

CORRECTIONAL SERVICE CANADA

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Concordance Between the Custody Rating Scale (CRS) and Offender Security Level (OSL) Among Men Offenders

Among men offenders, concordance between the Custody Rating Scale (CRS) and actual security classification was 74% for new admissions, and 69% for revocation admissions.

Why we did this study

The Custody Rating Scale (CRS) is an instrument employed by the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) to assist in determining an offender's initial security classification. As per [Commissioner's Directive 705-7](#), the CRS is used in conjunction with structured professional assessment of an offender's institutional adjustment, escape risk, and public safety risk to determine an appropriate Offender Security Level (OSL). The concordance rate captures the degree of overlap between CRS designations and actual security classification (i.e., OSL).

What we did

Trends in concordance between the CRS and OSL were examined using a dataset of all men admitted to federal custody between 2013/2014 and 2018/2019 on a Warrant of Committal (WOC; $N = 23,007$) or following a revocation of conditional release ($N = 6,240$).

What we found

During the period under analysis, concordance between the CRS and OSL was 74% for the WOC admission group. Concordance was lower in the case of revocation admissions (i.e., 69%). Security decreases, whereby the OSL was lower than the CRS designation, were slightly more common than security increases (see Table 1). Concordance was lowest in the Pacific region (i.e., 69% for WOC admissions, and 63% for revocation admissions), and highest in the Prairie region (78% and 74%).

Relative to White offenders, Indigenous and Black offenders were more likely to have a CRS designation of maximum (see Table 2). With respect to concordance, Indigenous and Black offenders were more likely to have a security decrease, and less likely to have a security increase.

Patterns in discordance were linked to profile factors (i.e., ratings on Static Risk, Dynamic Need, Motivation and Accountability). Offenders with a discordant decision typically had greater profile similarity to their respective security group relative to the concordant group associated with their CRS designation.

What it means

The concordance rate between the CRS designation and actual security classification was consistent with the rate reported in prior studies (e.g., Gobeil, 2011). However, concordance was lower for revocation admissions. Discordant decisions appeared to be tied to profile factors and had the impact of somewhat reducing racial/ethnic disparities. Overall, findings highlight the important role of professional judgement alongside the standardized use of the CRS.

Table 1. CRS-OSL Relationship for Men Offender Admissions, 2013/2014 to 2018/2019.

CRS-OSL Relationship	Admission Group	
	Warrant of Committal (WOC)	Revocation
Concordant	74%	69%
Security Increase	12%	15%
Security Decrease	14%	16%

Table 2. CRS and OSL Breakdown by Race/Ethnicity for Men Offender Admissions, 2013/2014 to 2018/2019.

Measure	Race/Ethnicity		
	White	Indigenous	Black
CRS			
Minimum	38%	19%	18%
Medium	50%	60%	58%
Maximum	11%	21%	24%
OSL			
Minimum	32%	18%	19%
Medium	61%	71%	65%
Maximum	7%	12%	17%

References:

Gobeil, R. (2011). *The Custody Rating Scale as applied to male offenders (Research Report R-256)*. Ottawa, ON: Correctional Service of Canada.

For more information: To obtain a PDF version of the full report, or for other inquiries, please e-mail the [Research Branch](#). You can also visit the [Research Publications](#) section for a full list of reports and one-page summaries.

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