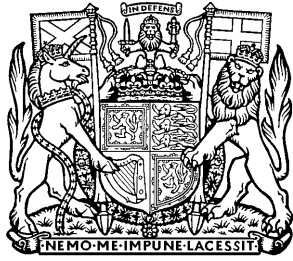

The Parole Board for Scotland

Corporate Plan 2002



Parole Board for Scotland

CORPORATE PLAN

2002

FOREWORD

This is the Parole Board's third Corporate Plan, covering the financial years 2002-05. Both previous Plans have referred to the difficulty involved in planning the future for a body whose workload is determined by other parties, whose methods of working have been subject to continuing review and whose very existence has been under threat at some times. Since the publication of the second Plan, the Human Rights Act 1998 has prompted yet more changes in our working practices, not all of which are yet fully quantifiable. This Plan, therefore, reflects our best possible estimates of what will be required to enable us to perform our task effectively, efficiently and with due regard to natural justice and the protection of the public.

Our task remains that of deciding if and when, and subject to what conditions, long term and life sentence prisoners should be released from custody once they have served the minimum part of their sentence required by law. We are also responsible for considering the recall and re-release of prisoners and for monitoring those on extended sentences. In all of our work, we rely on reports from many different bodies and persons – prison staff of all grades, social workers, psychologists, psychiatrists, voluntary organisations, the police, the Scottish Executive Justice Department, judges and the Crown Office. In order to perform our work satisfactorily in the interests of the public and parole candidates, we need good reports and we need them on time. In this Plan, and in future Annual Reports, we propose performance targets for ourselves which are genuine indicators of **the Board's** performance. We shall continue to monitor our performance and our practices to ensure that we make the best possible decisions in the most efficient way.


Performance indicators in previous Plans have related mainly to time frames within which decisions should be made and communicated. In the last year, research has been commissioned into the **quality** of the Board's decisions. While there are clearly many methodological difficulties with such research, it seems crucial to us that we should know how good we are at predicting how prisoners will respond when they are released. We would hope on the basis of this research to be able to develop both better understanding of the factors which might affect re-offending and performance indicators which measure the Board's ability to make correct decisions.

The major change in recent times affecting the Board's work is the introduction of Tribunals to determine the release of all life-sentence prisoners. The arguments in favour of this move were well rehearsed in the Scottish Parliament during the passage of the Convention Rights (Compliance) (Scotland) Act 2001, and the Board welcomes the new system. The exact implications for the Board's work will not be known until each existing life sentence prisoner has a "punishment part" set, since this punishment part will determine when the case is referred to the Board. It is clear, however, that the increase in workload will be substantial. In anticipation of this, the numbers of staff and members of the Board have been increased. We shall need to keep under review the number of Board members to ensure that we do not ask each individual, all of whom are part-time, to perform an unreasonable number of days work in a year. The nature of the work is very demanding, as is now made clear in all recruitment materials, and it is necessary to treat all members properly to maintain their high levels of commitment and enthusiasm for the work.

The Convention Rights (Compliance)(Scotland) Act also made changes to the appointment system for Board members and introduces a new system for their dismissal. This is in order to stress the independence of the Board. In furtherance of this independence, the Board has also been required to appoint its own legal advisers. This has now been done, under the normal procedures for

competitive tendering. The full cost of this service cannot be accurately predicted; the level of resort to judicial review of Board decisions is likely to be the major determinant of such cost.

Our Corporate Plan thus represents the best estimates we can make of the costs of our work for the next three years. Throughout that period we shall strive to improve our working practices to make the best possible decisions in the interests of the public and of all persons in the criminal justice system, and to do so with maximum efficiency.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'James J McManus', with a large initial 'J' and a long horizontal stroke.

James J McManus
Chairman

CHAPTER 1

General

1 This is the third Corporate Plan prepared by The Parole Board for Scotland. The purpose of this Corporate Plan is to explain the Board's functions; how it proposes these should be fulfilled; the Board's objectives; and its performance targets. The Plan covers the years 2002/03, 2003/04 and 2004/05.

Statutory Powers and Functions

2. The Parole Board for Scotland exists under the provisions of the Prisons (Scotland) Act 1989, the Prisoners and Criminal Proceedings (Scotland) Act 1993 and the Convention Rights (Compliance) (Scotland) Act 2001.

3. The Board has powers to:

recommend the release of determinate sentence prisoners serving 4 years or more but less than 10 years and it may also make recommendations as to the licence conditions of such prisoners;

recommend the release of prisoners serving a determinate sentence of more than 10 years' imprisonment;

direct the release on life licence of life prisoners;

recommend the recall to custody of determinate sentence prisoners serving sentences of 4 years' imprisonment or more, life sentence prisoners who have been released on parole or life licence and extended sentence prisoners in circumstances where such action is considered to be in the public interest.

In the case of those prisoners sentenced to 4 years or more but less than 10 years, the Scottish Ministers are statutorily obliged to accept the Board's recommendations.

4. The Board may direct the Scottish Ministers to re-release any prisoner who has been recalled to custody without a recommendation of the Board or any prisoner who has been recalled with such a recommendation. The cases of life prisoners and extended sentence prisoners who are recalled to custody must be considered by a Tribunal of the Board.

5. The Board advises the Scottish Ministers on additional conditions to be attached to prisoners' release licences.

The Parole Board Rules

6. The Parole Board (Scotland) Rules 2001, set out the matters which may be taken into account by the Board in considering references by the Scottish Ministers. These are:-

the nature and circumstances of any offence of which that person has been convicted or found guilty by a court of law;

that person's conduct since the date of his/her current sentence(s);

the likelihood of that person committing any offence or causing harm to any other person if he/she were to be released on licence, remain on licence or be re-released on licence as the case may be;

what that person intends to do if he/she were to be released on licence, remain on licence or be re-released on licence, as the case may be, and the likelihood of his/her fulfilling those intentions; and

any written information or documents or written representations which the Scottish Ministers or the person concerned has sent to the Board or which the Board has otherwise obtained.

7. The Rules provide for prisoners having access to reports and other information contained in their review dossiers, with suitable safeguards in non-tribunal cases for the withholding of information that Scottish Ministers or the Board considers it would be damaging to disclose. The Rules also prescribe the procedures for Tribunals.

The Parole Board Membership

8. Schedule 2 of the Prisoners and Criminal Proceedings (Scotland) Act 1993 provides that the Board shall consist of a Chairman and not less than 4 other members appointed by the Scottish Ministers. The Board must include among its members:

a Lord Commissioner of Justiciary;

a registered medical practitioner who is a psychiatrist;

a person appearing to Scottish Ministers to have knowledge and experience of the supervision and aftercare of discharged prisoners; and

a person appearing to Scottish Ministers to have made a study of the causes of delinquency and the treatment of offenders.

9. At present the Board comprises a Chairman and 18 members. In terms of section 14(2) of the 2001 Rules, the powers of the Board may be exercised by any three members.

10. The membership of the Board as at January 2002 is detailed at Annex 1.

The Work Of The Board

1. The Parole Board endeavours to ensure that those prisoners who are no longer regarded as presenting a risk to the public safety during a period of parole may serve the remainder of their sentence in the community under the supervision of a social worker. It is not the responsibility of the Board to consider the questions of punishment and general deterrence. These issues are regarded as discharged, in the case of determinate sentence prisoners, when a case is referred to the Board by the Scottish Ministers and on which the judiciary has deliberated in indeterminate prisoners' cases.

Determinate Sentence Prisoners

2. The Scottish Ministers refer to the Board a dossier in respect of every prisoner who is eligible to be considered for parole, unless a prisoner declines to be so considered. Such dossiers contain details of:

the full name and date of birth of the prisoner;

the establishment at which the prisoner is detained;

the prisoner's current sentence or sentences and an indication of the offence or offences for which that sentence or those sentences were imposed;

any other offences of which a court has found the prisoner guilty together with a note of the sentence or other disposal ordered on such findings;

reports prepared by those involved in supervising, caring for or counselling the prisoner which describe the prisoner's circumstances (including home background) and behaviour and on his/her suitability for release on licence; and

information about the prisoner's plans, including employment prospects, on release.

3. At the same time as the dossier is referred to the Board, the Scottish Ministers send a copy to the prisoner. The prisoner is invited to submit to the Board any written representations about the terms of the reports contained in the dossier and is asked to state whether or not he/she wishes to be interviewed by a member of the Board. In the event of the prisoner requesting an interview, he/she will be interviewed by a Board member and be provided with a copy of the report of that interview. The prisoner's written representations and the report of the interview are incorporated in the dossier and, several days before the prisoner's case for early release is due to be considered at a meeting of the Board, a copy of the dossier is forwarded to each member who is scheduled to attend that meeting in order that they may fully acquaint themselves with the circumstances of the case. The Parole Board Rules provide that the powers of the Board may be exercised by any 3 members of the Board, but in general terms seven members of the Board attend each case work meeting.

4. In the event of the Board recommending that a prisoner be granted parole, Scottish Ministers are, in circumstances where the prisoner has been sentenced to a term of less than 10 years' imprisonment, obliged to accept the recommendation. The licence runs from the date

on which the prisoner is released until the end of the sentence. In cases where the prisoner has been sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment or more, Scottish Ministers are not obliged to accept the Board's recommendation, but are required to exercise their discretion reasonably. In practice, it is exceptional for the Scottish Ministers to decline to accept a recommendation from the Board.

5. Scottish Ministers also refer to the Board information received from supervising officers and/or the police where the licensees' behaviour in the community suggests that they may present an unacceptable risk to the public. In such cases the Board may recommend that the licensee is recalled to custody.

Life Prisoners

6. Part 1 of the Convention Rights (Compliance) (Scotland) Act 2001 brought the arrangements for considering the release of adult mandatory life prisoners into line with the procedures for dealing with other classes of life prisoners. With effect from 8 October 2001 all life prisoners who have served the punishment part of their sentence must have the grounds for their continued confinement considered by a Tribunal of the Board.

7. A Tribunal of the Board consists of three members of the Parole Board For Scotland, appointed by the Chairman of the Board. The Chairman of the Tribunal must hold, have held or be qualified to hold judicial office.

8. A life prisoner is entitled to require Scottish Ministers to refer his case to the Parole Board once the punishment part, that is the period fixed by the courts to satisfy the requirements of retribution and deterrence, ignoring the period of confinement, if any, which may be necessary for the protection of the public, has been served.

9. In considering the case of a life prisoner a Tribunal has the power to direct Scottish Ministers to release the prisoner if it is satisfied that it is no longer necessary for the protection of the public that the prisoner should be confined.

10. In referring life prisoners' cases to the Board, Scottish Ministers also request advice on certain matters in the event that no direction to release the prisoner is made. These matters are:

the degree of risk posed by the prisoner and the steps needed to address this;

the desirability of transfer of the prisoner to different conditions within the options available; and

11. It is for the Tribunal, where it does not direct release, to fix the date on which it will next consider the prisoner's case. The Parole Board may, however, at the request of a life prisoner in respect of whom it has fixed the date of the next consideration of his case, direct the Scottish Ministers to refer that case to the Board before that date.

Extended Sentence Prisoners

12. Section 86 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 introduced provisions to allow courts to impose additional post-release supervision on certain offenders where they consider such action to be necessary. The criterion for imposing the additional supervision, which forms part of an "extended sentence" is that any existing supervision would not be enough to protect the public from serious harm from the offender.

13. An extended sentence may be imposed in indictment cases on:
 - sex offenders who would have received a determinate custodial sentence of any length;
 - or
 - violent offenders who would have received a determinate custodial sentence of 4 years or more.
14. The maximum length of the extension period is 10 years for sex offenders and 5 years for violent offenders. There are two other restrictions, namely:
 - if the sentence is imposed by a sheriff sitting with a jury, the maximum extension period is restricted to 3 years; and
 - the maximum length of the whole extended sentence cannot exceed the statutory maximum for that offence.
15. Scottish Ministers consult the Parole Board about the additional conditions that are to be attached to the release licences of extended sentence prisoners where the combined custodial part and the extension is 4 years or more.
16. Scottish Ministers refer to the Board all cases where an extended sentence prisoner has been recalled to custody.
17. In considering the case of grounds for recall of an extended sentence prisoner the Board, in recommending that the offender's licence be revoked, must be satisfied that such action is necessary in order to protect the public from serious harm from the offender. In the event of an extended sentence prisoner being recalled to custody, the case for re-release must be considered by a Tribunal of the Board. The Tribunal, if not recommending immediate re-release, must be satisfied that it is necessary to hold the offender in custody in order to protect the public from serious harm.

Non-Parole Licences

18. Offenders sentenced to a term of 4 years' imprisonment or more on or after 1 October 1993, who are not released on parole, are released on licence at the two thirds stage of their sentence and the licence runs to the sentence end date. The term non-parole licence is used to describe this non-discretionary period of supervision in the community. Offenders released on non-parole licence are mainly those prisoners whose conduct in prison and circumstances indicate that there is an unacceptable risk of re-offending on release. In general terms there will be indications that they have done little or no work on the factors such as drug or alcohol abuse which lay behind their offending, there may be evidence that they have continued with substance abuse in prison, they may have a history of failure during previous periods of supervision or they may have declined to be considered for early release on parole.
19. Scottish Ministers consult the Board about the terms of any additional conditions to be attached to the licences of prisoners who are released at the two thirds stage of their sentence.
20. Scottish Ministers also refer to the Board information received from licensees' supervising officers and/or the police where the licensees' behaviour in the community suggests that they present an unacceptable risk to the public. In such cases the Board may recommend that the licensee is recalled to custody.

Estimated Future Workload

21. An indication of the number of cases which will be referred to the Board in the years 2002 to 2005 is illustrated in the following table which shows the number of interviews that members of the Board will require to carry out at prison establishments throughout Scotland over these years:

Years	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05
Determinate Sentence Prisoners*	580	650	650
Recall Cases	150	150	150
Total Number of Interviews	730	800	800

* Includes second and subsequent reviews

In addition the Board will be required to convene Life Prisoner Tribunals in each of the years covered by the Plan. The best estimate we have of the likely numbers to be referred in each of the three years is as follows:

Years	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05
Tribunals	170	200	200

The Board will also be required to convene Tribunals to consider the re-release on licence of extended sentence prisoners who are recalled to custody. An estimate of the likely number of such cases is as follows:

Years	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05
Tribunals	5	5	5

22. The workload of the Board will be significantly increased because of the need to convene Tribunals to deal with the cases of adult mandatory life prisoners and an expected increase in the number of other cases referred to the Board. Each Tribunal must be chaired by a member of the Board who holds, has held or is qualified to hold judicial office and in order that the Board may fulfil this statutory function additional members were appointed to the Board in September 2001. All members of the Board are expected to contribute towards every aspect of the work of the Board. The additional members are, therefore, expected to participate in decision making at the Board's casework meetings.

23. At present the Board's membership stands at 19. The Board does not consider it essential that all members meet together in order to reach decisions in relation to the suitability of individual prisoners for release on licence. In these circumstances, no less than 3 Board members and no more than 7 members attend each case work meeting. The Board meets on a total of 36 occasions each year to consider the cases of determinate sentence prisoners referred to it by the Scottish Ministers.

Training of Members

24. The members of the Board are aware of the need to provide comprehensive training for new members who join the Board. The Board has established a training committee comprising three experienced Board members who are responsible for ensuring that satisfactory induction

training is available for all new members of the Board. An induction pack is available to new members and an experienced Board member acts as a mentor for the first 6 months of the new member's appointment.

Visits to Prison Establishments and Social Work Departments

25. Each year members visit a number of the prison establishments where parole eligible prisoners are held. These visits provide members of the Board with the opportunity to speak with prisoners and fully explain the early release procedures. The members also take the opportunity afforded by these visits to talk with prison staff of all disciplines and explain to them the Board's requirements with regard to matters such as the reports submitted in connection with the review of prisoners' cases for early release.

26. The Board also has referred to it each year the cases of children sentenced by the courts to detention under section 208 of the Criminal Procedure (Scotland) Act 1995 and for this reason the Board has agreed to visit the secure schools/units where such children are detained.

27. The Board's programme of visits over the next 3 years is as follows:

2002/03	2003/04	2004/05
Polmont	St Mary's Kenmure*	Cornton Vale
Glenochil	Castle Huntly	Noranside
Shotts	Peterhead	Greenock

* Secure school/ unit

28. The members of the Board also consider that a great deal of benefit is gained from meeting with community based social workers who are responsible for supervising licensees. Such meetings ensure that the Board is aware of any difficulties which may have arisen in the course of supervising licensees and that the members are kept up to date with regard to community based programmes which are designed to assist the successful reintegration of prisoners into the community and thereby reduce the risk of re-offending. A programme of visits over the years 2002 to 2005 has yet to be agreed with social work departments, but the proposed programme is:

2002/03	2003/04	2004/05
Glasgow	Clackmannan	Dundee
West Lothian	Falkirk	Edinburgh

General Purposes Meetings

29. The Parole Board holds 3 General Purposes Meetings each year. These meetings provide the members with the opportunity to discuss matters such as Board policy and procedures, proposed changes to the law relating to early release of offenders, consultation documents on which a Board response is requested, developments within the Scottish Prison Service, the Board's budget and the Board's performance in relation to the targets that it has set itself.

Annual Conference

30. The Board holds an Annual Conference which also provides members with the opportunity to gather together to discuss the business of the Board. The Conference also provides a forum for the members of the Board to meet with representatives of other organisations involved in the criminal justice system such as the Scottish Prison Service and agencies involved in the resettlement and aftercare of offenders. The benefits that accrue to the Board members as a result of holding the Annual Conference outweigh the small cost incurred and it is intended that a Conference be convened in each of the years covered by the Corporate Plan.

Observers at Board Meetings

31. The Board regularly invites visitors to observe and comment on its proceedings. Each year the Law Lords are invited to attend a meeting of the Board. The Board also invites staff of the Scottish Prison Service who are involved in the preparation of parole review reports and social workers who are required to supervise offenders in the community. The attendance of such individuals at meetings of the Board enables them to see the importance that the members of the Board place on the reports that they prepare.

Legal Adviser

32. As an independent non-departmental public body, the Parole Board for Scotland is required to appoint its own Legal Adviser. Following a tendering exercise carried out during 2000/01 the Board was pleased to appoint Anderson Strathern as its Legal Adviser with effect from April 2001. The agreed appointment period is 3 years.

CHAPTER 3

Objectives

1. The Board is responsible for managing the financial resources allocated to it to carry out its functions. The members are fully aware of the requirement that they must have due regard to economy in carrying out the functions of the Board. It is, therefore, one of the Board's primary objectives to manage operations efficiently and cost effectively thus ensuring that the taxpayer receives value for money in return for the resources allocated to the Board.
2. The members of the Board are aware that it is essential that the public in general have confidence in the parole system. It is of the utmost importance that the members assess as fully as possible the risk of a prisoner re-offending while on licence. In order to do this with a degree of confidence, the members require to be furnished with accurate and up to date information from those who provide the reports which make up the review dossier. Good quality reports are also essential to enable the Board to achieve a fair and consistent standard of assessment.
3. The members are also aware of the impact that waiting to be advised of the decision of the Board can have on prisoners. Because of this the Board always strives to ensure that unnecessary delays do not occur. Provided that the Board receives a properly completed review dossier timeously, it will endeavour to process all cases in a timely manner and within the 9 week time-scale agreed with the Scottish Ministers in respect of determinate sentence prisoners.
4. The Board places particular importance on prisoners being advised of the reasons underlying decisions and recommendations. For that reason officials of the Board's Secretariat send to prisoners an extract of that part of the Board's minutes relating to their particular case. The Board is aware of the importance that prisoners and those responsible for their management place on the Board providing meaningful reasons for its decisions and recommendations. The Board, therefore, aims to provide clearly stated reasons for both its decisions and recommendations which may be readily understood by prisoners and those who work with them.
5. The Board endeavours to respond positively and constructively to changes in the criminal justice system and to generate proposals for reform.
6. The Board seeks to maintain good working relationships with officials of the Scottish Prison Service, The Scottish Executive Justice Department and those agencies, statutory and non-statutory, involved in the parole system.

Performance Measures

7. The Board is aware of the need to ensure that prisoner's cases are dealt with consistently, timeously and efficiently in order that prisoners are not kept waiting unnecessarily for a decision in relation to their parole review.
8. The Board has adopted the following performance measures for the period covered by this Plan:

Determinate Sentence Prisoners

The proportion of interviews carried out with parole candidates within the agreed time-scale of within 5 weeks of referral.

The Board will endeavour to ensure that no less than 85% of interviews are conducted within 5 weeks of a determinate sentence prisoner's case being referred to the Board;

The proportion of cases considered at Board meetings within the agreed time-scale of within 9 weeks of referral.

The Board will endeavour to ensure that 85% of determinate sentence prisoners have their case considered at a meeting of the Board within 9 weeks of the case being referred to the Board by the Scottish Executive Justice Department.

Life Prisoners

Unless the prisoner, his legal agent or Scottish Ministers request a postponement, the first review of a life prisoner's case will be heard by a Tribunal within 3 days of the expiry of the punishment part set by the judiciary;**

Unless the prisoner, his legal agent or Scottish Ministers request a postponement, all second or subsequent reviews of a life prisoner's case will be heard by a Tribunal within 8 weeks of the case being referred to the Board;

That the Tribunal will issue its decision letter within 14 days of the end of the Tribunal hearing.

** This target does not apply to cases referred to the Board under the transitional arrangements designed to deal with those adult mandatory life prisoners who are currently held in custody, but have not yet had a punishment part set by the courts.

Values

9. In seeking to achieve the objectives set out above the Board will uphold the following values:

to treat all prisoners with fairness and respect;

to avoid unjustifiable discrimination;

to consider each case consistently, thoroughly and objectively, taking into account all evidence placed before it;

to discharge its responsibilities as openly as possible within the constraints of the criminal justice system; and

to support its staff, treating them with fairness and respect and enabling them to exercise their skills as fully as possible, while holding them accountable for their performance and expecting them to play their part in meeting the Board's objectives and adhering to these values.

Parole Research

1. The primary consideration of the Parole Board for Scotland is risk of re-offending. The Board must therefore be sure that the decision-making process both minimises any risk to the public and respects the rights of the individual whose case it is considering. Ongoing research is, therefore, imperative to monitor the impact of parole on re-offending as well as the outcome of the Board's decisions to grant parole or not.

2. Past research into parole decision-making indicates that a lot of emphasis has been placed on the development of an appropriate statistical risk score to help the parole boards' measure the likelihood of re-offending. Early empirical research¹ on parole decision-making often focused on offence-related, socio-economic and institutional variables to construct scales that predicted parole outcome. However, there was often little agreement on the most important factors and so the scales constructed were of limited use. Variables such as *age* and *index offence severity* were generally associated with parole decisions; for example, younger offenders and those convicted of less serious offences often received the most favourable parole consideration.

3. The Carlisle Committee², reviewing the parole system in England and Wales recommended that the Parole Board, "should be under a duty to take into account statistical prediction techniques and, where appropriate, clinical assessments which will assist it in its work". The first risk predictor used in Parole Board decision making in England and Wales was the Reconviction Prediction Score (RPS)³ which predicted the likelihood of a prisoner being convicted of a new offence within 2 years of release from prison. However, since its construction in 1960s, the predictive power of the RPS has been reduced, due in part to changes in the risk of reconviction caused by changes to the criminal justice system. Due to this problem of shrinkage, another instrument, the Risk Of Reconviction (ROR)⁴, was developed using a sample of prisoners released in the late 1980s. The ROR had the advantage not only of being more up-to-date but also of providing a measure of risk over variable time periods and providing a risk measure based on only 6 variables: *age at conviction, in years; number of youth custody sentences; number of adult custodial sentences; number of previous convictions.*

4. A ROR score is no longer calculated for prisoners being considered for parole and its use was discontinued in the late 1990s. It was felt by the Parole Board in England and Wales (the ROR was never used in Scotland) that it provided little more than a starting point for consideration of risk. Furthermore, it was considered that the resources required to make the ROR calculations could no longer be justified, since the scores appeared to be given little weight in the decision-making process.

5. The most recent study on the parole system in England and Wales was conducted by Hood and Shute⁵ and published in 2000. This study examined the parole decision-making process and the Parole Board's ability to differentiate between low and high risk offenders. The study demonstrated that the Parole Board's assessments of risk were higher than those arrived at using the ROR. Hood and Shute, therefore, concluded that the Board members were making "unduly pessimistic" clinical assessments and recommended that ROR scores should be calculated and considered by the Parole Board when making its decision about risk.

6. Given the conclusions which were been drawn by Hood and Shute, the Justice Department considered that it would be valuable to attempt some assessment of the efficacy of Parole Board decision making in Scotland. A research study was commissioned to explore recidivism rates among determinate sentence prisoners released on parole and those considered as presenting too great a risk to be paroled (and therefore released on non-parole licence at the two-thirds stage of sentence). The Parole Board for Scotland also appointed a sub-group of three members to discuss the way forward and to identify particular areas of interest for research. Board members were asked for comments and suggestions for research and this information was collated and presented as an extended research proposal document for consideration by the Central Research Unit.

7. In addition to comparing the release outcomes of these two groups of licensees, the research will attempt to identify the reasons for the Board's decision in cases where release on parole resulted in reconviction or failure (false-positive decisions) and cases where prisoners were refused parole but successfully completed their non-parole licences (false-negative decisions). A separate short research project will examine how the various reports and information contained in the parole dossier impact on the decision-making process. Some attempt will also be made to explore whether different Board members (males and females and members from different professional backgrounds) place different emphases on the information contained in the dossier.

8. The Parole Board for Scotland and the Justice Department have discussed also validating the Risk of Reconviction (ROR) score for use in Scotland. Before this score could be applied by the Parole Board in Scotland, it would be necessary to test whether, given the differences in our criminal justice system, the scoring system produces valid predictions of risk of reconviction in this jurisdiction. Validation of the ROR would be a substantial exercise and before such work could be undertaken it would have to be agreed that this type of statistical instrument could, potentially, make a contribution to decision making. An audit of risk assessment instruments currently in use in the Scottish criminal justice system has already commenced and, as part of this work, any existing evidence of the predictive efficacy of these statistical scores will be examined. This research will provide more information about the value of risk prediction instruments. When the findings from this research are known then the case for validating the ROR score for use in Scotland will be considered.

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Finance, Efficiency and Staffing

1. In carrying out its duties the Board is aware that it is funded from public money and, therefore, has regard to the fact that there is a need for economy. Indeed, it is one of the Board's primary objectives to manage its operations efficiently and cost effectively thus ensuring that the taxpayer receives value for money in return for the resources allocated to the Board.

Staffing

2. The workload of the Board has risen considerably each year and this has led to an increase in the membership of the Board. The revised procedures that flow from the introduction of the Convention Rights (Compliance) (Scotland) Act 2001 which require that all adult mandatory life prisoners have their case for release on licence considered by a Tribunal of the Board will have considerable implications for the workload of the Board's Secretariat as well as the Board members. In order to cope with the expected increase in workload the staff of the Board's Secretariat has been increased to the following level:

Secretary;

3 Casework Managers who act as Minute Secretaries at Board meetings and put in place the arrangements for Life Prisoner Tribunals;

3 staff who support the Board members by acting as Clerk at Tribunals as well as providing clerical support in dealing with cases submitted for consideration at Board meetings; and

3 Administrative Assistants.

3. An estimate of the Board's likely expenditure in each of the years 2002/03, 2003/04 and 2004/05 is provided at Annex 2.

H P Boyle
Secretary to the Board
Saughton House
Broomhouse Drive
Edinburgh

February 2002

ANNEX 1

The Membership of the Parole Board

MEMBERSHIP OF THE PAROLE BOARD FOR SCOTLAND

As at January 2002 the membership of the Parole Board for Scotland was:

Dr James J McManus	Chairman, Senior Lecturer in Law, University of Dundee
Mrs Megan Casserly	Vice chairman Former Principal Officer, Strategy Social Work Department, North Lanarkshire Council
Dr John Baird	Consultant Forensic Psychiatrist
Dr John P Donnelly	Consultant Forensic Clinical Psychologist
Mrs Johan Findlay	Justice of the Peace, Honorary Sheriff
Dr Judith Greenwood, OBE	Former Consultant Psychiatrist
Mrs Irene Guild	Former Procurator Fiscal
Mr Hamish Hyslop	Former Chief Superintendent, Strathclyde Police
Sheriff Brian A Lockhart	Sheriff, Glasgow
Sheriff Principal John J Maguire	Former Sheriff Principal, Tayside, Central and Fife
Mrs Eleanor McLaughlin	Former Lord Provost, Edinburgh
Mr James Milne	Former Area Director, the Scottish Prison Service
Ms Morag Owens	Former Assistant Director, Criminal Justice Services, Tayside Social Work Department
Sheriff Rita Rae	Sheriff, Glasgow
The Rt Hon Lord Ross	Former Lord Justice Clerk
Ms Morag Slessor	Chartered Forensic Clinical Psychologist
Sheriff James Spy	Sheriff, Paisley
Douglas Thomson	Solicitor
The Hon Lord Wheatley	Senator of College of Justice

ANNEX 2

Parole Board for Scotland

Estimated Expenditure 2002/03 to 2004/05

	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05
Members' Fees	257,000	276,000	282,000
Travel etc	90,000	100,000	105,000
Tax 5,000	5,000	5,000	
Staff Salaries	195,000	200,000	206,000
Board Conference	10,000	11,000	12,000
Training	500	1,000	1,000
Lunches/Hospitality	6,500	7,000	7,000
Conference Fees	2,000	2,000	2,000
Computer Maintenance	5,000	5,000	5,000
Printing	6,000	6,000	6,000
Stationery	10,000	10,000	10,000
Postage	14,000	14,000	15,000
Telephones	6,000	6,000	6,000
Photocopying	10,000	10,000	10,000
Web Site	2,000	2,000	2,000
Legal Adviser	20,000	23,000	25,000
Total	639,000	678,000	699,000