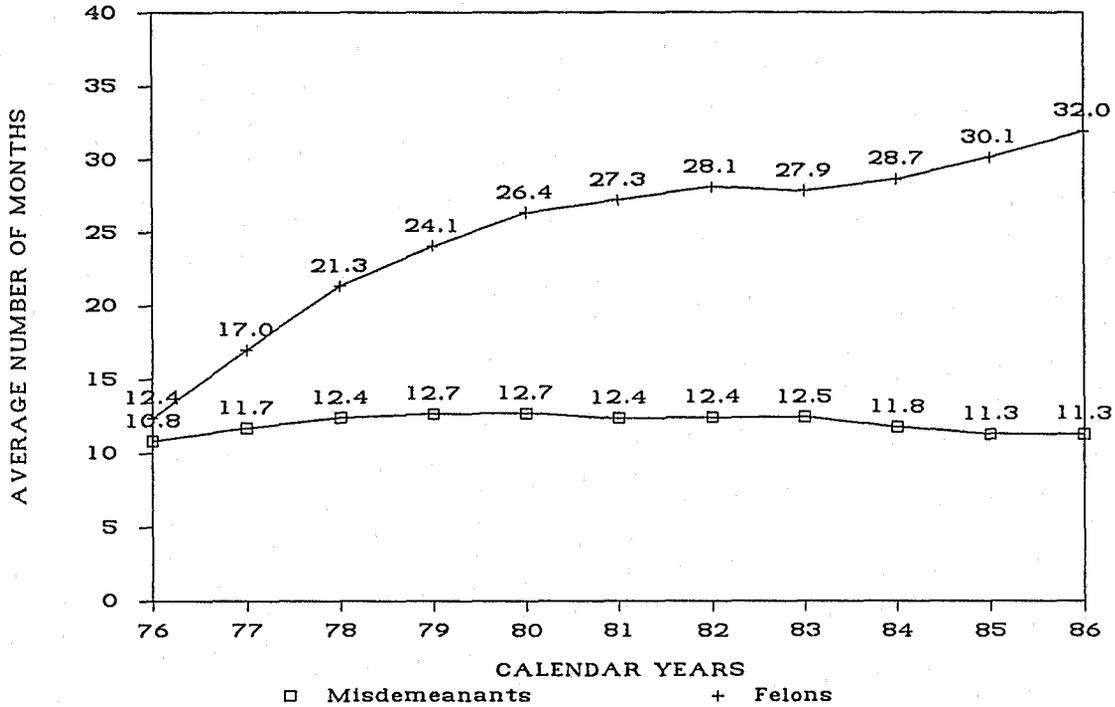
- The percentage of the annual, year-end probation caseload revoked each year remained relatively stable between 3.7 and 4.6 percent during the study period.

**Admissions to Probation: 1976 - 1986, Average Sentence
Felons & Misdemeanants**



- The average sentence length for probationers convicted of felonies has increased 28% from 1976 when the average was 45.2 months to 1986 when the average was 57.9 months. The average peaked in 1982 at 58.7 and remained relatively stable through 1986.
- Misdemeanor probationers' average sentence length remained steady between 14.3 and 15.6 months during the eleven-year period.

**Average Length of Supervision: Probation, 1976 - 1986
Felons & Misdemeanants**

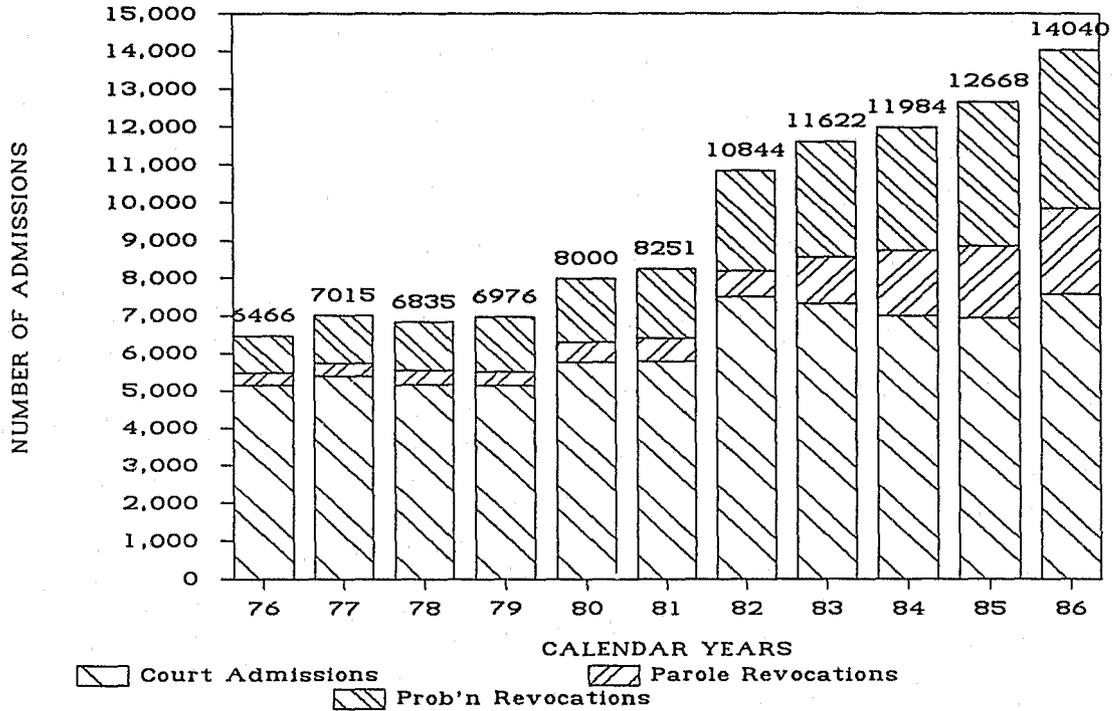


Calendar Year	Felons		Misdemeanants	
	Avg. Number of Years	Avg. Number of Months	Avg. Number of Years	Avg. Number of Months
1976	1.03	12.4	.90	10.8
1977	1.41	17.0	.97	11.7
1978	1.78	21.3	1.03	12.4
1979	2.01	24.1	1.05	12.6
1980	2.20	26.4	1.06	12.7
1981	2.27	27.2	1.03	12.4
1982	2.34	28.1	1.04	12.4
1983	2.32	27.9	1.04	12.4
1984	2.39	28.7	.98	11.8
1985	2.51	30.1	.94	11.3
1986	2.66	32.0	.94	11.3

**Average Length of Supervision: Probation, 1976 - 1986
Felons & Misdemeanants**

- The length of supervision for misdemeanor probationers was very stable for the eleven-year time period, averaging between 10.8 and 12.7 months.
- The average length of supervision for felony probationers however, more than doubled during the same time span, averaging 12.4 months in 1976 to an average of 32 months in 1986. This is indicative of the increasingly available and varied forms of probation now in use in Georgia (i.e., Intensive Probation, diversion centers, home confinement, etc.). Probation in Georgia is taking on more and more of the type of offenders that at one time would have had to go to prison, and is supervising them successfully.

Admissions to Prison, 1976 - 1986
Type of Admission



Calendar Year	Total Admissions	New Cases from Court	Probation Revocations	Parole Revocations
1976	6466	5151	984	331
1977	7015	5394	1270	351
1978	6835	5177	1289	369
1979	6976	5153	1462	361
1980	8000	5768	1698	534
1981	8251	5796	1834	621
1982	10844	7506	2634	704
1983	11622	7329	3054	1239
1984	11984	6990	3250	1744
1985	12668	6937	3813	1918
1986	14040	7579	4187	2274

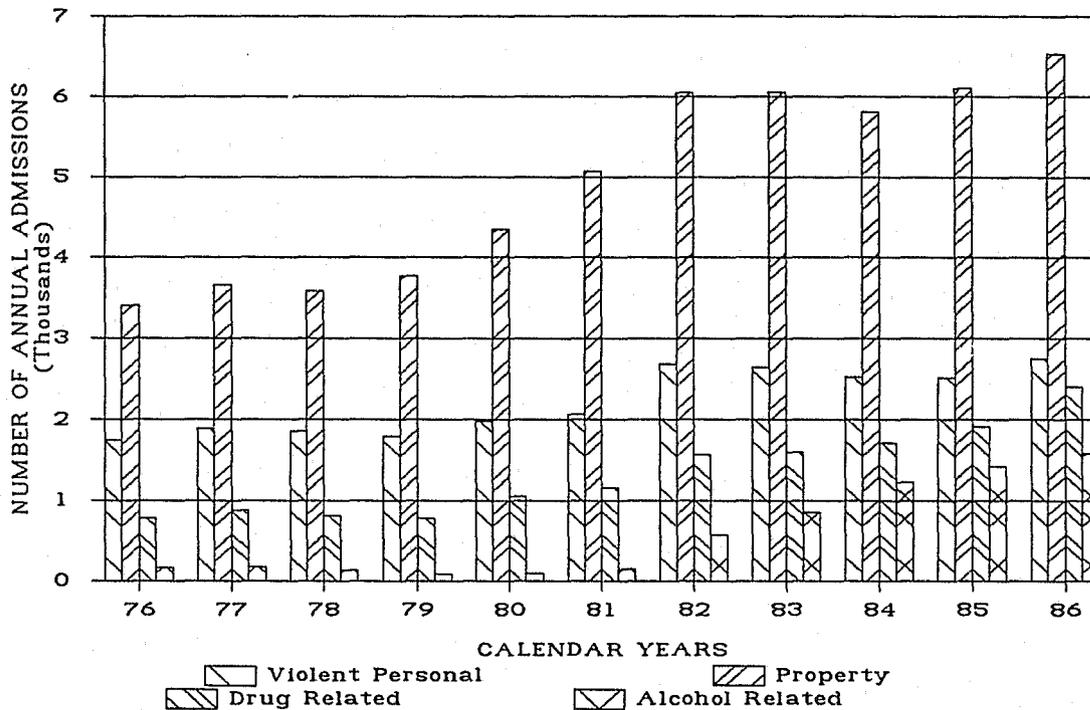
Admissions to Prison, 1976 - 1986
Type of Admission

- The total number of admissions to Georgia's prisons has more than doubled in the years from 1976 - 1986, increasing from 6,466 to 14,040.
- Although court admissions remain the leading admission type, the number of court admissions has only increased 47% since 1976, while probation revocation admissions more than quadrupled and parole revocation admissions increased nearly sevenfold.
- Revocations are playing a greater role in defining prison population size and composition. Note, for example, how the proportion of admissions due to probation and parole revocations has changed compared with new sentences from court:

Admissions Type	% Total Admits: 1976	% Total Admits: 1981	% Total Admits: 1986
Court: New Sentence	80%	70%	53%
Probation Revocations	15%	22%	30%
Parole Revocations	5%	7%	16%

- While court admissions seem to have risen and fallen in a roller-coaster fashion, admissions due to probation and parole revocations have steadily risen during the past ten years.

Admissions to Prison, 1976 - 1986 Crime Type



Calendar Year	Total Annual Admissions	Violent Personal	Non-Violent Personal	Property	Drug Related	Alcohol Related *	Other
1976	6466	1745	156	3405	786	165	233
1977	7015	1888	194	3662	882	168	293
1978	6835	1859	170	3586	818	132	309
1979	6976	1798	198	3775	782	85	378
1980	8000	1978	212	4354	1056	90	579
1981	8251	2066	248	5071	1164	149	704
1982	10844	2690	292	6056	1572	577	530
1983	11622	2650	257	6059	1598	855	408
1984	11984	2521	271	5814	1714	1233	524
1985	12668	2519	272	6105	1916	1423	522
1986	14040	2754	265	6538	2403	1591	563

NOTE: Alcohol Related crimes include DUI and Habitual Traffic Violator

Admissions to Prison, 1976 - 1986
Crime Type

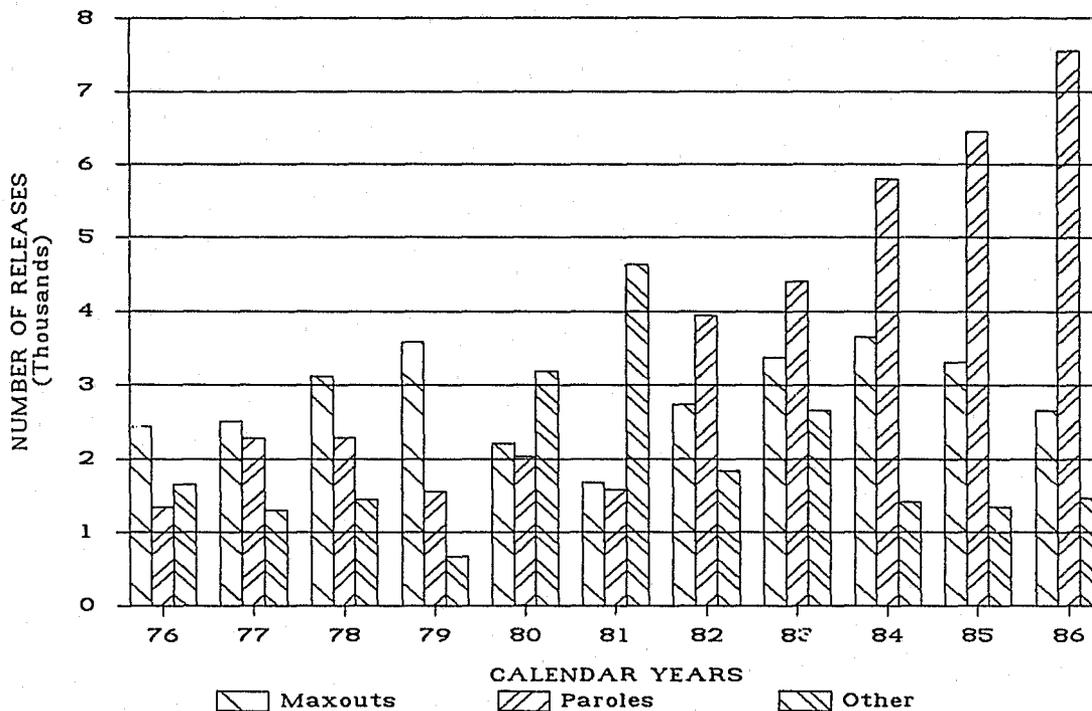
- Although property crime admissions continue to comprise the largest proportion of total admissions, that proportion has decreased from 53% of all admissions in 1976 to 46% in 1986.
- From 1976 to 1986 prison admissions for the following crime types increased by these amounts:

Alcohol Related	864%
Drug Related	206%
Other	142%
Non-Violent Personal	70%
Property	92%
Violent Personal	57%

- Offenders admitted on Drug Related (sales/possession) and Alcohol Related crimes are re-shaping the composition of Georgia's prison population. Together, admissions for these crime types increased from 14% of all prison admissions in 1976 to 28% in 1986.
- During the same time (1976 - 1986) the proportion of admissions for violent personal crimes, property and non-violent personal crimes either declined or held steady:

Admission Crime Type	% Total Admits: 1976	% Total Admits: 1981	% Total Admits: 1986
Violent Personal	27%	25%	20%
Non-Violent Personal	2%	3%	2%
Property	53%	61%	46%
Drug Related	12%	14%	17%
Alcohol Related	2%	2%	11%
Other	4%	8%	4%

Releases From Prison, 1976 - 1986
Type of Release



Calendar Year	Totals	Maxouts	Paroles	Other Releases *
1976	5439	2441	1346	1652
1977	6085	2506	2280	1299
1978	6851	3116	2285	1450
1979	5803	3580	1557	666
1980	7437	2210	2038	3189
1981	7899	1681	1585	4633
1982	8522	2742	3945	1835
1983	10433	3372	4402	2659
1984	10871	3655	5796	1420
1985	11100	3312	6448	1340
1986	11675	2655	7554	1466

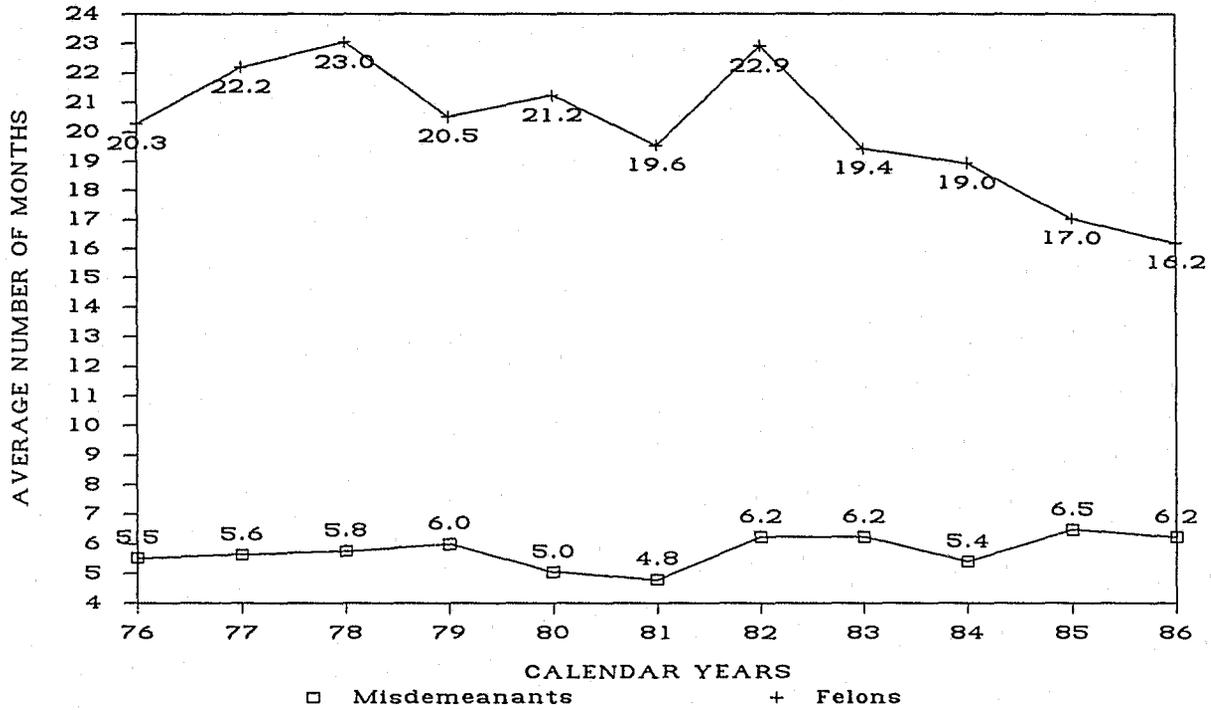
NOTE: "Other releases" includes other Parole Board actions such as commutations and reprieves and similar actions by the Courts.

Releases From Prison, 1976 - 1986
Type of Release

- As was noted in the *Ten-Year Trend Analysis*, releases from prison seem to be governed by prevailing policy:
 - 1976 - 1979: Earned Time releases (seen as "Maxouts" above).
 - 1980 - 1981: Parole Board steps up commutations and reprieves to relieve overcrowding (seen as "Other" above).
 - 1982: Parole Guidelines begin to demonstrate an impact on the system, as shown by the increase in parole releases.
 - 1984: HB505 goes into effect; marked increase in percentage of releases due to parole.
- The number of inmates released on parole increased 64% from 1982 to 1986.
- By 1986, paroles accounted for more than half of all releases, and maxouts for less than one-third -- a marked contrast from 1976 when paroles comprised barely one-fourth of releases and maxouts, nearly one-half.

Type of Release	% Total Releases: 1976	% Total Releases: 1981	% Total Releases: 1986
Maxouts	45%	21%	23%
Paroles	25%	20%	65%
Other Releases	30%	59%	12%

**Average Length of Stay: Prison, 1976 - 1986
Felons & Misdemeanants**

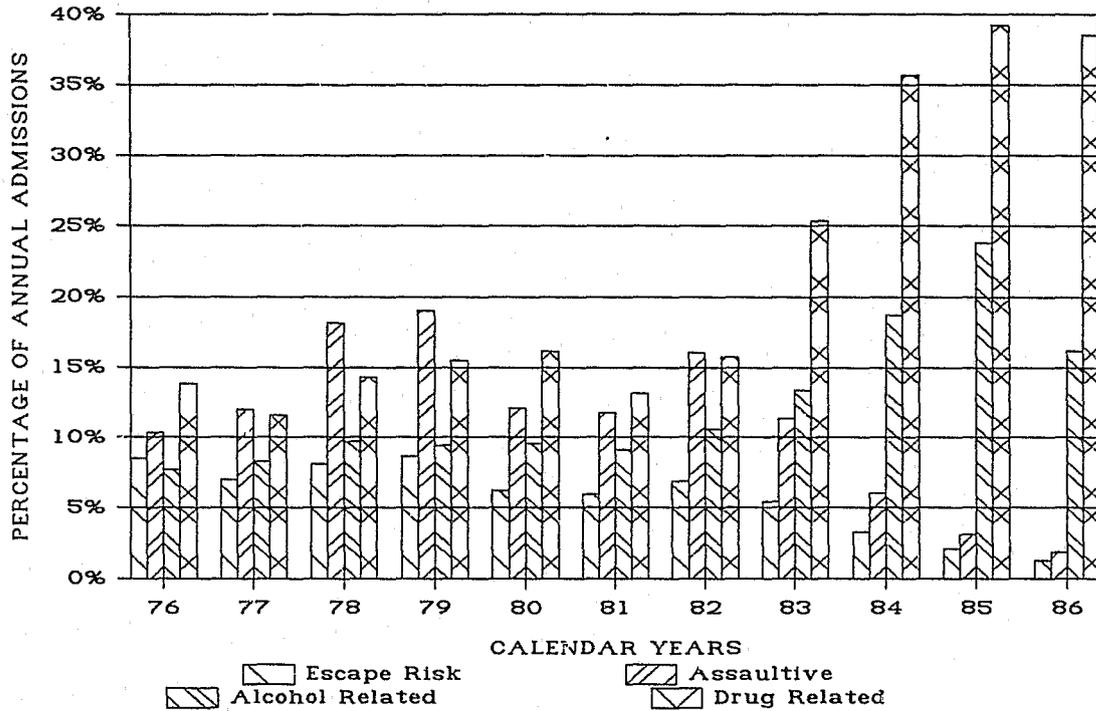


Calendar Year	Felons		Misdemeanants	
	Avg. Number of Years	Avg. Number of Months	Avg. Number of Years	Avg. Number of Months
1976	1.69	20.28	.46	5.52
1977	1.85	22.20	.47	5.64
1978	1.92	23.04	.48	5.76
1979	1.71	20.52	.50	6.00
1980	1.77	21.24	.42	5.04
1981	1.63	19.56	.40	4.80
1982	1.91	22.92	.52	6.24
1983	1.62	19.44	.52	6.24
1984	1.58	18.96	.45	5.40
1985	1.42	17.04	.54	6.48
1986	1.35	16.20	.52	6.24

**Average Length of Stay: Prison, 1976 - 1986
Felons & Misdemeanants**

- The average length of stay for felony inmates decreased from 1976 to 1986 by approximately four months, while it remained relatively stable at approximately six months for misdemeanants.
- In 1982, the average length of stay for felony offenders peaked at nearly 23 months and decreased yearly to an eleven-year low of 16.2 months in 1986.

**Admissions to Prison, 1976 - 1986
Percentage of Diagnostic Behavior Codes**

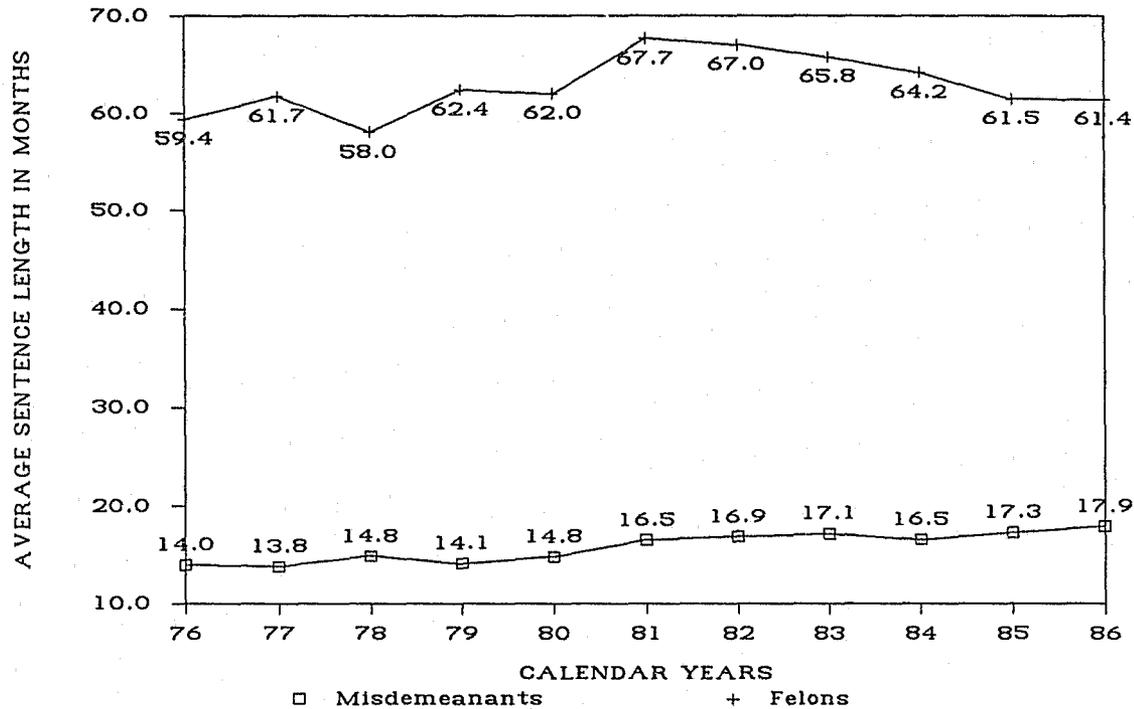


Admission Year	Escape Risk	Assaultive	Alcohol Related	Drug Related
1976	556	678	501	820
1977	497	855	592	752
1978	559	1254	670	927
1979	609	1338	665	1028
1980	514	1004	795	1275
1981	563	1112	860	1166
1982	805	1885	1246	1760
1983	644	1349	1590	2345
1984	397	735	2340	4135
1985	270	396	3056	4857
1986	179	264	2287	4420

**Admissions to Prison, 1976 - 1986
Percentage of Diagnostic Behavior Codes**

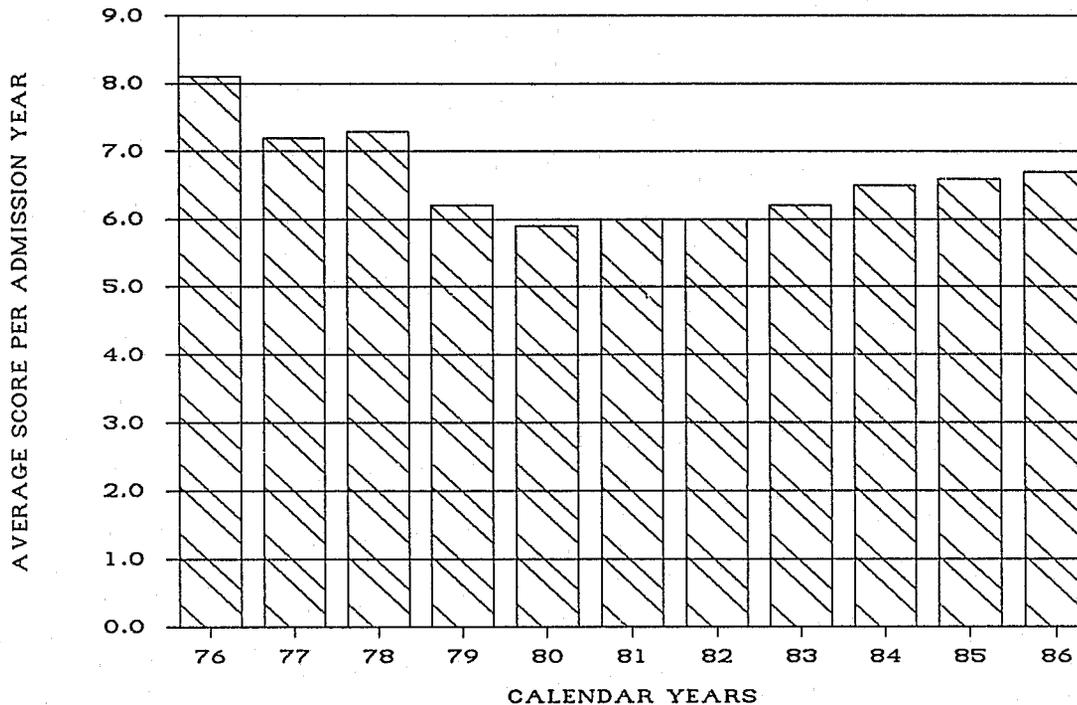
- This graph plots the proportion of the primary diagnostic behavior codes assigned inmates during the diagnostic phase of their imprisonment. These codes are given to the inmates based on the diagnostic counselor's personal interview and assessment of the inmate. The various behaviors include among others: "assaultive", "escape risk", "epileptic", "narcotic addict" and "alcohol abuser".
- The only diagnostic behaviors that demonstrated any significant change over the 11-year period, or that amounted to more than a percent or two of the total admissions for each calendar year were: "escape risk", "assaultive", "alcohol related" (a combination of "alcoholic" and "alcohol abuser"), and "drug related" (a combination of "drug experimenter" and "drug abuser").
- The proportion of inmates admitted each year given an "escape risk" code peaked in 1979 at 8.7%. Since 1979, however, the proportion of inmates designated as "escape risk" has significantly decreased to 1.3%.
- The proportion of inmates admitted given an "assaultive" code was highest in 1979 at 19%; except for a four-point jump in 1982, their numbers have declined until by 1986 "assaultive" inmates represented only 1.9% of the total admissions for the year.
- At the same time, inmates entering the system assigned drug related and/or alcohol related diagnostic codes increased significantly in the last five years, with both peaking in 1985 (37.9% for drug related and 23% for alcohol related).

**Admissions to Prison: 1976 - 1986, Average Sentence
Felons & Misdemeanants**



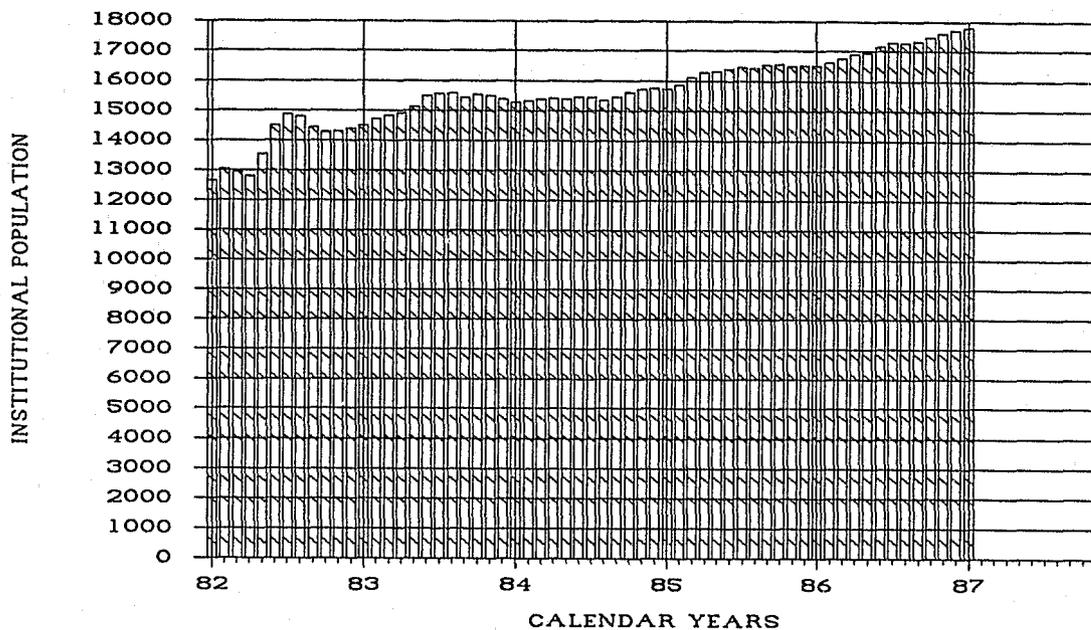
- The average sentence length increased by 3.5 months for felony inmates from 1976 to 1986. After the average sentence length peaked in 1981 (67.7 months) for these inmates, it then steadily decreased to 1986 (61.4).
- The average sentence length increased 3.9 months for misdemeanants over the period studied.

Admissions to Prison, 1976 - 1986
Average WRAT Reading Score



- This graph is based on the Reading sub-score of the Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT) administered to incoming inmates during their diagnostic phase. These scores are roughly equivalent to grade levels in reading ability.
- While the average functional reading level for admissions peaked in 1976 at the approximate 8th grade level, it decreased over the subsequent five years to just below the 6th grade level in 1980.
- Since 1980, the average functional reading level for admissions has risen slightly about seven months from 5.9 to 6.7.

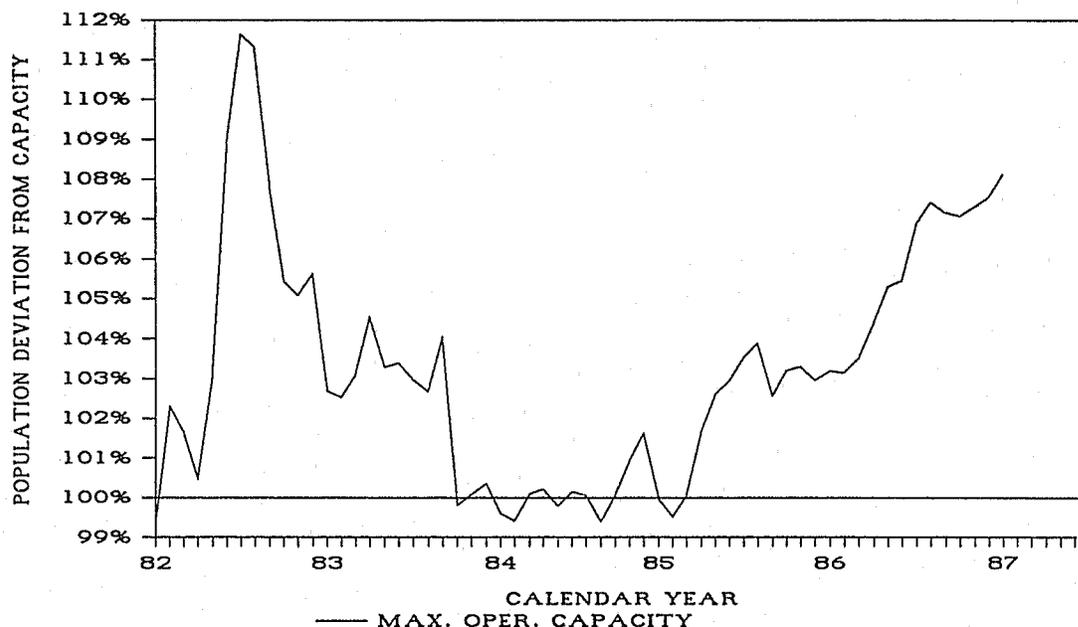
**Overall Prison & Transitional Center Population
Monthly Averages Since 1982**



Calendar Year	Average January Population
1982	12,661
1983	14,497
1984	15,275
1985	15,749
1986	16,527
1987	17,702

- The average monthly prison and transitional center population has increased from 12,754 in January 1982 to 17,702 by January 1987.
- The annualized growth rate for that period was 5.1%

Overall Prison and Transitional Center Utilization Monthly Averages Since 1982



- This graph plots the actual utilization of bedspace in prisons and centers since January 1982. The line at 100% indicates "Maximum Operating Capacity" established by the Governor, the Office of Planning and Budget, the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council, the Board of Pardons and Paroles, and GDC as the absolute maximum number of inmates who can fit in a prison without starting to cause grave legal, medical and behavior problems.
- Beginning in early 1982, a steep increase in utilization over 100% can be seen ending in the latter months of 1982. This increase is attributable to the admission of some 3,000 inmates from local jails. In May of 1983, the Parole Board put the Parole Guidelines into effect. A period of utilization stability can be seen for the subsequent year until early 1985, when utilization increased beyond the 100% level and with the exception of a few decreases, has continued to increase to the present.
- Much of the disruption felt by line staff in institutions and the perception that inmates are becoming more and more unmanageable may in part be attributable to the stresses felt by a prison system at more than 108% of capacity.