

Lee County Pre-Trial Services Assessment 2006



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I. Review of the Literature

As jail overcrowding takes place at the local level, more and more prisoners are released pre-trial on bail. The majority of these offenders successfully navigate through the time span between the time of arrest and final case disposition without re-offending. However, a disproportionate amount of ‘failures’ do occur within certain populations. It is important to identify those characteristics in order to properly administer any type of pretrial release system.

For decades, a number of articles and studies have been written on the relationship between illegal drug and crime. Most focus upon the search for a direct nexus between the two. The results thus far have not been encouraging. In fact, there have been no studies that attempt to link recidivism while on bail to specific drug crimes. However, there are several which examine factors that may explain the nature of narcotics offender.

Early research established that violence associated with drug related crime was caused by systemic reasons, not as a chemical response to cocaine as originally assumed (Goldstein, Brownstein, Ryan & Bulluci, 1988). Violence and crime associated with drug dealing was shown to stem from social issues, such as sale of imitation drug, robbery or protection of the drug operation (Johnson & Golub, 1995). Studies of prisoners released during 1983 revealed 38% had a previous drug related arrest and those with one or more prior drug arrests were more likely to be rearrested during a three year follow-up period (Beck, Bureau of Justice Report, 1997). However, this data does not differentiate between the levels of drug arrest (possession, sale or trafficking).

Additional recidivism studies of offenders released focus upon similar factors related to re-arrest and failure to appear. Failure to appear has been defined differently by various pretrial

agencies, sometimes requiring a bench warrant to be issued in order for it meet the definition (Pretrial Services Resource Center, 2001). For the purposes of this current study, failure to appear is simply defined as whenever any court appearance is missed.

Defendants with a history of failure to appear are a higher risk of future failures to appear (Eskridge, 1981; Goldkamp and Gottfredson, 1985). Prior criminal record and age were also found to be related factors in risk of re-arrest (Goldkamp and Gottfredson, 1985). Of particular interest to this current research, specific criminal charges were found to have a higher risk of re-arrest or failure to appear (Goldkamp and Gottfredson, 1985; Reaves and Smith, 1995). Drug traffickers had the highest amount of overall pretrial misconduct with a higher arrest and failure to appear rate than that of other crimes (Reaves and Smith, 1995).

II. Current Study

In the Spring of 2005, Florida Gulf Coast University engaged in a research project to evaluate the risk assessment instrument of Lee County Pre-Trial Services. The sample provided 1000 usable cases that were coded and entered into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Three hundred ninety-two cases were selected from September (2004) and fifty-seven were selected from October (2004). A final group of five hundred fifty one cases were selected from December (2004). By using data from the previous year, it was possible to track success and failure rates over that period.

Outcomes of defendants were examined at the three month and twelve month time-lines to determine successes and failures. Re-arrest and failure to appear rates for each suspect were utilized as the dependent variables in the final statistical analysis. Additional measures were created to determine their value in predicting recidivism. This pilot study lays the foundation for future testing of specific factors related to misconduct by those defendants awaiting trial.

III. Demographic Information

Demographic	Frequency	Percent (%)
Age		
Median	31	-
Mean	32.9	-
Range	16 - 80	-
Age score		
Under 24 y.o.a	285	28.5
25 - 35 y.o.a	333	33.3
Over 36 y.o.a.	381	38.1
Marital status		
Single	604	69.7
Married	191	22.0
Divorced	72	8.3
Employment status		
Unemployed	342	38.8
Less than six months	242	27.5
Greater than six months	297	33.7
Arrest type		
Misdemeanor	606	60.6
Felony	394	39.4
Charge code		
Property crime	427	42.7
Drug offense	270	27.0
Violent crime	303	30.3
Risk Category		
Less than ten points	172	17.2
Eleven to twenty points	237	23.7
More than twenty points	587	58.7

Demographics

Sample Size

A total of 1000 cases were selected for the research. Three hundred ninety two cases were selected from September (2004) and fifty-seven were selected from October (2004).

Age

Data collected on the variable, "Age" reflects that the median age of the sample was 31 years. The average age of the sample was 32.9 years.

Age Score

Almost forty-four percent (n=195) of the defendants were over thirty-six years of age. The twenty-five to thirty-five age group represented less than thirty percent of the sample (n=133), while those defendants under twenty-four years of age made up the smallest group (26.8%; n=120).

Time in Circuit

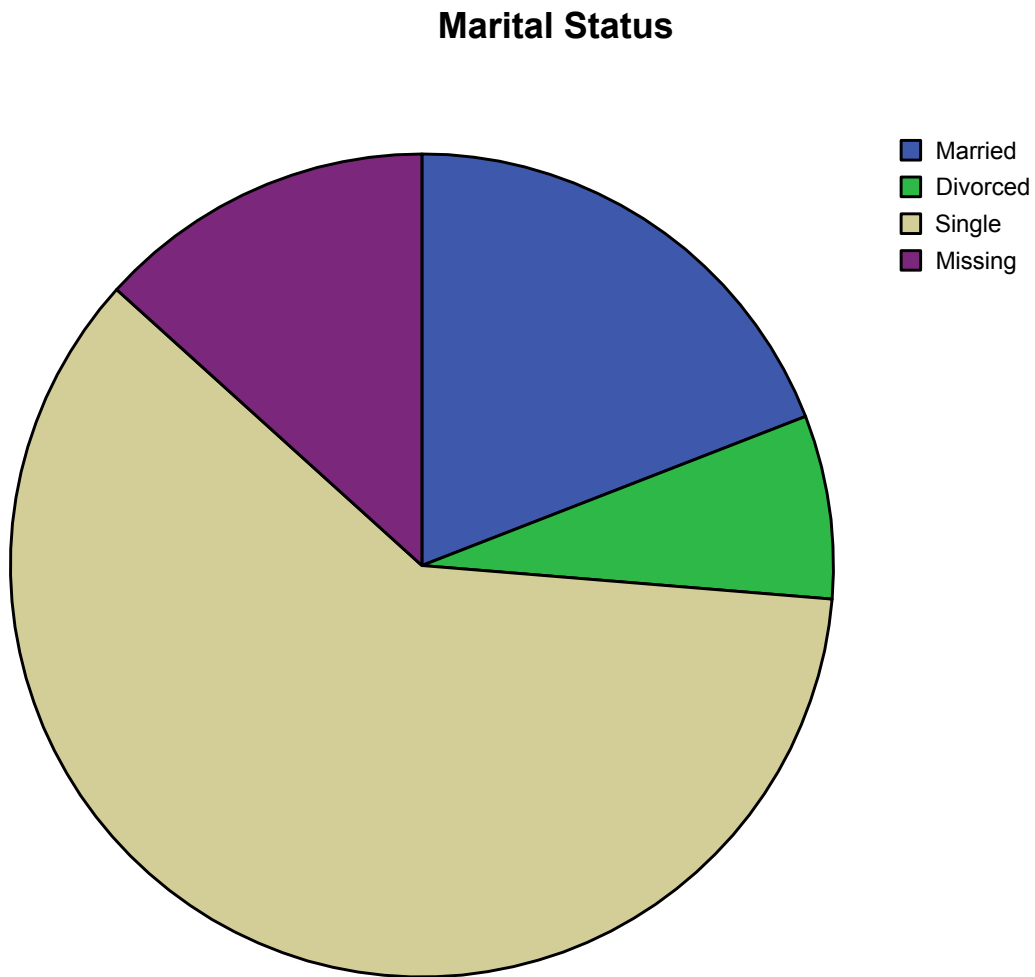
The average time defendants have lived in the area was 170 months, with a median time of 120 months. The large difference between median and mean indicates that more defendants have lived in the area for a shorter period of time.

Previous Arrests

Sixty-one percent have previous arrests for drugs, while fifty-two percent have a previous violent arrest charge. Seventy-five percent have been arrested for a property crime.

Marital Status

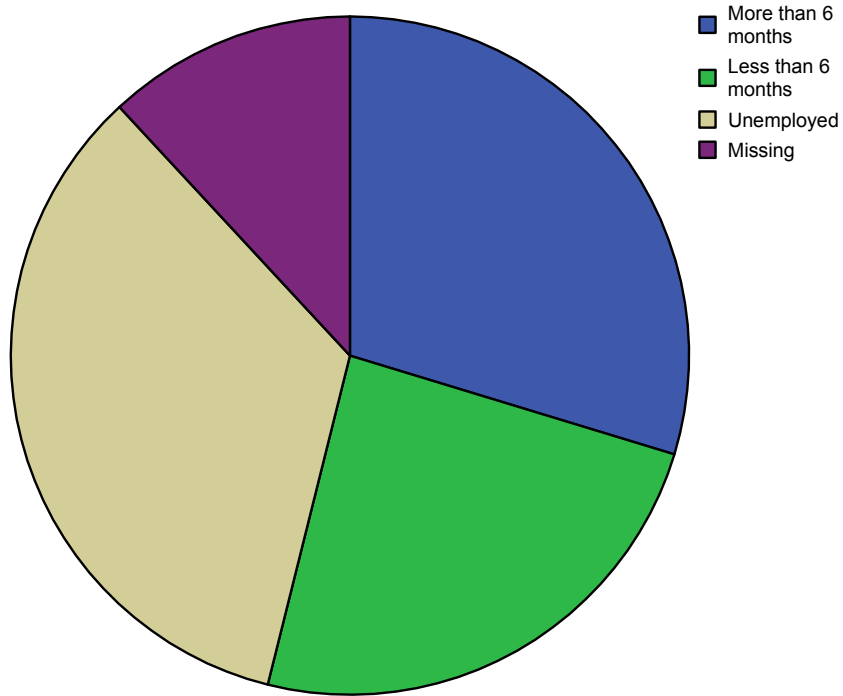
The overwhelming majority of defendants were single (69.7%; n=604) or divorced (8.3%; n=72). Married defendants made up twenty-two percent of the group under study (n= 191).



Employment Status

Over thirty eight percent of the defendants (n=342) were unemployed at the time of their arrest. Of those with jobs, less than thirty four percent had held them greater than six months (n= 297).

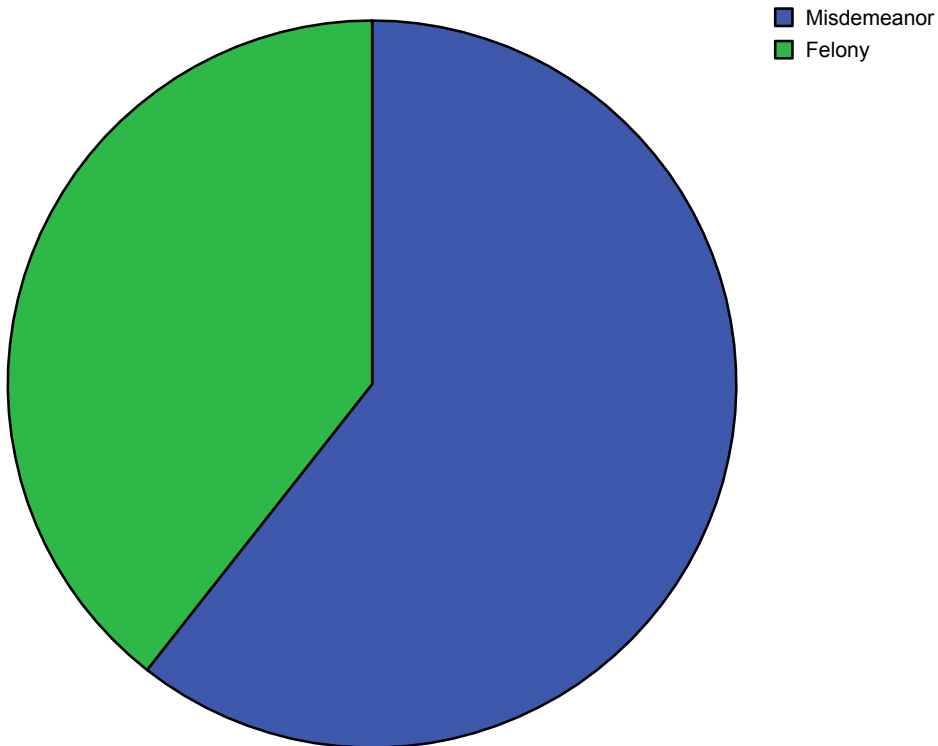
Employment



Arrest Type

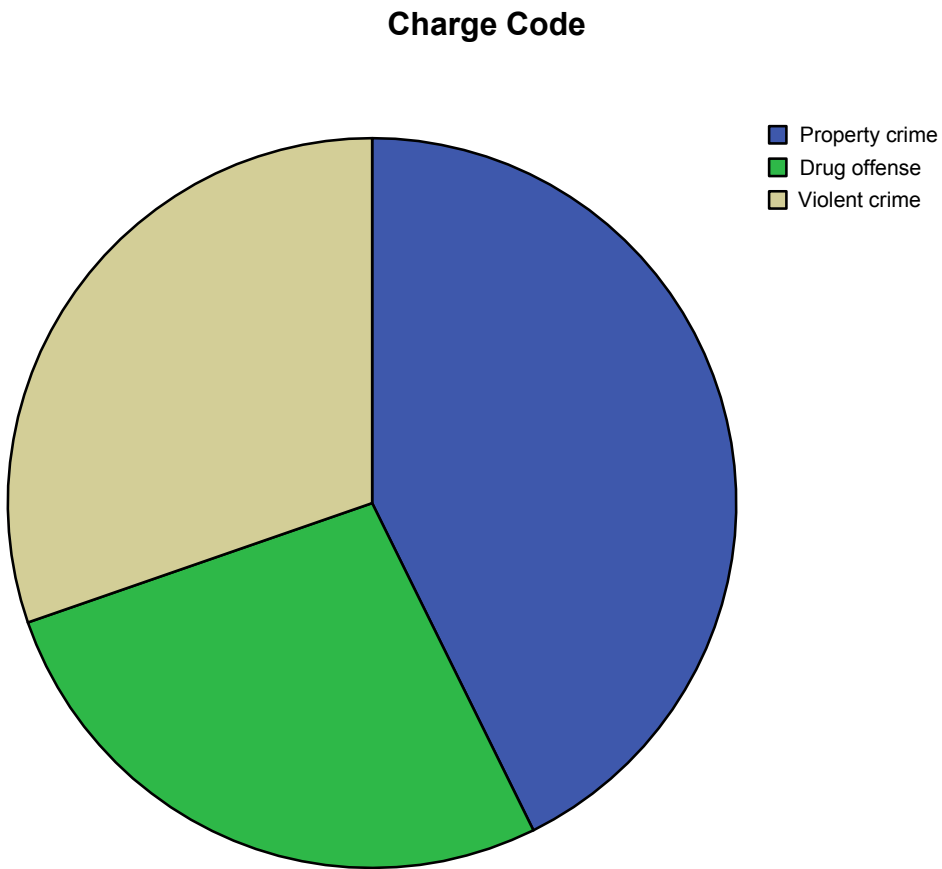
The majority of arrests were misdemeanors (60.6%; n= 606), with slightly under 40% being felony arrests (n=394).

Felony or misdemeanor



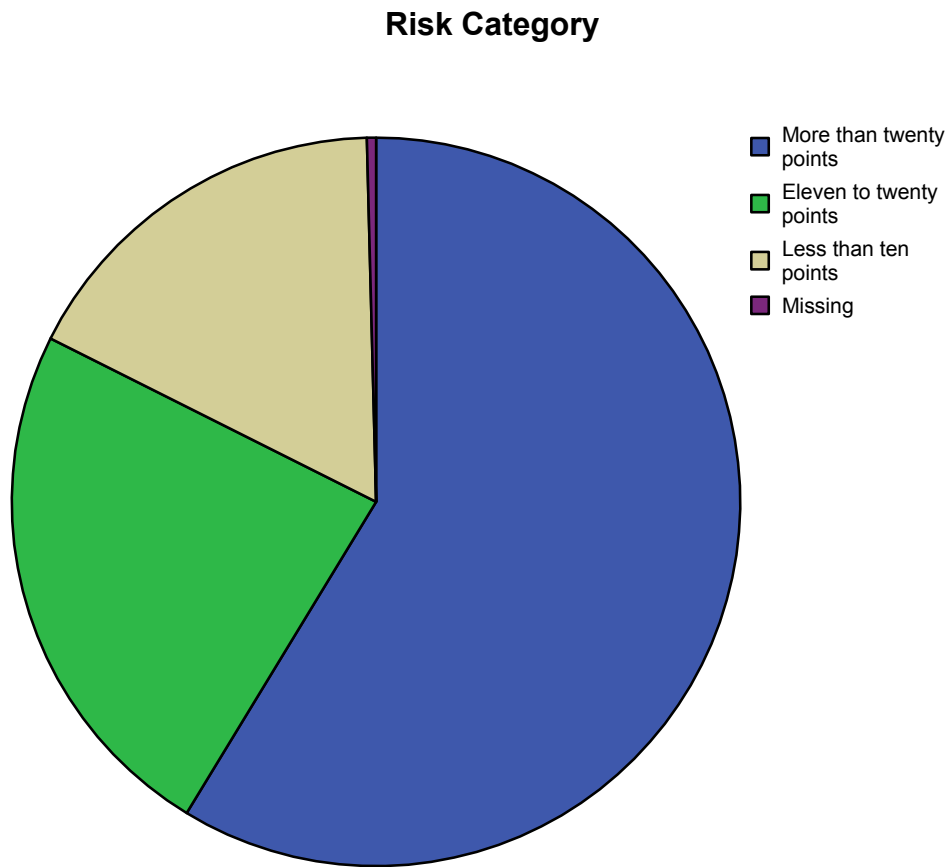
Charge Code

Property crimes make up less than half of the arrest charges (42.7%, n= 427) while drug offenses comprise 27% (n= 270). Violent crimes made up 30.3% (n=303).



Risk Category

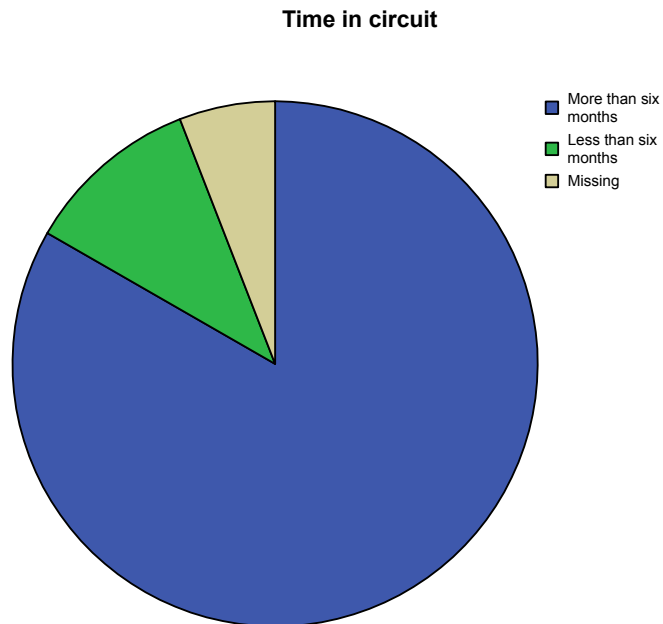
The largest group is that which has more than twenty points (58.9%; n = 587), while the smallest group has less than ten points (17.3%, n = 172).



IV. Data Collection

A. Time in circuit

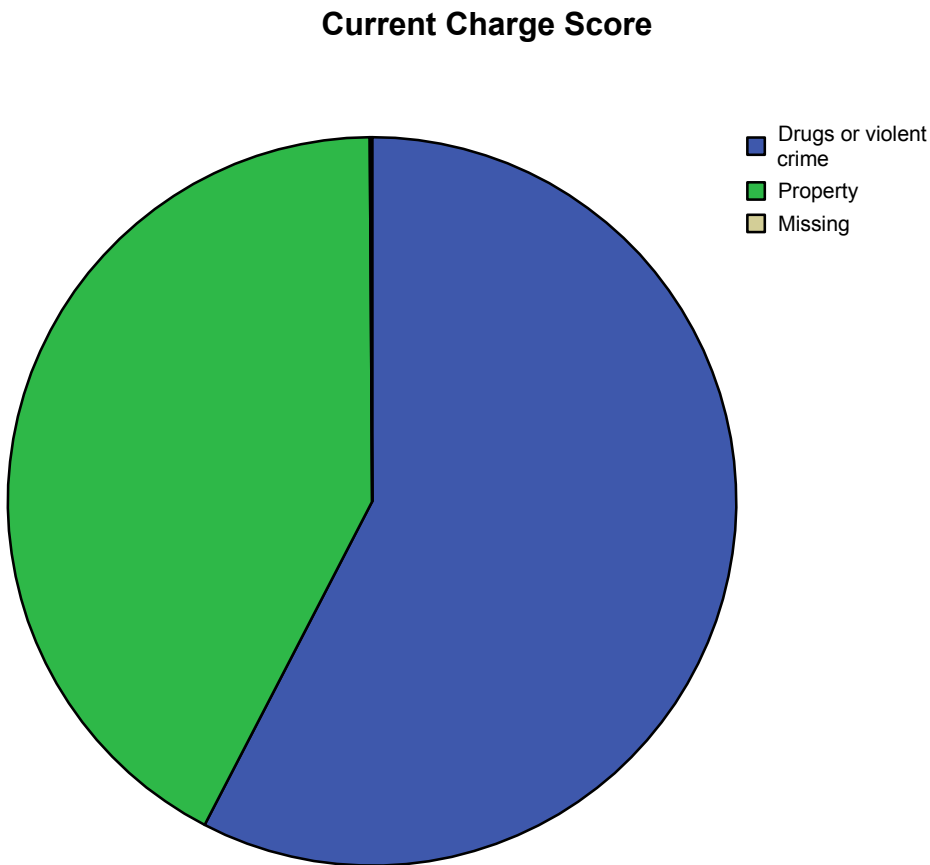
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	More than six months	833	83.3	88.5	88.5
	Less than six months	108	10.8	11.5	100.0
	Total	941	94.1	100.0	
Missing		59	5.9		
Total		1000	100.0		



Eighty-eight percent (88%) have lived in the circuit for more than six months.

Charge Score

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Drugs or violent crime	576	57.6	57.7	57.7
	Property	423	42.3	42.3	100.0
	Total	999	99.9	100.0	
Missing		1	.1		
Total		1000	100.0		



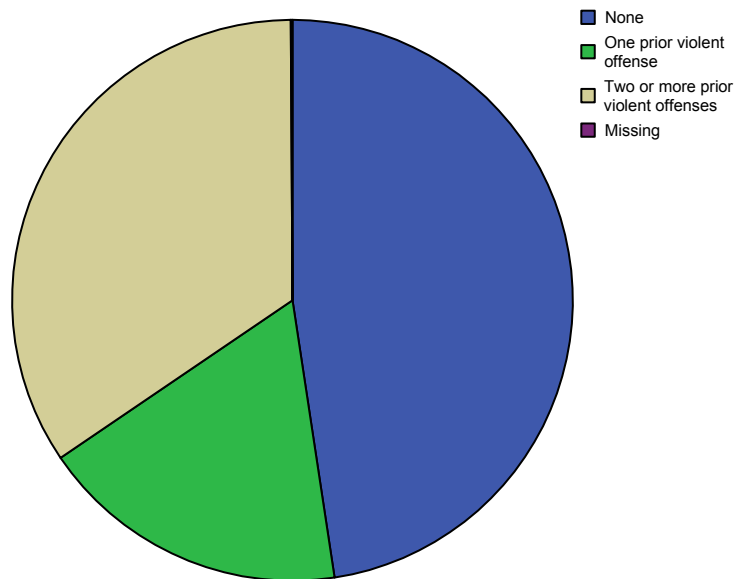
Fifty-eight percent (58%) are arrested for drugs or violent crime.

Prior Violent Charges

Prior Violent Charges

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	None	476	47.6	47.6	47.6
	One prior violent offense	179	17.9	17.9	65.6
	Two or more prior violent offenses	344	34.4	34.4	100.0
	Total	999	99.9	100.0	
Missing		1	.1		
Total		1000	100.0		

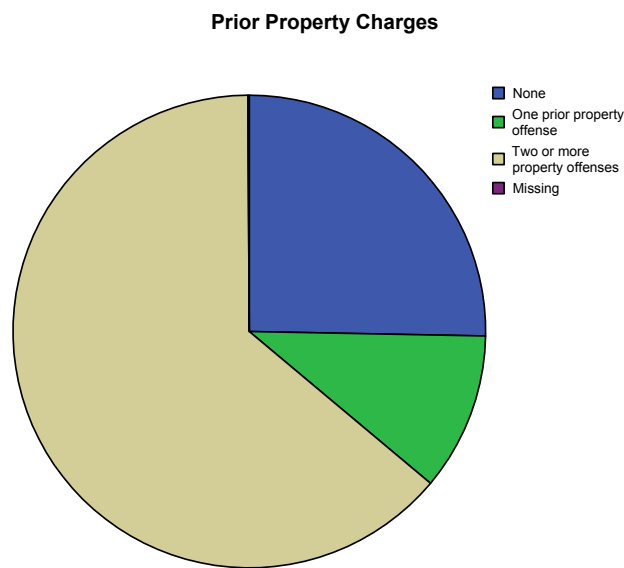
Prior Violent Charges



Forty eight percent (48%) have no violent history, while eighteen percent (18%) have a single prior offense and thirty-four percent (34%) have two or more.

Prior Property Charges

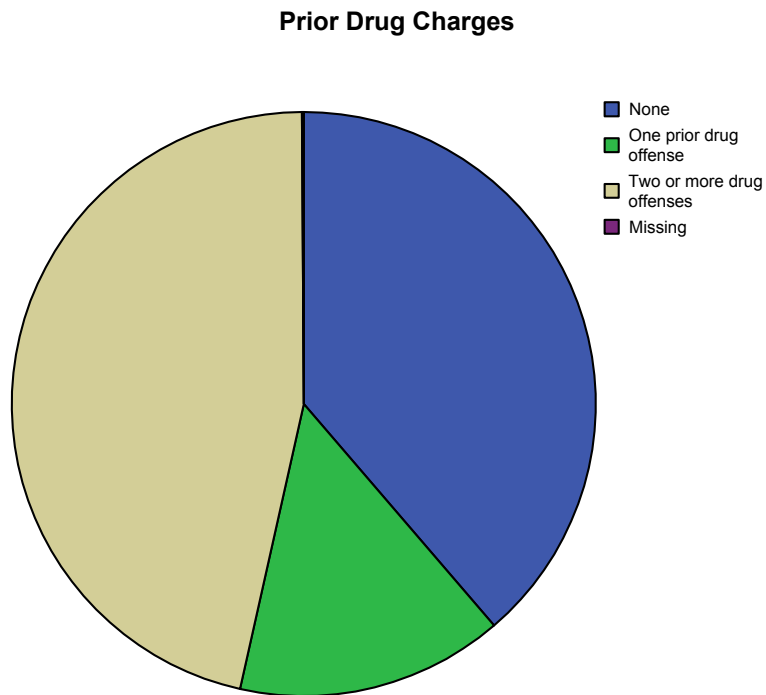
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	None	253	25.3	25.3	25.3
	One prior property offense	108	10.8	10.8	36.1
	Two or more property offenses	638	63.8	63.9	100.0
	Total	999	99.9	100.0	
Missing		1	.1		
Total		1000	100.0		



Twenty-five percent (25%) have no prior property charges, while eleven percent (11%) have a single prior offense and sixty-four percent (64%) have two or more.

Prior Drug Charges

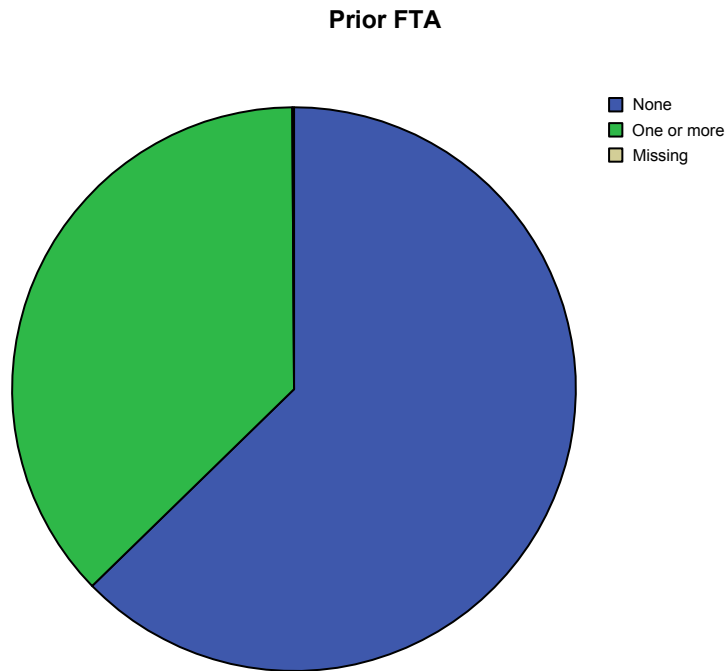
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	None	387	38.7	38.7	38.7
	One prior drug offense	148	14.8	14.8	53.6
	Two or more drug offenses	464	46.4	46.4	100.0
	Total	999	99.9	100.0	
Missing		1	.1		
Total		1000	100.0		



Thirty-nine percent (39%) have no prior drug charges, while fifteen percent (15%) have a single charge and forty-six percent (46%) have two or more.

Prior Failure to Appear

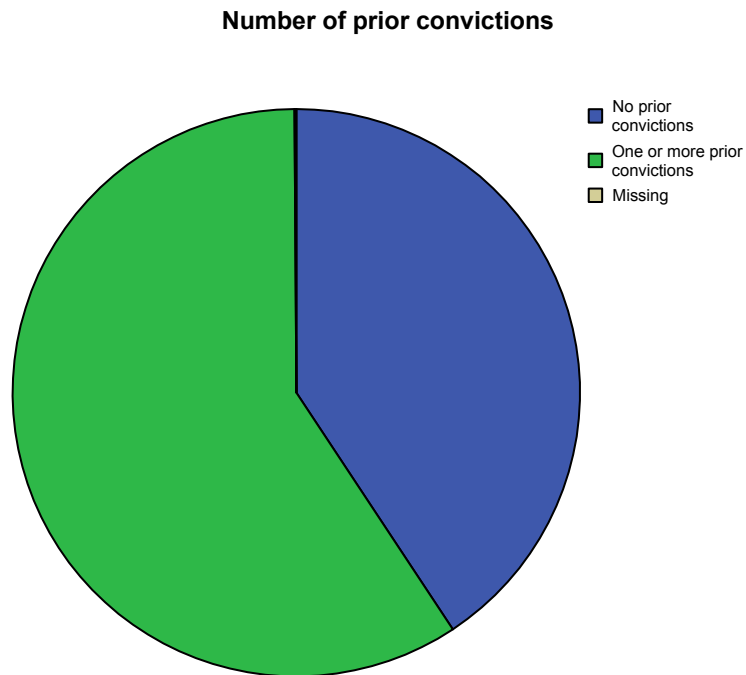
		Prior FTA			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	None	627	62.7	62.8	62.8
	One or more	372	37.2	37.2	100.0
	Total	999	99.9	100.0	
Missing		1	.1		
Total		1000	100.0		



Sixty-three percent (63%) have no prior failure to appear, while thirty-seven percent (37%) have one or more.

Number of Prior Convictions

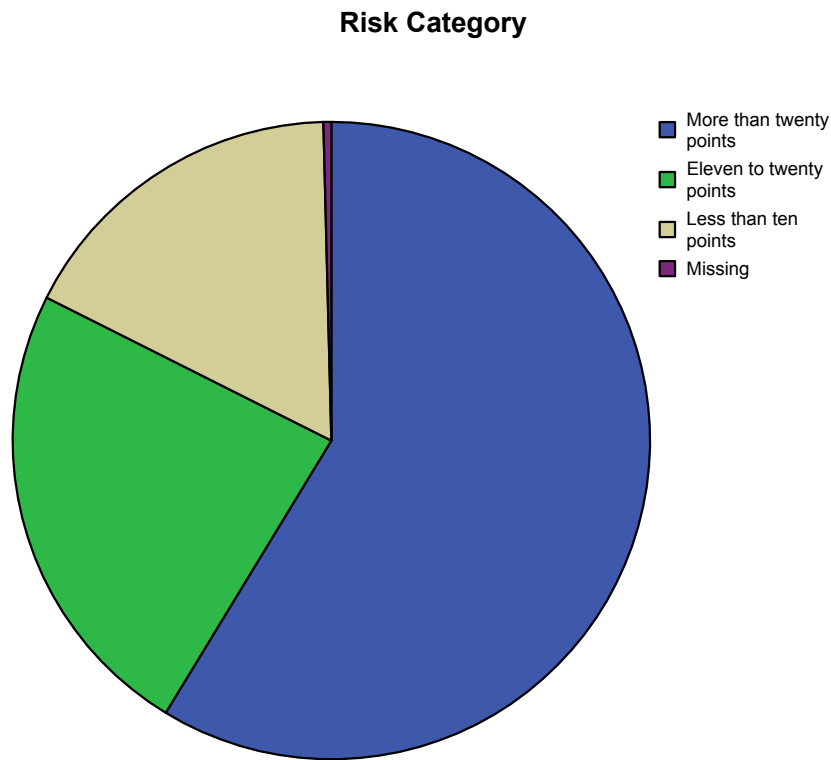
		Number of prior convictions			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No prior convictions	407	40.7	40.7	40.7
	One or more prior convictions	592	59.2	59.3	100.0
	Total	999	99.9	100.0	
Missing		1	.1		
Total		1000	100.0		



Forty-one percent (41%) have no prior convictions, while fifty-nine percent (59%) have one or more.

Total Risk Score

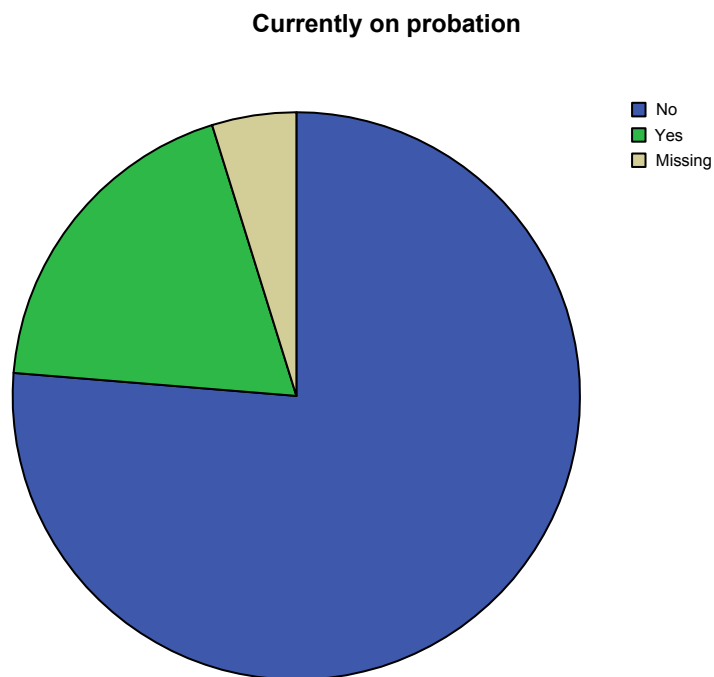
		Risk Category			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	More than twenty points	587	58.7	58.9	58.9
	Eleven to twenty points	237	23.7	23.8	82.7
	Less than ten points	172	17.2	17.3	100.0
	Total	996	99.6	100.0	
Missing		4	.4		
Total		1000	100.0		



Fifty-nine percent (59%) have more than twenty points, while twenty-four percent (24%) have eleven to twenty and seventeen percent (17%) have less than ten.

Currently on Probation

Currently on probation					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	763	76.3	80.1	80.1
	Yes	189	18.9	19.9	100.0
	Total	952	95.2	100.0	
Missing		48	4.8		
Total		1000	100.0		

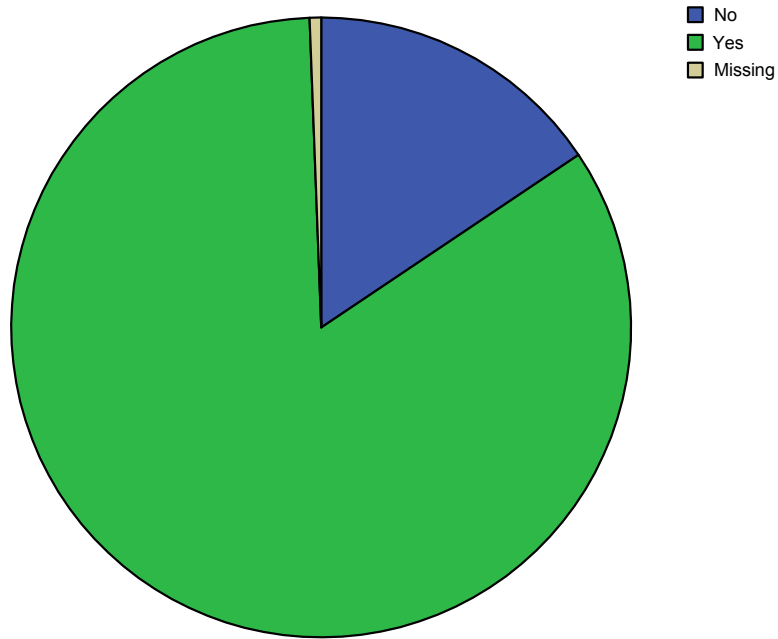


Twenty percent (20%) of defendants are currently on some type of probation.

Release at First Appearance

Release at first appearance					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	156	15.6	15.7	15.7
	Yes	838	83.8	84.3	100.0
	Total	994	99.4	100.0	
Missing		6	.6		
Total		1000	100.0		

Release at first appearance

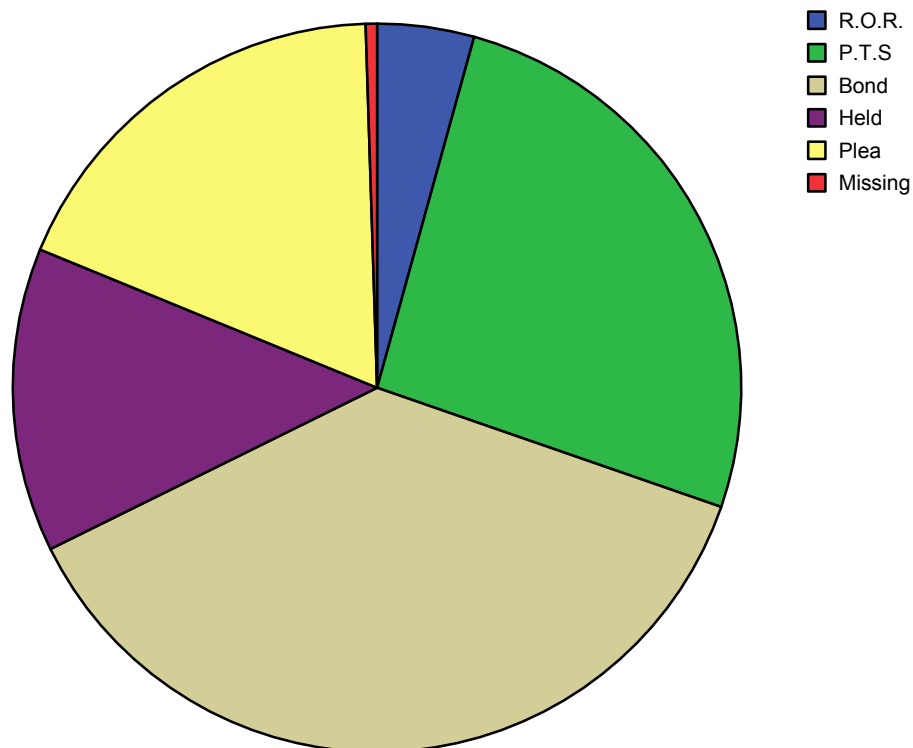


Less than sixteen percent (16%) of defendants are held after first appearance.

Release Type

		Release type			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	R.O.R.	43	4.3	4.3	4.3
	P.T.S	260	26.0	26.1	30.5
	Bond	374	37.4	37.6	68.0
	Held	135	13.5	13.6	81.6
	Plea	183	18.3	18.4	100.0
	Total	995	99.5	100.0	
Missing		5	.5		
Total		1000	100.0		

Release type

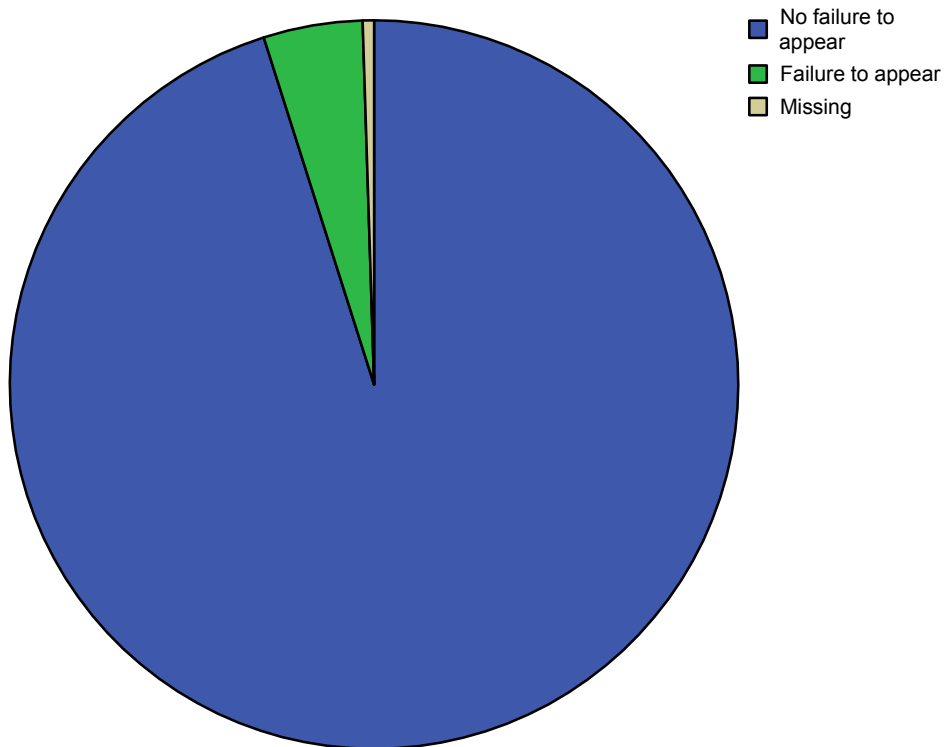


Twenty-six percent (26%) of defendants are placed under pretrial services.

Failure to Appear in First Three Months

Outcome Rate 1					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No failure to appear	951	95.1	95.6	95.6
	Failure to appear	44	4.4	4.4	100.0
	Total	995	99.5	100.0	
Missing		5	.5		
Total		1000	100.0		

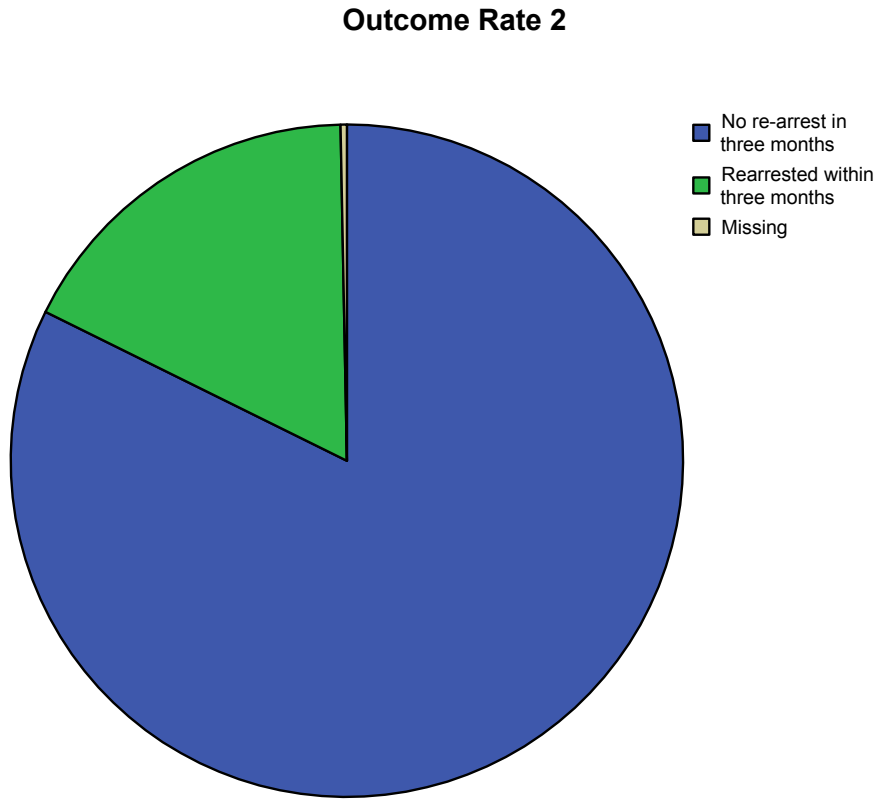
Outcome Rate 1



Four percent (4%) fail to appear in the first three months.

Re-arrest in First Three Months

		Outcome Rate 2			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No re-arrest in three months	823	82.3	82.5	82.5
	Rearrested within three months	174	17.4	17.5	100.0
	Total	997	99.7	100.0	
Missing		3	.3		
Total		1000	100.0		

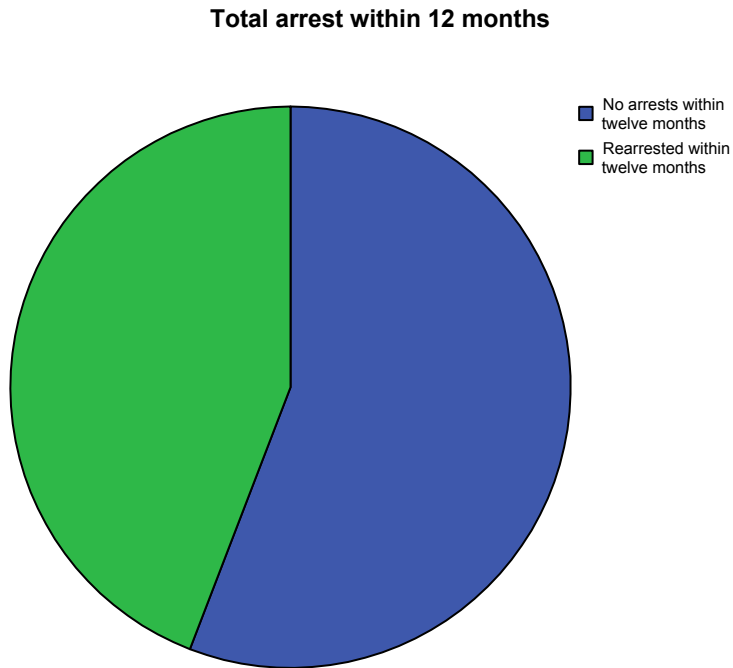


Seventeen percent are re-arrested in the first three months. The most frequent re-arrest charges are possession of cocaine and driving while license suspended.

Re-arrests in Twelve Months

Total arrest within 12 months

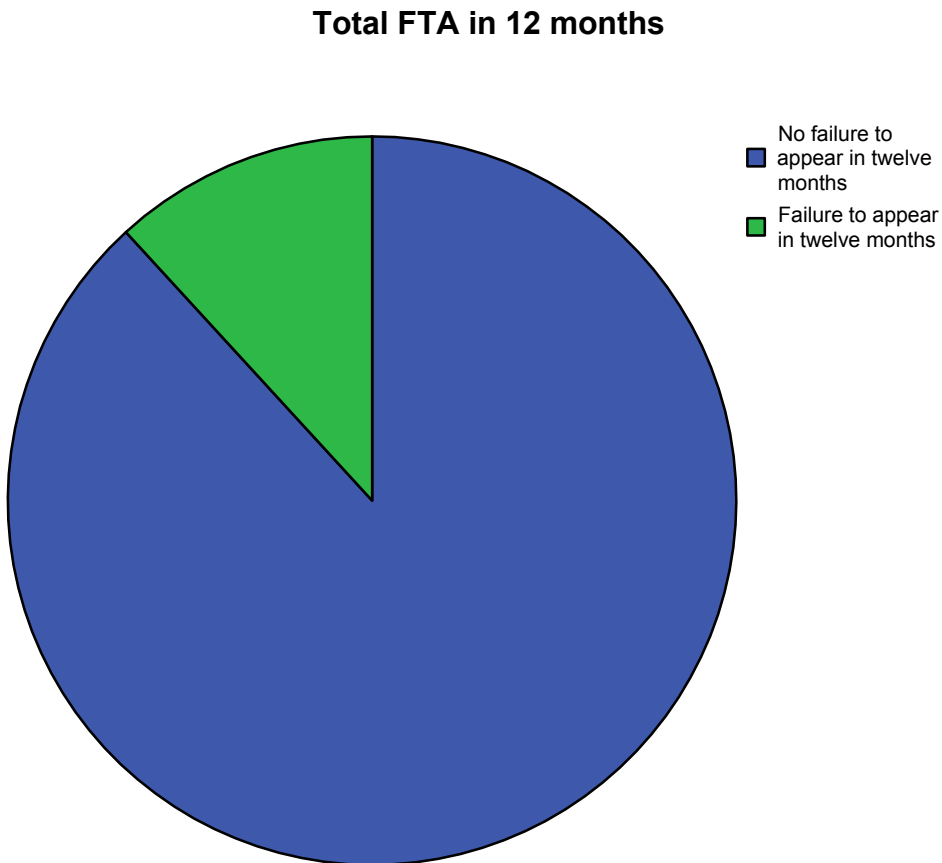
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No arrests within twelve months	558	55.8	55.8	55.8
	Rearrested within twelve months	441	44.1	44.1	99.9
	Missing	1	.1	.1	100.0
	Total	1000	100.0	100.0	



Forty-four percent (44%) are re-arrested within twelve months. The most frequent re-arrest charges are possession of cocaine and violation of probation.

Failure to Appear in Twelve Months

		Total FTA in 12 months			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No failure to appear in twelve months	881	88.1	88.1	88.1
	Failure to appear in twelve months	118	11.8	11.8	99.9
	Missing	1	.1	.1	100.0
Total		1000	100.0	100.0	



Twelve percent (12%) fail to appear within twelve months.

T-Test of Risk Score on Failure to Appear (w/in three months)

Group Statistics

	Outcome Rate 1	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Total Risk Score	No failure to appear	949	23.6312	12.30592
	Failure to appear	43	24.9767	12.20361

Independent Samples Test

t-test for Equality of Means					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
Total Risk Score	-.702	990	.483	-1.34555	1.91801

As shown the in above t-test, the risk score is not significantly different for defendants that fail to appear or do not fail to appear in the first three months. There is only a very small difference in their mean risk scores at the three month timeline in their court case. Interestingly, only four percent (n=43) of the defendants miss their court appearance in the early stages of their pretrial supervision. For this small number, it may be difficult to identify those who may be problem prone through a risk assessment instrument.

Profile of Failure to Appear at Three Months

With such a small number of offenders that fail to appear for their court cases, it is impossible to use statistical analysis in a meaningful manner. Forty-three cases are simply not sufficiently large enough to be able to apply the findings toward society as a whole. However, it is possible to create a profile of these specific offenders. Shown below are the release types in relation to the outcome. Those that are released on bond and fail to appear make up half of this group.

Count		Release type					Total
		R.O.R.	P.T.S	Bond	Held	Plea	
Failure to appear in first three months	No failure to appear	40	245	353	134	178	950
	Failure to appear	3	15	20	1	4	43
Total		43	260	373	135	182	993

In addition to the release type, offenders tended to have two or more prior property offenses (n=30), one or more prior violent offense (n=30), one or more prior drug offenses (n=27), one or more failure to appear (n=20) and was single (n=31).

T-Test of Risk Score on Re-arrest (w/in three months)

Group Statistics

	Outcome Rate 2	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Total Risk Score	No re-arrest in three months	821	22.4823	12.35022
	Rearrested within three months	174	29.2126	10.48234

Independent Samples Test

	t-test for Equality of Means		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
Total Risk Score	.000	-6.73031	.90403

As shown the in above t-test, the risk score is significantly different for defendants that are re-arrested or who are not re-arrested in the first three months. Mean scores between the groups are significantly different, indicating that the risk assessment instrument accurately identifies recidivism prone offenders. Unlike the results on failure to appear, the instrument appears to accurately separate the successful (22.5) from the unsuccessful (29.2) at an early stage in the supervision.

T-Test of Risk Score on Failure to Appear (w/in twelve months)

Group Statistics				
	Total FTA in 12 months	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Total Risk Score	No failure to appear in twelve months	880	23.2534	12.41639
	Failure to appear in twelve months	116	26.7586	10.96209

Independent Samples Test			
	t-test for Equality of Means		
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Total Risk Score	-3.185	156.599	.002

As shown above, there is a statistically significant difference in the risk scores of offenders that show up for their court appearances (23.2) and those who do not (26.7). The risk assessment instrument is much more reliable and identifying offenders over a greater period of time. At the twelve month time bar, twelve percent (12%) of the offenders fail to appear for their court dates.

T-Test of Risk Score on Re-arrest (w/in twelve months)

Group Statistics

Total arrest within 12 months		N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Total Risk Score	No arrests within twelve months	557	20.8797	12.18214
	Rearrested within twelve months	439	27.1913	11.53691

Independent Samples Test

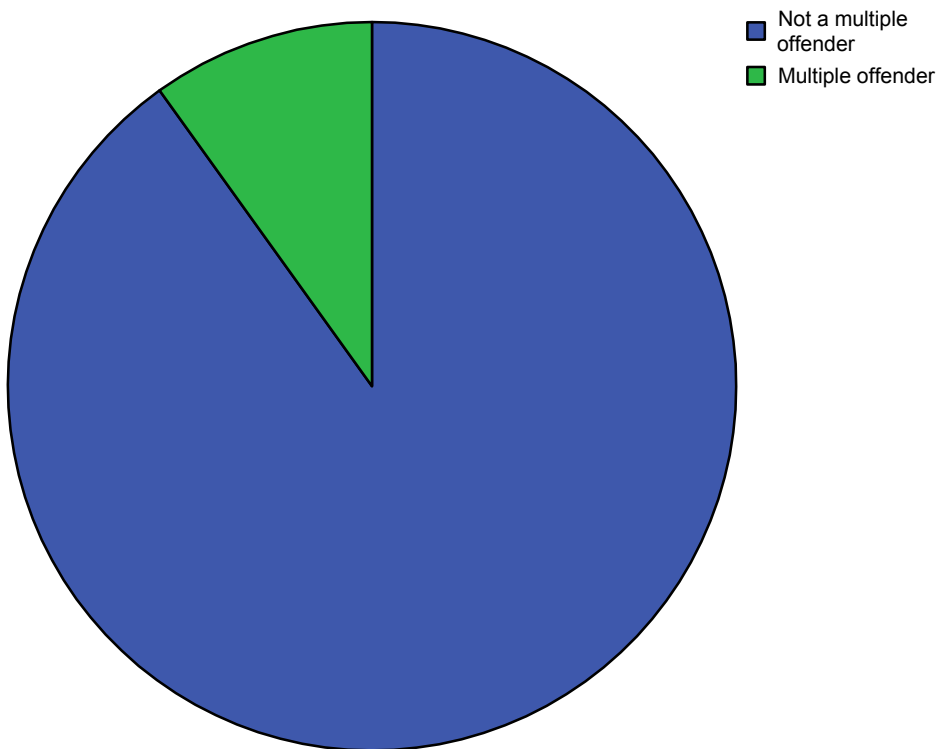
	t-test for Equality of Means		
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Total Risk Score	-8.363	961.264	.000

At twelve months, the risk assessment instrument continues to accurately identify those who are not re-arrested (n=557, m=20.9) and those who are (n=439, m=27.2). A t-test shows that there is a statistical difference between the mean scores of those who succeed and those who fail. At this point in the twelve month timeline, forty-four percent (44%) of the defendants have been re-arrested on at least one additional charge. Some have been re-arrested a number of times, which will be examined in following analysis.

Multiple Arrests within 12 months

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not a multiple offender	900	90.0	90.0	90.0
	Multiple offender	99	9.9	9.9	99.9
	Missing	1	.1	.1	100.0
	Total	1000	100.0	100.0	

Multiple arrests within 12 months



Ten percent (10%) are arrested two or more times after their initial arrest.

Original Charge and Multiple Arrests Crosstabs

Count		Multiple arrests within 12		
		Not a multiple offender	Multiple offender	Total
Current Charge	Homicide	1	1	2
	Aggravated battery	11	1	12
	Aggravated assault	7	2	9
	CCW	5	1	6
	Robbery	7	2	9
	Sale of cocaine	6	2	8
	Poss of cocaine w/intent to distribute	2	1	3
	Possession of cocaine	56	17	73
	Possession of controlled substance	8	1	9
	Grand theft	36	3	39
	Grand theft auto	12	1	13
	DWLS habitual	25	1	26
	Battery	36	3	39
	Domestic violence	129	4	133
	Possession of marijuana (under 20 grams)	22	3	25
	Possession of paraphernalia	8	2	10
	DUI	85	6	91
	Open container	14	1	15
	DWLS	62	11	74
	Trespass	9	6	15
	Resisting / Obstruction w/out violence	15	2	17
	No valid DL	39	1	40
	Loitering and Prowling	8	2	10
	Petit theft	44	9	53
	Prostitution	3	2	5
	Sale of cocaine w/in 1000 ft	1	2	3
	Agg assault w/ deadly weapon	10	2	12
	Burglary of a conveyance	7	3	10
	Burglary of a structure	16	2	18
	Felony battery domestic violence	3	2	5
	DUI 3rd offense or more	1	1	2

Original Charge and Multiple Arrests Narrative

The previous crosstabulation table examines the relationship between the original charge and committing multiple arrests while under Pre-Trial Services supervision. A large number of offenses did not seem to suffer from multiple acts of recidivism. Consequently, they were omitted in order to save space. While some original charges had only a single multiple arrest offender and was likely to not be a valid predictor of future recidivism, they were included for comparison purposes. This will allow fair comparison between specific charges without the bias of arbitrarily selecting out weaker variables.

Reviewing tables such as this should be done with a word of warning. As the sizes of these groups are different and small in terms of a sample size, it may not be appropriate to create a simple percentage of multiple offenders for each charge and then weigh them accordingly. While it is immediately clear in the table that cocaine related charges seem to have an associated trend toward recidivism, due to the number of cases it is not possible to say precisely how much more likely a cocaine offender will commit additional crimes over a marijuana offender. The most important component of this table should be those offenses that do not appear.

Employment as a Risk Factor

Each factor of the risk assessment instrument appeared to be properly weighted and based upon the extant scholarly literature in the field of pretrial services. However, when the variable used to measure employment was tested, its value became suspect. In both failure to appear and re-arrest (both at 12 months), there is no statistical difference based upon employment.

Total FTA in 12 months * Employment Crosstabulation

Count		Employment			
		More than 6 months	Less than 6 months	Unemployed	Total
Total FTA in 12 months	No failure to appear in twelve months	269	213	300	782
	Failure to appear in twelve months	28	29	42	99
Total		297	242	342	881

Total arrest within 12 months * Employment Crosstabulation

Count		Employment			
		More than 6 months	Less than 6 months	Unemployed	Total
Total arrest within 12 months	No arrests within twelve months	172	135	179	486
	Rearrested within twelve months	125	107	163	395
Total		297	242	342	881

Risk Categories and Outcomes

Shown below, risk categories are broken down by failures in re-arrest and court appearance. There is a statistically significant difference between the groups of both models. As predicted, lower risk scores are indicative of fewer problems in supervision.

Crosstab

Count		Risk Category			Total
		More than twenty points	Eleven to twenty points	Less than ten points	
Total FTA in 12 months	No failure to appear in twelve months	505	209	166	880
	Failure to appear in twelve months	82	28	6	116
Total		587	237	172	996

Crosstab

Count		Risk Category			Total
		More than twenty points	Eleven to twenty points	Less than ten points	
Total arrest within 12 months	No arrests within twelve months	282	139	136	557
	Rearrested within twelve months	305	98	36	439
Total		587	237	172	996

Link between Violence and Pretrial Misconduct

A chi-square analysis of offenders with prior violent charges indicates that while there is a statistically significant difference between groups in re-arrest, this is not the case for failure to appear. While a large number of violent offenders will commit crimes while awaiting court, they are no more likely than non-violent offenders to miss that court appearance.

Crosstab

Count		Prior Violent Charges			Total
		None	One prior violent offense	Two or more prior violent offenses	
Total arrest within 12 months	No arrests within twelve months	308	88	162	558
	Rearrested within twelve months	168	91	182	441
Total		476	179	344	999

Crosstab

Count		Prior Violent Charges			Total
		None	One prior violent offense	Two or more prior violent offenses	
Total FTA in 12 months	No failure to appear in twelve months	424	154	303	881
	Failure to appear in twelve months	52	25	41	118
Total		476	179	344	999

Link between Drugs and Pretrial Misconduct

A chi square analysis of offenders with prior drug charges has very similar findings to that of the violent offenders. Again, re-arrest is statistically more likely, while failure to appear is not.

Crosstab

Count		Prior Drug Charges			Total
		None	One prior drug offense	Two or more drug offenses	
Total arrest within 12 months	No arrests within twelve months	261	89	208	558
	Rearrested within twelve months	126	59	256	441
Total		387	148	464	999

Crosstab

Count		Prior Drug Charges			Total
		None	One prior drug offense	Two or more drug offenses	
Total FTA in 12 months	No failure to appear in twelve months	343	134	404	881
	Failure to appear in twelve months	44	14	60	118
Total		387	148	464	999

Predicting Failure to Appear (F.T.A)

As shown thus far, most of the existing variables are weak or non-existing predictors of the defendant failing to appear in court. The literature suggests that the strongest predictor is previous occurrences of missing court dates. From this, it might be concluded that the more previous F.T.A. a defendant has committed, the more likely it will be in the future. Shown below, those that attended their court appearance had almost half as many previous F.T.A. as those that did not. Statistical analysis indicates that there is a significant difference between the groups, but at a weak level ($p < .05$).

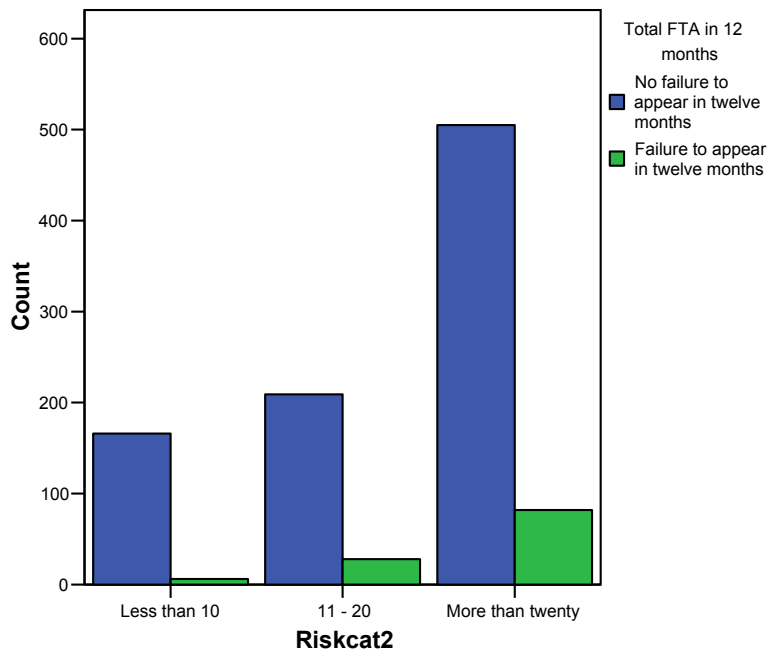
	Total FTA in 12 months	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Actual number of FTA	No failure to appear in twelve months	880	1.3216	2.97314
	Failure to appear in twelve months	117	2.2051	4.56474

Risk Categories and Failure to Appear (12 months)

Riskcat2 * Total FTA in 12 months Crosstabulation

Count		Total FTA in 12 months		
		No failure to appear in twelve months	Failure to appear in twelve months	Total
Riskcat2	Less than 10	166	6	172
	11 - 20	209	28	237
	More than twenty	505	82	587
Total		880	116	996

Bar Chart

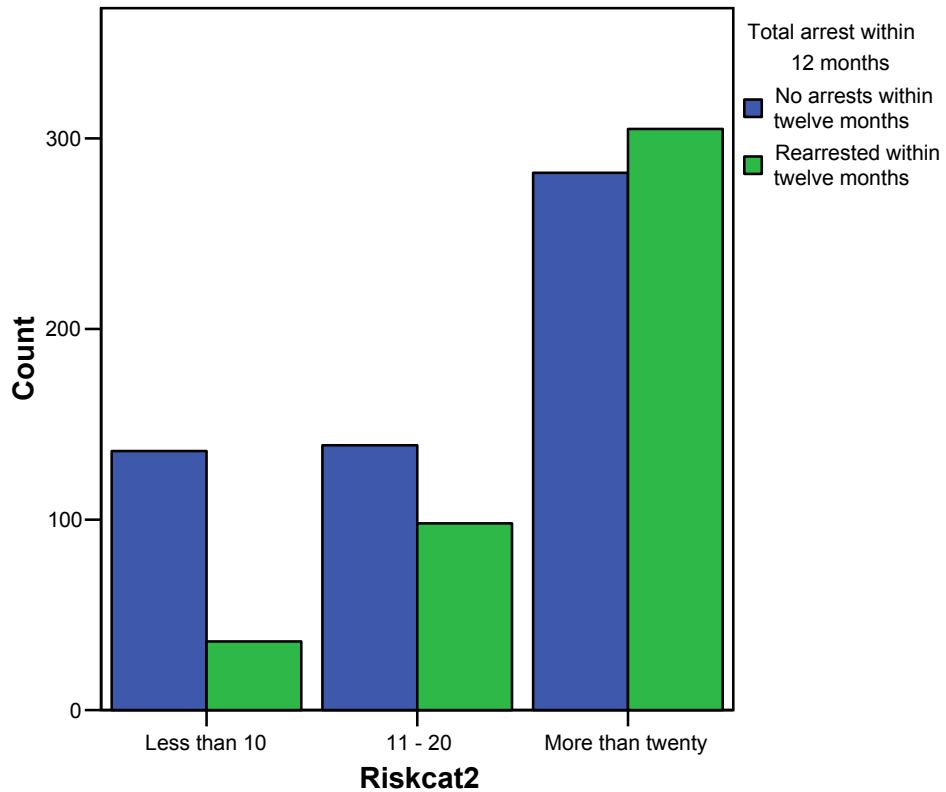


Risk Categories and Re-arrest

Riskcat2 * Total arrest within 12 months Crosstabulation

Count		Total arrest within 12 months		
		No arrests within twelve months	Rearrested within twelve months	Total
Riskcat2	Less than 10	136	36	172
	11 - 20	139	98	237
	More than twenty	282	305	587
Total		557	439	996

Bar Chart



Risk Category Analysis

Shown in the prior two pages, the risk categories are plotted in bar graph and crosstabulation table in relation to re-arrest and failure to appear. In the first table (pg 40), only three percent (3%) of defendants with a score of ten or less fail to appear, while that percentage jumps up to twelve percent (12%) for the scores of eleven to twenty. The highest risk group of scores greater than twenty has a similar failure to appear rate of fourteen percent (14%). While the low risk group has an appropriately low f.t.a. rate, the other categories have very similar rates indicating that the instrument does not accurately identify factors predictive of failure to appear.

In the second analysis, risk categories are plotted against re-arrest successes and failures in bar graph and crosstabs. Twenty-one percent (21%) of defendants with scores of ten or less were re-arrested during the twelve month study. Forty-one percent (41%) of the eleven to twenty category were re-arrested, in comparison with the high risk group with a fifty-two percent (52%) re-arrest rate. There are substantial differences between the recidivism rates of the groups indicating that the instrument is differentiating between the various levels of risk associated with re-arrest.

Release Type and Re-arrest

The table below presents the relationship between the release type and re-arrest within twelve months. Pre-Trial Services has one of the lowest rates of recidivism at thirty-eight percent (38%), when compared against R.O.R. (44%), bond (45%), held (36%) and pleas (56%).

Release Type and Rearrest Crosstabulation

Count		Total arrest within 12 months		
		No arrests within twelve months	Rearrested within twelve months	Total
Release type	R.O.R.	24	19	43
	P.T.S	160	100	260
	Bond	203	171	374
	Held	87	48	135
	Plea	81	102	183
Total		555	440	995

Release Type and Failure to Appear

This table examines release type and failure to appear.

Defendants under Pre-Trial Services had a F.T.A. rate of fourteen percent (14%), in comparison with R.O.R (12%), bond (12%), held (6%) and pleas (12%).

Release Type and FTA Crosstabulation

Count		Total FTA in 12 months		
		No failure to appear in twelve months	Failure to appear in twelve months	Total
Release type	R.O.R.	38	5	43
	P.T.S	224	36	260
	Bond	329	45	374
	Held	126	9	135
	Plea	161	22	183
Total		878	117	995

Limitations of this Study

Despite the reasonably strong sample size of this analysis, there was a limitation that must be addressed. The primary limitation of the study was its inability to test an overall model for the risk assessment instrument. Since the primary dependent variables (failure to appear and re-arrest) were both dichotomous in nature, logistic regression was the most suitable choice for statistical method. Unfortunately, most of the independent variables were also dichotomous creating a model with very few degrees of freedom. While it was not impossible to create and run this model, its value was limited. Instead, this study chose to create individual models for the key variables against the dependent variable. In doing so, each variable is tested for its significance in predicting re-arrest and failure to appear. The power of the risk assessment instrument in predicting pretrial misconduct was tested in a similar fashion using the risk score as a means of separating the successful and unsuccessful defendants. Unfortunately, it is impossible to identify the "weight" of each of these variables, as they are not within a single model. Only by viewing the study as a whole is it possible to appreciate the manner in which these factors predict future misconduct.

Recommendations

After reviewing each component variable of the risk assessment instrument, I was able to make a number of observations and recommendations for future application. First, the risk assessment instrument accurately predicts recidivism, regardless of whether it is at the three month or twelve month timeline. While almost all of the instrument factors are valid predictors, this does not appear to be the case with employment. Statistically, there was no difference between the levels of employment.

Second, failure to appear was incredibly hard to predict. At the three month timeline, the instrument was not able to identify the problem prone defendants. However, at twelve months, the instrument was much more reliable in identifying those that miss their court dates. Prior failure to appear seem to be the best predictor of future misconduct but as stated earlier the amount of prior f.t.a. is not the issue. A single prior failure to appear seems just as predictive as a large number. Consequently, differentiating levels of f.t.a. does not add to the strength of the instrument and perhaps should be modified.

Finally, there was the question of the validity for the numerical assignments for each risk category. On first glance, it may appear that these groups are arbitrarily assigned. However, when risk score and re-arrest or failure to appear are plotted, the differences are quite clear. Scores of less than ten have much fewer acts of recidivism or misconduct, while from a score of eleven re-arrest and failure to appear become commonplace. At twenty points and beyond, it is more likely than not that the defendant will be re-arrested.

According to the data of this study, the risk categories are accurately placed to separate the successful from the problem prone. A number of models were tried through trial and error to produce a better scoring system and none were able to meet or exceed the existing model. The risk assessment instrument as a whole is very accurate at predicting recidivism and moderately accurate at predicting failure to appear. Consequently, I would suggest using this instrument for twelve months and again evaluate its performance.