

**DESCRIPTION OF TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE—
PAROLE DIVISION STAFF PERCEPTIONS
REGARDING OFFICERS CARRYING FIREARMS IN THE
STATE OF TEXAS**

BY

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Table of Contents

Chapter	Page
Abstract.....	4
1. Introduction and Research Purpose	5
Introduction	5
Research Purpose.....	8
Preview of the Chapters	8
2. Officers and Their Authority	10
Introduction	10
Role Defined.....	10
Officer Authority	12
Summary.....	17
3. Safety for Officers on the Street.....	18
Introduction	18
Officer Victimization	18
Offender Population.....	21
Involvement in the Community	22
Local Law Enforcement Relations.....	25
Officer Perceptions	26
Liability	27
Summary.....	29
4. Officer Supervisory Styles.....	31
Introduction	31
Dual Roles	31
Officers as Social Workers.....	32
Officers as Law Enforcement	34
Role Conflict.....	37
Role Compatibility and Agency Philosophy	39
Finding a Balance	42
Supervisory Style Changes.....	44
Summary.....	46
5. The Texas Setting	48
Introduction	48
Reasons to Arm.....	49
Legislative Changes	49
Policy Changes	50
Safety Perceptions.....	51
Supervisory Styles.....	53
Summary.....	56

6.	Methodology	59
	Introduction	59
	Focus Groups.....	59
	Development of the Conceptual Framework.....	63
	Safety Perceptions	63
	Supervisory Styles.....	66
	Operationalization of the Conceptual Framework.....	67
	Safety Perceptions	67
	Supervisory Styles.....	68
	Survey Research.....	69
	Survey Development.....	70
	Sampling Issues	71
	Statistics.....	76
	Summary.....	77
7.	Findings.....	79
	Introduction	79
	Safety Perceptions.....	79
	Office Safety for Carriers.....	80
	Home Visit Safety for Carriers.....	82
	Field Visit Safety for Carriers.....	84
	Office Safety for Non-carriers	86
	Home Visit Safety for Non-carriers	89
	Field Visit Safety for Non-carriers.....	91
	Support Staff.....	94
	Perceptions Across Groups.....	96
	Supervisory Styles.....	99
	Home Visits.....	99
	Field Visits.....	101
	Referrals.....	103
	Urinalysis	105
	Reports of Violation	106
	Relationships.....	108
	Summary.....	111
8.	Summary and Conclusions.....	112
	Introduction	112
	Conclusions	112
	Safety Perceptions	112
	Supervisory Styles.....	115
	Study Limitations.....	117
	Recommendations for Further Research.....	118
	Summary.....	119

Bibliography	121
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Appendices

- Appendix A: Parole Division Administrative Directive 1.1.10: Parole
Officer Firearms Guidelines
- Appendix B: Focus Group Responses
- Appendix C: Firearms Survey

ABSTRACT

Parole and probation officers, traditionally viewed as social workers seeking to rehabilitate or reintegrate offenders in the community, have not carried firearms during the course of their duties. This view is changing toward a more active law-enforcement role in which officers are allowed to carry firearms. Reasons for this change include more violent offenders, youthful offenders, changing law enforcement relations and officer safety concerns. The current study looks at possible effects that implementation of firearms policy has on the Texas Department of Criminal Justice—Parole Division staff. The research purpose is two-fold. The first purpose examines safety perception changes of staff in the office and in the field. The second purpose examines officer supervisory style changes while supervising offenders. Project methods include focus groups and survey research. Findings indicate that officers carrying firearms experience increased safety perceptions; officers who choose not to carry and support staff experience no changes in safety perceptions. However, there is a difference between groups concerning the level of experienced changes in the workplace. The findings also indicate that, overall, there are no changes in officers' supervisory styles once they are authorized to carry firearms on duty.

CHAPTER ONE:

INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH PURPOSE

Introduction

"If they allow parole officers to carry firearms, I'll have to quit my job and go into another career field." (Texas Department of Criminal Justice-Parole Division parole officer)

"I've been in law enforcement for 15 years and I would never go into some areas of town where you people do home visits without a weapon." (Austin Police Department Lieutenant)

"I've been in this field for over 10 years and I've never needed a gun. What would make me think I need one now? We're supposed to be helping these people." (Texas Department of Criminal Justice-Parole Division unit supervisor)

"It's about time that we were able to carry guns. We've been fighting for this for a long time." (Texas Department of Criminal Justice-Parole Division parole officer)

"You mean to tell me that parole officers in Texas don't carry guns? I thought that everyone there rode a horse and had a gun strapped to his side--especially the people who have to deal with criminals on a daily basis." (US Coast Guard Captain)¹

When people are unfamiliar with the fields of community supervision,² they tend to assume that probation and parole officers are similar to law enforcement personnel and that they carry guns for protection. Perhaps this assumption is made because probation and parole officers are in contact with violent, convicted felons on a daily basis.

Community supervision officers are also required to supervise offenders³ on their turf, including subsidized projects, ghettos and rural homes miles from a nearby city or town.

¹ Each of the statements listed was stated to the author within a month period (April, 1998) before implementation of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice-Parole Division's firearm policy.

² The term "community supervision" includes the probation and parole supervision fields.

³ For clarity, the individuals on either probation or parole will be referred to as "offenders" unless a reference or quote from the literature specifically states otherwise. In the field of community supervision,

There is an inherent safety risk for parole and probation officers simply because of the clientele and the nature of the job. Some would then ask why officers do not carry firearms.

Traditionally, across states, probation and parole officers have not carried firearms on duty. Agency philosophy and supervision techniques have not supported the use of guns by community supervision field staff. Now, however, philosophies and techniques are changing. It is becoming more and more common for officers to be armed in the field--even to the point that it is becoming the norm (Brown, 1996:27). At this time, 70% of community corrections agencies in the United States permit officers to carry firearms while on duty (DelGrosso, 1997:48).

In the state of Texas, parole and probation officers have been prohibited from carrying firearms during the course of their job. This changed during the 1997 Regular Session of the 75th Texas Legislature when House Bill 2909 passed into law. House Bill 2909 gives parole and probation officers the authority to carry firearms on duty. The Texas Department of Criminal Justice—Parole Division is currently in the process of implementing House Bill 2909 and has outlined specific policy that officers must follow in order to obtain certification to carry a firearm on duty. Due to the law change and subsequent policy implementation, Parole Division staff employees are expressing mixed views regarding the topic and are experiencing hostile division lines in some district offices. Focus is placed on district office staff since they are the personnel who are in contact, either directly or indirectly, with firearms in the workplace. Some employees are thankful that officers have another level of force in which to defend themselves, while

numerous names are given to the individuals who are supervised by officers; to name a few: "clients," "probationers," "releasees," and "parolees."

others are fearful about the overall impact of weapons in the workplace. Officers may feel safer once they are allowed to carry firearms; however, how will the addition of weapons change the workplace and how officers currently supervise offenders? These are concerns that currently face Texas community supervision staff.

Overall, the topic of parole officers carrying firearms is one filled with conflicting opinions and emotional overtones. Within the national field of community supervision, this is a relatively new debate in which it's too early to evaluate the long range implications of officers carrying firearms (Champion, 1996:428). Opponents and proponents of the right to carry have strong reasons for supporting their position. Unfortunately there is little empirical data examining either side of the issue of whether officers should carry or not carry firearms on duty. The topic, however, will remain controversial and will still stimulate debate, primarily because of pressure from employees, collective bargaining contract demands or threats with court action under Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) laws (Veit and Smith, 1993:17).

Often, officers and management simply view the topic through different glasses. Officers see firearms as a way to protect themselves and believe that offenders are less likely to attack someone who has the ability to respond with deadly force (Stiles, 1996:26). Management, however, views the firearms issue as a gray area with many critical decision points (Stiles, 1996:26). For example, management has concerns about overall safety, agency philosophy, and budgetary constraints. Regardless, staff safety is at the top of the list of most important administrative issues in the field of community supervision (Paparozzi and Martin, 1996:38) and the firearms issue has become the front-runner of the safety field.

Research Purpose

This applied research project attempts to address some of the issues that have surfaced within the Texas Department of Criminal Justice—Parole Division. The purpose of this research is two-fold. The first purpose is to describe the safety perceptions of Parole Division staff since implementation of the firearms policy within the Division. The second purpose is to explore possible officer supervisory style changes since implementation of the firearms policy within the Division. It is hoped that information and recommendations from this research is used to further assist the agency with on-going implementation and training of the firearms policy.

Preview of the Chapters

While **chapter one** gives the overview and purpose of this research, **chapter two** provides a framework for newcomers to the world of community supervision. In this chapter, the basic definitions and roles of probation and parole officers are discussed. **Chapter three** supplies background information regarding various safety issues within the field of community corrections and reviews topics such as officer victimization and the changing offender population. Within **chapter four** the reader explores existing literature with a focus on supervisory styles found in the field of community corrections.

The project's conceptual framework and setting for the state of Texas and the Texas Department of Criminal Justice is addressed within **chapter five**. **Chapter six** is the methodology chapter, which introduces the reader to the research used for this applied research project. Survey research and focus groups are discussed, as well as advantages and disadvantages of using both research methods. The results of the survey and focus

groups are presented within **chapter seven**. Finally, **chapter eight** offers conclusions regarding the focus group and survey information as it pertains to district office staff safety perceptions and officer supervisory styles. Research weaknesses and limitations are discussed as well as recommendations for further research within this topic.

CHAPTER TWO:

OFFICERS AND THEIR AUTHORITY

Introduction

This chapter provides background knowledge regarding the field of community supervision within the criminal justice system. To understand the research purposes explored by this project, a foundation of basic information must first be given. Officers' roles are defined and distinctions are made between probation and parole officers. Since this project specifically addresses the issue of officers carrying firearms on duty, authorization to carry is also explained and discussed.

Role Defined

Probation and parole officers perform similar tasks, however, probation deals with offenders on the front-end of the criminal justice system and parole deals with offenders on the back-end of the system. The supervision process itself is similar for the parole and probation systems and in some states, the duties are handled by one agency or dually roled officers (Abadinsky, 1991:295). Probation and parole agencies are alike in that they compile information and give it to a decision-making authority, such as the judge or the parole board (Allen, Eskridge, Latessa, and Vito, 1985:120). The judge and the parole board then have the authority to either suspend (judge) or to release (parole) the sentence of the offender (Allen, et al, 1985:120). If the offender wants to keep his⁴ freedom, then he must also abide by the conditions imposed by the decision-making authority, e.g., judge or parole board. Probation and parole officers enforce the rules and

conditions of supervision. They are responsible for conducting office, home and field visits and submitting reports and recommendations regarding the offender's adjustment in the community while he is serving his sentence. While parole officers are typically governed by statewide rules, probation officers are usually governed by counties and local judges (Welch, 1989:4).

There are fundamental differences between the parole and probation fields. When an individual is convicted of a criminal offense, the court has several options. Two options the court may exercise result in eventual supervision by probation or parole officers. These two options include either sentencing the offender to a term of probation supervision or to a correctional facility. If the offender is placed on probation, he may have spent some time in a local jail, but he is commonly not considered enough of a threat to be incarcerated. If sentenced to a correctional facility, the offender does not pass go and does not collect \$200, instead he will be placed in the custody of the state and will be sent to prison. Individuals who have been imprisoned are administratively released by a decision making authority, e.g., parole board (Allen, Eskridge, Latessa, and Vito, 1985:120), and are then placed on parole supervision until the end of their sentence term. Such imprisonment usually is a reflection of the severity of offense or criminal history of the offender (Abadinsky, 1991:295).

Overall, parolees have committed more violent crimes than probationers (Welch, 1989:4) and are considered a greater danger to the community than are probationers (Abadinsky, 1991:295). A typical probationer is a first time, non-assaultive offender; if the offense is assaultive then the degree of violence is mild. The seriousness of a

⁴ The majority of offenders on probation or parole are male. Also, for clarity and ease of reading, masculine pronouns will primarily be used throughout this report.

parolee's convicted offense warrants his removal from society; when placed within the prison setting for a fixed time, parolees are exposed to cultures and behaviors that many probationers have never experienced.⁵ Probation officers are able to dangle the carrot of freedom for a probationer since he may not have experienced imprisonment, or the "unknown." Parole officers, on the other hand, most often encounter offenders who do not care about that same carrot because they know the risk of the "unknown." Prison is viewed as an experience that can be lived through. These noted differences are not to say that the risk to parole officers is greater than the risk to probation officers. Probation officers are still at risk because not only do they visit the same neighborhoods within the same odd hours (often evenings and weekends) as parole officers, but they also handle nearly six times as many cases nationwide (Welch, 1989:4). Even though there are risks to community supervision officers, the cost of incarceration is high. Due to these costs, society will continue to use more probation-front-end and parole-back-end resources to deal with convicted offenders (Champion 1996:428).

Officer Authority

Agencies charged with supervising convicted felons and misdemeanants receive their authority and direction from legislative mandates and internal agency policies and procedures. Officers employed by these agencies, whether they are federal, state or local, then follow rules and regulations as allowed by law. Few public employees are exposed to an inherent danger risk simply because of the nature of the job. Because the

⁵ Abadinsky (1991:297) goes on to state that parolees also learn from their prison experiences therefore they must unlearn some prison habits and patterns of behavior if they're to be successful in the community. Since probationers do not have these same experiences, they do not have to unlearn such behaviors.

perception of risk to community supervision officers is increasing,⁶ demands for safety have not only taken an informal tone but have also taken a more formal approach involving legislative changes, collective bargaining agreements and court cases (Smith, 1991:38). Some agencies have taken a proactive approach to staff safety providing officers with measures such as defensive training or pepper spray; however, authority to carry firearms may come from outside an agency's scope. One way officers will be given the authority to carry comes from the legislative branch. When agencies are making the decision to arm, they must look at legislative intent, how the statutes are defined and the agency's purpose. Administrators must also examine statutory authority to determine if the agency's scope is limited or general in nature (Stiles, 1996:27). Agencies cannot exercise authority unrecognized by law and administration needs to be careful in this respect (Stiles, 1996:28). There is little need to debate the firearms issue if the legislature has authorized officers to carry firearms. The American Probation and Parole Association (APPA, 1994:36) encourages legislation which would allow agencies to respond appropriately for staff safety, whether that involves firearms or not.⁷ On the other hand, the Federal probation system strongly supports legislation for officers to carry firearms while on duty (DelGrosso, 1997:46).

Florida is an example of a state which pursued legislative changes giving officers the authority to carry. In 1992 officers in Florida could not carry firearms (DelGrosso, 1997:48). Florida community supervision administration may have been able to authorize such but they were unsure of legislative intent, therefore they tried to get confirmation by the Florida House and Senate. Both bodies agreed to arm officers, but

⁶ Chapter three will present safety perceptions and risks in more detail.

the governor eventually vetoed the bill. In 1993, the same piece of legislature with some revisions was reintroduced and subsequently became law without the governor's signature (DelGrosso, 1997:48). Stiles (1996:27) also makes one other point about statutory authority in which he stresses that even if such authority prohibits firearms, this should not limit safety measures and training within the agency itself.

Officers can also be given the authority to carry firearms through the judicial branch of government. Officers in California were not allowed to carry firearms on duty so the state parole agents association sued the agency for the right to carry⁸ (Brown, 1990:22). Conflict and safety concerns were the basis for the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) 1978 class action lawsuit (DelGrosso, 1997:46; Smith, 1991:38). The department maintained that the work was not dangerous, as demonstrated by a good safety record to date (Smith, 1991:39). "The court rejected out of hand the department's safety record, labeling it as merely good fortune and pointed out in its decision that it is not necessary to wait until someone is seriously injured or killed before steps must be taken to provide a safe workplace" (Smith, 1991:39). The court found the parole officer's job to be inherently hazardous and ordered the department to take steps to increase officer safety, including the option to arm with firearms (Smith, 1991:39). It should also be noted that even prior to the court ruling, many California agents either refused to carry out mandated enforcement policies or unlawfully carried firearms while on duty⁹ (DelGrosso, 1997:46).

⁷ APPA's (1994:35, 36) position is not for or against arming community supervision officers, therefore this statement is not a position specifically on laws to arm staff.

⁸ California State Employee's Association and Charles Swim v. J.J. Enemoto et al., 53863 Superior Court, Shasta County, August 17, 1978 (Brown, 1990:22)

⁹ This is actually a common practice among officers who are not authorized to carry firearms (Brown, 1990:22; Champion, 1996:429). There were several officers who covertly carried firearms when the author was a parole officer between 1989 and 1993; during this time Texas officers were prohibited from carrying

In states where there are state laws allowing private citizens to carry, emotions are especially high regarding the carry issue for community corrections (Stiles, 1996:27). If private citizens are allowed to carry firearms but community supervision officers are not, then those officers who feel the need to carry a firearm on duty may believe that their rights are being violated. If officers or the public believe that community corrections personnel should be armed and the agency itself tries to squelch the issue, the interested parties will find a way to circumvent administrative issues. To support the argument for firearms, research even shows less violent crime in states where citizens can carry concealed firearms (Stiles, 1996:27). In states where citizens are allowed to carry firearms but community supervision officers are not, agencies should consider factors which arise from this situation and communicate reasons for not arming their officers to their staff and to the public.

Once authority to carry firearms is given by either the legislative or the judicial branches of government, parole and probation agencies must take steps to further give officers the authority to carry firearms while on duty. The organization has the responsibility of specifying the details of policy implementation. The mission statement should reflect the agency's authority as the legislature or the courts have given it. Once the mission statement has been identified, consideration of the firearms issue must be made with respect to this overall agency mission. The scope of authority to carry a firearm needs to be in alignment with the agency's mission. Agencies can either mandate weapons or give officers the option to carry. Some agencies may also only allow weapons in certain situations, e.g., fieldwork, making arrests or transporting offenders (DelGrosso, 1997:45).

According to Howard Abadinsky (1991:314), agency policy regarding firearms falls in to one of three categories:

1. Officers are not permitted to carry firearms at any time based either on state law or agency policy.
2. Officers are by statute peace/law enforcement officers, but the agency either restricts or discourages the carrying of weapons.
3. Officers are by statute peace/law enforcement officers and the agency permits or requires all qualified personnel to carry firearms.

Policy must be the cornerstone of any firearms program and needs to be comprehensive to provide clear direction to armed officers, but not so explicit to take away all discretion from the employees (Veit and Smith, 1993:17). When trying to determine what type of policy to implement, administrators will need to examine the uses of the firearm itself.

According to Veit and Smith (1993:18) there are three uses for a firearm:

- Defensive--individual or another is in immediate jeopardy and deadly force is the only reasonable alternative for escape;
- Offensive--weapon is intended to manage a situation that is clearly known to be dangerous, without a firearm and without the firearm the person could not continue to pursue the matter (e.g., entering a building where an armed suspect is known to be); and
- Tactical--firearm is used to manage a hostage or barricaded suspect situation (e.g., SWAT activities).

By reviewing other agencies' policies administrators can get a sense of direction, however, they also need to develop a final policy that specifically reflects the philosophy and intent of the department (Veit and Smith, 1993:17). Failure to do this has allowed firearms to unnecessarily impact the mission of the department. The firearm has the potential (more than any other 'tool') to disproportionately impact the role/function of the

agency (Veit and Smith, 1993:17). Most departments use this as a reason to not arm their officers. If addressed by policy and reinforced by other aspects of the program, the firearm should not control an agency's philosophy or mission (Veit and Smith, 1993:17). Policy issues about how to handle the position of firearms depends on factors such as officer expectations, desired agency outcomes and the most effective and efficient ways to achieve these goals and outcomes (Paparozzi and Martin, 1996:38). When officers have been authorized to carry firearms to execute their duties, it is the responsibility of the agency to also consider staff safety and changes which may occur within the workplace if arming officers is new territory for the agency.

Summary

The general nature of a community supervision officer's job may warrant the use of a firearm. As stated, there needs to be legislative and procedural guidelines in place to govern the use of weapons while an officer is on duty. In addition to these guidelines, the need to arm officers may be directly linked to safety issues within the workplace and in the field where an officer is responsible for supervising a convicted offender. Chapter three explains the safety issues arising from the responsibilities of accepting a position of authority within the field of community corrections.

CHAPTER THREE:

SAFETY FOR OFFICERS ON THE STREET

Introduction

This chapter provides some of the fundamental reasons people argue for the use of firearms by community supervision officers. Whether an agency is public or private, worker safety is considered an important right which is expected by all employees. Since probation and parole officers deal directly with convicted offenders, there is little disagreement that safety is an issue. The issue surrounding this subject is *how* the safety issue should be addressed and *why* changes are needed if firearms have traditionally not been used within the field of community corrections. This chapter also contributes an overall framework for the first research question of this project—whether safety perceptions increase with the introduction of firearms while officers are on duty.

Officer Victimization

Proponents of firearms use by community supervision officers stress that officers need to have the perception of safety while on duty. A byproduct of changes within the field of community corrections brings about a greater need and concern for personal safety (Smith, 1991:38; APPA, 1994:35). Literature reveals that not only is crime and societal violence on the increase, but violence against symbols of authority is increasing as well.¹⁰ POs¹¹ are at a higher risk and are exposed to greater risks than in the past

¹⁰ See, for example: Abadinsky, 1991:313; APPA, 1994:35; Paparozzi and Martin, 1996:39; Champion 1996:428.

¹¹ Since the distinction has been made between probation and parole officers, the terms “PO” or “officer” will be used generically referring to both groups. The terms “probation officer” and “parole officer” will be used when the literature specifically uses such or if the concepts/issues only apply to one group.

(DelGrosso, 1997:45). If parole is considered to be a law enforcement role in the community, then the officers may be at an increased risk for violent acts. (Paparozzi and Martin, 1996:39).

There are really no historical data about violence against parole and probation officers. The reports and surveys regarding PO victimization only recently started (Welch, 1989:4). In a 1988 Pennsylvania survey by William Parsonage, 24% of the active officers who responded had been threatened, assaulted or subjected to intimidation within the preceding 12 months¹² (Welch, 1989:4). In 1989, Welch (4) stated that violence against officers was higher than people thought. Violence against officers took the form of anonymous calls, verbal harassment and physical assaults. Welch (4) continued to state that officers were expected to put up with the harassment before (e.g., anonymous calls), but were not going to tolerate this type of victimization any longer.

In 1993, the Federal Probation and Pretrial Officers Association conducted a nationwide survey to determine the victimization of officers since 1980 (Champion, 1996:429). The goal of the research was to identify the types and number of serious assaults or attempted serious assaults that occurred while the officer was on duty or the offender knew that the person was an officer (DelGrosso, 1997:46). The research showed 1818 serious physical assaults and 792 attempted assaults over the 13 year time span (Champion, 1996:429; DelGrosso, 1997:46). The assaults were categorized as follows:

- 14 murdered, 2 attempted murders;
- 2 raped, 5 attempted rapes;
- 99 completed sexual assaults, 1 attempted sexual assault;
- 8 shot and wounded, 24 shot at and missed;
- 46 assaulted with a blunt instrument or projectile, 14 attempted assaults with a

¹² DelGrosso (1997:45) stated that the 1988 survey by Parsonage and Bushey indicated that more than half of all officers will be the victim of assault or other hazardous incident while they are employed by the probation agency.

blunt instrument or projectile;

- 14 stabbed or slashed, 14 stabbings attempted;
- 691 punched, kicked, choked or assaulted with another part of the assailant's body, 705 attempted in this category (DelGrosso, 1997:46).

There was no information regarding threats, intimidation, animal attacks, confrontations, property damage or similar situations (DelGrosso, 1997:46). Even though the survey was national in scope, there were several major metropolitan areas that did not respond, leading the researchers to conclude that the results may under-represent the actual number of assaults occurring within the field (Champion, 1996: 429; DelGrosso, 1997:46).

Champion (1996:429) notes that any assault or attempted assault is too many. Really there is no justifiable reason for assaults or attempted assaults, especially since offenders are subject to conditions of release (Champion, 1996:429). Safety concerns for community supervision are extensive--"...across studies, the career rates of experiencing a hazardous incident range from 38-50%. When only probation and parole workers with direct responsibility for supervising clients in the field are considered, the victimization rate is significantly higher." (Papy, 1996:23)

The purpose of the federal probation system program concerning firearms policy is to promote safety by providing a means of self-defense when lethal force is justified (Brown, 1996:33). Many perceive that firearms will decrease the likelihood of victimization among community corrections' staff. Even if an officer is attacked, she should respond based along a continuum of force required to escape or counter an attack.¹³ Deadly force should only be a last resort. A firearm is appropriate in a limited

¹³ The author is a Defensive Tactics Instructor/Trainer therefore this information is well known and studied by her.

number of instances, nevertheless, firearms are essential during a deadly force attack (Stiles, 1996:29). In addition to victimization, POs are concerned about the offender population for which they are accountable.

Offender Population

Another factor surrounding the decision to arm or not arm officers involves the offender population itself. The literature in the field of community supervision states that the offender population is changing (Champion, 1996:431) and there are more violent offenders on the streets with whom officers must deal (Smith, 1991:114; Champion 1996:428). Welch (1989:4) states that there are more violent offenders released due to prison overcrowding; or, because of overcrowding, violent offenders stay on probation longer. Gang violence has also escalated which influences the offender population (Welch, 1989:4). Other problems with the offender population include drug and alcohol use, which leads to more frequent testing (Champion, 1996:429; APPA, 1994:35; DelGrosso 1997:45), more serious instant offenses¹⁴ and prior convictions (DelGrosso, 1997:45). Another safety factor is the fact that numerous offenders are also armed themselves (DelGrosso, 1997:45).

In response to changes within the offender population, the parole and probation professions have been forced to change and reconsider traditional practices of not arming their officers (APPA, 1994:35). Many departments have reconsidered their position toward not arming officers and are changing their views to allow officers to carry defensive weapons (DelGrosso, 1997:45). The diversification of the offender population

¹⁴ An "instant offense" refers to the specific crime which placed the offender on community supervision.

has always been an obstacle for community corrections, but now that more violent juvenile offenders will also be casting their lot with adults, POs will have to use even more of their skills to ensure appropriate supervision as well as safety. This skill use will be of the utmost importance since officers are also finding themselves out in the community more.

Involvement in the Community

As previously noted, parole and probation officers are collectively referred to as “community supervision officers.” As the name implies, these officers are expected to supervise offenders within the community—which means the officers are also conducting their job in the community, on the offender’s turf. There is a high demand *by the public* to hold officers accountable for enhancing the level and effectiveness of supervision provided to the offenders in the community (APPA, 1994:35).

Specific legislation and agency policies often require officers to execute contacts at the offender's residence which requires the contacts to be unscheduled or even at odd hours¹⁵ (DelGrosso, 1997:45). POs feel more endangered in high crime areas, especially during the evening hours (Abadinsky, 1991:313). With more of a community proactive approach, which stresses offender accountability, officers are spending more time in communities where people typically are not supportive of their authority (Smith, 1991:38; APPA, 1994:35). Even though officers have to conduct face-to-face interviews with offenders in high crime areas, fears are generally not from the offender or the

¹⁵ Parole Division policy in Texas requires that officers utilize a “flex schedule” and schedule all offender visits around the offender's work hours; officers may not ask offenders to miss work in order to make an appointment with the parole officer. During the summer, officers may have to work very odd hours in

offender's family (this is usually a good relationship and may even be a safety net for the officer) (Welch, 1989:9). The fears stem from the community itself including the offender's friends or neighbors (Welch, 1989:9; Champion 1996:428). Not only is there risk from high crime neighborhoods, but rural officers may also be hours away from back-up or law enforcement help (DelGrosso, 1997:45).

POs have always conducted home and field visits with offenders, however, research is now indicating a decline of officer's home visits as a standard function (Champion 1996:428). Sometimes management will adjust field staff requirements which are considered to be hazardous. In some jurisdictions, department's home or field contacts have been suspended in certain high-risk areas--so the offender only has to report to the office (Smith, 1991:38). Anti-narcotic testing is waived, arrests and searches are prohibited and then generally sanctuary is given to offenders who live in neighborhoods deemed as dangerous or the offenders themselves are considered dangerous (Smith, 1991:38). Smith (1991:38) asserts that more than any other factor, this approach "endangers the future of community corrections." It reduces the risk to the officers, but it "violates the mandate that probation and parole has taken on itself (or has had statutorily imposed upon it)" (Smith, 1991:38).

Also occurring are non-management-approved steps to ensure PO safety. Some officers have taken such steps to decrease their own perceived risks (Smith, 1991:39). Safety surveys reveal that parole officers have stopped or decreased the supervision of certain offenders, by rarely going into neighborhoods or by "generally providing differential supervision, not as the results of some classification system, but because of an

order to complete the required contacts on each case. As a parole officer, the author often conducted visits at 6:00 am or even at 8:00 pm in order to meet the offender at his residence.

assessed threat to them personally” (Smith, 1991:39). Essentially, sanctuary has been given to offenders who live in high-risk areas where there are limited or suspended field contacts (Thornton and Shireman, 1993:56). Thornton and Shireman (1993:56) also sum up the issue of community involvement nicely by stating that “it would be difficult to explain to the media and the legislative body providing the agencies resources that high-risk parolees and probationers are not being supervised because they pose too great a threat to an officer.”

In a 1994 Colorado survey to officers regarding staff safety, 41% wanted home visits to be limited to specialized, high risk offenders; the rest of the respondents were opposed or undecided on this issue (DelGrosso, 1997:48). DelGrosso (1997:48) asserts that probation departments cannot explain how they provide “necessary surveillance and control to protect the community” if supervision is solely in the office. Much care needs to be given before the decision to continue or eliminate home contacts is made. Unless limited by stature, home contacts are traditionally an integral part of community corrections and doing the job strictly from the office does not give community protection or enhancement of community safety (Stiles, 1996:28).

Negligence can be alleged if officers are not out in the community supervising offenders as they have been mandated. For example, there was a settlement in the millions when an offender raped and murdered three young women; the offender had been seen an average of six times per week in face-to-face contacts by his supervising officer¹⁶ (Stiles, 1996:29). In this case, the officer was performing his job duties at or beyond the agency requirements. As Stiles (1996:29) asks: Imagine the settlement

¹⁶ Within Texas the most intensive caseload has a requirement of weekly face-to-face contacts with the offender.

amount if there was inadequate supervision?, or if there was no fieldwork or community involvement by the officer? Fieldwork is an integral part of an officer's job supervising offenders. Part of this fieldwork is work with local law enforcement agencies.

Local Law Enforcement Relations

When considering whether to arm community supervision officers, another factor that must be considered is the relationship with the law enforcement authorities within the agency's jurisdiction. The availability and the willingness of outside law enforcement agencies to accept the responsibility of enforcement functions as they relate to offenders (Paparozzi and Martin, 1996:38) is an important piece of information that probation and parole management needs to have. In many jurisdictions, most law enforcement agencies are legislatively mandated to respond to risks posed by community supervision clients (Paparozzi and Martin, 1996:38). In other jurisdictions, probation and parole agencies have been expected to "take care of their own" which means using agency staff to do risk management and law enforcement duties (Paparozzi and Martin, 1996:38). Abadinsky (1991:313) states that many times police and sheriff's agencies are unwilling or unable to provide warrant or enforcement services and if agencies do not execute their own warrants, then the offender will not be arrested on a violation warrant.¹⁷

In some jurisdictions, management has used quick fixes to this safety problem by

¹⁷ Parole and probation warrants may be issued for violation of criminal or technical rules of release. In some jurisdictions, law enforcement officers will generally arrest a parole/probation offender if he has a criminal court warrant but not if a parole/probation warrant is solely for technical allegations (e.g., failure to report, failure to attend treatment or contact with the victim of an offense). One of the problems with not being able to execute these warrants is that the offender stays on the streets; generally included within community supervision mission statements is "protection of the public." Such protection cannot occur when an offender is violating his release, is deemed a threat to the community and cannot be arrested on a violation warrant. Unfortunately, in the past Texas has also struggled with this problem and has not been

adapting law enforcement “procedures, techniques and tactics” (Smith, 1991:39). Some police procedures transfer well, but most do not. There is a large difference between physical abilities and skills, equipment, officer attitudes, and differences between legal mandates; training like police with these differences could actually put parole officers at a higher risk than they had before (Smith, 1991:39). When considering whether to take on enforcement and control responsibilities (arrest, searches, etc.), management needs to consider their relevant jurisdiction as well. The agency must consider local environment relations and abilities when deciding whether or not to broker law enforcement responsibilities or duties (Paparozzi and Martin, 1996:38). Besides this relationship with law enforcement, administration must also consider the attitudes and perceptions of their own front line staff who work with convicted offenders on a daily basis.

Officer Perceptions

Another reason advocates want community supervision officers armed is because it increases the officer's safety perception which makes her more confident in the field carrying out the duties of her position. There is undoubtedly a need for increased safety perception. In Texas, a safety survey regarding officer's experiences with intimidation, threats and assaults indicated that 38% who responded to the survey reported being intimidated by offenders in the office (Thornton and Shireman, 1993:35). Similarly, the New York State Division of Probation and Correctional Services surveyed all probation staff and “staff working with the alternatives to incarceration program” to find out perceptions of safety--51% were fearful in the office (Thornton and Shireman, 1993:35).

able to have parole violators arrested by local law enforcement agencies; sometimes the decision of whether or not to arrest offenders is based on funding for the local arresting agency itself.

Giving POs firearms may be one solution to the perception of decreased safety in the field and office. Welch (1989:9) states that in California, for example, officers have reported that the gun is helpful for psychological safety. As one officer said, "It is a psychological relief to know I have something here that I can protect myself with" (Welch, 1989:9). In Texas, the Texas Department of Criminal Justice-Parole Division (TDCJ-PD) Safety Committee listed one advantage of carrying firearms as "If the perception of safety increases, the parole officers' confidence may also increase" (Ballard, 1996:53). Brown (1996:74) cautions, however, and states that officers may experience an overdependence on the firearm itself. Over-reliance on equipment may be hazardous if the firearm is not available to the officer or if the firearm malfunctions when the officer relies on it for his physical and psychological well being.

Some officers believe that carrying firearms while they are executing their duties will create a safer work environment. However, even if given authority to carry, not all POs will carry because they may fear that the personal liability of carrying a firearm outweighs the guarantee of a safe workplace.¹⁸

Liability

Regardless of whether officers carry firearms, there is always the possibility of potential liability. Liability may occur if an officer discharges his weapon in violation of the law or agency policy, whether the incident occurring happens intentionally or accidentally (DelGrosso, 1997:45, 47). Liability may also occur if the agency restricts firearm carrying privileges to chosen officers. If an officer is denied access to a firearm

¹⁸ Even if officers do carry a firearm on duty, there is never a "guarantee" of a safe workplace. No defensive weapon can promise safety.

and the end result is his death, then the agency will be exposed to liability issues and potential lawsuits. If POs are armed, some fears by administration and officers alike include careless discharge which may hurt or kill officers, other staff or bystanders; loss of the weapon so it's turned on the officer; or inappropriate use of deadly force (Stiles, 1996:27). Although officers are only justified in using enough force to prevent injury or death to self or others (Brown, 1996:77), there still exists the possibility that in a high stress situation that an officer will escalate beyond when is reasonably necessary. Herein is where potential liability lies for officers who are authorized to carry.

If agencies do not arm their officers, then other liability issues surface. There is potential for danger to the public and liability issues if warrants go unattended (Abadinsky, 1991:313). If an officer is killed in the line of duty and it could be proven that the officer might have survived if given proper equipment (with the capacity to protect self), the agency would be liable (DelGrosso, 1997:47). There are similar civil lawsuits for law enforcement, but not yet for community corrections (DelGrosso, 1997:47; Welch, 1989:8). In at least one civil lawsuit relevant to community supervision, the court ruled that officers needed to be given relevant training to their job and conditions that are similar to those officers will encounter while they would actually be using the techniques, e.g., field visits with drunks and armed offenders. (DelGrosso, 1997:47). This suit was not specifically because of the firearms issue, however, other suits directly related to the issue of whether to arm community supervision officers may be forthcoming. DelGrosso (1997:47) recognizes that the community supervision departments do "not yet appear to have suffered monetarily from failure to provide officers with defensive weapons or failure to train." If POs are not allowed to carry and

are injured on duty, then they could sue their department for not properly training them or protecting them from risk. But if officers are allowed to carry, but misuse their weapons or hurt other people, the officers and their supervisors could be sued for negligence (Welch, 1989:8).

Welch (1989:8) maintains that the bigger liability risk is from arming POs. Not many officers bring suits against their departments. Welch (1989:8) also states that it is more likely that an officer will hurt someone else than be hurt. There are potential liability factors for arming or not arming officers in the field of community supervision. It almost seems that the only possible way for an officer or an agency to avoid liability would be for the agency to offer the option to carry and the officer subsequently choose not to carry. The unfortunate result in this scenario may be that the officer finds himself in a threatening situation yet is unable to defend himself to the fullest extent possible. Administrators must view their mission and the relevant safety needs and perceptions of the field when deciding to either provide officers with mandatory weapons, optional weapons, or no weapons at all.

Summary

There are several reasons for arming POs. Included in this decision are officer victimization, offender population changes, officer involvement in the community, relations with local law enforcement agencies, officer perceptions and liability issues. Although safety is one of the biggest reasons to arm officers in the field, administrators must consider yet another factor for arming officers. As stated, the agency philosophy should drive the decision to arm officers. Is the agency primarily social-work oriented or

is it law-enforcement oriented? Do officers have peace officer status or are weapons to be used for defensive purposes only? Chapter four reviews yet another consideration which must be given in the decision to arm community supervision officers. This consideration is that of supervisory styles. Introducing weapons into the workplace has the potential for altering the manner in which people conduct day-to-day business. For management, this is a point which must be considered when implementing a policy to arm officers on duty.

CHAPTER FOUR:

OFFICER SUPERVISORY STYLES

Introduction

The second research purpose of this project is developed in chapter four; therefore, a literature review of supervisory styles and techniques is presented within this chapter. To understand how weapons can influence officers on duty and possibly alter supervisory techniques, the roles of the officers themselves must be examined. Other components, which add depth to the officer role issue, are also addressed, including role conflict and agency philosophy.

Dual Roles

The responsibilities of POs require officers to assume many roles¹⁹ (Abadinsky 1991:304) toward offenders because of the diverse needs of the population and because of the nature of the job. Officers are frequently called upon to fill dual roles, yet they are not specifically one or the other (APPA, 1994:35). Within community supervision, the two primary roles by which POs are categorized include the social work role and the law enforcement role. POs are frequently required to perform tasks within each of these two roles while supervising an offender.

¹⁹ For an in-depth review of the eleven identified work roles of POs, refer to Abadinsky (1991:304, 305).

Officers as Social Workers

When POs act more as social workers, they are operating under the therapeutic or “medical/treatment” model. Under this model, offenders are viewed as socially “ill” and are “treated by caseworkers with a combination of therapy, social engineering or manipulation, personality restructuring and other ‘habilitative’ processes” (Smith, 1991:38). POs are viewed as advocates of the offender and the offender does not view the officer as a threat to his freedom (Smith, 1991:38; Thornton and Shireman, 1993:8). In this traditional approach, the officer acts as the offender’s helper by providing community resources, guidance, and by reducing the barriers to reintegrate the offender into the community (Brown, 1989:194). The helping role was also presented and emphasized in the 1973 Supreme Court case *Gagnon v. Scarpelli* (Brown, 1989:194; Brown, 1990:21). In commenting on the case, Brown (1989:194) notes that “revoking probation was seen as ‘a failure of supervision,’ as the purpose of supervision was to successfully work with offenders in the community.” The “social work” treatment model dominated and, hence, the issue of safety was virtually ignored by the larger profession of community corrections. Also, the social work model was “office administered” therefore POs were seldom exposed to the more dangerous community interaction (Smith, 1991:38).

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, it became more apparent to the community supervision field that changing offender behavior was difficult, especially if the offender did not want to change (Smith, 1991:38). Tax money became scarce and there was more emphasis on the norm of accountability by policy makers and the public in general. Many federal, state and local agencies had to account for resources, as did the community

supervision sector. Probation and parole agencies started to look more at their missions, how goals were achieved (Smith, 1991:38) and the roles that their front-line staff played in meeting these overall objectives.

During the late 1980s and 1990s, the public has typically demanded more punishment and incarceration of offenders rather than “rehabilitative” models and approaches (Smith, 1991:38). This attitude has extended to probation and parole, which are viewed as an extension or an expansion of the criminal justice prison system (Smith, 1991:38). Thornton and Shireman (1993:16) assert that the role of the officer is changing and that there is no longer the same kind of emphasis on treatment. The public is demanding protection first and then rehabilitation.

To examine the changes in PO roles, Sluder, Shearer and Potts (1991:3-11) conducted a study involving probation officers who attended the Probation Academy at Sam Houston State University in Huntsville, Texas. These officers were surveyed regarding role perceptions by looking at caseload management strategies. Contrary to other literature about changing roles, the study found that officers clearly supported treatment and reform-oriented goals, which was reflected by the officer's preference for “resource brokerage caseload management strategies” (Sluder, et al, 1991:9). One other note about this study, however, was that “there may be an infusion of pragmatism; our study indicated a positive, if weak, correlation between the resource broker and law enforcement strategies, indicating the possibility of a future shift away from treatment as the 'proper' goal of probation supervision” (Sluder, et al, 1991:9).

Brown (1990:21) even notes that there is little literature about arming POs because the academic culture has ignored the issue based on the perception that the role

of the officer is that of a counselor or an advocate for the offender. Brown (1990:21) continues to state that the court's decision in *Gagnon v. Scarpelli* was shaped by literature of that time which did not include a vision of probation and parole officers carrying firearms. Research in 1969 showed that the issue of guns never came up and even years later in 1985, the social work approach was still prevalent in college texts (Brown, 1990:21). Academic literature may reflect predominance of the social work model, however, practitioners in the field of community corrections are disputing this view.

The challenge of the rehabilitation model has led to more emphasis on control and surveillance in community corrections (Brown, 1989:196). This change also includes more pro-active, client-controlled officer orientations which also leads to more training topics addressing staff safety (Champion 1996:428). If officers are not primarily acting as the traditional social worker, then they must be acting in another role required by the profession, that of a law enforcer.

Officers as Law Enforcement

The law enforcement role of community supervision is also referred to by several names: "surveillance," "control," "accountability," and "authoritarian." The National Conference on Parole gave a classic surveillance definition: "Surveillance is that activity of the parole officer which utilizes watchfulness, checking, and verification of certain behavior of a parolee without contributing to a helping relationship with him" (Allen, Eskridge, Latessa, and Vito, 1985:128). Smith (1991:38) contends that most agencies around the country have to increase control and accountability by the imposition and enforcement of strict conditions of probation and parole and the use of higher levels of

supervision and surveillance or else they will face being abolished (Smith, 1991:38). Because of increased offender accountability through surveillance techniques and the change of the officer role from rehabilitative to that of a “proactive enforcer,” parole work is now viewed as more adversarial (Papy, 1996:23; Thornton and Shireman, 1993:8). Adversarial tasks include “on-site home and work visits, searches, drug testing, installing electronic surveillance equipment, crisis intervention and making arrests” (Smith, 1991:38). Depending upon the agency’s mission and policy requirements, officers are expected to conduct these adversarial tasks regardless of administrative steps taken to ensure officer safety, e.g., issuance of firearms while on duty.

Contributing to the adversarial and surveillance nature of community corrections is public perception of their safety and offender punishment for crimes against society. The public has been concerned about crime rates and becomes increasingly aware of offender activities on a daily basis through the media and more recent forms of communication via the Internet. Since the public focuses on those offenses that are especially violent in nature, they have demanded more of a locus on punishment and control rather than rehabilitation (Thornton and Shireman, 1993:8). Management of client risk through accountability is the notion of enforcement which requires POs to conduct community investigations and maintain contact with offenders in high crime areas (Paparozzi and Martin, 1996:38). Greater emphasis for enforcement techniques then generates more concern for an officer's safety (Thornton and Shireman, 1993:8). If the perception of the enforcement role is one of an adversary, the potential for aggression and victimization against the officer increases “dramatically” (Thornton and Shireman, 1993:8).

Brown's (1990:22) position is that the increased emphasis on enforcement is also evidenced by more and more states arming officers in view of the concern for officer safety in the field. Some law enforcement aspects of the community supervision position, such as making arrests, can be done by the parole agency or be brokered to local law enforcement agencies. The advent of law enforcement duties has framed the debate about the appropriate role of firearms among POs (Paparozzi and Martin, 1996:38). Abadinsky adamantly supports granting parole officers the authority to carry firearms in the field and make arrests of offenders who have violated their conditions of supervision (Abadinsky, 1991:315 and Brown, 1990:21). Supporters of this position maintain that an agency which cannot immediately arrest an offender who is involved in criminal behavior is not providing an adequate level of service or community protection (Abadinsky, 1991:315). Dr. Howard Abadinsky (1991:316) furthermore states that an agency whose officers have no responsibility to enforce special conditions²⁰ and restrictions through investigations and arrest powers is not providing the minimum acceptable level of community safety. Abadinsky (1991:316) also maintains that arrest abilities do not interfere with the PO's capacity to do a thorough job. Usually because of the relationship with the offender, officers make arrests or perform searches without hostility or tension that accompanies the arrests made by other law enforcement authorities²¹ (Abadinsky, 1991:316). Whether the officer takes the role of law enforcement or social work, there is some conflict that may occur if the officer is unable to fulfill both roles simultaneously.

²⁰ Abadinsky (1991:316) states that POs should be able to immediately arrest an offender who violates special conditions such as frequenting play areas, drinking and driving, carrying prohibited tools, or should be able to immediately investigate a lifestyle supported by status, e.g., drug dealer. Regular law enforcement officers may not be able to arrest individuals for most of the conditions as listed because the offender may not be breaking the law, but POs with arrest authority can take the offender into custody because of the violations of release (parole).

Role Conflict

Obviously the roles of social work and law enforcement have the potential to be polar opposites. Along with the issue of firearms use, this is another of the reasons that POs may experience role conflict when attempting to perform their duties on the job (Sigler and McGraw, 1985:28; Sigler, 1988:123). Role conflict occurs when someone "is subjected to two or more contradictory expectations whose stipulations the individual cannot simultaneously meet" (Brown, 1990:22). Officers may not feel they can meet the expectations of judges, supervisors, parole boards, colleges, the public, or law enforcement²² all at the same time.²³ Paparozzi and Martin (1996:38) ascertain that when the officer fills the role of surveillance, the perception of the public may be one of the enforcer of the law. Once established, this role is difficult to change. This is the case whether officers do this role themselves or broker with other agencies (Paparozzi and Martin, 1996:38).

According to Sigler (1988:121) probation and parole fields are ideal to test role conflict because of the potential for conflict between treatment and supervision which is characteristic of the field. Because of the need for an objective and perceptual scale regarding role conflict among parole and probation staff, Sigler (1988:122) attempted to find support for the theory of role conflict among community corrections staff. The academic community hypothesized that if there is a weapons requirement and a treatment

²¹ Regardless, Abadinsky (1991:316) asserts that whether or not an officer makes the arrest on the offender, the offender knows that the officer is the person who initiated the warrant action.

²² This list could actually go on and on, to include any person who has a stake in or is a customer of the community supervision system, even including the expectations of the offender or of the officer himself.

²³ For a more thorough discussion regarding role conflict and the differences between inter-role and intra-role conflict, see Sigler, 1988:121 - 129, and Sigler and McGraw, 1985:28-32.

philosophy within an agency, role conflict would be at its highest. According to this hypothesis, role conflict was to have even more credibility if the weapons' policy change was recent, as the case in Alabama (Sigler, 1988:124).

In Alabama, the traditional agency philosophy was treatment. After 1978, their agency philosophy changed to a combination of treatment and law enforcement, including full peace officer status training with firearm authority. The study found that role conflict was not strongly associated with weapons use. As might be expected, they did find that the enforcement-oriented officers carried their weapons more than the treatment-oriented ones, but the hypothesis of high role conflict was not supported (Sigler, 1988:127). Sigler (1988:128) goes on to note that it is also possible that officers find ways to reduce and adapt to role conflict and those that cannot, leave the profession. It is also possible that the conflict is in the mind of outsiders and that officers have little trouble viewing themselves as law enforcers and social workers (Sigler, 1988:128). Sigler and McGraw (1985:31) also state that "...role conflict is not more prevalent among those who see their role as treatment than among those who see their role as law enforcement."

Dr. Howard Abadinsky (1991:315) also acknowledged the researchers' literature about role conflict, but stated that he never experienced role conflict, nor did any of his colleagues in New York. Abadinsky (1991:315) continued to note that the application of social work principles was enhanced by the legal authority inherent in probation and parole settings; there must be the use of appropriate methods because offenders often "engage in behavior that is self-destructive and dangerous to the community." If there is a role conflict, then it is probably there in many professions--the true professional finds a

way to integrate various role expectations (Abadinsky, 1991:315). Abadinsky (1991:315) also stated that “among professions, role conflict is seldom seen as a justification for eviscerating the profession of a few less salient tasks.” Regardless, the debate over an officer’s role still exists and it will continue to focus on the agency’s emphasis toward rehabilitation or on law enforcement functions (APPA, 1994:35). Even with limited empirical evidence, the assumption of role conflict is prevalent in the field of community supervision and in the literature (Sigler and McGraw, 1985:28; Sigler, 1988:123).

Role Compatibility and Agency Philosophy

Another recurring theme in the literature is that there needs to be precise role identification for officers to follow (Sigler and McGraw, 1985:30). This can be done through an agency’s mission, policies, procedures and philosophical approach. Sigler (1988:123) suggests that clarification of policies and philosophy within the agency may alleviate some of the perceived conflict among staff. Abadinsky (1991:306) outlines three models that provide the framework for an agency’s contextual orientation:

- **Control:** emphasizes unannounced home visits, employment visits, drug tests and close working relationships with law enforcement agencies.
- **Combined:** provides social services along with control functions.
- **Social Service:** focuses on client’s needs, such as employment, housing, or counseling which gives social and psychological support.

Community supervision officers’ roles may be found within one of these three models (Abadinsky, 1991:306). Abadinsky (1991:306) states that most parole agencies are combination models while probation more often uses the social service model. The control orientation, in its purest form, would be hard to find, but portions of it can be

found in the combined model (Abadinsky, 1991:306). An example of programs which emphasize the control model within a combined context is electronic monitoring²⁴ or the Super Intensive Supervision Program.²⁵ Even through the controversy and debate about which role an officer should take with his client, this should not be the issue which is most addressed. Instead, the issue should be whether the officer's role is compatible with the agency model (Abadinsky, 1991:306).

Rationally, if the agency model is one of social service, then officers should not carry firearms and should not have arresting authority. Abadinsky (1991:312) suggests there is conflict if the agency model is more of a control/combined model with officers having the authority to arrest and search offenders, but are not able to carry firearms for protection or enforcements. It is the mixed messages that can cause problems, including moral problems because officers have problems performing their law enforcement functions (arrests, searches) without carrying firearms (Brown, 1990:21).

Keve (1979:427-434) surveyed administrators regarding their policies and concluded that the best needs of the agency and of the officers are served if there is clear policy definition. He also suggests that carrying firearms and beliefs of staff about firearms are more influenced by the agency's philosophy than by legislative definition of parole officers or whether agents work in rural or urban areas (Keve, 1979:434). Existing policy should dictate "how the mission is accomplished and determine to what degree safety equipment and training are needed" (Stiles, 1996:26), instead of the other way around. When California adopted policy to carry firearms in 1979, "there was a dramatic

²⁴ Electronic monitoring (EM) is a form of supervision in which the offender is equipped with an ankle bracelet and essentially placed on home arrest except for specific hours of the day in which he's allowed by his officer to leave.

shift in parole officer philosophy toward clients from rehabilitation to control and enforcement during that same period" (Champion, 1996:430).²⁶ The use of firearms should not be the deciding factor with respect to policy. Agency philosophy, policies and procedures should be established first and then the firearms policy should be consistent with those decisions.

If there is confusion about the ideologies or theories present within an agency, then typically officers may redefine their functions based on the tangible equipment they possess--however inappropriate this response is (Paparozzi and Martin, 1996:39). One of the most tangible pieces of equipment an officer can have is a firearm. It is better for the agency to establish the overall ideology that should be used with offenders than for the individual officers to do so because of the firearm they carry. Brown (1990:21) concluded that the agency's operational philosophy, whether control or case work, had the most influence on whether officers preferred to carry firearms while on duty.

Parole and probation agencies should have specific policies and procedures in place which are used to achieve desired outcomes (Paparozzi and Martin, 1996:39). Safety equipment and training "should assist in achieving objectives rather than defining results and the ways they are to be achieved" (Paparozzi and Martin, 1996:39). Too often the attention given to firearms policies and procedures and training exceeds the attention given to state-of-the-art principles for doing the day-to-day business of parole (Paparozzi and Martin, 1996:39). Individual jurisdictions within the field of community supervision

²⁵ Super Intensive Supervision Program (SISP) was implemented in Texas to provide the highest level of supervision to high risk offenders. This program has a motto of "zero tolerance" and violation reports are submitted immediately upon identification of a rule violation.

²⁶ This information is in direct conflict with Smith (1991:116) who states that in California, the mission did not change with the implementation of firearms to the workplace. All officers, whether they carried or not, must fulfill all officer duties and "availability of firearms was not a signal that the department was moving toward a law enforcement role, or that traditional treatment functions would be abandoned."

should establish their own philosophies toward supervision before the firearms issue comes into play, if not, the issue itself may become more important than it really needs to be.

Finding a Balance

Depending on the expectations that agencies have of their officers, POs may become used to performing only law enforcement or social work functions. POs may be so accustomed to their own approach it is difficult for them to understand that in another office, the same work can be completed with or without a weapon (Sigler and McGraw, 1985:30). Sigler and McGraw (1985:30) state that if local law enforcement is especially active then officers may adjust their role to an unarmed approach. If the law enforcement agencies are resistant or understaffed, POs may adjust their philosophy and take on the enforcement role. Still, Welch (1989:5) states that the major function of the officer is to be a social service counselor and broker, and that is how the job should be defined. Welch (1989:5) finds that by allowing other things (not defined) to creep in, the role will be chipped away and officers will end up doing surveillance and nothing else (Welch, 1989:5). The change in supervision may not be immediately apparent. For example, an agency may start to arm officers who in turn experience a gradual change in supervisory practices. Also, the agency itself may change employment practices and start hiring people with firearms experience instead of social service experience. All the while, the officers' role begins to change from social work to surveillance (Welch, 1989:5).

Often the debate over officer orientation and safety equipment is discussed in a polarized fashion, such as treatment v. surveillance or social work v. law enforcement.

Paparazzi and Martin (1996:39) note that this kind of thinking limits the full potential of probation and parole services as behavior changes and crime reduction strategies.

Polarized perspectives also enhances the likelihood of each group viewing the roles as mutually exclusive. Officers should individualize their response to each case, emphasizing either the law enforcement role or the therapeutic role, as needed; officers should also have the flexibility to adapt methods that are useful in their field (Abadinsky, 1991:306). If an officer is armed or unarmed the reflection could be the perception of either a law enforcement or a social work role (Thornton and Shireman, 1993:40). POs should, however, keep a balanced approach to work and not change services provided simply because they are armed. Officers should continue to use previously learned skills, training and techniques acquired on the job regardless of the defensive weapons authorized to them (Smith, 1991:116).

Within the community corrections field there is an emphasis for a balanced approach toward role expectations and supervision responsibilities (Abadinsky, 1991:315; APPA, 1994:35) Even in 1989, Jones and Robinson (1989:88) advocated a "proper blend" of law enforcement and social service caseworkers role to successfully perform supervisory duties. Although it appears that surveillance and casework are diametrically opposed, within the context of community corrections, they must co-exist. Agencies usually have two distinct parts to their mission: rehabilitate/reintegrate offenders into society while simultaneously protecting society from the very people who have been proven to be dangerous (Allen, Eskridge, Latessa, and Vito, 1985:129). Studies have supported the idea that officers are aware of the social work/law enforcement dichotomy that exists within the field of corrections (Allen, Eskridge,

Latessa, and Vito, 1985:137). The dichotomy is simply a part of the job and helps to make community supervision positions unique in their field.

Supervisory Style Changes

Most of the literature states that officers do not change their supervisory styles once they have been given the authority to carry firearms. As cited in Welch (1989:5), Keve and Faulkner believe that people will not treat others any differently when they are carrying a gun than when they are not. Agencies probably wish that they too would have good implementation strategies and the results that California has had. In California after the implementation of the firearms policy, types and frequency of service referrals were still the same (Smith, 1991:124). There was no polarization of parole officers' attitudes and perceptions (social work role vs. law enforcement role) after officers were given the authority to carry while on duty (Smith, 1991:124). All continued the same role, performing all regular parole functions. POs accepted and respected others' decisions to carry (Smith, 1991:124). "Put succinctly, the firearm did not turn a caring, humanistic work force into clack-jawed, drooling fascists" (Smith, 1991:124). Officers in California were specifically instructed to perform their duties as they have done before and handling any situation should be the same regardless of whether they carry or not (Smith, 1991:115, 116). When the policy changed in California from non-carrying to carrying, the agency made clear that availability of firearms was not indicative that there was a change from the traditional treatment functions to a law enforcement role (Smith, 1991:124). The officers were told not to become more like police officers, but to continue "to use the skills, training, techniques, and other tools they had acquired during

their careers” (DelGrosso, 1997:48). Basically the literature supports no supervisory style changes in California after implementation of firearms to the workplace.

One top administrator from a department where they changed from non-carrying to carrying, said she noticed “that the firearm has not changed the fundamental relationship between the officer and the offender. The ‘helping role’ continues as long as the offenders positively respond to supervision” (DelGrosso, 1997:48).

There have been fears that POs would be more aggressive, that they would stop using other measures and stop doing casework when they were armed; there were also fears that the offender would in turn arm themselves (Welch, 1989:9). “But none of those happened. It seemed to have almost no impact on the way individual agents behaved...You absolutely can maintain a good role with guns” (Welch, 1989:9).

Jones and Robinson (1989:90) offered one opinion that clearly contradicted the view that older officers would overemphasize the role of firearms. The exception was an officer with 33 years of law enforcement experience who never drew a weapon; he “...offered his belief that a person is less likely to practice communication skills in a combative situation if a firearm is available.”

By arming officers, administrators are probably most afraid that what happened in Georgia will occur in their agency. Georgia was a “classical case of runaway arms race” (Welch, 1989:5). This Georgia story is from James T. Morris who was a member of Georgia Parole Board since 1974 and also a former police officer (Welch, 1989:5). In 1967, Georgia used a social work model and then began hiring more ex-police officers and retired military personnel, especially those from military police. In the mid 1980s, the department learned that officers were doing heavy surveillance and that alone (Welch,

1989:5). According to Welch (1989:5), offenders were treated as they were in prison. Morris stated that "Our director of field operations referred to us in a positive way, as a paramilitary organization" (Welch, 1989:5). Guns were worn during all waking hours.²⁷ One year, some of the officers said their greatest need was to go from .38 caliber revolvers to 9mm automatics, more powerful guns that can shoot nine times in about five seconds (Welch, 1989:5). Morris blamed much of the problems on the fact that they had hired a lot of young college graduates and ex-police and military personnel who liked the status and power of the gun--not that they were fearful for their lives (Welch, 1989:5). "Georgia has now banned guns except for use in specific situations--arresting violators, working in high crime neighborhoods and other high risk situations" (Welch, 1989:5). As Texas administrators probably hope, the Georgia case may be the exception to the rule as it relates to officer supervisory style changes after the implementation of firearms within an agency.

Summary

Chapter four has given an overview of the roles officers must develop in order to be effective criminal justice professionals. Depending upon personal points of view, practitioners advocate either social work or law enforcement roles for POs. Although administrative philosophy is a large factor for determining which role will predominate among officers, there is the argument that arming officers will cause an evolution toward

²⁷ One officer even shot a barking dog as it ran up to him; then the agency had to pay for the dog. Another officer pulled a weapon on an offender who jumped into a car and took off; the officer emptied his revolver into the car. Another officer shot the ground as a warning shot and the bullet ricocheted off the sidewalk and hit the offender in the back. Some officers even started SWAT teams for purposes of making arrests; these POs would come in with fatigues on, baseball caps backwards and stun guns out in order to arrest a drunk who had three bottles of wine the night before (Welch, 1989:5).

the law enforcement role. This next chapter presents the setting for this project. As chapter five illustrates, Texas is now ready to embark on the endeavor of arming parole officers within the Texas Department of Criminal Justice. Since the agency is currently in the process of implementing a firearms policy for its parole officers, administrators must question not only increases in perceived safety, but the possibility of supervisory style changes. The dual purpose of this project will provide insight regarding these questions as they pertain to officers employed by the state of Texas.

CHAPTER FIVE:

THE TEXAS SETTING

Introduction

Chapter five provides a Texas perspective on the topic of arming parole officers²⁸ while on duty. Although it may be surprising to others in the community supervision field, Texas has always followed the treatment and combined models for supervision enforcement in the field of parole. Individuals employed by the Texas Department of Criminal Justice-Parole Division (TDCJ-PD) have never been authorized to carry a firearm on duty until 1998. There is a group of people who have always been proponents of arming parole officers in Texas, but several events sparked the controversial topic of carrying and led to the passage of a law authorizing officers to carry. After Texas House Bill 2909 passed, the Parole Division subsequently adopted policies allowing officers the option to carry a firearm during the performance of their job tasks. The first parole officers to carry firearms under TDCJ-PD authority were authorized to do so during the month of July 1998. The subject in Texas has been just as emotional and controversial as in other states. This chapter explores not only the reasons officers were armed in Texas, but it also provides the framework for the empirical portion of this research project.

Reasons to Arm

Previously, officers have never had the authority to carry firearms while on duty,

²⁸ Although the literature review has presented this topic inclusive of probation and parole officers, this chapter and the subsequent research addresses the issue as it relates to parole officers employed by the Texas Department of Criminal Justice. Probation officers within the state of Texas are employed by judicial districts and are given administrative support by TDCJ-Community Justice Assistance Division. Under the law, probation officers are authorized to carry firearms, however, the policy to carry is adopted

even if the officer was a licensed peace officer or a reserved deputy. Then, in 1995, Senate Bill 60 was passed and signed into law by the 74th Legislature of Texas (Ballard, 1996: 2). This concealed handgun bill allowed citizens to apply for a concealed handgun license (CHL) through the Texas Department of Public Safety (Ballard, 1996: Appendix C). As long as individuals passed the background check and firearms proficiency test, under Texas law qualified citizens were authorized to carry a concealed firearm. In response to the CHL, TDCJ issued an agency-wide memorandum that specifically prohibited officers from carrying firearms while on duty or on TDCJ property (Reynolds, 1996:1). The exceptions²⁹ to the TDCJ policy were not applicable to almost all parole staff, especially officers in the field conducting the daily business of field work (Reynolds, 1996:2). Ironically, many POs qualified for a CHL to carry a gun during personal hours but were unable to carry a firearm while conducting home visits and field visits on convicted felons.

The issue of firearms for safety also reached prominence in early 1995. On March 14, 1995, a shooting incident occurred at the Houston II District Parole Office (Ballard, 1996:2). An offender and his girlfriend came into the district office to report to his parole officer. Shortly thereafter an altercation occurred outside of the office; the girl was shot and killed and the offender was apprehended by a security guard. No officers were hurt, however, not all of the district offices within the state have the luxury of a full time or a part time security guard (Ballard, 1996:2). Due to this incident, officers'

on a judicial district-by-judicial district basis. Probation officers are not affected by TDCJ-PD policy and are not represented in this applied research project.

²⁹ Policy exceptions included Institutional Division staff such as wardens, assistant wardens or officers with custodial duties concerning inmates or confinees. Other exceptions pertained to employees residing in state-owned housing; employees with written consent from the Executive Director; or, employees authorized to carry a firearm by law with a defense to prosecution for unlawfully carrying weapons (Penal Code, 46.02) (Reynolds, 1996:2)

concern for their safety increased.

Then, in September of 1995 several policy changes made officers more wary of their safety. The contact standards for supervising offenders were revised so that officers were mandated to spend more of their time in the field making work and home contacts instead of in the offices (Ballard, 1996:2). Additionally, the parole offices began staying open later in the evening to accommodate working offenders. Both officers and clerical staff were apprehensive for their safety since they had to leave for home late in the evening (Ballard, 1996:2).

Soon afterward, in October of 1995, the Parole Division's Safety Committee was tasked with the assignment of assessing officer attitudes about carrying a concealed handgun while on duty. The committee was also asked to make recommendations regarding their findings on the topic itself (Ballard, 1996:2). The resulting safety survey revealed that of the total 863 officers³⁰ who responded, 80.3% supported a policy allowing officers to carry firearms while on duty (Ballard, 1996:5). Ballard (1996:5) goes on to state that there was no less than 67.8% support in any one demographic group. These findings are not new to Texas, however. At a statewide meeting of parole officers between 6/8/88 and 6/10/88, a survey of parole officers indicated that the majority (71.7%) of the respondents supported the option to carry firearms while on duty (Tenner, 1998:1). The results were conclusive. Officers in Texas were speaking out and requesting the authority to optionally arm themselves while on duty.

³⁰ During October, 1995, approximately 1200 officers were employed by TDCJ-PD. The survey was sent out to all officers and supervisors and reflected a 71.9% response rate.

Legislative Changes

For officers to carry firearms on duty, legislation had to be implemented giving such authorization. The 1997 Regular Session of the 75th Texas Legislature made such a ruling. The Texas Penal Code (1998, 120) allows parole officers to be armed while on duty as long as the officer is in compliance with the policies and procedures of the TDCJ. According to the Government Code (Texas, 1998:170; Texas, 1998:202) officers are only able to carry a weapon if they possess a firearms proficiency certificate from the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement Officer Standards and Education (TCLEOSE). Officers are not, by statute, certified peace or law enforcement officers. Officers are given a firearms proficiency certificate and are allowed to carry for self-defensive purposes only. In chapter two, *Officers and Their Authority*,³¹ there is a reference to the three categories in which agency policy falls. The reference is made from Howard Abadinsky (1991:314) and under the new statutory law, Texas does not fall into any of the three categories.³²

Policy Changes

Policy was also developed to reflect the change in the Texas statutes. Authorization to carry firearms is optional under current policy and officers must be aware of Sections 9.31-9.33 of the Texas Penal Code regarding the use of force for self-defense (Parole Division Administrative Directive, 1998:1). According to the Texas Penal Code (1998:15) officers are only justified in using force when and to the degree

³¹ Page 16

³² By sheer luck, this author has had contact with Dr. Abadinsky and the author brought up the subject of his three categories regarding agency firearms policy. He agreed that Texas now makes up a fourth category and that he will have to change the next edition of his textbook: Probation and Parole: Theory and Practice.

that force is necessary to protect the officer from someone else's use of unlawful force. Additionally, for officers to request the option of carrying a firearm while on duty, they must pay for all expenses themselves minus per diem and travel related costs (Parole Division Administrative Directive, 1998:2). The agency will allow the officer time off of work to go to trainings or to qualify or requalify with his firearm (Parole Division Administrative Directive, 1998:2). The policy clearly does not allow officers to execute any law enforcement activities such as searches or arrests. It also states that the firearm is to be carried in a concealed manner and only displayed with the intention of use (Parole Division Administrative Directive, 1998:5). For more detailed information regarding this policy, refer to **Appendix A: Parole Division Administrative Directives 1.1.10: Parole Officer Firearms Guidelines.**

Safety Perceptions

The Texas safety committee stated that one of the advantages of implementing a firearms policy within the Parole Division was that officers would have increased security. The committee also stated that officers would experience "added morale from knowing that their desires are not being ignored and that they are entrusted with the responsibility of carrying a weapon" (Ballard, 1996:53). Do officers experience added morale from carrying firearms? Do they actually feel safer because they are carrying firearms while executing home and field visits? As stated in Chapter three, under subtitle *Officer Perceptions*, California staff state that the gun is helpful for psychological safety. Safety almost comes right down to officer safety *perceptions*. If an officer *perceives* he is safe, the officer will act and conduct himself as if he *is* safe, thereby increasing his

safety and confidence level.

Officers who carry may experience increased security, but what about those officers who choose not to carry? What happens to their safety perception? Do the officers who choose not to carry firearms also feel safer or do they feel a decrease in their safety because others are carrying in their offices? These questions have not been addressed in the literature surrounding the topic of firearms within the probation and parole fields. Even though some officers choose not to carry firearms, unarmed officers must still work in offices where others have chosen the right to carry a firearm on duty.

Larry "Max" Schultz, Safety Officer of the TDCJ-PD (Schultz, 1998), asked these same safety questions about the clerical or support staff who are employed by the Division. Support staff are not given the option to carry firearms but they also work with officers who are authorized to carry weapons in the workplace. Most TDCJ clerical staff were hired under a "no carry" policy. Since the implementation of the firearms policy, support staff are exposed to firearms on a daily basis. What is the support staff safety level since they are not even among the target population authorized to carry a firearm on duty?

Other states have found that the addition of firearms to the workplace has not changed the practices or perceptions agency staff. For example, in California, many people, including the public and the officers themselves, believed that firearms' possession and display would increase the number of shooting incidents and even possible deaths of offenders and parole officers (Smith, 1991:122). This goes entirely against the idea that firearms add to the safety level of officers. However, history in California showed that during the next twelve years there was only one gun fired; during

that same twelve year period, there were seven unholsterings per month (Smith, 1991:122). California intended the gun to be viewed as an additional self-defense piece of equipment thus minimizing negative effects on the mission statement. They believe they “did just that” (Smith, 1991:122). In this case officers’ safety levels rose with the addition of firearms in the workplace.

In summary, the questions posed in this section give root to the first purpose of this research. This project describes the safety perceptions of Texas Parole Division staff since implementation of the firearms policy within the Division. The framework for the other research purpose is provided in the next section on supervisory styles.

Supervisory Styles

As stated, parole officers take on different roles while executing the duties of their job. In Texas, a primarily social work model is combined with portions of law enforcement techniques. Veronica Ballard, Parole Division Director (Ballard, 1998),³³ began her community corrections career in Louisiana. In Louisiana, she was certified to carry a firearm on duty while supervising convicted felons on community supervision. In the interview, Ms. Ballard stated that she is concerned about supervisory style changes once officers begin carrying firearms on duty. While in Louisiana, she routinely conducted more unscheduled and late visits for offenders than she did as an officer unarmed in Texas. Since these types of visits are primarily viewed as surveillance

³³ As the author compiled information for the literature review portion of this applied research project, she contacted Veronica Ballard, Director of the Parole Division to obtain her input about the firearms topic. The author wanted to obtain not only the Director’s support for the project but also feedback concerning research questions and project applicability for the Parole Division. Since Ms. Ballard has field experience in another state that allows community corrections officers to carry firearms on duty, her contribution to this project provided another aspect with which the author was unfamiliar.

techniques, Ms. Ballard wondered if Texas officers would start this same pattern once they were armed with weapons.

As stated in the literature in Chapter four, arrests, urinalysis testing, unscheduled home visits and electronic monitoring are considered law enforcement or surveillance methods. Parole Division policies govern the minimum number of office, home and field visits conducted. There are also policies regulating which offenders may be referred to Electronic Monitoring, the Super Intensive Supervision Program and other specialized caseloads. Some region and district policies have quotas for the number of urinalyses conducted on offenders; but, officers can also conduct urinalyses as often as they deem appropriate for the offenders under their direct supervision. Another category in which officers may increase surveillance techniques is technical reports of violation. Violation reports may be written for technical or non-technical violations. These reports are submitted with the intention of obtaining a warrant for the offender's arrest. Non-technical violations are law violations, such as arrests; these violation reports must be written in a timely manner according to Parole Division policy. Technical violations are violations of parole rules, such as missing a home visit or not attending a treatment group; there are policies that give some direction regarding when to write a technical report,³⁴ however an officer may also submit a written report even after the first violation. Depending upon the officer's supervision style, his ideologies and strategies may reflect in the number of visits conducted, reports written, urinalysis taken or referrals made.

Another concern within the field of community corrections is the change that the addition of firearms may make in the relationship between officer and offender. This

thread of reasoning has been pervasive during discussions at recent Parole Division firearms trainings. Typically firearms are viewed as enforcement and they are accepted as deadly weapons. Bringing firearms into the workplace raises the fear that the tension between an officer and an offender may escalate simply because the officer carries the firearm. This type of situation would result in the possibility of more attacks on officers or more resistance from offenders to follow an officer's direction (DelGrosso, 1997:45, 48). DelGrosso (1997:48) notes that there is little empirical evidence to support this position.

Discussions in Texas are mixed regarding how firearms influence a PO's relationships with offenders. Some people believe that the offenders will be more resistant toward supervision since parole officers may be viewed as law enforcement officers. Others state that the change in relationships between officers and offenders will be good in that the offenders will be more respectful and will view the officer as a professional authority figure. Any change in relationships will have to be determined once the firearms policy has matured past its infancy stage.

DelGrosso (1997:48) states that POs are trained, educated professionals with a good deal of intelligence. The addition of firearms to the workplace should not change the manner in which officers conduct day-to-day business.

Providing POs with the "ability to carry a weapon should not and will not determine how they approach their job...Rather, it is the officers' individual skill levels and the manner in which the agency trains and supervises the officers that determines how they function and present themselves in the community and with offenders" (DelGrosso, 1997:48).

³⁴ Graduated sanctions such as verbal reprimands or case staffings are authorized prior to submitting a technical report of violation for a warrant; depending on the officer, the graduated sanctions may continue over time (get stretched out) or be used quickly after each parole infraction.

Firearms may not impact an officer's supervisory style, but the addition of firearms could have another type of unintended effect. For example, Smith (1991:124) notes that the California firearm carrying policy may fail to attract potential employees who would normally apply because of the casework component of community supervision. People opposed to firearms may not enter the field. As a result, the policy may "eliminate some of the people who have historically kept probation and parole balanced between control and treatment" (Smith, 1991:124). Overall, the vast majority of POs have remained more positive than negative about accepting firearms (Smith, 1991:124).

Summary

Community supervision within the state of Texas has undergone major changes since 1995. One of those is the implementation of firearms policy for field officers. Although there are several reasons to implement statewide armory of officers, there are still questions about the effect that weapon introduction has within the workplace. The second purpose of this project is to explore possible officer supervisory style changes since implementation of the firearms policy within the Parole Division. After carrying firearms, officers may indeed be safer while executing their job duties, but bringing firearms into the workplace may have unintended negative consequences.

Some additional concerns that surfaced during the Oklahoma period of restricted carry may also extend to Texas. Oklahoma's concerns included:

- Are officers at a higher risk because the offenders know the officers have limited access to firearms?

- Do the offenders even know that the officers are able to carry?
- Will there be an increase in criminal behavior and non-compliance with conditions of release for those officers who choose not to or are unable to carry? (Jones and Robinson, 1989:90).

After the field of community corrections addresses more exploratory questions, the literature will be able to reflect additional information about workplace changes that have resulted from implementation of a firearms policy. Chapter six addresses the mechanics used for both the exploratory and descriptive research data collection. This research adds some insight into the questions and issues outlined in this chapter.

CHAPTER SIX:

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter discusses the methodology used for this applied research project. There are two purposes for this project. The first purpose is to describe the safety perceptions of Parole Division staff since implementation of the firearms policy within the Division. The second purpose is to explore possible officer supervisory style changes since implementation of the firearms policy within the Division. To address the two purposes of this research project there are two conceptual frameworks developed and operationalized in this chapter.

Focus Groups

Focus groups contributed a great deal of information to this project. Morgan (1997:17) suggests that focus groups be conducted on topics that allow participants the opportunity to actively and easily participate in the conversation. The issue of parole officers carrying firearms on duty readily meets this criterion. One strength of focus groups is that they have the ability to generate concentrated information on the exact topic of interest (Morgan, 1997:13). This way the subject content is specifically targeted to the researcher's interest as opposed to participant observation, which may not provide the information needed (*Op. cit.*). Compared to individual interviewing, focus groups are more efficient in terms of gathering equivalent amounts of data.

Group interaction can also provide insights into participants' opinions and experiences (*Op. cit.*). According to Morgan (1997:16), focus groups are essentially a

compromise between the strengths and weaknesses of participant observation and individual interviewing. Even though the interaction between participants is valuable in a focus group setting, it is also a corresponding weakness since the researcher is reliant upon this interaction (Morgan, 1997:15). Another weakness of focus groups is the fact that the facilitator creates and directs the groups therefore making them less naturalistic than, say, participant observation; there is also less certainty about participants' convictions because they could be influenced by other views within the group (Morgan, 1997:14).

Focus groups may be structured using a pre-existing agenda or less structured and more exploratory (Morgan, 1997:39,40). Due to the nature of this research, a combination of the two approaches was used to compile information from focus group participants. Morgan (*Op. cit.*) refers to this technique as a "funnel" approach. The "funnel" approach begins with less structured open discussion among participants in order to give them the opportunity to pursue areas within the topic which interests them. The group then concludes with more specific questions in order to gather information about the researcher's specific interests.

Using the "funnel" approach, seven focus groups³⁵ were conducted in July, 1998 throughout the state of Texas in order to gather additional information regarding the issue of parole officers carrying firearms while on duty. In order to capture a wide range of perspectives on this topic, group participants included Parole Division support staff, parole officers, parole supervisors and substance abuse casemanagers. Morgan (1997:35)

³⁵ Since the author is employed by TDCJ-PD as a curriculum developer, she is responsible for Staff Development's annual training needs assessment. When compiling information for needs assessments in the past, the author has conducted various division focus groups in order to gain insight and feedback from district office staff.

recommends segmentation of some groups, in order to control group composition and match chosen categories of participants. Since Morgan (*Op. cit.*) goes on to state that homogeneity in the focus groups allows for more free-flowing conversation, two of the seven focus groups were comprised of either pro-gun staff or anti-gun staff. These groups were conducted second and third, respectively; once information was compared between these groups with information from the first and fourth groups (mixed opinions), the researcher decided to mix the remaining groups.

Homogeneity did allow for some additional discussion regarding an extreme view, however, the participants tended to rapidly agree on an issue and then conclude the discussion. In the mixed opinion groups, the conversation remained lively while extreme views still surfaced. For a brief summary of the seven focus groups, refer to **Table 6.1**. The literature review on community supervision and firearms use guided the development of the focus group questions. For a synopsis of focus group questions and response comparisons obtained during the focus group discussion, refer to **Appendix B: Focus Group Responses**.

Focus groups are actually recommended as a means to construct questionnaires and are often linked with survey research (Morgan, 1997:25)—as in this case. Morgan (*Op. cit.*) also lists three basic ways focus groups may contribute to the construction of surveys:

- (a) by capturing all the domains that need to be measured in the survey,
- (b) by determining the dimensions that make up each of these domains, and
- (c) by providing item wordings that effectively convey the researcher's intent to the survey respondent.

**Table 6.1:
Parole Division Focus Groups**

	Amarillo	Midland-1	Midland-2	Bryan	Houston	Dallas	Waxahachie
Dated Conducted (each in July, 1998)	6	17	17	22	23	29	29
# of Participants	9	4	4	13	9	10	7
Opinions of Group Pro-gun Anti-gun Mixed	Mixed	Pro-gun	Anti-gun	Mixed	Mixed	Mixed	Mixed
Age (range)	26-42	29-36	33-40	24-55	27-53	26-60	24-46
Males v. Females	5 v. 4	3 v.1	0 v.4	4 v. 9	3 v. 6	6 v. 4	5 v. 2
Years with the Agency (range)	1-8	1-7	2-10	1-12	1-16	1-12	1-9
Plan to: Carry, or Not carry (undecided's were placed in 'not carry')	6 3	3 1	1 3	8 5	2 7	3 7	5 2
Taped Group	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No*	Yes
Notes Taken	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

*One participant objected to the use of a tape recorder, therefore this session was recorded with the facilitator's written notes.

Information from the focus groups was reviewed and studied to determine ways to use the data for survey construction as noted by Morgan. This information was used to construct a survey for distribution to Parole Division staff throughout the state. In this chapter under sub-heading **Survey Development**, a discussion relates how the focus groups influenced survey development.

As stated, the literature review helped develop the focus group question format. Focus groups allow participants the freedom to speak their views and contribute to the project from their unique perspectives. Information obtained during the focus groups then guided the refinement of the conceptual framework for this project.

Development of the Conceptual Framework

The literature review and focus groups contributed to the conceptual framework for this applied research project. The conceptual framework acts as an organizing device for data collection. Research results are also structured according to this framework. This section contains the conceptual frameworks for Parole Division staff safety perceptions and officer supervisory styles.

Safety Perceptions

Three categories and sets of working hypotheses are used to describe the safety perceptions of Parole Division staff since implementation of the Parole Division's firearm policy. The descriptive categories include:

- ◆ **Carriers**--officers who are authorized to carry firearms while on duty;
- ◆ **Non-carriers**--officers who do not carry firearms while on duty, and;
- ◆ **Support Staff**--staff members who work with parole officers in the office but are not given the option to carry firearms while on duty.

Using these three descriptive categories, multiple sub-hypotheses are proposed:

Working Hypothesis 1: Carriers

- WH#1a: POs will experience an increase in their perception of safety while in the office.
- WH#1b: POs will experience an increase in their perception of safety while conducting home visits.
- WH#1c: POs will experience an increase in their perception of safety while conducting field visits.

Working Hypothesis 2: Non-carriers

- WH#2a: POs will experience a decrease in their perception of safety while in the office.
- WH#2b: POs will experience no change in their perception of safety while conducting home visits.
- WH#2c: POs will experience no change in their perception of safety while conducting field visits.

Working Hypothesis 3: Support Staff

- WH#3: Support staff will experience a decrease in their perception of safety while in the office.

Working Hypothesis 4: Perceptions Across Groups

- WH#4: There will be a difference in perceptions about safety across groups, including carriers, non-carriers and support staff.

The working hypotheses for the carriers group were based on the literature review and input from participants in the focus groups. A majority of focus group participants who wanted to carry firearms on duty stated that they believed that a firearm would make them more safe during the course of their duties.

The first working hypothesis for non-carriers was developed after meeting with the focus groups. Several people in different groups stated that, initially, when officers were given the authority to carry firearms, officers who did not wish to carry would not feel as safe in the office. These officers were afraid that their safety would be compromised because officers were carrying firearms in the workplace. This fear branched in two directions: a fear of the officers themselves and a fear of differences with offenders. A couple of focus group participants continued to state that after a while, when carrying-officers had had an opportunity to “prove themselves,” their safety level would probably level off and return to normal. The participants also stated that they would not feel a difference in their safety while conducting field or home visits; this belief is derived from the premise that non-carrying officers would continue to supervise offenders as they had in the past.

The third working hypothesis in the safety perception category relates to support staff members. Given input from the focus groups, it was hypothesized that support staff would experience a decrease in safety perceptions in the office. Several clerical staff participants even approached the facilitator after the groups and stated that they would be concerned about their safety level after officers were able to carry firearms in the district offices.

The final working hypothesis was developed to examine the differences between the three categorized groups. After examining the data from the focus groups, it seemed that there should be a difference in safety perceptions between carriers, non-carriers and support staff.

Supervisory Styles

In order to address the second purpose of this research and examine possible officer supervisory style changes since implementation of the Division's firearms policy, the conceptual framework is comprised of loosely defined descriptive categories. The categories and descriptors are as follows:

- **Home Visits**--# of scheduled/unscheduled home visits; time home visits are conducted;
- **Field Visits**--# of scheduled/unscheduled field visits; time field visits are conducted;
- **Referrals**--# of referrals to EM/SISP (Electronic Monitoring/Super-Intensive Supervision Program) caseloads; # of referrals to DRC (Day Resource Center);
- **Urinalysis**--# of offender UAs (urinalysis);
- **Reports of Violation**--# of reports written for technical violations; and
- **Relationships**--interaction with offenders; interaction with co-workers.

Generally the focus group participants stated that they were not sure about any changes in officers' supervisory styles. A few participants were concerned that officers who carried firearms would act more controlling and demanding of their offenders. Some even stated that the officers who want to carry guns are just "wanna-be cops" and guns will make them act more like law enforcement. One other continuing concern within the field of community supervision, also voiced in the focus groups, was the change that the addition of firearms may make in the relationship between officer and offender. Several focus group participants stated that they thought some relationships would change (between officers and offenders, as well as between officers and officers), but the direction of change would depend solely on the officer and how he conducted himself.

Operationalization of the Conceptual Framework

Table 6.2 and Table 6.3 operationalize the conceptual frameworks outlined in this project.

Table 6.2
Operationalizing the Conceptual Framework
for Research Purpose #1

Research Purpose 1: Describe the safety perceptions of Parole Division staff since implementation of the firearms policy within the Division	
Carriers	<i>Questionnaire Items</i>
WH#1a: POs will experience an increase in their perception of safety while in the office.	Items #1; 9; 10; 11
WH#1b: POs will experience an increase in their perception of safety while conducting home visits.	Items #2; 6; 8
WH#1c: POs will experience an increase in their perception of safety while conducting field visits.	Items #3; 4; 5; 7
Non-carriers	
WH#2a: POs will experience a decrease in their perception of safety while in the office.	Items #1; 9; 10; 11
WH#2b: POs will experience no change in their perception of safety while conducting home visits.	Items #2; 6; 8
WH#2c: POs will experience no change in their perception of safety while conducting field visits.	Items #3; 4; 5; 7
Support Staff	
WH#3: Support staff will experience a decrease in their perception of safety while in the office.	Items #1; 9; 10; 11
Perceptions Across Groups	
WH#4: There will be a difference in perceptions about safety across groups, including carriers, non-carriers and support staff.	Items #1; 2; 3

Table 6.3
Operationalizing the Conceptual Framework
for Research Purpose #2

<i>Research Purpose 2:</i> Explore possible officer supervisory style changes since implementation of the firearms policy within the Division	
<i>Descriptive Categories</i>	<i>Questionnaire Items</i>
Home Visits	Items #12; 13; 14; 23; 24; 25
Field Visits	Items #15; 16; 17; 26; 27; 28
Referrals	Items #18; 19; 29; 30
Urinalysis	Items #20; 31
Reports of Violation	Items #21; 32
Relationships	Items #22; 33; 34

Survey Research

To fulfill the purpose of this project, focus groups supplemented the survey research used. Fortunately, both of the conceptual frameworks outlined above lend themselves to the use of a survey for data collection. Surveys are generally used for descriptive, explanatory and exploratory purposes (Babbie, 1995:257) and are an excellent way to obtain people's attitudes and beliefs (Alreck & Settle, 1995:11). Babbie (1995:253) also states that surveys are a good choice when used in studies that have individual people as the unit of analysis.

Surveys have several strengths. Respondents may be more truthful when completing self-administered, anonymous surveys than when face-to-face with an interviewer (Alreck & Settle, 1995:11). Standardization of the form itself also makes surveys more reliable, and they are an appropriate way of describing the characteristics of a large population (*Op. cit.*). More importantly, surveys are economical (Babbie, 1995:273). Like other research methods, surveys have their weaknesses. Survey research has a tendency to be artificial and potentially superficial (Babbie, 1995:282) which can affect the survey negatively. Babbie (1995:273) states that it is difficult to gain a full sense of social processes in natural settings when surveys are used. If used appropriately, the strengths of surveys will outweigh the weaknesses.

Since the first research purpose in this project is describing perceptions, focus groups and surveys are appropriate research methodologies. If individual interviewing were used, there probably would be too little information to generalize to a larger population. Other methodologies would be unable to capture *perceptions*, as the survey hopefully will. The second purpose explores changes in supervisory style, therefore a number of methodologies may be appropriate to examine this issue. Document analysis,

participant observation or a quasi-experimental design would have generated data to examine this topic, however, due to time constraints these methods are not practical. Note that this study does not examine *actual* changes in supervisory style, but examines district office staff's *perceptions* of change in supervisory style. Perceptions are the type of evidence available through surveys.

Survey Development

The framework used to develop the questionnaire was derived from the literature and the focus groups. Focus groups were used to construct key issues and verbiage in the survey. For example, focus groups participants stated repeatedly that they were more concerned about their level of safety when in contact with the offender's neighbors or family and friends than when in contact with the offender himself. Hence, separate categories of "neighbors," "family/friends," and "offender" were used to question concerns about perception of safety.

Focus group participants also used the terms "resistant" and "cooperative" numerous times when describing the changes they thought they would see from offenders on the caseloads after firearms were introduced into the workplace. Therefore, a question was developed asking:

"I feel that because officers are now carrying firearms, the offenders on my caseload have overall been:
[] more resistant; [] the same; [] more cooperative."

Another example of how survey development was influenced by the focus groups is found in the second research purpose of this project. The focus groups discussed aspects of supervision and differences in supervisory styles between people who wanted

to carry guns and those who did not. Although some participants stated that there would be no changes in any officer's supervisory style, others stated that they thought changes would occur. They continued to state that the carriers would probably not acknowledge any change in their own supervisory style or techniques. Due to the perception that carriers may be unaware of supervisory technique changes, two reporting methods were linked in the survey. The first set of items (#12-21) asks the respondents about increases or decreases in supervisory styles they have noticed on the job (self-report). The second set of items (#23-32) uses the identical questions as the first set of items, but asks about the observation of other officers' supervisory styles and techniques since carrying firearms on the job (observed-report). Then a comparison can be made between the perceptions of carriers and others working with her in the office.

Questionnaire design also followed the logic of the conceptual framework, which was informed by the literature review and focus groups. A copy of the survey and cover letter is presented in **Appendix C: Firearms Survey**. The survey was pre-tested by the TDCJ-PD Staff Development training employees and by various parole officers and supervisors known by the researcher. Once the survey was pre-tested, it was also given to the Parole Division Director Veronica Ballard for further input.

Sampling Issues

Since implementation of the Parole Division firearms policy is relatively new, not all officers who want to carry firearms on the job have been authorized to do so. Therefore, it had to be determined which district offices and staff members were directly

affected by policy implementation. Logic of the sampling method used is included in this section.

For the survey method of this project, the units of analysis are people employed by the Texas Department of Criminal Justice-Parole Division. It was important to know which district offices had officers authorized to carry firearms because the survey was designed to gather information regarding safety and supervisory style perceptions after implementation of the firearms policy. The law authorizing officers to carry was passed in 1997; however, the first parole officers were not armed until the last week of July, 1998.³⁶ Officers must follow Division policy that requires several steps before final authorization to carry a firearm on duty is granted. Due to these procedures, few officers are currently carrying³⁷ and many are still working on the final requirements to obtain authorization to carry. Since the policy requires the officers themselves to financially support this endeavor,³⁸ quite a bit of time may pass before all officers who want to carry firearms are able to complete the entire process for certification. Within the district parole offices where officers are currently carrying firearms, there are support staff, parole officers, supervisors and casemanagers who will be exposed to firearms within the workplace; it is a sample of these people who received the surveys in this project.

A stratified sample design was used to distribute the surveys to staff members who were employed at offices where firearms are currently used. Since not all offices

³⁶ It was estimated that the first officers would be carrying no later than the first part of June, 1998. Due to problems with the mandated TCLEOSE (Texas Commission on Law Enforcement Officer Standards and Education) curriculum, authorized TCLEOSE academies were not able to start training officers until the first part of July, 1998. After this training, officers must still submit paperwork and wait for a final decision from their Regional Directors; this can take anywhere from two weeks to a month.

³⁷ As of October 1, 1998 there were approximately 60 parole officers carrying firearms across the state of Texas.

³⁸ Training expenses in some areas are free while in other areas of the state the TCLEOSE course alone is over \$200. Officers must also pay for their own psychological exams and all weapons-related expenses.

have parole officers who have completed the procedures to carry, it would be useless to survey a population that had not been exposed to firearms within the workplace.

According to Alreck and Settle (1995:59), sample size depends on the budget and degree of confidence required from the survey. Alreck and Settle (1995:62) also state that it is seldom necessary to sample more than 10% of the total population to obtain adequate confidence. If the sample is divided into small sub-samples (as was done with the carriers, non-carriers and support staff categories) and if there is a possibility of high variance among units, a higher number than 10% may be required to obtain adequate confidence (Alreck & Settle, 1995:68). Currently there are approximately 1350 Parole Division field staff in the state of Texas. On October 9, 1998, surveys were distributed by inter-agency mail to two of the three TDCJ-PD regions.³⁹ Four hundred and fifty surveys were mailed to 12 offices in Region I and six offices in Region III. See **Table 6.4: Regional Distribution for the offices represented by this survey.**

³⁹ Region II (Houston and surrounding areas) currently has not authorized any officers to carry firearms on duty.

Table 6.4: Regional Distribution

Region I District Offices (Dallas & Surrounding Areas)	Region III District Offices (South, Central & West Texas)
Athens	Abilene
Dallas I	Amarillo
Dallas II	Lubbock
Dallas IV	Mineral Wells
Dallas V	Odessa
Denton	Waco
Fort Worth I	
Longview	
Mt Pleasant	
Sherman	
Texarkana	
Tyler	

Hopefully enough offices were surveyed to ensure representativeness of the larger group of staff members within Texas. Due to the nature of the population surveyed, however, there is the possibility of bias since not all regions or district offices were represented in the sample population. Surveys were returned by pre-stamped, addressed envelopes to the researcher's personal residence. Since the topic of firearms in the workplace is laden with emotional overtones, the anonymity of responses was secured

with the return delivery of questionnaires by the US Postal Service. The survey response rate was 57%⁴⁰ (258 surveys were returned by November 20, 1998). Babbie (1995:267) states that a response rate of 50% is considered good. The deadline for returning the surveys was October 21, 1998; however, the date was extended to allow for late responses. Refer to **Table 6.5: Survey Respondents**, for a distribution of Parole Division staff responding to the survey. Respondents included 43 officers currently carrying firearms, 110 officers in the process of obtaining authorization to carry firearms, 61 officers who plan not to carry firearms and 29 support staff members.

⁴⁰ Several incidents occurred after distribution of the survey which may have lowered the response rate somewhat. First, PD-Staff Development (researcher's employment) clerical staff received a call on October 12, 1998 about the survey from a caller who refused to identify himself but was obviously upset about distribution of the survey. The caller eventually hung up on the support staff member stating that the researcher was one of the biggest opponents to the firearm policy.

Second, the firearms committee met on October 14, 1998, and this researcher was in attendance (as part of employment responsibilities supervising the Staff Development safety training program). The researcher approached one of the members after the meeting to ask if he had received the survey. He asked if he could be frank and proceeded to ask the researcher about her motives for distributing the survey and what her opinion is about the firearms policy. He continued to state that "several" officers believe the researcher is anti-gun and that she was going to purposely skew the results in order to take their guns away. The researcher assured the officer and stated that regardless of her firearm preference the results would be reported as received. Also, if the carriers did not respond to the survey, then they would be under-represented in the results and would not have the opportunity to state any perceptions of safety in the field. The conversation continued for approximately 20 minutes, and--at the conclusion--the officer stated that he would do what he could to help dispel the rumors.

Third, the researcher was contacted by an Assistant Regional Director (ARD) who stated that "people are wiggling-out over your survey." He too, had received calls about the survey from carriers who were afraid that their firearms would be taken away. The ARD stated that there is a small faction of staff in West Texas who are so pro-gun that they believe there is an agency conspiracy to destroy the firearms policy. Again, the researcher's intentions (completion of the applied research project) were discussed at length with the ARD.

Several Staff Development trainers have also received similar phone calls and have reported to the researcher their responses. Mistrust within the Division may contribute to a lack of survey responses from parole field staff. As a final note, the firearms committee member e-mailed this researcher on October 23, 1998 to state that he had talked to several officers about the survey. In light of the researcher's statements regarding her motives and the analysis of the results, there would probably be several late survey responses from carriers in the field.

Table 6.5: Survey Respondents

<i>Category</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Valid Percent*</i>
Carriers	43	17.7
Non-carrying but getting authorization to do so	110	45.3
Non-carrying by choice	61	25.1
Support Staff	29	12.9
Total	243**	100.0

*Valid percent is used to show the percentage of respondents who answered this questionnaire item.

**Total respondents equaled 258, however, 15 (5.8%) failed to respond to this demographic item.

Statistics

Once the surveys were returned, a coding sheet was used to categorize the data.

Likert scales were used in the survey, and the following codes presented in **Table 6.6** were used for the coding sheet.

Table 6.6: Codes

Significantly Increased (2)	Always (2)	More Cooperative (1)	Strongly Agree (2)
Increased (1)	Frequently (1)	The Same (0)	Agree (1)
Not Changed (0)	Sometimes (0)	More Resistant (-1)	Neutral (0)
Decreased (-1)	Rarely (-1)		Disagree (-1)
Significantly Decreased (-2)	Never (-2)		Strongly Disagree (-2)
Question #: 1-3; 12-21; 23-32	Question #: 4-11	Question #: 22	Question #: 33-34

Since the research questions are descriptive and exploratory by nature, the results are inherently qualitative and only lend themselves to simple statistical descriptors. As applicable, measures of central tendency such as percent and frequency distributions are given along with some statistical means. SPSS software was used to tabulate the results; this software is an invaluable tool to help with comparisons and present the data in percentage distributions. For comparison across groups, t-tests and one way analysis of variance (ANOVA) are used. Post hoc tests using the Scheffé test are used to compare the differences between groups. The Scheffé test is very conservative and not subject to incorrect interpretation (Tajalli, 1998).

Summary

The project methodology used two forms of research methods. Focus groups were developed in accordance with the literature review. These groups then refined the conceptual framework used for data collection. Survey research was used to collect data and obtain perceptions of Parole Division employees with respect to district office staff safety levels and officers' supervisory styles. After a response rate of 57%, the surveys

were coded and simple statistical descriptors were used. Chapter seven discusses the findings of this applied research project. These findings are presented in congruence with the conceptual frameworks outlined within the methodology found in chapter six.

CHAPTER SEVEN:

FINDINGS

Introduction

Results of the survey are presented in this chapter. Information from the focus groups was primarily used to construct the survey items and form the working hypotheses. Parole staff completed the questionnaires during the month of October 1998. Even though information from the focus groups is not used for each finding in this chapter, some comments from the groups are included to clarify the data presented. Percent and frequency distributions are primarily used as the statistical analysis for the survey findings.

Safety Perceptions

The first research purpose of this project is to describe the safety perceptions of Parole Division staff since implementation of the firearms policy within the Division. To describe staff safety perceptions, parole staff were divided into three categories: carriers, non-carriers and support staff. Each category incorporates working hypotheses as a framework to collect data and present results.

Office Safety for Carriers

Working Hypothesis 1a: POs will experience an increase in their perception of safety while in the office.

Table 7.1 Safety Level Changes of Carriers in the Office <i>(Q#1)</i> Mean=1.4		
Category	Frequency	% of Respondents
Significantly Increased	24	55.8
Increased	13	30.2
Not Changed	5	11.6
Decreased	1	2.4
Significantly Decreased	0	0
Total	N=43	100.0

The category “carriers” is comprised of officers who are currently authorized to carry firearms on duty. As shown in **Table 7.1**, 86% of the respondents who carry firearms perceive that their safety levels in the office have either increased or significantly increased since they have been authorized to carry firearms. The data presented strongly support the working hypothesis that officers carrying firearms have an increased safety perception in the office since they have been allowed to carry firearms. **Table 7.2** provides questions which continue to address the safety perception in the office, however, the responses are categorized by how often the officer is concerned for

his safety when he encounters the offender's family/friends or the offender. Although items in **Table 7.2** (#9-11) asked respondents about their perceptions of safety level change, they do not directly test the proposed hypothesis. Instead, this information is used to supplement the hypothesis and determine current safety level concerns in the office. Since the mean scores given in **Table 7.2** are negative, the respondents generally are not as concerned about their safety when encountering these groups. A majority of carriers also stated that they are never (71.4%) concerned about their safety in the office since officers are now carrying firearms on duty. This information indicates that officers have a high safety perception while working in the office.

Table 7.2
Safety Level Concerns of Carriers in the Office: Percent Distribution
 N=43

Question	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Mean
9. Safety when in contact with family/friends vs. the offender	4.7	9.3	25.6	48.8	11.6	-.53
10. Safety when in contact with the offender	7.0	2.3	48.8	37.2	4.7	-.30
11. Safety because officers are carrying firearms*	0	2.4	7.1	19.0	71.4	-1.6

*N=42

Home Visit Safety for Carriers

Working Hypothesis 1b: POs will experience an increase in their perception of safety while conducting home visits.

Table 7.3 Safety Level Changes of Carriers During Home Visits (Q#2) Mean=1.73		
Category	Frequency	% of Respondents
Significantly Increased	32	78.0
Increased	8	19.5
Not Changed	0	0
Decreased	1	2.4
Significantly Decreased	0	0
Total	N=41	99.9*

*does not add to 100 due to rounding

Working hypothesis #1b is strongly supported by the information provided within **Table 7.3**. Almost all (97.5%) the carriers who responded indicated that their safety level while on home visits has either increased or significantly increased since they have been authorized to carry firearms on duty. Two other items addressed this question by asking the officer about her overall safety levels during home visits when in contact with the offender's friends/family and the offender himself. The results have a general bell-curve, with about half of the respondents stating that sometimes they are concerned about their safety during home visits (See **Table 7.4**).

Table 7.4
Safety Level Concerns of Carriers During Home Visits: Percent Distribution
 N=40

Question	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Mean
6. Safety when in contact with family/friends vs. the offender	7.5	32.5	47.5	10.0	2.5	.32
8. Safety when in contact with the offender	20.0	15.0	52.5	12.5	0	.43

More officers stated that they are “frequently” or “always” concerned about safety than did officers who responded “rarely” or “never.” As noted in previous chapters, a parole officer’s job is inherently dangerous. Overall concern for safety is good since officers need to be aware of their surroundings regardless of whether they do not feel danger; total disregard for safety may lead to carelessness. Although the data in **Table 7.4** describe concerns and do not test the hypothesis as do the data in **Table 7.3**, they do give another consideration for safety while officers are conducting home visits. Participants in the focus groups repeatedly stated that firearms were needed so those officers could be safe while conducting home and field visits. Several stated that the safety provided by a firearm is important to the well-being of the officer while she is out by herself conducting day-to-day visits at offenders’ homes and businesses.

Field Visit Safety for Carriers

Working Hypothesis 1c: POs will experience an increase in their perception of safety while conducting field visits.

Table 7.5 Safety Level Changes of Carriers During Field Visits (Q#3) Mean=1.56		
Category	Frequency	% of Respondents
Significantly Increased	26	63.4
Increased	13	31.7
Not Changed	1	2.4
Decreased	1	2.4
Significantly Decreased	0	0
Total	N=41	99.9*

*does not add to 100 due to rounding

Once again, the working hypothesis (#1c) is strongly supported by the information obtained through the questionnaire (See **Table 7.5**). Almost all (95.1%) of the respondents stated that their safety level while conducting field visits has increased since they have been able to carry firearms on duty. **Table 7.6** is not designed to test the hypothesis, but does provide descriptive information. A little under half of the respondents answered that they are sometimes concerned about their safety in the field when in contact with the offender, the offender's neighbors and family/friends. Over 47% of the officers stated that they are "always" or "frequently" concerned about their

safety in the field when they come in contact with an offender's neighbors than when they have contact with the offender himself. This is supported by information obtained during the focus groups when participants stated that they are more concerned about their safety when they encounter an offender's neighbors than when they are in direct contact with the people on their caseloads. Other officers in the focus groups also stated that they needed added protection (e.g., firearms) when they travel either tens or hundreds of miles in rural counties to conduct home and field visits. One officer wrote on his survey "The firearms policy has allowed increased confidence in personal safety whether in the field or on home visits." Another included "Although officers have not changed much since given permission to carry weapons, good morale and confidence has increased."

Table 7.6
Safety Level Concerns of Carriers During Field Visits: Percent Distribution
 N=40

Question	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Mean
4. Safety when in contact with neighbors vs. the offender	22.5	25.0	40.0	7.5	5.0	.53
5. Safety when in contact with family/friends vs. the offender	5.0	37.5	40.0	15.0	2.5	.28
7. Safety when in contact with the offender	10.0	12.5	52.5	22.5	2.5	.05

Office Safety for Non-carriers

The category “non-carriers” is comprised of officers who do not carry firearms on duty. Since officers were just able to receive authorization to carry firearms in July, 1998, not all officers who wish to carry have been given that authority to date. “Non-carriers” is the largest category of officers who responded to the survey (N=171; 70.4%); however, it does not mean that this is the number of officers who do not *want* to carry a firearm on duty. Of the 171 respondents in this category, 110 or 64.7% are actually in the process of receiving training and requesting authorization to carry a firearm on duty. Since this number is high and it is assumed that officers who *want* to carry a weapon will have similar ideologies as those officers who currently carry, the category of non-carriers has been divided into two sub-categories where appropriate. The sub-categories include: not carrying by choice and not carrying but in the process of obtaining authorization to carry. These two sub-categories will be examined separately when differences between the group are apparent.

Working Hypothesis 2a: POs will experience a decrease in their perception of safety while in the office.

Table 7.7 represents the safety level changes of non-carriers while working in the office. Overall, a majority of non-carriers perceived that there was no change in their level of safety at the office. Interestingly, over 41% of the people in the process of obtaining authorization to carry firearms experienced an increase or significant increase in their safety level in the office. On the other hand, 30.5% of the officers who choose not to carry experienced a decrease or a significant decrease in their office safety

perception. The mean values of the two sub-categories are significant at the .001 level, indicating that there is a difference in safety level changes between the officers who choose not to carry firearms and the officers who are in the process of obtaining authorization to carry on duty. The data from the survey do not support the working hypothesis, yet the focus groups indicated that officers who do not carry firearms may experience a decrease in safety perceptions in the office. Overall, the first working hypothesis is not supported by the evidence; however, as stated on several (15) returned surveys, "This survey may be too soon to really tell any differences. Conduct it again in 6-9 months."

Table 7.7
Safety Level Changes of Non-carriers in the Office
(Q#1)

Category	Not carrying by choice Mean = -.25		Not carrying but in the process of obtaining authorization to carry Mean=.52	
	Frequency	% of Respondents	Frequency	% of Respondents
Significantly Increased	1	1.7	20	18.2
Increased	7	11.9	26	23.6
Not Changed	33	55.9	55	50.0
Decreased	12	20.3	9	8.2
Significantly Decreased	6	10.2	0	0
Totals	N=59	100.0	N=110	100.0

$t = 5.5; p < .001$

Table 7.8 continues to explore and describe the safety perception of non-carriers.

Overall, the majority of respondents are either rarely or never concerned for their safety when in contact with an offender's friends/family or the offender himself. A small minority is always or frequently concerned for their safety in the office. One difference should be noted between sub-categories. Sixty-two percent of the officers who do not carry firearms but are in the process of obtaining authorization are not concerned about their safety because officers are carrying firearms in the office. Only 30% of the officers who choose not to carry have the same opinion, whereas 39% of the respondents who do not want to carry firearms are always or frequently concerned since officers are carrying firearms in the office. The mean differences between groups on this latter finding is also significant at the .001 level ($t = -4.67$).

Table 7.8
Safety Level Concerns of Non-Carriers in the Office: Percent Distribution

Question		Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Mean
9. Safety when in contact with family/friends vs. the offender $t = -.54^{\wedge}$	Non-carry by choice $N=60$	1.7	3.3	38.3	35.0	21.7	-.72
	Non-carry but getting authority $N=109$	3.7	2.8	29.4	38.5	25.7	-.80
10. Safety when in contact with the offender $t = 7.18^{\wedge}$	Non-carry by choice $N=61$	3.3	8.2	26.2	47.5	14.8	-.62
	Non-carry but getting authority $N=110$	3.6	6.4	25.5	34.5	30.0	-.81
11. Safety because officers are carrying firearms $t = -4.67^*$	Non-carry by choice $N=61$	16.4	23.0	31.1	16.4	13.1	.13
	Non-carry but getting authority $N=110$	5.5	12.7	20.0	19.1	42.7	-.81

* $p < .001$

\wedge not significant

Home Visit Safety for Non-carriers

Working Hypothesis 2b: POs will experience no change in their perception of safety while conducting home visits.

The second working hypothesis for the non-carrier category concerns changes in officer safety while conducting home visits. It is hypothesized that officers who do not carry firearms will experience no change when conducting home visits. Again, individuals in the focus groups stated that home and field visits for this category should not be any different after the firearms policy implementation. These officers stated that they intended to conduct “business as usual” and not change the manner in which home visits were conducted. As demonstrated by **Table 7.9**, seventy-one percent of the officers who choose not to carry stated that there was no change in their safety perceptions while conducting home visits; this finding strongly supports the working hypothesis. Those officers who are in the process of obtaining certification to carry contradict this finding. A minority (38%) state there is no change in safety perceptions, while over 53% state that their safety perception while conducting home visits has actually increased or significantly increased since the firearms policy has gone into effect. A comparison of means between groups indicates a t-test of 6.59, which is significant at the .001 level. There is an overall difference in safety level changes during home visits between the officers who choose not to carry and the officers who are in the process of obtaining authorization to carry the safety level changes.

Table 7.9 Safety Level Changes of Non-carriers During Home Visits <i>(Q#2)</i>				
Category	Not carrying by choice Mean = -.19		Not carrying but in the process of obtaining authorization to carry Mean=.69	
	Frequency	% of Respondents	Frequency	% of Respondents
Significantly Increased	0	0	23	22.5
Increased	4	8.3	32	31.4
Not Changed	34	70.8	39	38.2
Decreased	7	14.6	8	7.8
Significantly Decreased	3	6.3	0	0
Totals	N=48	100.0	N=97	99.9*

t = 6.59; p < .001

* does not add to 100 due to rounding

Table 7.10 Safety Level Concerns of Non-Carriers During Home Visits: Percent Distribution							
Question		Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Mean
6. Safety when in contact with family/friends vs. the offender t = .26^	Non-carry by choice N=47	6.4	19.1	42.6	23.4	8.5	-.09
	Non-carry but getting authority N=103	5.8	21.4	42.7	23.3	6.8	.04
8. Safety when in contact with the offender t = .69^	Non-carry by choice N=48	6.8	7.8	33.0	42.7	9.7	-.52
	Non-carry but getting authority N=103	4.2	8.3	25.0	56.3	6.3	-.41

^ not significant

Table 7.10 gives the percent distribution of non-carriers' safety concerns when in contact with the offender or the offender's family/friends. This information is descriptive in nature and is not designed to test the hypothesis. Instead, this information is used to obtain officers' relative sense of safety. The findings between sub-categories are similar, however the concern level distribution is different than that of the officers who carry firearms. **Table 7.10** shows that non-carriers are either sometimes or rarely concerned for their safety while conducting home visits, while **Table 7.4** demonstrates that carriers are always, frequently or sometimes concerned under the same conditions. This may support the desire that carriers have to carry a firearm on duty for added protection.

Field Visit Safety for Non-carriers

Working Hypothesis 2c: POs will experience no change in their perception of safety while conducting field visits.

The findings for working hypothesis #2c regarding non-carriers safety perceptions in the field are similar to the findings for working hypothesis #2b regarding non-carriers safety perceptions conducting home visits. **Table 7.11** shows that 81% of the respondents who choose not to carry perceive no change in safety while conducting field visits since the implementation of the firearms policy. These data strongly supports the hypothesis presented. Inversely, half (51%) of the officers who are working toward the authority to carry firearms perceive that their safety level in the field has increased or significantly increased since implementation of the policy. A little under half (44%) stated that there is been no change in their perception of safety while in the field. The

t-test (6.25) is significant at the .001 level, indicating a difference between groups in perceptions of field visit safety levels since officers have been carrying firearms on duty.

Table 7.11
Safety Level Changes of Non-carriers During Field Visits
(Q#3)

Category	Not carrying by choice Mean = -.06		Not carrying but in the process of obtaining authorization to carry Mean = .69	
	Frequency	% of Respondents	Frequency	% of Respondents
Significantly Increased	0	0	23	22.5
Increased	4	8.5	29	28.4
Not Changed	38	80.9	45	44.1
Decreased	3	6.4	5	4.9
Significantly Decreased	2	4.3	0	0
Totals	N=47	100.1*	N=102	99.9*

t = 6.25; p < .001

*does not add to 100 due to rounding

The descriptive information given in **Table 7.12** shows that non-carriers are more often concerned for their safety when in contact with an offender's neighbors or family/friends than when the officer has direct contact with the offender. These findings are similar to the discussion presented regarding carriers. When in contact with the offender, a majority of non-carriers (67% for non-carry by choice and 57% for non-carry but getting authorization) responded that they are either rarely or never concerned for

their safety when in direct contact with the offender. As one focus group participant stated, "I don't have to worry about my releasees. Oftentimes they're the ones that walk me to my car and tell other people not to mess with me. It's the unknown people I worry about, like the releasee's neighbors or friends." Again, **Table 7.12** does not directly test the hypothesis that non-carriers will experience no change in safety perceptions while conducting field visits. This information was obtained to supplement the hypothesis and provide additional feedback about non-carriers' safety concerns in the field. T-tests between the non-carriers by choice and the non-carriers but obtaining authorization show that there is no difference between groups.

Table 7.12
Safety Level Concerns of Non-Carriers During Field Visits: Percent Distribution

Question		Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Mean
4. Safety when in contact with neighbors vs. the offender $t = .13^{\wedge}$	Non-carry by choice $N=48$	14.6	20.8	41.7	14.6	8.3	.19
	Non-carry but getting authority $N=103$	11.7	27.2	39.8	13.6	7.8	.21
5. Safety when in contact with family/friends vs. the offender $t = .55^{\wedge}$	Non-carry by choice $N=47$	6.4	17.0	44.7	23.4	8.5	-.11
	Non-carry but getting authority $N=101$	6.9	20.8	43.6	21.8	6.9	.01
7. Safety when in contact with the offender $t = 1.0^{\wedge}$	Non-carry by choice $N=48$	4.2	6.3	22.9	54.2	12.5	-.65
	Non-carry but getting authority $N=102$	6.9	3.9	32.4	48.0	8.8	-.48

$^{\wedge}$ not significant

Support Staff

Working Hypothesis 3: Support staff will experience a decrease in their perception of safety while in the office.

Table 7.13 Safety Level Changes of Support Staff in the Office (Q#1) Mean = .00		
Category	Frequency	% of Respondents
Significantly Increased	1	3.6
Increased	6	21.4
Not Changed	14	50.0
Decreased	6	21.4
Significantly Decreased	1	3.6
Total	N=24	100.0

Table 7.3 clearly shows a perfect bell-curve, with 50% of the support staff respondents stating that there is no change in their safety perceptions, 25% stating an increase or significant increase in safety perceptions and 25% stating a decrease in their same perceptions. One respondent wrote in a comment on the survey stating that “Clerical stated they feel safer with officers carrying—they want us to carry—they don’t trust the 66 year old security guard here. He is armed. He carries his weapon, but does not wear his false teeth. Go figure.” Information presented in **Table 7.3** does not support the hypothesis that support staff’s safety perceptions in the office would decrease.

The data in **Table 7.14** do not test the hypothesis, but do summarize support staff perceptions of safety in the office. Overall, respondents are either sometimes or rarely concerned about their safety when they encounter an offender or an offender's family/friends in the office. Thirty-two percent are always or frequently concerned about their safety in the office since officers are now allowed to carry. Thirty-nine percent are concerned some of the time. As one support staff person responded on the survey, "I can understand the officers feeling the need for firearms on home visits, but I feel they should not be in the office. I feel that they (guns) can make a bad situation turn into an explosive one with perhaps an innocent bystander getting hurt or worse--killed." The focus groups provided information that was evenly split regarding the changes that support staff would experience based upon the policy change. Some thought that safety perceptions in the office would decrease, while others thought they would increase. The findings presented in this section do not support the hypothesis that support staff would experience decreased levels of safety while working in the office with officers authorized to carry firearms.

Table 7.14
Safety Level Concerns of Support Staff in the Office: Percent Distribution

Question	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Mean
9. Safety when in contact with family/friends vs. the offender <i>N</i> =25	0	4.0	52.0	32.0	12.0	-.52
10. Safety when in contact with the offender <i>N</i> =27	0	14.8	48.1	22.2	14.8	-.37
11. Safety because officers are carrying firearms <i>N</i> =28	10.7	21.4	39.3	14.3	14.3	0

Perceptions Across Groups

Working Hypothesis 4: There will be a difference in perceptions about safety across groups, including carriers, non-carriers and support staff.

Table 7.15
Safety Level Changes in the Office
One Way Analysis of Variance Between Groups

Group	Office Safety			
	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Error
Carriers	43	1.40	.79	.12
Not carrying but in the process of obtaining authorization to carry	110	.52	.08	.08
Not carrying by choice	59	-.25	.11	.11
Support Staff	28	0	.16	.16
Totals	240	.43	1.02	.07

F-test = 33.15; $p < .0001$

Table 7.15 provides a One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) between groups, including carriers, non-carriers and support staff. Comparison for office safety perception changes shows a significant difference between groups at the .0001 level. The

hypothesis that there is a difference between groups is strongly supported. An additional comparison is given with the Post Hoc Scheffé Test (See **Table 7.16**). The carrier group is significantly different ($p < .05$) in office safety mean responses than all other groups. The non-carriers who are in the process of obtaining authority to carry firearms are also statistically different ($p < .05$) in responses from the other groups. The only two groups that are not statistically different from one another in regards to safety perceptions in the office are the officers who choose not to carry by choice and the support staff employees.

Table 7.16
Safety Level Changes in the Office
One Way ANOVA: Post Hoc Scheffé Test

Groups (Mean)	Carriers (1.4)	Not carrying but obtaining authority (.52)	Not carrying by choice (-.25)	Support Staff (0)
Carriers (1.4)	n/a	$p < .05$	$p < .05$	$p < .05$
Not carrying but in the process of obtaining authorization to carry (.52)	$p < .05$	n/a	$p < .05$	$p < .05$
Not carrying by choice (-.25)	$p < .05$	$p < .05$	n/a	^
Support Staff (0)	$p < .05$	$p < .05$	^	n/a

F-test = 33.15; $p < .0001$

^ = Not Significant

n/a = not applicable since it is the same comparison group

A difference between groups is again shown in **Table 7.17**. One Way ANOVA provides data about safety level changes during home and field visits. Since support staff members are not involved in home and field visits, they are not included in this analysis. The f-test for home visit safety is 64.17 and the f-test for field visit safety is 48.76. Again, differences between groups are significant at the .0001 level. The hypothesis (#4) that there would be differences between groups is supported within all categories: office safety, home visit safety and field visit safety.

Table 7.17 Safety Level Changes During Home and Field Visits One Way Analysis of Variance Between Carriers and Non-carriers				
Group	Home Visit Safety		Field Visit Safety	
	N	Mean	N	Mean
Carriers	41	1.73	41	1.56
Not carrying but in the process of obtaining authorization to carry	102	.69	102	.69
Not carrying by choice	48	-.19	47	-.06
One Way ANOVA	F-test = 64.17; $p < .0001$		F-test = 48.76; $p < .0001$	

Supervisory Styles

The second purpose of this applied research project is to explore possible officer supervisory style changes since implementation of the firearms policy within the Division. Data are presented within loosely defined descriptive categories. The categories include home visits, field visits, referrals, urinalysis, reports of violation and relationships. Percent distributions for carriers and non-carriers are provided for each category. Carriers also have data for observed changes by other staff members. Observed change questions were included in the survey to supplement self-reporting information from officers who carry firearms on duty. Ideally, changes in supervisory style are measured with an experimental design using pre-test and post-test techniques and research methods such as participant observation and document analysis. Due to time and resource constraints this project simply asks respondents what their perceived changes are in supervisory techniques. The observed changes were included as an added control measure to compare with the reported changes provided by carrying officers.

Home Visits

Tables 7.18 and 7.19 provide information regarding the home visit category. The majority (83%) of respondents authorized to carry firearms on duty stated that they had not changed the number of scheduled home visits they conducted. Likewise, over 75% of carriers responded that they had not changed the number of unscheduled or late home visits they have conducted on offenders since they have been authorized to carry firearms on duty. However, there is a minority (25% and 23% respectively) of carriers that stated they had increased the number of unscheduled home visits and the number of home visits

conducted after 6:00 PM. Observed changes from other staff members support the carriers self-reporting and even indicate that a larger percent has not changed home visit supervisory practices.

Table 7.18 Home Visits: Officer Changes for Carriers Since Implementation of the Firearms Policy <i>Percent Distribution</i>				Legend: SI-Significantly Increased I-Increased N-Not Changed D-Decreased SD-Significantly Decreased		
Category	Reported Changes N=40			Observed Changes N=230		
	SI/I	N	D/SD	SI/I	N	D/SD
Number of scheduled home visits	Q #12; Mean = .2			Q #23; Mean = .14		
	15.0	82.5	2.5	12.6	86.9	.4
Number of unscheduled home visits	Q #13; Mean = .35			Q #24; Mean = .14		
	25.0	75.0	0	13.0	86.1	.8
Number of home visits conducted after 6:00 PM	Q #14; Mean = .32			Q #25; Mean = .17		
	22.5	77.5	0	15.1	83.7	1.2

Even though a minority of carriers attest that they have increased some home visit practices, **Table 7.19** shows that the non-carriers overwhelmingly report that they have not changed their own home visit strategies regarding scheduled (95%), unscheduled (90%) and late home visits (81%). The only other category, which exceeded a low 10% for non-carriers, was 14%, who indicated that that had either increased or significantly increased the number of home visits conducted after 6:00 PM.

Table 7.19 Home Visits: Officer Changes for Non-carriers Since Implementation of the Firearms Policy <i>Percent Distribution</i> N=149		Legend: SI-Significantly Increased I-Increased N-Not Changed D-Decreased SD-Significantly Decreased	
Question	SI/I	N	D/SD
12. Number of scheduled home visits Mean = .07	5.3	94.6	0
13. Number of unscheduled home visits Mean = .01	5.3	89.9	4.7
14. Number of home visits conducted after 6:00 PM Mean = .1	14.1	80.5	5.4

Field Visits

Percent distributions are provided for the number of scheduled, unscheduled and late field visits conducted by both carriers and non-carriers. The results are strikingly similar to the category for home visits. **Table 7.20** shows the reported changes by carriers and the observed changes by other staff members are congruent. A majority (85%) of carriers stated that they have not changed the number of scheduled field visits conducted for their offenders. About one in five carriers states that she has either increased or significantly increased the number of unscheduled and late field visits she conducts for her offenders. Carriers reported more of an increase in unscheduled and late home visits than their co-workers observed. The remaining respondents claim there is no change regarding supervisory techniques within these categories.

Table 7.20 Field Visits: Officer Changes for Carriers Since Implementation of the Firearms Policy Percent Distribution				Legend: SI-Significantly Increased I-Increased N-Not Changed D-Decreased SD-Significantly Decreased		
Category	Reported Changes N=40			Observed Changes N=224		
	SI/I	N	D/SD	SI/I	N	D/SD
Number of scheduled field visits	Q #15; Mean = .18			Q #26; Mean = .15		
	15.0	85.0	0	12.1	87.4	.4
Number of unscheduled field visits	Q #16; Mean = .28			Q #27; Mean = .14		
	22.5	77.5	0	13.3	85.4	1.2
Number of field visits conducted after 6:00 PM	Q #17; Mean = .28			Q #28; Mean = .18		
	20.0	80.0	0	15.5	82.8	1.7

Table 7.21 Field Visits: Officer Changes for Non-carriers Since Implementation of the Firearms Policy Percent Distribution N=149		Legend: SI-Significantly Increased I-Increased N-Not Changed D-Decreased SD-Significantly Decreased	
Question	SI/I	N	D/SD
15. Number of scheduled field visits Mean = .07	6.0	93.3	.7
16. Number of unscheduled field visits Mean = .05	7.4	88.6	3.1
17. Number of field visits conducted after 6:00 PM Mean = .08	11.4	83.9	4.7

Table 7.21 provides data for non-carrier's perceptions regarding field visit changes since implementation of the firearms policy. Non-carriers again state that there is no change regarding supervisory techniques as they relate to field visits. For each question within this category--scheduled, unscheduled and late field visits—over 84% of non-carriers stated that there is no change in how they have conducted their field visits. A mere 11% stated that they had actually increased or significantly increased the number of field visits conducted after 6:00 PM.

Referrals

Another descriptive category for supervisory styles is referrals. Items measured include referrals to Electronic Monitoring/Super Intensive Supervision Program and Day Resource Center caseloads. EM/SISP are considered surveillance caseloads and are the highest level of supervision that Texas parole has to offer. The DRC is a treatment-oriented program and Texas is currently leading the community supervision field with approaches to this innovative casework/teamwork oriented model. Carriers self-reported that they have not changed the number of referrals to either program (see **Table 7.22**). In both categories, 97% state they have not changed this practice. Other officers concur with this information--93% state that carriers have not changed the number of referrals to EM/SISP and DRC caseloads. These numbers are convincing, in that no change has occurred in the number of referrals made.

Table 7.22 Referrals: Officer Changes for Carriers Since Implementation of the Firearms Policy Percent Distribution				Legend: SI-Significantly Increased I-Increased N-Not Changed D-Decreased SD-Significantly Decreased		
Category	Reported Changes N=39			Observed Changes N=223		
	SI/I	N	D/SD	SI/I	N	D/SD
Number of referrals to EM/SISP caseloads	Q #18; Mean = .03			Q #29; Mean = .05		
	2.6	97.4	0	5.1	93.3	1.7
Number of referrals to DRC caseloads*	Q #19; Mean = -.05			Q #30; Mean = .05		
	0	97.3	2.7	6.1	92.6	1.3

*DRC reported changes N=37; DRC observed changes N=216

The number of respondents for the questions pertaining to DRC caseloads dropped since not all offices are able to refer to these caseloads.

Table 7.23 also shows that non-carriers have not changed the number of referrals to EM/SISP or DRC caseloads. Ninety-three percent indicate that there has been no change in the number of referrals to either the surveillance or the treatment program.

Table 7.23 Referrals: Officer Changes for Non-carriers Since Implementation of the Firearms Policy Percent Distribution N=148		Legend: SI-Significantly Increased I-Increased N-Not Changed D-Decreased SD-Significantly Decreased	
Question	SI/I	N	D/SD
18. Number of referrals to EM/SISP caseloads Mean = .03	5.4	93.2	1.4
19. Number of referrals to DRC caseloads Mean = .07	6.8	93.2	0

Urinalysis

The category of urinalysis is also considered a surveillance or law enforcement type activity. **Tables 7.24** and **7.25** both provide the percent distribution for the number of urinalysis conducted on offenders for carriers and non-carriers. The carriers report that 90% have not changed the number of UAs conducted; other staff report a similar high percentage (88%) for carriers as well. Surprisingly, the non-carriers actually report an increase or significant increase (16%) in the number of UAs conducted on their offenders. Even though the number is small, it is still more than the carriers report (10%). If the supervisory style change assumption were true, then the carriers should experience an increase in the number of UAs conducted since this category represents a surveillance technique.

Since the non-carriers reported a 16% increase in urinalysis, Region I and III Directors were contacted to determine if there was an alternative explanation (e.g., policy change) for the recorded behavior. Both reported that in early September, the Board of Pardons and Paroles Chairman stated that he wanted more urinalysis testing of all offenders on parole. Even though there have been no policy changes and no formal directives, many officers have taken the initiative to increase the number of UAs conducted (Ivey, 1998; Linson, 1998). As of September 1, 1998, a federal mandate for random drug testing also went into effect. This mandate requires that 10% of all offenders be tested by urinalysis (Ivey, 1998).

Table 7.24 Urinalysis: Officer Changes for Carriers Since Implementation of the Firearms Policy Percent Distribution				Legend: SI-Significantly Increased I-Increased N-Not Changed D-Decreased SD-Significantly Decreased		
Category	Reported Changes (Q #20) N=40 Mean = .1			Observed Changes (Q #31) N=224 Mean = .12		
	SI/I	N	D/SD	SI/I	N	D/SD
Number of UAs conducted on Offenders	10.0	90.0	0	10.8	88.3	.8

Table 7.25 Urinalysis: Officer Changes for Non-carriers Since Implementation of the Firearms Policy Percent Distribution N=150				Legend: SI-Significantly Increased I-Increased N-Not Changed D-Decreased SD-Significantly Decreased	
Question		SI/I	N	D/SD	
20. Number of UAs conducted on Offenders Mean = .17		16.0	84.0	0	

Reports of Violation

The report of violation category is designed to gauge the number of technical reports of violation that an officer writes on his caseload offenders. This category is also a measure of increased or tightened supervision since it measures a function that can be discretionary on the part of the officer. An officer can choose to write technical violation reports only as they are absolutely required, or an officer can choose to write technical violation reports for any infraction he deems worthy of a report. **Tables 7.26 and 7.27** again demonstrate what has become commonplace in the supervisory style categories.

The carriers and non-carriers both report that they have not changed the number of technical reports of violation written for offenders. Ninety-three percent of the carriers (supported by 89% of other staff) and 89% of the non-carriers report no change in this category. Again, the non-carriers report a higher percentage (10% v. 8%) of increased or significantly increased reports written than do the carriers. **Table 7.26** provides information relating to the carriers and **Table 7.27** provides information relating to the non-carriers.

Table 7.26 Reports of Violation: Officer Changes for Carriers Since Implementation of the Firearms Policy <i>Percent Distribution</i>				Legend: SI-Significantly Increased I-Increased N-Not Changed D-Decreased SD-Significantly Decreased		
Category	Reported Changes (Q #21) N=40 Mean = .1			Observed Changes (Q #32) N=224 Mean = .13		
	SI/I	N	D/SD	SI/I	N	D/SD
Number of technical reports of violations written for offenders	7.5	92.5	0	10.4	88.7	.8

Table 7.27 Reports of Violation: Officer Changes for Non-carriers Since Implementation of the Firearms Policy <i>Percent Distribution</i> N=149		Legend: SI-Significantly Increased I-Increased N-Not Changed D-Decreased SD-Significantly Decreased	
Question	SI/I	N	D/SD
21. Number of technical reports of violations written for offenders Mean = .1	10.0	88.6	1.3

Relationships

The final category within the second research purpose of supervisory styles is relationships. This includes relationships between staff members and offenders and between co-workers. One questionnaire item (#22) asked respondents about their feelings regarding the offenders on their caseloads since the firearms policy has taken effect. The majority (90.5%) of respondents stated that the offenders on their caseload have all in all been the same toward them. Only 8.5% stated that the offenders were more cooperative toward supervision. One percent then stated that the offenders were more resistant. Five survey respondents wrote in that the offenders still do not know that officers are even carrying firearms—especially since the policy requires officers to carry their firearms concealed. Another respondent added “I don’t feel that the releasees are aware of officers carrying yet, however, when they do, their behavior will become more resistant.” As shown in **Table 7.28**, the majority of each staff member category responded that the firearms policy has not changed their relationships with offenders.

Several survey comments reflected the following:

“The relationship has remained the same with the offenders. Unlike was predicted by everyone who opposed officers being armed.”

“I feel the relationship a parole officer has with releasees will be determined by how each officer conducts himself/herself, not whether they have a gun.”

“Carrying a firearm should not change any relationships. If you give respect, you get it.”

If the respondents are accurate about relationships with offenders, then the policy has not changed the association between officers and offenders. Keep in mind, however, that the survey was distributed only three months after the policy went into effect and at

that time only 60 officers were carrying firearms on duty. The responses may change once more as more officers are authorized to carrying firearms while conducting agency business. According to staff perceptions, at this time, the relationships between officers and offenders has not changed.

Table 7.28 Relationships with Co-Workers and Offenders Since Implementation of the Firearms Policy Percent Distribution										Legend: SA-Strongly Agree A-Agree N-Neutral D-Disagree SD-Strongly Disagree		
Category	Carriers N=41			Not Carrying but Getting Authority N=107			Not Carrying by Choice N=61			Support Staff N=25		
Question	SA/ A	N	D/ SD	SA/ A	N	D/ SD	SA/ A	N	D/ SD	SA/ A	N	D/ SD
33. The firearms policy has not changed my relationship with offenders.	Mean = 1.27			Mean = 1.12			Mean = .74			Mean = .64		
	87.8	9.8	2.4	84.1	12.1	3.7	60.6	31.1	8.2	56.0	40.0	4.0
34. The firearms policy has not changed my relationship with my co-workers.	Mean = 1.29			Mean = 1.07			Mean = .28			Mean = .7		
	87.8	4.9	7.3	84.1	9.3	6.5	48.3	25.5	26.7	55.5	37.0	7.4

Table 7.28 does show a difference in perception between staff categories regarding relationships with co-workers. Officers who are authorized to carry firearms on duty strongly agree or agree (88%) that the addition of firearms to the workplace has not changed the relationships with co-workers. Likewise, the officers who are not currently carrying firearms but are in the process of obtaining the authority to do so agree or strongly agree (84%) that the firearms policy has not changed their relationships with

co-workers. Only a little over half (56%) of the support staff respondents strongly agree or agree that there has been no change, while 37% reported neutral responses on the topic. Finally, 27% of the non-carriers who choose not to carry firearms believe that the firearms policy has changed their relationships with their co-workers. Another 26% were neutral and 48% agreed or strongly agreed that there was no change in the relationship with co-workers. Since a quarter of the non-carriers by choice state that there has been a change in their relationships with their co-workers, this group may need to be monitored later to determine if this perception changes, if they are unhappy in the workplace, or if they are leaving parole employment. Dozens of comments were written on the survey regarding the change in relationships with co-workers. Several comments follow:

"I worry about a parole officer with a weapon more than anything else...A psychological misses the truth about the kind of persons who are getting approval to carry."

"Some officers feel that they are the police. I feel more at risk in the office because there are some unstable officers who don't need guns (morale is too low) and tempers flair (sic) all the time. The problem isn't with the clients for the most part. There are some places that will sign-off on the psychological exam even if there are some signs of a problem (mentally)."

"I am more cautious/aware of those who carry in reference to if they are a friend or not."

"Some parole officers have a Robocop Syndrome, which is dangerous for all of us."

"I've become more aware of my co-workers that carry. Additional stress to me—not to anger them. More afraid of co-workers than offenders."

Summary

Chapter seven has provided findings for the dual purpose research purposes presented in this project. The first research purpose was descriptive and comprised of working hypotheses in respect to district office staff's safety perceptions. The second research purpose was exploratory with loosely defined categories for officer supervisory styles. Chapter eight gives concluding remarks, study limitations and recommendations for further research regarding the implementation of firearms within community corrections.

CHAPTER EIGHT:

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

The final chapter of this applied research project attempts to summarize the information and findings presented in the previous chapters. This project had dual research purposes. The first was to describe safety perceptions of TDCJ-PD staff members since implementation of the firearms policy. The second purpose used an exploratory method and attempted to discern any changes in officers' supervisory styles since implementation of the firearms policy. Any noted changes in supervisory styles were *perceptual* only. Due to the nature of the methodology, e.g., focus groups and survey research, *actual* changes in supervisory styles were not measured.

Conclusions

Concluding remarks will be categorized by the conceptual framework categories. This section is not exhaustive in its content, but provides a big picture perspective about the content provided by the findings chapter. District office staff comments on the returned surveys also provide another dimension to the following thoughts.

Safety Perceptions

It has been said that your perception is your reality. If you see the glass as half-full, then you will be thankful for the remaining beverage; however, if you see the glass as half-empty you may be disappointed that what you want is gone. Do officers feel safer in the field since the implementation of the firearms policy? For those that carry, a vast

majority responded “Yes, my safety level has increased or significantly increased since I’ve been able to carry a firearm on duty.” Isn’t this the purpose of a safety policy that includes weapons for defensive purposes? If so, then implementation of the policy is indeed making officers who carry firearms feel safer in the office and at home and field visits. As one survey respondent noted, “I feel officers carrying firearms is a benefit to overall safety and security.” Another stated “In my opinion, this is the best policy/procedural change I have seen the agency make on behalf of officers since becoming employed by the agency 8+ years ago.”

Of course, the other side of the coin presents another picture. There are still officers employed by the agency who do not believe that firearms have a place within community corrections. As one staff member responded on his survey,

“Personally, I think the new policy is stupid and non-beneficial to the performance of my job. The general community once knew parole officers were unarmed and respected us for that. Now they don’t know for sure. This uncertainty combined with lack of arrest authority is potentially dangerous.”

Some officers do not plan to carry firearms while on duty and as stated several times during the focus groups, the people who do not want to carry are concerned about their safety levels when they are around other officers that carry firearms. However, this hypothesis (WH #2a) was explored and not supported by the survey respondent’s replies. A similar hypothesis (WH #3) was made regarding support staff and it was not supported by the survey data either. For a summary of the safety perception hypotheses and the research methods used to compile information, refer to **Table 8.1: Research Evidence in Support of Working Hypotheses**.

Table 8.1
Research Evidence in Support of Working Hypotheses

Working Hypotheses	Survey	Focus Group
Carriers #1a: POs will experience an increase in their perception of safety while in the office.	<i>Strong Support</i>	<i>Strong Support</i>
Carriers #1b: POs will experience an increase in their perception of safety while conducting home visits.	<i>Strong Support</i>	<i>Strong Support</i>
Carriers #1c: POs will experience an increase in their perception of safety while conducting field visits.	<i>Strong Support</i>	<i>Strong Support</i>
Non-carriers #2a: POs will experience a decrease in their perception of safety while in the office.	<i>No Support</i>	<i>Supports</i>
Non-carriers #2b: POs will experience no change in their perception of safety while conducting home visits.	<i>Partial Support</i>	<i>Strong Support</i>
Non-carriers #2c: POs will experience no change in their perception of safety while conducting field visits.	<i>Partial Support</i>	<i>Strong Support</i>
Support Staff #3: Support staff will experience a decrease in their perception of safety while in the office.	<i>No Support</i>	<i>Partial Support</i>
Perceptions Across Groups #4: There will be a difference in perceptions about safety across groups, including carriers, non-carriers and support staff.	<i>Strong Support</i>	<i>Strong Support</i>

There is also partial support for the hypotheses that officers who choose not to carry firearms do not perceive changes in their safety levels while conducting home or field visits. This is probably in part because they do not see the need for a firearm on duty and are still conducting home and field visits as they routinely have in the past. Once more officers are carrying firearms on duty and more offenders become aware of the policy, the officers who choose not to carry may experience a decrease in their safety perceptions, as stated in the focus group. For changes in safety perceptions to be known, more research would have to follow up or supplement this report.

Supervisory Styles

At this time, the concerns of Veronica Ballard, Parole Division Director, that officer supervisory styles may change are overall unfounded; a few pockets of individuals reported a change in some supervisory techniques, but the numbers were not significant. To check the self-report rate by officers who carry firearms additional survey items for other staff member observations were included. Other staff members' responses supported the assertions by carriers that the supervisory techniques have not changed. Texas parole officers do not have arrest authority and arrests are generally viewed as a law enforcement or surveillance technique. The legislative and policy limitations of Texas officers may hamper their ability to move toward the extreme in a law enforcement role as it pertains to supervisory styles. However, one survey respondent did state "I am perceived as more law enforcement since being certified." Unfortunately, without elaboration, it is difficult to determine who perceives the officer as more law enforcement-oriented.

Traditionally, training and policy for Texas officers also advocates pro-active and awareness development while executing the duties of a parole officer. Since these concepts have been instilled within officers in relation to safety, there is little reason why implementation of firearms in the workplace would affect the manner in which officers scheduled or conducted their office, home and field visits. In each supervisory style category, the majority of carriers and non-carriers responded that there have been no changes in the number of visits conducted, referrals made, urinalysis obtained, or reports of violation written.

The one category that may need further attention is that pertaining to relationships with offenders and officers. Generally survey respondents stated that there was no change in the relationships between officers and offenders. The majority of respondents continued this thread as it relates to co-workers as well. There was, however, a minority of officers who choose not to carry firearms who stated that their relationships with their co-workers had changed. One person stated "I'm worried about some staff's mental state when they're carrying firearms." Two respondents provided similar statements; one said "Co-workers are making statements like -Now that I have a firearm no one had better mess with me. I have a gun on my hip!" It has been stated that the debate for firearms in community corrections is heated. The perceived relationship change among those people who do not carry may be attributed to deeply held beliefs about firearms in the community corrections field. Again, perception is reality; therefore, additional information from this group after the policy has been in place for some time would help management and training with any employee personnel issues within the workplace.

Study Limitations

There are several study limitations that need to be presented. One limitation concerns distribution of the survey itself. Even though the survey went to 450 Parole Division staff members and had a good response rate (57%), no one from Region II (Houston and surrounding areas) was represented in the study. At this time no one in that area has obtained the authority to carry a firearm on duty, therefore the data in chapter seven only represent staff members from Regions I and III. Also, when the survey was mailed to the district offices, officers had only been carrying firearms for about 2 ½ months. Those officers carrying for 2 ½ months are a minority since most officers received authorization to carry a firearm in September. This indicates that the survey is requesting perceptions in safety levels and supervisory styles after most officers have only been carrying firearms for about a month. This really is not enough time to adequately determine how changes have been taking shape in the office since implementation of the policy. Also, some offices surveyed only had 2 or 3 officers carrying; so again, changes in supervisory style or safety perceptions may be difficult to determine by the majority of staff employed in the office since the study was conducted within a short time frame.

Another study limitation is the methodology itself. Survey research is good for obtaining attitudes and perceptions regarding various topics. The first research question is ideal for survey research, however the second could be better measured by a true experimental design. The supervisory style categories are all measurable with the exception of "relationships." Relationships between co-workers and offenders are qualitative by nature, therefore surveys and focus groups are still solid research methods.

The other categories, however, lend themselves to good data collection methods. Therefore, if one truly wanted to measure supervisory style changes after the implementation of a firearm policy, an experimental research design would be more appropriate than survey research or focus groups.

Recommendations for Further Research

Since there is little research regarding firearms in the field of criminal justice, this research is only precursory in nature and requires follow-up at a later date when more officers are armed and the issue is more commonplace than it is at this point in time. As stated by fifteen survey respondents, this study needs to be done again in 6-12 months in order to obtain more accurate information regarding changes in the workplace. This study is not without merit since it may be used as baseline information for subsequent research. It would be interesting to see if responses change once more as more officers become armed while on duty.

Further research should also be done to explore the non-carriers' perceptions regarding relationship changes with co-workers. If this is indeed an area where more staff members can relate, the potential for conflict will exist or increase as more officers carry firearms in the office. An implication for management regarding conflict and firearms is a crucial area since the topic has so many emotional overtones. One survey respondent stated "Firearms are not being accepted in the division on an administrative level. Ugly comments are made on email and face-to-face about weapons." Such potential for conflict may be expected, however, to be pro-active in this area would be advisable for administrative staff.

Another reason to explore the effect of firearms relates to the situation that occurred after the survey went out (refer to footnote #40). Some officers are so mistrusting of management that they give a lot of unwarranted power to this researcher (implying that the survey would be used to take guns away) even after the legislature has authorized parole officers to carry firearms. This trust and communication situation should also be explored with further research in order to strengthen relationships and create a team effort of supervision that would best benefit the division's clients—the public and the offenders themselves.

Summary

The addition of firearms within the local and national fields of community corrections has many intentional and unintentional results. As one advantage, officers who carry firearms report an overall increase in safety perceptions while in the office or conducting home or field visits. The topic is not without its opponents. Discussion of this issue at the July 1996 American Probation and Parole Association conference led to disagreement and shouting between intelligent, educated, professional people because this is not an easy decision to make and it is not a decision that can be made at once (DelGrosso, 1997:48). Some officers in Texas believe that the decision to arm parole officers was well overdue. Another respondent stated that

“By parole officers carrying weapons, or being allowed to carry weapons, a greater sense of responsibility is present; there is a positive feeling that parole officers are now beginning to be recognized as criminal justice professionals.”

Others would argue, however that a gun, in and of itself, should not make a person more professional. It is the actions of the people in the profession and the agency that add to

the perception of professionalism. Regardless of the debate, parole officers in Texas now have the option to carry a firearm on duty. With this responsibility comes other implications. Subsequently, it is the responsibility of management to determine if and how these implications will affect the employees' work environment. If the work environment or supervisory styles will be affected by the addition of firearms, then steps must be taken to ensure that these changes will be positive and will benefit the public who the agency is mandated to serve.

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Table 7.20 Field Visits: Officer Changes for Carriers Since Implementation of the Firearms Policy Percent Distribution				Legend: SI-Significantly Increased I-Increased N-Not Changed D-Decreased SD-Significantly Decreased		
Category	Reported Changes N=40			Observed Changes N=224		
	SI/I	N	D/SD	SI/I	N	D/SD
Number of scheduled field visits	Q #15; Mean = .18			Q #26; Mean = .15		
	15.0	85.0	0	12.1	87.4	.4
Number of unscheduled field visits	Q #16; Mean = .28			Q #27; Mean = .14		
	22.5	77.5	0	13.3	85.4	1.2
Number of field visits conducted after 6:00 PM	Q #17; Mean = .28			Q #28; Mean = .18		
	20.0	80.0	0	15.5	82.8	1.7

Table 7.21 Field Visits: Officer Changes for Non-carriers Since Implementation of the Firearms Policy Percent Distribution N=149		Legend: SI-Significantly Increased I-Increased N-Not Changed D-Decreased SD-Significantly Decreased	
Question	SI/I	N	D/SD
15. Number of scheduled field visits Mean = .07	6.0	93.3	.7
16. Number of unscheduled field visits Mean = .05	7.4	88.6	3.1
17. Number of field visits conducted after 6:00 PM Mean = .08	11.4	83.9	4.7

Table 7.21 provides data for non-carrier's perceptions regarding field visit changes since implementation of the firearms policy. Non-carriers again state that there is no change regarding supervisory techniques as they relate to field visits. For each question within this category--scheduled, unscheduled and late field visits—over 84% of non-carriers stated that there is no change in how they have conducted their field visits. A mere 11% stated that they had actually increased or significantly increased the number of field visits conducted after 6:00 PM.

Referrals

Another descriptive category for supervisory styles is referrals. Items measured include referrals to Electronic Monitoring/Super Intensive Supervision Program and Day Resource Center caseloads. EM/SISP are considered surveillance caseloads and are the highest level of supervision that Texas parole has to offer. The DRC is a treatment-oriented program and Texas is currently leading the community supervision field with approaches to this innovative casework/teamwork oriented model. Carriers self-reported that they have not changed the number of referrals to either program (see **Table 7.22**). In both categories, 97% state they have not changed this practice. Other officers concur with this information--93% state that carriers have not changed the number of referrals to EM/SISP and DRC caseloads. These numbers are convincing, in that no change has occurred in the number of referrals made.

Table 7.22 Referrals: Officer Changes for Carriers Since Implementation of the Firearms Policy Percent Distribution				Legend: SI-Significantly Increased I-Increased N-Not Changed D-Decreased SD-Significantly Decreased		
Category	Reported Changes N=39			Observed Changes N=223		
	SI/I	N	D/SD	SI/I	N	D/SD
Number of referrals to EM/SISP caseloads	Q #18; Mean = .03			Q #29; Mean = .05		
	2.6	97.4	0	5.1	93.3	1.7
Number of referrals to DRC caseloads*	Q #19; Mean = -.05			Q #30; Mean = .05		
	0	97.3	2.7	6.1	92.6	1.3

*DRC reported changes N=37; DRC observed changes N=216

The number of respondents for the questions pertaining to DRC caseloads dropped since not all offices are able to refer to these caseloads.

Table 7.23 also shows that non-carriers have not changed the number of referrals to EM/SISP or DRC caseloads. Ninety-three percent indicate that there has been no change in the number of referrals to either the surveillance or the treatment program.

Table 7.23 Referrals: Officer Changes for Non-carriers Since Implementation of the Firearms Policy Percent Distribution N=148		Legend: SI-Significantly Increased I-Increased N-Not Changed D-Decreased SD-Significantly Decreased	
Question	SI/I	N	D/SD
18. Number of referrals to EM/SISP caseloads Mean = .03	5.4	93.2	1.4
19. Number of referrals to DRC caseloads Mean = .07	6.8	93.2	0

Urinalysis

The category of urinalysis is also considered a surveillance or law enforcement type activity. **Tables 7.24** and **7.25** both provide the percent distribution for the number of urinalysis conducted on offenders for carriers and non-carriers. The carriers report that 90% have not changed the number of UAs conducted; other staff report a similar high percentage (88%) for carriers as well. Surprisingly, the non-carriers actually report an increase or significant increase (16%) in the number of UAs conducted on their offenders. Even though the number is small, it is still more than the carriers report (10%). If the supervisory style change assumption were true, then the carriers should experience an increase in the number of UAs conducted since this category represents a surveillance technique.

Since the non-carriers reported a 16% increase in urinalysis, Region I and III Directors were contacted to determine if there was an alternative explanation (e.g., policy change) for the recorded behavior. Both reported that in early September, the Board of Pardons and Paroles Chairman stated that he wanted more urinalysis testing of all offenders on parole. Even though there have been no policy changes and no formal directives, many officers have taken the initiative to increase the number of UAs conducted (Ivey, 1998; Linson, 1998). As of September 1, 1998, a federal mandate for random drug testing also went into effect. This mandate requires that 10% of all offenders be tested by urinalysis (Ivey, 1998).

Table 7.24 Urinalysis: Officer Changes for Carriers Since Implementation of the Firearms Policy Percent Distribution				Legend: SI-Significantly Increased I-Increased N-Not Changed D-Decreased SD-Significantly Decreased		
Category	Reported Changes (Q #20) N=40 Mean = .1			Observed Changes (Q #31) N=224 Mean = .12		
	SI/I	N	D/SD	SI/I	N	D/SD
Number of UAs conducted on Offenders	10.0	90.0	0	10.8	88.3	.8

Table 7.25 Urinalysis: Officer Changes for Non-carriers Since Implementation of the Firearms Policy Percent Distribution N=150				Legend: SI-Significantly Increased I-Increased N-Not Changed D-Decreased SD-Significantly Decreased	
Question		SI/I	N	D/SD	
20. Number of UAs conducted on Offenders Mean = .17		16.0	84.0	0	

Reports of Violation

The report of violation category is designed to gauge the number of technical reports of violation that an officer writes on his caseload offenders. This category is also a measure of increased or tightened supervision since it measures a function that can be discretionary on the part of the officer. An officer can choose to write technical violation reports only as they are absolutely required, or an officer can choose to write technical violation reports for any infraction he deems worthy of a report. **Tables 7.26 and 7.27** again demonstrate what has become commonplace in the supervisory style categories.

The carriers and non-carriers both report that they have not changed the number of technical reports of violation written for offenders. Ninety-three percent of the carriers (supported by 89% of other staff) and 89% of the non-carriers report no change in this category. Again, the non-carriers report a higher percentage (10% v. 8%) of increased or significantly increased reports written than do the carriers. **Table 7.26** provides information relating to the carriers and **Table 7.27** provides information relating to the non-carriers.

Table 7.26 Reports of Violation: Officer Changes for Carriers Since Implementation of the Firearms Policy <i>Percent Distribution</i>				Legend: SI-Significantly Increased I-Increased N-Not Changed D-Decreased SD-Significantly Decreased		
Category	Reported Changes (Q #21) N=40 Mean = .1			Observed Changes (Q #32) N=224 Mean = .13		
	SI/I	N	D/SD	SI/I	N	D/SD
Number of technical reports of violations written for offenders	7.5	92.5	0	10.4	88.7	.8

Table 7.27 Reports of Violation: Officer Changes for Non-carriers Since Implementation of the Firearms Policy <i>Percent Distribution</i> N=149		Legend: SI-Significantly Increased I-Increased N-Not Changed D-Decreased SD-Significantly Decreased	
Question	SI/I	N	D/SD
21. Number of technical reports of violations written for offenders Mean = .1	10.0	88.6	1.3

Relationships

The final category within the second research purpose of supervisory styles is relationships. This includes relationships between staff members and offenders and between co-workers. One questionnaire item (#22) asked respondents about their feelings regarding the offenders on their caseloads since the firearms policy has taken effect. The majority (90.5%) of respondents stated that the offenders on their caseload have all in all been the same toward them. Only 8.5% stated that the offenders were more cooperative toward supervision. One percent then stated that the offenders were more resistant. Five survey respondents wrote in that the offenders still do not know that officers are even carrying firearms—especially since the policy requires officers to carry their firearms concealed. Another respondent added “I don’t feel that the releasees are aware of officers carrying yet, however, when they do, their behavior will become more resistant.” As shown in **Table 7.28**, the majority of each staff member category responded that the firearms policy has not changed their relationships with offenders.

Several survey comments reflected the following:

“The relationship has remained the same with the offenders. Unlike was predicted by everyone who opposed officers being armed.”

“I feel the relationship a parole officer has with releasees will be determined by how each officer conducts himself/herself, not whether they have a gun.”

“Carrying a firearm should not change any relationships. If you give respect, you get it.”

If the respondents are accurate about relationships with offenders, then the policy has not changed the association between officers and offenders. Keep in mind, however, that the survey was distributed only three months after the policy went into effect and at

that time only 60 officers were carrying firearms on duty. The responses may change once more as more officers are authorized to carrying firearms while conducting agency business. According to staff perceptions, at this time, the relationships between officers and offenders has not changed.

Table 7.28 Relationships with Co-Workers and Offenders Since Implementation of the Firearms Policy Percent Distribution										Legend: SA-Strongly Agree A-Agree N-Neutral D-Disagree SD-Strongly Disagree		
Category	Carriers N=41			Not Carrying but Getting Authority N=107			Not Carrying by Choice N=61			Support Staff N=25		
Question	SA/ A	N	D/ SD	SA/ A	N	D/ SD	SA/ A	N	D/ SD	SA/ A	N	D/ SD
33. The firearms policy has not changed my relationship with offenders.	Mean = 1.27			Mean = 1.12			Mean = .74			Mean = .64		
	87.8	9.8	2.4	84.1	12.1	3.7	60.6	31.1	8.2	56.0	40.0	4.0
34. The firearms policy has not changed my relationship with my co-workers.	Mean = 1.29			Mean = 1.07			Mean = .28			Mean = .7		
	87.8	4.9	7.3	84.1	9.3	6.5	48.3	25.5	26.7	55.5	37.0	7.4

Table 7.28 does show a difference in perception between staff categories regarding relationships with co-workers. Officers who are authorized to carry firearms on duty strongly agree or agree (88%) that the addition of firearms to the workplace has not changed the relationships with co-workers. Likewise, the officers who are not currently carrying firearms but are in the process of obtaining the authority to do so agree or strongly agree (84%) that the firearms policy has not changed their relationships with

co-workers. Only a little over half (56%) of the support staff respondents strongly agree or agree that there has been no change, while 37% reported neutral responses on the topic. Finally, 27% of the non-carriers who choose not to carry firearms believe that the firearms policy has changed their relationships with their co-workers. Another 26% were neutral and 48% agreed or strongly agreed that there was no change in the relationship with co-workers. Since a quarter of the non-carriers by choice state that there has been a change in their relationships with their co-workers, this group may need to be monitored later to determine if this perception changes, if they are unhappy in the workplace, or if they are leaving parole employment. Dozens of comments were written on the survey regarding the change in relationships with co-workers. Several comments follow:

"I worry about a parole officer with a weapon more than anything else...A psychological misses the truth about the kind of persons who are getting approval to carry."

"Some officers feel that they are the police. I feel more at risk in the office because there are some unstable officers who don't need guns (morale is too low) and tempers flair (sic) all the time. The problem isn't with the clients for the most part. There are some places that will sign-off on the psychological exam even if there are some signs of a problem (mentally)."

"I am more cautious/aware of those who carry in reference to if they are a friend or not."

"Some parole officers have a Robocop Syndrome, which is dangerous for all of us."

"I've become more aware of my co-workers that carry. Additional stress to me—not to anger them. More afraid of co-workers than offenders."

Summary

Chapter seven has provided findings for the dual purpose research purposes presented in this project. The first research purpose was descriptive and comprised of working hypotheses in respect to district office staff's safety perceptions. The second research purpose was exploratory with loosely defined categories for officer supervisory styles. Chapter eight gives concluding remarks, study limitations and recommendations for further research regarding the implementation of firearms within community corrections.

CHAPTER EIGHT:

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

The final chapter of this applied research project attempts to summarize the information and findings presented in the previous chapters. This project had dual research purposes. The first was to describe safety perceptions of TDCJ-PD staff members since implementation of the firearms policy. The second purpose used an exploratory method and attempted to discern any changes in officers' supervisory styles since implementation of the firearms policy. Any noted changes in supervisory styles were *perceptual* only. Due to the nature of the methodology, e.g., focus groups and survey research, *actual* changes in supervisory styles were not measured.

Conclusions

Concluding remarks will be categorized by the conceptual framework categories. This section is not exhaustive in its content, but provides a big picture perspective about the content provided by the findings chapter. District office staff comments on the returned surveys also provide another dimension to the following thoughts.

Safety Perceptions

It has been said that your perception is your reality. If you see the glass as half-full, then you will be thankful for the remaining beverage; however, if you see the glass as half-empty you may be disappointed that what you want is gone. Do officers feel safer in the field since the implementation of the firearms policy? For those that carry, a vast

majority responded “Yes, my safety level has increased or significantly increased since I’ve been able to carry a firearm on duty.” Isn’t this the purpose of a safety policy that includes weapons for defensive purposes? If so, then implementation of the policy is indeed making officers who carry firearms feel safer in the office and at home and field visits. As one survey respondent noted, “I feel officers carrying firearms is a benefit to overall safety and security.” Another stated “In my opinion, this is the best policy/procedural change I have seen the agency make on behalf of officers since becoming employed by the agency 8+ years ago.”

Of course, the other side of the coin presents another picture. There are still officers employed by the agency who do not believe that firearms have a place within community corrections. As one staff member responded on his survey,

“Personally, I think the new policy is stupid and non-beneficial to the performance of my job. The general community once knew parole officers were unarmed and respected us for that. Now they don’t know for sure. This uncertainty combined with lack of arrest authority is potentially dangerous.”

Some officers do not plan to carry firearms while on duty and as stated several times during the focus groups, the people who do not want to carry are concerned about their safety levels when they are around other officers that carry firearms. However, this hypothesis (WH #2a) was explored and not supported by the survey respondent’s replies. A similar hypothesis (WH #3) was made regarding support staff and it was not supported by the survey data either. For a summary of the safety perception hypotheses and the research methods used to compile information, refer to **Table 8.1: Research Evidence in Support of Working Hypotheses**.

Table 8.1
Research Evidence in Support of Working Hypotheses

Working Hypotheses	Survey	Focus Group
Carriers #1a: POs will experience an increase in their perception of safety while in the office.	<i>Strong Support</i>	<i>Strong Support</i>
Carriers #1b: POs will experience an increase in their perception of safety while conducting home visits.	<i>Strong Support</i>	<i>Strong Support</i>
Carriers #1c: POs will experience an increase in their perception of safety while conducting field visits.	<i>Strong Support</i>	<i>Strong Support</i>
Non-carriers #2a: POs will experience a decrease in their perception of safety while in the office.	<i>No Support</i>	<i>Supports</i>
Non-carriers #2b: POs will experience no change in their perception of safety while conducting home visits.	<i>Partial Support</i>	<i>Strong Support</i>
Non-carriers #2c: POs will experience no change in their perception of safety while conducting field visits.	<i>Partial Support</i>	<i>Strong Support</i>
Support Staff #3: Support staff will experience a decrease in their perception of safety while in the office.	<i>No Support</i>	<i>Partial Support</i>
Perceptions Across Groups #4: There will be a difference in perceptions about safety across groups, including carriers, non-carriers and support staff.	<i>Strong Support</i>	<i>Strong Support</i>

There is also partial support for the hypotheses that officers who choose not to carry firearms do not perceive changes in their safety levels while conducting home or field visits. This is probably in part because they do not see the need for a firearm on duty and are still conducting home and field visits as they routinely have in the past. Once more officers are carrying firearms on duty and more offenders become aware of the policy, the officers who choose not to carry may experience a decrease in their safety perceptions, as stated in the focus group. For changes in safety perceptions to be known, more research would have to follow up or supplement this report.

Supervisory Styles

At this time, the concerns of Veronica Ballard, Parole Division Director, that officer supervisory styles may change are overall unfounded; a few pockets of individuals reported a change in some supervisory techniques, but the numbers were not significant. To check the self-report rate by officers who carry firearms additional survey items for other staff member observations were included. Other staff members' responses supported the assertions by carriers that the supervisory techniques have not changed. Texas parole officers do not have arrest authority and arrests are generally viewed as a law enforcement or surveillance technique. The legislative and policy limitations of Texas officers may hamper their ability to move toward the extreme in a law enforcement role as it pertains to supervisory styles. However, one survey respondent did state "I am perceived as more law enforcement since being certified." Unfortunately, without elaboration, it is difficult to determine who perceives the officer as more law enforcement-oriented.

Traditionally, training and policy for Texas officers also advocates pro-active and awareness development while executing the duties of a parole officer. Since these concepts have been instilled within officers in relation to safety, there is little reason why implementation of firearms in the workplace would affect the manner in which officers scheduled or conducted their office, home and field visits. In each supervisory style category, the majority of carriers and non-carriers responded that there have been no changes in the number of visits conducted, referrals made, urinalysis obtained, or reports of violation written.

The one category that may need further attention is that pertaining to relationships with offenders and officers. Generally survey respondents stated that there was no change in the relationships between officers and offenders. The majority of respondents continued this thread as it relates to co-workers as well. There was, however, a minority of officers who choose not to carry firearms who stated that their relationships with their co-workers had changed. One person stated "I'm worried about some staff's mental state when they're carrying firearms." Two respondents provided similar statements; one said "Co-workers are making statements like -Now that I have a firearm no one had better mess with me. I have a gun on my hip!" It has been stated that the debate for firearms in community corrections is heated. The perceived relationship change among those people who do not carry may be attributed to deeply held beliefs about firearms in the community corrections field. Again, perception is reality; therefore, additional information from this group after the policy has been in place for some time would help management and training with any employee personnel issues within the workplace.

Study Limitations

There are several study limitations that need to be presented. One limitation concerns distribution of the survey itself. Even though the survey went to 450 Parole Division staff members and had a good response rate (57%), no one from Region II (Houston and surrounding areas) was represented in the study. At this time no one in that area has obtained the authority to carry a firearm on duty, therefore the data in chapter seven only represent staff members from Regions I and III. Also, when the survey was mailed to the district offices, officers had only been carrying firearms for about 2 ½ months. Those officers carrying for 2 ½ months are a minority since most officers received authorization to carry a firearm in September. This indicates that the survey is requesting perceptions in safety levels and supervisory styles after most officers have only been carrying firearms for about a month. This really is not enough time to adequately determine how changes have been taking shape in the office since implementation of the policy. Also, some offices surveyed only had 2 or 3 officers carrying; so again, changes in supervisory style or safety perceptions may be difficult to determine by the majority of staff employed in the office since the study was conducted within a short time frame.

Another study limitation is the methodology itself. Survey research is good for obtaining attitudes and perceptions regarding various topics. The first research question is ideal for survey research, however the second could be better measured by a true experimental design. The supervisory style categories are all measurable with the exception of "relationships." Relationships between co-workers and offenders are qualitative by nature, therefore surveys and focus groups are still solid research methods.

The other categories, however, lend themselves to good data collection methods. Therefore, if one truly wanted to measure supervisory style changes after the implementation of a firearm policy, an experimental research design would be more appropriate than survey research or focus groups.

Recommendations for Further Research

Since there is little research regarding firearms in the field of criminal justice, this research is only precursory in nature and requires follow-up at a later date when more officers are armed and the issue is more commonplace than it is at this point in time. As stated by fifteen survey respondents, this study needs to be done again in 6-12 months in order to obtain more accurate information regarding changes in the workplace. This study is not without merit since it may be used as baseline information for subsequent research. It would be interesting to see if responses change once more as more officers become armed while on duty.

Further research should also be done to explore the non-carriers' perceptions regarding relationship changes with co-workers. If this is indeed an area where more staff members can relate, the potential for conflict will exist or increase as more officers carry firearms in the office. An implication for management regarding conflict and firearms is a crucial area since the topic has so many emotional overtones. One survey respondent stated "Firearms are not being accepted in the division on an administrative level. Ugly comments are made on email and face-to-face about weapons." Such potential for conflict may be expected, however, to be pro-active in this area would be advisable for administrative staff.

Another reason to explore the effect of firearms relates to the situation that occurred after the survey went out (refer to footnote #40). Some officers are so mistrusting of management that they give a lot of unwarranted power to this researcher (implying that the survey would be used to take guns away) even after the legislature has authorized parole officers to carry firearms. This trust and communication situation should also be explored with further research in order to strengthen relationships and create a team effort of supervision that would best benefit the division's clients—the public and the offenders themselves.

Summary

The addition of firearms within the local and national fields of community corrections has many intentional and unintentional results. As one advantage, officers who carry firearms report an overall increase in safety perceptions while in the office or conducting home or field visits. The topic is not without its opponents. Discussion of this issue at the July 1996 American Probation and Parole Association conference led to disagreement and shouting between intelligent, educated, professional people because this is not an easy decision to make and it is not a decision that can be made at once (DelGrosso, 1997:48). Some officers in Texas believe that the decision to arm parole officers was well overdue. Another respondent stated that

“By parole officers carrying weapons, or being allowed to carry weapons, a greater sense of responsibility is present; there is a positive feeling that parole officers are now beginning to be recognized as criminal justice professionals.”

Others would argue, however that a gun, in and of itself, should not make a person more professional. It is the actions of the people in the profession and the agency that add to

the perception of professionalism. Regardless of the debate, parole officers in Texas now have the option to carry a firearm on duty. With this responsibility comes other implications. Subsequently, it is the responsibility of management to determine if and how these implications will affect the employees' work environment. If the work environment or supervisory styles will be affected by the addition of firearms, then steps must be taken to ensure that these changes will be positive and will benefit the public who the agency is mandated to serve.

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**Appendix A: Parole Division Administrative
Directive 1.1.10: Parole Officer Firearms Guidelines**

**TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE
PAROLE DIVISION**



**ADMINISTRATIVE
DIRECTIVE**

NUMBER: PD/AD-1.1.10

DATE: 6/12/98

PAGE: 1 of 6

SUPERSEDES: 12/19/97

SUBJECT: PAROLE OFFICER FIREARMS GUIDELINES

PURPOSE: To establish guidelines by which parole officers may carry firearms during the course and scope of their duties.

AUTHORITY: TEX. PENAL CODE ANN. § 46.15 (West 1997).

PROCEDURE:

I. Policy

- A. A Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) authorization giving consent for a parole officer to carry a firearm is only applicable to the carrying of a firearm while the officer is on duty and does not provide authorization for the officer to carry a firearm on personal time or during off-duty hours. Moreover, officers who elect to carry firearms in the course and scope of their employment may only do so if they qualify under criteria established by TDCJ, are in compliance with all policies and procedures set forth in this administrative directive, and have received formal authorization from their Regional Director.
- B. Armed officers are expected to be fully cognizant of their legal, moral, and ethical responsibilities in carrying a lethal weapon. They are also expected to be aware of other self-defense options, to utilize their weapon only as a last resort, and to use only the minimum force necessary to ensure their safety. Officers who carry a firearm shall only display or discharge their weapon for defensive purposes when necessary to protect human life and/or prevent serious bodily injury, and they shall be well informed regarding Sections 9.31-9.33 of the Texas Penal Code (Self-Defense, Deadly Force in Defense of Person, and Defense of Third Person), which will be included in the training that is required prior to authorization to carry a firearm on duty. Armed parole officers have no more duty to defend other people than unarmed parole officers, and the fact that an officer is carrying a firearm shall not determine whether the officer responds to a situation or remains at the scene of a potentially dangerous situation.
- C. An officer may not carry a firearm on duty unless he/she also carries Oleoresin Capsicum (OC).

- D. The decision to request approval to carry a firearm on duty is entirely at the discretion of each parole officer. No officer shall be ordered to carry a weapon or pressured to do so.
- E. Officers who choose to carry firearms shall do so at their own expense. TDCJ will not pay for or reimburse officers for the cost of firearms, equipment, ammunition, or weapons qualification training or fees. However, the required training and qualification/requalification process may be completed on the job during regular work hours. Staff are eligible for reimbursement of travel expenses and per diem expenses incurred while attending firearms qualification or requalification courses offered for parole officers by the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement Officer Standards and Education (TCLEOSE), provided that the course attended is at the nearest location to the officer's assigned duty station and that the criteria in PD/AD-1.3.4 (Travel Voucher) are met.

II. Qualifying Process

- A. The applicant must be classified by the State of Texas as a parole officer in State Classifications I through V [specifically, Parole Caseworker I, Parole Officer I, Parole Officer II, Parole Officer III (Unit Supervisor), or Parole Supervisor] or be a Case Manager, Case Manager Supervisor, Assistant Regional Director, or Regional Director.
- B. The applicant must be eligible to own and carry a firearm under federal law and must have a clear criminal record. Information regarding pending charges or misdemeanor convictions will be assessed on a case-by-case basis by the Regional Director.
- C. The applicant must complete basic firearms training provided by Staff Development, as well as training on the use of Oleoresin Capsicum, if OC training has not already been received.
- D. After completion of the Staff Development firearms training, a parole officer who wants to carry a firearm on duty shall E-mail a request to his or her respective Regional Director, who has the responsibility and discretion to grant or deny approval to carry a firearm on duty. Upon receipt of such a request, the Regional Director shall obtain an NCIC/TCIC criminal history report and then E-mail a response with tentative approval or disapproval. If the request is disapproved, a reason(s) must be provided to the officer.
- E. Tentative approval does not constitute authorization for the officer to carry a weapon on duty. Rather, it is official consent for the officer to continue with the qualification process. Final approval will not be granted until the Regional Director assesses whether the parole officer meets all eligibility criteria and has satisfied all the below requirements.
- F. Within 12 months of receiving tentative permission from the Regional Director to carry a firearm, the officer must satisfy the following requirements in the listed order:
 - 1. Obtain a Psychological Release (PSV-54) and have the form completed by a licensed psychologist certifying eligibility to carry a firearm;

2. Complete TCLEOSE Parole and Community Supervision Officer training and qualification; and
 3. Obtain a certificate of firearms proficiency issued by TCLEOSE, qualifying with the actual weapon(s) the officer might carry while on duty. If the officer has more than one weapon that he/she may wish to carry on different days, the certificate of firearms proficiency must specifically reflect proficiency with each of the weapons.
- G. The officer shall submit documentation that the steps listed in Section II.E have been completed to the Regional Director, who shall determine whether to grant final approval. If final approval is obtained from the Regional Director, the officer shall sign the Acknowledgement of Policies and Procedures (PSV-55) to acknowledge that he/she understands and will adhere to the Parole Division's policies and procedures (Attachment A).
- H. If the Regional Director denies the officer's request to carry a firearm, the officer has a right to appeal to the Deputy Director of Operations.
- I. The Regional Director or designee shall maintain all documents and records related to the firearms qualification/approval process, including the original signed acknowledgment described in Section II.F above.

III. Exceptions

- A. The Division Director or designee may order an officer not to carry on either a temporary or permanent basis due to extenuating circumstances. Consent may be withdrawn if the officer has received counseling or a performance evaluation in the past year that reveals a lack of acceptable judgment, an uncontrolled temper, or the need for close supervision in an area that reflects the officer's ability to carry a weapon safely. In addition, even if an officer has completed the qualification process and been authorized by the Regional Director, he or she shall not carry a firearm if:
1. The officer is taking medication that affects motor skills, reflexes, or judgment; or
 2. The officer is under disciplinary probation for a Level One, Two, or Three Violation or for the Level Four violations of horseplay (6a), misconduct (37), or conviction for a misdemeanor offense (39).
- B. If an officer is ordered not to carry a firearm on a temporary basis, he or she may reapply to the Regional Director for authorization to carry. If authorization to carry is granted within 12 months from the date of the discontinue order, the officer will be allowed to carry and to resume his or her prior recertification schedule. If the authorization to carry is granted after 12 months from the date of the discontinue order, the officer will need to repeat the procedures outlined in Section II.

IV. Requalification

- A. Range requalification shall be made annually through an authorized local enforcement agency, with a copy of certification forwarded to the officer's Regional Director. The cost of requalification shall be at the expense of the parole officer.
- B. The officer shall complete Staff Development specialized training every other year. Topics of these classes shall include but not be limited to gun retention, gun maintenance, situational scenarios, verbal de-escalation of hostile situations, street survival, and legal liabilities and moral issues. The officer shall complete Staff Development Defensive Tactics training in alternating years.
- C. The TCLEOSE firearms training authority will notify the Regional Director in writing of the parole officers who attempt to requalify but fail. In the event of a failure to requalify, the authorization to carry a weapon on duty will be suspended, and the employee will not be reauthorized to carry a weapon until he or she requalifies.

V. Weapon and Ammunition Standards

- A. While on duty, an officer may only carry a weapon that meets the following standards, as established by the Parole Division:

- 1. Type

- a. Double-action revolver with a 2" - 5" barrel or
- b. Semi-automatic pistol with a 2" - 5" barrel

- 2. Manufacturers

- | | |
|-------------|-----------------------|
| a. AMT | g. Para Ordnance |
| b. Beretta | h. Ruger |
| c. Browning | i. SIG-Sauer |
| d. Colt | j. Smith & Wesson |
| e. Glock | k. Springfield Armory |
| f. H&K | l. Taurus |

- 3. Caliber

- | | |
|------------------|----------------|
| a. 9 millimeter | d. .45 caliber |
| b. 10 millimeter | e. .357 Magnum |
| c. .40 caliber | f. .38 Special |

- B. Approval

- 1. The certified TCLEOSE instructor shall verify that the weapon is mechanically sound and in good repair and approve it for use.

2. The officer shall qualify with the same weapon(s) he/she intends to carry while on duty, which shall be verified by serial number. If the officer desires to carry a different weapon, requalification with that weapon is required.

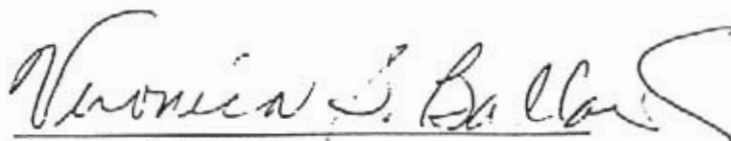
C. Ammunition standards are as follows:

1. All ammunition carried shall be factory-original loads with bullet weight between 115 and 250 grains with a controlled expansion-type bullet, per Sporting Arms Ammunition Manufacturers Institute (SAAMI) guidelines.
2. Reloaded ammunition may be used for practice only.

VI. General Guidelines

- A. The firearm shall be carried in a concealed manner. Suitable clothing options are allowed for concealment purposes, such as pullover outer garments (shirts, blouses, etc.), as long as professional casual appearance can be maintained.
- B. A Parole Division-issued badge designed for armed officers shall be worn on, in front of, or beside the firearm holster so that the badge is clearly visible whenever the firearm is visible. In addition, the officer shall carry his/her Parole Division badge and identification any time the firearm is carried while on duty.
- C. An authorized officer may carry a firearm any time the officer is on duty, whether in the office or conducting field work. However, in no circumstances may the officer carry more than one weapon at a time, even if he/she has demonstrated proficiency with more than one weapon.
- D. Armed officers should be aware of those situations where they may be required to relinquish control of their firearm (such as when traveling by air, visiting correctional institutions, or testifying in court) and must comply with all appropriate regulations.
- E. The officer has a duty at all times, whether on duty or not, to exercise reasonable care for the physical safety and care of others, and a negligent or intentional failure to exercise reasonable care will result in personal liability for the officer.
- F. When not carried, the firearm shall be stored in a secure manner in its holster. A firearm shall not be unholstered in the office or in the field except for lawful self defense or at designated range training sites.
- G. The officer shall notify the Regional Director in writing of any stolen, lost, or sold firearms the next business day following the occurrence.
- H. The officer is responsible for maintenance and regular inspections of his or her weapon to ensure that it is in serviceable condition at all times.

- I. The officer shall not "dry-fire," clean, repair, or exhibit the firearm where accidental discharge could cause injury, i.e., in the parole office or vehicle.
- J. If a firearm is either (a) drawn but not used or (b) discharged, either accidentally or intentionally, while the officer is on duty, the officer shall notify his/her immediate supervisor, who shall inform the Internal Affairs Division. Within twenty-four (24) hours following the occurrence, the officer shall submit a Firearm Incident Report (PSV-56).
- K. In the event that a parole officer discharges a firearm and causes bodily injury or death, the officer shall immediately contact emergency medical services, local law enforcement, and then his/her immediate supervisor, who shall notify the appropriate director and Internal Affairs. In addition:
1. The officer shall be placed on three (3) days administrative leave.
 2. The parole officer's authority to carry a weapon shall be suspended while on administrative leave and pending the outcome of the Internal Affairs investigation, a psychological review of the officer, and the subsequent and final decision of the appropriate director.
 3. The Post-Trauma Staff Support Team and the team psychologist shall contact the officer to provide immediate and ongoing support and, if deemed necessary, to make a referral to a licensed counselor or psychologist.
 4. The Regional Director may require a clearance or recommendation from a Post-Trauma Staff Support Team psychologist or from another licensed counselor or psychologist before permitting the parole officer to return to active duty from administrative leave.
- L. Any media inquiries regarding the discharge of a weapon shall be referred to the Director of Information Services. Release of information in violation of this provision may result in disciplinary action.
- M. The improper use of a firearm in violation of departmental policy or applicable federal or state law may result in disciplinary action by the department and in additional civil and criminal sanctions.



Veronica S. Ballard
Director, Parole Division

Appendix B: Focus Group Responses

FOCUS GROUP RESPONSES

Amarillo	Midland-1	Midland-2	Bryan	Houston	Dallas	Waxahachie
What do you think are the important aspects of supervision? What characteristics should a parole officer have to effectively do this job?						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Monitor ® because of violent/young offenders ◆ More time and attention to ® ◆ Protect public ◆ Strong work ethic ◆ Time management skills ◆ Maturity because of the responsibility of the job ◆ Open-minded 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Supervise ® ◆ Make sure they're following conditions and doing what they should ◆ Referrals ◆ Protect society ◆ Honesty ◆ Objectivity ◆ Have to be able to manage pressure and change well ◆ Time management skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Good communication ◆ Time with ® ◆ Referrals ◆ Identify problem areas ◆ Follow-up ◆ Patient ◆ Non-judgmental ◆ Level-headed ◆ Team-player 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Protect society ◆ Time with ® ◆ Monitor ◆ Referrals to help ® ◆ Supervise and enforce special conditions ◆ Communication ◆ self-discipline ◆ Flexibility ◆ Honesty with ® and others ◆ Patience ◆ Organizational skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Supervise ® ◆ Follow-up ◆ Protect society ◆ De-escalation techniques ◆ Communication ◆ Prioritization skills ◆ Detail-oriented ◆ Ability to remain calm ◆ Professional ◆ People-skills ◆ Tolerance ◆ Refined judgment ◆ Composure ◆ Ability to handle stressful situations ◆ Calm ◆ Rational 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Fair but firm ◆ Protect public ◆ Reintegrate ® ◆ Referrals ◆ Enforce special conditions ◆ Can't think job is to send the ® back (to prison), but to succeed and discharge parole ◆ Client-oriented ◆ Communication ◆ Work with people ◆ Enjoy work to be effective ◆ Versatile and flexible ◆ Like change ◆ Unbiased ◆ Capable of working independently ◆ Willing to learn 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Protect society ◆ Enforce special conditions ◆ Referrals ◆ Follow-up ◆ Must deal with each ® on an individual basis, not a TDCJ # ◆ Common-sense ◆ Patience ◆ Objectivity ◆ Open-minded ◆ Independent ◆ Must be able to read a map ◆ 100% professional ◆ Can't take the job personally ◆ People person

FOCUS GROUP RESPONSES

Amarillo	Midland-1	Midland-2	Bryan	Houston	Dallas	Waxahachie
Do you think there will be any changes because of weapons in the workplace? With releaseses (offenders)? With officers?						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ @ will know we have weapons and will assume everyone carries ◆ possibly more defensive ◆ not much change here because of 1-to-1 relationships, probably different in larger towns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ No change with @, or more cooperative ◆ Supervision styles should not change, if they're a stable-minded person ◆ @ are more worried about other people than they are about guns ◆ Clerical may be more apprehensive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Definitely ◆ A lot of attitudes ◆ Some already have attitudes, may get worse ◆ More control issues ◆ POs more demanding ◆ @ will think all POs carry ◆ More people at risk/danger because of guns in the workplace ◆ May be a shift from social work to law enforcement, but it won't be seen in the paperwork; ◆ POs who carry may not know they're changing or won't say it 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ @ will see POs as more law enforcement ◆ @ will not be as open, more skeptical to open-up to POs ◆ @ may be more resistant ◆ Supervision ideals won't change, but false sense of security may ◆ Some POs will think they have more authority ◆ POs may be cocky or have an attitude change ◆ Less patience for officers ◆ POs change, but not be aware of it 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Depends on the individual, there should be trust and respect on each side, whether PO carries a gun or not ◆ Some POs may go on a power-trip and become more authoritarian ◆ POs who carry will increase the number of unscheduled and unannounced visits; they'll think because they're packing they can go on unannounced visits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ @ may carry more guns since POs are now carrying ◆ Now POs are more social work than law enforcement, but their attitudes will change; some have changed because they have a badge, but now they'll be carrying a gun as well ◆ May change as younger, fresher people are hired ◆ Carrying POs may increase the # of visits conducted and change their supervisory styles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Without the right kind of training, there's the possibility of changes in the work place ◆ Guns up the threat to @, more of a perceived threat ◆ Now, perceived threat is low, but with guns, @ may carry more ◆ Perceived POs carry all of the time ◆ Guns change police officers and they will change POs ◆ May be more altercations with POs who carry guns

FOCUS GROUP RESPONSES

Amarillo	Midland-1	Midland-2	Bryan	Houston	Dallas	Waxahachie
Why do you want to carry guns? (asked as appropriate) Why do you think officers should be allowed to carry guns?						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Safety ◆ More scared of "Joe-Redneck than anyone else" ◆ Worried about the family, strangers, neighborhood kids and gangs ◆ Everyone should have the responsibility to carry or they shouldn't be here in the first place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Safety reasons ◆ Out in the field more and more ◆ POs know what triggers the @, not worried about @, but the surrounding communities and ◆ Not necessary to carry all the time, but POs need to be given a choice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ They're not necessary to do the job, but that probably depends on the location—needed more in rural areas ◆ Not opposed to guns, but "I don't want one" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Safety issue ◆ Not worried about the @, but the people around him ◆ Should have the option to carry guns ◆ Clear need to carry in the rural areas; no one can hear you if you scream; no service for cell phones in some areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Protection ◆ Personal choice ◆ POs want to carry for security of self ◆ Not scared of @, but of neighbors and collaterals ◆ More worried about co-workers carrying guns than about the @ ◆ Some officers have ulterior motives for wanting to carry a gun 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Concerned more about the people around the @, not the @ himself ◆ SISF officers need guns because they have to go out at late hours and on weekends ◆ Security because some elements are beyond your control ◆ Environment ◆ Defensive purposes only 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Safety reasons ◆ Not afraid of @, more afraid of neighbors ◆ Nothing stopping POs from carrying a gun now; anyone could have a gun at any time ◆ More people will start carrying over time

FOCUS GROUP RESPONSES

Amarillo	Midland-1	Midland-2	Bryan	Houston	Dallas	Waxahachie
What do you think will be the overall impact of weapons in the workplace? Do you have any concerns about guns in the workplace?						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> False sense of security Average person is intimidated by guns, but it's because they haven't had much involvement with them Overall hiring guidelines for POs should be more strict to get more professional officers "Barney-Fife Syndrome"—people with borderline maturity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bring credibility back to parole No problems, morale is good, good cohesion in the office Mentality here—raised around guns, so people are more likely to carry out here 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First 6 months, we will be more fearful until we see what happens—grace period—it will take much time to be comfortable Real fear is to be shot through a wall because some PO is playing with a gun in his office Support staff may be uncomfortable and concerned about safety Concerned about officers psychologically When POs agree, no problem; mixed views in the office are a problem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carry/don't carry groups clash More co-worker conflict With a weapon, POs may be quick to jump to an attitude ® will assume that all officers carry guns, even those who don't choose to carry—they'll be in more danger False sense of security in POs who carry ® may carry because POs are carrying POs may change work hours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some POs may have a false sense of security Concerned about co-workers; giving guns is a big responsibility See what happens—won't be comfortable until POs have carried for a while and then nothing has happened Concerned about POs carrying guns in their purses or even to the bathroom POs displace anger and vent on the clerical staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With a gun, POs are more likely to find a situation to use it Worried about security in the office, such as people carrying in purses A lot of POs won't follow policy and will take the guns out and clean them in the offices—what if they snap and then use it? Clerical staff is not concerned about POs carrying 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need to think about safety differently Diminish ability to supervise ® because of perceived threat from the PO Eventually may be a whole new group of POs because of carrying guns Clerical are opposed to guns in the workplace Need to change hiring practices and watch who you bring in Took job weren't carrying, now are, so could be big problem

FOCUS GROUP RESPONSES

Amarillo	Midland-1	Midland-2	Bryan	Houston	Dallas	Waxahachie
What do you think about the policy? Do you have any apprehensions about the policy or this change in policy?						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Concealment is good: out of sight, out of mind ◆ Yearly evaluations because the job is so stressful ◆ The way the policy's written, the liability goes back on the parole officer ◆ Not that much Unit Supv input ◆ May be used as a leverage or retaliation tool 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Fine ◆ Policy should not supercede law 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Hiring practices ◆ Psychological should be the same for everyone, so a PO can't go through three or four tests before they pass—how would you know they did that? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Extra policies for who should or should not carry guns ◆ Guns should be in the open so you know who's carrying ◆ Safety issue to know who's able to carry; don't know with concealment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Psychological tests are not able to thoroughly weed out people who should not carry—it's just a tool ◆ There needs to be consistency in testing; agency needs to do its own psychologicals ◆ More direct supervisory input into the process ◆ Sanctions for people who violate policy ◆ Anonymous reporting of POs who violate policy ◆ Hiring procedures need to change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ If PO gets shot, there needs to be a provision for her family; State of Texas should look out for people and provide some type of compensation ◆ Agency should pay expenses ◆ Be sure up-front that POs can carry before going through the process—NCIC check 1st ◆ Unit and parole supervisors give input since the regional director doesn't know the POs ◆ Security in offices ◆ State-issued shirt or jacket to wear 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Stress legal responsibility ◆ Psychological is important before people are able to carry ◆ POs should carry the entire time on duty ◆ Need to have lock boxes at work so POs can leave guns at work and not take home ◆ More training, so people will feel more safe and comfortable around guns — never lax up on training ◆ Concerned about concealment requirement

Appendix C: Firearms Survey

October 4, 1998

Texas Department of Criminal Justice
Parole Division Staff

Dear *Select* Parole Division Personnel:

You have been selected to participate in a study being conducted by the Southwest Texas State University. This study is designed to explore the perceptions and changes that may have occurred within your workplace since the implementation of the firearms policy earlier this year. *Your assistance is needed to complete this important study.*

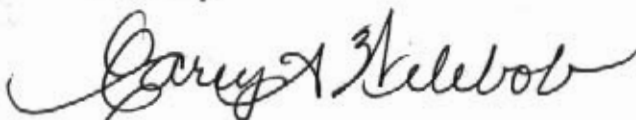
Included with this letter you will find a 34-item survey for which we would like you to respond. We respect your time and have made this questionnaire SHORT. A simple check-the-box questionnaire, this instrument should take you no longer than 10 minutes to complete.

It should be noted that this survey is not designed to be an internal tool for organizational decision-making. Rather, this questionnaire serves as a scholastic inquiry designed to advance our understanding of the dynamics surrounding implementation of the firearms policy.

With the support and cooperation of Director Veronica Ballard, I am asking you to please be a part of this study by taking the next several minutes to fill out this questionnaire. Please review the instructions and complete the items thoroughly. Once you've completed the survey, simply place it in the provided envelope and drop it in the mailbox. Your anonymity is respected so please do not place your name on the questionnaire or the return envelope.

I would like to thank each of you for taking the time to be a part of this academic study. A summary of the results of this investigation will be made available once it has been completed.

Sincerely,



Carey A. Welebob
Program Administrator, Staff Development Section
MPA Student, Southwest Texas State University

Parole Division Staff Firearms Survey

This survey is being conducted to obtain information regarding Parole Division staff perceptions regarding firearms in the workplace and use while on duty. Within TDCJ-PD, the first officers were authorized to carry firearms at the end of July, 1998.

Please answer the following questions based on your perception of changes since officers were authorized to carry firearms in your office.

INSTRUCTIONS: Beside each of the statements presented below, please complete the statement by checking the appropriate box to the right.

1. While I'm working in the office, I feel that my safety level has _____ since officers have been allowed to carry firearms.

If you are currently employed in a support staff position, please proceed to Question #9.

2. When I'm conducting home visits, I feel that my safety level has _____ since officers have been allowed to carry firearms.
3. When I'm conducting field visits, I feel that my safety level has _____ since officers have been allowed to carry firearms.

Significantly Increased	Increased	Not Changed	Decreased	Significantly Decreased
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

INSTRUCTIONS: Beside each of the statements presented below, please complete the statement by checking the appropriate box to the right. Remember to base your answer on any changes you've experienced or observed since officers have been carrying firearms on duty.

4. I am more concerned about my safety during field visits when I've encountered an offender's neighbors than when I have direct contact with the offender.
5. I am more concerned about my safety during field visits when I've encountered an offender's family/friends than when I have direct contact with the offender.
6. I am more concerned about my safety during home visits when I've encountered an offender's family/friends than when I have direct contact with the offender.
7. I am concerned about my safety during field visits when I'm in contact with the offender.
8. I am concerned about my safety during home visits when I'm in contact with the offender.
9. I am more concerned about my safety during office visits when I've encountered an offender's family/friends than when I have direct contact with the offender.
10. I am concerned about my safety in the office when I'm in contact with the offender.
11. I feel concerned about my safety because parole officers are carrying firearms in my office.

Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you are currently employed in a support staff position, please proceed to Question #23.

Since implementation of the firearms policy, ...

12. I have _____ the number of scheduled home visits for my offenders.
13. I have _____ the number of unscheduled home visits for my offenders.
14. I have _____ the number of home visits that I conduct after 6:00 PM.
15. I have _____ the number of scheduled field visits I normally conduct for my offenders.
16. I have _____ the number of unscheduled field visits I normally conduct for my offenders.
17. I have _____ the number of field visits that I conduct after 6:00 PM.
18. I have _____ the number of referrals to EM/SISP caseloads.
19. I have _____ the number of referrals to DRC caseloads.
20. I have _____ the number of UAs that I conduct on the offenders on my caseload.
21. I write a(n) _____ number of reports of violations regarding technical violations.

Significantly Increased	Increased	Not Changed	Decreased	Significantly Decreased
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

22. I feel that because officers are now carrying firearms the offenders on my caseload have overall been:
☐ more resistant ☐ the same ☐ more cooperative

My observation of other officers carrying firearms is that...

23. They have _____ the number of scheduled home visits for their offenders.
24. They have _____ the number of unscheduled home visits for their offenders.
25. They have _____ the number of home visits that they conduct after 6:00 PM.

Significantly Increased	Increased	Not Changed	Decreased	Significantly Decreased
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

My observation of other officers carrying firearms is that...

26. They have _____ the number of scheduled field visits for their offenders.
27. They have _____ the number of unscheduled field visits for their offenders.
28. They have _____ the number of field visits that they conduct after 6:00 PM.
29. They have _____ the number of referrals to EM/SISP caseloads.
30. They have _____ the number of referrals to DRC caseloads.
31. They have _____ the number of UAs that they conduct on their offenders.
32. They write a(n) _____ number of reports of violations regarding technical violations.
33. The firearms policy has not changed my relationship with offenders.
34. The firearms policy has not changed my relationship with my co-workers.

Significantly Increased	Increased	Not Changed	Decreased	Significantly Decreased
[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
[]	[]	[]	[]	[]

If you answered disagree or strongly disagree to items # 33 and/or 34, please indicate how the relationship or your interaction has changed with offenders and your co-workers:

Comments regarding any survey items:

PLEASE BE SURE TO COMPLETE THE LAST PAGE OF THIS SURVEY

Demographic Information:

The following information will be used for statistical purposes only and will be kept strictly confidential.

[illegible]

Caseload:	<input type="checkbox"/> Regular	Age:	<input type="checkbox"/> Under 25	Ethnicity:	<input type="checkbox"/> African American
	<input type="checkbox"/> EM		<input type="checkbox"/> 25-30		<input type="checkbox"/> Asian
	<input type="checkbox"/> SISP		<input type="checkbox"/> 31-40		<input type="checkbox"/> Caucasian
	<input type="checkbox"/> MR/MI		<input type="checkbox"/> 41-50		<input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic
	<input type="checkbox"/> DRC		<input type="checkbox"/> Over 50		<input type="checkbox"/> Middle Eastern
	<input type="checkbox"/> Sex Offenders				<input type="checkbox"/> Native American
	<input type="checkbox"/> Other				<input type="checkbox"/> Pacific Islander
	<input type="checkbox"/> No caseload				<input type="checkbox"/> Other

Sex:	<input type="checkbox"/> Male	Are you?...	<input type="checkbox"/> Currently carrying a firearm on duty.
	<input type="checkbox"/> Female		<input type="checkbox"/> Currently in the process of obtaining your psychological evaluation or TCLEOSE training.
Title:	<input type="checkbox"/> PCW II		<input type="checkbox"/> Planning to carry a firearm once you complete Staff Development's training and other requirements.
	<input type="checkbox"/> DPO I		<input type="checkbox"/> Planning to not carry on duty.
	<input type="checkbox"/> DPO II		<input type="checkbox"/> Not eligible to carry a firearm on duty.
	<input type="checkbox"/> US/PS		
	<input type="checkbox"/> ARD/RD		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Casemanager		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Support Staff		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Other		

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. Your comments and input are valuable to this project and your effort is greatly appreciated.

Please return your survey by October 21, 1998 within the self-addressed, stamped envelope. Since this is an anonymous instrument, your name and return address are not necessary.

If you would like a copy of the final results of this project, please write to the address printed on the return envelope.