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**FACILITY ESCAPE INCIDENTS  
1985 - 1989**

This report provides descriptive information on incidents of escape from the correctional facilities of the New York State Department of Correctional Services between 1985 and 1989. The report also presents information on demographic characteristics and legal history characteristics of escapees. When appropriate, escapees are compared with the general under custody population. The analysis uses a series of variables including facility security level, age, commitment offense, minimum sentence, maximum sentence, time served, prior adult criminal history, and duration of escape. The report is preceded by a brief summary of the main findings.

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### 1. Most Escaped Inmates from Minimum Custody

The majority of escapees (75%) in the time period of 1985-1989 were from minimum security facilities or medium security inmates assigned to work details outside of the security perimeter. The rate of escapes from secure custody in the time span of 1987-1989 fell dramatically from 1985-1986 rate levels (see Table 1.2, p. 4).

### 2. Number and Rate of Escaped Inmates, 1985-1989

In the five year time period of 1985-1989, 65 inmates escaped from custody. Twelve inmates escaped in calendar year 1989. The rate of escapees per 1000 inmates has shown a downward trend during the five year time span (see Table 1.1, p.2).

### 3. Number of Escaped Inmates by Facility Security Level

In 1989 six inmates escaped from medium security facilities and six inmates escaped from minimum security facilities. Over the time period of 1985 through 1989, 9% of escapes occurred in maximum security prisons, 34% at medium facilities and 57% at minimum facilities (see Table 2.1 p.6).

### 4. Incarceration Offenses of Escapees

In 1989 escapees were most likely to have been incarcerated in prison for the offenses of burglary (33%), drug offenses (25%), or robbery (17%). Forty-nine percent of escaped inmates during 1985-1989 had been imprisoned for burglary (see Table 3.1 p.10 and Table 3.2, p.11).

### 5. Age of Escaped Inmates

Escapees were younger when compared to the total inmate population. In the period of 1985-1989, 42% of escapees were under 25 years of age while 27% of undercustody inmates were under 25 years of age (see Table 4.1, p.13 and Table 4.2, p.14).

6. Ethnicity of Escaped Inmates

During the 1985-1989 time span, 71% of escapees were White. The total is in contrast to the total undercustody population where 20% are White. In 1989, 42% of escaped inmates are White (see Table 4.3, p. 16).

7. Prior Incarcerations of Escapees

Of the total 65 escapees in 1985-1989, 41% had served a prior commitment at a state prison while 37% had been previously incarcerated at a local jail (see Table 5.2, p.20).

8. Instant Offense Sentences

During the time period of 1985-1989, 57% of escaped inmates were serving a minimum sentence of less than three years. This percentage total compared to 41% in the inmate undercustody population (see Table 6.2, p. 23).

9. Time Served by Inmates Prior to Escapes

Sixty-three percent of escapees between 1985-1989 had served less than one year in Department custody, only 10% had served more than three years. Of 1989 escapees, 59% had served less than one year in custody and 17% had served more than three years (see Table 7.1, p.27 and Table 7.2, p.28).

10. Time of Escape Status Prior to Apprehension

Of the 65 escapees between 1985-1989, 51% (N=33) were caught within 12 hours and 83% (N=54) were apprehended within 48 hours. In 1989, 67% of escapees were caught within 12 hours (see Table 8, p.30).

11. Crimes Committed by Escapees in 1989

Two escapees in 1989 were charged with additional crimes while on escape status. One inmate was charged with theft of a motor vehicle and the second escapee was charged with attempted possession of a criminal instrument. Both charges were for non-violent offenses (see Appendix A, p.35).

INMATE ESCAPES FROM CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

1985 - 1989

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## INTRODUCTION

The Department of Correctional Services maintains data files on undercustody inmates and, together with specific information on escapes, produces the annual department report on facility escapes. The report profiles inmate escapees and the circumstances surrounding escape incidents for the previous year. Appendix A presents a brief description of each 1989 escape incident. Additionally, characteristics of escapees are examined for the time period of 1985 through 1989, and escapees are compared to the undercustody population for the same time span.

Over the period 1985-1989 there were 65 inmates who escaped in 52 separate incidents. With the exception of 1988 when five inmates escaped, the number of escape incidents and inmate escapees has remained relatively constant at 10 to 14 escape incidents per year involving a total of between 12 and 19 inmates. However, the rate of escaped inmates per thousand inmates in custody has shown a downward trend over the five year period. This trend may be explained by (1) fewer escapes, and (2) an increase in the number of inmates undercustody in correctional facilities. The inmate population increased 45% from 1985 (N=35,347) to 1989 (N=51,247). The decline in the rate of escapes is noteworthy in consideration of the rapid increase in the number of new correctional facilities and correctional officers.

Section One

NUMBER OF INMATE ESCAPES 1985-1989

A. FREQUENCY OF ESCAPES

There were 65 inmates who escaped from Department custody between 1985 and 1989. In the most recent year, 1989, 12 inmates escaped from correctional facilities. Table 1 presents data on the frequency and rate of escapes for the years 1985-1989.

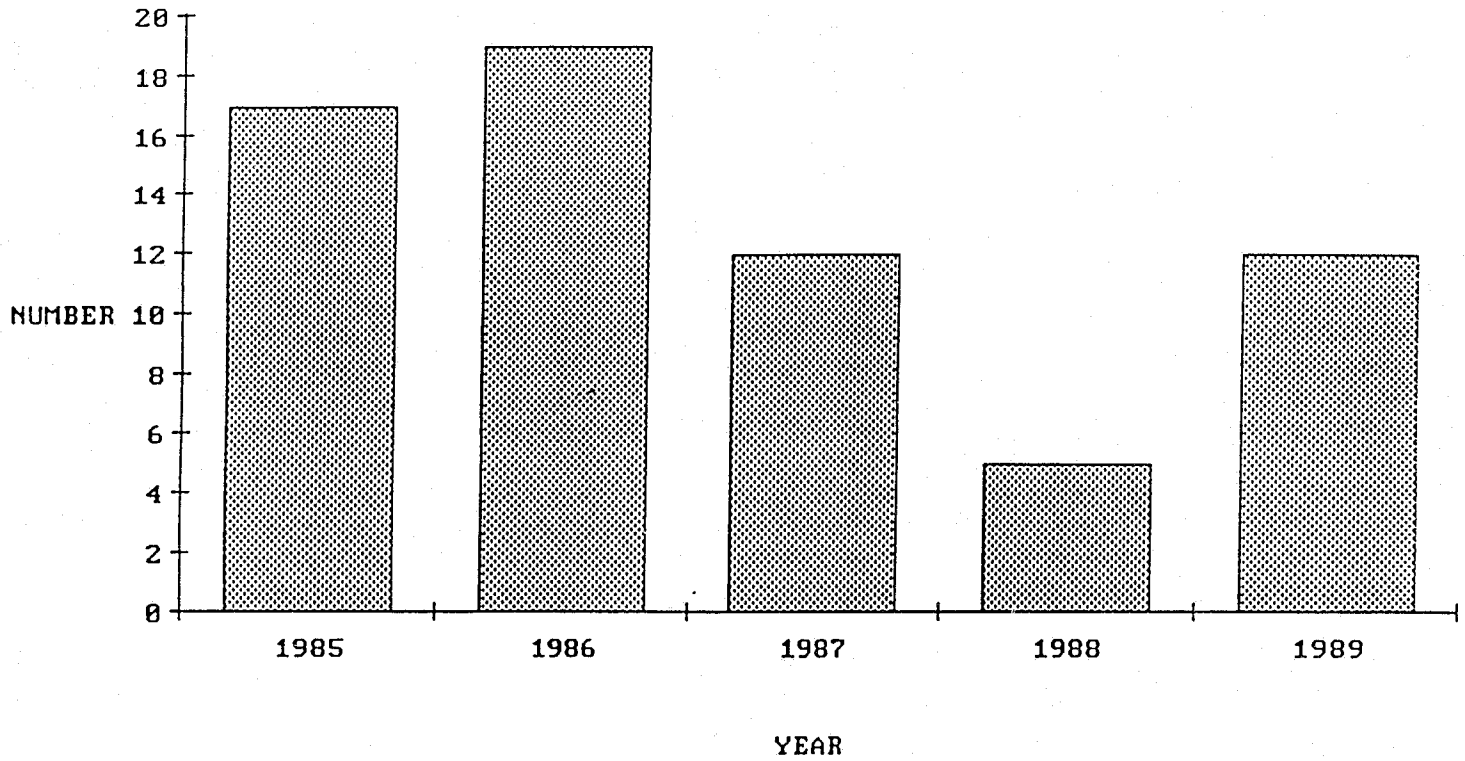
The number of escapes rose between 1988 (N=5) and 1989 (N=12), however, the total number of 1989 escapes is slightly less than the five year average of 13 escapes per year.

The average undercustody population in New York correctional facilities increased 45% between 1985 and 1989. Therefore the use of rates, based upon the number of escapes per thousand inmates under custody, allows for standardized comparison between years. Rate data are important in discerning the level of escape activity when there are large fluctuations in year to year totals of incarcerated inmates. The 1989 rate of escapes of .23 per thousand inmates was well below the five year average of .31.

TABLE 1.1  
FREQUENCY AND RATE OF ESCAPES  
1985 - 1989

CALENDAR YEAR	NUMBER OF ESCAPEES	RATE PER THOUSAND INMATES
1985	17	0.48
1986	19	0.49
1987	12	0.29
1988	5	0.11
1989	12	0.23
TOTAL	65	0.31

CHART 1  
NUMBER OF ESCAPED INMATES BY YEAR  
1985 - 1989





B. ESCAPES FROM SECURE CUSTODY

A total of 65 inmates escaped from custody between 1985 and 1989. However, 16 inmates escaped from within the perimeter of a medium or maximum security facility while a larger number of escapees walked out of minimum security facilities, or escaped from work assignments or community activities located outside of the prison. Inmates who effect their escape from minimum security facilities or from less secure areas outside of the perimeter fence of medium or maximum security prisons are commonly referred to as 'walkaways'. That is, since the inmate was assigned to a less secure area, he or she could escape from immediate custody by walking away. The escapee would not have to use more elaborate methods necessary in a higher security assignment.

Of a total of 65 escapees, 57% (N=37) were from minimum security facilities and 18% (N=12) were walkaways from maximum or medium security facility assignments outside of the perimeter fence. The remaining 25% (N=16) of escapees were persons who escaped from secure custody at maximum or medium security prisons. Table 1.2 shows that number and rate of escapes from secure custody and from less secure assignments (minimum security facilities and medium security details outside of perimeter). When escape rates of Table 1.1 and Table 1.2 are compared, the rate of escapes from secure custody has dropped considerably over the last three years when compared to the 1985-1986 time period. See Appendix A for review of escape incidents.

TABLE 1.2

FREQUENCY AND RATE OF ESCAPES FROM SECURE  
VS. LESS SECURE SECURITY ASSIGNMENT  
1985 - 1989

CALENDAR YEAR	ESCAPES FROM SECURE CUSTODY		ESCAPES FROM MINIMUM SECURITY OR WALKAWAYS	
	#	<u>RATE</u>	#	<u>RATE</u>
1985	5	.14	12	.34
1986	8	.21	11	.28
1987	0	.00	12	.29
1988	0	.00	5	.11
1989	3	.06	9	.18
TOTAL	16	.08	49	.23

Section Two

ESCAPES BY FACILITY SECURITY LEVEL

New York State correctional facilities are classified as maximum, medium or minimum security. This designation is based upon the physical characteristics of each facility that enable the Department to safely and securely house inmates. Several criteria are taken into consideration in determination of the security classification:

- perimeter - the type of enclosure surrounding the inmates within a correctional facility;
- internal control - the capacity to isolate internal areas of a prison through the use of control gates;
- housing - the range of occupational units from individual cells with remote controlled locks to open barrack-type housing;
- special housing - the need of facilities to securely control and isolate disruptive individual inmates from the general inmate population; and
- operational configuration - the ability to monitor and control inmate movement and interaction within the facility.

The Commissioner, or superintendent or director of an institution, may permit medium security inmates to leave facilities under guard to perform necessary maintenance work for the upkeep of the institution. Additionally, inmates who are eligible for parole, who will become eligible for parole within two years, or have one year or less remaining on their sentences may be eligible for transfer to a correctional camp to perform conservation or forestry work.

Inmates are assigned to correctional facilities based upon security and program assessments that are prepared during intake and periodically thereafter. Inmates are assigned a security classification based upon a security assessment as to the level of risk they pose to the public and to staff and other inmates.

Table 2.1 reveals the security level of inmates who escaped from custody in the years from 1985 through 1989. As indicated in the table, 57% (N=37) of the escapees were in minimum security facilities, 34% (N=22) were located at medium security prisons, and 9% (N=6) were housed in maximum security institutions.

TABLE 2.1

FACILITY SECURITY LEVEL OF INMATE ESCAPEES  
SECURITY LEVEL BY YEAR OF ESCAPE

Security Level	<u>1985</u>		<u>1986</u>		<u>1987</u>		<u>1988</u>		<u>1989</u>		<u>TOTAL</u>	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Maximum	1	6%	3	16%	2	17%	0	0%	0	0%	6	9%
Medium	8	47%	7	37%	1	8%	0	0%	6	50%	22	34%
Minimum	4	24%	2	11%	3	25%	1	20%	2	17%	12	19%
Camps	4	24%	7	37%	6	50%	4	80%	4	33%	25	38%
TOTAL	17	100%	19	100%	12	100%	5	100%	12	100%	65	100%

Table 2.2 shows the number of inmate escapes from individual correctional facilities within the last five calendar years. Nineteen new facilities opened during that time span and the total average yearly population increased by approximately 20,000 inmates.

TABLE 2.2

NUMBER OF INMATE ESCAPES BY FACILITY 1985-1989<sup>A</sup>

MAXIMUM	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	TOTAL	%
Attica	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Auburn	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bedford	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Clinton	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Coxsackie	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Downstate	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Eastern	0	0	2	0	0	2	3.1
Elmira	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Great Meadow	1	0	0	0	0	1	1.5
Green Haven	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Shawangunk	--	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sing Sing	0	3	0	0	0	3	4.6
Southport	--	--	--	0	0	0	0
Sullivan	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Wende	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	1	3	2	0	0	6	9.2
<b>MEDIUM</b>							
Adirondack	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Albion (M-F)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Altona	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Arthurkill	0	0	0	0	2	2	3.1
Bayview (M-F)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cayuga	--	--	--	0	0	0	0
Collins	0	0	1	0	2	3	4.6
Fishkill	1	0	0	0	0	1	1.5
Franklin	--	0	0	0	0	0	0
Greene	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Groveland (M-F)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hudson	1	4	0	0	0	5	7.7
Marcy	--	--	--	0	0	0	0
Mid-Orange	2	1	0	0	1	4	6.2
Mid-State	2	0	0	0	0	2	3.1
Mt. McGregor	0	0	0	0	1	1	1.5
Ogdensburg	2	0	0	0	0	2	3.1
Oneida	--	--	--	0	0	0	0
Orleans	0	2	0	0	0	2	3.1
Otisville	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Taconic (M-F)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Wallkill	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Washington	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Watertown	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Woodbourne	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Wyoming	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	8	7	1	0	6	22	33.9

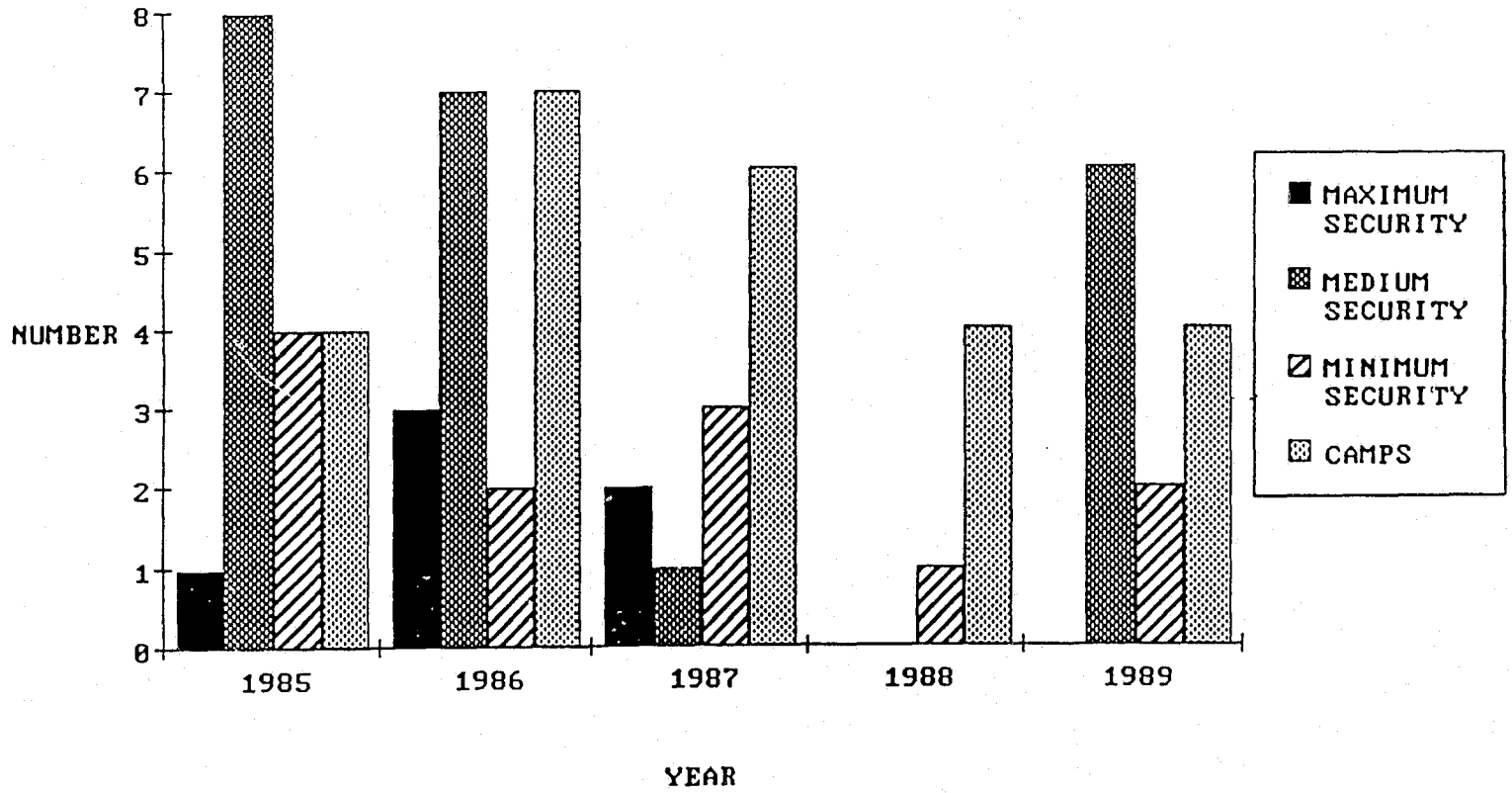
TABLE 2.2

NUMBER OF INMATE ESCAPES BY FACILITY 1985-1989 (Continued)

MINIMUM	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	TOTAL	%
Edgecombe	1	1	1	0	2	5	7.7
Fallsburg Annex	0	1	0	1	0	2	3.1
Fulton	1	0	0	0	0	1	1.5
Lakeview (Recep)	--	--	--	--	0	0	0
Lincoln	1	0	0	0	0	1	1.5
Lyon Mountain	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mohawk	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Parkside	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Queensboro	0	0	2	0	0	2	3.1
Rochester	1	0	0	0	0	1	1.5
Butler Shock	--	--	--	--	0	0	0
Lakeview Shock	--	--	--	--	0	0	0
Monterey Shock	--	--	0	0	0	0	0
Moriah	--	--	--	--	0	0	0
Summit (M-F)	--	--	--	0	0	0	0
Camp Beacon	0	0	1	1	0	2	3.1
Camp Gabriels	1	2	0	0	1	4	6.2
Camp Georgetown	0	0	2	1	2	5	7.7
Camp Groveland	--	--	--	--	1	1	1.5
Camp McGregor	0	2	1	0	0	3	4.6
Camp Monterey	2	3	1	--	--	6	9.2
Camp Pharsalia	1	0	0	2	0	3	4.6
Camp Summit	0	0	1	0	--	1	1.5
TOTAL	8	9	9	5	6	37	56.9
New York City Facilities							
Cape Vincent	--	--	--	0	0	0	0
Riverview	--	--	--	0	0	0	0
GRAND TOTAL	17	19	12	5	12	65	100

<sup>A/</sup>A dash appears in those cells on the table for those years in which a correctional facility was not yet operating or where the facility changed its designation. For instance, in 1988 Camp Summit became Summit Shock.

CHART 2  
NUMBER OF ESCAPEES BY YEAR AND SECURITY LEVEL  
1985 - 1989



Section Three

COMMITMENT OFFENSE OF ESCAPEES

The most serious current offense for each inmate is shown in Table 3.1. The most common commitment offenses in 1989 were burglary with 33% (N=4), drug offenses 25% (N=3), and robbery 17% (N=2). These figures are similar to the totals for escaped inmates for the time period of 1985-1989 when the most frequent offenses were burglary 49% (N=32), drug offenses 11% (N=7), stolen property 11% (N=7), and robbery 9% (N=6).

TABLE 3.1

COMMITMENT OFFENSE TYPE BY YEAR OF ESCAPE  
INMATE ESCAPEES 1985 - 1989

CRIME TYPE	1985		1986		1987		1988		1989		TOTAL	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
MURDER	1	6%	2	11%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	3	5%
OTHER												
HOMICIDE	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	8%	1	1%
RAPE	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
OTHER SEX	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
ROBBERY	2	12%	0	0%	1	8%	1	20%	2	17%	6	9%
ASSAULT	1	6%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	1%
BURGLARY	8	47%	11	58%	5	42%	4	80%	4	33%	32	49%
ARSON	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
GRAND												
LARCENY	3	18%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	3	5%
DRUGS	0	0%	2	11%	2	17%	0	0%	3	25%	7	11%
STOLEN												
PROPERTY	0	0%	3	16%	4	33%	0	0%	0	0%	7	11%
FORGERY	2	12%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	8%	3	5%
DWI	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	8%	1	1%
YOUTHFUL												
OFFENDERS	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
ALL												
OTHER												
FELONIES	0	0%	1	5%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	1%
TOTAL	17	100%	19	100%	12	100%	5	100%	12	100%	65	100%

Data on the commitment offenses for all inmates under custody of the Department of Correctional Services are compared to escaped inmates from 1985-1989 in Table 3.2. Noteworthy are the percentage differences in the undercustody population and the escape population in the offense types of robbery, burglary, drugs, and stolen property. The percentage of offenders in the undercustody population convicted of robbery and drugs is considerably lower when compared to the offense types in the escapee population (robbery, 27% vs. 9% and drugs 22% vs. 11%). Conversely, a higher percentage of escaped inmates were convicted of burglary or stolen property as compared to the general undercustody population (burglary, 49% vs. 13%; stolen property 11% vs. 2%).

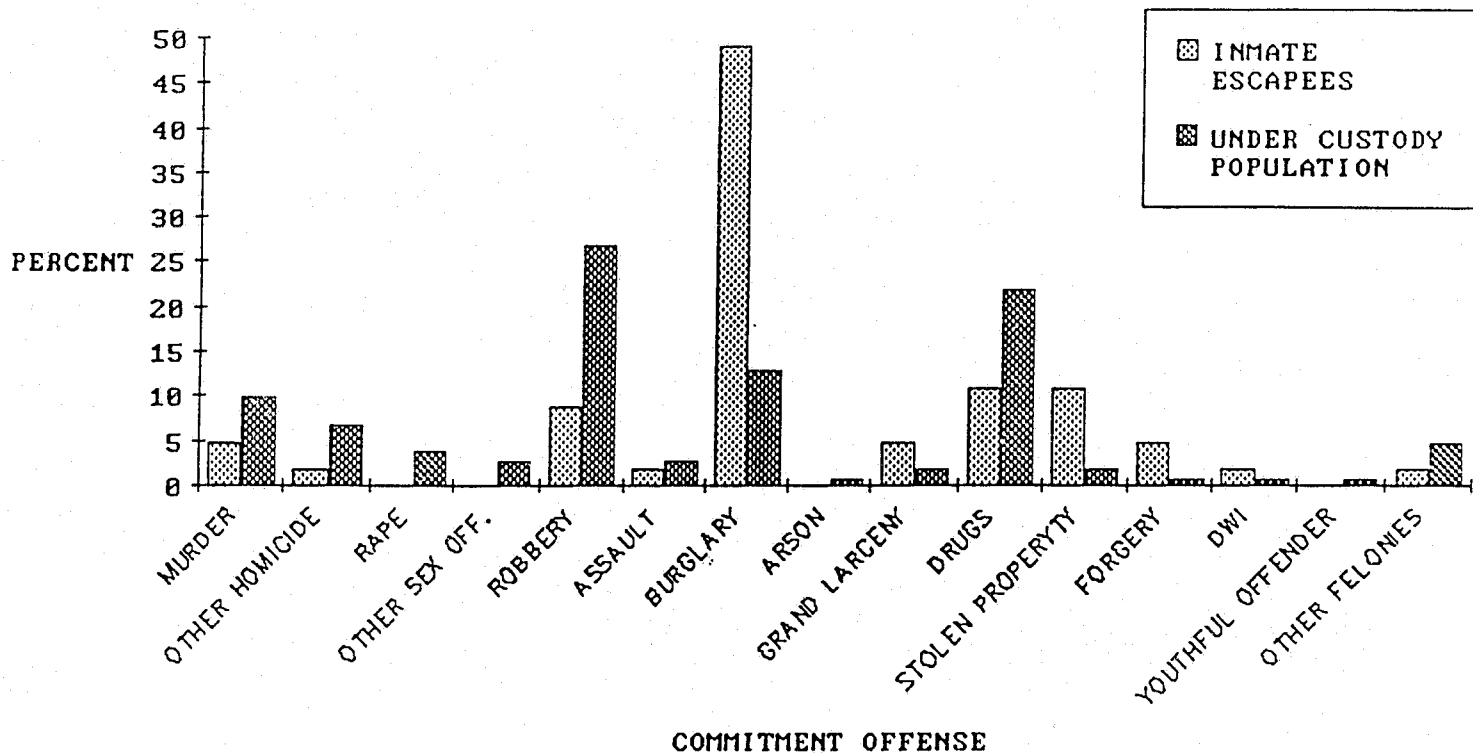
One reason for these differences is that offense type consideration is part of inmates' security assessment. Robbery may be considered a more serious offense than crimes such as larceny or forgery, and offenders are more likely to be assigned to higher security facilities, reducing escape opportunities. Stolen property offenses may not be considered as serious an offense as murder, robbery, sex offenses, assault, or other crimes of violence, and offenders convicted of these offenses may be assigned proportionately to lower security facilities. See Chart 3 (p. 9) for a graphic comparison between escapees' and undercustody population offense types.

TABLE 3.2  
 COMMITMENT OFFENSE OF ESCAPEES AND  
 UNDERCUSTODY POPULATION

OFFENSE TYPE	ESCAPEES 1985 - 1989	AVERAGE UNDERCUSTODY POPULATION 1985 - 1989
MURDER	5%	11%
OTHER HOMICIDE	1%	6%
RAPE	0%	3%
OTHER SEX	0%	3%
ROBBERY	9%	27%
ASSAULT	1%	3%
BURGLARY	49%	13%
ARSON	0%	0%
GRAND LARCENY	5%	3%
DRUGS	11%	22%
STOLEN PROPERTY	11%	2%
FORGERY	5%	1%
DWI	1%	0%
YOUTHFUL OFFENDER	0%	1%
ALL OTHER FELONIES	1%	5%
TOTAL	100%	100%



CHART 3  
COMMITMENT OFFENSE OF ESCAPEES VERSUS UNDER CUSTODY INMATES  
1985 - 1989



Section Four

AGE AND ETHNICITY OF ESCAPEES

A. AGE

The average age of inmate escapees in 1989 was 26 years old. Of the twelve escaped inmates, four were 22 years old or younger; five were between the ages of 23 and 26; and three were between 33 and 41. An examination of Table 4.1 reveals that the distribution of ages of escapees remained consistent over the years of 1985 through 1989. The majority of inmates were under 31 years old (approximately 75% in 1989 as compared to 74% in the 1985-1989 period). The percentage of inmates over the age of forty was slightly less in 1989 (8%) in contrast to the 1985-1989 time period (11%).

TABLE 4.1

AGE AT TIME OF ESCAPE BY YEAR OF ESCAPE  
INMATE ESCAPEES 1985 - 1989

AGE IN YEARS	1985		1986		1987		1988		1989		TOTAL	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
≤ 18	0	0%	1	5%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	1%
19-20	2	12%	2	11%	2	17%	1	20%	1	8%	8	12%
21-22	4	24%	1	5%	0	0%	0	0%	3	25%	8	12%
23-24	2	12%	3	16%	3	25%	1	20%	2	17%	11	17%
25-26	1	6%	4	21%	1	8%	1	20%	3	25%	10	15%
27-28	2	12%	4	21%	2	17%	0	0%	0	0%	8	12%
29-30	1	6%	0	0%	1	8%	1	20%	0	0%	3	5%
31-35	2	12%	1	5%	2	17%	0	0%	1	8%	6	9%
36-40	1	6%	0	0%	0	0%	1	20%	1	8%	3	5%
41-45	1	6%	1	5%	0	0%	0	0%	1	8%	3	5%
46-50	0	0%	2	11%	1	8%	0	0%	0	0%	3	5%
> 50	1	6%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	1%
TOTAL	17	100%	19	100%	12	100%	5	100%	12	100%	65	100%

A comparison of the ages of escapees in 1985-1989 with the total number of inmates in the undercustody population from 1985-1989 shows that the escapees were younger on average than the total population. While 42% of escapees were under the age of 25 and 74% were 30 years old or less, 27% of the undercustody population were under 25 years old and 58% were 30 years old or less. Alternately, only 25% of escapees were over 30 years old compared to 42% of the undercustody population in the years 1985 through 1989. See Table 4.2 for a comparison of ages of inmates who escaped with total undercustody population.

TABLE 4.2  
AGE OF ESCAPEES AND  
AVERAGE UNDERCUSTODY POPULATION

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AGE IN YEARS	AGE AT ESCAPE; ESCAPEES 1985-1989	AGE OF UNDER CUSTODY POPULATION 1985-1989
16-18	1%	2%
19-20	12%	5%
21-22	12%	9%
23-24	17%	11%
25-26	15%	10%
27-28	12%	11%
29-30	5%	10%
31-35	9%	19%
36-40	5%	11%
41-45	5%	6%
46-50	5%	3%
>50	1%	3%
TOTAL	100%	100%

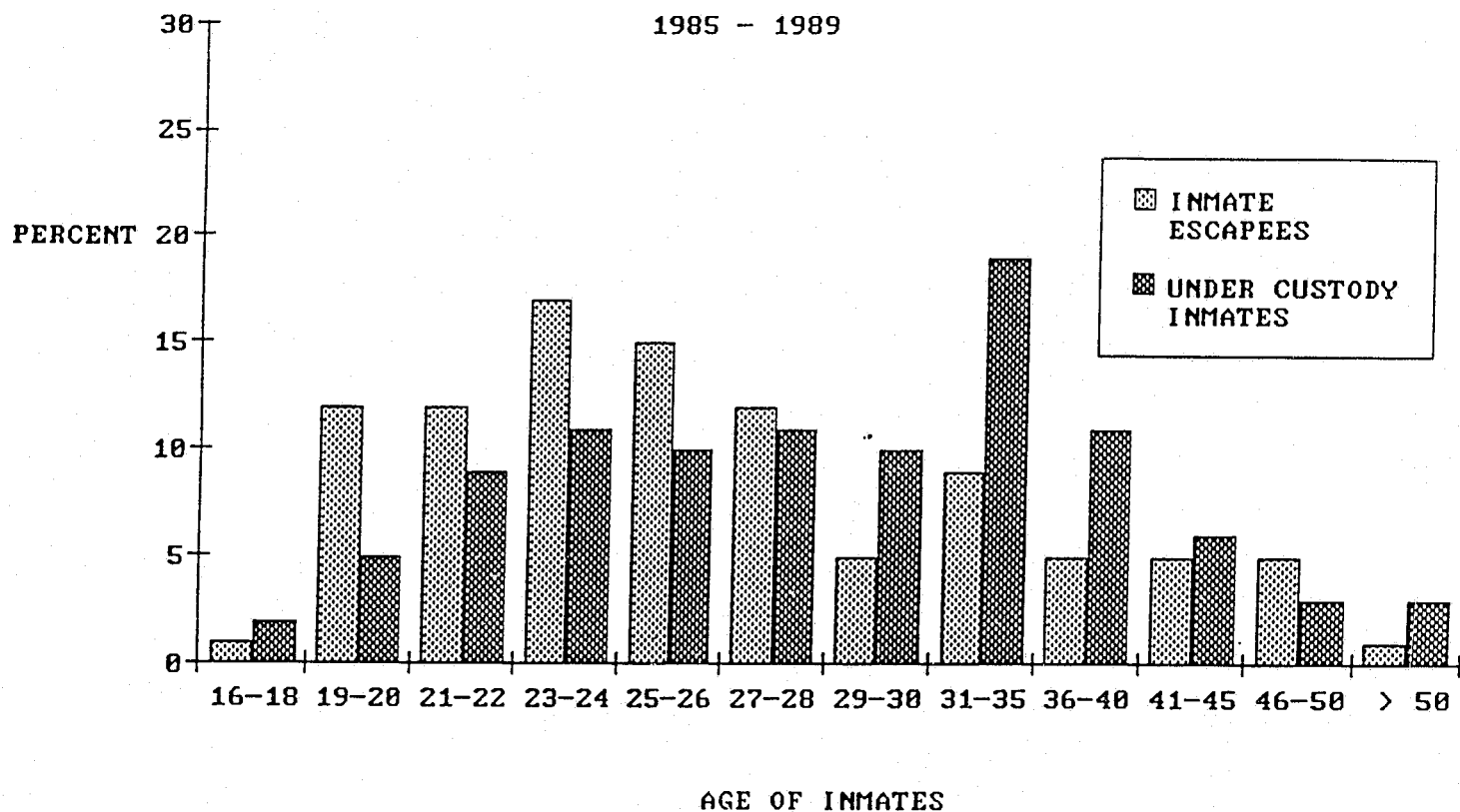
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CHART 4

AGE OF INMATES

INMATE ESCAPEES VS UNDER CUSTODY INMATES

1985 - 1989



**B. ETHNICITY OF ESCAPEES**

Table 4.3 presents information on the ethnicity of escaped inmates for the years 1985-1989. During the five year span, 71% of escapees were White, 14% Black, and 15% Hispanic. Proportionately fewer inmates classified as White escaped in 1989 as compared to the five year totals.

Table 4.4 presents information on the ethnicity of the undercustody population for the time period of 1985-1989. Comparisons between ethnicity of escapees and undercustody population for the five year time period reveal that 71% of escapees were White as compared to 20% of the total inmate population; 14% of escapees were Black compared to 50% in the undercustody population; and, 15% of escapees were Hispanic compared to 29% of the undercustody population (see Chart 4.1). The reader should note that ethnic group totals have changed from 1985 to 1989 with a larger percentage of Hispanics incarcerated and a concomitant decrease in inmates classified as White within the total inmate population.

We can also note that not only are Hispanics a greater portion of the total population in 1989 as compared to 1985, they also make up a greater portion of the escapee group in 1989 (42%) as compared with escapees in earlier years.

**TABLE 4.3**

**ETHNICITY BY YEAR OF ESCAPE  
INMATE ESCAPEES 1985 - 1989**

ETHNIC GROUP	1985		1986		1987		1988		1989		TOTAL	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
WHITE	11	65%	17	90%	8	67%	5	100%	5	42%	46	71%
BLACK	5	29%	0	0%	2	17%	0	0%	2	17%	9	14%
HISPANIC	1	6%	2	11%	2	17%	0	0%	5	42%	10	15%
OTHER	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
TOTAL	17	100%	19	100%	12	100%	5	100%	12	100%	65	100%

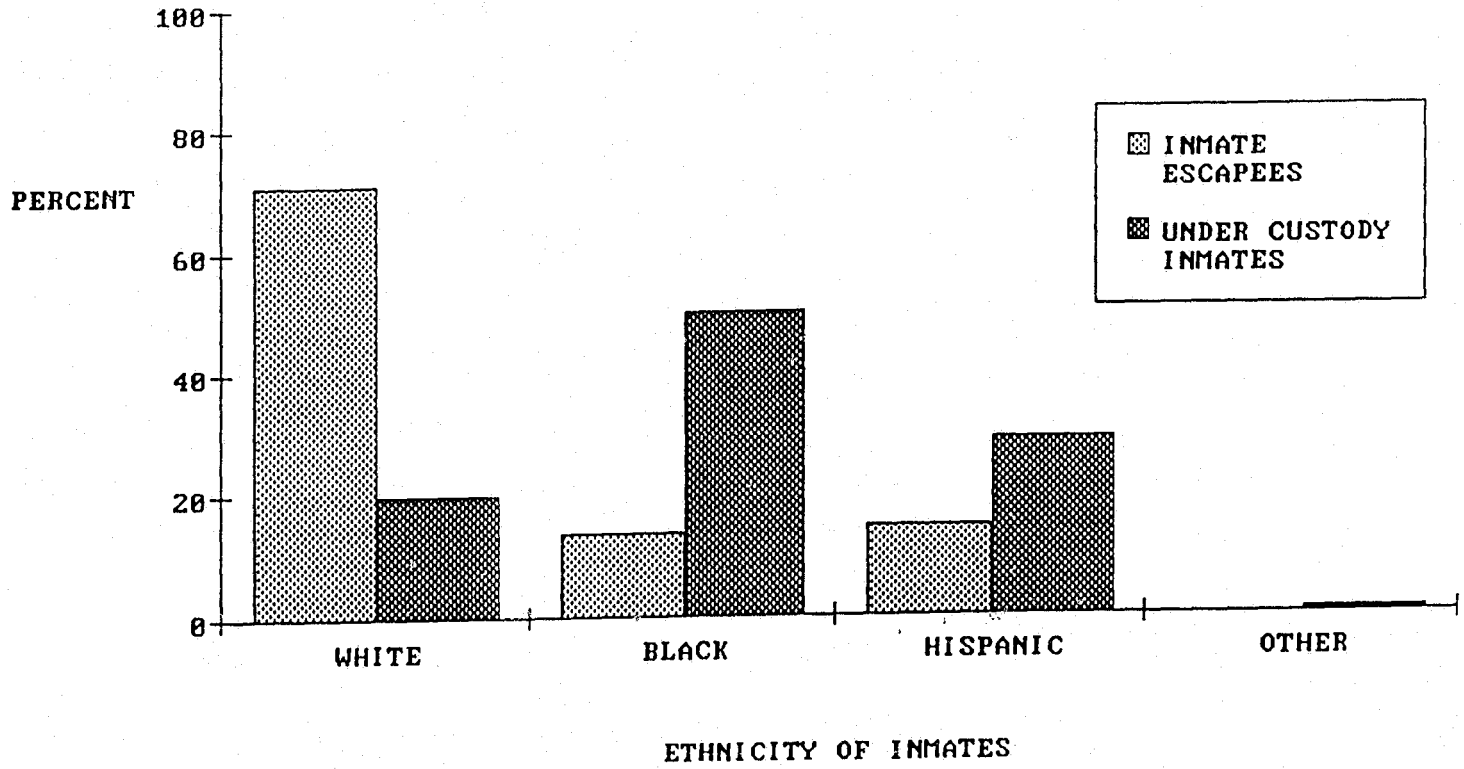
TABLE 4.4  
UNDERCUSTODY POPULATION  
YEAR BY ETHNICITY  
1985 - 1989

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ETHNIC GROUP	1985		1986		1987		1988		1989		TOTAL	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
WHITE	8,191	23%	8,387	22%	8,298	20%	8,667	19%	8,840	17%	42,383	20%
BLACK	18,120	51%	19,633	51%	20,571	50%	22,592	51%	25,265	49%	106,181	50%
HISPANIC	8,853	25%	10,424	27%	11,761	29%	13,102	29%	16,515	32%	60,655	29%
OTHER	184	1%	237	1%	249	1%	276	1%	624	1%	1,570	1%
TOTAL	35,348	100%	38,681	100%	40,879	100%	44,637	100%	51,244	100%	210,789	100%

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CHART 4.1  
ETHNICITY OF INMATES  
INMATE ESCAPEES VS UNDER CUSTODY INMATES  
1985 - 1989



Section Five

PRIOR CRIMINAL RECORD OF ESCAPED INMATES

A. HISTORY OF PRIOR ADULT CONVICTIONS

Table 5.1 shows the conviction status for prior offenses for the escapee population. Inmates are categorized according to the most serious prior criminal record (i.e., felony conviction more serious than misdemeanor conviction which in turn is treated as more serious than no prior conviction). Inmates are incarcerated for their instant commitment offense; prior offense refers to convictions before the most recent instant commitment offense. For example, consider the case of an inmate convicted of misdemeanor DWI in 1975, a felony offense of burglary in 1980, and a felony of armed robbery in 1987 whereby he received a prison sentence. For purposes of this discussion and Table 5.2, the most serious prior offense was the felony burglary and the 1987 armed robbery is the instant commitment offense for which the inmate is currently serving a prison sentence. Since the burglary felony is more serious than a misdemeanor of DWI, only the felony is counted.

TABLE 5.1

MOST SERIOUS PRIOR ADULT CRIMINAL CONVICTION BY YEAR OF ESCAPE  
INMATE ESCAPEES 1985 - 1989

PRIOR ADULT CONVICTION	1985		1986		1987		1988		1989		TOTAL	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
NO PRIOR	2	12%	1	5%	3	25%	1	20%	3	25%	10	15%
MISDEMEANOR	2	12%	3	16%	0	0%	1	20%	1	8%	7	11%
FELONY	13	76%	15	79%	9	75%	3	60%	8	67%	48	74%
TOTAL	17	100%	19	100%	12	100%	5	100%	12	100%	65	100%

Examination of the data reveals that the majority (N=48; 74%) of the escapees between 1985 and 1989 had been convicted of at least one prior felony offense. Fifteen percent of the escapees (N=10) did not have any prior convictions while seven inmates had a prior misdemeanor conviction.



**B. PRIOR ADULT COMMITMENTS**

Table 5.2 shows prior jail and prison commitments for the 65 escapees over the time period of 1985-1989. Only the most serious level of commitment is shown for each inmate. If an inmate's prior incarceration included one local commitment and one state prison commitment, the escapee's most serious commitment, the prison term, would be counted. Looking at escapees over the five year period 1985 to 1989 shows that forty-one percent had a previous prison incarceration. Thirty-seven percent had a prior jail commitment and 22% had no prior incarcerations (see Table 5.2). Totals for 1989 show that 58% of escaped inmates had a prior state commitment.

**TABLE 5.2**

**MOST SERIOUS PRIOR ADULT COMMITMENT BY YEAR OF ESCAPE  
INMATE ESCAPES 1985 - 1989**

PRIOR ADULT COMMITMENT	1985		1986		1987		1988		1989		TOTAL	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
NONE	4	24%	2	11%	4	33%	1	20%	3	25%	14	22%
JAIL	7	41%	9	47%	4	33%	2	40%	2	17%	24	37%
PRISON	6	35%	8	42%	4	33%	2	40%	7	58%	27	41%
TOTAL	17	100%	19	100%	12	100%	5	100%	12	100%	65	100%

Section Six

SENTENCE LENGTH OF ESCAPEES

The New York State Penal Code stipulates that an indeterminate sentence be imposed upon convicted felony offenders sentenced to the state correctional system. The indeterminate sentence is comprised of a range of years--a minimum and maximum time period that an inmate may serve. The minimum sentence is the least amount of time an inmate will serve before eligibility for parole. The maximum sentence is the greatest amount of time an inmate can serve prior to release from custody of the Department of Correctional Services.

The structure of the minimum and maximum sentence range may vary according to the number of offenses and prior felony convictions of the inmate. The length of the range of sentences for first time offenders, convicted of one felony, and sentenced to prison, is determined by the seriousness of the offense. The minimum sentence is normally one-third of the maximum sentence. For example; a first time offender convicted of 1st degree burglary may be sentenced to prison for an indeterminate term of 2-6 years. The two years is the minimum period of incarceration; the six years is the maximum time that can be served.

The minimum and maximum sentence structure can be complicated by a number of factors. Predicate felons, offenders convicted of a prior felony within the last ten years, can receive a sentence whereby the minimum sentence is increased to one-half of the established maximum sentence. First-time offenders convicted of crimes carrying a maximum sentence of 18 years imprisonment, may have a minimum term of six years; while predicate felons would have the minimum increased to nine years. Additionally, sentences may be imposed concurrently or consecutively for conviction of multiple offenses. An example of a concurrent sentence may be a case where an offender was convicted of two charges that resulted in a prison sentence of three to nine years on charge 1 and five to fifteen years on charge 2. The two sentences would be combined so that the inmate would be eligible for parole after serving five years, the longest of the two sentences. Under a similar case scenario but with a consecutive sentence imposed, the inmate would have to serve the sentence on charge 1, three to nine years, before he would be eligible to start the second sentence of five to fifteen years. In consecutive sentences the earliest time period prior to release would be eight years (three years on first charge plus five years on the second charge).

The above examples serve to illustrate the complexity of sentences imposed under the Penal Law. For purposes of discussion, the aggregate minimum sentence (the least amount of time an inmate must serve prior to consideration of parole by the Board of Parole) and the aggregate maximum (the longest term of imprisonment that an inmate may serve prior to release from custody) will be used to compare inmate escapees from 1985 through 1989 and to the total inmate population for those years.

A. AGGREGATE MINIMUM SENTENCE OF ESCAPED INMATES

Table 6.1 shows the aggregate minimum sentence of escapees for the years of 1985-1989. An examination of the table reveals that most prison escapees were serving relatively short minimum sentences and the percentage totals of the minimum sentence categories are similar from year to year, over the five year time period. Twenty-five percent of inmates who escaped in 1989 had less than two year minimum sentences, 59% were serving a minimum sentence of less than three years, 67% less than four years, and 84% less than five years. Percentage totals for the five year span are similar to 1989 in that 37% of escapees were serving a minimum sentence of less than two years, 57% less than three years, 77% less than four years, and 85% less than five years.

TABLE 6.1

AGGREGATE MINIMUM SENTENCE BY YEAR OF ESCAPE  
INMATE ESCAPEES 1985 - 1989

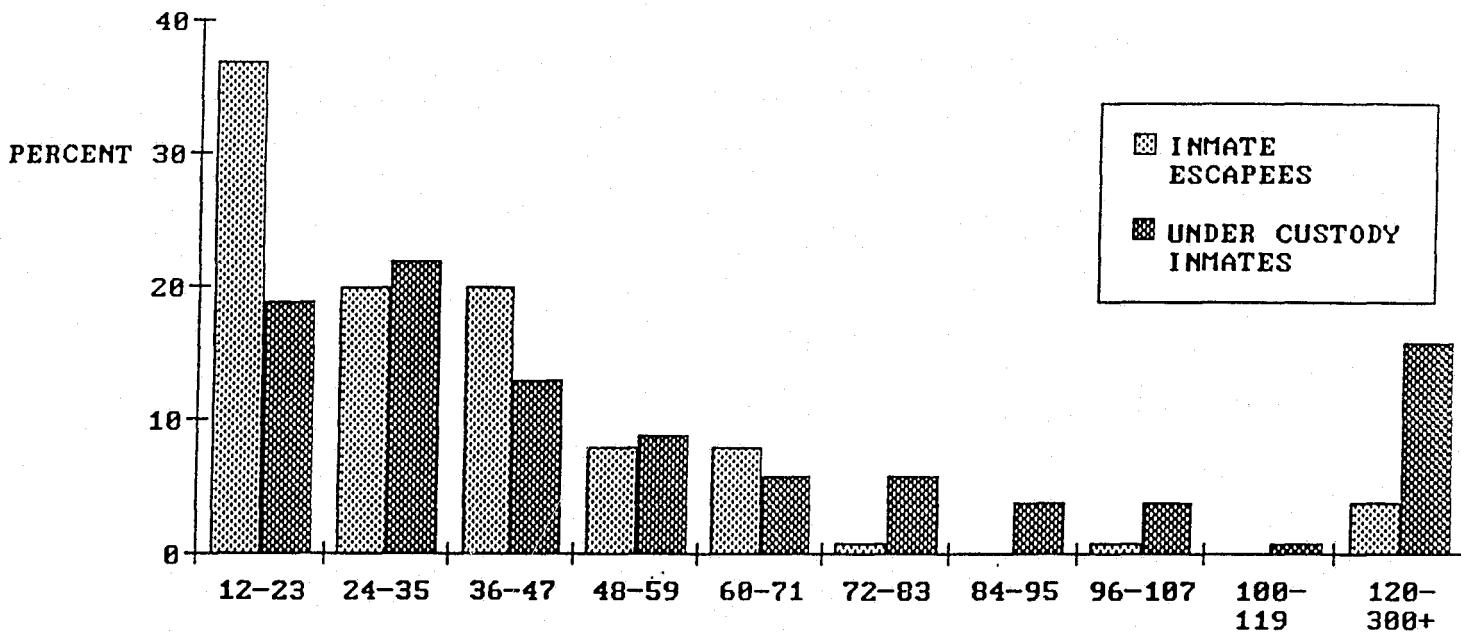
AGGREGATE MINIMUM SENTENCE (IN MONTHS)	1985		1986		1987		1988		1989		TOTAL	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
12- 23	7	41%	7	37%	5	42%	2	40%	3	25%	24	37%
24- 35	4	24%	0	0%	2	17%	3	60%	4	34%	13	20%
36- 47	3	18%	6	32%	3	25%	0	0%	1	8%	13	20%
48- 59	0	0%	1	5%	2	17%	0	0%	2	17%	5	8%
60- 71	1	6%	3	16%	0	0%	0	0%	1	8%	5	8%
72- 83	1	6%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	1%
84- 95	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
96-107	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	8%	1	1%
108-119	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
120-179	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
180-239	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
240-299	0	0%	1	5%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	1%
> 300	1	6%	1	5%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	2	3%
TOTAL	17	100%	19	100%	12	100%	5	100%	12	100%	65	100%

Table 6.2 shows the minimum sentence in months of escaped inmates during 1985-1989 as compared to the entire undercustody population for the same years. An examination of the table reveals that most escapees were serving shorter minimum sentences as compared to the undercustody population. When comparing escapees to total population, 37% of escapees were serving a minimum sentence of less than two years but only 19% of the undercustody population were serving minimum sentences of less than two years; 57% of escapees versus 41% of undercustody population were serving less than three years; 77% of escapees versus 54% of undercustody population were serving a minimum sentence of less than four years, and 85% of escapees versus 63% undercustody population were serving less than six years (see Chart 6). One explanation for the discrepancy between escapees and total inmate population in minimum sentences is that inmates sentenced for less serious offenses and shorter minimum sentences are more likely to be housed at minimum or medium security facilities, affording a greater opportunity for escape.

**TABLE 6.2**  
**AGGREGATE MINIMUM SENTENCE OF ESCAPEES AND**  
**OVERALL UNDERCUSTODY POPULATION**  
**1985 - 1989**

AGGREGATE MINIMUM SENTENCE (IN MONTHS)	ESCAPEES	AVERAGE UNDERCUSTODY POPULATION
12- 23	37%	19%
24- 35	20%	22%
36- 47	20%	13%
48- 59	8%	9%
60- 71	8%	6%
72- 83	1%	6%
84- 95	0%	4%
96-107	1%	4%
108-119	0%	1%
120-179	0%	5%
180-239	0%	5%
240-299	1%	2%
300 Plus	3%	4%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

CHART 6  
AGGREGATE MINIMUM SENTENCE  
INMATE ESCAPEES VS UNDER CUSTODY INMATES  
1985 - 1989



AGGREGATE MINIMUM SENTENCE  
(in months)

B. MAXIMUM SENTENCE OF INMATE ESCAPEES

Table 6.3 shows the maximum sentences of inmate escapees for the time period of 1985-1989. The percentage totals of maximum sentence categories show dissimilarity in year to year comparisons. While in 1985 (64%), 1988 (60%), and 1989 (58%) most escapees were serving maximum sentences of less than five years, in 1986 (63%) and 1987 (59%) most escapees were serving maximum sentences of more than five years. Additionally, the percentages reveal that in the total for the five year span, 51% of escapes were serving maximum sentences of less than five years but 17% of escapes (N=11) were serving maximum sentences of at least ten years.

TABLE 6.3

AGGREGATE MAXIMUM SENTENCE BY YEAR OF ESCAPE  
INMATE ESCAPES 1985 - 1989

AGGREGATE MAXIMUM SENTENCE (IN MONTHS)	1985		1986		1987		1988		1989		TOTAL	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
36- 47	6	35%	6	32%	5	42%	2	40%	3	25%	22	34%
48- 59	5	29%	1	5%	0	0%	1	20%	4	33%	11	17%
60- 71	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
72- 83	1	6%	1	5%	2	17%	2	40%	1	8%	7	11%
84- 95	2	12%	4	21%	2	17%	0	0%	0	0%	8	12%
96-107	0	0%	0	0%	2	17%	0	0%	2	17%	4	6%
108-119	0	0%	1	5%	1	8%	0	0%	0	0%	2	3%
120-179	2	12%	3	16%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	5	8%
180-239	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	2	17%	2	3%
240-299	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
25 YEARS TO LIFE	1	6%	3	16%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4	6%
TOTAL	17	100%	19	100%	12	100%	5	100%	12	100%	65	100%

The maximum sentences for escapees are compared to the entire undercustody population for the years 1985-1989 in Table 6.4. The largest differences occur at both ends of the maximum sentence continuum. While 34% of escaped inmates in the five year period had maximum sentences of less than four years, only 13% of the total correctional population had a maximum sentence of less than four years. In contrast, though 6% of escapees had maximum sentences of 25 years to life, 21% of the total undercustody population had sentences of that severity. The two inmate groups show more similarity in the maximum sentence range of between 5 and 15 years where 40% of escapees had received maximum sentences in this range and 39% of undercustody inmates received a maximum sentence of between 5 and 15 years.

TABLE 6.4  
AGGREGATE MAXIMUM SENTENCE OF ESCAPEES AND  
OVERALL UNDERCUSTODY POPULATION  
1985 - 1989

AGGREGATE MAXIMUM SENTENCE (IN MONTHS)	ESCAPEES 1985 - 1989	AVERAGE UNDERCUSTODY POPULATION 1985 - 1989
36- 47	34%	13%
48- 59	17%	16%
60- 71	0%	5%
72- 83	11%	10%
84- 95	12%	4%
96-107	6%	4%
108-119	3%	5%
120-179	8%	11%
180-239	3%	8%
240-299	0%	3%
25 YEARS TO LIFE	6%	21%
TOTAL	100%	100%

Section Seven

TIME SERVED TO DATE OF ESCAPE

The amount of time the escaped inmates had served at the time of their escape is displayed in Table 7.1. For 1989, 75% (N=9) of the inmates had served less than 18 months of their prison sentence, while the remaining 25% (N=3) had served between two and four years. One inmate escaped only 19 days after receipt into state custody; two others had served nearly four years. One explanation of the short average time period served by the inmates is that many inmates who are assigned to minimum custody facilities are serving relatively short sentences for less serious offenses. As most escapes occur from minimum custody facilities, the amount of time served is also less.

A comparison of time served in 1989 to the time period of 1985-1989 reveals that the two periods are similar. In both periods 75% of the escaped inmates had served less than 18 months.

TABLE 7.1

TIME SERVED PRIOR TO ESCAPE BY YEAR OF ESCAPE  
INMATE ESCAPEES 1985 - 1989

TIME SERVED (IN MONTHS)	1985		1986		1987		1988		1989		TOTAL	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
≤ 6	7	41%	5	26%	6	50%	1	20%	5	42%	24	37%
6-11	4	24%	7	37%	1	8%	3	60%	2	17%	17	26%
12-17	2	12%	3	16%	1	8%	0	0%	2	17%	8	12%
18-23	2	12%	2	11%	2	17%	1	20%	0	0%	7	11%
24-35	0	0%	1	5%	0	0%	0	0%	1	8%	2	3%
36-47	1	6%	0	0%	2	17%	0	0%	2	17%	5	8%
48-59	1	6%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	1%
60-71	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
> 72	0	0%	1	5%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	1%
TOTAL	17	100%	19	100%	12	100%	5	100%	12	100%	65	100%



Table 7.2 presents a comparison of the amount of time served in prison between inmate escapees for 1985 through 1989 and the total undercustody population for the same five years. The data for the undercustody population is derived from the correctional population as of December 31 for each year. An examination of Table 7.2 reveals that escapees, on average, have served less time when compared to the total inmate population (see also Chart 7).

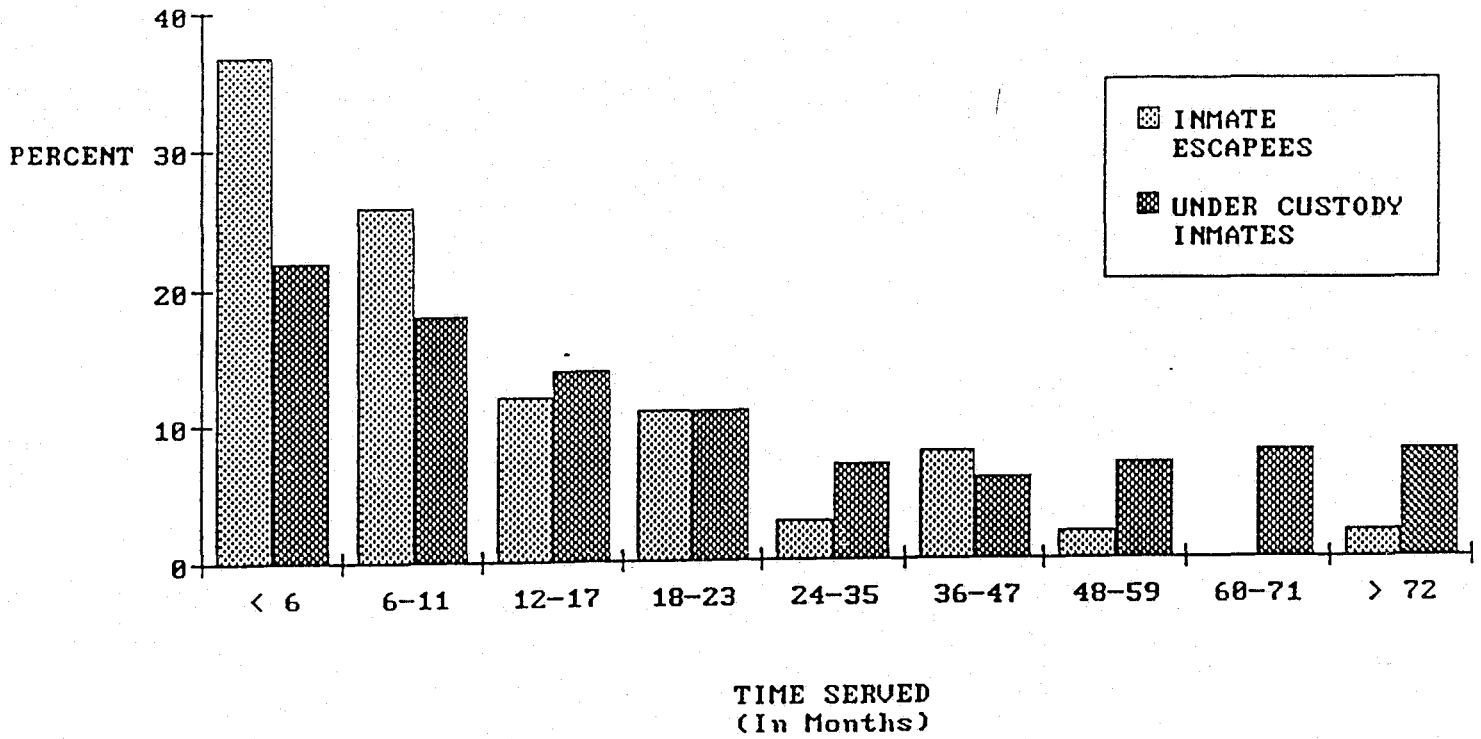
Differences are most pronounced at both the low and high end of the time served continuum. For example, 37% of escaped inmates had served less than six months and 63% had served less than one year. In comparison, 23% of the undercustody population had served less than six months and 42% had served less than one year.

Additionally, while 2% (N=2) of the escaped inmates from 1985-1989 had served four or more years, 21% of the total number of inmates undercustody had served more than four years.

TABLE 7.2  
TIME SERVED TO DATE OF ESCAPE AND  
TIME SERVED OF UNDERCUSTODY POPULATION  
1985 - 1989

TIME SERVED (IN MONTHS)	TIME SERVED TO DATE OF ESCAPE	TIME SERVED BY UNDERCUSTODY POPULATION
< 6	37%	23%
6-11	26%	19%
12-17	12%	13%
18-23	11%	10%
24-35	3%	8%
36-47	8%	6%
48-59	1%	6%
60-72	0%	7%
> 72	1%	8%
TOTAL	100%	100%

CHART 7  
TIME SERVED IN PRISON  
INMATE ESCAPEES VS UNDER CUSTODY INMATES  
1985 - 1989



Section Eight

DURATION OF ESCAPE AND SUBSEQUENT CRIMES

In 1989, 12 inmates escaped from custody but all were apprehended by correctional staff or police. Eight escapees were caught within 12 hours of their escape, while two remained at large for more than three days.

Of the 65 inmates who escaped from custody during the time period of 1985-1989, 51% (N=33) were caught within 12 hours and 83% (N=54) were taken into custody within 48 hours. Five inmates were not captured for more than two weeks. Chart 8.1 graphically depicts the time inmates were on escape status prior to apprehension (see p.28).

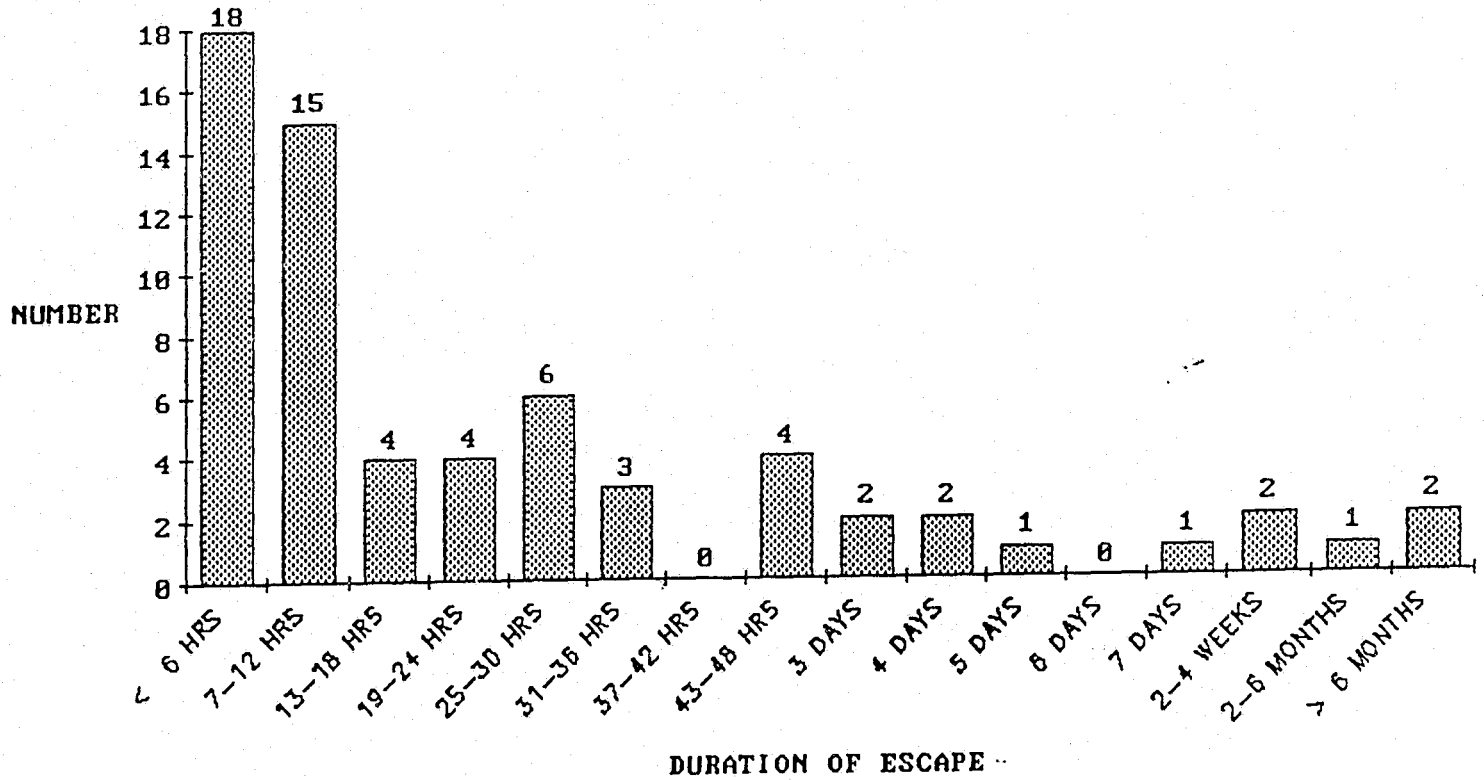
While any escapes by inmates are of concern to correctional officials and the public, an added consideration is whether any escapee commits additional crimes while on escape status. Of the 12 escapees in 1989, two were charged with additional crimes. A minimum custody inmate stole a truck to escape from the prison locale. A medium custody escapee fled the state upon his escape, and was apprehended in an adjacent state and charged with attempted possession of a criminal instrument.

TABLE 8

DURATION OF ESCAPE BY YEAR OF ESCAPE  
INMATE ESCAPEES 1985 - 1989

ESCAPE DURATION	1985		1986		1987		1988		1989		TOTAL	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
< 6 HRS	8	47%	7	37%	0	0%	0	0%	3	25%	18	28%
7-12 HRS	4	24%	2	11%	3	25%	1	20%	5	42%	15	23%
13-18 HRS	0	0%	0	0%	1	8%	2	40%	1	8%	4	6%
19-24 HRS	0	0%	0	0%	4	33%	0	0%	0	0%	4	6%
25-30 HRS	2	12%	3	16%	1	8%	0	0%	0	0%	6	9%
31-36 HRS	1	6%	0	0%	0	0%	1	20%	1	8%	3	5%
37-42 HRS	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
43-48 HRS	0	0%	3	15%	0	0%	1	20%	0	0%	4	6%
3 DAYS	0	0%	0	0%	1	8%	0	0%	1	8%	2	3%
4 DAYS	1	5%	1	5%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	2	3%
5 DAYS	0	0%	0	0%	1	8%	0	0%	0	0%	1	2%
6 DAYS	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
7 DAYS	0	0%	1	5%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	2%
2-4 WKS	0	0%	1	5%	1	8%	0	0%	0	0%	2	3%
2-6 Mths	1	5%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	2%
> 6 Mths	0	0%	1	5%	0	0%	0	0%	1	8%	2	3%
TOTAL	17	100%	19	100%	12	100%	5	100%	12	100%	65	100%

CHART 8  
DURATION OF ESCAPE  
1985 -1989



## APPENDIX A

The following cases are a brief description of the circumstances surrounding the escape of an inmate.

### ESCAPES - 1985

<u>FACILITY</u>	<u>MODE OF ESCAPE</u>
Fishkill	Under a truck
Mid-State	Walk away from outside work detail
Mid-State	Walk away from outside work detail
Edgecombe	Walked out of basement door
Camp Monterey	Walk away
Great Meadow	Industries truck from facility
Camp Gabriel	Walk away
Fulton	Walked out rear gate
Ogdensburg	Walk away from outside work detail
Ogdensburg	Walk away from outside work detail
Camp Monterey	Walk away
Mid-Orange	Over fence
Mid-Orange	Over fence
Camp Pharsalia	Walk away after removing window screen
Hudson	Unknown
Rochester	Over fence (minimum security facility)
Lincoln	Unknown

ESCAPES - 1986

<u>FACILITY</u>	<u>MODE OF ESCAPE</u>
Edgecombe	Through window
Hudson	Unknown
Hudson	Over fence
Fallsburg Annex	Over fence
Camp Monterey	Walk away
Camp Gabriels	Walk away
Orleans	Walk away from outside work site
Orleans	Walk away from outside work site
Camp McGregor	Walk away
Camp McGregor	Walk away
Camp Monterey	Walk away from dorm
Camp Monterey	Walk away from dorm
Mid-Orange	Unknown
Hudson	Over fence
Hudson	Over fence
Camp Gabriels	Walk away
Sing Sing	Perimeter fence cut
Sing Sing	Perimeter fence cut
Sing Sing	Perimeter fence cut

ESCAPES - 1987

<u>FACILITY</u>	<u>MODE OF ESCAPE</u>
Eastern	Car from farm annex
Eastern	Car from farm annex
Camp Monterey	On foot from dorm
Collins	Walk away
Edgecombe	Over fence (minimum security facility)
Camp McGregor	Walk away
Camp Georgetown	From work detail by jeep
Camp Georgetown	From work detail by jeep
Queensboro	Front door on work release
Queensboro	Walked out front door
Camp Beacon	Walk away from dorm
Camp Summit	Walk away from dorm

ESCAPES - 1988

<u>FACILITY</u>	<u>MODE OF ESCAPE</u>
Camp Georgetown	On foot from boiler room
Camp Pharsalia	Via conservation truck
Camp Pharsalia	Walk away from dorm
Fallsburg Annex	Walk away
Camp Beacon	Walk away from dorm

ESCAPES - 1989

<u>FACILITY</u>	<u>MODE OF ESCAPE</u>
Edgecombe	Ran out of front door
Collins	Walk away outside work detail
Arthur Kill	Hidden inside dumpster
Arthur Kill	Hidden inside dumpster later charged with criminal possession of stolen instrument
Camp Georgetown	Walk away from dorm later charged with theft of motor vehicle
Camp Georgetown	Walk away from dorm
Camp Groveland	Walk away from housing unit
Camp Gabriels	Walk away from outside work crew
Mid-Orange	Walk away from outside work crew
Camp McGregor	From SHU over fence
Edgecombe	Messhall - walked out the door
Collins	Walk away from outside garage