CORRECTIONAL SERVICE CANADA

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Revalidation of the Custody Rating Scale for Men Offenders

The Custody Rating Scale (CRS) continues to hold predictive validity for men offenders at intake.

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). Periodic revalidation of the CRS remains necessary given the dynamic nature of the offender population (Gobeil, 2011).

What we did

The predictive validity of the CRS for men offenders was assessed using a dataset of admissions to federal custody between 2013/2014 and 2018/2019. The dataset included men offenders admitted to federal custody on a Warrant of Committal (WOC, i.e., a new sentence; N = 23,007), or following a revocation of conditional release (N = 6,240).

What we found

A higher CRS designation was associated with a greater likelihood of involvement in a negative institutional event (see Table 1). This relationship was stronger for new admissions relative to revocation admissions. A similar pattern was found in regards to OSL and institutional outcomes. Area Under the Curve (AUC) values were examined to assess the predictive ability of the CRS and OSL in relation to institutional outcomes. AUC values exceeded the threshold of 'acceptable' predictive accuracy with respect to the WOC group, but not the revocation group, in the case of both the CRS and OSL (see Table 2).

What it means

Results reaffirm that the CRS is predictive of institutional outcomes for men offenders at initial intake, and suggest efficacy in use of professional judgement, as evidenced by the similar predictive ability of the CRS and OSL. However, the CRS holds less predictive accuracy for revocation admissions.

Table 1. Institutional Outcomes by CRS Designation for Men Offenders Admitted on a WOC or Revocation, 2013/2014 to 2018/2019.

Outcome	Custody Rating Scale (CRS) Level					
	Warrant of Committal (WOC)			Revocations		
	Min.	Med.	Max.	Min.	Med.	Max.
Incident[a]	35%	64%	91%	29%	45%	60%
Charge[b]	27%	59%	53%	22%	39%	53%

Table 2. Predictive Ability of CRS and OSL for Men Offenders Admitted on a WOC or Revocation, 2013/2014 to 2018/2019.

Outcome	Receiver Operating Characteristic (ROC) Analyses			
	Warrant of Committal (WOC)		Revocations	
	AUC*	95% CI	AUC*	95% CI
Custody Rating Scale (CRS)				
Incident[a]	.698	.692-.704	.582	.571-.594
Charge[b]	.697	.691-.703	.586	.574-.598
Offender Security Level (OSL)				
Incident[a]	.696	.691-.702	.561	.550-.571
Charge[b]	.688	.683-.694	.555	.544-.565

[a] *Refers to involvement in at least one security or behavioural incident during the sentence for which the CRS was applied and following CRS administration.*
[b] *Refers to an offender's receipt of any serious or minor disciplinary charge during the sentence for which the CRS was applied and following CRS administration. Only charges resulting in an outcome of 'guilty' were included.*
*The Area Under the Curve (AUC) is used to examine the predictive accuracy of a measure in ROC analyses; a value of 0.5 represents chance prediction, while a value of 1.0 represents perfect prediction.
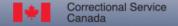*Note. CI = Confidence Interval*

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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