

**FINAL REPORT OF THE  
DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINAL  
JUSTICE SERVICES ON**

**EVALUATION OF THE  
RICHMOND DAY REPORTING  
CENTER (RDRC)**

**TO THE GOVERNOR AND  
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF VIRGINIA**



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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>I.</b>	<b>AUTHORITY FOR STUDY .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>II.</b>	<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>III.</b>	<b>PROGRAM DESCRIPTION .....</b>	<b>2</b>
	<b>Mission .....</b>	<b>2</b>
	<b>Administration and Program Structure.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>IV.</b>	<b>EVALUATION GOALS AND METHODOLOGY .....</b>	<b>4</b>
	<b>Offender Profiles.....</b>	<b>4</b>
	<b>Follow-Up Study.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>V.</b>	<b>EVALUATION RESULTS .....</b>	<b>6</b>
	<b>Program Success Rates.....</b>	<b>6</b>
	<b>Offender Characteristics.....</b>	<b>7</b>
	<b>Offender Service Needs .....</b>	<b>10</b>
	<b>Supervision.....</b>	<b>12</b>
	<b>Sanctioning .....</b>	<b>14</b>
	<b>Treatment Services.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>VI.</b>	<b>OFFENDER OUTCOMES .....</b>	<b>20</b>
	<b>Follow-Up Information.....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>VII.</b>	<b>PROGRAM IMPACT .....</b>	<b>22</b>
	<b>Recidivism.....</b>	<b>22</b>
	<b>Diversion and Net-Widening.....</b>	<b>23</b>

<b>VIII. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Program Completion Success Rate .....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Sanctioning of Offenders.....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Substance Abuse Needs of the RDRC Population .....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Treatment Services and Resources.....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Costs and Saving .....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Ensuring Public Safety .....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>IX. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....</b>	<b>29</b>

***APPENDIX A: ITEM 565 OF 1994 BUDGET BILL***

## **I. AUTHORITY FOR STUDY**

Item 565 of the 1994 General Assembly Budget Bill directed the Department of Corrections to "establish a day reporting center in the City of Richmond and the City of Norfolk for probation and parole technical violators who are under the supervision of the Richmond and Norfolk Probation and Parole Offices." Item 565 also directed the Department of Criminal Justice Services to evaluate these programs.

## **II. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

In 1994, the General Assembly authorized funding for the development of a day reporting center in the City of Richmond for probation and parole technical violators. The purpose of this program was to provide non-residential punishment which assured high standards of public safety. Ideally, a day reporting center program would reserve costly correctional bed space for more serious violent offenders. It would also provide the drug services, education, and other assistance necessary to prevent recidivism in offenders.

The Richmond Day Reporting Center (RDRC) began accepting offenders on October 1, 1994. The RDRC program was originally conceptualized to target the population of probationers and parolees in the City of Richmond who technically violate the conditions of community supervision. The scope of the program was ultimately expanded to include offenders directly sentenced to the program by City of Richmond Circuit Court judges and inmates released directly to the program by the Virginia Parole Board. The geographic scope of the program was also expanded to include offenders under the jurisdiction of Hanover, Henrico, and Chesterfield counties.

The RDRC is operated by six Department of Corrections (DOC) staff, who supervise and monitor offenders, and three services personnel, who provide drug treatment, educational assistance, and life skills assistance. The program incorporates three levels of treatment and supervision, with each level providing less stringent supervision requirements than the preceding one. In addition, offenders are sanctioned to discourage negative behaviors.

The evaluation was designed to provide information on the offenders participating in the RDRC program, the types of services received by offenders, and the degree of participant success with program requirements. A follow-up study was conducted to examine the outcomes for RDRC participants after they exited the program.

The evaluation results suggest that the RDRC program is achieving its goals of providing individualized treatment/rehabilitative services to many of its clients and ensuring public safety. However, the evaluators have developed several recommendations that may be useful in improving program effectiveness:

- Attempt to improve the program success rate by: (1) improving client selection, and (2) continuing individualized treatment, yet improving these efforts when possible.
- Impose sanctions as quickly as possible for negative behaviors.
- Continue to expand the drug treatment services available at the RDRC. If additional funds are not available for expanding the drug treatment program, the RDRC should allocate its treatment resources in the following order of priority: drug treatment; employment services; educational services.
- As reduction of prison costs is a primary goal of the RDRC, the RDRC should attempt to: (1) accept only clients who are prison bed diversions, and (2) reduce the number of days offenders are supervised by the RDRC while maintaining current treatment/program requirements.
- Review programming for offenders at-risk of violent behavior.
- Attempt to qualitatively determine predictors of absconding.

### III. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

#### Mission

The Richmond Day Reporting Center (RDRC) is a non-residential punishment for probationers and parolees. The RDRC was originally intended to serve as an alternative to revocation and incarceration among technical violators of probation and parole, that is, offenders who are probationers or parolees who have violated the conditions of that probation or parole. However, during the first year of operation, the population which the RDRC served was expanded to include non-technical violators who required additional supervision. A non-technical violator is an offender who is sentenced to the RDRC for a new offense or is paroled directly to the RDRC.

The RDRC seeks to: (1) function as the last step on a continuum of intermediate punishments prior to probation/parole revocation or incarceration, (2) provide enhanced maximum community supervision, and (3) offer increased treatment, rehabilitative services, and support in an effort to reduce the likelihood of recidivism. The RDRC program officially opened its facilities on October 1, 1994, with the capacity to manage up to 75 offenders. The program has operated above capacity since August 1995.

#### Administration and Program Structure

A detailed description of the RDRC program was provided in DCJS' interim report to the 1996 General Assembly (*Evaluation of the Richmond Day Reporting Center, 1996*). In brief, funding for the RDRC was provided by the 1994 Virginia Acts of the Assembly. Chapter 996 (Item 565) of the Acts authorized \$200,000 for FY1995 and \$375,000 for FY1996 to be apportioned from the Commonwealth's general funds. During the



evaluation period, the RDRC was operated under the auspices of the District #1 Probation and Parole Office of the Department of Corrections; however, the RDRC has operated as an independent unit with oversight provided by DOC's Central Regional Office since July 1, 1996. As of June 1996, the RDRC was open 5 days a week (65 hours a week).

### ***Staff***

The District #1 Chief Probation and Parole Officer is responsible for the oversight of the RDRC program. The RDRC is staffed by six Department of Corrections personnel: the Program Director, two Probation/Parole officers (PPOs), two Probation/Parole Technicians (surveillance officers), and one clerical support staff. The Program Director is responsible for the operation of the RDRC and supervision of its personnel. The Probation/Parole officers develop and implement the offender supervision and treatment plans, coordinate services provided by contractual staff, and supervise the surveillance officers. The primary duties of the surveillance officers include monitoring the daily activities of the RDRC offenders, completing appropriate personal and community contacts, ensuring offender compliance with his/her daily itinerary, monitoring attendance at treatment and educational services, and conducting on-site alcohol and drug screens.

In addition to these staff members, the RDRC program employs three contracted service providers: a Department of Correctional Education (DCE) teacher, an Offender Aid and Restoration (OAR) staff person, and an Alcohol and Drug Services (ADS) counselor. The DCE teacher is responsible for evaluating and coordinating the educational training needs of the RDRC offenders. The OAR staff person organizes the development of community service activities, assists offenders with employment and life skills, and provides emergency assistance and/or referrals when needed. The ADS counselor evaluates the substance abuse treatment needs and, when possible, provides treatment services for the offender at the RDRC facility. On-site services include group therapy, individual therapy, and monitoring of substance use through regular alcohol and drug screenings. When needed, the ADS counselor will refer program participants to treatment resources in the community.

### ***Program Operations***

The intended length of the RDRC program is approximately 120 days. The program is structured to provide three levels of supervision and treatment, with each level providing less stringent supervision requirements than the preceding one. Offenders are initially placed in Phase One, moving to Phase Two and Phase Three as they progress through the program. Phases are defined in terms of the number and types of supervision contacts required, and treatment and services received. In general, assessment occurs in Phase One, the bulk of offender treatment occurs in Phase Two, and transition back to regular supervision (or, in some cases, preparation for release from supervision) occurs in Phase Three. Offenders graduate to the next level of the program based on the assessments of the RDRC supervision and treatment staffs. Offenders who do not satisfactorily complete the reporting and treatment requirements of the program can be terminated at any point during the program.

The RDRC staff impose sanctions when participants violate program rules or requirements. Sanctions imposed range from performance of community service to Home Electronic Monitoring (HEM). An offender who consistently violates program rules and requirements can be terminated at any point after admission into the program. Offenders who are terminated from the program are returned to the Court for sentencing or to the Parole Board for revocation.

### ***Program Referral***

The 1996 interim report provides a comprehensive description of the referral process. Briefly, technical violators are referred by their home district Probation/Parole officer instead of beginning revocation proceedings, by a Circuit Court judge at the Violation Hearing in lieu of incarceration, or by a Parole Hearing Officer or Examiner during the parole revocation process. For non-technical violators, the Parole Board can require participation in the RDRC as a condition of release from incarceration, or a judge can sentence a new probationer to the program as a condition of probation.

Once a case is referred to the RDRC, the case is reviewed to determine if the placement is appropriate. If the case is accepted, the offender is then evaluated by the RDRC supervision and treatment staff. The staff then develop a viable plan for the offender which incorporates the RDRC rules, the supervision and reporting requirements developed for the offender, and the elements of the offender's treatment plan. Cases accepted by the RDRC do not remain part of the referring district's caseload, but are transferred to the RDRC Probation/Parole Officers while the offenders participate in the program.

## **IV. EVALUATION GOALS AND METHODOLOGY**

The evaluation was designed to provide information on the offenders participating in the RDRC programs, the types of services received by offenders, and the degree of participant success with the program requirements. A follow-up study was conducted to examine outcomes for RDRC participants after they exited the program.

### **Offender Profiles**

Data collection forms were designed by evaluation staff to collect offender profile information. RDRC staff conducted the on-site data collection by compiling information for each offender in four areas of program functioning: supervision, substance abuse treatment, vocational assistance (OAR) and educational assistance (DCE). The following factors were examined:

- Number of offenders participating in the RDRC program, and characteristics of these offenders;

- Number of offenders successfully completing the program and unsuccessfully terminated from the program, including reasons for termination;
- Number and types of supervision contacts made;
- Number and types of sanctions imposed for violating program rules, and types of violations; and
- Types of services provided to offenders in the RDRC program.

These data were collected on 149 offenders who exited the RDRC, either successfully or unsuccessfully, between October 1, 1994 and June 30, 1996.

### **Follow-Up Study**

The purpose of the follow-up study was to determine, to the degree possible, the outcomes of offenders who had left the RDRC program. Data for this portion of the evaluation was collected for two different samples of offenders from two different data sources. First, current status upon termination information was retrieved from client exit forms. For this group of offenders, the available information only reported the client's status at the time of departure from the RDRC, and each of these offenders had terminated unsuccessfully. Second, subsequent activity information was collected for a sample of clients who had previously exited the RDRC, either successfully or unsuccessfully. This information included client outcomes since leaving the RDRC. In total, some type of follow-up information was collected for 116 RDRC clients.

#### ***Current Status Upon Termination***

Status upon termination was collected for 21 offenders in the RDRC sample. This information was collected via the client exit form, a data collection form constructed by the evaluators which documented each offender's status at the time of termination. For each of these offenders, probation/parole had been revoked at the time the exit form was completed, that is, upon each offender's departure from the RDRC. Because this follow-up information was already available and reduction of data collection tasks for RDRC staff/PPOs was important, subsequent activity data (see below) were not requested for these offenders.

#### ***Subsequent Activity Information***

In Summer 1996, follow-up data were requested for a sample of the offenders who had previously terminated from the RDRC program. These data provided information on client outcomes since leaving the RDRC program. Several factors were considered in selecting the follow-up sample. First, if the offender left the RDRC program during June 1996, then the time between exiting the program and completion of the follow-up survey was deemed too short to provide useful information. Therefore, only offenders who exited prior to June 1, 1996 were included. Second, if the offender terminated unsuccessfully prior to entering the second phase of the RDRC program, follow-up data were not requested. Because unsuccessful completions during the first phase are frequently due to failure to report to the RDRC, it would be inappropriate to evaluate the

RDRC based upon the actions of these offenders. In addition, follow-up information was not requested for offenders who had been revoked at program termination (see above). Finally, offenders who left the RDRC program in some way other than a successful or unsuccessful discharge were not considered appropriate for follow-up. These cases included offenders who were deceased or were seriously ill and unable to participate in the program. After accounting for these factors, subsequent activity data were requested for 95 offenders. The average length of time since leaving the RDRC when follow-up information was obtained was 217 days (the range was between 37 and 565 days).

Follow-up forms for each offender in the sample were sent to the Probation/Parole Officers who were currently supervising the offenders. The offender's Probation/Parole Officer provided the data for the follow-up study by completing the forms and/or examining arrest records. In the case of offenders who were no longer under supervision or offenders who had warrants out for their arrests, the RDRC director conducted the criminal records checks necessary to complete the forms. Data collected for this portion of the follow-up study included subsequent arrests, probation or parole violations, employment, further treatment services and a rating of overall adjustment since leaving the RDRC. All offender profiles and follow-up forms were mailed to DCJS, where the data were coded, tabulated, and interpreted by the evaluation staff.

## V. EVALUATION RESULTS

The data provided by the RDRC for this study indicate two areas where the RDRC has deviated from its designed operations. First, the RDRC has been operating above its planned 75 offender capacity since August 1995. As of June 1996, the RDRC was supervising more than 100 offenders. Secondly, the expected duration of the RDRC program is 120 days; however, the data indicate that successful offenders spent an average of 192 days under supervision of the RDRC.

### Program Success Rates

Of the 149 offenders who exited the RDRC program between October 1994 and June 1996, 79 (53%) were terminated unsuccessfully from the program, while 68 (46%) exited successfully. The remaining two offenders (1%) left the program as "other exits" for reasons such as death and hospitalization due to injury. Four (3%) of the above successful offenders left the program under non-typical circumstances (e.g., transfer to another locality, or direct discharge upon expiration of the offender's supervision term). These four offenders and the two offenders classified as "other exits" were not included in subsequent analyses that compared findings for successful and unsuccessful offenders.

Nearly two-thirds (65%) of the unsuccessful offenders were terminated during the second phase. In all but two of the remaining unsuccessful cases, the offender was terminated in

Phase One. While successful offenders spent approximately six months (192 days) in the program, the average length of time spent in the program by unsuccessful offenders was about three months (97 days). The RDRC staff were asked their opinions on the primary reasons unsuccessful offenders were unable to complete the RDRC program. The most commonly offered reason, continued drug or alcohol use, was offered for 67% of the offenders who failed to complete the program. Other reasons included non-compliant attitude (39%), absconding (21%), and reporting violations (11%).

## **Offender Characteristics**

### ***Demographics***

As shown in Table 1, the vast majority of the 149 offenders in this study were African-American males. The average age of the participants in this sample was 30 years. The majority of the offenders were single, and 30% were childless.

<b>Table 1: Characteristics of RDRC Offenders</b>		
<b>Characteristic</b>		<b>% of Offenders</b>
<b>Gender:</b>	Male	86%
	Female	14%
<b>Race*:</b>	African-American	94%
	White	6%
<b>Age:</b>	Average	30 years
	Range	18 to 52 years
<b>Marital Status:</b>	Single	84%
	Married	9%
	Divorced	6%
	Widowed	1%
<b>Number of children:</b>	0	30%
	1 to 2	52%
	3 or more	18%

\*Race figures for the RDRC program are consistent with the racial breakdown in District #1 Probation/Parole District. As of 11/1/96, 87% of District #1 offenders were African-American.

Although not shown in the table, less than 15% of offenders received public assistance. At least 11% of the offenders served by the RDRC were from other localities (10 offenders from Henrico County and 5 offenders from Chesterfield County).

### ***SAQ profiles***

The RDRC offenders can also be described by examining scores on the SAQ-Adult Probation II instrument (SAQ). The SAQ was developed by Behavior Data Systems to assess offender risks and needs. This instrument is a computerized, self-administered survey comprised of the eight scales (see Table 2).

**Table 2. Description of SAQ Scales**

Scale Title	Types of Behaviors Measured
<b>Validity</b>	Lying, self-protective, recalcitrant and guarded behaviors
<b>Alcohol</b>	Alcohol use, susceptibility to use and alcohol-related problems
<b>Drug</b>	Drug abuse and drug-related problems
<b>Resistance</b>	Defensiveness and cooperativeness
<b>Aggressivity</b>	Dominating, argumentative, pushy and controlling behaviors
<b>Antisocial</b>	Antisocial behavior (lying, failure to pay debts, guilt, irresponsibility)
<b>Violence</b>	Use of physical force to injure, damage or destroy; identifies danger to self or others
<b>Stress Coping</b>	Ability to cope effectively with stress, tension, and pressure; reflects client's mental health

SAQ scores were available for 141 of the 149 offenders in our sample. The scores for each scale are reported in a percentile format. For each scale, scores between 0 and 40% constitute low risk; scores between 41% and 70% indicate medium risk; scores between 71% and 89% are considered in the problem range; and scores over 90% constitute maximum risk. See Table 3 for the percent of offenders whose scores fell into each risk category.

**Table 3: Percentage of Offenders by Risk Range on SAQ Scales**

Scale	Scored Low Risk Range	Scored Medium Risk Range	Scored Problem Range	Scored Maximum Risk Range
<b>Validity</b>	28%	30%	28%	14%
<b>Alcohol</b>	42%	45%	3%	10%
<b>Drug</b>	9%	21%	21%	48%
<b>Resistance</b>	66%	25%	4%	5%
<b>Aggressivity</b>	21%	52%	21%	7%
<b>Anti-social</b>	40%	52%	8%	1%
<b>Violence</b>	23%	48%	17%	13%
<b>Stress Coping</b>	31%	23%	33%	14%

Note: Read scale percentages across rows to determine the percentages of offenders falling into each risk range. Rows may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Two findings in the above table are notable. These data indicate that nearly half of the RDRC offenders scored in the maximum risk range of the SAQ drug scale, suggesting that drug abuse is a significant treatment need of this population. In addition, these data indicate that 13% of the offenders scored in the maximum risk range on the SAQ

violence scale. This finding is noteworthy from a client selection perspective because the RDRC program is designed to service non-violent offenders. This apparent discrepancy between policy and practice may be explained by the differences in the definition of "violent" used by the SAQ and the RDRC. On the SAQ scale, violence is defined as the use of physical force to injure, damage or destroy and indicates danger to the individual offender or to others. In contrast, the RDRC policy is not to accept an offender if his or her most recent conviction (i.e., the conviction on which he/she is serving the current probation/parole sentence) was for a violent offense; however, individual circumstances sometimes warrant reconsideration. In addition, the RDRC director reported that violent charges in the offender's past may also be considered on a case-by-case basis.

***Referral Information***

Offenders were referred to the RDRC from three primary sources: Probation and Parole Officers, the Parole Board, and Circuit Court judges. Table 4 describes the proportion of technical versus non-technical violators from each referral source.

<b>Table 4: Percentage of Offenders Referred to RDRC from Each Source</b>		
<b>Referral Source</b>	<b>% of RDRC population referred</b>	<b>Proportion of technical violators</b>
Probation and Parole Officers	48%	All
Parole Board	38%	Few
Circuit Court Judges	14%	Two-thirds

Across all referral sources, 67% of the offenders were parolees. Of the 71 people referred by PPOs, half were supervised under regular probation, 10% were supervised under regular parole, and 30% were supervised under dual probation and parole. The remainder of these referrals were from the Intensive Supervision Program (ISP). A PPO may cite several reasons for referring an offender to the RDRC. The most common reasons cited by the district PPOs when referring technical violators were positive urine screens (cited in 62% of the referrals) and reporting violations (cited in 40% of the referrals).

Most non-technical violators at the RDRC were referred by the Parole Board. According to the RDRC Program director, the vast majority of the offenders sent to the RDRC by the Parole Board were released from prison on parole with a special condition to complete the RDRC program.

***Comparison of Successful and Unsuccessful Offenders***

Characteristics of successful and unsuccessful offenders were compared to identify differences between the two groups. There were no significant\* differences between successful and unsuccessful offenders based on age, marital status, and number of children. In addition to comparing demographic information, SAQ scores were compared between these two groups. Only one area of significant difference emerged between

\* References to "significant differences" throughout the text refer to a results from statistical tests for significance.

those who completed the RDRC program successfully and unsuccessfully: drug abuse. The average successful offender scored 73%, whereas the average unsuccessful offender scored 81%. Finally, there were no differences in the referral sources for successful and unsuccessful offenders. In summary, the only characteristic difference between successful and unsuccessful offenders, based on these data, was lower drug risk scores for successful offenders.

### **Offender Service Needs**

#### ***Alcohol and Drug Services***

According to assessments of the Alcohol and Drug Services counselor, 84% of RDRC offenders were physically dependent upon drugs and/or alcohol and an additional 13% of the offenders abused drugs and/or alcohol but were not physically dependent. On average, program participants started using drugs when they were 16 years old. However, age at drug use onset ranged from 7 years to 45 years.

When offenders are evaluated by the ADS counselor, they are questioned about the types of drugs they use and the extent of their use of each drug. The ADS counselor provided a list of drugs used by each offender ranked in order of the seriousness of the problem caused by each drug. A summary of these seriousness rankings across offenders, as well as the percentage of offenders who used each drug, is shown in Table 5. Note that percentages for “offenders who use” include offenders who use at any level, from infrequent users to hard-core addicts.

<b>Table 5: Percentage of Offenders' Drug Abuse by Drug Type and Seriousness of Problem</b>				
<b>Drug</b>	<b>Most Serious</b>	<b>2nd Most Serious</b>	<b>3rd or More Most Serious</b>	<b>Total Percentage of Offenders Who Use:</b>
Cocaine	45%	25%	5%	75%
Heroin	22%	9%	4%	35%
Alcohol	15%	20%	22%	57%
Marijuana	8%	20%	31%	59%
LSD	0%	1%	3%	4%

As depicted in Table 5, individual offenders were most frequently assessed as having more serious problems with cocaine and heroin. Three-fourths of the offenders used cocaine and more than half used alcohol and/or marijuana. Not surprisingly, alcohol and drug treatment were required in the contracts of 87% of the participants of the RDRC program. At least 56% (n=84) of the offenders who required drug treatment had received some kind of drug treatment service prior to entering the RDRC program. Table 6 provides a summary of the types of previous drug treatment services received by these 84 offenders.



**Table 6: Types of Substance Abuse Treatment Received Prior to RDRC Placement for Offenders Requiring RDRC Drug Treatment**

Type of Treatment	Percentage of Offenders
Intermediate Residential	40%
Prevention (AA or NA included)	36%
Outpatient services	28%
DOC/Jail programs	19%
Hospital based services (inpatient)	14%
Detoxification	11%
Minimum interim services (residential)	10%
Substance Abuse Education	8%
Other types of services	6%
Supported living arrangements	4%
Problem Identification and Referral	2%
Long-term Residential	2%

***Educational Services***

Educational background data was available for 129 offenders in the sample (see Table 7). Although more than one-quarter of the offenders had graduated from high school or received their equivalency, more than 60% of the sample had not.

**Table 7: Percentage of Offenders by Highest Educational Level Completed**

Highest Grade Level Completed	Percentage
6th or 7th	5%
8th or 9th	24%
10th or 11th	37%
Part of 12th	2%
High School Graduate/GED	26%
Some College	5%

Of the 149 total offenders in this sample, 64 (43%) had educational services included in their contract. The policy of the RDRC required offenders who did not have a high school diploma or GED and who were unemployed to attend the DCE classes. Once employment was obtained, class attendance was no longer mandatory. Of the 64 people whose literacy levels were tested, the average literacy level was between the seventh and eighth grade level (or 7.6); literacy levels ranged between the 0 and 12.9 grade levels.

***Employment Services***

Employment status at time of referral was available for 93% (n=139) of the referrals. Seventy-eight percent of these offenders were unemployed when referred to the RDRC, fourteen percent were employed full-time, 7% were employed part-time, and 1% were

self-employed. Of those who were employed, 63% worked in manual labor or construction positions, 17% worked in janitorial or maintenance positions, 7% worked in food service, and 13% held other types of positions.

### Supervision

To assure high standards of public safety, RDRC participants are monitored through daily surveillance of their activities. Supervision is most intense when a participant initially enters the program. As the offender moves from Phase One to Phase Three, the degree of supervision is gradually diminished.

### *Minimum Contact Requirements*

To maintain effective supervision, the RDRC program has established minimum contact requirements (see Table 8). There are four different types of supervision contacts conducted with each offender. Personal contacts refer to a face-to-face contact with the offender. A collateral contact refers to consulting with the offenders' on-site service providers (ADS, OAR or DCE). Home contacts refer to visiting the offender at his/her residence. An employment verification contact includes speaking with the offender at work, inspecting a paystub, or speaking with the offender's supervisor. In addition to these minimum required contacts, other supervision activities include random itinerary checks, drug screens, and records checks.

<b>Table 8: RDRC Minimum Contact Requirements</b>			
<b>Type of Contact</b>	<b>Phase One</b>	<b>Phase Two</b>	<b>Phase Three</b>
<b>Personal</b>			
<i>if employed:</i>	1 per workday	2 per week	1 per week
<i>if unemployed:</i>	1 per workday	1 per workday	2 per week
<b>Collateral</b>	1 per week with each provider	1 per week with each provider	1 per week with each provider
<b>Home</b>			
<i>normally</i>	within 1 week of RDRC assignment	1 per month	1 per month
<i>if change in residence, complete additional contact</i>	within 1 week	within 1 week	within 1 week
<b>Employment</b>			
<i>normally</i>	within 1 week of RDRC assignment	1 per month	1 per month
<i>if change in employment status, complete additional contact</i>	within 1 week	within 1 week	within 1 week

**Assessment of Supervision Contact Frequency**

To assess if the RDRC met the minimum supervisory contact requirements, the RDRC PPOs were asked to submit contact information. Table 9 presents the average percent of the minimum required number of contacts made per offender for each type of contact. When the average percent exceeds 100, the average offender was supervised at a level higher than the minimum required contact frequency. Contacts may frequently be waived for legitimate reasons (such as offender illness or a conflict with offender's work schedule), and the data presented in Table 9 are adjusted to account for legitimate waivers of contacts.

<b>Table 9: Average Percentage of Minimum Contacts Made</b>			
<b>Type of Contacts</b>	<b>Phase One</b>	<b>Phase Two</b>	<b>Phase Three</b>
<b>Personal Contacts</b>	108%	177%	263%
<b>Collateral Contacts*</b>	66%	113%	18%
<b>Community Contacts †</b>	387%	373%	263%
<b>Employment Contacts</b>	133%	143%	97%

\*See text below for a detailed explanation of these figures.  
 † Community contacts include home contacts, contacts with offender's friends and family, and itinerary checks.

These data show that the average offender was supervised at a level higher than the minimum required contact frequency. However, information for community contacts and collateral contacts may be misleading due to data limitations, so this information should be interpreted with caution. Based upon the information in the table, one could conclude that there were 3 to 4 times the minimum required number of community contacts (which includes home contacts) for each offender. This is an overestimate because expected community contacts were calculated based upon the total number of home contacts required (see Table 8).

The percentage of collateral contacts completed with on site service providers are lower than RDRC minimum requirements for Phases One and Three. Due to additional data limitations, the data available most likely underestimate the percent of collateral contacts completed. Collateral contacts with service providers occur only when the offender is receiving treatment services. Because the beginning and end dates for treatment were not available for this study, expected collateral contacts were calculated assuming a contact with each service provider every week throughout the duration of the treatment program. However, treatment may not have been occurring during all weeks for each offender. Consequently, data for Phase Two, during which the bulk of treatment occurs, probably provides the most reliable estimate of compliance with collateral contacts. These particular data suggest that the RDRC completed the expected number of collateral contacts.

Supervision activities are used, in part, to accomplish the RDRC goal of ensuring public safety. The above data indicate that the RDRC is fulfilling its commitment to providing offender supervision. Furthermore, subsequent analyses revealed that only seven (4.7%) of the offenders were re-arrested while under supervision by the RDRC.

### Sanctioning

When offenders enrolled in the RDRC violate the program rules and requirements, the RDRC staff impose sanctions to promote offender accountability and support positive behavior by swiftly punishing negative behaviors. There are a variety of sanctions which may be imposed upon the offender depending upon the severity of the violation. Types of sanctions include community service, imposition of a curfew, increased reporting requirements, home electronic monitoring, or termination from the program.

#### *Analysis of RDRC Sanctioning Practices*

Only 20% of the RDRC participants completed the program without receiving a sanction. Twenty-eight percent of offenders received one sanction during RDRC placement, 32% received two or three sanctions, and the remaining 20% received more than 3 sanctions. Table 10 provides the types of violations and the percent of participants sanctioned at least once for each violation. The categories listed below are mutually exclusive, however, offenders may receive multiple sanctions at the same time.

<b>Table 10: Percentage of Offenders Sanctioned at Least Once for Each Type of Violation</b>			
<b>Type of Violation</b>	<b>All Offenders</b>	<b>Unsuccessful Offenders</b>	<b>Successful Offenders</b>
Failed to report or call as scheduled	37%	46%	25%
Positive urine screen or breathalyzer	35%	39%	30%
Absconding	18%	35%	0%
Failure to report to RDRC treatment/ services	15%	15%	14%
Failure to comply with other RDRC rules	13%	10%	17%
Failure to follow daily itinerary	5%	6%	4%
New arrest/offense	5%	8%	2%
Other	5%	6%	3%
Failure to notify of change in living or job situation	3%	3%	5%
Failure to complete previously imposed community service	2%	4%	0%
Failure to report to external treatment or services	1%	1%	0%
Failure to report for urinalysis	1%	0%	2%
Failure to secure employment	0%	0%	0%

Both successful and unsuccessful participants were most frequently sanctioned for failure to report and positive drug/alcohol screens. This finding is not surprising considering that reporting problems and drug use were most frequently cited by Probation and Parole Officers as the reasons for referral to the RDRC. The percentage of unsuccessful participants sanctioned for failure to report was nearly double that of successful participants. However, the percentage of unsuccessful offenders sanctioned for positive drug/alcohol screens (39%) was somewhat higher than that for successful offenders (30%). Finally, over one-third of the offenders who unsuccessfully terminated from the RDRC had absconded. According to the RDRC program director, absconding is defined as a period of absence of 24 hours or more. In the majority of the absconding cases, the offender had stopped reporting but was locatable. There were approximately 10 instances of absconding where the offender was not located. Note that subsequent analyses revealed no significant differences between absconders and non-absconders on demographics and SAQ scores.

Over half of the total RDRC population (53%) were sanctioned with termination from the program. With the exception of these termination sanctions for unsuccessful offenders, the most frequently assigned sanction for both successful and unsuccessful offenders was community service hours: 11% of the offenders were assigned four hours of community service at least once, 25% of the offenders were assigned eight hours of community service at least once, 1% of the offenders were assigned forty hours of community service, and 1% of the offenders were given daily community service activities. Other types of sanctions issued for successful and unsuccessful offenders were:

- 12% of all offenders received additional RDRC substance abuse services on at least one occasion (thereby increasing the requirements for successful discharge);
- 9% of all offenders were given increased reporting requirements at least once;
- 5% of all offenders were sanctioned to outside substance abuse services;
- 3% of all offenders were given increased drug and alcohol screenings;
- 5% were sanctioned to a detoxification center;
- 2% were placed on home electronic monitoring;
- 1% were given a curfew; and
- 25% received a sanction other than the sanctions already mentioned.

A total of 278 sanctions were issued in the period covered by this evaluation. Of these, 39% were issued on the same day as the infraction. An additional 28% were issued within 4 days of the infraction, 17% were issued between days 5 and 14, and 16% were sanctioned more than 14 days after the infraction. As these data show, one-third of the rule violations were not sanctioned until 5 or more days after the violation. While this may imply that the RDRC was lax in imposing sanctions in some cases, the RDRC Director has suggested several alternative explanations for this finding:

- In cases which require termination, RDRC cases must remain open until a warrant is issued for the offender's arrest. Termination sanctions are formally recorded as imposed at the time a warrant is issued. The RDRC must submit violation reports to the court or Parole Board, who in turn issue the warrants. The time lapse between

submission of the violation report and issuing the warrants may account for documented time between violations and sanctions in termination situations.

- The RDRC can not formally sanction for a positive drug screen until the result has formal confirmation from a toxicology lab. Lag time on this process is currently one month.
- In the case of absconding or reporting violations, an offender may not be available to sanction in a timely manner. Also, the RDRC may use a 2-week grace period to contact offenders and encourage them to return to the program. In this case, offenders are sanctioned when they return, but can not be sanctioned until they are participating in the program. If offenders choose not to return, they are terminated (and the sanction imposed) after the grace period.
- The number of required supervision contacts are somewhat relaxed for offenders in Phase Three. If a violation occurs during this phase, the program may wait until the offender reports to the program (which generally occurs within one week) before formally imposing the sanction.
- In some instances, the RDRC may not be aware of a violation for several days (such as failure to report for community service or an arrest). In cases such as this, the sanction may be swift once the violation is known, but these circumstances are not reflected in the available data.

#### ***Comparison Between Successful and Unsuccessful Offenders***

The average number of times an offender was sanctioned prior to completing the RDRC program was significantly lower among successful participants (1.5 sanctions) than among unsuccessful participants (2.5 sanctions), even though successful participants generally spent more time (192 days) at the RDRC than unsuccessful ones (97 days). In addition, there was a significant difference between successful and unsuccessful offenders on the average number of days between a participant's first violation and the imposition of the sanction for the violation. The average successful offender was sanctioned within 2 days of committing the first violation while the average for the unsuccessful offender was sanctioned within 11 days.

#### ***Reactions to Unsuccessful Terminations***

In discussing sanctions, it is important to consider RDRC program reactions to unsuccessful terminations. Of the 79 cases which terminated unsuccessfully, information on program responses were available on 76 cases. In each of these cases, the RDRC took action to return the offender to the purview of the criminal justice system, thereby effectively addressing its goal of ensuring public safety.

#### **Treatment Services**

The treatment and service needs of offenders who participate in the RDRC are assessed by the contracted treatment staff. The service providers develop an individualized treatment plan for each offender which is compatible with the overall RDRC requirements. Services provided by each of the three treatment personnel are outlined below.

### ***Services Provided by Alcohol and Drug Services (ADS)***

As discussed previously, the vast majority of offenders referred to the RDRC had drug abuse/dependency problems. Nearly 9 out of 10 offenders who came to the RDRC required ADS services. More than half (56%) of these offenders had received drug treatment services prior to coming to the RDRC.

Two drug treatment programs are offered at the RDRC: Intensive Outpatient (IOP) and Outpatient (OP). The IOP program consists of three modules per week; two of these modules focus on drug therapy and one emphasizes drug education. More than half (59%) of the offenders who required drug treatment services (76 people) were placed in the Intensive Outpatient program. The Outpatient (OP) program provides less intensive treatment for offenders who are not deeply involved in drug abuse. Half of each session focuses on therapy and the other half emphasizes education and relapse prevention. One-third of the offenders who received ADS services attended the OP program (42 offenders).

An additional drug treatment service is the Multi-Family Therapy Group. This group is facilitated by a licensed clinical social worker as part of the RDRC's contract with the Community Services Board. In this setting, approximately four clients and their families meet to discuss how drug use (and related behaviors) affect family members. A total of 10 offenders and their families participated in the Multi-Family Therapy Group. Each of these offenders were also participating in the IOP drug treatment program.

### **Impact of Services**

Based on exit assessments of the ADS counselor, 30% of the offenders who received ADS services did not change their alcohol or drug use patterns while in treatment; 18% of the offenders attempted to "clean up," but relapsed; and 5% abstained while in the RDRC program but still had a poor prognosis at program departure. In summary, 53% of the offenders who received ADS services left the program either still using drugs or with a high probability of using drugs.

In contrast, another group of clients had relatively positive outcomes. Twenty-five percent of the offenders who received ADS services abstained throughout the RDRC program, and left the program with a good prognosis. An additional 18% of offenders receiving ADS relapsed at least once while at the RDRC (determined by positive urine screens, ADS assessment or voluntary admission) but left the program drug free. Finally, among all offenders who received drug treatment while at the RDRC, there was a 50% increase in offenders who reported that they were attending Alcoholics or Narcotics Anonymous.

### ***Services Provided by Department of Correctional Education (DCE)***

The DCE teacher is responsible for evaluating the educational needs of the RDRC clients and coordinating educational training. There were 59 offenders placed in one of the three Adult Basic Education classes (see Table 11). The policy of the RDRC is to require unemployed offenders to attend DCE classes; however, offenders are not required to stay in the classes once employment is obtained.

<b>Table 11: Summary of Participation in Department of Correctional Education Classes</b>		
<b>Class Type</b>	<b>Number of Offenders Assigned</b>	<b>Average Pre-Class Literacy Level</b>
Basic literacy	18	4.8
Remedial education	28	8.8
Pre-GED tutoring	13	6.3

Impact of Services

According to the RDRC program director, this population of adult offenders is generally not interested in going to DCE classes. Many leave the classes as soon as they obtain employment. However, since the beginning of the program, three individuals receiving training from the DCE teacher have received their General Equivalency Degrees. The data necessary to make additional conclusions regarding the impact of DCE services were not available for this study.

***Services Provided by Offender Aid and Restoration (OAR)***

The RDRC contracts with OAR of Richmond for offender services. The staff member provided by OAR of Richmond is responsible for coordinating community service assignments, life skills classes, employment assistance, life assistance, and the impact of crime classes.

Community Service

The community service segment of the OAR responsibilities applies to every offender who participates in the RDRC. Each offender is initially required to complete a mandatory 50-hour community service assignment. The only way to be excused from the basic community service assignment is to take the impact of crime course (described below). Many offenders complete more than 50 hours because community service may be assigned as a sanction for negative behaviors. Typical types of community service assignments include maintenance work, janitorial duties, sorting donations, etc. According to the RDRC director, approximately 90% of these assignments occur outside the RDRC facility (e.g., at cemeteries, City Hall, the YMCA, and community centers), and the community service hours completed by the RDRC offenders represent a real savings to the community. All of the work done by the RDRC offenders would have been completed by a paid employee or left undone because funds were unavailable to hire an employee.

Approximately 60% of all RDRC offenders completed at least part of their required community service hours. On average, these offenders completed 36 hours of the 50-hour basic community service requirement. Forty (63%) of the successful offenders were actually required to complete community service hours; the remaining offenders took the impact of crime course, which waives the community service requirement. Thirty-eight of the successful offenders completed 50 or more hours of community service. The



remaining two offenders were discharged from supervision by the court prior to the completion of their community service hours, and were classified as successful terminations by the program based on progress at departure.

Impact of services. A total of 3,163 hours of required community service was completed over the months of this study. An additional 880 hours of community service were completed as sanctions. Since all of the tasks completed by the offenders would have either been completed by a paid employee or left undone because money was unavailable to hire an employee, the savings to the community can be quantified. Assuming a conservative \$5 per hour wage, the community service completed by the offenders saved the community \$20,215.

### Life Skills

OAR provides life skills training to offenders throughout Virginia. The 24-course curriculum covers the following topics:

- **Personal Growth:** includes sessions on criminality, communication skills, self-esteem, values clarification, anger management, stress management, problem solving, and goal setting.
- **Personal Health:** 1 session covers the topics of AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases, dietary needs of recovering addicts, and resources for medical care in the community.
- **Relationships:** includes sessions on dysfunctional families, children's issues and romantic relationships.
- **Financial Responsibilities:** includes sessions on budgeting, money management and consumer issues.
- **Educational Opportunities:** 1 session covers benefits of continued education, educational and vocational program, and identifying community resources.
- **Housing and Shelter:** 1 session covering topics of types of housing, assistance programs, emergency shelters, and the tenant/landlord relationship.
- **Employment Skills:** includes sessions on self-assessment, finding a job, interviewing skills, resumes and cover letters, keeping a job, and job training resources.

Offenders are assigned to specific classes based on the assessment of the OAR counselor. A total of 81 offenders participated in the life skills courses at the RDRC. On average, each offender participated in 11 life skills classes each. The most frequently attended life skill topic was Personal Growth (93% attended), followed by Employment Skills (67%), and Financial Responsibilities (59%). The remaining topics were attended by 15% or fewer offenders during the period of this study.

### Employment Assistance

Fifty-four offenders participated in the employment skills courses (see above). Although OAR does not directly provide for job placements, the data available also indicate that 4 people gained employment through OAR placements.

### Life Assistance

Unless the offender leaves the program prior to being assessed by the OAR staff member, each offender receives some counseling from the OAR staff member. Nearly half received more than one counseling session. During counseling, the OAR staff member identifies needs of the offender. The OAR staff member can then provide life assistance and/or referrals for life assistance as needed. Types of life assistance and levels of provision include: referrals for housing (14 offenders), monetary housing assistance (accessed in one instance for \$245.00), food referrals (8 offenders), transportation assistance (used by 5 offenders for a total of \$21.00), and assistance in some other form (received by 65 offenders). For the vast majority of these offenders, this additional assistance involved obtaining identification such as birth certificates or driver's licenses. Seventy of the RDRC offenders (47%) received at least one type of assistance described above.

### Impact of Crime Class

The Impact of Crime class is a seven week course which addresses the impact of crime on crime victims and victims' rights. Crime victims volunteer to speak to the RDRC participants about their experiences. The Impact of Crime course is highly structured and involves a substantial amount of homework. Upon course completion, participants are required to complete a community service project involving what they learned in the course. Because a community service project is a component of the course, offenders who take the course are excused from their standard 50-hour community service assignment.

A total of 38 RDRC offenders participated in the impact of crime class. The average offender who participated in the course (which includes successful and unsuccessful offenders) completed two-thirds of the course (19 hours).

### ***Comparison of Successful and Unsuccessful Offenders***

Treatment-related characteristics of successful and unsuccessful offenders were compared to identify differences. There were no significant differences observed between successful and unsuccessful offenders in employment status at time of entry into the RDRC, age when drug use began, or frequency of attendance at AA or NA. Only literacy level showed even a marginally significant difference. Unsuccessful offenders tested at the 6th grade level and successful offenders tested at the 7th grade level.

## **VI. OFFENDER OUTCOMES**

### **Follow-Up Information**

Of the 116 offenders for whom follow-up data was available, 59 were successful terminations and 57 were unsuccessful terminations. Seventeen percent were successful terminations who had been discharged from active supervision when they left the RDRC;

33% were successful terminations who were returned to regular supervision, and 1% were successful terminations who had been returned to intensive supervision. Thirty-one percent were unsuccessful terminations who had not had their probation or parole revoked at the time that their profile was submitted to DCJS, and 18% were unsuccessful terminations who were known to have had their probation and parole revoked at the time their offender profiles were submitted to DCJS.

### ***Successful Completions***

As mentioned previously, 59 offenders (62% of the population for which subsequent activity data was collected) were successful completions. Of these 59 successful terminations, 25 (42%) were still under active supervision; 22 (37%) had been discharged from active supervision; 3 (5%) were in prison or jail; and 1 was in a residential drug program). Of the remaining offenders, 2 could not be located and 6 fell under the "other" category (which included transfers to another jurisdiction, offenders who had died, etc.).

Twenty-eight of the successful offenders were known to be currently employed (23 of these in full-time positions). This number could be higher since the PPOs were not in contact with offenders who had been discharged from supervision. Approximately one-third of the successful offenders in this sample had been employed 100% of the time since their discharge from the RDRC. There were 11 offenders who had required additional treatment services since leaving the RDRC. For seven of these 11 offenders, this additional treatment was in the form of Alcoholics Anonymous or Narcotics Anonymous meetings. The remaining 4 offenders were evenly divided between outpatient and inpatient drug treatment programs. In addition, nine (15%) of these 59 offenders had violated the conditions of their probation at some point since leaving the RDRC.

Finally, Probation and Parole Officers were asked to rate the adjustment of the offenders since their discharge from the RDRC. Of the 59 successful terminations which were reviewed, the PPOs rated the adjustment of 53% as excellent and 31% as good. Only nine offenders who completed successfully were rated as either poor or very poor on adjustment.

### ***Unsuccessful Completions***

As mentioned previously, 79 offenders did not complete the RDRC program successfully. Nineteen of these offenders were not selected for follow-up data collection, and data was unavailable for three offenders. Therefore, 57 unsuccessful offenders were examined. According to the offender profile information provided by the RDRC for this group, as of July 1996:

- 21 of the offenders were known to have had their probation or parole revoked at the time their offender profiles were submitted to the evaluators;
- 15 additional offenders were in prison, jail or a detention facility;
- 2 offenders had served time for the probation/parole violation and been released without supervision;
- 1 offender had been returned by the court to the RDRC;

- 4 offenders were on active probation or parole; and
- 14 offenders had outstanding warrants for their arrest for probation/parole violations.

**VII. PROGRAM IMPACT**

**Recidivism**

Recidivism information was available for 95 of the 116 offenders in the follow-up sample. For the purposes of this study, recidivism is defined as an arrest for a new charge after leaving the RDRC. Of the 95 offenders, 15% or 14 people were rearrested on new charges since leaving the RDRC. Half of the offenders rearrested had left the RDRC as an unsuccessful completion and had warrants out for their arrest for probation/parole violations when they were arrested on the new charge(s). Six of the offenders rearrested had completed the RDRC program successfully and had returned to regular supervision. The remaining offender had successfully completed the RDRC program and had been released from active supervision. Table 12 provides an analysis of the types of rearrest charges. Of those offenders who were re-arrested, nearly two-thirds were arrested within 2 months of leaving the RDRC.

**Table 12: Rearrest Charges Received by Recidivist Offenders**

Type of Offense	Misdemeanor	% of Recidivating Offenders	Felony	% of Recidivating Offenders
Drug	2	14	5	36
Person	0	0	1	7
Property/Other	3	21	3	21

Half of the 14 rearrested offenders were convicted of the crime for which they were charged, two were acquitted, and four of the cases were pending when follow-up data was submitted. Outcome information on one of the re-arrested offenders was missing. Of the seven offenders who were convicted, the maximum sentence to be served was one year (in three cases). The remainder of the sentences ranged between 0 and 4 months to be served. In several cases, the offender's probation or parole was also revoked and a previously suspended sentence was imposed.

### **Diversion and Net-Widening**

An assessment of diversion and net-widening can be a useful tool in assessing the effectiveness of a program such as the RDRC. The RDRC is most effective when the offenders it serves are diverted from costly prison beds. The RDRC is least cost effective when its participants would have received less costly sanctions in its absence (known as net-widening). Unfortunately, the resources and data available do not allow for a prediction of the offender's sentence in the absence of the RDRC program. Without such data, a thorough study of diversion and net-widening is not possible.

The annual operating cost of the RDRC is \$375,000. According to the DOC Management Information Executive Summary for FY93, the daily cost to incarcerate an inmate in DOC is \$44.37, or \$16,195 annually. If 23 offenders who otherwise would have spent one year in DOC were instead diverted to the RDRC, the savings in DOC costs would equal the cost to operate the RDRC for one year. Any number of prison diversions to RDRC greater than 23 per year will result in a lower cost to the Commonwealth than imprisoning these offenders.

## **VIII. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Program Completion Success Rate**

**Attempt to improve the RDRC program success rate by: (1) identifying client compatibility to programming structure during the initial client evaluation/selection process, and (2) continuing to adjust programming intensity to meet individual client needs for current clients with severe problems, and increasing such efforts when feasible.**

More than half (53%) of the offenders who exited the program between October 1, 1994 and June 30, 1996 exited unsuccessfully. Forty-six percent successfully completed the program during this time. Eighty-three percent of the successful offenders for whom follow-up data were collected were rated by their Probation/Parole Officers as having good or excellent adjustment since leaving the RDRC. It is important to note that no successful terminations were possible until February 1995 due to the intended program length; however, unsuccessful terminations which occurred during this period were included in the overall success rate calculations.

The majority of offenders referred to the RDRC program had been performing unsuccessfully on probation or parole. The offenders were referred to the program because their probation and parole officers judged them to be high-risk offenders who required a greater degree of supervision or rehabilitative services. Given the

characteristics of these offenders (and the fact that the RDRC program is in the early years of development), it is perhaps not surprising that many offenders did not succeed in the RDRC program. However, if we assume that all offenders who entered the RDRC program would otherwise have been sentenced to jail or prison terms, or had their probation or parole revoked, then a 46% successful completion rate may be considered an achievement.

The RDRC completion rate is particularly notable given that the majority (67%) of the population served by the RDRC were parolees. It is also important to note that the RDRC program provides more intensive supervision than regular probation, which reasonably increases the identification of violations. In turn, awareness and reactions to these violations may precipitate unsuccessful terminations; therefore, the nature of the programming should also be considered in interpreting overall success rates.

However, further efforts to increase program success rates should be considered. To determine where such efforts might be made, evaluators examined differences between successful and unsuccessful offenders. The demographics and SAQ scores of successful and unsuccessful offenders were similar. However, unsuccessful offenders generally scored higher on the SAQ drug scale, had slightly lower literacy levels, and were twice as likely to be sanctioned for failure to report or call as scheduled. These differences suggest that the RDRC may be able to improve its successful completion rate by: (1) accepting offenders whose level of service needs are more compatible with the range of current services provided by RDRC (e.g., accept only offenders without extreme drug problems and long histories of reporting problems), and (2) continuing to customize, and, when possible, increasing efforts to customize treatment and supervision services for current clients of the RDRC who have more severe drug problems or histories of reporting problems.

### **Sanctioning of Offenders**

**The RDRC should consistently impose sanctions as quickly as possible following failure to comply with program rules and requirements.**

The majority of the sanctions issued by the RDRC were issued in a timely manner. However, data revealed that time between the first violation of RDRC rules and the imposition of a sanction was significantly longer for unsuccessful offenders than for successful ones. This does not imply that the RDRC was lax in imposing sanctions on unsuccessful offenders. For example, some of these delays appeared to be due to the nature of the violation and how readily the violation can be detected and sanctioned. However, reasons for this difference in time to sanction successful and unsuccessful offenders should be explored further to determine if there are any variations in sanctioning practices that may affect offender program success. In other words, is it possible that longer periods between violation and resulting sanction increase the chances an offender will fail to complete the program? If this is true, identifying the reasons why this happens may lead to program changes. As sanctions are important tenets of the

RDRC program to discourage negative behaviors, they should be imposed swiftly and consistently to be effective.

### **Substance Abuse Needs of the RDRC Population**

**The RDRC and the Department of Corrections should continue to expand the drug treatment services provided at the RDRC.**

Substance abuse was consistently revealed as the predominant problem of RDRC offenders. Nine out of ten offenders referred to the RDRC required Alcohol and Drug Services in their contracts, and approximately half of the offenders tested in the maximum risk range of the SAQ drug scale. Unsuccessful offenders frequently scored higher than successful offenders on the drug risk scale. These observations were consistent with observations of RDRC staff, who contended that drug abuse contributed to unsuccessful terminations in two-thirds of the unsuccessful cases.

Offender drug use also was highly correlated with probation and parole violations and re-arrests. Nearly one-third of the offenders were sanctioned at least once for a positive drug screen, and half of the offenders arrested after leaving the RDRC were arrested on drug charges.

On the other hand, it is important to note that ADS services appear to have a positive impact on some offenders. The ADS counselor indicated that 43% of those who received ADS services left the RDRC drug free. Given the magnitude of the problem and the potential impact of the treatment available, RDRC drug treatment services should be expanded as much as possible. This expansion should include hiring additional counselors, and increasing the frequency and intensity of drug treatment groups. The RDRC recently addressed this issue by adding a second substance abuse counselor to provide increased substance abuse programming and conduct assessments. However, given the magnitude of this problem in the RDRC population, additional efforts to increase substance abuse services are recommended.

### **Treatment Services and Resources**

**The RDRC should allocate its treatment resources in the following order of priority: drug treatment, OAR services, educational services.**

As the discussion above indicates, drug abuse is consistently regarded as the most significant problem of RDRC offenders and this should be the priority focus for treatment resources. However, RDRC clients have other significant problems as well. For example, three of every four offenders were unemployed when referred to the RDRC. One function of OAR services is to provide employment skills training. This training, as well as other OAR services (e.g., community service placements, impact of crime classes, employment assistance, and life skills training), are widely used. Although data

limitations hindered assessments of OAR impact, offender characteristics/profiles indicated that these types of services are clearly needed.

Many RDRC offenders also required educational assistance. Two of every three offenders referred to the RDRC had not completed high school or earned their General Equivalency Degrees. Consequently, 59 offenders were assigned to a DCE class. As indicated previously, the policy of the RDRC is to require unemployed offenders to attend DCE classes. However offenders are not required to stay in the classes once employment is obtained. According to the RDRC program director, this population of adult offenders is not interested in attending these classes, and many leave the classes as soon as employment is secured.

More RDRC offenders required drug treatment than educational services; however, the lack of interest in education by many offenders in education and the potential obstacle to learning and employment caused by drug involvement indicate drug treatment should be the first priority. While education and employment are important components of offender rehabilitation, neither appears to be the primary treatment need of most offenders at the RDRC. If additional funds are not allocated for expanding the drug treatment services of the RDRC, the RDRC and its funders are encouraged to weigh the lack of interest and participation in the DCE component of this program against the need to expand drug treatment services when allocating funds.

Therefore, the RDRC should allocate their service monies in the following order, if they are not currently doing so: substance abuse, OAR services, and DCE services. If they are currently allocating service funds in this manner, evaluation data suggest they should continue to do so.

### **Costs and Savings**

**If reduction of prison costs is a primary goal of this program, the RDRC should, to the degree possible:**

- **attempt to accept only clients who are prison bed diversions.**
- **attempt to reduce the number of days an offender is supervised by the program while maintaining current treatment/program requirements, if possible.**

Based upon the current level of funding and a per day cost of imprisonment of \$44.37, successfully diverting 23 offenders from one year of prison confinement would equal the annual operating funds of the RDRC. Acceptance of offenders who are not diversions from prison facilities would reduce any such cost savings. Realizing that the RDRC is not exclusively responsible for admission decisions, program administrators might consider providing periodic re-statements of their mission and goals to referral sources to maximize referrals that otherwise would go to prison.



Successful offenders spent an average of 187 days in the RDRC. Program administrators should examine the reasons for deviation from the pre-determined program length of 120 days. In addition, the RDRC should identify any administrative, organizational, or programming changes that may reduce actual program length, yet maintain current treatment/program requirements.

### **Ensuring Public Safety**

- 1. The RDRC staff should review programming for offenders at-risk of violent behavior.**
- 2. The RDRC staff should attempt to identify risk factors which predict absconding, and, if possible, use such information to reduce the incidence of absconding among its offenders. If risk factors for absconding can be reliably determined, the RDRC should make policy adjustments to address the additional supervision needs of these offenders.**

The RDRC seems to be fulfilling its mandate to protect public safety. The average offender is monitored at a level much higher than the minimum standard of supervision, and only 7 offenders were arrested while under RDRC supervision. In addition, the RDRC fulfilled its responsibility to the community to follow-up on every unsuccessful completion by returning the offender to the purview of the system.

However, the data indicated two components of offender supervision and public safety which require further study. First, 13% of the offenders scored in the maximum risk range on the SAQ violence scale, which is administered after an offender has been accepted into the program. RDRC policy is that the program does not accept offenders on supervision for a violent charge, and offenders with a past history of violence are considered on a case-by-case basis. If the RDRC intends to exclude violent offenders from its population because they are not compatible with program goals or services, the SAQ findings suggest that violent offenders and/or offenders at-risk of violent behavior are entering the program. To address the finding, the RDRC should consider examining the treatment needs of offenders measured as at-risk for violent behavior, as well as their compatibility to current RDRC programming. Services such as increased supervision and anger control classes, which are already in place, may be appropriate for such offenders; however, additional services may be useful for this group. Conversely, these contradictory findings might also raise questions about the sensitivity of the SAQ instrument as a violence index and its validity as a measure of offender risk needs.

Second, 27 offenders absconded while being supervised by the RDRC. Of those who absconded, approximately 10 were not locatable. These offenders were supervised as closely as other offenders. Using available data, evaluators compared characteristics of absconders and non-absconders and found no apparent differences; however, RDRC staff may have access to additional individual data/observations that were not accessible for this research effort. Given the similarities between absconders and non-absconders, the

RDRC staff are encouraged to examine the individual cases of absconding offenders to attempt to qualitatively determine factors which might predict absconding. If risk factors for absconding can be reliably determined, RDRC administrators should consider increasing supervision for these offenders, or denying admission of potential absconders into the RDRC program.

## IX. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Item	Item Details(D)		Appropriations(E)		
	First Year	Second Year	First Year	Second Year	
	coordination where none exists;				
	d. recommend improvements needed for post-incarceration services, and, where no post-incarceration service exists, methods for providing such services; and				
	e. develop a time schedule and resources needed to implement the recommendation set forth in this plan.				
	B. The Department of Corrections shall study the feasibility and cost of allowing state responsible offenders to participate in local correctional facilities' work release programs. The Department shall also recommend methods to implement such a program, including changes to the Code of Virginia that are necessary and incentives for local participation. These findings and recommendations shall be presented to the Governor and the Chairmen of the Senate Finance and House Appropriations Committees by October 1, 1993.				
563.	Community-Based Custody (3500000).....			\$11,197,517	\$13,547,517
	Community Non-Residential Custody and Treatment (3500400).....	\$719,855	\$1,069,855		
	Community Custody and Treatment Services Local Grants and Contracts (3500500).....	\$10,216,130	\$12,216,130		
	Community Custody and Treatment Services Coordination (3500600).....	\$261,532	\$261,532		
	Fund Sources: General.....	\$11,197,517	\$13,547,517		
	Authority: §§ 53.1-179 through 53.1-185.1, Code of Virginia.				
	A. The state payment for the diversion of any misdemeanants beyond the average number of misdemeanants for which state payments were made in either of the fiscal years 1989 or 1990, whichever is greater, shall require cash matching funds from non-state sources equal to 10 percent of the payment the state would otherwise make.				
	B. The Department of Corrections shall report to the Governor and Chairmen of the Senate Finance and House Appropriations Committees, by September 1, 1994, on implementation of the Fairfax County Day Reporting Center.				
	C. Included within this appropriation is \$400,000 the first year and \$750,000 the second year to establish pilot day reporting centers in the City of Richmond and the City of Norfolk for probation and parole technical violators who are under the supervision of the Richmond and Norfolk District Probation and Parole Offices. Out of these amounts the Department shall provide \$47,980 the first year and \$90,536 the second year to the Department of Correctional Education for education services. The Department of Corrections shall present a preliminary report on implementation of these centers to the Governor and the Chairmen of the House Appropriations and Senate Finance Committees by October 1, 1994. The Department of Criminal Justice Services shall evaluate these programs.				
	D. Included within this appropriation is \$50,000 the first year and \$2,050,000 the second year for the Department of Corrections to contract for the private site selection, construction, financing, maintenance and operation of up to four, 500-bed minimum security, pre-release or return-to-custody facilities for adult male offenders. The Department shall request such additional funds as may be necessary for the cost of contract(s) for such a facility(ies) as part of the 1994-96 interim budget request.				

