DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
ADMINISTRATION
3200 East Highway 34
c/o 500 East Capitol Avenue
Pierre, SD 57501-5070
Phone: (605) 773-3478
Fax: (605) 773-3194

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The Honorable Dennis Daugaard
Governor of South Dakota
500 East Capitol Avenue
Pierre, SD 57501

Dear Governor Daugaard:

As chairman of the Governor's Reentry Council, I am pleased to provide you the 2011 report of the activities of the Council and the state's efforts to reduce recidivism through strengthened reentry processes.

The Reentry Council was first established by Governor Mike Rounds in Executive Order 2009-02. On January 26, 2011 you issued an updated Executive Order (EO 2011-03) affirming your commitment to the state's efforts to reduce prisoner recidivism through sound reentry practices and recognizing the need for collaborative strategies for reentry success. As outlined in these Executive Orders, the primary goal of effective prisoner reentry is public safety. If a prisoner can leave state prison and refrain from additional criminal behavior this benefits not only the former prisoner, but their family, and their larger community as well. My overall goal in recidivism reduction is to restore offenders as productive, law abiding members of community; individuals who contribute to their communities rather than cause harm to themselves and others.

The Reentry Council is charged with identifying, defining and addressing issues affecting inmates being released from prison in South Dakota. The Council is also challenged to identify and apply best practices in prisoner reentry toward the goal of recidivism reduction. A strong and effective prisoner reentry process reduces the number of offenders who fail to make a successful and law abiding transition to the community and reduces the number who have to return to prison due to a parole violation or new offense.

The state's reentry efforts involving the Council focus on successful transition of adult inmates from state prison to the community, typically to parole supervision within the community. The state DOC has many partners in these reentry efforts, including state agencies represented by the Reentry Council members, local government and private sector partners. Much of the reentry work is funded through the existing budgets of

state, local and private entities. While reentry efforts will continue regardless of the availability of Federal funding, the state of SD's reentry efforts have been significantly augmented over the last 2 years through the receipt of Federal Second Chance Act (SCA) grant funds.

The state received the first SCA grant award October 1, 2009. The budget for this first year included $749,749 in Federal SCA dollars, $374,986 cash match and $374,860 in-kind match. This budget included four staff, a Reentry Project Manager (state employee); two local site coordinators, one in Rapid City and one in Sioux Falls (local agency employees) and a Transition Case Manager at the Women's Prison in Pierre (state employee). Approximately $900,000 was budgeted in the first grant award for contractual services.

On September 15 of this year (2011) the state was awarded a second year of funding under the SCA grant. This allowed for the continuation of services from the 2009 award. The state was able to stretch the 2009 award through almost two years and anticipates that the second year award will allow services through state fiscal year 2013. The second year of SCA funding continues the funding for the four staff positions from the first year plus two new parole agents, a reentry center staff person in Sioux Falls and a data systems intern for the reentry program in Sioux Falls. Approximately $1,000,000 in contractual services is budgeted under year two of this grant.

The bulk of the contractual services under the SCA grant awards are for the purchase of reentry services for offenders. Year two contractual services include:

$215,660 transitional housing assistance
$180,000 startup housing assistance
$108,000 for community based mental health services
$308,150 for community based chemical dependency services
$ 70,000 for mentorship, employability services and flexible funds
$104,400 for institutional based programming for offenders
$ 38,957 for staff training in assessments (LSI-R) and case management (EPICS)
$ 55,200 for project evaluation and consultation

The state's SCA budgets reflect investment in best practices in prisoner reentry including support for offender assessment, risk and need based programming, provisions for program fidelity, strong case management, research based program design and evaluation and a recognition of the necessity to ensure means to provide for basic needs for reentering prisoners. These budgets also reflect services identified with collaborative partners as those missing or lacking prior to the availability of SCA dollars for prisoner reentry.

The Second Chance Act programs receiving year two SCA funding (7 out of the original 15 grantees) were selected to participate in a National Second Chance Act Grant evaluation. The purpose of the evaluation is to test the impact of SCA's services on

transitioning offenders. This research will evaluate the SCA program's impact on participants' recidivism rates and other indicators of positive reentry (for example employment, child support payments, and housing stability) and compare these outcomes to those who are eligible for SCA services but were not randomly selected to participate in these services. This evaluation is funded through SD's second year SCA grant award (BJA) and is being conducted by Social Policy Research Associates and the National Opinion Research Center of the University of Chicago.

While SD's participation in the evaluation did not begin during calendar year 2011 much preparation work for evaluation participation was completed including procedures for random assignment of offenders to the treatment and control groups 6-9 months prior to a possible release from prison; training staff on evaluation procedures, consent forms and data collection; and making adjustments in operating procedures and practices to accommodate this experimental study within the correctional system.

As required to participate in this evaluation, the SD DOC needs to randomize eligible offenders into treatment (60%) and control groups (40%). The "treatment" under the SCA and this state's reentry initiative consists of the Thinking for a Change, Job Search Assistance, and Credit where Credit is Due programs, intensive case management and comprehensive case planning in the institution. The "treatment" in community is SCA funded services of housing assistance, employability programming, chemical dependency services, mental health services, assess to needs based flexible funds and enhanced caseload supervision on parole.

During the anticipated 8-10 months of evaluation participation, the SD DOC and its partners in service provision for offenders under the SCA program must ensure that those randomized into the "treatment" group get all of the services and the services have appropriate fidelity. Conversely, the same attention needs to be granted to ensure those randomized to the "control" group do not get these services during their correctional stay.

I have continued my predecessor's stated goal of a 50% reduction in recidivism in five years and I am very pleased to report continued progress toward meeting this goal. As explained in the 2010 Governor's Reentry Council Annual Report, SD measures recidivism consistent with the recidivism definition and measures of the Association of State Correctional Administrators (ASCA) to provide consistent recidivism measures across participating states. Using this ASCA definition, offenders are tracked 12, 24 and 36 months post release and those who return to prison as a result of a new conviction or as a result of a technical parole violation within the tracking period (12, 24 or 36 months from release) are counted as recidivists.

Attachment #1 charts recidivism data, 12, 24 and 36 months post release for offenders released in calendar years 2003 through 2010.

The measure of recidivism used by SD and ASCA requires a delay of at least a year from the time of release before recidivism can be measured. To illustrate, the 12 month

outcomes for 2010 releases could not be calculated until the close of 2011, to allow those who released at the very end of 2010 a full 12 months post release.

The recidivism rate of 2008 releases serves as the baseline for measuring progress toward a 50% recidivism reduction within five years. Attachment #2 charts 12 month recidivism targets to achieve the 50% reduction over five years. Services to qualified offenders under this reentry initiative started in the spring of 2010, making 2010 releases the first year targeted to measure progress toward the state's recidivism reduction goal. The actual 12 month recidivism rate of 2010 releases was 25.9% which is below the targeted rate of 28.1%.

Unfortunately, recent parole violation rates which serve as interim recidivism measures do not suggest a continued downward trend in recidivism for releases in 2011. In CY 2010 an average of 54 inmates were returned to prison as parole violators each month. In CY 2011 an average of 62 parole violators returned to prison each month. Attachment #3 charts the number of parole violation warrants from December 2008 through December 2011. Though a slightly different measure than violators returned to prison, these month by month charts clearly illustrate an upward trend in parole violators, in particular during the last months of CY 2011. Parole conditions violated that lead to revocation remain primarily to be absconding, alcohol and drug usage and new felony behavior.

Over the last several months the adult prison population has increased and the number of parole violators is a contributor to this increase. Attachment #4 charts the monthly average daily count for male and female prison inmates December 2008 through December 2011.

This unprecedented and unanticipated growth in the adult prison population and South Dakota's relatively high incarceration rate has prompted a several pronged strategy to evaluate the factors contributing to SD's incarceration rates and develop appropriate responses. The state's continued efforts toward recidivism reduction remain a key component of this necessary response. Other responses may include the development of additional alternatives to incarceration, drug and DUI courts, review of state policies and focus on system efficiency. Key to on-going recidivism reduction efforts and overall efforts to reverse this increase in prison incarceration is ongoing information provision and effective communication with governmental, private and community partners and stakeholders. It is my intent to use the Reentry Council and the associated Reentry Workgroup as one conduit for this information provision regarding these issues and possible responses.

In March 2011, South Dakota was awarded technical assistance under the Strategic Planning for Prisoner Reentry (SPPR) Project. This assistance was provided through the National Reentry Resource Center and was funded by the Public Welfare Foundation. SD's participation in the SPPR project came through a joint application of the Secretary of Corrections, the Chairman of the Board of Pardons and Paroles and the Executive Director of the Board of Pardons and Paroles and Parole Services.

SPPR project eligibility was tied to SD's adult SCA demonstration grant and was designed to enhance the state's ability to do comprehensive, sustainable strategic planning surrounding prisoner reentry. The SPPR planning team was made up of DOC institutional, parole and administrative staff, DSS Correctional Behavioral Health staff and local government and local agency staff partnering with the DOC in reentry efforts.

The SPPR team identified three top priorities for effort:

1. Enhancing organizational support for reentry
2. Case management
3. Improved communication and information sharing

The team worked in the summer and fall of 2011 in these subgroups and issued subgroup reports containing findings and recommendations in these three priority areas. Each group identified the group's major issue and action steps toward addressing the issue(s).

Concurrent with the SPPR effort are internal DOC efforts specific to reentry development. Current priorities in this effort are:

1. Staff training in assessment, case management and motivational interviewing
2. Development of comprehensive case plan prototype
3. Absconder reduction strategies
4. Risk reduction programming for long term offenders
5. Fidelity in program placement and delivery.

It was challenging to maintain sustained focus on reentry efforts in 2011. With the murder of Senior Correctional Officer Ronald Johnson and the attempted escape of inmates Berget and Robert from the State Penitentiary in April and James McVay's unauthorized departure from the community transition program and the murder of Maybelle Schein in July, there were adjustments to operations and significant trauma experienced by staff, their families and community. These events did impact the ability of the department to prioritize reentry initiatives and resulted in an understandable increase in caution and conservativeness in discretionary decisions. Though there are many factors impacting recidivism, evidence of the natural caution following events of this nature can be seen in the system through reduced discretionary paroles, fewer inmates placed in the community transition program, higher parole violation rates and a smaller percentage of offenders housed in minimum custody settings in 2011 than in 2010.

I remain optimistic that recidivism can be reduced through sound reentry practices including ongoing collaboration and that the recent growth in prison populations can be abated. The State of SD is fortunate to have the SCA grant program resources and the broad base of support and commitment from collaborative partners. Through the work of the Council, the SPPR initiative and internal DOC efforts there is a clear identification of the areas for ongoing focus in reentry and recidivism reduction efforts as we seek to regain the momentum in recidivism reduction from 2010.

Thank you for your on-going support of the work of the Council.

Sincerely,

Denny Kaemingk, Cabinet Secretary
SD Department of Corrections

Listing of Attachments:

1. Recidivism 2003-2010 Adult Inmates
2. 50% Recidivism Reduction in 5 years
3. Parole Revocations by Month
4. Inmate ADC by Month

Recidivism 2003-2010
Adult Inmates

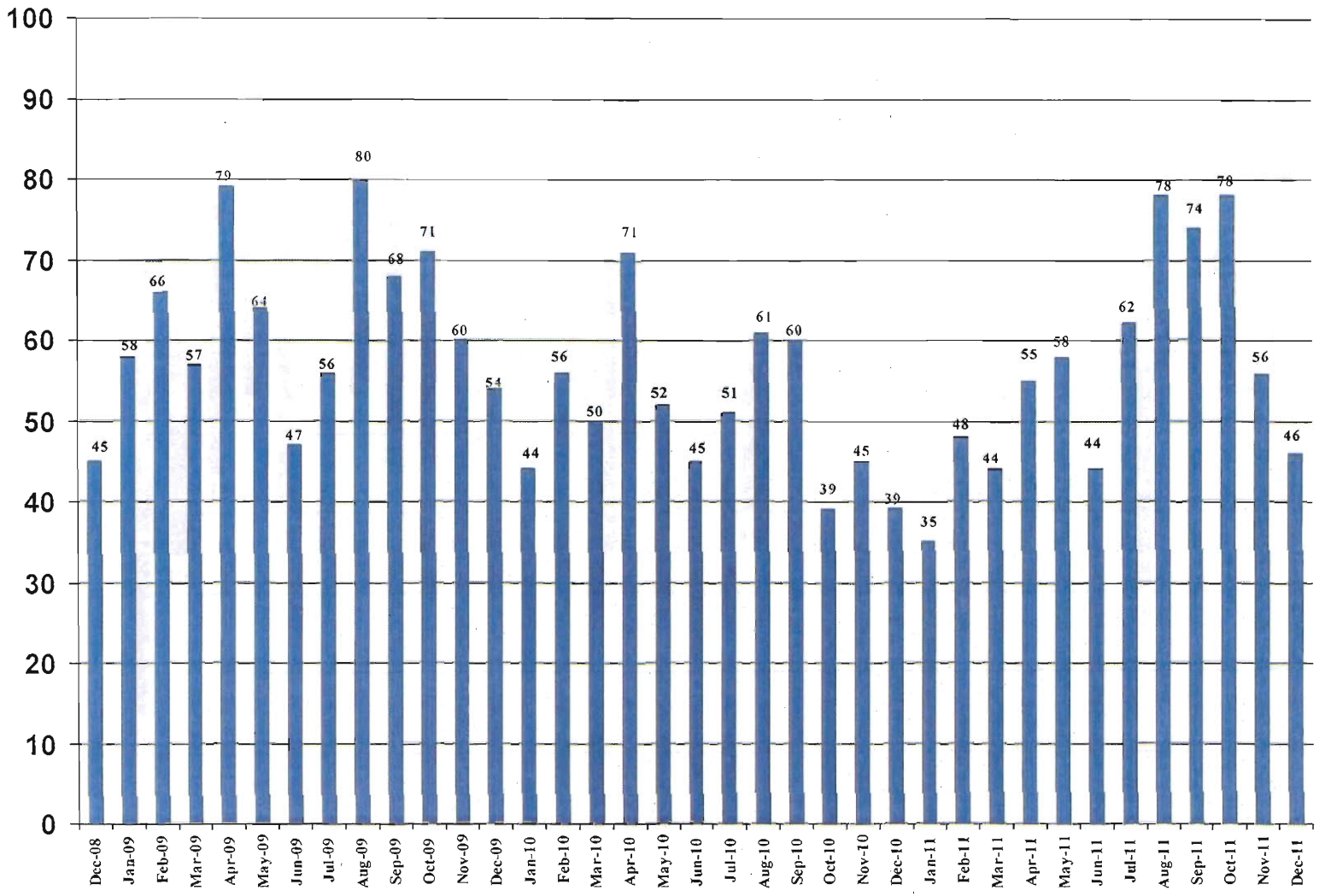
Release Year:	Number of Releases:	12 months	24 months	36 months
2003	1,657			43.0%
2004	2,034		40.9%	45.4%
2005	1,932	29.9%	40.6%	44.8%
2006	2,164	29.3%	39.3%	44.1%
2007	2,072	29.9%	41.0%	46.0%
2008	2,012	31.2%	40.3%	44.9%
2009	2,058	28.7%	38.3%	
2010	1,934	25.9%		

50% Recidivism Reduction in 5 years

Data Look	Releases	12 Month Recidivism Rate
2009	2007	29.9%
2010	2008	31.2%
2011	2009	28.7%
2012	2010	28.1% (target)
2013	2011	25.0% (target)
2014	2012	21.8% (target)
2015	2013	18.8% (target)
2016	2014	15.6% (goal)

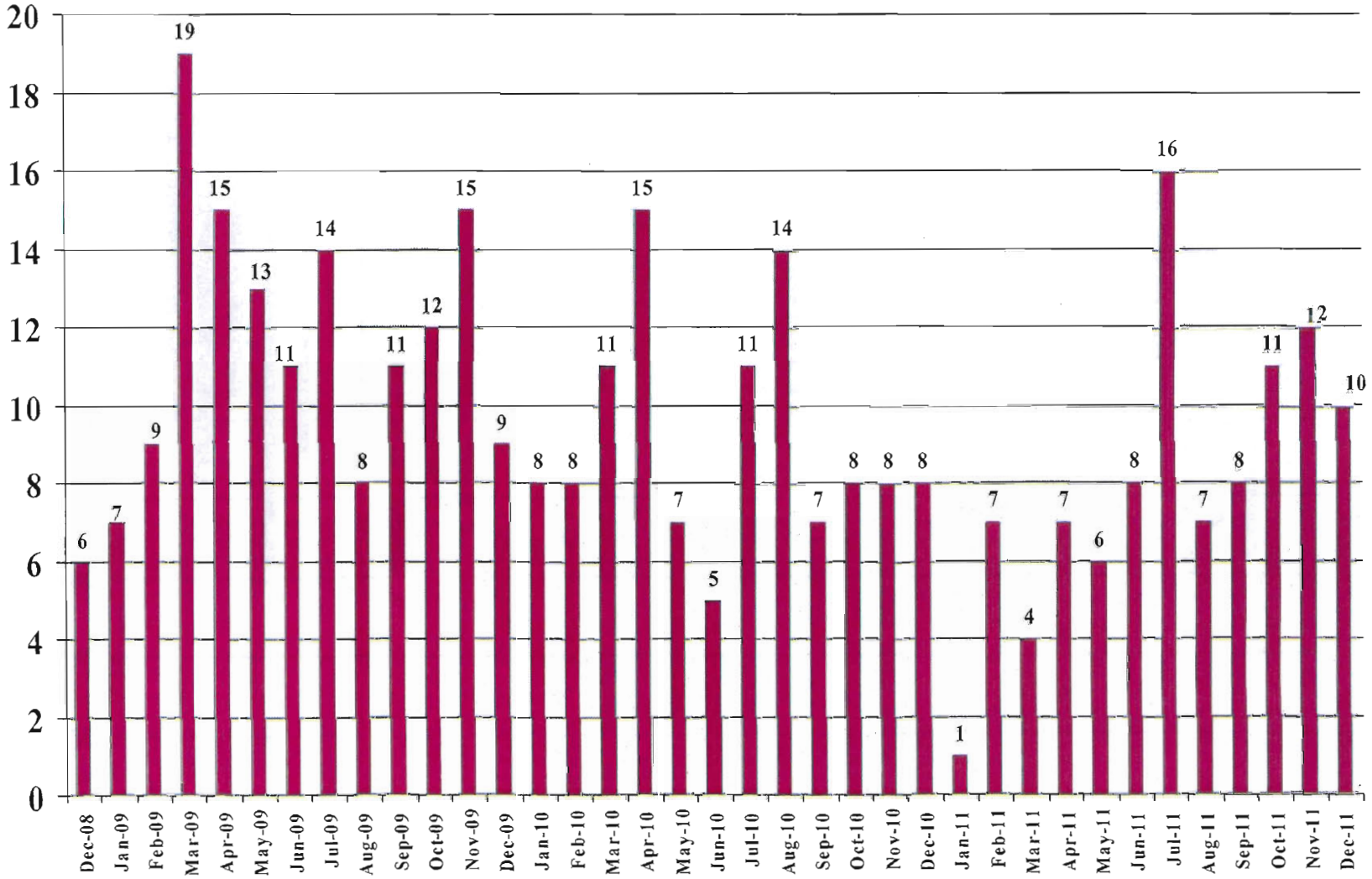
Male Parole Revocations by Month

December 2008 to December 2011



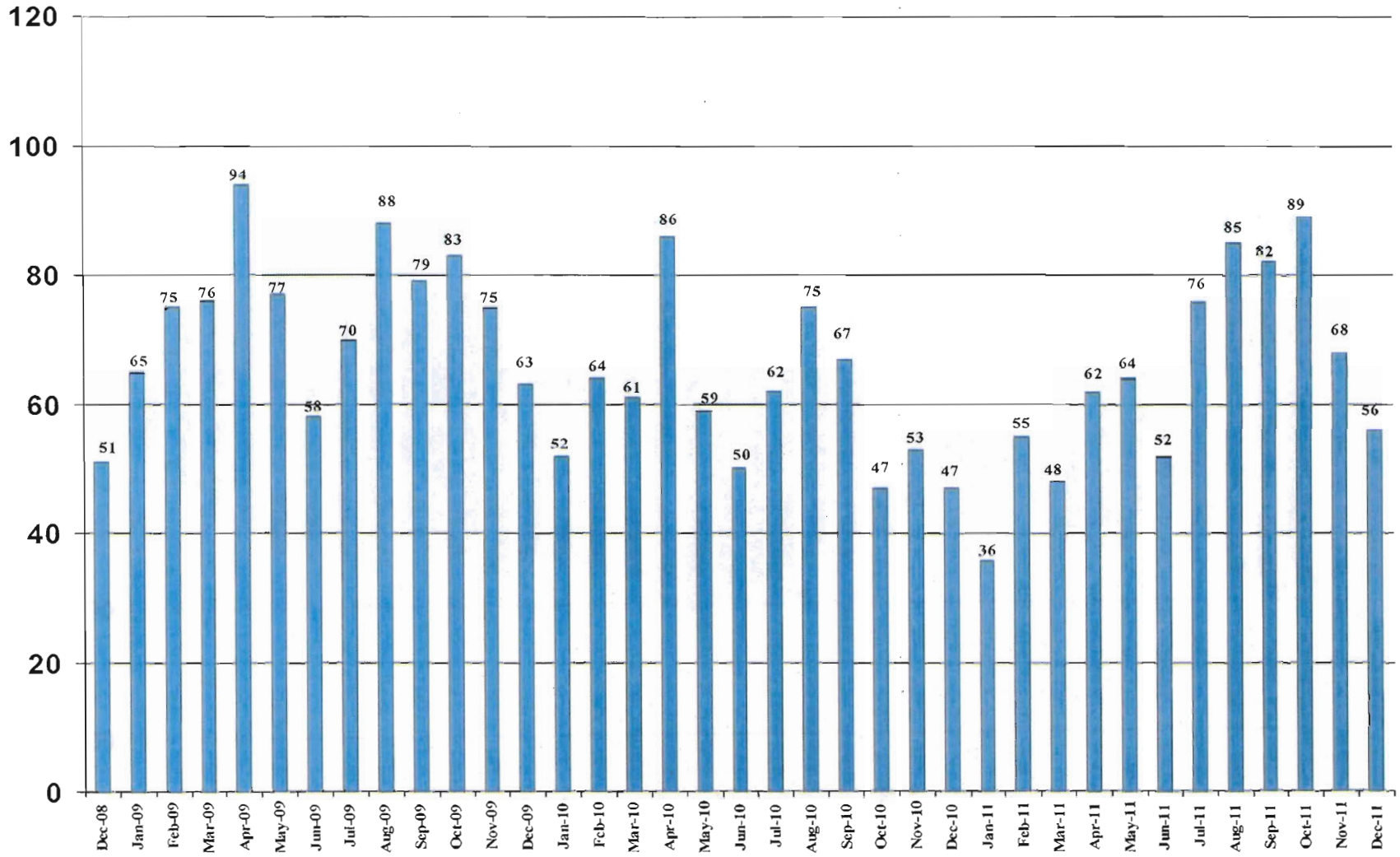
Female Parole Revocations by Month

December 2008 to December 2011



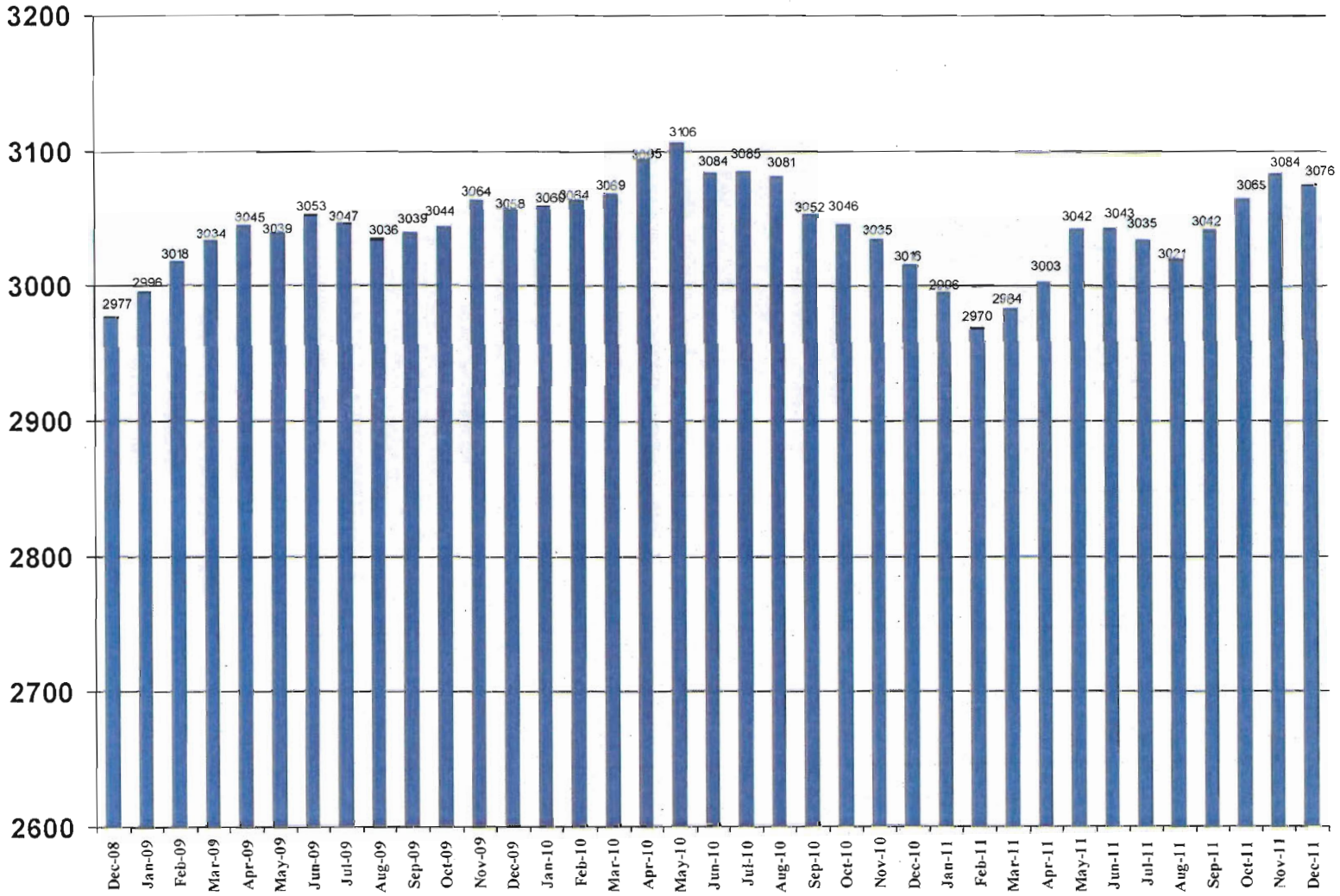
Total Parole Revocations by Month

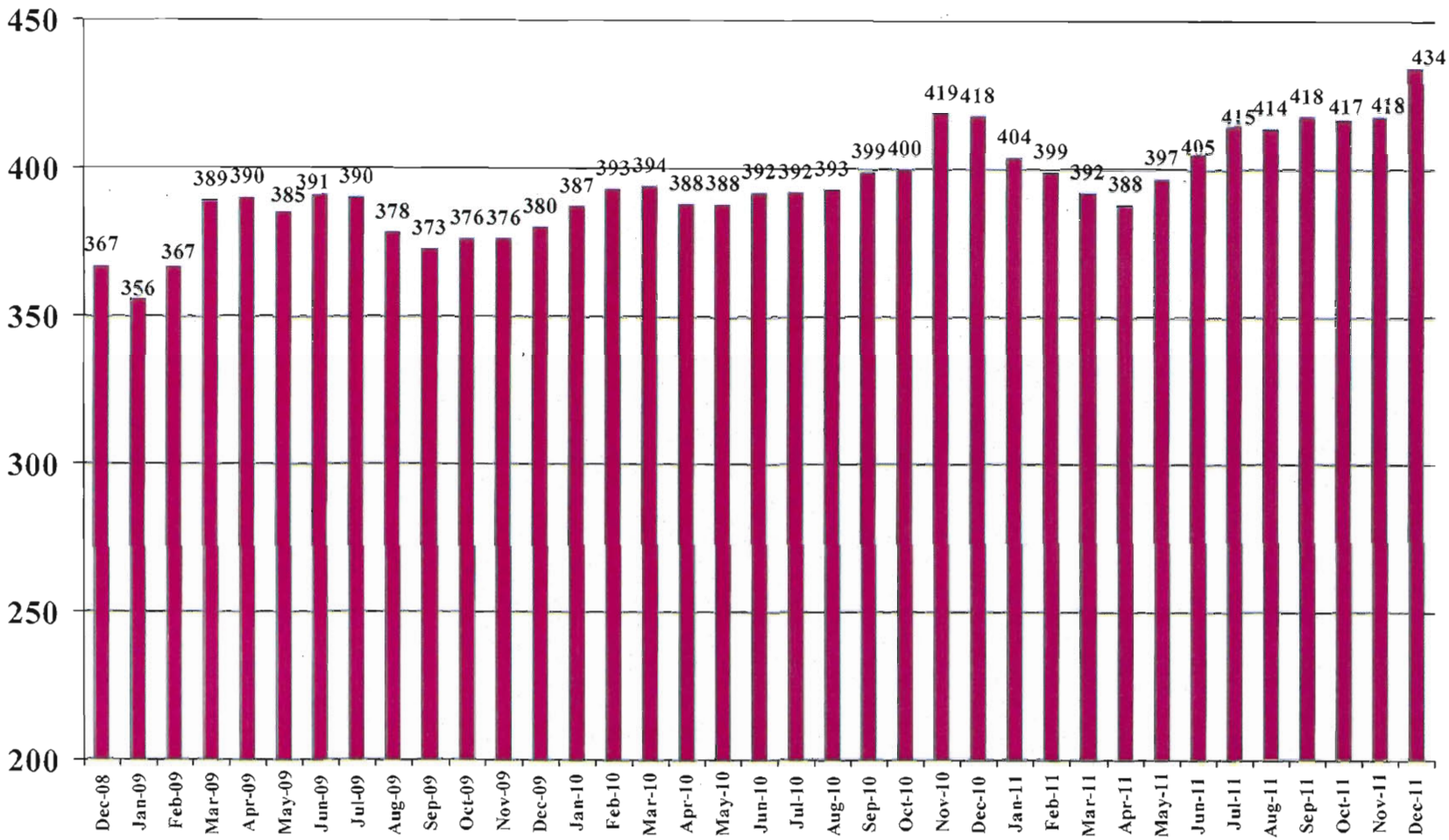
December 2008 to December 2011



Male Inmate ADC by Month

December 2008 to December 2011



Female Inmate ADC by Month

December 2008 to December 2011