

## CORRECTIONAL SERVICE CANADA

CHANGING LIVES. PROTECTING CANADIANS.

## Case Characteristics of Offenders in Structured Intervention Units (SIUs)

## Why we are doing this study

Structured Intervention Units (SIUs) were incorporated into the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) on November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2019. As per the [Corrections and Conditional Release Act \(CCRA\)](#), such units are intended to provide intervention-based accommodation to offenders whose placement in a mainstream unit would interfere with institutional security, the offender's safety, or the integrity of an investigation. SIUs are equipped with a multidisciplinary complement of staff who deliver interventions to support the offender's reintegration into a mainstream unit.

## What we did

An in-custody snapshot was extracted from CSC's computerized database on February 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2025. On this date, there was a total of 14,660 offenders in federal custody; of these, 258 had an active SIU authorization (corresponding with <2% of the offender population). A majority of authorizations were justified under 34.1 B (safety) of the CCRA (175; 68%); 31% (79) were justified under 34.1 A (security), while <2% were justified under 34.1 C (investigation). To explore the characteristics of offenders in an SIU, measures tied to demographic, sentence, and risk/need information were analyzed relative to the larger in-custody population as well as to maximum security non-SIU inmates.

## What we found

The SIU population has several marked distinctions with the general in-custody population (see Table 1), evidenced by tendencies of greater risk, need, and profile complexity. However, when lower security levels are excluded from the in-custody comparison group, the differences between the SIU group and non-SIU (maximum security) population are minimal across most measures. There are some exceptions, with the most notable differences relating to offender engagement; SIU inmates were more often deemed "not engaged" with their Correctional Plan (73% versus 63%). Additionally, SIU inmates were *less often* serving an indeterminate sentence (27% versus 42%) and *more often* had a "high" level of need in the area of attitudes (84% versus 74%), a "low" level of motivation (57% versus 47%), and identified staff safety concerns (37% versus 22%). Differences across the two main categories of SIU authorizations (i.e., CCRA 34.1 A and 34.1 B) were generally minimal; while offenders in an SIU under 34.1 A (safety) more often had a "high" level of need in the areas of associates (57% versus 45%), there was otherwise considerable profile similarity.

**Table 1. Profile Characteristics of the SIU Population and Comparison Groups on February 23, 2025.**

Measure	SIU Population 34.1 A	SIU Population 34.1 B	Maximum Security (Non-SIU In-Custody Population)	All Security Levels (Non-SIU In-Custody Population)
<b>High Static Risk</b>	88%	89%	87%	67%
<b>High Dynamic Need</b>	95%	98%	96%	73%
<b>High Needs</b>				
Education/ Employment	13%	8%	14%	7%
Marital /Family	13%	17%	19%	15%
Associates	57%	45%	48%	21%
Substance Use	59%	57%	57%	36%
Community Functioning	15%	8%	14%	7%
Personal / Emotional	75%	79%	78%	49%
Attitudes	84%	84%	74%	36%
<b>Low Motivation</b>	61%	57%	47%	16%
<b>Low Reintegration Potential</b>	89%	86%	88%	46%
<b>Low Accountability</b>	57%	59%	53%	22%
<b>Not Engaged</b>	73%	73%	63%	27%

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**Table 2. Select Alerts, Flags and Needs\* for the SIU Population and Comparison Groups on February 23, 2025.**

Alert/Flag/Need	SIU Population 34.1 A	SIU Population 34.1 B	Maximum Security (Non-SIU In-Custody Population)	All Security Levels (Non-SIU In-Custody Population)
<b>Violent</b>	23%	17%	20%	8%
<b>Staff Safety Concerns</b>	41%	36%	22%	8%
<b>Mental Health Concerns</b>	22%	14%	20%	12%
<b>Responsivity</b>	40%	35%	32%	27%
<b>Security Threat Group Affiliation</b>	28%	31%	26%	11%

\*Based on alerts, flags and needs identified in CSC's computerized database, the Offender Management System (OMS).

**What it means**

The SIU population bears considerable resemblance to the general maximum security population; both groups have greater profile complexity and indicators of higher risk and need relative to the rest of the federal in-custody population. However, there are a few important distinctions between the SIU group and non-SIU maximum security group, including key factors that may influence adaption and trajectories within the correctional environment, such as engagement, motivation and attitudes. The current findings reaffirm the importance of interventions within SIU that target cognitive-behavioral, attitudinal and inter-personal areas (see also Motiuk & Keown, 2021).

**References**

Motiuk, L. & Keown, L.A. (2021). *Characteristics of federal offenders in structured intervention units, the mainstream population and administrative segregation*. RIB-21-13. Ottawa, ON: Correctional Service Canada.

**For more information**

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