

TEMPORARY ABSENCE PROGRAM PARTICIPATION AND THE RELEASE OF FEDERAL OFFENDERS

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Executive Summary

The Annual Report of the Correctional Investigator and Report of the Panel Appointed to Review the Temporary Absence Program for Penitentiary Inmates recommended that further research be conducted on the Correctional Service of Canada's Temporary Absence (TA) Program. While previous research provided a descriptive analysis of TAs and the offenders who receive them, an investigation was undertaken to examine the relationship between TA program participation and discretionary (day or full parole) release. As well, these offenders were followed-up to explore post-release outcome.

A research sample was assembled of 47,146 TAs taken by 7,368 offenders (male and female) from April 1, 1993 to March 31, 1994. From this sample (note: that we then excluded 13,112 medical TAs), a total of 3,389 offenders (almost one-half) were subsequently released from a federal institution. Of these, 2,975 had been granted an Escorted Temporary Absence (ETA) and 1,002 had been granted an Unescorted Temporary Absence (UTA). All of these offenders were followed-up for a period of at least two years (until March 31, 1996).

The TA follow-up sample was subdivided into five separate groups and a series of comparative analyses were conducted in relation to three outcome measures (see below):

Group Offenders (%)	Temporary Absence Failure	Discretionary Release	Returned to Federal Custody
ETAs 2,973 87.8	52 (1.8%)	1,490 (50.1%)	619 (20.8%)
UTAs 1,002 29.6	35 (3.5%)	663 (66.2%)	76 (7.6%)
ETA and UTA 586 17.3	19 (3.2%)	383 (65.4%)	52 (8.9%)
ETAs and no UTAs 2,387 70.4	33 (1.4%)	1,107 (46.4%)	567 (23.8%)
UTAs and no ETAs 416 12.3	16 (3.9%)	280 (67.3%)	24 (5.8%)

As the results tabled above shows, less than one-twentieth of the offenders had an unsuccessful TA, three-fifths were granted a discretionary release and one-sixth were returned to federal custody.

A closer look at the relationship between TA participation and outcome revealed that offenders granted UTAs were more likely than those granted ETAs to:

- be unsuccessful while on TA (3.5% versus 1.8%);
- be granted a discretionary release (66% versus 50%); and
- be successful post-release (92% versus 79%).

Each of these relationships were found to be statistically meaningful. Moreover, when we removed cases granted ETAs from the UTA group the relationship between UTA and discretionary release/post-release outcome became more robust.

In exploring case characteristics, we found the following:

- female offenders were more likely than male offenders to have had ETAs,
- older offenders were more likely than younger offenders to have had ETAs,
- Native offenders were more likely than non-Native offenders to have had ETAs,
- sex offenders were more likely than non-sex offenders to have had ETAs,
- offenders in the Pacific region were more likely to have had ETAs relative to any other region, and
- most ETAs were for personal and family contact (about one-fifth each, respectively).

For UTAs,

- no significant differences were found with respect to either gender or age in relation to having had UTAs,
- Native offenders were less likely than non-Native offenders to have had UTAs,
- sex offenders were less likely than non-sex offenders to have had UTAs,
- offenders in the Ontario region were more likely to have had UTAs relative to any other region, and
- most UTAs were for family contact (about one-half).

In regards to discretionary release,

- Native offenders, homicide offenders, sex offenders and robbery offenders who had ETAs were less likely than their counterparts to have been granted a discretionary release,
- drug offenders who had ETAs were more likely than non-drug offenders to have been granted a discretionary release,
- offenders in the Quebec region who had ETAs were more likely to have been granted discretionary release relative to the other regions, and
- offenders who had ETAs for family contact or social reasons were more likely to have been granted a discretionary release.

As for having had UTAs and subsequent discretionary release,

- there were no age, gender, Native versus non-Native, or regional differences and no difference with respect to purpose of the UTA, and
- sex offenders and robbery offenders who had UTAs were less likely than their counterparts to have been granted a discretionary release.

Similarly, we examined the interplay between having had an ETA and return to federal custody in relation to a variety of case characteristics.

- older offenders and homicide offenders who had ETAs were more likely to have been returned to federal custody than other groups of offenders who had received ETAs,
- offenders in the Pacific region who had ETAs were more likely than those in other regions to have been returned to federal custody,
- offenders who had ETAs for compassionate reasons were more likely than others to have been returned, and
- drug offenders who had ETAs were less likely to have been returned to federal custody.

In regards to having had UTAs and return to federal custody,

- only offenders in the Pacific region and homicide offenders were more likely than their counterparts to have been returned to federal custody.

Given that participation in the UTA program increased the likelihood of discretionary release and the majority who received them did well post-release, the need to continue improving both selection and intervention strategies becomes evident.

As a mechanism for safely re-integrating offenders into the community, the selection of cases (especially Native and sex offenders) for UTA could be augmented by taking into consideration a more systematic approach to assessing both offender risk and needs.

In sum, this study yielded important information on the TA program and the impact of participation on release and community adjustment. As an indicator of reduced offender risk, having had an ETA is insufficient to warrant the granting of discretionary release. On the other hand, having had UTAs does warrant further consideration.

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Temporary Absence Program Participation and the Release of Federal Offenders

The 1990-91 Annual Report of the Correctional Investigator and Report of the panel appointed to review the Temporary Absence Program for penitentiary inmates (Pepino, Pepin & Stewart, 1992) recommended that further research be conducted on the Correctional Service of Canada's Temporary Absence (TA) Program. While both reviews underscored the need to develop a comprehensive data base for tracking purposes, it was the report of the Correctional Investigator which requested the Service examine the relationship between TAs and the granting of discretionary (day or full parole) release and post-release outcome.

To that end, previous work has yielded a descriptive analysis of TAs and the offenders who receive them (Grant & Belcourt, 1992). Moreover, the Service has designed, developed and implemented a national TA data base on the Offender Management System (OMS) for tracking purposes and created a research file for longitudinal follow-up. This report is a follow-up of TAs taken by federal offenders over a fiscal year (1993/94).

Method

Sample

A total of 47,146 TAs were taken by 7,368 federal offenders (male and female) from April 1, 1993 to March 31, 1994. We then removed a total of 13,112 TAs granted for medical reasons which yielded a

pool of 34,034 TAs. A distribution of the various purposes for these TAs are outlined in Table 1a below.

Table 1a.

Distribution of TAs (1993-94)

Purpose	TAs	Offenders
Administrative	5.1% (1,724)	12.5% (423)
Community Service	33.5% (11,399)	9.6% (326)
Compassionate	2.3% (777)	12.3% (418)
Family Contact	13.9% (4,723)	27.4% (928)
Parental responsibility	0.2% (63)	0.5% (17)
Personal development	19.2% (6,527)	20.6% (699)
Socialization	25.9% (8,821)	17.1% (578)

From this sample, a total of 3,389 offenders (almost one-half) were released into the community and available for follow-up. Of these, 96.7% were male offenders and 3.3% were female offenders. The overall number of offenders who had taken ETAs was 2,975 (86.4%) and UTAs was 1,002 (29.1%).

To conduct analyses (see Table 1b), the TA follow-up sample was divided into five separate groups as follows: 1) offenders who had an ETA (n = 2,975), 2) offenders who had an UTA (n = 1,002), 3) offenders who had both an ETA and UTA (n = 587), offenders who had an ETA but no UTA (n = 2,387) and 5) offenders who had an UTA but no ETA (n = 416). A distribution of the various case characteristics for these TA groupings are presented below.

Table 1b.

Percentage Distribution of Case Characteristics for TA Groupings

Characteristic	ETAs	UTAs	ETA and UTA	ETA and no UTA	UTA and no ETA
Gender: male	96.4	97.5	96.4	96.4	99.0
female	3.6	2.5	3.6	3.6	1.0
Age: under 30	23.5	24.0	18.3	24.8	32.2
30 to 49	64.5	65.2	70.3	63.1	57.9
50 +	12.0	10.8	11.4	12.1	9.9

Native: No	87.3	94.6	93.3	85.8	96.4
Yes	12.7	5.4	6.7	14.2	3.6
Region: Atlantic	14.9	8.9	8.0	16.6	9.9
Quebec	27.8	27.4	29.2	27.4	25.7
Ontario	26.2	43.5	39.8	22.8	48.8
Prairie	13.7	7.7	7.7	15.2	7.7
Pacific	17.5	12.3	15.4	18.0	7.9
Homicide offender: No	83.2	83.6	81.2	83.8	87.0
Yes	16.7	16.4	18.8	16.2	13.0
Sex offender: No	80.7	88.9	87.9	79.0	90.4
Yes	19.3	11.1	12.1	21.0	9.6
Robbery offender: No	68.6	71.7	74.1	67.3	68.3
Yes	31.4	28.3	25.9	33.7	31.7
Drug offender: No	74.6	72.0	73.4	74.9	70.0
Yes	25.4	28.0	26.6	25.1	30.0

In Table 1c, the various TA purposes are presented for these TA groupings are presented below.

Table 1c.

Percentage Distribution of Purpose for TA Groupings

Characteristic	ETAs	UTAs	ETA and UTA	ETA and no UTA	UTA and no ETA

Administrative	13.2	9.1	13.2	13.9	7.2
Community Service	10.9	4.3	10.9	11.9	0.7
Compassionate	13.7	1.9	13.7	16.7	2.6
Family	22.1	52.0	22.1	17.1	64.9
Parental	0.5	0.3	0.5	0.6	0.2
Personal	22.6	15.9	22.6	22.6	6.3
Social	16.9	16.6	16.9	17.3	18.0

Outcome Measures

For this study, three separate outcome measures were explored: failure while on TA; whether or a discretionary release had been granted subsequently (as opposed to statutory release or sentence expiration); and, return to federal custody for any reason (such as technical violations of release or a new criminal offence).

Results

The results of the Temporary Absence Program follow-up are organized into four sections: ‘outcome measures’, ‘case characteristics’, ‘discretionary release’ and ‘return to federal custody’. Comparative statistics for each of the five ETA/UTA groupings are presented to obtain a better understanding of the relationship between Temporary Absence Program participation and release behaviour among federal offenders.

Less than one-twentieth of the offenders granted a TA during 1993/94 were considered to be unsuccessful. (Note: this figure differs from TA success rates usually reported wherein the total number of TAs taken is considered rather than the number of offenders who had taken TAs). As Table 1d shows, the failure rates range from a low of 1.4% to a high of 3.9% across the various ETA/UTA groupings. These low base rates of failure (or very high success rate) limits our ability to conduct further analyses on this measure.

Interestingly, nearly three-fifths of the TA follow-up sample had been granted a discretionary release. More specifically, they were released on either day parole (22%) or full parole (40%). The remainder of the sample was given a statutory release (38%). Finally, one-sixth of the study sample was returned to federal custody over the two year follow-up period. These later two base rates (discretionary releases and returns to federal custody) are of sufficient magnitude to conduct meaningful comparative analyses.

Table 1d.

Percentage Distribution of Outcome Measures

Group Offenders (%)	Temporary Absence Failure	Discretionary Release	Returned to Federal Custody
ETAs 2,973 87.8	52 (1.8%)	1,490 (50.1%)	619 (20.8%)
UTAs 1,002 29.6	35 (3.5%)	663 (66.2%)	76 (7.6%)
ETA and UTA 586 17.3	19 (3.2%)	383 (65.4%)	52 (8.9%)
ETAs and no UTAs 2,387 70.4	33 (1.4%)	1,107 (46.4%)	567 (23.8%)
UTAs and no ETAs 416 12.3	16 (3.9%)	280 (67.3%)	24 (5.8%)

A closer look at the relationship between TA participation and outcome revealed that offenders granted UTAs were more likely than those granted ETAs to: be unsuccessful while on TA (3.5% versus 1.8%); be granted a discretionary release (66% versus 50%); and be successful post-release (92% versus 79%). Each of these relationships were found to be statistically meaningful. Moreover, when we removed cases granted ETAs from the UTA group the relationship between UTA and discretionary release/post-release outcome became more robust (see Table 1e).

Table 1e.

Relationships (Pearson r's) Between TA Groupings and Outcome Measures

Group (offenders)	Temporary Absence Failure	Discretionary Release	Returned to Federal Custody
ETAs (2,973)	-.05 (p<.01)	-.11 (p<.0001)	.13 (p<.0001)
UTAs (1,002)	.07 (p<.0001)	.18 (p<.0001)	-.19 (p<.0001)
ETA and UTA (586)	.04 (p<.02)	.12 (p<.0001)	-.12 (p<.0001)
ETAs and no UTAs (2,387)	-.07 (p<.0001)	-.18 (p<.0001)	.19 (p<.0001)
UTAs and no ETAs (416)	.05 (p<.01)	.11 (p<.0001)	-.13 (p<.0001)

Case Characteristics

To examine differences among selected case characteristics for the various categorizations of TA participation, we conducted a series of cross tabulations. These analyses were in relation to gender, age, whether or not the offender was Native, region, offence type (homicide, sex, robbery, drug) and purpose

of the ETA.

As expected, the majority of ETAs were taken by male offenders (96.4%) and the remainder by female offenders (3.6%). As Table 2a shows, there was a significant difference with respect to gender in relation to the number who had an ETA. Interestingly, female offenders were more likely to had had ETAs relative to male offenders during 1993/94.

A closer examination of the purpose of these ETAs indicated that female offenders were three times more likely than male offenders to have had ETAs for administrative reasons (36% versus 12%). Also noteworthy, older offenders (50 years or more) were more likely than younger offenders to have had an ETA. Similarly, offenders in the Pacific region, non-sex offenders and non-homicide offenders were more likely than their counterparts to have had an ETA.

Table 2a.

Percentage Distribution of Case Characteristics for ETAs (2,975 offenders)

Characteristic	%	p<
Gender:		
male	87.3	.005
female	96.4	
Age:		
under 30	83.9	.001
30 to 49	88.8	
50 +	89.7	
Native:		
No	86.6	.001
Yes	89.7	

Region:		
Atlantic	91.6	
Quebec	88.5	
Ontario	79.3	.001
Prairie	92.7	
Pacific	94.0	
Homicide offender:		
No	87.2	ns
Yes	90.2	
Sex offender:		
No	86.5	.001
Yes	93.5	
Robbery offender:		
No	87.8	ns
Yes	93.5	
Drug offender:		
No	88.4	ns
Yes	85.8	

In Table 2b, we show the distribution of ETAs in relation to stated purpose.

While the majority of TAs (in general) and ETAs (in particular) were for family contact and personal reasons (one-fifth for each, respectively), a chi-square analysis revealed that among those who had an ETA during 1993/93 the purpose was most likely for compassionate or community service reasons.

Table 2b.

Percentage Distribution of Purpose for ETAs (2,975 offenders)

Purpose	%	p<
Administrative	92.9	.001
Community service	99.1	
Compassionate	97.4	
Family	70.9	
Parental	94.1	
Personal	96.3	
Social	87.0	

As we can see in Table 3a, there were no significant differences with respect to gender or age in relation to the number who had an UTA. Of note, Native offenders were found to have had fewer UTAs relative to non-Native offenders during 1993/94. On the other hand, offenders in the Ontario region were more likely than offenders in the other regions to have had UTAs (nearly twice as likely as those in either the Atlantic or Prairie regions). No significant differences emerged in the proportion of offenders having had UTAs among homicide, robbery or drug offenders. However, sex offenders were significantly less likely than non-sex offenders to have had UTAs.

Table 3a.

Percentage Distribution of Case Characteristics for UTAs (1,002 offenders)

Characteristic	%	p<
Gender:		
male	29.8	ns
female	22.5	
Age:		
under 30	28.9	ns
30 to 49	30.3	
50 +	27.2	

Native:		
No	31.6	.001
Yes	13.9	
Region:		
Atlantic	18.1	
Quebec	29.8	
Ontario	44.4	.001
Prairie	17.5	
Pacific	22.3	
Homicide offender:		
No	29.5	ns
Yes	29.8	
Sex offender:		
No	32.1	.001
Yes	18.1	
Robbery offender:		
No	30.9	ns
Yes	26.7	
Drug offender:		
No	28.6	ns
Yes	31.9	

A closer look at the purpose of the UTAs revealed that among those who had UTAs during 1993/94, the reason was most likely for family contact (see Table 3b).

Table 3b.

Percentage Distribution of Purpose for UTAs (1,002 offenders)

Purpose	%	p<
Administrative	21.5	.001
Community service	13.2	
Compassionate	4.6	
Family	56.1	
Parental	17.7	
Personal	22.8	
Social	28.7	

An inspection of Table 4a reveals that there were no significant differences with respect to gender in relation to the number who had both an ETA and UTA during 1993/94. However, offenders who had both an ETA and UTA were more likely to have been between 30 and 49, non-Native, in the Ontario region, and be either a non-sex offender or non-robbery offender.

Table 4a.

Percentage Distribution of Case Characteristics for ETA and UTA (587 offenders)

Characteristic	%	p<
Gender:		
male	17.2	ns
female	18.9	
Age:		
under 30	12.9	.001
30 to 49	19.1	
50 +	16.9	

Native:		
No	18.2	.001
Yes	10.0	
Region:		
Atlantic	9.7	
Quebec	18.4	
Ontario	23.8	.001
Prairie	10.3	
Pacific	16.3	
Homicide offender:		
No	16.8	ns
Yes	20.0	
Sex offender:		
No	18.6	.001
Yes	11.6	
Robbery offender:		
No	18.7	.002
Yes	14.3	
Drug offender:		
No	17.2	ns
Yes	17.7	

A review of Table 4b indicates that among offenders who had both an ETA and UTA during 1993/94, the purpose was most likely for community service.

Table 4b.

Percentage Distribution of Purpose for ETA and UTA (587 offenders)

Purpose	%	p<
Administrative	92.9	.001
Community service	99.1	
Compassionate	97.4	
Family	70.9	
Parental	94.1	
Personal	96.3	
Social	87.0	

When looking at Table 5a, we find that there were no significant differences with respect to either gender or age in relation to the number who had an ETA but no UTA during 1993/94. Interestingly, offenders who had an ETA but no UTA were more likely to be Native, in either the Atlantic or Prairie region, or be a sex offender.

Table 5a.

Percentage Distribution of Case Characteristics for ETA and no UTA (2,387 offenders)

Characteristic	%	p<
Gender:		
male	70.2	ns
female	77.5	
Age:		
under 30	71.1	ns
30 to 49	69.8	
50 +	72.8	

Native:		
No	68.4	.001
Yes	86.2	
Region:		
Atlantic	81.9	
Quebec	70.2	
Ontario	55.6	.001
Prairie	82.5	
Pacific	77.7	
Homicide offender:		
No	70.5	ns
Yes	70.2	
Sex offender:		
No	67.9	.001
Yes	81.9	
Robbery offender:		
No	69.1	ns
Yes	73.3	
Drug offender:		
No	71.3	ns
Yes	68.1	

In Table 5b we see that among offenders who had an ETA but no UTA during 1993/94, the purpose was most likely for compassionate reasons.

Table 5b.

Percentage Distribution of Purpose for ETA and No UTA (2,387 offenders)

Purpose	%	p<
Administrative	78.5	.001
Community service	86.8	
Compassionate	95.5	
Family	43.9	
Parental	82.4	
Personal	77.3	
Social	71.3	

From looking at Table 6a, we note that there were significant differences with respect to gender, age and being Native in relation to the number who had an UTA but no ETA during 1993/94. More specifically, those who had taken UTAs but no ETAs were likely to have been male, under 30 and non-Native. As well, we found that these offenders were more likely to have been in the Ontario region and be a non-sex offender.

Table 6a.

Percentage Distribution of Case Characteristics for UTA and no ETA (416 offenders)

Characteristic	%	p<
Gender:		
male	12.6	.005
female	3.6	
Age:		
under 30	16.1	.001
30 to 49	11.2	
50 +	10.3	

Native:		
No	13.4	.001
Yes	3.9	
Region:		
Atlantic	8.5	.001
Quebec	11.5	
Ontario	20.7	
Prairie	7.3	
Pacific	6.0	
Homicide offender:		
No	12.8	ns
Yes	9.8	
Sex offender:		
No	13.5	.001
Yes	6.5	
Robbery offender:		
No	12.2	ns
Yes	12.4	
Drug offender:		
No	11.6	ns
Yes	14.2	

Table 6b shows that among offenders who had an UTA but no ETA during 1993/94, the purpose was most likely for family contact reasons.

Table 6b.

Percentage Distribution of Purpose for UTA and No ETA (416 offenders)

Purpose	%	p<
Administrative	7.1	.001
Community service	0.9	
Compassionate	2.6	
Family	29.1	
Parental	5.9	
Personal	3.7	
Social	13.0	

Discretionary Release

In exploring differences among selected case characteristics for the various categorizations of TA participation, we conducted a series of cross tabulations but did so in relation to whether or not the offender had also been granted a discretionary release.

For offenders who had ETAs, Table 7a shows there were no significant differences with respect to gender or age in relation to the number who had been granted a discretionary release. It is notable that among offenders who had ETAs during 1993/94 and subsequently granted a discretionary release, Native offenders, those in the Pacific region, homicide offenders, sex offenders and robbery offenders were significantly less likely to have been granted a discretionary release than their respective counterparts. In contrast, drug offenders who had an ETA were significantly more likely than non-drug offenders to be granted a discretionary release.

Table 7a.

Percentage Distribution of Discretionary Release: Case Characteristics for ETAs (2,975 offenders)

Characteristic	%	p<
Gender:		
male	49.8	ns
female	57.9	

Age:		
under 30	50.5	
30 to 49	50.4	ns
50 +	47.8	
Native:		
No	51.9	.001
Yes	37.9	
Region:		
Atlantic	52.7	
Quebec	58.1	
Ontario	50.0	.001
Prairie	46.0	
Pacific	38.7	
Homicide offender:		
No	52.5	.001
Yes	38.0	
Sex offender:		
No	53.3	.001
Yes	36.8	
Robbery offender:		
No	52.3	.001
Yes	45.4	

Drug offender:		
No	47.3	.001
Yes	58.5	

A look at Table 7b reveals that among offenders who had an ETA and later been granted a discretionary release, the purpose was most likely for family contact or social reasons.

Table 7b.

Percentage Distribution of Discretionary Releases: Purpose for ETAs (2,975 offenders)

Purpose	%	p<
Administrative	46.6	.001
Community service	46.8	
Compassionate	31.5	
Family	58.1	
Parental	50.0	
Personal	50.8	
Social	58.9	

We can see from Table 8a that among offenders who had UTAs there were no significant differences with respect to gender, age, being Native or location in relation to later having been granted a discretionary release. Only sex offenders and robbery offenders were less likely to have been granted a discretionary release.

Table 8a.

Percentage Distribution of Discretionary Releases: Case Characteristics for UTAs (1,002 offenders)

Characteristic	%	p<
Gender:		
male	66.0	ns
female	72.0	

Age:		
under 30	67.2	
30 to 49	64.8	ns
50 +	72.2	
Native:		
No	67.0	ns
Yes	55.6	
Region:		
Atlantic	62.5	
Quebec	69.1	
Ontario	65.4	ns
Prairie	70.1	
Pacific	62.6	
Homicide offender:		
No	63.8	ns
Yes	78.1	
Sex offender:		
No	67.8	.002
Yes	53.2	
Robbery offender:		
No	69.1	.002
Yes	58.8	

Drug offender:		
No	65.3	ns
Yes	68.3	

By viewing Table 8b, we see that among offenders who had an UTA and later been granted a discretionary release there were no significant differences with respect to purposes for the UTA.

Table 8b.

Percentage Distribution of Discretionary Releases: Purpose for UTAs (1,002 offenders)

Purpose	%	p<
Administrative	69.2	ns
Community service	69.8	
Compassionate	47.4	
Family	67.0	
Parental	66.7	
Personal	61.0	
Social	68.1	

Among offenders who had both an ETA and UTA during 1993/94 (Table 9a), we see that there were no significant differences for gender, age, being Native or location in the number who had been granted a discretionary release. We did find, however, that homicide offenders and sex offenders who had both ETAs and UTAs were significantly less likely to have been granted a discretionary release relative to their counterparts.

Table 9a.

Percentage Distribution of Discretionary Releases: Case Characteristics for ETA and UTA (587 offenders)

Characteristic	%	p<
Gender:		
male	64.8	ns
female	81.0	

Age:		
under 30	65.4	
30 to 49	64.6	ns
50 +	70.2	
Native:		
No	66.5	ns
Yes	53.9	
Region:		
Atlantic	53.2	
Quebec	70.8	
Ontario	66.5	ns
Prairie	64.4	
Pacific	58.9	
Homicide offender:		
No	62.6	.004
Yes	77.3	
Sex offender:		
No	67.8	.001
Yes	47.9	
Robbery offender:		
No	68.0	ns
Yes	57.9	

Drug offender:		
No	64.0	ns
Yes	69.2	

Table 9b, shows that among offenders who had both an ETA and UTA and later been granted a discretionary release there were no significant differences with respect to purpose.

Table 9b.

Percentage Distribution of Discretionary Releases: Purpose for ETA and UTA (587 offenders)

Purpose	%	p<
Administrative	65.6	ns
Community service	70.0	
Compassionate	62.5	
Family	69.3	
Parental	50.0	
Personal	59.4	
Social	61.5	

For offenders who had an ETA and no UTA, Table 10a shows there were no significant differences with respect to gender or age in relation to the number who had been granted a discretionary release. We note that among offenders who had an ETA but no UTA, Native offenders, those in the Pacific region, homicide offenders and sex offenders were significantly less likely to be granted a discretionary release than their respective counterparts. On the other hand, drug offenders who had an ETA but no UTA were significantly more likely than non-drug offenders to have been granted a discretionary release.

Table 10a.

Percentage Distribution of Discretionary Releases: Case Characteristics for ETA and no UTA (2,387 offenders)

Characteristic	%	p<

Gender:		
male	46.2	ns
female	52.3	
Age:		
under 30	47.8	ns
30 to 49	46.6	
50 +	42.6	
Native:		
No	48.1	.001
Yes	36.0	
Region:		
Atlantic	52.6	.001
Quebec	54.7	
Ontario	42.9	
Prairie	43.7	
Pacific	34.5	
Homicide offender:		
No	50.2	.001
Yes	26.9	
Sex offender:		
No	49.3	.001
Yes	35.3	

Robbery offender:		
No	48.0	ns
Yes	43.0	
Drug offender:		
No	43.3	.001
Yes	55.7	

Table 10b shows that among offenders who had an ETA but no UTA during 1993/94 and subsequently a discretionary release, the purpose of the ETA was most likely for social contact reasons.

Table 10b.

Percentage Distribution of Discretionary Releases: Purpose for ETA and No UTA (2,387 offenders)

Purpose	%	p<
Administrative	43.1	.001
Community service	43.5	
Compassionate	30.8	
Family	51.1	
Parental	50.0	
Personal	48.7	
Social	58.3	

We also examined offenders who had an UTA and no ETA (see Table 11a). As Table 11a shows, there were no significant differences with respect to gender, age, being Native, or regional location in relation to the number who had been granted a discretionary release. Only were sex offenders who had an UTA but no ETA significantly less likely than non-sex offenders to be granted a discretionary release.

Table 11a.

Percentage Distribution of Discretionary Releases: Case Characteristics for UTA and no ETA (416 offenders)

Characteristic	%	p<

Gender:		
male	67.7	ns
female	25.0	
Age:		
under 30	68.7	ns
30 to 49	65.2	
50 +	75.6	
Native:		
No	67.6	ns
Yes	60.0	
Region:		
Atlantic	73.2	ns
Quebec	66.4	
Ontario	64.0	
Prairie	78.1	
Pacific	72.3	
Homicide offender:		
No	65.5	ns
Yes	79.6	
Sex offender:		
No	67.8	.002
Yes	62.5	

Robbery offender:		
No	70.8	ns
Yes	59.9	
Drug offender:		
No	67.4	ns
Yes	67.2	

Among offenders who had an ETA but no UTA during 1993/94 and subsequently a discretionary release (see Table 11b), there were no significant differences across purpose of ETA.

Table 11b.

Percentage Distribution of Discretionary Releases: Purpose for UTA and No ETA (416 offenders)

Purpose	%	p<
Administrative	76.7	ns
Community service	66.7	
Compassionate	36.4	
Family	64.8	
Parental	100.0	
Personal	69.2	
Social	76.0	

Return to Federal Custody

We sought to uncover whether or not there were any significant differences among selected case characteristics for the various categorizations of TA participation, in relation to whether or not the offender had been returned to federal custody during the post-release follow-up period.

Among offenders who had ETAs and subsequently returned to federal custody (see Table 12a), we found offenders who were older (50 years or more), in the Pacific region or homicide offenders were significantly more likely to have been returned to federal custody than their respective counterparts. In contrast, drug offenders who had an ETA were significantly more likely than non-drug offenders to have been returned to federal custody.

Table 12a.

Percentage Distribution of Returns to Federal Custody: Case Characteristics for ETAs (2,975 offenders)

Characteristic	%	p<
Gender:		
male	20.7	ns
female	24.3	
Age:		
under 30	17.6	.02
30 to 49	21.3	
50 +	24.4	
Native:		
No	20.8	ns
Yes	22.4	
Region:		
Atlantic	19.1	.001
Quebec	17.7	
Ontario	21.1	
Prairie	20.6	
Pacific	27.0	
Homicide offender:		
No	14.4	.001
Yes	52.7	

Sex offender:		
No	21.2	ns
Yes	19.2	
Robbery offender:		
No	20.9	ns
Yes	20.7	
Drug offender:		
No	23.0	.001
Yes	14.4	

When examining offenders who had an ETA during 1993/94 and subsequently a return to federal custody (see Table 12b), the ETA was most likely for compassionate reasons.

Table 12b.

Percentage Distribution Returns to Federal Custody: Purpose for ETAs (2,975 offenders)

Purpose	%	p<
Administrative	23.2	.001
Community service	18.0	
Compassionate	35.1	
Family	18.5	
Parental	18.8	
Personal	22.9	
Social	9.5	

As Table 13a shows, among offenders who had UTAs there were no significant differences with respect to gender, age, being Native, being a sex offender, being a robbery offender or being a drug offender in relation to later having been returned to federal custody. Only those offenders who had UTAs in the Pacific region and homicide offenders were more likely to have been returned to federal custody.

Table 13a.

Percentage Distribution of Federal Returns to Custody: Case Characteristics for UTAs (1,002 offenders)

Characteristic	%	p<
Gender:		
male	7.5	ns
female	12.0	
Age:		
under 30	5.0	ns
30 to 49	8.7	
50 +	6.5	
Native:		
No	7.7	ns
Yes	7.4	
Region:		
Atlantic	12.5	.004
Quebec	6.5	
Ontario	5.1	
Prairie	10.4	
Pacific	13.8	
Homicide offender:		
No	5.7	.001
Yes	17.1	

Sex offender:		
No	7.6	ns
Yes	7.2	
Robbery offender:		
No	7.9	ns
Yes	6.7	
Drug offender:		
No	8.3	ns
Yes	5.7	

In Table 13b, we show that among offenders who had an UTA during 1993/94 and a subsequent return to federal custody there were no significant differences in the purposes of the UTA.

Table 13b.

Percentage Distribution of Federal Returns to Custody: Purpose for UTAs (1,002 offenders)

Purpose	%	p<
Administrative	9.9	ns
Community service	9.3	
Compassionate	0.0	
Family	7.7	
Parental	0.0	
Personal	8.8	
Social	5.4	

For offenders who had both an ETA and UTA during 1993/94 and subsequently returned to federal custody (see Table 13a), there were no significant differences for gender, age, being Native, being a sex/robbery/drug offender in the number who had been returned to federal custody. We did find, however, that offenders in the Pacific region who had both ETAs and UTAs were significantly more likely to have been returned to federal custody relative to their counterparts.

Table 14a.

**Percentage Distribution of Federal Returns to Custody: Case Characteristics for ETA and UTA
(587 offenders)**

Characteristic	%	p<
Gender:		
male	8.9	ns
female	9.5	
Age:		
under 30	6.5	ns
30 to 49	9.7	
50 +	7.5	
Native:		
No	9.1	ns
Yes	7.7	
Region:		
Atlantic	14.9	.05
Quebec	7.0	
Ontario	5.6	
Prairie	11.1	
Pacific	16.7	
Homicide offender:		
No	6.9	.001
Yes	17.3	

Sex offender:		
No	8.9	ns
Yes	8.5	
Robbery offender:		
No	9.2	ns
Yes	7.9	
Drug offender:		
No	9.3	ns
Yes	7.7	

Among offenders who had an ETA and UTA during 1993/94 and subsequently a return to federal custody, there were no significant differences in the purposes of the ETA and UTA.

Table 14b.

Percentage Distribution of Federal Returns to Custody: Purpose for ETA and UTA (587 offenders)

Purpose	%	p<
Administrative	9.8	ns
Community service	10.0	
Compassionate	0.0	
Family	10.4	
Parental	0.0	
Personal	9.8	
Social	3.3	

When we examined offenders who had an ETA and no UTA as well as returned to federal custody (see Table 15a) some interesting patterns emerge. As Table 15a shows, there were no significant differences with respect to gender, being Native, being a sex offender or being a robbery offender in relation to the number who had been returned to federal custody. We note that among offenders who had an ETA but no UTA, older offenders (50 years or more), those in the Pacific region, and homicide offenders were significantly more likely to be returned to federal custody. On the other hand, drug offenders who had an ETA but no UTA were significantly less likely than non-drug offenders to have been returned to federal custody.

Table 15a.

**Percentage Distribution of Federal Returns to Custody: Case Characteristics for ETA and no UTA
(2,387 offenders)**

Characteristic	%	p<
Gender:		
male	23.6	ns
female	27.9	
Age:		
under 30	19.6	.009
30 to 49	24.5	
50 +	28.4	
Native:		
No	23.9	ns
Yes	24.1	
Region:		
Atlantic	19.7	.001
Quebec	20.5	
Ontario	27.7	
Prairie	21.8	
Pacific	29.1	

Homicide offender:		
No	16.2	.001
Yes	62.8	
Sex offender:		
No	24.6	ns
Yes	20.7	
Robbery offender:		
No	24.0	ns
Yes	23.2	
Drug offender:		
No	26.3	.001
Yes	16.2	

For offenders who had an ETA and no UTA during 1993/94 and subsequently a return to federal custody, the purpose for the ETA was most likely to be for compassionate reasons.

Table 15b.

Percentage Distribution of Federal Returns to Custody: Purpose for ETA and No UTA (2,387 offenders)

Purpose	%	p<
Administrative	25.6	.001
Community service	19.1	
Compassionate	35.8	
Family	23.6	
Parental	21.4	
Personal	26.1	
Social	10.9	

Table 16a presents the distribution of offenders who had an UTA and no ETA as well as had been

returned to federal custody. As we can see from Table 16a, there were no significant differences with respect to gender, age, being Native, regional location, being a sex offender, being a robbery offender or being a drug offender in relation to the number who had been returned to federal custody. Only were homicide offenders who had an UTA but no ETA significantly more likely than non-homicide offenders to have been returned to federal custody.

Table 16a.

Percentage Distribution of Federal Returns to Custody: Case Characteristics for UTA and no ETA (416 offenders)

Characteristic	%	p<
Gender:		
male	5.6	ns
female	25.0	
Age:		
under 30	3.7	ns
30 to 49	7.1	
50 +	4.9	
Native:		
No	5.8	ns
Yes	6.7	
Region:		
Atlantic	9.8	ns
Quebec	5.6	
Ontario	4.4	
Prairie	9.4	
Pacific	6.1	

Homicide offender:		
No	4.1	.001
Yes	16.7	
Sex offender:		
No	5.9	ns
Yes	5.0	
Robbery offender:		
No	6.0	ns
Yes	5.3	
Drug offender:		
No	6.9	ns
Yes	3.2	

In relation to offenders who had an UTA and no ETA during 1993/94 and subsequently a return to federal custody (see Table 16b), there were no significant differences in the purposes of the UTA.

Table 16b.

Percentage Distribution of Federal Returns to Custody: Purpose for UTA and No ETA (416 offenders)

Purpose	%	p<
Administrative	10.0	ns
Community service	0.0	
Compassionate	0.0	
Family	5.2	
Parental	0.0	
Personal	3.9	
Social	8.0	

Discussion

The results of the TA program participation follow-up point to the predictive value, particularly UTAs, in discretionary release decision-making and post-release outcome. TA program participants were differentiated by the type of TA taken as well as a variety of selected case characteristics. The following summarizes the major findings:

1. Less than one-twentieth of the offenders in the 1993/94 study sample had an unsuccessful TA, three-fifths were granted a discretionary release and one-sixth were returned to federal custody.
2. Offenders granted UTAs were more likely than those granted ETAs to: be unsuccessful while on TA; be granted a discretionary release; and be successful post-release.
3. Female offenders, older offenders, Native offenders, sex offenders, and offenders in the Pacific region were more likely than their counterparts to have had ETAs and most ETAs were for personal and family contact reasons.
4. Native offenders and sex offenders were less likely than their counterparts to have had UTAs. On the other hand, offenders in the Ontario region were more likely to have had UTAs relative to any other region and most UTAs were for family contact.

The TA program participation follow-up offers some important information on the characteristics of offenders who receive them and the potential effects the interplay between these variables have on discretionary release and post-release outcome.

Given that participation in the UTA program increased the likelihood of discretionary release and the majority who received them did well post-release, the need to continue improving both selection and intervention strategies becomes evident.

As a mechanism for safely re-integrating offenders into the community, the selection of cases (especially Native and sex offenders) for UTA could be augmented by taking into consideration a more systematic approach to assessing both offender risk and needs.

To sum, this study yielded important information on the TA program and the impact of participation on release and community adjustment. As an indicator of reduced offender risk, having had an ETA is insufficient to warrant the granting of discretionary release. On the other hand, having had UTAs does warrant further consideration.

References

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