

## **Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction Population Projections, February 2002**

### **Projections Summary**

Table 1 summarizes the February, 2002 Bureau of Research population estimates for males, females and total population. The new projections estimate a July 1, 2002, prison population of **44,375**, a July 1, 2003, population of **44,110**, and a July 1, 2004, population of **44,255**. The population is then forecasted to rise gradually to a ten-year peak of **48,128** by July 1, 2011. The FY 2002-04 numbers represent a minor downward revision from projections published in January and December 2001. The current forecast indicates the population will stabilize over the next two fiscal years at roughly 200-300 below present levels. Below, we discuss the major assumptions and caveats underlying this forecast.

### **Intake Estimates and Assumptions**

Preliminary data indicate that CY 2001 intake will be 20,650, representing a 4.7% increase over CY 2000 and the highest annual number of court commitments ever received by DRC. This is also the fourth consecutive annual increase in the rate of admissions. The current model is based on annual increases of five percent and three percent for Calendar Years 2002 and 2003, respectively, followed by stable growth of two percent through CY 2011. This represents a moderate upward revision of the intake forecast used in the January 2001 projections. We took into consideration the following factors in making these estimates:

- Average daily commitment numbers increased about four percent over the second half of 2001 and are exceptionally high for January 2002. Actual intake in CY 2001 was virtually identical to that predicted in the January 2001 intake forecast. There is no basis for assuming a downturn in intake.

- No additional community diversion slots are anticipated.
- Although the rate of admissions among females slowed in CY 2001 compared to males, we maintain a slightly higher growth rate for women based on admission data for CY 1998 through CY 2000.

### **Population Analysis and Modeling Assumptions**

Below we describe our modeling assumptions and analysis of the FY 2001 admission and currently incarcerated (stock) populations that underlie the projections:

- The analysis is based on detailed descriptions of the July 2001 parole-eligible stock population with respect to guidelines actions and hearing status. That analysis revealed that a greater proportion of the more serious, currently incarcerated inmates are receiving continuances, but that the percentage receiving parole has increased (compared to projected release actions) among the balance of these offenders. Although continuance lengths declined among males over the past fiscal year (about five months, on average), time until release among inmates granted a projected release date increased overall, especially for second degree felony males. This is consistent with the maturation of the pre-SB2 population, as longer-term inmates move through the hearing cycle.
- The projections rely on better estimates of average time remaining until first hearing under current guidelines *among those previously heard before 1998*. The model also incorporates recent efforts made by the Parole Board to reschedule and convert long-term continuation decisions made under the pre-1998 guidelines. Together, these adjustments reduced overall length of stay among this portion of the parole-eligible stock population.
- The proportion of SB2 felony 4 and 5 admissions in FY 2001 (as a percentage of all SB2 admissions) declined slightly over the previous year, reversing an upward trend that began four years ago; however, overall term lengths are down slightly among almost all SB2 admissions (with the exception of felony 1 females). Although SB2 allows judges to impose additional penalty time on PRC violators who commit new felonies while under supervision, the most recent data indicate that these violators serve sentences comparable to non-violator commitments. FY 2001 data continue to reflect minimal use of any of the felony enhancements available under SB2.
- The model uses the most recently available recidivism data to estimate violator returns, which indicate higher technical violator rates and stable parole/PRC recommitment rates. PRC technical return rates were adjusted slightly based on the assumption that increased use of monitored time would produce fewer returns over the ten-year forecast. We also revised our estimates of time on PRC until successful discharge, which lowered estimates of the overall PRC supervision population from our January 2001 projections.

### **Further Issues**

Other broader issues should be noted. These projections assume continuity regarding broad patterns and policies in criminal justice, such as:

- no new legislation. Changes in the criminal code can affect prison admissions and sentence length. Pending legislative proposals increasing the use of penalty time associated with felony PRC violations could significantly increase the projected population.
- no dramatic changes in the crime rate. Although recent UCR data indicate stable overall crime patterns, a marked rise in the crime rate would probably affect admissions and the population numbers. An increase in violent crime would eventually alter the composition of future prison admission cohorts. The present projections are based on the most recently available admission data and the felony composition of those admissions.
- no further changes in the parole guidelines. There have been fairly dramatic changes in the prison population and projections due to the April 1998 changes in the guidelines. Further changes in policy or changes in overall release rates could also have a noticeable impact.
- no further changes in Post Release Control policy. Although there are proposals under consideration that would significantly change discretionary PRC screening criteria, the current projections are based on compliance with current policy. Any change in PRC placement policy ultimately affects prison population by affecting community supervision levels, thereby increasing or decreasing the number of returned violators. The model also assumes no changes in caps on violator penalty time and no major changes in the current composition of felony PRC violators.

**Table 1: ODRC Population Projections, by Sex, July 1, 2002 - July 1, 2011**

Date	Male	Female	Total
2/4/2002*	41831	2745	44576
7/1/2002	41537	2838	44375
7/1/2003	41232	2878	44110
7/1/2004	41317	2938	44255
7/1/2005	41674	2980	44654
7/1/2006	41972	3086	45058
7/1/2007	42367	3095	45462
7/1/2008	42757	3205	45962
7/1/2009	43463	3298	46761
7/1/2010	44424	3327	47751
7/1/2011	44756	3372	48128

\*Actual population from February 4, 2002 Weekly Population Count

**Table 2: ODRC New Court Admission  
Estimates, by Sex, CY 2002-CY 2011**

Calendar Year	Male	Female	Total
CY 2002	19029	2636	21665
CY 2003	19581	2728	22309
CY 2004	19954	2796	22750
CY 2005	20333	2866	23199
CY 2006	20719	2938	23657
CY 2007	21113	3011	24124
CY 2008	21514	3086	24600
CY 2009	21923	3163	25086
CY 2010	22339	3243	25582
CY 2011	22763	3324	26087