

# **A STUDY OF PROBATION AND PAROLE WORKER SAFETY IN THE MIDDLE ATLANTIC REGION**

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Associate Professor of Administration of Justice

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Associate Professor of Community Health Education

The Pennsylvania State University



**Sponsored by MASCA**

The Middle Atlantic States Correctional Association

With a Technical Assistance Grant  
From the National Institute of Corrections

August, 1990

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U.S. Department of Justice  
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## PREFACE

During my years on the Board of Trustees, I felt that the Middle Atlantic States Correctional Association (MASCA) was in a unique position as a regional organization to make a significant contribution to the criminal/juvenile justice field. When elected president, I felt I had the ideal opportunity to identify, initiate, and complete such a project. I am delighted that this report fulfills that goal.

In 1988, I heard about a Pennsylvania study on probation/parole staff safety being conducted by Penn State University Professor William H. Parsonage. I was immediately struck by the fact that this research was unique and interesting and focused on a topic of great concern to a significant portion of MASCA's constituency. If done on a regional basis, the data had the potential to provide important insights which could be used to improve the quality of worklife for community supervision personnel.

My contacts with William Parsonage and the National Institute of Corrections produced positive results: the research could be expanded to an eight state region, and NIC would consider footing the bill. A meeting in Washington early in 1989 produced a commitment from all top-ranking probation/parole officials in each MASCA jurisdiction to participate in the project. From their reaction, it was obvious that the study was needed, and that the results would be valued and useful.

The MASCA project was purposely designed to parallel the pilot study in Pennsylvania to obtain compatible data. Therefore, we adopted the definition of victimization which a group of line/field staff, supervisors, managers, and administrators developed for the pilot research. It was important to us to capture events which the workers considered hazardous. Accordingly, we defined victimization subjectively. This approach was both a strength and a weakness. Such broad usage is inclusive and therefore compatible with the initial study. However, it is easier to be consistent in identifying physical assaults than in describing intimidation. Nevertheless, the uniformity of approach and the fact that we did not take a sample population but attempted to include 100% of the probation/parole workers in our region give our results a great deal of validity.

My only dissatisfaction with this report is that we ultimately excluded the District of Columbia. Logistical problems and an extremely small response rate produced data of questionable reliability; therefore, the District was eliminated from the report. That change does not in any way diminish the accuracy or importance of the information obtained from other states.

I want to express my sincere gratitude to George Keiser and J. Richard Faulkner, Jr. of the National Institute of Corrections. Without their encouragement, support, and financial backing, this research could not have been accomplished. The assistance and guidance of the MASCA Research Advisory Committee also has been an integral and necessary part of the process. Special thanks to all who participated.



CONNECTICUT	Robert Bosco, Director, Department of Adult Probation Hans Fjellman, Chief, Parole Services Richard Morrissey, Deputy Director, Superior Court Family Division
DELAWARE	Timothy Brandau, Director, Community Based Services John Falkowski, Former Director, Community Services
MARYLAND	Donald Atkinson, Executive Assistant Director, Division of Parole and Probation Ben Jones, Deputy Director for Community Operations, Juvenile Services Agency
NEW JERSEY	Harvey M. Goldstein, Assistant Director for Probation, Administrative Office of the Courts Fred B. Holley, Chief, Bureau of Parole Mario Papparozi, Program Administrator, ISSP/HCP, Bureau of Parole
NEW YORK	Barbara Broderick, Director of Policy Analysis and Information, Division of Parole Edmund B. Wutzer, Director, Division of Probation and Correctional Alternatives
PENNSYLVANIA	W. Conway Bushey, Director of Grants-in-Aid, Board of Probation and Parole Andrew DeAngelo, Deputy Chief Probation Officer, Lehigh County Juvenile Probation Department
VERMONT	Dennis DeBevec, Chief of Public Information, Department of Corrections
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA	Gladys Mack, Chairperson, Board of Parole Alan M. Schuman, Director, Superior Court Social Services Division

MASCA owes a special debt of gratitude to William Parsonage and Joe Miller. Their efforts on our behalf show a tremendous amount of dedication to the safety concerns of justice workers. Our association with them has always been a pleasure, and their report exhibits the highest quality and integrity.

Finally, thanks to all who participated by completing surveys for our study. It is my sincere hope that the results of this research will benefit those who work in the field. All of us involved want this report to be a catalyst, sparking initiatives all across the MASCA region to make probation/parole work safer and more productive.

Dennis R. Martin, Past President  
Middle Atlantic States Correctional Association  
August 1, 1990

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## Section 1

### PROBATION AND PAROLE WORKER SAFETY IN THE MIDDLE ATLANTIC REGION

#### Introduction

Research focusing on worker safety in probation and parole is a late 1980's phenomenon.<sup>1</sup> While a fair amount of literature addressing the victimization of police officers exists, it was not until 1989 that the first published research addressing the victimization of probation and parole workers (the Pennsylvania survey) appeared. The purpose of that exploratory study was to generate information about the extent and nature of victimization as perceived and experienced by probation and parole staff members.<sup>2</sup>

In late 1989, the National Institute of Corrections (NIC) commissioned the first author to write a monograph on Worker Safety In Probation And Parole.<sup>3</sup> The NIC, as further evidence of its concern for worker safety, provided support for presentations at the annual meetings of the Middle Atlantic States Correctional Association<sup>4</sup> and the American Probation and Parole Association.<sup>5</sup> At the request of the Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole, the NIC provided a short-term technical assistance grant to support the second year Probation and Parole Worker Victimization Survey in Pennsylvania.<sup>6</sup>

Then, following up on an NIC consultation conducted in August, 1989, the Middle Atlantic States Correctional Association (MASCA) secured a technical assistance grant to support an expansion of the Pennsylvania research to its

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<sup>1</sup>All of the research that the authors could locate concerning worker safety in probation and parole was conducted between 1987 and 1989.

<sup>2</sup>Parsonage, William H. and W. Conway Bushey, "The Victimization of Probation and Parole Workers in the Line of Duty: An Exploratory Study," Criminal Justice Policy Review, Vol. 2, No. 4, 1989.

<sup>3</sup>Parsonage, William H., Worker Safety In Probation And Parole, Washington, DC: United States Department of Justice, National Institute of Corrections, April 1990.

<sup>4</sup>Parsonage, William H. and W. Conway Bushey, "The Victimization of Probation and Parole Workers In The Line Of Duty," Middle Atlantic States Correctional Association meeting, Kiamesha Lake, New York, May, 1989.

<sup>5</sup>Parsonage, William H. and W. Conway Bushey, "Worker Safety in Probation and Parole", American Probation and Parole Association Meeting, Milwaukee, WI, July, 1989.

<sup>6</sup>Technical Assistance Grant 89C1086 from the National Institute of Corrections to the Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole.

entire eight-state region.<sup>7</sup> A major purpose of the expanded research was to initiate development of a comprehensive database describing the victimization of probation/parole workers in the Middle Atlantic Region. The ten research questions listed below were articulated to guide that inquiry.<sup>8</sup>

1. How extensive is the victimization of probation and parole workers in the MASCA region?
2. Do the kinds and rates of victimization vary according to the specific roles of workers?
3. What kinds of victimizations occur?
4. Does victimization experience vary by worker characteristics?
5. Who victimizes probation and parole workers?
6. In what contexts do victimization events occur?
7. How do workers deal with these events?
8. What are the aftermaths of victimizations?
9. How much victimization of workers can be prevented?
10. To what extent do workers endorse various proposed policy initiatives in terms of their utility to reduce victimization?

The current document, A Study of Probation and Parole Worker Safety in the Middle Atlantic States, reports on the research conducted under the auspices of the MASCA organization involving the states of Connecticut, Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, and Vermont. While the District of Columbia is a part of the MASCA region and participated in the survey, data from that jurisdiction is not included in this report due to a very low response rate and a concern that any resulting inferences might be unreliable.

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<sup>7</sup>Technical Assistance Grant 89C1102 from the National Institute of Corrections to the Middle Atlantic States Correctional Association, August, 1989.

<sup>8</sup>The research questions endorsed by the MASCA Advisory Committee and utilized in the current research were the same as those addressed in earlier Pennsylvania studies (Parsonage & Bushey, 1988; Parsonage & Miller, 1989).

"Hazardous Incident" and "Victimization"  
Some Working Definitions

It is important, at the start, to define the terms "hazardous incident," "victim," and "victimization" as they are used in this report. A "hazardous incident" is considered to be a situation that has the potential to result in a physical assault or other illegal act against the worker.

The definition of "victim," as applied to probation/parole workers, is a more difficult issue. The popular image of a "victim" is that of a completely innocent person who gets hurt in the process of normal life circumstances. Police, corrections, probation, and parole workers against whom crimes and hazardous acts are committed have often been thought of in a different way. It is as though they cannot be afforded the status of "victim" because they "knew what they were getting into," or because in the conduct of their jobs they are expected to be able to deal with potentially dangerous persons and situations. Indeed, to assist them in that process, administration of justice workers are provided with special training, preparation, and resources to deal with hazardous situations. In spite of special preparation and competence, however, a correctional, police, or probation officer who is killed, raped, physically assaulted, intimidated, or otherwise threatened with harm while on duty is as much a victim as anyone else. Crime victims are people who suffer because of illegal acts against them.

Defining "victimization" is also complex. A number of variables must be taken into account. A victimization is "a specific criminal act as it affects a single victim."<sup>9</sup> In a practical sense, however, an act is a victimization when it is perceived as such. How the event is interpreted by the officer--as an offense or as expected behavior which is just part of the job--will depend on that perception. Events, in order to be victimizations, must be identified behaviorally as such by those experiencing them.

Victimizations must also be seen as transactions involving perpetrators and victims. Various victimologists have created typologies characterizing levels of offender-victim responsibility in crime events, demonstrating that the contributions of each participant can vary greatly.<sup>10</sup> Thus, different factors, including the roles of participants, their relationships, and other contributing circumstances, need to be taken into account in understanding the nature of victimization events and how to respond to them appropriately.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>Criminal Victimization in the United States--1987, Washington, DC: U. S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1988, p. 120.

<sup>10</sup>Karmen, Andrew, Crime Victims: An Introduction to Victimology (Monterey, CA: Brooks-Cole, 1984), p. 85.

<sup>11</sup>Parsonage, William H., Ed., Perspectives on Victimology (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Research Progress Series in Criminology, 1979), p. 10.

While the offenses against probation/parole workers that one usually hears about are incidents of serious physical assault, the spectrum of threatening events to which they are exposed is quite diverse. As a term or concept, victimization should not be limited to one terrible incident, such as an assault or a hostage situation. Also anxiety-producing are the series of uncontrollable, unpredictable, and unpleasant incidents (e.g., threats and intimidation attempts) that cumulatively may result in "burnout," post-traumatic stress disorder, or learned helplessness.<sup>12</sup> The range of victimization events, therefore, must be considered in the development of a practical understanding of the overall phenomenon, impact on workers, cost to agencies, and effective methods for prevention and intervention.

In defining "victimization" in the MASCA survey, it was decided to pursue an "inclusionary course" that would involve field workers in the process of establishing what they thought constituted victimization and, ultimately, in the creation of operational definitions. Thus, victimization was then (and will now for the purposes of this report) be defined in its broadest sense as including:

hazardous incidents in which people working in probation and parole agencies have been assaulted or threatened in connection with their work. Examples of hazardous incidents affecting staff safety would include: physical assault or harm; threat of physical assault or harm; assault or threat of harm to a worker's family members; harm or threat of harm to one's property; extortion; harm or threat of harm to a worker's reputation; or psychological intimidation.

Victimization of probation and parole workers is a multi-dimensional, relative, and often abstract problem. Exposure to such events can have serious personal, as well as organizational, consequences.

How we refer to criminal or threatening behavior that is directed toward probation/parole workers--whether we call it "hazardous events" or "victimizations"--has important implications for the way the problem will be addressed. Many, including the authors, want to be sure that the use of the term "victim" in no way characterizes probation and parole workers as weak, incompetent, ill-trained, or blundering people. Nor should the occurrence of such an event necessarily be viewed as the consequence of an error or omission on the part of an agency. Professional competence does not, unfortunately, immunize people from the dangerous or unwarranted acts of others. The decision to use "victim" and "victimization" has been made for lack of other terms to characterize adequately the real nature and seriousness of the problem with which we are dealing--crimes against workers in the line of duty.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup>Agee, Gerald L. and Vicki L. Agee, "When Risk Becomes Reality," Corrections Today, August 1987, 49-53.

<sup>13</sup>The following definition of "victimization" was developed and utilized in the 1988 and 1989 Pennsylvania studies, based on a review of pertinent literature and consultation with a group of administrators and officers representing state

Some Perspective On "Reading" The Data:  
Seeing Both the Good and Bad News

The importance of keeping some perspective is critical for interpreting and applying the findings generated by this research.

The fact that, across the MASCA region, approximately 60% of all probation and parole workers report having experienced some kind of victimization during their careers and that 30% of all respondents report at least one such event during the past 12 months evidences the existence of an important worker safety problem.

But it is also impressive that approximately 40% of all respondents report no victimization against them in their careers and that 70% have not been so offended during the past 12 months. It is apparent that the great majority of officers are able to function in their roles and deal effectively with hazardous situations without experiencing events they consider to be victimizations.

Moreover, information generated by this research not only describes the negative consequences arising out of offenses against workers; it also provides their judgments about the manner and methods by which victimizations can be prevented.

The purpose of this research, and the intent of the authors, was to be informative and helpful to workers and agency administrators in their endeavors to enhance worker safety in the line of duty. While it is probably true to predict that the data presented in this report will be used by different individuals or interest groups to support varying positions, it is hoped that it will be used responsibly and with some "balance."

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parole, adult and juvenile probation services--"any violence, threat of violence, intimidation, extortion, theft of property, damage to one's reputation or any other act which inflicts damage, instills fear or threatens one's sensibilities". The definition of victimization and the terms "hazardous incident" and "victimization" were matters discussed at an August 1989 meeting of the MASCA Research Advisory Committee. In order to maintain comparability between Pennsylvania data and data to be generated in the MASCA study, the basic elements of the definition of victimization used in the Pennsylvania studies was maintained. The Committee did suggest that the word victimization not be used in the questionnaire itself, preferring instead the use of "hazardous incident." The Advisory Committee members did not, however, challenge the concept of victimization as applying to such incidents involving probation and parole workers. The researchers followed the advice of the Committee by using the term "hazardous incident" in the definition used as the lead in to the survey questions.



## Section 2

### METHODOLOGY

#### Introduction

The worker safety studies in Pennsylvania and other member jurisdictions of the Middle Atlantic States Correctional Association (MASCA) were conducted in two separate phases of activity. The Pennsylvania survey, supported by a grant from the National Institute of Corrections (NIC), was conducted in early Summer, 1989. Surveys in the other MASCA jurisdictions<sup>1</sup>, also supported by a technical assistance grant from NIC, were conducted during November-December, 1989.

Both studies pursued the same objectives, guided by the 10 key research questions discussed in the preceding Section (see p.1-2). These questions had been derived from the researchers' experiences with the 1988 survey in Pennsylvania. The 1989 Pennsylvania survey instrument was reviewed with management personnel in the Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole. The revised survey instrument used in the MASCA regional surveys was discussed and reviewed with members of the MASCA Research Advisory Committee.

Similar procedures were also used in each phase of the research. The design of the survey questionnaires and data management followed accepted procedures for survey research.<sup>2</sup> Variations in instrument content between the 1989 Pennsylvania and MASCA regional surveys primarily reflected the need to tailor four survey items to personnel titles and other working terminology peculiar to each MASCA jurisdiction. Additionally, survey questions that pertained to safety concerns and safety-related policies which had been used in an exploratory follow-up study in Pennsylvania were incorporated into the general instrument used in the MASCA surveys.

The same procedural steps were used in conducting the Pennsylvania and MASCA regional surveys. These included (1) consultation with representatives of each participating jurisdiction for purposes of clarifying objectives and deciding on the content of the survey instrument, (2) instrument development and modification, (3) data collection, (4) data processing and analysis, and (5) report preparation and transmittal.

Details about the implementation of these procedures are presented below for both the Pennsylvania survey and the MASCA regional surveys. Information

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<sup>1</sup>The District of Columbia was originally included in the study. However, response rates for the probation and parole agencies in this jurisdiction were very low, and it was requested that results not be included in the final report.

<sup>2</sup>See, for example, Don A. Dillman, Mail and Telephone Surveys: The Total Design Approach (New York: Wiley, 1978); Floyd J. Fowler, Survey Research Methods (Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, 1988); Peter H. Rossi et al., eds. Handbook of Survey Research (New York: Academic Press, 1983).

about the 1989 Pennsylvania study is presented first, followed by a discussion of methodological procedures used in the MASCA regional study.

### The 1989 Pennsylvania Survey

The 1989 Pennsylvania study used a mail survey format, with a questionnaire as the primary data-gathering instrument. Design of the questionnaire relied mainly on a similar instrument used in the 1988 Pennsylvania study.<sup>3</sup>

The final 1989 survey package was comprised of the following components: (1) a cover memorandum from the Principal Investigator and the Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole's (PBPP) Director of the Division of Grants and Standards, explaining the survey's purpose and soliciting cooperation; (2) a brief feedback report to all probation and parole workers on the results of the 1988 Pennsylvania survey; (3) the questionnaire, which consisted of three main parts--Part I, applicable to all respondents, regardless of their personal experiences with victimization events during the past year or over their careers in the field; Part II, which applied only to respondents who had been physically assaulted or intimidated in the line of duty during the preceding 12 months; Part III, consisting of a series of open-ended questions for respondents completing Part II; and the Response Sheet. Confidential treatment of responses was promised by the researchers.

### Data Collection

The survey packages were distributed to potential respondents by using the internal mail-distribution system of the Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole (PBPP). A memorandum from the Project's Principal Investigator and the PBPP's Director of the Division of Grants and Standards accompanied the package of survey materials sent to administrators in relevant state and local probation and parole agencies.

This memorandum explained the purposes of the survey, called attention to procedures for its completion, and requested that it be filled out by each agency staff member. The memorandum also indicated that the Response Form could be returned to the Project Investigators through each agency's administrative office, or that individual staff members could return them directly to the Principal Investigator.

Most of the completed Response Sheets were returned in bulk mailings from the various state and local agencies. A sizable number, though, were returned by individuals through direct mailing. In many instances, those returning

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<sup>3</sup>William H. Parsonage and W. Conway Bushey, "The Victimization of Pennsylvania Probation and Parole Workers: An Exploratory Study," Criminal Justice Policy Review, 4:2, 1989; William H. Parsonage, Worker Safety in Probation and Parole (Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, 1990).

completed Response Sheets noted that they felt they could be more open in responding when they personally mailed the response sheet back to the Project Investigators.

### Data Processing and Analysis

Each response sheet was inspected for completeness and given a unique identification number, and the numbered responses were entered into a computerized data bank, using IBM-PCs.

The numeric survey data were analyzed by using the SPSS-PC package of statistical programs. Given the nature of most of the data--i.e., a nominal level of measurement--most analyses relied on descriptive frequencies and cross-tabulations, with appropriate statistics for nonparametric data, as called for.

### Response Rates

Census figures for all categories of personnel in the Pennsylvania probation and parole system were not available for 1989. Thus, calculations of response rates were made by relying on 1988 census figures. However, information received from personnel of the PBPP indicated that there should be little difference between the census figures for 1988 and 1989.

The overall response rate for the 1989 survey was 55% (1,399 respondents out of a census count of 2,561). As can be seen in Table 2.1, the distributions of respondents by work classification in the 1989 survey do not differ radically from the corresponding figures in the 1988 census. Clerical and staff members, however, are underrepresented in the survey group--24%, as compared to 30% in the 1988 census. The same is true for respondents who are probation/parole officers or agents, who represent 52% of all respondents. The key question, of course, is whether the differences in distributions between survey respondents and personnel census figures are such that the former are unrepresentative. This would not appear to be the case. The differences are relatively small in each of the work classifications.

Table 2.1

## RESPONSE RATES: PENNSYLVANIA

Job Category	Census			Survey		
	No.	% of Total	% Less Clerical	No.	% of Total	% Less Clerical
Clerical	773	30	NA	336	24	NA
Probation/Parole Officer/Agent	1428	55	78	727	52	68
Probation/Parole Supervisor	236	9	13	182	13	17
Chief/Deputy Chief	116	4	6	98	7	9
District Director/Deputy Director/Other PBPP Pers.	48	2	3	56*	4	5
<b>Totals</b>	<b>2601</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1399</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

\*Note: This discrepancy is not readily explainable. It is probable that several other "unlabelled" workers became mixed in with PBPP personnel, thus contaminating the precise figure.

Follow-Up Study

A special feature of the 1989 Pennsylvania Study was a follow-up survey of two samples of respondents to the general 1989 survey was conducted. A pool of potential respondents was created by identifying those individuals who had voluntarily listed their names and addresses on the back of the survey response sheet. From this initial group, additional criteria were used in an attempt to identify respondents who were "case handlers"--that is, directly involved in supervising probationers and parolees. The goal was to create two samples: first, respondents who had reported a victimization incident during the past year and had completed Part II of the survey questionnaire; and, second, respondents who had not reported a victimization incident during the past year. The application of simple random sampling techniques yielded 105 names in the first group and 102 in the second group.<sup>4</sup>

An instrument especially designed for the follow-up survey was mailed to individuals in both sample groups. The first 57 questions were identical for both sets of respondents. An additional 23 questions were addressed only to individuals reporting victimizations in the past year and completing Part II of the original 1989 survey questionnaire.

<sup>4</sup>It should be noted that neither sample was truly representative of either victims or non-victims in the original 1989 survey. A complete listing of names and addresses was unavailable for all respondents. Rather, a target was set to select approximately 100 cases for each follow-up group. As it turned out, the sampling program used yielded, respectively, the 105 and 102 cases already mentioned. In research terms, these are referred to as "purposive samples"--i.e., selected for the purpose of exploring additional conceptual and policy-related issues, not to yield a representative sample of respondents in the original 1989 survey.

Coded responses from the completed follow-up questionnaires were entered into the computer and merged with each respondent's original survey questionnaire to constitute a data record consisting of information from both the original and the follow-up surveys. Analyses were conducted by using the SPSS-PC package of statistical programs. The findings of the follow-up study were reported in the individual report on the Pennsylvania study.

None of the general survey results from the follow-up questionnaire has been included in the overall MASCA regional study report, with the exception of two sets of survey questions. Of special relevance to the later MASCA regional study was the inclusion of survey items related to agents'/officers' perceptions of personal safety in the field and ratings of a series of safety-related policy initiatives for the enhancement of worker safety in probation and parole. These items were later included in the survey questionnaire used in the MASCA regional study.

### The 1989 MASCA Region Worker Safety Study

The roots of the MASCA Region Worker Safety Study date back to a work session in Washington, D.C. in February, 1989 (sponsored by NIC) involving MASCA agency representatives and one of the researchers. The discussion at this meeting revolved around the possibility of expanding the Pennsylvania study to the rest of MASCA's eight-state region. As a result of this meeting, the researchers worked with Dennis Martin, immediate past president of MASCA and coordinator of the new initiative, to formulate a proposal for a technical assistance grant to the NIC to support a region-wide study. A grant from the NIC was awarded in mid-1989, and plans got underway for the regional study.

### MASCA Advisory Committee

In August, 1989, the researchers met with a Research Advisory Committee comprised of representatives from adult and juvenile probation and parole systems in each MASCA jurisdiction. At this meeting, held in Newark, New Jersey, the objectives of the earlier study in Pennsylvania were discussed, including the 10 guiding research questions noted earlier in Section 1. It was generally agreed that these research questions would also be used in formulating the regional study design. Further, copies of the survey instrument used in the Pennsylvania study were distributed and various items discussed. One concern of several attending the meeting was the use of the term "victimization" in the questionnaire. It was felt by some that this term could be interpreted by some potential respondents as denoting weakness and thus might result in a poorer response to the survey.

After lengthy discussion of the study and its timing, the survey instrument and procedures for its use, Committee members arrived at the following guidelines for the MASCA worker safety study.

1. The study would adhere as closely as possible to content and procedures used in the Pennsylvania study, in order to facilitate comparisons of findings between Pennsylvania and other MASCA jurisdictions.

2. Dennis Martin would serve as general coordinator for the study to facilitate communication between the researchers and members of the Advisory Committee and work with both to move the research process along.

3. Each Advisory Committee member would take the copies of the Pennsylvania survey questionnaire back to her/his agency for discussion and approval. Copies of the instrument would be mailed by Dennis Martin to other Advisory Committee members unable to attend the August meeting. Members were asked to discuss the instrument with others in their agencies and forward suggestions for modification to Mr. Martin for transmittal to the researchers.

4. The researchers would modify the existing survey instrument, taking into account two types of potential revisions: (a) those adapting wording in the questionnaire to terminology relevant to a particular jurisdiction; and, (b) other suggested revisions aimed toward improved clarity in the wording of questions.

5. Copies of the final version of the questionnaire and response sheets would be distributed to workers in individual jurisdictions, using internal procedures decided upon by officials in each agency.

6. Completed response sheets would be returned to the researchers in one of two ways: (a) collected through internal procedures in each agency, packaged and sent in bulk form to Dennis Martin and then to the researchers; or, (b) sent directly to the researchers by worker respondents at their discretion.

7. The survey findings would be presented at the next annual meeting of MASCA, scheduled for May, 1990. Preliminary findings, however, would be presented to the Advisory Committee at a meeting to be held in March or April, 1990. A comprehensive final report would also be prepared and presented to MASCA.

### Instrument Development

The survey questionnaire used in the MASCA regional study was based on that used earlier in the 1988 Pennsylvania study. Copies of this were distributed and discussed with Advisory Committee members during its August, 1989, meeting.

Two matters concerning the instrument to be used were agreed to at this meeting. First, it was agreed that it would be preferable to use the term "hazardous incident" in place of "victimization" in the lead-in statement to the questionnaire. Second, it was decided that four items in the questionnaire would have to be tailored to terminology used in each jurisdiction. These included: (1) Personnel classifications used in each probation and parole system; (2) disposition status classifications of offenders used; (3) offense classifications used; and (4) lists of counties.

In the months of September and October, 1989, several mail and telephone exchanges occurred between the researchers and Advisory Committee members, and between both and Dennis Martin, regarding revisions and refinements of the survey instrument. Revised copies of each state's questionnaire were sent to Dennis Martin in October, 1989, for transmittal to each participating state system. Further suggested refinements, although few in number, were received by the researchers and final changes were made. The lead-in statement and instructions on each questionnaire promised all respondents complete confidentiality in the handling of responses.

Dennis Martin managed transmittal of the final state-specific versions of the survey instrument in November, 1989. Accompanying each state's package of questionnaires was a memorandum from Mr. Martin, explaining the survey's purpose and soliciting workers' cooperation in completing the survey form.<sup>5</sup>

### Data Collection

Survey questionnaires were distributed to probation and parole workers by using internal distribution mechanisms selected by each agency. According to documentation provided to the researchers, two methods were used to distribute the questionnaires to staff members: (1) through supervisors, with each questionnaire accompanied by a covering memorandum from state (and in some cases) local agency officials; (2) by direct transmittal to workers, accompanied by a cover memorandum from an agency official.

Completed Response Sheets were returned to the researchers in one of three ways. First, many workers mailed their returns directly to the researchers, some noting that they wished to do this in order to assure the confidentiality of their responses. Second, response sheets were also collected by agency supervisors and managers, packaged, and mailed in bulk to the researchers. Third, some packages of responses were mailed directly to Dennis Martin for transmittal to the researchers.

### Data Processing

As each mailing was received, the researchers gave the response sheets a general check for completeness and assigned each one a state identification number and a unique identification number.

Data entry was accomplished by using the following procedures. Two individuals were trained in computerized data entry techniques, using the procedural guidelines developed by the researchers. The data entry workers were instructed to use a "Problem File" for any response sheets they felt were unclear. Response sheets in the Problem File were examined by the researchers and problems were resolved in one of two ways. First, most of the questions posed by the data entry workers were easily resolved and the cleared response

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<sup>5</sup>A sample copy of this memorandum and the survey questionnaire appear in Section 4 of this report

sheets were entered into the data bank. Second, some response sheets were rejected upon inspection by the researchers, for one of three reasons: (a) substantially incomplete information; (b) noninterpretable information; and, (c) obviously bogus information intended to mislead the researchers.

### Data Analysis

The data were processed by using source programs contained in the SPSS-PC statistical computer package. Initial computer runs were frequencies on each variable included in the survey questionnaire, with the results examined for necessary corrections of "wild codes." Given the nature of the survey data collected, later runs consisted mainly of cross-tabulations of the data from each state. The 10 key research questions undergirding the study were used as primary points of reference in the analyses of data.

### Report Preparation

It was decided that survey findings would be presented in the following format. First, "stand alone" reports on each state would be prepared. Each of these sections could be incorporated into a comprehensive research report, but each could also be extracted from the larger report and be used as an individual state report. Second, one section of the report would present comparative findings across all of the participating MASCA jurisdictions, including Pennsylvania.

Preliminary survey findings were presented to MASCA Advisory Committee members at a meeting in Newark, New Jersey, in early April, 1990. Comments from Committee members at that meeting were used in refining analyses and interpretations for the final report. Further presentations of findings were made at the May, 1990, annual meeting of MASCA held at the Mt. Airy Lodge, Mt. Pocono, Pennsylvania. Reactions at those meetings, as well as comments from Advisory Committee members at the April meeting, were used in preparing the final written report.

### Response Rates

The response rates for the 1989 MASCA worker safety survey are presented below on a state-by-state basis. In all instances, there are two overriding concerns about the responses received from each MASCA jurisdiction and probation/parole system. First, how representative are the survey respondents of their parent personnel complements? Second, what limitations are advisable for any state or agency system with respect to conclusions and generalizations drawn from that system's data? Both of these are reflected in each of the subsections which follow.



### Connecticut: Distribution and Response Rates

Survey questionnaires and response sheets were distributed to probation and parole workers in Connecticut through the following procedures. In the case of juvenile probation workers, questionnaires and response sheets were sent directly to supervisors, juvenile probation officers and aides, with a cover memorandum from the Assistant to the Director, Family Division. In the case of adult parole, packets of questionnaires and response sheets, with a cover memorandum from the Chief of Parole Services, were sent to each district parole office for distribution through supervisors to all parole officers. In adult probation, supervisor-to-staff channels were used for distribution, accompanied by a memorandum from the agency head.

Census figures for categories of personnel in the Connecticut juvenile and adult probation and parole system were provided by representatives in each of these agency settings. Calculations of response rates were made by relying on the figures shown in Table 2.2.<sup>6</sup>

The overall response rate for the 1989 Connecticut worker safety survey was 55%, or 259 out of 473. When clerical workers were excluded from the calculations, the response rate for non-clerical personnel rose to 58%, or 233 out of 401.

As can be seen in Table 2.2, the distribution of respondents to the 1989 worker safety study closely parallels percentages calculated from the census figures provided for the Connecticut adult and juvenile probation/parole work force.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>The only responses from clerical workers in Connecticut were received from adult probation agencies.

<sup>7</sup>The inclusion or exclusion of clerical staff from the calculations has little effect on comparisons between census and survey distributions.

Table 2.2

## RESPONSE RATES: CONNECTICUT

Job Category	Census			Survey		
	No.	% of Total	% Less Clerical	No.	% of Total	% Less Clerical
Clerical*	72	15	NA	26	10	NA
State Juvenile Probation/ Court Officer/Aide	63	13	16	39	15	17
State Probation - Adult	220	46	55	122	47	52
State Parole - Adult	60	13	15	30	12	13
Supervisor - Juvenile	20	4	5	15	6	6
Chief P.O. - Adult	38	8	9	27	10	12
<u>Totals</u>	<u>473</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>259</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>

\*Note: Only clerical workers in State Adult Probation were included in the worker safety study.

Delaware: Distribution and Response Rates

Survey questionnaires and response sheets were distributed to probation and parole workers in Delaware through the following procedures. In the case of adult probation and parole workers, these were given directly to individual staff members or mailed to supervisors for distribution to staff. A cover memorandum from top management explaining the survey and encouraging workers' cooperation accompanied each questionnaire. In the case of juvenile probation workers, survey questionnaires and response sheets, accompanied by a cover letter from the Chief of Community Based Services, were sent to individual workers.

Census figures for categories of personnel in the Delaware adult probation/parole and juvenile probation/aftercare agencies were provided by Advisory Committee members from each of these settings. Response rates were calculated by relying on these census figures, as shown in Table 2.3.

The overall response rate for the 1989 Delaware worker safety survey was 43%, or 81 out of 189. When clerical workers were excluded from the calculations, the response rate for non-clerical personnel rose to 51%, or 74 out of 145.

As can be seen in Table 2.3, the distribution of respondents to the 1989 worker safety study generally parallel percentages calculated from the census figures provided for the Delaware adult and juvenile probation/parole work force. This is even more so when clerical workers in adult probation/parole, who are sharply underrepresented in the survey respondent group, are excluded

from the calculations. Among adult probation/parole workers, officers in Job Category 1 are slightly overrepresented, as are probation officers among the juvenile probation/aftercare respondents. In neither case, though, are the percentages differences sufficient to preclude a general conclusion that respondents to the 1989 worker safety study are reasonably representative of the adult and juvenile probation/parole work force in Delaware.

Table 2.3  
RESPONSE RATES: DELAWARE

Job Category	Census			Survey		
	No.	% of Total	% Less Clerical	No.	% of Total	% Less Clerical
<u>Adult Probation/Parole:</u>						
Clerical	41	26	NA	4	7	NA
Probation/Parole Officer I	10	6	8	9	15	16
Probation/Parole Officer II	60	38	51	26	44	47
Sr. Probation/Parole Officer	24	15	20	12	20	22
Prob./Parole Supervisor	13	8	11	4	7	7
Social Services Specialist	9	6	8	3	5	5
Director/Administrator	1	1	1	1	2	2
<u>Totals</u>	<u>31</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>
<u>Juvenile Prob./Aftercare:</u>						
Clerical	3	10	NA	3	14	NA
Juvenile Probation Officer	22	71	78	16	73	84
Juvenile Prob. Supervisor	5	16	18	2	9	11
Director/Administrator	1	3	4	1	4	5
<u>Totals</u>	<u>158</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>59</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>

## Maryland: Distribution and Response Rates

In the Maryland Division of Adult Probation and Parole, questionnaires and response sheets, accompanied by a cover memorandum from the Director of the Division encouraging participation, were sent directly to all employees through an internal distribution system. With respect to the Department of Juvenile Services, internal delivery services were used to distribute copies of the questionnaires, accompanied by a memorandum from the Department's Director.

Census figures for categories of personnel in the Maryland Departments of Juvenile Services and Adult Probation and Parole were provided by Advisory Committee members from each of these agency settings. Response rates were calculated by relying on the figures shown in Table 2.4.

The overall response rate for the 1989 Maryland worker safety survey was 45%, or 777 out of 1,737. When clerical and administrative staff workers were excluded from the calculations, the response rate for non-clerical personnel rose to 51%, or 618 out of 1,218.

As can be seen in Table 2.4, the distribution of adult probation and parole workers who responded to the 1989 worker safety study closely parallel percentages calculated from the census figures. Thus, the conclusion can be stated that the survey distribution is reasonably representative of the adult probation and parole work force in Maryland.

With respect to respondents working in the Maryland juvenile services system, juvenile counselors, who are direct case contact workers, are somewhat overrepresented in the survey group, and all of the other personnel categories underrepresented. This, however, does not present a great problem, in that the study focuses principally on case bearing personnel in probation and parole work.

Table 2.4  
RESPONSE RATES: MARYLAND

Job Category	Census			Survey		
	No.	% of Total	% Less Cl./Staff	No.	% of Total	% Less Cl./Staff
<u>Division of Probation and Parole:</u>						
Clerical/Admin. Staff	271	26	NA	137	22	NA
Probation/Parole Agent	582	56	75	370	59	76
Line Supervisor	76	7	10	71	11	15
Monitor	92	9	12	33	5	7
Monitor Supervisor	12	1	2	4	1	1
Administrator	11	1	1	8	1	2
<u>Totals</u>	<u>1044</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>623</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>
<u>Division of Juvenile Services:</u>						
Clerical/Admin. Staff	248	36	NA	22	14	NA
Juvenile Counselor	332	48	75	117	76	89
Juvenile Counselor Supvr.	82	12	18	11	7	8
Director/Administrator	31	4	7	4	2	3
<u>Totals</u>	<u>693</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>154</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>

New Jersey: Distribution and Response Rates

In the New Jersey probation system, questionnaires and response sheets were distributed to workers by Chief and Assistant Chief Probation Officers in each of the counties. Each was accompanied by a cover memorandum explaining the study and encouraging participation. Internal delivery services were used in the New Jersey parole system to send packets of questionnaires and response sheets to District Officers, where they were then distributed to individual employees. Institutional Parole Office personnel were requested to pick up copies personally. In both cases, the questionnaires and response sheets were accompanied by a cover memorandum from the Chief, Bureau of Parole.

Census figures for categories of personnel in the New Jersey probation and parole systems were provided by officials in each agency setting. The response rates for each agency system were calculated by relying on these census figures, as shown in Table 2.5.

The overall response rate for the 1989 New Jersey worker safety survey was 59%, or 1,285 out of 3,725. The response rates were different, however, for each of the major systems. The rate for probation workers was 61%, or 1,991 out of 3,279. The corresponding rate for parole workers was 43%, or 194 out of 446. Excluding clerical workers from these calculations had little effect on either response rate.

As can be seen in Table 2.5, the distributions of probation and parole workers who responded to the 1989 New Jersey study closely parallel figures calculated from the census information. The conclusion can be drawn that the survey distribution is reasonably representative of the probation and parole work force in New Jersey. Parole officers are slightly underrepresented in the survey group, but not to a degree that would compromise conclusions drawn from the data.

Table 2.5  
RESPONSE RATES: NEW JERSEY

Job Category	Census			Survey		
	No.	% of Total	% Less Clerical	No.	% of Total	% Less Clerical
<u>Probation:</u>						
Secretarial/Clerical	885	27	NA	506	25	NA
Technical/Support Staff	107	3	4	21	1	1
Investigator	431	13	18	214	11	14
Senior Investigator	95	3	3	62	3	4
Probation Officer	796	24	33	505	25	34
ISP Officer--Probation	7	<1	<1	34	2	2
Sr. Probation Officer	552	17	23	356	18	24
Supervising Prob. Officer	62	2	3	33	2	2
Principal Probation Officer	261	8	11	185	9	12
Asst. Chief Prob. Officer	18	<1	1	16	1	1
Chief Probation Officer	4	<1	<1	5	<1	<1
Vicinage Asst. Chief. P.O.	7	<1	<1	4	<1	<1
Vicinage Chief Prob. Officer	13	<1	1	8	<1	1
Other Administrative Title	41	1	2	36	2	2
Other, unspecified	NA	--	--	6	<1	<1
<u>Totals</u>	<u>3279</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>1991</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>

Table 2.5 (Cont'd.)  
RESPONSE RATES: NEW JERSEY

Job Category	Census			Survey		
	No.	% of Total	% Less Clerical	No.	% of Total	% Less Clerical
<u>Parole:</u>						
Secretarial/Clerical/Staff	122	27	NA	48	25	NA
Parole Officer	190	43	59	73	38	50
Senior Parole Officer	76	17	23	36	19	25
ISSP Officer-Parole	13	3	4	8	4	5
Asst. Dist. Parole Supvr.	16	4	5	5	3	3
District Parole Supervisor	14	3	4	6	3	4
Supervising Parole Officer	5	1	2	2	1	1
Assistant Chief	2	<1	1	1	<1	1
Chief	1	<1	<1	1	<1	1
Other Administrative Title	6	1	2	4	2	3
Other, unspecified	NA	--	--	10	5	7
<b>Totals</b>	<b>446</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

#### New York: Distribution and Response Rates

In the New York probation system, copies of questionnaires and response sheets were sent from the State Director's office to County Directors of Probation for distribution to individual staff members. Cover memorandums from the State Director, Division of Probation and Correctional Alternatives, and County Directors of Probation also accompanied each questionnaire and response sheet.

Questionnaires and response sheets were distributed with payroll checks to employees in the state parole system in early December, 1989. They were accompanied by a cover memorandum from the Chairman, New York Division of Parole.

Two problems arose in the interpretation of response rates for probation and parole workers in New York. The first concerned the distributions of probation workers by job title, as discussed immediately below. The second pertained to the obvious underrepresentation of workers from the New York City area in both the probation and the parole respondent groups. This is also discussed below.

The overall response rate for personnel in New York probation agencies was 43%, or 1,853 out of 4,275. However, a detailed breakdown of probation

staff members by job titles precisely matching those used in the questionnaire was not available. Information provided by the New York Division of Probation and Correctional Alternatives was grouped into four broad categories: Administration, Probation Supervisor, Casebearing Probation Officer, and Clerical. The job titles of respondents to the survey were recoded to match as closely as possible, resulting in the census and survey distributions shown in Table 2.6.

As can be seen in Table 2.6, staff members in the Administration and Probation Supervisor groups are clearly underrepresented in the survey. It is likely that this resulted from some confusion in certain respondents' interpretation of the meaning of two job titles appearing in the survey instrument. One title was "Probation Adult Supervisor" and the other "Probation Juvenile Supervisor." The issue of concern was how respondents might have interpreted the term "supervisor." On the one hand, supervisor can refer to case supervision, meaning that the worker is in direct case contact with probationers. However, supervisor can also refer to supervision of personnel, perhaps with no direct case contact responsibilities. Comparisons of various responses throughout the questionnaire given by individuals identifying with one or the other of these job titles led to a conclusion that it is probable that some adult and juvenile supervisory personnel became mixed in with case-bearing officers. How frequently this might have occurred cannot be precisely determined, but the internal evidence suggests that upwards of 40 individuals may have been misclassified. However, with the comparatively large number of respondents in the probation officer category (N=1,423), a mixup of just 40 individuals should not have a seriously distorting effect on the findings.

A more serious concern was the underrepresentation of both probation and parole workers from the New York City area. Overall, 17% of all responding probation workers and 24% of those in state parole identified themselves as working in an agency located in the five-county New York metropolitan area. This imposes serious limitations on conclusions that can be drawn from the survey findings. In both cases, interpretations of data and conclusions drawn must be bounded by a clear recognition that New York City workers are severely underrepresented in the survey groups.

Table 2.6  
RESPONSE RATES: NEW YORK PROBATION

Job Category	Census			Survey		
	No.	% of Total	% Less Cl./Staff	No.	% of Total	% Less Cl./Staff
Clerical	1088	25	NA	362	20	NA
Administration	341	8	11	38	2	3
Probation Supervisor	380	9	12	30	2	2
Probation Officer	2466	58	77	1423	77	95
<u>Totals</u>	<u>4275</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>1853</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>



The overall response rate for state parole workers in New York was 15%, or 300 out of 1,973. The lack of respondents from the New York City area (only 24% of the total) has already been mentioned. There is also evidence, albeit anecdotal in character, that many state parole staff members did not receive the questionnaire or response sheet. The percentage distributions in Table 2.7 indicate some distortions between census and survey figures, though not as extreme as might have been expected, given apparent problems associated with the distribution of the survey instrument and response sheet. However this may be, though, extreme caution has been exercised in interpreting and drawing conclusions from the survey of state parole workers in New York.

Table 2.7  
RESPONSE RATES: NEW YORK PAROLE

Job Category	Census			Survey		
	No.	% of Total	% Less Clerical	No.	% of Total	% Less Clerical
<u>Parole:</u>						
Clerical/Admin. Staff	718	36	NA	83	28	NA
Parole Officer	985	50	78	137	46	63
Senior Parole Officer	189	10	15	49	16	22
Client Services Position	9	<1	1	7	2	3
Area Supervisor	32	2	2	12	4	6
Administrator/Executive						
Management/Parole Board	40	2	3	9	3	4
Other, n.e.c.	NA	--		3	1	1
<u>Totals</u>	<u>1973</u>	<u>100</u>		<u>300</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>

#### Vermont: Distribution and Response Rates

In Vermont, survey questionnaires and response sheets were distributed to individual staff members through Area Managers and the associated chain of command.

Census figures for categories of personnel in the Vermont probation and parole system were provided by Advisory Committee members from each of these settings. Response rates were calculated by relying on these census figures, as shown in Table 2.8.

The overall response rate for the 1989 Vermont worker safety survey was 62%, or 86 out of 139. When clerical workers were excluded from the calculations, the response rate for non-clerical personnel rose modestly to 64%, or 67 out of 104.

As can be seen in Table 2.8, the distribution of respondents to the 1989 worker safety study generally parallels percentages calculated from the census figures provided for the Vermont probation and parole work force. Probation and parole officers are somewhat underrepresented, but the discrepancy is a moderate one. Thus, the conclusion can be drawn that respondents to the 1989 worker safety study are reasonably representative of probation and parole workers in Vermont.

Table 2.8  
RESPONSE RATES: VERMONT

Job Category	Census			Survey		
	No.	% of Total	% Less Cl./Staff	No.	% of Total	% Less Cl./Staff
Clerical/Staff	35	25	NA	19	22	NA
Probation/Parole Officer	58	42	56	32	37	48
Intensive Probation Parole Officer	7	5	7	7	8	10
Casework Supervisor	9	6	9	8	9	12
Correctional Officer-CFSU	9	6	9	2	2	3
Case Aide	3	2	3	2	2	3
District Manager	14	10	13	13	15	19
Area Manager	4	3	4	3	4	4
<u>Totals</u>	<u>139</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>86</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>

### Summary

With the exception of New York, where problems limiting interpretations of findings have been noted, the results of the worker safety surveys across the MASCA region are very gratifying from the standpoint of accepted standards in survey research. Overall and individually the study offers a revealing and useful information base about victimization experiences of probation and parole workers. Used within the boundaries of some limitations noted above and in the next section of the report, they offer a valuable source of information to be used in pondering policies and programs to maintain and enhance the job-related safety of probation and parole staff members.

### Section 3

#### MASCA REGION

##### Regional Characteristics and Highlights

Detailed analyses of the survey results for each of the MASCA member jurisdictions can be found in the seven sections that constitute Part II of the report. The purpose here is to take a broad look at some of the survey findings from the standpoint of comparisons and contrasts across the MASCA region. The following are some observations flowing from the study that may be of consequence when probation and parole workers, their supervisors, and agency executives consider how the study's results might be put to practical use. In the next part of this section, more detailed comparisons and data will be presented.

1. There are enormous differences among the state and county agencies in size of work force and of local office settings.<sup>1</sup> These are frequently aligned, also, with variations in how the probation and parole systems are organized within a particular state. This implies that any new policies developed or specific measures taken to enhance probation and parole workers' safety must relate to particular state and local circumstances. What might be cost-effective in one setting might not in another. For example, smaller local agencies typically could not mount training programs on their own, and in some instances regional training and educational programs would be a cost-effective response.

2. As alluded to above, there are differences in the ways in which the various probation and parole systems are organized and managed. In some instances, adult probation and parole services are housed in a single agency, with juvenile services operated as a separate agency. In others, adult parole services are state-provided services, with adult and juvenile probation being a county responsibility. Each of the three basic services--adult parole, adult probation, and juvenile probation/aftercare--may also be separately budgeted and managed. Whatever the variations are, they are differences that must be taken into account when contemplating policy development and actions for the enhancement of worker safety.

3. This study used a questionnaire survey approach to obtain data about (a) the behavior of individuals (offenders) perpetrating assaultive or intimidating actions against probation and parole workers, and (b) the behavior of probation or parole workers in response to offenders' actions. The survey approach, however, enables the researcher only to obtain a report about a behavioral event from a respondent. Such information is, therefore, always vulnerable to such things as (1) poor memory recall about a past event, the fact that a respondent is reporting after-the-fact and subsequent experiences may influence how the event is reported in the present, and (3)

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<sup>1</sup>Differences in urban metropolitan and rural settings also constitute another important difference to be taken into account.

deliberate attempts to mislead the survey researcher because of feelings that surveys are distasteful and unnecessary, or that "nothing will happen, anyway," so why be concerned about the accuracy of responses.<sup>2</sup> This is not suggesting that the current survey data are inaccurate. Rather, it is just advocating caution about interpreting findings based on reported, rather than on directly observed, behavior.

4. Attention must also be paid to possible variations in the meaning each probation or parole worker gives to the terms hazardous event or victimization. The lead-in to the survey questionnaire presented each respondent with a working description of the events of interest to the study. It is likely, though, that there are some differences in how these events are perceived and interpreted by probation and parole workers. Personal meanings of behavioral events are shaped by many things; for example, cultural and normative influences, cumulative personal experiences, and agency policies toward hazardous and threatening events. Thus, for some, intimidation events may be regarded as being of little consequence--"no big deal," "it comes with the territory"--while other workers may regard similar incidents as quite serious.

5. The results of the worker safety study clearly indicate that occupational risk attaches to those working in the field of probation and parole, ranging from serious physical assault to less threatening, but still important, episodes of intimidation, harassment and emotional shakeup. This necessitates, though, a solid understanding of what it means to be "at risk" for possible physical assault, intimidation, or other threatening behavior from clients and often, family members of clients. When applied to probation and parole workers, occupational risk means that there is some level of probability that an individual working in that occupation will be exposed to assault or intimidation events in the line of duty. It does not mean that an incident will happen to a particular individual, only that a certain proportion within a work population will likely encounter an incident within a given time span.

6. There were some notable differences as well as similarities across the MASCA jurisdictions in reported career and past-year victimization rates. For example, the past-year rates were higher in Vermont and Connecticut than in the other states. However, past-year rates in the major industrial states of Maryland, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania were very similar.

7. Victimization rates tended to be higher--and, in some cases much higher--for parole officers/agents than for probation officers. This is not meant to minimize the victimization experiences of probation workers, for the comparable rates for them were not insignificant in themselves, only lower in comparison to parole workers. It is simply likely that the character of parole work places them in contact with clients who have "heavier" criminal histories and thus are more likely to attempt assaultive or intimidating behavior.

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<sup>2</sup>Several of the response sheets returned in the current survey were discarded because they were obviously bogus and designed to mislead.

8. Analyses of the data from all the MASCA member jurisdictions revealed few personal or job-related characteristics of probation and parole workers that correlated strongly with victimization rates. One of these, tenure in the field, would be expected, given the fact that both probation and parole are fields to which obvious risks for victimization exist. Therefore, the longer one is in the field, the more that individual is exposed to such risk and has opportunities for some such victimization event to occur.

9. Another correlate of victimization, though of modest strength, is gender. With the single exception of Maryland probation workers, males tend to be victimized more frequently than their female colleagues. Further, there is some evidence in the study suggesting that officers/agents carrying firearms are more likely to be victimized, even when type of agency--adult parole, adult probation, and juvenile probation--is taken into account. However, with the exception of parole agents in New York and Connecticut, the frequency of reported firearm carrying is very low in other states, thus complicating any in-depth analyses of the firearm-victimization rate relationship.<sup>3</sup>

10. The data on officers'/agents' perceptions of safety concerns and safety-related policies showed that large majorities in each state rate the field as having become much more dangerous over the past five years. Moreover, while most reported that they felt very safe or safe while working in their offices, similar majorities noted that they were very concerned when making contacts in the field. It is notable that the safety-related policy initiatives that received high ratings as "definitely useful" or "useful" were ones relating to two concerns: (a) policies that would enhance the worker's self-protection when in the field; and, (b) initiatives, such as self-defense training and verbal judo, which would improve the worker's self-protection potential and ability to deal constructively with hazardous incidents, should they arise.

11. Another important matter in understanding the character and dynamics of hazardous incidents affecting probation and parole workers is the location where or medium through which an event occurs. An examination of the data in the current study relating to this issue suggests that many of the incidents are, in reality, episodic. Often, more than one location and/or medium is involved before the victimization event is regarded as concluded, regardless of the outcome. For example, an incident that commences with an officer's or agent's visit to a client's home might be culminated in an on-the-street confrontation or a clash during a subsequent session between the officer/agent and client at the agency office. Data throughout the various state studies demonstrate that such action sequences are not uncommon.

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<sup>3</sup>In Maryland's State Probation and Parole system, for example, the carrying of a handgun is authorized only for warrant officers and for agents/officers who have reported a death threat, whereas in New York, parole officers have been carrying guns since the 1930s.

Moreover, the various incidents experienced by probation and parole workers very rarely occur outside the context of normal, day-to-day job performance.<sup>4</sup>

12. As will be seen later in this section, and can be seen in the individual state reports, the perpetrator of victimization incidents against probation and parole workers is most often a client under the supervision of the victim-officer/agent or the victim's agency. Exceptions to this usually involve juvenile probation officers, who are sometimes accosted by a family member of the juvenile under supervision.

13. The data in this study, regardless of the state of origin, are very clear in indicating that few probation and parole workers feel that the most serious past-year incident reported could have been prevented by them or by their agencies. However, considerably higher percentages feel that their agency could have better prepared them to deal with such incidents, perhaps through better and more self-defense training and other physical and verbal techniques for handling and defusing a situation.

14. Although officers/agents were the principal concern of the study, it also encompassed supervisors/managers, and clerical/staff workers. On the whole, the past-year victimization rates for the supervisors/managers were lower than those for the officers/agents. However, when career rates are taken into consideration, the rates for supervisors/managers, nearly all of whom worked previously as line officers, often surpassed those of current probation and parole officers/agents. Not surprisingly, the career and past-year rates for clerical and staff employees was much below those of the other two groups. However, victimization incidents involving these workers did occur, in some instances involving physical assault.

#### Summary Data: Officers/Agents Only

Of the 6,891 respondents to the MASCA Probation and Parole Worker Victimization Survey, 4,497 were probation and parole officers and agents with direct casework responsibilities.

As shown in Table 3.1, the reported career victimization rates of responding officers/agents varies from 56% (New Jersey) to 84% in Vermont. From 12% (New Jersey) to 33% (Vermont) report at least one assault during their careers, and rates of intimidation range from 55% in New Jersey to 84% in Vermont. The career victimization rate for all responding officers/agents in the MASCA region is 62% with 16% experiencing assault and 61% reporting intimidation events (see Table 3.20).

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<sup>4</sup>Some officers/agents have reported the onset of an event to be the result of a chance meeting with a client on the street or another public place, but these are very rare occurrences.

Table 3.1

## OFFICER/AGENT VICTIMIZATION RATES BY MASCA JURISDICTIONS (Percentages)

	CT	DE	MD	NJ	NY	PA	VT	MASCA
Career Victim Rates	71	59	65	56	65	62	84	62
Victim of Assault	30	15	15	12	14	26	33	16
Victim of Intimidation	70	57	64	55	64	61	84	61
Past-Year Victim Rates	56	43	37	34	33	29	65	35
Victim of Assault	16	12	5	5	4	7	12	6
Victim of Intimidation	55	43	37	33	33	28	65	34
Base N*	191	68	520	1288	1599	723	51	4390

\* Note: Here and elsewhere in this report, Base N indicates the total number of respondents on which the column percentages are based.

The "past-year" rates for officer/agent victimization in the MASCA region is 35%. As can be seen in Table 3.1, rates by jurisdiction vary from 29% in Pennsylvania to 65% in Vermont. Past-year rates for physical assault range from 4% (New York) to 15% (Connecticut) with a regional rate of 6%. With regard to past-year intimidation experience, the rate for the Region is 34%, with a range of 28% in Pennsylvania to 65% in Connecticut.

As mentioned earlier in this section, five "correlates of victimization" show up in the analysis of data: 1) officer gender, 2) holding second jobs, 3) the carrying of weapons, 4) unarmed self-defense training, and 5) type of agency.

Table 3.2 provides information concerning respondent gender by jurisdiction and past-year victimization rates by gender of respondent.

Table 3.2

## OFFICERS/AGENTS GENDER BY MASCA JURISDICTION (Percentages)

	CT	DE	MD	NJ	NY	PA	VT	MASCA
All Respondents:								
Male	64	68	49	47	50	66	67	53
Female	36	32	51	53	50	34	33	47
Past-Year Victims:								
Male	73	72	45	52	55	73	76	57
Female	27	28	55	48	45	27	24	43
Past-Year Non-Victims								
Male	52	64	51	44	48	64	50	50
Female	48	36	49	56	52	36	50	50
Base N	188	68	517	1274	1581	723	51	4424

As shown in Table 3.2, males are over-represented in terms of past-year victimization rates in all jurisdictions except Maryland, where the reverse is true.

Table 3.3 provides information concerning the extent to which officers/agents hold second jobs and the past-year victimization rates of respondents holding and not holding second jobs. Note that, while there is a positive correlation between holding second jobs and past-year victimization, it is slight.

Table 3.3

## OFFICERS/AGENTS HOLDING/NOT HOLDING SECOND JOBS BY MASCA JURISDICTIONS (Percentages)

	CT	DE	MD	NJ	NY	PA	VT	MASCA
All Respondents:								
Hold second job	27	37	23	21	18	28	20	21
Don't hold second job	73	63	77	79	82	72	80	78
Past-Year Victims:								
Hold second job	28	45	27	26	25	28	24	27
Don't hold second job	72	55	73	74	75	72	76	73
Past-Year Non-Victims								
Hold second job	26	31	20	18	14	27	11	19
Don't hold second job	74	69	80	82	86	73	89	81
Base N	188	68	517	1274	1578	723	51	4419

As shown in Table 3.4, a majority of officers/agents, overall, do not carry weapons. There is, however, a positive correlation between past-year victimization rates and the carrying of weapons. That is, in every jurisdiction except Delaware, a higher percentage of past-year victims carry weapons than is the case with non-victims. Note however, that while there is a positive correlation, we are not currently able to explain the reasons for the relationship with the data at hand.



Table 3.4

## WEAPONS (ANY TYPE) USUALLY CARRIED BY OFFICER/AGENTS (Percentages)

	CT	DE	MD	NJ	NY	PA	VT	MASCA
All Respondents								
Carry Weapon	38	23	10	11	33	20	16	33
Don't Carry Weapon	62	77	90	89	67	80	84	67
Past-Year Victims								
Carry Weapon	46	22	14	18	47	29	24	38
Don't Carry Weapon	54	78	86	82	53	71	76	62
Past-Year Non-Victims								
Carry Weapon	28	23	8	8	25	15	--	30
Don't Carry Weapon	72	74	92	92	75	85	100	69
Base N	184	61	446	1274	1406	723	44	3941

Table 3.5 presents comparative data concerning the relationship between unarmed self-defense training and past-year victimization. As the data reveals, there is a positive relationship between having training and increased victimization. This relationship holds up in all MASCA jurisdictions save Maryland. Again, while a correlation exists, the causality cannot be attributed using the data at hand.

Table 3.5

## PAST-YEAR VICTIMIZATION AND UNARMED SELF-DEFENSE TRAINING (Percentages)

	CT	DE	MD	NJ	NY	PA	VT	MASCA
All Respondents								
Have had training	94	71	56	26	50	60	71	48
Have not had training	6	29	44	74	50	40	29	52
Past-Year Victims								
Have had training	95	83	56	29	57	65	79	54
Have not had training	5	17	44	71	43	35	21	46
Past-Year Non-Victims								
Have had training	93	61	56	24	46	52	56	44
Have not had training	7	39	44	76	54	48	44	56
Base N	188	68	517	1275	1577	723	51	4420

Table 3.6 presents, by agency categories, past-year victimization rates as reported by officer/agent respondents in each of the MASCA jurisdictions. While these data should be interpreted with caution, they support the hypothesis that, in general, officers/agents employed by State Parole Agencies are at higher risk of victimization than their colleagues employed by other agency types in the same state jurisdiction. For example, New York State Parole officers have a higher reported past-year victimization rate (44%) than New York County Probation officers (27%). This correlation holds up when one examines the MASCA region by agency types (see Table 3.20).

Table 3.6

## PAST-YEAR VICTIMIZATION RATE (ANY TYPE) BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)

	CT	DE	MD	NJ	NY	PA	VT
<b>Past Year Rate:</b>	53	43	37	34	34	29	65
<b>Adult Services:</b>							
Child Support Enforcement	--	--	--	30	--	--	--
Pre-Trial Case Management	--	--	--	26	--	--	--
County Probation	--	--	--	39	--	28	--
State Probation	52	--	--	--	--	--	--
State Probation/Parole	--	46	39	--	--	--	--
State Parole	60	--	--	44	44	42	--
<b>Juvenile Services:</b>							
County Probation/Aftercare	--	--	--	32	--	25	--
State Probation/Aftercare	64	33	30	--	--	--	--
<b>Combined Adult/Juvenile Services:</b>							
County Probation	--	--	--	30	32	27	--
State Probation/Parole	--	--	--	--	--	--	65
Base N	188	68	520	1288	1599	723	51

The following tables and discussion will focus on the circumstances surrounding the most serious past-year victimization events reported by officers/agents. Table 3.7 provides information about the "nature of perpetrator actions" (often multiple) associated with these events.

As can be seen by an inspection of the data, the "threat of physical assault" and "intimidation" are the most common offender actions reported (Table 3.7).

Table 3.7

## NATURE OF PERPETRATOR ACTION IN MOST SERIOUS PAST-YEAR VICTIMIZATIONS (Percentages)

	CT	DE	MD	NJ	NY	PA	VT
Physical assault	34	27	8	18	12	29	14
Threat of physical assault	84	59	63	69	67	73	71
Damage to officer's property	13	9	8	5	5	10	4
Threat to officer's property	33	23	23	25	16	20	32
Intimidation	70	59	71	69	71	59	79
Attempted extortion	13	--	11	11	11	8	11
Threat to officer's reputation	20	18	29	24	31	28	50
Threat physical harm to PO's family	10	9	12	9	7	15	29
Intimidation of officer's family	4	4	4	4	5	6	25
Base N	81	22	131	258	361	122	28

Most commonly, the perpetrators in these events were reported to be probationers and parolees (Table 3.8).

Table 3.8

## PERPETRATORS IN MOST SERIOUS PAST-YEAR INCIDENTS AGAINST OFFICERS/AGENTS (Percentages)

	CT	DE	MD	NJ	NY	PA	VT
Client (Probationer or Parolee)	79	73	74	67	69	69	89
Client's family member	6	14	15	9	12	12	11
Client's friend	4	--	2	5	2	4	--
Court personnel	--	--	--	1	1	--	--
Bystander	--	--	1	5	2	--	--
Animal	1	--	--	1	3	4	--
Other	2	4	--	7	9	4	--
Unknown	7	9	--	4	3	5	--
Base N	82	22	130	258	361	122	27

Interestingly, in about half of the reported events, the perpetrator was not under the officer-victim's direct supervision. Indeed, in about one in five of the cases, overall, the offender was under the supervision of someone else in the officer-victim's agency (Table 3.9).

Table 3.9

## PERPETRATOR'S SUPERVISORY STATUS MOST SERIOUS PAST-YEAR VICTIMIZATION (Percentages)

	CT	DE	MD	NJ	NY	PA	VT
Under Officer's direct supervision	50	41	62	43	45	49	68
Under Officer's agency supervision	24	41	8	16	15	19	14
Under another agency's supervision	4	4	5	5	4	6	--
Not under supervision	12	4	9	15	23	16	18
Unknown	10	9	15	19	13	10	--
Base N	81	22	130	258	361	122	28

A question of interest has been the extent to which perpetrators against officers/agents have demonstrated assaultive behavior against others in the past. While it cannot be determined as to which offenders have and have not assaulted others in the past, the information elicited suggests that at least 21% of the perpetrators in the most serious reported past-year events have been known to assault someone else (Table 3.10).

Table 3.10

## ASSAULTIVE HISTORY OF PERPETRATOR IN PAST-YEAR VICTIMIZATION EVENTS (Percentages)

Prior Assaults Against Others	CT	DE	MD	NJ	NY	PA	VT
Probation/parole officers	6	9	4	10	7	2	7
Other probation/parole personnel	6	68	--	5	3	2	4
Police officers	32	32	28	26	23	8	54
Treatment agency personnel	10	14	14	8	8	7	21
Perpetrator's spouse	19	19	21	19	28	13	57
Other perpetrator family member	25	27	30	24	30	21	50
Other citizen	38	33	40	30	39	2	57
Base N	81	22	131	258	361	122	28

There is considerable concern about the involvement of probationers and parolees with drugs and alcohol. An objective in this study was to learn about the extent to which those who victimized officers/agents were "under the influence" at the time of the most serious past-year events. As shown in Table 3.11, about one in three of all the perpetrators, overall, were reported to be "under the influence," one in five were known "not to be under the influence," and in about 45% of the cases, whether or not the perpetrator was under the influence was "not known."

Table 3.11

WHETHER PERPETRATOR "UNDER INFLUENCE" AT MOST SERIOUS PAST-YEAR EVENT (Percentages)							
	CT	DE	MD	NJ	NY	PA	VT
Under Influence of Alcohol, or Drugs, or Both	31	19	24	27	21	22	47
Drugs	9	4	10	11	6	12	14
Alcohol	16	4	10	8	11	10	18
Both drugs and alcohol	6	9	4	8	4	--	14
Not under influence	20	27	25	22	26	37	21
Unknown	49	54	51	51	52	42	32
Base N	81	22	131	258	361	122	28

Table 3.12 shows data describing the "mode of force or actions" employed by perpetrators in the most serious past-year events. It should be noted that in many cases the perpetrator employed multiple actions in individual events.

Table 3.12

MODE OF FORCE USED BY PERPETRATOR IN MOST SERIOUS PAST-YEAR VICTIMIZATION (Percentages)							
	CT	DE	MD	NJ	NY	PA	VT
<u>Physical Force:</u>							
Shot	1	4	1	1	1	--	--
Hit with impact instrument	1	4	3	3	1	--	4
Cut with sharp edged inst.	1	4	2	2	2	--	--
Hit with fist or hand	23	23	8	11	6	9	7
Kicked	22	18	4	9	6	7	7
Pushed	39	45	12	22	19	16	18
Other weapon used	24	36	22	21	27	--	11
<u>Allegations about Officer's:</u>							
Professional conduct	42	27	48	43	46	21	50
Personal conduct	32	36	34	36	33	5	39
Lawsuits vs. officer/agency	27	14	20	28	31	7	61
Allegations re: co-workers	19	27	12	29	25	1	26
Allegations re: superiors	10	14	--	19	18	--	18
Allegations re: family/ friends	8	9	--	6	5	--	26
Base N	81	22	131	258	361	122	28

Table 3.13 shows the "Contexts" in which the most serious past-year victimizations of probation/parole officers/agents took place. As can be seen, announced/expected visits and surprise visits figured prominently as contexts in which incidents occurred.

Table 3.13

## CONTEXT FOR MOST SERIOUS PAST-YEAR VICTIMIZATION (Percentages)

	CT	DE	MD	NJ	NY	PA	VT
Announced or expected visit	32	32	50	35	41	20	33
Surprise visit	37	45	25	37	30	15	30
During arrest of the offender	24	41	4	11	14	18	22
During arrest of someone else	--	9	4	3	2	7	4
In response to offender's call	9	4	13	11	11	6	11
Response to offender's family call	12	9	10	8	9	2	18
Context of domestic dispute	16	4	3	8	10	2	7
During transport of offender	14	9	6	7	5	9	7
Other context	30	24	32	37	38	22	50
Base N	81	22	131	258	361	122	28

Additional information concerning the "Location" of events is presented in Table 3.14. Note that the most frequently reported location in all jurisdictions, except in Delaware and Pennsylvania, is the agency office.

Table 3.14

## WHERE MOST SERIOUS PAST-YEAR VICTIMIZATION OCCURRED (Percentages)

	CT	DE	MD	NJ	NY	PA	VT
Over the phone	16	9	24	20	17	8	15
By letter or mail	1	--	3	6	3	1	7
Message or report of others	14	9	9	9	11	3	18
Agency office	53	27	55	43	50	19	41
Client's home	24	32	14	15	21	26	18
Someone else's home	4	9	2	6	4	4	15
Prison or jail	10	4	7	12	11	10	22
Police station	4	4	--	4	2	--	30
Human service agency	6	--	7	3	6	2	7
Courtroom	12	4	17	8	6	9	11
In vehicle	12	--	4	9	5	2	7
Offender's employment site	4	9	1	3	2	1	--
Public facility	8	9	4	2	4	3	4
On the street	8	14	11	20	13	8	18
Apartment hall or elevator	12	--	2	10	--	1	7
Other location	8	4	8	9	--	2	11
Base N	80	22	130	258	361	122	28

The "principal immediate response" (action) by officer/agent-victims was, as shown in Table 3.15, to attempt to talk to the offender.

Table 3.15

## PRINCIPAL IMMEDIATE RESPONSE OF OFFICER TO MOST SERIOUS PAST-YEAR VICTIMIZATION (Percentages)

	CT	DE	MD	NJ	NY	PA	VT
Stuck back physically	21	27	2	11	8	11	15
Threatened to strike back physically	15	4	9	11	8	4	4
Used gun or other weapon	5	--	1	<1	1	--	--
Threatened to use gun	1	--	--		2	1	--
Displayed a badge or I.D.	16	23	6	1	12	1	--
Used verbal threat	41	23	20	2	25	9	7
Said nothing	12	23	31	1	19	5	11
Retreated	17	14	23	1	19	7	11
Called out for help	21	23	9	1	11	2	7
Attempted to talk to offender	78	73	63	6	69	43	85
Took no action	5	9	21	1	13	7	18
Other response	--	--	--	-	--	10	--
Base N	81	22	130	258	361	122	28

It is interesting to note that in a significant percentage of the reported events worker-victims were accompanied by other probation/parole officers/agents and/or other law enforcement officials (Table 3.16).



Table 3.16

OTHERS PRESENT (ADDITIONAL TO PERPETRATOR AND VICTIM) MOST SERIOUS PAST-YEAR EVENT (Percentages)

	CT	DE	MD	N J	NY	PA	VT
Probation/parole officer/agent	46	59	31	4	42	41	30
Other law enforcement official	15	41	19	21	15	12	48
Officer's family	5	--	5	2	4	2	4
Officer's friends/acquaintances	5	--	5	5	5	NA	7
Perpetrator's employer/co-workers	5	4	4	4	2	--	11
Perpetrator's family	32	32	26	16	26	10	18
Perpetrator's friends/acquaintances	19	32	15	26	18	NA	22
Bystanders	22	23	24	28	24	--	26
Others	18	18	20	12	18	11	14
Base N	81	22	131	258	361	122	28

As shown in Table 3.17, the "aftermaths" of most serious past-year victimization events reported by officers/agents are varied and often multiple. However, with the exception of Delaware and Pennsylvania, "being shaken up" by the experience was noted by sizable majorities of responding officers/agents. A "reduced trust in clients" also figured prominently in each of the states, except for Delaware.

Table 3.17

## AFTERMATHS MOST SERIOUS PAST-YEAR VICTIMIZATION (Percentages)

	CT	DE	MD	NJ	NY	PA	VT
Injured by incident	20	18	6	14	12	7	11
Chronic condition	1	4	1	1	1	1	--
Aggravation of old injury	3	--	2	1	2	2	--
Stomachache, headache, etc.	13	9	17	12	14	6	15
Shaken up	73	18	73	65	62	33	71
Fear on the job	53	18	46	45	35	24	39
Reduced self confidence	19	4	19	18	17	8	25
Reduced trust in clients	54	27	49	51	48	45	54
Reduced sensitivity to clients	29	14	36	35	28	30	29
Less open with clients	29	9	26	27	26	15	21
Less open with co-workers	10	9	--	7	--	--	4
Thought about quitting job	20	9	30	23	15	17	18
Applied for transfer	5	4	10	4	3	3	4
Avoid contact w/threatening clients	17	18	22	22	20	18	11
Increased use of medication	1	--	5	3	4	2	4
Increased use of alcohol	3	--	2	1	4	2	7
Disruption of personal life	29	4	40	25	27	7	43
Disruption of family life	16	9	--	16	20	8	29
Enhanced sense of self-confidence	23	50	22	24	24	26	25
Base N	80	22	131	258	361	122	28

Respondents were queried whether, in their judgment, the most serious past-year victimization events experienced by them could have been prevented. As shown in Table 3.18, most respondents do not think they, personally, could have done anything to prevent the incident. Overall, about one in four of the respondents did think that the agency could have done something to prevent the reported incidents and a majority asserted that agencies could have done something to better prepare personnel to cope with victimization situations.

Table 3.18

## WHETHER MOST SERIOUS PAST-YEAR INCIDENT COULD HAVE BEEN PREVENTED (Percentages)

	CT	DE	MD	NJ	NY	PA	VT
Could <u>you</u> have prevented incident?							
Yes	8	14	4	8	10	9	7
No	65	73	78	70	70	91	82
Don't know	27	14	17	22	20	--	11
Could your <u>agency</u> had done anything to prevent the incident?							
Yes	19	27	23	29	23	19	18
No	51	50	60	46	58	81	79
Don't know	30	23	17	24	20	--	4
Could the <u>agency</u> have done anything to better prepare personnel to cope with this type of situation?							
Yes	42	68	48	65	52	49	36
No	25	14	33	19	29	51	43
Don't know	33	18	19	16	19	--	21
Base N	80	22	131	258	361	121	28

Table 3.19 portrays the rank order of safety related policy initiatives based on the responses of probation/parole officers/agents from the eight MASCA jurisdictions. As shown in Table 3.19, the five initiatives most highly endorsed involve the use of "partner systems," "identification of high risk areas," "self-defense training," "probation/parole officer-police officer teams for making arrests," and "training in verbal judo." All of these appear to be implementable with modest resource commitments.

The information presented in this section is summary in nature and focuses on all officer/agent respondents by MASCA jurisdictions, irrespective of the type of agencies for which they work. Considerable attention is given to comparative information by agency type in the analyses presented in each of the jurisdiction-specific sections that follow. The reader should refer to those sections for details.

Table 3.19

## RANKINGS OF SAFETY RELATED POLICY INITIATIVES: OFFICER/AGENTS ONLY

Policy Initiatives	CT	DE	MD	NJ	NY	PA	VT
"Partner system" to be used "as needed"	1	1	2	2	1	1	1
Identify all "high risk" areas and inform P/P officers	2	2	1	1	2	4	2
Training in self-defense methods	5	3	4	3	3	2	4
P/P officer-police officer teams when making arrests	7	4	8	5	5	--	3
Training in "verbal judo"	6	5	5	6	4	7	5
"Panic buttons" on office telephones	4	8	3	4	6	10	7
Distress signal devices to POs making home visits	9	10	7	7	8	13	10
Establish secure clerical areas for field offices	3	11	11	9	17	11	15
Provide all P/P officers with hand-held radios	8	9	12	10	7	6	11
Two-way communications devices in officer's automobile	10	7	6	12	13	5	9
Security officers for field offices to control entrance	17	15	9	8	14	19	22
Provide P/P officers with recent "mugshots" of releasees	13	6	10	15	15	3	8
Provide P/P officers with non-lethal, chemical agents	11	14	14	16	9	14	6
Provide POs firearms to be carried when necessary	15	21	21	20	10	8	12
Provide POs firearms to be carried while on duty	16	17	23	22	16	--	16
Establish a "law enforcement arrest authority"	12	12	15	13	11	9	13
Provide P/P officers with soft body armor	14	13	19	19	12	12	14
Increase the number of specialized caseloads	21	16	16	23	21	15	18
Police/security officer present at revocation hearings	22	22	17	14	20	16	21
P/P officers provide supervisors with daily schedule	18	19	18	17	19	17	17
P/P officers check in/out with centralized monitor	19	18	20	21	22	18	19
Provide secure jail areas for visits with clients	20	23	13	11	18	20	23
Police/security officer present at all summons hearings	23	20	22	18	23	21	20

As was found in the state by state data, when examined across the entire MASCA region, parole officers/agents are significantly more likely to have experienced victimization during their careers as well as during the past year. While the rates for the "combined" are highest for past-year victimization, this is partly attributable to the fact that over half of the officers in that category are from Vermont where the past-year victimization rate was the highest of all MASCA jurisdictions. Also, respondents in that category likely have contact with both parolees and probationers (Table 3.20).

Table 3.20

## VICTIMIZATION EXPERIENCE OF OFFICERS/AGENTS ONLY IN THE MASCA REGION (Percentages)

	Probation	Parole	Combined <sup>5</sup>	Total
Career Victim Rates	60	75	70	62
Victim of Assault	13	32	23	15
Victim of Intimidation	59	74	70	61
Past-Year Victim Rates	33	42	54	35
Victim of Assault	5	12	13	6
Victim of Intimidation	32	41	54	34
Base N	3734	562	98	4394

Table 3.21 provides information about four correlates of victimization by agency type for all responding officers/agents in the MASCA region. As can be seen by examining the data, gender (males), holding second jobs, carrying a weapon, and having had unarmed self-defense training bear a positive correlation to victimization.

<sup>5</sup>In two of the participating states, the work classification used from respondents was "probation and parole officers." We have referred to this group as "Combined." It should also be noted that, for the purposes of tables 3.20 and 3.21, officers in both juvenile and adult services are subsumed under these general categories.

Table 3.21

## CORRELATES OF VICTIMIZATION FOR OFFICERS/AGENTS ONLY IN THE MASCA REGION

	Probation	Parole	Combined	Total
All Respondents:				
Male	49	75	67	53
Female	51	25	33	47
Base N	3759	567	98	4424
Past-Year Victims:				
Male	53	78	75	57
Female	47	22	24	43
Base N	1231	235	53	1519
All Respondents:				
Hold Second Job	21	21	26	21
Don't Hold Second Job	78	79	73	78
Base N	3756	565	98	4419
Past-Year Victims:				
Hold Second Job	26	29	30	27
Don't Hold Second Job	74	71	70	73
Base N	1230	233	53	1516
All Respondents:				
Carry Weapon (Any Type)	32	45	22	33
Don't Carry Weapon	68	55	78	67
Base N	3341	515	85	3941
Past-Year Victims:				
Carry Weapon (Any Type)	36	52	25	38
Don't Carry Weapon	64	48	74	62
Base N	1109	219	47	1375
All Respondents:				
Had Unarmed Defense Trng	45	62	73	48
No Unarmed Defense Trng	55	38	26	52
Base N	3756	566	98	4420
Past-Year Victims:				
Had Unarmed Defense Trng	50	65	83	54
No Unarmed Defense Trng	40	35	17	46
Base N	1230	235	53	1518

Section 4

SAMPLE SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Survey instruments used throughout the MASCA region study were identical, with the exception of four items which were tailored to reflect terminology applicable in a particular jurisdiction. These four questions pertained to (1) the county location of the agency in which a respondent was employed, (2) the respondent's specific job title, (3) the disposition status of the perpetrator of the victimization incident, and (4) the applicable label of the most serious offense committed by the perpetrator.

A copy of the survey instrument used in the New York worker safety study is included below to provide an example of the instrument and response sheet used in the MASCA study. Respondents were asked to return only the completed response sheet to the researcher.



1938 - 50TH ANNIVERSARY - 1988

# Middle Atlantic States Correctional Association

AN AFFILIATE OF THE AMERICAN CORRECTIONAL ASSOCIATION AND  
THE AMERICAN PROBATION AND PAROLE ASSOCIATION

Connecticut - Delaware - District of Columbia - Maryland  
New Jersey - New York - Pennsylvania - Vermont

November, 1989

**PRESIDENT**

George D. Bronson  
Connecticut Correctional  
Institution - Somers  
P.O. Box 100  
Somers, CT 06071  
203-749-8391

Dear Colleague:

**1st VICE-PRESIDENT**

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DC Superior Court  
409 E Street, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20001  
202-879-1765

**2nd VICE-PRESIDENT**

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**SECRETARY**

David G. Cormier  
M.A.S.C.A. - C.C.I.S.  
P.O. Box 100  
Somers, CT 06071  
203-749-8391

The Middle Atlantic States Correctional Association is concerned about on-the-job security of probation and parole staff. We want to assist our constituency to maintain their productivity under safe working conditions and practices. To that end, nearly 15,000 officers/agents, supervisors, managers, clerical and technical support staff from all probation/parole agencies in the region are being asked to participate in a MASCA survey conducted by two Penn State University professors under a grant from the National Institute of Corrections.

The first step is for you to take fifteen to twenty minutes to complete the attached questionnaire. Your involvement is crucial because the benefits to the field depend on a high level of participation. Please answer as many of the questions as apply to you, marking your responses on the green sheets and returning them according to the directions on the cover memo.

It is important that you feel free to respond honestly and completely about hazardous incidents in which you have been involved even if you have not reported them to your agency. Therefore, if you prefer, you can reply directly to: Joe A. Miller, Ph.D., Penn State University, P.O. Box 957, Lemont, PA 16851. Also, if you have any questions or comments about this study, please contact me.

What's in it for you? A final report will be widely disseminated detailing summary findings and analyses for the entire MASCA region as well as for each individual jurisdiction. Workshops at the May 1990 MASCA Conference will give administrators and staff from all levels the opportunity to discuss the implications for policy making and practical operations. Ultimately, MASCA wants to develop a training curriculum to teach probation/parole workers how to identify and avoid conflict situations and de-escalate them when they occur. NIC officials have already expressed interest in such a package as an outgrowth of this study.

Thank you very much for your cooperation. I firmly believe that this study will make a meaningful contribution to our profession.

Sincerely,

*Dennis R. Martin*

Dennis R. Martin  
Past President

DRM/mgc

## NEW YORK STAFF SAFETY STUDY

We are asking you to participate in a project to gather information about hazardous incidents in which people working in probation and parole agencies in New York (officers, administrators, supervisors, clericals, other staff) have been assaulted or threatened in connection with their work. Examples of hazardous incidents affecting staff safety would include: physical assault or harm; threat of physical assault or harm; assault or threat of harm to a worker's family members; harm or threat of harm to one's property; extortion; harm or threat of harm to a worker's reputation; or psychological intimidation.

Please record your responses on the attached green response sheet. Return only the response sheet. You may keep your copy of the questionnaire.

### PART I

1. For which type of agency do you work?

- 1 - County Probation
- 2 - State Parole

2. Where is your work assignment?

[USING THE CODES LISTED ON THE BACK OF THE RESPONSE SHEET, PLEASE WRITE IN THE CODE OF THE LOCATION WHERE THE AGENCY OR OFFICE AT WHICH YOU WORK IS LOCATED.]

3. What is your primary work site?

- 1 - Office
- 2 - Community
- 3 - Institution

4. What is your work assignment?

- 1 - Probation Adult Supervisor
- 2 - Probation Juvenile Supervisor
- 3 - Probation ISP
- 4 - Probation Adult Investigation
- 5 - Probation Juvenile Investigation
- 6 - Probation Intake
- 7 - Probation Warrant/Field Services
- 8 - Probation Combined Services
- 9 - Clerical
- 10 - Clerical Supervisor
- 11 - Technical Staff (Fiscal; Policy; MIS; Human Resource Management)
- 12 - Attorney, Administrative Law Judge, Revocation Specialist
- 13 - Client Services Position
- 14 - Parole Officer Assigned A Field, B Institutional, C Temporary Release
- 15 - Senior Parole Officer A Field, B Institutional, C Temporary Release
- 16 - Area Supervisor/Bureau Chief
- 17 - Administrator/Executive Management/Parole Board

5. What is the total number of employees in your office (including clerical)?

- 1 - 1 to 10
- 2 - 11 to 25
- 3 - 26 to 50
- 4 - 51 to 75
- 5 - 76 to 100
- 6 - 101 or more

6. What is your sex?

- 1 - Male
- 2 - Female

7. What is your age?

- 1 - Under 25 years
- 2 - 25-29 years
- 3 - 30-39 years
- 4 - 40-49 years
- 5 - 50+ years

8. What is your marital status?

- 1 - Single, never married
- 2 - Married
- 3 - Separated
- 4 - Divorced
- 5 - Widow/Widower
- 6 - Common-law relationship

9. What is your race/ethnicity?

- 1 - White
- 2 - Black
- 3 - Hispanic
- 4 - Native American
- 5 - Oriental
- 6 - Other

10. What is the highest grade you completed?

- 1 - Less than high school
- 2 - High school graduate
- 3 - Some college (incl. assoc. deg.)
- 4 - Bachelor's degree
- 5 - Graduate degree (incl. law or other professional degree)

11. How long have you worked for your current agency?

- 1 - Less than 1 year
- 2 - 1-2 years
- 3 - 3-4 years
- 4 - 5-9 years
- 5 - 10-19 years
- 6 - 20-plus years

12. How long have you worked in the probation/parole field?

- 1 - Less than 1 year
- 2 - 1-2 years
- 3 - 3-4 years
- 4 - 5-9 years
- 5 - 10-19 years
- 6 - 20-plus years

13. Do you have a second job?

- 1 - Yes
- 2 - No

14. Have you had unarmed self-defense training?

- 1 - Yes
- 2 - No

PLEASE INDICATE THE KIND OF WEAPON YOU USUALLY CARRY (IF ANY) IN QS. 15-19.

1 - Carry

2 - Not Carry

15. Handgun

18. Chemical agent  
(e.g., mace)

16. Other firearm

19. Knife or  
other sharp-  
edged instr.

17. Impact instr.  
(e.g., blackjack;  
heavy flashlight)

20. During your whole career in the probation/  
parole field, how many times have you been  
physically assaulted in the line of duty?

1 - Once

5 - More than four  
times

2 - Twice

6 - Never

3 - Three times

assaulted

4 - Four times

21. During your whole career in the  
probation/parole field, how many times has  
someone attempted to intimidate you by  
physical or any other threat?

1 - Once

5 - More than four  
times

2 - Twice

6 - Never intimi-  
dated

3 - Three times

4 - Four times

22. Since November, 1988, how many times have you  
been physically assaulted in the line of  
duty?

1 - Once

5 - More than four  
times

2 - Twice

6 - Never assaulted

3 - Three times

4 - Four times

23. Since November, 1988, how many times has  
someone attempted to intimidate you by  
physical or other threat?

1 - Once

5 - More than four  
times

2 - Twice

6 - Never intimi-  
dated

3 - Three times

4 - Four times

24. How concerned are you about your personal  
safety when making field contacts?

1 - Very concerned

2 - Somewhat concerned

3 - Not very concerned

4 - Definitely not concerned

5 - Do not make field contacts

25. How safe do you feel while working in your  
local office during regular office hours?

1 - Very safe

3 - Unsafe

2 - Safe

4 - Very unsafe

26. How safe do you feel while working in your  
local office during non-office hours?

1 - Very safe

3 - Unsafe

2 - Safe

4 - Very unsafe

27. In general, how safe do you feel when  
visiting with a client in your local jail or  
the state prison?

1 - Very safe

2 - Safe

3 - Unsafe

4 - Very unsafe

5 - Do not make such visits

28. With respect to personal safety, during the  
past five years (or whatever time you've  
been in the field, if less than 5 years), do  
you think your work in probation/parole  
field has:

1 - become more dangerous

2 - stayed about the same

3 - become less dangerous

[QUESTIONS 29-51 CONTAIN RECOMMENDATIONS THAT HAVE  
BEEN PROPOSED TO IMPROVE THE SAFETY OF PROBATION/  
PAROLE (P/P) OFFICERS. PLEASE INDICATE HOW USEFUL  
YOU FEEL EACH ONE WOULD BE IN IMPROVING THE SAFETY  
OF A P/P OFFICER.]

1 - Definitely Useful

2 - Useful

3 - Undecided

4 - Not Useful

5 - Definitely Not Useful

29. Develop a "partner system" to be used on  
an "as needed" basis when making home  
visits.

30. Identify all "high-risk" areas and keep  
all P/P officers informed of these areas.

31. Establish a "law enforcement arrest  
authority"--that is, special units of  
trained P/P officers with authority  
to carry weapons and make arrests.

32. Provide distress signal devices to  
P/P officers when making home/field  
visits. (The officer would have to notify  
the monitor of the distress signal device  
where he/she will be in the event of  
distress.)

33. Install two-way communication devices in  
each P/P officer's automobile.

34. Provide all P/P officers with hand-held  
radios to be used for two-way communication  
in an emergency.

35. Implement a requirement that all P/P  
officers provide their respective unit  
supervisor with a daily schedule prior to  
making home visits and/or field contacts.

36. Require that officers check in and out with a centralized monitor when on official business.
37. Increase the number of specialized caseloads with respect to probationers/ parolees.
38. Require that a security officer be present at all summons hearings held in a probation/ parole office.
39. Establish secure clerical areas for field offices--that is, these areas could be entered and exited only through electronically controlled security doors.
40. Provide P/P officers with "mugshots" taken of releasees at the time of their release.
41. Provide security officers for field offices; that is, individuals who would control entrance to field offices and would be available to assist in an emergency.
42. Provide "panic buttons" on office telephones; that is, buttons which would alert either the local police or security personnel in the event of an emergency.
43. Provide P/P officers with non-lethal, chemical agents to be carried when making home visits.
44. Provide training in "verbal judo"--that is, procedures for verbally disarming/defusing threatening situations.
45. Assuming proper screening/training, provide P/P officers with firearms to be carried during the course of their duties.
46. Provide P/P officers with soft body armor for use in situations thought to be "high risk."
47. Assuming proper screening/training, provide P/P officers with firearms to be carried at any time the officer believes that it is necessary.
48. Provide training in self-defense methods--that is, self-defense procedures without the use of weapons (e.g., karate).
49. Provide secure jail or prison areas for visits with probationers/parolees--that is, an areas where the probationer/parolee is physically separated from the P/P officer by a screen, glass, or other means.
50. Require that a security officer be present with the P/P officer at all revocation hearings.
51. Provide for P/P officer-police officer teams when making arrests of offenders in violation of probation/parole requirements.

PART II OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE DEALS WITH INCIDENTS OF PHYSICAL ASSAULT OR INTIMIDATION BY PHYSICAL OR OTHER THREAT SINCE NOVEMBER, 1988.

☐ CHECK THIS BOX IF YOU WERE NOT PHYSICALLY ASSAULTED OR INTIMIDATED BY PHYSICAL OR OTHER THREAT IN THE LINE OF DUTY DURING THE PAST YEAR. YOU ARE FINISHED. PLEASE RETURN YOUR COMPLETED RESPONSE SHEET.

#### PART II

1. In the most serious offense against you during the last 12 months, what was the perpetrator's status?
  - 1 - Offender (probationer/parolee)
  - 2 - Offender's family member
  - 3 - Offender's friend or acquaintance
  - 4 - Court personnel
  - 5 - Bystander
  - 6 - Animal (SKIP TO Q. 62)
  - 7 - Unknown
  - 8 - Other
2. What was the perpetrator's sex?
  - 1 - Male
  - 2 - Female
  - 3 - Unknown
3. How old was the perpetrator?
 

1 - Under 15 years	5 - 30-39 years
2 - 15-17 years	6 - 40-49 years
3 - 18-21 years	7 - 50+ years
4 - 22-29 years	8 - Unknown
4. What was the perpetrator's marital status?
 

1 - Single, never married	5 - Common-law relationship
2 - Married	6 - Widow/Widower
3 - Separated	7 - Unknown
4 - Divorced	
5. What was the perpetrator's estimated intelligence level?
 

1 - Above average	4 - Retarded
2 - Average	5 - Unknown
3 - Below average	

6. What was the highest grade the perpetrator completed?

- |                           |                                   |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1 - Less than high school | 3 - Some college                  |
| 2 - High school graduate  | 4 - Bachelor's or graduate degree |
|                           | 5 - Unknown                       |

7. What was the perpetrator's dispositional status?

- 1 - Pre-disposition supervision
- 2 - Pre-sentence investigation
- 3 - Adult Probation Supervision (Adult Services)
- 4 - Juvenile Probation Supervision
- 5 - Pre-Parole Institutional Confinement
- 6 - Temporary Release Supervision
- 7 - Parole Supervision Active
- 8 - Parole Absconder Work
- 9 - Parole Violator Custody Situation (Not an absconder)
- 10 - ISP
- 11 - Warrant Case
- 12 - Violator Institutional Confinement
- 13 - Unknown

8. Had the perpetrator been previously incarcerated at any time?

- 1 - Yes      2 - No      3 - Unknown

9. If the perpetrator was under sentence, what was the class of the most serious offense?

- |                        |                   |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| 1 - Felony A NOT DRUGS | 7 - Felony YO     |
| 2 - Felony A DRUG      | 8 - Misdemeanor A |
| 3 - Felony B           | 9 - Misdemeanor B |
| 4 - Felony C           | 10 - Misdemeanor  |
| 5 - Felony D           | Unclassify        |
| 6 - Felony E           | 11 - Unknown      |

10. Would you regard the most important offence for which the perpetrator had been sentenced to be of a violent character?

- 1 - Yes      2 - No      3 - Unknown

11. What was the type of the most important offense for which the perpetrator had been sentenced?

- 1 - Crime against the person
- 2 - Property crime
- 3 - Crime against chastity, morals
- 4 - Substance abuse or similar
- 5 - Unknown
- 6 - Not under sentence

12. Did the perpetrator have a history of drug abuse?

- 1 - Yes      2 - No      3 - Unknown

13. Did the perpetrator have a history of alcohol abuse?

- 1 - Yes      2 - No      3 - Unknown

14. What was the perpetrator's employment status at the time of the incident?

- |                    |                |
|--------------------|----------------|
| 1 - Emp. full-time | 3 - Unemployed |
| 2 - Emp. part-time | 4 - Unknown    |

15. Did the perpetrator have any known connection with one of the following groups?

- 1 - Organized crime
- 2 - Organized gangs
- 3 - No known connections
- 4 - Unknown

16. Which of the following best describes the perpetrator's prior criminal history?

- 1 - No prior convictions/adjudications
- 2 - One prior felony conviction or adjudication
- 3 - Two or more prior felony convictions or adjudications
- 4 - Prior misdemeanor (or equivalent) conviction(s)/adjudication(s) but no prior felony convictions
- 5 - Unknown

[PLEASE INDICATE (QS. 17-23) WHETHER THE PERPETRATOR HAD EVER ASSAULTED ANY OF THE FOLLOWING BEFORE.]

- 1 - Yes      2 - No      3 - Unknown

17. Other probation/parole officer/agent

18. Other probation/parole personnel

19. Police officer

20. Treatment agency personnel

21. Spouse

22. Other family member

23. Citizen

[PLEASE INDICATE THE PERPETRATOR'S ACTIONS BY  
RESPONDING "YES" OR "NO" TO QS. 24-33.]

1 - Yes      2 - No

24. Were you physically assaulted by the perpetrator?
25. Were you physically threatened by the perpetrator?
26. Did the perpetrator harm your property?
27. Did the perpetrator threaten to harm your property?
28. Did the perpetrator intimidate you?
29. Did the perpetrator attempt to extort something from you?
30. Did the perpetrator threaten your reputation?
31. Did the perpetrator threaten physical harm to one of your family members?
32. Did the perpetrator intimidate/attempt to intimidate anyone in your family?
33. Did the perpetrator make sexual advances or sexual innuendos toward you?
34. In what type of area did the incident occur?  
1 - Urban    2 - Suburban    3 - Rural
35. Was the perpetrator under supervision at the time of the incident?  
1 - No, not under supervision  
2 - Your supervision  
3 - Your agency's (but not your supervision)  
4 - Another agency's supervision  
5 - Unknown
36. At the time of the incident, was the perpetrator under the influence of any of the following?  
1 - Drugs                                  4 - Nothing  
2 - Alcohol                                 5 - Unknown  
3 - Both drugs & alcohol
37. Were you on duty when the incident occurred?  
1 - Yes                              2 - No
38. On what day of the week did the incident occur?  
1 - Monday                              5 - Friday  
2 - Tuesday                             6 - Saturday  
3 - Wednesday                         7 - Sunday  
4 - Thursday                            8 - Can't remember

39. What time of day was it when the incident occurred?
- 1 - Between 8 am and 6 pm  
2 - Between 6 pm and midnight  
3 - Between midnight and 8 am  
4 - Can't remember

40. Were you carrying a weapon at the time of the incident?
- 1 - No, was not armed
  - 2 - Handgun or other firearm
  - 3 - Chemical agent (e.g., mace)
  - 4 - Impact instrument (e.g., blackjack)
  - 5 - Knife or other sharp edged instrument
  - 6 - Handgun plus other weapon (e.g., chemical and/or impact instr.)

[PLEASE INDICATE IN QS. 41-48 WHETHER THE PERPETRATOR HAD OR USED ANY OF THE FOLLOWING WEAPONS IN THIS INCIDENT.]

- 1 - Used or threatened to use  
2 - Possessed but did not use/threaten to use  
3 - Did not possess
- |             |                   |
|-------------|-------------------|
| 41. Handgun | 45. Impact instr. |
| 42. Rifle   | 46. Vehicle       |
| 43. Shotgun | 47. Animal        |
| 44. Knife   | 48. Other         |

[PLEASE INDICATE IN Qs. 49-55 WHETHER THE PERPETRATOR DID ANY OF THE FOLLOWING TO YOU IN THIS INCIDENT.]

- | 1 - Yes                   | 2 - No                            |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 49. Hit with fist or hand | 53. Hit with an impact instrument |
| 50. Kicked                | 54. Cut with an edged instrument  |
| 51. Pushed                | 55. Other                         |
| 52. Shot                  |                                   |

[IN Qs. 56-61, PLEASE INDICATE WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING THE PERPETRATOR DID OR THREATENED TO DO TO YOU IN THIS INCIDENT.]

- 1 - Yes, did do, or threatened to do  
2 - No, did not do, or threaten to do
56. Allegations about your professional conduct
57. Allegations about your personal conduct
58. Lawsuits against you/your agency
59. Allegations about your family or friends
60. Allegations about your superiors
61. Allegations about your co-workers

[IN QS. 62-70, PLEASE INDICATE WHO, IN ADDITION TO YOURSELF AND THE PERPETRATOR WAS PRESENT WHEN THE INCIDENT OCCURRED.]

1 - Yes      2 - No

- 62. Other probation/parole officer/agent
- 63. Other law enforcement personnel
- 64. Member(s) of your family
- 65. Your friend(s)/acquaintance(s)
- 66. Perpetrator's employer/co-worker(s)
- 67. Perpetrator's family member(s)
- 68. Perpetrator's friend/acquaintance
- 69. Bystander(s)
- 70. Other

71. Had you had unarmed self-defense training at the time of the incident?

1 - Yes      2 - No

[IN QS. 72-80, PLEASE INDICATE THE CONTEXT(S) IN WHICH THE INCIDENT OCCURRED BY RESPONDING "YES" OR "NO" TO EACH ITEM.]

1 - Yes      2 - No

- 72. Expected or announced visit
- 73. Surprise visit
- 74. During arrest of perpetrator
- 75. During arrest of someone else
- 76. In response to call from perpetrator
- 77. In response to call from the perpetrator's spouse/family
- 78. In context of domestic dispute
- 79. During transport of perpetrator
- 80. Other

[IN QS. 81-96, PLEASE INDICATE THE LOCATION(S) WHERE THE INCIDENT TOOK PLACE BY ANSWERING "YES" OR "NO" TO EACH ITEM.]

1 = Yes      2 = No

- 81. Over the phone
- 82. By letter or mail
- 83. Through message/report from others

- 84. Agency office
- 85. Perpetrator's home
- 86. Someone else's home
- 87. Prison/jail
- 88. Police station
- 89. Human service agency
- 90. Court room
- 91. In vehicle
- 92. Place of perpetrator's employment
- 93. Public facility (incl. drinking or eating establishment)
- 94. On the street
- 95. Apartment hallway/elevator
- 96. Other
- 97. Were you injured during the incident?

- 1 - Yes, hospitalization required
- 2 - Yes, outpatient treatment required
- 3 - Yes, treated at the scene
- 4 - Yes, not treated
- 5 - Not injured

[PLEASE INDICATE IN QS. 98-108 WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING ACTIONS YOU USED IN REACTION TO THE INCIDENT.]

1 - Yes      2 - No

- 98. Struck back physically
- 99. Threatened to strike back physically
- 100. Used a gun or other weapon
- 101. Displayed or threatened to use a gun
- 102. Displayed a badge or I.D.
- 103. Used verbal threat
- 104. Said nothing
- 105. Retreated
- 106. Called out for help
- 107. Attempted to talk to the perpetrator
- 108. Took no action

[PLEASE INDICATE IN QS. 109-112 WHETHER THE INCIDENT RESULTED IN EACH OF THE FOLLOWING]

1 - Yes      2 - No

109. Chronic physical problems that limit your physical activity
110. Aggravation of an old injury
111. Stomachache, headache, or similar problems
112. No injury, but shaken up (emotionally upset)
113. Did the physical damage you received lead to:
- 1 - Permanent disability
  - 2 - Temporary disability
  - 3 - No disability
114. Could you have done anything to prevent the incident?
- 1 - Yes      2 - No      3 - Don't know
115. Could your agency have done anything to prevent the incident?
- 1 - Yes      2 - No      3 - Don't know
116. Could your agency have done anything to better prepare personnel to cope with this type of situation?
- 1 - Yes      2 - No      3 - Don't know
117. Which one of the following was the most important consequence of the incident for your job?

- |                            |                                   |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1 - Loss of employment     | 5 - Litigation against the agency |
| 2 - Suspension             | 6 - Commendation                  |
| 3 - Demotion               | 7 - Promotion                     |
| 4 - Litigation against you | 8 - No consequence                |
|                            | 9 - Still pending                 |

[PLEASE INDICATE WHETHER THE INCIDENT HAD PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACTS ON YOU BY RESPONDING "YES" OR "NO" TO QS. 118-126.]

1 - Yes      2 - No

118. Fear on the job
119. Reduced self-confidence
120. Reduced sense of trust in offenders
121. Reduced sensitivity to offenders
122. Increased use of medications
123. Increased use of alcohol
124. Disruption to personal life (e.g., strain, anxiety)

125. Disruption of family life (e.g., strain, anxiety)

126. Enhanced sense of self-confidence

127. In your opinion, how did the incident affect your personally?

- 1 - Positive consequences
- 2 - Negative consequences
- 3 - No consequences

128. In your opinion, how did the incident affect your family?

- 1 - Positive consequences
- 2 - Negative consequences
- 3 - No consequences

129. In your opinion, how did the incident affect your agency?

- 1 - Positive consequences
- 2 - Negative consequences
- 3 - No consequences

130. In your opinion, how did the incident affect your co-workers?

- 1 - Positive consequences
- 2 - Negative consequences
- 3 - No consequences

[PLEASE INDICATE WHETHER THE INCIDENT AFFECTED YOUR JOB PERFORMANCE IN ANY OF THE FOLLOWING WAYS BY RESPONDING "YES" OR "NO" TO QS. 131-138.]

1 - Yes      2 - No

131. Less open with co-workers
132. Less open with probationers/parolees
133. Thought about quitting the job
134. Applied for a transfer
135. Avoided contact with co-workers
136. Avoided contact with threatening probationers/parolees
137. Did not affect my job performance
138. Other



[IN QS. 139-148, PLEASE INDICATE TO WHOM  
YOU REPORTED OR DISCUSSED THIS INCIDENT.]

1 - Yes      2 - No

139. Your agency head  
140. Your supervisor  
141. Your co-workers  
142. The police

- 143. A counselor
- 144. Your spouse
- 145. Other family members
- 146. Friend(s)
- 147. Other person
- 148. No one

149. Using the scale below, with '1' being not serious and '10' being very serious, please indicate how serious you felt this incident was in terms of its impact on you and your personal safety.

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9-----10  
Not Serious Very Serious

WE THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING PART II OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE. NOW, WE WOULD LIKE YOU TO GIVE US YOUR PERSONAL DESCRIPTION OF THIS MOST SERIOUS INCIDENT YOU EXPERIENCED IN THE PAST YEAR. PLEASE RESPOND TO THE QUESTIONS ON PAGES 2-3 OF THE RESPONSE SHEET.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH!

RESPONSE SHEET

PART I

1. _____	10. _____	19. _____	28. _____	37. _____	46. _____
2. _____	11. _____	20. _____	29. _____	38. _____	47. _____
3. _____	12. _____	21. _____	30. _____	39. _____	48. _____
4. _____	13. _____	22. _____	31. _____	40. _____	49. _____
5. _____	14. _____	23. _____	32. _____	41. _____	50. _____
6. _____	15. _____	24. _____	33. _____	42. _____	51. _____
7. _____	16. _____	25. _____	34. _____	43. _____	
8. _____	17. _____	26. _____	35. _____	44. _____	
9. _____	18. _____	27. _____	36. _____	45. _____	

THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING PART I OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE.

-----

PART II

Complete PART II for the most serious incident  
you experienced during the past year.

1. _____	26. _____	51. _____	76. _____	101. _____	126. _____
2. _____	27. _____	52. _____	77. _____	102. _____	127. _____
3. _____	28. _____	53. _____	78. _____	103. _____	128. _____
4. _____	29. _____	54. _____	79. _____	104. _____	129. _____
5. _____	30. _____	55. _____	80. _____	105. _____	130. _____
6. _____	31. _____	56. _____	81. _____	106. _____	131. _____
7. _____	32. _____	57. _____	82. _____	107. _____	132. _____
8. _____	33. _____	58. _____	83. _____	108. _____	133. _____
9. _____	34. _____	59. _____	84. _____	109. _____	134. _____
10. _____	35. _____	60. _____	85. _____	110. _____	135. _____
11. _____	36. _____	61. _____	86. _____	111. _____	136. _____
12. _____	37. _____	62. _____	87. _____	112. _____	137. _____
13. _____	38. _____	63. _____	88. _____	113. _____	138. _____
14. _____	39. _____	64. _____	89. _____	114. _____	139. _____
15. _____	40. _____	65. _____	90. _____	115. _____	140. _____
16. _____	41. _____	66. _____	91. _____	116. _____	141. _____
17. _____	42. _____	67. _____	92. _____	117. _____	142. _____
18. _____	43. _____	68. _____	93. _____	118. _____	143. _____
19. _____	44. _____	69. _____	94. _____	119. _____	144. _____
20. _____	45. _____	70. _____	95. _____	120. _____	145. _____
21. _____	46. _____	71. _____	96. _____	121. _____	146. _____
22. _____	47. _____	72. _____	97. _____	122. _____	147. _____
23. _____	48. _____	73. _____	98. _____	123. _____	148. _____
24. _____	49. _____	74. _____	99. _____	124. _____	149. _____
25. _____	50. _____	75. _____	100. _____	125. _____	

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR COMPLETING PART II!

PLEASE GO ON TO PAGE 2 OF THE RESPONSE SHEET.

LOCATION OF WORK ASSIGNMENT

New York City

01 New York County  
(Manhattan)  
02 Bronx  
03 Queens  
04 Kings (Brooklyn)  
05 Richmond (Staten  
Island)

Downstate Urban

06 Nassau  
07 Suffolk  
08 Westchester

Upstate Urban

09 Erie  
10 Monroe  
11 Onondaga

Mixed Urban/Rural

12 Albany  
13 Broome  
14 Chemung  
15 Dutchess  
16 Niagara  
17 Oneida  
18 Orange

19 Rensselaer  
20 Rockland  
21 Saratoga  
22 Schenectady  
23 Ulster

Rural

24 Remaining 31  
Counties

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PLEASE TELL US IN YOUR OWN WORDS ABOUT THE MOST SERIOUS  
INCIDENT YOU EXPERIENCED DURING THE PAST YEAR.

1. When did this incident occur? (Your best approximation of the month/day/year).
2. Please give us in your own words a description of the incident. (E.g., where it occurred, what prompted the incident, what actions the offender took or threatened to take, etc.)

3. How did you personally deal with the incident? (E.g., Used force or threatened to use force, used or threatened to use a weapon, tried to talk to the offender, called for help from someone else, retreated, etc.)

4. If you reported the incident, how did your agency deal with it?

5. What kinds of things do you feel the agency should do to prevent hazardous incidents affecting staff safety?

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOU FOR YOUR HELP!

y

## Section 5

### SURVEY FINDINGS: CONNECTICUT

A total of 259 workers from Connecticut's Adult Parole and Probation and Juvenile Service agencies responded to the 1989 survey. This resulted in an overall response rate of 54% (259 of 479). The respondents were distributed across several job categories, as shown in the following listing.

<u>Job Category</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Clerical	26	10
State Probation-Juvenile	35	14
State Probation-Adult	122	47
State Parole-Adult	30	12
Juvenile Court Officer/Aide	4	2
Supervisor-Juvenile	15	6
Chief PO-Adult	27	10
<u>Totals</u>	<u>259</u>	<u>100</u>

#### Respondent Characteristics

To make analyses of respondent characteristics and hazardous incident encounters more efficient, these job categories were collapsed into three main types: (1) Officers<sup>1</sup>; (2) Supervisors and Managers; and (3) Clerical. Table 5.1 shows the relationships between each of these three main job types and various profile characteristics of survey respondents.

Officers employed in the state adult probation agency comprised more than three-fifths (63%) of all the officer respondents. Officers working in the state juvenile probation agency constituted one-fifth (21%) and those in state adult parole 16% of all officers responding to the survey. All of the responding clerical workers were employed in adult probation (Table 5.1).

Males comprise a modest majority among probation and parole officers (64%) but predominate in the supervisors/managers category (86%). All of the clerical respondents were female. A majority of the respondents are working in agency offices of 25 or fewer employees. Supervisors/managers were, on average, older than officers, an expected finding in view of the fact that movement into a management or supervisory position is typically associated with tenure in the agency and/or the field of probation/parole. Age profiles of clerical workers tended to parallel that of probation/parole officers, though 30% of the former are 50 years of age or older. (Table 5.1)

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<sup>1</sup>This includes all personnel whose jobs bring them into direct client contact for purposes of probation and parole supervision.

More than nine out of 10 officers (94%) hold a bachelor's or graduate degree. Almost all (98%) of the supervisors/managers are college graduates, with some 43 percent holding graduate degrees (Table 5.1).

Not surprisingly, supervisors/managers exhibit much longer tenure in both current agency and the field--97% and 98%, respectively, having 10 or more year's tenure. In contrast, slightly more than one-third of the officers (35%) have been in their current agencies or in the probation/parole field less than three years. Over one-third (35%) of the clerical respondents reported being in their current agency (35%) or in the field (39%) for 10 years or longer. (Table 5.1)

About one in four (27%) of all officer respondents reported that they held a second job, as did 23% of clerical workers. Only 12% of the supervisors/managers indicated this (Table 5.1).

All but a few (94%) of the officer respondents reported that they have had unarmed self-defense training, as did a similar proportion (93%) of the supervisors/managers (Table 5.1).

As can be seen in the last segment of Table 5.1, with the exception of a chemical agent (e.g., mace), relatively few respondents reported carrying any type of weapon. The highest frequencies were 36% of the officers and 26% of the supervisors/managers indicating that they usually carried a chemical agent. Carrying a handgun was reported by 12% of the responding officers and 5% of the supervisors/managers.

Table 5.1

## CHARACTERISTICS OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS (PERCENTAGES)

Characteristics	Officers	Supv'rs./ Managers	Clerical
<u>Agency Type:</u>			
State Probation-Juvenile	21	33	--
State Probation-Adult	63	60	100
State Parole-Adult	16	7	--
<u>Sex of Respondent:</u>			
Male	64	86	--
Female	36	14	100
<u>Office Size:</u>			
1-25 employees	62	71	65
26-50 employees	28	26	19
51-100 employees	10	2	15
<u>Age of Respondent:</u>			
Under 25 years	10	--	8
25-29 years	15	--	12
30-39 years	40	31	31
40-49 years	28	55	20
50 years or older	6	14	30
<u>Educational Attainment:</u>			
High school	1	--	58
Some college	5	2	42
Bachelor's degree	71	55	--
Graduate degree	23	43	--
<u>Tenure in Current Agency:</u>			
Less than 3 years	35	--	27
3-4 years	16	--	12
5-9 years	7	3	27
10 or more years	42	97	35
<u>Tenure in the Probation/ Parole Field:</u>			
Less than 3 years	35	--	30
3-4 years	17	--	9
5-9 years	9	2	22
10 or more years	38	98	39
<u>Second Job Held:</u>			
Yes	27	12	23
No	73	88	77

Table 5.1 Cont'd.)

## CHARACTERISTICS OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS (PERCENTAGES)

Characteristics	Officers	Supv'rs./ Managers	Clerical
<u>Unarmed Defense Training:</u>			
Yes	94	93	--
No	6	7	100
<u>Weapon Usually Carried:<sup>2</sup></u>			
Handgun	12	5	4
Other firearm	1	--	--
Impact instrument	6	--	7
Chemical agent	36	26	14
Knife/Other Sharp-edged Inst.	2	--	3
<u>Base N</u>	<u>191</u>	<u>42</u>	<u>26</u>

Note: Column percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Victimization Rates

For purposes of this study, victimization was defined in terms of the exposure of probation and parole workers to hazardous incidents encountered in the course of carrying out their jobs.<sup>3</sup> To help respondents understand the meaning of the term "hazardous incident" as used in designing this study, the following examples were included in the instructions appearing at the beginning of the questionnaire.

Examples of hazardous incidents affecting staff safety would include: physical assault or harm; threat of physical assault or harm; assault or threat of harm to a worker's family members; harm or threat of harm to one's property; extortion; harm or threat of harm to a worker's reputation; or psychological intimidation.

<sup>2</sup>Separate questions were asked for five different types of weapons. Thus, the percentages are independent for each type and do not add to 100.

<sup>3</sup>For a detailed discussion of the concept of "victimization" and its relation to hazardous incidents and worker safety in probation and parole, see William H. Parsonage, Worker Safety in Probation and Parole, Washington, D.C.: National Institute of Corrections, 1990.



In the first section of the survey questionnaire, which was applicable to all respondents, four items pertained to probation and parole workers' experiences with hazardous incidents. The first two asked whether the worker, over his/her entire career in the probation/parole field, had (1) been physically assaulted in the line of duty, or (2) been intimidated by a physical or other threat. The other two survey items were similar but asked the respondents to answer in terms of their experiences since November, 1988--an approximate 12-month period preceding the survey.

Victimization rates for all respondents during their entire careers in the probation/parole field and during the year preceding the survey are shown in Table 5.2. Some 71% of the current officers reported experiencing at least one victimization incident during the course of their careers in the field of probation/parole. An even higher rate (90%) prevailed for those who are currently supervisors or managers in one of the Connecticut agencies. The corresponding rate for clerical workers was 39%. (Table 5.2)

With respect to general type of victimization events, some 45% of the supervisors/managers indicated that they had been physically assaulted one or more times during their careers; a lower rate prevailed for officers (30%). Very few (4%) of the clerical workers reported that they had been physically assaulted while working in a probation agency. (Table 5.3) Almost nine out of 10 (88%) of the supervisors/managers reported that they had experienced incidents of intimidation during their careers in the field. The corresponding figure for officers was smaller, though two-thirds (67%) reported being intimidated during their careers. More than one-third (39%) of clerical workers also indicated that they had experienced one or more intimidation events during their tenure in the probation field. (Table 5.2)

As shown in the bottom half of Table 5.2, 56% of the officers reported experiencing some type of job-related hazardous incident during the year preceding the survey. The corresponding figure was smaller for supervisors/managers (40%), and considerably smaller (27%) for clerical workers. (Table 5.2)

When considered according to the general type of incident encountered during the past year, the highest rates were associated with intimidation events. Just over half (54%) of responding officers, more than one-third (38%) of the supervisors/managers, and about one-fourth (27%) of the clerical workers reported experiencing an incident of this type in the 12 months preceding the survey (Table 5.2).

Table 5.3 shows the victimization rates by type during the worker's entire career in the probation/parole field. As can be seen, well over half of the officers and supervisors/managers who had been assaulted during their careers experienced multiple incidents of physical assault.

Rates for intimidation during the career are much higher in all three of the worker categories. About nine of ten (88%) of the supervisors/managers reported that they had encountered one or more intimidation events during their careers in probation or parole, followed by some 70% of the probation/parole officers and 39% of the responding clerical workers. Moreover, over

half (55%) of the managers and supervisors reported that they had experienced intimidation events more than four times during their careers, as did some 30% of the officers. (Table 5.3)

Table 5.2

**VICTIMIZATION RATES IN ENTIRE CAREER AND DURING PAST  
YEAR IN PROBATION/PAROLE FIELD (Percentages)**

Victimization Status	Officers	Supv'rs./ Managers	Clerical
<u>Victimization in Career:</u>			
Never victimized in career	29	10	61
Victimization in career by general type:			
Physical assault only	2	2	--
Both assault and intimidation	28	43	4
Intimidation only	41	45	35
<u>Base N</u>	<u>186</u>	<u>42</u>	<u>23</u>
<u>Victimization in Past Year:</u>			
Not victimized past year	44	60	73
Victimization in past year general type:			
Physical assault only	2	2	--
Both assault and intimidation	15	5	4
Intimidation only	39	33	23
<u>Base N</u>	<u>188</u>	<u>42</u>	<u>22</u>

Note: Column percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Table 5.3

**VICTIMIZATION RATES OVER ENTIRE CAREER IN  
PROBATION/PAROLE FIELD (Percentages)**

Victimization Status	Officers	Supv'rs./ Managers	Clerical
Physically Assaulted in the Line of Duty During Entire Career	30	45	4
Times Physically Assaulted in the Line of Duty During Entire Career:			
Once	8	10	--
Twice	10	14	--
Three times	4	7	4
Four times	4	2	--
More than four times	4	12	--
Never physically assaulted	70	55	96
<u>Base N</u>	<u>186</u>	<u>42</u>	<u>25</u>
Intimidated by Physical or Any Other Threat During Entire Career	70	88	39
Times Intimidated by Physical or Any Other Threat During Entire Career:			
Once	15	2	17
Twice	7	12	--
Three times	11	10	9
Four times	6	10	--
More than four times	30	55	13
Never intimidated	30	12	61
<u>Base N</u>	<u>189</u>	<u>42</u>	<u>23</u>

Note: Column percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Another set of indicators of hazardous incident occurrences focused on the experiences of workers in the year preceding the survey. The results are shown in Table 5.4. As can be seen, 16% of the responding officers and 7% of the supervisors/managers indicated that they had been physically assaulted in the line of duty during the year preceding the survey. The fact that about one-in-six of the officers and one-in-14 of the supervisors/managers were at risk for physical assault while on the job during a yearly period constitutes a level of occupational risk of some importance.

When confrontations involving some form of intimidation are considered, the incidence rates are much higher. Among officers, just over half (54%) indicated that they had experienced one or more of such events in the year preceding the survey, and more than one-third (38%) of supervisors/managers reported similarly. The past-year intimidation rate for clerical workers was a notable 25% (Table 5.4). As the additional data in Table 5.4 demonstrate, a majority of those reporting intimidation events noted that more than one such confrontation had occurred during the year before the survey.

Table 5.4

**VICTIMIZATION RATES IN YEAR PRECEDING  
THE SURVEY (Percentages)**

Victimization Status	Officers	Supv'rs./ Managers	Clerical
Physically Assaulted in the Line of Duty During Past Year	16	7	4
Times Physically Assaulted in the Line of Duty During Past Year:			
Once	11	7	--
Twice	3	--	--
Three times	--	--	4
Four times	2	--	--
More than four times	<1	--	--
Never physically assaulted	84	93	96
Intimidated by Physical or Any Other Threat During Past Year	54	38	25
Times Intimidated by Physical or Any Other Threat During Past Year:			
Once	22	14	8
Twice	15	14	--
Three times	6	--	8
Four times	2	--	4
More than four times	8	10	4
Never intimidated	46	62	75
<b><u>Base N</u></b>	<b><u>188</u></b>	<b><u>42</u></b>	<b><u>24</u></b>

### Correlates of Victimization Status

Table 5.5 displays relationships between two worker classifications and personal or job-related characteristics by career victimization status.<sup>4</sup> Among probation/parole officers, gender and experiences with victimization incidents during one's career in the field are moderately related. Some 68% of the officer-victims who reported having experienced victimization during their careers in the field were male, while males comprised just over half (52%) of the career non-victims (Table 5.5). Among officers, older respondents were also a bit more likely to have confronted some such incident, but among supervisors/managers, age differences between victims and non-victims are so slight as to be negligible. An overwhelming number of all officers and supervisors/managers have also had unarmed self-defense training, and almost equal proportions fall into the victim and non-victim categories (Table 5.5).

Among officers, tenure in the field of probation/parole is clearly related to victimization status. For example, 57% of the officers with five or more years of tenure reported experiencing one or more victimization events during their careers, compared to 22% of those who have not encountered and such incidents (Table 5.5). However, carrying a weapon bears no relationship to the victimization status of either officers or supervisors/managers (Table 5.5).

In Table 5.6, relationships between victimization status during the year preceding the survey and several personal and job-related characteristics are shown for officers and supervisors/managers. An inspection of the data this table indicates few marked relationships between the characteristics examined and past-year victimization status. Only three require comment. First, some three-fourths (73%) of past-year probation/parole officer victims were male, compared to 52% of the non-victims. Second, among those officers indicating that they usually carry chemical agents for self-protection, some 42% fall into the past-year victim category, compared to 25% of non-victims. Moreover, 16% of the past-year officer victims reported that they usually carried a handgun, compared to only 7% of the non-victims. Carrying a handgun was reported by 12% of supervisors/managers who were past-year victims, but by none of the non-victims in this worker category. (Table 5.6)

In summary, the preceding data indicate that the problem of worker safety among Connecticut probation and parole workers, especially those involved in direct supervision of probationers/parolees, is pervasive. Although the rate of physical assault on officers and supervisors/managers in the year preceding the survey was only 16%, it still constitutes an important level of occupation risk (approximately one in six officers). Even among supervisors/managers, some 7% reported having encountered physical assault in the past year while performing their jobs.

When all types of hazardous incidents are considered, over half (56%) of the probation/parole officers responding to this survey experienced some such events during this same period of time, followed by 40% of the responding

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<sup>4</sup>"Victimization status" refers to any form or frequency of encounter with hazardous incidents and distinguishes only between general "yes" and "no" responses to survey items asking about such events.

supervisors/managers and 27% of the clerical workers. More detailed analyses of officers' experiences with on-the-job incidents affecting worker safety are presented in another major subsection below.

Table 5.5  
CORRELATES OF VICTIMIZATION STATUS  
DURING CAREER (Percentages)

Characteristics	Officers		Supv'rs./ Managers		Totals	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
<u>Sex of Respondent:</u>						
Male	68	52	90	50	73	52
Female	32	48	10	50	27	48
<u>Age of Respondent:</u>						
Under 25 years	6	22	--	--	5	21
25 - 29 years	13	18	--	--	10	17
30 - 39 years	45	33	32	25	42	33
40 - 49 years	29	22	55	50	35	24
50 years or older	8	4	13	25	9	5
<u>Unarmed self-defense training:</u>						
Yes, have had training	96	93	92	100	95	93
No, have not had training	4	7	8	--	5	7
<u>Tenure in probation/parole field:</u>						
Less than 3 years	24	65	--	--	19	60
3 - 4 years	19	13	--	--	15	12
5 - 9 years	11	4	3	--	9	3
10 years or more	46	18	97	100	57	24
<u>Kind of weapon usually carried:<sup>5</sup></u>						
Handgun	12	11	5	--	11	9
Other firearm	--	2	--	--	--	2
Impact instrument	6	6	--	--	4	6
Chemical Agent	38	31	29	25	35	29
Knife/Other sharp-edged instr.	2	2	--	--	2	2
<b>Base N</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>4<sup>6</sup></b>	<b>170</b>	<b>58</b>

Note: Column percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

<sup>5</sup>Respondents were asked to indicate whether they usually carried or did not carry a series of weapons. Hence, each percentage is independent and totals do not add to 100.

<sup>6</sup>This group of respondents was retained in Table 5.5 only for sake of completeness. Obviously, no comments are possible with such a small number base.

Table 5.6

**CORRELATES OF VICTIMIZATION STATUS DURING THE  
YEAR PRECEDING THE SURVEY (Percentages)**

Victimization Status	<u>Officers</u>		<u>Supv'rs./ Managers</u>		<u>Clerical</u>	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
<u>Sex of Respondent:</u>						
Male	73	52	94	80	76	58
Female	27	48	6	20	24	42
<u>Age of Respondent:</u>						
Under 25 years	8	14	--	--	7	11
25 - 29 years	14	14	--	--	12	11
30 - 39 years	45	36	35	28	43	34
40 - 49 years	27	29	53	56	30	35
50 years or older	7	6	12	16	7	8
<u>Unarmed self-defense training:</u>						
Yes, have had training	95	93	94	92	95	93
No, have not had training	5	7	6	8	5	7
<u>Hold second job:</u>						
Yes	28	26	24	4	27	21
No	72	74	76	96	73	79
<u>Tenure in current agency:</u>						
Less than 3 years	27	38	--	--	23	30
3 - 4 years	16	16	--	--	14	12
5 - 9 years	11	8	3	--	10	6
10 years or more	46	37	97	100	59	52
<u>Kind of weapon usually carried:<sup>7</sup></u>						
Handgun	16	7	12	--	15	6
Other firearm	1	1	--	--	1	1
Impact instrument	8	3	--	--	7	3
Chemical Agent	42	25	31	22	41	24
Knife/Other sharp-edged instr.	4	2	--	--	3	2
<b><u>Base N</u></b>	<b><u>119</u></b>	<b><u>99</u></b>	<b><u>17</u></b>	<b><u>25</u></b>	<b><u>17</u></b>	<b><u>128</u></b>

Note: Column percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

<sup>7</sup> Respondents were asked to indicate whether they usually carried or did not carry a series of weapons. Hence, each percentage is independent of all the others, and totals do not add to 100.



## Safety Concerns and Policy Initiatives for Worker Safety

### Safety Concerns

Employees in Connecticut agencies responding to the general survey were asked several questions concerning their perceptions of personal safety in various areas of the work environment of probation and parole. As can be seen in Table 5.1, a large majority of the officers (76%) and supervisors/managers (88%) felt themselves to be very safe or safe while working in their offices during regular office hours. However, the percentages feeling very safe or safe dropped considerably when the context was changed to working in your local office during non-office hours--49% for the officers, and 62% for the supervisors/managers (Table 5.1).

Seventy percent of the responding officers reported that they felt very safe/safe when visiting with an offender in the local jail or state prison. The figures for the supervisors/managers were higher, with 94% (33 of 35) of those who indicated that they did make such visits noting that they felt very safe or safe (Table 5.7).

The results were markedly different when officers were asked about their concern for personal safety when making field contacts. Nine out of 10 (91%) reported being very or somewhat concerned about personal safety when in the field (Table 5.7). The percentage was only slightly smaller for supervisors/managers (78%).

When respondents were asked to indicate whether, with respect to personal safety, they felt that work in the probation/parole field had recently become more dangerous or not, overwhelming majorities of the probation/parole officers (89%) and the supervisors/managers (88%) responded that the field had become more dangerous over the past five years. None of the officers or the supervisors/managers felt that the field had become less dangerous during this period of time (Table 5.7).

In sum, workers' concerns with safety focused principally on contacts made in the community, which constitutes for most probation and parole workers a primary work environment. With respect to the phenomenon of hazardous incidents, the findings presented here fit closely with data presented later in this section regarding such events. There, it can be seen that such incidents occur mainly during the carrying out of day-to-day work responsibilities in the community.

Table 5.7

**PERCEPTIONS OF ON-THE-JOB SAFETY: OFFICERS  
AND SUPERVISOR/MANAGERS (Percentages)**

Safety Concerns	Officers	Supv'rs./ Managers
How safe do you feel while working in your local office during regular office hours?		
Very Safe/Safe	76	88
Unsafe/Very Unsafe	24	12
How safe do you feel while working in your local office during <u>non-office</u> hours?		
Very Safe/Safe	49	62
Unsafe/Very Unsafe	51	38
How safe do you feel when visiting with an offender in your local jail or state prison?		
Very Safe/Safe	70	78
Unsafe/Very Unsafe	22	5
Do not make such visits	8	17
How concerned are you about your personal safety when making field contacts?		
Very concerned/Somewhat Concerned	91	76
Not very concerned/Definitely Not Concerned	7	19
Do not make field contacts	2	5
With respect to your personal safety, during the past <u>five years</u> (or whatever time you've been in the field, if less than 5 years), do you think your work in the probation/parole field has:		
Become more dangerous	89	88
Stayed about the same	11	12
Become less dangerous	--	--
<b>Base N</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>42</b>

## Policy Initiatives for Worker Safety

In his monograph, Worker Safety in Probation and Parole, Parsonage identified a series of policy initiatives regarded by probation and parole workers as relevant to worker safety in studies conducted in Texas, New York State, Pennsylvania and Virginia.<sup>8</sup> Workers were asked to rate each potential policy initiative with respect to its perceived usefulness as a means of enhancing the safety of probation and parole workers.

In the current study, respondents were asked to rank 23 potential policy proposals drawn from the studies conducted in Texas, New York, Pennsylvania and Virginia.<sup>9</sup> Possible ratings of each item were "definitely useful," "useful," "undecided," "not useful," and "definitely not useful." The results are shown in Table 5.8, with items rank-ordered according to the percentage of officers rating a policy initiative as "definitely useful" or "useful."

As can be seen in Table 5.8, seven items received exceptionally strong ratings by more than four-fifths of the officer respondents and, with one exception, the supervisors/managers. The two highest rated items were concerned with developing a "partner system" for use in making home visits and identifying all "high risk" areas. Establishing secure clerical areas for field offices was also strongly endorsed as definitely useful or useful by 88% of the officers and 95% of the supervisors/managers. Similar ratings were given to providing "panic buttons" by officers (87%), but not by supervisors/managers (69%). Providing training in self-defense methods and in "verbal judo" were also policy initiatives strongly supported by officers (86% supporting both policies) and by supervisors/managers--88% and 93%, respectively. Providing probation/parole officer-police officer teams when making arrests of offenders in violation of probation/parole requirements was supported by 82% of the officers and 88% of the supervisors/managers. Notably, the two items concerned with providing probation and parole officers with firearms were rated as useful by majorities of officers--61% for carrying firearms at anytime thought necessary and 58% for carrying firearms during the course of professional duties. However, supervisors/managers were less likely to endorse such policy initiatives; their corresponding ratings were 33% and 26%, respectively (Table 5.8).

In sum, respondents' ratings of policy initiatives as definitely useful or useful tend to emphasize those actions of immediate utility to the front-line officers in carrying out typical job responsibilities with an enhanced sense of personal safety.

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<sup>8</sup>William H. Parsonage, Worker Safety in Probation and Parole (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Corrections, 1990).

<sup>9</sup>Minor changes were made in a few items, based on suggestions resulting from reviews of the initial questionnaire by representatives of agencies in the MASCA membership.

Table 5.8

**PERCEPTIONS OF POLICY INITIATIVES: OFFICERS  
AND SUPERVISOR/MANAGERS (Percentages)**

Respondent Rating of Policies as "Definitely Useful" or "Useful"	Officers	Supv'rs./ Managers
Develop a "partner system" to be used on an "as needed" basis when making home visits	97	98
Identify all "high risk" areas and keep all P/P officers informed of these areas.	94	95
Establish secure clerical areas for field offices-- i.e., areas could be entered and exited only through electronically controlled security doors	88	95
Provide "panic buttons" on office telephones-- i.e., buttons which would alert either the local police or security personnel in the event of an emergency	87	69
Provide training in self-defense methods	86	88
Provide training in "verbal judo"	86	93
Provide for P/P officer-police officer teams when making arrests of offenders in violation of probation/parole requirements	82	88
Provide all P/P officers with hand-held radios to be used for two-way communication in an emergency	79	62
Provide distress signal devices to P/P officers when making home visits	78	60
Install two-way communication devices in each P/P officer's automobile	77	69
Provide P/P officers with non-lethal, chemical agents to be carried when making home visits	76	76
Establish a "law enforcement arrest authority"-- i.e., special units of trained P/P officers with authority to carry weapons and make arrests	73	64
Provide P/P officers with "mugshots" taken of releasees at the time of their release	72	64
Provide P/P officers with soft body armor for use in situations thought to be "high risk"	69	55

Table 5.8 (Cont'd.)

**CORRELATES OF VICTIMIZATION DURING PAST YEAR: OFFICERS  
AND SUPERVISOR/MANAGERS (Percentages)**

Respondent Rating of Policies as "Definitely Useful" or "Useful"	Officers	Supv'rs./ Managers
Assuming proper training, provide P/P officers with firearms to be carried at any time the officers believe it is necessary	61	33
Assuming proper screening/training, provide P/P officers with firearms to be carried during the course of their duties	58	26
Provide security officers for field offices--i.e., individuals who would control entrance to field offices and would be available to assist in an emergency	57	51
Implement a requirement that all P/P officers provide their respective unit supervisors with a daily schedule prior to making home visits and/of field contacts	55	88
Require that P/P officers check in and out with a centralized monitor when on official business	49	67
Provide secure jail areas for visits with clients-- i.e., an area where the client is physically separated from the P/P officer	48	38
Increase the number of specialized caseloads with respect to probationers/parolees	44	56
Require a police/security officer be present with the P/P officer at all revocation hearings	37	31
Require a police/security officer to be present at all summons hearings held in the probation/ parole office	34	43
<u>Base N</u>	<u>190</u>	<u>42</u>

## Victimization Experiences of Connecticut Probation and Parole Officers

The preceding discussion reported on the victimization experiences of the Connecticut probation and parole work force by general occupational class--officers, supervisors/managers, and clerical workers. The discussion in the remainder of this section deals exclusively with officers having direct case contact responsibilities. The purpose is to present information comparing and contrasting the victimization experiences of line officers by agency type. Presenting the data in this manner is intended to contribute to the development of agency-specific programs for the enhancement of worker safety.

### Victimization Experiences of Officers

A total of 259 Connecticut probation and parole workers responded to the survey. Of this number, 191 were identified as probation/parole officers in supervisory contact with probationers or parolees--30 in adult parole, 122 in adult probation, and 39 in juvenile probation/parole.

Characteristics of these officer respondents are shown in Table 5.9. As can be seen, agents in adult parole are predominantly male (93%), and males are also in the majority (64%) among workers in the juvenile probation/parole group, but less so among adult probation workers (57%). Overwhelming majorities of all officers had had unarmed self-defense training, including all of those in adult parole (Table 5.9).

Adult probation officers are younger, overall, than their colleagues in adult parole and juvenile probation. Correspondingly, adult parole officers have less tenure in the field than do their counterparts in other agencies. Nearly three-fourths (74%) of the juvenile probation/parole workers have 10 or more years in the field and about two-thirds (69%) have 10 or more years in their current agencies (Table 5.9)

As shown in Table 5.10, a fairly high proportion of the adult parole agents (40%) reported that they held second jobs. However, just over one-fourth (26%) of the adult probation officers also report second jobs. The corresponding figure for juvenile probation/parole workers is 18%.<sup>10</sup>

More than two-thirds (70%) of the adult parole agents indicated that they usually carry a handgun. Moreover, 93% of these same respondents reported that they carried chemical agents (e.g., mace). None of juvenile probation officers and only a few of the adult probation officers reported carrying a firearm of any type. Almost one-third (32%), though, of the adult probation agents noted that they did carry a chemical agent. Generally, self-protection equipment of any type is a rarity among the juvenile probation/parole agents.

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<sup>10</sup>Holding a second job, however, has no identifiable relationship with victimization rates. About equal proportions of past-year victims and non-victims reported holding second jobs

Table 5.9

**CHARACTERISTICS OF PROBATION/PAROLE OFFICER Respondents:  
BY TYPE OF AGENCY (Percentages)**

Characteristics	Juvenile Prob/Par.	Adult Probation	Adult Parole	Total
<u>Sex:</u>				
Male	64	57	93	64
Female	36	43	7	36
<u>Age:</u>				
Under 25 years	5	12	13	10
25 - 29 years	8	20	--	15
30 -39 years	18	45	50	40
40 - 49 years	54	19	33	28
50 years or older	15	4	3	6
<u>Unarmed Self-Defense Training:</u>				
Yes, have had training	92	93	100	94
No, have not had training	8	7	--	6
<u>Tenure in Field:</u>				
Less than 3 years	8	36	67	35
3 - 4 years	18	18	13	17
5 - 9 years	5	14	13	9
10 or more years	69	31	7	38
<u>Tenure in Current Agency:</u>				
Less than 3 years	18	36	43	32
3 - 4 years	15	20	3	16
5 - 9 years	3	11	13	10
10 years or more	74	33	40	42
<b>Base N</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>191</b>

Table 5.10

**SECOND JOBS HELD BY OFFICERS: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Second Job Held	Juvenile Prob/Par.	Adult Probation	Adult Parole	Total
Yes, hold second job	18	26	40	27
No, don't hold second job	82	74	60	73
<b>Base N</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>190</b>

Table 5.11

**WEAPONS USUALLY CARRIED BY OFFICERS: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Weapon Usually Carried	Juvenile Prob/Par.	Adult Probation	Adult Parole	Total
Handgun	--	1	70	12
Other firearm	--	1	--	1
Impact Instrument	3	9	--	6
Chemical agents	3	32	93	36
Knife or other sharp edged instrument	--	3	--	2
<b>Base N</b>	<b><u>39</u></b>	<b><u>121</u></b>	<b><u>30</u></b>	<b><u>190</u></b>

When the victimization experiences of Connecticut officers are examined, juvenile probation/parole officers report a notably higher career rate (89%) than their colleagues in the other agencies. It is likely that this is partly attributable to the longer tenure many of them have in the field--thus, giving them greater opportunity for exposure to hazardous incident situations. (See Table 5.8 above). At the same time, however, two-thirds (67%) of the adult probation officers and 63% of the adult parole officers also noted that they had experienced one or more victimization incidents during their careers--both significant figures in themselves (Table 5.12).

Table 5.12

**VICTIMIZATION RATES OF OFFICERS DURING ENTIRE CAREER:  
BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Victimization Status	Juvenile Prob/Par.	Adult Probation	Adult Parole	Total
Victimized during career	89	67	63	71
Not victimized during career	11	33	37	29
<b>Base N</b>	<b><u>37</u></b>	<b><u>119</u></b>	<b><u>30</u></b>	<b><u>186</u></b>



Table 5.13 presents information depicting the responding workers' career experience with assaultive and other threatening behavior. As can be seen, the career physical assault rate of juvenile probation/parole officers (57%) is much higher than the comparable rates for adult parole agents (37%) and adult probation officers (19%)--again, likely a reflection of the juvenile officers' longer average tenure in the field. Moreover, over half of those the juvenile services area reporting career assaults indicate that they have experienced such events three or more times while working in the field. Incidence rates for multiple assaults among workers in the other two respondent groups are considerably lower (Table 5.13).

A very high proportion of juvenile probation/parole officers (87%) report having experienced one or more events of intimidation during their careers. The comparable figures were 67% for adult probation officers and 60% for adult parole agents. Multiple incidents of intimidation were common in all three respondent groups (Table 5.13)

Table 5.13

OFFICERS PHYSICALLY ASSAULTED OR INTIMIDATED  
IN CAREER BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)

Physically Assaulted or Intimidated in Career	Juvenile Prob/Par.	Adult Probation	Adult Parole	Total
Physically assaulted in career:	57	19	37	30
Once	14	7	7	8
Twice	8	7	23	10
Three times	11	2	3	4
Four times	11	2	--	4
More than four times	14	2	3	4
Never assaulted	43	81	63	70
Intimidated by physical or any other threat in career:	87	67	60	70
Once	10	16	20	15
Twice	8	9	--	7
Three times	5	13	17	11
Four times	15	5	--	6
More than four times	49	23	33	30
Never intimidated	13	33	40	30
<b>Base N</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>189</b>

When the general victimization rates for the year preceding the survey are examined, differences among the agency groups narrow considerably, with the rates for juvenile probation/parole officers (64%) and for adult parole officers (60%) being very similar (Table 5.14). This same pattern is found when past-year intimidation rates are examined (Table 5.15). However, adult parole officers were the most likely to have been assaulted in the year preceding the survey (30%), as compared to 21% of the juvenile probation/parole officers and only 13% of the adult probation officers (Table 5.15).<sup>11</sup>

Table 5.14

VICTIMIZATION RATES OF OFFICERS IN A 12-MONTH PERIOD  
PRECEDING SURVEY: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)

Victimization Status	Juvenile Prob/Par.	Adult Probation	Adult Parole	Total
Victim during past year	64	52	60	56
Not victim during past year	36	48	40	44
<b>Base N</b>	<b><u>39</u></b>	<b><u>119</u></b>	<b><u>30</u></b>	<b><u>188</u></b>

When past-year victims and non-victims are compared in terms of personal and job-related characteristics (Table 5.16), the only trait that relates clearly to victimization status<sup>12</sup> is gender. Male workers are more likely than their female colleagues to have been victimized during the preceding year. This relationship, however, is partly a product of the strong presence of males in adult parole and the somewhat higher past-year victimization rates prevailing among these officers.

As was the case in the first two victimization studies in Pennsylvania, the past-year victimization rate in Connecticut for those carrying handguns or other self-protection equipment tends, on average, to be higher than for those

<sup>11</sup>It should be noted that the past-year victimization rates for physical assaults and intimidations against Connecticut officers are quite high when compared to other MASCA's member jurisdictions. Elsewhere in the MASCA region, rates for physical assault range from 4%-10% and from 35%-40% for intimidation events.

<sup>12</sup>"Victimization status" refers to encounters with any type or form of physical assault, and distinguishes only between the two conditions of victim and non-victim.

who do not carry them, although the strength of these relationships is quite modest (Table 5.17). Why this is so cannot be determined from the survey data at hand. For example, carrying a handgun or other weapon may be a proactive or reactive response to job-related risk, or a consequence of other, not readily apparent, influencing factors.

No relationship was found between having or not having unarmed self-defense training and past-year victimization status (Table 5.18).

Table 5.15

**OFFICERS PHYSICALLY ASSAULTED OR INTIMIDATED IN 12-MONTH PERIOD PRECEDING SURVEY: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Physically Assaulted or Intimidated in Year Preceding Survey	Juvenile Prob/Par.	Adult Probation	Adult Parole	Total
Physically assaulted in past year:	21	13	30	16
Once	13	8	23	11
Twice	5	2	7	3
Three times	--	--	--	--
Four times	3	2	--	2
More than four times	--	1	--	<1
Not assaulted during past year	79	87	70	84
Intimidated by physical or any other threat in past year:	62	51	56	54
Once	26	20	27	22
Twice	20	15	10	15
Three times	5	8	3	6
Four times	5	1	3	2
More than four times	5	8	13	8
Not intimidated during past year	38	49	48	46
<b>Base N</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>189</b>

Table 5.16

**DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF OFFICERS BY PAST-  
YEAR VICTIMIZATION STATUS (Percentages)**

Characteristics	Victims	Non-Victims	Total
<u>Sex:</u>			
Male	73	52	64
Female	27	48	36
<u>Age:</u>			
Under 25 years	8	14	11
25 - 29 years	14	14	14
30 -39 years	45	36	41
40 - 49 years	27	29	28
50 years or older	7	6	6
<u>Second Job Held:</u>			
Yes, hold second job	28	26	27
No, do not hold second job	72	74	73
<u>Tenure in Current Agency:</u>			
Less than 3 years	30	43	36
3 - 4 years	18	16	17
5 - 9 years	11	6	9
10 years or more	41	34	38
<u>Tenure in Field:</u>			
Less than 3 years	27	38	32
3 - 4 years	16	16	16
5 - 9 years	11	8	10
10 years or more	46	37	42
<u>Base N</u>	<u>105</u>	<u>83</u>	<u>188</u>

Note: Column percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding

Table 5.17

**WEAPON USUALLY CARRIED BY OFFICERS: BY VICTIMIZATION STATUS (Percentages)**

Weapon Usually Carried	Victims	Non-Victims	Total
Handgun	15	8	12
Other firearm	--	1	1
Chemical agent	43	27	36
Impact instrument	7	4	6
Knife or other sharp edged instrument	3	1	2
<b>Base N</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>184</b>

Table 5.18

**PAST-YEAR VICTIMIZATION STATUS OF OFFICERS HAVING OR NOT HAVING UNARMED DEFENSE TRAINING (Percentages)**

Past-Year Victimization Status	Victims	Non-Victims	Total
Has had unarmed defense training	95	93	94
Not had unarmed defense training	5	7	6
<b>Base N</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>188</b>

**Perceptions of Policy Initiatives and Worker Safety Concerns**

Officer respondents were asked to rank 23 potential policy proposals drawn from the studies conducted in Texas, New York, Pennsylvania, and Virginia. Possible ratings of each item were "definitely useful," "useful," "undecided," "not useful," and "definitely not useful." The results are shown in Table 5.19, with items rank-ordered according to the percentage of all respondents rating a policy initiative as "definitely useful" or "useful."

About one-third of the safety-related policies received strong endorsements by 80% or more of the officers responding to the survey. Two of the items were accorded very high ratings of usefulness. These were development of a "partner system" to be used in making home visits (97%) and identification of "high risk" areas (94%). Several other policy-related initiatives were also endorsed as useful by strong majorities of the respondents. These included establishing secure clerical areas for field offices (88%), providing panic buttons on office telephones (87%), providing training in "verbal

judo" (86%), providing training in self-defense methods (86%) and providing parole/probation officer-police officer teams in arresting offenders (Table 5.19).

Five of the potential policy initiatives were regarded as useful approaches by less than a majority of respondents. In general, these lower-rated items dealt with the use of police or security officers to enhance worker safety at hearings or in field offices, and requiring workers to check in and out with supervisors or other monitors when on official business (Table 5.19).

There were also some potential policy initiatives on which the juvenile and adult probation officers and the adult parole agents differed markedly in their endorsements of potential policies as definitely useful or useful. For example, 100% of the parole agents felt that providing officers with firearms for use as thought necessary (100%) or while on duty (97%) were definitely useful or useful policies, while small majorities of adult probation officers (62% and 57%) and about one-fourth of the juvenile officers favored these policies (Table 5.19). Marked discrepancies are also noted for two other items. Providing officers with up-to-date mugshots of releasees was strongly favored by all of the adult parole agents and 78% of the adult probation officers but by only 33% of the juvenile probation/parole officers. Conversely, only 14% of the adult parole agents felt that requiring officers to provide their super-visors with daily schedules was a useful policy initiative, while over half of their counterparts in juvenile probation/parole and almost two-thirds (65%) of the adult probation officers endorsed this item as definitely useful or useful (Table 5.19).

An interesting feature of the rankings of policy initiatives shown in Table 5.19, especially those receiving strong endorsements by the responding probation and parole workers, is that none appears to reflect policy ventures that are extraordinarily expensive or especially complex to implement.

Agents/officers were also asked several questions concerning their perceptions of personal safety in various areas of the work environment of probation and parole. As can be seen in Table 7.20, a large majority of all the respondents (76%) felt themselves to be very safe or safe while working in their offices during regular office hours, but only 50% during non-office hours. However, some 64% of the juvenile probation/parole officers noted that they felt very safe or safe while working the local office during non-office hours, but less than a majority of the adult probation officers and parole agents felt the same. Seven out of 10 (70%) felt similarly about their safety when visiting incarcerated offenders. When state parole officers were considered alone, the percentage rose to 87% (Table 5.20).

The results were markedly different when workers were asked about their concern for personal safety when making field contacts. In this instance 97% of the adult parole agents and 91% of adult probation officers noted that they were very concerned or concerned about their personal safety when in the field (Table 5.20). Some three-fourths (75%) of officers working in juvenile probation/parole felt the same. Moreover, almost nine out of ten (89%) felt that, with respect to personal safety, their work in the probation/parole

field had become more dangerous over the past five years (Table 5.20). In sum, workers' concerns with safety focused principally on contacts made in the community, which constitutes for many probation and parole workers a primary work environment.

Table 5.19

**RESPONDENTS' RATINGS OF THE USEFULNESS OF SAFETY-RELATED  
POLICIES: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Rating of Policies as "Definitely Useful" or "Useful"	Juvenile Prob/Par.	Adult Probation	Adult Parole	Total
Develop a partner system to be used as needed	94	98	100	97
Identify all high risk areas and inform officers	87	94	100	94
Establish secure clerical areas for field offices	85	90	86	88
Provide panic buttons on office telephones	87	87	86	87
Provide training in verbal judo	85	83	97	86
Provide training in self-defense methods	87	84	93	86
Provide parole/probation officer-police officer teams in arresting offenders	66	85	90	82
Provide officers with hand-held radios	54	83	97	79
Provide distress signal devices to officers making home visits	67	79	86	78
Install two-way communications devices in officers' cars	64	76	97	77
Provide officers with non-lethal chemical agents	62	77	90	76
Establish special unit of armed officers to make arrests	44	83	72	73
Provide officers with up-to-date mugshots of releasees	33	78	100	72
Provide officers with soft body armor	36	74	93	69
Provide officers with firearms to be carried when they think necessary	26	62	100	61
Provide officers with firearms for use while on duty	28	57	97	58
Provide security officers for field offices	70	51	66	56
Require officers to provide supervisors with daily schedules	54	65	14	55

Table 5.19 (Cont'd.)

**RESPONDENTS' RATINGS OF THE USEFULNESS OF SAFETY-RELATED  
POLICIES: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Rating of Policies as "Definitely Useful" or "Useful"	Juvenile Prob/Par.	Adult Probation	Adult Parole	Total
Require officers to check in and out with a centralized monitor	47	50	48	49
Provide secure jail areas for visits with clients	26	54	52	48
Increase the number of specialized caseloads	36	48	41	44
Police/security officer to be present at all revocation hearings	50	30	48	37
Police/security officer to be present at all summons hearings	56	27	38	34
<b>Base N</b>	<b><u>39</u></b>	<b><u>121</u></b>	<b><u>30</u></b>	<b><u>190</u></b>



Table 5.20

## SAFETY CONCERNS OF RESPONDENTS (Percentages)

Safety Concern Items	Juvenile Prob/Par.	Adult Probation	Adult Parole	Total
How safe do you feel while working in your local office during regular office hours?				
Very Safe/Safe	90	74	70	76
Unsafe/Very Unsafe	10	26	30	24
How safe do you feel while working in your local office during non-office hours?				
Very Safe/Safe	64	46	47	50
Unsafe/Very Unsafe	36	54	53	50
How safe do you feel when visiting with an offender in your local jail or state prison?				
Very Safe/Safe	55	70	87	70
Unsafe/Very Unsafe	8	28	13	20
Do not make such visits	37	2	--	10
How concerned are you about your personal safety when making field contacts?				
Very concerned	46	60	60	57
Somewhat concerned	39	31	37	33
Not very concerned	10	7	3	7
No field contacts	5	2	--	3
With respect to your personal safety, during the past five years, do you think your work in the probation/ parole field has become:				
More dangerous	82	90	97	89
Stayed about the same	18	10	3	11
Less dangerous	--	--	--	--
<u>Base N</u>	<u>39</u>	<u>121</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>190</u>

## The Dynamics of Victimization

Respondents indicating in Part 1 of the questionnaire that they had experienced one or more victimization events during the year before the survey were asked to complete Part 2 of the instrument, which asked a series of questions about what they regarded as the most serious event encountered. A total of 81 officer respondents (out of 109) completed this section of the questionnaire. The data presented in the remainder of this section are based on their responses to this additional section of the questionnaire.

As can be seen in Table 5.21, the perpetrators in hazardous incidents were most commonly clients (79% across all respondents). At the same time, however, just over half of the perpetrators--54% of the events involving adult probation officers and 56% involving adult parole agents--were under the officer-victim's direct supervision (Table 5.22). In the remaining 44% of the cases involving adult parole agents, the offender was under the respondent's agency's jurisdiction, which was also true for an additional 20% of the adult probation cases (Table 5.22). With respect to incidents involving juvenile probation/parole officers, the perpetrator's family members were the perpetrators in 14% of the cases (Table 5.21). Some 36% of the perpetrators of incidents against juvenile officers were "not under supervision" at the time of the incident (Table 5.22)

Criminal status characteristics of perpetrators vary according to the type of agency responsible for their supervision. For example, those supervised by adult parole tend to have a more serious and chronic criminal history--e.g., 69% with two or more prior adjudications/convictions for felonies. They also have a previous incarceration rate of 94%, compared to 51% of adult probationers and 21% of those supervised by juvenile probation/parole officers (Table 5.23). All of the perpetrators of incidents against parole officers were reported to have a history of drug abuse (Table 5.23).

Table 5.21

### OFFENDER'S STATUS AT TIME OF INCIDENT (Percentages)

Offender's Status	Juvenile Prob/Par.	Adult Probation	Adult Parole	Total
Client (probationer/parolee)	71	78	89	79
Client's family member	14	6	--	6
Client's friend	7	4	--	4
Bystander	--	--	--	--
Animal	--	--	6	1
Other	--	4	--	2
Unknown	7	8	6	7
<u>Base N</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>50</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>82</u>

Table 5.22

## OFFENDER'S STATUS AT TIME OF INCIDENT (Percentages)

Offender's Status	Juvenile Prob/Par.	Adult Probation	Adult Parole	Total
Under respondent's supervision	29	54	56	50
Under respondent's agency supervision	14	20	44	24
Under another agency's supervision	7	4	--	4
Not under supervision	36	10	--	12
Unknown	14	12	--	10
<b>Base N</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>81</b>

Table 5.23

CRIMINAL STATUS CHARACTERISTICS OF PERPETRATORS:  
BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)

Criminal Status Characteristics	Juvenile Prob/Par.	Adult Probation	Adult Parole	Total
<b>Most Serious Offense:</b>				
Misdemeanor	7	17	--	11
Felony A	--	8	18	9
Felony B	--	21	18	16
Felony C	7	27	29	24
Serious Juvenile Offender	29	--	--	5
Unknown	59	27	35	34
<b>Type Most Important Offense:</b>				
Crime vs. person	14	40	25	32
Crime vs. property	21	8	--	9
Crime vs. morals	--	4	--	3
Substance abuse	29	12	62	26
Not under sentence	7	2	--	3
Unknown	29	33	12	28
<b>Previous Incarceration:</b>				
Yes	21	51	94	55
No	50	18	--	20
Unknown	29	31	6	25

Table 5.23 (Cont'd.)

**CRIMINAL STATUS CHARACTERISTICS OF PERPETRATORS:  
BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Criminal Status Characteristics	Juvenile Prob/Par.	Adult Probation	Adult Parole	Total
<u>Drug Abuse History:</u>				
Yes	43	62	100	66
No	7	6	--	5
Unknown	50	32	--	29
<u>Alcohol Abuse History:</u>				
Yes	21	52	38	44
No	14	12	12	12
Unknown	64	36	50	44
<u>Prior Criminal History (convictions/ adjudications):</u>				
No prior convictions	7	4	--	4
One prior felony	--	6	6	5
Two or more prior felonies	14	39	69	40
Prior misdemeanor	50	18	--	20
Unknown	29	33	25	30
<u>Prior Assaults Against Others:</u>				
Probation/parole officer	--	6	12	6
Other probation/parole personnel	7	6	6	6
Police Officer	36	33	25	32
Treatment agency personnel	21	6	12	10
Spouse	7	24	12	19
Other family member	50	18	25	25
Citizen	36	39	38	38
<b>Base N</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>81</b>

As shown in Table 5.24, 43% of the perpetrators of incidents against adult parole agents were known to be under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol at the time of the offense--a rate substantially higher than the comparable figures for adult probation and juvenile probation/parole officers.

Table 5.24

**WHETHER OFFENDER UNDER INFLUENCE OF DRUGS OR ALCOHOL  
AT TIME OF INCIDENT: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Whether Under Influence	Juvenile Prob/Par.	Adult Probation	Adult Parole	Total
Drugs	7	6	19	9
Alcohol	14	18	12	16
Both drugs and alcohol	7	4	12	6
Nothing	36	18	12	20
Unknown	36	54	44	49
<b>Base N</b>	<b><u>14</u></b>	<b><u>50</u></b>	<b><u>17</u></b>	<b><u>81</u></b>

Table 5.25 characterizes the "nature of offender actions" against officers in the "most serious event" occurring during the preceding 12 months. It is notable that "physical assault" was involved in over half of the incidents involving juvenile probation/parole officers (57%) and precisely half of the adult parole officers (50%). Threat of physical assault occurred in more than 80% of all incidents, with all of the adult parole agents noting that they were threatened with physical assault. Some 74% of the adult probation officers and 71% of the juvenile probation/parole officers reported that the event involved some form of intimidation by the perpetrator (Table 5.25).

Table 5.25

**INCIDENCE OF DIFFERENT OFFENDER ACTIONS AGAINST PROBATION/PAROLE  
OFFICERS: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Offender Actions	Juvenile Prob/Par.	Adult Probation	Adult Parole	Total
Physical assault	57	22	50	34
Threat of physical assault	79	80	100	84
Damage to officer's property	7	8	31	13
Threat to officer's property	29	33	38	33
Intimidation	71	74	56	70
Attempted extortion	21	12	6	13
Threat to officer's reputation	7	22	25	20
Threat of physical harm to officer's family	7	10	12	10
Intimidation or attempted intimidation of officer's family member(s)	--	6	--	4
<b>Base N</b>	<b><u>14</u></b>	<b><u>50</u></b>	<b><u>17</u></b>	<b><u>81</u></b>

Note: Column percentages are not cumulative and do add to 100.

As shown in Table 5.26, across all respondents the most frequently named offender actions involving physical force were pushing (39%), hitting with fist or hand (23%), and kicking (22%). Half of the adult parole agents noted that they had been pushed and nearly one-third (31%) that they had been hit with a fist or hand. Slightly more than one-third (36%) of the juvenile probation/parole officers also reported being hit during the incident.

Allegations about the officer's professional conduct were noted by 47% of the adult probation officers, 38% of the adult parole officers, and 29% of the juvenile probation/parole officers (Table 5.26). Additionally, among adult parole agents, offender allegations about the agent's personal conduct (38%) or about the agent's co-workers (38%) were also fairly frequent ingredients of the victimization episode. Over one-third (35%) of the adult probation officers also noted that allegations by the offender about the officer's personal conduct were involved (Table 5.26).

Table 5.26

INCIDENCE OF ADDITIONAL OFFENDER ACTIONS AGAINST PROBATION/PAROLE OFFICERS: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)

Nature of Offender's Actions	Juvenile Prob/Par.	Adult Probation	Adult Parole	Total
<u>Physical Force:</u>				
Shot	--	2	--	1
Hit with impact instrument	--	2	--	1
Cut with sharp edged instrument	--	2	--	1
Hit with fist or hand	36	16	31	23
Kicked	21	12	50	22
Pushed	57	33	44	39
Other weapon used	14	18	47	24
<u>Allegations about Officer's:</u>				
Professional conduct	29	47	38	42
Personal conduct	14	35	38	32
Lawsuit vs. officer or agency	21	26	31	27
Allegations re: co-workers	--	18	38	19
Allegations re: superiors	7	12	6	10
Allegations re: family/friends	7	8	6	8
<b>Base N</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>79</b>

In 72% of the victimization occurrences involving adult parole agents, another agent was present when the incident took place (Table 5.27). This was also true for 50% of the juvenile probation/parole officers and 36% of the adult probation officers.

Third parties related to the offender were also present in many cases. In instances involving juvenile probation/parole officers, their presence and, frequently, their participation in the affair were noted by 71% of the officers. This was also true in 41% of the cases involving the adult parole officers (Table 5.27).

Table 5.27

OTHERS PRESENT AT VICTIMIZATION EVENT IN ADDITION  
TO OFFICER: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)

Victimization Status	Juvenile Prob/Par.	Adult Probation	Adult Parole	Total
Probation/parole officer	50	36	72	46
Law enforcement officer	29	8	24	15
Officer's family	--	6	6	5
Officer's friends or acquaintances	--	4	12	5
Offender's employer or co-workers	--	8	--	5
Offender's family	71	18	41	32
Offender's friends or acquaintances	29	16	18	19
Bystander(s)	36	18	24	22
Others	21	17	18	18
<b>Base N</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>80</b>

Another important matter in understanding the character and dynamics of hazardous incidents experienced is the location or medium where or through which an event occurs. An examination of the data relating to this issue in the current survey suggests that many of the incidents are, in reality, episodic. Often, more than one location and/or medium is involved before the victimization event is perceived as concluded, regardless of the outcome. For example, an incident that commences with an officer's or agent's visit to a client's home might be culminated in an on-the-street confrontation or a clash during a subsequent session between the officer and client at the agency office. The data in Table 5.28 suggests that such action sequences are not uncommon; many of the respondents identified multiple sites and/or media as being involved in the same event.

As can be seen in Table 5.28, an agency office was identified as a location where the incident occurred in a majority (53%) of all the "most serious incidents" reported. In events affecting adult parole agents, the

client's home was also named by 41% of these respondents.<sup>13</sup> A courtroom was a prominent location for incidents involving juvenile probation/parole agents 43%). Numerous other locations and/or media were noted by respondents, though the various frequencies of occurrence were generally quite low.

Table 5.28

WHERE INCIDENT TOOK PLACE BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)<sup>1</sup>

Where Incident Took Place	Juvenile Prob/Par.	Adult Probation	Adult Parole	Total
Over the phone	7	20	12	16
By letter or mail	--	2	--	1
Message or report of others	7	14	18	14
Agency office	50	56	47	53
Client's home	14	20	41	24
Someone else's home	--	6	--	4
Prison or jail	14	8	12	10
Police station	--	4	6	4
Human services agency	7	6	6	6
Courtroom	43	8	--	12
In vehicle	21	6	24	12
Offender's employment site	--	6	--	4
Public facility	--	12	--	8
On the street	--	8	11	8
Apartment hallway or elevator	21	8	18	12
Other location	14	8	--	8
<b>Base N<sup>14</sup></b>	<b>14</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>80</b>

Attempting to talk to the offender was named as a response to incidents by the great majority of all respondents (78%) (Table 5.29). Verbal threats were also employed by nearly two-thirds (65%) of the adult parole agents and 43% of the adult probation officers. Notably, about one-third (35%) of the adult parole agents reported that they struck back physically in response to an offender's actions, as did 29% of the juvenile probation/parole officers (Table 5.29). Responding to an offender by using or threatening to use a gun or other weapon was a rare occurrence (Table 5.29).

<sup>13</sup>Note, also, that in 56% of the cases involving adult parole agents, the incident occurred during arrest of the offender (Table 5.30).

<sup>14</sup>Respondents were requested to identify as many locations and/or media that applied to the most serious incident experienced in the year preceding the survey. Thus column percentages are not cumulative and do not add to 100.



Table 5.29

**RESPONSE BY OFFICER TO INCIDENT: BY  
AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)<sup>15</sup>**

Officer Response	Juvenile Prob/Par.	Adult Probation	Adult Parole	Total
Struck back physically	29	14	35	21
Threatened to strike back physically	14	14	18	15
Used gun or other weapon	7	2	12	5
Threatened to use a gun	--	--	6	1
Displayed a badge or I.D.	7	14	29	16
Used verbal threat	7	43	65	41
Said nothing	14	14	6	12
Retreated	14	20	11	17
Called out for help	29	20	18	21
Attempted to talk to offender	79	73	88	78
Took no action	7	7	--	5
<b>Base N</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>76</b>

In 56% of the cases involving adult parole officers, the incident took place during the arrest of the perpetrator, and as a consequence of an announced visit (44%) or a surprise visit (44%) (Table 5.30). Announced or surprise visits were also contexts of the most serious incident in two-thirds (67%) of cases involving adult probation officers and 50% of those involving juvenile probation/parole officers (Table 5.30). The latter were also much more likely to report that the incident occurred during transport of the offender (36%) (Table 5.30).

<sup>15</sup> Respondents were requested to identify as many responses that applied to the most serious incident experienced in the year preceding the survey. Thus column percentages are not cumulative and do not add to 100.

Table 5.30

**CONTEXT IN WHICH INCIDENT OCCURRED BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)<sup>16</sup>**

Context of the Incident	Juvenile Prob/Par.	Adult Probation	Adult Parole	Total
Announced or expected visit	29	29	44	32
Surprise visit	21	38	44	37
During arrest of the offender	7	16	56	24
During arrest of someone else	--	--	--	--
In response to offender's call	--	8	18	9
In response to offender's family member call	--	16	12	12
Context of domestic dispute	--	20	18	16
During transport of offender	36	6	18	14
Other context	36	33	18	30
<b>Base N</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>81</b>

**Aftermaths of Victimization and Consequences for Workers**

One of the important concerns in examining the many different impacts that victimization might have on personnel in the field of probation and parole focuses attention on the aftermaths of such events and their consequences for workers' personal and professional lives. Table 5.31 presents information describing the aftermaths of victimization as reported by respondents in the Connecticut worker safety study.

Being injured by the incident was reported by 39% of the adult parole agents and 28% of the juvenile probation/parole agents. The corresponding figure for adult probation officers was much lower (9%) (Table 5.31)

Two aftermaths that can be considered as primarily emotional in nature, being shaken up and fear on the job, were frequently reported as a consequence of the incident. Almost three-fourths (73%) of all respondents indicated that being "shaken up" was one aftermath of the incident. The frequencies for "fear on the job" as a consequence were lower but not insignificant, ranging from 33% for adult parole agents to 64% for adult probation officers (Table 5.31).

<sup>16</sup>Respondents were requested to identify as many contexts that applied to the most serious incident experienced in the year preceding the survey. Thus column percentages are not cumulative and do not add to 100.

Another feature of the data that stands out is the fact that officers perceive victimization incidents as affecting their approaches to or relationships with clients. A "reduced sense of trust in clients" was noted by 61% of the adult probation officers, 50% of the juvenile probation/parole officers, and more than one-third (39%) of the adult parole agents. A related aftermath, "reduced sensitivity to clients," was also cited by 36% of the adult probation officers (Table 5.31). Disruption of personal life was reported by over one-fourth (29%) of all respondents, including 34% of officers in adult probation. One-fourth (25%) of the latter also indicated that the incident had resulted in a disruption of family life (Table 5.31).

In contrast to the negative consequences of victimization, over two-fifths (22%) of all respondents noted that they had experienced an "enhanced sense of self-confidence" as a result of the incident (Table 5.31). In sum, the aftermaths reported were quite varied, and could conceivably have longer-term consequences for worker and agency effectiveness in the supervision of probationers and parolees.

Table 5.31

AFTERMATHS OF VICTIMIZATION EVENTS BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)

Victimization Status	Juvenile Prob/Par.	Adult Probation	Adult Parole	Total
Injured by incident	28	9	39	20
Chronic condition	--	--	6	1
Aggravation of old injury	--	--	12	3
Stomachache, headache, etc.	14	9	24	13
Shaken up	71	76	67	73
Fear on the job	43	64	33	53
Disruption in personal life	29	34	17	29
Disruption of family life	13	24	--	16
Enhanced sense of self-confidence	33	20	22	23
Reduced self confidence	--	30	6	19
Reduced trust in clients	50	61	39	54
Reduced sensitivity to clients	21	36	17	29
Increased use of medication	--	--	--	1
Increased use of alcohol	--	4	--	3
<b>Base N</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>76</b>

Additional survey questions pertaining to the aftermaths of the victimization event asked about other possible effects of the incident on the worker and others with whom he/she relates. The results are presented in Table 5.32. With respect to concern with personal effects on the officer, 42% of the adult probation officers and 43% of the juvenile probation/parole officers reported that the incident had negative personal consequences; only 22% of the adult parole agents responded similarly. Twenty-nine percent of all the respondents stated that the incident had a negative effect on their families. Two-fifths (41%) of the adult probation agents indicated that they were less open with clients as a result of the incident (Table 5.32).

Table 5.32

EFFECTS OF VICTIMIZATION EVENTS BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)

Effects of Victimization	Juvenile Prob/Par.	Adult Probation	Adult Parole	Total
<u>Personal Effect on Officers:</u>				
Positive consequences	21	18	22	19
Negative consequences	43	42	22	38
No consequences	36	40	56	43
<u>Effect on Officer's Family:</u>				
Positive consequences	--	--	--	--
Negative consequences	14	33	28	29
No consequences	86	67	72	71
<u>Effect of Incident on Agency:</u>				
Positive consequences	7	4	6	5
Negative consequences	21	18	11	17
No consequences	72	78	83	78
<u>Effect on Co-Workers:</u>				
Positive consequences	7	11	17	12
Negative consequences	29	27	28	28
No consequences	64	61	56	60
<u>Less Open with Client:</u>				
Yes	7	41	17	29
No	93	59	83	71
<u>Less Open with Co-Workers:</u>				
Yes	--	14	11	10
No	100	86	89	90
<u>Thought About Quitting Job:</u>				
Yes	14	25	11	20
No	86	75	89	80

Table 5.32 (Cont'd.)

## EFFECTS OF VICTIMIZATION EVENTS BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)

Effects of Victimization	Juvenile Prob/Par.	Adult Probation	Adult Parole	Total
<u>Applied for a Transfer:</u>				
Yes	--	9	--	5
No	100	91	100	95
<u>Avoided Contact with Co-Workers:</u>				
Yes	--	4	11	5
No	100	96	89	95
<u>Avoided Contact with Threatening Clients:</u>				
Yes	14	23	6	17
No	86	77	94	83
<u>Base N</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>45</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>77</u>

The last two concerns examined in this section of the report focus on the reporting behavior of officer victims in relation to the most serious incident experienced in the preceding year and their perceptions of whether the incident might have been prevented by them or their agencies. As can be seen in Table 5.33, among all respondents the two sets of individuals to whom the incident was reported were, in order of frequency, co-workers (88%) and supervisors (74%). Family members and friends were also frequently named individuals with whom they discussed the incident--53% with a spouse, 41% with a friend, and 29% with another family member. Among the adult parole agents, 44% related that they had reported the incident to the police, as did just over one-fourth of respondents in the other two groups. Overall, the data in Table 5.33 demonstrate that agents/officers in each of the agency settings are not reluctant to report and discuss the incident with others in the agency, and about half go on to discuss the experience with family members and friends.

Table 5.33

## REPORTING BEHAVIOR OF OFFICER VICTIMS BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)

To Whom Event Reported	Juvenile Prob/Par.	Adult Probation	Adult Parole	Total
Agency head	21	18	39	24
Supervisor	79	0	78	74
Co-workers	93	84	94	88
Police	29	28	44	32
Counselor	--	5	--	3
Spouse	43	56	56	53
Other family member	21	30	39	31
Friends	36	44	39	41
Other persons	14	26	28	24
No one	21	14	--	12
<b>Base N</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>80</b>

As shown in Table 5.34, it is clear that very few respondents--only 8% of all the probation/parole officers (none of the juvenile services workers) felt that they personally could have prevented the incident from occurring. This is not surprising, in view of earlier findings that indicate that a majority of the incidents occurred while the officer was carrying out normal day-to-day duties associated with the job, such as making field visits, meeting with an offender in the agency office, or dealing with the offender in a jail or prison. As more than one respondent to the survey noted in comments to the researchers, many of the events experienced simply "come with the territory"--they cannot be prevented, only dealt with in the most constructive manner possible.

A minority (19%) of the respondents felt that their agencies could have done something to prevent the hazardous incident from occurring, although some 33% of the adult parole officers felt that their agencies could have taken some preventive action. Moreover, 61% of the adult parole officers believed that their agencies could have better prepared them and other personnel to cope with this type of situation. This was also noted by 43% of the juvenile probation/parole officers and 34% of the adult probation officers (Table 5.34). In sum, what emerges from these data is (1) that officers perceive their ability and that of their agencies to prevent the occurrence of victimization events to be limited, but (2) prior education about the circumstances and dynamics of victimization events, coupled with training enabling them to cope with and respond more effectively to hazardous events in their daily job routines, could be achieved through more thorough educational and skills development programs sponsored by their agencies.

Table 5.34

## WHETHER INCIDENT COULD HAVE BEEN PREVENTED BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)

Whether Incident Could Have Been Prevented	Juvenile Prob/Par.	Adult Probation	Adult Parole	Total
Could you have prevented the incident?				
Yes	--	9	11	8
No	57	64	72	65
Don't know	43	27	17	27
Could your agency have done anything to prevent the incident?				
Yes	21	13	33	19
No	43	53	50	51
Don't know	36	33	17	30
Could the agency have done anything to better prepare personnel to cope with this type of situation?				
Yes	43	34	61	42
No	14	27	28	25
Don't know	43	39	11	33
<u>Base N</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>45</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>77</u>

## Section 6

### SURVEY FINDINGS: DELAWARE

#### Introduction

A total of 83 workers from throughout Delaware's Parole and Probation system responded to the 1989 survey. As noted earlier in the section dealing with methodology, this represented an overall response rate of 44%<sup>1</sup>. The respondents were distributed across several job categories, as shown in the following listing.

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Clerical	7	8
Probation/Parole Officer I	9	11
Probation/Parole Officer II	28	34
Sr. Probation & Parole Officer	14	17
Probation & Parole Supervisor	5	6
Social Service Specialist	5	6
Juvenile Probation Officer	12	14
Juvenile Probation Supervisor	1	1
Director/Administrator	2	3
<u>Totals</u>	<u>83</u>	<u>100</u>

#### Respondent Characteristics

To make analyses of respondent characteristics and hazardous incident encounters more efficient, these job categories were collapsed into three main types: (1) Officers;<sup>2</sup> (2) Supervisors/Managers; and (3) Clerical.<sup>3</sup> Table 6.1 shows the relationship between each of these three job types and various profile characteristics of survey respondents.

Adult probation and parole personnel constitute 71% of all respondents. and 74% of the responding officers. Among officer respondents, two-thirds (68%) are male, as are 88% of the supervisors/manager. All of the responding clerical and staff workers are female (Table 6.1).

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<sup>1</sup>However, very few clerical workers responded to the survey (7 out of a total of 44). When they are excluded from the calculation, the response rate rises to 52% (76 out of a total of 145).

<sup>2</sup>This includes all personnel whose jobs bring them into direct client contact for purposes of probation and parole supervision.

<sup>3</sup>The number of respondents in both the supervisor/manager and clerical categories is very small--eight and seven, respectively. They were included in the table for sake of completeness, but considerable caution is advised in interpreting the data for each of these groups of personnel.



Supervisors/managers are, on average, older than officers, an expected finding in view of the fact that movement into a management or supervisory position is typically associated with tenure in the field and agency (Table 6.1). Over four-fifths (82%) of the officers hold a bachelor's or graduate degree. The corresponding figure for supervisors/ managers is 100%.

Not surprisingly, supervisors/managers exhibit much longer tenure than officers in both current agency and the field--74% and 100%, respectively, having 10 or more year's tenure. In contrast, 56% of the officers have been in their current agencies less than five years and an equal percentage have also been in the field of probation/parole for less than five years. Overall, though, the figures for officer tenure in current agency and the field point to a relatively young work force (Table 6.1).

More than one-third of the responding officers hold a second job, as do 38% of the supervisors/managers. None of the clerical and staff respondents reported that they held a second job (Table 6.1).

A sizable majority (71%) of the officers indicated that they have had unarmed self-defense training. Exactly half of the supervisors/managers responded similarly (Table 6.1).

As can be seen in the last segment of Table 7.1, none of the officers reported carrying a handgun or other firearm, though one respondent in the supervisor/manager category reported carrying a handgun. Chemical agent (13%) and impact instrument (13%) had the highest frequencies of weapons carried, as reported by officers.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>While the number of non-responses to the survey items pertaining to the carrying of weapons was disproportionately higher than for any other set of questions--possibly, reflecting a respondent's regarding these questions as not applicable, or in a few cases, perhaps, a reluctance to report carrying a weapon not authorized--these were not frequent enough to offset an overall conclusion that weapons are carried by a very small number of workers. Moreover, data presented later in this section do not indicate a groundswell of support for a policy initiative authorizing the carrying of weapons by probation and parole officers.

Table 6.1

## CHARACTERISTICS OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS (PERCENTAGES)

Characteristics	Officers	Supv'rs./ Managers	Clerical	All Re- spondents
<u>Agency Type:</u>				
Adult Probation-Parole	74	62	57	71
Juvenile Probation/Aftercare	26	38	43	29
<u>Office Size:</u>				
1-10 employees	21	38	14	22
11-25 employees	33	--	43	31
26-50 employees	9	--	29	10
51 or more employees	36	62	14	37
<u>Sex of Respondent:</u>				
Male	68	88	--	64
Female	32	12	100	36
<u>Age of Respondent:</u>				
Under 25 years	2	--	--	1
25-29 years	21	--	29	19
30-39 years	34	25	43	34
40-49 years	41	25	29	42
50 years or older	3	50	--	4
<u>Educational Attainment:</u>				
High school	2	--	57	6
Some college	16	--	29	16
Bachelor's degree	69	38	14	61
Graduate degree	13	62	--	7
<u>Tenure in Current Agency:</u>				
Less than 3 years	40	--	29	35
3-4 years	16	--	14	14
5-9 years	15	25	14	16
10-19 years	26	62	43	31
20 or more years	3	12	--	4
<u>Tenure in the Probation/ Parole Field:</u>				
Less than 3 years	40	--	29	37
3-4 years	16	--	29	16
5-9 years	11	--	29	10
10-19 years	28	75	14	31
20 or more years	4	25	--	5

Table 6.1 (Cont'd.)

## CHARACTERISTICS OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS (PERCENTAGES)

Characteristics	Officers	Supv'rs./ Managers	Clerical	All Re- spondents
<u>Second Job Held:</u>				
Yes	37	38	--	34
No	63	62	100	66
<u>Unarmed Defense Training:</u>				
Yes	71	50	14	64
No	29	50	86	36
<u>Weapon Usually Carried:</u> <sup>5</sup>				
Handgun	--	12	14	2
Other firearm	--	--	--	--
Impact instrument	10	--	17	9
Chemical agent	13	--	17	12
Knife/Other Sharp-edged Inst.	3	--	17	4
<u>Base N</u>	<u>68</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>83</u>

Note: Column percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

<sup>5</sup>Separate questions were asked for five different types of weapons. Thus, the percentages are independent for each type and do not add to 100.

### Victimization Rates

For purposes of this study, victimization was defined in terms of the exposure of probation and parole workers to hazardous incidents encountered in the course of carrying out their jobs.<sup>6</sup> To help respondents understand the meaning of the term, "hazardous incident," as used in designing this study, the following examples were included in the instructions appearing at the beginning of the questionnaire.

Examples of hazardous incidents affecting staff safety would include: physical assault or harm; threat of physical assault or harm; assault or threat of harm to a worker's family members; harm or threat of harm to one's property; extortion; harm or threat of harm to a worker's reputation; or psychological intimidation.

In the first section of the survey questionnaire, which was applicable to all respondents, four items were concerned with probation and parole workers' experiences with hazardous incidents. The first two asked whether the worker, during his or her entire career in the probation/parole field, had (1) been physically assaulted in the line of duty, or (2) been intimidated by physical or other threat. The other two survey items were similar but asked the respondents to answer in terms of their experiences since November, 1988--an approximate 12-month period preceding the survey. The victimization rates for the combined group of officers and supervisors/managers during their entire careers in the probation and parole field and during the year preceding the survey are shown in Table 6.2.<sup>7</sup>

Some 60% of current officers and supervisors/managers reported experiencing at least one victimization incident during the course of their careers in the field of probation/parole. When general type of victimization events are considered, one-third (14%) of the respondents reported that they had been physically assaulted at some time during their careers, and 59% related that they had experienced incidents of intimidation during their careers in the field (Table 6.2).

As shown in the bottom section of Table 6.2, 42% of the respondents reported experiencing some type of victimization event during the year preceding the survey, with 10% indicating that the incident involved physical assault. Understandably, the highest rates are associated with occurrences of intimidation (42%).

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<sup>6</sup>For a detailed discussion of the concept of "victimization" and its relation to hazardous incidents and worker safety in probation and parole, see William H. Parsonage, Worker Safety in Probation and Parole, Washington, D.C.: National Institute of Corrections, 1990.

<sup>7</sup>Because of the small number of respondents in the supervisor/manager category (N=8), they were combined with officers/agents in tables reporting victimization rates.

Table 6.2

**VICTIMIZATION RATES FOR ENTIRE CAREER AND DURING PAST YEAR:  
OFFICERS AND SUPERVISORS/MANAGERS (Percentages)<sup>8</sup>**

Characteristics	Percent
<u>Victimization in Career:</u>	
Never victimized in career	40
Victimization in career by general type:	
Physical assault only	1
Both assault and intimidation	13
Intimidation only	46
<b>Base N</b>	<b>76</b>
<u>Victimization in Past Year:</u>	
Not victimized in past year incident in past year	58
Victimization in past year by general type:	
Physical assault only	--
Both assault and intimidation	10
Intimidation only	32
<b>Base N</b>	<b>76</b>

Note: Column percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Table 6.3 shows the victimization rates by type and rate during the staff member's entire career in the probation and parole field. As can be seen, the majority of reported physical assaults are single occurrences (9% of the 14% indicating that they had experienced work-related physical assaults during

<sup>8</sup>Because of the small number of respondents in the supervisor/manager category (N=8), they were combined with officer/agent respondents in this table.

their careers. The reported incidence of intimidation by physical or other threat during the worker's career in the field is much higher (59%). Of those experiencing intimidation events during their careers, the majority reported multiple instances of this form of victimization (Table 6.3).

Table 6.3

**VICTIMIZATION RATES OVER ENTIRE CAREER IN PROBATION/PAROLE FIELD:  
OFFICERS AND SUPERVISORS/MANAGERS (Percentages)<sup>9</sup>**

<u>Victimization Rates</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Physically Assaulted in the Line of Duty During Entire Career	14
Times Physically Assaulted in the Line of of Duty During Entire Career:	
Once	9
Twice	3
Three times	--
Four times	1
More than four times	1
Never physically assaulted	86
	<u>Base N</u> <u>76</u>
Intimidated by Physical or Any Other Threat During Entire Career	59
Times Intimidated by Physical or Any Other Other Threat During Entire Career:	
Once	16
Twice	5
Three times	12
Four times	4
More than four times	22
Never intimidated	41
	<u>Base N</u> <u>76</u>

Note: Column percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

<sup>9</sup>Because of the small number of respondents in the supervisor/manager category (N=8), they were combined with officers/agents in this table.

The second set of indicators of hazardous incidents focused on the experiences of workers in the year preceding the survey. The results are shown in Table 6.4. As can be seen, 10% of the combined group of officers (N=68) and supervisors/managers (N=8) reported that they had been physically assaulted in the line of duty during the year preceding the survey.

When confrontations by some form of intimidation are considered, the incidence rates are much higher (42%). Moreover, among those indicating such events to have occurred during the past year, half reported more than one such incident (Table 6.4).

Table 6.4

**VICTIMIZATION RATES IN YEAR PRECEDING SURVEY: OFFICERS  
AND SUPERVISORS/MANAGERS (Percentages)<sup>10</sup>**

<u>Victimization Rates</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Physically Assaulted in the Line of Duty During the Past Year	10
Times Physically Assaulted in the Line of of Duty During the Past Year:	
Once	9
Twice	1
Three times	--
Four times	--
More than four times	--
Never physically assaulted	90
Intimidated by Physical or Any Other Threat During Past Year	42
Times Intimidated by Physical or Any Other Threat During Past Year:	
Once	18
Twice	12
Three times	3
Four times	3
More than four times	7
Never intimidated	58
<b>Base N</b>	<b>76</b>

Note: Column percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

<sup>10</sup>Because of the small number of respondents in the supervisor/manager category (N=8), they were combined with officers/agents in this table.

### Correlates of Victimization

Table 6.5 displays relationships between general victimization status and various personal and job-related characteristics of the probation and parole officers and supervisors/managers responding to the survey.<sup>11</sup> As can be seen, males are more likely than females to have experienced victimization incidents during their careers in probation and parole (Table 6.5)

Age shows no relationship to career victimization experiences. However, tenure in the field of probation and parole is clearly related to career victimization status. For example, 45% of those with 10 or more years of tenure reported experiencing one or more victimization events at some time in their careers, compared to only 26% of those not reporting having faced such an incident. Respondents with unarmed self-defense training are also more likely than others to have been victimized at some point in their careers (78%), compared to only 53% of non-victims. Given the small numbers involved, no conclusions about weapons carried and career victimization status are warranted (Table 6.5).

In Table 6.6, relationships between victimization status during the year preceding the survey and several personal and job-related characteristics are shown for officers and supervisors/managers. Only one of these requires comment. Individuals with unarmed self-defense training are somewhat more likely to have been victimized at some time in the past year than their colleagues without such training. However, an inspection of the other data in Table 6.6 does not indicate any marked relationships between other variables and current victimization status.

In summary, the data presented thus far in Section 6 indicate that the problem of worker safety among Delaware probation and parole officers and supervisors/managers, is pervasive. Some 14% of these respondents reported that they had been physically assaulted during the past year while carrying out their job responsibilities.

When all types of hazardous incidents are considered, 42% of the officers and supervisors/managers responding to this survey experienced some such events during this same period of time. More details about the experiences of probation and parole workers in Delaware with on-the-job incidents affecting worker safety are presented in another subsection below.

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<sup>11</sup>"Victimization status" refers to any form or frequency of encounter with hazardous incidents, as defined earlier, and distinguishes only between general "yes" and "no" responses to survey items asking about such events.



Table 6.5

**CORRELATES OF VICTIMIZATION STATUS DURING ENTIRE CAREER:  
OFFICERS AND SUPERVISORS/MANAGERS (Percentages)<sup>12</sup>**

Characteristics	Totals	
	Yes	No
<u>Sex of Respondent:</u>		
Male	78	57
Female	22	43
<u>Age of Respondent:</u>		
Under 25 years	2	--
25 - 29 years	17	20
30 - 39 years	35	30
40 - 49 years	41	47
50 years or older	4	3
<u>Unarmed self-defense training:</u>		
Yes, have had training	78	53
No, have not had training	22	47
<u>Tenure in probation/parole field:</u>		
Less than 3 years	33	47
3 - 4 years	13	17
5 - 9 years	9	10
10 - 19 years	39	23
20 years or more	6	3
<u>Kind of weapon usually carried:<sup>13</sup></u>		
Handgun	2	--
Other firearm	--	--
Impact instrument	11	4
Chemical Agent	11	12
Knife/Other sharp-edged instr.	2	4
<b>Base N</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>30</b>

Note: Column percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

<sup>12</sup>Because of the small number of respondents in the supervisor/manager category (N=8), they were combined with officers/agents in this table.

<sup>13</sup>Respondents were asked to indicate whether they usually carried or did not carry a series of weapons. thus, each percentage is independent of the others, and totals do not add to 100.

Table 6.6

**CORRELATES OF VICTIMIZATION STATUS IN ENTIRE CAREER: OFFICERS  
AND SUPERVISORS/MANAGERS (Percentages)<sup>14</sup>**

Characteristics	Totals	
	Yes	No
<u>Sex of Respondent:</u>		
Male	75	66
Female	25	34
<u>Age of Respondent:</u>		
Under 25 years	3	--
25 - 29 years	22	16
30 - 39 years	34	31
40 - 49 years	34	50
50 years or older	6	2
<u>Unarmed self-defense training:</u>		
Yes, have had training	78	61
No, have not had training	22	39
<u>Hold second job:</u>		
Yes, have second job	44	32
No, do not have second job	56	68
<u>Tenure in current agency:</u>		
Less than 2 years	31	32
3 - 4 years	12	16
5 - 9 years	12	18
10 - 19 years	31	30
20 years or more	3	4
<u>Kind of weapon usually carried:<sup>15</sup></u>		
Handgun	3	--
Other firearm	--	--
Impact instrument	10	8
Chemical Agent	10	13
Knife/Other sharp-edged instr.	3	3
<b>Base N</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>42</b>

Note: Column percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

<sup>14</sup>Because of the small number of respondents in the supervisor/manager category (N=8), they were combined with officers/agents in this table.

<sup>15</sup>Respondents were asked to indicate whether they usually carried or did not carry a series of weapons. Thus, each percentage figure is independent of the others, and totals do not add to 100.

## Safety Concerns and Policy Initiatives for Worker Safety

### Safety Concerns

Officers/agents and supervisors/managers in Delaware who responded to the general survey were asked several questions concerning their perceptions of personal safety in various areas of the work environment of probation and parole. As can be seen in Table 6.7, the great majority of officers (80%) felt themselves to be very safe or safe while working in their offices during regular office hours. This figure declined slightly when the context was changed to working in your local office during non-office hours (70%).

Four-fifths (80%) of the respondents reported that they felt very safe or safe when visiting with an offender in the local jail or state prison (Table 6.7). The results were strikingly different when officers/agents and supervisors/managers were asked about their concern for personal safety when making field contacts. Here, nearly three-fourths (72%) reported being very or somewhat concerned about personal safety in the field (Table 6.7).

When respondents were asked to indicate whether, with respect to personal safety, work in the field had become more dangerous or not, 70% felt that the field had become more dangerous over the past five years.

In sum, workers' concerns with safety focused principally on contacts made in the community, which constitutes for most probation and parole workers a primary work environment. With respect to the phenomenon of hazardous incidents, the findings presented here fit closely with data presented in another subsection below on the dynamics of victimization events. There, it can be seen that such incidents occur mainly during the carrying out of day-to-day work responsibilities in the community.

Table 6.7

**PERCEPTIONS OF ON-THE-JOB SAFETY: OFFICERS  
AND SUPERVISOR/MANAGERS (Percentages)<sup>16</sup>**

Safety Concern Items	Totals
How safe do you feel while working in your local office during regular office hours?	
Very Safe/Safe	80
Unsafe/Very Unsafe	20
How safe do you feel while working in your local office during <u>non-office</u> hours?	
Very Safe/Safe	71
Unsafe/Very Unsafe	29
How safe do you feel when visiting with an offender in your local jail or state prison?	
Very Safe/Safe	80
Unsafe/Very Unsafe	17
Do not make such visits	3
How concerned are you about your personal safety when making field contacts?	
Very concerned/Somewhat Concerned	72
Not very concerned/Definitely Not Concerned	22
Do not make field contacts	5
With respect to your personal safety, during the past <u>five years</u> (or whatever time you've been in the field, if less than 5 years), do you think your work in the probation/parole field has:	
Become more dangerous	70
Stayed about the same	30
Become less dangerous	--
<b>Base N</b>	<b>76</b>

<sup>16</sup>Because of the small number of respondents in the supervisor/manager category (N=8), they were combined with officers/agents in this table.

## Policy Initiatives for Worker Safety

In his monograph, Worker Safety in Probation and Parole, Parsonage identified a series of policy initiatives regarded by probation and parole workers as relevant to worker safety in studies conducted in Texas, New York State, Pennsylvania and Virginia.<sup>17</sup> Workers were asked to rate each potential policy initiative with respect to its perceived usefulness as a means of enhancing the safety of probation and parole workers.

In the current study, respondents were asked to rank 23 potential policy proposals drawn from the studies conducted in Texas, New York, Pennsylvania, and Virginia.<sup>18</sup> Possible ratings for each item were "definitely useful," "useful," "undecided," "not useful," and "definitely not useful." The results are shown in Table 6.8, with items rank-ordered according to the percentage of officers rating a policy initiative as "definitely useful" or "useful."

As can be seen in Table 6.8, four items received high ratings by 86% or more of the officers and supervisors/managers. All pertained to concerns about personal safety when carrying out day-to-day job responsibilities in local settings. The highest rated item (96%) was concerned with developing a "partner system" for use in making home visit. The second highest rated item pertained to identifying all "high risk" areas (91%). This was followed by providing training in self-defense methods (88%) and providing for probation/parole officer-police officer teams when making arrests of offenders who have violated probation or parole requirements (86%). Two additional policy initiatives for worker safety rated as definitely useful or useful by at least three-fourths of the respondents included providing probation/parole officers with up-to-date "mugshots" of recent releasees (79%) and installing two-way communications devices in officers' automobiles (78%). Providing officers with firearms to be carried while on duty and providing firearms to be carried whenever they are believed necessary did not receive strong endorsements by respondents--41% and 38%, respectively, rating these policy items as being definitely useful or useful (Table 6.8).

In sum, respondents' ratings of policy initiatives as definitely useful or useful tended to emphasize those actions of immediate utility to the front-line officer in carrying out typical job responsibilities with an enhanced sense of personal safety.

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<sup>17</sup>William H. Parsonage, Worker Safety in Probation and Parole (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Corrections, 1990).

<sup>18</sup>Minor changes were made in a few items, based on suggestions resulting from reviews of the initial questionnaire by representatives of agencies in the MASCA membership.

Table 6.8

**PERCEPTIONS OF POLICY INITIATIVES: OFFICERS  
AND SUPERVISOR/MANAGERS (Percentages)<sup>19</sup>**

Respondent Rating of Policies as "Definitely Useful" or "Useful"	Off./Agts. & Sup./Mgrs.
Develop a "partner system" to be used on an "as needed" basis when making home visits	96
Identify all "high risk" areas and keep all P/P officers informed of these areas.	91
Provide training in self-defense methods	88
Provide for P/P officer-police officer teams when making arrests of offenders in violation of probation/parole requirements	86
Provide training in "verbal judo"	80
Provide P/P officers with "mugshots" taken of releasees at the time of their release	79
Install two-way communication devices in each P/P officer's automobile	78
Provide "panic buttons" on office telephones-- i.e., buttons which would alert either the local police or security personnel in the event of an emergency	72
Provide all P/P officers with hand-held radios to be used for two-way communication in an emergency	72
Provide distress signal devices to P/P officers when making home visits	71
Establish secure clerical areas for field offices-- i.e., areas could be entered and exited only through electronically controlled security doors	68
Establish a "law enforcement arrest authority"-- i.e., special units of trained P/P officers with authority to carry weapons and make arrests	61

<sup>19</sup>Because of the small number of respondents in the supervisor/manager category (N=8), they were combined with officers/agents in this table.

Table 6.8 (Cont'd.)

**CORRELATES OF VICTIMIZATION DURING PAST YEAR: OFFICERS  
AND SUPERVISOR/MANAGERS (Percentages)**

Respondent Rating of Policies as "Definitely Useful" or "Useful"	Off./Agt. & Sup./Mgrs.
Provide P/P officers with soft body armor for use in situations thought to be "high risk"	60
Provide P/P officers with non-lethal, chemical agents to be carried when making home visits	59
Provide security officers for field offices--i.e., individuals who would control entrance to field offices and would be available to assist in an emergency	56
Increase the number of specialized caseloads with respect to probationers/parolees	49
Assuming proper screening/training, provide P/P officers with firearms to be carried during the course of their duties	41
Require that P/P officers check in and out with a centralized monitor when on official business	41
Implement a requirement that all P/P officers provide their respective unit supervisors with a daily schedule prior to making home visits and/or field contacts	39
Require a police/security officer to be present at all summons hearings held in the probation/ parole office	39
Assuming proper training, provide P/P officers with firearms to be carried at any time the officers believes it is necessary	38
Require a police/security officer be present with the P/P officer at all revocation hearings	38
Provide secure jail areas for visits with clients-- i.e., an area where the client is physically separated from the P/P officer	37
<b>Base N</b>	<b>76</b>

## Victimization Experiences of Delaware Probation/Parole Officers

The preceding discussion reported on the victimization experiences of the Delaware probation/parole work force by general occupational class--Officers, Supervisors/Managers, and Clerical/Staff. The discussion in the remainder of this section deals exclusively with officers who have direct case contact responsibilities. The purpose is to present information comparing and contrasts the victimization experiences of line officers by agency type. Presenting of the data in this manner is intended to contribute to the development of agency-specific programs for the enhancement of worker safety.

Sixty-eight Delaware officers responded to the survey. Of this number, 50 were adult probation/parole officers, and 18 juvenile probation/aftercare workers. When those respondents reporting on victimization incidents during the past year are broken out, the number reduces to 22, of which only three are juvenile officers. Thus, for all tables reporting on the dynamics of past-year victimization incidents, a decision was made to collapse the adult and juvenile officer categories and analyze past-year events in terms of all Delaware probation and parole officers.

As shown in Table 6.9, responding Delaware officers are predominately male (68%) and over 30 years of age (78%). Adult probation/parole officers tend to have less tenure in the field than their counterparts in juvenile probation--74% having less than 10 year's tenure, compared to 50%. However, there is less of a discrepancy between these two groups when tenure in current agency is compared (Table 6.9)

Sizable numbers of all the Delaware officers (37%) hold second jobs. This was reported by more than 40% of the juvenile probation officers (Table 6.10).

None of the respondents reported carrying handguns or other firearms. There is some use of other personal protection equipment, though the percentages are low (Table 6.11).

Fifty-nine percent of the Delaware officers report at least one victimization against them during their careers. Difference in the victimization rates of adult probation/parole and juvenile probation officers were negligible (Table 6.12).

When examined by type of event, the career victimization rate for the responding Delaware officers is 15% for physical assaults and 57% for events involving intimidation. Career rates are similar across agency type, though adult probation/parole officers are somewhat more likely to have experienced multiple incidents of victimization, both physical assault and intimidation (Table 6.13).

As shown in Table 6.14, 43% of the Delaware officers report some kind of victimization during the past 12-month period. The rate is higher for Adult Probation/Parole officers (46%) than for juvenile probation/aftercare officers (33%).



Past-year victimization rates for physical assault are surprisingly close to the corresponding career rates--12% for the past year and 15% for career. However, the past-year physical assault rate is more than twice as high for adult probation/parole officers than for juvenile probation officers--14% vs. 6%. The difference in past-year intimidation rates for these two groups of workers is less pronounced (Table 6.15).

Table 6.9

CHARACTERISTICS OF PROBATION/PAROLE OFFICER RESPONDENTS:  
BY TYPE OF AGENCY (Percentages)

Characteristics	Adult Prob./ Parole	Juvenile Probation/ Aftercare	Total
<u>Sex:</u>			
Male	70	61	68
Female	30	39	32
<u>Age:</u>			
Under 25 years	2	--	1
25 - 29 years	20	22	21
30 - 39 years	32	39	34
40 - 49 years	44	33	41
50 years or older	2	6	3
<u>Tenure in Field:</u>			
Less than 1 year	18	6	15
1 - 2 years	30	17	26
3 - 4 years	18	11	16
5 - 9 years	8	17	10
10 - 19 years	22	44	28
20 years or more	4	6	4
<u>Tenure in Current Agency:</u>			
Less than 1 year	20	6	16
1 - 2 years	28	11	23
3 - 4 years	14	22	16
5 - 9 years	12	22	15
10 - 19 years	24	33	26
20 years or more	2	6	3
<u>Base N</u>	<u>50</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>68</u>

Table 6.10

## SECOND JOB HELD BY OFFICERS:BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)

Second Job Held	Adult Prob./ Parole	Juvenile Probation/ Aftercare	Total
Yes, hold a second job	34	44	37
No, don't hold a second job	66	56	63
<u>Base N</u>	<u>50</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>68</u>

Table 6.11

## WEAPONS USUALLY CARRIED BY OFFICERS:BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)

Weapon Usually Carried	Adult Prob./ Parole	Juvenile Probation/ Aftercare	Total
Handgun	--	--	--
Other firearm	--	--	--
Impact instrument	13	--	10
Chemical agent	13	12	13
Knife or other sharp edged instrument	4	--	3
<u>Base N</u>	<u>50</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>68</u>

Table 6.12

VICTIMIZATION RATES OF OFFICERS DURING ENTIRE CAREER:  
BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)

Victimization Status	Adult Prob./ Parole	Juvenile Probation/ Aftercare	Total
Victim during career	58	61	59
Not victimized during career	42	39	41
<u>Base N</u>	<u>50</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>68</u>

Table 6.13

**OFFICERS PHYSICALLY ASSAULTED OR INTIMIDATED  
IN CAREER BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Physically Assaulted or Intimidated in Career	Adult Prob./ Parole	Juvenile Probation/ Aftercare	Total
Physically assaulted in whole career:	14	17	15
Once	8	17	10
Twice	4	--	3
Three times	--	--	--
Four times	2	--	1
More than four times	--	--	--
Never assaulted	86	83	85
Intimidated by physical or any other threat in whole career:	58	56	57
Once	16	17	16
Twice	8	--	6
Three times	12	11	12
Four times	4	6	4
More than four times	18	22	19
Never intimidated	42	44	43
<b>Base N</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>68</b>

Table 6.14

**VICTIMIZATION RATES OF OFFICERS IN A 12-MONTH PERIOD  
PRECEDING SURVEY BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Victimization Status	Adult Prob./ Parole	Juvenile Probation/ Aftercare	Total
Victim during past year	46	33	43
Not victim during past year	54	67	57
<b>Base N</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>68</b>

Table 6.15

**OFFICERS PHYSICALLY ASSAULTED OR INTIMIDATED IN 12-MONTH  
PERIOD PRECEDING SURVEY BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Physically Assaulted or Intimidated In 12-Month Period Preceding Survey	Adult Prob./ Parole	Juvenile Probation/ Aftercare	Total
Physically assaulted in past year:	14	6	12
Once	12	6	10
Twice	2	--	1
Three times	--	--	--
Four times	--	--	--
More than four times	--	--	--
Not assaulted during past year	86	94	88
Intimidated by physical or any other threat in past year:	46	33	43
Once	20	11	18
Twice	12	17	13
Three times	4	--	3
Four times	4	--	3
More than four times	6	6	6
Not intimidated during past year	54	67	57
<b><u>Base N</u></b>	<b><u>50</u></b>	<b><u>18</u></b>	<b><u>68</u></b>

The data in Table 6.16 relate demographic and job-related characteristics of probation and parole officers to past-year victimization status. As can be seen, males are a bit more likely than females to have experienced a victimization event in the past year, but the difference is modest. No other characteristics examined is related to past-year victimization.

Only one respondent reported carrying a handgun on duty, and frequencies for other weapons carried are quite small. Overall, there is no marked relationship between the carrying of weapons and past-year victimizations (Table 6.17).

A further analysis of victimization experiences of probation and parole officers in Delaware examined the relationship between past-year victimization and having or not having unarmed self-defense training. As can be seen in Table 6.18, those having such training are somewhat more likely to have been victimized in the past year, but the difference is clearly modest, considering the small base numbers involved.

Table 6.16

**CHARACTERISTICS OF OFFICERS BY VICTIMIZATION STATUS DURING  
PAST YEAR: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Characteristics	Victim	Non-Victim	Total
<u>Sex:</u>			
Male	75	66	70
Female	25	34	30
<u>Age:</u>			
Under 25 years	3	--	1
25 - 29 years	22	16	18
30 - 39 years	34	32	33
40 - 49 years	34	50	43
50 years or older	6	2	4
<u>Education:</u>			
High school	--	2	1
Some college	16	14	14
Bachelor's degree	66	66	66
Graduate degree	19	18	18
<u>Tenure in Field:</u>			
Less than 1 year	16	14	15
1 - 2 years	28	20	27
3 - 4 years	16	14	16
5 - 9 years	9	9	9
10 - 19 years	25	39	28
20 years or more	6	4	4
<u>Tenure in Current Agency:</u>			
Less than 1 year	19	11	16
1 - 2 years	23	20	22
2 - 4 years	12	16	15
5 - 9 years	12	18	14
10 - 19 years	31	29	30
20 years or more	3	4	3
<u>Base N</u>	<u>31</u>	<u>39</u>	<u>70</u>

Table 6.17

**WEAPON USUALLY CARRIED BY OFFICERS: BY  
VICTIMIZATION STATUS (Percentages)**

Weapon Usually Carried	Victim	Non-Victim	Total
Handgun	3	--	1
Chemical agent	10	13	11
Impact instrument	10	8	9
Knife or other sharp edged instrument	3	3	3
<b>Base N</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>70</b>

Table 6.18

**VICTIMIZATION STATUS OF OFFICERS HAVING OR NOT HAVING  
UNARMED DEFENSE TRAINING (Percentages)**

Unarmed Self-Defense Training	Victim	Non-Victim	Total
Has had unarmed defense training	78	61	68
Has not had unarmed defense training	22	39	32
<b>Base N</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>70</b>

**Perceptions of Policy Initiatives  
and Worker Safety Concerns**

Respondents were asked to rank 23 potential policy proposals drawn from the studies conducted in Texas, New York, Pennsylvania, and Virginia. The possible ratings of each item were "definitely useful," "useful," "undecided," "not useful," and "definitely not useful." The results are shown in Table 6.19, with items rank-ordered according to the percentage of all respondents rating a policy initiative as "definitely useful" or "useful."

About one-third of the safety-related policies received strong to very strong endorsements by three-fourths or more of the officers responding to the survey. Three of the items were accorded very high ratings of usefulness. These included development of a "partner system" to be used as needed when making home visits (96%), identification of "high risk" areas (91%), and providing training in self-defense methods (91%). Several other safety-related policy initiatives were also endorsed as useful by strong majorities of the

respondents--for example, providing for officer-police officer teams when arresting offenders in violation of their parole/probation (85%), providing training in "verbal judo" (80%), providing officers with up-to-date mugshots of releasees (79%), providing officers with two-way communication devices in autos (78%), and equipping officers with hand-held radios (Table 6.19).

Eight of the potential policy initiatives were regarded as useful approaches by less than a majority of respondents. In general, the items receiving lower ratings dealt with the use of police or security officers to enhance worker safety at hearings or in field offices, and requiring workers to check in and out with supervisors or other monitors when on official business (Table 6.19).

There were also some policy initiatives on which adult probation/parole and juvenile probation officers differed markedly in their endorsement as definitely useful or useful. For example, 92% of the adult services officers awarded high ratings to providing officers with up-to-date "mugshots" of releasees, but only 44% of the juvenile probation officers did the same (Table 6.19). Further, 72% of the adult probation/parole officers felt that providing officers with non-lethal chemical weapons would be a useful policy, while only 28% of their counterparts in juvenile probation felt the same. A similar discrepancy is observable for establishing a special unit of armed officers to make arrests. This was strongly endorsed by 74% of the adult probation/parole respondents but by only 28% of their colleagues in juvenile service agencies (Table 6.19). Another notable difference between the responses of each group related to providing officers with firearms, which was more favored by adult probation/parole officers. Over half (52%) of these respondents felt that providing officers with firearms when thought necessary was a useful policy, compared to only 6% of those in juvenile probation/after-care. Other items with marked differences between the respondent groups were mainly concerned with enhancing office safety (Table 6.19).

An interesting feature of the ratings of the safety-related policies receiving strong endorsements by the responding probation and parole workers is that none appears to reflect policy ventures that are extraordinarily expensive or especially complex to implement.

Table 6.19

**RESPONDENTS' RATINGS OF USEFULNESS OF SAFETY-RELATED  
POLICIES: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

	Adult Prob./ Parole	Juvenile Probation/ Aftercare	Total
Develop a partner system to be used as needed	96	94	96
Identify high risk areas and inform officers	96	83	92
Provide training in self defense methods	94	83	91
Provide probation/parole officer-police officer teams for arrest of offenders	94	61	85
Provide training in verbal judo	80	78	80
Provide officers with mugshots of releasees	92	44	79
Two-way communication devices in officer's cars	84	62	78
Provide officers with hand-held radios	82	55	75
Provide distress signal devices to officers making home visits	78	56	72
Provide panic buttons on office telephones	76	56	71
Require officers to be trained as peace officers			
Establish secure clerical area in field offices	78	39	68
Establish special unit of armed officers to make arrests	74	28	62
Provide officers with soft body armor	74	33	63
Provide officers with non-lethal chemical agents	72	28	60
Provide security officers for field offices	64	33	56
Increase number of specialized caseloads	50	39	47
Provide officers with firearms to carry while on duty	44	17	44
Provide officers with firearms to be carried when they think necessary	52	6	40
Have police/security officer present at all summons hearings	46	22	40
Police/security officer to be present at all revocation hearings	40	28	39
Require officers to provide supervisors with daily schedules	30	61	38
Require officers to check in and out with centralized monitor	36	44	38
Provide secure jail areas for visits w/clients	42	17	35
<b>Base N</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>68</b>

Officers were also asked several questions concerning their perceptions of personal safety in various areas of the work environment of probation and parole. As can be seen in Table 6.20, a large majority of the respondents--81%, overall, including all of the juvenile probation officers--felt themselves to be very safe or safe while working in their offices during regular office hours. This percentage declined only slightly when the context was



changed to working in the local office during non-office hours. Large majorities of both sets of respondents did not see personal safety to be a problem when visiting an incarcerated offender.

The results were markedly different when workers were asked about their concern for personal safety when making field contacts. Here, some 79% of the probation/parole officers and 55% of the juvenile officers reported themselves to be very concerned or concerned about their personal safety when in the field (Table 6.20). Moreover, over seven out of ten (71%) felt that, with respect to personal safety, their work in the probation/parole field had become more dangerous over the past five years (Table 6.20). No one felt that the field had become less dangerous. In sum, workers' concerns with safety focused principally on contacts made in the community, which constitutes for most probation and parole workers a primary work environment.

Table 6.20

**SAFETY CONCERNS OF RESPONDENTS BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

	Adult Prob./ Parole	Juvenile Probation/ Aftercare	Total
How safe do you feel while working in your local office during regular office hours?			
Very safe/Safe	74	100	81
Unsafe/Very unsafe	26	--	19
How safe do you feel while working in your local officer during non-office hours?			
Very safe/Safe	66	84	71
Unsafe/Very unsafe	34	17	29
How safe do you feel when visiting with an offender in your local jail or state prison?			
Very safe/Safe	77	95	82
Unsafe/Very unsafe	20	6	10
Don't make visits	2	--	1
How concerned are you about your personal safety when making field contacts?			
Very concerned/Somewhat concerned	86	50	77
Not very concerned/definitely not concerned	10	50	20
No field contacts	4	--	3
With respect to your personal safety, during the past five years, do you think your work in the probation/parole field has become:			
More dangerous	76	56	71
Stayed about the same	24	44	29
Less dangerous	--	--	--
<b>Base N</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>68</b>

### The Dynamics of Victimization

In nearly three-fourths (73%) of the incident, the perpetrator was a probationer or parolee. Together, clients and clients' family members were the offenders in 87% of the incidents reported (Table 6.21).

The offender was under the respondent's supervision in less than half of the incidents (41%). In another 41% of the cases, though, the perpetrator was under the officer's agency's supervision when the incident occurred (Table 6.22).

Table 6.21

#### OFFENDER'S STATUS AT TIME OF INCIDENT (Percentages)

Offender Status	All Officers
Client (probationer/parolee)	73
Client's family member	14
Client's friend	--
Bystander	--
Other	4
Unknown	9
<b>Base N</b>	<b>22</b>

Table 6.22

#### OFFENDER'S SUPERVISION STATUS AT TIME OF INCIDENT (Percentages)

Supervision Status	All Officers
Under respondent's supervision	41
Under respondent's agency supervision	41
Under another agency's supervision	4
Not under supervision	4
Unknown	9
<b>Base N</b>	<b>22</b>

Table 6.23 shows the criminal status characteristics of perpetrators at the time of the most serious incident reported by officer victims. In about one-third of the cases, the most serious offense (36%) and type of most important offense (32%) were unknown. However, just over one-third (36%) of the perpetrators were under sentence for a felony count, with two-thirds involving crimes against the person (41%) or against property (27%).

Over half of the perpetrators were known to have been previously incarcerated, with some 52% having committed one or more felonies in their prior criminal histories. Sixty-eight percent of the respondents also reported that the perpetrator had previously assaulted another probation/parole officer (Table 6.23). Overall, the data suggest that offenders involved in the incidents reported have fairly "heavy" criminal histories.

Table 6.23

CRIMINAL STATUS CHARACTERISTICS OF PERPETRATORS (Percentages)	
Criminal Status Characteristics	All Officers
<u>Most Serious Offense:</u>	
Misdemeanor	23
Felony A	4
Felony B	14
Felony C	14
Felony E	4
Unknown	36
<u>Type of Most Important Offense:</u>	
Crime vs. person	41
Crime vs. property	27
Crime vs. morals	--
Substance abuse	--
Not under sentence	--
Unknown	32
<u>Previous Incarceration:</u>	
Yes	59
No	23
Unknown	18
<u>Drug Abuse History:</u>	
Yes	33
No	14
Unknown	52

Table 6.23 (Cont'd.)

## CRIMINAL STATUS CHARACTERISTICS OF PERPETRATORS (Percentages)

Criminal Status Characteristics	All Officers
<u>Alcohol Abuse History:</u>	
Yes	45
No	18
Unknown	36
<u>Prior Criminal History:</u>	
No prior convictions/adjudications	--
One prior felony	19
Two or more prior felonies	33
Prior misdemeanor	19
Unknown	29
<u>Prior Assaults Against Others:</u>	
Probation/parole officer	9
Other probation/parole personnel	68
Police officer	32
Treatment agency personnel	14
Spouse	19
Other family member	27
Citizen	33
<u>Base N</u>	<u>22</u>

Very few of the perpetrators were reported to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol at the time of the most serious past-year victimization event. Interestingly, though, in 54% of the cases the worker-victim did not know whether the offender was "under the influence" of drugs, alcohol, or both (Table 6.24).

Table 6.24

WHETHER OFFENDER UNDER INFLUENCE OF DRUGS OR ALCOHOL  
AT TIME OF INCIDENT (Percentages)

Whether Under Influence	All Officers
Drugs	4
Alcohol	4
Both drugs and alcohol	9
Nothing	27
Unknown	54
<u>Base N</u>	<u>22</u>

Actual physical assault of the officer occurred in 27% of the incidents, and 59% of all the events involved a threat of physical assault. Attempts to intimidate the officer were also common, occurring in 59% of the occasions (Table 6.25). In sum, whether the behavior exhibited by the perpetrator was physical assault or threat of assault, the data indicate that the officer was the direct object of victimization in the great majority of the cases. Those instances in which a third party related to the worker-victim (e.g., family member) is the object of victimization are very infrequent.

Table 6.25

**INCIDENCE OF DIFFERENT OFFENDER ACTIONS AGAINST OFFICERS (Percentages)**

Nature of Offender Action	All Officers
Physical assault	27
Threat of physical assault	59
Damage to officer's property	9
Threat to officer's property	23
Intimidation	59
Attempted extortion	--
Threat to officer's reputation	18
Threat of physical harm to officer's family	9
Intimidation or attempted intimidation of officer's family member(s)	4
	<u>Base N</u> <u>22</u>

As shown in Table 6.27, the officer-victim was accompanied by another probation/parole officer in 59% of the instances, and/or another law enforcement officer 41% of the time when the incident took place.

Another set of items in Part 2 of the survey instrument asked respondents about additional actions of the perpetrator against the worker-victim. The data for these items appear in Table 6.26. The data clearly demonstrate, overall, when the hazardous event involved physical force, the offenders most often employed body parts (e.g., hit, kicked, pushed). Allegations about the officer's professional conduct (27%) and/or personal conduct (36%) were not infrequent (Table 6.26).

Respondents were also asked to indicate who, in addition to themselves, was present when the incident took place. Other officers (59%), law enforcement officers (41%) and family members (32%) or friends of the offender (32%) were the most frequently named by the responding officers (Table 6.27).

Table 6.26

## INCIDENCE OF OFFENDER ACTIONS AGAINST OFFICERS (Percentages)

Nature of Offender Action	All Officers
<u>Physical Force:</u>	
Shot	4
Hit with impact instrument	4
Cut with sharp edged instrument	4
Hit with fist or hand	23
Kicked	18
Pushed	45
Other weapon used	36
<u>Allegations About Officer's:</u>	
Professional conduct	27
Personal conduct	36
Lawsuits threatened against officer/agency	14
Allegations re: co-workers	27
Allegations re: superiors	14
Allegations re: officer's family or friends	9
<b>Base N</b>	<b>22</b>

As shown in Table 6.27, the officer-victim was accompanied by another probation/parole officer 59% of the time and/or another law enforcement officer 41% of the time when the incident took place.

Table 6.27

## OTHERS PRESENT AT VICTIMIZATION EVENT IN ADDITION TO OFFICER (Percentages)

Others Present at Event	All Officers
Probation/parole officer	59
Law enforcement officer	41
Officer's family	--
Officer's friends or acquaintances	--
Offender's employer or co-workers	4
Offender's family members	32
Offender's friends or acquaintances	32
Bystander(s)	23
Others	18
<b>Base N</b>	<b>22</b>

Another important matter in understanding the character and dynamics of hazardous incidents experienced is the location or medium where or through which an event occurs. An examination of the data relating to this issue in the current survey suggests that many of the incidents are, in reality, episodic. Often, more than one location and/or medium is involved before the victimization event is perceived as concluded, regardless of the outcome. For example, an incident that commences with an officer's visit to a client's home might be culminated in an on-the-street confrontation or a clash during a subsequent session between the officer and client at the agency office. The data in Table 6.28 suggest that such action sequences are not altogether rare; many of the respondents identified multiple sites and/or media as being involved in the same event. As shown in Table 6.28, the client's home was reported most frequently to be where the incident occurred (32%), followed by the agency office (27%). Numerous other locations and/or media were noted by respondents, though the various frequencies of occurrence were generally quite low.

Table 6.28

WHERE INCIDENT TOOK PLACE (Percentages)

Where Incident Took Place	All Officers
Over the phone	9
By letter or mail	--
Message or report of others	9
Agency office	27
Client's home	32
Someone else's home	9
Prison or jail	4
Police station	4
Human services agency	--
Courtroom	4
In vehicle	--
Offender's employment site	9
Public facility	9
On the street	14
Apartment hallway or elevator	--
Other location	4
	<u>Base N</u> 22

The most frequent response of the worker-victim in reaction to the incident was an attempt to talk to the offender. In 27% of the cases, the officer struck back physically. In no instance did the officer report using a weapon or threatening to do so (Table 7.31).

Table 6.29

## RESPONSE BY OFFICER TO INCIDENT (Percentages)

Response by Officer	All Officers
Struck back physically	27
Threatened to strike back physically	4
Used gun or other weapon	--
Threatened to use a gun	--
Displayed badge or I.D.	23
Used verbal threat	23
Said nothing	23
Retreated	14
Called out for help	23
Attempted to talk to offender	73
Took no action	9
<b>Base N</b>	<b>22</b>

As shown in Table 6.30, in fully 50% of the cases, the context for the hazardous event was as arrest situation. Other modal contexts were surprise visits (45%) and announced or expected visits (32%) (Table 6.30).

Table 6.30

## CONTEXT IN WHICH INCIDENT OCCURRED (Percentages)

Context of Incident	All Officers
Announced or expected visit	32
Surprise visit	45
During arrest of the offender	41
During arrest of someone else	9
In response to offender's call	4
In response to offender's family member call	9
Context of domestic dispute	4
During transport of offender	9
Other context	24
<b>Base N</b>	<b>22</b>



### The Aftermaths of Victimization and Their Consequences

One of the important concerns in examining the many different impacts that victimization might have on personnel in the field of probation and parole focuses attention on the aftermaths of such events and their consequences for workers' personal and professional lives. Table 6.31 presents information describing the aftermaths of victimization as reported by respondents in the Delaware worker safety study.

The direct consequences of victimization experiences involved injury for 18% of the respondents. Other aftermaths were primarily of an emotional character. For example, 18% reported that they had been shaken up by the incident and another 18% that fear on the job also resulted from the incident (Table 6.31).

Another feature of the data that stands out as notable is the fact that officers perceive victimization incidents as affecting their approaches to or relationships with clients. A "reduced sense of trust in clients" was noted by slightly more than one-fourth (27%), and a related aftermath, "reduced sensitivity to clients," was also noted by 14% (Table 6.31). Significantly, though, 50% of all respondents reported a significant level of "enhanced sense of self-confidence" arising out of the event (Table 6.31).

Table 6.31

#### AFTERMATHS OF VICTIMIZATION EVENTS (Percentages)

Aftermaths of Events	All Officers
Injured by incident	18
Chronic condition	4
Aggravation of old injury	--
Stomachache, headache, etc.	9
Shaken up	18
Fear on the job	18
Reduced self-confidence	4
Reduced trust in clients	27
Reduced sensitivity to clients	14
Increased use of medication	--
Increased use of alcohol	--
Disruption of personal life	4
Disruption of family life	9
Enhanced sense of self-confidence	50
	<u>Base N</u> 22

Additional questions were asked about other possible effects of the incident on the worker and others with whom he/she relates. The results are presented in Table 6.32. In relation to personal effects on the officer, 36% of all respondents reported that the incident had positive consequences for them personally, but 32% noted that the incident had a negative effect on their families. There is very little of note in the remainder of Table 6.32 with respect to several other possible effects that might influence the worker's job performance as a probation or parole officer.

Table 6.32

EFFECT OF VICTIMIZATION EVENTS (Percentages)

Effects of Victimization	All Officers
<u>Personal Effect on Officers:</u>	
Positive consequences	36
Negative consequences	14
No consequences	50
<u>Effect on Officer's Family:</u>	
Positive consequences	--
Negative consequences	32
No consequences	68
<u>Effect of Incident on Agency:</u>	
Positive consequences	18
Negative consequences	--
No consequences	82
<u>Effect on Co-Workers:</u>	
Positive consequences	23
Negative consequences	18
No consequences	59
<u>Less Open with Client?</u>	
Yes	9
No	91
<u>Less Open with Co-Workers?</u>	
Yes	9
No	91
<u>Thought About Quitting Job?</u>	
Yes	9
No	91

Table 6.32 (Cont'd.)

## EFFECT OF VICTIMIZATION EVENTS (Percentages)

Effects of Victimization	All Officers
<u>Applied for Transfer?</u>	
Yes	4
No	95
<u>Avoided contact with Co-Workers?</u>	
Yes	--
No	100
<u>Avoided Contacts with Threatening Clients?</u>	
Yes	18
No	82
<u>Base N</u>	<u>22</u>

The last two concerns examined in this section of the report focus on the reporting behavior of officer-victims in relation to the most serious incident experienced in the preceding year and their perceptions of whether the incident might have been prevented by them or their agencies. As can be seen in Table 6.33, among all respondents the two sets of individuals to whom the incident was reported were, in order of frequency, supervisors (82%) and co-workers (77%). A majority (52%) also noted that the incident had been reported to the agency head. Spouses were less frequently designated as individuals with whom they discussed the incident (36%) as were other family members (27%) or friends (36%). Overall, the data in Table 6.33 indicate that officers in the Delaware agencies were not reluctant to report and discuss the incident with others in the agency.

As shown in Table 6.34, it is clear that very few respondents (14%) felt that they personally could have prevented the incident from happening. This is not surprising, in view of earlier findings that indicate that a majority of the incidents occurred while the officer/agent was carrying out normal day-to-day duties associated with the job, such as making field visits or meeting with an offender in the agency office. As more than one respondent to the overall MASCA survey noted in comments to the researchers, many of the events experienced simply "come with the territory"--they cannot be prevented, only dealt with in the most constructive manner possible.

Only about one-fourth of the respondents felt that their agencies could have done something to prevent the hazardous incident from occurring. At the same time two-thirds (68%) felt that their agencies could have done something to prepare them and other personnel better to cope with this type of situation

(Table 6.34). In sum, what emerges from these data is (1) that probation and parole officers perceive their ability and that of their agencies to prevent the onset of victimization events to be limited, but (2) prior education about the circumstances and dynamics of victimization events, coupled with training enabling them to cope with and respond more effectively to hazardous events in their daily job routines, could be achieved through more thorough educational and skills development programs sponsored by their agencies.

Table 6.33

REPORTING BEHAVIOR OF OFFICER VICTIMS (Percentages)

To Whom Event Reported	All Officers
Agency head	52
Supervisor	82
Co-workers	77
Police	41
Counselor	9
Spouse	36
Other family members	27
Friends	36
Other persons	32
No one	4
<u>Base N</u>	<u>22</u>

Table 6.34

## WHETHER INCIDENT COULD HAVE BEEN PREVENTED (Percentages)

Whether Incident Could Have Been Prevented	All Officers
Could you have prevented the incident?	
Yes	14
No	73
Don't know	14
Could your agency have done anything to prevent this incident?	
Yes	27
No	50
Don't know	23
Could the agency have done anything to better prepare personnel to cope with this type of situation?	
Yes	68
No	14
Don't know	18
<u>Base N</u>	<u>22</u>

## Section 7

### SURVEY FINDINGS: MARYLAND

A total of 777 workers from throughout Maryland's Parole and Probation and Juvenile Service agencies responded to the 1989 staff safety survey. As noted earlier in Part I, Section 2 (Methodology), this represented an overall response rate of 39%. Respondents were distributed across several job categories, as shown in the following listing.

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Secretarial/Clerical	147	19
Administrative Staff	12	2
Parole and Probation Agent	370	48
Line Supervisor	71	9
Monitor	33	4
Monitor Supervisor	4	<1
Juvenile Counselor	117	15
Juvenile Counselor Supervisor	11	1
Administrator	12	2
<u>Totals</u>	<u>777</u>	<u>100</u>

### Respondent Characteristics

To make analyses of respondent characteristics and hazardous incident encounters more efficient, these job categories were collapsed into three main types: (1) Agents/Officers<sup>1</sup>; (2) Supervisors and Managers; and (3) Clerical and Staff. Table 7.1 shows the relationships between each of these three main job types and various profile characteristics of survey respondents.

Workers employed in the State Division of Probation and Parole constituted 79% of all respondents. This varies little when comparisons are made according to worker classification--77% of officer/agents, 75% of supervisors/managers, and 87% of clerical and staff (Table 7.1). Clerical and staff workers in the State Department of Juvenile Services were somewhat more likely to respond to the survey than their counterparts in the Division of Probation and Parole. Additionally, office size shows very little relationship to worker classification (Table 7.1).

Among officer/agent respondents, males and females are almost equally represented--49% and 51%, respectively. However, among supervisors/managers, male respondents predominate--72%, as compared to 28% for females. Not surprisingly, the overwhelming majority of clerical and staff workers are female (95%) (Table 7.1).

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<sup>1</sup>This includes all personnel whose jobs bring them into direct client contact for purposes of probation and parole supervision, including both adults and juveniles.

Supervisors/managers are, on average, older than officers/agents, an expected finding in view of the fact that movement into a management or supervisory position is typically associated with tenure in the agency and field. At the same time, clerical and staff workers distribute fairly evenly across the first four age categories; notably, however, just over one-fifth (21%) of all clerical/staff respondents are 50 years of age or older (Table 7.1).

More than nine out of 10 (92%) officers/agents hold a bachelor's or graduate degree. The corresponding figure for supervisors/managers is just slightly higher (94%). Among clerical and staff workers, fully 90% have high school or some college education (Table 7.1).

Not surprisingly, supervisors/managers exhibit much longer tenure in both current agency and the field--91% and 92%, respectively, having 10 or more years' tenure. In contrast, just below one-third of the officers/agents (29%) have been in their current agencies less than five years and some 30% also have been in the field for less than five years. On the whole, the age profile of clerical and staff workers tends to mirror that of the officers/agents (Table 7.1).

About one in five of all officer/agent respondents holds a second job. The overall figure includes just below one-fourth (23%) of the responding officers/agents and just above one-fourth (28%) of the supervisors/managers.

A slight majority (56%) of the officer/agent respondents reported that they have had unarmed self-defense training.<sup>2</sup> Less than half (45%) of the supervisors/managers noted that they also had unarmed self-defense training. This was followed by only 22% of clerical and staff workers indicating the same (Table 7.1).

As can be seen in the last segment of Table 7.1, very few respondents reported carrying weapons of any type. Carrying a handgun was reported by only 1% of the officers/agents; 5% of the responding officers/agents noted that they usually carried a chemical agent or a knife or other sharp-edged instrument.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Note, however, in Table 7.8, that 77% of the officers/agents rated "training in self-defense methods" as a "definitely useful" or "useful" policy initiative. Nearly nine out of 10 (87%) of the supervisors/managers offered similar ratings.

<sup>3</sup>While the number of non-responses to the survey items concerning the carrying of weapons was disproportionately higher than for any other set of questions--possibly, indicating a reluctance to report carrying a weapon not authorized--these were not frequent enough to offset an overall conclusion that weapons are not carried by a significant number of workers. Moreover, the data in Table 7.8 below do not indicate a groundswell of support for a policy initiative authorizing the carrying of weapons by officers/agents.

Table 7.1

## CHARACTERISTICS OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS (Percentages)

Characteristics	Officers/ Agents	Supv'rs/ Managers	Clerical & Staff	All Re- spondents
<u>Agency Type:</u>				
State Probation-Parole	77	75	87	79
State Dept. Juvenile Serv.	23	25	13	21
<u>Office Size:</u>				
1-25 employees	62	57	60	61
26-50 employees	33	39	35	34
51-100 employees	4	4	4	4
101 or more employees	1	--	1	1
<u>Sex of Respondent:</u>				
Male	49	72	5	43
Female	51	28	95	57
<u>Age of Respondent:</u>				
Under 25 years	2	1	11	4
25-29 years	12	2	14	11
30-39 years	45	18	36	40
40-49 years	33	57	18	33
50 years or older	9	21	21	13
<u>Educational Attainment:<sup>4</sup></u>				
High school	2	2	54	13
Some college	6	4	36	12
Bachelor's degree	72	52	6	56
Graduate degree	20	42	3	19
<u>Tenure in Current Agency:</u>				
2 years or less	19	--	29	18
3-4 years	10	2	15	19
5-9 years	21	7	18	18
10-19 years	47	50	27	43
20 or more years	4	41	11	10

<sup>4</sup>Parole/Probation Monitors are included with officers/agents. Monitors are not required to have a baccalaureate degree. All agents must have baccalaureate degrees from an accredited four-year college or university



Table 7.1 (Cont'd.)

## CHARACTERISTICS OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS (Percentages)

Characteristics	Officers/ Agents	Supv'rs/ Managers	Clerical & Staff	All Re- spondents
<u>Tenure in the Probation/ Parole Field:</u>				
2 years or less	19	--	28	18
3-4 years	11	1	16	11
5-9 years	20	7	20	18
10-19 years	47	48	24	43
20 or more years	3	44	11	10
<u>Second Job Held:</u>				
Yes	23	28	11	21
No	77	72	89	79
<u>Unarmed Defense Training:<sup>5</sup></u>				
Yes	56	45	22	48
No	44	55	78	52
<u>Weapon Usually Carried:<sup>6</sup></u>				
Handgun	1	--	1	1
Other firearm	1	1	--	1
Impact instrument	4	2	--	3
Chemical agent	5	4	2	4
Knife/Other Sharp-edged Inst.	5	4	4	5
<b>Base N</b>	<b>520</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>777</b>

Note: Column percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

<sup>5</sup>All Division of Parole and Probation agents hired within the past seven years were required to take self-defense training as a part of their entry-level training.

<sup>6</sup>Separate questions were asked for five different types of weapons. thus, the percentages are independent of each other and do not add to 100.

### Victimization Rates

For purposes of this study, victimization was defined in terms of the exposure of probation and parole workers to hazardous incidents encountered in the course of carrying out their jobs.<sup>7</sup> To help respondents understand the meaning of the term "hazardous incident" as used in designing this study, the following examples were included in the instructions appearing at the beginning of the questionnaire.

Examples of hazardous incidents affecting staff safety would include: physical assault or harm; threat of physical assault or harm; assault or threat of harm to a worker's family members; harm or threat of harm to one's property; extortion; harm or threat of harm to a worker's reputation; or psychological intimidation.

In the first section of the survey questionnaire which was applicable to all respondents, four questions were concerned with probation and parole workers' experiences with hazardous incidents. The first two asked whether, during his or her entire career in the probation and parole field, the worker had (1) been physically assaulted in the line of duty, or (2) been intimidated by physical or other threat. The other two survey items were similar but asked the respondents to answer in terms of their experiences since November, 1988--an approximate 12-month period preceding the survey.

Table 7.2 shows victimization rates for all respondents during their entire careers in the probation and parole field and during the year preceding the survey. Some 65% of current officers/agents reported experiencing at least one victimization event during the course of their careers in the field of probation/parole. An even higher rate (78%) prevailed for those who are currently supervisors or managers in one of the Maryland agencies. Among clerical and staff employees, slightly more than one-fourth (28%) reported that they had also encountered at least one such incident while working in the field of probation and parole.

When general types of victimization events are examined, it can be seen that about one-fourth (24%) of the responding supervisors/managers indicated that they had been physically assaulted at least once during their careers. This rate was lower for officers/agents (15%) and much smaller (3%) for clerical and staff employees (Table 7.2)

Almost eight out of 10 (78%) of the supervisors/managers indicated that they had experienced incidents of intimidation during their careers in the field. The corresponding figure for officers/agents was smaller, though nearly two-thirds (64%) reported similarly. Rates of intimidation were much lower among clerical and staff workers (27%).

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<sup>7</sup>For a detailed discussion of the concept of "victimization" and its relation to hazardous incidents and worker safety in probation and parole, see William H. Parsonage, Worker Safety in Probation and Parole, Washington, D.C.: National Institute of Corrections, 1990.

As shown in the second segment of Table 7.2, 37% of the responding officers/agents reported experiencing some type of victimization during the year preceding the survey. The corresponding figure was smaller for supervisors/managers (28%) and considerably lower for clerical and staff employees (17%).

When the general type of incident encountered over the past year is considered, the highest rates are associated with intimidation events. More than one-third (37%) of responding officers/agents and one-fourth (26%) of the supervisors/managers reported experiencing an incident of this type. Among clerical and staff workers, some 17% were confronted with at least one instance of intimidation in the year preceding the survey.

Table 7.2

**VICTIMIZATION RATES FOR ENTIRE CAREER AND DURING  
PAST YEAR IN PROBATION/PAROLE FIELD (Percentages)**

Characteristics	Officers/ Agents	Supv'rs./ Managers	Clerical & Staff	All Re- spondents
<u>Victimization in Career:</u>				
Never victimized in career	35	22	72	41
Victimization in career by general type:				
Physical assault only	1	1	--	1
Both assault and intimid.	14	23	3	13
Intimidation only	50	55	24	46
<u>Base N</u>	<u>517</u>	<u>97</u>	<u>155</u>	<u>769</u>
<u>Victimization in Past Year:</u>				
Not victimized past year	63	72	83	68
Victimization in past year by general type:				
Physical assault only	<1	2	--	<1
Both assault and intimid.	5	3	4	4
Intimidation only	32	23	13	27
<u>Base N</u>	<u>517</u>	<u>98</u>	<u>155</u>	<u>770</u>

Note: Column percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Table 7.3 shows the victimization rates by type during the workers' entire careers in the probation and parole field. As can be seen, about half of both officers/agents and supervisors/managers had been physically assaulted more than once during their careers. There were no multiple incidents of assault reported by any clerical or staff employees.

Rates for intimidation during the career are much higher in all of the worker categories. About three-fourths (75%) of supervisors/managers reported that they had encountered one or more intimidation events during their careers in probation or parole, followed by some 64% of officers/agents and 28% of clerical and staff respondents. Moreover, nearly two-fifths (38%) of the managers and supervisors reported that they had experienced intimidation events more than four times during their careers, as did some 18% of officers/agents. Intimidation events were far fewer among clerical and staff workers, though just over one-fourth (28%) reported having experienced one or more incidents of intimidation while working in the probation and parole field.

The second set of indicators of victimization focused on the experiences of workers in the year preceding the survey. The results are shown in Table 7.4. As can be seen, 5% of both officers/agents and supervisors/managers indicated that they had been physically assaulted in the line of duty during the year preceding the survey, and 3% of the clerical and staff employees reported similarly. Even though the incidence of physical assault was quite small for officers/agents and supervisors/managers, one in 20 were at risk of physical assault while on the job during a yearly period--not a negligible level of occupational risk.

When confrontations involving some form of intimidation are examined, the incidence rates are much higher. Among officers/agents, more than one-third (37%) experienced one or more such events in the year preceding the survey, and nearly one-fourth (24%) of supervisors/managers were similarly affected (Table 7.4). As the additional data in Table 7.4 show, a majority of those reporting intimidation events indicated more than one such confrontation had occurred during the year before the survey. Even among clerical and staff respondents, the incident rate is not negligible, in that some 16% reported one or more intimidations events during the past 12 months.

Table 7.3

**VICTIMIZATION RATES OVER ENTIRE CAREER IN  
PROBATION/PAROLE FIELD (Percentages)**

Characteristics	Officers/ Agents	Supv'rs./ Managers	Clerical & Staff	All Re- spondents
Physically Assaulted in the Line of Duty During Entire Career	15	24	3	14
Times Physically Assaulted in the Line of Duty During Entire Career:				
Once	8	12	3	8
Twice	4	6	--	3
Three times	1	1	--	3
Four times	1	--	--	1
More than four times	1	4	--	1
Never physically assaulted	85	76	97	86
Intimidated by Physical or Any Other Threat During Entire Career	64	76	28	58
Times Intimidated by Physical or Any Other Threat During Entire Career:				
Once	15	16	8	14
Twice	15	16	6	14
Three times	11	4	4	9
Four times	4	3	4	4
More than four times	18	38	8	19
Never intimidated	36	24	72	42
<b><u>Base N</u></b>	<b><u>518</u></b>	<b><u>98</u></b>	<b><u>156</u></b>	<b><u>772</u></b>

Note: Column percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Table 7.4

**VICTIMIZATION RATES IN YEAR PRECEDING  
THE SURVEY (Percentages)**

Characteristics	Officers/ Agents	Supv'rs./ Managers	Clerical & Staff	All Re- spondents
Physically Assaulted in the Line of Duty During Past Year	5	5	3	4
Times Physically Assaulted in the Line of Duty During Past Year:				
Once	3	3	1	2
Twice	2	2	2	2
Three times	<1	--	--	<1
Four times	--	--	--	<1
More than four times	--	--	--	<1
Never physically assaulted	95	95	98	96
Intimidated by Physical or Any Other Threat During Past Year	37	24	16	31
Times Intimidated by Physical or Any Other Threat During Past Year:				
Once	17	9	8	14
Twice	9	7	1	7
Three times	5	1	3	4
Four times	2	1	--	1
More than four times	4	7	4	5
Never intimidated	63	76	84	69
<b>Base N</b>	<b>519</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>774</b>

Note: Column percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

### Correlates of Victimization Status

Table 7.5 displays relationships between two worker classifications and personal or job-related characteristics by general victimization status.<sup>8</sup> Among workers in both classifications, there is no significant relationship between gender and experiences with victimization incidents during one's career in the field. Older officers/agents are a bit more likely to have confronted such an incident, but among supervisors/managers the differences are so slight as to be negligible (Table 7.5).

Among officers/agents, tenure in the field of probation and parole is clearly related to victimization status. For example, 76% of the officers/agents with 5-19 years of tenure reported one or more victimization events to have occurred at some time in their careers, compared to 50% of those not reporting having faced such an incident (Table 7.5). Among the current supervisors/managers, no clear relationship between victimization status and tenure in the field is evident. Similarly, carrying a weapon bears no relationship to career victimization status of either officers/agents or supervisors/managers (Table 7.5).

Table 7.5

#### **CORRELATES OF VICTIMIZATION STATUS IN ENTIRE CAREER: OFFICERS/ AGENTS AND SUPERVISOR/MANAGERS (Percentages)**

Characteristics	Officers/ Agents		Supv'rs./ Managers		Total	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
<u>Sex of Respondent:</u>						
Male	50	48	74	71	54	50
Female	50	52	26	29	46	50
<u>Age of Respondent:</u>						
Under 25 years	1	3	1	--	1	3
25 - 29 years	10	16	1	5	8	14
30 - 39 years	47	41	18	14	42	38
40 - 49 years	33	31	57	62	38	34
50 years or older	9	10	22	19	11	10

<sup>8</sup>"Victimization status" refers to any form or frequency of encounter with hazardous incidents threatening worker safety, as defined earlier, and distinguishes only between general "yes" and "no" responses to survey items asking about such events.

Table 7.5 (Cont'd)

CORRELATES OF VICTIMIZATION DURING PAST YEAR: OFFICERS/  
AGENTS AND SUPERVISOR/MANAGERS (Percentages)

Characteristics	Officers/ Agents		Supv'rs./ Managers		Total	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
<u>Unarmed self-defense training:</u>						
Yes, have had training	56	58	51	24	55	54
No, have not had training	44	42	49	76	45	46
<u>Tenure in prob./parole field:</u>						
Less than 1 year	3	19	--	--	2	17
1 - 2 years	7	18	--	--	6	16
3 - 4 years	11	11	1	--	9	10
5 - 9 years	21	17	5	14	18	17
10 - 19 years	55	33	47	48	54	35
20 years or more	3	2	46	38	11	6
<u>Kind of weapon usually carried:<sup>9</sup></u>						
Handgun <sup>10</sup>	2	1	--	--	1	1
Other firearm	1	1	2	--	1	1
Impact instrument	5	1	3	--	5	1
Chemical Agent	5	5	4	--	5	5
Knife/Other sharp-edged instr.	5	5	4	--	5	5
Base N	<u>339</u>	<u>179</u>	<u>76</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>518</u>	<u>97</u>

Note: Column percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

<sup>9</sup>Respondents were asked to indicate whether they (1) usually carried or (2) did not carry a series of weapons. Hence, each percentage is independent of the others, and totals do not add to 100.

<sup>10</sup>In the Maryland probation and parole system, only the two parole warrant officers and their supervisor are authorized to carry firearms. Agents may only be issued a handgun permit when bona fide death threats are reported.



In Table 7.6, relationships between victimization status during the year preceding the survey and several personal and job-related characteristics are shown for officers/agents and supervisors/managers. An inspection of the data in this table does not indicate any marked relationships between the characteristics examined and victimization status during the past year. Application of the chi-square nonparametric test to the data in Table 7.6 found only one relationship to be statistically significant at a conventional .05 level. In this instance, size of local office (i.e., number of employees) showed a statistically significant relationship to victimization status for the past year. However, this relationship was weak at best, indicating slightly higher percentages of officers/agents in the smallest agencies (i.e., 1-25 employees) are more likely to have encountered a hazardous incident than their counterparts (65% as compared to 60%), while in the next office size group (i.e. 26-50 employees) the larger proportion was found among those not experiencing a hazardous incident during the past year--36%, as compared to 26%. No other relationship shown in Table 7.6 attained significance.

In summary, the foregoing data suggest that the problem of worker safety among Maryland probation and parole workers, especially those involved in direct supervision of probationers/parolees, is pervasive. Although the rate of physical assault on officers/agents and supervisors/managers in the year preceding the survey was only 5%, it still constitutes an important level of occupational risk (one in 20 workers). Even among the clerical and staff respondents, some 4% reported having encountered physical assault in the past year while performing their jobs.

When all types of hazardous incidents are considered, nearly one-third (32%) of the officers/agents responding to this survey experienced some such events during this same period of time, followed by nearly one-fourth of the responding supervisors/managers and clerical/ staff workers. More detailed analyses of officers/agents' experiences with on-the-job incidents affecting worker safety are presented later in this section.

Table 7.6

**CORRELATES OF VICTIMIZATION STATUS DURING PAST YEAR: OFFICERS/  
AGENTS AND SUPERVISOR/MANAGERS (Percentages)**

Characteristics	Officers/ Agents		Supv'rs./ Managers		Total	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
<u>Sex of Respondent:</u>						
Male	45	51	82	69	50	54
Female	55	49	18	31	50	46
<u>Age of Respondent:</u>						
Under 25 years	2	2	--	1	1	2
25 - 29 years	13	11	--	3	11	9
30 - 39 years	46	45	30	14	44	40
40 - 49 years	30	34	48	61	32	39
50 years or older	10	8	22	21	12	11
<u>Unarmed self-defense training:</u>						
Yes, have had training	56	56	48	44	55	54
No, have not had training	44	44	52	56	45	46
<u>Hold second job:</u>						
Yes	27	20	26	28	27	21
No	73	80	74	72	73	79
<u>Office Size:</u>						
1-25 employees	65	60	56	58	64	60
26-50 employees	26	36	41	38	28	35
51-100 employees	7	3	4	4	6	4
100 or more employees	2	1	--	--	1	1
<u>Tenure in current agency:</u>						
Less than 1 year	7	10	--	--	6	8
1 - 2 years	10	9	--	--	9	7
3 - 4 years	12	9	--	3	11	8
5 - 9 years	24	18	7	7	22	16
10 - 19 years	42	50	48	51	42	50
20 years or more	4	4	44	39	9	10

Table 7.6 (Cont'd.)

**CORRELATES OF VICTIMIZATION STATUS DURING PAST YEAR: OFFICERS/  
AGENTS AND SUPERVISOR/MANAGERS (Percentages)**

Characteristics	Officers/ Agents		Supv'rs./ Managers		Total	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
<u>Kind of weapon usually carried:<sup>11</sup></u>						
Handgun	3	1	--	--	2	1
Other firearm	2	1	--	2	2	1
Impact instrument	7	2	4	2	6	2
Chemical Agent	6	5	9	2	6	5
Knife/Other sharp-edged instr.	6	4	4	3	6	4
<b>Base N</b>	<b><u>190</u></b>	<b><u>327</u></b>	<b><u>27</u></b>	<b><u>71</u></b>	<b><u>517</u></b>	<b><u>98</u></b>

Note: Column percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

<sup>11</sup>Respondents were asked to indicate whether they usually carried or did not carry a series of weapons. Hence, each percentage is independent of the others, and totals do not add to 100.

## Safety Concerns and Policy Initiatives for Worker Safety

### Safety Concerns

Employees in the Maryland agencies responding to the general survey were asked several questions concerning their perceptions of personal safety in various areas of the work environment of probation and parole. As can be seen in Table 7.7, the great majority of officers/agents (80%) and supervisors/managers (88%) felt themselves to be very safe or safe while working in their offices during regular office hours. However, the percentages feeling very safe or safe dropped considerably when the context was changed to working in the local office during non-office hours--57% for officers/agents, and 66% for supervisors/managers (Table 7.7).

Sixty-five percent of the responding officers/agents reported that they felt very safe or safe when visiting with an offender in the local jail or state prison. However, when those indicating that they do not make such visits are excluded from the analysis, the percentage of officers/agents feeling very safe or safe in making jail or prison visits rises to 75% (338 of 452). The responses offered by supervisors/managers were similar, with 60% indicating they felt very safe or safe while making such visits (Table 7.7).

The results were strikingly different when officers/agents were asked about their concern for personal safety when making field contacts. Here, nearly three-fourths (73%) reported being very or somewhat concerned about personal safety in the field (Table 7.7). The percentage was much smaller for supervisors/managers (36%), although a sizable proportion of the latter (39%) noted that they did not make field contacts.

When respondents were asked to indicate whether, with respect to personal safety, work in the field had become more dangerous or not, some two-thirds (68%) of the officers/agents replied that the field had become more dangerous over the past five years. An even higher proportion (74%) of the supervisors/managers gave a similar response. Only 1% of both the officers/agents and supervisors/managers felt that the field had become less dangerous during this period of time.

In sum, workers' concerns with safety focused principally on contacts made in the community, which constitutes for most probation and parole workers a primary work environment. With respect to the phenomenon of hazardous incidents, the findings presented here fit closely with data presented later in this section regarding such events. There, it is shown that such incidents occur mainly during the carrying out of day-to-day work responsibilities in the community.

Table 7.7

**PERCEPTIONS OF ON-THE-JOB SAFETY: OFFICERS/  
AGENTS AND SUPERVISOR/MANAGERS (Percentages)**

Supv'rs./ Managers	Safety Concern Items	Officers/	Agents
<hr/>			
How safe do you feel while working in your local office during regular office hours?			
	Very Safe/Safe	80	88
	Unsafe/Very Unsafe	20	12
<hr/>			
How safe do you feel while working in your local office during <u>non-office</u> hours?			
	Very Safe/Safe	57	66
	Unsafe/Very Unsafe	43	34
<hr/>			
How safe do you feel when visiting with an offender in your local jail or state prison?			
	Very Safe/Safe	65	60
	Unsafe/Very Unsafe	22	21
	Do not make such visits	13	19
<hr/>			
How concerned are you about your personal safety when making field contacts?			
	Very concerned/Somewhat Concerned	73	36
	Not very concerned/Definitely Not Concerned	21	15
	Do not make field contacts	6	39
<hr/>			
With respect to your personal safety, during the past <u>five years</u> (or whatever time you've been in the field, if less than 5 years), do you think your work in the probation/parole field has:			
	Become more dangerous	68	74
	Stayed about the same	31	25
	Become less dangerous	1	1
<hr/>			
	<u>Base N</u>	<u>520</u>	<u>98</u>
<hr/>			

## Policy Initiatives for Worker Safety

In his monograph, Worker Safety in Probation and Parole, Parsonage identified a series of policy initiatives regarded by probation and parole workers as relevant to worker safety in studies conducted in Texas, New York State, Pennsylvania, and Virginia.<sup>12</sup> Workers were asked to rate each potential policy initiative in relation to its perceived usefulness as a means of enhancing the safety of probation and parole workers.

In the current study, respondents were asked to rank 23 potential policy proposals drawn from the studies conducted in Texas, New York, Pennsylvania, and Virginia.<sup>13</sup> Possible ratings of each item were "definitely useful," "useful," "undecided," "not useful," and "definitely not useful." The results are shown in Table 7.8, with items rank-ordered according to the percentage of officers/agents rating a policy initiative as "definitely useful" or "useful."

As can be seen in Table 7.8, five items received high ratings by more than three-fourths of the officer/agent respondents. The two highest rated items were concerned with identifying all "high risk" areas and developing a "partner system" for use in making home visits. Providing "panic buttons" on officer telephones received the third highest ranking from officers/agents (83%), followed by providing training in self-defense methods (77%) and in "verbal judo" (76%). Another five items were ranked as definitely useful or useful by at least two-thirds of the responding officers/agents. Notably, the two items concerned with providing officers/agents with firearms were among the three lowest ranked initiatives by officers/agents--40% for carrying firearms at anytime thought necessary and 39% for carrying firearms during the course of professional duties (Table 7.8).

The order of "definitely useful" and "useful" rankings by supervisors/managers was generally similar to that of officers/agents, though there were exceptions. For example, fully 93% of the supervisors/managers rated a "partner system" for making home visits as definitely useful or useful, compared to 87% of the officers/agents. On the other hand, some 69% of the supervisors/managers regarded as desirable a policy requiring officers/agents to provide their unit supervisors with a daily schedule prior to making home visits and/or field contacts, but only 51% of officers/agents awarded this item the same rating. Similarly, some 62% of the supervisors/managers rated a requirement that officers/agents check in and out with a centralized monitor as desirable, while less than a majority (45%) of officers/agents agreed (Table 7.8).

In sum, respondents' ratings of policy initiatives as definitely useful or useful tend to emphasize those actions of immediate utility to the front-line officer/agent in carrying out typical job responsibilities with an enhanced sense of personal safety.

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<sup>12</sup>William H. Parsonage, Worker Safety in Probation and Parole (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Corrections, 1990).

<sup>13</sup>Minor changes were made in a few items, based on suggestions resulting from reviews of the initial questionnaire by representatives of agencies in the MASCA membership.

Table 7.8

**PERCEPTIONS OF POLICY INITIATIVES: OFFICERS/AGENTS  
AND SUPERVISOR/MANAGERS (Percentages)**

Respondent Rating of Policies as "Definitely Useful" or "Useful"	Officers/ Agents	Supv'rs./ Managers
Identify all "high risk" areas and keep all P/P officers informed of these areas.	88	84
Develop a "partner system" to be used on an "as needed" basis when making home visits	87	93
Provide "panic buttons" on office telephones--i.e., buttons which would alert either the local police or security personnel in the event of an emergency	83	80
Provide training in self-defense methods	77	87
Provide training in "verbal judo"	76	85
Install two-way communications devices in each P/P officer's automobile	72	74
Provide distress signal devices to P/P officers when making home visits	71	73
Provide for P/P officer-police officer teams when making arrests of offenders in violation of probation/parole requirements	69	76
Provide security officers for field offices--i.e., individuals who would control entrance to field offices and would be available to assist in an emergency	69	74
Provide P/P officers with "mugshots" taken of releasees at the time of their release	69	78
Establish secure clerical areas for field offices--i.e., areas could be entered and exited only through electronically controlled security doors	67	66
Provide all P/P officers with hand-held radios to be used for two-way communication in an emergency	67	64
Provide secure jail areas for visits with clients--i.e., an area where the client is physically separated from the P/P officer	62	62

Table 7.8 (Cont'd.)

**PERCEPTIONS OF POLICY INITIATIVES: OFFICERS/AGENTS  
AND SUPERVISOR/MANAGERS (Percentages)**

Respondent Rating of Policies as "Definitely Useful" or "Useful"	Officers/ Agents	Supv'rs./ Managers
Provide P/P officers with non-lethal, chemical agents to be carried when making home visits	59	61
Establish a "law enforcement arrest authority"-- i.e., special units of trained P/P officers with authority to carry weapons and make arrests	56	56
Increase the number of specialized caseloads with respect to probationers/parolees	53	57
Require a police/security officer be present with the P/P officer at all revocation hearings	53	61
Implement a requirement that all P/P officers provide their respective unit supervisors with a daily schedule prior to making home visits and/or field contacts	51	69
Provide P/P officers with soft body armor for use in situations thought to be "high risk"	45	54
Require that P/P officers check in and out with a centralized monitor when on official business	45	62
Assuming proper training, provide P/P officers with firearms to be carried at any time the officers believes it is necessary	40	43
Require a police/security officer to be present at all summons hearings held in the probation/parole office	40	42
Assuming proper screening/training, provide P/P officers with firearms to be carried during the course of their duties	39	39
<u>Base N</u>	<u>520</u>	<u>98</u>



## Victimization Experiences of Maryland Probation/Parole Agents and Juvenile Services Officers

The preceding discussion reported on the victimization experiences of the Maryland probation/parole work force by general occupational class--Officers/Agents, Supervisors/Managers, and Clerical/Staff. The discussion in the remainder of this section deals exclusively with officers/agents having direct case contact responsibilities. The purpose is to present information comparing and contrasting the victimization experiences of line officers by agency type. Presenting of the data in this manner is intended to contribute to the development of agency-specific programs for the enhancement of worker safety.

### Victimization Experiences of Officers/Agents

A total of 777 Maryland State Probation and Parole personnel responded to the 1989 worker safety study. Of this number, 67% (N=520) identified themselves as probation/parole officers/agents having case contact with probationers or parolees.

Characteristics of these 520 officer respondents are shown in Table 7.9. As can be seen, State Department of Juvenile Services officers tend, on the average, more often to be males and older than their counterparts in the State Division of Probation and Parole. Almost half of all respondents report 10-19 year's tenure in the field and in their current agencies.

Among responding officers from the State Division of Parole and Probation and the State Department of Juvenile Services, almost one-fourth reported holding a second job--23% and 24%, respectively (Table 7.10).

The overwhelming majority of Maryland officers (98%) do not carry firearms while on duty (Table 7.11). Respondents most frequently reported carrying the type of weapons usually regarded as non-lethal (e.g., chemical agent or impact instrument) although 5% indicated they carried a knife or other sharp-edged instrument.

Table 7.9

**CHARACTERISTICS OF OFFICER/AGENT RESPONDENTS BY TYPE OF AGENCY (Percentages)**

Characteristics	Division of Parole/Prob.	Dept. of Juv. Serv.	Total
<u>Sex:</u>			
Male	47	57	49
Female	53	43	51
<u>Age:</u>			
Under 25 years	2	1	2
25 - 29 years	12	9	12
30 - 39 years	48	35	45
40 - 49 years	29	45	33
50 years or older	9	10	9
<u>Tenure in Field:</u>			
Less than 3 years	19	18	19
3 - 4 years	11	10	11
5 - 9 years	21	15	20
10 - 19 years	47	50	47
20 years or more	2	6	3
<u>Tenure in Current Agency:</u>			
Less than 3 years	21	9	18
3 - 4 years	10	10	10
5 - 9 years	21	19	20
10 - 19 years	45	54	47
20 years or more	3	7	4
<u>Base N</u>	<u>401</u>	<u>119</u>	<u>520</u>

By and large, unarmed defense training is a widely recommended skill for those working in the probation and parole field. With respect to such training, the survey results show notable differences between agents in the State Division of Parole and Probation and those in the Department of Juvenile Services. For example, 68% probation agents report having received such training, compared to only 17% of the juvenile services officers.

Table 7.10

**SECOND JOBS HELD BY OFFICERS/AGENTS AND UNARMED SELF-  
DEFENSE TRAINING: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Second Jobs and Self- Defense Training	Division of Parole/Prob.	Dept. of Juv. Serv.	Total
<u>Second Jobs:</u>			
Yes, hold a second job	23	24	23
No, do not hold second job	77	76	77
<u>Unarmed Defense Training:</u>			
Have had this training	68	17	56
Have not had this training	32	83	54
<b>Base N</b>	<b>401</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>520</b>

Table 7.11

**WEAPON USUALLY CARRIED BY OFFICERS/AGENTS  
BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Weapon Carried	Division of Parole/Prob.	Dept. of Juv. Serv.	Total
Handgun or other firearm	2	2	2
Chemical agent	4	4	4
Impact instrument	6	5	5
Knife or sharp edged instrument	5	4	5
<b>Base N</b>	<b>401</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>520</b>

Note: Column percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

The victimization experiences of probation/parole officers/agents were of particular interest in this study. Table 7.12 shows the victimization rates for officers/agents during their entire careers in the probation/parole field. As can be seen, two-thirds (66%) of all the responding officers/agents have experienced some form of victimization while in the field. The victimization rates are the same for State Parole and Probation agents and Juvenile Services officers. While there are undoubtedly differences in the level of seriousness of victimization incidents experienced by different officers/agents, these data suggest, at the least, that probation/parole field is an occupational field of considerable risk for most officers/agents.

Table 7.12

**VICTIMIZATION RATES OF OFFICERS/AGENTS DURING ENTIRE  
CAREER: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Victimization Status <sup>14</sup>	Division of Parole/Prob.	Dept. of Juv. Serv.	Total
Victimized during career	66	66	66
Not victimized during career	34	34	34
<b>Base N</b>	<b><u>401</u></b>	<b><u>119</u></b>	<b><u>520</u></b>

Table 7.13 shows the frequencies of physical assault or intimidation experiences for the officer/agent respondents over their entire careers in the probation/parole field. Again, the experiences of officers in both agencies are nearly identical. About 1 in 7 (15%) of the officer-respondents have been assaulted at least once in their careers.

When the focus shifts to information on instances of intimidation by physical or other threat during an individual's career in the probation and parole field, the figures are even more striking. Among all officers/agents, fully 64% reported experiencing intimidation by physical or other threat during their careers (Table 7.13). Overall, the figures for victimization over the career in the field of probation and parole lead to the conclusion that this is, indeed, a risk-laden occupational area with respect to probabilities of exposure to hazardous and physically or mentally threatening events during normal job performance.

The general victimization rates for officers/agents in the 12-month period preceding the survey are shown in Table 7.14. The highest rate was reported by State Probation and Parole agents (39%), with 30% of officers with the Department of Juvenile Services reporting victimization experiences during the year preceding the survey. The overall past-year victimization rate for all officer/agent respondents was 37%.

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<sup>14</sup>"Victimization status" includes all incidents of physical assault, threat, or intimidation.

Table 7.13

**OFFICERS/AGENTS PHYSICALLY ASSAULTED OR INTIMIDATED  
IN CAREER: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Victimization Status	Division of Parole/Prob.	Dept. of Juv. Serv.	Total
Physically assaulted in whole career:	15	16	15
Once	8	9	8
Twice	4	3	4
Three times	1	2	1
Four times	1	2	1
More than four times	<1	1	1
Never assaulted	85	84	85
Intimidated by physical or any other threat during whole career:	64	66	64
Once	14	18	15
Twice	16	12	15
Three times	12	9	11
Four times	5	3	4
More than four times	17	25	18
Never intimidated	36	34	36
Base N	<u>401</u>	<u>119</u>	<u>520</u>

Note: Column percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Table 7.14

**VICTIMIZATION RATES OF OFFICERS/AGENTS IN 12-MONTH  
PERIOD PRECEDING SURVEY (Percentages)**

Victimization Status	Division of Parole/Prob.	Dept. of Juv. Serv.	Total
Victimized in past year	39	30	37
Not victimized in past year	61	69	63
Base N	<u>398</u>	<u>118</u>	<u>516</u>

As can be seen in Table 7.15, about one in 20 officer/agent respondents in Maryland were physically assaulted during the past year. Intimidation rates during this same period, another measure of victimization, were considerably higher (37%). State parole/probation agents led the way with 38% reporting at least one incident as compared to 31% of the juvenile services officers.

The data in Table 7.16 relate demographic characteristics of officers/agents to past-year victimization status. As can be seen, the victimization rate is slightly higher for females than for males, but the difference is a modest one. None of the other demographic features of the officer/agent respondents appears to be related to past-year victimization.

Table 7.15

OFFICER/AGENT VICTIMIZATION RATES FOR 12-MONTH PERIOD  
PRECEDING SURVEY: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)

Victimization Status	Division of Parole/Prob.	Dept. of Juv. Serv.	Total
Physically assaulted in past year:	6	3	5
Once	3	2	3
Twice	2	1	1
Three times	<1	--	<1
Not assaulted in past year	94	97	95
Intimidated by physical or any other threat in past year:	38	31	37
Once	16	18	17
Twice	11	4	9
Three times	5	5	5
Four times	2	--	2
More than four times	4	3	4
Not intimidated past year	62	69	63
Base N	398	118	516

Note: Column percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Table 7.16

**CHARACTERISTICS OF OFFICERS/AGENTS IN YEAR PRECEDING SURVEY:  
BY VICTIMIZATION STATUS (Percentages)**

Characteristics	Victim	Non-Victim
<u>Sex:</u>		
Male	45	51
Female	56	49
<u>Age:</u>		
Under 25 years	2	2
25 - 29 years	13	11
30 - 39 years	46	45
40 - 49 years	29	34
50 years or older	10	8
<u>Education:</u>		
High school	2	2
Some College	7	5
Bachelor's degree	67	74
Graduate degree	24	17
<u>Tenure in Current Agency:</u>		
Less than 3 years	17	20
1 - 2 years	12	9
3 - 4 years	24	18
5 - 9 years	24	18
10 - 19 years	42	51
20 years or more	4	4
<u>Base N</u>	<u>190</u>	<u>326</u>

Note: Column percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

The analysis also examined the relationship between carrying or not carrying a weapon and past-year victimization status. Table 7.17 contains data on this relationship. As can be seen, officer/agent victims are more likely to carry a weapon, typically a handgun, than non-victims--4% and 1%, respectively--but the numbers are so small that they cannot be accorded any significance. While survey data from other MASCA jurisdictions (e.g., Pennsylvania) show a marked relationship between carrying weapons and victimization, this was not so in the case of Maryland.

A further analysis of the victimization experiences of state and county officers/agents examined the relationship between past-year victimization status and having or not having unarmed self-defense training. As can be seen in Table 7.18, having or not having self-defense training has no relationship to risk of victimization for Maryland officers/agents.

Table 7.17

**WEAPON USUALLY CARRIED BY AGENTS/OFFICERS: BY  
PAST-YEAR VICTIMIZATION STATUS: (Percentages)**

Weapon Usually Carried <sup>15</sup>	Victim	Non-Victim
Handgun or other firearm	4	1
Chemical Agent	5	5
Impact Instrument	7	2
Knife or sharp edged instrument	6	4
<b><u>Base N</u></b>	<b><u>165</u></b>	<b><u>281</u></b>

Table 7.18

**VICTIMIZATION STATUS OF OFFICERS/AGENTS HAVING AND NOT  
HAVING UNARMED DEFENSE TRAINING (Percentages)**

Unarmed Defense Training	Victim	Non-Victim
Yes, have had unarmed defense training	56	56
No, have not had unarmed defense training	44	44
<b><u>Base N</u></b>	<b><u>190</u></b>	<b><u>326</u></b>

**Perceptions of Policy Initiatives  
and Worker Safety Concerns**

Respondents were asked to rank 23 potential policy proposals drawn from the studies conducted in Texas, New York, Pennsylvania, and Virginia. Possible ratings of each item were "definitely useful," "useful," "undecided," "not useful," and "definitely not useful." The results are shown in Table 7.19, with items rank-ordered according to the percentage of all respondents rating a policy initiative as "definitely useful" or "useful."

<sup>15</sup>Separate questions were asked for each of the five different types of weapons. Thus, the percentages are independent for each type and do not add to 100 percent.



About one-third of the safety-related policies received strong to very strong endorsements by officers/agents responding to the survey. Three of the items were accorded very high ratings of usefulness. These included identification of "high risk" areas (88%), development of a "partner system" to be used as needed in making home visits (87%), and the provision of "panic buttons" on office telephones (83%). Several other policy-related initiatives were also endorsed as useful by strong majorities of respondents--for example, providing training in self-defense methods (78%), providing training in "verbal judo" (76%), and providing officers with two-way communications devices in automobiles (72%) (Table 7.19).

Six of the potential policy initiatives were rated as useful approaches by less than a majority of respondents. In general, these lower-rated items dealt with the use of police or security officers to enhance worker safety at summons hearings held in field offices, and requiring workers to check in and out with supervisors or other monitors when on official business (Table 7.19).

There were also some potential policy initiatives on which the probation/parole agents and the juvenile officers differed markedly in their endorsement as definitely useful or useful. For example, 79% of the probation/parole agents gave high ratings to providing officers with recent "mugshots" of releasees, but only 36% of the juvenile officers did the same (Table 7.19). Similar discrepancies are observable for six other items--providing security officers for field offices (76% vs. 44%), providing all officers with hand-held radios (72% vs. 51%), establishing secure clerical areas for field offices (72% vs. 51%), establishing a special unit of officers/agents with law enforcement arrest authority (64% vs. 34%), and providing officers with firearms to be carried at any time believed necessary (47% vs. 19%) or while on duty (45% vs. 20%) (Table 7.19).

An interesting feature of the rankings of policy initiatives shown in Table 7.19, especially those receiving strong endorsements by the responding probation and parole workers, is that none appears to reflect policy ventures that are extraordinarily expensive or especially complex to implement.

Table 7.19

**RESPONDENTS' RATINGS OF THE USEFULNESS OF WORKER  
SAFETY-RELATED POLICIES (Percentages)**

Respondent Ratings of Policies as "Definitely Useful" or "Useful"	Parole Probation	Juvenile Services	Total
Identify all "high risk" areas and keep all P/P officers informed of these areas.	87	91	88
Develop a "partner system" to be used on an "as needed" basis when making home visits	90	79	87
Provide "panic buttons" on office telephones--i.e., buttons which would alert either the local police or security personnel in the event of an emergency	87	69	83
Provide training in self-defense methods	79	72	78
Provide training in "verbal judo"	75	81	76
Install two-way communication devices in each P/P officer's automobile	76	61	72
Provide distress signal devices to P/P officers when making home visits	71	72	71
Provide P/P officers with "mugshots" taken of releasees at the time of their release	79	36	69
Provide security officers for field offices--i.e., individual who would control entrance to field offices and would be available to assist in an emergency	76	44	69
Provide probation/parole-police teams for arrests of offenders	69	68	69
Provide all P/P officers with hand-held radios to be used for two-way communication in an emergency	72	51	67
Establish secure clerical areas for field offices--i.e., areas entered and exited only through electronically controlled doors	72	51	67
Provide secure jail areas for visits with clients--i.e., an area where the client is physically separated from the P/P officer	65	53	62

Table 7.19 (Cont'd.)

**RESPONDENTS' RATINGS OF THE USEFULNESS OF WORKER  
SAFETY-RELATED POLICIES (Percentages)**

Respondent Ratings of Policies as "Definitely Useful" or "Useful"	Parole Probation	Juvenile Services	Total
Provide P/P officers with non-lethal, chemical agents to be carried when making home visits	63	47	59
Establish a "law enforcement arrest authority"-- i.e., a special unit of training P/P officers with authority to carry weapons and make arrests	64	34	57
Increase the number of specialized caseloads with respect to probationers/parolees	55	49	53
Require a police/security officer be present with the P/P officer at all revocation hearings	55	48	53
Implement a requirement that all P/P officers provide their respective unit supervisors with a daily schedule prior to making home visits and/of field contacts	48	61	51
Provide P/P officers with soft body armor for use in situations thought to be "high risk"	49	33	45
Require that P/P officers check in and out with a centralized monitor when on official business	42	55	45
Assuming proper training, provide P/P officers with firearms to be carried at any time the officers believes it is necessary	47	19	40
Require a police/security officer to be present at all summons hearings held in the probation/parole office	41	39	40
Allow officers to carry firearms on duty	45	20	39
<b>Base N</b>	<b>401</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>520</b>

Agents/officers were also asked several questions concerning their perceptions of personal safety in various areas of the probation and parole work environment. As can be seen in Table 7.20, a large majority of the respondents (80%) felt themselves to be very safe or safe while working in their offices during regular office hours, but only 57% felt safe after hours. However, nearly three-fourths of the juvenile services officers noted that they felt very safe or safe while working the local office during non-office hours, but a bare majority (54%) of the probation/parole agents felt the same. Nearly two-thirds (65%) felt similarly about their safety when visiting an incarcerated offender.

The results were strikingly different when workers were asked about their concern for personal safety when making field contacts. Here, some 79% of the probation/parole agents and 55% of the juvenile officers reported themselves to be very concerned or concerned about their personal safety when in the field (Table 7.20). Moreover, almost seven out of ten (68%) felt that, with respect to personal safety, their work in the probation/parole field had become more dangerous over the past five years (Table 7.20). In sum, workers' concerns with safety focused principally on contacts made in the community, which comprises for most probation and parole workers a primary work environment.

Table 7.20

## SAFETY CONCERNS OF RESPONDENTS (Percentages)

Safety Concern Items	Parole Probation	Juvenile Services	Total
How safe do you feel while working in your local office during regular office hours?			
Very Safe/Safe	76	94	80
Unsafe/Very Unsafe	24	6	20
How safe do you feel while working in your local office during <u>non-office</u> hours?			
Very Safe/Safe	54	73	57
Unsafe/Very Unsafe	47	26	43
How safe do you feel when visiting with an offender in your local jail or state prison?			
Very Safe/Safe	65	66	65
Unsafe/Very Unsafe	24	17	22
Don't make jail visits	11	17	13
How concerned are you about your personal safety when making field contacts?			
Very concerned/Somewhat Concerned	79	55	73
Not very concerned/Definitely Not Concerned	15	41	20
Don't make field contacts	6	4	6
With respect to your personal safety, during the past <u>five years</u> (or whatever time you've been in the field, if less than 5 years), do you think your work in the probation/parole field has:			
Become more dangerous	71	58	68
Stayed about the same	28	41	31
Become less dangerous	<1	2	1
<b>Base N</b>	<b>394</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>512</b>

The Dynamics of Victimization

In the most serious victimization event during the past year, State Division of Probation and Parole agents reported the perpetrator to be a client (probationer/parolee) in eight out of 10 cases. In the case of State Department of Juvenile Services respondents, the client was the perpetrator in 45% of the cases and client family members were perpetrators in 41% of the events (Table 7.21). Although not shown in tabular form here, the perpetrator was male in 85% of all the cases.

Table 7.21

## OFFENDER'S STATUS AT TIME OF INCIDENT (Percentages)

Characteristics	Division of Parole/Prob.	Dept. of Juv. Serv.	Total
Client (probationer/parolee)	79	45	74
Client's family member	10	41	15
Client's friend	3	--	2
Bystander	2	--	1
<b>Base N</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>130</b>

In the majority of cases (62% overall), the perpetrator was under the direct supervision of the worker-victim, and under the supervision of someone else in the same agency in 8% of the cases. Note, however, the significant difference between the agents in the Division of Probation and Parole and officers in the Department of Juvenile Services in this regard. In the latter case, only 29% of the perpetrators were under the respondent's supervision, compared to 69% of the victimization incidents involving the probation/parole agents (Table 7.22).

Table 7.22

OFFENDER'S SUPERVISION STATUS AT TIME OF INCIDENT:  
BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)

Supervision Status	Division of Parole/Prob.	Dept. of Juv. Serv.	Total
Under respondent's supervision	69	29	62
Under respondent's agency's supervision	7	9	8
Under another agency's supervision	4	14	5
Not under supervision	5	29	9
Unknown	15	19	15
<b>Base N</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>130</b>

Table 7.23 shows the criminal status characteristics of perpetrators at the time of the most serious incident reported by officer/agent victims. As expected, perpetrators supervised by agents of the Division of Probation and Parole have a "heavier criminal history" than those under the authority of the State Department of Juvenile Services. Sizable numbers (31%) were also known to have previously assaulted police officers.

Officers/agents completing Part 2 of the survey questionnaire dealing with details of the most serious victimization event in the past year were asked whether the perpetrator was under the influence of drugs or alcohol at the time of the incident. The results are shown in Table 7.24. The most frequent response to this question was "Unknown," with some 42% of all respondents reporting this. However, the combined percentages for under the influence of drugs and alcohol when the incident occurred were quite small for the juvenile services agencies; the highest was 35% for the state probation and parole agency.

A very important piece of information in understanding the dynamics of victimization against probation/parole workers pertains to the behavioral character of the perpetrator's actions. Table 7.25 shows the rates of reported actions by the offender against the worker-victim. The most frequent incident reported was "intimidation"--70% of the probation/parole agents, and 76% of the juvenile services officers. "Threat of physical assault," especially in the case of state probation/parole agents (64%), was the second most frequent form of victimizations against Maryland workers. Actual "physical assault" was reported by only 8% of all respondents, with 9% of the parole/probation agents reporting physical assault--a figure almost twice as high as that for juvenile services officers. In sum, whether the behavior exhibited by the perpetrator was physical assault or threat of assault, or other form of intimidation, the data clearly indicate that the officer/agent is the direct object of victimization in the great majority of cases. Instances in which a third party related to the worker-victim (e.g., family member) is the object of victimization are infrequent.

Table 7.23

**CRIMINAL STATUS CHARACTERISTICS OF PERPETRATORS:  
BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Characteristics	Division of Parole/Prob.	Dept. of Juv. Serv.	Total
<u>Most Serious Offense:</u>			
Misdemeanor	30	11	27
Felony	43	28	41
Unknown	27	61	32
<u>Type of Most Important Offense:</u>			
Crime vs. person	49	32	46
Crime vs. property	6	16	8
Crime vs. morals	4	5	4
Substance abuse	20	5	18
Not under sentence	1	5	2
Unknown	20	37	23
<u>Previous Incarceration:</u>			
Yes	53	14	47
No	23	33	24
Unknown	24	52	29
<u>Drug Abuse History:</u>			
Yes	47	38	46
No	24	14	23
Unknown	28	48	31
<u>Alcohol Abuse History:</u>			
Yes	44	33	43
No	21	24	21
Unknown	34	43	36
<u>Prior Criminal History (i.e., (convictions or adjudications):</u>			
No prior convictions	3	15	5
One prior felony	16	25	18
Two or more felonies	16	5	15
Prior misdemeanor	36	5	31
Unknown	28	50	32



Table 7.23 (Cont'd.)

**CRIMINAL STATUS CHARACTERISTICS OF PERPETRATORS:  
BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Characteristics	Division of Parole/Prob.	Dept. of Juv. Serv.	Total
Prior Assaults Against Other Individuals: <sup>16</sup>			
Probation/Parole officer	4	--	4
Police officer	31	14	28
Treatment agency personnel	16	--	14
Spouse	23	9	21
Other family member	30	29	30
Citizen	44	19	40
<b><u>Base N</u></b>	<b><u>110</u></b>	<b><u>21</u></b>	<b><u>131</u></b>

Table 7.24

**WHETHER OFFENDER UNDER INFLUENCE OF DRUGS OR ALCOHOL AT  
TIME OF INCIDENT: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Whether Under the Influence	Division of Parole/Prob.	Dept. of Juv. Serv.	Total
Drugs	11	5	10
Alcohol	11	5	10
Drugs and Alcohol	4	--	4
Nothing	24	33	25
Unknown	50	57	51
<b><u>Base N</u></b>	<b><u>110</u></b>	<b><u>21</u></b>	<b><u>131</u></b>

<sup>16</sup>The responses in this category will not add up to 100% due to the possibility of assaults by individual perpetrator against several persons.

Table 7.25

**INCIDENCE OF DIFFERENT OFFENDER ACTIONS AGAINST PROBATION/PAROLE  
OFFICER/AGENT: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Nature of Offender Action	Division of Parole/Prob.	Dept. of Juv. Serv.	Total
Physical assault	9	5	8
Threat of physical assault	64	57	63
Damage of officer's property	9	5	8
Threat to officer's property	22	29	23
Intimidation	70	76	71
Attempted extortion	12	9	11
Threat to officer's reputation	29	29	29
Threat phy. harm POs family member	12	14	12
Intimidation/attempted intimidation of officer's family member	4	--	4
<b>Base N</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>131</b>

Another item in Part 2 of the survey instrument asked respondents about additional actions of the perpetrator against the victim-worker. The data for this item appear in Table 7.26. The data clearly demonstrate that probation/parole agents are more frequently the objects of some form of physical force employed by the perpetrator. When allegations about the officers/agent's professional conduct were made, they tended to occur most frequently (50%) in the case of probation/parole agents, though such allegations were also made against 38% of the juvenile services officers (Table 7.26).

Respondents were asked to indicate who, in addition to themselves, was present when the incident took place. Other agents (34%), a family member of the offender (21%) and law enforcement officials (17%) were most frequently named by probation/parole agents. In the case of juvenile services officers, members of the offender's family (54%), law enforcement officials (27%), and another officer (18%) were most frequently reported as being present when the incident occurred (Table 7.27).

Another important matter in understanding the character and dynamics of hazardous incidents experienced is the location where or medium through which an event occurs. An examination of the data relating to this issue in the current survey suggests that many incidents are, in reality, episodic. Often, more than one location and/or medium is involved before the victimization event is perceived as concluded, regardless of the outcome. For example, an incident that commences with an officer's or agent's visit to a client's home might be culminated in an on-the-street confrontation or a clash during a subsequent session between the officer/agent and client at the agency office. The data in Table 5.20 suggests that such action sequences are not uncommon; many of the respondents identified multiple sites and/or media as being involved in the same event.

As can be seen in Table 7.28, an agency office was identified as a location where the incident occurred in a majority (55%) of all the "most serious incidents" reported. An agency office was most frequently named as the site or location where the incident took place by both probation/parole agents (59%) and juvenile services officers (32%) (Table 7.28). In the case of probation/parole agents, "over the phone" (23%) was the only other response reported by more than one-fifth of the respondents. This was not the case, however, for juvenile services officers, who listed "over the phone" (27%), a courtroom (27%), and "on the street" confrontations (23%) as the place where the incident occurred. In the client's home was named by 13% of the probation/parole agents and 14% of the juvenile services officers (Table 7.28).

Table 7.26

**INCIDENCE OF ADDITIONAL OFFENDER ACTIONS AGAINST PROBATION/PAROLE OFFICER/AGENT: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Nature of Offender Action	Division of Parole/Prob.	Dept. of Juv. Serv.	Total
<u>Physical Force:</u>			
Shot	2	--	1
Other weapon	25	5	22
Hit with impact weapon	4	--	3
Cut	3	--	2
Hit with fist or hand	10	--	8
Kicked	5	--	4
Pushed	13	9	12
<u>Allegations about Officer's:</u>			
Professional conduct	50	38	48
Personal conduct	36	19	34
Lawsuits vs. officer	19	24	20
Allegations about co-workers	14	5	12
<b>Base N</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>131</b>

Note: These were presented as separate items in the survey questionnaire. Thus, column percentages do not add to 100.

Table 7.27

**OTHERS PRESENT AT VICTIMIZATION EVENT, IN ADDITION TO  
OFFICER/AGENT: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Others Present at Incident	Division of Parole/Prob.	Dept. of Juv. Serv.	Total
Probation/Parole officer	34	18	31
Law enforcement official	17	27	19
Officer's family or friends	5	4	5
Offender's family member	21	54	26
Offender's employer/co-workers	4	9	4
Offender's friends	16	14	15
Bystander	24	27	24
Others	25	29	20
<b>Base N</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>131</b>

Note: These were presented as separate items in the survey questionnaire.  
Thus, column percentages do not add to 100.

Table 7.28

**WHERE INCIDENT TOOK PLACE BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Where Incident Took Place	Division of Parole/Prob.	Dept. of Juv. Serv.	Total
Over the phone	23	27	24
By letter or mail	4	--	3
Through message or report of others	9	9	9
Agency office	59	32	55
Client's home	13	19	14
Someone else's home	3	--	2
Prison or jail	6	9	7
Human service agency	7	4	7
Courtroom	14	27	17
In vehicle	4	4	4
Offender's employment site	1	4	1
Public facility	5	--	4
On the street	9	23	11
Apartment hall or elevator	1	9	2
Other location	7	9	8
<b>Base N</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>130</b>

The most frequent response of the worker-victim in reaction to the incident was an attempt to talk to the offender--68% of the juvenile services officers and 62% of the probation/parole agents. The next most frequent response, although considerably lower, was to "say nothing" (31% of all respondents) (Table 7.29). By and large, there were no great differences between responses offered by individuals associated with the two different agencies.

Table 7.29

RESPONSE TO INCIDENT BY OFFICER/AGENT:  
AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)

Principal Immediate Response	Division of Parole/Prob.	Dept. of Juv. Serv.	Total
Struck back physically	3	--	2
Threatened to strike back	10	4	9
Used gun or other weapon	--	4	1
Displayed a badge or I.D.	5	9	6
Used verbal threat	23	4	20
Said nothing	30	36	31
Retreated	24	18	23
Called out for help	9	9	9
Attempted to talk to offender	62	68	63
Took no action	18	41	21
<b>Base N</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>130</b>

Note: Respondents were asked to report multiple immediate reactions. Thus, columns percentages do not add up to 100.

Overall, 50% of the reported victimization incidents occurred in the context of an "announced or expected visit." In the case of juvenile services officers, 64% of the events occurred in this context; the corresponding figure for probation/parole agents was 48%. The latter also experienced victimizations in the context of surprise visits in 27% of the cases. Interestingly, very few incidents occurred during arrests of offenders (see Table 7.30).

Table 7.30

**CONTEXT IN WHICH INCIDENT OCCURRED BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Context of Incident	Division of Parole/Prob.	Dept. of Juv. Serv.	Total
Announced or expected visit	48	64	50
Surprise visit	27	14	25
During arrest of the offender	5	--	4
During arrest of someone else	4	4	4
In response to offender's call	14	9	13
Response to call from offender's spouse/family	10	9	10
In context of domestic dispute	3	4	3
During transport of offender	4	14	6
Other context	32	32	32
<b>Base N</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>131</b>

Note: Column totals may not add to 100 due to rounding.

### Aftermaths of Victimization and Consequences for Workers

One of the important concerns in examining the many different impacts that victimization might have on personnel in the field of probation/parole focuses attention on the aftermaths of such events and their consequences for workers' personal and professional lives. Table 7.31 presents information describing the aftermaths of victimization as reported by respondents in the Maryland worker safety study.

The direct consequences of victimization experiences were primarily of an emotional, rather than physical, character. Relatively few of the officers/agents reported being physically injured (6%). On the other hand, two aftermaths that can be considered as primarily emotional in nature--shaken up and fear on the job--were more frequently reported to be a consequence of the incident--73% and 46%, respectively, of all respondents. Disruption in personal life was also noted by 40% of all respondents. (Table 7.31).

Another feature of the data that stands out is the fact that officers/agents perceive victimization incidents as affecting their approaches to or relationships with clients. A "reduced sense of trust in clients" was noted by 49% of the responding probation/parole agents and by 45% of the juvenile services officers. A related aftermath, "reduced sensitivity to clients," was also noted by almost one-third (36%) of all respondents (Table 7.31).

In contrast to the consequences of victimization just reported, about one-fourth (26%) of all the Division of Parole and Probation respondents noted that they had experienced an "enhanced sense of self-confidence" as a result of the incident (Table 7.31). In sum, the reported aftermaths were quite varied, and could conceivably have longer-term consequences for worker and agency effectiveness in the supervision of probationers and parolees.

In addition to survey items on the aftermaths of the victimization event, additional questions were asked about other possible effects of the incident on the worker and others with whom he/she relates. The results are presented in Table 7.32. With respect to the concern with personal effects on the officer/agent, 39% of all respondents reported that the incident had negative consequences for them personally, and 29% noted that the incident had a negative effect on their families.

Some 30% of the responding officers/agents reported that they had thought about quitting their jobs as a result of the victimization event, with the highest figure (32%) occurring in the case of respondents associated with the Division of Parole and Probation (Table 7.32). As might be expected, given the earlier discussion of aftermaths of victimization, some 22% of all responding officers/agents noted that "avoided contact with threatening clients" was a personal outcome of the incident for them.

Table 7.31

AFTERMATHS OF VICTIMIZATION EVENTS BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)

Where Incident Took Place	Division of Parole/Prob.	Dept. of Juv. Serv.	Total
Injured by incident	6	4	6
Chronic condition	2	--	1
Aggravation of old injury	2	4	2
Stomachache, headache, or similar	18	9	17
Shaken up	74	68	73
Fear on the job	48	36	46
Lack of self confidence	20	18	19
Reduced sense of trust in clients	49	45	49
Reduced sensitivity to clients	36	32	36
Increased use of medication	4	9	5
Increased use of alcohol	3	--	2
Disruption in personal life	40	41	40
Enhanced sense of self-confidence	26	--	22
<b>Base N</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>130</b>

Note: Column percentages are not cumulative. Each percentage represents the incidence of the particular aftermath.

Table 7.32

## EFFECTS OF THE VICTIMIZATION EVENT BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)

Effects of Victimi- zation Event	Division of Parole/Prob.	Dept. of Juv. Serv.	Total
<u>Personal Effect on Officer:</u>			
Positive consequences	15	--	13
Negative consequences	40	36	39
No consequences	45	64	48
<u>Effect on Officer's Family:</u>			
Positive consequences	4	--	3
Negative consequences	33	9	29
No consequences	63	91	68
<u>Effect of Incident on Agency:</u>			
Positive consequences	6	--	5
Negative consequences	15	18	16
No consequences	78	82	79
<u>Effect on Co-Workers:</u>			
Positive consequences	7	4	7
Negative consequences	27	27	27
No consequences	66	68	66
<u>Less Open with Clients:</u>			
Yes	27	24	26
No	73	76	73
<u>Thought About Quitting Job:</u>			
Yes	32	18	30
No	68	82	70
<u>Applied for a Transfer:</u>			
Yes	11	9	10
No	89	91	89
<u>Avoided Contact with Co-Workers:</u>			
Yes	4	4	4
No	95	95	95
<u>Avoided Contact with Threatening Clients:</u>			
Yes	22	23	22
No	78	77	78
<u>Base N</u>	<u>109</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>130</u>

Note: Column totals may not add to 100 due to rounding.



The last two concerns examined in this section of the report focus on the reporting behavior of officer/agent victims in relation to the most serious incident experienced in the preceding year and their perceptions of whether the incident might have been prevented by them or their agencies. As can be seen in Table 7.33, among all respondents the two sets of individuals to whom the incident was reported were, in order of frequency, co-workers (81%) and supervisors (76%). Family members and friends were also frequently noted individuals with whom they discussed the incident--54% naming friends, 47% their spouses, and 39% another family member. Only 10% reported that they had discussed the incident with "no one." Overall, the data in Table 7.22 indicate that agents/officers in each of the agency settings are not reluctant to report and discuss the incident with others in the agency, and about half go on to discuss the experience with family members and friends.

Table 7.33

**REPORTING BEHAVIOR OF OFFICER/AGENT VICTIMS BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

To Whom Event Reported	Division of Parole/Prob.	Dept. of Juv. Serv.	Total
Agency head	23	14	22
Supervisor	74	86	76
Co-workers	82	77	81
Police	23	14	21
Counselor	12	--	10
Spouse	53	18	47
Other family members	39	36	39
Friends	55	45	54
Other person	17	9	16
No one	8	19	10
<b>Base N</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>129</b>

Note: Column percentages are not cumulative. Each percentage represents the proportion of respondents answering "Yes" to the survey item.

As shown in Table 7.34, it is clear that very few respondents--only 5% of the probation/parole agents, and none of the juvenile services workers--felt that they personally could have prevented the incident from happening. This is not surprising, in view of earlier findings that indicate that a majority of the incidents occurred while the officer/agent was carrying out normal day-to-day duties associated with the job, such as making field visits, meeting with an offender in the agency office, or dealing with the offender in a jail or

prison. As more than one respondent to the survey noted in comments to the researchers, many of the events experienced simply "come with the territory"--they cannot be prevented, only dealt with in the most constructive manner possible.

A minority (23%) of the respondents felt that their agencies could have done something to prevent the hazardous incident from occurring. However, almost half of the respondents felt that their agencies could have done something to prepare them and other personnel better to cope with this type of situation (Table 7.34). In sum, what emerges from the findings shown in Table 7.34 is (1) that officers/agents perceive their ability and that of their agencies to prevent the onset of victimization events to be limited, but (2) prior education about the circumstances and dynamics of victimization events, coupled with training enabling them to cope with and respond more effectively to hazardous events in their daily job routines, could be achieved through more thorough educational and skills development programs sponsored by their agencies.

Table 7.34

WHETHER INCIDENT COULD HAVE BEEN PREVENTED BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)

Whether Incident Could Have Been Prevented	Division of Parole/Prob.	Dept. of Juv. Serv.	Total
Could you have prevented the incident?			
Yes	5	--	4
No	80	68	78
Don't know	14	32	17
Could your agency had done anything to prevent the incident?			
Yes	24	14	23
No	59	68	60
Don't know	17	18	17
Could the agency have done anything to better prepare personnel to cope with this type of situation?			
Yes	51	32	48
No	30	50	33
Don't know	19	18	19
<b>Base N</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>130</b>

Note: Column percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

## Section 8

### SURVEY FINDINGS: NEW JERSEY

A total of 2185 workers from throughout New Jersey's Adult Parole and Probation and Juvenile Service agencies responded to the 1989 survey. As noted in the earlier discussion of methodology (Part I, Section 2), this represented an effective response rate of 69% (2185 of 3696 workers). In addition, two categories of workers not often found in connection with parole and probation systems responded to the worker safety survey; namely, child support enforcement officers and pretrial case management investigators. The various classes of workers were distributed across several job categories, as shown in the following listing.

<u>Job Category</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Secretarial/Clerical	552	25
Technical/Support Staff	23	1
Investigator	214	10
Senior Investigator	62	3
Probation Officer	505	23
Intensive Supervision Program Officer--Probation	34	2
Senior Probation Officer	356	16
Supervising Probation Officer	33	2
Principal Probation Officer	185	8
Assistant Chief Probation Officer	13	1
Chief Probation Officer	5	<1
Vicinage Asst. Chief Probation Officer	4	<1
Vicinage Chief Probation Officer	8	<1
Parole Officer Trainee	1	<1
Parole Officer	72	3
Senior Parole Officer	36	2
Intensive Supervision/Surveillance Program Officer-Parole	8	<1
Asst. District Parole Officer	5	<1
District Parole Supervisor	6	<1
Supervising Parole Officer	2	<1
Assistant Chief	4	<1
Chief	2	<1
Other Administrative Title	46	2
Other, unspecified	9	<1
<u>Totals</u>	<u>2185</u>	<u>100</u>

## Respondent Characteristics

To make analyses of respondent characteristics and encounters with hazardous incidents more efficient, these job classifications were collapsed into three main categories: (1) Officers<sup>1</sup>; (2) Supervisors and Managers; and (3) Clerical and Staff. Within each category, an additional distinction was made between probation and parole workers. Table 8.1 shows the relationships between each of these general categories and various profile characteristics of survey respondents.

A slight majority (54%) of the probation officers responding to the survey are females, while close to three-fourths (72%) of parole officer respondents are male. The great majority of supervisors/managers are male--70% in probation and 88% in parole. The vast majority of clerical and staff workers in both fields are female in office settings having more than 100 employees (Table 8.1).

Parole officers are, on the average, older than their counterparts in probation. At the same time, supervisors and managers in both fields tend to be older than the officers, an expected finding in view of the fact that movement into a management or supervisory position is typically associated with tenure in the agency and field. Clerical and staff workers distribute fairly evenly across the upper three age categories; notably, however, just below one-third (31%) of all the clerical/staff respondents are 50 years of age or older (Table 8.1).

More than eight out of 10 officers--84% of those in the probation field and 87% of those in parole--hold a bachelor's or graduate degree. The corresponding figures for supervisors/managers are somewhat higher (94% in each case). Over 95% of the clerical and staff workers have high school or some college education (Table 8.1).

Not surprisingly, supervisors/managers exhibit much longer tenure in the probation or parole fields--89% of those in probation and 94% of those in parole having 10 or more years' tenure. Similar results are found for tenure in current agency (Table 8.1). In contrast, just over one-third of the probation officers (34%) have been in the field less than three years and some 49% also have been in the field for less than five years. Slightly more than half (51%) have been working in their current agencies for less than five years. In contrast, only about one-fourth (23%) of the parole officers have less than five years in the field, and about one-third (34%) have been in their current agencies for less than five years. On the whole, clerical and staff workers tend to be younger than their officer counterparts (Table 8.1).

One-fifth (20%) of all the probation officers hold a second job. The corresponding figure for parole officers is 27%. The corollary figures are smaller for both supervisors/managers and clerical/staff employees (Table 8.1)

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<sup>1</sup>This includes all personnel whose jobs bring them into direct client contact for purposes of probation and parole supervision, enforcement of court-ordered child support, and pretrial case management.

There are substantial differences between probation and parole employees with respect to unarmed self-defense training. Among probation officers, only 23% report having had such training, compared to 59% of the parole officers. Similarly, among the supervisors/managers, the differences were even more distinct, with only 30% of those in probation reporting that they had such training, compared to 82% of those working in the parole field.

As can be seen in the last segment of Table 8.1, very few respondents in any job category reported that they carried a weapon of any type. Carrying a handgun was reported by only 1% of the probation officers and none of the parole officers. The highest frequency was 8% for probation officers who reported carrying an impact instrument followed by another 5% reporting that they usually carried a chemical agent.<sup>2</sup>

Table 8.1

CHARACTERISTICS OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS (PERCENTAGES)

Characteristics	Officers		Supv'rs./ Managers		Clerical & Staff	
	Prob.	Par.	Prob.	Par.	Prob.	Par.
<u>Sex of Respondent:</u>						
Male	44	72	70	88	3	6
Female	56	28	30	12	97	94
<u>Age of Respondent:</u>						
Under 25 years	14	2	<1	--	16	4
25-29 years	21	9	4	--	12	21
30-39 years	33	36	20	18	23	25
40-49 years	18	40	48	59	18	19
50 years or older	14	14	27	24	31	31
<u>Educational Attainment:</u>						
High school	4	3	4	6	72	58
Some college	12	9	3	--	25	38
Bachelor's degree	70	68	64	47	2	4
Graduate degree	14	19	30	47	1	--

<sup>2</sup>While the number of non-responses to the survey items concerning the carrying of weapons was considerably higher than for any other set of questions--indicating, possibly, a reluctance to report carrying a weapon not authorized--these were not frequent enough to offset an overall conclusion that weapons are carried by very few of the workers surveyed. However, the data in Table 4.8 below indicate varying degrees of support between probation officers and parole agents for a policy initiative authorizing the carrying of weapons by officers/agents.

Table 8.1 (Cont'd.)

## CHARACTERISTICS OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS (PERCENTAGES)

Characteristics	<u>Officers</u>		<u>Supv'rs./ Managers</u>		<u>Clerical &amp; Staff</u>	
	Prob.	Par.	Prob.	Par.	Prob.	Par.
<u>Office Size:</u>						
1-25 employees	40	63	35	41	51	48
26-50 employees	29	35	20	59	26	50
51-100 employees	19	1	22	--	13	2
101-200 employees	7	1	12	--	5	--
201 or more employees	5	--	11	--	6	--
<u>Tenure in the Probation/ Parole Field:</u>						
2 years or less	34	13	3	--	34	27
3-4 years	15	10	4	--	12	13
5-9 years	20	30	5	6	22	35
10-19 years	27	42	51	59	24	15
20 or more years	4	5	38	35	7	11
<u>Tenure in Current Agency:</u>						
2 years or less	33	17	3	--	34	27
3-4 years	18	17	4	--	14	12
5-9 years	20	31	6	6	21	31
10-19 years	25	30	49	59	24	17
20 or more years	4	5	37	35	7	12
<u>Second Job Held:</u>						
Yes	20	27	12	18	10	19
No	80	73	88	82	90	81
<u>Unarmed Defense Training:</u>						
Yes	23	59	30	82	10	19
No	77	41	70	18	90	81
<u>Weapon Usually Carried:</u>						
Handgun <sup>3</sup>	1	--	<1	--	<1	--
Other firearm	1	1	--	--	<1	--
Impact instrument	8	4	2	--	1	--
Chemical agent	6	1	2	--	3	--
Knife/Other Sharp-edged Inst.	4	1	2	--	3	5
<u>Base N</u>	<u>1169</u>	<u>117</u>	<u>287</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>527</u>	<u>48</u>

Note: Column percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

<sup>3</sup>Separate questions were asked for the five different types of weapons. Thus, the percentages are independent and column totals do not add to 100.

### Victimization Rates

For purposes of this study, victimization was defined in terms of the exposure of probation and parole workers to hazardous incidents encountered in the course of carrying out their jobs.<sup>4</sup> To help respondents understand the meaning of the term, "hazardous incident," as used in designing this study, the following examples were included in the instructions appearing at the beginning of the questionnaire.

Examples of hazardous incidents affecting staff safety would include: physical assault or harm; threat of physical assault or harm; assault or threat of harm to a worker's family members; harm or threat of harm to one's property; extortion; harm or threat of harm to a worker's reputation; or psychological intimidation.

In Part 1 of the survey questionnaire, which was applicable to all respondents, four items pertained to probation and parole workers' experiences with hazardous incidents. The first two asked whether the worker, during his or her entire career in the probation/parole field, had (1) been physically assaulted in the line of duty, or (2) been intimidated by physical or other threat. The other two survey items were similar but asked the respondents to answer in terms of their experiences since November, 1988--approximately 12 months prior to the survey.

Victimization rates for all respondents during their entire careers in the probation and parole field and during the year preceding the survey are shown in Table 8.2. As can be seen, majorities of all the officers reported experiencing at least one victimization incident during the course of their careers in the field of probation/parole. However, the rates are much higher for parole officers (74%) than for probation officers (54%). Even higher rates prevailed for those who are currently supervisors or managers in one of the New Jersey agencies--88% for those in parole and 69% for those in probation. On-the-job hazardous incidents are much less frequent among clerical and staff employees, although some 16% of those in probation agencies and 13% of those working in parole agencies reported having experienced at least one such incident (Table 8.2).

When general types of victimization events are considered, just below half (47%) of the responding parole supervisors/managers indicated that they had been physically assaulted at some time during their careers, compared to only 23% of their counterparts in probation. Among all officers, the physical assault rates for the entire career was twice as high for parole officers than for probation officers (22% vs. 11%). Similar differences occurred when intimidation rates are considered, with some 73% of parole officers reporting one or more such incidents, compared to 53% of probation officers. Among the

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<sup>4</sup>For a detailed discussion of the concept of "victimization" and its relation to hazardous incidents and worker safety in probation and parole, see William H. Parsonage, Worker Safety in Probation and Parole, Washington, D.C.: National Institute of Corrections, 1990.

supervisors/managers, more than four out of five in the parole field (82%) and two-thirds of those in parole (67%) indicated having experienced one or more intimidation events during their careers. (Table 8.2)

As shown in the bottom section of Table 8.2, one-third (33%) of the probation officers personally encountered some type of past-year victimization. This figure was higher for parole officers (44%). The corresponding figures were smaller for both groups of supervisors/managers--36% of those in the area of parole and 24% of those in probation (Table 8.2).

When examined according to the general type of incident encountered in the past year, the highest rates are associated with intimidation. About one-third (32%) of the probation officers and 44% of the parole officers reported experiencing an incident of this type in the past year. Corresponding figures for supervisors/managers were 24% and 30%, respectively. Among clerical and staff workers, some 6-8% encountered at least one intimidation incident in the year preceding the survey (Table 8.2).

Table 8.3 shows the victimization rates by type during the worker's entire career in the probation and parole field. As can be seen, about half of the officers and supervisors/managers in both probation and parole who had experienced physical assault had been assaulted more than once during their careers. However, the overall figures are higher for those working in parole. Multiple incidents were also reported by 2% of the clerical/staff employees.

Rates of intimidation during the career are much higher in all of the worker categories. About two-thirds (68%) of supervisors/managers in the probation field reported having experienced one or more intimidation events during their careers in probation or parole; the comparable figure for those in the parole field was 82%. The corresponding figures for each of probation and parole officers were 53% and 73%, respectively. Distinct minorities of clerical and staff respondents reported having experienced intimidation events while on the job (15% in probation and 9% in parole) (Table 8.3).

Just below half (47%) of the managers and supervisors in parole reported that they had experienced intimidation events more than four times during their careers, followed by 36% of the parole officers. Comparable figures for their counterparts in probation were much lower (28% for managers and 17% for probation officers). The incidence of multiple intimidation events were far fewer among clerical and staff workers, though 16% of those in probation offices reported having experienced one or more incidents of intimidation while working in probation and parole agencies (Table 8.3).

The second set of indicators of hazardous incidents focused on the experiences of workers in the year preceding the survey. The results are shown in Table 8.4. As can be seen, 5% of the probation officers and 8% of the parole officers indicated that they had been physically assaulted in the line of duty during the year preceding the survey. Among the supervisors/managers, some 6% of those in probation and 12% of those in parole reported being assaulted during the past year. The incident of physical assault among clerical and staff employees was only 1% for those in probation offices but 4% for those in parole offices. Even though the incidence of physical assault was quite small



for officers and supervisors/managers, the fact that approximately one in 20 were at risk of physical assault while on the job during a yearly period constitutes a level of occupational risk of some importance.

Table 8.2

VICTIMIZATION RATES FOR ENTIRE CAREER AND DURING PAST  
YEAR IN PROBATION/PAROLE FIELD (Percentages)

Characteristics	Officers		Supv'rs./ Managers		Clerical & Staff	
	Prob.	Par.	Prob.	Par.	Prob.	Par.
<u>Victimization in Career:</u>						
Never victimized in career	46	26	31	12	84	87
Victimization in career by general type:						
Physical assault only	1	1	1	6	1	4
Both assault and intimid.	10	21	22	41	2	--
Intimidation only	43	52	45	41	13	9
<u>Base N</u>	<u>1160</u>	<u>116</u>	<u>284</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>472</u>	<u>46</u>
<u>Victimization in Past Year:</u>						
Not victimized past year	67	56	76	65	92	91
Victimization in past year general type:						
Physical assault only	1	--	3	6	<1	2
Both assault and intimid.	4	8	3	6	1	2
Intimidation only	28	36	18	24	7	4
<u>Base N</u>	<u>1164</u>	<u>114</u>	<u>282</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>474</u>	<u>46</u>

Note: Column percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Table 8.3

**VICTIMIZATION RATES DURING ENTIRE CAREER IN  
PROBATION/PAROLE FIELD (Percentages)**

Victimization Rate	<u>Officers</u>		<u>Supv'rs./ Managers</u>		<u>Clerical &amp; Staff</u>	
	Prob.	Par.	Prob.	Par.	Prob.	Par.
Physically Assaulted in the Line of Duty During Entire Career	11	22	24	47	4	4
Times Physically Assaulted in the Line of Duty During Entire Career:						
Once	5	7	10	24	2	2
Twice	2	8	6	18	<1	2
Three times	1	4	4	6	<1	--
Four times	1	1	1	--	--	--
More than four times	1	3	4	--	1	--
Never physically assaulted	89	78	76	53	96	96
<u>Base N</u>	<u>1163</u>	<u>117</u>	<u>284</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>472</u>	<u>46</u>
Intimidated by Physical or Any Other Threat During Entire Career	53	73	68	82	16	9
Times Intimidated by Physical or Any Other Threat During Entire Career:						
Once	10	10	11	6	6	2
Twice	14	16	12	29	4	--
Three times	9	8	13	--	2	--
Four time	4	4	4	--	1	--
More than four times	17	36	28	47	4	7
Never intimidated	47	27	32	18	84	91
<u>Base N</u>	<u>1162</u>	<u>115</u>	<u>283</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>475</u>	<u>46</u>

Note: Column percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

When confrontations by some form of intimidation are considered, the incidence rates are much higher. Among officer respondents, nearly one-third

(32%) of those in probation and 44% of those in parole experienced one or more of such events in the year preceding the survey. The comparable figures for supervisors/managers were 21% and 30%, respectively (Table 8.4). And, as the additional data in Table 8.3 show, a majority of those reporting intimidation events indicated more than one such confrontation had occurred during the year before the survey. Even among clerical and staff respondents, the incident rate is not negligible, in that some 6-8% reported encountering one or more intimidations during the last 12 months.

Table 8.4

VICTIMIZATION RATES IN YEAR PRECEDING  
THE SURVEY (Percentages)

Victimization Rate	Officers		Supv'rs./ Managers		Clerical & Staff	
	Prob.	Par.	Prob.	Par.	Prob.	Par.
Physically Assaulted in the Line of Duty During Past Year	5	8	6	12	1	4
Times Physically Assaulted in the Line of Duty During Past Year:						
Once	3	7	4	6	<1	2
Twice	1	--	2	6	<1	2
Three times	<1	--	--	--	--	--
Four times	<1	--	--	--	--	--
More than four times	1	1	<1	--	<1	--
Never physically assaulted	95	92	94	88	99	96
<b>Base N</b>	<b>1167</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>282</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>477</b>	<b>46</b>
Intimidated by Physical or Any Other Threat During Past Year:	32	44	21	30	8	6
Times Intimidated by Physical or Any Other Threat During Past Year:						
Once	13	15	8	12	3	2
Twice	9	13	7	6	2	2
Three times	5	5	1	--	1	--
Four times	1	--	1	6	<1	--
More than four times	4	11	5	6	<1	2
Never intimidated	68	56	79	70	92	94
<b>Base N</b>	<b>1164</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>284</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>477</b>	<b>46</b>

Note: Column percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

### Correlates of Victimization

Table 8.5 displays relationships between worker classifications and personal or job-related characteristics by general victimization status.<sup>5</sup> Among probation officers, nearly equal proportions of males and females reported that they had experienced one or more victimization events during their careers in the field. However, in the parole officer group, males were more likely than females (78% vs. 57%) to have encountered victimization events. Among the supervisors/managers in probation agencies, gender has no relationship to victimization status. As stated in the footnote to Table 8.5, there were only two respondents in the parole supervisors/managers category, precluding any analysis of responses (Table 8.5).

While age of respondent shows only a slight relationship to victimization status during career, tenure in the field of probation and parole is clearly related to victimization rates. For example, 85% of the parole officers with more than five years tenure in the field reported experiencing one or more victimization events at some time in their careers, compared with only 53% of those not reporting having faced such an incident (Table 8.5). Among probation officers, 62% of those in the victim group reported five or more years tenure in the field, compared to 38% of those in the non-victim group. No similar relationship existed among supervisors/managers in the probation field (Table 8.5).

In Table 8.6, relationships between victimization status during the year preceding the survey and several personal and job-related characteristics are shown for officers and supervisors/managers in both probation and parole. An inspection of the data in this table indicates few relationships of note between the characteristics examined and victimization status during the 12 months preceding the survey. For example, among parole officers, males are somewhat more likely than females to have experienced victimization at some time during the past year, but the relationship is not pronounced. No similar relationship was found in the probation officer respondent group. Parole officers who report holding a second job are also more likely than those not holding second jobs to have experienced victimization events during the past year, but this is not true among probation officers. The numbers of all respondents who reported carrying a weapon of some type were too small to permit any meaningful analysis.

In summary, the data presented thus far in Section 8 indicate that the problem of worker safety among New Jersey probation and parole workers, especially those involved in direct supervision of probationers/parolees, is pervasive. Although the rate of physical assault on officers in the year preceding the survey ranged from 5%-8%, it still constitutes an important level of occupational risk (1 in 20 to 1 in 12 workers). The results were similar for those in supervisory/management positions.

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<sup>5</sup>"Victimization status" refers to any form or frequency of encounter with hazardous incidents during the worker's career and distinguishes only between general "yes" and "no" responses to survey items asking about such events.

When all types of hazardous incidents are considered, about one-third of probation officers and some 44% of parole officers experienced some such events during this same period of time, followed by about one-fourth (24%) of the probation supervisors/managers and 35% of parole supervisors/managers.

Table 8.5

**CORRELATES OF VICTIMIZATION STATUS DURING CAREER:  
OFFICERS AND SUPERVISOR/MANAGERS (Percentages)**

Characteristics	Officers				Supv'rs./ Managers			
	Prob.		Parole		Prob.		Parole	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
<u>Sex of Respondent:</u>								
Male	49	39	78	57	72	63	93	* <sup>6</sup>
Female	51	61	30	43	28	37	7	*
<u>Age of Respondent:</u>								
Under 25 years	10	19	1	3	--	1	--	*
25 - 29 years	19	22	6	17	5	2	--	*
30 - 39 years	38	28	37	34	21	18	20	*
40 - 49 years	21	15	43	31	51	44	53	*
50 years or older	13	16	13	14	23	34	27	*
<u>Tenure in Prob./Parole Field:</u>								
Less than 3 years	21	49	7	30	1	--	--	*
3 - 4 years	16	14	8	17	5	2	--	*
5 - 9 years	22	17	29	30	5	4	60	*
10 - 19 years	35	18	49	23	52	50	40	*
20 years or more	5	3	7	--	37	38	--	*
<u>Kind of weapon usually carried:<sup>7</sup></u>								
Handgun	1	<1	--	--	--	1	--	*
Other firearm	1	<1	2	--	--	--	--	*
Impact instrument	12	2	4	4	2	1	--	*
Chemical Agent	8	3	2	--	3	1	--	*
Knife/Other sharp-edged instr.	5	2	--	4	2	1	--	*
<b>Base N</b>	<b>626</b>	<b>531</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>15</b>	

Note: Column percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

<sup>6</sup>There were only two respondents in this category, so no percentage displays were possible

<sup>7</sup>Respondents were asked to indicate whether they usually carried or did not carry a series of weapons. Hence, each percentage is independent of all the others, and totals do not add to 100.

Table 8.6

**CORRELATES OF VICTIMIZATION STATUS DURING PAST YEAR:  
OFFICERS AND SUPERVISOR/MANAGERS (Percentages)**

Characteristics	Officers				Supv'rs./ Managers			
	Prob.		Parole		Prob.		Parole	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
<u>Sex of Respondent:</u>								
Male	48	42	84	62	61	72	83	91
Female	52	58	16	38	39	28	17	9
<u>Age of Respondent:</u>								
Under 25 years	13	14	--	2	--	<1	--	--
25 - 29 years	24	19	10	8	15	1	--	--
30 - 39 years	36	32	34	40	26	19	17	18
40 - 49 years	18	19	46	35	49	48	83	46
50 years or older	9	16	10	16	10	32	--	36
<u>Unarmed Self-defense Training:</u>								
Yes, have had training	25	22	60	59	32	30	100	73
No, have not had training	75	78	40	41	68	70	--	27
<u>Hold Second Job:</u>								
Yes	24	18	43	14	15	12	17	18
No	76	82	57	86	85	88	83	82
<u>Tenure in current agency:</u>								
Less than 1 year	8	19	2	9	4	1	--	--
1 - 2 years	27	19	8	13	3	1	--	--
3 - 4 years	18	14	16	19	12	2	--	--
5 - 9 years	20	20	38	23	10	5	--	9
10 - 19 years	24	26	30	31	46	50	83	46
20 years or more	2	4	6	5	25	40	17	46
<u>Kind of weapon usually carried:<sup>1</sup></u>								
Handgun	1	<1	--	--	--	<1	--	--
Other firearm	1	1	2	--	--	--	--	--
Impact instrument	13	5	8	2	5	1	--	--
Chemical Agent	10	4	2	--	5	2	--	--
Knife/Other sharp-edged instr.	5	3	2	--	2	2	--	--
<b>Base N</b>	<b>383</b>	<b>778</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>11</b>

Note: Column percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

<sup>1</sup>Respondents were asked to indicate whether they usually carried or did not carry a series of weapons. Hence, each percentage is independent of all the others, and totals do not add to 100.

## Safety Concerns and Policy Initiatives for Worker Safety

### Safety Concerns

Employees in New Jersey agencies responding to the general survey were asked several questions concerning their perceptions of personal safety in various areas of the work environment of probation and parole. As can be seen in Table 8.7, sizable majorities of the probation and parole officers and supervisors/managers felt themselves to be very safe or safe while working in their offices during regular office hours; the percentages ranged from 77% of the parole officers to 94% of the parole supervisors/managers. However, the percentages feeling very safe or safe declined when the context was changed to working in your local office during non-office hours, with the greatest drop occurring among probation officers, with 53% reporting that they felt very safe or safe during non-office hours (Table 8.7).

Fifty-two percent of the responding probation officers reported that they felt very safe or safe when visiting with an offender in their local jail or state prison; the comparable figure for parole officers was 65 percent. As can be seen, sizable numbers of probation and parole supervisors/managers indicated that they did not make such visits, but among those who reported making visits, the great majority (100% of those in parole) indicated that they felt very safe or safe in this work context (Table 8.7)

The results were markedly different when officers were asked about their concern for personal safety when making field contacts. Here, just over four-fifths (82%) of the parole agents reported being very or somewhat concerned about personal safety when in the field (Table 8.7); the comparable figure for probation officers was 63%. The percentages were smaller for supervisors/managers in both areas, although a sizable proportion of these respondents--53% in the area of probation, and 76% in parole--indicated that they did not make field contacts.

When respondents were asked to indicate whether, with respect to personal safety, work in the field had become more dangerous or not, four-fifths (81%) of both parole officers and supervisors/managers responded that the field had become more dangerous over the past five years. The percentages of probation officers and supervisors/managers responding similarly were considerably smaller--55% and 59%, respectively--but still represented a majority of these respondents. Very small numbers of all respondents felt that the field had become less dangerous during the past five years.

In sum, workers' main concerns with safety focused principally on contacts made in the community, which constitutes for most probation and parole workers a primary work environment. With respect to the phenomenon of hazardous incidents, the findings presented here fit closely with data to be presented later in this section regarding the dynamics of such events. There, it will be seen that such incidents occur mainly during the carrying out of day-to-day work responsibilities in the community.

Table 8.7

**PERCEPTIONS OF ON-THE-JOB SAFETY: OFFICERS  
AND SUPERVISOR/MANAGERS (Percentages)**

Characteristics	<u>Officers</u>		<u>Supv'rs./ Managers</u>	
	Prob.	Par.	Prob.	Par.
How safe do you feel while working in your local office during regular office hours?				
Very Safe/Safe	78	77	80	94
Unsafe/Very Unsafe	22	23	20	62
How safe do you feel while working in your local office during <u>non-office</u> hours?				
Very Safe/Safe	53	63	61	88
Unsafe/Very Unsafe	47	37	39	12
How safe do you feel when visiting with an offender in your local jail or state prison?				
Very Safe/Safe	52	65	39	41
Unsafe/Very Unsafe	26	29	20	--
Do not make such visits	22	6	41	59
How concerned are you about your personal safety when making field contacts?				
Very concerned/Somewhat Concerned	63	82	37	12
Not very concerned/Definitely Not Concerned	13	7	10	12
Do not make field contacts	24	11	53	76
With respect to your personal safety, during the past <u>five years</u> (or whatever time you've been in the field, if less than 5 years), do you think your work in probation/parole has:				
Become more dangerous	55	81	59	81
Stayed about the same	44	18	38	19
Become less dangerous	1	1	3	--
<b>Base N</b>	<b>1168</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>287</b>	<b>17</b>



## Policy Initiatives for Worker Safety

In his monograph, Worker Safety in Probation and Parole, Parsonage identified a series of policy initiatives regarded by probation and parole workers as relevant to worker safety in studies conducted in Texas, New York State, Pennsylvania and Virginia.<sup>8</sup> Workers were asked to rate each potential policy initiative with respect to its perceived usefulness as a means of enhancing the safety of probation and parole workers.

In the current study, respondents were asked to rank 23 potential policy proposals drawn from the four studies just mentioned.<sup>9</sup> Possible ratings of each item were "definitely useful," "useful," "undecided," "not useful," and "definitely not useful." The results are shown in Table 8.8, with items rank-ordered according to the percentage of probation and parole staff rating a policy item as "definitely useful" or "useful."

As can be seen in Table 8.8, five items received high ratings by more than four-fifths of responding officers and supervisors/managers. The two highest rated items were concerned with identifying all "high risk" areas and developing a "partner system" for use in making home visits.<sup>10</sup> Providing training in self-defense methods and providing "panic" buttons on office and providing for probation/parole officer-police officer teams when making arrests of offenders (80%) also received strong endorsements from officers as definitely useful or useful policies.

Substantial differences between probation and parole personnel in their ratings of policy initiatives occurred in relation to four items. The policy item referring to the provision of "panic buttons" on office telephones was rated as definitely useful or useful by 83% of probation officers and 87% of probation supervisors/managers. However, only 65% of parole officers and 53% of their supervisors/managers responded similarly. Another policy item with a substantial difference in ratings referred to establishing a "law enforcement arrest authority" of special units of parole/probation officers with authority to carry weapons and make arrests; 83% of the parole officers supported this policy, compared to 64% of the probation officers. A similar difference is observable with respect to providing probation/parole officers with recent "mugshots" of releasees. However, the order of support for a policy item was reversed in relation to providing security officers for field offices. This was rated as definitely useful or useful by some three-fourths (76%) of the probation officers but by only half (49%) of the parole officers (Table 8.8).

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<sup>8</sup>William H. Parsonage, Worker Safety in Probation and Parole (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Corrections, 1990).

<sup>9</sup>Minor changes were made in a few items, based on suggestions resulting from reviews of the initial questionnaire by representatives of agencies in the MASCA membership.

<sup>10</sup>Interestingly, some two-thirds (65%) of the parole supervisors/managers rated the latter policy initiative as definitely useful or useful--a notably smaller proportion than the other three categories of personnel.

Two additional policy initiatives received varying degrees of support from probation and parole officers, though neither was among those receiving the strongest ratings. Both related to providing officers with firearms. The item referring to providing officers with firearms to be carried at any time thought necessary was rated as definitely useful/useful by 69% of the parole officers but only 49% of the probation officers; comparable figures for providing officers with firearms to be carried during the course of their duties were 67% and 47%, respectively (Table 8.8).

The order of "definitely useful" and "useful" rankings by supervisors/managers was similar on most items to that of officers, though differences were evident between supervisors/managers in probation or parole for some of the potential policy initiatives. For example, probation supervisors/managers were more favorable than their counterparts in parole toward providing secure jail areas for visits with clients (65% vs. 29%), requiring a police/security officers to be present at all revocation hearings (66% vs. 29%), requiring officers to provide their unit supervisors with a daily schedule before making home visits (77% to 29%), and requiring a police/security officer to be present at all summons hearings held in the probation/parole office (62% vs. 29%) (Table 8.8).

In sum, respondents' ratings of policy initiatives as definitely useful or useful tend to emphasize those actions of immediate utility to front-line officers in carrying out typical job responsibilities with an enhanced sense of personal safety.

Table 8.8

**PERCEPTIONS OF POLICY INITIATIVES: OFFICERS  
AND SUPERVISOR/MANAGERS (Percentages)**

Respondents Ratings of Policies as Definitely Useful or Useful	<u>Officers</u>		<u>Supv'rs./ Managers</u>	
	Prob.	Par.	Prob.	Par.
Identify all "high risk" areas and keep all P/P officers informed of these areas.	92	87	87	65
Develop a "partner system" to be used on an "as needed" basis when making home visits	91	84	92	100
Provide training in self-defense methods	82	86	80	94
Provide "panic buttons" on office telephones--i.e., buttons which would alert either the local police or security personnel in the event of an emergency	83	65	87	53
Provide for P/P officer-police officer teams when making arrests of offenders in violation of probation/parole requirements	80	85	82	82
Provide training in "verbal judo"	78	74	84	94
Provide distress signal devices to P/P officers when making home visits	77	72	71	59
Provide security officers for field offices--i.e., individuals who would control entrance to field offices and would be available to assist in an emergency	76	49	75	41
Establish secure clerical areas for field offices--i.e., areas could be entered and exited only through electronically controlled security doors	71	77	76	88
Provide all P/P officers with hand-held radios to be used for two-way communication in an emergency	68	68	63	76
Provide secure jail areas for visits with clients--i.e., an area where the client is physically separated from the P/P officer	70	57	65	29
Install two-way communication devices in each P/P officer's automobile	67	69	67	82

Table 8.8 (Cont'd.)

**PERCEPTIONS OF POLICY INITIATIVES: OFFICERS  
AND SUPERVISOR/MANAGERS (Percentages)**

Respondents Ratings of Policies as Definitely Useful or Useful	<u>Officers</u>		<u>Supv'rs./ Managers</u>	
	Prob.	Par.	Prob.	Par.
Establish a "law enforcement arrest authority"-- i.e., special units of trained P/P officers with authority to carry weapons and make arrests	64	83	51	71
Require a police/security officer be present with the P/P officer at all revocation hearings	67	40	66	29
Provide P/P officers with "mugshots" taken of releasees at the time of their release	61	83	56	76
Provide P/P officers with non-lethal, chemical agents to be carried when making home visits	63	60	56	41
Implement a requirement that all P/P officers provide their respective unit supervisors with a daily schedule prior to making home visits and/or field contacts	64	26	77	29
Require a police/security officer to be present at all summons hearings held in the probation/ parole office	60	34	62	29
Provide P/P officers with soft body armor for use in situations thought to be "high risk"	52	62	42	41
Assuming proper training, provide P/P officers with firearms to be carried at any time the officers believes it is necessary	49	69	37	55
Require that P/P officers check in and out with a centralized monitor when on official business	52	29	62	40
Assuming proper screening/training, provide P/P officers with firearms to be carried during the course of their duties	47	67	36	65
Increase the number of specialized caseloads with respect to probationers/parolees	49	46	56	41
<b><u>Base N</u></b>	<b><u>1147</u></b>	<b><u>116</u></b>	<b><u>278</u></b>	<b><u>17</u></b>

## Victimization Experiences of New Jersey Juvenile and Adult Probation and Parole Officers

The preceding discussion reported on the victimization experiences of the New Jersey probation and parole work force by general occupational class--officers, supervisors/managers, and clerical and staff. The discussion in the remainder of this section deals exclusively with probation and parole officers having direct case contact responsibilities. The purpose is to present information comparing and contrasting the victimization of line officers by agency type. Presenting the data in this manner is intended to contribute to the development of agency-specific programs for the enhancement of worker safety.

The New Jersey probation and parole system is comprised of six distinct agency "types." In this study, two main groups of agencies are distinguished for purposes of analysis. The first group, which is dealt with in this part of the research report, consists of County Juvenile Probation, County Adult Probation, County Combined Juvenile and Adult Probation, and State Parole. The remaining two, Pre-Trial Case Management and Child Support Enforcement, are the focus of another major subsection below.

### Victimization Experiences of Juvenile/ Adult Probation and Parole Officers

Characteristics of the New Jersey probation and parole officers responding to the survey are shown in Table 8.9. As can be seen, some two-thirds (68%) of the state parole officers are male, and a clear majority (58%) of the officers in the county combined probation agency are female. Officers in the other two types of agencies are more evenly distributed between males and females. State parole officers tend, on average, to be older and have longer tenure both in the field and in their current agencies (Table 8.9).

Overall, about one in five (21%) probation and parole officers in New Jersey reported holding a second job, with the separate figures ranging from 17% of the county combined (juvenile and adult) probation officers to 26% of those in state parole (Table 8.10). Very few (1% of all the respondents) indicated that they usually carry some kind of firearm. Further, small numbers of workers report carrying any other "personal protection equipment" (Table 8.11).

Table 8.9

**CHARACTERISTICS OF PROBATION/PAROLE OFFICER RESPONDENTS  
BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Characteristics	County Juvenile Probation	County Adult Probation	County Combined Probation	State Parole	Total
<u>Sex:</u>					
Male	49	54	41	68	52
Female	51	46	58	32	48
<u>Age:</u>					
Under 25 years	16	12	11	1	11
25 - 29 years	26	21	21	11	20
30 - 39 years	40	32	33	35	34
40 - 49 years	16	19	21	40	21
50 years or older	3	17	14	12	13
<u>Tenure in Field:</u>					
Less than 3 years	25	37	34	12	29
3 - 4 years	20	13	13	11	14
5 - 9 years	20	23	23	32	23
10 - 19 years	25	30	28	41	30
20 years or more	--	7	1	4	4
<u>Tenure in Current Agency:</u>					
Less than 3 years	37	29	36	16	30
3 - 4 years	18	14	13	18	15
5 - 9 years	20	22	21	33	23
10 - 19 years	25	29	29	30	28
20 years or more	--	7	1	4	4
<b>Base N</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>384</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>818</b>

Table 8.10

**SECOND JOBS HELD BY OFFICERS: BY  
AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Whether Second Job Held	County Juvenile Probation	County Adult Probation	County Combined Probation	State Parole	Total
Yes, hold second job	18	23	17	26	21
No, do not hold second job	82	77	83	74	79
<b>Base N</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>384</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>818</b>

Table 8.11

## WEAPONS USUALLY CARRIED BY OFFICERS BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)

Weapon Usually Carried	County Juvenile Probation	County Adult Probation	County Combined Probation	State Parole	Total
Handgun	--	1	2	--	1
Other firearm	--	1	1	1	1
Impact instrument	3	10	10	2	8
Chemical agents	3	6	8	--	5
Knife or sharp edged inst	3	5	3	1	4
<b>Base N</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>384</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>818</b>

Sixty percent of all the respondents reported that they had been victimized at least once during their careers. State parole officers had the highest rate of reported career victimizations (77%), with at least half or more of officers in the other three groups responding similarly (Table 8.12). Officers working primarily with adult parolees and probationers experienced more physical assaults during their careers in the field than their colleagues in the other two county agencies. State parole officers had the highest rate of physical assault (20%). Of the parole officers who had been physically assaulted while working in the field, some two-thirds indicated that multiple instances of assault had occurred (Table 8.13).

The past-year victimization rate for all responding officers was 36%, ranging from 29% of county adult probation officers to 44% of the state parole workers (Table 8.14). However, state parole officers were no more likely than officers in the county agencies to report having been physically assaulted in the year preceding the survey, and, though they have the highest rates for reported past-year intimidations, about one-third of the other responding officers also experienced intimidation incidents during the year preceding the survey (Table 8.15). Viewed in the light of these data, it is likely that the higher reported career victimization rate for state parole officers is partly a product of their longer average tenure in the field.

An examination of relationships between several personal and job-related characteristics of officers with past-year victimization status<sup>11</sup> did not show any notable connections between any of the listed variables and victim or non-victim status. Males were slightly more likely than females to be past-year victims, but the relationship is one of modest strength (Table 8.16).

<sup>11</sup>"Victimization status," as used here and elsewhere in the report, refers to encounters with any type or form of physical assault or intimidation, and only distinguishes between the two categories of "victim" and "non-victim."

Table 8.12

**VICTIMIZATION RATES FOR OFFICERS DURING ENTIRE  
CAREER: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Victimization Status	County Juvenile Probation	County Adult Probation	County Combined Probation	State Parole	Total
Victimized in entire career	58	59	50	77	60
Not victimized in career	42	41	50	23	40
<b><u>Base N</u></b>	<b><u>157</u></b>	<b><u>377</u></b>	<b><u>161</u></b>	<b><u>116</u></b>	<b><u>811</u></b>

Table 8.13

**OFFICERS PHYSICALLY ASSAULTED OR INTIMIDATED  
IN CAREER BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Physically Assaulted or Intimidated in Career	County Juvenile Probation	County Adult Probation	County Combined Probation	State Parole	Total
Physically assaulted in whole career:	11	15	10	20	14
Once	7	7	4	7	7
Twice	2	3	3	8	3
Three times	--	1	2	3	1
Four times	--	1	1	1	1
More than four times	1	2	1	2	2
Never assaulted	89	85	90	80	86
Intimidated by physical or any other threat in whole career:	56	59	51	73	59
Once	7	12	9	9	10
Twice	17	13	12	16	14
Three times	15	9	8	10	10
Four times	5	5	4	5	5
More than four times	12	19	17	33	19
Never intimidated	44	41	49	27	41
<b><u>Base N</u></b>	<b><u>161</u></b>	<b><u>385</u></b>	<b><u>169</u></b>	<b><u>104</u></b>	<b><u>819</u></b>



Table 8.14

**VICTIMIZATION RATES OF OFFICERS IN 12-MONTH PERIOD  
PRECEDING SURVEY BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Physically Assaulted or Intimidated in Past Year	County Juvenile Probation	County Adult Probation	County Combined Probation	State Parole	Total
Victimized in past year	32	29	30	44	36
Not victimized in past year	68	61	70	56	64
<b>Base N</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>388</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>839</b>

Table 8.15

**OFFICERS PHYSICALLY ASSAULTED OR INTIMIDATED IN 12-MONTH  
PERIOD PRECEDING SURVEY BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Physically Assaulted or Intimidated in Past Year	County Juvenile Probation	County Adult Probation	County Combined Probation	State Parole	Total
Physically assaulted in past year:	6	8	7	5	7
Once	4	4	4	4	4
Twice	1	2	1	--	1
Three times	--	<1	1	--	<1
Four times	--	<1	--	--	<1
More than four times	1	1	1	1	1
Not assaulted past year	94	92	93	95	93
Intimidated by physical or any other threat in past year:	31	38	30	44	36
Once	11	16	9	15	14
Twice	11	11	7	15	10
Three times	7	5	7	5	6
Four times	1	2	1	--	1
More than four times	1	5	5	9	5
Not intim. past year	69	62	70	56	64
<b>Base N</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>385</b>	<b>169</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>819</b>

Table 8.16

**PERSONAL AND JOB-RELATED CHARACTERISTICS OF OFFICERS BY  
PAST-YEAR VICTIMIZATION STATUS (Percentages)**

Characteristics	Victim	Non-Victim
<u>Sex:</u>		
Male	59	49
Female	41	51
<u>Age:</u>		
Under 25 years	9	11
25 - 29 years	25	17
30 - 39 years	35	34
40 - 49 years	22	22
50 years or older	8	16
<u>Education:</u>		
High school	1	2
Some College	6	7
Bachelor's degree	75	74
Graduate degree	18	17
<u>Tenure in Field:</u>		
Less than 3 years	26	29
3 - 4 years	19	12
5 - 9 years	23	23
10 - 19 years	29	32
20 years or more	3	5
<u>Tenure in Current Agency:</u>		
Less than 3 years	27	31
3 - 4 years	18	13
5 - 9 years	25	21
10 - 19 years	26	30
20 years or more	3	4
<u>Base N</u>	<u>305</u>	<u>534</u>

Note: Column percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding

Although, as reported earlier, the percentages of New Jersey probation and parole officers carrying weapons is low, past-year victims tend more often than non-victims to carry two types of protection equipment--chemical agents and impact instruments (Table 8.17). However, as shown in Table 8.18, there is no observable relationship between having or not having had unarmed self-defense training and past-year victimization status.

Table 8.17

**WEAPON USUALLY CARRIED BY OFFICERS: BY  
VICTIMIZATION STATUS (Percentages)**

Weapon Usually Carried	Victim	Non-Victim
Handgun	1	<1
Other firearm	1	<1
Chemical agent	10	3
Impact instrument	13	5
Knife or other sharp edged instrument	5	3
<b>Base N</b>	<b>305</b>	<b>532</b>

Table 8.18

**VICTIMIZATION STATUS OF OFFICERS HAVING AND NOT HAVING  
UNARMED DEFENSE TRAINING (Percentages)**

Whether Has Training	Victim	Non-Victim
Has had unarmed defense training	32	28
Not had unarmed defense training	67	72
<b>Base N</b>	<b>305</b>	<b>532</b>

### Perceptions of Policy Initiatives and Worker Safety Concerns

Officer respondents were asked to rank 23 potential policy proposals drawn from studies conducted in Texas, New York, Pennsylvania, and Virginia. Possible ratings of each item were "definitely useful," "useful," "undecided," "not useful," and "definitely not useful." The results are shown in Table 5.19, with items rank-ordered according to the percentage of all of the officers rating a policy initiative as "definitely useful" or "useful."

Five of the safety-related policies received strong endorsements by 75% or more of the officers responding to the survey. Two of the items were accorded very high ratings of usefulness. These were identification of "high risk" areas (91%) and development of a "partner system" to be used in making home visits (89%). Several other policy-related initiatives were also endorsed as useful by strong majorities of the respondents--for example, providing training in self-defense methods (82%), providing for officer-police officer teams when making arrests of offenders (81%), providing panic buttons on office telephones (81%), and providing training in verbal judo" (77%) (Table 8.19).

Several of the potential policy initiatives were regarded as useful by only about half of the respondents. In general, these lower-rated items dealt with the use of police or security officers to enhance worker safety at hearings or in field offices, and requiring workers to check in and out with supervisors or other monitors when on official business (Table 8.19).

State parole officers differed markedly from county probation officers in ratings accorded three items. Some 83% of the state parole officers felt that providing officers with up-to-date mugshots of releasees would be a definitely useful/useful policy. Ratings by county probation officers were much lower. Similarly, the state parole officers were much more favorable toward providing officers with firearms to be carried at any time thought necessary (70%) or while on duty (69%). This was favored by a bare majority of the adult probation officers and by less than half of officers in the other two types of county agencies. At the same time, only 24% percent of these officers favored providing supervisors with daily schedules, a policy item receiving much stronger ratings from county probation officers (Table 8.19).

An interesting feature of the rankings of policy initiatives shown in Table 8.19, especially those receiving strong endorsements by the responding probation and parole officers, is that none appears to reflect policy ventures that are extraordinarily expensive or especially complex to implement.

Officers were also asked several questions concerning their perceptions of personal safety in various areas of the work environment of probation and parole. As can be seen in Table 8.20, a large majority of all the respondents (78%) felt themselves to be very safe or safe while working in their offices during regular office hours, but only 54% during non-office hours. Nearly two-thirds (65%) felt similarly about their safety when visiting an incarcerated offender (Table 8.20).

The results were markedly different when workers were asked about their concern for personal safety when making field contacts. In this case, 83% of the parole officers and about three-fourths of the other responding officers noted that they were very concerned or concerned about their personal safety when in the field (Table 8.20). Additionally, some 83% of the state parole officers felt that, with respect to personal safety, their work in the probation/parole field had become more dangerous over the past five years, as did about three-fifths of the county probation officers (Table 8.20). In sum, workers' concerns with safety focused principally on contacts made in the community, which constitutes for most probation and parole workers a primary work environment.

Table 8.19

OFFICERS' RATINGS OF THE USEFULNESS OF WORKER  
SAFETY RELATED-POLICIES (Percentages)

Policy Items	County Juvenile Probation	County Adult Probation	County Combined Probation	State Parole	Total
Identify all high risk areas and inform P/P officers	92	90	94	88	91
Develop a partner system to be used as needed	88	90	89	85	89
Provide training in self defense methods	84	80	78	89	82
Provide for officer-police officer teams when making arrests of offenders	78	79	78	86	81
Provide panic buttons on office telephones	81	84	82	66	81
Provide verbal judo training	83	73	79	76	77
Provide distress signal devices to P/P officers making home visits	69	74	77	72	73
Provide security officers for field offices	66	77	76	49	71
Establish secure clerical areas for field offices	63	68	77	77	70
Provide POs hand-held radios	63	71	69	72	69
Install 2-way communication devices in officers' cars	61	65	66	74	66
Establish special unit of armed P/P officers to make arrests	61	66	63	82	66
Provide P/P officers with non-lethal chemical agents	64	67	60	59	64

Table 8.19 (Cont'd.)

**OFFICERS' RATINGS OF THE USEFULNESS OF WORKER  
SAFETY RELATED-POLICIES (Percentages)**

Policy Items	County Juvenile Probation	County Adult Probation	County Combined Probation	State Parole	Total
Provide secure jail areas for visits with clients	62	64	68	57	64
Provide P/P officers with mugshots of releasees	50	61	62	83	62
Police/security officer present at all revocation hearings	62	60	71	39	60
Require PO provide super- visors with daily schedules	56	57	63	24	54
Provide POs with firearms to be carried at any time	45	55	48	70	53
Provide POs with firearms to carry during duties	40	53	43	69	51
Provide POs soft with body armor	48	49	54	60	51
Have Police/security officer present at all summons hearings	60	52	54	33	51
Increase number of specialized caseloads	43	51	51	49	49
Require POs to check in and out with centralized monitor	40	47	48	31	44
<b>Base N</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>390</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>844</b>

Table 8.20

## SAFETY CONCERNS OF OFFICERS (Percentages)

Safety Concerns	County Juvenile Probation	County Adult Probation	County Combined Probation	State Parole	Total
How safe do you feel while working in your local office during regular office hours?					
Very Safe/Safe	77	78	75	79	78
Unsafe/Very Unsafe	23	22	25	21	22
How safe do you feel while working in your local office during non-office hours?					
Very Safe/Safe	53	54	52	62	54
Unsafe/Very Unsafe	47	46	48	38	46
How safe do you feel when visiting with an offender in your local jail or state prison?					
Very Safe/Safe	58	60	46	65	57
Unsafe/Very Unsafe	24	33	30	33	31
Don't make visits	18	7	24	2	12
How concerned are you about your personal safety when making field contacts?					
Very/Somewhat Concerned	73	75	67	83	74
Not Very/Not Concerned	19	15	15	8	15
No field contact	8	9	18	8	11
With respect to your personal safety, during the past five years, do you think your work in the field has become:					
More dangerous	59	63	56	83	63
Stayed about the same	40	36	41	17	35
Less dangerous	1	1	3	--	1
<b>Base N</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>390</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>844</b>

## The Dynamics of Victimization

Respondents indicating in Part 1 of the questionnaire that they had experienced one or more victimization events during the year preceding the survey were asked to complete Part 2 of the instrument, which asked a series of questions about what they regarded as the most serious event encountered. A total of 192 officer respondents completed this section of the questionnaire. The remaining data presented in this section are based on their responses to this additional section of the survey instrument.

As can be seen in Table 8.21, the perpetrators of the hazardous incidents were most commonly clients (71% across all respondents). At the same time, however, just half of all the perpetrators were under the officer-victim's direct supervision (Table 8.22). Among county probation officers in the combined agencies and state parole officers, the supervision status of the perpetrator's supervision status at the time of the incident was unknown about one-fourth of the time (Table 8.22).

Criminal status characteristics of perpetrators varied according to the type of agency responsible for their supervision. Those under the supervision of state parole officers tended to have more serious and chronic criminal histories. Their previous incarceration rate was 68% (Table 8.24).

In more than half of all the incidents reported, ranging from 45% of the juvenile probation officers to 64% of state parole officers, the perpetrator was known to have a history of drug abuse. Similar figures were reported for a history of alcohol abuse (Table 8.23).

Table 8.21

### OFFENDER'S STATUS AT TIME OF INCIDENT (Percentages)

Offender Status	County Juvenile Probation	County Adult Probation	County Combined Probation	State Parole	Total
Client (probationer/parolee)	71	76	66	62	71
Client's family member	13	8	9	10	10
Client's friend	3	8	6	7	7
Court personnel	3	--	3	--	1
Bystander	3	2	6	10	4
Animal	--	1	3	3	1
Other	3	--	--	3	1
Unknown	5	4	6	3	5
<b>Base N</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>194</b>



Table 8.22

**OFFENDER'S SUPERVISION STATUS AT TIME OF INCIDENT  
BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Supervision Status	County Juvenile Probation	County Adult Probation	County Combined Probation	State Parole	Total
Under respondent's supervision	62	55	26	43	50
Under respondent's agency supervision	11	18	35	11	18
Under another agency's supervision	5	3	6	4	4
Not under supervision	13	12	3	18	11
Unknown	8	13	29	25	16
<b>Base N</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>191</b>

Table 8.23

**CRIMINAL STATUS CHARACTERISTICS OF PERPETRATORS  
BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Criminal Status Characteristics	County Juvenile Probation	County Adult Probation	County Combined Probation	State Parole	Total
<u>Most Serious Offense:</u>					
First degree	5	5	3	32	9
Second degree	10	11	19	18	13
Third degree	24	38	29	4	29
Fourth degree	--	8	3	--	5
Disorderly person	3	6	--	--	4
Delinquent	21	1	--	--	5
Unknown	18	22	42	36	27
Not under sentence	18	7	3	11	9
<u>Type Most Important Offense:</u>					
Crime vs. person	30	29	13	39	28
Crime vs. property	16	11	16	7	12
Crime vs. morals	--	2	6	--	2
Substance abuse	22	32	29	18	27
Not under sentence	19	21	29	29	23
Unknown	13	5	6	7	7

Table 8.23 (Contd.)

**CRIMINAL STATUS CHARACTERISTICS OF PERPETRATORS  
BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Criminal Status Characteristics	County Juvenile Probation	County Adult Probation	County Combined Probation	State Parole	Total
<u>Previous Incarceration:</u>					
Yes	29	48	45	68	47
No	48	28	16	--	26
Unknown	24	24	39	32	28
<u>Drug Abuse History:</u>					
Yes	45	58	55	64	56
No	18	15	10	11	14
Unknown	37	27	35	25	30
<u>Alcohol Abuse History:</u>					
Yes	39	44	39	36	41
No	32	20	13	21	21
Unknown	29	36	48	43	38
<u>Prior Criminal History (Convictions/Adjudications):</u>					
No prior conviction	19	10	6	--	9
One prior felony	5	14	13	29	14
Two or more felonies	32	33	26	39	33
Prior misdemeanor	19	16	19	--	15
Unknown	24	27	35	32	29
<u>Prior Assaults Against Others:</u>					
Probation/Parole officer	5	10	13	14	10
Other Prob/Par personnel	--	3	10	4	4
Police officer	21	35	23	29	29
Treatment agency personnel	13	5	10	7	8
Spouse	13	16	19	18	16
Other family member	45	24	19	18	27
Citizen	34	35	23	50	35
<b><u>Base N</u></b>	<b><u>38</u></b>	<b><u>95</u></b>	<b><u>31</u></b>	<b><u>29</u></b>	<b><u>192</u></b>

In the most serious events against responding officers, about one-third of the perpetrators were known to be under the influence of drugs, alcohol, or both. Interestingly, in about half of the hazardous events the responding officers did not know whether the offender was "under the influence" (Table 8.24).

Table 8.24

**WHETHER OFFENDER UNDER INFLUENCE OF DRUGS OR ALCOHOL AT  
TIME OF INCIDENT BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Whether Under Influence	County Juvenile Probation	County Adult Probation	County Combined Probation	State Parole	Total
Drugs	--	13	17	11	10
Alcohol	11	9	3	7	8
Both drugs and alcohol	5	10	13	7	9
Nothing	24	18	17	21	19
Unknown	59	49	50	54	52
<u>Base N</u>	<u>37</u>	<u>95</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>190</u>

In 20% of the "most serious incidents," the offender's actions against officers involved physical assault. Threats of physical assault and intimidations were involved in 74% and 68% of the events, respectively, with 86% of the state parole officers reporting that threats of physical assault were made by the perpetrator (Table 8.25). In sum, whether the behavior exhibited by the perpetrator was physical assault or threat of assault, or other form of intimidation, the data clearly indicate that the probation/parole officer was the direct object of victimization in the great majority of cases. Instances in which a third party related to the worker-victim (e.g., family member) was the target of victimization were infrequent.

Another set of items in Part 2 of the survey instrument asked respondents about additional actions of the perpetrator against the victim-worker. As can be seen in Table 8.26, past-year incidents involving firearms, impact instruments or knives used by the perpetrator were rare. More commonly, when the offender used physical force against the probation/parole officer, body parts (e.g., hands and feet) were used by the perpetrator as weapons of force.

When allegations were made by the perpetrator during the course of the incident, the most common targets were the professional and/or personal conduct of the officer (Table 8.26). With the exception of incidents involving county juvenile probation officers, threatened lawsuits against the officer or his/her agency and allegations about co-workers also figured prominently in the most serious incidents occurring in the past year (Table 8.26).

Table 8.25

**INCIDENCE OF DIFFERENT OFFENDER ACTIONS AGAINST PROBATION AND  
PAROLE OFFICERS BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Offender Actions	County Juvenile Probation	County Adult Probation	County Combined Probation	State Parole	Total
Physical assault	11	24	26	14	20
Threat of physical assault	78	70	68	86	74
Damage to officer's property	8	5	3	7	6
Threat to officer's property	13	27	35	36	27
Intimidation	46	74	68	79	68
Attempted extortion	8	13	16	4	11
Threat to officer's reputation	11	32	10	21	22
Threat of physical harm to officer's family	--	13	6	18	10
Intimidation or attempted intimidation of officer's family member	--	3	10	7	4
<b><u>Base N</u></b>	<b><u>37</u></b>	<b><u>95</u></b>	<b><u>31</u></b>	<b><u>28</u></b>	<b><u>191</u></b>

Table 8.26

**INCIDENCE OF ADDITIONAL OFFENDER ACTIONS AGAINST PROBATION AND  
PAROLE OFFICERS BY AGENCY TYPE (Perceptions)**

Nature of Offender Action	County Juvenile Probation	County Adult Probation	County Combined Probation	State Parole	Total
Physical Force:					
Shot	3	1	--	--	1
Hit with impact instr.	--	6	3	--	4
Cut with sharp edged instrument	--	3	3	--	2
Hit with fist or hand	5	15	23	11	14
Kicked	11	12	23	7	13
Pushed	19	27	32	18	25
Other weapon used	16	24	16	29	22
Allegations about Officer's:					
Professional conduct	26	47	35	50	42
Personal conduct	26	44	31	36	37
Lawsuits vs. officer officer's agency/	10	23	31	32	23
Allegations re co-workers	16	30	41	32	29
Allegations re superiors	10	17	21	14	16
Allegations re family and friends	--	8	7	11	7
<b>Base N</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>191</b>

Respondents were also asked to indicate who, in addition to themselves, was present when the incident took place. Other probation/parole officers were named as being present by 48% of all respondents, ranging from a low of 38% of the state parole officers to a high of 53% of the county adult probation officers (Table 8.27). With respect to incidents involving parole officers, the offender's friends or acquaintances were noted as being present by 45% of the respondents (Table 8.27).

Table 8.27

**OTHERS PRESENT AT VICTIMIZATION EVENT IN ADDITION TO OFFICER  
BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Others Present at Event	County Juvenile Probation	County Adult Probation	County Combined Probation	State Parole	Total
Probation/Parole officer	45	53	42	38	47
Law Enforcement official	18	22	13	14	19
Officer's family	--	4	--	3	3
Officer's friends or acquaint.	--	6	3	7	5
Offender's employer/co-workers	3	3	6	7	4
Offender's family	29	20	6	14	18
Offender's friends or acquaint	21	32	26	45	31
Bystander(s)	34	32	35	24	32
Others	13	9	13	14	11
<b>Base N</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>193</b>

Another important matter in understanding the character and dynamics of hazardous incidents experienced is the location or medium where or through which an event occurs. An examination of the data relating to this issue in the current survey suggests that many of the incidents are, in fact, episodic. Often, more than one location and/or medium is involved before the victimization event is perceived as concluded, regardless of the outcome. For example, an incident that commences with an officer's visit to a client's home might be culminated in an on-the-street confrontation or a clash during a subsequent session between the officer and client at the agency office. The data in Table 8.28 suggest that such action sequences are not altogether rare; many of the respondents identified multiple sites and/or media as being involved in the same event.

As shown in Table 8.28, an agency office was reported most frequently to be where the incident occurred (45% overall), although this was much more common among the county probation officers than state parole officers. About one-fifth of all respondents indicated the client's home as a site of the incident, and another one-fifth of the state parole officers named a prison or jail (Table 8.28). Numerous other locations and/or media were noted by respondents, though the various frequencies of occurrence were generally quite low.

Table 8.28

## WHERE INCIDENT TOOK PLACE BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)

Where Incident Took Place	County Juvenile Probation	County Adult Probation	County Combined Probation	State Parole	Total
Over the phone	18	23	10	10	18
By letter or mail	--	6	3	7	5
Message or report of others	13	7	13	10	10
Agency office	37	55	42	24	45
Client's home	24	16	23	21	19
Someone else's home	5	5	6	10	6
Prison or jail	10	7	10	21	10
Police station	5	4	6	7	5
Human services agency	3	4	3	--	3
Courtroom	5	9	6	--	7
In vehicle	10	12	6	14	11
Offender's employment site	3	4	3	4	4
Public facility	3	3	--	--	2
On the street	16	21	19	38	22
<u>Base N</u>	<u>38</u>	<u>96</u>	<u>31</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>194</u>

Attempting to talk to the perpetrator was the most frequent response of all the probation/parole officers to the incident (59%) (Table 8.29). Using verbal threats was employed by about one-third of the county adult probation officers and state parole officers. Striking back physically did not figure prominently as a response by officers, except in the case of those working in adult probation, some 23% of whom reported that this had been an immediate response on their part (Table 8.29). Numerous other responses were cited by respondents, though frequencies were generally quite low.

Table 8.29

**OFFICERS' RESPONSES TO INCIDENT BY:  
BY AGENCY TYPE (Perceptions)**

Officer Responses	County Juvenile Probation	County Adult Probation	County Combined Probation	State Parole	Total
Struck back physically	10	14	23	7	13
Threatened to strike back	10	12	6	21	12
Used gun or other weapon	--	1	--	--	<1
Threatened to use a gun	5	1	3	--	2
Displayed badge or I.D.	5	11	23	17	13
Used verbal threat	24	31	13	34	27
Said nothing	21	17	23	21	19
Retreated	--	18	16	24	15
Called out for help	3	26	23	10	19
Attempted to talk to offender	60	61	55	55	59
Took no action	24	8	19	7	13
<b>Base N</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>194</b>

Overall, a majority of the reported victimization incidents occurred in the context of announced/expected and surprise visits. In the case of state parole officers, surprise visits figured prominently (59%) (Table 8.30).

Table 8.30

**CONTEXT IN WHICH INCIDENT OCCURRED BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Context of Incident	County Juvenile Probation	County Adult Probation	County Combined Probation	State Parole	Total
Announced or expected visit	37	37	29	28	34
Surprise visit	24	35	39	59	37
During arrest of the offender	13	9	16	17	12
During arrest of someone else	3	4	6	--	4
In response to offender's call	10	13	3	7	10
In response to offender's family member call	8	10	6	7	9
Context of domestic dispute	10	4	10	7	7
During transport of offender	13	3	6	10	7
Other context	24	36	42	52	37
<b>Base N</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>193</b>



## Aftermaths of Victimization and Consequences for Workers

An important concern in examining the many different impacts that victimization might have on personnel in the field of probation/parole focuses on the aftermaths of such events and their consequences for workers' personal and professional lives. Table 8.31 presents information describing the aftermaths of victimization as reported by respondents in the New Jersey worker safety study.

Aftermaths reported by victims involved physical injury in 16% of cases, although hospitalization was seldom required. One of four respondents experienced an enhanced self-confidence as an outcome (Table 8.31).

Two aftermaths that can be considered as primarily emotional in nature, being shaken up and fear on the job, were frequently reported as a consequence of the incident. Almost two-thirds (66%) of all respondents indicated that being "shaken up" was one aftermath. The frequencies for "fear on the job" as a consequence were lower but not insignificant, ranging from 29% for county juvenile probation officers to 54% for adult probation officers (Table 8.31).

Another feature of the data that stands out is the fact that officers perceive victimization incidents as affecting their approaches to or relationships with clients. A "reduced sense of trust in clients" was noted by 54% of all responding officers. A related item, "reduced sensitivity to clients," was also cited by one-third of the respondents (Table 8.31).

In contrast to the negative consequences of victimization, nearly one-fourth (24%) of all the Division of Parole and Probation respondents noted that they had experienced an "enhanced sense of self-confidence" as a result of the incident (Table 8.31). In sum, the aftermaths reported were quite varied, and could conceivably have longer-term consequences for worker and agency effectiveness in the supervision of probationers and parolees.

As reflected in Table 8.32, a significant number of respondents reported negative consequences arising out of their victimization experiences during the past year. More than one-fourth of all the officers involved in past-year incidents noted that the incident had had negative consequences for them personally, including one-third of both the adult probation and parole officers. Additionally, almost one-third (31%) of the parole officers felt that the incident had had negative consequences for their families, and some 36% of adult probation workers noted that the incident had negative consequences for their co-workers (Table 8.32). It is also notable that some 29% of all respondents indicated that they had become less open with clients as a result of the experience, and more than a fourth--30% and 26%, respectively--of officers in adult probation and county combined agencies reported that they had thought about quitting their jobs as a consequence of hazardous events (Table 8.21).

Table 8.31

## AFTERMATHS OF VICTIMIZATION EVENTS BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)

Aftermaths of Incident	County Juvenile Probation	County Adult Probation	County Combined Probation	State Parole	Total
Injured by incident	13	20	16	7	16
Chronic condition	--	2	3	--	1
Aggravation of old injury	--	3	--	--	1
Stomachache, headache, etc.	5	18	6	14	13
Shaken up	37	74	58	86	66
Fear on job	29	54	52	48	48
Reduced of self confidence	3	27	23	24	21
Reduces trust in clients	39	65	45	48	54
Reduced sensitivity to clients	26	38	29	31	33
Increased use of medication	--	5	--	10	4
Increased use of alcohol	3	--	--	3	1
Disruption of personal life	10	35	13	38	27
Disruption of family life	3	18	6	34	16
Enhanced sense self-confidence	24	25	23	24	24
<b>Base N</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>194</b>

Table 8.32

## EFFECTS OF THE VICTIMIZATION EVENT BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)

Effects of Victimization	County Juvenile Probation	County Adult Probation	County Combined Probation	State Parole	Total
Personal Effect on Officer:					
Positive consequences	16	13	23	17	15
Negative consequences	18	33	23	31	28
No consequences	66	55	55	52	56
Effect on Officer's Family:					
Positive consequences	--	1	3	--	1
Negative consequences	8	26	13	31	21
No consequences	92	73	84	69	78
Effect of Incident on Agency:					
Positive consequences	5	7	13	10	8
Negative consequences	5	16	10	7	11
No consequences	89	77	77	83	80

Table 8.32 (Cont'd.)

## EFFECTS OF THE VICTIMIZATION EVENT BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)

Effects of Victimization	County Juvenile Probation	County Adult Probation	County Combined Probation	State Parole	Total
Effects on Co-Workers:					
Positive consequences	8	5	6	14	7
Negative consequences	18	36	13	24	27
No consequences	74	59	81	62	66
Less Open with Clients:					
Yes	18	27	45	31	29
No	82	73	55	69	71
Less Open with Co-Workers					
Yes	10	8	3	10	8
No	90	92	97	90	92
Thought About Quitting Job:					
Yes	8	30	26	17	23
No	92	70	74	83	77
Applied for Transfer:					
Yes	3	1	6	--	2
No	97	99	94	100	98
Avoided Contact with Co-workers:					
Yes	3	2	3	--	2
No	97	98	97	100	98
Avoided Contact w/ Threatening Clients:					
Yes	13	26	19	21	22
No	87	74	81	79	78
<b>Base N</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>193</b>

The last two concerns examined in this section of the report focus on the reporting behavior of officer victims in relation to the most serious incident experienced in the preceding year and their perceptions of whether the incident might have been prevented by them or their agencies.

As can be seen in Table 8.33, among all respondents the two sets of individuals to whom the incident was reported were, in order of frequency, the officer's co-workers (83%) and supervisors (70%). Friends (52%), spouses (39%)

and other family members (37%) were also frequently noted as individuals with whom they discussed the incident. Only 7% reported that they had discussed the incident with "no one." Overall, the data in Table 8.33 indicate that officers in each of the agency settings are not reluctant to report and discuss the incident with others in the agency, and fairly large numbers go on to discuss the experience with family members and friends.

Table 8.33

REPORTING BEHAVIOR OF OFFICER VICTIMS BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)

To Whom Event Reported	County Juvenile Probation	County Adult Probation	County Combined Probation	State Parole	Total
Agency head	16	28	35	28	27
Supervisor	66	77	64	59	70
Co-workers	89	83	84	76	83
Police	16	27	23	41	26
Counselor	10	7	3	10	8
Spouse	39	40	37	38	39
Other family members	32	41	48	21	37
Friends	50	57	52	38	52
Other person	21	20	19	24	21
No one	8	4	6	14	7
<b>Base N</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>193</b>

As shown in Table 8.34, it is clear that few respondents in the county probation agencies felt that they personally could have prevented the incident from happening. This is not surprising, in view of the earlier findings that indicate that most of the incidents occurred while the officer was carrying out normal day-to-day duties associated with the job, such as making field visits, meeting with an offender in the agency office, or dealing with an offender in a jail or prison. As several respondents to the general survey noted in comments to the researchers, many of the events experienced simply "come with the territory"--they cannot be prevented, only dealt with in the most constructive manner possible. However, just over one-fifth (21%) of the parole officers indicated that they could have prevented the incident's occurrence.

More of the respondents in each group felt that their agencies could have done something to prevent the incident, ranging from a low of 18% for juvenile probation officers to 41% of those in state parole (Table 8.34). Many more respondents felt that their agencies could have done something to better prepare them to cope with this type of situation (Table 8.34). In sum, what emerges from the findings shown in Table 8.34 is that (1) the officers perceive their

abilities and that of their agencies to prevent the onset of victimization events to be limited, but (2) prior education about the circumstances and dynamics of victimization events, coupled with training enabling them to cope with and response more effectively to hazardous events in their daily job routines, could be achieved through more educational and skills development programs sponsored by their agencies.

Table 8.34

WHETHER INCIDENT COULD HAVE BEEN PREVENTED:BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)

Whether Incident Could Have Been Prevented	County Juvenile Probation	County Adult Probation	County Combined Probation	State Parole	Total
Could you have prevented the incident?					
Yes	5	8	3	21	9
No	74	72	74	65	72
Don't know	21	20	23	14	20
Could your agency have done anything to prevent this incident?					
Yes	18	33	23	41	30
No	63	44	39	38	46
Don't know	18	23	39	21	24
Could the agency have done anything to better prepare personnel to cope with this type of situation?					
Yes	63	66	58	72	65
No	26	19	23	21	21
Don't Know	10	16	19	7	14
<b>Base N</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>193</b>

## Victimization Experiences of New Jersey Child Support Enforcement and Pre-Trial Case Management Officers

The remainder of this section deals exclusively with officers having case contact responsibilities in two units of New Jersey's probation system--Child Support Enforcement and Pre-Trial Case Management. A total of 356 officers working in these two agencies responded to the worker safety survey--215 in Child Support Enforcement and 141 in Pre-Trial Case Management. Information comparing and contrasting the victimization experiences of these officers is presented by agency type. Presenting the data in this manner is intended to contribute to the development of agency-specific programs for the enhancement of worker safety.

### Victimization Experiences of Child Support Enforcement and Pre-Trial Case Management Officers

Characteristics of the 356 officer respondents are shown in Table 8.35. As can be seen, a majority of both sets of officers are female, including just over two-thirds (69%) of those in child support enforcement and 56% of those in pre-trial case management. One-third or more of the officers in each agency type are below 30 years of age. Not surprisingly, their tenure in both the current agency and the field tends to be briefer than typically found in probation agencies. For example, about half of those working in child support enforcement have less than three years of tenure in their current agency and the field (Table 8.35).

Just over one-fifth of the responding officers reported that they hold a second job (Table 8.36). Usually carrying a weapon of any type was reported by a distinct minority of all the officers. Seven percent of the pre-trial case management officers indicated that they usually carried an impact instrument for self-protection, the highest figure for any of the listed weapons (Table 8.37).

Table 8.35

## CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS: BY TYPE OF AGENCY (Percentages)

Characteristics	Child Supp. Enforcement	Pre-Trial Case Mgt.	Total
<u>Sex:</u>			
Male	34	44	36
Female	69	56	64
<u>Age:</u>			
Under 25 years	20	15	18
25 - 29 years	19	18	18
30 - 39 years	25	34	29
40 - 49 years	17	16	17
50 years or older	19	16	18
<u>Tenure in Field:</u>			
Less than 3 years	49	32	42
3 - 4 years	18	18	18
5 - 9 years	14	18	16
10 - 19 years	15	28	21
20 years or more	3	3	3
<u>Tenure in Current Agency:</u>			
Less than 3 years	50	36	44
3 - 4 years	17	18	18
5 - 9 years	15	16	15
10 - 19 years	14	28	19
20 years or more	3	3	3
<u>Base N</u>	<u>214</u>	<u>140</u>	<u>354</u>

Table 8.36

## SECOND JOB HELD BY OFFICERS: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)

Second Job Held	Child Supp. Enforcement	Pre-Trial Case Mgt.	Total
Yes, hold a second job	21	22	21
No, do not hold a second job	79	78	78
<u>Base N</u>	<u>214</u>	<u>139</u>	<u>353</u>

Table 8.37

**WEAPONS USUALLY CARRIED: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Weapon Usually Carried	Child Supp. Enforcement	Pre-Trial Case Mgt.	Total
Handgun	--	1	<1
Other firearm	1	2	1
Impact instrument	2	7	4
Chemical agents	4	3	4
Knife or sharp edged instrument	2	5	3
<b>Base N</b>	<b>214</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>354</b>

Victimization experiences of officers working in child support enforcement and pre-trial case management were of particular interest in this study. Table 8.38 shows the victimization rates for these officers over their entire careers in the field. The career victimization rates are nearly identical in both groups--45% of those in child support enforcement and 47% in pre-trial case management (Table 8.38). However, the data in Table 8.39 demonstrate that intimidation events constitute the great majority of career victimization experiences. For example, 45% of the responding officers noted that they had been intimidated at least once in their career; only 7% reported that their career victimization experiences had involved physical assault (Table 8.39). At the same time, though, about half of those who indicated that they had experienced intimidation events reported that this had occurred three or more times during their careers (Table 8.39).

Table 8.38

**VICTIMIZATION RATES OF OFFICERS DURING ENTIRE CAREER:  
BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Second Job Held	Child Supp. Enforcement	Pre-Trial Case Mgt.	Total
Have been victimized during career	45	47	46
Have not been victimized during career	55	53	54
<b>Base N</b>	<b>207</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>346</b>



Table 8.39

**OFFICERS PHYSICALLY ASSAULTED OR INTIMIDATED DURING WHOLE  
CAREER: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Second Job Held	Child Supp. Enforcement	Pre-Trial Case Mgt.	Total
Physically assaulted in whole career:	6	10	7
Once	3	5	4
Twice	1	1	1
Three times	<1	2	1
Four times	<1	2	1
More than four times	1	--	1
Never assaulted	94	90	93
Intimidated by physical or any other threat in whole career:	45	46	45
Once	7	10	8
Twice	12	15	13
Three times	4	7	5
Four times	4	1	3
More than four times	17	12	15
Never intimidated	55	54	55
<b>Base N</b>	<b>214</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>354</b>

The general victimization rates for both groups of officers during the 12-month period preceding the survey are shown in Table 8.40. One-third of those in child support enforcement reported victimization experiences in the past year, as did one-fourth (26%) of those in pre-trial case management. As can be seen in Table 8.41, past-year victimizations involving physical assault on these officers were rare (2%); more common were intimidation events.

Table 8.40

**VICTIMIZATION RATES OF OFFICERS IN 12-MONTH PERIOD PRECEDING  
THE SURVEY: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentage)**

Victimization Status	Child Supp. Enforcement	Pre-Trial Case Mgt.	Total
Victimized during past year	33	26	30
Not victimized during past year	67	74	70
<b>Base N</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>347</b>

Table 8.41

**OFFICERS PHYSICALLY ASSAULTED OR INTIMIDATED DURING  
PAST YEAR: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Physically Assaulted or Intimi- dated During Past Year	Child Supp. Enforcement	Pre-Trial Case Mgt.	Total
Physically assaulted during past year:	2	2	2
Once	2	1	2
Twice	--	--	--
Three times	--	--	--
Four times	--	1	<1
More than four times	--	--	--
Not assaulted past year	98	98	98
Intimidated by physical or any other threat during past year:	32	25	29
Once	10	15	12
Twice	9	6	8
Three times	4	1	3
Four times	1	1	1
More than four times	8	1	6
Not intimidated past year	68	75	71
<b>Base N</b>	<b>214</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>354</b>

When past-year victims and non-victims were compared in terms of basic demographic characteristics, no marked differences surfaced (see Table 8.42). There is a slight tendency for victims to carry weapons (other than firearms) more often than non-victims, but the difference is not pronounced and only a small number of the officers report carrying a weapon of any kind (Table 8.43).

Table 8.42

## DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF OFFICERS BY VICTIM STATUS (Percentages)

Demographic Characteristics	Victim	Non-Victim
<u>Sex:</u>		
Male	37	35
Female	63	65
<u>Age:</u>		
Under 25 years	18	18
25 - 29 years	14	21
30 - 39 years	38	25
40 - 49 years	15	17
50 years or older	13	19
<u>Education:</u>		
Less than high school	--	--
High school	8	10
Some college	27	26
Bachelor's degree	59	58
Graduate degree	7	6
<u>Tenure in Field:</u>		
Less than 3 years	34	45
3 - 4 years	23	17
5 - 9 years	16	16
10 - 19 years	26	18
20 years or more	2	4
<u>Tenure in Current Agency:</u>		
Less than 3 years	42	44
3 - 4 years	20	17
5 - 9 years	15	16
10 - 19 years	22	18
20 years or more	1	4
<u>Base N</u>	<u>105</u>	<u>244</u>

Note: Column percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding

Table 8.43

**WEAPON USUALLY CARRIED BY OFFICERS BY VICTIM STATUS (Percentages)**

Weapon Usually Carried	Victim	Non-Victim
Handgun	--	<1
Other firearm	--	1
Chemical agent	8	2
Impact instrument	7	3
Knife or other sharp edged instrument	6	2
<b>Base N</b>	<b><u>105</u></b>	<b><u>244</u></b>

The great majority of the respondents (80% or more in each group) have not had unarmed self-defense training. Moreover, the data in Table 8.44 make it clear that the presence or absence of such training bears no relationship to risk of victimization.

Table 8.44

**VICTIMIZATION STATUS OF OFFICERS BY UNARMED DEFENSE TRAINING (Percentages)**

Unarmed Self-Defense Training	Victim	Non-Victim
Have had unarmed self-defense training	20	16
Have not had unarmed self-defense training	80	84
<b>Base N</b>	<b><u>105</u></b>	<b><u>244</u></b>

### Perceptions of Policy Initiatives and Worker Safety Concerns

Respondents were asked to rank 23 potential policy proposals drawn from studies conducted in Texas, New York, Pennsylvania, and Virginia. Each item reflected a policy initiative with potential for enhancing the safety of probation and parole officers/agents. The possible ratings of each item were "definitely useful," "useful," "undecided," "not useful," and "definitely not useful." Table 8.45 contains the results, with items rank-ordered according to the percentage of all respondents rating a policy initiative as "definitely useful" or "useful."

About one-third of the safety-related policies received strong to very strong endorsements by the responding officers. Two were accorded very high ratings of usefulness. These were developing a partner system to be used as needed in making home visits (92%) and the identification of "high risk" areas and informing officers about them (92%) (Table 8.45). Several other policies were also endorsed as definitely useful/useful by strong majorities in both respondent groups. These included providing training in self-defense methods (84%), providing distress signal devices to officers making home visits (84%), providing probation/parole officer-police officer teams when making arrests of offenders in violation of probation/parole requirements (82%), and providing security officers for field offices (81%) (Table 8.45). The two items rated as useful by less than a majority of the respondents both related to providing officers with firearms to be carried when deemed necessary or while on duty.

In general, the ratings offered by officers in child support enforcement and pre-trial case management were very similar, most differing by five percentage points or less. As was true with the findings presented earlier in this section for probation/parole officers, those policy initiatives receiving strong endorsements by these officers do not appear to reflect ventures that are extraordinarily expensive or especially complex to implement.

Table 8.45

#### **RESPONDENTS' RATINGS OF THE USEFULNESS OF SAFETY-RELATED POLICIES BY: AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Safety-Related Policies	Child Supp. Enforcement	Pre-Trial Case Mgt.	Total
Develop a partner system to be used as needed	92	92	92
Identify all high risk areas and inform officers	94	92	92
Provide training in self-defense methods	81	88	84
Provide panic buttons on office phones	84	84	84

Table 8.45 (Cont'd.)

**RESPONDENTS' RATINGS OF THE USEFULNESS OF SAFETY-RELATED  
POLICIES: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Safety-Related Policies	Child Supp. Enforcement	Pre-Trial Case Mgt.	Total
Provide distress signal devices to officers making home visits	85	82	84
Provide P/P officer-police officer teams when arresting offenders	83	81	82
Provide security officers for field offices	82	80	81
Provide training in verbal judo	76	84	79
Provide secure jail areas for visits with clients	84	71	78
Establish secure clerical areas in field offices	77	74	76
Require officer to provide supervisors with daily schedules	79	74	77
Police/security officer present at all revocation hearings	77	73	75
Have police/security officer present at all summons hearings	80	61	72
Install two-way communication devices in officers' cars	70	70	70
Require officers to check in and out with a centralized monitor	70	65	68
Provide officers with hand-held radios	71	62	67
Provide officers with recent mugshots of releasees	68	63	66
Establish special units of armed officers to make arrests	67	61	65
Provide officers with non-lethal chemical agents	58	60	59
Provide officers with soft body armor	58	52	56
Increase number of specialized caseloads	51	49	50
Provide officers with firearms to be carried when they deem necessary	47	45	46
Provide officers with firearms to be carried while on duty	47	45	46
<b>Base N</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>340</b>

Officers were also asked several questions concerning their perceptions of personal safety in various areas of the work environment of probation and parole. As can be seen in Table 8.46, a large majority of those working in pre-trial case management (86%) and two-thirds of those in child support enforcement (69%) felt themselves to be very safe/safe while working in their offices during regular office hours. However, the percentages were quite different when the work context was changed to working in local offices during non-office hours--58% and 47%, respectively. Of those officers in each group indicating that they visited incarcerated offenders, fairly large majorities reported that they felt safe/very safe when making such visits (Table 8.46).

Sizable proportions in each group of officers stated that they did not make field contacts. Among those who do, about four-fifths noted that they were very concerned/concerned about their personal safety when in the field (Table 8.46). Respondents were split, though, on their perceptions of changes in the field over the past five years affecting personal safety. Less than a majority of each group saw the field as becoming more dangerous during this period of time, and slightly more than half felt that the field had "stayed about the same" (Table 8.46).

Table 8.46

## SAFETY CONCERNS OF RESPONDENTS (Percentages)

Safety Concern Items	Child Supp. Enforcement	Pre-Trial Case Mgt.	Total
How safe do you feel while working in your local office during regular office hours?			
Very Safe/Safe	69	86	76
Unsafe/Very Unsafe	31	12	24
How safe do you feel while working in your local office during non-office hours?			
Very Safe/Safe	47	58	51
Unsafe/Very Unsafe	53	42	49
How safe do you feel when visiting with an offender in your local jail or state prison?			
Very Safe/Safe	33	56	42
Unsafe/Very Unsafe	11	32	19
Don't visit in jails	57	12	44
How concerned are you about your personal safety when making field contacts?			
Very Concerned/Concerned	39	44	41
Not/Definitely Not Concerned	10	13	13
No Field Contacts	51	43	49
With respect to your personal safety, during the past five years, do you think your work in the probation/parole field has become:			
More dangerous	40	46	43
Stayed about the same	56	54	55
Less dangerous	3	--	2
<b>Base N</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>356</b>



## The Dynamics of Victimization

With respect to factors related to the "most serious incident occurring during the past year," the experiences of officers working in child support enforcement and pre-trial case management were similar. In 59% of the cases, the perpetrators were clients, with one in four being under the supervision of the worker (Tables 8.47 and 8.48). About one-fourth of the respondents in each group reported the offender's status to be an unspecified "other" person (Table 8.47). As might be expected, pre-trial case management clients tend to have "heavier" criminal history backgrounds; in fact, in the large majority of cases involving child support enforcement officers, the perpetrator was either not under sentence or the status was unknown to the respondent (Tables 8.47, 8.48, and 8.49). Moreover, over half of the perpetrators of events against pre-trial case management officers were reported to have alcohol and/or drug abuse histories, compared to only about one-fourth to one-third of those involved in incidents with child support enforcement staff (Table 8.49).

Table 8.47

### OFFENDER'S STATUS AT TIME OF INCIDENT: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)

Offender's Status	Child Supp. Enforcement	Pre-Trial Case Mgt.	Total
Client	56	62	59
Client's family member	12	5	9
Client's friend	--	--	--
Court personnel	--	--	--
Bystander	--	5	2
Animal	--	--	--
Other	24	29	26
Unknown	8	--	4
<b>Base N</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>46</b>

Table 8.48

### OFFENDER'S SUPERVISION STATUS AT TIME OF INCIDENT: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)

Supervision Status	Child Supp. Enforcement	Pre-Trial Case Mgt.	Total
Under respondent's supervision	22	24	23
Under respondent's agency supervision	9	14	11
Under another agency's supervision	--	19	9
Not under supervision	30	19	25
Unknown	39	24	32
<b>Base N</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>46</b>

Table 8.49

**CRIMINAL STATUS CHARACTERISTICS OF PERPETRATORS:  
BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Criminal Status Characteristics	Child Supp. Enforcement	Pre-Trial Case Mgt.	Total
Most Serious Offense:			
First degree	--	9	4
Second degree	--	9	4
Third degree	--	14	7
Fourth degree	4	5	4
Disorderly person	--	5	2
Delinquent	--	5	2
Unknown	58	19	40
Not under sentence	37	33	36
Type Most Serious Offense:			
Crime vs. person	4	48	26
Crime vs. property	--	9	5
Crime vs. morals	4	--	2
Substance abuse	14	9	12
Not under sentence	50	9	30
Unknown	27	24	26
Previous Incarceration:			
Yes	12	52	31
No	21	14	18
Unknown	67	33	51
Drug Abuse History:			
Yes	13	38	25
No	13	19	16
Unknown	74	43	59
Alcohol Abuse History:			
Yes	30	29	29
No	4	24	13
Unknown	65	48	57
Prior Criminal History (Convictions/ Adjudications):			
No prior convictions	13	14	14
One prior felony	--	14	7
Two or more prior felonies	9	33	20
Prior misdemeanor	--	14	7
Unknown	78	24	52
Prior Assaults Against Other Individuals:			
Probation/parole officers	17	9	13
Other probation/parole personnel	22	5	14
Police officer	4	29	16
Treatment agency personnel	9	14	11
Spouse	39	19	29
Other family members	13	29	20
Citizen	4	29	16
<b>Base N</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>46</b>

In incidents involving both child support enforcement and pre-trial case management officers, the perpetrators were reported to have been under the influence of drugs, alcohol, or both about one-fourth of the time. However, in cases affecting the former, this was reported to be unknown by over half (54%) of the respondents (Table 8.50).

Table 8.50

WHETHER OFFENDER UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF DRUGS OR ALCOHOL  
AT TIME OF INCIDENT: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)

Whether Under Influence	Child Supp. Enforcement	Pre-Trial Case Mgt.	Total
Drugs	8	19	13
Alcohol	8	5	7
Both drugs and alcohol	8	--	4
Nothing	21	38	29
Unknown	54	38	47
<u>Base N</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>45</u>

A very important piece of information in understanding the dynamics of victimization against officers pertains to the behavioral character of the perpetrator's actions. Offender actions in hazardous incidents most commonly involved a "threat of physical assault" and/or "intimidations" against officers (58% and 72% respectively). Actual physical assault occurred in 7% of the cases. With two exceptions, the distributions of different reported offender actions against the officers were quite similar. The first exception involved threats to the officer's reputation, which occurred in 36% of the instances involving child support enforcement officers but only 19% of those involving pre-trial case management personnel. The second pertained to attempted extortion, which was also more frequent in the former group (16% vs. 5%) (Table 8.51).

In cases involving physical force, perpetrators were reported to have used guns, impact instruments and sharp-edged weapons in a small number of incidents, all against child support enforcement officers. Allegations about professional and personal conduct were much more frequent, with a majority of officers in child support enforcement units indicating that the perpetrator had made allegations about the officer's professional and/or personal conduct, threatened lawsuits against the officer or agency, or against the officer's superiors (Table 8.52).

In a majority of the cases (56%) involving officers in child support enforcement personnel, other officers were present when the victimization event took place. Among workers in pre-trial case management, another officer (43%) or a law enforcement officer (48%) were most frequently reported as others who were present when the incident took place. (Table 8.53).

Table 8.51

**INCIDENCE OF DIFFERENT OFFENDER ACTIONS AGAINST  
OFFICER: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Offender Actions	Child Supp. Enforcement	Pre-Trial Case Mgt.	Total
Physical assault	8	5	7
Threat of physical assault	54	62	58
Damage to officer's property	--	5	2
Threat to officer's property	20	24	22
Intimidation	76	67	72
Attempted extortion	16	5	11
Threat to officer's reputation	36	19	28
Threat of physical harm to officer's family	8	9	9
Intimidation or attempted intimidation of officer's family members	8	5	6
<b>Base N</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>46</b>

Table 8.52

**INCIDENCE OF ADDITIONAL OFFENDER ACTIONS AGAINST  
OFFICER: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Offender Actions	Child Supp. Enforcement	Pre-Trial Case Mgt.	Total
Physical Force:			
Shot	4	--	2
Hit with impact instrument	8	--	4
Cut with sharp edged instrument	4	--	2
Hit with first or hand	8	5	6
Kicked	--	--	--
Pushed	16	9	13
Other weapon used	16	19	17
Allegations about officer's:			
Professional conduct	56	43	50
Personal conduct	56	14	37
Lawsuits vs. officer or agency	56	38	48
Allegations re: co-workers	48	5	28
Allegations re: superiors	60	5	35
Allegations re: family and friends	4	5	4
<b>Base N</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>46</b>

Table 8.53

**OTHERS PRESENT AT VICTIMIZATION EVENT IN ADDITION TO  
OFFICER: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Others Present at Event	Child Supp. Enforcement	Pre-Trial Case Mgt.	Total
Probation/Parole Officer	56	43	50
Law Enforcement Official	16	48	30
Officer's family	--	--	--
Officer's friends or acquaintances	8	5	6
Offender's employer or co-workers	--	9	4
Offender's family	4	9	6
Offender's friends or acquaintances	4	9	6
Bystander(s)	20	9	15
Others	12	19	15
<b>Base N</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>46</b>

As shown in Table 8.54, a majority of the incidents (60%) perpetrated against child support enforcement workers occurred at the agency office (60%); "over the phone" was also reported by 48% of these officers (Table 8.54). The agency officer and, not surprisingly, prison or jail figured prominently as locations in the case of officers working in pre-trial case management--29% and 33%, respectively (Table 8.54).

Attempting to talk to the offender was noted as an immediate response to the incident by sizable majorities of officers in both groups--92% of those in child support enforcement and 71% of those in pre-trial case management (Table 8.55). Using a verbal threat was reported by nearly one-fourth (24% in both groups) as an immediate response, and about one-fifth of officers in child support indicated that their response had been to retreat. None of the respondents in either officer group reported striking back physically as a response to the perpetrator, and only a few noted that they had threatened to strike back (Table 8.55).

In both groups of officers, a majority of the incidents occurred in connection with announced or surprise visits with the offender (Table 8.56). In response to a call from the offender was also noted by slightly more than one-fourth (28%) of workers in child support enforcement (Table 8.56).

Table 8.54

## WHERE INCIDENT OCCURRED: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)

Where Incident Occurred	Child Supp. Enforcement	Pre-Trial Case Mgt.	Total
Over the phone	48	9	30
By letter or mail	20	5	13
Message or report of others	12	5	9
Agency office	60	29	46
Client's home	4	--	2
Someone else's home	4	--	2
Prison or jail	--	33	15
Police station	--	--	--
Human services agency	8	--	4
Courtroom	12	19	15
In vehicle	4	--	2
Offender's employment site	--	--	--
Public facility	--	--	--
On the street	8	--	4
Other location	--	14	6
<b>Base N</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>46</b>

Table 8.55

IMMEDIATE RESPONSE TO INCIDENT BY OFFICER:  
BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)

Response of Officer	Child Supp. Enforcement	Pre-Trial Case Mgt.	Total
Struck back physically	--	--	--
Threatened to strike back physically	4	5	4
Used gun or other weapon	--	--	--
Threatened to use a gun	4	--	2
Displayed a badge or I.D.	8	5	6
Used verbal threat	24	24	24
Said nothing	8	14	11
Retreated	20	9	15
Called out for help	16	14	15
Attempted to talk to offender	92	71	83
Took no action	16	29	22
<b>Base N</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>46</b>

Table 8.56

## CONTEXT IN WHICH INCIDENT OCCURRED: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)

Context of Incident	Child Supp. Enforcement	Pre-Trial Case Mgt.	Total
Announced or expected visit	32	45	38
Surprise visit	48	15	33
During arrest of the offender	8	5	7
During arrest of someone else	8	--	4
In response to offender's call	28	4	17
In response to offender's family member call	12	--	6
Context of domestic dispute	16	9	13
During transport of offender	12	9	11
Other context	40	43	41
<u>Base N</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>46</u>

#### Aftermaths of Victimization and Consequences for Workers

One of the important concerns in examining the many different impacts that victimization experiences might have on personnel in the probation field focuses attention on the aftermaths of such events and their consequences for workers' personal and professional lives. Table 8.57 presents information depicting aftermaths as reported by these two groups of respondents to the New Jersey worker safety study.

Sixteen percent of the officers in child support enforcement reported that they had been injured during the victimization event (Table 8.57). However, the direct consequences of victimization experiences were primarily of an emotional, rather than physical character. For example, being "shaken up" by the experience was indicated by some 60% of the officers in child support enforcement and 52% of those in pre-trial case management. Fear on the job was also reported by nearly half (48%) of the former officers and one-third (33%) of the latter (Table 8.57).

A feature of the data that stands out is the fact that many officers perceived victimization incidents as affecting their approaches to or relationships with clients. A "reduced sense of trust in clients" was reported by some 44% of officers in child support enforcement and one-third (33%) in pre-trial case management. Similar proportions felt that a "reduced sensitivity to clients" had also been a consequence of their experiences--48% and 33%, respectively (Table 8.57).

In contrast to the negative consequences of victimization just reported, about one-fourth of the officers in child support enforcement (24%) and one-

third (33%) in pre-trial case management noted that they had experienced an "enhanced sense of self-confidence" as a result of the incident (Table 8.57). In sum, the reported aftermaths were quite varied and, especially in the case of child support enforcement officers, could conceivably have longer-term consequences for worker and agency effectiveness in dealing with clients.

Table 8.57

**AFTERMATHS OF VICTIMIZATION EVENTS: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Aftermaths of Event	Child Supp. Enforcement	Pre-Trial Case Mgt.	Total
Injured by incident	16	5	11
Chronic condition	--	--	--
Aggravation of old injury	--	--	--
Stomachache, headache, etc.	12	5	9
Shaken up	60	52	56
Fear on job	48	33	41
Reduced self confidence	12	9	11
Reduced sense of trust in clients	44	33	39
Reduced sensitivity to clients	48	33	41
Increased use of medication	4	--	2
Increased use of alcohol	4	--	2
Disruption of personal life	24	9	17
Disruption of family life	24	5	15
Enhanced sense of self-confidence	24	33	28
	<u>25</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>46</u>

In addition to survey items on the general aftermaths of the incident, additional questions were asked about other possible effects on the worker and others with whom he/she relates. As can be seen in Table 8.58, officers in child support enforcement were more likely to report that the experience had had negative personal consequences (44%) than their counterparts in pre-trial case management (19%). However, thinking about quitting the job was noted by one-third (33%) of the latter officers, compared to some 20% of the former (Table 8.58). Just below one-third of the officers in both groups indicated that avoidance of contact with threatening clients had resulted from their past-year victimization experiences (Tables 8.58).



Table 8.58

## EFFECTS OF THE VICTIMIZATION EVENT: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)

Effects of Victimization Event	Child Supp. Enforcement	Pre-Trial Case Mgt.	Total
Personal Effects on Officer:			
Positive consequences	8	14	11
Negative consequences	44	19	33
No consequences	48	67	56
Effects on Officer's Family:			
Positive consequences	--	--	--
Negative consequences	20	9	15
No consequences	80	90	85
Effect of Incident on Agency:			
Positive consequences	4	--	2
Negative consequences	24	9	17
No consequences	72	90	80
Effects of Incident on Co-Workers:			
Positive consequences	--	14	6
Negative consequences	40	24	33
No consequences	60	62	61
Less Open with Clients?			
Yes	28	29	28
No	72	71	72
Thought About Quitting Job?			
Yes	20	33	26
No	80	67	74
Applied for a Transfer?			
Yes	8	14	11
No	92	86	89
Avoided Contacts with Co-Workers?			
Yes	--	--	--
No	100	100	100
Avoided Contact with Threatening Clients?			
Yes	32	29	30
No	68	71	70
<u>Base N</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>46</u>

The last two concerns to be examined focus on the reporting behavior of officer victims in relation to the most serious past-year incident and their perceptions of whether the incident might have been prevented by them or their agencies. As can be seen in Table 8.59, among all respondents the two sets of individuals to whom the incident was reported were, in order of frequency, supervisors (72%) and co-workers (65%). Several other persons were also named, though the percentages in each case were much lower. Overall, the data in Table 8.59 suggest that officers in both agency settings are not reluctant to report and discuss the incident with others in the agency, and many go on to discuss the experience with family members and friends.

Very few respondents--only 9% of those in pre-trial case management, and none in child support enforcement--felt that they could have prevented the incident from occurring. This is not surprising, in view of earlier data indicating that a majority of the incidents occurred while the officers were carrying out normal, day-to-day duties associated with their jobs. As several respondents to the overall survey noted in comments to the researchers, many of the events experienced simply "come with the territory"--they cannot be prevented, only dealt with in the most constructive manner possible.

Considerably more, but still minorities, of the respondents felt that their agencies could have done something to prevent the hazardous event from occurring. However, sizable majorities in both settings were of the opinion that their agencies could have prepared them and other personnel better to cope situations of this type (Table 8.60). In sum, what emerges from the findings shown in Table 8.60 is that (1) the officers perceived their ability to be very limited and that of their agencies to be somewhat limited in preventing the onset of victimization events, but (2) prior education about the circumstances and the dynamics of victimization events, coupled with training enabling them to cope with and respond more effectively to hazardous events in their daily job routines, could be achieved through more thorough educational and skills development programs sponsored by their agencies.

Table 8.59

REPORTING BEHAVIOR OF OFFICER VICTIMS: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)

Reporting Behavior	Child Supp. Enforcement	Pre-Trial Case Mgt.	Total
Agency head	40	24	33
Supervisor	76	67	72
Co-workers	64	67	65
Police	8	9	9
Counselor	--	9	4
Spouse	33	29	31
Other family members	32	14	24
Friends	40	19	30
Other person	20	24	22
No one	4	9	7
<u>Base N</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>46</u>

Table 8.60

**WHETHER INCIDENT COULD HAVE BEEN PREVENTED: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Whether Incident Could Have Been Prevented	Child Supp. Enforcement	Pre-Trial Case Mgt.	Total
Could you have prevented the incident?			
Yes	--	9	4
No	68	62	65
Don't know	32	29	30
Could your agency have done anything to prevent this incident?			
Yes	40	33	37
No	32	48	39
Don't know	28	19	24
Could the agency have done anything to better prepare personnel to cope with this type of situation?			
Yes	76	71	74
No	12	14	13
Don't know	12	14	13
<u>Base N</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>46</u>

## Section 9

### SURVEY FINDINGS: NEW YORK

A total of 2,154 workers from throughout New York's County Probation and State Parole agencies responded to the 1989 survey. This represented an overall response rate of 34%. The response rate for the New York probation agencies was 43%, and that for the parole agencies 15%. However, as noted earlier in discussion of methodology (Part I, Section 2), a complicating factor in interpreting survey findings from the New York study is the underrepresentation of probation and parole personnel from the New York City area. Thus, any generalization of results must be tempered by this fact.

Respondents to the New York survey were distributed across several job categories, as shown in the following listing.

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Probation Adult Supervisor	485	22
Probation Juvenile Supervisor	65	3
Probation ISP	76	4
Probation Adult Investigation	268	12
Probation Juvenile Investigation	44	2
Probation Intake	115	5
Probation Warrant/Field Services	33	2
Probation Combined Services	303	14
Clerical	328	15
Clerical Supervisor	68	3
Technical Staff (Fiscal; Policy; MIS; Human Resources Management)	47	2
Attorney, Administrative Law Judge, Revocation Specialist	3	<1
Client Services Position	23	1
Parole Officer Assigned A Field, B Institutional, C Temporary Release	137	6
Senior Parole Officer A Field, B Institutional, C Temporary Release	49	2
Area Supervisor/Bureau Chief	42	2
Administrator/Executive Management/ Parole Board	47	2
Other, unspecified	21	1
<u>Totals</u>	<u>2154</u>	<u>100</u>

## Respondent Characteristics

To make analyses of respondent characteristics and hazardous incident encounters more efficient, the job categories above were collapsed into three main types: (1) Officers<sup>1</sup>; (2) Supervisors and Managers; and (3) Clerical and Staff. Table 9.1 shows the relationships between each of these three main job types and various profile characteristics of survey respondents.

Workers employed in County Probation comprise the great majority of all respondents (86%). This varies little when comparisons are made according to worker classification--88% of officers, 76% of supervisors/managers, and 82% of clerical and staff (Table 9.1). Among officer respondents, nearly two-thirds (64%) are working in agency offices of fewer than 50 employees, a percentage nearly equalled by the supervisors/managers (60%).<sup>2</sup> Clerical and staff respondents are more likely to be found in smaller offices, with 58% working in office settings of 25 or fewer employees (Table 9.1).

Among the officers, an equal proportion (50%) of both males and females responded to the survey. However, among supervisors/managers, male respondents predominate--74%, compared with 26% females. Not surprisingly, the overwhelming majority (92%) of clerical and staff workers are females (Table 9.1).

Supervisors/managers are, on the average, older than officers, an expected finding in view of the fact that movement into a management or supervisory position is typically associated with tenure in the agency and field. At the same time, clerical and staff workers distribute fairly evenly across the bottom three age categories (Table 9.1).

Fully 96% of the officers hold a bachelor's or graduate degree. This figure is matched by supervisors/managers (92%), although some 55% of this group hold a graduate degree. Among clerical and staff workers, about nine out of 10 (89%) have a high school diploma or some college education (Table 9.1).

Not surprisingly, supervisors/managers exhibit much longer tenure in both current agency and the field--89% and 93%, respectively, having 10 or more year's tenure. In contrast, two-fifths of the officers (40%) have been in their current agencies less than five years and some 38% also have been in the field for less than five years. On the whole, the age profile of clerical and staff workers tends to mirror that of the officers (Table 9.1).

Not quite one in five (18%) of all officer respondents holds a second job. This figure is smaller for both supervisors/managers (15%) and clerical and staff workers (12%) (Table 9.1).

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<sup>1</sup>This includes all personnel whose jobs bring them into direct client contact for purposes of probation and parole supervision.

<sup>2</sup>This is partly attributable to the overrepresentation of respondents working in areas outside of New York City and other large population centers throughout the state.

One half (50%) of the officer respondents reported that they have had unarmed self-defense training.<sup>3</sup> This figure was higher (60%) for the supervisors/managers . Only 7% of the clerical and staff workers reported the same (Table 9.1).

As can be seen in the last segment of Table 9.1, some 22% of the officers reported carrying a handgun.<sup>4</sup> This figure was higher for the supervisors/managers (31%). The next most popular weapon usually carried was a chemical agent--with 14% of the officers and 13% of the supervisors/managers noting that they usually carried such a weapon (Table 9.1). Very small numbers of the clerical and staff workers reported carrying a weapon of any kind.

Table 9.1

CHARACTERISTICS OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS (Percentages)

Characteristics	Officers	Supv'rs./ Managers	Clerical & Staff	All Re- spondents
<u>Agency Type:</u>				
County Probation	88	76	82	86
State Dept. Juvenile Serv.	12	24	18	14
<u>Sex of Respondent:</u>				
Male	50	74	8	43
Female	50	26	92	57
<u>Age of Respondent:</u>				
Under 25 years	4	--	6	5
25-29 years	11	--	12	10
30-39 years	30	12	25	28
40-49 years	35	49	30	35
50 years or older	19	39	27	22

<sup>3</sup>Note, however, in Table 9.8, that 82 percent of the officers/agents rated "training in self-defense methods" as a "definitely useful" or "useful" policy initiative. Some 93 percent of the supervisors/ managers felt such training to be useful.

<sup>4</sup>This figure is, however, heavily influenced by the greater number of probation officers included in the officers/agents category. When probation and parole agents are distinguished, the data indicate that only 14% of the probation officers report usually carrying a handgun, with the comparable figure for parole agents was 81%.

Table 9.1 (Cont'd.)

## CHARACTERISTICS OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS (Percentages)

Characteristics	Officers	Supv'rs./ Managers	Clerical & Staff	All Re- spondents
<u>Educational Attainment:</u>				
High school	1	1	51	11
Some college	3	1	38	10
Bachelor's degree	70	42	6	56
Graduate degree	26	55	5	23
<u>Office Size:</u>				
1-10 employees	23	21	32	24
11-25 employees	19	15	26	20
26-50 employees	23	24	15	21
51-100 employees	12	15	7	11
76-100 employees	6	3	6	6
101 or more employees	18	22	13	17
<u>Tenure in Current Agency:</u>				
2 years or less	24	1	25	23
3-4 years	16	2	14	15
5-9 years	21	8	24	21
10-19 years	25	29	25	25
20 or more years	14	60	11	16
<u>Tenure in the Probation/ Parole Field:</u>				
2 years or less	23	--	24	22
3-4 years	15	--	15	15
5-9 years	21	6	24	21
10-19 years	26	26	25	26
20 or more years	15	67	11	16
<u>Second Job Held:</u>				
Yes	18	15	12	16
No	82	85	88	84
<u>Unarmed Defense Training:</u>				
Yes	50	60	7	41
No	50	40	93	59

Table 9.1 (Cont'd.)

## CHARACTERISTICS OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS (Percentages)

Characteristics	Officers	Supv'rs./ Managers	Clerical & Staff	All Re- spondents
<u>Weapon Usually Carried:</u> <sup>5</sup>				
Handgun	22	31	2	18
Other firearm	2	--	1	1
Impact instrument	8	6	2	7
Chemical agent	14	13	4	12
Knife/Other Sharp-edged Inst.	5	4	3	5
<u>Base N</u>	<u>1599</u>	<u>92</u>	<u>442</u>	<u>2131</u>

Note: Column percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

## Victimization Rates

For purposes of this study, victimization was defined in terms of the exposure of probation and parole workers to hazardous incidents encountered in the course of carrying out their jobs.<sup>6</sup> To help respondents understand the meaning of the term "hazardous incident" as used in designing this study, the following examples were included in the instructions appearing at the beginning of the questionnaire.

Examples of hazardous incidents affecting staff safety would include: physical assault or harm; threat of physical assault or harm; assault or threat of harm to a worker's family members; harm or threat of harm to one's property; extortion; harm or threat of harm to a worker's reputation; or psychological intimidation.

In the first section of the survey questionnaire, which was applicable to all respondents, four items pertained to probation and parole workers' experiences with hazardous incidents. The first two asked whether, during his or her entire career in the probation/parole field, the worker had (1) been phys-

<sup>5</sup>Separate questions were asked for five different types of weapons. Thus, the percentages are independent for each type and do not add to 100.

<sup>6</sup>For a detailed discussion of the concept of "victimization" and its relation to hazardous incidents and worker safety in probation and parole, see William H. Parsonage, Worker Safety in Probation and Parole, Washington, D.C.: National Institute of Corrections, 1990.



ically assaulted in the line of duty or (2) been intimidated by physical or other threat. The other two survey items were similar but asked respondents to answer in terms of their experiences since November, 1988 (approximately 12 months prior to the survey).

Victimization rates for all respondents during their entire careers in the probation and parole field and during the year preceding the survey are shown in Table 9.2. Some 65% of current officers reported experiencing at least one victimization incident during the course of their careers in the field of probation/parole. An even higher rate (77%) prevailed for those who are currently supervisors or managers in one of the New York agencies. Among clerical and staff employees, 18% reported that they had also encountered at least one such incident while working in probation/parole.

When general types of victimization events are considered, 30% of the supervisors/managers indicated that they had been physically assaulted at some time during their careers. This rate was lower for officers (14%) and much smaller (3%) for clerical and staff employees (Table 9.2).

Among supervisors/managers, 72% indicated that they had experienced incidents of intimidation during their careers in the field. The corresponding figure for officers was smaller, though 55% gave the same response. Rates of intimidation were much lower among clerical and staff workers but still accounted for some 18% of this employee group.

As can be seen in the bottom section of Table 9.2, 34% of the responding officers reported encountering some form of job-related victimization during the year preceding the survey. The corresponding figure was smaller for the supervisors/managers (21%) and considerably lower for the clerical and staff employees (7%).

When examined in relation to the general type of incident experienced during the past year, the highest rates were found for intimidation events. One-third (34%) of responding officers and 21% of the supervisors/managers reported experiencing an incident of this type. Among clerical and staff workers, 7% were confronted with at least one instance of intimidation in the year preceding the survey.

Table 9.2

**VICTIMIZATION RATES FOR ENTIRE CAREER AND DURING PAST  
YEAR IN PROBATION/PAROLE FIELD (Percentages)**

Characteristics	Officers	Supv'rs./ Managers	Clerical & Staff	All Re- spondents
<u>Victimization in Career:</u>				
Never victimized in career	35	23	82	44
Victimization in career by general type:				
Physical assault only	<1	4	1	1
Both assault and intimid.	14	26	2	12
Intimidation only	51	46	16	44
<u>Base N</u>	<u>1583</u>	<u>91</u>	<u>398</u>	<u>2072</u>
<u>Victimization in Past Year:</u>				
Not victimized in past year	66	79	93	72
Victimization in past year by general type:				
Physical assault only	<1	--	--	<1
Both assault and intimid.	5	2	1	3
Intimidation only	29	19	6	24
<u>Base N</u>	<u>1588</u>	<u>91</u>	<u>402</u>	<u>2081</u>

Note: Column percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Table 9.3 shows the victimization rates by type over the worker's entire career in the probation/parole field. The data show that about half of the officers and supervisors/managers who had experienced physical assault had been assaulted more than once during their careers. Multiple incidents were also reported by just over 2% of the clerical and staff employees.

Intimidation rates during the career are much higher in all of the worker categories. Over two-thirds (72%) of the supervisors/managers reported that they had experienced one or more such events during their careers in probation or parole, followed by some 64% of the officers and 17% of clerical and staff

respondents. Moreover, more than one-third (36%) of the managers and supervisors reported that they had faced intimidation events more than four times during their careers, as had some 22% of the officers. Intimidation events were far fewer among clerical and staff workers, though 17% reported having experienced one or more such incidents while working in the probation/parole field.

The second set of indicators of hazardous incidents focused on workers' experiences in the year preceding the survey. The results are shown in Table 9.4. As can be seen, 4% of the officers and 2% of the supervisors/managers reported that they had been physically assaulted in the line of duty during the year preceding the survey; less than 1% of the clerical and staff workers reported similarly. Even though the incidence of physical assault in the 12 months preceding the survey was quite small for officers, the fact that one in 25 were at risk for physical assault while on the job during a yearly period constitutes a level of occupational risk of some importance.

When confrontations involving some form of intimidation are considered, the incidence rates are much higher. Among officer respondents, one-third (33%) experienced one or more such events in the year preceding the survey, and one-fifth (20%) of supervisors/managers were similarly affected (Table 9.4). As the additional data in Table 9.4 show, a majority of those reporting intimidation events indicated more than one such confrontation during the year before the survey. Even among clerical and staff respondents, the incident rate is not negligible, in that some 7% reported one or more intimidation events during the last 12 months.

Table 9.3

**VICTIMIZATION RATES ENTIRE CAREER IN THE  
PROBATION/PAROLE FIELD (Percentages)**

Characteristics	Officers	Supv'rs./ Managers	Clerical & Staff	All Re- spondents
Physically Assaulted in the Line of Duty During Entire Career	14	31	2	13
Times Physically Assaulted in the Line of Duty During Entire Career:				
Once	7	17	<1	6
Twice	4	4	<1	3
Three times	1	2	<1	1
Four times	1	2	--	1
More than four times	2	6	1	2
Never physically assaulted	86	69	98	87
<b><u>Base N</u></b>	<b><u>1589</u></b>	<b><u>91</u></b>	<b><u>407</u></b>	<b><u>2087</u></b>
Intimidated by Physical or Any Other Threat During Entire Career	64	72	17	56
Times Intimidated by Physical or Any Other Threat During Entire Career:				
Once	13	10	6	11
Twice	14	13	3	12
Three times	10	7	4	9
Four times	5	7	--	4
More than four times	22	36	5	20
Never intimidated	36	28	83	44
<b><u>Base N</u></b>	<b><u>1589</u></b>	<b><u>91</u></b>	<b><u>407</u></b>	<b><u>2087</u></b>

Note: Column percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Table 9.4

**VICTIMIZATION RATES IN YEAR PRECEDING  
THE SURVEY (Percentages)**

Characteristics	Officers	Supv'rs./ Managers	Clerical & Staff	All Re- spondents
Physically Assaulted in the Line of Duty During Past Year	5	2	<1	4
Times Physically Assaulted in the Line of Duty During Past Year:				
Once	3	1	<1	3
Twice	1	1	--	<1
Three times	<1	--	<1	<1
Four times	<1	--	--	<1
More than four times	<1	--	--	<1
Not physically assaulted	95	98	99	96
<b><u>Base N</u></b>	<b><u>1586</u></b>	<b><u>90</u></b>	<b><u>403</u></b>	<b><u>2079</u></b>
Intimidated by Physical or Any Other Threat During Past Year	34	20	7	27
Times Intimidated by Physical or Any Other Threat During Past Year:				
Once	14	7	4	12
Twice	9	6	1	7
Three times	5	3	1	4
Four times	1	--	--	1
More than four times	5	4	1	4
Not intimidated	67	80	93	73
<b><u>Base N</u></b>	<b><u>1586</u></b>	<b><u>90</u></b>	<b><u>403</u></b>	<b><u>2079</u></b>

Note: Column percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

### Correlates of Victimization

Table 9.5 displays the relationships between two worker classifications and personal or job-related characteristics by career victimization status.<sup>7</sup> Among workers in both classifications, males are somewhat more likely to have encountered victimization incidents during their careers in the field, but the differences are not large. Among officers, age shows very little relationship to victimization status, and among supervisors/managers the differences are so slight as to be negligible (Table 9.5).

With respect to the probation/parole officers, having had unarmed self-defense training shows a modest relationship to hazardous incident encounters during one's career in the field (Table 9.5). In contrast, the supervisors/managers having such training are considerably more likely to have encountered such incidents during their careers--67%, as compared to 33% not having had unarmed self-defense training.

Among both officers and supervisors/managers, tenure in the field of probation/parole is clearly related to victimization status. For example, 73% of the officers with more than five years tenure in the field reported experiencing one or more victimization events during their careers, compared with 41% of those not reporting having faced such an incident (Table 9.5). Among current supervisors/managers, no clear relationship between career hazardous event status and tenure in the field is evident.

Carrying a handgun, however, does relate to victimization status. For example, 28% of those victimized at some point in their careers reported a handgun as the kind of weapon usually carried, compared with only 9% of those not victimized. A similar comparison can be made between the two subgroups of supervisors/managers. Some 37% of those in the victim category reported that they carried handguns, as compared with only 10% of those not experiencing a victimization event during their careers in the field (Table 9.5).

In Table 9.6, relationships between victimization status during the year preceding the survey and several personal and job-related characteristics are shown for officers and supervisors/managers. An inspection of the data in this table does not indicate any marked relationships between the characteristics examined and past-year victimization status. Application of the chi-square nonparametric test to the data in Table 9.6 found only two relationships to be statistically significant at a conventional .05 level. First, officers holding second jobs were more likely to have been victimized during the preceding year. Second, carrying a handgun was also related to victimization status among officers.

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<sup>7</sup>"Victimization status" refers to any form or frequency of encounter with hazardous incidents and distinguishes only between general "yes" and "no" responses to survey items asking about such events.

## Summary

The foregoing data indicate that the problem of worker safety among New York probation and parole workers, especially those involved in direct supervision of probationers/parolees, is pervasive. Although the rate of physical assault on officers and supervisors/managers in the year preceding the survey was only 4%, it still constitutes an notable level of occupation risk (1 in 25 workers).<sup>8</sup>

When all types of victimization events are considered, one-third (34%) of the officers responding to this survey experienced some such encounters during this same period of time, followed by about one-fifth (21%) of the responding supervisors/managers. More detailed analyses of officers' experiences with on-the-job incidents affecting worker safety are presented in another subsection below.

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<sup>8</sup>Attention must again be drawn to the fact that probation and parole personnel in New York City are underrepresented among survey respondents, and this must be taken into account in generalizing survey results.

Table 9.5

**CORRELATES OF VICTIMIZATION STATUS IN ENTIRE CAREER:  
OFFICERS AND SUPERVISOR/MANAGERS (Percentages)**

Characteristics	<u>Officers</u>		<u>Supv'rs./ Managers</u>		<u>Total</u>	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
<u>Sex of Respondent:</u>						
Male	54	43	77	62	56	44
Female	46	57	23	38	44	56
<u>Age of Respondent:</u>						
Under 25 years	2	8	--	--	2	8
25 - 29 years	8	15	--	--	8	14
30 - 39 years	31	30	16	--	30	29
40 - 49 years	40	27	50	48	41	38
50 years or older	18	20	34	52	20	21
<u>Tenure in prob./parole field:</u>						
Less than 2 years	13	41	--	--	12	40
3 - 4 years	14	17	--	--	13	17
5 - 9 years	24	17	4	14	22	17
10 - 19 years	32	14	26	29	31	15
20 years or more	17	10	70	57	21	12
<u>Unarmed self-defense training:</u>						
Yes, have had training	54	42	67	38	55	41
No, have not had training	46	58	33	62	45	59
<u>Kind of weapon usually carried:<sup>9</sup></u>						
Handgun	28	9	37	10	27	9
Other firearm	2	1	--	--	1	1
Impact instrument	10	5	7	6	9	5
Chemical Agent	17	8	15	6	16	8
Knife/Other sharp-edged instr.	7	2	3	7	6	2
<b>Base N</b>	<b>1031</b>	<b>558</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>1099</b>	<b>579</b>

Note: Column percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

<sup>9</sup>Respondents were asked to indicate whether they usually carried or did not carry a series of weapons. Hence, each percentage is independent of all the others, and totals do not add to 100.



Table 9.6

**CORRELATES OF VICTIMIZATION STATUS DURING PAST YEAR:  
OFFICERS AND SUPERVISOR/MANAGERS (Percentages)**

Characteristics	Officers		Supv'rs./ Managers		Total	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
<u>Sex of Respondent:</u>						
Male	57	48	72	75	56	50
Female	43	52	28	25	44	50
<u>Age of Respondent:</u>						
Under 25 years	4	5	--	--	4	4
25 - 29 years	11	10	--	--	10	10
30 - 39 years	35	28	22	10	35	27
40 - 49 years	36	35	39	52	36	36
50 years or older	14	22	39	38	15	23
<u>Unarmed self-defense training:</u>						
Yes, have had training	57	46	67	59	58	47
No, have not had training	43	54	33	41	42	53
<u>Hold second job:</u>						
Yes	25	14	22	14	25	14
No	75	86	78	86	75	86
<u>Tenure in current agency:</u>						
Less than 2 years	21	25	6	--	21	24
3 - 4 years	20	14	--	3	19	14
5 - 9 years	22	20	6	9	22	19
10 - 19 years	25	25	33	28	25	25
20 years or more	12	16	56	61	14	19
<u>Kind of weapon usually carried:<sup>10</sup></u>						
Handgun	32	15	33	29	32	16
Other firearm	2	1	--	--	2	1
Impact instrument	12	6	17	4	12	6
Chemical Agent	19	11	18	10	18	11
Knife/Other sharp-edged instr.	8	4	6	4	8	4
<b>Base N</b>	<b>530</b>	<b>1051</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>546</b>	<b>1120</b>

Note: Column percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

<sup>10</sup> Respondents were asked to indicate whether they usually carried or did not carry a series of weapons. Hence, each percentage is independent of all the others, and totals do not add to 100.

## Safety Concerns and Policy Initiatives for Worker Safety

### Safety Concerns

Employees in the New York agencies responding to the general survey were asked several questions concerning their perceptions of personal safety in various areas of the work environment of probation and parole. As can be seen in Table 9.1, the great majority of the officers (86%) and the supervisors/managers (82%) felt themselves to be very safe or safe while working in their offices during regular office hours. At the same time, the percentage of officers feeling very safe or safe declined to a level of 60% when the context was shifted to working in the local office during non-office hours (Table 9.1). However, among supervisors/managers, the percentage feeling safe or very safe during non-offices fell by only 6%.

Two-thirds (67%) of the responding officers reported that they felt very safe or safe when visiting with an offender in the local jail or state prison. However, when those indicating that they do not make such visits are excluded from the analysis, the percentage of officers feeling very safe or safe in making jail or prison visits rises to 80% (1065 of 1335). Among supervisors/managers indicating that they did make such visits, 90% (38 of 42) indicated they felt very safe or safe while making such visits.

The results were strikingly different when officers were asked about their concern for personal safety when making field contacts. Here, some two-thirds (68%) reported being very or somewhat concerned about personal safety when in the field (Table 9.1). The corresponding figure was considerably smaller for supervisors/managers (28%), although a sizable proportion of the latter (64%) indicated that they did not make field contacts.

When respondents were asked to indicate whether, with respect to personal safety, work in the field had become more dangerous or not, three-fourths of both officers (74%) and supervisors/managers (75%) saw the field as having become more dangerous over the past five years. Only 1% of both groups of respondents felt that the field had become less dangerous during this same period of time.

In sum, workers' concerns with safety focused principally on contacts made in the community, which constitutes for most probation and parole workers a primary work environment. With respect to the occurrence of hazardous incidents, the findings presented here fit closely with data to be presented below regarding such events. There it will be shown that such incidents occur mainly during the carrying out of day-to-day work responsibilities in the community.

Table 9.7

**PERCEPTIONS OF ON-THE-JOB SAFETY: OFFICERS/  
AND SUPERVISOR/MANAGERS (Percentages)**

Safety Concern Items	Officers	Supv'rs./ Managers
How safe do you feel while working in your local office during regular office hours?		
Very Safe/Safe	86	82
Unsafe/Very Unsafe	14	18
How safe do you feel while working in your local office during <u>non-office</u> hours?		
Very Safe/Safe	60	76
Unsafe/Very Unsafe	40	24
How safe do you feel when visiting with an offender in your local jail or state prison?		
Very Safe/Safe	67	42
Unsafe/Very Unsafe	17	4
Do not make such visits	16	54
How concerned are you about your personal safety when making field contacts?		
Very concerned/Somewhat Concerned	68	28
Not very concerned/Definitely Not Concerned	12	8
Do not make field contacts	20	64
With respect to your personal safety, during the past <u>five years</u> (or whatever time you've been in the field, if less than 5 years), do you think your work in the probation/parole field has:		
Become more dangerous	74	75
Stayed about the same	25	24
Become less dangerous	1	1
<b>Base N</b>	<b>1592</b>	<b>91</b>

## Policy Initiatives for Worker Safety

In his monograph, Worker Safety in Probation and Parole, Parsonage identified a series of policy initiatives regarded by probation and parole workers as relevant to worker safety in studies conducted in Texas, New York State, Pennsylvania and Virginia.<sup>11</sup> Workers were asked to rate each of the potential policy initiatives with respect to its perceived usefulness as a means of enhancing the safety of probation and parole workers.

In the current study, respondents were asked to rank 23 potential policy proposals drawn from the studies conducted in Texas, New York, Pennsylvania, and Virginia.<sup>12</sup> Possible ratings for each item were "definitely useful," "useful," "undecided," "not useful," and "definitely not useful." The results are shown in Table 9.2, with items rank-ordered according to the percentage of officers rating a policy initiative as "definitely useful" or "useful."

As can be seen in Table 9.2, four items received high ratings from more than four-fifths of the officer respondents. The two highest rated items were concerned with developing a "partner system" for use in making home visits (94%) and identifying "high risk" areas and keeping officers informed about them (90%). Providing training in self-defense methods (89%) and in "verbal judo" (87%) also received strong endorsements. Providing for probation/parole officer-police officer teams when making arrests of offenders (79%), providing "panic" buttons on officer telephones (77%), and providing officers with hand-held radios for two-way communication in emergencies (77%) were also endorsed by substantial numbers of officers as definitely useful or useful. Those items receiving the lowest ratings as "definitely useful" or "useful" dealt mainly with administrative and safety concerns in the office setting (Table 9.2).

The order of "definitely useful" and "useful" rankings by supervisors/managers was similar on most items to that of officers, though differences were evident for some of the policy initiatives. For example, supervisors/managers were somewhat more favorable toward requiring officers to provide their unit supervisors with a daily schedule before making home visits (79% vs. 56%), and requiring that officers check in and out with a centralized monitor when on official business (71% vs. 47%) (Table 9.2). In general, though, officers and supervisors/managers were quite similar in their ranking of the majority of policy initiative items.

In sum, respondents' ratings of policy initiatives as definitely useful or useful tend to emphasize those policies of immediate utility to the front-line officers in carrying out typical job responsibilities with an enhanced sense of personal safety.

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<sup>11</sup>William H. Parsonage, Worker Safety in Probation and Parole (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Corrections, 1990).

<sup>12</sup>Minor changes were made in a few items, based on suggestions resulting from reviews of the initial questionnaire by representatives of agencies in the MASCA membership.

Table 9.8

**PERCEPTIONS OF POLICY INITIATIVES: OFFICERS  
AND SUPERVISOR/MANAGERS (Percentages)**

Respondent Rating of Policies as "Definitely Useful" or "Useful"	Officers	Supv'rs./ Managers
Develop a "partner system" to be used on an "as needed" basis when making home visits	94	88
Identify all "high risk" areas and keep all P/P officers informed of these areas.	90	88
Provide training in self-defense methods	89	92
Provide training in "verbal judo"	87	96
Provide for P/P officer-police officer teams when making arrests of offenders in violation of probation/parole requirements	79	68
Provide "panic buttons" on office telephones-- i.e., buttons which would alert either the local police or security personnel in the event of an emergency	77	82
Provide all P/P officers with hand-held radios to be used for two-way communication in an emergency	77	80
Provide distress signal devices to P/P officers when making home visits	74	69
Provide P/P officers with non-lethal, chemical agents to be carried when making home visits	71	64
Assuming proper training, provide P/P officers with firearms to be carried at any time the officers believes it is necessary	71	61
Establish a "law enforcement arrest authority"-- i.e., special units of trained P/P officers with authority to carry weapons and make arrests	71	57
Provide P/P officers with soft body armor for use in situations thought to be "high risk"	71	71
Install two-way communication devices in each P/P officer's automobile	69	63

Table 9.8 (Cont'd.)

**PERCEPTIONS OF POLICY INITIATIVES: OFFICERS  
AND SUPERVISOR/MANAGERS (Percentages)**

Respondent Rating of Policies as "Definitely Useful" or "Useful"	Officers	Supv'rs./ Managers
Provide security officers for field offices--i.e., individuals who would control entrance to field offices and would be available to assist in an emergency	69	63
Provide P/P officers with "mugshots" taken of releasees at the time of their release	69	74
Assuming proper screening/training, provide P/P officers with firearms to be carried during the course of their duties	69	70
Establish secure clerical areas for field offices--i.e., areas could be entered and exited only through electronically controlled security doors	68	78
Provide secure jail areas for visits with clients--i.e., an area where the client is physically separated from the P/P officer	57	44
Implement a requirement that all P/P officers provide their respective unit supervisors with a daily schedule prior to making home visits and/or field contacts	56	79
Require a police/security officer be present with the P/P officer at all revocation hearings	51	44
Increase the number of specialized caseloads with respect to probationers/parolees	49	57
Require that P/P officers check in and out with a centralized monitor when on official business	47	71
Require a police/security officer to be present at all summons hearings held in the probation/parole office	42	42
<b>Base N</b>	<b>1580</b>	<b>90</b>

## Victimization Experiences of New York Probation and Parole Officers

The preceding discussion reported on the victimization experiences of the New York probation and parole work force by general occupational category--officers, supervisors/managers, and clerical and staff. The discussion in the remainder of this section deals exclusively with probation and parole officers having case contact responsibilities. The purpose is to present information comparing and contrasting the victimization experiences of line officers by agency type. Presenting the data in this manner is intended to contribute to the development of agency-specific programs for the enhancement of worker safety.

### Victimization Experiences of Probation/Parole Officers

A total of 2,152 probation and parole workers responded to the survey. Of this number, 1,591 could be identified as probation/parole officers in positions of case contact with probationers or parolees--1,401 in county probation and 190 in state parole.

Characteristics of these officer respondents are shown in Table 9.9. In terms of all New York officers, males and females were equally represented in the responding group. However, officers in adult parole were predominantly male (79%), and females were a slight majority (54%) among county probation officers. State parole officers are, on average, somewhat older than their counterparts in county probation and tend to have longer tenure in the field and in their current agencies (Table 9.9). As shown in Table 9.10, nearly equal proportions of county probation officers (18%) and state parole officers (16%) reported that they held second jobs.

Approximately four-fifths (81%) of the state parole officers reported that they usually carry handguns or another firearm, compared to only 13% of the county probation agents. Very small numbers of either set of respondents replied that they carried any other weapon. Impact instruments were usually carried by 17% of the parole officers and a chemical agent (e.g., mace) by 15% of the county probation officers (Table 9.11).

Table 9.9

**CHARACTERISTICS OF PROBATION/PAROLE OFFICER RESPONDENTS  
BY TYPE OF AGENCY (Percentages)**

Characteristics	County Probation	State Parole	Total
<u>Sex:</u>			
Male	46	79	50
Female	54	21	50
<u>Age:</u>			
Under 25 years	5	1	4
25 - 29 years	12	4	11
30 - 39 years	30	32	30
40 - 49 years	34	44	35
50 years or older	19	18	19
<u>Tenure in Field:</u>			
Less than 3 years	10	2	9
3 - 4 years	15	20	15
5 - 9 years	21	22	21
10 - 19 years	25	29	26
20 years or more	14	19	15
<u>Tenure in Current Agency:</u>			
Less than 3 years	10	4	10
1 - 2 years	15	9	14
3 - 4 years	14	27	16
5 - 9 years	20	22	21
10 - 19 years	25	21	25
20 years or more	14	16	14
<b>Base N</b>	<b>1401</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>1591</b>

Table 9.10

**SECOND JOB HELD BY OFFICERS: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Second Job Held	County Probation	State Parole	Total
Yes, hold second job	18	16	18
No, do not hold second job	82	84	82
<b>Base N</b>	<b>1401</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>1591</b>



Table 9.11

**WEAPONS USUALLY CARRIED BY OFFICERS AND UNARMED SELF-  
DEFENSE TRAINING: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Weapon Usually Used Carried Unarmed Self-Defense Training	County Probation	State Parole	Total
<u>Weapon Usually Carried:</u>			
Handgun	13	81	20
Other firearm	1	6	1
Impact instrument	7	17	8
Chemical agent	15	5	13
Knife or other sharp edged instrument	5	7	5
<u>Unarmed Self-Defense Training:</u>			
Have had this training	47	70	50
Have not had this training	53	30	50
<u>Base N</u>	<u>1401</u>	<u>190</u>	<u>1591</u>

Table 9.12 shows the career victimization rates for both county probation and state parole officers in New York. As can be seen, there is virtually no difference between the two groups with respect to overall rates of victimization during a career in the field. However, when attention is shifted from general victimization rates to the separate career rates for assault and intimidation events, the picture changes dramatically.

Table 9.13 presents information depicting the responding workers' career experiences with assaultive and other threatening behavior. As can be seen, the career assault rate for state parole agents (37%) is considerably higher than the comparable rate for county probation officers (11%)--in fact, more than three times as high. Moreover, well over half of the parole officers reporting career assaults report that they have experienced multiple incidents of assault while working in the field. When career intimidation rates are examined, the figures for state parole officers are higher than for county officers (75% vs. 63%) but the difference is far less dramatic (Table 9.13).

Table 9.12

**VICTIMIZATION RATES OF OFFICERS DURING ENTIRE  
CAREER: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Victimization Rate	County Probation	State Parole	Total
Victim during career	56	59	56
Not victimized during career	44	41	44
<b>Base N</b>	<b>1401</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>1591</b>

Table 9.13

**OFFICERS PHYSICALLY ASSAULTED OR INTIMIDATED DURING CAREER  
BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Physically Assaulted or Intimi- dated During Career	County Probation	State Parole	Total
Physically assaulted in whole career:	11	37	14
Once	6	13	7
Twice	3	13	4
Three times	1	3	1
Four times	1	2	1
More than four times	1	5	2
Never assaulted	89	63	86
Intimidated by physical or any other threat in whole career:	63	75	64
Once	13	8	13
Twice	15	11	14
Three times	10	12	10
Four times	5	5	5
More than four times	20	38	22
Never intimidated	37	25	36
<b>Base N</b>	<b>1401</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>1591</b>

When the general victimization rates for the year preceding the survey are examined, the difference in rates between state parole agents and county probation officers is quite small--32% and 27%, respectively (Table 9.14). However, when rates for physical assault and intimidation events are examined, a notable difference emerges. State parole agents have a much higher past-year physical assault rate (14%) than county probation agents (3%). Parole officers are also more likely to have encountered one or more intimidation events during the past year (43%), though one-third (32%) of the county probation agents also experienced one or more such incidents during the year preceding the survey (Table 9.15).<sup>13</sup>

Table 9.14

VICTIMIZATION RATES IN 12-MONTH PERIOD PRECEDING  
THE SURVEY: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)

Victimization Status	County Probation	State Parole	Total
Victim past year	27	32	28
Not victim past year	73	68	72
<u>Base N</u>	<u>1401</u>	<u>190</u>	<u>1591</u>

<sup>13</sup>It is interesting to compare findings for New York county probation officers in this study with a recent study of this same work force conducted by the New York Division of Probation and Correctional Alternatives. In the latter study, line officers were asked about the number and types of incidents in which they had been involved between 1984 and 1988. Some 37% of the respondents reported incidents of intimidation and 3% assault or assault/injury, figures closely corresponding with the results of this survey. See Richard E. Ely, Report on the Safety Concerns of Probation and Alternatives to Incarceration Staff in New York State, New York State Division of Probation and Correctional Alternatives, August 15, 1989.

Table 9.15

**OFFICERS PHYSICALLY ASSAULTED OR INTIMIDATED DURING 12-MONTH  
PERIOD PRECEDING SURVEY: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Assault or Intimidation	County Probation	State Parole	Total
Physically assaulted in past 12 months:	3	14	4
Once	2	10	3
Twice	<1	2	<1
Three times	<1	--	<1
Four times	<1	--	<1
More than four times	<1	1	<1
Never assaulted	97	86	96
Intimidated by physical or any other threat in past 12 months:	32	43	33
Once	13	18	14
Twice	9	11	9
Three times	4	4	4
Four times	1	2	1
More than four times	4	9	5
Never intimidated	68	57	67
<b>Base N.</b>	<b>1401</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>1591</b>

When past-year victims and non-victims are compared in terms of several personal and job-related characteristics (Table 9.16), there are no notable differences between the characteristics examined and past-year victimization status. Male officers are slightly more likely than their female colleagues to have been victimized during the past year, but the difference is, at best, a modest one. Further, the higher rate is partly a product of the strong presence of males in state parole and the higher victimization rates found for parole officers.

Table 9.16

**CHARACTERISTICS OF OFFICERS BY PAST-YEAR  
VICTIMIZATION STATUS (Percentages)**

Characteristics	Victim	Non-Victim
<u>Sex:</u>		
Male	55	48
Female	45	52
<u>Age:</u>		
Under 25 years	4	5
25 - 29 years	11	10
30 - 39 years	35	28
40 - 49 years	36	35
50 years or older	14	22
<u>Education:</u>		
Less than high school	<1	--
High school	<1	1
Some college	1	4
Bachelor's degree	72	69
Graduate degree	26	26
<u>Tenure in the Field:</u>		
Less than 3 years	20	24
3 - 4 years	18	14
5 - 9 years	25	20
10 - 19 years	25	26
20 years or more	13	16
<u>Tenure in Current Agency:</u>		
Less than 3 years	21	25
3 - 4 years	20	14
5 - 9 years	22	20
10 - 19 years	25	25
20 years or more	12	16
<b>Base N</b>	<b>529</b>	<b>1049</b>

As shown in Table 9.17, those carrying handguns or other personal protection equipment were at higher risk than those not "carrying." As was the case in the first two victimization studies in Pennsylvania, the past-year victimization rate in New York for probation and parole officers carrying handguns or other personal-protection equipment tends, on the average, to be higher than for those not carrying weapons (Table 9.17). Why this is the case cannot be determined from the survey data at hand. For example, it could be a product of the differing nature of assigned caseloads carried by officers in the different county and state agencies. It could also be the consequence of other, not readily apparent, influencing factors. The correlation exists--in fact, also occurs in other MASCA jurisdictions--but a causal basis for the relationship remains unknown.

Table 9.18 shows the relationship between past-year victim status and whether officers have had unarmed self-defense training. It can be seen that those with such training were somewhat more likely to have been victimized in the year preceding the survey.

Table 9.17

**WEAPON USUALLY CARRIED BY OFFICERS BY PAST-YEAR  
VICTIM STATUS (Percentages)**

Weapon Usually Carried	Victim	Non-Victim
Handgun <sup>14</sup>	32	15
Other firearm	2	1
Chemical agent	19	11
Impact instrument	12	6
Knife or other sharp edged instrument	8	4
<b>Base N</b>	<b>529</b>	<b>1049</b>

Table 9.18

**PAST-YEAR VICTIM STATUS OF OFFICERS HAVING/NOT  
HAVING SELF-DEFENSE TRAINING (Percentages)**

Unarmed Self-Defense Training	Victim	Non-Victim
Has had unarmed self-defense training	57	46
Has not had unarmed self-defense training	43	54
<b>Base N</b>	<b>529</b>	<b>1049</b>

**Perceptions of Policy Initiatives  
and Worker Safety Concerns**

Probation and parole officer respondents in New York were asked to rank 23 potential policy proposals drawn from the studies conducted in Texas, New York, Pennsylvania, and Virginia. The possible ratings of each item were "definitely useful," "useful," "undecided," "not useful," and "definitely not useful." The results are shown in Table 9.19, with items rank-ordered

<sup>14</sup>Respondents were asked to indicate whether they usually carried or did not carry a series of weapons. Hence, each percentage is independent of all others, and totals do not add to 100.

according to the percentage of all respondents rating a policy initiative as "definitely useful" or "useful."

About one-fourth of the safety-related policies received strong endorsements by 75% or more of the probation and parole officers responding to the survey. Two of the items were awarded very high ratings of usefulness. These were development of a "partner system" to be used in making home visits (93%) and identification of "high risk" areas (90%). Several other policy-related initiatives were also endorsed as useful by strong majorities of the respondents--for example, providing training in self-defense methods (88%), training in verbal judo (87%) and providing officers with hand-held radios (77%) and panic buttons on office telephones (77%) (Table 9.19).

Three of the potential policy initiatives were rated as useful approaches by less than a majority of respondents. The lower-rated items dealt with the use of police/security officers to enhance worker safety at summons hearings, and requiring workers to check in and out with supervisors or other monitors when on official business (Table 9.19).

There were also some potential policy initiatives on which county probation officers and state parole officers differed markedly in their endorsements of listed items as definitely useful or useful. For example, 93% of the parole officers felt that providing firearms to be carried by officers when thought necessary was a definitely useful or useful policy; the corresponding figure for county probation agents was 68%. Similarly, 95% of the parole agents supported providing officers with soft body armor, compared to some two-thirds (68%) of the probation agents. Parole officers were also much more favorable toward providing officers with up-to-date mugshots of releasees (96%) than were the probation officers (65%) (Table 9.19).

An interesting feature of the rankings of policy initiatives shown in Table 9.19, especially those policies receiving strong endorsements by the responding probation and parole workers, is that none appears to reflect safety-related policy ventures that are extraordinarily expensive or especially complex to implement.

Probation and parole officers were also asked several questions about their perceptions of personal safety in various areas of the work environment of probation and parole. As can be seen in Table 9.20, a large majority of all the respondents (86%) felt themselves to be very safe or safe when working in their offices during regular office hours, but only 60% did during non-office hours. Some two-thirds (63%) felt similarly about their safety when visiting an incarcerated offender (Table 9.20).

The results were quite different when workers were queried about their concern for personal safety when making field contacts. In this instance, 70% of the parole agents and over three-fourths (68%) of the other responding officers noted that they were very concerned or concerned about their personal safety when in the field (Table 9.20). Moreover, three-fourths (75%) felt that, with respect to personal safety, their work in the probation/parole field had become more dangerous over the past five years (Table 9.20). In sum, workers' concerns with safety focused principally on contacts made in the community, which constitutes for most probation and parole workers a primary work environment.

Table 9.19

**RESPONDENTS' RATINGS OF THE USEFULNESS OF SAFETY-RELATED  
POLICIES: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Rating of Policies as "Definitely Useful" or "Useful"	County Probation	State Parole	Total
Develop a partner system to be used as needed	93	97	93
Identify high risk areas and inform officers	90	94	90
Provide training in self defense methods	88	94	88
Provide training in verbal judo	87	87	87
Provide officers with hand-held radios	75	96	77
Provide panic buttons on office telephones	76	80	77
Provide distress signal devices to officers making home visits	74	75	74
Provide officers with firearms to be carried when they think necessary	68	93	71
Establish special unit of armed officers to make arrests	72	59	71
Provide officers with soft body armor	68	95	71
Provide officers with non-lethal chemical agents	71	69	71
Install two-way communication devices in officer's cars	68	82	70
Provide officers with mugshots of releasees	65	96	69
Provide security officers for field offices	69	66	69
Establish secure clerical area in field offices	66	82	68
Provide secure jail areas for visits w/clients	58	52	57
Require officers to provide supervisors with daily schedules	57	47	56
Police/security officer to be present at all revocation hearings	50	57	51
Increase number of specialized caseloads	49	49	49
Require officers to check in and out with a centralized monitor	46	49	47
Have police/security officer present at all summons hearings	42	47	42
<b>Base N</b>	<b>1401</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>1591</b>



Table 9.20

## SAFETY CONCERNS OF RESPONDENTS: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)

Safety Concern Items	County Probation	State Parole	Total
How safe do you feel while working in your local office during regular office hours?			
Very safe/Safe	86	83	86
Unsafe/Very Unsafe	14	17	14
How safe do you feel while working in your local officer during non-office hours?			
Very safe/Safe	59	70	60
Unsafe/Very unsafe	41	30	40
How safe do you feel when visiting with an offender in your local jail or state prison?			
Very safe/Safe	66	75	67
Unsafe/Very unsafe	16	19	17
Don't make visits	18	5	16
How concerned are you about your personal safety when making field contacts?			
Very concerned	31	37	32
Somewhat concerned	37	33	37
Not very concerned	11	7	10
Definitely not concerned	1	--	1
No field contacts	19	23	20
With respect to your personal safety, during the past five years, do you think your work in the probation/parole field has become:			
More dangerous	73	83	74
Stayed about the same	26	17	25
Less dangerous	1	--	<1
<b>Base N</b>	<b>1401</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>1591</b>

## The Dynamics of Victimization

Respondents indicating in Part 1 of the questionnaire that they had experienced one or more victimization events in the year preceding the survey were asked to complete Part 2 of the instrument, which asked a series of questions about what they regarded as the most serious event encountered. A total of 361 officer respondents completed this supplementary section of the survey instrument. The data presented in the remainder of this section are based on their responses to this additional section of the questionnaire.

As can be seen in Table 9.21, the perpetrators in hazardous incidents were most commonly clients (69% across all respondents). This ranged, though, from 66% of the cases involving county probation officers to 83% of those involving state parole officers. At the same time, however, less than half of the perpetrators--45% of the events involving both parole officers and county probation officers--were under the officer-victim's direct supervision (Table 9.22). In another 36% of the cases involving state parole officers, the offender was under the respondent's agency's jurisdiction, which was also true for only an additional 11% of the county probation cases (Table 9.22).

Criminal status characteristics of perpetrators vary according to the type of agency responsible for their supervision. For example, those supervised by state parole officers tend to have more serious and chronic criminal histories--e.g., 74% with offenses in the felony categories, compared to 39% of those supervised by county probation agents (Table 9.23). Further, 88% of those responsible for instigating victimizations against parole officers had been incarcerated previously, compared to 56% of those victimizing probation officers (Table 9.23). In effect, as might be expected, perpetrators of victimization events against state parole officers tend to have "heavier" criminal histories (e.g., more prior felony convictions and previous incarcerations).

Table 9.21

### **PERPETRATOR'S STATUS AT TIME OF INCIDENT (Percentages)**

Perpetrator's Status	County Probation	State Parole	Total
Client (probationer/parolee)	66	83	69
Client's family member	14	3	12
Client's friend	3	--	2
Court personnel	1	--	1
Bystander	2	2	2
Animal	3	2	3
Other	9	10	9
Unknown	4	--	3
<b>Base N</b>	<b>303</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>361</b>

Table 9.22

**OFFENDER'S SUPERVISION STATUS AT TIME OF INCIDENT  
BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Supervision Status	County Probation	State Parole	Total
Under respondent's supervision	45	45	45
Under respondent's agency supervision	11	36	15
Under another agency's supervision	4	2	4
Not under supervision	26	11	23
Unknown	14	7	13
<b>Base N</b>	<b>303</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>361</b>

Table 9.23

**CRIMINAL JUSTICE CHARACTERISTICS OF PERPETRATOR:  
BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Criminal Status Characteristics	County Probation	State Parole	Total
<b>Most Serious Offense:</b>			
Felony A (not drugs)	1	7	2
Felony A (drugs)	5	11	6
Felony B	5	15	7
Felony C	6	17	8
Felony D	8	13	9
Felony E	11	7	11
Felony YO	3	4	3
Misdemeanor A	27	--	22
Misdemeanor B	1	--	1
Misdemeanor (unclassified)	2	2	2
Unknown	31	24	30
<b>Type Most Important Offense:</b>			
Crime vs. person	28	50	32
Crime vs. property	12	11	12
Crime vs. morals	3	4	3
Substance abuse	24	18	23
Not under sentence	20	14	19
Unknown	12	4	11
<b>Previous Incarceration:</b>			
Yes	56	88	61
No	19	5	17
Unknown	24	7	21

Table 9.23 (Cont'd.)

**CRIMINAL STATUS CHARACTERISTICS OF PERPETRATORS:  
BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Criminal Status Characteristics	County Probation	State Parole	Total
<u>Drug Abuse History:</u>			
Yes	48	72	52
No	21	10	19
Unknown	31	17	29
<u>Alcohol Abuse History:</u>			
Yes	48	37	46
No	20	25	21
Unknown	32	39	33
<u>Prior Criminal History:</u>			
No prior convictions/adjudications	11	2	10
One prior felony	14	25	16
Two or more prior felonies	12	51	18
Prior misdemeanor	36	10	31
Unknown	27	12	25
<u>Prior Assaults Against Others:</u>			
Probation/parole officer	7	7	7
Other probation/parole personnel	3	2	3
Police officer	22	29	23
Treatment agency personnel	9	4	8
Offender's spouse	30	20	28
Offender's family members	31	27	30
Citizen	35	61	39
<b>Base N</b>	<b>303</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>361</b>

As shown in Table 9.24, in 21% of past-year incidents, perpetrators were reported to be under the influence of drugs, alcohol or both. Interestingly, in 52% of the cases it was not known whether offenders were or were not "under the influence."

Table 9.24

**WHETHER OFFENDER UNDER INFLUENCE OF DRUGS OR ALCOHOL  
AT TIME OF INCIDENT: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Whether Under Influence	County Probation	State Parole	Total
Drugs	5	12	6
Alcohol	12	7	11
Both drugs and alcohol	4	4	4
Nothing	25	32	26
Unknown	54	45	52
<b>Base N</b>	<b><u>303</u></b>	<b><u>58</u></b>	<b><u>361</u></b>

The most common offender actions taken against officers in the context of reported hazardous events involved "intimidation" (71%), the "threat of physical assault" (67%), and "threat to officer's reputation" (31%). State parole officers experienced four times the rate of actual physical assault as did county probation officers (32% vs. 8%) (Table 9.25). As shown in Table 9.26, when offenders used physical force in the incident, the weapons used most often were body parts--for example, hitting, kicking, and/or pushing. Offenders' allegations about the officer's professional conduct were reported by 61% of the parole officers and 43% of the county probation officers, as were allegations about the officers' personal conduct--37% and 32%, respectively (Table 9.26). Slightly less than half (46%) of the parole officers reported that the offender had threatened lawsuits against the officer or the officer's agency (Table 9.26).

It is also interesting to note that in 61% of the reported events, state parole officers were accompanied by other probation/parole officers (Table 9.27). This may be influenced by the fact that 39% of the events reported by state parole officers involved the arrest of the offender, a circumstance in which a parole officer is frequently accompanied by a fellow officer (Table 4.30).

Table 9.25

**INCIDENCE OF DIFFERENT OFFENDER ACTIONS AGAINST OFFICERS  
BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Nature of Offender Action	County Probation	State Parole	Total
Physical assault	8	32	12
Threat of physical assault	67	65	67
Damage to officer's property	5	4	5
Threat to officer's property	16	16	16
Intimidation	72	66	71
Attempted extortion	10	14	11
Threat to officer's reputation	28	45	31
Threat of physical harm to officer's family	7	5	7
Intimidation or attempted intimidation of officer's family members	4	7	5
<b>Base N</b>	<b>303</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>361</b>

Table 9.26

**INCIDENCE OF ADDITIONAL OFFENDER ACTIONS AGAINST OFFICERS  
BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Nature of Offender Action	County Probation	State Parole	Total
<u>Physical force:</u>			
Shot	1	--	1
Hit with impact instrument	2	--	1
Cut with sharp edged instrument	2	2	2
Hit with fist or hand	4	13	6
Kicked	4	18	6
Pushed	15	44	19
Other weapon used	27	29	27
<u>Allegations about officer's:</u>			
Professional conduct	43	61	46
Personal conduct	32	37	33
Lawsuits vs. officer or agency	29	46	31
Allegations re: co-workers	23	36	25
Allegations re: superiors	17	23	18
Allegations re: family or friends	5	7	5
<b>Base N</b>	<b>303</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>361</b>

Table 9.27

**OTHERS PRESENT AT VICTIMIZATION EVENT IN ADDITION TO  
OFFICER: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Other Present at Event	County Probation	State Parole	Total
Probation/parole officer	38	61	42
Law enforcement official	14	23	15
Officer's family	3	5	4
Officer's friends or acquaintances	5	5	5
Offender's employer or co-workers	2	4	2
Offender's family	27	23	26
Offender's friends or acquaintances	16	25	18
Bystander	22	39	24
Others	18	18	18
<b>Base N</b>	<b>303</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>361</b>

It is interesting to note that 50% of the reported past-year incidents took place in the agency office, more frequently in incidents involving probation officers (51%) than parole officers (41%). The client's home was noted as a location in one-fifth (21%) of the incidents recounted by both probation and parole officers, and a prison or jail was named by almost one-fourth (23%) of the state parole officers (Table 9.28).

Table 9.28

**WHERE INCIDENT TOOK PLACE: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Where Incident Took Place	County Probation	State Parole	Total
Over the phone	19	9	17
By letter or mail	3	5	3
Message or report of others	11	9	11
Agency office	51	41	50
Client's home	22	18	21
Someone else's home	3	9	4
Prison or jail	8	23	11
Police station	1	5	2
Human services agency	5	11	6
Courtroom	6	5	6
In vehicle	5	5	5
Offender's employment site	1	5	2
Public facility	4	5	4
On the street	11	25	13
<b>Base N</b>	<b>303</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>361</b>

Overall, the most common "immediate actions" taken by the officer vis-a-vis the perpetrator was an attempt to defuse the situation by "trying to talk to the offender" (69%) and/or "using verbal threats" (25%). State parole officers "struck back physically" 27% of the time, a rate almost seven times that of county probation officers (Table 9.29). This, however, could well be an artifact of the nature of the event and the context in which it occurred (recall the significantly higher incidence of physical assault against state parole officers).

Table 9.29

OFFICER'S PRINCIPAL IMMEDIATE RESPONSE: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)

Principal Immediate Response	County Probation	State Parole	Total
Struck back physically	4	27	8
Threatened to strike back physically	7	14	8
Used gun or other weapon	<1	2	1
Threatened to use gun	1	9	2
Displayed badge or I.D.	8	30	12
Used verbal threat	23	34	25
Said nothing	19	20	19
Retreated	20	11	19
Called out for help	11	11	11
Attempted to talk to offender	72	55	69
Took no action	12	14	13
<u>Base N</u>	<u>303</u>	<u>58</u>	<u>361</u>

As shown in Table 9.30, past-year victimization events commonly took place in the context of announced or expected visits (41%) and surprise visits (30%). For state parole agents, the most frequently reported context for the hazardous incident was during the arrest of the offender (39%).



Table 9.30

**CONTEXT IN WHICH INCIDENT OCCURRED: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Context of Incident	County Probation	State Parole	Total
Announced or expected visit	43	30	41
Surprise visit	28	37	30
During arrest of the offender	9	39	14
During arrest of someone else	1	5	2
In response to offender's call	12	4	11
In response to offender's family member call	9	7	9
Context of domestic dispute	10	9	10
During transport of the offender	5	5	5
Other context	39	29	38
<b>Base N</b>	<b>303</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>361</b>

Aftermaths of Victimization  
and Their Consequences

As can be seen by an examination of Tables 9.31 and 9.32, worker-victims report "aftermaths" which have important consequences for their work behavior and approaches to clients. For example, 62% of respondents in both worker groups indicated that they had been "shaken up" by the incident, and about one-third stated that "fear on the job" was a consequence of the victimization experience (Table 9.31). Moreover, "reduced trust in clients" was reported by almost half (48%) of the respondents, and "reduced sensitivity to clients" by just over one-fourth (28%) (Table 9.31). Interestingly, one-fourth of both probation and parole officers noted that an "enhanced self-confidence" had resulted from the experience (Table 9.31).

The past-year victimization events were reported to have had "negative consequences for the officer" 34% of the time and in one-fourth (25%) of the cases resulted in less openness with clients. In 20% of the cases, officers reported "avoiding contact with threatening clients" as a consequence of the event (Table 9.32).

Table 9.31

## AFTERMATHS OF VICTIMIZATION EVENTS: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)

Aftermaths of Victimization	County Probation	State Parole	Total
Chronic condition	1	2	1
Aggravation of old injury	1	7	2
Stomachache, headache, etc.	14	14	14
Shaken up	62	62	62
Fear on job	35	33	35
Reduced self-confidence	17	17	17
Reduced trust in clients	47	49	48
Reduced sensitivity to clients	26	39	28
Increased use of medication	4	3	4
Increased use of alcohol	3	7	4
Disruption of personal life	26	30	27
Disruption of family life	19	23	20
Enhanced self-confidence	24	25	24
<b>Base N</b>	<b>303</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>361</b>

Table 9.32

## EFFECTS OF THE VICTIMIZATION EVENT: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)

Effects of Victimization Event	County Probation	State Parole	Total
Personal effects on officer:			
Positive consequences	17	14	16
Negative consequences	35	30	34
No consequences	48	56	49
Effects on officer's family:			
Positive consequences	1	5	2
Negative consequences	20	21	20
No consequences	79	74	78
Effect of incident on agency:			
Positive consequences	7	5	7
Negative consequences	11	10	11
No consequences	82	84	82
Effect on co-workers:			
Positive consequences	9	19	11
Negative consequences	27	23	26
No consequences	64	58	63

Table 9.32 (Cont'd.)

## EFFECTS OF THE VICTIMIZATION EVENT: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)

Effects of Victimization Event	County Probation	State Parole	Total
Less open with clients?			
Yes	24	39	26
No	76	61	74
Thought about quitting job?			
Yes	16	9	15
No	84	91	85
Applied for a transfer?			
Yes	2	9	3
No	98	91	97
Avoided contacts with co-workers?			
Yes	3	7	4
No	97	93	96
Avoided contact with threatening clients?			
Yes	22	14	20
No	78	86	80
<b>Base N</b>	<b>303</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>361</b>

The last two concerns examined in this section of the report focus on the reporting behavior of officer/agent victims in relation to the most serious incident experienced in the preceding year and their perceptions of whether the incident might have been prevented by them or their agencies. As can be seen in Table 9.33, among all respondents the two sets of individuals to whom the incident was reported were, in order of frequency, supervisors (83%) and co-workers (78%). Fully 94% of the responding state parole officers indicated that they had reported the incident to their supervisors. Family members and friends were also frequently noted individuals with whom they discussed the event--45% naming their spouses, 47% friends, and 33% another family member. Only 6% reported that they had discussed the incident with "no one." Overall, the data in Table 9.33 indicate that officers in each of the agency settings are not reluctant to report and discuss the incident with others in their agencies, and nearly half also report discussing the experience with family members and friends.

Table 9.33

## REPORTING BEHAVIOR OF OFFICER VICTIMS: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)

Reporting Behavior	County Probation	State Parole	Total
Agency head	31	24	30
Supervisor	81	94	83
Co-workers	78	78	78
Police	24	28	25
Counselor	7	6	7
Spouse	44	54	45
Other family members	32	39	33
Friends	45	44	45
Other person	19	24	20
No one	6	6	6
<u>Base N</u>	<u>303</u>	<u>58</u>	<u>361</u>

While most (70%) do not think they could have done anything to have prevented the incident, about one-fourth of respondents think the agency could have done something to prevent the incident. However, a slight majority (52%) believe that the agency could have done something to better prepare them to cope with such situations (Table 9.34).

Table 9.34

**WHETHER INCIDENT COULD HAVE BEEN PREVENTED:  
BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Whether Incident Could Have Been Prevented	County Probation	State Parole	Total
Could you have prevented the incident?			
Yes	11	5	10
No	70	70	70
Don't know	19	25	20
Could your agency have prevented the incident?			
Yes	22	27	23
No	58	55	58
Don't know	20	18	20
Could the agency have done anything to better prepare personnel to cope with this type of situation?			
Yes	51	54	52
No	28	34	29
Don't know	20	12	19
<b><u>Base N</u></b>	<b><u>303</u></b>	<b><u>58</u></b>	<b><u>361</u></b>

## Section 10

### SURVEY FINDINGS: PENNSYLVANIA<sup>1</sup>

A total of 1,399 workers in state and county probation and parole agencies responded to the 1989 survey. As noted in the earlier discussion of methodology (Part I, Section 2), this represented an overall response rate of 55%. Respondents were distributed across several job categories, as shown in the following listing.

<u>Job Category</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Clerical	302	22
Staff	36	3
Probation Officers/Parole Agents	723	52
Supervisor	176	13
Chiefs/Deputy Chiefs	93	7
District Directors/Deputy Directors	13	1
Other <sup>2</sup>	56	4
<u>Totals</u>	<u>1399</u>	<u>100</u>

#### General Respondent Characteristics

To make analyses of respondent characteristics and victimization experiences more efficient, these job categories were collapsed into three main types: (1) Probation officers/parole agents; (2) Supervisors and Managers; and (3) Clerical and Staff. Table 10.1 shows the relationships between each of the three main job types and various profile characteristics of respondents.

Workers affiliated with county juvenile and adult agencies constituted 82% of all respondents. This varied little when comparisons were made among the worker classifications--85% of probation officers/parole agents, 82% of supervisors/managers, and 76% of clerical and staff workers (Table 10.1).

Males comprise two-thirds (66%) of respondents in the probation officer/parole agent category, and a slightly higher proportion of the supervisors/

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<sup>1</sup>The survey of Pennsylvania probation and parole agencies was conducted independently of the surveys in other MASCA jurisdictions. Data were gathered in June, 1989, and a separate report was prepared. The information in this section was extracted from that report. See William H. Parsonage and Joe A. Miller, Pennsylvania Probation and Parole Victimization Project: 1989 Project Report, January 1990.

<sup>2</sup>The "Other" category contained mainly employees of the Pennsylvania State Board of Probation and Parole not fitting into the other work classifications.

managers (71%). Not surprisingly, the great majority of clerical and staff workers are female (92%). Office size shows very little relationship to worker classification (Table 10.1).

Supervisors/managers are, on the average, older than officers/agents, and clerical and staff workers distribute fairly evenly across the age categories, when the youngest two age groups are collapsed into a single group of workers 29 years of age or less (Table 10.1).

Fully 96% of the probation officers/parole agents hold a bachelor's or graduate degree, compared to 83% of supervisors/managers. However, the latter have the highest proportion of respondents with graduate degrees (41%). All but a few of respondents in the Clerical and Staff category have high school or some college education (Table 10.1).

Not surprisingly, the figures for tenure in current agency clearly favor supervisors/managers, with three-fourths (76%) having 10 or more years' tenure in their current agencies. In contrast, precisely half (50%) of the officers/agents have less than five years in the current agency--a figure that is closely matched by clerical and staff workers (48%). A similar pattern is found when tenure in the probation and parole field is considered. Some 79% of supervisors/managers have been in the field for 10 years or longer, compared to 32% of officers/agents. On the other hand, nearly half (49%) of the officers/agents have less than five years' tenure in the field, compared to only 12% of the supervisors/managers. Clerical and staff workers show no preponderance toward either end of the tenure range (Table 10.1).

One fourth of all the respondents hold a second job. The percentages for officers/agents and supervisors/managers are identical at 28% (Table 10.1).

A majority (60%) of the officers/agents report that they have had unarmed self-defense training. The same was true for just below half (47%) of the supervisors/managers. Not surprisingly, very few (10%) of clerical and staff workers report having had this training (Table 10.1).

Weapons are carried by distinct minorities of all respondents. Officers/agents had the highest frequency (19%), followed by supervisors/managers at 15%. Only 4% of clerical and staff workers reported that they usually carried a weapon (Table 10.1).

Table 10.1

## CHARACTERISTICS OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS (Percentages)

	Officers/ Agents	Supv'rs./ Managers	Clerical & Staff	All Re- spondents
<u>Agency Type:</u>				
County Juvenile Probation	39	43	31	36
County Adult Probation	38	37	34	37
County Juv./Adult Probation	8	11	11	9
State Probation and Parole	15	18	24	18
<u>Office Size:</u>				
5 or less employees	6	13	13	9
6 - 10 employees	25	19	24	23
11 - 20 employees	25	22	22	24
21 - 50 employees	27	23	23	25
51 or more employees	17	23	18	19
<u>Sex of Respondent:</u>				
Male	66	71	8	53
Female	34	29	92	47
<u>Office Size:</u>				
5 or less employees	6	13	13	9
6 - 10 employees	25	19	24	23
11 - 20 employees	25	22	22	24
21 - 50 employees	27	23	23	25
51 or more employees	17	23	18	19
<u>Age of Respondent:</u>				
Under 25 years	10	7	13	9
25 - 29 years	25	5	11	17
30 - 39 years	38	41	30	37
40 - 49 years	19	33	23	24
50 years or older	7	19	23	14
<u>Educational Attainment:</u>				
High school <sup>3</sup>	1	7	60	17
Some college	3	10	34	12
Bachelor's degree	71	42	4	48
Graduate degree	25	41	2	23

<sup>3</sup>This category includes a few clerical/staff workers reporting less than a high school education.



Table 10.1 (Cont'd.)

## CHARACTERISTICS OF SURVEY PERCENTAGES (Percentages)

Characteristics	Officers/ Agents	Supv'rs./ Managers	Clerical & Staff	All Re- spondents
<u>Tenure in Current Agency:</u>				
2 years or less	32	7	32	27
3 - 4 years	18	6	16	14
5 - 9 years	19	11	17	17
10 - 20 years	25	58	29	34
20 or more years	5	18	7	8
<u>Tenure in the Probation and Parole Field:</u>				
2 years or less	31	7	25	25
3 - 4 years	18	5	15	14
5 - 9 years	19	10	16	16
10 - 19 years	26	57	30	35
20 or more years	6	22	7	10
<u>Second Job Held by Respondent:</u>				
Yes, second job held	28	28	14	25
No, no second job	72	71	86	75
<u>Unarmed Defense Training:</u>				
Yes, have training	60	47	10	45
No, not have training	40	53	90	55
<u>Weapon Usually Carried:</u>				
Do not carry weapon	80	85	96	85
Handgun or other firearm <sup>4</sup>	17	13	2	12
Chemical agent	1	1	2	1
Impact instrument	1	1	<1	1
<u>Base N</u>	<u>723</u>	<u>338</u>	<u>338</u>	<u>1399</u>

Note: Column percentages for some characteristics may not add to 100 due to rounding.

<sup>4</sup>Only one agent reported carrying a firearm other than a handgun.

## Victimization Rates

All respondents were asked a series of questions about their experiences with victimization in the course of carrying out their jobs. The definition of victimization used in designing the study was included in the instructions appearing at the beginning of the questionnaire. There victimization was defined as "any violent act or threat of violence, intimidation, theft of property, damage to one's reputation, or any other act which inflicts damage, instills fear, or threaten's one's sensibilities." The following statement was also included in order to clarify further how the definition might apply to workers in the probation and parole field.

Examples of victimization would include physical assault or harm, assault or threat of harm to a worker's family members, intimidation, harm or threat of harm to one's property, extortion, harm or threat of harm to a worker's reputation, or psychological victimization.

In the first section of the survey questionnaire, which applied to all respondents, four items were concerned with victimization experiences of workers in the probation and parole field. The first two asked whether the worker, during his or her entire career in probation and parole, had (1) been physically assaulted in the line of duty or (2) been intimidated by physical or other threat. The other two questions were similar but asked respondents to answer in terms of their experiences in the 12-month period preceding the survey.

The rates of victimization for all respondents in their entire careers in the probation and parole field and during the year preceding the survey are shown in Table 10.2. Some 62% of current probation officers/parole agents reported experiencing at least one victimization incident in the course of their careers in the field. This was slightly higher for individuals who are currently supervisors or managers (69%). Among clerical and staff workers, almost one in five (19%) reported that they had also been victimized while employed in probation and parole work.

When general types of victimization are considered, the percentages of officers/agents and supervisors/managers experiencing only intimidations during their careers were identical (36%). This was also true for 18% of clerical and staff workers. Victimization experiences involving both assault and intimidation accounted for one-fourth (25%) of the officers/agents and nearly one-third (31%) of the supervisors/managers. This combination was quite rare among clerical and staff workers, comprising only 1% of this entire group of respondents.

As can be seen in the bottom segment of Table 10.2, 29% of the responding officers/agents reported experiencing some type of victimization during the year preceding the survey. The corresponding figure was considerably smaller for supervisors/managers (17%), and very few of the clerical and staff workers indicated that they had been victimized during the past year.

When examined by general type of victimization occurring during the past year, the highest incident rates were related to intimidations only--22% of the officers/agents, 13% of the supervisors/managers, and 6% of clerical and staff workers. Seven percent of victimization events among officers/agents involved physical assaults; the corresponding rate for supervisors/managers was 3%. None of the clerical and staff workers reported suffering a physical assault during the year preceding the survey.

Table 10.2

**VICTIMIZATION STATUS IN ENTIRE CAREER AND DURING PAST YEAR  
IN PROBATION AND PAROLE FIELD (Percentages)**

Victimization Status	Officers/ Agents	Supv'rs./ Managers	Clerical & Staff	All Re- spondents
<u>Victimization in Career:</u>				
Never victimized in career	38	31	81	47
Victimization in career by general type:				
Physical assault only	1	2	--	1
Both assault and intimid.	25	31	1	20
Intimidation only	36	36	18	32
<u>Victimization in Past Year:</u>				
Not victimized past year	29	17	94	80
Victimization in past year by general type:				
Physical assault only	1	<1	--	1
Both assault and intimid.	6	3	--	4
Intimidation only	22	13	6	16
<u>Base N</u>	<u>723</u>	<u>338</u>	<u>338</u>	<u>1399</u>

Table 10.3 shows the frequencies of victimizations by type during the worker's entire career in the probation and parole field. As can be seen, majorities of both officers/agents and supervisors/managers experiencing physical assault reported that they had been assaulted more than one time in their careers. Multiple victimizations among clerical and staff workers were very rare, just over 1% of all workers in this category.

Rates of victimization by intimidation during the worker's career are much higher in each of the categories. Two-thirds of the supervisors/managers reported having been victimized one or more times through intimidation during their careers, as did 61% of the probation officers/parole agents. Moreover, almost one-third (30%) of the managers and supervisors had been victimized by intimidation more than four times, as had some 22% of the officers/agents (Table 10.3). Intimidation events were far fewer among clerical and staff workers, though nearly one-fifth (19%) reported having experienced one or more incidents of intimidation while working in the probation and parole field.

The second set of indicators of victimization focused on the experiences of workers in the 12-month period preceding the survey. Table 10.4 shows the results. As can be seen, both forms of victimization are more frequent among probation officers/parole agents--in effect, those workers involved in day-to-day, community supervision of probationers and parolees (Table 10.4). Though the incidence of physical assault of officers/agents was quite small (7%), the fact that one in 14 officers/agents were at risk of physical assault while on the job during a yearly period constitutes an occupational risk level of some importance.

When past-year victimizations by some form of intimidation are examined, incidence rates are considerably higher. Among officers/agents, more than one-fourth (28%) experienced one or more victimization events in the year preceding the survey, and 17% of supervisors/managers were similarly affected. As the additional data in Table 10.4 show, a majority of those who reported intimidation events indicated more than one such experience in the year preceding the survey.

Table 10.3

**RATES OF VICTIMIZATION IN ENTIRE CAREER IN PROBATION  
AND PAROLE FIELD (Percentages)**

Victimization Event	Officers/ Agents	Supv'rs./ Managers	Clerical & Staff	All Re- spondents
Physically Assaulted in the Line of Duty During Entire Career	26	32	1	22
Times Physically Assaulted in the Line of Duty During Entire Career:				
Once	0	10	<1	7
Twice	8	9	1	6
Three times	4	6	--	4
Four times	1	2	--	1
More than four times	4	6	--	3
Never physically assaulted	74	68	99	78
Intimidated by Physical or Any Other Threat During Entire Career	61	67	19	52
Times Intimidated by Physical or Any Other Threat During Entire Career:				
Once	12	10	9	11
Twice	14	11	3	11
Three Times	9	13	3	8
Four times	4	3	12	3
More than four times	22	30	3	3
Never intimidated	39	33	81	48
<u>Base N</u>	<u>723</u>	<u>338</u>	<u>338</u>	<u>1399</u>

Table 10.4

**RATES OF VICTIMIZATION IN YEAR PRECEDING  
THE SURVEY (Percentages)**

Victimization Rate	Officers/ Agents	Supv'rs./ Managers	Clerical & Staff	All Re- spondents
Physically Assaulted in the Line of Duty During Past Year	7	4	--	5
Times Physically Assaulted in the Line of Duty During Past Year:				
Once	5	2	--	3
Twice	1	1	--	1
Three times	<1	<1	--	<1
Four times	--	<1	--	<1
More than four times	<1	<1	--	<1
Never physically assaulted	93	96	100	95
Intimidated by Physical or Any Other Threat During Past Year	28	17	6	20
Times Intimidated by Physical or Any Other Threat During Past Year:				
Once	11	6	3	8
Twice	8	7	2	6
Three Times	3	2	--	2
Four times	1	2	<1	3
More than four times	4	2	<1	3
Never intimidated	72	83	94	80
<u>Base N</u>	<u>723</u>	<u>338</u>	<u>338</u>	<u>1399</u>

### Correlates of Victimization

Table 10.5 displays relationships between two worker classifications<sup>5</sup> and several personal and job-related characteristics by general victimization status<sup>6</sup> during respondents' entire careers in the probation and parole field. Among workers in both classifications, males are more likely than females to have been victimized at some time during their careers. Among officers/agents and supervisors/managers, those between the ages of 30-49 are more likely to have been victimized than their younger counterparts.

Among both officers/agents and supervisors/managers with less than 20 years in the probation/parole field, tenure is related to having been victimized at some time in the individual's career. In both instances, officers/agents with job tenure in the range of 5-19 years are more likely to have been victims than those with less than five years of tenure (Table 10.5). The most plausible explanation for this finding is that, the longer the tenure in the field, the more likely an officer/agent or current supervisor/manager is to have been at risk for victimization. At the same time, it tends to confirm another more general conclusion of this study; namely, that victimization of probation and parole workers is not a rare occurrence and the risk of experiencing such an event increases with a worker's tenure in the field.

The data in Table 10.5 also show that workers in both classifications who have had unarmed self-defense training and who carry handguns are more likely to have been victims at some time in their careers. These findings, however, must be viewed only as correlates; causal connections cannot be determined from the survey data at hand. It is possible, for example, that carrying a handgun is a response to prior victimization events for some workers; that is, attempts to enhance personal safety are themselves reactions to victimization.

In Table 10.6, relationships between victimization status<sup>7</sup> during the year preceding the survey and several personal and job-related characteristics are shown for officers/agents and supervisors/managers. As can be seen, males are more likely than females to be victims in both worker classifications. Age, however, is not related to victimization status; workers in every age range were at equal risk for past-year victimization. Among officers/agents, tenure in current agency shows a slight relationship to victimization status, though not a strong one. Among supervisors/managers, tenure in current agency bears no relationship to victimization status.

Having unarmed self-defense training and carrying a handgun are related to past-year victimization status for both officers/agents and supervisors/managers. As stated earlier, though, causal explanations for these relationships are not possible from the data at hand.

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<sup>5</sup>Only data for probation officers/parole agents and supervisors/managers are included in Table 10.5. Incident rates for clerical and staff workers were too small to warrant further analysis.

<sup>6</sup>"Victimization status" refers to any form or frequency of victimization and distinguishes only between "victims" and "non-victims."

<sup>7</sup>See footnote 6.

Table 10.5

**CORRELATES OF VICTIMIZATION IN ENTIRE CAREER: OFFICERS/  
AGENTS AND SUPERVISOR/MANAGERS (Percentages)**

Characteristics	Officers/ Agents		Supv'rs./ Managers		Total	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
<u>Sex of Respondent:</u>						
Male	70	60	86	50	74	60
Female	30	40	14	50	26	40
<u>Age of Respondent:</u>						
Under 25 years	6	17	1	6	4	14
25 - 29 years	21	32	4	8	15	26
30 - 39 years	43	30	44	33	44	31
40 - 49 years	23	13	36	26	28	17
50 years or older	7	8	15	28	10	14
<u>Tenure in prob./parole field:</u>						
Less than 1 year	6	25	<1	7	4	20
1 - 2 years	12	26	2	11	9	22
3 - 4 years	18	19	5	4	14	15
5 - 9 years	23	12	10	12	18	12
10 - 19 years	35	13	62	44	44	21
20 years or more	6	5	21	23	11	10
<u>Unarmed self-defense training:</u>						
Yes, have had training	65	52	54	30	62	46
No, have not had training	35	48	46	70	38	54
<u>Kind of weapon usually carried:</u>						
Do not carry weapon	75	93	81	93	77	89
Handgun or other firearm <sup>8</sup>	22	4	18	4	20	8
Chemical agent	1	3	<1	3	1	2
Impact instrument	2	--	1	--	2	1
<u>Base N</u>	448	274	233	105		

Note: Column percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

<sup>8</sup>One officer/agent reported carrying a firearm other than a handgun.



In Table 10.6, relationships between past-year victimization status<sup>9</sup> and several personal and job-related characteristics are shown for officers/agents and supervisors/managers. As can be seen, males are more likely than females to be victims in both worker classifications. Age, however, is not related to victimization status; workers in any age range were at equal risk for victimization during the 12 months preceding the survey. Among the officers/agents, tenure in current agency shows a slight relationship to victimization status, though not a strong one. Tenure in current agency bears no relationship to victimization status among supervisors/managers.

Having unarmed self-defense training and carrying a handgun are related to victimization status for both officers/agents and supervisors/managers. As stated earlier, though, these are demonstrated correlates, and causal explanations for either relationship are not possible from the data at hand.

In summary, the data presented thus far in this section indicate that the problem of victimization among probation and parole workers, especially those involved in direct supervision of probationers/parolees, is pervasive. While the rate of physical assault on officers/agents in the line of duty during the year preceding the survey was only 7%, it still constitutes an important level of occupational risk (one in 14 workers). When all types of victimization are considered, more than one-fourth (28%) of the officers/agents responding to this survey experienced one or more victimization events during this same period of time. More detailed analyses of the victimization experiences of probation officers/parole agents are presented in another subsection below.

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<sup>9</sup>"Victimization status" refers to any form or frequency of victimization and distinguishes only between "victims" and "non-victims."

Table 10.6

**CORRELATES OF VICTIMIZATION DURING PAST YEAR: OFFICERS/  
AGENTS AND SUPERVISOR/MANAGERS (Percentages)**

Characteristics	Officers/ Agents		Supv'rs./ Managers		Total	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
<u>Sex of Respondent:</u>						
Male	73	64	86	68	76	65
Female	27	36	14	32	24	35
<u>Age of Respondent:</u>						
Under 25 years	9	10	2	2	8	7
25 - 29 years	28	24	7	5	24	17
30 - 39 years	38	38	46	40	39	39
40 - 49 years	19	20	28	34	21	25
50 years or older	6	8	18	19	9	12
<u>Hold second job:</u>						
Yes	28	27	25	30	27	28
No	72	73	75	70	73	74
<u>Office Size:</u>						
Less than five employees	5	6	14	13	7	8
6 - 10 employees	27	24	25	18	27	22
11 - 20 employees	26	25	25	21	26	23
21 - 50 employees	24	28	16	25	23	27
51 or more employees	17	17	21	24	18	19
<u>Tenure in current agency:</u>						
Less than 1 year	7	15	4	2	6	11
1 - 2 years	21	19	11	5	18	14
3 - 4 years	18	18	12	11	17	13
5 - 9 years	22	18	10	11	19	16
10 - 19 years	31	23	54	59	36	36
20 years or more	2	6	9	20	3	11
<u>Unarmed self-defense training:</u>						
Yes, have had training	68	57	68	43	68	52
No, have not had training	32	43	32	57	32	48

Table 10.6 (Cont'd.)

**CORRELATES OF VICTIMIZATION DURING PAST YEAR: OFFICERS/  
AGENTS AND SUPERVISOR/MANAGERS (Percentages)**

Characteristics	Officers/ Agents		Supv'rs./ Managers		Total	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
<u>Kind of weapon usually carried:</u>						
Do not carry weapon	71	85	70	88	71	85
Handgun or other firearm <sup>10</sup>	26	12	28	10	27	13
Chemical agent	1	2	2	1	1	1
Impact instrument	2	1	--	1	1	1
<u>Base N</u>	<u>723</u>		<u>338</u>		<u>1061</u>	

Note: Column percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

<sup>10</sup>One officer/agent reported carrying a firearm other than a handgun.

## Victimization Experiences of Pennsylvania Probation Officers/Parole Agents

The preceding discussion reported on the victimization experiences of the Pennsylvania probation and parole work forces by general occupational class--officers/agents, supervisors/managers, and clerical/staff. The discussion in the remainder of this section deals exclusively with officers/agents having direct case contact responsibilities. The purpose is to present information comparing and contrasting the victimization experiences of line officers by type of agency. Presenting the data in this manner is intended to contribute to the development of agency-specific programs for the enhancement of worker safety.

### Victimization Experiences of Officers/Agents

A total of 1,399 Pennsylvania probation and parole personnel responded to the 1989 survey. Of this number, 52% (N=723) were identified as probation officers/parole agents in direct case contact with probationers and parolees. Characteristics of these 723 survey respondents are shown in Table 10.7.

As can be seen in Table 10.7, Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole (PBPP) agents tend, on average, more often to be male, older, and have longer tenure in the field and current agency than their counterparts in the county juvenile and adult probation agencies. With respect to tenure in the field, almost two-thirds (66%) of all PBPP respondents have been in the field for 10 years or more, compared to the next highest figure of 27% for respondents in county juvenile probation agencies. The results are similar for tenure in current agency: 61% of the PBPP respondents have 10 or more years tenure in their current agency; the closest corresponding figure for other respondents is 26% of officers in county juvenile probation agencies. This suggests that the work force in the State agency is much more stable than probation work forces at the county level.

Among respondents working as probation officers in county adult probation and county combined agencies, about one-third reporting hold a second job--34% and 32%, respectively. Among survey respondents, those employed by the State Board of Probation and Parole reported the lowest rates of second jobs held--13% (Table 10.8).

Table 10.7

**CHARACTERISTICS OF PROBATION OFFICER/PAROLE AGENT  
RESPONDENTS: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Characteristics	County Juvenile Probation	County Adult Probation	County Juvenile & Adult Probation	State Board of Probation & Parole
<u>Sex:</u>				
Male	62	65	59	86
Female	38	35	41	14
<u>Age:</u>				
Under 25 years	8	16	3	--
25 - 29 years	30	27	41	2
30 - 39 years	39	38	34	38
40 - 49 years	16	14	9	46
50 years or older	6	5	11	14
<u>Tenure in Field:</u>				
Less than 1 year	15	14	12	4
1 - 2 years	16	24	23	3
3 - 4 years	21	17	18	14
5 - 9 years	21	19	21	14
10 - 19 years	20	24	21	54
20 years or more	7	2	4	12
<u>Tenure in Current Agency:</u>				
Less than 1 year	15	15	12	3
1 - 2 years	17	27	25	5
3 - 4 years	22	15	16	17
5 - 9 years	20	19	23	15
10 - 19 years	19	22	21	52
20 years or more	7	1	2	9
<u>Base N</u>	<u>281</u>	<u>276</u>	<u>56</u>	<u>108</u>

Table 10.8

## SECOND JOBS HELD BY OFFICERS/AGENTS:BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)

Second Jobs Held	County Juvenile Probation	County Adult Probation	County Juvenile & Adult Probation	State Board of Probation & Parole
Yes, hold second job	26	34	32	13
No, do not hold second job	74	66	68	87
<u>Base N</u>	<u>281</u>	<u>273</u>	<u>56</u>	<u>108</u>

Data from the 1988 Worker Safety Survey of probation and parole personnel in Pennsylvania showed that 85% of all respondents to the survey do not carry a weapon of any kind. The corresponding rate for the 1989 Pennsylvania survey was precisely the same--85%. However, when the data for officers/agents are examined in terms of the type of agency, a different picture emerges. While the majority of agents in the juvenile, adult, and combined county agencies do not carry weapons of any type, a modest majority of PBPP agents report that they are armed (58%)--all but one reporting that the weapon usually carried was a handgun (Table 10.9). Among all respondents who reported carrying some type of weapon, weapons usually regarded as non-lethal (e.g., chemical agent or impact instrument) are distinctly in the minority of weapons reported.

By and large, unarmed defense training is a widely recommended skill for those working in the probation and parole field. The survey results exhibit notable differences across probation officers/parole agents in different types of agencies. For example, almost nine out of 10 (87%) PBPP agents indicated that they have such training, as compared to only 44% of probation officers in county juvenile probation agencies. Probation officers in the other two types of agencies--county adult and county combined--are in between, with 63% and 68%, respectively, reporting that they had received unarmed defense training as a part of their jobs.

The victimization experiences of probation officers/parole agents were of particular interest in this study. Table 10.10 shows the victimization rates for officers/agents during their entire careers in the probation/parole field. As can be seen, a majority of all the responding officers/agents have experienced some form of victimization while in the field. The victimization rates vary from a high of 88% for Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole agents to a low of 55% for those working in county adult probation agencies. While there are undoubtedly sizable differences in the degrees of seriousness of victimization incidents experienced by officers/agents, these data suggest, at the least, that the probation/parole field is a high-risk occupation for most officers/agents.

Table 10.9

**WEAPONS USUALLY CARRIED BY OFFICERS/AGENTS: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Weapons	County Juvenile Probation	County Adult Probation	County Juvenile & Adult Probation	State Board of Probation & Parole
Do not carry a weapon	93	84	71	42
Handgun or other firearm	4	14	23	58
Chemical agent	2	1	2	--
Impact instrument	1	2	4	--
<b>Base N</b>	<b>281</b>	<b>274</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>107</b>

Note: Column percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Table 10.10

**VICTIMIZATION RATES OF OFFICERS/AGENTS DURING ENTIRE CAREER: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Victimization Status <sup>11</sup>	Agency Type				Total
	County Juven.	County Adult	County Combin.	State PBPP	
Victimized in entire career	60	55	57	88	62
Not victimized in entire career	40	45	43	12	38
<b>Base N</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>276</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>720<sup>1</sup></b>

Table 10.11 shows the frequencies of physical assault or intimidation experienced by the officers/agent respondents over their entire careers in the probation officers/ field. As can be seen, the state probation and parole agents are much more likely--57%, as compared to the next highest figure of 25% for county juvenile probation officers--to have been physically assaulted in line of duty at least once in their careers as probation officers or parole

<sup>11</sup>"Victimization status" refers to any form or frequency of encounter with hazardous incidents, as defined earlier, and distinguishes only between general "yes" and "no" responses to survey items asking about such events.

agents. At the same time, it must be noted that a one in four chance of exposure to physical assault among county juvenile probation agents is itself a noteworthy figure, in that it points to a high-risk occupation, as does the corresponding 23% figure for those probation officers in the county combined agencies.

When instances of intimidation by physical or other threat during the individual's career in probation and parole are examined, the figures are even more striking. Among respondents in the State Board of Probation and Parole, some 86% reported experiencing one or more intimidations by physical or other threat during their careers, with majorities of officers in all of the other types of agencies reporting similarly. Overall, the figures for victimization over the career in the field of probation and parole lead to the conclusion that this is, indeed, an occupational area of considerable risk with respect to exposure to hazardous or physically or mentally threatening events during normal job performance.

Table 10.11

**OFFICERS/AGENTS PHYSICALLY ASSAULTED OR INTIMIDATED  
IN CAREER: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Physically Assaulted or Intimidated in Career	County Juvenile Probation	County Adult Probation	County Juvenile & Adult Probation	State Board of Probation & Parole
Physically assaulted in whole career:	25	14	23	57
Once	12	7	7	11
Twice	7	3	9	19
Three times	3	2	4	11
Four times	<1	--	2	6
More than four times	3	2	2	10
Never assaulted	75	86	77	43
Intimidated by physical or any other threat in whole career:	58	55	55	86
Once	12	16	11	6
Twice	12	16	11	17
Three times	8	9	2	13
Four times	4	2	7	6
More than four times	22	12	25	44
Never intimidated	42	45	45	14
Base N	281	276	56	108

Note: Column percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.



The general victimization rates for officers/agents in the year preceding the survey are shown in Table 10.12. The highest rate was reported by State Probation and Parole agents (42%), with about one-fourth of the officers in the county agencies reporting victimization incidents in this 12-month period. The overall victimization rate for all officer/agent respondents was 29%.

Table 10.12

VICTIMIZATION RATES OF OFFICERS/AGENTS IN 12-MONTH PERIOD  
PRECEDING SURVEY: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)

Victimization Status <sup>12</sup>	Agency Type				Total
	County Juven.	County Adult	County Combin.	State PBPP	
Victimized in past year	25	28	27	42	29
Not victimized in past year	75	72	73	58	71
Base N	280	276	56	108	720 <sup>1</sup>

Another set of indicators relative to recent victimization experiences of probation officers and parole agents focused on the frequencies of incidents that occurred in the 12-month period preceding the survey. The results are shown in Table 10.13. As can be seen, among county probation officers, about one in 20 were physically assaulted during that period. Almost one in five of the PBPP agents (18%) reported having been physically assaulted in the line of duty during this same period of time. Past-year intimidation rates, another measure of victimization, were considerably higher. Again, PBPP agents led the way, with 39% reporting at least one such incident between May 1, 1988, and May 1, 1989, with about one out of every four other officer/agent respondents reporting similarly.

The data in Table 10.14 relate demographic characteristics of officers/agents to past-year victimization status. As can be seen, the victimization rate is slightly higher for males than for females, though the difference is modest. However, none of the other demographic features of the officer/agent respondents has a marked relationship to past-year victimization status.

<sup>12</sup>"Victimization status" refers to any form or frequency of encounter with hazardous incidents, as defined earlier, and distinguishes only between general "yes" and "no" responses to survey items asking about such events.

Table 10.13

**OFFICERS/AGENTS PHYSICALLY ASSAULTED OR INTIMIDATED DURING THE  
YEAR PRECEDING SURVEY: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Physically Assaulted or Intimidated in 12 Months Preceding Survey	County Juvenile Probation	County Adult Probation	County Juvenile & Adult Probation	State Board of Probation & Parole
Physically assaulted in past year:	5	5	5	18
Once	3	5	5	12
Twice	<1	<1	--	6
Three times	--	<1	--	1
Four times	--	--	--	--
More than four times	1	--	--	--
Never assaulted	95	95	95	82
Intimidated by physical or any other threat in past year:	24	28	27	39
Once	7	13	11	17
Twice	6	9	5	10
Three times	3	2	2	6
Four times	1	1	4	2
More than four times	7	2	5	4
Never intimidated	76	72	73	61
<u>Base N</u>	<u>280</u>	<u>276</u>	<u>56</u>	<u>108</u>

Table 10.14

**DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF OFFICERS/AGENTS:  
BY VICTIMIZATION STATUS (Percentages)**

Demographic Characteristics	Victim	Non-Victim
<u>Sex:</u>		
Male	73	64
Female	27	36
<u>Age:</u>		
Under 25 years	9	10
25 - 29 years	28	24
30 - 39 years	38	38
40 - 49 years	19	20
50 years or older	6	8

Table 10.14 (Cont'd.)

**DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF OFFICERS/AGENTS:  
BY VICTIMIZATION STATUS (Percentages)**

Demographic Characteristics	Victim	Non-Victim
<u>Education:</u>		
High school	1	2
Some College	2	4
Bachelor's degree	65	73
Graduate degree	32	22
<u>Tenure in Field:</u>		
Less than 3 years	24	26
3 - 4 years	15	14
5 - 9 years	19	16
10 - 19 years	36	34
20 years or more	6	11
<u>Tenure in Current Agency:</u>		
Less than 3 years	25	27
3 - 4 years	16	14
5 - 9 years	19	16
10 - 19 years	36	34
20 years or more	4	10
<u>Base N</u>	<u>209</u>	<u>513</u>

Note: Column percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

The analysis also examined the relationship between carrying or not carrying a weapon and victimization status. Table 10.15 contains data on this relationship. As can be seen, officer/agent victims are more likely to carry a weapon, typically a handgun, than non-victims--26% and 14%, respectively--a statistically significant difference, as indicated by the nonparametric chi-square test. While the survey data can only show correlates among variables and cannot be used to attribute causality to this relationship, the fact of the relationship itself is interesting. State probation and parole agents are more likely than their counterparts in county agencies to carry handguns and also are more likely to have experienced a victimization incident in the 12 months preceding the survey. It is possible, then, that the relationship between carrying a handgun and victim status, as shown in Table 10.15, is an artifact of differences in probationer and parolee cases handled by officers/agents in the state and county agencies.

Table 10.15

**WEAPON USUALLY CARRIED BY OFFICERS/AGENTS:  
BY VICTIMIZATION STATUS: (Percentages)**

Weapon Usually Carried	Victim	Non-Victim
Do not carry weapon	71	84
Handgun or other firearm	26	14
Chemical Agent	1	1
Impact Instrument	2	1
<u>Base N</u>	<u>208</u>	<u>511</u>

A further analysis of the victimization experiences of state and county officers/agents examined the relationship between past-year victimization status and having or not having unarmed self-defense training. As shown in Table 10.16, those officers/agents who have had unarmed self-defense training are somewhat more likely to have experienced a victimization incident in the year preceding the survey. While about one in three (32%) of the officers/agents reported having had unarmed self-defense training were victims, only one in four (24%) of those without such training were victims.

Table 10.16

**VICTIMIZATION STATUS OF OFFICERS/AGENTS HAVING AND NOT  
HAVING UNARMED SELF-DEFENSE TRAINING (Percentages)**

Past-Year Victimization Status	Have	Not Have
Victim in year preceding survey	32	24
Not victim in year preceding survey	68	76
<u>Base N</u>	<u>434</u>	<u>286</u>

### The Dynamics of Victimization

In the most serious victimization event, the perpetrator was the client (probationer or parolee) in seven out of 10 cases (Table 10.17). Differences across the agency types were rather slight, except in the case of county combined juvenile/adult agencies, but the total number of these cases (N=9) is so small that the difference cannot be regarded as an important one. The next most frequent perpetrator (12%) was a client's family member. Although not shown in the table here, the perpetrator was male in 80% of all the cases.

In nearly half of the cases, the perpetrator was under the direct supervision of the worker-victim, while 19% were under the supervision of someone else in the same agency (Table 10.18). Fewer than one out of five of the perpetrators (16%) were not under supervision at the time of the most serious incident.

Table 10.17

#### OFFENDER'S STATUS AT TIME OF INCIDENT (Percentages)

Offender's Status	Agency Type				Total
	County Juven.	County Adult	County Combin.	State PBPP	
Client (probationer/parolee)	76	67	33	75	69
Client's family member	21	6	33	9	12
Client's friend	3	6	11	--	4
Animal	--	6	--	6	4
Other	--	7	11	7	4
Unknown	--	8	11	3	5
<u>Base N</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>52</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>32</u>	<u>122</u>

Table 10.19 shows the criminal status characteristics of perpetrators at the time of the most serious incident reported by the officer/agent victims. Misdemeanors are most commonly found among adult probationers supervised by officers in county adult probation agencies (46%), while 1st degree felony cases are most frequent among PBPP agents (44%). In fact, two-thirds (68%) of all the perpetrators involved in victimizations against PBPP agents were under sentence for a felony offense when the most serious incident occurred (Table 10.19).

With respect to the perpetrator's most important instant offense, crimes against the person were the most frequent in two of the agencies: county adult probation (48%) and State Board of Probation and Parole (56%). Crimes against property, not surprisingly, were found most frequently among offenders under supervision of county juvenile probation agencies (48%).

A majority of all of the perpetrators (65%) were reported to have been previously incarcerated (Table 10.19). Across the various types of agencies, this ranged from a high of 84% in the case of the State Board of Probation and Parole to a low of 44% for the county combined (juvenile/adult) agencies.

Only the PBPP agents had a majority reporting that the perpetrator was known to have a history of drug abuse (84%) or alcohol abuse (66%). In relation to the three types of county probation agencies, the most striking feature of the data on drug and alcohol abuse is the percentage of cases in which this information was unknown to the officer/agent reporting on the victimization incident. The "Unknown" responses ranged from 16% (drug abuse history) for respondents in State Board of Probation and Parole agency to more than 40% (alcohol abuse history) for those officers/agents in county adult and county combined agencies (Table 10.19). Given the role that such forms of abuse might play in prompting victimization behavior, especially physical assault, the proportion of cases in which this history was unknown to the officer/agent victims is surprising.

With respect to prior convictions or adjudications, nearly two-thirds (66%) of those involved in victimizations against PBPP agents had two or more prior felonies (Table 10.19). This figure was far greater for these agents than for any other category of respondents.

Prior assaults against another individual were most prominent among perpetrators of incidents against officers in the county juvenile probation agencies. Some 56% were known to have committed a prior assault against a family member or another citizen (Table 10.19). However, again, the proportion of instances in which knowledge of prior assaults was unknown (39% across all four types of agencies) makes any other observations about this offender characteristic questionable.

Table 10.18

OFFENDER'S SUPERVISION STATUS AT TIME OF INCIDENT:  
BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)

Supervision Status	Agency Type				Total
	County Juven.	County Adult	County Combin.	State PBPP	
Under respondent's supervision	48	54	22	50	49
Under respondent's agency's supervision	21	15	--	28	19
Under another agency's supervision	10	2	33	--	6
Not under supervision	14	17	33	12	16
Unknown	7	12	11	10	10
<u>Base N</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>52</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>32</u>	<u>122</u>

Table 10.19

**CRIMINAL STATUS CHARACTERISTICS OF PERPETRATORS:  
BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Criminal Status Characteristics	Agency Type				Total
	County Juven.	County Adult	County Combin.	State PBPP	
<u>Most Serious Offense:</u>					
Misdemeanor	21	46	17	6	27
3rd degree felony	7	14	11	12	12
2nd degree felony	14	2	11	12	8
1st degree felony	31	6	11	44	22
Not under sentence	21	14	33	9	16
Unknown	7	20	11	16	15
<u>Type of Most Important Offense:</u>					
Crime vs. person	28	48	22	56	43
Crime vs. property	48	17	33	16	25
Crime vs. morals	3	2	--	--	2
Substance abuse	3	4	11	6	5
Not under sentence	10	10	22	3	9
Unknown	7	19	11	19	16
<u>Previous Incarceration:</u>					
Yes	55	62	44	84	65
No	24	19	33	3	17
Unknown	21	19	22	12	18
<u>Drug Abuse History:</u>					
Yes	34	40	44	84	51
No	31	23	11	--	18
Unknown	34	36	44	16	31
<u>Alcohol Abuse History:</u>					
Yes	48	44	44	66	51
No	21	15	11	3	13
Unknown	31	40	44	31	36
<u>Prior Criminal History (Convictions or Adjudications)</u>					
No prior convict./adjud.	24	21	33	6	19
One prior felony	14	6	--	6	7
Two or more felonies	21	19	22	66	32
Prior misdemeanor (or equiv.)	24	31	33	9	24
Unknown	17	23	11	12	18

Table 10.19 (Cont'd.)

**CRIMINAL STATUS CHARACTERISTICS OF PERPETRATORS:  
BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Criminal Status Characteristics	Agency Type				Total
	County Juven.	County Adult	County Combin.	State PBPP	
<u>Prior Assaults Against Another Individual:</u>					
Probation officers/parole agents	--	--	--	9	2
Correctional officer	--	4	--	--	2
Police officer	--	8	11	16	8
Treatment agency personnel	7	8	--	3	7
Spouse or other family member	28	12	11	19	13
Citizen	28	19	44	9	21
Had not committed prior assaults	3	--	--	3	2
Unknown	34	42	33	41	39
<u>Base N</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>52</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>32</u>	<u>122</u>

Officers/agents completing the supplemental portion of the survey questionnaire dealing with details about the most serious victimization event in the past year were asked whether the perpetrator was under the influence of drugs or alcohol at the time of the incident. The results are shown in Table 10.20. The most frequent response to this question was "Unknown," with some 42% of all respondents reporting this. However, the combined percentages for under the influence of drugs and alcohol when the incident occurred were quite small for the county agencies; the highest was 35% for the state agency.



Table 10.20

**WHETHER OFFENDER UNDER INFLUENCE OF DRUGS OR ALCOHOL AT  
TIME OF INCIDENT: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Whether Under Influence	Agency Type				Total
	County Juven.	County Adult	County Combin.	State PBPP	
Drugs	7	12	--	19	12
Alcohol	7	6	22	16	10
Nothing	48	35	33	31	37
Unknown	38	48	44	34	42
<u>Base N</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>52</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>32</u>	<u>122</u>

A very important piece of information for understanding the dynamics of victimization against probation officers and parole agents pertains to the behavioral character of the perpetrator's actions. Table 10.21 shows the rates of reported actions of offenders against worker-victims. By far the highest incidence, 73% across all agencies, was reported for "threat of physical assault," especially in the case of officers associated with county juvenile (79%) and county adult (77%) probation agencies. Intimidation was the next most frequently reported offender behavior (59% for all respondents). Actual physical assault was reported by 29% of all respondents, but over half of the PBPP agents (53%) indicated that physical assault had occurred--a figure almost twice as high as the combined rates for the county agencies. In sum, whether the behavior exhibited by the perpetrator was physical assault or threat of assault, or other form of intimidation, the data clearly indicate that the officer/agent is the direct object of victimization in the great majority of cases. Instances in which a third party related to the worker-victim is the object of victimization are infrequent.

Another item in the survey instrument asked respondents about additional actions of the offender against the victim-worker. The data for this item appear in Table 10.22. As can be seen, among officers/agents, some form of physical force occurred in 32% of the cases--which closely corresponds to the reported incidence rate of physical assault already reported in Table 10.21. Allegations by the perpetrator about the officer/agent were reported to be quite infrequent; the majority of officers/agents noted that no allegations had been made. When allegations about the officer/agent's professional conduct were made, they tended to occur most frequently (31%) in the case of workers associated with county juvenile probation agencies.

Table 10.21

**INCIDENCE OF DIFFERENT OFFENDER ACTIONS AGAINST PROBATION OFFICERS/  
PAROLE AGENTS: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Nature of Offender Action	Agency Type				Total
	County Juven.	County Adult	County Combin.	State PBPP	
Physical assault	38	10	22	53	29
Threat of physical assault	79	77	56	64	73
Damage to officer/agent's property	7	6	22	16	10
Threat to officer/agent's property	17	17	33	25	20
Intimidation	52	62	78	56	59
Attempted extortion	4	14	--	6	8
Threat to officer/agent's reputation	34	31	11	22	28
Threat of physical harm to family member of officer/agent	14	12	--	25	15
Intimidation or attempted intimidation of family member of officer/agent	10	6	11	--	6
<u>Base N</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>52</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>32</u>	<u>122</u>

Respondents to Part 2 of the questionnaire were also asked to indicate who, in addition to themselves, was present when the incident took place. In the majority of incidents, those present were other probation officers/parole agents or law enforcement officers (53%) (Table 10.23). The highest number responses--"no one else" (35%)--occurred in the case of worker-victims in county adult probation agencies.

Table 10.22

**INCIDENCE OF ADDITIONAL OFFENDER ACTIONS AGAINST PROBATION  
OFFICERS/PAROLE AGENTS: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Nature of Offender Action	Agency Type				Total
	County Juven.	County Adult	County Combin.	State PBPP	
<u>Physical Force:</u>					
Hit with fist or hand	14	6	--	12	9
Kicked	14	--	11	12	7
Pushed	17	8	--	34	16
None of the above actions	55	86	89	41	67
<u>Allegations about Officer's/ Agent's:</u>					
Professional conduct	31	17	11	22	21
Personal conduct	3	8	--	--	5
Lawsuits vs. officers/agent	3	12	--	6	7
Allegations about co-workers	--	2	--	--	1
No allegations made	59	62	89	72	66
Base N	29	52	9	32	122

Note: Column totals may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Table 10.23

**OTHERS PRESENT AT VICTIMIZATION EVENT, IN ADDITION TO  
OFFICER/AGENT: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Others Present at Event	Agency Type				Total
	County Juven.	County Adult	County Combin.	State PBPP	
Probation officers/parole agents	45	29	44	56	41
Law enforcement official	10	12	11	12	12
Officer's/Agent's family or friends	3	2	--	6	2
Offender's family or friends	14	8	22	3	10
Others	14	14	--	7	11
No one else	14	35	22	16	24
<u>Base N</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>52</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>32</u>	<u>122</u>

Note: Column totals may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Across all respondents, the most frequent sites where the incident occurred were client's home (26%), agency office (25%), and prison or jail (10%) (Table 10.24). Variations across the different types of agencies were generally not notable, although the three sites just mentioned accounted for some two-thirds (68%) of responses received from those working in county adult probation agencies. Among officers in county juvenile probation agencies, client's home, courtroom, and prison or jail accounted for nearly three-fifths (59%) of the responses for this group.

Table 10.24

WHERE INCIDENT TOOK PLACE: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)

Where Incident Took Place	Agency Type				Total
	County Juven.	County Adult	County Combin.	State PBPP	
Over the phone	10	10	--	6	8
By letter or mail	--	2	--	--	1
Through message or report from others	7	2	--	3	3
Agency office	3	25	11	25	19
Client's home	28	29	33	19	26
Someone else's home	3	4	--	6	4
Prison or jail	10	14	--	6	10
Human service agency	3	2	--	3	2
Courtroom	21	2	22	6	9
In vehicle	3	--	--	3	2
Offender's employment site	--	--	--	3	1
Public facility	--	2	--	9	3
On the street	3	8	33	6	8
Apartment hall or elevator	--	--	--	3	1
Other location	7	2	--	--	2
<u>Base N</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>52</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>32</u>	<u>122</u>

The most common "principal immediate response" of the worker-victim in reaction to the incident was an attempt to talk to the offender (43% of all respondents) (Table 10.25). The next most frequent response, although considerably lower, was "struck back physically" (11%). However, worker-victims in only two types of agencies, State Board of Probation and Parole (25%) and county juvenile probation (17%) reported using this action. The frequencies for all other specific responses were quite low, overall (Table 10.25).

Table 10.25

**PRINCIPAL IMMEDIATE RESPONSE TO INCIDENT BY OFFICERS/  
AGENTS: BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Principal Immediate Response	Agency Type				Total
	County Juven.	County Adult	County Combin.	State PBPP	
Struck back physically	17	--	--	25	11
Threatened to strike back physically	7	4	--	3	4
Threatened to use a gun	--	--	--	3	1
Displayed a badge or I.D.	--	--	--	3	1
Used verbal threat	3	12	11	9	9
Said nothing	7	6	--	3	5
Retreated	7	12	11	--	7
Called out for help	--	2	--	6	2
Attempted to talk to offender	41	52	56	28	43
Took no action	7	4	11	9	7
Other response	10	10	11	9	10
<u>Base N</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>52</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>32</u>	<u>122</u>

Note: Column totals may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Another important matter in understanding the character and dynamics of hazardous incidents experienced is the location where or medium through which the event unfolds. An examination of the data relating to this issue in the current study suggests that many of the incidents are, in reality, episodic. Often, more than one location and/or medium is involved before the victimization event is perceived as concluded, regardless of the outcome. For example, an incident that commences with an officer's or agent's visit to a client's home might be culminated in an on-the-street confrontation or a clash during a subsequent session between the officer/agent and client at the agency office. The data in Table 5.26 suggest that such action sequences are not uncommon; many of the respondents identified multiple sites and/or media as being involved in the same event.

For state probation and parole agents and their counterparts in the county adult agencies, three contexts supplied the majority of circumstances in which incidents occurred. With respect to respondents in county adult agencies, announced or expected visits (25%), a surprise visit (21%), and during arrest of the offender (12%) combined for an overall frequency of 58% for these three contexts. Among the PBPP agents, during arrest of offender (41%) was the highest reported frequency, followed by announced or expected visit (16%) and surprise visit (6%)--combining to account for two-thirds (68%)

of all the responses given by these agents (Table 10.26). "During transport of the offender" was somewhat important in cases involving the county juvenile and county combined agencies, with 24% and 22%, respectively, indicating this as the context in which the incident occurred (Table 10.26).

Table 10.26

CONTEXT IN WHICH INCIDENT OCCURRED BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)

Context of Incident	Agency Type				Total
	County Juven.	County Adult	County Combin.	State PBPP	
Announced or expected visit	24	25	--	16	20
Surprise visit	7	21	33	6	15
During arrest of the offender	7	12	11	41	18
During arrest of someone else	10	6	--	6	7
In response to call from offender	7	8	--	3	6
Response to offender family call	3	--	--	3	2
In context of domestic dispute	3	2	--	--	2
During transport of offender	24	--	22	6	9
Other context	14	27	33	19	22
Base N	29	52	9	32	122

The Aftermaths of Victimization and Their Consequences

An important concern in analyzing the many different impacts that victimization might have on probation and parole workers focuses attention on the aftermaths of these events and their consequences for workers' personal and professional lives. Table 10.27 presents incident rate figures for a series of potential consequences for probation and parole workers who experienced one or more instances of victimization while carrying out their job responsibilities.

Three features of the data in Table 10.27 are the most striking. First, the direct consequences for the individual were primarily of an emotional, rather than physical, character. Relatively few of the officers reported being physically injured, having a chronic condition or aggravating an old injury as a result of the incident (10% across all respondents). On the other hand, two aftermaths that can be considered to be primarily emotional in nature--shaken up and fear on the job--were more frequently reported as a consequence of the incident--33% and 24%, respectively. The third feature

that stands out in the data are the proportions of those indicating that the incident affected their approaches to or relationships with clients. A "reduced sense of trust in clients" was noted by 45% of the officers/agents, and the incidence of this outcome was especially high (65%) among workers in the county juvenile probation agencies. A related aftermath, "reduced sensitivity to clients," was also noted by almost one-third (30%) of all respondents.

In contrast to the consequences of victimization just reported, about one-fourth (26%) of all respondents to this section of the survey questionnaire noted that they had experienced an "enhanced sense of self-confidence" as a result of the incident. In sum, the reported aftermaths were quite varied, but, overall, negative consequences tended to outweigh the positive, and those suggesting an emotional response within the individual worker or from the worker towards clients could conceivably have longer-term consequences for worker and agency effectiveness in supervising probationers and parolees.

Table 10.27

AFTERMATHS OF VICTIMIZATION EVENTS: BY  
AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)

Aftermaths of Events	Agency Type				Total
	County Juven.	County Adult	County Combin.	State PBPP	
Injured by incident	10	2	11	12	7
Chronic condition	--	--	--	3	1
Aggravation of old injury	--	--	--	6	2
Stomachache, headache, or similar	10	2	11	6	6
Shaken up	38	40	44	12	33
Fear on the job	24	35	22	6	24
Lack of self-confidence	7	12	--	6	8
Reduced sense of trust in clients	65	46	33	28	45
Reduced sensitivity to clients	34	35	--	25	30
Increased use of medications	3	2	--	3	2
Increased use of alcohol	3	2	--	3	2
Disruption in personal life	10	4	--	9	7
Disruption of family life	7	6	--	16	8
Enhanced sense of self-confidence	24	23	22	34	26
Obtained counseling or psychological treatment	--	6	--	--	2
Suffer of economic loss	--	2	11	9	4
<u>Base N</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>52</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>32</u>	<u>122</u>

Note: Column percentages not cumulative.

Additional survey items related to aftermaths of the victimization event asked about other possible effects of the event on the worker and others to whom he/she relates. The results are presented in Table 10.28. With respect to the concern with personal effects on the officer/agent, about one-fourth (27%) of all respondents reported that the incident had negative consequences for them personally, and one-fifth (20%) noted that the incident had a negative effect on their families. Only one other item, effects on co-workers, elicited negative ratings of much note; here, 21% of respondents in county adult probation agencies and 19% in the State agency felt that the incident had a negative effect on their co-workers.

Some 17% of the responding officers/agents reported that they had thought about quitting their jobs as a result of the victimization event, with the highest figure (21%) occurring in the case of respondents associated with the county adult probation agencies (Table 10.28). As might be expected, given the earlier discussion of aftermaths of victimization, some 18% (nearly one-fifth) of all responding officers/agents noted that "avoided contact with threatening clients" was a personal outcome of the incident for them.

Table 10.28

EFFECTS OF THE VICTIMIZATION EVENT:  
BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)

Effects of Victimization Event	Agency Type				Total
	County Juven.	County Adult	County Combin.	State PBPP	
<u>Personal Effect on Officer/Agent:</u>					
Positive consequences	7	12	11	12	11
Negative consequences	31	29	22	22	27
No consequences	62	60	67	66	62
<u>Effect on Officer's/Agent's Family:</u>					
Positive consequences	3	--	--	--	1
Negative consequences	14	25	--	22	20
No consequences	83	75	100	78	80
<u>Effect of Incident on Agency:</u>					
Positive consequences	3	6	11	6	6
Negative consequences	3	10	--	12	8
No consequences	93	85	89	81	86
<u>Effect on Co-workers:</u>					
Positive consequences	7	2	11	6	5
Negative consequences	3	21	--	19	15
No consequences	90	77	89	75	80



Table 10.28 (Cont'd.)

**EFFECTS OF THE VICTIMIZATION EVENT:  
BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Effects of Victimization Event	Agency Type				Total
	County Juven.	County Adult	County Combin.	State PBPP	
<u>Less Open with Clients:</u>					
Yes	17	15	11	13	15
No	83	85	89	87	85
<u>Thought about Quitting Job:</u>					
Yes	17	21	11	13	17
No	83	79	89	87	83
<u>Applied For a Transfer:</u>					
Yes	--	6	--	3	3
No	100	94	100	97	97
<u>Avoided Contact with Co-Workers:</u>					
Yes	3	2	--	6	3
No	97	98	100	94	97
<u>Avoided Contact with Supervisors:</u>					
Yes	14	8	--	6	8
No	86	92	100	94	92
<u>Avoided Contact with Threatening Clients:</u>					
Yes	28	21	11	6	18
No	72	79	89	94	81
Base N	29	52	9	32	122

Note: Column totals may not add to 100 due to rounding.

As can be seen in Table 10.29, among all respondents the two sets of individuals to whom the incident was reported were, in order of frequency, co-workers (86%) and supervisors (82%). Family members and friends were also frequently noted individuals with whom they discussed the incident--50% naming friends, 46% their spouses, and 40% another family member. Only 10% reported that they had discussed the incident with "no one." Overall, the data in Table 10.29 indicate that agents/officers in each of the agency settings are not reluctant to report and discuss the incident with others in the agency, and about half go on to discuss the experience with family members and friends.

Table 10.29

**REPORTING BEHAVIOR OF OFFICER/AGENT VICTIMS:  
BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Reporting Behavior	Agency Type				Total
	County Juven.	County Adult	County Combin.	State PBPP	
Agency head	45	48	9	9	46
Supervisor	93	73	88	84	82
Co-workers	93	83	100	81	86
Police	28	12	33	40	24
Counselor	7	10	--	3	7
Spouse	52	42	22	52	46
Other family members	45	44	44	29	40
Friends	62	50	22	48	50
Other person	31	17	--	16	19
No one	7	10	--	14	10
Base N	29	52	9	32	122

Note: Column percentages are not cumulative. Each percentage figure represents the proportion of respondents answering "Yes" to the survey item.

The last topic examined in this section is whether the officer/agent or the agency could have done something to prevent the incident from occurring. From the data in Table 10.30, it is clear that very few respondents felt that they personally could have prevented the incident from happening. This is not surprising, in view of earlier findings that indicate that a majority of the incidents occurred while the officer/agent was carrying out normal day-to-day duties associated with the job, such as making field visits or dealing with the offender in a jail or prison. As more than one respondent to the survey noted in comments to the researchers, many of the events experienced simply "come with the territory"--i.e they cannot be prevented, only dealt with in the most constructive manner possible.

About twice as many respondents felt that their agencies could have done something to prevent the incident from occurring, but what this might have been is not possible to assert from the data at hand. However, respondents were split almost evenly on the issue of whether their agencies could have done anything to prepare them and other personnel better to cope with this type of situation (Table 10.32). In sum, what emerges from the findings is (1) that officers/agents perceive their ability and that of their agencies to prevent the onset of victimization events to be limited, but (2) prior education about the circumstances and dynamics of victimization events, coupled with training enabling them to cope with and respond more effectively to hazardous events in their daily job routines, could be achieved through more thorough educational and skills development programs sponsored by their agencies.

Table 10.32

**WHETHER INCIDENT COULD HAVE BEEN PREVENTED:  
BY AGENCY TYPE (Percentages)**

Whether Incident Could Have Been Prevented	Agency Type				Total
	County Juven.	County Adult	County Combin.	State PBPP	
Could you have prevented the incident?					
Yes	10	6	44	9	9
No	90	94	56	91	91
Could your agency have done anything to prevent this incident?					
Yes	21	15	33	19	19
No	79	85	67	81	81
Could the agency have done anything to better prepare personnel to cope with this type of situation?					
Yes	48	50	33	52	49
No	52	50	67	48	51
Base N	<u>29</u>	<u>52</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>31</u>	<u>121</u>

## Section 11

### SURVEY FINDINGS: VERMONT

A total of 86 workers from throughout Vermont's parole and probation system responded to the 1989 survey. As noted earlier in the section dealing with methodology, this represented an overall response rate of 62%. The respondents were distributed across several job categories, as shown in the following listing.

<u>Job Category</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Clerical	15	17
Other Administrative Staff	4	5
Probation/Parole Officer	32	37
Intensive Probation/Parole Officer	7	8
Casework Supervisor	8	9
Correctional Officer C-FSU	2	2
District Manager	13	15
Area Manager	3	4
Case Aide	2	2
<u>Totals</u>	<u>86</u>	<u>100</u>

### Respondent Characteristics

To make analyses of respondent characteristics and hazardous incident encounters more efficient, these job categories were collapsed into three main types: (1) Officers;<sup>1</sup> (2) Supervisors/Managers; and (3) Clerical and Staff. Table 11.1 shows the relationship between each of these three job types and various profile characteristics of survey respondents.

Probation and parole personnel constituted 92% of all respondents. Eight percent of the respondents identified themselves as being in an "Other" type of agency, but no further information was provided to indicate what this might be. Office size is not related to worker classification; the great majority are small, containing 10 or fewer workers (Table 11.1).

Among officer respondents, two-thirds (67%) are male, and some 88% of supervisors/managers are also male. All of the responding clerical and staff workers are female (Table 11.1).

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<sup>1</sup>This includes all personnel whose jobs bring them into direct client contact for purposes of probation and parole supervision.

Supervisors/managers are, on average, older than officers, an expected finding in view of the fact that movement into a management or supervisory position is typically associated with tenure in the field and agency. Across all three worker classifications, sizable percentages of respondents are 40 years of age or older--81% of the supervisors/managers, 57% of the officers, and 42% of clerical and staff personnel (Table 11.1).

Nearly two-thirds (66%) of the officers hold a bachelor's or graduate degree. The corresponding figure for supervisors/managers is just slightly higher (75%). Among clerical and staff personnel, 95% have a high school education college and one individual (5%) holds a graduate degree (Table 11.1).

Not surprisingly, supervisors/managers exhibit much longer tenure than officers in both current agency and the field--44% and 63%, respectively, having 10 or more year's tenure. In contrast, just below one-third (32%) of the officers have been in their current agencies less than five years and some 33% also have been in the field for less than five years. Overall, though, the figures for tenure in current agency indicate a fairly stable work force, in that 58% of the officers and 88% of the supervisors/managers have five or more years in their current agencies. At the same time, over half of the clerical and staff workers have been in their agencies less than five years (Table 11.1).

One in five of the responding officers holds a second job, as does 12% of the supervisors/managers. About one-fourth (26%) of the clerical and staff respondents reported working at a second job (Table 11.1).

A sizable majority (71%) of the officers indicated that they have had unarmed self-defense training. Just over half (56%) of the supervisors/managers responded similarly (Table 11.1).

As can be seen in the last segment of Table 11.1, very few respondents reported carrying weapons of any type. Carrying a handgun was reported by only 2% of the officers, and the highest frequency was 11% for officers who reported carrying an impact instrument.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>While the number of non-responses to the survey items concerning the carrying of weapons was proportionately much higher than for any other set of questions--possibly, reflecting a respondent's regarding these questions as not applicable, or indicating a reluctance to report carrying an unauthorized weapon--these were not frequent enough to offset an overall conclusion that weapons are carried by a very small number of workers. Moreover, the data in another section below do not indicate a groundswell of support in Vermont for a policy initiative authorizing the carrying of weapons by probation/parole officers.

Table 11.1

## CHARACTERISTICS OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS (Percentages)

Characteristics	Officers	Supv'rs./ Managers	Clerical & Staff	All Re- spondents
<u>Agency Type:</u>				
Probation and Parole	94	81	95	92
Other	6	19	5	8
<u>Office Size:</u>				
1-10 employees	68	75	79	72
11-25 employees	14	12	16	14
26-50 employees	18	12	5	14
<u>Sex of Respondent:</u>				
Male	67	88	--	56
Female	33	12	100	44
<u>Age of Respondent:</u>				
Under 25 years	4	--	5	4
25-29 years	8	--	16	8
30-39 years	31	19	37	30
40-49 years	39	56	26	40
50 years or older	18	25	16	19
<u>Educational Attainment:</u>				
High school	14	6	37	18
Some college	30	19	58	34
Bachelor's degree	40	62	--	35
Graduate degree	16	13	5	13
<u>Tenure in Current Agency:</u>				
Less than 3 years	32	--	42	28
3-4 years	10	12	21	13
5-9 years	24	44	16	26
10-19 years	28	38	16	27
20 or more years	6	6	5	6
<u>Tenure in the Probation/ Parole Field:</u>				
Less than 3 years	24	6	39	24
3-4 years	10	--	17	9
5-9 years	31	31	22	29
10-19 years	28	50	17	29
20 or more years	8	12	6	8

Table 11.1 (Cont'd.)

## CHARACTERISTICS OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS (Percentages)

Characteristics	Officers	Supv'rs./ Managers	Clerical & Staff	All Re- spondents
<u>Second Job Held:</u>				
Yes	20	12	26	20
No	80	88	74	80
<u>Unarmed Defense Training:</u>				
Yes	71	56	26	58
No	29	44	74	42
<u>Weapon Usually Carried:</u> <sup>3</sup>				
Handgun	2	--	--	1
Other firearm	2	--	--	1
Impact instrument	11	8	--	8
Chemical agent	7	--	--	4
Knife/Other Sharp-edged Inst.	7	17	--	7
<u>Base N</u>	<u>51</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>86</u>

Note: Column percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Victimization Rates

For purposes of this study, victimization was defined in terms of the exposure of probation and parole workers to hazardous incidents encountered in the course of carrying out their jobs.<sup>4</sup> To help respondents understand the meaning of the term "hazardous incident," as used in designing this study, the following examples were included in the instructions appearing at the beginning of the questionnaire.

Examples of hazardous incidents affecting staff safety would include: physical assault or harm; threat of physical assault or harm; assault or threat of harm to a worker's family members; harm or threat of harm to one's property; extortion;

<sup>3</sup>Separate questions were asked for five different types of weapons. Thus, the percentages are independent for each type, and they do not add to 100 percent.

<sup>4</sup>For a detailed discussion of the concept of "victimization" and its relation to hazardous incidents and worker safety in probation and parole, see William H. Parsonage, Worker Safety in Probation and Parole, Washington, D.C.: National Institute of Corrections, 1990.

harm or threat of harm to a worker's reputation; or psychological intimidation.

In the first section of the survey questionnaire, which was applicable to all respondents, four items were concerned with probation and parole workers' experiences with hazardous incidents. The first two asked whether the worker, during his or her entire career in the probation and parole field, had (1) been physically assaulted in the line of duty, and/or (2) been intimidated by physical or other threat. The other two survey items were similar but asked the respondents to answer in terms of their experiences since November, 1988--an approximate 12-month period preceding the survey.

Victimization rates for all respondents during their entire careers in the probation/parole field and during the year preceding the survey are shown in Table 11.2. Some 84% of current officers reported experiencing at least one victimization incident during the course of their careers in the field of probation/parole. A slightly lower rate (81%) prevailed for those who are currently supervisors or managers in one of the Vermont agencies. Among clerical and staff employees, slightly more than one-fifth (21%) reported that they had also encountered at least one such incident while working in the field of probation and parole.

When general type of victimization events are considered, one-third (33%) of the responding officers indicated that they had been physically assaulted at some time during their careers; the corresponding figure was lower for the supervisors/managers (25%). None of the clerical and staff workers reported having been physically assaulted while working in the field (Table 11.2)

As shown in the bottom segment of Table 11.2, 65% of the responding officers reported experiencing some type of victimization event during the year preceding the survey. The corresponding figure was smaller for the supervisors/managers (56%) and considerably lower for clerical and staff employees (5%).

When considered according to the general type of incident encountered during the past year, the highest rates are associated with intimidation events. Over half of the responding officers (53%) and supervisors/managers (56%) reported experiencing an incident of this type. (Table 11.2)

Table 11.3 shows the victimization rates by type during the worker's entire career in the probation and parole field. As can be seen, about half of the officers and the supervisors/managers who had been physically assaulted during their careers have experienced more than one such event. There were no incidents of job-related physical assaults reported by any of the clerical or staff employees.

Rates for intimidation during the career are much higher in all of the worker categories. More than four-fifths of the responding officers (84%) and supervisor/managers (81%) reported that they had encountered one or more intimidation events during their careers in probation/parole. Moreover, over



half (53%) of the officers and 38% of the supervisors/managers reported that they had experienced intimidation events more than four times during their careers (Table 11.3).

Table 11.2

**VICTIMIZATION RATES FOR ENTIRE CAREER AND DURING PAST  
YEAR IN PROBATION/PAROLE FIELD (Percentages)**

Characteristics	Officers	Supv'rs./ Managers	Clerical & Staff	All Re- spondents
<u>Victimization in Career:</u>				
Never victimized in career	16	19	79	30
Victimization in career by general type:				
Physical assault only	--	--	--	--
Both assault and intimid.	33	25	--	24
Intimidation only	51	56	21	45
<b><u>Base N</u></b>	<b><u>51</u></b>	<b><u>16</u></b>	<b><u>19</u></b>	<b><u>86</u></b>
<u>Victimization in Past Year:</u>				
Not victimized past year	35	44	95	50
Victimization in past year by general type:				
Physical assault only	--	--	--	--
Both assault and intimid.	12	--	--	7
Intimidation only	53	56	5	43
<b><u>Base N</u></b>	<b><u>51</u></b>	<b><u>16</u></b>	<b><u>19</u></b>	<b><u>86</u></b>

Note: Column percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

The second set of indicators of hazardous incidents focused on the experiences of workers in the year preceding the survey. As can be seen in Table 11.4, 12% of the probation and parole officers indicated that they had been physically assaulted in the line of duty during the year preceding the survey; none of the other respondents reported having been physically assaulted during this same time period. Even though the incidence of physical assault appears relatively small for officers, the fact that about one in eight were at risk of physical assault while on the job during a yearly period constitutes a level of occupational risk of some importance.

When victimizations by some form of intimidation are considered, the incidence rates are much higher. Among probation and parole officers, some 65% experienced one or more such events in the year preceding the survey, and more than half (56%) of supervisors/managers were similarly affected (Table 11.4). And, as the additional data in Table 11.4 show, a majority of those reporting intimidation events reported experiencing more than one such event in the year before the survey.

Table 11.3

**VICTIMIZATION RATES OVER ENTIRE CAREER IN  
PROBATION/PAROLE FIELD (Percentages)**

Victimization Status	Officers	Supv'rs./ Managers	Clerical & Staff	All Re- spondents
Physically Assaulted in the Line of Duty During Entire Career	33	25	--	24
Times Physically Assaulted in the Line of Duty During Entire Career:				
Once	16	6	--	10
Twice	6	--	--	4
Three times	4	6	--	4
Four times	--	--	--	--
More than four times	8	12	--	7
Never physically assaulted	67	75	100	76
<u>Base N</u>	<u>51</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>86</u>
Intimidated by Physical or Any Other Threat During Entire Career	84	81	21	70
Times Intimidated by Physical or Any Other Threat During Entire Career:				
Once	4	--	10	5
Twice	12	38	5	15
Three times	10	--	--	5
Four times	6	6	--	5
More than four times	53	38	5	50
Never intimidated	16	19	79	30
<u>Base N</u>	<u>51</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>86</u>

Note: Column percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Table 11.4

**VICTIMIZATION RATE IN YEAR PRECEDING  
THE SURVEY (Percentages)**

Victimization Status	Officers	Supv'rs./ Managers	Clerical & Staff	All Re- spondents
Physically Assaulted in the Line of Duty During Past Year	12	--	--	7
Times Physically Assaulted in the Line of Duty During Past Year:				
Once	10	--	--	6
Twice	2	--	--	1
Three times	--	--	--	--
Four times	--	--	--	--
More than four times	--	--	--	--
Not physically assaulted	88	100	100	93
<u>Base N</u>	<u>51</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>86</u>
Intimidated by Physical or Any Other Threat During Past Year	65	56	5	50
Times Intimidated by Physical or Any Other Threat During Past Year:				
Once	14	19	--	12
Twice	12	12	--	9
Three times	10	6	--	7
Four times	8	6	1	7
More than four times	22	12	--	15
Not intimidated	35	44	95	50
<u>Base N</u>	<u>51</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>86</u>

Note: Column percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

### Correlates of Victimization Status

Table 11.5 displays relationships between general victimization status and various personal and job-related characteristics of the probation and parole officers and supervisors/managers responding to the survey.<sup>5</sup> As can be seen, males are more likely than females to have experienced victimization incidents during their careers in probation and parole (Table 11.5).

Age shows no clear relationship to career victimization experiences. However, tenure in the field of probation and parole is clearly related to career victimization status. For example, of those with 10 or more years of tenure, 47% reported experiencing one or more victimization events at some time in their careers, compared to only 18% of those not reporting having faced such incidents. Respondents with unarmed self-defense training were considerably more likely than others to have been victimized at some point in their careers (75%), compared to only 27% of non-victims. While all of those who reported carrying a weapon were in the victim group, the numbers involved are too small to warrant any solid conclusions (Table 11.5).

In Table 11.6, relationships between victimization status during the year preceding the survey and several personal and job-related characteristics are shown for officers and supervisors/managers. Only two of these relationships are notable. First, males are more likely than females to have experienced a victimization during the past year. Similarly, individuals who have had unarmed self-defense training are more likely to have been victimized at some time in the past year than their colleagues without such training. An inspection of the other data in Table 11.6 does not indicate any marked relationships between other variables and current victimization status. All of those reporting carrying some type of weapon were past-year victims, but the numbers involved are too small to warrant any conclusions.

In summary, the data in this section indicate that the problem of work-related safety among Vermont probation and parole workers is pervasive. Some 12%--approximately, one in eight--of the officers responding to the survey reported that they had been physically assaulted in the line of duty during the past year. None of the supervisors/managers reported being assaulted during this same time period.

When all types of hazardous incidents are considered, one-third (33%) of the officer-respondents to this survey experienced one or more such events during this same period of time, followed by one-fourth (25%) of the responding supervisors/managers. More detailed officers' experiences with on-the-job incidents affecting worker safety are presented in another subsection below.

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<sup>5</sup>"Victimization status" refers to any form or frequency of encounter with hazardous incidents, as defined earlier, and distinguishes only between general "yes" and "no" responses to survey items asking about such events.

Table 11.5

**CORRELATES VICTIMIZATION STATUS DURING ENTIRE CAREER:  
OFFICERS AND SUPERVISORS/MANAGERS (Percentages)<sup>6</sup>**

Characteristics	Totals	
	Yes	No
<u>Sex of Respondent:</u>		
Male	77	46
Female	23	54
<u>Age of Respondent:</u>		
Under 25 years	4	--
25 - 29 years	5	9
30 - 39 years	30	18
40 - 49 years	45	36
50 years or older	16	36
<u>Unarmed self-defense training:</u>		
Yes, have had training	75	27
No, have not had training	25	73
<u>Tenure in prob.parole field:</u>		
Less than 5 years	23	45
5 - 9 years	30	36
10 - 19 years	36	18
20 years or more	11	--
<u>Kind of weapon usually carried:<sup>7</sup></u>		
Handgun	2	--
Other firearm	2	--
Impact instrument	12	--
Chemical Agent	6	--
Knife/Other sharp-edged instr.	10	--
<b>Base N</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>11</b>

Note: Column percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

<sup>6</sup>Because of the small number of probation and parole officers who were not victimized at some point in their career (N=8), both officers and supervisors/managers are included in this table.

<sup>7</sup>Respondents were asked to indicate whether they usually carried or did not carry a series of weapons. Thus, each percentage figure is independent of the others, and column percentages do not add to 100.

Table 11.6

**CORRELATES OF VICTIMIZATION STATUS IN DURING PAST YEAR:  
OFFICERS AND SUPERVISORS/MANAGERS (Percentages)<sup>8</sup>**

Characteristics	Totals	
	Yes	No
<u>Sex of Respondent:</u>		
Male	81	56
Female	19	44
<u>Age of Respondent:</u>		
Under 25 years	5	--
25 - 29 years	5	8
30 - 39 years	33	20
40 - 49 years	45	40
50 years or older	12	32
<u>Unarmed self-defense training:</u>		
Yes, have had training	74	56
No, have not had training	26	44
<u>Hold second job:</u>		
Yes, have had training	21	12
No, have not had training	79	88
<u>Tenure in current agency:</u>		
Less than 5 years	43	39
5 - 9 years	22	28
10 - 19 years	31	22
20 years or more	3	11
<u>Kind of weapon usually carried:<sup>9</sup></u>		
Handgun	2	--
Other firearm	3	--
Impact instrument	17	--
Chemical Agent	8	--
Knife/Other sharp-edged instr.	14	--
<b>Base N</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>25</b>

Note: Column percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

<sup>8</sup>Because of the small number of officers who reported experiencing victimization events during the year preceding the survey (N=8), both probation and parole officers and supervisors/managers were included in this table.

<sup>9</sup>Respondents were asked to indicate whether they usually carried or did not carry a series of weapons. Thus, each percentage figure is independent of the others, and totals do not add to 100.

## Safety Concerns and Policy Initiatives for Worker Safety

### Safety Concerns

Employees in Vermont agencies responding to the general survey were asked several questions concerning their perceptions of personal safety in various areas of the work environment of probation and parole. As can be seen in Table 11.7, the great majority of officers (90%) and supervisors/managers (88%) felt themselves to be very safe or safe while working in their offices during regular office hours. However, the percentages feeling very safe or safe declined considerably when the context was changed to working in your local office during non-office hours--64% for the officers, and 69% for the supervisors/managers (Table 11.7).

Three-fourths (76%) of the responding officers reported that they felt very safe or safe when visiting with an offender in the local jail or state prison. Moreover, when those indicating that they do not make such visits are excluded from the analysis, the percentage of officers feeling very safe or safe in making jail or prison visits rises to 87% (39 of 45). The responses offered by supervisors/managers were similar; 93% (14 of 15) of those noting that they did make such visits indicated they felt very safe or safe while making such visits (Table 11.7).

The results were strikingly different when officers were asked about their concern for personal safety when making field contacts. Here, some three-fourths (76%) reported being very or somewhat concerned about personal safety in the field (Table 11.7). Among the supervisor/managers, the percentage was much smaller (34%), although a sizable proportion (38%) reported that they did not make field contacts.

When respondents were asked to indicate whether, with respect to personal safety, work in the field had become more dangerous or not, 71% of the officers and 69% of the supervisors/managers responded that they felt the field had become more dangerous over the past five years. No respondents in either group felt that the field had become less dangerous during the past five years (Table 11.7).

In sum, workers' concerns with safety focused principally on contacts made in the community, which constitutes for most probation and parole workers a primary work environment. With respect to the phenomenon of hazardous incidents, the findings presented here fit closely with data presented in another subsection below on the dynamics of victimization events. There, it can be seen that such incidents occur mainly during the carrying out of day-to-day work responsibilities in the community.



Table 11.7

**PERCEPTIONS OF ON-THE-JOB SAFETY: OFFICERS  
AND SUPERVISOR/MANAGERS (Percentages)**

Safety Concerns	Officers	Supv'rs./ Managers
How safe do you feel while working in your local office during regular office hours?		
Very Safe/Safe	90	88
Unsafe/Very Unsafe	10	12
How safe do you feel while working in your local office during <u>non-office</u> hours?		
Very Safe/Safe	64	69
Unsafe/Very Unsafe	36	31
How safe do you feel when visiting with an offender in your local jail or state prison?		
Very Safe/Safe	76	88
Unsafe/Very Unsafe	20	6
Do not make such visits	4	6
How concerned are you about your personal safety when making field contacts?		
Very concerned/Somewhat Concerned	76	34
Not very concerned/Definitely Not Concerned	12	19
Do not make field contacts	12	38
With respect to your personal safety, during the past <u>five years</u> (or whatever time you've been in the field, if less than 5 years), do you think your work in the probation/parole field has:		
Become more dangerous	71	69
Stayed about the same	29	31
Become less dangerous	--	--
<b>Base N</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>16</b>

## Policy Initiatives for Worker Safety

In his monograph, Worker Safety in Probation and Parole, Parsonage identified a series of policy initiatives regarded by probation and parole workers as relevant to worker safety in studies conducted in Texas, New York State, Pennsylvania, and Virginia.<sup>10</sup> Workers in each state were asked to rate each potential policy initiative with respect to its perceived usefulness as a means of enhancing the safety of probation and parole workers.

In the current study, respondents were asked to rank 23 potential policy proposals drawn from the four state studies mentioned above.<sup>11</sup> The possible ratings of each item were "definitely useful," "useful," "undecided," "not useful," and "definitely not useful." The results are shown in Table 11.8, with items rank-ordered according to the percentage of officers who rated a policy initiative as "definitely useful" or "useful."

As can be seen in Table 11.8, five items received high ratings by over 80% of the officer respondents. All pertained to concerns about personal safety when carrying out day-to-day job responsibilities in local settings. The highest rated item (96%) was concerned with developing a "partner system" for use in making home visits; 93% of the supervisors/managers also strongly endorsed this policy initiative. Providing probation/parole officer-police officer teams when making arrests of offenders in violation of probation or parole requirements was rated as definitely useful or useful by 84% of the officers and 93% of the supervisors/managers. The other three items rated as definitely useful or useful by more than four-fifths of the probation and parole officers were identifying all "high risk" areas (82%), providing training in self-defense methods (82%) and providing training in "verbal judo" (82%) (Table 11.8).

Another four policy concerns were rated as definitely useful or useful by between 70-80% of the responding officers. These included equipping probation and parole officers with non-lethal, chemical agents when making home visits (78%), providing "panic buttons" on office telephones (76%), providing officers with recent "mugshots" as releases (72%), and installing two-way communication devices in each officer's automobile (72%) (Table 11.8).

The order of "definitely useful" and "useful" rankings by supervisors/managers was generally similar to that of officers on most items, though sizable differences were evident on some of the potential policy initiatives. For example, while 78% of the officers rated having non-lethal, chemical agents when making home visits as definitely useful or useful, only 39% of the supervisors/managers similarly endorsed this policy initiative. Also, though only 20% of the supervisors/managers strongly endorsed the provision of

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<sup>10</sup>William H. Parsonage, Worker Safety in Probation and Parole (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Corrections, 1990).

<sup>11</sup>Minor changes were made in a few items, based on suggestions resulting from reviews of the initial questionnaire by representatives of agencies in the MASCA membership.

firearms to officers to be carried at any time believed necessary, just over half of the officers (53%) saw this as a definitely useful or useful policy. At the same time, two-thirds of the supervisors/managers (67%) gave strong ratings to requiring all probation/parole officers to provide their supervisors with a daily schedule prior to making home visits and/or field contacts, but this was supported by only 37% of the officer respondents (Table 11.8).

In sum, respondents' ratings of policy initiatives as definitely useful or useful tended to emphasize those actions of immediate assistance to front-line officers in carrying out typical job responsibilities with an enhanced sense of personal safety.

Table 11.8

**PERCEPTIONS OF POLICY INITIATIVES: OFFICERS  
AND SUPERVISOR/MANAGERS (Percentages)**

Respondent Rating of Policies as "Definitely Useful" or "Useful"	Officers	Supv'rs./ Managers
Develop a "partner system" to be used on an "as needed "basis when making home visits	96	93
Provide for P/P officer-police officer teams when making arrests of offenders in violation of probation/parole requirements	84	93
Identify all "high risk" areas and keep all P/P officers informed of these areas.	82	60
Provide training in self-defense methods	82	53
Provide training in "verbal judo"	82	87
Provide P/P officers with non-lethal, chemical agents to be carried when making home visits	78	39
Provide "panic buttons" on office telephones-- i.e., buttons which would alert either the local police or security personnel in the event of an emergency	76	80
Provide P/P officers with "mugshots" taken of releasees at the time of their release	75	47
Install two-way communication devices in each P/P officer's automobile	73	67
Provide distress signal devices to P/P officers when making home visits	56	67
Assuming proper training, provide P/P officers with firearms to be carried at any time the officers believes it is necessary	53	20
Establish a "law enforcement arrest authority"-- i.e., special units of trained P/P officers with authority to carry weapons and make arrests	49	27
Provide P/P officers with soft body armor for use in situations thought to be "high risk"	49	53

Table 11.8 (Cont'd.)

**PERCEPTIONS OF POLICY INITIATIVES: OFFICERS  
AND SUPERVISOR/MANAGERS (Percentages)**

Respondent Rating of Policies as "Definitely Useful" or "Useful"	Officers	Supv'rs./ Managers
Establish secure clerical areas for field offices-- i.e., areas could be entered and exited only through electronically controlled security doors	41	53
Assuming proper screening/training, provide P/P officers with firearms to be carried during the course of their duties	41	20
Implement a requirement that all P/P officers provide their respective unit supervisors with a daily schedule prior to making home visits and/or field contacts	37	67
Increase the number of specialized caseloads with respect to probationers/parolees	35	53
Require that P/P officers check in and out with a centralized monitor when on official business	35	53
Require a police/security officer to be present at all summons hearings held in the probation/ parole office	24	27
Require a police/security officer be present with the P/P officer at all revocation hearings	22	27
Provide security officers for field offices--i.e., individuals who would control entrance to field offices and would be available to assist in an emergency	20	20
Provide secure jail areas for visits with clients-- i.e., an area where the client is physically separated from the P/P officer	20	13
<u>Base N</u>	<u>51</u>	<u>16</u>

## Victimization Experiences of Vermont Probation/Parole Officers

Respondents indicating in Part 1 of the survey questionnaire that they had experienced one or more victimization events during the year before the survey were asked to complete Part 2 of the instrument, which asked a series of questions about what they regarded as the most serious event encountered. A total of 28 officer-respondents (out of 33 reporting past-year victimization experiences) completed this section of the questionnaire. The discussion in the remainder of this section focuses exclusively on officers' responses to this supplemental section of the questionnaire. The purpose is to present information about the past-year victimization experiences of line officers.

## The Dynamics of Victimization

The perpetrator of the victimization incident was, with few exceptions, the probationer or parolee (89%). A client's family member was named in the remaining 11% of the cases (Table 11.9). Although not shown in a table here, 89% of the perpetrators were male, and 82% were 21 years of age or older. In addition, 71% of the offenders' disposition statuses were identified as being under probation/parole supervision at the time of the most serious incident.

Table 11.9

### OFFENDER'S STATUS AT TIME OF INCIDENT (Percentages)

Offender Status	Officers
Client (probationer/parolee)	89
Client's family member	11
Client's friend	--
Bystander	--
Other	--
Unknown	--
	<b><u>Base N</u></b>
	<b><u>28</u></b>

In two-thirds (68%) of the incidents described, the perpetrator was under the responding officer's supervision, and in an additional 14% of the cases was under the officer's agency's supervision (Table 11.10). In contrast to what was found in the other MASCA jurisdictions surveyed, in no instance was the supervision status of the offender unknown.

Table 11.10

OFFENDER'S SUPERVISION STATUS TIME OF INCIDENT (Percentages)

Supervision Status	Percent
Under respondent's supervision	68
Under respondent's agency supervision	14
Under another agency's supervision	18
Not under supervision	--
Unknown	--
<b>Base N</b>	<b>28</b>

Table 11.11 shows the criminal status characteristics of perpetrators at the time of the most serious incident reported by officer victims. As can be seen, equal proportions of the offenders were under sentence for misdemeanors or felonies (48% each). "Crimes against persons" was the most important offense for which the perpetrator had been sentenced for a slight majority (53%) of all offenders in the victimization incident. Substance abuse was the most important offense in 21% of the cases. However, respondents reported that 75% of the perpetrators were known to have a history of drug abuse, with some 93% having a history of alcohol abuse (Table 11.11).

Slightly less than half (46%) of the perpetrators had been previously incarcerated, with a like proportion having one or more felony convictions in their prior criminal histories. Only 4% were reported to have had no prior convictions or adjudications (Table 11.11). A majority of the perpetrators had records of prior assaults against others, including police officers (54%), spouses (57%) and other family members (50%), and other citizens (57%) (Table 11.11). Overall, the data suggest that the offenders involved in the most serious incidents during the past year have fairly "heavy" criminal histories.

Table 11.11

**CRIMINAL STATUS CHARACTERISTICS OF PERPETRATORS (Percentages)**

Criminal Status Characteristics	Percent
<u>Most Serious Offense:</u>	
Misdemeanor	48
Felony	48
Unknown	4
<u>Type of Most Important Offense:</u>	
Crime vs. person	53
Crime vs. property	18
Substance abuse	21
Not under sentence	7
Unknown	--
<u>Previous Incarceration:</u>	
Yes	46
No	18
Unknown	36
<u>Drug Abuse History:</u>	
Yes	75
No	11
Unknown	14
<u>Alcohol Abuse History:</u>	
Yes	93
No	--
Unknown	7
<u>Prior Criminal History:</u>	
No prior convictions/adjudications	4
One prior felony	14
Two or more prior felonies	32
Prior misdemeanor	43
Unknown	7
<u>Prior Assaults Against Others:</u>	
Probation/parole officer	7
Other probation/parole personnel	4
Police officer	54
Treatment agency personnel	21
Spouse	57
Other family member	50
Citizen	57
<u>Base N</u>	<u>28</u>



Almost half (46%) of the perpetrators were reported to have been under the influence of drugs, alcohol or both at the time of the most serious past-year victimization events. Interestingly, though, in one-third (32%) of the cases the worker-victim did not know whether the offender was "under the influence" or drugs and/or alcohol when the incident occurred (Table 11.1).

Table 11.12

WHETHER OFFENDER UNDER INFLUENCE OF DRUGS OR ALCOHOL  
AT TIME OF INCIDENT (Percentages)

Whether Under Influence	Percent
Drugs	14
Alcohol	18
Both drugs and alcohol	14
Nothing	21
Unknown	32
<u>Base N</u>	<u>28</u>

Actual physical assault occurred in a relatively small proportion of the incidents reported (14%), although 71% of the events involved the threat of physical assault (Table 11.13). Intimidations or attempts to intimidate were an element in 79% of the victimization incidents, and half (50%) involved a threat to the officer's reputation, as did one-third (32%) a threat to the officer's property (Table 11.13). In sum, whether the behavior exhibited by the perpetrator was physical assault or threat of assault, the data indicate that the officer is the direct object of victimization in the great majority of the cases. Instances in which a third party related to the worker-victim (e.g., family member) is the object of victimization, although not negligible, are comparatively infrequent.

Table 11.13

## INCIDENCE OF DIFFERENT OFFENDER ACTIONS AGAINST OFFICERS (Percentages)

Nature of Offender Action	Percent
Physical assault	14
Threat of physical assault	71
Damage to officer's property	4
Threat to officer's property	32
Intimidation	79
Attempted extortion	11
Threat to officer's reputation	50
Threat of physical harm to officer's family	29
Intimidation or attempted intimidation of officer's family member(s)	25
<b>Base N</b>	<b>28</b>

Another set of items in Part 2 of the survey instrument asked respondents about additional actions of the perpetrator against the victim-worker. The data for these questions appear in Table 11.14. The data clearly demonstrate that physical force was seldom involved, and when it occurred the offenders most often employed body parts (e.g., hit, kicked, pushed) as the means of physical force. More frequent involved were allegations about the officer's professional conduct (50%) and lawsuits threatened against the officer or his/her agency (61%) (Table 11.14).

As shown in Table 11.15, the officer-victim was accompanied by another probation/parole officer about one-third (30%) of the time when the incident and by a law enforcement officer almost half (48%) of the time. The latter data are not surprising, in view of the fact that many of the incidents reported occurred when the perpetrator was under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol and reported to be engaging in abusive behavior towards family members or others.

Table 11.14

**INCIDENCE OF ADDITIONAL OFFENDER ACTIONS AGAINST OFFICERS (Percentages)**

Nature of Offender Action	Percent
<u>Physical Force:</u>	
Shot	--
Hit with impact instrument	4
Cut with sharp edged instrument	--
Hit with fist or hand	7
Kicked	7
Pushed	18
Other weapon used	11
<u>Allegations About Officer's:</u>	
Professional conduct	50
Personal conduct	39
Lawsuits threatened against officer/agency	61
Allegations re: co-workers	26
Allegations re: superiors	18
Allegations re: officer's family or friends	26
<u>Base N</u>	<u>28</u>

Table 11.15

**OTHERS PRESENT AT VICTIMIZATION EVENT IN ADDITION TO OFFICER (Percentages)**

Others Present at Event	Percent
Probation/parole officer	30
Law enforcement officer	48
Officer's family	4
Officer's friends or acquaintances	7
Offender's employer or co-workers	11
Offender's family members	18
Offender's friends or acquaintances	22
Bystander(s)	26
Others	14
<u>Base N</u>	<u>28</u>

Another important matter in understanding the character and dynamics of hazardous incidents experienced is the location where or medium through which an event occurs. An examination of the data relating to this issue in the current survey suggests that many of the incidents are, in reality, episodic. Often, more than one location and/or medium are involved before the victimization event is perceived as concluded, regardless of the outcome. For example, an incident that commences with an officer's visit to a client's home might be culminated in an on-the-street confrontation or a clash during a subsequent session between the officer and client at the agency office. The data in Table 11.16 suggest that such action sequences are not altogether rare; many of the respondents identified multiple sites and/or media as being involved in the same event. As shown in Table 11.16, the agency office was reported most frequently to be where the incident occurred (41%), followed by a police station (30%) and a jail or prison (22%). Numerous other locations and/or media were noted by respondents, though the various frequencies of occurrence were generally fairly low.

Table 11.16  
WHERE INCIDENT TOOK PLACE (Percentages)

Where Incident Took Place	Percent
Over the phone	15
By letter or mail	7
Message or report of others	18
Agency office	41
Client's home	18
Someone else's home	14
Prison or jail	22
Police station	30
Human services agency	7
Courtroom	11
In vehicle	7
Offender's employment site	--
Public facility	4
On the street	18
Apartment hallway or elevator	7
Other location	11
<u>Base N</u>	<u>28</u>

The most frequent response of the worker-victim in reaction to the incident was an attempt to talk to the offender (85%). The officer struck back in only 15% of the cases, and in no instance did the officer use or threaten to use a gun or other weapon (Table 11.17).

Table 11.17

## RESPONSE BY OFFICER TO INCIDENT (Percentages)

Response by Officer	Percent
Struck back physically	15
Threatened to strike back physically	4
Used gun or other weapon	--
Threatened to use a gun	--
Displayed badge or I.D.	--
Used verbal threat	7
Said nothing	11
Retreated	11
Called out for help	7
Attempted to talk to offender	85
Took no action	18
<b>Base N</b>	<b>28</b>

As shown in Table 11.18, over half (53%) of the contexts in which the hazardous event occurred was an announced/expected visit (33%) or a surprise visit (30%) by the officer. One-fourth (26%) of the incidents occurred in the context of an arrest situation.

Table 11.18

## CONTEXT IN WHICH INCIDENT OCCURRED (Percentages)

Context of Incident	Percent
Announced or expected visit	33
Surprise visit	30
During arrest of the offender	22
During arrest of someone else	4
In response to offender's call	11
In response to offender's family member call	18
Context of domestic dispute	7
During transport of offender	7
Other context	50
<b>Base N</b>	<b>28</b>

### Aftermaths of Victimization and Consequences for Workers

One of the important concerns in examining the many different impacts that victimization might have on personnel in the field of probation and parole focuses attention on the aftermaths of such events and their consequences for workers' personal and professional lives. Table 5.19 presents information describing the aftermaths of victimization as reported by respondents in the Vermont worker safety study.

The direct consequences of victimization experiences involved injury for only 7% of the officer respondents. The most frequent aftermaths were of an emotional character. For example, 71% reported that they had been shaken up by the incident and another 39% that fear on the job also resulted from this experience (Table 11.19).

Another feature of the data that is notable is the fact that many of the officers perceive victimization incidents as affecting their approaches to or relationships with clients. A "reduced trust in clients" was noted by more than half (54%) of the respondents, and a related aftermath, "reduced sensitivity to clients," was also reported by 29% (Table 11.19). Significantly, though, one-fourth (25%) of all respondents reported a level of "enhanced" self-confidence arising out of the event (Table 11.19).

Table 11.19

#### AFTERMATHS OF VICTIMIZATION EVENTS (Percentages)

Aftermaths of Events	Percent
Injured by incident	7
Chronic condition	--
Aggravation of old injury	--
Stomachache, headache, etc.	14
Shaken up	71
Fear on the job	39
Reduced self-confidence	25
Reduced trust in clients	54
Reduced sensitivity to clients	29
Increased use of medication	4
Increased use of alcohol	7
Disruption of personal life	43
Disruption of family life	29
Enhanced sense of self-confidence	25
Base N	28

In addition to survey questions about the aftermaths of the victimization event, several questions were asked about other possible effects of the incident on the worker and others with whom he/she relates. Results are presented in Table 11.20. With respect to personal effects on the officer, 43% of all respondents indicated that the incident had negative consequences for them personally, and 29% noted that it had a negative effect on their families. Relatively few saw the incident as affecting their agencies or co-workers negatively, although one-fifth felt that they were less open with clients as a result of the experience (Table 11.20).

Table 11.20

EFFECT OF VICTIMIZATION EVENTS (Percentages)

Effects of Victimization	Percent
<u>Personal Effect on Officers:</u>	
Positive consequences	14
Negative consequences	43
No consequences	43
<u>Effect on Officer's Family:</u>	
Positive consequences	4
Negative consequences	29
No consequences	68
<u>Effect of Incident on Agency:</u>	
Positive consequences	14
Negative consequences	7
No consequences	79
<u>Effect on Co-Workers:</u>	
Positive consequences	25
Negative consequences	25
No consequences	50
<u>Less Open with Client?</u>	
Yes	21
No	79
<u>Less Open with Co-Workers?</u>	
Yes	4
No	96
<u>Thought About Quitting Job?</u>	
Yes	18
No	82

Table 11.20 (Cont'd.)

## EFFECT OF VICTIMIZATION EVENTS (Percentages)

Effects of Victimization	Percent
<u>Applied for Transfer?</u>	
Yes	4
No	96
<u>Avoided contact with Co-Workers?</u>	
Yes	4
No	96
<u>Avoided Contacts with Threatening Clients?</u>	
Yes	11
No	89
<u>Base N</u>	<u>28</u>

The last two concerns examined in this section of the report focus on the reporting behavior of officer victims in relation to the most serious incident experienced in the preceding year and their perceptions of whether the incident might have been prevented by them or their agencies. As can be seen in Table 11.21, among all respondents the two sets of individuals to whom the incident was reported were, in order of frequency, supervisors (82%) and co-workers (71%). A majority (54%) also noted that the incident had been reported to the police. Spouses were less frequently named as individuals with whom they discussed the incident (46%) as were other family members (29%) or friends (36%) and agency heads (29%). Overall, the data in Table 11.21 indicate that officers in the Vermont agencies were not reluctant to report and discuss the incident with others in the agency.

As shown in Table 11.22, it is clear that very few respondents (7%) felt that they personally could have prevented the incident from happening. This is not surprising, in view of earlier findings that indicate that a majority of the incidents occurred while the probation/parole officer was carrying out normal day-to-day duties associated with the job, such as making field visits or meeting with an offender in the agency office. As more than one respondent to the overall MASCA survey noted in comments to the researchers, many of the events experienced simply "come with the territory"--they cannot be prevented, only dealt with in the most constructive manner possible.

Less than one-fifth (18%) of the respondents felt that their agencies could have done something to prevent the hazardous incident from occurring. At the same time, only 36% felt that their agencies could have done something



to prepare them and other personnel better to cope with this type of situation (Table 11.22). In sum, what emerges from these data is (1) that probation and parole officers perceive their ability and that of their agencies to prevent the onset of victimization events to be limited, but (2) they also perceive prior education about the circumstances and dynamics of victimization events, coupled with training could equip them to cope with and respond more effectively to hazardous events in their daily job routines, although their confidence in the efficacy of such education and training is not unlimited.

Table 11.21

## REPORTING BEHAVIOR OF OFFICER VICTIMS (Percentages)

To Whom Event Reported	Percent
Agency head	29
Supervisor	82
Co-workers	71
Police	54
Counselor	11
Spouse	46
Other family members	29
Friends	36
Other persons	4
No one	18
<b>Base N</b>	<b>28</b>

Table 11.22

## WHETHER INCIDENT COULD HAVE BEEN PREVENTED (Percentages)

Whether Incident Could Have Been Prevented	Percent
Could you have prevented the incident?	
Yes	7
No	82
Don't know	11
Could your agency have done anything prevent this incident?	
Yes	17
No	79
Don't know	4
Could the agency have done anything to better prepare personnel to cope with this type of situation?	
Yes	36
No	43
Don't know	21
<b>Base N</b>	<b>28</b>