

72632

PAROLE GUIDELINES FOR ALASKA

SUPPLEMENTAL REPORT TIME SERVED COMPONENT

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ALASKA BOARD OF PAROLE

SEPTEMBER 1980

72632

STATE OF ALASKA

DEPT. OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

BOARD OF PAROLE

JAY S. HAMMOND, Governor

ALASKA BOARD OF PAROLE
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September 11, 1980

Dear Colleagues:

The basic PAROLE GUIDELINES FOR ALASKA report was completed, printed, and distributed in December 1979. It explained the progress made at that time on developing parole guidelines in Alaska. The report also outlined the additional research necessary before the "time served" portion of the parole guidelines could be established.

We are very pleased to announce the National Institute of Corrections did award the Parole Board a supplemental grant allowing us to complete the necessary research for the "time served" component. The results are contained in the consultant's attached report. We believe you will find much of this data very interesting and informative. Many of the basic questions about the release patterns of the Board are answered in this report.

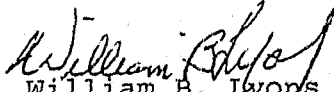
The Board members met with the consultants on June 27, 1980 and adopted the parole guidelines matrix as outlined in table M8 on page 20 of the attached report. The members also voted to delete the race data item from the risk score after receiving an opinion from the Attorney General's office and after further discussion regarding that item. The revised risk score sheet is included with this report.

The Board's staff is drafting the coding manual to accompany the risk score sheet and the Board expects to initiate the "dry runs" soon as recommended on page 21 of the report. If no major problems arise, we expect to be using the guidelines for our decisions by Spring 1981.

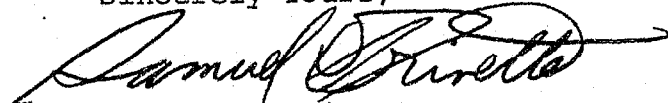
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September 11, 1980

We are happy to share the results of our research with you.
Your comments are always welcome.

Sincerely Yours,


William B. Lyons
Chairman

Sincerely Yours,


Samuel H. Trivette
Executive Director

Attachments: PAROLE GUIDELINES FOR
ALASKA REPORT--SUPPLEMENTAL
REPORT

SHT/clr

This report was prepared by Bay Area Research Design Associates under contract with the Alaska Board of Parole. The research was supported by supplemental funding from the National Institute of Corrections under grant number A18. Points of view or opinions stated in this document are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the National Institute of Corrections or the Alaska Board of Parole.

ALASKA PRISON RELEASE
MATRIX DECISION MAKING

M. G. Neithercutt

June 1980

ABSTRACT

This document is a technical supplement to the materials provided the Alaska Board of Parole in November 1979 and published by them in December 1979. The major task left undone in that report was recommendation of a release decision matrix to be tested and then implemented as an information resource.

The suggested matrix appears as Table M8 herein. Also included are analyses of mandatory releasee data and demonstration responses to queries typical of those received/generated by the Board in its usual operations.

This report closes with observations about some possible next steps.

ALASKA PRISON RELEASE
MATRIX DECISION MAKING

Mandatory Releasees

New cases augmented the set from which decisions can be made in the time elapsing since the last report.¹ These took three forms: 1) existing parolee cases were edited to some extent, 2) new parole cases were added, both in instances of earlier omissions of cases and paroles since mid-1979, and 3) data on mandatory releasees exiting prison from 1970 - 1979 were added. These last cases are not as extensive as the parolee files, however; we have only identifiers, race, year of release, offense, sentence, time served, and release status for each of those 362 files.

Race

For this report² the mandatory releasees have been classified into four ethnic categories: white, black, native, and other.

Table R1
Racial Composition of Mandatory Releasees

<u>Race</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
White	202	56%
Black	30	8%
Native	120	33%
Other	8	2%
Unknown	<u>2</u>	<u>1%</u>
Total	362	100%

Most mandatory releasees are white (56%) and a third are native.

Release Year

Persons in this file were released over a ten year period-- from 1970 - 1979. (The first year, 1970, and the last, 1979, are incomplete.)

Table R2
Mandatory Release Years

<u>Year</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
1970	1	-
1971	12	3%
1972	30	8%
1973	19	5%
1974	34	9%
1975	38	10%
1976	66	18%
1977	48	13%
1978	65	18%
1979	46	13%
Unknown	<u>3</u>	<u>1%</u>
Total	362	100%

As Table R2 demonstrates, peak mandatory release years were 1976 - 1979 with 1976 and 1978 having the heaviest concentrations of cases (18% each).

Sentences

Sentence lengths also are of interest. Table R3 presents the picture. Almost 2/3 of the mandatory releasees had sentences of 2 years or less. Only 3 persons (1%) had sentences exceeding 5 years. None of these are life sentences as lifers do not mandatorily release under Alaska law. Mean mandatory release sentence length was 29.2 months.

Similarly, Table R4 shows mandatory releasee time served. Seventy percent of these persons served 2 years or less; only 1 stayed in prison over 5 years. Mean time served was 21.8 months, 75% of the sentence mean (see Table R3). Thus, although Alaska good time credit laws as applied to these persons

Table R3
Mandatory Release Sentences
(in Months)

<u>Months Sentenced</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
Under 7	27	7%
7 - 12	103	28%
13 - 24	103	28%
25 - 36	68	19%
37 - 60	40	11%
61 - 120	18	5%
Over 120	3	1%
Mean	29.2	100%

Table R4
Mandatory Releasee Time Served
(in Months)

<u>Months Served</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
Under 7	29	8%
7 - 12	107	30%
13 - 24	117	32%
25 - 36	60	17%
37 - 60	34	9%
61 - 120	14	4%
Over 120	1	-
Mean	21.8	100%

are tedious to understand and explain, they worked out to about a 25% credit on sentences up to 5 years on which parole was not granted.

Offense

These mandatory releasees were imprisoned for a great variety of offenses. In no case were more than 30 persons mandatorily released for the same offense. Table R5 shows the 10 most frequent crimes represented and the percent of the 362 total population included in each crime grouping. The table accounts for 54% of the cases.

Table R5
Mandatory Releasees' Most Frequent
Imprisonment Offenses

<u>Offense</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
BNIAD	30	8%
ADW	26	7%
BIAD	24	7%
GL	22	6%
Forgery	20	6%
Robbery	17	5%
L&L	17	5%
R&C	15	4%
Manslaughter	13	4%
Sale of Drugs	<u>12</u>	<u>3%</u>
Total	196	54%

Race & Release

Though there are a multitude of excursions possible through these data, their full exploration awaits questions for which answers are needed from them. To give an idea of the potential here we can use a couple of questions about race.

During the formulation of these data sets a question arose as to whether one racial group or another receives parole

Table R6
Release Type by Race

	<u>Mode of Release</u>						<u>%</u>
<u>Race</u>	<u>Mandatory Release</u>		<u>Parole</u>		<u>Combined</u>		<u>Paroled</u>
	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>	
White	202	56%	381	57%	583	57%	65%
Black	30	8%	110	17%	140	14%	79%
Native	120	33%	152	23%	272	26%	56%
Other	8	2%	15	2%	23	2%	65%
Unknown	<u>2</u>	1%	<u>7</u>	1%	<u>9</u>	1%	-
Total	362	100%	665	100%	1,027	100%	-

$$\chi^2 = 21.15 \quad df = 3 \quad P = L .001$$

more frequently. The last column in Table R6 indicates blacks are most likely to be paroled (79%), whites and "others" are next most likely (65% each), and natives are least likely (56%). The main differences are among the whites, blacks, and natives. Whites are about equally represented in both the mandatory release and the parole groups, with blacks overrepresented among parolees and natives overrepresented among mandatory releasees.

Whether or not these differences can be accounted for in terms of the applicable sentence lengths is a reasonable question. Table R7 shows mean sentences for mandatory releasees and for parolees by race. The parolees have sentences roughly twice as long as do the MR's. This is true of each racial group, except that paroled blacks' mean sentences are well over twice as long as are their MR counterparts'.

Table R8 gives comparable findings for mean terms served by race. Each racial group serves much closer to the same mean months whether MR'd or paroled.

Table R7
Mean Months Sentenced by Race
Mandatory Releasees and Parolees

<u>Race</u>	<u>Release Type</u>	
	<u>Mandatory Release</u>	<u>Parole</u> *
White	26.6	54.2
Black	34.6	79.2
Native	30.3	59.6
Other	61.5	127.6
Overall Mean	29.3	61.3
Total Cases (Missing Cases)	360 (2)	576 (89)

Table R8
Mean Months Served by Race
Mandatory Releasees and Parolees

<u>Race</u>	<u>Release Type</u>	
	<u>Mandatory Release</u>	<u>Parole</u>
White	20.2	19.4
Black	23.0	25.7
Native	22.9	21.4
Other	43.8	24.1
Overall Mean	21.9	21.1
Total Cases (Missing Cases)	360 (2)	576 (89)

* Note that these tables are based on a slightly different population than data cited in previous reports. This base is used to make MR and parolee codings comparable.

Table R9 tells that only "other" races serve a substantially different portion of their sentences than the balance of the ethnic groups. Thus, it appears that sentence length does impact proportions paroled. Natives tend to have shorter sentences and, thus, to be paroled somewhat less than other minority racial groups. They serve the same portions of their sentences as whites, though, whether MR'd or paroled. Blacks serve shorter terms, proportionally, reflecting the longer sentences with which they enter prison. This is even more true for those in the "other" racial group. Blacks are paroled at the greatest rate of any racial group though they serve slightly more time than whites and natives.

Table R9
Mean Months Served as a Proportion of
Mean Sentence, by Race
Mandatory Releasees and Parolees

<u>Race</u>	<u>Release Type</u>	
	<u>Mandatory Release</u>	<u>Parole</u>
White	76%	36%
Black	66%	32%
Native	76%	36%
Other	71%	19%

Another way to formulate these data, to assure mean sentence data are not distorting, is to look at sentence lengths by time categories. Table R10 lends this perspective.

Another important consideration here touches parole performance by various racial groups. How one evaluates the appropriateness of times served by racial groups is impacted by effectiveness considerations. One index to effectiveness is the proportions of each group who sustain new felonies while on parole. Table R11 shows blacks have the highest portion of new

Table R10
Categorized Months Sentenced by Race
Mandatory Releasees and Parolees Combined

Race	Sentence Categories																						Total		Unknown	
	Under 7		7 - 12			13 - 24			25 - 36			37 - 60			61 - 120			Over 120								
	#	%	#	%	Cum %	#	%	Cum %	#	%	Cum %	#	%	Cum %	#	%	Cum %	#	%	#	%	#	%			
White	27	5%	109	20%	26%	124	23%	49%	113	21%	70%	94	18%	88%	49	9%	97%	17	3%	533	100%	90	14%			
Black	3	2%	8	6%	9%	23	18%	27%	24	19%	45%	48	38%	83%	13	10%	93%	9	7%	128	100%	0				
Native	14	6%	45	18%	23%	63	25%	48%	59	23%	72%	38	15%	87%	23	9%	96%	10	4%	252	100%	0				
Other	0		4	17%	17%	5	22%	39%	4	17%	57%	4	17%	74%	3	13%	87%	3	13%	23	100%	0				
Total	44	5%	166	18%	22%	215	23%	45%	200	21%	67%	184	20%	86%	88	9%	96%	39	4%	936	100%	90	9%			

felonies; natives and whites have essentially equal proportions of new felonies and there were no new felonies outside these groups.

Table R11
Parolee
New Felonies by Race

	<u>Race</u>				<u>Total</u>
	<u>White</u>	<u>Black</u>	<u>Native</u>	<u>Other</u>	
Number of Cases	383	111	152	15	661
Number of New Felonies	19	14	9	0	42
Percent New Felonies	5%	13%	6%	-	6%

From these observations we can look at release characteristics of racial groups in summary form.

Release Characteristics by Race

<u>Whites</u>	<u>Blacks</u>	<u>Natives</u>	<u>Others</u>
medium proportion paroled	largest proportion paroled	smallest proportion paroled	medium proportion paroled
shortest mean sentences	second longest mean sentences	third longest mean sentences	longest mean sentences
(with natives) shortest mean terms served	second longest mean terms served	(with whites) shortest mean terms served	longest mean terms served
(with natives) served largest proportion of sentence	served medium proportion of sentence	(with whites) served largest proportion of sentence	served smallest proportion of sentence
low proportion new felonies	higher proportion new felonies	low proportion new felonies	no new felonies

Sentence Length and Release Type

Another example of the use of these data comes from the question: "What proportion of persons in each sentence length category receives parole?" Tables R12 and R13 respond. Note that as sentence length increases proportion paroled grows. This is true both for the years 1970-80 and 1975-80.

Table R12
Release Type by Sentence Length
Mandatory Releasees and Parolees
1970 - 1980

<u>Months Sentenced</u>	<u>Mandatory Releasees</u>	<u>Parolees</u>	
	<u>#</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
Under 7	27	17	39%
7 - 12	103	74	42%
13 - 24	103	122	54%
25 - 36	68	144	68%
37 - 60	40	159	80%
61 - 120	18	78	81%
Over 120	<u>3</u>	<u>38</u>	93%
Total	362	632	

Table R13
Release Type by Sentence Length
Mandatory Releasees and Parolees
1975 - 1980

<u>Months Sentenced</u>	<u>Mandatory Releasees</u>	<u>Parolees</u>	
	<u>#</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
Under 7	13	2	13%
7 - 12	61	16	21%
13 - 24	80	53	40%
25 - 36	57	75	57%
37 - 60	35	95	73%
61 - 120	16	49	75%
Over 120	<u>2</u>	<u>15</u>	88%
Total	264	305	

Matrix Decision Making

The last report on this undertaking* left off with spelling out the principles of matrix decision making and sample formats of decision tables. The next step in the progression from experimentation with the ideas underlying matrix decisions to operationalization involves analyzing data on terms served. In the months elapsing since last report those data have been secured and tentatively analyzed (data editing remains incomplete).

The derivation of risk scores is an empirical endeavor, risk scores being the product of the relation between parole performance and background factors. In the previous analysis the 665 Alaska parole cases under study were segmented into four risk categories--very low risk, low risk, medium risk, and high risk. The very low risk cases are seen essentially as cases on which risk is not an element. The risk dimension thus makes a contribution to the release decision in about 40% of the cases (269 of 665).

The other axis of the matrix has to do with seriousness. The decision was made to follow the new Alaska Criminal Code (effective January 1, 1980) on this dimension.³ Thus, the categories that dimension encompasses are: Unclassified, Felony A, Felony B, Felony C, Misdemeanor A, Misdemeanor B, and Violation. Because our interest is in imprisoned offenders, the last three categories have marginal applicability.

A decision matrix adhering to these constraints takes this general form:

* Neithercutt, M. G. *Alaska and Parole Guidelines*.
San Francisco: Bay Area Research Design Associates,
November 1979

Table M1

General Form
Decision Matrix

<u>Crime Categories</u>	<u>Risk Scores</u>			
	<u>0 & Over</u>	<u>-1 - -4</u>	<u>-5 - -8</u>	<u>-9 & Under</u>
Unclassified	_____	_____	_____	_____
Felony A	_____	_____	_____	_____
Felony B	_____	_____	_____	_____
Felony C	_____	_____	_____	_____
Misdemeanor A	_____	_____	_____	_____
Misdemeanor B	_____	_____	_____	_____
Violation	_____	_____	_____	_____

Several issues are pertinent to applying this decision form to parole release choices. One can be relatively secure in the supposition that risk scores will relate to release (at least parole release) outcomes because the scores were derived using parole performance as the criterion. However, it may be that the crime categories are related to empirical considerations.

Further, assurance is absent that there is any correlation between risk and prison time served or between "seriousness" and time served. This dilemma is made more complex by the possibility that whatever relations do exist will take forms not readily clarified by accepted analytical approaches. Thus, it is necessary to look at some varied presentations of relationships before placing the cases in a two-dimensional table.

When the study cases are classified on the seriousness dimension and placed in risk categories, the following table emerges. Table M2 tells us that mean months of prison time served before parole increase steadily as risk becomes greater (reading across the table) and that terms served decrease consistently as crime categories grow less serious (reviewing

Table M2

MEAN MONTHS
TIME SERVED

Alaska Parolees

1971 - 1979

Risk Scores

	<u>12 - 0</u>		<u>-1 - -4</u>		<u>-5 - -8</u>		<u>-9 - -15</u>	
	<u>#</u>	<u>Mos.</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>Mos.</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>Mos.</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>Mos.</u>
Unclassified	17	50.2	5	69.2	2	92.5	0	
Felony A	122	18.3	46	28.8	10	61.1	1	
Felony B	143	16.1	68	23.4	27	33.0	0	
Felony C	52	12.0	33	16.4	7	24.3	0	
Misdemeanor A	11	8.2	4	13.8	1	37.0	0	
Misdemeanor B	9	7.6	2	17.5	0		0	
Violation	Too few to categorize							
Unknown	<u>42</u>		<u>33</u>		<u>28</u>		<u>2</u>	
Total	396		191		75		3	665

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Table M3
Parolee
Median Months Served
by Crime Category
by Risk Group

Crime Category	Risk Group												High Risk
	Lowest Risk				Low Risk				Moderate Risk				#
	Mdn Mos	Mid80% Mos Svd	Mid60% Mos Svd	#	Mdn Mos	Mid80% Mos Svd	Mid60% Mos Svd	#	Mdn Mos	Mid80% Mos Svd	Mid60% Mos Svd	#	#
Unclassified	37	9 - 94	16 - 91	17	45	-	-	5	-	-	-	2	
Felony A	14	5 - 34	8 - 26	122	26	11 - 48	16 - 43	46	49	29 - 108	36 - 79	10	
Felony B	15	5 - 28	6 - 23	143	20.5	10 - 41	12 - 31	68	33	18 - 49	19 - 45	27	
Felony C	10	5 - 22	8 - 17	52	13.5	7 - 30	10 - 23	33	24	17 - 32	17 - 32	7	
Misdemeanor A	6	3 - 16	3 - 15	11	13	-	-	4	-	-	-	1	
Misdemeanor B	6	2 - 8	2 - 8	9	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	0	
Unknown				42				33				28	
Total				396				191				75	3

table columns). Cautions about the size of the study groups in the misdemeanor and violations seriousness cells and in the highest risk group remain appropriate. Also, the number of unknown cases in each risk score column could have an impact.

Looking at mean time served is not adequate, however, because the mean may be an inappropriate measure of central tendency when scores vary widely. Thus Table M3 presents median months served (the median being the middle point of each score array) and then the middle 80% time served range and the middle 60% time served range. Again, the medians follow the pattern of the means. Note, however, that Felony A and B "lowest risk" cases (column 1, row 2) have similar medians, probably indicating that the A and B Felonies are treated as comparable unless the inmate is a parole risk. Notice also that the differences in felony class ranges appear primarily on the upper bounds.

With added confidence that the data have some consonance with "reasonable expectations" (that more serious offenders will serve more time and that greater risks will do likewise), we can move to fill in the decision matrix. Were a decision maker hearing analogous cases to those analyzed here to employ a time-set matrix designed to encompass 80% of the relevant cases, his/her reference table would look something like Table M4.

Table M5 affords the same perspective but includes only the middle 60% of the terms served.

In each of these tables (M4 and M5) the decision maker would be viewing products of release decisions which have ranged over substantial numbers of months. Since one of the purposes of these matrices is to increase equity in decision making (that is, enhance the degree to which like inmates are treated alike), one can take the opposite tack and refer to a matrix in which minimum variability is described, with

Table M4
Months Served Matrix
80% Inclusive

<u>Crime Category</u>	<u>Risk Scores</u>			
	<u>0 & Over</u>	<u>-1 - 14</u>	<u>-5 - -8</u>	<u>-9 & Under</u>
Unclassified	9 - 94	-	-	-
Felony A	5 - 34	11 - 48	29 - 108	-
Felony B	5 - 28	10 - 41	18 - 49	-
Felony C	5 - 22	7 - 30	17 - 32	-
Misdemeanor A	3 - 16	-	-	-
Misdemeanor B	2 - 8	-	-	-
Violation	-	-	-	-

Table M5
Months Served Matrix
60% Inclusive

<u>Crime Category</u>	<u>Risk Scores</u>			
	<u>0 & Over</u>	<u>-1 - -4</u>	<u>-5 - -8</u>	<u>-9 & Under</u>
Unclassified	16 - 91	-	-	-
Felony A	8 - 26	16 - 43	36 - 79	-
Felony B	6 - 23	12 - 31	19 - 45	-
Felony C	8 - 17	10 - 23	17 - 32	-
Misdemeanor A	3 - 15	-	-	-
Misdemeanor B	2 - 8	-	-	-
Violation	-	-	-	-

documentation of exceptions.

A method of doing this is to start with the category median and allow only 10% variation above and below that value. This results in a matrix like Table M6. Though this

Table M6
Months to be Served Matrix
10% Bounded Median

Crime Category	Risk Scores			
	0 & Over	-1 - -4	-5 - -8	-9 & Under
Unclassified	36 - 47	45	-	-
Felony A	11 - 17	21 - 35	41 - 57	-
Felony B	12 - 17	17 - 22	27 - 39	-
Felony C	8 - 12	12 - 15	18 - 30	-
Misdemeanor A or B or Violation	4 - 8	11 - 19	-	-

table has the form and configuration the data dictate (that is, it is a strict interpretation of the data, starting in each cell with the population median score and moving up and down the array to include the 20% of cases nearest the median), it has some discontinuities that may be troublesome. The "Unclassified, -1 - -4" value is not a range but a fixed term, the product of a limited number of relevant cases. Also, the table gives no assistance with cases falling in 7 cells (including all the highest risk cases); again, we see the impact of strictly interpreting rules applied to a limited population.

Thus, we face the same quandary many others working with similar data have met. Several have used an approach sometimes referred to as "smoothing". In other words, the data are conformed to assure easier application while preserving the empirical sense of the findings.

There are several aspects of judgment that impact the table's final form. One way to bring the decision matrix to

a more useful state could be to modify it as follows.

Table M7

Example
Months Served Matrix

<u>Crime Category</u>	<u>Risk Scores</u>			
	<u>0 & Over</u>	<u>-1 - -4</u>	<u>-5 - -8</u>	<u>-9 & Under</u>
Unclassified	36 - 47	41 - 50		
Felony A	11 - 17	21 - 35	41 - 57	
Felony B	12 - 17	17 - 22	27 - 39	
Felony C	8 - 12	12 - 15	18 - 30	
Misdemeanor/ Violation	4 - 8	11 - 19		

The "Unclassified, -1 - -4" range can be settled upon by taking the average range of the other -1 - -4 categories and distributing this average around the category median. Similar procedures can be used to as great an extent as is deemed necessary; however, it is important to recognize that these steps exceed the grasp which these analyses can give and so are based on such considerations as "policy", "public protection," etc. It is highly unlikely that many cases of great risk but with misdemeanor/violation crimes will be encountered, so the last two vacant cells in the matrix probably are inconsequential.

A different situation exists regarding the last column of the table. It is observable that there are few of these cases getting parole. It may be, though, that several such persons appear before the Board. We get some idea of this by looking at mandatory release time served data. These seem to say that very few of these types of cases are being released from Alaska prison custody, since only 15 subjects in that set had served over 5 years.

Release Matrix

The matrices presented thus far have used all available

data because a large number of cases is necessary to allow stability of findings. Alaska presents a peculiar necessity for using only part (rather than all) of the available data, in that in 1974 substantial law changes introduced minimum terms as a significant release-decision consideration.

Thus, all things considered, we felt it necessary to develop the final form of the suggested matrix resting only on 1975 and succeeding cases. Thus, Table M8 takes only those cases paroled on and after January 1, 1975 into consideration. Notice that that gives somewhat more smoothness in form and also reflects higher minimum terms for several categories.

The work is incomplete, of course, for matrix decision making requires continuing update. At this juncture, though, the preferred decision set seems to be reflected in Table M8.

Table M8
Suggested
Months Served Matrix
(1975 & later cases base)

<u>Crime Category</u>	<u>Risk Scores</u>			
	<u>0 & Over</u>	<u>-1 - -4</u>	<u>-5 - -8</u>	<u>-9 & Under</u>
Unclassified				
Felony A	17 - 23	29 - 36	41 - 57	
Felony B	16 - 21	21 - 28	33 - 41	
Felony C	13 - 19	14 - 19	18 - 24	
Misdemeanor/ Violation	7 - 10	11 - 19		

Race - An Afterword

Throughout these endeavors the Board has (commendably) been open to consideration of use of any factor whose relation to parole performance (risk) could be demonstrated empirically. Some original decision factors were deleted because of their instability, their susceptibility to devious alteration, etc.

Race, though a "hot" issue, has steadfastly been retained in the risk analyses, the Board's view being that if it added information it should be retained as a consideration. Feedback on the published work to date has been laden with (sometimes ominous) comments about using race as a release decision factor. Thus, the Board has asked the Alaska Attorney General for a formal legal opinion on the matter and requested an analysis of how many cases would actually change risk categories as a result of deletion of race from the scoring program.

The Attorney General's report is not yet in hand. Data analysis reveals that only 14 cases would change risk score categories with the deletion of race. In most instances the person's risk score would improve though, ironically, in a few the risk score is made more detrimental by deletion of the item.

Conclusion

As this report tells, the primary task during this contract period was to develop a time served matrix which the Alaska Board of Parole could implement. That task has been accomplished, as have several others. It is recommended that it be used in a "dry run" a couple of hearing schedules and then be implemented. Meantime, the Board needs to find the resources to have analytical services available to it, to update the tables at least semi-annually, to keep its computerized case records current, to assure its ability to respond to data inquiries fully, and to forward its desire to understand more fully its own practices and their implications.

FOOTNOTES

1. See: Neithercutt, M. G. *Parole Guidelines for Alaska*.
Juneau: Alaska Board of Parole, December 1979
2. The data base herein fluctuates somewhat as cases have
been added in phases. The mandatory release group is stable
throughout, though parolee counts vary.
3. Pending legislation was used to classify drug offenses.

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