

Appendix A

Profiles of Assessment Instruments*

* This appendix includes a brief description of and links to additional resources on several risk and needs assessment instruments currently available. With funding from the Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance, the NCSC is reviewing several adult offender risk and needs assessment instruments in more detail and will post the results of this review on the Center for Sentencing Initiatives Web site (www.ncsconline.org/csi) when completed.

Correctional Offender Management Profiling for Alternative Sanctions (COMPAS)

Background Information: Northpointe Institute for Public Management, Inc. developed the original, statistically-based COMPAS system in the late 1990s. The tool was designed to assess key risk and needs factors in adult and youth correctional populations and to provide decision support for practitioners charged with case planning and management ([Reentry Policy Council, n.d.](#)). The COMPAS can assess four types of risk (general recidivism, violent recidivism, non-compliance, and failure to appear) for use at a variety of decision points in the criminal justice system ([Derrick, Bancroft, & Cirincione, 2004](#)). Originally developed and normed on offenders in New York ([New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services, n.d.](#)), the system has evolved since its inception as revalidation data offer new insights on the performance and validity of the tool ([Northpointe Institute for Public Management, Inc., n.d.](#)).

Instrument Administration Requirements: The COMPAS system allows for some degree of flexibility in the administration process. Offender data collection options include offender self-report, scripted interviews, and structured interviews as part of a web-based, automated assessment process. Northpointe offers a standard 2-day training that covers practical use, interpretation of results, and case planning strategies. Advanced training options are available on the theoretical underpinnings of offender assessments, gender responsiveness training, motivational interviewing, and other topics ([Northpointe Institute for Public Management, 2010](#)).

Instrument Content: The COMPAS Core assessment for adult offenders contains both static and dynamic factors. Content may be individually tailored based on jurisdictional needs and resources, but can include 4 risk and 4 need scales:

- Risk: failure to appear, non-compliance (technical violations), general recidivism, violent recidivism
- Criminogenic needs: cognitive-behavioral, criminal associates/peers, criminal involvement, criminal opportunity, criminal personality, criminal thinking (self-report), current violence, family criminality, financial problems, history of non-compliance, history of violence, leisure/boredom, residential instability, social adjustment, social environment, social isolation, socialization failure, substance abuse, vocation/education

In addition to these domains, the COMPAS contains two response bias scales to detect random responding and lying. Northpointe also offers several standard adaptations of COMPAS Core specifically designed for use with re-entry populations and with women and juvenile offenders.

All versions of the COMPAS system use offender risk and needs information to produce a report that can guide case management decisions. The automated system allows for process evaluations, program performance/outcomes analyses, service gap analyses, and program performance evaluations. Users can also export this information into existing case management systems ([Northpointe Institute for Public Management, 2010](#)).

Obtaining the COMPAS: The COMPAS is a proprietary system. To inquire about the COMPAS or to obtain user manuals and internal research documentation on the tool, contact [Northpointe](#).

References

- Derrick, P., Bancroft, H., and Cirincione, M. (2004). Navigating a system of graduated sanctions: Adopting an assessment methodology for community corrections in New York state. In *Topics in Community Corrections, Annual Issue 2004* (pp. 28-33). Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections. Retrieved from <http://nicic.gov/pubs/1999/period166.pdf>
- New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services (n.d.). *Technology advancing practices*. Retrieved from <http://dpc.state.ny.us/technology.htm>
- Northpointe Institute for Public Management, Inc. (n.d.). *Northpointe brochure*. Retrieved from <http://www.northpointeinc.com/pdf/NPBrochure.pdf>
- Northpointe Institute for Public Management, Inc. (2010, January 14). *COMPAS risk & need assessment system: Selected questions posed by inquiring agencies*. Retrieved from <http://www.northpointeinc.com/pdf/Selected%20Compas%20Questions%20Posed%20by%20Inquiring%20Agencies.pdf>
- Reentry Policy Council (n.d.). *Assessment Instruments: Recidivism Risk*. Retrieved from <http://tools.reentrypolicy.org/assessments/instruments/Recidivism+Risk>

Inventory of Offender Risk, Needs, and Strengths (IORNS)

Background Information: The IORNS was created by Dr. Holly Miller in 2006 as an offender assessment of static risk, dynamic risk/need, and protective strength factors. The tool is complimented by several subscales for specific assessments in the areas of violent and sexual criminal behavior (Miller, 2006).

Instrument Administration Requirements: Purchaser must hold a degree in forensic or clinical psychology or psychiatry plus satisfactory completion of appropriate coursework in psychological testing, or have a license or certification from an agency that requires such training and experience. Line staff can administer the self-report assessment to offenders and score the results, but they must be supervised by a licensed professional who is also responsible for interpreting the instrument ([Psychological Assessment Resources, 2010](#)).

Instrument Content: The IORNS is a 130-item true/false self-report questionnaire (written at a 3rd grade reading level) that assesses static risk, dynamic risk/need, and protective strength factors in separate indices. It consists of 4 total indices, 8 scales, 14 subscales, and 2 validity scales ([Psychological Assessment Resources, 2010](#)).

- The Static Risk Index (SRI) contains 12 criminal history items.
- The Dynamic Need Index (DNI) contains 79 items in the form of six dynamic need scales (with subscales in parentheses): Criminal Orientation (pro-criminal attitudes, irresponsibility), Psychopathy (manipulativeness, impulsivity, angry detachment), Intra/Interpersonal Problems (esteem problems, relational problems), Alcohol/Drug Problems, Aggression (hostility, aggressive behaviors), and Negative Social Influences (negative friends, negative family).
- The Protective Strength Index (PSI) contains 26 items in the form of two scales: Personal Resources (cognitive/behavioral regulation, anger regulation, education/training) and Environmental Resources.
- The Overall Risk Index that combines the SRI and DNI total scores and subtracts the PSI total score; it also takes into account offender response biases by including a Favorable Impression scale and an Inconsistent Response Style scale.

Obtaining the IORNS: The IORNS is a proprietary instrument. To purchase the IORNS, visit [Psychological Assessment Resources](#).

References

Miller, H. (2006). A dynamic assessment of offender risk, needs, and strengths in a sample of pre-release general offenders. *Behavioral Sciences & the Law*, 24, 767-782. doi: 10.1002/bsl.728

Psychological Assessment Resources (2010). *Inventory of Offender Risk, Needs, and Strengths (IORNS)*. Retrieved from <http://www4.parinc.com/Products/Product.aspx?ProductID=IORNS>

LSI-R (Level of Service Inventory-Revised) and LS/CMI (Level of Service/Case Management Inventory) LS/RNR (Level of Service/Risk, Need, Responsivity)

Background Information: In 1995, Don Andrews and James Bonta developed the LSI-R on a Canadian criminal population as a “third generation” approach to offender risk assessment. Third generation tools assess static and dynamic risk and needs factors in the evaluation of an offender’s risk for recidivism and assess whether the offender may be amenable to community intervention/treatment for the purpose of risk reduction. In their independent meta-analysis of factors predictive of adult offender recidivism, Gendreau, Little, and Goggin (1996) identified the LSI-R as “the most useful actuarial measure” available at the time of their review.

The LS/CMI is the “fourth generation” revision of the LSI-R that assesses offender risk, needs, and responsivity (RNR) to inform case planning via a built-in case management system. The LS/RNR is similarly comprised of the updated risk, need, and responsivity scales, but offer these separately from the LS/CMI case management system for organizations already equipped with established case management systems of their own.

Instrument Administration Requirements: The LSI-R and LS/CMI are administered through a structured interview between the interviewer and offender, with the recommendation that supporting documentation be collected from family members, employers, case files, drug tests, and other relevant sources as needed. Those who administer the exam must have an understanding of the principles of tests and measurements or be supervised by someone who does; a professional with advanced training in psychological assessment or a related discipline must assume responsibility for the instrument’s use, interpretation, and communication of results (Andrews & Bonta, 2001, p. 3; Andrews, Bonta, & Wormith, 2004, p. 6).

Instrument Content: The LSI-R and LS/CMI contain a mix of static and dynamic factors, developed from recidivism literature, professional opinions of probation officers, and relevant social learning theory on criminal behavior.

The LSI-R is a 54-item risk and needs assessment instrument that consists of 10 areas (Andrews & Bonta, 2001, p. 2):

1. Criminal History (10 items)
2. Education and Employment (10 items)
3. Financial (2 items)
4. Family and Marital (4 items)
5. Accommodations (3 items)
6. Leisure and Recreation (2 items)
7. Companions (5 items)
8. Alcohol/Drug Problems (9 items)
9. Emotional/Personal (5 items)
10. Attitudes/Orientation (4 items)

The LS/CMI refined and combined content of the LSI-R into 8 factors, represented by 43 items in the first section of the tool (Andrews, Bonta, & Wormith, 2004, p. 3):

1. Criminal History (8 items)
2. Education/Employment (9 items)
3. Family/Marital (4 items)
4. Leisure/Recreation (2 items)
5. Companions (4 items)
6. Alcohol/Drug Problems (8 items)
7. Procriminal Attitude/Orientation (4 items)
8. Antisocial Pattern (4 items)

The LS/CMI system contains 7 additional sections. Sections 2-5 of the LS/CMI identify additional risk factors (personal problems; social, health, and responsivity considerations; perpetration history; mental health; procriminal attitude/orientation; incarceration history, and concerns). Sections 6-7 provide a summary of risks and needs, allowing for clinical overrides of assessment recommendations based on atypical offender situations. Section 8 provides tools for program and placement decisions.

Obtaining the LSI-R or LS/CMI: All Level of Service assessment tools are proprietary. To purchase the LSI-R, LS/CMI, or LS/RNR or inquire about assessment training services in your area, visit [Multi-Health Systems, Inc.](#)

References

- Andrews, D., & Bonta, J. (2001). *LSI-R: The Level of Service Inventory-Revised user's manual*. North Tonawanda, NY: Multi-Health Systems.
- Andrews, D. A., Bonta, J. L., & Wormith, J. S. (2004). *LSI/CMI: Level of Service/Case Management Inventory: An offender assessment system user's manual*. North Tonawanda, NY: Multi-Health Systems.
- Gendreau, P., Little, T., & Goggin, C. (1996). A meta-analysis of the predictors of adult offender recidivism: What works! *Criminology*, *34*, 575-608. doi: 10.1111/j.1745-9125.1996.tb01220.x

ORAS (Ohio Risk Assessment System)

Background Information: The Ohio Department of Rehabilitation & Correction (DRC) hired the University of Cincinnati Center for Criminal Justice Research (CCJR) in 2006 to develop a system of offender risk, needs, and responsivity assessment tools to use statewide ([Latessa, Smith, Lemke, Makarios, & Lowenkamp, 2009](#)). The goal was to create a consistent, reliable, standardized system of tools that could be used at various decision points in the criminal justice system (i.e., pretrial, community supervision, prison intake, reentry) to facilitate communication and continuity across criminal justice agencies. CCJR's work resulted in the Ohio Risk Assessment System (ORAS), an automated fourth generation assessment tool. The developers designed ORAS to generate case plans that prioritize needs and treatment domains and work with existing IT systems. The ORAS was slated for full-scale implementation throughout the Ohio DRC and DRC-funded programs in March of 2011 ([Ohio Department of Rehabilitation & Correction, 2010](#)).

Instrument Administration Requirements: No specialized education is necessary to administer the ORAS. However, researchers at CCJR have assembled a mandatory training package for those interested in using the ORAS. According to the ORAS user manual, practitioners use a combination of structured interviews, official records, and other collateral sources to complete the assessment tools. They also administer a self-report questionnaire to the offender for three of the tools (the Community Supervision Screening Tool, the Prison Intake Tool, and the Prison Reentry Tool) to supplement this information.

Instrument Content: All tools contain both static and dynamic factors. Risk classification cutoff values differ by tool and between males & females.

- Pretrial Assessment Tool (PAT): 7 items
- Community Supervision Screening Tool (CSSST): 4 items
- Community Supervision Tool (CST): 35 items to assess criminal history (6 items), education, employment, & financial situation (6 items), family & social support (5 items), neighborhood problems (2 items), substance use (5 items), peer associations (4 items), and criminal attitudes & behavioral patterns (7 items)
- Prison Screening Tool (PST): 4 items
- Prison Intake Tool (PIT): 31 items to assess age, criminal history (7 items), school behavior & employment (6 items), family & social support (5 items), substance abuse & mental health (5 items), and criminal lifestyle (7 items)
- Prison Reentry Tool (RT): 20 items to assess age, criminal history (8 items), social bonds (4 items), and criminal attitudes and behavioral patterns (7)

Obtaining the ORAS: The ORAS is non-proprietary. However, those interested in using the ORAS must complete a standard training program before implementing the tool. This training program and other contracted technical assistance and research services (e.g., automating the tool, validation research services, advanced training) are offered by the instrument developers. To obtain the ORAS and an estimate for the costs of technical assistance and research services, contact the [Center of Criminal Justice Research](#).

References

Latessa, E., Smith, P., Lemke, R., Makarios, M., & Lowenkamp, C. (2009). *Creation and validation of the Ohio Risk Assessment System: Final report*. Cincinnati, OH: Authors. Retrieved from http://www.uc.edu/ccjr/Reports/ProjectReports/ORAS_Final_Report.pdf

Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction. (2010, June 15). *Ohio Risk Assessment System*. Retrieved from <http://www.drc.ohio.gov/web/ORAS.htm>

OST (Offender Screening Tool)

Background Information: In 1996, as part of its commitment to implementing research-based practices, the Maricopa County Adult Probation Department (MCAPD) reviewed its use of offender risk and needs information. After considering several issues (e.g., staff buy-in and long-term costs), MCAPD opted to create its own assessment instrument. Working with consultant Dr. David Simourd, MCAPD developed and implemented the Offender Screening Tool (OST) in 1998. In the OST, the MCAPD originally sought to create a risk/needs tool that would (a) provide a broad, overall assessment of offender risk/needs, (b) incorporate static and dynamic risk factors most predictive of criminal behavior, (c) provide information that could be used to determine risk of recidivism and guide case planning/management decisions, and (d) be meaningful and valuable to staff. As a greater variety of cognitive-behavioral treatment programs became available in the county, Simourd and the MCAPD expanded the OST to include additional needs domains (Ferguson, 2002).

The OST was validated for statewide use in 2003 ([Arizona Adult Probation Services Division, 2010; Simourd, 2003](#)) and was fully implemented statewide in 2005 pursuant to Arizona Supreme Court [Administrative Order 2005-12](#). The most recent revalidation of the OST system in Arizona was completed in 2008 (Lowenkamp, Latessa, & Bechtel, 2008). In 2009, the Arizona Judicial Council adopted the use of a statewide standard presentence report that incorporates the criminogenic risks identified in the OST.

Instrument Administration Requirements: The OST is administered at the presentencing stage by interviewers who enter information into a computerized system for automated scoring. No specialized certifications are required, but all staff members receive training. In Maricopa County, the presentence division receives training on how to administer and interpret results from the OST; all other probation department staff receive training on interpretation and how to use results to inform case planning and management (Ferguson, 2002).

Instrument Content: The OST contains 44 items (14 static, 30 dynamic) in 10 domains ([Stinson, 2002](#)).

- Vocational/Financial (5 items)
- Education (3 items)
- Family and Social Relationships (8 items)
- Residence and Neighborhood (2 items)
- Alcohol (3 items)
- Drug Abuse (3 items)
- Mental Health (2 items)
- Attitude (7 items)
- Criminal Behavior (9 items)

The final domain, Physical Health/Medical (2 items), is used exclusively as a responsibility factor. Although all 44 items are administered, the offender's final OST score includes only the above 42 items.

Obtaining the OST: The OST is non-proprietary. To obtain the OST, user manuals, and original construction and validation research on the tool, contact the Arizona Supreme Court, Administrative Office of the Courts, [Adult Probation Services Division](#).

References

- Arizona Adult Probation Services Division (2010, July). *Eight evidence-based principles for effective interventions & timeline of significant events in Arizona probation*. Phoenix, AZ: Author. Retrieved from http://www.azcourts.gov/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=ICL48eRs_Nw%3d&tabid=2654
- Arizona Supreme Court (2005). *Administrative Order No. 2005-12: Adopting the standardized assessment and reassessment tool and conducting a pilot program for reassessment timeframes for adult intensive probationers*. Phoenix, AZ: Author. Retrieved from <http://www.azcourts.gov/portals/22/admorder/orders05/2005-12.pdf>
- Ferguson, J. (2002). Putting the “what works” research into practice: An organizational perspective. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 29, 472-492. doi: 10.1177/0093854802029004007
- Lowenkamp, C. T., Latessa, E., & Bechtel, K. (2008). *A reliability and validation study of the Offender Screening Tool (OST) and Field Reassessment Offender Screening Tool (FROST) for Arizona*. Cincinnati: Center for Criminal Justice Research, University of Cincinnati.
- Stinson, P. (2002, May). *Development of a risk assessment instrument to be used in bail release decisions in Maricopa County, Arizona*. Phoenix, AZ: Maricopa County Pretrial Services Agency. Retrieved from http://www.pretrial.org/Docs/Documents/ICM_Risk_Assessment.pdf

STRONG (Static Risk and Offender Needs Guide)

Background Information: Washington State's Offender Accountability Act, passed in 1999, identifies the need to "reduce the risk of reoffending by offenders in the community." It directs the Department of Corrections (DOC) to improve the classification of felony offenders and to deploy staff and rehabilitative resources more effectively ([Drake & Barnoski, 2009](#)). Following this legislation, the Washington State Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP) examined the validity of the DOC's risk instrument at the time (the LSI-R) and thought that the predictive power of the assessment could be improved by including more static risk items. Based on this recommendation, the DOC asked WSIPP to create a new static risk instrument comprised of only offender demographic and criminal history information. The Static Risk Assessment was completed in 2006 ([Barnoski & Drake, 2007](#)). In 2008, the Washington State DOC implemented their automated offender assessment and case planning system with the research services of WSIPP and technical assistance from Assessments.com. This automated system included the Static Risk Assessment and an Offender Needs Assessment, which is used to identify offender needs and protective factors for use in case planning. Because of the automated case planning component of the STRONG, it is considered a 4th generation risk and needs assessment system.

Instrument Administration Requirements: The Static Risk Assessment is conducted based on a thorough investigation of offender criminal history information. No offender interview is necessary. No specialized administrator qualifications are required to administer the Offender Needs Assessment; staff members may conduct this structured interview. Line staff should, however, complete routine booster training sessions in addition to an initial training program for quality assurance purposes. For improved quality control, Washington State established a small, dedicated intake unit to conduct all risk assessments statewide.

Instrument Content: The system is a web-based interface with two separate assessments. The Static Risk Assessment is conducted first based on the offender's criminal history information and contains 26 items: demographics (2 items), juvenile record (4 items), commitment to the DOC (1 item), total adult felony record (9 items), total adult misdemeanor record (9 items), and total sentence/supervision violations (1 item).

Calculated separately, the Offender Needs Assessment contains 10 domains and 55 items: education (4 items), community employment (10 items), friends (2 items), residential (3 items), family (8 items), alcohol/drug use (6 items), mental health (6 items), aggression (4 items), attitudes/behaviors (7 items), and coping skills (5 items).

After these assessments are calculated, the system automatically generates an overview report that displays the offender's risk level classification and a prioritized listing of his or her criminogenic needs and protective factors. Line staff can interactively design the offender case plan using this information.

Obtaining the STRONG: A near identical version of the original Washington State system is available commercially as the STRONG. To purchase the STRONG, visit Assessments.com.

References

- Barnoski, R., & Drake, E. K. (2007, March). *Washington's Offender Accountability Act: Department of Corrections' static risk instrument*. Olympia, WA: Washington State Institute for Public Policy. Retrieved from <http://www.wsipp.wa.gov/rptfiles/07-03-1201R.pdf>
- Drake, E. K., & Barnoski, R. (2009, March). *New risk instrument for offenders improves classification decisions* (Document No. 09-03-1201). Olympia, WA: Washington State Institute for Public Policy. Retrieved from <http://www.wsipp.wa.gov/rptfiles/09-03-1201.pdf>

The Wisconsin Risk/Needs Scales (WRN or DOC-502) Correctional Assessment and Intervention System (CAIS)

Background Information: The Wisconsin Classification System was created in the fall of 1977 (Baird, Heinz, & Bemus, 1979). This system is comprised of the Wisconsin Risk/Needs scales and the Client Management Classification (CMC) responsivity and case management tool. To facilitate practitioner use of the system, the National Council on Crime and Delinquency (NCCD) updated the tools in 2004 and created the automated, web-based Correctional Assessment and Intervention System (CAIS). Offender data is stored on a remote server hosted by NCCD, and new entries within a particular jurisdiction are immediately password-accessible to local staff.

Instrument Administration Requirements: No specialized education is required; trained line staff can administer the WRN or CAIS. NCCD developed and administers a training package for the CAIS tool.

Instrument Content: The WRN is a 53-item interview-driven paper assessment. Content areas include criminal history, education/employment, family/friends, mental/emotional stability, plans/problems, health, sexual behavior, drug/alcohol usage, and financial management ([Justice System Assessment & Training \[J-SAT\], 2011](#)). The CMC is a 71-item interview-based case planning process that categorizes offenders into one of four possible typologies (Selective Intervention, Casework/Control, Environmental Structure, and Limit Setting). These classifications can then be used to guide case planning strategies (see Baird & Neuenfeldt, 1990).

The CAIS is an automated assessment and case management system that includes an updated version of the WRN and the CMC. A new risk and needs tool was created based on the results of a meta-analysis and can be included in the purchased CAIS. The statistically-derived risk items are modified to reflect gender differences and needs are prioritized based on their relationship with criminal behavior. Jurisdictions with established risk/needs instruments of their own can substitute their instruments into the CAIS in lieu of the generic assessments.

Obtaining the WRN, CMC, or CAIS: The WRN and CMC are non-proprietary tools. To obtain the WRN, visit [J-SAT](#). The CMC is available through the [National Institute of Corrections](#). The CAIS is currently available on a subscription basis (per case, for the lifetime of the case). The CAIS tool and associated training packages can be ordered through [NCCD](#).

References

- Baird, C. S., Heinz, R. C., & Bemus, B. J. (1979). *The Wisconsin case classification/ staff deployment project: A two-year follow-up report*. Madison, WI: Wisconsin Division of Corrections.
- Baird, C., & Neuenfeldt, D. (1990, August). The Client Management Classification system. In National Council on Crime and Delinquency, *NCCD Focus* (pp. 1-7). San Francisco: National Council on Crime and Delinquency.
- Justice System Assessment & Training (2010). *Wisconsin Risk & Needs tool (WRN)*. Retrieved from <http://www.j-sat.com/Toolkit/Adult/adf6e846-f4dc-4b1e-b7b1-2ff28551ce85>