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PROFILE OF 1985 ABSCONDERS FROM TEMPORARY RELEASE PROGRAM

This report presents the characteristics of inmates who absconded from the Temporary Release Program during calendar year 1985. Comparative data for 1984 absconders is also presented. The report is preceded by a brief summary of the main findings.

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HIGHLIGHTS

1. From a total of 8,437 participants in Temporary Release Programs during 1985, there were 172 absconders. Absconders made up 2.0% of total participants in the Temporary Release Program in 1985.
2. Male participants are more likely to abscond from Temporary Release than female participants.
3. Blacks made up 39% of the comparison group and 45% of the absconders. Whites comprised 33% of the comparison group and 19% of the absconders. Hispanic and Puerto Rican inmates comprised 28% of the comparison group and 36% of the absconder population.
4. Persons committed for violent property crimes (i.e., Robbery or Burglary 1st and 2nd) are the group of offenders most likely to abscond. Persons committed for drug offenses are the least likely to abscond. Persons committed for drug offenses represented 41% of the 1985 comparison group and only 18% of the absconder group.
5. In 1985, 83 (48%) of those who absconded returned to the facility voluntarily. Seventy-six (76 or 44%) of the absconders were involuntarily returned and 13 (8%) were not returned. Of the 76 involuntary returns, 29 were the result of the commission of a new crime. Of the total 8,437 participants in Temporary Release, the percent arrested for a new crime was 0.3%.
6. In 1985, 33% of those who absconded returned to the facility in one day or less.
7. A recorded drug history was apparent in 70% of the absconder case folders. A history of an alcohol problem was present in 40% of the cases. These percentages of past drug use and alcohol use are similar to those in the general under custody population.
8. Forty-nine percent (49%) of those who absconded had participated in Temporary Release for 90 days or less.
9. At the time of absconding, 44% of the absconders had appeared before the Parole Board and had been denied parole (although 10% of program participants have been denied parole prior to admission to the program; also see item 11 below), 41.3% were awaiting their initial hearing, and 15.1% had been before the Board and received a set or open date.
10. At the time of absconding, 38% of the absconders had passed their parole eligibility date.
11. Based on preliminary data, it appears that the length of time to next parole Board appearance or the period of time since the last Board appearance are not strongly associated with absconding.

## PROFILE OF 1985 ABSCONDERS FROM TEMPORARY RELEASE PROGRAM

This report examines the characteristics of inmates who absconded from the New York State Department of Correctional Services' Temporary Release Program during calendar year 1985.

### A. BACKGROUND

Temporary Release Programs, operated by the Department of Correctional Services, allow inmates who have met specific eligibility requirements to leave a correctional facility and return to the community for a set length of time and for a specific purpose.

The Temporary Release Program is designed to facilitate re-entry of inmates into the community prior to release on parole. The major components of the Temporary Release Program are work release and furlough. Work release permits inmates to leave a facility for a specified period of time, solely for employment purposes. Furloughs are used to allow inmates an opportunity to seek employment or to have family contact. Other programs included in Temporary Release, but used less frequently, are educational release, industrial training leave, and leave of absence.

For all forms of temporary release, the inmate is obligated to return to the facility at a predetermined time. If the inmate fails to return to the facility, he or she is considered to have absconded from the program and a warrant is issued.

### B. PURPOSE OF REPORT

During 1985, there were some 8,437 participants in the Temporary Release Program (some inmates participated in both the work release and furlough components so this figure slightly overrepresents the total number of inmates involved). Of the 8,437 participants, 172 (or 2.0%) were declared as having absconded from Temporary Release. Although absconders represent a very small proportion of the inmates who participate in a temporary release program, they are a matter of concern to the Department and the public. The purpose of this report is to describe the absconder population and to compare characteristics of absconders with those of inmates who successfully complete Temporary Release Programs.

### C. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study examines characteristics of the 172 inmates who absconded from Temporary Release during the 1985 calendar year. Data from Department records was collected and coded for the 172 inmates who absconded. To make this information as meaningful as possible, data is also presented on inmates who absconded in 1984. Where possible, we compare characteristics of 1985 absconders with a comparison group of 1985 Temporary Release Program participants. The comparison group consists of inmates who participated in Temporary Release from one of four facilities which are used exclusively for Temporary Release: Edgecombe,

Fulton, Rochester, and Parkside. These comparisons facilitate the identification of characteristics which might distinguish inmates who abscond from Temporary Release from those who participate successfully.

Information is also provided on inmates who absconded in 1984. A/ This allows us to determine if the profile of the absconder group has remained roughly the same over the two year period.

D. DEMOGRAPHICS

1. Sex Distribution

The majority of inmates who participate in Temporary Release are male. Similarly, the majority of inmates who absconded are male. Table 1 presents the sex distribution of inmates who absconded in 1984 and 1985 and the comparison group distribution for each of those years. For both years, about 93% of the participants in Temporary Release were male and 7% female. In comparison, of those who absconded, 95% and 98% were male in 1984 and 1985, respectively.

Table 1. Sex Distribution

Sex	1984				1985			
	Absconder		Comparison		Absconder		Comparison	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Male	146	95%	790	93%	169	98%	736	93%
Female	7	5%	59	7%	3	2%	53	7%
TOTAL	153	100%	849	100%	172	100%	789	100%

Male participants are more likely to abscond than their female counterparts, as demonstrated in both 1984 and, particularly so in 1985.

A/ For a complete discussion see: "Absconders from Temporary Release Programs: A 1984 Survey." New York State Department of Correctional Services, Albany, New York.

2. Ethnic Distribution

Table 2 and Figure 1 present the ethnic distribution of absconders and the comparison group for 1984 and 1985 Temporary Release participants.

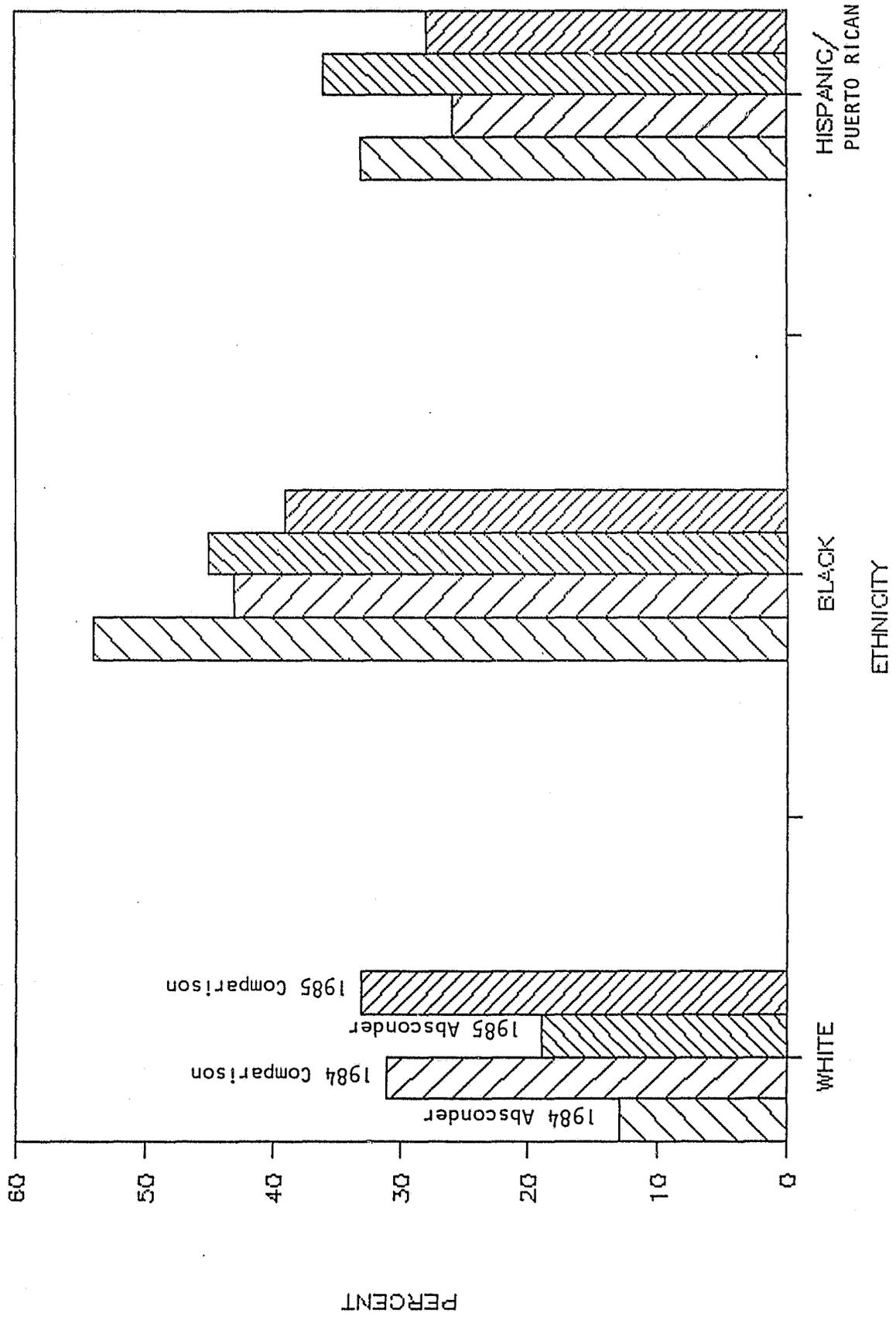
In 1984 and 1985, Whites were significantly less likely to abscond than Blacks or Hispanics. However, Whites absconded more often in 1985 than in 1984. Blacks, on the other hand, declined in their representation in the absconder group from 1984 to 1985. While Blacks still represent the largest group of absconders in 1985, absconders were disproportionately more often Hispanic. In 1985, 36% of the absconders were Hispanic as compared to 28% of the 1985 comparison group. This finding is different than in 1984 when Blacks were the group most overrepresented in the absconder population.

Briefly, Black and Hispanic inmates are overrepresented in the absconder group, Whites underrepresented.

Table 2. Ethnic Distribution

<u>Ethnicity</u>	<u>1984</u>				<u>1985</u>			
	<u>Absconder</u>		<u>Comparison</u>		<u>Absconder</u>		<u>Comparison</u>	
	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
White	20	13%	263	31%	34	19%	259	33%
Black	83	54%	362	43%	77	45%	307	39%
Hispanic/ Puerto Rican	50	33%	224	26%	61	36%	222	28%
TOTAL	153	100%	849	100%	172	100%	789	100%

Figure 1. Ethnic Distribution



3. Age Distribution

The age distribution for 1984 and 1985 is presented in Table 3. The majority of absconders for both years were between the ages of 21 and 34. The single largest age category for the 1984 absconders was the 21 to 24 age group. In contrast, the single largest absconder age group in 1985 was the 25 to 29 age group.

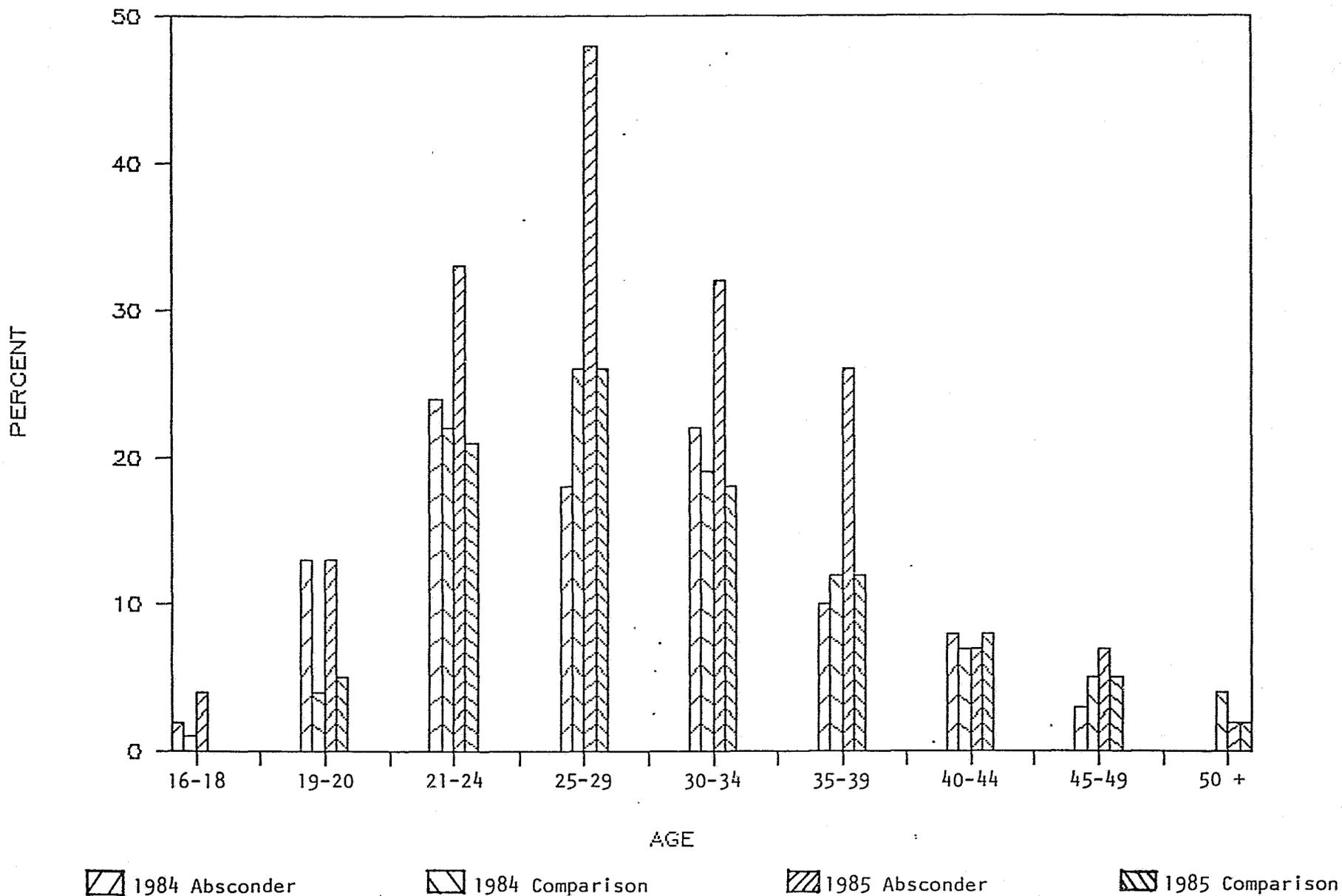
The average age at abscond date was 28.6 in 1984 which was slightly lower than the average age of the comparison group for that year. In 1985, the average age was 29.5 which was about the same as that for the comparison group. Therefore, the absconders in 1985 were on average slightly older than those inmates who absconded in 1984.

Table 3. Age Distribution

Age	1984				1985			
	Absconder		Comparison		Absconder		Comparison	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
16-18	3	2%	11	1%	4	2%	2	0%
19-20	20	13%	34	4%	13	8%	40	5%
21-24	36	24%	182	22%	33	19%	165	21%
25-29	27	18%	219	26%	48	28%	204	26%
30-34	34	22%	156	19%	32	19%	144	18%
35-39	16	10%	99	12%	26	15%	96	12%
40-44	12	8%	56	7%	7	4%	65	8%
45-49	5	3%	40	5%	7	4%	39	5%
50 +	0	0%	37	4%	2	1%	34	2%
TOTAL	153	100%	834A/	100%	172	100%	789	97%
Average Age	28.6		30.9		29.5		29.6	

A/ Fifteen cases were missing this information.

# Figure 2. Age Distribution



4. Substance Abuse History

The following tables provide information on reported substance abuse histories of inmates who absconded in 1984 and 1985. This data was coded from materials contained in inmate case folders, such as pre-sentence investigation records and prison classification forms. It should be noted that much of this information relies on statements from offenders. As with all self-report data, results should be interpreted with caution due to the limitations of self-report data (i.e., withholding, forgetting, or exaggerating information). Additionally, there may be some variation in staff definitions of what constitutes a drug or alcohol problem.

Table 4. Substance Abuse History

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<u>Alcohol Problem</u>	<u>1984 Absconders</u>		<u>1985 Absconders</u>	
	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
No	89	58%	103	60%
Yes	64	42%	69	40%
	-----	-----	-----	-----
TOTAL	153	100%	172	100%

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For both years, the proportion of absconders having an alcohol problem remains steady at approximately 40%.

Table 5. Substance Abuse History

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<u>Drug Problem</u>	<u>1984 Absconders</u>		<u>1985 Absconders</u>	
	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
No Indication	59	39%	51	30%
Yes	94	61%	121	70%
	-----	-----	-----	-----
TOTAL	153	100%	172	100%

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Of those inmates who absconded in 1985, 40% had some indication of an alcohol problem. These findings are similar to an earlier study of alcohol problems based on the Michigan Alcohol Screening Test (MAST) scores of men committed to DOCS in 1981 where approximately 35% had MAST scores of 9 or greater, indicating excessive alcohol use.

Those inmates with some indication of a drug problem increases from 61% in 1984 to 70% in 1985. These findings are consistent with preliminary survey results of drug use among all inmates held under custody in December of 1986, in which 78% of all inmates indicate prior drug use.

In summary, inmates who abscond do not differ substantially in their substance abuse history from other inmates.

#### 5. Crime of Commitment

Table 6 and Figure 3 present information on crime of commitment for absconders in 1984 and 1985. In 1985, inmates convicted of violent personal offenses (e.g., murder, manslaughter, assault) represented a smaller proportion of inmates in both the absconder and comparison groups compared to the corresponding groups in 1984. In the 1985 comparison group, approximately 4% of the inmates participating in Temporary Release were convicted of a violent personal offense. Similarly, about 4% of the 1985 absconders were committed for a violent personal offense, therefore, inmates committed for one of these offenses are evenly represented in 1985.

In 1984, the proportion of inmates in the comparison group committed for Robbery 1st, 2nd, or 3rd was approximately 32%. The absconders were slightly overrepresented in the Robbery category during that year. The discrepancy between the absconder group and the comparison group is even greater in 1985. While the proportion of absconders committed for Robbery remains about the same at 34%, their representation in the comparison group declined to 24%.

Similarly, inmates committed for Burglary were more likely to abscond than would be expected by their representation in the comparison groups for both 1984 and 1985. Inmates committed for Burglary for both years represent about 15% of the comparison group populations. The proportion of absconders committed for Burglary was 30% in 1984 and 26% in 1985. While the proportion of absconders committed for a burglary offense declined from 1984 to 1985, this group of offenders are still more likely to abscond than would be expected from their representation in Temporary Release.

Alternatively, inmates committed for a drug offense were significantly under-represented in the absconder group for both years in the analysis. This finding is most obvious in 1985 when drug offenses were the single largest offense category in the comparison group at 41%. However, the proportion of the 1985 absconders committed for a drug offense was only 18%.

In summary, 1985 absconders were more likely to have committed Robbery or Burglary and less likely to have committed a drug offense, when compared with a control group of program participants.

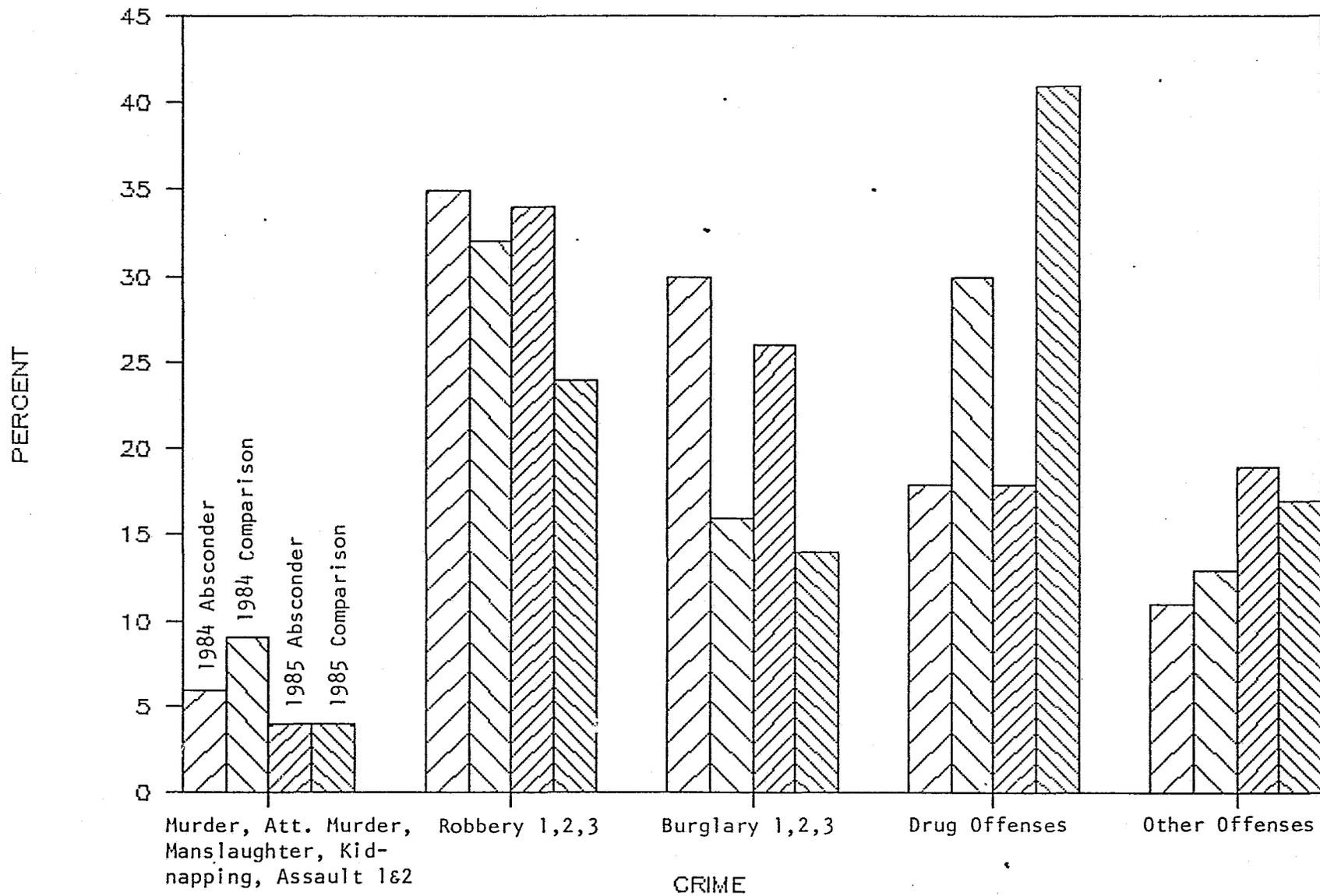
Table 6. Crime of Commitment

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<u>Offense Type</u>	<u>1984</u>				<u>1985</u>			
	<u>Absconder</u>		<u>Comparison</u>		<u>Absconder</u>		<u>Comparison</u>	
	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
Murder, Attempted Murder, Manslaugh- ter, Kidnapping, Assault 1 & 2	9	6%	79	9%	7	4%	34	4%
Robbery 1st, 2nd, 3rd	54	35%	274	32%	58	34%	188	24%
Burglary 1st, 2nd, 3rd	45	30%	135	16%	44	26%	109	14%
Drug Offenses	28	18%	251	30%	31	18%	321	41%
Other Offenses	17	11%	109	13%	32	19%	137	17%
	<hr/>				<hr/>			
TOTAL	153	100%	849	100%	172	100%	789	100%

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Figure 3. Crime of Commitment



6. Facility Location

Temporary Release includes both long-term and short-term release from general confinement. Eight facilities have long-term Temporary Release Programs available. Long-term release includes continuous scheduled release on an ongoing basis for reasons such as daily employment. Short-term release includes release for a predetermined period of time (i.e., weekend furlough) but does not continue over an extended period of time. Inmates housed in long-term release facilities may participate in both long and short-term release.

Table 7 presents information on the number of participants and absconders from long-term release facilities for 1984 and 1985.

As these data indicate, the rate of absconding from long-term release facilities was 4.0% in 1984. This figure increases somewhat to 4.8% among 1985 program participants.

Table 7. Absconders from Long-Term Release Facilities:

FACILITY	1984		1985			
	PARTICIPANTS	ABSCONDERS	PARTICIPANTS	ABSCONDERS		
		NUMBER	RATE A/	NUMBER	RATE	
ALBION	146	4	2.7%	137	0	0.0%
EDGEcombe	1050	63	6.0%	1043	71	6.8%
FULTON	1402	57	4.0%	1232	75	6.1%
HUDSON	246	4	1.6%	216	0	0.0%
PARKSIDE B/	216	3	1.3%	168	3	1.8%
ROCHESTER	159	1	0.6%	176	2	1.1%
COMMUNITY CONTRACT	163	11	6.7%	0	0	0.0%
FISHKILL	96	1	1.0%	85	0	0.0%
MT. MCGREGOR	83	0	0.0%	91	0	0.0%
TOTAL	3555	144	4.05%	3148	151	4.8%

A/ These percentages represent the absconding rate of inmates from each facility. For example, 4 out of 146 inmates at Albion who participated in temporary release absconded in 1984. Four divided by 146 is .027, thus, the rate of absconding at Albion in 1984 was 2.7%.

B/ Parkside (formerly Lincoln Annex) is an all female facility.

Every correctional facility permits temporary release participation on a short-term basis through furloughs or leaves of absence from general confinement. The following is a table of only those facilities that had absconders from short-term release in 1984 and 1985.

Table 8. Absconders from Short-Term Temporary Release

	<u>1984</u>		<u>1985</u>	
	<u>Participants</u>	<u>Absconders</u>	<u>Participants</u>	<u>Absconder</u>
Adirondack	49	2	105	1
Albion	0	0	175	2
Altona	18	1	0	0
Camp Gabriels	181	2	114	1
Camp Georgetown	0	0	186	3
Camp Monterey	67	2	98	1
Camp Pharsalia	0	0	65	1
Eastern	47	1	0	0
Fishkill	0	0	85	1
Great Meadow	0	0	4	1
Groveland	0	0	26	1
Hudson	125	2	137	2
Lyon Mountain	57	1	165	2
Mt. McGregor	0	0	167	2
Washington	0	0	42	2
Woodbourne	0	0	131	1
All Other Facilities (excluding long-term temporary release facilities)	4,415	0	3,789	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4,959</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>5,289</b>	<b>21</b>

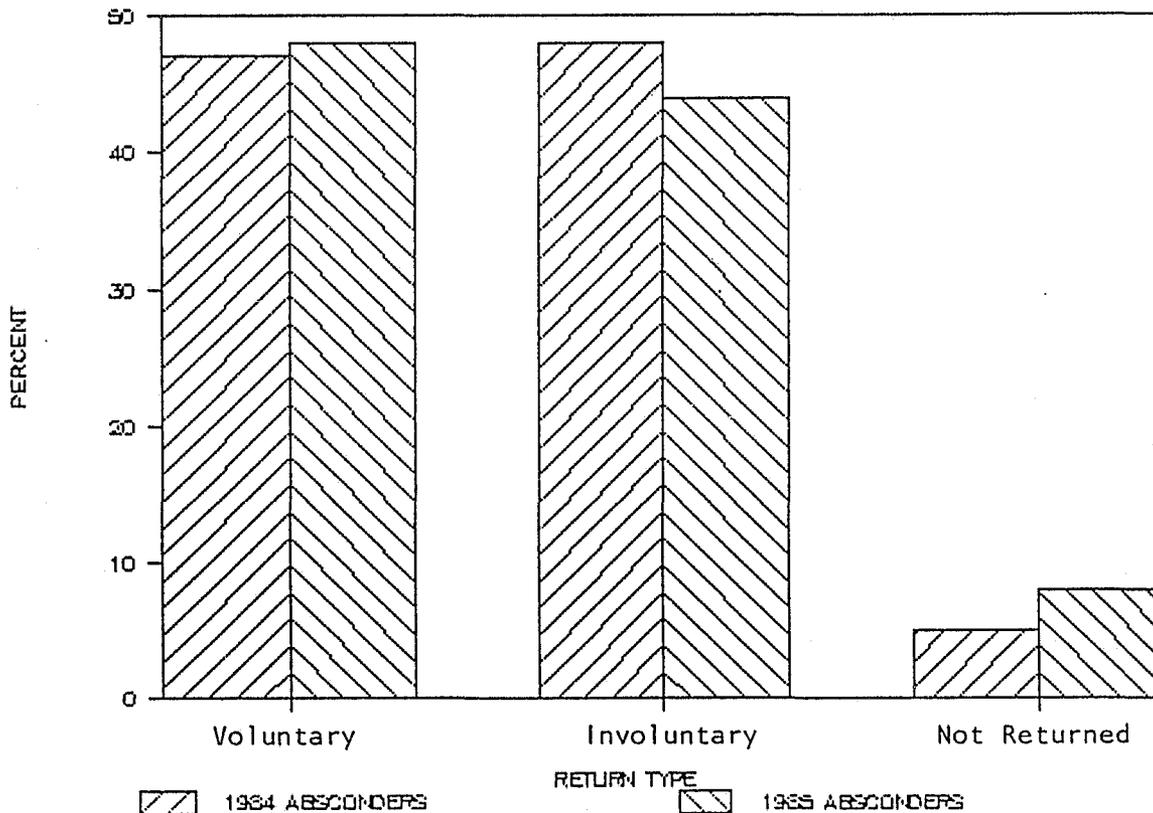
7. Type of Return to Custody

The following table presents information on the type of return to custody. "Custody" includes the inmate's return to any law enforcement agency, not exclusively to the Department of Correctional Services. Voluntary return are those who returned on their own accord with no law enforcement intervention. Involuntary return includes those arrested for absconding or for the commission of a new offense.

Table 9. Type of Return to Custody  
(as of report preparation date)

<u>Return Type</u>	<u>1984 Absconders</u>		<u>1985 Absconders</u>	
	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
Voluntary	72	47%	83	48%
Involuntary	74	48%	78	46%
Not Returned	7	5%	11	6%
TOTAL	153	100%	172	100%

Figure 4. Type of Return to Custody



8. Length of Unauthorized Absence

The length of time an inmate was in absconder status remained virtually unchanged from 1984 to 1985. For both years in the study, a large number of absconders were returned to custody in one day or less. Table 10 shows that 35% in 1984 and 39% in 1985 were returned within one day. In both years, 65% to 70% of the absconders were returned within a one month period.

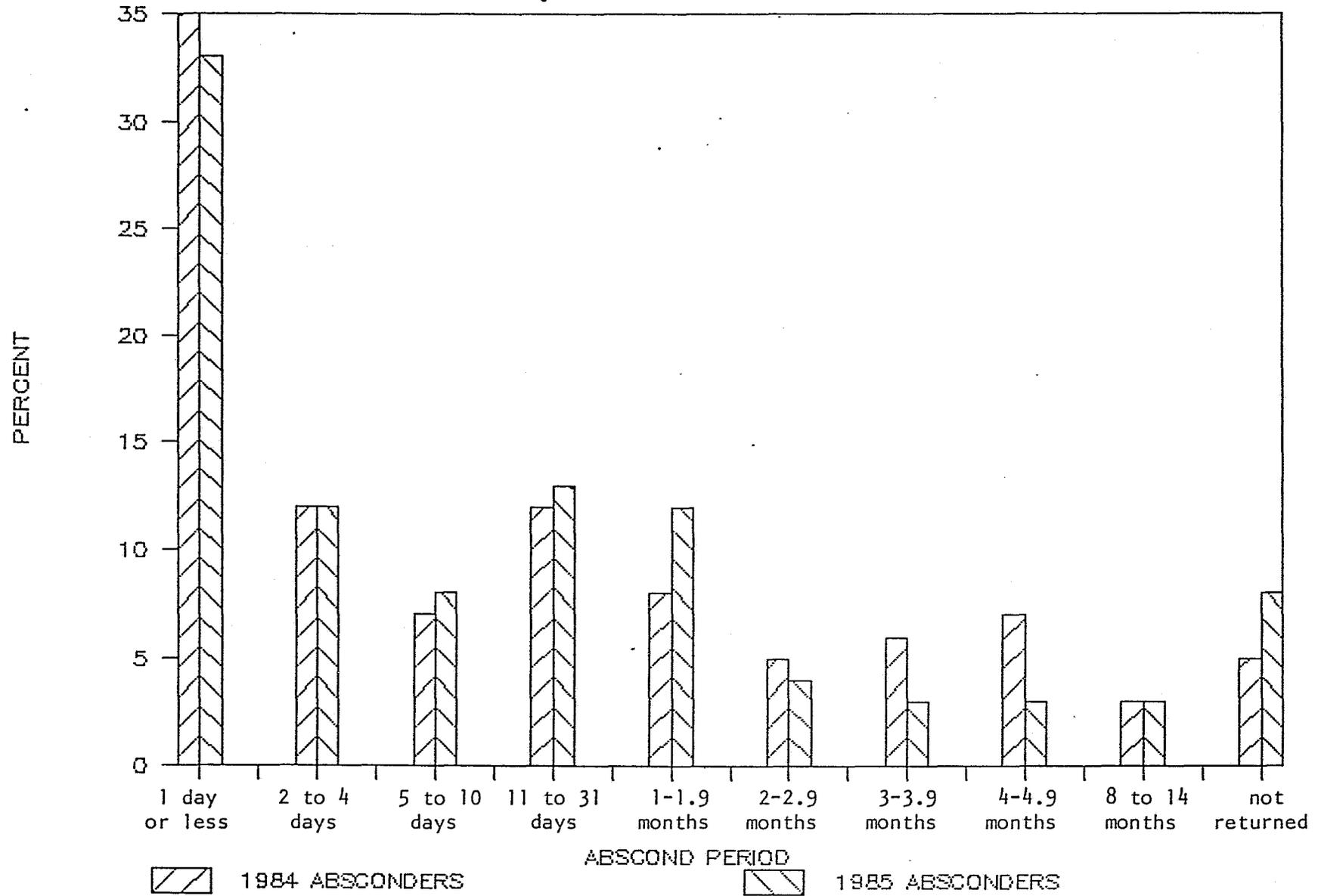
Table 10.1. Length of Unauthorized Absence

<u>Abscond Period</u>	<u>1984 Absconders</u>		<u>1985 Absconders</u>	
	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
1 day or less	53	35%	57	34%
2 to 4 days	18	12%	20	12%
5 to 10 days	10	7%	16	9%
11 to 31 days	19	12%	25	15%
1 to 1.9 months	13	8%	19	11%
2.0 to 2.9 months	8	5%	7	4%
3.0 to 3.9 months	9	6%	5	3%
4.0 to 7.9 months	10	7%	6	4%
8 to 14 months	6	3%	4	2%
Not Returned <u>A/</u>	7	5%	11	6%
TOTAL	153	100%	170	100%

A/ It should be noted that the Not Returned category reflects those cases which were not returned at the time the report was prepared. However, the number of cases not returned continues to decline with the voluntary or involuntary return of these inmates.

Figure 5.

Length of Unauthorized Absence



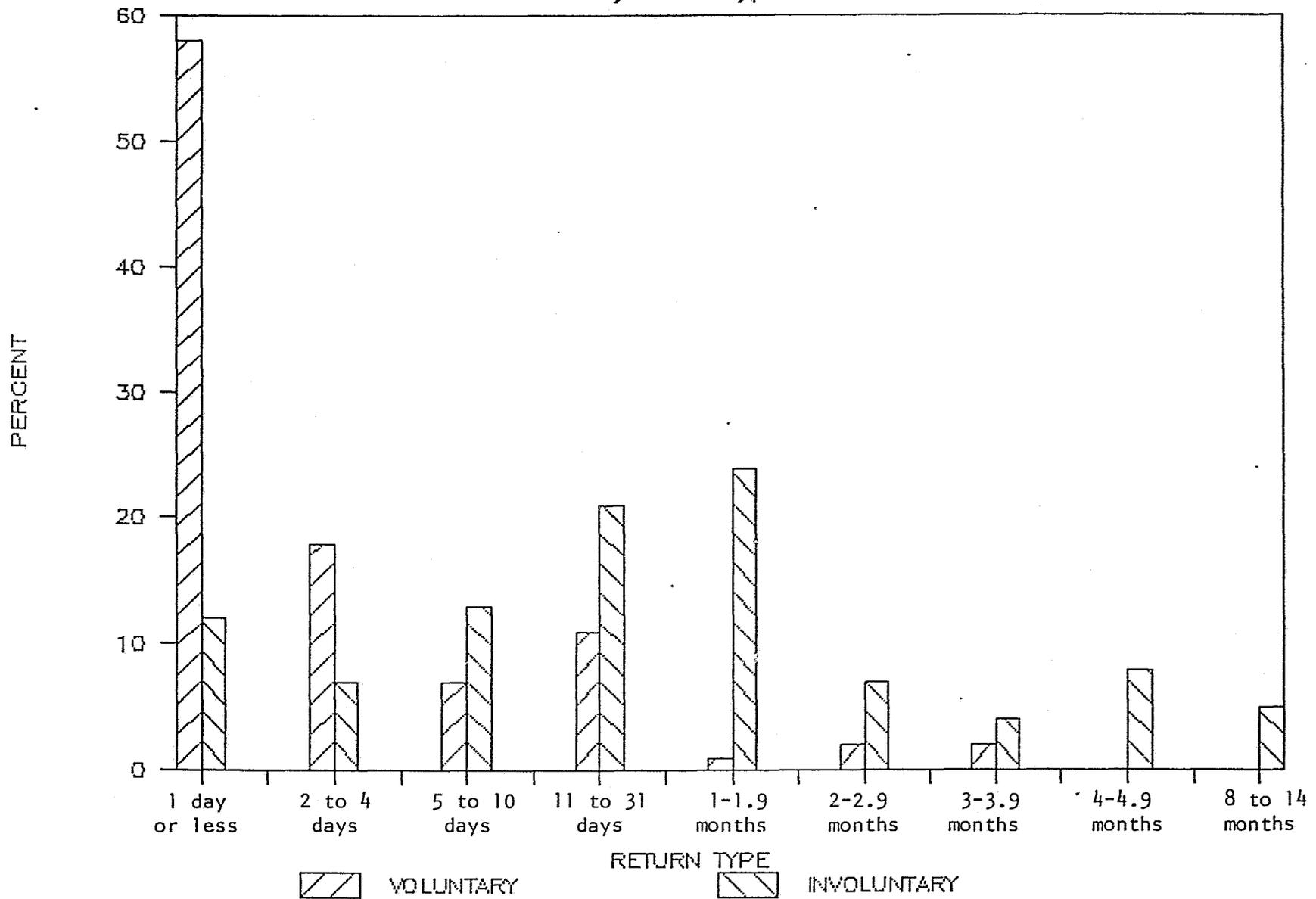
9. Abscond Period by Voluntary or Involuntary Return

The length of unauthorized absence appears directly related to the type of return, voluntary or involuntary. Table 10.2 presents the abscond period by the type of return for those inmates who absconded in 1985. As shown in Table 10.2, 58% of all inmates who returned voluntarily did so within one day or less. Comparatively, 12% of those inmates returned involuntarily were returned within the first day. The majority of all voluntary returns (83%) returned within 10 days of absconding. This compares to 32% of those inmates who were returned involuntarily during the same period.

Table 10.2. Length of Unauthorized Absence by Return Type

<u>Abscond Period</u>	<u>Return Type</u>			
	<u>Voluntary</u>		<u>Involuntary</u>	
	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
1 day or less	48	58%	9	12%
2 to 4 days	15	18%	5	7%
5 to 10 days	6	7%	10	13%
11 to 31 days	9	11%	16	21%
1 to 1.9 months	1	1%	18	24%
2.0 to 2.9 months	2	2%	5	7%
3.0 to 3.9 months	2	2%	3	4%
4.0 to 7.9 months	0	0%	6	8%
8 to 14 months	0	-	4	-
TOTAL	83	100%	76	100%

FIGURE 6. Length of Absence  
by Return Type



10. Prior Abscond History

Table 11 indicates the proportion of inmates with any prior history of bail jumping or related behavior prior to Temporary Release participation. Incidents of bail jumping, for instance, may have occurred several years prior to temporary release consideration. However, inmates with any history of conviction for escape or absconding are excluded by law from participating in Temporary Release. There is a decrease from 25% in 1984 to 16% in 1985, in the proportion of absconders who had previously exhibited some form of absconding behavior.

Table 11. Prior History of Bail Jumping or Related Behavior

<u>Prior Abscond History</u>	<u>1984 Absconders</u>		<u>1985 Absconders</u>	
	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
No	115	75%	144	84%
Yes	38	25%	28	16%
TOTAL	153	100%	172	100%

E. PROGRAM RELATED CHARACTERISTICS

1. Type of Temporary Release

In 1985, according to the Office of Temporary Release, 3,148 inmates participated in long-term temporary release (work release, educational release, industrial training) and 5,289 participated in short-term release (furlough, leave of absence). While the number of short-term release participants exceeds the number of long-term participants, this does not reflect the amount of time spent away from the facility. Those inmates in long-term release programs are released on a frequent and continuous schedule. Consequently, on any given day, over a 1,000 inmates will be released for employment purposes while only 30 to 50 will be released for furlough.

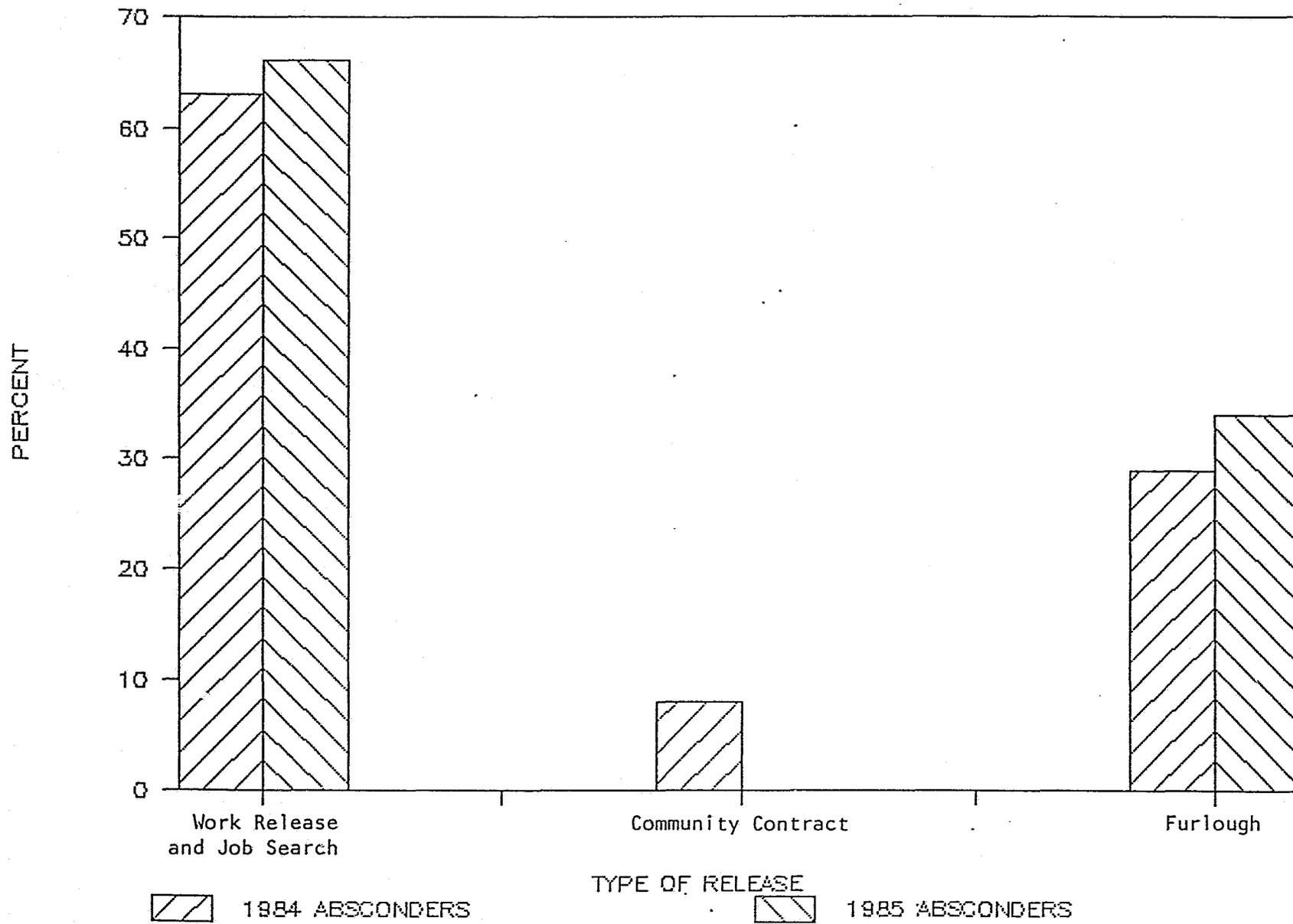
Therefore, those inmates in long-term temporary release programs have more opportunity and would be expected to abscond more frequently than inmates in short-term release programs. Table 12 presents the type of release activity the inmate was participating in at the time of absconding for 1984 and 1985.

Table 12. Type of Release

<u>Type of Release</u>	<u>1984 Absconders</u>		<u>1985 Absconders</u>	
	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
Work Release and Job Search	96	63%	114	66%
Community Contract	12	8%	0	0%
Furlough	45	29%	58	34%
TOTAL	153	100%	172	100%

There was a slight increase between 1984 and 1985 in the proportion of inmates who absconded from work release and job search furloughs. Absconders from that category made up 63% of those who absconded in 1984 and 66% of the absconders in 1985. There was also an increase in the percent of inmates who absconded from furloughs increasing from 29% in 1984 to 34% in 1985. There were no cases in 1985 in community contract due to the discontinuation of the program. Most of the change in percentage of absconders in work release and furlough is due to the discontinuance of the community contract program from the overall Temporary Release Program.

Figure 7. Type of Release



2. Reasons for Absconding

In 1985 approximately 45% of the case folders of inmates who absconded contained information which provided some reason or explanation for the inmate's failure to return. This information is provided by the inmate and recorded by a parole officer or a Temporary Release employee. The Division of Temporary Release is improving procedures for the compilation of this information.

The alcohol and drug categories include abuse of these substances (i.e., the inmate got drunk, missed work and was late in returning to the facility). "Illness" was coded in circumstances where the inmate became ill while out on release, and this illness resulted in the inmate's failure to return. "Domestic" was coded when the inmate experienced family problems which precluded his/her return to the facility.

Table 13. Reasons for Absconding

	<u>1984 Absconders</u>		<u>1985 Absconders</u>	
	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
Alcohol Use	5	9%	18	24%
Drug Use	11	20%	14	18%
Alcohol & Drug Use	1	2%	2	3%
Illness	4	7%	7	9%
Domestic	14	25%	32	42%
Alcohol, Drug, and Domestic	6	11%	3	4%
Other	15	27%	0	0%
	-----	-----	-----	-----
TOTAL	56	100%	76	100%
No Reason Recorded	92		83	
Not Returned	5		13	

Domestic problems and drug or alcohol use are the predominant reasons cited by participants as factors associated with absconding.

In 1985, there was an increase in the proportion of cases in which alcohol use apparently contributed to the inmates' absconding. There was also a substantial increase in those cases involving some type of domestic or family problem.

3. Time in Temporary Release

Table 14 presents information on the length of time inmates participated in Temporary Release prior to absconding.

Table 14. Time in Temporary Release Prior to Absconding

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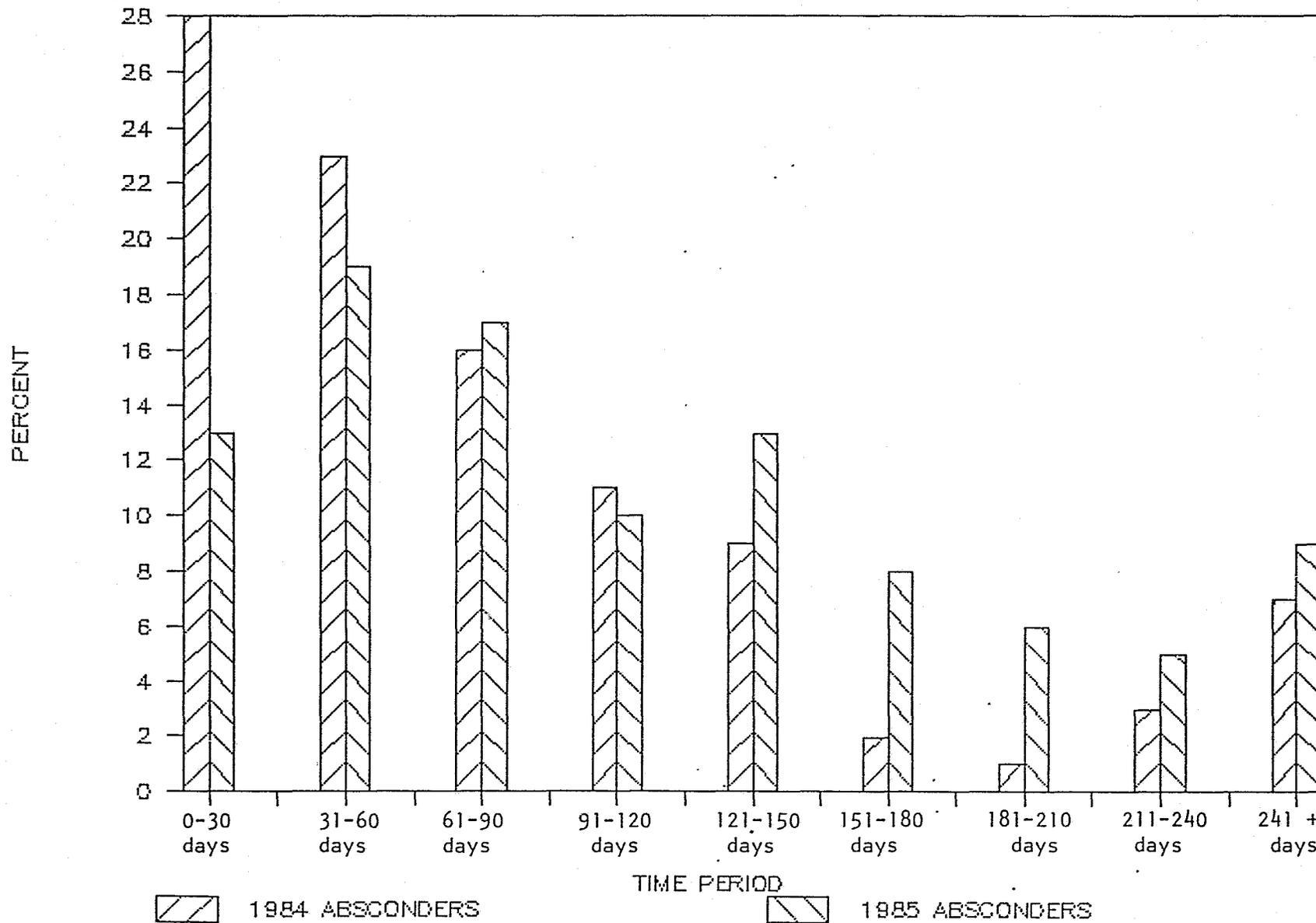
<u>Time in Temporary Release</u>	<u>1984 Absconders</u>		<u>1985 Absconders</u>	
	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
0 - 30 days	41	28%	22	13%
31 - 60 days	34	23%	33	19%
61 - 90 days	24	16%	29	17%
91 - 120 days	17	11%	17	10%
121 - 150 days	14	9%	22	13%
151 - 180 days	3	2%	14	8%
181 - 210 days	1	1%	11	6%
211 - 240 days	4	3%	8	5%
241 + days	10	7%	16	9%
	-----	-----	-----	-----
TOTAL	148 <u>A/</u>	100%	172	100%

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In 1984, 50% of those who absconded did so within the first 60 days in Temporary Release. In 1985, 32% absconded prior to the end of the first 60 days and 48% absconded prior to the end of the first 90 days in Temporary Release. While there was some decrease in the proportion of inmates who absconded within the first few months of Temporary Release, the initial months in Temporary Release still appear to be the time when inmates are more likely to abscond.

A/ The figures for 1984 differ somewhat from the previous report on 1984 absconders due to different grouping procedures. Five cases are lost from the 1984 distribution due to missing data on the computer file. These five cases had been manually added to this distribution in the 1984 report.

Figure 8. Time in Temporary Release



4. Parole Status

Table 15 presents the parole status of 1985 absconders at the time of their absconding. The greatest proportion of inmates, at 43.6%, had been before the Board and had been denied parole. Denial of parole reflects denial at any time during incarceration not necessarily while in Temporary Release. The denial category is a mixed group, some were denied while in Temporary Release, others were denied parole prior to approval to the program. The next largest group, at 41.3%, were awaiting their initial hearing at the time of absconding. The remaining 14% of the absconder population had been before the Board and were given an open date or the release date had been set at the time of absconding.

Table 15. Parole Status

	<u>1985 Absconders</u>	
	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
Awaiting Initial Set	71	41.3%
Open	9	5.2%
Denied	17	9.9%
	75	43.6%
TOTAL	172	100.0%

5. Time Remaining to Parole Eligibility at Time of Absconding

Table 16 and Figure 9 indicate the time remaining from abscond date to parole eligibility.

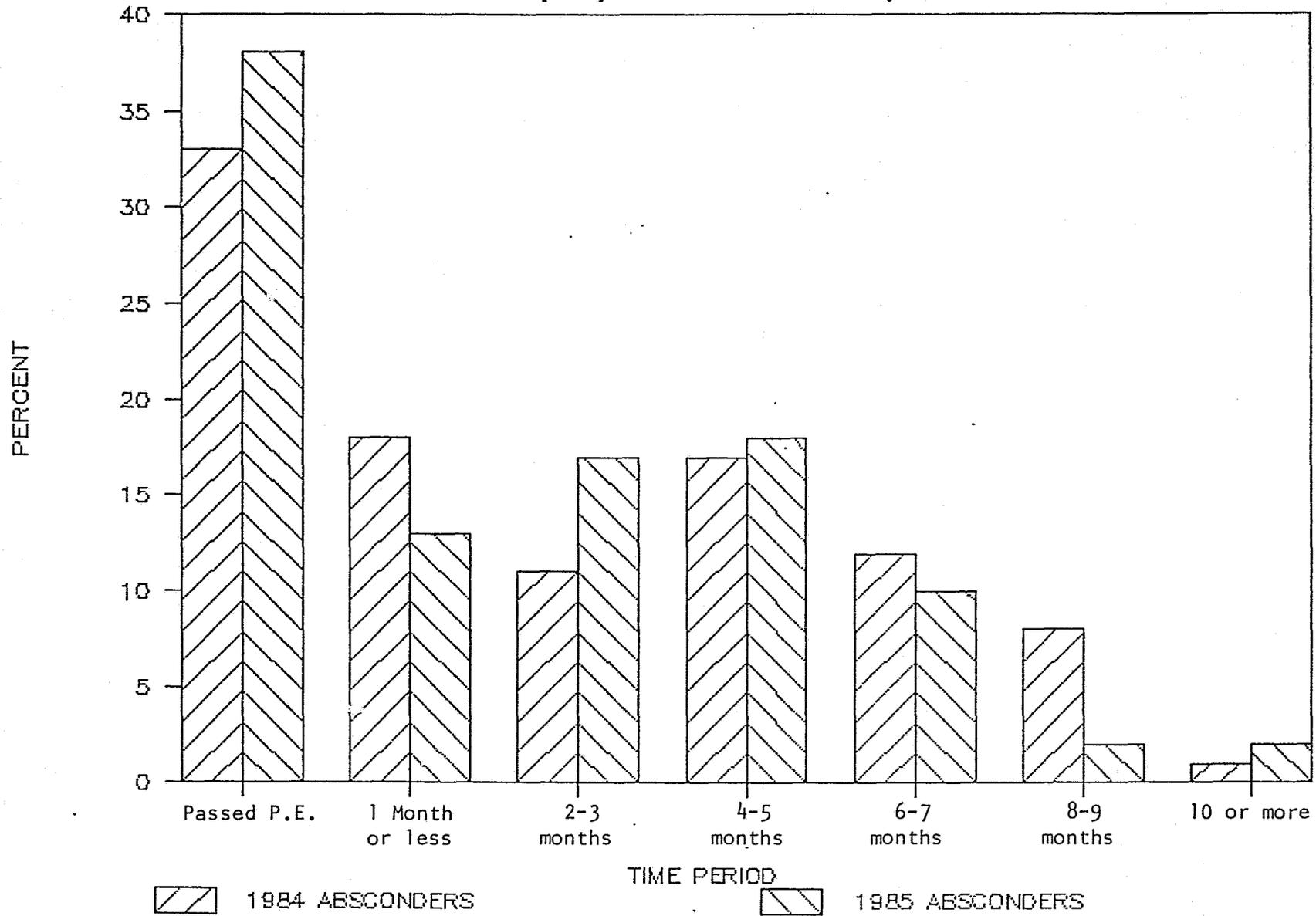
Table 16. Time Remaining to Parole Eligibility Date

<u>Time to Parole Eligibility Date</u>	<u>1984 Absconders</u>		<u>1985 Absconders</u>	
	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
Passed P.E.	50	33%	65	38%
One Month or Less	27	18%	23	13%
2 to 3 Months	17	11%	28	16%
4 to 5 Months	26	17%	32	19%
6 to 7 Months	18	12%	17	10%
8 to 9 Months	13	8%	4	2%
10 or More	2	1%	3	2%
TOTAL	153	100%	172	100%

In 1985, 38% of those who absconded had passed their parole eligibility date at the time of absconding, this is a slightly greater proportion than in 1984. The proportion of absconders with one month or less declined somewhat from 18% in 1984 to 13% in 1985. In virtually all of the cases within one month or less, the inmate had already appeared before the Parole Board.

# Figure 9. Time Remaining to Parole

Eligibility at Time of Absconding



## 6. Parole Eligibility

One area of interest is the relation between parole hearing status and absconding. What does the absconder group look like in terms of time remaining to parole hearing or length of time since the last parole hearing? Table 17 presents a crosstabulation of time (in months) since the last parole hearing date by time (in months) to the next parole hearing date. Table 17 presents data for the absconder group and it reflects the status of the inmate in regard to parole hearing date at the time that the person absconded.

We can look first at the cases in the top row of Table 17. These are absconders from the Temporary Release Program who were awaiting an initial parole hearing. There are seven cases in the "same month" category among the 74 absconders (top row, Table 17) that have been categorized as awaiting initial hearing. Unfortunately, the actual day of the parole hearing is often not recorded on the computer file so we do not know if the inmate absconded shortly before or after the parole hearing. Of those who were awaiting initial appearance, only seven absconded in the same month as the hearing. Among those awaiting initial hearing, there is not a large difference in the number who absconded one month before the hearing (N = 11), two months before (N = 10), three months before (N = 16), or four months prior to the hearing (N = 13). There are fewer absconders among those who had five months or longer to parole hearing date, but those with five months or longer to parole hearing date make up only 23% of those absconders awaiting initial appearance. To repeat, then, among those absconders awaiting initial parole hearing, there were fewer cases (N = 17) where the person had five months or longer before Board appearance; but among those with four months or less to initial Board appearance, about the same number of absconders are found in each monthly category (e.g., four months to Board appearance, three months to Board appearance, etc.).

When we turn our attention to time remaining to next parole hearing date (e.g., either initial hearing or second hearing) for the total group of absconders (bottom row in Table 17), we see a pattern similar to that observed among absconders awaiting initial appearance. Inmates with five months or longer to Board appearance make up 28% (N = 48) of absconders while inmates with four months or less to Board appearance make up 72% (N = 123) of absconders. Among those with four months or less to Board appearance, it appears that the number of absconders is about the same (i.e., approximately 25) in each monthly category. That is, there is roughly the same number of absconders who have four months to parole hearing as there are absconders who absconded in the same month as their hearing. Since comparative data on time to hearing for the population of Temporary Release Program participants is not available, it is not possible to say whether absconders differ significantly from non-absconders according to time remaining to parole release consideration. Looking at the distribution of time remaining to next parole hearing for the absconder group, we can make two observations: (1) the majority of absconders (72%) were within four months of parole hearing date; (2) among those with four months or less to Board appearance, there is about the same number of cases in the four

month, three month, two month, and one month to parole hearing categories, suggesting to us that the approach of a parole hearing date is not generally associated with absconding.

Table 17 also presents the distribution of time elapsed since the last parole hearing (last column in Table 17). Again, these data show that time since the last Parole Board hearing is not related to absconding; that is, there is fairly even distribution of cases in the one month, two month, etc. from Parole Board appearance categories.

It can be noted that the upper right hand quadrant of Table 17 contains several cases in which the time remaining to next parole hearing is relatively short (e.g., two months or less), and the time since the last hearing is relatively short (e.g., two months or less). Many of these cases had received a parole release date by the Board of Parole, but they had some special conditions that had to be met (i.e., a firm job offer in the community) prior to release.

Table 17. Abscond Date in Relation to Time from Last Hearing and Time to Next Parole Hearing

<u>Time Between Abscond and Last Hearing</u>	<u>Time Between Abscond and Next Hearing</u>										<u>TOTAL</u>
	<u>9 Months or more</u>	<u>8 Months</u>	<u>7 Months</u>	<u>6 Months</u>	<u>5 Months</u>	<u>4 Months</u>	<u>3 Months</u>	<u>2 Months</u>	<u>1 Month</u>	<u>Same Month</u>	
Awaiting Initial	4	2	2	3	6	13	16	10	11	7	74 43.3%
Same Month		1		2			1	1	1	1	7 4.1%
1 Month	1			1	2			1	8	2	15 8.8%
2 Months	3	1				1			1	5	11 6.4%
3 Months	1	1	2	2			1				7 4.1%
4 Months		3			1	5	1	3	1		14 8.2%
5 Months	1		1		3	1	1	2	3		12 7.0%
6 Months	1			2		1	1	1		1	7 4.1%
7 or More	1		1			3	5	5	2	7	24 14.0%
TOTAL	12 7.0%	8 4.7%	6 3.5%	10 5.8%	12 7.0%	24 14.0%	26 15.2%	23 13.5%	27 15.8%	23 13.5%	171 100.0%

As noted above, data is not available on a control or comparison group of Temporary Release Program participants regarding the length of time to next parole hearing so as to compare absconders with Temporary Release participants who did not abscond. We can, however, take note of the length of time to parole eligibility date as of date of entry into the Temporary Release Program for both 1985 absconders and a comparison group of program participants. These data are presented in Table 18. The data in Table 18 indicate that, at least at program entry, absconders are generally similar to other program participants in regard to time remaining to parole eligibility date. We can see in Table 18 that there are slightly more absconders who have passed their parole eligibility date (16%) than is true among comparison cases (10%).

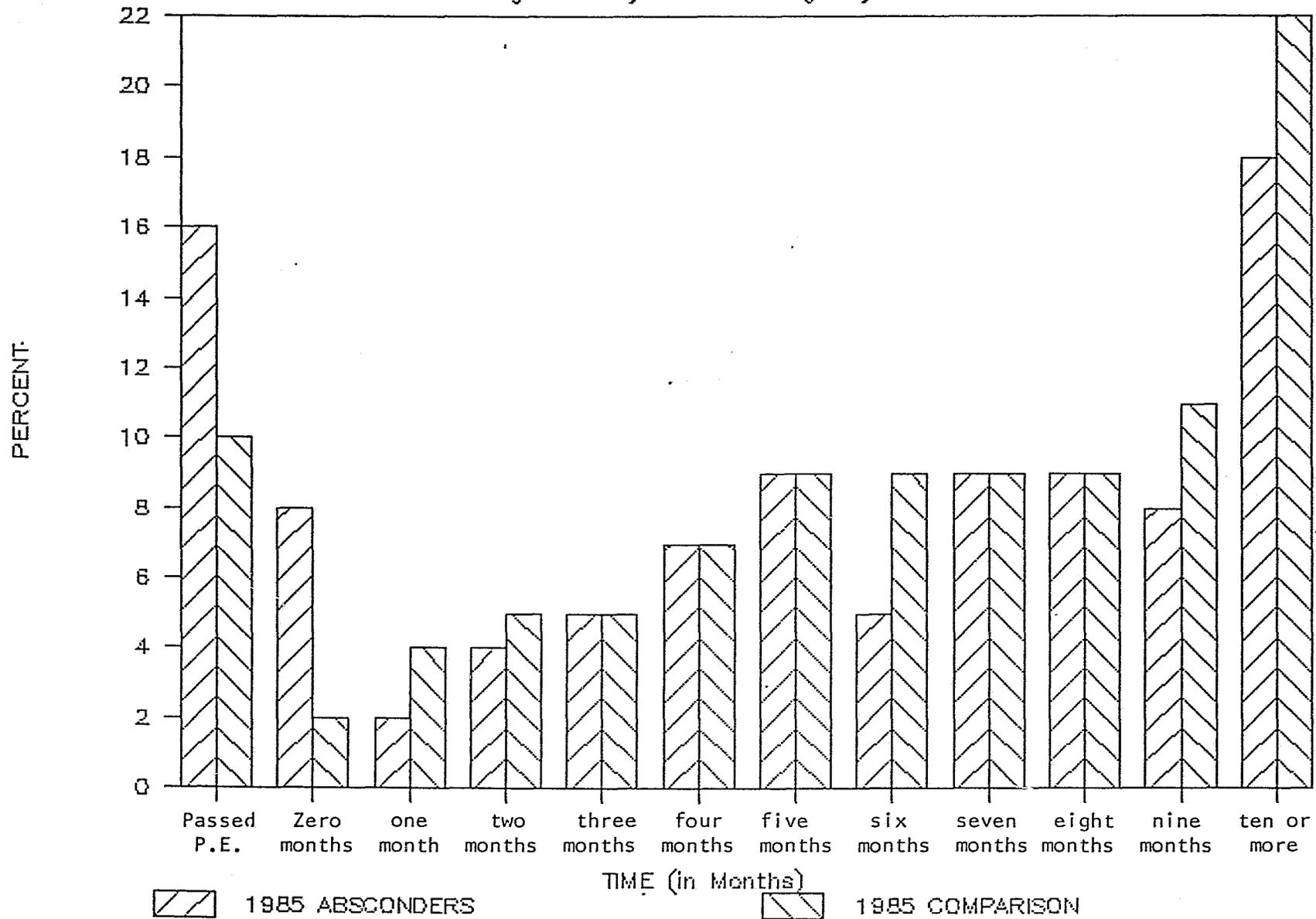
It is also true that a somewhat higher percentage of the absconder group had zero months to parole eligibility date (8.1%) than was true among comparison participants. The latter finding suggests that there may be a small group of individuals who abscond for which parole status is a relevant consideration. Looking at the remainder of the distribution, however, the absconder and comparison group participants look very similar with respect to time to parole eligibility date.

Table 18. Length of Time Between Program Entry and Parole Eligibility Date

<u>Time to Parole Eligibility Date</u>	<u>1985 Absconders</u>		<u>1985 Comparison</u>	
	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
Passed P.E.	27	16%	76	10%
0 Months	14	8%	12	2%
1 Month	3	2%	29	4%
2 Months	7	4%	37	5%
3 Months	8	5%	36	5%
4 Months	12	7%	51	7%
5 Months	16	9%	69	9%
6 Months	9	5%	68	9%
7 Months	16	9%	69	9%
8 Months	15	9%	73	9%
9 Months	14	8%	85	11%
10 or More	31	18%	175	22%
TOTAL	172	100%	780	100%

Based on these preliminary data, it would appear that the length of time to next Parole Board appearance or the period of time since last Board appearance are not strongly associated with absconding. It may be that absconding is more closely related to situational factors (e.g., use of drugs or alcohol, domestic disputes) than to current parole status or to impending changes in parole status.

Figure 10. Length of Time Between  
Program Entry & Parole Eligibility Date



### Conclusion

Although this study should not be used for predictive purposes or as a basis for Temporary Release decision-making, it may be useful for developing an understanding of when and why some inmates abscond from Temporary Release. Caution should be exercised in using the information provided in this report as a predictive tool for anticipating success of individual participants in Temporary Release.

A brief review of the findings of the study is contained in the highlights section preceding the body of the report.

As noted in the conclusion to last year's report, the Division of Temporary Release requested that the relationship between parole status and absconding be examined more closely in this year's report. For those inmates who absconded during 1985, it does not appear that time from the last Parole Board hearing or time to the next Parole Board hearing is a strong indicator of the probability of absconding. Nor does it appear that the time to parole eligibility is strongly associated with absconding. Consequently, based on these preliminary data, factors other than Parole Board appearances or parole eligibility, may be better indicators of likeliness to abscond.

The length of time in Temporary Release prior to absconding appears to be more evenly distributed in 1985. While a large proportion of inmates absconded within the first 90 days in Temporary Release (49%) in 1985, this is down substantially from the proportion of absconders (67%) who absconded during the same time in 1984.

Most important, absconders represent a very small proportion (approximately 2%) of those who participated in the Temporary Release Program during 1985 (N = 8,437 participants). Furthermore, of those who did abscond, 48% returned voluntarily and a large proportion returned to custody within one day or less (33%). Twenty-nine (29) inmates were arrested after having absconded, although in several cases, the arrest offense was for the crime of absconding. These data, so far as they go, do not appear to show that absconders present a serious threat to community, particularly in view of the very large number of inmates who participate in the program.