

EVALUATION OF AREA BOARD CLASSIFICATION AT THE
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION

Interim Report I: Process Description and Statistical Summary

MICROFICHE

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ABSTRACT

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Classification plays a prominent role in both the management of a correctional system, and in the maximization of the benefits of individualized program planning. This study is the first in a comprehensive series of reports concerning Area Board classification in the Massachusetts Department of Correction (DOC). These Boards are basically charged with periodically reviewing inmate status subsequent to the initial intake classification, to determine eligibility and suitability for inter-institutional transfers. Although unified in overall approach, each of the three DOC regions administers its own Boards for men housed within the Area's facilities.

The major objective is to describe the operation of the three Area Boards by developing an historical perspective; depicting the components of the process; providing a statistical summary of the numbers seen, types of recommendations made, and Central Office actions vis-a-vis these recommendations; and conducting a preliminary follow-up analysis to determine the outcome of these recommendations. The period under study was July, 1977 through January, 1978. The process and outcomes of all cases heard by Area Boards during this time was characterized with both qualitative and quantitative techniques employed for the research.

The Area Board system was instituted in mid-1976 following a general Department reorganization into three distinct regions. These Boards review cases that are referred by other sources (as institutional classification committees) and evaluate inmates' eligibility for transfer, and suitability for the various placement options. The final decision is incumbent upon the administrative level at the Central Office to supply final approval over the transfer. A variety of factors are weighed during the placement determination. Among these are statutory eligibility requirements, institutional behavior, and program availability.

Intensive interviews conducted with both line level and classification management staff yielded perceptions of the process as effective; but due to the double layered decision-making, not as efficient as the previous system. Training and increased communication were cited as important needs to be addressed.

The quantitative analysis utilized a base population of the approximately 1200 cases seen during the time parameter. Although limited data was gathered, several interesting findings emerged. Most Area Board recommendations (60.7 percent) were for lower custody. Central Office approved a majority of the recommendations (66.7 percent) but evidenced a more conservative orientation by approving more transfers to higher custody than the original recommendations. For example, approvals for maximum security constituted an increase of 28 percent over the original recommendations, and approvals for community-based programs represented a decrease of 23 percent over the Area Board determinations. However, actual Central Office approvals were generally highest in the security level recommended by the Area Boards.

The length of the classification process was found to be greater than expected: a two-week median for Central Office to decide upon Area Board recommendations; two weeks from the decision to a transfer; and a four to five week median time period overall for classification to be completed (from hearing to transfer).

The outcome analysis of Area Board recommendations demonstrated a fairly high degree of consistency between the security level of the original placement recommended by the Board, those approved by Central Office, and the actual placements following the hearings. These latter two were slightly more conservative than the original recommendations. Finally, examination of six-month placements evidenced a substantial degree of movement through the various security levels of the corrections system. A large proportion (36.5 percent) were residents of a community-based program or on parole.

No definitive conclusions are offered, since little empirical support could be gleaned from the available data. The second study draws a sample of these cases and employs a more in-depth analysis utilizing additional variables. These include a continuous institutional movement tracking, the rationales upon which decisions are premised, and incarceration experience data. Thus, questions regarding the bases for the decisions, and the accuracy of the placements, will be addressed. Implications of the present study did note the need for more training and communication, and an upgrading in the efficiency of the decision-making.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The researcher must credit those individuals whose assistance made this study a realistic enterprise. All Central Office classification management staff - Dick Grelotti (former Supervisor) and Jack Jackson (current Supervisor); and the Area Directors for Area I, Briana Murphy (and before her Sue Richmond); Area II, Dale Musgrave; and Area III, Sharon Smith - provided the design framework, reviewed all material, and gave generously of their time in guiding, criticizing, and granting interviews to refine the study.

The institutional classification staff, too numerous to name individually, were extremely helpful in facilitating an understanding of the Area Board process by permitting researchers to observe actual Boards, and by participating in in-depth interviews.

The tediousness of typing and organizing the narrative and numerous tables of the report was the usual extremely competent work of Ellen Weiner, Research Secretary.

Finally, the researcher must express her gratitude to Paul Jones, Research Assistant, for his data collection and coding, management of the data system, extensive interviewing, and general assistance. Without his patience, persistence, and ability to stick with a task, this study would not have been completed.

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INTRODUCTION

Classification occupies a place at the foundation of corrections. The ability to assess individual needs, determine necessary security level, and plan treatment accordingly must be qualitatively sound, yet efficient. Potential obstacles may derive, however, from its dual mandate to both contribute to the smooth operations of correctional facilities, and to guard against continued criminality of its clients by effecting a rehabilitative experience.

This assessment may be conducted at several points during the individual's term of incarceration, utilizing different sources of information about the offender to make a security and treatment evaluation. Thus, the reception or intake classification may operate bereft of information regarding institutional behavior, and rely instead on criminal history, results of psychological tests, and interviews with the inmate. Subsequent classification obviously possesses a broader scope of information at its disposal upon which to base its assessments. Inasmuch as an effective classification system influences the experience of the institutionalized individual, as well as the institution itself, these bases must be conceptualized and employed for their maximum utility for both the inmate and corrections administrators.

This evaluation of Area Board classification at the Massachusetts Department of Correction is a comprehensive study of decision-making and its relevance to desired outcomes; i.e., to a "successful" career in prison and effective institutional management. Prior to this type of analysis, however, a systematic description of the operations of the Area Boards must be presented. The objective of this Interim Report, therefore, is to portray the Area Board process in its role in corrections, and to provide some preliminary feedback on the efficacy of their decisions.

Massachusetts Department of Correction

To be able to assume the proper perspective toward classification operations in Massachusetts, a brief description of the organizational structure of the Department of Correction (DOC) is necessary. The agency operates under the aegis of the Executive Office of Human Services, with the Commissioner reporting directly to this Secretariat.

In mid-1976, the DOC underwent a significant reorganization, from a centralized structure to regionalization. The administrative division was premised upon a decentralization of Central Office program functions via the management of three distinct Area administrations which are based upon programmatic, demographic, and geographic considerations. The responsibility for classification management was delegated to three separate entities, or units, within this structure; and to a centralized coordinator. (An organizational chart of the DOC is provided on page 11.) Thus, the Area Board process was modeled within the framework provided by the decentralization.

The entire classification process is formally integrated at three levels in the incarceration experience: the initial reception and diagnostic capability; institutional boards, for preliminary screening for transfers and program planning; and the area boards, which determine eligibility and suitability for inter-institutional transfers to either lower, higher, or lateral custody. Special boards may be held as well. Thus, treatment planning and custody assessment follow the individual throughout his or her prison career. Final discretion over any recommended transfer resulting from a classification hearing rests with the Office of the Commissioner of Correction, who may approve or overturn any recommendation.

A more extensive description of the different types of classification capabilities is as follows:

1. Reception and Diagnostic Classification: Judges in Massachusetts sentence male convicted offenders to two major state institutions; MCI-Concord, traditionally reserved for the younger, less-serious first-time offender; and MCI-Walpole, a facility housing the older and more recidivistic individual.¹ This practice is based primarily on statutory criteria which incorporate basic custodial assumptions, and not on treatment-oriented considerations. The Department of Correction administratively assigns these offenders according to age, once under its jurisdiction. MCI-Concord receives men who are under 23 years of age and individuals 23 and older are assigned to MCI-Walpole.

Upon commitment, or shortly thereafter, the inmate is transferred to one of two intake classification capabilities; the Northeast Reception and Diagnostic Center (NRDC), serving the Concord population, and the Reception and Diagnostic Center (RDC) for the Walpole population.² The intake evaluation consists of exhaustive investigation into the client's social, educational, and criminal history; psychiatric, vocational, and educational assessment; and examination of other characteristics and relevant information. The culmination of these activities is a recommendation regarding the individual's most suitable custody level, specific institution, and programs that might best serve his needs. An eleven-item need scale is utilized to record these determinations.

1 Women are sentenced to MCI-Framingham. Since the classification experience for women differs from that of men, both initially and on the Area level (primarily since Framingham is the only state-operated facility housing women), and since they represent a distinct minority of the incarcerated population, this study will focus on men only.

2 There is no guarantee, however, that all inmates will see an RDC. One study found that during 1976, 17 percent of all men sentenced during that year were not seen by the RDC or NRDC. (Carney, F. et al, A Study of the Reception and Diagnostic Process of the Massachusetts Department of Correction, April, 1978).

2. Institutional Boards: Correctional facilities convene boards to serve primarily two functions: one, to conduct an initial assessment and program plan for residents new to the particular facility; and two, to maintain ongoing reviews of institutional experience of the inmate for compliance with program recommendations, to plan for further correctional treatment, and during the course of which, to screen considerations for transfer. Intra-institutional transfers (as from B to A block in Walpole) may be effected during these hearings.

3. Area Boards: When an individual is eligible for, applies for, or circumstances necessitate an institutional transfer, the decision falls under the jurisdiction of the Area Boards. Classification proceedings may adjudge transfers to lower or higher custody, or to a facility representing a similar level of security. The Area Boards review program participation, adjustment to incarceration, and numerous other factors when recommending subsequent placement and/or specific programming.

4. Special Departmental Boards: Special boards may be held at times. For example, the Commissioner of Correction may convene classification boards for the Departmental Segregation Unit (DSU) for decisions regarding movement into and out of this custody status.

The Problem

Several challenges to classification have emerged recently on a national level. Foremost among these is the contention that classification for both treatment and management purposes constitutes a contradiction in ideologies. Critics have argued that at present, these systems are engaged in, and are best suited for, security risk assessment, and treatment is of secondary and less developed concern. The problem is that correctional administrators should recognize this principle, and deal with it by making the goals of classification explicit and effecting decision-making in accordance with these goals.

Another common criticism has questioned the relevance, in terms of meeting individual needs, of the decision-making process itself. The National Commission on Standards and Goals in Corrections has specifically urged the analysis of decision-making to determine the factors that influence this process.

The current drive for accreditation in corrections also targets classification. A series of thirteen model standards was outlined by the American Correctional Association to bring classification systems into compliance for accreditation. Among these are provision of a written policy manual, involvement of the inmates, procedures for "special needs" inmates, mandatory

3 The preceding arguments have been summarized in Corrections National Advisory Committee on Standards and Goals (1977).

reviews, specification of criteria, and research and evaluation.⁴

Despite, and perhaps as instigation of these criticisms, classification retains its considerable role in corrections. The need for this type of capability has lately become exacerbated, due to national trends which witness greater numbers of convicted offenders who are incarcerated; the differing needs of this population; and the proliferation of diverse programs designed to meet these needs and cope with concomitant management pressures.

The impetus to investigate the classification system was provided by correctional administration within the DOC. As part of an effort of the Model Evaluation Project (MEP) to identify and conduct management-based evaluation research that would have implications for policy, several months were spent soliciting suggestions of topics from program staff and administrators. The broad area of classification was most frequently mentioned, marking it as a high management priority. This was seen as being reflective of a desire of correctional management to acquire a greater understanding of both the process of classification, and especially the intricacies of decision-making and the consequences of these decisions.

The specific formulation of the problem took direction from the Research Division commitment to provide a comprehensive evaluation of classification. Building upon several studies already completed in this area,⁵ the MEP process enabled a division of responsibility for conducting an evaluation of the intake reception and diagnostic facilities,⁶ and one of the Area Boards. This bilateral approach should facilitate a complete and integrated assessment of the Massachusetts classification system.

The high priority assigned to the study of classification processes receives further support on a national level. The National Advisory Commission builds into its standards for a comprehensive classification system the requirement for "... a monitoring and evaluation mechanism to determine whether the objectives are being met." Further,

The system should be sufficiently objective and quantifiable to facilitate research, demonstration, model building, intra-system comparisons, and administrative decision-making.⁷

⁴ Commission on Accreditation for Corrections, Manual of National Advisory Committee on Standards and Goals (1977).

⁵ Blomquist, K., A Preliminary Study of Residents of MCI-Norfolk Transferred to Higher Security During 1974 (Publication No. 102, 1975).

Chayet, E., New Line Classification During its First Year of Operation (Publication No. 153, May, 1979).

Wittenberg, S., A Study of Community-Based Classification Boards October-December 1976 (September, 1977).

⁶ Carney, F., et al, op cit.

⁷ NACSB (p. 210).

This concern is echoed by the ACA, as part of an "essential" standard to be achieved for accreditation.⁸

The evaluation of the Area Boards will constitute a first step in providing a knowledge base and essential feedback to administrators responsible for this process, and to corrections staff throughout the system who are affected by classification decision making. These staff will be formally apprised of first, the bases upon which classification recommendations are premised; and second, the actual outcomes of these proceedings.

Organization of Evaluation

The entire study will be released in three documents. The first, current report, is concerned with basically describing the operation of the Area Board system; the second study will focus more intensively on the decision-making process. Finally, the third report will attempt to assess the appropriateness of the decisions.

Overall, four objectives have been framed for the evaluation:

1. To describe the operation of the three Area Boards.
2. To describe the types of recommendations and types of inmates recommended by the Boards.
3. To document the decision-making rationales of classification and the correlates of these decisions.
4. To assess the validity of the classification decision-making process.

This segment of the study will essentially concentrate upon the first question, by addressing the following derivative sub-objectives:

- 1.1 To locate the Area Board process within the general context of classification at the DOC by describing its precursor.
- 1.2 To operationally describe the components of the process within the organization.
- 1.3 To provide a numerical description of the numbers seen, the types of recommendations made, and Central Office actions vis-a-vis these recommendations.
- 1.4 To conduct a preliminary follow-up analysis to determine the outcome of these recommendations and decisions.

The specific methods of examining these areas will be presented with each section. The organization of this report will conform to these concerns; first, a narrative process description will be presented. This will include the official stance on classification, a profile of the pre-Area Board system, an in-depth characterization of the current system, and a general

⁸ ACA (p. 72).

discussion of its relative advantages and disadvantages as perceived by classification staff. The second section is a quantitative analysis. Here, the Area Board recommendations and Central Office decisions will be analyzed by their outcomes, and some preliminary statement made regarding the efficiency and effectiveness of the process. The report will conclude with a general discussion of the findings, with its implications for operations and further research.

DESCRIPTION OF THE AREA BOARD PROCESS

This section will describe in detail the operations of the Area Board classification capability. A basic historical picture will be presented first, comparing the Area Boards to their pre-reorganizational counterparts. The basic objectives of the current procedures will be discussed, along with a documentation of how these procedures actually occur. Finally, the relative advantages and disadvantages of the process will be discussed, based upon perceptions of both Central Office and institutional staff who are responsible for making these classification decisions.

Methodology

The material presented below has been synthesized from several sources. The seven Department of Correction Directives¹ concerning classification were reviewed to clarify the pre-Area Board processes, and to establish the baseline from which the current process emerged. The bulk of the information, however, was derived from intensive and open-ended interviews with all three Central Office Directors of Classification and the Supervisor of Classification Systems; and interviews with institutional staff experienced in Area Boards. Interviews were conducted with five chairpersons, four regular Board members, and four social workers who present cases to the Board.² Thus, much of the following will necessarily be a qualitative analysis.

Classification Prior to Area Boards: The Area Board classification process was first instituted shortly following the Departmental reorganization in 1976. Both the pre-Area Board counterparts, as well as the current system, have interpreted their mandate from the Departmental Directive on Classification Process and Organization of Classification (DO 4400.1) which specified the goals and objectives of the classification process.

A primary concern of the Massachusetts Department of Correction shall be the creation of a classification process designed to reintegrate the offender into community life. A fundamental tenet of that philosophy is that the individual treatment of offenders, rather than mass handling, is the norm. This implies the existence of a comprehensive classification process for diagnosing the needs of each offender, recommending the most appropriate correctional program and monitoring the extent to which the program is implemented. Classification is also essential, when there is a limited amount of resources available, to insure that those residents who can best benefit from a particular opportunity are identified.

1 DO's 4400.1 through 4400.7 (issued in February, 1975).

2 Interview schedules employed for this purpose are appended to this report as Appendix C.

The directive continues by identifying a series of operational goals, which resemble those outlined by the National Advisory Commission on Standards and Goals in Corrections. These are framed as the following:

- classification will consider assessment of risk as well as treatment planning
- no more surveillance or help than required will be provided and security level will be appropriate
- the system will be based upon fairness and consistent with personal dignity
- adequate staff and training will be ensured
- inmates will be involved in the process to a maximum extent possible
- guarantees will be made that the system will be sufficiently objectifiable to facilitate research, evaluation, and administration

The components of the mechanism utilized to effect inmate transfers from one facility to another are outlined. Prior to the Area Boards, two separate types of Boards fulfilled this role: inter-institutional transfer boards and community-based boards.

Inter-Institutional Transfer Boards: These Boards reviewed cases for transfer between the major facilities (as MCI-Walpole, Concord, and Norfolk). Convened regularly at these institutions, boards were comprised of four voting members and a chairperson. The members were representatives of the sending facility and potential receiving facilities. The institution's internal classification committee, or program review board, often served as the primary referral source. A consideration for transfer, or referral to see this Board, was often based upon an assessment that more appropriate programs were available at another institution. A ten-day parameter was established for the decision to be reached; five working days for the Board recommendation and write-up to be forwarded to Central Office, and another five days for the Central Office to make its final determination of placement.

Community-Based Boards: Community boards were convened whenever a pre-release or other community-based program was potentially involved in the transfer. Membership on these boards was drawn from the pre-release centers, forestry camps, MCI-Framingham, and a pool of correction officers from the sending institution. Appearances before this board were often contingent upon the inmate's proximity to parole or discharge. A recommendation for transfer considered the criteria of the diverse community-based options; in the case of a recommendation to a contracted facility, actual placement was determined by this facility's acceptance of the inmate. As with the inter-institutional classification boards, ten working days was specified for the recommendation to be translated into a decision at the Central Office level.

With both types of Boards, the binding decision was made by a Central Office administrator who was designated by the Commissioner (usually, the Deputy Commissioner for Classification).

Follow-up review of the cases, investigation, and the securing of additional information was performed by this office prior to placing the decision in writing. Notification of the superintendents of both sending and receiving facilities, as well as the inmate, also originated at the Central Office. In sum, all coordination of classification activities was ultimately a responsibility of a single individual (with necessary assistance) operating in an administrative capacity.

Area Board Classification

The discussion of Area Board classification will of necessity be more lengthy to provide the reader with an exhaustive framework from which to view the analyses of its operations.

Organizational Structure and Objectives

Each Area convenes its own Area Boards at the major institutions. For Area I, Concord convenes these boards once a week, and the Northeast Correctional Center (NCC) schedules Boards twice a month. In Area II, (which has no major male facilities), Boards are held at the major institutions in the other Areas. It should be noted at the outset that inasmuch as Area II is comprised primarily of community-based facilities, the Boards are, for the most part, reclassification oriented. In other words, many of the Area II inmates have been returned to their sending facility for a reassessment of security risk based on a negative experience in pre-release.³ Thus, the Boards are held at the two commitment institutions on a regular basis: twice a month at Concord, and twice a month at Walpole. Finally, Area III has Area Boards in four of its facilities: once a week at MCI's Walpole and Norfolk, twice a month at Southeastern Correctional Center (SECC) and extra boards scheduled for Bay State Correctional Center (BSCC). All three Areas convene extra Boards as the need arises.

All coordination, selection of Board members and chairpeople, training, and most important, final decisions stem from the Central Office administrative staff. Each Area is headed by a Director of Classification, who is responsible to the appropriate Area Commissioner and reports to the Supervisor of Classification Systems. He, in turn, reports directly to the Commissioner. The staffing patterns of the central coordinator, and the three Area units, is provided in the two organizational charts on pages 10 and 11.

The operational mandate of the Area Board classification process derives essentially from the previously cited directive. Instead of effecting this mandate through discretely functioning boards, Area Boards hear all cases, and continue to provide a centralized review. It diverges from the former process by, as one Director stated, transferring the assessment authority from the individual institutions to a more centralized, and putatively, more objective party. A more extensive discussion of the similarities and differences between the two processes, and the relative advantages and disadvantages of each, will follow the description of actual Area Board operations.

³ Reclassification will be described in greater detail on the following pages.

SUPERVISOR
of
CLASSIFICATION
SYSTEMS

AREA I

AREA II

AREA III

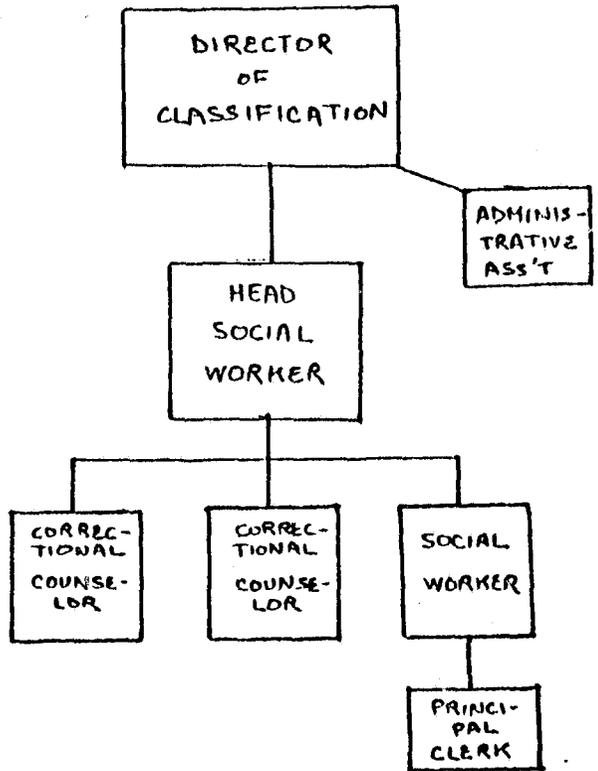
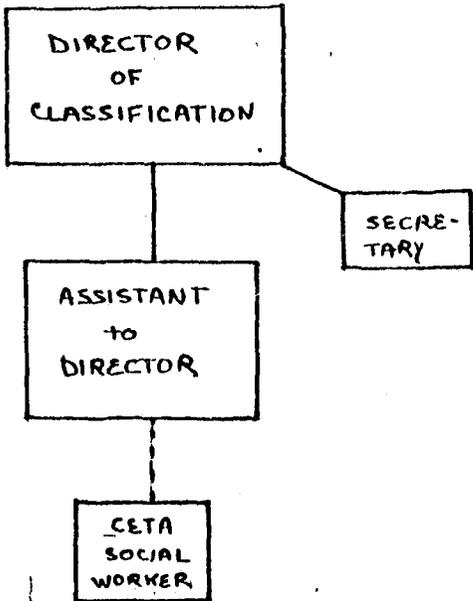
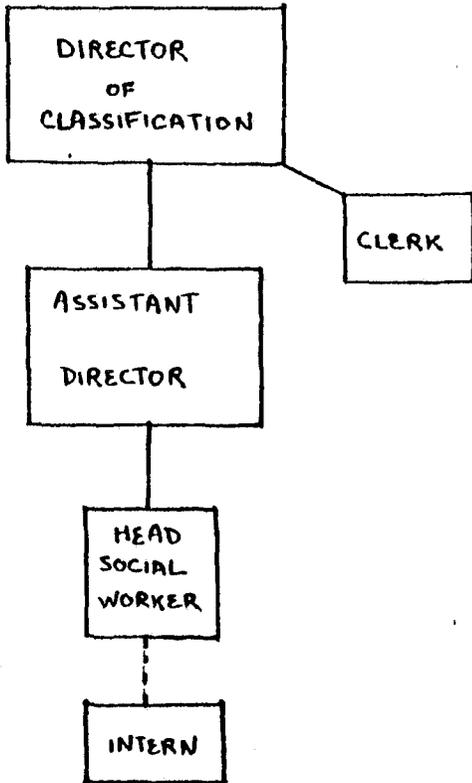
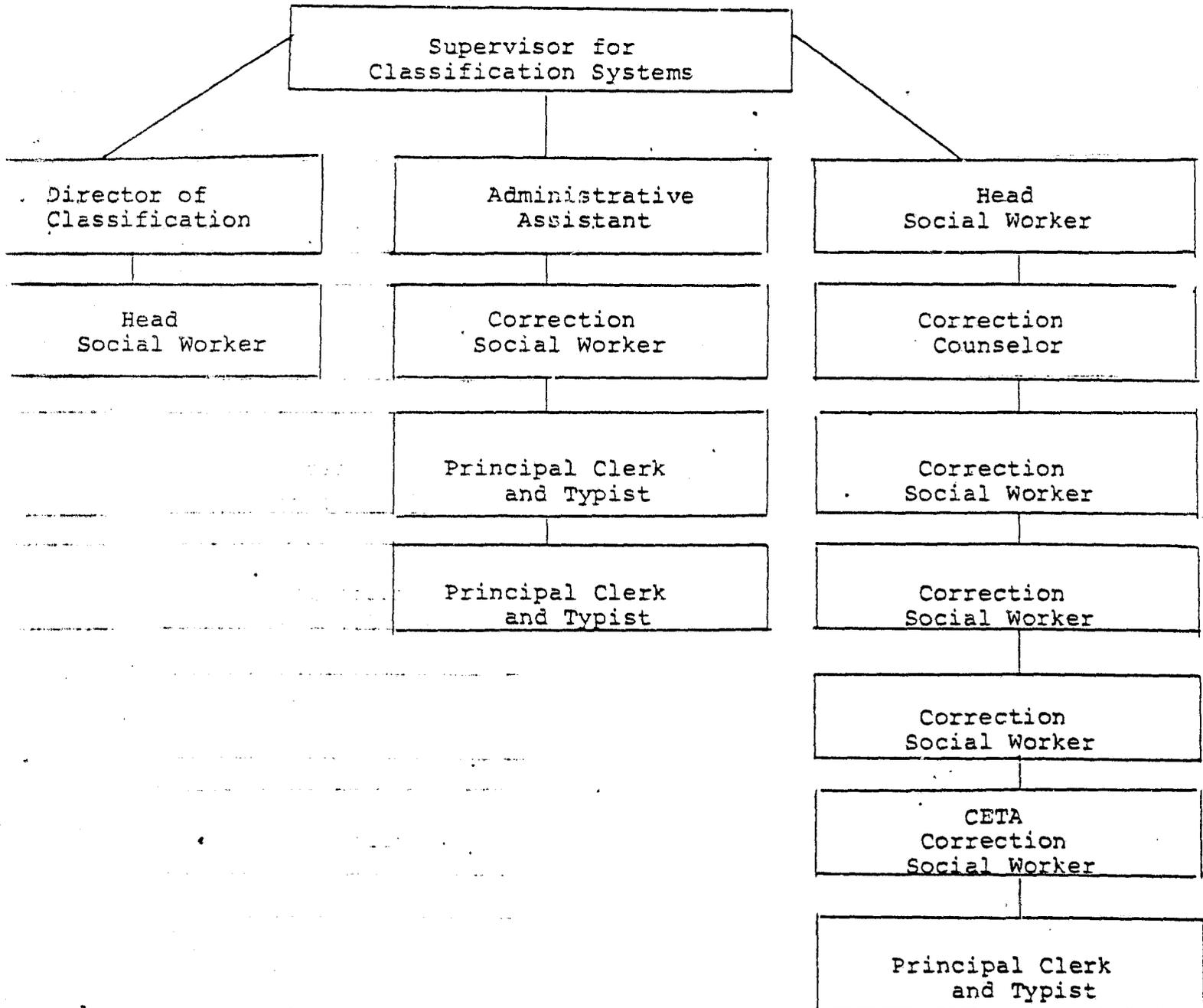


FIGURE 2: Organizational Structure of Central Office Classification

FIGURE 1

Organizational Structure of
Central Classification



Area Board Process Description

The operations description of the Area Board process will be organized according to sequential steps in activity; i.e., from identifying the initial pool of inmates to be screened, the actual hearing and recommendation, the Central Office component of the decision, through possible types of outcome. Wherever there is significant contrast between the Areas, this will be noted.

Pool of Potential Inmates

Referrals to be heard by an Area Board are made in numerous ways. Five primary sources were identified:

1. Internal Classification Committees: Each institution has an internal committee that is charged with, among other duties, the responsibility to initially screen residents for a possible transfer. This ICC recommendation to see an Area Board must be approved by the Superintendent before the inmate's name is placed on the pending list.

2. Periodic Review Dates: Both the Reception Diagnostic Centers and Area Boards can specify a future review date. These often are set for 30, 60, or 90 day intervals, and are approved by the Commissioner in the course of deciding upon a previous Board action.⁴ Thus, when an inmate is nearing the specified review date, his name is added to the pending list.

3. Reclassification: A reclassification hearing is the result of a return, to the committing institution or other higher security facility, from lower custody following a preliminary assessment that a lower security rating might not have been appropriate. Often, a provisional return is made, during which time staff of the returning facility will evaluate whether or not they will accept the inmate back into lower security status. If they do not want him returned, the case will be referred to the Central Office for placement on the reclassification list. The other instance is when the lower custody facility, either upon receipt of serious disciplinary reports or general poor adjustment to lower security, will have the inmate returned to his commitment institution or higher security upon approval of Central Office classification staff. If there are any disciplinary reports, these must be resolved, including possible appeals, prior to scheduling the inmate for an Area Board hearing. In either of these cases, the role of the Board is to reassess the security risk of the inmate and make a suitable placement recommendation based upon this risk. It should be noted further that this source of referral usually assumes the greatest priority in terms of being scheduled for an Area Board hearing.

4. Open Reserve Parole date: If an inmate receives an open reserve parole date, he will be seen by the Board as quickly as possible, to secure the corroborative approval of the DOC with the parole decision.

⁴ It should be stated that the RDC sets periodic review dates in an advisory capacity, and that hearing schedules are not bound by these dates.

5. Superintendent's Referral: At times, the superintendent of an institution (or his designee) may request that the inmate see an Area Board. This may be a result of a disciplinary board which recommends reclassification, special circumstances, or needs of the facility.

The list of inmates awaiting an Area Board hearing is maintained by different institutional staff. For example, in Area I, the Deputy Superintendent for Classification or Head Social Worker compiles these lists from a tickler file containing all referrals. In Area II, lists are maintained at the Central Office by the Assistant to the Director, who directly communicates these names to the Board members. Area III varies from institution to institution: at Walpole, the head social worker assumes responsibility for receiving referrals and compiling lists; at SECC, this is the job of the Director of Classification, and at Norfolk, the case managers perform this function. Generally, the same individuals who are in charge of the pending lists also inform the inmate or his social worker that the case will be heard by a specific Area Board. It may take anywhere from one to four weeks (or even longer) for a Board to hear the case after a referral is made to the appropriate source.

When the inmate is to be reviewed, his social worker prepares a pre-hearing summary sheet. Often this is completed in collaboration with the inmate; however, much of the information can be obtained from the institutional records. Included on this form are items as housing status, vocational assignments, disciplinary record, and compliance with previous classification recommendations. (A copy of this document can be found in Appendix C.) The social worker might further prepare the inmate for his appearance before the Board, discussing various programs available and informally developing a concrete treatment plan to be requested. In any case, the inmate is usually informed of his hearing date at least a day before the actual Board; in the case of a reclassification, during which the inmate has the right to retain an attorney, he may be notified up to a week prior to the hearing. He must be notified, however, three days before a scheduled appearance.

Area Board Membership

Composition

Board members and chairpersons are drawn from the particular Area, and the structure of Areas I and III is essentially similar. Four voting members must be present; these consist of two correction officers generally from the same facility in which the inmate is currently housed, and two classification/treatment people (which may include head social workers). These latter are drawn from a different institution than that hosting the Board. The chairperson usually occupies a high level classification or treatment position in another institution. Due to the peculiar nature of Area II, the Board membership is comprised a little differently. Although there must be four voting members and a

chairperson, of the two correction officers, one must be from an Area II facility. Other members may include case managers from different facilities than the one in which the Board is held. Their chairpeople at present are the Director of Classification and Treatment at one facility, and the work/release coordinator at another.

Selection and Training

Although all three Area Directors of Classification select the Board members and chairpersons, qualifications and provision for training differs from Area to Area. For example, all profess to choose individuals with direct experience with Area Boards, especially those who have served as Board members. They are generally recruited from the ranks of higher level administrators at the institutions. Training is systematically provided in Area III in the form of monthly meetings between the Area Director of Classification and the Board chairpeople, and through an Area III Task Force. Board members usually observe several hearings before actually participating in a voting capacity.

The Hearing

The outcome of the Area Board hearing is a placement recommendation. The Boards have at their disposal a wide array of institutions and their internal programs, and a vast community-based network from which to select an appropriate placement.

A typical hearing is conducted by commencing with the social worker responsible for the inmate presenting the salient details of the case to the Board, without the inmate present. Copies of the pre-hearing summary sheet, administrative chronology, and other pertinent documentation is distributed, and the institutional folder is available for review. Some preliminary discussion may ensue, during which Board members attempt to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the dimensions of the case.

The inmate is then brought into the hearing room. He is introduced to the Board by the chairperson and given a brief description of the process. If this is a reclassification, he is asked whether he has been informed of his right to counsel. A question and answer period ensues, with the objective to ascertain the security risk posed by the individual (as by asking him to reconstruct incidents resulting in disciplinary reports); and the types of programs from which he could benefit most. If the inmate has requested placement at a particular facility, his motivation for doing so is also examined.

After ensuring that the individual has no further questions, he is asked to leave the room. The chairperson then directs a general discussion of the case, and asks each member to make a placement recommendation. A vote is taken; the chairperson only

votes in case of a tie. He or she takes notes on the proceedings, recording the rationales stated by Board members upon which they are basing their recommendations, and any minority dissent. These notes are utilized to write the narrative which is later forwarded to the Central Office.

The inmate returns and is informed of the Board's recommendation. Any dispute can be appealed in writing to the Area Commissioner within five working days. This is also the time limit for the Board to forward recommendations to the Central Office. He is further informed that the final decision will be made by the Commissioner, and that he will be notified within ten days.

Factors Influencing Decision-Making

A number of areas are considered by Board members when assessing the inmates suitability for a transfer. These may be internal, or characteristics of the inmate himself; or external including factors not within the inmate's control.

Although the next report will investigate and quantify the bases upon which the classification recommendations are made, the interviews with Board members proved valuable for a preliminary depiction of these factors. These can be suggested discretely; however they are in actuality used in combination with each other.

1. External Factors: These considerations are fairly straightforward, some relating to statutory restrictions. Among those mentioned were time left to serve, pending parole hearing, receipt of an open reserve parole date, the necessity to receive SDP clearance, specific program eligibility, program availability, and bed space. These factors must be addressed prior to the actual program consideration and an assessment of the inmate's suitability.

2. Internal Factors: Institutional experience and Board - specific behavior are paramount in this category. Among the latter is the inmate's presentation during the hearing; for example, general attitude, and whether he is calm, hostile, contradictory, self-aware, or cooperative. Institutional experience is reviewed, primarily to determine security risk. The wide range of this type of information encompasses housing and work reports, the nature and seriousness of disciplinary reports, past and present program involvement, compliance with prior classification recommendations, community ties, resourcefulness, and motivation.

Central Office Decisions

A package documenting the hearing is sent to the Central Office by the chairperson. Included is a list of inmates seen by the Board, their placement recommendations, any conditions adjudged necessary, the narrative of each case, and supporting documentation

such as the pre-hearing summary sheet and other institutional records. These are received by the appropriate "sending" Area Director of Classification.

The Area Director reviews each recommendation by conducting a case check. The inmate's folder is reviewed and an independent opinion rendered. Additional information may be sought at this point; for example; cases are referred to the Security Management Team to establish any potential enemy situations at a receiving facility. Bed-space and more detailed program criteria will also be reviewed. At this point, the Director of Classification reaches a decision regarding the Area Board recommendation according to the following specifications:

1. Intra-Area Transfers: If the inmate's destination is to a facility in the same Area as the sending facility, the Area Director of Classification for that Area will sign the decision. The superintendents of the sending and receiving facilities and the inmate are also notified by this Area Director.

2. Inter-Area Transfers: If the inmate's placement is to be in a facility outside the current area, the case must be discussed with the receiving Area Director of Classification. Often, she/he will perform an additional case check. If the two Area Directors cannot agree upon an approved placement, the dispute is mediated by the Supervisor of Classification Systems. The lists of final decisions are typed and, as mentioned, sent to the involved parties.

The Transfer

The outcome of the Area Board process may be an inter-institutional transfer. In theory, these transfers should occur shortly following the Central Office placement determination, to be consistent with any alteration in security risk assessment.

In practice, however, inmates may be sent to the receiving facility before the Central Office decision list is formally issued; he may be retained at his current residence for a substantial period after the decision has been made; or, he may not reach the approved placement at all. Several explanations were offered for this variability.

1. Transfer Prior to Decision: The Central Office receives a list containing all cases seen by the Board on a particular date. As each individual decision is made, the inmate may be transferred. The official list may not be released due to a backlog in having it typed; it is reasonable to expedite a transfer in this instance.

2. Delayed Transfer: Long waiting lists for entry into programs may exist, especially in the community-based programs. These lists are prioritized according to when the individual appeared before a Board, and available bed-space filled as it arises. Optimally, the inmate awaiting such a transfer will be placed in a lesser custody facility, but often this cannot be accommodated.

Another possible cause for a delay in transfer is if the inmate receives disciplinary reports prior to his move that must be cleared.

3. No Transfer After Decision: Two major factors account for an approved placement being overturned. First, prior to the transfer, the inmate may receive disciplinary reports that necessitate a reconsideration of custody risk. Second, additional investigative or other information may become available that would reflect upon the type of approved placement.

Perceptions of Area Board Process

Any process is shaped by both formal and informal assumptions. The explicit, usually written, guidelines formally direct the conduct of the operations, yet the belief system of process participants can exert as strong an influence over the character of the proceedings. It is for this reason that the interviews included questions on perceptions of the process. Staff were asked to outline the relative advantages and disadvantages of Area Board classification, and to propose means for improvement in this system. Many of these were cited as comparisons to the pre-Area Board process.

Advantages

The salient advantages of Area Board classification were generally summarized as betterment of the review process; increasingly informed decision-making; and overall, improved management. In short, Area Board classification was viewed as greatly improving effectiveness.

1. Betterment of the Review Process: The inclusion of a centralized, duplicate case review was seen as responsible for improving the quality of the decisions. The increased information available to administrative Area staff, as well as the utilization of more well-trained professionals who are removed from specific institutions to perform case-checking, was said to contribute to a more objective and impartial review process.

2. Increasingly Informed Decision-Making: The tri-Area division is thought to vastly increase the depth and scope of knowledge each Area staff has regarding the institutions and programs within the Area's jurisdiction. This in turn leads to better decisions, since they are based upon a clear understanding of the available options.

Communication between Areas ensures that placements outside the resident's Area will also be considered with a realistic perspective. Direct communication with receiving facilities, and a closer relationship of Central Office with institutional staff was also cited as contributing to more informed decisions. Overall, increased awareness of the DOC's resources brought

about by decentralization, positively influences the quality of classification decisions being made.

3. Improved Management: The organizational structure of Central Office classification staff facilitates better management of the system. Such aforementioned factors as better communication between the Central Office Area staff, other Area staff, additional Central Office functions, and institutional personnel, were seen as partially responsible. The relatively consistent membership, and the selection at Central Office of the Board members, also grants better management.

Disadvantages

Components of the Area Board process that are construed as advantages inherently become the basis for perceived disadvantages. The main concern points to a decrease in efficiency; the safeguards for a higher quality process and a cumbersome bureaucracy result in increased time necessary for final decisions to be reached; and the in-depth, Area-intensive staff knowledge implies less developed familiarity with other DOC resources.⁵

1. Bureaucratic Complexity: Provision for an additional Central Office case check compounds the length of time involved in making decisions. This is further exacerbated by the some-time practice of receiving Areas to perform their own case check, and the need to mediate and resolve disputes over placement decisions. Time between a Board appearance and transfer is lengthened; the putative ten days communicated to inmates becomes

⁵ There is partial evidence that the current Area Board system is processing more cases than the previous classification mechanism. A system-wide calculation of cases appearing before Inter-Institutional Transfer Boards and Community Based Boards was conducted for the period of July, 1975 through January, 1976 (the same time frame as the one utilized in this analysis, but representing the previous system only). IITB's and CBB's heard approximately 596 cases, compared to approximately 1200 heard by Area Boards two years later. Computed proportionately to the average monthly population of correctional institutions during these periods, the following ratios were obtained:

	<u>1975-1976</u>	<u>1977-1978</u>	<u>% Increase</u>
Average Monthly Population	2180	2774	27%
Number of Cases Heard	596	1200	99%

Thus, while population increased only 27 percent, the number of cases classified nearly doubled.

an unrealistic goal. Other impacts fall upon institutional staff, who often must wait to learn what the Central Office decision was (implicitly, the accuracy of their recommendations); and in some cases are so far removed from the decision-making that they cannot perceive the rationales behind many of the final decisions.

2. Area-Intensiveness: The trichotomization into Areas is believed to present several drawbacks to classification decision-making. First, although Area staff is extremely familiar with their own resources, they may not be as well-versed in receiving placements outside the Area. Second, the different character of the three Areas, due in part to the types of facilities in each, was thought to give rise to variation in correctional philosophy. Thus, there might be potential conflict over placement decisions involving inter-Area transfers.

Another problem with administration by Area is that the pool of qualified potential Board members and chairpersons is restricted to the Area. This precludes the "sharing" of high-level and experienced institutional staff, placing some Areas at a relative disadvantage.

Suggestions for Improvement

A number of strategies were suggested that would improve the present system. The most overwhelming concern, stressed by both Central Office and institutional staff, was for more training and communication. Training should provide up-to-date information on resources and program eligibility factors, especially concerning other Areas, to all individuals dealing with the Boards. Specific suggestions for this training included scheduling "mock" Boards, rotating the Boards and individual members through other Areas, disseminating lists of programs, bed-space, and entrance availability, holding periodic meetings with Central Office and institutional staff, and with other Area Board members, arranging site visits to other correctional facilities, and generally, providing ongoing in-service training.

Length of the classification process was also viewed as requiring modification. A more reasonable time frame should be communicated to inmates, as well as to institutional staff. Efforts should be made to expedite the decision-making time, on both levels. Due to the fairly large caseload, Board chairpersons may take longer than five days to complete their write-ups. This could be partially alleviated by freeing the chairpersons' time from his or her regular tasks. This solution seems unfeasible to implement, however, since these individuals are fairly high-level staff. Another, somewhat impractical solution, is to eliminate the duplicate case checking that occurs at Central Office for inter-Area transfers.

Improvements could also be made in the following areas: systematizing the format and content of social worker presentations; monitoring and feedback evaluations of Area Board members; better screening of Area Board members for potential biases; and increasing Central Office staff to perform case checking.

QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

Methodology

The Population

For this interim population description report, data was systematically collected on the total population seen by an Area Board from July, 1977 through January, 1978. This seven-month time frame was selected for several reasons: 1) it allows an initial start-up period of Area Board operations prior to commencing the evaluation; 2) the January end date permits a six-month outcome analysis to be conducted within the completion parameters of this study; and 3) it exerts natural controls on population fluctuations at the correctional institutions due to outside factors (such as court sentencing activity and legislative action).

A total of 1200 cases was available for study. A case was defined as an appearance before an Area Board; thus, a single individual might have appeared before the Board more than once during the seven months.

Variables selected for the analysis included the Area of the Board, institution in which the Board was held, date of the Board, recommendation of the Board, specific institution recommended, Central Office decision,¹ institution approved by Central Office, the date of this decision; immediate placement of the inmate, the date transferred, and the placement as of six months.

Research Objectives

This preliminary report establishes the framework for the later, more detailed analysis. The major objectives of this study are therefore:

- 1) To describe the operations of the Area Board classification effort by providing information on the numbers seen, the types of recommendations made, the processing time, Central Office action vis-a-vis Area Board recommendations, and other dimensions of process.
- 2) To provide some preliminary indication of the effectiveness of Area Board activity by examining actual placements of inmates subsequent to their hearings, and custody level as of six months compared to the original Area Board recommendation.

Most of the analysis will utilize frequency distributions and percentages.

¹ The researcher erred in failing to include the category "denied Area Board recommendation; approved to remain at current status". As it was too late to rectify this by the time error was noticed, this dimension of Central Office decision-making will not appear in this report. The second study will include this variable.

A copy of the sources of information appears in Appendix C. These data were obtained from Area Board records that are maintained at Central Office, and the centrally filed inmate record card. Six-month placement was generated through a computer request of the CAPMIS² system.

Findings

Section I: Frequency Distributions

Pages 21 to 31 present a series of tables depicting frequency distributions of the major variables in this study. When appropriate, measures of central tendency (averages) have been computed. In all cases, however, the values of the variable are collapsed into logical categories with a number and percentage for each value. Although a simple analysis is presented, a more extensive discussion will follow the combined section on findings.

Area and Institution in which Board is Held

Area III, which includes Walpole and Norfolk, accounted for 61.2 percent of all appearances before Boards held during this period. Nearly 30 percent were seen in Area I, and Area II was responsible for 9.2 percent. This finding is consistent with expectations of the relative population capacities of their major institutions: for example, Norfolk, Walpole, and SECC in Area III can house 1624 men; and Concord in Area I had a capacity of 220. Area II, comprised mainly of minimum security and the community-based network, primarily convenes reclassification hearings, which explains the relatively small percentage of Area Board cases heard during the six months.³

TABLE I: AREA IN WHICH BOARD IS HELD

<u>AREA</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>
I	354	(29.5)
II	111	(9.2)
III	735	(61.2)
TOTAL	1200	(100.0)

² Correction and Parole Management Information System.

³ As of the end of December, 1977, the total population capacity for all Area II facilities was 460; this includes MCI-Framingham.

The specific institutional breakdown illustrates this more clearly. As can be seen in Table II, Concord accounted for the single greatest proportion of Area Board appearances (33.4 percent). Area III facilities each contributed a large proportion: 27.2 percent in Walpole, 25.3 percent in Norfolk; and 13.9 percent in SECC. No Area II facilities are listed since reclassifications are held in the institution to which the inmate is sent following a return from lower custody. Analysis showed that 64 of the 111 cases heard in Area II were seen at Walpole (57.7 percent); and 47 at Concord (42.3 percent).

TABLE II: INSTITUTION IN WHICH BOARD IS HELD

<u>INSTITUTION</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>
Concord	401	(33.4)
Walpole	327	(27.2)
Norfolk	304	(25.3)
SECC	167	(13.9)
Bay State ⁴	1	(0.1)
TOTAL	1200	(100.0)

Monthly Distribution of Cases

The distribution of cases over the seven month period was plotted. As can be seen in Table III, a relatively even number of cases was heard each month, ranging only from twelve percent in October, 1977 to a high of 18.2 percent in August, 1977. This uniformity is evident if case distribution is broken down by institution.

⁴ Bay State Correctional Center did not house inmates until September, 1977..

TABLE III: NUMBER OF CASES HEARD, BY MONTH, IN ALL INSTITUTIONS

MONTH	INSTITUTION											
	CONCORD		WALPOLE		NORFOLK		SECC		BSCC		TOTAL	
	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>
July, 1977	52	(13.0)	44	(13.5)	55	(18.1)	15	(9.0)			166	(13.8)
August, 1977	77	(19.2)	61	(18.7)	53	(17.4)	27	(16.2)			218	(18.2)
September, 1977	56	(14.0)	66	(20.2)	27	(8.9)	30	(18.0)			179	(14.9)
October, 1977	52	(13.0)	38	(11.6)	34	(11.2)	20	(12.0)			144	(12.0)
November, 1977	55	(13.7)	57	(17.4)	44	(14.5)	33	(19.8)			189	(15.8)
December, 1977	41	(10.2)	37	(11.3)	50	(16.4)	19	(11.4)			147	(12.2)
January, 1978	68	(17.0)	24	(7.3)	41	(13.5)	23	(13.8)	1	(100.0)	157	(13.1)
TOTAL	401	(33.4)	327	(27.2)	304	(25.3)	167	(13.9)	1	(100.0)	1200	(100.0)

Recommendations of the Area Boards

As Table IV illustrates, the majority of recommendations of the Area Boards were to transfer to lower custody (60.7 percent of all recommendations). A recommendation to "remain at current status" was made in 27.8 percent of the cases seen. Transfer to higher custody was deemed necessary in 5.9 percent of the cases. This latter finding must be interpreted with caution, however, since at this point it was impossible to distinguish the re-classifications from other "remain at current status". This may alter the analysis, since many of the latter might actually be a recommendation for higher custody. The second report will address this issue, although examination of the actual institution recommended may be more illuminating.

TABLE IV: RECOMMENDATIONS OF AREA BOARDS

<u>RECOMMENDATION</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>
Remain at current status	332	(27.8)
Transfer to lower custody	725	(60.7)
Transfers to higher custody	71	(5.9)
Transfer to lateral custody	65	(5.4)
Out-of-state transfer	1	(0.1)
TOTAL	1194	(100.0)

Custody Level of Institutions/Facilities Recommended by Area Boards

Table V depicts the actual institution or facility recommended by the Area Boards. For simplicity, these were categorized by custody level. At the outset, two conditions should be noted: first, Concord was considered as maximum security, since at the time of the analysis, this level was appropriate. Subsequently, and for later portions of the analysis, this designation was changed to medium. Second, a "medium-minimum" security level was used to cover those facilities whose distinctions were unclear at the time of data collection: e.g., portions of SECC and Framingham. Where possible, these were coded into the appropriate custody level.⁵

⁵ The specific institutions in each category are listed in Appendix B.

TABLE V: INSTITUTION RECOMMENDED BY AREA BOARDS (In Custody Level)

<u>INSTITUTION</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Maximum	255	(21.5)
Medium	255	(21.5)
Minimum	122	(10.3)
Medium/Minimum	145	(12.2)
Community-Based	370	(31.2)
House of Correction	18	(1.5)
Protective Custody	11	(0.9)
Other	10	(0.8)
TOTAL	1186	(100.0)

Recommendations seemed to be split between maximum and medium (combined for 43.0 percent) and minimum and community-based (totalling 41.5 percent). The single greatest proportion of recommendations were to a community-based option (31.2 percent of all cases). Finally, maximum alone comprised 21.5 percent of the institutions recommended by the Boards.

Central Office Decisions

Binding authority over the Area Board recommendations is at the discretion of the Central Office. Various options are possible, including a specification of conditions. The Commissioner may approve the Area Board decision; or, it may deny the decision and approve the inmate for another placement.

Table VI presents the Central Office decision over the Area Board recommendations. One option is missing from this table: when Central Office denies the Area Board decision and approves the individual to remain at current status. This decision category was coded instead into another appropriate spot. For example, an inmate housed in maximum who was recommended for medium but denied by Central Office to remain at current status would have been coded: "deny AB recommendation; approve for higher". This oversight has been remedied for the second report.

TABLE VI: CENTRAL OFFICE DECISIONS

<u>TYPE OF DECISION</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Approve Area Board recommendation	800	(66.7)
Deny AB recommendation; approve for lower than Board recommendation	70	(5.8)
Deny AB recommendation; approve for higher than Board recommendation	208	(17.3)
Deny AB recommendation; approve for lateral to Board recommendation	118	(9.8)
Defer	3	(0.3)
TOTAL	1199	(100.0)

The majority of Central Office decisions concurred with the Area Board recommendation. In 66.7 percent of the cases, Central Office approved the Area Board judgment. Approvals for higher custody than the Board recommendation occurred in 17.3 percent of the cases; this probably accounts for a sizable number of Central Office approvals to remain at current status.

Custody Level of Institutions/Facilities Approved by Central Office

The specific institution or facility approved by Central Office allows a further discrimination of the types of decisions being made.

TABLE VII: INSTITUTIONS APPROVED BY CENTRAL OFFICE (In Custody Level)

<u>INSTITUTION</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Maximum	329	(27.5)
Medium	276	(23.0)
Minimum	153	(12.8)
Medium/Minimum	110	(9.2)
Community-Based	288	(24.0)
House of Correction	19	(1.6)
Protective Custody	10	(0.8)
Other	13	(1.1)
TOTAL	1198	(100.0)

Maximum security institutions accounted for 27.5 percent of the Central Office decisions, closely followed by community-based facilities (24.0 percent of all decisions) and medium security (23.0 percent). An analysis of the divergence between Central Office decisions and the Area Board recommendations will be presented in a later section.

Custody Level of Immediate Placement

Actual institutional placement of individuals following the conclusion of the Area Board process was determined. Process conclusion was defined as a transfer, if this was the Commissioner's decision; or the date of the Central Office decision, if no transfer was to occur. Table VII summarizes the custody level of the institutions and facilities receiving or housing men seen by an Area Board subsequent to the conclusion of the classification.

TABLE VIII: IMMEDIATE PLACEMENTS (In Custody Level)

<u>INSTITUTION</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Maximum	350	(29.3)
Medium	275	(23.1)
Minimum	139	(11.7)
Medium/Minimum	112	(9.4)
Community-Based	282	(23.6)
House of Correction	18	(1.5)
Protective Custody	9	(0.8)
Other	8	(0.7)
TOTAL	1193	(100.0)

Maximum security was the single most prevalent recipient (29.3 percent), followed by community-based facilities (23.6 percent) and medium security (23.1 percent). A sizable combined proportion was placed at either minimum or medium/minimum security options (21.1 percent).

Custody Level of Placement Six Months Later

The inmate's placement six months after the conclusion of the Area Board process was investigated. This follow-up will be utilized later to determine the relative accuracy of the Area Board recommendations. Table IX depicts the findings. The total is smaller than that of previous tables since as of this writing, not enough time had elapsed to be able to complete the tracking for all inmates in the population.

TABLE IX: PLACEMENT SIX MONTHS AFTER COMPLETION OF AREA BOARD PROCESS
(In Custody Level)

<u>INSTITUTION</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>
Maximum	273	(27.2)
Medium	155	(15.4)
Minimum	65	(6.5)
Medium/Minimum	92	(9.2)
Community-Based	146	(14.5)
House of Correction	13	(1.3)
Parole	203	(20.2)
GCD	18	(1.8)
Sentence Revoked	2	(0.2)
Escape	18	(1.8)
Other	19	(1.9)
TOTAL	1004	(100.0)

The figures indicated that the single greatest proportion was in maximum security at the end of six months (27.2 percent). However, community-based programs, parole, and release on a Good Conduct Discharge combined accounted for an even greater percentage of the total (36.5 percent). Twenty percent of the cases appearing before an Area Board had been paroled by six months.

Length of Area Board Classification Process

Three measures of the length of classification were computed. First, the time between the Area Board hearing and the date of the Central Office decision was determined to see if the "turn-around" conformed to the specified two weeks. Second, if an inmate was approved for a transfer, the time between the Area Board hearing and the actual date of transfer was derived. Finally, for those inmates scheduled to transfer, the time between the date of the Central Office decision and date of transfer was examined. These data are presented in Tables X, XI, and XII on pages 42 and 43.

TABLE X: TIME UNTIL CENTRAL OFFICE DECISION

<u>NUMBER OF WEEKS</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>CUMULATIVE %</u>
Less than 1 Week	32	(2.7)	(2.7)
1 to 2 Weeks	264	(22.1)	(24.8)
2 to 3 Weeks	347	(29.1)	(53.9)
3 to 4 Weeks	278	(23.2)	(77.1)
4 to 5 Weeks	153	(12.8)	(89.9)
5 to 6 Weeks	99	(8.3)	(98.2)
6 to 7 Weeks	18	(1.5)	(99.7)
7 Weeks or More	3	(0.3)	(100.0)
TOTAL	1194	(100.0)	

By the end of two weeks, only 24.8 percent of all cases had been decided by Central Office. This increases approximately 100 percent by a week later, when 53.9 percent of the cases had been decided. An additional fifty percent increase occurs by the end of four weeks, when 77.1 percent of the population had concluded classification. The median (or midpoint) length of time it takes for Central Office to make its decision, therefore, falls somewhere from two to three weeks.

TABLE XI: TIME FROM AREA BOARD HEARING TO TRANSFER

<u>NUMBER OF WEEKS</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>CUMULATIVE %</u>
2 Weeks or Less	74	(9.6)	(9.6)
2 to 3 Weeks	105	(13.7)	(23.3)
3 to 4 Weeks	116	(15.1)	(38.4)
4 to 5 Weeks	87	(11.3)	(49.7)
5 to 6 Weeks	77	(10.0)	(59.7)
6 to 7 Weeks	54	(7.0)	(66.7)
7 to 8 Weeks	59	(7.7)	(74.4)
8 to 10 Weeks	58	(7.5)	(81.9)
10 to 13 Weeks*	68	(8.9)	(90.8)
13 Weeks or Longer*	71	(9.2)	(100.0)
TOTAL	769		

In Table XI it can be seen that somewhat longer is necessary for inmate transfers. The median here is approximately four to five weeks; only 23.3 percent had transferred by the end of three weeks; and 38.4 percent by the end of four weeks.

TABLE XII: TIME BETWEEN DATE OF CENTRAL OFFICE DECISION AND TRANSFER

<u>NUMBER OF WEEKS</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>CUMULATIVE %</u>
Less than 1 Week	275	(36.8)	(36.8)
1 to 2 Weeks	103	(13.8)	(50.6)
2 to 3 Weeks	80	(10.7)	(61.3)
3 to 4 Weeks	60	(8.0)	(69.3)
4 to 5 Weeks	44	(5.9)	(75.2)
5 to 7 Weeks	75	(10.0)	(85.2)
7 to 10 Weeks*	57	(7.7)	(92.9)
Longer than 10 Weeks*	53	(7.1)	(100.0)
TOTAL	747	(100.0)	

* These figures may be attributed to coding error; the transfers might not have resulted directly from the particular Area Board hearing.

Fifty percent of the cases scheduled for a transfer had done so by two weeks. Over sixty percent had transferred at the end of three weeks, and by five weeks, three-fourths of those inmates had gone to their designated placements. Thus, within a month of the Central Office decision, a sizable majority of transfers had occurred, with a median of two weeks.

Summary of Findings

Table XIII follows the outcome of placement recommendations throughout the process. Cases are not followed individually through the system; thus, cases in maximum at six months are not necessarily those who began with a recommendation for maximum. Rather, these figures represent frequency distributions discussed in the preceding section.

It appears that from the Area Board recommendation immediate placement, a relatively high degree of consistency is present in terms of assessed and real custody level. The percentage of cases in each is quite similar, whether one examines the Area Board recommendation, the Central Office decision, or the immediate placement.

TABLE XIII: FLOW OF PLACEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS THROUGHOUT THE PROCESS

CUSTODY LEVEL	AREA BOARD RECOMMENDATION		CENTRAL OFFICE DECISION		IMMEDIATE PLACEMENT		PLACEMENT AT SIX MONTHS	
	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>
Maximum	255	(21.5)	329	(27.5)	350	(29.3)	273	(27.2)
Medium	255	(21.5)	276	(23.0)	275	(23.1)	155	(15.4)
Minimum	122	(10.3)	153	(12.8)	139	(11.7)	65	(6.5)
Medium/Minimum	145	(12.2)	110	(9.2)	112	(9.4)	92	(9.2)
Community-Based	370	(31.2)	288	(24.0)	282	(23.6)	146	(14.5)
House of Correction	18	(1.5)	19	(1.6)	18	(1.5)	13	(1.3)
Protective Custody	11	(0.9)	10	(0.8)	9	(0.8)	*	
Parole	-	-	-	-	-	-	203	(20.2)
GCD	-	-	-	-	-	-	18	(1.8)
Sentence Revoked	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	(0.2)
Escape	-	-	-	-	-	-	18	(1.8)
Other	10	(0.8)	13	(1.1)	8	(0.7)	19	(1.9)
TOTAL	1186	(100.0)	1198	(100.0)	1193	(100.0)	1004	(100.0)

* These cases were coded under another category heading.

SECTION II: CROSSTABULATIONS

In this section, certain variables are compared to others to answer more specific research questions. In these cases, crosstabulations of variables are portrayed to be able to compare findings on one set of data with another.

The research objectives examined in the following section can be more clearly specified as:

1. What are the outcomes of Area Board recommendations? How does the Central Office act upon these recommendations? What divergence is there between the Area Board recommendation and subsequent placement? How does the inmate's institutional placement six months later compare to the original recommendation?
2. What are the outcomes of the entire process? How does the Central Office decision compare to the variables mentioned above; i.e., immediate placement and that six months later?

A series of lengthy tables will be displayed. Highlights of the findings, and some analytical discussion, are summarized in the following narrative.

Outcomes of Area Board Recommendations

Central Office Decisions Upon Area Board Recommendations

In Table XIV the original Area Board recommendation is compared to the Central Office decision. Several Central Office alternatives are possible; these are described by referring to whether the decision was higher or lower than, or lateral to the Area Board recommendation, or whether Central Office simply approved the recommendation.

The Table lends itself to the derivation of approval rates; or, what percentage of the original recommendations was approved for each category of Central Office decision.

A recommended transfer to higher custody was most likely to result in an outright approval from Central Office. As can be seen, 85.9 percent of all such recommendations were approved. A high approval rate was also obtained for recommendations to remain at current status; Central Office concurred with 7.7 percent of these recommendations. It is notable that the lowest approval rate occurred vis-a-vis Area Board recommendations for transfers to lower custody, since only 59.7 percent of these were approved. This still, however, represents a majority of these recommendations.

The Central Office decision category of "deny Area Board recommendation; approve for lower custody than that recommended by the Board; occurred most often over recommendations to remain

at current status (15.1 percent) and transfer to higher status (11.3 percent). Central Office approvals of institutions representing a higher custody level than the Board recommendation were made most often when this recommendation was for a transfer to lower custody (26.7 percent of all original recommendations for lower custody). Finally, recommendations for a lateral transfer received the highest approval rate for a transfer to lateral custody; 30.8 percent of these recommendations were denied by Central Office for an institution or facility of the same custody level.

TABLE XIV: CENTRAL OFFICE DECISIONS UPON AREA BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Central Office Approves Area Board Recommendation (N=794):

<u>AREA BOARD RECOMMENDATION</u>	<u>ORIGINAL N</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>APPROVAL RATE</u>
Remain Current Status	332	258	(32.5)	77.7%
Transfer to Lower	724	432	(54.4)	59.7%
Transfer to Higher	71	61	(7.7)	85.9%
Transfer Lateral	65	42	(5.3)	64.6%
Out-of-State	1	1	(0.1)	100.0%
TOTAL	1193	794	(100.0)	

2. Central Office Approves for Lower than Area Board Recommendation (N=70):

<u>AREA BOARD RECOMMENDATION</u>	<u>ORIGINAL N</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>APPROVAL RATE</u>
Remain Current Status	332	50	(71.4)	15.1%
Transfer to Lower	724	10	(14.3)	1.4%
Transfer to Higher	71	8	(11.4)	11.3%
Transfer to Lateral	65	2	(2.9)	3.1%
Out-of-State	1	0	(0.0)	0.0%
TOTAL	1193	70	(100.0)	

3. Central Office Approves for Higher than Area Board Recommendation (N=208):

<u>AREA BOARD RECOMMENDATION</u>	<u>ORIGINAL N</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>APPROVAL RATE</u>
Remain Current Status	332	12	(5.8)	3.6%
Transfer to Lower	724	193	(92.8)	26.7%
Transfer to Higher	71	2	(1.0)	2.8%
Transfer to Lateral	65	1	(0.5)	1.5%
Out-of-State	1	0	(0.0)	0.0%
TOTAL	1193	208	(100.0)	

4. Central Office Approves for Lateral to Area Board Recommendation (N=118):

<u>AREA BOARD RECOMMENATION</u>	<u>ORIGINAL N</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>APPROVAL RATE</u>
Remain Current Status	332	11	(9.3)	3.3%
Transfer to Lower	724	87	(73.7)	12.0%
Transfer to Higher	71	0	(0.0)	0.0%
Transfer to Lateral	65	20	(16.9)	30.8%
Out-of-State	1	0	(0.0)	0.0%
TOTAL	1193	118	(100.0)	

Institutions and Facilities Approved by Central Office Compared to Institutions and Facilities Recommended by the Area Boards

Table XV compares the custody level of the institutions recommended by the Area Boards to those approved by the Central Office. As before, approval rates are computed to be able to discern more discriminating patterns of Central Office action in each decision category.

The same general pattern noted before seems evident again: that there is Central Office concurrence with the Area Board assessments. For example, the highest approval rate for maximum security occurs over the original Board recommendations for maximum (85.9 percent); the highest approval rate for medium is in the Board category of medium (72.5 percent); recommendations for minimum security had an approval rate for minimum of 77.9 percent; approvals for medium/minimum facilities were made most often over recommendations for medium/minimum (60.0 percent); and recommendations for community-based placements resulted in an approval rate of 70.8 percent.

TABLE XV: INSTITUTION OF CENTRAL OFFICE DECISION COMPARED TO INSTITUTION RECOMMENDED BY AREA BOARD (In Custody Level)

1. Central Office Approves for Maximum (N=326):

<u>INSTITUTION RECOMMENDED BY AREA BOARD</u>	<u>ORIGINAL N</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>APPROVAL RATE</u>
Maximum	255	219	(67.2)	85.9%
Medium	255	40	(12.3)	15.7%
Minimum	122	11	(3.4)	9.0%
Medium/Minimum	145	28	(8.6)	19.3%
Community-Based	370	25	(7.7)	6.8%
House of Correction	18	0	(0.0)	0.0%
Protective Custody	11	1	(0.3)	9.1%
Other	10	2	(0.6)	20.0%
TOTAL	1186	326	(100.0)	

2. Central Office Approves for Medium (N=271):

<u>INSTITUTION RECOMMENDED BY AREA BOARD</u>	<u>ORIGINAL N</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>APPROVAL RATE</u>
Maximum	255	25	(9.2)	9.8%
Medium	255	185	(68.3)	72.5%
Minimum	122	11	(4.1)	9.0%
Medium/Minimum	145	12	(4.4)	8.3%
Community-Based	370	37	(13.7)	10.0%
House of Correction	18	1	(0.4)	5.6%
Protective Custody	11	0	(0.0)	0.0%
Other	10	0	(0.0)	0.0%
TOTAL	1186	271	(100.0)	

3. Central Office Approves for Minimum (N=151):

<u>INSTITUTION RECOMMENDED BY AREA BOARD</u>	<u>ORIGINAL N</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>APPROVAL RATE</u>
Maximum	255	3	(2.0)	1.2%
Medium	255	13	(8.6)	5.1%
Minimum	122	95	(62.9)	77.9%
Medium/Minimum	145	9	(6.0)	6.2%
Community-Based	370	31	(20.6)	8.4%
House of Correction	18	0	(0.0)	0.0%
Protective Custody	11	0	(0.0)	0.0%
Other	10	0	(0.0)	0.0%
TOTAL	1186	151	(100.0)	

4. Central Office Approves for Medium/Minimum (N=110):

<u>INSTITUTION RECOMMENDED BY AREA BOARD</u>	<u>ORIGINAL N</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>APPROVAL RATE</u>
Maximum	255	2	(1.8)	0.8%
Medium	255	6	(5.5)	2.4%
Minimum	122	3	(2.7)	2.5%
Medium/Minimum	145	87	(79.1)	60.0%
Community-Based	370	12	(10.9)	3.2%
House of Correction	18	0	(0.0)	0.0%
Protective Custody	11	0	(0.0)	0.0%
Other	10	0	(0.0)	0.0%
TOTAL	1186	110	(100.0)	

5. Central Office Approves for Community-Based
(N=286):

<u>INSTITUTION RECOMMENDED BY AREA BOARD</u>	<u>ORIGINAL N</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>APPROVAL RATE</u>
Maximum	255	6	(2.1)	2.4%
Medium	255	9	(3.1)	3.5%
Minimum	122	2	(0.7)	1.6%
Medium/Minimum	145	7	(2.4)	4.8%
Community-Based	370	262	(91.6)	70.8%
House of Correction	18	0	(0.0)	0.0%
Protective Custody	11	0	(0.0)	0.0%
Other	10	0	(0.0)	0.0%
TOTAL	1186	286	(100.0)	

The above findings can be summarized in an alternative manner, by looking at the difference in the number of cases recommended for a particular custody level, and the number actually approved by Central Office for that option. Table XVI describes this divergence.

TABLE XVI: DIVERGENCE BETWEEN CUSTODY LEVELS OF PLACEMENTS APPROVED BY CENTRAL OFFICE AND PLACEMENTS RECOMMENDED BY AREA BOARDS

<u>CUSTODY LEVEL</u>	<u>AREA BOARD RECOMMENDED</u>	<u>CENTRAL OFFICE APPROVED</u>	<u>DIFFERENCE</u>
Maximum	255	326 (+71)	+27.8%
Medium	255	271 (+16)	+ 6.3%
Minimum	122	151 (+29)	+23.8%
Medium/Minimum	145	110 (-35)	-24.1%
Community-Based	370	286 (-84)	-22.7%

The more conservative decision making of Central Office is highlighted: for example, 71 more cases are approved for maximum, representing an increase of 27.8 percent over the Area Board recommendations. Conversely, 84 fewer cases were approved for community-based placements than were recommended, which is actually a decrease of 22.7 percent.

Immediate Institutional Placement Compared to Area Board Recommendations

The custody level of the institution or facility originally recommended by the Area Board compared to the inmate's immediate placement at the conclusion of the classification experience is presented in Table XVII. As before, placement at the conclusion of classification was defined as the actual receiving institution, if this was appropriate, or the institution in which he was housed, in cases of "approved to remain at current status". Rates in this table are placement rates, or the percentage of the original recommendations that was housed in each placement category.

The patterns of placement rates closely resemble the approval rates discussed previously, although to a lesser extent. For example, 84.2 percent of the inmates recommended for a maximum placement were placed in maximum; however, a substantial proportion of those recommended for medium and for medium/minimum were placed in maximum (20.5 percent and 22.1 percent of these respective categories).

Recommendations for medium security resulted in a large percentage placed in medium (68.5 percent); the placement rate for minimum was highest in the category of original recommendations for minimum (72.7 percent); and medium/minimum recommendations demonstrated the highest placement rate in this custody level (57.2 percent). Finally, 68.4 percent of all recommendations for community-based facilities resulted in an actual placement in one of these programs.

TABLE XVII: IMMEDIATE PLACEMENT COMPARED TO INSTITUTION RECOMMENDED BY AREA BOARD (In Custody Level)

1. Immediate Placement in Maximum (N=347):

<u>INSTITUTION RECOMMENDED BY AREA BOARD</u>	<u>ORIGINAL N</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>APPROVAL RATE</u>
Maximum	253	213	(61.4)	84.2%
Medium	254	52	(15.0)	20.5%
Minimum	121	13	(3.7)	10.7%
Medium/Minimum	145	32	(9.2)	22.1%
Community-Based	370	33	(9.5)	8.9%
House of Correction	18	1	(0.3)	5.6%
Protective Custody	11	1	(0.3)	9.1%
Other	10	2	(0.6)	20.0%
TOTAL	1182	347	(100.0)	

2. Immediate Placement in Medium (N=271):

<u>INSTITUTION RECOMMENDED BY AREA BOARD</u>	<u>ORIGINAL N</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>APPROVAL RATE</u>
Maximum	253	27	(10.0)	10.7%
Medium	254	174	(64.2)	68.5%
Minimum	121	15	(5.5)	12.4%
Medium/Minimum	145	12	(4.4)	8.3%
Community-Based	370	42	(15.5)	11.4%
House of Correction	18	1	(0.4)	5.6%
Protective Custody	11	0	(0.0)	0.0%
Other	10	0	(0.0)	0.0%
TOTAL	1182	271	(100.0)	

3. Immediate Placement in Minimum (N=137):

<u>INSTITUTION RECOMMENDED BY AREA BOARD</u>	<u>ORIGINAL N</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>APPROVAL RATE</u>
Maximum	253	2	(1.5)	0.8%
Medium	254	12	(8.7)	8.8%
Minimum	121	88	(64.2)	72.7%
Medium/Minimum	145	9	(6.6)	6.2%
Community-Based	370	26	(19.0)	7.0%
House of Correction	18	0	(0.0)	0.0%
Protective Custody	11	0	(0.0)	0.0%
Other	10	0	(0.0)	0.0%
TOTAL	1182	137	(100.0)	

4. Immediate Placement in Medium/Minimum (N=112):

<u>INSTITUTION RECOMMENDED BY AREA BOARD</u>	<u>ORIGINAL N</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>APPROVAL RATE</u>
Maximum	253	4	(3.6)	1.6%
Medium	254	5	(4.5)	2.0%
Minimum	121	2	(1.8)	1.7%
Medium/Minimum	145	83	(14.3)	57.2%
Community Based	370	16	(74.1)	4.3%
House of Correction	18	0	(0.0)	0.0%
Protective Custody	11	1	(0.9)	9.1%
Other	10	1	(0.9)	10.0%
TOTAL	1182	112	(100.0)	

5. Immediate Placement in Community-Based (N=280):

<u>INSTITUTION RECOMMENDED BY AREA BOARD</u>	<u>ORIGINAL N</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>APPROVAL RATE</u>
Maximum	253	7	(2.5)	2.8%
Medium	254	9	(3.2)	3.5%
Minimum	121	3	(1.1)	2.5%
Medium/Minimum	145	8	(2.9)	5.5%
Community-Based	370	253	(90.4)	68.4%
House of Correction	18	0	(0.0)	0.0%
Protective Custody	11	0	(0.0)	0.0%
Other	10	0	(0.0)	0.0%
TOTAL	1182	280	(100.0)	

Placement at Six Months Compared to Institutions and Facilities
Recommended by the Area Boards

Table XVIII summarizes the comparison between the inmate's institutional placement as of six months, and the original recommendation of the Area Board. Once again, placement rates are presented. In this case, these rates refer to the percentage of the original recommendation that was housed in each category of security level at the end of six months.

The placement patterns discussed with respect to previous tables do not appear as consistent when considering placement at six months. For example, although 53.7 percent of the original recommendations for maximum were residents of a maximum security facility at the end of six months, a sizable proportion of the other recommendation categories were also in maximum. The Table shows these percentages to be 20.8 percent of the original recommendations for medium security; 16.3 percent of the recommendations for minimum security; 20.7 percent of the recommendations for medium/minimum security; 18.8 percent of the inmates recommended for a community-based program; 21.4 percent of the house of correction recommendations; and 11.1 percent of the protective custody recommendations.

The other categories of six month placement did not draw as evenly from all recommended custody levels. Recommendations for medium security had a high proportion of medium security placements (42.6 percent); recommendations for minimum security had the single highest placement rate in minimum (37.8 percent); community-based recommendations resulted in the highest placement rate in this type of program (31.3 percent); and placements in medium/minimum facilities were highest in the recommendation categories of medium/minimum (29.8 percent) and protective custody (77.8 percent). This latter finding is probably due to the use of one of these institutions (a portion of SECC) as protective custody housing.

The placement rate of inmates on parole at six months is interesting to examine. Recommendations for maximum resulted in a parole placement rate of 17.7 percent; 15.9 percent of the inmates recommended for medium were on parole by six; and 31.9 percent of the recommendations for community-based facilities had been paroled.

TABLE XVIII: PLACEMENT AT SIX MONTHS COMPARED TO INSTITUTION RECOMMENDED BY AREA BOARD (In Custody Level)

1. Six Month Placement in Maximum (N=271):

<u>INSTITUTION RECOMMENDED BY AREA BOARD</u>	<u>ORIGINAL N</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>PLACEMENT RATE</u>
Maximum	231	124	(45.8)	53.7%
Medium	207	43	(15.9)	20.8%
Minimum	98	16	(5.9)	16.3%
Medium/Minimum	121	25	(9.2)	20.7%
Community-Based	304	57	(21.0)	18.8%
House of Correction	14	3	(1.1)	21.4%
Protective Custody	9	1	(0.4)	11.1%
Other	10	2	(0.7)	20.0%
TOTAL	994*	271	(100.0)	

2. Six Month Placement in Medium (N=153):

<u>INSTITUTION RECOMMENDED BY AREA BOARD</u>	<u>ORIGINAL</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>PLACEMENT RATE</u>
Maximum	231	29	(19.0)	12.6%
Medium	207	88	(57.5)	42.5%
Minimum	98	10	(6.5)	10.2%
Medium/Minimum	121	8	(5.2)	6.6%
Community-Based	304	11	(7.2)	3.6%
House of Correction	14	3	(2.0)	21.4%
Protective Custody	9	0	(0.0)	0.0%
Other	10	4	(2.6)	40.0%
TOTAL	994	153	(100.0)	

3. Six Month Placement in Minimum (N=65):

<u>INSTITUTION RECOMMENDED BY AREA BOARD</u>	<u>ORIGINAL</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>PLACEMENT RATE</u>
Maximum	231	1	(1.5)	0.4%
Medium	207	6	(9.2)	2.9%
Minimum	98	37	(57.0)	37.8%
Medium/Minimum	121	10	(15.4)	8.3%
Community-Based	304	10	(15.4)	3.3%
House of Correction	14	1	(1.5)	7.1%
Protective Custody	9	0	(0.0)	0.0%
Other	10	0	(0.0)	0.0%
TOTAL	994	65	(100.0)	

* This figure is substantially lower than the total in preceding tables since not enough time had elapsed at the time of data collection for the six-month tracking to be completed for everyone in the population. All sample members will be included in the next report.

4. Six Month Placement in Medium/Minimum (N=91):

<u>INSTITUTION RECOMMENDED BY AREA BOARD</u>	<u>ORIGINAL N</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>PLACEMENT RATE</u>
Maximum	231	10	(11.0)	4.3%
Medium	207	16	(17.6)	7.7%
Minimum	98	6	(6.6)	6.1%
Medium/Minimum	121	36	(39.6)	29.8%
Community-Based	304	13	(14.3)	4.3%
House of Correction	14	1	(1.1)	7.1%
Protective Custody	9	7	(7.7)	77.8%
Other	10	2	(2.2)	20.0%
TOTAL	994	91	(100.0)	

5. Six Month Placement at Community-Based (N=146):

<u>INSTITUTION RECOMMENDED BY AREA BOARD</u>	<u>ORIGINAL N</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>PLACEMENT RATE</u>
Maximum	231	6	(4.1)	2.6%
Medium	207	13	(8.9)	6.3%
Minimum	98	15	(10.3)	15.3%
Medium/Minimum	121	17	(11.6)	14.0%
Community-Based	304	95	(65.1)	31.3%
House of Correction	14	0	(0.0)	0.0%
Protective Custody	9	0	(0.0)	0.0%
Other	10	0	(0.0)	0.0%
TOTAL	994	146	(100.0)	

6. Six Month Placement on Parole (N=198):

<u>INSTITUTION RECOMMENDED BY AREA BOARD</u>	<u>ORIGINAL N</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>PLACEMENT RATE</u>
Maximum	231	41	(20.7)	17.7%
Medium	207	33	(16.7)	15.9%
Minimum	98	11	(5.6)	11.2%
Medium/Minimum	121	16	(8.1)	13.2%
Community-Based	304	97	(49.0)	31.9%
House of Correction	14	0	(0.0)	0.0%
Protective Custody	9	0	(0.0)	0.0%
Other	10	0	(0.0)	0.0%
TOTAL	994	198	(100.0)	

Outcomes of Central Office Decisions

Immediate Placement Compared to Central Office Decisions

Table XIX shows the actual proportion of cases placed in each custody level institution, compared to the placement decision made by Central Office. It is striking that most Central Office designated custody levels result in an immediate placement in that level facility.

Approvals for maximum were placed in maximum at an extremely high rate of 97.7 percent; 93.8 percent of the cases approved for medium were immediately housed in medium; minimum approvals were overwhelmingly placed in minimum (92.1 percent); decisions for medium/minimum were actually received by this type of facility at a rate of 92.7 percent; and 95.1 percent of the approvals for community-based were directly placed in one of these programs.

TABLE XIX: IMMEDIATE PLACEMENT COMPARED TO CENTRAL OFFICE DECISION
(In Custody Level)

1. Immediate Placement in Maximum (N=350):

<u>CENTRAL OFFICE DECISION</u>	<u>ORIGINAL N</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>PLACEMENT RATE</u>
Maximum	326	319	(91.9)	97.9%
Medium	276	13	(3.7)	4.7%
Minimum	151	6	(1.7)	4.0%
Medium/Minimum	110	5	(1.4)	4.5%
Community-Based	288	5	(1.4)	1.7%
House of Correction	19	1	(0.3)	5.3%
Protective Custody	10	0	(0.0)	0.0%
Other	13	1	(0.3)	7.7%
TOTAL	1193	350	(100.0)	

2. Immediate Placement in Medium (N=275):

<u>CENTRAL OFFICE DECISION</u>	<u>ORIGINAL N</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>PLACEMENT RATE</u>
Maximum	326	3	(1.1)	0.9%
Medium	276	259	(94.2)	93.8%
Minimum	151	3	(1.1)	2.0%
Medium/Minimum	110	2	(0.7)	1.8%
Community-Based	288	4	(1.5)	1.4%
House of Correction	19	0	(0.0)	0.0%
Protective Custody	10	0	(0.0)	0.0%
Other	13	4	(1.5)	30.8%
TOTAL	1193	275	(100.0)	

3. Immediate Placement in Minimum (N=139):

<u>CENTRAL OFFICE DECISION</u>	<u>ORIGINAL N</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>PLACEMENT RATE</u>
Maximum	326	0	(0.0)	0.0%
Medium	276	0	(0.0)	0.0%
Minimum	151	139	(100.0)	92.1%
Medium/Minimum	110	0	(0.0)	0.0%
Community-Based	288	0	(0.0)	0.0%
House of Correction	19	0	(0.0)	0.0%
Protective Custody	10	0	(0.0)	0.0%
Other	13	0	(0.0)	0.0%
TOTAL	1193	139	(100.0)	

4. Immediate Placement in Medium/Minimum (N=112):

<u>CENTRAL OFFICE DECISION</u>	<u>ORIGINAL N</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>PLACEMENT RATE</u>
Maximum	326	2	(1.8)	0.6%
Medium	276	1	(0.9)	0.4%
Minimum	151	0	(0.0)	0.0%
Medium/Minimum	110	102	(91.1)	92.7%
Community-Based	288	5	(4.5)	1.7%
House of Correction	19	0	(0.0)	0.0%
Protective Custody	10	1	(0.9)	10.0%
Other	13	1	(0.9)	7.7%
TOTAL	1193	112	(100.0)	

5. Immediate Placement in Community-Based (N=282):

<u>CENTRAL OFFICE DECISION</u>	<u>ORIGINAL N</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>PLACEMENT RATE</u>
Maximum	326	2	(0.7)	0.6%
Medium	276	2	(0.7)	0.7%
Minimum	151	3	(1.1)	2.0%
Medium/Minimum	110	1	(0.4)	0.0%
Community-Based	288	274	(97.2)	95.1%
House of Correction	19	0	(0.0)	0.0%
Protective Custody	10	0	(0.0)	0.0%
Other	13	0	(0.0)	0.0%
TOTAL	1193	282	(100.0)	

Placement at Six Months Compared to Central Office Decisions

The final outcome of the Central Office decisions was determined by the custody level of each case six months after classification. Table XX locates these placements for each custody level of the Central Office decision in the form of placement rates for each category.

One general pattern can be distinguished: for each custody level of the six-month placement, the highest placement rate is in the original Central Office decision for the same custody level. Thus, 55.1 percent of the decisions for maximum were housed in maximum; 50 percent of the approvals for medium were in medium; 38.3 percent of the minimum approvals were found in minimum; 45.3 percent of the decisions for a medium/minimum facility were in this type of facility*; and 37.8 percent of the community-based approvals were participants of one of these programs at the end of the six-month follow-up.

The placement rates of cases on parole merits separate elaboration: Outstanding here is the 18.5 percent of the approvals for maximum who had been paroled by six months; 21.1 percent of the medium approvals; 14 percent of the medium/minimum approvals, and 32.4 percent of the approvals for community-based facilities. The reader must be cautioned, however, not to assume that these cases were directly released from the type of facility approved by Central Office.

Several additional findings need further explanation. First, close to twenty percent (19.3) of the approvals for community-based facilities were in maximum by six months. A sizable proportion of the approvals for medium (18.3 percent) were also in a maximum security institution. Finally, community-based facilities served as the residence for a number of minimum approvals (19.2 percent) and medium/minimum approvals (16.3 percent).

* Actually, the highest placement rate was for protective custody (75 percent). However, due to the use of portions of medium/minimum facilities for protective custody, we may assume this to be a result of the coding.

TABLE XX: PLACEMENT AT SIX MONTHS COMPARED TO CENTRAL OFFICE DECISION
(In Custody Level)

1. Six-Month Placement in Maximum (N=273):

<u>CENTRAL OFFICE DECISION</u>	<u>ORIGINAL N</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>PLACEMENT RATE</u>
Maximum	292	161	(59.0)	55.1%
Medium	232	28	(10.3)	12.1%
Minimum	120	22	(8.1)	18.3%
Medium/Minimum	86	8	(2.9)	9.3%
Community-Based	238	46	(16.8)	19.3%
House of Correction	15	4	(1.5)	26.7%
Protective Custody	8	1	(0.4)	12.5%
Other	13	3	(1.1)	23.1%
TOTAL	1004	273	(100.0)	

2. Six-Month Placement in Medium (N=155):

<u>CENTRAL OFFICE DECISION</u>	<u>ORIGINAL N</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>PLACEMENT RATE</u>
Maximum	292	26	(16.8)	9.9%
Medium	232	116	(74.8)	50.0%
Minimum	120	3	(1.9)	2.5%
Medium/Minimum	86	0	(0.0)	0.0%
Community-Based	238	5	(3.2)	2.1%
House of Correction	15	2	(1.3)	13.3%
Protective Custody	8	0	(0.0)	0.0%
Other	13	3	(1.9)	23.1%
TOTAL	1004	155	(100.0)	

3. Six-Month Placement in Minimum (N=65):

<u>CENTRAL OFFICE DECISION</u>	<u>ORIGINAL N</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>PLACEMENT RATE</u>
Maximum	292	2	(3.1)	0.7%
Medium	232	7	(10.8)	3.0%
Minimum	120	46	(70.8)	38.3%
Medium/Minimum	86	6	(9.2)	7.0%
Community-Based	238	3	(4.6)	1.3%
House of Correction	15	1	(1.5)	6.7%
Protective Custody	8	0	(0.0)	0.0%
Other	13	0	(0.0)	0.0%
TOTAL	1004	65	(100.0)	

4. Six-Month Placement in Medium/Minimum (N=92):

<u>CENTRAL OFFICE DECISION</u>	<u>ORIGINAL N</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>PLACEMENT RATE</u>
Maximum	292	14	(15.2)	4.8%
Medium	232	18	(19.6)	7.8%
Minimum	120	5	(5.4)	4.2%
Medium/Minimum	86	39	(42.4)	45.3%
Community Based	238	5	(5.4)	2.1%
House of Correction	15	2	(2.2)	13.3%
Protective Custody	8	6	(6.5)	75.0%
Other	13	3	(3.3)	23.1%
TOTAL	1004	92	(100.0)	

5. Six-Month-Placement in Community-Based (N=146):

<u>CENTRAL OFFICE DECISION</u>	<u>ORIGINAL N</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>PLACEMENT RATE</u>
Maximum	292	10	(6.8)	3.4%
Medium	232	8	(5.5)	3.4%
Minimum	120	23	(15.8)	19.2%
Medium/Minimum	86	14	(9.6)	16.3%
Community-Based	238	90	(61.6)	37.8%
House of Correction	15	0	(0.0)	0.0%
Protective Custody	8	0	(0.0)	0.0%
Other	13	1	(0.7)	7.7%
TOTAL	1004	146	(100.0)	

6. Six-Month Placement on Parole (N=203):

<u>CENTRAL OFFICE DECISION</u>	<u>ORIGINAL N</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>PLACEMENT RATE</u>
Maximum	292	54	(26.6)	18.5%
Medium	232	49	(24.1)	21.1%
Minimum	120	11	(5.4)	9.2%
Medium/Minimum	86	12	(5.9)	14.0%
Community-Based	238	77	(37.9)	32.4%
House of Correction	15	0	(0.0)	0.0%
Protective Custody	8	0	(0.0)	0.0%
Other	13	0	(0.0)	0.0%
TOTAL	1004	203	(100.0)	

Institution which Board is Held Compared to Six-Month Placement

As a final measure of the quality of the Board decisions, a comparison was made between the specific institution convening the Board, and the inmate's placement at the end of six months. This data is presented in Table XXI.

In general, inmates seen by a Board tend to experience movement into lesser security statuses. For example, although close to thirty percent of the cases heard at Walpole were in maximum, the overwhelming majority were found in lower security at the end of six months.

Thirty percent of the Concord hearings resulted in a parole at six months. This may be explained by the gradual shift of the facility from maximum to medium security during the period under study and the high proportion of residents with an indefinite sentence. What is striking, however, is the 35 percent of Concord cases that were housed in maximum.

A sizeable proportion (19 percent) of the cases heard in Norfolk, a medium security facility, were found in maximum security at the end of six months. The majority however, (63.6 percent) were in lower security, and 17.4 percent had been paroled.

Finally, of note for the SECC hearings was the 25 percent who had been placed in a community-based program.

TABLE XXI: INSTITUTION IN WHICH BOARD IS HELD COMPARED TO SIX-MONTH PLACEMENT

INSTITUTION OF BOARD:

Six-Month Placement	Walpole		Concord		BSCC		Norfolk		SECC	
	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)
Maximum	84	(29.8)	118	(35.5)	-	-	48	(19.0)	23	(16.9)
Medium	80	(28.4)	32	(9.6)	-	-	35	(13.8)	8	(5.9)
Minimum	12	(4.3)	7	(2.1)	-	-	34	(13.4)	12	(8.8)
Medium/Minimum	24	(8.5)	6	(1.8)	-	-	34	(13.4)	28	(20.6)
Community-Based	19	(6.7)	46	(13.9)	-	-	46	(18.2)	37	(25.7)
House of Correction	5	(1.8)	4	(1.2)	-	-	3	(1.2)	1	(0.7)
Parole	39	(13.8)	100	(30.1)	1	(100.0)	44	(17.4)	19	(14.0)
GCD	8	(2.8)	4	(1.2)	-	-	3	(1.2)	3	(2.2)
Revoked	-	-	2	(0.6)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Escape	8	(2.8)	6	(1.8)	-	-	3	(1.2)	1	(0.7)
Other	3	(0.9)	7	(2.1)	-	-	3	(1.2)	6	(4.4)
TOTAL	282	(100.0)	332	(100.0)	1	(100.0)	253	(100.0)	167	(100.0)

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Several major findings can be summarized.

1. A large proportion of all Area Board recommendations (60.7 percent), were for transfers to lower custody.

2. Central Office tended to approve Area Board recommendations (66.7 percent approval rate); the largest percentage of overturns were for approvals to higher custody.

3. In terms of specific institution, the Area Board recommendations were nearly equally split between maximum and medium security (43 percent) and minimum and community-based (41.5 percent).*

4. Central Office decisions were apt to be more conservative: 50.5 percent for maximum or medium security versus 36.8 percent for minimum or community-based.*

5. At the end of the six-month follow-up, a large proportion of the population (36.5 percent) was in community-based programs or released on a GCD or parole.

6. The length of classification is greater than expected; the median length of time for Central Office decisions was two to three weeks; the median number of weeks from a hearing to a transfer was four to five weeks; and the median length of time between the Central Office decision to a transfer was two weeks.

7. There was a fairly high degree of consistency between Area Board recommendations and Central Office decisions; however, the latter again tended to act more conservatively (i.e., overturn for higher custody).

8. The highest Central Office approval rates were in the security level originally recommended by the Area Boards.

9. The security level of actual placements was fairly consistent with Area Board recommendations; the highest placement rates were in the same categories of these original recommendations.

10. Six-month placements (for those who could be followed) also drew the highest proportions from the original recommendations. However, there was evidence of substantial movement through the system; for example, releases on parole constituted 17.7 percent of the maximum, 15.9 percent of the medium, 11.2 percent of the minimum, 13.2 percent of the medium/minimum, and 31.9 percent of the community-based recommendations.

* This difference between institution recommended by Area Boards and that approved by Central Office was found to be statistically significant. Central Office approved more cases to maximum or medium security (50.5%) than Area Board recommendations to these security levels (43%). $\chi^2=13.463$, $p<.001$. Central Office approved statistically fewer cases to minimum security or community-based placements (36.8%) than the Area Boards (41.5%) $\chi^2=5.463$, $p<.05$.

11. Central Office decisions almost always resulted in an immediate placement in that security level facility.

12. Six-month placements had a slightly higher degree of consistency with the Central Office decision, compared to the Area Board recommendation. The proportion on parole from each Central Office decision category was: maximum, 18.5 percent; medium 21.2 percent; minimum, 9.2 percent; medium/minimum, 14.0 percent; and community-based, 32.4 percent.

DISCUSSION

This report has presented a large amount of data concerning Area Board classification. Pictured was a somewhat complex bureaucracy processing a heavy volume of cases through a diversified correctional system. Some tentative statements can be made regarding the relative quality of this mechanism, although an extensive analysis will be reserved for the forthcoming reports. In this regard, the findings are tantalizing, since few empirically derived explanations can be offered until the basis for decision-making is explored, and intensive examination of a sample of cases conducted.

The pattern of recommendations and placements demonstrated a fairly high degree of consistency. Central Office approved the majority of the Boards' recommendations, and the highest specific approval rates were in the same custody level as the original recommendations. Although a large proportion of cases were recommended, approved, and sent to lower custody facilities, the Central Office component exerted a moderating influence over the Area Board judgments by reserving more men in higher custody. Since Central Office decisions are almost certain to result in housing in the approved custody level, the innate checks and balances of the system are reflected in a tendency toward more conservative placements. This conservatism may be attributed to the broader scope of information possessed by the Central Office regarding such factors as investigative information, program eligibility and availability, and bed-space.

Preliminary evidence suggests that these may be more accurate decisions. By the end of six months, a slightly higher percentage of men are housed in the security level approved by Central Office, as compared to those that the Area Board recommended. This persists to parole, however, with a greater proportion of men being paroled from each security level of Central Office decision. Especially of note is the finding that 18.5 percent of the Central Office approvals for maximum security had been paroled. We may speculate that men who are close to their parole date are retained at higher security for the remaining incarceration time, rather than exposing them to the transition to lower security for a short stay, from which they might not derive full benefit. If substantiated, we may want to question whether this practice is advantageous to the inmate, since even a brief exposure to a community-based setting may prove sufficient in facilitating re-integration into society.

The relative efficiency of Area Board classification may be challenged. The additional decision-making capacity of Central Office elongates the processing time from the ideal of two weeks, to a median of two to three weeks. Thus, fifty percent of the cases were decided after this point; the two-week parameter should probably be re-evaluated to be consistent with this finding. Actual transfers appeared to be enabled after a considerable period of time; the median was found to be four to five weeks.

The population studied evidenced a substantial degree of movement through the system. This movement was generally to lesser security levels from those in which the Boards were convened. Therefore, the caseload appearing before Area Boards can be characterized as fairly mobile and appropriate for these hearings, especially considering the high proportion of six-month placements in minimum security (6.5 percent); community-based programs (14.5 percent); and on parole (20.2 percent).

Not all movement was in a positive direction, however. In the two lesser security "host" institutions (Norfolk and SECC), the six-month analysis shows a sizeable percentage who were housed in higher security levels than these facilities (e.g., 19 percent of Norfolk inmates in maximum, and 22.8 percent of the residents of SECC who were moved to medium or maximum facilities). Even more notable was the proportion of community-based approvals who were residents of maximum security at the end of six months (19.3 percent) and the minimum approvals who were found in maximum (18.3 percent). This finding, and the one concerning the substantial parole rate of maximum approvals, must be investigated further. The rationales for the original decisions and the characteristics of these inmates must be ascertained, as these placements run counter to expectations.

As mentioned, few definitive conclusions can be outlined on the basis of the current findings. To do so would be premature and misleading. Rather, a series of implications and further questions can be posed for subsequent examination.

Implications

1. Overall perceptions of the Area Board process varied, depending upon which type of contributor was interviewed. Two general themes emerged: that the quality of decisions has improved, but this is at the sacrifice of expedient decisions and involvement of institutional staff.

2. In specific, the Area Board classification process seems to require an upgrading of both training and communication. Interviews with institutional and Central Office staff highlighted the concern for increased communication between these two dimensions, and for systematic and ongoing training of involved staff. It is believed that these improvements would further enhance the quality of the process by facilitating more informed decision-making, and by systematizing the dissemination of information and assumptions that guide these procedures.

3. Area Boards hear a great number of cases and, on the basis of evidence presented thus far, seem to be making fairly accurate recommendations (if accurate is defined as achieving concurrence with Central Office decisions and resulting in a six-month placement in a security level that is equal to, or lower than, the Board's recommendation). Detailed examination of interim movement is required, however, to assert these suggestions with greater confidence. Additional research would also attempt to discover correlates of the less accurate seeming decisions; for example, the inmates approved for community-based placements housed in maximum at six-months.

4. Several additional enigmatic findings should be explored further: for example, what is the reason for the 18.5 percent of maximum decisions, and 21.2 percent of the medium decisions that were paroled by six months? The greater recidivism rates of inmates released from higher security, as compared to community-based programs, has been amply documented.¹ However, we cannot assume that these men were directly released from the institution representing their immediate placement. Further illumination will be provided in the next report, in which a continuous tracking of movement for six months is conducted.

5. Although there was a fairly high degree of concurrence between Central Office decisions and Area Board recommendations, most of the divergence occurred when the former overturned a recommendation in favor of one for higher custody. It would be fruitful to ascertain the reasons for this, if possible, and the characteristics of this group during the next stage of the analysis.

To reiterate: The following analytic phase will provide an in-depth investigation of characteristics of inmates in the recommendation/decision typology; the rationales purported for

¹ LeClair, D., Societal Reintegration and Recidivism Rates,
Massachusetts Department of Correction, Publication No. 159,
(August, 1978).

these recommendations; and a continuous movement tracking. Subsequently, a base expectancy type of design will be developed and employed to determine the probability of success at lower custody; to describe these successful inmates; and to assess whether decisions not to transfer men to lower custody were accurate. It is only after these tasks are completed that more specific conclusions regarding Area Board classification will be possible.

APPENDIX A

List of Department of Correction Directives Concerning Classification

- DO 4400.1 Classification Process and Organization of Classification
- DO 4400.2 Guidelines for the Operation of the Reclassifications Process-Intrafacility and Interfacility
- DO 4400.3 The Case Records - Institutional Six Position Folder
- DO 4400.4 Classification Report
- DO 4400.5 Progress Report
- DO 4400.6 The Quick Reference Index
- DO 4400.7 Added Data Form

APPENDIX B

Security Level Distinctions

The following coding distinctions were made for the various institutions and facilities while conducting the analysis:

Maximum

Walpole
Concord (considered until August, 1978)

Medium

Norfolk
Concord medium
NECC medium
Bridgewater medium

Minimum

Monroe }
Plymouth } forestry camps
Warwick }
Bay State Correctional Center
Farm Dorm
SECC minimum

Medium/Minimum

Framingham (where unclear)
SECC (where unclear)

Community-Based

All pre-release centers and contracted halfway houses

Other codes (e.g., House of Correction, protective custody) should be self-explanatory.

APPENDIX C

Following are several of the documents utilized to obtain data for this study. The first, the pre-hearing summary sheet, is used in slightly differing forms in the three Areas. Interview schedules are also included.

DEPARTMENTAL CLASSIFICATION COMMITTEE

NAME: M/# DATE:
 HOUSING: AGE: REQUEST:
 S.D.P. STATUS: P.E.: G.C.D.: EFFECTIVE:

OFFENSE:	SENTENCE:
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DATE COMM:
 FURLOUGHS:
 HOME AREA:

WARRANTS:

TREATMENT PROGRAMS: (Has resident complied with classification recommendations?) (needs?)

HEALTH:

VOCATIONAL SKILLS: (Prior employment history and work goals)

EDUCATION: (Needs and formal attainment)

INSTITUTION WORK ASSIGNMENTS:

MILITARY:

MARITAL STATUS AND FAMILY TIES:

DRUG OR ALCOHOL USAGE:

C.S.N.:

DEPARTMENTAL CLASSIFICATION COMMITTEE

PAGE 2

NAME:

W# _____

CRIMINAL HISTORY:

ADMINISTRATIVE CHRONOLOGY:

DISCIPLINARY RECORD:

COMMENTS:

INTERVIEWS WITH AREA DIRECTORS OF CLASSIFICATION

1. Description of the flow of the Area Board Process:

Pool of potential inmates:

how are they identified?

who refers inmates for an Area Board hearing (e.g., re-classification, periodic reviews, ICC referrals), and how are these records kept? where are these records kept?

who informs the Board of its caseload?

How often does the Board convene?

who informs the inmate of pending appearance before a Board?

what criteria is used to see the Area Board?

what criteria is used to deny an application to see an Area Board?

how long should it take between the time an inmate is referred to see an Area Board, and the actual date his case is heard?

Area Board hearing:

what is the composition of the Board? does this every vary?

how are Board members selected?

how are chairpeople selected? what qualifications are necessary?

what type of training do Area Board members undergo?

how long should it take before Central Office makes its decision upon an Area Board recommendation?

Central Office decisions:

who actually makes these decisions?

what additional factors are considered when making these decisions?

are these recorded anywhere?

who notifies the institutional superintendent of a pending placement?

what input do institutional superintendents have at this point?

how long should it take between the Central Office decision and the actual date of transfer?

Inmate transfers subsequent to Central Office decisions:

what would prohibit an inmate from actually going to his approved placement?

2. Additional questions:

- a. a brief description of the pre-Area Board counterparts.
- b. what are the adequacies and/or inadequacies of the Area Board process?
- c. what improvements can be made in the Area Board process?
- d. describe the interface of the institutional versus Central Office roles.
- e. statement of goals and objectives for the Area Board process.

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE I - AREA BOARD CHAIRPEOPLE

Instructions to interviewer: The following series of questions are designed to obtain information about the Area Board process of classification. The responses to each broad question should be as detailed as possible, without leading the respondent. Probes will be capitalized. These questions should be used in three occasions: a) when the respondent is going off track for too long; b) when certain essential information is not being provided; and c) when meaning is unclear or confusing and definitions need to be clarified.

Begin the interview by generally describing the classification project. His or her responses will be utilized to generally guide the portions of the report that describe the process, and to help structure the types of categories we look at when we analyze decision-making for recommendations. If more information is needed, offer to send him/her a copy of the research design. Tell the respondent that you just want to ask him some questions concerning his/her experience with the Area Boards. Assure the respondent that all information will remain confidential.

- 1) Could you describe the process of conducting an Area Board hearing?

- PROBES:
- a) How are inmates screened prior to appearing?
 - b) Who conducts the pre-hearing investigation? How is it used?
 - c) Who decides who will sit on the Board? (Deeper) Why are these types of people selected?
 - d) What, in your experience, is the manner (or procedures used) in which the actual hearing is conducted?

2) How are the recommendations for transfer or no transfer made by the Area Boards you have chaired?

- PROBES:
- a) What factors about the inmate himself tend to influence the decision? (Examples here are inmate prior record, institutional adjustment, etc. Get definitions clarified.)
 - b) What external factors tend to influence the decision (for example, bed-space, parole hearing, etc.) On what occasions or in which situations these come into consideration?
 - c) How would you characterize the Board's interaction process that precedes making the recommendation? What happens in the case of a minority dissent?

3a) What types of problems do you see with the current Area Board process?

PROBES: a) What kind of role do you see that Central Office classification staff plays? Other Areas?

3b) What do you think would approve upon the current procedures?

PROBES: Where solutions are suggested, try to find out why the respondent feels this to be a better alternative.

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE II - AREA BOARD MEMBERS

Instructions to interviewer: The following series of questions are designed to obtain information about the Area Board process of classification. The responses to each broad question should be as detailed as possible, without leading the respondent. Probes will be capitalized. These suggestions should be used on three occasions: a) when the respondent is going off track for too long; b) when certain essential information is not being provided; and c) when meaning is unclear or confusing and definitions need to be clarified.

Begin the interview by generally describing the classification project. His or her responses will be utilized to generally guide the portions of the report that describe the process, and to help structure the types of categories we look at when we analyze decision-making for recommendations. If more information is needed, offer to send him/her a copy of the research design. Tell the respondent that you just want to ask him some questions concerning his/her experience with the Area Boards. Assure the respondent that all information will remain confidential.

1) Could you describe the process of conducting an Area Board hearing from your experience?

- PROBES:
- a) How do you use the pre-hearing investigation summary?
 - b) What exactly are the procedures used to conduct a hearing?
 - c) Why do you think you are selected to sit on the Board? About how often do you do this?

2) How are the recommendations for transfer or no transfer made by the Area Boards you have sat upon?

- PROBES:
- a) What factors about the inmate himself tend to influence the decision? (Examples here are inmate prior record, institutional adjustment, etc. Get definitions clarified.)
 - b) What external factors tend to influence the decision (for example, bed-space, parole hearing, etc.) On what occasions or in which situations do these come into consideration?
 - c) How would you characterize the Board's interaction process that precedes making the recommendation? What happens in the case of a minority dissent?
 - d) How much input do you feel you've had in influencing Board decisions? (Important) In what types of situations do you have greater or lesser influence?

3a) What types of problems do you see with the current Area Board process?

PROBES: a) What kind of role do you see that Central Office classification staff plays? Other Areas?

3b) What do you think would improve upon the current procedures?

PROBES: Where solutions are suggested, try to find out why the respondent feels this to be a better alternative.

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE III - SOCIAL WORKERS WHO PRESENT CASES TO AREA BOARDS

Instructions to interviewer: The following series of questions are designed to obtain information about the Area Board process of classification. The responses to each broad question should be as detailed as possible, without leading the respondent. Probes will be capitalized. These suggestions should be used on three occasions: a) when the respondent is going off track for too long; b) when certain essential information is not being provided; and c) when meaning is unclear or confusing and definitions need to be clarified.

Begin the interview by generally describing the classification project. His or her responses will be utilized to generally guide the portions of the report that describe the process, and to help structure the types of categories we look at when we analyze decision-making for recommendations. If more information is needed, offer to send him/her a copy of the research design. Tell the respondent that you just want to ask him some questions concerning his/her experience with the Area Boards. Assure the respondent that all information will remain confidential.

1) From your experience, how are Area Board hearings conducted?

2) Do you conduct the pre-hearing investigation?

If YES: How do you do this?

PROBE: How long does it take?

How is it used by the Board?

If NO: Who does?

How is it used by the Board?

3a) Do you feel you have influence over the Board's decisions?

PROBE: Under what conditions, or under what situations,
do you have greater or lesser influence?

3b) What do you feel is your role vis-a-vis the Area Board? The
inmate whose case you're presenting?

END