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BY THE COMPTROLLER GENERAL

Report To The Congress

OF THE UNITED STATES

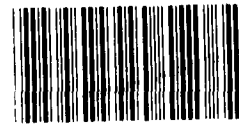
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Correctional Institutions Can Do More To Improve The Employability Of Offenders

The opportunities for offenders to improve their legitimate employment prospects while in Federal and State correctional institutions are limited. Among other things:

- Classification, assignment, counseling, and guidance services neither identify offenders' needs and interests nor encourage participation in appropriate programs.
- Academic education, occupational training, and work assignments do not prepare offenders for employment.
- Transitional programs do not receive enough attention.

GAO recognizes that prison administrators face constraints in trying to improve offender employability, but believes that better management and organization of existing programs would improve the situation. Recommendations are made to the Departments of Justice; Health, Education, and Welfare; and Labor.



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Report

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COMPTROLLER GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20548

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To the President of the Senate and the
Speaker of the House of Representatives *CLW 00001*

This report discusses inadequacies in education and training programs in Federal and State correctional institutions. It makes certain recommendations for improving these programs in Federal correctional institutions and recommends ways in which existing Federal assistance can do more to improve these programs in State correctional institutions.

This review was made because of concern expressed by the Congress and others about the adequacy of programs for improving the employability of offenders in Federal and State correctional institutions.

We are sending copies of this report to the Director, Office of Management and Budget; the Attorney General; the Secretary of Labor; and the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare.

James B. Stacks

Comptroller General
of the United States



D I G E S T

Before entering or after leaving prison, most offenders are not prepared to obtain and maintain legitimate employment. While some are committed irrevocably to criminal careers, many others have conventional goals. They need basic education, marketable vocational skills, social skills, and job placement assistance.

Existing Federal programs can more effectively aid offender employability if

- Federal correctional institutions better manage and organize their programs and
- a portion of Federal education and training assistance to the States is used to help improve program management and organization in State correctional institutions.

The following elements of a system to improve the employability of offenders in prisons do not work properly, if at all.

- Classification, assignment, counseling, and guidance services do not identify offenders' needs and interest or encourage their participation in appropriate programs.
- Academic education, occupational training, and work assignments do not prepare offenders for employment.
- Social education and related activities before release, job placement assistance, and financial resources do not receive enough attention to aid offenders' integration back into the community.
- Management information systems do not effectively keep track of offender and system performance.
- Education and training programs have not been fully evaluated.

It must be recognized that prison administrators face a number of constraints in working to improve offender employability, such as the history of failure of offenders and limited resources. (See ch. 2.) But GAO believes that better management and organization of existing programs would improve the situation.

CLASSIFICATION AND COUNSELING

Most offenders drop out of school before acquiring skills for legitimate employment. Offenders who decide to use their time in prison to prepare for such employment need guidance and support.

Prison classification and counseling programs cannot give offenders effective guidance and support because

- screening tests and evaluations do not adequately identify offenders' needs;
- classification teams do not always know enough about offenders' aptitudes, interests, and needs to help them make well-informed program decisions; and
- vocational placement and training guidance is provided by staff who are not trained in vocational counseling.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The primary role of education programs, according to community and prison educators, is to give students opportunities to satisfy their own needs. Educators see training as providing work habits and attitudes useful in any type of employment even if it is not directly related to the training.

There is no assurance that many offenders are being properly educated or trained in correctional institutions because

- most correctional systems do not use standard curriculum materials so they cannot tell what education and training each institution is supposed to provide;

- program enrollment and completion criteria are not standardized or applied uniformly and therefore, offenders can enroll in programs regardless of aptitude and be granted completions even if they leave before finishing;
- some certified apprenticeship programs in Federal institutions could not or did not provide necessary training, yet offenders were given credit for this training;
- many Federal institutions penalize offenders who participate in education and training programs by providing greater rewards for routine maintenance activities, such as janitorial work;
- prison maintenance and industry programs do not provide organized training to unskilled offenders or jobs for skilled offenders which help them maintain their skills; and
- correctional agencies do not conduct routine comprehensive management evaluations of program operations.

TRANSITIONAL SERVICES

Many offenders need help if they are to make a successful return to the community. Most offenders encounter long lags between release, employment, and their first paychecks because they lack basic social skills, such as communication, problem solving, decisionmaking, money management, and working with others. Offenders typically require substantial job placement assistance because they are inexperienced in successfully getting work and lack confidence in their ability to obtain and hold legitimate jobs.

The transitional services provided in prisons are not receiving enough attention to be of much help to offenders.

- Effective social education programs have not been established.
- Offenders get little assistance in locating employment before release from prison.

- Offenders given the maximum gratuity, or "gate money," when released from the correctional systems GAO reviewed could support themselves from 9 to 24 days if single and 4 to 12 days if married with two children.
- Some Federal institutions were getting insufficient funds for gratuities while others were getting too much; none of the institutions had definitive criteria to ensure that the amount of gratuities given offenders was based on their needs.

IMPROVED MANAGEMENT INFORMATION
SYSTEMS NEEDED

Correctional agencies need comprehensive management information for monitoring and evaluating program operations at each institution so they can make informed decisions.

Federal prison managers prepared manual reports for their own use because the automated information provided on Bureau of Prisons education and training programs was inaccurate, incomplete, and untimely. In one institution the vocational training program had 47 percent fewer enrollments in 1 year than was reported by the automated system. Reasons for this included inadequate staff training and lack of management followup to be sure of accurate reporting.

↳The Bureau's management information system also failed to provide

- cost data by individual program for comparative analysis,
- summary information on inmate needs to assist in selecting appropriate programs,
- current plans for inmates to measure their progress, and
- information for reviewing programs which aid offender transition to the community.

Although three of the four States reviewed received \$2.7 million in Federal grants to establish management information systems, only

one has a system which is operational and which has the potential to provide comprehensive information. The fourth State plans to implement a comprehensive system using its own funds.

PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS IS UNKNOWN

Criteria to assess program performance including the success or failure of programs to improve offender employability have not been formulated. Also, no system has been established to collect all relevant information for evaluation of program management and impact.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Attorney General should instruct the Director of the Bureau of Prisons to strengthen the management of the Bureau's programs for improving the employability of offenders by making sure that: Classification and counseling programs

- identify offenders' needs and interest,
- encourage participation in appropriate programs, and
- provide regular counseling and assessment of offender progress in programs.

Academic and occupational education programs
prepare offenders for employment by

- developing uniform curriculum materials with enrollment and completion criteria,
- ✓--implementing better organized on-the-job training programs,
- ✓--reexamining each apprenticeship program to ensure that all requirements are met, and
- ✓--designing a rewards system that encourages program participation in conjunction with tight controls on student performance.

Transitional services are given sufficient attention by

- ✓ --implementing current policies for social education and prerelease programs,
- ✓ --giving parole officers sufficient information to help offenders find employment or training after release,
- ✓ --making sure offenders with the need get an adequate gratuity upon release, and
- ✓ --considering establishing inmate savings plans.

The management information system is improved by

- ✓ --training staff responsible for collecting and reporting information and
- ✓ --establishing a management structure to ensure that data is collected and reported in an accurate, complete, and timely manner.

The Attorney General should require the Director of the Bureau of Prisons and the Administrator of the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration to design programs which assess system effectiveness in improving the employability of offenders and which all correctional agencies can carry out economically.

The Director of the National Institute of Corrections should disseminate to each correctional agency for use as models the

- results of the Bureau's reassessment of its classification and counseling services, as recommended above, including a description of how the management of those services has been improved to overcome the problems discussed in this report and
- curriculum materials and program review criteria developed by the Bureau.

The Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare should direct the Commissioner of Education to encourage the States to improve management of the classification, counseling, curriculum, on-the-job training, and transition

programs in their correctional institutions by using a portion of the assistance provided them under the Vocational Education Act of 1963 and the Education Amendments of 1976.

The Secretary of Labor should encourage the use of Comprehensive Employment and Training Act funds in State correctional institutions for establishing and operating

- programs that assess inmate needs, interests, and potential in the labor market and provide counseling and preparation for entering the labor market;
- outreach programs to make offenders aware of manpower services available in their States and to persuade them to use such services;
- programs to refer offenders to appropriate employment, training, or other opportunities upon their release from prison; and
- supportive services to enable offenders to take advantage of employment opportunities.

The Secretary of Labor also should require the Administrator of the Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training to

- investigate proposed apprenticeship programs in correctional institutions in sufficient depth to ensure that all program requirements can be met and
- monitor continually the adequacy of the training provided by registered programs.

AGENCY COMMENTS

The Departments of Labor and Health, Education, and Welfare concurred with the recommendations for improving classification, counseling services, education, training, and transition programs in correctional institutions. (See app. I.)

The Department of Justice was critical of the report but did not specifically address many of the recommendations GAO made. The Department's

comments were almost 2 months late and were not received until after this report was finalized. GAO has included the comments and its analysis as appendix IV.

Comments received from the States where GAO did indepth work were considered in preparing the report.

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ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|------|---|
| ABE | adult basic education |
| BAT | Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training |
| CETA | Comprehensive Employment and Training Act |
| FPI | Federal Prison Industries, Inc. |
| GAO | General Accounting Office |
| GATB | General Aptitude Test Battery |
| GED | General Education Development |
| HEW | Department of Health, Education, and Welfare |
| IQ | intelligence quotient |
| LEAA | Law Enforcement Assistance Administration |
| OJT | on-the-job training |
| SAT | Stanford Achievement Test |

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

As of December 31, 1977, about 290,800 adult offenders were in the custody of American correctional systems. ^{1/} Approximately 29,400 were in Federal institutions and the remaining 261,400 were in State institutions. Most of these offenders lack the necessary education and skills to obtain and maintain gainful employment. In fact, this group constitutes one of the most educationally deprived groups in the United States.

Education and training programs geared toward assisting the offender in adjusting to society after incarceration and in helping to solve employment problems are offered in most correctional institutions. Nationwide, about 75 percent of all correctional institutions conduct formal vocational training programs; most offer some form of academic education; approximately one-third operate prison industries; and over 80 percent assign offenders to operational or maintenance activities.

IMPORTANCE OF HELPING OFFENDERS FIND EMPLOYMENT

Some offenders are irrevocably committed to criminal careers, some are uncommitted to goals of any kind, and others have conventional goals in life. Whatever the diverse characteristics of offenders, they have a number of things in common:

- Approximately 95 percent of all felons incarcerated in Federal and State institutions will eventually be returned to the community.
- They will need jobs to support themselves when released.
- They will need basic education, marketable vocational skills, and social skills to obtain employment.

^{1/}This figure excludes those offenders in jails and local facilities.

--Most will need job placement assistance to find employment.

The cost of corrections, as one component of the overall criminal justice system, has been estimated to be in excess of \$2.5 billion per year, and the annual costs associated with incarcerating an adult offender are up to \$12,000. Since research has shown that 30 to 50 percent of the offenders released will be recommitted to a correctional institution within a year--with the overall commitment rate increasing by more than 20 percent a year--the cost can only increase in the future.

Studies have shown some relationship between employment and recidivism for offenders. Failure to adequately address the problems of improving offender employability could increase the chances that many offenders will continue to return to prison because they do not have the necessary basic education, job skills, and social skills needed to support themselves and successfully reintegrate into society.

CHANGING PHILOSOPHY OF CORRECTIONS

Throughout the history of American corrections, change has occurred through a mixture of concern for the welfare of offenders, convenience for correctional administrators, and economics. The pioneer prisons in this country were established in the early 1800s because of discontent with past practices of corporal and capital punishment for all types of offenders. Initially, the emphasis was on penitence and work in solitude. This philosophy gave way to a new system where offenders worked in groups for increased productivity.

The industrial prison prevailed in the United States well past the Civil War, and many of the punitive attributes and abuses of prison labor practices continued well into the 20th century. Around 1870, concern for the offender focused on improvements in food and living conditions. Most important at this time was the introduction of education and other programs for the reformation of offenders.

It was not until 1930 that the era of rehabilitation began. Since that date, various treatment and program models were proposed and tried for the rehabilitation and correction of offenders. The belief that participation in treatment and other programs would make noncriminals out of criminals was so strong that offenders were compelled to participate.

The efforts to change the offender by coercive programming continued into the 1960s, when correctional authorities started allowing offenders to voluntarily participate in programs. Also, more emphasis was placed on the reintegration of the offender into the community through education and work furlough programs.

By the late 1960s, the dominant changes in correctional institutions were those occasioned by court decisions which dealt primarily with the civil rights of offenders. The struggles of incorporating the various court decisions into the fabric of daily institutional management continues and may explain, in part, a growing trend toward the deemphasis of rehabilitation as an objective of incarceration and the return to the earlier perspective that incarceration for punishment is reason enough.

In the 1970s, the Bureau of Prisons' position has been that rehabilitation cannot be "coerced"--people can change only if they are motivated. According to the Bureau, this position calls for an increased emphasis on quality education, vocational counseling, community programs, and other important services. Offenders will continue to be provided with program opportunities designed to assist them. However, participation will be entirely voluntary because although institutions cannot change offenders, they can and should provide offenders with the opportunity to change themselves.

ROLE OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

The Federal Government plays a threefold role in improving the employability of offenders in correctional institutions by

- operating programs in the Bureau of Prisons for Federal law violators committed to the custody of the Attorney General;
- developing model programs supported by the Bureau, the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA), the Department of Labor, and the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW); and
- providing financial and technical assistance to the States through these same Federal agencies.

The legislation under which these efforts are carried out is discussed in appendix II.

A study made for HEW in April 1977 estimated that about \$94 million in Federal funds has been expended for correctional education and training programs in fiscal year 1975. About \$12 million of this was used for Federal offenders. Of the remaining \$82 million, about \$9 million--or 11 percent--was supplied by LEAA. HEW accounted for \$72 million--or 88 percent--of the total, and Labor provided \$1 million.

SCOPE OF REVIEW

We examined those programs that the Bureau and four State departments of corrections used for improving the employability of offenders. Certain background information on the Bureau and the four State departments of corrections is included in appendix III.

Between August 1977 and March 1978, we visited 16 Federal and State correctional institutions to examine the manner in which education and training programs were provided to offenders. We made our review at the Bureau's headquarters, two of the Bureau's regional offices, and the correctional institutions at El Reno, Oklahoma; Fort Worth, Texas; Texarkana, Texas; Terre Haute, Indiana; and Sandstone, Minnesota. We also conducted work at the State departments of corrections and selected institutions in Kentucky, Minnesota, Ohio, and Texas. We reviewed records and discussed the procedures and operations of programs with correctional officials and offenders.

In this report, the education, training, and related programs in institutions are viewed as an interrelated system whose objective is to improve the employment prospects of offenders. The elements of such a system are

- classification, assignment, counseling, and guidance services designed to identify the needs and interests of offenders and to encourage them to pursue programs that meet those needs;
- academic and occupational education programs designed to prepare offenders for employment upon their release;
- social education, prerelease activities, job placement assistance, and financial resources necessary to assist offenders in successfully reintegrating into the community;
- management information systems designed to monitor offender and system performance; and

--evaluation programs designed to assess the effectiveness of the system in improving the employability of offenders.

Each of these elements is discussed in subsequent chapters of this report. These elements must be designed and operated as an integrated system through which offenders who have the need can be motivated to move toward the goal of securing and retaining legitimate employment after leaving the institution. Also, no report on programs for improving the employability of offenders would be complete without recognizing the constraints that prison management must deal with. A discussion of these constraints is presented in chapter 2.

The States in our review were selected on the basis of their geographic location and are not considered by us to be better or worse than those we did not visit. Because the focus of this report was to identify problems which Federal agencies could more effectively address, the States generally have not been identified except to provide background information or to give them credit for making headway in attempting to solve certain problems. This was done so that other States might be able to contact them to obtain additional information.

CHAPTER 2

PRISON ADMINISTRATORS FACE CONSTRAINTS

IN IMPROVING OFFENDER EMPLOYABILITY

Although studies have shown that programs for improving the employability of offenders may mean the critical difference between their successful adjustment to society or return to prison, implementing effective programs is "easier said than done." Prison administrators face a number of constraints in attempting to improve the employability of offenders. A discussion of these constraints follows.

1. Offenders have a history of failure.

Most offenders have poor employment histories, possess few marketable skills, lack basic education necessary to develop these skills, possess undesirable character traits, and increasingly find unskilled positions eliminated by technological advances. Many have low self-esteem and are not motivated to pursue legitimate careers.

The offender population in Federal and State correctional institutions is largely young, male, and disproportionately represented by lower social and economic levels and minority groups. In many ways, their problems are similar to those of the hard-core unemployed, except that offenders carry the additional stigma of being convicts.

A study for HEW reported that the average educational level of all offenders was grade level 8.5, while it was grade level 9.7 for Federal offenders. The study also reported that offenders typically functioned two or three grades below the actual number of school years completed. Also, up to 90 percent of adult offenders did not have high school diplomas when first incarcerated. One study showed that in a majority of the adult institutions, more than 50 percent of the population had less than an eighth-grade education. Correctional officials estimated that between 70 and 80 percent of all offenders had no marketable skills when they enter prison.

2. Primary emphasis must be placed on the custody and care of offenders which leaves little resources for programs to improve their employability.

The primary goals of correctional administrators are custody and care to (1) prevent escapes, (2) satisfy the basic needs of offenders, and (3) prevent them from harming themselves and others. Providing custody means that all aspects of offender activities are tightly controlled and that most of an institution's funding is used to provide sufficient personnel to secure the institution. Little is left to support programs for improving the employability of offenders.

The Bureau of Prisons, for example, spent about \$218 million for the operation of its institutions in fiscal year 1977, but only about \$6.6 million--or 3 percent--was for education and training of offenders. Federal Prison Industries, Inc., supplied an additional \$4 million for training of offenders. The four States included in our review spent about \$184 million during fiscal year 1977 for the operation of their correctional institutions, and only about \$9 million--or 5 percent--was for education and training of offenders. (See app. III.)

Many programs designed to improve the chances for successful transition of an offender from prison to the community require that the offender be outside the confines of the institution. Such programs include work release, study release, furloughs, and halfway houses. Custody considerations, including the prevention of escapes and the desire to prevent offenders from committing additional crimes while the community, generally limit the use of such programs to less than 1 percent of the total number of offenders incarcerated in correctional institutions. Normally, offenders who are eligible for community programs have committed less serious offenses against society, generally served a major portion of their sentence, and demonstrated positive social adjustment.

3. Institutional needs take priority over the education and training needs of the offender.

One of the most troublesome problems prison administrators face is the matching of institutional

needs with the education and training needs of a mixed group of offenders. Since correctional staff must assign a large percentage of the offender population to work details for the purpose of running the daily operations of the institution, there is little opportunity to meet many of the education and training needs of offenders. Few correctional institutions have been able to structure an effective training program out of institutional work assignments.

Most of these work opportunities are limited to simple chores, such as food services, janitorial services, and grounds and facilities maintenance. These jobs provide little opportunity for the offender to develop skills to effectively compete for employment in the competitive marketplace upon release from prison.

4. Overcrowding in Federal and State correctional institutions limits the opportunities offenders have for improving their employability.

Prison administrators in Federal and State correctional institutions are experiencing severe overcrowding problems. The offender population in Federal facilities was 29,400, or about 28 percent over the design capacity of these facilities as of December 31, 1977. Three of the States included in our review were facing overcrowding problems. The fourth State, Minnesota, housed 1,755 offenders at its 5 adult institutions as of December 31, 1977, or 87 percent of their design capacity.

In some Federal institutions, overcrowding has resulted in a few waiting lists for entrance into certain education and training programs. These waiting lists normally delayed rather than precluded an offender from participating in programs. In some State correctional institutions, overcrowding severely decreased the chances an offender had to participate in programs because there were limited resources available for education and training as well as long waiting lists.

In an effort to ease the impact of overcrowding, prison administrators have assigned more offenders to work assignments and prison industries than can be productively employed.

While these assignments will give offenders some tasks to perform, they do not provide much of an opportunity to develop or maintain marketable skills and good work habits.

5. Lack of employment opportunities in the community.

Even the most highly educated and trained offender will have difficulty in finding employment if there are poor economic conditions in his community.

* * * * *

Although these constraints must be recognized, we believe that management must work within them to achieve the maximum return from existing programs. The other alternative--doing nothing--does not appear acceptable to us.

CHAPTER 3

OFFENDERS ARE NOT RECEIVING COMPREHENSIVE

CLASSIFICATION AND COUNSELING SERVICES

Offenders typically have a number of needs which have to be addressed to enhance their chances of securing and maintaining gainful employment upon release. Correctional institutions have classification services which are designed to (1) identify these needs, (2) develop program recommendations best suited to fulfill the identified needs, and (3) regularly reassess offender progress in programs. Counseling services are offered to encourage the offender to pursue and complete the recommended programs as well as to assist the offender with day-to-day problems that, if left unattended, impede program achievements.

Federal and State correctional institutions are not providing comprehensive classification and counseling services. Rather, classification has been primarily used to (1) specify a custody level, (2) assign living quarters, and (3) designate some type of institutional assignment. Counseling services have generally been limited to assisting offenders in solving institutional adjustment problems related to incarceration. Our review at Federal and State institutions showed that:

- Classification teams are not always prepared to help offenders make appropriate program decisions.
- Offenders' progress in programs is not always assessed.
- Comprehensive and regularly scheduled counseling services are not available.

Consequently, offenders may be pursuing inappropriate goals, and program resources may be wasted.

WHAT IS A COMPREHENSIVE CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM?

The American Correctional Association's Manual of Standards for Adult Correctional Institutions states that a classification system should help ensure that offenders participate in programs that will assist them during their incarceration and subsequent release to the community. It should also provide for assessment of risk and the efficient management of the offender population. All new offenders

should be carefully screened and evaluated for proper custodial assignment and program placement. Offenders should participate in assessing their needs and in selecting programs to meet those needs. Each offender's progress should be reassessed at least every 12 months.

The Bureau of Prisons' policy is that classification will

- identify the causal factors underlying each individual's offense,
- recommend programs for offenders according to their specific needs and availability of resources,
- maintain control of offenders, and
- develop and record the necessary data for individual case management and long-range program planning.

The Bureau notes that it is necessary to identify and utilize all available programs in the correction of offenders. Programs needed by offenders are to be determined through a systematic classification process which includes development of individual program plans.

The Bureau's classification of an offender requires a composite of reports and forms submitted by various departments within the institution. A classification committee meets with each offender and is supposed to identify an offender's needs and design a program to meet them. Classification data should include information on an offender's education, possession of a marketable skill, and employment history. The committee is supposed to make education and vocational training recommendations in the form of clearly stated goals. Recommendations are also required for programs in self-control, interpersonal relationships, standards and values, and aspirations. The States have similar classification programs.

CLASSIFICATION TEAMS ARE NOT
ALWAYS PREPARED TO HELP OFFENDERS
MAKE APPROPRIATE PROGRAM DECISIONS

Classification teams in Federal and State institutions are not always able to help offenders make program decisions. This can gear offenders for failure, close off opportunities for qualified offenders, and waste valuable resources.

Offender needs are not
always adequately determined

The Bureau and State correctional agencies have policies which provide for administering certain screening tests and evaluations to all offenders during reception. The purpose is to (1) identify offender needs, (2) assist in establishing a custody level, and (3) identify the need for further indepth diagnostic evaluations. Generally, the screening tests measure academic achievements, intelligence quotient (IQ), vocational aptitude, and personality traits. Other required evaluations include criminal and social histories and psychological diagnosis.

We found that Bureau and some State correctional institutions were not always testing offenders or performing the required evaluations. The following examples illustrate some of the deficiencies we found.

- A sample of 145 offenders already classified at 3 Federal institutions revealed that 76.6 percent had been tested for academic achievement, 77.9 percent had been tested for IQ, only 33.1 percent had been tested for vocational aptitude, and only 27.6 percent had been tested for personality traits.
- One State did not have a procedure that required testing of all offenders during reception. Tests were administered only after the offender expressed a desire to enroll in a particular education or training program. In January 1978, a procedure was implemented which now requires that all offenders be tested during reception. This test is designed to measure academic achievement, vocational aptitude, IQ, and personality traits.
- In another State, procedures require that all offenders receive a complete diagnostic workup, including staff reports and testing, to identify needs at a reception center. At one of the State's two reception centers, we found that the required staff reports and testing generally had not been completed for about half of the offenders that had been classified. Corrections officials stated that staff limitations precluded the complete testing and evaluation of offender needs.

The identification of offender needs is not being accomplished in some instances because institutional personnel are not ensuring that all required information is assembled. Usually, different entities are responsible for scheduling,

administering, and scoring tests and preparing written evaluations. For example, at one Federal institution, the education department is responsible for administering academic and vocational aptitude tests, while the psychology department is responsible for administering IQ and personality tests and preparing psychological evaluations. It is then the responsibility of the individual caseworker to collect this data for each offender assigned to his caseload. The caseworker has no control over many of the activities for identification of offender needs and can only hope that proper testing and evaluations will be performed.

A simple system of central control for the collection of classification data would solve this problem. For instance:

--At one State reception center, all classification data is sent to the office of the Associate Warden for Treatment, where the secretary first records receipt of the document in a master log and then places the document in the master file established for the offender. The log contains a checklist for each offender of all documents required to complete the classification package. Copies of certain required data are sent to the caseworker for use prior to classification. After all the required data is logged in, the offender is scheduled to meet his classification team, and a preclassification counseling session is scheduled for the offender with his caseworker to discuss the findings of the classification study and probable program recommendations. If a required document is not received, the secretary contacts the appropriate department.

Classification teams are not always prepared

We found instances when classification teams had not been prepared to make well-informed program recommendations to offenders. In some cases, teams were not able to make appropriate recommendations because data about the offender's needs had not been sufficiently developed at the time of classification. In other cases, the team members had not adequately familiarized themselves with the available classification data. Generally, only 10 minutes or less was allocated for each offender being classified. This time is not nearly adequate to make a comprehensive review of the classification data, make a team decision on program recommendations, and present and discuss the recommendations

with the offender. The teams were making only cursory reviews of the classification data, mostly limited to the offender's criminal history, his conduct since incarceration, and a few obvious identified needs.

Because the teams are not fully aware of the background and needs of the offender, many appropriate program and assignment recommendations are overlooked or inappropriate recommendations are made by the team. For example:

--Inmate Dave, 26 years old, is serving a 15-year sentence in a Federal institution for armed bank robbery. This is his first commitment to a penal institution. Although he dropped out of high school in the 11th grade, scored very well on his academic achievement test, and has an IQ of 102, the team did not recommend that he enroll in the General Educational Development (GED) program. The team did recommend that Dave participate in a vocational training program, but he was not tested for vocational aptitude.

--Inmate Norb, 26 years old, is serving a 10-year sentence at a Federal institution for bank robbery. This is his first commitment to a penal institution. The offender was not tested for academic achievement, IQ, vocational aptitude, or personality. The presentence investigation report, one of the few documents of substantive information available to the classification team, indicated that he was a high school graduate, had a poor employment record, and possessed no apparent job skills. Also, the report indicated that on the basis of a test administered 12 years earlier, his IQ was average. The classification team, without further investigation, recommended him for enrollment in the Post Secondary Education program, but made no recommendations regarding the development of a marketable skill or learning good work habits.

--Inmate Mike, 34 years old, is serving a 5-year sentence for distribution of heroin. This is his first incarceration. He claims to have completed high school in one instance but also states he dropped out of school in the 11th grade to enter vocational training and learn the drycleaning trade. He was not tested for academic achievement, IQ, or vocational aptitude. The classification team recommended that he:

- Enroll in adult basic education.
- Enroll in adult secondary education.
- Enroll in postsecondary education.
- Develop stable work habits and learn a skill.

OFFENDER PROGRESS IN PROGRAMS
IS NOT ALWAYS ASSESSED

Although the Bureau and most State correctional agencies require written progress reports and a review of offenders' program activities at least annually, we found that (1) written progress reports were not always prepared and (2) offenders' program activities were not reviewed on a regular basis at some of the institutions we visited. Also, we found that reclassification activities were often conducted on an unscheduled basis and then only for the benefit of the institution or at the request of the offender. For example:

- At one institution visited, many medium custody offenders were reclassified to minimum custody and then transferred to the institution's farm camp in an effort to reduce overcrowding in the main institution. In reclassifying the offenders, only their past criminal history and behavior while incarcerated was considered. No consideration was given to program involvement or whether programs could be continued at the farm camp.

Furthermore, when progress reports were prepared, they were generally for only those offenders eligible for parole consideration.

Officials at Federal and State correctional institutions stated that they did not have sufficient resources to continuously evaluate the progress of all offenders. The little time available for offender review and reclassification activities is generally reserved for those offenders eligible for parole, those having institutional adjustment problems, those requesting program changes or institutional transfers, and administrative purposes. 1/

1/E.g., a warden's discretionary measures, such as transferring an inmate to a safer institution or transferring an inmate because of behavioral problems.

Because there were no regularly scheduled progress reviews for offenders at some institutions, several officials told us that program reviews and reclassification actions were dominated by a small percentage of troublemakers and manipulators in the offender population. As a result, the majority of the offender population is closed out of these activities unless they self-initiate requests. Officials also told us of offenders that had been incarcerated for several years without receiving progress reports or program reviews.

COMPREHENSIVE COUNSELING
SERVICES ARE NOT AVAILABLE

The Manual of Correctional Standards, developed by the American Correctional Association, states that a major function of the correctional agency is to influence change in the attitudes and behavior of the offender. Counseling by professionally trained staff, such as psychiatrists, psychologists, and social caseworkers, assist the offender in developing better insight into and an understanding of institutional and free society living. The influence of the professional staff can be extended by trained paraprofessionals under the supervision of the professional staff. To be effective, counseling should be provided on a regularly scheduled basis, as offenders do not use counseling services unless they are scheduled to do so. In addition to the American Correctional Association standards, many other studies support the importance of an effective counseling program.

We found that comprehensive counseling services were not available to all offenders in Federal and State correctional institutions because there were not enough qualified counselors.

--The ratio of counselors to each offender was below established standards in many of the institutions we visited.

--Many counselors did not meet established standards for education and training.

--Vocational counseling was practically nonexistent.

Counselors in Federal and State correctional institutions are often overwhelmed with large caseloads and other duties. As a result, the quantity and quality of counseling services available to offenders does not meet the level required to successfully assist them in improving their employability or reintegration into the community.

Offender-to-counselor ratios are excessive

The staffing criteria established by the American Correctional Association provides that each institution should have at least 1 psychiatrist and 3 psychologists for 600 offenders and 1 caseworker for 30 to 150 offenders depending on the type of offender, the rate of turnover, and the institution's mission. We compared the size of professional psychological and caseworker staffs at the 16 institutions we visited with the standards of the American Correctional Association and found the 16 institutions had 28 fewer psychiatrists and 56 fewer psychologists than recommended.

The number of offenders per caseworker at 12 institutions ranged from 9 at 1 State institution to 263 at another and averaged 1 caseworker for 125 offenders. Four institutions in 1 State, which housed about 6,400 offenders, had no caseworkers. Officials at Federal and State correctional institutions stated that excessive caseloads and high caseload turnover rates--sometimes exceeding 90 percent--prevented many offenders from receiving needed counseling services.

Since many non-counseling-related duties, which are important to the overall operation and security of the institution, are attached to counselor positions, counseling suffers. These duties include:

- Developing classification data.
- Participating in classification, disciplinary, honor status, and other institutional committees.
- Providing staff training and development.
- Preparing reports, maintaining offender files, and answering correspondence.
- Conducting evaluations for institutional and other criminal justice departments, such as the courts and the parole authority.
- Supervising admission orientation and prerelease programs.
- Dealing with a myriad of offender-related activities such as assignment changes, transfer requests, custody changes, legal affairs, veterans affairs, family matters, changes to visiting lists, congressional inquiries, and approving the transfer of offender funds.

There is little doubt that these activities are important and that counselors are best qualified to accomplish these tasks. The demand for many of these activities, however, has increased in recent years due to circumstances such as the recognition of offender rights, changes in parole procedures and criteria, and the Privacy Act of 1974, thus leaving little time for counseling offenders. This small amount of time is allocated on a first-come-first-serve basis. The following examples illustrate the impact other duties have on counseling services.

--One State institution has 2 psychologists for an inmate population of about 1,400. These psychologists are required to administer and score pre-classification testing for all newly admitted offenders and to perform all psychological evaluations requested by the courts, parole board, forensic unit, and the institutional administration. As a result, each psychologist is able to have a caseload of only five or six offenders, and then only long enough to deal with very immediate problems. No indepth psychoanalysis or group counseling services are provided by the psychologists.

--One casework counselor at a Federal institution did no counseling and was spending full time chairing the institutional disciplinary committee and coordinating offender transfers to other institutions. Other institutional casework counselors were maintaining caseloads in excess of 200 offenders.

Many counselors do not meet established education and training standards

The American Correctional Association standards provide that professional counselors have appropriate training in their respective fields of counseling. Casework counselors should have a master's degree, or at least specialized and intensive pretraining in the correctional system. Psychologists should possess a minimum of a doctorate degree in clinical psychology. Paraprofessionals should be properly trained and carefully supervised by professional staff.

Neither the Bureau nor the States require new casework counselors to meet these standards. The minimum employment qualifications range from a seventh-grade education in Ohio to a bachelor's degree, including 24 semester-hours of social sciences, for Bureau employees. Kentucky and Minnesota require only a bachelor's degree in any discipline, although Minnesota prefers a degree in the behavioral sciences. None

of the States nor the Bureau offers adequate specialized and intensive pretraining for new caseworkers. Some correctional officials stated that they had many caseworkers with little or no training in correctional casework counseling. Also, Texas generally does not provide caseworkers, except to staff a few specialized treatment units serving a small percentage of the offender population.

The psychologists hired by the Bureau and Minnesota met the standards, but those hired by the other States did not. Part of this problem could be that the minimum qualifications for employment as a psychologist in those States do not come close to meeting the standards. Ohio requires only a bachelor's degree in psychology; Kentucky, a master's degree in psychology or a related field; and Texas, a master's degree.

The Bureau's attempt to improve the counseling was not entirely successful

The Bureau, in an effort to provide a formal program of counseling assistance for offenders, established a program in 1970 which promoted experienced correctional officers to GS-9 Correctional Counselors. This program was necessary because the availability of trained treatment specialists (casework counselors) was very limited. The Bureau's 1976 analysis of the Correctional Counselor Program, however, identified several problems, including the fact that correctional counselors had not received adequate training. Counselors were not trained to address offender problems of a legal nature, such as sentences and parole hearings. In addition, some counselors did not feel they were adequately trained in individual and group counseling techniques. Our interviews with correctional counselors revealed some of these same problems and concerns.

In addition, the correctional counselor is affected by a unique problem in that offenders often view him as just another custody officer not to be trusted. This is only natural because correctional counselors wear custody officer uniforms, are carried on the custodial roster, are at least partially supervised by the Chief Correctional Supervisor in many institutions, and are assigned to perform direct custodial duties. This not only creates an identity problem for offenders, but also for the correctional counselor.

Institutions need trained vocational counselors

In addition to the counseling services previously mentioned, the American Correctional Association standards state that skilled vocational counselors should be employed to guide the vocational placement and training of offenders. We found that institutions we visited generally did not employ trained full-time vocational counselors. To the contrary, vocational counseling is generally provided informally by work supervisors, casework counselors, and vocational education instructors. Bureau and State correctional officials told us that trained vocational counselors would be of benefit in fully identifying offender needs and recommending them for appropriate programs.

STATES NEED TO USE FEDERAL PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS CLASSIFICATION AND COUNSELING PROBLEMS

The States we visited needed to use available Federal grant programs to assist their correctional agencies in improving their classification and counseling programs. While the amount of such assistance is limited, it obviously could be put to good use in correctional institutions.

The Vocational Education Act of 1963, as amended, authorizes the Commissioner of Education to make grants to the States under section 130 to assist them in improving and providing supportive services for their vocational education programs. Section 134 of the act provides that not less than 20 percent of these funds be used to support programs for vocational development guidance and counseling programs and services to possibly include vocational and educational counseling for youth offenders and adults in correctional institutions.

Part C of title III of the Education Amendments of 1976--Career Education and Career Development--provides Federal assistance to the States to enable them to (1) plan for the development of career education and development programs and activities for individuals and (2) plan for the improvement of existing programs and activities in the areas of awareness, exploration, planning, and decisionmaking of individuals served with regard to career opportunities and career development throughout the lifetimes of such individuals.

In Part D of the Education Amendments of 1976--Guidance and Counseling--the Congress stated that

- guidance and counseling activities were an essential component to assure success in achieving the goals of many education programs;
- lack of coordination among guidance and counseling activities had resulted in an underutilization of available resources; and
- increased and improved preparation of education professionals was needed in guidance and counseling, including administration, with special emphasis on inservice training.

This part of the act authorizes the Commissioner of Education to contract with or make grants to various public agencies and private nonprofit organizations to (1) assist them in conducting institutes, workshops, and seminars designed to improve the professional guidance qualifications of teachers and counselors, (2) provide training for supervisory and technical personnel having responsibilities for guidance and counseling, and (3) improve supervisory services in the field of guidance and counseling. The Commissioner is also authorized to make grants to States to assist them in carrying out programs to coordinate new and existing programs of guidance and counseling the States.

Title I of the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) provides support through States' prime sponsors for programs to (1) assess the individual's needs, interests, and potential in the labor market and (2) counsel and prepare the individual to enter the labor market. ¹/ Title III authorizes the Secretary of Labor to use funds available under title III to provide additional title I services to offenders.

CONCLUSIONS

The Bureau and State correctional agencies are not managing their classification programs in a way that will assure adequate identification of offenders' needs, development of program plans for offenders' goals, and routine reassessment of the offenders' progress in programs. Also, correctional

¹/For more detailed information on the use of CETA funds for offenders, see "Employment and Training Programs for Offenders," U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, ET Handbook No. 341, July 15, 1977.

agencies have not implemented comprehensive counseling programs which provide a full range of counseling services administered by qualified counselors. The absence of these services detracts from the ability of these agencies to identify, motivate, and aid those offenders who want to improve their employment prospects voluntarily or who would do so if provided some guidance. It also wastes valuable resources by making inappropriate program assignments.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend that the Attorney General instruct the Director of the Bureau of Prisons to reassess the classification and counseling services provided in Federal institutions with the objectives of overcoming the management problems identified in this report and ensuring that:

- The classification program in each institution is able to and does provide for the time and effort required to (1) identify each offender's needs, (2) motivate those offenders with the need to improve their prospects for employment, and (3) routinely reassess offender progress in programs.
- Comprehensive and regularly scheduled counseling services are provided all offenders.
- Correctional counselors receive sufficient training to be able to adequately carry out their counseling duties.

The Director of the National Institute of Corrections should disseminate to each State correctional agency the results of the Bureau's reassessment of its classification and counseling services as recommended above, including a description of how the management of those services has been improved to overcome the problems discussed in this report.

We recommend that the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare instruct the Commissioner of Education to encourage the States to apply a portion of the assistance provided them under the Vocational Education Act of 1963 and the Education Amendments of 1976 to help improve the classification and counseling programs in their correctional institutions.

We also recommend that the Secretary of Labor encourage the use of CETA funds to (1) establish and operate programs that assess offender needs, interests, and potential in the labor market and (2) provide counseling and preparation for entering the labor market.

AGENCY COMMENTS

The Departments of Labor and HEW commented on a draft of this report by letters dated November 29, 1978, and December 1, 1978, respectively. (See app. I.) Both Departments concurred in our recommendations for improving classification and counseling services in correctional institutions. HEW stated that the Commissioner of Education would send a memorandum to every State department of education emphasizing the need to use a portion of their vocational grants to bring about needed improvements in correctional institution programs. Labor stated that our recommendation appeared to be consistent with the Department's future direction in offender programing.

The Department of Justice was asked to comment on a draft of this report by letter dated September 11, 1978. Comments were requested by November 15, 1978, but were not received until January 1979. Since our report had already been finalized, we included their comments and our analysis as appendix IV. This was done to have only the necessary changes to the report.

Comments from the States where we did indepth audit work were considered, and changes have been made where appropriate.

CHAPTER 4

EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROGRAMS

NEED BETTER MANAGING

Federal and State correctional institutions offer offenders a wide range of activities, such as academic education, occupational training, maintenance and operation of the institution, and work in prison industries. If properly managed, these activities can enhance offenders' chances of being ready for the world of work. We found that correctional administrators were not making maximum use of these resources because

- uniform curriculum materials for education and training programs within most correctional systems were absent,
- program enrollment and completion criteria were not standardized and/or uniformly applied,
- few on-the-job (OJT) training programs had been established,
- apprenticeship programs in the Bureau were often deficient,
- institutional rewards in the Bureau were a disincentive to offender participation in education and training programs, and
- work assignments were not providing enough training opportunities for offenders.

Since many offenders are returning to the community ill prepared to compete in the job market, correctional administrators operating education and training programs need to make a greater effort to effectively use the limited resources allocated for improving the employability of offenders. To do this, they must first conduct more comprehensive reviews of program activities.

CORRECTIONAL SYSTEMS SHOULD HAVE UNIFORM CURRICULUM MATERIALS FOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROGRAMS

"Curriculum materials" are normally defined as anything of a written or an audiovisual nature developed to meet the objectives of an education or a training program. Also, teacher guides and manuals which include goals and objectives,

learning experiences, activities, instructional aids, and tests are normally considered curriculum materials.

Our review showed that only one correctional system--the Texas Department of Corrections--had developed standardized curriculum materials for its institutional education and training programs. In the other systems, each institution offered education and training programs with the curriculums varying between institutions depending on the preference of the instructor. Consequently, many offenders are unable to continue a program without some disruption in instruction when transferring from one institution to another, and their progress is unknown at the time of the transfer. Furthermore, the Bureau and two State correctional agencies included in our review had not established a mechanism to ensure that offenders who were transferred were given priority in reenrolling and completing the programs at other institutions.

The following examples illustrate the problems we found in Federal and State correctional institutions.

- The Bureau has defined "adult basic education" (ABE) as a program designed to assist offenders whose communication and computation skills constitute difficulties in securing and retaining employment. At one institution, the reading comprehension and writing skills curriculum were developed especially for adults. The ABE curriculum also included mathematics, English, and spelling. At another institution, the ABE curriculum was merely a remedial reading program. It utilized materials designed in the early 1960s for elementary and secondary school systems. More modern materials have been specifically developed for adult education programs. These materials may have been of greater interest to the offender population. Offenders completing ABE at the latter institution could be at a disadvantage if they attempted to enroll in the GED program because any deficiencies in computation skills would not have been corrected.

- There was little relationship between the curriculums for a masonry course taught within several institutions of a State correctional system. The instructor at one institution in this State informed us that he routinely received offenders transferred from other institutions, and it was very difficult to give them any advanced standing in the program since there was little relationship between the curriculums used at each institution.

The Texas Department of Corrections operates a comprehensive school district--Windham School District--within its correctional system. The curriculum and course materials are provided to instructors in a standard format and are organized by individual units for flexibility and the evaluation of offender progress in the program. Also, the Windham School District is currently using a competency-based high school curriculum developed jointly by the Texas Education Agency and the University of Texas under a grant from the U.S. Office of Education.

The competency-based educational curriculum was especially developed for adult education and covers six basic areas--(1) transportation, (2) government, (3) health, (4) community services, (5) occupation knowledge, and (6) consumer economics--that are necessary for individuals to successfully live in society. This curriculum is also being pilot tested in nine public school districts in Texas and plans call for its implementation statewide by 1980.

Bureau and State officials told us that standardized curriculums, centrally developed by qualified specialists, would eliminate duplication of effort in curriculum development and help ensure high-quality curriculums. Furthermore, standardized curriculums would enhance program continuity for offenders transferring to other institutions during a course of instruction because their progress would be known.

PROGRAM ENROLLMENT AND COMPLETION CRITERIA WERE NOT STANDARDIZED OR UNIFORMLY APPLIED

Uniform standards for program enrollments and completions are necessary for program accountability, resource allocation, effective program management, and facilitating comparative cost-benefit analyses which can serve as the basis for further program improvements. Our review of education and training programs showed that the Bureau of Prisons and three State correctional systems had no uniform criteria for program enrollments and completions. Only the Texas Department of Corrections has developed uniform criteria for its programs. In the other systems, we found cases when offenders had been permitted to enroll in education and training programs if they had expressed interest. Also, we found cases when program completions had been granted when offenders terminated the program or were transferred from the institutions.

The following examples illustrate the problems we found with program enrollment and completion criteria.

- At one Federal institution, some vocational education programs had no prerequisites for enrollment. For example, the welding and auto mechanics courses had no mandatory prerequisites, but a sixth grade reading level was desired.
- At one State institution, the enrollment criteria for vocational education programs was similarly nonspecific. An offender was expected to have mathematics, reading, and comprehension abilities and a desire to learn. The specific vocational education programs had an open-door enrollment policy, with no academic requirements. Some instructors at this institution preferred that offenders have high school diplomas or GED certificates, whereas other instructors preferred that offenders have eighth grade reading and math skills.
- At another State institution, we found no specific guidelines for enrollment of offenders in vocational education programs. The general criteria state that offenders should (1) have a sincere desire to learn, (2) take the General Aptitude Test Battery (GATB), (3) have minimum abilities in reading and mathematics, and (4) have no more than 3 years nor less than 6 months to their dates for meeting with the parole board. If an offender scores below the norm on the GATB, the Vocational Training Coordinator can still accept the offender if he has a desire to learn.
- At another Federal institution, specific enrollment criteria had been developed for on-the-job training programs. Prior to enrollment in the programs, offenders were required to score 6.0 on the Stanford Achievement Test (SAT) and to score the minimum on the GATB for the chosen occupational field. Our analysis of the records for nine offenders in the on-the-job training programs showed that two had not taken the SAT and one had scored 5.0. Also, we found that six of the nine offenders had not taken the GATB.
- The Bureau's policy for education and training programs requires that an offender score at least 6.0 on the SAT before an ABE course completion is granted. At one Federal institution, we found the instructor had been granting course completions to offenders without administering the SAT. The course did not include any computation skills; therefore, the SAT was not used since offenders could not be expected

to pass the mathematics section of the examination. Also, offenders participating in OJT programs at this institution were considered "program completions" after 1 year, regardless of what they had learned, since no tests were given. Furthermore, all offenders participating in college courses were recorded as program completions when the college term was over even though some offenders may have failed courses. In addition, the Supervisor of Education stated that offenders participating in apprenticeship programs were recorded as program completions when they discontinued participation in a program due to a transfer, release on parole from the institution, or expiration of Veterans Administration educational benefits.

--At another Federal institution, the Supervisor of Education stated that an offender was considered a program completion when he was released from the institution, regardless of his standing in the course. This practice was based on instructions from the Bureau's headquarters.

--At another Federal institution, offenders enrolled in a postsecondary course or the GED program were counted as course completions even though they had not successfully completed the course or passed the GED test.

--At other Federal institutions, many offenders enrolled in apprenticeship programs were granted course completions despite the fact that the offenders had taken only small percentages of the total hours required for completion of registered apprenticeship programs.

The Bureau has recognized the importance of uniform criteria for program completions of education and training programs. In May 1978, the Bureau issued a new policy statement which provides some guidance to the institutional staffs on program completion criteria. While this policy does not address enrollment criteria or provide any guidance as far as program completions for OJT, it does address the issues of adult secondary education and postsecondary education programs. For example, completion of an adult secondary education program shall be based on the achievement of the GED norms as determined by the American Council on Education or a regular high school diploma. Also, successful completion of a postsecondary education program shall be recognized only when an offender has received a passing grade in a course provided by an accredited postsecondary education institution.

Bureau and State officials told us that uniform criteria for program enrollments and completions were needed to guarantee quality education and training programs. They also told us that uniform enrollment criteria would ensure that only qualified candidates were permitted to enter programs. Furthermore, uniform completion criteria would provide potential employers with some assurance that the offender had demonstrated certain capabilities.

FEW OJT PROGRAMS WERE ESTABLISHED

OJT is an organized program that can assist offenders in learning a marketable skill while confined in correctional institutions. A formal OJT program in a correctional institution should include

- a written course curriculum with related academic instruction,
- proper equipment and facilities,
- qualified instructors,
- periodic assessment of offender progress in programs, and
- supervision by the education department.

Although the Bureau and some State correctional agencies recognize the important role that properly structured OJT programs play in providing offenders with marketable skills, few have been established.

Little progress by the Bureau in establishing viable OJT programs

In an attempt to more fully utilize institutional resources, the Bureau directed its institutions in June 1974 to establish formal OJT programs as one means of teaching marketable skills to offenders. The Bureau recommended that each of its institutions determine the training potential of maintenance activities and develop formally structured OJT programs where possible. The curriculum for each OJT program was to be developed jointly by personnel from institutional maintenance and education departments. The maintenance supervisors were given the responsibility for training offenders. The education department was given responsibility for providing the related academic instruction, maintaining the quality and integrity of the program, and measuring offender progress in OJT programs.

At the time of our review--over 2 years after the Bureau directive--formal OJT programs had not been established in three of the five Federal institutions we visited. One of the remaining institutions had seven programs, and the other institution had one program. Thirty-three offenders participated in five of the seven programs at one institution during fiscal year 1977. The Bureau reported that 18 offenders had withdrawn from the programs, 6 were still enrolled, and 9 offenders had completed 2 programs, as shown in the following chart.

| PROGRAM | NUMBER OF OFFENDERS THAT | | | |
|-------------------|--------------------------|-----------|----------|---------------------|
| | PARTICIPATED | COMPLETED | WITHDREW | WERE STILL ENROLLED |
| ELECTRIC SHOP | 3 | 0 | 2 | 1 |
| MACHINE SHOP | 19 | 4 | 12 | 3 |
| PAINT SHOP | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| PLUMBING SHOP | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| SHEETMETAL SHOP | 6 | 5 | 1 | 0 |
| STEAMFITTING SHOP | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 |
| WOODWORKING SHOP | 3 | 0 | 1 | 2 |
| TOTAL | 33 | 9 | 18 | 6 |

The nine completions could have been overstated since the institution granted a completion after 1 year in the program regardless of what the offender had learned.

Our review of the OJT programs showed that offenders were not receiving any formally structured training because the programs were no more than institutional maintenance assignments. The primary deficiencies we found in these programs included:

- Lack of written curriculums.
- Insufficient personnel, equipment, and facilities for training.

- Absence of instructors being held accountable for training of offenders.
- Little or no relationship between kinds of work experience and related academic instruction.
- Lack of routine assessment of offender progress.
- Absence of standardized enrollment and completion criteria.

In March 1976, the Ohio State University Center for Vocational Education completed a study of occupational education in six Federal institutions. One of these institutions was also included in our review and had seven OJT programs. The study concluded that primary emphasis of the OJT programs was placed on maintenance of the institution, and little if any effort was spent on OJT programs encompassing planned instructional activities. Also, this study recommended that the existing OJT programs be replaced with more viable programs.

Staff operating these programs in one Federal institution stated that they did not have the capability to provide viable OJT programs. Regional and institutional officials also stated that the Bureau should reevaluate current OJT programs to ensure that they taught marketable skills and proper emphasis was placed on training of offenders.

Few OJT programs
available to State offenders

Only one of the four States included in our review--Texas--had developed OJT programs for offenders. Another State--Kentucky--was in the process of developing some OJT programs for all its institutions.

The Texas Department of Corrections operates OJT programs at 2 of its 15 institutions. These programs include such occupational areas as auto mechanics, meat cutting, auto body repair, building maintenance, and a machinist program. They are similar in structure to those taught through public high schools in Texas.

Each program has a written curriculum covering actual work experiences and related academic training. This curriculum includes learning modules, which enable the instructor to periodically test offender progress in the program. Upon completion, a training certificate is issued. About half of the approximately 50 offenders who participated

in programs at the 2 institutions during fiscal year 1977 completed the programs.

One State correctional official in Texas stated that current plans called for making OJT programs available to more institutions and increasing the number of occupational areas in which training would be provided.

THE BUREAU'S APPRENTICESHIP
PROGRAMS WERE OFTEN DEFICIENT

Apprenticeship is an organized program of training in occupations that require a wide and diverse range of skills and knowledge. It should involve planned OJT under proper supervision combined with a minimum of 144 hours of related academic instruction each year. The term of apprenticeship in most occupations ranges from 1 to 5 years.

The Bureau of Prisons reported that it operated 110 apprenticeship programs in 17 correctional institutions as of April 18, 1978. We found that the Bureau had erroneously reported that 122 offenders had completed 135 apprenticeship programs during fiscal year 1977. Our analysis showed that 58 percent, or 79, of the reported completions had received fewer than the minimum training hours required for completion of a registered apprenticeship program. In fact, our review of five apprenticeship programs at two Federal institutions showed that although the Bureau had reported eight completions, no offenders had completed these programs.

Some of the major problems we identified were:

1. The Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training (BAT) and the Joint Apprenticeship Councils had not fully investigated some apprenticeship programs at one institution to ensure its capability to offer the required training.
2. Offenders were not always tested before entering apprenticeship programs.
3. Offenders were receiving credit for training either not received or not available at the institution.
4. There was no regular evaluation of offenders' progress in job performance and related instruction.
5. The Bureau granted completions to offenders who had received fewer than the minimum training hours required for a registered apprenticeship program.

Role of Department of Labor's Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training

BAT encourages and assists industry in the development, expansion, and improvement of apprenticeship and training programs. BAT's operations are carried out under the supervision and direction of the Administrator (at the national office) and 10 regional offices and through its field staff in every State. BAT's field staff work with local employers, unions, and State Apprenticeship Agencies in establishing apprenticeship programs.

Apprenticeship Agencies recognized by BAT have been established in 29 States, the District of Columbia, the Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico. Each obtains policy guidance from apprenticeship councils composed of employers and labor and public representatives. A number have staffs to help employers and unions develop, expand, and improve apprenticeship programs. The work of the State Apprenticeship Agencies is carried out as an integral part of the national apprenticeship program.

When an apprentice has successfully met all the program standards, a certificate of completion is issued. This certificate is issued by the State Apprenticeship Agency or BAT in those States without State Apprenticeship Agencies.

Some apprenticeship programs were not fully evaluated by BAT and joint apprenticeship committees

BAT has developed special procedures for establishing a registered apprenticeship program within a correctional institution. Initially, the BAT representative is responsible for touring the facilities and ensuring that the capability exists to offer an apprenticeship program. If the BAT representative believes that a registered apprenticeship program can be established, the local support of labor and industry is sought and a joint apprenticeship committee is formed to develop standards for the training program.

Each apprenticeship program sets basic standards to make sure that the program provides uniform and effective training that develops the skills required of qualified craft workers. Programs registered by BAT must include (1) a schedule of work processes in which apprentices are to receive training and experience on the job, (2) 144 hours per year of organized classroom instruction designed to provide apprentices with knowledge in technical subjects related to their trade, (3) proper OJT supervision with adequate facilities to train

apprentices, and (4) a system to measure apprentices' progress, both in job performance and related instruction.

We found that BAT and joint apprenticeship committee members had not fully investigated the four programs at one institution to ensure that the correctional institution was capable of offering all the required training and the related trades instruction. As a result, BAT has registered programs even though institutions were not capable of providing significant parts of the required training. The following example illustrates this problem.

--A registered meat-cutting apprenticeship program was established in 1975. The education department submitted standards for 69 OJT-related work processes. The instructor for this program stated that only 20 could be offered at this institution. No related trades instruction was offered at the institution for this program. Another Federal institution, which can offer only 24 work processes, was seeking to register a similar program.

Work supervisors who were responsible for operating the training programs stated that BAT and the joint apprenticeship committees had not conducted any detailed studies of the equipment and facilities available in the institution to assess whether the training capability existed for apprenticeship programs. Several work supervisors stated that they did not participate in the development of the standards for the programs. They also questioned whether apprenticeship programs should have been approved at the institution because they did not believe that sufficient capability existed to offer the programs.

The education department and the work supervisors were also responsible for developing and providing related trades instruction of 150 hours per year for apprenticeship programs. We found, however, that there had been no coordination between them in developing an organized related trades program for apprentices. On the contrary, little or no relationship appeared between the training offered in the shops and the materials available in the related trades laboratory. For many offenders who chose to attend, the laboratory merely functioned as a study hall where they could read magazines.

The education department at this correctional institution and the local joint apprenticeship committee were responsible that only qualified applicants were accepted. The Standards

of Apprenticeship at the institution required that each applicant have an achievement level of 7.0 in reading ability and arithmetic fundamentals as determined by the SAT. Also, each offender must demonstrate aptitude for the trade and a general ability to learn as determined by the GATB. We found, however, that 13 of the 28 enrollees had not taken either the SAT or the GATB.

Officials from the institution's education department stated that insufficient emphasis had been placed on the testing of offenders before their acceptance into apprenticeship programs. They also stated that in the past, primary emphasis had been placed on getting offenders into the programs regardless of their chances of completing them.

Also, the national apprenticeship standards require that instructors keep accurate records of the training received by each apprentice. The shop supervisor and the related trades instructor in the education department were responsible for maintaining the records of training received by the offenders in the four apprenticeship programs at one institution.

We found that offenders enrolled in apprenticeship programs at this institution were receiving credit for training either not received or not available at the institution. Also, offenders were routinely receiving 8 hours' credit each day for training, when in fact the normal hours of training were closer to 5 or 6 hours due to interruptions for meals, head counts, visitors, and other reasons.

The following examples illustrate these problems.

--Inmate Rich was enrolled in an apprenticeship program for 1 month and received credit for 4,260 hours of training. The institution awarded 2,000 hours credit for training which inmate Rich allegedly received while working on an institutional work assignment. The institution could not supply us with any documentation verifying that Rich had received the training. Regarding the remaining 2,260 hours of credit Rich received, we found that the institution was not capable of offering training for 1,986 hours.

--Nine offenders enrolled in an apprenticeship program were given 2,231 hours of credit for training not available in the shops and 138 hours of nonexistent related trades instruction.

--Thirteen offenders were given credit for training when in fact they had been in the visiting room with friends and relatives.

Bureau officials agreed that offenders had been improperly credited with apprenticeship training hours when the training had not been received or had not been available. These same officials stated that steps would be taken to ensure that in the future, offenders would be credited only with actual training received.

Lack of routine assessment
of offender progress in
apprenticeship programs

The national apprenticeship standards provide that periodic evaluations be given of the apprentice's progress in both job performance and related instruction. Representatives from the Education Department and the instructor are responsible for regularly testing and measuring offender progress in apprenticeship programs, but our review showed that this was not done. The following example illustrates this problem.

--During our visit to three of the apprenticeship programs, the work supervisors told us that they did not administer periodic proficiency tests or have a system to measure an offender's job performance. They also told us that the joint apprenticeship committee had done nothing to assist in evaluating offender's progress in the programs.

Bureau of Prisons officials agreed that a creditable apprenticeship program must include routine assessment of offender progress in the program as well as periodic proficiency tests. These same officials also stated that necessary corrective action would be taken. .

Bureau granted completions to offenders
who had received less than the required training

The national apprenticeship program provides that the standards set a term of apprenticeship that is consistent with training requirements as established by industry practices. The national program specifies that in no case shall a training program be registered if it involves less than 1 year or fewer than 2,000 hours of training.

The Bureau reported that it operated 110 apprenticeship programs in 17 correctional institutions as of April 18, 1978.

The Bureau also reported that 122 offenders had completed 135 apprenticeship programs during fiscal year 1977. Our analysis of these completions showed that on the average, the 122 offenders spent only about 1,600 hours in the programs, which is fewer than the minimum 2,000 hours required for completing a registered apprenticeship program. In fact, some of the apprenticeship programs required 6,000 or 8,000 hours for completion. We found 51 completions for which the offenders had averaged fewer than 1,000 hours in the apprenticeship programs. The following examples illustrate this problem.

--One institution reported one completion in fiscal year 1977, and the total hours spent by the offender in the program were only 16.

--Another institution reported 23 completions in fiscal year 1977, and the total hours spent in these programs by all offenders were about 1,000.

--A third institution reported seven completions in fiscal year 1977 and the total hours spent in these programs by all offenders were only 2,460.

The Bureau reported nine completions of apprenticeship programs at the five Federal institutions included in our review. We found that three of the five institutions had no apprenticeship programs; however, the Bureau reported a completion at one of the three. The Bureau reported eight completions at the other two. Our review showed that no offenders had ever completed apprenticeship programs at these two institutions.

Several Bureau officials stated that the number of reported completions for apprenticeship programs in fiscal year 1977 was unrealistic. They also stated that this problem could be traced to the granting of program completions when offenders were released from an institution irrespective of their standing in apprenticeship programs.

THE BUREAU'S REWARDS SYSTEM DOES NOT MOTIVATE OFFENDERS TO PARTICIPATE IN PROGRAMS

Many offenders are not motivated to participate in academic education and occupational training. Inequities in the Bureau's current rewards system are one major reason. The Bureau and States use two types of rewards to motivate offenders to participate in programs--monetary pay and "good time" allowances. Good time allowances reduce the amount of the sentence the offender serves.

We found that many of the Bureau's institutions have structured the rewards system to primarily emphasize institutional maintenance activities. Therefore, the rewards for an offender who attempts to improve his employment potential through participation in academic education and occupational training are not equivalent to those associated with the most menial institutional work assignments, such as a janitor. Several State correctional agencies, however, have revised their rewards system and placed participation in educational and occupational programs on a level at least equal to most work assignments in the institution.

The Bureau's reward system provides little incentive for offenders to improve their employability

The Bureau's monetary reward system offers little incentive for offenders to participate in programs to improve their employability. Bureau policy allows performance pay for an offender's exceptional work performance as well as productive participation in correctional treatment programs. We found that two of the five Federal institutions visited provided no monetary rewards for participation in academic education and occupational training, but money was provided for institutional maintenance assignments. The following case history illustrates what can happen under this system.

--Inmate Tom was admitted to an institution in July 1976 and met with the institutional classification team. The team recommended that Tom participate in vocational training, but all programs were filled. Therefore, he was assigned as a janitor and began receiving performance pay of \$10 per month. Subsequently, his pay was increased to \$25 per month. Tom enrolled in a vocational welding class (vocational training is a full-time assignment) in July 1977. At this point, Tom's performance pay was discontinued. Conversations with the welding instructor and related trades instructor indicated Tom was well motivated, had good attendance, and was making satisfactory course progress. According to the instructor, Tom dropped out of the vocational training program because he was not receiving any money.

The other three correctional institutions paid offenders about \$5 to \$10 a month for participation in education and occupational training programs. One institution provided, in addition to the monthly payments, a cash award of up to \$25 for successfully completing academic and occupational training programs.

The Bureau automatically awards good time to all offenders who work in prison industries and farm camp operations. In the past, the Bureau awarded good time to some offenders who had participated in academic education and occupational training programs. However, the Bureau terminated this practice in October 1977. The education staff at some Federal institutions believe that the discontinuance of good time will further reduce participation in education and training programs.

State reward systems provide
monetary incentives for offenders
to improve their employability

Three of the four State correctional agencies included in our review provide some monetary rewards to all offenders who participate in education and training programs. For example, Ohio has established an offender pay system consisting of six wage categories which range from no compensation to a maximum of \$28 per month. Offenders in the Ohio correctional system who participate in education and training programs can receive up to \$20 per month. The fourth State, Texas, does not provide any monetary rewards to offenders; therefore, the absence of monetary rewards for education and training activities is not a disincentive for offender participation.

INSTITUTIONAL WORK AND PRISON INDUSTRIES
DID NOT PROVIDE ENOUGH WORK FOR OFFENDERS

Some offenders in Federal and State correctional institutions may prepare themselves for the world of work through only work experience and skills acquired in prison maintenance and work assignments in prison industries. Correctional administrators face several constraints in using these activities to assist offenders in developing marketable skills. (See ch. 2). Also, legal restrictions prevent prison industries from producing certain products which would provide relevant work experience to offenders.

In spite of these constraints, we believe correctional administrators can increase the training opportunities for offenders working in institutional maintenance and prison industries by

- making work supervisors responsible for training offenders and
- matching offender job skills and experience with existing institutional work assignments.

More emphasis needed on training
offenders in institutional and
prison industry work assignments

In most Federal and State institutions we visited, the work supervisors were held accountable only for the maintenance and repair of the institution. Offenders were normally assigned to perform specific work tasks, based on institutional needs and priorities, with little or no consideration given to the offenders' training needs. Any skills and experiences offenders obtained were merely incidental to the main task of maintaining, repairing, and operating the institution.

Some work supervisors and prison industry officials stated that the primary emphasis was not to train offenders for employment in the private sector, but rather to operate the institution and keep offenders busy.

In June 1976, the Bureau emphasized that Federal Prison Industries, Inc.(FPI), should establish specialized production training units within industries. The purpose of these specialized units was to provide training to offenders in those occupational fields with job opportunities in the private sector. In establishing these specialized units, FPI wants to emphasize

- development of a formal program of planned sequential training and work experience,
- work experiences that enabled offenders to acquire and maintain skills demanded in the private sector,
- higher staff ratios than found in normal prison industry operations, and
- establishment of operations having significant employment potential in the community.

We found that only one of the five Federal institutions visited had a specialized training program in an industry. This program had a 6-month formal training course in offset printing. The industry official in charge of this program stated that the equipment and production methods were comparable to those used in private industry. However, only 13 offenders were enrolled in this program, and only 1 offender had completed it during the first 11 months it was in operation. As of August 31, 1977, FPI had established only three other specialized training programs at Federal correctional institutions. The four programs had the capability to train

102 offenders; however, only 76 were participating in these programs as of August 31, 1977.

In May 1978, the Committee on the Judiciary, House of Representatives, submitted a report to the House stating that FPI was not as active and effective as it could have been in providing offenders with marketable job skills. This Committee proposed that the Department of Justice look at the future of FPI by studying the following issues:

- The viability of the employment training provided by FPI.
- The options for employing more Federal prisoners in order to reduce idleness in institutions.
- The wage scale paid.
- The possibility of removing the market restrictions on FPI products.
- The role of private industry in FPI.
- The possibility of modernizing industrial operations.

Offender job skills and experiences are not matched with existing institutional work assignments

Correctional systems generally place little emphasis on matching an offender's existing job skills and work experience with an appropriate institutional work assignment. This would be beneficial to both the institution and the offender, since knowledgeable people would be performing institutional duties and offenders could retain some proficiency in certain job skills.

Only one correctional system--the Texas Department of Corrections--has implemented a formal system for matching offender skills with available institutional assignments. This system is used by institutional officials to assign offenders to appropriate institutional work assignments whenever possible.

Prison industries offer offenders little training in marketable job skills

Many offenders in Federal and State correctional institutions who work in prison industries have little or no

opportunity to obtain a marketable skill because operations are unskilled and labor is intensive.

Many of these industries (1) provide training in fields where there are no employment opportunities in the private sector and (2) use machinery and manufacturing techniques which are antiquated and not compatible with those found in the private sector. The following examples illustrate some of the problems we found.

- The warden at one institution stated that work in the broom factory offered limited opportunities for offenders to acquire job skills. Most offender positions require little education or training and are repetitive functions requiring little skill.
- The Superintendent of Industries at one institution with glove and printing operations stated that the chances of an offender's securing a similar position in the private sector were nil.
- The furniture operation at one institution uses old equipment that is not compatible with that used in the private sector. This equipment does not give the offender sufficient experience and training to acquire a position in industry upon release.
- The printing operation at one institution uses equipment that is obsolete as well as antiquated methods which are no longer used by most commercial printing operations in the private sector.
- The supervisor for the janitorial supplies operation at one institution described his manufacturing techniques as primitive when compared with production techniques used by private industry. He stated that offenders acquired no marketable skills in this operation.

In contrast, the Minnesota Department of Corrections, with funding assistance from the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, has recently revised the structure of its prison industry operation to provide more viable occupational training to offenders. The major change has been the introduction of private enterprise into the prison industries setting. Minnesota has passed legislation which permits private business enterprises to establish a manufacturing or an assembly operation within the prison using offender labor. When an offender is employed by a private business enterprise, he must be paid no less than the prevailing

minimum wages paid for work of a similar nature in the private sector. Legislation has also been passed which permits State correctional officials to require offenders to pay the costs of their maintenance out of the salaries they receive. One of the cited advantages of this concept is that private industry can offer the offender a competitive, real world, work experience within the prison environment, and the offender can also gain practical experience in being self-supporting by paying for the basic cost of his rent, food, and laundry services while incarcerated. Approximately 130 offenders were participating in this program.

MANAGEMENT REVIEWS OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROGRAMS NEED TO BE IMPROVED

Because limited resources are available for education and training programs within correctional institutions, it is essential that these programs be operated as efficiently as possible. To assure that this is done, correctional administrators need to routinely monitor and review the economy and efficiency of program activities. Our review showed that:

- The Bureau had not conducted any indepth reviews of education and training programs in those Federal institutions we visited.
- Two State correctional agencies made little effort to conduct management reviews of education and training programs.

We believe that, if correctional administrators had conducted comprehensive management reviews of the economy and efficiency of program activities, many of the deficiencies we identified would have surfaced and appropriate program revisions would have already been implemented.

The Bureau has conducted limited indepth management reviews

The Bureau has implemented a two-tiered process for conducting management reviews of education and training activities. The Supervisor of Education at each institution is responsible for conducting internal reviews of the economy and efficiency of education and training programs. Also, the Bureau's five Regional Education Administrators are responsible for annual reviews of the education and training programs at each institution within their regions.

Our review at five Federal institutions showed that the Supervisors of Education generally did not conduct any indepth management reviews of the education and training programs. On the contrary, some of these officials stated that they did not have adequate criteria and resources to perform management reviews. They also stated that top management had placed insufficient emphasis on indepth reviews as evidenced by their low priority in relationship to the overall daily operations at the institutions. The following examples illustrate these problems.

- The Supervisor at one institution stated that no indepth management reviews were conducted because these activities were low priority and he had limited staff resources.
- The Assistant Supervisor of Education at another institution stated that he had little criteria to use in conducting indepth management reviews.
- The Associate Warden for Programs at one institution stated that indepth management reviews were not conducted because this activity was low priority in relationship to the overall operation of the institution.

Each of the Bureau's Regional Education Administrators is responsible for conducting management reviews annually of the (1) academic education programs, (2) occupational training programs, (3) apprenticeship programs, (4) social education activities, and (5) recreation and leisure time activities at those institutions in their respective regions. Our review at two of the Bureau's five regional offices showed that the Regional Education Administrators had not conducted indepth management reviews of the education, training, and social education programs. To the contrary, we found that their visits to the institutions were generally limited to a maximum of 1 week for an initial visit and 1 week for a followup visit. Therefore, insufficient time was available for the education administrators to make any indepth management reviews of program activities, as evidenced by the following examples.

- The Regional Education Administrator conducted a 5-day site visit at one institution and reported no deficiencies in program activities. However, our review of education and training programs at this institution a few months later showed several deficiencies, such as (1) lack of formal OJT programs, (2) absence of qualified vocational counseling,

(3) failure to implement a potentially viable apprenticeship program while pursuing the registration of another program in which the institution had limited instructional capabilities, (4) absence of program entrance and completion criteria, and (5) little formally structured social education activities.

--Another Regional Education Administrator conducted a 2-day site visit of the education and training activities at another institution. This report did not identify any significant deficiencies in the education, training and social education programs. Later in the month, we found a number of program deficiencies such as (1) viable OJT programs were lacking, (2) there was no qualified vocational counseling, (3) apprenticeship programs were being registered when in fact the institution did not have the capability to offer the major segments of the training programs, (4) program enrollment and completion criteria were lacking, (5) there was no regular assessment of offenders' progress in programs, (6) offenders were receiving credit for apprenticeship training either not received or not available at the institution, (7) adult basic education was limited to reading enhancement with no attempt to improve computation skills, and (8) there were no formally structured social education activities.

The Warden and Supervisor of Education at one Federal institution stated that the annual reviews were of limited value because the Regional Education Administrator (1) had insufficient time for an indepth review of program activities, (2) lacked criteria, training, and experience to perform indepth management reviews, and (3) might be hesitant to jeopardize rapport with the institutional staff by criticizing marginal programs and making aggressive recommendations.

State correctional agencies have made little effort to monitor programs

Although State correctional agencies recognize the important role indepth management review of education and training programs plays in ensuring that programs are operated in the most economical and efficient manner, only two of the four States in our review--Ohio and Texas--had conducted any such reviews. Minnesota plans to conduct a comprehensive review of its correctional education and training programs every 2 years, but concedes that it does not presently have the resources necessary to conduct such reviews. Correctional officials in the other States also shared this view.

STATES COULD USE FEDERAL ASSISTANCE TO
IMPROVE CURRICULUM MATERIALS AND
IMPLEMENTATION OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROGRAMS

Most States could use Federal assistance programs to help improve curriculum materials and implementation of the education and training programs in their correctional institutions. This would improve the ability of correctional agencies to make needed improvements.

Section 133 of the Vocational Education Act of 1963, as amended, makes funds available to the States for vocational education curriculum development projects for individuals with special needs, such as disadvantaged persons. The act also provides grants to the States for vocational education and work study programs. Funds are also available for cooperative vocational education programs which (1) involve students who, through arrangements between schools and employers, receive academic instruction in school and related vocational instruction at jobs, and (2) could be used as models for developing OJT programs in correctional institutions.

Title III of the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act authorizes the Secretary of Labor to use funds available under title III to provide additional manpower services as authorized under Titles I and II for offenders by establishing appropriate procedures to ensure that they are provided with such manpower training and related assistance and support services to enable them to secure and obtain meaningful employment. Whenever feasible, the Secretary may make arrangements for the use of training equipment comparable to that currently used for the job in which training is furnished. The law provides that the Secretary develop information concerning the special needs of offenders for such services and the means of increasing their employment opportunities.

CONCLUSIONS

The Bureau of Prisons and State correctional agencies have not managed their education and training programs in a manner providing offenders a maximum opportunity to improve their employability. Also, correctional agencies have not fully utilized institutional maintenance assignments and work in prison industries to assist offenders in obtaining marketable job skills. Furthermore, the Bureau and State correctional agencies have not conducted comprehensive management reviews of program activities. If such reviews had been performed, many of the problems we found would

have been identified and appropriate corrective action implemented.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend that the Attorney General require that the Director of the Bureau of Prisons

- develop a uniform curriculum, with standardized enrollment and completion criteria, for academic education, vocational training, OJT, apprenticeship, institutional work assignment training components, and prison industry training components;
- implement viable OJT programs on a priority basis;
- conduct an indepth study of its apprenticeship programs with the Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training to ensure that all program requirements are being met;
- design a rewards system which places equal emphasis on work and program participation in conjunction with tight controls over offender performance;
- design institutional work assignments that provide more training in vocational training components; and
- have FPI make a greater effort to provide offenders with OJT in marketable job skills and to expand the number of specialized training programs.

In addition, the Attorney General should require that the Director of the Bureau of Prisons develop (1) more specific criteria for the periodic reviews of education and training programs and (2) a reporting mechanism which will ensure that each of the criteria is addressed during the reviews.

The Director of the National Institute of Corrections should disseminate the curriculum and program review criteria developed by the Bureau of Prisons in accordance with the above recommendations to all State correctional agencies to use as a guide in improving their programs.

We recommend that the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare instruct the Commissioner of Education to encourage the States to use part of the assistance given them under the Vocational Education Act of 1963 to help improve the curriculums and OJT programs in their correctional institutions.

We recommend that the Secretary of Labor encourage the use of CETA funds to give offenders in correctional institutions manpower training and related assistance and support services to enable them to secure and obtain meaningful employment.

We recommend that the Secretary of Labor instruct the Administrator of BAT to:

- Ensure that BAT representatives fully investigate proposed correctional institution programs.
- Work with the Bureau of Prisons to improve the credibility of apprenticeship programs in Federal institutions.
- Monitor continually the adequacy of the training provided.

AGENCY COMMENTS

The Departments of Labor and HEW concurred in the recommendations for improving education and training programs in correctional institutions. HEW stated that the Commissioner of Education would send a memorandum to every State department of education emphasizing the need to use a portion of their vocational grants to bring about needed improvements in correctional institution programs. Labor stated that its current emphasis had been directed at CETA prime sponsors in an effort to encourage them to make their entitlement funds available for offender program activities. Labor also stated that recommendations pertaining to apprenticeship programs had already been implemented by BAT to the extent that time and staff would permit.

CHAPTER 5

OFFENDERS NEED BETTER ASSISTANCE

IN MAKING THE TRANSITION TO THE COMMUNITY

Studies have shown that transitional programs are important in assisting offenders to successfully reintegrate into the community. Our review showed that offenders needed better transitional aid through

- social education,
- prerelease programs,
- job placement assistance, and
- release funds.

Federal institutions had not adequately implemented existing Bureau policies, while State institutions were hampered by unstructured or nonexistent programs.

LITTLE EMPHASIS IS PLACED ON SOCIAL EDUCATION

Social education is an organized effort to assist offenders in their (1) adjustment to the institution, (2) personal growth, and (3) ability to cope with the problems encountered in society upon release. It has been defined as the process of reorienting the offender with the norms and socially acceptable behavior patterns in a free society. Ideally, social education programs should assist the offender in making transition from the institution to community life.

Frequently, offenders are unable to obtain or retain employment because they lack basic social skills. They need a comprehensive social education program in life skills, decisionmaking skills, group and family living skills, consumer education, and communication skills. The Bureau of Prisons and State correctional agencies have generally recognized the importance of social education programs, but they have not established viable programs.

Limited progress by the Bureau in establishing social education programs

The Bureau has recognized the importance of social education programs and the role they play in bridging the

gap between the institution and the community. In August 1976, the Bureau instructed its institutions to establish social education programs which would assist offenders in improving interrelationships with others; realistic goal-setting; and coping with daily problems as consumers, family members, wage earners, and responsible citizens. The Bureau's guidelines stressed that social education should be a total institutional experience, and all departments in each institution had the responsibility of contributing to the social education environment. The Bureau also instructed each of its institutions to (1) systematically assess the specific social educational needs of its population, (2) implement a specific series of structured social education programs to address these needs, and (3) develop an approved local system for evaluation of social education activities.

We found that four of the five Federal institutions we visited did not comply with the Bureau's policies and guidelines for establishing viable social education programs for offenders. Few staff resources were devoted to social education, and few funds were allocated in the institutional budgets for this program. Institutions we visited had generally not systematically assessed the specific social education needs of the offenders or implemented a comprehensive series of structured social education programs to address these needs. The programs were generally unstructured with no starting and completion dates. Also, the social education programs were generally not evaluated.

The following examples illustrate some of the deficiencies we found.

- The warden at one institution delegated responsibility for implementing and evaluating social education activities to the unit management staff. The institutional staff had not assessed the specific needs of the total offender population. While two of the seven general population units had implemented some social education activities, there appeared to be some misunderstanding between the unit managers as to what constituted social education. One unit provided training in family relations, standards and values, economics, self-control, interpersonal relations, and basic rational behavior. Another unit manager defined social education as any activity that promoted constructive use of leisure time activities, such as chess and bridge. Few staff or resources were specifically allocated for implementing or evaluating social education activities. There had been no internal evaluations of the social education program. The warden stated

that more emphasis would be given to social education if he had additional resources.

--The warden at another institution delegated responsibility for implementing and evaluating social education activities to an instructor in the Education Department. This individual was also responsible for numerous other institutional duties. The institutional staff had not assessed the specific needs of the offender population or implemented a series of structured social education activities. Very limited resources were allocated for implementing or evaluating social education activities. The program coordinator stated that there were no specific plans for expanding existing efforts to comply with the Bureau's instructions.

--The warden at a third institution also delegated responsibility for the social education program to an instructor in the Education Department. He devotes only about one third of his time to social education activities. No formal assessment was made of the social education needs of the offender population. There were a few structured programs; however, the social education coordinator was unable to supply us with a complete list of programs offered, dates conducted, and the number of participants. Very limited resources were allocated for implementing and evaluating the social education program. The social education coordinator stated that he did not know if he was responsible for evaluating the social education program or how such an evaluation should be conducted.

Limited progress by State correctional agencies in establishing social education programs

Although State correctional agencies have recognized the important role of social education programs, few formal programs have been implemented. State correctional administrators have allocated few resources for social education, and generally those programs available were unstructured and were offered on an informal basis. Also, limited data was available on the number of offenders who participated in these programs.

One of the four States included in our review--Kentucky--had designed and begun implementing a comprehensive social education program. Some of the planned courses include

basic communication; problem solving; decisionmaking; money management; and job-related skills, such as meeting and dealing with fellow workers and superiors. State correctional officials stated that upon full implementation of the program, social education needs of offenders would be assessed and all offenders would be encouraged to enroll in appropriate programs. State officials also stated that routine evaluations of the social education program would be made.

Another State--Texas--included social education programs as a part of its prerelease program at one institution. After our review, social education activities were expanded to several other institutions. The other two States had no formalized programs, but they offered some unstructured activities at one time. These programs were terminated because of shortages of resources.

MORE EMPHASIS IS NEEDED
ON PRERELEASE PROGRAMS

Federal and State correctional institutions need viable prerelease programs which recognize that preparing the offender for ultimate release must begin as soon as he is initially committed to the institution. According to the Bureau and other correctional authorities, a prerelease program should include a structured series of lectures, seminars, counseling, and group sessions which help the offender improve his chances of obtaining and holding employment. The program itself should be a combination of the dissemination of information via lectures, video tapes, and guest speakers from the community. The content should include such topics as

- improving family relationships;
- coping with stress;
- the offender's responsibilities while on parole;
- the availability of community organizations that provide assistance to offenders;
- money management; and
- employment assistance information, including resume preparation, interview techniques, and job adjustment.

The Bureau and State correctional agencies have recognized the importance of prerelease programs; nevertheless, we found that

--the Bureau's institutions had not implemented viable and structured prerelease programs and evaluations were not conducted and

--only two of the States offered structured programs but evaluations generally were not performed.

Little progress was made by the Bureau in establishing viable prerelease programs

The Bureau directed that all its institutions establish a prerelease program that would supplement other institutional treatment programs aimed at preparing the offender for transition to the community. The Bureau also directed that the prerelease program be structured in such a manner as to maximize use of resources such as the U.S. Probation Office, halfway houses, the Social Security Administration, the Veterans Administration, and other community resources. All institutional staff were directed to participate in the program and to strongly encourage offender participation.

We found that none of the five Federal institutions we visited had fully complied with the Bureau's policy for establishment of a formalized prerelease program. At most of the institutions we visited, few resources were allocated to establish viable and structured prerelease programs. Generally, the programs did not include a structured series of lectures, seminars, counseling, and group sessions. The institutional staff rarely participated in the prerelease programs, and prerelease coordinators did not maintain enrollment data.

At one institution, we were informed that there had been no prerelease program for several years. During our review, the warden designated one casemanager to develop and implement a prerelease program with the help of Case Management, Psychology Services, and the Education Department. The Associate Warden for programs was responsible for evaluating the prerelease program, which (1) did not follow an agenda, (2) was not structured, and (3) utilized no visual aids. Outside speakers have participated in the program, but the prerelease coordinator was unable to furnish us any documentation on the materials presented. At the time our work was completed, neither Education nor Case Management had participated in the program. Psychology Services periodically offered group counseling sessions to offenders. The prerelease program was limited to a half-day session once a month. No evaluation of the prerelease program took place. Also, no feedback came from offenders to determine whether (1) the prerelease program

had assisted them in their transition to the community or (2) if the program should be restructured.

Some prerelease programs are available to offenders in State correctional institutions

Some State correctional agencies also recognize the importance of a prerelease program to assist the offender in successfully reintegrating into the community. Only two of the four States included in our review had developed structured prerelease programs and conducted evaluations of these programs.

The Minnesota Department of Corrections operates a structured prerelease program at one institution for offenders who will be released from it and the other major institutions. Participation in the program is voluntary and is primarily directed toward helping the offender find a job. The prerelease program includes such activities as individual counseling, resume preparation, and job interviews. The program averaged about 18 days per session and served about 300 offenders in 1977.

The Texas Department of Corrections has long recognized the value of a prerelease program in assisting the offenders in their transition to the community. A prerelease program was initiated in 1963 and is housed in a specifically built facility with a full-time staff. The program offers 2 weeks of general lectures covering a variety of topics, relating to employment, law, finances, and family, that are presented by community representatives and department staff. Smaller group sessions and individual counseling are also offered to deal intimately with the individual, including the development of a prerelease plan and job and program placement assistance. However, this program served only about 37 percent of the offenders released during the 8-month period ended April 1977 primarily because not all parolees participated, some offenders were excluded for security purposes, and other offenders were excluded so they could complete other programs before release.

Kentucky offered a prerelease program at one of its institutions. The Bureau of Corrections did not have a policy statement defining the purpose of the program or implementing instructions. The program depended entirely on outside resources and consisted of a series of lectures by a variety of outside speakers on subjects relevant to offenders' reintegration into the community. There was, however, little continuity to the program since the speakers were not always available. Participation in the program was voluntary, and no

statistics were available on the number of offenders who participated in the program. The program's effectiveness has never been evaluated. Another State has no formal prerelease program in any of its institutions.

JOB PLACEMENT ASSISTANCE FOR
OFFENDERS NEEDS MORE EMPHASIS

Many factors may affect an individual's success or failure after release from a correctional institution. Job placement assistance prior to release is important because most offenders are released from correctional institutions with very limited resources.

Offenders typically require substantial job placement assistance for successful postrelease employment because they lack experience in seeking and obtaining employment and thus lack confidence in their abilities to obtain and hold legitimate jobs.

More emphasis is needed on job placement assistance for offenders to ensure that they have employment opportunities prior to their release from correctional institutions. Our review at 16 Federal and State correctional institutions showed that:

- Little job placement assistance was available to offenders incarcerated in Federal correctional institutions since this responsibility had been transferred to the Federal Probation System.
- No formally structured job placement program was established by the Federal Probation System to assist in finding jobs for offenders.
- Some assistance was available to offenders incarcerated in State correctional institutions in Minnesota and Texas, but little assistance was provided to offenders in the other two States.

Our review was limited to job placement assistance provided to offenders at correctional institutions. The services provided by various community organizations will be examined in a subsequent review.

Little job placement assistance
available to Federal offenders

The Bureau's community program officers were responsible for knowing about labor market conditions in their areas, maintaining close liaison with State employment offices, and

placing offenders in jobs. Generally, the community program officers did not attempt to place offenders in jobs prior to their release from correctional institutions. Primary emphasis was placed on finding jobs for offenders after they had been released from correctional institutions. The job placement assistance provided by community program officers was generally limited to referring the offenders to various organizations in the community, such as the State employment service or a job clearinghouse.

In March 1977, the Bureau and the Federal Probation System entered into an agreement whereby the Federal Probation System assumed administrative and operational responsibility for developing employment resources and making job referrals for persons paroled or mandatorily released from Federal correctional institutions. The Bureau's community program officers retained the responsibility for employment placement assistance for offenders released from Federal community treatment centers or contract halfway houses. This agreement terminated all of the Bureau's formal efforts to assist offenders in finding jobs prior to release from institutions.

The Federal Probation System has been hampered in its efforts to assist offenders to find employment because of high caseloads and other administrative duties for the courts. Officials from the Federal Probation System stated that they had no structured job placement program nor were any staff employed who were specialists in job placement activities.

The Federal Probation System generally did not provide any job placement assistance to offenders at Federal institutions. System officials stated that Probation Officers generally made no effort to personally contact offenders until they were released from the institution. They also stated that no criteria on job placement assistance had been furnished to the District Probation Offices. Rather job placement assistance provided by Probation Officers ranges from some informal contacts with employers to referring offenders to (1) the State employment service, (2) the National Alliance of Businessmen, (3) job clearinghouses, and (4) highly structured job placement programs in a limited number of offices.

In an effort to enhance the ability of Probation Officers to find jobs for offenders, the Federal Probation System began a series of workshops for some of its Probation Officers in February 1978. These workshops have focused on such issues as

--employment placement,

- legal issues pertaining to employment placement,
- direct placement versus use of community resources,
- trends in employment, and
- job readiness training.

The Department of Justice has recognized the importance of and the need for closer coordination between the Bureau's institutional staff and the Federal Probation System's staff for the purpose of developing a comprehensive release plan for each offender. The Department stated that particular attention should be given to developing cooperative plans suitable to the individual's needs--including employment and interest; to the extent possible, the plans should be consistent with the vocational training received within the institution. 1/

Limited assistance is available
to State offenders

Offenders released from State correctional institutions also have the basic need for some employment assistance to successfully reintegrate into the community. We found that only two of the four State correctional agencies had implemented formal programs to assist offenders in finding employment. One of the two States which had no programs would like to implement a program if sufficient resources were available.

Minnesota

The Minnesota Department of Corrections offers job placement assistance at one institution for offenders released from two male adult institutions. In 1977, about 300 offenders went through the program. This represented about one-third of all offenders released from adult institutions in 1977. Statistics show that 70 percent of the offenders participating in the program have verified placements, including a job, school, or further treatment.

The Department of Corrections also operates another job placement program at a small minimum security institution, which has a full-time job placement coordinator. The

1/More detailed information is contained in our report entitled "Probation and Parole Activities Need To Be Better Managed" (GGD-77-55, Oct. 21, 1977).

coordinator is responsible for assisting offenders in finding employment. He arranges interviews for offenders with prospective employers, accompanies them on the interviews, and is able to place about 80 percent of the offenders in jobs or in school. The job placement coordinator frequently finds employment for offenders through the State employment service, CETA's OJT programs funded by Labor, and community organizations specializing in job placement.

Texas

The State of Texas operates two separate and distinct job placement programs for offenders. One program is operated by the Texas Department of Corrections primarily for those offenders discharged with no requirement for further supervision. The other program is for those offenders requiring further supervision by the State Board of Pardons and Paroles.

In 1973 the Texas Department of Corrections established a voluntary program--the Community Service Program--for offenders discharged from State correctional institutions. It was established under an initial grant of \$128,655 from Labor and has been funded with State funds since September 1, 1975. The Community Service Program maintains a computerized listing of relevant information necessary for placing offenders in various jobs. As of December 1977, this information included a list of about 1,600 companies in Texas which had agreed to participate in the program and hire offenders. It also included a brief synopsis for each company, including the types of jobs offered, number of offenders placed and terminated, and average starting salary.

Job counselors gather information on specific job requirements and vacancies from these companies. They determine offender job needs, interests, and capabilities through interviews and various offender profile reports. The counselors then visit potential employers in major metropolitan areas to develop jobs for the offender and schedule interviews. Upon release, it is up to the offender to show up at the interview. State correctional officials stated that one major problem with the program has been the failure of many offenders to report for the prearranged interviews.

The State Board of Pardons and Paroles operates a job placement program for those offenders who are paroled from State correctional institutions. The parole officers are responsible for providing job placement assistance to parolees; however, the parole officers are not specialists in job

placement and generally have little knowledge of the needs of the labor market. In addition, they do not have the type of information developed by the Community Service Program nor do they have access to this information. This limits the ability of parole officers to find jobs for offenders.

OFFENDERS NEED MORE FUNDS UPON RELEASE
FROM FEDERAL AND STATE
CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Most offenders receive a small gratuity, called gate money, upon release from Federal and State correctional institutions. The purpose of the gratuity is to provide the released offender with sufficient funds to support himself a minimum of 2 weeks or until he is able to secure employment and receive his first paycheck. Studies on the employment problems of ex-offenders have shown long lags between release, employment, and receipt of the first paycheck. The vast majority of offenders released from correctional institutions do not have prearranged jobs, and employment comes slowly.

Studies have shown that the present gratuity programs for offenders in Federal and State correctional institutions are inadequate because they fail to minimize the hardships confronting offenders during the critical period of transition between incarceration and reintegration into the community. Studies have also shown that there is a high correlation between a lack of financial resources upon release from correctional institutions and postrelease failure. Our review showed that:

--Fifty-nine percent of the offenders leaving Federal institutions in fiscal year 1977 had received a gratuity, which averaged \$36.

--All offenders released from the four State correctional systems were eligible for gratuities, which ranged from a low of \$75 in one State to a high of \$200 in another.

The 1977 Urban Family Budget Index (lower budget) prepared by the Bureau of Labor Statistics showed that a single individual required \$8.30 per day to pay for basic living expenses, while a married individual with two children under the age of 6 required \$17.07. Using these budgets, the following chart compares the maximum number of days the single or married offender may expect gate money to last upon release from a Federal or State correctional institution.

| CORRECTIONAL SYSTEM | MAXIMUM GRATUITY | MAXIMUM SUPPORT DAYS | |
|---------------------|------------------|----------------------|---------|
| | | SINGLE | MARRIED |
| FEDERAL | \$100 | 12 | 6 |
| KENTUCKY | 75 | 9 | 4 |
| MINNESOTA | 100 | 12 | 6 |
| OHIO | 75 | 9 | 4 |
| a/ TEXAS | 200 | 24 | 12 |

a/ Offenders released from State correctional institutions in Texas must pay transportation expenses to their release destination.

The new releasee will have disproportionately high initial expenses as he must immediately obtain clothing and pay for other essentials, including lodging, food, and job-seeking costs. Often the releasee is required to make an advance rental payment, which would swallow the entire gate money amount on the first day. The model budgets used are based on an individual's needs. For those releasees returning to households where they must share or shoulder the burden of supporting a family, the daily cost would substantially expand, thereby shrinking the support period provided by the gate money.

Limited gratuities were paid to Federal offenders

The Bureau's policy is to release offenders with sufficient funds, including their accumulated earnings, to care for themselves in the community until they are able to secure employment and receive their first paychecks. Title 18, U.S.C. 4281, authorizes the Bureau to provide clothing, transportation, and a gratuity of up to \$100 to each offender upon discharge from imprisonment or release on parole. Sufficient funds have not been available for the Bureau to provide all offenders having the need with the \$100 maximum gratuity. Therefore, the Bureau has taken the position that those offenders with the fewest resources should be given the largest gratuities.

During fiscal year 1977, the Bureau released 16,138 offenders from all its facilities. About 59 percent--or 9,518--of the releasees received a gratuity. The percentage of offenders who received a gratuity in 1977 is somewhat misleading because those offenders released through Community Treatment Centers are not eligible for a gratuity. The average gratuity paid by the Bureau to a Federal offender during this period was about \$36. The Bureau recognizes that a gratuity of \$36,

or even \$100 in many cases, is totally inadequate to meet the transitional needs of the offender until he receives his first paycheck.

In January 1978, Senate bill 1437 was passed by the United States Senate to recodify the Federal Criminal Code (title 18, U.S.C. 4281). This bill would authorize the Bureau to provide a gratuity of up to \$500 to each Federal offender upon his release. A companion bill, House bill 6869, was introduced in the United States House of Representatives in May 1977. It would authorize the Bureau to provide a gratuity of no less than \$200 nor more than \$500 to each Federal offender upon his release. Neither bill was enacted into law.

Limited gratuities were paid to offenders released from State correctional institutions

Offenders released from State correctional institutions also have the basic need for sufficient release funds to assist them in their reintegration into the community. The four State correctional agencies included in our review gave some limited funds to all offenders upon release from prison. The amount ranged from a low of \$50 in Kentucky to a high of \$200 in Texas. Two States (Minnesota and Ohio), however, have established compulsory savings plans to ensure that offenders have at least a minimum amount of funds upon release. These plans provide that a set percentage of an offender's earnings be set aside in a release account to ensure that the offender has temporary living expenses during his transition back to the community.

Kentucky

The Kentucky Revised Statutes provide that each offender be furnished a gratuity of not more than \$75, transportation back to the county of commitment, and clothing. The purpose of the gratuity is to provide the offender with sufficient funds to cover his living expenses until he reaches his destination or until he receives income from his family or wages from employment. In July 1977, the Bureau of Corrections issued a policy which provided that each offender be given \$50 regardless of the amount of the offender's personal funds. Those offenders with extreme needs who do not have sufficient personal funds or support from the family and community organizations may apply for an optional gratuity of \$25. During fiscal year 1977, the Kentucky Bureau of Corrections granted gratuities totaling \$65,000. Corrections officials stated that no optional gratuities had been paid in fiscal year 1977.

Ohio

The Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction established a compulsory savings plan in October 1977. This plan requires that a set percentage of an offender's earned wages, ranging from 29 to 40 percent, be set aside in a release account. The offender is to use these funds upon release for temporary living expenses, but if the offender is released before he has saved \$75, the Department makes up the difference. Also, each offender receives all funds in his personal account. He also may receive transportation to his release destination and appropriate clothing.

Ohio corrections officials stated that the compulsory savings plan was structured in such a manner that only about 10 percent of all offenders released from State institutions in the future would require any supplement by the State.

Minnesota

The Minnesota Department of Corrections has established a mandatory savings plan in which 50 percent of an offender's earned wages are set aside in a release account until the offender has accumulated \$100. Upon release, the inmate is paid that amount plus all funds credited to his personal account. If the offender is paroled before he accumulates \$100 in his release account, the State supplements his account to ensure that he has \$100. The State has also implemented a \$500 mandatory savings plan for a small number of offenders earning over \$0.75 per hour. The State does not supplement the account if the offender is paroled before accumulating that amount.

The State also furnishes all offenders with transportation to their release destinations and clothing upon request.

Texas

All offenders released from State correctional institutions in Texas receive \$200 in release funds and some clothing. Offenders, however, must arrange for and pay the cost of transportation to their release destinations. The Texas Department of Corrections does not compensate offenders for any work performed during incarceration. Therefore, most offenders leaving the State correctional institutions have little or no personal funds to supplement the \$200 gratuity.

THE BUREAU NEEDS TO IMPROVE ADMINISTRATION OF GRATUITIES

Our review showed a need for the Bureau to improve the administration of its gratuity program. We found that improvements were needed in the method of budgeting for gratuities and in the development of criteria for determining the amount of the gratuity paid to offenders. These improvements would ensure that sufficient funds were available and that gratuities were equitably distributed to offenders on the basis of need.

The method of budgeting for gratuities needs to be changed

The Bureau needs to revise its method of budgeting for gratuities because gratuities are not allocated to each institution on the basis of the total projected offender population that will be released annually from an institution. Rather, gratuities are included as a part of the total funds requested for the care and treatment of offenders. Those funds are then allocated to the Bureau's institutions on the basis of total population. Institutions with similar numbers of offenders are generally allocated approximately the same amount of funds for gratuities, despite the fact that the missions of the institutions may be completely different and the number of offenders released during any period may be totally disproportionate. The current method of budgeting for gratuities may limit the number of offenders who receive a gratuity as well as the amount of the gratuity.

Officials from the Bureau's regional offices stated that funds should be allocated to each institution on the basis of the projected number of offenders that will be released annually and not on the basis of institutional population. Other Bureau officials felt that gratuities should be a separate line item in the budget so they would not be affected by other elements of the inmate care budget.

Improved criteria are needed for paying gratuities to offenders

The Bureau's policy is to provide the largest gratuities to offenders having the fewest available resources, including personal funds and resources in the community. The actual amount paid to each offender is at the discretion of the institutional staff.

Our review showed that the Bureau needs to improve the administration of the gratuity program because the current guidelines are subject to different interpretations by the

institutional staffs. During our visits to five Federal institutions, we found inconsistencies in the manner in which gratuities were distributed to offenders. The following examples illustrate these inconsistencies.

--One institution provided no more than \$25 to any offender transferred to a contract halfway house. Another institution granted up to \$100 to an offender going to a halfway house. A third institution granted between \$25 and \$50 to an offender going to a halfway house.

--Some offenders released from one institution with personal funds exceeding \$100 received gratuities from \$20 to \$100, while other offenders with under \$1 of personal funds received less than \$15.

Regional and institutional officials advised us that more definitive criteria were needed to ensure that gratuities were equitably distributed to offenders on the basis of their needs.

FEDERAL ASSISTANCE TO STATES COULD ADDRESS TRANSITIONAL PROGRAMS

Federal assistance programs could help improve the transition programs in correctional institutions.

Section 150 of the Vocational Education Act of 1963, as amended, authorizes the Commissioner of Education to make grants to States to assist them in conducting programs (1) including consumer education, food and nutrition, family living and parenthood education, child development and guidance, housing and home management (including resource management), and clothing and (2) encouraging outreach programs for youth and adults in correctional institutions. Funds may also be used for such ancillary services as teacher training and supervision, curriculum development, research, program evaluation, special demonstration and experimental programs, development of instructional materials, exemplary projects, provision of equipment, and State administration and leadership.

Title I of the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act provides support through State prime sponsors for (1) outreach programs to make persons aware of the availability of manpower services and persuade them to use such services, (2) referral to appropriate employment, training, or other opportunities, and (3) supportive services to enable individuals to take advantage of employment opportunities. Title III of the Act

authorizes the Secretary of Labor to use funds available under title III to provide additional manpower services as authorized under title I to segments of the population in particular need, such as offenders.

CONCLUSIONS

The Bureau and State correctional agencies have not placed sufficient emphasis on programs to assist offenders in making a successful transition to the community. The absence of these services detracts from the offenders' chances of reintegrating into the community and wastes valuable resources. Also, the Bureau needs to improve the administration of its gratuity program to ensure that sufficient funds are available and that gratuities are equitably distributed based upon need.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend that the Attorney General require that the Director of the Bureau of Prisons:

- Ensure that his institutions implement existing policies for social education and prerelease programs.
- Work with the Federal Probation System so that parole officers receive sufficient information in advance of an offender's release to assist in obtaining employment.
- Ensure that funds are available to give an offender an adequate gratuity upon release from Federal institutions and consider implementing an offender's savings plan similar to those used by some States.
- Improve the administration of the gratuity program.

We also recommend that the the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare instruct the Commissioner of Education to encourage the States to upgrade the transition programs in their correctional institutions with part of the assistance funds provided them under the Vocational Education Act of 1963.

We recommend that the Secretary of Labor encourage the use of CETA funds for (1) outreach programs to offenders in correctional institutions to make them aware of manpower services available in their State and to persuade them to use such services, (2) programs to refer offenders to appropriate employment, training, or other opportunities upon their release from prison, and (3) supportive services to enable offenders to take advantage of employment opportunities.

AGENCY COMMENTS

The Departments of HEW and Labor concurred in the recommendations for improving transition programs in correctional institutions. HEW stated that the Commissioner of Education would send a memorandum to every State department of education emphasizing the need to use a portion of their vocational grants to bring about needed improvements in correctional institution programs. Labor stated that our recommendation appeared to be consistent with the future direction of offender programming.

CHAPTER 6

IMPROVED MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM

CAN STRENGTHEN PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

The Bureau of Prisons and State correctional agencies can strengthen management of programs for improving offender employability by developing and improving existing management information systems. Such systems are invaluable in monitoring inmate progress in programs as well as for planning and funding these programs.

The Bureau has been using an automated system since 1970; however, correctional administrators have made limited use of the system. The Bureau's system currently provides information that is inaccurate, untimely, and incomplete. Also, the system does not provide all the information needed by correctional administrators. As a result, correctional staffs independently developed duplicate manual information systems.

Three of the four States included in our review received Federal grants of about \$2.7 million from the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration for the purpose of establishing automated management information systems. Only one of these three States had an operational system, but it did not provide comprehensive data for assessing inmate progress in programs.

Since the Bureau and the four State correctional agencies did not have comprehensive management information, management was forced to make decisions without it or depend on manually developed information which had often been prepared on an ad hoc basis. Such a process (1) is time consuming, (2) poorly utilizes valuable personnel resources, and (3) lacks the timeliness for making well-informed management decisions.

A well-designed management information system can strengthen program management by providing comprehensive and reliable information to all levels of management in a timely manner for

- monitoring operations at each correctional institution,
- evaluating programmatic activities at the institutions, and
- ensuring that existing resources are efficiently managed.

Such a system is a valuable tool that prison administrators can use to ensure that training programs are properly designed to meet offenders' needs, interests, and aptitudes as well as to measure offenders' progress in programs. Also, the system can be used by prison administrators to ensure that limited resources are allocated to institutions and programs on the basis of need, use, and effectiveness.

IMPROVEMENT IS NEEDED IN THE ACCURACY,
TIMELINESS, AND COMPLETENESS OF INFORMATION
IN THE BUREAU'S SYSTEM

The Bureau's management information system provides reports to each institution on those offenders participating in programs. We found that the information contained in these reports was of little use to prison administrators because it was inaccurate, incomplete, and untimely. Consequently, the Bureau lacks data necessary to effectively manage existing resources and determine whether offenders are obtaining needed education and training.

The following examples illustrate some of the problems with accuracy, completeness, and timeliness.

--A report showing offender program enrollments, completions, and withdrawals at one institution during fiscal year 1977 misstated offender participation and completion of vocational training programs. The following chart compares the report with actual class rolls obtained from the instructors.

| VOCATIONAL TRAINING | AUTOMATED REPORT | CLASS ROLLS |
|---------------------|------------------|-------------|
| TOTAL ENROLLMENT | 382 | 453 |
| COMPLETIONS | 183 | 207 |
| WITHDRAWALS | 118 | 131 |
| ENDING ENROLLMENT | 133 | 115 |

--A report titled "Unit Planning and Participation" is supposed to show individual unit assignments, offender program plans, enrollments, completions, and offender progress. One such report produced for an institution excluded 31 (27 percent) of

116 offenders assigned to 1 of the institution's unit teams. We found that 14 of the 31 offenders had been assigned to the unit more than 60 days and 2 of these 14 had been in the unit for over 2 years.

Some of the reasons for these problems include inadequate training of the institutional staff in using the system and a lack of followup to ensure that staff report information accurately. Without adequate training and the support of top management, institutional staff often fail to recognize the value of the system and the importance of reporting data accurately.

In an effort to fill gaps in the Bureau's automated reporting system, the Bureau's Education Administrator implemented a manual reporting system for education and training in fiscal year 1975. In June 1977, the Bureau's Education Administrator abolished this system because the information was not valid or useful. In abolishing the manual reporting system, the Education Administrator stated:

"* * * When we try to summarize the data from individual institution reports, we find data inconsistencies and discrepancies which we are unable to resolve. Further, despite the fact that definitions of terms and concepts accompany the report form, institutions do not interpret and apply these definitions uniformly. Therefore, it is not possible to arrive at valid regional or Bureau totals, nor is it possible to correctly compare data between institutions."

Institutional personnel have continued to prepare internal manual reports for their daily operational needs, such as monitoring offender class enrollments, completions, and withdrawals. Also, these reports are inaccurate in many cases. The following chart demonstrates inaccuracies of the manual reporting system at one institution by comparing information reported to the warden on offender participation in vocational training with reports we obtained from the instructors.

| VOCATIONAL TRAINING PARTICIPATION | INSTITUTIONAL REPORT | INSTRUCTOR REPORTS | PERCENTAGE DIFFERENCE |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| ENROLLMENTS | 745 | 306 | 143 |
| COMPLETIONS | 136 | 119 | 14 |
| WITHDRAWALS | 176 | 116 | 52 |
| ENDING ENROLLMENT | 433 | 71 | 510 |

Regional and institutional officials stated that they made little use of the reports generated from the management information system. They also stated that top management needed to place more emphasis on training institutional staff on the values of the system as well as the importance of reporting information accurately.

THE SYSTEM FAILS TO PROVIDE INFORMATION
NEEDED BY BUREAU MANAGEMENT

The Bureau's management information system does not provide correctional administrators with all the information necessary to effectively manage education and training programs. Some of these deficiencies included

- the failure to collect cost data by individual program,
- the unavailability of summary information on offender needs for use in selecting programs,
- a poorly designed report for monitoring inmate program participation, and
- no provision for inputting and reporting data on transitional programs.

The Bureau recognizes the need for making cost analyses of institutional programs, but the information system does not provide the needed information. This was evident in July 1977, when the Bureau's Education Task Force attempted to conduct a comparative analysis of each institution's education and training costs. It was necessary for the Task Force to perform the analysis manually from information supplied by education personnel at each institution and from a variety of reports. In the end, it was impossible to conduct a detailed cost analysis of individual education and training programs since each institution reports only the total costs for education and training by nature of expense rather than by type of program.

Selection of appropriate education and training programs requires an assessment of offender needs. Without such an assessment, the institution may offer programs that do not meet offender needs or fail to offer programs that could address these needs. One institution, recognizing the importance of assessing offender needs, found it necessary to manually analyze information routinely input into the Bureau's automated system. This manual analysis was necessary because the automated system did not summarize and report

to the institution data needed for this assessment, such as offender education and skill levels.

The automated report of individual offender program plans, enrollments, completions, and withdrawals is poorly designed for monitoring offender participation in programs. The report intermingles the offender's current and past plans as well as the status of program activities so that the current plan is not discernible. Institutional staff stated that this report, if properly formatted, would be valuable in monitoring offender activities. Poor report design may be the result of the Bureau's failure to adequately consider the report's purpose since a policy statement describes the report, but does not specify its purpose.

Wardens and other officials stated that some information necessary for monitoring many of the institutional programs which provide assistance to offenders in their transition to the community was unavailable. For example, one warden stated that there could be some potential benefit to institutional management if information was available to

- monitor gratuities to ensure that offender needs for this assistance were provided equitably and to the extent possible within Bureau guidelines;
- measure the effectiveness of transferring offenders to halfway houses, including offender needs for this service as well as reasons precluding transfers; and
- assess the effectiveness of furloughs to assist offenders in acquiring jobs in the community before release.

None of the Federal institutions we visited gathered this type of information in any comprehensive format.

STATUS OF INFORMATION SYSTEMS
IN STATE CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTIONS

State prison administrators also need management information systems to determine the effectiveness of their offender programs and evaluate offenders' progress in those programs. Three of the four States included in our review received Federal grants totaling about \$2.7 million through LEAA for establishing such systems. One of the four States included in our review has an operational automated offender information system. This system, however, provides only

limited data on offender program activity. The other States have offender information systems under varying stages of development. Only two of these systems, however, are expected to provide comprehensive management information for monitoring offender progress in programs.

Kentucky

In 1976 the Kentucky Bureau of Corrections conducted an internal evaluation of its management information system. The study team concluded that information processing was un-systematic, was time consuming, and wasted valuable personnel resources. Also, the information was not available for making timely and well-informed management decisions. For example, at one institution the Kentucky Bureau of Corrections asked how many offenders were under the age of 21. To obtain this information, it was necessary to manually examine each offender's folder to find his birthdate and then compute his age. This whole process was extremely time consuming.

In 1977 the Kentucky Bureau of Corrections began developing an offender-based information system. The system, estimated to cost approximately \$504,200 when implemented in 1979, will be entirely funded by the State. The Kentucky Bureau of Corrections estimates that the system has the potential for saving about \$1.4 million annually. As presently envisioned, the system will contain demographic and background information on offenders. It will give management fiscal reviews, personnel complements, itemized programs and budgets, and performance information.

Ohio

The Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction started developing an automated offender based management information system in 1969. This system was developed by management consulting firms under grants totaling \$1,268,112 from LEAA. The system became operational in 1973. The system was abandoned in 1975 because (1) there had been insufficient development before placing the system into service, (2) the sophisticated hardware could not achieve the purposes for which it had been designed, and (3) the online system at each institution was prohibitively expensive.

After the system was discontinued in 1975, Ohio began developing a new offender-based information system. The new system will be part of the State's Criminal Justice Information System, which is being developed under a grant of about \$400,000 from LEAA. It will be a less sophisticated system in terms of equipment and data content. The content

of the system will be limited to demographic, background, and sentencing data for incarcerated offenders. It will provide some information for program-planning purposes; however, current plans do not call for using the system for program evaluations because offender program activity information and monetary data will not be included in the system. State correctional officials stated that their first priority was to achieve operational status for the basic offender information system. They recognize the important role this system can play in program evaluations. They also stated that future expansion of the system might include program evaluation data.

Minnesota

The Minnesota Department of Corrections has used an automated management information system for several years to collect, organize, and deliver information for administrative use. This system is fragmented and inefficient since no single place is available where complete information on offenders can be retrieved in a timely and accurate manner. As a result, the Department has been limited in its capabilities to monitor activities at the institutions as well as evaluate how efficiently existing programs are managed.

The Department has received \$520,000 under three grants from LEAA. Additional funds of about \$155,000 have been requested for completing development of an offender-based management information system. This system is being designed to include such information as background; diagnostic and classification results; job or program assignments, as well as performance, visitation, disciplinary reports, and medical data. The Department expects this system will be fully operational by September 1978.

The new system will provide the Department with information for program-planning and evaluation purposes; however, it still lacks financial information on programs, postrelease job placements, and followup data for complete program-planning and evaluation.

Texas

The Texas Department of Corrections started developing an automated management information system in 1971 under grants from LEAA of \$517,846. The system became operational in 1973 and provides the Department with comprehensive information on offender job skills, job assignments, vocational aptitudes, and other information relevant to offender employment skills. Correctional administrators then use this information to (1) place offenders in jobs requiring their skills,

(2) determine offender aptitude for training programs, and
(3) assist offenders in obtaining employment upon release.
This system, however, is not used for planning or funding
programs, determining the effectiveness of offender programs,
and measuring how offenders are progressing in these programs.

The State correctional official responsible for the
system recognized that the system was not making maximum
use of all the information contained in it. Future plans,
he said, call for certain programing changes which will en-
able the Department to better utilize the system to measure
offender progress in programs and determine the effectiveness
of programs.

CONCLUSIONS

The Bureau and State correctional agencies can strength-
en the management of programs for improving offender employ-
ability by developing and implementing comprehensive manage-
ment information systems. Such systems would be valuable in
monitoring offender progress in programs as well as providing
needed information for well-informed management decisions on
the planning and funding of these programs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend that the Attorney General require that the
Director of the Bureau of Prisons:

- Use the management information system to monitor
offender progress in programs and to provide the
information needed for planning and funding these
programs.
- Provide adequate training of institutional staff
responsible for collecting and reporting information.
- Establish a management structure to ensure that data
is collected and reported in an accurate, complete,
and timely manner.

The Attorney General should require the Administrator
of the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration to work
more closely with States using LEAA funds to implement
management information systems that help States design
systems (1) which they can afford to operate and (2) which
will provide them the information they need.

CHAPTER 7

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

PROGRAMS HAVE NOT BEEN FULLY EVALUATED

The Bureau of Prisons and State correctional agencies have not fully evaluated correctional education and training programs. Criteria to assess program performance including the success or failure of programs to improve offender employability have not been formulated. Also, no system has been established to collect all relevant information for evaluations of program management and impact. As a result, the Bureau and State correctional agencies do not know the extent to which the programs assist in improving the employability of offenders or what changes are needed to improve the programs.

Because correctional administrators face a number of operational constraints and a shortage of funds for offenders' education and training, it is imperative that program effectiveness be continually evaluated. Correctional education authorities have highlighted the need for comprehensive program evaluations of correctional education and training programs over the years.

In August 1977, the National Correctional Education Evaluation Project completed a study of education programs in some 200 Federal and State correctional institutions. This study concluded that:

- There was a serious lack of program effectiveness reviews, especially those addressing acquired training and skills in relation to job market needs.
- Little if any attention had been given to the measurement of postprogram success, postrelease followup, or recidivism rates in the evaluation of correctional education programs over the past 5 years.
- Sizable confusion and ambiguity existed about the meaning, content, and purpose of program evaluations.
- A substantial number of correctional education program evaluations had been reported, but the quality, effectiveness, and purpose of these evaluations might be at best questionable and at worst meaningless.

The study recognized that the overriding need in the area of program evaluation was further refinement and development of the scope, form, and purpose of such evaluations. In an attempt to address this problem, the study recommended that evaluations be designed to include procedures for measuring the impact of programs on offenders upon course completion and after release to the community.

In July 1978, we reported that LEAA and State evaluation activities and information were not meeting users' planning, decisionmaking, and policymaking needs. 1/

- The amount and types of evaluation were inadequate.
- Evaluation activities and products were of questionable quality.
- User needs were not met.
- Resources allocated for evaluation were inadequate and needed better management.
- Better coordination of evaluation program efforts was needed.

We recommended that LEAA substantively involve State and local officials in formulating evaluation policies, guidelines, and requirements by establishing an evaluation coordinating committee composed of Federal, State, local, and private criminal justice representatives and by systematically assessing evaluation needs at least annually. We also made recommendations for ensuring that sufficient resources were available and for improving the quality and utility of evaluation results and information in a cost-effective manner.

A critical step in evaluating programs is establishing clearly defined goals and measurable objectives. The primary goal of education and training programs in correctional institutions is to assist the offenders in learning a marketable job skill. However, correctional administrators have not established any quantifiable program objectives, such as matching offender skills obtained while participating in programs in institutions with the jobs available in the private sector.

1/"Evaluation Needs of Crime Control Planners, Decision-makers, and Policymakers Are Not Being Met" (GGD-77-72 and GGD-77-72A, July 14, 1978).

The collection of relevant data is also needed to perform program evaluation. Some of the more crucial data correctional administrators need includes (1) the offender's success or lack of success in obtaining employment or continuing his education, (2) the type of job and wage rate the offender obtains, (3) the offender's adjustment in the community upon release, and (4) feedback from employers on the offender's skills, quality and relevance of training received, and work habits. As discussed in chapter 6, the Bureau and State correctional agencies do not presently have systems for collecting, summarizing, and analyzing information on offenders.

Correctional administrators face difficulties in obtaining postrelease followup information on all offenders. Individuals who have served their full sentences in a correctional institution are not required to furnish correctional authorities any postrelease information. One possible solution to this would be to work with parole authorities to develop information on offenders' postrelease employment patterns. Since most offenders are released under parole supervision, correctional administrators could use such data to make past and present comparisons as well as establish baselines from which trends may be spotted and evaluations performed.

Two States have made some limited attempts to evaluate the effectiveness of education and training programs. Another plans to implement a system for continuously monitoring program effectiveness. State correctional officials told us that these limited studies had been beneficial in enhancing offender employability. However, they told us that they did not have the system to routinely collect all the required relevant information or the necessary resources to regularly analyze the information.

CONCLUSIONS

The failure of the Bureau and State correctional agencies to (1) develop criteria for evaluating program effectiveness and (2) accumulate the relevant data on program results precludes correctional administrators from determining which programs improve offender employability or what program changes are needed. With specific criteria and a comprehensive evaluation system, correctional administrators could better utilize limited resources for education and training programs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend that the Attorney General require that the Director of the Bureau of Prisons and the Administrator of the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration jointly design

evaluation programs which can (1) assess system effectiveness in improving offender employability and (2) be economically implemented by all correctional agencies. The design should include specific criteria for measuring program effectiveness and a system to collect, summarize, and analyze information on program results.



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20201

DEC 1 1978

Mr. Gregory J. Ahart
Director
Human Resources Division
United States General
Accounting Office
Washington, D.C. 20548

Dear Mr. Ahart:

The Secretary asked that I respond to your request for our comments on your draft report entitled, "Correctional Institutions Can Do More To Improve The Employability Of Offenders."

We concur with the report's recommendations calling for the Commissioner of Education to encourage the States to apply a portion of the assistance provided them under the Vocational Education Act of 1963 and the Education Amendments of 1976 to 1) help improve the classification and counseling programs in their correctional institutions, 2) help improve the curriculum and on-the-job training programs in their correctional institutions, and 3) upgrade the transition programs in their correctional institutions.

The Commissioner of Education will send a memorandum to every State Department of Education emphasizing the need to use a portion of their vocational grant to bring about needed improvements in Correctional Institution Programs. This memorandum will be sent within the next month.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on this draft report before its publication.

Sincerely yours,

Thomas D. Morris
Inspector General

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
WASHINGTON

NOV 29 1978

Mr. Gregory J. Ahart
Director
Human Resources Division
U. S. General Accounting Office
Washington, D. C. 20548

Dear Mr. Ahart:

The Department of Labor has reviewed the draft of GAO's report entitled "Correctional Institutions Can Do More To Improve the Employability of Offenders." The study's primary focus was directed at the Bureau of Prisons and their institutional training programs. An examination was also made of the vocational education and prison industry programs in selected correctional institutions in four States (Texas, Minnesota, Kentucky, and Ohio).

The report emphasizes the need for increased employment and training services to inmates in the institutions examined. A second finding suggests that where institutional training and prison industry programs exist, greater resources of staff and revenue should be expended to more adequately prepare offenders for meaningful job placement opportunities after incarceration.

We feel that this report and its recommendations are concise, complete and describe many of the problems in all prisons. One recommendation is that the "Secretary of Labor encourage the use of CETA funds in State correctional institutions for establishing and operating programs that...provide...preparation for entering the labor market." That recommendation appears to be consistent with the Department's future direction in offender programming.

The Labor Department has long recognized the need for training and career counseling programs in State and Federal institutions. During the 1960's the Department funded several experimental and demonstration programs which focused on improving skill training for inmates. The Model Ex-Offender programs of the early 70's introduced vocational counseling and supportive services to inmates in approximately 15 State institutions, linking vocational counseling services with job training and placement slots for inmates upon their release. Our experiences inside the institutions demonstrated that institutional training programs were only as effective as the equipment, instruction and job-related opportunities available to the successful completors upon their release. Frequently we found the vocational education and training experiences offered within the institutions lacked any linkage with employment opportunities in the community. Often the time period between training completion and institutional release was sufficiently long as to preclude ex-offender placement in employment opportunities related to training received. The report also is consistent with the Department's experience that overcrowded institutions hinder effective training and counseling programs.

Under the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) of 1973, as amended, the Secretary of Labor made funds available under title III to enhance offender employment and training opportunities. Current emphasis has been directed at CETA prime sponsors in an effort to encourage them to make their entitlement funds available for offender program activities. Title III monies have been used by the Department to establish institutional-based vocational counseling programs. These programs, referred to as Model Ex-Offender Programs, linked institutional residents with job placement and training activities in their communities.

During the past 2 years, the Department's thrust has been that of technical assistance to prime sponsors. The technical assistance activity focuses on prime sponsors who have demonstrated an interest in allocating entitlement funds for offender programs.

The report's observations and recommendations pertaining to apprenticeship programs in the institutions examined, although critical, are constructive and the suggestions to the Secretary have already been implemented by the Department's Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training to the extent that time and staff will permit. The full intent of the Bureau is for the registered apprenticeship programs in the institutions to be equal to, or exceed those apprenticeship programs in the private sector. However, both the institutional and private sector programs must meet the provisions of Title 29, Part 29 CFR subtitle A (Labor Standards for the Registration of Apprenticeship Programs). Multi-Trade Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committees have been established in the institution programs to insure program comparability and protection for the inmate apprentices. The authors of the report offer several examples of situations where institutional residents complete their apprenticeship in less than the required number of hours. The Bureau is of the opinion that the authors of the report may have been hasty in some of their conclusions.^{1/}The Bureau recognizes an apprentice as one having completed apprenticeship only after the joint committee has been satisfied that the apprentice has mastered the trade and requested the Bureau to issue a certificate of completion. The report observed that in some institutions examined, the institutions reported inmate residents as having completed their apprenticeship when the period of commitment to those facilities had terminated, whether the apprenticeship program had been completed or not.

^{1/}This matter was resolved in subsequent discussions with Department of Labor officials.

These comments on institutional apprenticeships are not to be construed as a rebuttal to the report, but as areas for further checking to insure accuracy in the report. If the Department can be of further assistance in the preparation of the final report, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,



R. C. DeMARCO
Inspector General - Acting

FEDERAL AGENCIES FUNDINGEDUCATION AND TRAINING PROGRAMS FOR OFFENDERS

Few Federal education and training programs are specifically designed to improve the employability of offenders in Federal and State correctional institutions. Rather, most Federal agencies provide financial support for education and training programs to a target population that is disadvantaged. Correctional institutions are generally eligible to receive financial support for education and training programs since offenders are classified as disadvantaged. Currently, no comprehensive list is available of all Federally funded education and training programs for offenders. Three Federal Departments--Justice; Labor; and Health, Education, and Welfare--provide most of the Federal funds for correctional education and training programs. Additional information on the three Departments follows.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

The Department of Justice provides funds for the education and training of Federal law violators committed to the custody of the Attorney General. Funding for these programs is included as a part of the operating budget of the Bureau of Prisons.

The National Institute of Corrections, which is attached to the Bureau of Prisons, is authorized to carry out a program of technical assistance and training for State and local correctional personnel and others who work with offenders.

Law Enforcement Assistance Administration funds allocated to corrections in the States we reviewed have been used primarily for activities other than the education and training of offenders in State correctional institutions. LEAA provides funds through each State Planning Agency to improve law enforcement activities. It administers block and discretionary grant programs, provides technical assistance, and conducts research and development programs which assist State and local criminal justice agencies.

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

The Department of Labor's programs provide assistance in several ways--comprehensive manpower services, public

employment programs, programs for special target groups, the Job Corps, emergency jobs and unemployment assistance, national on-the-job training, apprenticeship outreach and training, and employment consultation and placement services. These programs may provide education, training, and job assistance to offenders in institutions or those released to the community.

Most of Labor's financial support for State correctional institutions is supplied under the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act of 1973. One section of the act (title III) specifically covers offenders. This section provides for the establishment of procedures to ensure that trainees are given manpower training and related services, such as basic education, drug addiction or dependency rehabilitation, health care, and other services which will enable trainees to secure meaningful employment. Funds appropriated under the act have been used by State correctional agencies to provide occupational training and related services to offenders.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE

The Department of Health, Education, and Welfare provides financial assistance to State and local education agencies for the purpose of improving and strengthening educational opportunities for the handicapped and disadvantaged. Legislation that assists in the education and training of offenders includes (1) the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended, (2) the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended, (3) the Adult Education Act of 1966, (4) the Library Services and Construction Act, and (5) the Vocational Education Act of 1963, as amended.

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended, provides funds to State education agencies and school districts. These funds are used to expand the educational opportunities for educationally deprived children. Correctional agencies have used these State funds to improve academic education for offenders under the age of 21 by providing additional instructors for adult basic and secondary education programs.

The Higher Education Act of 1965 authorizes Federal funds to colleges and universities for (1) strengthening community service programs, (2) expanding library resources and training programs in librarianship, and (3) improving

training and retraining programs for teachers, teacher aides, and other educational personnel. This act also provides financial assistance for individual students to attend college through the Basic Educational Opportunity and Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant programs. State correctional agencies have used the Higher Education Act to provide college programs and sponsor teacher interns within the correctional facilities. Offenders in Federal and State correctional institutions have obtained tuition assistance for college programs through the Basic Educational Opportunity Grant program.

The Adult Education Act of 1966 expanded the educational opportunities of adults. It encouraged them to obtain at least secondary education and training to enable them to become more employable, productive, and responsible citizens. Under the act, funds are generally awarded directly to the States, which reallocate the money to local education agencies. State correctional agencies have used these funds to provide adult basic and secondary education programs for offenders.

The Library Services and Construction Act provides that Federal funds may be used for improving public library services for the physically handicapped, institutionalized, and disadvantaged. The act specifically authorizes that books, library materials, and library services may be provided to offenders in correctional institutions. Under the act, funds are awarded to a State agency which is responsible for reallocating these funds to individual library projects. These funds have been used to expand library services for offenders in State correctional institutions.

The Vocational Education Act of 1963, as amended, authorizes that Federal funds be spent to improve the quality of vocational education and expand vocational education opportunities. Grants are generally provided to State Education Agencies to assist them in maintaining and extending existing programs and in developing new vocational education programs. Special target groups have been identified for particular emphasis in the delivery of these services. These include youths; persons of limited English-speaking ability; handicapped persons; and nonhandicapped persons who have academic, socioeconomic, or other handicaps that prevent them from succeeding in a regular vocational education program. Offenders are eligible for services under the Vocational Education Act of 1963, as amended, since they are members of a disadvantaged group. State correctional administrators have used funds appropriated under the Vocational Education Act of 1963, as amended, to provide occupational training programs for offenders.

BACKGROUND ON CORRECTIONAL AGENCIESBUREAU OF PRISONS

The role of the Bureau of Prisons within the Federal criminal justice system is to carry out the judgments of the U.S. Courts for those Federal law violators committed to the supervision of the Attorney General. The Bureau provides for the custody and care of offenders and offers a wide variety of programs to help offenders prepare for reentering society. In carrying out these activities, the Bureau operates a nationwide system of correctional facilities which include 6 penitentiaries, 22 Federal correctional institutions, 4 prison camps, 3 metropolitan correctional centers, 2 detention centers, 1 medical center, and 9 community treatment centers. About 29,400 offenders were housed in the Bureau's facilities as of December 31, 1977. The Bureau employed a staff of about 8,200 and operated on a budget of about \$218 million during fiscal year 1977.

The Bureau recognizes that programs such as academic education, occupational training, social education, and counseling are important elements in improving the employability of offenders. But primary responsibility for enrolling in these programs rests with the offender. The Bureau offers a full range of academic programs and a wide range of occupational training programs at its institutions. The academic education programs include adult basic and secondary education and a variety of postsecondary education courses. Adult basic and secondary education programs are generally taught by Bureau personnel, while postsecondary education is provided through arrangements with neighboring colleges. The occupational training programs include exploratory training, formal vocational training, apprenticeship training, and on-the-job training. Occupational training is generally taught by Bureau personnel at the institutions. In fiscal year 1977, the Bureau spent about \$10.6 million for educating and training offenders. About \$4 million of this was provided by Federal Prison Industries, Inc.

KENTUCKY BUREAU OF CORRECTIONS

The Kentucky Bureau of Corrections is responsible for the operation of adult correctional institutions and the administration of probation and parole activities.

Its mission is to deliver effective services so that adult offenders will develop maximum constructive careers and avoid further involvement in criminal behavior. The Bureau operates 11 correctional institutions which housed about 3,700 offenders as of December 31, 1977. During fiscal year 1977, the Bureau employed a staff of about 1,400 and operated on a budget of about \$22 million. The Bureau allocated about 3 percent of its budget--or \$673,000--for operating the academic education programs in its institutions. The Kentucky Bureau of Vocational Education spent \$310,296 during fiscal year 1977 in support of vocational training programs in Kentucky's correctional institutions.

The Bureau offers adult basic and secondary education at its institutions and a limited amount of special education and postsecondary education. The adult basic and secondary education programs are taught by Bureau employees, while postsecondary education is provided by local colleges. The occupational training programs in the institutions are taught by instructors from the Kentucky Bureau of Vocational Education.

MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

The Minnesota Department of Corrections is responsible for operating the State's five adult institutions and three juvenile facilities. The Department is committed to the development of programs that will both control offenders' inappropriate behavior and assist offenders in functioning as law-abiding citizens. The Department housed about 1,750 offenders in the 5 adult institutions as of December 31, 1977. During fiscal year 1977, the Department employed a staff of about 950 and spent about \$19.4 million at the 5 adult institutions. The Department spent about 8 percent of its budget--or \$1.5 million--for the operation of education and training programs for offenders in fiscal year 1977 at these five institutions.

The Department recognizes that all incarcerated offenders must be provided with programs which will assist in changing their lifestyles; however, the Department rejects the belief that offenders can be coerced into making significant behavioral changes by the correctional staff. Its programs provide positive reinforcement to offenders who voluntarily select a self-improvement activity. The Department provides education programs for the educationally disadvantaged offender, vocational education for the unskilled offender, and higher educational opportunities.

OHIO DEPARTMENT OF REHABILITATION
AND CORRECTION

The Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction is responsible for operating correctional institutions and the community treatment programs for adult offenders. Its goal is to protect society by operating a system of correctional institutions which

- humanely controls offenders' behavior and
- provides offenders with experiences and opportunities to modify their behavior so it is acceptable to society.

The Department operates 8 correctional institutions, which housed about 13,000 offenders as of December 31, 1977. During fiscal year 1977, the Department employed a staff of about 3,600 and operated on a budget of about \$61 million. The Department spent about 3 percent of its budget--or \$1.9 million--for operation of the education and training programs for offenders in fiscal year 1977.

Ohio is one of the few State correctional systems having a State-chartered school system; it has an accredited high school program for offenders. The Ohio Central School System provides both academic education and vocational training programs to offenders in Ohio's adult institutions. Participation in these programs is voluntary. A full range of academic programs is available to offenders, including adult basic education, adult secondary education, and a variety of postsecondary education courses. Adult secondary education includes formal high school classes and a General Education Development program. The adult basic and secondary education programs are taught by Department personnel, while postsecondary education is taught by instructors from local colleges. The Ohio Central School System also provides a wide range of formal vocational education programs.

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

The Texas Department of Corrections is responsible for operating the State correctional system for adult offenders. The Department's goal is to provide sentenced offenders with humane treatment as well as the opportunity, and encouragement to participate in training which will better prepare them to return to society. The Department operates 15 institutions

which housed about 22,400 offenders as of December 31, 1977. During fiscal year 1977, the Department employed a staff of about 3,300 and expended about \$81 million for total operations. The Department spent about 6 percent--or \$5 million--for operating the education and training programs for offenders in fiscal year 1977.

In 1969 the Texas Legislature authorized the Windham School District to serve the elementary and secondary education needs of offenders. This school system is fully accredited by the Texas Education Agency. The Windham School District's overall goal is to provide offenders possessing less than a high school education with the opportunity to acquire academic and vocational skills necessary to function in the society. The Windham School District offers offenders the opportunity to participate in adult basic education, obtain a high school diploma, or acquire a General Education Development certificate. Postsecondary educational opportunities are available through neighboring community colleges.

The Windham School District offers a wide range of occupational training programs, including (1) 29 different formal vocational training courses, (2) an occupational orientation program, (3) a pilot apprenticeship program, and (4) a series of formal on-the-job training programs.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20530

Address Reply to the
Division Indicated
and Refer to Initials and Number

JAN 9 1979

Mr. Allen R. Voss
Director
General Government Division
United States General Accounting Office
Washington, D.C. 20548

Dear Mr. Voss:

The Department of Justice is pleased to respond to your request for comments on the draft report entitled "Correctional Institutions Can Do More To Improve The Employability of Offenders."

The report is an effort to comprehensively assess a variety of educational and vocational training programs in several State and Federal institutions. The report is based on 16 different institutions of which five were Federal and the remainder scattered among four State systems. Because of the limited scope of the audit and because the GAO staff summarized their findings without specifying which institutions or Department of Corrections were cited, a reader of the draft report may be left with the impression that little is being accomplished in this area. The GAO staff draws a number of conclusions which can be accepted only as generalizations and made several recommendations which we consider oversimplified, unrealistic, and costly.

The report focuses on the issue of inmate employability and advances an underlying premise that increasing employment skills for most inmates will reduce the possibility that those inmates will become felony recidivists. To support this premise, page 2 of the draft report indicates that studies have been made showing a relationship between employment and recidivism for offenders. The draft report does not identify these studies. We seriously doubt that the extent of the relationship between employment and recidivism can be identified or proved, or that it is the significant problem implied by the report. A certain amount of enhanced discussion of the premise would be helpful in demonstrating its overall significance to the report.



In terms of inmate educational and vocational training program alternatives, the report completely overlooks the possibility of using vocational and technical training and job placement facilities--many of them Federally supported--that are already established in many communities. The GAO auditors carry through the entire report an underlying assumption that the Bureau of Prisons (BOP) is a static institution to which treatment programs must be attached or through which treatment programs, i.e., employment training programs, must be developed. Given the physical location of many BOP facilities, it is understandable that the auditors would approach the subject from this point of view. However, this perspective leads inevitably to the conclusion that a separate and expensive system of vocational-technical training programs must be developed and located within the physical environment of a Federal prison. If employment is relevant to an offender's survival in the community and, since vocational-technical educational programs now exist in the communities throughout the United States, we believe GAO should have given serious consideration to whether it would be more efficient, in economic terms, for BOP to provide more community corrections alternatives that utilize the vocational and technical training and job placement facilities of the community.

Because GAO treats the area of employability in very broad perspective, it is extremely difficult to make appropriate comments or responses to a number of the issues raised in the report. For example, on page 30 of the report GAO recommends:

The Attorney General should instruct the Director of the Bureau of Prisons to reassess the classification and counseling services provided in Federal institutions with the objectives of overcoming the management problems identified in this report and ensuring that

--the classification program in each institution is able to and does provide for the time and effort required to identify each offender's needs, to motivate those offenders with the need to improve their prospects for employment, and routinely reassess offender progress in programs,

- comprehensive and regularly scheduled counseling services are provided all offenders; and
- correctional counselors receive sufficient training to be able to adequately fulfill their counseling duties.

There are a number of latent assumptions in this recommendation. It is assumed that the classification program is able to identify offender needs; that adequate time and effort is available to identify needs; that offenders can be motivated to improve their prospects for employment; and that offender progress can be routinely reassessed.

The identification of needs is not a simple task, and no consensus exists about how to derive inmate needs. Aside from this, inmate needs are often artificially affected by the prison setting, and fulfillment of immediate needs may bear no relationship to inmate needs during their community reintegration.

Likewise, with overcrowded conditions and heavy counselor caseloads, it is very difficult to expend the time and effort necessary to determine inmate needs. The improvement of offender motivation to become employable is difficult when many institutional jobs do not require skilled labor or demand skills that are not needed or no longer applicable to more modern industries in the community.

The recommendation also fails to define what is meant by "comprehensive" and "regularly scheduled" counseling services. The BOP program guidelines call for a comprehensive approach to counseling. The first step of the Bureau's classification policy is to identify the causal factors underlying the offense of each individual. Identifying the cause for crime and the nature of the criminal is a tenuous process, at best. Various theories could be used, including a psychological, social, economic, biological, or some combination of these approaches, but no "best" theory has been developed. The methodology and the conclusions obtained from using such approaches are often invalid and unreliable. A comprehensive approach will assure an extensive examination of the problem but is unlikely to provide commonly acceptable answers and is likely to cost too much to administer.

The recommendation that BOP should provide "regularly scheduled counseling services" is somewhat unclear or contrary to current thinking concerning "coercive treatment." Efforts to change the offender by coercive programming often has dysfunctional effects on offender rehabilitation. However, we fully recognize that sufficient counseling and program direction must be given to meet offender needs.

With respect to technical assistance and funding, page 104 of the report recommends that the Attorney General require the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA) to work more closely with those States using LEAA funds to implement management information systems and help them design systems which they can afford to operate and which will provide the information they need. This recommendation relates to a problem that has been long recognized by LEAA and likewise has been the focal point of substantial action by the Department over a sustained period of time. Since 1974, with the inception of the Offender Based State Corrections Information System (OBSCIS), LEAA has provided technical assistance to States receiving LEAA funds to design and implement management information systems. Such assistance includes the identification of operational and administrative information needed by the States' correctional agencies. However, OBSCIS funds are limited and will not support the complete development of a comprehensive corrections information system in most States. The funds are intended to provide the initial development of a system, with the State assuming responsibility for further enhancement. Consequently, within only a few years time, a State may not have made sufficient fund outlays to achieve the level of information systems development recommended by the report, and thus are unable at this time to provide comprehensive management information for monitoring the progress and effectiveness of offender employability programs. To date, LEAA has provided 33 States more than \$10.8 million for the development of management information systems in this area. To finance the States beyond the initial development stage would be costly and not within LEAA's present funding capability.

The Department has been consciously aware of many of the problems discussed in the report. For example, LEAA has already funded research that should assist in designing the evaluation program contemplated by GAO's recommendation on page 108. Specifically, LEAA has completed a survey


of institutional education programs and is working on projects to identify measures of program effectiveness and system performance. Research is also underway in assessing the effectiveness of post-release employment strategies. In the future, LEAA plans to undertake additional research in developing and testing offender employment models and institutional education programs. The Attorney General has also established a Corrections Task Force which includes representatives from LEAA and BOP to explore issues affecting corrections and recommend appropriate Federal remedial action.

We also have the following observations to make regarding the draft report:

- LEAA has a discretionary grant program for Prison Industry Programs which attempts to implement and test a Free Venture Model which is consistent with many of the recommendations in the report. One of the first Free Venture grant awards was to the Minnesota Department of Corrections. Although this program has been active since February 1977, it is not cited in the draft report.
- Page 110 of the draft indicates that LEAA funds have been used "primarily for activities other than education and training of offenders in State correctional institutions." It should be noted that 50 percent of LEAA's Part E funds are awarded to the States under the block grant program. These funds go to both State and local facilities and are used for many purposes. A complete analysis of LEAA block and discretionary grant funds would have to be made prior to reaching the conclusions stated in the report as to the amount of funding devoted to education and training.

Should you desire any additional information, please feel free to contact us.

Sincerely,


Kevin D. Rooney
Assistant Attorney General
for Administration

GAO ANALYSIS OF THE DEPARTMENT
OF JUSTICE COMMENTS

The Department of Justice did not indicate what it planned to do, if anything, about the many problems noted in the report. Rather than address the report's central message--that correctional institutions could improve the employability of offenders by better managing existing programs--the Department addressed issues such as

- the relationship between employment and recidivism;
- community programs; and
- constraints faced by prison management in providing training to offenders.

As we point out in our report, most offenders lack the necessary education and skills to obtain and maintain gainful employment, and education and training programs geared toward assisting the offender in adjusting to society are offered in most correctional institutions. Although it is true that a relationship between employment and recidivism for offenders cannot be identified or proved, a great deal of money is being spent on providing training to offenders and on developing ways to improve it. That fact is evidenced by the Department's comments. In them, the Department advances the possibility that more consideration be given to utilizing programs available in the community, and also discuss an experimental training program being funded by LEAA.

Although it would be helpful if a relationship between employment training and recidivism could be proven, we do not believe the absence of such data detracts from the message of this report. Offenders who want to improve their lot in life should be provided with that opportunity, and funds spent for that purpose should be used as efficiently and economically as possible. Such an approach will not only enhance the opportunities available to offenders, but will also add credibility to any evaluations of the benefits of employment training that are conducted.

An important clarification needs to be made regarding the use of vocational and technical training and job placement facilities available in communities. We do not believe that those facilities should be ignored, and, in fact, we are conducting a separate review of community efforts to aid offenders in improving their employability. But at the same time,

it must be recognized that custody considerations presently limit the use of such programs. We agree that correctional authorities should use community facilities if and when it can be done. Also, we are not advocating the establishment of separate vocational-technical training programs within Federal prisons. Our concern is with shortcomings in the operation of existing ones.

The Department also commented on our recommendations related to classification and counseling services and stated that it is very difficult, with overcrowded conditions and heavy counselor caseloads, to expend the time and effort necessary to determine inmate needs. It also stated that the improvement of offender motivation to become employable is difficult when many institutional jobs do not require skilled labor or demand skills that are not needed or no longer applicable to more modern industries in the community.

In chapter 2 of our report, we attempted to recognize the constraints faced by prison administrators. We know that a number of problems exist, but since those problems have no easy solutions, we continue to believe that management must work within them to achieve the maximum return from existing programs. Also, we do not think counseling should be "coercive," nor do we think that it can be. We do not expect people to be forced to accept help that they do not want, but we do think a bona fide effort to motivate such people should be made.

The Department concludes its comments on classification and counseling by stating that it fully recognizes that sufficient counseling and program direction must be given to meet offender needs. Our recommendations were geared toward improving performance in those areas and for the most part, involve closer adherence to existing Bureau of Prison policies and procedures.

The Department stated that we made several recommendations which it considered to be oversimplified, unrealistic, and costly. Because the Department did not specify which recommendations, it is difficult to respond to that statement. However, as we pointed out elsewhere, we realize that improving the employability of offenders is a difficult task--but it has not been shown to be unrealistic. Also, many of our recommendations to the Department of Justice

were made with a view toward putting existing resources, as well as those additional resources which may be provided through the Departments of Labor and Health, Education, and Welfare, to the best possible use.

The Department also informed us of actions being taken by LEAA in the areas of technical assistance and evaluation and made some additional observations on the draft report. We recognize that LEAA does not have the funding capability to finance management information systems beyond the initial development stage in all States, and we are not advocating that it should be done. We are concerned that States not use LEAA funds to implement a system that exceeds their needs or is too expensive for them to operate. Thus, we are not calling for more funds--only closer liaison between LEAA and States to be sure that the funds that are spent for management information systems are being put to the best possible use.

The discretionary grant program funded in Minnesota by LEAA was discussed in chapter 4 of our draft report. We have changed the report to show that the program was funded by LEAA. Our comment in appendix II that LEAA funds allocated to corrections have been used primarily for activities other than the education and training of offenders in State correctional institutions is based on the work we did in the four States we visited. Our report has been clarified on this matter.

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