

**SURVEY REPORT
ON
INTERNAL OFFENDER CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM**

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SURVEY REPORT ON INTERNAL OFFENDER CLASSIFICATION

Introduction

The purpose of the survey is two-fold. First, it will assess to what extent internal offender classification systems are being used in the United States, and second, to solicit interest in becoming a test site to develop and evaluate an internal classification system. This survey is the first task to be completed by the National Council on Crime and Delinquency (NCCD) for the Internal Offender Classification project with a grant awarded by the National Institute of Corrections (NIC) in October, 1993. This report will briefly describe the findings generated from the questionnaire, current as of May 5, 1994.

On March 7, 1994, NCCD sent out a questionnaire to all fifty states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, the Federal Bureau of Prisons. The New York City Jail System, the Philadelphia Prison System, and the Cook County Jail System had expressed interest in being a test site and therefore were also included in the survey. A followup phone call was made 10 days after the mailing to check the status of the questionnaire. A week later, the 20 agencies which had still not responded were faxed a reminder together with a copy of the questionnaire. To date, 55 agencies have responded by returning the questionnaire, and the majority of responses were accompanied by classification instruments and policies as requested on the questionnaire. Survey results are summarized in Table 1 and 2. Table 1 displays responses from all 55 agencies, and Table 2

categorizes the states according to their existing classification systems.

How Prevalent Is the Use of Internal Offender Classification?

A number of states have indicated that they have a formal internal classification system. But in reviewing their classification manuals and through followup calls, it became clear that they do not have such a system (i.e. an extra tier of internal classification in addition to the external system). Rather, their system is a comprehensive system which "does it all", namely, institutional assignment, and unit housing assignment which depends largely on program needs and work eligibility.

Moreover, most facilities have multi-security or multi-custody level housing units such as protective custody units and administrative segregation units. Placement into these special units is largely dependent on the results from the objective classification process, and to a smaller degree, on the professional judgment of prison staff. Therefore, some corrections personnel are under the impression that their objective classification performs also the job of an internal system.

A side note, fifty-two agencies that have responded are using an external (objective) classification system. The remaining two (Massachusetts and New Jersey) are in the process of implementing their systems this year.

States which have claimed to have both formal external and internal classification systems are :

- Federal Prison System - the Adult Internal Management System (AIMS) developed by Dr. Herbert Quay has been implemented in a small number of facilities in the system. The AIMS relies on two inventories to classify inmates: 1. the analysis of Life History records, and 2. the Correctional Adjustment Checklist. The system classifies inmates according to their level of management risk and also susceptibility of being victimized.
- Georgia - the AIMS system is used in all state correctional institutions.
- Illinois - with the assistance of NCCD, the Illinois DOC implemented a system in its four maximum security facilities (Stateville, Joliet, Pontiac and Menard). After an inmate is received at one of these facilities, the internal classification system scoring instrument is used to determine the inmate's level of institutional aggression. Based on that score, the inmate is assigned to the appropriate housing, work, and program assignments. The instrument scores inmates on their level of aggression, largely determined by their disciplinary conduct and gang activities, but also using some of the same criteria found on the larger system-wide classification system.
- Indiana - in selected sites only, formal internal classification is being used to determine housing assignments. For example, in Indiana State Reformatory, which is a maximum security facility, all general population offenders were screened at intake to identify disruptive offenders. A second classification procedure is also required to process offenders for work assignments and housing assignments. Factors to be considered by classification staff are past conduct history, gang affiliations, and proofs of detrimental effect on the security of the facility and other offenders. Offenders will then be housed in different cell blocks based on results from their levels of management risk and work eligibility.
- Louisiana - the initial objective classification is an integrated system which determines institutional assignment, unit housing assignment and also assesses programming needs.
- Missouri - the Missouri Department of Corrections has been using the AIMS system since the late 1980's. The system is in place at all of the Department's secure facilities but is

not used in the two community release centers or in the institutional treatment centers which provide specialized substance abuse programming. The AIMS is also not used in female facilities.

- New Hampshire - one comprehensive classification system which accomplishes most classification purposes. It aims to provide a profile of an inmate in these areas: security (public risk), custody (institutional risk), medical and health care needs, mental health needs, training/programming needs, education needs, vocational training needs, and work skills. Housing assignments within a designated facility are made based on a version of Quay system.
- New Mexico - in this state, the classification process is a comprehensive process which determines an inmate's custody level, institutional assignment, programming assignments which include education, treatment and jobs, and decisions relating to family visits, furloughs and good time awards. The initial custody classification determines institutional assignment and also recommends programs suitable for the inmates. Program recommendations at this point can be changed by the classification staff in the institution based on requests of the inmate or judgment of the staff. The Department has a formal procedure in administrative segregation placement, aside from that, it does not seem to have a formal system in unit housing placement within a facility. Basically, an inmate's custody level and program needs determine where he/she will serve time.
- Ohio - the Adult Internal Management System (AIMS or Quay) is used in a number of facilities.
- Oklahoma - the Quay system is being used in a number of facilities.
- Pennsylvania - this state has been using the Pennsylvania Additive Classification Tool (PACT) which was developed in conjunction with NCCD, in order to determine the custody levels of inmates since October, 1992. PACT also contains a needs assessment. In addition to using the custody levels generated via PACT to assign inmates to facilities, the department also uses the custody levels to assign inmates to appropriate security level housing within the facility. Therefore, there is a degree of overlap in that the department uses PACT data as an external as well as an internal classification to some extent.
- South Carolina - the Adult Internal Management System (AIMS or Quay) has been implemented in all 32 facilities.
- Texas - this state uses an integrated classification system

which determines both facility and housing unit assignments.

- South Dakota - the AIMS system has been implemented in a number of facilities.
- Washington - one of the very few states that has implemented a bona fide internal classification system in one of its facilities. The system is Prison Management Classification (PWC), a personality-topology based system which classifies and segregates inmates according to their personality types. This system is being used only in the Clallum Bay Corrections Center.

In 1993, Washington DOC also implemented Case Management System (the predecessor to PMC) to match offender needs with appropriate placement and resources and to "have the right offender in the right bed at the right time".

- West Virginia - the custody level scored by the inmate in the objection classification process determines which facility he/she will reside. The custody level also determines which housing area within a facility he/she will be assigned to, for example, protective custody unit, dorm, segregation unit, and infirmary.

In short, only eleven agencies including the Bureau of Prisons have implemented formal internal classification systems (independent of the external system), and among these few, the most widely used system is the Adult Internal Management System (AIMS).

Which States Are Interested In Being Selected?

Of the 55 respondents, 40 agencies have expressed interest in participating as a test site. Of course, some states are more interested than others, as reflected by either a formal letter of commitment from the director or multiple phone calls to NCCD to inquire of the status of the project. The states most enthusiastic are Delaware, Hawaii, Indiana, Louisiana, Maine, Oklahoma, Oregon, Washington, and West Virginia. On the other

hand, Alaska, California, Maryland, Michigan, Mississippi, Nevada, New Jersey, Philadelphia, South Dakota, and Wisconsin are not interested in participating. The states of Utah and Virginia are undecided.

One criterion of being selected is the existence of an objective prison classification that assesses inmates' custody levels and program needs. As shown in the table, the majority of states fulfill this requirement. The other criterion is the existence of an automated information system for tracking inmates' classification, disciplinary, and facility movement records. In this regard, some states will not qualify because their disciplinary files are not automated.

The following is a list of states that are 1) interested, 2) using an automated disciplinary system, and 3) using an automated objective classification system:

Alabama
Arizona
Arkansas
Colorado
Connecticut
Florida
Georgia
Idaho
Indiana
Iowa
Minnesota
Missouri
New York State
Tennessee
Vermont
Washington State
Wyoming

Conclusion

The findings show that the use of 'formal' internal offender

classification is not prevalent among the states. However, most states do claim to have 'informal' internal classification which assigns inmates to appropriate housing units, work and other programs. One common scenario is the use of an integrated objective classification which determines the custody level and institutional assignment of an inmate, and then at the prison facility, the custody level is again used as a baseline for housing unit assignment. Eleven states have an existing and independent (of the external classification) internal classification system (Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Missouri, New Hampshire, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Carolina, South Dakota, Washington State, and the Federal Prison System.)

The reaction to our invitation to become a test site for this study is very positive. Of the 55 agencies that returned the questionnaire, 40 have expressed interest in being selected.

TABLE 1
NIC INTERNAL OFFENDER CLASSIFICATION STUDY
NATIONAL SURVEY RESULTS ON EXISTING CLASSIFICATION SYSTEMS

		EXTERNAL CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM	AUTOMATED EXTERNAL SYSTEM	FORMAL INTERNAL CLASSIFICATION	AUTOMATED INTERNAL SYSTEM	NEWS ASSESSMENTS	AUTOMATED ASSESSMENTS	AUTOMATED DISCIPLINARY RECORDS	INTEREST IN BEING A TEST SITE
1	ALABAMA	Y	Y	N	NA	Y	Y	Y	Y
2	ALASKA	Y	N	N	NA	Y	N	N	N
3	ARIZONA	Y	Y	N	NA	Y	Y	Y	Y
4	ARKANSAS	Y	Y	N	NA	Y	N	Y	Y
5	CALIFORNIA	Y	Y	N	NA	N	N	Y	N
6	COLORADO	Y	Y	N	NA	Y	Y	Y	Y
7	CONNECTICUT	Y	Y	N	NA	Y	Y	Y	Y
8	COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS	Y	Y	N	NA	N	NA	N	Y
9	DELAWARE	Y	N	N	NA	Y	N	N	Y
10	FEDERAL BUREAU OF PRISONS	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
11	FLORIDA	Y	Y	N	NA	Y	Y	Y	Y
12	GEORGIA	Y	Y	Y	P	Y	N	Y	Y
3	HAWAII	Y	Y	N	NA	Y	N	N	Y
14	IDAHO	Y	Y	N	NA	Y	N	Y	Y
15	ILLINOIS	Y	Y	Y	N	N	NA	N	Y
16	INDIANA	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
17	IOWA	Y	Y	N	NA	Y	Y	Y	Y
18	KANSAS	Y	Y	N	NA	Y	Y	N	Y
19	KENTUCKY	Y	Y	N	NA	Y	Y	N	Y
20	LOUISIANA	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y
21	HUNT, LOUISIANA	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	N	Y
22	MAINE	Y	Y	N	NA	N	NA	N	Y
23	MARYLAND	Y	Y	N	NA	Y	N	Y	N
24	MASSACHUSETTS	N	NA	N	NA	N	NA	N	Y
25	MICHIGAN	Y	Y	N	NA	N	NA	Y	N
26	MINNESOTA	Y	Y	N	NA	N	NA	Y	Y
27	MISSISSIPPI	Y	N	N	NA	Y	N	N	N
28	MISSOURI	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
29	MONTANA	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	N	Y

**TABLE 1 (Cont'd)
NIC INTERNAL OFFENDER CLASSIFICATION STUDY
NATIONAL SURVEY RESULTS ON EXISTING CLASSIFICATION SYSTEMS**

		EXTERNAL CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM	AUTOMATED EXTERNAL SYSTEM	FORMAL INTERNAL CLASSIFICATION	AUTOMATED INTERNAL SYSTEM	NEEDS ASSESSMENTS	AUTOMATED NEEDS ASSESSMENTS	AUTOMATED DISCIPLINARY RECORDS	INTEREST IN BEING A TEST SITE
30	NEBRASKA	Y	N	Y	N	N	NA	Y	Y
31	NEVADA	Y	Y	N	NA	N	NA	Y	N
32	NEW HAMPSHIRE	Y	P	Y	P	Y	P	N	Y
33	NEW JERSEY	N	NA	N	NA	N	NA	Y	N
34	NEW MEXICO	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	N	Y
35	NEW YORK STATE	Y	Y	N	NA	Y	Y	Y	Y
36	NORTH CAROLINA	Y	Y	N	NA	Y	Y	N	Y
37	NORTH DAKOTA	Y	N	N	NA	N	NA	N	Y
38	OHIO	Y	Y	Y	N	N	NA	N	Y
39	OKLAHOMA	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	N	Y
40	OREGON	Y	Y	N	NA	Y	Y	N	Y
41	PENNSYLVANIA	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N	Y
42	PHILADELPHIA	Y	N	N	NA	Y	N	Y	N
43	PUERTO RICO								
44	RHODE ISLAND	NA	NA	Y	N	N	NA	Y	Y
	SOUTH CAROLINA	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
46	SOUTH DAKOTA	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
47	TENNESSEE	Y	Y	N	NA	Y	Y	Y	Y
48	TEXAS	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
49	UTAH	Y	Y	N	NA	N	NA	Y	U
50	VERMONT	Y	Y	N	NA	Y	Y	Y	Y
51	VIRGIN ISLAND								
52	VIRGINIA	Y	Y	N	NA	Y	N	Y	U
53	WASH D.C.	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N
54	WASHINGTON STATE	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
55	WEST VIRGINIA	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	N	Y
56	WISCONSIN	Y	Y	N	NA	Y	Y	Y	N
57	WYOMING	Y	Y	N	NA	Y	Y	Y	Y

Keys:

Y = Yes
N = No

P = Partial
U = Undecided

Rhode Island has only one prison facility, therefore, external classification is not necessary.

**TABLE 2
LISTS OF STATES
BY FORMS OF INMATE CLASSIFICATION AND TRACKING SYSTEMS**

1. EXTERNAL CLASSIFICATION
2. FORMAL INTERNAL CLASSIFICATION
3. AUTOMATED SYSTEM
4. AUTOMATED DISCIPLINARY

1. EXTERNAL CLASSIFICATION
2. NO FORMAL INTERNAL CLASSIFICATION
3. AUTOMATED SYSTEM
4. AUTOMATED DISCIPLINARY

1. EXTERNAL CLASSIFICATION
2. NO FORMAL INTERNAL CLASSIFICATION
3. NO AUTOMATED SYSTEM
4. NO AUTOMATED DISCIPLINARY

1. NO EXTERNAL CLASSIFICATION

FEDERAL PRISONS	ALABAMA	ALASKA	MASSACHUSETTS
GEORGIA	ARIZONA	DELAWARE	NEW JERSEY
INDIANA	ARKANSAS	MISSISSIPPI	
SOUTH CAROLINA	CALIFORNIA	NORTH DAKOTA	
SOUTH DAKOTA	COLORADO		
TEXAS	CONNECTICUT		
WASHINGTON STATE	FLORIDA		
MISSOURI	IDAHO		
	IOWA		
	MARYLAND		
	MICHIGAN		
	MINNESOTA		
	NEVADA		
	NEW YORK STATE		
	TENNESSEE		
	UTAH		
	VERMONT		
	VIRGINIA		
	WISCONSIN		
	WYOMING		