



MICHIGAN

OFFICE OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL

AUDIT REPORT



THOMAS H. MCTAVISH, C.P.A.
AUDITOR GENERAL

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Michigan
Office of the Auditor General
REPORT SUMMARY

Performance Audit

Report Number:
471-0202-05

Special Alternative Incarceration Program

Department of Corrections

Released:
August 2007

The Special Alternative Incarceration Program (SAI) is an alternative to prison for selected male and female prisoners and probationers convicted of certain nonassaultive crimes. SAI is a 90-day military-style boot camp that seeks to provide its trainees with the opportunity to change their anti-social attitudes and criminal lifestyles and prepare themselves for reentry into the community as productive, law-abiding citizens.

Audit Objective:

To assess the effectiveness of the Department of Corrections' (DOC's) efforts to evaluate the benefits of SAI.

Audit Conclusion:

We concluded that DOC's efforts to evaluate the benefits of SAI were moderately effective. We noted one reportable condition (Finding 1).

Reportable Condition:

DOC had not developed a comprehensive process to assist in evaluating the success of SAI (Finding 1).

Noteworthy Accomplishments:

SAI graduated 5,125 trainees during the period January 2002 through November 2005. Of those who graduated, 1,019 (19.9%) received a general educational development (GED) certificate while participating in SAI.

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Audit Objective:

To assess SAI's compliance with selected policies and procedures related to safety and security.

Audit Conclusion:

We concluded that SAI was generally in compliance with selected policies and procedures related to safety and security. However, we noted four reportable conditions (Findings 2 through 5).

Reportable Conditions:

SAI did not ensure that officers documented the performance of the required number of trainee shakedowns and housing unit searches (Finding 2).

SAI did not ensure that the public works sergeant performed and documented all required weekly inspections of public works assignments. Also, SAI did not ensure that the deputy warden or the inspector performed and documented all quarterly inspections of public works assignments. (Finding 3)

SAI did not comply with its procedure requiring security over medical tools (Finding 4).

SAI staff did not document in the trainees' files that trainees attended orientation in tool use and public works (Finding 5).

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Audit Objective:

To assess the effectiveness and efficiency of SAI's food service and warehousing operations.

Audit Conclusion:

We concluded that SAI's food service operation was moderately effective and was efficient. We also concluded that SAI's warehousing operation was effective and efficient. We noted one reportable condition (Finding 6).

Reportable Condition:

SAI did not sufficiently document menu item evaluations, quarterly nutritional reviews, and average caloric content calculations (Finding 6).

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Audit Objective:

To assess the effectiveness and efficiency of SAI's eligibility screening and intake processes.

Audit Conclusion:

We concluded that SAI's eligibility screening process was moderately effective and was efficient. We also concluded that SAI's intake process was effective and efficient. We noted one reportable condition (Finding 7).

Reportable Condition:

SAI did not ensure that information retained in the database used to track potentially eligible prisoners was complete and easily accessible (Finding 7).

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Agency Response:

Our audit report includes 7 findings and 8 corresponding recommendations. DOC's preliminary response indicates that it and SAI agree with all of the recommendations and have complied or will comply with them.

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A copy of the full report can be obtained by calling 517.334.8050 or by visiting our Web site at: <http://audgen.michigan.gov>



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THOMAS H. MCTAVISH, C.P.A.
AUDITOR GENERAL

August 9, 2007

Ms. Patricia L. Caruso, Director
Department of Corrections
Grandview Plaza Building
Lansing, Michigan

Dear Ms. Caruso:

This is our report on the performance audit of the Special Alternative Incarceration Program, Department of Corrections.

This report contains our report summary; description of program; audit objectives, scope, and methodology and agency responses and prior audit follow-up; comments, findings, recommendations, and agency preliminary responses; six exhibits, presented as supplemental information; and a glossary of acronyms and terms.

Our comments, findings, and recommendations are organized by audit objective. The agency preliminary responses were taken from the agency's responses subsequent to our audit fieldwork. The *Michigan Compiled Laws* and administrative procedures require that the audited agency develop a formal response within 60 days after release of the audit report.

We appreciate the courtesy and cooperation extended to us during this audit.

AUDITOR GENERAL

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SPECIAL ALTERNATIVE INCARCERATION PROGRAM DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

	<u>Page</u>
INTRODUCTION	
Report Summary	1
Report Letter	3
Description of Program	7
Audit Objectives, Scope, and Methodology and Agency Responses and Prior Audit Follow-Up	9
COMMENTS, FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND AGENCY PRELIMINARY RESPONSES	
Benefits of the Special Alternative Incarceration Program (SAI)	13
1. Evaluation of SAI Success	13
Safety and Security	16
2. Trainee Shakedowns and Housing Unit Searches	17
3. Public Works Assignment Inspections	18
4. Security Over Medical Tools	19
5. Orientation Documentation	20
Food Service and Warehousing Operations	22
6. Food Service Operations	22
Eligibility Screening and Intake Processes	24
7. SAI Database	24

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Exhibit 1 - Summary of Data for Selected Performance Indicators	27
Exhibit 2 - Recidivism Data	28
Exhibit 3 - Absconder Data	29
Exhibit 4 - Reported Wages Data	30
Exhibit 5 - Unemployment Claims Data	31
Exhibit 6 - Food Assistance Program (FAP) Data	32

GLOSSARY

Glossary of Acronyms and Terms	34
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Description of Program

The Special Alternative Incarceration Program (SAI) was created by Act 287, P.A. 1988 (Sections 798.11 - 798.18 of the *Michigan Compiled Laws*), as an alternative to prison for selected male probationers* who were convicted of certain crimes. Act 22, P.A. 1992, amended the eligibility criteria to include both male and female prisoners* and probationers. Sections 771.3b and 791.234a of the *Michigan Compiled Laws* provide eligibility criteria and preclude participation for those offenders convicted of various primarily assaultive crimes. Also, offender consent and the sentencing judge's approval is required before the offender can be placed in SAI.

SAI is a military-style boot camp with two primary goals*. First, it promotes public safety through risk management in the selection of program participants. Second, SAI provides its trainees* with the opportunity to change their anti-social attitudes and criminal lifestyles and prepare themselves for reentry into the community as productive, law-abiding citizens. To accomplish these goals, SAI utilizes techniques adapted from the military, including physically strenuous work, strict discipline, and physical exercise. In addition to these military-style techniques, SAI incorporates programming such as education, substance abuse awareness, basic life skills training, anger management, job-seeking skills, and job preparation. SAI trainees are not afforded the same privileges as offenders housed in other State correctional facilities. For example, SAI trainees are not allowed to have visitors (except clergy or attorneys), personal property (except hygiene items issued by SAI), or funds received from any source. Offenders generally complete SAI in 90 calendar days.

After successful completion of SAI, trainees are placed directly on parole or probation with the first 120 days served under intensive supervision (phase III)*. Prisoner trainees are placed on parole for not less than 18 months or the remaining balance of their sentence, whichever is longer. Those who do not have appropriate housing are placed in a residential aftercare facility.

SAI is located three miles north of Chelsea at the Cassidy Lake facility. It is under the jurisdiction of the Department of Corrections and is supervised by the warden of the Cooper Street Correctional Facility. The Cassidy Lake facility occupies 88 acres and

* See glossary at end of report for definition.

has 7 housing units. The facility has capacity for 440 beds; however, SAI is funded to operate only 360 beds.

For fiscal year 2004-05, SAI had expenditures of approximately \$11 million and graduated 1,172 trainees. As of September 30, 2005, SAI had 110 employees.

Audit Objectives, Scope, and Methodology and Agency Responses and Prior Audit Follow-Up

Audit Objectives

Our performance audit* of the Special Alternative Incarceration Program (SAI), Department of Corrections (DOC), had the following objectives:

1. To assess the effectiveness* of DOC's efforts to evaluate the benefits of SAI.
2. To assess SAI's compliance with selected policies and procedures related to safety and security.
3. To assess the effectiveness and efficiency* of SAI's food service and warehousing operations.
4. To assess the effectiveness and efficiency of SAI's eligibility screening and intake* processes.

Audit Scope

Our audit scope was to examine the program and other records of the Special Alternative Incarceration Program. Our audit was conducted in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* issued by the Comptroller General of the United States and, accordingly, included such tests of the records and such other auditing procedures as we considered necessary in the circumstances. Our audit procedures, performed from July 2005 through January 2006, included examination of program records and activities primarily for the period October 1, 2002 through November 30, 2005.

Audit Methodology

To establish our audit objectives and to gain an understanding of SAI activities, we conducted a preliminary review of SAI operations. This included discussions with various SAI staff regarding their functions and responsibilities and examination of program records, DOC policy directives and operating procedures, and SAI operating procedures. In addition, we reviewed self-audits*, monthly reports to the deputy warden, and annual reports.

* See glossary at end of report for definition.

To assess the effectiveness of DOC's efforts to evaluate the benefits of SAI, we verified selected data in SAI's annual reports; conducted tests of records relating to offender needs assessments and screenings; compared the cost of SAI to other State correctional facilities; surveyed a sample of circuit court judges; and compiled data on criminal activity and the need for State financial assistance of SAI prisoner graduates*, SAI-eligible prisoners*, SAI probationer graduates*, and SAI-potentially-eligible probationers*.

To assess SAI's compliance with selected policies and procedures related to safety and security, we conducted tests of records related to drug testing, trainee searches, trainee counts, radio checks, fire safety, medication control, and public works*. On a test basis, we inventoried keys, critical tools*, and dangerous tools*. In addition, we reviewed security monitoring exercises, trainee orientation, trainee housing searches, housekeeping and sanitation, employee training, offender training, and disaster management plans.

To assess the effectiveness and efficiency of SAI's food service and warehousing operations, we tested food service records and procedures related to Statewide menus, production, and quality evaluations. We examined inventory records and procedures for the purchase and issuance of trainee and officer supplies.

To assess the effectiveness and efficiency of SAI's eligibility screening and intake processes, we examined the methods used to screen and document the eligibility of prisoners and probationers to participate in SAI. We examined SAI records and procedures pertinent to scheduling trainee intake and medical evaluation.

We use a risk and opportunity based approach when selecting activities or programs to be audited. Accordingly, our audit efforts are focused on activities or programs having the greatest probability for needing improvement as identified through a preliminary review. By design, our limited audit resources are used to identify where and how improvement can be made. Consequently, our performance audit reports are prepared on an exception basis. To the extent practical, we add balance to our audit reports by presenting noteworthy accomplishments for exemplary achievements identified during our audits.

* See glossary at end of report for definition.

Agency Responses and Prior Audit Follow-Up

Our audit report includes 7 findings and 8 corresponding recommendations. DOC's preliminary response indicates that it and SAI agree with all of the recommendations and have complied or will comply with them.

The agency preliminary response that follows each recommendation in our report was taken from the agency's written comments and oral discussion subsequent to our audit fieldwork. Section 18.1462 of the *Michigan Compiled Laws* and Department of Management and Budget Administrative Guide procedure 1280.02 require DOC to develop a formal response to our audit findings and recommendations within 60 days after release of the audit report.

Our March 1993 performance audit of the Office of Special Alternative Incarceration, Field Operations Administration, Department of Corrections (47-202-93), had 5 recommendations. In our follow-up review of the Office of Special Alternative Incarceration, Field Operations Administration, Department of Corrections (47-202-93F), released in November 1993, we followed up on the 1 recommendation related to the material finding reported in our March 1993 performance audit. DOC was in the process of complying with the recommendation at the time of our follow-up review.

Within the scope of this audit, we followed up the remaining 4 recommendations from the March 1993 performance audit and the 1 recommendation that DOC was in the process of complying with at the time of our follow-up review. In total, DOC complied with 2 of the 5 recommendations, DOC partially complied with 1 recommendation, and 2 recommendations were no longer applicable. The portion of the recommendation with which DOC had not complied is repeated in this report.

COMMENTS, FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS,
AND AGENCY PRELIMINARY RESPONSES

BENEFITS OF THE SPECIAL ALTERNATIVE INCARCERATION PROGRAM (SAI)

COMMENT

Audit Objective: To assess the effectiveness of the Department of Corrections' (DOC's) efforts to evaluate the benefits of SAI.

Conclusion: **We concluded that DOC's efforts to evaluate the benefits of SAI were moderately effective.** We noted one reportable condition* related to evaluation of SAI success (Finding 1).

Noteworthy Accomplishments: SAI graduated 5,125 trainees during the period January 2002 through November 2005. Of those who graduated, 1,019 (19.9%) received a general educational development (GED) certificate while participating in SAI.

FINDING

1. Evaluation of SAI Success

DOC had not developed a comprehensive process to assist in evaluating the success of SAI. Consequently, DOC was unable to evaluate the overall effectiveness of SAI and support its efforts to expand the program.

Program effectiveness can often be evaluated and improved by having a comprehensive evaluation process. Such a process should include performance indicators* that measure outcomes* related to a program's goals and objectives*; performance standards* or goals that describe the desired level of outcomes based on management expectations, peer group performance, and/or historical performance; a management information system to accurately gather relevant outcome data on a timely basis; a comparison of the actual data to desired outcomes; a reporting of the comparison results to management; and recommendations to improve effectiveness and efficiency or change the desired performance standards or goals.

One of SAI's primary goals is to provide its trainees with the opportunity to change their anti-social attitudes and criminal lifestyles and prepare themselves for reentry into the community as productive, law-abiding citizens. SAI seeks to accomplish its

* See glossary at end of report for definition.

goals through achieving objectives, including promoting personal and social development and teaching self-discipline, personal responsibility, positive work ethics, and a principle-based value system.

SAI annually compiles and reports certain information to the Legislature on the operation of SAI, including statistics relating to graduate recidivism* and graduate success on the GED test. However, SAI and DOC have not compared these statistics to similar statistics of former prisoners and probationers who did not complete SAI. In addition, SAI and DOC did not compile or evaluate other performance indicators. For example, absconder* status*, reported wages, collection of unemployment compensation, receipt of public assistance, cost data, and stakeholder survey information could collectively provide information that may be useful in evaluating the success of SAI.

By analyzing additional performance indicators and comparing performance indicator results of prisoners and probationers who completed SAI with former prisoners and probationers who were eligible for but who did not complete SAI, DOC could begin to evaluate the overall effectiveness of SAI, including whether the graduates benefited from SAI and whether SAI met its objectives.

We reviewed performance indicator data relating to recidivism, absconder status, reported wages, collection of unemployment compensation, receipt of public assistance, cost efficiency, and judicial support:

- a. We compiled SAI prisoner graduate and SAI-eligible prisoner data from October 1, 2000 through June 22, 2005 and SAI probationer graduate and SAI-potentially-eligible probationer data from October 1, 2001 through June 22, 2005. Our results are presented as supplemental information in Exhibits 1 through 6. We acknowledge that many factors can impact recidivism, absconder status, employment, and the need for public assistance. However, this type of data, in addition to other relevant performance indicator data, should be collected and further analyzed to evaluate how well graduates function after SAI. Such analysis could provide valuable information regarding SAI success, may result in changes to SAI, and may support expansion of SAI.

* See glossary at end of report for definition.

- b. We performed a cost analysis of SAI and determined that it appears to be a cost-effective alternative for housing and rehabilitating offenders who meet the SAI eligibility criteria. We determined that SAI's average daily per trainee cost for fiscal year 2004-05 of \$97 exceeds the average daily cost per prisoner of the State's four minimum security (level I)* correctional facilities of \$53. However, trainees are generally incarcerated at SAI for only 90 days, whereas prisoners who are eligible for SAI but are instead committed to other State correctional facilities are likely to be incarcerated for 12 to 36 months. Therefore, DOC's total per trainee cost for SAI of approximately \$8,700 is significantly less than its estimated annual cost of \$19,400 per prisoner at a level I correctional facility. In addition, SAI has a maximum operating capacity of 440 beds; however, SAI was legislatively funded to operate at a capacity level of only 360 beds. Based on this and the fact that trainees are generally incarcerated at SAI for only 90 days, we determined that SAI has the capacity to accommodate approximately 320 additional trainees annually. As a result, we determined that, even when considering SAI's prisoner recidivism rate, the State could save approximately \$2.5 million annually if SAI operated at full capacity.
- c. We surveyed a sample of 35 circuit court judges. Our survey results indicated that 13 (52.0%) of the 25 judges who responded favored SAI and sentenced criminals to SAI when possible. In addition, 18 (72.0%) of the 25 judges indicated that they would be interested in receiving information regarding the success of SAI. This supports the need for DOC to analyze performance indicators that provide comprehensive information that may be useful in evaluating the overall success of SAI. This information may be valuable in obtaining additional judicial and legislative support to expand SAI.

RECOMMENDATION

We recommend that DOC develop a comprehensive process to assist in evaluating the success of SAI.

AGENCY PRELIMINARY RESPONSE

DOC agrees with the recommendation and will comply. DOC plans to bring SAI under the Michigan Prison Reentry Initiative (MPRI) umbrella as a

* See glossary at end of report for definition.

specialized MPRI subpopulation of offenders returning to the community. DOC has extensive plans to evaluate all DOC programs under MPRI with regard to implementation of evidence-based practices, as well as intermediate and long-term performance and outcome measures.

The objective of the comprehensive program evaluations will be to learn as much as possible about what works, what does not work, and how to improve results. This implies understanding both the outcomes of the work and the processes of implementation. Measuring the outcomes determines whether the direction and magnitude of change is meaningful, and assessing the process of implementation determines how the outcomes were achieved. This will require collection of many new pieces of information in the DOC data systems, and the work to develop these data system enhancements and begin collecting these data elements is well underway.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

COMMENT

Background: SAI operates under policy directives and operating procedures established by DOC and additional operating procedures developed by SAI. These policies and procedures are designed to have a positive impact on the safety and security of SAI as well as to help ensure that trainees receive proper care and services. The procedures address many aspects of SAI operations, including key and tool security; trainee and housing unit searches; trainee counts; fire safety; preventive maintenance; disaster planning; and food, medical, and educational services. Although compliance with these policies and procedures contributes to a safe and secure program, the nature of the population and environment is unpredictable and inherently dangerous. Therefore, compliance with these policies and procedures will not entirely eliminate the safety and security risks.

Audit Objective: To assess SAI's compliance with selected policies and procedures related to safety and security.

Conclusion: We concluded that SAI was generally in compliance with selected policies and procedures related to safety and security. However, we noted four

reportable conditions related to trainee shakedowns* and housing unit searches, public works assignment inspections, security over medical tools, and orientation documentation (Findings 2 through 5).

FINDING

2. Trainee Shakedowns and Housing Unit Searches

SAI did not ensure that officers documented the performance of the required number of trainee shakedowns and housing unit searches. Conducting the required number of trainee shakedowns and housing unit searches improves SAI's likelihood of detecting and confiscating contraband and improves the safety and security of staff and prisoners.

Our review of trainee shakedown and housing unit search records disclosed:

- a. SAI staff did not document that officers had performed 2,550 (40.3%) of the required 6,325 trainee shakedowns during February, May, and August 2005.

SAI operating procedure 04.04.110 requires that each officer perform five prisoner shakedowns per day and document them on the appropriate forms. The shift commanders are responsible for maintaining a daily log documenting that each officer has performed the required shakedowns.

- b. SAI staff did not document that assigned inspection officers had performed 261 (38.8%) of the 672 housing unit searches required during April 2004 and May and August 2005.

SAI operating procedure 04.04.110 requires that the assigned inspection officer conduct an inspection and search of each room or bunk area each morning and each evening and to document them in the appropriate logbook.

RECOMMENDATION

We recommend that SAI ensure that officers document the performance of the required number of trainee shakedowns and housing unit searches.

* See glossary at end of report for definition.

AGENCY PRELIMINARY RESPONSE

SAI agrees and informed us that it has complied. SAI stated that shift commanders are monitoring trainee shakedown and housing unit search documentation to ensure compliance. In addition, SAI stated that captains are verifying completion of required shakedowns and searches in their monthly reports.

FINDING

3. Public Works Assignment Inspections

SAI did not ensure that the public works sergeant performed and documented all required weekly inspections of public works assignments. Also, SAI did not ensure that the deputy warden or the inspector performed and documented all quarterly inspections of public works assignments. Conducting the required number of public works assignment inspections helps ensure the safety and security of the community, SAI staff, and SAI trainees.

SAI operating procedure 03.02.121 requires the public works sergeant to perform weekly inspections of each public works site and SAI operating procedure 04.04.100j requires the deputy warden or the inspector to visit each public works assignment quarterly. Weekly inspections ensure compliance with safety requirements, the terms of the public works agreement, and operating procedures. Weekly inspections also ensure that trainees are appropriately motivated, that tools are in working order, and that satisfactory progress is made on completing the assignment.

SAI trainees perform public works projects, such as ground maintenance, snow removal, trash pickup and removal, and general cleaning in the surrounding areas primarily for public agencies.

Our review of records relating to the public works assignment inspections disclosed:

- a. SAI did not perform 328 (83.5%) of the 393 required weekly public works assignment inspections during three months of fiscal year 2003-04 and seven months of fiscal year 2004-05.

- b. SAI did not document that any of the 4 required quarterly visits were completed during the first and second quarters of fiscal year 2002-03 and the third and fourth quarters of fiscal year 2003-04.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend that SAI ensure that the public works sergeant performs and documents all required weekly inspections of public works assignments.

We also recommend that SAI ensure that the deputy warden or the inspector performs and documents all quarterly inspections of public works assignments.

AGENCY PRELIMINARY RESPONSE

SAI agrees and informed us that it has complied. During the audit period, SAI was in transition from Field Operations Administration to Correctional Facilities Administration. SAI informed us that, during the transition, the day shift commander was directed to make weekly inspections of public works assignments. SAI also informed us that the public works sergeant, the deputy warden, and the inspector are now performing and documenting all required inspections.

FINDING

4. Security Over Medical Tools

SAI did not comply with its procedure requiring security over medical tools. Trainee access to critical and dangerous medical tools could facilitate escape attempts and/or result in harm to SAI staff or trainees.

SAI operating procedure 04.04.120 requires that critical and dangerous tools be secured in a locked drawer or cabinet when not in use. Compliance with this procedure would help ensure that SAI trainees do not have access to critical and dangerous medical tools.

Our review of the medical area disclosed:

- a. SAI medical staff did not secure the medical tool storage cabinets during 2 (33.3%) of our 6 observations of the medical area. Trainees assigned to a

medical bed, trainees awaiting medical eligibility testing, and quitters* are housed immediately outside of the medical area. Although an officer is assigned to monitor this area, the location of the area and the number of trainees housed directly outside of the area increases the risk that a trainee could enter the medical area without being detected by the officer on duty.

- b. SAI medical staff did not secure critical and dangerous medical tools when they were not in use. Five (14.7%) of 34 types of critical and dangerous medical tools as identified on SAI's tool control inventory were not secured during our inventory review. These included medical tools such as oxygen tanks, an Allen wrench, laceration trays, and scissors.

RECOMMENDATION

We recommend that SAI comply with its procedure requiring security over medical tools.

AGENCY PRELIMINARY RESPONSE

SAI agrees and informed us that it has complied. SAI stated that medical staff have been instructed to secure the medical tool storage cabinets and to secure the office door if the area is left unattended. In addition, SAI stated that medical staff have also been instructed to secure medical tools and trays in locked cabinets when they are not in use. SAI informed us that oxygen tanks are secured in a rack for safety. SAI also informed us that shift command and the deputy warden are monitoring compliance with these requirements.

FINDING

5. Orientation Documentation

SAI staff did not document in the trainees' files that trainees attended orientation in tool use and public works. Proper training in the use of tools, safety equipment, and work rules would help ensure the safety of the community, SAI staff, and SAI trainees.

* See glossary at end of report for definition.

Our review of 44 trainee files disclosed:

- a. SAI did not document in the trainees' files that 25 (56.8%) trainees had attended orientation in the proper use of tools.

SAI operating procedure 06.04.105b requires SAI staff to provide a tool orientation to all new trainees. The orientation consists of instructing trainees in the proper and safe use of all hand tools, such as lawn mowers, weed whips, and bow saws, and the use of all safety equipment available at SAI. After receiving the tool orientation, trainees are required to sign a tool training certificate to document that they have received the training.

- b. SAI did not document in the trainees' files that 5 (11.4%) trainees had attended the public works orientation.

SAI operating procedure 03.02.121 requires that SAI staff conduct a public works orientation for all trainees assigned to public works projects. The orientation consists of instructing trainees about work rules, safety requirements, and expected behavior when in the community. After receiving the orientation, trainees are required to sign a document indicating that they have received the training.

Our prior audit report included a recommendation that SAI staff document the completion of screenings, needs assessments, and individual training that are required for safe program operations. DOC informed us that it had complied with the recommendation by implementing procedures to ensure that all necessary documentation was part of the trainees' files. We determined that DOC had complied with documenting the completion of screenings and needs assessments; however, individual training in the areas of tool use and public works was not always documented in the trainees' files.

RECOMMENDATION

WE AGAIN RECOMMEND THAT SAI STAFF DOCUMENT IN THE TRAINEES' FILES THAT TRAINEES ATTENDED ORIENTATION IN TOOL USE AND PUBLIC WORKS.

AGENCY PRELIMINARY RESPONSE

SAI agrees and will comply. SAI informed us that the public works sergeant was and is diligent in providing tool and public works orientation for all trainees, but the documentation was not placed into the trainee files due to shortage of administrative staff. SAI also informed us that it is using custody staff and all available light-duty employees to keep up with filing until the hiring freeze is lifted and approval to fill administrative positions is obtained.

FOOD SERVICE AND WAREHOUSING OPERATIONS

COMMENT

Audit Objective: To assess the effectiveness and efficiency of SAI's food service and warehousing operations.

Conclusion: We concluded that SAI's food service operation was moderately effective and was efficient. We also concluded that SAI's warehousing operation was effective and efficient. We noted a reportable condition related to food service operations (Finding 6).

FINDING

6. Food Service Operations

SAI did not sufficiently document menu item evaluations, quarterly nutritional reviews, and average caloric content calculations.

Testing each meal and filling out the required menu item evaluations help ensure that the food is safe, edible, and of high quality. Conducting a nutritional review and average caloric content calculation helps ensure that the trainees are receiving adequate nutrition and calories to perform the amount of rigorous physical training and work required each day.

SAI operating procedure 04.07.103 requires that a sergeant, or higher ranking officer, eat each meal 30 minutes prior to serving it, fill out a menu item evaluation form, and forward it to the food service director. DOC policy directive 04.07.100 requires that a nutritional review and a three-day average caloric content calculation be conducted quarterly.

We reviewed the menu item evaluations for three weeks during our audit period (March 1 through March 14, 2005 and August 22 through August 28, 2005) and obtained an understanding of the documentation procedures for the nutritional reviews and average caloric content calculations for the audit period. We noted:

- a. SAI did not complete menu evaluations for 55 (87.3%) of 63 required menu evaluations during the three weeks reviewed. In addition, SAI informed us that it did not have documentation for any of the menu evaluations for the month of August 2005.
- b. SAI did not document any of the 12 nutritional reviews or average caloric content calculations required during our audit period.

The DOC central office conducted a nutritional review and average caloric content calculation during fiscal year 2003-04 and determined that SAI was providing adequate calories to trainees. However, SAI should be completing the menu item evaluations, nutritional reviews, and caloric content calculations on a regular basis to ensure that proper nutrition and calories are provided to trainees at all times.

RECOMMENDATION

We recommend that SAI sufficiently document menu item evaluations, quarterly nutritional reviews, and average caloric content calculations.

AGENCY PRELIMINARY RESPONSE

SAI agrees and informed us that it has complied. SAI stated that its staff were regularly evaluating meals but were inconsistent in completing the menu item evaluation (form CRO 136). SAI informed us that shifts are now required to send a copy of their evaluations to the inspector and food service director daily. Since the audit, SAI's food service is now under the auspices of the Cooper Street Correctional Facility. The Cooper Street food service director will ensure that quarterly nutritional reviews and average caloric content calculations are conducted.

ELIGIBILITY SCREENING AND INTAKE PROCESSES

COMMENT

Background: Intake is the process of receiving offenders from referral sources and placing them in SAI. The process begins with the eligibility screening performed by SAI staff on all prisoners who are committed to DOC and on all probationers sentenced to SAI. Eligibility requirements are specified in State statute, court documents, and DOC policies and procedures. Once eligibility is determined, SAI must prepare required documents and schedule the arrival of the prisoners and probationers. When prisoners and probationers arrive at SAI, intake staff review each trainee file to ensure that all necessary paperwork has been completed by the transferring State prison or county. SAI staff then begin to strip away the false pride many offenders have in their past criminal behavior. Trainees are provided uniforms and hygiene products and their heads are shaved. After the intake process is completed, the trainees are housed in a separate waiting area until they receive their physical examinations. After the trainees are medically cleared, they are inducted into SAI and the 90-day program begins.

Audit Objective: To assess the effectiveness and efficiency of SAI's eligibility screening and intake processes.

Conclusion: We concluded that SAI's eligibility screening process was moderately effective and was efficient. We also concluded that SAI's intake process was effective and efficient. We noted one reportable condition related to the SAI database (Finding 7).

FINDING

7. SAI Database

SAI did not ensure that information retained in the database used to track potentially eligible prisoners was complete and easily accessible. As a result, SAI staff had difficulty analyzing prisoner eligibility data and had to expend additional time and resources to obtain accurate, up-to-date information.

SAI tracks the results of prisoner eligibility screening on a database. SAI staff periodically receive and install database updates from the Charles Egeler

Reception and Guidance Center in Jackson for use in monitoring the eligibility of prisoners. During our review, we noted:

- a. SAI staff did not ensure that all eligibility screening data was entered into the database. Our testing noted that 78 (61.9%) of 126 judge notification denial letters had not been recorded in the database. In addition, of the 3,699 prisoners who had entered the general prison population from October 1, 2002 through June 22, 2005, we could not locate eligibility screening information in the database for 200 (5.4%) of these prisoners. Because the database is used to track prisoners who are potentially eligible for SAI, incomplete data creates inefficiencies in the SAI screening process.
- b. SAI did not retain data in a manner that allowed for easy access and analysis. The database configuration compounded the overall time required to retrieve essential information. Our review of the database indicated that it did not contain a centralized table to allow for standard queries of prisoner eligibility results. SAI staff had to search three or four tables to determine the prisoner eligibility status.

RECOMMENDATION

We recommend that SAI ensure that information retained in the database used to track potentially eligible prisoners is complete and easily accessible.

AGENCY PRELIMINARY RESPONSE

SAI agrees and informed us that it has complied. SAI stated that it has changed the database configuration to allow for standard queries. In addition, SAI stated that it has developed queries to assist in ensuring the completeness of the database.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

SPECIAL ALTERNATIVE INCARCERATION PROGRAM (SAI)
Department of Corrections
Summary of Data for Selected Performance Indicators
For Fiscal Years 2000-01 Through 2004-05 (1)

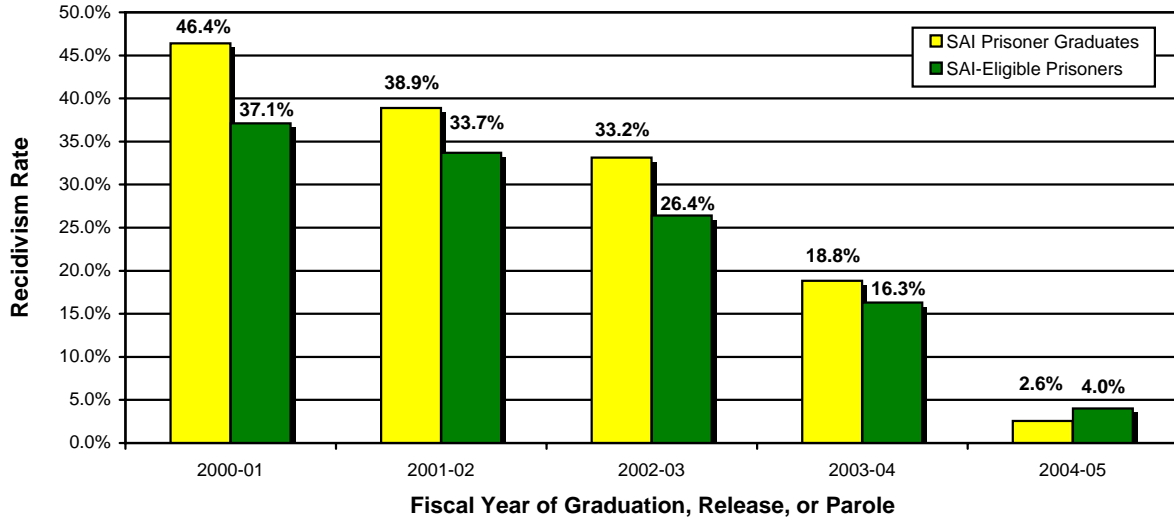
	Fiscal Year of Graduation, Release, or Parole					Cumulative 2000-01 through 2004-05
	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	
Recidivism (2)						
SAI prisoner graduates	46.4%	38.9%	33.2%	18.8%	2.6%	28.7%
SAI-eligible prisoners	37.1%	33.7%	26.4%	16.3%	4.0%	24.5%
SAI probationer graduates	(7)	38.5%	27.7%	18.0%	3.9%	24.1%
SAI-potentially-eligible probationers	(7)	10.5%	5.8%	3.5%	0.9%	7.3%
Absconder (3)						
SAI prisoner graduates	36.7%	34.5%	31.5%	24.5%	12.8%	28.6%
SAI-eligible prisoners	29.2%	33.5%	31.7%	24.1%	7.7%	26.4%
SAI probationer graduates	(8)	(8)	(8)	(8)	(8)	(8)
SAI-potentially-eligible probationers	(8)	(8)	(8)	(8)	(8)	(8)
Reported Wages (4)						
SAI prisoner graduates	39.8%	44.8%	50.5%	64.9%	57.8%	52.9%
SAI-eligible prisoners	38.2%	37.5%	40.1%	49.2%	42.3%	41.5%
SAI probationer graduates	(7)	47.3%	48.7%	58.8%	55.1%	52.6%
SAI-potentially-eligible probationers	(7)	57.4%	54.6%	59.2%	60.3%	57.5%
Unemployment Claims (5)						
SAI prisoner graduates	2.4%	3.2%	3.8%	4.9%	1.2%	3.5%
SAI-eligible prisoners	3.0%	2.2%	2.6%	2.5%	1.6%	3.0%
SAI probationer graduates	(7)	2.7%	2.8%	1.6%	0.9%	2.1%
SAI-potentially-eligible probationers	(7)	5.6%	6.3%	4.9%	4.3%	5.5%
Food Assistance Program (6)						
SAI prisoner graduates	34.3%	42.8%	32.7%	41.6%	34.4%	37.4%
SAI-eligible prisoners	42.1%	43.9%	45.1%	46.8%	42.4%	44.3%
SAI probationer graduates	(7)	24.6%	19.4%	20.6%	18.7%	20.8%
SAI-potentially-eligible probationers	(7)	38.1%	33.9%	25.5%	22.5%	33.1%

This table shows the results of data compiled for selected performance indicators by comparison group and by fiscal year of graduation, release, or parole. This data is displayed in chart format in Exhibits 2 through 6. The cumulative 2000-01 through 2004-05 column presents the cumulative results for each comparison group for the period October 1, 2000 through June 22, 2005.

- (1) Fiscal year 2004-05 data includes data only through June 22, 2005.
- (2) Recidivism data reflects the percentages of SAI prisoner and probationer graduates and SAI-eligible prisoners and SAI-potentially-eligible probationers who were reincarcerated at any time after graduation, release, or parole through June 22, 2005.
- (3) Absconder data reflects the percentages of SAI prisoner graduates and SAI-eligible prisoners who were on abscond status at any time after graduation, release, or parole through June 22, 2005.
- (4) Reported wages data reflects the percentages of SAI prisoner and probationer graduates and SAI-eligible prisoners and SAI-potentially-eligible probationers released or paroled who received wages between April 1, 2004 and June 22, 2005.
- (5) Unemployment claims data reflects the percentages of SAI prisoner and probationer graduates and SAI-eligible prisoners and SAI-potentially-eligible probationers released or paroled who received unemployment compensation between April 1, 2004 and June 22, 2005.
- (6) Food Assistance Program data reflects the percentages of SAI prisoner and probationer graduates and SAI-eligible prisoners and SAI-potentially-eligible probationers who were issued food stamps after graduation, release, or parole through June 22, 2005.
- (7) Probationer data was not available for fiscal year 2000-01.
- (8) Absconder data was not analyzed for probationers.

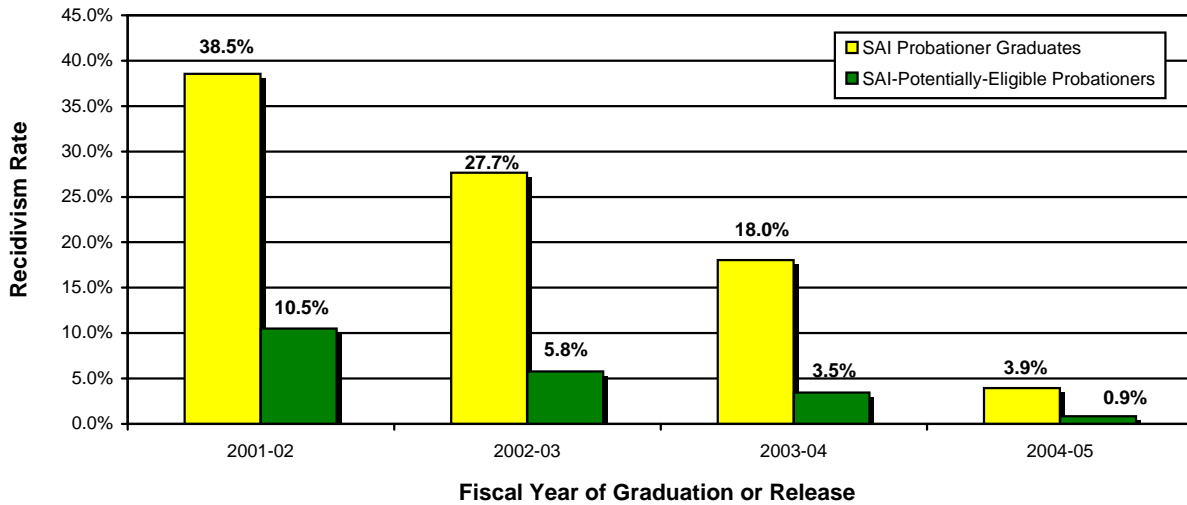
SPECIAL ALTERNATIVE INCARCERATION PROGRAM
Department of Corrections
Recidivism Data

Cumulative Recidivism Data - Prisoners



This chart presents the recidivism rates of SAI prisoner graduates and SAI-eligible prisoners who returned to State custody at any time after graduation, release, or parole, by fiscal year of graduation, release, or parole, as of June 22, 2005.

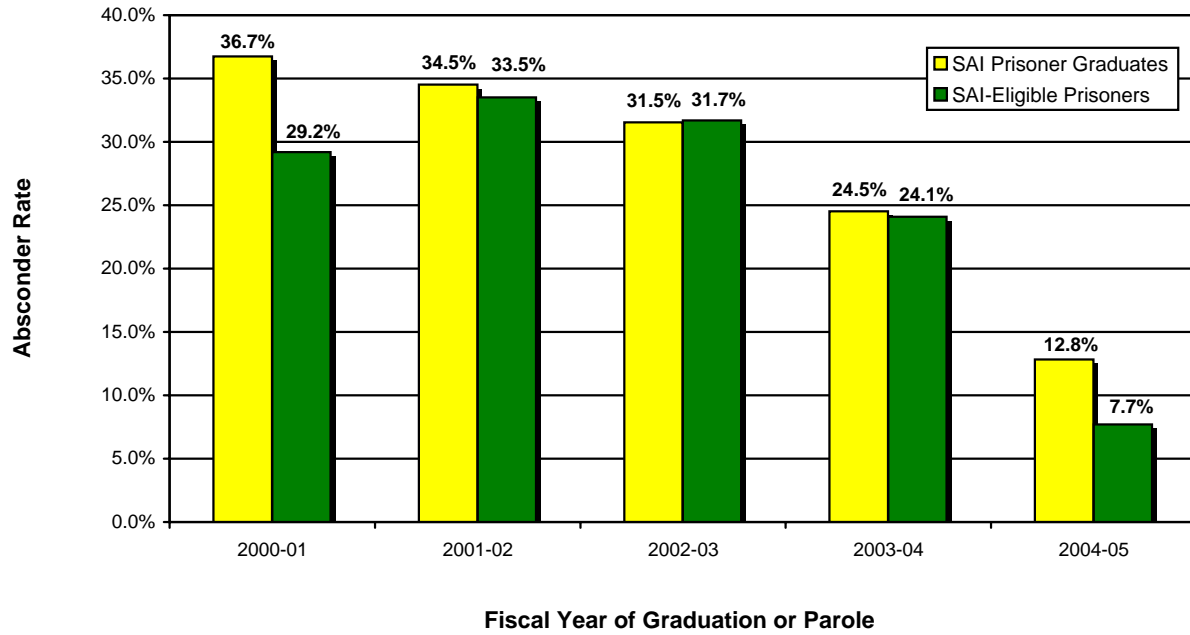
Cumulative Recidivism Data - Probationers



This chart presents the recidivism rates of SAI probationer graduates and SAI-potentially-eligible probationers who returned to State custody at any time after graduation or release, by fiscal year of graduation or release, as of June 22, 2005.

SPECIAL ALTERNATIVE INCARCERATION PROGRAM
Department of Corrections
Absconder Data

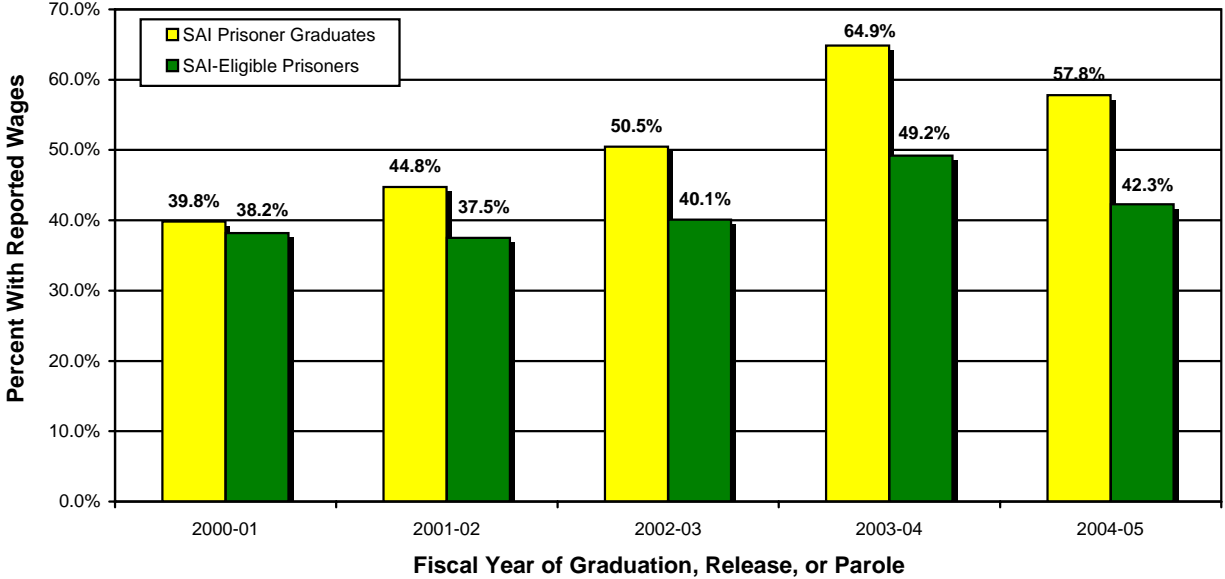
Cumulative Absconder Data - Prisoners



This chart presents the absconder rates of SAI prisoner graduates and SAI-eligible prisoners who absconded from parole at any time after graduation or parole, by fiscal year of graduation or parole, as of June 22, 2005.

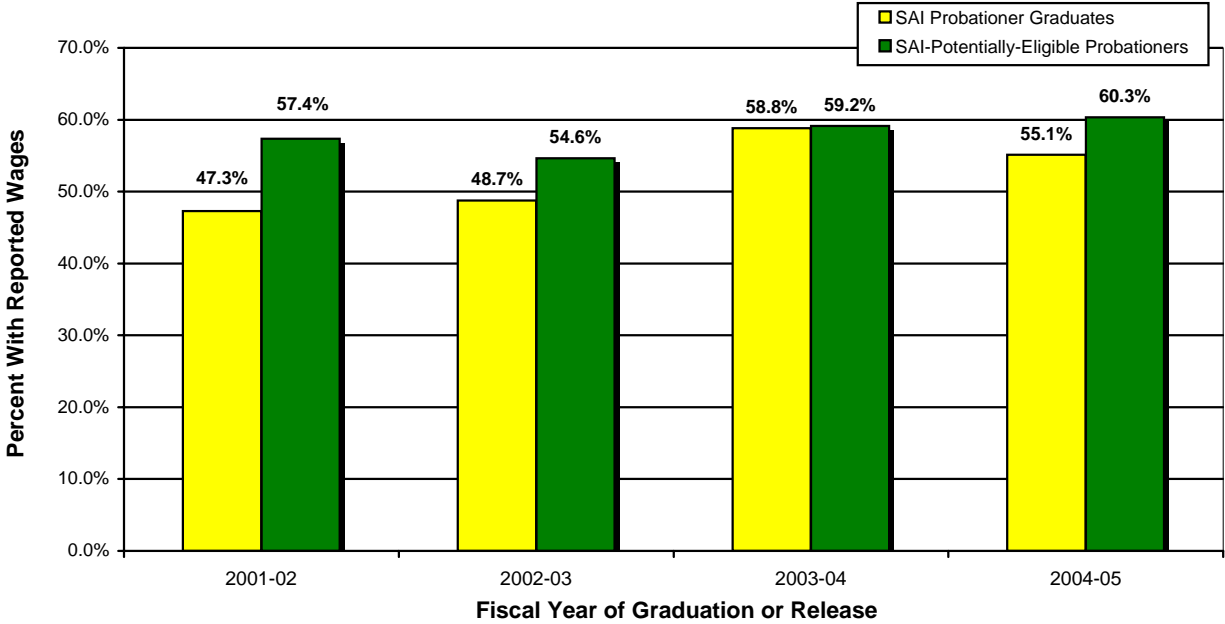
SPECIAL ALTERNATIVE INCARCERATION PROGRAM
Department of Corrections
Reported Wages Data

Cumulative Reported Wages Data - Prisoners



This chart presents the percentages of SAI prisoner graduates and SAI-eligible prisoners who reported wages between April 1, 2004 and June 30, 2005.

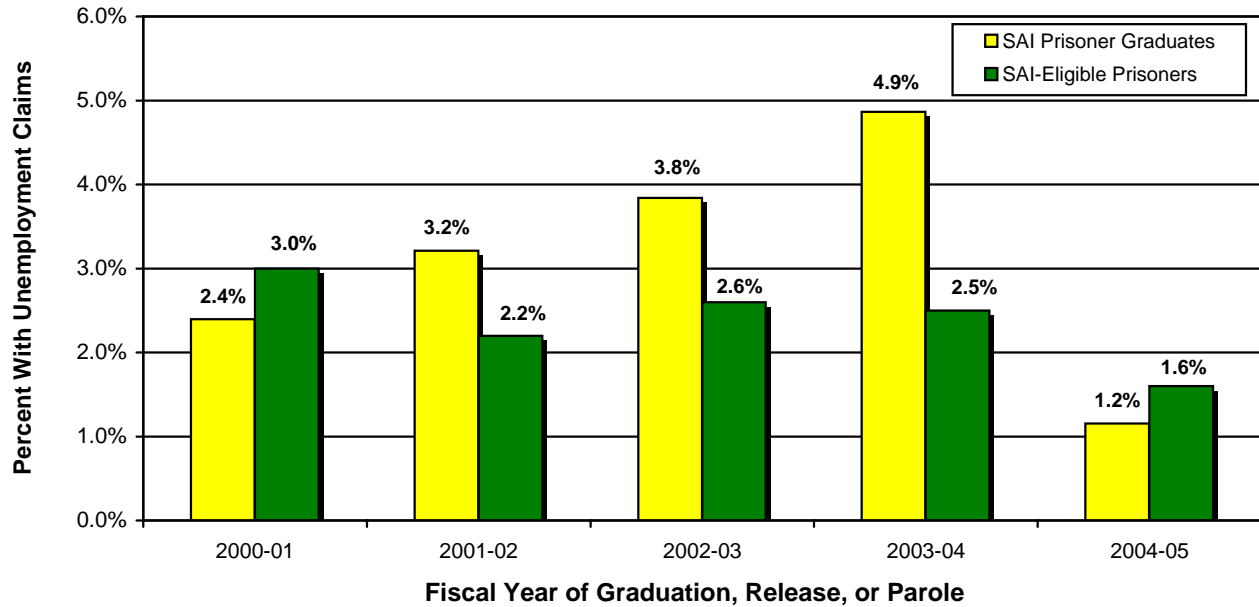
Cumulative Reported Wages Data - Probationers



This chart presents the percentages of SAI probationer graduates and SAI-potentially-eligible probationers who reported wages between April 1, 2004 and June 30, 2005.

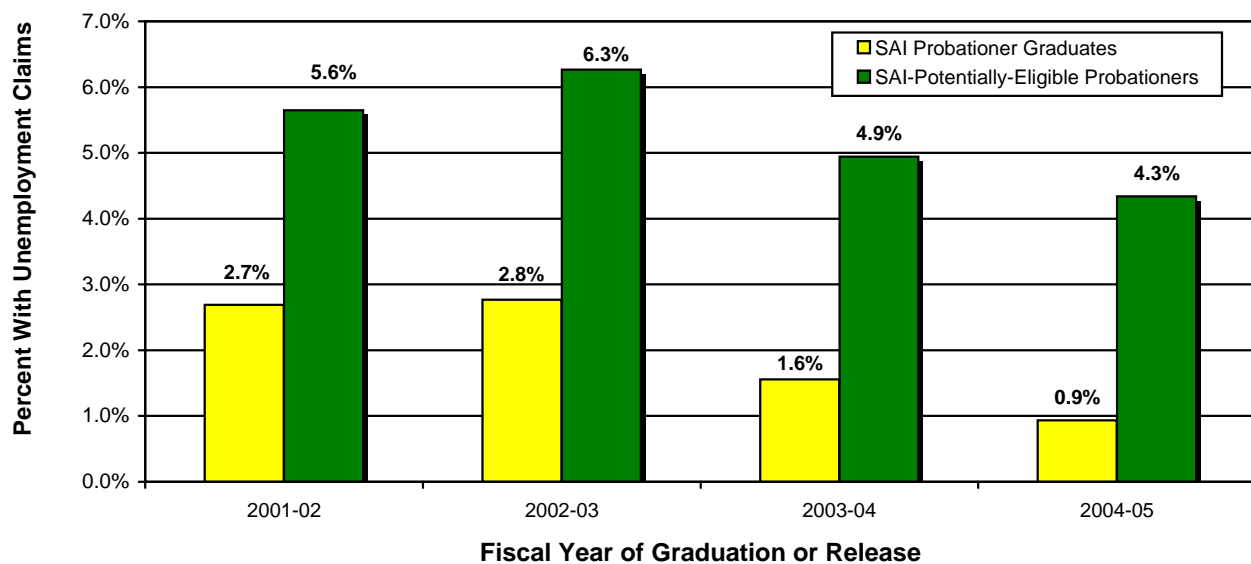
SPECIAL ALTERNATIVE INCARCERATION PROGRAM
Department of Corrections
Unemployment Claims Data

Cumulative Unemployment Claims Data - Prisoners



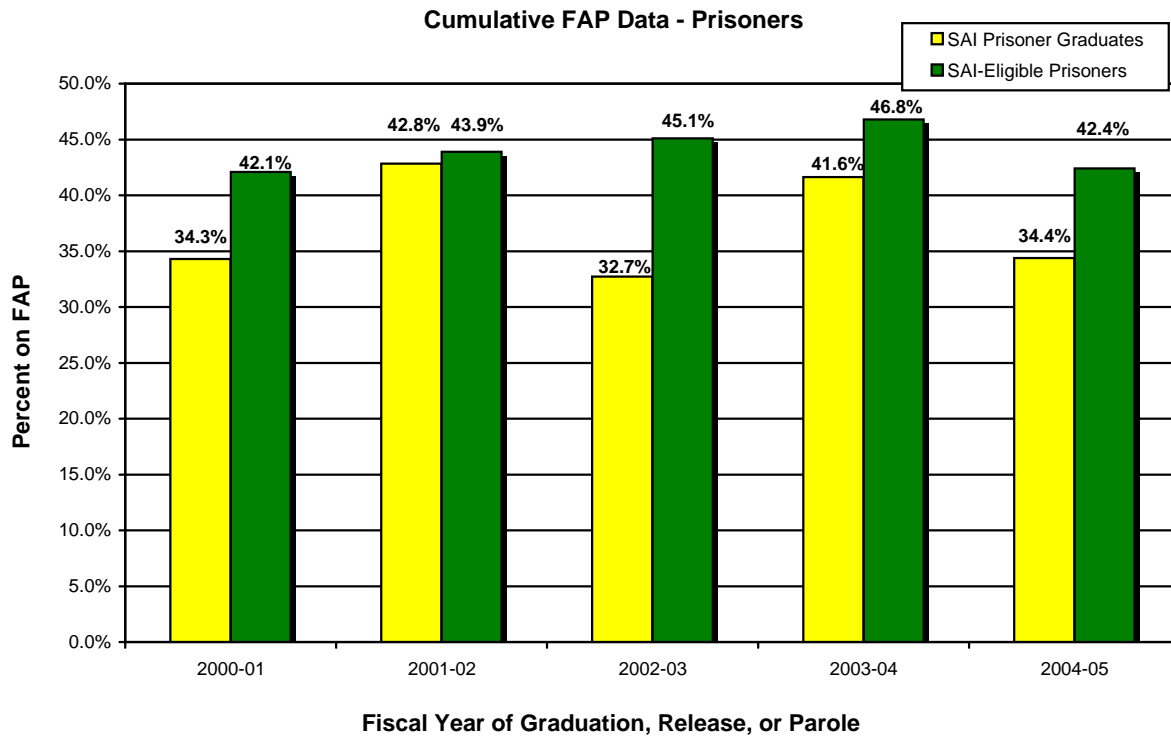
This chart presents the percentages of SAI prisoner graduates and SAI-eligible prisoners who collected unemployment benefits between April 1, 2004 and June 30, 2005.

Cumulative Unemployment Claims Data - Probationers

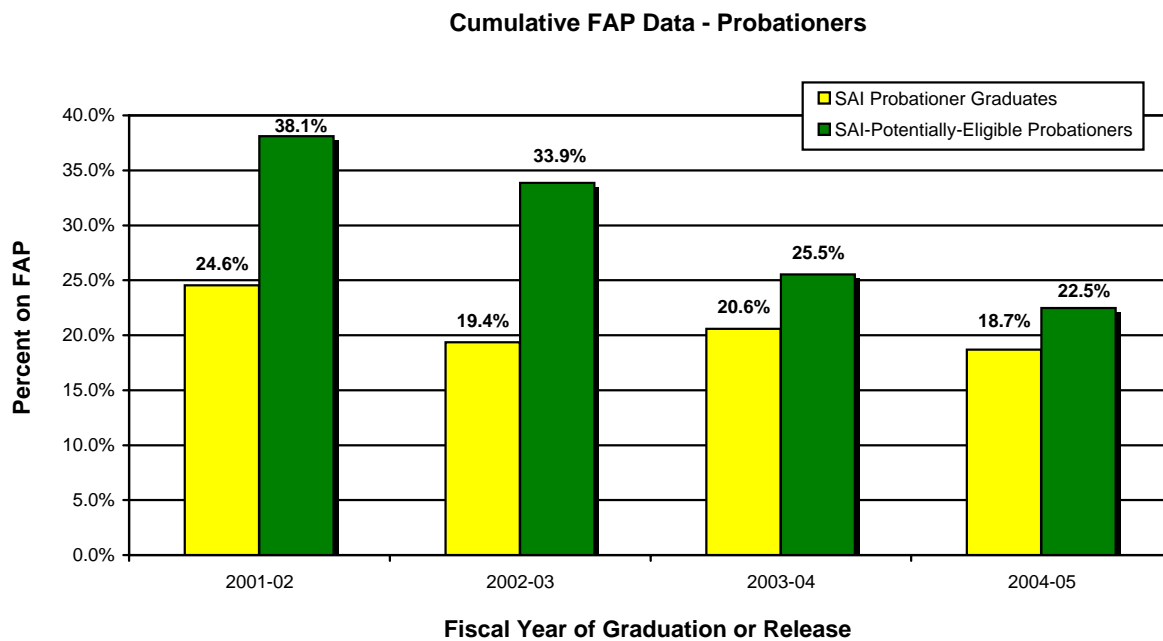


This chart presents the percentages of SAI probationer graduates and SAI-potentially-eligible probationers who collected unemployment benefits between April 1, 2004 and June 30, 2005.

SPECIAL ALTERNATIVE INCARCERATION PROGRAM
Department of Corrections
Food Assistance Program (FAP) Data



This chart presents the percentages of SAI prisoner graduates and SAI-eligible prisoners who received food assistance after graduation, release, or parole through June 22, 2005.



This chart presents the percentages of SAI probationer graduates and SAI-potentially-eligible probationers who received food assistance after graduation, release, or parole through June 22, 2005.

GLOSSARY

Glossary of Acronyms and Terms

absconder	A parolee who has clearly fled supervision and/or missed two consecutive scheduled in-person contacts.
absconder status	The classification assigned to a parolee who has absconded.
critical tools	Items designated specifically for use by employees only or for use or handling by prisoners while under direct employee supervision. Critical tools shall be stored only in a secure area and shall be accounted for at all times.
dangerous tools	Items that may be used or handled by prisoners while under indirect employee supervision. Dangerous tools shall be stored only in a secure area and shall be accounted for at all times.
DOC	Department of Corrections.
effectiveness	Program success in achieving mission and goals.
efficiency	Achieving the most outputs and outcomes practical with the minimum amount of resources.
FAP	Food Assistance Program.
GED	general educational development.
goals	The agency's intended outcomes or impacts for a program to accomplish its mission.
intake	The process of receiving offenders from referral sources and placing them in SAI.
intensive supervision (phase III)	The highest level of parole supervision to which an offender can be assigned. This supervision level requires the highest

	number of contacts between the parolee and the DOC field agent.
minimum security (level I)	The classification assigned to prisons that house prisoners who can live in facilities with a minimal amount of security. These prisoners are normally relatively near parole, are not serving for a sexual offense, and have no history of certain kinds of arson behavior.
MPRI	Michigan Prisoner Reentry Initiative.
objectives	Specific outcomes that a program seeks to achieve its goals.
outcomes	The actual impacts of the program.
performance audit	An economy and efficiency audit or a program audit that is designed to provide an independent assessment of the performance of a governmental entity, program, activity, or function to improve public accountability and to facilitate decision making by parties responsible for overseeing or initiating corrective action.
performance indicator	Information of a quantitative or qualitative nature used to assess achievement of goals and/or objectives.
performance standard	A desired level of output or outcome.
prisoner	Person serving a term of incarceration under the jurisdiction of DOC.
probationer	Person placed on probation pursuant to Chapter XI of the Code of Criminal Procedure, Act 175, P.A. 1927, being Section 771.3b of the <i>Michigan Compiled Laws</i> .
public works	Projects in the local community where trainees work, such as maintaining public residential areas and working in a recycling facility.

quitter	A prisoner or probationer who voluntarily terminates from SAI or is terminated for violating rules or for not meeting the eligibility criteria. Prisoners are reclassified to an appropriate Correctional Facility Administration institution and probationers are returned to the jurisdiction of the sentencing court.
recidivism	The return of a parolee or probationer to State custody.
reportable condition	A matter that, in the auditor's judgment, represents either an opportunity for improvement or a significant deficiency in management's ability to operate a program in an effective and efficient manner.
SAI	Special Alternative Incarceration Program.
SAI-eligible prisoners and SAI-potentially-eligible probationers	Former prisoners and probationers who did not participate in SAI even though their crime and sentence met the requirements to be eligible for SAI.
SAI prisoner graduates and SAI probationer graduates	Former prisoners and probationers who graduated from SAI.
self-audits	Audits performed by facility staff that enable management and staff to ensure that all operational units comply with policy directives and take proactive steps to correct any noncompliance. Performing self-audits is intended to maximize safe and efficient operations by DOC.
shakedown	The act of searching a trainee, an employee, or a visitor to ensure that he/she does not have any contraband in his/her possession.
trainee	An offender and participant in SAI (either a prisoner or a probationer).

