

Federal Probation

A JOURNAL OF CORRECTIONAL PHILOSOPHY AND PRACTICE

Published by the Administrative Office of the United States Courts

VOLUME XLIX

MARCH 1985

NUMBER 1

This Issue in Brief

SEP 16 1985

A Diversionary Approach for the 1980's.—Various changes in social thought and policy of the past several years carry important implications for the treatment of young offenders. These changes include a marked decrease in public willingness to spend tax money for social programs, a shift in focus from offender-rights to victim-rights, and an increase in the desire for harsher treatment of serious offenders. The general social ethos reflected in those positions has prompted a reassessment and new direction for the delivery of juvenile diversion services in Orange County, California. Authors Arnold Binder, Michael Schumacher, Gwen Kurz, and Linda Moulson discuss a new Juvenile Diversion/Noncustody Intake Model, which has successfully combined the collaborative efforts of law enforcement, probation, and community-based organizations in providing the least costly and most immediate level of intervention with juvenile offenders necessary to protect the public welfare and to alter delinquent behavioral patterns.

Home as Prison: The Use of House Arrest.—Prison overcrowding has been a major crisis in the correctional field for at least the last few years. Alternatives to incarceration—beyond the usual probation, fines, and suspended sentences—have been tried or proposed. Some—such as restitution, community service, intensive probation supervision—are being implemented; others have simply been proposed. In this article, authors Ronald P. Corbett, Jr. and Ellsworth A.L. Fersch advocate house arrest as a solution to prison overcrowding and as a suitable punishment for many nonviolent, middle-range offenders. The authors contend that with careful and random monitoring of offenders by special probation officers, house arrest can be both a humane and cost-effective punishment for the offender and a protection to the public.

CONTENTS

ACQUISITIONS

A Diversionary Approach: for the 1980's	Arnold Binder Michael Schumacher Gwen Kurz Linda Moulson	4	99051
Home as Prison: The Use of House Arrest	Ronald P. Corbett, Jr. Ellsworth A.L. Fersch	13	99052
Forgotten People: Elderly Inmates	Gennaro F. Vito Deborah G. Wilson	18	99053
Florida's Sentencing Guidelines: Progression or Regression?	David B. Griswold	25	99054
Reliability in Guideline Application: Initial Hearings - 1982	James L. Beck Peter B. Hoffman	33	99055
Responses to the Accreditation Program: What Correctional Staff Think About Accreditation	Susan M. Czajkowski Peter L. Nacci Nancy Kramer Shelley J. Price Dale K. Sechrest	42	99056
The Victim's Role in the Penal Process: Recent Developments in California	Donald R. Ranish David Shichor	50	99057 VRC
Recidivism Among Convicted Sex Offenders: A 10-Year Followup Study	Joseph J. Romero Linda Meyer Williams	58	99058
The Warrant Clause: The Key to the Castle	Leila Obier Schroeder	65	99059
Assessing Correctional Officers	Cindy Wahler Paul Gendreau	70	99060
Departments:			
News of the Future		75	
Looking at the Law		77	
Reviews of Professional Periodicals		80	
Your Bookshelf on Review		83	
Letters to the Editor		88	
It Has Come to Our Attention		89	

explains that exclusionary rules developed to keep illegally obtained evidence from being used in court and that both arrests and searches can occur without a warrant in specific circumstances.

Assessing Correctional Officers:—Authors Cindy Wahler and Paul Gendreau review the research on correctional officer selection practices. Traditionally, selection of correctional officers was based upon physical requirements, with height and size being a primary consideration. A number of studies have

employed the use of personality tests to aid in the identification of the qualities of "good" correctional officers. These assessment tools, however, have provided qualities that are global and not unique to the role of a correctional officer. Noting a recent trend towards a behavioral analysis within the field personnel selection, the authors argue that a similar type of analysis may provide a more fruitful avenue for assessment of correctional officers.

All the articles appearing in this magazine are regarded as appropriate expressions of ideas worthy of thought but their publication is not to be taken as an endorsement by the editors or the Federal probation office of the views set forth. The editors may or may not agree with the articles appearing in the magazine, but believe them in any case to be deserving of consideration.

99051-99060

U.S. Department of Justice
National Institute of Justice

This document has been reproduced exactly as received from the person or organization originating it. Points of view or opinions stated in this document are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the National Institute of Justice.

Permission to reproduce this ~~copyrighted~~ material has been granted by

Federal Probation

to the National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS).

Further reproduction outside of the NCJRS system requires permission of the ~~copyright~~ owner.

Responses To The Accreditation Program: What Correctional Staff Think About Accreditation

BY SUSAN M. CZAJKOWSKI, PETER L. NACCI, NANCY KRAMER,
SHELLEY J. PRICE, AND DALE K. SECHREST*

ALTHOUGH THE use of informal standards in the field of corrections began 100 years ago, only recently has an attempt been made to promote a set of uniform standards that can be applied to a variety of different correctional settings in the context of a formal accreditation process. Six years have passed since the creation of the first formal set of standards by the Commission on Accreditation for Corrections (created in 1974 as a program of the American Correctional Association but now an independent entity), and presently over 350 institutions and programs have been accredited, with over 200 more under contract with the commission to achieve accreditation.

With the rapid growth of the accreditation program has come a need for understanding the effects of the program and for assessing its strengths and weaknesses. In late 1982, the Commission on Accreditation for Corrections (CAC) initiated a major research effort to elicit feedback on the accreditation program from staff at accredited facilities and agencies in the field. By allowing staff to express its thoughts, needs, and problems related to accreditation, the commission hoped to gain insight into aspects of the program which need revising, leading to eventual improvement of the accreditation process and standards. The major product of this effort was a survey, designed collaboratively by the commission, the ACA Committee on Standards, and the Office of Research of the Bureau of Prisons, which was distributed to staff at all accredited programs in the United States and Canada during March 1983. This article analyzes that survey to provide an understanding of how correctional personnel involved in the accreditation process arrive at their overall

conclusions about the accreditation program. First, a brief description of the accreditation process itself will be presented, a discussion of the procedures used to collect and analyze the data will follow, and finally, the results of the analyses and their implications for the accreditation program will be explored.

The Accreditation Process

There are several phases an institution/program must complete to achieve accredited status, and the entire process normally takes up to 2 years to complete. There are 10 sets of standards recognized by the CAC which correspond to different types of adult and juvenile programs, e.g., probation and parole, institutions, detention facilities, and community services. In most agencies pursuing accreditation, an accreditation manager oversees and coordinates the process, working with institution staff to reach compliance with the appropriate set of standards, which may be up to 450 in number. The standards cover a variety of areas, including institutional safety and security, staff training and development, program opportunities for offenders, and physical plant conditions, and compliance with them is considered to reflect a minimum or acceptable level of performance for the facility.

When a facility or program decides to undergo accreditation, it first completes a self-evaluation period. Activities during this period involve assessing the program's level of compliance with the standards, upgrading programs and the physical plant, where needed, and gathering extensive documentation to demonstrate compliance with the standards. When the program believes it complies with enough standards to be eligible for accreditation and is ready for an on-site visit by the commission, they request an audit. Audit teams, composed of experienced correctional professionals selected and trained by the commission, are sent to the program to inspect its operations and physical facilities, speak with program staff and offenders, and review the documentation produced by staff to verify compliance with the standards. Through an exchange of

*Susan M. Czajkowski and Peter L. Nacci are with the Office of Research, and Nancy Kramer with the Office of Community Programs, Federal Bureau of Prisons. Shelley J. Price is with the Commission on Accreditation for Corrections. Dale K. Sechrest is a visiting professor, Criminal Justice Department, Florida International University. The opinions expressed in this article are the authors'. The authors wish to thank Thomas Kane and William Saylor, who helped with the data analysis and commented on earlier drafts of the article.

written reports and correspondence, the findings of the audit team are formally presented to the executive staff of the facility, and the facility executives respond to issues raised by the auditors and develop plans for correcting any deficiencies in meeting the standards.

Upon completion of a successful audit during which the program demonstrates compliance with all mandatory life, health, and safety standards and 90 percent of all other standards, an accreditation hearing is scheduled. The hearing, which is conducted by a panel composed of members of the commission's governing board and is usually attended by agency representatives, serves a fact-finding function. The hearing involves a review of the program's audit report, including any appeals of the audit team's findings submitted by the program; plans developed by the program to achieve 100 percent compliance with the standards; and any other matters relevant to the accreditation award. Based on the determination that the program has achieved acceptable levels of compliance with the standards and satisfies other conditions of the accreditation process, a 3-year accreditation is awarded to the agency or facility.

Survey construction. The purpose of the accreditation survey was to obtain correctional staff members' opinions about the benefits and problems accreditation presented for them and their agencies. The survey consisted of items designed to measure respondents' perceptions and feelings about various aspects of the accreditation program. Respondents used a scale to indicate agreement or disagreement with a number of statements that reflected their beliefs about the impact of accreditation on the institution, for example, its influence on the effectiveness of programs and operations, as well as more specific effects of accreditation, such as its effect on staff morale. Items were also included to measure how respondents viewed the accreditation process itself, in terms of the adequacy of time allowed to complete the process, the usefulness of requirements and preparations for accreditation, the distribution of staff resources to complete the necessary tasks, and the behavior of commission auditors. In addition, the survey contained items assessing the need for changing or streamlining the process and assessing attitudes toward reaccreditation. Finally, the survey included items measuring characteristics of the group which responded to the questionnaire (i.e., position in the organization, security level, and size of facility) and open-ended questions which allowed respondents to state their views about accreditation in their own words.

Collection of data. Surveys were sent to staff at all accredited facilities and programs in the United States and Canada, with instructions specifying the distribution of surveys to the chief executive officer of the facility/program, a department head, the accreditation manager, and a nonsupervisory staff member. Of the 1,022 surveys sent to over 300 agencies, 566, or 55 percent, were returned.

Data Analysis

Descriptive analyses. The respondents were mostly administrators or supervisory staff at adult institutions which had completed their first accreditation process. Overall descriptive analyses (presented in more detail in Farkas and Fosen, 1983) revealed that these staff members were generally satisfied with the results of accreditation—believing that accreditation had tangible benefits for their institutions, such as increased program effectiveness and institution management—but were less satisfied with the process, believing that accreditation is disruptive to institutional functioning, requires more documentation than necessary, and therefore needs streamlining.

Further analyses. While a description of overall responses to the survey provides useful information about how respondents generally feel about accreditation, how staff members arrive at their views of accreditation is also important to understand. Such an understanding would provide insights into why some groups of respondents were not as positive as others about the effects of accreditation, allowing managers to develop strategies for making the accreditation program more acceptable to these agencies and their staff members and encouraging them to become more actively involved in the accreditation program. In addition, the desire for streamlining the accreditation process may be stronger for certain groups, and it would be helpful to determine the types of experiences respondents have had (type of training, for example) that lead to a desire for streamlining and the types of simplifications or other changes in the accreditation process suggested by different groups.

To find the answers to these questions, we used a data analysis technique, called path analysis, which involves the construction and validation of conjectured "models" that represent the way respondents think about an event, such as accreditation. A brief discussion of the statistical techniques used and their specific application to the analysis of responses to the survey follows.

Factor Analysis. The questionnaire was constructed using items that would reflect certain

themes concerning the process of accreditation and its presumed effects on institutional functioning (e.g., accreditation as disruptive to institution operations; accreditation's effects on institutional safety/security). The first stage of the analysis consisted of categorizing the items into groups based on what the authors believed to be the common themes these items represented to respondents when they thought about accreditation. For example, the items "there have been fewer incidents of violence at the facility/program since accreditation" and "because of accreditation, we're better prepared for emergencies" were both considered to express the idea that accreditation affects the safety and security of the institution. Our ideas about which items clustered together to express particular topics were tested using factor analysis, a statistical pro-

cedure which shows the extent to which an item reflects the concept it is presumed to represent. Eighteen themes or concepts were identified in this way, representing two major areas: 1) evaluations of accreditation's effects on areas of institution functioning and effectiveness, and 2) evaluations of various elements of the accreditation process. The items and the themes they represent are shown in Table 1. Generally, the factor analysis confirmed the item-theme structure that the researchers had attempted to design into the questionnaire. An individual's responses to the items making up a theme were then combined so that each respondent could be given a score which indicated his beliefs about the theme, e.g., that accreditation had increased the safety of the institution.

TABLE 1.- THEMES UNDERLYING ACA SURVEY ITEMS

Themes	Items	Themes	Items
SAFETY AND SECURITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There have been fewer incidents of violence at the facility/program since accreditation. • Because of accreditation, we're better prepared. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accreditation is a good way to measure what is actually happening in the facility/program.
OPPORTUNITIES FOR INMATES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inmates have more opportunities for visiting since accreditation. • Inmates have more opportunities for meaningful work assignments since accreditation. • Inmates have more opportunities for furthering their education since accreditation. • Inmates have more opportunities for recreation since accreditation. 	RESULTS OF ACCREDITATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I do not see any tangible benefits from accreditation. • The accreditation process has increased the effectiveness of programs and operations. • The accreditation process has resulted in a safer, cleaner, more healthy place for staff and offenders.
RELATIONSHIP WITH COURTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accreditation has enabled us to work with the Courts more effectively (i.e., consent decrees, etc.). • Being accredited will give us a better defense against pending/future law suits. 	DESIRE TO STREAMLINE THE PROCESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The documentation required in preparation for the audit is more than necessary to meet the standards. • The duplication in the standards manual results in unnecessary work. • Any streamlining in the accreditation process would significantly harm the effectiveness and credibility of the accreditation program. • I fear that any reduction in the number of standards would significantly harm the effectiveness and credibility of the accreditation program.
RELATIONSHIP WITH LEGISLATURE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accreditation enabled us to justify requests for increases in funds and/or positions better than we could before. • We have obtained additional resources for the facility/program because of our involvement with accreditation. 	DISTRIBUTION OF WORKLOAD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff members working on accreditation spent over 50% of their time during the self-evaluation/audit period involved with accreditation. • All supervisory level staff was involved in the self-evaluation process and in preparing for the audit. • The accreditation work load was spread evenly among the staff.
MANAGEMENT EFFECTIVENESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accreditation has been a good management tool. • Accreditation helped us develop and organize our policies and procedures better. 		
EVALUATION OF PROGRAMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accreditation helped us determine if staff had been following agency policy. • During accreditation, we evaluated programs and operations more thoroughly than we had before. 	DISRUPTION TO INSTITUTIONAL OPERATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accreditation is disruptive to the routine operation of an institution/program. • Our experience shows that preparation for accreditation can be fit into routine operations.

Themes	Items	Themes	Items
CAC RESPONSIVENESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CAC's own operating manual for applicant agencies was not helpful. • The Commission and its staff are responsive to the needs and interests of correctional practitioners. 	AUDITOR FAIRNESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In judging compliance, auditors went beyond the intent of the standards. • The auditors gave us the opportunity to demonstrate compliance with the intent of the standards. • The auditors were here to find fault; they did not give us credit when we deserved it.
TIMELINESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was not enough time to complete the self-evaluation process. • The auditors need more time to adequately measure compliance with the standards. 	AUDITOR KNOWLEDGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The auditors knew how a correctional facility/program should operate. • The auditors understood current correctional practices.
UTILITY OF PREPARATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparing Plans of Action contributes very little to the value of accreditation. • Gathering documentation for audit preparation was useful. 	STAFF MORALE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accreditation improved staff communication. • Accreditation improved staff morale.
AUDITOR FLEXIBILITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The auditors are too dependent on written documentation. • The auditors requested additional documentation which was not necessary for purposes of the audit. • Auditors adequately supplemented their review of documentation with interviews and on-site verification. 	COMMITMENT TO ACCREDITATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once accredited we shouldn't have to complete the entire process again to be reaccredited. • I feel we should seek reaccreditation.

Path Analysis. The path analysis involved testing whether the respondents' thoughts or opinions about the themes (e.g., that accreditation results in a safer institution, that the accreditation process needs streamlining, that accreditation improves management of the institution) were related in particular ways specified by "models." These models can be thought of as representations of the connections between people's thoughts and opinions about a topic, such as accreditation. The analysis presumes that people think logically from "A" to "B" to "C" to "D." If "D" is the thought, "*accreditation does not increase the effectiveness of programs and operations*," then perhaps by revealing that this negative evaluation of accreditation starts ultimately with thought "A" ("*the accreditation process is disruptive to institutional functioning*"), which in turn produces thoughts "B" and "C" ("*accreditation does not improve relationships with the Courts*" and "*does not provide greater opportunities for inmates*"), we have learned where improvements might be made. To say only that some percentage of people agree or disagree that accreditation is beneficial and that some percentage believe that accreditation is disruptive does not acknowledge the connection people make between these thoughts and does not indicate how a judgment about accreditation's benefits can be influenced in the future. But by obtaining empirical support for a relationship between beliefs about the disruptiveness of the accreditation process and one's

evaluation of accreditation, we can feel more confident that accreditation's disruptive effects may be a key determinant of dissatisfaction with accreditation, and therefore that decreasing the disruptiveness of the process will lead to more positive attitudes toward the accreditation program.

Three models which hypothesize relationships between respondents' thoughts about the different themes were tested using path analytic techniques, which show the extent to which a thought or opinion about a theme is related to or produces another thought. The results of those analyses, along with a description of each model and a discussion of the implications following from the results of the analyses, are discussed below.

Results

The Management Effectiveness Model. Previous analyses revealed that administrators (defined as chief executive officers and agency administrators) responded more favorably to accreditation than nonadministrators (both nonadministrative supervisors and line staff). For example, while 83 percent of administrators disagreed that there were no tangible benefits from accreditation (with 10 percent agreeing with this statement), 64 percent of nonadministrators disagreed with this item and 20 percent agreed with it. We hypothesized that this difference in response to accreditation's benefits might be due to the difference between administrators and nonadministrators in terms of

their expectations about what accreditation will do for the agency or facility and their perceptions concerning its impact. These differential perceptions and expectations are in turn related to each group's function within the organization and the role the groups play in achieving accreditation. In assessing the rewards accreditation brings to an institution, administrators may focus on how it affects their role in the organization—that is, that it increases management and evaluation of programs, enabling them to “sell” their programs more effectively to the legislature and better defend themselves in court, thereby increasing their ability to obtain needed resources. It may be the perception that accreditation better enables the institution to deal with the legal system and to elicit support and resources from legislators that leads administrators to believe that accreditation has tangible benefits and increases program effectiveness at their institutions.

However, unlike administrators who deal with these issues on a daily basis, nonadministrators may not perceive accreditation as enhancing management capabilities, improving the institution's relationships with outside agencies, and therefore providing benefits to the institution to as great an extent. We hypothesized that nonadministrative personnel may focus more on day-to-day aspects of the institution's functioning and might therefore be more sensitive to the effects of accreditation on more “operational” issues, such as institutional security, staff morale, inmate opportunities, and routine operation of the institution. Since the demands placed on an agency during the accreditation process can cause problems primarily for those staff most involved with the daily operation of the facility, nonadministrative staff may be more likely to focus on the increased workload and operational problems resulting from accreditation, and so may be more likely than administrative staff to view accreditation as disruptive to the institution, as harmful to staff morale, and as a diversion from providing greater opportunities for inmates and facility security. These attitudes may lead to a less positive evaluation of the results of accreditation and less commitment to the process for nonadministrative than for administrative staff.

Findings. The analyses showed that the authors' intuitions about the differences between these two groups' evaluations of accreditation were largely correct: administrators do view accreditation more positively than nonadministrators—that is, they believe accreditation increases the effectiveness of programs, makes the institution a cleaner, healthier,

and safer place, and produces tangible benefits—because administrators believe, to a greater extent than do nonadministrators, that accreditation will enhance their ability to organize and manage the institution, which causes them to believe they will be better able to obtain resources and support from the courts and legislature through accreditation. In addition, because of their belief that accreditation has positive effects, administrators are more committed to the accreditation program as evidenced by their greater desire to seek reaccreditation than nonadministrators.

Contrary to expectation, nonadministrators, as compared to administrators, did not see accreditation as having more negative effects on institutional security and opportunities for inmates, nor as causing greater disruption to institutional functioning. However, nonadministrators were less likely than administrators to believe that accreditation positively affects staff morale, which in turn leads to less positive attitudes about the effects of accreditation among nonadministrators and consequently to their diminished commitment to the accreditation program.

Implications. Administrators and nonadministrators see the effects of accreditation differently, and this analysis suggests that these differences may be based on the different roles and therefore the different experiences of these two groups within the organization. Administrators see accreditation more positively because they see it as enhancing the acquisition and management of resources, areas of institution operation with which they have direct experience. Nonadministrators, although generally positive about accreditation's impact on the organization, are less positive about its effects than are administrators, perhaps because they don't encounter these effects directly in their day-to-day experience. Since they don't confront issues of institution management and resource acquisition as do administrators, the value of accreditation in these areas is not as apparent to them.

One implication of this finding is that nonadministrative staff can be “brought into” the accreditation process to a greater extent. Nonadministrators currently do not see accreditation as affecting them personally and therefore could be made more aware of how accreditation can benefit them directly. First, accreditation's potential for improving institution management, and therefore improving relationships with outside agencies, should be emphasized by administrators. Then, specific benefits resulting from the enhanced institution management and better relationships with the

courts and legislature provided by accreditation should be communicated to line staff and supervisors by administrators. Administrators should emphasize that better management and increased resources ultimately affect everyone in the institution, whether management or nonmanagement; administrators should stress the concrete ways line staff and supervisors can benefit from these improvements (e.g., higher pay, more positions, safer conditions). These connections need to be made explicit to those who are not as involved in the process so as to ensure their support and involvement in the accreditation program.

The Auditors Model. Although the amount of time spent by auditors at the facility is limited, the way respondents evaluate auditor behavior and attitudes in conducting the audit—whether auditors are perceived as acting in a fair manner, as demonstrating expertise in the field of corrections and a willingness to be flexible in conducting the audit—may be an important determinant of respondents' views of the CAC and their overall perceptions of the accreditation process. Previous analyses showed that respondents' attitudes toward the auditors were very positive overall, with the auditors perceived as fair, knowledgeable about corrections, and responsive to staff efforts to provide information to supplement documentation prepared for the audit (Farkas and Fosen, 1983). Knowing whether these attitudes influence impressions of the commission and of the results of accreditation could indicate the extent to which auditor behavior contributes to respondents' views of accreditation, and whether increased emphasis might be placed on how audit teams interact with field staff, and the "image" they project while in the field.

Findings. The analysis using this model indicated that beliefs that the auditors are flexible and knowledgeable result in more positive evaluations of the commission's responsiveness and more positive attitudes toward the effects of accreditation on inmates, staff, and overall institutional functioning. However, beliefs that the auditors are fair does not seem to influence whether the CAC is seen as responsive, nor whether accreditation is seen to have positive or negative effects. The finding that the perception of the auditors as fair does not impact on any of the variables in the model may be due to a belief that auditor fairness is more reflective of personal qualities or characteristics of the auditor than of the CAC and the accreditation program in general. However, auditor knowledgeability and flexibility may be perceived as resulting from CAC selection and training, thus indicating the extent to

which the commission "cares" about the respondents and their accreditation-related needs.

Implications. The audit teams sent to the institutions play an important role in staff response to the accreditation program; they are, in a sense, the "personification" of the accreditation program for field staff and can act to ensure positive responses to the commission and the program. This suggests that the CAC should continue to place emphasis on selecting well-qualified, knowledgeable, and flexible individuals to serve as auditors by using selection criteria that emphasize these qualities in auditors. Auditors should be sensitized to the impact their demonstration of correctional knowledge and flexibility has on personnel at facilities during the audit. And finally, perhaps managers should emphasize to staff that auditors are selected on the basis of correctional expertise, thus contributing to continued positive attitudes toward and acceptance of the auditors.

The Accreditation Process Model. This model addresses the way characteristics of the respondent or facility—type of accreditation training received, position, security level, and size of the facility—affect: 1) beliefs about the distribution of accreditation-related work among staff; 2) whether respondents thought there was adequate time for the process; and 3) whether the required preparation, i.e., Plans of Action and documentation for audit, was seen as useful. The model predicts that negative evaluations of the accreditation process—i.e., that the workload is not distributed evenly, that the time allowed is inadequate, and/or that the preparations are not useful—may lead the respondent to see accreditation as disruptive, and therefore to believe that streamlining of the accreditation process and standards would not harm the program, and that the process is in need of simplification through elimination of duplication in the standards and reduced documentation requirements.

Findings. Security level, facility size, and the respondent's position in the agency all affect the extent to which streamlining is desired; interestingly, type of training had no effect on whether an individual believed the procedure required streamlining. In terms of position, accreditation managers were the group of respondents most likely to desire streamlining. Administrators tended to believe that the workload was more evenly distributed among staff and were more likely to think the time allowed was adequate, while nonadministrators were more likely to believe that the time was inadequate. In addition, *staff members at medium security facilities*

were less positive about the usefulness of preparing for the audit and for accreditation generally, leading to a greater perception of the accreditation process as disruptive and to a desire to streamline the process. Personnel at smaller facilities (less than 250 inmates) saw the preparations as more useful, and therefore saw less need for streamlining the process.

Finally, the variables that best predicted a desire for streamlining the process were beliefs about the distribution of accreditation-related work and the utility of preparations for the audit. Streamlining was desired to a greater extent when staff perceived that the workload was inequitably distributed and that the preparations required for accreditation were not useful; however, the perception that inadequate time was allowed was not important in determining a respondent's desire for streamlining.

Implications. The fact that accreditation managers were most likely to desire streamlining presumably reflects the more direct involvement of accreditation managers, the greater demands of the process on these individuals, and consequently their greater awareness of problems with the accreditation process due to unnecessary complexity. Since accreditation managers are the persons most closely involved with accreditation procedures, and since most respondents (70 percent) indicated that the accreditation managers at their facilities were not assigned exclusively to accreditation duties but performed these duties in addition to their regular jobs, accreditation managers may more often experience work overload due to accreditation and therefore desire streamlining of the process to a greater extent.

Respondents' judgments about the usefulness of preparing for accreditation, including developing Plans of Action and gathering documentation for the audit, appeared to differ depending on security level and size of the facility. Personnel in medium security level facilities found the preparations least useful and desired streamlining to a greater extent than did staff at other security levels, while staff at smaller institutions found the preparations for accreditation more useful and did not desire streamlining to as great an extent as did staff at larger facilities. The reason for these findings is not clear; perhaps the different perceptions about the accreditation process held by personnel at institutions of varying size and security level are based on differences in other variables that are correlated with security level and size, for example, differences in the types of populations being served, or the predominant types of work activities that staff are required to perform (e.g., an emphasis on the pro-

cessing of inmate movement into and out of the facility at the lower security level institutions vs. a greater emphasis on long-term maintenance activities at the higher security levels). Further exploration of the relationship between security level, size, and the perceived usefulness of accreditation preparations and requirements is needed to clarify this finding.

Obviously, the accreditation process is more problematic for some groups of respondents than others. It could be hypothesized that the extent to which it is a problem depends on how much the demands of the accreditation process exacerbate the demands already made on the individual by his day-to-day job. Those who experience the greatest number of demands associated with accreditation, such as accreditation managers, for example, may experience work overload as a result of their participation in the accreditation process, and therefore see the process as more disruptive and as more in need of streamlining than other staff. In any event, it is interesting that for staff in general, a desire for streamlining was not based on time constraints inherent in the accreditation process, but rather on an evaluation of how useful the preparations were and how the workload was distributed among staff.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the conclusions drawn from each of the three models presented above, recommendations can be made for improving both the process and attitudes of staff toward accreditation. The recommendations are addressed to administrators at institutions undergoing or about to undergo accreditation, and to ACA and commission staff who have responsibility for revising the process and standards:

- Line staff and nonadministrative supervisory staff could be more involved in the accreditation process than they currently are, or should at least be more aware of the extent to which they are beneficiaries of the process. Such involvement, which includes emphasizing the ways accreditation can improve management, increase resources, and benefit the institution as a whole, should improve their attitudes toward and commitment to the accreditation process.
- The behavior of auditors is important, as it reflects on the commission and the accreditation process in general. Care should continue to be taken to select qualified auditors and emphasize that they be flexible during the audit process.

- The accreditation process is more disruptive to some groups of individuals than others, particularly to those staff members who already have a large number of demands placed on them by their jobs without the added burden of accreditation and those who are most involved in implementing the accreditation process. This suggests that individuals in these groups be sought out as a source of suggestions for streamlining the accreditation process.

Although these findings reveal something about the way staff members think about accreditation, they also raise further questions that should be addressed:

- It is not clear why nonadministrators see accreditation as having a less positive effect on staff morale than do administrators. Perhaps nonadministrators view the process as merely additional work and feel the added operational demands of accreditation will increase the workload and cause morale problems. If this is true, future efforts to emphasize the benefits of accreditation to line staff members should be accompanied by administrative recognition of the additional demands accreditation creates for these staff members, an assessment of the extent to which staff members become "overloaded" due to accreditation-related work, and perhaps the provision of additional support to those staff members who experience work overload. Future research which examines

the impact of accreditation-related demands on staff workload and morale is needed.

- Why do personnel at medium security and larger facilities desire streamlining to a greater extent than do personnel at minimum and maximum security facilities and at smaller institutions? Again, there is a need to look more closely at differences in perceptions of accreditation based on characteristics of the facility, such as security level and size.

Finally, the ACA and the commission continue to be committed to a thorough examination of the accreditation process, as reflected in their solicitation of opinions and suggestions from field staffs and willingness to respond to the feedback received. Based on the results of this survey, the ACA Committee on Standards and the commission have deleted nearly 100 standards from the second editions of the adult manuals. There is a commitment to further eliminate duplicative standards and to revise both the accreditation and reaccreditation processes. These efforts to maintain communication and to act on suggestions from those participating in the accreditation process are essential to an effective accreditation program and to the overriding goal of upgrading programs and services in order to ensure humane and effective correctional institutions.

REFERENCES

- Farkas, G.M. and Fosen, R.H. "Responding to Accreditation," *Corrections Today*, December 1983, pp. 40-42.