**State Auditor's Office**

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An Audit Report on

# Parole Division Operations at the Department of Criminal Justice

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*An Audit Report on*

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## Overall Conclusion

The Department of Criminal Justice (Department) used the tools available to it to monitor parole officer caseloads, track drug tests and offender contacts, and ensure that parole offices had sufficient coverage for parole officers on leave. The Department tracked 93 percent of the required drug tests and 96 percent of the required offender contacts in its Offender Information Management System (OIMS) for fiscal year 2009 and the first half of fiscal year 2010.

In addition, the Department reported its caseload ratios to the Office of the Governor and the Legislative Budget Board as required by the Texas Government Code and General Appropriations Act (81st Legislature). However, the Department exceeded the caseload guidelines established in the Texas Government Code and the General Appropriations Act. Also, the methodology used to calculate the caseload ratios in these reports understates the caseloads when compared to the methodology established in the Department's policies and procedures to calculate caseload ratios. For example, in its April 2010 report to the Legislative Budget Board, the Department reported that it had an overall caseload ratio of 63.5 offenders per parole officer. However, using the methodology for calculating caseload ratios in the Department's policies, auditors determined that the Department's overall caseload ratio was 78.8 offenders per parole officer, which more accurately reflects the resources needed to manage caseloads with offenders requiring differing levels of supervision.

The Department also should ensure that quality reviews used to monitor parole officers' caseloads are conducted within required time frames and tracked appropriately.

> **Background Information**
>
> The Department of Criminal Justice's Parole Division (Division) supervises offenders on parole and mandatory supervision. Offenders report to a parole officer for supervision based on their offender category. For fiscal year 2009 and the first half of fiscal year 2010, the Division supervised an average of 79,939 parolees. The average number of parole officers during this time period was 1,255.
>
> On average, for fiscal year 2009 and the first half of fiscal year 2010, the Division supervised offenders in the following case categories:
>
> - 63,337 offenders classified as **regular offenders** with minimum, medium, or maximum supervision levels.
>
> - 4,802 offenders classified under the **Special Needs Offender Program**, which includes mentally impaired, mentally retarded, terminally ill, or physically handicapped offenders.
>
> - 3,448 offenders classified as **Therapeutic Community**, which is for offenders with substance abuse issues.
>
> - 3,028 offenders classified as **sex offenders**.
>
> - 2,157 offenders classified as **other/unknown** for whom the supervision level had not been identified in the Offender Information Management System.
>
> - 1,677 offenders who were placed on **electronic monitoring** and were monitored using radio frequency equipment.
>
> - 1,490 offenders classified under the **Super-Intensive Supervision Program**. These offenders were monitored using Global Positioning System (GPS) technology.

## Survey of Parole Officers and Supervisors

Auditors surveyed 1,234 parole officers and received responses from 537 (44 percent response rate) related to parole officer training, caseloads, job duties, and the use of OIMS.  Auditors also surveyed 243 unit supervisors and parole supervisors (supervisors) and received responses from 168 (69 percent response rate) related to supervisor training, caseload management, and the use of OIMS.  Survey responses generally aligned with the audit findings in this report.  While Parole Division supervisors generally reported that they had the necessary tools to monitor parole officer caseloads, the parole officers expressed concerns about the size of their caseloads and the overtime required to manage them.

## Parole Officer Training

Generally, the Department ensured that parole officers completed required training.  Specifically:

➢ All new parole officers hired between July 2004 and January 2010 attended the required six-week Parole Officer Training Academy.

➢ The majority of supervisors promoted since January 2004 and parole officers who oversee specialized caseloads attended training as required.

However, the Department should improve the training it provides to parole officers by:

➢ Updating its curriculum to ensure that it matches the requirements in the Department's policies and procedures.

➢ Providing training for supervisors and parole officers who oversee specialized caseloads on a regular basis.

➢ Reviewing its policy and determining whether resources are available to provide 40 hours of in-service training biennially.  None of the 883 parole officers completed the required 40 hours of in-service training for the 2008-2009 biennium because the Department did not offer a sufficient amount of in-service training during that time period.  However, 91 percent of the parole officers who were required to take in-service training in fiscal year 2009 completed at least 20 hours.

## Prior Recommendations

The Department had fully or substantially implemented most of the prior State Auditor's Office recommendations in *An Audit Report on Selected Parole Functions at the Department of Criminal Justice and the Board of Pardons and Paroles* (State Auditor's Office Report No. 08-036, June 2008) regarding offender contacts, drug testing, and information technology improvements.

## Summary of Management's Response

The Department agreed with the recommendations in this report.

## Summary of Objectives, Scope, and Methodology

The objectives of the audit were to:

➢ Determine whether the training that the Department provides to parole officers is consistent with Department policies and procedures.

➢ Determine whether the Department's management of parole officer caseloads and offender contacts complies with Department policies and procedures and state law.

➢ Determine whether the Department has taken corrective actions to address selected recommendations from *An Audit Report on Selected Parole Functions at the Department of Criminal Justice and the Board of Pardons and Paroles* (State Auditor's Office Report No. 08-036, June 2008).

The scope of the audit included reviewing and analyzing various Department training data from July 2004 through February 2010 and parole supervision and caseload data from September 2008 through February 2010. In addition, auditors surveyed 1,234 parole officers and 243 unit supervisors and parole supervisors (supervisors) and received survey responses from 537 parole officers (44 percent) and 168 (69 percent) supervisors.

The audit methodology included collecting information and documentation, performing selected tests and other procedures, analyzing and evaluating the results of the tests, and conducting interviews with staff from selected parole offices and the Department's Parole Division. Information technology work was primarily limited to following up on the information technology recommendations from the previous State Auditor's Office report (see Chapter 3).

Auditors also identified issues of a sensitive nature related to training and other less significant issues that were communicated separately in writing to the Department.

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# Detailed Results

## While the Department Manages Parole Officer Caseloads and Tracks Offender Contacts as Required, It Should Improve Its Reporting of Caseload Ratios and Tracking of Quality Reviews

The Department of Criminal Justice (Department) used the tools available to it to (1) monitor parole officer caseloads on a daily or weekly basis, (2) track drug tests and offender contacts, and (3) ensure that parole offices have sufficient coverage while a parole officer is on leave. The Department reported caseload ratios to the Office of the Governor and the Legislative Budget Board as required by the Texas Government Code and General Appropriations Act (81st Legislature). However, the Department exceeded the caseload guidelines established in the Texas Government Code and the General Appropriations Act. Also, the methodology the Department used to calculate the caseload ratios in these reports understates the caseloads when compared to the methodology established in the Department's policies and procedures to calculate caseload ratios. The Department should also improve its quality review processes to ensure that the quality reviews used to monitor parole officers' caseloads are conducted within the required time frames and tracked appropriately.

### Chapter 1-A
### The Department Managed Parole Officer Caseloads and Tracked Drug Tests and Offender Contacts as Required; However, It Did Not Always Ensure That Drug Tests and Offender Contacts Were Recorded in a Timely Manner or Adequately Supported

The Department's Parole Division used various tools, such as automated caseload reports and data collected in the Department's Offender Information Management System (OIMS), to monitor parole officer caseloads on a daily or weekly basis and to ensure that parole offices had sufficient coverage and backup while a parole officer was on leave.

In addition, parole officers appropriately tracked the required offender drug tests and offender contacts for the majority of the offenders tested; however, the Department did not ensure that parole officers entered all drugs tests and offender contacts into OIMS within the required three days. Further, the Department did not always maintain supporting documentation for the drug tests entered into OIMS.

The Department monitored parole officer caseloads on at least a weekly basis.

Each parole office is allocated a certain number of parole officers (see text box for Department-wide allocations). As new offenders are assigned to a parole office on a daily or weekly basis, unit supervisors and parole supervisors (supervisors) are responsible for assigning them to a parole officer. Supervisors at the 10 parole offices that auditors visited used various reports from OIMS and the Department's mainframe computer to review parole officer caseloads and distribute the assigned offenders in as equitable a manner as possible.

To do this, the supervisors must consider an offender's case category to determine the level of supervision that will be required (see Chapter 1-B for more information about case categories). In addition, the offender's assignment may depend on his or her home address because the parole officer may be required to conduct home visits. When a parole officer is on extended leave, the supervisors also must reallocate the caseload among a parole office's other parole officers.

**The Department ensured that parole offices had sufficient coverage for parole officers on short-term leave.**

Auditors reviewed 10 parole offices' backup plans and duty day schedules and determined that all 10 offices had sufficient coverage when parole officers were on short-term leave. Department policy requires parole offices to provide trained backup officers for parole officers on short-term leave who have Super-Intensive Supervision Program and electronic monitoring offenders in their caseloads. Generally, these parole officers are the only parole officers for whom official backups are provided in all parole offices. In addition, all 10 offices visited relied on "duty officers" to provide backup for regular parole officers on short-term leave by helping with office visits, drug testing, or any other offender contacts needed.

**The Department's parole officers appropriately tracked drug tests and offender contacts.**

For the 300 offenders whom auditors tested, the Department's parole officers consistently tracked drug tests and offender contacts as required. The Department's OIMS showed that parole officers completed 1,111 (93 percent) of 1,192 required drug tests and 7,589 (96 percent) of 7,931 required offender contacts during fiscal year 2009 and the first half of fiscal year 2010.

**The Department did not ensure that parole officers entered all drugs tests and offender contacts into OIMS within the required three days.**

The Department's parole officers entered 141 (90 percent) of 157 drug tests that auditors reviewed and 968 (80 percent) of 1,209 regular offender contacts reviewed into OIMS within the required three days. For the 16 drug tests not entered within 3 days, the entry into OIMS ranged from 4 days to 42 days

after the drug test was completed.  The remaining 241 offender contacts reviewed were entered into OIMS between 4 and 64 days after the offender contact was completed.

Of the 537 parole officers who responded to auditors' survey, 326 (61 percent) agreed that they had enough time during the work week to perform required offender drug testing, and only 159 (30 percent) agreed that they had enough time to perform all required offender contacts.  In addition, 263 (49 percent) of 537 OIMS users surveyed stated that they did not have adequate computer resources to enter offender drug testing and contact information into OIMS within the required 3-day time frame (see Chapter 3 for more information).

In addition, the Department's policies do not specify time frames for entering offender contacts into OIMS for case categories other than regular supervision.  Without up-to-date information in OIMS, the Department's ability to ensure that parole officers with specialized caseloads are completing offender contacts as required is reduced.  Establishing and enforcing time frames for parole officers to enter this information into OIMS could help the Department more effectively monitor offender contacts.

**The Department did not consistently maintain supporting documentation for the drug tests entered into OIMS as complete.**

The Department could not provide auditors a signed drug test form for 75 (31 percent) of 240 drug tests that auditors reviewed at 8 parole offices visited.  At the other two offices auditors visited, parole officers sent the signed drug test forms to the regional office, where a clerk was assigned to enter the information from the drug test forms into a spreadsheet.  The regional office did not have drug test dates for 116 (25 percent) of 463 drug tests entered in OIMS as completed.  The Department's record retention schedule requires the Department to retain the drug test results for at least three years.  Without a signed drug test form, the Department's ability to ensure that the drug tests were actually conducted is reduced.

### Recommendations

The Department should:

- Ensure that its parole officers update OIMS within the required time frames for offender contacts and drug testing results.

- Update its policies and procedures to establish time frames within which parole officers must enter offender contacts into OIMS for specialized programs.

- Maintain all records related to drug testing in compliance with the Department's records retention schedule.

## Management's Response

*The TDCJ agrees to continue taking steps to ensure the Offender Information Management System (OIMS) contact and drug testing information is updated timely. The Parole Division implemented processes to improve parole officer performance in the completion of required offender contacts and drug testing, which is noted in the audit report. The Parole Division modified the Contact Standards for Regular Supervision Cases policy in Fiscal Year (FY) 2010 on the required timeframes to update the OIMS during the audit period, which should improve performance.*

*The TDCJ agrees to update policies and procedures to establish timeframes for entry of offender contacts. Policies relative to specialized caseloads will be updated and additional processes to monitor parole officer compliance with timeframes will be instituted.*

*The TDCJ agrees to review and, as necessary, revise policies and procedures to ensure drug testing records are consistently maintained as outlined by established retention schedules.*

# The Department Accurately Classified Offenders to Reflect Special Conditions; However, It Exceeded Caseload Guidelines in Fiscal Year 2009 and Should Improve How It Reports This Information

The Department accurately classified offenders' case categories to reflect the special conditions imposed on the offenders by the Board of Pardons and Paroles (see text box). Of the 300 offenders tested at 10 parole offices, 299 were accurately classified within OIMS. The accuracy of these classifications is important because (1) different case categories require different supervision levels by the parole officers and (2) the Department's caseload guidelines establish differing caseload ratios based on the categories of cases assigned to a parole officer.

> **Classification Process**
>
> Each offender is assigned a parole officer who classifies the offender's case category in OIMS based on the special conditions imposed by the Board of Pardons and Paroles (Board). Any changes made to an offender's case category must receive supervisory approval in order to become active in OIMS. Changes to certain conditions also require approval from the Board.

The Texas Government Code and the General Appropriations Act (81st Legislature) establish differing maximum caseload ratios for the Department's parole officers. The Department's policies establish maximum caseloads that comply with the maximum caseload ratios established in the General Appropriations Act. However, the ratios in the Department's policies exceed the maximum caseload ratios required by Texas Government Code, Section 508.1142 (see Table 1). For example, the Texas Government Code establishes a maximum caseload of 60 regular offenders to each parole officer, whereas the Department's policy and the General Appropriations Act set the maximum caseload at 75 regular offenders to each parole officer.

Table 1

| Maximum Caseload Ratios | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Case Category** | **Maximum Ratio Set by the Texas Government Code** | **Maximum Ratio Set by the General Appropriations Act (81st Legislature)** | **Maximum Ratio Set by Department Policies** |
| Regular | 60 offenders to 1 parole officer | 75 offenders to 1 parole officer | 75 offenders to 1 parole officer |
| Therapeutic Community | 35 offenders to 1 parole officer | Not applicable [a] | 75 offenders to 1 parole officer |
| Electronic Monitoring (Intensive Supervision) | 20 offenders to 1 parole officer | 25 offenders to 1 parole officer | 25 offenders to 1 parole officer |
| Super-Intensive Supervision Program | 11 offenders to 1 parole officer | 20 offenders to 1 parole officer | 14 offenders to 1 parole officer |
| Sex Offender | 24 offenders to 1 parole officer | Not applicable [a] | 30 offenders to 1 parole officer |
| Special Needs Offender Program | 35 offenders to 1 parole officer | Not applicable [a] | 45 offenders to 1 parole officer |
| [a] These caseload ratios were not specifically mentioned in the General Appropriations Act. | | | |

The Department reported caseload ratios as required to the Office of the Governor and the Legislative Budget Board (see text box). However, the methodology used to calculate the caseload ratios in these reports understates the caseloads when compared to the methodology established in the Department's policies and procedures to calculate caseload ratios. Because a parole officer's caseload may consist of several categories of cases, the Department's policies and procedures provide a methodology for calculating caseloads using assigned weights for each type of case (see Appendix 4 for a listing of these assigned weights).

For example, in its April 2010 report[1] to the Legislative Budget Board, the Department reported an overall caseload ratio of 63.5 offenders per parole officer. Using the Department's methodology, auditors calculated that the Department's overall caseload ratio was 78.8 offenders per parole officer, which more accurately reflects the resources needed to manage caseloads with offenders requiring differing levels of supervision.

In addition, using the Department's methodology, auditors calculated that the Department's average caseload for fiscal year 2009 was 77.2 offenders per parole officer, which exceeded the guidelines.

Further, the Department did not submit its annual report to the Legislative Budget Board in a timely manner. Specifically, the Department submitted its fiscal year 2009 report to the Legislative Budget Board in April 2010 (eight months after the fiscal year end).

The Department also implemented a new Therapeutic Community Phase 1-B Program in July 2008 (see text box). According to Department management, parole officers whose caseloads include offenders in this program should have a caseload ratio of 55 offenders to 1 parole officer, which is lower than some of its other caseload guidelines; however, the Department has not updated its policies to reflect this. The Department's policies also do not address offender contact standards for offenders in the Therapeutic Community Phase I-B program.

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[1] This report was based on caseload data for January 2010.

### Recommendations

The Department should:

- Seek clarification and agreement on the caseload guidelines and related reports required by the Texas Government Code and the General Appropriations Act and reflect any changes in related internal policies.

- Report caseload ratios for the fiscal year to the Legislative Budget Board in a timely manner following the fiscal year end (if caseload ratios do not meet guidelines).

- Update its policies to include caseload ratios and offender contact standards for offenders in the Therapeutic Community Phase I-B program.

### Management's Response

*The TDCJ agrees to seek clarification and agreement on the case load requirements as outlined in the Texas Government Code and the General Appropriations Act, and reflect the agreed changes in related internal policies. Once a methodology is agreed upon, the TDCJ agrees to use the established methodology when calculating and reporting caseload ratios to the Legislative Budget Board and the Governor's Office.*

*The TDCJ agrees to report caseload ratios to the Legislative Budget Board as required in a timely manner, following the end of the fiscal year.*

*The TDCJ agrees to update policies and procedures to reflect caseload ratios and contact standards for therapeutic community offenders on the Phase I-B program. The Parole Division implemented the therapeutic community Phase I-B program in July 2008 and trained employees on the specific requirements.*

## The Department Should Ensure That Quality Reviews Are Conducted within Required Time Frames

The Department did not consistently ensure that quality reviews conducted by parole officers' supervisors from August 2008 through June 2010 were completed within the required time frames (see text box for details about the quality reviews and their required time frames). Of the 289 quality reviews tested, 209 (72 percent) were completed on time. In addition, of the 267 quality review follow-ups tested:

- 207 (78 percent) were completed within 30 workdays following quality review completion or within 45 days if given an extension.

- 40 (15 percent) lacked documentation showing that the quality review follow-ups had been performed.

- 20 (7 percent) were completed between 32 and 84 workdays following the completion of the original quality reviews. Department policy states that follow-up reviews must be completed with 30 workdays following the completion of the original quality review.

In addition, the Department did not ensure that its regional management adequately tracked the quality reviews and maintained adequate supporting documentation. Specifically:

- Two regions did not record follow-up dates in their tracking systems as required by Department policy.

- At one region, information for 6 (10 percent) of 63 parole officers was missing from the tracking systems. This limited auditors' ability to ensure the accuracy of the tracking systems. In addition, auditors determined that the tracking systems at two offices in this region did not include all the quality reviews performed in fiscal year 2009 and the first half of fiscal year 2010.

Department policies do not address quality review requirements when a parole officer is on extended leave for more than 30 days. For example, if a parole officer is on leave for Family and Medical Leave Act reasons for more than 30 days, the Department's policies do not state when a quality review should take place. The policies state only that the subsequent quality review should be conducted within one month of the originally scheduled quality review.

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### Quality Reviews

Reviews are performed on each parole officer to ensure that offenders receive appropriate services, to identify general or specific areas that require additional training, and to monitor parole officers' performance for evaluation purposes. Department policies require a regional director or designee to maintain a tracking system for the completion of quality reviews and follow-up reviews.

The quality reviews must be completed within the following time frames:

- **Training quality reviews**: Must be completed within two months of the date a parole officer completes the Parole Officer Training Academy.

- **Regular quality reviews**: Must be completed within four months of the training quality review and every six months from the date of the last regular quality review.

- **Special quality reviews**: Must be completed either (1) within four months of a parole officer's transfer from another district parole office or (2) before a parole officer leaves a position for any reason and more than three months have elapsed since the last quality review. Special quality reviews may also be conducted at management's discretion.

- **Extensions**: If a postponement is granted, the subsequent quality review shall be conducted within one month of the originally scheduled quality review.

- **Quality review follow-ups**: Must be completed by the 30th workday following the completion of the original quality review. The parole officer may request additional time to prepare for the follow-up. The follow-up may not be extended for more than 45 days from the date on which the quality review was signed by the parole officer.

Source: Department policy and operating procedures.

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### Recommendations

The Department should:

- Ensure that supervisors conduct quality reviews within the required time frames.

- Ensure that regional management maintains tracking systems and quality review documentation as required by Department policy.

- Revise its policies to address quality review requirements for parole officers taking extended leave.

### Management's Response

*The TDCJ agrees and will continue to develop and implement procedures for the timely completion of quality reviews. Since 2007, the Parole Division has been working with the TDCJ's Information Technology Division to automate a case and caseload review process utilizing OIMS to replace the current quality review process which is manual and time consuming. Additional processes will be put in place to address the challenges with the current procedures until a more automated system is developed.*

*The TDCJ agrees to continue to develop and revise management oversight tracking reports and maintain documentation of quality reviews.*

*The TDCJ agrees to update policies and procedures to address timeframes for completion of quality reviews for officers on extended leave. Related policies will be updated accordingly.*

Chapter 1-D
## Supervisors Generally Reported They Have the Necessary Tools to Monitor Parole Officer Caseloads; However, Parole Officers Expressed Concerns About Caseloads and Overtime

Auditors surveyed 243 unit supervisors and parole supervisors (supervisors) regarding caseload management and available monitoring tools. Of the 168 supervisors who responded:

- 70 percent agreed they are given the tools necessary to properly monitor the completion of offender contacts; only 13 percent disagreed with this statement.[2]

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[2] The remaining respondents were either "neutral" regarding the survey statement or responded that the survey statement was "not applicable."

- 65 percent agreed they have the tools necessary to properly monitor parole officer caseload levels; only 21 percent disagreed with this statement.[3]

- 38 percent agreed that regional management is responsive to changes in staffing needs in the area that they supervise; 38 percent disagreed with this statement.[3]

- 56 percent agreed they are able to make necessary adjustments to parole officer caseloads in a timely manner; 26 percent disagreed with this statement.[3]

Auditors surveyed 1,234 parole officers regarding their job duties and caseloads. Of the 537 parole officers who responded:

- 21 percent agreed that their caseload allowed them to effectively perform their job responsibilities.

- 41 percent agreed that concerns they have regarding caseload size or offender contacts are addressed by their supervisor in a timely manner.

- 18 percent agreed that their caseload is adjusted when it exceeds the standard set by Department policy.

Of those parole officers who provided written comments, 15 percent had concerns about requesting and reporting overtime and 20 percent stated that their caseloads were too high.

Auditors noted that the survey responses were consistent with audit results. See Appendix 2 for full survey results.

**Additional monitoring tools are available to monitor parole officers' voice mails.**

Auditors noted that only 4 of the 10 district parole offices visited had voice mail installed so that offenders could leave messages; the remaining offices had a central number available that offenders could call during business hours. At the four offices with voice mail, the system can provide a report that supervisors could use to track each parole officer's new and total messages in their in-boxes; however, several supervisors were not aware of this monitoring tool.

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[3] The remaining respondents were either "neutral" regarding the survey statement or responded that the survey statement was "not applicable."

### Recommendations

The Department should:

- Review the survey results and make any necessary changes based on its analysis.

- Ensure that parole offices are aware of reports that can be used to monitor voice mails.

### Management's Response

*The TDCJ values input from parole officers on division operations and agrees to review survey results. For several years the Parole Division has conducted parole officer focus groups on broad topics, such as, OIMS and procedures for specialized programs in an attempt to obtain input similar to the State Auditor's Office survey results. Further, the Parole Division staffs all policy revisions to regional management and parole officers prior to implementation. The Parole Division investigated and implemented a limited e-learning program for parole officers attending the training academy. The Parole Division is currently reviewing electronic survey methods in order to increase operational input from parole officers and supervisors. Lastly, the Parole Division conducts regular monthly videoconferences with regional management.*

*The TDCJ agrees to ensure parole offices are aware of the capability of available monitoring reports in locations where voicemail is being utilized.*

## The Department Generally Ensured That Parole Officers Completed Required Training; However, It Should Improve Its Training by Updating Its Curriculum and Offering In-service and Other Training on a Regular Basis

Generally, the Department ensured that parole officers completed required training (see text box). Specifically:

> **Training Overview**
>
> The Parole Division offers four types of training for its parole officers and supervisors:
> - Parole Officer Training Academy.
> - Specialized Officer Supervision School.
> - In-service training.
> - Supervisory classes.
>
> The Parole Division has tracked the attendance at these classes in its Personnel and Payroll System (training database) since September 2004.

- All new parole officers hired between July 2004 and January 2010 attended the required Parole Officer Training Academy.

- The majority of unit supervisors and parole supervisors (supervisors) promoted since January 2004 and parole officers who oversee specialized caseloads attended training as required.

However, the Department should improve the training it provides to parole officers by:

- Updating its curriculum to ensure that it matches the requirements in the Department's policies and procedures.

- Providing training for supervisors and parole officers who oversee specialized caseloads on a regular basis.

- Reviewing its policy and determining whether resources are available to provide 40 hours of in-service training biennially.

### Chapter 2-A
### Training Is Provided to New Parole Officers as Required; However, the Department Should Improve the Training Curriculum

> **Parole Officer Training Academy**
>
> Department policy requires all new parole officers to complete the Parole Officer Training Academy (POTA), which is a six-week course. Participants must pass several tests throughout the course to graduate. The classes are located in Beeville, Texas and are taught by Parole Division training instructors.
>
> Classes offered through POTA include:
> - Department and policy overview.
> - Offender supervision (contacts, substance abuse, case categories, schedules, and other topics).
> - Use of OIMS.
> - Officer safety.
> - Hearings processes.
> - Quality reviews.

The Department's training database shows that all 778 active parole officers who were hired from July 2004 through January 2010 attended the Department's Parole Officer Training Academy (POTA) as required (see text box). In addition, for all 30 new parole officers tested, the Department had documentation confirming that they attended POTA in fiscal year 2009 or the first half of fiscal year 2010 and passed the tests necessary to graduate.

However, the Department has not updated the POTA training curriculum related to offender contacts and drug testing since it revised its policies in these areas. As a result, the training may not provide parole officers with the most updated information needed to perform their job duties.

**Survey results indicated that the POTA curriculum could be improved.**

Of the 537 parole officers that responded to auditors' survey, 254 (47 percent) stated that POTA training overall did not sufficiently prepare them for their parole officer responsibilities, and 202 (38 percent) stated that the POTA training on OIMS did not sufficiently prepare them for using the system. However, 293 (55 percent) stated that the POTA training on contact standards was useful, and 253 (47 percent) stated that the POTA training on drug testing procedures was useful.

When asked to rank the type of training on which POTA should place more emphasis, the parole officers' most common response was training on OIMS, followed by training on offender contacts and drug testing. In addition, 24 percent of the parole officers who provided written comments in the survey stated that more hands-on or on-the-job training would be helpful.

### Recommendations

The Department should:

- Regularly update the POTA training curriculum as needed to align with Department policies, including those for offender contacts and drug testing.

- Consider modifying the POTA curriculum to address the areas needing improvement identified by parole officers in auditors' survey. This could include increasing training on OIMS, drug testing, and offender contacts, as well as increasing hands-on or on-the-job training.

### Management's Response

*The TDCJ agrees to update policies and procedures and ensure curriculum updates are timely and coincide with the posting of updated or developed policies.*

*The TDCJ values input from parole officers on division operations and agrees to review survey results. Survey information will be analyzed to determine potential modifications to Parole Officer Training Academy (POTA) or in-service training. The Parole Division strives to provide the most current TDCJ policy information to affected staff, to include timeframes to enter offender contacts and maintaining drug testing documents at the Parole Officer Training Academy. The Parole Division will also determine the need for increasing hands-on or on-the-job training.*

## Training Provided to Officers Who Oversee Specialized Caseloads Generally Occurs as Required and Is Consistent with Department Policy; However, the Department Should Improve Its Therapeutic Community Training

The Department's training database shows that most parole officers who oversee a specialized caseload have completed the required Specialized Officer Supervision School (SOSS) training. Auditors reviewed the training completed by the specialized officers as of March 2010 (see text box for more information about SOSS training) in the training database. Specifically:

- Ninety (97 percent) of 93 parole officers tested who supervised sex offenders had completed the required SOSS training.

- Sixty-three (98 percent) of 64 Special Needs Offender Program parole officers tested had completed the required SOSS training.

- Seventy-nine (98 percent) of 81 Super-Intensive Supervision Program/electronic monitoring parole officers tested had completed the required SOSS training.

- Forty-seven (96 percent) of 49 Therapeutic Community parole officers tested had completed the required SOSS training.

In addition, for all 30 parole officers tested who had attended SOSS training, the Department had documentation confirming their attendance and graduation from the required SOSS class.

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**Specialized Officer Supervision Schools (SOSS)**

SOSS training consists of one-week courses that all parole officers who oversee specialized caseloads are required to complete according to Department policy. As of March 2010, the Department offered the following SOSS courses:

- Special Needs Offender Program training. This included training for mentally impaired, mentally retarded, terminally ill, or physically handicapped offenders.

- Sex offender training.

- Super-Intensive Supervision Program/electronic monitoring training.

- Therapeutic Community training. This included training for officers who oversee offenders with substance abuse issues.

Participants must pass a class test to graduate. The classes are taught by individuals in the Parole Division's Specialized Programs Department and Warrants Section.

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While Department policy states that parole officers who oversee a specialized caseload should take the next available SOSS class related to the category of offender being supervised, the Department did not consistently offer these classes on a regular basis. For example, during fiscal year 2009, there was a gap of more than five months between SOSS classes for Therapeutic Community officers and a gap of nearly nine months between SOSS classes for Super-Intensive Supervision Program/electronic monitoring officers.

Auditors reviewed the Department's curriculum for all four SOSS classes offered as of March 2010 and determined that the curriculum aligns with the related policies for caseload ratios, offender contacts, and drug testing.

Survey results indicated that parole officers find SOSS training to be useful. Of the 347 specialized parole officers who responded to the auditors' survey statement on overall SOSS training, 190 (55 percent) agreed that SOSS training overall prepared them for their responsibilities as a parole officer with a specialized caseload. A total of 235 (67 percent) of the 350 specialized

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**Experiential Training and Immersion Training Courses**

Experiential Training and Immersion Training courses are 3 to 3.5 days each and offered to Therapeutic Community parole officers by the Department's Rehabilitation Programs Division. These classes teach participants what it is like to be an active member of the therapeutic community process.

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parole officers who responded to the auditors' survey statement on SOSS contract standards training agreed that the SOSS training on contact standards was useful.

**The Department did not ensure that Therapeutic Community officers completed all required training.**

Department policy requires parole officers whose caseloads include Therapeutic Community offenders to complete Experiential Training and Immersion Training courses (see text box). However, as of March 2010, only 2 (4 percent) of 49 parole officers with Therapeutic Community offenders in their caseloads had completed this training since fiscal year 2008, according to the courses' instructor.

</td></tr>
</table>

### Recommendations

The Department should:

- Ensure that it offers SOSS training classes on a regular basis.

- Ensure that Therapeutic Community parole officers attend Experiential Training and Immersion Training courses as required by Department policy.

### Management's Response

*The TDCJ agrees to offer Specialized Officer Supervision School's on a regular basis and enhance policies and procedures to ensure a consistent schedule is maintained with exceptions consistently documented.*

*The TDCJ agrees to enhance policy and procedures to ensure Experiential Training and Immersion Training courses are provided to therapeutic community officers on a regular basis and oversight procedures are in place to ensure required staff attend.*

Chapter 2-C
## Training Provided to Newly Promoted Supervisors Is Conducted as Required and Is Generally Consistent with Policies; However, the Department Should Ensure That It Offers This Training on a Regular Basis

According to the Department's training database, 139 (87 percent) of 159 unit supervisors and parole supervisors (supervisors) promoted between January 1, 2004, and February 28, 2010, completed the Human Resources Topics for Supervisors training within 180 days of their promotion dates, as required by Department policy. An additional 13 (8 percent) supervisors completed this

training but not within the required 180-day time period. Overall, 96 percent (152 of 159) of the supervisors had taken this required class.

<table>
<tr><td>

**Unit Supervisor and Parole Supervisor Training Courses**

These two courses are one week each and taught by the Department's In-Service Training Department and various staff members in the Department's Central Office in Austin. The courses include the following topics:

- Leadership skills.
- Reporting tools.
- Case reviews.
- Performance evaluations.
- Overview of the specialized programs.

</td></tr>
</table>

The Parole Division has also developed additional training classes for its supervisors (see text box). While the Department's policies do not require supervisors to complete these additional training classes, Department management stated that they encourage supervisors to complete this additional training. However, the Department has not offered these additional classes on a regular basis. For example, it did not offer Parole Supervisor training for nearly two years from April 28, 2008, to March 15, 2010. In addition, the Department did not offer the Unit Supervisor training class for about one year.

Further, the Department's Unit Supervisor training curriculum generally aligns with Department policies related to quality reviews, job duties, offender contacts, and specialized caseloads. Auditors communicated some minor inconsistencies separately to Department management. For example, Department policy requires that a parole officer be present during a training quality review, whereas the curriculum only suggests that the parole officer be present.

According to the Department's training database:

- 112 (83 percent) of the 135 unit supervisors promoted from January 1, 2004, through February 28, 2010, had completed the Unit Supervisor training course.

- 19 (79 percent) of the 24 parole supervisors promoted from January 1, 2004, through February 28, 2010, had completed the Parole Supervisor training course.

It should be noted that auditors were not able to verify the accuracy of the data in the Department's training database because the Department did not consistently retain supporting documentation. The Department provided signed rosters for 14 (54 percent) of the 26 unit supervisors who, according to the training database, attended a Unit Supervisor training course in fiscal year 2009 or the first half of fiscal year 2010. Auditors did not have any supporting documentation to test for the Parole Supervisor training course because the Department did not offer a class during this audit's scope from September 1, 2008, through February 28, 2010.

### Recommendations

The Department should:

- Update its policy to identify the training required for newly promoted unit supervisors and parole supervisors and establish a time frame for completing the training.

- Provide Parole Supervisor and Unit Supervisor training classes on a regular basis and maintain documentation for all attendees.

### Management's Response

*The TDCJ agrees to update policy to identify training requirements for newly promoted unit supervisors and parole supervisors and establish timeframes for completion.*

*The TDCJ agrees to maintain documentation, offer the training on a regular basis, with any exception consistently documented.*

Chapter 2-D
## The Department's Parole Division Did Not Provide In-service Training as Required during the 2008-2009 Biennium

None of the 883 parole officers required to complete 40 hours of in-service training during the 2008-2009 biennium completed the required 40 hours of training (see text box for information about in-service training). The maximum number of in-service training hours completed by a parole officer during this time period was 28 hours, and the average number of in-service training hours completed by parole officers was 20 hours. Overall, 830 (94 percent) of the 883 parole officers hired before September 1, 2007, completed at least some in-service training during the biennium.

> **In-Service Training**
>
> According to Department policy, all parole officers are required to complete 40 hours of Parole Division-recognized in-service training per fiscal biennium. Classes are developed and taught by program specialists located in each of the regions from the Parole Division's In-Service Training Department.

The Parole Division's In-Service Training Department offered one 8-hour class in fiscal year 2008 and one 20-hour class in fiscal year 2009, which is less than the 40-hour biennial requirement. Only 222 (25 percent) of the 883 parole officers hired before September 1, 2007, completed the 8-hour class in fiscal year 2008. However, 970 (91 percent) of the 1,066 parole officers hired before September 1, 2008, completed the 20-hour Parole Violation and Revocation course in fiscal year 2009.

Survey results indicated that parole officers find in-service training to be useful. Of the 537 parole officers and 168 supervisors responding to auditors'

survey, 221 (41 percent) of parole officers and 82 (49 percent) of supervisors agreed that in-service training was useful as it relates to their job duties.

### Recommendation

The Department should review its in-service training policy and determine its available resources and ability to provide all employees 40 hours of in-service training biennially.

### Management's Response

*The TDCJ agrees to review its in-service training policy and determine available resources and ability to consistently provide all employees 40 hours of in-service training biennially.*

## *The Department Has Fully or Substantially Implemented Most Prior State Auditor's Office Recommendations Related to Offender Contacts, Drug Testing, and Information Technology*

| Implementation Status Definitions |
| --- |
| **Fully Implemented** – Successful development and use of a process, system, or policy to implement a prior recommendation. |
| **Substantially Implemented** – Successful development but inconsistent use of a process, system, or policy to implement a prior recommendation. |
| **Incomplete/Ongoing** – Ongoing development of a process, system, or policy to address a prior recommendation. |
| **Not Implemented** - Lack of a formal process, system, or policy to address a prior recommendation. |

Overall the Parole Division has made significant progress in implementing recommendations in *An Audit Report on Selected Parole Functions at the Department of Criminal Justice and the Board of Pardons and Paroles* (State Auditor's Office Report No. 08-036, June 2008). Of the 10 recommendations auditors reviewed, 7 were substantially or fully implemented (see Table 2). While the Department has made progress in implementing most of the prior audit recommendations, it should continue its efforts to improve its Offender Information Management System (OIMS).

Table 2

| Status of Implementation of Audit Recommendations | | |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Recommendation** | **Implementation Status** | **Details** |
| The Department should establish minimum documentation standards for recording violations and interventions in OIMS. These standards should ensure significant events, such as the issuance of arrest warrants and parole officer interventions, are clearly documented in OIMS. | Fully Implemented | The Parole Violation and Revocation module in OIMS, which was implemented in January 2010, was designed to document interventions, violations, warrants, and hearings in OIMS. The Department's Parole Division established minimum documentation standards for reporting violations and interventions as of December 4, 2008. Training for the Parole Violation and Revocation module was conducted in fiscal year 2009 for 91 percent of current parole officers who had been employed since September 1, 2008. |
| The Department should ensure parole officers' compliance with required contacts and drug testing is tracked and reported to management on a regular basis. | Substantially Implemented | Auditors found that management implemented a report to track offender drug tests statewide and is currently developing a report to track contacts due, which is scheduled for implementation on November 1, 2010.

Auditors tested offender records from fiscal year 2009 and the first half of fiscal year 2010 and determined that 93 percent of the required drug tests and 96 percent of offender contacts were tracked in OIMS. (See Chapter 1-A for more information on drug testing and offender contacts.) |
| The Department should use industry-standard processes and methodologies for information technology project management, in particular to obtain documented user acceptance by the Board and Department to complete the OIMS project by the target date of July 2008. | Incomplete/ Ongoing | The Department has not obtained a certification of the OIMS project completion. A key user group, the Board of Pardons and Paroles, has not signed off on completion. Also, data has not been fully loaded into the pre-release module of OIMS. |
| The Department should work with the State Quality Assurance Team to clarify the reporting for the OIMS Project. | Fully Implemented | The Department updated the State Quality Assurance Team about the OIMS project completion status to more clearly identify remaining work. |

| Status of Implementation of Audit Recommendations | | |
|---|---|---|
| Recommendation | Implementation Status | Details |
| The Department should determine and use optimal personal computer configurations for OIMS. | Substantially Implemented | As of April 2010, auditors found that 85 percent of the personal computers used for OIMS have documented memory and speed specifications that meet the minimum configuration requirements established by the Department.  Documentation of specifications for the remaining 15 percent is missing from this inventory; therefore, auditors could not determine whether those personal computers met minimum configuration requirements.  Of 72 computers inspected, 79 percent met the minimum specifications and 47 percent matched what was listed in the Department's inventory. |
| The Department should maintain and use information to improve OIMS performance, including:<br><br>▪ Performance targets.<br>▪ Historical performance monitoring data.<br>▪ Help desk calls of user problems. | Fully Implemented | The Department uses software to monitor the response time of OIMS at the user level.  A consultant's study used historical monitoring data to evaluate OIMS performance, and the Department implemented a help desk system to assist in tracking and resolving OIMS problems. |
| The Department should complete any Department-approved technical changes suggested by third-party analyses. | Fully Implemented | Department-approved recommendations for improvements to OIMS performance were implemented as of March 2008. |
| The Department should help users avoid having to re-enter data when OIMS automatically logs them off the system. | Incomplete/ Ongoing | Auditors determined that OIMS has been reprogrammed to warn users prior to a 30-minute time-out; however, users now remain logged on indefinitely.  The Department is addressing this issue.  Of the 537 OIMS users responding to auditors' survey, 238 (44 percent) stated that they had lost significant data in the past year. |
| The Department should work with Board and Department users to improve OIMS performance during periods of heavy usage. | Incomplete/ Ongoing | Auditors determined that the Department made numerous changes to monitor and improve OIMS performance; however, 263 (49 percent) of 537 OIMS users surveyed stated that they did not have adequate computer resources to enter offender drug testing and contact information into OIMS within the required 3-day time frame.  In addition, 35 (19 percent) of 186 respondents who provided written comments complained about the slowness of OIMS. |
| The Department should coordinate with IBM and Team for Texas to document the responsibility for performance monitoring. | Fully Implemented | The Department is responsible for the local area network (LAN), wide area network (WAN), and desktop support.  Staff at the San Angelo data center, monitors the performance of the hardware.  OIMS application performance monitoring is a dual responsibility because of the interaction of the hardware and the application. |

Recommendations

The Department should:

▪ Obtain project sign-off from the Board of Pardons and Paroles for the OIMS project and obtain certification of project completion as required by the Legislature.

- Ensure that the inventory list of personal computer equipment is complete and accurate and that all equipment meets Department-established minimum requirements.

- Continue to monitor OIMS performance, including data loss.

## Management's Response

*The TDCJ agrees to obtain project sign-off from the Board of Pardons and Parole. The Information Technology Division has continued to work diligently with both the Parole Division and the Board of Pardons and Parole to complete the user requirements in the areas of both functionality and reporting. To date, the functional programming of the OIMS system has been completed; however, several reports requested by the Board of Pardons and Parole remain to be finished. The Information Technology Division staff is working closely with the Board of Pardons and Parole to complete these reports so the project sign-off and certification can be completed.*

*The TDCJ agrees and will continue to update all inventory records to contain a sufficient level of information to provide a complete and accurate description of the equipment. The Information Technology Division will also continue to work with parole staff to ensure that all equipment meets the TDCJ's established minimum requirements.*

*The TDCJ agrees to continue to monitor OIMS performance to ensure the system is functioning and the end users are able to complete their work without loss of data. The current system has a thirty minute time-out feature which provides a two minute warning prior to user logoff. In addition, the Information Technology Division has redesigned several screens which allow free-form text entry into 12 smaller screens to capture data in smaller increments and thereby reduce the risk of significant data loss upon logout. All screens have a "save" button available to the user. The Information Technology Division continues to instruct users to use the "save" feature prior to session timeout. The Information Technology Division also monitors help desk call levels for OIMS and has not seen a significant amount of data loss reporting by users in FY 2010.*

# Appendices

### Objectives

The objectives of the audit were to:

- Determine whether the training that the Department of Criminal Justice (Department) provides to parole officers is consistent with Department policies and procedures.

- Determine whether the Department's management of parole officer caseloads and offender contacts complies with Department policies and procedures and state law.

- Determine whether the Department has taken corrective actions to address selected recommendations from *An Audit Report on Selected Parole Functions at the Department of Criminal Justice and the Board of Pardons and Paroles* (State Auditor's Office Report No. 08-036, June 2008).

### Scope

The scope of the audit included reviewing and analyzing various Department training data from July 2004 through February 2010 and parole supervision and caseload data from September 2008 through February 2010. In addition, auditors surveyed 1,234 parole officers and 243 unit supervisors and parole supervisors (supervisors) and received survey responses from 537 parole officers (44 percent) and 168 (69 percent) supervisors.

### Methodology

The audit methodology included visiting two parole offices in each of the five regions. Auditors visited parole offices in Houston[4], Dallas, Fort Worth, San Antonio, Georgetown, Tyler, Athens, Midland, and Odessa.

Information collected and reviewed included the following:

- Department policies and procedures related to offender contacts, offender drug testing, parole officer training, parole officer quality reviews, and the Department's caseload guidelines.

- State statutes regarding parole caseloads and training requirements.

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[4] There were two district parole offices that auditors visited in Houston.

- Training curriculum and rosters for various classes offered by the Department's Parole Division.

- Offender data from the Department's Offender Information Management System (OIMS) and training records from the Department's Payroll and Personnel System.

- Department documentation, including organizational charts, caseload reports, monitoring tools, quality review tracking systems, drug testing forms, and inventory listings.

- Interviews with supervisors, regional management, and key staff at individual parole offices regarding caseload management, parole officer staffing, quality reviews, and training.

- Interviews with staff from the Specialized Programs Department and the Warrants Section, and interviews with the Parole Division's deputy directors.

- Internal audit documentation and published internal audit reports.

Procedures and tests conducted included the following:

- Tested documentation of offender contacts and drug tests to determine compliance with Department policies and procedures.

- Observed training courses, tested training documentation, and reviewed class curriculum to determine compliance with Department policies and procedures.

- Analyzed training data from the Department's training database.

- Tested quality reviews and follow-up reviews to determine whether they were completed within the required time frames.

- Inspected computers and inventory records at individual parole offices.

- Surveyed parole officers, unit supervisors, and parole supervisors.

- Followed up on audit findings and recommendations from a previous State Auditor's Office report.

- Analyzed caseload data from the Department's automated systems.

- Analyzed caseload reports that the Department submitted to the Office of the Governor and the Legislative Budget Board.

Criteria used included the following:

- Texas Government Code, Chapter 508.

- Rider 31, page V-20, of the General Appropriations Act (81st Legislature).

- Department policies and procedures.

## Project Information

Audit fieldwork was conducted from February 2010 through August 2010. We conducted this performance audit in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

The following members of the State Auditor's staff performed the audit:

- Jennifer Wiederhold, CGAP (Project Manager)

- Sajil Scaria, CFE (Assistant Project Manager)

- Lindsay Johnson

- Brian Jones, CGAP

- Cain Kohutek

- Marlen Kraemer, MBA, CISA, CGAP

- Cecilia Miglicco, CPA

- Lisa M. Thompson

- Leslie Ashton, CPA (Quality Control Reviewer)

- Nicole Guerrero, MBA, CIA, CGAP, CICA (Audit Manager)

# Results of the State Auditor's Office's Survey of Parole Officers and Supervisors

The State Auditor's Office surveyed 1,234 parole officers—and received responses from 537 (44 percent response rate)—and asked the respondents to rank their level of agreement or disagreement with 16 statements related to parole officer training, caseloads, job duties, and the ease of use of the Department of Criminal Justice's (Department) Offender Information Management System (OIMS). Table 3 lists the survey results.

Table 3

| Survey Results Related to Parole Officer Training, Caseloads, Job Duties, and Use of OIMS [a] | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Survey Statement | Respondents Who Agreed with Survey Statement [b] | Respondents Who Were Neutral about Survey Statement | Respondents Who Disagreed with Survey Statement [c] | Survey Statement Not Applicable to Respondent |
| 1. I have enough time during the work week to perform offender drug testing as required. | 61% | 15% | 23% | 1% |
| 2. I have enough time during the work week to perform all offender contacts as required. | 30% | 19% | 51% | 1% |
| 3. I have adequate computer resources (hardware, software, technical support, etc.) to do my job, including entering offender drug testing and contact information into OIMS within the required three-day time frame. | 34% | 17% | 49% | 0% |
| 4. OIMS is accessible to me at all times from my desktop computer. | 28% | 18% | 53% | 1% |
| 5. In the past year, I have used OIMS without losing a significant amount of data. | 37% | 19% | 44% | 1% |
| 6. The quality reviews (QR) provide useful feedback to help me perform my job. | 49% | 24% | 25% | 2% |
| 7. The number of offenders on my caseload allows me to effectively perform my job responsibilities. | 21% | 16% | 63% | 0% |
| 8. Adjustments are made to the number of offenders on my caseload when the current number of offenders exceeds the standards set by Department policy. | 18% | 17% | 63% | 2% |
| 9. Any concerns I have regarding caseload size or offender contacts are addressed by my supervisor in a timely manner. | 41% | 24% | 33% | 2% |
| 10. I find in-service training useful as it relates to my job duties. | 41% | 28% | 29% | 2% |
| 11. Parole Officer Training Academy (POTA) training sufficiently prepared me for my responsibilities as a parole officer. | 25% | 26% | 47% | 1% |

| Survey Results Related to Parole Officer Training, Caseloads, Job Duties, and Use of OIMS [a] | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Survey Statement | Respondents Who Agreed with Survey Statement [b] | Respondents Who Were Neutral about Survey Statement | Respondents Who Disagreed with Survey Statement [c] | Survey Statement Not Applicable to Respondent |
| 12. The training I received at POTA on contact standards was useful. | 55% | 26% | 18% | 1% |
| 13. The training I received at POTA on drug testing procedures was useful. | 47% | 26% | 23% | 4% |
| 14. The training I received at POTA on OIMS sufficiently prepared me for using the system. | 24% | 24% | 38% | 15% |
| 15. Specialized Officer Supervision Schools (SOSS) training has sufficiently prepared me for my job responsibilities as a parole officer with a specialized caseload. | 35% | 15% | 14% | 35% |
| 16. The training I received at SOSS on contact standards was useful. | 44% | 15% | 7% | 35% |

[a] Percentages may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding.

[b] Respondents who agreed or strongly agreed with an individual survey statement were grouped together in the "Agree" column.

[c] Respondents who disagreed or strongly disagreed with an individual survey statement were grouped together in the "Disagree" column.

Parole officers were also asked to rank areas in which they felt they needed additional training. The largest percentage chose OIMS as the top area in which they wanted additional training. Training on offender contacts was ranked the second most frequently cited area, followed by training on drug testing, defensive tactics training, and firearms training.

The State Auditor's Office also surveyed 243 unit supervisors and parole supervisors (supervisors)—and received responses from 168 (69 percent response rate)—and asked the respondents to rank their level of agreement or disagreement with 10 statements related to supervisor training, caseload management, and the use of OIMS. Table 4 on the next page lists the survey results.

Table 4

| Survey Results Related to Supervisor Training, Caseload Management, and the Use of OIMS [a] | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Survey Statement | Respondents Who Agreed with Survey Statement [b] | Respondents Who Were Neutral about Survey Statement | Respondents Who Disagreed with Survey Statement [c] | Survey Statement Not Applicable to Respondent |
| 1. I am given the tools necessary to properly monitor the completion of offender contacts for the officers that I supervise. | 70% | 15% | 13% | 1% |
| 2. The quality reviews are a useful tool for monitoring parole officers' completion of required offender contacts. | 39% | 17% | 44% | 0% |
| 3. I have adequate computer resources (hardware, software, technical support, etc.) to do my job. | 60% | 11% | 29% | 0% |
| 4. OIMS is accessible to me at all times from my desktop computer. | 61% | 12% | 27% | 0% |
| 5. In the past year, I have used OIMS without losing a significant amount of data. | 67% | 13% | 20% | 1% |
| 6. I am given the tools necessary to properly monitor officer caseload levels. | 65% | 13% | 21% | 1% |
| 7. Regional management is responsive to changes in staffing needs in the area that I supervise. | 38% | 24% | 38% | 0% |
| 8. I am able to make necessary adjustments to officer caseloads in a timely manner. | 56% | 18% | 26% | 0% |
| 9. I find in-service training useful as it relates to my job duties. | 49% | 24% | 26% | 1% |
| 10. I am given opportunities to receive additional training to develop useful knowledge and skills for my position. | 38% | 24% | 39% | 0% |
| [a] Percentages may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding. [b] Respondents who agreed or strongly agreed with an individual survey statement were grouped together in the "Agree" column. [c] Respondents who disagreed or strongly disagreed with an individual survey statement were grouped together in the "Disagree" column. | | | | |

Table 5 lists the average number of offenders and parole officers in each of the Department of Criminal Justice's 65 District Parole Offices, 5 Intermediate Sanction Facilities, 5 Pre-Revocation Task Units, and 3 Resource Centers during fiscal year 2009 and the first half of fiscal year 2010. Auditors conducted site visits at the following district parole offices:

- Athens District Parole Office.

- Dallas III District Parole Office.

- Fort Worth III District Parole Office.

- Georgetown District Parole Office.

- Houston IV District Parole Office.

- Houston VI District Parole Office.

- Midland District Parole Office.

- Odessa District Parole Office.

- San Antonio III District Parole Office.

- Tyler District Parole Office.

Table 5

| | Average Number of Offenders and Parole Officers Fiscal Year 2009 and First Half of Fiscal Year 2010 [a] | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Average Number of Offenders by Offender Category | | | | | | | | Average Number of Parole Officers |
| Region/Parole Facility | Regular [b] | Electronic Monitoring | Special Needs Offender Program | Therapeutic Community | Sex Offender | Super-Intensive Supervision Program | Other [c] | Total | |
| Region I | | | | | | | | | |
| Athens District Parole Office | 572 | 9 | 54 | 25 | 19 | 16 | 2 | 697 | 10 |
| Beaumont District Parole Office | 1,224 | 81 | 110 | 125 | 153 | 112 | 32 | 1,836 | 35 |
| Bryan/College Station District Parole Office | 677 | 18 | 36 | 52 | 27 | 22 | 1 | 831 | 13 |
| Conroe District Parole Office | 992 | 20 | 63 | 48 | 40 | 27 | 2 | 1,191 | 18 |

| Region/Parole Facility | Average Number of Offenders by Offender Category | | | | | | | | Average Number of Parole Officers |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | Regular [b] | Electronic Monitoring | Special Needs Offender Program | Therapeutic Community | Sex Offender | Super-Intensive Supervision Program | Other [c] | Total | |
| East Texas Intermediate Sanction Facility | 663 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 665 | 3 |
| Greenville District Parole Office | 371 | 5 | 42 | 18 | 19 | 7 | 0 | 462 | 7 |
| Huntsville District Parole Office | 556 | 16 | 37 | 28 | 28 | 22 | 1 | 687 | 12 |
| Longview District Parole Office | 609 | 7 | 39 | 34 | 20 | 9 | 1 | 719 | 11 |
| Marshall District Parole Office | 401 | 5 | 38 | 20 | 10 | 8 | 0 | 483 | 7 |
| Mount Pleasant District Parole Office | 368 | 3 | 17 | 21 | 12 | 7 | 1 | 428 | 7 |
| Nacogdoches District Parole Office | 503 | 9 | 34 | 19 | 27 | 6 | 1 | 598 | 9 |
| Orange District Parole Office | 342 | 8 | 30 | 19 | 15 | 7 | 1 | 421 | 7 |
| Paris District Parole Office | 417 | 5 | 35 | 26 | 17 | 6 | 1 | 507 | 8 |
| Texarkana District Parole Office | 440 | 6 | 32 | 16 | 18 | 5 | 1 | 516 | 8 |
| Tyler District Parole Office [d] | 1,709 | 31 | 145 | 78 | 63 | 28 | 5 | 2,059 | 32 |
| Region I Totals | 9,842 | 225 | 711 | 528 | 466 | 282 | 47 | 12,099 | 187 |
| Region II | | | | | | | | | |
| Dallas I District Parole Office [d] | 827 | 1 | 2 | 30 | 0 | 0 | 14 | 875 | 12 |
| Dallas II District Parole Office | 2,251 | 31 | 108 | 90 | 84 | 46 | 73 | 2,682 | 41 |
| Dallas III District Parole Office | 1,250 | 50 | 34 | 2 | 111 | 48 | 49 | 1,543 | 29 |
| Dallas IV District Parole Office | 1,618 | 39 | 326 | 85 | 95 | 86 | 24 | 2,274 | 43 |
| Dallas V District Parole Office | 1,162 | 1 | 92 | 7 | 53 | 44 | 14 | 1,373 | 22 |
| Dallas Pre-Rev Task Unit | 661 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 664 | 10 |

**Average Number of Offenders and Parole Officers**

**Fiscal Year 2009 and First Half of Fiscal Year 2010** [a]

| Average Number of Offenders and Parole Officers<br>Fiscal Year 2009 and First Half of Fiscal Year 2010 [a] | | | | | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Region/Parole Facility | Average Number of Offenders by Offender Category | | | | | | | | Average Number of Parole Officers |
| | Regular [b] | Electronic Monitoring | Special Needs Offender Program | Therapeutic Community | Sex Offender | Super-Intensive Supervision Program | Other [c] | Total | |
| Dallas Resource Center | 337 | 51 | 1 | 214 | 111 | 1 | 248 | 962 | 17 |
| Denton District Parole Office | 692 | 8 | 70 | 33 | 20 | 8 | 7 | 837 | 13 |
| Fort Worth I District Parole Office [e] | 1,359 | 21 | 30 | 26 | 77 | 28 | 205 | 1,746 | 27 |
| Fort Worth II District Parole Office | 1,882 | 63 | 390 | 121 | 92 | 73 | 69 | 2,689 | 45 |
| Fort Worth III District Parole Office | 1,495 | 107 | 34 | 168 | 121 | 42 | 85 | 2,052 | 31 |
| Fort Worth Pre-Rev Task Unit | 326 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 330 | 5 |
| Mineral Wells District Parole Office | 920 | 16 | 54 | 42 | 39 | 10 | 18 | 1,100 | 16 |
| North Texas Intermediate Sanction Facility | 405 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 406 | 2 |
| Sherman District Parole Office | 492 | 14 | 19 | 17 | 19 | 5 | 2 | 567 | 8 |
| Waxahachie District Parole Office | 701 | 12 | 72 | 25 | 37 | 7 | 14 | 867 | 13 |
| Region II Totals | 16,379 | 413 | 1,234 | 860 | 858 | 399 | 825 | 20,968 | 333 |
| Region III | | | | | | | | | |
| Angleton District Parole Office | 707 | 14 | 67 | 18 | 20 | 8 | 2 | 835 | 13 |
| Dayton District Parole Office [f] | 321 | 7 | 22 | 17 | 27 | 6 | 1 | 400 | 7 |
| Houston I District Parole Office | 1,949 | 62 | 222 | 84 | 1 | 17 | 140 | 2,474 | 33 |
| Houston II District Parole Office | 1,956 | 32 | 75 | 71 | 3 | 51 | 5 | 2,193 | 35 |
| Houston III District Parole Office | 1,879 | 40 | 108 | 83 | 212 | 41 | 4 | 2,367 | 37 |
| Houston IV District Parole Office | 1,999 | 65 | 105 | 206 | 7 | 88 | 9 | 2,479 | 39 |
| Houston V District Parole Office | 1,571 | 30 | 87 | 64 | 6 | 22 | 4 | 1,786 | 27 |

| | Average Number of Offenders by Offender Category | | | | | | | | Average Number of Parole Officers |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Average Number of Offenders and Parole Officers** <br> **Fiscal Year 2009 and First Half of Fiscal Year 2010** [a] | | | | | | | | | |
| Region/Parole Facility | Regular [b] | Electronic Monitoring | Special Needs Offender Program | Therapeutic Community | Sex Offender | Super-Intensive Supervision Program | Other [c] | Total | Average Number of Parole Officers |
| Houston VI District Parole Office [d] | 1,011 | 55 | 0 | 36 | 312 | 31 | 1 | 1,446 | 29 |
| Houston VII District Parole Office | 1,740 | 74 | 390 | 86 | 76 | 96 | 168 | 2,629 | 47 |
| Houston Pre-Rev Task Unit | 191 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 193 | 3 |
| Rosenberg District Parole Office | 739 | 19 | 61 | 29 | 24 | 9 | 2 | 883 | 13 |
| South Texas Intermediate Sanction Facility | 426 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 426 | 2 |
| Webster District Parole Office [g] | 838 | 25 | 48 | 37 | 22 | 9 | 6 | 985 | 15 |
| Region III Totals | 15,326 | 424 | 1,185 | 731 | 710 | 378 | 342 | 19,096 | 299 |
| **Region IV** | | | | | | | | | |
| Austin I District Parole Office | 740 | 68 | 136 | 1 | 6 | 67 | 7 | 1,024 | 22 |
| Austin II District Parole Office | 1,397 | 55 | 1 | 145 | 108 | 0 | 240 | 1,947 | 28 |
| Austin Pre-Rev Task Unit | 249 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 250 | 3 |
| Corpus Christi District Parole Office | 1,357 | 24 | 85 | 117 | 60 | 25 | 48 | 1,715 | 24 |
| Del Rio District Parole Office | 168 | 2 | 16 | 6 | 7 | 3 | 1 | 203 | 4 |
| Georgetown District Parole Office | 715 | 13 | 58 | 21 | 32 | 9 | 7 | 854 | 13 |
| Harlingen District Parole Office | 616 | 13 | 30 | 25 | 26 | 6 | 1 | 717 | 11 |
| Laredo District Parole Office | 332 | 6 | 6 | 11 | 7 | 2 | 1 | 365 | 6 |
| McAllen District Parole Office | 1,029 | 19 | 75 | 34 | 30 | 11 | 17 | 1,217 | 18 |
| San Antonio I District Parole Office [d] | 1,596 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 168 | 0 | 10 | 1,779 | 27 |
| San Antonio II District Parole Office | 1,946 | 5 | 498 | 12 | 0 | 0 | 20 | 2,481 | 34 |

| Average Number of Offenders and Parole Officers<br>Fiscal Year 2009 and First Half of Fiscal Year 2010 [a] | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Average Number of Offenders by Offender Category | | | | | | | | Average Number of Parole Officers |
| Region/Parole Facility | Regular [b] | Electronic Monitoring | Special Needs Offender Program | Therapeutic Community | Sex Offender | Super-Intensive Supervision Program | Other [c] | Total | |
| San Antonio III District Parole Office | 169 | 6 | 1 | 236 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 412 | 6 |
| San Antonio Pre-Rev Task Unit | 149 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 149 | 1 |
| San Antonio Resource Center | 187 | 69 | 0 | 2 | 11 | 90 | 234 | 594 | 17 |
| Sequin District Parole Office | 514 | 6 | 37 | 25 | 28 | 7 | 4 | 621 | 11 |
| Temple District Parole Office | 882 | 24 | 73 | 57 | 44 | 13 | 2 | 1,094 | 16 |
| Victoria District Parole Office | 447 | 13 | 33 | 40 | 23 | 8 | 2 | 565 | 9 |
| Waco District Parole Office | 1,326 | 22 | 65 | 51 | 53 | 21 | 17 | 1,555 | 22 |
| Region IV Totals | 13,817 | 344 | 1,115 | 786 | 602 | 263 | 613 | 17,540 | 271 |
| Region V | | | | | | | | | |
| Abilene District Parole Office | 859 | 18 | 78 | 74 | 41 | 18 | 11 | 1,099 | 17 |
| Amarillo District Parole Office | 1,182 | 28 | 62 | 79 | 65 | 24 | 22 | 1,462 | 23 |
| Big Spring District Parole Office | 166 | 2 | 10 | 7 | 6 | 2 | 3 | 197 | 3 |
| Brownwood District Parole Office | 212 | 2 | 23 | 15 | 14 | 2 | 1 | 269 | 4 |
| El Paso I District Parole Office | 793 | 58 | 112 | 19 | 48 | 62 | 48 | 1,141 | 27 |
| El Paso II District Parole Office [h] | 267 | 48 | 10 | 1 | 50 | 4 | 15 | 395 | 8 |
| Lubbock District Parole Office | 1,261 | 39 | 87 | 136 | 49 | 14 | 161 | 1,748 | 26 |
| Midland District Parole Office [d] | 448 | 11 | 26 | 19 | 31 | 10 | 3 | 548 | 9 |
| Monahans District Parole Office | 82 | 3 | 6 | 4 | 4 | 2 | 0 | 101 | 2 |
| Odessa District Parole Office | 624 | 26 | 28 | 94 | 18 | 9 | 14 | 812 | 14 |
| Pampa Intermediate Sanction Facility | 357 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 358 | 2 |

| | Average Number of Offenders by Offender Category | | | | | | | | Average Number of Parole Officers |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Region/Parole Facility | Regular [b] | Electronic Monitoring | Special Needs Offender Program | Therapeutic Community | Sex Offender | Super-Intensive Supervision Program | Other [c] | Total | |
| Plainview District Parole Office | 290 | 6 | 31 | 13 | 17 | 6 | 4 | 365 | 7 |
| San Angelo District Parole Office | 565 | 14 | 37 | 39 | 26 | 5 | 5 | 690 | 12 |
| West Texas Intermediate Sanction Facility | 274 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 274 | 1 |
| Wichita Falls District Parole Office | 551 | 12 | 45 | 42 | 23 | 12 | 8 | 692 | 11 |
| **Region V Totals** | 7,931 | 267 | 555 | 541 | 390 | 169 | 296 | 10,149 | 165 |
| Other [i] | | | | | | | | | |
| Other | 43 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 34 | 87 | Not Applicable |
| **Total Offenders and Parole Officers** | 63,337 | 1,677 | 4,802 | 3,448 | 3,028 | 1,490 | 2,157 | 79,939 | 1,255 |

The table is titled: **Average Number of Offenders and Parole Officers — Fiscal Year 2009 and First Half of Fiscal Year 2010 [a]**

[a] Totals do not always sum precisely due to rounding.

[b] This includes in-custody offenders.

[c] This includes offenders on a District Re-Entry Center caseload and offenders identified in the Offender Information Management System as "other/unknown."

[d] The Regional Director is based in this District Parole Office.

[e] Includes the Fort Worth Resource Center.

[f] Includes the Liberty District Parole Office.

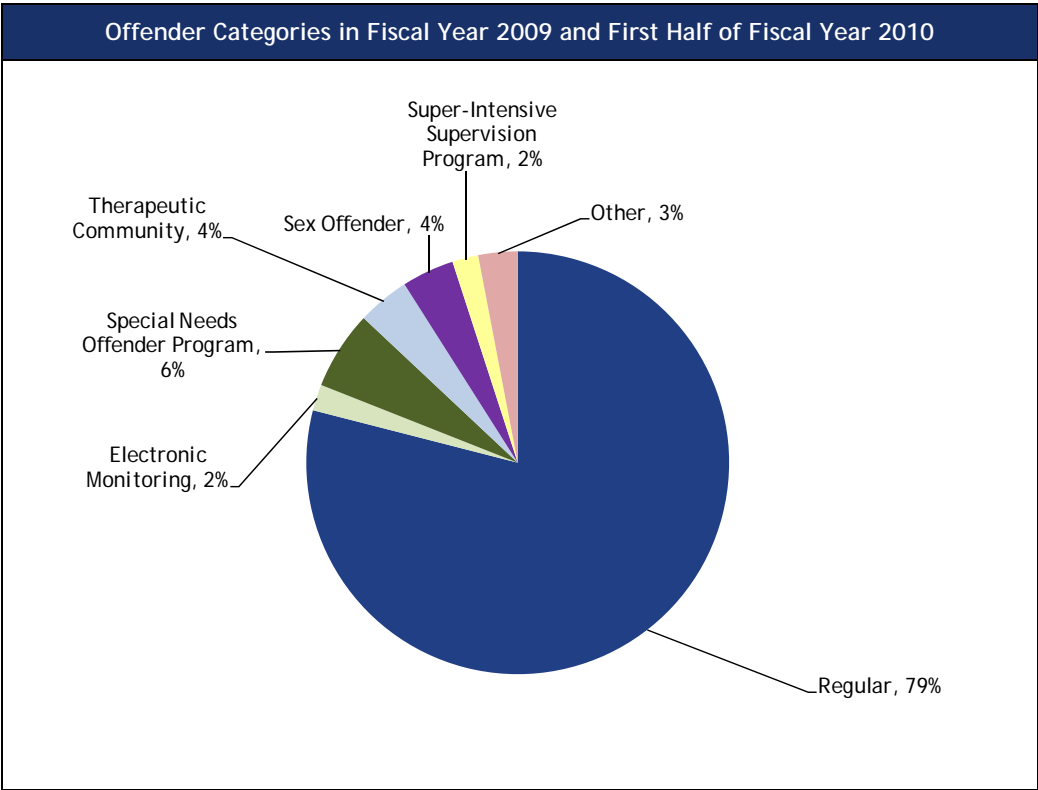[g] Includes the Galveston District Parole Office.

[h] The El Paso II District Parole Office has been in operation since June 2009.

[i] Includes the Central Coordination Unit, Extradition Unit, and other officers and offenders not specifically assigned to a District Parole Office.

Source: Department of Criminal Justice.

Figure 1 shows the offenders' categories during fiscal year 2009 and the first half of fiscal year 2010.

Figure 1



Offender Categories in Fiscal Year 2009 and First Half of Fiscal Year 2010

Super-Intensive Supervision Program, 2%

Therapeutic Community, 4%

Sex Offender, 4%

Other, 3%

Special Needs Offender Program, 6%

Electronic Monitoring, 2%

Regular, 79%

Source: Department of Criminal Justice.

Because a parole officer's caseload may consist of several categories of cases, the Department of Criminal Justice's (Department) policies and procedures provide a methodology for calculating caseload ratios using assigned weights for each type of case. Table 6 shows the weights that should be applied to each category of offender on a parole officer's caseload, according to the Department's policies and procedures.

Table 6

| Weighting That Should Be Applied to Calculate Maximum Caseload Ratios | |
| --- | --- |
| Type of Case | Weighting To Be Applied |
| Number Courtesy Supervision Cases | x .25 |
| Number on Therapeutic Community | x 1.0 |
| Number on Regular Supervision | x 1.0 |
| Number on Special Needs Offender Program | x 1.66 |
| Number on Electronic Monitoring Program | x 3.0 |
| Number on Sex Offender Program | x 2.5 |
| Number on Super-Intensive Supervision | x 5.5 |

Source: Department's Parole Division Policy 3.15.1.

| Recent SAO Work | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Number** | **Product Name** | **Release Date** |
| 10-025 | An Audit Report on the Department of Criminal Justice's Oversight of Selected Providers That Deliver Residential Services and Substance Abuse Treatment Programs | March 2010 |
| 09-004 | An Audit Report on the Department of Criminal Justice's Complaint Resolution and Investigation Functions | September 2008 |
| 08-036 | An Audit Report on Selected Parole Functions at the Department of Criminal Justice and the Board of Pardons and Paroles | June 2008 |
| 07-026 | An Audit Report on Selected Rehabilitation Programs at the Department of Criminal Justice | March 2007 |

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