



Evaluation Report:

Louisiana Department of Corrections
Classification System

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Correctional Services Group, Inc.
Louisiana State University

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EVALUATION REPORT:

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CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

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PREFACE

This evaluation report has been prepared by Correctional Services Group, Inc., and Louisiana State University's Departments of Criminal Justice and Experimental Statistics under a National Institute of Corrections grant. Co-project directors were Robert Buchanan (CSG) and Dr. Doris Layton MacKenzie (LSU). Other project staff included Cindie Unger (CSG) and research assistant Dawna Stitt (LSU).

Project staff wish to thank Secretary of Corrections C. Paul Phelps, Assistant Secretary James E. Morris, and their staff for their assistance in the completion of this study. The co-project directors especially wish to acknowledge the ongoing efforts of the study's Advisory Group, which included the following Department officials:

- Kelly Ward, Chairman; Deputy Warden, Dixon Correctional Institute
- Gary Gremillion, Classification Administrator
- Gary Brazell, District Administrator, Probation and Parole, NID
- Tommy Thompson, Director of Classification, Dixon Correctional Institute
- Georgiana Johnson, Director of Classification, Louisiana Correctional Institute for Women
- Evita Key, Director of Research and Statistics
- Richard Stalder, Warden, Wade Correctional Center
- Steve Leake, Director of Classification, Work Training Facility-South
- Gary Frank, Director of Classification, Louisiana State Penitentiary
- Gary Pettigrew, Mental Health Director, Adult Reception and Diagnostic Center
- Vallerie Myer, Health Care Administrator

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This evaluation report includes an overview of classification in LDOC; the procedures, design, and results of the evaluation project; the recommendations of the project team; and suggestions for the implementation of the recommendations.

The present LDOC classification system was developed during a period of growth and change. LDOC is presently expanding both in the number of facilities and in the size of the existing facilities. It is the Department's desire to enter this new period of growth with a comprehensive plan. A classification system incorporating the most up-to-date administration strategies is expected to improve the management of offenders and to more efficiently make use of the agency's resources. This report reviews the history of the development of offender classification in LDOC and describes the classification system as it now exists.

Classification provides a means of balancing the needs of the offender, the correctional system, and the public. It has come to be viewed by the courts and prison administrators as the primary vehicle for making adequate decisions about custody, security, and programming, and for facility planning. An historical overview of offender classification throughout the United States, contemporary trends in classification, and the advantages of an effective classification system are described herein. Additionally, relevant legal issues and cases are discussed as they relate to classification.

A committee of personnel representing various components and institutions from throughout the LDOC was appointed as an Advisory Group for the evaluation project. Throughout the year of the evaluation, project met regularly with the Advisory Group. Early during the evaluation, the objectives of the study were

identified and the study was planned. Data and information were gathered from (1) a review of LDOC classification documents and supporting information; (2) questionnaires distributed to a sample of key staff; (3) workshops with classification staff at correctional institutes; and (4) visits to institutions to interview classification staff and observe classification activities.

On the basis of the information gathered during the study and the classification objectives identified, a series of recommendations were made for general classification, initial classification, institutional classification, and for classification system information needs. Additionally, possible strategies for the implementation of these recommendations are given in this report. The appendix includes a substantial amount of supplementary information. For example, complete copies of the surveys, statistics describing the survey results, instruments for assessing substance abuse histories, and a description of the CSG Correctional Classification Profile among other items are included in the appendix.

Study Objectives

Project staff, in conjunction with the Advisory Group, identified two principal objectives of the classification evaluation:

1. To perform an evaluation of the present LDOC classification system by examining policies, procedures, decision-making, needs assessment, information needs, and criteria used in classification; and
2. To make recommendations for the development of a more objective classification process that incorporates concepts of public and institutional risk to the extent that these are not presently incorporated in the classification system.

Survey Results

Two surveys were administered during the course of the study. One survey was distributed to staff representing administration, programs, security, classification, and support services. The second survey was administered to all LDOC institutional classification staff. The goal of the surveys was to identify the factors believed to be important by LDOC personnel in determining security and custody levels, the objectives of classification in staff's view, use of the classification summary, problems in classification, availability of information during classification, and how staff assess the capability of LDOC institutions to handle various inmate needs. Classification staff at ARDC and LCIW who are responsible for initial classification in the LDOC were asked additional questions related to initial classification activities.

The institutional capability analysis indicated that there was a lack of consensus among staff as to the perceived capability of institutions to handle inmates' needs. The judged ability of an institution to handle specific needs, such as mental health or substance abuse, varied depending upon whether staff were judging their own institutions or other institutions in the system. Thus, there appeared to be some uncertainty among staff as to what programs and/or security or custody capabilities were available at different facilities. The impact on the system of such uncertainties in regard to transfers and program planning is discussed.

Surveys elicited staff's attitudes and opinions about the objectives of classification, factors important in evaluating the seriousness of escapes, and reclassification and transfer decisions. Procedures for handling special management inmates were examined with questions regarding protective custody and determining a history of violence.

The importance and accuracy of information available for classification and reclassification were examined. Some discrepancies were found between the ratings of the importance of specific types of information and the staff's beliefs about the accuracy of that information. This was particularly important in regard to the diagnostic summary.

A reliability analysis in which classification staff were asked to classify five different case studies indicated that staff differed in how they made custody and security decisions and in the security or custody level to which they would assign the same case. Thus, some inconsistencies in classification decisions were suggested by these results.

Classification Objectives

Workshops were held at institutes with classification staff to identify the most important objectives of classification in the LDOC system. In addition, the problems the staff had in attaining these objectives were examined. As a result of these workshops, the following core group of classification system objectives were developed:

1. The attainment of all-inclusive, high-quality, standardized data;
2. The use of valid, reliable, and objective measurement and testing instruments in the classification decision-making process;
3. Structuring and checking the discretionary decision-making powers of classification staff;
4. Screening and further evaluation of inmates for management problems and/or who have special needs;
5. Matching inmates with programs consistent with their security, custody, and programmatic needs;
6. Classification of each inmate at the least restrictive custody level;

7. Continuous evaluation and improvement of the classification process;
and
8. Development of classification procedures at the initial, institutional, and community release levels that are consistent with the above objectives.

Summary of the Recommendations

A. General Classification Recommendations

1. Classification Decision-making

The Department should reduce the subjectivity of the present classification system, concentrating on a consistent and reliable application of the existing criteria employed by the Department for both initial classification and reclassification decision-making.

The Department should develop consistent policy and procedure to guide classification staff in evaluating the role of detainers, criminal history, and escape history in determining the security needs of inmates.

The Department should consider formally employing the concepts of eligibility, suitability, and acceptability when identifying inmates for assignment to minimum security and community placement status.

In determining an inmate's overall security and custody level and institutional assignment, the emphasis the Department places on length of sentence should be reduced.

All classification decision-making authority should be removed from institutional disciplinary boards.

2. Inmate Needs Assessment

The management of inmates within the Louisiana Department of Corrections would be improved by the ability to distinguish between inmates' security needs and custody needs and to assign inmates to institutions based upon these needs.

The Department should adopt a system to objectively assess inmates' substance abuse histories.

3. Programming

The Department should develop a formalized process to evaluate and rate the program and support services capabilities of each institution.

All inmates should participate in some form of prerelease programming, whether it is provided on an institutional basis or in a community corrections setting.

4. Classification Information

The Department should undertake a review of the documents employed during initial classification and reclassification to determine those that can be consolidated, replaced, or completely eliminated as superfluous, underutilized, and/or generally unnecessary.

It is recommended that Department staff investigate the costs of automating the classification report generating and recordkeeping functions at the institutions.

5. Staffing/Staff Development

Additional clerical personnel should be added to assist in the production of classification reports.

A 40-hour preservice and 16-hour inservice classification training program should be developed and implemented for staff formally involved in the classification process.

Likewise, the Department should consider developing a 4-hour block of classification training to be included in the preservice training program for all agency staff.

6. Planning

The Department should use the improved classification system to project facility staffing, treatment, and classification resources that will be required over the short and long term.

B. Initial Classification Recommendations

Program goal statements should be developed for all inmates entering the Louisiana correctional system.

The Department of Corrections should develop a priority system for admitting inmates to the DOC that is applicable to all parish and local detention facilities.

C. Institutional Classification (Reclassification) Recommendations

The Department should have the capability to monitor initial classification decisions throughout the confinement career of each inmate.

Central office classification staff should revise the Pattern of Violence Index for use during reclassification of inmates.

The program goal statements developed during initial classification should be refined and implemented by institutional classification staff during the institutional orientation and reception process and at each reclassification review, as needed.

Inmates should have the capability to request a security reduction. However, written policy should specify that a formal hearing and a written response are only necessary when a security change is initiated by staff.

Regular status review should be conducted every 90 days rather than every 60 days as specified by current policy.

An objective system should be developed to determine the role and involvement of disciplinary data in the increase or decrease of an inmate's custody status, as well as most acceptable institutional assignments.

The Correctional Classification Profile model developed by Correctional Services Group, Inc., should be considered as a possible format for overall institutional assignment. It should be modified, however, to accommodate the present Louisiana classification items so as not to radically alter the existing classification approach.

D. Classification System Information Needs

A menu-driven computer classification system should be developed, consistent with the present CAJUN management information system.

Up-to-date master record files of inmate classification information should be maintained at the central office to expedite the institutional assignment classification decision-making process.

E. Special Management Inmate Classification

A two-phase protective custody classification process should be developed, differentiating between those inmates who legitimately require protective custody and those for whom a documented need for such assignment has not been substantiated.

Additional inpatient beds are needed at LSP and DCI to manage the increased mental health inmate population. In addition, an increase in mental health personnel at other LDOC units is warranted to support the LSP and DCI programming.

A separate area should be set aside at LCIW for the reception and diagnostic functions associated with initial classification of female inmates.

The Department should undertake the development of a comprehensive manual that objectively rates the security, program, and support services capabilities of each institution.

Implementation Strategies

The final chapter in this report discusses the development and implementation strategy that the Department should consider to effectively and successfully introduce an enhanced classification approach. Fourteen major steps are recommended:

- Step 1: Agreement to Develop an Objective Classification System
- Step 2: Commitment of Top Agency Personnel
- Step 3: Selection of Project Planning Staff
- Step 4: Identification of Role of Project System Planners
- Step 5: Development of New Classification System Goals and Objectives
- Step 6: Appointment of Advisory Group
- Step 7: Identification of Legal Issues
- Step 8: Selection of Development Approach
- Step 9: Preparation of Development Plan
- Step 10: Preparation of Implementation Plan
- Step 11: Pilot Testing of New System
- Step 12: Development of Revised Classification System Policies and Procedures
- Step 13: Computerization of Classification System
- Step 14: Training of Department Staff

Based upon prior experience by other correctional systems, the Department should allocate a time frame between 12 and 18 months to carry out the 12 aforementioned steps.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

A. Background for Project

On May 1, 1986, the National Institute of Corrections awarded a grant to the Louisiana Department of Corrections (LDOC) to evaluate and make recommendations for the improvement of the Louisiana offender classification system. In turn, the Department contracted with Correctional Services Group, Inc., of Kansas City, Missouri, and the Louisiana State University to carry out the various elements of the evaluation project. The award of this grant was prompted by several events that warrant further discussion.

The present classification system has been put together as needs developed during a period of significant growth and change. Although the general feeling is that the classification system works somewhat well, there are areas in which the process is not fully adequate. For example, the work training facilities are chronically under the population totals assigned by the court, yet there are approximately 3,500 offenders waiting in parish prisons to come into LDOC facilities. The maximum security facility most likely has offenders who could do their time at a medium security facility, and this would allow more of the maximum security offenders in the parish facilities to enter the state institutions.

The LDOC is also in the process of developing a number of new facilities and expanding present facilities. It is the Department's desire to go into this new period of growth with a comprehensive plan rather than repeat the piecemeal plan used in the past. The evaluation of the present classification system and help in the development of an improved system as proposed in the grant activities will assist the Department in planning and staffing the new facilities.

In summary, the classification process as it exists is not meeting the present needs of LDOC nor will it address needs of the future. In reviewing objective offender classification systems developed in other states, the Department recognized benefits not presently enjoyed in Louisiana. Such a system would improve the management of offenders and more efficiently make use of the agency's resources.

B. History of Classification in Louisiana

Prior to 1975, the LDOC operated two major institutions and three community placement centers. All initial classification and reception processing was performed at Louisiana State Penitentiary at Angola. The classification process focused on separating the first offenders and community placement candidates from the majority of offenders destined to be incarcerated at Angola. The second classification objective was to find a "safe" place for the offenders left at Angola. Most of the activity in the classification process was devoted to internal classification.

In 1975, the LDOC started a process of expansion, resulting from a recognized need for change in the system and a federal court order designed to relieve overcrowding at Angola. From 1975 to the present, five new institutions have been constructed, so that the classification process now has additional options for offender placement. The majority of incarcerated offenders are now serving time at facilities other than Angola. Prior to 1975 the LDOC had open intake, meaning any parish sheriff could bring a sentenced offender to LDOC at any time. Since 1975, the Department has had a court-ordered population limit on each institution. Therefore, all intake from the parish facilities is scheduled based on existing vacancies. In 1976, the Department classification function was moved from Angola to Dixon Correctional

Center in preparation for the opening of the Adult Reception and Diagnostic Center (ARDC) at Hunt Correctional Center.

Beginning in 1979, all offenders entering the LDOC (except those assigned to death row) entered the system through ARDC. The average intake from the parish facilities has been approximately 3,000 inmates per year. Presently ARDC has two main functions with respect to classification: first, to evaluate and process an inmate arriving from a parish prison, another LDOC facility, or as a parole violator; second, to recommend assignment to an appropriate LDOC facility. The Office of Adult Services at the Headquarters of LDOC is responsible for scheduling transfers by matching the recommendations from ARDC with existing bed space.

C. The Present Louisiana Classification Approach

The present LDOC classification system provides the initial classification of offenders coming into the system and provides for systematic reclassification of offenders both between and within institutions. The classification system has been developed to respond to needs that have developed during the 10 years of growth and change. LDOC did not have a master plan for classification when the growth period began. Therefore, the classification process was developed piecemeal and added to previously used procedures. This approach has satisfied, for the most part, the primary objectives of classification.

Like most systems, the initial classification process attempts to compile sufficient information about the offender so that his or her needs can be matched with available resources and the most appropriate security placement can be made. The population pressure from the parish prisons requires these basic classification functions to be accomplished routinely in a short time period, 14 days. It is crucial to move inmates quickly through the

classification process without making mistakes in placement. A policy statement exists identifying the selection criteria for the placement and transfer of offenders based on Department regulations and state law. The decision-making process also relies on individual judgments and interpretations of the staffing committee members.

Within-institution reclassification is a function of each institution, with transfer authority resting with the Office of Adult Services. The same departmental criteria used in initial classification are used in this reclassification; again, however, each decision-making group at the institution relies on individual judgments and interpretation of criteria. A status reduction review process for each inmate in LDOC is mandated every 60 days. The structure for within-institution reclassification is set in Department regulations but each institution has established its own criteria based on local need.

D. Introduction to Offender Classification

The mandate of corrections is to manage the offender from the time of his conviction to the time of his release from all legal supervision. Within the constraints imposed by a state's statutes, the sentences imposed by the judges, and the resources the state provides, there are numerous alternatives. Whenever practicable and feasible, the choice that meets the needs of the offender, the correctional system, and the public should be made. Classification provides a mechanism for achieving this objective.

There are numerous advantages for a correctional system that employs an effective classification process. Several of these advantages are summarized below:

1. Classification permits a more efficient and systematic analysis of individual inmate needs. Standardized processing of inmates based

upon sound classification principles responds to the administration's need for inmate management as well as the need for the system to utilize its limited resources in an appropriate manner. Further, a standardized classification procedure facilitates later research and evaluation that can be used to upgrade programs and services.

2. Effective classification permits a better communication flow through the correctional continuum--including inmate, custody staff, treatment staff, administrative staff, and even to the public. Further, an objective basis for classification decisions is more readily communicable to, and understood by, public and political sectors who are concerned with how programs and custody determinations are made.
3. Another advantage to classification is that it provides a method for implementing the overall goals and mission of the correctional agency. Likewise, the agency can monitor and evaluate its effectiveness in reaching its goals.
4. Effective classification, based upon fairness and objectivity, encourages systematic, specific, and consistent responses to institutional behavior. Thus, the inmate is more likely to perceive a logic and predictability in this system that otherwise may appear reactive, crisis-oriented, subject, or arbitrary.
5. Classification promotes an effective and orderly relationship between areas of correctional decision-making that have traditionally been addressed at least somewhat independently. In other words, it clarifies for correctional staff, inmates, and the public the relationships among institutional behavior, custody changes, institutional transfers, and community program participation.

6. Effective classification helps the correctional agency to balance the needs of the agency with those of each institution, the individual inmate, and the public. Considerations weighted during classification decision-making include:
 - o The system's security resources (e.g., number of beds available at the different institutions);
 - o The system's programs and staff resources and availability;
 - o The individual institution's need for order and security;
 - o The institution's need for institutional maintenance;
 - o The inmate's program and service needs;
 - o The distribution of security needs evidenced by the inmate population;
 - o The public's concern and need to be protected against criminal behavior through length of incarceration, prevention of escape, and successful reintegration strategies;
 - o The media's concern about public protection, prison conditions, etc.; and
 - o The courts' concern about conditions of confinement, correctional practices, and prisoner rights.
7. Objective classification decision-making has a distinct advantage over arbitrary decisions in the area of pre-release, honor center, or halfway house assignment. Many prison systems are currently overcrowded and desperately need to accurately identify inmates who are appropriate candidates for pre-release and community placement. Objective classification can address immediate system needs, as well as generate accurate data upon which to project future security and facility needs.
8. Classification promotes effective pooling of knowledge about individual offenders. Important information about inmates may come from the inmates themselves, the correctional officers who supervise

them on a daily basis, program supervisors, past records, and treatment staff (psychologists, educators, counselors, medical staff, etc.). Classification ensures this information is given adequate consideration and that important decisions are not reached upon inaccurate or incomplete information.

It is essential to place classification in the context of overall prison management. Classification is at least a two-level enterprise. It functions at the system (central office) level, where there must be a classification policy and procedure to meet the philosophy, resources, and needs of the agency. It may also function at an intermediate level at a central reception center. Finally, classification exists at the institution to implement the decisions made by the classification committee (at whatever level). Crucial issues exist at all levels, but classification management is a major part of the overall management of a correctional system. The movement and assignment of prisoners sets the stage for many other prison functions (e.g., custody, food service, industry).

E. Historical Perspectives in Prisoner Classification

To achieve a better understanding of the present situation, it is worthwhile to take a brief look at the history of prison classification. Classification is not a new concept in prisons: it has existed for at least two hundred years, under different names, but always reflecting the philosophy of a particular prison. At its beginning, classification was no more than separation of broad types of offenders from one another: juveniles from adults, first offenders and/or debtors from "hardened" criminals, men from women, etc. Such a function had little, if anything, to do with subsequent treatment because, until the eighteenth century, most prisoners being held were

awaiting execution. After the middle of the century, most prisons were little more than warehouses, and corporal punishment prevailed as the means of control.

Early nineteenth century prisons in this country took classification to one of its extremes. Reformers began isolating every prisoner in an effort to allow each person ample opportunity for introspection. Such religious meditation in a humanitarian environment was intended to rehabilitate the individual sufficiently for successful reintegration into society. Because such a system provided questionable benefits, other reformers established systems in which work was seen as the definitive method of rehabilitation. This philosophy was prevalent until after the Civil War. Later in the nineteenth century, a few educational and rehabilitative programs were developed. Usually, though, prisons continued to concentrate on inmate labor for rehabilitation, as well as for punishment.

As the twentieth century approached, most prison systems in the United States were acutely feeling the ill effects of their history of experimentation. Many were characterized by structures designed to serve one purpose, but forced to serve another. The running of a prison had evolved into a multifaceted endeavor. There were political, administrative, and economic issues, as well as issues surrounding the needs of offenders. Since labor was the major activity of most prisoners, accruing as much income and benefits as possible was the major goal of prison officials. Accomplishing this in systems and structures designed for other purposes led to many problems. Inmate labor was necessary for the survival of most prison systems and rehabilitation was distantly removed from prison productivity until the 1930's. Labor practices were especially harsh and abuse of all types was common.

From the 1930's through the 1960's, with the growth of various criminological and psychological theories, a myriad of reformatory and rehabilitative practices emerged, ranging from treatment of mental disorders to vocational training. The underlying concept was that the prisoner could be rehabilitated or "corrected." Also, states established departments of correction to remove prisons from the highway departments. Chain gangs and road crews began to disappear as rehabilitation programs became more commonplace.

In some systems program participation carried incentives, usually early parole, or "good time," and was often mandatory. The programming aspect of classification came into its own during this time because not every inmate could participate. Programs were limited, both in number and nature, but inmates were numerous and had diverse needs.

While many of these programs have become largely voluntary in recent years, this change has been paralleled by a movement toward reintegration of the prisoner by means of community-based programs. Because these programs often put the prisoner at work or study in the community, the role of classification from both a custody and a programming perspective took on added importance. Classification became the main tool for balancing the prisoner's rights not to deteriorate in prison and to be placed in the least restrictive housing, with society's right to be protected from criminal behavior.

Concerns with this critical balance, perhaps combined with the growing awareness of officials and inmates of the outdated and inequitable aspects of many prisons, resulted in a recent development of court interest in and interaction with the correctional system. Frequently based on inmates' civil rights, court decisions continue to affect broad areas of correctional management. They frequently place special attention on classification issues,

such that these are most often the source of programming and supervision-level decisions.

As many states have moved toward sentencing laws that have substantially increased prisoner confinement (changing the composition of the prison population), and courts have ordered sweeping administrative changes, prison systems have been faced with considering new facility planning. In addition, this past decade has brought serious overcrowding and violence, which make this need more pressing. Classification has come to be viewed by the courts and prison administrators as the primary vehicle for making adequate decisions about both facility planning and for handling violence and overcrowding.

F. Court Involvement in Classification

Since 1969, the federal courts have been actively involved in prison condition suits concerning prisoner classification. At this writing, three quarters of the prison systems in this country are in litigation at either the state or federal level over some aspect of the conditions of confinement.

The history of such court involvement as it pertains to classification is an interesting one. It began with Holt vs. Sarver (300 F. Supp. 825 [1969]), in which the plaintiffs alleged that confinement in the Arkansas prison system amounted to cruel and unusual punishment. The court agreed and, for the first time in the history of U.S. prisons, held that the totality of prison conditions did indeed violate the Constitution.

This decision was a giant step in opening the door to court involvement in prison reform. It acknowledged that the combined effect of various circumstances must be the test of whether confinement is unconstitutional, even though each of the contributing components may not reflect constitutional rights. It did not, however, specify the means for bringing the system up to constitutional standards. The court felt that the administrative procedures

were the domain of the state. A year later, a second Holt vs. Sarver suit (309 F. Supp. 362 [1970], aff'd 442 F.2d 304 [9th Cir. 1971]) alleged that confinement itself violated the Constitution. The judge again agreed, noting some worthwhile improvements, but held that the system was still not operating at a constitutional level.

He did advocate that housing assignments be based on the needs of the population in order to reduce the levels of fear and violence within the institutions. This was another first. Even though it was not labeled classification, the principle was established of using a tool that is not a constitutional right itself as a means to alleviate unconstitutional conditions.

The first decision to order that a classification system be designed and implemented came out of the Federal District Court of Rhode Island in Morris vs. Travisono (310 F. Supp. 857 [1970]). The judge determined that a functioning classification system was the only method by which the inmates' claims of overcrowding and capricious assignments to a "behavior control unit" in the state prison could be alleviated.

The system designed by the Department of Corrections saw classification as a tool that

contributes to a smoothly, efficiently operated correctional program by the pooling of all relevant information concerning the offender, by devising a program for the individual based upon that information, and by keeping that program realistically in line with the individual's requirements. It furnishes an orderly method to the institution administrator by which the varied needs and requirements of each inmate may be followed through from confinement to discharge. Through its diagnostic and coordinating functions, classification not only contributes to the objective of rehabilitation, but also to custody, discipline, work assignments, officer and inmate morale, and the effective use of training opportunities. Through the data it develops, it assists in long-range planning and development, both in the correctional system as a whole and in the individual institution.

In 1976 (Pugh vs. Locke, 406 F. Supp. 318), Alabama gave us the most detailed orders regarding classification. As with Arkansas, the plaintiffs

challenged the constitutionality of the entire system. Again, recognizing that even though classification was not a constitutional right, it was a major means by which to elevate conditions to a standard acceptable under the Constitution.

The judge ordered that the classification system be based on the needs of the inmates, and not merely upon those of the institution or the larger system. A court-ordered research group conducted an extensive study of the needs of the population and implemented a classification system which followed the court's order that it include, but not necessarily be limited to, considerations of:

1. Age, offense, prior record, physical and mental health requirements, and vocational, educational, and work needs;
2. A method to identify aged, infirm, psychologically disabled, and mentally retarded prisoners in an effort to transfer them to a proper institution or to receive treatment within the prison; and
3. A method to identify those qualified for transfer to a prerelease, work release, or other community-based facility.

During the next few years courts in Illinois, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island ordered classification systems similar to the one in Alabama. New Hampshire and Rhode Island have unique aspects worthy of note.

The New Hampshire state law mandates that persons sentenced to prison be classified to determine appropriate placement. Even though a classification system existed, it did not serve this purpose. The information was often incomplete and there was no way of ensuring its reliability or that of the system as a whole. The judge held that adequate classification is necessary for officials to fill their obligation to "diagnose and treat inmates' medical and psychological needs and to protect them from assaults" (Laamon vs. Helgemoe, 437 F. Supp. 269, 275 [1977]). For this reason, he ordered a new classification system to be developed using the format of the Alabama plan.

Palmagiano vs. Garrahy (443 F. Supp. 956 [1977]) is, from one point of view, the result of the Department of Corrections in Rhode Island ignoring the order given in the 1970 Morris vs. Travisono case. That decision, cited earlier, established the basis for development of a comprehensive classification system.

By 1977, however, the court found that the Rhode Island prison system had deteriorated to the point that "inmates exist in a state of constant violence and fear so that it is impossible for the state to provide adequate protection for the inmates...under the present classification system" (Morris vs. Travisono, at 968). The judge echoed the statements made in 1970 when these issues were first brought before the court.

Classification is essential to the operation of an orderly and safe prison. It is a prerequisite for the rational allocation of whatever program opportunities exist within the institution. It enables the institution to gauge the proper custody level of an inmate, to identify the inmate's educational, vocational, and psychological needs, and to separate nonviolent inmates from the more predatory....Classification is also indispensable for any coherent future planning. (Morris vs. Travisono, at 956)

The judge ordered all inmates to be reclassified on a similar basis as in Pugh vs. Locke, and programs to be established to carry out classification needs. This situation is a prime example of the tenacity of the courts in such matters.

One development in federal law that potentially affects litigation is Public Law 96-247, of May 1980--the Civil Rights of Institutionalized Persons Act. This law gives the U.S. Attorney General the authority to intervene in civil actions concerning deprivation of constitutional and federal statutory rights of individuals in state and local institutions. The impact of such intervention is far-reaching. Thus, cases that might be meritorious but, may not be brought forward for lack of financial backing, might now be initiated by the Department of Justice.

Inmates in all states have filed major cases that have not yet come to a final decision. If recent Supreme Court decisions are reviewed, one can see the form that these decisions may take. Three salient areas have been given attention by the Supreme Court and the following conclusions reached:

1. The totality of the conditions of confinement must be considered when determining whether a system is unconstitutional.
2. A remedial order in a totality case should address each factor that contributed to the overall violation of the Constitution or which the court feels is necessary to remedy the overall violation. This must be done whether or not a specific factor represents an independent Constitutional right.
3. The court may enunciate specific minimum standards that must be followed to remedy the constitutional violations.

Having had these issues addressed by the highest court in the land, it is unlikely that the courts will uphold any prison system lacking a viable classification procedure. It is for this reason that, even though the issue in a case may be overcrowding, the lack of rehabilitative opportunity leading to deterioration of the incarcerated individual, capricious housing assignments, or the high degree of fear and/or violence, a major portion of the solution will still probably rest with classification. Thus, the lack of an objective means of classifying inmates has been shown to be, and is likely to remain, the seminal aspect of an unconstitutional prison system.

As of this date, there have been no significant court decisions in Louisiana directly involving the Department's classification system. However, given the attitude of the courts, the state's growing prison population, and increased litigation by state prisoners, it seems quite likely in the near future that one or more components of the classification system may be subject to legal scrutiny.

G. Contemporary Trends in Classification¹

At the present time in the United States, there is a decided shift in classification away from subjective judgments toward the employment of standardized instruments. Many of the states currently using standardized instruments cited court pressures and overcrowding problems as their primary motivation for developing new models and guidelines. The expectation is that these guidelines will reduce the possibility that the courts will find institutional or program assignments unconstitutional or arbitrary, as well as provide a defense against public criticism concerning the necessary assignment decisions dictated by overcrowded conditions and court mandates.

One of the basic considerations in developing an objective classification system is the choice of clinical versus actuarial data for decision-making purposes. Briefly, the clinical method is characterized by the application of some level of human (subjective) judgment to the case. The actuarial method is characterized by the mechanical application of statistically derived ratings that summarize such data as past behavior for purposes of predicting future behavior. Still other classification models utilize a combination of these approaches. For example, the newer approaches generally use the actuarial approach as a foundation in considering a number of fixed factors that, on the average, will predict model outcome. However, clinical classification methods can be used to identify and evaluate mitigating or aggravating circumstances that may suggest a classification decision that deviates from that suggested by a purely actuarial approach.

One important conceptual framework currently being used in classification is based upon a decision-tree model. For these models, independent variables

¹ This section was summarized from an unpublished report by the National Institute of Corrections entitled Classification Evaluation and Guidelines (1980).

frequently associated with recidivism, escape, or unfavorable institutional adjustment are paired with dependent variables. The Florida classification system uses a decision-tree model based on the initial identification of factors considered to be important in making classification decisions. The system was developed using Interpretive Structural Modeling (ISM), which is a computer-aided technique for generating a contextual map, or "structured model," of a complex issue.

According to the model, the initial and most important question would be whether the inmate was diagnosed as "actively psychotic." If the answer to this question is yes, the inmate is immediately assigned to maximum custody. However, if the answer is no, then the scorer moves on to the next element of the decision tree, which relates to the inmate's history of intentional violence. The scores on this and subsequent categories define the appropriate custody assignment for that particular inmate.

Another recent model, originally developed by the Federal Bureau of Prisons (FBOP), is the additive model or scale. Like decision-tree models, additive scales can be developed through a variety of means, including statistical analyses and consensus-building techniques. Additive models overcome the basic flaws of decision-tree schemes since discriminating power is spread among many variables; often various combinations of factors can result in identical overall scores. This scoring is, at the same time, the primary drawback to additive scales. All decisions are made based on cut-off scores along one continuum. Unlike the decision tree, additive models generally do not base different custody level decisions on different criteria.

One of the most recent innovations in classification security and custody designation is a dual scoring system that incorporates the concepts of institutional and public risk--the first is scored for institutional violence potential and the latter for perceived threat to the community (combined into a

third overall security score). This system has been developed by Correctional Services Group, Inc., and incorporated in an overall classification approach called the Correctional Classification Profile. It has been implemented in Maryland, West Virginia, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, Arizona, Georgia, and Arkansas by Correctional Services Group.

The rationale for this model is that inmates vary widely in terms of institutional and public threat potential. Some prisoners may pose a relatively low risk to the outside community, yet have a history of assaultive institutional behavior. Other prisoners manifest excellent institutional adjustment, yet when exposed to the community they commit repeated violent acts. With this knowledge and the appropriate institutional security designations, classification staff can determine the levels of perimeter control and custody (supervision) required for each inmate.

A primary advantage of this type of approach is that it permits a more specific pairing of a system's institutional security levels with the differential custody needs of the individual (i.e., inner-cell security and close supervision for the adjustment problem, with perimeter security emphasized for the public risk-only inmate).

This brief overview of contemporary trends in classification illustrates the diverse options that are available to a correctional system that wishes to improve its classification process through the adoption of more standardized, objective procedures.

CHAPTER TWO: EVALUATION APPROACH

A variety of approaches were employed to obtain the information necessary to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the Louisiana Department of Corrections' classification system. These approaches are summarized below:

A. Appointment of a Classification Advisory Committee

During the first weeks of the project, an Advisory Committee was appointed to both oversee the conduct of the project and to provide direction concerning the focus of the evaluation. Advisory Committee members represented the following Department components and institutions:

- Central Office Classification;
- Research and Statistics;
- Probation and Parole;
- Medical and Health Care Services;
- Psychological Services;
- Hunt Correctional Center/Male Reception and Diagnostic Unit;
- Dixon Correctional Institute;
- Louisiana Correctional Institute for Women;
- Work Training Facility/South;
- Louisiana State Penitentiary at Angola.

The first Advisory Committee was held on May 8, 1986, at the Hunt Correctional Center. The agenda included:

- Introduction of primary CSG staff;
- Role of Advisory Committee;
- Solicitation of Advisory Committee expectations;
- Background of the study;
- Goals and objectives of the study;
- Review of the project work plan;
- Results expected; and
- Discussion of Correctional Classification Profile and other objective classification systems.

Project staff met monthly with the Advisory Committee during the six-month evaluation process. Individual representatives provided invaluable information concerning their perceptions of the classification function and the impact of their individual operations on the Department's classification system.

B. Study Objectives

Prior to undertaking the formal evaluation of the Louisiana classification system, the Department of Corrections identified the following as being the two principal objectives of this classification evaluation:

1. Performing an evaluation of the present Louisiana DOC classification system by:
 - Comparing current policies and procedures to contemporary classification practices and accepted national standards (ACA);
 - Analyzing the role of staff discretion in the decision-making process;
 - Assessing the procedures used to match offender needs with Department resources;
 - Assessing the outcomes of classification decision-making, including custody designation, institutional assignment, program placement, special needs identification, etc.;
 - Determining the types of information collected by the Department for use during the initial and reclassification process and evaluating their utility for classification decision-making; and
 - Identifying the criteria/factors Department staff use to make security (institutional) and custody assignments.
2. Developing a more objective classification process that incorporates the concepts of public and institutional risk by:
 - Development of classification policies and procedures amenable to standardization;
 - Developing specific criteria for housing assignment, custody designation, special needs identification, etc.;
 - Developing a structured classification instrument which can be used by Department personnel for purposes of institutional assignment, custody designation, program placement, etc.;
 - Establishing a feedback and monitoring system to regularly evaluate the outcomes of classification decisions and the decision-making process; and
 - Enabling inmate security levels to be reduced over time without substantial threat to the general public.

While the two preceding objectives were considered the primary focus of this evaluation, corollary objectives included:

- The development of a definitive statement of the mission, goals, and objectives of the Department's classification system;
- The facilitation of cooperative relationships between the Department and agencies that currently, or at a future date, provide offender information to the Department;
- An assessment of the ability of the proposed classification system to adapt to the changing needs of the Department and offenders while incorporating changes in laws and standards relating to classification;
- The identification of the capabilities of each Department facility to determine each institution's strengths and weaknesses relative to security, custody, programs, and support services; and
- The development of procedures to determine short- and long-range bed space, security, and program needs.

C. Review of DOC Classification Documents and Supporting Information

During the course of this evaluation, CSG staff reviewed numerous documents to familiarize themselves with the classification process used by the Louisiana Department of Corrections. This information included:

- Classification policies and procedures;
- Classification forms and documents;
- Legal documents; and
- Other relevant Louisiana DOC reports/documents.

D. Administration of Questionnaires, Survey Instruments

A significant portion of the classification evaluation was devoted to the development and dissemination of a comprehensive questionnaire and the subsequent analysis of this questionnaire. A copy of the questionnaire is included in the appendix to this report.

The questionnaire was sent to eleven institutional coordinators located either in an institution or a headquarters. Coordinators were instructed to

distribute the questionnaires to all staff involved in classification as well as a sample of key staff representing administration, programs, security, and support services.

A total of 226 questionnaires were distributed to the institutional coordinators. The number of questionnaires distributed to each institution varied depending on size of institution and number of classification personnel. Questionnaires were returned in a sealed envelope within three weeks of distribution. Names on questionnaires were optional.

An overall response rate of 78% was obtained. Response rates from individual institutions are listed below:

	<u>Number Distributed</u>	<u>Response Rate</u>
Hunt Correctional Institute	32	78%
Louisiana State Penitentiary	39	85%
Louisiana Correctional Institute for Women	22	95%
Louisiana Correctional and Institutional School	20	100%
Work Training Facility/North	20	80%
Work Training Facility/South	12	92%
Dixon Correctional Institute	22	54%
Wade Correctional Institution	22	86%
Washington Correctional Institution	22	64%
Department of Correction Headquarters	10	60%
State Police Barracks	5	0%

The questionnaire consisted of 22 questions: position held, length of time with department and in current position, and major area represented were asked of each respondent. The major areas represented included administration, classification, security, inmate programs, and support services. Initial classification, reclassification, institutional classification, and institutional capabilities were topics included in the questionnaire. Questionnaires distributed to Hunt Correctional Center and Louisiana Correctional Institute for Women included eleven additional questions on initial classification issues.

A second questionnaire was distributed to 48 classification officers in the eight LDPSC prisons for males. The procedure for administering the questionnaire was identical to that of the first survey. A total of 37 officers, or 73%, returned the questionnaire. A copy of the questionnaire is included in Appendix A. This survey was designed to elicit additional data on the importance and accuracy of information available at initial classification and at reclassification, in the opinion of the staff. Additionally, information was gathered in regard to protective custody inmates within the LDPSC system. The third portion of this survey was designed to examine the consistency of decisions made by the classification officers in regard to five classification cases.

Included in the appendix are tables showing the major results from these surveys.

B. Conduct of Institutional Workshops

CSG/LSU project staff conducted one-day workshops at Angola, Dixon, and the Louisiana Correctional Institute for Women with institutional classification staff and personnel who support classification functions. The purpose of these meetings was fourfold:

1. To acquaint institutional DOC classification staff to the study and to obtain their active support and participation;
2. To identify the objectives of classification, as viewed by institutional classification staff;
3. To identify the problems classification staff face in the performance of their classification responsibilities and to develop possible strategies for resolving these problems; and
4. To observe the actual execution of Department institutional classification procedures.

F. Summary of Study Approach

In reviewing the extensive amount of data collected during the course of the evaluation, project staff found the inevitable variety in people's perceptions. As a result, our analysis of the Louisiana Department of Corrections' classification system does not reflect any one group of statistics or any one opinion. Instead, our findings and recommendations are based on overall patterns that emerged from our study of the current classification system. Further, some of our findings and recommendations are contrary to the beliefs and opinions of some Department staff. Indeed, some of the major recommendations will be seen by many staff as substantial departures from current practices. Heretofore, the Louisiana system functioned adequately because necessary changes in classification policies and procedures were identified and instituted on a proactive basis, rather than from the crisis-oriented posture that characterizes many other correctional classification systems. Recently, however, numerous forces began pressuring the Department to adopt a more efficient and objective classification system. These include, for example, prisoner overcrowding, public and political response to institutional conditions, and severe monetary constraints.

It should be noted that the DOC classification system is only one component of the overall correctional system and, as such, does not exist in a vacuum.

There are numerous other operations that impact the effectiveness of both classification and the correctional agency. Classification is, however, the most visible and thus the most vulnerable to public and internal scrutiny and criticism. Therefore, project staff has endeavored to identify not only the weaknesses in the present system, but also its strengths. This will help place the Department's classification system in the proper perspective for purposes of implementing needed changes in policies and procedures.

CHAPTER THREE: SURVEY RESULTS

A. Assessment of Institutional Capabilities

An important but often overlooked component of any classification system is having the capability to effectively match inmates' needs with the capabilities of institutions. However, to do so requires classification staff to possess accurate and current knowledge of each institution's security, custody, and program abilities. Specifically, staff were asked if their facility and other facilities could adequately address the following inmate needs and classifications:

- Serious medical care needs;
- Violent inmate;
- Escape-prone inmate;
- Sexual offender;
- Mentally ill inmate;
- Mentally retarded inmate;
- Substance abuse inmate;
- Protective custody inmate;
- Chronic rule violator;
- Youthful offender;
- Long-term inmate;
- Academic needs;
- Special education needs; and
- Vocational needs.

In an attempt to assess staff knowledge and perception of the capabilities of Louisiana's correctional facilities, three separate yet interrelated questions were asked:

- What are the capabilities of your institution?
- What are the capabilities of other Department institutions?
- How do ARDC staff perceive the capabilities of each institution?
(This question was included since ARDC staff are required to know or at least have a working familiarity of institutional capabilities for initial assignment purposes.)

The results of this activity are depicted in Table 1, on the following pages. They clearly demonstrate that, except for a few institutions (e.g., Angola, Wade), there is little consensus among institutional and ARDC staff as to the perceived capabilities of most Department facilities. For example, while staff from the Work Training Facility South believe they can well accommodate and manage inmates with academic, vocational, and special education needs, ARDC and other Department staff do not believe this facility is prepared to provide the types of programs consistent with these inmate needs. Similarly, staff from the Louisiana Correctional and Industrial School rate themselves as being able to manage long-term inmates. However, staff from ARDC and other institutions are not so optimistic about LCIS's capabilities in this area.

At the other extreme, Dixon staff do not believe their facility is capable of programming inmates with special education needs, while ARDC and other agency staff understand that it can accommodate at times this type of offender.

The ramifications of such inconsistencies regarding staff knowledge of institutional capabilities can be both serious and costly. Inmates can be transferred to institutions for special programming only to find it either does not exist or is not available in sufficient magnitude to accommodate all inmates. Inmates can also be transferred for various security and custody reasons to institutions which do not have the physical plant and/or staffing capabilities to adequately contain and manage them.

Table 1

Capability of Institution to Handle Inmate Problems:
 Evaluation of Institution by Hunt Classification (ARDC) Staff,
 Staff at Own Institution, and Staff at Other Institutions

	Serious Medical and Health Care Needs			Violent Inmate			Escape-Prone Inmate		
	ARDC	Self	Other	ARDC	Self	Other	ARDC	Self	Other
	Hunt Correctional Center (ARDC)	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	?
Louisiana State Penitentiary (Angola)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Louisiana Correctional Institute for Women	?	0	?	1	?	1	1	1	1
Louisiana Correctional and Industrial School	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Work Training Facility--North	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Work Training Facility--South	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Dixon Correctional Institute	?	?	0	?	1	?	?	1	?
State Police Barracks	0	-	0	0	-	0	0	-	0
Wade Correctional Center	?	0	0	?	?	?	?	?	?
Washington Correctional Institute	0	0	0	?	?	?	?	?	?

0 = No (mean rank above 3.5)

1 = Yes or Usually (mean rank 1 - 2.5)

? = Sometimes (mean rank 2.5 - 3.5)

Table 1 (continued)

Capability of Institution to Handle Inmate Problems:
 Evaluation of Institution by Hunt Classification (ARDC) Staff,
 Staff at Own Institution, and Staff at Other Institutions

	<u>Sexual Offender</u>			<u>Mentally Ill Inmate</u>			<u>Mentally Retarded Inmate</u>		
	<u>ARDC</u>	<u>Self</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>ARDC</u>	<u>Self</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>ARDC</u>	<u>Self</u>	<u>Other</u>
Hunt Correctional Center (ARDC)	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	1	-
Louisiana State Penitentiary (Angola)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Louisiana Correctional Institute for Women	1	?	1	1	?	1	1	?	1
Louisiana Correctional and Industrial School	1	?	?	0	0	0	?	?	?
Work Training Facility--North	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	?	0
Work Training Facility--South	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	?	0
Dixon Correctional Institute	1	1	?	?	?	?	1	?	?
State Police Barracks	0	-	0	0	-	0	0	-	0
Wade Correctional Center	?	1	?	?	0	0	?	?	?
Washington Correctional Institute	1	1	?	?	?	?	?	?	?

0 = No (mean rank above 3.5)
 1 = Yes or Usually (mean rank 1 - 2.5)
 ? = Sometimes (mean rank 2.5 - 3.5)

Table 1 (continued)

Capability of Institution to Handle Inmate Problems:
 Evaluation of Institution by Hunt Classification (ARDC) Staff,
 Staff at Own Institution, and Staff at Other Institutions

	<u>Protective Custody Inmate</u>			<u>Substance Abuse Inmate</u>			<u>Chronic Rule Violator</u>		
	<u>ARDC</u>	<u>Self</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>ARDC</u>	<u>Self</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>ARDC</u>	<u>Self</u>	<u>Other</u>
Hunt Correctional Center (ARDC)	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	1	-
Louisiana State Penitentiary (Angola)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Louisiana Correctional Institute for Women	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Louisiana Correctional and Industrial School	0	?	?	1	1	?	?	?	0
Work Training Facility--North	0	?	0	0	1	0	0	?	0
Work Training Facility--South	0	1	0	0	?	?	0	0	?
Dixon Correctional Institute	?	?	?	1	1	1	?	1	?
State Police Barracks	?	-	0	0	-	0	0	-	?
Wade Correctional Center	1	1	1	1	1	1	?	?	?
Washington Correctional Institute	?	?	?	1	1	1	?	?	?

0 = No (mean rank above 3.5)
 1 = Yes or Usually (mean rank 1 - 2.5)
 ? = Sometimes (mean rank 2.5 - 3.5)

Table 1 (continued)

Capability of Institution to Handle Inmate Problems:
 Evaluation of Institution by Hunt Classification (ARDC) Staff,
 Staff at Own Institution, and Staff at Other Institutions

	<u>Youthful Offender</u>			<u>Long-term Inmate</u>			<u>Academic Needs</u>		
	<u>ARDC</u>	<u>Self</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>ARDC</u>	<u>Self</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>ARDC</u>	<u>Self</u>	<u>Other</u>
Hunt Correctional Center (ARDC)	-	1	-	-	?	-	-	1	-
Louisiana State Penitentiary (Angola)	1	1	?	1	1	1	1	1	1
Louisiana Correctional Institute for Women	1	?	1	1	1	1	1	?	1
Louisiana Correctional and Industrial School	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
Work Training Facility--North	1	1	?	0	?	0	?	1	?
Work Training Facility--South	1	1	?	0	0	0	?	1	?
Dixon Correctional Institute	1	1	1	?	?	?	1	1	1
State Police Barracks	1	-	0	?	-	0	0	-	0
Wade Correctional Center	1	1	1	?	1	?	1	1	1
Washington Correctional Institute	1	1	1	?	?	?	1	1	1

0 = No (mean rank above 3.5)
 1 = Yes or Usually (mean rank 1 - 2.5)
 ? = Sometimes (mean rank 2.5 - 3.5)

Table 1 (concluded)

Capability of Institution to Handle Inmate Problems:
 Evaluation of Institution by Hunt Classification (ARDC) Staff,
 Staff at Own Institution, and Staff at Other Institutions

	<u>Special Education Needs</u>			<u>Vocational Needs</u>		
	<u>ARDC</u>	<u>Self</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>ARDC</u>	<u>Self</u>	<u>Other</u>
Hunt Correctional Center (ARDC)	-	1	-	-	1	-
Louisiana State Penitentiary (Angola)	1	?	1	1	1	1
Louisiana Correctional Institute for Women	1	0	1	1	1	1
Louisiana Correctional and Industrial School	1	1	?	1	1	1
Work Training Facility--North	0	0	0	?	?	?
Work Training Facility--South	0	1	0	?	1	0
Dixon Correctional Institute	?	0	?	1	?	1
State Police Barracks	0	-	0	?	-	0
Wade Correctional Center	?	1	?	1	1	1
Washington Correctional Institute	?	?	?	1	1	1

0 = No (mean rank above 3.5)
 1 = Yes or Usually (mean rank 1 - 2.5)
 ? = Sometimes (mean rank 2.5 - 3.5)

Similarly, the lack of knowledge of facility capabilities can and does result in additional inmate transfers. The inability to effectively match the inmate initially or at reclassification can lead to repeat transfers of the same inmate until he is eventually assigned to an institution able to provide for his various needs.

B. Institutional Objectives

In order to examine the classification objectives of departmental staff, LDPSC staff were asked to prioritize 12 classification objectives. In the view of the staff, the primary objective of classification was to "provide safety and security to the public." Staff in all institutions but Dixon Correctional Institute listed the following objectives as the next most important in classification:

1. Meet security needs of inmates
2. Determine medical and psychiatric needs of inmates
3. Protect staff

Staff at Dixon listed "facilitate rehabilitation/reintegration of inmate" in the top four instead of "determine the medical and psychiatric needs." This may be because few inmates are sent to Dixon with medical and psychiatric needs and, second, that the new prerelease program may have influenced staff to consider reintegration an important objective of classification.

The other seven objectives listed below were ranked lower in importance by the staff. On the average, the staff listed these objectives at approximately the same level of importance:

1. Determine proper jobs for inmates
2. Identify inmates for minimum security assignment
3. Facilitate program planning
4. Provide inmate orientation to institution

5. Identify inmates for lateral transfer
6. Determine when an inmate's custody level should be changed
7. Identify inmates who require counseling

As would be expected, there was a consistency across institutions in the importance of protecting the public and staff from danger.

C. Importance and Accuracy of Classification Information

The importance and accuracy of information at initial classification and at reclassification as reported by LPDSC classification officers is shown in Table 2. Important to note is that inmate capabilities, headquarters recommendations, ARDC recommendations, mental health test results, and jail adjustment reports are considered less important than the other information at initial classification. On the other hand, criminal history, prior institutional record, and medical reports are considered more important than other information.

Criminal history, prior institutional record, pre/post-sentence investigation, and medical reports are ranked highest in accuracy.

The third column in Table 2 is the difference between the mean importance and the mean accuracy. If the number is negative, it means that the factor is judged less in mean accuracy than mean importance. For example, criminal history was rated on the average as 1.5, or between important and very important. The accuracy of this information was rated as 1.76, or important. The difference was $-.26$, indicating that the importance was higher than the accuracy. These results were used as a crude indicator of the relationship between the importance and accuracy of the information listed.

As can be seen, the largest difference was negative, for inmate interviews, suggesting that although these might be important, they are not considered very accurate. The next largest difference was positive, for

Table 2

Importance and Accuracy of Information at Initial Classification and
Reclassification, as Reported by LDPSC Classification Officers (n=36)

<u>Type of Information</u>	<u>Importance^a</u> <u>Mean</u>	<u>Accuracy^b</u> <u>Mean</u>	<u>Difference</u>
Initial Classification			
Inmate capabilities/skills	2.55	2.85	-.30
Headquarters recommendations	2.54	2.28	.26
ARDC recommendations	2.45	2.18	.53
Jail adjustment report	2.39	2.53	-.14
Mental health test results	2.17	2.26	-.09
Summary from ARDC	1.96	2.24	-.28
Inmate interview	1.94	2.64	-.70
Pre/post-sentence investigation	1.87	1.82	.05
Medical reports	1.79	1.74	.05
Prior institutional record	1.76	1.76	0
Criminal history	1.50	1.76	-.26
Reclassification			
Jail adjustment report	2.75	2.69	.06
ARDC recommendations	2.75	2.50	.25
Headquarters recommendations	2.72	2.35	.37
Summary from ARDC	2.58	2.28	.30
Pre/post-sentence investigation	2.39	1.97	.42
Mental health test results	2.03	2.03	0
Inmate capabilities/skills	1.91	2.59	-.68
Line staff recommendations	1.87	NA	NA
Inmate interview	1.84	2.35	-.51
Criminal history	1.79	1.77	.02
Prior institutional record	1.58	1.59	-.01
Medical reports	1.51	1.59	-.08
Knowledge of inmate	1.33	NA	NA
Behavior in institution	1.00	NA	NA

^aScale: very important (1) to not at all important (4).

^bScale: very accurate (1) to not at all accurate (4).

information related to ARDC recommendations. These were not rated as very important but, in comparison to their level of importance, they are considered accurate. Similar to this are recommendations from headquarters--they are not considered extremely important, but they are accurate.

Almost all of the rest of the large differences were negative, indicating a discrepancy between importance and accuracy. In these cases, the importance was higher than the accuracy, suggesting that the information was important but not sufficiently accurate. Fairly large negative differences were found for criminal history, the classification summary from ARDC, and inmate capabilities/skills. Since criminal history and the classification summary are rated fairly high in importance, this discrepancy in accuracy is noteworthy.

The ratings of importance and accuracy of information at reclassification are similar to those at initial classification, except the behavior in the institution is of primary importance, followed by knowledge of the inmate. Criminal history and prior institutional record became less important, while inmate capabilities and medical reports became more important.

The discrepancy between importance and accuracy changes at reclassification. The summary from ARDC has been evaluated to be less important at reclassification than it was at initial classification. However, the accuracy has remained at about the same level. The result is now a positive difference between importance and accuracy, suggesting that the accuracy is sufficient for the level of importance. A very similar situation occurs for the pre/post-sentence investigation, which results in a positive difference. Additionally, there is a positive difference between importance and accuracy for ARDC recommendations and for headquarters recommendations. Thus, it appears that for pre/post-sentence investigation, recommendations from ARDC and headquarters, and the classification summary, the accuracy of the information is adequate considering the level of importance.

The two large negative difference between importance and accuracy were for inmate capabilities and inmate interviews. Interestingly, this was the same as the findings for initial classification. What appears to be occurring is that

the classification officers believe that it is important to interact with the inmate during classification, but that the accuracy of the information is apt to be faulty whether the interview occurs initially or at reclassification.

D. Diagnostic Classification Summary

The previous section of this report indicated that the classification summary prepared by ARDC was important at initial classification but was not very important in reclassification according to the ratings of classification staff. At initial classification there was some discrepancy between the importance and accuracy of the summary. In fact, the discrepancy between importance and accuracy suggested that the summary is not as accurate as it is important. This was reversed at reclassification--that is, the summary was more accurate than it was important. The evaluation of the accuracy of the summary changed little from initial classification to reclassification; instead, the importance rating of the summary declined.

In order to further understand how staff made use of the classification summary prepared by ARDC, they were asked to indicate whether they used the summary for any of eight purposes. Table 3 shows the percent of people from five different areas of responsibility (excluding ARDC and LCIW) who responded "yes" when they were asked if they employ the classification summary for decision-making in regard to the listed situations. The summary does appear to be used for a variety of purposes. It appears to be particularly important in determining housing and work assignments by the classification staff.

The summary is used very little to determine counseling needs except by staff representing support services. Most likely this is because once psychological problems are indicated, further counseling needs are determined by the clinic staff. However, the classification summary may be sent from ARDC

Table 3

Use of Diagnostic Classification Summary by Personnel
in Five Job Areas at Institutions Other Than Hunt and LCIW

<u>Classification Function</u>	<u>Work Area</u>				
	<u>Adminis- tration</u>	<u>Classifi- cation</u>	<u>Security</u>	<u>Inmate Programs</u>	<u>Support Services</u>
	(17)	(34)	(33)	(14)	(22)
Special management needs	47%	44%	48%	35%	59%
Work assignment	52%	67%	51%	28%	50%
Service needs	52%	44%	45%	42%	68%
Amount/type of supervision	52%	55%	54%	43%	54%
Program needs	70%	58%	66%	28%	73%
Type of housing unit	52%	74%	69%	36%	59%
Counseling needs	-	8%	18%	-	40%
Community placement	47%	26%	39%	43%	54%
Other	-	17%	-	-	13%

to the institutions with the perception that institutions will use it to determine counseling needs. This does not appear to be occurring.

E. Factors Important in Classification Decisions

Shown in Table 4 are the rank order of factors considered important in classification decisions as evaluated by the classification staff. The top 10 out of a total of 35 are listed. History of escape, nature of current offense, and history of violence are ranked as most important at initial classification.

Classification staff were also asked to rate the importance of factors in reclassification. These 22 reclassification factors were very different from those listed for initial classification. The ten factors rated highest are shown in Table 4. One the whole the ratings are much higher than for classification. Almost all of the listed factors are rated high in importance.

Table 4

Ten Factors Classification Staff Consider Most Important in
Determining Initial Classification and Reclassification of Inmates

Factor	Importance ^a (Rank Order)		
	Institutions Other Than LCIW and Hunt	Hunt	LCIW
Initial Classification			
History of escapes/attempted escapes	1.86 (1)	1.90 (4)	1.80 (1)
Nature of current offense	1.93 (2)	1.27 (1)	2.60 (4)
History of violence	2.02 (3)	1.30 (2)	2.40 (3)
Protective custody needs	2.18 (4)	1.54 (3)	2.00 (2)
Detainers	2.48 (5)	2.30 (6)	2.60 (4)
Disciplinary reports	2.65 (6)	2.63 (8)	3.60 (7)
Prior institutional adjustment	2.78 (7)	2.10 (5)	3.20 (5)
Physical stature or handicaps	3.38 (8)	3.60 (9)	3.80 (8)
Psychological test data	3.88 (9)	2.60 (7)	-
Age of inmate	4.16 (10)	3.90 (10)	-
First felony conviction	-	-	3.40 (6)
Notoriety	-	-	3.40 (6)
Reclassification			
Assaults against staff	1.04 (1)	1.09 (1)	1.20 (2)
Escape or attempted escape	1.28 (2)	1.27 (4)	1.00 (1)
Possession of a deadly weapon	1.41 (3)	1.20 (3)	2.20 (7)
Threats against staff	1.43 (4)	1.54 (6)	2.00 (6)
Major disciplinary violations	1.77 (5)	-	2.00 (6)
Possession of contraband	1.83 (6)	2.30 (10)	-
Trafficking of contraband	1.84 (7)	1.60 (7)	1.80 (5)
Assault against inmates	1.86 (8)	-	1.60 (4)
Suicidal tendencies	1.97 (9)	1.40 (5)	1.40 (3)
Protective custody needs	2.15 (10)	1.10 (2)	2.20 (7)
Psychological instability	-	1.70 (8)	-
Successful adjustment while under minimum security	-	2.20 (9)	1.80 (5)
Previous transfer to increased custody	-	-	1.80 (5)

^aImportance was rated on a scale from 1 (most important) to 10 (least important).

F. Escape

All staff were asked to indicate the importance of 11 factors in estimating the seriousness of an escape. There was a consistency in their responses across areas of work responsibility and institutions. The violence

involved, use of weapons, and physical force were the three factors evaluated as most serious. A second group of factors listed as less serious overall than the previous were: other crimes committed while on escape, planned or spontaneous action, group versus individual escape, type of facility, recency, and motivation for the escape. The rank varied somewhat by institution and by work area. The factors ranked lowest in seriousness were inmate's return from escape (voluntary or involuntary) and the time left to serve at the time of escape.

G. Reclassification and Transfers

Classification staff were asked which activities should be performed during reclassification reviews. Almost everyone believed that "service needs should be identified" (91%). The majority of the staff said that progress reviews (70%), interinstitutional transfers (68%), and program changes (68%) should be evaluated. Fewer thought that job assignment changes (32%), custody changes (26%), and housing assignment changes (38%) should be evaluated.

In regard to decisions about transfers, many of the staff wrote responses indicating that they felt the need for more information about an inmate immediately upon arrival in a new institution. However, the type of information described varied greatly from "program recommendations" and "program performance" to "work history" to general information about "the reasons for placement of an inmate in a particular facility."

H. Reliability Analysis

The LDPSC classification staff were given five inmate classification case studies. Each case included a short description of a newly arrived male inmate appropriate for initial classification decisions. They were given another short description of the inmate's adjustment and experiences during his first year of confinement to be used to reclassification. The initial classification

summary included a short narrative description of the inmate and a form summarizing the information. The information in the description included age; offense; sentence length; criminal history; escape history; detainers; prior institutional record; work, educational, and military records; substance abuse history; family stability; and adjustment at the reception center. After reading the first description of the inmate, classification staff were asked to indicate how the inmate should be classified and what factors were important in this decision. The staff were next given information for reclassification of the inmate. They were again asked how they would classify the inmate and which factors were important in these decisions.

Each of the five cases differed but the procedure and classification questions were the same for each case. (The cases are included in the appendix.) For example, one case involved a 21-year-old, single male serving seven years for possession of narcotics. Another involved a 28-year-old male serving a 5-to-9-year sentence for aggravated assault and burglary. Staff were asked to work individually and take as long as they wanted to make decisions. There were three sets of questions to which staff were asked to respond. First, they were asked to decide to which security and custody level the inmate in the case should be assigned. Second, they were asked to identify the factors that were important in their custody and security decisions. Finally, they were asked to indicate which programs they would recommend for the inmate. The staff were asked these questions once after reading the initial classification summary and once after reading the reclassification summary.

The object of the study was to examine the consistency or inconsistency in the classification decisions of the classification staff. Large differences in the classification decisions by staff for the same case would suggest inconsistency in classification decision-making. The cases were selected to be

somewhat difficult and to have numerous factors which needed to be considered in the classification decisions. Of course, there were no correct answers, as the focus was on the consistency of the decisions among the staff for identical cases.

For each case, after receiving the initial classification information, staff were asked "under the present conditions, what security level would you assign this inmate to?" and, following this, they were asked the same question in regard to custody level. These two questions were repeated after the staff received the reclassification information. There were four levels of security and custody: maximum/close; medium; minimum; trusty/community.

Shown in Table 5 are the percent of the classification officers who classified inmates in each case in the four security and custody levels. As can be seen for cases one, two, and four, almost all of the officers classified the inmates in medium security for both custody and security. Additionally, most of the officers classified the inmates at medium security and custody at reclassification. Of these three cases, case one was most consistent. Most of the staff would keep the inmate in a medium security and custody facility, although some would move the inmate into minimum level at reclassification. Cases two and four were less consistently classified into the medium level at reclassification.

Cases three and five were very different from the other cases. Almost half of the staff classified these cases into the maximum/close level and the other half of the staff classified these cases into the medium level. In all cases there was a wide variance in the classification of the offenders by the classification staff.

Table 5

Security and Custody Levels: Case Study Comparisons
(Classification Officers: N = 35)

	<u>Maximum/ Close</u>	<u>Medium</u>	<u>Minimum</u>	<u>Trusty/ Community</u>
<u>Case 1</u>				
Classification:				
Security	5.6%	91.7%	2.8%	0.0%
Custody	2.9%	88.6%	8.6%	0.0%
Reclassification:				
Security	2.9%	82.4%	14.7%	0.0%
Custody	0.0%	81.8%	15.2%	3.0%
<u>Case 2</u>				
Classification:				
Security	22.9%	71.4%	5.7%	0.0%
Custody	16.7%	72.2%	8.3%	2.8%
Reclassification:				
Security	11.7%	79.4%	8.8%	0.0%
Custody	20.0%	68.6%	8.6%	2.9%
<u>Case 3</u>				
Classification:				
Security	40.0%	54.3%	5.7%	0.0%
Custody	41.2%	50.0%	5.9%	2.9%
Reclassification:				
Security	42.4%	48.5%	9.1%	0.0%
Custody	48.4%	36.4%	9.1%	6.0%
<u>Case 4</u>				
Classification:				
Security	14.2%	82.4%	2.9%	0.0%
Custody	20.6%	73.5%	2.9%	2.9%
Reclassification:				
Security	3.0%	69.7%	18.7%	9.1%
Custody	3.1%	62.5%	21.9%	12.5%
<u>Case 5</u>				
Classification:				
Security	45.8%	48.6%	5.7%	0.0%
Custody	40.0%	48.6%	8.6%	2.9%
Reclassification:				
Security	29.4%	61.8%	8.8%	0.0%
Custody	14.7%	67.8%	14.7%	2.9%

In the second set of questions, the staff were asked to indicate how important each of 16 factors was in their security and custody decisions for

the inmate. An examination of the mean scores for each factor suggested that the evaluation of the cases was very similar to the results found when the staff were asked to identify, in general, the factors they believe are important in classification decisions. (See Tables 6a through 6e on the following pages.) That is, for all these cases, the nature of the offense was rated as important in both security and custody decisions, and this was true at both initial classification and reclassification. Length of sentence was also rated high in importance in most of the decisions. The other factors rated high depended upon the case; particularly important were histories of escape or violence, criminal history, mental health status, detainers, and institutional adjustment.

The third set of questions referred to the programs or services that the staff would recommend for the inmate described in the case. Staff were asked to indicate whether they would recommend (definitely yes, yes, maybe, no, or definitely no) each of a list of 14 programs. (See Tables 7a and 7b on the following pages.) The programs or services recommended for the inmate varied greatly depending upon the case evaluated by the staff. If substance abuse was suggested by the summary, then these programs were recommended. Some type of academic, educational, or vocational program was suggested for most of the inmates. Counseling was recommended for most of the inmates. On the average, neither work release, educational release, prerelease, nor furloughs were recommended for these inmates. However, there was a larger variance in the recommendations for these programs.

TABLE 6a. The importance of security and custody factors in classification decisions as rated by LDPSC correctional officers for case 1.

	Classification Mean (STD)	Reclassification Mean (STD)
Nature of Offense:		
security	1.4 (.72)	1.8 (1.00)
custody	1.5 (.90)	1.6 (.90)
History of Escape:		
security	1.8 (.91)	2.2 (.99)
custody	1.9 (.88)	2.0 (.98)
Length of Sentence:		
security	1.5 (.74)	2.1 (.99)
custody	1.9 (.96)	1.9 (1.00)
Medical Status:		
security	2.6 (1.00)	2.6 (.94)
custody	2.5 (.93)	2.6 (.90)
Detainer:		
security	2.2 (1.29)	2.6 (1.14)
custody	2.5 (1.11)	2.6 (1.20)
History of Violence:		
security	1.8 (.87)	2.0 (.83)
custody	1.8 (.73)	2.1 (.90)
Protective Custody Needs:		
security	2.3 (1.06)	2.6 (.97)
custody	2.4 (1.02)	2.4 (1.00)
Substance Abuse:		
security	2.8 (.91)	2.7 (1.07)
custody	2.8 (.85)	2.5 (.91)
Educational Needs:		
security	2.6 (.83)	2.2 (.86)
custody	2.7 (.77)	2.3 (.84)
Age:		
security	2.6 (.94)	2.8 (.97)
custody	2.6 (1.02)	2.6 (.95)
Vocational training needs:		
security	2.7 (.89)	2.4 (.96)
custody	2.6 (.78)	2.4 (.86)
Criminal history:		
security	1.6 (.81)	2.0 (.98)
custody	1.8 (.73)	2.0 (.97)
Family ties:		
security	2.8 (.79)	3.0 (.73)
custody	2.9 (.93)	2.9 (.75)
Prior institutional adjustment:		
security	2.1 (.80)	1.9 (.79)
custody	2.0 (.78)	1.8 (.84)
Work skills:		
security	2.5 (.92)	2.3 (.77)
custody	2.6 (.86)	2.3 (.83)
Mental Health status:		
security	1.9 (.91)	2.3 (.94)
custody	2.3 (.94)	2.3 (1.08)

Note: very important (1) to not important (2)

TABLE 6b The importance of security and custody factors in classification decisions as rated by LDPSC correctional officers for case 2.

	Classification Mean (STD)	Reclassification Mean (STD)
Nature of Offense:		
security	1.4 (.60)	1.6 (.92)
custody	1.5 (.81)	1.5 (.82)
History of Escape:		
security	1.5 (.70)	1.8 (.87)
custody	1.6 (.76)	1.7 (.96)
Length of Sentence:		
security	1.7 (.86)	1.8 (.92)
custody	1.8 (.92)	1.9 (.94)
Medical Status:		
security	2.6 (1.14)	2.7 (.98)
custody	2.5 (1.01)	2.5 (.96)
Detainer:		
security	2.3 (1.20)	2.6 (1.12)
custody	2.5 (1.13)	2.4 (1.20)
History of Violence:		
security	2.1 (.98)	2.0 (.98)
custody	1.9 (.91)	2.0 (1.05)
Protective Custody Needs:		
security	2.4 (1.17)	2.5 (1.05)
custody	2.4 (1.12)	2.6 (1.10)
Substance Abuse:		
security	2.2 (1.22)	2.0 (1.05)
custody	2.3 (1.18)	2.0 (1.11)
Educational Needs:		
security	2.6 (1.09)	2.3 (1.04)
custody	2.5 (1.10)	2.3 (1.00)
Age:		
security	2.4 (1.19)	2.5 (1.09)
custody	2.4 (1.13)	2.4 (1.04)
Vocational tranining needs:		
security	2.7 (1.00)	2.4 (.97)
custody	2.8 (1.01)	2.4 (1.01)
Criminal history:		
security	1.7 (.76)	2.0 (.95)
custody	1.8 (.87)	1.9 (1.08)
Family ties:		
security	2.9 (.90)	3.0 (.80)
custody	3.0 (.87)	2.9 (.83)
Prior institutional adjustment:		
security	1.8 (.82)	1.5 (.78)
custody	1.8 (.69)	1.6 (.65)
Work skills:		
security	2.9 (.81)	2.7 (.85)
custody	2.8 (.91)	2.5 (.90)
Mental Health status:		
security	2.3 (1.00)	2.4 (.93)
custody	2.4 (1.03)	2.2 (1.00)

Note: very important (1) to not important (2)

TABLE 6c. The importance of security and custody factors in classification decisions as rated by LDPSC correctional officers for case 3.

	Classification Mean (STD)	Reclassification Mean (STD)
Nature of Offense:		
security	1.4 (.73)	1.7 (.99)
custody	1.7 (.81)	1.7 (.92)
History of Escape:		
security	2.0 (1.21)	2.2 (1.20)
custody	2.1 (1.17)	2.2 (1.23)
Length of Sentence:		
security	1.9 (.98)	2.0 (1.11)
custody	2.1 (1.05)	2.1 (1.08)
Medical Status:		
security	2.3 (1.08)	2.0 (.96)
custody	2.3 (1.04)	2.1 (1.01)
Detainer:		
security	1.6 (.92)	2.5 (1.26)
custody	1.8 (1.05)	2.5 (1.27)
History of Violence:		
security	2.2 (1.15)	2.1 (1.04)
custody	2.2 (.93)	2.2 (1.05)
Protective Custody Needs:		
security	1.9 (.97)	2.2 (1.17)
custody	2.0 (.91)	1.9 (.89)
Substance Abuse:		
security	2.6 (1.07)	2.5 (1.03)
custody	2.6 (.96)	2.5 (1.09)
Educational Needs:		
security	2.6 (1.04)	2.6 (1.00)
custody	2.7 (.98)	2.6 (1.00)
Age:		
security	2.6 (.94)	2.7 (1.00)
custody	2.5 (.93)	2.6 (.96)
Vocational training needs:		
security	2.9 (.99)	2.7 (1.03)
custody	2.8 (.96)	2.8 (1.06)
Criminal history:		
security	2.1 (1.02)	2.4 (1.12)
custody	2.1 (1.00)	2.3 (1.08)
Family ties:		
security	2.5 (1.09)	2.5 (1.07)
custody	2.4 (1.07)	2.3 (1.01)
Prior institutional adjustment:		
security	2.4 (1.07)	1.8 (.92)
custody	2.5 (.97)	1.8 (.91)
Work skills:		
security	2.7 (.89)	2.7 (.93)
custody	2.8 (.88)	2.8 (.91)
Mental Health status:		
security	1.3 (.58)	1.3 (.62)
custody	1.5 (.80)	1.3 (.65)

Note: very important (1) to not important (2)

TABLE 6d. The importance of security and custody factors in classification decisions as rated by LDPSC correctional officers for case 4.

	Classification Mean (STD)	Reclassification Mean (STD)
Nature of Offense:		
security	1.7 (.86)	1.8 (.98)
custody	1.9 (.96)	2.0 (.93)
History of Escape:		
security	1.4 (.74)	1.6 (.61)
custody	1.5 (.71)	1.7 (.82)
Length of Sentence:		
security	1.7 (.87)	1.8 (.79)
custody	2.0 (.86)	2.0 (.86)
Medical Status:		
security	2.6 (1.01)	2.6 (1.01)
custody	2.8 (1.06)	2.5 (1.01)
Detainer:		
security	2.4 (1.18)	2.4 (1.18)
custody	2.6 (1.14)	2.4 (1.18)
History of Violence:		
security	2.0 (1.02)	2.3 (.97)
custody	2.1 (.91)	2.3 (1.04)
Protective Custody Needs:		
security	2.2 (1.07)	2.4 (1.10)
custody	2.2 (1.06)	2.3 (.93)
Substance Abuse:		
security	3.0 (.93)	3.0 (.99)
custody	3.0 (1.01)	3.0 (1.07)
Educational Needs:		
security	3.0 (.91)	3.0 (.86)
custody	2.9 (.89)	3.0 (.77)
Age:		
security	2.7 (1.03)	2.8 (.96)
custody	2.8 (1.00)	2.9 (1.01)
Vocational training needs:		
security	2.6 (1.13)	2.4 (1.07)
custody	2.7 (1.01)	2.6 (1.00)
Criminal history:		
security	1.7 (.72)	2.0 (.94)
custody	1.9 (.93)	2.0 (.84)
Family ties:		
security	2.8 (.84)	3.0 (.87)
custody	2.9 (.92)	2.8 (.94)
Prior institutional adjustment:		
security	1.9 (.96)	1.9 (1.01)
custody	2.0 (1.00)	2.0 (1.04)
Work skills:		
security	2.9 (.92)	2.3 (.88)
custody	2.9 (.78)	2.4 (.81)
Mental Health status:		
security	1.7 (.79)	1.7 (.84)
custody	1.6 (.79)	1.9 (.94)

Note: very important (1) to not important (2)

TABLE 6e. The importance of security and custody factors in classification decisions as rated by LDPSC correctional officers for case 5.

	Classification Mean (STD)	Reclassification Mean (STD)
Nature of Offense:		
security	1.2 (.64)	1.4 (.81)
custody	1.4 (.65)	1.5 (.83)
History of Escape:		
security	2.6 (1.18)	2.4 (1.17)
custody	2.4 (1.14)	2.4 (1.20)
Length of Sentence:		
security	1.1 (.42)	1.4 (.73)
custody	1.3 (.53)	1.4 (.78)
Medical Status:		
security	2.6 (.92)	2.7 (.99)
custody	2.7 (.87)	2.6 (.95)
Detainer:		
security	2.7 (1.24)	2.9 (1.26)
custody	2.8 (1.19)	2.7 (1.29)
History of Violence:		
security	2.0 (1.14)	2.3 (1.22)
custody	2.2 (1.11)	2.2 (1.16)
Protective Custody Needs:		
security	2.6 (1.14)	2.3 (1.06)
custody	2.5 (1.07)	2.4 (1.05)
Substance Abuse:		
security	3.4 (.82)	3.4 (.87)
custody	3.4 (.81)	3.3 (.79)
Educational Needs:		
security	3.3 (.96)	3.0 (.98)
custody	3.3 (.83)	3.0 (1.01)
Age:		
security	2.5 (1.13)	2.6 (1.13)
custody	2.5 (1.10)	2.6 (1.02)
Vocational training needs:		
security	3.3 (.84)	3.0 (.96)
custody	3.2 (.80)	3.1 (.90)
Criminal history:		
security	2.0 (1.24)	2.4 (1.27)
custody	2.1 (1.16)	2.3 (1.24)
Family ties:		
security	2.7 (1.08)	2.8 (1.07)
custody	2.7 (1.05)	2.6 (1.05)
Prior institutional adjustment:		
security	2.8 (1.21)	2.2 (1.21)
custody	2.9 (1.19)	1.9 (1.05)
Work skills:		
security	2.6 (1.12)	2.3 (1.08)
custody	2.5 (1.10)	2.4 (.98)
Mental Health status:		
security	1.9 (.94)	2.2 (1.03)
custody	2.2 (1.09)	2.0 (.87)

Note: very important (1) to not important (2)

TABLE 7a. The Programs or Services Recommended by LDPSC Classification Officers for Inmates in Five Cases Studies at Initial Classification.

	Cases				
	Mean (STD)				
	1	2	3	4	5
Academic/Education	1.55(.82)	1.52(.87)	1.68(1.15)	3.12(1.20)	3.57(1.21)
Vocational Training	1.65(.76)	1.75(.90)	1.88(1.05)	1.88(.75)	3.14(1.23)
Correctional Industries	2.48(.89)	2.72(1.13)	2.48(.97)	2.50(1.02)	2.23(1.10)
Counseling (general)	2.00(.85)	1.52(.65)	1.31(.63)	1.48(.70)	2.00(1.16)
Psychiatric Services	2.81(1.24)	2.25(1.14)	1.38(.76)	1.91(1.05)	2.91(1.23)
Psychological Services	2.68(1.21)	1.97(1.02)	1.33(.67)	1.82(1.05)	2.60(1.24)
Work Release	3.74(1.29)	3.97(1.15)	3.86(1.24)	3.97(1.15)	4.17(1.20)
Educational Release	3.68(1.45)	4.22(1.17)	3.94(1.16)	4.11(1.13)	4.37(1.05)
Medical and Health Care	2.77(1.17)	2.44(1.13)	2.00(.92)	2.31(1.13)	2.52(1.21)
Religious Programs	2.20(.88)	2.25(1.02)	2.00(.92)	2.08(.91)	1.91(.81)
Alcohol Treatment	1.80(.87)	2.11(1.21)	2.19(1.11)	3.22(1.37)	3.68(1.07)
Drug Treatment	2.60(1.12)	1.33(.75)	2.75(1.22)	3.31(1.30)	3.65(.99)
Pre-release Preparation	2.22(1.21)	2.47(1.48)	2.68(1.34)	2.65(1.43)	3.88(1.38)
Furloughs	3.64(1.28)	4.22(.98)	3.88(1.44)	3.82(1.15)	4.28(1.12)

TABLE 7b. The Programs or Services Recommended by LDPSC Classification Officers for Inmates in Five Cases Studies in Reclassification.

	Cases				
	Mean (STD)				
	1	2	3	4	5
Academic/Education	1.48(.71)	1.71(1.01)	2.29(1.38)	3.11(1.42)	2.96(1.40)
Vocational Training	1.82(1.11)	1.88(.99)	2.41(1.40)	1.65(.74)	3.06(1.26)
Correctional Industries	2.61(.98)	2.85(1.14)	2.71(1.28)	2.23(.81)	2.24(1.09)
Counseling (general)	1.78(.79)	1.57(.73)	1.20(.47)	1.69(.83)	1.88(.84)
Psychiatric Services	2.80(1.14)	2.31(1.09)	1.20(.53)	2.68(1.10)	2.44(1.02)
Psychological Services	2.45(.90)	1.86(.83)	1.17(.57)	2.30(.97)	2.20(.88)
Work Release	3.82(1.21)	4.31(1.07)	4.17(1.22)	3.11(1.42)	4.38(1.10)
Educational Release	3.94(1.15)	4.30(1.14)	4.25(1.06)	3.69(1.34)	4.41(1.04)
Medical and Health Care	3.00(1.30)	2.67(1.33)	1.94(1.05)	2.54(1.10)	2.64(1.20)
Religious Programs	2.34(1.02)	2.19(.98)	2.11(1.02)	1.79(.72)	2.11(.80)
Alcohol Treatment	1.88(1.09)	1.92(1.22)	2.54(1.31)	3.36(1.27)	3.73(1.08)
Drug Treatment	2.53(1.33)	1.28(.70)	2.82(1.31)	3.36(1.31)	3.73(1.05)
Pre-release Preparation	2.60(1.39)	2.69(1.52)	2.85(1.55)	2.47(1.44)	4.11(1.27)
Furloughs	4.05(1.21)	4.19(1.14)	4.00(1.23)	3.47(1.44)	4.39(1.05)

What was of interest in these classification decisions in regard to security, custody, and programs was the consistency of the decisions by the classification officers. If all classification staff make similar decisions about the classification of a particular inmate, then it could be assumed that the decision-making process was reliable. That is, inmates would be consistently classified, even if different officers were doing the classification. One way to look at this is to use an intraclass correlation. This is a summary number showing the degree of correlation among subjects across the different items.² Shown in Table 8 are the correlations for the ratings of the importance of the factors at classification and reclassification for security and custody decisions. In addition, the correlations for the recommended programs at classification and reclassification are shown.

Table 8

Intraclass Correlations of Classification Staff's Decisions in
5 Case Studies for 16 Different Security and Custody Factors
and 14 Different Programs

	-----Case-----				
	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>Classification</u>					
Security	0.25	0.22	0.20	0.28	0.35
Custody	0.21	0.21	0.16	0.25	0.32
Programs	0.32	0.51	0.49	0.41	0.39
<u>Reclassification</u>					
Security	0.14	0.16	0.14	0.22	0.24
Custody	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.16	0.24
Programs	0.38	0.51	0.52	0.24	0.47

² For a complete description of intraclass correlation, see B.J. Winer's Statistical Principles in Experimental Design, New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1971.

A high intraclass correlation (near 1.0) would suggest that the classification officers were consistent in the direction of their recommendations from factor to factor for a particular case. As can be seen overall, the correlations for security and custody decisions ranged from a low of .16 to a high of .35 at classification. Most correlations were .20 to .28, or moderately low. Even lower were the correlations for security and custody decisions at reclassification, where they ranged from .14 to .24, with most correlations around .14.

The results for the programs at classification and reclassification were much higher. The correlations ranged from .24 to .52, most of the correlations being moderately high (.40 to .50).

The five case examples were designed to present fairly common problems that arise in classification decision-making. The examples have been used to examine classification decisions in classification workshops held by the American Correctional Association. There are no norms available to tell how consistent different correctional systems would be in their classification of these cases. However, the low intraclass correlations suggest that LDPSC staff may emphasize different factors in their classification decisions. This appears to be less true for programming or service decisions.

I. Protective Custody

A survey questionnaire on protective custody problems and issues was given to classification officers in the eight male state prisons. Interviews were also held with a selective group of protective custody inmates. A distinction was made between offenders needing protection for external reasons (problems incurred before entering prison) and those needing protection for internal reasons (problems incurred once inside the prison). Prisoners with external problems are sent directly to the Wade Correctional Center. Wade's protective

custody system is, in most cases, for offenders who have given testimony against other offenders or who have turned state's evidence.

Protective custody for internal reasons is different from protective custody for external reasons. Each prison has individual policies for prisoners who experience problems once within the prison. How inmates enter protective custody, how they move through the protective custody system, and how and if they return to general population also appear to differ in Louisiana's different state prisons.

Table 9 shows that there are large differences in the sizes of the population and the percent of protective custody inmates in the prisons. Angola was very different from the other prisons. The protective custody population at Angola equaled 10 percent of the total population, while all other prisons have less than one percent of their population in protective custody.

There were few differences in rating the importance of criteria in making protective custody classification decisions for classification officers in the different prisons. As shown in Table 10, on a scale from 1 to 4, none of the listed criteria was considered unimportant.

When asked about inmates' movement through the protective custody system, 97 percent of all classification officers said that inmates may be placed in protective custody at their own request, while 15 percent of the staff members said that inmates cannot request protection.

When asked how inmates get placed in protective custody, 58 percent of the classification officers said that some are placed through ARDC, 21 percent said that none are placed through ARDC, and 3 percent said all are placed through ARDC (Table 11). Respondents stated 52 percent of the time that some inmates

TABLE 9
PRISON STATISTICS FOR PROTECTIVE STAFF SURVEY

	<u>Inmate Population</u>	<u>Court Ordered Maximum</u>	<u>Security Level</u>	<u>Classification Officers</u>	<u>PC Inmates</u>	<u>% of inmates in pc population</u>
Angola	4664	4747	maximum	18	498	10
Hunt	1146	1159	max, close med, min	11	5	.4
LCIS	927	928	medium	2	4	.4
WTF/N	450	450	minimum	2	0	0
WTF/S	290	330	minimum	2	0	0
Dixon	873	974	medium	3	5	.5
Wade	593	626	medium	4	22	4
Washington	1120	1120	medium	4	3	.2

TABLE 10
Importance of Criteria in Making
Protective Custody Classification Decisions

	<u>Mean Importance</u>					
	<u>Hunt</u>	<u>Angola</u>	<u>LCIS</u>	<u>Dixon</u>	<u>Wade</u>	<u>Washington</u>
Informant	2.0	1.8	1.0	1.3	0	2.5
Identified Enemies	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.3	1.0	1.0
Inmate Request Due to Fear of Other Inmates	2.0	1.7	1.0	1.3	0	1.2
Physically Weak and Small	2.0	1.2	1.0	1.6	1.0	2.5
Mentally Retarded	2.0	1.1	1.6	1.0	2.0	2.5
Homosexual	2.0	1.3	2.3	1.6	3.0	2.7
Victim of Sexual Harassment	3.0	1.5	1.0	1.6	1.0	1.5
Debts to Other Inmates	2.0	1.4	1.6	1.6	1.0	1.2
Former Law Enforcement or Correctional Officer	1.0	1.0	3.0	1.3	1.0	1.5
Suicidal	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Nature of Crime	3.0	1.6	3.3	1.6	2.0	2.5
Psychiatric Concerns	2.8	1.5	2.3	1.3	1.0	1.5
Assault	2.0	1.6	2.3	1.5	2.0	1.7
Rape Victim	2.0	1.6	2.3	1.5	2.0	1.0

Note: 1 being very important, 4 being not important at all

TABLE 11

Staffs' Perceptions of How Inmates Get Placed in Protective Custody

	Institutions					
	<u>Hunt</u>	<u>Angola</u>	<u>LCIS</u>	<u>Dixon</u>	<u>Wade</u>	<u>Washington</u>
Through ARDC	2.0	2.0	1.3	1.0	2.5	1.0
By Staff Assignment	2.1	3.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
At Their Own Request	2.5	2.5	2.0	3.0	2.0	3.0

**Note: 1=none, 2=some, 3=most, 4=all

are placed in protective custody by staff assignment, 36 percent said that most were placed that way, and 3 percent said all were placed that way. Finally, 36 percent of the surveyed classification officers said that some inmates are placed in protective custody at their own request, while 61 percent said that most are placed that way.

In an overall look at protective custody, respondents were asked if there was a certain type of inmate that ends up in protective custody. Classification officers gave a positive answer 70 percent of the time. There was agreement among all those answering the survey that protective custody inmates compared to inmates in general population were apt to be younger, weaker, immature, and with no previous jail experience.

Classification officers were then asked to identify how prevalent certain problems were in protective custody compared to general population. Overall, staff in the majority of institutions said that protective custody inmates have fewer programs, fewer work opportunities, are permitted less movement and have fewer outside activities. Table 12 shows that there is a difference between Angola and the other institutions. Angola houses most protective custody inmates in separate buildings away from general population. Angola can do this because of its size and therefore may allow its protective custody inmates more freedom of movement, more outdoor recreation, more programs, and more work opportunities.

With the exception of the staff in Washington and Wade, classification officers believe that a fairly large percentage of inmates who are transferred from protective custody in one prison go into protective custody at the new prison. Also, they are thought to move into an institution with a higher security level (Table 13).

TABLE 12

PREVELENCE OF PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH PROTECTIVE CUSTODY
IN PERCENT

Do Inmates Have Fewer (less).....?

	<u>Hunt</u>	<u>Angola</u>	<u>LCIS</u>	<u>Dixon</u>	<u>Wade</u>	<u>Washington</u>
<u>PROGRAMS</u>						
Yes	100	78	100	100	100	50
Undecided	0	7	0	0	0	25
No	0	14	0	0	0	25
<u>WORK OPPORTINUNITIES</u>						
Yes	80	78	100	100	100	100
Undecided	20	7	0	0	0	0
No	0	14	0	0	0	0
<u>MOVEMENT</u>						
Yes	68	12	100	100	100	100
Undecided	16	0	0	0	0	0
No	16	14	0	0	0	0
<u>OUTSIDE ACTIVITIES</u>						
Yes	83	78	100	100	100	100
Undecided	17	21	0	0	0	0
No	0	0	0	0	0	0
<u>PERSONAL PROPERTY</u>						
Yes	67	42	35	100	50	75
Undecided	16	7	0	0	0	0
No	16	50	67	0	50	0
<u>VISITING PRIVILEGES</u>						
Yes	33	7	0	50	50	25
Undecided	33	0	0	0	0	0
No	33	93	100	50	50	75
<u>STATUS</u>						
Yes	50	57	67	50	100	75
Undecided	17	14	33	50	0	25
No	33	29	0	0	0	0

TABLE 13

Staffs' Perception of Where Inmates Are Transferred To

<u>SECURITY LEVEL:</u>	<u>Hunt</u>	<u>Angola</u>	<u>LCIS</u>	<u>Dixon</u>	<u>Wade</u>	<u>Washington</u>
Equal Security Level	28.6%	57.1%	33.3%	33.3%	100%	100%
Higher Security Level	28.6%	35.7%	33.3%	66.7%	0	0
Lower Security Level	0	7.1%	0	0	0	0
I Don't Know Where They Go	42.9%		33.3%	0	0	0
 <u>POPULATION TYPE:</u>						
Go to General Population At New Prison	16.7%	21.4%	0	33.3%	100%	75%
Go Into Protective Custody At New Prison	50%	35.7%	100%	33.3%	0	0
Go To Protective Custody And Then Return To General Population	16.7%	14.3%	0	0	0	0
I Don't Know What Happens To Them	16.7%	28.6%	0	33.3%	0	0

When asked what improvements could be made concerning protective custody, 43 percent said that protective custody could be improved by developing a system that would avoid abuse by inmates who truly did not need protection. Better screening, more bed space, additional staff, a separate protective custody board, and making protective custody inmates work were additional comments.

The results of this study show that there are great discrepancies among classification processes concerning protective custody. These problems could be alleviated by a two-phase protective custody classification process which differentiates between those inmates who legitimately require protective custody and those for whom a documented need for such assignment has not been substantiated. Angola, because of its size and its placement of inmates with protection needs into separate housing, not mixed with administrative segregation or disciplinary segregation, has demonstrated the ability to provide protective custody inmates with more programs and privileges such as those provided to general population.

The results suggest that inmates are, in a way, punished for having protection needs, such as through loss of programs and privileges in comparison to the general population. A centralized multi-purpose unit would alleviate these problems associated with protective custody. By housing all protection cases together, in one specialized unit, it would be possible to offer these inmates more freedom of movement, more work opportunities, greater outdoor recreation, and more programs, thereby equalizing the treatment afforded to general population and protective custody.

CHAPTER FOUR: CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM OBJECTIVES

It is important in an assessment of an existing classification system to determine what objectives an agency has for the system and what impediments exist that stand in the way of fully achieving those objectives. As the Louisiana correctional system has yet not formulated specific objectives for its classification approach, it was considered necessary to identify a preliminary set of priority objectives as provided by agency institutional classification staff. To obtain this information, two workshops were conducted, the first at the Louisiana State Penitentiary at Angola on October 1, 1986, and the second at the Dixon Correctional Institute on October 27, 1986. The results of the two meetings were combined and are presented here for review.

A. Classification Objectives

The following were identified by staff from Angola and Dixon as being important objectives of the Louisiana classification system:

1. To make correct security decisions regarding the institutional environment an inmate should be assigned to in order to prevent escape;
2. To make correct custody decisions regarding the institutional environment so as to be able to effectively control and manage inmate institutional behavior;
3. To identify and match inmate skills with institutional jobs;
4. To serve as the mechanism that protects the general public, the inmate, other inmates, and staff;
5. To assess and prioritize problem areas for each inmate that require programmatic response;
6. To minimize inmate litigation and outside court interference in the operation of the correctional system;
7. To identify required counseling services and level of treatment intervention;

8. To serve as the mechanism which represents the inmates relative to their dealing with other departments;
9. To provide for the gradual reduction of an inmate's security and custody status prior to release;
10. To determine internal assignment within the institution;
11. To minimize staff and inmate friction;
12. To serve as an information source for institution and central office staff;
13. To act as a buffer between security personnel and the inmate population;
14. To provide information regarding lateral transfers;
15. To provide information to the Parole and Pardon Board relative to release decision-making;
16. To provide information regarding inmates who are qualified for special crews;
17. To provide information regarding inmates who are qualified for trusty custody;
18. To provide information for particular inmates during times of crisis;
19. To provide information that provides the basis for development and coordination of inmate programs;
20. To provide information for matching inmates with the limited facility, programmatic, support services, and staff resources of the agency.

While these objectives are not representative of all the objectives that the Louisiana Department of Corrections may have pertaining to its classification system, they are those objectives that institutional classification personnel believe to be important. With additional time and thought, additional objectives may have surfaced. However, the intent of the exercise at both Angola and Dixon was to develop a preliminary listing of objectives while at the same time affording classification staff the opportunity to independently and objectively consider the classification objectives that are important to them.

The above objectives are consistent with objectives identified by other state correctional system classification personnel worked with previously by the evaluation team. However, while the objectives remain the same, the emphasis appears to be somewhat different. Unlike the other state systems, there is a greater emphasis placed upon the relationship of classification decision-making and job assignment. In many respects, the job assignment of an inmate and, more importantly, vocational skills possessed by the inmate drive the classification system. Classification staff both during the workshop and during informal interviews indicated that inmates with work skills that are needed by either the agency or a related criminal justice system agency would often have their current custody status modified so as to enable them to engage in a designated work activity.

B. Problems in Meeting Classification Objectives

As stated earlier, the intent of the two workshops at Angola and Dixon was not only to develop a preliminary set of objectives but also to identify problems that institutional classification staff have in attaining these objectives. The following is a listing of problem areas provided the evaluation team during the two workshops:

1. Misunderstanding by security staff of the classification process;
2. Insufficient classification personnel to carry out the numerous and varied classification activities;
3. Inconsistent application of classification criteria for transfer and internal and external classification decision-making;
4. Poor inmate morale;
5. Influence of outside forces, e.g., political influence by state government officials;
6. Insufficient inmate jobs for inmate assignments;
7. Insufficient maximum security bed space, which precludes the placement of some high security inmates in appropriate maximum security housing;

8. Numerous and varied non-classification functions that must be conducted and carried out by classification personnel;
9. No written criteria for internal assignment of inmates;
10. Inconsistency in the review of inmate records for classification decision-making, e.g., staff select certain elements of inmate records based upon their respective discipline;
11. Ineffective disciplinary system to support classification system;
12. An extensive number of inmates with long sentences, minimizing effect of discipline;
13. Lack of automated information for classification decision-making;
14. Inadequate training at both the pre-service and in-service levels for classification and non-classification personnel;
15. No orientation program for inmate pre-release programming;
16. Inability to match custody capabilities of institutions with inmate security and custody needs;
17. Too much emphasis placed on the consent of inmates for lateral transfers;
18. Limitations of bed space availability relative to inmate preferences for lateral transfers;
19. Insufficient and inaccurate data pertaining to inmate recidivism, precluding an understanding of the impact of classification on inmate post-release adjustment;
20. Insufficient clerical personnel and word processing equipment.

Classification staff, by and large, indicated that the nature of the inmate population in Louisiana was having an adverse impact on the operation of the Department's classification system. Specifically, they indicated that the inmate population was becoming more dangerous and escape-prone as the result of longer sentences meted out by Louisiana's judiciary. In terms of the impact on classification, classification staff find themselves in a position where the only available beds are at the lower security and custody levels, while at the same time the majority of inmates require higher security in terms of institutional assignment and staff supervision. This situation has caused both

the Department and institutional classification personnel to modify the criteria for inmate custody and institutional assignment decision-making to the point where agency staff believe that now some inappropriate inmates are being placed in lower security environments. The solution to this problem, as voiced by many personnel, is either to construct additional high security beds, which is somewhat precluded by Louisiana's current financial shortfall, or develop objective criteria that are not as dependent on an inmate's length of sentence to be used in determining eligible and suitable inmates for minimum/trusty assignment and community release programming.

C. Proposed Classification System Objectives

Correctional Services Group recommends, given the lack of stated classification system objectives by the agency, that the Louisiana Department of Corrections develop a core group of classification system objectives that address:

1. The attainment of all-inclusive, high-quality, standardized data;
2. The use of valid, reliable, and objective measurement and testing instruments in the classification decision-making process;
3. Structuring and checking the discretionary decision-making powers of classification staff;
4. Screening and further evaluation of inmates for management problems and/or who have special needs;
5. Matching inmates with programs consistent with their security, custody, and programmatic needs;
6. Classification of each inmate at the least restrictive custody level;
7. Continuous evaluation and improvement of the classification process; and
8. Development of classification procedures at the initial, institutional, and community release levels that are consistent with the above objectives.

CHAPTER FIVE:

CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. General Classification Recommendations

1. Classification Decision-making

The Department should reduce the subjectivity of the present classification system, concentrating on a consistent and reliable application of the existing criteria employed by the Department for both initial classification and reclassification decision-making.

Specifically, it is recommended that the Department consider incorporating the concepts of public and institutional risk into its current classification format. "Public risk" is a classification factor, used for both initial classification and reclassification, that indicates the likelihood an inmate will attempt escape and the level of risk that inmate would pose to the public, should the escape be successful. "Institutional risk" is a classification factor, used for both initial classification and reclassification, that indicates the likelihood an inmate will be disruptive to the safe, secure, and orderly operation of an institution.

Criteria that may be used to assess an inmate's public risk include:

- Severity of offense
- Extent of violence in current offense
- Use of weapon in current offense
- History of escape
- History of violence
- History of confinement
- Length of confinement (estimated)
- Status of detainer(s)

In the staff survey, public risk factors were considered high in importance at initial classification. In particular, escapes, nature of offense, history of violence, and detainers were listed as very important to consider.

Criteria that may be used to assess an inmate's institutional risk include:

- Prior institutional adjustment
- Community stability
- Inmate adjustment during initial classification
- Probation/parole adjustment
- Mental health
- Age
- Gang affiliation
- Substance abuse history

Without adopting a purely objective system of classification, the Louisiana Department of Corrections could develop a format for consistently and reliably applying existing criteria in classification decision-making. One option is to develop a checklist of all classification criteria. If this option is chosen it would be important to review all criteria to ensure they are all adequately defined. Another option would be to develop a format similar to that used by the Correctional Classification Profile (CCP) developed by Correctional Services Group. A description of the CCP and its advantages is included in the appendix to this report. This format lists each classification factor separately and the criteria that must be considered for each factor. As outlined above, under the factor of Institutional Risk, roughly equivalent to the Department's custody designation, are the eight criteria that are assessed.

The Department should develop consistent policy and procedure to guide classification staff in evaluating the role of detainers, criminal history, and escape history in determining the security needs of inmates.

At the present time, the Department has a Pattern of Violence assessment form that addresses criminal history (see page 68). The ARDC is the only facility using this form and employs it only to determine qualified inmates for community placement and status reduction. It is recommended that all facilities consider the use of this form after the cut-off points have been clarified and finalized. In developing additional policies to evaluate

detainers and escape history, the Department may want to consider the following:

Detainers

Highest concern

Is the detainer for a capital offense?

Is the detainer for a felony offense, or parole violation?

Is the detainer for a misdemeanor, fine, traffic offense, municipal, ordinance violation, etc?

No detainer

Lowest concern

Escape risk

Highest concern

Was there an escape or attempted escape from a secure perimeter facility less than three years ago or multiple such escapes/escape attempts in past 10 years?

Was there an escape or attempt from a secure perimeter facility over three years ago but less than 10 years ago or multiple such escapes or attempts over 10 years ago?

Was there an escape or attempted from non-secure facility less than three years ago or multiple such escapes over three years ago or escape or attempted escape from secure perimeter facility over 10 years ago?

Was there an escape or attempted escape from non-secure perimeter facility over three years ago, or default, bail absconsion, unauthorized absence from the military, or escape during arrest process less than three years ago?

No escape history.

Lowest Concern

The staff also responded that the risk of escape is important to consider in determining the initial classification of an inmate. In evaluating the factors that are important in estimating the seriousness of an escape, staff ranked (1) the violence involved, (2) use of a weapon, and (3) use of physical

Pattern of Violence Scale:
Criteria for Pattern of Violence

Listed below are a series of violent crimes and associated point values. (These points are the average values--arithmetic means--of the ratings suggested by all concerned EHCC and OAS personnel.) To determine an inmate's "violence rating," add up the points listed for each crime for which he has been convicted. For arrests with no disposition, add one-half the indicated point value. Then refer to the cut-off values below for each class of institution. If the inmate's total point value exceeds the cut-off score for the facility for which he is being screened, he is ineligible because of a pattern of violence.

<u>Points</u>	<u>Offense</u>
11	Murder, first or second degree; aggravated rape; aggravated kidnapping
9	Armed robbery, forcible rape
7	Manslaughter, aggravated crime against nature, aggravated escape, inciting riot
6	First degree robbery, simple rape, aggravated arson, aggravated sexual battery, false imprisonment with a deadly weapon
5	Aggravated burglary, sexual battery, cruelty to juveniles
4	Aggravated battery, simple kidnapping, mingling harmful substances
3	Extortion, simple robbery, negligent homicide, aggravated assault, intimidating witness/injuring officer, battery of a police officer, vehicular homicide
2	Purse snatching, possession firearm by ex-felon, resisting an officer, simple assault
1	Simple battery, illegally carrying weapons

Cut-Off Value

Maintenance--WTF SPB	8
LCIS	12
Medium	18

force as indicative of a serious escape attempt. The Department may want to consider these factors in combination with the following escape risk scale.

The Department should consider formally employing the concepts of eligibility, suitability, and acceptability when identifying inmates for assignment to minimum security and community placement status.

As used in classification, eligibility is defined as the utilization of objective, measurable criteria which are employed to determine whether the inmate has met minimum standards to be considered for a particular classification action, e.g., transfer, custody reduction, etc. An inmate must meet the eligibility criteria prior to assessment of suitability. Examples of eligibility criteria for community placement status at reclassification might include: no violence in current offense; no weapon used in current offense; no escape history; no history of violence in previous convictions; no major disciplinary convictions within past two years; estimated length of confinement less than 12 months; and no detainer for felony offense.

Suitability is defined as the utilization of objective measurable variables to screen eligible inmates to identify the best candidates for particular classification actions. Suitability criteria are generally subject to change. An inmate must pass the screening for suitability prior to assessment of acceptability. Examples of suitability criteria for community placement status might include: inmate's work performance; present age and maturity level; and the number of disciplinary reports.

Acceptability is defined as the utilization of subjective, nonmeasurable variables to determine which of the suitable candidates will be reduced in security. Many inmates who have been adjudged to be both eligible and suitable for a certain program would not be approved if not found to be also acceptable. The determination of acceptability is much more subjective than eligibility and suitability and is generally based on sensitive/nonsensitive considerations.

For example, an inmate convicted for a sexual offense is determined to be both eligible and suitable for reduction to community placement status but the only open bed is in an area where the local citizenry are actively opposed to the presence of individuals who have a history of sexual offenses. In this case, the inmate would not be an acceptable candidate for community placement status until a bed opened up in a nonsensitive location.

Monitoring of decisions separated by eligibility, suitability, and acceptability would permit the Department to identify the specific limitations or difficulties in moving inmates to lower status placement. Problems with and solutions to empty beds in minimum security could be more successfully addressed if the specific decision-making was identified. That is, eligibility problems would have to be solved in a different manner than acceptability problems.

In determining an inmate's overall security and custody level and institutional assignment, the emphasis the Department places on length of sentence should be reduced.

Many correctional agencies have reduced the importance they place on length of sentence as a classification criterion. These agencies have instead chosen to concentrate on other criteria that better describe an inmate's potential risk for escape and likelihood of creating management problems. As a primary classification criteria, length of sentence can dictate what may be inappropriate facility assignments. If length of sentence is used it should be balanced by other criteria such as history of violence, nature of present offense, and history of escape, consistent with the results of the survey completed by agency staff. Oftentimes criteria other than length of sentence are better indicators of what behavior may be expected from inmates.

Departmental staff should examine the Department's policies on length of sentence and project the impacts of reducing the emphasis classification staff

place on this criteria. The results of this analysis should be used to redistribute the relative weight assigned to each criterion.

All classification decision-making authority should be removed from institutional disciplinary boards.

Current practice holds that disciplinary boards determine guilt, sentence, and punishment. As part of a guilty finding they also determine whether the inmate's custody will increase. This is in direct contradiction to the practice in most other jurisdictions. Disciplinary boards in other jurisdictions refer custody decisions to reclassification committees or boards.

All decisions regarding inmates' custody status should be decided by the standing classification board at the applicable institution. This practice ensures that custody decisions are made by trained classification staff according to Department policies and procedures. It also ensures that the disciplinary system adheres to its objective--the finding of guilt or innocence and the imposition of sentence.

At LCIW, assignment to maximum security is made only by the institutional disciplinary board or by the Institutional Classification Committee Board if the inmate is received with a documented history of violence or assault. Policy states that assignment will be in accordance with agency procedure for placement in extended lockdown. Reassignment from maximum security is made only by the Lockdown Review Board. These policies confuse disciplinary segregation status with maximum security designation. To be consistent within the agency, assignment to disciplinary segregation should be based upon the commission of disciplinary infractions. Assignment to maximum security should be based upon a uniform and consistent application of criteria that assess the inmate's need for security and custody. Only the institutional classification board should make maximum security assignments.

2. Inmate Needs Assessment

The management of inmates within the Louisiana Department of Corrections would be improved by the ability to distinguish between inmates' security needs and management needs and to assign inmates to institutions based upon these needs.

Security is defined as the physical plant environment to which inmates should be assigned to prevent escape or attempted escape, while management is the degree of supervision required to manage inmates while they are assigned to facilities. Differentiating between these inmate needs would allow staff to identify more appropriate institutional assignments and departmental responses and conserve correctional resources.

Under the present system the majority of inmates identified as having high security needs are assigned to Angola and unless they are special management inmates they are supervised like every other general population prisoner at Angola. Under the proposed system, inmates would also be classified for their management needs. Inmates identified as having high security needs would still be assigned to Angola but the intensity of their supervision would depend upon their identified management needs. For example, an inmate who commits murder in the heat of passion would present relatively high security concerns but is not likely to present serious management problems. It is wasteful of scarce correctional resources to supervise this inmate as one would an inmate who murdered a fellow inmate or correctional officer.

To accomplish this it would be necessary to identify the security and management capabilities of each LDOC facility. It would be fruitless to identify inmate security and management needs if there were no method for matching these needs with the Department's facilities.

In defining the security capabilities of a correctional facility, the following factors are generally considered:

- Perimeter fencing and barriers;
- Perimeter mobile patrols;
- Use of guard towers;
- Detection devices;
- Type of inmate housing (e.g., single cell, multiple occupancy, or dormitory);
- Use of internal zoning; and
- Control rooms.

Management factors would include, at a minimum, the following:

- Inmate supervision strategies;
- Time frame for inmate counts and supervision;
- Inmate escort and movement procedures;
- Inmate program and services management and supervision; and
- Emergency response capabilities.

In the case of female inmates, it is perhaps even more important to differentiate between their security and management needs. The security and management needs of women differ, for the most part, from men. For example, most female offenders do not tend to present as high a risk of escape as do their male counterparts. Accordingly, there is less need to place them in a high security institution. However, a larger percentage of female inmates than male inmates have mental problems. Mental problems are high correlated with management problems. The management problems associated with differences between the sexes are compounded by the limited number of assignment options available within most agencies. In Louisiana, there is only one facility for women, LCIW. It is possible to differentiate the security and management capabilities of separate units within one institution and to assign eligible inmates accordingly. It is recommended that the Department pursue this course of action.

The Department should adopt a system to objectively assess inmates' substance abuse histories.

Presently the Department relies on a review of available information and inmate self-report to identify prisoners in need of substance abuse programming. Due to the high incidence of substance abusers in correctional

populations it is important to have a more definitive and accurate system for identifying these inmates.

There are several brief, easily administered instruments that provide valid, reliable information. For example, the Michigan Alcoholism Screening Test (MAST) is a sound instrument with considerable research support. It does, however, require a structured, individual interview of up to 30 minutes. On the other hand, the Alcadd Test is a quick group test, but it is high in face validity and inmates can distort the results. Reaching an acceptable balance between convenience and acceptable degrees of reliability and validity is characteristic of this type of assessment. In general, the greater the face validity of an assessment instrument, the more uncertain the interpretation. Both denial or and distortion (to gain special treatment) can cause an inmate to manipulate the results leading to a faulty conclusion.

Instruments for assessing drug dependency are less readily available. The Drug and Alcohol Use Evaluation Scale (DUES/AUES) provides behavioral indices of maladjustment useful for assessing treatment outcome. DUES scores can range from 0 to 16; however, cut-off scores need to be developed to facilitate the screening and referral process.

Other community-based information (like that obtained from the DUES) should be systematically sought and evaluated. Information from family, friends, employers, and so forth, can provide an accurate and comprehensive picture of the offender's alcohol and drug use. When this information is available, it may lessen the need for other diagnostic procedures.

A detailed description of these instruments, including the development, advantages, disadvantages, reliability, and validity is provided in the appendix.

3. Programming

The Department should develop a formalized process to evaluate and rate the program and support services capabilities of each institution.

At the present time the Department does not have comprehensive information about its facilities. It is probable that there are inmates assigned to inappropriate institutions or cell blocks and inmates who are in need of services that are not available where they are housed.

One method of assessing facility capabilities is to develop a survey instrument that would be completed by knowledgeable facility staff. The instrument would be designed to solicit information about:

- Physical plant
- Staffing patterns
- Staffing levels
- Available programs
- Program staff
- Program requirements
- Program equipment and facilities
- Available support services
- Support service equipment
- Support service facilities
- Support service staffing

This information could then be developed into a manual of facility capabilities for classification staff to use in selecting the most appropriate institutional assignments for inmates both at initial classification and reclassification.

This recommendation is not without precedent. A few years ago, the Department sent questionnaires to the prisons to gather information with which to identify levels of in-house care available.

Finally, as is obvious from the assessment of institutional capabilities reported in Chapter 3, there is some uncertainty within the LDPSC system of the capabilities of various institutions within LDPSC. This might be expected to increase with the planned new facilities.

All inmates should participate in some form of prerelease programming, whether it is provided on an institutional basis or in a community corrections setting.

At the present time, most inmates are discharged from the Louisiana Department of Corrections maintaining institutions, other than Dixon, Hunt, and LCIW, without prerelease programming. This practice does not help the offenders and it may harm the public. Studies have shown that inmates, particularly long-term inmates, are concerned about adjusting to life on the outside. Many inmates are deficient in life skills and have poor community ties. Prerelease programming can reduce the likelihood of inmates returning to prison.

To be effective prerelease programming should be comprehensive and multifaceted. This applies whether the programming takes place in a secure institution or in a community corrections setting. It is recommended that a comprehensive release plan be developed for all inmates when they are within 18 months of release. Such a plan should include: life skills training, job skills refresher courses, employment counseling, community furloughs for eligible inmates, substance abuse counseling, a concentrated visiting program, and marital and family counseling. Such a program need not be expensive. This type of program could be accomplished with a reallocation of staff responsibilities and a shift in emphasis from traditional prison programming to prerelease programming.

If the Department wishes to implement prerelease programming, the first step would be to design two programs--one for those who will be released directly from a secure institution and another for those who will be released from a community corrections center. First, the Department would identify the

³ A grant is soon to be awarded to the Department to develop and implement a prerelease program at all institutions.

programs goals and objectives. Second, it would then determine the length of the program. Third, the program plan would be developed--the frequency and duration of the necessary activities and services. Fourth, the Department would identify the necessary staff. Fifth, the Department would determine which staff could be reallocated to this function. And Sixth, the Department would implement the program.

4. Classification Information

The Department should undertake a review of the documents employed during initial and reclassification to determine those that can be consolidated, replaced, or completely eliminated as superfluous, underutilized, and/or generally unnecessary.

While such a review was outside the scope of this study, the Department does have an active forms committee. This committee should be charged with this responsibility. In addition, once the Department determines which recommendations it will implement, it is likely that new forms may be necessary. This committee would be the logical choice to develop these new forms.

It is recommended that Department staff investigate the costs of automating the classification report generating and record keeping functions at the institutions.

A committee composed of interested staff could be appointed to determine the number of computers, the types of software packages, the number of hours of training that would be needed and the total cost of implementing an agency-wide system.

5. Staffing/Staff Development

Additional clerical personnel should be added to assist in the production of classification reports.

Shortages of good clerical assistance is a chronic problem not only in corrections but in all government agencies. However, it would appear more appropriate, both in terms of effort and cost, that clerical assistance be available to reduce the problems associated with an ineffective word processing

system. Additional clerical personnel would make the current level of classification staff more effective and efficient. If it is possible to automate the production of classification reports and supporting materials fewer clerical personnel would be needed. Personnel computers and word processing software are reasonably priced and relatively easy to learn to use. Over the long term it would be more cost effective to invest in computer hardware and software than in additional clerical staff.

A 40-hour preservice and 16-hour inservice classification training program should be developed and implemented for staff formally involved in the classification process.

The present lack of both preservice and inservice training for classification staff was identified as a serious deficiency in the present system by classification counselors, supervisors, and administrators. The training academy currently offers no training programs for classification staff. Training is on-the-job, under supervision. The supervisor thereafter checks periodically to verify the employee's progress.

On-the-job training is an important component in training classification staff to perform their functions, but it is not a substitute for intensive, formal, preservice and inservice training.

Relying exclusively on on-the-job training can present problems in consistency and reliability. Policy can be diluted or, worse, misinterpreted, if it is filtered through too many people.

Sample outlines for a 40-hour preservice and a 16-hour inservice training program for classification staff is included in the appendix.

Likewise, the Department should consider developing a 4-hour block of classification training to be included in the preservice training program for all agency staff.

It was apparent from the site visits and formal and informal interviews that the staff not formally involved in classification do not understand the classification process and need additional training in this area. This training program should include: 1) goals and objectives of classification; 2) initial classification; 3) reclassification; 4) classification of special management inmates; and 5) impact of classification on inmate programs and services.

6. Planning

The Department should use the improved classification system to project facility staffing, treatment, and classification resources that will be required over the short and long term.

The Department does not presently have adequate information about its inmate population and programs/service resources to plan for future needs. The recommendations contained in this report would, if implemented, rectify this situation.

The assessment of correctional resources, discussed previously, is a frequently overlooked aspect of comprehensive classification programming. An accurate profile of the inmate population is not sufficient information for planning purposes. What is needed, in addition, is an accurate profile of all Louisiana correctional facilities. Profiling the facilities has a cost associated with it but the return on such an investment of time and money will quickly be returned by allowing the Department to more efficiently match inmates' needs with facility resources. This procedure will maximize existing resources by identifying the areas of greatest need and the gaps in service provision. This type of information would allow the Department to direct its limited resources to meet the objectives agency staff determine are most important.

B. Initial Classification Recommendations

Program goal statements should be developed for all inmates entering the Louisiana correctional system.

While this type of program planning is currently done to a limited extent, it could become a more effective management tool. ARDC staff are in the best position to initially develop these goal statements because they have all the assessment and testing data at hand and they have the time to develop these goal statements in consultation with inmates. Staff should not view these goal statements as static. They will change over time and, as a result, must remain flexible. These goal statements, when used in conjunction with security and custody status, will help classification staff determine the most appropriate facility assignments for inmates both at initial classification and reclassification.

The Department of Corrections should develop a priority system for admitting inmates to the DOC that are applicable to all parish and local detention facilities.

When the Department has available bed space for prisoners backed up in Parish jails, there are no policies and procedures to select which prisoners should be transferred to the custody of the Department. As a result, agency staff believe the Department receives the worst state inmates the Parishes are holding.

A sample priority system might be:

- Priority 1--Offenders who have major medical/psychological problems as documented by a physician and for whom local resources are not available.
- Priority 2--Problematic prisoners, or those who pose a substantial threat to the local facility, as documented by appropriate due process hearings, or notorious prisoners.
- Priority 3--Prisoners who will attain parole eligibility at the local facility.

- Priority 4--Prisoners identified for intake by the Office of the Attorney General.
- Priority 5--Prisoners located in overcrowded jails.
- Priority 6--State prisoners who have physically spent the longest time at the local facility.

C. Institutional Classification (Reclassification) Recommendations

The Department should have the capability to monitor initial classification decisions throughout the confinement career of each inmate.

Without the capability to monitor initial classification decisions, the Department has no way of evaluating the outcomes of classification decision-making or the achievement of the program goal statements developed during initial classification.

Several jurisdictions currently use the Offender Based Tracking System (OBTS). This system was developed several years ago specifically to monitor what happens to inmates in a correctional system over time.

With respect to the monitoring of classification actions, the following decisions should be capable of being monitored by the tracking system:

- Security decisions--decisions pertaining to institutional and housing assignment;
- Custody decisions--decisions pertaining to inmate management and supervision procedures;
- Program decisions--decisions regarding inmate interest and assignment to academic, vocational training, counseling, and related programming; and
- Support services decisions--decisions pertaining to inmate medical and mental health needs and treatment.

Central office classification staff should revise The Pattern of Community Violence Index for use during reclassification of inmates.

The Pattern of Violence Index, previously discussed, is currently used only at the ARDC. With some modification it would also be a useful tool for reclassification. For example, central office staff should specify cut-off

values for the scale employed by the index. Further, classification staff rate 1st and 2nd degree murder the same. It will be necessary to revise the ratings to use a larger number of values. In addition, after it is revised, the index should be validated on a sample of Louisiana inmates.

The program goal statements developed during initial classification should be refined and implemented by institutional classification staff during the institutional orientation and reception process and at each reclassification review, as needed.

The program goal statements developed during initial classification will not be useful unless they are reviewed by institutional classification staff on a regular basis (at six month intervals is recommended). It will be important for institutional classification staff to review the goal statements with the inmate to ensure that, to the extent possible, the inmate is participating in the appropriate programs and receiving the necessary services. In all probability, many inmates will change their minds frequently about what goals they wish to achieve during their incarceration. As a result, the goal statements must be viewed as flexible and staff should expect most inmates to request modifications in their goal statements.

Inmates should have the capability to request a security reduction. However, written policy should specify that a formal hearing and a written response are only necessary when a security change is initiated by staff.

This recommendation will reduce the workload of institutional classification staff in that an inmate's request for a security reduction will be accepted by classification staff but will not require a formal hearing nor a written response. However, it will be necessary for staff to inform inmates of this change in policy.

Regular status review should be conducted every 90 days rather than every 60 days as specified by current policy.

Regular, scheduled status reviews are an important aspect of classification. They serve to ensure that inmates are not lost in the system and that needs are identified and responded to as quickly as possible. However, the more often status reviews are required the heavier the workload for existing classification staff. With the recent increases in the inmate population, continuing the practice of reviewing inmates every 60 days will soon necessitate additional institutional classification staff. A regularly scheduled classification review every 90 days is sufficient. However, there should be policies and procedures that stipulate the conditions under which more frequent reviews are authorized.

An objective system should be developed to determine the role and involvement of disciplinary data in the increase or decrease of an inmate's custody status, as well as most acceptable institutional assignments.

Department staff should assign weights to infractions using the index from the inmate rule book. The weighting assigned to infractions should also be tied to the passage of time. That is, after a certain amount of time passes, to be specified by Department staff, the inmate should be penalized less severely for its commission. It may also be possible to add mitigating and aggravating factors to the weighting scale.

The Correctional Classification Profile model developed by Correctional Services Group, Inc. should be considered as a possible format for overall institutional assignment. It should be modified, however, to accommodate the present Louisiana classification items so as not to radically alter the existing classification approach.

The Correctional Classification Profile is one method for systematically assessing the security, custody, program, and support service needs of inmates. It is not necessary to adopt the model to use the format. The format incorporates a method for matching offender needs with agency resources based upon numerical values. Agency staff set values for both levels of inmate need

and levels of institutional capabilities through a consensus seeking process. This procedure structures inmate assessment and classification decision-making based upon an agency's current practices. The process is analogous to plotting a distribution of responses and eliminating the extreme responses on both ends. The result is categorized as an average response. Discussion pertaining to the CCP was included earlier in this chapter.

D. Classification System Information Needs

A menu-driven computer classification system should be developed, consistent with the present CAJUN management information system.

CAJUN should have the capability to incorporate all classification actions, including:

- Automatic assignment of inmates to institutions and programs;
- Monitoring of classification decisions; and
- Data collection capabilities for classification system evaluation purposes.

The new Sperry Link system should be employed to carry out these and other related classification capabilities.

Up-to-date master record files of inmate classification information should be maintained at the central office to expedite the institutional assignment classification decision-making process.

Complete master classification files are not routinely maintained at central office on all inmates. The lack of on-hand comprehensive data hampers the review and approval activities of central office classification staff.

E. Special Management Inmate Classification

A two-phase protective custody classification process should be developed, differentiating between those inmates who legitimately require protective custody and those for whom a documented need for such assignment has not been substantiated.

Protective custody in the Louisiana correctional system is the segregation of inmates for their protection from violence or predation by inmates in the

general population. It is not an inherently prejudicial status, and must not entail the loss of any privileges other than those which are unavoidable because of the segregation required.

1. Assignment Procedures

Any inmate who applies for PC status shall be admitted to the PC section. However, the unit manager shall take appropriate steps to inquire into the need for protection, with the aim of determining whether that need is sufficient to justify separation of the inmate from the general population. Where possible, he shall attempt to institute an alternate means of control to resolve the problem presented by the inmate.

When an inmate applies for protection, the unit manager shall interview him and the interview shall be tape-recorded and transcribed. The transcript shall be forwarded to the central office of the Department. Only written summaries will be retained at the institution.

If the inmate is willing to divulge the identity of the person or persons who pose a threat to him, or if the unit manager is satisfied that the inmate has given all the information he can, the inmate will be designated as Protective Custody, Class I (PC/I).

If the inmate refuses to give any information, or the unit manager is not satisfied that the inmate has provided a full and truthful account of the circumstances causing the inmate's apprehensions, the inmate will be designated as Protective Custody, Class II (PC/II).

When an inmate identifies an enemy or enemies as the reason for requesting PC status, he shall be assigned to PC in probationary status. This assignment shall last up to but no more than seven days. During probationary status assignment, the inmate will not be able to leave the PC housing unit and will participate in no job assignments. The purpose of probationary status is to

permit the inmate time to reconsider his need for PC, while giving staff time to investigate the inmate request. At the end of probationary status, the unit manager and institutional classification committee will make a decision as to whether the inmate shall be assigned to PC/I or PC/II status.

Institutional staff shall maintain a record of all PC inmate enemies and their institutional housing assignment. When an enemy is transferred or released, the PC inmate shall be so informed and given the opportunity to voluntarily return to general population. Should the inmate be in PC/I status and refuse to return to general population, the unit manager and institutional classification committee have the option of assigning the inmate to PC/II status dependent upon the continued documented presence of another enemy or enemies.

2. Program Procedures

All able-bodied PC/I inmates are eligible for employment in assignments which do not employ any inmates from the general population. PC/I inmates will earn time in accordance with Louisiana good time system regulations. Disabled PC/I inmates will be assigned to work at the discretion of the unit manager.

Inmates in PC/II are not eligible for employment, and do not earn good time. During working hours, they will be retained in the unit and assigned to their cells. PC/II's will be assigned to a separate section from PC/I's in the Protective Custody Unit. PC/II inmates may also be restricted in terms of exercise/recreation, hobbies, telephone calls (except attorney consultation), educational opportunities, and access to library (except legal library). In addition, PC/II's will not be paid while in this status.

If and when they are willing to give a better account of their circumstances, they may be reclassified to PC/I.

Because of the vulnerability of the PC section to penetration by inmates seeking opportunities for revenge or predation, special care must be taken to maintain strict control of men assigned to PC/II. Their need for protection will be accepted, but the possibility of other motives for applying for admission to the unit will be kept in mind.

Every effort will be made to provide and encourage cell-study educational programs. The counselor assigned to the section will organize and maintain an active program of individual and group counseling. In addition to the benefits usually expected of such programs, it is to be assumed that the counselor will gain the confidence of some of the men assigned to PC so that unreasonable fears may be resolved and, when a return to the general population is feasible, plans toward that end can be made to the best advantage of all concerned.

3. Reclassification Procedures

All inmates assigned to PC will be reviewed monthly for the first six months of their stay, and after that at least semi-annually. The prime objective of the classification committee will be to discover steps that can be taken to encourage and secure the inmates' return to the general population.

4. Return to the General Population

When an inmate in PC/I or PC/II notifies the unit manager that he is ready to return to the general population, he shall be interviewed to obtain a full understanding of the situation. The interview will be tape-recorded and transcribed, and the situation will be presented to the institution classification committee for a planned placement. With the approval of the unit manager of the unit in which placement is proposed, the inmate may then return to the general population.

It may occasionally happen that the specific enemy or enemies from whom a PC/I desired protection have been released or transferred from the institution.

If the PC/I inmate declines a return to the general population, he may be demoted to PC/II unless convincing evidence is presented to the unit manager that there exists a continuing need for protection.

Additional inpatient cells at LSP and DCI are required to provide for the special management and treatment needs of Louisiana inmate who have chronic mental problems who will require stabilization before being transfer ad back to maintaining institutions.

At the current time, both LSP and DCI manage chronically mentally ill inmates. For the most part, their staff and facilities are adequate to the demand these inmates place upon them. It would be more productive and, over the long term, more cost effective to provide additional staff at other units to provide support for LSP and DCI via screening, treatment, etc. Another option would be to either construct a new facility for this purpose or, as several other states have recently done, convert a state mental health facility for this purpose. For example, the Arizona DOC has converted a former mental health institution in Phoenix into the Flamenco Unit, which is a high security unit for severely mentally ill offenders, previously housed in a number of state correctional facilities. Since the opening of Flamenco in late 1986, agency officials report that the disruption those inmates previously created at the other institutions has all but been eliminated, while, at the same time, the quality and extent of mental health care and treatment have substantially increased.

Agency staff should develop eligibility criteria for transfer to this unit to ensure that the available beds are utilized by those in most need. In addition, available institutional medical and mental health care staff should be assigned to a treatment team whose primary responsibility is this unit. This team would include: a physician; a psychologist; a part-time psychiatrist; a caseworker; a recreation aide; and a correctional officer.

A separate area should be set aside at LCIW for the reception and diagnostic functions associated with initial classification of female inmates.

One reason for this recommendation is to ensure that the initial reception, admission, and classification policies and procedures used for male prisoners is also that used for female prisoners. Equal opportunity, which translates into equal treatment, is a constitutional issue that has received increased attention from the courts in recent years. A second reason is that it is important to separate new admissions from the standing inmate population at least for a period long enough to perform the necessary assessment and orientation. Particularly for first time offenders the initial period of incarceration is fraught with anxiety and apprehension. A gradual entry into institutional life can ease the transition and improve the chances of a satisfactory adjustment to confinement.

To implement this recommendation it will be necessary to add a psychological associate, classification officer, and at least one clerical staff.

The Department should undertake the development of a comprehensive manual that objectively rates the security, program, and support services capabilities of each institution. This assessment should be performed by a task force that includes personnel from Central Office, ARDC, LCIW, and other Department institutions. The capabilities for each institution would then be rated and recorded employing a format similar to that found on the following pages.

Connecticut Correctional Institution—Somers

Box 100

Somers, Connecticut 06071

(203) 749-8391

Institutional Description

Average Daily Population (1986): 1,391

Perimeter Security

Double fence, topped with barbed tape, encased in concrete, electronically monitored with watch towers.

Type of Housing: Cells, dormitories

Facility Description

The system's largest institution held an average of 1,391 inmates daily during FY 1986-87. It is also the system's maximum security facility and opened during 1962-63. Somers also acts as the system's classification/reception center and houses the mental hygiene unit for males and the system's medical clinic. The mental hygiene unit operates a sex offender program for offenders with a history of sex offenses. Somers maintains all levels of educational programs and a variety of industries. Education programs include academic and vocational training, with microcomputers, optical, and small engine repair. Eight prison industries shops, ranging from furniture and clothing manufacturing to printing and reupholstery, are based at Somers. The facility also offers numerous special programs, including a 24-hour family visiting program in trailers located on the grounds, the Sight from Sound Rainbow, and the Cabbage Patch, where inmates prepare recorded materials for the blind and children, respectively. Somers also offers the Sesame Street Program for family visiting. A hobby shop is available, with crafts sold at the unique, Presidential Award-winning Prison Store in Bloomfield.

Capability Ratings Summary

Public Risk	
Institutional Risk	
Medical	5
Mental Health	5
Education	4
Vocational Training	5
Alcohol/Drug Treatment	2
Sex Offense Treatment	5

Medical Capabilities

Components

Infirmery (25 beds)
Medical isolation cells
Dispensary
Pharmacy
Waiting room/area
X-ray
Handicapped access
Dental operatories (2)
Dental x-ray
Dental laboratory
Sick call, 4 days/week
Treatment not requiring serious and intensive care, including splinting or casting of fractures of a minor nature.

Notes

Emergency surgery beyond scope of in-house physicians, such as serious stab wounds, serious lacerations involving major vascular, tendon, or muscle damage, is performed at St. Francis Hospital in Hartford or Johnson Memorial Hospital in Stafford Springs.

Specialty Clinics

Physical therapy	1-2 days/week, 4 hours/day
Radiology	2 days/week, 4 hours/day
Optometry	1-2 days/week, 4-8 hours/day
Orthopedics	Unknown
Oral surgery	1 day/week, 4 hours/day
Podiatry	2 days/month, 4 hours/day
Ophthalmology	1 day/month, 2-3 hours/day
Internal medicine	2 days/month, 3 hours/day

Staff

Coverage

Physician	5 days/week, 7 hours/day
Medic	7 days/week, 24 hours/day
Nurse	7 days/week, 24 hours/day
Pharmacist	5 days/week, 7 hours/day
Lab technician	5 days/week, 7 hours/day
X-ray technician	5 days/week, 7 hours/day
Medical records technician	5 days/week, 7 hours/day
Dentist	5 days/week, 7 hours/day
Anesthesiologist/Nurse anesthetist	24 hours/week

Mental Health Capabilities

Programs/Services/Facilities

Special treatment unit--25 to 30 beds
 Medication available
 Therapy--individual
 Therapy--group
 Psychiatric assessment/support
 Mental health education
 Counseling
 Custody support
 Recreational programs available
 Vocational/educational programs available

Staff

Coverage (On-Site)

Counselor Supervisor	1.0
Psychiatrist	4 contract
Psychiatric nurse	1.0
Psychologist	1.45 FTE, 2-3 day/week
Social worker/counselors	3.0
Correctional treatment officer	
Correctional officer	
CSA II	1.0

Education Capabilities

Programs/Services

Staff

Number

Diagnostic/Prescriptive Educational Services	Principal	1.0
Special Education	Psychologist	1.0
English as Second Language (ESL)	Teachers, as appropriate	8.0
Library services (exclusive of law library)	Clerical	1.0
Educational counseling	Aides	0.0
Adult Basic Education (ABE)	Librarian	NA
General Education Development (GED)		
Post-secondary classes		

<u>Course Title</u>	<u>Total Enrollment</u>		<u>Class Availability</u>			<u>Waiting List</u>		<u>Prerequisites and/or Special Restrictions</u>
	<u>Current</u>	<u>Maximum</u>	<u>Half Day</u>	<u>Whole Day</u>	<u>Both</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	
ABE	60	75		x		x		Score below 6.0 on Standard Achievement Test
GED	32	40		x		x		Score below 6.0 on Standard Achievement Test
College/Remedial	177	177			Evening	x		Open enrollment policy. HS diploma or GED.
ESL	11	15		x		x		
Special Education	?	?						

Vocational Training Capabilities

Programs/Services

Diagnostic
 Vocational counseling
 Pre-vocational training
 Vocational training
 Pre-apprentice training

Staff

Teachers, as appropriate

Number

Vocational Programs

<u>Program</u>	<u>Certif- icate</u>	<u>Enrollment</u>		<u>Hours/ Day</u>	<u>Waiting List</u>		<u>Prerequisites and/or Special Restrictions</u>
		<u>Current</u>	<u>Maximum</u>		<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	
Computer Programming	x	18	18	6	x		8th grade education
Small Engine Repair	x	14	15	6	x		8th grade education
Optical Repair	x	19	19	6	x		8th grade education

Industry/Institutional Jobs

<u>Institutional Job Assignment</u>	<u>Total Number of Skilled Laborers Needed</u>
Automotive mechanic	6
Barber	9
Carpenter	80
Clerical	10
Cook	25
Building trades	8
Electrician	6
Laundry	30
Librarian (general)	3
Librarian (legal)	2
Maintenance (general)	26
Maintenance (grounds)	14
Plumber	6

<u>Industry Assignment</u>	<u>Total Number of Workers Needed</u>	<u>Waiting List</u>		<u>Prerequisites and/or Special Restrictions</u>
		<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	
Woodworking/Refinishing	80		x	None
Upholstery	60		x	None
Clothing	40		x	None
Print	30		x	None
Laundry	30		x	None
Dental	15		x	None
Support/Warehouse	20	x		None
Optical	18	x		GED

Alcohol/Drug Treatment Capabilities

<u>Programs/Services</u>	<u>Staff</u>	<u>Number</u>
Multi-modality substance abuse treatment program	Supervisor	0.5
	Program Coordinator	0.33
Individual counseling	Certified Substance Abuse Counselor	5.0
Group counseling	Clerical	0.0
Substance abuse education program		
Support groups--Behavioral Studies, Spanish 12 Steps, and Graduate Behavioral Studies		

Sex Offense Treatment Capabilities

<u>Programs/Services</u>	<u>Staff</u>	<u>Number</u>
Individual counseling	Program Director	1.0
Group therapy	Volunteers	4.5 hours/week
Educational groups		
Family therapy		
Psychopharmacological treatment		
Community follow-up		
Peer support groups		

CHAPTER SIX: IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

Based upon commentary provided by the Classification project's Advisory Board, it was the understanding of CSG and LSU project staff that the Department is desirous of objectifying the present classification system without reducing the success the existing approach has had relative to minimizing security and custody problems.

A number of important steps must be completed prior to operationalizing the Chapter 5 recommendations for which there was consensus by the Advisory Board. The first, and most important, focus of this chapter is the development of an implementation strategy which describes the various tasks and activities, staff, resources, and time frames necessary to introduce an enhanced classification approach in a systematic, timely, accepted, and cost-effective manner.

There appear to be 14 major steps that should be completed to successfully develop and implement an enhanced classification approach:

- Step 1: Agreement to Develop an Objective Classification System
- Step 2: Commitment of Top Agency Personnel
- Step 3: Selection of Project Planning Staff
- Step 4: Identification of Role of Project System Planners
- Step 5: Development of New Classification System Goals and Objectives
- Step 6: Appointment of Advisory Group
- Step 7: Identification of Legal Issues
- Step 8: Selection of Development Approach
- Step 9: Preparation of Development Plan
- Step 10: Preparation of Implementation Plan
- Step 11: Pilot Testing of New System
- Step 12: Development of Revised Classification System Policies and Procedures
- Step 13: Computerization of Classification System
- Step 14: Training of Department Staff

Step 1: Decision to Develop an Objective Classification System

The first activity is to determine whether it is prudent for the agency to embark upon development of a new system even though such an endeavor appears to have many advantages. In doing so, several questions must be answered:

- What short- and long-term purposes are to be served by the classification effort?
- How much will it cost to develop a new system and to operate it once implemented?
- To what extent will the new system reduce costs associated with overbuilding, transfers, escapes, etc.?
- Do top management staff and others responsible for overseeing the system's development understand the magnitude of the effort they are undertaking?
- Are there qualified and experienced staff available to design and implement a more objective classification system?
- Is there a clear understanding of the risk involved in not developing a more objective system?
- How long is anticipated to develop and implement a new classification system?
- Can an organizational climate be created to support successful completion of the classification project?
- Is there an adequate experience base to sustain the development and updating of the new classification system?

Step 2: Commitment of Top Agency Personnel

The Secretary of Corrections and other top-level staff must be aware of the magnitude of the project in terms of staff time, funding, and time frame for development and implementation, or revision. More important, they must be committed to seeing the project through to completion. This is particularly true when it comes under attack by those who continue to support the previous system. Missouri, New York, and Illinois, in particular, found that backing from top-level administrators helped to alleviate staff resistance to the new system.

In committing to such a weighty undertaking, administrative staff should determine the practical limitations that they will face.

Among the most serious limitations confronting the agency will be the budget and timetable for developing the classification system. They will have

implications for the size and salary of planning staff, the caliber of resource persons to be utilized, the amount of effort involved in system preparation, and the number of subtopics to be dealt with in the developmental process.

Another constraint will be the planners' practical knowledge and skill. Their expertise will determine the extent to which the agency will be able to actualize the system's goals and objectives, which should be set forth early in the developmental process. Planners need to be familiar with the problems and job realities of developing a classification system for an inmate population. They also need to know where to find resources for the developmental process, as well as be skillful in soliciting them. If planners have to develop this knowledge as they go along, many decisions will be made at the last minute in an uninformed manner. The result will likely be an ineffective classification system.

Planning personnel should not be constrained by the expectations of others. Top agency staff should determine what their expectations will be so as to minimize interference with planning staff. Planners must be aware that they operate within an agency or institutional framework that has a general philosophical commitment and imposes certain restraints. Planners are accountable for funds from the agency, which believes that the planners' efforts should be congruent with its philosophy and purpose. Planners--with their own philosophical commitments--need to work out how they will address these various expectations.

Step 3: Selection of Project Planning Staff

Persons should be selected who are sufficiently qualified or experienced to oversee such a complex and time-consuming undertaking as development and implementation of a new classification approach. Agency administrators must put aside personal friendships and political considerations and retain staff

who are either currently knowledgeable of objective approaches and their developmental processes or who possess the skills to acquire such knowledge through training, document review, and/or examination of other objective classification approaches.

Some agencies have found that they either do not employ such personnel or, if they do, are unable to commit them full time to the project. In this event, consultants familiar with objective classification system development should be retained, but only after determining that the consultants' knowledge, communication skills, and availability are such that their retention will assist rather than impede system development. It is also important that the agency maintain control over all project activities.

Step 4: Identification of Role of Classification System Planners

Agency officials must decide what the role of project staff will be in developing the classification system. Their roles will be heavily dependent upon whether the system is statistically devised or developed through consensus.

The classification system, if based upon a consensus approach, may be designed exclusively to fine and meet the needs and interests of agency personnel. In Missouri, for example, a variety of staff were involved in all stages of the process. The system's objectives, content, and implementation methods were tailored to their needs. The planners' role was to elicit staff opinions on what factors and weightings of factors were important. The planners then designed a system to meet these expectations, periodically asking agency personnel for additional feedback. Such staff involvement was also credited with increasing acceptance of the new system. In Florida, a task force, comprised of staff representing various disciplines within the agency, used a consensus approach to identify classification criteria.

Alternately, planners may decide that they have either a special expertise in classification system development or a statistically based approach that does not warrant other staff input. They would then structure the system without the involvement of other agency staff. Project planners in Illinois employed this approach to identify classification criteria that were significantly associated with dangerous behavior. Further, the Illinois planners believe that the use of such research in designing the new system enhanced its credibility among agency staff.

Step 5: Development of New Classification Goals and Objectives

The evaluation of the Louisiana correctional system derived a number of goals and objectives for the present approach. However, the decision by the Advisory Board to objectify the classification system should result in the possible revision of relevant goals and objectives.

The agency should develop a statement of purpose summarizing in one or two sentences the overall aim of the revised classification system and the general impact it is expected to have on the Louisiana correctional system. Goals should specify the major areas that the modified classification system will address, such as protection of the public, principle of least restrictive confinement consistent with prisoners' risk, etc. Objectives should explicitly describe the results to be achieved, such as a 40% reduction in escapes during the next fiscal year, 25% reduction in the number of interinstitutional transfers, etc. The questions below are useful in selecting goals and objectives for the system:

- What is most relevant to the agency?
- What is most applicable to the overall goals of the agency?
- What will be most difficult to achieve?
- What will be most useful in classifying offenders?

- What is feasible?

Following selection, revised classification system goals and objectives must be formulated into written statements. Each major area included in the goals statement should be translated into specific objectives or outcome statements. To illustrate, an objective related to the goal of reducing major institutional disciplinary violations could be: "By January 1, 1988, 45% of all inmates with three or more such violations will be reviewed quarterly by the classification committee."

In preparing classification system objectives, attention should be afforded to the aims of the system (end-result objectives) and the process for accomplishing these objectives (process objectives). End-result objectives specify the impact of the system on inmate behaviors, while process objectives describe the implementation activities of agency staff.

Well-developed end-result objectives for a classification system should meet the following criteria:

- Specify the outcomes of the system;
- Specify the tasks and responsibilities staff are expected to undertake;
- Provide consistency and integration among the diverse elements of the system; and
- Establish a basis for evaluation.

Step 6: Appointment of Advisory Group

Most successful classification systems are the product of input from not only project staff but also an advisory group. For instance, California developers used advisory committees to develop goals for the new system, review its additive scoring process, and help weight classification variables. In New York, an advisory committee, composed of top-level personnel from various departments, assisted in developing classification guidelines.

Since any classification system planner's expertise and skills are limited, it is beneficial to form a group of "knowledgeable others" who embody the crucial viewpoints of the agency. It should include staff representing administration, security, programs, services, industries, planning, and information systems, as well as officials from other criminal justice agencies affecting the classification system's development and eventual implementation. They will be able to provide information that greatly improves the performance of the system while enhancing its acceptance by other agency personnel. They can assess the planners' development approach and suggest practical ways to strengthen the system's ability to classify inmates effectively.

By arranging regular advisory group meetings and calling special meetings if necessary, system planners can clarify the rationale for their decisions and give other staff a feeling of being part of the process. Wise use of the group will increase support for the completed system.

Step 7: Identification of Legal Issues

Litigation pertaining to inmates' rights has become increasingly common in recent years, and the classification process has not been exempt from this trend. The judicial system has not only been carefully scrutinizing classification policies and procedures, but also directly involved in shaping classification practices.

In light of such litigation, the Louisiana correctional system should include minimal procedural safeguards in its new classification approach to ensure that due process and equal protection, as well as other legal requirements, are met. This will extend to inmates those rights that seem justified and should limit litigation pertaining to classification following implementation of the more objective system.

Step 8: Selection of Approach to System Development

Most correctional systems introducing a new classification approach adapt a classification system used in another jurisdiction. These correctional agencies elect to "borrow" another agency's classification system for a number of reasons, including:

- The apparent success of the system in improving classification decision-making;
- The time, effort, and cost of evaluating the current classification process;
- A lack of expertise on the part of correctional administrators relative to understanding the intricacies of an effective classification system; and
- The belief that other agencies often possess knowledge and experience above and beyond that of the agency considering a new correctional approach.

The Advisory Board has determined that the Correctional Classification Profile, a model now employed by six other states, would be modified for use in the Louisiana correctional system. This model was discussed in Chapter 5.

In selecting the CCP, a number of important issues were addressed in promoting its effective use by the Louisiana correctional system:

- The CCP addresses the agency's overall goals and objectives;
- The model correlates with the purpose of the agency's classification system;
- The offender information available to the agency is consistent with the informational requirements of the CCP;
- The criteria now employed by the agency to assess security and program needs are generally consistent with those used by the CCP;
- The CCP facilitates housing assignment, custody needs, and program assignment, as well as security assessments;
- The CCP promotes the matching of inmate needs and agency resources;
- The CCP promotes policies and procedures that are capable of standardization;
- The CCP addresses classification legal issues;

- The CCP is not so complex as to require the use of outside consultants;
- The CCP incorporates a monitoring plan to permit periodic evaluations of classification decision-making and outcomes;
- The CCP can be automated and incorporated into the agency's management information system; and
- Finally, the CCP is consistent with the philosophy of agency classification and security staff; that is, it is an approach they will find generally acceptable and eventually become committed to.

Step 9: Preparation of Development Plan

Since the Advisory Board has determined the CCP will be adapted, it is time to prepare a development plan. Planning the developmental process is a complex task. The experiences of other agencies suggest that any development time frame under 12 months is unrealistic and likely to diminish the system's effectiveness.

To enhance the developmental process, the agency should prepare a plan that incorporates, at a minimum, the following elements:

- Development of a project management and reporting system;
- Preparation of a project development budget;
- Establishment of a project timetable;
- Preparation of draft security and custody determination instruments;
- Assessment of security and programmatic capabilities of agency institutions;
- Preparation of pilot-test format; and
- Development of evaluation and validation plan

Step 10: Preparation of Implementation Plan

The successful introduction of a more objective classification approach does not end with its development, for the new system must still be implemented. However, many other states have found that the implementation phase can be hampered by time and budgetary limitations, insufficient training, and staff resistance. It can also lead to redesign of the classification format and modification of classification criteria, further tightening budget and time constraints. For example, Oklahoma decided to include a "positive

adjustment factor" in its reclassification instrument, and Illinois altered its scoring instrument in order to eliminate an overconsideration of age.

To minimize such problems, the agency should prepare a comprehensive implementation plan that includes the following components:

- Pilot testing of classification instrument;
- Development of new classification system policies and procedures; and
- Training of staff.

Planning staff in Kentucky and Missouri found that agencies should avoid allowing too much time to elapse between system development and implementation since a long delay can dampen staff enthusiasm.

Step 11: Pilot Testing of New System

It is important for the Department to pre-test its classification instrument. Pilot testing can help the agency avoid making piecemeal modifications to correct problems as they crop up following implementation of a new system. The experience of Kentucky serves to point up the usefulness of pilot testing. The agency tested its objective scoring instrument on the files of approximately one thousand inmates who had already been assigned to medium and maximum security. As a direct result of this testing, planning staff were able to make several important scoring adjustments prior to agency-wide use of the new system: the weight given disciplinary reports was increased, while the number of points allotted to education and employment was decreased. In assessing the various activities involved in system development and implementation, Kentucky planners view pilot testing as "a must."

Pilot testing will be either the last task in the development of the objective classification system or the first in the implementation phase. The testing process should include both a "paper" test of the process using available data and a format pilot test of the system by institutional staff. The intent is to determine both how well the instrument performs using a sample

of the present inmate population and what modifications may be necessary prior to implementation system-wide.

The pilot test of any objective classification instrument should be conducted with the established goals and objectives for the system in mind. For example, if an objective of the system is to distribute the inmate population proportionately among the various security and custody categories, the pilot test should measure the extent to which the new system addresses this objective. A correctional agency that is desirous of assigning approximately 20% of its inmate population to each of five designated security levels would not be satisfied with a classification approach that places 5% in maximum security, 35% in close security, 15% in medium security, 40% in minimum security, and 5% in community security. While this distribution may represent the actual security composition of the agency's inmate population, it does not adequately respond to the previously established objective. The agency has one of two decisions to make at this time: first, either alter or reweight the factors comprising the security scale or, second, modify the original security assignment objective.

Other objectives for the classification system, such as matching inmate needs with agency resources, identifying program requirements, addressing the specific security and custody needs of special management inmates, and checking the reliability, validity, and timeliness of classification information, can also be evaluated through the pilot test.

Another method of pilot testing is to compare the new system via a simulation with an established classification system such as that developed by the Federal Prison System. In the simulation approach, a statistically representative sample of the agency's overall inmate population would be classified using both the new system and the validated system. The results of

the two simulations would then be compared to examine the extent of misclassification. For example, should the Federal Prison System custody determination instrument assign 13% of the sample to a high security status, in contrast to 27% for the new system, several questions need to be answered. First, does the Federal Prison System security approach consider the unique characteristics of the particular agency's inmate population? Second, are there any criteria, such as gang affiliation and protective custody requirements, that influence the agency's system but are not included in the security determination section of the Federal model? Finally, by using another classification system, is the agency "comparing apples with oranges?" Specifically, are the security categories employed by the Federal Prison System correlated with those used by the agency? For example, Security Level Four (SL-4) in the Federal Prison System is comparable to upper medium or close security categories utilized by most state correctional systems. However, the approximate comparability may be lacking in the pilot test so as to depict some misclassification when in fact little or none exists.

Step 12: Development of Policies and Procedures

Written policies and procedures are necessary for the effective introduction of a new classification system. Without such written direction, staff may deviate from the structure of the system--to the detriment of the general public, other staff, and the inmate population.

Policies are necessary for the agency to adequately convey its objectives to all personnel. At a minimum, they should include direction for successfully interpreting the purpose, goals, and objectives of the new classification system. Policy statements should explain why the system does what it does.

In addition, written procedures should provide specific steps for carrying out the new classification system. They must state who will be responsible,

what must be done, where the activity should occur, and in what time frame the task should be completed.

Policies and procedures should be incorporated into a comprehensive manual that prescribes initial classification, reclassification, and central office classification practices for all institutional settings and populations. It should also delineate areas of classification responsibility. This manual should be updated regularly to include all revisions in policies and procedures.

A classification manual should be completed prior to training in system use so that staff can be given a thorough introduction to the new classification process. An inadequate manual in Missouri, according to some agency personnel, created problems in training and ultimately impeded implementation of the new system. Because the manual was not sufficiently detailed or complete, some confusion regarding the scoring process arose among participants. This confusion was one of the reasons the agency conducted a second training session. Oklahoma encountered a similar problem. Its new policies and procedures were not officially approved until after training had been conducted. By then, some modifications had been made, resulting in temporary misunderstandings among staff.

Serious consideration should also be given to using the classification manual to orient inmates to the new system.

Step 13: Computerization of Classification System

Computerization of the classification process can be developed in three phases. First, an objective system of classification must be developed. Decision-making must be quantified in some fashion so that these numbers can be used in a computer. However, this phase of the process of computerization could be initiated before the computers are available. The result of the

present study indicating the factors that classification staff believe are important to consider in classifying an objective system. Until some type of objective system is developed, computerization of the classification system will be limited.

The second phase of computerization should be the development of a standardized computer program to be used at all institutions. The program could be developed for use with individual personal computers located at each institution. Staff could monitor the classification and reclassification process within each institution. The objective system could be evaluated and recommendations made to an LDOC committee as to the adequacy of the system and its usefulness. This would be a very good way of evaluating the objective system. It would take advantage of the much lower cost and ease of use of personal computers compared with the complexity and cost of a complete link between headquarters and the institutions. Classification staff might want to enter data directly into the computer without using paper forms.

The final phase would be to develop a link between all institutions. This, of course, would be the final goal. However, there would be many advantages in developing the system in three stages. A network system requires an objective classification system, which would be developed and tested in the first phase. The network will also require people experienced with computers; institutional staff would get their initial experience with personal computers in the second phase of development before the network was fully functional. More complex programming and data verification would have to be developed for the link but this would not be necessary for the within-institution classification system using personal computers.

Step 14: Training of Staff

Training agency personnel at all levels is critical if staff are to be able to adequately understand and use the revised classification system. Typically, this training lasted between 8 and 16 hours. A number of states have indicated that insufficient training hindered effective implementation of their new systems and that an agency instituting an objective system should consider a longer period of training.

For existing personnel, a comprehensive training program of at least 16 to 24 hours is recommended. Training should cover such topics as instrument use, information management, resource allocation, and program development decisions. It should also include, at least in the initial training sessions, an overview of how the system was developed so that staff who were not involved will be acquainted with its background.

In addition to this introductory program, training should be provided on both a pre-service and in-service basis for all agency personnel. Once the system is in place and accepted by staff, the necessity to discuss the background for its need and development generally decreases. A minimum of eight hours should be devoted to system training on the pre-service level and four hours on an in-service basis.

Methods for presenting the material will vary according to the nature of the information to be learned and the role of staff in the learning process. Subject matter may be taught in one-way presentations (lectures, symposiums, films, panels, debates) or in participatory methods (discussion and problem-solving groups, brainstorming sessions, role playing). In the former method, staff will assume a relatively inactive role, listening, watching, and taking notes. The presentation should be pre-determined in detail and, thus, will not be affected much by the audience. In the latter method, staff will be

dynamically involved. They will bring up examples from their own correctional experience. Problems and solutions will be found collectively. Numerous other agencies, such as the Federal Prison System, Kentucky, and Minnesota, also found it useful to involve staff in hands-on application of the scoring instrument, using case files. This activity would be followed by discussions to enhance interrater reliability. The interest and concerns of staff relative to the classification system and its eventual implementation should direct the course of the participatory approach.

Another important component of the training program is the selection of the instructional staff. Instructors should be chosen on the basis of their expertise and teaching ability. Involvement in developing the classification system, while helpful, does not necessarily mean that participants can translate that knowledge to agency staff. Instructors may be drawn from a variety of sources within the agency, such as the targeted staff itself and administrative personnel, and from professional fields outside the agency. Selecting instructors from each of these areas has advantages and limitations. An instructor from staff will be familiar with the other participants; however, fulfilling the role of both co-learner and instructor is difficult unless all staff are given the opportunity and this is clarified beforehand. The planners of the classification system run the risk of being unable to break out of their role as system developers, who are seen by other agency staff as having a vested, and possibly overly zealous, interest in the successful implementation of the classification system. Outside instructors can play the role of experts more easily, but they may be out of touch with both the classification system and the job reality of agency staff. Clear lesson plans, personal contacts with agency staff, and last-minute briefings will help minimize these risks.

Final Considerations

A national evaluation of objective classification systems completed by CSG for the National Institute of Justice yielded several findings that need to be highlighted to expedite system development and implementation.

First, planning staff should emphasize, particularly for classification approaches developed through consensus, that the system takes a fairly common-sense view of prediction and therefore is easy for agency personnel to recognize as a restructuring of their own experience.

Second, the criteria incorporated into the new classification system should generally be comparable to those factors previously employed by classification staff in deriving security assignments.

Third, the system should attempt to mesh the perspective and inferences of staff with data used in deriving security and custody decisions.

Fourth, the quantitative character of the objective approach should manifest risk as an interaction of factors along a continuum. This will permit the agency to conduct statistical analyses of consistency, analyze trends, and simulate the results of proposed modifications.

Fifth, careful consideration should be given to the design, or redesign, of reclassification instruments that are independent of initial scoring criteria. The effectiveness assessment that was conducted as part of the national evaluation found initial classification items, particularly those related to current offense, to be relatively weak predictors of behavior. Only age was shown to have even a moderate predictive capacity. Reclassification, consequently, should rely heavily on measures of in-custody conduct that promote a "just desserts" orientation to decision-making.

Sixth, the system should exclude factors that are legally vulnerable.

Seventh, to ensure effective operation of the new approach, the groundwork for monitoring and evaluation efforts should be laid during system development. Means for obtaining the quantifiable information needed to assess classification decision-making should be built into the system design.

Finally, the new system should be presented as a tool or guide to effective classification and not as the final word. The ultimate decision should belong to the classification officer, who can enact overrides when essential, assuring the responsible participation of staff in the classification process.

In conclusion, the development and implementation of a more objective prison classification system in Louisiana is a complex process that depends upon the commitment of agency staff and resources, the support of key people outside the agency, the allocation of sufficient time to accomplish the Department's goals and objectives, and, most important, a well-conceived plan to guide the system's development and implementation.

The preceding guidelines, while not inclusive, were prepared to help correctional agencies anticipate problems that may arise during system development and implementation, or revision, and to suggest strategies for addressing these issues before they become problematic.

Included on the next page is a proposed development and implementation schedule for the classification effort.

Table 14

Proposed Development and Implementation Schedule
 (Based upon 15-month Schedule)

Step	Month
Step 1: Agreement to Develop an Objective Classification System	1
Step 2: Commitment of Top Agency Personnel	1
Step 3: Selection of Project Planning Staff	1
Step 4: Identification of Role of Project System Planners	2
Step 5: Development of New Classification System Goals and Objectives	2
Step 6: Appointment of Advisory Group	2
Step 7: Identification of Legal Issues	3
Step 8: Selection of Development Approach	3
Step 9: Preparation of Development Plan	3
Step 10: Preparation of Implementation Plan	6
Step 11: Pilot Testing of New System	8-12
Step 12: Development of Revised Classification System Policies and Procedures	12
Step 13: Computerization of Classification System	13
Step 14: Training of Department Staff	14-15