

A SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT ON THE SELF-EVALUATION
PROJECT AT M.C.I., CONCORD

In January of 1970, a large number of staff members at M.C.I., Concord participated in the American Correctional Association's Self-Evaluation Project. This project is designed to evaluate how well a correctional institution measures up to the standards of the A.C.A as set forth in their Manual of Correctional Standards. In February of 1970, the research unit of the Department of Correction published a report¹ that indicated how several functional areas of M.C.I., Concord (such as, classification, library services, etc.) compared to each other. Recently, the American Correctional Association has provided our Department with some feedback as to how M.C.I., Concord compares to thirty-six other correctional institutions that have participated in the self-evaluation project. The purpose of this report is to present the results of this comparison.

Before we get to the A.C.A.'s findings, two points should be made concerning the institutions to which M.C.I., Concord was compared. First, in the judgment of the A.C.A., the comparison institutions are felt to be fairly representative of maximum security institutions. These comparison institutions were located in seventeen states from all regions of the country and include some Canadian facilities. The second point is that, in the judgment of the A.C.A., the comparison institutions cannot be considered inherently "better" institutions. That is, these institutions, on the whole, do not have "more potential for achieving a higher rating because of greater resources, since they represent systems at widely differing stages and levels of development."²

With this in mind, let us turn to the findings.

The attached table graphically represents the difference between Concord's rating and the combined ratings of all 36 comparison institutions (i.e., the national average) for the 15 areas examined in the Self-Evaluation Study. Each chapter was ranked according to the percentage points above or below the national average for each chapter. It should also be pointed out that both the national average and Concord's rating are based on the proportion of A.C.A. standards that were completely met, without qualification.

As can be seen the difference ranges from 11.5 percentage points above the national average for the area of Classification to 40.7 percentage points below the national average for Education. The three strongest areas for M.C.I., Concord, relative to the national average, were Classification; Chaplaincy; and Counselling, Case Work, and Clinical Services.

¹ "A Preliminary Report on the Self-Evaluation Project at M.C.I., Concord" , Department of Correction, mimeo, February, 1970.

² Letter from W. Donald Pointer, Assistant Director, Ford Foundation Project on Self-Evaluation and Accreditation, American Correctional Association.

The three weakest areas of M.C.I., Concord were Education, Library Services, and Employment. Overall, for the fifteen areas examined, Concord was 11.5 percentage points below the national average (See the Total bar).

One important issue relevant to the somewhat negative ratings of M.C.I., Concord ought to be mentioned - i.e., the complete reconstruction of the institution which is currently under way. Several of Concord's evaluators stated that they anticipated substantial improvement in their particular chapters when the construction is completed. We may, then, expect real changes in the near future. However, currently it appears that - according to the ratings of the Concord staff during January of 1970 - M.C.I., Concord conforms to slightly fewer of the A.C.A. standards, overall, than does a sample of comparable institutions nationally.

