



Data Driven Decisions

VERMONT DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS WORK CAMP OUTCOME EVALUATION

A STUDY COMMISSIONED BY

ACT No. 41

2011-2012 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

STATE OF VERMONT

Submitted to:

The Vermont Senate Judiciary Committee

The Vermont House Judiciary Committee

The Vermont Joint Committee On Corrections Oversight

Submitted by:

The Vermont Center For Justice Research

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January, 2012

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Research Team

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Director of Research

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In Act 41, this body tasked the Vermont Center for Justice Research (VCJR) with evaluating the recidivism rates of defendants assigned to the Northeast and Southeast Work Camps as compared to defendants sentenced to prison/jail without the benefit of work camp.¹ The principal findings of the evaluation include:

- The overall recidivism rate² for work camp participants was 35%, compared to a 46% recidivism rate for those who went to prison.
- Work camp participants with an LSI risk assessment score of “Medium” had a 35% recidivism rate compared to a 53% recidivism rate for prison inmates with an LSI score of “Medium.”
- The work camp that a defendant is assigned to is significant in reducing recidivism. Participation at the Northeast Work Camp is more statistically significant in reducing the likelihood of recidivism than is participation at the Southeast Work Camp.
- The re-offense patterns for the Work Camp Group and the Prison Group were generally the same. Recidivists from both groups were reconvicted of a wide variety of crimes. Over 70% of the reconvictions for both groups were misdemeanors. During the study period the median number of reconvictions for the Work Camp Group was two as opposed to three reconvictions for the Prison Group.
- Recidivists from both groups were reconvicted soon after release from DOC custody. Approximately 45% of the recidivists from the Work Camp Group were reconvicted within one year and 92% were reconvicted within three years. Forty-nine percent of the Prison Group recidivists were reconvicted within one year and 88.4% were reconvicted within three years.
- Sixty-nine percent of recidivists in both the Work Camp Group and the Prison Group earned their new offense in the county in which they lived at the time of entry into custody.

¹ It should be noted that the evaluation was based on existing data records only. The scope of the research, therefore, was limited. Limitations on the data are discussed when relevant.

² See pages 5- 6, *infra*, for a discussion of recidivism definitions.

METHODOLOGY

This study focused on those inmates released from the Vermont Department of Corrections (DOC) custody³ from 01/01/2006 thru 12/31/2010. Information regarding offender release date, length of stay, work camp location, days served, LSI score, and reentry level were provided by the DOC. The cohort was then matched to Vermont Criminal Information Center (VCIC) records for the recidivism study. The VCIC records provided the type of reconviction offense, date of reconviction, location of reconviction offense, and the sentence of the new reconviction offense. The final cohort after matching to VCIC data included 5,612⁴ defendants. One thousand one hundred and eighty-one (21%) were in the Work Camp Group and 4,431 (79%) were in the Prison Group.

DEMOGRAPHICS

During the study period, there was no work camp option for females. Therefore, the 1,181 work camp defendants all were male. Of the 4,431 Prison Group defendants, 917 (20%) were female. Race or ethnicity data was available in a high percentage of cases. One hundred and seventeen (9.9%) of the Work Camp Group were African-Americans, and 1,029 (87.1%) were Caucasian. In contrast, only 5.6% (250) of the Prison Group were African-Americans⁵ and 91.6% (4060) were Caucasian. The median age at release for all defendants was 30 years of age. The average age for the Work Camp Group was 33.12 years and for the Prison Group 32.65 years. The most common age was 21 for the Work Camp Group and 23 for the Prison Group.

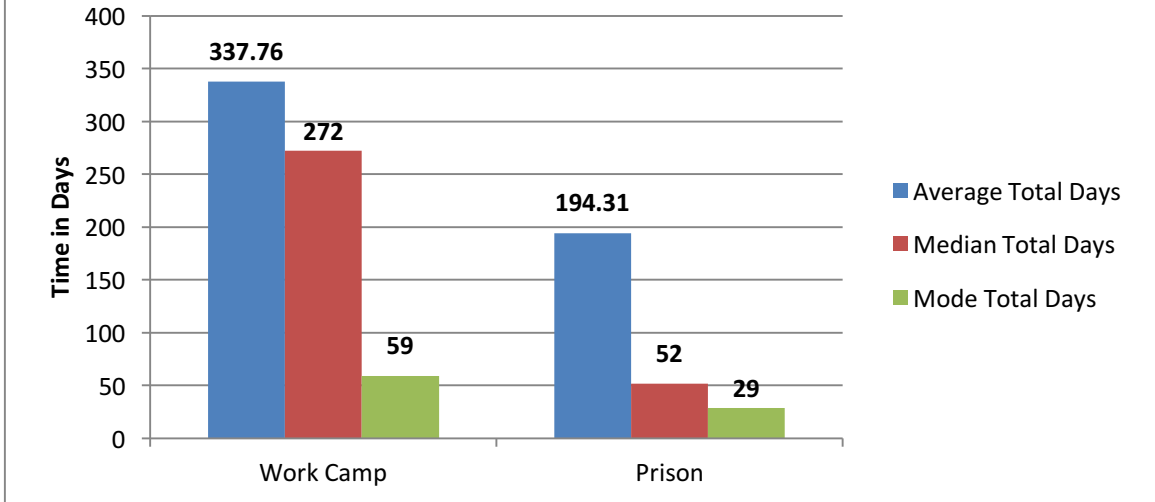
Defendants in the Work Camp Group had a longer average stay in DOC custody than the Prison Group. Chart 1 below illustrates the total time served in DOC custody in days for the various groups.

³ The cohort was restricted to subjects whose most serious crime which resulted in their commitment to the DOC during the study period was for either a misdemeanor or felony in the property crime, drug crime, or motor vehicle crime categories. Restricting the selection criteria to these categories of offenses resulted in a Prison Group which was roughly similar to the Work Camp Group in terms of offense patterns

⁴ This study represents the first matching of DOC to VCIC data. Matching was done on Name and DOB. Of the original cohort identified from DOC data, approximately 300 individuals could not be accurately matched to VCIC records. The VCIC records were then matched back to DOC using docket information in the DOC criminal history file. This match led to identifying the Person Identification Number used by DOC. The final cohort excludes those defendants that could be matched but VCIC has recorded as deceased. Also excluded from the final cohort were those defendants whose total stay with DOC was seven days or less.

⁵ It is interesting to note in the context of the broader discussion on race and sentencing in Vermont, that 31% of the African-Americans in the final cohort were from out-of-state.

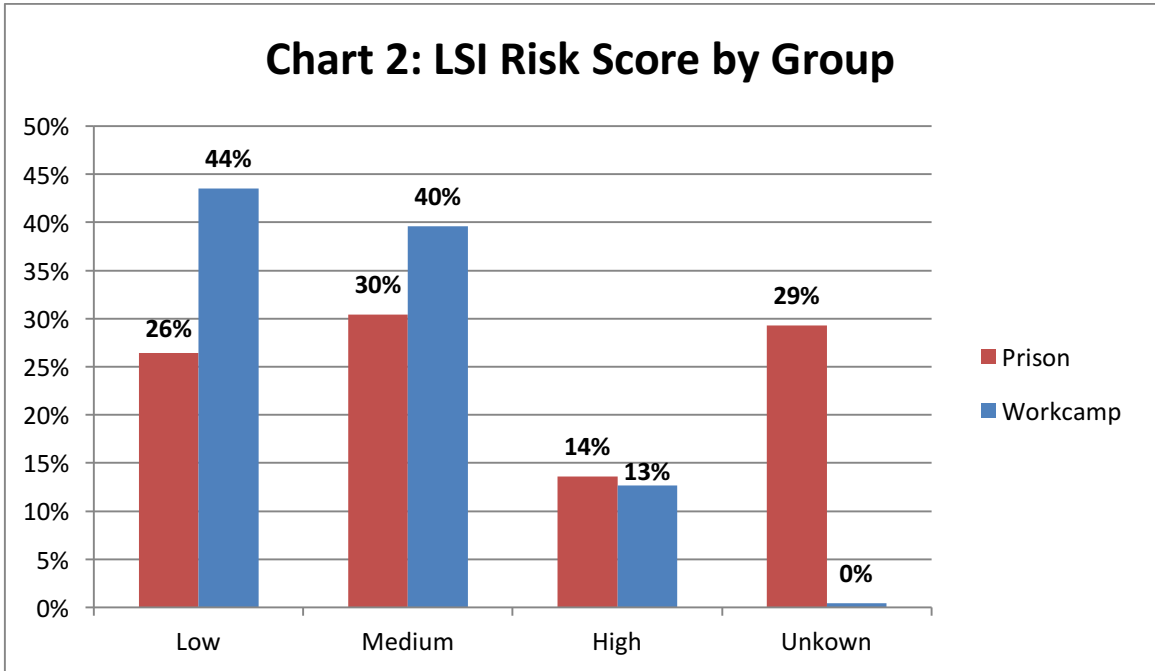
Chart 1: Total Days Served In DOC Custody By Group



Of the total stay days, the Work Camp Group spent on average, 155.9 days in work camp, about 34% of their total time in custody. However, the median time at work camp was 133 days and the mode was 56 days.

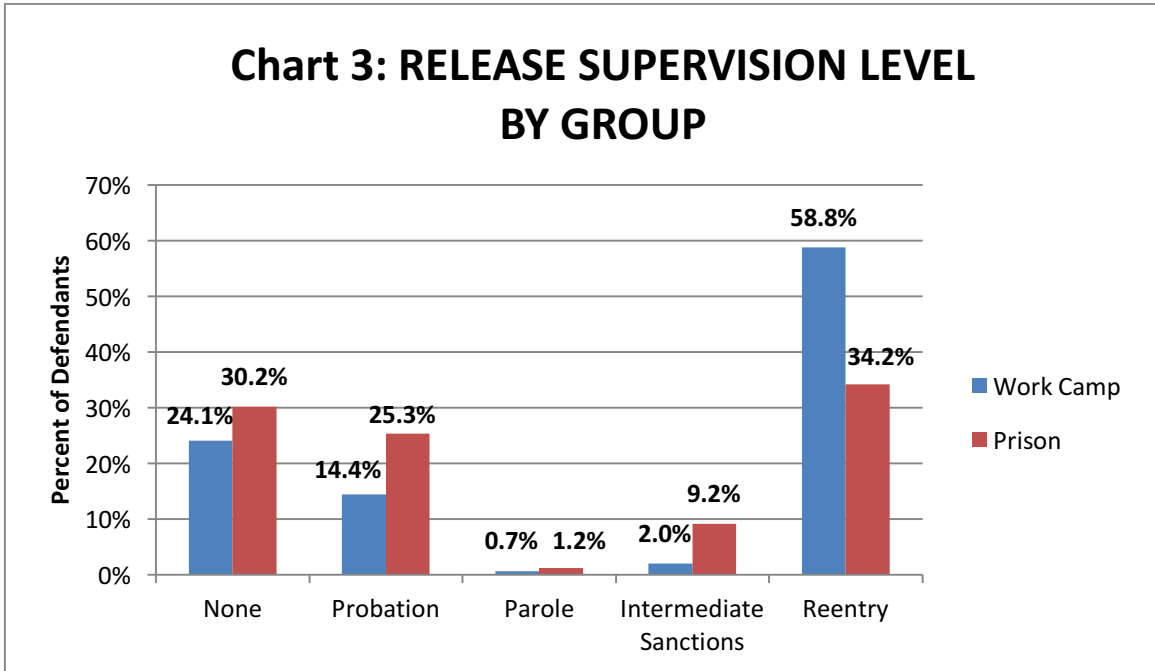
As would be expected, the Work Camp Group overall had a lower LSI risk score than the Prison Group.⁶ Chart 2 below indicates that approximately 44% (514) of the Work Camp Group had an LSI score of “Low,” and slightly more than 40% (498) had a score of “Medium.” Overall, about 84% of the work camp defendants earned a “Low” or “Medium” score. Slightly more than 26% (1171) of the prison defendants earned a “Low” score, and 30% (1348) earned a “Medium” score. Therefore, 56% of the prison defendants scored “Medium” to “Low” on the LSI risk assessment tool.

⁶ The Work Camp Group also had a better documented LSI score. The score was unknown in 29.3% of the Prison Group versus 4.1% of the Work Camp Group.



The groups also differed in the level of supervision upon release. Work camp participants were more likely to be released into a reentry program ⁷ and prison inmates were more likely to be released with no supervision. Chart 3 below shows the percentage of defendants in each group and the level of supervision to which the defendants were released.

⁷ The Department of Corrections defines the reentry category as: a generic group of releases under the furlough statute (28 VSA 808) which includes Reintegration Furlough (pre-minimum), Conditional Reentry (past minimum), Medical Furlough, and Treatment Furlough. It does not include the Pre-Approved Furlough option which is accounted for separately under “Intermediate Sanctions.”



RECIDIVISM

There are varying definitions of recidivism employed by policymakers, researchers and program administrators. Each definition captures a different aspect of the issues surrounding criminal justice planning. When the Vermont Sentencing Commission was active, the Commission defined recidivism as any conviction, including probation violations. In VCJR’s study of domestic violence recidivism⁸, it was observed that there were defendants who were recidivating only with probation violations. This number was reported separately in order to provide a more in-depth understanding of the issue. Finally, this body in “The War on Recidivism” Act of 2011, ordered the Department of Corrections to calculate recidivism as:

[T]he rate of recidivism based upon offenders who are sentenced to more than one year of incarceration, who, after release from incarceration, return to prison within three years for a conviction for a new offense or a violation of supervision resulting, and the new incarceration sentence is at least 90 days.⁹

For this report, the purpose of which was to compare work camp recidivism rates to prison recidivism rates, the definitions of recidivism have been slightly modified to more accurately reflect the cohort population. The following definitions of recidivism were used:

⁸ http://www.crgvt.org/uploads/5/2/2/2/52222091/crg_report_2011_12_recidivism_domestic_assault.pdf

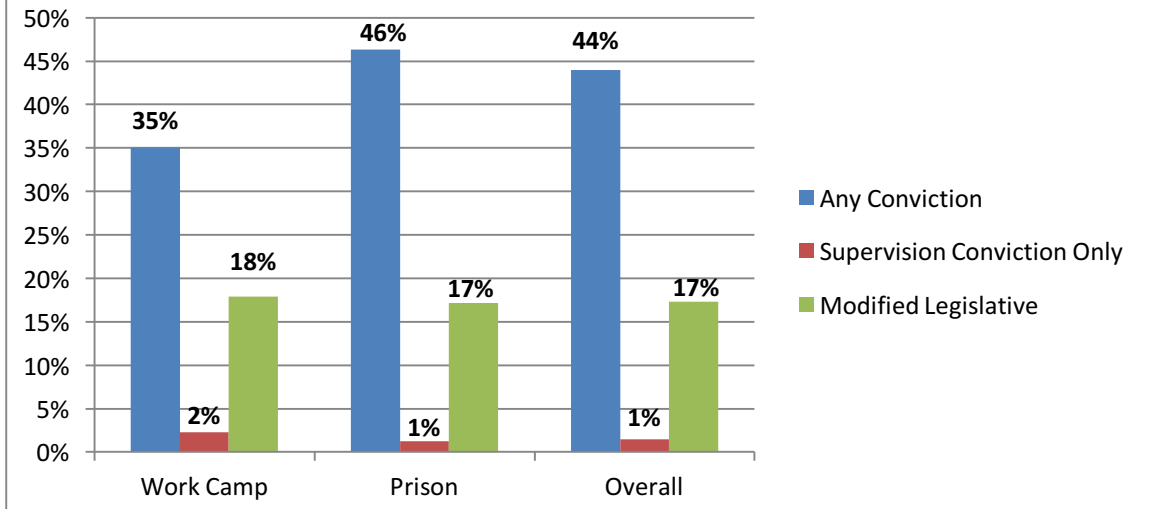
⁹ <http://www.leg.state.vt.us/docs/2012/Acts/ACT041.pdf> Section 5, Subsection b(1).

1. The defendant received a new conviction for any offense (including a probation violation, violation of conditions of release, or escape) at any time after release from DOC custody. In Chart 4 below this is referred to as “Any Conviction”;¹⁰
2. The defendant ONLY received one conviction of one of the following supervision violations: (1) probation violation; (2) violation of conditions of release; or (3) escape, and had no other convictions for any crime or violation since his/her release from custody. In Chart 4 below this is referred to as “Supervision Conviction Only”;
3. The defendant, regardless of time served on the original sentence, was convicted of a new offense, within three years, where the minimum sentence was 90 days (or more) of incarceration. This is a modified version of the legislative definition. The cohort for this study did not include many (only 44) defendants who had served more than a year at work camp. In Chart 4 below this is referred to as a “Modified Legislative”.¹¹

¹⁰ DOC and VCJR differ in their approach to measuring recidivism. The Department of Corrections calculates recidivism based on a methodology which facilitates the ability of the Department to report on and manage the State’s prison population. VCJR measures recidivism using standard measures based on VCIC data which are designed to identify which individuals are reconvicted and/or incarcerated for any offense during the study period. For example, DOC does not include probation violations as new convictions, where VCJR does. The most significant difference, however, is that DOC measures recidivism each time a particular defendant is released during the study period, whereas VCJR bases its recidivism measures on only the defendant’s first release from custody during the study period.

¹¹ Please note that DOC and VCJR use different measures of whether a defendant was “sentenced to” 90 days or more. DOC uses the maximum sentence for determining whether or not the defendant was sentenced to a period of incarceration greater than 90 days. DOC calculations include non-incarcerative sentences (probation, deferred) where the maximum time is 90 days or greater. VCJR uses the minimum sentenced time from VCIC records. A defendant was considered “sentenced to” at least 90 days if the sentence was a straight sentence and the minimum was 90+ days or if the sentence was a split sentence and the minimum days to serve were 90+ days.

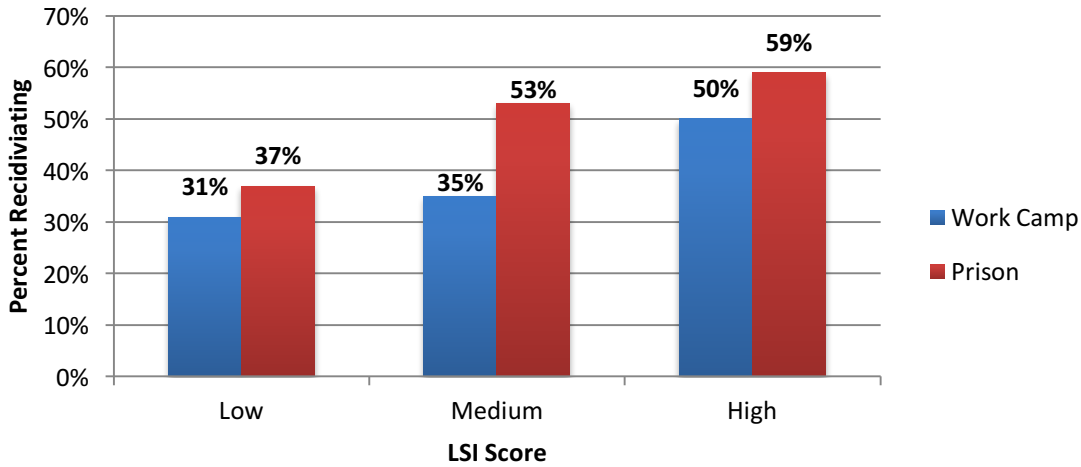
Chart 4: Percent of Defendants Recidivating, Per Various Measures



As Chart 4 above illustrates, there is a difference in the “Any Conviction” definition of recidivism rate that is not apparent in any of the other measures. Using the “Any Conviction” definition of recidivism, work camp defendants recidivated at a lower percentage than did the Prison Group. Because this measure of recidivism found an 11% difference in recidivism rates, it is this definition that is used in the rest of the report for analysis.

The demographic and social data available for the cohort was limited for the two groups. The best proxy for such data is the defendant’s LSI risk score, as the instrument captures prior convictions, drug and alcohol use, family support, and other well-tested predictors of recidivism. Chart 5 indicates that recidivism rates for the Work Camp Group were lower than those of the Prison Group even within different LSI classifications.

Chart 5: "Any Recidivism" by LSI Risk Score and Group



TIME TO NEW CONVICTION

Chart 6 indicates that recidivists from both groups earned a new conviction soon after release from DOC custody.¹² Twenty point three percent of the work camp recidivists earned their new conviction within six months, 45.2% were reconvicted within one year, and 91.1% earned a new conviction within three years. Twenty-nine percent of the Prison Group recidivists had earned their new conviction within six months of release, 49% earned a new conviction within one year, and 89.8% earned a conviction within three years.

¹² "Time to new conviction" was measured using the DOC release date and the **date of disposition** of the new case. The Department of Corrections measures "time to new conviction" from the **incident date** of the new conviction.

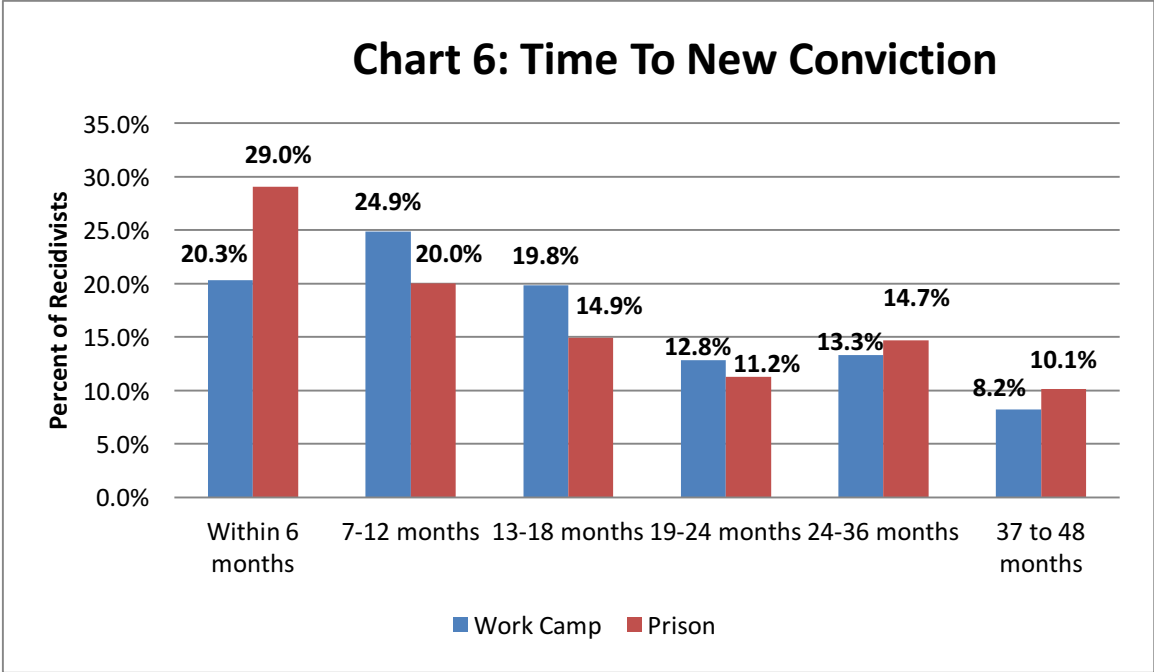
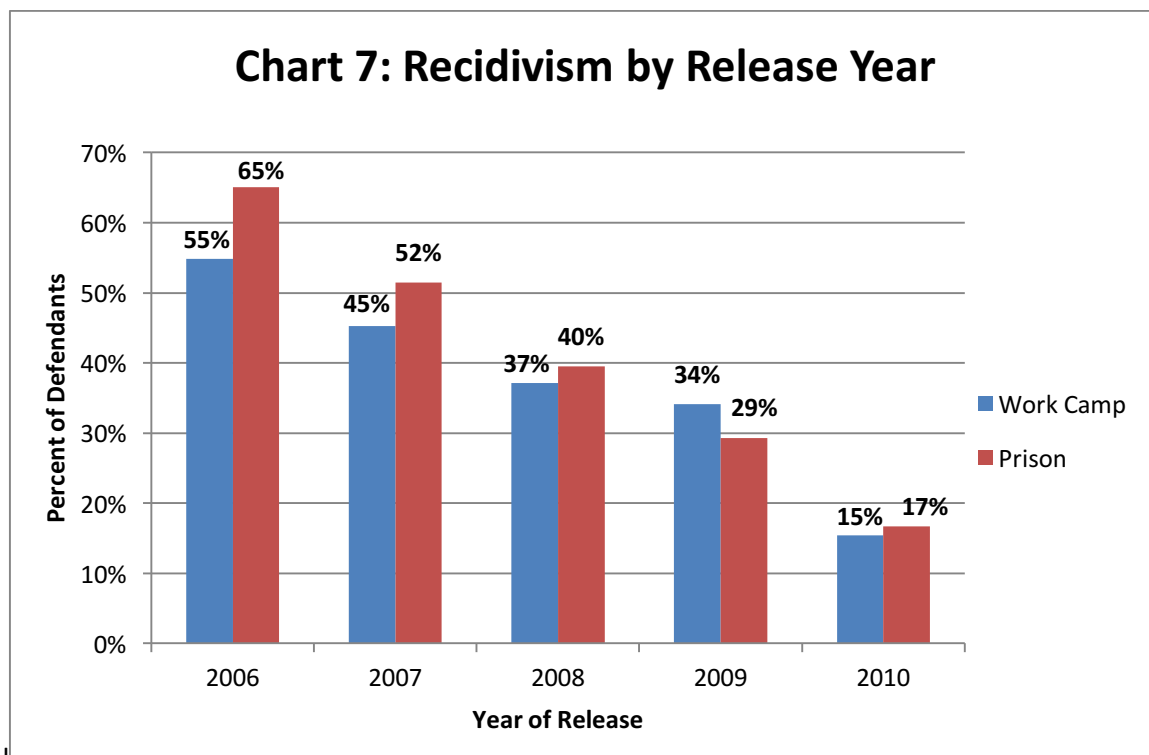


Chart 7 illustrates the percent of defendants recidivating by the year of their release from DOC custody. For example, for those subjects released in 2006, defendants in the Work Camp Group recidivated at a lower level (55%) than did defendants from the Prison Group (65%). Except for 2009, subjects from the Work Camp Group recidivated at lower levels than did the Prison Group for all release years in the study.



NEW CONVICTIONS

Chart 8 and Chart 9 indicate that the groups did differ slightly on the type of first new conviction and how many new convictions a defendant earned during the study period. For 15% of the work camp recidivists, the first new conviction was for escape, compared to 9% for the Prison Group. Otherwise, drug offenses and DLS were common first convictions for both groups. The remaining new offenses ran the gamut of Vermont crimes from Fish and Wildlife convictions to DUI and Domestic Assault. Approximately 6.4% of work camp recidivists were reconvicted of a crime of violence while 11.4% of the Prison Group recidivists were reconvicted of a crime of violence.

The most common number of total reconvictions for recidivists throughout the study group was one conviction¹³. The median number of new convictions for recidivists from the Work Camp Group was two; the mean or average was three reconvictions. The median number of new convictions for the Prison Group was three; the mean was four new convictions. An overwhelming majority of the recidivist convictions were for misdemeanors; 71% percent of the Work Camp Group recidivated with a misdemeanor offense and 77% of the Prison Group recidivists earned a misdemeanor conviction.

¹³ New convictions based on the subject's VCIC record as of 09/01/2011.

Chart 8: Work Camp Group Most Common First New Convictions

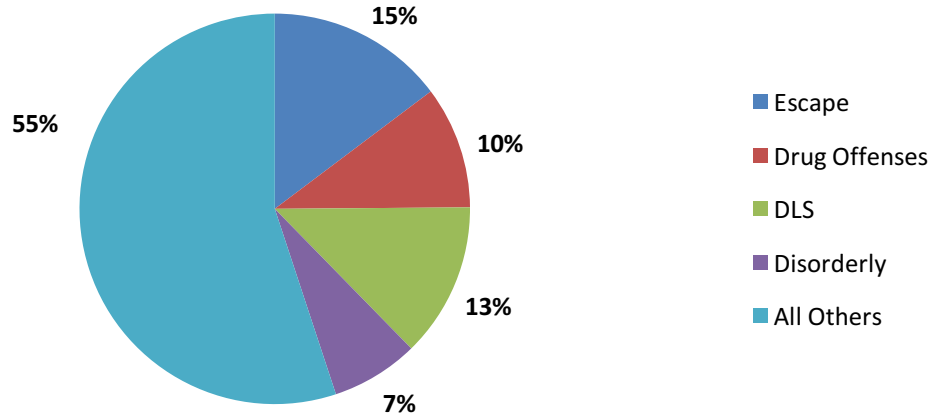
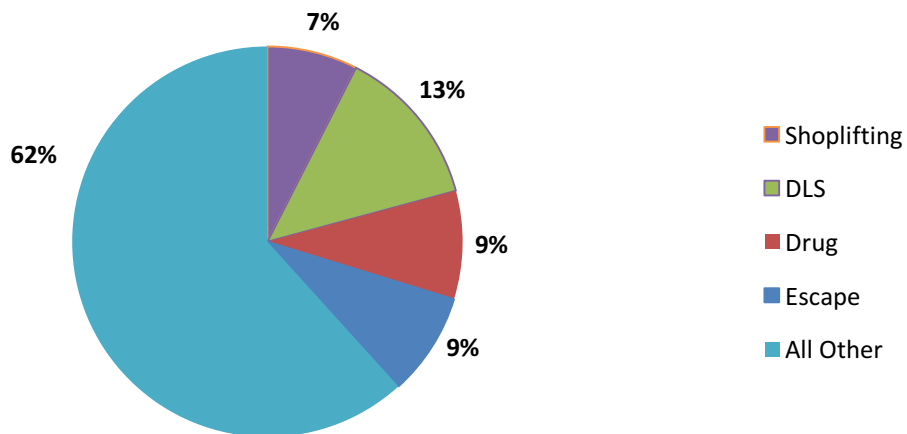


Chart 9: Prison Group Most Common First New Convictions



Once reconvicted, work camp defendants were more likely to receive a sentence to incarceration. Chart 10 below, illustrates the distribution of new sentences by group. Although the Work Camp Group was more likely to be sentenced to incarceration, the median time sentenced to serve between the two groups was about the same. The Work Camp Group was sentenced to an

average minimum sentence of 203 days, with a median of 60 days. The Prison Group was sentenced to an average minimum sentence of 190 days, with a median of 58.5 days.

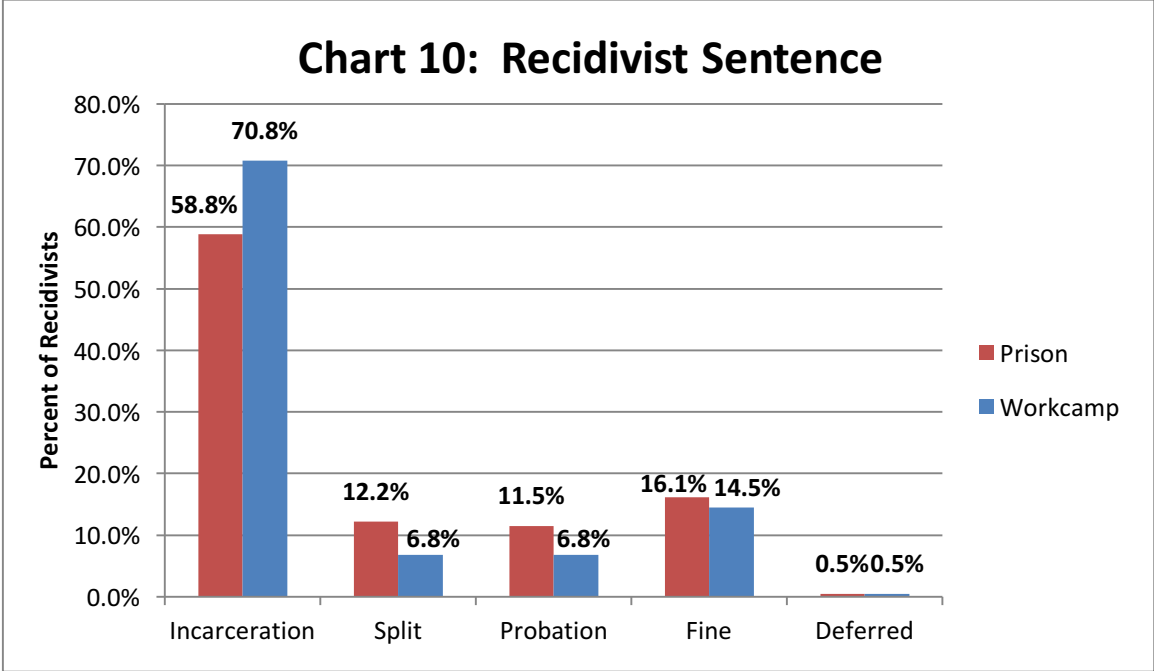
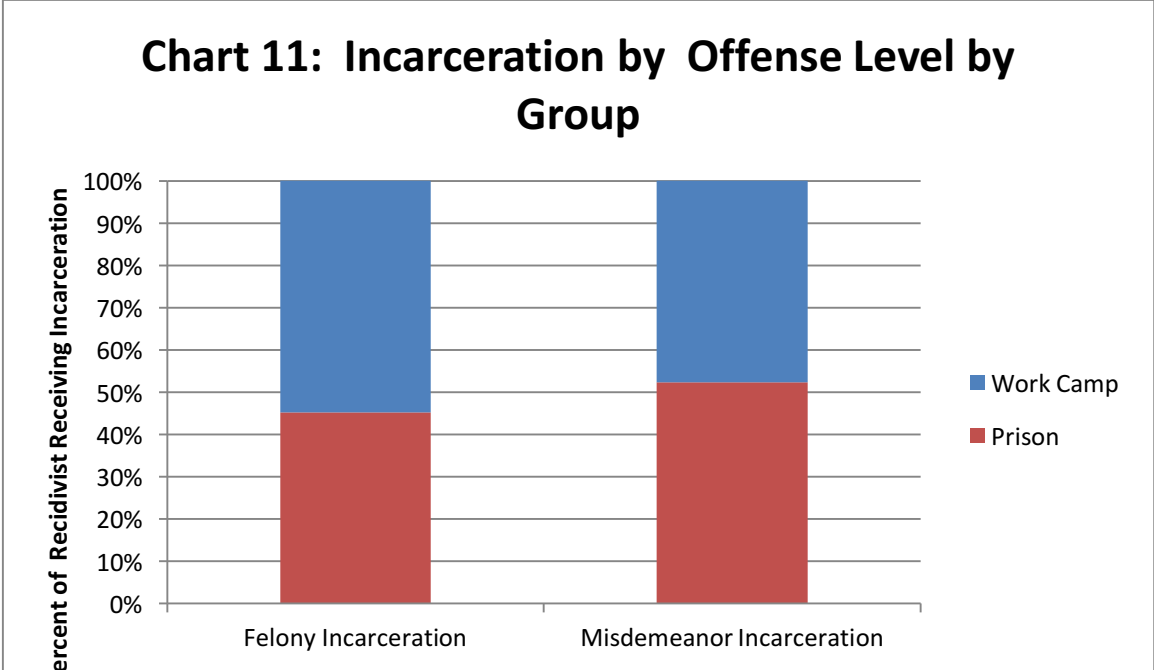


Chart 11 illustrates the breakdown between felony and misdemeanor first recidivist convictions that received incarceration as the sentence; work camp participants who recidivated with a felony offense were more likely to go to prison than felony recidivists from the Prison Group.



COUNTY OF RECIDIVIST CONVICTION

Nearly 70% of recidivists in both the Work Camp Group and the Prison Group earned their new offense in the county in which they lived at the time of entry into DOC custody. Chart 12 below indicates the county of the first recidivist conviction.

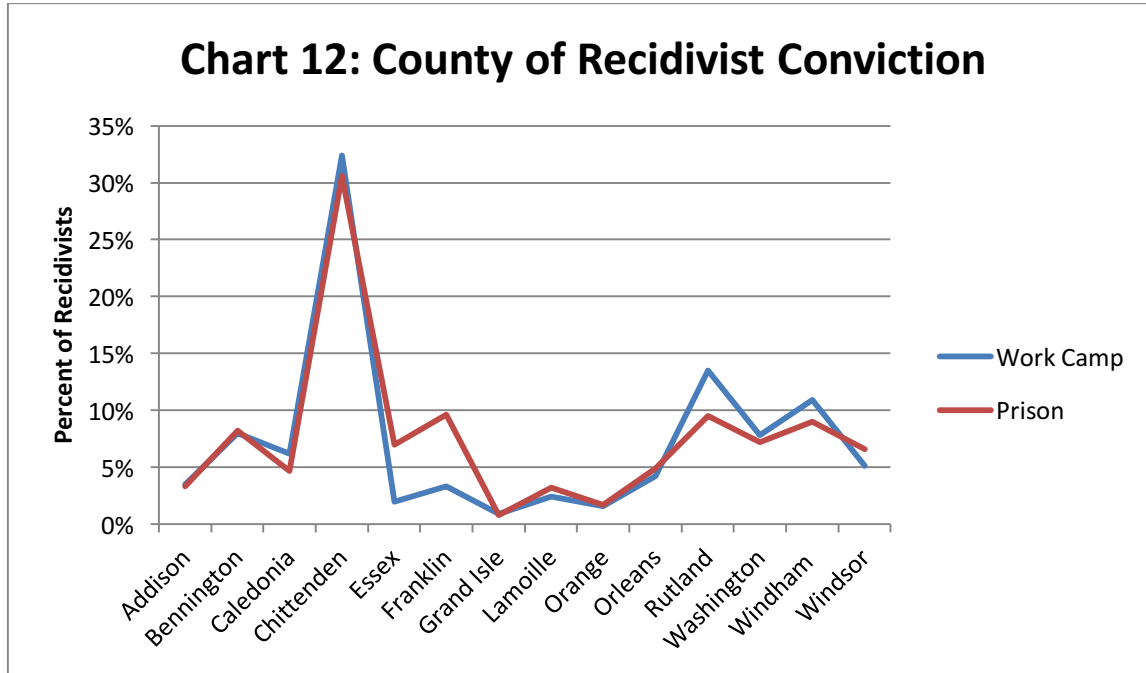


Table 1 and Table 2 below illustrate the defendants who recidivated in a different county than the one where they resided at the time of entry into DOC custody; 16% of the 460 out-of-state inmates in the cohort (76), recidivated in the state of Vermont.

TABLE 1: County of Recidivist Offense, When Recidivism County Was Different from the County of Residence

		County of Recidivist Offense														Total
		Addison	Bennington	Caledonia	Chittenden	Essex	Franklin	Grand Isle	Lamoille	Orange	Orleans	Rutland	Washington	Windham	Windsor	
County of Residence	Out of state	0	14	4	21	0	0	0	1	1	2	12	3	12	6	76
	Addison	0	1	1	23	0	2	0	0	0	0	11	1	0	1	40
	Bennington	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	6	1	2	4	14
	Caledonia	0	0	0	4	3	1	0	0	1	7	0	8	0	2	26
	Chittenden	9	5	1	0	1	24	4	10	4	5	13	12	6	3	97
	Essex	0	0	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	11
	Franklin	2	0	0	34	0	0	3	4	0	4	1	0	2	1	51
	Grand Isle	0	0	0	7	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11
	Lamoille	1	1	3	6	0	3	0	0	0	5	0	7	2	0	28
	Orange	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	12	2	5	21
	Orleans	0	0	9	4	0	1	0	6	1	0	1	1	1	0	24
	Rutland	14	13	0	11	0	3	0	0	1	1	0	3	6	10	62
	Washington	1	0	4	15	1	1	1	10	6	0	3	0	3	1	46
	Windham	0	2	4	6	0	2	0	0	0	1	4	3	0	12	34
	Windsor	0	2	0	4	0	1	0	0	4	1	3	2	8	0	25
Total		28	38	37	135	5	42	8	31	18	28	54	53	44	45	566

Table 2 : County of Recidivist Offense By Group, When Recidivism County Was Different from the County of Residence

			County of Recidivist Offense													Total	
			Addison	Bennington	Caledonia	Chittenden	Essex	Franklin	Grand Isle	Lamoille	Orange	Orleans	Rutland	Washington	Windham		Windsor
Work Camp Group	County of Residence	Out of state	0	3	3	7	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	2	17
		Addison	0	0	0	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	1	0	0	13
		Bennington	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2
		Caledonia	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	0	1	7
		Chittenden	2	0	0	0	0	2	1	1	0	1	4	4	2	0	17
		Essex	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	5
		Franklin	1	0	0	3	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	2	0	10
		Grand Isle	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
		Lamoille	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	4
		Orange	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	3
		Orleans	0	0	3	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	6
		Rutland	3	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	9
		Washington	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	4
		Windham	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	5
		Windsor	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	2
		Total	6	7	11	24	1	2	2	4	1	5	14	15	8	5	105
	Prison Group	County of Residence	Out of state	0	11	1	14	0	0	0	0	1	2	11	3	12	4
		Addison	0	1	1	16	0	2	0	0	0	0	6	0	0	1	27
		Bennington	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	4	1	2	4	12
		Caledonia	0	0	0	3	2	1	0	0	1	5	0	6	0	1	19
		Chittenden	7	5	1	0	1	22	3	9	4	4	9	8	4	3	80
		Essex	0	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
		Franklin	1	0	0	31	0	0	2	3	0	3	0	0	0	1	41
		Grand Isle	0	0	0	6	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10
		Lamoille	1	0	3	6	0	3	0	0	0	5	0	5	1	0	24
		Orange	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	5	18
		Orleans	0	0	6	3	0	1	0	5	1	0	1	0	1	0	18
		Rutland	11	11	0	10	0	3	0	0	1	1	0	2	5	9	53
		Washington	1	0	4	12	1	1	1	10	6	0	2	0	3	1	42
		Windham	0	1	3	6	0	2	0	0	0	1	4	1	0	11	29
		Windsor	0	2	0	4	0	1	0	0	3	1	3	2	7	0	23
	Total	22	31	26	111	4	40	6	27	17	23	40	38	36	40	461	

PREDICTORS OF RECIDIVISM

The following sections analyze whether or not: 1) work camp participation is a significant factor in reducing recidivism; and 2) the work camp to which a defendant is assigned is a significant factor in reducing recidivism.

During the course of this evaluation there were many variables that the VCJR did not have access to or could not compute including criminal history¹⁴, employment history and other social data. Therefore, the information contained below should be viewed as informative and not dispositive.

Is Work Camp A Significant Factor In Reducing Recidivism?

Logistic Regression: *Independent Variables*

Variable Name	Source/Information
Group	DOC data, whether the defendant was in the Prison Group or the Work Camp Group. Categorical, Prison Group (coded as 1) was the indicator group.
Age at Release	DOC data, the age of the defendant upon release from custody
LSI Score	DOC Data, those with unknown LSI scores were excluded from the model.
Reentry Level	DOC data, categorical variable, conditional reentry was the indicator group.
Total Stay Days	Doc data, total days spent in DOC custody

Logistic Regression: *Dependent Variable*

Variable Name	Source/Information
Recidivist	VCIC disposition date, "Any Conviction"

¹⁴ VCJR has previously found that prior criminal history is statistically significant in recidivism rates of DUI offenders (See: http://www.crgvt.org/uploads/5/2/2/2/52222091/crg_report_2009_11_recidivism_dui_arrests.pdf) and in domestic violence recidivism (See http://www.crgvt.org/uploads/5/2/2/2/52222091/crg_report_2011_12_recidivism_domestic_assault.pdf). In this study, the cohort was identified using DOC data. DOC does not record the docket number of a sentence that is served. Therefore, identifying in the VCIC data which offense (docket) the defendant was serving time on was necessary to develop a criminal history. Within the confines of the budget for this project, VCJR could not adequately develop the code necessary to match a significant amount of episodes to VCIC data. Therefore, the variable is not included in the analysis.

Logistic Regression: Recidivist or Not (N=4,262)

The model when insignificant variables are excluded correctly predicted who would not recidivate 71.6% of the time. The model correctly predicted who would recidivate only 51.5% of the time. The model's overall predictive percent correct was 62.5%.¹⁵ The table below indicates which variables were found to be statistically significant predictors of recidivism.

Variable	Beta	Standard Error	p-value *	Exp(B)
Group	.536	.076	.000	1.709
Age at Release	-.035	.003	.000	.965
LSI	.421	.046	.000	1.52
Conditional Reentry	NA	NA	.000	NA
No Supervision	-.279	.071	.000	.757
Probation	-.670	.080	.000	.512
Parole	-.423	.271	.118	.655
Intermediate Sanctions	-.449	.112	.000	.638
Length of Stay	.000	.000	.000	1.0

*p<.05

Those who participated in work camp were less likely to recidivate than those that did not participate in work camp. As would be expected, the older the defendant, the less likely the defendant is to recidivate. Likewise, the higher the LSI score the more likely the defendant is to recidivate. The table above illustrates that the odds of recidivating (Exp (B) column) increased by a factor of 1.7 for each .536 increase in the group variable (where prison=1). Therefore, the odds of recidivating are increased for those sentenced to prison

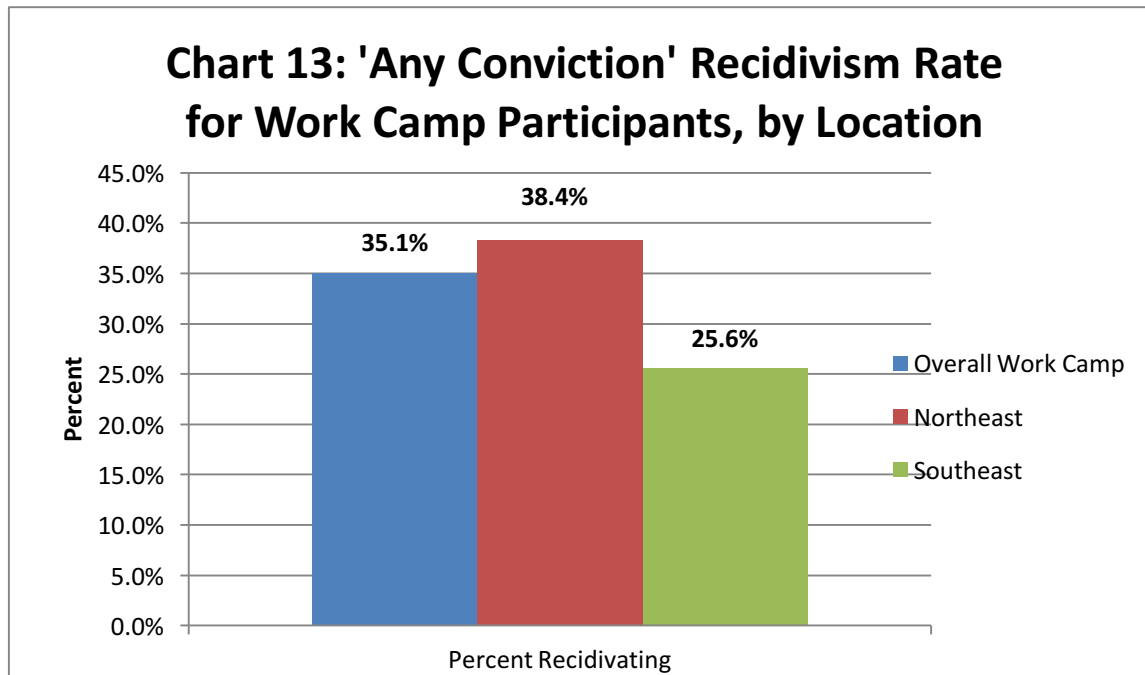
The supervision level upon release is statistically significant. It appears that the conditional reentry programs¹⁶ reduce recidivism as compared to other supervision level options. Because of the nature of the study, and the limited nature of the data, this relationship was not more fully explored. However, the table above indicates that the odds of recidivating are increased and statistically significant for those with no supervision, those on probation, and those released to intermediate sanctions as compared to those released to conditional reentry programs. Parole, however, was not a statistically significant factor in recidivism compared to conditional reentry programs.

¹⁵ Gender was not included in the analysis as no women were in the Work Camp Group. Race was not a significant factor in recidivism.

¹⁶ Conditional reentry is a generic group of releases under the Furlough statute (28 VSA 808) which includes Reintegration Furlough (pre-minimum), Conditional Reentry (past minimum), Medical Furlough, and Treatment Furlough. It does not include the Pre-Approved Furlough option which is accounted for separately under the "Intermediate Sanctions (I.S.)"

Is The Work Camp To Which A Defendant Is Assigned A Significant Factor In Reducing Recidivism?

Chart 13 indicates that defendants assigned to the Southeast work camp have approximately a 13% lower recidivism rate than do defendants assigned to the Northeast camp.



In the final cohort (excluding those defendants with an unknown re-entry level) there were 1,132 work camp defendants. Eight hundred and forty-five (74.6%) served time in the Northeast Work Camp, and 287 (25.4%) served time in the Southeast facility. Forty-three defendants served time in both camps during their sentence. The average stay in the Northeast facility was 168.4 days, with a median of 154 days. The average stay in the Southeast facility was 112.32 days with a median of 82 days.

Logistic Regression: *Independent Variables*

Camp	DOC Data, categorical, Northeast (coded as 0)
Age at release	DOC data, the age of the defendant upon release from custody.
LSI Level	DOC Data, those with unknown LSI scores were excluded from the model.
Reentry Level	DOC data, categorical variable, conditional reentry was the indicator group.
Stay Days	Doc data, total days spent in DOC custody
Camp Days	Doc data, total days spent at work camp

Logistic Regression: *Dependent Variable*

Variable Name	Source/Information
Recidivist	VCIC disposition date, "Any Conviction"

Logistic Regression Recidivist or Not (N= 1,089)¹⁷

The model correctly predicted who would not recidivate 88.5% of the time, and correctly predicted who would recidivate 32%. The overall predictive percent correct for the model was 68.2%.

Variable	Beta	Standard Error	p-value*	Exp(B)
Camp	.901	179	.000	2.46
Age at Release	-.036	.007	.000	.965
LSI	.313	.099	.002	1.36
Conditional Reentry	NA	NA	.000	NA
None	-.732	.162	.000	.481
Probation	-.874	.205	.000	.417
Parole	-20.597	13895	.999	.000
Intermediate Sanctions	.272	.436	.533	1.31
Length of total Stay	.001	.000	.031	1.00
Days at Work Camp	-.003	.001	.000	.997

*P<.05

¹⁷ Defendants excluded from the analysis were those where the LSI score was unknown and those that served some time in both camps.

The work camp placement was statistically significant in predicting recidivism; however, it was the opposite of what the descriptive statistics suggest. The Northeast facility was coded as 0. The table above illustrates that the odds of recidivating (Exp (B) column) increased by a factor of 2.46 for each .901 increase in the camp variable (where the Southeast Camp =1). Therefore, the odds of recidivating are increased for those defendants assigned to the Southeast Camp. However, because of the study period covered, the Southeast facility released only 287 (25.4%) of the defendants in the final Work Camp cohort. Further research is therefore needed to more fully explore the relationship between camp placement and recidivism.

As with the complete cohort, the supervision level upon release was statistically significant for the Work Camp Group. It appears that the conditional reentry programs are more likely to reduce recidivism for the Work Camp Group as compared to other supervision level options. However, unlike the complete cohort, with the Work Camp Group neither parole nor intermediate sanctions were statistically significant in reducing recidivism rates.

As noted above, VCJR did not have access¹⁸ to program participation information,¹⁹ prior drug/alcohol abuse data, or other factors that are known to contribute to recidivism. Therefore, the results should be viewed as informational and not dispositive.

CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ADDITIONAL RESEARCH

Based on the above analysis, participation in work camp helps reduce recidivism. An especially interesting finding of this study is the positive effect (18% less recidivism) of work camp on defendants with an LSI score of “Medium”. Of further interest to policymakers is that placement of a work camp does not appear to lead to new crimes by the released participants in that jurisdiction; nearly 70% of recidivists reoffended in their county of residence prior to DOC custody.

The above analysis suggests that further research is needed regarding the role that individual work camps play in reducing recidivism. Further research should also explore reentry programs and their effect on reducing recidivism.

¹⁸ Or in the case of criminal history, could not calculate within the project budget.

¹⁹ See for example http://www.crgvt.org/uploads/5/2/2/2/52222091/idvd_final_rreport_12-9-11b.pdf, finding that participation in the IDVD program reduced recidivism.