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Missouri State Auditor

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CORRECTIONS

Probation and Parole Management



Board of Probation and Parole's management system fails to adequately monitor offenders and the performance of field officers

Field officer contacts with offenders have not complied with division standards and periodic reports are not always completed timely. In addition, supervisory reviews were not always performed or documented and retained.

Field officers did not make required contacts with offenders

Our tests showed significant deficiencies in compliance with division standards. We found field officers did not contact offenders as required for each type of contact. We also found as the level of supervision and required number of contacts increased, compliance percentage generally decreased. Overall test results show compliance rates of only 73, 45, 34, and 47 percent for positive office visits, employment checks, home visits, and treatment contacts, respectively. (See page 8)

Case summary and violation reports submitted late or not at all

The Board of Probation and Parole policies and procedures manual requires initial case summary reports to be completed within the first 60 days of supervision. However, of 27 applicable cases, there were 15 initial case summary reports, or 56 percent, submitted 10 or more days late, with an average of 69 days late. In addition, one initial case summary report was never completed. In 35 of the 55 applicable cases reviewed, field officers submitted routine case summary reports that were 10 or more days late. In addition, field officers failed to complete 16 routine case summary reports. Division policy requires field officers to prepare routine case summary reports every six months. In 12 of the 55 applicable cases we reviewed, field officers submitted violation reports that were 10 or more days late. Field officers are required to submit initial violation reports within 10 working days from the date the violation became known. In one case we reviewed it took 75, 125, and 137 days to complete three separate violation reports. During our review of that case, we also found the field officer never completed a violation report for two violations that occurred in October 2004. (See page 11)

New management tools could help better monitor compliance with division policies

According to division personnel, supervisory reviews are not always performed and are not documented and maintained. In addition, when supervisory reviews are performed they do not adequately monitor field officer compliance with division policies. In March 2005, the division began testing a new quality assurance audit program that audits 10 percent of each field officer's caseload for compliance with various division policies, including the timeliness of reports and contact compliance. However, division officials do not believe it is feasible to utilize the program to monitor the performance of



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YELLOW SHEET

individual field officers due to system limitations. Instead, the division plans to use the newly developed automated road book for this purpose. The automated road book is the first component of the planned automated case management system. The division implemented this component statewide in January 2006, but had to take it off-line in February 2006 due to system failures. (See page 13)

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Abbreviations

DOC	Department of Corrections
SAO	State Auditor's Office
RSMo	Missouri Revised Statutes



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Honorable Matt Blunt, Governor
and
Larry Crawford, Director
Department of Corrections
and
Dana D. Thompson, Chairman of the Board
Division of the Board of Probation and Parole
Jefferson City, MO 65102

The Department of Corrections, Division of the Board of Probation and Parole (division), is responsible for releasing individuals from confinement in state correctional institutions through parole or conditional release and supervising individuals on probation or parole. Because the community is at risk if supervision strategies fail, successful program completion is vital. Our objectives included determining (1) whether field officers maintained required contact with offenders, (2) whether field officers documented significant information about offenders' conduct and performance, (3) the extent supervisors review probationer and parolee case files to ensure field officers are adequately performing tasks, and (4) the extent of management oversight.

We found field officer contacts have not complied with division standards and periodic reports are not always completed timely, supervisory reviews of case files have not always been performed or documented, and the division lacks a management system to monitor the performance of field officers and the supervisory review process.

Our audit was conducted in accordance with applicable standards contained in *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States, and included such procedures as we considered necessary in the circumstances. This report was prepared under the direction of John Blattel. Key contributors to this report were John Luetkemeyer, Andrea Paul, and Susan Cessac.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Claire McCaskill".

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State Auditor

Introduction

The Board of Probation and Parole (board) is comprised of seven full-time members appointed by the governor, subject to the advice and consent of the Senate. The chair of the board is responsible for operations, funds, expenditures, Interstate Compact Services, and supervision of parolees and probationers, and is the chief spokesperson for the board. Section 217.655, RSMo, states that the board of probation and parole is responsible for determining whether a person confined to a Department of Corrections (DOC) facility receives parole. The board is also responsible for the supervision of all persons placed on probation by the circuit courts of the state as provided by sections 217.750 and 217.760, RSMo. The board can assign special conditions in order to address specific offender needs and improve the opportunity for success under supervision. They also monitor the supervision of offenders in the community and return those offenders to prison who are a risk to the community. As of June 30, 2005, there were 66,697 active probation and parole cases. There were about 1,100 field officers responsible for these cases.

The Division of the Board of Probation and Parole (division) promotes public safety through proficient assessment, supervision, treatment, sanctions, and control of offenders placed on probation by the courts or released on parole by the board. Probation and parole officers (field officers) are responsible for supervising offenders on probation or parole. Supervision refers to the activities the field officers should perform to ensure the probationers and parolees meet their conditions of release orders. The field officer effectively balances treatment and supervision strategies necessary to manage offender risk with the needs and interests of victims and communities. This supervision process consists of a number of critical activities including:

- Accurate and ongoing assessment of offender risk and need.
- Development of effective supervision and treatment plans.
- Restorative justice practices.
- Use of appropriate sanctions and strategies to minimize risk, and maximize the potential for successful outcomes.¹

To reduce recidivism, field officers continuously assess and evaluate the offenders assigned to them and supervise at a level consistent with the risk of their re-offending.

Because the field officers are responsible for monitoring probationers and parolees for compliance with the board and court conditions of release, their

¹ <http://www.doc.missouri.gov/division/prob/district.htm>

roles are critical to the success of the board's and the court's objectives. The DOC's mission is to improve public safety through secure confinement and effective community interventions.² The cooperative efforts of victims, communities, and state and local governments are essential to provide effective correctional services. The department through these cooperative efforts holds offenders accountable for their behavior and prepares them to be productive citizens.

The DOC's goal is to improve public safety by increasing the success rate of probationers under supervision and parolees released from incarceration.² To achieve this goal, field officers work with the offender to minimize subsequent relapses and provide the offender with community support and assistance. The division has implemented policies and procedures that outline the minimum standards each field officer should follow when supervising an offender placed on probation or parole.

Supervision levels

According to the division's policies and procedures manual, there are three standard levels of supervision: minimum, regular, and enhanced. These supervision strategies allow the division to protect the public by monitoring offenders and helping offenders become responsible and productive members of the community. Field officers base the supervision level on the client analysis scale, or needs scale. The needs scale allows field officers to assess offenders' needs associated with offense-related behavior and determine the appropriate supervision level based on that analysis. Multiple factors are included in the needs assessment, such as employment, violations of probation or parole conditions, legal issues, and substance abuse problems.

The minimum level of supervision is for low need offenders and requires the least amount of offender supervision. Field officers assign offenders to minimum supervision when an offender has complied with the granting authority's and division's policies and stipulations, established an ability to manage a stable lifestyle, and has become a responsible citizen. Offenders are required to report monthly on an automated telephone system.

Regular supervision is for offenders with moderate needs. Periodic in-person contacts, employment checks, treatment contacts, and home visits are required.

² DOC's 2006 Strategic Plan.

The division designed enhanced and intensive supervision for high need offenders. An offender is considered high need if he/she is continually having difficulty meeting the conditions of probation or parole. Field officers make contacts more frequently and perform an important role in educational and occupational development and the rehabilitation process. The intensive level of supervision is the most comprehensive phase, with contact occurring the most frequently.

The division has defined minimum requirements for each supervision level. There are four required types of contacts: office visits, employment checks, home visits, and treatment contacts. Office visits are face-to-face contact with the offender at the probation and parole office or other meeting place. Employment checks require the field officer to verify that the offender is currently employed by receiving a check stub or calling the employer. Home visits are face-to-face contact with the offender at the offender's home or a visit at the offender's home where there is visible or verbal assurance that the offender still resides at the address. Treatment contacts are contact with the treatment provider to discuss the offender's progress or a face-to-face contact with the offender at a treatment facility. Table 1.1 shows the required contacts for each level of supervision.

Table 1.1: Number of Required Contacts for Each Level of Supervision

Level of Supervision	Type of Contact			
	Office Visits	Employment Checks	Home Visits	Treatment Contacts
Regular	1 per month	1 per month	1 every 6 months	1 per month
Enhanced ¹	1 per week ²	1 per month	1 per month	1 per month
Intensive ¹	2 per week	1 per week	1 per month	1 per week

¹ The enhanced level of supervision includes enhanced and intensive phase II. The intensive level of supervision is phase I only.

² The division allows the substitution of treatment contacts for up to two office visits per month for cases at the enhanced supervision level.

Source: Division Policies and Procedures Manual.

The Missouri Drug Court Program provides an alternative to prison, jail, and standard probation models for offenders with non-violent, drug-related felony offenses. Under the program, the prosecutor, defense attorney, diversion manager,³ treatment specialist, and various other court personnel work in a team environment to educate the offender on treatment strategies,

³ Probation and Parole Field Officer.

monitor the offender's progress, and assist the offender with substance abuse rehabilitation. The offender is required to attend various therapy, self-help, and 12-step meeting programs, in addition to the regularly scheduled meetings with the diversion manager. Each drug court is responsible for developing treatment plans and program phases and requirements. We audited selected cases assigned to drug courts in Kansas City, Springfield, and St. Louis. Table 1.2 shows the diversion manager requirements in each drug court.

Table 1.2: Contact Requirements for Drug Court Programs

	Kansas City	Springfield	St. Louis
Phase I			
Office Visit	2 per month	2 per week	1 per week
Employment Check	2 per month	1 per week	1 per week
Home Visit	1 every 6 months	2 per month	Not required due to safety issues
Phase II			
Office Visit	2 per month	1 per week	1 per week
Employment Check	2 per month	1 per week	1 per week
Home Visit	1 every 6 months	1 every 3 weeks	Not required due to safety issues
Phase III			
Office Visit	1 per month	1 per week	2 per month
Employment Check	1 per month	1 per week	2 per month
Home Visit	1 every 6 months	1 per month	Not required due to safety issues
Phase IV			
Office Visit	n/a – only three phases	1 per week	n/a – only three phases
Employment Check		1 per week	
Home Visit		1 per month	

Source: Division Policies and Procedures Manual.

Scope and Methodology

To determine whether probation and parole officers maintained required contact with offenders, we received data from the division of all probationers and parolees that were supervised between January 1, 2002 and June 25, 2004. We then extracted active probation and parole cases that were placed on probation between January 1, 2003 to December 31, 2003. We selected five geographical areas to visit and review case files. The overall population size from these areas was 8,557 cases. We then divided the population into three separate populations based on supervision level. We randomly chose 14 enhanced, 20 intensive, 21 regular, and 5 drug cases, for a total of 60 cases in our sample. Table 1.3 shows a breakdown of our sample by area.

Table 1.3: Breakdown of Random Sample Selection by Area

District(s)	Number of Cases
Kansas City area	16
St. Louis area	20
Springfield area	15
Moberly	4
Cape Girardeau	5
Total	60

Source: State Auditor's Office (SAO) random selection results.

We reviewed each case file in our sample for compliance with various division policies and procedures. We compared the number of contacts field officers made to the number of contacts required to be made, ensured the offender was assigned to the correct level of supervision based on the division's criteria, and determined if violation and case summary reports were completed timely and accurately.

To gain an understanding of the supervisory review process, we spoke with various supervisors in districts throughout the state. We then compared supervisory review requirements as outlined in the division's policies and procedures manual to the verbal descriptions of actual review processes. In addition, we inquired about the supervision of specific cases in our random sample that we found did not comply with division requirements.

To determine the extent of management oversight, we reviewed division policies and procedures, management reports, the DOC's strategic plan, and interviewed division officials and other applicable staff.

We performed data reliability tests on the division's offender management system. We determined this system was sufficiently reliable for the purposes of this report.

We requested comments on a draft of our report from the Director of the Department of Corrections. We conducted the majority of our work between March 2004 and July 2005.

Deficiencies in Program Oversight Could Compromise Program Success

Improvements are needed in the Department of Corrections (DOC), Division of the Board of Probation and Parole's (division) management system to adequately monitor the performance of field officers and the supervisory review process. Field officer contacts with offenders have not complied with division standards and periodic reports are not always completed timely. In addition, supervisory reviews were not always performed or documented and retained.

Field Officers Did Not Make Required Offender Contacts

Our tests showed significant deficiencies in compliance with division standards. We found field officers did not conduct the required number of contacts for each type of contact. We also found as the level of supervision and required number of contacts increased, compliance percentage generally decreased.

The following tables show the results of our case review for each supervision level.

Table 2.1: Cases Reviewed on Regular Supervision

Type of Contact	Number of Contacts		Percentage Complied
	Required	Made	
Office visit	422	354	84
Employment check	291	155	53
Home visit	75	35	47
Treatment contact	174	57	33

Source: SAO analysis of division records.

Table 2.2: Cases Reviewed on Enhanced Supervision

Type of Contact	Number of Contacts		Percentage Complied
	Required	Made	
Office visit	1366	982	72
Employment check	192	99	52
Home visit	305	93	30
Treatment contact	240	148	62

Source: SAO analysis of division records.

Table 2.3: Cases Reviewed on Intensive Supervision

Type of Contact	Number of Contacts		Percentage Complied
	Required	Made	
Office visit	192	110	57
Employment check	36	7	19
Home visit	19	5	26
Treatment contact	57	15	26

Source: SAO analysis of division records.

Table 2.4: Cases Reviewed on the Drug Court Program

Type of Contact	Number of Contacts		Percentage Complied
	Required	Made	
Office visit	251	189	75
Employment check	130	32	25
Home visit	25	11	44

Source: SAO analysis of division records.

Overall test results show compliance rates of only 73, 45, 34, and 47 percent for positive office visits, employment checks, home visits, and treatment contacts, respectively.

Contact compliance would improve public safety

Offender contacts allow field officers to monitor offender progress, address offender needs, and help ensure public safety. Field officers conduct monthly analyses of each offender's progress and current needs during office visits. Home visits allow field officers to monitor the home activity of offenders and form a relationship with and engage the help of the offender's support group, e.g., family, spouse, etc. Employment checks help field officers oversee each offender's employment and assist in job search and training if needed. In addition, division personnel said maintaining employment helps keep offenders out of trouble. Treatment contacts allow field officers to monitor an offender's progress in a treatment facility, such as an outpatient substance abuse or violent offender program. Field officers can make treatment contacts, such as meeting with the offender at the treatment facility, or collateral treatment contacts, such as speaking with the offender's counselor via telephone. According to the division's policies and procedures manual, proper assessment of substance abuse issues, intervention, and monitoring of required treatment programs allows offenders to successfully complete the probation or parole program.

Field officers unable to explain missed contacts

We discussed our results with field officers to determine why contacts were not made as required. Field officers offered a wide variety of responses as to why contacts were not made, such as time constraints due to paperwork, it was an oversight, the offender moved around a lot, or they did not know. There was no consensus as to the main causes for the missed contacts. Supervising officers also could not provide us with the main reasons for these missed contacts, but did express concern that contacts were not occurring in accordance with division policy. The following are examples of cases from our random sample:

Example case 1

The offender was sentenced to a DOC institution for 2nd degree robbery. According to the case file, the offender attempted to rob an elderly woman of her purse. After the victim struggled, the offender stole the victim's car and traded it for crack cocaine. The offender completed a 180 day treatment

program in a department institution and was released on parole in August 2003. In January 2004, while still on parole, the offender borrowed an automobile from an associate, but sold the automobile for drug money instead of returning it to the owner. In a violation report submitted in March 2004, the field officer assigned to the case described the current and prior offenses and stated that the offender's behavior becomes aggressive when he uses illegal substances and he should be considered a threat to society and the offender was assigned to enhanced supervision. However, the field officer assigned to the case only made 57 percent of the required treatment contacts. In addition, the compliance rate for the other required contacts was 69, 63, and 0 percent for office visits, employment checks, and home visits, respectively. The offender failed to comply with the requirements of a work release program in March 2005 and was arrested for new offenses in September 2005. As of January 2006, the offender was incarcerated in a state correctional facility.

Example case 2

The offender was sentenced to probation for assault on a law enforcement officer and unlawful use of a weapon. According to the pre-sentence investigation, when officers responded to a domestic violence call, the offender used a knife to threaten harm to the law enforcement officers and himself. After using a taser gun to subdue the offender, police placed him under arrest. The offender plead guilty and was sentenced to probation on November 10, 2003. While the offender was on enhanced supervision, a supervision level for high need and risk offenders, the field officer assigned to the case made 91 percent of the required office visits, but only 14 percent of the home visits, and 25 percent of treatment contacts. As of January 2006, the offender was still on probation and in outpatient treatment for abuse of prescription drugs. Because of the drug abuse, the field officer assigned the offender to the intensive supervision level.

Example case 3

The offender was sentenced to 25 years in a DOC institution for murder in the 2nd degree and 10 years for armed criminal action. According to the case file, the offender was convicted in 1988 of murder in the 2nd degree for a drug related shooting. The offender also admitted to involvement in gang activity and illegal drug activity. After serving 14 years of his sentence, the offender was placed on parole. The field officer placed the offender on enhanced supervision and made 78 percent of the required office visits, 63 percent of employment checks, but none of the required home visits and treatment contacts. As of January 11, 2006, the offender was still on parole and in outpatient treatment for abuse of alcohol. In addition, the offender had a pending DWI charge and was assigned to the regular supervision level.

Offenders Not Always Properly Evaluated

Offenders are not always assigned to the correct supervision level. As discussed in chapter 1, the supervision level assignment is based on the field officers' assessments of the offenders' needs and risks. The field officer uses this assessment to create supervision strategies and determine the most appropriate frequency of contacts.

In one of our sample cases the offender's initial needs and risks assessment was not completed until five months after the offender was placed on probation. Further, when the assessment was performed, the offender was placed on regular supervision although the assessment indicated an enhanced level of supervision was required. Division personnel told us problems associated with this offender's assessment were due to an oversight. As a result, the offender was placed on an incorrect supervision level for an additional five months. According to division management, after the offender tested positive for drugs in September, October, and November of 2005, the field officer recommended revocation. As of December 2005 a hearing was pending for the court system to review the case and make a decision.

Case Summary and Violation Reports Submitted Late or Not at All

Initial case summary reports were required in 27 of the 60 cases in our sample population. The Board of Probation and Parole policies and procedures manual requires initial case summary reports to be completed within the first 60 days of supervision. However, of the 27 cases, there were 15 initial case summary reports, or 56 percent, submitted 10 or more days late, with an average of 69 days late. In addition, one initial case summary report was never completed. According to the field officer assigned to the case, the initial case summary report was started but never completed. The supervisor on the case stated that the case was transferred from another district in the first week of supervision, and the failure to complete an initial case summary report was probably an oversight. Initial case summary reports provide information on an offender's background and criminal history, and are used by probation and parole officers, supervisors, and the board or court granting the offender's release. The reports include a description of the current offense, the offender's arrest record, and the offender's family, educational, and employment history. The initial case summary report is used in conjunction with the client risk and need scales to develop supervision strategies that best address the offender's needs.

In 35 of the 55 applicable cases⁴ reviewed, field officers submitted routine case summary reports that were 10 or more days late. In addition, field officers failed to complete 16 routine case summary reports. Division policy requires field officers to prepare routine case summary reports every six months. The division uses routine case summary reports as a method for field officers and supervisors to periodically monitor case activity and identify special issues that need to be addressed. According to division policy, preparation of the reports ensures the efficient and effective delivery of service to the courts, board, and offenders.

In 12 of the 55 applicable cases⁴ we reviewed, field officers submitted violation reports that were 10 or more days late. Field officers are required to submit initial violation reports within 10 working days from the date the violation became known. In one case we reviewed it took 75, 125, and 137 days to complete three separate violation reports. During our review of that case, we also found the field officer never completed a violation report for two violations that occurred in October 2004. At the time of our review in May 2005, the violation reports were over seven months late. Field officers complete violation reports when an offender fails to comply with the conditions of his/her probation or parole. After completion, field officers send the reports to the granting authority, the board for parole cases or the court system for probation cases. The board or court system then uses the violation reports to determine the appropriate injunction, such as revocation or continuance.

The following case from our sample is an example of violations not being properly reported:

While on intensive supervision from April to October 2003, the field officer documented in the case file that the offender canceled or failed to show up for seven consecutive office visits. A violation report was prepared and the offender was declared an absconder. The offender was arrested and served 30 days in jail. The offender was again placed on probation, however, from August to December 2004, the offender did not show up for any office visits. During this time, the field officer did not complete a violation report to declare the offender an absconder. According to the field officer, the offender was not declared an absconder because the field officer knew the offender had not left town. The probation and parole manual states "an absconder is defined as an offender whose whereabouts are unknown and/or is avoiding supervision."

⁴ Field officers were not required to complete routine case summary or violation reports for the five drug court cases in our sample.

We discussed our results with field officers, supervisors, and other division personnel to determine why reports were not completed as required. However, we again received a wide variety of responses and no common cause was identified.

Management Did Not Adequately Monitor Review Process

According to division personnel, supervisory reviews are not always performed and are not documented and maintained. In addition, when supervisory reviews are performed they do not adequately monitor field officer compliance with division policies. We spoke with probation and parole supervisors in four regions and found case reviews focus on case maintenance and clean up rather than field officer compliance. In addition, the division does not have automated systems in place to ensure supervisory reviews are performed as required by division policy.

Division policy requires supervisory reviews to be conducted monthly for field officers. The performance conference allows supervisors to evaluate employee compliance with the major job responsibilities of his/her position. According to the policy and procedures manual, supervisors should assess several areas, including timeliness and content of case summary and violation reports, compliance with contact requirements, and accuracy of need assessments and supervision level placement. Policy requires supervisors to enter performance conferences into a performance log, which, according to a division official, is maintained in each field officer's personnel file.

New management tool results consistent with SAO test results

In March 2005, the division began testing a new quality assurance audit program. Under the new program, field supervisors will audit 10 percent of each field officer's caseload for compliance with various division policies, such as content and timeliness of reports and contact compliance. The results of program testing showed most of the same deficiencies identified in our audit.

Table 2.5: Results of Internal Quality Assurance Pilot Program

Quality Assurance Question	Percentage Compliance
Are office visit contacts consistent with level of supervision?	63
Are employment checks consistent with level of supervision?	49
Are home visits consistent with level of supervision?	50
Are treatment contacts consistent with level of supervision?	57
Was the initial case summary report completed within the first 60 days of opening?	77
Was the violation report completed within 10 working days of the date the violation became known?	75

Source: Quality Assurance Coordinator.

The division's new quality assurance audit program does not monitor the timeliness of case summary reports even though division policy requires field officers to prepare case summary reports every six months. The division uses routine case summary reports as a method for field officers and supervisors to periodically monitor case activity and identify special issues that need to be addressed. According to division policy, preparation of the reports ensures the efficient and effective delivery of service to the courts, board, and offenders.

According to a division official, the division plans to use the information collected from the quality assurance audits to review the effectiveness of the current policies and procedures and conduct performance comparisons between regions and districts. The program also addresses many of the items reviewed during the performance conference process, such as timeliness and content of case summary and violation reports, compliance with contact requirements, and accuracy of need assessments and supervision level placement. However, according to division officials, it is not feasible to utilize the program to monitor the performance of individual field officers due to system limitations. Instead, the division plans to use the newly developed automated road book for this purpose. The automated road book is the first component of the planned automated case management system. The division implemented this component statewide in January 2006, but had to take it off-line in February 2006 due to system failures.

Conclusions

Field officers have not always complied with division standards regarding the frequency of contacts with offenders, evaluating offender needs, and submitting case summary and violation reports. In addition, the division did not have an effective management reporting system to notify management personnel of problems. The new quality assurance audit program and/or the automated road book would provide the division with a mechanism to better monitor field officer compliance and the supervisory review process.

The board and the court system cannot timely and accurately assess offender activity and rectify public safety concerns if field officers do not make required contacts and submit violation reports in a timely manner.

Recommendations

We recommend the Board of Probation and Parole:

- 2.1 Establish policies requiring supervisors to use the new quality assurance audit program and/or automated road book to better monitor the performance of individual field officers.
- 2.2 Ensure supervisory reviews are documented and retained.

2.3 Utilize the quality assurance audit program to also measure compliance with division policies regarding the preparation of routine case summary reports.

Agency Comments

The Missouri Department of Corrections appreciates the opportunity to respond to specific audit findings and to improve our operations. Following are the department's responses to the recently completed audit at Probation and Parole.

The Probation and Parole Management Report, produced by the State Auditor's Office identifies deficiencies in offender contact requirements and in the timeliness of reports to the courts and parole board. We agree with the corresponding recommendations and believe that when implemented, they will improve the supervision process and management of probation and parole. Specifically, the Division endorses the three audit recommendations:

- *To establish policies requiring supervisors to use the new quality assurance audit program and/or automated road book to better monitor the performance of individual field officers.*
- *To ensure supervisory reviews are documented and retained.*
- *To utilize the quality assurance audit program to also measure compliance with division policies regarding the preparation of routine case summary reports.*

While we in general support the audit recommendations, we believe that several specific findings overstate noted deficiencies.

Regarding the finding, "field officers did not make required contacts," in our review of the same cases we found that contacts were incorrectly calculated by the State Auditor's Office in 36 (60%) of the 60 cases. This difference in calculation may have led to an overstatement of non-compliance findings.

We believe the primary reason for the differences between our review of contact compliance and the State Auditor's Office is in the understanding of the impact of mitigating variables. Offender non-compliance with supervision requirements must be considered. Offenders often miss appointments and forget to provide verification of employment, during an appointment. Also, offenders will often exhibit sporadic periods of employment, partial employment and unemployment. There are also many types of circumstances, which may make an offender unavailable for

minimum contacts, such as in-patient treatment, short-term jail terms, or serious medical conditions. While we hold the probation and parole officer accountable for addressing these issues, which may eventually lead to a violation of supervision, such variables should have been considered in presenting the audit results. It may be important for agency policy to address a means to document such differences in contact compliance.

Regarding the finding, "Offenders not always properly evaluated," we would note that this finding was supported in the audit with only one case from the 60 audited. We find that to be insubstantial evidence for this finding.

Regarding the finding "Case summary and violation reports submitted late or not at all," in our review of the 60 cases audited by the State Auditor's Office we would disagree with the findings regarding late reports in 20% of the cases reviewed. Specifically, our review revealed the following observations:

- *The findings on reports identify only one of the 60 initial case summary reports that were not submitted.*
- *The current process for managing case summary reports includes the utilization of a monthly list of due reports. Although each report has a specific due date, in most locations reports are not considered late if submitted within the month that they are due. The State Auditor's Office use of a 10-day late marker could have inflated findings in this area.*

Regarding the finding "management did not adequately monitor review process," we note that the agency has developed and implemented two management tools to improve our case management and review process. They are: the Automated Road Book and Quality Assurance Audit system. Both systems have required significant investments in time and energy and will produce improved outcomes by providing line staff and management with the tools to better manage the supervision process. While we agree there is always room for improvement, we do have a current system and have been working diligently to improve it via the quality assurance audit system and automated road book.

We agree that this audit identifies certain deficiencies in offender contact requirements and in the timeliness of reports to the courts and parole board. Further, we agree and will work to implement the three identified recommendations and believe they will improve the management of probation and parole.

Auditor's Comment

The DOC could not provide any supporting documentation to dispute the accuracy of our test results. In addition, both our test work and the results compiled by the division's Quality Assurance Pilot Program show significant rates of non-compliance with division policies.