

Chapter 10

Alberta

10.1 Introduction

The One-Day Snapshot survey of Alberta's inmate population included components from eight of the 11 modules covered in the standard Survey Instrument (see Appendix A for the survey instrument). Alberta conducted an electronic data compilation of all relevant information for the survey. Included in the data captured for the survey were: a profile of facility characteristics; demographic and background information on inmates; and, legal status, offence, and sentence length data on each inmate.

The survey data are presented in seven sections. Section 10.1 provides an introduction to the One-Day Snapshot conducted in Alberta, including a description of the methodology used (for a more in-depth description of the methodology used for this project, see Appendix B). Section 10.2 describes adult correctional facilities in Alberta, including the number, size and types of facilities utilized. Section 10.3 examines the number of inmates in adult correctional facilities in Alberta, including rates of incarceration, and on-register versus actual-in capacity levels. Section 10.4 discusses current offence records for the inmate population, focusing on the types of crimes committed. Section 10.5 describes aggregate sentence lengths that inmates received. Section 10.6 provides a profile of the inmate population in Alberta, in terms of demographic and socio-economic characteristics such as age, gender, Aboriginal status, education, employment, etc. Finally, this section discusses some management issues associated with inmate characteristics. Section 10.7 includes all the tables for this chapter.

Most analyses in this chapter are based on the "on-register" inmate population (i.e., inmates who have been placed in a correctional facility to serve their sentence, including those who may not physically be located at the facility on Snapshot day), in order to provide a picture of all inmates. This population may differ in some respects from the inmates who were actually-in the facilities on Snapshot day. When examining over-capacity, both "on-register" and "actual-in" (i.e., inmates who were physically located at the facility on Snapshot day) are examined. The actual-in population provides a more realistic indication of over-capacity situations.

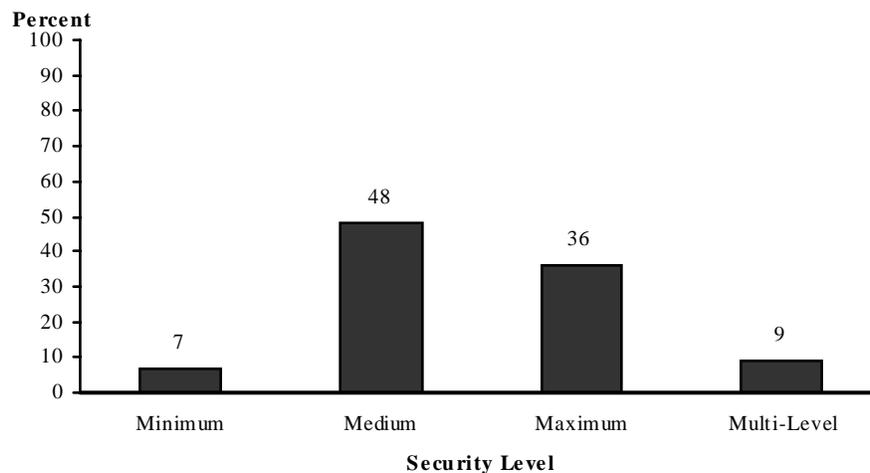
Although the focus of the chapter is Alberta's provincial adult inmate population, in order to provide a useful frame of reference, some relevant comparisons are made with other jurisdictions. When reference is made to the "inmate population", this represents the "on-register" inmate population. Reference to this population or to the "total inmate population" in Alberta includes only correctional facilities under provincial jurisdiction. It should also be noted that data in this report are based on one day. As such, generalizations should be made with caution.

10.2 Adult Correctional Facilities

On October 5th, 1996, there were 10 adult correctional facilities in operation in Alberta. Four provinces/territories had more facilities in operation than Alberta (Ontario, Quebec, British Columbia, and Saskatchewan). New Brunswick had the same number of facilities (see Table 1-1 – in national chapter). The total "operational capacity" (i.e., the total number of permanent beds in each facility) for the 10 facilities in Alberta was 2,412. On average, this amounts to an operational capacity of 241 inmates per facility, which is the highest average of all jurisdictions. Alberta's average operational capacity per facility is closer in size to the average operational capacity of federal facilities in Canada (269).

Table 10-1 shows the total operational capacity for each adult correctional facility in Alberta. Among the 10 correctional facilities, the reported operational capacity ranged from 24 for the smallest facility (Kainai Correctional Centre, a minimum security facility) to 536 for the largest (Edmonton Remand Centre, a maximum security facility).

Figure 10-A
Distribution of Beds by Security Level of Facilities: Alberta



Source: The Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics. *A One-Day Snapshot of Inmates in Canada's Adult Correctional Facilities Survey (1996)*.

As can be seen in the table, the largest number of Alberta's facilities were medium security. Four of the 10 facilities were classified as medium security, two as minimum security, two as maximum security, and two as multi-level security. Figure 10-A shows the number of beds in the facilities by security level¹. Almost one-half (48%) of the beds in Alberta's facilities were classified as medium security. Although there were two facilities at each of the other levels of security, 36% of beds were classified as maximum security, 9% as multi-level security, and 7% as minimum security. The only other jurisdiction with a large proportion of beds designated as medium security was federal Correctional Service Canada facilities (62%). Ontario, British Columbia and the Northwest Territories had a large proportion of beds in maximum security facilities. However, the more extensive use of multi-level security facilities appears to be common among most other jurisdictions. In fact, in Quebec and Prince Edward Island, all facilities were designated as multi-level.

Like other jurisdictions (except Ontario and New Brunswick, which classified the largest proportion of their facilities as jail/detention centres), many of Alberta's facilities (six out of 10) were classified as correctional centres (Table 10-1). However, unlike other jurisdictions, Alberta also had a large number of remand centres (four facilities). The only other jurisdictions with remand centres were Quebec, Manitoba and British Columbia.

Seven of the 10 facilities housed both male female inmates (one minimum security, two medium security, and all maximum and multi-level facilities). The remaining three facilities housed only male inmates. Alberta had two facilities which housed both adults and young offenders.

Regarding special features, nine of Alberta's 10 facilities had punitive or administrative segregation units, which is higher than many jurisdictions. In four other jurisdictions (Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, Quebec and Ontario), almost all institutions also had punitive/administrative segregation units. Only Saskatchewan had no facilities with these units. In addition, three facilities in Alberta were equipped with units for the purpose of housing inmates who needed protective custody, and one facility with a special handling unit.

Another notable special feature in Alberta is four facilities with psychiatric units. This was infrequently reported in other jurisdictions. There were only 17 other such units reported in all other provincial/territorial institutions in Canada. The use of dormitories, which was relatively frequent in other jurisdictions, was used to a lesser extent in Alberta. There were two institutions with dormitories for regular sentenced inmates and one institution that made use of dormitories for intermittent inmates.

The Snapshot data suggest that Alberta has created some flexibility in its accommodation strategy through the use of all four security levels in the province.

¹ In this report, the security level of beds are the same as the security level of the facility. However, this does not mean that the inmate who occupies the bed is rated at that security level.

10.3 Number of Inmates in Adult Correctional Facilities

10.3.1 Inmates On-Register

On Snapshot day, a total of 2,889 inmates were on-register in adult correctional facilities in Alberta². Figure 1-B (in national chapter) shows Alberta's on-register count, compared with other jurisdictions across Canada. The 2,889 inmates in Alberta facilities was the third largest population of the 12 provinces/territories, and accounted for 12% of all inmates on-register in provincial/territorial correctional facilities in Canada on Snapshot day. Quebec was the next largest jurisdiction, with almost double the number of inmates (5,766). The next smallest jurisdiction was British Columbia with approximately 300 fewer inmates on-register (2,603) than Alberta.

Rates of incarceration provide a different perspective on the relative size of adult correctional populations. Based on the "on-register" inmate population, 14.1 persons per 10,000 of Alberta's adult population were incarcerated on Snapshot day (Figure 1-C – national chapter). This was the fourth highest rate of incarceration among the 12 provinces/territories. Only the Northwest Territories (74.8), Yukon (34.9) and Saskatchewan (15.5) had higher rates. Other jurisdictions ranged from 6.5 to 12.5 persons per 10,000 adult population. The rate of incarceration for federal inmates was 6.1 persons per 10,000 adult population.

10.3.2 Inmates' Legal Status

Provincial/territorial corrections in Canada are responsible for offenders who receive custodial sentences of less than two years and federal inmates on Exchange of Service Agreements. In addition, they are responsible for housing persons charged with offences who have been "remanded" to custody while awaiting trial. Remand refers to persons who have been charged with an offence and ordered by the court to custody while awaiting a further court appearance. They have not been sentenced to custody or community service but can be held for a number of reasons (e.g., risk that they will fail to appear for their court date, risk to re-offend, etc.). The dual responsibility for sentenced and remand inmates presents some particular difficulties for managing the inmate population. For example, sentenced and remand inmates have to be considered as separate and distinct populations for purposes of accommodation planning, programming, etc. Where appropriate, throughout this report, comparisons between sentenced and remand inmates will be made.

Inmates may be held in provincial/territorial facilities for several reasons. Inmates' legal status include: regular provincial/territorial sentence, serving an intermittent sentence³, on remand, or an "other" category which includes those on temporary detention, immigration holds, etc.

As illustrated in Figure 10-B, more than two-thirds (70%) of on-register inmates in Alberta were regular sentenced inmates. A further 15% were remand inmates, 12% were intermittent sentenced inmates, and 3% had other legal status. Of the inmates serving regular sentences, 32 were serving federal sentences under an Exchange of Service Agreement. There were also 38 inmates in Alberta who were beginning to serve a federal sentence and who were still within the 15-day waiting period that can precede transfer to a federal facility.

In all provinces/territories, the largest proportions of inmates were regular sentenced inmates, ranging from 53% of inmates in Ontario to 83% in the Northwest Territories. Compared to the national total, Alberta had a larger proportion of regular sentenced inmates (70% versus 63%), and a smaller proportion of inmates on remand (15% versus 25%). However, Alberta had a similar proportion of inmates serving intermittent sentences compared to the national total (12% versus 10%). The proportion of intermittent sentenced and remand inmates also varied among the jurisdictions. In three jurisdictions (British Columbia, the Northwest Territories, and Saskatchewan), 3% or fewer of the inmates were serving intermittent sentences. In Ontario and New Brunswick, 13% of the inmates were serving intermittent sentences. The proportion of inmates on remand ranged from 10% in Newfoundland to 31% in Ontario.

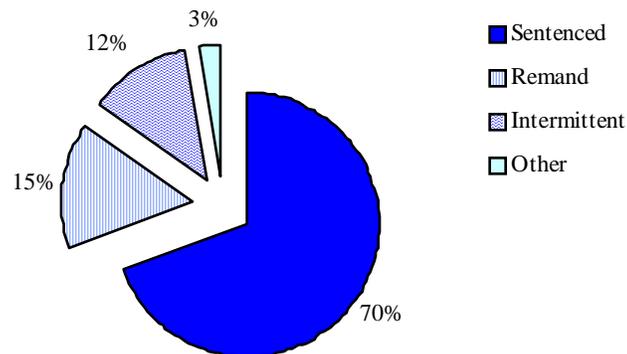
10.3.3 Inmate Capacity

Based on data from the Snapshot, inmate capacity can be examined in two ways – through "on-register" population counts (i.e., all inmates assigned to the correctional facility, including those not physically located at the facility on Snapshot day) and through "actual-in" population counts (i.e., inmates physically located at the facility on Snapshot

² On Snapshot day, most of the inmates on-register in Alberta (75%) were actually accommodated in the institution where they were on-register. A further 16% were on temporary absences, 5% were serving intermittent sentences on weekdays, 1% were on removal warrants to medical or psychiatric facilities, 1% were temporarily in a facility in another jurisdiction, and 1% were away from the facility for other reasons such as day parole.

³ Intermittent sentences are for 90 days or less and inmates serve their sentences on a periodic basis of 2-3 days at one time, usually on weekends. These inmates return to the community to resume employment and family responsibilities when they are not in custody.

Figure 10-B
On-Register Inmate Population by Legal Status: Alberta¹



Source: The Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics. *A One-Day Snapshot of Inmates in Canada's Adult Correctional Facilities Survey (1996)*.

n = 2,889.

¹ Data were missing for 6 inmates (<1%).

day). On-register counts over-estimate capacity levels because inmates who are not located at the facility do not have a substantial impact on the operation or management of the facility. But, on-register counts do provide information on the number of inmates each facility is responsible for (and the correctional facility must deal with administrative issues associated with these inmates). Actual-in counts, on the other hand, provide a more accurate indication of overcrowding. Comparison of both on-register and actual-in counts allows an examination of the total number of inmates that facilities are responsible for, as well as the number of inmates who are not physically located at the facility, on Snapshot day.

As can be seen in Table 10-1, based on the “on-register” population on Snapshot day, Alberta’s correctional facilities were over capacity by 20%. Individually, six of the 10 facilities were operating above capacity. Both maximum security facilities, which are two of the largest facilities in Alberta (Edmonton Remand Centre and Calgary Remand Centre) were operating above capacity (148% and 111%, respectively). In addition, three of the four medium security facilities were operating above capacity. In particular, Calgary Correctional Centre was operating at 159%. One multi-level security facility (Red Deer Remand Centre) was also operating above capacity (111%). Both minimum security facilities were operating below capacity.

When capacity was calculated based on the “actual-in” inmate populations (i.e., the actual number of inmates physically located in the correctional facility on Snapshot day), the number of facilities with over-capacity situations decreased. Overall, Alberta’s correctional facilities were operating at 90% capacity based on the actual-in inmate counts. Only three facilities remained over capacity based on the actual-in count – Fort Saskatchewan Correctional Centre (115%), Calgary Correctional Centre (114%), and Edmonton Remand Centre (105%). Based on the actual-in count, minimum security facilities in Alberta were operating at one-third (32%) of capacity.

Figure 1-E (national chapter) contrasts jurisdictions in terms of how closely their total “on-register” and “actual-in” inmate populations approached or exceeded the reported operational capacity⁴. Alberta was among seven of the 12 provinces/territories reporting total “on-register” populations which were above operational capacities. However, as noted above, when the “actual-in” population was used to calculate percentage capacity, Alberta was utilizing only 90% of its’ available space to accommodate inmates.

In addition to information on overcrowding based on capacity, information was also available from eight jurisdictions⁵ on type of accommodation (see Figure 1-F – national chapter). In most jurisdictions, large proportions of inmates were housed in shared accommodations designed for more than two inmates. These data were not available for Alberta⁶.

⁴ It should be noted that the Snapshot was taken on a Saturday in order to include inmates serving intermittent sentences. The actual-in count may be smaller on other days of the week because there would be fewer inmates serving intermittent sentences in the institution.

⁵ Data on type of accommodation were available from Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Manitoba, Yukon, the Northwest Territories, and CSC.

⁶ Table 10-2 is not included in this chapter because accommodation data were not available.

10.4 Current Offences

The Snapshot survey produced detailed information for up to five of the “most serious offences” (MSO) for which inmates were currently incarcerated (see Appendix D for offence categories)⁷. Therefore, the MSO analyzed within this section is not necessarily the only offence for which an inmate was currently incarcerated.

The most serious current offence for 40% of Alberta's inmates on Snapshot day was “other” *Criminal Code* or Federal Statute offences (Table 10-3), in particular drug-related offences. Another 33% were incarcerated for property offences, primarily break and enter. Finally, one-quarter (27%) were incarcerated for crimes against the person, such as serious assault and robbery.

Higher proportions of remand than sentenced inmates were incarcerated for crimes against the person (32% versus 26%). This was consistent with almost all other jurisdictions (the Northwest Territories was the exception). This would be expected since offenders who are held on remand often are those involved in more serious offences. However, it should be noted that remand inmates have not yet been convicted, and that they may be convicted of a less serious offence than that for which they are currently incarcerated, or acquitted.

In relation to other provinces/territories, Alberta had the fourth lowest incidence of crimes against the person (see Figure 1-G in national chapter). This was similar to Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, and Quebec (25%, 26%, and 26%, respectively). However, it was substantially lower than all other provinces/territories (ranged from 34% in Nova Scotia to 70% in the Northwest Territories). Among federal inmates, almost three-quarters (73%) had a crime against the person as their most serious offence, which is not surprising since offenders in federal institutions are typically those involved in more violent or serious offences.

Alberta was one of only two jurisdictions whose greatest proportion of most serious offences were “other” *Criminal Code* or Federal Statute offences. In New Brunswick, 38% of inmates were also incarcerated for “other” *Criminal Code* or Federal Statute offences. Alberta and New Brunswick also shared a similar distribution for property offences (33% and 36%) and crimes against the person (27% and 26%).

When examining specific offences, the largest proportion of inmates in Alberta were incarcerated for drug offences (17%). This was the largest proportion of inmates incarcerated for drug offences of any jurisdiction. In Quebec, 14% of inmates were incarcerated for drug offences (as most serious offence), while other jurisdictions reported between 2-10%. Federally, the proportion of inmates incarcerated for drug offences was 8%.

The next largest proportion of inmates in Alberta were incarcerated for break and enter (14%). This was one of the lowest proportions across jurisdictions. Most other jurisdictions reported between 18-26% of the inmates incarcerated for break and enter.

Finally, the third largest proportion of inmates in Alberta were incarcerated for “other” *Criminal Code* and Federal Statute offences (12%). This included “offences against public order” (7%), “offences against the rights of property” (1%), “dangerous operation of a vehicle” (1%) and “other *Criminal Code* traffic violations” (1%).

Slightly larger proportions of sentenced than remand inmates were incarcerated for drug offences, break and enter, and “other” *Criminal Code* or Federal Statute offences. However, as stated earlier, a greater proportion of remand than sentenced inmates were incarcerated for crimes against the person.

An analysis of up to five of the most serious offences for which each inmate was currently incarcerated was conducted to provide a picture of the number of different “types” of offences for which inmates were incarcerated. This essentially provides an indication of the variety of offending.

In examining not just the most serious but “any” of the five most serious non-violent offences, the data show that a large proportion of inmates in Alberta had break and enter (15%) or theft (20%) as part of their current offence pattern – offence categories that are typically indicative of a high likelihood of repeat offending. This pattern was similar to that in other jurisdictions.

⁷ The most serious offence is based on the Seriousness Index of the Revised Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Survey Violation Coding Structure that defines seriousness in terms of length of maximum sentence and the degree of injury or threat of injury to the victim. Offences are grouped into the following major offence categories: Crimes Against the Person (e.g., homicide/attempt murder, sexual assault, serious assault, minor assault, robbery, and other violent); Property Offences (e.g., break and enter, theft, fraud, and other property); and Other Criminal Code and Federal Statute Offences (e.g., weapons offences, administration of justice offences, impaired driving offences, drug offences, other Criminal Code and Federal Statute offences).

Two-thirds (67%) of inmates in Alberta facilities were currently incarcerated for non-violent offences only (Table 10-4). A further 20% had both crimes against the person and other types of offences among their five most serious current offences, and 13% were currently incarcerated for only offences against a person (a total of 33% incarcerated for a violent offence). Only Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick and Quebec had lower proportions of inmates incarcerated for violent offences (27%, 30% and 32%, respectively). In other provinces/territories, the proportion of those currently incarcerated for a crime against the person ranged from 42% in British Columbia to 69% in the Northwest Territories⁸. Among federal inmates, 78% were currently incarcerated for at least one crime against the person.

Similar to most jurisdictions, a larger proportion of remand inmates had offences against the person (including inmates who had both crimes against the person and other types of offences) (37% versus 32%).

Unlike most other jurisdictions, in Alberta, the largest proportion of inmates were currently incarcerated for five or more offences (38%) (Table 10-5). A further 26% were incarcerated for one offence, 15% for two offences, 12% for three offences, and 9% for four offences. Slightly larger proportions of sentenced than remand inmates had five or more offences (39% versus 35%). In other jurisdictions (except Alberta, Saskatchewan and federally), the largest proportion of inmates were incarcerated for one offence (ranging from 29% in Newfoundland to 50% in the Northwest Territories). As in Alberta, in Saskatchewan and federal facilities, the largest proportion of inmates were currently incarcerated for five or more offences (43% and 30%, respectively).

Some general conclusions can be derived from these data. In comparison to most other jurisdictions, Alberta's inmates show a lower incidence of crimes against the person and a smaller proportion of inmates with both crimes against the person and non-violent offences occurring together. However, the data for Alberta also indicate that inmates have substantially more numerous offences on their current records. This suggests a pattern of less seriousness and versatility, but greater volume in offending for Alberta's inmates.

10.5 Sentence Length

Figure 10-C presents a breakdown of the total aggregate sentence lengths for sentenced inmates in Alberta (also see Table 10-6)⁹. On Snapshot day, 45% of sentenced inmates were serving terms of less than six months. An additional 21% were serving terms of six months to less than one year, 26% were serving terms of one year to less than two years, and 8% were serving terms of two years or more. Normally, a person who is sentenced to a term of incarceration of two years or more is housed in a federal facility. However, inmates with sentences of two years or more in a provincial/territorial facility may be federal inmates who have been newly re-admitted and awaiting transfer to a federal facility or inmates being held under an Exchange of Service Agreement.

On-register data produces longer average sentence lengths than admissions data. This is the case because those admitted for short sentences will show up in yearly admissions data. However, the one-day count will only include those who are currently on-register in the facility (and many short-term inmates will have completed their sentence). For instance, while sentences of less than one month account for more than one-third of sentenced admissions to provincial/territorial facilities, these offenders represent 10% or fewer of the inmates in the One-Day Snapshot.

The median¹⁰ aggregate sentence length for inmates in Alberta was 184 days (approximately six months). This was substantially shorter than that found in Saskatchewan and the Northwest Territories (365 days each), as well as that found in Manitoba and Newfoundland (273 days each) and British Columbia (244 days). It was similar to all other jurisdictions, except Ontario. Ontario had the lowest median aggregate sentence length of all jurisdictions (153 days).

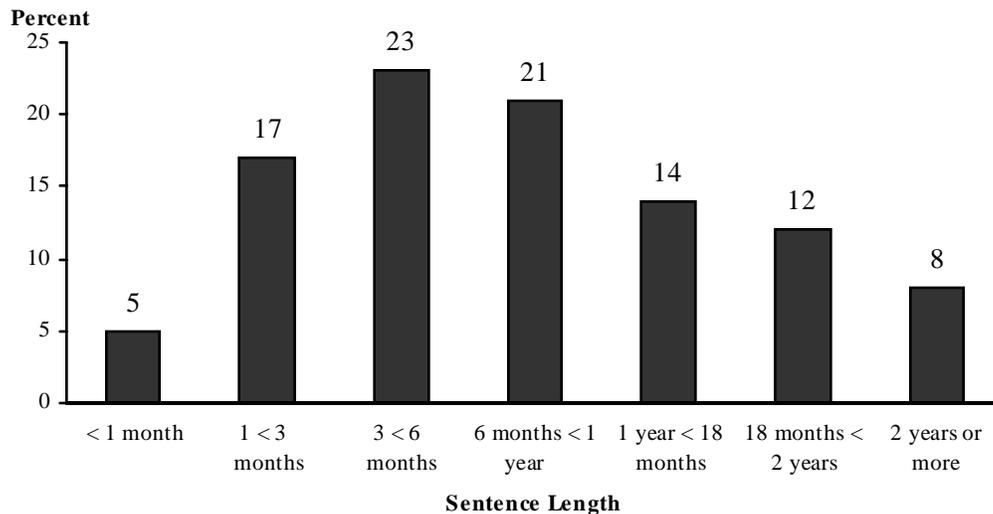
A detailed analysis of sentence lengths for major offence categories was not possible with data from the Snapshot. Information on sentence length was based on the aggregate sentence (i.e., the sum of all sentences that the offender must serve for the current incarceration). An offender can be convicted of multiple charges and a judge may order that various prison sentences be served either consecutively to, or concurrently with, one another. With data from the Snapshot, it was not possible to discern what sentence was received for which offence.

⁸ Data were not available for Ontario.

⁹ For this analysis, sentenced inmates include regular sentenced inmates and those serving intermittent sentences. It excludes those on remand and "other" inmates, such as those on temporary detention, immigration holds, etc.

¹⁰ The median represents the mid-point when all values are arranged in order of magnitude. One-half of the observations have a value less than or equal to the median, and one-half have a value greater than or equal to the median.

Figure 10-C
Aggregate Sentence Length for On-Register Inmates: Alberta^{1,2}



Source: The Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics. *A One-Day Snapshot of Inmates in Canada's Adult Correctional Facilities Survey (1996)*.

¹ Sentencing data includes only inmates serving regular and intermittent sentences ($n = 2,362$).

² Data were missing for 12 inmates (1%).

10.6 A Profile of Adult Inmates

10.6.1 Gender

Although there are equal proportions of adult males and females in the population in Alberta (50% male and 50% female)¹¹, 90% of inmates on-register in adult correctional facilities in the province on Snapshot day were male. The over-representation of males within the inmate population relative to the provincial/territorial population was found in all other jurisdictions, including the federal inmate population.

As shown in Table 10-7, while the majority of both male and female inmates were serving regular sentences, this was slightly more often the case for females – 73% of females were regular sentenced inmates compared to 69% of males.

Males and females differed in the offence types for which they were currently incarcerated (Table 10-3). A larger proportion of females than males were incarcerated for crimes against the person (33% versus 27%). However, a larger proportion of males than females were incarcerated for property offences (34% versus 27%). The same proportions of males and females were incarcerated for “other” *Criminal Code*/Federal Statute offences (40% each). The most common offence for which males were incarcerated was drug-related offences (17%), followed by break and enter (15%). Females were most often incarcerated for drug-related offences (14%).

It should be noted that, due to small numbers of female inmates in several jurisdictions, gender analyses by offence type was not always possible. However, where this analysis was possible, gender differences were found in some jurisdictions. A larger proportion of males than females were incarcerated for crimes against the person in Newfoundland, Ontario, Saskatchewan, British Columbia, and federally. In Nova Scotia, Quebec and Manitoba, the proportions were very similar between the sexes. However, similar to Alberta, in New Brunswick and the Northwest Territories, a larger proportion of females than males were currently incarcerated for crimes against the person.

As illustrated in Figure 10-D, slightly larger proportions of males than females were currently incarcerated for more than one offence. Three-quarters (75%) of males had more than one current offence compared to 69% of females (also see Table 10-5).

¹¹ Based on data from the 1996 Census of Population, Statistics Canada.

Figure 10-D
Number of Current Offences by Gender: Alberta¹



Source: The Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics. *A One-Day Snapshot of Inmates in Canada's Adult Correctional Facilities Survey (1996)*.
¹ Data were missing for 81 inmates (3%).

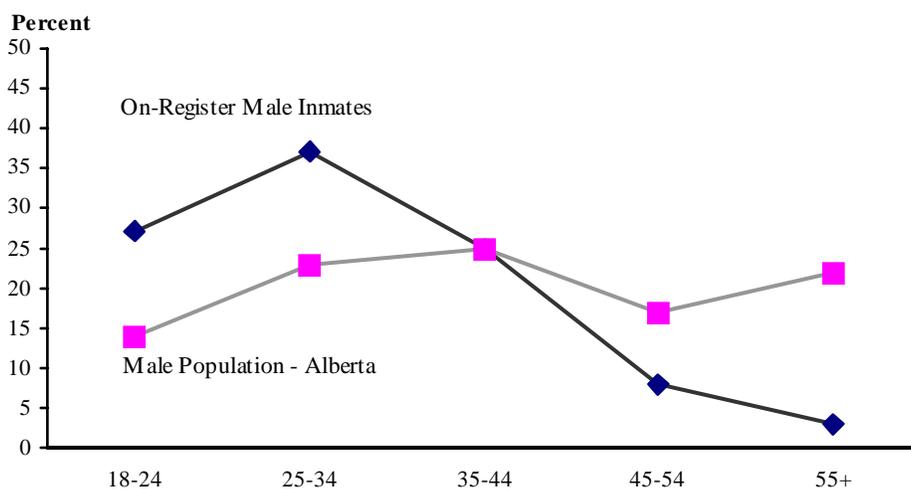
Males and female received fairly similar sentences (Table 10-6). The median aggregate sentence length for males was 184 days and 181 days for females. This was not the case in other jurisdictions - typically, the median sentence for males was longer than that received by females. Any differences are likely due to factors such as severity of offence or the criminal history of offender. Since it is not possible to analyze sentence length by offence categories using data from the Snapshot, this cannot be examined further.

10.6.2 Age

The median age for inmates was less than that for the adult population in Alberta. On Snapshot day, the median age of inmates in Alberta's facilities was 31. The median age for the adult population in Alberta in 1996 was 40.

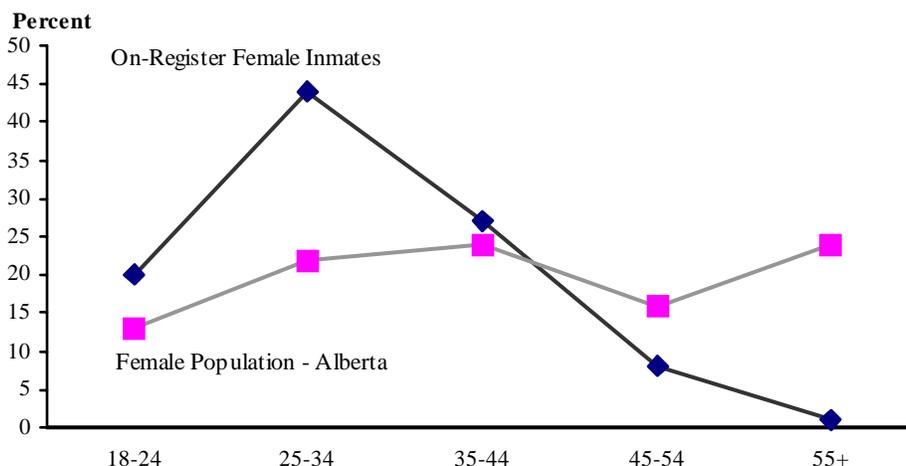
Figures 10-E and 10-F illustrate how the male and female adult population in Alberta is distributed by age compared with the on-register inmate population. Generally, younger age groups are over-represented in custodial populations, particularly adults between the ages of 18 and 34. From age 35 onwards, this pattern is reversed (see Table 10-7).

Figure 10-E
Males - Age Distribution of Adult Population¹ and On-Register Inmates: Alberta



Source: The Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics. *A One-Day Snapshot of Inmates in Canada's Adult Correctional Facilities Survey (1996)*.
¹ Based on 1996 Census.

Figure 10-F
Females - Age Distribution of Adult Population¹ and On-Register Inmates: Alberta



Source: The Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics. *A One-Day Snapshot of Inmates in Canada's Adult Correctional Facilities Survey (1996)*.

¹ Based on 1996 Census.

On Snapshot day, males aged 18-24 were the most over-represented. Over one-quarter (27%) of the male inmate population falls within this age group, compared to 14% of the adult male population in Alberta. Males aged 25-34 were also over-represented. Thirty-seven percent of on-register male inmates were in this age group compared to 23% of the population in Alberta. Among female inmates, those aged 25-34 were the most over-represented. Forty-four percent of the female inmates were in this age group, compared to 22% of the adult female population in Alberta.

These age distributions are similar in other jurisdictions.

The largest proportion of inmates aged 18-24 were incarcerated for property offences (40%) (Table 10-3), in particular break and enter. Among other age groups, the largest proportion of inmates were incarcerated for "other" *Criminal Code*/Federal Statute offences, in particular drug-related offences.

As mentioned earlier, unlike most other jurisdictions, the largest proportion of inmates in Alberta were currently incarcerated for five or more offences (38%). However, this proportion varied slightly by age group (Figure 10-G). Whereas 37% or more of inmates aged 18-24, 25-34, 35-44 and 55 and over were currently incarcerated for five or more offences, this was only the case for 31% of inmates aged 45-54 (also see Table 10-5).

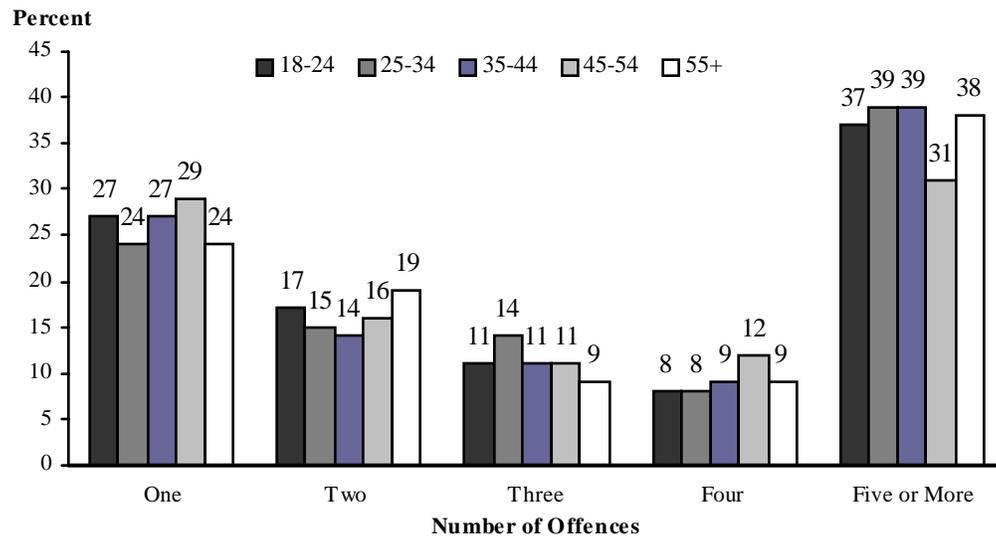
As can be seen in Table 10-6, sentence lengths were similar across all age groups (ranged from 182-184 days), with the exception inmates who were 55 years of age or older. For these older inmates, the median sentence was considerably longer (276 days). As noted earlier, it is not possible to discern the reason for varying sentence lengths from the Snapshot data.

10.6.3 Aboriginal Inmates

While Aboriginal persons accounted for approximately 4% of the adult population in Alberta in 1996, they accounted for 34% of the inmates on Snapshot day. As illustrated in Figure 1-L (national chapter), the proportion of Aboriginal inmates varied considerably across jurisdictions. However, in all jurisdictions the proportion of Aboriginal inmates was substantially larger than the proportion of Aboriginal persons in the provincial/territorial population.

The majority of Aboriginal inmates in Alberta were North American Indian (64%, compared to 57% in the Alberta population). A further one-third (35%) were Métis (compared to 41% in the Alberta population, and less than 1% were Inuit (1% in Alberta population). Fairly similar proportions of regular sentenced, remand and intermittent inmates were North American Indian (65%, 60%, and 63%, respectively).

Figure 10-G
Number of Current Offences by Age: Alberta¹



Source: The Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics. *A One-Day Snapshot of Inmates in Canada's Adult Correctional Facilities Survey (1996)*.

¹ Missing data for 81 inmates (3%).

While the majority of both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal inmates were serving regular sentences, this was more often the case for Aboriginal inmates (see Table 10-7). Three-quarters (75%) of Aboriginal inmates were regular sentenced inmates compared to 67% of non-Aboriginal inmates. A larger proportion of non-Aboriginal inmates were on intermittent sentences (15% versus 8%). In most jurisdictions, there were greater proportions of Aboriginal inmates serving regular sentences, and smaller proportions serving intermittent sentences, as compared to non-Aboriginal inmates. Two exceptions were Saskatchewan (no differences) and New Brunswick (slightly larger proportion of non-Aboriginal inmates were serving regular sentences).

Some differences were evident in the offence characteristics reported for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal inmates (Table 10-3). A slightly larger proportion of Aboriginal than non-Aboriginal inmates were incarcerated for crimes against the person (31% versus 26%). The difference is primarily due to a larger proportion of Aboriginal than non-Aboriginal inmates incarcerated for robbery (8% versus 5%).

A slightly larger proportion of non-Aboriginal inmates were incarcerated for property offences (34% versus 31%) and "other" *Criminal Code* and Federal Statute offences (41% versus 38%). These differences were primarily due to a larger proportion of non-Aboriginal than Aboriginal inmates incarcerated for drug-related offences (18% versus 14%).

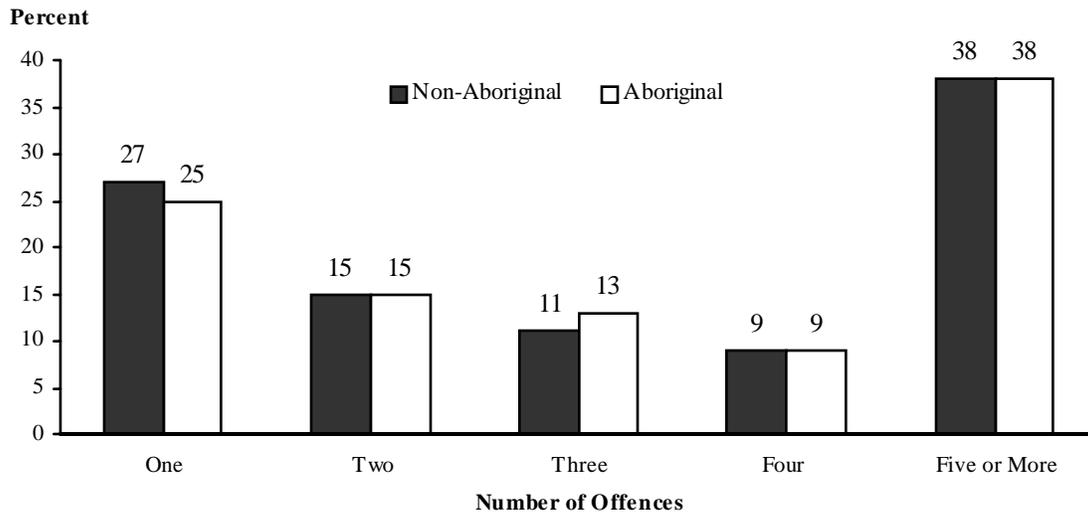
Overall, among the jurisdictions, some differences in offence types between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal inmates were found, although in some, such as Ontario, the differences were less evident.

There were larger proportions of female inmates among Aboriginal than non-Aboriginal inmates (14% versus 7%). Further, larger proportions of Aboriginal than non-Aboriginal females were incarcerated for "other" *Criminal Code* and Federal Statute offences (44% of Aboriginal females compared to 36% of non-Aboriginal females). A larger proportion of non-Aboriginal than Aboriginal females were incarcerated for property offences (32% versus 23%).

As illustrated in Figure 10-H, similar proportions of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal inmates were currently incarcerated for more than one offence. Approximately three-quarters (75% and 73%, respectively) of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal inmates had more than one current offence (also see Table 10-5).

In most other jurisdictions, there were slightly larger proportions of Aboriginal than non-Aboriginal inmates incarcerated for more than one offence. These differences were most noticeable in Quebec, Yukon, and the Northwest Territories.

Figure 10-H
Number of Current Offences by Aboriginal Status: Alberta¹



Source: The Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics. *A One-Day Snapshot of Inmates in Canada's Adult Correctional Facilities Survey (1996)*.

¹ Data were missing for 88 inmates (3%).

In Alberta, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal inmates received similar aggregate sentences (see Table 10-6). The median aggregate sentence length for Aboriginal inmates was 183 days and 184 days for non-Aboriginal inmates.

However, differences existed among female inmates – Aboriginal females received a median aggregate sentence of 122 days, compared to 184 days for non-Aboriginal females. Among males, the median aggregate sentence length was 184 days for both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal inmates. It is not possible from the Snapshot to determine the reasons for these differences.

10.6.4 Socio-Demographic Characteristics

As part of the Snapshot survey, some additional background and demographic data on inmates were gathered to provide a more comprehensive profile of the inmate populations. The survey included information on marital status, educational level, and employment situation at the time of the most recent admission to custody. As well, information was provided on citizenship and home language.

As illustrated in Table 10-8, more than one-quarter (27%) of those incarcerated on Snapshot day had a grade 9 education or less, compared to 14% of adults in Alberta. Another 43% had grade 10 or 11, and 30% had grade 12 or higher. A slightly larger proportion of remand than sentenced inmates had grade 9 education or less (29% versus 26%).

More than one-half (54%) of inmates who reported that they were in the labour market at the time of incarceration were unemployed at the time of admission to the facility, compared to 7% of adults in Alberta¹². A larger proportion of remand than sentenced inmates were unemployed (61% versus 52%).

Thirty-seven percent of inmates were married at the time of admission, compared to almost two-thirds (65%) of adults in Alberta. This finding was similar in other jurisdictions. Slightly fewer remand inmates were married as compared to sentenced inmates (35% versus 38%).

One hundred percent of inmates in Alberta spoke English¹³. The majority of inmates (96%) in Alberta reported Canadian citizenship.

¹² Percent unemployed refers to those not employed and seeking work. It does not include those who report that they would like work, but who have stopped searching because they believe no work is available. Younger adults in Canada generally experience higher rates of unemployment, and, since younger age groups are generally over-represented in custodial populations the proportion of unemployed inmates may be slightly inflated.

¹³ Data from Alberta indicate whether inmates can speak English. In other jurisdictions, the data refer to home language.

10.6.5 Criminal History

Data on criminal history were not available from Alberta¹⁴.

10.6.6 Offender-Victim Relationship

Data on the offender-victim relationship were not available from Alberta¹⁵.

10.6.7 Risk and Need Profile of Inmates

Data on risk and needs were not available from Alberta¹⁶.

10.6.8 Management of the Inmate Population

Data on the security concerns and use of segregation were not available from Alberta¹⁷.

A significant question that arises in looking at management of inmate populations is how inmates are being differentiated by level of security. Table 10-16 provides a profile of inmates by security level of facilities for Alberta. As can be seen in the table, remand inmates were non-existent at the minimum level of security. The largest proportion of remand inmates were housed in maximum security facilities (33% of the inmates were on remand). Further, slightly larger proportions of inmates housed in maximum security facilities were incarcerated for crimes against the person compared to other levels of security (29% versus 24% for multi-level and 26% each for minimum and medium). The median aggregate sentence length for those in minimum security facilities was shorter than in medium security facilities (257 days versus 278 days), but substantially longer than in maximum and multi-level security facilities (90 days and 93 days, respectively).

Regarding inmate characteristics, in minimum security facilities 14% of the inmates were female. However, there were similar proportions of females in maximum and multi-level security facilities (11% and 12% of inmates were female, respectively). In medium security facilities, only 8% of the inmates were female. Aboriginal persons comprised 38% of the inmates in medium security facilities, which is larger than in other levels of security. Inmates in minimum security facilities were slightly older (median age of 34) than those in other levels of security (median ages of 30 in medium, and 32 in maximum and multi-level).

10.7 Tables

Table 10-1	Distribution of Correctional Facilities and Inmate Populations on October 5th, 1996: Alberta
Table 10-2	Distribution of On-Register Inmates by Type of Accommodation: Alberta [Not in this Chapter]
Table 10-3	Distribution of Offence Types: Alberta
Table 10-4	Nature of Current Offences: Alberta
Table 10-5	Number of Current Offences: Alberta
Table 10-6	Distribution of Aggregate Sentence Length: Alberta
Table 10-7	Selected Inmate Characteristics: Alberta
Table 10-8	Background Characteristics of Inmates: Alberta
Table 10-9	Criminal History of Inmates: Alberta [Not in this Chapter]
Table 10-10	Nature of Offender-Victim Relationships by Types of Offence for Crimes Against the Person: Alberta [Not in this Chapter]
Table 10-11	Distribution of Risk Levels: Alberta [Not in this Chapter]
Table 10-12	Characteristics of Inmates Within Each Risk Level: Alberta [Not in this Chapter]
Table 10-13	Distribution of Risk Level by Offence Type: Alberta [Not in this Chapter]
Table 10-14	Proportion of Inmates with Needs Assessed to be 'High': Alberta [Not in this Chapter]
Table 10-15	Use of Segregation: Alberta [Not in this Chapter]
Table 10-16	Differentiation of Inmates by Security Level of Facilities: Alberta

¹⁴ Because data on criminal history were not available from Alberta, Table 10-9 is not included in this chapter.

¹⁵ Because data on offender-victim relationship were not available from Alberta, Table 10-10 is not included in this chapter.

¹⁶ Because data on risks and needs were not available from Alberta, Tables 10-11 through 10-14 and 10-I and 10-J are not included in this chapter.

¹⁷ Because data on security concerns, use of segregation, and risk were not available from Alberta, Table 10-15 and Figures 10-K through 10-M are not included in this chapter.

Table 10-1

Distribution of Correctional Facilities and Inmate Populations on October 5th, 1996: Alberta¹

Facility	Type	Gender	Total Capacity ²	On-Register Count	Capacity "On-Register"	Actual-In Count ³	Capacity "Actual-In"
			No.	No.	%	No.	%
Minimum							
Bow River Correctional Centre	Correctional Centre	Males & Females	153	122	80	51	33
Kainai Correctional Centre	Correctional Centre	Males	24	14	58	6	25
Subtotal			177	136	77	57	32
Medium							
Calgary Correctional Centre	Correctional Centre	Males	283	450	159	322	114
Fort Saskatchewan Correctional Centre	Correctional Centre	Males & Females	392	515	131	449	115
Lethbridge Correctional Centre	Correctional Centre	Males & Females	217	229	106	197	91
Peace River Correctional Centre	Correctional Centre	Males	263	176	67	150	57
Subtotal			1,155	1,370	119	1,118	97
Maximum							
Calgary Remand Centre	Remand Centre	Males & Females	336	374	111	292	87
Edmonton Remand Centre	Remand Centre	Males & Females	536	793	148	563	105
Subtotal			872	1,167	134	855	98
Multi-Level							
Medicine Hat Correctional Centre	Remand Centre	Males & Females	84	78	93	59	70
Red Deer Remand Centre	Remand Centre	Males & Females	124	138	111	87	70
Subtotal			208	216	104	146	70
Total			2,412	2,889	120	2,176	90

Special Features within Facilities

	Special Handling Unit	Protective Custody	Punitive/Administrative Segregation	Psychiatric Unit	Dormitory for Intermittent Sentences	Dormitory for Regular Sentences	Holding Cells	Young Offenders with Adults	Alcohol Treatment Facility	Total Special Features
Minimum										
Bow River Correctional Centre	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Kainai Correctional Centre	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Medium										
Calgary Correctional Centre	-	1	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	3
Fort Saskatchewan Correctional Centre	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	2
Lethbridge Correctional Centre	1	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	3
Peace River Correctional Centre	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	2
Maximum										
Calgary Remand Centre	-	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	3
Edmonton Remand Centre	-	1	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	4
Multi-Level										
Medicine Hat Correctional Centre	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	2
Red Deer Remand Centre	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	2
Total	1	3	9	4	1	2	-	2	-	22

Source: Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics. A One-Day Snapshot of Inmates in Canada's Adult Correctional Facilities Survey (1996).

- nil or zero.

¹ Includes all facilities that were operational on Snapshot Day.

² Defined as the number of permanent beds in the facility.

³ Defined as the total number of inmates who were physically located in the correctional facilities on Snapshot Day.

Table 10-3
Distribution of Offence Types¹: Alberta

	Number of Inmates	Crimes Against the Person						TOTAL				
		Homicide/ Attempt Murder	Sexual Assault	Serious Assault	Minor Assault	Robbery	Other Violent					
		%										
Legal Status²												
Sentenced ³	2,385	2	5	7	4	6	2	26				
Remand	419	4	5	7	5	7	3	32				
Total	2,804	2	5	7	5	6	2	27				
Gender⁴												
Males	2,535	2	5	7	5	6	2	27				
Females	273	4	5	9	4	7	3	33				
Aboriginal Status⁵												
Non-Aboriginal	1,843	2	5	7	4	5	2	26				
Aboriginal	958	2	4	8	5	8	3	31				
Age⁴												
18-24	733	2	6	6	4	8	2	27				
25-34	1,059	2	5	8	5	6	3	28				
35-44	708	3	4	9	5	6	2	28				
45-54	234	2	3	4	6	5	2	23				
55+	74	--	9	5	--	--	-	22				
		Property Crimes				Other Criminal Code (CC) / Federal Statutes						
		Break and Enter	Theft	Fraud	Other Property	TOTAL	Weapons Offences	Administration of Justice	Impaired Driving Offences	Drug Offences	Other CC/ Federal	TOTAL
		%					%					
Legal Status²												
Sentenced ³		14	10	3	6	33	2	3	7	17	12	40
Remand		12	10	4	5	31	2	3	8	13	11	37
Total		14	10	3	6	33	2	3	7	17	12	40
Gender⁴												
Males		15	10	3	6	34	2	3	7	17	12	40
Females		10	10	3	5	27	2	4	7	14	14	40
Aboriginal Status⁵												
Non-Aboriginal		15	10	3	6	34	1	3	7	18	12	41
Aboriginal		13	9	3	6	31	3	3	7	14	12	38
Age⁴												
18-24		20	11	3	6	40	1	3	5	14	10	33
25-34		12	9	3	6	30	2	3	6	19	12	42
35-44		12	11	2	6	31	2	3	10	16	11	41
45-54		12	9	6	5	32	3	2	9	16	15	45
55+		11	14	5	4	34	4	--	--	22	12	45

Source: The Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics. A One-Day Snapshot of Inmates in Canada's Adult Correctional Facilities Survey (1996).

- nil or zero.

-- amount too small to be expressed.

¹ Based on the current most serious offence.

² Missing data for 85 inmates (3%).

³ "Sentenced" includes regular, intermittent and inmates with "other" legal status.

⁴ Missing data for 81 inmates (3%).

⁵ Missing data for 88 inmates (3%).

Table 10-4

Nature of Current Offences^{1,2}: Alberta

	Number of Inmates	Only Against Person	Against Person & "Other" ³	Only "Other" Offence ³
			%	
Legal Status				
Sentenced ⁴	2,385	12	20	68
Remand	419	17	20	63
Total	2,804	13	20	67

Source: The Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics. A One-Day Snapshot of Inmates in Canada's Adult Correctional Facilities Survey (1996).

¹ Analysis of up to five of the most serious offences for which an inmate was incarcerated.

² Data were missing for 85 inmates (3%).

³ "Other" Offence = property crimes, other Criminal Code violations, and other offences not against the person.

⁴ "Sentenced" includes regular, intermittent and inmates with "other" legal status.

Table 10-5

Number of Current Offences: Alberta

	Number of Inmates	One	Two	Three	Four	Five+
				%		
Legal Status¹						
Sentenced ²	2,385	25	15	12	9	39
Remand	419	29	17	12	7	35
Total	2,804	26	15	12	9	38
Gender³						
Males	2,535	25	16	12	8	39
Females	273	32	13	12	11	33
Aboriginal Status⁴						
Non-Aboriginal	1,843	27	15	11	9	38
Aboriginal	958	25	15	13	9	38
Age³						
18-24	733	27	17	11	8	37
25-34	1,059	24	15	14	8	39
35-44	708	27	14	11	9	39
45-54	234	29	16	11	12	31
55+	74	24	19	9	9	38

Source: The Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics. A One-Day Snapshot of Inmates in Canada's Adult Correctional Facilities Survey (1996).

¹ Missing data for 85 inmates (3%).

² "Sentenced" includes regular, intermittent and inmates with "other" legal status.

³ Missing data for 81 inmates (3%).

⁴ Missing data for 88 inmates (3%).

Table 10-6
Distribution of Aggregate Sentence Length: Alberta¹

	Number of Inmates	< 6 months	6 months - < 1 year	1 year or more	Median Sentence days
Total Inmates²	2,350	45	21	34	184
Gender²					
Males	2,114	44	21	35	184
Females	236	48	21	31	181
Aboriginal Status³					
Non-Aboriginal	1,542	44	20	36	184
Aboriginal	804	44	25	31	183
Age²					
18-24	611	41	24	36	184
25-34	905	45	22	33	184
35-44	584	48	20	32	182
45-54	192	44	16	41	184
55+	58	34	22	43	276

Source: The Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics. A One-Day Snapshot of Inmates in Canada's Adult Correctional Facilities Survey (1996).

¹ Includes data only for inmates serving intermittent and regular sentences ($n = 2,362$).

² Missing data for 12 inmates (<1%).

³ Missing data for 16 inmates (1%).

Table 10-7
Selected Inmate Characteristics: Alberta

	Number of Inmates	Gender		Number of Inmates	Aboriginal Status	
		Males	Females		Non- Aboriginal	Aboriginal
		%			%	
Legal Status¹						
Intermittent	356	12	12	353	15	8
Other	84	3	2	84	3	2
Sentenced	2,006	69	73	2,004	67	75
Remand	437	15	13	435	15	15
Total	2,883	100	100	2,876	100	100
Age²						
18-24	758	27	20	756	26	27
25-34	1,089	37	44	1,087	35	42
35-44	726	25	27	723	26	24
45-54	239	8	--	239	9	6
55+	77	3	--	77	4	1
Total	2,889	100	100	2,882	100	100
Gender²						
Males				2,604	92	86
Females				278	8	14
Total				2,882	100	100

Source: The Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics. A One-Day Snapshot of Inmates in Canada's Adult Correctional Facilities Survey (1996).

-- amount too small to be expressed.

¹ Missing data for 6 inmates (<1%) for gender analysis and 13 inmates (<1%) for Aboriginal analysis.

² Missing data for 7 inmates (<1%) for Aboriginal analysis.

Table 10-8
Background Characteristics¹ of Inmates: Alberta

		Total	Sentenced ²	Remand
Grade Completed				
Number of Inmates³		2,867	2,433	434
9 or less	%	27	26	29
10 to 11	%	43	44	43
12 or higher	%	30	30	28
Total	%	100	100	100
Employment Status				
Number of Inmates⁴		2,810	2,387	423
Unemployed	%	54	52	61
Employed	%	46	48	39
Total	%	100	100	100
Marital Status				
Number of Inmates³		2,867	2,433	434
Single	%	52	52	55
Married	%	37	38	35
Separated or Divorced	%	10	10	--
Widowed	%	--	--	--
Total	%	100	100	100
Language				
Number of Inmates⁵		2,697	2,292	405
English	%	100	100	100
French	%	-	-	-
Aboriginal	%	-	-	-
Other	%	-	-	-
Total	%	100	100	100
Citizenship				
Number of Inmates⁶		2,861	2,430	431
Canadian	%	96	96	96
Other	%	4	4	4
Total	%	100	100	100

Source: The Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics. *A One-Day Snapshot of Inmates in Canada's Adult Correctional Facilities Survey (1996)*.

- nil or zero.

-- amount too small to be expressed.

¹ The characteristics listed in this table refer to the status of the inmate at the time of admission to the correctional facility.

² Includes inmates serving regular, intermittent and "other" types of sentences.

³ Missing data for 22 inmates (1%).

⁴ Excludes inmates who were "not in the market" for employment at the time of admission (n = 51). Missing data for 28 inmates (1%).

⁵ Missing data for 192 inmates (7%). Refers to those who reported they spoke English.

⁶ Missing data for 28 inmates (1%).

Table 10-16
Differentiation of Inmates by Security Level of Facilities: Alberta

Inmate Characteristics	Number of Inmates	Level of Security			
		Minimum	Medium	Maximum	Multi-Level
		%			
Legal Status¹					
Sentenced ²	2,446	100	98	67	84
Remand	437	-	2	33	16
Total	2,883	100	100	100	100
Offence Type³					
Crimes Against the Person	767	26	26	29	24
Property and Other Crimes ⁴	2,041	74	74	71	76
Total	2,808	100	100	100	100
Median Aggregate Sentence (in days)⁵	2,350	257	278	90	93
Gender					
Males	2,611	86	92	89	88
Females	278	14	8	11	12
Total	2,889	100	100	100	100
Aboriginal Status⁶					
Non-Aboriginal	1,899	76	62	69	71
Aboriginal	983	24	38	31	29
Total	2,882	100	100	100	100
Median Age (in years)	2,889	34	30	32	32

Source: The Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics. A One-Day Snapshot of Inmates in Canada's Adult Correctional Facilities Survey (1996).

- nil or zero.

¹ Missing data for 6 inmates (<1%).

² "Sentenced" includes inmates serving regular, intermittent and "other" types of sentences.

³ Missing data for 81 inmates (3%).

⁴ "Other Crimes" includes all other Criminal Code and Federal Statute offences.

⁵ Sentencing data includes regular and intermittent types of sentences (n = 2,362). Missing data for 12 inmates (<1%).

⁶ Missing data for 7 inmates (<1%).