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Department of Correctional Services

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**IDENTIFIED MALE
SUBSTANCE ABUSERS**

JANUARY 1993

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**IDENTIFIED MALE SUBSTANCE ABUSERS
NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES
JANUARY 1993**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The following report provides information on male inmates under custody on January 2, 1993 who have been identified as substance abusers. The information on substance abuse reflects self-reported drug use and scores of nine or above on the Michigan Alcohol Screening Test (MAST).

Based on available self-report data on drug use and MAST scores, 68 percent (39,745) of the total male inmate population of 58,235 may be identified as substance abusers.

It should be noted that the above percentage of identified substance abusers in the inmate population must be considered a conservative estimate of the extent of substance abuse. The numbers include both inmates who report no drug use and have MAST scores under nine (14,525) and inmates with missing data on drug use (3,965). If the cases with missing data are excluded, it may be calculated that 73 percent (39,745) of the 54,270 inmates for whom data is available may be classified as substance abusers.

Information is presented on drug and alcohol abuse, type of drug use, crime of commitment, region of commitment, minimum sentence, maximum sentence, second felony status, current age, educational level and ethnic status.

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SECTION I

IDENTIFIED SUBSTANCE ABUSERS

The following table presents the breakdown of reported substance abuse for those male inmates held under custody as of January 2, 1993. Of the 58,235 male inmates under custody, 68 percent (39,745) report using drugs or are classified as alcoholic based on a score of 9 or more on the Michigan Alcohol Screening Test (MAST).

TABLE 1

	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>PERCENT</u>
Drug Abuse	26,877	46%
Drug and Alcohol	9,135	16%
Alcohol	<u>3,733</u>	<u>6%</u>
Identified Substance Abuser	39,745	68%
No Substance Abuse	14,525	25%
Missing Data on Drug Use	<u>3,965</u>	<u>7%</u>
Substance Abuse Not Identified	18,490	32%
TOTAL	58,235	100%

PERCENT OF SUBSTANCE ABUSERS IN INMATE POPULATION EXCLUDING MISSING DATA

Table 2 presents the percentage of identified substance abusers in the inmate population excluding cases missing data on drug use.

The "No Substance Abuse" category includes cases with no reported drug use, who are missing a MAST score. The missing MAST cases are included in this "No Substance Abuse" category to avoid overestimating the percentage of identified use when missing data is removed from the base. Drug use is considered the controlling variable since the majority of cases report drug use while only a small percentage of cases are identified as alcoholic with no corresponding drug use.

For inmates for which substance abuse data is available, 73 percent can be identified as substance abusers.

TABLE 2

<u>INMATES WITH SUBSTANCE ABUSE DATA</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>PERCENT</u>
Substance Abuse Indicated	39,745	73%
No Substance Abuse Indicated	<u>14,525</u>	<u>27%</u>
TOTAL	54,270	100%

ALCOHOL AND/OR DRUG ABUSE

Table 3 displays the breakdown of substance use reported by identified substance abusers. Of the identified male substance abusers, 68 percent report drug abuse only, 23 percent abuse both drugs and alcohol and 9 percent are identified as alcoholic according to the MAST (but report no drug use).

TABLE 3

	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>PERCENT</u>
Drug Abuser	26,877	68%
Drugs and Alcohol	9,135	23%
Alcoholic	<u>3,733</u>	<u>9%</u>
TOTAL	39,745	100%

TYPE OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Information on type of reported substance use is based on self-report drug use and is collected at the time of reception to the Department. Data is collected on up to three types of reported substances used. The following information is based on the first substance reported, with the exception of marijuana. If marijuana is the first reported substance of use and another drug such as cocaine is reported second, the drug marijuana is overridden to reflect the cocaine use.

Since only one substance is reported in the following tables it is important to remember that many of those reporting substance use indicate multiple drug use. For example, an individual who reports heroin, cocaine, and marijuana use would be counted for purposes of this report as a heroin user.

In addition, it should also be pointed out that this research follows the Department's standard protocol of considering MAST scores of nine or more as being indicative of alcoholism.

This stringent criterion was initially suggested by the Fellowship Society. More recently, a 1988 report of the Vera Institute of Justice supports the use of this criterion. This Vera study found that MAST scores of nine or more were highly related to other measures of alcohol abuse.

Moreover, it should be noted that the manual for the MAST indicates that a score of seven or more may be viewed to suggest a pattern of behavior reflective of alcoholism. The Department's continued use of a MAST score of nine as the criterion for alcohol abuse in its research series exceeds this cutoff point of seven. As such, the Department's use of this more rigorous criterion may be seen to generate conservative statistics on the extent of alcohol abuse among commitments.

Based on this information, Table 4 presents substance use for inmates identified as drug and/or alcohol abusers. Forty-six percent of inmates reporting substance abuse report using cocaine or crack, 15 percent report heroin use, 9 percent other drugs or narcotics, 21 percent marijuana or hashish, and 9 percent are identified as alcoholics with no drug use.

TABLE 4

	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>PERCENT</u>
Cocaine/Crack	18,090	46%
Heroin	5,827	15%
Other Drugs (exc. marijuana)	3,675	9%
Marijuana Only	8,420	21%
Alcohol Only	<u>3,733</u>	<u>9%</u>
TOTAL	39,745	100%

SECTION II
COMMITMENT INFORMATION

CRIME OF COMMITMENT

The most common commitment offenses for identified substance abusers are drug offenses. Thirty-six percent of the identified male substance abusers were committed for the sale or possession of drugs. Robbery is the second most common offense (22%), followed by homicide (14%) and burglary (11%).

TABLE 5

	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>PERCENT</u>
Homicide	5,390	14%
Rape	1,156	3%
Robbery	8,636	22%
Assault	1,108	3%
Burglary	4,196	11%
Arson	121	*
Sex Offenses	947	2%
Weapons Offenses	1,307	3%
Kidnapping	139	*
Other Coercive	273	1%
Drug Offenses	14,337	36%
Grand Larceny	658	2%
Forgery	209	1%
Stolen Property	546	1%
DWI	311	1%
Other Felonies	169	*
Youthful Offender	<u>234</u>	<u>1%</u>
TOTAL	39,737	100%**

Missing Cases = 8

* = Less than 0.5%

** May not add to 100% due to rounding.

REGION OF COMMITMENT

For reporting purposes, New York State is broken into four regions. Inmates from the New York City region are people committed from Bronx, Kings, New York, Queens and Richmond counties. The Suburban New York region includes Nassau, Suffolk, Westchester and Rockland counties. Upstate urban reflects commitments from upstate counties that include a population center of 50,000 or more. The eight counties included in this category are Albany, Broome, Erie, Monroe, Oneida, Onondaga, Rensselaer and Schenectady. The other Upstate category contains the remaining upstate counties.

The majority of identified substance abusers are from the New York City area. Seventy percent of the inmates are from New York City. Thirteen percent of cases are from Suburban New York. Ten percent are from Upstate Urban areas and the remaining 8 percent are from all other Upstate areas.

TABLE 6

	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>PERCENT</u>
New York City	27,767	70%
Suburban New York	5,099	13%
Upstate Urban	3,818	10%
Upstate Other	<u>3,035</u>	<u>8%</u>
TOTAL	39,719	100%*

Missing = 26

* May not add to 100% due to rounding.

SECOND FELONY STATUS

The second felony offender law requires that people who have been convicted of a felony offense, and who have a prior felony conviction serve a mandatory state prison sentence. The following table provides second felony offender status for identified substance abusers.

Sixty percent of the identified male substance abusers were sentenced as second felony offenders while 38 percent were sentenced as first felony offenders. Two percent of the cases were sentenced as persistent felons.

TABLE 7

	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>PERCENT</u>
First Felony Offender	15,059	38%
Second Felony Offender	23,782	60%
Persistent Felony Offender	<u>904</u>	<u>2%</u>
TOTAL	39,745	100%

AGGREGATE MINIMUM SENTENCE

Fifty-six percent of identified male substance abusers have a minimum sentence less than four years. Seventy-one percent of the male population is serving a minimum sentence of less than six years.

TABLE 8

	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>PERCENT</u>
12 to 17 months	2,491	6%
18 to 23 months	4,098	10%
24 to 35 months	9,769	25%
36 to 47 months	6,130	15%
48 to 71 months	6,058	15%
72 to 119 months	5,524	14%
120 to 179 months	1,869	5%
180 to 239 months	1,429	4%
240+ months	<u>2,366</u>	<u>6%</u>
TOTAL	39,734	100%

Missing Cases = 11

AGGREGATE MAXIMUM SENTENCE

Fifty-two percent of the identified substance abusers have a maximum sentence of less than eight years. Twenty-nine percent of the men have a maximum sentence of 15 years or greater, including 14% with life maximums.

TABLE 9

	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>PERCENT</u>
36 Months	4,706	12%
37-53 Months	5,244	13%
54-71 Months	4,102	10%
72-95 Months	6,764	17%
96-107 Months	1,431	4%
108-143 Months	3,764	10%
144-179 Months	2,445	6%
180+ Months	5,865	15%
Life Maximum	<u>5,423</u>	<u>14%</u>
TOTAL	39,744	100%

Missing Cases = 1

SECTION III
DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

AGE

Forty-six percent of the identified male substance abuser population are 29 years or less. Twenty-six percent of the inmates are between 25 and 29 years old, 39 percent are between 30 and 39 years old, while 15 percent are 40 years of age or older.

TABLE 10

<u>AGE</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>PERCENT</u>
16-18 Years	698	2%
19-20 Years	1,539	4%
21-24 Years	5,525	14%
25-29 Years	10,306	26%
30-34 Years	9,517	24%
35-39 Years	6,076	15%
40-44 Years	3,346	8%
45-49 Years	1,557	4%
50-54 Years	700	2%
55-59 Years	301	1%
60-64 Years	129	*
65+ Years	<u>51</u>	<u>*</u>
TOTAL	39,745	100%

Average Age = 31.5 years

* = Less than 0.5%

EDUCATIONAL LEVEL AT RECEPTION

The following information on education is based on educational achievement reported at reception to the Department.

Thirty-eight percent of identified male substance abusers report having a high school education or above. Thirty-three percent have less than a 10th grade education and 17 percent have an 8th grade education or less.

TABLE 11

	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>PERCENT</u>
6th Grade or Less	1,723	4%
7th Grade	1,272	3%
8th Grade	3,683	10%
9th Grade	6,015	16%
10th Grade	6,888	18%
11th Grade	4,541	12%
12 Grade/GED	11,823	30%
Some College or Tech	<u>2,953</u>	<u>8%</u>
TOTAL	38,897	100%*

Missing Cases = 848

* Cases may not add to 100% due to rounding.

ETHNIC STATUS

Forty-eight percent of identified male substance abusers are Black. Thirty-four percent are Hispanic and 17 percent are White.

TABLE 12

	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>PERCENT</u>
White	6,647	17%
Black	19,182	48%
Hispanic	13,555	34%
Other	<u>280</u>	<u>1%</u>
TOTAL	39,664	100%

Missing Cases = 81

SUMMARY

As demonstrated by this report, the majority of the male inmate population in New York State are identified substance abusers. Of the offenders for which the Department has substance abuse data, 73 percent report using drugs or have a MAST score of nine or greater. The most commonly reported drug used was cocaine/crack (46%). Marijuana was the second most frequently reported drug (21%). Fifteen percent of the identified substance abusers reported using heroin.

The crime of commitment for identified substance abusers also reflects drug involvement. Thirty-six percent of the men were committed for drug offenses. The second most prevalent crime of commitment was for Robbery (22%) and 14% of the cases were committed for a Homicide.

The majority of cases have a prior felony conviction. Sixty-two percent of the men were sentenced as a predicate felony offender.

Demographic information reveals the majority of substance abusers are from the New York City region, are Black or Hispanic, and average 31.5 years of age.

Educational level varies with approximately 38 percent reporting a high school education or above. However, 17 percent reported less than a 9th grade education.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In closing, this research found a decrease in the percentage of the male inmate population who may be identified as substance abusers, from 80% in April 1991, to 75% in April 1992, to 73% in January 1993.

This decrease in the percentage of male substance abusers under custody as of January 1993 may be attributed to a decrease in 1992 male commitments who report drug use. There was a parallel decrease of approximately 3% in drug crime commitments in 1992.

Despite this slight decline in self-reported drug use, three-quarters of the Department's inmate population may be identified as substance abusers (39,745), which substantiates the Department's need for treatment resources in this area.

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