UNDER-STAFFING, LONG HOURS OF WORK AND HEALTH: 
THE DON JAIL

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Respondent: I was here at quarter to 6 this morning.

Interviewer: And your normal shift is till 10?

Respondent: No, my normal shift would be 2 this afternoon till 10 tonight. But they had no staff so we came in at 6 this morning.

Interviewer: But your scheduled to work in fact till 10 tonight?

Respondent: Absolutely, yes.

Interviewer: And then, the schedule has you starting tomorrow morning at 6 [am].

Respondent: Well the schedule shows that we start at 2 [pm]. But they’re asking us to come in at 6 [am].

Interviewer: So your expectation is that you’ll be working 6 [am] till 10 tonight and 6 [am] till 10 tomorrow?

Respondent: Yeah.

Interviewer: So you’ll have 8 hours between 16 hour shifts?

Respondent: Yeah.

Interviewer: So you work 32 of a 40 hour shift period.

Respondent: Yeah. And…out of those 2 days you have 6 hours family time.

Interviewer: And does this happen on a regular basis?

Respondent: Absolutely, absolutely.

Interviewer: And we’re saying weekly? Monthly?

Respondent: Weekly.

(Correctional Officer, Don Jail February 2003) (Number 5)
INTRODUCTION

This assessment was prepared for the Ontario Public Service Employees Union. It examines the conditions of work at the Don Jail. I was asked by the Union to assess whether under-staffing and the resulting levels of overtime represented a health risk and to offer recommendations, if any, arising out of my assessment. The assessment provides evidence in support of the union's claim that long hours of work represent a potential health risk to the staff of the Don Jail.

The assessment is based on:

- A review of the key literature on long hours of work and health and the literature on work organization and health.
- Documents provided by management on staff shortages and the prevalence of overtime worked at Jail during 2001 & 2002.
- Eleven interviews with correctional officers at the Don Jail conducted by the author during February of 2003. The sample was constructed to represent the three main areas of the Jail, the ranges, admissions & discharges, and medical. It also represented officers working different levels of overtime. Four of the eleven worked fewer than 12 hours of overtime each week. The remainder worker 12 or more hours.
- Two interviews with the local union president and a phone interview with the person responsible for scheduling at the Jail.
- A short survey distributed to all permanent corrections officers with their February pay cheques. The survey included the 14 question Karasek Job Content Questionnaire (JCQ) and the 17 questions that make up the effort-reward imbalance scale developed by Siegrist (See appendix one). Ninety surveys were distributed and 52 were returned for a response rate of 58%.
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS:

- Correctional officers report below average health status and high levels of hypertension and sleep disorders.
- The average correctional officer is working over 60 hours a week. Work weeks of 80 hours per week and more are common.
- There is a high probability that the reliance on overtime at this workplace is affecting the health of correctional officers.
- The physical conditions of the job, air quality, and lighting are not conducive to good health.
- The organization of work has led to both job strain and effort-reward imbalance.
The report is divided into six sections:

- Section One reviews the literature on long hours, work organization and health outcomes.
- Section Two describes the work done at the Don Jail.
- Section Three provides a profile of staff shortages and overtime at the Jail. It examines why officers agree to work long hours.
- Section Four examines how work is organized at the Jail focusing on workload, control and support.
- Section Five examines the health effects of work at the Don Jail.
- Section Six: Summarizes the findings and makes recommendations to improve the health of workers at the Don Jail.
SECTION ONE: RESEARCH ON LONG HOURS, WORK ORGANIZATION AND HEALTH OUTCOMES

LONG HOURS AND HEALTH

Long hours of work in Japan and the United States (Schor 1991) has created a new interest in the impact of long hours of work on health. Long hours may affect health outcomes in two different ways. Long hours or work may itself be stressful, leading to maladaptive behaviors such as smoking, over-eating, lack of exercise and drug use. Working long hours may also extend the duration of exposure to other work related health risks including ergonomic risks, chemical toxins, work related fatigue, job strain, effort-reward imbalance, and other stressor resulting from the organization of work. A recent review of this subject concluded:

There is currently sufficient evidence to raise concerns about the risks to health and safety of long working hours... It is difficult to escape the conclusion that schedules of this nature [weeks >50 hours] are detrimental to health and well-being” (Spurgeon et.al. 1997, p. 367 & 374).

Academic interest in long hours of work and health outcomes dates back to World War I when research was carried out on munitions workers in Britain (Vernon, 1920). This research led to the observation that shortening working hours and introducing regular breaks could reduce fatigue without any reduction in production. Research along these lines continues. Proctor et.al. (1996) examined the impact of long hours on cognitive functions. They reported that long hours of work had a negative impact on tasks requiring attention and executive function skills. These studies were interested primarily in the impact of long hours on productivity. The impact on health was a secondary objective.

Recently, research into long hours at work has focused more directly on the health effects. This is driven in part by the Japanese recognition of a specific occupational condition related to long hours and overwork, “Karoshi”, or death from overwork. The major ways Karoshi manifests itself are heart attacks and strokes leading to sudden death. The first case of Karoshi was reported in Japan in 1969 when a 29 year old worker died at work from a stroke. By 1987, the Japanese Ministry of Labor was regularly reporting cases of Karoshi. Its prevalence remains a subject of debate. The Ministry has reported between 20 and 60 cases of Karoshi deaths each year for which it awarded compensation. In 1994, the government’s Economic Planning Agency put the number of karoshi deaths at around 1,000 per year. Others have estimated it at closer to 10,000 or one-third of all deaths from cardiovascular deaths in the 20 to 59 year age group (Nishiyama & Johnson 1997. p. 625-6)

The recognition of Karoshi, as a work related occupational health risk led a number of Japanese researchers to explore its causes. Studies revealed that many of the Karoshi
victims had worked at least 3,000 hours per year just before their death (Nishiyama & Johnson 1997. p. 627). It is argued that the combination of rationalization of production methods in Japan since 1945, long hours of work and long commutes each day have created the conditions for death from overwork in Japan.

As researchers have come to understand Karoshi, they have proposed a "Karoshi model" to explain how work can lead to sudden death. It is argued that long hours of work brings about unhealthy lifestyle changes such as smoking, alcohol abuse, lack of physical activity, sleeplessness, poor eating habits and fewer chances for medical examinations. Long hours may also lead to increased anxiety, strain, irritability, fatigue and a tendency toward obesity. These can increase the risk of cardiovascular disease and sudden death. Maruyama & Morimoto (1996) studied the effects of long hours of work on Japanese managers. They concluded that managers who normally worked more than 10 hours a day were more at risk of insufficient sleep, irregular meals, and worsening physical conditions compared to those who worked 9 or fewer hours per day. As hours of work increased, stress levels increased, and the subjective quality of life decreased. Nakamura et.al., 1998 found working overtime was correlated with an increase in body mass index and an increase in waist circumference over a three year period. Margot (1999), using Canadian National Population Health data from 1994/95 & 1996/97 showed an increased risk of negative health behaviors associated with the shift from normal to long hours of work. Men and women who increased their hours of work had a higher risk of increased cigarette consumption. Men had a higher risk of an unhealthy weight gain, and women had an increased risk of increased alcohol consumption and depression.

Other research has focused on the impact of long hours on blood pressure and other indicators of cardiovascular health. In an early paper, Uehata (1991) reported the characteristics of Karohsi victims. Of 203 cases studied, 123 died of strokes, 50 of acute cardiac failure, 27 of myocardial failure and 4 of aortic ruptures. Two-thirds of the Karohsi victims worked more than 60 hours per week, or worked 50 hours of overtime per month, or worked half of their fixed holidays before the attack. Hayashi (1996) reported overtime increased blood pressure and heart rate over a 24 hour period. Sokejima & Kagamimori (1998) were amongst the first to look at hours of work and the risk of acute myocardial infarction (AMI). They reported a U-shaped relationship between hours of work and the risk of AMI. Men working long hours (more than 11 hours per day) were 2.44 times more likely to suffer AMI than those working normal hours (7-9 hours per day). They also found a relationship between recent increases in hours of work and the risk of AMI. Liu & Tanaka (2002) compared Japanese men admitted to hospital with acute myocardial infarction (AMI) with a control group without AMI. They found that those with AMI worked longer hours, were less likely to get sufficient sleep and had fewer days off. The risk of AMI amongst those who worked more than 61 hours per week was double the risk of those who worked 40 hours or less. In a recent paper, Nakanishi et.la. (2001) found no effect of long hours on blood
pressure. They suggested that the pathways from long hours to health outcomes may be buffered by the work organization context. They noted that in their sample, the majority of individuals working long hours were architects and researchers, while those working normal hours were clerks. They hypothesized that architects and researchers work under conditions that buffered them from the negative effects of their long hours. Their work alerts us to the need to consider both hours of work and the context under which those hours are worked to understand work related health outcomes.
WORK ORGANIZATION AND HEALTH OUTCOMES

The previous section established the link between long hours of work and health outcomes. While there is sufficient evidence to suggest that long hours can negatively affect health outcomes, the most recent research suggests that the work context may mediate the health effects of long hours of work. The most obvious way long hours of work can increase health risks is through prolonged exposure to dangerous substances or biomechanical hazards. Recent research suggests a third set of possible risks related to the organization of work itself. In their recent publication, “The Changing Organization of Work and the Safety and Health of Working People”, the United States National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health stated “There is growing appreciation that the organization of work has broad implications for the safety and health of workers.” (NIOSH 2002) Much of the research into work organization and health outcomes has focused on “job strain” and “effort-reward imbalance”. Job strain exists when jobs involve low levels of control at work and high workload demands. Effort-reward imbalance exists when the demands of a job are not fully compensated by monetary and non-monetary rewards. A key argument of this assessment is that at the Don Jail correctional officers work long hours, in an unhealthy physical environment and are exposed to both job strain and effort-reward imbalance. The remainder of this section will describe the concepts of job strain and effort-reward imbalance.

THE WHITEHALL STUDIES AND THE LINK BETWEEN WORK ORGANIZATION AND HEALTH OUTCOMES

The Whitehall studies advanced our understanding of how work organization affects health outcomes. In a project begun in 1967, Michael Marmot and his colleagues discovered an age-adjusted social gradient in death rates and in absenteeism in a study involving tens of thousands of British civil servants working in offices in London. Civil servants in the highest employment grade (administrative) had from one-third to one-half the incidence of mortality of those in the lowest grade (clerical) (Marmot et.al., 1984; Marmot et.al., 1991; Marmot, 1997). The sample was unique in that it included only office workers. These workers were not heavily exposed to traditional health risks such as dangerous substances or biomechanical hazards associated with manufacturing. Equally important, the health impact of poverty was largely removed from the equation as even the worst paid employment grade enjoyed a comfortable material standard of living.

What explains the causes of this social health gradient? Subsequent research indicated that life style explained only a small component of this difference. Under Whitehall II, begun in 1985, Marmot and his colleagues began exploring the role of work organization as an explanation of this gradient. Work organization is the complex set of practices which shape the physical and social organization of workplaces. Together,
these practices define how people interact with their physical environment and how they interact with each other. In a key paper, researchers argued that prolonged exposure to jobs with limited control over decisions at work nearly doubled the risk of coronary heart disease compared to those working at jobs with high levels of control (Bosma et al., 1997). Using data from the same study, North and her colleagues showed civil servants in the lowest employment grades had 3 to 6 times the level of short and long absences from work compared with civil servants in the highest grade (North et al., 1993 & 1996). They went on to argue that work demands, control at work and support at work were significant factors in explaining the pattern of absences from work. A recent summary report from the study concludes, "The work environment appears to be an important influence on health. . . . Our results suggest that interventions at the level of work design, organisation and management may reduce morbidity in working populations." (Stansfield, Head & Marmot, 2000; see Cooper 1998 for a review of some of this literature).

The Whitehall studies paved the way for a number of other studies into the impact of work organization on health. In a major Canadian study by Statistics Canada, Wilkins and Beaudet (1998) examined how workload, control at work, job insecurity, physical demands, and support from supervisors and co-workers affected a number of health outcomes including, blood pressure, repetitive strain injuries, back problems and migraines. They found that for men, the combination of high workload and low control at work was associated with migraines and psychological distress, while for women it was associated with work injuries. High physical demands led to work injury in both sexes, while low co-worker support was related to migraines in men and work injury and psychological distress amongst women. Dollard et al. (2000), studying workers from a public sector welfare agency, concluded, "If workers are consistently in a situation of chronic heavy workload with a lack of either support or control, strain and ill-health, not to mention a lack of productivity can result." (p. 507) The Canadian Heart and Stroke Foundation, in its annual Report Card on Canadians, warned, "Workers who have little control in their jobs but are under great pressure, are at an increased heart risk brought about by stress." (Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada, 2000).

**MODELING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WORK ORGANIZATION AND HEALTH**

The recognition that work organization appears to influence health outcomes has led to extensive research trying to explain why this is so. Three complementary models of the relationship have emerged. They are:

- **Job Demand-Control Model (JD-C)**

- **Iso-strain model**
Effort-Reward Imbalance (ERI)

THE JOB DEMAND-CONTROL MODEL

A major breakthrough in our understanding of the relationship between work organization and health came with the work of Karasek and Theorell (Karasek 1979; Karasek & Theorell, 1990). They developed what is known as the Job Demand-Control (JD-C) model. They pointed to "job strain", defined as the combination of high psychological workload demands and low decision latitude or control as a key health risk. Psychological demands are measured by questions asking: Is work excessive? Are there conflicting demands? Is there time for work? Is it too fast or too hard? Decision latitude is measured by questions asking: Can employees make their own decisions? Can they choose how to do their job? Do they have a say on the job? Do they take part in decisions? Researchers using the JD-C model have shown that a variety of health problems, including high blood pressure and cardiovascular disease, are more common where employees are exposed to "job strain". For instance, heart disease is more common amongst overworked cashiers and line workers than amongst overworked executives.

The etiology linking "job strain" and health continues to be explored. In his early work, Karasek argued that workers facing job strain would experience a state of arousal and stress that inhibits learning which in turn further increases stress and arousal by impairing confidence and self-esteem. More recent work has focussed on how increasing control permits workers to minimize the effects of workload-related stressors by allowing them to adjust their work pattern so they complete their job assignments when they are best able to do so and in ways they find the least stressful. According to Wall, et al., (1996) "Control provides the opportunity for individuals to adjust to demands according to their needs and circumstances." (p. 155) In the short run, "job strain" is hypothesized to lead to lower job satisfaction, exhaustion and depression, and in the long run to stress-related illness, including cardiovascular disease. (See Schnall, et al. 2002; de Jonge 2000a; Stansfield et.al. 2000).

A compelling piece of evidence in support of the "job strain" model comes from a Swedish study. The results are summarized in Figure One. The prevalence of heart disease symptoms is more than seven times higher for workers with little control and high workload than for those with high control and high workload.
FIGURE ONE: JOB DEMAND-CONTROL AND HEART DISEASE PREVALENCE
(Swedish males, 1974, N=1,621)
(Number on vertical bar is percentage in each category with symptoms)
Source: Karasek & Theorell 1990, p. 6.
The Cornell Work Site study directed by Landsbergis, Schnall & Schwartz is investigating the link between work organization and hypertension at eight workplaces in New York City. Early results indicate that systolic and diastolic blood pressure are affected more by a person’s workplace than by other demographic variables (Schlussel et.al. 1990). Further research by this team combined data based on the Karasek 42 item Job Content Questionnaire with ambulatory blood pressure readings. The results suggest that the link between "job strain" and heart disease identified by Karasek is caused by elevated blood pressure readings (Schnall et al., 1992; Landsbergis et al., 1994). The initial study was repeated three years later with a total of 195 men and showed that blood pressure was higher amongst workers facing "job strain" in both periods of time ("Chronic job strain") compared to those facing job strain in only one period or not at all (Schnall et al.,1998). In addition, men leaving a situation of job strain over the 3 years of the follow-up had a significant decline in their work blood pressure of 5.3 mm Hg systolic and 3.2 mm Hg diastolic. The evidence in support of a link between work organization and cardiovascular disease is summarized in Schnall et.al., 2000.

ISO-STRAIN MODEL

The Iso-strain model adds workplace support to the analysis of how work organization affects health outcomes. Research during the last twenty years points to a link between the degree to which individuals interact with others in their society and health outcomes. Social cohesion, social capital and the decline in social capital are important subjects for researchers trying to understand trends in overall public health (Putnam 2000; Coburn 2000; Karasek & Theorell 2000). At work, this link is explored within the framework of the Iso-strain model (Johnson & Hall 1988; Johnson 1991).

Recent research suggests that social support at work influences health through a complex set of pathways, some related to buffering the negative effects of workload and control, while others relate to increased collective control at work. Johnson (1991) lists four routes through which social support influences health outcomes at work:

- meeting basic human needs for companionship and group affiliation;
- providing resources to moderate the impact of job demands;
- influencing adult socialization and promoting active patterns of behaviour; and
- through collective coping systems that protect groups of workers against structural demands and pressures.
Stansfeld et al. (1998) provide some clues to the etiology between support and
health. They hypothesize that the positive aspects of work (high levels of control, skill discretion, work support, high rewards) combined with personal social support may increase self-esteem and perceptions of control over the environment. These positive psychological states may reduce chronic physiological arousal and boost immune responsiveness leading to good health and greater resistance to the impact of life events. The absence of a positive work and support environment may lead to a chronic metabolic disturbance that may then lead to the development of impaired functioning and disease.

Evidence confirming the role of support as a factor affecting health outcomes is reported in Johnson (1991). From a sample of 13,779 Swedish male and female workers, it was shown that low control and low support increased the risk of cardiovascular disease. Johnson and his colleagues found that the prevalence of cardiovascular disease was higher for those reporting low control or those reporting low support and was the highest for those reporting both low control and low support at work (1.67 times that found in the high control/high support group).

EFFECT-REWARD IMBALANCE MODEL

A third approach to understanding how work organization affects health is the Effort-Reward Imbalance Model (ERI) (Siegrist 1996; Siegrist & Peters 2000). Siegrist argues that an imbalance between costs and gains at work (i.e. high effort/low reward condition) results in a state of emotional distress with special propensity to autonomic arousal and associated strain reactions. The ERI model does not abandon the earlier focus on control at work or workload. Rather it places control and workload in the context of a broader and deeper set of social forces and it introduces rewards as a key factor determining levels of stress. In the ERI model, effort at work is viewed as part of a socially organized exchange with workers receiving rewards from society. Those rewards include money, esteem and status control. When effort and rewards are imbalanced, the individual is stressed and in the long-run is more likely to experience negative health outcomes.

Evidence supporting the role of effort-reward imbalance in determining health outcomes at work is becoming increasingly compelling. In the original study using this model, Siegrist (1996) showed that the risk of acute myocardial infarction, sudden cardiac death, and coronary heart disease was most elevated in those with at least one indicator of high effort and at least one indicator of low reward (p. 34). More recently, the Whitehall II study has uncovered a significant relationship between effort-reward imbalance and increased risk of alcohol dependence, psychiatric disorder, long spells of sickness absence and poor health functioning (Stansfeld, Head & Marmot, 2000, p. 1).
SECTION TWO: WORKING AT THE DON JAIL

Section One reviewed the theoretical literature linking long hours, work organization and health outcomes. This section provides a basic description of working at the Don Jail, the kind of staff employed and the overall work environment. Subsequent sections profile work hours at the Jail, workload and a more detailed portrait of work organization. This section uses information drawn from interviews with correctional officers.

WORKING AT THE DON JAIL

The majority of staff in this bargaining unit are correctional officers. There are two types of correctional officers: classified and casual. Classified officers have permanent positions at the Jail. They are full-time, have some seniority rights regarding access to preferred shift schedules, and are entitled to advanced notice of when they will work. Casual officers are on short term contracts, are used on an as needed basis, and have limited rights under the collective agreement. Classified and casual corrections officers are assigned many of the same tasks in the Jail. Classified and casual corrections officers both work overtime.

The Don Jail is a multi-story facility built in the 1960s. It was built to house approximately 525 inmates. It regularly houses from 650 to 700 inmates which has a number of implications for overall workload. The cell areas are spartan with limited natural light. An important design feature of the Jail is the use of open bars to contain inmates. This gives inmates constant access to officers. In newer jails, inmates are segregated from officers by a combination of open bars and solid see-through walls.

Inmates are generally housed at the Jail for short period of time (less than one year). Many are awaiting trial or being tried. This results in regular visits between lawyers and inmates and constant movement of inmates within the Jail and between the Jail and the courts in Toronto.

The majority of correctional officers work in three main areas of the Jail: the ranges (including segregation areas), the medical area, and admissions and discharges. A small number work in other areas including: control, transporting inmates, delivering programs to inmates, the kitchen, laundry etc.

The ranges are where the inmates are housed, fed and spend most of their time. Ranges are divided into living areas (A & C ranges) and segregation areas (B landings) Segregation areas house inmates needing special protection or who are being disciplined for various reasons. The medical range (5A) is where inmates with special medical needs are housed and where inmates needing medical treatment can be attended to by a doctor or nurse before returning to the regular ranges.
The ranges (A & C ranges) are secure rectangular areas with two rows of 18 cells. Each cell is designed to hold two inmates and includes a space for a bunk bed and toilet. From a distance, cells appear to be about 10 feet square. The cells open to a living area which is enclosed by a second set of bars. The living area includes tables for eating, TVs, phones, and showers. The correctional officers' work stations are situated outside this second set of bars. Standard ranges were built to house 72 inmates. At least one of the ranges is set aside for inmates with psychiatric and other special needs and houses fewer inmates.

A range is normally staffed by two correctional officers during the day and one at night. They are responsible for watching the inmates, making sure they are fed, providing toiletries, preparing inmates for movement, and moving them within the Jail. Inmates are locked up each day from 9 at night till 9 in the morning. During the day the cells are normally open and inmates can freely move between their cells and the living area within the second set of bars. When staffing levels fall below the required two officers the inmates are kept in their cells during the day and denied access to the living areas.

The segregation areas (B-landings) have 4-5 cells and the medical area (5A) has about a 12 cells.

Given the current problem with overcrowding at the Jail, most of the ranges have more than 72 inmates. The locally agreed maximum for a range is 99. When the inmate count exceeds 72, inmates are housed three to a cell with the third inmate sleeping on the floor. Once there are more than 72 inmates in a range a third officer is supposed to be assigned to that area.

**WORKING THE RANGES**

Ranges are staffed 24 hours a day seven days a week. The work of the day shift begins around 7:00 a.m. when inmates going to early court or needing medical treatment are removed from their cells. Around 9:00 the cells are opened and the days routine begins. Breakfast is delivered to the ranges around 9:15. The correctional officers oversee the distribution of food and clean-up. Once breakfast is done inmates begin moving within the Jail. This may involve getting ready to go to court, going to health care for medical treatment, visiting a professional such as a lawyer etc., visits from family and friends. Inmates are escorted by a correctional officer when moving within the Jail. Around 9:00 pm the inmates are locked in their cells where they remain until 9:00 the next morning.

One correctional officer described his day as follows:
Our job basically is to feed them (inmates) and obviously the security aspect of it, to make the necessary arrangements so that they can meet with lawyers, get their methadone treatments or other treatments that are required and it's basically an ongoing job until they get locked up in the evening, about 8 o'clock, for the night. During this time we have to maintain the cleanliness within the unit and it is a very difficult job to coordinate sometimes because there are things happening. (Number 1)

On night shift, the correctional officer is constantly checking on the inmates.

Every 20 minutes you have a clock. You have to go walk around…what your looking for is anybody hanging, any property damage, any smells. Your looking for some evidence, like last night I found a brew. The inmates had been trying to make alcohol with bread and sugar and fruits. I found it in the shower room as I walked around the 1st time, I could sense it, I asked my partner to let me in. I went in. I also found a lighter last night. So it's all these little things that your finding. (Number 2)

Interview respondents described their work as both routine, but also punctuated with crisis which throws everyone off their routines. On one hand, the work is the same each day, watching the inmates, feeding them, moving them. On the other hand crisis such as a code-blue (someone is being assaulted) mix-ups in food deliveries, and shortages of staff result in back-ups and interruptions to this routine. In a jail environment these sorts of interruptions to routine can create anxiety and stress amongst correctional officers concerned about their safety and the safety of the inmates. One officer suggested:

On paper if you look at our standing orders, people would say well this is a finely tuned machine, but it really isn't because if one thing falls out of place it causes a chain reaction and all of a sudden staff get reassigned so you don't have anyone to help you do your job. So then you get backed up and then somebody has to come and help you . . . it does become a problem and again this has been compounded recently because we are down 5 of 45 staff members. (Number 1)

An important factor in assessing the overall workload at the Jail is its design. Built in the 1950s, it uses an older design style. Correctional officers are separated from the inmates by open bars. This gives the inmates a degree of access to officers not found in newer jails where correctional officers are separated from inmates by solid walls. The additional workload resulting from the design of the Jail was a recurring theme in the interviews.

Look how close the inmates are, they can actually see me. At least behind a wall like [other jails] . . . they have to come and push a button. “Sir I'd like to talk to
you.” “No, get back.” There is no direct contact, you know? Here it’s like... it’s a bar. That’s all it is a bar, a bar. “Boss, where’s that towel you promised me. Boss I need that extra phone call. My lawyer…..” They come up with phenomenal excuses and you as a correctional officer have to just stay calm. (Number 2)

... they always have access to you, on the one side always because where your desk is facing one side of the range...so you’re subjected to them coming up and asking all the questions and you're subjected to listening to their music and their TV and their talking and their noise, a lot of noise. (Number 3)

Most other jails you don't have the contact with inmates that we do. We are one of the only jails where you are sitting all day not with them but with only those bars between you, so all day they can ask you questions they can do whatever they want they can be throwing things at us you know they harass you but that's extreme case, not too often. (Number 4)

The Jail was designed to house inmates in a relatively austere environment. One side effect is that correctional officers have to work long hours in this environment. A number of officers described the lack of natural light, poor air circulation and a general lack of upkeep and cleanliness in the ranges.

If I came in here to work and there were no inmates around me for the whole day I would still feel some degree of stress because of just the environment itself. You don't know if it is raining out or it is sunny. In the winter months I am very severely effected by lack of sunlight. In the winter months I basically leave work in the dark I get home at dark and for a 3 day stretch I go without seeing just the slightest bit of light. It is a depressed environment. (Number 1)

You come in here and you're tired all the time. You go outside, across the street you pick right up- the air, I don't know, they do air tests they say the air quality is fine, everything is fine but you always feel tired here. My eyes are always burning just because you feel tired. (Number 4)

It (health) has gone downhill. . . I find that I haven't much time or for whatever reason I find when I come here I don't feel like I used to. I used to go to the gym a lot more, in here I find it very. .. the air quality in here is horrific and I think that that is part of the problem so usually when I have been here I don't have the energy to do a lot of things. . . physically like going to the gym, I just don't have the energy after I've been here. (Number 10)

I get bad very bad headaches when I come in here. . . . The noise level because of the overcrowding the noise level is very, very, very [nosi]. It depends, some
of the ranges are quieter than others but they are very, very noisy when you get that many people up there and everybody is talking and the TVs, we got 4 or 5 TVs and they are all on different channels and they are all on full volume so that different groups can watch. It can be very noisy. . . . Sometimes I have only been here for an hour and I get a headache. (Number 10)
WORKING IN ADMITTING AND DISCHARGE

Admitting and discharge (A&D) is a distinct work area within the Jail. Correctional officers can be assigned to either the ranges or A&D. This area processes inmates when they are first assigned to the Jail, when they are moving between the Jail and the courts, and when they are discharged. Staff are exposed to some of the same strains found in the ranges, namely constant noise, poor air and constant availability to inmates. The following provides a sense of what it is like working in this area.

I'll give you a brief rundown on what takes place in getting a discharge. In the morning we are responsible for sending all the courts out. Courts could range from high 60s to 100-120. We are working under time constraints cause everybody has to see the judge. So you're trying to get all these guys down from court, trying to feed them, trying to change them, while maintaining a secure environment. It’s not an easy task. You’ve got a lot of bodies in one area, you have inmates coming from all different areas of the Jail. So we tend to have a lot of conflicts in A&D. . . . In the morning it’s pretty loud. It’s pretty hectic. Now after they’ve gone to court and had their time in court the wagons slowly come back. The wagons are comprised of brand new admits and court returns. Once again, this time we are responsible for checking all the legal documents when they come in to make sure we have a valid document to hold them in custody. . . . You’ll have 30-40 new admits sometimes, 40 is very high. I guess the average is about 20-25.

These guys are coming down off heroin, every kind of drug imaginable, some of them very unpredictable. We have guys that have mental illness that haven’t been identified that are mixed in with what we call general population inmates. . . . So you are almost playing doctor role. . . . After they’re processed, this is just from the new admit point-of-view, then another officer has to catalogue all his items. And after that he’s changed into our little orange pumpkin suit and is taken up to a unit. Once again, hectic area. We have got a lot of new faces in the Jail. Don’t know how predictable they are . . . we’ve caught them with knives, narcotics, wires are very common. This is also time when they can steal another inmate’s nice fancy running shoes that were $300. We also get a lot of muscling going on. And during this it is just chaos. We could have 60 bodies down there. And at any given time officers on the floor - 6. We’ve got them packed into one little area when this is going on, so it’s pretty hectic. (Number 5)

JOB SATISFACTION

The previous section described the basic work pattern at the Don Jail and the work environment. A number of stressors were identified including the design of the Jail which gives inmates constant access to correctional officers, poor air quality, noise, overcrowding in the ranges, and staff shortages to deal with crisis. These and other
stressors will be examined in more detail below. Despite these problems most
correctional officers interviewed expressed overall satisfaction with their jobs. A number
valued the intrinsic rewards associated with doing a difficult job. Others were more
instrumental valuing the ability to provide for their households. This high general level
of satisfaction existed despite very serious concerns expressed by these same people
about working at the Jail. The following are typical of the responses regarding job
satisfaction.

I take great deal of pride in that 6 out of 10 people that start this job can't handle
it. The turnover is incredible. . . . The environment is as I say, physically it is not
great, it is stressful but there is something that draws you to it. . . . So I am very
thankful, and it is not all negative. I wish it was better and there are things that
could be improved with a little bit of guidance and it has to come from the
government. (Number 1)

Don’t get me wrong I like this job, I think I am fit for this job. But, I just tell you
something right now: that I am just overworked, I am burnt out, and my goal is to
bring the standards back. . . . be proud of what your doing. (Number 2)

I don't like to think about doing this job for 19 more years but because I have
been doing this job 13 years any skills I did have in any other field are gone. And
to quit and go somewhere else when you have a wife and 2 kids it's pretty hard.
So I feel like I am stuck here to maintain my quality of life for me and my family.
(Number 4)

I am the man responsible for feeding and clothing and sheltering the family. I
never really looked at it and said “You know, do I enjoy my job?” Certainly I don’t
look for a reward from the public because they don’t have a clue what we do.
(Number 5)

I have pride in everything I do. I love my job. I enjoy my job. I tell all my friends
that I enjoy my job. It is one of the best jobs that I have ever had. (Number 7)

When I go out with my friends to a bar, I go “Don’t tell anybody what I do.”
Because I am afraid of how they are going to react, I mean in case they have
down time themselves, whatever. I am not proud, what do I do? I don’t
accomplish anything. I took social work. What do I do? I don’t get to talk to
anybody. I don’t get to help them. I do nothing, absolutely nothing. I could leave
here and do the best job I could’ve done upstairs, everything that is required of
me, right to a T, and I’ll get the same thing as if I went downstairs and slept for
the last 12 hours. That’s nothing. (Number 8)

Generally, I like what I do for a living. Not that I like locking people up, but there
are sometimes where the things I do, that I truly believe makes a difference in people’s lives. And that’s what I do. I hope that whatever I do helps to make society a little safer. Along with my colleagues. That’s why I am in the business. Although, that’s why I started, but right now it is just to make a difference in society. (Number 9)

I do [like my job], I mean I don't love it but I don't hate it. You know it is a job and that's all. That's all, I come here to get my pay cheque and I come here I do my job and that's it and I leave. (Number 10)
SECTION THREE: LONG HOURS OF WORK AT THE DON JAIL

a) Staff vacancies and overtime hours at the Don Jail

The charts in this section summarize information supplied by management on work schedules and staffing levels between January of 2001 and December of 2002. There are a number of gaps in the charts as the information supplied was incomplete or the categories used in reporting the data changed over the 24 month period. To overcome some of these limitations, the charts report average daily values for the first full week of each month, where available. For example, the data for January of 2001 uses the seven day period starting Monday January 1 as representative of that month. For most months, the period used starts with the first Monday of the month.

The charts provide a profile of staff shortages, the amount of overtime worked at the Jail and trends over the period. The Charts One through Three document the severity of the staff shortage problem at the Jail. Fully staffed, and at the rated capacity of 525, the Jail is supposed to have a staff complement of 141. In Chart One, the average number of daily staff vacancies rose from about 10 per day to 25 by the end of 2002. Chart Two provides evidence on the rate of what are called exceptions, staff not available for assignment due to sickness, having days off in lieu of working holidays, those reassigned to other duties, on WSIB claims and long term disability. These also showed a slight upward trend from the mid 30's to the low 40s. Chart Three provides evidence on inmate population which was consistently between 100 and 125 above the rated capacity. Higher inmates counts require additional staff beyond the 141 staff level.
Chart One: Average number of daily staff vacancies Don Jail (by month) (January 2001-December 2002)

Chart Two: Average number of daily staff exceptions Don Jail (by month) (January 2001-November 2002)
Chart Three: Average inmate count Don Jail (by month) (January 2001-December 2002)
Given the number of staff vacancies, the unavailability of staff due to absenteeism and their being assigned duties outside the Jail, and the need for extra staff due to overcrowding, management at the jail has had to rely on the use of overtime by staff and the employment of casual officers on a permanent basis. Chart Four shows that overtime hours as a percentage of regular hours worked by permanent and casual officers increased from around one-third of all hours worked at the beginning of 2001 to almost one-half by the end of 2002.

Chart Four: Overtime hours as a percentage of regular hours at the Don Jail (by month) (January 2001-December 2002)
The overtime hours worked were not evenly spread across permanent and casual officers. On average, permanent officers worked more overtime than casualls and the trend in overtime worked by permanent officers increased over the 24 month period.

Chart Five: Permanent correctional officers overtime hours as a percentage of their regular hours at the Don Jail (by month) (May 2001-December 2002)

Chart Six: Casual correctional officers overtime hours as a percentage of their regular hours at the Don Jail (by month) (May 2001-December 2002)
Reports from those interviewed confirmed the pattern of long hours of work for many of the staff at the Jail. An effort is made to equalize overtime hours by offering additional hours to correctional officers based on seniority and number of hours already worked. Not all officers work overtime, or as much overtime as others. Given that on average overtime hours equaled half of the regular hours worked towards the end of 2002, many officers were working more than 60 hours a week on a regular basis. One person interviewed had worked 16 hours a day for 17 straight days. It was reported it is not unusual for officers to work 200 hours of overtime in a month. To work 200 hours of overtime in one month, an officer would have to work 16 hour shifts 6 days a week for the entire month. A number of officers earn in excess of $100,000 per year. At a pay rate of $23.00 an hour and time and one-half after 40 hours, an officer would have to average over 30 hours of overtime per week, or a work week of 70 hours, to earn $100,000. Some earn even more. Overtime is so prevalent at the Jail that it is creating new norms regarding reasonable hours of work. When one officer was asked if he worked a lot of overtime, he reported no he was only doing 16 to 20 extra hours a week.

One officer reported:

> We have people that work 7 days in a row, 16 hours a day. Our average salary is about 50,000 dollars, people here make in excess of 120, 130,000 dollars a year. It is a cash cow, it is an easy thing to latch on to because the money is good. Security and health are like something in the back if something happens well then I'll deal with it. And some of us look at it a bit different. I'd like to prevent it from happening. (Number 1)

Another officer reported:

> I would say maybe 20% are doing it [16 hour shifts] regularly, everyday, easy. Or coming in and knocking 40 hours off a week in overtime. That's 2 jobs! That's 2 jobs. . . . When you start doing 80 hours a week, you are doing 2 jobs.

Questioner: And has this been just since the strike?

Respondent: No, this has been going on, I have been [here] 5 years and this has been going on since I have been here. (Number 7)

b) Why do people work the overtime?

The prevalence of overtime and long hours of work raises the question, “Why are people working such long hours?” The motives are complex. The financial benefits are important. An officer working even the average level of overtime of approximately 20
hours a week would earn in excess of $80,000 a year. A number earn much more. However, this represents only part of the reason why correctional officers work long hours. They are also motivated by the unique nature of work in a Jail and a sense of obligation to other officers. Without overtime the Jail could not function safely. Officers might find themselves working alone in hostile environments. Inmates might have to be locked down for days at a time, denied visits or yard exercise. Denied these basic privileges, inmates can take their frustration out on officers. As a result, many officers work long hours to enhance the safety of those they work with and in turn their own safety. Officers are being asked to choose between the damaging health effects of working long hours and the damaging health effects of staff shortages within the Jail.

Some officers volunteer to work overtime to maintain some control over when they work. If officers collective refused overtime, management has the contractual right to force them to work extra hours. Officers reported:

A lot of it has to do with the fact that I want to make a little more money and try to get things paid off or try and save for different things. But a lot of it has to do with the shortages too. You know if you don't come in somebody else is going to end up getting stuck alone and the shifts that you are stuck alone when you are short staffed in the Jail is a lot worse." (Number 4)

I wouldn't say it's your being pressured to work. But I would say that your feeling obligated to work. Because if you don't come to work, that could be a night shift staff member that will be ordered back, where they are given no choice, but they have to stay. That just creates an unsafe environment. Because you are staying against your will, you may be already tired, but you don't have a choice, so you have to stay here....I can't speak for other staff members, but I can speak for myself. Yeah, there is money involved, obviously everybody likes the money. But there are many times where you don't really want to do it, but you know what's going to happen, you know they are going to force someone else to do it and it is just not good. You do it out of...there is some guilt there. Yeah, yeah, there is guilt. (Number 5)

It is a double edged sword for me because you know there is a lot of stress here . . . but to me it is a money pit as well. So I am willing to risk my mental health at times, I am willing to risk my physical health at times, but at the same time it angers me too. You come to work for these people and almost as a favour . . . Well we need you today there is only 7 guys on the shift. Well I make number 8 so that is good. If somebody screams for help I am an extra set of hands or you are really jammed up somewhere, okay I am here to help you. And you'll find a lot of the guys here that are going through the same problem. They come in out of the feel of obligation, the feel of need . . . But that is what is happening, people are just basically dying from the inside out. (Number 6)
My record is 18 doubles in a row, 18 16-hour shifts in a row. Now there is a lot of
stress- don't think about the fact that I have to drive home after that and then get
up and do it all over the next day. . . . 3:30 in the morning my phone will ring
'yeah can you come in' yeah sure why not, drag your ass out of bed. Now I know
you called me, you must be desperate because I am the highest man on the
overtime. . . . there are times when they phone, I am desperate and they beg you
to come to work. There is a manager, grown man on the other end of the phone
begging me to come to work, he's got nobody else to turn to, and I am his last
resort. . . . There is nobody to come replace him even. He says, look I have
been here since yesterday. (Number 6)

Sometimes you go, oh you don't like to say no to that person because sometimes
you are taken care of or you like that person so you go—l've done a couple of
extended shifts and trust me I don't like to extend my shifts, I hate it, I want out of
here after 12—and you say yes because of that "I need you, I need, you" this and
that, "o.k. fine." (Number 8)

There is a strong moral code amongst some of the officers which can lead to people
taking on hours they would rather not.

So what if none of us do the overtime. Who is going to run the Jail? . . . It
wouldn't run at all. . . . So why do I care? I don't. I don't. I could care less. The
only thing I care about is that none of the officers or management, anybody that's
not an inmate and is in here, gets hurt. That's the only thing I care about, other
than that I could care less. I don't care about the guys in there. I just care about
the people I work with and are around me. Even if I don't like you, we get on
each other's nerves, I care about you not getting hurt. That is the only thing I
care about. . . . There's just no way to run it [without overtime] and they try to run
it. . . . they'll [inmates] blow, eventually they would blow. They were getting pretty
pissed off there in the summer, they weren't even getting yard. They were
getting absolutely nothing. And they all knew, they believed because it was our
sick time. (Number 8)

Some people might think that they are doing it to help other people out . . . a lot
of times people still ask, you'll be asked can you come in tomorrow and we'll do
this for you, you know we are looking at the board and it looks a little short
staffed tomorrow and we don't want so and so to be by themselves. So
sometimes you get a little pressure or you feel oh if I don't come in people are
going to be by themselves and they are going to- like I said nobody wants to be
here by themselves. (Number 10)
I work enough overtime. I find there is a dual purpose: I like to have the extra money but sometimes I am at the point where I don't want to work but I think to myself if on my days off I come in to help them the shift will run a little smoother and in return when I am working they will come in help and make my shift as well running a little smoother. . . . The only reason why I am working it is because I know that if I come in on my days off, my partner's on their days off will come in and give me a hand. . . . We have people working 16 hours a day taking 4 hours sleep and doing that again. They do that night after night after night. They are forgetting things they are breaking security procedures. You bring it up to the attention of management, management don't want to deal with it. (Number 11)

For other officers there is always the threat of management forcing them to work overtime. By volunteering they retain some control over when they

If we don't voluntarily work overtime, then we will be ordered to work overtime. . . . If we volunteer to work overtime to a certain extent, then we will be able to plan a little bit of a social life. . . . And once they order you, the only way you are getting out through that front door is on a stretcher or you'll be going home sick and you have to produce a doctor's note. You have to have a valid reason. (Number 11)

SECTION FOUR: WORKLOAD, CONTROL AND SUPPORT

Section One examined what is know about the links between work organization and health outcomes. It showed how combinations of workload, control and support can lead to job strain and effort-reward imbalance. This section will document the nature of workload, control and support at the jail. The subsequent section will explore how these characteristics of work may combine to affect the health of correctional officers.

I) WORKLOAD

We begin with a detailed analysis of workload at the Jail. The focus will be the volume of work, the unique demands of an officer working with inmates, the impact of staff shortages and overcrowding. Together these factors result in jobs with heavy psycho-social demands.

a) Volume of work

A number of officers reported they were seriously overload at work. Contributing factors include the nature of work, lack of staff and overcrowding. Officers reported:
I am overworked, I am literally burnt out. It's got to the point that it's affected my family, my friends don't see me anymore. I am the prisoner here. I'm the one now that is always working, I have no rights. It has gotten to the point where I have no rights. (Number 2)

You start off at 9 o'clock in the morning you are feeding breakfast, you try to get a clean up done. You get the courts ready, you have a doctor's parade. Health care are always coming down to get people. By this time you go to the search you spend an hour searching the range, then you get to feed lunch. You feed lunch then you have to get all the dishes, account for all the dishes and get them out. Then shortly after that visits start so have you have a visit run as quickly as every 10 minutes getting visits. You got health care looking for people in the afternoon. You got A & D all day looking for people because they have video court 3 times a day. Visits can keep you busy all afternoon always you have one guy on the phone, the phone's always ringing get this guy ready I'm coming to get him. And he looks after the paper work and the other guy does the running. Then you have supper, you feed supper, after that you start health care, nurse comes around, nurse comes around 3 times a day to issue medication, you have to supervise the nurse, you have clothing changes that happen during the day. You could be working area where the search is. And then the lock up at night, all the while -you have 3 people on the range- you trying to find breaks for each other, to relieve each other to go for breaks. When you have 3 people it's kind of tough. (Number 4)

. . . greater amount of inmates means greater demand. They want things as little as tooth brushes. And they don't all come up at the same time . . . they are not organized like that. . . . It wasn't always like that. . . . there was really one spokesman for them. And the spokesman would evaluate what was needed and then come up and say “Boss, we've run out of tooth paste today, is it possible that you could get a couple of boxes.” . . . that's the way it ran. But, I don't know if it's the overcrowding that people don't get along as well. They don't accept one guy being in charge anymore. They all want to be in charge. . . . The end result of it is that in terms of the physical demand . . . . . it's constantly doing something. (Number 9)

I would say it is stressful. . . . The stress comes from trying to answer all those inmate’s questions as best as you can, plus they all have demands: you have health care problems that you have to deal with, picking up their form letters, others having to do with their finances, they want to know how much money is in their accounts when the canteen day comes up. There just never seems to be a break . . . Now it seems to be more managing . . . situations all the time. And it
doesn’t seem to let up. The only time it does let up is when you are on break. (Number 9)

b) Workload rated to nature of inmate population

An important factor contributing to this heavy workload is the unique nature of the inmate population. Correctional officers are often the inmates’ only contact with the outside world. Inmates are also affected by the lack of staff and overcrowding which can increase tension throughout the Jail.

If you were dealing with inanimate objects or you just come in and work with machines that’s one thing - you get harassed on this job. There isn’t a day that goes by as a general duty officer that you are sitting at your desk that you are not asked 400 questions. . . . it is never ending. Quite often when it is 2 of you there, one of you has to go for a little walk and just clear his head.” (Number 1)

Now, when you have staff shortage during the day and you have a big court—this is very common—and you have 120 maybe go to court and a majority have come back already early in the day. . . .We could have 60 inmates downstairs that we cannot move because there is not sufficient staff upstairs. . . . There down there, they sit there for a couple of hours. These guys have gotten woken-up, let’s say 6:30 in the morning, and they may have gone to court, sat in court for a couple of hours…never even seen the judge. Loaded back on the wagon, brought back to us. They are just completely annoyed and now we have to tell them “Sorry you’ll have to wait for staff to some into the building.” The stress level goes right through the roof. They are screaming at every officer they can possibly see. And then the threats starts, and the jousting starts between the officers and the inmates. (Number 5)

Inmates were locked down almost every weekend because of lack of staff. . . . They are locked up all weekend without showers or without the visits, cancelled. So they have visitors who can maybe make it in only on weekends, all of a sudden can’t visit them so they are upset and it’s us that are sitting in the range listening to it and try to say ‘sorry but these things happen’ it’s us that gets the brunt of it all. (Number 3)

And then you have your bad days when we are on lock down, when there is no staff, you have the inmates are refused showers, phone calls, and visits. So of course they get upset, so they verbally take it out on you and they like to say it’s because we always call in sick, that’s what they believe. . . .they have very little to begin with up there, some of them up there. And so when you start taking whatever they have and they haven’t really done anything for a punishment, it’s
just because we don’t have the staff, and then they are upset because their mother is coming to see them or their wife or whatever and there’s no way they can even tell them “Don’t come”, they get upset. So then who’s going to get that, we are going to get the verbal abuse for that. (Number 8)

c) Impact of staff shortages

Staff shortages are having a significant effect on workload. Lack of staff means more work for those who are working, additional stress and uncertainty regarding how a reduced staff might deal with a crisis at the Jail, and increased stress from working without a partner in a potentially hostile environment. Officers reported:

There is never enough staff to supervise to do proper cleanups. Years and years ago we had a whole platoon of 11 officers who would come in for a 9 to 9 shift, and their assignment was basically to do trivial little jobs, one of them was to escort the inmates around and clean up each respective unit. And this was done on a daily basis . . . Time does not permit us to do anything anymore, except do the job that is required: get the inmates out to court, get them fed, get them to the doctor, items of health and safety that need to be done are a non-issue in this place. (Number 1)

My big concern here now is the day shift where you have so many inmates out and a significantly reduced staff, so if there is a problem in a unit or a corridor that has 50 inmates and it is a major brawl, well you have only 15 officers ready to respond, what do we do? . . . So there is always this ongoing issue of you know when do we go in [inside the range]. And to us it is a major safety concern because you could theoretically lose half of your staff . . . So far we have been lucky. (Number 1)

Sometimes we work alone. A lot of times we work alone. Depending if it’s the weekend. I know the summer there that was just a usual thing. You work by yourself. . . . There’s just no staff and when there is no staff you have no one to relieve you to go to break. Sometimes you can start at 6 in the morning and it’s not till 6, 7, 8 hours later that they finally have somebody to relieve you and your stuck up there. So and then there are only, the only thing they say is “We’ll sign for an hour overtime for your break.” “Well I don’t want the hour overtime, I want my break. I want to get up and get out and go get something to eat.” So and sometimes our breaks is what keeps you going, is getting out of there—you know what I mean—and just taking a break from the unit. So breaks is one thing. (Number 8)

d) Overcrowding
Overcrowding increases workload in a number of ways. The extra inmates in the ranges increases the work associated with feeding and taking care of inmates. The crowding can lead to tension between the inmates and between the inmates and the correctional officers. This can increase the officer’s workload.

We just had an incident yesterday and the police are involved now. They got some staff members and threatened them and you know a lot of it right now is to do with overcrowding. The units are basically designed for 72 inmates if everybody has a bed to themselves and so on and so forth. Over the past several years now, we have inmates sleeping on the floor, which is quite a regular occurrence, we have 99 in there and it is designed for 72. You have 27 sleeping on the floor. (Number 1)

“…you gotta remember, when the count skyrockets to 99. . . .there is 20 extra bodies on a unit. That means 20 different orders. You need more toilet paper. If a flood starts there’s so much things that happen…a fire may start. There’s, from the bad breath in the morning till like somebody that scams a meal. There’s so much problems, . . .it’s unreal. It’s a continuous cycle, a continuous fight. And they’re, we’re tired . . . the problem is people do not realize the extra time to feed an extra 7 or 8 people. To clothe, to take them to visits, to take them to yard, to lock them up, to make sure that they’re washed. It’s just unbelievable. (Number 2)

The prisoners will turn around and say “Boss I need a toothpaste/I need a toothbrush.” How many times have I told them “listen when my partner comes back from the search I’ll get you one.” Time goes by, it elapses. They get pissed off, we get pissed off. It’s the same thing, supplies, supplies, supplies, we need supplies. Right. Partner comes back, he or she is writing a report because they found something. I still cannot get out of my unit to go and satisfy this person, by that time…visits start. “I’m not going to my visit because I didn’t brush my teeth, you promised me a toothbrush…” It just goes on and on and on, all the time. It is a continuous fight. (Number 2)

The overcrowding is a big problem, you know dealing with these guys upstairs and you know having them in the conditions that they are in you know like 3 guys in every cell, and the supplies, whether it is toilet paper or soap or whatever . . . because there are so many you have that much more. I remember working with a unit when you didn’t have more than like 72 guys and then you’d have guys go to court. So you are basically dealing with, on a daily basis like 45-50 guys. Now, even when guys go to court you still have like over 80 guys, so you just got that much more and anything from toiletries to shaving these guys- all the razors are issued, so you only got 20 razors, you got 99 guys. . . . Then on weekends,
it's very terrible. There is nowhere for them to go and everybody is here and you've got 99 guys and you can feel it sometimes. A lot of times in the morning you feel the tension, and you get a lot of yelling and screaming from those guys which in turn can cause a response from you depending on what is taking place. It can be very stressful at times, there are a lot of times, like I said that things happen and it's over a small thing, you know it might be over a piece of toast or a roll of toilet paper. And it is just because there is so many guys. (Number 10)
II) CONTROL

It might seem counter-intuitive to suggest that correctional officers in a jail lack control at work, yet this appears to be the case. At one time, officers used access to privileges such as cigarettes or the threat of isolation to maintain control over inmates. The shift to a non-smoking facility, combined with overcrowding which makes it difficult to isolate an inmate, creates a situation where officers have few ways to exert their authority. Their authority is further eroded by a lack of enforcement of standing orders and what appears to be a lax approach by management towards rules and regulations in an attempt to keep inmates content in an overcrowded facility and staff content in an environment where there are too few staff to do the job properly.

a) Control at work

A number of those interviewed described a general lack of control at work:

My only control is that I don't let these guys escape. They [inmates] tell me when they want to go for a visit, they tell me when they want to go in their cells, they tell me who wants to run the unit. What happens is we have cleaners [lead inmates] that are basically the heavies on the unit. And of course if you keep those 3 or 4 happy then there is harmony on the unit but it defeats the purpose of what correction is supposed to be all about. How do you deal with them, well if somebody becomes belligerent you put them on misconduct and you throw them into segregation. The only problem is there is no room in segregation. (Number 1)

When I first started it was quite different the management would let the officers have more power, you never heard an inmate asking for a supervisor . . . Now it seems the inmates just go directly to the supervisor it doesn't matter about the guards anymore, whatever the guards say it doesn't matter and the captains have sort of taken away some of that power. (Number 3)

We are just here to supervise and make sure nobody gets hurt. Any officer that thinks they are going to run a range, it is not going to happen. . . . They [inmates] know your habits, they know what they can get away with, what they can’t get away with, which officers to fool around with and play around with, which officers to test and which not to test, so they know what they are doing. . . . They can make your day miserable. They can make your day a living hell. They can flush, flood the toilets, they can throw the food. I mean they can just make your day…these guys are good. (Number 7)
We have lost control. We really have. We’ve never actually had control inside the unit, they’ve always run it. . . . There was a lot more control to be had than there is now. We have absolutely none and we don't have the backing from the management. (Number 8)

The system has to change. Every weekend we have lock down situation or near lock down situation and I don't want to see this Jail explode. . . . The inmates are making more weapons they are standing up to staff where before if an inmate did that he'd be punished- it has gotten to the point where they have almost control of the facility and we are just letting them do it. (Number 11)

b) Lack of enforcement of standing orders

There is also a sense of lack of control as a result of management’s apparent willingness to turn a blind eye to the enforcement of existing standing orders. The reasons for this are complex. In part, it appears that rules are bent so the work can get done in a context of staff shortages. Lack of enforcement is also motivated by management's need to offer officers some incentive to work long hours. Standings orders are meant to insure the safety of correctional officers and inmates. Officers are supposed to have back-up when inmates are out of their cells. There are maximum numbers of inmates that officers are supposed to escort at any one time between areas of the Jail. Cell inspections are supposed to be done on a regular basis to prevent inmates from hiding weapons and other contraband. Correctional officers often take it upon themselves to determine which of these orders will be followed and when. This leads to a surprising variance in standards within each range and area of the Jail. This in turn creates uncertainty and a sense of lack of control as officers rotate through the ranges on a random basis, never knowing what standards were applied in their area before them. There are also concerns that an officer’s decisions regarding which orders to enforce may result in dangerous situations for other officers. Officers reported:

In the current climate everybody is needed, so if you are casual and you don't want to work or you just want to screw around all day long well you can get away with it. Because they have no means of dealing with it now. (Number 1)

They (management) don't want to create waves. They don't have the staff. (Number 2)

Bending the rules just to get the job done, absolutely. . . . you're not supposed to have the inmates out into the area getting their treatments or seeing the doctor when you are by yourself. Well it seems that I quite often have an inmate out with the doctor or nurse with just me. It seems that's the only way you can get the whole thing done. And supervisors come up and sign your book and they
leave and it seems to be just things that happen. That's bending the rules, it can be various things, but we do it. We do it just to get the job done. (Number 3)

Policies of the Jail, standing orders as they call them dictate that we escort no more than 6 inmates at a time. We will escort a lot more than 6. Search procedures aren't thorough. . . . Booking in new admits, you've guys with injuries, we are supposed to do active injury reports, occurrence reports, photographs. We just can't do it, it's impossible, there is no way to do it. When your processing a new admit there is certain information put into the computer: next of kin, illnesses, you know processing is a lengthy process itself, and you skip through a bunch of those screens. But you have no choice. (Number 5)

I don't think that there is honestly one rule in here that we follow to the letter. It can't be done. You can't start this program the way it is supposed to be started first thing in the morning and get it done by the time it says to do it. There is not one rule in here that honestly works. But it looks pretty on paper. It covers their [management] ass. . . . But you cut corners to win, when you cut corners in their favour and you lose they'll hang you for it. (Number 6)

We have a procedure called “Lock Out.” And that's when after the morning clean up, you're expected to get the guys out of the cells, your to go in, into the range, your partner covers you. And get them out of their cells, bed made, this and that. And usually we don’t go that far anymore. . . . we are up to 99 inmates and we are expected to still go in there. . . . Think I am going to go in there?” And even the captain turned around and said “I would never go in there.” . . . So what has happened is, then it wasn’t expected of us for the longest time, so nobody even went in there. So things accumulate, these guys know that we are not going in there. . . . which then obviously there is more weapons in there that they are creating because we are not going in there and taking them out. (Number 8)

I mean we are breaking rules left and right. . . I had a captain say to me that when I was on the b-landing by myself. . . he had an inmate in the back and he says to me “Why don't you let so and so out to clean?” “Why would I do that, I am by myself?” And this guy’s huge, eh, and yet this was in the back of segregation. He goes “Well I didn’t tell you to do that.” “But, you want me to. You want me—it’s o.k. with you—to let him out and I am by myself.” (Number 8)

A lot of times there's a lot of corners that get cut here. Everybody does it, a lot of managers overlook things when it is to their benefit, you know they'll ask you to do things for them too, which you shouldn't really do. . . . I've seen people by themselves upstairs. I am by myself, I have got no partner and yeah we have this guy here, he is a lawyer and he needs to see his client, can you do me a favour. Well I can't have anybody up- Just do me (manager) a favour, I'll come
up. I'll be up there in 5 minutes, I'll sit with you while he is there. They never show up. I mean they cut corners, we cut corners depending on you know, like I said it is all suited to what they want done. If something has to get done, it has to get done. (Number 10)

III) SUPPORT AT WORK

The level of support at work for correctional officers is mixed. In general, officers do not report being supported in their efforts by management. Quite the contrary, a number feel either management has let them down by failing to enforce existing standing orders, or takes the side of inmates in disputes with officers. The latter is partially a result of overcrowding in the Jail and the need to manage inmate frustrations when many are sleeping on the floor and living in over-crowded areas. A number of officers do report a sense of support from fellow workers, but even here this is tempered by the fact that some of their co-workers work such long hours they are unable to function effectively. Officers reported:

For the most part, they [management] ignore you, they let you do what you want to as long as everything is done the way they want it done . . . . which means nothing went wrong. So they sort of ignore you. They come around, they are supposed to supervise you by doing a patrol every couple of hours and making sure everything is o.k. And you get the sense that when they come in it's just say “I've got to quickly sign that book and get out.” . . . I guess support, comes from “Hey look, don't bother me. . . . Don't bother me. I won't bother you. You don't bother me.” That's the kind of support you get out of these people. . . . Generally, if you are having a hard day with the inmates, they are not listening to you. Generally managers want to find the easiest way to solve the problem. And that is not always the security way. . . . I would prefer that if I've taken a strong stand and I am following the rules, that my manager would come in and say “Yes, your absolutely right, this is the way it is supposed to be done. And inmate you listen to him form now on, or we are going to punish you in some way”: segregation, or whatever they use. That's generally not done anymore. . . . That is an overcrowding issue though. (Number 9)

Now were right in here, it's management against staff, it's staff against inmates, and it's staff against staff. The problem is it is going this way because there is no staff. There is no staff. There have been days in the summer that just pasted, on a Sunday morning 7 staff members showed up. How did they solve this problem. They punished the night shift. They don't let you go home. But, they can only hold you for 16 hours. That's how they take care of it, that's how they say thank you. (Number 2)
For . . . officers who do a lot of overtime, what management tends to do is reward them by giving them easier duties in general. So that creates animosity for people who come in generally just for their own shifts and get posted in places that are not their desirable post and see these other guys who may be here everyday in these nicer posts. So when you are standing up in the line up in the morning and you’re giving your duties, you always hear the same people getting the same easy posts and your always being stuck in units with 99 inmates in 2C and 3C. That creates a lot of animosity and that puts people against each other at work. (Number 9)

I think the attitudes from upper management is you don't get any praise. . . so in that aspect I don't think we get any satisfaction that way. It would be nice for them to say you know you guys did a good job up here today you know you handled that situation great or something but usually you don't hear too much of that of course. (Number 3)

For the most part there's not very much positive reinforcement as far as if you come in and do something for them not too often you get a thank you but if you screw up or when you do something wrong quite often they'll come down on you for doing that. (Number 4)

If you want to talk about personal satisfaction, there is none! There's no personal satisfaction in this facility. No manager's going to reward you, no manager is gong to say “You know what, you guys went way beyond the call of duty today, thanks a lot.” It isn't going to happen. (Number 5)
SECTION FIVE: THE HEALTH EFFECTS OF WORK AT THE DON JAIL

Sections Two, Three and Four described the overall work environment correctional officers face at the Don Jail. Many officers work long hours. These conditions can lead to unhealthy lifestyle choices, high levels of anxiety and irritability. Long hours of work also increase the exposure to other physical workplace risks such as poor lighting and air, and excessive noise. During interviews, officers reported heavy workloads, limited control at work limited, and concerns about support from management. Workplaces with these characteristics place employees at risk of job strain and effort-reward imbalance. This section presents the evidence from interviews and the survey on how work is affecting health outcomes of correctional officers at the Jail.

Correctional officers were asked to complete a short self-completed survey on working conditions and health outcomes. Ninety surveys were distributed in February of 2003 with the pay cheques. They were returned to the union office in sealed envelopes and forwarded to McMaster University for coding and analysis. Fifty-two surveys were returned for a response rate of 58%. The survey included the 14 questions from the JCQ questionnaire used by Karasek to calculate job strain. It included 17 questions used by Siegrist to calculate effort-reward imbalance. A number of health questions were added including the self-rated health question used in the National Population Health Survey and questions on hypertension, exhaustion, pain and sleep problems.
a) Overall health

The survey asked correctional officers to rate their own health on a scale from excellent to poor. The question was taken from the National Population Health Survey, 2000/01. The results, presented in Chart One, suggest that correctional officers are much less likely to report excellent or very good health and more likely to report good/fair/poor health than the Canadian population as a whole.

(Canada data from 2000/01 NPHS)

This overall portrait of poor health is supported by statements made during the interviews. A number of officers reported high levels of stress and other health problems.

I know there is stress here. You don't necessarily see it every day but there is. Several years ago I came down with what they call battles disease. And this was totally new to me, I was never in a battle as far as I am concerned. The doctor identified because when I went on vacation I fell apart. My heart rate was all over the place I was having chest pain. I was so anxious and nervous I was shaking on my holiday. I had to go to the hospital on several occasions. I couldn't figure out why. Why isn't this happening to me when I am at work. Well they explained to me that this is what they call battles disease where your body tries to adapt to a stressful environment and when it is not there all of a sudden it doesn't know what
to do. So you are medicated- I would say that 95% of the staff here are on medication. I have been on medication now for 7 or 8 years. (Number 1) I am depressed. I am really depressed. I am actually seeking therapy for that right now. . . . I am not able to keep my standards where they used to be and where they should be, and that's the bottom line. You get paid…the money's o.k., but it doesn't matter. (Number 2)

Came back here [after a three year absence] and I was astounded how the Jail has changed. The Jail is a very dangerous place right now. The lack of staff, the over-crowding, the under-staffing, and the amount of overtime. . . . I came back here and I see how the officers have aged. They have lost their hair, they're being separated, they're overworked. I am at that point right now, I will be honest, I am exhausted. . . . Some of these people, I'll be extremely honest with you, are overworked. (Number 2)

I am always tired so when I hit the pillow I hit the pillow, but I seem to be fatigued all the time, very tired. But it's a combination of here and home life. (Number 3)

There will be days where I'll have a real bad day in here . . . . I'll go home and maybe my family is already in bed because I don't get home until 10 o'clock at night and I'll just be, there's no way I'm going to go back and go through that again tomorrow. There's no way in hell I'll just call in sick. (Number 4)

I have seen staff fight in here, grown men going at it. I have see men and women toe to toe screaming their heads off. . . . I have seen guys when they are pumped you literally physically have to get them out of the area, drag them. You don't get that in other jobs. You don't get guys in the office throwing staplers at each other, screaming and hollering. You don't have guys in fist fights, you don't have guys going come on right now let's do it, let's get it over with. And it happens here unfortunately on a regular basis. (Number 6)

I was fine until I came here . . . even now I take something because I just can't cope sometimes. . . . It doesn't matter how tough I think I am, no one can desensitize themselves to a pedophile, to a rapist, to a murderer. I am feeding you guys, your in the paper . . . . now I am feeding you and taking your requests, like I mean. . . . Your mind, even though I might not think it, your mind can't, especially mine with 2 kids, it's just after a while it affects other parts of your life. But it is directed to my job. (Number 8)

Evidence in support of the overall poor health of correctional officers can also be found in the responses to other questions on the survey. Table One reports results from a series of questions on health outcomes. In each case, the Table shows the percentage of the entire sample reporting a specific health condition. A sizeable percentage of
correctional officers reported having been diagnosed as hypertensive, being exhausted after work, and tense at work. Nearly half reported difficulty sleeping and almost two-thirds reported waking tired most days. Evidence of the impact of long hours, effort-reward imbalance and job strain on health will be presented below.

Table One: Health indicators Don Jail, 2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Percentage agreeing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diagnosed as hypertensive</td>
<td>48.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exhausted most days after work</td>
<td>71.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tense at work most days</td>
<td>59.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frustrated with job most days</td>
<td>61.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condition</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work in pain most days</td>
<td>61.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take pain medication most days</td>
<td>36.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty sleeping most days</td>
<td>46.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wake tired most days</td>
<td>63.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
b) Long hours and health

In Section Two it was shown that management is highly dependent on long hours to staff the jail. The survey asked officers if they felt pressured to work overtime. Over 80% of the officers reported they often felt pressured to work extra hours. The interviews provide evidence of how these long hours of work affect health outcomes.

Officers reported:

What I find, and this is persistent I have spoken with several people, when you go home from work you can't go to sleep it doesn't matter how tired you are. . . . Mental fatigue is very visible here. I have had my share of dealing with doctors about my own personal issues. (Number 1)

I can be pretty cranky, like I am working now Thursday probably tomorrow, Friday, Saturday, Sunday- 4 shifts, 12 hour shifts with an average of 3 hours a day commuting, 15 hours, you get home, shower maybe have a snack say hi to the kids, the wife get to bed, get up in the morning shower and that's all there is to it. (Number 4)

I have actually sat in the parking lot. I have gotten all the way here and I don't want to come in. I have to talk myself into coming in and that's like I say the double edged sword. Yeah if I walk in the door right now that's 500 bucks because it is overtime, 16 hours at 35 bucks and hour, that is good money. . . . I am doing this for my family. . . . I used to love my job, I used to love it. But now it is more or less you get addicted to the overtime in a sense. You get addicted to the adrenaline here because there is days when this place is just busting, you can feel it in the air it just tingles. As soon as you walk in the door you can just feel it. And I kind of thrive on that as an adrenaline junkie in a sense but at the same time too there are days when you get here and people say oh you don't want to go upstairs. . . . It is eating me up from the inside out. I go through a hell of a lot of booze when I get home. . . . I come in I have to have a beer or 2 sit down and calm down. (Number 6)

Last year I was the third highest paid correctional officer in the province of Ontario, made $125, 000 here. . . . Realistically I am making good money, but I am paying for it too. Being here 16 hours a day 7 days a week plays a toll on your physical system, plays a toll on your mental abilities. Realistically some days here I just snap. And it is not a fault of the person that I am with it's just you push the right button. You know the stress has been building for day and some guys here- my nickname is the madman. Because I lose it sometime and I just go nuts. But
it is because it has been building and building and there is no release for it. (Number 6)

There are days when I am walking in and my feet are so swollen I can't walk, you know because 16 hours . . . there are days I am walking around here and I have got a headache and I just can't get rid of. The air system in here, you are breathing in germs, you are breathing air like I say one side of the building is hot and the other side is freezing. You are sitting there, you are uncomfortable. (Number 6)

It is not just those working the long hours whose health is affected by this situation. Even officers working normal hours report heavier workloads covering for colleagues too exhausted to perform their duties fully, or feeling tense as a result of uncertainty if a colleague will be able to complete tasks necessary to protect the safety of all working at the Jail. Officers reported:

We are dealing with an officer who I work with who has finished his seventh day in a row, 16 hours a day. . . . some are ordered to work, casuals are continually harassed into staying and working extra hours so now maybe you have a tired person and a pissed off person, and so now I have to be going in to the living area and deal with these inmates with somebody backing me up who is falling asleep. So my policy is, and I talk to the administration . . . I am not going in there. You give me someone that I can rely on and I'll do it. . . . How can you maintain a good attitude and your sanity when you have to deal with all of these things. (Number 1)

What I don't like is being assigned to that [area] with other officers who are on overtime and who are tired and decide that they are going to sit all day and do the log book instead of going to get inmates, so there I am running back and forth getting all the inmates. . . . you have people you know they come and say "you know I just worked 16 hours yesterday" and so they want to sit and relax. . . . I said I don't do overtime but I don't think I should pick up the slack for people who are. (Number 3)

[Interviewer: Are people dependable after working 16 hours shifts?] Your not. You can't be. You are not alert. You let things slide. You are not alert, you're not alert. And this is a job where you need eyes in the back of your head. . . . You need to be alert, you need to know what you are doing. And you can diffuse situations while you are alert. Well you are not alert, things get by you and the inmates can see it. Your nodding off at the desk . . . the inmates can see it . . . they'll come around and bring their drugs or weapons, you won't even see it, because your minds not there. Your minds saying, "Oh, oh, go home, I am tired." (Number 7)
You have some people that work a 6 to 2 and then work a 2 to 10 or a lot of people work a 2 to 10 and then stay all night. They stay all night from 10 to 6, they do a double. And then they go home, short turnaround, and then your back again at 2 to 10. How can you really function? You know what, do you think I am going to trust that person watching me when I am in there? There is just no way. (Number 8)

c) Staff shortages and health

Those interviewed also drew a link from staff shortages to health outcomes.

They can't justify running the Jail with 30 -35 staff members when it is supposed to be 45. They can't justify having one officer in the b-landing to (indecipherable) all the doors, deal with the inmates in the segregation area, feed you know do all these things by themselves for a 12 hour shift. It is a lot of stress. It is a lot of stress on you physically and mentally as well. (Number 1)

For me the number one thing is getting home to my family in the evening and I am going to do whatever I can to do that. They have the standing orders which I try to follow very closely. Some of my colleagues don’t seem to want to do the same thing. . . . because I run it a little more strictly, the inmates don’t seem to like that very much. . . .[some] say “Well you guys do whatever you want to do today, just don’t escape today” . . . For me, the stressful part is when I come in the shift after them, they are used to just having things run, however. When I come in I want things run a little more safer, a little more stricter. (Number 9)

Staff shortages, I mean nobody wants to come here when you know you are going to be by yourself, when you know you aren't going to have a partner. It has been going on for quite awhile, it's a little bit better at the last little while but I mean all summer and it was terrible I didn't want to come in. And it was just that much more stressful dealing with things on your own not having a partner to help you, not being able to go downstairs, have something to eat, have a drink and just get out of there for a few minutes. . . . So it was terrible, you know. A lot of times I'd come in here one day and said that was it I couldn't handle it. . . . And then you get the other end of the coin with people that are basically trying to take advantage …who have been working every day and they are basically no help whatsoever to you because they are so tired or burnt out from dealing with this stuff 6 or 7 days a week and 12 or 16 hours a day, you know. The lesser of two evils, would I rather work by myself with 99 guys or would I rather work with somebody who has been working 16 hours the last 4 days in a row and can barely keep their eyes open? It's 2 evils and it's very difficult. (Number 10)
d) Effort-reward imbalance and health

In Section One, the effort-reward imbalance (ERI) scale developed by Siegrist was introduced. The ERI scale allows researchers to predict which types of work organization are likely to negatively affect health outcomes. ERI combines measures of extrinsic effort (time pressure, responsibility, physical demands) in the numerator and measures of reward (respect, income, promotion prospects, insecurity) in the denominator. The scale can take values between .5 and 2. Any value for the scale about 1 is said to represent an imbalance where effort exceeds rewards.

Table Two reports responses to the individual questions that make up the effort component of the scale. Officers were asked to either agree or disagree with the given statement. In general, most correctional officers report their work requires significant levels of effort. The one exception is physical demands with just over half agreeing their jobs are physically demanding.

Table Two: Measures of Effort

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage agreeing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have constant time pressure due to a heavy workload.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have many interruptions and disturbances in my job.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have a lot of responsibility in my job.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am often pressured to work overtime.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My job is physically demanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over the past few years, my job has become more and more demanding.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tables Three(a) & (b) report responses to a series of questions that make up the reward component of the scale. For the most part, responses to the rewards questions were low.
Table Three (a): Measures of Esteem Rewards and Income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Percentage agreeing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I receive the respect I deserve from my superiors.</td>
<td>17.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I receive the respect I deserve from my colleagues.</td>
<td>48.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Considering all my efforts and achievements, I receive the respect and prestige I deserve at work.</td>
<td>13.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I experience adequate support in difficult situations.</td>
<td>21.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am treated fairly at work.</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Considering all my efforts and achievements, my salary/income is adequate.</td>
<td>23.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table Three (b): Measures of Status Control

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Percentage agreeing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My job promotion prospects are poor.</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Considering all my efforts and achievements, my work prospects are adequate.</td>
<td>19.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have experienced or I expect to experience an undesirable change in my work situation.</td>
<td>84.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My job security is poor.</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My current occupational position adequately reflects my education and training.</td>
<td>32.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As well as being asked if they agree of disagree with the above statements, officers were also asked to what extent they were distressed by the statements if that condition existed. For example, officers were asked if they have constant time pressure due to heavy workloads. If they agreed with this statement they were asked as well whether they were distressed, or not distress by this condition. The effort-reward imbalance
scale is calculated by dividing the sum of the distress responses to the effort questions by the sum of the distress responses to the reward questions. A correction factor is added to compensate for the different number of questions in the numerator and the denominator. The end result is a scale which can take the values from .5 to 2. Values greater than one represent imbalance and a potential health risk. Table Four reports the values for the effort reward imbalance scale for officers at the Don Jail. Over 70% had ERB values over 1 and 44% had ERB values greater than 1.25. For the majority of officers effort exceeded rewards.

Table Four: Distribution of Values of Effort-Reward Imbalance at the Don Jail
(Values >1 represent imbalance and a health risk)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Range of ERB</th>
<th>Percentage of officers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 1</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 to 1.25</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater than 1.25</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

e) Job strain

Job strain, derived from the Karasek Job Demand-Control model was introduced in Section One. Job strain is used extensively to predict the health effects of work organization. The core prediction is that as control falls and workload increases, health risks increase. Responses to a series of questions are used to calculate a workload index and a control index. These are then used to divide the sample into four quadrants. A high strain quadrant where workload is above average and control below average, an active quadrant where both workload and control are above average, a low strain quadrant where control is above average and workload below average and a passive quadrant where both workload and control are below average. Following a number of other studies, we use the median values from the Cornell Hypertension study as our cut points for above and below average scores on the two indices.

The highest health risks are predicted in the “High Strain” quadrant where control is low and workload is high. There is some debate about which quadrant has the least health risks. Those in the “Active” quadrant benefit from a positive work experience and active learning, while those in the “Low Strain” quadrant enjoy a relaxed work environment. Both enjoy below average health risks. Those in the “Passive” quadrant suffer from a gradual atrophying of learned skills and abilities and a lack of motivation. Health risks are likely to be average.

Figure Two presents results from the survey responses at the Don Jail for correctional officers and compares them with job strain measures from a number of other work sites.
including a large public sector office setting and a large manufacturing setting. Correctional officers (CO2) were located in the high strain quadrant of the figure. They enjoyed about the same level of control as public sector workers in an office setting, less than skilled trades and technical, office and professional workers in a manufacturing setting and more than assemblers in a manufacturing setting. Their workload was higher than all of the job classifications in the manufacturing setting and less than public sector office workers.

These results suggest that correctional officers are exposed to job strain with the associated increased risk of various stress related illnesses.
SECTION SIX: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This assessment examined long work hours, the organization of work, and health outcomes at the Don Jail. The assessment was informed by a body of literature linking health outcomes with long hours of work, workload, control at work, support at work and the balance between effort and rewards.

The assessment relied on data drawn from interviews with correctional officers at the Don Jail and a survey of working conditions and health outcomes. The words of those interviewed paint a compelling picture of a workplace where hours of work are excessive and where work is done within a work organization context that is affecting health outcomes.

Having examined the interviews, analyzed the survey data and again reviewed the literature, including my own studies in the field, I have concluded the following:

- Correctional officers report below average health status and high levels of hypertension and sleep disorders.
- The average correctional officer is working over 60 hours a week. Work weeks of 80 hours per week and more are common.
- There is a high probability that the reliance on overtime at this workplace is affecting the health of correctional officers.
- Long hours of work are affecting the health of those who work long hours as well as those who continue to work normal hours.
- The physical conditions of the job, air quality, and lighting are not conducive to good health.
- The organization of work has led to both job strain and effort-reward imbalance.
- The culture at this workplace is such that it cannot be left to the staff to refuse working long hours. This will only be done by the employer increasing staff so that all posts in the jail can be filled without recourse to overtime.
Accordingly, I recommend that the employer:

- Increase staffing levels so that the Don Jail is in compliance with the Ontario Employment Standards Act.

- In particular, the employer should increase staffing levels to be in compliance with sections 18(1), 18(3) and 18(4) of the act as follows:
  
  18(1): An employee must have at least 11 consecutive hours free from performing work in each day.

  18(3): An employee must also have at least eight consecutive hours free from performing work in between shifts.

  18(4): An employee must also receive at least 24 consecutive hours off work in each work week, or 48 consecutive hours off work in every two consecutive work weeks.

- As staffing levels increase, job strain will fall and fewer staff will face effort-reward imbalance. To speed this process, the employer should create a joint labour management committee to evaluate managerial practices at the Jail with the objective of ensuring that existing standard orders are followed and that steps are taken to ensure staff are supported in their relations with inmates.

- Steps should be taken to improve air, lighting, and noise levels at the jail. Special emphasis should be given to limiting inmates’ direct access to corrections officers.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


APPENDIX ONE:

FORMULAS FOR CALCULATING JCQ CONTROL & WORKLOAD

(0 = low control/low workload 100=high control/high workload)
(All responses coded 0=strongly agree to 3=strongly disagree)

Control= \[ ((15-learn-creative-skill-variety-develop+repeat)^{*}2) + ((6-decision-say+freedom)^{*}4) \] * (100/72)

Workload= \[ ((6-fast-hard)^{*}3) + ((excess+time+conflict)^{*}2) \] * (100/36)

FORMULAS FOR CALCULATING EFFORT-REWARD IMBALANCE

\[ e=cheavy+cinter+grespon+cover+cphysic+cdemand \]
(value range 6-12)

\[ r=crsuper+crcoll+crestpect+cupport+cincome+cpromo+cprosp+cchange+csecure+cpos \]
(it reversed) (value range 20-10)

\[ ERB=e/(r* \text{correction factor}) \]
(correction factor = .6)
(ERB value range = .5 to 2, values >1 equal imbalance)
## TABLE A1: CONTROL/WORKLOAD INDEX VALUES BY JOB CLASSIFICATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>JOB CLASS</th>
<th>CONTROL</th>
<th>WORKLOAD</th>
<th>JCQ QUADRANT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A) DON JAIL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>CO2</td>
<td>41.5</td>
<td>65.3</td>
<td>High Strain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B) PUBLIC SECTOR</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLERKS</td>
<td>42.6</td>
<td>91.3</td>
<td>High Strain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SENIOR BENEFITS OFFICER</td>
<td>48.1</td>
<td>81.9</td>
<td>High Strain</td>
</tr>
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<td>JUNIOR BENEFITS OFFICER</td>
<td>38.0</td>
<td>78.7</td>
<td>High Strain</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>C) MANUFACTURING</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>ASSEMBLER</td>
<td>26.4</td>
<td>55.3</td>
<td>Passive</td>
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<tr>
<td>TECHNICAL/OFFICE PROFESSIONAL</td>
<td>65.6</td>
<td>50.7</td>
<td>Passive</td>
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<tr>
<td>SKILLED TRADES</td>
<td>69.1</td>
<td>46.6</td>
<td>Low Strain</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>D) CORNELL STUDY (MEDIANS)</strong></td>
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<td>56.0</td>
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### APPENDIX TWO: GLOSSARY

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ERI</td>
<td>Effort-Reward Imbalance</td>
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<tr>
<td>JCQ</td>
<td>Job Content Questionnaire</td>
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<tr>
<td>JD-C</td>
<td>Job Demand-Control</td>
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<td>CLERK</td>
<td>Clerk, Public Sector</td>
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<tr>
<td>ERI</td>
<td>Effort-Reward Imbalance</td>
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<tr>
<td>J.B.OFF</td>
<td>Junior Benefits Officer, Public Sector</td>
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<tr>
<td>S.B.OFF</td>
<td>Senior Benefits Officer, Public Sector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOP</td>
<td>Technical, Office Professional</td>
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