Minnesota Prison Population Projections

Fiscal Year 2007 Report

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since the early 1980s, the Minnesota Department of Corrections (DOC) and Minnesota Sentencing Guidelines Commission (SGC) have collaborated to produce an annual prison population forecast. This year's projection report examines recent trends in Minnesota's prison population, analyzes the accuracy of projections since 2000, and presents the prison population forecast over the next ten years.

Recent Trends in the Prison Population

- After several years of fairly rapid growth, the prison population is still increasing but at a slower rate. From FY 2002-2004, the prison population grew by an average of 635 offenders per year. But from FY 2005-2006, the rate of growth has declined as the population increased by 375 offenders during FY 2005 and 302 offenders during FY 2006.

- Although the total number of admissions continues to increase, the slowed growth in the prison population, particularly for male methamphetamine offenders, is due to the fact that offenders are staying, on average, for shorter periods of time. These shorter lengths of stay are the result of the following two factors:

    1. The number of offenders admitted as new commitments, who generally have longer lengths of stay, has slightly decreased.
    2. The number of offenders admitted as probation and supervised release violators, who generally have shorter lengths of stay, has increased.

Actual Prison Population vs. Projections (2006)

- During the most recent 12-month period, projections have underestimated the actual prison population by an average of 0.7 percent, or 66 offenders per month.

FY 2007 Prison Population Forecast

- The prison population is projected to increase by 168 inmates (1.9%) during FY 2007 and by a total of 2,549 (29%) during the ten-year forecast period.

- The number of male inmates is expected to grow by 1.3 percent (111) during FY 2007, compared to 11.3 percent (57) for females. By the end of FY 2016, the projected growth rate is 28 percent for males (2,351) and 39 percent for females (198).

Admission Type

- New commitments are expected to account for 57 percent (95 offenders) of the FY 2007 increase and 73 percent (1,870 offenders) of the growth over the next ten years. Offenders violating their conditions of probation or supervised release are estimated to account for the remaining short- and long-term growth.

Offense Type

- Methamphetamine offenders have figured prominently in the recent increase in the prison population. Male projections indicate, however, that the methamphetamine inmate popula-

tion will drop by 50 offenders during FY 2007. But over the next ten fiscal years, the forecast suggests the male methamphetamine population will grow by 184 offenders (20%).

- Female projections show that methamphetamine offenders will account for the largest increases over both the short- and long-term. The number of female methamphetamine offenders is projected to increase by 15 (14%) during FY 2007 and by a total of 176 (60%) over the ten-year forecast period.

- The forecast suggests that person offenders will not only have the largest numerical increase (66) for males in FY 2007, but will also have the greatest numerical increase over the next ten years (787).

- With a projected increase of 611 male inmates, sex offenders are expected to have the second-highest numerical growth by FY 2016. Moreover, at 38 percent, this group has the greatest projected growth rate over the entire forecast period.

- DWI offenders are projected to have the highest growth rate for males during FY 2007 (10%) and the second-highest rate over the ten-year period (36%). In contrast, DWI offenders are estimated to have one of the lowest long-term growth rates for female inmates. Similarly, at 18 percent, the forecast indicates that other drug (i.e., non-methamphetamine) offenders will have the slowest growth rate for male inmates over the entire forecast period.

RECENT TRENDS IN MINNESOTA'S PRISON POPULATION

After several years of fairly rapid growth, the prison population is still increasing, albeit at a slower rate. During the most recent fiscal year, the total prison population grew by 3.5 percent (302 offenders), the lowest increase since FY 2001 (2.4 percent) (see Table 1). From FY 2005-2006, the size of the increase dropped by 47 percent as the population grew by an average of 339 offenders. From FY 2002-2004, the prison population grew by an average of 635 offenders per year.

The decreasing population growth is due largely to two factors. First, although the total number of admissions increased during FY 2006, there has been a change in the type of offenders being admitted to prison. After several years of consistent increase, the number of new commitment admissions has been relatively constant the last three fiscal years (2004-2006) (see Table 2). Conversely, the number of probation and supervised release violators admitted to prison increased once again during FY 2006.

Second, the lack of an increase in new commitments, coupled with the rise in probation and supervised release violators, means that more offenders with shorter sentences and shorter lengths of stay (LOS) are being admitted to prison, resulting in diminished population growth. Compared to new commitments, who have had an average LOS of 39 months since 2002, the average LOS has been roughly two years less for probation violators (16 months) and nearly three years less for supervised released violators (5 months). Accordingly, the average LOS for all offenders admitted during FY 2006 is approximately two months less than it was during FY 2002-2004.

Table 1. Numerical and Percent Change by Offense Type, FY 2001-2006

	FY 2001	*FY 2002*	*FY 2003*	*FY 2004*	*FY 2005*	*FY 2006*
Total Prison Population						
Numerical change	152	518	622	765	375	302
Percent change	2.4	8.1	9.0	10.1	4.5	3.5
Methamphetamine Offenders*						
Numerical change	160	187	307	288	115	-38
Percent change	228.6	81.3	73.6	40.0	11.4	-3.4
Other Drug Offenders						
Numerical change	-41	-1	86	29	16	-101
Percent change	-4.3	-0.1	9.3	2.9	1.5	-9.6
Person Offenders						
Numerical change	10	77	68	308	-157	68
Percent change	0.4	3.2	2.7	12.0	-6.1	2.5
Sex Offenders						
Numerical change	79	5	5	118	119	110
Percent change	6.8	0.4	0.4	9.5	8.7	7.4
Property Offenders						
Numerical change	-49	63	113	-243	158	38
Percent change	-4.5	6.1	10.3	-20.1	16.3	3.4
DWI Offenders						
Numerical change	N/A	N/A	N/A	150	188	127
Percent change	N/A	N/A	N/A	250.0	89.5	31.9
Other Offenders						
Numerical change	-7	111	59	115	-64	98
Percent change	-1.2	18.7	8.4	15.1	-7.2	11.9

* Does not include amphetamine

The declining growth is most apparent among the methamphetamine offender population, which provides what is perhaps a more vivid illustration of the effect of changing admission patterns and declining lengths of stay on prison population levels. In fact, just as the size of the methamphetamine offender population has waxed and waned over the last few years, so has the overall prison population. As shown in Table 1, the number of methamphetamine offenders grew by an average of 236 inmates per fiscal year from FY 2001-2004, reaching a peak of 307 during FY 2003. During FY 2005, however, the size of the growth (115 offenders) was 60 percent less than it was during the previous fiscal year. Moreover, for the first time since the onset of the methamphetamine boom in FY 2001, the number of methamphetamine offenders dropped by 38 in FY 2006.

Table 2. Admission, Sentence Length, and Length of Stay Trends by Admission Type, FY 2002-2006

	Admission Type											
	New Commitments			Probation Violators			Supervised Release Violators			Total		
Fiscal Year	*Number*	*Avg. Sentence Length*	*Avg. LOS*	*Number*	*Avg. Sentence Length*	*Avg. LOS*	*Number*	*Avg. Sentence Length*	*Avg. LOS*	*Number*	*Avg. Sentence Length*	*Avg. LOS*
2002	1,862	58.7	38.9	901	29.5	19.0	1,459	N/A	4.0	4,222	49.2	22.6
2003	2,239	57.0	38.0	1,010	29.2	18.3	1,568	N/A	4.4	4,817	48.3	22.9
2004	2,446	60.2	40.5	1,042	23.5	14.2	1,836	N/A	5.3	5,324	49.3	23.2
2005	2,422	58.9	37.7	1,068	24.2	14.3	2,079	N/A	5.4	5,569	48.3	21.2
2006	2,462	57.1	37.9	1,209	23.7	14.1	2,214	N/A	4.9	5,885	46.1	20.6
Total	11,431	58.4	38.8	5,230	25.8	15.8	9,156	N/A	4.9	25,817	48.2	22.0

Note: Excluded from the calculations are short-term offenders from FY 2004 and 2005, and new commitments and probation violators from FY 2002 and 2003 who had lengths of stay less than six months.

As shown in Table 3, although annual admission totals have continued to increase for methamphetamine offenders in general, the population growth has leveled off because offenders being admitted to prison are staying for shorter time periods. The average LOS for methamphetamine offenders has dropped by almost ten months since FY 2002. The shorter LOSs are due to a growing influx of probation and supervised release violators, a decrease in new commitments, and a reduction in sentence lengths. For example, since FY 2002, the average sentence length decreased by six months for new commitments and almost nine months for probation violators. Overall, the average sentence length has declined by nearly eight months since FY 2002.

Table 3. Methamphetamine Admission, Sentence Length, and Length of Stay Trends by Admission Type, FY 2002-2006

	Admission Type											
	Meth New Commitments			Meth Probation Violators			Meth Supervised Release Violators			Total		
Fiscal Year	*Number*	*Avg. Sentence Length*	*Avg. LOS*	*Number*	*Avg. Sentence Length*	*Avg. LOS*	*Number*	*Avg. Sentence Length*	*Avg. LOS*	*Number*	*Avg. Sentence Length*	*Avg. LOS*
2002	214	58.7	38.2	70	38.0	24.0	27	N/A	4.8	311	53.6	32.1
2003	368	60.4	38.9	91	39.3	24.8	39	N/A	9.6	498	56.2	34.0
2004	400	60.7	39.0	124	32.0	19.2	95	N/A	7.1	619	53.9	30.3
2005	350	55.5	35.4	123	36.2	22.2	121	N/A	4.1	594	50.4	26.3
2006	342	52.3	33.3	134	29.2	17.7	169	N/A	4.0	645	45.8	22.4
Total	1,712	57.6	37.0	542	34.2	21.1	282	N/A	5.2	2,667	51.9	26.3

Note: Excluded from the calculations are short-term offenders from FY 2004-2006, and new commitments and probation violators from FY 2002 and 2003 who had lengths of stay less than six months.

ACTUAL & PROJECTED POPULATION COMPARISONS, 2000-2006

The extent to which projections differ from actual prison population (i.e., the error rate) can be quantified in a number of ways but is generally measured in terms of the percent difference between the two. Although using the relative values of the percent difference is helpful in determining whether projections have over- or underestimated actual prison population, they can

artificially lower the error rate. For example, if population projections overestimate the actual population by two percent one month and then underestimate it by two percent the following month, the average percent difference would be zero when using their relative values, erroneously implying that projections have perfectly forecast the actual prison population. If absolute values of the percent difference for the two months are used, then the average error rate would be two percent. Although the absolute error rate provides a more accurate measure of the extent to which projections have differed from the actual prison population, the relative error rate is also included to illustrate the direction in which projections have been off the mark.

As shown in Table 4, which depicts the average monthly error rate for each year since 2000, projections have underestimated the actual prison population by an average of 0.10 percent per month over the last seven years. In absolute terms, projections have differed from the actual prison population by an average of 2.08 percent per month. Last year's forecast overestimated the prison population by 0.73 percent, an average of 66 offenders per month.

Table 4. Average Annual Percentage Error Rate between Actual and Projected Prison Populations, 2000-2006

Year	*Relative Percentage Error Rate*	*Absolute Percentage Error Rate*
2000	-0.49	0.91
2001	2.30	2.30
2002	-3.11	3.11
2003	-1.20	1.20
2004	-2.16	2.16
2005	3.83	3.83
2006	0.73	1.08
Total	-0.10	2.08

These figures compare favorably with error rates for other projection models. In a 1996 review of forecasting models used within the field of corrections, the General Accounting Office (GAO) reported that the average error rate for the projection model used by the Federal Bureau of Prisons from 1991-1995 was 1.4 percent.[1] Moreover, the National Council on Crime and Delinquency (NCCD), which had at that time reportedly prepared prison population forecasts and provided technical assistance for more than 20 states, indicated that its projections were off by an average of two percent between 1991 and 1994 (GAO, 1996).[2]

Negative error rates for projections, particularly from 2002-2004, are largely attributable to the sharp and unexpected recent rise in the volume of prison admissions and, more precisely, the number of new commitments. In particular, because more offenders with longer sentences were being admitted to prison, especially for methamphetamine offenses, projections underestimated the actual prison population during this three-year period.

The 2005 projections were based, in part, on the assumption that the increase in new commitment admissions would continue. However, the volume tapered off in 2005. Accordingly, the 2005 projections overestimated the actual prison population by 3.8 percent, the highest error rate

[1] To forecast the federal prison population, the Bureau of Prisons and the U.S. Sentencing Commission developed the Federal Sentencing Simulation Model (FEDSIM) in 1987 and revised it eight years later in 1995 (FEDSIM-2) GAO, 1996).

[2] The model used by the NCCD was Prophet, originally developed by the California Department of Corrections in 1976 (GAO, 1996).

over the last seven years. Like last year's projections, the current forecast takes into account the slowed growth in new commitment admissions, especially for male offenders.

FY 2007 PRISON POPULATION PROJECTIONS

The forecast presented below was prepared during the fall of 2006 and is based on current laws, trends, and practices. The Structured Sentencing Simulation (SSS) model was used to generate projections. This year's forecast was disaggregated by offender gender, admission type, and offense type. Because short-term offenders (STO) do not occupy a bed space in a Minnesota correctional facility (MCF), they have been excluded from the overall projections. A separate STO forecast, disaggregated by offender gender, is presented later in this report.

A more detailed discussion of the data, methodology, and assumptions used to develop the current projections can be found in the appendix to this report.

The forecast suggests that the total prison population will increase by 168 inmates (1.9%) in FY 2007 (see Figure 1). Over the next ten years, the total prison population is estimated to grow by 2,549 inmates, a 29 percent increase (see Figure 2). In the following sections, a closer look is taken at the areas estimated to increase by disaggregating the forecast by gender, admission type, and offense type.

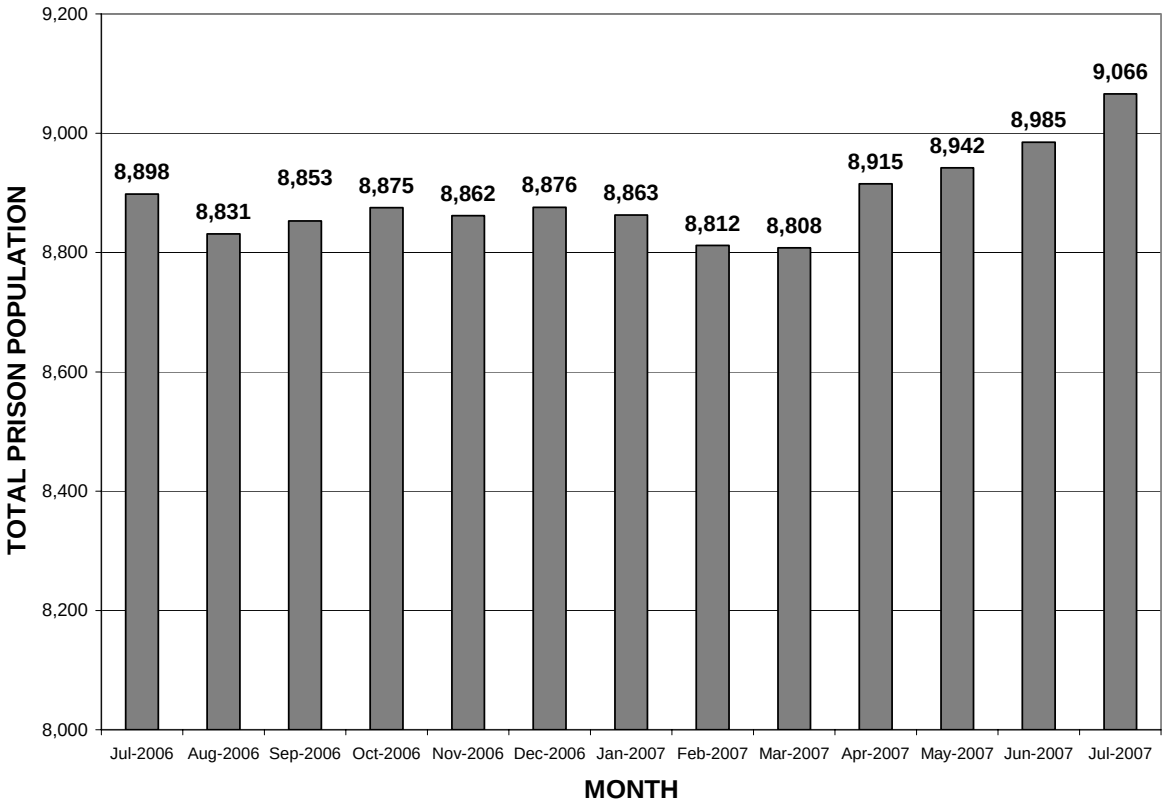

Figure 1. Projected Total Prison Population, FY 2007

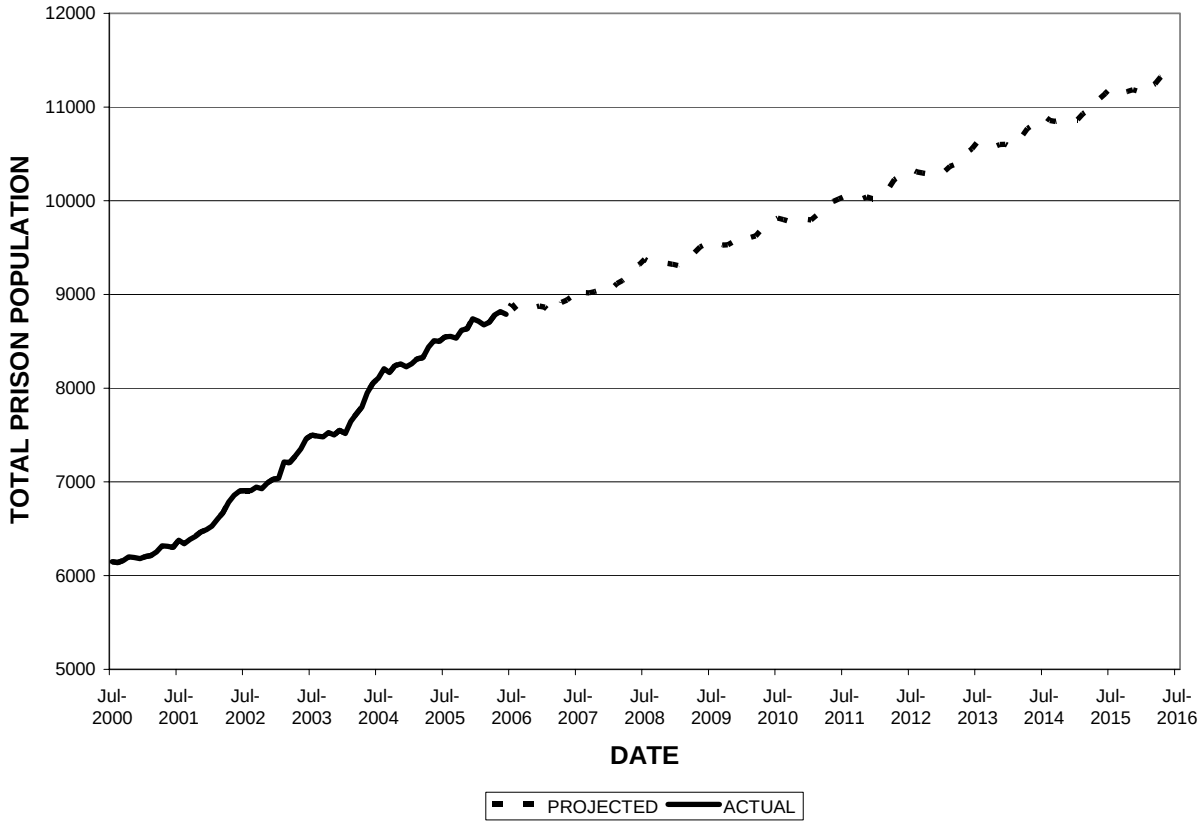

Figure 2. Actual and Projected Prison Population, FY 2001-2016

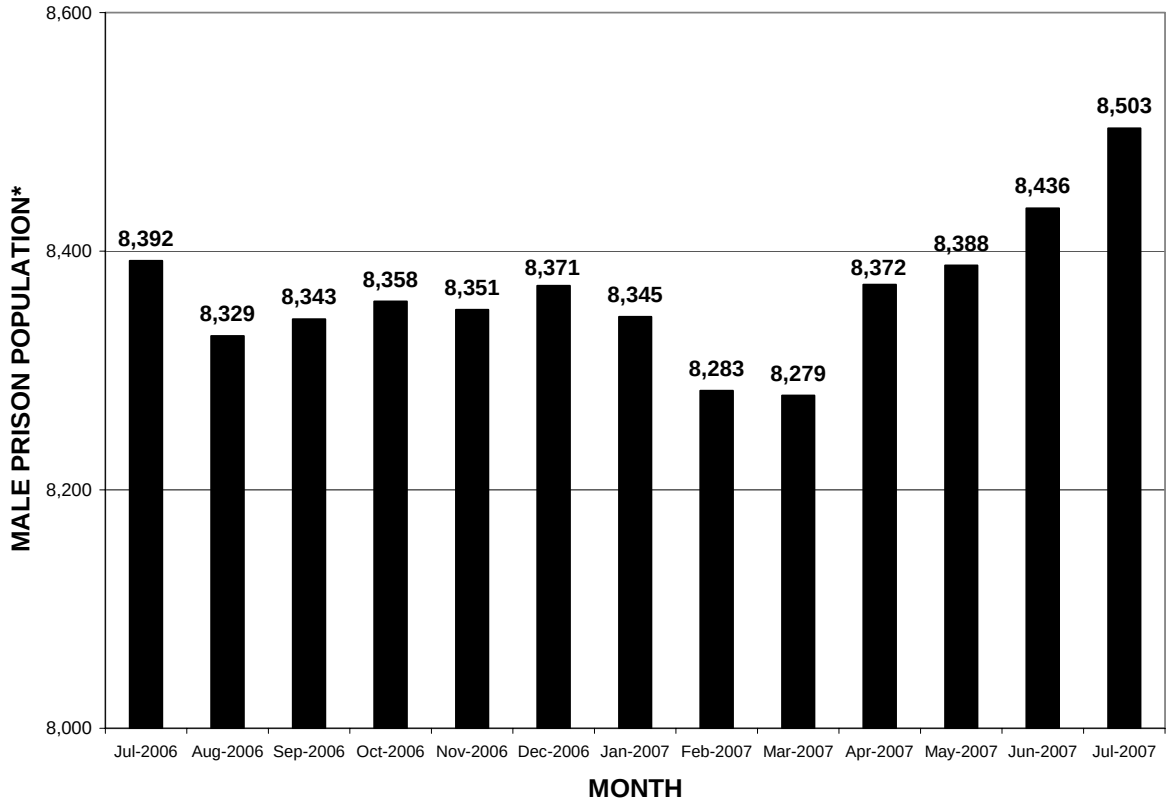

Figure 3. Projected Male Prison Population, FY 2007

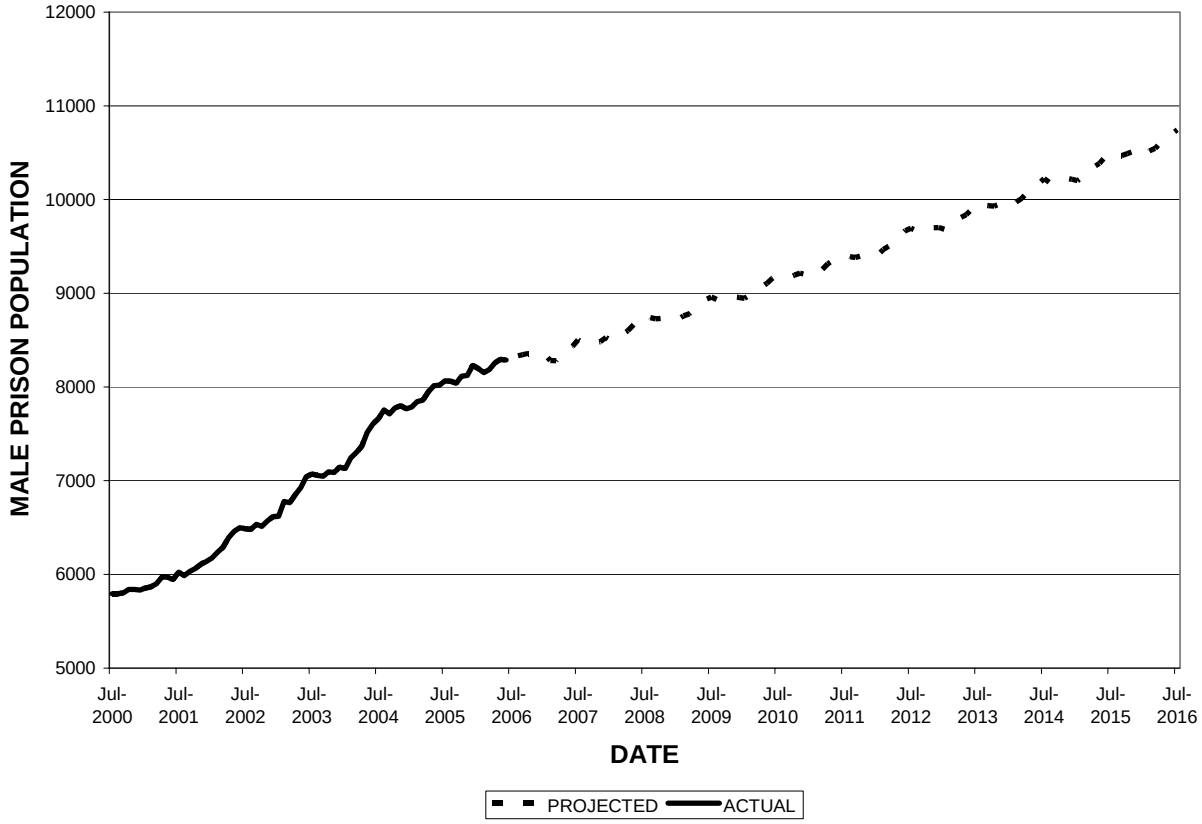

Figure 4. Actual and Projected Male Prison Population, FY 2001-2016

Male Prison Population Projections

Because male offenders constitute the vast majority of inmates, male population projections are very similar to overall projections. Results suggest that the male prison population will increase by 111 inmates (1.3%) during FY 2007 (see Figure 3). By the end of FY 2016, the size of the male population is estimated to grow by 2,351 inmates, a 28 percent increase (see Figure 4).

Male Prison Population Projections by Admission Type

The forecast suggests that new prison commitments will account for most of the increase in FY 2007 as well over the next ten years. For example, male new commitments are estimated to grow by 81 (1.3%) during FY 2007, or 73 percent of the projected increase for FY 2007 (see Figure 5). The number of male new commitments is expected to grow by 1,752 offenders by the end of FY 2016, a 29 percent increase over the ten-year period and 75 percent of the overall increase in the male prison population (see Figure 6).

More modest increases are expected for male probation violators. This group is expected to grow by 77 (6%) in FY 2007 and by 397 (31%) over the full ten-year period. Supervised release violators (i.e., release returns) are projected to have a 43-offender decrease in FY 2007. The forecast indicates, however, that the number of supervised release violators will increase by 202 offenders (19%) from FY 2007-2016.

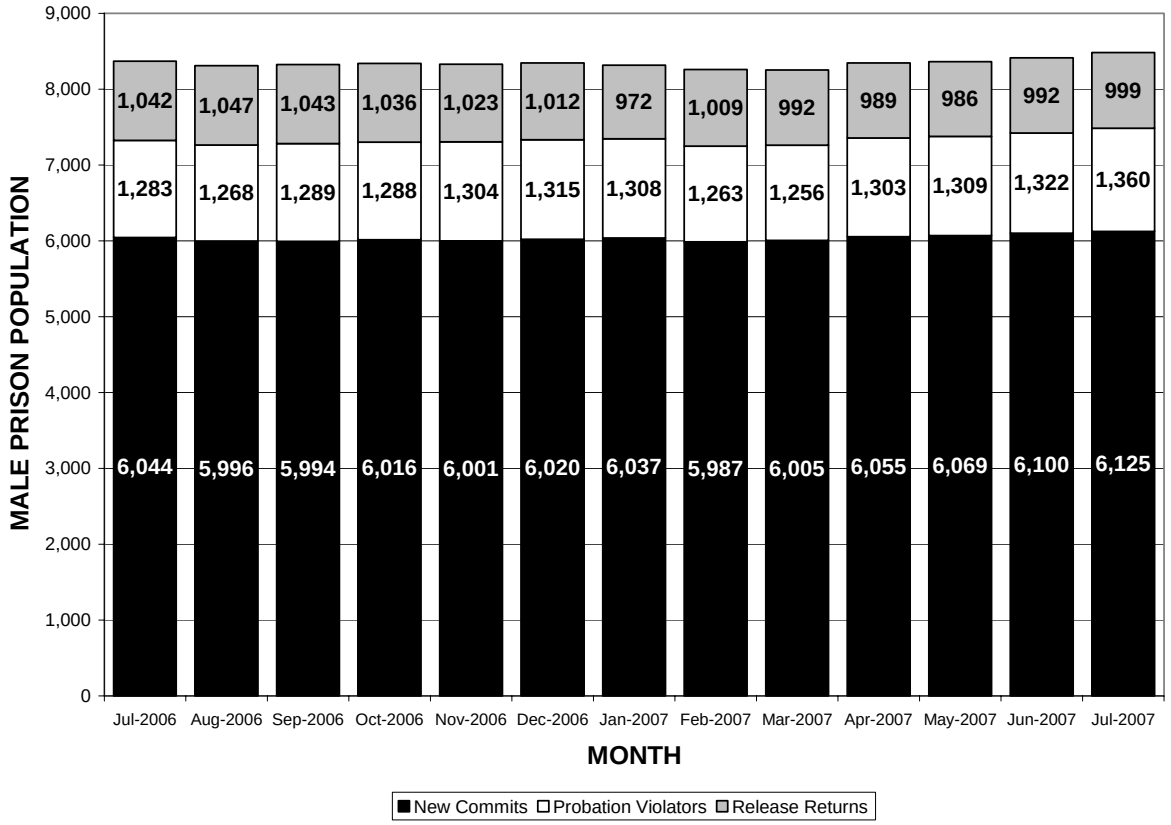

Figure 5. Projected Male Prison Population by Admission Type, FY 2007

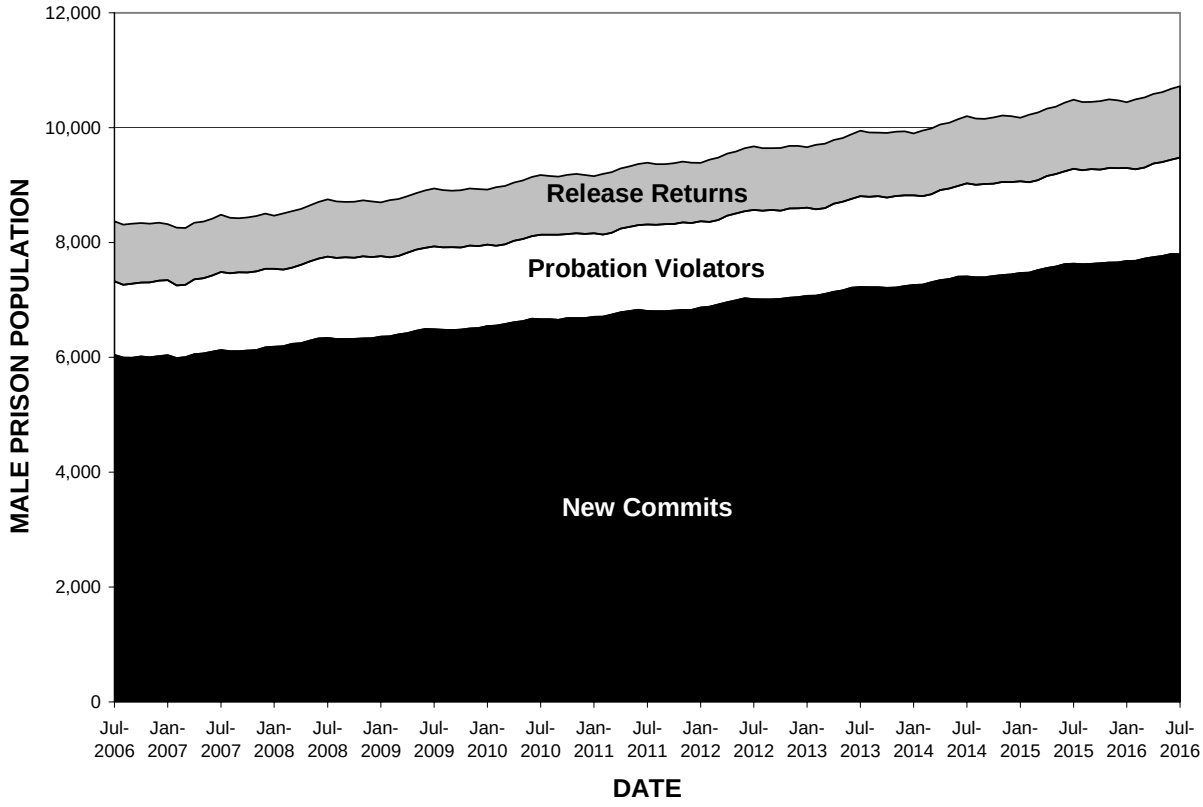

Figure 6. Projected Male Prison Population by Admission Type, FY 2007-2016

Male Prison Population Projections by Offense Type

At 38.4 percent, sex offenders are projected to have the highest growth rate over the entire forecast period (see Table 5). Moreover, the projected 611-offender increase constitutes the second-largest numerical growth over the ten-year period, trailing only person offenders (787). Although the size of the short-term increase for person offenders is relatively small (66), the projected long-term increase (787) is the largest among the seven offense types, comprising 33 percent of overall growth (2,351) in the male prison population.

Table 5. Projected Male Prison Population by Offense Type, FY 2007-2016

Offense Type	*July 2006*	*July 2007*	*July 2016*	*2006-2007 Numeric Difference*	*2006-2007 Percent Change*	*2007-2016 Numeric Difference*	*2007-2016 Percent Change*
Other Person	2,606	2,672	3,393	66	2.5	787	30.2
Property	1,051	1,070	1,252	19	1.8	201	19.1
Other Drugs	856	805	1,003	-51	-6.0	147	17.2
Meth	928	878	1,112	-50	-5.4	184	19.8
Sex	1,591	1,612	2,202	21	1.3	611	38.4
DWI	488	537	654	49	10.0	166	34.0
Other	848	909	1,104	61	7.2	256	30.2
PSI holds	24	20	23	-4	-16.7	-1	-4.2
Total	8,392	8,503	10,743	111	1.3	2,351	28.0

Felony DWI offenders are projected to have the highest short-term growth rate and the second-highest long-term growth rate among the seven offense types. More specifically, the male felony DWI offender population is estimated to grow by 49 (10%) during FY 2007 and 166 (34%) over the entire forecast horizon.

Methamphetamine offenders figured prominently in the sharp increase in the male inmate population from FY 2002-2004. However, consistent with the drop in the methamphetamine offender population during FY 2006, this group is projected to decrease by 50 (-5.4%) during FY 2007. Over the full ten-year period, however, this population is expected to grow by 184 offenders.

Similar to methamphetamine offenders, inmates incarcerated for other drug offenses are projected to drop by 51 during FY 2007, a 6.0 percent decrease. Overall, then, the forecast suggests that the size of the total male drug offender population will decline by 101 offenders during the current fiscal year. Other drug offenders are expected to increase by 147 inmates, however, by the end of FY 2016.

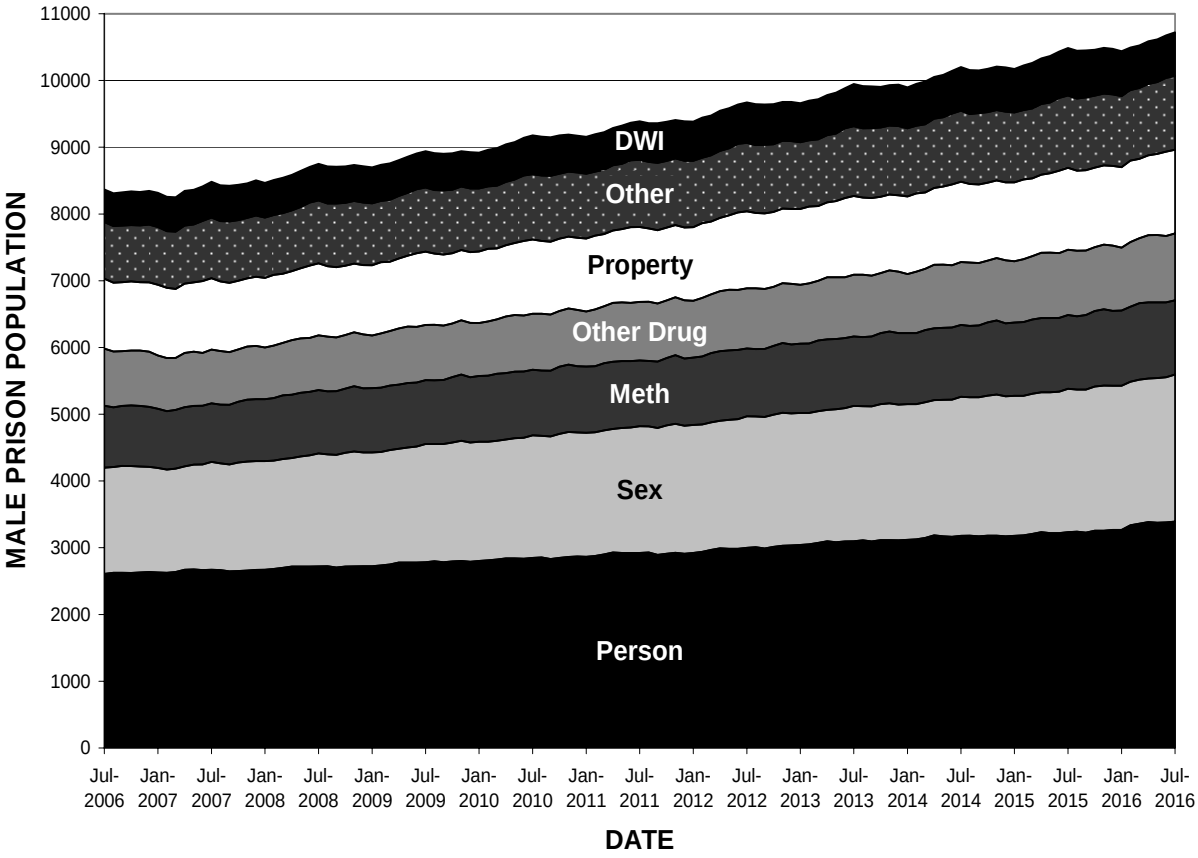

Figure 7. Projected Male Prison Population by Offense Type, FY 2007-2016

Female Prison Population Projections

The female prison population is projected to increase by 57 during FY 2007 (11%) (see Figure 8). By the end of FY 2016, the female prison population is estimated to be 704, an increase of 198 offenders at a rate of 39 percent (see Figure 9).

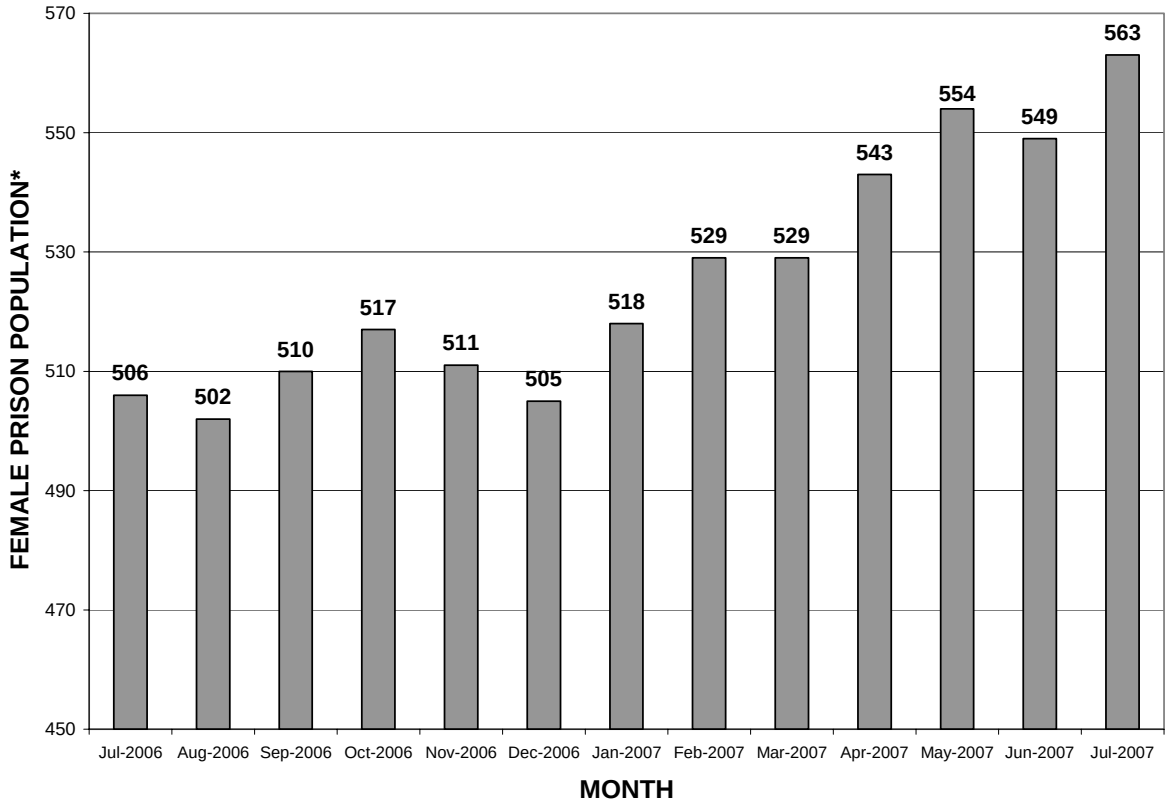

Figure 8. Projected Female Prison Population, FY 2007

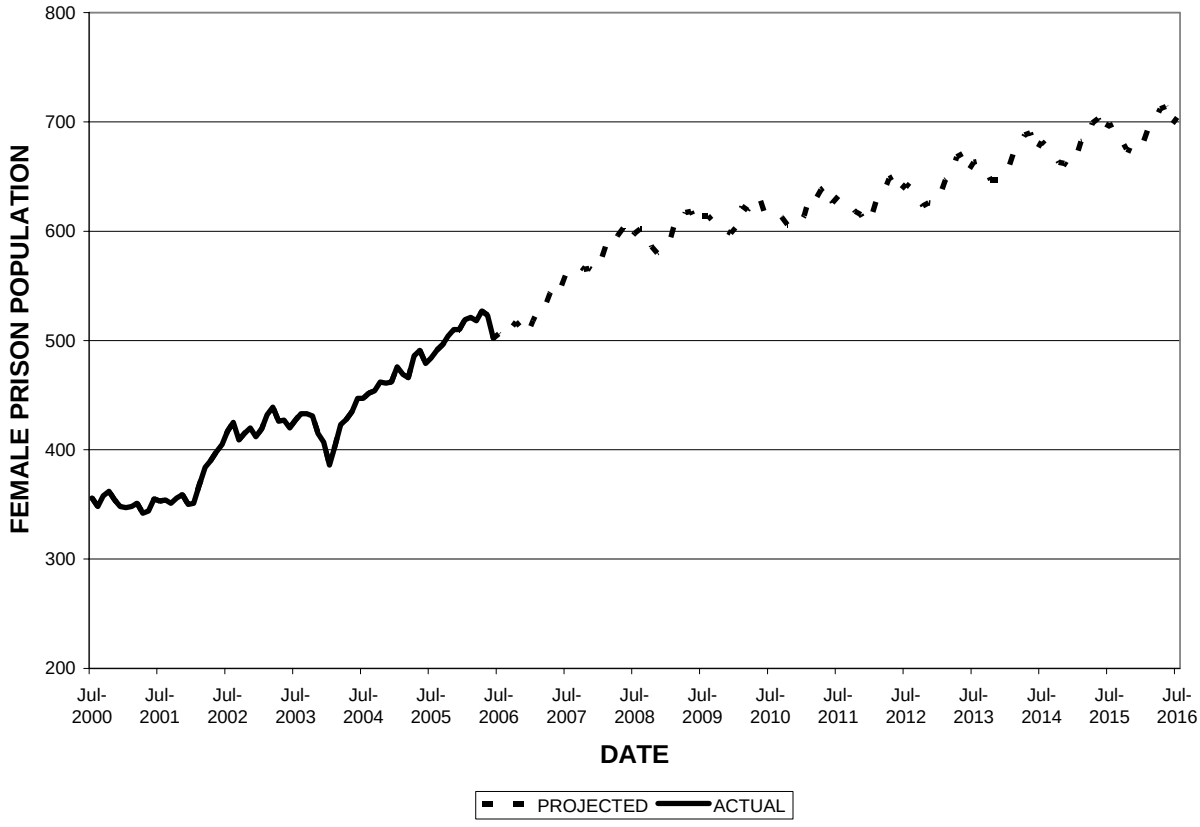

Figure 9. Actual and Projected Female Prison Population, FY 2001-2016

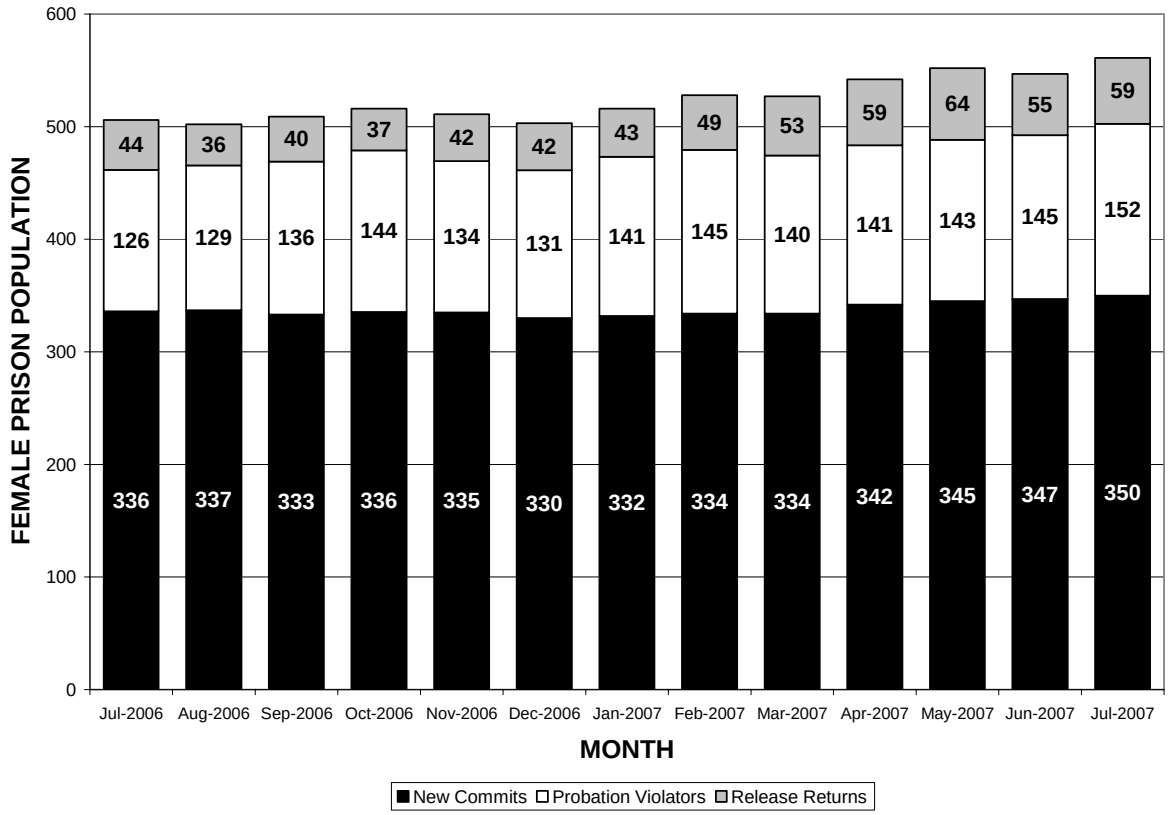

Figure 10. Projected Female Prison Population by Admission Type, FY 2007

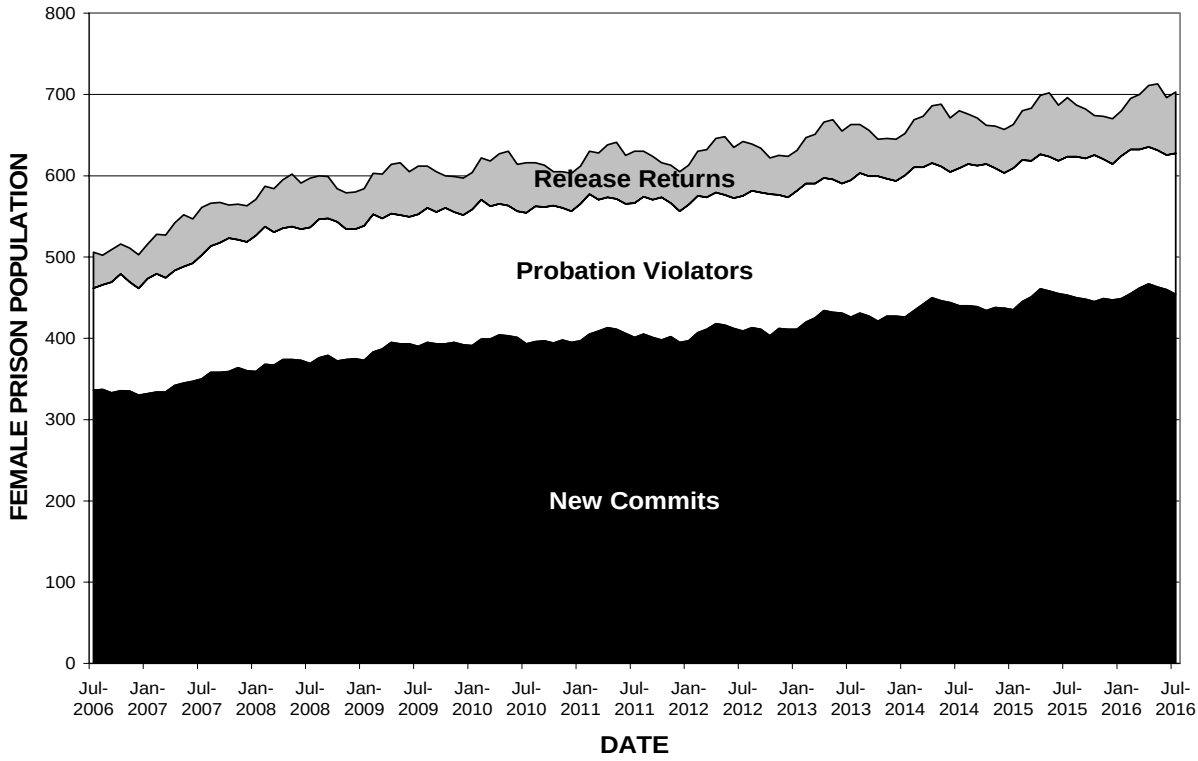

Figure 11. Projected Female Prison Population by Admission Type, FY 2007-2016

Female Prison Population Projections by Admission Type

Female new commitments are expected to be responsible for 25 percent of the growth during FY 2007, increasing by 14 offenders at a rate of four percent (see Figure 10). This group is estimated to increase by 118 offenders (35%) over the next ten years, or 60 percent of the projected growth (see Figure 11).

The forecast suggests that probation violators will account for the largest increase during FY 2007, growing by 26 offenders (21%). Long-term growth will be more modest, however, as probation violators are projected to increase by 47 offenders (37%) over the ten-year period. Supervised release violators are expected to grow by 15 offenders during FY 2007, a 34 percent increase. By the end of FY 2016, this group is projected to increase by 73 percent (32 offenders).

Female Prison Population Projections by Offense Type

The forecast indicates that methamphetamine offenders will account for the largest short- and long-term growth in the female inmate population. This group is estimated to grow by 15 in FY 2007, an increase of 14 percent (see Table 6). By the end of FY 2016, this population is projected to number 176, a growth of 66 offenders (60%). The forecasted increase among female methamphetamine offenders comprises 26 percent of the overall projected growth for FY 2007 and 33 percent over the entire ten-year period.

Table 6. Projected Female Prison Population by Offense Type, FY 2007-2016

Offense Type	*July 2006*	*July 2007*	*July 2016*	*2006-2007 Numeric Difference*	*2006-2007 Percent Change*	*2007-2016 Numeric Difference*	*2007-2016 Percent Change*
Other Person	136	149	195	13	9.6	59	43.4
Property	98	113	127	15	15.3	29	29.6
Other Drugs	77	85	93	8	10.4	16	20.8
Meth	110	125	176	15	13.6	66	60.0
Sex	20	17	35	-3	-15.0	15	75.0
DWI	32	36	38	4	12.5	6	18.8
Other	33	36	39	3	9.1	6	18.2
PSI holds	0	2	1	2	N/A	1	N/A
Total	506	563	704	57	11.3	198	39.1

Along with methamphetamine inmates, property offenders are projected to have the largest numerical increase (15) for FY 2007, whereas person offenders are estimated to have the second-largest numerical increase (59) from FY 2007-2016. DWI and other offenders are projected to have the slowest growth rates—19 percent and 18 percent, respectively—over the long term.

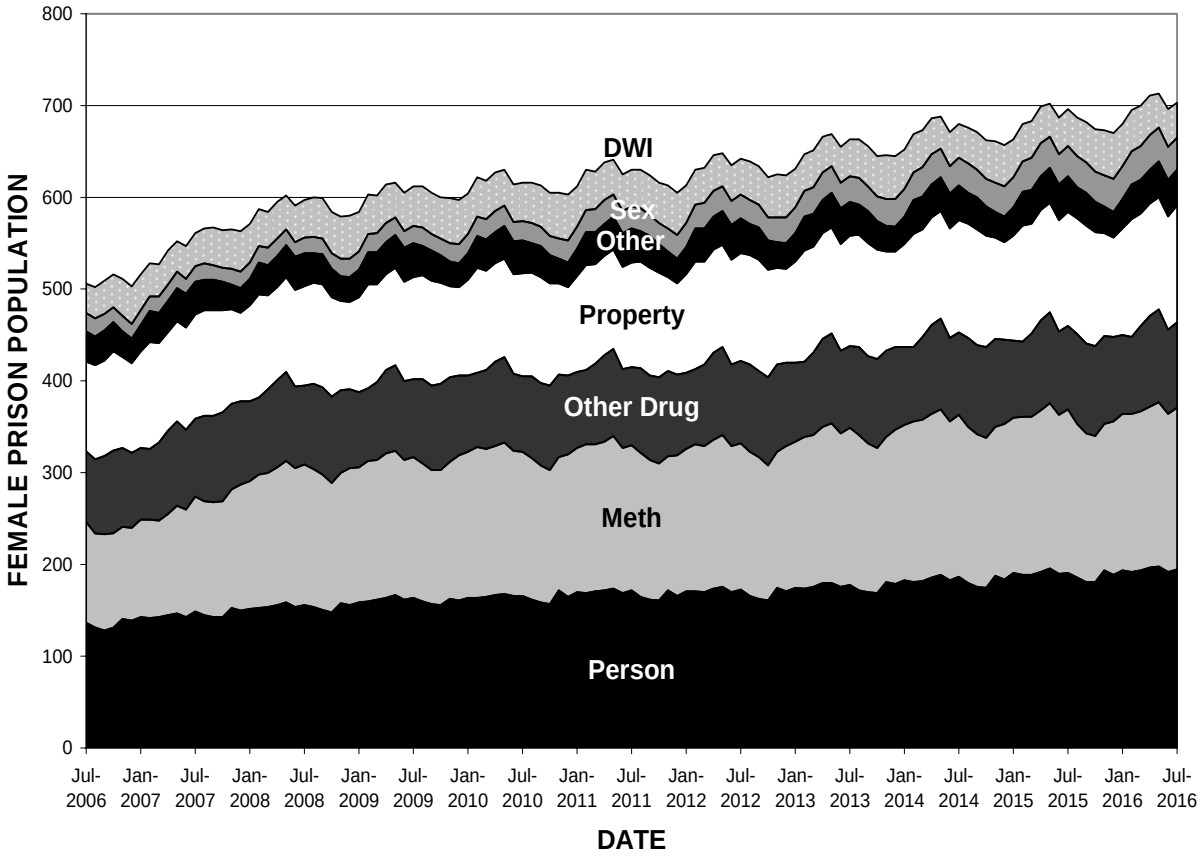

Figure 12. Projected Female Prison Population by Offense Type, FY 2007-2016

Short-Term Offender (STO) Forecast

Since July 1, 2003, offenders committed to the commissioner of corrections with a length of stay of 180 days or less have been serving their term of imprisonment at a county jail, workhouse, or other place authorized by law. Because these "short-term offenders" do not occupy a bed space in an MCF, they were excluded from the overall projections. However, separate STO projections were developed for both male and female offenders.

The total STO population is projected to grow by 45 offenders during FY 2007, a 14 percent increase (see Figure 13). Male STOs are estimated to account for 87 percent of the increase. Over the full ten-year forecast period, the STO population is projected to expand by 57 percent (61 offenders), topping out at 506 offenders by the end of FY 2016. The forecast indicates that male and female STO populations will both grow at rates of 60 and 38 percent, respectively, over the entire forecast period, with males increasing by 168 and females by 16.

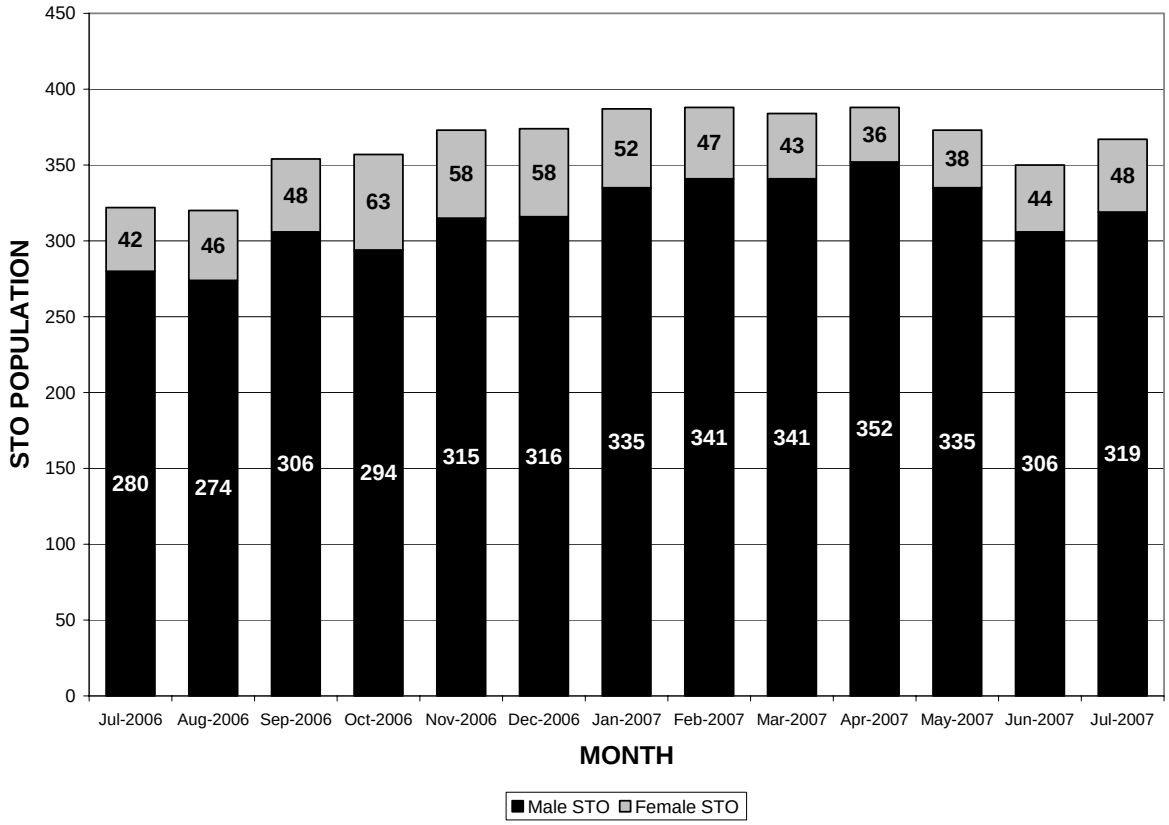

Figure 13. Projected STO Population by Offender Gender, FY 2007

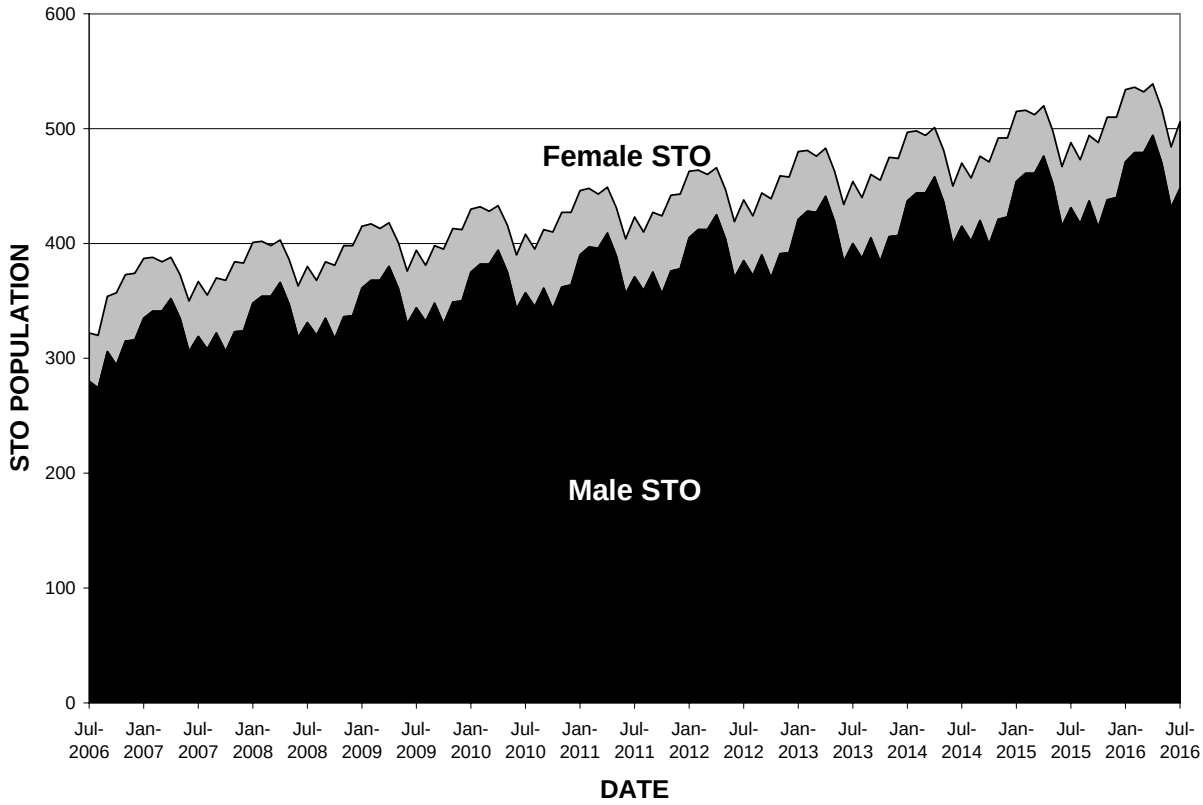

Figure 14. Projected STO Population by Offender Gender, FY 2007-2016

CONCLUSION

The boom in the prison population over the last few decades has been driven largely by an increase in drug offenders. One type of drug offender – those imprisoned for methamphetamine offenses – has played a significant role in prison population expansion over the last several years. After increasing at a much slower pace during FY 2005, however, the drug offender population (both methamphetamine and other drugs) decreased by 139 during FY 2006. Due in large part to declining drug offender numbers, the present forecast suggests the total population increase for FY 2007 (168 offenders) will be a little more than half what it was for FY 2006 (302 offenders).

Projections indicate, however, that methamphetamine offenders will continue to account for a relatively large proportion of both short- and long-term growth in the female prison population. Other major areas of difference between the male and female inmate forecasts include DWI offenders and admission type. DWI offenders had the highest projected growth rates for male offenders but had among the lowest for female offenders. Further, although the number of supervised release violators is expected to increase for females in FY 2007, it is projected to decrease for males.

Projections presented in this report are based on current laws, trends, and practices in the State of Minnesota. Any changes would attenuate the validity of these projections and require modification of the forecast.

REFERENCES

General Accounting Office (1996). *Inmate Populations, Costs, Projection Models*. United States General Accounting Office. Washington, D.C.

APPENDIX

DATA, METHODOLOGY, AND FORECAST ASSUMPTIONS

The Structured Sentencing Simulation (SSS) model was used to generate the current Minnesota Department of Corrections (DOC) state prison population forecast. SSS uses prison admission and stock population data to simulate movement of offenders through the correctional system. Admission data, which contain in-depth information on all offenders admitted to the DOC during fiscal year (FY) 2006, is used to produce future prison admissions throughout the forecast period (FY 2007-2016). Accordingly, future prison admissions generated by the SSS model for this year's forecast will resemble offenders admitted during FY 2006.

The stock population data, on the other hand, contain detailed information on all inmates incarcerated in a Minnesota correctional facility (MCF) on July 1, 2006. Stock population data thus provide a "one-day snapshot" of all incarcerated offenders on the first day of the forecast period for this year's projections.

The forecast produced by the SSS model is based not only on prison admission and stock population data, but also on a number of key assumptions made about factors such as the volume of future prison admissions, impact of new law changes, and projected capacity of institutional and community programs. Assumptions used in this year's projections follow.

FY 2007 Prison Population Forecast Assumptions

1. *Current prison population projection period* – July 2006 to June 2016.

2. *Future prison admissions* – In an effort to sharpen accuracy of projections, particularly during the first several years of the forecast period, prison admissions were separated into three categories: new commitments, probation violators, and supervised release violators. Prison admissions were grouped in these categories due to the relatively large disparity in offender lengths of stay among the three types. That is, new commitments receive, on average, substantially longer sentences and typically have longer lengths of stay than probation violators, who generally have greater lengths of stay than supervised release violators.

   Because admission trends can differ significantly among the three types, separate assumptions were made about each for both male and female offenders. However, due to the volatility of these trends over time, separate assumptions were made only for the first year of the forecast period (FY 2007). For years 2-10 (FY 2008-2016), a flat two percent annual increase was used for both male and female offenders for all three admission types.

   First-year admission assumptions, which were based largely on trends in recent admission data, are presented in the following table. For example, because the number of male offenders admitted as new commitments during FY 2005 was virtually the same as the number admitted during FY 2006, a zero percent, first-year admission assumption was used for male new commitments. Similarly, increases of five and nine percent were the first-year admission assumptions used for male probation and supervised release violators, respectively, due to commensurate increases in these two admission types from FY 2005-2006. Based on a comparison of admission data for FY 2005-2006, a five percent decrease was assumed for

First-Year Admission Assumptions for Male and Female Offenders

Admission Type	*Percent Change Assumption*	
	Male Offenders	Female Offenders
New commitment	0%	-5%
Probation violator	10%	1%
Supervised release violator	5%	7%

female new commitments, whereas one and seven percent increases were the first-year assumptions used for female probation and supervised release violators, respectively.

3. *Future short-term offender (STO) admissions* –STOs were excluded from the overall projections since they do not occupy a bed space in an MCF. A separate STO forecast was developed in which the projections were disaggregated by offender gender.

   STO admissions do not contain any supervised release violators, as these offenders are admitted as either new commitments or, more frequently, probation violators. Based on recent trends in admission data, STO male new commitments are assumed to increase by seven percent during FY 2007 and by three percent from years two through ten. STO male probation violators, on the other hand, are assumed to increase by nine percent during the first year and by four percent from FY 2008-2016.

   For females, the first-year admission assumption was a ten percent increase for new commitments and a five percent increase for probation violators. From FY 2008-2016, the admission assumption was a three percent increase for new commitments and a two percent increase for probation violators.

4. *Institutional and community programs* – Three programs currently provide offenders with an opportunity for release into the community prior to their original supervised release date: Work Release, the Challenge Incarceration Program (CIP), and the new Conditional Release Program (CRP). To accurately forecast the prison population, it is necessary to account for offenders entering these programs. As a result, assumptions were made about capacity, duration, and eligibility criteria of these three programs over the forecast period.

   a. *Work Release:* Since 1968, carefully-screened inmates who have served at least one-half of their term of imprisonment and are within eight months of their supervised release date have been allowed to work at paid employment or participate in approved vocational programming in the community. The number of eligible offenders who participate in the work release program at a given time is dictated by the DOC's budget, which indicates that monthly program capacity from 2006-2014 will be 200 offenders (170 males and 30 females). Accordingly, current projections assumed these numbers.

   b. *Challenge Incarceration Program (CIP):* Implemented in 1992, this three-phase program is geared toward nonviolent drug and property offenders. During the first "boot camp" phase, which lasts a minimum of six months, male offenders are imprisoned at the MCF-Willow River, whereas female CIP participants are incarcerated at the MCF-Togo. Following successful completion of the institutional phase, offenders are placed in the community for Phases II and III, each of which generally lasts six months. Offenders who complete all three phases are then placed on supervised release until sentence expiration. For offenders who fail, time spent in CIP Phase I is added to their length of stay.

Recent history indicates that CIP operating capacity has been 90 male and 24 female offenders. However, the MCF-Willow River will begin a gradual expansion that will add 90 beds in 2007. Consequently, current projections assume that operating capacity during the first six months of FY 2007 will be 90 male and 24 female offenders. From the last six months of FY 2007-2016, however, the present forecast assumes a male capacity of 180.

The following historical data on CIP are included in the forecast assumptions: Eligible offenders enter the program no earlier than three months after their admission to prison; and those who complete Phase 1 will be released, at a minimum, 12 months before their original supervised release date. Consistent with recent data on CIP success/failure rates, the present forecast further assumes that 70 percent of CIP participants will successfully complete Phase 1. For the 30 percent who fail, time spent in CIP Phase I is added to their length of stay.

c. *Conditional Release Program (CRP):* Mandated by the 2005 Minnesota Legislature, CRP is an intensive treatment program for carefully screened, nonviolent drug offenders who, upon successful completion of the program, are eligible for release after they have served either 36 months or half of their term of imprisonment, the lesser of the two. Eligible offenders began entering CRP, which generally lasts six months, in November 2005. Like CIP, offenders who fail CRP may have the time they spent in the program added to their length of stay.

Recent analyses suggest that monthly program capacity will be 15 males and 2 females. Current projections assume that a total of 100 males and 15 females will participate before the program sunsets in June 2009. Like CIP, it is assumed that 70 percent of CRP participants will successfully complete the program. Of the 30 percent who fail, time spent in CRP may be added to their length of stay. Similar to CIP, it is further assumed that offenders are not eligible to enter CRP until three months after they are admitted to prison. The minimum amount of time saved is assumed to be 12 months for program completers.

5. *New Law Changes* – Several laws were passed during the 2006 legislative session that are assumed to have an impact on future prison population levels within the current forecast period. Assumptions regarding the impact of these legislative changes follow.

a. *Sentencing grid for Criminal Sexual Conduct (CSC) offenders:* Directed by the legislature to develop a new approach for sentencing sex offenders, the Sentencing Guidelines Commission (SGC) developed a separate sentencing grid for sex offenders that increases the length of sentences imposed on sex offenders with criminal histories, especially those with a prior sex offense. For the present forecast, it is assumed that these modifications will have a prison bed impact of 40 beds by the end of FY 2007 and 305 beds by the end of forecast period.

b. *Domestic Violence offenses:* The definition of the time period during which repeat violations of certain domestic abuse offenses can be enhanced to gross misdemeanors and felonies was modified to provide a consistent time period of within ten years of a previous conviction. The offenses that qualify as priors are termed "qualified domestic violence-related offenses." The offenses that can be enhanced if they are repeat violations

are: violation of an order for protection, fifth-degree assault, domestic assault, violation of a harassment restraining order, and harassment-stalking. Violation of domestic abuse no-contact orders was added to the list of crimes defined as "qualified domestic violence-related offenses" in 609.02, subd. 16. If an offender commits domestic assault, fifth degree assault, a violation of an order for protection, harassment, or a violation of a harassment restraining order, the offense can be enhanced to a gross misdemeanor or felony if the offender has previous convictions for crimes listed in 609.02, subd. 16. These changes will result in an increase in the time period during which subsequent offenses can be enhanced and an increase in the number of offenses that can be used to enhance subsequent offenses. For the current forecast, it is assumed that these changes will result in no more than a five percent increase in the number of felony-level offenders. A five percent increase in the number of felony convictions would result in a projected prison bed impact of six beds. Allowing a six-month delay before the impact is realized, three beds would be needed in FY 2007 and six beds in FY 2008 and every year thereafter.

6. *Pre-Sentence Investigation (PSI) Holds* – PSI holds comprise a group of offenders yet to be sentenced, but who nevertheless occupy a prison bed. It is necessary, therefore, to account for these offenders in population projections. However, because admission and offense type data are not available on these offenders until after they are sentenced, PSI holds are treated as a discrete category when the forecast is disaggregated by admission and offense type.

   On July 1, 2006, the first day of the forecast period, there were 21 male and 0 female PSI holds in an MCF. Based on an analysis of PSI hold stock population data from July 1, 2005, the present forecast assumes that these 21 offenders in the stock population will remain in PSI hold status anywhere from 0.3 to 6.2 months, with 2.1 months being the average. In addition, given that PSI hold admission data from 1996-2006 suggest that the annual number of admissions has been relatively stable over the ten-year period, current projections further assume that 160 offenders (150 males and 10 females) will enter PSI hold status each year and stay in that status from 0.2 to 8.5 months, with the average being 1.9 months.

7. *Supervised release date adjustments* – The SSS model uses admission and stock population data to forecast the prison population. Both sets of data contain information on offenders' scheduled release dates (SRD). An SRD can change, however, if the offender receives extended incarceration disciplinary time or dies while incarcerated. To account for these potential changes to SRDs, an analysis was performed on admission and stock population data files used in this year's forecast. SRDs in both files were compared with actual release dates (for released inmates) or updated SRDs (for offenders still incarcerated) as of October 15, 2006. If an offender's actual release date or SRD was different from that listed in the data files, it was adjusted accordingly. The monthly impact of SRD changes was estimated from November 2006 through June 2016 to fully account for the effect of these adjustments on the prison population over the entire forecast period.