

November 2012

DSHS Special Commitment Center: *Population Forecast, Revised*

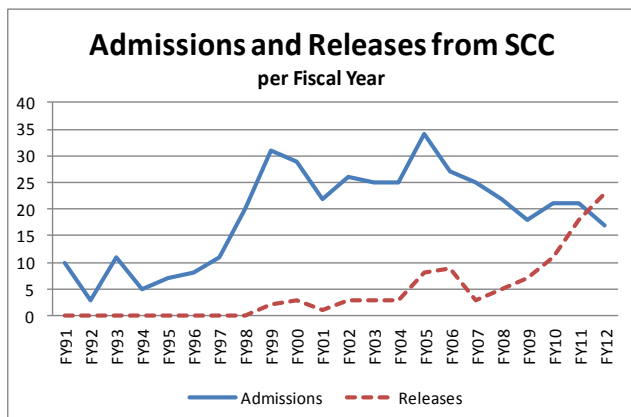
Enacted in 1990, the state’s Sexually Violent Predator (SVP) statute grants Washington the authority to detain the state’s most dangerous sex offenders at the state’s Special Commitment Center (SCC) if prosecutors can prove beyond a reasonable doubt:

- The offender committed a sexually violent offense;
- The offender suffers from a mental abnormality that causes the offender to have serious difficulty controlling sexually violent behavior; and
- The offender’s mental disorder makes him more likely than not to engage in predatory acts of violence again if the person is not confined to a secure facility.¹

Individuals who are found to meet these criteria by a jury, or are detained prior to trial, are sent to the Special Commitment Center, located on McNeil Island.

In fiscal year (FY) 2012, releases from the Department of Social and Health Services’ (DSHS) SCC exceeded admissions for the first time in the history of the state’s sexually violent predator law. As Exhibit 1 illustrates, this is due to a general decline in admissions over the last 12 years and a more recent sharp increase in releases.

Exhibit 1



WSIPP, 2012

Summary

In fiscal year 2012, releases from the Department of Social and Health Services’ Special Commitment Center (SCC) exceeded admissions for the first time in the history of the state’s sexually violent predator law.

Prior to FY05, there were only two ways individuals were released from SCC: (1) by not meeting the criteria for civil commitment at their commitment trial and (2) death. Since FY05, a growing number of releases are for individuals who were committed and no longer meet the criteria for civil commitment.

Significant findings regarding the current populations’ characteristics are:

- The risk profile of the resident population has increased over the last 10 years and is near an all-time high.
- The percentage of SCC residents who victimize strangers has decreased over time.

Assuming recent trends continue, the number of people under the jurisdiction of the SCC is expected to remain at or about its current level for a few years and then gradually decline.

Finally, actual SCC population levels have proved to be much lower than the 2007 population projection. The forecast predicts between 299 and 312 SCC residents between FY 2013 and 2032.

Suggested citation: Murray, C. (2012). *DSHS special commitment center: Population forecast* (Document No. 12-11-1102). Olympia: Washington State Institute for Public Policy.

¹ RCW 71.09

Prior to FY05, there were only two ways individuals were released from SCC: (1) by not meeting the criteria for civil commitment at their commitment trial and (2) death. Since FY05, and particularly in the last five years, a growing number of releases are individuals who no longer meet the criteria for civil commitment.

This report addresses three primary issues:

- characteristics of the current SCC population;
- a population projection for the next 20 years; and
- a comparison of the 2007 forecast to actual experience.

Significant findings from the analysis of the current population’s characteristics are:

- The risk profile of the resident population has increased over the last 10 years and is near an all-time high.
- The percentage of SCC residents who victimize strangers has decreased over time.

The population forecast is based on a model that predicts annual admissions and releases. While there have been intermittent ups and downs, admissions per year have generally trended downward since 2000. The primary cause for this trend is believed to be a change in sentencing laws in 2001 that created the “Determinate-Plus” sentencing system.² Most of the effect of this law change appears to have already occurred and, while there will continue to be yearly variations, a general decline in admissions is not expected to continue beyond another two years.

As noted above, there has been a notable increase in the number of releases from SCC in recent years. The primary reason for this change is new research concluding there is a significant

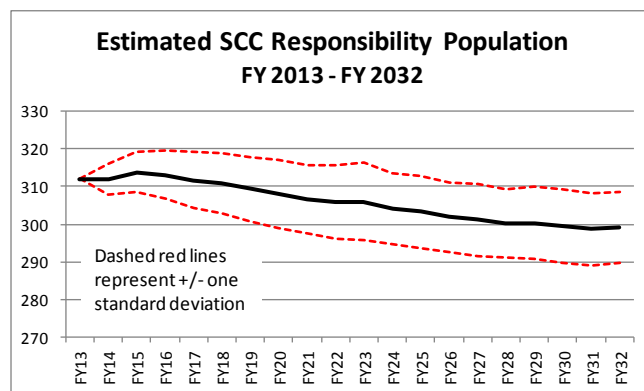
² RCW 9.94A.507

A determinate-plus offender is subject to the jurisdiction of the Indeterminate Sentence Review Board (ISRB). Prior to the expiration of an offender’s minimum term, the ISRB will evaluate the offender. Upon expiration of the minimum term, the ISRB must release the offender unless the offender is likelier than not to commit a sex offense. If not released, ISRB must re-evaluate at least every five years. If released, offender on community custody status for remainder of maximum term. The maximum term is the statutory maximum sentence for the crime: life for Class A felonies, ten years for Class B felonies, and five years for Class C felonies.

decrease in recidivism by rapists at age 60 and by pedophiles at age 70.³ Because of this research, many older offenders no longer meet the criteria for civil commitment at their legally required annual review. This change has resulted in a large increase in the number of residents unconditionally released from SCC.

The most uncertain components of the population forecast are admissions and unconditional releases. Assuming that recent trends continue, the total number of people under the jurisdiction of the SCC is expected to remain at approximately its current level for a few years and then gradually decline. The population forecast is shown in the following chart.

Exhibit 2



WSIPP, 2012

It is expected that the SCC population will primarily reside in the total confinement facility with little or no increase in the use of less restrictive alternatives over current levels.

Actual SCC population levels have proved to be much lower than the 2007 population projection. There are two primary reasons for this. The first is that a near-term forecast by DSHS was too high. The long-term forecast assumed that short-term trends would continue, but predicted additional increases in the population did not materialize. While the long-term forecast was generally accurate, it predicted far fewer releases than actually occurred. Given the recent change in sentencing law and research discussed above, this underestimation of releases could not have been anticipated.

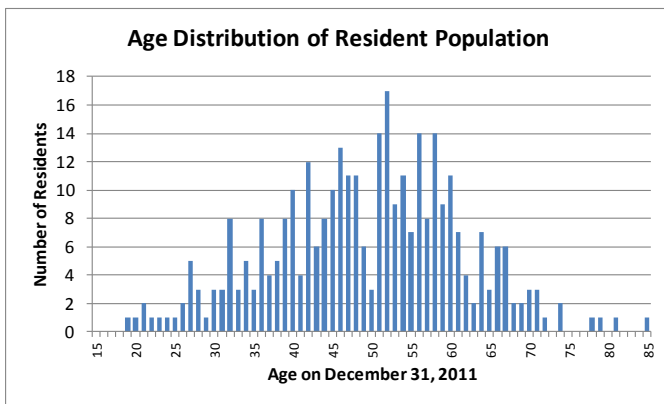
³ Helmus, L., Thornton, D., Hanson, R. K., & Babchishin, K. M. (2011). *Assessing the risk of older sex offenders: Developing the Static-99R and Static 2002R*. Retrieved from <http://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/res/cor/rep/2011-01-aroso-eng.aspx>

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CURRENT POPULATION

AGE PROFILE

The median age of the resident population on December 31, 2011, was 51; 10 percent of the population was 65 or older. In Exhibit 3, the height of each column represents the number of SCC residents of a particular age at the end of 2011.

Exhibit 3



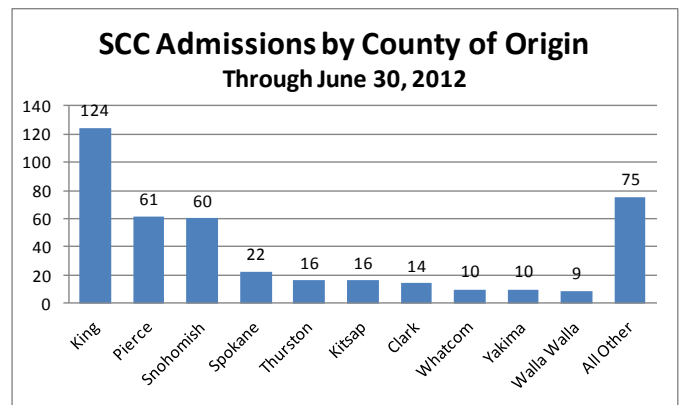
WSIPP, 2012

Because release rates are low, and half the population is 51 or older, the number of older residents will increase in future years. Recent changes in release rates disproportionately impact older residents and, therefore, the increased concentration of older residents will not be as pronounced as would have been expected only a few years ago. The projected age profile of the resident population in future years is discussed in the population projection section of this report.

COUNTY OF ORIGIN

Ten counties account for over 80 percent of all SCC admissions. The top three counties—King, Pierce, and Snohomish—account for nearly 60 percent. The following chart shows the distribution of SCC admissions by county of origin from 1991 through June 30, 2012.

Exhibit 4

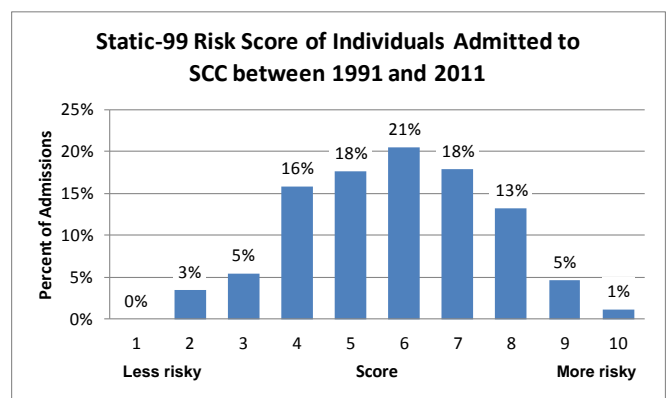


WSIPP, 2012

RISK PROFILE

SCC residents are evaluated using a variety of assessment tools. The Static-99 is an actuarial risk assessment instrument developed by Hanson and Thornton.⁴ It is the most widely used sex offender risk assessment instrument in the world. Over 85 percent of everyone ever admitted to SCC has been assessed using this tool. As an actuarially based instrument, it is reliable for measuring the risk profile of a group but not for predicting the behavior of outliers who may be found in any group. Exhibit 5 shows the percentage distribution of risk scores for 346 individuals admitted to SCC between 1991 and 2011.

Exhibit 5



WSIPP, 2012

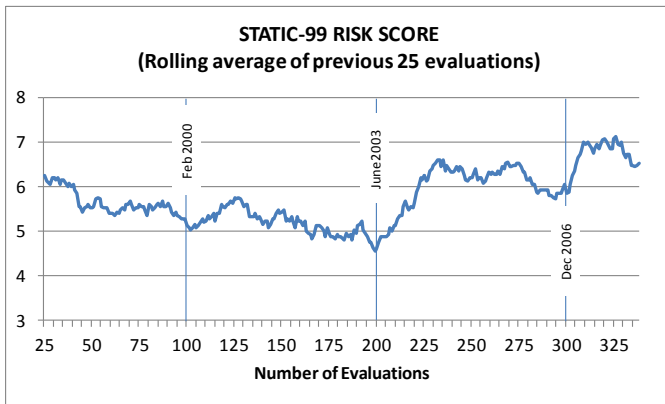
A score of 2 to 3 is equal to a low-to-moderate risk of sexual reoffense (five-year recidivism rates between 9 and 12 percent); 4 to 5 has a moderate-to-high risk of reoffense (26 to 33

⁴ <http://www.static99.org/>

percent); and 6 and above has a high risk of reoffense (39 percent within five years, 52 percent within 15 years).

Because Static-99 risk scores of individuals admitted to SCC have been recorded over many years, it is possible to evaluate changes in the risk profile of SCC residents over time. In Exhibit 6, a rolling average is used to dampen volatility so that patterns can be more easily discerned. As this exhibit shows, the average risk of individuals admitted to SCC generally declined from the early 1990s until the middle of calendar year 2003. Except for brief intervals, the opposite trend has been seen since, with the highest average risk scores occurring in recent years.

Exhibit 6

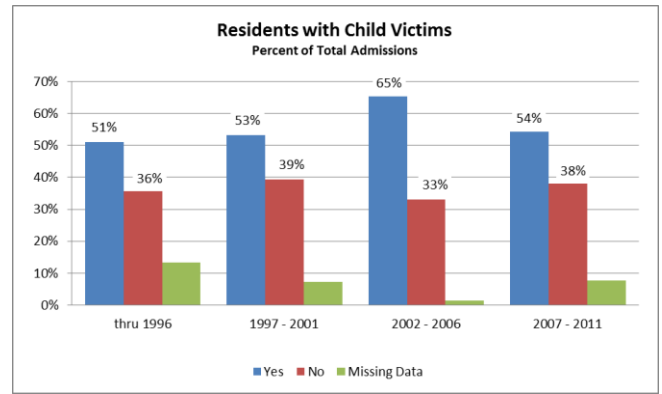


WSIPP, 2012

VICTIM PROFILE

Because victim of choice is important in treatment planning, part of the evaluation of civilly committed sex offenders is categorizing each resident’s victims (children, adults, or both). This information is derived from criminal history and resident self-disclosure. Exhibit 7 displays the percentages of total SCC admissions who have child victims.

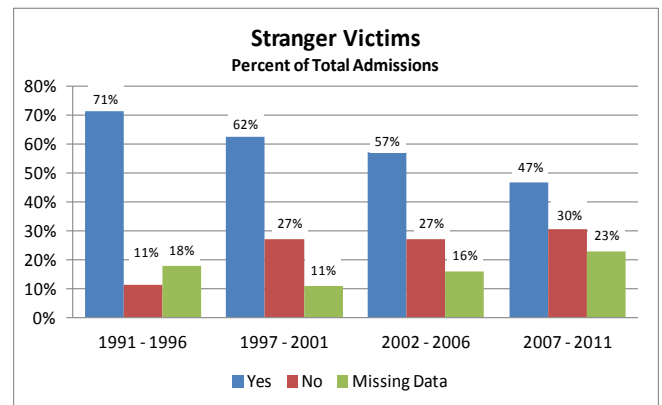
Exhibit 7



WSIPP, 2012

Another parameter in victimization is whether or not the perpetrator knows the victim. While the amount of missing data for this parameter has increased over time, it appears that the percentage of perpetrators who victimize strangers has decreased. It is possible that this trend is correlated with the increase in child victims seen in Exhibit 7, since sex offenders often establish relationships with children prior to victimization.

Exhibit 8



WSIPP, 2012

POPULATION PROJECTION

The number of individuals under the jurisdiction of the SCC increases as people are admitted to the facility and decreases for one of three main reasons:

- discharge by the court following a legal finding that the person does not meet the requirements for civil commitment;⁵
- release by the court because the person no longer meets the requirements; and
- when a resident dies.

Very occasionally, an individual may be discharged or released to a state mental hospital or other jurisdiction. In addition, some individuals have been convicted of new crimes while residing at the SCC. These individuals serve time in prison for the new offense but will return to the total confinement facility when their prison term expires.

Individuals may also be conditionally released, either to a Secure Community Transitional Facility (SCTF) or other less restrictive alternative (LRA). Individuals who are conditionally released remain under the jurisdiction of the SCC. The methodology used in this report results in a forecast of the total number of individuals under the jurisdiction of the SCC, including those in SCTFs and LRAs. Disaggregation of the forecast into the categories of total confinement, SCTF, and LRA is discussed at the end of this section.

ADMISSIONS

Most admissions to the SCC are from individuals who have completed their prison sentence. Others are admitted from Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration (JRA) facilities, state mental hospitals, or for committing what the law calls a “recent overt act”⁶ while in the community. In all cases, a referral for possible civil commitment is

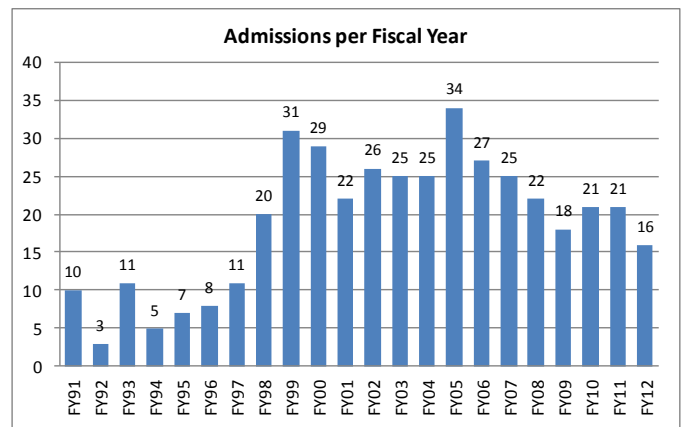
⁵ Individuals are admitted to SCC upon a probable cause finding that they should be held in the Special Commitment Center pending the outcome of a civil commitment trial. Between admission and trial, individuals are in “pre-commitment” status.

⁶ RCW 71.09.020: “Recent overt act” means any act, threat, or combination thereof that has either caused harm of a sexually violent nature or creates a reasonable apprehension of such harm in the mind of an objective person who knows of the history and mental condition of the person engaging in the act or behaviors.

made to either the State Attorney General (AG) or, for King County cases, the King County Prosecuting Attorney’s Office. Referrals come from a variety of state and local agencies but mainly from the Department of Corrections and the Indeterminate Sentence Review Board (ISRB).

Admissions to SCC rose rapidly during the 1990s. Since then, with the exception of a few years, the trend has been flatter. Exhibit 9 shows actual admissions from the start of the SCC program through FY 2012. There have been 417 individuals admitted to SCC during this time; some of these people have been admitted more than once.

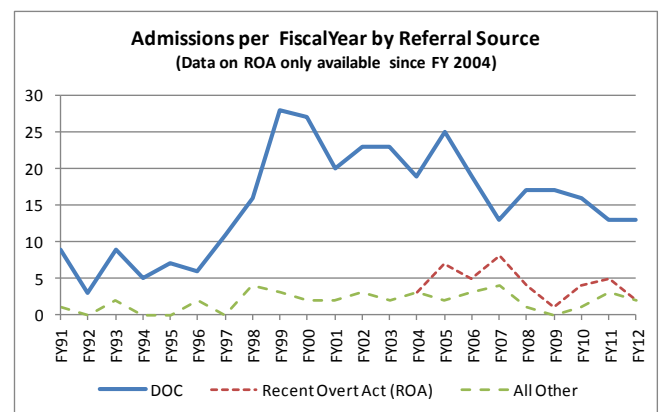
Exhibit 9



WSIPP, 2012

Exhibit 10 breaks down admissions by referral source. As this chart shows, the Department of Corrections (including the ISRB) has been the referral agency for most of the individuals admitted to SCC.

Exhibit 10



WSIPP, 2012

It is also clear from this exhibit that the general decline in SCC admissions over the last 12 years has been due to fewer admissions of individuals released from DOC. Both the timing and trend of this decline are consistent with the expectations surrounding the passage of legislation which created the Determinate-Plus sentencing system in 2001.⁷ Individuals sentenced under this law are sometimes referred to as Community Custody Board (CCB) offenders. Decisions about release, or increase in minimum prison term of CCB offenders, are made by the ISRB.

The same exhibit also shows that admissions from agencies other than DOC have ranged from zero to four since the program started in fiscal year 1991. Since fiscal year 1998, there have been about 2.3 admissions per year from non-DOC agencies. The frequency of admissions from non-DOC agencies is not expected to change in future years, according to available data.

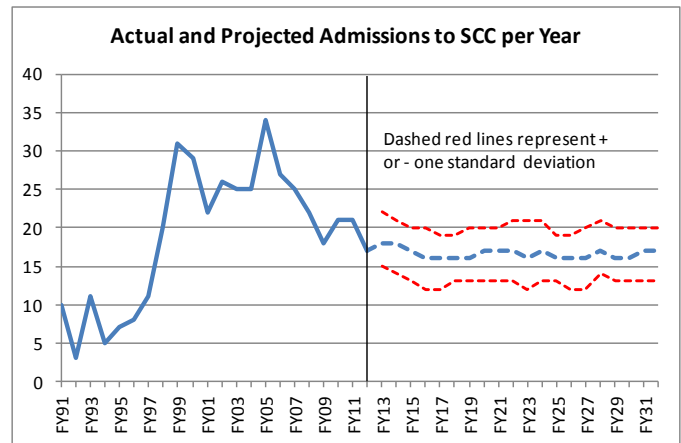
Records are not available on “recent overt act” (ROA) admissions prior to 2004. Since 2004 there have been an average of 4.3 ROA admissions to SCC per year. Like non-DOC admissions, the number of ROA admissions per year is small, and the forecast assumes that future years will reflect past experience.

DOC admissions are more complex. The downward trend in DOC admissions might suggest that SCC admissions will continue to decline to a very low level, mostly made up of non-DOC and ROA admissions sometime in the future. In theory, because of Determinate-Plus sentencing, the ISRB should be able to extend the prison terms of the most dangerous sex offenders and, thereby, reduce—or even eliminate—the need for civil commitment. In practice, sex offenders sentenced under the old law are still being released, and there will always be dangerous sex offenders whose current imprisonment is for something other than a sex crime. Because these are not CCB offenders, the only way to incapacitate such offenders past their sentence expiration date is through civil commitment.

After review of the data, the expectation is that admissions to SCC will trend slightly lower for a few more years and then average between 16

and 17 admissions per year for the foreseeable future. Normal variation above and below the average is to be expected. With an average standard deviation of 3.7 over the life of the forecast, about two-thirds of the time admissions should be in the range of 12 to 20 per year, with some years higher and some years lower. While unusual extremes may occur, the forecast model suggests that lows less than 9, or highs greater than 24, are unlikely to occur. Exhibit 11 shows actual admissions per year through FY 2012 plus projected future admissions for the next 20 years.

Exhibit 11



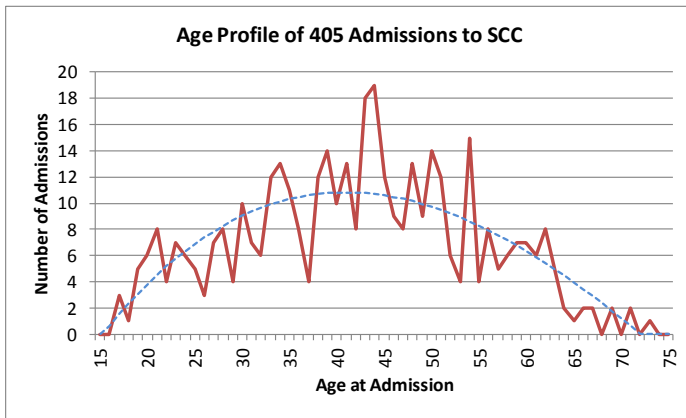
WSIPP, 2012

AGE AT ADMISSION

For some parts of the Population Projection Model (unconditional release and predicted mortality) it is necessary to know the age of people admitted to SCC in the future. Since there is no way to know this ahead of time, it is assumed that the age profile of future admissions will be similar to the age profile of past admissions. Exhibit 12 (next page) shows the age profile of the 405 admissions to SCC through FY 2011 where both the birth date and date the person was admitted to SCC are known. The dashed line represents the polynomial used to generate the age profile of future admissions. As with other parts of the model, a random number generator is used to create the age profile of future admissions. When the model is run 100 times, the average age at admission of projected future admissions is within a few months of the average age at admissions of those already admitted.

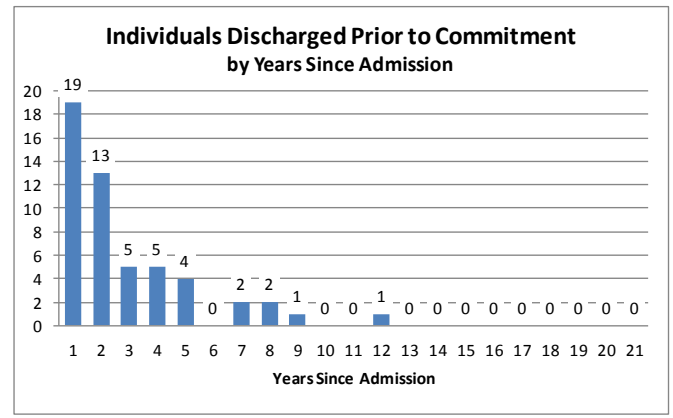
⁷ RCW 9.94A.712

Exhibit 12



WSIPP, 2012

Exhibit 13



WSIPP, 2012

RELEASE FROM SCC

There are three primary ways by which residents are released from the SCC:

- Discharge prior to commitment;
- Release subsequent to commitment (sometimes called “unconditional release”); and
- Death.

Data were available to analyze these factors for 406 of the 417 individuals admitted to SCC between 1991 and the end of fiscal year 2012. The methodology to estimate these releases is discussed below.

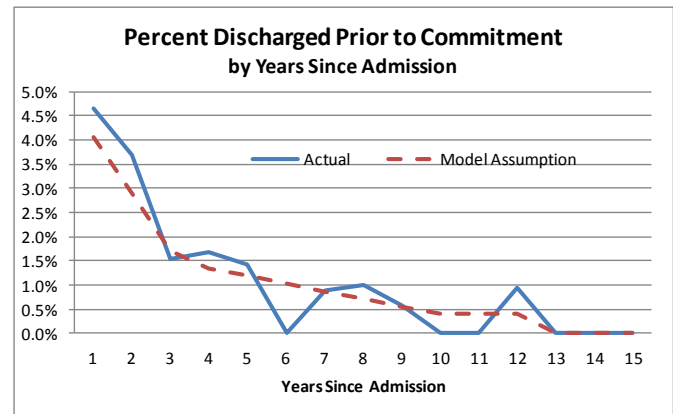
DISCHARGE PRIOR TO COMMITMENT

Through FY 2012, 52 individuals were discharged from SCC prior to commitment. The primary reason for these discharges is because, at filing, a probable cause decision is made based on expert review of case material only. At the commitment trial, the expert will most likely have met with and interviewed the subject and, with this additional information, may conclude that he does not meet the criteria for civil commitment.

Most of these 52 discharges were within five years of admission. Only six have been discharged after being in SCC for more than five years and no one after more than 12 years. The frequency of discharge by years since admission is shown in the following Exhibit.

The probability of being released during any year is equal to the number of people released during the year divided by the number of individuals who have been in residence that long or longer. These probabilities can be used to estimate the number of future discharges. Historical percentages, along with the assumptions used in the projection model, are illustrated in Exhibit 14.

Exhibit 14



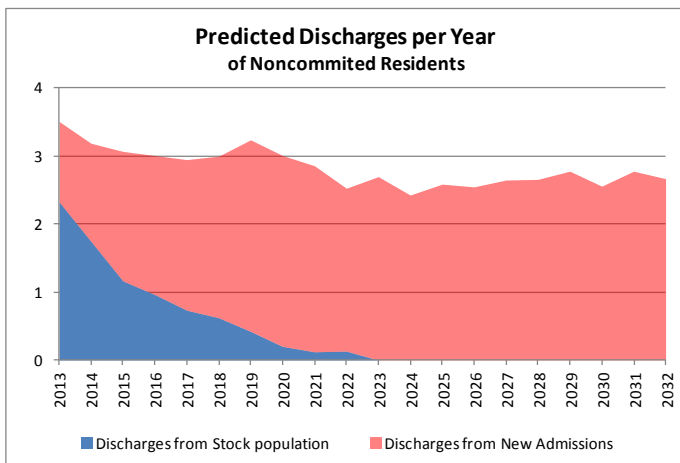
WSIPP, 2012

The Discharge Projection Model uses a random number generator to estimate how many current residents, as well as how many of those admitted in future years, will be discharged prior to commitment. For each of the first 12 years of a persons’ residency, if the random number is less than the probability of discharge for that year, that person is identified as discharged. (Of course, the model is not actually predicting *who* will be discharged; only how many discharges will occur each year out of a group of people with

admission dates starting 12 years ago and continuing 22 years into the future.)

Since the forecast assumes that the probability of discharge decreases over time and that no one is discharged after year 12, the number of discharges from the stock population is expected to fall to zero by fiscal year 2024. At the same time, because discharges are most common in the early years of residency, the decline in discharges from the stock population is expected to be offset by discharges of individuals admitted in the future. Furthermore, because admissions are projected to remain at a fairly constant rate, the average number of discharges per year is also expected to be fairly constant. After running the Discharge Projection Model 100 times, the model predicts a modest decline for the first ten years followed by a period of relative stability thereafter. Exhibit 15 illustrates this conclusion.

Exhibit 15

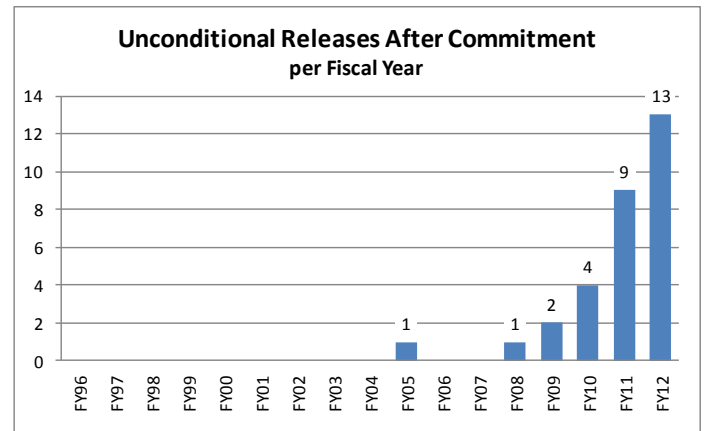


WSIPP, 2012

RELEASE AFTER COMMITMENT (ALSO CALLED “UNCONDITIONAL RELEASE”)

Release after commitment is much more complicated. As the following chart shows, no one was released from SCC subsequent to civil commitment prior to fiscal year 2005. However, this type of release has become relatively common in the last few years.

Exhibit 16



WSIPP, 2012

With such an abrupt change and so little history, it is difficult to draw firm conclusions about future post-commitment releases. However, at least part of the reason for this change is new research that finds recidivism by sex offenders—particularly those who target adult victims—is very low after age 60.⁸ This has resulted in a revision to the primary risk assessment instrument used to measure the risk of reoffense.

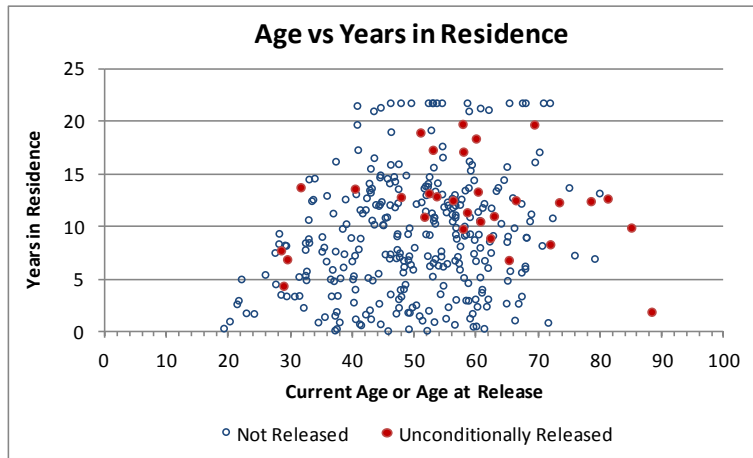
Since age is a factor in these recent releases, we examined the current and released population by age and number of years in residence. Each dot in Exhibit 17 (next page) represents an individual. The horizontal axis shows the person’s current age or, for those who have been released, their age at release. The vertical axis shows how long each person has been (or was) in residence.

As this exhibit demonstrates, this type of release is most frequent for older residents who have been in SCC for a number of years.

Combining age and years in residence provides another way of looking at the data and forms the basis for constructing a model to predict future releases. In Exhibit 18 (next page), each vertical line represents an individual. The pale grey lines are individuals still in SCC. The darker red lines are the 30 people who have been unconditionally released. The height of each line represents the combined age plus years in residence for each individual.

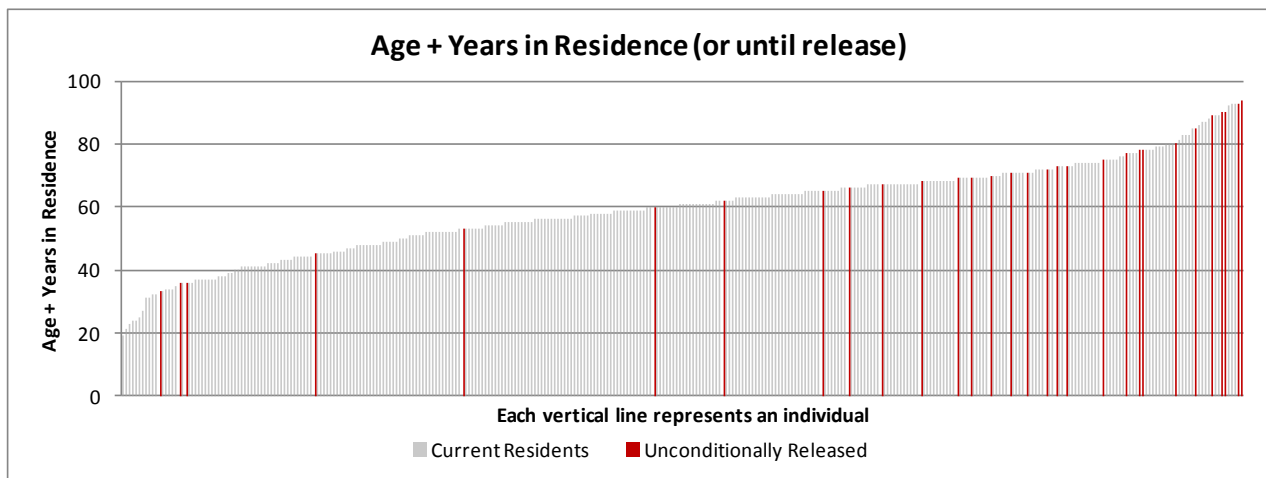
⁸ Hulmus, L., Thornton, D., Hanson, R. K., & Babchishin, K. M. (2011). Improving the predictive accuracy of Static-99 and Static-2002 with older sex offenders: Revised age weights. *Sexual Abuse* 24(1), 64-101. doi: 10.1177/1079063211409951

Exhibit 17



WSIPP, 2012

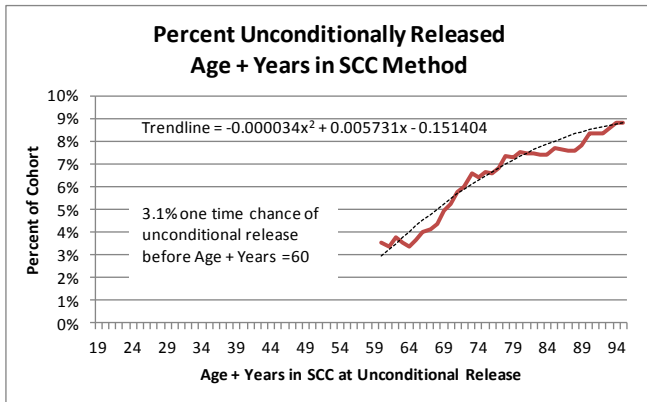
Exhibit 18



WSIPP, 2012

By examining the age plus years in SCC for only the released population it can be seen that there is a fairly consistent pattern for those whose age plus years equals 60 or greater. This pattern is shown in the following chart.

Exhibit 19

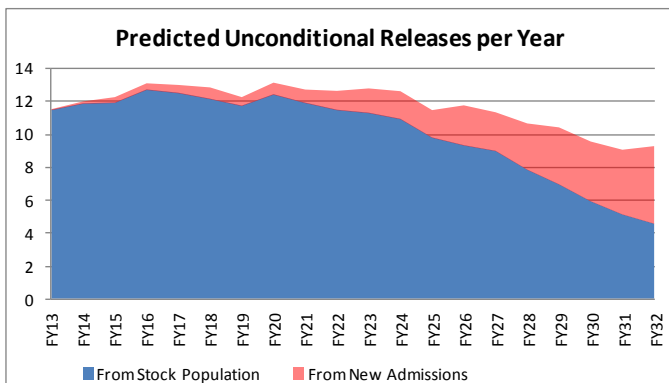


WSIPP, 2012

For age plus years in SCC of 60 or more, the projection model assumes an annual probability of release as computed by the trend line in the above chart. For residents whose combined age plus years in SCC is less than 60, the model assumes a one-time chance of release of 3.1 percent. As with discharges, the number of residents released post-commitment, as well as the timing of release, is determined by a random number generator and running the model 100 times.

The model projects an average of between 11 and 13 unconditional releases per year for the next dozen years. After that it will decline gradually over the remainder of the forecast. Exhibit 20 shows the results of this analysis.

Exhibit 20



WSIPP, 2012

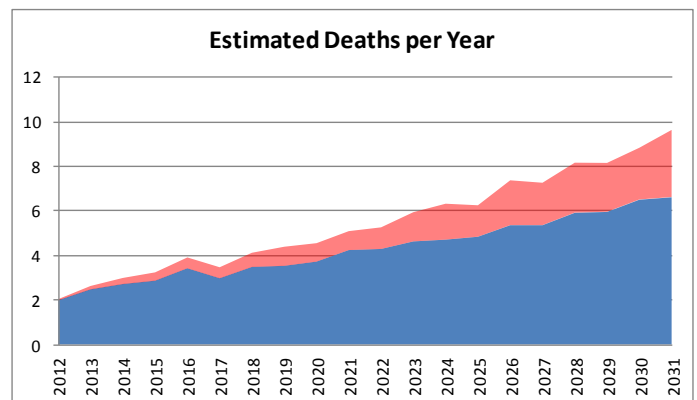
DEATH

Fifteen of the 401 individuals admitted through FY 2011 died while under the jurisdiction of the SCC. Future mortality is estimated using Life Tables published in *National Vital Statistics Reports*,⁹ September 28, 2011, to determine the probability of surviving from year X to year X + 1. After infancy, the probability of surviving one more year goes down with age. For example, the probability of a 50 year old male surviving to age 51 is 99.5 percent, whereas the probability of a 79 year old male surviving to age 80 is 94.5 percent. While this difference may seem small, each year brings a diminishing probability of surviving one more year so that the probability of a 50 year old surviving to age 80 is only 54.7 percent.

Since the Mortality Projection Model is dependent on age, the same method used to assign ages to new admissions described above is used to estimate mortality. When the model is run 100 times, the average age at death is close to the normal life expectancy for the cohort used in the model.

As the SCC population ages, the model projects a slow increase in the average number of deaths per year, as illustrated in Exhibit 21.

Exhibit 21



WSIPP, 2012

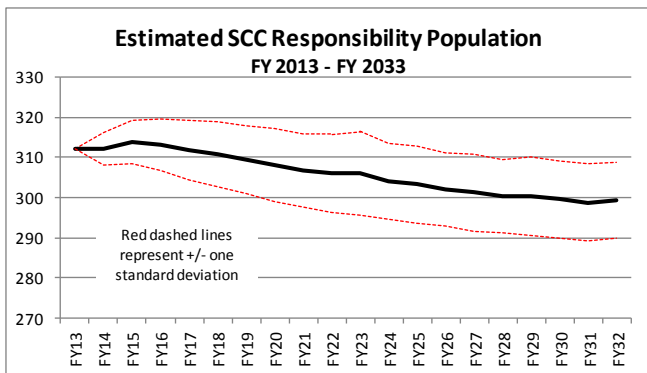
⁹ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics, National Vital Statistics System. (2011). *National vital statistics reports: United States life tables, 2007* (Vol. 59, No. 9). Retrieved from http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr59/nvsr59_09.pdf

FORECAST

In the previous pages the factors that cause the resident population to decrease are treated as if they were separate events. They are, however, not mutually exclusive. No one is discharged and then subsequently unconditionally released or unconditionally released and then discharged. If someone dies while in SCC, that is the way they leave the program. Consequently, the model components—admissions, discharges, unconditional releases, and deaths—cannot simply be added together to arrive at a forecast of future population levels.

A final component of the forecast model resolves this issue by determining the earliest year when a person leaves the program—whether that is through discharge, unconditional release, or death. The following chart summarizes the population forecast for SCC for the next 20 years.

Exhibit 22



WSIPP, 2012

With some significant caveats, it can be expected that population levels will fall between the average plus or minus one standard deviation about two-thirds of the time and between the average plus or minus two standard deviations about 95 percent of the time.

The most significant caveats have to do with the admission rate and unconditional releases.

With regard to admissions, there is some evidence that the judicial system has gradually come to a more or less uniform understanding and application of the Determinate-Plus sentencing system. As a greater proportion of CCB offenders have received life sentences (as opposed to fixed 5-, 10-, and 20-year sentences

as provided by the law), the ability of the Indeterminate Sentencing Review Board to keep sexually violent predators in prison and out of the civil commitment process has increased. If a mature implementation of the Determinate-Plus sentencing system reduces average admissions to SCC to 13 to 14 per year (as opposed to 16 to 17 per year as assumed in this forecast), the SCC population is unlikely to ever grow and will decline even more rapidly throughout the forecast period.

The second major caveat relates to unconditional releases. As noted in the discussion above, the abrupt and recent change in unconditional release greatly increases the difficulty in drawing conclusions about the future. If unconditional releases do not continue at a relatively high level, the SCC population will certainly not decline and may well grow in future years.

The following table summarizes the results of the forecast assuming admissions and unconditional releases are consistent with the experience of recent years.

**Exhibit 23
SCC Population Projection – FY13 thru FY32**

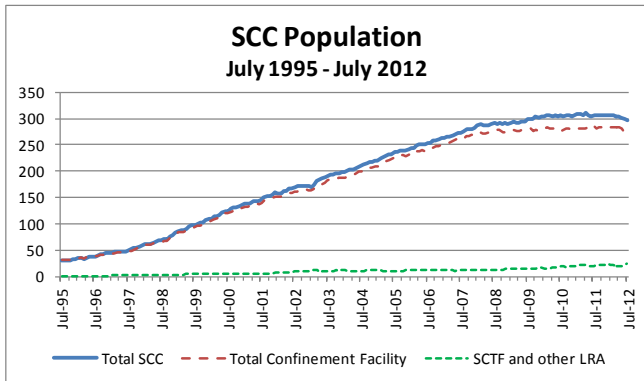
Start of Fiscal Year	Average	Average plus		Average minus	
		1 Std Dev	2 Std Dev	1 Std Dev	2 Std Dev
2013	312				
2014	312	316.1	320.3	307.9	303.8
2015	314	319.1	324.4	308.4	303.1
2016	313	319.6	326.1	306.7	300.2
2017	312	319.2	326.6	304.3	296.8
2022	306	315.8	325.6	296.1	286.3
2027	301	310.8	320.4	291.6	282.0
2032	299	308.6	318.0	289.9	280.6

POPULATION FORECAST BY LOCATION

The population forecast is for the residents who are the responsibility of the SCC. These residents may be in total confinement, a secure community transitional facility (SCTF), other less restrictive alternative (LRA), or, for a small number of residents, temporarily held in another facility such as a jail or prison while serving time on a new charge.

As Exhibit 24 shows, most residents have been, and continue to be, in the total confinement facility.

Exhibit 24

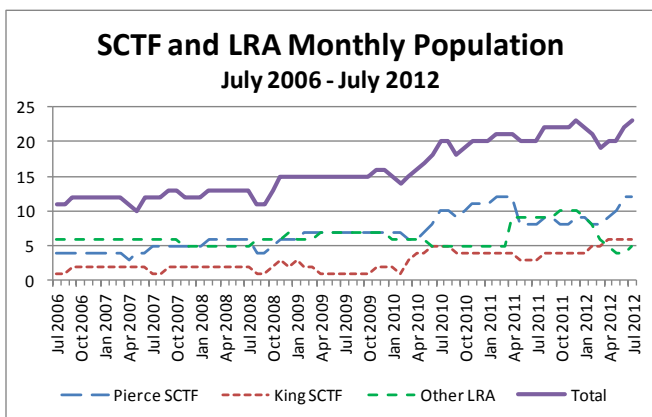


WSIPP, 2012

The Pierce County SCTF received its first resident in late 2001; the King County SCTF in 2006. In recent years, the six-bed King County facility has often been filled to capacity; the 24-bed Pierce County facility (which is located on McNeil Island next to the total confinement facility) has never been more than half full.

Exhibit 25 shows the average monthly population of the SCTFs and other LRAs since July 2006. The notable increase in SCTF/LRA population since 2010 has been largely due to increased use of the Pierce County SCTF. Since this period corresponds with the recent increase in unconditional releases, it is not expected that total SCTF/LRA utilization will increase in the future.

Exhibit 25

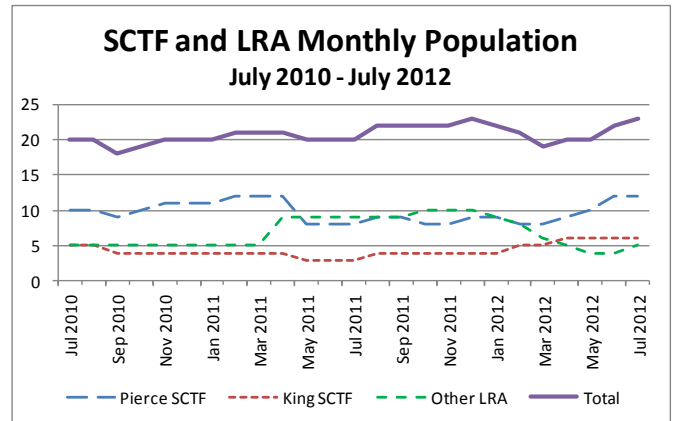


WSIPP, 2012

Looking more closely at the last two years—as shown in Exhibit 26—it is estimated that the King County SCTF will continue to have between four

and six residents; the Pierce County facility between eight and 12; and other LRAs between five and 10 residents for the foreseeable future. Overall, unless there are policy changes that affect where residents are housed, probably 20 to 25 people will be in the SCTFs and LRAs over the life of the population forecast.

Exhibit 26



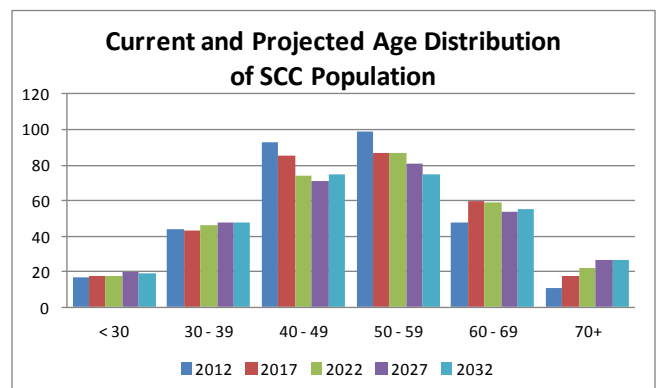
WSIPP, 2012

If 20 to 25 residents are in SCTFs or other LRAs, the population of the total confinement facility will likely remain under 300 for the next 20 years while slowly declining to about 280.

PROJECTED AGE DISTRIBUTION OF RESIDENTS IN FUTURE YEARS

While the increase in unconditional releases over the last few years means that older residents are disproportionately released relative to younger residents, the number of older residents is still expected to increase. Exhibit 27 illustrates the expected age distribution of residents based on the population forecast in this report.

Exhibit 27



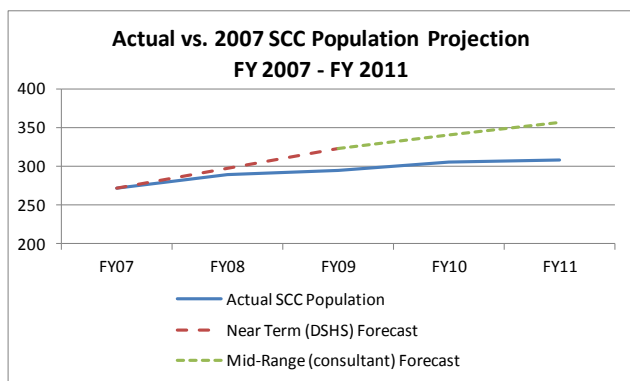
WSIPP, 2012

Because of the increase in the number of older residents, particularly residents over the age of 70, it can be expected that age-related health care issues and their associated cost will increase as time goes by.

2007 FORECAST VS. ACTUAL POPULATION GROWTH

Exhibit 28 compares the 2007 population forecast for the Special Commitment Center to actual experience through the end of fiscal year 2011. As can be seen, the population forecast was substantially higher than actual experience.

Exhibit 28



WSIPP, 2012

The 2007 population forecast was made up of two forecasts: (1) a near-term forecast prepared by the Department of Social and Health Services, and (2) a long-term forecast prepared by the consultant. The near-term forecast was for fiscal years 2008 and 2009. The long-term forecast was for fiscal year 2010 and beyond. The consultant was instructed to assume that the near-term forecast was accurate and to project changes in population levels from the level forecast by DSHS for fiscal year 2009. As the exhibit illustrates, the near-term forecast overstated population growth through FY09. This, in turn, caused the long-term forecast to begin too high. The following table summarizes the size of the overstated population attributable to each forecast.

Exhibit 29
Annual Overage Attributed to Near- and Long-Term Forecasts

	End of Fiscal Year			
	FY08	FY09	FY10	FY11
Actual SCC Responsibility Population	290	295	306	308
Near-Term Forecast	297	323	NA	NA
Near-Term Overage	7	28	28	28
Mid-Range (long-term) Forecast	NA	NA	340	357
Mid-Range Overage Minus Near Term Overage	NA	NA	6	21

The near-term forecast was apparently a simple projection from past experience in the annual growth of SCC responsibility residents. Because the near-term forecast was not based on components of change in the population (i.e. changes in admissions and releases), the reason(s) why the population grew at a slower rate during fiscal years 2008 and 2009 cannot be ascertained.

In contrast, the long-term forecast was based on components of change and we can, therefore, identify how each component of the forecast varied from actual experience. The long-term forecast components were: admissions, deaths, and discharges. Exhibit 30 (next page) shows how each of these components varied from actual experience during FY10 and FY11.

As Exhibit 30 shows, the mid-range forecast was slightly high for admissions and deaths but *very low* for discharges. In fact, the increase in discharges in recent years could not have been predicted from past experience. As Exhibit 31 (next page) illustrates, this is particularly true for release of previously committed residents.

FUTURE FORECASTS

Future forecasts of the SCC population will be more efficient if there are some additions to the data routinely collected by the SCC. These include:

- type of admission (probable cause, ROA, readmission);
- admission source (DOC, ISRB, JRA, other); and
- history of movement of individuals (to/from total confinement/SCTF/LRA).

At present, for example, information on ROA admissions must be collected by separately contacting the Attorney General’s Office and the King County Prosecuting Attorney.

Additionally, information regarding residents who are admitted based on stipulations would be helpful. There has been a trend toward more residents being committed using stipulations:¹⁰

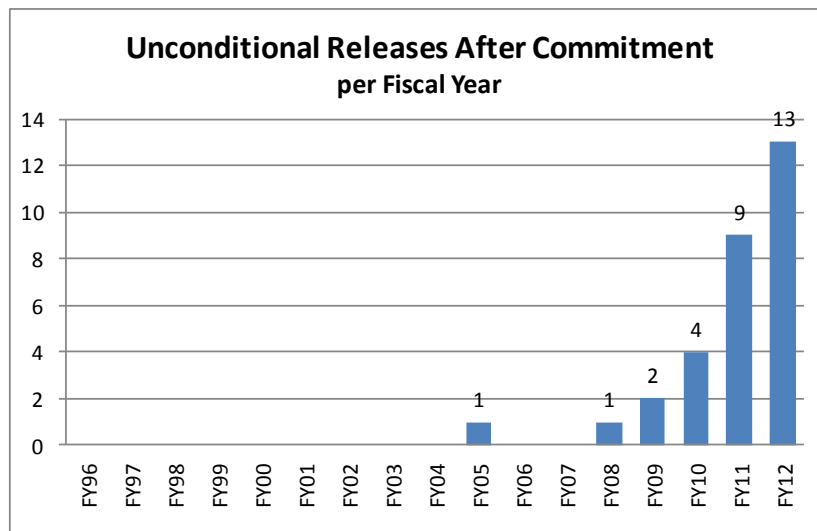
- 2012: 13 of 18 (as of August)
- 2011: 8 of 15
- 2010: 5 of 11
- 2009: 3 of 20

¹⁰ H. Coryell, personal communication, October 2012

Exhibit 30
Actual Experience vs. the Mid-Range Long-Term Forecast by Forecast Components of Change

	Beginning Pop	FY 2010			FY End/Begin Pop	FY 2011			Ending Pop
		Admits	Deaths	Discharges		Admits	Deaths	Discharges	
Actual	295	22	-1	-10	306	21	-3	-16	308
DSHS Forecast	323								
Long-term forecast		24	-4	-3	340	23	-4	-2	357
Difference	28	2	-3	7	34	2	-1	14	49

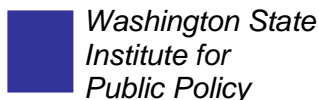
Exhibit 31



Christopher Murray, of Christopher Murray & Associates, prepared this report.

For more information, please contact Roxanne Lieb at (360) 586-2768 or lieb@wsipp.wa.gov.

Document No. 12-11-1102



The Washington State Legislature created the Washington State Institute for Public Policy in 1983. A Board of Directors—representing the legislature, the governor, and public universities—governs the Institute and guides the development of all activities. The Institute’s mission is to carry out practical research, at legislative direction, on issues of importance to Washington State.