

EVALUATION OF AREA BOARD CLASSIFICATION AT THE
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION

INTERIM REPORT II: CORRELATES OF CLASSIFICATION
RECOMMENDATIONS AND DECISIONS

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ABSTRACT

This report is the second in a series that evaluates Area Board classification, which is the process enabling inmate inter-institutional transfers. Building upon an overall framework established in the first report, a process description, the current paper develops profiles of cases in selected security level recommendation or decision categories, and discusses their putative underlying rationales.

Data collected for the 590 sample cases were extensive, comprised of decision variables, factors specific to the Board hearing, and inmate characteristics including institutional experience, criminal history, personal background, and nature of the current offense. Over 150 discrete variables were utilized in the analysis.

Findings highlighted the primary emphasis placed on security risk and facility management when making placement determinations. This was indicated both in rationales for recommendations and decisions, as well as inmate characteristics. Individual program needs were addressed secondarily, usually as a condition accompanying a placement decision.

Profiles of men a) recommended by Area Boards for lower security; b) approved by Central Office for lower security; and c) approved at this level for higher security/remain in current status, did not deviate from what was expected. Lower security cases were apt to have adjusted more fully to incarceration, which includes displaying (in the Board's opinion) a better attitude and greater motivation, and to have more extensive community linkages. The converse of these characteristics described men approved for higher security settings, or for no transfer.

Other findings, warranting additional investigation, were cited. Men approved for lower security tended to be further from parole eligibility. Unanimous security recommendations by Area Boards were more likely to be approved by Central Office as opposed to those including a minority dissent. Finally, Board assessment of motivation and attitude, both subjective indicators, weighed heavily in placement deliberations.

The study concludes with a series of implications for policy, based on the finding that the dominant goal of classification is security management and protection of society. More research is planned to assess the overall effectiveness, in terms of success at subsequent placements, of the processes described in these reports.

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INTRODUCTION

The widespread expansion and diversification of corrections has formalized the need for the differential handling of offenders. Recognizing that a heterogeneous prison population will require eclectic programming and differing security levels, system-wide classification capabilities have been created and instituted in most correctional jurisdictions.

These classification mechanisms operate within the broad context of a growing competition among several, often incompatible ideologies regarding sentencing and the philosophy of corrections. Within this framework, the system must achieve the dual, and sometimes contradictory goals of maximizing the benefits derived by offenders from the incarceration experience (rehabilitation); and in maintaining secure and smoothly functioning facilities (security and custody). Emphasis on either will obviously gear classification practice to outcomes designed to further these goals, but it is generally agreed that most systems embody both philosophies to some extent.

Although these arguments have been summarized elsewhere,¹ we may assert that the failure to acknowledge these inherent contradictions, and to adopt an ideological stance from which to base the system, has instigated well-founded criticism.² A guiding assumption has been that procedures should be systematically implemented, without resulting in uniformity of recommendations. Offenders should be viewed individually, possessing unique sets of circumstances and characteristics that would potentially result in various combinations of program planning and security levels. The extent to which this tenet is applied and the effectiveness and efficiency of the processes developed, regardless of their basic ideologies, is not fully known. Thus, evaluation of classification systems, and ongoing monitoring and internal assessment of these mechanisms, is becoming requisite, most notably on a national level.³

1 Chayet, E., Evaluation of Area Board Classification at the Massachusetts Department of Correction. Interim Report I: Process Description and Statistical Summary. (Pub. #171, April, 1979). Hereinafter referred to as "Interim Report I", The Executive Summary of this study appears as Appendix A.

2 Arguments are summarized in Corrections. National Advisory Committee on Standards and Goals in Corrections (1977).

3 Research and evaluation are included as an essential standard to achieve compliance for accreditation in accordance with national accreditation standards. See: Commission on Accreditation for Corrections, Manual of National Advisory Committee on Standards and Goals (1977).

This report is the second in a comprehensive endeavor to evaluate Area Board classification at the Massachusetts Department of Correction (DOC). Three separate but related studies are planned for this series, which provides in-depth documentation of procedures utilized by the DOC to review cases for inter-institutional transfer subsequent to the initial intake classification.

The first study, Interim Report I, presented a complete narrative description of the Area Boards, and provided a basic statistical analysis of operations for the population seen during a representative seven-month time frame. The present paper draws a sample of this population and, employing expanded and intensified data collection, develops profiles of cases most likely to be recommended for various types of placements by the Boards. The Central Office decision-making level is explored as well via analysis of the patterns of approval over recommendations to higher or lower security, and the distinguishing characteristics of inmates in each group.

A simple compilation of rationales underlying the recommendations and decisions, and corollary conditions, will also be presented. The final report will incorporate the findings of conducting an outcome analysis of success/failure at these placements, and assess the relative effectiveness of the classification decision-making.

Highlights of Classification in the Massachusetts Department of Correction

A brief overview of classification in Massachusetts, emphasizing the role of the Area Boards, is prerequisite to later understanding of the analysis. Four types of classification capabilities are formally integrated into the corrections system: intake reception/diagnostic centers; institution-based program review Boards; inter-institutional classification (Area Boards); and special types of boards.

Two reception/diagnostic centers are designed to initially classify all court commitments to a state-level correctional facility. This process results in a determination of an appropriate security level, corresponding facility, and a fairly comprehensive assessment of needs and recommended programs to address these areas.

Institutional boards are convened at each facility. Their role is multifaceted, including intake planning when the offender first arrives at the particular institution, periodic program and adjustment reviews, and initial transfer screening to determine referrals to Area Boards.

Area Boards convene primarily to review cases for inter-institutional transfers. A variety of recommendations may result from an appearance before one of these Boards; for example, for the inmate to remain in his current facility (remain at current status), to transfer to higher security, lower security, to make a lateral move. Area Boards are not based at specific facilities; rather, membership is drawn from one of the three separate DOC areas, and Boards see inmates currently housed in that area only.

Finally, the special boards encompass those classification hearings not included above, such as a massive endeavor to reclassify all DOC residents for pre-release, or the boards held for inmates housed in the Departmental Segregation Unit (DSU).

All final decisions on classification recommendations are made by Central Office administrative staff, who act on behalf of the Commissioner of Correction.⁴ Decisions may be in accordance with the recommendations, or Central Office may deny (overturn) a Board assessment and approve the case to another facility. Conditions with which the inmate must comply may also be specified at this point, in lieu of, or in addition to those that the classification boards had deemed appropriate.

⁴ Institutional Boards are the exception, where Superintendents hold overall approving authority.

Area Board Classification

As mentioned, Area Board classification draws members from institutions located within the particular region, and is structured on a rotating basis. Their recommendations are approved or denied by Central Office Area Directors of Classification: if the proposed transfer is within the Area, this single review is sufficient. If, however, the transfer involves a facility in an Area other than the inmate's current residence, there must be consultation and agreement between the two Directors. Disputed cases are handled by the Supervisor of Classification who, incidentally, performs the administrative reviews over reception/diagnostic center recommendations.

This peculiar structure does give rise to some real and perceived problems. As Interim Report I indicated, although the intent of the Area Division was to induce improved effectiveness by upgrading the quality of decisions, one consequence has been a suffering of efficiency. Final decisions may require longer than a month, alienating both the inmates, who expect more timely transfers, and institutional staff, who often feel that they are acting within a vacuum.

Several other generalizations have been made about Area Board classification. The double-layered decision-making behaves in a fairly consistent manner, with Central Office approving a majority of the Board recommendations. What is notable, however, is the conservative direction exerted by the Central Office, with more of their decisions geared toward higher security placements.

The Problem

The current evaluation was undertaken by the Model Evaluation Unit (MEP) of the Research Division, as a major commitment in its role to identify and conduct management-based research projects. These studies were necessarily departmental priorities, and have direct administrative utility. Classification, which underlies most corrections operations, was repeatedly asserted as an important topic for research; thus, MEP focused upon one of its integral components.

As discussed in Interim Report I, the specific choice to evaluate the Area Board process resulted from a review of the Research Division's prior contributions to a comprehensive analysis of the classification system. Since several research papers had already been completed,⁵ assignment of the two remaining

⁵ See: Blomquist, K., A Preliminary Study of Residents of MCI-Norfolk Transferred to Higher Security During 1974 (Publication No. 102, 1975).
Chayet, E., New Line Classification During its First Year of Operation (Publication No. 153, May, 1978).
Wittenberg, S., A Study of Community-Based Classification Boards October-December 1976 (September, 1977).

broad topics - reception and diagnostic classification, and Area Boards - was made, with the Director of Research and a group of graduate students conducting an evaluation of the former, and MEP agreeing to design and implement an evaluation of the latter topic.⁶

Particular interest was demonstrated by administration in this type of evaluation endeavor, most probably due to four inter-related conditions. First, it is generally acknowledged that classification practitioners operate nearly bereft of empirical data regarding the nature of the population they deal with, and the types and efficacy of the decisions made. Little feedback is made available to these staff on the appropriateness of their recommendations, and general profiles of inmates benefitting most from particular programs and levels of security.

Second, the DOC underwent a major shift in organization in 1976, from a centralized to a decentralized administrative structure. Classification procedures were modified accordingly, instituting Area Boards. Previously, two types of central boards heard all cases - Inter-Institutional Transfer Boards for cases limited to the major institutions, and Community-Based Boards for transfers potentially involving a pre-release center or similar facility - and these boards originated from the Central Office. Thus, the new operations represented by the Area Boards were perceived as meriting systematic evaluation, to assess its efficiency and effectiveness.

A third condition that partially led to the desire for this evaluation concerns the imbalances in institutional population. Massachusetts possesses a complex network of correctional institutions and facilities ranging from maximum security, through pre-release and other community-based centers. Although the major maximum and medium security institutions are at times overcrowded, or at least operating at full capacity, there has been a significant and persistent problem in the inability to fill all pre-release beds. The study of the classification process, and the types of inmates recommended for various placements and their success at these placements, may assist decision-makers with the difficult task of assigning security risk adequately while ensuring maximum utilization of correctional resources.

Finally, national attention is being increasingly devoted to classification. For example, the drive for accreditation in corrections has meant that administrators must carefully evaluate their systems and make those changes necessary to bring their classification capabilities into compliance with the particular standards. Therefore, this study represents a timely response to both internal concerns and external issues.

⁶ Carney, F., et al, A Study of the Reception and Diagnostic Process of the Massachusetts Department of Correction, (April, 1978).

METHODOLOGY

Research Objectives

The research objectives of this paper can best be understood by reviewing the overall goals of the evaluation. Simply, these are: 1) to describe the operation of the Area Board system; 2) to develop profiles for cases recommended and approved/denied for the various placement options; 3) to document the rationales underlying recommendations and decisions, and the correlates of these decisions; and 4) to assess the effectiveness of the classification process.

Interim Report I addressed the first of these; the present study responds to the second and third objectives by investigating the following specific set of derivative questions:

- a) What are the rationales upon which placement recommendations are based, and the conditions of these placements?
- b) What are the characteristics of cases recommended for lower security that differentiate this group from other placement recommendations?
- c) What are the characteristics of recommendations that are approved by Central Office for lower security?

Prior to any elaboration of these, the sample parameters, and the sources and types of data that constitute the components of these objectives must be documented.

The Sample

A fifty percent random sample was drawn from the original population of 1200 cases that appeared before an Area Board between July, 1977 through January, 1978. Each appearance constitutes a case; thus, an individual who has more than one hearing during this time frame might have been included in the sample more than once. Reduction due to missing documents yielded a final sample size of 590 cases.

Sources and Types of Data

A wide variety of data was collected for each case (a complete list of variables appears as Appendix). Sources of information, and the nature of the data, included the following:

1. Correction and Parole Management Information System (CAPMIS): A standard set of computerized data maintained in this system includes criminal history variables, information regarding the current offense, personal background characteristics, furlough outcomes, and inter-institutional movement.

2. Pre-Hearing Summary Sheet: This document is completed by social workers prior to a hearing, and contains information concerning all aspects of the prison experience to that point. Among these are disciplinary reports, prior residences in lower security, substance abuse, program participation, and compliance with past classification recommendations.

3. Area Board Narratives: Highlights of the hearing are documented in a one- to two-page narrative. In addition to the parameters of the recommendations, some of the dynamics of the hearing are conveyed. Variables obtained from these narratives were, most importantly, the rationales underlying Board recommendations, conditions, and reasons for minority dissent. Coding was open-ended, recording all information in its entirety. Later examination resulted in classifying these data into more manageable categories.

4. Inmate Folders: Up-to-date information pertaining to current and past incarcerations is maintained in case folders. Filed at the institution of residence, these were consulted when other data sources were incomplete.

The general analytic framework, as developed from Interim Report I, was derived from intensive personal interviews with classification practitioners at all levels of the Department of Correction. Findings have been grouped into three broad categories: a sample description, which includes a preliminary analysis of Board and Central Office decision rationales and conditions; a profile of cases recommended by Boards for lower security; and a profile of cases approved by Central Office for either lower security or higher security/remain in current status.

Statistical Analysis

Two simple analytic techniques were employed. For pure descriptive data, frequency distributions were provided. Where appropriate, these data were presented in rank order.

When comparisons between two groups were made, a Chi Square (X^2) was computed. This statistic determines if the differences in distribution along a particular variable between the groups could be considered statistically significant. An association was assumed to be significant, and subsequently reported, if the X^2 was .05 or less. This means that the observed relationship would be expected to occur by chance in the population fewer than five times in one hundred.

FINDINGS

SECTION I: DESCRIPTION OF THE SAMPLE

The following narrative and Tables I through VI synthesize a basic description of the sample investigated for this study. The first segment will draw an operational picture of the sample, employing frequency distributions of recommendations, approvals, and institutions and facilities of the decision components.

The bulk of this section, however, is comprised of the rationales and conditions associated with Board recommendations, and with Central Office approvals to various placement options. A series of tables will be presented, ranking these decision correlates, and some general discussion will be offered.

OPERATIONS

Area of Board

Table I is a breakdown of cases heard by the Area in which Boards were held. As found in Interim Report I, the sample is proportionately highest for Area III, with its greater number of major facilities, than for Area I, or Area II, in which most boards are held for reclassification.

TABLE I: AREA IN WHICH BOARD IS HELD

	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>
Area I	170	(28.9)
Area II	50	(8.5)
Area III	369	(62.6)
TOTAL	589	(100.0)

Board Recommendations

The types of placement recommendations made by the Boards are presented in Table II.

TABLE II: AREA BOARD RECOMMENDED PLACEMENTS

	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>
Remain in current status	154	(26.2)
Transfer to lower security	363	(61.7)
Transfer to higher security	38	(6.5)
Transfer to lateral security	20	(3.4)
Other transfer	13	(2.2)
TOTAL	588	(100.0)

In brief, the majority of recommended placements were for lower security than the inmate's current residence. A sizeable proportion, however, was recommended for no change in security status. A small number was recommended for a transfer to higher security.

Central Office Approvals

Central Office exercises the binding authority in either approving or denying the recommendations of the Area Boards. Table III depicts these final decisions in relation to the original recommendations:

TABLE III: CENTRAL OFFICE APPROVALS VIS-A-VIS AREA BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>
Approve Area Board	373	(63.3)
Deny; approve for lower	27	(4.6)
Deny; approve for higher	49	(8.3)
Deny; approve for lateral	53	(9.0)
Deny; approve to remain current	73	(12.4)
Deferred	3	(.5)
Other	11	(1.9)
TOTAL	589	(100.0)

The sample outcomes closely resemble the patterns described in Interim Report I: Central Office approved the majority of Area Board recommendations. When denied, the Board judgments are overturned most usually for a decision to remain in current (12.4 percent of the sample), followed by approvals for a lateral transfer (9 percent) or for a placement in a higher security level (8.3 percent).

Institutions and Facilities Recommended and Approved

Possibly more illuminating upon the nature of the relationship between the two decision-making components are the following tables IV and V, which depict the actual types of institutions and facilities recommended and approved.

TABLE IV: INSTITUTIONS AND FACILITIES RECOMMENDED BY AREA BOARDS

	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>
<u>Type of Placement:</u>		
Maximum security	123	(20.8)
Medium security	113	(19.2)
Minimum security	83	(14.1)
Medium/minimum security	74	(12.5)
Community-based facility	160	(27.1)
House of Correction	10	(1.7)
Other placement	20	(3.4)
TOTAL	583	(100.0)

TALBE V: INSTITUTIONS AND FACILITIES APPROVED BY CENTRAL OFFICE

	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>
<u>Type of Placement:</u>		
Maximum security	157	(27.0)
Medium security	125	(21.5)
Minimum security	97	(16.7)
Medium/minimum security	61	(10.5)
Community-based facility	126	(21.7)
House of Correction	8	(1.3)
Other	7	(1.2)
TOTAL	581	(100.0)

A visual comparison of the two tables shows the conservatism characteristic of the Central Office decision-making: for example, more cases were approved for maximum security than the Area Boards recommended, (27.0 percent versus 20.8 percent); and fewer, cases approved for community-based placements (21.7 percent compared to 27.1 percent recommended by the Boards).

This conservative orientation is more apparent in Table VI, which calculates the percentage of difference for selected security levels, between Area Board recommendations and Central Office approvals.

TABLE VI: DIVERGENCE BETWEEN AREA BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS AND CENTRAL OFFICE APPROVALS

<u>Security Level</u>	<u>Number Area Board Recommended</u>	<u>Number Central Office Approved</u>	<u>(Difference)</u>	<u>Percent Divergence</u>
Maximum	123	157	(+34)	+27.6%
Medium	113	125	(+12)	+10.6%
Minimum	83	97	(+14)	+16.9%
Community-based	160	126	(-34)	-21.3%

The difference between the Area Boards and Central Office in terms of their placement orientations was found to be statistically significant.⁷ In other words, Central Office was significantly more likely to approve a maximum security placement, and less likely to approve a transfer to a community-based facility.

RATIONALES AND CONDITIONS

The reasons proffered by the Area Boards for their various placement recommendations were tabulated. Conditions of such placements were also noted, as were Central Office rationales and conditions when recorded. Thus, we can obtain a broader picture of the dimensions of each decision.

Area Board Rationales

Rationales Underlying Board Recommendations for Transfer to Lower Security

The twenty most frequently mentioned rationales for a transfer to lower security are presented in Table VIIa. A total of 52 discrete rationales were stated; these twenty account for 82.3 percent of all rationales given.

⁷ Maximum security approvals and recommendations were compared to community-based approvals and recommendations. $X^2=8.17$, with one degree of freedom; $p < .01$.

TABLE VIIa: BOARD RATIONALES FOR TRANSFERS TO LOWER SECURITY
 (First most Important Rationale): TWENTY MOST FREQUENT

Rank	Rationale	N	(%)
1	Good institutional record (furlough, work reports)	36	(9.7)
2	Good behavior record	31	(8.4)
3	Concrete educational/vocational plans	27	(7.3)
4	Self-awareness of problems	22	(5.9)
5	Complied with classification plan	19	(5.1)
6	Present facility inappropriate	18	(4.8)
6	Proximity to parole or GCD	18	(4.8)
8	MAPS Contract	16	(4.3)
9	Good presentation before Board	15	(4.0)
10	Good past adjustment at lower security	14	(3.8)
10	Specific program needs	14	(3.8)
12	Good disciplinary record	13	(3.5)
13	Aid in transition to community	11	(3.0)
14	Open reserve date	10	(2.7)
14	Needs structured setting	10	(2.7)
16	Work-related programs	9	(2.4)
17	Minor criminal record	7	(1.9)
18	Forestry candidate	6	(1.6)
19	Family ties	5	(1.3)
19	Pre-release preparation	5	(1.3)

The two most important reasons concerned institutional record, comprised of furloughs, work and housing reports; and disciplinary reports. These two factors were identified for close to twenty percent of all rationales to lower security. With the addition of all other reasons relating to institutional record (i.e., compliance with classification plan, good past adjustment at lower security, and disciplinary history) over thirty percent of all rationales are represented.

TABLE VIIb: BOARD RATIONALES FOR TRANSFERS TO LOWER SECURITY (Second Most Important Rationale):
TEN MOST FREQUENT

Rank	Rationale	N	(%)
1	Good behavior record	43	(15.0)
2	Good institutional record	33	(11.5)
3	Good disciplinary record	21	(7.3)
4	Concrete educational/vocational plans	18	(6.3)
5	Proximity to parole or GCD	14	(4.9)
6	Reasonable risk	13	(4.5)
7	Good past adjustment at lower security	11	(3.8)
9	Self-awareness of problems	10	(3.5)
9	Needs structured setting	10	(3.5)

It is often the case for more than one rationale to be asserted. The second most important of these is tabulated in Table VIIb. As is evident, institutional record plays a prominent role - the first three reasons concern behavior in prison, and contribute well over thirty percent to the total rationales.

Rationales Underlying Board Recommendations for Transfer to Higher Security

TABLE VIII: BOARD RATIONALES FOR TRANSFERS TO HIGHER SECURITY

Rank	Rationale	N	(%)
1	Poor attitude or motivation	13	(35.1)
2	Poor institutional behavior	11	(29.7)
3	Prior failures	4	(10.8)
4	Substance abuse	3	(8.1)
5	Enemies	2	(5.4)
6	Age	1	(2.7)
6	Mental instability	1	(2.7)
6	Protective custody	1	(2.7)
6	Other	1	(2.7)

The single most frequent reason for recommending a transfer to higher security was an assessment of poor attitude or motivation. The next two reasons reflect institutional behavior, and combined, constitute over forty percent of all reasons.

Rationales Underlying Board Recommendations for Transfer to Lateral Security

TABLE IX: BOARD RATIONALES FOR TRANSFERS TO LATERAL SECURITY

Rank	Rationale	N	(%)
1	Enemies	7	(33.3)
1	Positive adjustment	7	(33.3)
2	Needs work-up	2	(9.5)
3	Can function better	1	(4.8)
3	Secure environment	1	(4.8)
3	Has concrete and realistic goals	1	(4.8)
3	More extensive programs	1	(4.8)
3	Age	1	(4.8)

Two factors were cited with equal frequency as rationales for a transfer to a facility representing the same security level as the inmate's current residence: existence of an enemy situation, and positive institutional adjustment.

Rationales Underlying Board Recommendations to Remain in Current Status

Table X presents the fifteen most frequently cited rationales accompanying recommendations to remain at current status. Statutory ineligibility accounts for twelve percent of these; institutional record, as measured by D-Reports, program participation, behavior adjustment, and failures at pre-release, contributes 25 percent. It should be noted that these fifteen rationales constitute almost 70 percent of all reasons given for recommendations to remain in current status.

TABLE X: BOARD RATIONALES FOR REMAIN IN CURRENT STATUS:
FIFTEEN MOST FREQUENT

Rank	Rationale	N	(%)
1	Outstanding warrants or court cases	14	(9.0)
2	Needs being met at current institution	12	(7.7)
3	Negative D-Reports	11	(7.1)
3	Lack of program participation	11	(7.1)
5	Alcohol problems	7	(4.5)
6	Poor institutional behavior	6	(3.9)
6	Past violent behavior	6	(3.9)
6	Escapes	6	(3.9)
9	Inability to adjust	5	(3.2)
9	Failures at pre-release	5	(3.2)
9	Lack of goals	5	(3.2)
9	Ineligible for lower security	5	(3.2)
9	Nature of offense	5	(3.2)
9	Observe for longer period	5	(3.2)
9	Substance abuse	5	(3.2)

Conditions Upon Board Recommendations

Conditions with which inmates must comply concomitant with program placement were categorized by the security level recommended by the Boards. This provides additional insight into the underlying bases of the decision-making dynamic. Table XI ranks those conditions associated with Board recommendations to lower security.

TABLE XI: BOARD CONDITIONS ON TRANSFERS TO LOWER SECURITY

Rank	Condition	N	(%)
1	Substance abuse/counseling	62	(36.1)
2	Periodic review	16	(9.3)
3	Periodic urinalysis	13	(7.6)
3	TNT	13	(7.6)
5	Vocational testing	10	(5.8)
6	Programs	8	(4.7)
7	Counseling	7	(4.1)
8	Comply with MAPS	5	(2.9)
8	Full-time employment	5	(2.9)
8	Pursue GED	5	(2.9)
11	Cadre position	3	(1.7)
11	Monitor enemy situation	3	(1.7)
11	Take care of health problem	3	(1.7)
11	Supervise for protective custody	3	(1.7)
11	Screen for hospital program	3	(1.7)
11	No release programs	3	(1.7)
11	SMT check	3	(1.7)
18	Remain D-Free	2	(1.2)
18	Needs parole approval	2	(1.2)
20	Good work reports	1	(.6)
20	SDP processing	1	(.6)
20	Other	1	(.6)

Area Boards recommended 363 cases for lower security placements. Of these, 172, or 47.4 percent were accompanied by conditions. A predominant concern of Board members when adjudging suitability for these transfers appears to be substance abuse. Programs to address this problem were stipulated for 36.1 percent of all conditions in this level. Combined with required periodic urinalysis, this area represents 43.7 percent of the conditions upon lower security transfers.

TABLE XII: BOARD CONDITIONS ON TRANSFERS TO HIGHER SECURITY

Rank	Condition	N	(%)
1	Protective custody, or screen for PC	7	(26.9)
2	Alcohol program involvement mandatory	4	(15.4)
3	Clear D-report	3	(11.5)
3	Screen for enemies	3	(11.5)
3	Periodic reviews	3	(11.5)
6	Inability to adjust to pre-release	2	(7.7)
6	Apply for farm if and when applicable	2	(7.7)
8	Drug counseling	1	(3.9)
8	Apply for work	1	(3.9)

TABLE XIII: BOARD CONDITIONS ON TRANSFERS TO LATERAL SECURITY

Rank	Condition	N	(%)
1	Screen for population	5	(33.3)
2	Periodic review	3	(20.0)
3	Confirm acceptance at facility	2	(13.3)
4	Pursue GED	1	(6.7)
4	Medium security	1	(6.7)
4	Drug programming	1	(6.7)
4	Complete RDC	1	(6.7)
4	Remain D-Free	1	(6.7)

Over half (52.6 percent) of the 38 recommendations for higher security included a specified condition. Table XII illustrates the regard for protective custody needs in these situations. Combining this first ranked condition with "screen for enemies", a total of 38.4 percent of the conditions are covered. Substance abuse program involvement is also relatively important, and accounts for 15.4 percent of all conditions. Similarly, Table XIII implies that protective custody concerns are also paramount in recommending a transfer to lateral security. Parenthetically, this transfer category included the highest proportion of conditions: 75 percent of the twenty cases here entailed mandated conditions.

TABLE XIV: BOARD CONDITIONS ON REMAIN IN CURRENT STATUS

Rank	Condition	N	(%)
1	Periodic review	28	(26.9)
2	Contingent review	14	(13.5)
3	Counseling, or screen for counseling	13	(12.5)
4	Remain D-Free	10	(9.6)
5	Continue program involvement	9	(8.6)
5	Outstanding cases	9	(8.6)
7	Psychiatric evaluation	5	(4.8)
8	AA	3	(2.9)
9	Reapply if inmate considers another facility	2	(1.9)
9	Resolve SDP	2	(1.9)
9	Possible out-of-state transfer	2	(1.9)
12	Furlough	1	(1.0)
12	Obtain official version	1	(1.0)
12	Get approval of program	1	(1.0)
12	SBII	1	(1.0)
12	Reestablish trust	1	(1.0)
12	Other	1	(1.0)

Quite a sizable percentage (67.5 percent) of the 154 cases recommended to remain in current status had stated conditions. Most frequently, these were linked with mandated periodic reviews (usually set for 30-60-90 days); or contingent reviews (i.e., reviews to be scheduled when additional conditions are met, as clearing D-reports). These two types of reviews ranked highest, and constituted 40.4 percent of all these types of conditions. Counseling was also frequently required representing about 12 percent of all conditions.

Central Office Decision Rationales

The decision rationales of Central Office administration are not as formally or systematically documented. However, those recorded were quantified into Table XV. Few generalizations can be made from such limited data. When Central Office denies an Area Board recommendation and approves a placement to higher security or remain in current status, the most frequently stated rationale is that a longer observation period is necessary.

TABLE XV: CENTRAL OFFICE DECISION RATIONALES

Rank	Rationale	N	(%)
	<u>I. CO approved for higher:</u>		
1	Needs longer observation period	6	(37.5)
2	D-Reports	3	(18.7)
2	Escapes	3	(18.7)
4	Institutional behavior	2	(12.5)
5	Screen for another placement	1	(6.3)
5	Needs gradual transition	1	(6.3)
	<u>II. CO approved for lower:</u>		
1	Doesn't need maximum security	1	(100.0)
	<u>III. CO approved for lateral:</u>		
1	Enemy situation	2	(66.7)
2	Waiting list	1	(33.3)
	<u>IV. CO approved Board recommendation:</u>		
1	Protective custody	5	(100.0)

TABLE XV: CENTRAL OFFICE DECISION RATIONALES
(Continued)

Rank	Rationale	N	(%)
	V. <u>CO approved to remain in current status:</u>		
1	Needs longer observation period	9	(34.6)
2	Poor institutional history	5	(19.2)
3	D-reports	3	(11.5)
4	Parole date	2	(7.7)
4	Program unavailable	2	(7.7)
4	SBII	2	(7.7)
7	Outstanding warrants	1	(3.8)
7	Enemy situation	1	(3.8)
	VI. <u>CO defers:</u>		
1	Wait for medical report	1	(100.0)
	VII. <u>CO approves for other option:</u>		
1	SBII via TASC	4	(100.0)

Rationales were most likely to be recorded for decisions generally representing a higher security level than the Board recommended. For example, compared to 32.7 percent of the higher security approvals and 35.6 percent of the remain in current status cases including a Central Office rationale, only 1.3 percent of the full approvals, 3.7 percent of approvals for lower, and 5.7 percent of the lateral approvals contained reasons.

Central Office Conditions

Administrative staff may impose conditions upon approved placements. These may be in addition to, or in lieu of, the Board stipulations. Table XVI illustrates the conditions required by Central Office in each category of placement security level.

TABLE XVI: CENTRAL OFFICE CONDITIONS

Rank	Condition	N	(%)
	<u>I. CO approved for higher:</u>		
1	Periodic review	12	(37.5)
2	Review regarding specific issue	7	(21.9)
3	Contingent periodic review	6	(18.8)
4	Remain D-Free	5	(15.6)
5	Program involvement	1	(3.1)
5	Good reports	1	(3.1)
	<u>II. CO approved for lower:</u>		
1	Remain D-Free	2	(20.0)
1	Periodic internal review	2	(20.0)
1	Periodic review	2	(20.0)
4	Needs approval of program	1	(10.0)
4	Contact program	1	(10.0)
4	TASC	1	(10.0)
4	Other	1	(10.0)
	<u>III. CO approved for lateral:</u>		
1	TNT	8	(44.4)
2	Counseling	3	(16.7)
3	D-Reports	2	(11.1)
3	Six month review	2	(11.1)
3	CJAP	2	(11.1)
6	Other	1	(5.6)

TABLE XVI: CENTRAL OFFICE CONDITIONS
(Continued)

Rank	Condition	N	(%)
	<u>IV. CO approved Board recommendation:</u>		
1	Remain D-Free	18	(18.0)
2	Periodic internal reviews	16	(17.0)
3	Continue positive program involvement	7	(7.0)
3	Review contingent upon adjustment	7	(7.0)
5	Counseling	6	(6.0)
5	TNT	6	(6.0)
5	Review after evaluation	6	(6.0)
8	AA	5	(5.0)
9	Monitor internally	4	(4.0)
9	Protective custody	4	(4.0)
9	Review after parole hearing	4	(4.0)
9	Substance abuse evaluation	4	(4.0)
9	Monitor substance abuse	4	(4.0)
14	Needs approval of program	3	(3.0)
15	Other	2	(2.0)
16	Sign contract	1	(1.0)
16	Clarify enemy situation	1	(1.0)
16	SDP clearance	1	(1.0)
	<u>V. CO approved to remain in current status:</u>		
1	Review when parole outcome is known	7	(18.9)
2	Periodic review	6	(16.2)

TABLE XVI: CENTRAL OFFICE CONDITIONS
(Continued)

Rank	Condition	N	(%)
3	Review if complies with classification	5	(13.5)
4	Remain D-Free	4	(10.8)
5	Continue program involvement	3	(8.1)
6	Drug evaluation	2	(5.4)
6	Review when eligible	2	(5.4)
6	Review when completes 6 months successfully	2	(5.4)
9	Psychiatric evaluation	1	(2.7)
9	Review if D-Free	1	(2.7)
9	Address substance abuse	1	(2.7)
9	Resolve outstanding cases	1	(2.7)
9	SDP clearance	1	(2.7)
9	Other	1	(2.7)
	<u>VI. CO approves for other option:</u>		
1	SBII via TASC	2	(66.7)
2	Defer	1	(33.3)

Specifying reviews is common to all types of approved placements. This represents 78.2 percent of all conditions associated with approvals to higher security; 40 percent of the conditions upon placements in lower security; 11.1 percent of lateral transfer conditions; 34 percent of the conditions when Central Office approves the Board recommendations; and 62.1 percent of the conditions imposed upon approvals to remain at current status. These reviews range from seemingly straightforward periodic reviews, to classification appearances contingent upon parole hearing outcomes and disciplinary report clearance.

As with rationales, Central Office conditions tend to be associated with approvals for higher security that were divergent from the Board assessments. Thus, 65.3 percent of the approvals for higher security placements and 50.7 percent of the approved to remain in current status category included conditions. On the other hand, Central Office imposed conditions upon 26.8 percent of the approved Board recommendations, 37 percent of the approvals for lower, and 34 percent of the lateral security transfers.

Summary of Rationales and Conditions

Tables XVII, XVIII, and XIX summarize the preceding findings. Several general patterns can be noted.

Board Rationales: Two striking inferences can be drawn on the basis of Table XVII. Program needs do not seemingly affect Area Board decision-making; rather, institutional adjustment and factors related to facility management are more important influences. Thus, one implication is that security issues are at the forefront of classification deliberations while programmatic concerns appear to be secondary considerations. The second implication derives from the large percentage of institutional adjustment factors found to be rationales across all security level recommendations. Reliance upon this aspect may mean that transfers - contingent upon "positive" behaviors - constitute a reward for such behavior, rather than part of a deliberately conceived program plan aimed at reintegration.

TABLE XVII: SUMMARY OF RATIONALES FOR EACH RECOMMENDATION LEVEL

RECOMMENDED PLACEMENT FOR:

Rationales Category	Lower Security		Higher Security		Lateral Security		Remain in Current Status	
	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>
Program eligibility	33	(8.9)	-	-	-	-	19	(12.2)
Institutional adjustment	130	(35.2)	15	(40.5)	7	(33.3)	39	(25.0)
Program needs	51	(13.8)	-	-	1	(4.8)	26	(16.7)
Other external factors	29	(7.9)	-	-	-	-	17	(10.9)
Other internal factors	53	(14.4)	18	(48.7)	5	(23.8)	28	(17.9)
Security-management	30	(8.1)	3	(8.1)	8	(38.1)	17	(10.9)
Other	43	(11.7)	1	(2.7)	-	-	10	(6.4)
TOTAL	369	(100.0)	37	(100.0)	21	(100.0)	156	(100.0)

Board Conditions: No generalizations regarding the imposition of conditions by Area Boards can be asserted on the basis of Table XVIII. Several salient findings should, however, be reiterated. The condition overwhelmingly associated with a lower security recommendation is program participation. This may be reflective of classification's endeavor to develop transfer policy consistent with individual program needs. Recommendations for both higher security and lateral security, on the other hand, were more concerned with conditions related to security or management issues, such as protective custody. Finally, as would be expected, recommendations for no transfer were frequently accompanied by mandated future classification reviews. Although the Board was not assessing the individual suitable for different placement at this time, an additional period is set to allow for conformity with stipulations, continue observed adjustment, or simply, reach eligibility.

Central Office Conditions: Table XIX classifies the various Central Office-imposed condition categories by their decisions in relation to the original Board recommendations. The table indicates the relative importance attached by Central Office to continued classification reviews, regardless of approved security level. These are regarded as most essential when Central Office approves for higher security than the Board recommended, or for no transfer. Thus, denials to apparently positive placements (i.e., lower security) benefit from an additional safety valve in the form of subsequent reviews. Another finding shows that specific program participation was deemed especially necessary for outright approvals over Board recommendations, or with approvals for lateral security facilities. These types of conditions may also contribute further refinement of the Area Board judgments.

TABLE XVIII: SUMMARY OF BOARD CONDITIONS

RECOMMENDED PLACEMENT FOR:

<u>Conditions Category</u>	<u>Lower Security</u>		<u>Higher Security</u>		<u>Lateral Security</u>		<u>Remain in Current Status</u>	
	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>(%)</u>
Program Eligibility	1	(0.6)					8	(8.0)
Institutional Adjustment	7	(4.0)	2	(11.1)	1	(7.2)	10	(10.0)
Program Participation	113	(63.8)	5	(27.8)	2	(14.3)	28	(28.0)
Classification Reviews	17	(9.6)	2	(11.1)	3	(21.4)	41	(41.0)
Other External Factors	5	(2.8)			3	(21.4)	7	(7.0)
Other Internal Factors	3	(1.7)						
Other Factors	15	(8.5)					5	(5.0)
Security Management	16	(9.0)	9	(50.0)	5	(35.7)	1	(1.0)
TOTAL	177	(100.0)	18	(100.0)	14	(100.0)	100	(100.0)