

Massachusetts Department of Correction  
Carol Higgins O'Brien, Commissioner

FY15  
July-March *Gap* Analysis Report

Christopher Mitchell, Director Reentry and Programs Services

*Prepared by:*  
*Reentry and Program Services Division in Collaboration with Strategic Research and Planning Division*

**Introduction:**

The Massachusetts Department of Correction's (MA DOC) vision is to effect positive behavioral change in order to eliminate violence, victimization, and recidivism. Motivating and recommending offenders to participate and complete evidence based programs is one of the many strategies the MA DOC utilizes to effect positive behavioral change. In order for the MA DOC to make informed decisions and document progress towards this vision, a *gap* analysis was implemented for measuring and reporting offenders' participation in evidence based programs.

This *gap* analysis represents how successful MA DOC is at effecting positive behavioral change for its offender population by means of programming. This analysis is extremely beneficial as it captures our programming gaps, allows the MA DOC to make informed decisions to reduce the gaps, provides programming benchmarks for strategic planning, promotes transparency, and creates a roadmap for efficiently managing resources.

The cornerstone of our program services is the Risk, Need, and Responsivity (RNR) framework. RNR is predicated on three core principles:

- i ***The Risk Principle*** asserts that criminal behavior can be reliably predicted, intensity of services should match the offenders' risk level and treatment should focus on the higher risk offenders
- i ***The Need Principle*** highlights the importance of addressing criminogenic needs in the design and delivery of treatment
- i ***The Responsivity Principle*** focuses on matching an offender's personality and learning style with appropriate program settings and approaches (Andrews, Zinger, Hoge, Bonta, Gendreau & Cullen, 1990; Andrews and Dowden, 2006).

In regards to the MA DOC's programming processes, a risk assessment is conducted on male, criminally sentenced offenders that are serving a minimum of one year and are not sentenced to life without parole. Offenders who score moderate-to-high risk to recidivate on their risk assessment are eligible for a needs assessment. An offender's needs assessment scores will then identify criminogenic need areas that should be addressed with corresponding programming prior to release in order to reduce the likelihood of recidivating.

Furthermore, offenders that do not complete a risk assessment or score low risk to recidivate on their risk assessment are not provided with a need assessment. These offenders are recommended for programming via program override entries, which are based on supportive

evidence (official version, drug screening, dialogue with the offender, etc). The risk principle supports this practice in which the higher risk population is targeted for programming.

Offenders with a substance abuse, anger, or criminal thinking need are recommended for the Correctional Recovery Academy (CRA) Program, Violence Reduction Program, Criminal Thinking Program, respectively. This report will illustrate the MA DOC's progress towards promoting positive behavioral change by means of programming prior to an offender's release.

### **Part One, Post-Release Cohort:**

From July 1, 2014 through March 31, 2015, a total of 1,002 male offenders released to the street<sup>1</sup> from MA DOC custody that began this admission as a new court commitment<sup>2</sup>. Seventy-three percent of this release cohort completed a needs assessment, 20% were not eligible for a needs assessment due to scoring low risk to recidivate on their risk assessment, and approximately 7% either refused to complete an assessment or were serving less than one year, and were not eligible for a needs assessment. The following analysis depicts this release cohort's progress towards addressing their criminogenic needs prior to release back to their communities.

### **Need Area Breakdown:**

**Table 1: FY15 July-March Male New Court Commitment Releases to the Street Identified Need Areas**

<b>FY15 July-March New Court Commitment Releases to the Street Need Area Breakdowns</b>								
			<b>Substance Abuse</b>		<b>Criminal Thinking</b>		<b>Anger</b>	
<b>Release Month</b>	<b>Number Male Releases</b>	<b>Number w/ Needs Assessment</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,002</b>	<b>735</b>	<b>599</b>	<b>81%</b>	<b>417</b>	<b>57%</b>	<b>488</b>	<b>66%</b>
Jul-14	108	83	62	75%	49	59%	56	67%
Aug-14	116	86	70	81%	45	52%	53	62%
Sep-14	109	81	64	79%	45	56%	52	64%
Oct-14	133	88	79	90%	49	56%	56	64%
Nov-14	89	66	51	77%	37	56%	50	76%
Dec-14	115	87	73	84%	51	59%	54	62%
Jan-15	124	92	74	80%	48	52%	61	66%
Feb-15	98	69	58	84%	41	59%	51	74%
Mar-15	110	83	68	82%	52	63%	55	66%

*\*Percentages are based on the number of offenders who completed a Needs Assessment.*

- 81% substance abuse need
- 57% criminal thinking need
- 66% anger need

<sup>1</sup> A release to the street occurs when an inmate is released from the custody of the Massachusetts Department of Correction by way of parole or discharge to the street. Conditions warranting a release to the street include: parole, good conduct discharge, and expiration of sentence.

<sup>2</sup> Individuals committed by the courts to the Massachusetts Department of Correction as a result of a criminal offense. Thus, this analysis excludes offenders who were re-admitted and subsequently released, such as parole or probation violators.

### **Release Cohort Gap Analysis Methodology:**

Offenders may have multiple outcomes for a specific program. For example, an offender may initially refuse to participate in a program; however, on a subsequent program recommendation decide to enroll and proceed to complete a program. Thus, a hierarchy of program outcomes has been established to measure the highest outcome level of participation an offender has achieved during their incarceration. Each offender's highest outcome within the hierarchy is reflected in the following tables for each program.

#### **Program Outcome Hierarchy:**

- 1) Completed Program
- 2) Enrolled
- 3) Terminated Unsuccessfully
- 4) Refused to Participate
- 5) Accepted
- 6) Ineligible
- 7) Program not Available
- 8) No recommendation/No recommendation outcome/Pending override approval (POA)

The **gap** is the percentage of offenders **who did not complete** corresponding core programming to a need area prior to their release; i.e. **gap** = 100% - % Completed Program.

The total sum of eligible offenders is based upon the sum of offenders with a corresponding need (i.e., substance abuse, anger, or criminal thinking) and those with a program override entry<sup>3</sup>.

**Table 2: Male Substance Abuse Need Area by CRA Outcomes**

Male Substance Abuse Need Area by CRA Outcomes																	
						GAP											
Release Month	Number Male Releases	Number Eligible		Completed Program		Participated		Refused to Participate		Accepted to Waitlist		Program Not Available		Ineligible		No Rec/Rec Outcome/ POA*	
Total	1,002	679	68%	301	44%	118	17%	98	14%	3	0%	139	20%	10	1%	10	1%
Jul-14	108	74	69%	30	41%	15	20%	10	14%	1	1%	16	22%	1	1%	1	1%
Aug-14	116	77	66%	32	42%	12	16%	12	16%	0	0%	19	25%	1	1%	1	1%
Sep-14	109	75	69%	39	52%	10	13%	7	9%	0	0%	17	23%	0	0%	2	3%
Oct-14	133	83	62%	27	33%	17	20%	14	17%	1	1%	20	24%	3	4%	1	1%
Nov-14	89	60	67%	24	40%	14	23%	11	18%	0	0%	11	18%	0	0%	0	0%
Dec-14	115	81	70%	41	51%	11	14%	11	14%	1	1%	16	20%	0	0%	1	1%
Jan-15	124	79	64%	36	46%	13	16%	13	16%	0	0%	15	19%	1	1%	1	1%
Feb-15	98	69	70%	31	45%	16	23%	9	13%	0	0%	9	13%	1	1%	3	4%
Mar-15	110	81	74%	41	51%	10	12%	11	14%	0	0%	16	20%	3	4%	0	0%

\* Reference Gap Analysis Report Definitions.

#### ➤ CRA Program Outcomes:

- **56% gap (N=378)**; decreased 4% compared to FY14 benchmarks
- 20% of eligible offenders released without ever being housed in a facility that offered CRA programming; decreased 4% compared to FY14 benchmarks
- 14% of eligible offenders refused to participate in programming; decreased 1% compared to FY14 benchmarks
- The MA DOC offers multiple substance abuse programs. The GAP analysis only considers the CRA Program due to it being our most intensive substance abuse program, and limitations associated with collecting data from the many community based substance abuse providers who provide treatment as part of a supportive case management model prior to release and post release.

<sup>3</sup> Reference Gap Analysis Report Definitions.

**Table 3: Male Criminal Thinking Need Area by Criminal Thinking Outcomes**

Male Criminal Thinking Need Area by Criminal Thinking Outcomes																
						GAP										
Release Month	Number Male Releases	Number Eligible		Completed Program		Participated		Refused to Participate		Accepted to Waitlist		Program Not Available		Ineligible		No Rec/Rec Outcome/ POA*
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,002</b>	<b>471</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>43</b> <b>9%</b>
Jul-14	108	52	48%	12	23%	5	10%	5	10%	19	37%	7	13%	4	8%	0 0%
Aug-14	116	50	43%	11	22%	8	16%	3	6%	11	22%	9	18%	1	2%	7 14%
Sep-14	109	50	46%	12	24%	2	4%	4	8%	18	36%	8	16%	0	0%	6 12%
Oct-14	133	56	42%	10	18%	9	16%	6	11%	19	34%	6	11%	2	4%	4 7%
Nov-14	89	47	53%	13	28%	7	15%	4	9%	9	19%	9	19%	1	2%	4 9%
Dec-14	115	59	51%	20	34%	8	14%	6	10%	17	29%	5	8%	0	0%	3 5%
Jan-15	124	56	45%	15	27%	7	13%	10	18%	12	21%	7	13%	0	0%	5 9%
Feb-15	98	45	46%	15	33%	6	13%	3	7%	10	22%	5	11%	0	0%	6 13%
Mar-15	110	56	51%	13	23%	4	7%	7	13%	17	30%	7	13%	0	0%	8 14%

➤ Criminal Thinking Outcomes:

- **74% gap (N=350);** increased 2% compared to FY14 benchmarks
- 13% of eligible offenders released without ever being housed in a facility that offered Criminal Thinking; decreased 5% compared to FY14 benchmarks
- 9% of eligible offenders refused to participate in programming; increased 5% compared to FY14 benchmarks

**Table 4: Male Anger Need Area by Violence Reduction Outcomes**

Male Anger Need Area by Violence Reduction Outcomes																
						GAP										
Release Month	Number Male Releases	Number Eligible		Completed Program		Participated		Refused to Participate		Accepted to Waitlist		Program Not Available		Ineligible		No Rec/Rec Outcome/ POA*
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,002</b>	<b>561</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>4</b> <b>1%</b>
Jul-14	108	62	57%	18	29%	5	8%	6	10%	25	40%	6	10%	2	3%	0 0%
Aug-14	116	60	52%	16	27%	6	10%	7	12%	24	40%	3	5%	3	5%	1 2%
Sep-14	109	63	58%	18	29%	7	11%	3	5%	27	43%	5	8%	3	5%	0 0%
Oct-14	133	69	52%	22	32%	17	25%	6	9%	15	22%	6	9%	2	3%	1 1%
Nov-14	89	55	62%	16	29%	12	22%	8	15%	12	22%	4	7%	2	4%	1 2%
Dec-14	115	65	57%	28	43%	7	11%	12	18%	16	25%	1	2%	1	2%	0 0%
Jan-15	124	70	56%	17	24%	14	20%	12	17%	18	26%	8	11%	0	0%	1 1%
Feb-15	98	57	58%	22	39%	10	18%	2	4%	19	33%	3	5%	1	2%	0 0%
Mar-15	110	60	55%	20	33%	10	17%	10	17%	14	23%	6	10%	0	0%	0 0%

➤ Violence Reduction Program Outcomes:

- **68% gap (N=376);** increased 3% compared to FY14 benchmarks
- 7% of eligible offenders released without ever being housed in a facility that offered Violence Reduction; decreased 4% compared to FY14 benchmarks
- 12% of eligible offenders refused to participate in programming; increased 6% compared to FY14 benchmarks

The Criminal Thinking and Violence Reduction Program both have a significant number of offenders who release to the street while on the waitlist to engage in the program. This large gap can be attributed to a lack of resources, which are a necessity when trying to meet the specific programming needs of the MADOC offender population.

**Table 5: Male Register Sex Offenders by Sex Offender Treatment Program Outcomes**

Male Register Sex Offenders by Sex Offender Treatment Outcomes															
						GAP									
Release Month	Number Male Releases	Number Eligible		Participated		Refused to Participate		Accepted to Waitlist		Program Not Available		Ineligible		No Rec/Rec Outcome/ POA*	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,002</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3%</b>
Jul-14	108	15	14%	5	33%	3	20%	0	0%	6	40%	0	0%	1	7%
Aug-14	116	15	13%	10	67%	2	13%	1	7%	2	13%	0	0%	0	0%
Sep-14	109	11	10%	6	55%	1	9%	0	0%	3	27%	0	0%	1	9%
Oct-14	133	18	14%	13	72%	4	22%	0	0%	1	6%	0	0%	0	0%
Nov-14	89	8	9%	5	63%	0	0%	0	0%	3	38%	0	0%	0	0%
Dec-14	115	21	18%	7	33%	5	24%	0	0%	6	5%	1	5%	2	10%
Jan-15	124	16	13%	9	56%	2	13%	0	0%	5	3%	0	0%	0	0%
Feb-15	98	8	8%	3	38%	1	13%	1	13%	3	38%	0	0%	0	0%
Mar-15	110	9	8%	6	67%	0	0%	0	0%	3	33%	0	0%	0	0%

➤ Sex Offender Treatment Program Outcomes<sup>4</sup>:

- 47% **gap** (N=42)
- 26% of eligible offenders released without ever being housed in a facility that offered the Sex Offender Treatment Program
- 15% of eligible offenders refused to participate in programming

**Table 6: Male Offenders Admitted without a HS Diploma/GED that Earned a GED/HiSET**

Male New Court Commitment Releases to the Street Breakdown of Offenders Admitted without a HS Diploma/GED that Earned a GED/Hi-Set				
Month	Number Releases	Number Admitted w/out HS Diploma or GED	Number Earned GED/Hi-Set	Percent Earned GED/Hi-Set
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,002</b>	<b>457</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>26 %</b>
Jul-14	108	52	16	31 %
Aug-14	116	59	16	27 %
Sep-14	109	56	18	32 %
Oct-14	133	51	12	24 %
Nov-14	89	40	7	18 %
Dec-14	115	52	15	29 %
Jan-15	124	56	19	34 %
Feb-15	98	42	6	14 %
Mar-15	110	49	10	20 %

➤ GED/HiSET Program Outcomes<sup>5</sup>:

- 26% of offenders admitted without a high school diploma or GED earned a GED or HiSET during their incarceration

<sup>4</sup> This dataset was not included in the FY14 Gap Analysis Report, thus there is no comparison to the prior benchmark.

<sup>5</sup> This dataset was not broken down by program outcome hierarchy due to the different levels of educational programming.

## **Conclusion:**

The MA DOC strives to reduce the gap by continuously implementing multiple strategies that will aid in this endeavor. For example, the Reentry and Program Services Strategic Plan highlights program outcome projections.

- i Increase the percentage of new court commitment releases to the street that were:
  - o Eligible for substance abuse programming that completed CRA prior to release to 70% by July 2017.
  - o Eligible for criminal thinking programming that completed criminal thinking prior to release to 33% by July 2017.
  - o Eligible for anger programming that completed violence reduction prior to release to 40% by July 2017.

The following objectives will have a significant impact on reducing the gap and assisting the MA DOC in implementing a performance-based culture that is working towards meeting our vision.

### **Objectives to Reduce the Gap:**

- o Reduce the percentage of offenders that release without ever being housed in a facility that offers programming for a corresponding need area.
- o Reduce the percentage of refusals to participate.
- o Reduce the percentage of unsuccessful terminations without effecting program fidelity.
- o Improve program recommendation processes to ensure all necessary program recommendations are entered into the Department's information system.

Additionally, the MA DOC recognizes the importance of supportive case management services to assist offenders as they transition from prison to the community. The department has initiated a dialogue with many community based providers who currently facilitate supportive case management services in an attempt to enhance data collection, analysis processes, and to more comprehensively define gaps in this report.

### **GAP ANALYSIS REPORT DEFINITIONS**

**Risk Assessment-** Tool utilized by the MA DOC to identify offenders who are moderate to high risk to re-offend and prioritize them for programming.

**Need Assessment-** Tool utilized by the MA DOC to place offenders in the appropriate programs that will aid in their reentry to society, and will most likely reduce the offender's chance of reoffending.

**Gap-** The percentage of offenders who did not complete corresponding core programming to a need area prior to their release; i.e.  $gap = 100\% - \% \text{ Completed Program}$ .

**Program Override Entry-** Occurs when an offender does not score moderate to high risk for a criminogenic need area based on their needs assessment, and a program recommendation is formulated by their Correctional Program Officer (CPO) due to evidence that the offender can benefit from participating in such a program.

**Substance Abuse Need-** Offenders with a score from 3 to 10 on their needs assessment for substance abuse need area.

**Substance Abuse Total Number Eligible-** The sum of offenders with a substance abuse need, and those with a program recommendation override.

**Criminal Thinking Need-** Offenders with a score from 6 to 10 on their needs assessment for criminal thinking need area.

**Criminal Thinking Total Number Eligible-** The sum of offenders with a criminal thinking need, and those with a program recommendation override.

**Anger Need-** Offenders with a score from 5 to 10 on their needs assessment for anger need area.

**Anger Total Number Eligible-** The sum of offenders with an anger need, and those with a program recommendation override.

**Completed Program-** Outcome issued when an offender satisfactorily completes the program (need considered met, upon completion of program within this analysis).

**Participated-** Outcome issued when an offender participates in a program, but does not complete the program due to various circumstances.

**Refused to Participate-** Outcome issued when an offender refuses to participate in programming.

**Accepted-** Outcome issued when an offender accepts a program recommendation and is on the waitlist for programming.

**Ineligible-** Outcome issued when an offender has the need for corresponding programming, but is unable to participate in programming due to various reasons, such as length of time left to serve, and housing unit.

**Program not Available-** Outcome issued when an offender has the criminogenic need for programming and the program is not available at their facility.

**Pending Override Approval (POA)/no recommendation outcome/no recommendation-** These are incomplete recommendations, due to an offender obtaining an early release via parole, or being transferred before a recommendation can be completed.

**Register Sex Offender-** Offenders required to register as a sex offender based on current and/or prior offenses.

### **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Andrews, D A., Bonta, J., Cullen, F T., Gendreau, P., Hoge, R D., & Zinger, I. (1990). *Does Correctional Treatment Work? A Clinically Relevant and Psychologically Informed Meta-Analysis*. *Criminology*, 28.

Andrew, D.A., & Dowden, C. (2006). *Risk principle of Case Classification in Correctional Treatment: A Meta Analytic Investigation*. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, 50.

This brief was written and prepared by Reentry and Program Services Division. Special recognition to Daniel Feagans, Statistician, and Hollie Matthews, Deputy Director Office of Strategic Planning & Research. Any comments or questions can be addressed by e-mail:

[Matthew.Moniz@massmail.state.ma.us](mailto:Matthew.Moniz@massmail.state.ma.us)

Copies of publications from the Office of Strategic Planning & Research can be found at  
<http://www.mass.gov/doc>.

Publication No. 15-147-DOC-01, 8 pgs.–May, 2015

Authorized by: Gary Lambert, Assistant Secretary for Operational Services.