Detention Data Information System, 2008 & 2009

Montana Board of Crime Control

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8/31/2010

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INTRODUCTION

In November 2005, the Montana Board of Crime Control (MBCC) convened a detention dilemma planning meeting to develop a strategic response to perceived statewide jail overcrowding. One step of the strategic response called for the MBCC to seek out technical assistance from an independent provider. Madeline Carter and Gary Kempker of the Nation Institute of Corrections were identified as the technical assistance consultants. Carter and Kempker in May and June of 2006, conducted telephone interviews and site visits to jail and detention localities across the state to assess the dimensions of the local jail population capacity issues. The key findings as reported by Carter and Kempker are as follows: "data is needed to better inform an analysis of the crowding problem; multiple conditions are contributing to the crowding problem; and a more strategic, cross-system collaborative approach to problem analysis is needed.[1]" The consultants offered ten recommendations and among them were to "collected and analyze offender profile data" and "to build long term data and information system capacity[2]". With those recommendations in mind, the MBCC's Statistical Analysis Center (SAC) set out to create an adult jail based data system to meet those two specific recommendations.

The SAC was assisted in this endeavor with grant funding from the Bureau of Justice Statistics, State Justice Statistics (SJS) grant program. Initially called the Detention Dilemma Project, the first stream of funding was awarded to the SAC in 2006 (Grant # 2006-BJ-CX-K034). It has subsequently been funded under the SJS program under grant number 2007-BJ-CX-K020. The Montana SAC has received a total of $101,500 of SJS program funds for the Detention Dilemma Project.

The initial purpose of the Detention Dilemma Project was to "fund the creation of reports for the records management systems of the various detention centers, to create a central repository of this detention information, and to perform analysis to determine what methods will provide the best chance of reducing the overcrowding of the detention centers and increasing the relative safety of Montanans both inside and outside of the detention centers.[3]"

The Montana SAC has been partially effective at meeting this broad goal. The first objective of Detention Dilemma Project was to "create a central repository" for jail based booking information. The Montana SAC created the Detention Data Information System (DDIS) which currently serves as the only statewide repository in Montana for jail-based offender booking information. The first objective has been met with the creation of DDIS.

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[1] Carter, Madeline M. & Gary B. Kempker. "Montana Board of Crime Control Jail Crowding Assessment." United States Department of Justice. National Institute of Corrections. Available online at: http://mbcc.mt.gov/PlanProj/Projects/NIC_TA_%20Report.pdf. Last accessed August 17, 2010.

[2] Ibid.

[3] 2006 Montana SAC SJS Program Narrative.

The second objective is to "perform analysis to determine what methods will provide the best chance of reducing the overcrowding of the detention centers and increasing the relative safety of Montanans…" This report will attempt to partially meet the second objective. It will only partially meet this second objective because anecdotally, most jails in Montana are reporting that they are no longer experiencing problems with overcrowding. Current DDIS data does not cover the time period dating back to the height of the overcrowding problem. Secondly, the DDIS database is still experiencing growth and technical enhancements. While the DDIS repository has well over 62,000 records from 2007 – year-to-date 2010, the consistency, accuracy, and breadth of the DDIS data will continue to grow well beyond the life of this grant. This report serves as a first analysis of the data within DDIS and will set the foundation for additional research on Montana's offender population in the future.

BACKGROUND

Montana is characterized as a frontier state with a large land mass and a small population base. According to the U.S. Census Bureau annual population projections, the total state population is just under 975,000 residents. Montana's population density in terms of persons per square mile is about 6.6[4]. About 54% of the states geography can be classified as Urban while the rest is classified as Rural[5].

Montana consists of 56 counties; the top ten most populous counties account for over 70% of the state's total population. Law enforcement/public safety responsibilities primarily rest within the purview of local law enforcement agencies, namely Police Departments and Sheriff's Offices. All 56 counties within the state have a Sheriff's Office, but 50 out of the 56 operate jail facilities. Sheriff's departments range in size from just 2 sworn officers to about 50 sworn officers[6]. In addition, local Sheriff's Offices employ an additional 580 detention staff[7].

Under Montana law, the governing body of a county or two or more units of local government working together have sole authority over building and operating detention centers[8]. In practice, the daily operations for most detention centers in Montana have been delegated to county Sheriff's Offices. However, not all Sheriff's Offices have detention facilities about 50 counties currently operate a jail, temporary holding facility, or detention center. Additionally, a handful of local Police Departments operate temporary holding facilities. The three largest detention centers operated by county governments are in Yellowstone, Missoula, and Cascade counties.

[4] U.S. Census Bureau.
[5] Ibid
[6] 2009 Law Enforcement Personnel Survey. Montana Board of Crime Control.
[7] Ibid
[8] Montana Code Annotated 7-32-2201

DDIS OVERVIEW

The DDIS is a statewide repository housed at the MBCC. It was created for the purpose of collecting booking information from local jails on all offenders booked into jail. In consultation with the Yellowstone County Detention facility and the creator of the Swift records management system, the MBCC defined a DDIS reporting standard that guides the submission of this data. The DDIS system was designed to collect information that in most cases was already being entered into most detention facilities jail management systems. Furthermore, we also included non-mandatory data elements that in most cases are not currently collected. This was done such that future expansion of the system could be done with minimal additional programming.

Jail Management System

In Montana, and not unlike many states, local law enforcement rely on private vendors for electronic records managements systems. These systems are typically a fully integrated package from Computer Automated Dispatch (CAD) to records management and jail management. At present, roughly eight different companies and two custom built programs are at use in Montana's local law enforcement agencies. Because local law enforcement relies very heavily on their data management systems, the DDIS system was designed to easily accept data from these systems. In fact, it was modeled very similarly with the Montana Incident-Based Reporting System which conforms to the National Incident Based Reporting System standards.

With the use of SJS funds, the MBCC paid for programming to ensure most of the vendors that are currently operating in Montana would be compliant with the DDIS reporting standards. This task was accomplished successfully. All but two vendors to date have been modified. The MBCC plans to continue to pursue compliance with these vendors and the counties they operate in.

Reporting Agencies

At the time of this report, twenty-three agencies have reported some data to the DDIS repository. Another six agencies have signed off on participating in the project and are currently testing DDIS submissions for a total of 29 local agencies (58%). Those same local agencies cover 75% of the total population. In total, those 29 agencies have about 1,267 jail beds, or about 63% of all jail beds in Montana. All but one reporting agency are Sheriff's Offices. One reporting jail is operated by a Police Department. A complete list of the agencies that have submitted DDIS data can be found in Appendix A.

ANALYSIS

Table 1: DDIS Booking Profile

	2008	2009
Bookings (N)	16,881	27,903
% Male	78%	77%
% Female	22%	23%
% White	47%	57%
% American Indian	13%	11%
% All Other	3%	2%
% Not Reported	37%	30%

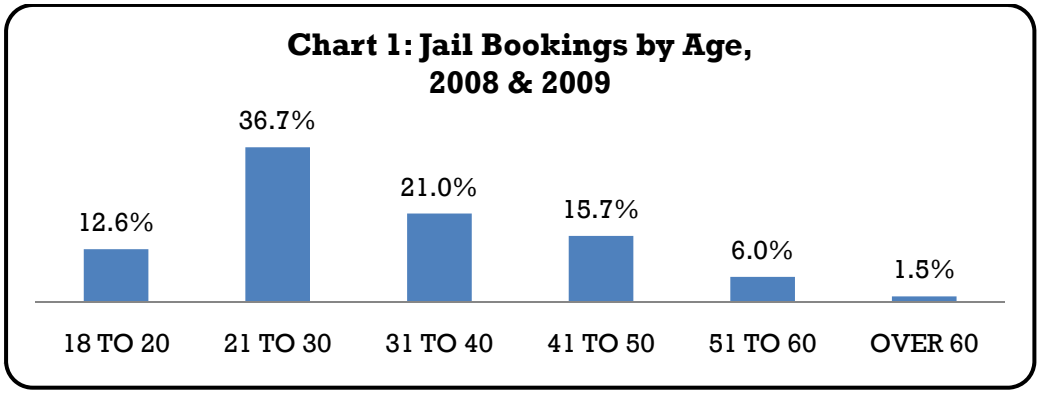
Table 1 shows the booking profile by gender and race. The total number of bookings recorded in the DDIS system grew from 2008 to 2009 primarily because of an increase in the number of reporting agencies. The total number of agencies reporting almost doubled from 11 in 2008 to 21 in 2009. Over three quarters of all persons booked into jail were male offenders. Interestingly, the percentage of white offenders booked increased from 47% in 2008 to 57% in 2009. This could be partially attributed to the geographic distribution of the reporting jails. Despite the increase however, the percentage of white offenders in jail is far below Montana's percentage of population that is white. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, almost 88% of Montana's total population is white. About 12% of the offenders booked into jail over the two year period were reportedly American Indian. This is almost twice the percentage of the general population that is American Indian. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, about 6% of Montana's general population is American Indian. Disturbingly, over 30% of the offenders in the DDIS did not have a known race value reported. This high percentage could be caused by a number of factors including a problem with the export process or incomplete booking records. Training and systems improvement could assist to ensure more complete booking records.

Table 2: Offender Age by Gender

	All (N = 44,784)	**Male (N = 34,708**	**Female (N = 10,076)**
Mean	32.7	32.9	32.2
Std. Dev.	11.5	11.7	10.6
Min.	12.1	12.1	12.8
Max	87.3	87.3	77.9
Missing	2216	1,646	568
Lower Quartile	23.2	23.2	23.2
Median	29.7	29.6	29.8
Upper Quartile	40.7	40.8	40.1

Table 2 shows the summary statistics representing offenders' age when booked into jail by gender. The age was calculated based on the offenders reported date of birth and the date the offenders were released from jail. Over 2200 birth dates were missing. Based on the data in 2008 and 2009, the mean age of offenders was 32.7 years of age. The median was almost 30. While it is possible that youth under the age of 18 may be booked into an adult jail in Montana while awaiting transport to a juvenile facility, I suspect many of the bookings with ages below 18 are erroneous. About .001% of all offender records in DDIS had ages of less than 18. The DDIS system was designed to collect only adult offender information. Chart 1 shows the age distribution of offender records in DDIS. More than one-

third of all offenders fall into the 21 to 30 age range. About half of all offenders are 30 years of age or younger.

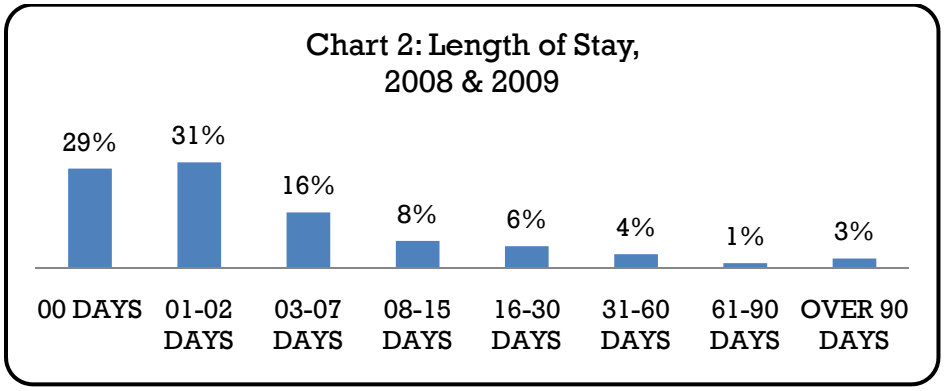


By gender, the age distribution of both males and females is strikingly similar. There is only a slight difference in the mean age, where male offenders, on average, are slightly older than female offenders. All other measures of distribution vary little by gender.

Table 3: Length of Stay.

Mean	11.2
Std. Dev.	35.8
Min.	0
Max	1,557
Missing	NA
Lower Quartile	0
Median	2
Upper Quartile	6

Table 3 shows the summary statistics for the length of stay in number of days. On average offenders spend about 11 days in jail. However, the length of stay distribution is not equally distributed. It is skewed to the right. The median length of stay, which may be a more appropriate measure, is 2 days. The maximum that a person reportedly stayed in jail was 1,557 days (4.3 years.) Chart 2 shows the length of stay distribution. Almost one-third of all persons booked into jail are released the same day. Another third of all offenders spend one to two days in jail. Three quarters of all persons booked into a county jail spent less than a week.



In 2008 and 2009, the detention facilities are most active during the warmer months in Montana. The jails in 2008 and 2009 seemed to be busiest in August in both years and the least busy in November and December.

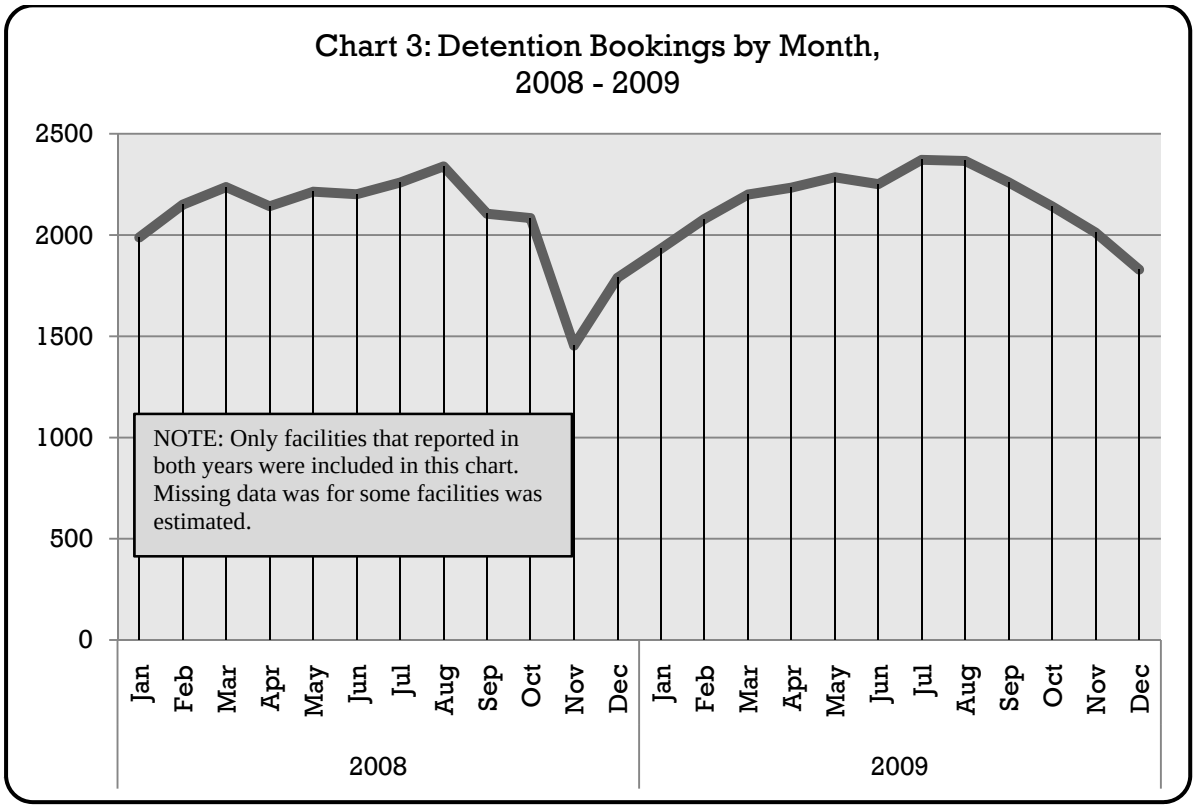


Chart 4 compares the booking day of the week against the release day of the week. It is most common for offenders to be booked into jail on a Friday than any other day of the week. On the other hand, it is most common for offenders to be release from jail on a Monday. This could be partially caused by sentencing practices, such as judges ordering offenders to serve time in jail over consecutive weekends. However, offenders were equally likely to be released on Wednesday. Only 10% of offenders are released on Saturdays.

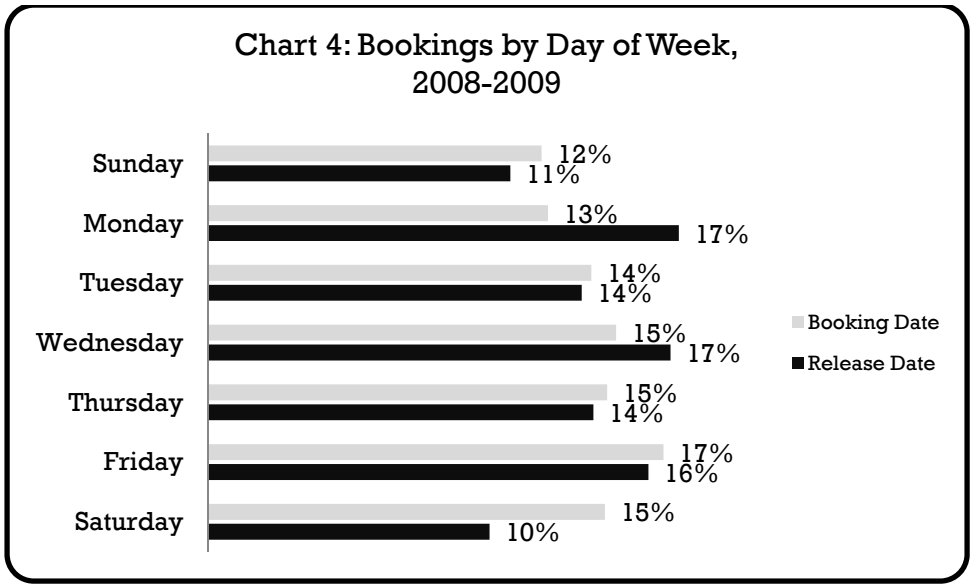
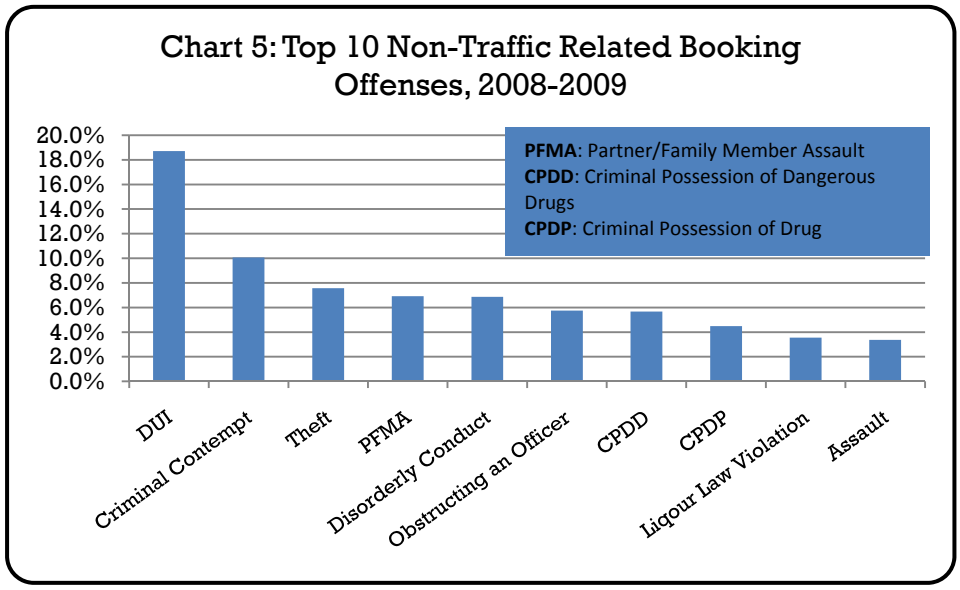


Chart 5 shows the most commonly reported booking offenses that are non-traffic related. Many of the bookings were sent with a traffic related offense coupled with a contempt of court or some other more serious offense such as drug possession. Almost 19% of all persons booked into jail were booked on a DUI offense. This is consistent with other data that suggests that Montana suffers from high rates of drinking and driving. For example, in terms of criminal offenses known to law enforcement, DUI is the fourth most commonly reported offense behind only larceny/theft, criminal mischief/vandalism, and simple assault[9]. Another 10% of all bookings are for criminal contempt. Theft, partner/family member assault, and disorderly conduct round out the top five.



[9] Steyee, Jimmy. (2010). "Crime in Montana, 2008-2009". Montana Board of Crime Control.

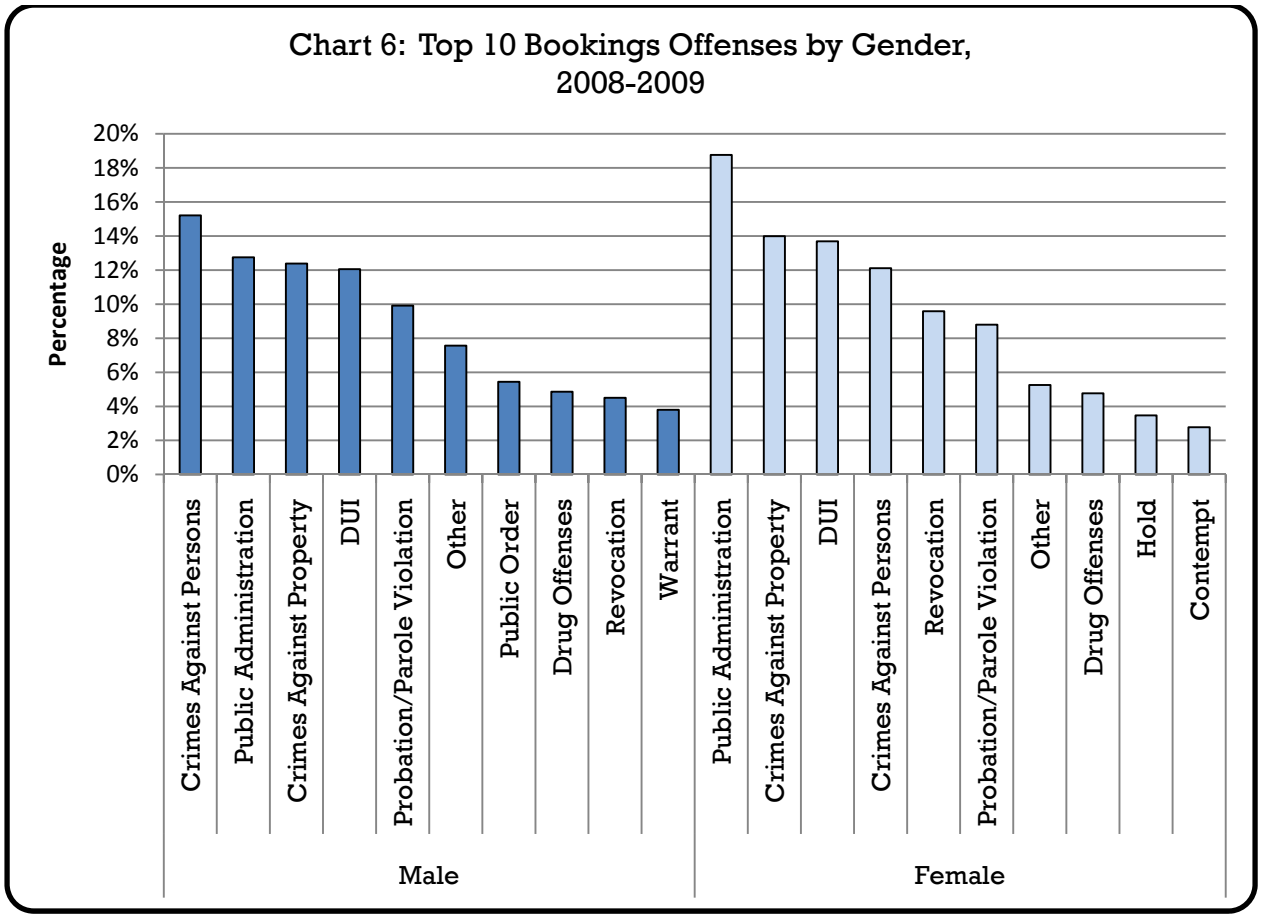


Chart 6 shows the top ten booking categories by gender. Bookings offenses in this chart were grouped into broad categories. It shows that male offenders are more commonly booked into jail on more violent crimes. About 15% of all offenses in the DDIS system committed by males were crimes against persons[10]; 19% of all female offenders were booked into jail on public administration offenses[11]. Females when compared to males, were more commonly booked into jail for property offenses and DUI offenses. Interestingly, a larger percentage of female offenders were booked into jail on revocation of a suspended or deferred sentence. On the other hand, male offenders were more likely to go to jail due to probation or parole violations.

[10] Crimes Against Persons was defined as any MCA code in Chapter 45 section 5 (MCA 45-5).
[11] Crimes Against Public Administrations was defined as any MCA code in Chapter 45 section 7 (MCA 45-7).

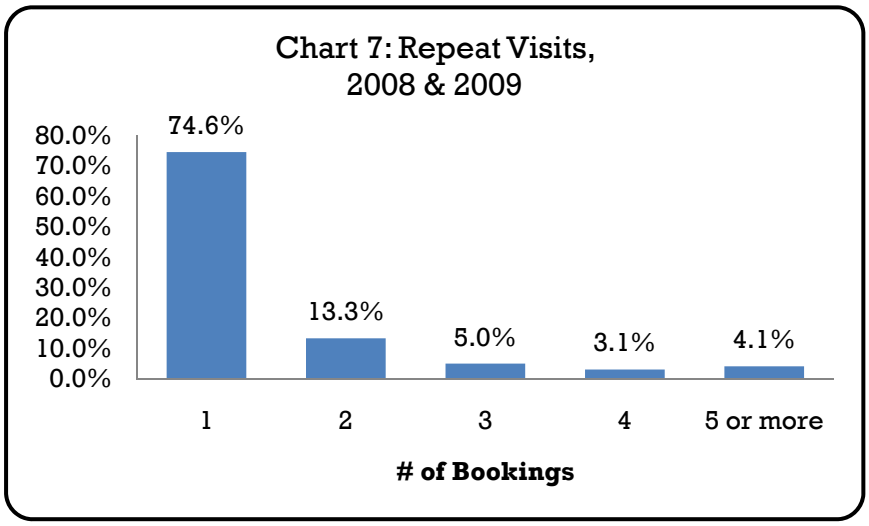


Chart 7 shows the number of bookings offenders have experienced over the course of two years. In some cases, offenders are booked on new charges multiple times and in other cases they are booked in jail multiple times based off one charge. This can occur when a judge sentences an offender to serve a sentence on concurrent weekends for example. Almost 75% of the offenders booked into jail in 2008 and 2009 were booked only once. Another 13% of the offenders were booked into jail on two different occasions. About 12% of all offenders were booked into jail three or more times. In reality, I believe this is an under representation of offenders with repeat bookings due to miss-matched records in the DDIS system. Offender's booking records were matched based on first and last name, encrypted social security numbers, and date of birth. This strict criterion ensures that offenders booking records are not falsely matched. However, incomplete and inconsistent information in any of these fields would cause an underrepresentation.

LEVEL 1 AND LEVEL 2 FLAGS

A number of *non-mandatory* flags were built into the system to gather additional information about the offender and the circumstances surrounding the bookings. Many of these flags correspond directly with data elements in the Montana Incident-Based Reporting System (MTIBRS). The intent was that this information that is currently being collected in local law enforcements records management systems for MTIBRS purposes could be directly transferred to the jail management systems for DDIS purposes. Those flags include the following: homeless status of the offender; citizenship of the offender; tribal affiliation of the offender; self-reported mental health problems; self-reported physical health problems; whether or not the offender suffered from a handicapped disability; the self-reported alcohol dependency of the offender; and the self-reported drug dependency of the offender.

Preliminary analysis of the data reveals that most jails that are currently participating in this project do not currently collect this information in a systematic manner that can be easily accessed in the jail records management system. In some cases, such as tribal affiliation, this question is simply not asked of the offender and is not formally recorded. In other cases, this

information may be collected in various other processes, but never recorded in the jail management system.

Table 4: Level 1 Data Element Flags

Level 1	Yes	No	Unknown	# of Agencies Reporting
Alc.-Dependency	13.1%	56.5%	29.9%	16
Drug Dependency	6.2%	79.5%	9.6%	16
Handicapped	0.5%	70.9%	24.3%	16
Homeless	0.5%	37.3%	56.8%	1
Mental Health	12.2%	52.4%	35.4%	14
Physical	6.2%	20.8%	72.9%	14

Table 4 reveals the distribution of the Level 1 flags reported in the DDIS system. As noted before, this information is currently suspect indicated by the large percentage of unknown values. Unknown as designed in this system indicates that the information was not available and the U – unknown data value was used as a place holder in the file submission. For the agencies that consistently send the self-reported alcohol dependency data element, the percentage of offenders that report alcohol dependency ranges from as little at 3% to as much as almost 40%. The data indicated only about 6.2% of jail inmates reported drug dependency. According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS), 22.2% of jail inmates displayed characteristics that would indicate dependence and abuse of alcohol as measure by the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, fourth edition[12]. Another 34.4% of jail inmates surveyed in the BJS report suggests that 34.4% of offenders displayed characteristics that would indicate dependence and abuse of drugs[13].

[12] Karberg, Jennifer C. & Doris J. James. (2005) "Substance Dependence, and Abuse, and Treatment of Jail Inmates, 2002." U.S. Department of Justice. Office or Justice Programs. Bureau of Justice Statistics.
[13] Ibid.

Table 5: Level 1 Offender Characteristics

Level 1		# Reporting Agencies
Citizenship	**% of Total**	**18**
C - US Citizen	34.9%	
L - Legal Alien	20.7%	
T - Tourist	0.0%	
N - Illegal Resident	0.1%	
U - Unknown	44.3%	
Residency		**18**
R - Resident of Jurisdiction	79.1%	
U - Unknown	12.1%	
N - Non-Resident	7.9%	
L - Resident of Surrounding Area	0.9%	
Tribal Affiliation	**NR**	**0**

Table 5 shows the Citizenship, Residency, and Tribal affiliation data element distributions. Looking closely at the citizenship data element suggests that many agencies do not currently collect and/or define this data element properly. Over 44% of the offenders were reported with and unknown citizenship. However, over 20% of the jail inmates were reported legal aliens. The Residency data element suggests that most (about 80%) of the offenders booked into jail live locally which logically makes sense. However, there may be some confusion between the definition of resident of jurisdiction and resident of surrounding area. Over 10% of the offenders were reported with an unknown residency. Lastly, the offender Tribal Affiliation is not currently being collected and reported in a systematic manner.

Table 6: Level 2 Offense Flags

Level 2	Yes	No	Unknown	# Agencies Reporting
Alcohol	1.8%	3.6%	93.4%	13
Drug	0.4%	5.1%	94.3%	13
Violence	0.1%	5.3%	94.3%	13
Domestic	0.2%	5.1%	94.3%	13
Gang	0.0%	5.5%	94.3%	1
Bias	1.8%	3.6%	94.3%	13

Table 6 shows the Level 2 flags that were built into the DDIS system. Level 2 flags pertain to the circumstances surrounding bookings offense. For example, it would indicate if drugs were involved in the commission of the crime. Level 2 flags were not reported with any consistency or success. Upon further discussion with jail administrators, in many cases the booking officer knows very little, if anything about the circumstances surrounding the offense for which the inmate was booked. Furthermore, this information is not linked with case reports that are generated in law enforcements records management systems.

The current data suggests a couple of key points. The first is that training and technical assistance could be offered to jail administrators and staff of the importance and utility in collecting Level 1 flags. Some agencies currently have the capability to record and submit Level 1 flag information, but some training needs to be offered in the utility and importance of accurately recording the this data. Secondly, the Level 2 flags are not currently being stored and

reported in most jails. Some major policy and procedural changes would have to be implemented in order to systematically collect this information during booking.

DISCUSSION

This analysis briefly examined some of the data contained within the DDIS system. Further research could drill into the data with a more in-depth analysis. However, this analysis has painted a preliminary jail booking profile. The current data suggests that many offenders are booked into jail, but spend less than 24-48 hours locked-up. Male offenders are booked into jail at a rate of about 4-to-1 when compared to females. Many offenders are booked into jail on DUI charges. This is consistent with other data that suggests that Montana has very high rates of driving while intoxicated. However, male offenders are much more likely to be booked into jail due to violent crimes. The average age of offenders is about 30 years of age, this is consistent across gender.

The DDIS system has a strong foundation from which to continue to grow a statewide jail based bookings information system. Until now, very little was known about Montana's dynamic jail-based offender population. Consider that in 2008 and 2009 alone, over 44,000 bookings were generated by the jails that participated in the DDIS project. Many people experienced multiple bookings. This indicates to me that a significant part of Montana's population is being affected in some way due to jail based incarceration.

The DDIS system is experiencing growth, and all the challenges that come with growing a statewide data gathering system. The MBCC must work to bring awareness to the DDIS and the potential utility of the data. Additionally, training and technical assistance regarding the importance of record keeping must be offered to jail administrators and staff. Finally, the data submissions must be constantly monitored to ensure that all participating jails continue to be fully engaged in the process.

APPENDIX A

Detention Data Information System Reporting Facilities

N	ORI	County	# Beds	County Population[14]
1	MT0010000	Beaverhead Co.	22	8,976
2	MT0020000	Big Horn Co.	30	13,015
3	MT0040000	Broadwater Co.	48	4,793
4	MT0090000	Custer Co.	20	11,189
5	MT0120000	Deer Lodge Co.	36	8,792
6	MT0130000	Fallon Co.	11	2,725
7	MT0150000	Flathead Co.	87	89,624
8	MT0160000	Gallatin Co.	45	90,343
9	MT0180000	Glacier Co.	10	13,550
10	MT0200000	Granite co.	11	2,879
11	MT0220000	Jefferson Co.	25	11,470
12	MT0240000	Lake Co.	42	28,605
13	MT0250000	Lewis & Clark Co.	57	61,942
14	MT0270000	Lincoln Co.	25	18,717
15	MT0320000	Missoula Co.	224	108,623
16	MT0340000	Park Co.	20	15,941
18	MT0440300	Colstrip	8	2,321
19	MT0450000	Sanders Co.	28	11,096
21	MT0470000	Silver Bow Co.	72	32,949
22	MT0500000	Teton Co.	6	6,088
23	MT0560000	Yellowstone Co.	286	144,797
24	MT0210000	Hill Co.	79	16,632
25	MT0140000	Fergus Co.	36	11,208
26	MT0360000	Phillips Co.	4	3,944
27	MT0330000	Musselshell Co.	14	4,600
28	MT0530000	Valley Co.	16	6,826
29	MT0300000	Meagher	5	1,908
State Total			**1,267**	**733,553**

MT Total Pop.	974,989
% coverage	75%
MT Total Beds	2,000
% coverage	63%

[14] U.S. Census Bureau. 2009 Population Estimates.