

EVALUATION OF AREA BOARD CLASSIFICATION AT THE  
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION

INTERIM REPORT II: CORRELATES OF CLASSIFICATION  
RECOMMENDATIONS AND DECISIONS

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ABSTRACT

This report is the second in a series that evaluates Area Board classification, which is the process enabling inmate inter-institutional transfers. Building upon an overall framework established in the first report, a process description, the current paper develops profiles of cases in selected security level recommendation or decision categories, and discusses their putative underlying rationales.

Data collected for the 590 sample cases were extensive, comprised of decision variables, factors specific to the Board hearing, and inmate characteristics including institutional experience, criminal history, personal background, and nature of the current offense. Over 150 discrete variables were utilized in the analysis.

Findings highlighted the primary emphasis placed on security risk and facility management when making placement determinations. This was indicated both in rationales for recommendations and decisions, as well as inmate characteristics. Individual program needs were addressed secondarily, usually as a condition accompanying a placement decision.

Profiles of men a) recommended by Area Boards for lower security; b) approved by Central Office for lower security; and c) approved at this level for higher security/remain in current status, did not deviate from what was expected. Lower security cases were apt to have adjusted more fully to incarceration, which includes displaying (in the Board's opinion) a better attitude and greater motivation, and to have more extensive community linkages. The converse of these characteristics described men approved for higher security settings, or for no transfer.

Other findings, warranting additional investigation, were cited. Men approved for lower security tended to be further from parole eligibility. Unanimous security recommendations by Area Boards were more likely to be approved by Central Office as opposed to those including a minority dissent. Finally, Board assessment of motivation and attitude, both subjective indicators, weighed heavily in placement deliberations.

The study concludes with a series of implications for policy, based on the finding that the dominant goal of classification is security management and protection of society. More research is planned to assess the overall effectiveness, in terms of success at subsequent placements, of the processes described in these reports.

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## INTRODUCTION

The widespread expansion and diversification of corrections has formalized the need for the differential handling of offenders. Recognizing that a heterogeneous prison population will require eclectic programming and differing security levels, system-wide classification capabilities have been created and instituted in most correctional jurisdictions.

These classification mechanisms operate within the broad context of a growing competition among several, often incompatible ideologies regarding sentencing and the philosophy of corrections. Within this framework, the system must achieve the dual, and sometimes contradictory goals of maximizing the benefits derived by offenders from the incarceration experience (rehabilitation); and in maintaining secure and smoothly functioning facilities (security and custody). Emphasis on either will obviously gear classification practice to outcomes designed to further these goals, but it is generally agreed that most systems embody both philosophies to some extent.

Although these arguments have been summarized elsewhere,<sup>1</sup> we may assert that the failure to acknowledge these inherent contradictions, and to adopt an ideological stance from which to base the system, has instigated well-founded criticism.<sup>2</sup> A guiding assumption has been that procedures should be systematically implemented, without resulting in uniformity of recommendations. Offenders should be viewed individually, possessing unique sets of circumstances and characteristics that would potentially result in various combinations of program planning and security levels. The extent to which this tenet is applied and the effectiveness and efficiency of the processes developed, regardless of their basic ideologies, is not fully known. Thus, evaluation of classification systems, and ongoing monitoring and internal assessment of these mechanisms, is becoming requisite, most notably on a national level.<sup>3</sup>

- 1 Chayet, E., Evaluation of Area Board Classification at the Massachusetts Department of Correction. Interim Report I: Process Description and Statistical Summary. (Pub. #171, April, 1979). Hereinafter referred to as "Interim Report I", The Executive Summary of this study appears as Appendix A.
- 2 Arguments are summarized in Corrections. National Advisory Committee on Standards and Goals in Corrections (1977).
- 3 Research and evaluation are included as an essential standard to achieve compliance for accreditation in accordance with national accreditation standards. See: Commission on Accreditation for Corrections, Manual of National Advisory Committee on Standards and Goals (1977).



This report is the second in a comprehensive endeavor to evaluate Area Board classification at the Massachusetts Department of Correction (DOC). Three separate but related studies are planned for this series, which provides in-depth documentation of procedures utilized by the DOC to review cases for inter-institutional transfer subsequent to the initial intake classification.

The first study, Interim Report I, presented a complete narrative description of the Area Boards, and provided a basic statistical analysis of operations for the population seen during a representative seven-month time frame. The present paper draws a sample of this population and, employing expanded and intensified data collection, develops profiles of cases most likely to be recommended for various types of placements by the Boards. The Central Office decision-making level is explored as well via analysis of the patterns of approval over recommendations to higher or lower security, and the distinguishing characteristics of inmates in each group.

A simple compilation of rationales underlying the recommendations and decisions, and corollary conditions, will also be presented. The final report will incorporate the findings of conducting an outcome analysis of success/failure at these placements, and assess the relative effectiveness of the classification decision-making.

## Highlights of Classification in the Massachusetts Department of Correction

A brief overview of classification in Massachusetts, emphasizing the role of the Area Boards, is prerequisite to later understanding of the analysis. Four types of classification capabilities are formally integrated into the corrections system: intake reception/diagnostic centers; institution-based program review Boards; inter-institutional classification (Area Boards); and special types of boards.

Two reception/diagnostic centers are designed to initially classify all court commitments to a state-level correctional facility. This process results in a determination of an appropriate security level, corresponding facility, and a fairly comprehensive assessment of needs and recommended programs to address these areas.

Institutional boards are convened at each facility. Their role is multifaceted, including intake planning when the offender first arrives at the particular institution, periodic program and adjustment reviews, and initial transfer screening to determine referrals to Area Boards.

Area Boards convene primarily to review cases for inter-institutional transfers. A variety of recommendations may result from an appearance before one of these Boards; for example, for the inmate to remain in his current facility (remain at current status), to transfer to higher security, lower security, to make a lateral move. Area Boards are not based at specific facilities; rather, membership is drawn from one of the three separate DOC areas, and Boards see inmates currently housed in that area only.

Finally, the special boards encompass those classification hearings not included above, such as a massive endeavor to reclassify all DOC residents for pre-release, or the boards held for inmates housed in the Departmental Segregation Unit (DSU).

All final decisions on classification recommendations are made by Central Office administrative staff, who act on behalf of the Commissioner of Correction.<sup>4</sup> Decisions may be in accordance with the recommendations, or Central Office may deny (overturn) a Board assessment and approve the case to another facility. Conditions with which the inmate must comply may also be specified at this point, in lieu of, or in addition to those that the classification boards had deemed appropriate.

<sup>4</sup> Institutional Boards are the exception, where Superintendents hold overall approving authority.

## Area Board Classification

As mentioned, Area Board classification draws members from institutions located within the particular region, and is structured on a rotating basis. Their recommendations are approved or denied by Central Office Area Directors of Classification: if the proposed transfer is within the Area, this single review is sufficient. If, however, the transfer involves a facility in an Area other than the inmate's current residence, there must be consultation and agreement between the two Directors. Disputed cases are handled by the Supervisor of Classification who, incidentally, performs the administrative reviews over reception/diagnostic center recommendations.

This peculiar structure does give rise to some real and perceived problems. As Interim Report I indicated, although the intent of the Area Division was to induce improved effectiveness by upgrading the quality of decisions, one consequence has been a suffering of efficiency. Final decisions may require longer than a month, alienating both the inmates, who expect more timely transfers, and institutional staff, who often feel that they are acting within a vacuum.

Several other generalizations have been made about Area Board classification. The double-layered decision-making behaves in a fairly consistent manner, with Central Office approving a majority of the Board recommendations. What is notable, however, is the conservative direction exerted by the Central Office, with more of their decisions geared toward higher security placements.

## The Problem

The current evaluation was undertaken by the Model Evaluation Unit (MEP) of the Research Division, as a major commitment in its role to identify and conduct management-based research projects. These studies were necessarily departmental priorities, and have direct administrative utility. Classification, which underlies most corrections operations, was repeatedly asserted as an important topic for research; thus, MEP focused upon one of its integral components.

As discussed in Interim Report I, the specific choice to evaluate the Area Board process resulted from a review of the Research Division's prior contributions to a comprehensive analysis of the classification system. Since several research papers had already been completed,<sup>5</sup> assignment of the two remaining

<sup>5</sup> See: Blomquist, K., A Preliminary Study of Residents of MCI-Norfolk Transferred to Higher Security During 1974 (Publication No. 102, 1975).

Chayet, E., New Line Classification During its First Year of Operation (Publication No. 153, May, 1978).

Wittenberg, S., A Study of Community-Based Classification Boards October-December 1976 (September, 1977).

broad topics - reception and diagnostic classification, and Area Boards - was made, with the Director of Research and a group of graduate students conducting an evaluation of the former, and MEP agreeing to design and implement an evaluation of the latter topic.<sup>6</sup>

Particular interest was demonstrated by administration in this type of evaluation endeavor, most probably due to four inter-related conditions. First, it is generally acknowledged that classification practitioners operate nearly bereft of empirical data regarding the nature of the population they deal with, and the types and efficacy of the decisions made. Little feedback is made available to these staff on the appropriateness of their recommendations, and general profiles of inmates benefitting most from particular programs and levels of security.

Second, the DOC underwent a major shift in organization in 1976, from a centralized to a decentralized administrative structure. Classification procedures were modified accordingly, instituting Area Boards. Previously, two types of central boards heard all cases - Inter-Institutional Transfer Boards for cases limited to the major institutions, and Community-Based Boards for transfers potentially involving a pre-release center or similar facility - and these boards originated from the Central Office. Thus, the new operations represented by the Area Boards were perceived as meriting systematic evaluation, to assess its efficiency and effectiveness.

A third condition that partially led to the desire for this evaluation concerns the imbalances in institutional population. Massachusetts possesses a complex network of correctional institutions and facilities ranging from maximum security, through pre-release and other community-based centers. Although the major maximum and medium security institutions are at times overcrowded, or at least operating at full capacity, there has been a significant and persistent problem in the inability to fill all pre-release beds. The study of the classification process, and the types of inmates recommended for various placements and their success at these placements, may assist decision-makers with the difficult task of assigning security risk adequately while ensuring maximum utilization of correctional resources.

Finally, national attention is being increasingly devoted to classification. For example, the drive for accreditation in corrections has meant that administrators must carefully evaluate their systems and make those changes necessary to bring their classification capabilities into compliance with the particular standards. Therefore, this study represents a timely response to both internal concerns and external issues.

<sup>6</sup> Carney, F., et al, A Study of the Reception and Diagnostic Process of the Massachusetts Department of Correction, (April, 1978).

## METHODOLOGY

### Research Objectives

The research objectives of this paper can best be understood by reviewing the overall goals of the evaluation. Simply, these are: 1) to describe the operation of the Area Board system; 2) to develop profiles for cases recommended and approved/denied for the various placement options; 3) to document the rationales underlying recommendations and decisions, and the correlates of these decisions; and 4) to assess the effectiveness of the classification process.

Interim Report I addressed the first of these; the present study responds to the second and third objectives by investigating the following specific set of derivative questions:

- a) What are the rationales upon which placement recommendations are based, and the conditions of these placements?
- b) What are the characteristics of cases recommended for lower security that differentiate this group from other placement recommendations?
- c) What are the characteristics of recommendations that are approved by Central Office for lower security?

Prior to any elaboration of these, the sample parameters, and the sources and types of data that constitute the components of these objectives must be documented.

### The Sample

A fifty percent random sample was drawn from the original population of 1200 cases that appeared before an Area Board between July, 1977 through January, 1978. Each appearance constitutes a case; thus, an individual who has more than one hearing during this time frame might have been included in the sample more than once. Reduction due to missing documents yielded a final sample size of 590 cases.

### Sources and Types of Data

A wide variety of data was collected for each case (a complete list of variables appears as Appendix ). Sources of information, and the nature of the data, included the following:

1. Correction and Parole Management Information System (CAPMIS): A standard set of computerized data maintained in this system includes criminal history variables, information regarding the current offense, personal background characteristics, furlough outcomes, and inter-institutional movement.

2. Pre-Hearing Summary Sheet: This document is completed by social workers prior to a hearing, and contains information concerning all aspects of the prison experience to that point. Among these are disciplinary reports, prior residences in lower security, substance abuse, program participation, and compliance with past classification recommendations.

3. Area Board Narratives: Highlights of the hearing are documented in a one- to two-page narrative. In addition to the parameters of the recommendations, some of the dynamics of the hearing are conveyed. Variables obtained from these narratives were, most importantly, the rationales underlying Board recommendations, conditions, and reasons for minority dissent. Coding was open-ended, recording all information in its entirety. Later examination resulted in classifying these data into more manageable categories.

4. Inmate Folders: Up-to-date information pertaining to current and past incarcerations is maintained in case folders. Filed at the institution of residence, these were consulted when other data sources were incomplete.

The general analytic framework, as developed from Interim Report I, was derived from intensive personal interviews with classification practitioners at all levels of the Department of Correction. Findings have been grouped into three broad categories: a sample description, which includes a preliminary analysis of Board and Central Office decision rationales and conditions; a profile of cases recommended by Boards for lower security; and a profile of cases approved by Central Office for either lower security or higher security/remain in current status.

### Statistical Analysis

Two simple analytic techniques were employed. For pure descriptive data, frequency distributions were provided. Where appropriate, these data were presented in rank order.

When comparisons between two groups were made, a Chi Square ( $\chi^2$ ) was computed. This statistic determines if the differences in distribution along a particular variable between the groups could be considered statistically significant. An association was assumed to be significant, and subsequently reported, if the  $\chi^2$  was .05 or less. This means that the observed relationship would be expected to occur by chance in the population fewer than five times in one hundred.

## FINDINGS

### SECTION I: DESCRIPTION OF THE SAMPLE

The following narrative and Tables I through VI synthesize a basic description of the sample investigated for this study. The first segment will draw an operational picture of the sample, employing frequency distributions of recommendations, approvals, and institutions and facilities of the decision components.

The bulk of this section, however, is comprised of the rationales and conditions associated with Board recommendations, and with Central Office approvals to various placement options. A series of tables will be presented, ranking these decision correlates, and some general discussion will be offered.

## OPERATIONS

### Area of Board

Table I is a breakdown of cases heard by the Area in which Boards were held. As found in Interim Report I, the sample is proportionately highest for Area III, with its greater number of major facilities, than for Area I, or Area II, in which most boards are held for reclassification.

TABLE I: AREA IN WHICH BOARD IS HELD

	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>
Area I	170	(28.9)
Area II	50	( 8.5)
Area III	369	(62.6)
TOTAL	589	(100.0)

### Board Recommendations

The types of placement recommendations made by the Boards are presented in Table II.

TABLE II: AREA BOARD RECOMMENDED PLACEMENTS

	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>
Remain in current status	154	(26.2)
Transfer to lower security	363	(61.7)
Transfer to higher security	38	( 6.5)
Transfer to lateral security	20	( 3.4)
Other transfer	13	( 2.2)
TOTAL	588	(100.0)

In brief, the majority of recommended placements were for lower security than the inmate's current residence. A sizeable proportion, however, was recommended for no change in security status. A small number was recommended for a transfer to higher security.

Central Office Approvals

Central Office exercises the binding authority in either approving or denying the recommendations of the Area Boards. Table III depicts these final decisions in relation to the original recommendations:

TABLE III: CENTRAL OFFICE APPROVALS VIS-A-VIS AREA BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>
Approve Area Board	373	(63.3)
Deny; approve for lower	27	( 4.6)
Deny; approve for higher	49	( 8.3)
Deny; approve for lateral	53	( 9.0)
Deny; approve to remain current	73	(12.4)
Deferred	3	( .5)
Other	11	( 1.9)
TOTAL	589	(100.0)

The sample outcomes closely resemble the patterns described in Interim Report I: Central Office approved the majority of Area Board recommendations. When denied, the Board judgments are overturned most usually for a decision to remain in current (12.4 percent of the sample), followed by approvals for a lateral transfer (9 percent) or for a placement in a higher security level (8.3 percent).



Institutions and Facilities Recommended and Approved

Possibly more illuminating upon the nature of the relationship between the two decision-making components are the following tables IV and V, which depict the actual types of institutions and facilities recommended and approved.

TABLE IV: INSTITUTIONS AND FACILITIES RECOMMENDED BY AREA BOARDS

	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>
<u>Type of Placement:</u>		
Maximum security	123	(20.8)
Medium security	113	(19.2)
Minium security	83	(14.1)
Medium/minimum security	74	(12.5)
Community-based facility	160	(27.1)
House of Correction	10	( 1.7)
Other placement	20	( 3.4)
TOTAL	583	(100.0)

TALBE V: INSTITUTIONS AND FACILITIES APPROVED BY CENTRAL OFFICE

	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>
<u>Type of Placement:</u>		
Maximum security	157	(27.0)
Medium security	125	(21.5)
Minimum security	97	(16.7)
Medium/minimum security	61	(10.5)
Community-based facility	126	(21.7)
House of Correction	8	( 1.3)
Other	7	( 1.2)
TOTAL	581	(100.0)

A visual comparison of the two tables shows the conservatism characteristic of the Central Office decision-making: for example, more cases were approved for maximum security than the Area Boards recommended, (27.0 percent versus 20.8 percent); and fewer, cases approved for community-based placements (21.7 percent compared to 27.1 percent recommended by the Boards).

This conservative orientation is more apparent in Table VI, which calculates the percentage of difference for selected security levels, between Area Board recommendations and Central Office approvals.

TABLE VI: DIVERGENCE BETWEEN AREA BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS AND  
CENTRAL OFFICE APPROVALS

<u>Security Level</u>	<u>Number Area Board Recommended</u>	<u>Number Central Office Approved</u>	<u>(Difference)</u>	<u>Percent Divergence</u>
Maximum	123	157	(+34)	+27.6%
Medium	113	125	(+12)	+10.6%
Minimum	83	97	(+14)	+16.9%
Community-based	160	126	(-34)	-21.3%

The difference between the Area Boards and Central Office in terms of their placement orientations was found to be statistically significant.<sup>7</sup> In other words, Central Office was significantly more likely to approve a maximum security placement, and less likely to approve a transfer to a community-based facility.

#### RATIONALES AND CONDITIONS

The reasons proffered by the Area Boards for their various placement recommendations were tabulated. Conditions of such placements were also noted, as were Central Office rationales and conditions when recorded. Thus, we can obtain a broader picture of the dimensions of each decision.

#### Area Board Rationales

##### Rationales Underlying Board Recommendations for Transfer to Lower Security

The twenty most frequently mentioned rationales for a transfer to lower security are presented in Table VIIa. A total of 52 discrete rationales were stated; these twenty account for 82.3 percent of all rationales given.

<sup>7</sup> Maximum security approvals and recommendations were compared to community-based approvals and recommendations.  $\chi^2=8.17$ , with one degree of freedom;  $p < .01$ .

TABLE VIIa: BOARD RATIONALES FOR TRANSFERS TO LOWER SECURITY  
(First most Important Rationale): TWENTY MOST FREQUENT

Rank	Rationale	N	(%)
1	Good institutional record (furlough, work reports)	36	(9.7)
2	Good behavior record	31	(8.4)
3	Concrete educational/vocational plans	27	(7.3)
4	Self-awareness of problems	22	(5.9)
5	Complied with classification plan	19	(5.1)
6	Present facility inappropriate	18	(4.8)
6	Proximity to parole or GCD	18	(4.8)
8	MAPS Contract	16	(4.3)
9	Good presentation before Board	15	(4.0)
10	Good past adjustment at lower security	14	(3.8)
10	Specific program needs	14	(3.8)
12	Good disciplinary record	13	(3.5)
13	Aid in transition to community	11	(3.0)
14	Open reserve date	10	(2.7)
14	Needs structured setting	10	(2.7)
16	Work-related programs	9	(2.4)
17	Minor criminal record	7	(1.9)
18	Forestry candidate	6	(1.6)
19	Family ties	5	(1.3)
19	Pre-release preparation	5	(1.3)

The two most important reasons concerned institutional record, comprised of furloughs, work and housing reports; and disciplinary reports. These two factors were identified for close to twenty percent of all rationales to lower security. With the addition of all other reasons relating to institutional record (i.e., compliance with classification plan, good past adjustment at lower security, and disciplinary history) over thirty percent of all rationales are represented.

TABLE VIIb: BOARD RATIONALES FOR TRANSFERS TO LOWER SECURITY (Second Most Important Rationale):  
TEN MOST FREQUENT

Rank	Rationale	N	(%)
1	Good behavior record	43	(15.0)
2	Good institutional record	33	(11.5)
3	Good disciplinary record	21	( 7.3)
4	Concrete educational/vocational plans	18	( 6.3)
5	Proximity to parole or GCD	14	( 4.9)
6	Reasonable risk	13	( 4.5)
7	Good past adjustment at lower security	11	( 3.8)
9	Self-awareness of problems	10	( 3.5)
9	Needs structured setting	10	( 3.5)

It is often the case for more than one rationale to be asserted. The second most important of these is tabulated in Table VIIb. As is evident, institutional record plays a prominent role - the first three reasons concern behavior in prison, and contribute well over thirty percent to the total rationales.

Rationales Underlying Board Recommendations for Transfer to Higher Security

TABLE VIII: BOARD RATIONALES FOR TRANSFERS TO HIGHER SECURITY

Rank	Rationale	N	(%)
1	Poor attitude or motivation	13	(35.1)
2	Poor institutional behavior	11	(29.7)
3	Prior failures	4	(10.8)
4	Substance abuse	3	( 8.1)
5	Enemies	2	( 5.4)
6	Age	1	( 2.7)
6	Mental instability	1	( 2.7)
6	Protective custody	1	( 2.7)
6	Other	1	( 2.7)

The single most frequent reason for recommending a transfer to higher security was an assessment of poor attitude or motivation. The next two reasons reflect institutional behavior, and combined, constitute over forty percent of all reasons.

Rationales Underlying Board Recommendations for Transfer to Lateral Security

TABLE IX: BOARD RATIONALES FOR TRANSFERS TO LATERAL SECURITY

Rank	Rationale	N	(%)
1	Enemies	7	(33.3)
1	Positive adjustment	7	(33.3)
2	Needs work-up	2	( 9.5)
3	Can function better	1	( 4.8)
3	Secure environment	1	( 4.8)
3	Has concrete and realistic goals	1	( 4.8)
3	More extensive programs	1	( 4.8)
3	Age	1	( 4.8)

Two factors were cited with equal frequency as rationales for a transfer to a facility representing the same security level as the inmate's current residence: existence of an enemy situation, and positive institutional adjustment.

Rationales Underlying Board Recommendations to Remain in Current Status

Table X presents the fifteen most frequently cited rationales accompanying recommendations to remain at current status. Statutory ineligibility accounts for twelve percent of these; institutional record, as measured by D-Reports, program participation, behavior adjustment, and failures at pre-release, contributes 25 percent. It should be noted that these fifteen rationales constitute almost 70 percent of all reasons given for recommendations to remain in current status.

TABLE X: BOARD RATIONALES FOR REMAIN IN CURRENT STATUS:  
FIFTEEN MOST FREQUENT

Rank	Rationale	N	(%)
1	Outstanding warrants or court cases	14	(9.0)
2	Needs being met at current institution	12	(7.7)
3	Negative D-Reports	11	(7.1)
3	Lack of program participation	11	(7.1)
5	Alcohol problems	7	(4.5)
6	Poor institutional behavior	6	(3.9)
6	Past violent behavior	6	(3.9)
6	Escapes	6	(3.9)
9	Inability to adjust	5	(3.2)
9	Failures at pre-release	5	(3.2)
9	Lack of goals	5	(3.2)
9	Ineligible for lower security	5	(3.2)
9	Nature of offense	5	(3.2)
9	Observe for longer period	5	(3.2)
9	Substance abuse	5	(3.2)

Conditions Upon Board Recommendations

Conditions with which inmates must comply concomitant with program placement were categorized by the security level recommended by the Boards. This provides additional insight into the underlying bases of the decision-making dynamic. Table XI ranks those conditions associated with Board recommendations to lower security.

TABLE XI: BOARD CONDITIONS ON TRANSFERS TO LOWER SECURITY

Rank	Condition	N	(%)
1	Substance abuse/counseling	62	(36.1)
2	Periodic review	16	( 9.3)
3	Periodic urinalysis	13	( 7.6)
3	TNT	13	( 7.6)
5	Vocational testing	10	( 5.8)
6	Programs	8	( 4.7)
7	Counseling	7	( 4.1)
8	Comply with MAPS	5	( 2.9)
8	Full-time employment	5	( 2.9)
8	Pursue GED	5	( 2.9)
11	Cadre position	3	( 1.7)
11	Monitor enemy situation	3	( 1.7)
11	Take care of health problem	3	( 1.7)
11	Supervise for protective custody	3	( 1.7)
11	Screen for hospital program	3	( 1.7)
11	No release programs	3	( 1.7)
11	SMT check	3	( 1.7)
18	Remain D-Free	2	( 1.2)
18	Needs parole approval	2	( 1.2)
20	Good work reports	1	( .6)
20	SDP processing	1	( .6)
20	Other	1	( .6)



Area Boards recommended 363 cases for lower security placements. Of these, 172, or 47.4 percent were accompanied by conditions. A predominant concern of Board members when adjudging suitability for these transfers appears to be substance abuse. Programs to address this problem were stipulated for 36.1 percent of all conditions in this level. Combined with required periodic urinalysis, this area represents 43.7 percent of the conditions upon lower security transfers.

TABLE XII: BOARD CONDITIONS ON TRANSFERS TO HIGHER SECURITY

Rank	Condition	N	(%)
1	Protective custody, or screen for PC	7	(26.9)
2	Alcohol program involvement mandatory	4	(15.4)
3	Clear D-report	3	(11.5)
3	Screen for enemies	3	(11.5)
3	Periodic reviews	3	(11.5)
6	Inability to adjust to pre-release	2	( 7.7)
6	Apply for farm if and when applicable	2	( 7.7)
8	Drug counseling	1	( 3.9)
8	Apply for work	1	( 3.9)

TABLE XIII: BOARD CONDITIONS ON TRANSFERS TO LATERAL SECURITY

Rank	Condition	N	(%)
1	Screen for population	5	(33.3)
2	Periodic review	3	(20.0)
3	Confirm acceptance at facility	2	(13.3)
4	Pursue GED	1	( 6.7)
4	Medium security	1	( 6.7)
4	Drug programming	1	( 6.7)
4	Complete RDC	1	( 6.7)
4	Remain D-Free	1	( 6.7)

Over half (52.6 percent) of the 38 recommendations for higher security included a specified condition. Table XII illustrates the regard for protective custody needs in these situations. Combining this first ranked condition with "screen for enemies", a total of 38.4 percent of the conditions are covered. Substance abuse program involvement is also relatively important, and accounts for 15.4 percent of all conditions. Similarly, Table XIII implies that protective custody concerns are also paramount in recommending a transfer to lateral security. Parenthetically, this transfer category included the highest proportion of conditions: 75 percent of the twenty cases here entailed mandated conditions.

TABLE XIV: BOARD CONDITIONS ON REMAIN IN CURRENT STATUS

Rank	Condition	N	(%)
1	Periodic review	28	(26.9)
2	Contingent review	14	(13.5)
3	Counseling, or screen for counseling	13	(12.5)
4	Remain D-Free	10	( 9.6)
5	Continue program involvement	9	( 8.6)
5	Outstanding cases	9	( 8.6)
7	Psychiatric evaluation	5	( 4.8)
8	AA	3	( 2.9)
9	Reapply if inmate considers another facility	2	( 1.9)
9	Resolve SDP	2	( 1.9)
9	Possible out-of-state transfer	2	( 1.9)
12	Furlough	1	( 1.0)
12	Obtain official version	1	( 1.0)
12	Get approval of program	1	( 1.0)
12	SBII	1	( 1.0)
12	Reestablish trust	1	( 1.0)
12	Other	1	( 1.0)

Quite a sizable percentage (67.5 percent) of the 154 cases recommended to remain in current status had stated conditions. Most frequently, these were linked with mandated periodic reviews (usually set for 30-60-90 days); or contingent reviews (i.e., reviews to be scheduled when additional conditions are met, as clearing D-reports). These two types of reviews ranked highest, and constituted 40.4 percent of all these types of conditions. Counseling was also frequently required representing about 12 percent of all conditions.

### Central Office Decision Rationales

The decision rationales of Central Office administration are not as formally or systematically documented. However, those recorded were quantified into Table XV. Few generalizations can be made from such limited data. When Central Office denies an Area Board recommendation and approves a placement to higher security or remain in current status, the most frequently stated rationale is that a longer observation period is necessary.

TABLE XV: CENTRAL OFFICE DECISION RATIONALES

Rank	Rationale	N	(%)
	<u>I. CO approved for higher:</u>		
1	Needs longer observation period	6	(37.5)
2	D-Reports	3	(18.7)
2	Escapes	3	(18.7)
4	Institutional behavior	2	(12.5)
5	Screen for another placement	1	( 6.3)
5	Needs gradual transition	1	( 6.3)
	<u>II. CO approved for lower:</u>		
1	Doesn't need maximum security	1	(100.0)
	<u>III. CO approved for lateral:</u>		
1	Enemy situation	2	(66.7)
2	Waiting list	1	(33.3)
	<u>IV. CO approved Board recommendation:</u>		
1	Protective custody	5	(100.0)

TABLE XV: CENTRAL OFFICE DECISION RATIONALES  
(Continued)

Rank	Rationale	N	(%)
	V. <u>CO approved to remain in current status:</u>		
1	Needs longer observation period	9	(34.6)
2	Poor institutional history	5	(19.2)
3	D-reports	3	(11.5)
4	Parole date	2	( 7.7)
4	Program unavailable	2	( 7.7)
4	SBII	2	( 7.7)
7	Outstanding warrants	1	( 3.8)
7	Enemy situation	1	( 3.8)
	VI. <u>CO defers:</u>		
1	Wait for medical report	1	(100.0)
	VII. <u>CO approves for other option:</u>		
1	SBII via TASC	4	(100.0)

Rationales were most likely to be recorded for decisions generally representing a higher security level than the Board recommended. For example, compared to 32.7 percent of the higher security approvals and 35.6 percent of the remain in current status cases including a Central Office rationale, only 1.3 percent of the full approvals, 3.7 percent of approvals for lower, and 5.7 percent of the lateral approvals contained reasons.

#### Central Office Conditions

Administrative staff may impose conditions upon approved placements. These may be in addition to, or in lieu of, the Board stipulations. Table XVI illustrates the conditions required by Central Office in each category of placement security level.

TABLE XVI: CENTRAL OFFICE CONDITIONS

Rank	Condition	N	(%)
	I. <u>CO approved for higher:</u>		
1	Periodic review	12	(37.5)
2	Review regarding specific issue	7	(21.9)
3	Contingent periodic review	6	(18.8)
4	Remain D-Free	5	(15.6)
5	Program involvement	1	( 3.1)
5	Good reports	1	( 3.1)
	II. <u>CO approved for lower:</u>		
1	Remain D-Free	2	(20.0)
1	Periodic internal review	2	(20.0)
1	Periodic review	2	(20.0)
4	Needs approval of program	1	(10.0)
4	Contact program	1	(10.0)
4	TASC	1	(10.0)
4	Other	1	(10.0)
	III. <u>CO approved for lateral:</u>		
1	TNT	8	(44.4)
2	Counseling	3	(16.7)
3	D-Reports	2	(11.1)
3	Six month review	2	(11.1)
3	CJAP	2	(11.1)
6	Other	1	( 5.6)

TABLE XVI: CENTRAL OFFICE CONDITIONS  
(Continued)

Rank	Condition	N	(%)
	IV. <u>CO approved Board recommendation:</u>		
1	Remain D-Free	18	(18.0)
2	Periodic internal reviews	16	(17.0)
3	Continue positive program involvement	7	( 7.0)
3	Review contingent upon adjustment	7	( 7.0)
5	Counseling	6	( 6.0)
5	TNT	6	( 6.0)
5	Review after evaluation	6	( 6.0)
8	AA	5	( 5.0)
9	Monitor internally	4	( 4.0)
9	Protective custody	4	( 4.0)
9	Review after parole hearing	4	( 4.0)
9	Substance abuse evaluation	4	( 4.0)
9	Monitor substance abuse	4	( 4.0)
14	Needs approval of program	3	( 3.0)
15	Other	2	( 2.0)
16	Sign contract	1	( 1.0)
16	Clarify enemy situation	1	( 1.0)
16	SDP clearance	1	( 1.0)
	V. <u>CO approved to remain in current status:</u>		
1	Review when parole outcome is known	7	(18.9)
2	Periodic review	6	(16.2)

TABLE XVI: CENTRAL OFFICE CONDITIONS  
(Continued)

Rank	Condition	N	(%)
3	Review if complies with classification	5	(13.5)
4	Remain D-Free	4	(10.8)
5	Continue program involvement	3	( 8.1)
6	Drug evaluation	2	( 5.4)
6	Review when eligible	2	( 5.4)
6	Review when completes 6 months successfully	2	( 5.4)
9	Psychiatric evaluation	1	( 2.7)
9	Review if D-Free	1	( 2.7)
9	Address substance abuse	1	( 2.7)
9	Resolve outstanding cases	1	( 2.7)
9	SDP clearance	1	( 2.7)
9	Other	1	( 2.7)
	VI. <u>CO approves for other option:</u>		
1	SBII via TASC	2	(66.7)
2	Defer	1	(33.3)

Specifying reviews is common to all types of approved placements. This represents 78.2 percent of all conditions associated with approvals to higher security; 40 percent of the conditions upon placements in lower security; 11.1 percent of lateral transfer conditions; 34 percent of the conditions when Central Office approves the Board recommendations; and 62.1 percent of the conditions imposed upon approvals to remain at current status. These reviews range from seemingly straightforward periodic reviews, to classification appearances contingent upon parole hearing outcomes and disciplinary report clearance.

As with rationales, Central Office conditions tend to be associated with approvals for higher security that were divergent from the Board assessments. Thus, 65.3 percent of the approvals for higher security placements and 50.7 percent of the approved to remain in current status category included conditions. On the other hand, Central Office imposed conditions upon 26.8 percent of the approved Board recommendations, 37 percent of the approvals for lower, and 34 percent of the lateral security transfers.

#### Summary of Rationales and Conditions

Tables XVII, XVIII, and XIX summarize the preceding findings. Several general patterns can be noted.

Board Rationales: Two striking inferences can be drawn on the basis of Table XVII. Program needs do not seemingly affect Area Board decision-making; rather, institutional adjustment and factors related to facility management are more important influences. Thus, one implication is that security issues are at the forefront of classification deliberations while programmatic concerns appear to be secondary considerations. The second implication derives from the large percentage of institutional adjustment factors found to be rationales across all security level recommendations. Reliance upon this aspect may mean that transfers - contingent upon "positive" behaviors - constitute a reward for such behavior, rather than part of a deliberately conceived program plan aimed at reintegration.



TABLE XVII: SUMMARY OF RATIONALES FOR EACH RECOMMENDATION LEVEL

Rationales Category	Lower Security		Higher Security		Lateral Security		Remain in Current Status	
	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>
Program eligibility	33	( 8.9)	-	-	-	-	19	(12.2)
Institutional adjustment	130	(35.2)	15	(40.5)	7	(33.3)	39	(25.0)
Program needs	51	(13.8)	-	-	1	( 4.8)	26	(16.7)
Other external factors	29	( 7.9)	-	-	-	-	17	(10.9)
Other internal factors	53	(14.4)	18	(48.7)	5	(23.8)	28	(17.9)
Security-management	30	( 8.1)	3	( 8.1)	8	(38.1)	17	(10.9)
Other	43	(11.7)	1	( 2.7)	-	-	10	( 6.4)
TOTAL	369	(100.0)	37	(100.0)	21	(100.0)	156	(100.0)

Board Conditions: No generalizations regarding the imposition of conditions by Area Boards can be asserted on the basis of Table XVIII. Several salient findings should, however, be reiterated. The condition overwhelmingly associated with a lower security recommendation is program participation. This may be reflective of classification's endeavor to develop transfer policy consistent with individual program needs. Recommendations for both higher security and lateral security, on the other hand, were more concerned with conditions related to security or management issues, such as protective custody. Finally, as would be expected, recommendations for no transfer were frequently accompanied by mandated future classification reviews. Although the Board was not assessing the individual suitable for different placement at this time, an additional period is set to allow for conformity with stipulations, continue observed adjustment, or simply, reach eligibility.

Central Office Conditions: Table XIX classifies the various Central Office-imposed condition categories by their decisions in relation to the original Board recommendations. The table indicates the relative importance attached by Central Office to continued classification reviews, regardless of approved security level. These are regarded as most essential when Central Office approves for higher security than the Board recommended, or for no transfer. Thus, denials to apparently positive placements (i.e., lower security) benefit from an additional safety valve in the form of subsequent reviews. Another finding shows that specific program participation was deemed especially necessary for outright approvals over Board recommendations, or with approvals for lateral security facilities. These types of conditions may also contribute further refinement of the Area Board judgments.

TABLE XVIII: SUMMARY OF BOARD CONDITIONS

RECOMMENDED PLACEMENT FOR:

<u>Conditions Category</u>	<u>Lower Security</u>		<u>Higher Security</u>		<u>Lateral Security</u>		<u>Remain in Current Status</u>	
	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>
Program Eligibility	1	( 0.6)					8	( 8.0)
Institutional Adjustment	7	( 4.0)	2	(11.1)	1	( 7.2)	10	(10.0)
Program Participation	113	(63.8)	5	(27.8)	2	(14.3)	28	(28.0)
Classification Reviews	17	( 9.6)	2	(11.1)	3	(21.4)	41	(41.0)
Other External Factors	5	( 2.8)			3	(21.4)	7	( 7.0)
Other Internal Factors	3	( 1.7)						
Other Factors	15	( 8.5)					5	( 5.0)
Security Management	16	( 9.0)	9	(50.0)	5	(35.7)	1	( 1.0)
TOTAL	177	(100.0)	18	(100.0)	14	(100.0)	100	(100.0)

TABLE XIX: SUMMARY OF CENTRAL OFFICE CONDITIONS

APPROVED PLACEMENT FOR: (Vis-a-vis Board Recommendation)

<u>Condition Category</u>	<u>Approved Board Recommendation</u>		<u>Denied; Approved for Lower</u>		<u>Denied; Approved for Higher</u>		<u>Denied; Approved for Lateral</u>		<u>Denied; Approved to Remain Current</u>	
	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>
Program Eligibility	1	( 1.0)							4	(11.8)
Institutional Adjustment	18	(18.8)	2	(20.0)	7	(21.9)	2	( 8.7)	3	( 8.0)
Program Participation	30	(31.2)	1	(10.0)	2	( 6.2)	15	(65.4)	6	(17.7)
Classification Reviews	33	(34.4)	4	(40.0)	22	(68.8)	5	(21.7)	20	(58.8)
Other External Factors	4	( 4.2)	2	(20.0)						
Other Internal Factors										
Other Factors	2	( 2.1)	1	(10.0)			1	( 4.4)	1	( 2.9)
Security Management	8	( 8.3)			1	( 3.1)				
TOTAL	96	(100.0)	10	(100.0)	32	(100.0)	23	(100.0)	34	(100.0)

SECTION II: PROFILES OF CASES IN THE RECOMMENDATION AND DECISION  
TYPOLOGIES

This section is comprised of three segments. The overall framework was derived by dichotomizing Area Board recommendations. One group contains all recommended placements to lower security (i.e., lower than the inmate's current residence); the second group combines recommendations for higher security and remain in current status into one category.\* All relevant findings are condensed into summaries for purposes of clarity.

The first portion of this section highlights the characteristics that significantly distinguish lower security recommendations from cases recommended to higher security or remain in current status. Reporting format is organized around the two central issues for classification boards: eligibility and suitability. Eligibility is generally addressed first, and establishes whether the inmate meets both statutory eligibility requirements for facility or program entry and specific program criteria. The institutional screening process should all but ensure that the former type of eligibility has been investigated by the time of the Area Board hearing.

The determination of suitability accords more discretion to classification staff. Here, the goal is to match inmate needs, capabilities, and desires with an appropriate facility and/or programs. Obviously, a wide array of factors is available to the decision-maker to be able to arrive at such a judgment. For the clarity of the following narrative, we have categorized suitability factors into five dimensions which encompass finer indicators of institutional adjustment and performance, criminal history, and background.

Central Office approvals, while controlling for Area Board recommendations, are examined in an abbreviated format in the subsequent sections. The second section delineates characteristics of approved recommendations to lower security, compared to those not approved; and the third analyzes cases approved by Central Office for higher security/remain in current status in contrast to the not approved cases in this level.

Each section contains a summary table of maximum Chi Square splits, including the location of the split, the number and percentage of group members in each portion of the split, and an estimate of the probability (p) of that relationship occurring by chance alone.

The first section begins with a narrative summary of the characteristics found to statistically discriminate Area Board recommendations to lower security from those to higher security. In the next two sections, however, an additional measure is employed. For each characteristic that distinguishes Central Office approvals in the particular security level, approval rates are calculated. Thus, more detailed patterns of approvals are made apparent.

\* Due to this collapse of categories and exclusion of other possible levels of recommendations, the sample was reduced to 555 cases.

## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

### I. Area Board Recommendations to Lower Security

A total of thirty variables, predominantly suitability factors, statistically discriminated recommendations for lower security from other transfer options.

1. Eligibility factors: Three variables differentiated the two groups in terms of statutory eligibility or specific program eligibility. Cases recommended for lower security placements were:

- less likely to possess outstanding warrants or court cases
- more likely to receive shorter minimum sentences
- more likely to be serving an indeterminate sentence
- more likely to have less time to serve until becoming eligible for parole (from the original date of commitment)

2. Suitability factors: Twenty-seven variables were distributed across the following five dimensions.

a. Institutional Behavior: Five distinguishing characteristics could be considered institutional behavior indicators. They demonstrated that recommendations to lower security were:

- less likely to have minor disciplinary reports
- less likely to have received a major disciplinary report
- less likely to have received a disciplinary report that incurred a major sanction\*
- more likely to be assessed as highly or somewhat motivated
- more likely to be viewed as displaying an excellent or good attitude

b. Criminal History: Five aspects of criminal history statistically discriminated recommendations for lower security. They were:

- less likely to have been previously charged on person offenses
- less likely to have been previously charged with a property-related offense

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\* Distinctions were made in types of disciplinary reports according to Departmental policy. Thus, a minor D-report entails minor sanctions, such as loss of television. A major report may result in the imposition of isolation time, and a major sanction report incurs referral to the D.A.'s Office, or reclassification.

- more likely to have been previously incarcerated in a federal or state institution
- more likely to be older when first arrested
- more likely to be older when incarcerated for the current offense

c. Personal Characteristics: Seven indicators emerged in this dimension. Cases recommended for lower security were:

- more likely to be skilled laborers
- more likely to be vocationally goal-oriented
- less likely to have used or be using drugs
- more likely to have "manual labor" as their prior occupation
- more likely to receive frequent visits from family and friends while incarcerated
- less likely to have been single at the time of the present incarceration
- more likely to have been employed longer at their most skilled position
- more likely to have retained any job for a longer period of time

d. Other Institutional Factors: Seven significant variables, related to other areas of institutional experience, distinguished lower security recommendations. These cases were:

- less likely to have appeared before an Area Board, prior to the current appearance
- more likely to be appearing before the Board due to an inmate request
- less likely to have the current appearance related to reclassification
- more likely to have participation in a drug program recommended in conjunction with a transfer
- more likely to be working in an institutional assignment or pursuing education at the time of the hearing
- more likely to have originally been committed to MCI-Concord
- less likely to have MCI-Walpole as their original commitment institution

- more likely to have shorter maximum sentences

e. Program Participation \*: Three of this type of variable indicated that cases recommended for lower security were:

- more likely to have attended, or be on a waiting list for an education program
- more likely to have participated or be on a waiting list for a vocational program
- more likely to have been participants in "other" programs

\* Includes whether participation occurred (or if the inmate was on a waiting list) and type of termination, if known.



TABLE XX

SUMMARY OF  $\chi^2$  SPLITS FOR VARIABLES DISTINGUISHING RECOMMENDATIONS FOR  
LOWER SECURITY FROM RECOMMENDATIONS TO HIGHER OR REMAIN CURRENT

VARIABLE	LOCATION OF SPLIT	RECOMMENDATIONS TO LOWER SECURITY		RECOMMENDATIONS TO HIGHER/REMAIN CURRENT		$\chi^2$
		N	%	N	%	
Outstanding Warrants or Cases	None	308	(84.8)	136	(70.8)	15.417
	Some	55	(15.2)	56	(29.2)	P < .001
Minimum Sentence	9 yrs. or less	168	(71.8)	86	(58.9)	6.741
	10 yrs. or more	66	(28.2)	60	(41.1)	P < .01
Time Until First PE Date	3 yrs. or less	200	(60.8)	82	(49.1)	6.169
	More than 3 yrs.	129	(39.2)	85	(50.9)	P < .05
Minor D-Reports	3 or Fewer	343	(94.5)	166	(86.5)	10.658
	More than 3	20	( 5.5)	26	(13.5)	P < .01
Major D-Reports	2 or Fewer	312	(86.0)	130	(67.7)	25.772
	More than 2	51	(14.0)	62	(32.3)	P < .001
Major Sanction D-Reports	None	238	(65.6)	94	(49.0)	14.408
	Some	125	(34.4)	90	(51.0)	P < .001
Motivation	Highly, some	282	(82.5)	62	(36.3)	110.143
	Negative, lacking	60	(17.5)	109	(63.7)	P < .001
Attitude	Excellent, good,	233	(64.4)	40	(21.6)	89.472
	fair, poor	129	(35.6)	145	(78.4)	P < .001
Prior Charges for Person Offenses	5 times or less	255	(71.2)	119	(62.3)	4.569
	More than 5 times	103	(28.8)	72	(37.7)	P < .05
Prior Charges for Property Offenses	None	63	(17.6)	21	(11.0)	4.190
	Some	295	(82.4)	170	(89.0)	P < .05
Age at First Arrest	17 or younger	256	(72.3)	155	(81.6)	5.74
	18 or older	98	(27.7)	35	(18.4)	P < .05
Age at Incarceration	22 or younger	148	(41.5)	99	(52.4)	5.5953
	23 or older	209	(58.5)	90	(47.6)	P < .05
Vocational skills/goals	skilled labor	131	(36.6)	46	(24.1)	8.920
	all others	227	(63.4)	145	(75.9)	P < .01
	no goals	66	(18.4)	50	(26.2)	4.480
	goals	292	(81.6)	141	(73.8)	P < .05
Drug Use	no use	158	(43.5)	67	(34.9)	3.880
	some use	205	(56.5)	125	(65.1)	P < .05
Occupation	manual labor	202	(59.4)	85	(47.2)	7.071
	all others	138	(40.6)	95	(52.8)	P < .01
Family and community ties	frequent	107	(57.2)	44	(40.7)	7.440
	seldom, never	80	(42.8)	64	(59.3)	P < .01
Marital Status	single	203	(56.2)	126	(67.0)	5.992
	ever married	158	(43.8)	62	(33.0)	P < .05
Time at most skilled position	2 yrs. or less	230	(75.7)	129	(83.8)	3.966
	more than 2 yrs.	74	(24.3)	25	(16.2)	P < .05

VARIABLE	LOCATION OF SPLIT	RECOMMENDATIONS TO LOWER SECURITY		RECOMMENDATIONS TO HIGHER REMAIN CURRENT		
		N	%	N	%	
Time on Job of	2 yrs. or less	223	(72.6)	126	(81.3)	4.173
Longest Duration	more than 2 yrs.	84	(27.4)	29	(18.7)	P < .05
Number Area	2 or fewer	241	(67.7)	104	(56.2)	6.945
Boards Seen	more than 2	115	(32.3)	81	(43.8)	P < .01
Reason for	inmate request	196	(55.2)	63	(34.4)	20.896
Area Board	all others	159	(44.8)	120	(65.6)	P < .001
	reclassification	57	(16.1)	55	(30.1)	14.354
	all others	298	(83.9)	128	(69.9)	P < .001
Drug Program	Yes	31	( 8.5)	4	( 2.1)	8.860
Recommendation	No	332	(91.5)	188	(97.9)	P < .01
Institutional	Yes	268	(79.1)	126	(68.1)	7.690
Job or Educa-	No	71	(20.9)	59	(31.9)	P < .01
tional Assign-						
ment						
Commitment	Walpole	255	(62.8)	139	(74.3)	6.356
Institution	Concord	133	(37.2)	50	(26.7)	P < .05
Maximum	24 yrs. or less	330	(90.9)	157	(81.8)	9.754
Sentence	25 yrs. or more	33	( 9.1)	35	(18.2)	P < .01
Education	Yes, waiting	181	(50.0)	77	(40.1)	4.938
Program	No	256	(50.0)	153	(59.9)	P < .05
Participation						
Vocational	Yes, waiting	106	(29.3)	39	(20.3)	5.223
Program	No	256	(70.7)	153	(79.7)	P < .05
Parti						
Other Program	Yes, waiting	202	(56.1)	86	(44.8)	6.429
Participation	No	158	(43.9)	106	(55.2)	P < .01

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

II. CENTRAL OFFICE APPROVALS OVER AREA BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS FOR LOWER SECURITY

Fifteen variables statistically differentiated Central Office approvals over recommendations for lower security from the non-approvals in this category.

Cases were more likely to be approved for lower security transfers if they:

- had more than two years remaining to serve before becoming eligible for parole (63.8 percent vs. 20.9 percent)\*
- were serving an indeterminate sentence (63.6 percent vs. 57.1 percent)
- had no major disciplinary reports (64.3 percent vs. 46.1 percent)
- were considered highly motivated (67.1 percent vs. 54.2 percent)
- were not assessed as displaying a "poor" attitude (57.6 percent vs. 37.0 percent)
- had returned from furlough as "late-under" one or no times (52.9 percent vs. 12.5 percent)
- were residing in maximum custody housing at the time of the hearing (62.9 percent vs. 43.0 percent)
- had never been previously incarcerated as an adult (64.5 percent vs. 51.1 percent)
- were twenty or older when arrested for the first time (67.7 percent vs. 53.4 percent)
- had been previously charged with offenses against the person five or fewer times (60.4 percent vs. 45.6 percent)
- had never served in the military (58.7 percent vs. 45.5 percent)
- used marijuana more than any other drug (87.5 percent vs. 55.6 percent)
- had decisions reached at Central Office in a week or less (64.6 percent vs. 52.7 percent)

\* These percentages represent the respective approval rates at the split in the variable. The first figure is the approval rate for cases with the reported characteristic, the second refers to the remaining portion of the variable. Thus, in this case the approval rate of cases with more than two years until parole eligibility was 68.8 percent; for cases with less than two years, the approval rate was 20.9 percent.

- had received a unanimous Board recommendation (60.5 percent vs. 36.8 percent)
- had never participated in an education program (61.3 percent vs. 50.8 percent)

TABLE XXI

SUMMARY OF  $\chi^2$  SPLITS FOR VARIABLES DISTINGUISHING CENTRAL OFFICE APPROVALS  
FOR LOWER SECURITY FROM NON-APPROVALS

Variable	Location of Split	Approvals to Lower Security		Non-Approvals to Lower Security		$\chi^2$
		N	(%)	N	(%)	
Time from Area Board to PE Date	2 yrs. or less more than 2 yrs.	111 90	(55.2) (44.8)	107 51	(67.7) (32.3)	5.793 P < .05
Minimum Sentence	Indeterminate All Others	82 121	(40.4) (59.6)	47 113	(29.4) (70.6)	4.743 P < .05
Major Disciplinary Reports	None Some	126 77	(62.1) (37.9)	70 90	(43.8) (56.2)	12.088 P < .00
Motivation	Higher All Others	55 141	(28.1) (71.9)	27 119	(18.5) (81.5)	4.202 P < .05
Attitude	Poor All Others	10 193	( 4.9) (95.1)	17 142	(10.7) (89.3)	4.294 P < .05
Number of Late-Under Furlough Outcomes	1 or none 2 or more	74 1	(98.7) ( 1.3)	66 7	(90.4) ( 9.6)	4.931 P < .05
Housing Status	Maximum All others	100 95	(51.3) (48.7)	59 93	(38.8) (61.2)	5.347 P < .05
Total Number Prior Adult Incarcerations	None Some	89 113	(44.1) (55.9)	49 108	(31.2) (68.8)	6.163 P < .05
Age at First Arrest	19 or younger 20 or older	156 42	(78.8) (21.2)	136 20	(87.2) (12.8)	4.253 P < .05
Number of Charges for Person Offenses	5 or less 6 or more	154 47	(76.6) (23.4)	101 56	(64.3) (35.7)	6.492 P < .01
Military Discharge	No military Was in military	155 35	(81.6) (18.4)	109 42	(72.2) (27.8)	4.247 P < .05
Drug Use	Marijuana All others	21 85	(19.8) (80.2)	3 68	( 4.2) (95.8)	8.813 P < .01
Time from Area Board to Central Office Decision	1 week or less more than 1 week	62 137	(31.2) (68.8)	34 123	(21.7) (78.3)	4.021 P < .05
Board Vote Tally	Unanimous Minority dissent	170 28	(85.9) (14.1)	111 48	(69.8) (30.2)	13.552 P < .00
Education Program Participation	Yes, waiting No	92 111	(45.3) (54.7)	89 70	(56.0) (44.0)	4.049 P < .05

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

III. CENTRAL OFFICE APPROVALS OVER AREA BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HIGHER SECURITY/REMAIN IN CURRENT STATUS

Fourteen variables distinguished approved recommendations for higher security or remain at current status. Cases were more likely to be approved for this level by Central Office if they:

- were considered by Area Boards as either lacking motivation, or poorly motivated (84.4 percent vs. 69.4 percent)\*
- were assessed as having a fair or poor attitude (83.4 percent versus 60.0 percent)
- had experienced ten or fewer furloughs (79.8 percent vs. 57.1 percent)
- had been incarcerated at any level on five or fewer occasions (80.1 percent vs. 60.0 percent)
- had violated parole conditions at least once (81.6 percent vs. 61.3 percent)
- had been previously charged with offenses against the person (79.6 percent vs. 50.0 percent)
- had been incarcerated in a county facility three times or less (80.0 percent vs. 45.5 percent)
- had experienced two or more incarcerations at a state or federal facility (100.0 percent vs. 75.6 percent)
- had violated parole conditions as an adult (90.0 percent vs. 60.9 percent)
- did not use heroin (87.2 percent vs. 66.1 percent)
- had a maximum sentence of ten years or longer (82.9 percent vs. 68.3 percent)
- had received a unanimous recommendation from the Area Board (82.0 percent vs. 65.0 percent)
- had not complied with classification recommendations of previous Boards (94.6 percent vs. 73.1 percent)
- did not have vocational education needs (82.4 percent vs. 62.1 percent)

\* As with the table documenting approvals for lower security, these represent approval rates.

TABLE XXII

2  
 SUMMARY OF X<sup>2</sup> SPLITS FOR VARIABLES DISTINGUISHING APPROVALS FOR  
 HIGHER SECURITY/REMAIN CURRENT STATUS FROM NON-APPROVALS

Variable	Location of Split	Approvals for Higher/Remain Current		Non-Approvals for Higher/Remain Current		X <sup>2</sup> P
		N	(%)	N	(%)	
Motivation	Higher, somewhat Lacking, negative	43 92	(31.9) (68.1)	19 17	(52.8) (47.2)	5.385 P < .05
Attitude	Excellent, good Fair, poor	24 121	(16.6) (83.4)	16 24	(40.0) (60.0)	10.172 P < .01
Total Number of Furloughs	10 or less 11 or more	142 8	(94.7) (5.3)	36 6	(85.7) (14.3)	3.890 P < .05
Total Number of any Prior Incarcerations	5 or less 6 or more	137 12	(91.9) (8.1)	34 8	(81.0) (19.0)	4.224 P < .05
Total Number of Parole Violations	None Some	19 40	(32.2) (67.8)	12 9	(57.1) (42.9)	4.059 P < .05
Number of Charges for Person Offenses	None Some	5 144	(3.4) (96.6)	5 37	(11.9) (88.1)	4.826 P < .05
Number of Prior County Incarcerations	3 or less 4 or more	144 5	(96.6) (3.4)	36 6	(85.7) (14.3)	7.212 P < .01
Number of Prior State or Federal Incarcerations	1 or more 2 or more	130 19	(87.2) (12.8)	42 0	(100.0) (0.0)	5.947 P < .05
Number of Adult Parole Violations	None Some	14 27	(34.1) (67.9)	9 3	(75.0) (25.0)	6.307 P < .05
Drug Use	Heroin All Others	37 41	(47.4) (52.6)	19 6	(76.0) (24.0)	6.226 P < .05
Maximum Sentence	8 yrs. or less 10 yrs. or more	43 107	(28.7) (71.3)	20 22	(47.6) (52.4)	5.34P P < .05
Board Vote Tally	Unanimous Minority Dissent	123 26	(82.6) (17.4)	27 14	(65.9) (34.1)	4.435 P < .05
Compliance with Prior Classification Recommendations	Yes or partial No	87 35	(71.3) (28.7)	32 2	(94.4) (5.9)	7.644 P < .01
Educational Needs	Vocational All Others	18 117	(13.3) (86.7)	11 25	(30.6) (69.4)	5.986 P < .05

\* Yates correction applied.

## DISCUSSION

Although a myriad of findings has been presented, discerning concrete patterns or drawing general inferences becomes quite complicated. Following is a series of impressions regarding clearcut areas that merit highlighting and further reflection.

### Decision Rationales

The analysis of rationales and conditions was valuable primarily in the sense that it quantified, for the first time, these dimensions of the classification process. In review, the rationale of institutional adjustment embraced all security levels of Board recommended placements. This factor includes both positive and negative behavioral aspects (such as no disciplinary reports versus many major disciplinary reports); as well as accepting both a subjective assessment of adjustment and more objective indicators. Area Boards also considered other factors for specific placement levels. For example, higher security recommendations were concerned with "other internal factors", which includes Board members' evaluation of anxiety, presentation, and self-awareness. A most outstanding finding in this area, however, was the relative unimportance accorded program needs as a determinant of placement recommendation.

A regard for program needs does emerge as a condition, both upon Board - recommended and Central Office approved placements. Program participation was mandated for a large proportion of all security levels. Thus, although not specifically instigating a placement recommendation, concern for the individual's particular needs was addressed through the imposition of conditions.

Classification reviews, either at a specified interval or contingent upon the accomplishment of another objective, was a major accompaniment to Board recommendations for no transfer. This is echoed by Central Office, which also tends to enjoin this condition upon approvals for higher security. It may be inferred that any possible inappropriateness surrounding such conservative decisions may be rectified within a clearly defined time span by applying the safeguard of additional classification reviews.

Finally, it is notable that Central Office staff are not prone to documenting rationales. This made it impossible to investigate the divergence in reasons for denials over Area Board recommendations.

### Decision Category Profiles

The characterization of inmates in the three recommendation/decision categories did not substantially deviate from what would be expected. Thus, individuals recommended for lower security were liable to have demonstrated "better" adjustment to incarceration, both in a real sense, as measured by having accrued fewer disciplinary reports, and in a subjective manner, by receiving positive Board assessments regarding motivation and attitude.



They were correspondingly more integrated into the institution, as evidenced by program involvement and work assignments. These cases embarked in criminal activity when older, committing less serious crimes, but were surprisingly more apt to have been previously incarcerated. They enjoy more extensive community linkages, and possess skills conducive to reintegration. Finally, this type of recommendation was apparently closer to release, and possessed fewer statutory deterrents (e.g., warrants) to transfer to lower security.

Predictably, Central Office approved, rather than denied, placements in lower security settings to more adjusted inmates, those whose sentences allowed for greater planning flexibility (i.e., indeterminate sentences) and whose criminal activity was less serious. Paradoxically, this group was apt to be further from parole.

Conversely, when approvals were over recommendations to higher security, individuals were viewed as exhibiting poorer adjustment to prison life, and to have accrued a more problematic criminal record. Common to both types of approvals is the finding that cases were originally unanimously recommended by the Area Board for the particular placement. We may speculate, therefore, that the presence of a minority dissent in Board hearings is seriously considered by the Central Office when rendering decisions.

Perceptions of behavior often unwittingly guide actions; they may not, however, accurately correspond to the observed behaviors. Based on our findings, the perceptions producing rationales for the various placement recommendations were, to a great extent, consistent with the more objective indicators. Thus, an assessment of the character of institutional adjustment was generally borne out in the data by reference to such variables as disciplinary reports and furloughs, with lower security cases more likely to have a "positive" record.

Some findings in this regard did prove to be questionable. For example, Board members routinely conferred judgments concerning the extent of the inmate's motivation, and the nature of his attitude (presumably, toward incarceration and the Area Board). These evaluations then became significant factors in rationalizing placement recommendations, and inmates who displayed apparently better attitudes and greater motivation were recommended for lower security, and vice versa.

Finally, Area Boards apparently receive cases that have been mostly pre-screened for transfer eligibility. Few discriminating variables were found in this dimension, and it was rarely reported as a rationale for any recommendation. Those ineligible cases are evidently further screened at the Board level, since none of the variables distinguishing Central Office approvals for higher security were in the eligibility category. This is one indicator of efficiency in the Area Board process, since cases inappropriate for this type of hearing are not being scheduled.

In conclusion then, we found no major anomalies in the Area Board system. Some problematic areas were discussed, which will be elaborated as implications. Overall, the typology of inmates derived for each decision category discussed resembled an expected profile, and it remains to ascertain whether indeed the most appropriate decisions have been made for each group.

### Implications

Several implications - both immediately pragmatic and more far-reaching - are naturally suggested by the findings. Some of these may be framed in terms of questions for additional research.

1. An obvious gap in information availability was with the Central Office practice of not recording decision rationales. As a result, few explanations can be offered for administrative denials over Area Board recommendations. Interim Report I cites lack of communication and information dissemination between the institutional staff and Central Office personnel as a shortcoming in this classification endeavor. The present finding tends to support this, since the absence of official rationales when recommendations are overturned may continue to foster this impression. Inasmuch as Area Board members receive little feedback on why their judgment was denied, the above criticism is understandable. Not making these reasons available also may affect the quality of the original recommendations, since without being apprised of the bases of Central Office overturns, Area Board staff may continue to reach the same types of decisions that result in these overturns.

2. When Central Office did offer rationales for approved placements, we found wide variation among the various security levels in terms of proportion of reasons given. When approvals were for higher security than the Board recommendation, rationales were more apt to accompany the approval. Thus, the conservative tendency at Central Office is generally verbally supported, while overturns for lower or lateral security, or agreements with Board judgments, are viewed as requiring no such justification.

3. Few specific reasons generally influence a large proportion of placement determinations. Institutional record emerged as an important foundation upon which these assessments were based, almost regardless of which security level was being recommended. The adjustment of the individual to incarceration (implicitly, the degree of conforming behavior facilitating management) is more important than specific program needs. Thus, on the dimension of Board decision-making, security management achieves prominence.

4. The balance between security and rehabilitation concerns is restored when conditions are imposed. In this case, it was found that program participation was quite often required of an inmate - most frequently for transfers to lower security, but to other security levels as well. Security issues are retained, most especially for recommended transfers to higher security.

5. Not surprisingly, Central Office conditions were also focussed toward institutional adjustment issues. The overriding implication that can be drawn from the above three findings is fairly obvious: that the primary goal of corrections classification, as operationalized in the Area Board system, appears to be security and smooth facility management. Individualized program planning does occur, but not until this principal obligation has been met.

6. Another implication can be developed from the above findings. It can be argued that Area Boards utilize transfers as a reward, contingent upon positive institutional adjustment. Proponents of societal reintegration via gradual release would claim that this may be at odds with a program plan most conducive to successful reintegration, and that transfers should consider proximity to release, work skills and aptitudes, and general program needs. Granting transfers on the basis of institutional behavior may not actually further successful societal reentry, since adjustment to incarceration does not necessarily correlate with law-abiding and productive civilian life.

7. The predominant concern of Central Office conditions was with ensuring subsequent classification reviews. This was particularly the case when recommendations were overturned for higher security, or for to remain in current status, rather than transfer. As mentioned, this may constitute an additional safeguard that has been built into the system, whereby even if Central Office judgments tend to be overly conservative, the decision may be revoked at a specified future date. These integral "checks and balances" also serve as systematic sources of referrals for future Area Board hearings.

8. Cases approved by Central Office for lower security were further from their parole eligibility date than cases not approved for lower security. This enigmatic finding warrants additional exploration, since if men with less incarceration time remaining are not being approved for lower security and are being retained instead at higher levels, this too is contrary to a policy of graduated release. And, it has been consistently demonstrated that men released from higher security have significantly higher recidivism rates than those released from lower security.\* Until we analyze additional information regarding the institutions from which these men were released, the reader must be cautioned that the above contention is purely speculative.

9. Finally, to underscore the previous discussion, we conclude with a mandate for additional study. This final phase is necessary to be able to assess the effectiveness of Area Board decision-making. The system may be operating under a number of assumptions that are translated into certain characteristics considered desirable for particular decision categories. As an example, institutional behavior is presumed to be a valuable indicator, and is apparently utilized as a determinant of security level.

\* LeClair, D., Societal Reintegration and Recidivism Rates, Massachusetts Department of Correction, Publication No. 159 (August, 1978).

It remains for the analysis to test these assumptions by conducting a follow-up of institutional movement. In so doing, the actual success of placements resulting from Area Board hearings can be determined. The distinguishing characteristics of inmates experiencing various outcomes will also become known, enabling in turn a more informed decision-making dynamic.

APPENDIX A

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EVALUATION OF AREA BOARD CLASSIFICATION IN THE MASSACHUSETTS  
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION

Interim Report I: Process Description and Statistical Summary

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## INTRODUCTION

Classification is an integral component of any correctional system, yet the process must deal with two, potentially conflicting operational mandates to classify both for treatment purposes, and for those of management and security. Area Boards constitute one component of a comprehensive system of the Massachusetts Department of Correction (DOC) and are charged with periodically reviewing inmate status to determine eligibility and suitability for inter-institutional transfers. Although unified in overall approach, each of the three DOC regions administers its own Boards for inmates housed within the Area's facilities.

This report is the first in a series of studies of the Area Board classification process, and stems from DOC management request. The overall research goals have been identified as: 1) to describe the operation of the three Area Boards; 2) to describe the types of recommendations and types of inmates recommended by the Boards; 3) to determine the decision-making rationales of classification and the correlates of these rationales; and 4) to assess the validity of the classification decision-making process.

The present study addresses the first major objective by: developing some historical perspective on the Area Board process within the general context of classification at the DOC by: a) describing its precursor; b) operationally describing the components of the process within the organization; c) providing a statistical summary of the numbers seen, the types of recommendations made, and Central Office actions vis-a-vis these recommendations; and d) conducting a preliminary follow-up analysis to determine the outcome of these recommendations and decisions.

## Technique

The population of all cases heard by a Board during a representative time frame (July, 1977 through January, 1978) formed the basis for the study. Variables collected for each case included the dates of the hearing, Central Office decision, and transfer; the Area Board recommendations; Central Office decision (approved placement); actual placement immediately following classification; and placement six months after concluding classification. Frequency distributions and crosstabulations were utilized to portray this quantitative data.

A sizable portion of the report is a narrative description of classification, and the drawbacks and advantages of this particular strategy. Information necessary to prepare this section was derived primarily from in-depth interviews with both Central Office administrative classification staff; and institution-based Area Board members and chairpersons. The Departmental Directives on classification were also reviewed.

## Findings

Inasmuch as two sections on findings are included - a qualitative description and statistical summary - the following will be organized in the same manner.

### I. Narrative Description of the Area Board Process:

1. The centralized classification process prior to Area Boards is characterized as utilizing separate types of Boards - Inter-Institutional Transfer Boards for transfer between major facilities, and Community-Based Boards, for considerations for community placements. Approvals flowed from the Board recommendation to the Central Office Supervisor of Classification Systems (acting on behalf of the Commissioner).

2. Area Boards hear all potential transfer cases. The recommendation is sent to a Central Office Area Director of Classification, who approves recommendations to a placement within his or her own Area. If inter-area, both Area Directors must agree, and final sign-off is obtained from the Supervisor of Classification Systems.

3. There are five avenues by which an inmate may appear before an Area Board: recommendation by the institution's internal classification committee; receipt of a periodic review date by a prior classification board; necessity for reclassification following a lower security placement; receipt of an open reserve parole date; and referral by a Superintendent.

4. A variety of factors are weighed during Board deliberations. These may be external, such as statutory eligibility, bed-space and program availability; and/or internal, as inmate's program involvement and motivation.

5. The process was perceived by classification staff as having the advantages of bettering the review process, leading to increasingly informed decision-making, and improving management. These can be generally categorized in terms of effectiveness. Disadvantages cited bore upon efficiency; i.e., bureaucratic complexity and Area-intensiveness (or, that familiarity with corrections is limited to the particular Area). Suggestions for improvement included upgrading training and communication, expediting the decision-making time, systematizing information, and increasing staff size.

II. Quantitative Analysis of the Area Board Process:  
Twelve major findings were asserted, based on an analysis of 1200 cases appearing before Area Boards during the specified time frame.

1. A large proportion of all Area Board recommendations (60.7 percent), were for transfers to lower custody (Table 1).
2. Central Office tended to approve Area Board recommendations (66.7 percent approval rate); the largest percentage of overturns were for approvals to higher custody (Table 2).
3. In terms of specific institution, the Area Board recommendations were nearly equally split between maximum and medium security (43 percent) and minimum and community-based (41.5 percent).
4. Central Office decisions were apt to be more conservative: 50.5 percent for maximum or medium security versus 36.8 percent for minimum or community-based. As Table 3 demonstrates, the Area Boards recommended 255 cases for maximum security and the Central Office ultimately approved 326 cases for maximum, which was an increase of 28 percent. Conversely, the Boards recommended 370 cases for community-based facilities and Central Office approved only 286 - a decrease of 23 percent.
5. At the end of the six-month follow-up, a large proportion of the population (36.5 percent) was in community-based programs or released on a GCD or parole.
6. The length of classification is greater than expected; the median length of time for Central Office decisions was two to three weeks; the median number of weeks from a hearing to a transfer was four to five weeks; and the median length of time between the Central Office decision to transfer was two weeks.
7. There was a fairly high degree of consistency between Area Board recommendations and Central Office decisions; however, the latter again tended to act more conservatively (i.e., overturn for higher custody). Whereas 85.9 percent of the recommendations for higher custody were approved by Central Office, only 59.7 percent of the recommendations for lower security were approved.
8. The highest Central Office approval rates were in the security level originally recommended by the Area Board.



9. The security level of actual placements was fairly consistent with Area Board recommendations; the highest placement rates were in the same categories of these original recommendations. Recommendations for maximum drew the highest specific approval rates: 85.9 percent of all Board recommendations for maximum were approved for maximum. In contrast, 70.8 percent of the community-based recommendations were approved for such a placement by Central Office.

10. Six-month placements (for those who could be followed) also drew the highest proportions from the original recommendations. However, there was evidence of substantial movement through the system; for example, releases on parole constituted 17.7 percent of the maximum, 15.9 percent of the medium, 11.2 percent of the minimum, 13.2 percent of the medium/minimum, and 31.9 percent of the community-based recommendations.

11. Central Office decisions almost always resulted in an immediate placement in that security level facility.

12. Six-month placements had a slightly higher degree of consistency with the Central Office decision, compared to the Area Board recommendation. The proportion on parole from each Central Office decision category was: maximum, 18.5 percent; medium 21.2 percent; minimum, 9.2 percent; medium/minimum, 14.0 percent; and community-based, 32.4 percent.

TABLE 1  
RECOMMENDATIONS OF AREA BOARDS

<u>Recommendation</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Remain at current status	332	(27.8)
Transfer to lower custody	725	(60.7)
Transfer to higher custody	71	( 5.9)
Transfer to lateral custody	65	( 5.4)
Out-of-state transfer	1	( 0.1)
TOTAL	1194	(100.0)

TABLE 2  
CENTRAL OFFICE DECISIONS<sup>1</sup>

<u>Type of Decision</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Approve Area Board recommendation	800	(66.7)
Deny AB recommendation; approve for lower than Board recommendation	70	( 5.8)
Deny AB recommendation; approve for higher than Board recommendation	208	(17.3)
Deny AB recommendation; approve for lateral to Board recommendation	118	( 9.8)
Defer	3	( 0.3)
TOTAL	1199	(100.0)

<sup>1</sup> Missing is the option to "approve to remain at current status". This will appear in the next report. In this table, the type of decision would have been weighed and coded into an appropriate category vis-a-vis the Area Board recommendation.

TABLE 3

DIVERGENCE BETWEEN CUSTODY LEVELS OF PLACEMENTS APPROVED BY CENTRAL  
OFFICE AND PLACEMENTS RECOMMENDED BY AREA BOARD

<u>Custody Level</u>	<u>Area Board Recommended</u>	<u>Central Office Approved</u>	<u>Difference</u>
Maximum	255	326 (+71)	+27.8%
Medium	255	271 (+16)	+ 6.3%
Minimum	122	151 (+29)	+23.8%
Community-Based	370	286 (-84)	-22.7%

Conclusions

No definitive conclusions will be offered until an exhaustive analysis of additional data is complete. This will include a characterization of inmates in the recommendation/decision typology; the rationales for these recommendations; and a continuous movement tracking. The final report will endeavor to determine the probability of success at lower custody; describe these successful inmates; and assess whether these decisions were accurate. At this time, statements about the Area Board classification process will be made with greater confidence.

One generalization that has emerged from this analysis is that Central Office tends to act more conservatively than the Area Boards in classification deliberations. In the subsequent research an attempt will be made to ascertain whether or not a relationship exists between this conservative orientation in the Central Office and the persistent problem of vacancies in pre-release beds.

APPENDIX B

Two tables are presented on the following pages, which depict Central Office approval rates over respective Area Board recommendations for lower security, or for higher security/remain in current status. These calculations formed the basis for the approval rates cited in Summary of Findings II and III, on pages , and should be viewed in conjunction with the corresponding  $X^2$  tables on pages and

These tables should be read as follows: for each statistically significant variable, the previously reported split at which the difference between the two groups is greatest appears in the first column. The N, or number of the particular category of Board recommendations at this split, is next, followed by the number with that characteristic approved by Central Office. Finally, an approval rate for each half of the split is computed and appears in the last column.

CENTRAL OFFICE APPROVAL RATES OVER AREA BOARD RECOMMENDATION TO  
LOWER SECURITY

Time from Area Board to Parole Eligibility

<u>Split</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>N Approved</u>	<u>Approval Rate</u>
2 yrs.-	218	111	50.9%
+ 2 yrs.	141	90	63.8%
TOTAL	359	201	56.0%

Minimum Sentence

<u>Split</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>N Approved</u>	<u>Approval Rate</u>
Indeterminate	129	82	63.6%
All others	234	121	51.7%
TOTAL	363	203	55.9%

Major D-Reports

<u>Split</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>N Approved</u>	<u>Approval Rate</u>
None	196	126	64.3%
Some	167	77	46.1%
TOTAL	363	203	60.0%

Motivation

<u>Split</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>N Approved</u>	<u>Approval Rate</u>
High	82	55	67.1%
All others	260	141	54.2%
TOTAL	342	196	57.3%

Attitude

<u>Split</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>N Approved</u>	<u>Approval Rate</u>
Poor	27	10	37.0%
All others	335	193	57.6%
TOTAL	362	203	56.1%

Number of Late-Under Furlough Outcomes

<u>Split</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>N Approved</u>	<u>Approval Rate</u>
1 or None	140	74	52.9%
2 or More	8	1	12.5%
TOTAL	148	75	50.7%

Housing Status

<u>Split</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>N Approved</u>	<u>Approval Rate</u>
Maximum	159	100	62.9%
All others	221	95	43.0%
TOTAL	380	195	51.3%

Total Number Prior Adult Incarcerations

<u>Split</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>N Approved</u>	<u>Approval Rate</u>
None	138	89	64.5%
Some	221	113	51.1%
TOTAL	359	202	56.3%

Age at First Arrest

<u>Split</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>N Approved</u>	<u>Approval Rate</u>
19 or younger	292	156	53.4%
20 or older	62	42	67.7%
TOTAL	354	198	55.9%

Number of Charges for Person Offenses

<u>Split</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>N Approved</u>	<u>Approval Rate</u>
5 or less	255	154	60.4%
6 or more	103	47	45.6%
TOTAL	358	201	56.1%

Military Discharge

<u>Split</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>N Approved</u>	<u>Approval Rate</u>
No military	264	155	58.7%
In military	77	35	45.5%
TOTAL	341	190	55.7%

Drug Use

<u>Split</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>N Approved</u>	<u>Approval Rate</u>
Marijuana	24	21	87.5%
All others	153	85	55.6%
TOTAL	177	106	59.9%

Time from Area Board to Central Office Decision

<u>Split</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>N Approved</u>	<u>Approval Rate</u>
1 week or less	96	62	64.6%
More than 1 week	260	137	52.7%
TOTAL	356	199	55.9%

Board Vote Tally

<u>Split</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>N Approved</u>	<u>Approval Rate</u>
Unanimous	281	170	60.5%
Minority dissent	76	28	36.8%
TOTAL	357	198	55.4%

Education Program Participation

<u>Split</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>N Approved</u>	<u>Approval Rate</u>
Yes, waiting	181	92	50.8%
No	181	111	61.3%
TOTAL	362	203	56.1%

CENTRAL OFFICE APPROVAL RATES OVER AREA BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS TO  
HIGHER SECURITY OR REMAIN IN CURRENT STATUS

Motivation

<u>Split</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>N Approved</u>	<u>Approval Rate</u>
Higher, somewhat	62	43	69.4%
Lacking, negative	109	92	84.4%
TOTAL	171	135	78.9%

Attitude

<u>Split</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>N Approved</u>	<u>Approval Rate</u>
Excellent, good	40	24	60.0%
Fair, poor	145	121	83.4%
TOTAL	185	145	78.4%

Total Number of Furloughs

<u>Split</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>N Approved</u>	<u>Approval Rate</u>
10 or less	178	142	79.8%
11 or more	14	8	27.1%
TOTAL	192	150	78.1%

Total Number of Any Prior Incarcerations

<u>Split</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>N Approved</u>	<u>Approval Rate</u>
5 or less	171	137	80.1%
6 or more	20	12	60.0%
TOTAL	191	149	78.0%

Total Number of Parole Violations

<u>Split</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>N Approved</u>	<u>Approval Rate</u>
None	31	19	61.3%
Some	49	40	81.6%
TOTAL	80	59	73.8%



Total Number of Charges for Person Offenses

<u>Split</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>N Approved</u>	<u>Approval Rate</u>
None	10	5	50.0%
Some	181	144	79.6%
TOTAL	191	149	78.0%

Total Number of Prior County Incarcerations

<u>Split</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>N Approved</u>	<u>Approval Rate</u>
3 or less	180	144	80.0%
4 or more	11	5	45.5%
TOTAL	191	149	78.0%

Number Prior State or Federal Incarcerations

<u>Split</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>N Approved</u>	<u>Approval Rate</u>
1 or less	172	130	75.6%
2 or more	19	19	100.0%
TOTAL	191	149	78.0%

Number Adult Parole Violations

<u>Split</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>N Approved</u>	<u>Approval Rate</u>
None	23	14	60.9%
Some	30	27	30.0%
TOTAL	53	41	77.4%

Drug Use

<u>Split</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>N Approved</u>	<u>Approval Rate</u>
Heroin	56	37	66.1%
All others	47	41	87.2%
TOTAL	103	78	75.7%

Maximum Sentence

<u>Split</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>N Approved</u>	<u>Approval Rate</u>
8 yrs. or less	63	43	68.3%
10 yrs. or more	129	107	82.9%
TOTAL	192	150	78.1%

Board Vote Tally

<u>Split</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>N Approved</u>	<u>Approval Rate</u>
Unanimous	150	123	82.0%
Minority dissent	40	26	65.0%
TOTAL	190	149	78.4%

Compliance with Prior Classification Recommendations

<u>Split</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>N Approved</u>	<u>Approval Rate</u>
Yes or partial	119	87	73.1%
No	37	35	94.6%
TOTAL	156	122	78.2%

Educational Needs

<u>Split</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>N Approved</u>	<u>Approval Rate</u>
Vocational	29	18	62.1%
All others	142	117	82.4%
TOTAL	171	135	78.9%

APPENDIX C

List of Variables Utilized for the Research

The following list represents all variables actually analyzed during the course of the research. They have been grouped according to their sources.

CAPMIS Data

race

sex

court from which committed

marital status

military discharge

prior address

occupation

time at most skilled position

time on job of longest duration

last grade completed

drug use

total number of court appearances

total number of charges for:

    person offenses

    property offenses

    sex offenses

    drunkenness

    escape offenses

number of prior:

    juvenile incarcerations

    county incarcerations

    state or federal incarcerations

    juvenile paroles

    juvenile parole violations

    adult paroles

    adult parole violations

total number of furloughs

number of:

    successful furlough outcomes

    late-under furlough outcomes

    late-over furlough outcomes

    escape furlough outcomes

    arrest furlough outcomes

    other furlough outcomes

present offense

current institution

beginning institution (for movement summary)

final institution

final custody status

Pre-Hearing Summary Investigation and Recommendation Narrative

Board recommendation  
institution recommended by Board  
Central Office action  
institution recommended by Central Office  
commitment institution  
reason for Area Board  
institution requested  
current residence  
board institution  
Board rationales for recommendations to:  
    lower security  
    higher security  
    lateral security  
    no transfer  
Board conditions of transfer  
Board vote tally  
reason for minority dissent  
Central Office rationales  
Central Office conditions  
Board recommendations for :  
    education programs  
    counseling programs  
    drug programs  
    alcohol programs  
    vocational programs  
    TNT participation  
    other programs  
    SBII evaluation  
outcome of SBII evaluation  
housing status  
SDP clearance status  
job or education institutional assignment  
successful furloughs at time of hearing  
furloughs at time of hearing that were:  
    late-under  
    escape  
outstanding warrants or court cases  
prior compliance with classification recommendations  
health status  
vocational skills  
educational needs  
family and community ties  
drug usage  
alcohol usage  
minor disciplinary reports  
major disciplinary reports  
major sanction disciplinary reports  
past minor disciplinary reports  
past major disciplinary reports  
past major sanction disciplinary reports  
motivation  
attitude

prior participation in:

- education programs
- counseling
- vocational programs
- other programs
- work release
- education release

termination types from:

- education programs
- counseling
- vocational programs
- other programs
- work release
- education release

number of pre-release placements during this incarceration

type of termination from first pre-release placement

number of months in first pre-release placement

type of termination from second pre-release placement

number of months in second pre-release placement

number of pre-release placements during prior incarcerations

number of positive prior pre-release terminations

number of negative prior pre-release terminations

number of neutral prior pre-release terminations

number of returns from minimum to higher security during this incarceration

number of returns from medium to higher security during this incarceration

number of returns from minimum to higher security during prior incarceration

number of returns from medium to higher security during prior incarcerations

number of institutional boards seen during this incarceration

number of area boards seen during this incarceration

number of area board recommendations to:

- lower security
- higher security
- lateral security
- remain current status

Central Office outcome of:

- first Area Board seen
- second Area Board seen
- third Area Board seen
- fourth Area Board seen

Central Office decision in relationship to:

- recommendation of first Area Board
- recommendation of second Area Board
- recommendation of third Area Board
- recommendation of fourth Area Board

prior parole revocations

classification by a reception diagnostic center

#### Derived Variables

total number of any prior incarcerations

total number of prior adult incarcerations

total number of paroles

total number of parole violations

age at incarceration

age at first arrest

age at first arrest for drunkenness

age at first arrest for drugs  
minimum sentence in years  
maximum sentence in years  
time until first parole eligibility date  
time from Area Board to first transfer  
time from Area Board to first transfer not resulting directly from hearing  
time from first to second move  
time from second to third move  
time from Area Board recommendation to Central Office decision  
time from reclassification returns to Area Board recommendation  
time from reclassification returns to Central Office decision  
time from Area Board hearing to parole eligibility date  
time from Area Board hearing to Good Conduct Discharge date  
Board recommendation category  
Central Office approval category