

DOC June 1999 Recidivism Study Remarks

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The DOC June 1999 Recidivism Study is seriously flawed.

First, the DOC's definition is much too narrow. It includes inmates returned only to the DOC. It does not include released inmates who were incarcerated in county jails, federal prisons, or out-of-state prisons. If these numbers were added to the "Inmates Returned to the DOC" category, then, and only then, could the true reincarceration rate for inmates released be attained.

Thus the DOC comes up with a reincarceration rate of almost 48% for the years 1994-94. However, if the DOC counted those released inmates who were not in the DOC system, but rather in county jails, federal prisons, or out-of-state prisons, the 48% reincarceration rate would be significantly higher.

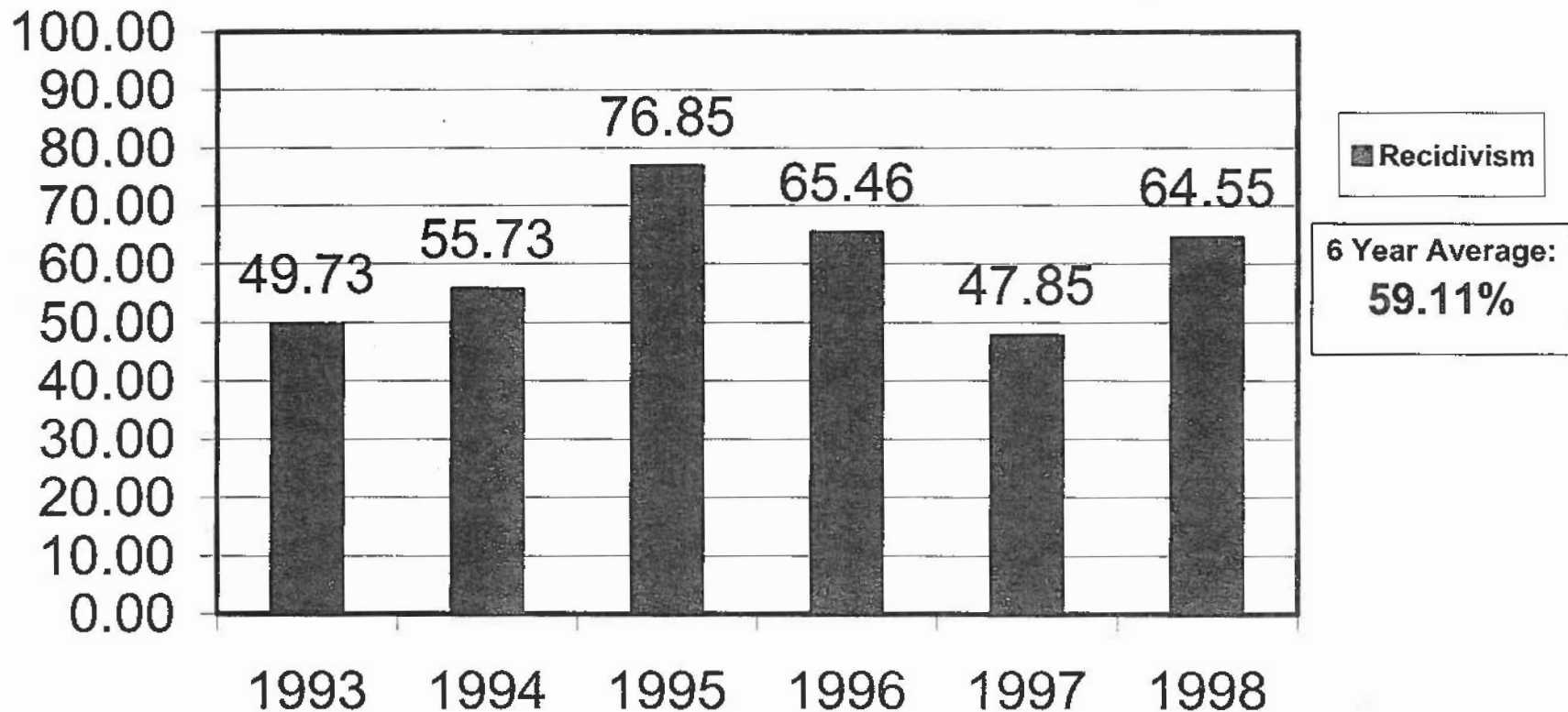
Second, the Study reflects only inmates released and inmates returned; it does not include inmates rearrested, which would be a significantly higher number. For example, in the only benchmark study in existence from the Bureau of Justice Statistics, Department of Justice, "Recidivism of Prisoners Released in 1983", the reincarceration rate at the end of 3 years was 41.4%, but the rearrest rate was 62.5% – a full 20% greater.

Third, the inmates released and inmates returned to the DOC data is measurably inconsistent with the Annual Statistical Reports published by the DOC for those classifications.

Recidivism Rates

Defined by Inmates Paroled from & Parolees Returned to State Correctional Institutions*

SOURCE: Annual Statistical Reports, PA Department of Corrections, 1993-1998



* Neither this data, nor the June 1999 DOC Recidivism Study, accounts for parolees returned to county jails, federal prisons, or out-of-state prisons, all of which would be expected to significantly increase recidivism reincarceration rates. The 1983 BJS Recidivism Study estimates the out-of-state re-arrest rate at 5.5%. No separate data is available for county jail and federal incarceration rates.

Recidivism Rates

Defined by Inmates Paroled from and Parolees Returned to State Correctional Institutions*

	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
Inmates Paroled	7147	7244	5598	5611	6702	5927
Parolees Returned	3554	4037	4302	3673	3207	3826
Recidivism Rate	49.73%	55.73%	76.85%	65.46%	47.85%	64.55%
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> <p style="margin: 0;">6 Year Average: 59.11%</p> </div>						

*Does not include parolees returned to county jails, federal prisons, or out-of-state prisons

SOURCE: Annual Statistical Reports, PA Department of Corrections, 1993-1998

Measuring Recidivism

SOURCE: Bureau of Justice Statistics Report
"Recidivism of Prisoners Released in 1983", p.2

Classification	Definition	3-Year Statistics
Rearrest	Refers to any arrest for a felony or serious misdemeanor offense	62.50%
Reconviction	Refers to a conviction on at least one charge after the date of release from prison	46.80%
Reincarceration	Refers to (1) any return to prison or (2) any admission to a local jail with a sentence for a new offense	41.40%

Data collected on 108,580 inmates from 11 states, accounting for 57% of all State prisoners released in the U.S. in 1983

Data Summary

Number of Inmates Returned to State Custody

Almost half of the inmates released in 1994 & 1995 returned to state custody at least once within 3 years of their release.

The percent of inmates returning to state custody has decreased since 1994.

Year of Release	Inmates Released	Total Returned	Percent of inmates returning:		
			6 months	1 year	3 years
1994	9,218	4,629	14.9%	27.1%	49.9%
1995	6,708	3,101	15.3%	26.9%	47.6%
1996	7,654	1,594	11.7%	20.8%	N/A
1997	9,413	2,008	11.4%	21.3%	N/A

One Year Return Rate Based on Type of Release

Individuals released on parole returned to state custody at a higher rate than those individuals released due to the completion of their sentence.

Year of Release	Type of Release	Inmates Released	Total Returned	Percent Returned
1994	Parole	8,384	2,440	29.1%
	Completed Sentence	934	63	6.8%
1995	Parole	5,563	1,752	31.5%
	Completed Sentence	1,145	53	4.6%
1996	Parole	5,804	1,509	26.0%
	Completed Sentence	1,850	85	4.6%
1997	Parole	6,950	1,893	27.2%
	Completed Sentence	2,464	109	4.4%

Releases

Table 30: Inmate Releases by Type for Calendar Years 1997 and 1998

Type of Release	1997		1998	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Unconditional				
Maxed Out*	2,423	24.9%	2,616	29.0%
Executed	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
By Court Order	103	1.1%	101	1.1%
Total	2,526	26.0%	2,717	30.1%
Conditional				
State Parole	4,881	50.2%	4,126	45.7%
County Parole	10	0.1%	8	0.1%
Reparoled (State)	1,811	18.6%	1,793	19.9%
Total	6,702	68.9%	5,927	65.6%
Other Releases				
Deaths	109	1.1%	128	1.4%
Other**	392	4.0%	259	2.9%
Total	501	5.1%	387	4.3%
Total Releases	9,729	100.0%	9,031	100.0%

* Expiration of maximum sentence.

** Other includes transfers to state hospitals and other jurisdictions.

TABLE 30: INMATE RELEASES BY TYPE FOR CALENDAR YEARS 1995 AND 1996

TYPE OF RELEASE	1995	PERCENT OF TOTAL	1996	PERCENT OF TOTAL
UNCONDITIONAL				
MAXED OUT	1,022	14.1	1,814	22.6
EXECUTED	2	0.0	0	0.0
BY COURT ORDER	64	0.9	106	1.3
TOTAL	1,088	16.0	1,920	23.9
CONDITIONAL				
STATE PAROLE	3,704	51.0	3,800	47.2
COUNTY PAROLE	22	0.3	9	0.1
REPAROLED (STATE)	1,872	25.8	1,802	22.4
TOTAL	5,598	77.1	5,611	69.8
DEATHS	122	1.7	127	1.6
OTHER*	455	6.3	385	4.8
TOTAL	577	7.9	512	6.4
TOTAL RELEASES	7,263	100.0	8,043	100.0**

*OTHER INCLUDES TRANSFERS TO STATE HOSPITALS AND OTHER JURISDICTIONS

** TOTAL EXCEEDS 100% DUE TO ROUNDING.

Pennsylvania Department of Corrections
1994 Annual Statistical Report

TABLE 31: DISCHARGES FROM THE STATE PRISON IN 1993 AND 1994 BY TYPE

TYPE OF RELEASE	1993	PERCENT OF TOTAL	1994	PERCENT OF TOTAL
UNCONDITIONAL				
MAXED OUT	750	8.9	751	8.9
BY COURT ORDER	89	1.1	57	0.7
TOTAL	839	10.0	808	9.6
CONDITIONAL				
STATE PAROLE	5,330	63.3	5,250	61.9
COUNTY PAROLE	22	0.3	23	0.3
REPAROLED (STATE)	1,795	21.3	1,971	23.2
TOTAL	7,147	84.8	7,244	85.4
DEATHS	78	0.9	102	1.2
OTHER	362	4.3	327	3.9
TOTAL DISCHARGES	8,426	100.0	8,481	100.0