

Research at a glance



Profile of Convicted Murderers who Reoffend with a Similar Crime while under Supervision in the Community

KEY WORDS: *Reoffend homicide, murderers, full parole, supervision in the community*

Why we did this study

In July 2007, following the report entitled *Board of Investigation into the Release and Supervision of an Offender on Full Parole Charged with First Degree Murder – Durham, Ontario – October 27, 2006*, the Research Branch was asked to compile a list from the Offender Management System (OMS) of all homicide cases in Canada from January 1, 1998, to January 1, 2008, inclusively. From there they were asked to inventory all first- and second-degree murder and manslaughter cases and then to identify all those offenders who had previously been sentenced for murder or manslaughter prior to this ten-year period. The objective was to determine whether there are indicators that could help parole offices establish a checklist for these types of cases.

What we did

Over this ten-year period, 3,032 males were arrested, convicted and given a federal sentence for various types of homicides. Of this number, 83 (2.7%) were under supervision at the time of their offence and 10 (0.3%) were under supervision and had previously been sentenced for another homicide. This is an average of one case per year.

Although this sample is too small for statistical analyses, an in-depth review of these 10 cases revealed 15 common traits among the offenders. The purpose of this report is to present these indicators.

To avoid any errors in compiling the data collected, each repeat homicide by a male offender under community supervision between January 1, 1998, and January 1, 2008, that was recorded in the OMS was double checked.

What we found

A list of 15 characteristics and trends for the ten cases emerged: 1) A significant history of violence; 2) Early commission of a violent crime (juvenile criminal history); 3) A very violent pre-, per- and post- MO (the death of the victims was followed by the suicides of two assailants and a third was shot by police); 4) A relatively short lapse of time between release and recidivism; 5) A lack of remorse; 6) A complete lack of empathy for the victim or victims; 7) Criminal opportunities associated with a very conspicuous criminal lifestyle; 8) Membership to a criminal group or organization; 9) Abuse of multiple substances dating back more than 15 years; 10) Diagnosed mental health problems

11) A violent family background; 12) A dysfunctional family background; 13) Repeated escapes or attempts to escape; 14) Repeated parole failure; 15) Varied involvement or failure in programs appropriate to the offender's risk level.

Number of Offenders Convicted of Homicide 1998 – 2008 (N=3032)

Offenders convicted of homicide while under community supervision	83	2.7
Repeat homicide committed while under community supervision	10	0.3

What it means

Although the sample size obtained in this study was much too small for tests of significance and the results cannot be used to construct an actuarial scale, however, the results were used to establish a list of 15 characteristics and trends for the ten cases studied. These 15 indicators could prove useful for parole officers working with offenders sentenced for homicide who are under federal supervision in the community.

For more information

Bensimon, P. (2011). *Profile of Convicted Murders who Reoffend with a Similar Crime while under Supervision in the Community*. Ottawa, Ontario. Correctional Service of Canada

To obtain a PDF version of the full report, contact the following address: research@csc-scc.gc.ca.

Prepared by: Philippe Bensimon, Ph.D.

Contact

Research Branch
(613) 995-3975
research@csc-scc.gc.ca

