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ESCAPES FROM DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES FACILITIES
1981 THROUGH 1985

This report provides legal and demographic information on inmates who have escaped from the Department of Correctional Services during calendar years 1981 through 1985. An aggregate profile of these inmates is provided including: reason for original commitment; minimum and maximum sentence length; facility of escape; ethnic status; time served since last commitment; duration of escape; age at time of escape; and prior adult criminal record.

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ESCAPES FROM DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES FACILITIES
1981-1985

This report provides information on inmates who escaped from custody of the Department of Correctional Services during the five year period 1981-1985. Eight profile characteristics are presented for the escape cohort for each of the five years. In addition to a brief summary text, tabulations are provided for each characteristic.

H I G H L I G H T S

1. In 1985 a total of 17 inmates escaped from DOCS custody in fourteen separate incidents. The number of escapees in 1985 was the lowest annual total for the five year period. The average rate of inmate escapees between 1981 and 1985 was less than one per 1000 inmates.
2. The majority of the inmates who escaped between 1981 and 1985 were serving time for various burglary offenses. This was also true of the 1985 escapees. Between 1981 and 1985 only 9% of the escapees were serving time for murder and manslaughter offenses. In 1985 only one inmate serving time for such offenses escaped.
3. Over half of the 1985 inmate escapees had served less than one year in prison at the time of their escape. This was also true of all the inmates who escaped between 1981 and 1985. The 1985 inmate escapees served an average of 13 months prior to their escape.
4. Between 1981 and 1985, 56% of the escapees left the custody of minimum security facilities and camps, while 26% left from medium security prisons, and the remaining 18% left from maximum security facilities.
5. Between 1981 and 1985, white inmates accounted for 56% of the escapees. During that period black and hispanic inmates each made up approximately 20% of the escapee group. In 1985 the escapee group consisted of 65% whites, 29% blacks, and 6% hispanics.
6. Between 1981 and 1985, 63% of the inmates who escaped were returned to DOCS custody within forty-eight hours. An additional 27% were returned within a month while 10% stayed out for over a month. For the 1985 escapees an unusually high percentage were returned within twenty-four hours. The average duration of the escapes in 1985 was thirteen hours.

8. Between 1981 and 1985 approximately 80% of the inmate escapees had minimum sentences of less than five years. Among the 1985 escapees the proportion of inmates with this minimum sentence range was even higher. The average minimum sentence length for the 1985 escapees was 41 months.
9. Between 1981 and 1985 approximately 53% of the inmate escapees had maximum sentences of less than five years. The proportion of escapees with this maximum sentence range was similar for 1985. The average maximum sentence length for the 1985 escapees was 69 months.
10. Between 1981 and 1985 over 38% of the inmate escapees were between the ages of 25 and 29 years. In comparison to the under custody populations during this period, younger inmates tended to be overrepresented among escapees while older inmates tended to be underrepresented among escapees. The average age of escapees in 1985 was 26 years 8 months.
11. Between 1981 and 1985 over 72% of the inmate escapees had some prior experience being incarcerated in either local jails or in prisons. The proportion of 1985 escapees with prior incarceration histories was even higher.

TABLE I

ESCAPES FROM DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES FACILITIES
1981 THROUGH 1985 CALENDAR YEARS

<u>Calendar Year</u>	<u>Number of Escapees</u>	<u>Rate Per Thousand Inmates</u>	<u>Multiple Escapes</u>	<u>Multiple Escapes as % of Total</u>	<u>Total No. of Escapes</u>
1981	19	0.74	2	11.8	17
1982	44 ^{a/}	1.54	7	24.1	29
1983	29 ^{b/}	.93	7	38.9	18
1984	20	.61	4	25.0	16
1985	17	.49	3	21.4	14
TOTAL	129	.86	23	24.5	94

^{a/}Includes 10 parole detainees.

^{b/}Includes 2 parole detainees.

According to Table I, the number of escapees from DOCS custody during 1985 declined 15% from the prior year's total and was down 39.3% from the prior four year average. The rate of escapes per thousand inmates under custody for 1985 was .49, which is the lowest rate reported since 1979. The annual escape rate has been on the decline since 1982. The average rate of escapes per thousand inmates between 1981 and 1985 was .86.

There were three escapes during 1985 which involved more than one inmate, with two inmates involved in each of these three escape incidents. The number of reported multiple escapes has been declining since 1983.

Table II shows that the primary commitment offense for the 17 inmates involved in escapes during 1985 was burglary, representing 47% of the total. Throughout the five year period covered by this report the most frequently occurring crime of commitment for inmates who have escaped involved some degree of burglary. Between 1981 and 1985 burglary offenses accounted for 47% of the commitment crimes attributed to the inmates who have escaped. During the same five year period the next most frequent crime of commitment for escapees was robbery as they accounted for 21% of the total.

A comparison of the commitment offenses of the 1985 escapees and commitment offense of the 1985 end of year under custody population revealed a discrepancy in the burglary category. While burglary commitments represented approximately 14% of the under custody population, they represented 47% of the 1985 escapee cohort. In contrast, robbery commitments were underrepresented in the escapee cohort at 12%, while representing approximately 31.1% of the 1985 under custody population.

TABLE II .

ESCAPEES FROM DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES FACILITIES
BY CRIME OF COMMITMENT: 1981 THROUGH 1985

Commitment Offense	1981		1982		1983		1984		1985		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Murder	1	5%	—	—	5	19%	2	10%	1	6%	9	8%
Manslaughter	1	5%	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1%
Robbery	6	32%	9	26%	4	15%	4	20%	2	12%	25	21%
Burglary	6	32%	14	41%	10	37%	11	55%	8	47%	49	42%
Assault	—	—	—	—	1	4%	—	—	1	6%	2	2%
Grand Larceny	—	—	4	12%	1	4%	1	5%	3	18%	9	8%
Rape	—	—	—	—	1	4%	—	—	—	—	1	1%
Drugs	—	—	2	6%	1	4%	2	10%	—	—	5	4%
Stolen Property	—	—	1	3%	1	4%	—	—	—	—	2	2%
Youthful Offenders	2	11%	2	6%	1	4%	—	—	—	—	5	4%
All Other Felonies	3	16%	2	6%	2	7%	—	—	2	12%	9	8%
TOTAL	19	100%	34^{a/}	100%	27^{b/}	100%	20	100%	17	100%	117	100%

^{a/} Excludes 10 parole detainees.

^{b/} Excludes 2 parole detainees.

According to Table III over one-half of the 1985 escapees (65%) had served less than one year since their last commitment at the time of their escape. There were seven escapees in 1985 who had served less than six months at the time of their escape, representing 41% of the cohort total. Overall, for the five year period of this report, the proportion of escapees who had served less than a year in prison was 60%, and half of those inmates had served less than six months prior to their escapes. The average number of months served by inmates prior to their escapes in 1985 was 13 while the median number of months served prior to escaping was lower at 10.

TABLE III

ESCAPEES FROM DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES FACILITIES
BY TIME SERVED SINCE LAST COMMITMENT: 1981 THROUGH 1985

Time Served	1981		1982		1983		1984		1985		Total	
	Number	Percent										
Less Than 6 Months	4	21%	11	32%	9	33%	4	20%	7	41%	35	30%
6-11 Months	8	42%	11	32%	5	19%	7	35%	4	24%	35	30%
11-17 Months	4	21%	4	12%	6	22%	1	5%	2	12%	17	15%
18-23 Months	1	5%	3	9%	1	4%	4	20%	2	12%	11	9%
24-35 Months	1	5%	4	12%	4	15%	3	15%	—	—	12	10%
36-47 Months	—	—	1	3%	1	4%	—	—	1	6%	3	3%
48-59 Months	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	6%	1	1%
60-71 Months	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
72 Plus	1	5%	—	—	1	4%	1	5%	—	—	3	3%
TOTAL	19	100%	34	100%	27	100%	20	100%	17	100%	117	100%

Tables IV and V show that between 1981 and 1985 the majority of escaping inmates left from minimum security facilities or camps that are run by this agency. Of the 117 escapees analyzed in this five year period 56% escaped from minimum security/camp prisons, 26% left from medium security facilities, while the remaining 18% escaped from maximum security facilities. In 1985 an equal number of inmates (8) escaped from both minimum/camp and medium security prisons with one additional inmate leaving from a maximum security facility.

TABLE IV
ESCAPES FROM D.O.C.S. FACILITIES BY SECURITY LEVEL 1981-1985

Year	Minimum		Medium		Maximum		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
1981	10	53%	7	37%	2	11%	19	100%
1982	26*	76%	6	18%	2	6%	34	100%
1983	13	48%	4	15%	10	37%	27	100%
1984	9	45%	5	25%	6	30%	20	100%
1985	8*	47%	8	47%	1	6%	17	100%
Percent of Total	66	56%	30	26%	21	18%	117	100%

TABLE V

ESCAPES FROM DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES FACILITIES
BY FACILITY OF ESCAPE: 1981 THROUGH 1985

Facilities listed are where escapes have occurred during this period.

Facility	Year of Escape				
	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985
TOTAL ESCAPES	19	34	27	20	17
MAXIMUM SECURITY	1	2	10	6	1
Attica	0	0	2	0	0
Downstate	0	0	4	0	0
Eastern	0	0	1	0	0
Elmira	1	0	3	3	0
Great Meadow	0	2	1	0	1
Green Haven	0	0	1	1	0
MEDIUM SECURITY	7	6	4	5	8
Adirondack	1	1	0	0	0
Albion	0	1	0	0	0
Fishkill	1	0	0	0	1
Groveland	0	0	0	2	0
Hudson	0	3	4	1	1
Mid-Orange	4	0	0	0	2
Sing Sing	0	0	0	1	0
Queensboro	1	1	0	0	0
Woodbourne	0	0	0	1	0
Mid-State	0	0	0	0	2
Ogdensburg	0	0	0	0	2
MINIMUM SECURITY: OTHER	3	9	6	2	4
Edgecombe	1	3	2	2	1
Fulton	1	5	2	0	1
Lincoln	1	1	2	0	1
Rochester	0	0	0	0	1
MINIMUM SECURITY: CAMPS	6	14	7	6	4
Beacon	0	0	2	0	0
Gabriels	0	0	1	0	1
Georgetown	3	4	0	0	0
Mt. McGregor	0	1	2	0	0
Monterey	0	3	2	3	2
Pharsalia	0	4	0	2	1
Summit	3	2	0	1	0
FEMALE FACILITIES	2	0	0	0	0
Bedford Hills	1	0	0	0	0
Lincoln Annex	1	0	0	0	0
OUTSIDE FACILITY CONFINES	0	3	0	1	0

According to Table VI, between 1981 and 1985, the percent of white escapees was disproportionate to their makeup in the under custody population, while for black inmates the proportion of those who escaped was lower than their under custody counterparts. The proportion of hispanic inmates who escaped during this five year period was roughly equivalent to the proportion of hispanics under custody. In 1985 white inmates accounted for 65% of the escapees while whites only accounted for 22% of the 1985 end of year under custody population. The proportion of blacks who escaped in 1985 was 29% while blacks accounted for 50% of the end of year under custody population. The proportion of hispanics who escaped in 1985 was unusually low at 6% of the years total, at the same time hispanics accounted for 20% of the end of year under custody population. Due to the small number of escapes each year it is hard to determine any consistent trend information on an annual basis.

TABLE VI

ESCAPEES FROM D.O.C.S. FACILITIES BY ETHNICITY

Ethnic Group	1981		1982		1983		1984		1985		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent								
White	9	47%	22	65%	16	59%	10	50%	11	65%	68	58%
Black	4	21%	5	15%	5	19%	6	30%	5	29%	25	21%
Hispanic	5	26%	7	21%	6	22%	4	20%	1	6%	23	20%
Other	1	5%	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1%
TOTAL	19	100%	34	100%	27	100%	20	100%	17	100%	117	100%

According to Table VII 39% of the 117 inmates that escaped during this five year study period were returned within twenty-four hours. An additional 24% were returned within the period of 25 to 47 hours. Thus 63% of these escaping inmates were back in custody in less than two days. The Table also shows that between 1981 and 1985, 27% of the escapees were captured within the period of two to thirty days while 10% stayed out for over one month.

During 1985, an unusually high percentage (82%) of escapees were captured within a twenty-four hour period. The average duration for 1985 escapes was approximately thirteen hours, while the median duration was about six hours.

TABLE VII

ESCAPEES FROM DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES FACILITIES
BY DURATION OF ESCAPES: 1981 THROUGH 1985

Escape Duration	1981		1982		1983		1984		1985		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent								
Less than 24 hours	8	42%	8	24%	12	44%	4	15%	14	82%	46	39%
25 - 47 hours	5	26%	8	24%	5	19%	8	30%	2	12%	28	24%
2 - 7 days	1	5%	10	29%	6	22%	3	11%	1	6%	21	18%
8 - 14 days	1	5%	1	3%	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	2%
15 - 21 days	1	5%	3	9%	—	—	2	7%	—	—	6	5%
22 days - 1 months	1	5%	—	—	—	—	1	4%	—	—	2	2%
Greater than 1 month	2	11%	4	12%	4	15%	2	7%	—	—	12	10%
TOTAL	19	100%	34	100%	27	100%	20	100%	17	100%	117	100%

According to Table VIII , between 1981 and 1985 the most frequent minimum sentence length (given to 57% of the 117 inmate escapees) was under two and one-half years. An additional 23% of the inmates who escaped had minimum sentences ranging between two and one-half to five years. Thus, during the time frame of this study 80% of the escapees had minimum sentences which were under five years. Among of the 1985 escapees 94% had minimum sentences of less than five years. The average minimum sentence for this group of 17 inmates was 41 months while the median minimum sentence was only 18 months.

According to Table IX , between 1981 and 1985 the most frequent maximum sentence length (given to 27% of the 117 inmates who escaped) was less than four years. In total, 53% of the inmates who escaped from DOCS custody in the five years of this study had been given maximum sentences of less than five years. Among the 1985 escapees 53% had maximum sentences of less than five years. The average maximum sentence for this group of 17 inmates was 69 months while the median maximum sentence was only 48 months.

TABLE VIII

ESCAPES FROM DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES
BY MINIMUM SENTENCE 1981 THROUGH 1985

Minimum Sentence	1981		1982		1983		1984		1985		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent								
Unspecified Minimum	3	16%	1	3%	—	—	—	—	—	—	4	4%
1 - 2 1/2 Years	8	42%	24	70%	13	48%	11	55%	11	65%	67	57%
2 1/2 - 5 Years	6	32%	5	15%	5	19%	6	30%	5	29%	27	23%
5 - 10 Years	1	5%	4	12%	2	7%	—	—	—	—	7	6%
10 - 20 Years	1	5%	—	—	4	15%	1	5%	—	—	6	5%
20 Years Plus	—	—	—	—	3	11%	2	10%	1	6%	6	5%
TOTAL	19	100%	34	100%	27	100%	20	100%	17	100%	117	100%

TABLE IX

ESCAPEES FROM DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES
BY MAXIMUM SENTENCE 1981 - 1985

Maximum Sentence	1981		1982		1983		1984		1985		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent								
3 - 4 Years	2	11%	13	38%	5	19%	5	25%	7	41%	32	27%
4 Years	6	32%	5	15%	3	11%	3	15%	2	12%	19	16%
49-59 Months	2	11%	3	9%	3	11%	2	10%	2	12%	12	10%
5 Years	3	16%	2	6%	1	4%	—	—	1	6%	7	6%
5 - 10 Years	4	21%	8	24%	7	26%	6	30%	4	24%	29	25%
10 - 20 Years	—	—	3	9%	1	4%	—	—	—	—	4	3%
20 Years Plus	1	5%	—	—	2	7%	1	5%	1	6%	5	4%
Life	1	5%	—	—	5	19%	3	15%	—	—	9	8%
TOTAL	19	100%	34	100%	27	100%	20	100%	17	100%	117	100%

According to Table X most of the 117 inmates who escaped from DOCS custody in the five year period of this study (i.e. 38%) were between the ages of 25 and 29 at the time of their escape. According to the 1985 end of year under custody figures the majority of inmates in general (i.e. 25.5%) were also in this age range.

A further comparison of the age distribution of escapees with the general under custody population shows that younger inmates aged 16 to 20 were overrepresented among the escapees while older inmates over 35 years were underrepresented.

The age distribution for the 1985 escapees reveals that most inmates were between the ages of 21 and 24. The mean age of inmate escapees in 1985 was 26 years 8 months, while the median age for this group was 25 years 10 months.

TABLE X

ESCAPEES FROM DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES FACILITIES
BY AGE AT TIME OF ESCAPE: 1981 THROUGH 1985

Age in Years	1981		1982		1983		1984		1985		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent								
16 - 18 Years	3	16%	3	9%	5	19%	—	—	—	—	11	9%
19 - 20 Years	3	16%	5	15%	4	15%	2	10%	2	14%	16	14%
21 - 24 Years	2	11%	11	32%	7	26%	5	25%	6	43%	31	26%
25 - 29 Years	7	37%	11	32%	8	30%	8	40%	4	29%	38	32%
30 - 34 Years	4	21%	4	12%	1	4%	5	25%	3	21%	17	15%
35 - 39 Years	—	—	—	—	2	7%	—	—	1	7%	3	3%
40 - 44 Years	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	7%	1	1%
45 - 49 Years	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
50 Years +	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
TOTAL	19	100%	34	100%	27	100%	20	100%	17	100%	117	100%

Table XI shows that of the 117 inmates who escaped between 1981 and 1985 43% had had some prior local jail experience while another 30% had some prior prison experience. Thus 73% of the inmates escapees had some prior experience being incarcerated. This figure is somewhat higher than the proportion of inmates who were admitted to DOCS custody in 1984. Of that group only 56.6% of the inmates had had any prior experience being incarcerated.

An examination of the prior records of the 1985 escapees shows that 76% of those inmates had prior incarceration histories. This overrepresentation of inmate escapees with prior jail and prison experiences may be a significant issue as those who have experienced prisons and jails may be more prone to escapes.

TABLE XI

ESCAPEES FROM DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES FACILITIES
BY PRIOR ADULT CRIMINAL RECORD: 1981 THROUGH 1985

Prior Adult Record	1981		1982		1983		1984		1985		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent								
No Prior Adult Record	3	16%	4	12%	4	15%	1	5%	2	12%	14	12%
No Prior Institutional Commitment	3	16%	6	18%	5	19%	2	10%	2	12%	18	15%
Local Commitment	8	42%	16	47%	10	37%	11	55%	5	29%	50	43%
State or Federal Commitment	5	26%	8	24%	8	30%	6	30%	8	47%	35	30%
TOTAL	19	100%	34	100%	27	100%	20	100%	17	100%	117	100%