Worker Safety in Probation and Parole

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FOREWORD

The delivery of community correctional services has become an increasingly difficult task. Those on the "front line," working directly with probationers and parolees, are the people on whom we depend to translate our mandate into effective community protection and client services. Thus, the safety of probation and parole workers, while carrying out their important tasks, is a concern which unites the interests of staff and administrators at all levels. This monograph on Worker Safety in Probation and Parole will stimulate increased attention to the problem and provide information useful to those engaged in efforts to enhance staff safety and security.

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National Institute of Corrections

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My research concerning the victimization of probation and parole workers and the preparation of this monograph could not have been accomplished without the enthusiastic cooperation and assistance of many people.

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Finally, to the many probation and parole workers and administrators in Pennsylvania (where our work began) and across the country, thank you for your interest, assistance, and magnificent cooperation. When all is said and done, we're all in it together.

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Section 1

WORKER SAFETY IN PROBATION AND PAROLE: A PROBLEM WHOSE TIME HAS COME

INTRODUCTION

The issue of worker safety in probation and parole is a 1980'S phenomenon.[1] While a fair amount of literature addressing the victimization of police exists, it was not until 1989 that the first research focusing directly on the victimization of probation and parole workers was published.[2] What explains the new-found interest in probation and parole worker safety? Why has the concern for personal risk recently become a preoccupation?

The occurrence of highly publicized events, such as the killing of a Dallas probation officer and the rape and beating of a state parole officer in Beaumont, Texas, has alarmed many people working in probation and parole.

> During the spring of 1988 a Dallas County Probation Officer was murdered and a state parole officer in Beaumont was beaten and raped. Concerns about officer safety and methods of preventing similar incidents reached a fever pitch among parole and probation officers.[3]

Awareness of such events has stimulated workers to think about their own vulnerability to physical assaults, verbal attacks, threats, intimidation, coercion and other potentially serious and violent acts against them in the line of duty.

Other less dramatic, but equally important, developments have taken place over the past decade which have contributed to making probation and parole work more dangerous. For example, tied to an increased demand for tough criminal sanctions and a retributive correctional mandate, the focus of probation and parole has shifted from an emphasis on rehabilitation to one of surveillance. With that shift, the nature of the worker-client relationship has become

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[1]All of the research that the author could locate concerning worker safety in probation and parole was conducted between 1987 and 1989.

[2]Parsonage, William H. and W. Conway Bushey, "The Victimization of Probation and Parole Workers in the Line of Duty: An Exploratory Study," Criminal Justice Policy Review, Vol. 2, No. 4, 1989.

[3]"Angry parole officers: We need guns," The Houston Post, May 18, 1988.

more adversarial. Caseloads have more than doubled, reducing the opportunity for extensive worker contact with clients who might benefit from more attention. The communities in which many probationers and parolees live have become increasingly more dangerous environments for officers to work with their clients.

It is often asserted that people who decide to enter the field must be willing to accept the risk of physical and verbal abuse as "part of the territory." And, to a certain extent, that is true. Actually, there are popularly understood expectations of the justice work-group and aspects of its culture which tend to reinforce such a view (e.g., the macho image). Further, at an organizational level, administrators have tended to "downplay" worker safety as a serious problem, fearing that attention might open up issues of agency responsibility and liability. The cumulative consequence has been to deny sufficient attention to the problems of violent and abusive incidents involving workers in the line of duty.

The human and financial costs associated with the physical and verbal abuse of workers (time off the job, loss of productivity, staff turnover due to fear and frustration, medical and disability expenses) are manifold and have become too extensive to ignore. The case for a pro-active approach on the part of agencies, and other professional associations representing the field, is compelling. It is clear that worker safety in probation and parole is a problem whose time has come!

PRESSURE FOR ACTION

Alarm over disastrous events and concern about the welfare of those working in the field of probation and parole have stimulated proposals for action to do something to enhance worker safety. Examples of agency responses to that call for action, include the following:

- In many jurisdictions, probation and parole officers have been authorized to carry weapons while on duty.
- Unarmed self-defense has become a common component of in-service training programs in many jurisdictions.
- In an attempt to reduce assaults against workers, laws have been passed (or legislative bills are pending) that would "up the ante" and make such behavior a felony offense.
- In some jurisdictions, probation and parole work has been identified as a hazardous profession with officers eligible for hazardous-duty pay and early-retirement benefits.

- Concern for the ability to secure assistance while in the field has caused many agencies to authorize the use of 2-way radios for field staff.

- In some locations, workers wear body armor in carrying out planned arrests and in other dangerous situations.

- Metal detectors and security separations between waiting rooms and staff areas have been installed in many agency offices.

- Policies restricting community visitation practices of workers have been promulgated in many jurisdictions with the intent of reducing officer risk and preventing dangerous incidents (identification of "red zones" and "safe zones").

- Some agencies no longer involve probation and parole workers in arrests of alleged violators.

- Restraining devices and specially equipped vehicles with security screens have been introduced in some settings.

- Many agency safety-related training programs have been developed or enhanced.

Agency attention to the safety of workers in the line of duty has also been stimulated by an increasing recognition of the potential for litigation emerging when hazardous events involving workers occur. While legal action by victimized workers against agencies, perpetrators, or third parties for redress of harm done to them in the line of duty has not been as widespread in probation and parole as in the police field,[4] a number of Questions bear on the issue of agency responsibility. For example:

1. Do employing agencies have the obligation to inform workers of the potential risks associated with their jobs?

2. Should employers screen potential employees to ensure they are capable of carrying out the tasks associated with their roles in a safe manner?

3. To what extent is the employer responsible for providing training aimed at the prevention of victimization in the context of potentially dangerous tasks (e.g., arrests, client home visits)?

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[4] **See Friend, Charles E., "Police Rights: Civil Remedies for Law Enforcement Officers," New York: The Mitchie Company, 1979.**

4. What is the affirmative responsibility of supervisors to ensure that workers are performing appropriately to avoid victimization?

5. What are the obligations of agencies to provide safe work environments to enhance worker safety?

6. To what extent does agency decision-making concerning the duties and responsibilities of workers, assignment of cases, distribution of work loads, etc. carry with it liability for worker safety?

7. Does the agency have a responsibility to provide legal assistance to workers who wish to pursue litigation against clients or others who victimize them?

8. In the matter of direct physical injury, what is the agency's responsibility for payment of medical bills, salary, etc.?

9. Apart from direct physical injury, what are the agency's obligations concerning damage to one's property, career, reputation, mental state, family relations, etc. arising from on-the-job victimizations?

So far as is known, these are questions still to be answered by the courts. There remain a number of uncertainties, therefore, about just where agency responsibility and liability start and stop concerning the aftermaths of victimizations to workers occurring in the line of duty. The need for agencies to be proactive in this domain is, however, clear.

The role of legislatures and the courts relative to the problems of worker victimization must also be examined. For example, a frequent concern expressed by workers goes something like this:

> "If you charge a client who victimizes you with a n&w offense, the likelihood is that, if he is convicted, the court will simply give him a sentence to run concurrent with his existing sentence. So, the process of charging the perpetrator doesn't result in any real penalty."

Clearly, the need for new preventive legislation and its implementation by the courts is a legitimate concern of workers in the field:

A WORKING DEFINITION OF "HAZARDOUS INCIDENT" AND "VICTIMIZATION"

It is important, early on, to define the terms "hazardous incident," "victim," and "victimization" as they will be used in this monograph. A "hazardous incident" is considered to be a

situation that has the potential to result in physical assault or other illegal act against the worker.

The definition of "victim," as it applies to probation/parole workers, is a more difficult matter. The popular image of a "victim" is that of a completely innocent person who gets hurt in the process of normal life circumstances. Police, corrections probation, and parole workers against whom crimes and hazardous acts are committed have often been thought of in a different way. It is as though they cannot be afforded the status of "victim" because they "knew what they were getting into," or because in the conduct of their jobs they are expected to be able to deal with potentially dangerous persons and situations. Indeed, to assist them in that process, administration of justice workers are provided with special training, preparation, and resources to deal with hazardous situations. But in spite of special preparation and competence, a correctional, police, or probation officer who is killed or raped while on duty is as much a victim as anyone else. crime victims are people who suffer because of illegal acts against them.

Defining "victimization" is also complex. A number of variables must be taken into account. A victimization is "a specific criminal act as it affects a single victim."[5] In a practical sense, however, an act is a victimization when it is perceived as such. How the event is interpreted by the officer--as an offense or as expected behavior (which is just part of the job) --will depend on that perception. Events, in order to be victimizations, must be identified behaviorally as such.

Victimizations must also be seen as transactions involving perpetrators and victims. Victimologists (see Figure 1) have created typologies characterizing levels of of fender-victim responsibility in crime events, demonstrating that the contributions of each participant can vary greatly? Thus, the roles of participants, their relationships, and other contributing circumstances, need to be considered in understanding the nature of such events and how to respond to them appropriately.'

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[5]"Criminal Victimization in the United States," 1987, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, 1988, 120.

[6]Karmen, Andrew. "Crime Victims: An Introduction to Victimology," Monterey, CA: Brooks-Cole, 1984, 85.

[7]Parsonage, William H., Ed., "Perspectives on Victimology," Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Research Progress Series in Criminology, 1979, 10.

Figure 1

Victimologist	Types of Victims (or Encounters)
Mendelsohn (1956)	1) completely innocent 2) having minor guilt 3) as guilty as offender 4) more guilty than offender 5) most guilty--fully responsible 6) imagining
Lamborn (1968)	1) initiation 2) facilitation 3) provocation 4) perpetration 5) cooperation 6) instigation
Sheley (1979)	1) active offender-passive victim 2) active offender-semi active victim 3) active offender-active victim 4) semi-passive offender-active victim 5) passive offender-active victim

While the offenses against probation/parole workers that one usually hears about are incidents of serious physical assault, the spectrum of threatening events to which they are exposed is quite diverse. Victimization should not be limited to one terrible incident, such as an assault or a hostage situation. Also anxiety producing are the series of uncontrollable, unpredictable, and unpleasant incidents (e.g., threats and intimidation attempts) that cumulatively may result in "burnout," post-traumatic stress disorder, or learned helplessness.[8] The range of victimization events, therefore, must be considered in the development of a practical understanding of the overall phenomenon, impact on workers, cost to agencies, and effective methods for prevention and intervention.

In defining "victimization" in the 1988 Pennsylvania survey of the victimization of probation and parole workers in the line of duty, it was decided to pursue an "inclusionary course" that would involve field workers in the process of establishing what they thought constituted victimization and, ultimately, in the creation of operational definitions. Thus, victimization was then (and will now for the purposes of this monograph) be defined in its broadest sense as:

[8]Agee, Gerald L. and Vicki L. Agee, When Risk Becomes Reality," Corrections Today, August 1987, 49-53.

"any violence, threat of violence, intimidation, extortion, theft of property, damage to one's reputation, or any other act which inflicts damage, instills fear, or threatens one's sensibilities."[9]

Victimization of probation and parole workers is a multi-dimensional, relative, and often abstract problem. Exposure to such events can have serious personal, as well as organizational, consequences.

How we refer to criminal or threatening behavior directed toward probation/parole workers--whether we call it "hazardous events" or "victimizations"--has important implications for the way the problem will be addressed. Many, including the author, want to be sure that the use of the term "victim" in no way characterizes probation and parole workers as weak, incompetent, ill-trained, or blundering people. Nor should the occurrence of such an event necessarily be viewed as an error or omission on the part of an agency. Professional competence does not, unfortunately, immunize people from the dangerous or unwarranted acts of others. The decision to use "victim" and "victimization" has been made for lack of other terms to adequately characterize the real nature and seriousness of the problem with which we are dealing--crimes against workers in the line of duty.

NEED FOR A LINE-OF-MARCH APPROACH TO PROBLEMS OF WORKER SAFETY

Pressure on agency administrators to "do something" on behalf of worker safety has been building. Often, however, actions have been taken without the benefit of good information describing the actual incidence and prevalence of the problem. To act without adequate information involves risks. That is, actions taken may be misguided or, worse, with all good intentions exacerbate the problem.

In the search for ways to enhance worker safety, it is important to acknowledge that no single model can be proposed for uniform application across jurisdictions. There may be some "generic" or generally applicable components, but agency approaches to the prevention and remediation of worker victimization must be developed according to the specific legal, organizational, and environmental circumstances in which agencies operate.

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[9]Parsonage, William H. and W. Conway Bushey, "The Victimization of Pennsylvania Probation and Parole Workers in the Line of Duty," a survey, The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA, 1988.

While effective worker safety programs must be "tailor-made" for specific agencies, those responsible for agency worker safety efforts can profit from the experience and perspective of others. It is the purpose of this monograph to provide information, perspective, and assistance in that process.

The framework for the remainder of the monograph is as follows. Section Two, "A Research Literature Perspective," describes what the author has learned about the nature and extent of the problems of hazardous incidents involving probation and parole workers and their victimization. Section Three provides examples of "Proposals and Efforts in the Enhancement of Worker Safety." Attention is given to recommendations emanating from the field and descriptions of sample programs already in place in selected agencies. Based on the perspectives generated in earlier sections, Section Four provides a "Developmental Guide for Agency Action" in assessing safety issues and instituting a "process" to enhance worker safety. Section Five, "The Worker's Role in Enhancing Personal Safety," presents a framework for individual probation and parole officers to assess their own safety status and develop strategies for reducing their risk of victimization. In Section Six, "Reflections," attention is directed to issues related to the developmental direction that probation, parole, and corrections appear to be taking and its relevance for the occupational health and safety of workers.

It should be noted that the victimization of human service workers in the line of duty is a new focus within the field of victimology. This monograph, developed with a tremendous amount of cooperation from administrators and workers in the field, should generate some serious discussion and consideration of the problem and contribute to the safety, health, and well-being of probation and parole workers.

Section 2

A RESEARCH LITERATURE PERSPECTIVE

Very little has been written about employee groups who must sometimes deal with violent individuals or the consequences of violent acts in the course of their jobs. Studies examining violence in the workplace have largely focused on police officers, personnel working in psychiatric facilities and, less frequently, on correctional officers in penal institutions.

With the exception of an article in press (Parsonage and Bushey 1989)[10], the only direct literature concerning hazardous incidents involving probation and parole workers is to be found in unpublished reports and agency documents. It must be noted that the operational definitions of "hazardous incidents" and "victimization" vary in different reports. For the purposes of this monograph, however, these definitional dissimilarities do not seriously distort the incidence, prevalence, and seriousness of probation and parole officer job-related victimization, nor the kinds of policies advocated to reduce the hazards.

REVIEW OF THE RELEVANT RESEARCH LITERATURE

In their Parole Division Survey of the Texas Correctional Association, Longmire and Wilson (1987) found that almost 50% of the respondents had experienced some kind of hazardous incident during their careers. Sixty-six percent favored legislation authorizing parole and probation officers to carry weapons (support increased to 77.5% when proper training and psychological testing were required). Eighty-eight percent of the respondents favored self-defense training and 90% supported stress management as a part of in-service training. Interestingly, no "hazardous events" involving physical assault and injury were reported as such."

Renzema's (1987) survey of Adult Probation Officers in Pennsylvania focused on confrontations in which force (beyond verbal commands) was used on or by the respondents. His findings suggest that as population density decreased (e.g., urban to rural districts), rates of confrontation increased: that officers who carried weapons experienced a higher incidence of confrontations than those who did not carry weapons: and that males with a few

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"Parsonage, William H. and W. Conway Bushey, "The Victimization of Probation and Parole Workers in the Line of Duty: An Exploratory Study," Criminal Justice Policy Review, Vol. 2, No. 4, 1989.

"Longmire, Dennis R. and Charles B. Wilson, "Summary Report: Parole Division Survey," Huntsville, TX, Texas Correctional Association, 1987.

years of experience--especially if they had prior experience in police or correctional work--were a good deal more likely to experience client confrontations than women generally or less experienced officers of either sex.

> Whatever the motives for carrying equipment, officers who at times carry guns, batons, handcuffs, or two-way radios experience between 1.53 times (batons) and 2.75 times (guns) as many confrontations overall as those who never carry such gear. Examining the ratios within each sex yields similar but even more dramatic results: the smallest ratio for men is 1.86 for those who carry two-way radios, while the highest is 8.08 for handcuffs. For women, the ratios ranged from 1.58 (radios) to 4.25 (guns). Of the 233 male officers carrying handcuffs, 62.2% had confrontations: of the 78 not carrying handcuffs, only 7.7% had confrontations.

Five percent of his sample reported having experienced assault requiring time off the job or medical treatment sometime during their careers (rates of 1.5% for females and 5.4% for males). Forty percent of his respondents who engaged in field supervision had experienced some kind of confrontation with clients during the past year; the rate was 29.2% for office-bound officers. Confrontations were most likely to occur in connection with the arrest of clients. Eighty-three percent of the respondents agreed with the statement that "probation and parole work is becoming more dangerous?

During September/October 1988, the Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles distributed a Safety and Security Survey to its 830 district parole officers, parole caseworkers, and parole supervisors, The survey yielded a 50% response rate. While a relatively small percent of the 411 returning questionnaires reported actual physical assaults, the assault rate for parole officers was found to be significantly higher than rates reported in national victimization surveys. Table 1 summarizes the findings concerning assaults and threats against parole officers. The overall picture of assault/threats/intimidations indicates a serious safety problem for Texas Parole Officers.

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[12]Renzema, Mark, "The Dangers of Probation Work: A Progress Report on an Exploratory Survey," Kutztown, PA, Kutztown University, 1987, 11.

[13]Renzema, Mark, ibid

Table 1

Assaults and Threats Against (Texas) Parole Officers"

Type of Assault/Threat	Percent Reporting Assault/Threats (N=411) Ever	During Previous Year
Assault with Weapon	3%	1%
Assault with Body	6%	3%
Threat with Weapon - in person	5%	2%
Threat without Weapon - in person	21%	13%
Threat of Harm - not in person	19%	
By Telephone	15%	8%
By Mail	3%	1%
Other Indirect Threat	7%	
Attacked by Dog	28%	20%

Intimidation	% Reporting Intimidation Previous Year
Parolee's Residence	41%
Other Field Contact	22%
Off ice Contact	24%

An area of particular interest explored in the Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles' survey dealt with worker concerns for personal safety. Seventy-nine percent of those responding thought that parole officer safety training in Texas was inadequate. Their findings are presented in Table 2.

Recently, a Probation and Parole Security Committee in the Commonwealth of Virginia Department of Corrections, Division of Probation and Parole, did a survey of staff to determine "threats to safety and security and to identify precautions currently in place." Of the 620 questionnaires sent, 554 were returned, yielding a response rate of 89%. Staff were asked whether they felt their office environments were safe. and secure. Fifty-three percent felt safe and 47% did not. However, only 36% of urban staff reported feeling safe. Thirty-nine percent of survey respondents reported being verbally threatened by a client (about. half of these events took place in the field and half in the office). Seven percent reported being assaulted by a client with twice as many of these events occurring in the field as in the office setting. The "safety issues" most frequently mentioned by staff were: concern about safety in the client's home; concern about the health risks associated with taking urine screens: and secretarial staff concern about safety when working alone. Staff reported a heightened frustration when incidents are reported only

"Eisenberg, Michael, "Parole Officer Safety and Security Survey, Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles, January 1989, 2.

through the office grapevine?

Table 2

(Texas) Parole Officers' Concern for Personal Safety[16]

Concern for Personal Safety	Percent Responding (N=411) Very	Somewhat	Total
"Off-Duty"	24%	44%	68%
Making Home Visits	49%	42%	91%
Making Field Contacts	33%	48%	81%
Concern for Family Safety	37%	40%	77%

Parole Officers' Feelings of Safety

Feeling of Safety at	Percent Responding Unsafe	Very Unsafe	Total
Local field office	19%	2%	21%
Office, non-working hours	33%	16%	49%
Local jail	6%	1%	7%
Revocation hearing	7%	1%	8%

Perceived Personal Safety of Officers

Work as Parole Officer has:	Percent Responding
Become more dangerous	77%
Stayed about the same	22%
Become less dangerous	1%

During 1988, a safety committee (appointed by the New York State Director of Probation and Correctional Alternatives) developed and distributed a survey dealing with safety issues to all probation departments and state-funded alternatives to incarceration programs in New York. Of the 4,000 questionnaires sent out, 2,172 were returned for a return rate of 54%. Fifty-five percent of those returning questionnaires indicated that they had experienced at least one "threatening incident" during the five year period, 1984-88. Thirty-two percent of the respondents indicated some kind of victimization during the past 12 months. Table 3 reports the percentage of respondents reporting various types of victimizations during the past five years.

"Division of Adult Community Corrections,"Safety & Security," A Report of the Ad Hoc Probation and Parole Security Committee, Virginia Department of Corrections, December 1988.

[16]Eisenberg, Michael, ibid., 5.

Table 3

Percentage (New York) Respondents Reporting Incidents" Between 1984 and 1988

	Any Incident	No Incident
Harassment	32.6%	67.4%
Coercion	3.6%	96.3%
Bribery	5.3%	94.7%
Intimidation	31.7%	68.3%
Physical Threat	21.2%	78.8%
Property Loss	11.5%	88.5%
Assault	2.1%	97.9%
Assault with Injury	1.2%	98.8%
All Incidents	54.7%	45.3%

When asked if they had ever perceived a risk to their safety on the job, 77% of the New York respondents indicated in the affirmative. Fifty-seven percent indicated that concerns over safety affected "... going into the field...," citing reasons such as increasing dangerousness of clients and neighborhood characteristics as contributing factors. Eighty-two percent of the officers believed that, with proper training, the probation officer should have the option of carrying firearms. Table 4 presents their representation of perceived risk in three contexts: the field, the office, and off duty. The New York study found that the nature of the officer's assignment is related to the risk that he or she will be the subject of an assaultive incident. Warrant processing staff were at highest risk (64.2%) as compared to intake staff, who reported the lowest incident rate (47.5%).[18]

[17]Ely, Richard E., "Report on the Safety Concerns of Probation and Alternatives to Incarceration Staff in New York State," Bureau of Policy, Planning and Information, New York Division of Probation and Correctional Alternatives, draft report, August 15, 1989, 2.

[18]Ely, Richard E., ibid., 17.

Table 4

Perceived Risk (New York)"

	In Field	In Office	Off Duty
Never	8.7%	18.1%	41.6%
Seldom	35.0%	47.3%	34.2%
Occasionally	46.2%	28.5%	20.0%
Frequently	7.0%	5.1%	2.7%
Always	3.0%	1.8%	1.4%

THE PENNSYLVANIA STUDY[20]

During 1988, Parsonage and Bushey conducted a study of the total Pennsylvania probation and parole workforce of 2,561. More than 72% (1,834) returned their questionnaires. Pennsylvania has an organizationally decentralized system. Table 5 portrays the agency distribution of the probation/parole workforce and the relative response to the survey.

Table 5

Agency Type, State Census, and Responding Pennsylvania Probation and Parole Personnel

	Census		Survey Respondents	
	Freq.	Pct.	Freq.	Pct.
County Juvenile Probation	833	33	592	32
County Adult Probation	1,038	40	792	43
County Juvenile/Adult Prob (combined)	172	7	131	7
State Board of Probation and Parole	528	20	317	17
Information Unavailable	0	0	2	<1
Totals	2,561	100%	1,832	100%

Pennsylvania workers were asked to report acts against them that they considered to be victimizations. An analysis of the information provided by the respondents was conducted in terms of nine practical research questions.

1. How extensive is the victimization of probation and parole workers in Pennsylvania?

[19]Ely, Richard E., ibid., 11.

[20]All of the information and Tables 5 to 15 included in this section, THE PENNSYLVANIA STUDY, come from Parsonage, William H. and W. Conway Bushey, op. cit.

Overall, 38% (700) of the respondents reported having been victimized at least ’once during their careers. Twenty-four percent (447) of the total sample reported at least one victimization against them during the past 12 months, as shown in Table 6.

Many workers have experienced multiple victimizations during their careers. Table 7 depicts reported career experience.

Table 6

Work Classification of Pennsylvania Respondents by Victimization Categories

Work Classification	Respondents		Victim During Career		Victim Past 12 mo.	
	Freq.	Pct.	Freq.	Pct.	Freq.	Pct.
Clerical/Staff	408	22	48	7	31	7
Prob/Par Off/Agt	1,083	59	461	66	349	78
Supervisors	207	11	98	14	36	8
Chief/Dep Chf	93	5	46	7	24	5
Dist Dir, Others	46	3	19	3	7	2
Column Totals	1,834	100%	700	100%	447	100%

Table 7
Times Physically Assaulted, Intimidated in Career*

Times Physically Assaulted	Cler/ Staff	P/P Agent	Super- visor	Chief Dp Ch	Other PBPP	Row Totals
One Time	9	94	17	4	4	128(18)
Two Times	0	56	18	5	4	83(12)
Three Time‘s	2	27	3	8	1	41(6)
Four Times	1	8	2	1	1	13 (2)
More Than 4 Times	2	40	14	10	2	68(10)
Never Assaulted	41	245	45	19	a	358 (52)
Base N	55	470	99	47	20	691(100%)
Intimidated						
One Time	13	69	13	1	3	99(14)
Two Times	7	79	22	3	1	112(16)
Three Times	12	75	9	7	4	107(15)
Four Times	3	38	9	5	3	58 (8)
More Than 4 Times	13	194	44	30	7	288(42)
Never Intimidated	7	14	2	1	2	26 (4)
Base N	55	470	99	47	20	691(100%)

*Reports of 700 Victim-Respondents by Current Work Classification

2. Do the kinds and rates of victimization vary according to the specific roles of workers?

As shown in Table 8, eight out of ten were probation officers or parole agents at the time of the most serious victimization. Workers occupying other roles do, however, experience appreciable levels of victimization. Their safety is also deserving of attention and assistance.

Table 8

Work Classification at Time of Most Serious Victimization

	Freq.	Pct.
Clerical/Staff	55	7.9
Prob/Par Off/Agt	562	80.3
Supervisor	31	4.4
Chief/Dep Chf	23	3.3
Other	26	3.7
Missing	3	4
Column Totals	700	loo.o%

3. What kinds of victimizations occur?

Forty-eight percent of worker-victims have been physically assaulted at least once during their career: 74% report at least one intimidation event (see Table 7). Workers were asked to identify the form(s) of victimization associated with the most serious incident experienced during their careers. Table 9 lists these incidents. For many respondents, the "most serious event" included multiple acts against them, thus, multiple responses are recorded.

Table 9

Form of Most Serious Victimization

	Freq.	Pct.
Threat of physical harm to worker	392	56%
Physical assault	245	35%
Intimidation of worker	199	28%
Psychological victimization	78	11%
Threat of physical harm to family members	67	10%
Threat of harm to worker's reputation	62	9%
Threat of harm to worker's property	46	7%
Harm to worker's property	43	6%
Intimidation of family	28	4%
Extortion of worker	2	<l%
Other (Base N=700)	**63**	**9%**

4. Does the experience of victimization vary by worker characteristics?

Of those experiencing physical assaults against them, workers providing direct supervision to clients (probation/parole officers) were at the highest risk. The rate of physical assaults against male officers/agents during the past 12 months is almost twice as high as for female officers/agents; over the entire career, the rate is three times as high for males. Male officers also experience higher rates of threats/intimidations, but the difference is not so dramatic. Overall, the victimization rate for white workers is higher than for non-whites (see Table 10).

Table 10

Probation/Parole Officer/Agent Only (N=1,083)

Officer/Agent Respondents	Assaulted in Career	Intimidated in Career
Males	27%	46%
Females	9%	34%
White	23%	44%
Non-white	12%	33%
Tenure in Field:		
Less than 5 yrs	11%	29%
5 - 9 yrs	25%	56%
10 or more yrs	31%	51%

Findings also indicate that while most officer/agents reported they were not carrying a gun at the time of the most serious event, those who were victims of physical assaults reported carrying guns 2-l/2 times more frequently than officers who were not victims. A majority of victims report having had unarmed self-defense training, and respondents holding second jobs were found to be at higher risk.

5. Who victimizes probation and parole workers?

The perpetrators are predominately male (84%), unemployed in 60% of the cases, and have less than a high school education (57%). Seventy-one percent of those who victimized workers were under probation or parole supervision at the time, and a slight majority of that group (53%) were under some other officer's direct supervision. Table 11 portrays reported perpetrators in the most serious victimization incidents.

Interestingly, in 46% of the most serious incidents reported by Pennsylvania respondents, the offenders had been known to have

assaulted others in the past (see Table 12).

Table 11

Perpetrator in Most Serious Incident

	Freq.	Pct.
Client	498	71.1%
Client's Family Member	72	10.3%
Client's Friend	26	3.7%
Police Personnel	2	.3%
Court Personnel	5	.7%
Professional Personnel	2	.3%
Bystander	21	3.0%
Animal	10	1.4%
Other	45	6.4%
Not reported	15	2.1%

Table 12

Whether Offender in Most Serious Incident Ever Assaulted Anyone Before

Previous Assaults on	Freq.	Pct.	
Probation/parole officer	27	4%	
Corrections officer	23	3%	
Police officer	77	11%	
Treatment agency worker	30	4%	
Spouse of offender	62	9%	
Other family member of offender	115	16%	
Another citizen	204	29%	
No known prior assaults	18	3%	54%
Unknown	360	51%	
Base N	700		

Note: Multiple responses to survey item were solicited.

6. In what contexts do victimization events occur?

Eighty-five percent of the time, victimizations occurred during the normal 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. workday. In half the cases, events took place either in the agency office or the client's home. The vast majority of incidents took place in a context other than on an expected or announced visit (see Table 13).

Findings indicated that 21% of the victimizations took place incidental to an arrest of a probationer or parolee. In the majority of physical assault cases, the perpetrators used body

parts (hit, kicked, pushed). Firearms or knives were used by offenders in 6% and 7% of the cases respectively.

Table 13

Where Most Serious Incident Took Place

Place of Incident	Freq.	Pct.
Over phone/by mail	64	9%
Agency office	151	22%
In client's home/someone else's home	164	24%
Prison/jail	54	8%
Courtroom	32	5%
On the street	77	11%
Police station	9	1%
Human service agency	14	2%
Public place	18	3%
Other, miscellaneous	104	15%
Column Totals	687	100%

7. How do workers deal with these events?

Most commonly, workers tried to "talk their way out" of the situation. Attempts to deal with victimization events via direct physical methods were minimal (see Table 14).

Table 14

Worker Reaction to Offender in Most Serious Incident

Worker Reaction	Freq.	Pct.
Struck back physically	110	16%
Threatened to strike back physically	38	5%
Drew or displayed a gun	11	2%
Used a gun	2	<l%
Simulated a gun	2	<l%
Threatened to use a gun	2	<l%
Threatened to use impact weapon	1	<l%
Used an impact weapon	1	<l%
Displayed a badge or I.D.	21	3%
Used verbal threat	125	18%
Said nothing	86	12%
Retreated	83	12%
Called out for help	71	10%
Attempted to talk to offender	277	40%
Took no action	55	8%
Other action, miscellaneous	210	30%
Base N	577	

Note: Multiple responses to the survey item were solicited.

Three out of four respondents reported the abusive event to their agency. Importantly, 14% of the workers did not talk with anyone about their victimizations.

8. What are the aftermaths of victimization?

While 35% of the most serious incidents reported were physical assaults (see Table 9), medical treatment was required in only 9% of the cases. Thirty-eight percent of all worker-victims reported being "shaken up" emotionally as a consequence of the incident, and 11% said they experienced stomach ache, headache, or similar problems.

As shown in Table 15, 18% of the workers experienced fear on the job as an aftermath of the most serious incidents reported. Other psychological consequences included lack of self-confidence (6%), reduced sense of trust of clients (29%), reduced sensitivity to clients(l7%), disruption of personal life (9%), and disruption of family life (5%).

Table 15

Psychological Impacts As Result of Most Serious Incident

Impact	Freq.	Pct.
Fear on the job	124	18%
Lack of self-confidence	45	6%
Reduced sense of trust of clients	202	29%
Reduced sensitivity toward clients	116	17%
Disruption of personal life	60	9%
Disruption of family life	38	5%
Enhanced sense of self-confidence	53	8%
No psychological impact	265	38%
Base N	700	

Significantly, 13% of all those reporting victimizing incidents thought about quitting the job, and 13% reported avoidance of contact with threatening clients as an aftermath. One out of three worker-victims indicated that the episode has had negative consequences for them, and negative aftermaths for their families in 23% of the cases. It should be noted that, in 8% of the cases, workers reported an enhanced sense of self-confidence as an outcome, revealing that a victimization event might not always be totally negative.

9. How much victimization of workers can be prevented?

In the workers' judgement, victimization events could have been avoided 25% of the time, and the agency could have done something to prevent them in 22% of the cases. Worker-victims

indicated in 55% of the cases their agencies could have better prepared them to cope with these events.

SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY AND PRACTICE

While the body of research concerning hazardous incidents and victimization of probation and parole workers is "thin," it is possible, from what is known, to draw some conclusions. The research reported in this monograph suggests that the problem is both extensive and pervasive. Across studies, the career rates of experiencing hazardous incidents range from 38% to 50% (see Table 16). When only probation/parole workers with direct responsibility for supervision of clients in the field are considered, the victimization rate is significantly higher. For example, an examination of the work classification of Pennsylvania respondents at the time of the most serious victimization revealed that 81% were probation/parole officers.[21] Workers occupying other roles also experience appreciable levels of victimization in the line of duty.

Table 16

Percentage Reporting Hazardous Incidents

Study	In Career	Past Year
Texas Corr Assoc (1987)	50%	
Texas Bd Pardons & Paroles	41% or more	
Virginia Div Prob & Par	39%	
New York State Prob	55%	32%
PA Statewide Survey (1988)	38%	24%

The range of offensive events, as reflected in all of the studies, is broad and includes acts of physical assault, threats of harm to workers and their families, property damage, intimidation, and coercion. The frequency of threats and intimidation attempt; against workers is dramatically higher than acts of physical assault (see Tables 1, 3, 7, and 9).

As revealed in the Pennsylvania study, threatening events and victimization of workers occur in the context of normal, rather than extraordinary, work circumstances. Most commonly, incidents take place in situations where probation/parole workers have initiated the contact and potentially have some control (see Table 13).

Taken together, when me examines the contexts in which reported hazardous incidents occur, the elements of surprise, lack

[21] "Parsonage, William H. and W. Conway Bushey, ibid.

of preparation, and predictability for one or more of the participants involved in the transaction appear to be involved While certain characteristics of worker-victims and offender-victimizers can be identified, they only indirectly explain the phenomenon.

The impacts and consequences of hazardous incidents and actual victimizations on workers manifest themselves in many significant ways--physical trauma; fear on the job; avoidance of contact with threatening clients; and reduced self-confidence, trust, and sensitivity to clients (see Tables 2 and 15).

Information generated by the Pennsylvania research suggests that a significant amount of worker-victimization can be prevented. It must be noted, however, that total prevention is not realistic. The goal should be to prevent what we can and prepare workers to deal effectively with the events which might occur.

In general, information emanating from the studies reported above, a review of agency incidence reports, and the author's personal conversations with people in the field strongly suggest that the verbal and physical abuse of probation and parole workers is more widespread than is generally known and that a significant number of incidents are not being reported. Further, the impact of such events (e.g., fear, stress, negative attitudes towards clients) on workers and their agencies, while hidden, are likely to be extensive. As the criminal justice client population increases, exacerbating the prison overcrowding problem, greater numbers of offenders in need of intensive care will likely be diverted or released to community supervision.

The prospects for increased exposure of probation/parole workers to hazardous situations in the line of duty are clear. Thus, there is a need to develop comprehensive information from which sound policy decisions and helpful agency interventions can be designed and implemented. It must be regarded as a serious matter when probation/parole workers--traditionally the most liberal and help-oriented group in the justice system--argue for stronger measures related to worksite safety.

Section 3

PROPOSALS AND EFFORTS IN THE ENHANCEMENT OF WORKER SAFETY

As was indicated at the beginning of this monograph, it is only recently that the problem of worker safety in probation and parole has begun to receive serious attention. Where action has been taken, it has often been limited and piecemeal. This fact becomes apparent when agency administrators are asked to describe worker safety efforts that are already in place. Most commonly, activities identified as safety-oriented are incidental components of other programs.

Also apparent is that administrators and workers are grappling with the question of "what to do." There is considerable uncertainty as to the proper course of action. Thus, efforts to prevent hazardous incidents, reduce actual victimization of workers, and deal with the aftermaths of events, should they occur, are for the most part at the proposal stage. The purpose of this section is to describe emerging proposals for the enhancement of worker safety and the implementation efforts currently under way.

WHAT WORKERS SUGGEST BE DONE TO ENHANCE SAFETY

Workers who supervise probationers and parolees in the field are concerned about personal safety in the line of duty. And, they want something to be done about it. While proposals emanating from the field should not be adopted simply because workers have suggested them, they are most certainly deserving of consideration.

> "In Beaumont, Texas, officers are refusing to make all but a few home visits until they determine whether Thursday's meeting produces new safeguards. Elsewhere there are threats to stop home visits unless new steps are taken by the parole board to increase officers' safety."[22]

One of the focuses of the research efforts, which was reported in Section 2, was the solicitation of recommendations concerning the prevention of hazardous incidents and the remediation of worker victimization. Worker views provide a useful perspective in considering the development of policy and procedure in this regard and should be noted when an agency grapples with this issue.

In the Pennsylvania study, for example, workers reporting offenses against them were asked to identify the kinds of things that their agencies could have done (might do) to prevent or

[22]Markely, Greg and Jerome Davidson, "Firearms/Power of Arrest for Parole Officers," Report, Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles, June 20, 1988, 1.

remediate victimizations. Figure 2 represents commonly mentioned proposals. Responses of these workers point to areas of policy and practice deserving of attention.

Figure 2

Pennsylvania Respondents' Suggestions to Prevent Hazardous Incidents"

- Arrange for backup in potentially violent situations.
- Provide training to help staff identify and address potential problem areas.
- Provide training in passive restraint and self-defense.
- Provide non-lethal weapons training.
- Provide firearms and firearms training to those who must make arrests.
- Install physical barriers to prevent unauthorized people from entering non-public office areas.
- Improve courthouse security.
- Provide better and more complete training in arrest procedures.
- Enact stronger penalties for those who assault officers.
- Provide appropriate vehicles for transporting prisoners.
- Arrange for assistance of police- in high-risk situations.
- Improve communication systems: car radio or phone link-ups to home base and police support; portable radio/ walkie-talkie for officers in the field.
- Take disciplinary action against agents who will not assist fellow agents.

In the Texas survey, officers were asked their opinions of "how useful" each of 22 recommendations would be for improving their own personal safety (see Table 17). The highest ranking recommendation was "provide parole officers with mugshots taken of the releasee at the time of release from the Texas Department of Corrections." The next highest ranked item was the recommendation that special units of trained parole officers be established who have the authority to carry weapons and make arrests. Other recommendations with high positive percentages included two-way radios in parole officer cars, training in physical self-defense, "buddy systems" for home visits, "panic button" in field offices, and identifying and informing parole officers of high-risk areas in the region.

New York State adult probation workers were asked to indicate things that could be dune to enhance safety in the performance of their duties. Figure 3 portrays worker recommendations.

[23]Parsonage, William and W. Conway Bushey, op. cit.

Table 17

Texas Respondents' View of Value of Safety Policies[24]

Recommendation	Percent Responding		
	Very Useful	Useful	Total
"Mugshots" of releasee for officers	61	26	87
"Panic Button" in field offices	39	38	77
"Buddy System" for home visits	38	38	76
Training in physical self defense	40	34	74
Two-way radios in officers' cars	40	30	70
Hand-held radios	35	34	69
Identify high-risk areas	38	31	69
Secure clerical offices	36	32	68
Security officers for offices	24	34	68
Peace officers at revocation hearing	27	35	62
Two-way radios check-in/out	30	30	60
Special parole unit w/arrest authority	44	18	59
Peace Officer at summons hearing	24	35	59
Verbal judo	20	37	57
Distress signal device	24	31	55
Provide firearms	34	21	55
Provide firearms at officer discretion	32	23	55
Specialized caseloads	20	33	53
Provide secure jail areas	23	30	53
Require P.O. to be certified as peace officers	33	19	52
Non-lethal chemical agents	18	21	39
Daily home visit schedule for supervisor	11	25	36

Figure 3

New York Worker Safety Enhancement Suggestions[25]

The option to carry firearms	Team home visits
Radios in cars	Hand carried two-way radios
Self-defense training	Metal detectors in offices
Protective barriers in offices	Office security personnel

In the Virginia survey, recommended worker safety precautions were graded as mandatory, essential, and important based on the level of support (see Figure 4).

[24]Eisenberg, Michael, op. cit.

[25]Ely, Richard, op. cit.

Figure 4

Virginia Worker Safety Recommendations[26]

Mandatory Recommendations

- Communication equipment should be provided in state vehicles.
- The Department of Corrections should develop training in the DOC regions and the private sector rather than at the academy.
- Offices without a system to prevent clients from entering the staff area without permission should be studied to determine cost-effective ways to prevent or limit access.
- Offices should have an alarm system or "panic button" to summon assistance.

Essential Recommendations

- Implement training for all staff in dealing with:
  - -the difficult or hostile client
  - -the contagiously diseased client
  - -self-defense
  - -the hostage situation
  - -the substance abusive client
  - -the sex offender client.
- An office policy or plan should be in place for handling the aggressive or violent client and all staff should be familiar with the plan.
- An office policy or plan should be in place for dealing with hostage situations.
- A physical barrier should be between the reception and staff areas.

Important Recommendations

- A metal (weapons) detector should be installed in offices where they are not currently in place.
- The Department should consider developing policy authorizing staff to carry some form of self-protection.

Clearly, commonalities exist among the "recommendations" for enhancing safety offered by the workers of Pennsylvania, Texas, Virginia, and New York State. Workers are uniformly concerned about actions to: 1) improve training in dealing with difficult clients and situations; 2) provide for communications in the field; 3) provide for back-up assistance in potentially dangerous situations; 4) provide training and authorization in personal protection techniques and weapons; and 5) enhance office security through metal detectors, barriers, and other security measures. There is also considerable support for action intended to deter

[26]Virginia Division of Adult Community Corrections, op. cit.

aggression against workers by increasing penalties for such behavior, and the provision of special worker benefits programs related to the stress and hazards of their work.

These recommendations, coming from those who experience the realities of field work, are deserving of serious consideration by those responsible for dealing with worker safety.

WHAT'S GOING ON IN THE FIELD RELATIVE TO WORKER SAFETY?

Many of the "safety enhancement recommendations" made by respondents in Pennsylvania, Texas, Virginia, and New York have been implemented, in one fashion or another, some place in the United States. Programs illustrative of the "types" of activities or interventions suggested are described in this section. While it is not possible to include exhaustive information for each program, the agency name and address is provided to facilitate direct contact by interested individuals.

TRAINING TO DEAL WITH DANGEROUS SITUATIONS

Special Worker Safety Hazard Training

The Federal Judicial Training Center, with the assistance of a Staff Safety Curriculum Planning Committee, produced a "Participant Workbook" and supplementary video-tape that support a two-day course dealing with worker safety. Materials are related to safety issues in the environments within which workers function. The staff safety training goals around which materials are organized are: 1) analysis of prevention approaches in the common danger situations: 2) development of crisis management and control techniques; and 3) application of emergency responses when all else fails.

The workbook, and the agenda for implementing the training, take the participant through "situations" using various scenarios and checklists (e.g., office safety checklist, telephone bomb threat checklist, office security checklist). Tips on how to "case" various situations and enhance safety are provided. Advice is given about what one can do to enhance personal safety by "not looking like a victim." Stages of crises, and ways of identifying them, are described along with "styles" and "approaches" for handling them. Ways of minimizing or managing situations and escaping them with the least amount of "damage" are discussed. Attention is also given to preparation for potential emergency situations. These materials are thought to be broadly adaptable.

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[27]"Staff Safety: Workbook for Participants," Division of Continuing Education and Training, Washington, DC, Federal Judicial Training Center, 1988.

Contact: David Leathery, Federal Judicial Training Center
Dolley Madison House, 1520 H Street, N.W.,
Washington, DC 20005 (202)633-6024

Street Survival Training

The New York State Division of Parole and John Jay College of Criminal Justice have developed a 40-hour "Street Survival" training program for parole officers. Recognizing that parole officers perform the most complex of human service jobs, with the most dangerous clients, in the most inhospitable of environments, the Division of Parole has developed this extensive training program aimed at the enhancement of staff protection and safety. Program content includes preplanning for arrest, handcuffing, speedcuffing, confrontations, distraction and stunning theory, office arrests, holster safety, residence arrests and searches, domestic violence intervention, prisoner search and transportation, stress management, street awareness, and danger signs. A manual with lesson plans and instructional materials is available.[28]

Contact: Paulette T. Strong, Director, Staff Development,
New York Division of Parole, 97 Central Avenue,
Albany, NY 12206 (518)473-9666

Arrest Training

The Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole's policies and procedures require that field supervision staff "...receive formal training in the correct and safe procedures to be followed in effecting an arrest and transporting prisoners." Of note are the procedural requirements focusing on worker safety; for example:

> Planned Arrests: Whenever a parole agent believes there is a necessity to arrest a client, a conference should be held with his/her supervisor. The conference should include a review of the client's history (number of previous arrests, types of crimes committed, history of assaultive behavior, health of the client, attitude toward supervision) and other available information, and a decision shall be made regarding the need for assistance from other law enforcement personnel in making the arrest. When a decision is made to arrest a client, two parole agents are required to effect the arrest, as

[28]"Street Survival for Parole Officers," New York Division of Parole and John Jay College of Criminal Justice, New York, NY, undated.

well as using other law enforcement personnel when necessary.

The Board provides all agents with eight hours of "Basic Arrest and Transportation of Prisoners" training. A course in "Advanced Arrest Strategies" is also provided. This course explores strategies for high-risk confrontations beyond those covered in the basic course. Areas covered are building and suspect approaches; foot pursuits; room searches; body searches; firearms issues; speed handcuffing; disabilities incident to arrest; and mental, emotional, and physical preparation for stressful situations.

Contact: James O. Smith, Director of Training, Pennsylvania Board of Probation & Parole, P.O. Box 1661 Harrisburg, PA 17105 (717)783-7045

Training to "Read" Dangerous Situations

A number of programs have been developed to train workers in "reading" situations. For example, the Federal Judicial Staff Safety program includes training materials that assist workers in identifying "Stages of a Crisis" and responding to them appropriately. Elements of the Center's training program for "Crisis Management and Control" focus on stages of a crisis: identification of the worker's style in handling a crisis; a conflict management styles comparison chart; and exercises to facilitate instruction in maximizing workers' effectiveness in dealing with crisis situations.[30]

Contact: David Leathery, Federal Judicial Training Center, Dolley Madison House, 1520 H Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20005 (202)633-6024 *

COMMUNICATIONS IN THE FIELD

Hand-Held Radios

In the interest of improved protection of both the community and the staff, the Suffolk County New York Probation Department

[29]"Arresting Clients for Violation of Probation and Parole," Policy 0005E,29, Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole, Harrisburg, PA, May 18, 1988.

[30]Division of Continuing Education and Training, Federal Judicial Training Center, op. cit.

provides officers who work in the community with portable police radios. The radios are to be used to request assistance from another law enforcement agency in case of an emergency where there is either the threat of physical violence or actual physical violence being perpetrated against that probation officer or another individual; to provide communication between department personnel actively participating in a warrant execution or other arrest matter; to properly notify the sheriff's communication unit of a transportation matter where a prisoner is in custody; and to provide a method of 'paging' field staff by supervisory personnel. The Department provides training to staff in the use of radios.[31]

Contact: William P. Benjamin, Director of Probation, Suffolk County Probation, P.O. Box 188, Yaphank, NY 11980 (516)924-4300

The Lehigh County (Pennsylvania) Probation Department currently provides every officer with a two-way radio equipped with a "panic button" for emergency assistance.

Automobile Radio-Telephones

Some jurisdictions provide officers with agency-owned vehicles with two-way radios or radio-telephones. Very often, arrangements are made with the local emergency radio system (fire and police) to operate on that frequency and access services of attending dispatchers.

Mandatory Itineraries and Check-In Programs

Some agencies, in an attempt to enhance the safety of workers, have established policies requiring the filing of field itineraries and mandatory check-in procedures. The intent is that, if a worker fails to call the office on schedule, his/her supervisor is alerted and able to initiate appropriate action.

BACKUP ARRANGEMENTS

Team Supervision and Other Arrangements

In many jurisdictions, team supervision concepts have been employed to enhance both the effectiveness and the safety of probation and parole officers in serving their total caseload. The notion is that the process of joint planning, decision-making, and collaboration in the implementation of actions provides mutual

[31]"Protocol for Issuance and Use of Portable police Radios,:: Suffolk County, New York, Adult Probation Department, Yaphank, NY, 1989.

support and enhanced performance. Rather than representing situational collaboration, team arrangements provide a kind of ongoing "backup."

In December 1988, the New York Division of Parole did a nationwide survey to learn about the use of team and/or group supervision programs by other jurisdictions. Of the 29 states contacted, 10 (Florida, Georgia, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Ohio Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Utah, Wisconsin, and Wyoming) indicate; the use of some type of team or group process and provided descriptive materials. It was found that "..the majority of jurisdictions implementing team supervision use two agents." In general, probation officers have a series of cases for which they are responsible, or have the "lead," but field work is usually done in pairs. While the communities have become more dangerous with more drug activity and officers voice a desire to work in teams to enhance. safety, the majority of the programs were initiated to relieve prison overcrowding by providing stricter supervision to offenders who would not otherwise be released. The majority of the programs report good experiences and find the programs worthwhile.[32]

Restriction of Community Supervision Practices

Some agencies have identified particularly dangerous sections of the cities within their jurisdictions and made them off-limits for community contacts except under specified circumstances and conditions. Another way to deal with the problem is to create special units to provide community supervision in high-risk areas. The New York City Department of Probation has established a special unit (the Community Contact Unit) of armed, police-trained probation officers who assist drug probation officers and monitor the activities of the drug-abusing probationers in the community. This is an example of transferring certain supervisory responsibilities to specially trained personnel?

Contact: Kevin T. Smyley, Commissioner, The City of New York Department of Probation, 115 Leonard Street New York, NY 10013 (212)513-7600

[32]"Team Supervision Survey Results," Office of Policy Analysis and Information, New York State Division of Parole, Albany, NY, January 1989.

[33]Smyley, Kevin T., "New Approaches to Drug Offenders: New York Implements Stricter Supervision," Corrections Today, June 1989, 28-32.

PERSONAL PROTECTION PROGRAMS

In a number of jurisdictions, various types of instructional programs have been instituted and equipment authorized for the purpose of enhancing workers' personal protection capabilities. Where the use of personal protection methods has the potential for causing injury, it is particularly important that appropriate selection, training, and supervision procedures be followed. It should be noted that the inappropriate use of force by a worker may have implications of liability for his/her superiors.

> Vicarious Liability: Vicarious liability is that liability attached to an individual who has the authority to direct the actions of another. An administrator can be held liable for the acts of his/her subordinates if the subordinate wrongly injures a third party and the injury was approximately caused by the administrator's negligence in:
>
> a. appointment
> b. retention
> c. assignment
> d. entrustment
> e. failure to supervise
> f. failure to train
> g. failure to direct?

Use of Force Training Model

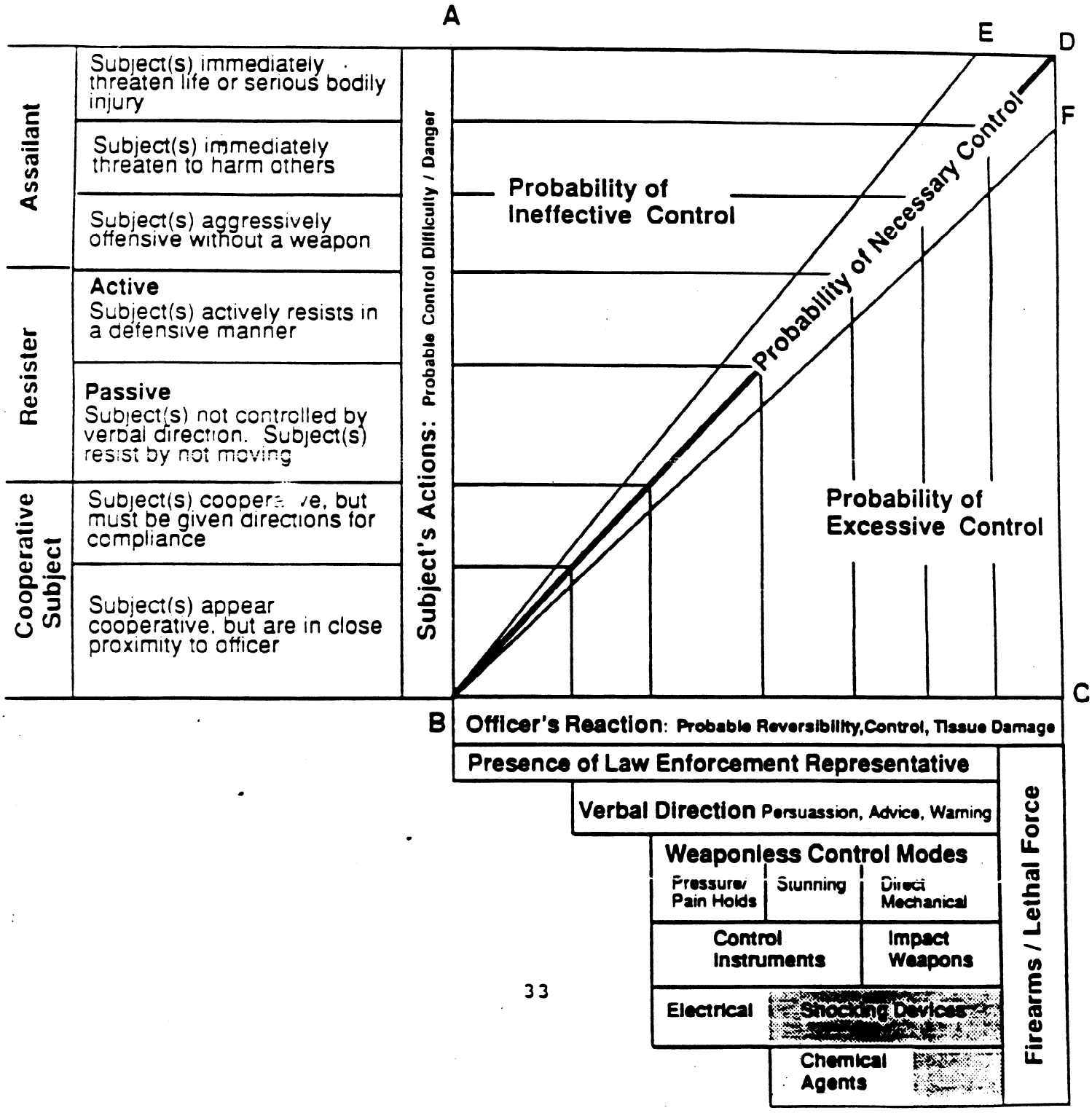
The Lehigh County (Pennsylvania) Adult Probation Department uses the "Use of Force Paradigm" developed by John C. Desmedt, founder of Police S.A.F.E.T.Y. Systems (see Figure 5).

> In using the model, the subject's level of action is determined first from the vertical scale since it is his action that determines the amount of force used by a law enforcement officer. This vertical continuum is sectioned to indicate degrees of threat/resistance..
>
> The horizontal axis represents the use of force by a law enforcement officer. This line, BC, is sectioned to indicate levels of control...
>
> The graph is traversed by three lines. Line BD represents the ideal use of force. Note that it exactly bisects the chart at a 45 degree angle...
>
> Lines BE and BF create a discretionary gray area within which the officer's actions are acceptable. Area ABE

[34]Firearms Training Program for United States Probation Officers and United States Pretrial Services Officers, Federal Judicial Training Center, Washington, DC, 29.

Figure 5

Use of Force Model



indicates potential ineffective control or response, and area CBF represents potential excessive control or response,

To find proper use of force:

1. Determine the position of threat/resistance on the vertical axis AB.

2. At that level, follow the horizontal line to the center line BD.

3. From the point where line BD is intersacted follow a line straight down to the horizontal axis BC. The point on the axis is the proper use of force.[35]

Police Safety Systems trains and certifies persons as instructors for the Use bf Force Model.

Contact: R. Scott Schlechter, Defensive Tactics & Firearms Instructor, Lehigh County Adult Probation, 455 Hamilton Street, Allentown, PA 18105 (2l5)820-3406

John C. Desmedt, and James F. Marsh, The Police S.A.F.E.T.Y. System, Inc., P.O. Box 684 Sterling, VA 22170 (703) 444-4083

Authorization of Officers to Carry Firearms

A question which is often asked, but so far as is known, has not been answered satisfactorily, is, "Do firearms increase or decrease probation/parole staff safety?" Several articles have been written in the past ten years that identify and discuss some of the issues relative to the "gun debate?

[35]Desmedt, John C., "Use of Force Paradigm for Law Enforcement," Journal of Police Science and Administration, Vol. 12, No. 2, 1984.

[36]For a review of the issues concerning the carrying of firearms by probation and parole personnel, see Lozito and Zinsmeyer, "The Gun Debate," Texas Journal of Corrections, Vol. 14, No. 6, 1988; Jones and Robinson, "Keeping the Piece," Corrections Today, February 1989; Keve, "No Farewell to Arms," Crime and Delinquency October 1979; and Sigler, "Role Conflict for Adult Probation and Parole Officers," Journal of Criminal Justice, Vol. 16, 1988.

During the past few years, an increasing number of agencies have authorized the carrying of firearms under various circumstances. For example, in Pennsylvania the carrying of firearms by adult probation officers is authorized in 34 of the 67 counties. The Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole likewise authorizes agency-issued firearms to agents who qualify.

A nationwide survey of state parole agencies was conducted by the Interstate Compact Unit of the Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles during June 1988 regarding the authorized carrying of firearms by parole officers. It was found that:

21 states (42%) do not authorize carrying of firearms.

29 states (58%) authorize carrying of firearms as follows:
- 9 states require parole officers to carry firearms;
- 15 states allow officers the option to carry firearms;
- 5 states authorize firearms for special units only.

In most jurisdictions that authorize the carrying of firearms, mandatory training is required. The Texas survey revealed that training ranged from 1 to 320 hours. In most cases, 40 hours of training was required. Additionally, agencies authorizing the carrying of weapons commonly have extensive written policies. dealing with 1) who may carry, 2) the authorization and training necessary, 3) circumstances under which unholstering or using the weapon is authorized, and 4) reporting requirements when weapons are drawn or fired?'

The Peoria County (Illinois) Adult Probation Department Firearm Policy is provided as illustrative.

> Purpose
> The following policy delineates the authorized procedures regarding use of firearms and impact weapons in the department.
>
> Application
> This policy applies only to members of the Peoria County Adult Probation Department who are authorized to use firearms and/or impact weapons in connection with their duties or employment.

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[37]Markley, Greg and Jerome Davidson, "Firearms/Power of Arrest for Parole Officers," Survey Report, Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles, June 20, 1988.

Policy

All officers authorized to carry firearms must complete the mandatory firearms training and requalify semi-annually with their weapons.

All firearms will be furnished at the Officer's expense:

Authorized Officers who have completed mandatory training may carry a double action .38 caliber revolver or a 9 millimeter weapon. Officers electing to carry a revolver must carry a Smith & Wesson, Colt, or Ruger, double action revolver with a two to four inch barrel capable of firing .38 special ammunition. Officers carrying a 9 millimeter must carry a Smith & Wesson, Sig, or Beretta. Authorized Officers carrying the 9 millimeter weapons will only use ammunition issued by the Peoria County Sheriff's Department.

Ammunition will be furnished by the Peoria County Sheriff's Department. Only Remington-Peters, .38SPL.+P factory ammunition may be used.

All weapons will be carried fully loaded at all times while on duty with the approved ammunition.

Authorized Officers will not display their weapons or holster in the office or in the field. Any authorized Officer carrying a weapon or holster will be required to conceal the weapon or holster with an outer garment. Weapons or holsters worn in the Probation Office will be placed in the locked gun case in the Intensive Probation Supervision office. Weapons are prohibited to be carried in an off-duty status.

Firearms are to be used for the protection of the Officer or the public only and will not be used to effect a forcible arrest. An Officer is justified in shooting a person only under the following conditions:

If the Officer has clear and sufficient reason to believe that the Officer is about to physically receive great bodily harm or have his [her] life terminated.

If the Officer has clear and sufficient reason to believe that the person the Officer is attempting to shoot poses an immediate and proximate danger of great bodily harm or immediate and proximate danger to the life of the Officer or another person.

The firing of warning shots is prohibited.

Firing a weapon from, or at a moving vehicle, except in defense of the Officer's life or the life of another, is prohibited.

Firing a Weapon at a fleeing person when there is proximate danger of hitting an innocent bystander is prohibited.

Firearms are to be used as a last resort to protect the Officer or another person.

Impact weapons may be used only by Officers authorized in writing. Impact weapons are to be used only for the protection of the Probation Officer. Only those impact weapons provided by the Probation Department are authorized for use.

Discipline

Unauthorized use of weapons will result in the Officer being the subject of discipline if the use of weapons involved:

Violation of the firearms and impact weapons policy.

Poor judgement involving reckless disregard of public safety.

Reactions to a fear-producing situation in which the Officer's response amounts to panic.

Accidental discharge of a weapon, through carelessness or unprofessional conduct.

In every instance involving the discharge of a firearm by an Officer of this department, except for recreation, training, or the use of an impact weapon in the performance of his/her duties, an official report will be filed by the Officer directly to his[/her] immediate supervisor. The report must be made and filed with the Officer's immediate supervisor prior to the termination of the working day on the day the weapon was discharged.

If any violation of this policy regarding use of firearms or impact weapons is determined, disciplinary action shall be initiated. The discipline will be commensurate with the seriousness of the situation. When the facts immediately available clearly indicate that the Officer is guilty of violating the procedures outlined in this policy, the Officer will be suspended pending a complete and thorough investigation of the case. The suspension may be with or without pay at the Chief Probation Officer's discretion.

When the facts immediately available da not support willful violation of the procedures outlined in this policy, the Officer will not be suspended but an investigation will be made of the case.

violations of the department's policy regarding use of weapons will not be tolerated. (10/15/87)[38]

Contact: Melvin A. Haynes, Chief Probation Officer, Peoria County Adult Probation, 228 Northeast Jefferson, Peoria, IL 61603 (309) 672-6018

Unarmed Defense Training

A common component of pre-service and in-service training programs for probation and parole workers is unarmed self-defensive tactics. The Pueblo Community College's Criminal Justice Academy offers training in "Defensive Tactics for Probation Officers." The course curriculum includes the following:

- Mental preparation for a defensive tactic. [Learning to make all tactics and techniques instinctive moves rather than thought-through processes].
- Establishing a positive mental attitude for defensive tactics. [Training your will-to-survive].
- Non-violent aggression management. [How to de-escalate a potentially violent situation by means of non-violent aggression management techniques].
- Selection of force. [Guidelines for selecting proper force.]
- Warning signs of impending aggression/violence. [Learning to recognize the psychological and/or physical signs in a person's preparation to attack].
- Defense considerations in the office setting. [Understanding the potential dangers in your office and how to decrease your vulnerability].
- Tactics for the female officer. [Special defense considerations for the female officer].

[38]"Firearms Policy," Peoria County, Illinois, Adult Probation Department, Peoria, IL, October 15, 1987.

- Home visits. [Defensive considerations involved in home visits, including intervening in domestic disputes, dog attacks, and much more].
- Handling an emotionally disturbed person. [Understanding the difference between an emotionally disturbed and an emotionally upset person and responding to them accordingly].
- Officer hostage situations. [Understanding the dynamics of a hostage situation to improve chances of survival].
- Edged weapons tactics. [Establishing a safe strategy for recognizing and dealing with knife attacks].
- Firearm considerations. [Practical techniques for defense against an armed assailant].
- Civil suits. [Guidelines for protecting one's self from a potential civil suit].
- Keychain stick (KCS). [Use of the keychain stick as a controlling tool, including rules governing its use as an impact weapon].

Contact: Criminal Justice Academy, Pueblo Community College, 2151 E. Highway 50, Canon City, CO 81212

Verbal Judo

The State of Connecticut offers a Safety and Defensive Tactics Course, which is designed to teach juvenile probation officers to manage verbally and physically aggressive clients. Officers are trained, among other things, to identify and prevent violent outbursts by reducing tension through verbal interaction.

Contact: James M. Kearney, Training Officer, Officer Safety Programs, Superior Court, 920 Broad Street, P.O. Box F, Station A, Hartford, CT 06106 (203) 566-8290

[39]"Probation Defensive Tactics Training: A New Perspective," Pueblo Community College Training Brochure, Canon City, CO, undated.

Body Armor

The Suffolk County (New York) Probation Department has issued body armor to all of its field staff requesting it. Those issued soft body armor are expected to wear it under exterior clothing (not as an outer garment) during the work day, both in the field and in the office.[40]

Contact: William P. Benjamin, Director of Probation, Suffolk County Probation, P.O. Box 188, Yaphank, NY 11980 (516)924-4300

The Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole has recently provided body armor to agents working in the Intensive Drug Units in Philadelphia and Pittsburgh. Also available in the Board's other district offices, equipment is provided to protect workers from gunshot and other wounds. This type of protection is most commonly intended for use in potentially dangerous situations--arrests of probationers and parolees.

Contact: Dan Solla, Deputy District Director, Pennsylvania Board of Probation an Parole, 1400 Spring Garden Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103 (215)560-2210

Restraining Systems

In an attempt to prevent dangerous situations from occurring during the transport of probationers and parolees, some agencies have equipped agency vehicles with security screens and other devices to prevent escape and protect officers. The use of handcuffs, security belts, ankle cuffs, and other devices is common in the transportation of clients who have been taken into custody.

OFFICE SECURITY SYSTEMS AND PROGRAMS

Metal Detectors and Other Office Safety Equipment[1]

In a survey conducted by the Virginia Division of Probation and Parole, staff recommended the installation of metal detectors and other barriers to unauthorized admission to agency offices. In the process of implementing this and other recommendations, the Virginia Department of Corrections has requested resources from the

[40]"Care and Responsibility for Soft Body Armor," Memorandum, Suffolk County, New York, Adult Probation Department, Yaphank, NY, February 14, 1989.

General Assembly to purchase portable, hand-held metal detectors.[41]

Security Guards at Agency Offices

Some agencies have security guards (often deputy sheriffs) in selected offices. For example, security guards are posted in facilities of the District of Columbia Board of Parole during all office hours, with the responsibility for screening all visitors, keeping a log for visitors and clients, and managing any conflicts that arise between clients and staff. This arrangement was established following several threatening incidents and is seen as a means to control the potential for attacks and improve the comfort of employees.

Panic Buttons and Other Emergency Alarm Systems

Concern for the safety of workers in the office environment has stimulated the development of a number of "emergency alarm" systems. Some agencies have installed silent alarms that can be used to call for assistance. Other agencies have "911 systems" and agreements with police and fire departments that a 911 call from the probation/parole office will result in assistance within a certain response period.

Practical constraints such as inadequate funds, or the lack. of proximity to a law enforcement agency, require the development of other concepts in many offices. Trainers with the Ohio Adult Parole Authority have helped those responsible for office safety establish programs and procedures to assist workers in the de-escalation of dangerous situations. For example, when a potentially dangerous situation occurs, workers are instructed to call out a code (i.e., "I need to talk to John Doe") to the secretary who knows to summon assistance. The responding officers are also trained to make their approach in a way that has some prospect of de-escalating or defusing the situation (i.e., the responding officer enters the office and asks his colleague to "come immediately; I need to see you right now!"). Such an approach often has the potential to interrupt the process quite effectively. Practical approaches should be developed that fit the resources, circumstances, and environment of agency offices?

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[41]Walter M. Pulliam, Jr., Manager for Probation and Parole Support Services, Box 26963, Richmond, VA, telephone interview, August 22, 1989.

[42]Letter from Gladys W. Mack, Chairperson, District of Columbia Board of Parole, August 30, 1989.

[43]R. Kent Slough, Supervisor-Trainer, Adult Parole Authority, Lebanon, Ohio, telephone conference, August 22, 1989.

Contact: R. Kent Slough, Supervisor-Trainer, and Howard Wilson, Parole Officer-Trainer, Adult Parole Authority, 500 Justice Drive, Lebanon, OH 45036 (512)932-4040.

DETERRENCE EFFORTS

Increasing Penalties for Assaults on Officers

One of the approaches being taken in an attempt to deter assaults against probation and parole workers is the introduction of legislation to increase penalties for such acts. In Pennsylvania, for example, a bill has been introduced (House Bill 917) amending existing statutes to make it a first degree felony to attempt to cause or intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly cause serious bodily injury to a county adult or juvenile probation officer or a state parole agent while in the performance of duty. This Bill would make it a second degree felony to attempt to cause or intentionally or knowingly cause bodily injury to a probation officer or parole agent in the line of duty.[44]

Contact: Gary Cenna, Legislative Chairman, Pennsylvania Association on Probation, Parole & Correction, Adult Probation Department, 121 North Broad Street, Philadelphia, PA 19107 (215)686-9497

SPECIAL BENEFITS

Identifying Probation/Parole Work as Hazardous Duty

Alabama state probation and parole officers act in a dual capacity in that they serve the circuit and district courts in probation matters, and the Board of Pardons and Paroles in parole matters. The officers are also duly sworn deputy sheriffs, but are more commonly referred to as peace officers. "... In 1978, the State's Attorney General handed down an opinion which recommended that the State's probation and parole officers be fully trained as peace officers, including firearms training. Upon completion of their training, the officers must qualify with a handgun every year. As a recognition of their being qualified to handle hazardous duty, the officers receive a subsistence pay of five

[44]House Bill 917, Legislative Summary, Session of 1989, Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole, Harrisburg, PA, May 1989.

dollars a day for each working day."[45]

Early Retirement

Under S9-3 (Special Eligibility for Law Enforcement Officers and Firefighters), U.S. probation officers are eligible for voluntary retirement on an immediate annuity upon meeting the following requirements: 1) employment under the retirement system for at least one year within the 2-year period immediately preceding the separation on which annuity is based; 2) age 50 or over; 3) at least 20 years of creditable service as a law enforcement officer or firefighter, or any combination of such service totaling at least 20 years. The purpose of this special provision was to "... allow the earlier retirement of those law enforcement officers whose duties are primarily the investigation, apprehension, or detention of persons suspected or convicted of offenses against the criminal laws of the United States and who, because of their positions, are no longer capable of carrying on efficiently, and their replacement by younger employees would improve the service. A more generous method of computing the amount of annuity is provided, not as a special reward for the type of service involved, but rather because a more liberal formula is usually necessary to make the earlier retirement (with resultant shorter service) economically possible."&

Currently, legislation has been introduced in Pennsylvania that would make probation and parole agents employed by the Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole eligible for early retirement. "The Commonwealth recognizes that certain occupations are involved with great stress and hazard. The present law gives relief to certain recognized occupations by allowing early retirement at age 50. This Bill would place the Board's parole agents in this retirement category. We support this effort."[47]

Contact: Joseph Long, Executive Assistant to the Chairman, Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole, P.O. Box 1661, Harrisburg, PA 17105 (717)787-5430

[45]Sigler, Robert T. and Bridgett McGraw, "Adult Probation and Parole Officers: Influence of Their Weapons, Role Perceptions and Role Conflict," Criminal Justice Review, Volume 9, Number 1, Spring, 1984, 30-31.

[46]Subchapter S9: Optional Retirement, FPM Supplement 831-1, September 21, 1981.

"Legislative Summary, Session of 1989, Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole, Harrisburg, PA.

CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this section was two-fold: 1) to report on recommendations from field workers about programs and actions they think can enhance their safety in the performance of their duties, and 2) to identify and briefly describe programs in place in various agencies *across* the country illustrative of the kinds of actions workers are concerned about.

Several observations are in order. When one looks at the listing of "worker recommendations," it is clear that they generally want the same things from jurisdiction to jurisdiction (e.g., Pennsylvania, Texas, Virginia, New York State). It is also clear that in one place or another, programs related to each of the recommendations have been initiated. In other words, there are referents: there are people who can be contacted for more detailed information about their programs and experiences and who should be perceived as valuable resources to enhance worker safety.

Section 4

A DEVELOPMENTAL GUIDE FOR AGENCY ACTION

In the process of solving a problem--for example, the problem of worker safety--it is important to be sensitive to the consequences of actions on other people, units of the justice system, and the very integrity of probation and parole work as a professional field. The review of policies and procedures as they relate to worker safety is a selective process. Depending on the specific dimensions of safety problems confronting agencies, the paths followed may be quite different. Clearly, "overkill" in the review and development of safety-related policy should be avoided. Policy that is not needed or changes without good reason is dysfunctional and, perhaps, debilitating to effective agency functioning.

For example, a decision by a probation/parole agency to reduce the risk of hazardous incidents against workers by enacting a policy that precludes them from participating in arrests of violators shifts that responsibility (along with the attendant risks) to someone else. A policy decision not to conduct field visits with clients in the community (to restrict supervision to office visits) may enhance worker safety, but what does it do to the viability of probation and parole supervision?

Considerable attention is being given to the enactment of “good time" laws as a method of reducing overcrowding in prisons. It is important that consideration be given to the impact of such release policies on parole agencies and their need for additional resources to supervise the resulting larger, more troublesome caseloads.

Clearly, the evolution of a viable worker safety program which complements the achievement of other agency mandates and objectives requires the use of careful inquiry, analysis, and problem solving procedures. It is a complex task.

In Section 3, attention was given to describing *worker* proposals and illustrative agency initiatives aimed at the prevention of hazardous incidents and remediation of victimizations. Here, our purpose will be to suggest a process that agencies might use in their own efforts to assess and address the problem of worker safety.

A FRAMEWORK FOR AGENCY ACTION

No single generic worksite safety program can be proposed as a model to be uniformly applied across jurisdictions. It is possible, however, to identify a "process" or "framework" that agencies might employ in assessing the status of worker safety in their organizations and in developing "tailor-made" programs aimed

at the prevention of hazardous incidents and remediation of victimization in the line of duty. Elements of such a process include:

- Articulation of worker safety as an agency priority.
- Establishment of an ongoing committee to consider and deal with safety issues.
- Assessment of the extent and nature of worker safety problems.
- Establishment of an appropriate incident reporting system,
- Analysis of existing policies, procedures, and practices.
- Creation of appropriate training programs.
- Development of a remedial help program.

Clearly, this process must be applied flexibly, based on agency responsibilities, size, resources, etc. A very small agency would, of necessity, approach the problem differently than a large, complex, statewide organization. The elements of the "process" to be discussed are intended to provide a reasonable, generally applicable sequence of actions useful in the development of a worker safety program. While the process is generic, the formulation of policies and procedures and the development of specific programmatic approaches must, of course, be based on the particular circumstances, needs, and responsibilities of individual agencies.

The Clear Need for a Pro-Active Stance

As can be seen from the information presented in Section 2, the verbal and physical abuse of probation and parole workers in the line of duty is a serious and pervasive problem. It is equally clear that this is an area that has, at least in some jurisdictions, been largely ignored. In a practical sense, it is a "hidden" problem with only a small portion of the total number of hazardous incidents and actual victimizations being reported.

Some workers indicate that there are a number of disincentives to reporting&certain kinds of hazardous events:

- An absence of definitive agency policy concerning the reporting of such incidents:
- A fear that admitting a victimization might be seen as a sign of personal weakness;

- A belief by many workers that it is "unsafe" to report anything but "righteous events" (those in which it could not be construed that the worker did anything wrong) for fear of repercussions:

- A view that "nothing useful" will happen anyway.

Yet, the perception of officers remains that probation and parole work is becoming more dangerous. Indeed, future prospects for worker abuse look even more bleak as larger, more dangerous caseloads are diverted from overcrowded correctional institutions to supervision in the community. Thus, there are compelling reasons for agency administrators and leaders in the field to adopt pro-active, aggressive, and constructive approaches to the problem of worker health and safety.

An indispensable component of a viable program involves the creation of conditions that encourage workers to report actual victimizations and other safety problems. To bring that about, there must be both the belief and reality that resources will be made available to assist workers (and agencies) in preventing and dealing with the aftermaths of such events.

ARTICULATING AN AGENCY POSITION CONCERNING WORKER SAFETY

Worker safety should not-be perceived as an abstract issue. Breaches of safety and physical, psychological, and economic victimizations of workers represent tangible, very real events to the people involved, with potentially serious "fallout" for the individual and those with whom he/she interacts. Thus, as agencies formulate their positions concerning worker safety, it must be understood that threatening and abusive events can have long-term, incremental consequences such as burnout, erosion of confidence, diminished trust in co-workers, and reduced regard for the welfare of clientele. It is serious business and needs to be treated as such!

One of the common concerns expressed by workers is uncertainty about "where their agencies stand" on the matter of worker safety. It is extremely important, therefore, that agencies give this area prominence. A powerful way to demonstrate real concern is through the creation of written policies that clearly and tangibly commit the organization and its resources to the goals of worker safety. The position taken by the administration needs to be promulgated in a clear and convincing manner and reinforced by action taken in responding to actual worker safety incidents.

> In the Virginia survey, for example, workers expressed considerable frustration over the fact that they learned of victimization events only "through the grapevine? They argued for an agency policy which would require

timely and accurate communication to staff concerning victimization events?

Honest, open communication about hazardous incidents and victimizations that do occur, as well as the actions taken, is important to creating worker trust and reducing erroneous perceptions in the work force.

Management By Objectives (MBO) can be a powerful approach to agency goal setting, resource commitment, and performance evaluation. Establishing the enhancement of worker safety as a stated agency goal sets the stage for committed, tangible organizational efforts to assess worker safety issues and include preventive and remedial programming as a part of the agency action plan.

> The, adoption of an agency goal (for example, worker safety) in an organization using MB0 results in a process in which all units must write performance objectives, implementation procedures, and methods for evaluation.

While many probation/parole agencies have (or participate in county or state) employee assistance programs, few articulate worker victimization as an identifiable category of concern. To specifically include this domain as an employee assistance program mandate could have valuable consequences. Illustrative of this are policies that require agencies to participate in state employee assistance programs designed to prevent, identify, assist, and refer for treatment or counseling employees with "alcohol or drug-related problems.@* Employees are protected from punitive measures arising out of their participation in the program. The specific attention given to this health problem has resulted in a significant commitment of state and agency resources. Further, it has stimulated the development of written guidelines, responsibilities, and procedures that supervisors are required to follow in assisting employees in dealing with their problems.

Clearly defining the problem of worker safety as a priority domain for attention in written agency policy and in the mandate of an employee assistance program can have important consequences for the stimulation of efforts in the prevention and remedial treatment of worker victimization. Moreover, to recognize worker safety in this context can legitimize it as an occupational health and safety problem for which agency concern and action is intended

[48]Virginia Division of Adult Community Corrections, op. cit.

to be helpful and constructive rather than punitive.[49]

DEVELOPMENT OF A WORKER SAFETY COMMITTEE

An important component of an agency strategy for assessing and dealing with worker safety issues is the development of a Worker Safety Committee. The need for an organizational entity with a clear mandate and commensurate authority to explore the problem and stimulate appropriate action is critical. Such a committee might, at various times, have several functions such as overseeing information gathering and assessment processes, analyzing and making recommendations regarding the adequacy of agency policies and procedures, reviewing hazardous incidents, and recommending appropriate constructive actions. Appropriate resources and access to personnel and records must be provided for the committee to do its work.

The 'composition of the committee is important for both the credibility and success of the enterprise. It would probably be inappropriate, for example, to appoint the Internal Investigations Unit as the "worker safety committee." There should be representation from all levels and major functions in the agency. The committee's mandate, authority, and rules under which it will operate should be articulated. The committee's ability to function will depend upon a high level of information, credibility, and acceptance among agency staff at all levels.

> In 1988 a committee was formed at the request of the Virginia Deputy Director of Adult Community Corrections to study issues and develop recommendations to ensure the reasonable safety of Probation and Parole staff during performance of their duties. The committee was asked to assess the scope and degree of present and potential threat; to identify and evaluate those precautions currently in place by individual districts or regions; and to formulate a set of specific remedial recommendations regarded as either mandatory, essential, or important. The committee was originally composed of six probation and parole officers, a deputy chief probation and parole officer, two chief probation and parole officers, and the administrative secretary of a large, urban district. They selected their own

[49]It is the author's understanding that the Wisconsin Division of Corrections provides services through its employee assistance program to workers requesting assistance in dealing with the aftermath of line-of-duty victimizations.

chairperson and had the help of a skilled facilitator.[50]

ASSESSING THE NATURE AND EXTENT OF WORKER SAFETY ISSUES AND EVENTS

A critical step in the development of a pro-active agency approach to the prevention of hazardous events and remediation of worker victimization involves an assessment of the extent and nature of the problem. Depending on the size of the agency, a survey (or some other method for securing information) should be designed for administration to the total staff.

The manner in which the survey is conducted and represented to the staff is extremely important. For various reasons, some staff are concerned about repercussions arising out of their report of hazardous incidents or victimization events. Indeed, in the Pennsylvania survey, respondents included notes with their responses indicating concern that their supervisors should not see their reports for fear of reprisal.

> Note on a returned survey answer sheet: "You know that there are some risks in reporting these incidents. I'll give you my name trusting that it [the answer sheet] won't get back to my chief."

Depending on the situation, it may be worthwhile to have an external consultant actually administer the survey, receive responses, and analyze the data so that the anonymity of respondents is protected.

To publicize the survey, to articulate the reason for soliciting information, to guarantee the anonymity of respondents, and to indicate the constructive, intended use to which the information will be put are extremely important. To be able to point to agency policy focusing on a concern for the safety of workers and an expression of the administration to do something constructive will be extremely effective in gaining staff participation and support.

In the data gathering process, a number of informational categories should be included. All members of the agency should be included in the survey. While those having direct supervisory contact with clients are likely to experience the highest rates of hazardous incidents, clerical, staff, and others are also at risk. Their experience, concerns, and needs must be registered and considered in the development of agency worker safety programs.

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[50]Description of the Ad Hoc Probation and Parole Safety Committee, Division of Adult Community Corrections, Virginia Department of Corrections.

The range of worker safety concerns, hazardous situations, and types of actual victimizations should be considered. When one thinks of worker victimization, one commonly thinks of physical assault. But there are other kinds of victimizations which have potentially serious and long range impacts on the health, welfare, and performance of workers. For example repeated threats, intimidations, attempts at coercion, etc. can result in serious stress-related problems. So, the definition of hazardous events and victimization needs to be broad, affording the opportunity for workers to identify the range of circumstances which they perceive to be safety threats.

The conduct of an agency-wide survey also affords the opportunity to collect information descriptive of the workforce that is otherwise not commonly available.

> For example, in Pennsylvania, prior to the 1988 study, there was no system-wide data describing the probation and parole workforce. Indeed, due to the juvenile-adult, state-county organizational multi-tier system, the total numbers of persons working in various roles was not known.

It will be important to secure information from agency staff concerning their career experience with hazardous incidents as well as their experience during the past year. One of the purposes of the survey should be to get a handle on the range of events. Workers should have an opportunity to share (perhaps for the first time) experiences even though they may not be recent. The systematic collection of data will make it possible to establish an annual rate of occurrence. Knowledge of contemporary experience and conditions is important to policy development. The kinds of information secured should include the following categories:

1. Information about the respondent.

2. Information about the agency role, tenure and experience of the respondent.

3. Information about career hazardous incidents and victimization experience of the respondent.

4. Information about the hazardous incident and victimization experience of the respondent during the past 12-month period.

5. Detailed information about the most serious event, including:

    a. The type and characteristics of the event.
    b. The work context within which it took place.
    c. The characteristics of the perpetrator.

d. The immediate reaction of the worker to the event.
e. The aftermaths (impacts) of the event on the worker, the agency, the workers family, others.
f. Information concerning the reporting of the event.
g. Worker assessment of whether and how the event might have been prevented.
h. Worker suggestions about what might prevent future events and/or prepare workers to deal with them.
i. Proposals for agency action regarding worker safety.

Based on the information collected, an analysis should be conducted with particular attention to the implications for policy and procedure development aimed at the prevention of hazardous incidents and remediation of worker victimization. Probable areas of concern should be staff recruitment and training, supervision, assignment of cases, mechanical interventions, and other legislative and policy initiatives (each of these areas will be discussed later in this monograph).

ESTABLISHMENT OF AN INCIDENT REPORTING SYSTEM

In addition to a survey to secure agency-wide information concerning career experience with hazardous incidents, as well as the perceptions, concerns, and suggestions of staff, there is a need to establish an ongoing reporting system. It is the experience of many agencies that the care with which reporting systems are designed, represented to staff, and managed has a tremendous impact on workers' willingness to use them.

Most agencies have expectations concerning the reporting of incidents involving workers in confrontations with clients or others in the line of duty; some have written policies in this regard. The way a policy is written will have a good deal to do with workers' willingness to comply. For example, if the procedures prescribed for dealing with reported injuries on the job involve investigations by supervisors, a determination of the role of the worker in his/her injurious situation, etc., they may cause workers to be cautious about reporting incidents in which they fear they may have some culpability.

A number of reasons exist for gathering data on hazardous incident experiences of workers on a regular basis. The best strategy for collecting information relative to these needs must be carefully thought through. For example, in securing certain types of information, a general survey allowing workers to remain anonymous may be most appropriate. On the other hand, the need to respond effectively to actual victimizations against workers requires the timely reporting of events along with identifying information relevant to agency intervention and assistance. Workers need to understand the purposes of the selected incident reporting system, and how the information will be used if their full cooperation is to be expected.

ANALYSIS OF AGENCY POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND PRACTICES

A central purpose for defining worker safety as an important agency issue and gathering information concerning the extent and nature of the problem is to initiate a review of the adequacy of agency policies, procedures, and practices.

Depending on the manner in which such a review is conducted, the outcomes can be quite different. For example, if the "agenda" is to determine the best way to "cover all bases" against possible agency liability, as opposed to a desire to determine how best to provide advocacy and assistance to workers experiencing hazardous incidents, the resulting recommendations are likely to be quite different. It is important to stress that the "interest" of the agency and the worker do not have to be in conflict.

PROMULGATION OF PROPOSALS FOR THE ENHANCEMENT OF WORKER SAFETY

Based on the analysis of information secured via surveys, interviews, reports, etc., it is likely that the Safety Committee will identify a number of policies, procedures, and programs for examination concerning their adequacy in the enhancement of worker safety. One can logically organize such concerns in terms of the following three general domains for assessment relative to the enhancement of worker safety: 1) selection, training, and assignment of personnel: 2) better safety-oriented facilities and equipment; 3) legislative initiatives.

Selection, Training and Assignment of Staff

Several "informants" in the field suggest the importance of careful selection of personnel to assure that they will be psychologically, physically, and intellectually able to deal with various aspects of practice which appear to involve significant levels of risk. Such screening is commonly emphasized in settings where workers carry weapons in the line of duty and are involved in arrest and other high-risk situations.

There are some issues, however, associated with applicant screening which bear on the rights of those aspiring to positions in probation and parole. For example, are personality characteristics, perceived ability to deal with hostility, view of power, and ability to administer authority constructively proper factors to consider in applicant screening? Can agencies require psychological assessments and security clearances for prospective employees? Under what conditions can persons be legally screened out for employment consideration on the basis of personal characteristics such as physical size, strength, or ability to engage in self defense? Apparently, some agencies have resolved some of these issues.

Lehigh County Pennsylvania Adult Probation, for example, has the following policy:

> Police safety systems is a style of Defensive Tactics developed by John Desmedt of the United States Secret Service. This system was developed to train law enforcement officers in a more dynamic method of training which can easily be applied to real life situations. The system also provides law enforcement officers a use of force model which helps the officer recognize the amount of force necessary to control a situation.
>
> All Probation Officers must pass the initial certification. A test for recertification will be at the call of the instructor. If the Probation Officer fails to be certified, he/she will be given the opportunity for retest. If certification is not achieved and it is assessed that the Probation Officer cannot perform job functions, the Probation Officer may be terminated. There will be mandatory training two times per year with optional training at least quarterly?

Clearly, procedures utilized in staff screening, selection, and assignment have worker safety implications. In the process of interviewing applicants, supervisors must make judgments concerning the individual's ability to perform effectively in the work role. The ability to deal with risk situations is an important performance prerequisite. While the agency wants to get the most qualified people for the job (e.g., those who can operate safely in high risk situations), it must also be very sensitive to the civil rights of all applicants. There are some precautionary notes that must be registered. It is important for the agency to be able to demonstrate that certain worker characteristics/ prerequisites are essential to competent job performance. The agency must also be able to demonstrate that their means of assessment are valid.

From all the data collected, discussions with people in the field, and professional judgement, it is clear that the single most important area for prevention of worker victimization is staff training. Put another way, state of the art professional planning, decision-making, and performance is the best way to deal with hazardous situations and, thereby, prevent many victimizations. Indeed, in 24% of the cases, Pennsylvania workers indicated that they could have prevented their victimization by their own actions?[52]

"Lehigh County Adult Probation Department, "Defensive Tactics," Policy and Procedures Manual, Allentown, PA.

"Parsonage, William H. and W. Conway Bushey, op. cit.

Several training areas have significant implications for worker safety: effective case investigation, special problems and approaches to the supervision of various groups of clients, proper arrest procedures, tactics for de-escalating dangerous situations, the legal ramifications of using force, etc. An assessment of agency policy and practice concerning the training of workers in areas obviously connected with their performance in the field will be critical.

One of the ways to prevent hazardous incidents is to modify the role and responsibility of workers. For example, some agencies no longer allow workers to arrest clients alleged to be in violation of their conditions. Some agencies have restricted worker contacts with clients, requiring them to take place in the agency office. In some jurisdictions, community contacts with probationers and parolees, while not precluded, have been limited because of the perceived danger involved (e.g., the requirement that community contacts are to be made by two officers). The most common use of the "two officer" policy relates to arrest situations. For example, the Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole requires that two officers participate in planned arrests?

As more and more jurisdictions authorize workers to carry firearms, agency policy, procedure, and careful training protocols need to be developed.

Clearly, there is no way one can pre-program decisions to be made by front-line workers because the parameters of the situation arise out of the unique event. What one can do is to train workers regarding categories of situations and provide them with a range of responses which might be applied as appropriate. But the final decision necessarily must be left to the discretion of the front-line worker who must "read" the situation and make his/her own decisions.

The appropriate supervision of workers by superiors to insure that their level of practice is consistent with agency policy and professional expectations can have major consequences for the prevention of hazardous incidents. Some agencies require that supervisors periodically accompany workers in the field to observe and evaluate their performance. The following Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole policy statement illustrates this policy:

> Assistant supervisors and district directors who are supervising a supervision unit shall hold monthly in-depth supervisory conferences with each parole agent under his/her supervision to discuss client cases, problems, agent concerns, etc.; and, in each six month

[53]"Arresting Clients for Violation of Probation and Parole," op. cit.

> period, one of the monthly conferences shall be with the agent in the field. In addition, the supervisor shall meet briefly with the agent on his/her weekly duty day to discuss any urgent matters.
>
> During the field visit with the agent, the supervisor should minimally accomplish the following:
>
> a. Visit, if possible, the five clients selected for discussion for the month.
> b. Observe the agent's client contact style, noting strengths and areas needing improvement.
> c. Become acquainted with the areas and communities in which the agent works.
> d. Make some contacts with related county officials, such as chief probation officers, treatment directors, and counselors.[54]

Most commonly, the purposes articulated for an evaluation do not include an assessment of worker safety practices; however, that should be a previously announced objective.

There are a number of potential relationships between the assignment of caseloads and the risk of hazardous incidents. It is believed that, in general, as caseloads/workloads of probation and parole workers have increased, so has the rate of verbal and physical abuse of workers. In addition to size of workload, there is also some evidence that offenders with certain characteristics tend to assault or abuse workers more often than other clients do. The Pennsylvania study indicates that unemployed offenders with a history of assaultive behavior, currently under sentence for serious felonies, tend to victimize probation/parole workers more frequently than offenders not exhibiting those characteristics. Thus, workload and case assignment are significant factors in the prevention of hazardous incidents.

In some jurisdictions, special units have been developed to deal with certain kinds of cases.

> New York City is facing a drug epidemic of alarming proportions. The New York City Department of Probation has embarked on an ambitious initiative to supervise the drug-abusing probationer more effectively. Five buildings were acquired to house the Department% new drug initiative. To begin with, the buildings needed plenty of bathrooms--enough for the tests, the public, and the staff. A new line of employees was established--lab

[54]"Parole Agent Supervisory Conferences," Director of Supervision Memorandum, Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole, Harrisburg, PA, March 5, 1987.

technicians whose primary responsibility is to take specimens. Supervision is provided by a special unit combining treatment and strict enforcement procedures. Offenders classified at 1-C (the crack cocaine caseload) are subject to regular urinalysis, and they face automatic violation if they aren't clean. Probationers must remain in the program for the duration of their probation. A unit has been set up to work directly with the special caseload officers, visiting probationers at home and monitoring their behavior in the community. The group of armed, specially trained probation officers is called the Community Contact Unit.[55]

In the process of assessing the appropriateness of agency policies, procedures, and practices, the extent to which classification of caseloads, the establishment of specialized units, and team supervision arrangements can enhance safety is worthy of consideration.

Facilities and Equipment

One of the concerns expressed by workers in the Pennsylvania, Virginia, Texas, and New York surveys was the need for protective barriers and devices to promote office safety. For example, Virginia personnel thought there should be a physical barrier between the reception and waiting areas. Offices without a system to prevent clients from entering staff areas should be studied to determine ways to limit access. Offices should have alarm systems or panic buttons to summon assistance. Metal (weapons) detector systems should be installed in offices where they are not currently in place.[56]

Attention to office safety factors has been an integral part of the design and construction of a new Board of Probation and Parole district office in Williamsport, Pennsylvania. Physical barriers separate the reception and clerical areas as well as other staff areas. Interview rooms are lined up in such a way that one can see what's going on in them from several positions in the office. A special room has been constructed to facilitate client urine screening, physical searches, and provision for custody of clients when required. Staff was purposely involved in the design of the facility. Additionally, the Board's Bureau of Administrative Services is reviewing the physical layout of all the field

[55]Smyley, Kevin T., "New Approaches to Drug Of fenders: New York Implements Stricter Supervision," Corrections Today, June 1989.

[56]Virginia Division of Adult Community Corrections Survey, op. cit.

offices with the objective to make them more secure for employees.[57]

The safety of probation and parole workers has sometimes been jeopardized by the lack of access to emergency communications equipment to summons assistance to deal with hazardous situations confronted in the field. Unlike police, who have radios in their patrol cars and carry portable radios when out of their vehicles probation and parole workers have characteristically been without such devices; there is increasing pressure for the issuance and use of radios in the field.

In many jurisdictions, workers involved in the direct supervision of offenders are now authorized to carry firearms and other implements for personal protection. The appropriateness of such a policy appears relative to a number of factors characterizing the, situations in which workers must practice (e.g., the appropriateness of guns for the New York City Probation Department's Community Contact Unit [see above] as compared to juvenile probation officers in a rural county), Of particular concern are the policies, procedures, and practices in place concerning the authorization, training, and carrying of firearms.

Depending on the particular tasks and circumstances of workers and the provision of special protective gear (such as body armor), restraining devices (cuffs, transfer belts) may be appropriate and contribute to the safety of staff. Arrest situations and transportation activities are examples of circumstances which may require such equipment It is clear, however, as in the case of firearms, not all situations or all staff will require special protective equipment. Indeed, the traditional role of a probation/parole worker and the use of such equipment in the context of case supervision may seem contradictory.

Before rushing into blanket decisions concerning protective gear, guns, and radios, considerable attention should be given to identifying circumstances in which these devices are warranted and those in which they are not.

Legislative Initiatives

In Pennsylvania (and other jurisdictions) legislation has been introduced which would increase the penalties for assaults on probation and parole workers in the line of duty.

> Pennsylvania House Bill 917 amends section 2702 of Title 18 of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes. This amendment would make it a first degree felony to attempt to cause or intentionally knowingly, or recklessly cause

[57]"Office Security Given Priority," Annual Report, Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole, Harrisburg, PA, 1989.

serious bodily injury to a police officer, fire fighter, county adult probation or parole officer, county juvenile probation or parole officer or an agent of the Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole in the performance of duty or to an employee of an agency, company or other entity engaged in public transportation, while in the performance of duty.

This Bill makes it a second degree felony to attempt to cause or intentionally or knowingly cause bodily injury to a police officer, fire fighter, county adult probation and parole officer, county juvenile probation and parole officer, or an agent of the Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole in the performance of duty?

The assumption underlying such proposals is that heavier penalties will have a deterrent effect on worker victimization. Whether they will or not, and the extent to which they will have the desired effect is still unknown.

Legislation providing for hazardous duty status (implications for extra pay and benefits) and early retirement is another thrust being pursued by those who believe workers deserve special benefits in recognition of the hazards associated with their role.

[58]"House Bill 917," op. cit.

Section 5

THE WORKER'S ROLE IN ENHANCING PERSONAL SAFETY

While agencies can do much to enhance the safety of probation and parole workers in the line of duty, individual workers must do some things for themselves.

The Pennsylvania research, reports of others, and this authors experience suggest that individual workers have considerable power in effecting their personal safety, because they have broad discretion in determining the mode and methods they use in the supervision of clients. In many cases, by their own decisions and actions, workers are able to prevent (or stimulate) their own victimization. This view is supported by the fact that 24% of workers reporting victimizations in the Pennsylvania study indicated they could have prevented their victimization by their own actions.[59] And, in the Texas Parole Officer Safety and Security Survey, a number of comments by workers supported that assertion.

> Majority of threats could be avoided if the person presenting himself ...[acts] in a professional manner' --common sense approach."
>
> "Need to use a little more common sense--some of this comes with experience?
>
> "Don't expect the agency to provide for your personal safety--each officer should make an effort to implement measures to secure and control their own safety. An officer should prepare themselves mentally, physically and emotionally for problems that may arise in the field or at the office ...the same precautions a person should take while off-duty."[60]

Any overall strategy for enhancing safety, therefore, must involve the worker as a key actor in the process.

WHAT WORKERS SAY THEY DO

One way to discover potentially viable strategies that workers might pursue in enhancing their personal safety is to ask workers what they do in that regard.

In the Texas Parole Officer Safety and Security Survey, respondents were asked, "Please describe any specific personal

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[59]Parsonage, William H. and W. Conway Bushey, op. cit.

[60]Eisenberg, Michael, op. cit., (sample of parole officer safety/security procedures).

precautions which you take for your personal safety when making a home visit to see a parolee." Many of the responses connoted a considerable amount of 'wariness' surrounding these kinds of contacts.

> "stop, look and listen before entering a house. Make scheduled visits. Remain near the door."
>
> "I do not make home visits after dark and if I have to make late visits (between 6:OO pm and 8:00 pm) I take my husband."
>
> Wake certain car is in good order and gassed. Do not stop if many cars are in front. After knocking--stand to the side of the door--not directly in front. Do not reprimand parolees any place other than office or jail. Carry pistol and chemical."
>
> "If need arises--do not enter residence--have parolee come into yard. Leave purse in vehicle. Make daytime visits if need arises."
>
> "Stand by the front door. Do not sit down."
>
> "This job is so unsafe. A person has to use common sense."[61]

Other responses of the Texas workers go beyond "avoidance and timidity" and portray a more analytical assessment of situations.

> "Home and field visits conducted during daylight hours. When visiting a high crime area, advise my supervisor when I will check back into the office. When knocking on the door, stand well back after knocking so the door cannot be jerked open and someone grab me. Use extreme caution before entering a parolee's home, check number of people present, their attitude, alcoholic condition, and stand outside if the situation looks dangerous. If I had cause to believe a dangerous situation might arise, I would ask another officer or a police officer to accompany me."
>
> "Assess parolee's physical location of residence (high risk area). Know whether he is assaultive, emotionally unstable, and/or schizophrenic etc. Do not allow releasee to take me to a 'back room' where I could be 'hemmed up.' Know (if possible) if parolee is wanted on a warrant--especially felony. Make sure releasee knows I cannot arrest him and that I am no physical threat

[61]Eisenberg, Michael, ibid.

(carry a weapon); but rather his parole 'supervisor,' here to help him make the right decisions and assist him in choices. Be on guard for abnormal behavior or uneasiness. Know when to leave."[62]

Another question focused on behavior in the office. "Please describe any specific personal precautions which you take when meeting with a parolee in your field office." The following illustrative responses are interesting.

"Keep door open and eyes open. Control conversation at all times."

"I would prefer to have a desk between us, but now have to share a tiny office and the desks must face the walls. (This is bad for several reasons). Leave door open or cracked. Let supervisor and other officers know to listen for problems."

"Walk behind client. If a trouble case is coming into office I let fellow officers know ahead of time. If a client needs to be reprimanded I handle it with caution, so that I do not anger the client."

"I have a claw hammer in my desk to hang pictures, which I have put in my top drawer to get to fast if the need arose."

"Conduct myself in a professional manner--and review ...plan prior to interview."

"Watch for agitation, try to calm down parolee, especially if they are about to be arrested."

Given the chance to add comments, Texas workers' opinions reflected a range of positions; for example, concerning guns:

"I feel that if parole officers carry weapons (guns), obviously the parolee will know this and be snore likely to feel threatened and more likely to use force against a parole officer. We are supervisors, not police officers?

"No matter how much training one receives--physical, verbal--if a parolee gets mad and wants to kick his parole officer's ass or worse, he'll do so. I am in favor of parole officers having the option of being armed

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[62]Eisenberg, Michael, ibid.

[63]Eisenberg, Michael, ibid.

with firearms. It is better for me to be armed and never use it than for me to need a firearm and never have it."[64]

The views and comments of the Texas workers are both engaging and helpful. Beyond portraying a number of security concerns, they reflect several areas that workers should consider in their own professional practices and decision-making.

ASSESSMENT OF PERSONAL RISK LEVEL

It is this author's view that, while not all hazardous incidents can be anticipated or avoided, a great number can be prevented. In the process of reviewing a large number of incident descriptions, it appears that often assaultive events "grow" out of confrontations which might be anticipated and perhaps forestalled. For example, a significant number of physical assaults against workers occur in the context of arrest situations. Often, assaultive behavior against workers occurs when clients attempt to escape or otherwise avoid arrests and officers attempt to physically take them into custody. Clearly, it is illegal for clients to resist lawful arrest or to physically assault officers with authority to effect arrests. At the same time, it is reasonable to assert that, with proper preparation and assistance, many of these events can be prevented. In short, good professional planning and practice can play a decided part in the enhancement of worker safety.

By reviewing one's own characteristic approach to his/her work, an individual should be able to make some assessment of personal risk to various kinds of hazardous incidents and victimizations. The following series of questions and related comments are intended to be helpful to workers in the conduct of such a self-assessment. The questions are "keyed" to areas identified by workers or gleaned from the literature as having some relationship to hazardous situations.

A number of factors appear to have some connection with increased or decreased risk to victimization. For example, in the Pennsylvania survey, the vast majority of victimizations occurred in a context other than an announced visit, and 22% occurred in arrest situations. Forty-six percent of the perpetrators were known to have assaulted someone else in the past. For whatever reason, officers who were armed were 2-l/2 times more likely to be assaulted than were unarmed officers. The rate of victimization was twice as high for males as for females. The research data currently available is not sufficient to support the development of a "risk scale or profile." There is enough information, however, to suggest areas worthy of worker caution and planning

[64]Eisenberg, Michael, ibid.

in carrying out their responsibilities?

In assessing personal practice decisions and interactions workers might consider some basic questions. These questions are believed to have relevance for worker safety.

(Personal Style and Orientation)

1. How do you see your role (enforcer, helper, both)?
2. How do you want clients to perceive you?
3. How do you see clients (all the same, different, worthy, unworthy)?
4. How do you use your authority? Constructively. or destructively?
5. Do you carry weapons for your protection?
6. What is your preferred method for dealing with offender resistance (force, talking)?
7. Should clients be treated the same, differently?

A worker's perception of his/her role, attitude toward clients, and prototypical approach to dealing with them all have some strong safety implications. This is because those views are communicated to those with whom the: officer has contact and, in turn, influence reciprocal behavior.

> As a Chicago Parole Officer remarked to the author, there is a line in a rap song that says, "Don't push me--I'm close to the edge." Many of our clients are close to the edge and we have to be very concerned about the way we approach them in doing our job.

According to the literature available, certain worker behavior tends to influence increased prospects for confrontations. In the Kutztown study and the Pennsylvania Survey, officers who carry guns and have had self-defense training report a higher level of confrontations than their unarmed colleagues? In fact, it must be stated that we don’t know why that happens, but it does. Some would hypothesize that this relationship can be explained in terms of officers' view of power and the tendency of those who carry guns to use force over reason. Others would argue that those who choose to carry guns are officers who work with the most difficult, violent, and dangerous clientele. In evaluating one's "own style" relative to personal risk, it is useful to consider the extent to which officer beliefs and behavior may prevent or stimulate hazardous events.

"Parsonage, William H. and W. Conway Bushey, op. cit.

[6] [6]Renzema, Mark, op. cit.

(Preparation to Deal With Hazardous Situations)

1. Have you had unarmed self-defense training?
2. Have you been properly trained to make arrests?
3. Have you been trained in procedures to diffuse situations?
4. Have you developed a plan for dealing with threatening events should they occur?

While protocols cannot be developed in advance which apply specifically to every possible confrontation, workers can be trained, in general, to handle various kinds of hazardous situations should they occur. Appropriate training and preparation of workers to carry out their roles is not only a responsibility of agencies, but also a professional obligation of workers and their supervisors. Many opportunities for professional training and development are available on an in-service basis or from external vendors, Administrators are increasingly aware of their obligation to adequately prepare those under their direction to perform competently. And the responsibility of workers to take an active part in their own development is equally clear.

One of the great problems in the field today is the lack of comprehensive, comparable information about the clients with whom officers work. A critical factor in effective supervision is a well-developed knowledge of one's cases. Indeed, probation and parole officers functioning with inadequate client information are essentially operating with their "hands tied behind their backs." The backbone of effective (and safe) supervision is the kind and quality of information collected in the conduct of pre-sentence and post-release investigations.

(Knowledge of Cases)

1. How well do you know your case?
2. Have you established case goals and objectives?
3. Have you developed a predictable working relationship with your client?
4. Has the client victimized probation officers or others in the past?

In many jurisdictions, the conduct of pre-sentence investigations has been relegated to the collection of information needed to fill out sentencing guidelines forms, with little attention to the development of in-depth understandings of unique cases in all of their dimensions. The absence of such comprehensive information has negative consequences for case planning, decision-making, supervision, and progress evaluation.

The business of supervision requires attention to dealing with individuals in the context of their realities. Judgments about the need, purpose, appropriate environment, mode, and timing of case

contacts require an accurate informational base.

One factor which relates to reported hazardous incidents and worker victimization is the element of surprise (unpredictability) in contacts with clients. The development of predictable working relationships with clients and a planned approach to one's casework responsibilities provides an important foundation for making supervision a safer and more viable process.

(Caseload Management and Planning)

1. Do you plan your field work and case contacts?
2. Do you develop a written work-plan that can be given to your supervisor, etc.?
3. Have you prepared for the specific focus of the contact?
4. To what extent have you considered whether others should be involved in the event?
5. Do you plan your arrests?
6. Do you have back-up assistance in arrests?
7. Do you have the proper equipment for the event (e.g., body armor, restraining equipment)?
8. Do you have regularly scheduled conferences with your supervisor to discuss cases, etc.?
9. Do you generally make surprise visits or do you schedule visits?

Planning and preparation is an indispensable component of professional performance in probation and parole and plays a significant role in worker safety. There is great value in laying out on paper just what one needs to accomplish and, based on the purpose of the contact or activity, identifying the most appropriate mode and timing for the event. For example, if the purpose of a contact is to determine what the client is doing when he doesn't expect you, a surprise visit is appropriate, even though there are certain risks associated with an unannounced contact (e.g., not finding the client home, potential for upsetting him). If the purpose of a contact is to effect an arrest, then the appropriate planning, preparation, and involvement of others is necessary. If the purpose of the contact is to assist the client in dealing with personal/family financial management, the most appropriate arrangement will be an announced visit (appointment) with the understanding that the client needs to prepare for the contact (e.g., get together his pay stubs, bills, etc.). The development of written work-plans is also helpful as they provide others (supervisor, secretary) with information concerning the worker's itinerary.

Probation and parole officers, in order to carry out their responsibilities, must enjoy the cooperation of their colleagues in the agency as well as in other components of the administration of justice system and related human service agencies.

(Liaison Arrangements & Community Relationships)

1. Have you developed working relationships with the local police?
2. Have you developed contacts with the social service providers?

It is unfortunate but true that in some jurisdictions, whether through errors of omission or commission, such working relationships are strained. As a consequence, requests for information, cooperation, or assistance in arrests or other situations may not be honored. To the extent that workers develop a network of working relationships with representatives of other agencies and make use of them in ethical and responsible ways, their ability to work effectively and safely is materially enhanced.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

For reasons that are not totally clear, it would appear that workers with extensive experience in the field have learned to "avoid" or "handle" potentially dangerous situations. In the New York State survey[67], for example, an inverse relationship between assaultive confrontations and tenure in the position was found. Thus, it is suggested that worker behavior does bear a significant relationship to safety. With proper training and the conscious attention of workers to their own practice and strategies, much can be done to prevent and/or deal constructively with hazardous situations.

[67]Ely, Richard, op. cit.

Section 6

REFLECTIONS

The circumstances and conditions under which community correctional programs (particularly probation and parole) are administered have changed significantly in recent years. The direction and dimensions of this change, especially in terms of their implications for worker safety issues, are dramatic.

In 1969, probation and parole caseloads in many jurisdictions approached the 50-unit workload standard of the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice; in 1989, caseloads are commonly more than twice that amount. Whereas in 1969 an in-depth pre-sentence investigation was commonly conducted on all felony defendants, now the "short form," emphasizing the collection of sentencing guidelines data, has taken its place.

During the same 20-year period, American society has experienced a conservative political shift and, with it, a rejection of the rehabilitative ideal as a primary motive and viable method for dealing with juvenile delinquents and criminal offenders. This shift has been dramatically influenced by the drug problem and frustration over the seeming inability of our traditional institutions to deal with it. In an attempt to gain some control over crime, we have pursued a regimen of harsh penalties, punishment, and confinement. The consequent dramatic rise in prison populations, with concomitant overcrowding, has now resulted in increasing pressure to release serious offenders to community supervision. Adequate funding to deal effectively with the tremendous growth in the probation/parole population has generally not been forthcoming. Teamed with the frightening dimensions of the drug problem, the officers' turf, the community's expectations, and the conditions under which officers must function have changed drastically. And, it would appear, so has their exposure to hazardous incidents and risk of victimization.

One important consequence of all this has been a significant evolution of the perceived role of probation and parole workers. Where the 1969 era workers would have defined their job as "change agents" or "helpers," many of their 1989 counterparts commonly consider law enforcement and community protection as their primary responsibility. Attention has shifted, for the most part, from client advocacy and facilitation to offender surveillance and control. In addition, probationers and parolees understand this shift: they know that just as the worker's reality has changed, so has theirs.

It is the author's view that, in the long run, there is a significant connection between the mandate of corrections, the manner in which we deal with offenders, offenders' perceptions of

the role of workers, and workers' personal safety in the line of duty. If this is true, efforts on the part of agencies and workers to enhance their safety are important and worth pursuing, but are limited in their ability to solve the problem. In many ways, we have "thrown out the baby with the bathwater," and, perhaps without realizing it, contributed to the increased level of risk workers face in the performance of their duties.

Whatever the circumstances which have fed it, the victimization and safety of probation and parole workers in the line of duty have become both serious and pervasive problems. Clearly, something needs to be done.

While there is increasing concern on the part of workers and administrators to act to enhance safety, there have been a number of impediments to the achievement of this objective:

1. The problem of describing worker safety issues and operationally defining "victimization."

2. The difficulty of assessing the scope of the problem (i.e., the nature and extent of hazardous incidents experienced by workers and victimizations against them in the line of duty).

3. The problem of an inadequate understanding of the etiology or causation of these events.

4. The problem of developing appropriate agency-based strategies for productive intervention.

A number of issues are associated with the definition of hazardous incidents and worker victimization, not the least of which is concern for the "politicization" of the phenomenon. Some are legitimately concerned that calling attention to physical and verbal abuses against workers may have the effect of blowing the problem out of proportion. Others are concerned that the development of narrow definitions will have the effect of minimizing the problem and encourage inadequate attention. There has been an attempt in this monograph to be sensitive to these concerns while, at the same time, avoiding the pitfalls associated with either course. The author's intent has been to assist the reader in recognizing the complexity of the topic, and the relative nature of hazardous events, the circumstances of their occurrence, their seriousness, and consequences. To do so acknowledges that behavior defined in the law as a crime, committed against a probation or parole worker, makes him/her a crime victim. At the same time, it must be understood that particular victimizations may vary enormously in terms of their seriousness (felony, misdemeanor, summary): the circumstances associated with such incidents (aggravating, mitigating); the differential impacts of such events on workers and others (physical, emotional, financial); worker

perceptions of the significance of events (serious of no consequence); and their decisions whether or not to take action.

The position has been taken that, in order to elicit comprehensive information concerning the nature and extent of worker victimization in the line of duty, the definition of "hazardous incidents" and victimization" must be broad and inclusive. However, the manner in which the resulting information is classified, described, and analyzed should enable discriminations to be made in terms of the circumstances and seriousness, the necessity of intervention, and the kind of attention required.

To date, nation-wide data are not available concerning worker safety issues. This monograph represents a first effort in assembling, from this author's research and the research of others, what is known about the problem. It is intended to provide a beginning framework for action. The hope is to stimulate efforts at the local level in the prevention of hazardous incidents, remediation of worker victimization, and the enhancement of worksite safety in probation and parole.

Continuing efforts to evolve common definitions and expand the database across jurisdictions are already under way. To the extent that comprehensive, comparable information describing the phenomenon can be developed, local interests and attention to the problem of worker safety will be significantly enhanced. In addition to the need for a comprehensive database, a major task still to be pursued involves the need for a more complete exploration and understanding of the causation and dynamics of actual worker victimization. To this point, the author's research and the research of others provide only limited information and a few impressions about the causation and dynamics of such events.

The practical and most important purpose of this line of research is its potential use in the development of programs for the enhancement of worker safety.' A number of programs have already been implemented in individual agencies across the country to enhance the safety of their workers, which can provide useful examples for others. It is clear, however., that steps taken in particular agencies should be tailor made to their unique circumstances (mandates, policy, clientele, resources, practices). Thus, the need for agency-specific assessment, planning, and programming in the evaluation of worker safety efforts is compelling.

Our findings suggest that we must begin to look at the exposure of probation and parole workers to hazardous incidents and their victimization in the line of duty as a serious occupational health problem, not simply a criminal/legal issue. The consequences of such events need not be regarded as signs of personal weakness. We need to accept that stress, fear, familial

disruption, etc. are "sad, but honorable" rather than "demeaning" outcomes of job-related victimization. Such consequences of hazardous events should be seen as a legitimate basis for the provision of employee assistance and other helpful benefits.

It must be regarded as a serious matter when probation and parole workers--traditionally the most liberal and offender help-oriented group in the justice system--argue for stronger measures as they relate to worksite safety. Perhaps, when all is said and done, the most important contribution of this work will be to stimulate administrators and other leaders to become actively concerned with the problem of worker safety and all of its ramifications.

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