

Employment Trends in Corrections

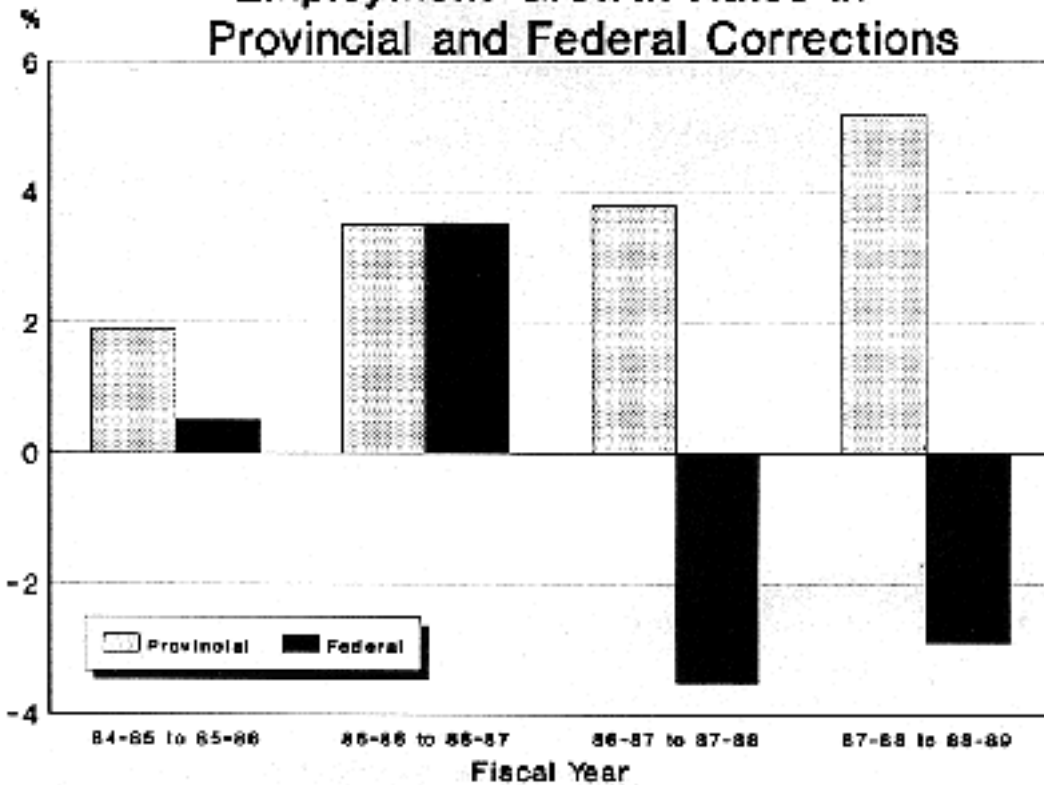
The Census Bureau in the United States has recently released statistics on the total number of federal, state and local government employees. Over the period October 1, 1987, to October 1, 1988, the figures show an overall increase of 1.8% in the number of staff performing government functions. Of particular note, however, was the fact that corrections showed the largest growth rate of all government functions: an increase of 8% was recorded between 1987 and 1988. Further, during the previous five years, the average annual rate of growth for corrections employment was 7.8%, the fastest rate of growth in government.

To provide some comparative figures for Canada, the Research Branch examined data provided by the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics and the Public Service Commission of Canada (PSC) on the staffing levels in corrections for both federal and provincial jurisdictions. We decided to look at the overall growth rate of the provincial and federal correctional systems, and to compare the Correctional Service of Canada to the overall federal public sector.

Between 1987 and 1988, the number of employees working for provincial and federal jurisdictions in Canada increased by only 0.6%. An overall increase of 7.1% occurred between the 1984-85 and 1988-89 fiscal years. When comparing the percentages of employees working for provincial and federal corrections for a five-year period, one notices that employment in the provincial system has steadily increased, while in federal corrections it increased from 1984 to 1986 and decreased from 1987 to 1989 (see **Figure**).

Figure 1

Employment Growth Rates in Provincial and Federal Corrections



According to figures provided by the Public Service Commission of Canada, although the number of departures has been greater than the number of entrants, staff strength within the Correctional Service of Canada has declined at a somewhat lower rate than in the public service at large.

Table 1

Growth in Staffing Levels by Occupational Category			
Occupational Category	CSC Strength as of Dec.31/88	% change CSC 87/88	% change PSC 87/88
Management	82	3.8	0.4
Sci Prof.	715	-0.1	0.4
Adm. + F.S.	1 886	-0.5	2.2
Technical	52	-10.3	-1.6
Adm. support	1 499	-1.0	-3.0
Operational	6127	-1.2	-4.6
Total	10 361	-1.0	-1.4

The table shows that staff strength in the Public Service Commission decreased by 1.4% in the six major occupational categories from December 31, 1987, to December 31, 1988. By contrast, in the Correctional Service of Canada, the decrease was 1.0%. Looking more closely at the figures, we see that the Correctional Service of Canada has kept pace with the PSC in some areas but has decreased staffing

levels more substantially in other areas. For example, the Correctional Service of Canada decreased staffing levels more significantly in the Technical category but less so in Administrative Support and Operational categories. The Scientific and Professional category and the Administrative and Financial Support groups grew slightly in the PSC but decreased in the Correctional Service of Canada. Management was the only occupational category that grew in the Correctional Service of Canada. Although this category also grew in the PSC, the increase was much higher in the Correctional Service of Canada.