



AN ANALYSIS OF GOOD TIME ALLOWANCES
IN CONNECTICUT CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES AND
THE EFFECTS ON MISDEMEANANT AND FELON SENTENCE

A Research Report

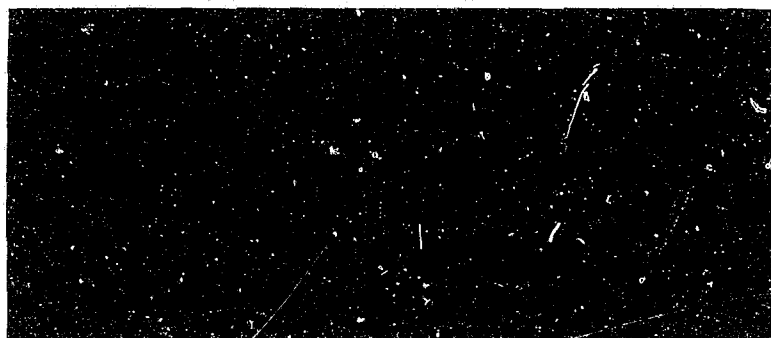
of the

Connecticut Department of Correction

Hartford 06115



48057



AN ANALYSIS OF GOOD TIME ALLOWANCES
IN CONNECTICUT CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES AND
THE EFFECTS ON MISDEMEANANT AND FELON SENTENCES

DONALD M. PARKER
RESEARCH ANALYST

Connecticut Department of Correction

Research Division
James Harris, Director
June, 1978

48057

ABSTRACT

This study analyzes the effects of good time allowances for (1) inmates receiving indeterminate felon sentences at Connecticut Correctional Institutions, and (2) inmates receiving determinate misdemeanor sentences and recently discharged from Connecticut Correctional Centers.

The study does not attempt to address the exceptional cases arising from any of the varied combinations of sentences which the judiciary may impose, and for which the application of the good time laws can often become quite complicated.

The General Statutes of Connecticut allow four types of good time credit.

1. Statutory Good Time
2. Jail Credit Good Time
3. Seven Day Work Week Good Time
4. Outstandingly Meritorious Good Time

The first two are generally awarded as a matter of course to all eligible sentenced inmates, while the latter two are awarded on a selective basis to sentenced inmates who meet special conditions.

The study was conducted to determine:

1. How much good time, by type, is granted.
2. How much good time is revoked.
3. How much good time is restored.
4. By what percentage good time provisions reduce minimum sentences.

5. What percentage of an inmate's sentence is actually served.

Many individuals believe that the Department of Correction revokes a great deal of good time and that it subsequently restores nearly all of it. It is also commonly believed that the Department awards large amounts of Outstandingly Meritorious Good Time (OMGT).

The study however reveals that little good time is revoked and less is later returned.

The study also shows that although the Commissioner has the authority to award an inmate up to 120 days OMGT, the most frequent award was 60 days for felons and 10 days for misdemeanants.

Other salient facts revealed by the data are:

- . The average felon minimum sentence was 3.3 years.
- . The average misdemeanor sentence was 71 days.
- . Felon inmates received an average of 496 days (16.5 mos.) good time, which resulted in a 41.0% reduction of their minimum sentence.
- . Misdemeanant inmates averaged 30 days good time, which amounted to a 42.0% reduction of their sentence.
- . The average amount of Outstandingly Meritorious Good Time awarded was 28 days for felon inmates. (most frequent was 60).
- . Twenty percent of the felon inmates had some portion of their good time revoked. Only one inmate in the misdemeanor sample of 226 had good time revoked.

- . The amount of forfeited good time subsequently restored was approximately one-third of that revoked.
- . The average felon inmate became eligible for parole after serving about 59.0% of his minimum sentence. A misdemeanor inmate served approximately 58.0% of his sentence.
- . The proportion of time served to the sentence imposed tends to decrease as the length of sentence increases.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

		<u>PAGE</u>
I.	Introduction.....	1
II.	Samples Used in Study.....	1
III.	Definitions.....	2
IV.	Findings.....	4
	A. Good Time Awarded to Felon Inmates.....	4
	1. Particular Findings.....	5
	B. Good Time Awarded to Misdemeanant Inmates.....	8
	1. Particular Findings.....	10
	2. Offenses.....	13
V.	Discussion.....	16
VI.	Appendix A.....	19

LIST OF TABLES

PAGE

Table 1	Estimate of the Average Reduction of Minimum Sentence by Type of Good Time and Average Time Served Prior to Parole Eligibility for Inmates Sentenced on or after 10-1-76 to Indeterminate Sentences.....	6
Table 2	Amount of Good Time Granted and Average Length of Stay for Inmates who Served Definite Sentences for Misdemeanor Offenses.....	11

LIST OF FIGURES

PAGE

Figure 1	Amount of Good Time Granted and Average Time Served Prior to Parole Eligibility for Felons with Indeterminate Sentences.....	9
Figure 2	Amount of Good Time Granted and Average Length of Stay for Misdemeanor Sentences.....	14
Figure 3	Percent of Sentenced Misdemeanants by Type of Offense.....	15
Figure 4	Percent of Offenses by Class Misdemeanor.....	17

INTRODUCTION

The General Statutes of Connecticut set forth the regulations governing the allowances of good time for inmates under Department of Correction supervision.

Good time allowances provide a method by which an inmate may earn a reduction of his/her sentence by good conduct and obedience to the rules and regulations of the Department of Correction. Nearly all correctional professionals believe that awarding good time to inmates motivates them toward good behavior during incarceration.

This study was undertaken to make Department policy makers more aware of the real effects of good time allowances on an inmate's sentence-in short, to learn what's really happening.

The questions this study addresses are:

- What is the average amount of good time received by felon and misdemeanor inmates?
- How much good time is forfeited?
- How much of the good time forfeited is later restored?
- How much is an inmate's sentence reduced by good time awards?
- What percentage of an inmate's sentence is actually served?

SAMPLES

There were two random samples used in this study: a felon and a misdemeanor sample.

The felon sample data, collected during October 1977 at the Hartford Parole District office consisted of 270 male parolees under parole supervision. All 270 were serving indeterminate sentences. In addition, all sentences ran concurrently when there was a conviction for multiple offenses.

The misdemeanor sample data were collected during January 1978 at the Hartford Correctional Center. The sample consisted of 226 inmates who were discharged from their sentence during the last six months of calendar 1977. All had served definite sentences for misdemeanor offenses. As with the felon sample, all sentences ran concurrently when there was a conviction for multiple offenses.

The collected data were keypunched onto computer cards. The cards were used to generate a variety of data analysis tables through the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) computer program.

A specific listing of the variables collected and used in data analysis is given in Appendix A.

DEFINITIONS

In Connecticut, the general statutes currently provide four types of good time credit: (1) Statutory Good Time (SGT); (2) Jail Credit Good Time (JCGT); (3) Seven Day Work Week Good Time; and (4) Outstandingly Meritorious Good Time (OMGT).

Statutory Good Time (SGT) is awarded all sentenced inmates for good behavior while incarcerated. It is typically awarded routinely and is credited in a lump sum at the beginning of an inmate's sentence. It is applied to both the minimum and maximum of an indeterminate sentence, and to the specific sentence in the case of a definite sentence.

The amount of SGT that could be earned on sentences imposed prior to October 1, 1976 was 5 days per month up to a minimum sentence of six years. Inmates with sentences with a minimum of six or more years earned 7.5 days per month for the 6th and subsequent years. Effective October 1, 1976 the rate of good time was increased to 10 days per month for inmates with minimums of under six years and 15 days per month for the sixth and subsequent years. SGT is pro-rated for less than a full month's confinement.

Prior to October 1, 1976 inmates were also awarded Meritorious Good Time (MGT) at the rate of 5 days per month. The increase of SGT mentioned above resulted from the combining of SGT and MGT in order to standardize and simplify the computation of good time.

Jail Credit Good Time (JCGT), created on October 1, 1975, is earned on the time an inmate spends in jail prior to being sentenced. This pre-conviction confinement occurs when an accused person is either denied bond or is unable to obtain the necessary bond money.

For inmates sentenced between October 1, 1975 and September 30, 1976, JCGT was earned at the rate of 5 days for each month of jail time. For those sentenced on or after October 1, 1976, the rate was increased to 10 days per month. As with SGT, JCGT is pro-rated for less than a full month's confinement.

Seven Day Work Week Good Time is awarded to sentenced inmates at the rate of 1 day for each period of seven consecutive days of institutional employment at the correctional facility.

Outstandingly Meritorious Good Time (OMGT) is awarded any sentenced inmate who displays exceptional personal achievement, accomplishment, or any other outstandingly meritorious conduct, as determined by the Commissioner of Correction.

A sentenced inmate can be awarded not more than 120 days OMGT for any one continuous term of imprisonment. The number of inmates who can receive OMGT in any one fiscal year is limited to 10% of the average sentenced inmate population during the previous fiscal year.

FINDINGS

GOOD TIME AWARDED TO FELON INMATES

The sample of 270 was separated into three groups depending on the date the person was sentenced. The three groups were (1) those sentenced prior to October 1, 1975 (N=197); (2) those sentenced between October 1, 1975 and September 30, 1976 (N=59); and (3) those sentenced on or after October 1, 1976 (N=14).

This division isolated the effects of changes which occurred in the good time laws on October 1, 1975 and October 1, 1976. The change occurring on October 1, 1975 was the creation of good time for pre-conviction jail time (JCGT), accrued at the rate of 5 days for each month of jail time. A number of changes altered the sentences pronounced October 1, 1976 and after. Statutory good time was increased from 5 to 10 days per month for sentences with a minimum of under six years, and from 7.5 days to 15 days per month for the sixth and each subsequent year. JCGT was increased from 5 to 10 days per month. However, meritorious good time was combined with SGT.

Because of the small number of sampled individuals in the two groups sentenced after October 1, 1975, the data collected on the 197 persons in the first group was extrapolated to estimate the good time effects on felons presently being sentenced.

A summary of the comparative amounts of good time awarded is presented in Table 1.

PARTICULAR FINDINGS

1. The minimum sentence ranged from 1 to 10 years, with an average of 3.3 years. Over one-third (38.6%) received minimums of 2 years or less, with 2 years being the most frequent.

Table 1

Estimate of the Average Reduction of Minimum Sentence by Type of Good Time and Average Time Served Prior to Parole Eligibility For Inmates Sentenced On or After 10/01/76 to Indeterminate Sentences

Number	Minimum Sentence		SGT	JCGT	7 Day Job	OMGT	GTFORT	GTREST	Gross Good Time	Net Good Time	Jail Credit	Total Time Served	Percent of Minimum Served
	Yrs	Days	Days										
20	1	365	120	6	1	1	0	0	123	123	17	237	65.0
15	1½	547	180	22	4	2	1	0	208	207	65	340	62.0
41	2	730	240	20	12	5	2	0	277	275	57	455	62.0
18	2½	912	300	22	13	31	1	0	366	365	66	547	60.0
37	3	1095	360	30	26	24	2	0	440	438	89	657	60.0
1	3½	1277	420	44	42	90	0	0	596	596	129	691	53.0
20	4	1460	480	36	36	34	2	0	586	584	110	876	60.0
19	5	1825	600	28	49	47	4	1	724	721	81	1104	60.0
12	6	2190	780	58	58	80	4	1	976	973	176	1217	56.0
3	7	2555	960	60	137	70	5	1	1227	1223	182	1332	52.0
7	8	2920	1140	48	68	99	11	3	1355	1347	142	1373	54.0
4	10	3650	1500	54	188	94	5	3	1836	1834	160	1816	50.0
197	5.3 Averages	1201	413	28	29	28	3	1	498	496	83	705	59.0

SGT.....Statutory good time

JCGT....Jail credit good time

OMGT....Outstandingly meritorious good time

GTFORT..Good time forfeited

GTREST.....Good time restored

Gross good time..Total good time earned

Net good time....Total good time less forfeitures

Jail credit.....Pre-conviction jail credit time

2. All 197 inmates received statutory good time with an overall average of 413 days or 13.6 months.
3. The average amount of jail credit good time received was 28 days. A total of 170 (86.3%) of the inmates were entitled to this type of good time.
4. A total of 113 (57.4%) of the 197 received 7 day job credit good time. The average was nearly one month. The higher the minimum sentence, the more likely an inmate would receive this type of credit.
5. The average amount of outstandingly meritorious good time awarded was 28 days. As with other types of good time, the higher the minimum sentence the higher the amount of good time awarded. The most frequent number of days of OMGT awarded was 60 days. The limit that can be awarded to any one inmate is 120 days.
6. Twenty percent of the inmates had some portion of their good time forfeited through the disciplinary process. The average amount forfeited was 3 days. One third of this was subsequently restored.
7. The average net amount of good time received was 496 days or slightly more than 16 months. This reduction amounted to approximately 41.0 percent of an inmate's sentence.
8. Approximately 86.0% of all sentenced inmates spend time in jail prior to conviction. Over two-thirds (68.8%)

spend 120 days or less in the accused status. The average was 83 days with a range of from 1 to over 330 days.

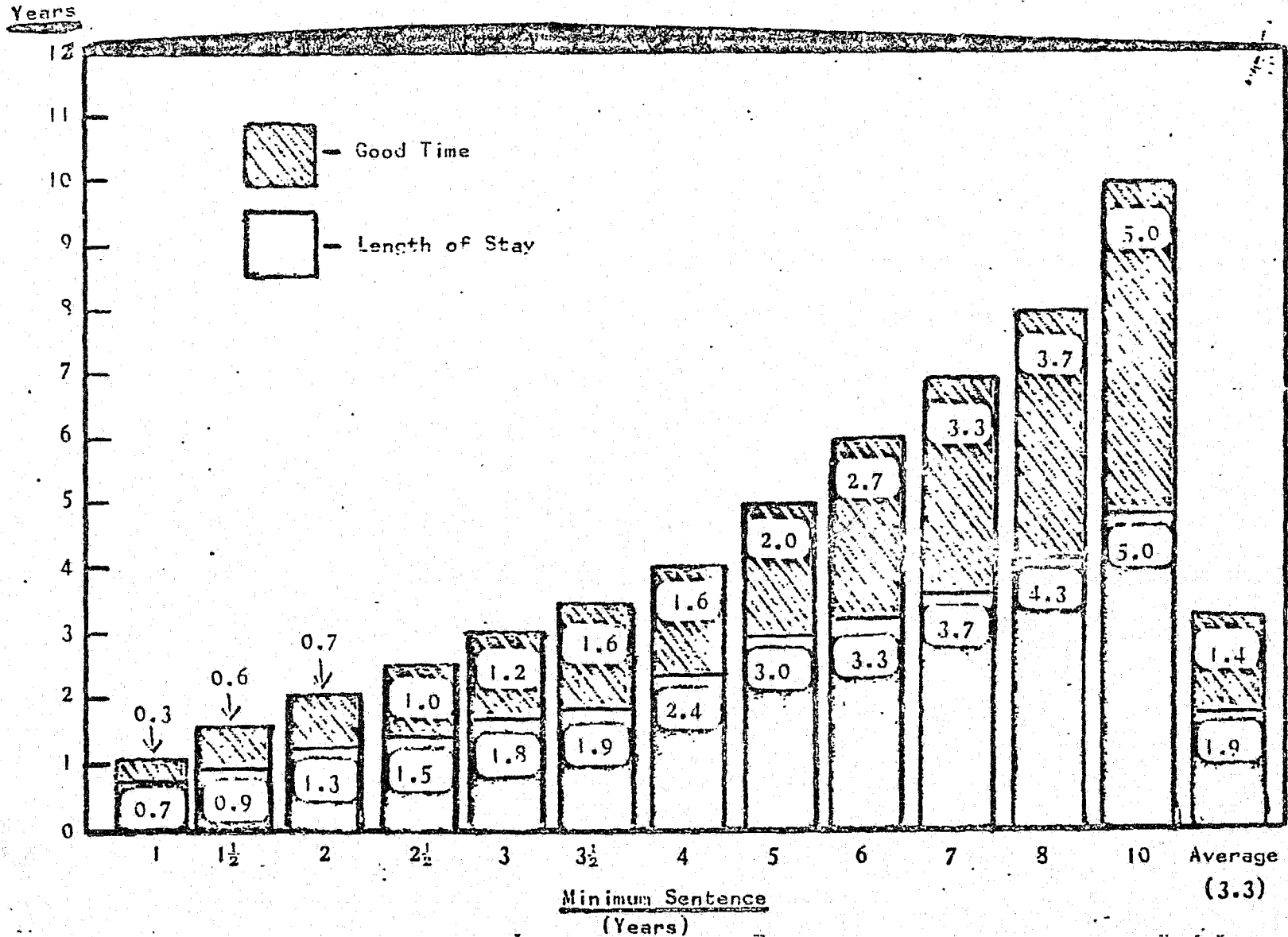
9. The average sentenced felon was incarcerated 705 days (23.2 months), 59.0% of his minimum sentence, prior to being eligible for parole. Those who received longer terms served a smaller percentage of their minimums than did those who received relatively shorter sentences. For example, a person with a 1 year minimum sentence served approximately 65.0% of his minimum, while a person with a 10 year minimum served about 50.0% of his minimum prior to being eligible for parole.
10. Figure 1 illustrates in years the average good time and time served prior to eligibility for parole by felon inmates with indeterminate sentences.
11. The effects of changes in the good time laws in 1975 and 1976, resulted in an increase of 18.7% in the average amount of good time awarded to those sentenced after 10-01-76, from 418 days to 496 days. The percent of the minimum sentence served consequently decreased to 59.0% from 66.0%.

GOOD TIME AWARDED TO MISDEMEANANT INMATES

All 226 sentenced misdemeanants in the sample were sentenced after October 1, 1976 and were not subject to any changes in the good time laws. All were discharged from their sentence during the last 6 months of calendar year 1977.

Figure 1

Amount of Good Time Granted and Average Time Served Prior to Parole Eligibility
For Felons With Indeterminate Sentences



For the purpose of table clarity, Table 2 that follows, includes only 200 of the original 226 inmates. The 26 omitted were atypical in that their sentences were for other than multiples of 5 days. Their exclusion does not appreciably change any of the averages. Two variables not included in the felon study were included in the misdemeanor study: type of offense and class offense. When there were multiple offenses, the most severe was chosen as the primary offense.

PARTICULAR FINDINGS

1. The data summarized in Table 2 show that the average length of sentence for misdemeanants was 71 days. Two-thirds received a sentence of 60 days or less. The most frequent sentence was for 30 days. There were 5 inmates (2.5%) who received the maximum allowable misdemeanor sentence of one year.
2. The average statutory good time received was 24 days.
3. 99.1% of the sampled inmates received SGT. Not all inmates received it because an offender must have a sentence of 3 or more days to be eligible to earn SGT.
4. A total of 82 inmates were entitled to receive jail credit good time at the rate of 10 days per month pro-rated. The average misdemeanor inmate received 2 days JCGT.
5. Seven day job good time averaged 3 days for each inmate. 84 inmates received this type of good time credit.

[illegible]

1. The first part of the document is a list of names and their corresponding addresses. The names are listed in a column on the left, and the addresses are listed in a column on the right. The names are: John A. Smith, John B. Smith, John C. Smith, John D. Smith, John E. Smith, John F. Smith, John G. Smith, John H. Smith, John I. Smith, John J. Smith, John K. Smith, John L. Smith, John M. Smith, John N. Smith, John O. Smith, John P. Smith, John Q. Smith, John R. Smith, John S. Smith, John T. Smith, John U. Smith, John V. Smith, John W. Smith, John X. Smith, John Y. Smith, John Z. Smith. The addresses are: 123 Main St., 456 Main St., 789 Main St., 101 Main St., 202 Main St., 303 Main St., 404 Main St., 505 Main St., 606 Main St., 707 Main St., 808 Main St., 909 Main St., 1010 Main St., 1111 Main St., 1212 Main St., 1313 Main St., 1414 Main St., 1515 Main St., 1616 Main St., 1717 Main St., 1818 Main St., 1919 Main St., 2020 Main St., 2121 Main St., 2222 Main St., 2323 Main St., 2424 Main St., 2525 Main St., 2626 Main St., 2727 Main St., 2828 Main St., 2929 Main St., 3030 Main St., 3131 Main St., 3232 Main St., 3333 Main St., 3434 Main St., 3535 Main St., 3636 Main St., 3737 Main St., 3838 Main St., 3939 Main St., 4040 Main St., 4141 Main St., 4242 Main St., 4343 Main St., 4444 Main St., 4545 Main St., 4646 Main St., 4747 Main St., 4848 Main St., 4949 Main St., 5050 Main St., 5151 Main St., 5252 Main St., 5353 Main St., 5454 Main St., 5555 Main St., 5656 Main St., 5757 Main St., 5858 Main St., 5959 Main St., 6060 Main St., 6161 Main St., 6262 Main St., 6363 Main St., 6464 Main St., 6565 Main St., 6666 Main St., 6767 Main St., 6868 Main St., 6969 Main St., 7070 Main St., 7171 Main St., 7272 Main St., 7373 Main St., 7474 Main St., 7575 Main St., 7676 Main St., 7777 Main St., 7878 Main St., 7979 Main St., 8080 Main St., 8181 Main St., 8282 Main St., 8383 Main St., 8484 Main St., 8585 Main St., 8686 Main St., 8787 Main St., 8888 Main St., 8989 Main St., 9090 Main St., 9191 Main St., 9292 Main St., 9393 Main St., 9494 Main St., 9595 Main St., 9696 Main St., 9797 Main St., 9898 Main St., 9999 Main St.

Table 2
Amount of Good Time Granted and Average Length of Stay for Inmates
Who Served Definite Sentences for Misdemeanor Offenses

Number	Length of Sentence	SGT	JCGT	7 Day Job	OMGT	GTFORT	GTREST	Gross Good Time	Net Good Time	Jail Credit	Total Time Served	Percent of Sentence Served
Days												
15	10 days	4	0	0	0	0	0	4	4	0	6	60.0
16	15	6	0	0	0	0	0	6	6	1	9	60.0
5	20	6	0	0	0	0	0	6	6	1	14	70.0
60	30	10	1	0	0	0	0	11	11	3	19	63.0
12	45	16	1	1	0	0	0	18	18	4	27	60.0
23	60	20	4	1	0	0	0	25	25	11	35	58.3
28	90	30	1	5	0	0	0	36	36	4	54	60.0
13	120	40	4	6	1	0	0	51	51	11	69	57.5
23	150	60	4	10	4	0	0	78	78	11	102	56.7
5	360	120	20	15	16	0	0	171	171	55	189	52.5
200	Averages 71 days	24	2	3	1	0	0	30	30	6	41	57.7

SGT.....Statutory good time

JCGT....Jail credit good time

OMGT....Outstandingly meritorious good time

GTFORT..Good time forfeited

GTREST.....Good time restored

Gross good time..Total good time earned

Net good time...Total good time less forfeitures

Jail credit....Pre-conviction jail credit time

6. There were 13 inmates awarded outstandingly meritorious good time by the Commissioner of Correction. The awards ranged from 5 to 40 days, and averaged out to 1 day for each inmate in the sample. As with other types of good time, the higher the sentence the higher the amount of good time. A total of 13 (6.5%) of the 200 were awarded OMT.
7. Only one inmate had part of his good time forfeited. This averaged out to less than one day per inmate. The 5 days forfeited were not restored.
8. The average total good time received was 30 days for each inmate. SGT accounted for 80.0% of this total.
9. Each inmate served an average of 41 days, or 57.7% of his sentence. As with felons, misdemeanants with shorter sentences serve a higher percentage of their terms than offenders with longer sentences. An inmate with a 10 day sentence served 60.0% of that sentence, while an inmate with one year sentence served 52.5% of his sentence, or 189 days.
10. A misdemeanor sentenced inmate spent an average of 6 days in jail prior to conviction. This compares to an average of 83 days (see Table 1) for sentenced felons. This large discrepancy arises from the much higher severity of felon crimes which results in either high bonds or bond denials. Another important contributing factor is the backlog of pending cases

in Superior Court which requires that accused confined inmates spend long periods of time in jail awaiting trial.

Figure 2 illustrates the average number of days good time an inmate received, along with the average length of stay by length of sentence.

OFFENSES

As stated previously, the type and class of offense were included as additional variables in the misdemeanor study.

Offenses were divided into 7 different types - (1) property offenses; (2) offenses affecting public justice and peace; (3) offenses against persons; (4) motor vehicle offenses; (5) drug offenses; (6) sex offenses and (7) fraud and forgery offenses.

Misdemeanors are classified for the purpose of sentence as follows: (1) Class A; (2) class B; (3) class C and (4) unclassified. The sentence for a class A misdemeanor cannot, with some exceptions, exceed one year; a sentence for a class B offense cannot exceed 6 months; a sentence for a class C offense cannot exceed 3 months, while the term for an unclassified misdemeanor cannot exceed the sentence specified in the general statutes.

Figure 3 reflects the offense categories into which the misdemeanor sample fell. 36.8% of the primary offenses were for property crimes, closely followed by offenses against public justice and peace with 31.5%.

Figure 2

Amount of Good Time Granted and Average Length
of Stay For Misdemeanor Sentences

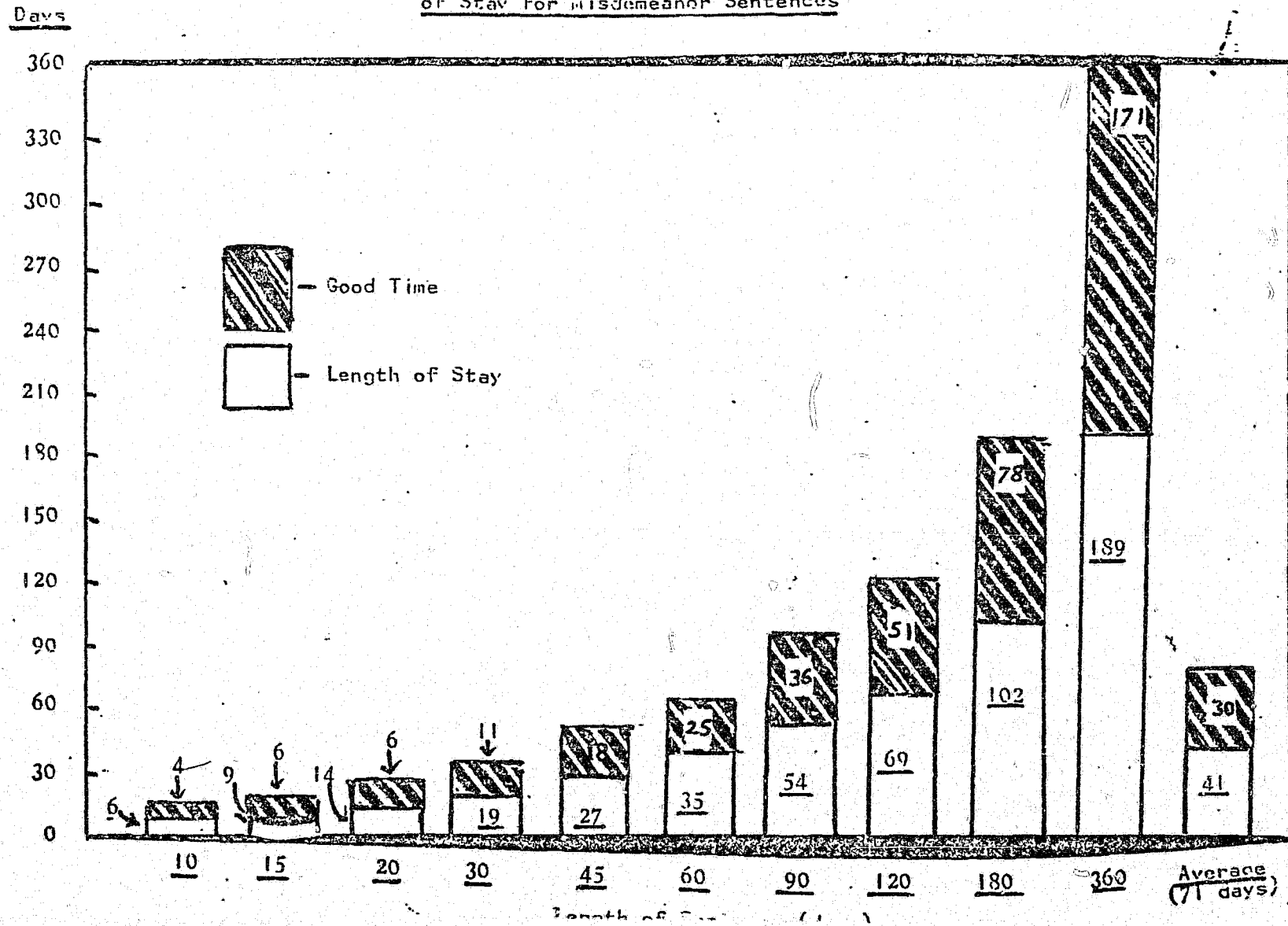
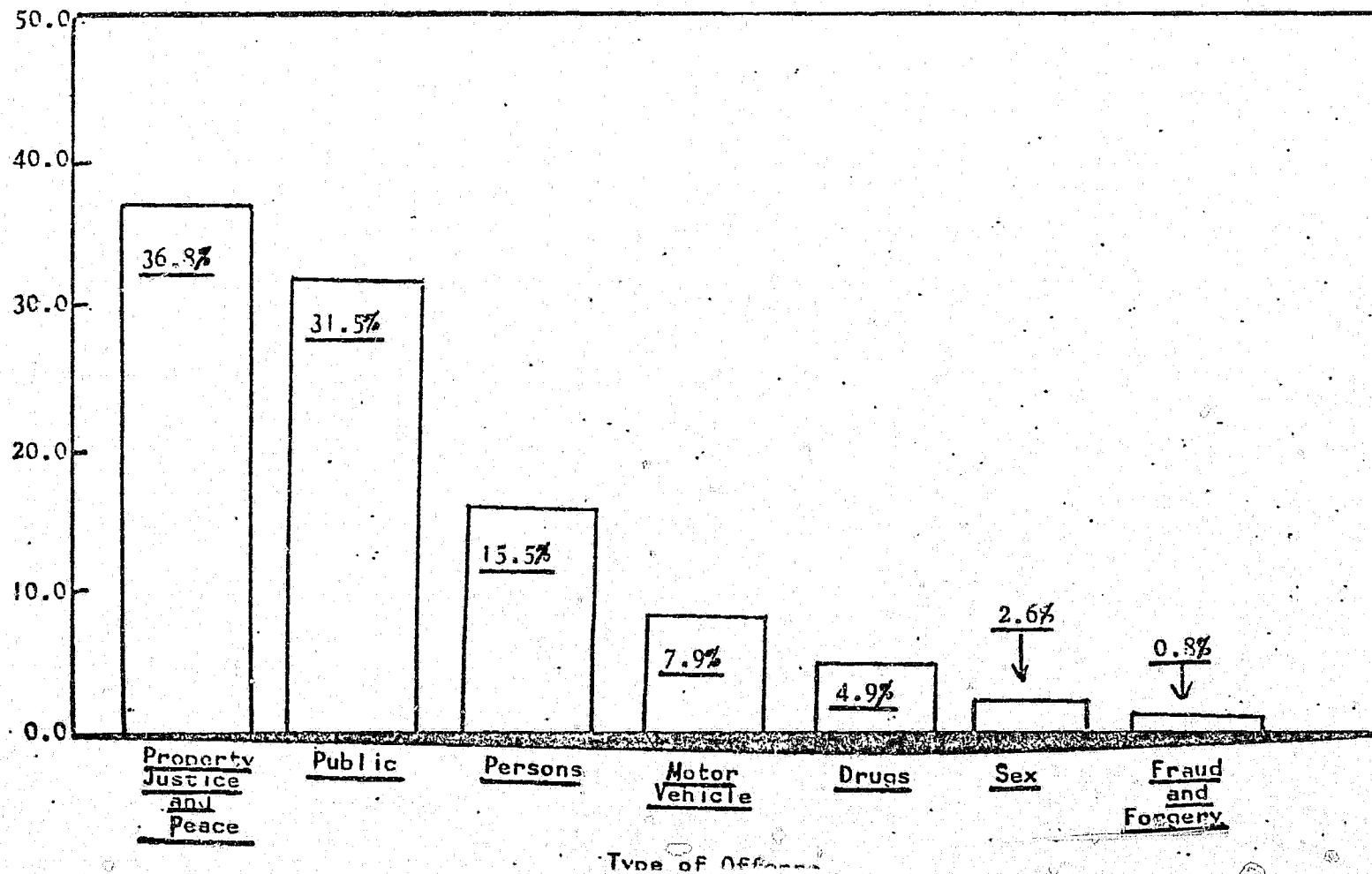


Figure 3

Percent of Sentenced Misdemeanants
by Type of Offense

Percent



The most frequent offense was for larceny (61) followed by breach of peace (28) and disorderly conduct with 22. These three accounted for over one-half (55.5%) of the misdemeanor offenses.

A misdemeanant was more likely to be convicted of a class B offense (38.5%) than any other class offense. This is depicted in Figure 4. As the severity of offense class increased the average time served also increased.

The most frequent offense by class was - class A, assault III; class B, larceny III; class C, disorderly conduct; and unclassified, operating a motor vehicle while under suspension

DISCUSSION

There is a general feeling that the Department first revokes a large amount of an inmate's good time and subsequently restores all of it. The results of this study indicate differently. An examination of the data reveals that an inmate earns nearly all of the good time he is eligible to earn and that very little is revoked. When an inmate is found by the Disciplinary Committee to have violated Department of Correction rules or regulations, it may impose a number of different sanctions other than the loss of good time. Some of these other sanctions are loss of visiting and mail privileges, confinement to quarters, punitive segregation and the imposition of extra duty assignments during leisure hours. All such actions must be reviewed and approved by the Commissioner. Since the loss of good time is used

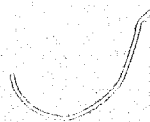
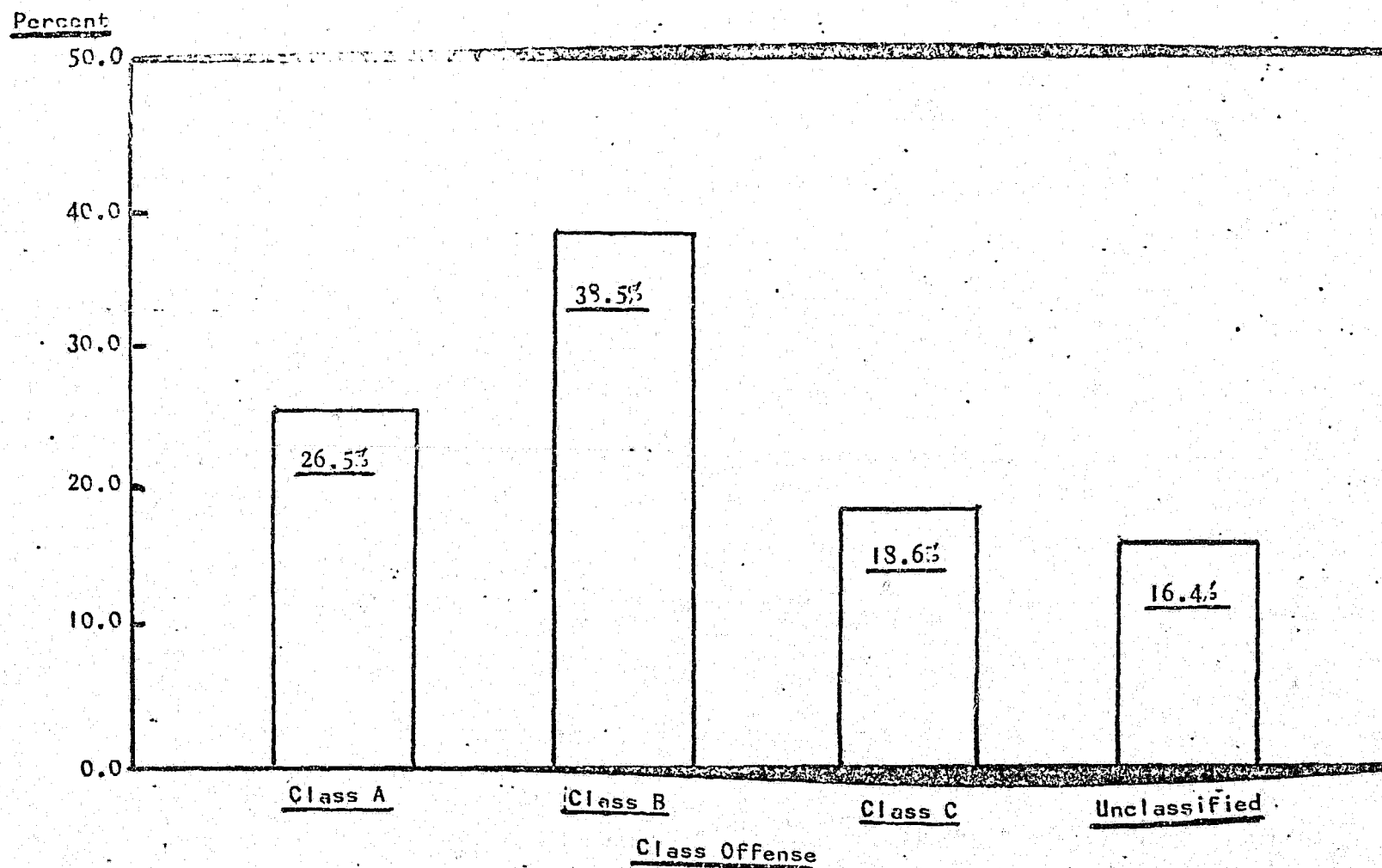


Figure 4

Percent of Offenses by Class Misdemeanor



sparingly by the Disciplinary Committee, it seems to indicate that it prefers to impose sanctions other than loss of good time.

Again contrary to belief, the amount of good time which was later restored only amounted to approximately one-third of that revoked.

Another general belief is that the Commissioner's awards of outstandingly meritorious good time (OMGT) are very substantial. The study showed this belief to be greatly exaggerated. The most frequent number of OMGT days awarded to felon inmates was 60, while that awarded to misdemeanants was 10. The limit that can be awarded to any one inmate is 120 days, double the amount the Commissioner most frequently awarded felon inmates.

Department personnel frequently state that good time provisions usually reduce an inmate's sentence by one-third. This study indicates that this assumption slightly understates the situation: Good time allowances reduced the sentences of felon inmates by 41% and of misdemeanor inmates by 42%.

Although this study did not include inmates who received sentences which ran consecutively, or other sentence combinations, it is a fairly accurate description of the effects good time allowances have upon the average felon and misdemeanor sentence.

APPENDIX A

FELON VARIABLES

1. Type of Sentence
2. Date of Sentence
3. Minimum Sentence
4. Maximum Sentence
5. Statutory Good Time
6. Jail Credit
7. Jail Credit Good Time
8. Meritorious Good Time
9. 7 Day Work Job
10. Outstandingly Meritorious Good Time
11. Good Time Forfeiture
12. Good Time Restored
13. Institution
14. Inmate Number

MISDEMEANANT
VARIABLES

1. Date of Sentence
2. Inmate Number
3. Type Offense
4. Class Offense
5. Probation Part of Sentence
6. Specific Sentence
7. Statutory Good Time
8. Jail Credit
9. Jail Credit Good Time
10. 7 Day Work Job
11. Outstandingly Meritorious Good Time
12. Good Time Forfeiture
13. Good Time Restored

END