

COURT SERVICES AND OFFENDER SUPERVISION AGENCY
FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

STRATEGIC PLAN FY 2005 – FY 2010



AUGUST 1, 2003

CONTENTS

Introduction.....	1
Strategic Assessment	2
Circumstances of CSOSA’s Creation	2
Statutory Authority	5
CSOSA’s Approach to Community Supervision.....	5
Accomplishments to Date.....	9
Strategic Framework.....	12
Critical Success Factors:	
1. Risk and Needs Assessment.....	15
2. Close Supervision	18
3. Treatment and Support Services	23
4. Community Partnerships.....	28
Management Strategies.....	31
Relationship to Annual Performance Plan.....	35
Program Evaluation	37
Key Factors Affecting Goals	38
Relationship to PSA’s Strategic Plan.....	42

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**STRATEGIC PLAN
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INTRODUCTION

This document presents the second Strategic Plan for the Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency (CSOSA), covering FY 2005 through FY 2010. The plan begins with a brief overview of CSOSA's history, mandate, and program model, then presents the agency's mission and strategic objectives, followed by the agency's general goals for the next five years and the management strategies which are important means of achieving these goals. The relationship between the strategic plan and annual performance plans is defined, along with a summary of program evaluations proposed for this period. The plan then discusses external factors that influence the agency's achievements, including external stakeholders.

CSOSA is a unique agency. Founded to alleviate the severe financial distress of the District of Columbia and strengthen an overburdened criminal justice system, CSOSA embodies the federal government's concern for the nation's capital. It also exemplifies the need for criminal justice collaboration, particularly in the District. While CSOSA's employees are federal, their function is local. They must work closely with the city's government, police, and jail system, federal partners (the Bureau of Prisons, U.S. Parole Commission, and U.S. Attorney), and other federally-funded District entities (the Superior Court and Public Defender Service). In the District, responsibility for the criminal justice system is spread among different agencies and offices with varying funding sources and priorities.

CSOSA's structure mirrors the complexity of the District's criminal justice system. The agency incorporates the D.C. Pretrial Services Agency (PSA), which provides release recommendations to the court and monitors defendants released into the community. CSOSA and PSA share many clients and provide many similar services, but they do not overlap. The key distinction is the individual's place in the criminal justice continuum. While the person is presumed innocent, he or she reports to PSA. If the case results in conviction, the individual interacts with CSOSA's Community Supervision Program, which provides probation supervision (in lieu of incarceration) and parole/supervised release supervision (post-incarceration).

As CSOSA enters its second strategic planning period, we can celebrate many accomplishments. We have built a solid programmatic foundation and established an

administrative infrastructure to support the work of our supervision officers. Our approach to supervision and our accomplishments are discussed within this plan. We are proud of our achievements and appreciative of the resources we have received. This plan sets forth our agenda for the next five years, during which we will see the initial results of our efforts. We are confident that we are contributing to a safer District of Columbia by interrupting the cycle of crime, substance abuse, and lack of accountability that has claimed too many of our residents.

STRATEGIC ASSESSMENT

This section of the strategic plan provides background on the circumstances of CSOSA's creation and the conditions this agency was expected to remediate, as well as a summary of CSOSA's statutory authority. In addition, the theory behind CSOSA's approach to community corrections is briefly discussed, and a summary of CSOSA's progress in implementing that approach is presented.

Circumstances of CSOSA's Creation

In January 1997, former President William J. Clinton outlined a vision to revitalize Washington, D.C. and improve prospects for successful "home rule." The cornerstone of the strategy for accomplishing these goals was to relieve the District of Columbia Government of major financial and management responsibilities by having the federal government assume responsibility for functions typically funded by state governments (rather than municipalities), i.e., prisons, courts, and probation/parole supervision. On August 5, 1997, the National Capital Revitalization and Self-Government Improvement Act of 1997 ("Revitalization Act") became law.

The new law set in motion a massive, system-wide reorganization of criminal justice functions:

- The Lorton prison complex has closed, transferring responsibility for the District's sentenced felons to the Federal Bureau of Prisons.
- The District has adopted a determinate sentencing system and abolished parole for individuals sentenced after August 2001.
- For the remaining parole-eligible prison population, parole authority has been transferred from the D.C. Board of Parole (which was abolished) to the U.S. Parole Commission.
- The federal government has assumed responsibility for funding the D.C. Courts and the D.C. Public Defender Service.
- A new federal agency, the Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency (CSOSA), was formed to supervise individuals released to the community from the point of arrest through the completion of sentence.

In addition to its core responsibility of supervising the approximately 23,000 adults under pretrial, probation, parole, or supervised release in the District, the agency is required to determine uniform supervision and reporting practices, develop and operate intermediate sanctions programs for sentenced offenders, and arrange for the supervision of D.C. offenders in jurisdictions outside the District of Columbia.

Prior to the creation of CSOSA, the District agencies responsible for managing these functions – the D.C. Pretrial Services Agency, the D.C. Board of Parole, and the Office of Adult Probation, Social Services Division, Superior Court of the District of Columbia – lacked sufficient resources and the basic infrastructure to provide effective monitoring for most individuals under criminal justice control. Throughout the 1990s, the financial difficulties of the District worsened, leading to the establishment of a financial “Control Board” and then to the Revitalization Initiative, described above.

By all accounts, prior to the Revitalization Act, public safety was seriously compromised. The tax base had been eroding. Greater and greater percentages of the local budget were being consumed by the burgeoning costs of maintaining a large prison system. Given the uncontrollable costs of maintaining the institutional side of corrections (prisons), the community side (probation and parole supervision) became ever more weak and ineffective as resources dried up.

This phenomenon was by no means unique to the District of Columbia. As prison populations around the country exploded throughout the 1980s and 1990s, probation and parole caseloads grew at a more modest but still significant rate. Funding for community corrections did not keep pace, resulting in unmanageable caseloads in some jurisdictions, some as high as 500 offenders for each probation or parole officer.

Nationally, over 6.5 million individuals are under some form of criminal justice supervision – either on probation, in jail or prison, or on parole. More than 70 percent of this population is in the community. Yet 90 percent of the “correctional dollar” goes to maintain residential institutions such as jails and prisons. Prior to the Revitalization Act, the situation in the District was comparable to that of other states, with one significant difference: the District did not have a statewide revenue system to pay for these functions. Thus, the deterioration of basic public safety functions was far worse in the District; leading eventually to a “rescue package” designed to provide federal funding for what would normally be state-level functions.

In the area of offender supervision, the Revitalization Act provided a unique opportunity to reverse these discouraging trends and employ a potentially potent strategy to improve public safety at the neighborhood level. If most crime is committed by people already known to the justice system, and if more than two thirds of all adult offenders are already in the community and at least legally subject to supervision, that leverage can and should be used to influence their conduct, hold them accountable, and create an environment more conducive to their successful re-entry to law abiding society. Prior to Revitalization, there was neither a broad-based

organizational commitment nor the resources to make use of that criminal justice leverage, except for small numbers of individuals in specialized programs, such as the “Drug Court.”

The creation of CSOSA, and the infusion of “investment capital” presented an opportunity to expand and build on successful local programs and strategies. The D.C. Pretrial Services Agency operates as an independent entity within CSOSA, and is committed to supporting the overall mission while also honoring the constitutional presumption of innocence for pretrial defendants. PSA has been a nationally recognized leader in pretrial supervision for many years.

It was clear from the beginning that any effort to combat crime must also address addiction. Numerous studies have conclusively documented the close correlation between criminal activity and the use of alcohol and other drugs. Studies also indicate that the frequency and severity of criminal activity grows as drug use increases. Both national and local statistics demonstrate the relationship. According to a 1998 study funded by the Office of National Drug Control Policy in conjunction with the Washington/Baltimore High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) initiative, adults in the criminal justice system account for 50 to 60 percent of the cocaine and heroin consumed in the country. In addition, other studies indicate that, nationally, drug users and drug traffickers commit a disproportionate number of the twelve million property crimes and almost two million violent crimes reported each year.

Locally, within the District of Columbia, the relationship is also clear. Between 1998 and 2000, the D.C. Metropolitan Police Department classified one-third of the city’s murders with known motives as drug-related.¹ Drug offenders comprise 30 percent of the D.C. prison population, and approximately two thirds of defendants and offenders under supervision have a history of substance abuse.

The impact of crime in the community goes beyond the direct victims and their families who bear the physical, emotional and psychological affects of crime. The fear of crime creates a constrained living environment that changes the social dynamic. The consequences of criminal activity in the District have been well documented. For example²:

- 36 percent of the city’s adult residents report that the problems caused by drugs in their neighborhoods have changed the way they live their lives;
- 74 percent of residents are fearful of crime in the city; 48 percent are fearful of crime in their neighborhood; and
- 48 percent of residents report fear of street crime and avoid going out at night.

¹ “A Study of Homicides in the District of Columbia,” D.C. Metropolitan Police Department, October 2001.

² “Criminal Victimization and Perceptions of Community Safety in 12 Cities, 1998,” Steven K. Smith,

Living in constrained circumstances not only reinforces the social and economic disadvantages that sustain poverty, but also complicates the government's ability to effectively address the complex problems associated with community development. The broader economic development of the District will certainly be influenced by this agency's success in improving public safety.

Statutory Authority

The National Capital Revitalization and Self-Government Improvement Act of 1997 ("Revitalization Act") established CSOSA within the executive branch of the federal government. Initially functioning as trusteeship while an administrative infrastructure was put in place, CSOSA was certified as an independent executive branch agency on August 5, 2001. The Revitalization Act placed the D.C. Pretrial Services Agency as within CSOSA as an independent entity. In addition, the D.C. Public Defender Service, an independent District of Columbia agency, receives its appropriated federal funds through a transfer from CSOSA.

The Revitalization Act requires CSOSA to provide supervision to offenders on probation, parole, and supervised release for violation of District of Columbia Code offenses. The agency carries out its responsibilities on behalf of the court or agency having jurisdiction over the person being supervised. CSOSA supervises all offenders placed on probation by the Superior Court of the District of Columbia, and all individuals on parole or supervised release pursuant to the District of Columbia Code. The agency is also required to determine uniform supervision and reporting practices, develop and operate intermediate sanctions programs for sentenced offenders, and arrange for the supervision of D.C. offenders in jurisdictions outside the District of Columbia. The Revitalization Act was amended in 1999 to enable CSOSA to carry out the sex offender registration and DNA collection functions that were enacted in the District of Columbia Code.

The D.C. Pretrial Services Agency assists the trial and appellate levels of both the federal and local courts in determining eligibility for pretrial release by providing verified background information and criminal histories on all arrestees and recommendations about available release options. Pretrial Services is further responsible for supervising defendants released from custody during the pretrial period by monitoring compliance with conditions of release and by ensuring that they appear for scheduled court hearings. Pretrial Services supervision also provides defendants with the opportunity to participate in a variety of social interventions that decrease the likelihood of future criminal behavior.

CSOSA's Approach to Community Supervision

The debate among academics, politicians and professionals in the criminal justice system regarding the causes of crime and the effectiveness of various solutions has

gone on for decades. Many variables have been correlated to crime, ranging from the size of the youth population to homeownership rates and street design. While the exact causes of crime continue to be debated, one thing is certain: Long-term success in reducing recidivism and increasing public safety will require that a significant portion of the District's offender population change their behavior.

In 1998, CSOSA commissioned a study, "Understanding Supervision in the District of Columbia: The Baseline Study" to better understand the existing supervision practices of the three D.C. government agencies from which CSOSA was formed. Results from the baseline study were used to develop the goals and strategies in this strategic plan.

The study, conducted by an independent third party, included the following objectives.

- Examine the characteristics of defendants and offenders supervised by the supervision agencies and the type of conditions of release,
- Measure the range of services provided to defendants and offenders in the different agencies,
- Measure the system features that impact service delivery,
- Measure the impact of services received (e.g. face-to-face contacts, collateral, drug testing, day reporting, electronic monitoring, etc.) on outcomes (e.g. compliance with supervision requirements, satisfactory completion of services, revocation, etc.), and
- Develop models of effective services to increase the likelihood of positive outcomes for different types of offenders.

The study revealed that the population under supervision has significant substance abuse problems, educational deficits, job skills deficits, and criminal histories. Specifically, the offender population in the District of Columbia exhibits the following characteristics:

- 88 percent are male, 12 percent female;
- 92 percent are African American;
- 50 percent have less than a high school diploma;
- 70 percent report a history of substance abuse;
- Median age is 35;
- 62 percent have a primary or secondary drug offense; and
- 66 percent report prior convictions.

In addition to this research, there is a sizeable body of evidence that illustrates what works and what does not work in assessing risk and managing offenders and high-risk defendants under supervision. The introduction of the "broken windows" theory in 1982 significantly changed the debate surrounding effective practices in all community-based public safety functions. This theory, first articulated by James Q.

Wilson and George Kelling³, maintains that seemingly small breakdowns in public order, if left unattended, grow into much larger crime problems. By addressing the smaller problems of order, police could reduce the number and severity of major crimes in a given neighborhood.

The “broken windows” theory contributed to the increased emphasis on community policing throughout the 1990s. At the close of the 1990s, public policymakers began to examine the applicability of this model to community supervision. A group of practitioners and policymakers convened as the Reinventing Probation Council in 1998. Their report, “Transforming Probation Through Leadership: The ‘Broken Windows’ Model” appeared in August 1999.⁴ Both the report and subsequent commentary on it have influenced CSOSA’s approach to community supervision.

The “broken windows” model of probation maintains that the primary “product” of community supervision is not services delivered to those under supervision, but public safety for the entire community. The authors argue that public confidence in community supervision has eroded significantly, and that to rebuild it, administrators and policymakers must adopt an approach that redefines the “customer” of community supervision to encompass all citizens—offenders, victims, and ordinary individuals. To that end, the authors articulate seven principles through which community supervision can be “reinvented”:

1. Place public safety first;
2. Supervise probationers in the neighborhood, not the office;
3. Rationally allocate resources;
4. Provide for strong enforcement of probation conditions and a quick response to violations;
5. Develop partners in the community;
6. Establish performance-based initiatives; and
7. Cultivate strong leadership.

CSOSA has incorporated these principles in its program model. Our approach to community supervision is grounded in the primacy of public safety as the most important outcome we strive to achieve. Moreover, our system of supervision emphasizes the placement of officers in the community, the imposition of swift consequences for non-compliant behavior, and the development of community partnerships.

While the “broken windows” model is a compelling statement of how community supervision should focus on the community as a whole, it does not address the significant needs and deficits that impede offenders’ desire to make significant life

³Wilson, James Q. and George Kelling, “Broken Windows: The Police and Neighborhood Safety,” *Atlantic Monthly*, 249:3 (March 1982), pp. 29-38.

⁴Reinventing Probation Council, “Transforming Probation Through Leadership: The ‘Broken Windows’ Model.” Center for Civic Innovation (The Manhattan Institute) and The Robert J. Fox Leadership Program (University of Pennsylvania), August 1999.

changes. As the baseline study demonstrated, offenders in the District of Columbia must overcome educational deficits, poor work histories, and overwhelming addiction to establish a viable, crime-free lifestyle. A comprehensive community corrections system that ignores these needs and focuses solely on enforcement does little to increase public safety or public confidence.

Faye Taxman of the University of Maryland and James Byrne of the University of Massachusetts articulated this deficiency in a 2001 article, “Fixing ‘Broken Windows’ Probation.”⁵ Taxman and Byrne argued that treatment is an essential component of a successful, truly comprehensive community corrections strategy. They wrote:

Our review of the research ... reveals that it is offender improvement in the areas of employment, substance abuse, personal and family problems that is directly related to recidivism reduction. At its core, offender change in these areas is precisely what probation officers should focus on during supervision.⁶

In developing its supervision model, CSOSA recognized that the principles articulated in the “broken windows” model need not be viewed as conflicting with the provision of treatment and other support programming. On the contrary, the external control exercised through close supervision, meaningful sanctions, and surveillance drug testing can complement the offender’s participation in support programs. If the principles of “broken windows” are aimed at establishing a system of *external* accountability—the offender is watched and is punished when non-compliance is detected—treatment and other programming is intended to establish a system of *internal* accountability. Through success in treatment, education, job training, and other experiences, the offender learns that change is possible and desirable. He or she develops the desire to behave differently. The success of sanctions-based treatment (that is, court-mandated drug treatment enforced through immediate, graduated sanctions for violations), funded on a regional basis through the HIDTA initiative, was important to developing CSOSA’s program model.

The development of internal accountability and the desire to sustain behavioral change are long processes that usually entail lapses and mistakes. The offender’s path to progress is not straight. Graduated sanctions provide the ideal vehicle to contain minor relapses before they develop into new criminal activity.

CSOSA’s ability to affect the behavior of the offenders we supervise is therefore equally dependent upon two factors: 1) identifying and treating drug use and other social or individual problems among the defendant and offender population, and 2) establishing swift and certain consequences for individuals under supervision who fail

⁵ Taxman, Faye and James Byrne, “Fixing Broken Windows Probation,” *Perspectives: Journal of the American Probation and Parole Association*, Spring 2001, p. 22.

⁶ *Ibid*, p. 24.

to comply with the conditions of their release. Both of these principles are essential to CSOSA's success.

Accomplishments to Date

Since its establishment as a trusteeship in 1997, CSOSA has made significant progress in changing the way community supervision occurs in the District of Columbia. We have implemented practices that combine the principles articulated in the "broken windows" model of probation with a range of treatment and support programs, providing real opportunities for offenders and defendants to internalize the ideas of accountability and change. All of these changes have occurred while the administrative and managerial infrastructure of the agency were being put in place, leading to certification as an independent agency in August 2000.

At this plan's adoption, our most important programmatic accomplishments include:

- Reduction of probation and parole caseloads from well over 100 cases per officer to the current level of 56 cases per officer in general supervision and an average of 44 cases per officer in special supervision categories (sex offenders, mental health, and domestic violence cases). Resources received in FY 2003 will allow CSOSA to reach the target probation and parole caseload of 50 cases per officer in general supervision.
- Implementation of comprehensive risk assessment to identify each offender's potential likelihood of reoffense at the start of supervision. Offenders are assigned to a supervision level based on the result of risk screening and are reassessed every 180 days.
- Implementation of transitional programming for parolees and supervised releases residing in Federal Bureau of Prisons Community Corrections Centers (or halfway houses). CSOSA's supervision officers work with offenders on pre-release status to verify the release plan, secure a stable residence, maintain employment, and identify specific programmatic needs.
- Establishment of field offices to place Community Supervision Officers close to the residences and workplaces of the offenders they supervise, making these officers a visible public safety presence in the community.
- Design and deployment of a state-of-the-art automated case management system to replace outdated legacy systems.
- Establishment of a network of Learning Labs located at field offices. These Learning Labs provide educational programming and employment assistance to offenders and defendants in the area. Partnerships are being developed with

public and private sector employers to increase the job placements available through the learning lab network.

- Establishment of a system of graduated sanctions for non-compliance. These sanctions range from reprimands and increased office visits through short-term residential placement.
- Increased surveillance drug testing of offenders. Implemented a policy of universal testing of eligible offenders in combination with sanctions to enforce a “zero tolerance” policy toward substance abuse.
- Greatly increased availability of substance abuse treatment. CSOSA has worked with the city’s vendors to develop a comprehensive service delivery system ranging from hospital-based detoxification, through intensive residential treatment, to outpatient treatment. CSOSA also developed a substance abuse assessment protocol to ensure that offenders are assigned to the appropriate treatment placement, as well as quality assurance standards for treatment providers.
- Establishment of an Assessment and Orientation Center to provide intensive testing, needs assessment, and treatment readiness programming for high-risk defendants and offenders. CSOSA will expand this program into a Reentry and Sanctions Center, enabling the agency to expand this successful program and implement a wider range of residential sanctions.
- Establishment of a partnership with the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) to facilitate joint supervision activities. High-risk cases are presented to the MPD officers assigned to the Police Service Area in which the offender lives. MPD officers and Community Supervision Officers also make joint field visits, or Accountability Tours, to offenders’ homes and workplaces.
- Establishment of Community Justice Advisory Networks in the eight Police Districts to foster community awareness of CSOSA’s activities.
- Establishment of a partnership with the city’s faith community to link offenders returning from prison with a stable, positive community institution. This partnership will also increase the range of support services available to returning offenders.

As this list indicates, CSOSA has achieved a great deal with the resources we have been given. To date, our achievements have been almost entirely process-oriented. We have implemented many of the operational changes that were envisioned in the Revitalization Act. Through the resources that have been made available to us, we have built a new system of community supervision around the strategic objectives discussed below. During the years covered by this plan, we will complete our

programmatic infrastructure and begun measuring the impact these changes are having on crime in the District of Columbia.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

CSOSA's strategic plan—the set of general goals that represent the agency's priorities over the next five years—flows from its mission and core organizational values. In the broadest sense, our strategy is to fulfill our mission. We do so through activities that are informed by, and expressions of, our core organizational values.

CSOSA's Mission

The mission of CSOSA is to increase public safety, prevent crime, reduce recidivism, and support the fair administration of justice in close collaboration with the community we serve. The agency will enhance decision-making and provide effective community supervision, thereby ensuring public confidence in the criminal justice system.

CSOSA's mission translates into two core strategic goals that drive decision-making and resource allocation. All our activities and initiatives support these goals:

- I. *Prevent the population supervised by CSOSA from engaging in criminal activity by establishing strict accountability and dramatically increasing the number of offenders who successfully reintegrate into society.*

If CSOSA is completely successful, offenders and defendants under our supervision will commit far fewer crimes. CSOSA's program would have a significant impact on public safety by reducing crime.

- II. *Support the fair administration of justice by providing accurate information and meaningful recommendations to criminal justice decision-makers to help them in determining the appropriate release conditions and/or disposition of cases.*

In addition to offender supervision, CSOSA has an important responsibility to provide information and recommendations to the court, the U.S. Parole Commission, and other criminal justice agencies. This information should be timely, complete, and of the highest quality. In that way, CSOSA can increase public confidence in the justice system.

Strategic Objectives

CSOSA is committed to breaking the cycle of crime and drug use by the population that it supervises, reintegrating offenders into the community, and providing accurate, timely and complete information to criminal justice decision makers in order to ensure the fair administration of justice. To this end CSOSA has identified the

following four strategic objectives, or Critical Success Factors, that serve as the organization's guiding principles:

- **Risk and Needs Assessment.** CSOSA will provide timely, accurate, and meaningful assessments and recommendations to criminal justice decisionmakers. In addition, defendants and offenders under CSOSA's supervision will be assessed to determine their level of risk to the community and their need for the programs and services CSOSA provides.
- **Close Supervision.** Defendants and offenders will be supervised and/or monitored at a level appropriate to their risk classification, so that conditions of release may be enforced, swift and certain consequences imposed for violation of those conditions, and incentives applied to improve compliance.
- **Treatment and Support Services.** Treatment and support services will be made available to defendants and offenders to meet their assessed needs, to increase the likelihood of successful reintegration to the community, and to interrupt the cycle of substance abuse and crime.
- **Partnerships.** CSOSA will pursue partnerships with law enforcement, government, and community entities to increase public awareness of agency activities, promote cooperative activities with the police in monitoring offenders, and increase the level of support services available to offenders and defendants.

Historically, the criminal justice system has vacillated between the polar extremes of traditional forms of incarceration and a more socially liberal rehabilitation approach to deal with offenders. Fears about inadequate control and punishment of high-risk offenders on the one hand and concern about unconstitutional prison overcrowding, and the ineffectiveness and soaring cost of incarceration on the other hand, have resulted in the extensive use of intermediate sanctions. Additionally, pretrial service functions are faced with monitoring the delicate balance between protecting the public and ensuring the defendant's return to court with the defendant's presumption of innocence and right to the least restrictive conditions of release.

Prior efforts in the District of Columbia to deal with repeat offenders failed due to a lack of resources, coordination, and strategic leadership. The basic supervision "infrastructure" within the District had been under-funded for decades. As a result, CSOSA inherited extremely high supervision caseload ratios, inadequate or nonexistent information systems, insufficient drug testing and treatment capacity, and a range of uncoordinated programs that failed to protect the public interest.

Using this plan as a framework, CSOSA implemented a "community-based" and "sanctions-based" system of supervision. All of CSOSA's operating strategies and general goals are rooted in the four Critical Success Factors. The Critical Success Factors define the conditions that must be achieved for our program to be successful; the general goals define specific outcomes we intend to pursue to demonstrate that success.

In the years ahead, CSOSA will focus on demonstrating the impact of these changes on public safety. In the first years of our existence, we concentrated on building systems, developing procedures, and deploying the resources that we were given in an effective manner. We were putting a new agency, and a new type of program, in place.

We are not yet finished. These systems will continue to evolve and be refined throughout the next several years. But we are at a point where we can anticipate results. The general goals provided under each Critical Success Factor combine the need to refine processes with the intention of achieving results. This is very much the goal structure of an Agency that is still defining itself. By the time this strategic planning cycle is over, we expect to be able to concentrate exclusively on measuring the outcome of our programs.

Critical Success Factor 1: Risk and Needs Assessment

CSOSA dedicates approximately 25 percent of its annual resources to activities in this area, including:

- Risk screening using the CSOSA Screener;
- Needs assessment using a variety of instruments (a revised instrument that integrates needs assessment with risk is currently under development);
- Initial drug testing;
- Preparation of the case plan;
- Review at appropriate intervals of the risk assessment, needs assessment, and case plan;
- Preparation of Presentence Investigations.

Risk and needs assessment is the basis of case management. If the supervision officer is aware of the offender's risk to the community, he or she can structure supervision to minimize that risk. Likewise, if the officer is aware of the offender's programmatic needs, he or she can refer the offender to appropriate interventions.

For the offenders CSOSA supervises, risk and needs assessment often begins prior to the start of supervision. CSOSA prepares Presentence Investigations for the D.C. Superior Court. These documents provide comprehensive criminal and social histories and include sentencing recommendations. Once the offender enters supervision, CSOSA administers its Risk Screener to determine the appropriate supervision level. The risk assessment process is currently being expanded to include a comprehensive needs assessment.

General Goal:

- *CSOSA will improve its case planning process to incorporate risk and needs assessment, resulting in a case plan for each offender that identifies specific supervision requirements and intervention strategies.*

One of CSOSA's major operational initiatives has been to implement appropriate and comprehensive assessment of defendants and offenders throughout the District's correctional system. Appropriate assessment is a critical foundation for effective case management. The results of the assessment process drive the development of the treatment plan and outline conditions that will hold the defendant or offender accountable for his/her behavior while on release.

CSOSA compiled a scientific review team and tasked this group with developing a comprehensive classification system. The team included practitioner and scientific experts in the areas of mental health, substance abuse, and criminality, as well as representatives from the National Institute of Corrections and the National Institute of

Justice. The group developed the classification process and completed the instrument used during the first stage of the process.

After the development of the instrument, definitions and procedures for its use, CSOSA implemented the screener throughout the Community Supervision Program. The screener was used on all new cases that entered probation or parole supervision on or after February 28, 2000. The Bureau of Governmental Research at the University of Maryland conducted an initial construction study to assess the predictive value of the screener.

The second phase of the classification process is the assessment of needs. CSOSA is developing an instrument to assess the level of needs for offenders in the District Columbia. This instrument will assess offenders in a variety of areas (e.g., substance abuse, violence/aggression, vocational needs, life skills needs and interpersonal relationships).

As CSOSA has developed its program, specific interventions such as substance abuse treatment, vocational education, faith-based mentoring, and other services have become increasingly available to assist the offender population. These services will be integrated into the needs assessment instrument, so that the assessment leads to specific strategies that can be used to assist each offender in overcoming the problems and deficits that affect his or her ability to make life changes. These program services will be combined with risk assessment to develop a supervision plan for the offender, outlining both the behavioral conditions to which he or she must adhere and the services he or she needs to access.

CSOSA's goal is therefore to complete the risk and needs assessment process it has begun, refining and expanding it into a comprehensive case planning mechanism that is an integral part of supervision. The risk and needs assessment and the case plan must be completed early enough in the supervision process to affect decision-making. The case plan must address both supervision (supervision contacts, drug testing, etc.) and programmatic issues (treatment, education, social issues, family issues, etc.) and be updated periodically to respond to changes in the offender's behavior or situation. In addition, the risk and needs assessment tool will be validated on an ongoing basis to ensure that it is providing appropriate diagnostic results and treatment recommendations.

Means and Strategies. As discussed above, CSOSA is now developing and will soon implement a needs assessment instrument. This instrument will be tested and validated in the coming years. In addition, the agency's case management system will track whether initial assessment and updates are performed within timeframes set by policy. It is not expected that any additional resources will be required to achieve this goal.

General Goal:

- *CSOSA will improve its Presentence Investigation Reports, as determined by timely submission and user satisfaction, each year over the next five years (from a baseline measurement established in FY 2004).*

In addition to risk and needs assessment of the supervised population, CSOSA staff prepare over three thousand Presentence Investigations every year for offenders sentenced in the D.C. Superior Court. These investigations provide important criminal background and social history information to the sentencing judge, and include a sentencing recommendation. Particularly in cases that do not go to trial, where the judge has little opportunity to learn the defendant's history, these reports are critical to the judge's ability to impose an appropriate sentence. Presentence Investigations are also used by the Federal Bureau of Prisons in determining institutional placement and, in some cases, by the U.S. Parole Commission (USPC) in formulating parole conditions. They become an important part of the offender's record and a primary source of background information for staff who must make decisions about the offender.

Case audits have revealed that over 90 percent of these reports are submitted on time, but additional effort is required to assess the quality and usefulness of the finished document. To that end, CSOSA has adopted a general goal of increasing user satisfaction with the document, as determined by user reports and ongoing review.

Means and Strategies. Since its inception, CSOSA has emphasized the importance of the presentence investigation as a reference document that follows the offender throughout his time in the criminal justice system. It is the primary source of information about the offender's criminal history, social history, substance abuse history, and past supervision or incarceration experiences.

Within the constraints of existing resources, CSOSA has worked to improve the quality of the presentence investigation document. Performance measures for this goal will be structured to allow for a baseline measurement of both overall user satisfaction and specific elements of the investigation that can then be targeted for improvement. It is expected that the initial survey will be administered in FY 2004, with an annual follow-up each year throughout the period covered by this plan.

Improvements in the presentence investigation will be achieved primarily through three strategies. First, portions of the investigation will be automated, reducing the amount of time the officer spends on routine clerical functions. Standard language for common phrases will be adopted to eliminate stylistic variations among writers. Second, the development, approval, and submission of each investigation report will be followed in the case management system to ensure timely action. Third, officers performing the investigative function may receive additional training, based on the results of the baseline survey, to improve the quality of certain portions of the document.

Critical Success Factor 2: Close Supervision

CSOSA dedicates approximately 55 percent of its annual resources to activities in this area, including:

- Surveillance drug testing;
- Supervision contacts (office visits, phone contacts, and home or work visits);
- Initial case planning with pre-parole offenders residing in Federal Bureau of Prisons Halfway Houses;
- Detecting and sanctioning non-compliant behavior, according to CSOSA's sanctions matrix (Accountability Contract) as guidance;
- Monitoring compliance with specific interventions or conditions imposed by the court or U.S. Parole Commission (e.g., treatment, community service, mental health care, etc.);
- Referral to programs and services as appropriate.

Since its creation in 1997, CSOSA has been committed to implementing a community-based approach to supervision, taking proven best practices and making them a reality in the District of Columbia. Prior to the enactment of the Revitalization Act, supervision officers handled staggering caseloads from behind their desks downtown, providing only minimal levels of contact to most offenders. Prior to the enactment of the Revitalization Act, the average supervision caseload in probation and parole was 180-200 high-risk offenders to every supervision officer. The infusion of significant resources into CSOSA has enabled caseloads to be reduced to the current average of 56 general supervision offenders per officer, which is still somewhat higher than the target of 50, but much improved from past levels. Specialized high-risk caseloads (mental health and sex offender) are lower, averaging 44 offenders per officer.

CSOSA also adopted a new deployment structure for its officers, abolishing the old designations of Probation and Parole Officers and creating the position of Community Supervision Officer for line staff. Community Supervision Officers handle both parole and probation cases and increasingly spend their time in District neighborhoods, performing supervision functions where offenders live and work. CSOSA has established a total of six field units, and hopes to add a seventh in FY 2004.

Re-Entry of Parolees into the Community

For a number of years prior to June of 1998, the District of Columbia did not uniformly transition inmates to parole by placing them in community corrections centers, or halfway houses. This practice was contrary to standard practice in the entire federal system and in most states. Often, individuals who had been incarcerated

at Lorton for years were simply transported by bus on their parole date to the D.C. Jail in Southeast Washington, and released to the street with instructions to report to a parole officer downtown. Not surprisingly, without a system of community supports and supervision, many offenders resumed the cycle of crime and drug use.

In May 1998, the practice of transitioning parolees through halfway houses was reinstated through a Memorandum of Understanding between CSOSA, the D.C. Corrections Trustee, the U.S. Parole Commission, and the D.C. Department of Corrections. Since this practice has resumed, inmates who are granted parole have been transitioned back into the community through halfway houses, where they spend a final portion of their sentence (not to exceed ten percent of the total sentence). In July of 1998, the agency started assigning Community Supervision Officers to work with halfway house residents. The Transitional Intervention for Parole Supervision (TIPS) Program provides counseling services, release planning, and service referrals to the pre-parole population in order to reduce the probability of continued criminal behavior and provide for a smoother transition back into the community. During this program, the offender and the TIPS officer develop an initial supervision plan that remains in effect for the first 90 days following release, while the offender becomes accustomed to general supervision.

The TIPS program carries the philosophy that each prospective parolee's individual history and evolution of criminality or addiction must be assessed to develop an effective transitional and treatment plan tailored to his or her specific risks and needs. Pre-parolees must comply with conditions of drug testing, treatment and counseling, and frequent reporting. The program carries a zero tolerance policy for alcohol and other drugs, and pre-parolees who test positive for alcohol and/or illegal substances are returned to institutional custody immediately. In addition, there is strict case management, including tracking, monitoring, regular reporting, random breathalyzer tests, counseling, and a urinalysis twice a week. The program also provides services such as comprehensive needs assessment, job placement, referral to vocational and educational programming, mentoring, housing release planning, and alcohol and substance abuse education along with a wide range of treatment resources.

Over the past several years, CSOSA has made great progress in establishing a more effective supervision model. However, the proof of whether these resources are effective is in the outcomes: Does our program have an impact on public safety in the District of Columbia? CSOSA's goals in this area therefore focus on the most meaningful outcomes: rearrest, the imposition of sanctions, and technical violations. Meeting these goals will contribute to a significant reduction in recidivism and a significant increase in public safety.

General Goal:

- *CSOSA will decrease the proportion of the population under supervision that is rearrested (from a baseline measurement established in FY 2002).*

Rearrest is a commonly accepted indicator of criminal activity within the supervised population. Although in itself rearrest does not constitute recidivism, it is a useful predictor of recidivism. If offenders are following their case plans—complying with their conditions of release, maintaining employment, and refraining from drug use—their chances of rearrest should be reduced dramatically. While CSOSA cannot eliminate rearrest, successful implementation of its program should reduce it.

Over the past several years, CSOSA has been working to establish baseline rearrest rates for the probation and parole populations. Little data exists on rearrest prior to CSOSA's establishment, and until recently tracking rearrest was a labor-intensive manual process. Through the implementation of SMART, CSOSA's automated case management system, and linkage with Metropolitan Police Department computer systems, tracking rearrest has become much easier and more reliable. Baseline measurements have been established.

Means and Strategies. The achievement of this goal depends on CSOSA's continued implementation of a supervision model that stresses accountability and close monitoring. A number of operational strategies directly contribute to this goal: reduction in caseload, placement of officers in the community, partnership with the Metropolitan Police Department, and regular reassessment of risk. The deployment of additional Community Supervision Officer positions received in FY 2003 will bring the agency's general supervision caseload to the target ratio of 50 cases per officer and will directly contribute to this goal.

General Goal:

- *CSOSA will increase the percentage of recorded violations for which a timely sanction is imposed and implemented (from a baseline measurement established in FY 2004).*

A system for addressing non-compliant behavior is at the heart of CSOSA's program model. Research has demonstrated the effectiveness of graduated sanctions in both supervision and treatment. Offenders whose behavior is closely monitored, and whose non-compliance is subject to swift and certain consequences, are more likely to follow with their case plans and avoid criminal activity. Therefore, CSOSA has developed, and is seeking to expand, a range of sanctions up to and including residential placement. By consistently implementing these sanctions, we believe we can contain more offenders safely within the community, reducing the instances in which revocation for technical violation becomes necessary—although revocation must always be presented as the ultimate sanction.

CSOSA's sanctions are defined by policy and captured within a sanctions matrix, or Accountability Contract. This document defines the consequences for non-compliant behavior in clear, certain language. The offender signs the contract, and it becomes part of the case plan. Sanctions currently include such measures as: officer reprimand, increased drug testing, increased supervision contacts, attendance at a sanctions group, increase in supervision level, and residential placement. When CSOSA's Re-Entry and Sanctions Center is fully operational, our capacity to impose residential sanctions will be significantly increased.

Prior to the implementation of automated case management, CSOSA had no reliable mechanism to track the recording of violations and imposition of sanctions. The case management system is currently being modified to capture the disposition of each recorded technical violation, including the date, duration, nature, and success of the sanction. This information is essential in the preparation of Alleged Violation Reports.

In formulating this goal, CSOSA chose to emphasize the appropriateness of the sanction and timeliness of its imposition rather than the number of recorded sanctions. To be effective, a sanction must be both calibrated to the seriousness of the behavior and executed quickly and reliably. CSOSA does not seek to decrease the number of recorded violations or sanctions.

Means and Strategies. This goal is dependent on full implementation and consistent enforcement of the Accountability Contract, as well as continued availability of residential sanctions for more severe violations. In addition, supervision officers must receive adequate training in the imposition of sanctions, and whether sanctions are imposed in a timely manner must be tracked through the automated case management system.

General Goal:

- *CSOSA will decrease the proportion of the population who receive three or more violations from separate incidents in a single year (from a baseline measurement established in FY 2004).*

While violations are an expected part of most offenders' supervision, if CSOSA's program model is succeeding, the proportion of the population who violate multiple times each year should decrease. More offenders should be adhering to their case plans, succeeding in their program placements—in short, not engaging in the behaviors that constitute violations. Therefore, the proportion of the population that violates multiple times in any given year should decrease. As noted above, CSOSA does not seek to reduce the number of recorded violations, but rather the proportion of the population who violate repeatedly in a given year.

It should be noted that CSOSA will count each separate incident, not each separate violation resulting from a single incident. A single incident may result in multiple violations—an offender may miss a drug test and fail to report for an office visit, for example, because he has smoked marijuana. That would constitute two violations (the missed test and the missed office visit) but one incident.

Means and Strategies. Timely detection of non-compliant behavior and equally timely imposition of appropriate sanctions are essential to achieving this goal. To that end, caseload ratios must remain low enough for officers to monitor offenders closely and respond quickly to signs of trouble.

General Goal:

- *CSOSA and the U.S. Parole Commission will develop standards for the format and content of Alleged Violation Reports (AVRs) by the end of FY 2004, and staff will receive training in these standards by the end of FY 2005.*

CSOSA's Community Supervision Officers provide documentation of alleged violations to the U.S. Parole Commission, who then determine whether the offender's release status should be revoked and the offender returned to incarceration. These reports must be complete, comprehensive, and appropriately documented. They must also contain sufficient evidence that the office has attempted to address the offender's non-compliance through sanctions, and that revocation is being sought either because other strategies have failed or because the violation is so serious that no other strategy is appropriate.

CSOSA and the U.S. Parole Commission are collaborating on joint staff training and joint drafting of standards for these reports. In addition, CSOSA's case management system will incorporate an AVR module by the end of FY 2003. This module will automate production of the report and minimize the possibility of omissions.

Means and Strategies. This goal will be achieved primarily through collaborative effort, deployment of the automated AVR module, and staff training. This goal must be achieved to enable CSOSA to shift its focus to ensuring that revocation is requested appropriately.

Critical Success Factor 3:

Treatment and Support Services

CSOSA dedicates approximately 15 percent of its annual resources to activities in this area, including:

- Assessment for, and placement in, appropriate substance abuse treatment, including detoxification, residential, transitional, and outpatient programming;
- Monitoring and quality assurance of contracted treatment services;
- Pre- and post-treatment drug testing;
- Placement in court-ordered non-substance abuse treatment, including sex offender and domestic violence programming;
- Operation of a system of Learning Labs, providing basic adult education, GED preparation, and vocational assistance.

Long-term success in reducing recidivism among the defendant and offender population depends upon two key factors: 1) identifying and treating drug use and other social problems among this population; and 2) establishing swift and certain consequences for individuals under supervision who fail to comply with the conditions of their release. Unless both conditions are achieved, the cycle of drugs and crime cannot be interrupted.

The supervision strategies CSOSA has put in place have proven effective in reducing drug-related crime. Sanctions-based treatment has proven to be an effective tool in changing behavior. Research performed by the Washington/ Baltimore High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) project has found that the length of time in treatment contributes to reductions in arrests, drug use and technical violations. This study found that involvement in a drug treatment program with regular drug testing and immediate sanctions for violations resulted in a 70 percent reduction in recidivism 12 months following completion of the program.

Since 1993, treatment services available for the criminal justice population have diminished dramatically. The number of detoxification beds available through the D.C. Addiction Prevention and Recovery Administration between 1993 and 1999 decreased from 105 to 50, a 52 percent reduction. During the same period, the number of residential treatment slots decreased by 60 percent from 379 to 153. The number of outpatient treatment slots fell 17 percent from 1,207 to 999. Further, individuals under supervision compete with the general public for limited treatment capacity.

Because more than 70 percent of offenders under supervision report a drug problem, and because there is a proven nexus between drug abuse and crime, reducing substance abuse is one of CSOSA's highest priorities. While drug testing has increased greatly, and while surveillance has a deterrent effect on the casual user, most offenders have more serious substance abuse problems. The agency has received substantial resources to make treatment available to an unprecedented

number of defendants and offenders under supervision. Treatment placements increased dramatically between FY 1999 and FY 2002, and continued funding has enabled us to maintain approximately 1,100 treatment placements per year. CSOSA has developed contracts with a range of treatment providers for services ranging from hospital detox to outpatient treatment. In addition, CSOSA has developed in-house treatment expertise to provide clinical assessment and recommend the most appropriate placement. “Treatment” also encompasses court-ordered sex offender treatment, mental health assessment and referral, and domestic violence programs.

Learning Labs

CSOSA has established a range of support programs to help defendants and offenders address other problems in their lives. The CSOSA Learning Labs, located at the field offices, provide self-paced computer-assisted adult literacy and GED programming, English as a Second Language classes, and vocational placement assistance. Trained staff offer educational and vocational testing and help the offender/defendant to negotiate the stressful process of finding and maintaining employment.

The Learning Labs represent an important collaboration between CSOSA, other government agencies, and neighborhood groups. The original Learning Lab at St. Luke Center was established in part with a grant from the Department of Justice’s Weed and Seed program, and a local minority-owned business, Empowerment Technology, equipped and networked the site for computer-based learning. Collaboration with Project Bridges, a consortium of churches in the District and Maryland organized to support and strengthen families, reinforced these opportunities by recruiting volunteer mentors. This type of active community involvement continues to be essential to the Learning Lab initiative.

General Goal:

- *CSOSA will increase the proportion of offenders placed in residential substance abuse treatment who satisfactorily complete the program (from a baseline measurement established in FY 2003).*

While some benefit can be derived from any treatment experience—even if the offender does not complete the program—CSOSA has adopted this goal to ensure that the offender’s probability of completing treatment is among the criteria used in determining whether he or she should be placed. While CSOSA’s treatment resources have increased considerably, the demand for treatment continues to exceed availability. Therefore, placement in treatment should be at least partially contingent on the offender’s likelihood to complete the program and thereby derive maximum benefit from the treatment experience.

This goal has been limited to residential treatment in order to take into account that relapse, which is most often experienced during the outpatient portion of the treatment continuum, is a necessary part of the treatment experience. An offender may fail to complete an outpatient placement several times, each time developing a better sense of his or her personal relapse cycle. Such cycles are fairly common and should not constitute a treatment failure. Similarly, some outpatient programs do not have a distinct termination, but are “maintenance” programs that help the offender transition from inpatient treatment to community-based support (such as a twelve-step or faith-based program).

Means and Strategies. The achievement of this goal will depend on several factors. First, a solid definition of treatment success must be developed. What really constitutes a successful completion—the vendor’s program structure or the benefit the offender derived from treatment? Second, CSOSA’s process of assessing and placing offenders in treatment must be structured to take both motivation and need into account. Third, offenders for whom treatment is a condition of release must be taken into account. The outcome of mandatory treatment may be different from that of voluntary treatment. CSOSA has significant work ahead in determining how, and by what criteria, to measure treatment success.

General Goal:

- *CSOSA will reduce drug use among offenders who complete a residential treatment program, as measured by positive urine tests before and after treatment (from a baseline measurement established in FY 2004).*

CSOSA is just beginning to measure the effectiveness of treatment. The most reliable indicator of treatment effectiveness is drug test results. A baseline measurement of the level of negative tests post-completion should be available in FY 2004. This goal is confined to offenders who satisfactorily complete residential treatment due to the nature of outpatient treatment, as discussed above. It is too early to predict the level of reduction in positive drug tests that can be sustained. However, CSOSA is committed to measuring the effectiveness of treatment and continuing to make improvements in this area.

Means and Strategies. Evaluation of treatment effectiveness is a high priority at CSOSA. Research and Evaluation staff are in the process of designing protocols to determine how both short-term and long-term treatment success should be measured. While evaluation design is a critical component of achieving this goal, the development and provision of adequate aftercare services are even more important for treatment success to be maintained over time. In the coming years, CSOSA intends to explore whether more treatment resources should be allocated to aftercare, or whether other options, including peer support, twelve-step programs, and faith-based

groups, can be successfully implemented without decreasing the number of treatment placements.

General Goal:

- *CSOSA will decrease the proportion of offenders under supervision who are revoked to incarceration for substance abuse violations (from a baseline measurement established in FY 2004).*

The most important measure of treatment success or failure is whether the offender returns to incarceration due to repeated substance abuse violations. In such cases, the combined elements of community supervision—surveillance, sanctions, and treatment—have proven ineffective in managing the offender’s substance abuse behavior. The offender’s substance abuse renders him or her unable to function in the community. There is often no choice but to return the offender to incarceration.

CSOSA is committed to reducing the number of such cases. Effective assessment—particularly the type of programming that will be provided in the expanded Reentry and Sanctions Center—combined with treatment, supervision, sanctions, and outpatient support, should result in an increasing proportion of these high-risk offenders defeating their drug use.

Means and Strategies. Full implementation of the Reentry and Sanctions Center is essential to achieving this goal. The Reentry and Sanctions Center will provide both a key pre-treatment assessment and a meaningful residential sanction for high-risk offenders. In addition, this goal also requires timely imposition of sanctions for the initial substance abuse violations, as well as timely referral for treatment. While some revocations for substance abuse violations are inevitable, these actions can be reduced through sanctions and treatment.

General Goal:

- *CSOSA will increase the proportion of offenders who, after completing programming in CSOSA’s Learning Labs, achieve a significant increase in education level (from a baseline measurement established in FY 2004).*

Learning Lab programming is intended to produce meaningful increases in participants’ education levels. The majority of offenders under CSOSA supervision do not possess a high school diploma, and many function at a fifth grade level. Improving offenders’ education levels is a vital part of successful community reintegration.

CSOSA is beginning to capture data on offenders’ functional level as part of the initial Learning Lab assessment. Comparable post-tests are also being initiated to

measure the offender's accomplishments. A baseline for achievement should be established by FY 2004.

Means and Strategies. This goal will be achieved through continued implementation of the Learning Lab program and tracking of participants' success. An enhancement to the case management system is under development to capture this information. Over the period covered by this plan, "significant increase" will be defined as a quantifiable increase in functioning according to a standardized literacy or educational achievement test.

General Goal:

- *CSOSA will increase the proportion of offenders referred to Learning Labs who obtain employment through the Learning Lab (from a baseline measurement established in FY 2004).*

CSOSA is seeking to expand job opportunities available through the Learning Lab so that offenders can receive both assistance with the job application process and viable job leads. To achieve this goal, CSOSA will need to have both a range of jobs available and an effective process for placing offenders in those jobs.

The Learning Lab network has been growing, putting staff and procedures in place and expanding the number of sites. Tracking of offenders placed in jobs through the Learning Labs began in FY 2002, and the SMART system will incorporate a Learning Lab module by the end of FY 2003. By the end of FY 2004, a baseline measurement of the rate of offender placement should be established.

Means and Strategies. Achievement of this goal depends on continued success in developing employment resources through partnership with the public and private sectors. Such partnerships will result in increased employment opportunities for offenders under supervision. CSOSA is working with the D.C. Department of Employment Services and a number of potential employers to increase the number of placements that can be made through the Learning Labs.

Critical Success Factor 4: Community Partnerships

CSOSA dedicates approximately 5 percent of its annual resources to activities in this area, including:

- Partnership with the Metropolitan Police Department in each of the city's 83 Police Service Areas;
- Maintenance and growth of Community Justice Advisory Networks in each of the city's eight Police Districts;
- Development of cooperative agreements and Memorandums of Understanding with government, non-profit, and private entities to increase opportunities available to offenders in the areas of community service, job placement, and support programs.

CSOSA's program model focuses on integrating the functions of offender supervision into the overall community. The results we seek depend in part on cooperation from, and effective collaboration with, our partners—in the justice system, in the community, and in government. We have made significant progress in establishing meaningful partnerships since our founding, and we are now at the point where we can commit to goals that express the value and effectiveness of these relationships.

CSOSA does not view "cross-cutting" programs as an afterthought to our operations. They are essential to our success. To that end, we are involved in a number of innovative partnerships and interagency initiatives to increase both the range of services available to offenders and the network of accountability that prevents crime. CSOSA's goal is to involve the community in supervision—not as a substitute for the officer's work, but as a long-term addition to the offender's life. If the offender comes to believe that the community is invested in his or her success, then he or she becomes invested in the community's welfare and understands the consequences of crime.

General Goal:

- *CSOSA will increase the level of collaborative supervision activities that occur in partnership with the Metropolitan Police Department (from a baseline measurement established in FY 2004).*

CSOSA now has functioning partnerships in all 83 Police Service Areas. Each of these partnerships provides a venue for collaborative supervision. This collaboration takes three forms: joint orientation of offenders entering supervision, presentation of high-risk cases to police officers in the offender's home Police Service Area, and joint accountability tours (home/work site visits) between police officers and Community Supervision Officers. Each activity is important to increasing police awareness of, and participation in, community supervision. Offenders who are

known and monitored by the police are less likely to engage in criminal activity and more likely to have at-risk behavior noticed and interrupted before criminal activity results.

To ensure that our partnership with MPD continues to grow, CSOSA is committed to increasing the level of partnership activities by 10 percent each year over the FY 2004 baseline. We are incorporating an automated tracking capability into SMART in FY 2003 and should establish baseline measurements for each type of activity in FY 2004.

Means and Strategies. Maintaining the target caseload of approximately 50 offenders per supervision officer is essential to achieving this goal. Joint supervision activities with MPD are a time-intensive but important aspect of case management. Community Supervision Officers must have sufficient time to complete these activities. Moreover, these activities must be entered into the case record and tracked within the automated case management system.

General Goal:

- *CSOSA will increase the number of cooperative agreements or Memorandums of Understanding with government, non-profit, faith-based, or private entities to provide opportunities for offenders to fulfill community service requirements (from a baseline established in FY 2003).*

One important result of partnerships is the community's acceptance of offenders' skills and labor. Agreements with outside entities—other government agencies, non-profit groups, faith-based groups, or private businesses—allow offenders to fulfill their requirements for community service. In addition to meeting court-imposed requirements, these opportunities provide work experience and give the offender a chance to interact with the community in a positive way. CSOSA is committed to increasing each year the number of organizations committed to providing these opportunities, and to maintaining an appropriate level of community service placements so that offenders with a community service requirement can fulfill it in a timely manner.

Means and Strategies. CSOSA's Community Justice Programs division works to develop opportunities for offenders to fulfill their community services requirements. By demonstrating the benefit to the community and the cost-effectiveness of participating in the program, CSOSA can increase the number of community service slots that are available.

General Goal:

- *CSOSA will increase the number of cooperative agreements or Memorandums of Understanding with government, non-profit, faith-based, or private entities to provide employment, training, or support programs for offenders (from a baseline established in FY 2003).*

In addition to community service opportunities, CSOSA's partnerships result in increased employment, training, and support programming for offenders under supervision. CSOSA is committed to continuing to grow these resources, which are an invaluable complement to supervision. These resources create links between the offender and his or her community. Participation in a non-profit organization's training program or a faith institution's substance abuse support group will assist the offender in forming permanent, positive relationships and developing positive ways to spend time. Such connections are key to the offender's long-term success.

Means and Strategies. CSOSA is working to expand its Faith/Community Partnership activities to enable offenders to access job training, transitional housing, and other types of support programs offered by area faith institutions. Program capacity and demand from non-criminal justice participants may affect our ability to achieve this goal.

MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

In CSOSA's first strategic plan, three core administrative functions were defined as requiring significant developmental effort and resources over the course of the plan. These areas—Human Capital, Information Technology, and Resource Management—remain critical to CSOSA's effective functioning. Ongoing initiatives in these areas will continue to enhance agency operations and performance, as measured by achievement of the general goals discussed above. Each of these strategic areas is discussed briefly in this section to provide an overview of CSOSA's accomplishments and its ongoing effort to integrate resources allocation with performance measurement.

Human Capital

From CSOSA's inception, senior managers have been aware that the agency's success rests on the efforts of its Community Supervision Officers (CSOs). CSOSA exists to provide a necessary public service—the supervision of offenders and defendants released into the community. These staff implement our program of accountability-based supervision and support services. They assess the offender, refer him or her to services, and monitor his or her progress. They conduct site visits at the offender's home and place of employment. They detect non-compliant behavior and impose sanctions. If all else fails, they request that the offender's release be revoked, and that he or she be taken into custody.

While CSOSA has reduced caseloads by increasing the number of supervision officers, we also realize that smaller caseloads will not in themselves reduce recidivism. Merely having contact with the individual under supervision does not translate into establishing a positive rapport, which is the critical factor that increases the likelihood of compliance with conditions of release. The nature of the relationship that is established between the individual and the officer is what differentiates success from failure. Creating this rapport is critical to altering the behavior of individuals under supervision and assisting them in reintegrating into the community. It requires a level of insight into human behavior gained from a combination of knowledge, experience, and intuition that our human resource management processes must identify, develop and support. In addition, our management practices must address the delicate balance between ensuring consistent treatment of those under supervision and hindering the rapport between the officer and his or her caseload.

CSOSA's Office of Human Resources has undertaken a number of initiatives to ensure that recruitment and training activities reflect the complex requirements of the position, including:

- Development and implementation of a comprehensive pre-service training academy for newly-hired CSOs.
- Analysis of the critical competencies of the CSO position.

- Development and implementation of CSO evaluation criteria that are directly tied to the agency's Critical Success Factors.
- Targeted recruitment to increase the number of bilingual CSOs to serve the Spanish-speaking offender population.

These initiatives will continue throughout the period covered by this strategic plan.

Information Technology

The decision to combine three distinct District of Columbia agencies into a single new agency posed significant information technology challenges. The probation and parole functions were served by out-of-date, under-maintained information systems. While the Pretrial Services Agency had a functional information system, it too required significant updating and enhancement.

The challenges were programmatic as well as functional. CSOSA's program model combined probation and parole caseloads under the new job category of Community Supervision Officer, so separate information systems could no longer be maintained. In addition, CSOSA has based community supervision at multiple field offices rather than one central location. This was a significant change from former practices, under which a centralized staff completed most data entry.

CSOSA implemented these changes in stages throughout 1999 and 2000. It was not until early 2001, when the CSO workforce was largely in place, three field offices had been established, and an administrative infrastructure had been built to support the new supervision model, that the central data entry unit was dismantled (except for some system intake functions). At this time, the probation and parole information systems were merged. The resulting database, the Offender Automated Supervision Information System (OASIS), came online in January 2001. OASIS established an initial framework for inputting data about both probation and parole cases, but it retained many of the obsolete features of the legacy systems and was always intended as an interim solution. The decision was made in 2001 to replace OASIS with a permanent, web-based information system.

The design and deployment of this system, the Supervision Management Automated Record Tracking (SMART) System, has been a major priority throughout 2001 and 2002. CSOs were the primary designers of SMART, working collaboratively with both Information Technology staff and consultants. Version 1.0 of SMART, the general supervision module, was deployed on January 22, 2002. The system was brought from requirements analysis to deployment in far less time than neighboring jurisdictions have spent on requirements analysis alone (without ever achieving a functional system). Since deployment of the initial module, the agency has been working to transition all case management recordkeeping to the new system. This transition will occur in phases, as data is verified, new SMART modules are completed, and results are audited.

Concurrent with the effort to deploy SMART, the Pretrial Services Agency undertook a major redesign and enhancement of its information system. The redesigned system, the Pretrial Real-Time Information System Manager (PRISM) came online in 2002.

Enhancements and additional modules will continue to be developed and deployed in SMART and PRISM throughout FY 2003 and FY 2004. These modules will greatly enhance the supervision officer's ability to capture specific data for the agency's performance measures. Enhancements are also under development to improve the agency's ability to access data from other sources, such as D.C. Superior Court and the Metropolitan Police Department. These outside sources are essential to capturing key variables—such as case dispositions and arrests—in a timely manner. CSOSA also is responsible for maintaining a secure sex offender registry, as required by the Sex Offender Registration Act of 1999 (D.C. law 13-137).

With the deployment of SMART and PRISM, the agency has made a major commitment to linking case management and performance measurement; however, any database is only as useful as the data entered into it. With that in mind, the agency continues to train officers to integrate supervision activities with data entry. Although these systems remain, to an extent, works in progress, CSOSA is committed to relying on the data they produce. For that reason, baselines cannot be established and progress measured for some of our strategic goals until the relevant system features become operational.

Resource Management

CSOSA is committed to managing for results. The agency's budget is a tool to force change, measure progress, and set a course toward future achievement. With that in mind, CSOSA has made significant progress toward integrating strategy, performance measurement, and resource allocation. The budget is formulated, and expenditures tracked, according to the Critical Success Factors (CSFs). To be considered for funding, each new initiative must demonstrate that it is directly related to at least one CSF. These strategic objectives are more than just guiding principles. They are the framework within which we conduct our daily operations.

CSOSA's performance management process is designed to "operationalize" our strategic plan. Specifically, performance management is the broad umbrella under which all our planning, financial management, and policy-making activities are conducted. It integrates our executive leadership, management, budget and performance evaluation functions into a coherent process that focuses the entire organization on key priorities and strategies. Specifically, the process establishes a framework for:

- Establishing our strategic direction based on an analysis of external factors,
- Formulating specific outcomes, strategies and performance measures,

- Developing a budget that allocates resources based on priorities in the strategic and annual plans,
- Communicating expectations and establishing accountability for resource utilization and program performance, and
- Monitoring program performance, adjusting strategies and reporting on results.

Relationship to Annual Performance Plan

CSOSA has established a system of performance measures around each Critical Success Factor. These measures have defined the key activities that must occur in order to operationalize the Critical Success Factor. The FY 2004 performance measures are summarized below.

CSF 1: Risk and Needs Assessment

- timely completion of presentence investigations;
- timely completion of initial risk assessment;
- timely completion of case plan;
- timely completion of the accountability contract;
- timely reassessment according to policy.

CSF 2: Close Supervision

- monthly drug testing of all eligible offenders;
- timely resolution of loss of contact through request of a warrant;
- timely completion of community service requirements;
- implementation of the appropriate sanction for each documented violation of the accountability contract.

CSF 3: Treatment and Support Services

- timely placement in treatment following completion of the assessment;
- satisfactory completion of the treatment program;
- completion of an aftercare/relapse prevention plan;
- Learning Lab referrals result in placement in appropriate programming.

CSF 4: Partnerships

- development of community service capacity;
- development of job opportunities;
- presentation of high-risk cases to the Metropolitan Police Department;
- regular Offender Reentry Orientations in each police district;
- regular accountability tours with MPD officers and CSOSA Community Supervision Officers.

As this list illustrates, our current set of performance measures are largely concerned with tracking whether key activities occur at the intervals defined by policy. As our strategic focus shifts from specific tasks to general goals within each Critical Success Factor, our performance measures will be revised to track specific outputs related to those goals. For example, while we currently have a performance measure related to timely completion of the presentence investigation, the general goal of increasing user satisfaction with the investigation may necessitate additional performance measures around designing and implementing a user survey and targeting specific elements of the investigation process for improvement based on survey results.

This shift from measures that track core activities (such as “close supervision”) to measures that support a measurable goal (such as “increased job placements”) will not occur overnight. CSOSA’s operations are still relatively new, and tracking these core outputs remains essential to staying on course. However, CSOSA recognizes that meaningful performance measurement is about results, not tasks. We can perform our jobs very efficiently and still fail to achieve our goal. In order to determine whether our program model is working, we must develop measures that track activities without losing sight of why we perform those activities.

This strategic plan elevates the five intermediate outcomes defined in the previous iteration of the strategic plan (reduced rearrest, reduced drug use, reduced revocation, increased employment, and increased educational achievement) to the status of general goals. These outcomes will result from performing our core activities well. They will directly affect whether we can reduce recidivism. Therefore, there are no general goals more important than these outcomes.

Program Evaluation

The lack of a comprehensive case management system containing reliable data severely impeded program evaluation efforts during CSOSA's first years of operation. Now that we have deployed such a system, meaningful program evaluation will be possible once several conditions are met:

- all system features necessary to implement an evaluation design must be fully functional;
- sufficient data must be available to allow for meaningful analysis; and
- the data must be verified.

All of these processes are underway at this time and will continue throughout the planning period. We expect to make great progress in the quality, accuracy, and availability of data over the period covered by this plan. During that time, we will also complete initial evaluations and studies related to several Critical Success Factors, including:

CSF 1: Risk and Needs Assessment

- Evaluation of the appropriateness of risk assessment and supervision level assignments
- Validation and revalidation of CSOSA's risk and needs screening tools
- Establishing a typology of offenders along risk and need domains

CSF 2: Close Supervision

- Evaluation of the association between supervision strategies and policies and violation patterns
- Evaluation of intensive supervision programs and offender outcomes
- Assessment of 'least restrictive' conditions of release and potential public safety compromises

CSF 3: Treatment and Support Services

- Evaluation of the efficiency/effectiveness of CSOSA's treatment screening, assessment, and placement protocol
- Evaluation of the association between treatment outcomes and recidivism across offender typologies
- Evaluation of VOTE participation's effect on educational and vocational outcomes

At this time, these evaluations are in the planning stages. As data quality and availability improve and the case management system continues to evolve, these studies will be prioritized and the designs finalized to reflect the agency's need for information and the best analysis that can be performed with the available data.

Key Factors Affecting Goals

At the highest level, the dramatic changes CSOSA seeks to affect, as well as confidence in the criminal justice system, depend on our ability to change the behavior of individuals under our supervision. Our strategies are designed to achieve this outcome. They were developed using the empirical results of a large body of professional research and the successful implementation of similar programs in other areas. However, we do not have unilateral authority to ensure the ultimate implementation of our strategies.

CSOSA performs its functions within the larger criminal justice process. We do not operate in a vacuum. Our activities are designed to support the courts, the U.S. Parole Commission, and in a larger sense, the Congress and the community. Specifically, the success of the strategies laid out in this strategic plan depends on CSOSA obtaining:

- Support from the Courts and the U.S. Parole Commission for the sanctions process,
- Support from the community for our community supervision program and partnership strategy, and
- Resources to further reduce caseloads, provide drug and other treatment services, and provide overall support to the supervision function.

Support for the Sanctions Process

An accountability structure is the cornerstone of supervision and must be established at the beginning of supervision. Our strategy to provide close supervision for convicted offenders assumes that an accountability contract is established between the offender and the releasing authority at the beginning of the supervision period. This contract includes the conditions of release and describes a series of sanctions to redress the behavior of the person under supervision. The strategy is predicated on swift and certain consequences for non-compliant behavior, i.e., during the supervision period, every detected accountability contract violation will be met with a prescribed and immediate response, as prescribed in the contract. The Pretrial Services Agency uses a similar accountability structure for high-risk defendants who violate their conditions of release.

While CSOSA monitors the conditions of release, the Judiciary and the U.S. Parole Commission have responsibility for determining whether the defendant or offender has abided by the conditions of their release. If the releasing authorities do not accept and support the implementation of accountability contracts and processes are not structured in such a way as to provide quick and meaningful responses, then the unintended message to the individual under supervision is that the condition is not important. The speed and outcome of decisions made by these organizations will directly affect successful implementation of our supervision strategy. Lack of support for the accountability contracts would undermine the tenets of swift and certain

consequences and hamper our ability to manage noncompliant behavior. It would also negatively affect our treatment strategy, since empirical data indicates that individuals are more likely to successfully complete their treatment if the releasing authority provides a coercive incentive.

Support for Community Partnerships

Establishing partnerships and gaining community support for our programs is central to our overall strategy of community-based supervision. Forging alliances with local police helps us to monitor offenders and hold them accountable to their release terms. Community leaders play a vital role in this strategy as well by extending the resources for job training, educational assistance, mentoring, and substance abuse support. Moreover, the active involvement of individuals and community organizations helps establish a sense of unity and common purpose in preventing and controlling crime. However, successful partnerships are not easily established, nor are they built overnight. Citizens and community leaders are often leery of criminal justice organizations and may view other community efforts as more deserving of their time and resources. Gaining this support is integral to our long-term success in achieving our goal of reducing recidivism and reintegrating the offender into the community.

Resources

As discussed above, CSOSA was formed from three separate organizations that for a long time lacked adequate resources, curtailing their ability to adequately protect public safety. The strategies and performance targets in this plan were formulated based on the assumption that the agency will continue to receive adequate funding to fully implement its community and sanctions-based approach to supervision. The increased funding CSOSA has already received has allowed us to make significant strides in reducing caseloads, expanding drug testing, providing treatment services and improving automation. Over the next five years, additional funds will help the agency make further improvements in these areas. Establishing a sanctions center to stabilize relapsing individuals in a secure environment will also contribute to increased public safety in the District of Columbia.

Influencing the External Factors

Although the external factors discussed above are outside of our direct control, they are not beyond our span of influence. It is highly unlikely that releasing authorities will completely reject the graduated sanctions scheme; that all community leaders will decline to establish partnerships with us; or that we will receive no funding for additional needed programs. Instead, we are likely to have varying degrees of success in each of these areas depending upon how well we can explain the overall logic of our programs. We can best influence these external factors by demonstrating

successful results from implementing our strategies and by maintaining an internal climate of fiscal responsibility and prudence.

Stakeholder Input

During development of this strategic plan, CSOSA solicited input from a number of external stakeholder agencies, including:

- **District of Columbia Deputy Mayor for Public Safety and Justice.** CSOSA is involved in the formulation and execution of a Comprehensive City-Wide Re-Entry Strategy, which will coordinate a range of public and private responses to the returning offender's need for housing, employment, and health care.
- **District of Columbia Superior Court.** CSOSA prepares presentence investigations for use by Superior Court judges, and appears before the judges to request revocation of probation.
- **Federal Bureau of Prisons.** The Revitalization Act began the process of transferring custody of District of Columbia felons to the Federal Bureau of Prisons. This process was completed in 2001 with the closure of the Lorton Correctional Complex.
- **Metropolitan Police Department.** CSOSA is involved in a number of collaborative activities with the police, including joint offender orientations and home/work site visits.
- **U.S. Attorney.** CSOSA collaborates with the U.S. Attorney on a number of initiatives to target high-crime areas of the city.
- **U.S. Parole Commission.** The U.S. Parole Commission assumed the parole adjudication function for District of Columbia offenders in 1998. Since the District of Columbia abolished parole in 2001, the U.S. Parole Commission is also the administrator of supervised release, under which a sentenced offender can spend the final portion of his or her sentence in the community. Supervised release may not exceed 15 percent of the total sentence.

Community Supervision Officers work with the Commission to enforce the parolee's compliance with release conditions; the CSO submits an Alleged Violation Report to the Commission in cases where the officer has determined the offender should be returned to custody.

All of the stakeholder agencies were complimentary of CSOSA's efforts to improve community supervision, particularly efforts to increase community outreach, participation, and awareness. The stakeholders also supported increased collaboration, particularly around the issues of targeted crime prevention,

improvement of the presentence investigation (which is used by a number of stakeholders), data sharing, and community outreach. Several stakeholders indicated a desire for more information and training regarding CSOSA's risk and needs assessment process, treatment referral process, sanctions, and requests for revocation of release.

The interviews informed not just the agency's strategic direction but also short-term actions that will be taken to address stakeholder concerns. CSOSA recognizes the need to maintain an open dialogue with its criminal justice partners and to share information whenever possible. The policies, actions, and priorities of these agencies remain important factors in any effort to address crime. An individual's passage through the criminal justice system—from arrest to prosecution to sentencing through incarceration and release—can involve all of these agencies. For that reason, collaboration is essential so that criminal justice resources can be deployed in a consistent, effective manner.

Relationship to PSA's Strategic Plan

While both Pretrial Service Officers (PSO) and Community Supervision Officers (CSO) monitor, drug test, refer, and sanction individuals, the processes and possible outcomes are quite different:

- The PSO's contact with an individual is, in general, quite short. The average period of pretrial supervision lasts four months for misdemeanor cases and nine months for felonies. By contrast, probation lasts an average of 20 months and parole an average of five years.
- The PSO focuses on short-term interventions that increase the probability that the defendant will keep his or her court date. The CSO aims at a long-term strategy through which the individual can establish a different type of lifestyle. This may involve very basic life changes—where and with whom the individual lives; how he or she earns and thinks about money; his or her friends and associates; developing skills he or she may be ashamed of lacking; and fighting a war, composed of many battles, to break his or her personal cycle of drug abuse and crime.
- The PSO has limited leverage that can be used to enforce conditions of release. The individual has not been convicted and cannot readily be taken into custody or forced to comply. More options are available to the CSO. Community supervision is, at least in part, a privilege. The individual is viewed as a sufficiently low risk that he or she is allowed to avoid, or be released from, incarceration, at the price of abiding by certain conditions. Because release is a privilege, if those conditions are violated, that privilege can be revoked. The individual can serve his or her sentence in prison rather than out of it. Therefore, offenders on supervision have both more incentive to comply and a potentially stiffer punishment for non-compliance. While revocation is always a carefully considered decision, the offender is very much aware that it can, and does, happen.

For these reasons, pretrial supervision is significantly different from post-conviction supervision. The means are different, and so are the ends. PSA is a component of CSOSA—and as such contributes to CSOSA's overall organizational vision and priorities—but its mission necessitates the maintenance of some degree of operational independence. Therefore, PSA has formulated its own strategic plan, with separate objectives and accompanying performance goals and measures.

Within its plan, PSA has established three operational priorities, within which they have defined specific objectives:

- Assessment and Release Recommendations
- Monitoring and Supervision of Released Defendants
- Integrate Supervision with Treatment

These operational priorities correspond to three of the Critical Success Factors (Risk and Needs Assessment, Close Supervision, and Treatment and Support Services), but recast those core values from the perspective of pretrial supervision. PSA's goals and strategies diverge from the broader CSOSA strategies only to the extent that its mission and function require.