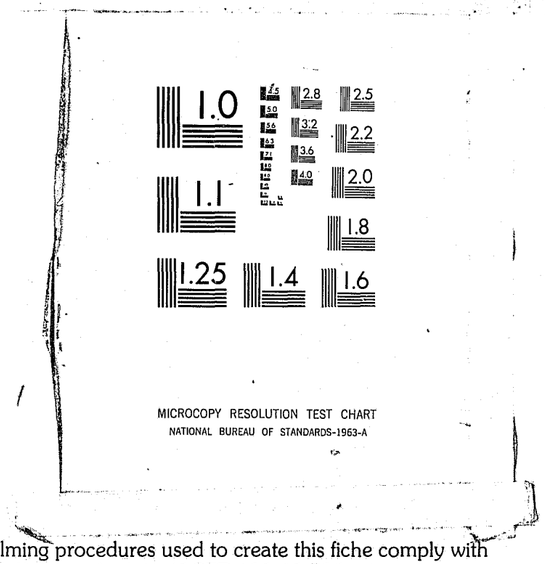
If you have issues viewing or accessing this file contact us at NCJRS.gov.

National Criminal Justice Reference Service

ncjrs

This microfiche was produced from documents received for inclusion in the NCJRS data base. Since NCJRS cannot exercise control over the physical condition of the documents submitted, the individual frame quality will vary. The resolution chart on this frame may be used to evaluate the document quality.



Microfilming procedures used to create this fiche comply with the standards set forth in 41CFR 101-11.504.

Points of view or opinions stated in this document are those of the author(s) and do not represent the official position or policies of the U. S. Department of Justice.

National Institute of Justice
United States Department of Justice
Washington, D.C. 20531

DATE FILMED

2-1-82

MF-1

THE IOWA OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT SCORING SYSTEM

Volume I: System Overview and Coding Procedures

U.S. Department of Justice
National Institute of Justice

This document has been reproduced exactly as received from the person or organization originating it. Points of view or opinions stated in this document are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the National Institute of Justice.

Permission to reproduce this ~~copyrighted~~ material has been granted by Public Domain LEAA, U.S. Dept. of Justice

to the National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS).

Further reproduction outside of the NCJRS system requires permission of the ~~copyright~~ owner.

Statistical Analysis Center
Office for Planning and Programming
State of Iowa

October, 1980

80192

Office for Planning and Programming
523 E. 12th Street
Des Moines, Iowa 50319
Robert F. Tyson, Director

Statistical Analysis Center

DIRECTOR - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - Paul Stageberg, M.A.

DATA COORDINATOR - - - - - - - - - - - - - Daryl R. Fischer, Ph.D.*

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PLANNER - - - - - - - Marcia L. Cohan, M.S.

RESEARCH ANALYST - - - - - - - - - - - - - Fu-hau Yu, M.S.**

PROGRAMMER ANALYST - - - - - - - - - - - - Gail L. Bontrager, M.P.A.

SECRETARY - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - Joyce L. Samo

* Study Coordinator/Author
** Study Assistant/Data Processing Support

This report was published through financial assistance provided by the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, U.S. Dept. of Justice, through grants 79-MU-AX-0010 and 80-BS-CX-0021. Points of view or opinions contained herein do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Dept. of Justice.

INTRODUCTION

This report from the Statistical Analysis Center serves to introduce the Offender Risk Assessment Scoring System, which provides a statistical method of assessing the risk - and potential seriousness - of new criminal charges posed by the release of a given charged or convicted offender. In addition to providing for a general assessment of risk, the system allows for an assessment of the risk of violence, which is an atypical but highly advantageous aspect of the technique.

The risk assessment system is one product of a five-year study of correctional experiences in Iowa begun while the author was employed by the Bureau of Correctional Evaluation of the Iowa Department of Social Services (1975-1977), and continued during his tenure with the Statistical Analysis Center (1978-1980). All data on which the study and development were based are from a correctional evaluation data system maintained from early 1974 through mid-1979.

Specifically, the system was developed through a painstaking analysis of offender characteristics associated with the occurrence of new criminal charges and unfavorable outcome among 6337 adult probationers and parolees released from caseloads in Iowa during the three-year period 1974-1976. Development was completed in the late summer of 1980, and the system was then validated against a separate data set to insure that the methods would be effective in practice.

The new data set consisted of records of 9387 adult probationers and parolees released from caseloads during 1977-1979. Validation efforts have clearly established that the system has an uncommon degree of accuracy in predicting the likelihood and potential seriousness of new criminal acts by released offenders. In fact, the author can find no record of systems developed elsewhere that can approach the accuracy or versatility of the proposed system.

The Offender Risk Assessment Scoring System can be used at any decision state of criminal justice at which judgments are routinely made of the risk of recidivism, violence, or flight. The system applies equally well to felons and misdemeanants, and without regard to the past movement of the offender in the justice system process. Thus it can be used by pre-trial release on recognizance and release-with-services staffs for offender screening, by prosecutorial staff to target "career criminals," by judges and pre-sentence investigators as input to sentencing recommendations and decisions, by probation and parole officers to help manage their cases, by institutional staff in custody decisions, and by the parole board in its decision-making, among others.

The system was so constructed that its proper application should result in significant reductions in revocation and re-arrest rates, and thereby lead to enhanced public protection, with little or no added cost to the taxpayer.

The present document, which is Volume I of a series, provides an overview of the system and details the coding procedures necessary to use it. In addition, a wide range of statistical information is

NCJRS

JUL 14 1981

presented concerning 1) the statistical validity of the system, 2) the applicability of the system to various correctional populations in Iowa, and 3) profiles of offenders falling in each of the eight risk levels of the general risk assessment. The author feels that sufficient information is given to allow the user to determine suitable means of applying the system in actual decision-making. Subsequent volumes of the series will pursue in greater depth the multitude of policy-related questions raised by the prospective use of the method.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Introduction	-i-
Table of Contents	-iii-
Summary	-iv-
System Overview	-1-
Contrasts with Existing Practices	-83-
Coding Procedures	-86-

SUMMARY

The Statistical Analysis Center has completed the development of an offender screening tool designed to assist criminal justice decision-makers, such as judges, probation and parole officers, and parole board members, with the difficult decisions as to which offenders pose the greatest threat to society if released. The Offender Risk Assessment Scoring System allows two separate but complementary assessments of risk, including 1) a general assessment - which predicts the likelihood and potential seriousness of new criminal acts in general, and 2) a violence assessment - which predicts the likelihood of new crimes against persons.

There are several fundamental observations that recommend the use of this particular system as an aid to release decision-making:

A. Predictive Efficiency The Statistical Analysis Center feels that a breakthrough has been achieved with respect to the predictive efficiency or statistical validity of risk prediction. Values of the Mean Cost Rating (MCR) and the Coefficient of Predictive Efficiency (CPE) have been achieved which are much higher than same for existing systems with which SAC is familiar.[1] It is believed that the high values of MCR and CPE, and the resulting gain in predictive efficiency, are due to the extended period of time devoted to development (five years), to the large data available to the research staff (15,724 cases), and to the application of a variety of methods (additive and configural methods for the most part) in the analysis of data.

It is the opinion of the staff that with the proposed system 1) the general public can be better protected, 2) existing recidivism rates can be reduced by up to a third, and 3) we can achieve the above with less public expenditure for criminal justice. SAC has demonstrated this possibility through the development of explicit "prescriptive" sentencing and parole guidelines - based in part on the risk assessment system - which embrace these features. These contingencies are possible given the high degree of efficiency of the system in pinpointing potential recidivists and non-recidivists.

B. Contrast with Current Decision Patterns In conjunction with the work on risk assessment, the Statistical Analysis Center has been involved in a study of recent decision patterns affecting offender movement within Iowa's felony sentencing and corrections system. Efforts have been devoted to predict or explain these decisions in a manner similar to the approach involved in risk assessment.

[1] SAC has undertaken a review of previous research in risk prediction, and can find no risk assessment device developed elsewhere with an MCR or CPE approaching those for the Iowa system (MCR = .637 and CPE = .807 in the combined sample for the general risk assessment).

It was discovered, for example, that the seriousness of charged or convicting offenses, the number of past prison sentences and other adult convictions, and previous offender behavior during the current involvement are factors that are given heavy weight in release decision-making in Iowa. On the other hand, these factors are not among the best predictors of recidivism. The best predictors include current age, age at first arrest, number of prior arrests, number of prior (juvenile and adult) incarcerations, and the type of convicting offense (persons convicted of burglary, car theft, robbery, forgery, and bad checks are the most likely to repeat). It is likely, then, that the statistical method of risk assessment can help decision-makers move in the direction of a more accurate assessment of risk in terms of such factors.

C. The Versatility of the Proposed System One of the most attractive features of the system proposed here is the inclusion of an explicit assessment of violence risk. This feature is virtually unique among systems of a similar nature.[1] The availability of a violence risk prediction device addresses the extraordinary concern with potential violence manifested by release decision-makers in Iowa, and the concern that a lower risk violent offender as identified by the general assessment may still pose a risk of violence.

Another useful feature of the Iowa system is the presence of four levels of high risk offenders, namely those rated HIGH RISK, VERY-HIGH RISK, ULTRA-HIGH RISK, and SUPER RECIDIVIST. This feature allows a distinction as to "how high risk" a high risk offender really is, and helps differentiate the very worst cases from those that might be viewed as marginal. In practice, it is envisioned that imprisonment would be used more frequently for those rated SUPER RECIDIVIST or ULTRA-HIGH RISK than for those rated VERY-HIGH RISK or HIGH RISK. It is the feeling of the staff that this feature will alleviate some of the concerns of those who object to the high risk ratings attached to many younger property offenders. With regard to this latter point, we might note here that although the better share (60%) of SUPER RECIDIVISTS in our study sample were 18 and 19-year olds, they nonetheless had averaged 10.6 prior arrests, 6.5 prior convictions, and 4.5 prior incarcerations.

D. A Preponderence of Lower Risk Offenders The final configuration of the Iowa system is such that a disporportionately large share of offenders in the Iowa corrections system are rated as less than average risks by the method. In fact, in our study sample of 12,517 cases, 64.4% of offenders are rated as below average risk (LOW-MEDIUM, LOW or VERY-LOW RISK), and 71.3% as average risk or below (including HIGH-

[1] The Michigan Department of Corrections also uses violence risk prediction.

MEDIUM RISK). Accordingly, it is envisioned that we can greatly reduce public expenditures for criminal justice by decreasing the extent of prosecutorial, incapacitative, and rehabilitative efforts directed against lower risk offenders. In turn, the concomitant cost savings of such a strategy could be directed, in part, to increased efforts directed at higher risk offenders. In our opinion, a net savings can be attained with use of the proposed system, in conjunction with a reduction in recidivism rates - and enhanced public protection, that would draw from more effective control of the higher risk offender.

SAC estimates, for example, that with the implementation of a currently available set of sentencing guidelines based in part on risk,[1] we could achieve the seemingly impossible feat of 1) reducing the commitment rate to state prisons by 17%, and 2) reducing the probation violation rate by 30%.

The question of the predictive efficiency of the proposed system is an important one, and is dealt with in detail in the body of the report. The table on the following page provides a handy guide to the statistical validity of the general risk assessment component of the system. A close examination of the table will acquaint the reader with many of the most salient features of the method.

[1] This set of "prescriptive" sentencing guidelines was developed by SAC and was tested against the body of felons convicted in Iowa during 1974-1976 to determine the likely impact of the system on commitment rates and recidivism. A similar set of parole guidelines is under construction.

STATISTICAL VALIDITY OF THE GENERAL RISK ASSESSMENT

OFFENDER RISK RATING	TOTAL CASES	REVOCATION/ ABSCONDER	REARRESTED 18-MONTH FOLLOW-UP	THREAT TO PUBLIC SAFETY
SUPER RECIDIVIST	290	64.3%	88.3%	95.2%
ULTRA-HIGH RISK	472	48.9%	78.6%	73.4%
VERY-HIGH RISK	1561	42.4%	66.6%	62.8%
HIGH RISK	1269	31.0%	51.8%	45.3%
HIGH-MEDIUM RISK	860	22.3%	34.6%	26.6%
LOW-MEDIUM RISK	3235	14.8%	22.8%	18.2%
LOW RISK	2015	7.4%	14.6%	9.4%
VERY-LOW RISK	2815	3.0%	8.2%	4.5%
ALL HIGH RISK	3592	41.0%	64.7%	60.6%
ALL MEDIUM RISK	4095	16.4%	25.3%	20.0%
ALL LOW RISK	4830	4.8%	10.9%	6.5%
ALL OFFENDERS	12,517	19.0%	31.0%	26.5%

[1] See pages 2-5 for a precise definition of this measure of the threat posed by release of the offender. It is there referred to as the OUTCOME INDEX.

SYSTEM OVERVIEW

The Offender Risk Assessment Scoring System was developed by the Statistical Analysis Center to provide direct assistance to system decision-makers faced with making judgments of the risk involved in releasing charged or convicted offenders to the free community. As such, it is a measure of several things.

First, it rates or ranks offenders according to the simple probability of re-arrest, revocation, or flight. Thus, the higher the risk rating, the more likely are offenders to become recidivists or to continue a pattern of recidivism.

Secondly, it rates or ranks offenders according to the likely number of new criminal charges upon release. Thus, offender types prone to greater numbers of new charges per arrest, in addition to - or in lieu of - a greater likelihood of re-arrest, would be rated as higher risk than counterparts not so-prone. This system rates Group A - with twice the likelihood of re-arrest but half the expected number of new charges per arrest as Group B - as of the same risk as Group B, all else equal.

Thirdly, the system predicts the seriousness of new criminal charges by assigning higher risk ratings to offender types prone to more serious charges than to counterparts not so-prone, all else equal. Thus, if Group A has the same probability, and expected number, of new charges as Group B, but is more prone to crimes against persons - or to felonies as opposed to misdemeanors - than the former will likely be rated as higher risk than the latter. In addition, the system provides a separate assessment - based in part on the general assessment - of the risk of violence or of new crimes against persons. Thus the emphasis on predicting the seriousness of new charges is both implicit (in the general assessment) and explicit (in the violence assessment).

In sum, the Offender Risk Assessment Scoring System measures the extent to which various types of offenders pose a threat to society in terms of the probability, and the expected number and seriousness, of new criminal acts during a given period of street time. Additionally, the system has been shown - as would be expected - to rate individuals according to the probability that a release condition - such as probation, parole, or work release - would be revoked, or that the offender would abscond or escape if given the opportunity. This follows - in part - since new criminal charges frequently lead to revocation or to an attempt by the offender to avoid arrest or detention. Secondarily, this follows from the fact that the system also predicts - to a somewhat lesser extent - the occurrence of technical violations of release agreements, i.e., offenders who are prone to new criminal charges are also prone to violate rules by drinking, using drugs, carrying weapons, rejecting supervision, etc.

In addition to its use in predicting recidivism, the system has been shown to predict misconduct among inmates of adult correctional institutions, and community residential facilities, including escape, assaultiveness, and other forms of maladjustment. At the pre-trial stage, the system is efficient in predicting failures to appear for scheduled court dates and re-arrests prior to final adjudication.

In general, research establishes that the Offender Risk Assessment Scoring System predicts unacceptable behavior and associated sanctions throughout the criminal justice process.

The system, as currently structured, may be used to assess risk for any adult charged with or convicted of a criminal offense, whatever the level of the charge. It was developed through an analysis of offender characteristics associated with unfavorable outcome among 6337 adult probationers and parolees released from caseloads in Iowa during the three-year period 1974-1976. For each of these cases, data were available on 1) up to three new criminal charges (if any), 2) type of release (discharge, revocation, escape/absconder), and 3) jail time prior to release. All outcome information reflected offender behavior and system response during the period of probation or parole, which averaged 11.7 months per offender.

To address the three concerns of 1) re-arrest probability, 2) number of new criminal charges, and 3) the seriousness of new charges, a statistical measure of unfavorable outcome was developed that reflects a combination of all three factors. This measure, called WEIGHTED OUTCOME, was defined as a weighted sum of outcome factors as follows:

WEIGHTED OUTCOME =

5 x number of new felony charges against persons +

4 x number of new Part I[1] felony charges not against persons +

3 x number of new Part II[2] felony charges not against persons +

2 x number of new indictable (now serious) misdemeanors +

1 x number of new simple misdemeanors +

2 if the offender was released by revocation +

1 if the offender was released as an absconder +

1 if the offender was discharged without new charges but spent time in jail prior to release (for technical violations)

Since available data covered up to three new charges, the maximum possible WEIGHTED OUTCOME that could be recorded would be 15 points for 3 new felonies against persons, plus 2 points for a revocation, or 17 points. The minimum would of course be 0, when the offender was discharged without new charges or jail time.

For any group of offenders under study, the average value of WEIGHTED OUTCOME, over all members of the group, was taken as a measure of group outcome. This works out to be identical to the result of computing the WEIGHTED OUTCOME measure directly from a list of all new charges (up to 3 per person), numbers released in each manner, and numbers discharged with jail time but no new charges, and dividing by total cases in the group. Thus, we need only total group outcome - without tying the outcome to individuals - in order to compute a group-based weighted outcome measure.

---

[1] Part I crimes not against persons include burglary, larceny, and motor vehicle theft.

[2] Part II crimes includes all non-Part I crimes.

For all 6337 cases in the study sample, WEIGHTED OUTCOME was computed as 1.182, that is, the average value of WEIGHTED OUTCOME over all cases was 1.182.

The goal of the analysis, then, was to discover, and somehow combine offender characteristics associated with high or low values of WEIGHTED OUTCOME. Stated otherwise, an effort was made to "split" offender categories away from the total group outcome of 1.182.

To accomplish this end a wide range of variables in the data base were examined, including demographic, socio-economic, current offense, and prior record information. The following variables were found to associate significantly with the weighted outcome measure (not necessarily in the order of strength of association):

CURRENT OFFENSES (type not seriousness - from arrest on)
CURRENT AGE
AGE AT FIRST ARREST
PRIOR ARRESTS
JUVENILE CONVICTIONS (probations, commitments)
JUVENILE COMMITMENTS
PRIOR ADULT CONVICTIONS
PRIOR ADULT JAIL TERMS
PRIOR ADULT (PRISON) COMMITMENTS
PRIOR (JUVENILE OR ADULT) PROBATIONS
PRIOR (JUVENILE OR ADULT) CONVICTIONS
PRIOR ADULT INCARCERATIONS
PRIOR INCARCERATIONS
PRIOR JAIL TERMS/JUVENILE COMMITMENTS
PRIOR JAIL/PRISON/PROBATION
KNOWN ALIASES?
HISTORY OF DRUG OR ALCOHOL PROBLEM? NARCOTICS USE?
UNEMPLOYED? (most recent status in community)
EMPLOYABLE SKILL?
HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA? GED?
YEARS OF SCHOOL
LEGALLY MARRIED?
PRE-TRIAL SERVICES OR DETENTION?
PROBATION TIME IN JAIL/RESIDENCE?

The basic approach of the research was then to develop the best predictive strategy possible by combining categories of these variables. This process was a long and involved one, which - to the current date - has led to approximately 80 separate and distinct risk assessment devices of varying degrees of accuracy. The common thread in all this has been that as time progressed refinements have led to improved predictive ability and thus to greater potential utility of the devices in applied risk assessment.

In all, approximately 3000 man-hours and $300,000 have been devoted to activities that - in one way or another - have led to the development of the risk assessment system proposed here.

Before discussing the coding procedure necessary to use the system in actual offender screening, it is well to discuss the question of the statistical validity of the system in predicting recidivism and/or violence. In particular, how well does the general risk assessment component of the system predict the frequency (probability), number, and seriousness of new charges as reflected in our outcome measure?

To address this question, the "predictive efficiency" of the general risk assessment can be measured within both the construction sample of 6337 cases, and within the so-called validation sample of 9387 cases. This latter sample reflects the population of adult probationers and parolees who were released from caseloads during 1977-1979, whereas - as mentioned previously - the construction sample covered the years 1974-1976. Because the reporting agencies did not report complete data on every case, the final figures on statistical validity concern somewhat smaller offender populations, namely 4704 offenders in the construction sample and 7813 in the validation sample, or 12,517 overall.

The final general risk assessment classifies offenders into eight risk levels (or risk ratings) varying from VERY-LOW RISK to SUPER RECIDIVIST. The following is a complete listing of these ratings, together with the number and percentage of cases falling under each rating in the construction, validation, and combined samples:

GENERAL RISK RATING (LEVEL)	TOTAL CASES		
	CONSTRUCTION	VALIDATION	COMBINED
SUPER RECIDIVIST	101 (2.1%)	189 (2.4%)	290 (2.3%)
ULTRA-HIGH RISK	168 (3.6%)	304 (3.9%)	472 (3.8%)
VERY-HIGH RISK	485 (10.3%)	1076 (13.8%)	1,561 (12.5%)
HIGH RISK	436 (9.3%)	833 (10.7%)	1,269 (10.1%)
HIGH-MEDIUM RISK	310 (6.6%)	550 (7.0%)	860 (6.9%)
LOW-MEDIUM RISK	1188 (25.3%)	2047 (26.2%)	3,235 (25.8%)
LOW RISK	781 (16.6%)	1234 (15.8%)	2,015 (16.1%)
VERY-LOW RISK	1235 (26.3%)	1580 (20.2%)	2,815 (22.5%)
ALL OFFENDERS	4704 (100.0%)	7813 (100.0%)	12,517 (100.0%)

The reader will note 1) that the general risk assessment system breaks down the offender population into four levels of high risk offenders, two of medium risk, and two of low risk, 2) that a disproportionate share of cases fall in lower risk levels, 3) that the two highest risk levels - SUPER RECIDIVIST and ULTRA-HIGH RISK - contain by far the fewest cases, and 4) that the four high risk levels together contain about the same fraction of the cases as the two medium risk levels together.

Next, to discuss the statistical validity - or predictive efficiency - of the system, we examine the values of WEIGHTED OUTCOME within each of the eight risk levels, for the construction, validation, and combined samples:

GENERAL RISK RATING (LEVEL)	WEIGHTED OUTCOME		
	CONSTRUCTION	VALIDATION	COMBINED
SUPER RECIDIVIST	4.56	4.23	4.34
ULTRA-HIGH RISK	3.51	3.26	3.35
VERY-HIGH RISK	3.02	2.80	2.87
HIGH RISK	2.01	2.09	2.07
HIGH-MEDIUM RISK	1.31	1.16	1.21
LOW-MEDIUM RISK	0.97	0.75	0.83
LOW RISK	0.51	0.38	0.43
VERY-LOW RISK	0.17	0.23	0.21
ALL OFFENDERS	1.18	1.22	1.21

Before discussing statistical validity in detail, it is appropriate to make a change of scale in the measure WEIGHTED OUTCOME so that it varies from 0% to 100%, thinking of 0% as "no recidivism" or "totally favorable outcome," and 100% as complete or "perfect recidivism" or "totally unfavorable outcome." After studying the performance of all categories, including actual rates of re-arrest, revocation, etc., it was decided that the scale should be changed so that the scaled-up (or down) outcome measure should attain a value of 100% for the SUPER RECIDIVIST category in the construction sample. In other words, the (negative) performance of super recidivists in the construction sample was taken as a base, with the outcome for any other group expressed as a percentage of this base. This seemed highly intuitive and was well-supported by the performance of this group.

We thus defined:

$$\text{OUTCOME INDEX} = \frac{\text{WEIGHTED OUTCOME}}{4.56} \times 100\%$$

This change of scale in no way alters the relative degree of success or failure of any of the risk categories. It simply modifies the range of magnitude of the measure so that we can discuss all outcomes as varying between 0% and 100%. For example, with this definition, the OUTCOME INDEX for the HIGH-MEDIUM RISK category in the validation sample is:

$$\frac{1.16}{4.56} \times 100\% = 25.4\%$$

Likewise, the overall OUTCOME INDICES for the construction, validation, and combined samples come to:

$$\text{CONSTRUCTION:} \quad \frac{1.18}{4.56} \times 100\% = 25.9\%$$

$$\text{VALIDATION:} \quad \frac{1.22}{4.56} \times 100\% = 26.8\%$$

$$\text{COMBINED:} \quad \frac{1.21}{4.56} \times 100\% = 26.5\%$$

We can then think of the eight risk levels as "splitting away" offender categories and corresponding outcome indices from these population indices. The better or more complete is this splitting away, the greater the statistical validity or predictive efficiency of the system. In other terms, the more successful we are in pushing cases into higher risk and lower risk categories (away from the population rates), the better the prediction.

The table on the following page summarizes the relevant information on total cases and outcome indices within the construction, validation, and combined samples. The reader should study this table very carefully before going on.

A thorough appreciation of this table will allow an understanding of the extent to which the general risk assessment system does better than pure chance in predicting recidivism. To gain this appreciation, scan up and down the two columns within each sample, noting 1) the extent to which we have a magnitude of cases in higher risk levels coupled with higher outcome indices, and 2) the extent to which we have a magnitude of cases in lower risk levels coupled with lower risk ratings. What we are saying here is that one should compare the given results with the ideal result of perfect prediction, namely where we have HIGH RISK and LOW RISK offenders, the outcome index for the HIGH RISK is 100% and for the LOW RISK is 0%:

PERFECT PREDICTION
(combined sample)

RISK LEVEL	TOTAL CASES	OUTCOME INDEX
HIGH RISK	3317	100%
LOW RISK	9200	0%

The closer are the results to the perfect prediction displayed above, the greater the statistical validity or predictive efficency of the system.

To talk more intelligently about the extent to which we fall short of perfect prediction, it is appropriate to introduce the concept of "units" of success and failure within the study samples.

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
STATISTICAL VALIDITY

GENERAL RISK RATING	CONSTRUCTION		VALIDATION		COMBINED	
	TOTAL CASES	OUTCOME INDEX	TOTAL CASES	OUTCOME INDEX	TOTAL CASES	OUTCOME INDEX
SUPER RECIDIVIST	101	100.0%	189	92.7%	290	95.2%
ULTRA-HIGH RISK	168	77.0%	304	71.4%	472	73.4%
VERY-HIGH RISK	485	66.1%	1076	61.3%	1561	62.8%
HIGH RISK	436	44.1%	833	45.9%	1269	45.3%
HIGH-MEDIUM RISK	310	28.7%	550	25.4%	860	26.6%
LOW-MEDIUM RISK	1188	21.2%	2047	16.5%	3235	18.2%
LOW RISK	781	11.1%	1234	8.4%	2015	9.4%
VERY-LOW RISK	1235	3.8%	1580	5.0%	2815	4.5%
ALL OFFENDERS	4704	25.9%	7813	26.8%	12,517	26.5%

In most prediction studies, the researcher chooses a simple 0-1 outcome measure such as 0 = success and 1 = failure, where failure may be defined as the occurrence of a certain type of event, such as re-arrest (or the occurrence of any one of several events, such as re-arrest, revocation, or flight). In such a case, a group outcome measure is simply the percentage failing (or succeeding), which of course varies from 0% to 100%.

In this study, however, we use a weighted measure that can't be interpreted directly as a percentage of cases failing. However, with our change of scale to a measure varying from 0% to 100% (OUTCOME INDEX), we can think of "units" of success and failure within any of the three study populations. Thus, in the construction sample, the overall outcome index is 25.9%, and we can think of the 25.9% of the 4704 cases in that sample as composed of units of failure. Likewise, we can think of the 74.1% remainder of that sample as composed of units of success. Furthermore, we can think of this same breakdown into units of success and failure within any of the risk levels of any of the three samples. Thus, for the 1076 VERY-HIGH RISK offenders in the validation sample, we can think of 61.3% (the OUTCOME INDEX for this level in the sample) of the 1076 or 659.6 as being "units of failure" and the remaining 38.7% or 416.4 as being "units of success."

With the preceding convention, we can now talk about the predictive efficiency of the general risk assessment - and the extent to which we fall short of perfect prediction - in terms of the distribution of our units of success and failure among the eight risk levels.

IN PERFECT PREDICTION, WE HAVE 100% OF THE "FAILURES" IN THE HIGH RISK LEVEL, AND 100% OF THE "SUCCESSES" IN THE LOW RISK LEVEL.

How, then, do the successes and failures (our units) in the three study samples distribute among the eight risk levels? The answer to this question involves a very simple series of calculations, the results of which are summarized in the table on the following page.

In all three samples, we see the great bulk of success units falling in the three lowest risk levels - 80.9% in the construction sample, 75.9% in the validation sample, and 77.8% in the combined sample. Likewise, the better share of failure units fall in the four highest risk levels - 61.0% in the construction sample, 68.5% in the validation sample, and 65.8% in the combined sample. These features are consistent with the desire that a high percentage of the success units fall in lower risk levels and a high percentage of failure units in higher risk levels.

To better study this type of question, two additional tables were constructed, one showing cumulative percentages of success/failure units from the bottom up, and the other showing cumulative percentages from the top down. These two tables, which follow, allow us to readily determine the extent to which failure units concentrate in higher levels and success units in lower levels. For example, in the "bottom up" table, we see that 49.0% of the success units, and only 9.5% of the failure units, fall in the lowest two risk levels in the combined sample. Also, in the "top down" table, we see that 48.4% of the failure units, and only 7.8% of the success units, fall in the highest three risk levels in the combined sample. (Note: the reader should examine the bottom portion of the bottom-up table and the top portion of the top-down table).

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
DISTRIBUTION OF UNITS OF SUCCESS/FAILURE

GENERAL RISK RATING	CONSTRUCTION		VALIDATION		COMBINED	
	UNITS OF SUCCESS	UNITS OF FAILURE	UNITS OF SUCCESS	UNITS OF FAILURE	UNITS OF SUCCESS	UNITS OF FAILURE
SUPER RECIDIVIST	0.0%	8.3%	0.2%	8.4%	0.1%	8.3%
ULTRA-HIGH RISK	1.1%	10.6%	1.5%	10.4%	1.4%	10.5%
VERY-HIGH RISK	4.7%	26.3%	7.3%	31.5%	6.3%	29.6%
HIGH RISK	7.0%	15.8%	7.9%	18.2%	7.5%	17.4%
HIGH-MEDIUM RISK	6.3%	7.3%	7.2%	6.7%	6.9%	6.9%
LOW-MEDIUM RISK	26.9%	20.7%	29.9%	16.1%	28.8%	17.8%
LOW RISK	19.9%	7.1%	19.8%	5.0%	19.8%	5.7%
VERY-LOW RISK	34.1%	3.9%	26.2%	3.7%	29.2%	3.8%
TOTAL UNITS OF SUCCESS/FAILURE	3485.7	1218.3	5719.1	2093.9	9200.0	3317.0

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
BOTTOM-UP CUMULATIVE DISTRIBUTION OF UNITS OF SUCCESS/FAILURE

GENERAL RISK RATING	CONSTRUCTION		VALIDATION		COMBINED	
	UNITS OF SUCCESS	UNITS OF FAILURE	UNITS OF SUCCESS	UNITS OF FAILURE	UNITS OF SUCCESS	UNITS OF FAILURE
SUPER RECIDIVIST	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
ULTRA-HIGH RISK	100.0%	91.7%	99.8%	91.6%	99.9%	91.7%
VERY-HIGH RISK	98.9%	81.1%	98.3%	81.2%	98.5%	81.2%
HIGH RISK	94.2%	54.8%	91.0%	49.7%	92.2%	51.6%
HIGH-MEDIUM RISK	87.2%	39.0%	83.1%	31.5%	84.7%	34.2%
LOW-MEDIUM RISK	80.9%	31.7%	75.9%	24.8%	77.8%	27.3%
LOW RISK	54.0%	11.0%	46.0%	8.7%	49.0%	9.5%
VERY-LOW RISK	34.1%	3.9%	26.2%	3.7%	29.2%	3.8%
TOTAL UNITS OF SUCCESS/FAILURE	3485.7	1218.3	5719.1	2093.9	9200.0	3317.0

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
TOP-DOWN CUMULATIVE DISTRIBUTION OF UNITS OF SUCCESS/FAILURE

GENERAL RISK RATING	CONSTRUCTION		VALIDATION		COMBINED	
	UNITS OF SUCCESS	UNITS OF FAILURE	UNITS OF SUCCESS	UNITS OF FAILURE	UNITS OF SUCCESS	UNITS OF FAILURE
SUPER RECIDIVIST	0.0%	8.3%	0.2%	8.4%	0.1%	8.3%
ULTRA-HIGH RISK	1.1%	18.9%	1.7%	18.8%	1.5%	18.8%
VERY-HIGH RISK	5.8%	45.2%	9.0%	50.3%	7.8%	48.4%
HIGH RISK	12.8%	61.0%	16.9%	68.5%	15.3%	65.8%
HIGH-MEDIUM RISK	19.1%	68.3%	24.1%	75.2%	22.2%	72.7%
LOW-MEDIUM RISK	46.0%	89.0%	54.0%	91.3%	51.0%	90.5%
LOW RISK	65.9%	96.1%	73.8%	96.3%	70.8%	96.2%
VERY-LOW RISK	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
TOTAL UNITS OF SUCCESS/FAILURE	3485.7	1218.3	5719.1	2093.9	9200.0	3317.0

To more or less summarize the information contained in the three tables, and to provide one single measure of predictive efficiency, there is a statistic called the Mean Cost Rating (MCR) that can be computed directly from the cumulative percentages in either of the last two tables. This measure of the statistical validity of the general risk assessment varies from 0 (no prediction) to 1 (perfect prediction), and roughly estimates the fraction of the way from none to perfect prediction afforded by the method. The three values of MCR for the three samples are:

SAMPLE	MCR
CONSTRUCTION	.650
VALIDATION	.639
COMBINED	.637

From these values of MCR, we can see that the predictive efficiency of the method drops only slightly (from .650 to .639 or by 1.7%) from the construction to the validation sample. Since the method was developed solely with cases from the construction sample, we can see that the method actually "predicts" the future outcome of cases (1977-1979) from previous outcome patterns (1974-1976). Based on this result, we could expect the method to be valid if used for offender screening in the years to come. Thus we recommend its use in actual decision-making.

To give the reader an additional basis for evaluating the potential utility of the general risk assessment as a screening tool, we would like to compare our results with the results of a statistical study of the validity of the Salient Factor Score, a risk assessment device being used by the United State Parole Commission as one component of a set of parole guidelines.[1] The guidelines are used to set expected release dates for federal prisoners.

The Salient Factor Score is based on seven predictive items, including number of prior convictions, number of prior commitments, age at first commitment, auto theft or checks among committing offenses, past/current parole revocation or current probation revocation, history of heroin or opiate dependence, and verified employment (or full-time school attendance) for a total of at least 6 months during last 2 years in the community. The method assigns points to various categories of these items, and - upon addition - gives a "Salient Factor Score" that varies from 0 to 11. The score is then collapsed into four categories of risk or "parole prognosis."

---

[1] Peter B. Hoffman and Sheldon Adelberg, "The Salient Factor Score: A Non-technical Overview," Federal Probation, March, 1980.

The Salient Factor Score was developed from an analysis of 2497 cases of released Federal prisoners and of factors associated with unfavorable outcome in this group during a 2-year follow-up period, and was then validated against a separate sample of 2149 offenders.

Defining unfavorable outcome as 1) arrest for a new criminal offense resulting in a conviction and commitment of 60 days or more, or 2) return to prison as a parole mandatory release violator, or 3) a parole mandatory release absconder, the Salient Factor Score performed as follows on the construction, validation, and combined samples:

SALIENT FACTOR SCORE CATEGORY	CONSTRUCTION CASES	CONSTRUCTION UNFAV.	VALIDATION CASES	VALIDATION UNFAV.	COMBINED CASES	COMBINED UNFAV.
POOR	728	45.0%	641	42.0%	1369	43.6%
FAIR	660	35.6%	565	31.5%	1225	33.7%
GOOD	669	24.1%	564	18.6%	1233	21.6%
VERY GOOD	440	9.3%	379	5.5%	819	7.6%
ALL OFFENDERS	2497	30.6%	2149	26.7%	4646	28.8%

As computed by those responsible for the study, the values of MCR for the above data are as follows:

SAMPLE	MCR
CONSTRUCTION	.33
VALIDATION	.37
COMBINED	.35

There are several points that should be made concerning differences between the Iowa and the Federal figures. First, the Federal samples contained only ex-inmates of Federal institutions, whereas the Iowa samples contained both ex-inmates (parolees) and non-committed offenders (probationers). Secondly, the Federal study followed all offenders for a fixed two-year period, while the Iowa study followed each offender to his or her probation or parole release, which averaged 11.7 months from the date received. Thirdly, the Federal study used a different outcome measure that was not weighted as the Iowa measure was. Note, however, that the overall outcome measures - 26.5% for the Iowa combined sample and 28.8% for the Federal combined sample - were very close, so any difference in predictive efficiency is not due to a higher proportion of "failures" in either study.

It is well to point out with regard to the last point above that MCR depends not only on the absolute predictive efficiency of a device, but also on the magnitude of the overall outcome measure in the study group. In general, the closer this measure is to .50 or 50%, the higher

MCR will be. In the Iowa study, the overall measure on the combined sample was 26.5%. If, instead, the overall measure had been 50.0%, then a different set of results would have been obtained, giving a different value for MCR:

IOWA STUDY - COMBINED SAMPLE - 50% OUTCOME INDEX

GENERAL RISK RATING	TOTAL CASES	OUTCOME INDEX
HIGHER RISK[1]	4,452	102.1% (100.0%)
LOW-MEDIUM RISK	3,235	34.3% (33.6%)
LOW RISK	2,015	17.7% (17.3%)
VERY-LOW RISK	2,815	8.5% (8.3%)
ALL OFFENDERS	12,517	50.0% (49.0%)

With a slight down-scaling to put all indices in the 0-100% range, we would compute MCR for this table at .824, a truly lofty value, and a 29% increase over the previous .637.

FEDERAL STUDY - COMBINED SAMPLE - 50.0% UNFAVORABLE

SALIENT FACTOR SCORE CATEGORY	TOTAL CASES	UNFAVORABLE
POOR	1369	75.7%
FAIR	1225	58.5%
GOOD	1233	37.5%
VERY-GOOD	819	13.2%
ALL OFFENDERS	4646	50.0%

With a 50.0% rate of unfavorable outcome in the Federal study, per the data in the table above, the value of MCR would come to .491, a 40% increase over the previous .35.

[1] Combination of 5 highest levels of general risk.

The reader will note that in adjusting the overall outcome index to 50% in the Iowa study, the top five risk levels had to be collapsed to keep the index for the highest risk category at or under 100% (after the down-scaling). If we had not collapsed these levels in this way, then the outcome indices for the top five levels would have been 179.6%, 138.5%, 118.5%, 85.5%, and 50.2%. With the Federal results, this was not a problem since the adjusted rates of unfavorable outcome all fell below 100%.

The above points out one difficulty in using MCR to measure predictive efficiency, namely it doesn't reward the researcher for isolating extremely high risk groups - that is, groups with performance at least twice as unfavorable as the overall sample performance.

Another measure, which we call the Coefficient of Predictive Efficiency (CPE), does adequately reward such results, and has the same desirable quality of falling between 0 (no prediction) and 1 (perfect prediction).[1]

CPE is defined simply as the variance[2] of the outcome indices (or rates of failure) of the risk levels divided by 2500, where the base (overall) index for the study group has been adjusted to 50%.

IOWA SYSTEM - COMBINED SAMPLE - 50% OUTCOME INDEX

OFFENDER RISK LEVEL	TOTAL CASES	OUTCOME INDEX
SUPER RECIDIVIST	290	179.8%
ULTRA-HIGH RISK	472	138.5%
VERY-HIGH RISK	1,561	118.5%
HIGH RISK	1,269	85.5%
HIGH-MEDIUM RISK	860	50.2%
LOW-MEDIUM RISK	3,255	34.3%
LOW RISK	2,015	17.7%
VERY-LOW RISK	2,815	8.5%
ALL OFFENDERS	12,517	50.0%

[1] CPE can theoretically be greater than 1 if the net effect of prediction is greater than the ideal 0%-100% result.

[2] The variance of a set of numbers is simply the sum of the squared differences of all observations from their mean (average), divided by the number of observations.

$$CPE = [290(179.8\%-50.0\%)^2 + 472(138.5-50.0\%)^2 + 1561(118.5\%-50.0\%)^2 + 1269(85.5\%-50.0\%)^2 + 860(50.2\%-50.0\%)^2 + 3235(34.3\%-50.0\%)^2 + 2015(17.7\%-50.0\%)^2 + 2815(8.5\%-50.0\%)^2]/12,517x2500 = .807$$

CPE for the Federal System, with a 50% unfavorable outcome in the combined sample, comes out to:

$$CPE = [1369(75.7\%-50.0\%)^2 + 1225(58.5\%-50.0\%)^2 + 1233(37.5\%-50.0\%)^2 + 819(13.2\%-50.0\%)^2]/4646x2500 = .198$$

COMPARISON OF IOWA AND FEDERAL RESULTS
COMBINED SAMPLES
OUTCOME MEASURE/% UNFAVORABLE ADJUSTED TO 50%

SYSTEM	MCR	CPE
IOWA	.824	.807
FEDERAL	.491	.198

Note that for "perfect" prediction in the Iowa sample, using a 50% outcome index, we would have:

$$CPE = [6258.5(100\%-50\%)^2 + 6258.5(0\%-50\%)^2]/12,517x2500 = 1.00.$$

Thus, using CPE as a measure of predictive efficiency, we can think of the Iowa system as roughly 81% of perfect, remembering - of course - that "perfect" in this sense does not necessarily mean the ideal 0%-100% prediction (CPE can attain or exceed 1.00 in other ways).

Remember that CPE is directly a measure of two things:

1) the ability to split large numbers of cases away from the middle, i.e., into higher and lower risk categories, and

2) the ability to attain high rates of "failure" in high risk levels (the higher the better), and low rates of "failure" in low risk levels (the lower the better), or - in other words - to exact "wide" splits.

In this sense, CPE might better be termed the "splitting coefficient."

A concern that might well be addressed at this point is the question of the applicability of the general risk assessment system. Since the study sample consisted of both probationers and parolees, does the system really predict well within either one of these groups?[1]

[1] Theoretically, the system might not predict near as well within either group, e.g., we might find that most of the lower risk offenders are probationers and most of the higher risk offenders parolees.

The table on the following page provides a detailed breakdown of study results for three components of the combined sample, namely misdemeanor probationers, felony probationers, and (institutional) parolees. Again, the reader should study this table very carefully before proceeding.

Note that for all three sub-populations of our study group, the value of MCR (.596, .619, and .628) is near MCR (.637) for the overall group. On the other hand, CPE for the three subpopulations (1.114, .698 and .459) varies widely. This latter aspect derives from the varying extent to which outcome indices for the high risk categories vary from the overall indices. For example, the outcome index for SUPER RECIDIVISTS among misdemeanor probationers (86.3%) is 5.2 times the overall rate (16.6%) for this group, while the same factors for felony probationers and parolees are 3.5 and 2.2 respectively.

Since the Federal study concerned ex-prisoners only, it is clearly a better choice to compare the Federal results with the Iowa results for parolees:

COMPARISON OF IOWA AND FEDERAL RESULTS
COMBINED SAMPLES
IOWA PAROLEES ONLY
OUTCOME MEASURE/% UNFAVORABLE ADJUSTED TO 50%

SYSTEM	MCR	CPE
IOWA	.740	.459
FEDERAL	.491	.198

It should be noted that our discussion of the Federal system was not offered as a form of criticism of that system. As far as the author can tell, the Federal system is one of the most accurate and easy-to-use systems in place anywhere in the country. Rather, we offer the given comparison as a way of highlighting the benefits of the extensive research that went into the development of the Iowa system. It was thus in the manner of a compliment that we chose the Federal results as a type of benchmark from which we could judge the quality of the research in this state.

One aspect of the Iowa system not present in many other systems is the seriousness-weighting feature for new criminal charges. Because of this feature, higher risk offenders are not only more likely to be re-arrested, they are also prone to more new charges - and to more serious new charges - per new arrest. Thus higher risk offenders are disproportionately prone to new violence and to felonies as opposed to misdemeanors. In addition, a greater share of new felonies are expected to be for (serious) Part I crimes.

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
OUTCOMES BY TYPE OF RECEIVING PROGRAM
COMBINED CONSTRUCTION/VALIDATION SAMPLE

GENERAL RISK RATING	MISDEMEANOR PROBATION		FELONY PROBATION		INSTITUTIONAL PAROLE	
	TOTAL CASES	OUTCOME INDEX	TOTAL CASES	OUTCOME INDEX	TOTAL CASES	OUTCOME INDEX
SUPER RECIDIVIST	32	86.3%	161	101.9%	97	87.1%
ULTRA-HIGH RISK	90	62.7%	227	81.8%	155	67.3%
VERY-HIGH RISK	222	59.6%	1007	61.2%	332	69.7%
HIGH RISK	311	42.9%	707	45.0%	251	49.0%
HIGH-MEDIUM RISK	133	27.5%	466	29.0%	261	21.8%
LOW-MEDIUM RISK	925	18.4%	1935	18.6%	375	15.5%
LOW RISK	758	7.6%	1094	11.2%	163	5.6%
VERY-LOW RISK	1745	4.8%	994	2.9%	76	9.5%
ALL OFFENDERS	4216	16.6%	6591	29.3%	1710	39.4%
MEAN COST RATING (MCR)	.596		.619		.628	
COEFFICIENT OF PREDICTIVE EFFICIENCY (CPE)	1.114		.698		.459	

As indicated previously, the measure WEIGHTED OUTCOME is determined by adding up to 5 points for each of up to 3 new charges, and up to 2 points for other aspects of an unfavorable outcome (revocation, flight, jail time):

POINTS	ASPECTS OF UNFAVORABLE OUTCOME (up to 3 new charges)
5	New felony against person(s)
4	New Part I felony not against person(s)
3	New Part II felony not against person(s)
2	New indictable misdemeanor
1	New simple misdemeanor
2	Revocation
1	Flight (absconder) or jail time and none of above
TOTAL =	WEIGHTED OUTCOME

Recall that the WEIGHTED OUTCOME for any group of offenders is defined as the average value of WEIGHTED OUTCOME (as above) over all its members:

$$\text{WEIGHTED OUTCOME} = \frac{\text{Total points for group}}{\text{Total cases in group}}$$

Then, OUTCOME INDEX =

$$\frac{\text{WEIGHTED OUTCOME}}{4.56} \times 100\% = \frac{\text{Total points for group}}{4.56 \times \text{Total cases in group (N)}} \times 100\% =$$

$$\text{Total points for group} \times \frac{100\%}{4.56 \times N} =$$

$$[5 \times \text{Number of new felonies against persons}] \times \frac{100\%}{4.56 \times N} +$$

$$[4 \times \text{Number of new Part I felonies not against persons}] \times \frac{100\%}{4.56 \times N} +$$

$$[3 \times \text{Number of new Part II felonies not against persons}] \times \frac{100\%}{4.56 \times N} +$$

$$[2 \times \text{Number of new indictable misdemeanors}] \times \frac{100\%}{4.56 \times N} +$$

$$[1 \times \text{Number of new simple misdemeanors}] \times \frac{100\%}{4.56 \times N} +$$

$$[2 \times \text{Number of revocations}] \times \frac{100\%}{4.56 \times N} +$$

$$[1 \times \text{Number of absconders or those jailed without above}] \times \frac{100\%}{4.56 \times N}$$

Thus, the OUTCOME INDEX can be thought of as being the sum of seven different components, with one for each of the seven aspects of unfavorable outcome as listed above. We can then express any outcome index as the sum of its components.

The table on the following page reflects just such a breakdown of outcome indices into components for the eight risk levels of the general risk assessment in the combined sample. For convenience, the 4th and 5th components (misdemeanors) and the 6th and 7th components (revocation and absconder/jail) are combined in the table.

By scanning across rows, the reader can easily interpret each of the outcome indices in terms of the types of behavior/outcome that compose it. In addition, scanning down columns allows the reader to compare the relative frequency of occurrence of each type of outcome among the eight risk levels. Thus, for example, we see exceptionally high rates of new felonies against person(s) (13.4% and 15.0%) in the two highest risk levels, a super high rate (31.4%) of new Part I felonies not against persons in the SUPER RECIDIVIST category, and somewhat lower but still exceptionally high rates (16.9% and 17.0%) of the latter in the ULTRA-HIGH RISK and VERY-HIGH RISK categories.

In the higher risk levels, we can see that the components reflecting the more heavily weighted aspects cover a greater percentage of the outcome index. For example, the FELONY AGAINST PERSONS and PART I FELONY NOT AGAINST PERSONS components comprise 47% (45.7%/95.2%) of the outcome index for SUPER RECIDIVISTS, while the corresponding figures are only 19% and 4% for the LOW RISK and VERY-LOW RISK categories respectively.

The reader should keep in mind that these components are weighted, and thus are not the absolute rates of occurrence of the corresponding outcomes. We can't, then, say anything from this table about the percentage of offenders charged with new felonies against persons, etc.

To allow specific interpretation, the same type of information is provided (in the tables to follow) for 1) misdemeanor probationers, 2) felony probationers, and 3) (institutional) parolees. The reader will note 1) the exceptionally high violence (felony against persons) components in the SUPER RECIDIVIST, and ULTRA-HIGH RISK categories of parolees, and 2) the exceptionally high Part I property (felony not against persons) components in the SUPER-RECIDIVIST, ULTRA-HIGH RISK, and VERY-HIGH RISK categories of felony probationers. Of particular interest is the magnitude (43.2%) of this latter component in the SUPER RECIDIVIST felony probationer category.

It is recommended that the preceding tables be examined regularly by those making use of the risk assessment scoring system. The four tables will allow a good understanding of the relative risk of various types posed by the different risk categories of the three types of offenders.

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
COMPONENTS OF OUTCOME INDEX
COMBINED CONSTRUCTION/VALIDATION SAMPLE

GENERAL RISK RATING	TOTAL CASES	FELONY AGT. PERSONS	OTHER FELONY		MISDEMEANOR	REVOKE/JAIL/ ABSCONDER	OUTCOME INDEX
			PART I	PART II			
SUPER RECIDIVIST	290	13.4%	31.4%	14.3%	9.9%	26.2%	95.2%
ULTRA-HIGH RISK	472	15.0%	16.9%	9.7%	11.3%	20.5%	73.4%
VERY-HIGH RISK	1561	5.2%	17.0%	12.3%	10.0%	18.3%	62.8%
HIGH RISK	1269	2.8%	8.4%	10.4%	9.2%	14.5%	45.3%
HIGH-MEDIUM RISK	860	0.3%	6.2%	5.3%	5.6%	9.3%	26.6%
LOW-MEDIUM RISK	3235	0.9%	2.7%	4.6%	3.9%	5.9%	18.2%
LOW RISK	2015	1.0%	0.8%	2.1%	2.4%	3.1%	9.4%
VERY-LOW RISK	2815	0.2%	0.0%	0.8%	1.8%	1.7%	4.5%
ALL OFFENDERS	12,517	2.3%	5.6%	5.4%	5.0%	8.2%	26.5%

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
COMPONENTS OF OUTCOME INDEX
COMBINED CONSTRUCTION/VALIDATION SAMPLE
MISDEMEANOR PROBATIONERS

GENERAL RISK RATING	TOTAL CASES	FELONY AGT. PERSONS	OTHER FELONY		MISDEMEANOR	REVOKE/JAIL/ ABSCONDER	OUTCOME INDEX
			PART I	PART II			
SUPER RECIDIVIST	32	0.0%	22.5%	5.6%	30.0%	28.2%	86.3%
ULTRA-HIGH RISK	90	13.1%	13.1%	3.9%	14.4%	18.2%	62.7%
VERY-HIGH RISK	222	3.0%	9.6%	9.0%	20.1%	17.9%	59.6%
HIGH RISK	311	2.1%	8.4%	5.0%	13.5%	13.9%	42.9%
HIGH-MEDIUM RISK	133	0.0%	6.8%	6.3%	4.2%	10.2%	27.5%
LOW-MEDIUM RISK	925	0.3%	2.9%	2.8%	6.2%	6.2%	18.4%
LOW RISK	758	0.3%	0.3%	1.5%	3.2%	2.3%	7.6%
VERY-LOW RISK	1745	0.0%	0.0%	0.9%	1.8%	2.1%	4.8%
ALL OFFENDERS	4216	0.7%	2.5%	2.4%	5.4%	5.6%	16.6%

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
COMPONENTS OF OUTCOME INDEX
COMBINED CONSTRUCTION/VALIDATION SAMPLE
FELONY PROBATIONERS

GENERAL RISK RATING	TOTAL CASES	FELONY AGT. PERSONS	OTHER FELONY		MISDEMEANOR	REVOKE/JAIL/ ABSCONDER	OUTCOME INDEX
			PART I	PART II			
SUPER RECIDIVIST	161	11.2%	43.2%	13.4%	8.2%	25.9%	101.9%
ULTRA-HIGH RISK	227	9.1%	23.8%	11.6%	12.9%	24.4%	81.8%
VERY-HIGH RISK	1007	4.7%	19.4%	10.2%	8.3%	18.6%	61.2%
HIGH RISK	707	2.3%	8.9%	11.9%	8.6%	13.3%	45.0%
HIGH-MEDIUM RISK	466	0.6%	6.8%	6.8%	6.2%	8.6%	29.0%
LOW-MEDIUM RISK	1935	1.2%	3.2%	5.2%	3.2%	5.8%	18.6%
LOW RISK	1094	1.5%	1.5%	2.9%	2.2%	3.1%	11.2%
VERY-LOW RISK	994	0.5%	0.0%	0.6%	1.3%	0.5%	2.9%
ALL OFFENDERS	6591	2.3%	7.5%	6.1%	4.8%	8.6%	29.3%

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
COMPONENTS OF OUTCOME INDEX
COMBINED CONSTRUCTION/VALIDATION SAMPLE
INSTITUTIONAL PAROLEES

GENERAL RISK RATING	TOTAL CASES	FELONY AGT. PERSONS	OTHER FELONY		MISDEMEANOR	REVOKE/JAIL/ ABSCONDER	OUTCOME INDEX
			PART I	PART II			
SUPER RECIDIVIST	97	21.6%	14.8%	18.5%	6.2%	26.0%	87.1%
ULTRA-HIGH RISK	155	24.6%	9.1%	10.2%	7.2%	16.2%	67.3%
VERY-HIGH RISK	332	8.1%	14.5%	20.6%	8.4%	18.1%	69.7%
HIGH RISK	251	5.2%	7.3%	12.5%	6.2%	17.8%	49.0%
HIGH-MEDIUM RISK	261	0.0%	5.2%	5.2%	5.0%	6.4%	21.8%
LOW-MEDIUM RISK	375	1.4%	0.5%	5.7%	2.0%	5.9%	15.5%
LOW RISK	163	1.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	4.1%	5.6%
VERY-LOW RISK	66	0.0%	0.0%	2.4%	6.4%	0.7%	9.5%
ALL OFFENDERS	1710	6.2%	6.5%	9.9%	5.0%	11.8%	39.4%

Before going on, it is in order to make some comments on our selection of an outcome measure.

We have had criticisms in the past concerning the use of information on all new charges, and not just on charges somehow substantiated in court. Critics have suggested that we should not hold unproven charges "against" the affected individuals for reasons of fairness and justice. Typical of this reasoning is the concern that we are counting such a case as a "failure" when in-fact the offender may have completed his or her term of probation or parole successfully, and without a new conviction.

The point the critics miss is that the use of such information is not for the purpose of accusing either the offender (personally) or the program (probation or parole). "Judgments" as to what constituted success, failure, guilt, etc., were of little or no concern to the researchers. Rather, the concern was with the identification of groups of offenders showing either atypically high or atypically low rates of unfavorable outcome or of reinvolvement with the criminal justice system. To wit, we wanted to use as much information as was available to help identify "high risk" and "low risk" offenders. From this angle, we didn't care, and no one else should care, if added information on unproven new charges helped us to better identify these groups. Furthermore, the statistical evidence at hand does show that use of the added information did achieve its purpose, i.e., the added cushion of a higher base outcome measure (reflecting those unproven charges) allowed much better statistical explanation of the outcome measure, and thus better prediction.

We might also note that those concerned with the use of unproven charges sometimes forget that only a small fraction of crimes ever lead to arrest - much less conviction. In an analysis completed in 1979, SAC estimated that only 4.4% of all Part I felonies committed by adults in Iowa during 1974-1977 led to arrest, and only 1.3% to conviction. Furthermore, SAC calculated - based on statistics of this type - that an adult offender could commit 177 "typical" Part I felonies before his chances of imprisonment rose above 50%. With these odds, it seems strange that researchers and others should quibble about unproven charges. We suggest that the critics attempt to estimate how many Part I crimes are actually committed in a year by a typical high risk offender as identified by this study, and then come back to discuss our choice of criteria.

To complete this section, it remains to briefly discuss the validity of the violence risk assessment component of the Offender Risk Assessment Scoring System. This component classifies offenders into nine risk levels (ratings) ranging from NIL RISK to SUPER RECIDIVIST. The following is a complete listing of these ratings, together with numbers and percentages of cases falling under each rating in the construction, validation, and combined samples.

VIOLENCE RISK RATING (LEVEL)	TOTAL CASES					
	CONSTRUCTION		VALIDATION		COMBINED	
SUPER RECIDIVIST	34	(0.7%)	62	(0.8%)	96	(0.8%)
ULTRA-HIGH RISK	79	(1.7%)	203	(2.6%)	282	(2.3%)
VERY-HIGH RISK	157	(3.3%)	301	(3.9%)	458	(3.7%)
HIGH RISK	28	(0.6%)	32	(0.4%)	60	(0.5%)
HIGH-MEDIUM RISK	456	(9.7%)	971	(12.4%)	1,427	(11.4%)
LOW-MEDIUM RISK	572	(12.2%)	1105	(14.1%)	1,677	(13.4%)
LOW RISK	135	(2.9%)	187	(2.4%)	322	(2.6%)
VERY-LOW RISK	2069	(44.0%)	3459	(44.3%)	5,528	(44.2%)
NIL RISK	1174	(25.0%)	1493	(19.1%)	2,667	(21.3%)
ALL OFFENDERS	4704	(100.0%)	7813	(100.0%)	12,517	(100.0%)

According to the table, 70.9% of the cases in the combined sample fall in the lowest three risk levels (NIL to LOW RISK), 22.2% in the medium risk levels, and only 6.9% in the high risk levels.

To determine the statistical validity of the violence risk assessment, we define a measure of new violence as follows:

VIOLENCE = [2 x Number of new violent felonies +
1 x Number of other crimes against persons
or involving weapons] x 100%.

Using this definition, rates of violence within the nine levels of each sample were as follows:

VIOLENCE RISK RATING	VIOLENCE INDEX CONSTRUCTION	VALIDATION	COMBINED
SUPER RECIDIVIST	76.5%	63.9%	68.4%
ULTRA-HIGH RISK	38.0%	36.0%	36.6%
VERY-HIGH RISK	27.4%	28.9%	28.4%
HIGH RISK	17.9%	19.3%	18.6%
HIGH-MEDIUM RISK	13.2%	12.7%	12.9%
LOW-MEDIUM RISK	8.7%	7.4%	7.8%
LOW RISK	5.2%	5.0%	5.1%
VERY-LOW RISK	3.3%	2.4%	2.7%
NIL RISK	0.5%	0.8%	0.7%
ALL OFFENDERS	6.3%	6.6%	6.5%

The values of Mean Cost Rating (MCR) based on the results above are:

SAMPLE	MCR
CONSTRUCTION	.607
VALIDATION	.619
COMBINED	.612

If we adjust the overall violence indices for the three samples (6.3%, to 6.6% and 6.5%) to the same values as we observed for the overall outcome indices (25.9%, 26.8% and 26.5%), then we can legitimately compare MCR's between the general and violence risk assessments. Doing this, we find new values of MCR for violence risk assessment:

SAMPLE	MCR GENERAL	VIOLENCE[1]
CONSTRUCTION	.650	.685
VALIDATION	.639	.741
COMBINED	.637	.733

The above values of MCR are based on the adjusted violence indices given below:

[1] Combining the top five categories of violence risk.

VIOLENCE RISK RATING	ADJUSTED VIOLENCE INDEX CONSTRUCTION	VALIDATION	COMBINED
HIGHER RISK[1]	89.6%	85.2%	86.7%
LOW-MEDIUM RISK	35.8%	30.0%	31.8%
LOW RISK	21.4%	20.3%	20.8%
VERY-LOW RISK	13.6%	9.7%	11.0%
NIL RISK	2.1%	3.2%	2.9%
ALL OFFENDERS	25.9%	26.8%	26.5%

Going back to the original 9-level indices, we compute CPE for the three samples to be:

SAMPLE	CPE
CONSTRUCTION	2.163
VALIDATION	1.755
COMBINED	2.048

These extremely high values of CPE are due to exceptionally high rates of violence in the higher violence risk levels as compared to the comparatively low rates for the complete samples.

The table on the following page provides a profile of the 12,517-member combined sample according to both general and violence risk.[2] The reader will note a strong correlation between the two ratings, which follows in-part from the fact that violence risk is defined in terms of three factors, one of which is general risk. Note also 1) that all those rating as high risk for violence (H to SR) are at least VERY-HIGH RISK in general, and 2) that all those rated SUPER RECIDIVIST or ULTRA-HIGH RISK in general are high risk for violence. We thus see the high violence risk categories as providing refinement within the high general risk categories instead of <u>adding</u> new categories of high risk offenders.

[1] Combination of 5 highest levels of violence risk.

[2] The symbols are defined as follows: SR/SUPER RECIDIVIST, UH/ULTRA-HIGH RISK, VH/VERY-HIGH RISK, H/HIGH RISK, HM/HIGH-MEDIUM RISK, LM/LOW-MEDIUM RISK, L/LOW RISK, VL/VERY-LOW RISK, and N/NIL RISK.

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL/VIOLENCE RISK PROFILE
COMBINED CONSTRUCTION/VALIDATION SAMPLE

VIOLENCE RISK RATING	TOTAL CASES	GENERAL RISK RATING							
		SR	UH	VH	H	HM	LM	L	VL
SUPER RECIDIVIST	96	49	47	0	0	0	0	0	0
ULTRA-HIGH RISK	282	39	109	134	0	0	0	0	0
VERY-HIGH RISK	458	202	256	0	0	0	0	0	0
HIGH RISK	60	0	60	0	0	0	0	0	0
HIGH-MEDIUM RISK	1427	0	0	1427	0	0	0	0	0
LOW-MEDIUM RISK	1677	0	0	0	1269	104	304	0	0
LOW RISK	322	0	0	0	0	0	0	174	148
VERY-LOW RISK	5528	0	0	0	0	756	2931	1841	0
NIL RISK	2667	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2667
TOTAL	12,517	290	472	1561	1269	860	3235	2015	2815

Note. See page 113 for the distinctions that result in the pattern of cases as indicated above.

To provide information of use to managers, the next table gives a breakdown according to general risk for selected subgroups of the study population, and (below the dashed line) for community residential corrections clients handled during 1974-1976, and for active prisoners in Iowa as of August 31, 1980. These profiles will allow potential users of the system to gain an appreciation of how it might be applied in actual decision-making, depending on where and for what purpose.

For example, in a program designed to handle misdemeanor probationers,[1] such as the community services program, one would expect most clients to be LOW-MEDIUM RISK or lower. Accordingly, this sentencing option might be denied those rated HIGH-MEDIUM RISK or higher, or at least certain precautions taken in such cases. On the other hand, in community residential programs we see a much higher risk offender in general (41.3% VERY-HIGH RISK or higher), and thus entirely different standards for placement and/or custody would be advised.

We make a special note concerning the risk profile of the 8-31-80 prison population. The data at hand clearly show that the prison population tends to be a higher risk population - but still contains a high percentage of offenders who would not pose a serious threat to society if released. Indeed, about 48% of the population is rated low or medium risk (up to HIGH-MEDIUM RISK) according to general risk assessment. Furthermore, only 18.4% of prisoners rate as a high risk for violence. These facts would seem to be of great import at a time when existing prisons have reached or exceeded capacity.[2]

With regard to the prison population issue, there has been much concern with alternative strategies for effecting a reduction in the population, or at least a leveling-off. The Statistical Analysis Center feels that a reduction in the prison population can be achieved without increasing existing recidivism rates in the state or otherwise imposing a significant threat to the general public. This can be accomplished if the frequency and length of incarceration of lower risk offenders is decreased, while the same are increased for higher risk offenders, especially those prone to violence. The question remains as to how this might be most efficiently achieved.

To begin, the use of risk assessment as a form of input to the sentencing process could decrease the number of prison admissions in the state without increasing probation violation rates. An impediment to this contingency is the provision of the new criminal code that prohibits the granting of probation to persons convicted of forcible felonies.[3] The table on the next page shows that a significant percentage of persons convicted of such crimes in the study population (62.3%) were rated medium or low risk, and would not have posed any appreciable risk if released on probation. Aside from the consideration

---

[1] Or at least those charged with or convicted of misdemeanors.

[2] Prison officials in Iowa, as well as the Iowa Board of Parole, have been advised of these findings.

[3] Forcible felonies include murder, sexual abuse, robbery, kidnapping, felonious assault, and burglary or arson in the first degree.

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL RISK PROFILE
SELECTED OFFENDER POPULATIONS

CORRECTIONAL POPULATION	TOTAL CASES	GENERAL RISK RATING							
		SR	UH	VH	H	HM	LM	L	VL
COMBINED STUDY SAMPLE									
MISDEMEANOR PROBATIONERS	4216	0.8%	2.1%	5.3%	7.4%	3.2%	21.9%	18.0%	41.4%
FELONY PROBATIONERS	6591	2.4%	3.4%	15.3%	10.7%	7.1%	29.4%	16.6%	15.1%
ALL PROBATIONERS	10,807	1.8%	2.9%	11.4%	9.4%	5.5%	26.5%	17.1%	25.3%
INSTITUTIONAL PAROLEES	1710	5.7%	9.1%	19.4%	14.7%	15.3%	21.9%	9.5%	4.4%
OTHER POPULATIONS									
COMMUNITY RESIDENTIAL CORRECTIONS CLIENTS	598	4.8%	5.7%	30.8%	14.9%	8.0%	20.4%	9.9%	5.5%
PRISONERS (8-31-80)	2458	5.6%	9.4%	16.6%	13.7%	15.9%	22.7%	11.4%	4.7%

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
CHARACTERISTICS OF RISK-RATED OFFENDERS
COMBINED CONSTRUCTION/VALIDATION SAMPLE

SENTENCING OFFENSE TYPE
FELONS ONLY

SENTENCING OFFENSE TYPE	TOTAL CASES	GENERAL RISK RATING							
		SR	UH	VH	H	HM	LM	L	VL
FORCIBLE	592	35	35	89	66	83	166	71	49
NON-FORCIBLE AGAINST PERSON(S)	385	10	12	33	40	16	106	84	84
DRUG-LAW VIOLATION	576	5	15	30	36	58	153	135	144
PROPERTY	5487	190	275	1110	721	522	1571	607	491
OMVUI	611	0	10	14	22	19	117	208	221
MISCELLANEOUS	650	15	29	44	73	31	188	141	129
ALL OFFENSES	8301	255	376	1320	958	729	2301	1246	1116

Note In this table, the table on the next page, and tables on pages 38-82, the reader should study the distribution of cases both within rows and within columns. The row distributions tell us how offenders with a given characteristic or characteristics vary according to risk, while the column distributions tell us the characteristics of offenders falling in the various risk levels.

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
CHARACTERISTICS OF RISK-RATED OFFENDERS
COMBINED CONSTRUCTION/VALIDATION SAMPLE

SENTENCING OFFENSE TYPE
MISDEMEANANTS ONLY

SENTENCING OFFENSE TYPE	TOTAL CASES	GENERAL RISK RATING							
		SR	UH	VH	H	HM	LM	L	VL
AGAINST PERSON(S)	65	3	3	8	2	0	23	13	13
DRUG-LAW VIOLATION	1436	0	28	57	79	29	381	316	546
PROPERTY	744	10	26	69	107	34	251	135	112
OMVUI	1290	0	9	8	32	1	92	181	967
MISCELLANEOUS	681	14	21	61	76	46	166	134	163
ALL OFFENSES	4216	27	87	203	276	110	913	779	1801

of crime severity - which might mandate incarceration in certain cases independent of risk assessment - there appears to be adequate justification to allow probation for forcible felons.

Note also (from the table) that the large bulk (71.2%) of persons convicted of other (non-forcible) crimes against persons, such as manslaughter, lascivious acts, assault with intent to inflict serious injury and others, were rated medium or low risk in the study population. Currently, about 36% of persons convicted of such crimes are sent to prison.[1] With risk assessment, more of these people could be handled in a community setting.

From another angle, SAC has found that certain types of repeat offenders generally rate as medium or low risk despite current higher rates of imprisonment. For example, 51% of those in the study population who had previous prison commitments (on prior convictions) were rated medium or low risk. This group of convicted felons tends to be treated quite harshly by judges due to a proven record of recidivism. The statistics show, however, that many have reduced their frequency of criminal activity over time and - to a certain extent - have "burned out." SAC feels that with risk assessment, it is possible to do a better job of identifying those among former inmates who are currently convicted but who could be handled safely in the community.

Short of straight probation, research supports the expanded use of shock probation and community residential corrections as "intermediate" types of sentencing aimed at deterrence and public protection. Currently, such alternatives are not having a significant impact on the prison population in this state.[2]

With assistance from SAC, the Sentencing Disparity Study Committee of the Iowa Supreme Court has found that there is significant disparity in the use of the imprisonment option among the various sentencing judges in the state. For example, a given type of convicted felon might be four to five times more likely to be imprisoned in some counties in the state than in others. The result of such disparities is that we have no consistent policy across Iowa as to which offenders should be imprisoned.

With more uniform sentencing - perhaps achieved through sentencing guidelines and aided by risk assessment - even better use of the community corrections system in Iowa could be achieved. Currently, many offenders are sent to prison simply because they were sentenced by a judge who tends to rely on imprisonment more than most other judges. Furthermore, many of such individuals are convicted of less serious crimes that normally dictate probation. This is not to say, however, that these judges have no reasonable justification for these incarcerations. It's just that other judges less frequently consider these factors as sufficient to imprison.

[1] Currently about 20% of persons convicted of (felony) property offenses are sent to prison.

[2] See Volume IX: Prison Population of SAC's series Crime and Criminal Justice in Iowa.

In general, the comments above apply equally well to the parole decision. Currently, the Iowa Board of Parole relies heavily on perceptions of crime severity and past record to dictate how much time people should serve. In addition, heavy emphasis is placed on institutional behavior, with many people serving an extra one, two, or three years based on poor prison performance. SAC analyses show, however, that few of the major factors considered by the Board are strong risk factors,[1] and that - as a result - there is not a strong association between time served and the risk of recidivism. SAC feels that there is a significant potential for increasing the frequency of parole (from the current 30-35 per month to about 50-60 per month) with the use of risk assessment. Furthermore, this can be accomplished without imposing a 180° flip-flop in parole policy. To make use of risk assessment in an efficient manner, the Parole Board would have to reach a clear understanding of the proposed risk assessment and decide on the proper role of such as a component of the decision process. This could be accomplished easily with parole guidelines, which are readily attainable under the current state of knowledge.[2]

To summarize, SAC's risk assessment research has led to an improved state of knowledge of which types of offenders pose a significant threat of recidivism if released. The research shows clearly that:

1) the large bulk (perhaps two-thirds) of convicted offenders in Iowa pose less than an average risk of recidivism, and can be trusted with greater freedom than is often the case under present policies,

2) that only a relatively minor fraction of convicted offenders are truly dangerous or recidivistic, and

3) that with improved screening we can better protect the public from high risk offenders and decrease existing recidivism rates, with less incarceration and public expenditure.

To allow a better understanding of the risk assessment and the manner in which it classifies individuals according to current and background characteristics, we have chosen to include in this document a set of tables which profile offenders in each of the risk levels. These tables, which follow, should be carefully reviewed, as SAC feels that many persons exposed to the system maintain false perceptions concerning the types of people rated high or low risk. Until such perceptions are corrected, it is difficult to make much headway in implementation, since the concerned parties frequently feel that the system would impose an undesirable or unworkable change of policy.

---

[1] For example, misconduct in prison has only a minor effect in increasing the probability of recidivism, and has virtually no impact on recidivism among lower risk offenders.

[2] SAC has done the necessary research to develop and test such a system.

The tables that follow provide profiles of general risk categories in the combined sample according to the following items:

SEX
RACE
AGE AT RELEASE
AGE AT FIRST ARREST
JUVENILE RECORD
PRIOR ARRESTS
PRIOR CONVICTIONS
PRIOR INCARCERATIONS
PRIOR PROBATION TERMS
PRIOR ADULT CONVICTIONS
PRIOR ADULT JAIL TERMS
PRIOR ADULT (PRISON) COMMITMENTS
MARITAL STATUS
EMPLOYMENT STATUS AT RELEASE
USUAL OCCUPATIONAL LEVEL
DIPLOMAS/DEGREES
YEARS OF FORMAL SCHOOLING
DRUG ABUSE HISTORY
ALCOHOL ABUSE HISTORY
KNOWN ALIASES
AGE AND PRIOR COMMITMENT RECORD (3 tables)
AGE, OFFENSE TYPE, AND PRIOR COMMITMENT RECORD (22 tables)

In the last 25 tables, the last column gives an "overall risk rating" for each age category that is defined as follows:

OVERALL RISK RATING =

Number rated SUPER RECIDIVIST x 95.2% +
Number rated ULTRA-HIGH RISK x 73.4% +
Number rated VERY-HIGH RISK x 62.8% +
Number rated HIGH RISK x 45.3% +
Number rated HIGH-MEDIUM RISK x 26.6% +
Number rated LOW-MEDIUM RISK x 18.2% +
Number rated LOW RISK x 9.4% +
Number rated VERY-LOW RISK x 4.5%

This OVERALL RISK RATING is based on combined sample OUTCOME INDICES for each general risk level and essentially gives a single measure of risk for each category. It does not necessarily agree with the corresponding OUTCOME INDEX. To help the reader appreciate the utility of examining overall risk ratings, the table on the following page rank orders the categories of the three AGE AND PRIOR COMMITMENT RECORD tables according to the magnitude of this group measure of risk.

OFFENDERS WITH PRIOR CRIMINAL COMMITMENTS

OFFENDER CATEGORY	TOTAL CASES	OVERALL RISK RATING
AGE 18-19/2+ PRIOR ADULT COMMITMENTS	3	95.2%
AGE 18-19/JUVENILE COMMITMENT ONLY	619	67.1%
AGE 18-19/ONE PRIOR ADULT COMMITMENT	22	67.1%
AGE 20-24/2+ PRIOR ADULT COMMITMENTS	34	60.9%
AGE 25-29/2+ PRIOR ADULT COMMITMENTS	103	60.8%
AGE 25-29/JUVENILE COMMITMENT ONLY	28	49.4%
AGE 25-29/ONE PRIOR ADULT COMMITMENT	277	48.0%
AGE 20-24/JUVENILE COMMITMENT ONLY	711	44.3%
AGE 30-39/2+ PRIOR ADULT COMMITMENTS	156	40.8%
AGE 40+/2+ PRIOR ADULT COMMITMENTS	196	39.8%
AGE 30-39/JUVENILE COMMITMENT ONLY	76	24.0%
AGE 40+/ONE PRIOR ADULT COMMITMENT	119	23.6%
AGE 40+/JUVENILE COMMITMENT ONLY	37	22.7%
AGE 30-39/ONE PRIOR ADULT COMMITMENT	215	22.1%

RISK RATINGS : SUPER RECIDIVIST - 95.2%, ULTRA-HIGH RISK - 73.4%, VERY-HIGH RISK - 62.8%, HIGH RISK - 45.3%, HIGH-MEDIUM RISK - 26.6%, LOW-MEDIUM RISK - 18.2%, LOW RISK - 9.4%, VERY-LOW RISK - 4.5%.

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
CHARACTERISTICS OF RISK-RATED OFFENDERS
COMBINED CONSTRUCTION/VALIDATION SAMPLE

SEX

SEX	TOTAL CASES	GENERAL RISK RATING							
		SR	UH	VH	H	HM	LM	L	VL
MALE	10,810	271	456	1499	1103	824	2811	1609	2237
FEMALE	1707	19	16	62	166	36	424	406	578
ALL OFFENDERS	12,517	290	472	1561	1269	860	3235	2015	2815

Because of the relatively small number of females in the study group, the distribution of risk for males is virtually identical to the distribution for all offenders. Note also the much higher concentration of females in the lower risk levels. The data show, for example, that 36% of the males and 58% of the females are LOW or VERY-LOW RISK.

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
CHARACTERISTICS OF RISK-RATED OFFENDERS
COMBINED CONSTRUCTION/VALIDATION SAMPLE

RACE

RACE	TOTAL CASES	GENERAL RISK RATING							
		SR	UH	VH	H	HM	LM	L	VL
WHITE	11,055	240	377	1369	1077	721	2845	1807	2619
BLACK	1143	42	72	154	160	110	314	153	138
AMERICAN INDIAN	116	5	14	19	12	14	25	16	11
SPANISH AMERICAN	132	2	5	11	15	11	30	31	27
ASIATIC	21	0	1	2	3	0	7	4	4
ALL OFFENDERS	12,467	289	469	1555	1267	856	3221	2011	2799

There is a common perception that our methods rate an abnormally larger percentage of black offenders as high risk. Note, however, that 63% of the blacks in the study group rated HIGH-MEDIUM RISK or lower, and 25% as LOW or VERY-LOW RISK. We comment, also, that only 12% of the high risk offenders in the study group are black.

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
CHARACTERISTICS OF RISK-RATED OFFENDERS
COMBINED CONSTRUCTION/VALIDATION SAMPLE

AGE AT RELEASE

AGE AT RELEASE	TOTAL CASES	GENERAL RISK RATING							
		SR	UH	VH	H	HM	LM	L	VL
18	1408	89	58	400	242	26	361	104	128
19	1584	84	71	302	207	74	510	147	189
20-24	4655	29	178	580	532	390	1532	513	901
25-29	1900	77	128	121	225	232	271	428	418
30-39	1544	3	20	74	42	97	334	459	515
40 OR OVER	1426	8	17	121	21	41	227	364	664
ALL OFFENDERS	12,517	290	472	1561	1269	860	3235	2015	2815

The percentage of offenders rated high risk varies with age as follows: AGE 18/56%, AGE 19/42%, AGE 20-24/28%, AGE 25-29/29%, AGE 30-39/9%, and AGE 40+/12%. We comment, however, that this pattern varies considerably depending on the type of correctional program to which the offender was assigned. The percentages rated high risk are much more balanced, for example, within the prison population, Note, though, that 60% of the SUPER RECIDIVISTS in the study group were age 18 or 19 at release, while only 1.6% of those rated SUPER RECIDIVIST or ULTRA-HIGH RISK were age 30 or over at release.

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
CHARACTERISTICS OF RISK-RATED OFFENDERS
COMBINED CONSTRUCTION/VALIDATION SAMPLE

AGE AT FIRST ARREST

AGE AT FIRST ARREST	TOTAL CASES	GENERAL RISK RATING							
		SR	UH	VH	H	HM	LM	L	VL
0-12	502	85	109	133	62	40	47	23	3
13-15	1638	162	209	500	234	165	297	60	11
16-17	2082	39	116	540	357	281	586	138	25
18-21	4568	3	34	318	520	251	1680	788	974
22-29	2166	0	3	34	84	115	510	609	791
30 OR OVER	1534	0	0	28	8	4	108	395	1011
ALL OFFENDERS	12,490	289	471	1553	1265	856	3228	2013	2815

The reader will note from the above that age at first arrest is strongly associated with risk. For example, 85% of SUPER RECIDIVISTS were first arrested before the age of 16, 92% of ULTRA-HIGH RISK offenders before the age of 18, and 96% of VERY-HIGH RISK offenders before the age of 22. On the other end, only 5.4% of LOW and VERY-LOW RISK offenders were arrested as juveniles. Of those first arrested before the age of 16, 70% are rated high risk. Of those first arrested at age 22 or over, only 4.2% are rated high risk.

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
CHARACTERISTICS OF RISK-RATED OFFENDERS
COMBINED CONSTRUCTION/VALIDATION SAMPLE

JUVENILE RECORD

JUVENILE RECORD	TOTAL CASES	GENERAL RISK RATING							
		SR	UH	VH	H	HM	LM	L	VL
NO JUVENILE ARREST	7996	1	23	321	563	313	2240	1763	2772
JUVENILE ARREST, NO COMMITMENT	2390	37	140	599	437	283	703	157	34
JUVENILE COMMITMENT	2131	252	309	641	269	264	292	95	9
ALL OFFENDERS	12,517	290	472	1561	1269	860	3235	2015	2815

This item, which is strongly correlated with age at first arrest, is also a strong correlate of risk. Note that 87% of SUPER RECIDIVISTS, and 65% of ULTRA-HIGH RISK offenders were committed as juveniles. On the other extreme, 2.1% of LOW and VERY-LOW RISK offenders were committed as juveniles. It is true, however, that 59% of high risk offenders were not committed as juveniles. Of those who were committed as juveniles, 56% are rated VERY-HIGH RISK or higher, and only 4.9% as LOW or VERY-LOW RISK.

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
CHARACTERISTICS OF RISK-RATED OFFENDERS
COMBINED CONSTRUCTION/VALIDATION SAMPLE

PRIOR ARRESTS

PRIOR ARRESTS	TOTAL CASES	GENERAL RISK RATING							
		SR	UH	VH	H	HM	LM	L	VL
NONE	4483	0	1	45	154	80	1132	907	2164
ONE	1973	0	1	157	158	123	698	434	402
TWO	1352	0	5	179	243	144	441	190	150
THREE	1063	0	9	223	183	170	300	137	41
FOUR	709	1	13	174	127	104	180	91	19
FIVE	541	24	17	149	100	65	99	72	15
SIX	413	25	14	109	81	61	89	30	4
SEVEN	246	15	24	87	45	12	44	18	1
EIGHT OR MORE	1737	225	388	438	178	101	252	136	19
ALL OFFENDERS	12,517	290	472	1561	1269	860	3235	2015	2815

As the reader can clearly see from the concentration of cases along the diagonal, this item is a strong correlate of risk. The percentage of offenders with eight or more prior arrests varies from 80% among SUPER RECIDIVISTS and ULTRA-HIGH RISK offenders, to 3.2% among LOW and VERY-LOW RISK offenders. Note that all but one SUPER RECIDIVIST has five or more prior arrests, and all but 16 ULTRA-HIGH RISK offenders four or more priors. The fact that we see a wide variation in numbers of prior arrests among HIGH and VERY-HIGH RISK offenders is due to a wide variation in age among these groups, with the young ones having fewer - and the older ones more - prior arrests. Of the offenders who have five or more prior arrests who are rated medium or low risk (35%), most are older offenders.

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
CHARACTERISTICS OF RISK-RATED OFFENDERS
COMBINED CONSTRUCTION/VALIDATION SAMPLE

PRIOR CONVICTIONS

PRIOR CONVICTIONS	TOTAL CASES	GENERAL RISK RATING							
		SR	UH	VH	H	HM	LM	L	VL
NONE	5691	0	4	168	338	131	1596	1108	2346
ONE	2110	21	27	289	239	222	654	355	303
TWO	1423	31	41	300	225	188	359	184	95
THREE	921	40	52	187	160	100	225	121	36
FOUR	604	39	59	162	80	75	115	64	10
FIVE	436	19	41	120	72	57	68	52	7
SIX	283	24	33	83	33	27	50	32	1
SEVEN	187	20	35	53	27	8	26	14	4
EIGHT OR MORE	838	94	179	197	92	50	133	80	13
ALL OFFENDERS	12,493	288	471	1559	1266	858	3226	2010	2815

Note that all of the SUPER RECIDIVISTS, and all but four of the ULTRA-HIGH RISK offenders, have prior (juvenile or adult) convictions. Here, prior convictions include juvenile probations and commitments, and prior adult convictions. Although over half (58%) of medium and low risk offenders have no prior convictions, we still find a significant percentage (25%) with two or more prior convictions. Likewise, fully 62% of those with two or more prior convictions are rated medium or low risk. Even among those with eight or more prior convictions, fully a third are rated medium or low risk. Prior convictions is nowhere near the correlate of risk that either prior arrests or age at first arrest is.

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
CHARACTERISTICS OF RISK-RATED OFFENDERS
COMBINED CONSTRUCTION/VALIDATION SAMPLE

PRIOR INCARCERATIONS

PRIOR INCARCERATIONS	TOTAL CASES	GENERAL RISK RATING							
		SR	UH	VH	H	HM	LM	L	VL
NONE	8196	2	29	485	677	335	2352	1576	2740
ONE	1790	65	78	356	250	255	491	243	52
TWO	908	51	72	220	160	120	197	71	17
THREE	555	37	67	167	80	72	83	45	4
FOUR	344	32	44	127	45	31	38	27	0
FIVE	202	22	45	71	19	12	14	19	0
SIX	138	22	31	39	16	9	10	11	0
SEVEN	70	13	23	17	1	4	9	3	0
EIGHT OR MORE	314	46	83	79	21	22	41	20	2
ALL OFFENDERS	12,517	290	472	1561	1269	860	3235	2015	2815

This item is a good correlate of risk, with two-thirds of high risk offenders, and only 11% of low risk offenders, having prior incarcerations. We define this item to include the number of juvenile commitments and prior adult jail or prison terms. Notice that all but two SUPER RECIDIVISTS, and 94% of ULTRA-HIGH RISK offenders, have prior incarcerations. Again, however, we find that 44% of those with prior incarcerations are rated medium or low risk, and 22% of those rated medium or low risk have prior incarcerations. As many as 27% of those with eight or more prior incarcerations are rated medium or low risk. Most of such individuals are older offenders.

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
CHARACTERISTICS OF RISK-RATED OFFENDERS
COMBINED CONSTRUCTION/VALIDATION SAMPLE

PRIOR PROBATION TERMS

PRIOR PROBATION TERMS	TOTAL CASES	GENERAL RISK RATING							
		SR	UH	VH	H	HM	LM	L	VL
NONE	9182	105	188	730	791	463	2483	1673	2749
ONE	2663	105	180	640	390	326	666	293	63
TWO	477	51	62	133	73	56	67	32	3
THREE	113	13	24	29	13	11	10	13	0
FOUR OR MORE	82	16	18	29	2	4	9	4	0
ALL OFFENDERS	12,517	290	472	1561	1269	860	3235	2015	2815

As the reader can see by scanning the rows above, those offenders with prior (juvenile or adult) probations are quite a bit higher risk than other offenders. In fact, the overall risk ratings for those with none, one, or two or more prior probations are 20.8%, 39.4%, and 52.3% respectively (SAC research shows that judges give little weight in sentencing decisions to prior probation terms). Notice that 62% of those rated SUPER RECIDIVIST or ULTRA-HIGH RISK, and 53% of those rated VERY-HIGH RISK, have previously been on probation.

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
CHARACTERISTICS OF RISK-RATED OFFENDERS
COMBINED CONSTRUCTION/VALIDATION SAMPLE

PRIOR ADULT CONVICTIONS

PRIOR ADULT CONVICTIONS	TOTAL CASES	GENERAL RISK RATING							
		SR	UH	VH	H	HM	LM	L	VL
NONE	7022	101	76	590	510	304	1880	1192	2369
ONE	2068	46	65	290	240	213	579	343	292
TWO	1122	32	77	190	190	125	270	150	88
THREE	694	21	41	112	117	80	180	111	32
FOUR	424	19	39	100	58	49	87	62	10
FIVE	258	14	24	59	36	27	47	44	7
SIX	168	5	22	43	19	15	41	22	1
SEVEN	101	6	13	28	17	4	18	11	4
EIGHT OR MORE	636	44	114	147	79	41	124	75	12
ALL OFFENDERS	12,493	288	471	1559	1266	858	3226	2010	2815

Clearly, the number of prior adult convictions in a person's record is not a strong correlate of risk. In fact, overall risk ratings vary little as prior adult convictions increase: NONE/19.9%, ONE/28.5%, TWO/35.0%, THREE/34.5%, FOUR/40.3%, FIVE/40.5%, SIX/41.7%, SEVEN/45.6%, and EIGHT+/46.3%. In fact, 51% of those with two or more prior adult convictions are rated low or medium risk. These facts are some of the most important presented in this report. They are due mainly to the fact that age and number of prior adult convictions are inversely related.

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
CHARACTERISTICS OF RISK-RATED OFFENDERS
COMBINED CONSTRUCTION/VALIDATION SAMPLE

PRIOR ADULT JAIL TERMS

PRIOR ADULT JAIL TERMS	TOTAL CASES	GENERAL RISK RATING							
		SR	UH	VH	H	HM	LM	L	VL
NONE	9971	153	184	954	903	575	2702	1731	2769
ONE	1386	58	112	300	207	177	337	163	32
TWO	522	29	51	129	90	57	103	54	9
THREE	214	17	32	60	34	14	24	30	3
FOUR	119	11	25	39	9	9	16	10	0
FIVE	75	3	15	26	9	4	9	9	0
SIX	33	1	10	8	1	3	8	2	0
SEVEN	16	3	2	3	0	2	4	2	0
EIGHT OR MORE	181	15	41	42	16	19	32	14	2
ALL OFFENDERS	12,517	290	472	1561	1269	860	3235	2015	2815

This item, though a better predictor that prior adult convictions, is not a good predictor beyond the simple yes/no question as to whether or not a person has prior jail terms. Namely, we see little variation in overall risk ratings as we move from one to multiple prior jail terms: NONE/22.3%, ONE/39.3%, TWO/43.3%, THREE/48.5%, FOUR/53.5%, FIVE/50.4%, SIX/49.1%, SEVEN/47.8%, and EIGHT+/49.9%.

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
CHARACTERISTICS OF RISK-RATED OFFENDERS
COMBINED CONSTRUCTION/VALIDATION SAMPLE

PRIOR ADULT COMMITMENTS

NUMBER OF PRIOR ADULT COMMITMENTS	TOTAL CASES	GENERAL RISK RATING							
		SR	UH	VH	H	HM	LM	L	VL
NONE	11,130	220	318	1255	1093	668	2946	1842	2788
ONE	897	33	89	159	137	150	210	97	22
TWO	269	18	30	65	29	23	47	53	4
THREE	129	7	14	32	10	17	25	23	1
FOUR OR MORE	92	12	21	50	0	2	7	0	0
ALL OFFENDERS	12,517	290	472	1561	1269	860	3235	2015	2815

Notice here that 71% of SUPER RECIDIVISTS and ULTRA-HIGH RISK offenders, and 80% of all high risk offenders, have never previously been in prison (some of the 80% have been in on the current sentence). Also, 52% of those with one prior prison commitment, and 41% of those with two or more prior prison commitments, are rated medium or low risk.

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
CHARACTERISTICS OF RISK-RATED OFFENDERS
COMBINED CONSTRUCTION/VALIDATION SAMPLE

MARITAL STATUS

MARITAL STATUS	TOTAL CASES	GENERAL RISK RATING							
		SR	UH	VH	H	HM	LM	L	VL
NEVER MARRIED	6187	186	277	1041	774	397	1789	676	1047
MARRIED	3422	39	80	214	230	226	783	721	1129
SEPARATED	741	5	29	82	80	63	190	149	143
DIVORCED	1802	45	72	184	151	145	398	390	417
WIDOWED	129	1	1	5	4	2	24	36	56
COMMON-LAW	236	14	13	35	30	27	51	43	23
ALL OFFENDERS	12,517	290	472	1561	1269	860	3235	2015	2815

Note that only 16% of high risk offenders are married at release, while 25% of medium risk offenders and 38% of low risk offenders, are married. Of all types of marital status, the highest risk group by far consists of those who are common-law married.

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
CHARACTERISTICS OF RISK-RATED OFFENDERS
COMBINED CONSTRUCTION/VALIDATION SAMPLE

EMPLOYMENT STATUS AT RELEASE

EMPLOYMENT STATUS AT RELEASE	TOTAL CASES	GENERAL RISK RATING							
		SR	UH	VH	H	HM	LM	L	VL
UNEMPLOYED	4239	141	207	722	518	279	1117	613	642
EMPLOYED FULL-TIME	6968	116	227	709	629	494	1774	1177	1842
EMPLOYED PART-TIME	855	20	27	84	82	62	244	140	196
UNEMPLOYABLE	147	2	4	15	10	6	35	33	42
ALL OFFENDERS	12,209	279	465	1530	1239	841	3170	1963	2722

The percentage of offenders who are unemployed at release varies from 45% of high risk offenders, to 35% of medium risk offenders, to 27% of low risk offenders. Although employment status is not the predictor - at release - that some other items are, it is true that a person's employment record during probation or parole is a strong predictor of recidivism. Those who can maintain employment for at least 75% of their term of probation or parole have a greatly enhanced probability of success.

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
CHARACTERISTICS OF RISK-RATED OFFENDERS
COMBINED CONSTRUCTION/VALIDATION SAMPLE

USUAL OCCUPATIONAL LEVEL

USUAL OCCUPATIONAL LEVEL	TOTAL CASES	GENERAL RISK RATING							
		SR	UH	VH	H	HM	LM	L	VL
NONE	1710	74	70	294	192	75	482	229	294
UNSKILLED	4350	117	212	673	539	326	1241	594	648
SEMI-SKILLED	3513	64	123	391	350	279	924	572	810
SKILLED-TRADES	2075	29	61	189	153	160	465	427	591
CLERICAL	182	1	1	9	13	3	36	45	74
SALES	216	1	1	3	7	7	35	50	112
MANAGER	163	2	1	1	6	7	23	26	97
PROPRIETOR	88	0	0	0	1	1	11	21	54
PROFESSIONAL	183	1	3	0	8	2	12	40	117
ALL OFFENDERS	12,480	289	472	1560	1269	860	3229	2004	2797

Note that only 13.3% of SUPER RECIDIVISTS and ULTRA-HIGH RISK offenders are at skilled-trades or beyond (below in the list). Notice, also, the high concentration of offenders with higher skill levels in the lower risk levels. The same is true of persons with advanced degrees in the next table.

CONTINUED

1 OF 3

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
CHARACTERISTICS OF RISK-RATED OFFENDERS
COMBINED CONSTRUCTION/VALIDATION SAMPLE

DIPLOMAS/DEGREES

DIPLOMAS/ DEGREES	TOTAL CASES	GENERAL RISK RATING							
		SR	UH	VH	H	HM	LM	L	VL
NONE	5171	185	232	912	632	403	1370	705	732
GED	1504	55	126	267	202	162	350	194	148
HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA	5269	48	100	356	402	271	1419	1011	1662
SPECIAL TRADE	281	1	10	21	26	19	60	54	90
ASSOCIATE OF ARTS DEGREE	79	0	1	5	4	5	17	10	37
BACHELORS DEGREE	172	1	3	0	3	0	14	34	117
MASTERS DEGREE	18	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	14
PH.D./M.D./J.D.	21	0	0	0	0	0	3	4	14
POST DOCTORAL	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
ALL OFFENDERS	12,517	290	472	1561	1269	860	3235	2015	2815

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
CHARACTERISTICS OF RISK-RATED OFFENDERS
COMBINED CONSTRUCTION/VALIDATION SAMPLE

YEARS OF FORMAL SCHOOLING

YEARS OF FORMAL SCHOOLING	TOTAL CASES	GENERAL RISK RATING							
		SR	UH	VH	H	HM	LM	L	VL
0-6	189	5	4	25	9	9	47	50	38
7	194	9	14	29	23	13	38	35	33
8	1033	36	76	167	100	89	222	162	181
9	1224	65	79	283	162	97	291	128	119
10	1833	71	99	328	257	170	482	225	201
11	1802	44	72	300	238	159	551	221	217
12	4753	49	109	369	395	261	1299	885	1386
13	623	7	12	33	46	38	155	118	214
14	406	3	1	12	21	14	77	88	190
15	160	0	0	4	7	5	33	42	69
16	182	1	4	1	4	0	21	35	116
17 OR MORE	67	0	1	0	0	1	8	15	42
ALL OFFENDERS	12,466	290	471	1551	1262	856	3224	2004	2808

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
CHARACTERISTICS OF RISK-RATED OFFENDERS
COMBINED CONSTRUCTION/VALIDATION SAMPLE

DRUG ABUSE HISTORY

DRUG ABUSE HISTORY	TOTAL CASES	GENERAL RISK RATING							
		SR	UH	VH	H	HM	LM	L	VL
NO HISTORY	7237	60	154	602	566	409	1942	1384	2120
MARIJUANA ONLY	2754	70	121	395	327	188	789	370	494
NON-NARCOTIC DRUGS	1504	56	94	282	209	151	352	165	195
NARCOTICS	1022	104	103	282	167	112	152	96	6
ALL OFFENDERS	12,517	290	472	1561	1269	860	3235	2015	2815

Most noteworthy is the fact that 79% of SUPER RECIDIVISTS have drug abuse histories, and that 36% have narcotics use histories. Also, among those with a narcotics use history, 64% rate as high risk, and only 10% as low risk. Of those rated LOW or VERY-LOW RISK, 73% have no drug abuse history.

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
CHARACTERISTICS OF RISK-RATED OFFENDERS
COMBINED CONSTRUCTION/VALIDATION SAMPLE

ALCOHOL ABUSE HISTORY

ALCOHOL ABUSE HISTORY	TOTAL CASES	GENERAL RISK RATING							
		SR	UH	VH	H	HM	LM	L	VL
NO	7665	128	201	764	709	461	2105	1304	1993
YES	4830	160	270	792	558	398	1127	707	818
ALL OFFENDERS	12,495	288	471	1556	1267	859	3232	2011	2811

Although not a strong predictor among all offenders, alcohol abuse history is a strong predictor among older offenders.

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
CHARACTERISTICS OF RISK-RATED OFFENDERS
COMBINED CONSTRUCTION/VALIDATION SAMPLE

KNOWN ALIASES

KNOWN ALIASES	TOTAL CASES	GENERAL RISK RATING							
		SR	UH	VH	H	HM	LM	L	VL
NO	11,846	253	402	1442	1176	789	3073	1922	2789
YES	671	37	70	119	93	71	162	93	26
ALL OFFENDERS	12,517	290	472	1561	1269	869	3235	2015	2815

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
DISTRIBUTION OF RISK FOR SELECTED OFFENDER CATEGORIES
COMBINED CONSTRUCTION/VALIDATION SAMPLE

OFFENDERS WITH JUVENILE COMMITMENT BUT NO PRIOR ADULT COMMITMENT

AGE AT RELEASE	TOTAL CASES	GENERAL RISK RATING								OVERALL RISK RATING
		SR	UH	VH	H	HM	LM	L	VL	
18-19	619	152	86	275	53	20	30	2	1	67.1%
20-24	711	12	85	197	122	131	140	20	4	44.3%
25-29	191	28	30	28	31	26	30	18	0	49.4%
30-39	76	0	0	9	2	17	32	13	3	24.0%
40+	37	0	0	6	1	2	12	15	1	22.7%
ALL AGES	1634	192	201	515	209	396	244	68	9	55.4%

This table and those following were drawn up to indicate to the reader the manner in which risk ratings are a function of age for various types of offenders based on current offense and prior commitment record. We believe that the tables are self-explanatory. They apply to persons sentenced for felonies only.

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
DISTRIBUTION OF RISK FOR SELECTED OFFENDER CATEGORIES
COMBINED CONSTRUCTION/VALIDATION SAMPLE

OFFENDERS WITH ONE PRIOR ADULT COMMITMENT

AGE AT RELEASE	TOTAL CASES	GENERAL RISK RATING								OVERALL RISK RATING
		SR	UH	VH	H	HM	LM	L	VL	
18-19	22	4	5	8	5	0	0	0	0	67.1%
20-24	274	5	34	92	46	43	48	6	0	47.1%
25-29	277	24	48	38	68	48	32	16	3	48.0%
30-39	215	0	0	12	20	43	79	49	12	22.1%
40+	119	0	0	10	13	14	55	20	7	23.6%
ALL AGES	907	33	87	160	152	148	214	91	22	38.9%

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
DISTRIBUTION OF RISK FOR SELECTED OFFENDER CATEGORIES
COMBINED CONSTRUCTION/VALIDATION SAMPLE

OFFENDERS WITH TWO OR MORE PRIOR ADULT COMMITMENTS

AGE AT RELEASE	TOTAL CASES	GENERAL RISK RATING								OVERALL RISK RATING
		SR	UH	VH	H	HM	LM	L	VL	
18-19	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	95.2%
20-24	34	3	10	11	6	2	2	0	0	60.9%
25-29	103	20	18	29	19	10	3	4	0	60.8%
30-39	156	3	20	47	10	17	23	34	2	40.8%
40+	196	8	17	62	7	13	48	38	3	39.8%
ALL AGES	492	37	65	149	42	42	76	76	5	46.3%

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
DISTRIBUTION OF RISK FOR SELECTED OFFENDER CATEGORIES
COMBINED CONSTRUCTION/VALIDATION SAMPLE

OFFENDERS CONVICTED OF MURDER/RAPE
NO PRIOR COMMITMENT

AGE AT RELEASE	TOTAL CASES	GENERAL RISK RATING								OVERALL RISK RATING
		SR	UH	VH	H	HM	LM	L	VL	
18-19	8	0	0	0	3	0	3	0	2	24.9%
20-24	21	0	0	1	3	1	6	3	7	18.8%
25-29	20	0	0	0	3	4	3	5	5	18.3%
30-39	21	0	0	0	0	0	5	10	6	10.1%
40+	16	0	0	0	0	0	3	4	9	8.3%
ALL AGES	70	0	0	1	9	5	20	22	29	18.6%

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
DISTRIBUTION OF RISK FOR SELECTED OFFENDER CATEGORIES
COMBINED CONSTRUCTION/VALIDATION SAMPLE

OFFENDERS CONVICTED OF MURDER/RAPE
PRIOR COMMITMENT

AGE AT RELEASE	TOTAL CASES	GENERAL RISK RATING								OVERALL RISK RATING
		SR	UH	VH	H	HM	LM	L	VL	
18-19	3	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	51.1%
20-24	4	0	2	1	0	0	1	0	0	57.0%
25-29	12	0	2	0	1	3	6	0	0	31.8%
30-39	8	0	0	0	1	0	2	5	0	16.1%
40+	9	2	0	0	1	0	4	2	0	36.4%
ALL AGES	36	2	4	2	5	3	13	7	0	33.8%

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
DISTRIBUTION OF RISK FOR SELECTED OFFENDER CATEGORIES
COMBINED CONSTRUCTION/VALIDATION SAMPLE

OFFENDERS CONVICTED OF ROBBERY
NO. PRIOR COMMITMENT

AGE AT RELEASE	TOTAL CASES	GENERAL RISK RATING								OVERALL RISK RATING
		SR	UH	VH	H	HM	LM	L	VL	
18-19	58	0	3	15	9	6	23	2	0	37.4%
20-24	64	3	0	14	5	14	28	0	0	35.5%
25-29	20	1	1	3	3	4	2	6	0	34.6%
30-39	12	0	0	0	1	0	7	4	0	17.5%
40+	4	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	23.7%
ALL AGES	158	4	4	33	18	24	61	13	1	34.4%

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
DISTRIBUTION OF RISK FOR SELECTED OFFENDER CATEGORIES
COMBINED CONSTRUCTION/VALIDATION SAMPLE

OFFENDERS CONVICTED OF ROBBERY
PRIOR COMMITMENT

AGE AT RELEASE	TOTAL CASES	GENERAL RISK RATING								OVERALL RISK RATING
		SR	UH	VH	H	HM	LM	L	VL	
18-19	27	8	3	13	3	0	0	0	0	71.6%
20-24	58	9	9	11	8	14	5	0	0	52.3%
25-29	22	3	1	7	6	4	1	0	0	54.3%
30-39	25	1	4	5	1	4	8	2	0	40.8%
40+	12	4	1	2	1	1	2	1	0	58.1%
ALL AGES	144	25	18	38	19	23	16	3	0	54.7%

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
DISTRIBUTION OF RISK FOR SELECTED OFFENDER CATEGORIES
COMBINED CONSTRUCTION/VALIDATION SAMPLE

OFFENDERS CONVICTED OF FORCIBLE FELONY EXCEPT MURDER/RAPE/ROBBERY
NO PRIOR COMMITMENT

AGE AT RELEASE	TOTAL CASES	GENERAL RISK RATING								OVERALL RISK RATING
		SR	UH	VH	H	HM	LM	L	VL	
18-19	16	0	0	4	0	1	10	1	0	29.3%
20-24	46	1	0	3	5	4	23	5	5	24.0%
25-29	30	1	1	1	3	8	8	6	2	26.4%
30-39	19	0	0	0	3	0	5	7	4	16.4%
40+	16	0	0	0	0	0	3	5	8	8.6%
ALL AGES	127	2	1	8	11	13	49	24	19	22.2%

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
DISTRIBUTION OF RISK FOR SELECTED OFFENDER CATEGORIES
COMBINED CONSTRUCTION/VALIDATION SAMPLE

OFFENDERS CONVICTED OF FORCIBLE FELONY EXCEPT MURDER/RAPE/ROBBERY
PRIOR COMMITMENT

AGE AT RELEASE	TOTAL CASES	GENERAL RISK RATING								OVERALL RISK RATING
		SR	UH	VH	H	HM	LM	L	VL	
18-19	3	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	77.1%
20-24	24	0	4	3	2	9	6	0	0	38.4%
25-29	11	2	2	0	2	4	1	0	0	50.2%
30-39	17	0	0	2	2	4	4	5	0	26.0%
40+	15	1	2	5	1	0	5	1	0	46.8%
ALL AGES	70	4	9	11	7	17	16	6	0	40.7%

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
DISTRIBUTION OF RISK FOR SELECTED OFFENDER CATEGORIES
COMBINED CONSTRUCTION/VALIDATION SAMPLE

OFFENDERS CONVICTED OF NON-FORCIBLE FELONY AGAINST PERSONS
NO PRIOR COMMITMENT

AGE AT RELEASE	TOTAL CASES	GENERAL RISK RATING								OVERALL RISK RATING
		SR	UH	VH	H	HM	LM	L	VL	
18-19	51	0	0	13	8	0	23	4	3	32.3%
20-24	106	2	1	7	10	4	40	12	30	21.1%
25-29	69	0	0	1	6	5	14	25	18	15.0%
30-39	75	0	0	0	3	0	15	31	26	10.9%
40+	50	0	0	0	4	0	7	18	21	11.4%
ALL AGES	351	2	1	21	31	9	99	90	98	18.0%

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
DISTRIBUTION OF RISK FOR SELECTED OFFENDER CATEGORIES
COMBINED CONSTRUCTION/VALIDATION SAMPLE

OFFENDERS CONVICTED OF NON-FORCIBLE FELONY AGAINST PERSONS
PRIOR COMMITMENT

AGE AT RELEASE	TOTAL CASES	GENERAL RISK RATING								RISK RATING
		SR	UH	VH	H	HM	LM	L	VL	
18-19	24	6	3	10	3	0	2	0	0	66.3%
20-24	22	1	6	5	1	3	5	1	0	48.9%
25-29	27	3	6	1	6	2	6	3	0	46.3%
30-39	18	0	0	3	0	3	9	2	1	25.3%
40+	19	1	0	1	3	0	10	4	0	27.0%
ALL AGES	110	11	15	20	13	8	32	10	1	44.4%

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
DISTRIBUTION OF RISK FOR SELECTED OFFENDER CATEGORIES
COMBINED CONSTRUCTION/VALIDATION SAMPLE

OFFENDERS CONVICTED OF DRUG-LAW VIOLATION
NO PRIOR COMMITMENT

AGE AT RELEASE	TOTAL CASES	GENERAL RISK RATING								OVERALL RISK RATING
		SR	UH	VH	H	HM	LM	L	VL	
18-19	465	0	4	23	44	13	146	122	113	18.0%
20-24	906	1	2	15	20	23	234	208	402	11.8%
25-29	203	0	3	1	5	12	19	53	110	10.7%
30-39	49	0	0	0	1	2	11	19	16	11.2%
40+	11	0	0	0	0	0	3	4	4	10.0%
ALL AGES	1634	1	9	39	70	50	413	396	645	13.4%

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
DISTRIBUTION OF RISK FOR SELECTED OFFENDER CATEGORIES
COMBINED CONSTRUCTION/VALIDATION SAMPLE

OFFENDERS CONVICTED OF DRUG-LAW VIOLATION
PRIOR COMMITMENT

AGE AT RELEASE	TOTAL CASES	GENERAL RISK RATING								OVERALL RISK RATING
		SR	UH	VH	H	HM	LM	L	VL	
18-19	54	0	21	20	3	4	6	0	0	58.3%
20-24	141	2	3	18	17	23	62	13	3	29.7%
25-29	61	2	8	3	17	6	17	8	0	37.4%
30-39	24	0	1	1	2	4	10	3	3	23.2%
40+	3	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	45.0%
ALL AGES	283	4	33	44	39	37	95	25	6	36.4%

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
DISTRIBUTION OF RISK FOR SELECTED OFFENDER CATEGORIES
COMBINED CONSTRUCTION/VALIDATION SAMPLE

OFFENDERS CONVICTED OF BURGLARY/MOTOR VEHICLE THEFT
NO PRIOR COMMITMENT

AGE AT RELEASE	TOTAL CASES	GENERAL RISK RATING								OVERALL RISK RATING
		SR	UH	VH	H	HM	LM	L	VL	
18-19	532	5	8	219	71	31	185	3	10	41.9%
20-24	568	1	24	105	119	82	218	9	10	35.4%
25-29	132	2	11	10	28	23	28	26	4	32.4%
30-39	54	0	0	2	3	6	22	16	5	18.4%
40+	22	0	0	1	0	3	10	7	1	18.0%
ALL AGES	1308	8	43	337	221	145	463	61	30	36.8%

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
DISTRIBUTION OF RISK FOR SELECTED OFFENDER CATEGORIES
COMBINED CONSTRUCTION/VALIDATION SAMPLE

OFFENDERS CONVICTED OF BURGLARY/MOTOR VEHICLE THEFT
PRIOR COMMITMENT

AGE AT RELEASE	TOTAL CASES	GENERAL RISK RATING								OVERALL RISK RATING
		SR	UH	VH	H	HM	LM	L	VL	
18-19	231	79	22	120	3	4	3	0	0	73.5%
20-24	254	0	45	94	58	45	10	1	1	52.1%
25-29	125	25	26	39	19	16	0	0	0	64.2%
30-39	77	0	7	21	3	32	8	6	0	39.2%
40+	45	0	4	18	0	11	12	0	0	43.0%
ALL AGES	685	104	104	292	83	108	33	7	1	63.0%

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
DISTRIBUTION OF RISK FOR SELECTED OFFENDER CATEGORIES
COMBINED CONSTRUCTION/VALIDATION SAMPLE

OFFENDERS CONVICTED OF LARCENY/STOLEN PROPERTY
NO PRIOR COMMITMENT

AGE AT RELEASE	TOTAL CASES	GENERAL RISK RATING								OVERALL RISK RATING
		SR	UH	VH	H	HM	LM	L	VL	
18-19	497	4	9	68	118	13	198	33	54	30.5%
20-24	544	0	6	36	49	24	234	72	123	20.3%
25-29	162	0	2	0	13	24	28	63	32	16.2%
30-39	98	0	0	0	8	0	17	31	42	11.8%
40+	63	0	0	1	0	0	10	23	29	9.4%
ALL AGES	1364	4	17	105	188	61	487	222	280	22.4%

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
DISTRIBUTION OF RISK FOR SELECTED OFFENDER CATEGORIES
COMBINED CONSTRUCTION/VALIDATION SAMPLE

OFFENDERS CONVICTED OF LARCENY/STOLEN PROPERTY
PRIOR COMMITMENT

AGE AT RELEASE	TOTAL CASES	GENERAL RISK RATING								OVERALL RISK RATING
		SR	UH	VH	H	HM	LM	L	VL	
18-19	110	27	14	55	10	2	2	0	0	68.9%
20-24	165	0	15	54	30	34	29	3	0	44.3%
25-29	75	11	11	11	14	9	11	8	0	49.3%
30-39	60	0	5	8	3	5	27	7	5	28.6%
40+	38	0	2	11	4	1	13	6	1	35.3%
ALL AGES	448	38	47	139	61	51	82	24	6	48.4%

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
DISTRIBUTION OF RISK FOR SELECTED OFFENDER CATEGORIES
COMBINED CONSTRUCTION/VALIDATION SAMPLE

OFFENDERS CONVICTED OF BAD CHECKS/FORGERY
NO PRIOR COMMITMENT

AGE AT RELEASE	TOTAL CASES	GENERAL RISK RATING								OVERALL RISK RATING
		SR	UH	VH	H	HM	LM	L	VL	
18-19	129	1	3	25	29	8	63	0	0	35.3%
20-24	357	0	8	46	48	31	224	0	0	29.6%
25-29	192	0	6	5	27	40	40	73	1	23.2%
30-39	135	0	0	3	1	7	41	83	0	14.4%
40+	51	0	0	3	0	5	13	30	0	16.5%
ALL AGES	864	1	17	82	105	91	381	186	1	25.9%

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
DISTRIBUTION OF RISK FOR SELECTED OFFENDER CATEGORIES
COMBINED CONSTRUCTION/VALIDATION SAMPLE

OFFENDERS CONVICTED OF BAD CHECKS/FORGERY
PRIOR COMMITMENT

AGE AT RELEASE	TOTAL CASES	GENERAL RISK RATING								OVERALL RISK RATING
		SR	UH	VH	H	HM	LM	L	VL	
18-19	54	17	5	18	10	2	2	0	0	67.8%
20-24	104	0	19	45	19	18	3	0	0	54.0%
25-29	84	16	11	22	22	13	0	0	0	60.2%
30-39	63	0	1	12	1	12	15	22	0	26.5%
40+	61	0	4	27	0	4	9	17	0	39.7%
ALL AGES	366	33	40	124	52	49	29	39	0	50.3%

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
DISTRIBUTION OF RISK FOR SELECTED OFFENDER CATEGORIES
COMBINED CONSTRUCTION/VALIDATION SAMPLE

OFFENDERS CONVICTED OF CRIME AGAINST PROPERTY EXCEPT
BURGLARY/MOTOR VEHICLE THEFT/LARCENY/STOLEN PROPERTY/BAD CHECKS/FORGERY
NO PRIOR COMMITMENT

AGE AT RELEASE	TOTAL CASES	GENERAL RISK RATING								OVERALL RISK RATING
		SR	UH	VH	H	HM	LM	L	VL	
18-19	291	0	5	38	69	5	116	27	31	29.3%
20-24	376	0	2	20	29	16	169	64	76	19.0%
25-29	123	0	1	1	5	12	19	44	41	13.2%
30-39	147	0	0	0	0	1	19	33	94	7.5%
40+	89	0	0	1	0	0	14	20	54	8.4%
ALL AGES	1026	0	8	60	103	34	337	188	296	18.7%

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
DISTRIBUTION OF RISK FOR SELECTED OFFENDER CATEGORIES
COMBINED CONSTRUCTION/VALIDATION SAMPLE

OFFENDERS CONVICTED OF CRIME AGAINST PROPERTY EXCEPT
BURGLARY/MOTOR VEHICLE THEFT/LARCENY/STOLEN PROPERTY/BAD CHECKS/FORGERY
PRIOR COMMITMENT

AGE AT RELEASE	TOTAL CASES	GENERAL RISK RATING								OVERALL RISK RATING
		SR	UH	VH	H	HM	LM	L	VL	
18-19	72	13	8	28	11	4	8	0	0	60.2%
20-24	113	1	20	32	19	15	26	0	0	47.0%
25-29	59	5	6	9	11	13	9	6	0	43.2%
30-39	49	0	1	10	1	6	13	17	1	26.7%
40+	27	0	3	6	1	1	5	11	0	32.0%
ALL AGES	320	19	38	85	43	39	61	34	1	44.9%

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
DISTRIBUTION OF RISK FOR SELECTED OFFENDER CATEGORIES
COMBINED CONSTRUCTION/VALIDATION SAMPLE

OFFENDERS CONVICTED OF OMVUI
NO PRIOR COMMITMENT

AGE AT RELEASE	TOTAL CASES	GENERAL RISK RATING								OVERALL RISK RATING
		SR	UH	VH	H	HM	LM	L	VL	
18-19	127	0	2	2	9	1	22	17	74	12.6%
20-24	277	0	0	10	13	2	48	39	165	11.7%
25-29	218	0	3	0	4	0	9	52	150	7.9%
30-39	351	0	0	0	0	0	17	81	253	6.3%
40+	612	0	0	0	0	0	22	136	454	6.1%
ALL AGES	1585	0	5	12	26	3	118	325	1096	7.9%

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
DISTRIBUTION OF RISK FOR SELECTED OFFENDER CATEGORIES
COMBINED CONSTRUCTION/VALIDATION SAMPLE

OFFENDERS CONVICTED OF OMVUI
PRIOR COMMITMENT

AGE AT RELEASE	TOTAL CASES	GENERAL RISK RATING								OVERALL RISK RATING
		SR	UH	VH	H	HM	LM	L	VL	
18-19	21	0	5	4	7	0	3	2	0	48.0%
20-24	46	0	2	7	10	3	20	4	0	33.1%
25-29	30	0	6	0	9	0	4	8	3	33.7%
30-39	45	0	0	1	0	5	18	16	5	15.5%
40+	93	0	0	2	0	10	44	28	9	16.1%
ALL AGES	235	0	13	14	26	18	89	58	17	24.4%

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
DISTRIBUTION OF RISK FOR SELECTED OFFENDER CATEGORIES
COMBINED CONSTRUCTION/VALIDATION SAMPLE

OFFENDERS CONVICTED OF MISCELLANEOUS CRIMES
NO PRIOR COMMITMENT

AGE AT RELEASE	TOTAL CASES	GENERAL RISK RATING								OVERALL RISK RATING
		SR	UH	VH	H	HM	LM	L	VL	
18-19	172	4	3	11	29	4	52	40	29	24.2%
20-24	370	1	5	26	54	13	117	75	79	21.8%
25-29	159	1	2	4	11	16	36	37	52	16.7%
30-39	151	0	0	1	5	4	41	48	52	12.1%
40+	141	0	0	0	3	2	27	37	72	9.6%
ALL AGES	993	6	10	42	102	39	273	237	284	18.2%

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
DISTRIBUTION OF RISK FOR SELECTED OFFENDER CATEGORIES
COMBINED CONSTRUCTION/VALIDATION SAMPLE

OFFENDERS CONVICTED OF MISCELLANEOUS CRIMES
PRIOR COMMITMENT

AGE AT RELEASE	TOTAL CASES	GENERAL RISK RATING								OVERALL RISK RATING
		SR	UH	VH	H	HM	LM	L	VL	
18-19	47	8	10	14	8	2	4	0	1	61.0%
20-24	89	7	5	27	13	10	23	4	0	45.4%
25-29	66	5	19	3	10	14	10	5	0	47.2%
30-39	46	2	1	5	3	2	20	11	2	27.0%
40+	29	0	1	3	3	3	10	8	1	25.5%
ALL AGES	277	22	36	52	37	31	67	28	4	43.3%

CONTRASTS WITH EXISTING PRACTICES

The question naturally arises as to whether or not the "statistical" system proposed here - which is based on a strictly limited set of offender characteristics - is more efficient in "separating the wheat from the chaff" than is the traditional "clinical" process of reviewing the complete offender record, conducting a face-to-face interview, and making a subjective assessment based on all available information. The answer to this question depends in part on the skill and knowledge of the decision-maker. Naturally, the less-experienced individual has less to go on in making a judgment, and may gain more from having an objective tool for assisting in the decision process. However, it is also possible that some of the more seasoned "veterans" may have ingrained a number of faulty perceptions of just what constitute "risk factors," and would thereby benefit even more from the objective evidence.

In any case, a basic fact of life is that the human mind has a number of very basic limitations in efficiently assimilating information and past experience, that are <u>not</u> present with modern computerized data processing. Indeed, no decision-maker could consistently and efficiently analyze, synthesize, and actualize both past experiences and the current factors in a case to match the capability of a well-conceived and executed computerized assessment. This does not mean, however, that statistical predictive devices <u>uniformly</u> outpace clinical judgments. Certainly, it is possible for a decision-maker to have great insight into risk factors and how they interact. Also, some predictive devices are not well-enough constructed to provide better predictions than the clinical variety. But it is true that - potentially - the computerized assessment has a much greater capability to handle a large number of factors and cull from them an effective predictive strategy.

A workable compromise would seem to be that the statistical method can best serve as a "tool" in assisting the decision-making process rather than in replacing the existing clinical methods. In other words, each type of process could "potentially" improve on the other. We would warn, however, that clinical judgments based on faulty perceptions would only weaken or counteract the benefit of the statistical method. In practice, it is recommended that exceptions to the statistical assessment be supported with statements as to why given factors in the case dictate such an exception. This process would be similar to conventions whereby judges and parole board members using decision-making guidelines dictating expected sentences and times-to-be-served would document their reasons for deviating from those guidelines. In fact, such is frequently the practice with existing systems of this type.

Certain analyses completed by the Statistical Analysis Center support the proposition that the Offender Risk Assessment Scoring System could significantly increase the efficiency with which decision-makers make judgment of risk in this state. Data are available which show that there is only a weak correlation between the risk rating assigned by the system and the probability and length of imprisonment in Iowa.

Stated otherwise, there is no clear association between objective statistical "risk" and either the sentence imposed or the time-to-be-served in felony cases. This fact has been well documented and has been explained in detail in Volume IX of Crime and Criminal Justice in Iowa, and in recent briefs prepared by the SAC. At the extreme, SAC has taken the position that with effective risk assessment providing input to sentencing and parole decisions, it is possible to reduce commitments to adult correctional institutions and to reduce the average length of prison terms in this state while at the same time reducing recidivism rates and better protecting the general public.

Other analyses show - for example - that there is <u>not</u> a strong association between supervision levels assigned to probationers and parolees in Iowa (minimum, normal, intensive) and objective risk ratings based on the proposed system. Indeed, under current decision practices, a large share of such individuals are placed under normal supervision. With the proposed risk assessment, however, well over half of probationers and parolees could well be placed on either minimum or intensive supervision. In other words, the statistical method quite easily separates the good risks (minimum supervision) from the poor risks (intensive supervision). Likewise, the system could readily identify good candidates for residential placement in the community or for revocation on technical violations. It is the judgment of SAC that use of the statistical method would free up probation and parole officers' time to a greater extent than is now the case, and would exact "more bang for the buck" in delivering correctional services in the community. This derives from the fact that there appears to much unneeded supervision of lower risk offenders, who are large in number, and insufficient care and control in the case of higher risk offenders, who are much fewer in number.

It is well to point out that risk assessment is only one of several concerns reflected in any offender screening process in criminal justice. Risk, though an important factor to consider, is by no means the only concern in deciding whether or not a person should be released or confined, or in assigning a level of custody or supervision. For example, there would be little quarrel with the idea that the seriousness of the crime with which a person is charged or convicted is a major factor in the decision outcome, whether or not the offender be judged a good, fair, or poor risk. In fact, with some offenses, such as murder, the fact of the seriousness of the crime may vastly outweigh all other factors. Thus the fact that a murderer would rate as a good risk for release would do little to mitigate the view that incarceration - and lengthy incarceration at that - is deserved in such a case.

In general, the "risk factor" as assessed by statistical/actuarial methods may not agree in many cases with what would be viewed as a <u>deserved</u> punishment or disposition. Stated otherwise, the public protection motive of the decision process may not always be consistent with the just deserts or punishment/retribution motive. To a certain extent, this lack of association is documented by work of the Statistical Analysis Center relating "risk factors" to traditional factors given heavy weight in past decisions to imprison or to approve or deny parole in Iowa. To wit, many offenders convicted of more serious crimes rate as better than average risks, and likewise many of those convicted of less serious crimes (even among convicted felons) rate as higher than average risks.

We are not suggesting here that traditional judgments of desert and seriousness be "replaced" by a formal risk assessment process. On the contrary, we see risk assessment as augmenting another "complementary" dimension in the decision process, and thereby allowing better decisions given other established facts of the case such as offense severity. Thus, within the group of armed robbers, although a much higher percent of such would be imprisoned than would be the case for thiefs, risk could dictate to a certain extent which among this group could be safely placed on probation or released earlier than normal if committed to prison.

In addition to current offense severity/seriousness, other factors not necessarily associated with risk that could relate to desert and the punishment/retribution angle are 1) the number of times convicted and especially of felonies as an adult, 2) the number of times imprisoned, 3) a record of violence, 4) past failures on probation, parole, or work release, 5) use of a weapon in the instant offense, 6) many actual (current) offenses suspected or proven, and 7) current charges during a period of release on previous charges.

For decision processes affecting offender status within the community, employment, length of time served (to a given date) on probation/parole, previous adjustment, needs as opposed to risks, and geographical location, among others, could well be considered in addition to risk assessment and offense severity. Again, we worn of the problem of diluting the effect of the risk assessment with other factors. It is best to decide on how each factor to be considered should be "weighted into" the decisions themselves to ensure the proper - and effective - role of each. This highlights the advantage of careful planning as a prelude to effective decision-making.

CODING PROCEDURES

As discussed above, the Offender Risk Assessment Scoring System allows the user to make two separate - but complementary - assessments of risk as follows:

A) THE GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM, which rates offenders according to the probability of re-arrest, revocation, or flight, and according to the propensity to be charged with multiple offenses per arrest or with more serious charges. This assessment gives a risk rating among eight possible ratings varying from VERY-LOW RISK to SUPER RECIDIVIST.

B) THE RISK OF VIOLENCE, which rates offenders according to the probability of new charges for crimes against persons or involving weapons, and especially for violent felonies. This assessment, which is based in part on the general assessment, but with refinement by further "violence-risk" categories, gives a risk rating among nine possible ratings varying from NIL RISK to SUPER RECIDIVIST.

To reach a determination of both general risk and violence risk, it is necessary to go through a nine-step process as outlined on the following page.

The first step in this process involves the collection of data as indicated on Form A (page 90). This form provides for all of the data necessary to code both general and violence risk. The coder should circle each item on the form that applies to the offender being rated. This includes circling all offense categories on the form that apply to the offender at the arrest stage or beyond, or according to what is known to the coder. Definitions of all items are given on pages 91-93, and should be reviewed carefully and frequently. In addition, important notes on data collection are listed following the item definitions.

Once the data collection form is complete, the coder should refer to the chart on page 96 to determine precisely which lettered forms should be coded to complete the remaining steps of the nine-step sequence. The forms, lettered B1 to B7, C1 to C4, D, E, F, G, H, and I, appear on pages 98-114 below and correspond (as indicated on page 87) with the given eight steps. The coder should note that from one to three items of information, including current age, prior arrests or adult commitments, and current offense type, are needed to select the appropriate forms.

When the appropriate forms have been collected, they should be stapled in the specified order to the back of a cover sheet followed by the data collection form (Form A). The cover sheet, which can be drawn up by the user agency, should indicate:

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
PROCESSING STEPS

PROCESSING STEP	FORMS
1. DATA COLLECTION	A
2. GENERAL RISK ASSESSMENT (PRELIMINARY)	B1 TO B7
3. VIOLENCE RISK ASSESSMENT (PRELIMINARY)	C1 TO C4
4. SUPPLEMENTARY RISK ASSESSMENT	D
5. ADJUSTED GENERAL RISK ASSESSMENT (BASED ON 2, 3, AND 4)	E
6. SMOOTHING FUNCTION	F
7. FINAL GENERAL RISK ASSESSMENT (BASED ON 5 AND 6)	G
8. FINAL VIOLENCE RISK ASSESSMENT (BASED ON 3, 7, AND CURRENT OFFENSE TYPE)	H
9. RISK RATINGS BY (THE ABOVE) PROCESSING STEP(S)	I

1) Name,
2) Identifying or file number,
3) Supervisor (if applicable),
4) Program Assignment and/or location,
5) Coder,
6) Date coded,
7) Final General Risk Rating, and
8) Final Violence Risk Rating,

along with any other information desired by the user agency. An example of such a cover sheet is given on page 115.

Next, the coder should begin completing the selected forms with data provided on Form A. The first seven of these forms, B through H, involve successive determinations of a level of risk, the last two of which (Forms G and H) provide the final general and violence risk ratings. At each step, a code is circled based on which of the indicated combinations of characteristics (configurations) apply to the offender. The codes, including SR, UH, VH, H, HM, LM, L, L-VL, VL, N, and M/L, are defined on page 97. This page should be examined briefly before beginning the coding process for the first time, and later as needed. When all coding (Forms B through H) is completed, all results should be summarized on Form I and the final ratings recorded on the cover sheet.

The seven forms (B through H) give seven successive assessments as follows:

Form B(1-7): A "preliminary general risk assessment," which provides the foundation for the assessment of general risk, and which took the bulk of development time.

Form C(1-4): A "preliminary violence risk assessment," which provides the foundation for the assessment of violence risk.

Form D: A "supplementary risk assessment," which provides selected high risk categories not covered on the B and C forms.

Form E: An "adjustment to the preliminary general risk assessment" of the B form, based on the preliminary violence and supplementary risk assessments.

Form F: An entirely distinct assessment of general risk, called a "smoothing function," which considers more factors, but in a less sensitive way, then the B forms. This assessment is needed to "smooth out" various assessments of the E form judged inadequate because of the lack of adequate cases in certain configurations. This device formed one of the original versions of the Offender Risk Assessment Scoring System, and - though predictive - is far less accurate than the final system.

Form G: The "final general risk assessment," based on the adjusted preliminary general risk assessment of Form E and the smoothing function of Form F.

Form H: The "final violence risk assessment," based on the preliminary violence risk assessment of the C form, with adjustments made according to the final general risk assessment of Form G, and the presence or absence of crimes against person(s) among current offenses.

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
DATA COLLECTION

FORM A

CIRCLE EACH CATEGORY BELOW AS APPLICABLE

A. CURRENT OFFENSES

MURDER
MANSLAUGHTER
RAPE
ATTEMPTED RAPE
SEX OFFENSE AGT. JUVENILE
ROBBERY OR ASSAULT TO ROB
AGGRAVATED ASSAULT
GOING ARMED WITH INTENT
EXTORTION
OTHER AGAINST PERSON(S)

BURGLARY OR ATTEMPT
MOTOR VEHICLE THEFT
LARCENY-FIRST DEGREE
OTHER LARCENY
STOLEN PROPERTY
FORGERY
BAD CHECKS
OTHER FRAUD
EMBEZZLEMENT
COUNTERFEITING
ARSON
VANDALISM
SHOPLIFTING
OTHER AGAINST PROPERTY

OMVUI-1ST
OMVUI-2ND OR 3RD
OTHER ALCOHOL-RELATED
DRUG-RELATED (NON-NARCOTIC)
DRUG-RELATED (NARCOTICS)
CARRYING A CONCEALED WEAPON
OTHER WEAPONS
CONSPIRACY
AGAINST PUBLIC MORALS

AGAINST PUBLIC JUSTICE/AUTH.
MISCELLANEOUS

B. CURRENT AGE 18 19 20 21-24 25-29 30+
C. AGE AT FIRST ARREST 0-12 13-14 15 16-17 18-19 20+
D. PRIOR ARRESTS 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8+
E. JUVENILE CONVICTIONS 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7+
F. JUVENILE COMMITMENTS 0 1 2 3 4+
G. PRIOR ADULT CONVICTIONS 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7+
H. PRIOR ADULT JAIL TERMS 0 1 2 3 4+
I. PRIOR ADULT (PRISON) COMMITMENTS 0 1 2 3 4+
J. PRIOR (JUVENILE OR ADULT) PROBATIONS 0 1 2 3 4+
K. PRIOR CONVICTIONS (E+G) 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7+
L. PRIOR ADULT INCARCERATIONS (H+I) 0 1 2 3 4+
M. PRIOR INCARCERATIONS (F+L) 0 1 2 3 4+
N. PRIOR JAIL TERMS/JUVENILE COMMITMENTS (F+H) 0 1 2 3+
O. PRIOR JAIL/PRISON/PROBATION (H+I+J) 0 1 2 3 4+
P. KNOWN ALIASES NO YES
Q. HISTORY OF DRUG/ALCOHOL PROBLEM ALCOHOL NON-NARCOTIC DRUGS NARCOTICS
R. UNEMPLOYED NO YES
S. EMPLOYABLE SKILL NO YES
T. HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA NO YES
U. GED NO YES
V. YEARS OF SCHOOL 0-9 10+
W. LEGALLY MARRIED NO YES
X. PRE-TRIAL CONDITION ROR BAIL RWS DETENTION
Y. PROBATION TIME JAIL RESIDENCE NEITHER

ITEM DEFINITIONS

PRIOR ARRESTS

This element is to reflect the total number of arrests in the offender's record to-date, minus one for the arrest leading to the current sentence. Arrests between the original arrest on the current sentence and the current date are to be included. Include also (if known), all instances of new charges not involving formal arrest, such as during the current confinement. Do not include traffic arrests, except when they involve a non-traffic offense. Include all juvenile and adult arrests, whether or not they led to formal charges.

Remember, this element is to cover the total number of arrests to-date, including arrests during the current sentence, minus one.

PRIOR CONVICTIONS

This element is to reflect the total number of convictions in the offender's record to-date, minus one if the offender is convicted on current charges. Do not include traffic fines, except when non-traffic charges are involved. Otherwise include all adult convictions, felony or misdemeanor, and all instances of juvenile probations and commitments. All adult probations are to be counted, including deferred judgment/sentence probations.

Adult convictions are convictions occurring after the offender's 18th birthday.

PRIOR INCARCERATIONS

This element is to reflect the total number of convictions in the offender's record that have led to incarceration, minus one if the offender is, or has been, incarcerated on the current sentence. Incarcerations are to include juvenile and adult commitments and county jail terms.

According to this definition, a return of a parole violator should be counted in total incarcerations only if a new sentence was involved.

Adult incarcerations are incarcerations occurring after the offender's 18th birthday.

PRIOR PROBATIONS

This element is to reflect the total number of juvenile or adult probations granted the offender to the current date, minus one if the offender has received any probation on the current sentence.

JUVENILE COMMITMENT

Any placement in a juvenile facility as the result of criminal or status offenses.

AGE AT FIRST ARREST

The age of the offender at the first formal arrest of any type, whether or not formal action was subsequently taken.

PRIOR JAIL/PRISON/PROBATION

This element is to reflect the total number of adult jail or prison terms (served) or (adult or juvenile) probation terms, minus one if the offender has spent any time in jail or prison or on probation on a current sentence.

KNOWN ALIASES

This element is to reflect the existence of a willful falsification of the offender's legal name by the offender. Nicknames or other variations of the offender's legal name are not to be counted as aliases.

UNEMPLOYED

This element is to reflect the lack of a paying full-time or part-time job at the time of sentencing, if the offender has been sentenced. If the offender has not been sentenced, use his or her most recent known employment status in the free community. If no information on the offender's employment status at any recent time is available, a poor or unstable employment history, at the discretion of the coder, may be substituted for "unemployed."

NO EMPLOYABLE SKILL

This element reflects the lack of any acquired skills that would allow the offender to obtain a job of a skilled or semi-skilled nature without additional training or education.

HISTORY OF DRUG/ALCOHOL PROBLEM

This element is to reflect indications in the offender's record, statements to the same effect, or other knowledge, of serious or prolonged abuse of alcohol or drugs, the latter including all prescription drugs and controlled or counterfeit substances. The element should reflect personal use only, and should include all cases of formal drug or alcohol treatment, and other serious personal or job-related problems caused by the use of drugs or alcohol. Include cases of heavy use, even if the offender disclaims a problem.

HISTORY OF NARCOTICS USE

This element should reflect any indication that the offender has, at any time, used a narcotic drug, including cocaine and opium derivatives (heroin, morphine, etc.).

0-9 YEARS OF SCHOOL AND NO GED

This element is to reflect the fact of less than 10 years of completed formal schooling, and the lack (to the current date) of a general education degree. Thus credit may be given for education completed during the current sentence or since the current arrest.

PRE-TRIAL SERVICES OR DETENTION

This element is to reflect the fact that the offender was not released on his or her own recognizance, or on a money bond, prior to adjudication on current charges. In Iowa, this implies that the individual was either released with services (supervision) or was detained in a county jail, state prison, or

community residential facility. If the risk assessment is taking place prior to the determination of a pre-trial condition, the element is to be coded according to the coder's best judgment as to whether or not the offender would be released with services or detained, absent the risk assessment.

PROBATION TIME IN JAIL/RESIDENCE

This element refers to the fact that the offender has spent some time in a county jail or in a community residential facility after sentencing on the current offense(s). If the risk assessment is taking place prior to sentencing, and without knowledge that such time will be spent after the sentence, then the coder should code this element as if no time is to be spent.

CURRENT OFFENSE(S)

Against Person(s)

Kidnapping
Homicide (murder or manslaughter) and attempts
Sexual abuse or rape and attempts
Robbery and attempts
Assault (simple or aggravated)
Sex offenses (lascivious acts, incest, etc.)
Going armed with intent
Burglary-1st or with aggravation
Larceny from a person
Arson-1st or of a dwelling house
Other offenses strictly against person(s)

Against Property

Burglary-2nd or without aggravation
Motor vehicle theft (larceny of, or operating without the owner's consent)
Larceny/shoplifting
Stolen property (receiving or concealing)
Embezzlement
Forgery/uttering a forged instrument/false use of a financial instrument
Bad checks
Other fraud (false pretenses, fraudulent practices, etc.)
Vandalism
Arson - not 1st and not of a dwelling house
Other offenses strictly against property

Drugs/Alcohol

OMVUI
Intoxication
Other liquor-law violations
Possession, delivery, or possession with intent to deliver, a controlled or counterfeit substance
Other drug-law violations

Weapons

Carrying a concealed weapon
Possession of firearms
Other weapons offenses

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
NOTES ON DATA COLLECTION

1. THE CODING FOR CURRENT OFFENSES SHOULD REFLECT AS ACCURATELY AS POSSIBLE ACTUAL OFFENDER BEHAVIOR. THUS THE CODER SHOULD NOTE THE NATURE OF ARRESTING OR CHARGED OFFENSES THAT WERE DROPPED, DISMISSED, OR REDUCED. THE KEY TO CODING CURRENT OFFENSES IS TO FIND THE OFFENSE THAT WOULD EXACT THE HIGHEST RISK RATING POSSIBLE, WITHOUT REGARD TO WHEN THE CHARGE WAS ACTIVE. THUS, IF A PERSON WAS CHARGED WITH BURGLARY AND OMVUI, BUT WAS CONVICTED ONLY OF OMVUI, THEN THE CURRENT OFFENSES SHOULD BE COUNTED AS INCLUDING BURGLARY, SINCE BURGLARY EXACTS HIGHER RISK RATINGS THAN DOES OMVUI.

2. BE SURE TO OBTAIN AS MUCH INFORMATION AS POSSIBLE ON THE OFFENDER'S CRIMINAL HISTORY, SINCE A GOOD SHARE OF THE RISK ASSESSMENT IS BASED ON ITEMS OF THIS NATURE. IT IS PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT TO OBTAIN ACCURATE DATA ON THE OFFENDER'S JUVENILE RECORD. ACCORDINGLY, EVERY EFFORT SHOULD BE MADE TO OBTAIN LOCAL RAPSHEETS IN ADDITION TO THE DCI AND/OR FBI INFORMATION. THE PSI IS GENERALLY SUFFICIENT TO CODE CRIMINAL HISTORY, BUT MAY NOT ALWAYS CONTAIN COMPLETE JUVENILE OR OUT-OF-STATE DATA. IF FACED WITH A LACK OF OFFICIAL INFORMATION, AND NO FURTHER DOCUMENTATION CAN BE OBTAINED, UNOFFICIAL SOURCES - SUCH AS DIRECT QUESTIONING OF THE OFFENDER - ARE BETTER THAN NOTHING.

3. REMEMBER TO COUNT ALL ARRESTS, CONVICTIONS, PROBATIONS, AND INCARCERATIONS - RIGHT UP TO THE CURRENT DATE - IN CODING CRIMINAL HISTORY. STUDY THE INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY TO MAKE SURE THAT THIS IS DONE CORRECTLY. REMEMBER THE TOTAL MINUS ONE CONVENTION.

4. KEEP IN MIND THAT THE CURRENT MARITAL STATUS, OCCUPATIONAL LEVEL (IF ABOVE USUAL), AND EDUCATION - AND NOT JUST THAT GIVEN IN THE PSI OR ADMISSIONS SUMMARY - ARE TO BE CODED, AS WELL AS THE MOST RECENT EMPLOYMENT STATUS IN THE COMMUNITY.

5. DON'T FORGET THAT "NICKNAMES" SHOULD NOT BE COUNTED AS ALIASES.

6. REMEMBER TO COUNT BOTH JUVENILE AND ADULT ARRESTS, CONVICTIONS, PROBATIONS, AND INCARCERATIONS, BUT EXCLUDE TRAFFIC OFFENSES. ANY INDICATION THAT THE OFFENDER WAS JUDGED "GUILTY" SHOULD LEAD THE CODER TO COUNT A GIVEN INCIDENT AS A CONVICTION.

7. BE SURE NOT TO COUNT PAROLE VIOLATION RETURNS AS PRIOR (OR CURRENT) ADULT COMMITMENTS OR JAIL TERMS UNLESS THERE WAS AN ADDED OR CONCURRENT SENTENCE IMPOSED. DEFINITELY DO NOT COUNT

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
NOTED ON DATA COLLECTION
(CONTINUED)

THE CURRENT INCARCERATION AS A PRIOR INCARCERATION FOR INMATES OR EX-INMATES.

8. WHILE "PRIOR ARRESTS" ARE FOR NON-TRAFFIC OFFENSES ONLY, "AGE AT FIRST ARREST" SHOULD REFLECT THE FIRST ARREST OF ANY TYPE.

9. IF AT ALL POSSIBLE, OBTAIN CRIMINAL HISTORY DATA THAT REFLECTS ALL CRIMINAL ACTIVITY TO THE CURRENT DATE. THUS A PSI MAY NOT SHOW THE NEW BURGLARY THAT LED TO THE REVOCATION OF PROBATION FOR LARCENY. OTHER DOCUMENTS, SUCH AS ADMISSION SUMMARIES, SHOULD BE EXAMINED FOR ANY REFERENCES TO OFFENSES NOT FORMALLY RECORDED ON THE RAPSHEETS OR PSI.

10. EXPERIENCE SHOWS THAT FAULTY DATA COLLECTION CAN EASILY LEAD TO A FALSE ASSESSMENT OF RISK, AND THEREBY TO A BAD DECISION IN MANY CASES. EXTRA CARE IN DATA COLLECTION CAN PAY GREAT DIVIDENDS IN THE LONG RUN, INCLUDING GREATER CONFIDENCE IN THE RESULTS OF THE PROCESS.

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
INSTRUCTIONS ON FORMS TO CODE

CURRENT AGE			FORMS TO CODE
18			A,B1,C1,D,E,F,G,H,I
19			A,B2,C1,D,E,F,G,H,I
20	2+ PRIOR ARRESTS		A,B3,C1,D,E,F,G,H,I
	0-1 PRIOR ARRESTS		A,B4,C1,D,E,F,G,H,I
21-24	2+ PRIOR ARRESTS	NOT ALL CURRENT OFFENSES AGAINST PROPERTY	A,B3,C2,D,E,F,G,H,I
		ALL CURRENT OFFENSES AGAINST PROPERTY ---	A,B3,C3,D,E,F,G,H,I
	0-1 PRIOR ARRESTS	NOT ALL CURRENT OFFENSES AGAINST PROPERTY	A,B4,C2,D,E,F,G,H,I
		ALL CURRENT OFFENSES AGAINST PROPERTY ---	A,B4,C3,D,E,F,G,H,I
25-29	NOT ALL CURRENT OFFENSES AGAINST PROPERTY		A,B5,C2,D,E,F,G,H,I
	ALL CURRENT OFFENSES AGAINST PROPERTY		A,B5,C3,D,E,F,G,H,I
30+	2+ PRIOR ADULT COMMITMENTS		A,B6,C4,D,E,F,G,H,I
	0-1 PRIOR ADULT COMMITMENTS		A,B7,C4,D,E,F,G,H,I

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
KEY TO RISK RATING SYMBOLS

SR - SUPER RECIDIVIST

UH - ULTRA-HIGH RISK

VH - VERY-HIGH RISK

H - HIGH RISK

HM - HIGH-MEDIUM RISK

LM - LOW-MEDIUM RISK

L - LOW RISK

L-VL - LOW TO VERY-LOW RISK

VL - VERY-LOW RISK

N - NIL RISK

M/L - MEDIUM OR LOW RISK

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
OFFENDERS CURRENTLY AGE 18

FORM B1

PRIMARY RISK FACTORS (COUNT)
- 7+ PRIOR ARRESTS
- 3+ PRIOR CONVICTIONS
- 2+ PRIOR INCARCERATIONS
- 2+ PRIOR PROBATIONS
- 2+ PRIOR ADULT CONVICTIONS
- 1+ PRIOR ADULT INCARCERATIONS
- FIRST ARREST BEFORE AGE 13
- HISTORY OF NARCOTICS USE

→ 4+ RISK FACTORS → VH

→ 1-3 RISK FACTORS → H

NO PRIMARY RISK FACTOR / PRIOR ARREST RECORD

→ CURRENT OFFENSES INCLUDE: BURGLARY, ROBBERY, MOTOR VEHICLE THEFT, OR FIRST DEGREE LARCENY → H

→ **SECONDARY RISK FACTORS (COUNT)**
- 3-6 PRIOR ARRESTS
- 1-2 PRIOR CONVICTIONS
- 1 JUVENILE COMMITMENT
- FIRST ARREST AGE 13-15
- UNEMPLOYED
- 0-9 YEARS OF SCHOOL AND NO GED
- PRE-TRIAL SERVICES OR DETENTION
- PROBATION TIME IN JAIL/RESIDENCE

→ CURRENT OFFENSES NOT STRICTLY DRUG OR ALCOHOL RELATED
- → 1+ RISK FACTORS → H
- → NO RISK FACTORS → LM

→ CURRENT OFFENSES STRICTLY DRUG OR ALCOHOL RELATED
- → 4+ RISK FACTORS → H
- → 0-3 RISK FACTORS → L

NO PRIMARY RISK FACTOR / NO PRIOR ARREST RECORD

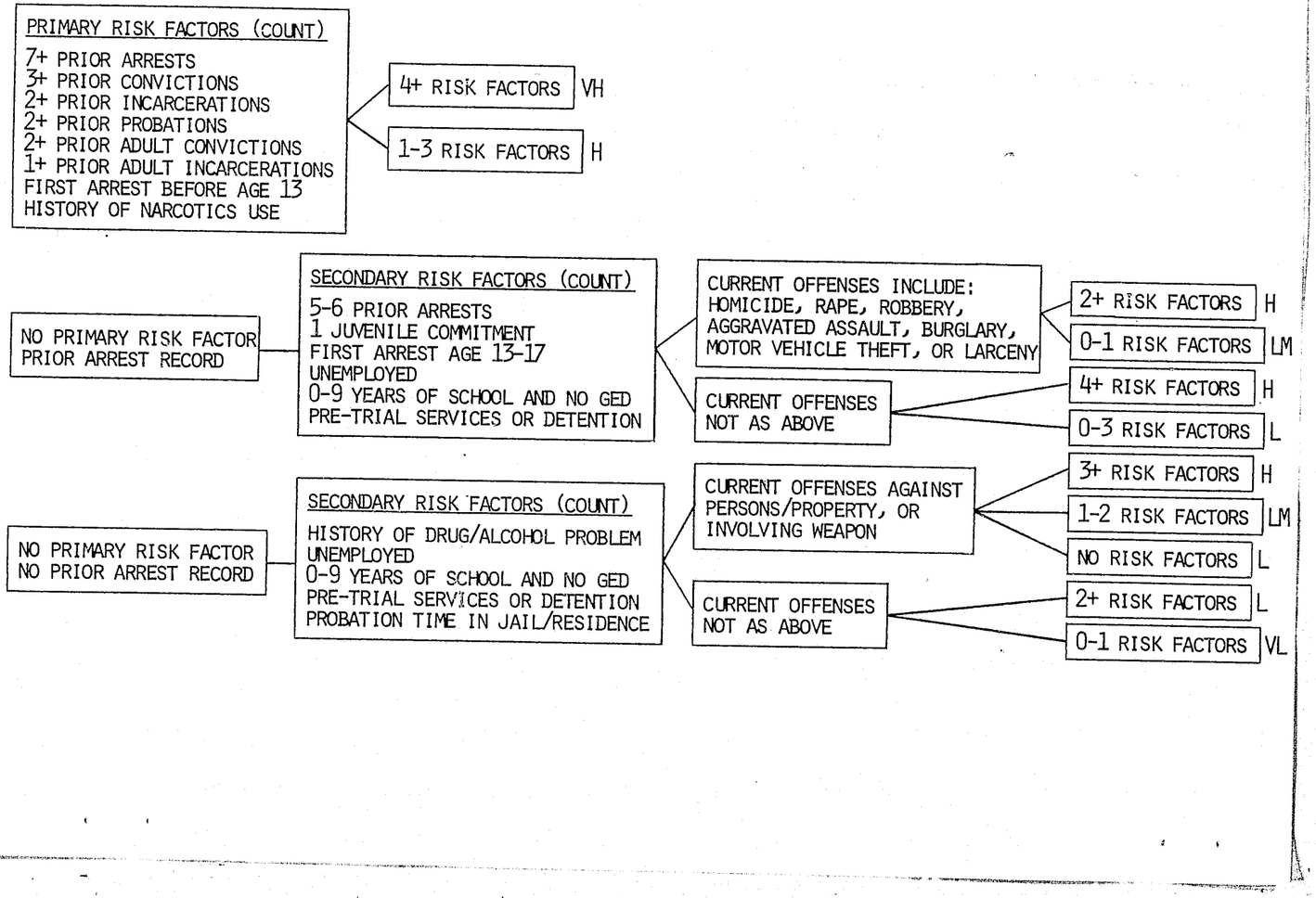
→ **SECONDARY RISK FACTORS (COUNT)**
- HISTORY OF DRUG/ALCOHOL PROBLEM
- UNEMPLOYED
- 0-9 YEARS OF SCHOOL AND NO GED
- PRE-TRIAL SERVICES OR DETENTION
- PROBATION TIME IN JAIL/RESIDENCE

→ CURRENT OFFENSES AGAINST PERSONS/ PROPERTY, OR INVOLVING WEAPON
- → 3+ RISK FACTORS → H
- → 1-2 RISK FACTORS → LM
- → NO RISK FACTORS → L

→ CURRENT OFFENSES NOT AS ABOVE
- → 2+ RISK FACTORS → L
- → 0-1 RISK FACTORS → VL

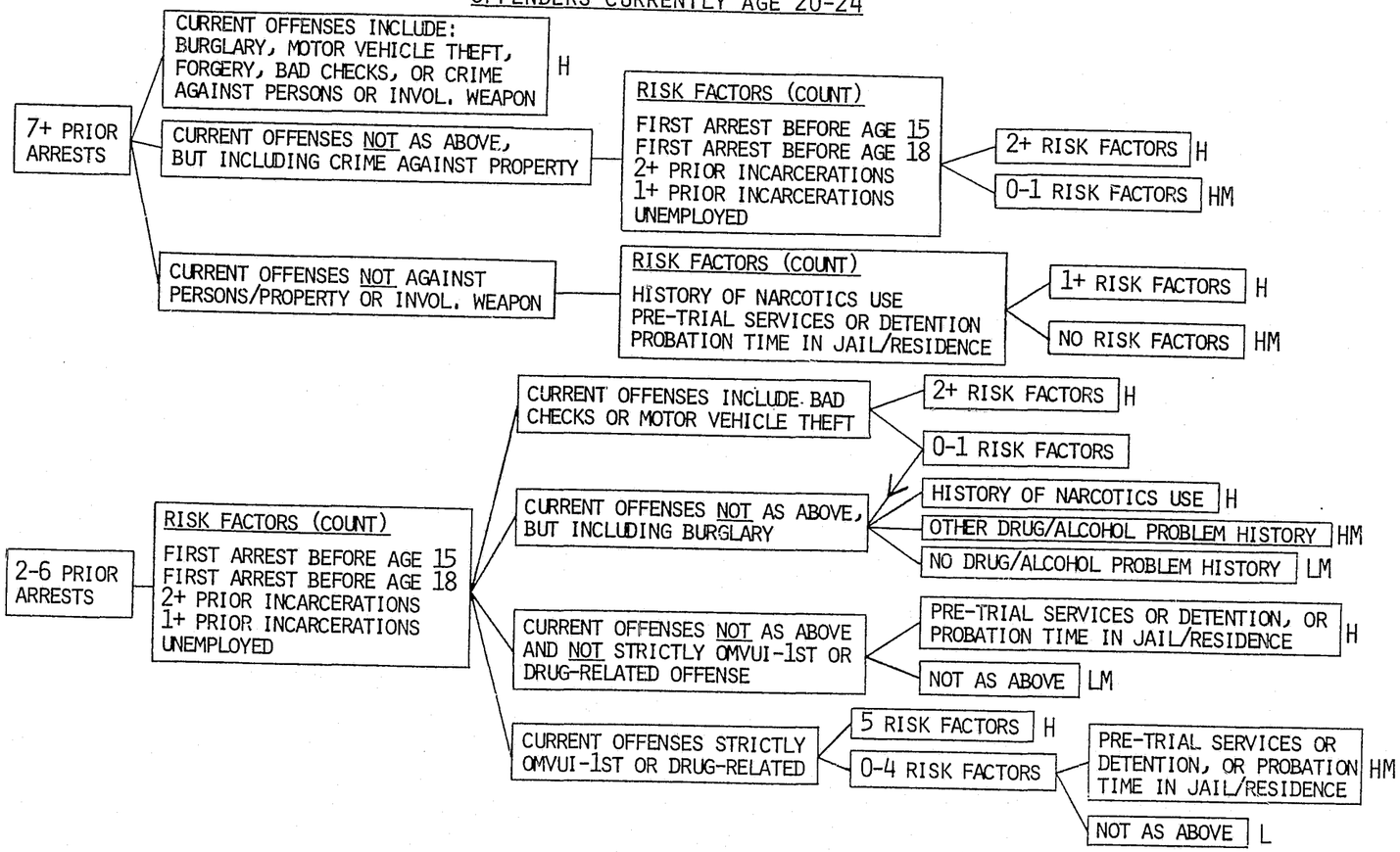
OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
OFFENDERS CURRENTLY AGE 19

FORM B2

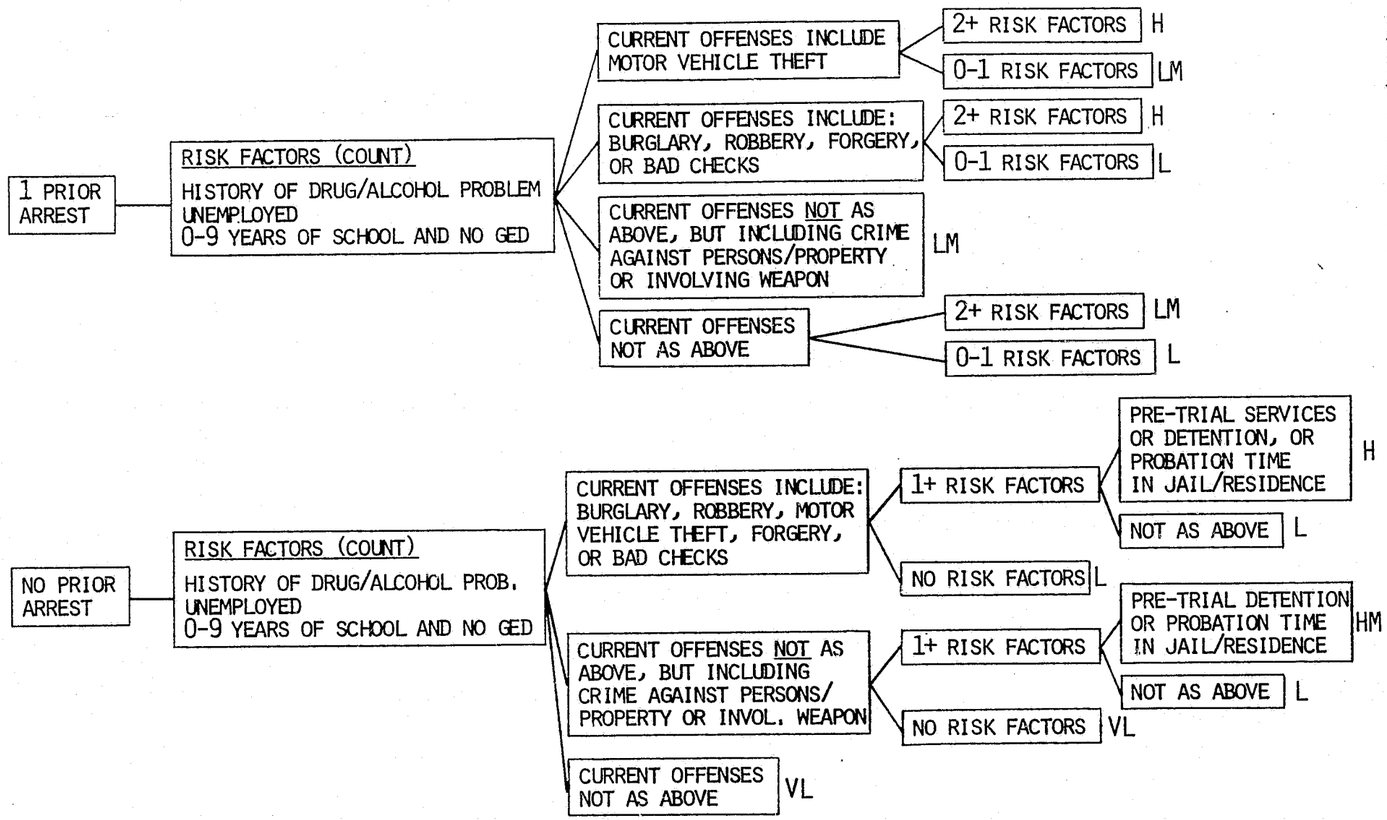


OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
OFFENDERS CURRENTLY AGE 20-24

FORM B3

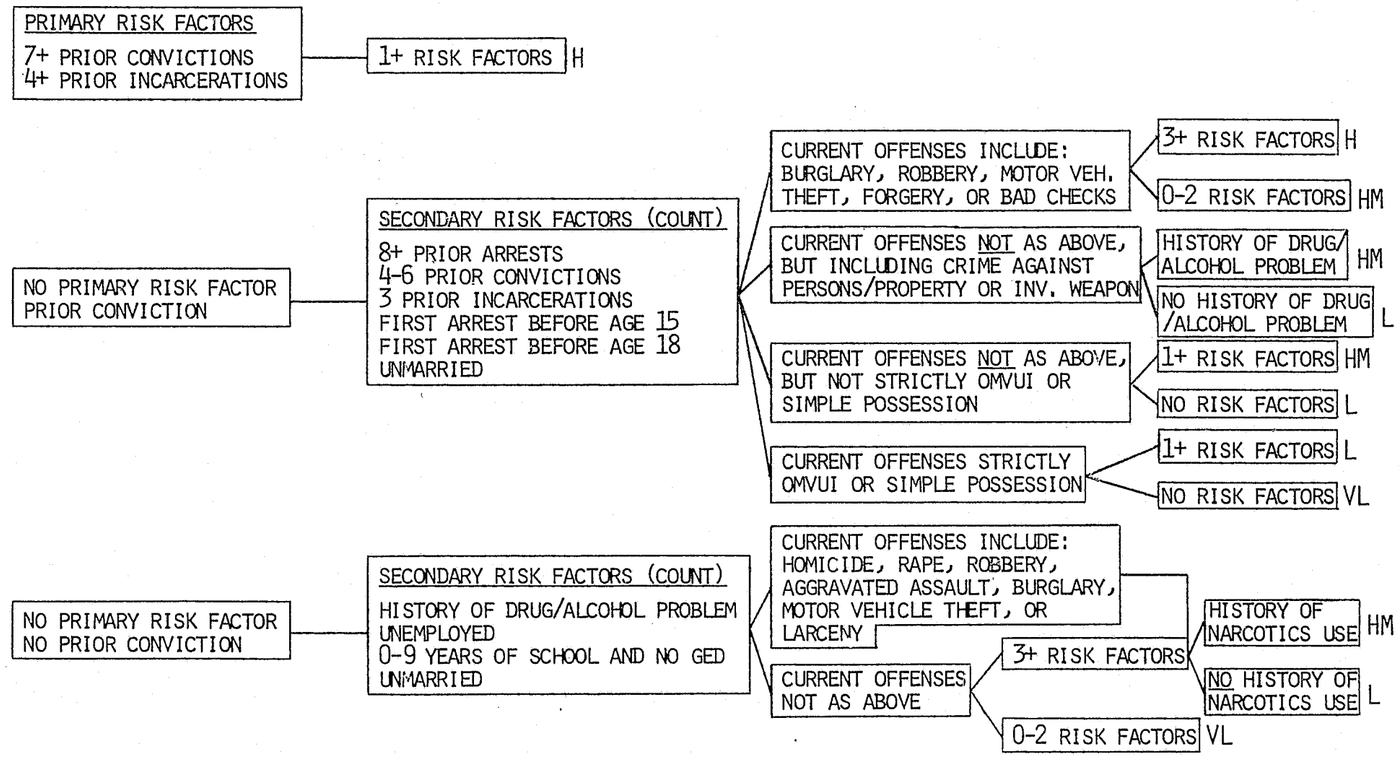


GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
OFFENDERS CURRENTLY AGE 20-24
(CONTINUED)



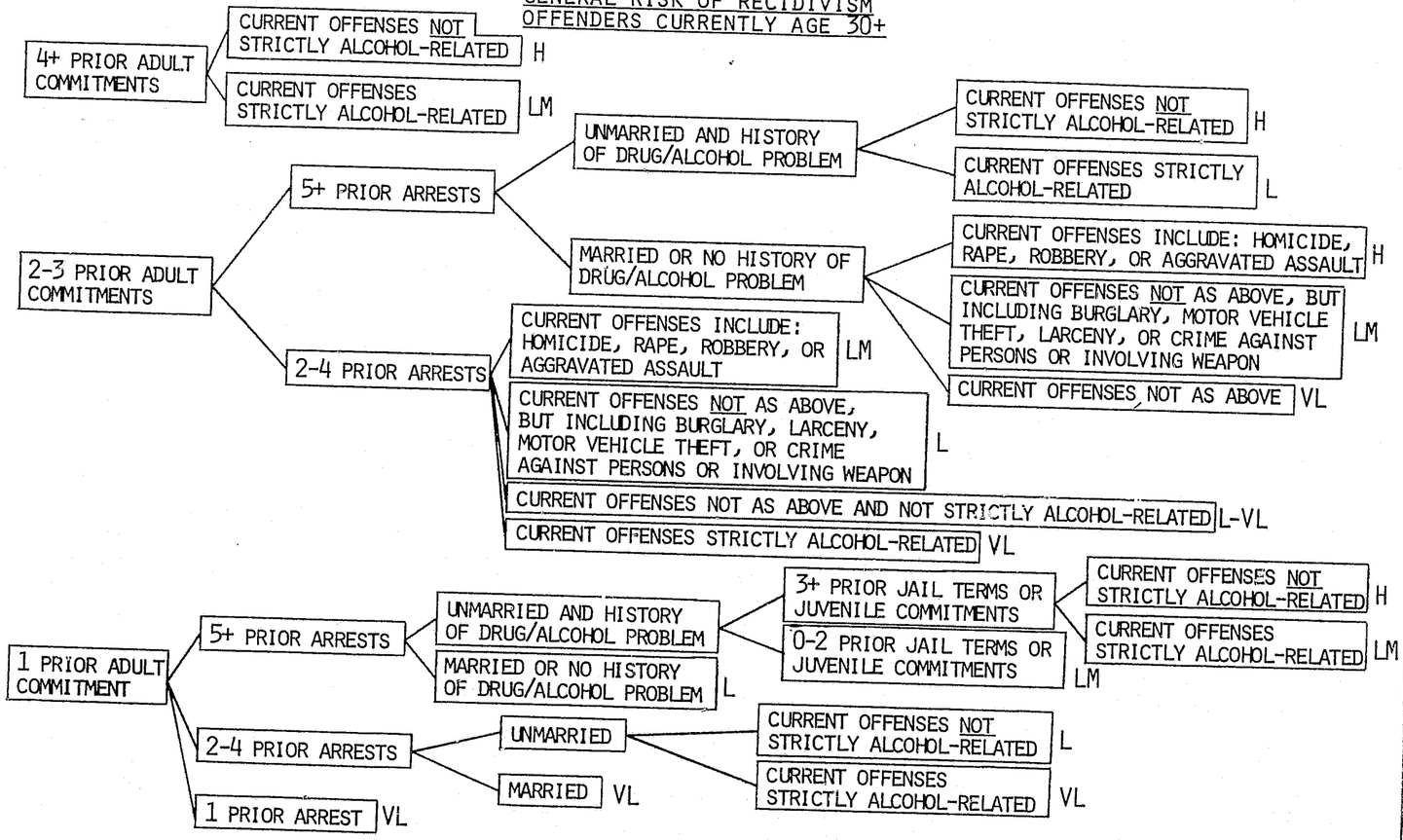
OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
OFFENDERS CURRENTLY AGE 25-29

FORM B5



OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
OFFENDERS CURRENTLY AGE 30+

FORM B6

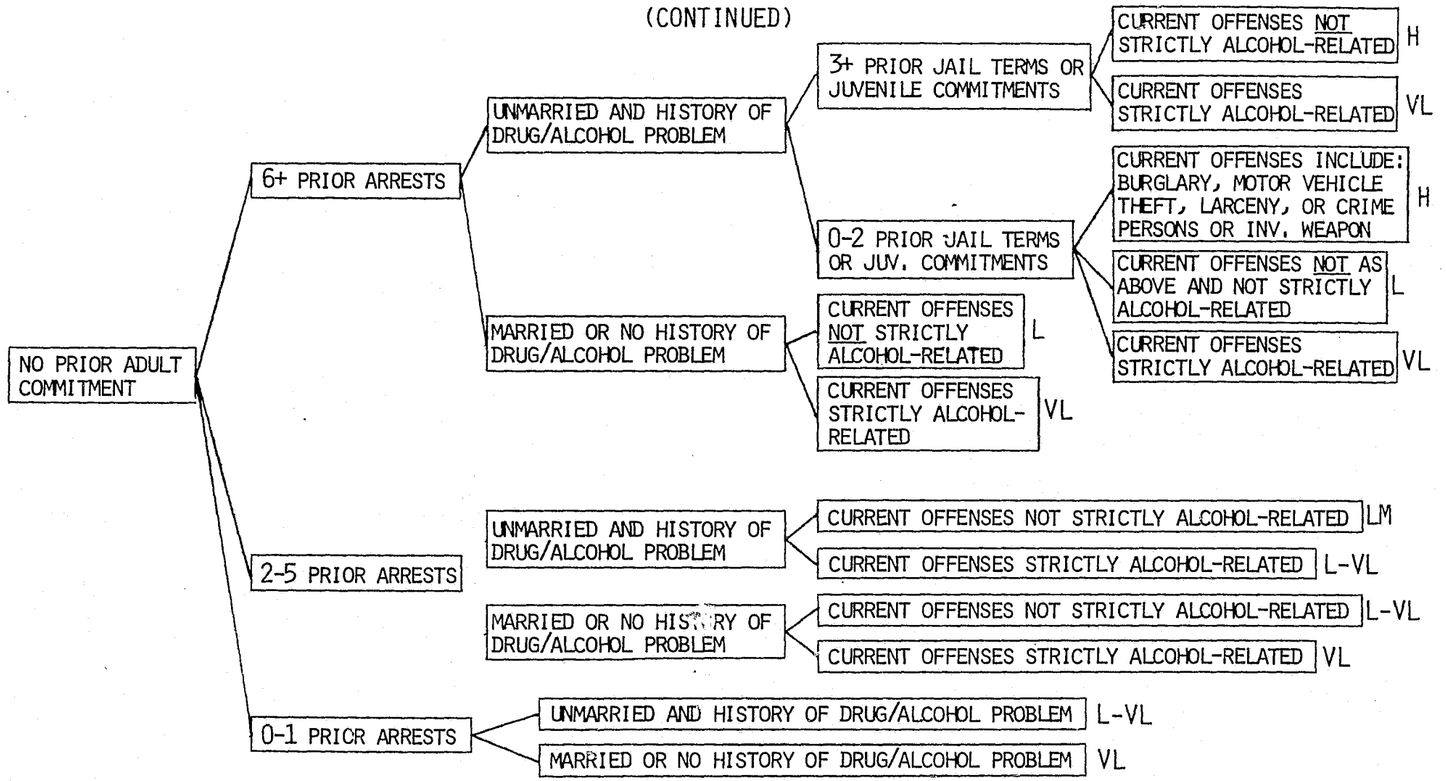


CONTINUED

2 OF 3

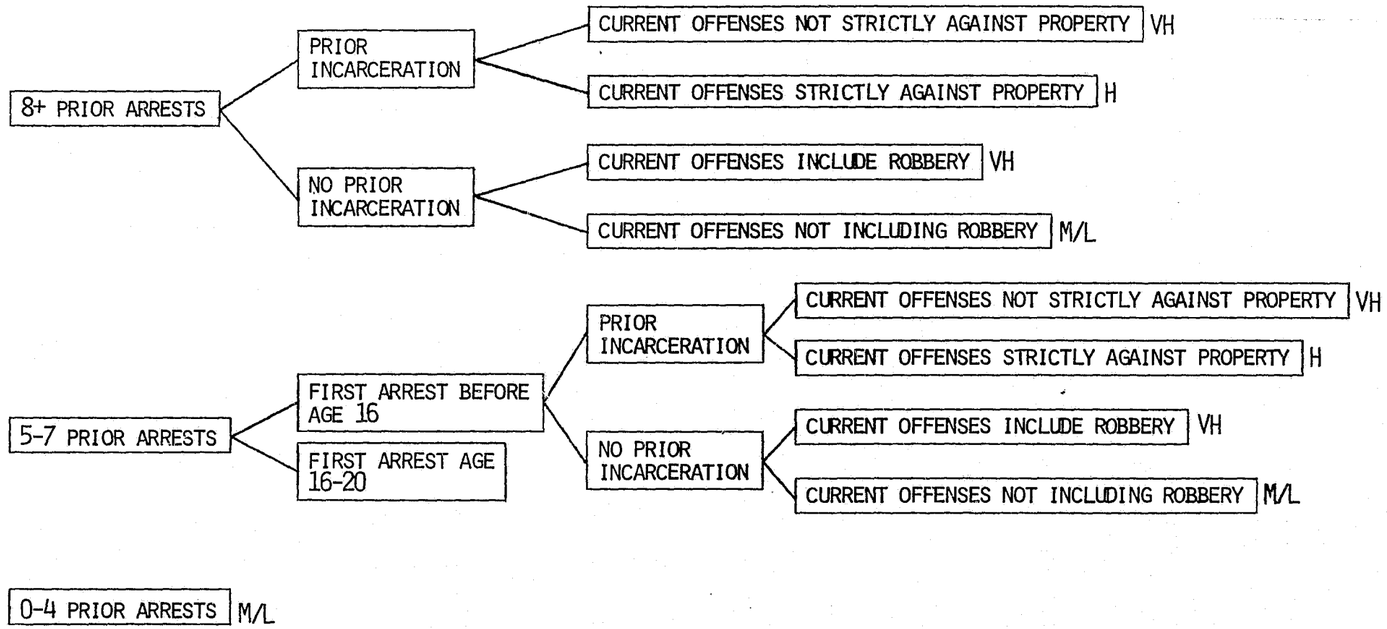
GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
OFFENDERS CURRENTLY AGE 30+
(CONTINUED)

FORM B7



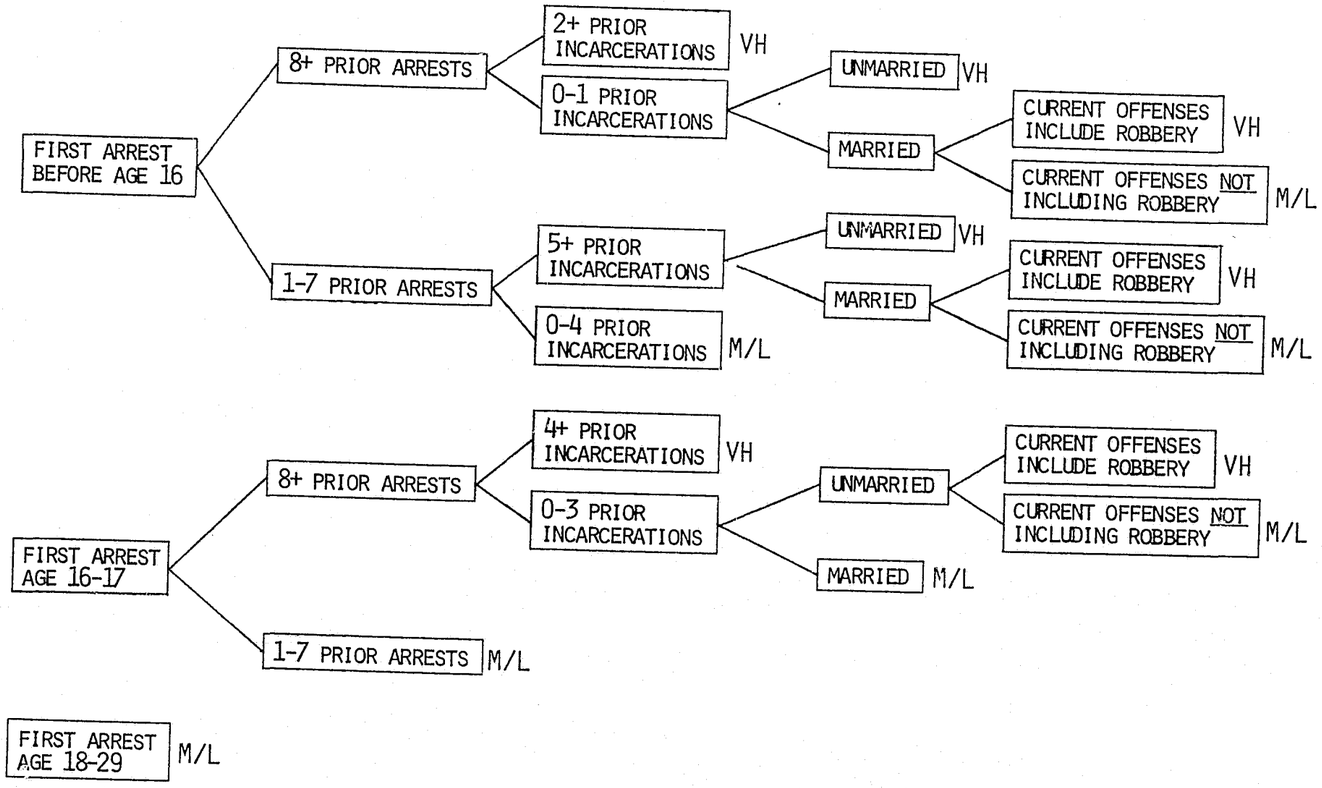
OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
RISK OF VIOLENCE
OFFENDERS CURRENTLY AGE 18-20

FORM c1



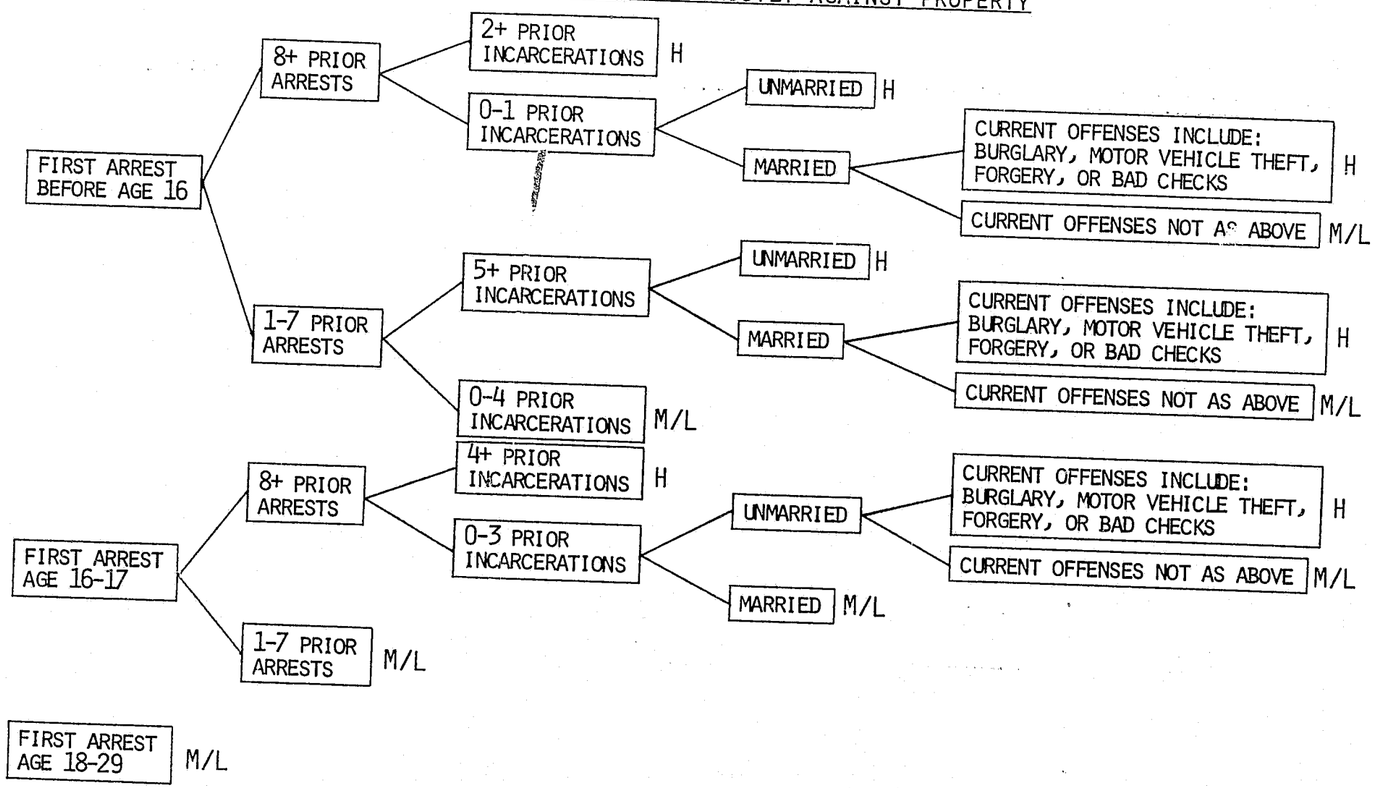
OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
RISK OF VIOLENCE
OFFENDERS CURRENTLY AGE 21-29
AT LEAST ONE CURRENT OFFENSE NOT STRICTLY AGAINST PROPERTY

FORM c2



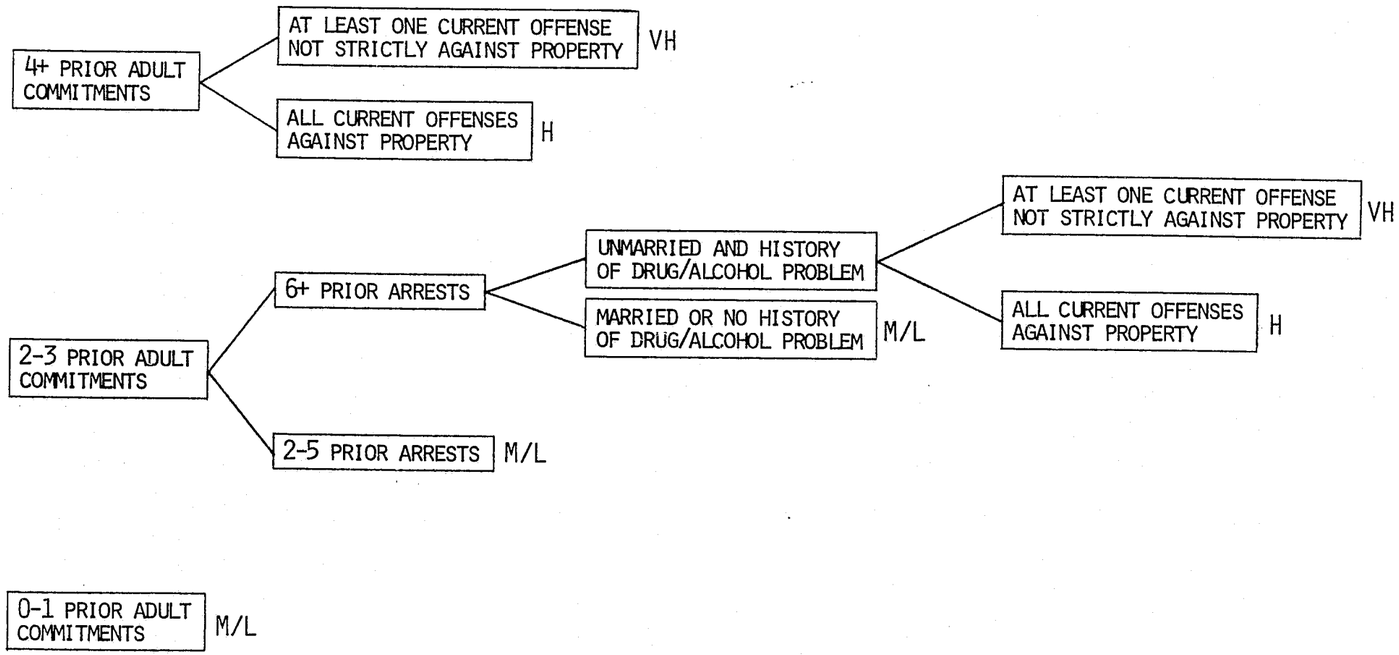
OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
RISK OF VIOLENCE
OFFENDERS CURRENTLY AGE 21-29
ALL CURRENT OFFENSES STRICTLY AGAINST PROPERTY

FORM C3



FORM C4

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
RISK OF VIOLENCE
OFFENDERS CURRENTLY AGE 30+



OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
SUPPLEMENTARY ASSESSMENT

FORM D

HIGH RISK (H)

AGE 21-24/5+ PRIOR ARRESTS/FIRST ARREST AGE 18-24

AGE 25-29/8+ PRIOR ARRESTS/FIRST ARREST AGE 18-29/2+ PRIOR ADULT COMMITMENTS

AGE 30-44/8+ PRIOR ARRESTS/FIRST ARREST AGE 20-44/2+ PRIOR ADULT COMMITMENTS

MEDIUM OR LOW RISK (M/L)

ALL OTHER OFFENDERS

FORM E

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
ADJUSTMENT FOR VIOLENCE/SUPPLEMENTAL RISK

Instructions First locate the table below corresponding to the offender's current age group. Then locate the offender's general risk rating to the left side of the table, the appropriate violence/supplemental risk rating to the top of the table, and the adjusted general risk rating in the body of the table.

AGE 18-19

GENERAL RISK RATING	VIOLENCE RISK		
	M/L	H	VH
VH	VH	UH	SR
H	H	UH	SR
LM	LM	UH	SR
L	L	UH	SR
VL	VL	UH	SR

AGE 20-24

GENERAL RISK RATING	VIOLENCE AND SUPPL. RISK BOTH M/L	HIGH VIOLENCE OR HIGH SUPPL. RISK	VERY-HIGH VIOLENCE RISK
H	H	VH	UH
HM	HM	H	VH
LM	LM	H	VH
L	L	L	L
VL	VL	VL	VL

AGE 25-29

GENERAL RISK RATING	VIOLENCE AND SUPPL. RISK BOTH M/L	HIGH SUPPL. RISK	HIGH VIOLENCE RISK	VERY-HIGH VIOLENCE RISK
H	H	H	UH	SR
HM	HM	H	UH	SR
L	L-VL	H	UH	SR
VL	VL	VL	UH	SR

AGE 30+

GENERAL RISK RATING	VIOLENCE AND SUPPL. RISK BOTH M/L	HIGH VIOLENCE OR HIGH SUPPL. RISK	VERY-HIGH VIOLENCE RISK
H	H	VH	UH
LM	LM	VH	UH
L	L	L	L
L-VL	L-VL	L-VL	L-VL
VL	VL	VL	VL

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
SMOOTHING FUNCTION

FORM F

COMPONENT A

1 Current age 25-29
2 Current age 20-24
3 Current age 0-19
1 No employable skill
1 No high school diploma
1 Not legally married

___ TOTAL SCORE

RISK RATINGS: 1) 0-2
2) 3-4
3) 5-6

COMPONENT B

4 3+ prior arrests
4 First arrest age 0-17
4 Juvenile commitment
4 1-3 prior jail/prison/probation
8 4+ prior jail/prison/probation
3 History of drug/alcohol problem
6 History of narcotics use
1 Known aliases

___ TOTAL SCORE

RISK RATINGS: 1) 0
2) 1-3
3) 4-8
4) 9-13
5) 14-20
6) 21-30

COMPONENT C (current offenses)

1 Sex offense agt. juvenile, OMVUI-1st, others not listed below
2 Manslaughter, drug offenses except narcotics, OMVUI-2nd or 3rd, stolen property, carrying weapons, vandalism, attempted rape, shoplifting, embezzlement
3 Aggravated assault, murder, rape, narcotics, going armed with intent, larceny, fraud except bad checks, crimes against public morals, conspiracy, crimes against public justice and auth.
4 Robbery and assault to rob, burglary and attempts, motor vehicle theft, forgery, counterfeiting, bad checks, arson, extortion

RISK RATINGS (as above)

DEFINE THE "RISK PROFILE" OF THE OFFENDER AS THE JUXTAPOSITION OF RISK RATINGS FOR COMPONENTS A, B, C IN THAT ORDER.

COMPOSITE RISK RATING	RISK PROFILES CLASSIFIED AT EACH RATING
VERY-HIGH RISK (VH)	163,164,263,264,353,354,363,364
HIGH RISK (H)	154,162*,244*,253,254,262*,334*,342*,343*,344,351,352,361*,362
HIGH-MEDIUM RISK (HM)	124,134,143,144,152,153,161,223,224,233,234,243,252,261,323,324,332,333
LOW-MEDIUM RISK (LM)	114,123,133,141,142,151,214,232,241,242,251,313,314,322,331,341
LOW RISK (L)	113,131,132,213,222,231,321
VERY-LOW RISK (VL)	111,112,121,122,211,212,221,311,312

*Rate misdemeanants (excluding aggravated) with these profiles as HIGH-MEDIUM RISK.

FORM G

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
GENERAL RISK OF RECIDIVISM
FINAL ASSESSMENT

Instructions Locate the offender's adjusted general risk rating to the left side of the table below, and his or her smoothing factor to the top of the table, circling the corresponding final risk rating in the body of the table.

ADJUSTED GENERAL RISK RATING	SMOOTHING FACTOR					
	VL	L	LM	HM	H	VH
SR	VL	LM	UH	UH	UH	SR
UH	VL	LM	VH	VH	UH	SR
VH	VL	LM	VH	VH	VH	UH
H	VL	LM	H	H	VH	VH
HM	VL	LM	LM	HM	H	H
LM	VL	L	LM	LM	HM	H
L	VL	L	LM	LM	HM	HM
L-VL	VL	L	L	LM	LM	LM
VL	VL	VL	L	L	L	L

FORM H

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
RISK OF VIOLENCE
FINAL ASSESSMENT

Instructions Locate the offender's final general risk rating to the left side of the table below, and his or her (preliminary/previously coded) violence risk rating to the top of the table, the latter located according to whether of not the offender has any current offense against person(s), circling the corresponding final violence risk rating in the body of the table.

FINAL GENERAL RISK RATING	CURRENT OFFENSE AGAINST PERSON(S)			CURRENT OFFENSE NOT AGAINST PERSON(S)		
	RISK OF VIOLENCE			RISK OF VIOLENCE		
	M/L	H	VH	M/L	H	VH
SR	UH	SR	SR	H	VH	UH
UH	UH	SR	SR	H	VH	UH
VH	UH	UH	UH	HM	HM	HM
H	LM	LM	LM	LM	LM	LM
HM	LM	LM	LM	VL	VL	VL
LM	LM	LM	LM	VL	VL	VL
L	L	L	L	VL	VL	VL
VL	L	L	L	N	N	N

FORM I

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
RISK RATINGS BY PROCESSING STEP

CIRCLE RATINGS AS APPLICABLE

1) GENERAL RISK ASSESSMENT	VH	H	HM	LM	L	VL			
2) VIOLENCE RISK ASSESSMENT	VH	H	M/L						
3) SUPPLEMENTARY RISK ASSESSMENT	H	M/L							
4) ADJUSTED GENERAL RISK ASSESSMENT	SR	UH	VH	H	HM	LM	L	L-VL	VL
5) SMOOTHING FUNCTION	VH	H	HM	LM	L	VL			
6) FINAL GENERAL RISK ASSESSMENT	SR	UH	VH	H	HM	LM	L	VL	
7) FINAL VIOLENCE RISK ASSESSMENT	SR	UH	VH	H	HM	LM	L	VL	N

OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT
STATE OF IOWA
COVER SHEET

NAME _____

IDENTIFYING NUMBER _____

SUPERVISOR _____

PROGRAM ASSIGNMENT _____

CODER _____

DATE CODED _____

FINAL GENERAL RISK RATING (CIRCLE)

SUPER RECIDIVIST
VERY-HIGH RISK
HIGH-MEDIUM RISK
LOW RISK
ULTRA-HIGH RISK
HIGH RISK
LOW-MEDIUM RISK
VERY-LOW RISK

FINAL VIOLENCE RISK RATING (CIRCLE)

SUPER RECIDIVIST
VERY-HIGH RISK
HIGH-MEDIUM RISK
LOW RISK
NIL RISK
ULTRA-HIGH RISK
HIGH RISK
LOW-MEDIUM RISK
VERY-LOW RISK

END