



Santa Clara County  
Office of the Sheriff  
Custody Bureau  
Jail Classification System Evaluation

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# Introduction

The Santa Clara County Office of the Sheriff Custody Bureau operates one of the largest jail systems in California and the nation. With approximately 3,500 male and female inmates in custody at any given time, a primary task for the Sheriff's Custody Bureau is to properly and safely house and manage this population on a daily basis. In order to perform that task, it must have a valid and reliable jail classification system that ensures people are properly housed in the various jail facilities and housing units. It is also important that all inmates are re-evaluated on a regular basis to ensure the current classification and housing assignments are proper.

Although the Sheriff's Custody Bureau has operated a jail classification system for many years, there have been some interests to see if the system needed to be evaluated and revised. The Santa Clara County Executive's Office of Budget and Analysis contacted the JFA Institute to see if such an evaluation could be completed in a timely manner. JFA then agreed to perform the work summarized in this report.

This study could not have been completed as quickly as it was without the considerable assistance and cooperation of the Custody Bureau's classification staff. The authors of this report would like to publically acknowledge their insights and assistance.

## Review of the Current Jail Classification System

As noted above, the Custody Bureau has been operating a formal inmate classification system for many years. One of the first tasks in this study was to assess the current system as it compares to those that have been successfully implemented in other major jail systems. In making this comparison, the standards set forth by the U.S. Department of Justice's National Institute of Corrections (NIC) were applied to Santa Clara's system. These standards include 1) the use of objective criteria that can be scored in a numeric manner, 2) the use of face to face interviews, 3), an initial and reclassification process, and 4) the application of over-rides.

The core NIC inmate classification system consists of an initial and reclassification process that assesses inmates on a number of criminal history, current offense(s), prior escapes, prior and current institutional conduct and certain demographic factors. Inmates are scored on these factors to produce a scored custody level usually defined as Minimum, Medium, and Maximum custody. Note the term custody is used to classify inmates while security should be used to classify the housing units and beds that are used to house the classified inmates.

The housing plan is another essential part of a classification system as it guides the actual placement of inmates within the jail's facility(s). The goal is to match as much as possible the inmate's custody level with the housing unit's security level. For a variety of

reasons, this is not often possible which results in some level of mixing the custody levels within a designated housing unit. The essential standard is that Maximum custody inmates should never be housed with Minimum custody inmates and vice versa.

But in addition to the so called “scoring items”, there are also a number of well defined over-rides that can be used, with proper checks and balances, to deviate from the scored custody level. These over-rides are separated into mandatory and discretionary over-rides.

Mandatory over-rides are those that restrict inmates who score Minimum custody but who have an outstanding restriction (e.g., charged with a homicide, outstanding felony warrant, etc.) that by policy will not allow the person to be placed in a Minimum security setting.

Discretionary over-rides are those factors that can be imposed at the discretion of the classification staff to either decrease or increase the inmate’s scored custody. Classification staff can use a number of pre-set discretionary factors that are approved by the correctional agency.

The fundamental principle underlying the NIC system is that every inmate’s initial custody level needs to be reassessed and modified based on the inmate’s most recent in-custody behavior on a regular timetable. The initial classification process is expected to make an informed estimate of the expected inmate’s custody level needs. But since the vast majority of inmates do not exhibit negative behavior while incarcerated, a well-structured reclassification process that lowers the custody level for inmates who exhibit positive behavior and increases the custody level for inmates who do not. In this sense, the inmate classification system reflects more of a “just deserts” behavioral philosophy as opposed to a predictive model.

As presently designed, the Santa Clara system meets many of the basic design features of the NIC core system as described above. It has initial and reclassification processes and it uses factors that are typically found on the NIC jail classification instruments. Further, it has a dedicated classification unit and the results of the system recorded in the Sheriff’s data system. But there are some important limitations to the current system that need to be addressed:

First, the overall instrument used by the Sheriff’s Department is not a pure numerical scoring system but a list of “factors” and/or descriptors that may be applied to each inmate in the form of a matrix. These factors are separated into security level, behavioral, custody profile, judicial status, and special condition categories with numerous sub-factors within each broad category. Based on the inmate’s matrix rating, the inmate is then assigned to the appropriate facility and housing unit. But some of the factors are somewhat subjective and may not be reliably used by all classification staff. Its fair to say that the Santa Clara Sheriff’s classification matrix approach is unique in the field of jail classification systems.

Second, there is no formal set of over-rides that can be applied to the process. There is a set of restrictions that are part of the matrix and that limit which inmates can be placed in Minimum, Medium, High Medium or Maximum security, but formal discretionary over-rides are not part of the system. It should be added that when the study began, the Custody Bureau was not allowing pretrial inmates to be housed in the Minimum security facilities. Such a restriction for Minimum custody is not appropriate based on the NIC model and the vast majority of other jail classification systems.

Third, there is no formal reclassification instrument or process that would require all inmates to be formally re-classified on a regularly scheduled basis. There is a process by which inmates assigned to the higher security of level 3/4 are reviewed every 30 days for possible housing in a lower custody level. This is problematic as the time frame is too short to properly evaluate the stability of inmates who may be posing a risk to staff and inmates. A preferred and more accepted process would consist of reclassifying all inmates every 60 days to have their current security level reviewed and considered for a reduced or increased level based on their most recent period of institutional conduct. This is significant given the fact that many of the current jail population have been in custody for more than 60 days, which is the standard threshold for completing a reclassification review for jail classification systems.

In summary, the current classification system has many of the core ingredients of a sound system. But it also lacks several key components serving to produce some level of error in the assignment and placement of the inmate population. The direction of this error is most likely producing some level of over-classification.

## Overview of the Current Santa Clara Jail Population

As part of the study, a number of data files were quickly assembled by the Custody Bureau's very capable information system staff. These data files contained each inmate's basic demographic, current offense, housing location and classification matrix score. In this section, some of the key attributes of the population are presented.

As shown in Table 1, the jail population as of February 2016 was predominantly male and non-white. Hispanics constituted 54% of the inmate population. Relative to their charges or convicted crimes, most inmates had multiple charges against them with an average of eight and a median of four charges. Attempting to sort the most serious offense is a complicated process but it appears that the dominant charge was drug related followed by theft-fraud. However, about 35% of the population were either charged or convicted of a violent, sex or weapon crime.

There was a wide array of inmates by age ranging from 18 years to 86 years with an average age of 35 years and a median age of 33 years. In terms of legal status, the majority of the inmates were in pretrial status either for a felony level charge (56%) or a misdemeanor (8%).

**Table 1 Key Jail Population Attributes – February 2016**

Attribute	Inmates	%
Gender		
Male	3,095	88%
Female	440	12%
Race		
Black	490	14%
White	821	23%
Hispanic	1,908	54%
Asian	242	7%
Other	74	2%
Primary Charge		
Murder	153	4%
Assault	384	11%
Robbery	151	4%
Domestic Violence	207	6%
Sex Crimes	230	7%
Weapons	112	3%
Drugs	579	16%
Theft-Fraud	517	15%
Traffic Violations	113	3%
Burglary	227	6%
DUI	111	3%
Parole/Probation Violation	93	3%
Other Felonies	331	9%
Other Misd	325	9%
Legal Status		
Pretrial Felons	1,991	56%
Pretrial Misd	300	8%
Sentenced Felons	302	9%
Sentenced Misd	195	6%
Sentenced 1170(h)	240	7%
PRCS	140	4%
US Marshal Hold	102	3%
Other	265	7%
	Mean	Median
Number Charges	8 charges	4 charges
Average Age	34 years	32 years
Days in Custody	210 days	88 days

There were a significant numbers of inmates who had been locally sentenced either for a felony (9%), misdemeanor (6%) or under the realignment provisions (7%).

Finally, the amount of time in custody to date for the inmate population varied significantly. The average time in custody was 210 days while the median time was much lower at 88 days, which suggested a number of inmates had been in custody for more than one year. Significantly, 17% of the population had been in custody for a year or longer.

Relative to the current security level, 17% were assigned to Maximum and another 13% to High Medium. The largest portion was in Medium security (51%) while only 18% were assigned to Minimum security. Compared to other large jail and state prison systems, the number of inmates assigned to Minimum security is relatively low. Usually, one would expect 25-35% of the inmates to qualify for Minimum custody. In three recent studies by JFA, we found that in Los Angeles County had 32%, Sonoma County over 40%, and Allegheny County (Pittsburg) 29% assigned to Minimum custody. The low Santa Clara Minimum custody rate is due, in part, to the current policy of restricting pretrial inmates from Minimum custody and the lack of a structured reclassification process that rewards inmates for compliant behavior.

There were differences, as expected, in the security levels by gender, with significantly higher proportions of women in Minimum custody and somewhat lower percentages in the higher custody levels.

Finally, one notes the very small percentage of inmates who had not been formally classified. This is a bit unusual for a jail system that typically delays a formal classification process until the inmate has been in custody for 1-3 days. The reason for this is to avoid conducting a formal and staff intensive classification events for people who will be quickly released from the jail system. The Custody Bureau has a policy of formally classifying all inmates as soon as possible after booking. There were about 162 inmates who had been in custody for three days or less but had been formally classified.

**Table 2. Current Security Level - February 2016**

	Females		Males		Total	
	Inmates	%	Inmates	%	Inmates	%
Unclassified	0	0%	9	0%	9	0%
Minimum	139	32%	510	16%	649	18%
Medium	179	41%	1,631	53%	1,810	51%
High Medium	60	14%	390	13%	450	13%
Maximum	62	14%	555	18%	617	17%
Total	440	100%	3,095	100%	3,535	100%

In addition to the Custody Bureau’s point system based on static factors, the Custody Bureau’s classification matrix includes a “Behavioral Factor” that seeks to identify any special management issues. About half of the inmates were designated as “Low Risk” and would seem to be good candidates for Minimum custody. A substantial number of inmates were designated Protective Custody which was well above the rate for any jail or prison system. The Sheriff’s Department, Custody Bureau, Classification Unit attributes this high number of inmates in protective custody to inmates who are 1) gang dropouts, 2) Southern gang members who are smaller in number and are at substantial risk of harm if placed on the minimum camp with the larger population of Northern gang members, and 3) inmates who have received threats of harm because of drug related issues.

There were also a very large number of inmates who were labeled as “Suspected Gang” members as compared to only 21 males listed as “Verified Prison Gang” members. The Custody Bureau’s gang intelligence unit is responsible for making this determination. The term “Suspected” is somewhat misleading as the Custody Bureau is fully confident that these inmates are verified gang members, so in reality they are known gang members. However, according to the Custody Bureau, they are unable to validate these suspected prison gang members because the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation is the only entity that currently validates prison gang members. Thus even though the Custody Bureau has substantial evidence that they are prison gang members, they are unable to classify those inmates as “validated gang members”.

The Sureno gang members represent gang members who were being segregated by the Custody Bureau in separate housing units for their own protection. It is the belief of the Custody Bureau that any attempt to mingle Surenos with other gangs and especially the more numerous Nortenos gang member would result in serious disturbances. But such a policy greatly restricts the ability to classify these inmates by their risk levels. Virtually all of the Surenos were listed as “Protective Custody” which adds to the high Protective Custody numbers. The other two large categories under Protective Custody were “gang dropouts” (426 inmates) and “sexual charges” (243 inmates).

**Table 3. Special Populations – February 2016**

Management Factor	Females		Males		Total	
	Inmates	%	Inmates	%	Inmates	%
Low Risk	276	63%	1,467	47%	1,743	49%
Protective Custody	32	7%	1,000	32%	1,032	29%
Verified Prison Gang	0	0%	21	1%	21	1%
Moderate Custody Problem	83	19%	484	16%	567	16%
Sureno Gang	12	3%	148	5%	160	5%
Suspected Gang	70	16%	658	21%	728	21%

Table 4 offers a more detailed analysis of the days in custody to date broken down by gender, race/ethnicity, and timeframes. As expected, female inmates had lower lengths of stay to date as they tend to have less extensive and more moderate criminal histories which is why there were higher proportions of females in the lower security levels as noted in Table 2.

There were significant differences by race/ethnicity with Blacks and Hispanics having longer days in custody than whites. However, if one examines the inmate security level by race/ethnicity, it was also true that Black and Hispanic inmates were disproportionately assigned to the higher security levels which also were associated with the more serious charges and criminal histories of Blacks and Hispanics (Table 5). Thus the higher proportions of Blacks and Hispanics is related to their more serious criminal records and longer sentences.

The last observation from Table 4 is the number of inmates who had been in custody for 60 days or more. Under the NIC system, these inmates would be under the reclassification format. Nearly 60% of the jail population met these criteria and would have a formal reclassification assessment completed on them.

Finally, the snapshot data file contained information on whether the inmates who were currently in custody had received a formal disciplinary report. Only 13% of the inmates had at least one formal infraction report filed against them. These 474 inmates produced a total of 801 infractions or an average of 1.7 formal infractions. While national data are not available to make direct comparisons with the Santa Clara data, it is generally the case that the vast majority of jail inmates do not incur any formal disciplinary sanctions while in custody. This is somewhat due to the short periods of imprisonment for jail inmates. However, this landscape is rapidly changing with the advent of the 2011 California Realignment Act and Prop 47 that has resulted in a jail population that has inmates sentenced to longer periods of confinement. These two initiatives may have an impact on more gang related, in custody, inmate on inmate and inmate on staff assaults.

These infraction rates were applied to the current security level (Table 6). There was a strong and positive relationship between the rates of misconduct for Minimum, Medium and Maximum security inmates. But, the "High/Medium" security inmates had a formal disciplinary rate that was below the Medium security inmates and above the Minimum security inmates.

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**Table 4. Days in Custody To Date  
Jail Population as of February 2016**

Attribute	Ave Days	Median Days
Total Inmates	210	88
Gender		
Male	221	94
Female	135	56
Race/Ethnicity		
White	151	68
Black	218	80
Hispanic	235	101
Asian	193	96
Special Indicators		
Under 60 days	1,449	41%
60+ Days	2,086	59%
Under 3 days	107	3%
More than 365 days	566	16%

**Table 5. Inmate Security Level by Race/Ethnicity  
Jail Population as of February 2016**

Attribute	Minimum	Medium	High Medium	Maximum
Black	13%	46%	21%	20%
Hispanic	17%	51%	12%	20%
White	23%	55%	12%	10%

It should also be noted that there is another form of conduct that is reported by staff on inmates called the Custody Input Reports or CIRs. These are used to record both positive and negative conduct behavior. Unfortunately, the CIRs are not part of the Custody Bureau's database and cannot be analyzed for the entire jail population. However, as shown later in the report, these data were manually collected for the pilot test on the inmates who had been in custody for at least 60 days.

**Table 6. Infractions for the Current Population by Current Security Level  
Jail Population as of February 2016**

Total DR Infractions	801
Total Inmates Receiving DR	474
% of Population	13%
Average number of infractions	1.7
By Security Level	
Maximum	44%
High Medium	17%
Medium	27%
Minimum	12%

## Pilot Test Results of the New Inmate Classification System

The above analysis of the current classification system showed several strengths and some areas where improvements could be made. The strengths of the current Santa Clara classification system are as follows:

1. Relies on factors found in the other objective jail classification systems;
2. Has a formal classification unit that is well trained in the current classification process;
3. Has a formal housing plan that guides the placement of inmates based on the classification criteria; and,
4. The data used to classify inmates is automated, so the inmate's basis for housing can be tracked.

The areas where improvements can be made are as follows:

1. A formal reclassification process where inmates are interviewed and re-assessed is lacking;
2. There is no separation of the security assessment score by initial and reclassification instruments;
3. A large number of initial classifications are performed on inmates who are subsequently quickly released from custody (same day or within a day or two); and,
4. Pretrial inmates who are assessed as Minimum security inmates are precluded to be housed in Minimum security housing units.

To address these issues, a prototype system was created and pilot tested on a random sample of the current inmate population. A total of 104 females and 419

males were sampled. Comparisons were made between the samples and the total number of inmates in custody on the date of the snapshot. As shown in Table 7, the samples are statistically comparable.

Initial and Reclassification forms were drafted and reviewed by the Custody Bureau's classification staff. Staff were then trained in their use and were given the task of completing either an initial classification or a reclassification form for each sampled case. Inmates who had been in custody for less than 60 days had the initial classification form completed while those who had been in custody for 60 days or more had the reclassification form completed. The objective was to estimate how the current inmate population would be classified under the new scoring system and using a formal reclassification form.

Tables 8 through 10 summarize the results of the pilot test. These results are separated by the initial and reclassification results and by gender. For both the initial and reclassification cases, there is a clear pattern of a higher number of inmates being scored as Minimum custody as compared to the final classification level. The latter takes into account the mandatory and/or discretionary over-rides that can be applied by the staff. For example, an inmate's gang status can be used to increase the inmate's custody level if in the opinion of the classification staff such an over-ride was warranted.

The other major observation is that even with the application of the over-rides, the final custody levels for the sampled cases shows a higher proportion of inmates being classified for Minimum custody as compared to their current custody levels. Table 11 shows the differences between the current and projected new security levels by gender. For both groups, there will be a significantly higher proportion of inmates assigned to Minimum custody and a corresponding lower proportion in the Medium/High group.

The final step in the pilot test was to determine if adjustments should be made to the prototype instruments and other aspects of the classification system. In recognition of the considerable differences between the scored and final custody levels for the medium and Minimum security groups, the cut-off points for the two groups was re-examined for the initial and reclassification instruments. As noted above the scored classification level can be over-ridden by applying either a mandatory or discretionary over-ride.

**Table 7. Comparison of Total and Sample Populations  
By Security by Gender**

Attribute	Females			
	Total		Sample	
	Inmates	%	Inmates	%
Unclassified	3	1%	0	0%
Min	127	28%	28	27%
Med	198	44%	43	41%
High Med	58	13%	14	13%
Max	61	14%	19	18%
Unclassified	3	1%	0	0%
High Assaultive/Escape	7	2%	2	2%
Repeat Disruptive	14	3%	3	3%
GP RED	13	3%	4	4%
Adverse Influence	37	8%	10	10%
Low Risk	276	62%	62	60%
Special Management	55	12%	16	15%
Victim Potential	2	0%	0	0%
Protective Custody	36	8%	6	6%
Psych Problems	4	1%	1	1%
Totals	447	100%	104	100%
	Males			
Security Level	Total		Sample	
Unclassified	6	0%	0	0%
Min	537	17%	82	19%
Med	1,574	51%	207	49%
High Med	398	13%	55	13%
Max	554	18%	75	18%
Behavior				
High Assaultive/Escape	90	3%	9	2%
Repeat Disruptive	27	1%	0	0%
GP RED	138	4%	22	5%
Adverse Influence	200	7%	24	6%
Immediate Escape Risk	2	0%	0	0%
Low Risk	1,436	47%	209	50%
Special Management	127	4%	19	5%
Unknown	1	0%	0	0%
Victim Potential	18	1%	1	0%
Protective Custody	1,005	33%	132	31%
Psych Problems	19	1%	3	1%
Totals	3,069	100%	419	100%

**Table 8. Pilot Test Results – Initial Classification Sample**

Custody Level	Female		Male		Total	
	Inmates	%	Inmates	%	Inmates	%
Totals	60	100%	176	100%	236	100%
Scored						
Maximum	8	13%	11	6%	19	8%
Medium	18	30%	72	41%	90	38%
Minimum	34	57%	93	53%	127	54%
Final						
Maximum	7	12%	22	13%	29	12%
Medium	24	40%	89	51%	113	48%
Minimum	29	48%	65	39%	94	42%

**Table 9. Pilot Test Results - Reclassification Sample**

Custody Level	Female		Male		Total	
	Inmates	%	Inmates	%	Inmates	%
Totals	44	100%	272	100%	316	100%
Scored						
Maximum	5	11%	50	18%	55	17%
Medium	13	30%	60	22%	73	23%
Minimum	26	59%	162	60%	188	60%
Final						
Maximum	11	25%	65	24%	76	24%
Medium	10	23%	114	42%	124	39%
Minimum	23	52%	91	34%	114	36%

**Table 10. Pilot Tests - Grand Totals for Both Samples**

Custody Level	Female		Male		Total	
	Inmates	%	Inmates	%	Inmates	%
Totals	104	100%	448	100%	552	100%
Scored						
Maximum	13	13%	61	14%	74	13%
Medium	31	30%	132	29%	163	30%
Minimum	60	58%	255	57%	315	57%
Final	0					
Maximum	18	17%	87	19%	105	19%
Medium	34	33%	203	45%	237	43%
Minimum	52	50%	156	35%	208	38%

**Table 11. Comparisons Between New and Current Custody/Security Levels**

Population	Current	New
Female		
Maximum	14%	17%
Medium	55%	33%
Minimum	32%	50%
Male		
Maximum	18%	19%
Medium	66%	45%
Minimum	16%	35%
Total		
Maximum	17%	19%
Medium	64%	43%
Minimum	18%	38%

Tables 12 and 13 summarize how these over-rides are being applied on the initial and reclassification samples. The initial classification sample had fewer over-rides with 7% being mandatory reasons and 17% being discretionary. The mandatory reasons are quite straightforward and appropriate for restricting inmates for Minimum custody and security placement. The most prevalent discretionary reasons used were “known management problem” and “gang member”. Most of these gang member inmates and known management problems were scored as Minimum but were over-riden to Medium custody.

**Table 12. Initial Classification Sample Over-Rides**

Over-ride type	Female	Male	Total	%
Mandatory	3	14	17	7%
Discretionary	7	33	40	17%
Mandatory Reasons				
Detainer	3	1	4	2%
Murder	0	3	3	1%
Sex Offender	0	6	6	3%
US Marshall Hold	0	4	4	2%
Discretionary Reasons			0	0%
Gang Member	2	9	11	5%
Known Management	7	11	18	8%
Mental Status	0	3	3	1%
Offense More Severe	0	3	3	1%
Offense Not Severe	2	4	6	3%
Prior Good Conduct	1	1	2	1%
Prior Record Less Severe	0	1	1	0%
Prior Record More Severe	0	1	1	0%

The same pattern exists for the reclassification cases although the use of discretionary over-rides is more frequent (23%). For example there were 18 cases that were over-ridden from Minimum to Medium custody for being a “Known Management Problem “ but ten of the cases had no disciplinary infractions of any kind. The concern here is why are these inmates labeled as “special management “ problems when they have no misconducts? It could be that their prior behavior was so serious in nature that even positive behavior over an extended period of time is not sufficient to address the concerns of classification staff.

Of the 20 cases with a gang member over-ride, 13 were scored as Minimum and ten were over-ridden to Medium and another three to Maximum. All seven cases scored as medium were elevated to Maximum. However, only one of the 20 cases had a DR or CIR infraction.

**Table 13. Reclassification Sample Over-Rides**

Type of Over-Ride	Females	Males	Total	% of Sample
Mandatory Over-Rides	3	39	42	11%
Discretionary Over-Rides	9	77	86	23%
<b>Mandatory Reasons</b>				
Arson	0	2	2	1%
Detainer	0	2	2	1%
Murder	3	10	13	3%
CDCR Sentenced – Awaiting Transfer	0	2	2	1%
Sex Offender	0	15	15	4%
US Marshall	0	8	8	2%
<b>Discretionary Reasons</b>				
Escape Threat	0	1	1	0%
Gang Member	0	20	20	5%
Isolated Prior Misconduct	0	8	8	2%
Known Management	7	11	18	5%
Mental Status	0	5	5	1%
Offense More Severe as Scored	0	9	9	2%
Offense Not Severe as Scored	0	6	6	2%
Prior Good Conduct	1	8	9	2%
Prior Record Less Severe than Scored	1	1	2	1%
Prior Record More Severe than Scored	0	1	1	0%

For the reclassification sample, both the formal DRs that were reported and the more informal CIRs were recorded. A pooled “Total DR/CIS” variable was created to gain a broader look at the overall conduct of inmates who have been in custody for at least 60 days.

Table 14 summarizes these rates (percent with a DR or CIR, and, the average number of DRs and CIRs) by gender, scored custody level and final custody level. Somewhat surprising, female inmates have higher misconduct rates than their male counterparts. So, at this time there is no factual basis to develop a separate scale for the female inmates. Women are being assigned to lower custody levels due to less serious criminal records and other risk factors embedded in the classification process.

But, there are very important differences between the custody levels based on the scoring process, the final custody level with over-rides applied, and the inmate’s current security level based on the current security rating process. Clearly, the new scored custody level performs much better than the other two procedures. While the application of over-rides is an essential part of any classification system, these



**Table 14 DR/CIR Rates by Gender, Scored Custody, Final Custody and Current Security Levels**

Attribute	% DR/CIR	Average DR/CIR
Gender		
Males	24%	0.58
Females	36%	1.11
Scored Custody Level		
Max	64%	2.16
Medium	39%	0.77
Minimum	13%	0.16
Final Custody Level		
Max	37%	1.04
Medium	33%	0.83
Minimum	16%	0.2
Current Security Level		
Max	31%	0.88
Medium/High Medium	30%	0.72
Minimum	20%	0.28

data suggest there is a need to ensure there is not some level of excessive use of over-rides.

Finally, analysis was done to determine if the cut-off points for the reclassification instrument should be modified. It was found that inmates with a total point score of four or less had substantially lower rates of misconduct. Adjusting the scale so that inmates scoring four or less points on the reclassification instrument would serve to ensure inmates who score as Minimum custody would pose minimal risk to staff and inmates.

## Summary

1. There are many positive aspects of the current classification system that should be retained. Specifically, the initial classification process is very comprehensive, there is a core of dedicated and well-trained staff assigned to the unit, and many of the factors used to assess an inmate's custody level meet industry standards.
2. The major weaknesses lie in 1) computing the current security rating which is not as structured and defined as it should be and 2) conducting a structured reclassification assessment for all inmates every 60 days. That re-

classification assessment should place greater emphasis on the inmate's conduct as opposed to the inmate's criminal record and current charge(s).

3. The current security rating assessment methods should be replaced by the pilot tested initial and reclassification instruments which will increase the number of Minimum custody inmates and reduce the number of Medium custody inmates. The number of Maximum custody inmates will remain largely the same. These changes would take into account the over-rides recommended by the classification staff.
4. An essential part of the NIC system is the reclassification process which requires a formal re-assessment of all inmates every 60 days. Such a re-assessment also entails a formal confidential interview with the inmate and a full explanation of the basis for his or her classification rating.
5. In order to implement the new system, sufficient staff will be required to properly conduct the reclassification interviews. While it is the strong recommendation that all inmates be interviewed, it would be acceptable to only interview inmates who are current assigned to Maximum and Medium custody.
6. It is also recommended that the process of reclassifying Level 3/4 inmates every 30 days be discontinued unless there are special circumstances warranting such an early review.
7. Given the importance of the classification process, it is also recommended that a Captain position be created whose sole duty is to manage the classification system. Currently, the Captain now assigned to classification has too many other important duties that do not allow her to focus on managing the classification system.
8. The new classification scoring system will need to be fully automated. The Custody Bureau has already begun the process of modifying the current data base to meet this need.
9. The use of "known management problem" and "gang member" over-rides will need to be re-evaluated for inmates who are not demonstrating any negative behavior or conduct. There must be some evidences that such inmates pose a threat to other inmates and staff.
10. The scale for the reclassification instrument should be modified so that inmates scoring 4 points or less are designated for Minimum custody.
11. There is no need to create a separate instrument for the female inmates. The proposed system uses objective factors that apply equally to male and female inmates.

