Workload Measures for Probation and Parole

WORKLOAD MEASURES

FOR

PROBATION AND PAROLE

by

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Many of the agencies contacted expressed great interest in the results of this study because they planned to convert to a workload system but found it difficult to design the process based on existing literature. We experienced similar problems until reaching Evalyn C. Parks of the University of Arizona Department of Public Policy, Planning and Administration, and we wish to thank her for her assistance.

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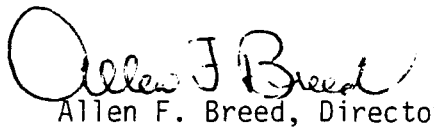
FOREWORD

Corrections agencies throughout the country are being challenged to carry out their missions in a period of diminishing resources on many fronts. Probation and parole agencies have been particularly affected by budget and staffing cuts. Further, those agencies are increasingly hardpressed to defend staffing needs based on caseload standards when research has indicated little relationship between caseload size and recidivism.

The workload approach to probation and parole management explored in this report provides agencies with an alternative way of looking at and understanding their resource needs. Based on the measurable quantities of time needed to perform mandated tasks satisfactorily, a workload approach allows administrators to document minimal staffing requirements and make informed management decisions on allocating agency resources.

It is our hope that the experiences of other agencies presented in this report, along with the authors' guidelines for implementation, will be of use to agencies contemplating the development of functioning workload systems.



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1. INTRODUCTION

Probation and parole agencies have long been concerned with "appropriate" or "ideal" or "optimum" caseloads:

> Probation caseloads should average 50 offenders per officer.
>
> (Consensus of Probation Administrators, 1917)
>
> Probation agencies should be staffed on the basis of an average ratio of 35 offenders per officer.
>
> (President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice, 1967)[17]

Actual caseloads, 1982:

Los Angeles County	300:1
Maryland Probation/Parole	100:1
Wisconsin Community Corrections	52:1

Historically, work has been assigned on the basis of a caseload standard, that is, a formula providing a set number of supervisor and/or investigation cases per officer. This technique was generally accepted among officers and administrators. Even with the acknowledgment that all clients do not require equal amounts of agency resources, arbitrary "ideal" caseloads were recommended by such authorities as the American Correctional Association. These ideal stan ards were usually produced by a group of experienced personnel arriving at a consensus of what was required to achieve the goals of protecting the community and effecting a significant, positive impact on client rehabilitation. The fundamental assumption of this system was that individual officers make a deter mination as to which cases require more effort than others and budget their own time accordingly. Random case assignment was supposed to assure an equal distr bution of types of cases and thus evenly distribute work.

In practice, few agencies have come close to achieving ideal caseloads. Such standards have traditionally been accepted by probation and parole agencie but rejected by funding bodies. The "ideal" standards usually set a much lower ratio of cases per officer than that at which most agencies had previously operated. Thus, the implementation of such standards required significant increases in staff. Unfortunately, few studies indicate that operating at an "ideal" level has had any positive effect on client behavior. In fact, there i little evidence available to indicate that increasing the ratios far beyond the "ideal" has had any significant negative effects on achieving agency goals.

It is therefore not surprising that, as resources diminish, it has become increasingly difficult to defend probation or parole budget requests based on offender-to-staff ratios. Agencies today consistently find themselves being asked to do more with the same or diminishing resources, "ideal" caseload recommendations not withstanding.

As early as the 1950's, probation and parole agencies did begin to explore alternative ways of allocating resources. A smattering of references to time and motion studies began to appear in correctional research literature. However, time studies were new to correctional researchers, technologies were limited, and the objectives of these studies were often ill-defined. As a result, most early time studies simply focused on how officer time was divided among many different job functions. The limited utility of these studies was addressed by the President's Commission Task Force on Corrections in 1967:

> Time, as a work measure, has not been used extensively. Many original studies which utilized this measure were designed more to show the expenditure of time among several activities rather than to predict manpower requirements or workload levels.[2/]

By the mid-1970's, the questioning of probation and parole manpower needs by state legislatures and county boards intensified. While many administrators could refer to time study information that described how officers divided their time between supervision, investigations, and other activities, few agencies had obtained the type of time measures required for budget development and staff deployment. New methods of time study, developed specifically for determining the staffing requirements of probation and parole agencies, were needed.

Researchers responded with the introduction of "longitudinal" time study designs. These designs timed and recorded all activities related to an individual client that occurred within a specified period. With the probationer rather than the officer day as the principal focus of analysis, the average amount of time spent each month on each client could be computed easily. The data could then be broken down by classification level, geographical region, or any other appropriate category. Other activities such as investigations were time-studied from start to finish and the results were averaged for budget proposals. This method of time study represented a significant departure from prior practice and provided the measures needed for workload budgeting and deployment.

A workload approach to probation and parole management rests on the following assumptions:

- There is a quantifiable amount of time one can expect from an employee.
- The amount of work assigned to an employee must be completed during a prescribed period of time.

- The time it "normally" takes to supervise a particular type of case or complete an investigation can be measured.

- The aggregation of time factors constitute a method of resource allocation superior to that of caseload equalization.

Many correctional administrators agree that budget requests based on workload measures are more easily defended than those based on caseload ratios. Furthermore, it is felt that workload systems generally result in a more equitable distribution of agency resources. Of the various systems developed to date none has been used more successfully than those developed in Wisconsin and Florida, where workload-based budgets have gained legislative approval.

Workload systems are not always based on time study results. Some are derived from data produced by surveys or consensus-building techniques. Often, staff at various levels of the organization are asked to estimate the time required to complete different tasks, and the estimates are then averaged to for the basis for a workload budgeting or deployment system. While this approach avoids the need to conduct a time study, it has several potential drawbacks. Th relative strengths and weaknesses of the various ways workload systems have developed throughout U.S. probation and parole agencies are discussed in subsequent sections of this report.

PURPOSES OF WORKLOAD SYSTEMS

The basic purposes of workload systems in probation and parole are as follows:

- To provide data for budget justification and support

- To enable an agency to appropriately allocate its resources

- To enhance agency accountability.

Once time requirements for various agency functions have been ascertained, the data can be used to determine staffing requirements for the organization. Funding bodies unwilling to accept caseload ratios as the basis for an agency's budget may be more predisposed to accept a budget based on the time required to complete mandated functions.

Workload systems should not be used for budget purposes only. The data suc systems generate can be of substantial assistance to the agency in allocating it limited resources. A thorough workload analysis will indicate, for example, the number of pre-sentence investigations that can be completed by each staff person in a given month. It will also indicate how many cases of which type an officer can appropriately supervise at a given time, as well as the amount of time required by other agency functions. Thus, administrators can assign staff to each unit, office, or area based on the total workload each represents.

If used appropriately, workload systems can greatly increase accountability at all levels of the organization. The processes and reports required for workload accounting and management purposes also serve as a means for monitoring performance. This can be accomplished at the individual officer, unit, district, or agency level. In an era characterized by management objectives, sunset provisions, zero-based budgeting, and diminishing resources, agencies will be increasingly required to justify their existence. While workload systems often provide budget analysts with an inside view of agency operations, this potential threat is more than offset by the opportunities they offer administrators to monitor, evaluate, and take corrective action where appropriate.

THE RELATIONSHIP OF WORKLOAD TO OTHER MANAGEMENT CONCEPTS

Agencies usually undertake the development of workload systems in conjunction with other management concepts. For example, workload is a natural enhancement to classification. The integration of classification and workload systems provides administrators with invaluable data for planning, budgeting, and resource deployment. In addition, each system provides a rationale for the other. Classification is based on the premise that different clients require different levels of supervision; workload systems provide the quantitative measures that translate supervision requirements into budget and deployment formulas.

Agencies interested in either classification or workload systems must first address the need to develop standards for all agency functions. Standards represent both the quantity and quality control measures of an organization. They are generally developed as precise written statements that outline the minimum performance requirements for supervision, investigations, case planning, auditing, and other agency responsibilities. Neither classification nor workload have meaning unless related to specified standards. Considerable emphasis should therefore be given to their development, including, at a minimum, the following points:

1. Standards should represent a level of quality of service mandated by the community, the courts, and/or the oversight agency.

2. Standards should reflect reasonable requirements; minimum expectations must be attainable or the standards become meaningless. In jurisdictions that are significantly understaffed, points 1 and 2 are often in conflict. In such instances, point 2 should take precedence and the difference documented in reports to the appropriate funding or oversight agencies.

3. Standards must be measurable. Minimum expectations should be quantified and/or clearly defined.

4. Finally, standards must be monitored and enforced if the agency wishes to be recognized as a responsible and accountable entity.

This need for monitoring, evaluation, and accountability often results in agencies developing or enhancing existing information systems to augment workload and classification systems. In large agencies, computerization of workload data is a necessity; in smaller organizations, it is simply a preferred method o operation. With or without automation, both the scheduling and content of management reports are often altered substantially due to the implementation of workload system.

The change in emphasis from caseload to workload should be reflected in every agency office. Responsibilities assigned to clerical staff and first-line supervisors can be altered by workload systems. Changes for clerical staff are often minimal, with new assignments generally limited to the area of workload accounting. Changes for supervisors, however, can be substantial. The new workload management system often impacts on case assignments, case audits, reports to administrators, and staff allocation within each unit. New training programs may be needed to ensure understanding and appropriate use of the workload system by first-line supervisors.

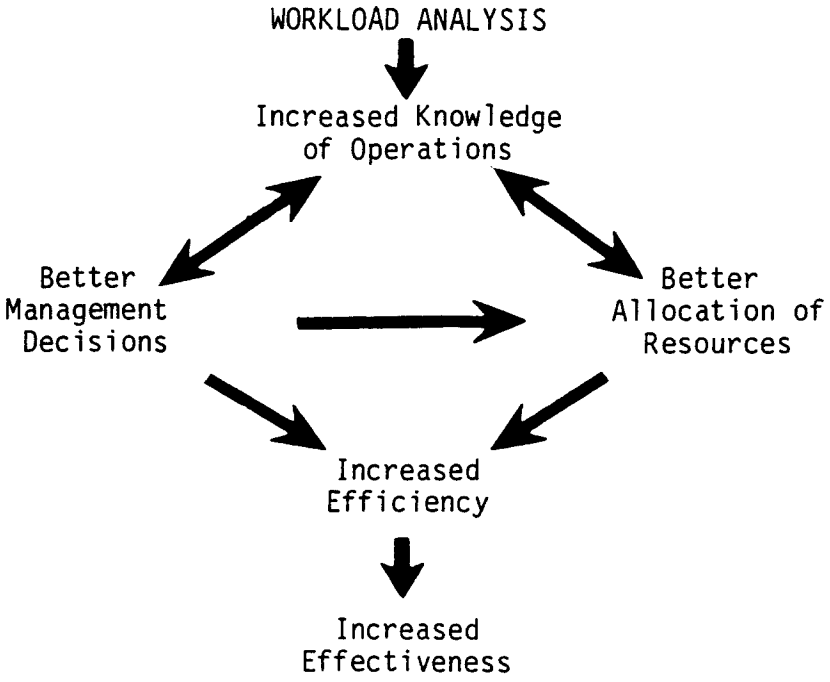
In summation, workload systems are integrally related to the classification systems, agency standards, management information systems, and training programs of any probation and parole agency. Careful integration of these processes can greatly enhance agency efficiency.

RECENT INTEREST IN WORKLOAD SYSTEMS

Interest in workload studies and systems has increased dramatically in recent years, due mainly to the deteriorating fiscal situations facing most correctional administrators. When agencies are forced to cut staff and services administrators need accurate indications of what reductions will mean to each section of the organization. What were previously viewed as in-house grumblings (e.g., which unit has more work -- the investigation or supervision unit) can become serious confrontations. Administrators need to prioritize all agency functions and estimate minimal staffing requirements in essential areas. At thi point, a thorough workload analysis can prove to be invaluable, providing data for difficult decisions.

Administrators in agencies not facing cutbacks in staff and other resources have also become increasingly aware that time studies and the resulting workload systems can provide substantial information for management decisions. Time studies often reveal that widely accepted assumptions regarding agency operations are erroneous. For instance, certain functions are often thought to consume large amounts of officer time because of the notoriety or pressure associated with them. Time studies may document that, in actuality, only a smal percentage of total time is spent on such functions. By identifying how much time is consumed by paperwork and other administrative tasks, time studies also often lead to procedural changes designed to make more appropriate use of office time.

In general, the operational goals of workload analyses can be schematically illustrated as follows:



Subsequent chapters of this report describe the development of various types of probation and parole workload systems and their use in relation to the above goals.

2. COMMON ELEMENTS OF EXISTING WORKLOAD SYSTEMS

The reason for increased interest in a workload approach to probation and parole management is evident. The need is to organize, define, document, and quantify agency functions objectively: What is it that officers do? What should they do more or less of? Where should agency resources be redeployed or increased? What cuts will produce the least amount of harm?

Organizing, documenting, and quantifying agency resource needs have usually been accomplished by various types of time studies. Marvin Mundell points out that "motion and time studies assume there is a best way that can be learned through the application of scientific principles."[3] However, conducting a time study is not enough to move from a caseload to a valid and viable workload system. Most agencies have recognized the need to establish agencywide standards of operation, implement formal case classification procedures, and initiate compliance monitoring systems to enhance accountability.

Identifying the "best way" to supervise clients requires the agency to set policy based on agency priorities and staff capabilities. Since the "best way" varies among agencies, it is inappropriate to adopt the results of one system as a standard. Nevertheless, experience indicates that agencies can use a standard process to develop their own workload system. This process includes classification, time study, and workload reporting.

CLASSIFICATION

The President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice (1967) stated that:

> Differential treatment of offenders according to their individual needs is fundamental to the corrections task....Clearly the value of differential treatment requirements is that probation manpower ratios vary directly with the kind and amount of services to be performed.[4]

The American Bar Association agreed, adding:

> The conclusion is not only...that a sound probation service should have the capacity to employ differential caseloads and differential treatment based on the characteristics of probated offenders, but that more attention must be devoted to identification of those offenders most likely to respond to one type of program as opposed to another.[5]

The two most commonly stated goals of probation/parole agencies are, first, protecting the public, and second, providing resources to effect rehabilitation of clients. While all agencies attach importance to these goals, the relative emphasis attached to each varies. At one end of the spectrum are agencies that do not formally classify probationers or parolees. These agencies rely on the experience and intuition of officers to provide appropriate levels of service; hence, a single supervision requirement is applied to all clients. Other systems have moved a step beyond this and classify clients at levels of anticipated service or surveillance requirements (e.g., intensive vs. regular, maximum, medium, minimum, etc.). Some agencies, however, have no explicitly stated classification criteria; therefore, methods of determing the appropriate supervision levels are based on essentially the same techniques mentioned above -- officer experience and intuition.

Undoubtedly, there are officers who are very skilled at making such differentiations without the assistance of formal measuring instruments. However, such skill is not easily attained or taught, and it requires that officers appropriately weigh factors such as agency priorities, client needs, and the relative risk each client represents to the community.

Agencies dissatisified with this informal method identify three major impediments to moving toward more formal systems:

1. The perception that an officer's ability to determine his own caseload priorities must be maintained. To suggest another approach is viewed as a challenge to professional and individual autonomy.

2. Lack of faith in the ability of a formal system to classify clients reliably and validly.

3. The increased paperwork involved in formal systems.

There are no easy rebuttals to these arguments. However, a significant and growing number of agencies have moved beyond informal classification while maintaining the traditional agency goals of public protection and client rehabilitation. The methods usually employed are a system for measuring the probability of continuing legal problems (i.e., risk) and a system for measuring clients' service requirements (i.e., needs). The importance attached to either of these methods in determining supervision level is defined by agency priorities.

Classification Models

It is not necessary to develop your own classification system. Much of the groundwork has already been done. The agencies visited during the preparation of this report employed formal classification systems that by no means exhaust the list of existing systems. The key is to choose a system that best "fits" the agency philosophy and adapt it to complete the "fit."

A survey conducted by the American Justice Institute, for example, indicated that there is a consistent set of factors that appears on most validated risk instruments.[6] The study, conducted by Don and Steve Gottfredson, also concluded that, of the scales tested, the complexity or degree of sophistication had no effect on the validity of the scale. It should be stressed that the study does not grant validity to every risk scale regardless of its design. It does suggest that sophisticated research capability may not be necessary to develop a valid risk scale.

Florida's classification model is based on the length of time the client has been on supervision. All clients are maximum for the first 90 days and are automatically reduced one level of supervision annually unless the supervising officer obtains approval to increase or maintain the current level. This method was chosen for two reasons. First, historical data has shown that if clients re-offend, they do so in the first three to six months; second, this method significantly reduced the potential for manipulation of workload by the supervising officer.

Wisconsin's classification model includes risk and needs instruments. The risk scale was developed using multiple regression to identify and weight client characteristics and criminal experiences that best predicted future criminal behavior. The needs scale was developed by committees of supervising officers who identified the frequency of client needs and the resources needed to service them. Supervising officers compute the initial client risk and needs assessments within 30 days of sentence. They then reassess risk and needs at six-month intervals to place the client in the most appropriate supervision level. The system resulted from a legislative mandate and was developed with LEAA funds.

Ohio started with the Wisconsin model and reconstructed the regression analysis and needs survey using data from its own clients. The resulting risk and needs scales vary only slightly from the Wisconsin scales.

Oregon uses a risk-only classification model. Its history of risk scale was developed for use by the parole board and is also used at sentencing. Supervision level is determined by using a matrix format to record the extent of criminal history and seriousness of the offense. Clients are reassessed at six-month intervals until the client reaches level 4, or minimal supervision, at which point the officer cannot raise the supervision level of the client. All misdemeanant offenders are automatically classified type 4. The risk-only model is used because reductions in agency resources forced management to chose surveillance over service delivery.

Missouri developed and validated the Client Analysis Scale (CAS) to classify clients. The CAS is also designed to provide a means for the officer to assess the client's current life situation. The scale has six elements: two criminal behavior items and four needs items. The officers classify the client at admission and then reassess at 90-day intervals. Funding for the development of the CAS was provided by LEAA.

Policy Decisionmaking

Once classification scales or devices are selected, the first component of a workload system is partially complete. The weaving of classification into case processes requires policy decisions on frequency of assessment and client contact. Policy and procedures involving classification, early termination, and minimum supervision are also usually considered. In any event, the process may require substantial change in an agency's procedures. Since change is often resisted, officers and supervisors as well as administrators and judges should be involved in the decisionmaking.

The importance of involving all segments of the system is best illustrated by the experiences of Oregon and Florida. The State of Oregon implemented a classification/workload system, but apparently gave insufficient attention to some components of the criminal justice system. As a result, the officers' union filed an unfair labor practices complaint against the Division of Corrections, and the district attorneys are fighting the system as well. The controversy centers around the policy that all misdemeanants are automatically classified type 4, or minimum supervision. This is unfortunate because the classification system uses a valid risk assessment scale, and the workload indices used are reasonably consistent with those devised by other agencies. Had probation officers and district attorneys been more completely involved, perhaps compromises could have been made and an effective system developed.

Florida, on the other hand, not only involved related components of the criminal justice system (a 15-member judicial panel), but also piloted the project in one region to obtain line staff input. As a result, the system is accepted by all segments. The probation and parole program director believes the project was instrumental in increasing the staff by 129 positions during fiscal 1981-1982 and in obtaining the governor's recommendation for an additional 281 positions in fiscal 1982-1983.

By involving all segments of the system, an agency not only creates better communication about its supervision priorities and practices, but also instills ownership. Regardless of the similarities between your "home-grown" system and some other "ideal" system, developing ownership increases understanding and may increase compliance and acceptance by officers, supervisors, and administrators.

A major part of any classification effort is the definition of the differentiated contact or service standards attached to each level of supervision. In agencies that have successfully implemented a workload process, these are usually defined as minimum contact standards -- that is, having successfully measured those clients who represent a higher risk and/or need, officer time and agency resources will be appropriately employed to meet differential case requirements. Minimum contact standards represent the lowest level of service the agency deems appropriate for clients at a specific supervision level.

Many officers perceive minimum standards as a challenge to their professionalism and autonomy. However, minimum standards can allow individual officers sufficient latitude to exercise professional judgment. For example, agencies cognizant of the advantages of officer professionalism and autonomy may set a minimum frequency of contact (quantity), but leave the intent or style of contact (quality) up to the discretion of the supervising officer.

WORKLOAD MEASUREMENT

We assume that officers have a relatively fixed amount of total time available and that job tasks must be completed in an identifiable time frame. It is imperative, then, that some measurement of work time be conducted in order to illustrate the relationship between job requirements (workload) and time available.

Importance of Time Concept

One underlying motive for attempting to identify "ideal" caseload size or "ideal" workload is the premise that time devoted to the clients is related to outcomes. Administrators and practitioners have stressed that probation and parole systems would be more effective if caseloads were reduced. A substantial amount of research has been conducted to study the relationship between caseload size and outcome. The Special Intensive Parole Unit (SIPU) efforts in California produced some interesting results. Phases I and II of the project illustrated that reduced caseloads showed no significant difference in outcome compared to regular, larger caseloads.[7] However, Phase III of the project showed a significantly better outcome in the lower caseload groups at both the 12- and 24-month followup. In addition, it was reported that:

> Reduced caseloads showed the best results with medium-risk parolees, rather than with the best or poorest risks. These findings supported the impression that the effect of caseload size was not a simple function of numbers, but the consequence of various kinds of interactions.[8]

SIPU IV was designed to identify the interactions alluded to in Phase III. After five years, the major conclusion was that

> ...the only variable that made a real difference in parole outcome was the amount of time the parole agent had to devote to supervision.[9]

As a result, the Parole Work Unit Program was begun in 1965 in an attempt to introduce new concepts into caseload management. Special attention was placed on two concepts in particular:

1. Supervision of each parolee in accordance with service needs, and

2. Allowing agents sufficient time to accomplish the tasks required of them.

Thus, attention was shifting from numbers of cases to time required to meet the special requirements of the individuals.

Combining classification and work measurement provides information essential to the workload approach: Classification systems identify specific needs of clients and assess the risk they represent to the community, while work measurement translates the need for services and surveillance into time requirements. To accomplish this, the work measurement study must accurately identify the amount of time an officer needs to supervise cases and complete investigations. The approach used to identify time needed is critical to the functional use of any workload system.

Time Studies

Probation and parole systems have carried out time studies for a variety of reasons. Some have employed this technique to determine what the "typical" field agent does. Others have used time studies to assist in prioritizing agency operations.

The previously cited quote by Marvin Mundel alluded to the relationship between time studies and scientific principle. The experience of many agencies contacted, however, recalls the words of Mark Twain:

> There is something fascinating about science. One gets such wholesale returns of conjecture out of such a trifling investment of fact.
>
> ("The Damned Human Race," in Letters From the Earth)

Application of the "scientific method" is no guarantee that the results will reflect agency workload. Since communication between administrators and researchers is often inadequate, and their perspectives so different, it is easier to find studies that employ methodologies designed to measure a theoretical "concept" of time rather than the time measurement needed to reflect workload.

There are two basic methods, or concepts, for measuring work time -- descriptive and prescriptive. A descriptive method is one that measures how long it takes the worker to finish the task or activity. Officer activities may include such categories as face-to-face contacts, collateral contacts, court time, travel time, staff meetings, investigations, etc., with the output reported as a percentage of total time or as average time per task.

It is important to understand that the unit of analysis in a descriptive study is the officer day. This approach assumes that the officer will allocate the appropriate amount of time necessary to complete the required functions. If the officer's workload is realistic, this assumption has some merit. But the influence of understaffing on a descriptive time study can be profound. While it is reasonable to expect professionals to exceed 40 hours a workweek, it is not reasonable to expect overtime to be consistently required. In his analysis of a Florida workhour study, Rousch clearly presents the officers' response to continued overwork:

> The only logical courses of action available are to omit certain tasks from each case or perform tasks in less than a complete manner. Many of the tasks involved contain immediate feedback devices...reports...appearance before judicial bodies, monies to be recovered.... Obviously, if such "self test" tasks were omitted, the system would receive an immediate alert in terms of nonperformance with its attendant negative connotations. Other tasks involved, however, have no such immediate feedback mechanisms. These tasks could be omitted therefore with greatly reduced opportunity for discovery. Such tasks abound in...supervision and administrative categories.... Therefore to assign an unrealistic workload to a professional is to invite nonconformance in such areas.[10/]

A common approach to computing the amount of time required to complete a pre-sentence report, for example, is to simply sum the amount of time needed to complete all required tasks within that function. If the officer is overworked, it is very likely that some of the tasks will be either omitted or incomplete. Therefore, the study will not give an accurate statement of the time required to complete the task adequately. What one has measured is time allocated to complete each task, not time needed.

Prescriptive time studies approach the problem from a different perspective. In a prescriptive study, minimum standards of performance are established and must be met if a case or investigation is to be included in the study. Thus the unit of analysis is the client or investigation practice, rather than the officer day. Comparing actual performance to required standards allows for deletion of records where standards were not met. Therefore, an agency can determine the amount of time needed to meet the minimum standards established by the agency.

Time studies do not win popularity contests. Even a study designed to be as unobtrusive as possible will meet resistance. As a result, one is tempted to "borrow" work units from a similar jurisdiction or simply assign work units to

that jurisdiction's supervision levels or investigation types. This method may illustrate the difference between officer workloads if the clients are appropriately classified. However, the definition of a maximum workload cannot be accurately determined. In effect, the work unit system is still as arbitrary as caseload size, although points or units have replaced cases. This type of arbitrary determination of units retains the same flaw as caseload limits -- the impact of additional work cannot be articulated.

WORKLOAD REPORTING

To accurately budget for staff, deploy resources, and monitor field activity, a reporting network must be included in any workload system. A major complaint of field officers relates to workload reporting methods. Often, officers are required to report the numbers and types of cases and investigations they were involved with during the month. Officers usually do not complete the information on the same day or share the same method for accounting. But since they do share the irritation related to the paperwork, officers and administrators are skeptical of the statistical accuracy of the data.

Methods of Reporting

Satisfactory methods to report workload have been developed. These methods generally fall into two categories: 1) a "ledger," or manual tracking system, generally kept by clerical staff, and 2) a computerized workload accounting system that is programmed into an agency's management information system.

The "ledger" system requires that a clerical person in each office keep a separate list of clients and their corresponding workload points for each officer. These lists are updated as the status of the client changes. At the end of every month, a summary of each officer's workload is completed, sent to central office for processing, and returned to the unit supervisor to use in assigning cases during the following month. In addition, routine due dates for work related to specific supervision and investigation cases are kept on the ledger, and work due and overdue notices are sent to the officers and supervisors. The system is simple, cost efficient, and has been adapted by many agencies throughout the United States.

The Florida system is designed to have the officer's workload kept by its information system. This process is similar to the manual method used in Wisconsin, except that workload information is entered via terminal and included in the client information. The information system at any time can generate workload totals for each officer or lists of work due that week or month.

Forms

Obviously, forms are required regardless of the method chosen. Existing forms can often be used or modified to notify a clerical or terminal operator of

a change in client status. An analysis of existing paperwork will be necessary to determine if new forms will be needed to allow each type of workload change to be identified.

For example, Wisconsin uses existing paperwork to notify their "ledger keeper" of new assignments, terminations, and other status changes. Wyoming, on the other hand, had to devise an alternative to adjusting paperflow to update its workload accounting system. While some forms are used, interoffice memos and phone calls provide timely information, whereas waiting for a form (e.g., court orders) may take months.

A manual ledger process can require a substantial amount of clerical time. Already-overburdened staff may be hard pressed to take on another function. Both Hennepin County (Minneapolis) and the State of Minnesota's response to this problem was to have supervisors complete the ledger, with some surprisingly positive results. Often, however, the workload accounting process can replace some existing in-house tracking system. Also, staff can be relieved of other functions that are not as valuable as the workload information.

The amount of time required to maintain the system will vary with the number of classifications and reporting dates monitored. Experience in Wisconsin indicates that approximately 15 to 20 minutes per eight officers per day are required, while Wyoming, which has one "ledger keeper" in Cheyenne, requires 4 hours per day to maintain a workload record for 35 officers.

There is no doubt that a computerized on-line method of workload accounting is the most efficient method. However, the cost can be prohibitive. Quality terminals can cost as much as $4,000 each, with programming and computer time an additional cost. In general, if the terminals are already or soon to be in use, it makes sense to use a computerized process. For example, Cuyahoga County (Cleveland, Ohio) programmed the capability for monitoring workload into its Probation Management Information System (PMIS) almost two years before the completion of its final workload system. Since the workload information is part of the PMIS, research and evaluation using workload as well as classification data is possible.

3. DECISIONS AND OPTIONS

A major intent of this study was to canvas existing workload systems in search of successful and promising methodologies that could be followed by other agencies desiring a workload system. As expected, a variety of approaches was found. While there are many consistencies, there are also significant differences. This chapter is devoted to identifying the major options available to probation and parole agencies.

In addition to the six agencies chosen for on-site analysis, Rock Island County (Rock Island, Illinois), Hennepin County (Minneapolis, Minnesota), and the States of Wyoming and Minnesota are used to illustrate decisions and options.

Decisions and options generally fall into three major areas:

- o Classification: the process used to identify and prioritize clients.
- o Workload Measurement: the methodology used to identify the relationship between time available and job requirements.
- o Workload Reporting: the process used to routinely monitor, maintain, and report agency workload.

CLASSIFICATION

Classification is the first decision point because the success of the workload system is directly related to a valid and reliable classification process.

Solomon and Baird point out that:

> ...corrections must recognize that classification is first and foremost a management tool. It should, in fact, be perceived as the veritable cornerstone of correctional administration. As a means of setting priorities, its purposes are to promote rational, consistent, and equitable methods of assessing the relative needs and risk of each individual, and then assign agency resources accordingly.[11]

Classification as it relates to workload requires six major decisions on the part of probation and parole agencies.

Classification Decision 1: Criteria Used to Determine Supervision Priority

OPTIONS
- Risk: Characteristics and criminal history of the client that make probability statement about the client's propensity for further criminal behavior. Examples include the Wisconsin and Ohio Risk Assessments and the California Base Expectancy Scales.
- Needs: Characteristics of the client that create a profile of the type and severity of specific needs. Examples of needs assessment instruments include those developed in Wisconsin, Ohio, and Missouri.
- Officer Impression: Impressions of the client based on officer experience, training, and professionalism.

CRITERIA USED TO DETERMINE SUPERVISION PRIORITY

	Fla.	Oreg.	Wis.	Mo.	Ohio	Federal	Rock Island County	Hennepin County	Wyo.	N
Risk	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	›
Need			x	x	x		x	x	x	›
Officer			x		x		x	x	x	›

Each of the agencies with the exception of Missouri includes a risk scale i its classification scheme. Although Florida does not employ a formal scale, it does classify cases based on the length of time on supervision, which is merely derivation of risk philosophy.

The utility of the needs scale is often a subject of debate. Experience ir Wisconsin indicates that risk and needs assessments designate the same supervision level in most instances. Others' experiences differ. For example, befor adopting its present system, Hennepin County (Minnesota) used a version of the California Base Expectancy Scale; officers and administrators complained that while the scale was a valid risk predictor, high-need clients, especially those with drug needs, were often misclassified to low supervision. Missouri's Case Assessment System is almost solely a needs-based system; this decision was made because the agency wanted a system of prioritizing clients as well as promoting and evaluating service delivery.

Classification Decision 2: Number of Supervision Levels

OPTIONS Two or More: We will assume that a single supervision level is out of the question. The actual number chosen is somewhat arbitrary, but it is recommended that an agency not choose more than four, as classification scales cannot differentiate client groups to that precision.

NUMBER OF SUPERVISION LEVELS UTILIZED

	Fla.	Oreg.	Wis.	Mo.	Ohio	Federal	Rock Island County	Hennepin County	Wyo.	Minn.
Two Levels						x				
Three Levels	x		x	x	x		x		x	
Four Levels		x						x		x

Three supervision levels is the most common choice. While there is no "scientific" logic that identifies three levels as best, there seems to be some acceptance of three levels by officers and administrators.

Classification Decision 3: Determination of Contact Standards

OPTIONS

- Face-to-Face Contacts -- Office: Probably the most common choice of any agency. Although practitioners contend that phone calls are often equally effective, office visits place more responsibility on the client.
- Home or Field Contacts: Often a controversial decision because of the travel time, number of non-positive contacts, and potential danger.
- Collateral Contacts: Any non-client contact by phone, mail, or in person. Also a very common requirement.

NUMBERS OF FACE-TO-FACE CONTACTS REQUIRED PER MONTH

Level of Supervision	Fla.	Oreg.	Wis.	Mo.	Ohio	Federal	Rock Island County	Hennepin County	Wyo.	Minn.
High	2	5	2	2	3	2	4	2/per 3 mo.	2	2
Medium	1	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1
Low	1	1	1/per 3 mo.	1/per 3 mo.	1/per 3 mo.		1	1	1/per 3 mo.	1/pe 3 mo
Minimum		1/per 3 mo.								

Wisconsin, Oregon, and Ohio have a home visit included in the fact-to-face contacts. The key for agencies is to determine standards that are realistic as well as measurable (e.g., a mandate for two face-to-face contacts per week is unrealistic). On the other hand, a standard of "two case contacts" per month ma be realistic but not precisely measurable.

Classification Decision 4: Establishing Cut-Off Scores

OPTIONS
- Distribution of Cases Method: This method requires that a random sample of the agency's cases be "classified" with the selected scales. When the scores are displayed as a frequency distribution, cut-off scores can be identified that will aggregate the agency caseload into a pre-determined distribution.
- Recidivism Method: With this method, cut-off scores are determined by comparing the rate of recidivism with the client's score. Cut-of scores are then chosen based on the recidivism level the agency can defend.

METHOD OF ESTABLISHING CUT-OFF SCORES

	Fla.	Oreg.	Wis.	Mo.	Ohio	Federal	Rock Island County	Hennepin County	Wyo.	Minn.
Distribution		x			x	*				
Recidivism	x		x	x			x	x	x	x

* Not known.

Classification Decision 5: Timing of Scale Completion

OPTIONS
- Pre-Sentence: Information needed to complete classification scales is often gathered at the pre-sentence stage. This is especially tru regarding the risk scale.
- Post-Sentence: Agencies that complete classification at the post-sentence stage often do so because it gives an officer more time to accurately complete the scale. Also, agencies that have separate PSI and supervision officers complete the scale post-sentence because they believe that the supervising officer should be responsible for the classification.

TIMING OF SCALE COMPLETION

	Fla.	Oreg.	Wis.	Mo.	Ohio	Federal	Rock Island County	Hennepin County	Wyo.	Minn.
-Sentence		x	x*		x	x				
-Sentence	x		x	x			x	x	x	x

x-Point of classification
*-Risk assessment only

While the point of completion ultimately depends on the agency's perspective and organizational structure regarding the two options above, there is one caution. It is tempting to complete the risk scale and include the results in the PSI. If this procedure is followed, be sure that judges understand that the scales place a client into a group and do not predict individual case outcome.

Classification Decision 6: Reassessment Schedule

OPTIONS
- No Reassessments: The client's initial classification will determine the supervision level for the entire period of supervision.
- Pre-Determined Intervals: Clients are assessed initially and then periodically reassessed. Reassessment can raise or lower supervision level and illustrate client progress while on supervision.

REASSESSMENT INTERVALS

	Fla.	Oreg.	Wis.	Mo.	Ohio	Federal	Rock Island County	Hennepin County	Wyo.	Minn.
3 Months				x						
6 Months		x	x		x		x	x	x	x
Annually	x							x*		
Client Not Reassessed						x				

*-Client reassessed annually after 24 months on supervision.

WORKLOAD MEASUREMENT

The method and process chosen at this stage can have long-term implications for an agency. Agencies have delved into workload systems assuming they could justify requests for additional staff only to find that the results of their workload analysis indicated that staff could be reduced. We do not mean to impl that a workload analysis should always show the agency to be understaffed. We d suggest that any agency intending to develop a workload system take the time needed to design a process that will accurately measure work. External agencies (e.g., budget offices and legislative bodies) are often interested in the study results, and accurate, credible data is essential whatever the motive for the study.

Seven major decisions must be made regarding workload measurement.

Workload Measurement Decision 1: Identifying Workload-Generating Functions

OPTIONS
- Supervision: In general, the number of supervision levels defines the workload-generating functions related to supervision. However, some consideration should be given to other client statuses while on supervision, such as absconders, jail cases, and transfers.
- Investigation: The most common functions in this area are pre- and post-sentence. In general, functions fit into this category if they require special reports from the officer. Examples include pre-parole, transfers from out-of-state, and expungements.
- Non-Direct Client Service: This category encompasses functions that officers perform that do not concern a specific case. Examples include court liaison and community service coordination.

Existing agency practices will often identify work-generating functions. An obvious source to use is the existing procedures or policy manual. In general, it is advantageous to combine functions when possible. The greater the number of separate functions studied, the greater the sample size requirements and difficulty of workload reporting.

Workload Measurement Decision 2: Time Study Methodology

OPTIONS
- Descriptive: Descriptive studies measure how officers spend their day. The unit of analysis is the officer day, which is usually broken into 10- or 15-minute intervals for measurement purposes.
- Prescriptive: Prescriptive (longitudinal) studies follow a sample of clients for a specific period of time, with a prescribed level of contact required for each case.

- Officer Survey: Officers are polled by mail or in person to estimate how much time it would take to supervise clients at a prescribed level and complete investigations that meet the agency's standard.

Descriptive time studies were completed by Missouri, Florida, and Ohio. In general, descriptive studies require officers to record the time spent on specific activities. An estimate of the amount of time spent (in minutes) is entered under an activity that best describes the function they are performing. On occasion, observers have been known to time an activity with a stopwatch, but such precision is generally uncomfortable for the participants and costly to the agency. (However, the stopwatch method was used in the Federal Probation Officer Time Study with some success.)

The Missouri and Ohio time studies offer good illustrations of descriptive methodologies. The Ohio study required that officers keep a daily log of their activities during four consecutive weeks; entries were activity-specific with start and finish times recorded for each occurrence of an activity. Missouri's descriptive methodology required each officer to record time by activity in 15-minute intervals on three randomly selected days during one month.

The process for constructing the amount of time spent by supervision levels varied considerably between the two jurisdictions. Since Ohio conducted its study over a one-month period, it was possible to report results not only by percent of time for each function but also as the average time per month for each supervision level. Because Missouri chose three random days in a month, the results had to be manipulated to calculate time in minutes from percentage of time, as follows:

1. Calculate the month-hours per task.

$$\text{Month-Hours per Task} = \text{Percent of Time on Task} \times \text{Hours Available per Month} \times \text{Average Number of Officers}$$

2. Calculate the average time per task.

$$\text{Average Time per Task} = \frac{\text{Month-Hours per Task (Step 1)}}{\text{Average Number of Tasks}}$$

Each methodology has strong and weak points. For example, although the data collected in Ohio required minimal recombination, a greater imposition was placed on officers there than by the Missouri study, which required more data recombination. Regardless of these issues, the practical use that can be made of such studies is limited by the overall problems of employing a descriptive time study with overburdened staff.

As stated earlier, the prescriptive approach focuses on the client. The general method of study is that each activity relating to a specific client is recorded by date, activity type, and amount of time spent. Time is often divide into contact time, recording time, and travel time. Only clients that are seen according to minimum standards are included in the analysis. Contact, recording and travel time are then summed and averaged for all clients on which standards were met. This was essentially the strategy chosen by Wisconsin and by Ohio in later study. Activities relating to a random sample of officers' clients were recorded and included in the analysis only if standards were met. Investigation were also sampled and scrutinized for content before inclusion.

Oregon used a combination of client sampling and survey techniques. It had carried out an earlier formal study whose results had been rejected by the legislature as a basis for workload budgeting. Ten years later, when legislativ interest in workload budgeting was revived, a decision was made to use the previously collected data since they were similar to results obtained in Wisconsin and Florida. Administrators and supervisors were also asked to estimate the time required for activities that had not been included in the original time study. This method, chosen because of time constraints, will likely require some type of validation study.

As with the descriptive approach, there are advantages and disadvantages to a prescriptive time study using the officer self-report format. The advantages are that recombination of data is minimal and that time is related to standards, thereby implying performance and accountability. The disadvantage is that it is possible to underestimate the actual time spent. Having met the major standards and documenting those, officers may neglect to document the indirect time they spend on a specific case.

A noteworthy attempt to do a time study that minimized the data collection task of agents was made in Ohio. This Ohio study used regression analysis to determine the relationship between payroll hours, criminal justice contacts, collateral contacts, and mileage records. Because all of these data were routinely available, no extra recording was necessary. However, the analysts concluded that regression failed to provide any information regarding the relationship between work activity and time worked.

Three problems were identified with the study: 1) Insufficient variation was found in the amount of time worked, 2) data values were found to have a statistically non-normal distribution, and 3) dependent variables were influenced by the independent variables. Although the results of this particular time study were not positive, the effort was both creative and noteworthy and ma still hold some future promise.

Workload Measurement Decision 3: Sampling

OPTIONS • Client Sample: Necessary for prescriptive studies. Clients are randomly selected, either manually or by computer, from officer-specific lists.

- Officer Sample: Optional for both descriptive and prescriptive studies. Large agencies will use this option most often to measure urban/rural discrepancies and other demographic variances. Medium to small agencies (less than 100 officers) will need to include each officer in some phase of the study.

In a true random sample, each individual must have an equal chance of being selected. Reality may dictate that true random samples are not practical. For example, if officers are sampled, care must be taken to ensure that specialized workloads (drug, alcohol, supervised release, etc.) are included. Client samples must not oversample clients who require little or no activity (banked caseloads, unsupervised probation, etc.)

Workload Measurement Decision 4: Length of Study

OPTIONS
- Specified Days: Officers complete the time study for a representative sample of days.

- Supervision Cycle: Officers complete the time study on selected cases for one supervision cycle. A supervision cycle is defined as the longest length of time before a major contact between officer and client is required.

The "specified days" option is used with descriptive studies. If this method is chosen, be sure an appropriate mix of beginning and ending weekdays and weeks of the month is selected to ensure that a representative sample of days is studied.

The "supervision cycle" option is the choice with prescriptive/ longitudinal studies. Investigations studied are followed from assignment to completion, not by supervision cycle.

Workload Measurement Decision 5: Data Collection

OPTIONS
- After Study is Completed: Officers hold all time study forms until the study has been completed.

- Periodically During the Study: At pre-determined dates, officers forward partially completed time study forms for preliminary analyses.

Collection of data forms at the end of the study usually results in a deluge of paper and may overburden the staff assigned to editing and data entry. Periodic data collection serves to even out the burden on research staff and allows for monitoring of coding requirements. The drawbacks to periodic collection are that forms get lost or only partial sets are returned; thus a master list must be kept to monitor data collection.

Workload Measurement Decision 6: Data Analysis

OPTIONS
- Function-Specific: The unit of analysis is the officer. Time is usually broken down by office visits, home visits, phone calls, etc. Most common with descriptive methods, but possible with prescriptive methods.

- Client/Investigation-Specific: The unit of analysis is the investigation or client. Controls may be made for clients and investigations that have not met agency standards.

Early time studies analyzed the officer by proportion of time spent on various activities. The value of this type of analysis is that it may illuminate discrepancies between agency intent and practice. For example, if the intent of the agency is to provide direct surveillance and the study indicates that only 10% of available time is spent on that function, action may be taken to resolve the problem.

Client/investigation-specific studies can provide a functional analysis as well as a unit analysis that lends itself to internal resource allocation and funding.

Workload Measurement Decision 7: Determining Hours Available

OPTIONS
- Vacation, Sick Leave, Holidays: This information is routinely available from personnel. However, a decision must be made whether to deduct time earned or time used.

- Agency Expectations: These include hours available for officer training, program development, personal time, and administrative tasks.

The following table illustrates a range of decisions made by other agencies that have implemented workload systems. The TOTAL HOURS column is obtained by multiplying the number of hours worked per week by 52.2 weeks per year. Each agency can define its own time deductions and estimate or time-study those areas. Regardless, be sure that each of the deductions chosen can be defended.

DETERMINATION OF HOURS AVAILABLE

	Florida	Wisconsin	Missouri	Oregon	Ohio	Federal
TOTAL HOURS	2,088	2,088	2,016	2,088	2,088	2,088
Subtract: Vacation, sick leave, holidays	232	259	120	234	240	306
Subtotal	1,856	1,829	1,896	1,854	1,848	1,782
Subtract: Training		138				
Program development		128	264			
Personal time		110				
Administrative tasks		55	228	132	133	26
	-0-	431	492	395	381	26
TOTAL AVAILABLE HOURS	1,856	1,398	1,404	1,459	1,467	1,756
HOURS PER MONTH	154.7	116.5	117	121.6	122.2	146.3

WORKLOAD REPORTING

Routine reporting and use of workload data are necessary to monitor agency needs as well as maintain the integrity of the workload system. Efficient workload reporting systems can serve officers by distributing new work assignments equally; supervisors, by monitoring unit or regional demands and compliance; and administrators, by providing timely information for budgeting, planning, and evaluation.

Three major decisions are required.

Workload Reporting Decision 1: Recordkeeping Medium

OPTIONS
- Computerized: Many agencies have computerized systems in place that are designed to monitor many or all of the activities used to calculate workload.
- Manual: Agencies that have no computer capability or cannot afford to update a present system to include workload may choose to have supervisory or clerical staff keep workload records.
- Manual Recording with a Computerized Summary: Workload data are maintained manually but are analyzed and summarized by computer.

Most agencies have in place a systematic method for retrieving caseload and investigation totals. Often an existing system or derivation of it may be used to report workload. However, modifications are usually required if data on work due and overdue are to be maintained.

Workload Reporting Decision 2: Frequency of Summary Reporting

OPTIONS
- Weekly: Agencies experiencing high volume and client turnover may need to summarize workload on a weekly basis to assign new cases appropriately.
- Monthly: Officer, unit, and agency workload is summarized to assign new cases and allocate staff. Agencies with an even flow of workload may summarize workload monthly and still assign new work equitably.
- Quarterly: Most agencies experience peaks and valleys of workload. While more frequent summaries may be needed to assign new work, quarterly summaries may be more accurate for budget purposes.

More than one of the above options may be appropriate. For example, to assign new work, a supervisor may need his or her unit summaries on a weekly basis; management may prefer monthly or quarterly summaries.

Workload Reporting Decision 3: Assignment of Reporting Function

OPTIONS

- Clerical: Many would argue that since workload reporting is based on forms processing, etc., it is a clerical function. In most instances, clerical staff either initiate or process the paperwork used to update workload.

- Supervisors: The workload reporting system can be used as an unobtrusive audit by supervisors to monitor compliance with reassessment schedules, PSI due dates, and other routine reports. In many agencies, the supervisor already has some sort of system in place to monitor officer activity.

Both options are reasonable alternatives. As previously mentioned, Hennepin County (Minneapolis, Minnesota) and the Minnesota Department of Corrections have supervisors trained to maintain the workload reporting. Wisconsin, on the other hand, has at least one clerical per unit designated as "ledger keeper" to maintain workload reporting.

The decisions and options presented in this chapter are not intended to function as an exhaustive list of the decisions to be made and options available for every agency. Numerous exceptions exist, based on staff limitations, time, financial constraints, and policy. However, we believe that addressing these decisions and considering these options will bring to light the problems to be faced while developing your own workload system.

Chapter 4 and the appendices contain recommendations on how to proceed with a workload development project.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

WORKLOAD ANALYSIS GUIDELINES

The following guidelines are presented to assist agencies interested in establishing a workload system. They are offered as a practical approach to the measurement of workload and the subsequent use of the information that workload systems generate. The guidelines are based on the collective experiences of the authors and the administrators, researchers, and line staff interviewed during the course of this project.

1. The goals and objectives of the workload analysis should be stated explicitly.

A workload analysis can be undertaken for budget development and support purposes, for staff and resource deployment, or simply to describe the activities of the agency in order to identify potential problems and inefficiencies.

Most agencies initiate workload studies to determine the number of staff needed to accomplish all functions mandated by the funding body or oversight agency. In effect, such studies are statements that an agency will perform at a certain level if it is provided with sufficient staff. Further, the agency is accountable for that level of service through the articulation of specific work standards that are explicitly defined and measurable, and can therefore be audited.

A workload analysis provides several primary benefits:

- A method for determining the number of line staff needed based on work requirements, rather than on tenuously supported caseload ratios.
- A method for deploying staff among various operational units based on work requirements, rather than on volume of cases.
- Recognition that investigations are legitimate work activities with their own time requirements and should not be included within a fixed case ratio.
- A method for analyzing changing work demands over time and projecting future work demands based on past trends.

The remaining guidelines are based on the assumption that the workload analysis is being undertaken for budgeting and deployment purposes.

2. Take the necessary time to plan the project adequately.

Conversion to a workload system must be an agencywide effort. While it will affect the agency's operation at all levels, it will impact most heavily on line officers, who may have to shed some traditional approaches and habits. A workload system will also move the agency toward more uniform performance of job functions, though it by no means will dictate the style or techniques of supervision. Experience indicates that staff participation in the developmental stages of the project can help ensure their acceptance of the study's results.

It is often beneficial to form a committee that includes unit supervisors and line staff, as well as administrators and researchers. Such a committee would be responsible for developing the workload analysis project for the agency. It would recommend ways to implement the workload system and strategies for continuing its operation after the developmental phase. Another important function would be to keep lines of communication open between probation/parole and other interested parties (e.g., judges, district attorneys).

Appendices A and B present an outline for developing a workload project and sample 12-month implementation plans.

3. Identify data needs and define functions and activities accordingly.

A thorough analysis of agency data requirements is crucial to identifying and defining the primary functions of line staff. These functions usually fall under the general categories of investigation and supervision, which are too general to be of use in a workload formula. Therefore, each category must be broken down into specific types.

Investigations are usually easy to identify by type. For example, presentence, social history, and pre-parole reports are common and distinct types. Investigations can be further broken down by client contact time, court time, recording time, etc.

The supervision function must also be defined by type. Where classification systems are in place, it is easy to relate time to level of supervision. However, most agencies desire additional breakdowns, especially if regional or urban/rural distinctions are contemplated. In addition, agencies usually want to identify travel time, time spent in face-to-face client contacts, collateral contacts, case planning, and other activities.

Each function or activity identified must be defined as mutually exclusive. The more extensive the list of functions, the more complicated the recording of activities becomes. Therefore, the need for additional functions/activities is included in the study.

4. The workload analysis should be based on a longitudinal time study. Recording should be done by line officers.

A longitudinal time study follows a supervision case for a specific length of time, and an investigation from assignment to completion. The officer records the total time -- including travel time, recording time, court time, waiting time, etc. -- required by the case or investigation. Time is recorded for each activity on the case or investigation, regardless of whether it occurs during regular or non-regular working hours.

As indicated earlier, a prescriptive time study determines the amount of time required to meet supervision or investigation standards, not time spent in a typical work day or to complete certain tasks. Ideally, the length of the longitudinal study should coincide with the period needed to make a face-to-face contact with the lowest-level supervision cases. For example, if the lowest-level cases are seen every other month, the study would cover a two-month period for all levels of supervision. This avoids the confusion of ending the study at different times for different levels. It also permits the study to capture time spent on the lowest-level cases during the off-contact month.

There are obvious limits to how long a time study should run -- any study that exceeds three months stretches the patience of participating staff. There is a natural resistance and resentment among line staff to any time study effort, and imposing one for an extended period invites outright rebellion. Cases with infrequent contacts (less than 1 per 3 months) are better handled by administrative estimates of time requirements than by a study that attempts to capture a very minimal amount of activity.

The longitudinal nature of the study dictates that activities be timed and recorded by participating officers. While self-reporting can result in some misrepresentation of activities, experience indicates that this can be minimized through a thorough orientation process. Staff must be aware of the study's goals and objectives and the implications of over- or under-recording of activities. In the interest of accuracy, staff should be assured that the data will not be used to evaluate individual performance, but will be aggregated and presented as unit, district, or state averages. An example of a self-reporting time study form is presented in Appendix C.

5. The study should be piloted with a small representative sample of officers.

A two-week pilot of the study with 10 to 20 officers is invaluable. Input from this group can help to alleviate problems with instructions, definitions, and forms. The pilot will also be of considerable help in developing an orientation and training program for the general study.

6. Select a representative sample of cases for inclusion in the study. Base the total sample size on the number of anticipated breakdowns.

The study should include a random sample of cases. Large samples produce more defensible results, while very small samples have little or no statistical validity. Agencies conducting workload analyses should design the studies to include at least 100 cases per breakdown required. For example, if an agency uses three supervision levels and anticipates presenting separate results for three districts, nine different analyses will be conducted and 1,350 cases will be needed for the complete analysis.

Agencies should also anticipate that some cases initially included in the study will not produce useable data. This occurs when cases are transfered, revoked, or discharged soon after the study begins. Cases for which agency standards have not been met must also be deleted (see guideline 7). For these reasons, approximately 20% more cases should be included in the original sample than are necessary to produce valid, reliable results.

Very small agencies will rarely be able to meet the criterion of 100 cases per breakdown without significantly overburdening staff. In such instances, up to 50% of the total caseload should be studied, and the amount of recording -- functions, activities, time categories -- should be minimized.

7. Agencies thought to be understaffed must be careful not to measure the "status quo."

Most probation and parole agencies are experiencing increases in caseloads and, as a result, find it difficult to meet mandated requirements. Since the primary purpose of a workload analysis is to identify the number of staff required to meet agency standards, officers should be instructed to expend all efforts necessary to meet agency requirements and the particular needs of each case included in the time study (even to the detriment of other functions not included in the study). This is an extremely important study parameter. Without such instructions, time spent on each case or investigation may be severely constrained by current conditions; as a result, the study will merely describe the status quo rather than reflect resource needs. Studies that simply reflect current conditions rather than needs are of little or no value in budget development.

8. Select a time period for the study that will best reflect "normal" agency workload and activities.

In selecting the months in which to conduct a time study, the following criteria should be followed.

A. Avoid transition periods. If the need for the workload study is the result of initiation of a new classification system or other changes in agency standards, the time study should not begin until these procedures have been fully implemented and staff and clients have adjusted to the new requirements. Experience indicates that two to three months are usually required for such adjustment.

B. Avoid major vacation or holiday periods. During the month of December, the number of new cases assigned and the number of presentence reports requested decrease substantially in many jurisdictions. This is due to courts being closed as judges take vacations to coincide with the holiday season. Similarly, June, July, and August are not ideal months for a time study in most agencies because of officers' vacations. As a result, the number of "officer months" represented in the study can be reduced significantly.

9. Train, monitor, and edit.

Staff participating in the time study must be thoroughly trained to ensure the most accurate records possible. Training should include information on the purpose(s) of the study; interpretation of function, activities, and instructions; and a complete explanation of coding requirements and the need for accuracy.

Monitoring the study to discover misconceptions, errors, and omissions as early as possible is equally crucial. A sample of time study records should be checked periodically during the course of the study to ensure compliance with instructions. It is also beneficial to contact participating officers at various times during the study to deal with problems and misconceptions.

Finally, all time study forms should be edited by someone knowledgable about the study's design, purpose, and coding requirements before the forms are forwarded to data processing. Editing will reduce the data entry errors and produce a more accurate report.

WORKLOAD STAFFING AND BUDGET DEVELOPMENT

A well-designed time study will yield extensive amounts of data. In analyzing the data for budget or deployment purposes, the basic unit of analysis is the case or investigation. Means, medians, standard deviations, and other statistics that help determine the appropriate amount of time required by a particular type of case or investigation can be computed from the raw data.

Using the time study data, an agency can determine its current workload. Simply put, the number of cases in each supervision level or investigation type multiplied by its time requirement for one month yields the total workhours required for that month. The following example for an agency with two supervision levels and one type of investigation illustrates the point.

	Cases	Time Study Results		Total Hours Per Month
Level 1	500	x 3 Hours	=	1,500
Level 2	1,000	x 1 Hour	=	1,000
Pre-Sentence Investigations	100	x 10.5 Hours	=	1,050
				3,550

After determining the number of hours required by cases and investigations, the agency must now compute the number of hours available from each line officer. The typical officer is salaried for 40 hours per week, 52.2 weeks per year, or 2,088 hours. However, not all of this time is available to the agency. Deductions must be made for vacation, sick time, holidays, and personal leave. Experience indicates that the number of hours deducted for average "time off" ranges from 220 to 300 hours per year per officer. Personnel departments can usually furnish records for each employee for vacation, sick leave, etc., permitting the computation of agency averages.

After reducing the time available by subtracting the average time off, most agencies take an additional step and subtract the time required for non-case-related functions. Wisconsin, for example, considered all of the following before arriving at the number of hours available to each officer for supervision and/or investigations:

Professional Development - Time required for training (usually set by agency policy or personnel codes).

Community/Program Development - Defined as development and mobilization of resources to meet the needs of clients, this includes activities that further the image of probation/parole in the community or that strengthen working relationships with firms or other state and county agencies.

Administrative Tasks - Non-case-related paperwork (daily logs, expense accounts, survey forms, etc.)

Break Time - Established by union contract as two 15-minute breaks per day.

Total available time per officer is computed in the following manner.

Total Work Hours Per Year

less

Average vacation time
Average sick leave
Average personal leave
Holidays
Required training time, if any
Community/program development time, if any
Break time, if any
Administrative task time, if any

equals

Time Available Per Officer Per Year to Supervise Cases or Conduct Investigations

Since considerable variations exist among agencies in the number of holidays, amount of vacation time, and training and community participation requirements, the amount of time available for line officers to supervise cases or to conduct investigations also varies. Experience indicates, however, that a range from a low of 115 hours per month to a high of about 140 hours per month will include most agencies.

Returning to the example of a monthly workload of 3,550 hours, assume that an officer has 125 hours available for supervision and investigations. The agency would need 28.5 staff to perform all work at agency standards (3,550 ÷ 125). By function, the agency needs 12 staff for level 1 cases, 8 staff for leve 2 cases, and 8.5 staff for PSIs. If the agency has two or more units, comparison of the workload for each can be made to determine where staff should be placed.

The final requirement in a workload system is to develop a reporting process that tracks the classification and officer assignment of each case under supervision and records each investigation assignment. Unless an agency has a sophisticated computer operation with on-line entry of all changes in client status, it is best to rely on a manual reporting process. Manual "ledger" systems are very inexpensive and produce reasonably timely data. Such systems have been successfully used in many jurisdictions and seem to benefit large, small, urban, and rural agencies equally.

Basically, two documents are needed. The first is a ledger listing all cases supervised by each officer (see Appendix D). The ledger is set up to show the current classification of the case, its work value, and the next scheduled reporting activity. As cases or investigations are added to an officer's work assignments, they are listed on that officer's ledger. As cases terminate or

investigations are completed, they are removed from the ledger. The second document is a summary list by officer of all work assignments. The sample summary report in Appendix E, for example, lists the number of cases in each supervision level, the number of investigations assigned, and any other work assignments that are tracked.

Since the results of the time study are in minutes or fractions of hours, it is often beneficial to determine "points," or work units, for each of the officer activities used to compute workload. A simple method is as follows.

- Assign a value of 1 point to the average time needed to supervise a minimum case.
- Divide all other results by the average time for a minimum case and round to the nearest whole number.
- Divide the total time available for supervision by the average time for a minimum case to yield the total number of points composing a full workload.

It is important to note that points are to be used for general comparison or for assigning work. Budget requests should use the more precise "time" values (see Appendix F for sample workload budgets).

APPENDIX A

WORKLOAD DEVELOPMENT PROJECT - Outline

1. Define the meaning and purpose of a workload system.

2. Form a core group of staff from all levels of the agency -- line staff, middle management, administration.

3. The group must define the primary work function of a line officer -- generally investigations and supervision.

   A. Types of investigations must be identified.

   B. A means for differentiating clients into separate supervision levels must be selected.

      1) Failure potential measured by risk scores or base expectancy tables.

      2) Social needs measured by a needs analysis scale.

      3) Combination of 1 and 2.

4. The group determines quantifiable and measurable standards for supervision of cases in each level. It also establishes qualitative standards of acceptability for each type of investigation if such standards do not exist.

   A. Supervision standards are usually expressed in terms of the number of face-to-face contacts per month between an officer and a client. Clients under intensive supervision may require several face-to-face contacts each month, while those in minimal supervision may have face-to-face contacts four times per year or less. Other face-to-face contacts may be substituted for standards as long as they are quantifiable and verifiable. Quantifiable standards are a management and budgeting tool and are not designed to be a substitute for the quality of case supervision.

   B. Qualitative standards for investigation should be defined in terms of content, organization, and timeliness so that some uniformity exists for each investigation type with respect to the required work effort.

5. Using the selected instruments to classify cases, complete a random sample of caseloads. Using this sample, determine cut-off scores for dividing the population into different supervision levels. The scores should be selected by considering the number of supervision levels and the contact standards established for each level. The amount of work generated is linked to the number of cases in each level and the standards for that level.

10. Design a ledger, or workload tracking system.

    A. Every client's current classification must be recorded.

    B. All assigned PSIs and other investigations must be recorded.

    C. Use points or units to approximate work effort.

    D. Decide on use of a manual or computer-based system.

    E. Develop a ledger summary document.

    F. Develop a ledger workload report.

6. Design a time study.

   A. A workload time study is longitudinal. A specific case is followed for a specific length of time. An investigation is followed from start to finish.

   B. The time study measures the amount of time required to meet supervision or investigation standards. It is not time spent on a typical workday task. It is a statement of the amount of work demanded by the current supervision and investigation workload.

   C. Design forms to capture longitudinal data.

   D. Determine the length of the study. This is usually linked to the time period required to make one face-to-face contact with clients at the lowest level of supervision. For example, clients on the quarterly contact cycle are seen once in three months; therefore, a three-month time study for all supervision levels is appropriate.

   E. Monitor progress through the core committee.

   F. Definition of terms for the study is necessary as well as a detailed set of instructions.

7. Monitor the time study. Check cases for accuracy of coding and compliance with standards.

8. Analyze the time study.

   A. The basic unit of analysis is the case or investigation, not task.

   B. Eliminate cases where standards were not met.

   C. Determine both the average and median times and distribution of cases.

   D. Break down cases by investigation and classification type.

9. Create a workload formula.

   A. Total available hours are reduced by sick days, holidays, vacations, training time, and administrative tasks.

   B. Determine available hours/month.

   C. Determine work demand based on time values for each category of work; multiply by cases in each category.

APPENDIX B

SAMPLE 12-MONTH WORKLOAD IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Chronological Events and Responsibilities

	Event	Due Date	Responsibility
	Select Core Team	January 14	
	Select Classification Scales	February 28	
	Meet with Agency Data Processing Staff	February 28	
*	Print Temporary Forms	March 9	
	Develop Method of Classifying Existing Cases	March 9	
	Agree on Supervision and Reassessment Standards	March 9	
*	State/Agency-wide Meeting	March 16	
	Study Options for Ledger Medium	March 20	
	Analyze Overall Forms Routing	March 21	
	Define Staff Functions to be Included in Workload	March 29	
	Develop Non-Client Hour Deductions	April 17	
	Design Ledger Forms	April 25	
*	Design Time Study	May 1	
	Classify All Cases	May 15	
*	Train Ledger-Keepers	May 30	
*	Print Formal Classification Documents	July 6	
*	Implement Time Study	July 27	
	Provide Follow-up Training of Field and Supervisory Staff	July 27	
	Monitor Time Study	August	

* These events are crucial to the timeliness, cost efficiency, and overall success implementation of the project.

Chronological Events and Responsibilities (cont.)

Event	Due Date	Responsibility
Monitor Time Study	September	
Evaluate Ledger	October 16	
Process Time Study	November 30	
Analyse Time Study	December 14	
* Develop Work Units	December 21	
Prepare First Workload Report	January 10	
Train Supervisors in Workload Management	January 15	
Finalize Workload Reports	January 15	

* These events are crucial to the timeliness, cost efficiency, and overall successful implementation of the project.

SAMPLE 12-MONTH WORKLOAD IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

MONTH 1	MONTH 2	MONTH 3	MONTH 4
• Select classification scales • Print temporary forms • Agree on supervision and reassessment standards • Develop method of classifying existing cases • Statewide meeting • Meet with agency data processing staff	• Study options for ledger medium • Analyze forms routing • Define staff functions to be included in workload	• Ledger forms designed • Time study designed • Develop non-client hour deductions	• All cases classified • Train ledger keepers
MONTH 5	**MONTH 6**	**MONTH 7**	**MONTH 8**
	• Follow up training of field and supervisory staff • Implement time study	• Monitor time study • Monitor ledger process	• Monitor time study • Monitor ledger
MONTH 9	**MONTH 10**	**MONTH 11**	**MONTH 12**
• Process time study • Evaluate ledger	• Time study analysis complete • Develop work units • First workload report	• Train supervisors in workload management • Finalize ledger system	• Final Report

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES
DIVISION OF CORRECTIONS
TEM-47 (2/82)

APPENDIX C

STATE OF

FIELD SUPERVISION TIME STUDY
CHRONOLOGICAL LOG

CLIENT NAME (LAST)	(FIRST)	(MI)	CASE NUMBER	(SUFFIX)	AGENT NUMBER

AGENT CLASSIFICATION	LENGTH OF SERVICE - YEARS	CLIENT CLASSIFICATION	CURRENT SCORES (IF APP
SOCIAL WORKER 1 2 3	1 2 3 4 5 6+	ER MAX MED MIN JUV INST 1 2 3 4 5 6	NEEDS _____ RISK ___

CONTACT CODES

PERSON: 1 CLIENT
2 COLLATERAL
3 ABSCONDER/OS CASE
4 VICTIM

METHOD: 1 FACE TO FACE
2 PHONE
3 MAIL
4 OTHER

PLACE: 1 AGENT'S OFFICE
2 CLIENT'S EMPLOYMENT
3 CLIENT'S HOME
4 CLIENT'S SCHOOL
5 JAIL/DETENTION
6 DOC INSTITUTION
7 HALFWAY HOUSE/GROUP HOME
8 OTHER

FUNCTION CODES

1 SUPERVISION
2 VIOLATION INVESTIGATIONS
3 REVOCATION MATTERS
4 HEARING TIME/COURT TIME
5 COLLATERAL CASE CONSULTATION
6 ESTABLISH RESTITUTION
7 COMMUNITY SERVICE ORDER
8 DOC IN VISIT
9 CASE S
10 TRANSP ABSCO
11 FAMILY
12 OTHER

DATE MO/DAY	CONTACT CODES: PERSON	CONTACT CODES: METHOD	CONTACT CODES: PLACE	FUNCTION CODE	DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY	MINUTES: RECORDING	MINUTES: TRAVEL	A

Instructions: In the "Workload Due Date" column make all entries in pencil and enter one of the following: R for re-evaluation; C for chronological summary; or the specific date due for investigations.

AGENT NAME	AREA NUMBER	YEAR	PAGE OF

CLIENT NAME (LAST NAME FIRST)	DATE REC'D	WORKLOAD DUE DATE												WORKLOAD CLASSIFICATION							WORKLOAD POINTS
		JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	1ST	2ND	3RD	4TH	5TH	6TH	7TH	

APPENDIX D

SAMPLE CLASSIFICATION LEDGER

APPENDIX E

SAMPLE WORKLOAD SUMMARY REPORT

UNIT MONTHLY REPORT

NOVEMBER 1982

PO NO	NAME	MAX	MED	MIN	PSI	RES MAX	RES MED	MEN	WOM	DIS	TRF	SUPV CASES	WORK UNITS	AVR WORK UNIT
425		22	16	11	2	11	7	38	11	1	2	49	153	0
443		22	14	8	4	13	5	35	9	0	0	44	163	0
413		13	22	15	2	4	6	46	4	0	0	50	158	0
407		13	11	27	4	9	1	47	5	4	0	51	168	0
419		27	12	19	3	5	2	45	13	0	1	58	206	0
455		1	1	1	3	0	0	1	2	0	0	3	45	0
431		25	19	34	3	15	3	73	5	0	0	78	228	0
430		38	26	2	3	8	2	48	18	1	0	66	252	0
435		16	27	13	2	7	6	52	4	1	0	56	175	0
418		23	16	7	3	9	3	43	3	1	0	46	221	0
428		25	18	18	2	9	1	47	14	4	2	61	195	0
999	TOTALS	225	182	155	31	90	36	475	88	12	5	562	1964	196

SAMPLE AGENCY BUDGET

WORKLOAD CLASSIFICATIONS	AVERAGE TIME	FY 83 Population	FY 83 Total Hours Per Month	FY 83 Field* Positions Required	FY 84 Population	FY 84 Total Hours Per Month	FY 84 Field* Positions Required
Supervision							
HIGH	2.5 hrs/mo	2,000	5,000	40.0	2,140	5,350	42.8
MEDIUM	1.2	3,500	4,200	33.6	3,745	4,494	36.0
LOW	0.5	2,000	1,000	8.0	2,140	1,070	8.6
ADMINISTRATIVE	0.15	900	135	1.1	960	144	1.2
TOTAL - Supervision		8,400	10,335	82.7	8,985	11,058	88.6
Investigation							
Presentence	8.0 hrs/mo	3,300	2,200	17.6	3,531	2,354	18.8
Postsentence	6.0	4,000	2,000	16.0	4,280	2,140	17.1
TOTAL - Investigation		7,300	4,200	33.6	7,811	4,494	35.9
GRAND TOTAL			14,535	116.28		15,552	124.4

* Positions Required equals total hours ÷ average hours available per month.

HOURS AVAILABLE

START

40 Hours/Week @ 52.2 Weeks → 2,088 hours/year

LESS → Vacation, Sick Leave, Holidays → 250 hours/year

LESS → Administrative, Personal, Professional Development → 338 hours/year

EQUALS → Hours Available Per Year → 1,500 hours/year or 125 hours/month

Supervision Hours Required

Class Unreported					
Felony	421				
Misdemeanant	1				
Class 1 Cases					
Felony	1,583	X 2.75	=	4,353.25	Hours/Month
Misdemeanant	25	X 2.75	=	68.75	Hours/Month
Class 2 Cases					
Felony	2,558	X 2.00	=	5,116.00	Hours/Month
Misdemeanant	61	X 2.00	=	122.00	Hours/Month
Class 3 Cases					
Felony	2,303	X 1.40	=	3,224.20	Hours/Month
Misdemeanant	79	X 1.40	=	110.60	Hours/Month
Class 4 Cases					
Felony	4,287	X .45	=	1,929.15	Hours/Month
Misdemeanant	4,174	X .45	=	1,878.30	Hours/Month
TOTAL	15,070 Cases			16,802.25	Hours/Month

REPORT PREPARATION HOURS REQUIRED

Felony Initial Classifications	680 X	1.50 Hours	=	1,020.00 Hours/Month
Felony Misconduct Reports on Temp Lvs.	23 X	1.50 Hours	=	34.50 Hours/Month
Felony Out-of-State Investigations	94 X	5.00 Hours	=	470.00 Hours/Month
Felony Parole Plan Investigations	25 X	4.00 Hours	=	100.00 Hours/Month
Felony Postsentence Investigations	60 X	8.00 Hours	=	480.00 Hours/Month
Felony Presentence Investigations	471 X	12.00 Hours	=	5,652.00 Hours/Month
Felony Reclassification Assessments	726 X	2.00 Hours	=	1,452.00 Hours/Month
Felony Revocation Recommendations	383 X	6.00 Hours	=	2,298.00 Hours/Month
Felony Special Investigations	452 X	4.00 Hours	=	1,808.00 Hours/Month
Felony Supplemental Reports	577 X	3.00 Hours	=	1,731.00 Hours/Month
TOTAL	3,491 REPORTS			15,045.50 HOURS/MONTH

RESOURCE ALLOCATION

Supervision Hours	16,802.25	Plus Report Preparation Hours	15,045.50	TOTAL	31,847.75 Hours/Month
Hours/Month	31,847.75	Divided by 121.58 Hours Per Month Available		TOTAL	261.9 Positions Needed
Positions Authorized	98.0		Positions Filled	TOTAL	97.0

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