



ARIZONA CRIMINAL
JUSTICE COMMISSION

Criminal History Analysis of Class Six Felony Offenders Released from Prison in 2007

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Arizona Prison Population

- The Arizona prison population rose from 26,510 to 40,492 from 2000 to 2009 (53% increase)*
- According to the U.S. Census, the total resident population in Arizona rose by 28% from 2000 to 2009
- The Arizona Department of Corrections reported an Arizona prison population of 40,204 as of August 2010

*Data provided by the U.S. Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Statistics.

Population Characteristics

- Approximately one-third of the 40,204 inmates in Arizona prisons in August 2010 were historically non-violent offenders
- 55% of inmates were serving their first Arizona prison sentence

Questions Posed

- What does the criminal history of lower-level inmates in Arizona prisons reveal about their incarceration sentences?
- Do variations exist in the data as a result of offender characteristics?

Data Available

- An extract was collected from the Arizona Department of Corrections (AZDC) for all inmates released from prison in 2007
- The Arizona Department of Public Safety (AZDPS) collects and maintains all arrest and disposition forms throughout the state within the Arizona Computerized Criminal History (ACCH) repository

ACCH Data Process

- An offender is booked using Livescan or fingerprint cards for a finger-printable offense, thus populating ACCH electronically with the arrest data
- The disposition is submitted at a later date and electronically entered and linked to each arrest charge
- Disposition information cannot be entered without an initial booked arrest

Pros/Cons of Using ACCH Data

- A standard method for collecting arrest and disposition information
- Data is available electronically
- Gaps in the data collection exist, leading to missing arrest and/or disposition data
- AZDPS purges ACCH records for deceased offenders

Offense Categories

Violent Offenses

Murder

Sexual Assault/Misconduct
with Minor

Robbery

Assault

Other Violent

Property Offenses

Burglary

Larceny/Theft

Motor Vehicle Theft

Forgery/Counterfeiting

Fraud

Other Property

Drug Offenses

Drug Sales

Drug Sales/Possession

Drug Possession

Public Order Offenses

Weapons

Driving Under the Influence

Driving-Related

Other Public Order

Preliminary Data

- A total of 5,122 class six felony offenders were released from prison in 2007
- 893 females were released; 4,229 males were released
- 46% Caucasian, 28% Latino, 12% African-American, 7% Native American, 7% Other

Preliminary Data

Table 1. Percentage of Inmates Released in 2007 by Offender Category and Most Serious Arrest Charge in Criminal History

		Most Severe Arrest Charge Prior to Confinement				
		Violent Offense	Property Offense	Drug Offense	Public Order Offense	Total
Most Severe Offense Category	Violent Offenders	92.6%	2.5%	1.5%	3.3%	100.0% (N=904)
	Property Offenders	39.0%	57.7%	1.3%	2.0%	100.0% (N=1,384)
	Drug Offenders	57.8%	21.0%	21.0%	0.1%	100.0% (N=727)
	Public Order Offenders	59.6%	23.2%	13.2%	4.0%	100.0% (N=2,098)

Preliminary Data

- 36.7% of property offenders were arrested prior to the prison sentence for an assault offense
- 54.9% of drug offenders were arrested for a prior assault; 48.7% for a prior larceny offense; 25.0% for a burglary charge
- 57.7% of public order offenders were arrested for a prior assault; 46.7% for a prior larceny offense; 29.0% for a burglary charge

Preliminary Data

Table 2. Percentage of Inmates Released in 2007 by Offender Category and Most Serious Conviction Charge in Criminal History

		Most Severe Conviction Charge Prior to Confinement				
		Violent Conviction	Property Conviction	Drug Conviction	Public Order Conviction	Total
Most Severe Offense Category	Violent Offenders	86.5%	3.3%	1.9%	8.3%	100.0%
	Property Offenders	20.6%	66.0%	3.0%	10.5%	100.0%
	Drug Offenders	35.0%	24.7%	35.0%	5.4%	100.0%
	Public Order Offenders	34.5%	24.8%	9.5%	31.2%	100.0%

Preliminary Data

- 32.8% of all arrest counts prior to prison sentence in the ACCH were missing disposition information
- 85.4% of all class 6 felony offenders released were missing at least one disposition in their ACCH rap sheet

Preliminary Data

Table 3. Percentage of Inmates (Excluding Admissions for Probation Revocation) by Offender Category and Most Serious Arrest Charge in Criminal History

		Most Severe Arrest Charge Prior to Confinement				
		Violent Offense	Property Offense	Drug Offense	Public Order Offense	Total
Most Severe Offense Category	Violent Offenders	94.0%	2.7%	0.9%	2.4%	100.0% (N=452)
	Property Offenders	44.7%	52.1%	1.3%	1.8%	100.0% (N=608)
	Drug Offenders	59.2%	22.1%	18.7%	0.0%	100.0% (N=380)
	Public Order Offenders	64.9%	21.2%	9.8%	4.0%	100.0% (N=1,018)

Preliminary Data

- Of the 5,122 class 6 felony inmates released, 51.9% were originally admitted to prison for probation revocation
- Table 3 shows a noticeable shift in the percentages favoring violent offending

Preliminary Data

- As the age of property, drug, and public order offenders increases, so does the percentage of those inmates arrested for a violent crime prior to incarceration
 - 18 to 24: 38.0%
 - 25 to 29: 52.5%
 - 30 to 34: 55.9%
 - 35 to 44: 60.3%
 - 45 and Up: 60.8%
- Male inmates (56.4%) incarcerated for property, drug and public order offenses were more likely than female inmates (35.8%) to have been previously arrested for a violent crime

Preliminary Data

- Of all inmates incarcerated for property, drug and public order offenses, Native Americans (65.3%) were most likely to have been previously arrested for a violent crime, followed by African American (63.6%) and Latino (57.1%) inmates

Further Research

- Continue to create typologies for each level of felony class
- Dig deeper in the public risk scoring data as well as the offense types
- Explore additional methods to separate prior offenses from offenses leading to incarceration in prison

Policy Implications

- ACJC continues to utilize criminal history record data and information to inform stakeholders and the public about relevant justice issues
- Provide policy makers with the tools they need to make sound decisions

Other Projects Using ACCH Data

- Records Quality Reporting
- Reporting of Sexual Assault
- Felony Case Processing



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