Minnesota Prison Population Projections

Fiscal Year 2008 Report

1450 Energy Park Drive, Suite 200
St. Paul, Minnesota 55108-5219
651/361-7200
TTY 800/627-3529
www.doc.state.mn.us
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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 2005-2007, the rate of growth has declined as the population increased by an average of 282 offenders per year during this time.

- 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 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 (2007)

- During CY 2007, projections overestimated the actual prison population by an average of 0.17 percent, or 15 offenders per month.

FY 2008 Prison Population Forecast

- The prison population forecast is based on current laws, trends, and practices.
- The prison population is projected to increase by 115 inmates (1.3%) during FY 2008 and by a total of 2,697 (30%) during the ten-year forecast period.
    - The modest growth, particularly over the short term, is partly due to the anticipated effect that the legislative increase in property offense threshold levels will have on the prison population.
- The number of male inmates is expected to grow by 1.0 percent (82) during FY 2008, compared to 6.1 percent (33) for females. By the end of FY 2017, the projected growth rate is 30 percent for males (2,508) and 35 percent for females (189).

Admission Type

- New commitments are expected to account for 70 percent (80 offenders) of the FY 2008 increase and 69 percent (1,851 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

- After several years of declining drug offender numbers, particularly among those incarcerated for methamphetamine offenses, the projections indicate that other drug offenders will have the highest increase (57) for both males and females during FY 2008, followed by methamphetamine (36). Combined, the 93-offender increase is expected to make up 81 percent of the short-term growth in the total prison population.

- Over the long term, however, the growth among all drug offenders (both methamphetamine and other drugs) is expected to account for only 26 percent of the increase from FY 2008-2017.

- Instead, person offenders (both sex and other person) are estimated to account for a relatively large portion of the long-term growth in the prison population. For example, person offenders are expected to be responsible for 47 percent of the increase in the prison population by the end of FY 2017.

- Among males, other person offenders had the largest projected numerical increase (723) over the ten-year period, followed by sex offenders (465). Among females, other person offenders also had the largest projected increase (65) by the end of the forecast period, whereas sex offenders had the highest long-term percentage increase (90%).

- Since inception of the Felony DWI Law in August 2002, the number of male DWI offenders has increased substantially, growing by an average of more than 100 offenders per year. This year's forecast suggests that the growth in the male DWI population will taper off with a 12-offender increase (2%) during FY 2008. Among females, the DWI population is projected to increase by one offender during FY 2008 and six over the entire ten-year period.

RECENT TRENDS IN MINNESOTA'S PRISON POPULATION

After several years of fairly rapid growth, the prison population is still increasing, albeit at a slightly slower rate. During the most recent fiscal year, the total prison population grew by 1.9 percent (168 offenders) (see Table 1). From FY 2002-2004, the prison population grew by an average of 635 offenders per year. But from FY 2005-2007, the prison population increased by an average of 282 per year. The average annual increase from FY 2005-2007 (282) is 56 percent less than the average from FY 2002-2004 (635).

The decreasing population growth is due largely to two factors. First, although the total number of admissions increased during FY 2007, 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 (2004-2007) (see Table 2). Conversely, the number of probation and supervised release violators admitted to prison increased once again during FY 2007.

Second, the lack of an increase in new commitments, coupled with the growing number of 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 FY

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 2007 is nearly three months less than it was during FY 2002-2004.

Table 1. Numerical and Percent Change by Offense Type, FY 2002-2007

	FY 2002	*FY 2003*	*FY 2004*	*FY 2005*	*FY 2006*	*FY 2007*
Total Prison Population						
Numerical change	518	622	765	375	302	168
Percent change	8.1	9.0	10.1	4.5	3.5	1.9
Methamphetamine Offenders*						
Numerical change	187	307	288	115	-38	-123
Percent change	81.3	73.6	40.0	11.4	-3.4	-11.3
Other Drug Offenders						
Numerical change	-1	86	29	16	-101	-26
Percent change	-0.1	9.3	2.9	1.5	-9.6	-2.7
Person Offenders						
Numerical change	77	68	308	-157	68	62
Percent change	3.2	2.7	12.0	-6.1	2.5	2.2
Sex Offenders						
Numerical change	5	5	118	119	110	56
Percent change	0.4	0.4	9.5	8.7	7.4	3.5
Property Offenders						
Numerical change	63	113	-243	158	38	25
Percent change	6.1	10.3	-20.1	16.3	3.4	2.1
DWI Offenders						
Numerical change	N/A	N/A	150	188	127	99
Percent change	N/A	N/A	250.0	89.5	31.9	18.9
Other Offenders						
Numerical change	111	59	115	-64	98	75
Percent change	18.7	8.4	15.1	-7.2	11.9	8.2

* 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 261 inmates per fiscal year from FY 2002-2004, 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 second consecutive year, there was a reduction in the methamphetamine offender population, as it dropped by 123 during FY 2007.

Table 2. Admission, Sentence Length, and Length of Stay Trends by Admission Type, FY 2002-2007

	Admission Type											
	New Commitments			Probation Violators			Supervised Release Violators			Total		
Fiscal Year	*Number*	*Avg. Sentence Length*	*Avg. Projected LOS*	*Number*	*Avg. Sentence Length*	*Avg. Projected LOS*	*Number*	*Avg. Sentence Length*	*Avg. LOS*	*Number*	*Avg. Sentence Length*	*Avg. Projected 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
2007	2,415	56.6	37.8	1,196	23.9	14.0	2,394	N/A	4.7	6,005	45.7	20.1
Total	13,846	58.1	38.5	6,426	25.5	15.5	9,156	N/A	4.8	31,822	47.7	20.9

Notes: Excluded from the calculations are short-term offenders from FY 2004-2007, and new commitments and probation violators from FY 2002 and 2003 who had lengths of stay less than six months.
Sentence lengths and lengths of stay are expressed in months.

As shown in Table 3, although there were more than 600 methamphetamine offenders admitted to prison during FY 2007, the size of the population has declined because offenders being admitted to prison are staying for shorter time periods. The average projected LOS for methamphetamine offenders has dropped by 11 months since FY 2002. The shorter projected LOSs are due to a growing influx of probation and supervised release violators, a reduction in sentence lengths, and a decrease in new commitments. For example, after reaching a peak of 400 during FY 2004, the number of new commitments has grown smaller each year. Indeed, the number of new commitments during FY 2007 was 70 less than the previous year (342 in FY 2006) and was the lowest total since FY 2002.

Table 3. Methamphetamine Admission, Sentence Length, and Length-of-Stay Trends by Admission Type, FY 2002-2007

	Admission Type											
	Meth New Commitments			Meth Probation Violators			Meth Supervised Release Violators			Total		
Fiscal Year	*Number*	*Avg. Sentence Length*	*Avg. Projected LOS*	*Number*	*Avg. Sentence Length*	*Avg. Projected LOS*	*Number*	*Avg. Sentence Length*	*Avg. LOS*	*Number*	*Avg. Sentence Length*	*Avg. Projected 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
2007	272	54.9	34.8	125	33.2	20.2	212	N/A	4.7	609	48.1	21.3
Total	1,984	57.6	36.0	667	34.1	20.9	663	N/A	5.0	3,276	50.5	27.1

Notes: Excluded from the calculations are short-term offenders from FY 2004-2007, and new commitments and probation violators from FY 2002 and 2003 who had lengths of stay less than six months.
Sentence lengths and lengths of stay are expressed in months.

ACTUAL & PROJECTED POPULATION COMPARISONS, 2000-2007

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, 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.

Table 4, which depicts the average monthly error rate for each year since 2000, shows that projections have overestimated the actual prison population by an average of 0.01 percent per month over the last seven years. In absolute terms, projections have differed from the actual prison population by an average of 1.88 percent per month. Last year's forecast overestimated the prison population by 0.17 percent, an average of 15 offenders per month.

Table 4. Average Annual Percentage Error Rate between Actual and Projected Prison Populations, 2000-2007

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
2007	0.17	0.48
Total	0.01	1.88

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]

[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).

FY 2008 PRISON POPULATION PROJECTIONS

The forecast presented below was prepared during the fall of 2007 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 (STOs) 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 115 inmates (1.3%) in FY 2008 (see Figure 1). Over the next ten years, the total prison population is estimated to grow by 2,697 inmates, a 30 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.

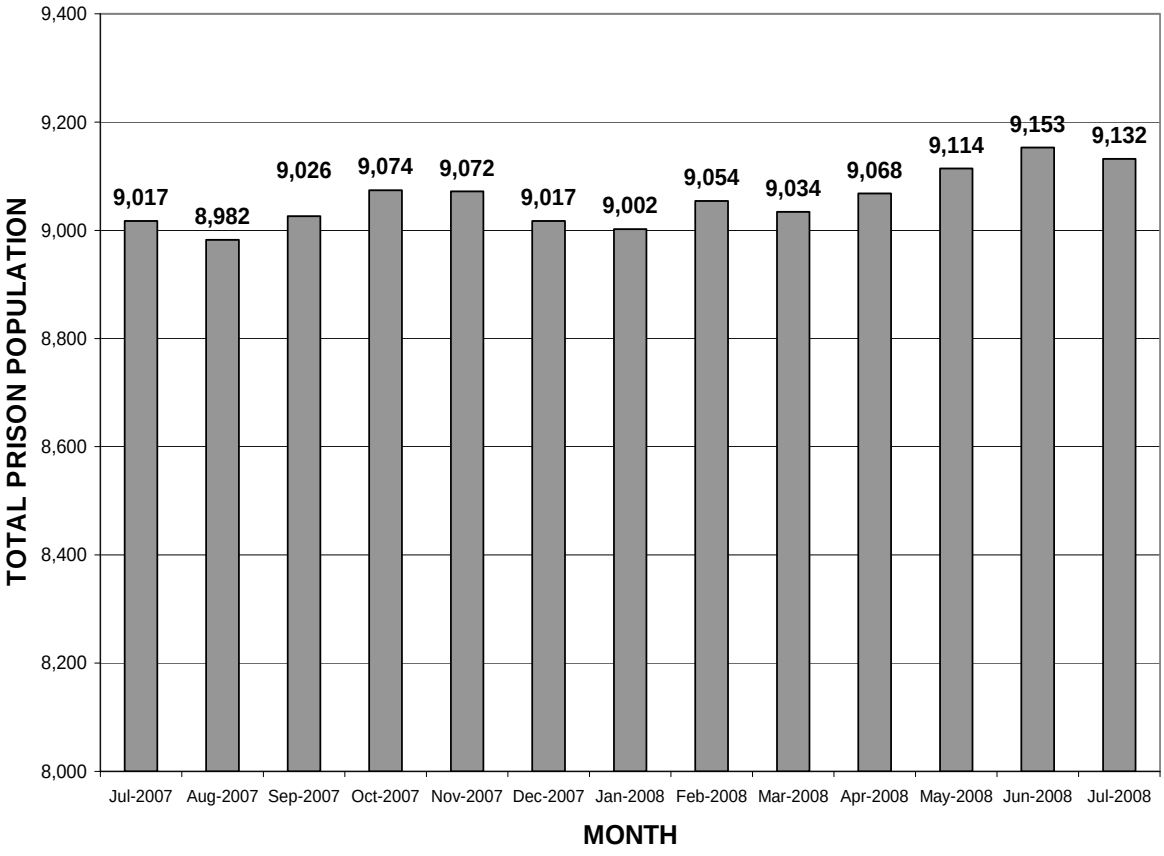

Figure 1. Projected Total Prison Population, FY 2008

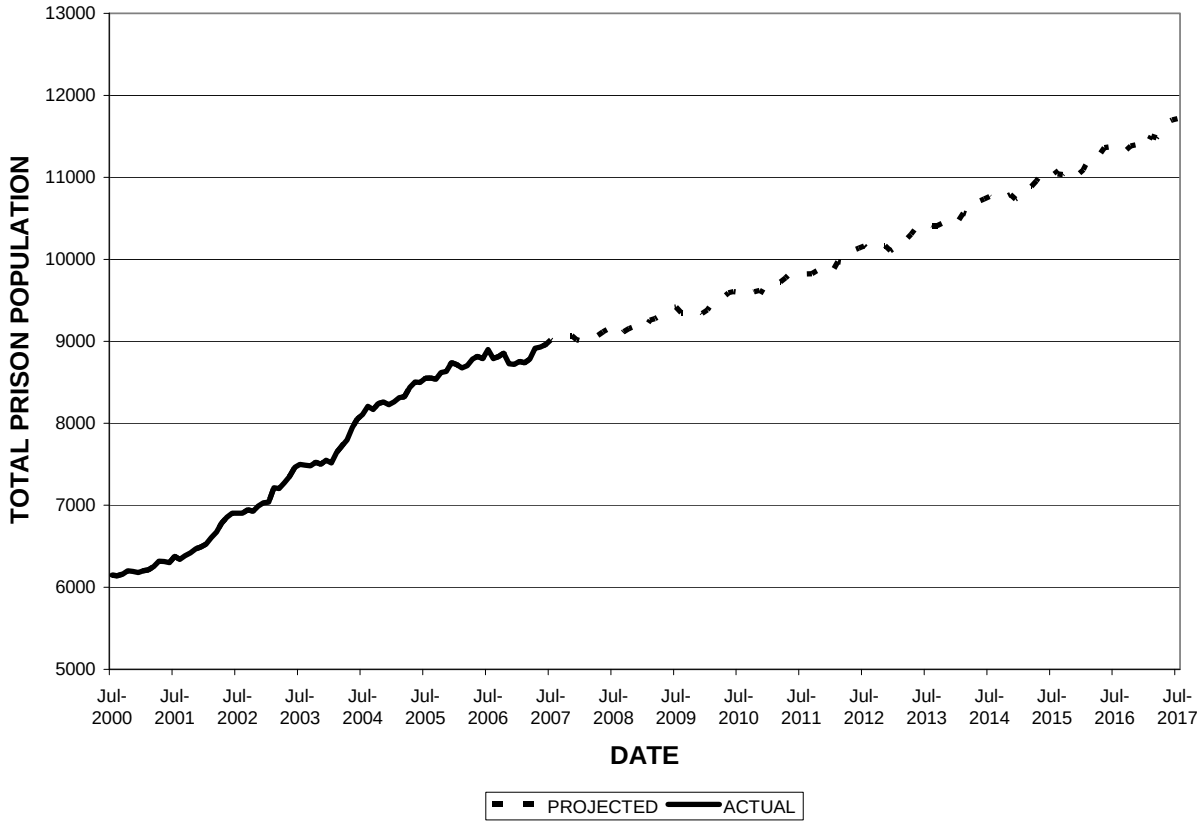

Figure 2. Actual and Projected Prison Population, FY 2001-2017

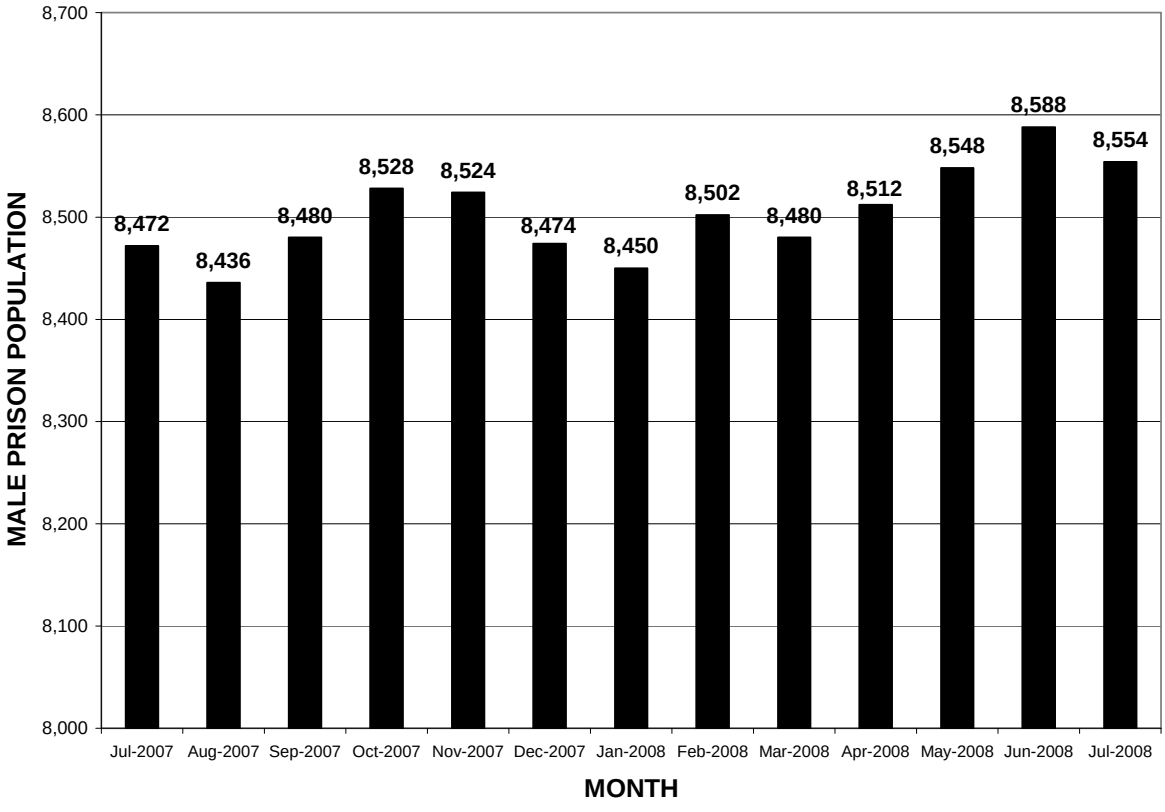

Figure 3. Projected Male Prison Population, FY 2008

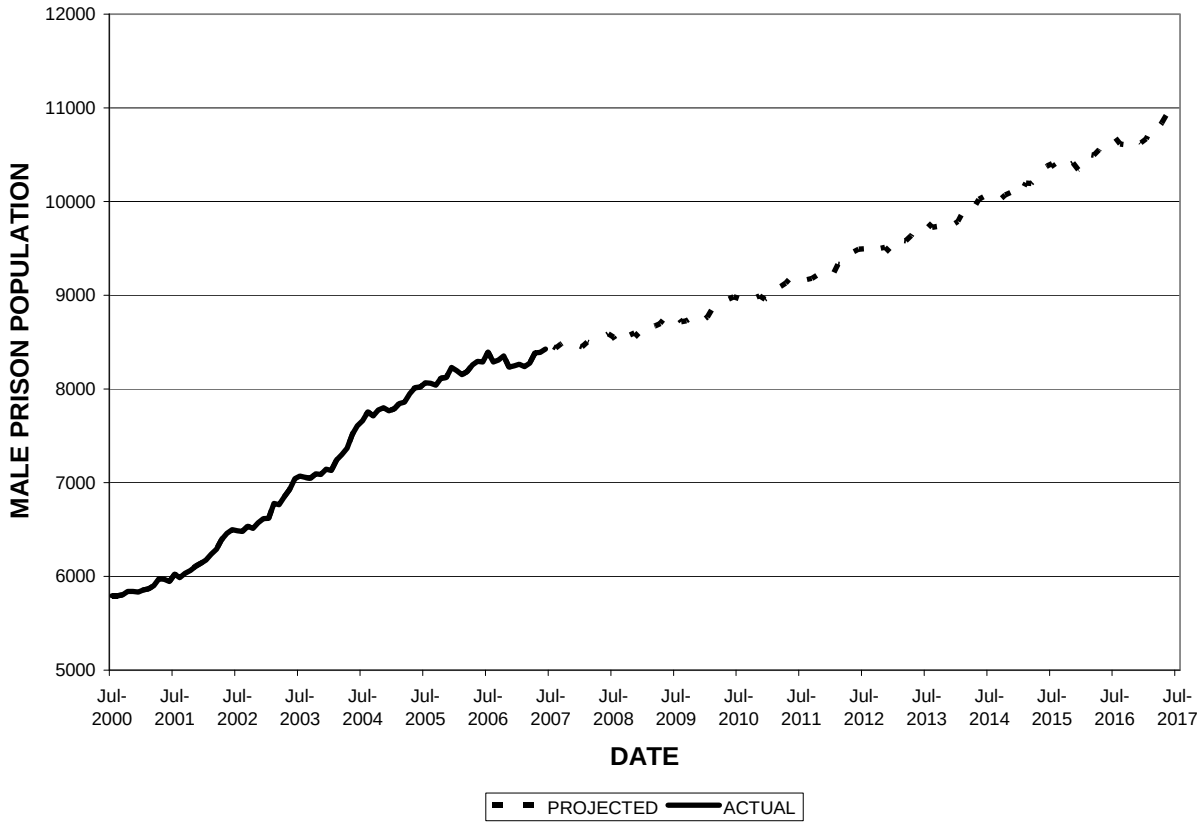

Figure 4. Actual and Projected Male Prison Population, FY 2001-2017

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 82 inmates (1.3%) during FY 2008 (see Figure 3). By the end of FY 2017, the size of the male population is estimated to grow by 2,508 inmates, a 30 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 2008 as well as over the next ten years. For example, male new commitments are estimated to grow by 78 (1.0%) during FY 2008, or 95 percent of the projected increase for FY 2008 (see Figure 5). The number of male new commitments is expected to grow by 1,728 offenders by the end of FY 2017, a 29 percent increase over the ten-year period and 69 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 69 (5%) in FY 2008 and by 360 (27%) over the full ten-year period. Supervised release violators (i.e., release returns) are projected to have a 67-offender decrease in FY 2008. The forecast indicates, however, that the number of supervised release violators will increase by 385 offenders (32%) from FY 2008-2017.

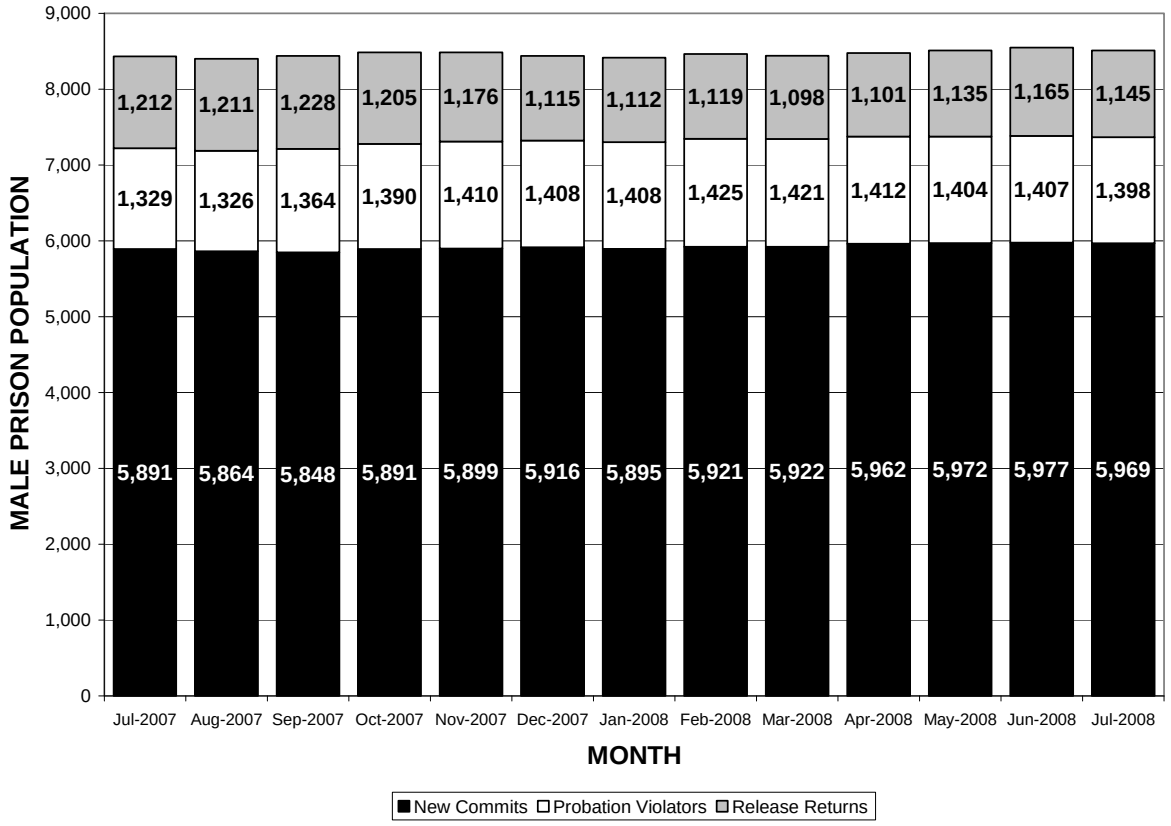

Figure 5. Projected Male Prison Population by Admission Type, FY 2008

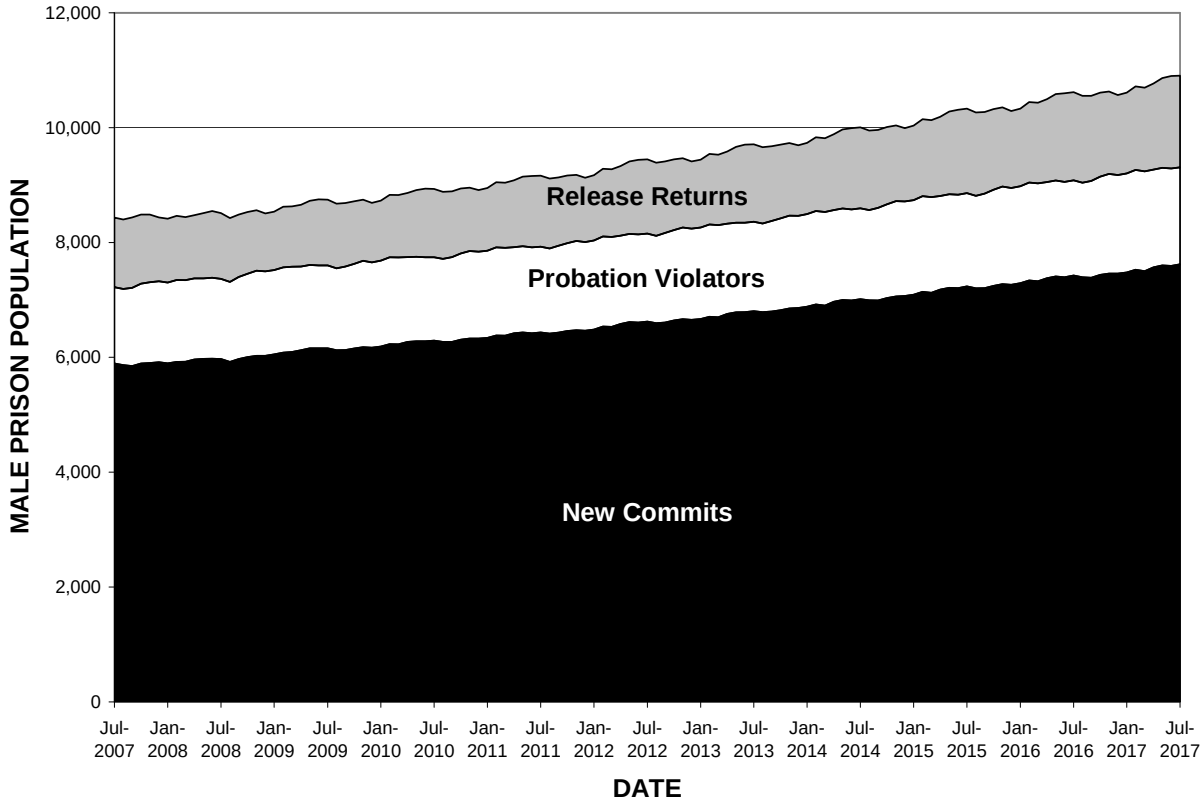

Figure 6. Projected Male Prison Population by Admission Type, FY 2008-2017

Male Prison Population Projections by Offense Type

At 50 percent, other drug offenders are projected to have the highest growth rate over the entire forecast period (see Table 5). Moreover, the projected 396-offender increase constitutes the third-largest numerical growth over the ten-year period, trailing only other person and sex offenders. Although the number of sex offenders is projected to drop by 22 offenders during FY 2008, the estimated long-term increase (465) is the second largest among the seven offense types, comprising 19 percent of overall growth (2,508) in the male prison population. Therefore, all person offenders (sex and other person) are expected to account for nearly half (47 percent) of the long-term growth and will make up 50 percent of the male prison population by the end of FY 2017.

Table 5. Projected Male Prison Population by Offense Type, FY 2008-2017

Offense Type	*July 2007*	*July 2008*	*July 2017*	*2007-2008 Numeric Difference*	*2007-2008 Percent Change*	*2008-2017 Numeric Difference*	*2008-2017 Percent Change*
Other person	2,637	2,652	3,360	15	0.6	723	27.4
Property	1,048	1,041	1,326	-7	-0.7	279	26.6
Other drugs	795	843	1,191	48	6.0	396	49.8
Meth	813	833	1,041	20	2.5	228	28.1
Sex	1,634	1,612	2,099	-22	-1.3	465	28.5
DWI	581	593	723	12	2.1	142	24.4
Other	924	938	1,165	14	1.5	240	26.0
PSI holds	40	42	75	2	5.0	35	87.5
Total	8,472	8,554	10,980	82	1.0	2,508	29.6

After several years of declining numbers, the male methamphetamine offender population is expected to grow by 20 during FY 2008 (3%) and by 228 (28%) over the ten-year period. Overall, then, the forecast suggests that the size of the total male drug offender population will increase by 68 during the current fiscal year. Moreover, by the end of FY 2017, this population is expected to exceed more than 2,200 offenders, or 20 percent of all male inmates.

Since the inception of the Felony DWI Law in August 2002, the number of male DWI offenders has increased substantially, growing by an average of more than 100 offenders per year. This year's forecast suggests, however, that the growth in the male DWI population will taper off with a 12-offender increase (2%) during FY 2008. A similar increase (14) is projected for other offenders during the current fiscal year. Although the number of property offenders is expected to drop by 7 by the end of FY 2008, the long-term forecast indicates a growth of 279 offenders, a 27 percent increase.

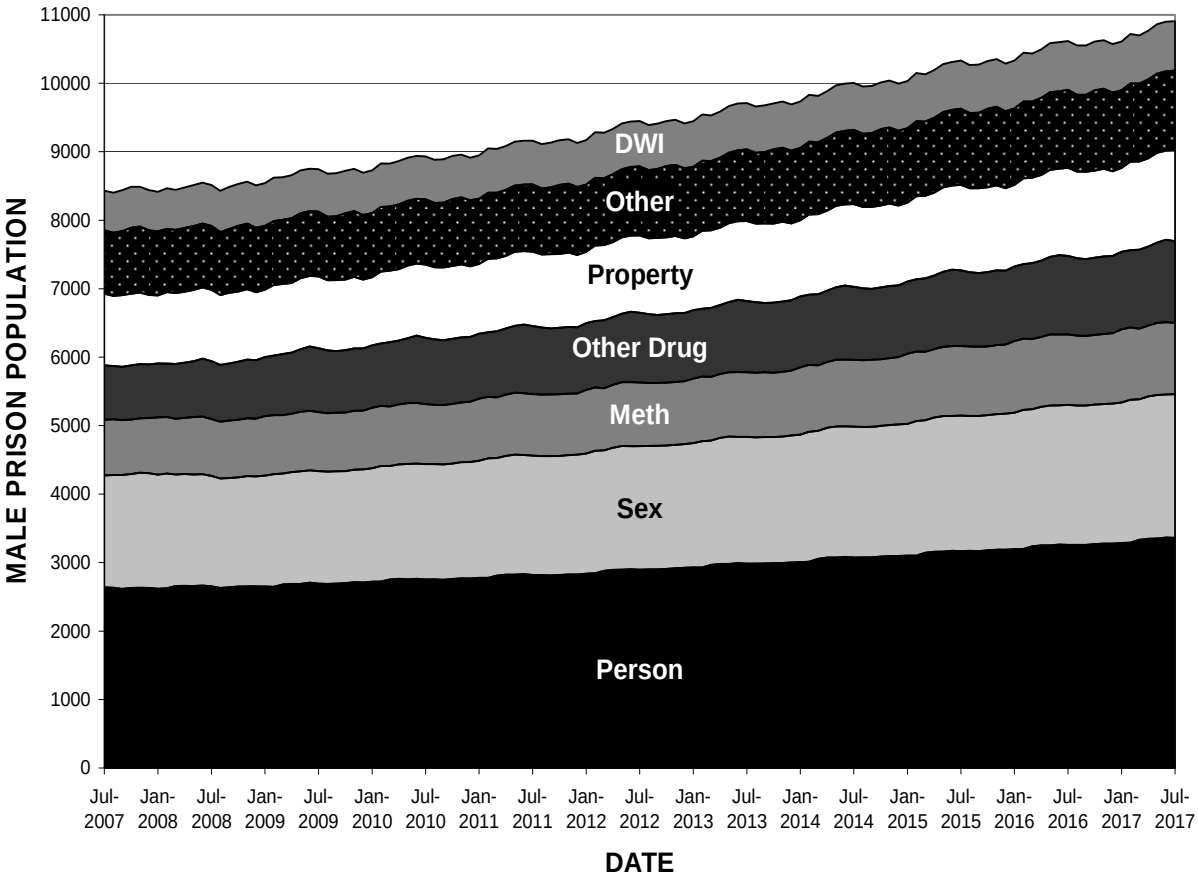

Figure 7. Projected Male Prison Population by Offense Type, FY 2008-2017

Female Prison Population Projections

The female prison population is projected to increase by 33 during FY 2008 (6%) (see Figure 8). By the end of FY 2017, the female prison population is estimated to be 734, an increase of 189 offenders at a rate of 35 percent (see Figure 9).

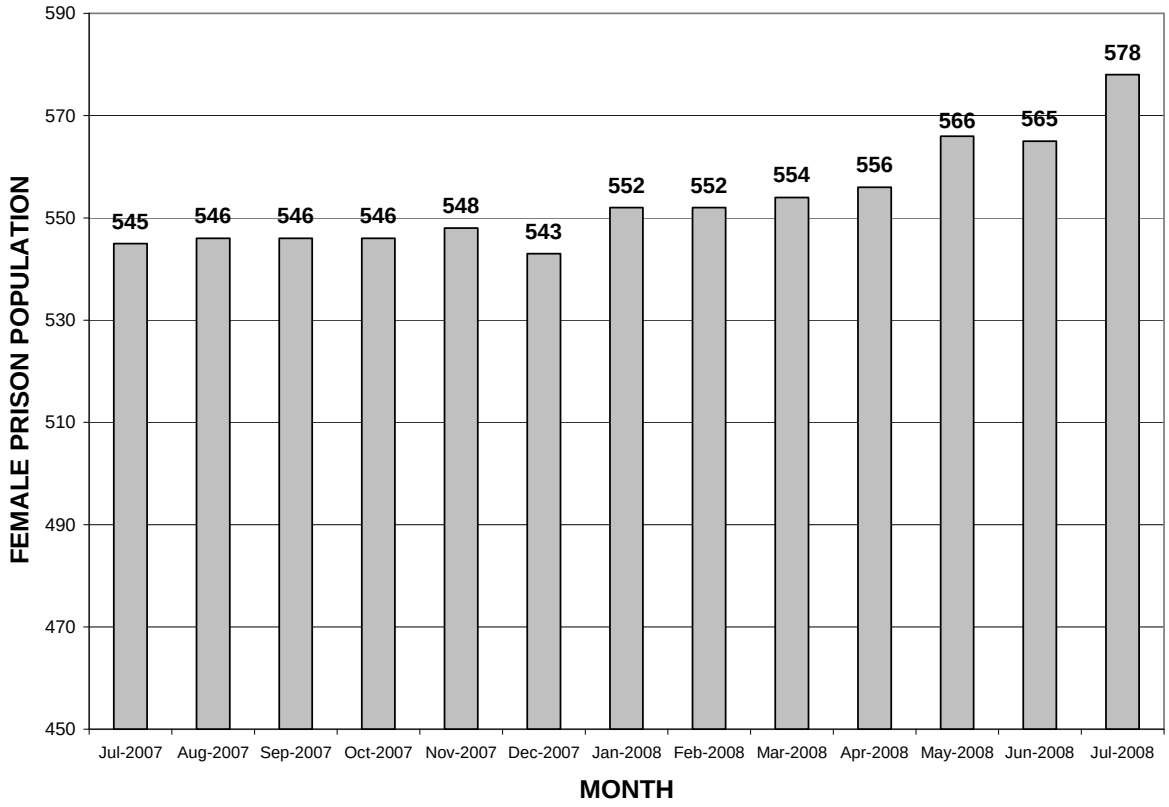

Figure 8. Projected Female Prison Population, FY 2008

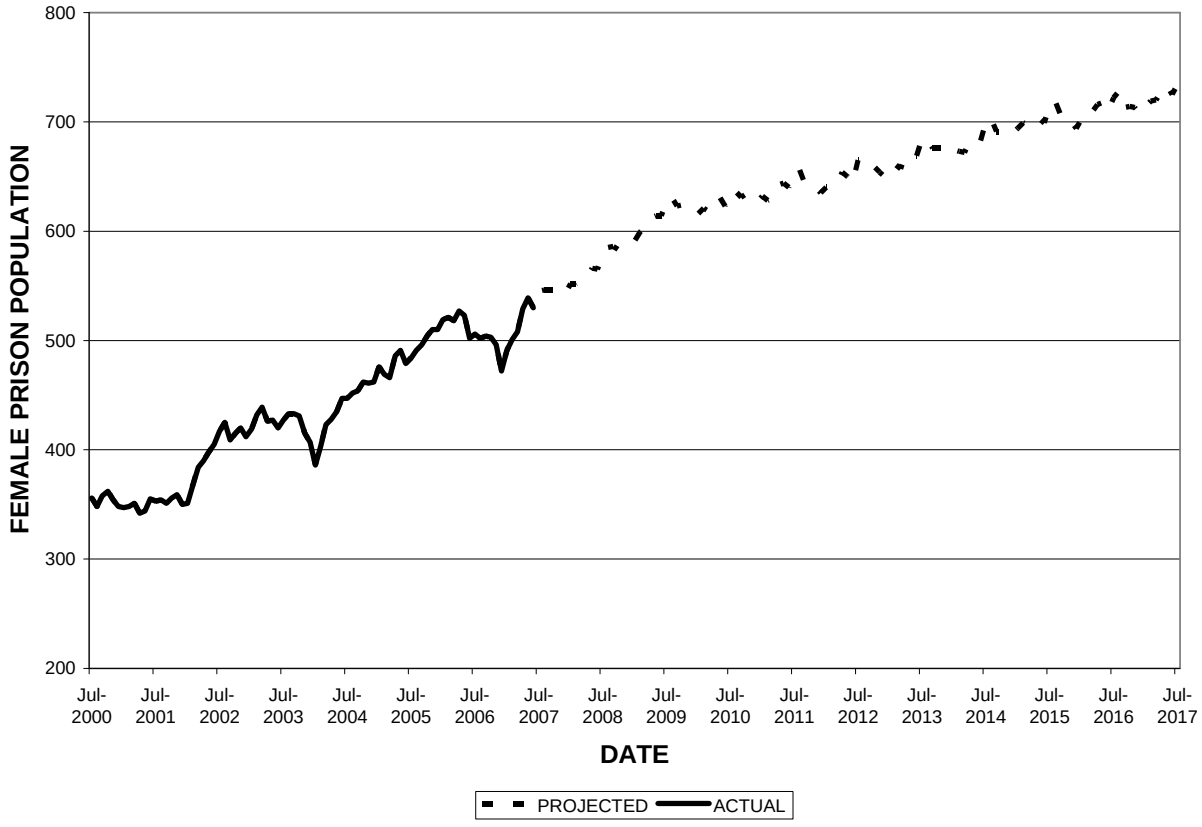

Figure 9. Actual and Projected Female Prison Population, FY 2001-2017

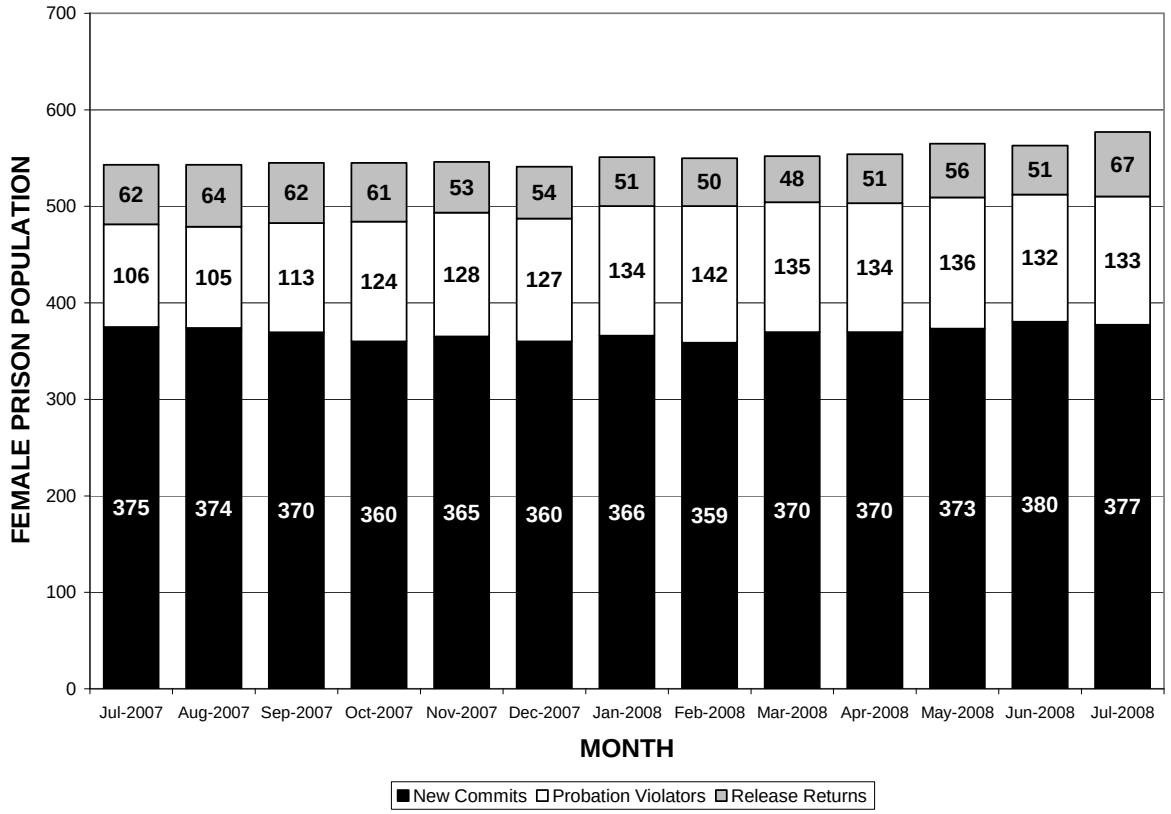

Figure 10. Projected Female Prison Population by Admission Type, FY 2008

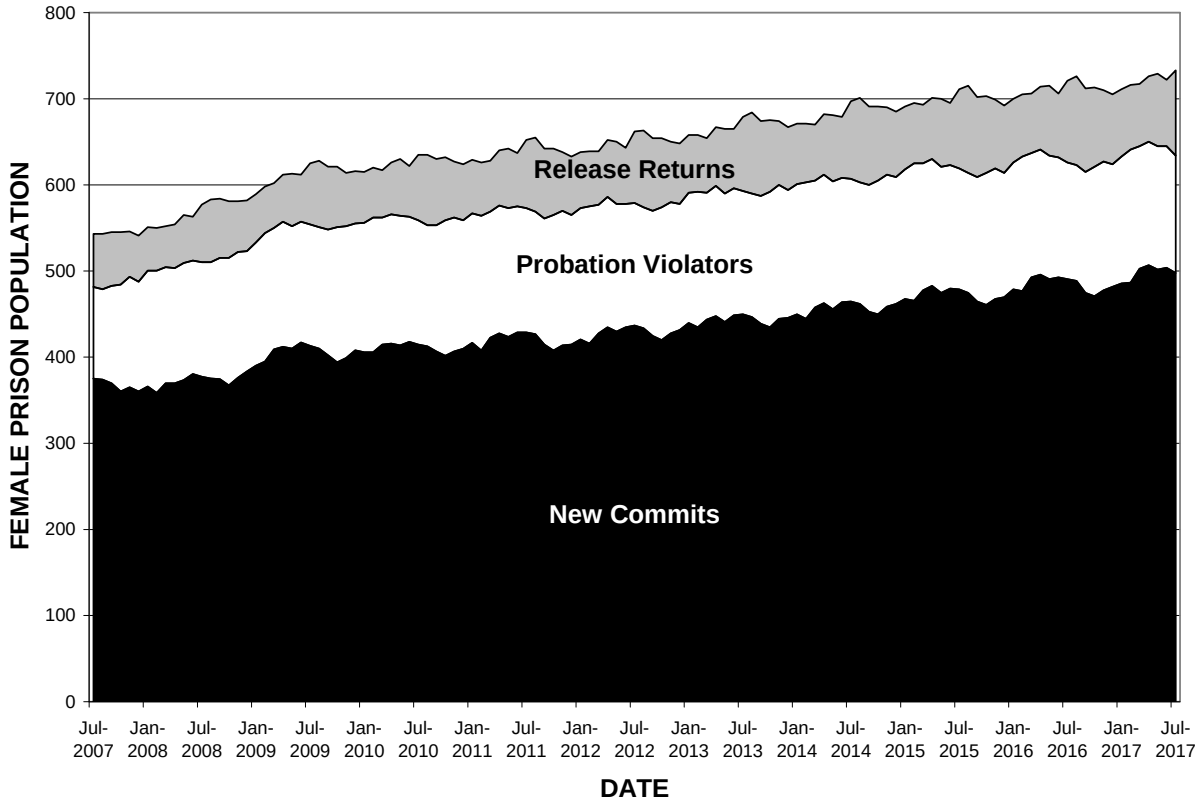

Figure 11. Projected Female Prison Population by Admission Type, FY 2008-2017

Female Prison Population Projections by Admission Type

Female new commitments are expected to be responsible for six percent of the growth during FY 2008, increasing by two offenders at a rate of one percent (see Figure 10). This group is estimated to increase by 123 offenders (33%) over the next ten years, or 65 percent of the projected growth (see Figure 11).

The forecast suggests that probation violators will account for the largest increase during FY 2008, growing by 27 offenders (25%). Long-term growth will be more modest, however, as probation violators are projected to increase by 30 offenders (28%) over the ten-year period. Supervised release violators are expected to grow by five offenders during FY 2008, an eight percent increase. By the end of FY 2017, this group is projected to increase by 60 percent (37 offenders).

Female Prison Population Projections by Offense Type

The forecast indicates that methamphetamine offenders will account for the largest short-term growth (16) in the female inmate population, an increase of 14 percent. The second largest short-term increase belongs to other drug offenders, who are projected to grow by nine during FY 2008. Altogether, drug offenders are projected to increase by 25 during FY 2008 and by 83 over the ten-year period. By the end of FY 2017, drug offenders are expected to make up 38 percent of the female prison population.

Table 6. Projected Female Prison Population by Offense Type, FY 2008-2017

Offense Type	*July 2007*	*July 2008*	*July 2017*	*2007-2008 Numeric Difference*	*2007-2008 Percent Change*	*2008-2017 Numeric Difference*	*2008-2017 Percent Change*
Other person	162	169	227	7	4.3	65	40.2
Property	106	101	113	-5	-4.7	7	6.6
Other drugs	83	92	103	9	10.8	20	24.2
Meth	111	127	174	16	14.4	63	57.0
Sex	16	17	30	1	6.3	14	90.3
DWI	35	36	41	1	2.9	6	17.4
Other	33	38	48	5	15.2	15	46.2
PSI holds	2	1	1	-1	-50.0	-1	-50.0
Total	545	578	734	33	6.1	189	34.7

Over the long term, other person offenders are projected to have the largest numerical increase (65). Sex offenders, meanwhile, are estimated to have the greatest percentage increase (90) by the end of FY 2017. Overall, with a projected increase of 79 offenders over the ten-year period, person offenders (other person and sex) are expected to account for 42 percent of the long-term growth among female offenders.

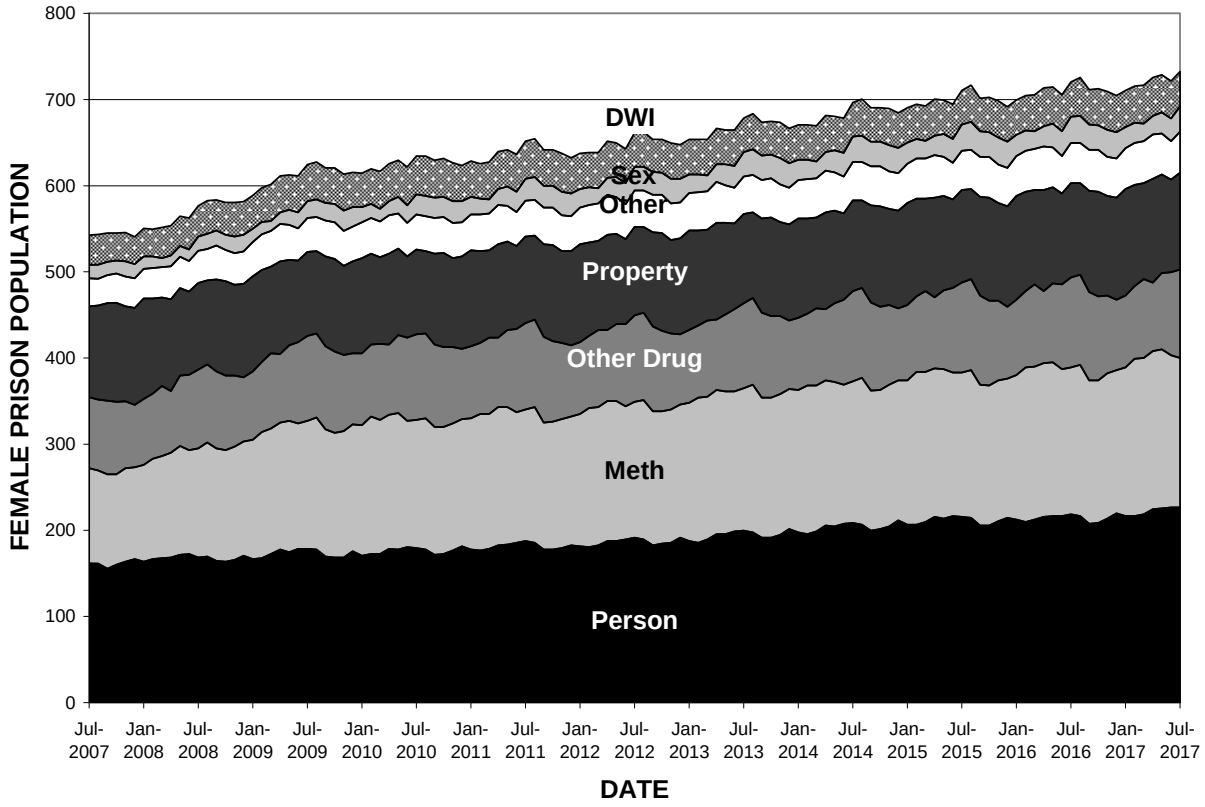

Figure 12. Projected Female Prison Population by Offense Type, FY 2008-2017

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 41 offenders during FY 2008, a 12 percent increase (see Figure 13). Male STOs are estimated to account for 85 percent of the increase. Over the full ten-year forecast period, the STO population is projected to expand by 37 percent (130 offenders), topping out at 478 offenders by the end of FY 2017. The forecast indicates that male and female STO populations will both grow at rates of 37 and 38 percent, respectively, over the entire forecast period, with males increasing by 110 and females by 20.

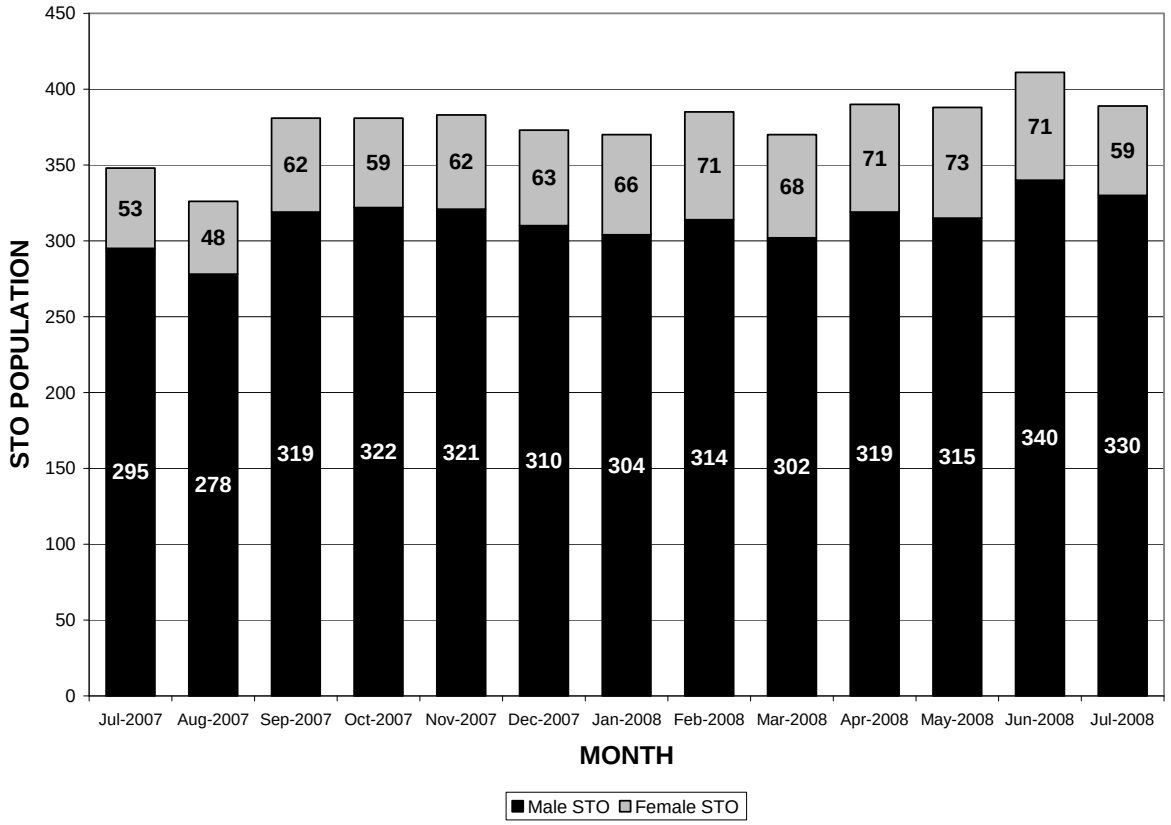

Figure 13. Projected STO Population by Offender Gender, FY 2008

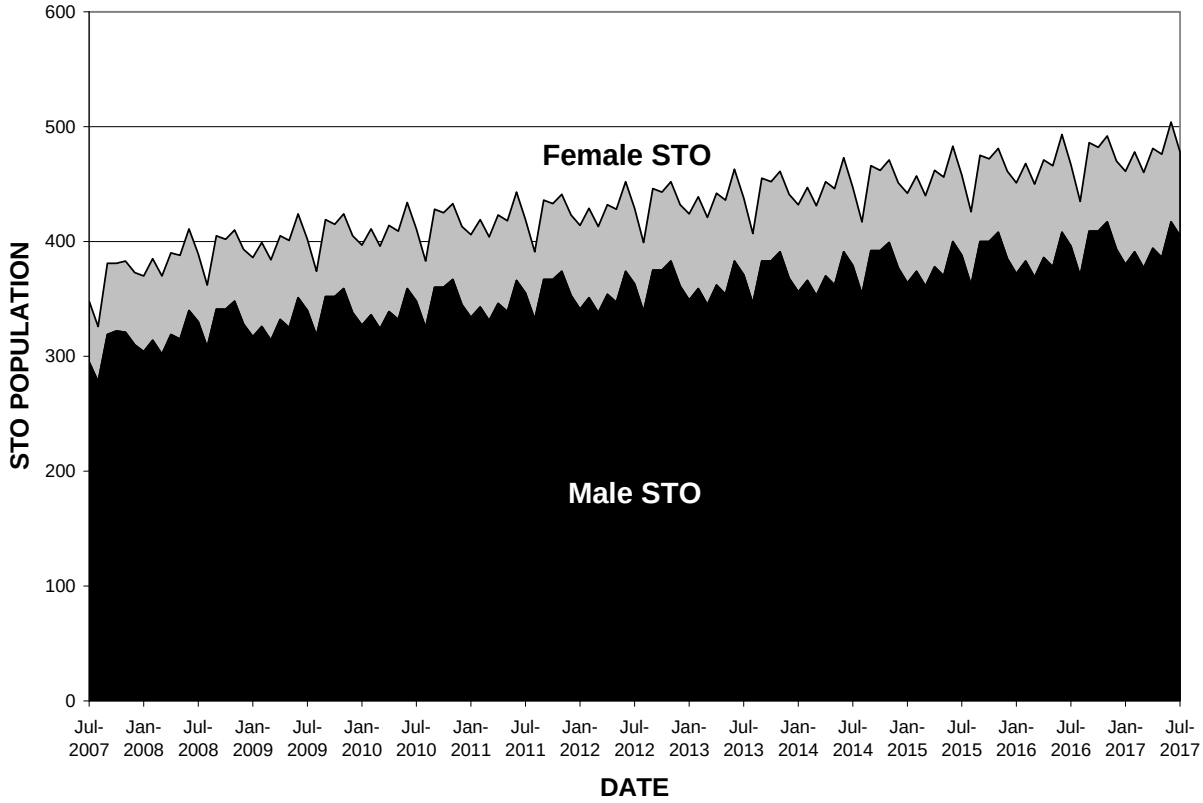

Figure 14. Projected STO Population by Offender Gender, FY 2008-2017

CONCLUSION

Over the last few decades, the prison population in Minnesota has grown dramatically. For example, on July 1, 1987, the prison population was 2,561. But on July 1, 2007, the population stood at 9,214, nearly a fourfold increase over the last two decades. After a period of sharp growth during the first several years of this decade, the expansion of the prison population has slowed down. Consistent with the diminished growth, the present forecast suggests the total population increase for FY 2008 (115 offenders) will be roughly two-thirds what it was for FY 2007 (168 offenders).

Projections indicate that drug offenders (both methamphetamine and other drugs) will account for a majority of the short-term growth (81% of the projected 115-offender increase in FY 2008), but only about a quarter of the long-term growth (26% of the 2,637-offender increase from FY 2009-2017). Nearly half of the projected long-term growth will be due to person offenders (both sex and other person). For example, the forecast indicates person offenders will be responsible for 47 percent of the increase from FY 2008-2017. Since FY 2005, DWI offenders have constituted the largest growing segment of the prison population. However, with a projected increase of 13 offenders (both male and female) during FY 2008, this year's forecast suggests that the rate of growth for these offenders will decline.

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

REFERENCE

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) 2007, is used to produce future prison admissions throughout the forecast period (FY 2008-2017). Accordingly, future prison admissions generated by the SSS model for this year's forecast will resemble offenders admitted during FY 2007.

The stock population data, on the other hand, contain detailed information on all inmates incarcerated in a Minnesota correctional facility (MCF) on July 1, 2007. 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. These assumptions include 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 2008 Prison Population Forecast Assumptions

1. *Current prison population projection period* – July 2007 to June 2017.

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. Moreover, due to the volatility of these trends over time, separate assumptions were made for the first year of the forecast period (FY 2008) and are presented in the following table. For example, because the number of male offenders admitted as new commitments during FY 2006 was virtually the same as the number admitted during FY 2007, a zero percent, first-year admission assumption was used for male new commitments. Similarly, increases of eight and six 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 2006-2007. Based on a comparison of admission data for FY 2006-2007, a two percent increase was assumed for female new commitments, whereas three and ten percent increases were the first-year assumptions used for female probation and supervised release violators, respectively.

Admission Assumptions for Male and Female Offenders

Year	*Percent Change Assumption*					
	Males			**Females**		
	New Commitment	Probation Violator	Release Violator	New Commitment	Probation Violator	Release Violator
Year 1 (FY 2008)	0%	8%	6%	2%	3%	10%
Years 2-10 (FY 2009-2017)	2%	2%	4%	2%	1%	4%

Separate assumptions were also made about years 2-10 (FY2009-2017) of the forecast period. Based on long-term trends in admission data, this year's forecast assumes a two percent increase in new commitments and a four percent increase in release violators during years 2-10 for both males and females. Whereas the long-term assumption was a two percent increase for male probation violators, it was a one percent increase for female probation violators.

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 ten percent during FY 2008 and by four percent from years two through ten. STO male probation violators, on the other hand, are assumed to increase by four percent during the first year and by two percent from FY 2009-2017.

   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 2009-2017, 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, and the new Conditional Release Program. 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 2007-2015 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.

   Recent history indicates that CIP operating capacity has been 90 male and 24 female offenders. In 2007, however, however, the capacity at the MCF-Willow River was doubled to 180 beds. Consequently, current projections assume that operating capacity for CIP will be 24 female and 180 male offenders.

   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 I 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 I. For the 30 percent who fail, time spent in CIP Phase I may be 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. 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 5 males and 1 female. 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 and 2007 legislative sessions 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. *Theft and Other Offense thresholds*: In 2007, thresholds were increased for some property offenses for which the offense level is determined by the monetary value of the property lost or damaged. Those offenses are: Theft (609.52), Dishonored Checks (609.535), and Damage to Property (609.595). Crimes which specify penalties based on the penalty provisions of the theft statute also affected include: Workers Compensation Fraud (176.178), Welfare Fraud (256.98), False Representations (268.182), Food Stamp Fraud (393.07), Non-Payment for Improvement (514.02), Financial Exploitation of Vulnerable Adult (609.2335), Presenting False Claims to a Public Officer (609.465), Medical Assistance Fraud (609.466), Bringing Stolen Goods Into the State (609.525), Receiving Stolen

Property (609.53), Defrauding an Insurer (609.611), and Fraud in Obtaining Credit (609.82). The increase in threshold levels is assumed to result in fewer offenders receiving executed prison sentences, thereby producing bed space savings. More specifically, based on analyses performed by the Sentencing Guidelines Commission (SGC), the current forecast assumes a 24-bed decrease by the end of FY 2008 and a 40-bed decrease by the end of the forecast period.

b. *Sentencing grid for Criminal Sexual Conduct (CSC) offenders:* Directed by the legislature to develop a new approach for sentencing sex offenders, the SGC developed a separate sentencing grid for sex offenders in 2006 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 372 beds by the end of forecast period.

c. *Domestic violence offenses:* The definition of the time period during which repeat violations of certain domestic violence 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. The present forecast assumes a six-bed increase from FY 2008-2017.

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, 2007, the first day of the forecast period, there were 40 male and 2 female PSI holds in an MCF. Based on an analysis of PSI hold stock population data from July 1, 2006, the present forecast assumes that these 42 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 FY 1996-2007 suggest that the annual number of admissions has been relatively stable over the 10-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, 2007. 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 2007 through June 2017 to fully account for the effect of these adjustments on the prison population over the entire forecast period.