Research Update from BJS: 
*Source and Use of Firearms Involved in Crimes and Time Served in State Prison, 2016*
Outline of Presentation

• Survey of Prison Inmates (SPI), 2016: Source and Use of Firearms Involved in Crimes
  • Where did people in prison obtain the firearms that they used in the crime for which they are serving time? How did they use the firearms?

• Time Served in State Prison, 2016
  • What was the average time served in state prison for prisoners released in 2016? What offenses were they serving for?
Survey of Prison Inmates (SPI), 2016

Source and Use of Firearms Involved in Crimes
Background of SPI

• Cross-sectional survey of the U.S. prison population
  • Formerly known as the Survey of Inmates in State and Federal Correctional Facilities

• Conducted periodically among a sample of state and federal prisoners

• Produces national estimates; separate estimates of state and federal prisoners
Topics covered in the 2016 SPI

• Demographics

• Criminal Justice
  • Offense and sentence
  • Incident characteristics
  • Criminal history
  • Weapons/firearms

• Socio-Economic Status
  • Education
  • Employment history
  • Personal income
  • Housing/living status
  • Children

• Health and Healthcare
  • Physical
  • Mental/emotional
  • Substance dependence/abuse
  • Treatment

• Prison Rule Violations
  • Number; type
  • Disciplinary action

• Prison Programs and Work Assignments
  • Type (e.g., job training, education)
  • Motivation
  • Perceived value
Source and Use of Firearms

• Describes firearm possession during the crime for which prisoners were serving time and by type of offense; how the firearm was used during the crime; type of firearm possessed; and methods, sources, and processes of obtaining the firearm.

• Available at bjs.gov
Possession and Use of Firearms During Offense

- **21%**
  - State and federal prisoners possessed or carried a firearm when they committed the offense for which they were serving time in prison

- **13%**
  - State and federal prisoners used a firearm by showing, pointing, or discharging it during the offense for which they were imprisoned
Use of Firearms During Offense

Among the 21% of state prisoners who possessed or carried a firearm when they committed the offense for which they were serving time in prison—

- 46% Discharged the firearm during the offense
- 27% Killed a victim during the offense
Use of Firearms During Offense

Among the 20% of federal prisoners who possessed or carried a firearm when they committed the offense for which they were serving time in prison—

- **12%** Discharged the firearm during the offense
- **4%** Killed a victim during the offense
Source of Firearms

Among state and federal prisoners who possessed or carried a firearm when they committed the offense for which they were serving time in prison, the source of the firearm was—

- Purchased/traded at retail source: 10%
- Obtained from individual: 25%
- Off the street/underground market: 43%
- Found at scene of crime: 7%
- Theft: 6%
- Brought by someone else: 5%
- Other: 6%
Time Served in State Prison, 2016
Overview

- Background on the National Corrections Reporting Program
- Methodology for report
- Report results
National Corrections Reporting Program (NCRP)

- BJS has administered NCRP since 1983
- Annual voluntary data collection of administrative records on individual prisoners submitted by state departments of corrections
- Collects offender-level data on admissions and releases from state prisons and post-confinement community supervision
- Abt Associates serves as data collection agent
Files submitted each year by respondents

- Prison admissions
- Prison releases
- Prison custody at year-end
- Admissions to post-confinement community supervision
- Releases from post-confinement community supervision
Annual Submissions Combined into a Single Term File for Analysis

Annual Files

Term Record File

Prison Term

1/1/00

12/31/17
Key NCRP Data Elements

Offender ID Numbers
- Includes a unique Offender ID, State ID, FBI Number, and SSN

Offender Characteristics
- Includes name, DOB, race, ethnicity, gender, education level, veteran status, last known address

Sentence characteristics
- Includes county where sentence was imposed, offenses, sentence length

Admission date and type

Release date and type
Methodology for report

- Includes in analysis:
  - release records from 2016
  - prisoners’ initial release for sentenced offense
  - prisoners with a sentence of at least 1 year
  - prisoner records with known values for offense type and time served in prison

- Excludes prisoners released by means of:
  - transfer
  - appeal
  - retainer
  - escape
Report Findings

• The average time served by state prisoners released in 2016, from initial admission to initial release, was 2.6 years, and the median time served was 1.3 years.

• Persons serving less than 1 year in state prison represented 40% of first releases in 2016.

• On average, state prisoners serving time for property, drug, or public-order offenses served less than 2 years before initial release.
Findings continued

• Based on 377,839 releases in 2016
• Violent offenses made up almost 30% of releases
• Murder/Non-negligent manslaughter made up less than 2% of releases
• Drug offenses made up almost 25% of releases
## Distribution of time served, by most serious offense, 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time served at first release</th>
<th>All offenses</th>
<th>Violent</th>
<th>Property</th>
<th>Drug</th>
<th>Public order</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 6 months</td>
<td>18.1%</td>
<td>10.8%</td>
<td>20.7%</td>
<td>21.1%</td>
<td>21.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 - 11.9 months</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
<td>24.9%</td>
<td>24.0%</td>
<td>25.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 - 1.9 years</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>27.2%</td>
<td>27.0%</td>
<td>27.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 - 4.9 years</td>
<td>22.9%</td>
<td>27.5%</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
<td>20.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 - 9.9 years</td>
<td>8.1%</td>
<td>15.9%</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 - 19.9 years</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 years or longer</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Deaths among state prisoners awaiting their first release

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2,755</th>
<th>49%</th>
<th>68%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Number of deaths in 2016 for first time release, based on data from 38 states</td>
<td>• Almost half of all deaths were persons sentenced for murder or rape/sexual assault offenses</td>
<td>• Persons in state prison for violent offenses made up almost 70% of deaths</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
NCRP Products and Data

• BJS Publications – www.bjs.gov
  • Time Served in State Prison, 2016 NCJ 252205

• Archived data at NACJD – www.icpsr.umich.edu
  • Selected variables public dataset
  • Full, de-identified restricted dataset (IRB required)

• NCRP Prisoners Webtool – Forthcoming!