

## ATTACHMENT A

### **Supervisor Lange: Various Questions Concerning Jail Population Study**

*I have a few questions regarding the Voorhis report and I thought I'd start with you.*

***1. When he talks about the criminal incidents listed in the Appendices, were the people all booked into our jail or does it include the booked, paid bond and released individuals?***

Response from Jail Population Study author David Voorhis (DV): My understanding is that the data does reflect all those booked at the jail, including those that paid bond and released. This would be a natural occurrence in the county jail.

***2. When he talks about withdrawing a "larger sample of the 2004 admissions" in first paragraph of the overview, did he look at all 2004 admissions? Sample usually means a group selected from a larger population, but I though he stated he looked at all 2004 admissions.***

DV Response: I tried to use the entire year data but not fully successful in gleaning a completely accurate set of data that matches exactly with the "known" number of admissions. There are some cases that were dropped because of missing information that skews the outcomes. Again, this is normal in all databases. There is a set of admissions that I have had trouble identifying charges for and are not included in the charges data. Hence, I will say that we have a significant SAMPLE for the 2004 but not the full data for that year. The sample gives us much more information than the two week sample that I had developed in the proposal. All samples look at a "slice of the pie" and are descriptive and not exact, because if you do a sample from a different time the jail's population will have changed to some degree and yield slightly different results. The large sample provides a very stable picture of what is generally occurring in the jail. In the average length of stay calculations I deviated from the admissions sample by including those that were in jail on 1/1/04 because many had very long stays at the jail.

***3. How do we get reimbursed from the State if we are attributing so many inmates to them?***

County Response: In theory, the Wisconsin Department of Corrections reimburses county jails up to \$40 per person per day for inmates in the jail on probation holds. For a number of reasons, however, total reimbursements are nowhere near that amount. Among the reasons are these:

- DOC pays only for probation holds of felons, not persons on probation for misdemeanors; consequently, the Racine County Jail has a number of probation holds for whom DOC will not pay.
- Since DOC opened its Sturtevant facility, it tries to maximize the number of felony probation holds that it transfers out of our jail into that facility, further reducing the number of inmates for whom it makes payment.
- Although it was not the case in the state fiscal year that ended June 30, 2004, DOC has been notorious for failing to make the full per-inmate, per-day payment, because its available funds usually fall short of its total obligation to county jails.

- We consistently impress upon DOC that it must continue to reduce its use of the Racine County Jail and that it must pay fully for the bedspace it uses.

***Where does that money go? General revenue? Jail accounts?***

County response: It is a budgeted revenue item for the Jail (Cost Center 10190); it is reflected in Account Number 3240.

***4. Do you have an opinion as to why the average drug bonds are higher than Crimes against Persons on page #12?***

County response: This is a very interesting question. The *appearance*—not necessarily the reality—that “bonds” for offenses against persons are higher than those for drug offenses is likely due to a number of factors. Some of these involve the nature of the database and some derive from the report’s effort to condense the great mass of information into comprehensible categories and quantities. This is yet another reason why the report’s appendices are as valuable as—albeit less easily understood than—its narrative and summarizations.

*Issues related to the database.* The CJMS database uses a single field—“bond”—to reflect

- The amount of a cash or signature bond, if a bond has been set
- The municipal court forfeiture amount, if the individual has been charged with (or found guilty of) violating a municipal ordinance
- The purge amount—i.e., the amount that will permit the inmate to leave the jail—if the inmate has been incarcerated for contempt of court, e.g., in a child support matter.

In short, many of the “bond” amounts on which the calculations are based are not truly bonds. As a reminder of that fact, the rest of this response will usually put the word in quotation marks.

*Issues related to the condensation and summarization of the data.* Persons who are daily involved in the criminal justice process recognize the difficulty of comparing any one case to another. Comparing broad “categories” of cases can be even more difficult. The report has opted in favor of a limited number of categories—six—for analytical purposes. As the report author, Mr. Voorhis, noted in his presentation, more categories could provide more precision—albeit at the expense of undesirable complexity.

One might expect that, the broader the category, the larger the number of offenses that fall within it. That is true here, especially with respect to offenses against persons. A few included infractions might have been better placed in the “public order” category—for example, the various municipal ordinance offenses related to building maintenance. Some other offenses—notably, those involving obstructing or resisting police officers (as opposed to battery of police officers)—might as appropriately have been classed among “public order” offenses. This is especially true, because a significant number of them seem to have been municipal citations, rather than criminal charges.

Appendix E to the report is especially valuable, because it provides a listing of the offenses within each category. It also indicates, within a particular category, the frequency with which a specific offense was the most serious offense charged. According to the data in Appendix E, various forms of the offenses of obstructing or resisting law enforcement officers were the most serious charges in over 43% of all the cases classified as “Crimes Against Persons.” The most frequently charged of this type of offense—“obstructing or resisting an officer”—has an “average bond amount” of \$993.00 (see Appendix D), and the other variants generally have lower “average bond amounts.” The statistically heavy presence of obstruction/

resistance offenses in the category of “offenses against persons” necessarily has an effect on the “average bond amount” for the entire category.

*Considering the effect of obstruction/resistance offenses on the entire category.* Your questions motivated us to engage in a little computational effort of our own. Because we find the results interesting, we are sharing them with you. They should not, however, be considered substitutes for, or even supplements to, the calculations contained in the report.

In brief, we did the following:

- For each of the two offense categories—drug offenses and offenses against persons—we tried to take all the offenses specified in Appendix E.
- For each of the categories, we entered the data on number of occurrences of each offense and the average “bond” amount for individuals charged with that offense from each of two appendices: B and D. The former reflects “average bond amounts” by specified offense, regardless of whether it was the most serious offense charged, while the latter also reflects “average bond amounts” by specified offense, but only for the most serious offense charged.
- From those data, we determined the “averages of the averages,” by calculating both the mean “bond” amount and the median “bond” amount for the two categories.
- In addition, for the “offenses against person” category, we also calculated the mean and median “bond” amounts, but *excluding* the obstruction/resistance offenses.

These calculations are, of course, subject to a number of caveats. Quite apart from the likelihood that some data were inaccurately keystroked in, there are difficulties attendant on making calculations on the basis of already processed data (e.g., using the report’s calculations of “average” bond amounts for particular offenses), rather than on the basis of the complete raw data set. In addition, we cannot be sure that we have included all the offenses within each category.

Nonetheless, our calculations do provide some interesting results, i.e.:

- When comparing average bonds, regardless of whether the specified offense is the most serious offense charged (Appendix B), both the mean and the median bond amounts appear to be substantially higher for “offenses against persons” than for “drug offenses”

	<u>Offenses Against Persons</u>	<u>Drug Offenses</u>
Mean Bond	\$8,303	\$6,386
Median Bond	\$6,787	\$4,942

- However, where the specified offense is the most serious offense charged (Appendix D), although the *median* “bond” amounts for “offenses against persons” appears to be higher than that for “drug offenses,” the *mean* “bond” amount appears to be lower:

	<u>Offenses Against Persons</u>	<u>Drug Offenses</u>
Mean Bond	\$6,721	\$7,929
Median Bond	\$5,520	\$3,510

- Finally, the effect of the obstruction/resistance offenses on the “bond” average is shown by the results derived after eliminating those offenses from the calculations. Although disregarding those offenses has little effect on the *median* “bond” amount for the category of “offenses against persons,” it produces a 70% increase in the *mean* “bond” amount for that category and a figure 45% higher than the mean “bond” amount for the “drug offense” category:

	<u>Offenses Against Persons (w/o obst/resist)</u>	<u>Drug Offenses</u>
Mean Bond	\$11,494	\$7,929
Median Bond	\$5,843	\$3,510

We believe, therefore, that the presence of obstruction/resistance offenses in the “offenses against persons” category all by itself demonstrably skews downward the mean “bond” amounts for that category.

***5. What is a "teletype hold" on page 14?***

County response: A “teletype” hold is a hold placed on an individual by another law enforcement agency.

***Any other comments about the report?***

***Thanks!***

***Supervisor Lange***