

Wyoming Department of Corrections Annual Report

REPORT PERIOD: FY2008 (July 1, 2007 through June 30, 2008)

GENERAL INFORMATION:

Agency: Wyoming Department of Corrections

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Other locations: Afton, Buffalo, Casper, Cheyenne, Cody, Douglas, Evanston, Gillette, Green River, Jackson, Kemmerer, Lander, Laramie, Lusk, Lyman, Newcastle, Pinedale, Powell, Rawlins, Riverton, Rock Springs, Sheridan, Torrington, Wheatland, Worland

Year established and reorganized: The Wyoming Department of Corrections (WDOC) was established in 1991 as part of the reorganization of Wyoming state government. WDOC assumed management of the four state penal institutions that had previously been under the administration of the Board of Charities and Reform, which was created in 1889, and the Department of Probation and Parole, which was created in 1941. WDOC continued to provide support to the Board of Parole until 2003 when the Board became a separate operating agency.

Statutory references: W.S. §§ 9-2-2012; 25-1-104; 25-1-105

Additional references at: W.S. §§ 7-13-103 through 108; 7-13-301 through 307; 7-13-401 through 424; 7-13-501 through 504; 7-13-701 through 702; 7-13-801 through 807; 7-13-901 through 915; 7-13-1001 through 1003; 7-13-1101 through 1107; 7-13-1301 through 1304; 7-13-1401; 7-13-1501; 7-15-101 through 105; 7-16-101 through 7-16-311; 7-18-101 through 115; 7-19-101 through 7-19-603; 7-22-101 through 115; 9-1-701 through 9-1-710; 9-2-2701 through 2707; 25-1-201; 25-2-101 through 104

Organizational structure: Division of Central Services, Division of Field Services, Division of Prisons, Administration, Investigations, and Policy and Planning

Clients served: Offenders sentenced by the courts to serve prison sentences, released to parole by the Parole Board, or placed on probation by the courts (including offenders from other states who transfer to Wyoming under the standards of the Interstate Commission on Adult Offender Supervision)

WYOMING QUALITY OF LIFE RESULTS STATEMENTS:

- Wyoming families and individuals live in a stable, safe, supportive, nurturing, healthy environment.
- Wyoming state government is a responsible steward of State assets and effectively responds to the needs of residents and guests.

CONTRIBUTION TO THE WYOMING QUALITY OF LIFE:

- The Wyoming Department of Corrections (WDOC) contributes to the Wyoming quality of life by providing for the safety of families and individuals through effective management of offenders in prison and in the community.
- In as cost-effective manner as possible, using research-based approaches, offenders are given opportunities to become law-abiding citizens, while the department addresses the needs of victims and the public.

BASIC FACTS ABOUT THE WYOMING DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS:

WDOC operates four adult prisons (three male facilities: the Wyoming Honor Conservation Camp and Boot Camp in Newcastle, the Wyoming Honor Farm in Riverton, and the Wyoming State Penitentiary in Rawlins; and one female facility: the Wyoming Women’s Center in Lusk). A fifth prison is currently being built and is scheduled to open in 2010 (the Wyoming Medium Correctional Institution in Torrington). The department also contracts with three adult community corrections centers (Casper, Cheyenne, and Gillette). WDOC is responsible for the supervision of adult probation and parole offenders statewide.

FY2008 Staffing

1,121 FTEs*
13 part-time employees
15 AWECs

1,149 Total Staff**

BY2007-08 Budget

General Funds \$205,111,929
Federal Funds \$1,795,699
Other Funds \$11,307,964

Total \$218,215,592

*Includes 196 FTEs allocated for new prison

**Staff total does not include contracted service providers such as medical staff

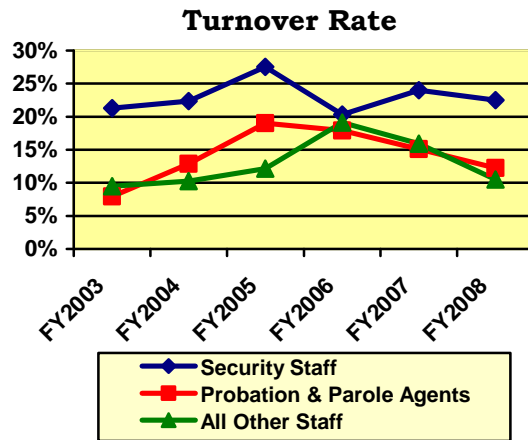
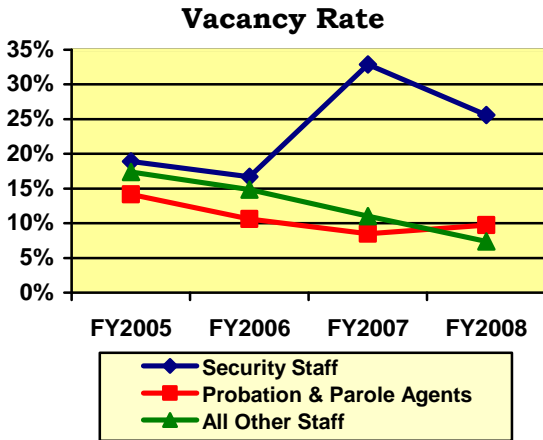
The average daily population (ADP) for WDOC inmates for FY2008 was 2,017. Due to a shortage of housing space, approximately 718 of those inmates were housed in non-department facilities, including adult community corrections centers, out-of-state facilities, county jails, as well as a 100-bed secure treatment facility in Casper. The ADP for offenders under WDOC supervision for probation and parole for FY2008 was 6,966. For FY2008, there were 725 inmate intakes with 771 inmate terminations; 2,561 probation intakes with 2,183 probation terminations; and 303 parole intakes with 251 parole terminations. In addition to offenders, WDOC serves victims, families, and the public. The entire State of Wyoming is potentially served by WDOC.

PRIMARY FUNCTIONS OF THE WYOMING DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS:

- **Public Safety:** WDOC contributes to safer communities by exercising reasonable, safe, secure, and humane management of inmates, probationers, and parolees.
- **Rehabilitation:** Using research-based “best practices,” WDOC actively provides offenders opportunities to become law-abiding citizens.
- **Case Management:** WDOC utilizes a structured process of assessing an offender’s risks and needs in order to target areas for treatment and intervention.
- **Correctional Standards:** WDOC adheres to standards within the corrections profession that ensure the safety and security of staff, offenders, institutions, and the public while providing for the professional management of offenders.
- **Good Stewardship:** WDOC develops partnerships with victims, community members, public agencies, and private agencies to better meet the department’s mission in a meaningful and cost-effective manner.

PERFORMANCE MEASURE #1: The percentage of vacant positions within the agency (Vacancy Rate) and the percentage of employee turnover (Turnover Rate).

PRIMARY FUNCTIONS: Public Safety; Correctional Standards; Good Stewardship



Note: The vacancy rate is the percentage of vacant positions determined by the average number of vacant positions divided by the total positions authorized.

Note: The turnover rate is the percentage of employee turnover determined by the total vacancies created divided by the total positions authorized.

Story Behind the Last Year of Performance: The vacancy rate is a measure of the authorized positions that remain unfilled. Those vacancies may exist as the result of employees leaving or with the allocation of new positions. The vacancy rate for FY08 shows improvement from FY07, with the exception of a slight increase in the vacancy rate for probation and parole agents. The most notable trend is the decrease in the vacancy rate for security staff. The difficulty in recruiting and retaining security staff remains a challenge for the department. Aggressive recruiting efforts have helped, but there remain an average of about 100 security staff positions that are unfilled across the department.

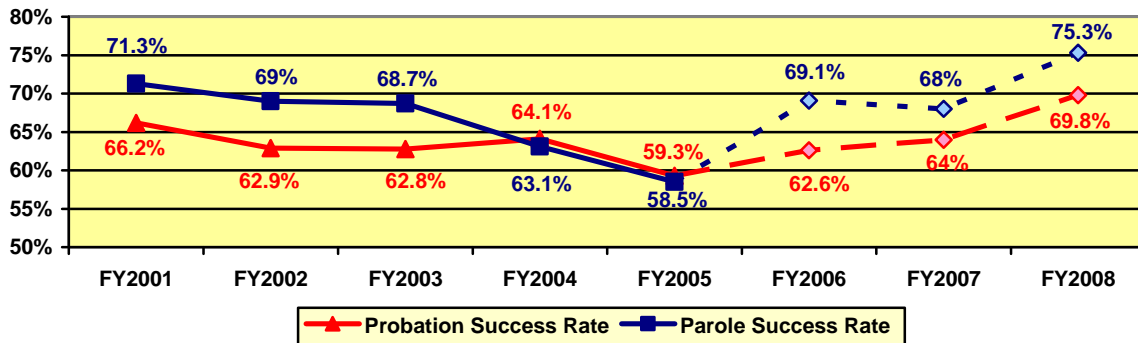
The turnover rate shows the rate at which employees are leaving WDOC. The turnover rate for FY08 reflects a decrease in the number of staff leaving WDOC. While the overall turnover rate for WDOC is approximately 17%, the turnover rate for security staff remains relatively high at 22.48%. Turnover primarily results from voluntary separation, but includes involuntary separation as well.

According to the American Correctional Association there is a nation wide trend of shortages for security staff. The combined effects of vacancy rates and turnover for security staff in FY08 leaves stability in only about 58% of WDOC's security staff. While the picture is better for other staff, the ability to attract and retain staff is necessary for the safe and efficient operation of correctional facilities, field offices, and department operations. The department believes that the reasons for continued high turnover and difficulty in filling jobs may be related to the general state of the economy within Wyoming, a small labor pool, low unemployment, shortage of available housing, and salary competition due to the energy boom within the State.

What has been accomplished? The department continues to review staffing standards to ensure the adequate complement of staff to offender/inmate ratios. Recruiting efforts have been aggressive and proactive, focusing on potential employees with prior corrections experience, those exiting the military, and high school and college students with an interest in careers in criminal justice. The department conducted 47 recruiting trips in 15 states in FY08, resulting in the hiring of 192 new employees. The department has begun to utilize exit surveys for additional information impacting employee retention. WDOC has worked to ensure that staff salaries, especially those in the correctional series, are adequate. The POST certification of correctional officers has helped to professionalize the correctional staff series. WDOC has established new policies that allow for flexibility in setting staff work schedules. Retention efforts have focused on employee housing, staff-supervisor relationships, and improved communication.

PERFORMANCE MEASURE #2: The percentage of probationers and parolees who successfully complete supervision and do not return to the WDOC within three years of release from supervision.

PRIMARY FUNCTIONS: Public Safety; Rehabilitation; Case Management



Note: Full data is available for 2001-2005. ♦ The following data points will be adjusted accordingly with time to meet the measure: 2006 reflects probationers and parolees not returning to the WDOC within two years of release from supervision; 2007 reflects those not returning to the WDOC within one year of release from supervision; 2008 reflects those not returning to the WDOC after a current successful termination.

Story Behind the Last Year of Performance: Because the measure only considers the success of an offender if the offender does not return to WDOC within three years of release from supervision, the measure for FY08 is an incomplete measure. It reflects those not returning to the WDOC after a current successful termination. It is anticipated that this number will decrease over the next three years as some offenders that have recently been released from supervision are likely to return to WDOC. The FY08 success rates for parolees and probationers have increased from FY07. While trends appear to be improving, those success rates continue to be subject to revision until the offender has passed three years after release from supervision without returning to the WDOC.

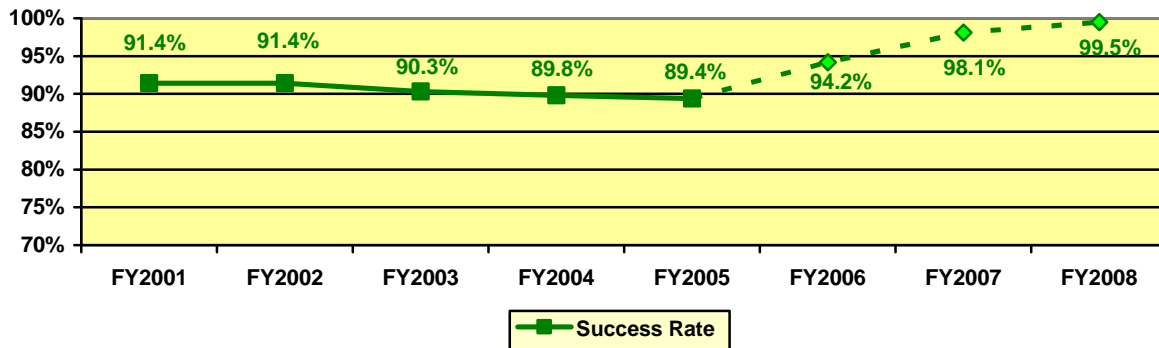
The success rates for FY05 are worth considering, as they become definitive numbers this year. FY05 marks a low point for the success rates of probationers and parolees. The highest vacancy rate and highest turnover rate in recent years for probation and parole agents occurred in that year and may have contributed to the reduced success rate for offenders.

Challenges faced for community supervision continue to involve increased numbers of offenders under supervision and a turnover rate of 12.26% for field agents in FY08. Workload demand involves increasing numbers of Presentence Investigations ordered by Courts, a 16% rise in offenders supervised under medium/maximum standards, and the need to recruit, hire, and train staff. However, success rates within the community for both probation and parole offenders are mostly impacted by offender substance abuse behaviors (*i.e.*, approximately 80% of offenders under supervision have substance abuse issues).

What has been accomplished? The main challenge has been to maintain offender success rates with increasing workloads. To address these challenges and most effectively utilize resources, WDOC's focus remains on risk/need assessment, individual case plans, recognizing stages of change, responsibility principles, and cognitive behavioral intervention. Challenges have been further mitigated through the transfer of 10 correctional officer positions to field services, increased staff training, and focusing on highest need offenders. Staff training and professional development opportunities remain critical to meet offender needs and address community safety concerns. WDOC has partnered with community treatment to provide a 40 bed residential substance abuse program in Casper. Efforts to provide enhanced re-entry services continue, with emphasis on resource development, community partnership, and consistent case planning. Specialized training and community supervision strategies with sex offenders have been implemented. Motivational interviewing, a recognized effective intervention to reduce the risk of recidivism, has been initiated across WDOC.

PERFORMANCE MEASURE #3: The percentage of inmates who do not return to prison for a new felony conviction within three years of release from the institution.

PRIMARY FUNCTIONS: Public Safety; Rehabilitation; Case Management



Note: Full data is available for 2001-2005. ♦ The following data points will be adjusted accordingly with time to meet the measure: 2006 reflects inmates not returning to prison within two years of release from the institution; 2007 reflects those not returning to prison within one year of release from the institution; 2008 reflects those not returning to prison with less than one year of release from the institution.

Story Behind the Last Year of Performance: The success rate for FY08 is an incomplete measure as it is defined by those inmates who do not return to prison for a new felony conviction within three years of release from the institution. It is anticipated that the success rate for FY08 will decrease over the next three years as some of those inmate recently released from prison are likely to return under a new felony conviction. WDOC uses a nationally standardized measure of recidivism (*i.e.*, reoccurrence of criminal behavior after intervention by the criminal justice system) as an indicator of inmate rehabilitation. Most offenders returning to prison are returning due to technical violations of parole and not as a result of a new felony conviction. Those offenders who return for non-felony violations of parole are reflected in performance measure #2.

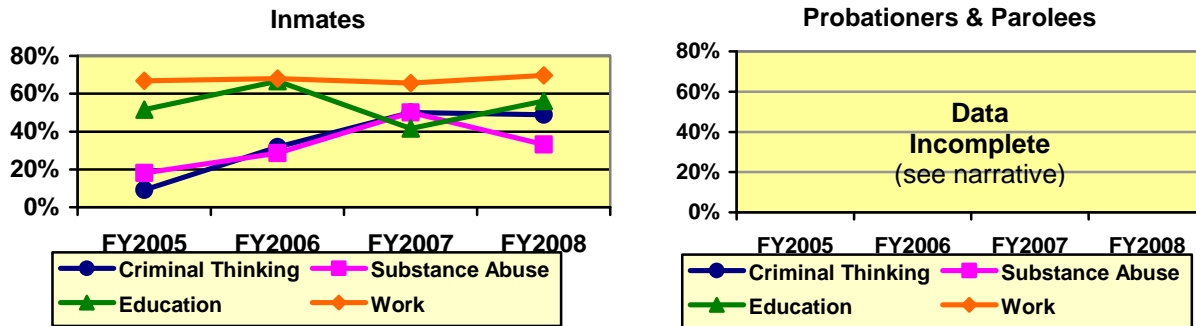
The success rate in FY08 is very high because WDOC engages in rehabilitative programs and interventions during the incarceration of inmates and because incarceration itself acts as a deterrent to future crime. WDOC uses evidence-based crime prevention and individualized risk/needs assessment to direct inmates to “best practice” program opportunities that target an inmate’s criminality and provide opportunities for rehabilitation. The ultimate success of these efforts is established over time. To some degree, the measure is impacted by the large number of inmates housed out of state and the department’s staffing shortages, lessening the ability to provide opportunities for inmates to become law abiding citizens. It is also important to consider the success rate for FY05 at this time as this measure becomes fixed this year. While the success rate is very slightly lower than the previous year, it remains relatively constant over time and indicates that the vast majority of inmates in Wyoming are not committing new felony offenses within three years of release from prison.

What has been accomplished? The success rate is impacted by the department’s ability to provide opportunities and interventions that assist inmates in becoming law-abiding citizens. Efforts such as the POST certification of correctional officers, the implementation of uniform case planning, and the expansion of inmate work opportunities all positively impact the outcome. Significant progress has been achieved in moving WDOC in these directions over the last year. Individualized case planning for inmates has begun, focusing interventions of the assessed risks and needs of each inmate. Correctional industries are being developed which serve to enhance work skills. Educational and vocational opportunities were expanded and partnerships with local community colleges were developed. WDOC has continued to improve substance abuse programming and interventions available to inmates. Sex Offender programming has begun and targets the cognitive thinking and risk avoidance behaviors of the inmate. The department also continues to audit correctional facilities and focus on improvement.

PERFORMANCE MEASURE #4: The percentage of offenders with assessed programmatic, education, or work needs who completed the recommended treatment or intervention(s).

Note: Programmatic needs include criminal thinking, substance abuse, and sex offenders. Measures reflect treatment received prior to completion of an offender’s sentence.

PRIMARY FUNCTIONS: Rehabilitation; Case Management



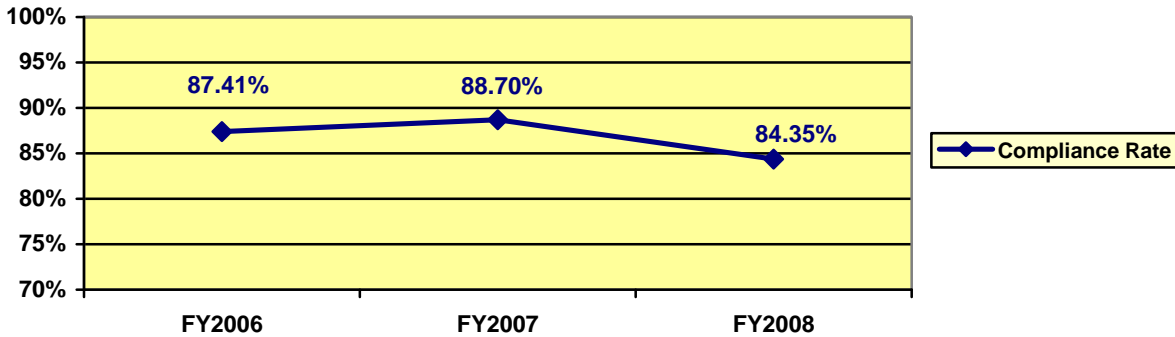
Story Behind the Last Year of Performance: In order to change deeply ingrained criminal behaviors, correctional interventions need to be individualized to the specific risks and needs of the offender. Programs considered most effective in reducing future criminal behavior focus on criminal thinking, substance abuse treatment, education services, sex offenses, and developing positive work skills. Ultimately, WDOC hopes to show effectiveness in targeting program and intervention resources to offenders in order to promote long term change. This measure is a reflection of offenders who were assessed as having specific risks/needs, who completed programming or interventions, and who completed their entire sentence, exiting from the WDOC system.

The performance in FY08 shows increased percentages of inmates completing work and educational interventions, a slight decrease in the percentage of inmates completing cognitive programming, and a decrease in the percentage of inmates completing substance abuse programming. A far greater percent of inmates began programming but did not complete it. The mixed results are largely due an inability to maintain consistent programs because of in-state housing shortages and the frequent inmate transfers this generates. The number of offenders completing needed programming and intervention has increased. However, the overall percentage was lower as new data calculations revealed a greater number of offenders eligible to be counted for this measure. The performance is also somewhat affected by the nature of the measure itself. By tracking exiting cohorts, WDOC is able to assess whether or not offenders completed the targeted interventions during their time with WDOC. Those offenders who are still in the system are not reflected in this measure as they continue to have the opportunity to complete treatment or intervention. The use of risk/needs assessments is relatively new to WDOC, so some offenders within the cohorts may have completed an intervention but may not have been assessed, thus excluding them from being counted. The department continues to address all treatment areas for offenders under probation and parole supervision, but data is not yet collected in a manner that allows for tracking of offenders who received appropriate assessments, were then recommended for programming, and completed the treatment or intervention.

What has been accomplished? This measure continues to evolve as the department determines how best to measure the delivery of treatment and interventions to offender populations. WDOC recently standardized its battery of assessments to better focus program and treatment efforts. In doing so, the department has aligned offender risk/need assessments with individualized case plans and has begun to use those case plans to target interventions. WDOC is developing data systems in order to track offender progress. WDOC continues to explore and develop work, education, and programming opportunities for offenders and to match the assessed needs of offenders with appropriate interventions. New initiatives expected to further impact this measure include sex offender treatment and motivational interviewing.

PERFORMANCE MEASURE #5: The percentage of compliance with correctional audit standards.

PRIMARY FUNCTIONS: Public Safety; Correctional Standards; Good Stewardship



Story Behind the Last Year of Performance: The corrections profession has established multiple standards as “best practices” within the corrections environment. The American Correctional Association (ACA) has a certification process that measures the performance of an agency against the industry standards. WDOC is in the initial stages of working towards the ACA accreditation process. By continuing to compare the average compliance rate of various audits, the department is able to measure how well it is doing in meeting identified correctional standards.

The decrease in the trend line belies the actual success of the department for FY08. While there is an overall decrease in the compliance rate, the number of areas audited has dramatically increased. By adding *Security Audit*, *Education/Industries/Volunteer Audit*, and *Case Management Audit* results to the *Classification Audit* and *Health and Safety Audit* results, the overall picture of compliance with department and national standards is much clearer. *Emergency Preparedness Audits* have also been developed and will be counted in future measures. Adult Community Corrections audits were removed from this measure as the audit format changed from a quantitative to a qualitative format. The four correctional facilities are now audited on a regular basis and performance in compliance with national standards is now much more representative of actual compliance. We believe that as we continue to audit systematically and routinely, the percentages of compliance in all of the areas will increase.

What has been accomplished? FY08 was a good year for the WDOC with respect to the audit process itself. Prison Division staff received additional training on national standards and technical assistance in developing audit instruments. This helped staff to identify and implement enhanced audit processes that are compliant with national standards. Given the importance of auditing, WDOC developed and audited several additional areas during FY08. The actual number and types of audits undertaken by WDOC in any given year may vary, but averaging of compliance rates controls for the variance. Compliance with inmate classification standards has remained high. The compliance rates for security and emergency preparedness audits are improving as the audit process has become more standardized. The department is still establishing a baseline for education/industries/volunteers audits and case management audits. Additional tracking measures have been developed as the audit process has become increasingly more complex.

The department is continuing to focus efforts developing and carrying-out audits that measure the compliance with department and national standards. Auditing processes have been standardized in an effort to measure percentages of compliance in a consistent manner. Efforts were made to audit private prison contract facilities out of state to ensure compliance with security standards. With the impending ACA accreditation process growing near, the WDOC will soon be able to measure its compliance with audit standards on a national level.

Wyoming Department of Corrections Organizational Chart

July 2008

