

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

Operations, Planning and Training Division (OPTD)



AGING-INMATE POPULATION PROJECT

(1992 – 2012)

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NOTE: All data in this report was collected during the first three quarters of 2013 (February – September).

These numbers change constantly and may not or will not be consistent with the numbers we currently have, but were the correct numbers we retrieved at the time these reports were created.

Older inmates have more health problems, generally consume more health services, and are prescribed more medications than younger inmates... Regardless of the increased demand these individuals place on the system, their numbers are steadily increasing and they will continue to consume a disproportionate share of the limited resources available for health care and programmatic enhancements within the correctional setting.

- *State of Florida Correctional Medical Authority, "2009-2010 Annual Report and Report on Aging-inmates"*

Executive Summary

The aging-inmate crisis is a major topic of discussions in prison systems throughout America. This crisis is primarily focused on the high cost of caring for the aging-inmate population. This is an on-going and growing concern for the state and federal prison systems not only in America, but also outside of U.S, as mentioned in the following,

The rising cost and complexity of incarcerating the aged is far from an exclusively American problem. A study released this month in a journal (<http://www.journalslibrary.nihr.ac.uk/hsdr/volume-1/issue-5>) states that "older prisoners are the fastest growing subgroup in the English and Welsh prison estate" and that 44 percent of those establishments have no established prisoner policies. And so the staff of the prison is left to figure out how to enforce strict prison rules on those who are sometimes physically unable to stand to be counted, walk long distances to dining halls, or get top bunks. (<http://.vice.com/blog/the-future-of-american-prisons-is-old-people>)

California has strict laws for violent felony crimes. It passed the three-strikes law which gives offenders lengthy mandatory sentences for the third conviction for any felony. Georgia has an even stricter two-strikes law, although it applies to only the most heinous felonies, including *murder, aggravated assault, child molestation, aggravated child molestation, armed robbery, kidnapping, and rape*. In Georgia, these crimes are collectively called the 'Seven Deadly Sins'. The elderly are being sentenced to prison for longer periods of time. If an offender commits murder as a first offense, he/she will get at a *minimum* life in prison with the possibility of parole. If his/her first offense is one of the other six Deadly Sins, he/she will get a *mandatory minimum* sentence of ten years; the maximum sentence can be as high as life. A second conviction, at any time, will result in a sentence of life without parole, therefore, referring to this law as the 'two-strikes' law. Consequently, many more offenders will stay in prison beyond their fiftieth birthday and some will stay for the rest of their lives.

The Georgia Department of Corrections (GDC), as well as most other states in the US, is seeking ways to adequately accommodate the aging-inmate population, as it relates to their physical and mental state and the medical needs associated with them, while at the same time alleviating the high-cost of care. For example, view the Table 1 below.

STATE	AGING-INMATE MEDICAL COST	YOUNGER/HEALTHIER INMATES MEDICAL COST
Georgia	\$8,500	\$950
Michigan	\$11,000-\$40,000	\$4,200 or less
Nevada	\$4,000-\$5,000	\$1,000
North Carolina	\$5,970	\$1,980
Oklahoma	\$6,231	\$4,911
Texas	\$4,853	\$795
Virginia	\$5,400	\$800

Table 1: Comparing elderly offender vs. youth offender medical-cost

The need for inmates fifty years old or older to receive medical attention and care has drastically and steadily increased over the past 20 years and so has the cost of caring for their medical needs. In November 2009, according to Stephen Chen
[\[http://www.cnn.com/2009/CRIME/11/13/aging.inmates\]](http://www.cnn.com/2009/CRIME/11/13/aging.inmates)

Georgia, one of the 10 largest prison systems in the country, spends about \$8,500 on medical costs for inmates over 65, compared with about an average of \$950 for those who are younger, corrections officials say. Across the country, inmate medical care costs about \$3 billion a year.

Georgia inmates 65 and over had an average yearly medical cost of \$8,565 compared with \$961 for those under 65 years old. Older inmates' medical cost is nearly nine times higher than younger inmates, according to Dave Crary of the Associated Press in the article Elderly inmates: Aging Prison Population Strains Tight State Budget. (2012, January 27)

The number of inmates fifty years old or older, who are aging in prison and suffering from various ailments in state prisons nationwide, is increasing. As of 2012, Georgia had more than 54,400 inmates and more than 9,100 were fifty years old or older. Five years ago, in 2007, Georgia had 55,600 inmates and just over 7,000 were fifty years old or older. Even though there were more inmates in 2007 than in 2012, the number of inmates fifty years old or older has grown by more than 2,000 since 2007. Ailments that the inmates fifty years old or older suffer with include heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure, cancer, Alzheimer's, dementia, vision and dental issues and other common illnesses associated with growing old.

The main reasons why prisons systems are facing this dilemma across the country are the same. The main reasons for the aging-inmate crisis include; laws with mandatory sentencing which causes inmates to be incarcerated for longer periods of time; long-term substance-abuse that contributes to poor health issues; and years of poor diets and poor eating-habits which also contributes to poor health issues.

Even though the reasons for this dilemma are the same, the actions that individual states are adopting in order to alleviate the aging inmate crisis, are different from one state to the next. For example, California prison officials announced the dedication of an \$839 million complex in Stockton to provide "mental health and medical services to the state's sickest inmate patients",

according the *Johnson and Beiser, USA Today (2013)*, whereas, “15 states and the District of Columbia had provisions for geriatric release.” according to *Tina Chiu of the Vera Institute of Justice*. Some states see a need to release chronically-ill inmates fifty years old or older to their families, some states have medical facilities to move them to, some states house them at certain prisons that cater to the sick and in many cases the inmates fifty years old or older simply die in prison before they are ever able to be pardoned or moved to a facility that can care for them.

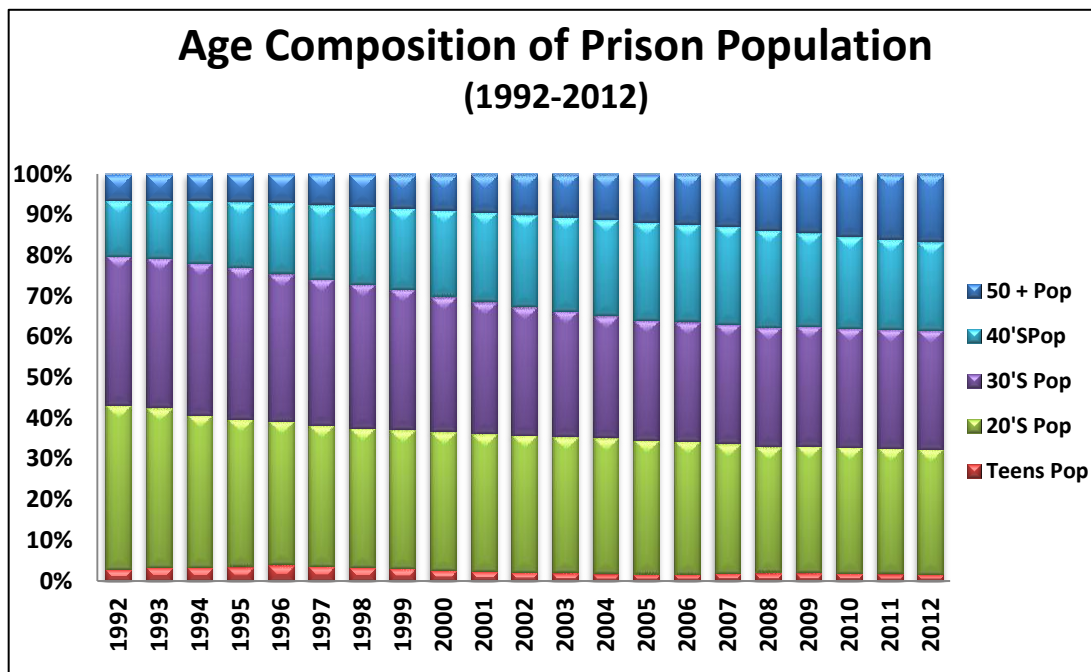
In order for the GDC to continue to effectively care for the fifty years old or older inmate population, it must provide these aging-inmates with the proper needed care in order to be in compliance with the federal government and the U.S. Constitution, while at the same time, adopt a highly-effective means of conserving limited funds.

GRAPH 1: SHIFTING INMATE AGE DISTRIBUTION (Standing Population 1992 – 2012)

The overall inmate standing population, over the past 20 years, for the various age groups by decade are shown in graph 1 (*below*): The number of inmates in their teens slightly decreased from 3% to 2%; the number of inmates in their 20's decreased by 7% (from 37% to 30%); inmates in their 30's also had a 6% decrease in growth (from 34% to 28%). Inmates in their 40's had a 7% increase (from 13% to 21%); inmates in their 50's experienced a steady increase in their population, growing from 3% to 12%, which is a 9% increase; and inmates 60 and over had a slight increase in their standing inmate population, growing by 2% (from 2% to 4%).

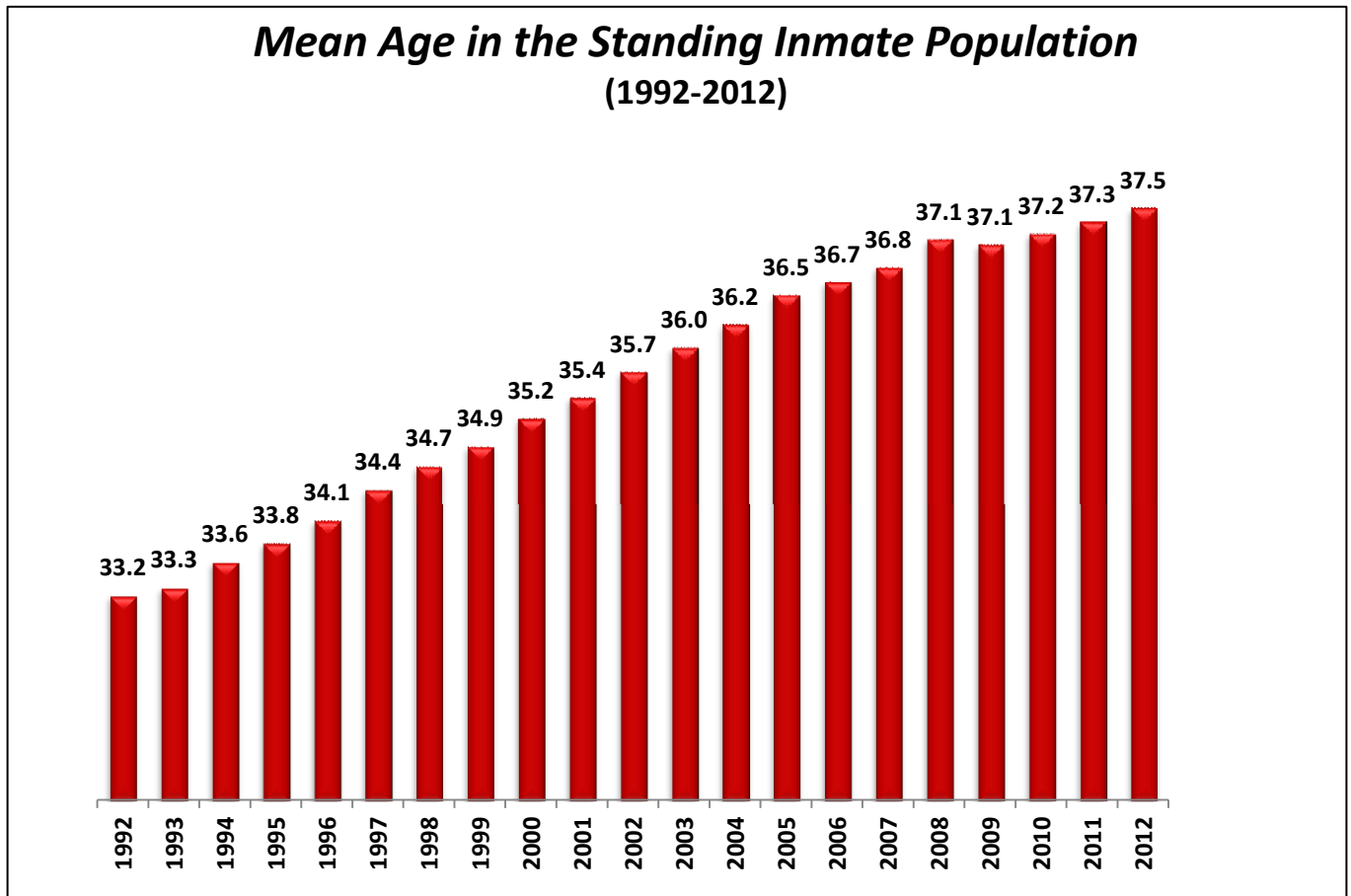
Even though more than 87% of the standing population in 1992 was under 50 years old and inmates 50 and older accounted for only about 5% of the total population in 1992, by 2012 inmates under 50 only made up about 81% of the total standing population (a decrease of about 6%) and inmates 50 and older accounted for 16% of the total standing population which is an 11% increase since 1992.

Today, in the standing inmate population there are considerably more inmates in their fifties and older than there was 20 years ago. Inmates in their fifties have quadrupled from 3% - 12% and inmates 60 and older have doubled from 2% - 4%.



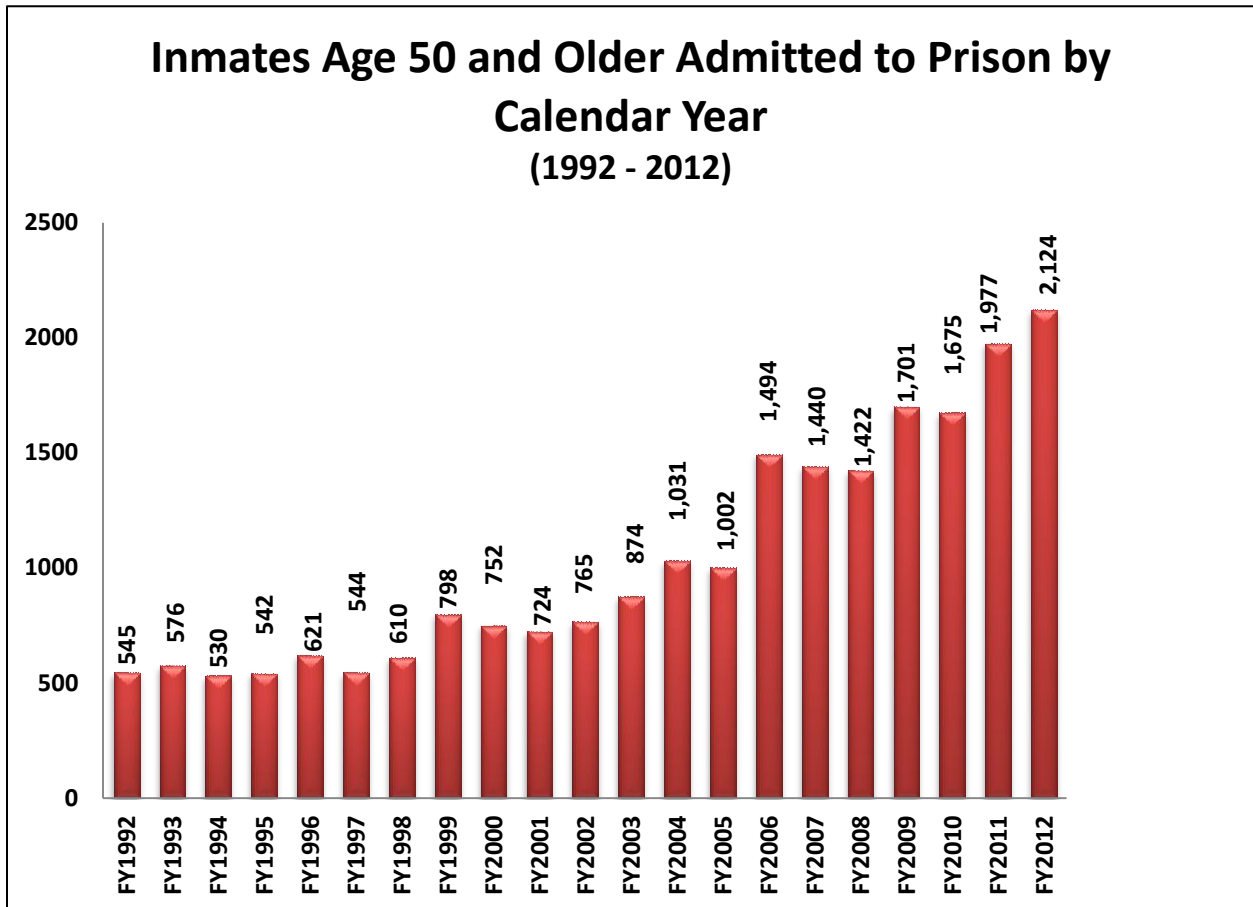
GRAPH 2: AVERAGE INMATE AGE INCREASING

The average (mean) age of the GA inmate has steadily increased over the past 20 years. As reflected below, the average inmate age has increased during the past 20 years by more than 4 years, from 33.2 to 37.5 years.



GRAPH 3: ADMISSION TRENDS

There were 2,124 inmates, age fifty and over (or 10% of all admissions that year), admitted to Georgia prison in FY 2012. FY 2012 had the record high of admissions over the past 20 years. The FY 2012 admissions of older inmates was nearly three times higher than FY 2002 (10 years ago) and nearly 4 times higher than in FY 1992 (20 years ago).



GRAPH 4: ADMISSION TYPES

More than three-fourths (over 77%) of all inmates age 50 and older are admitted to prison through a direct court commitment (or new from court) whereas 16% are parole revocations and remaining 6% are probation revocations.

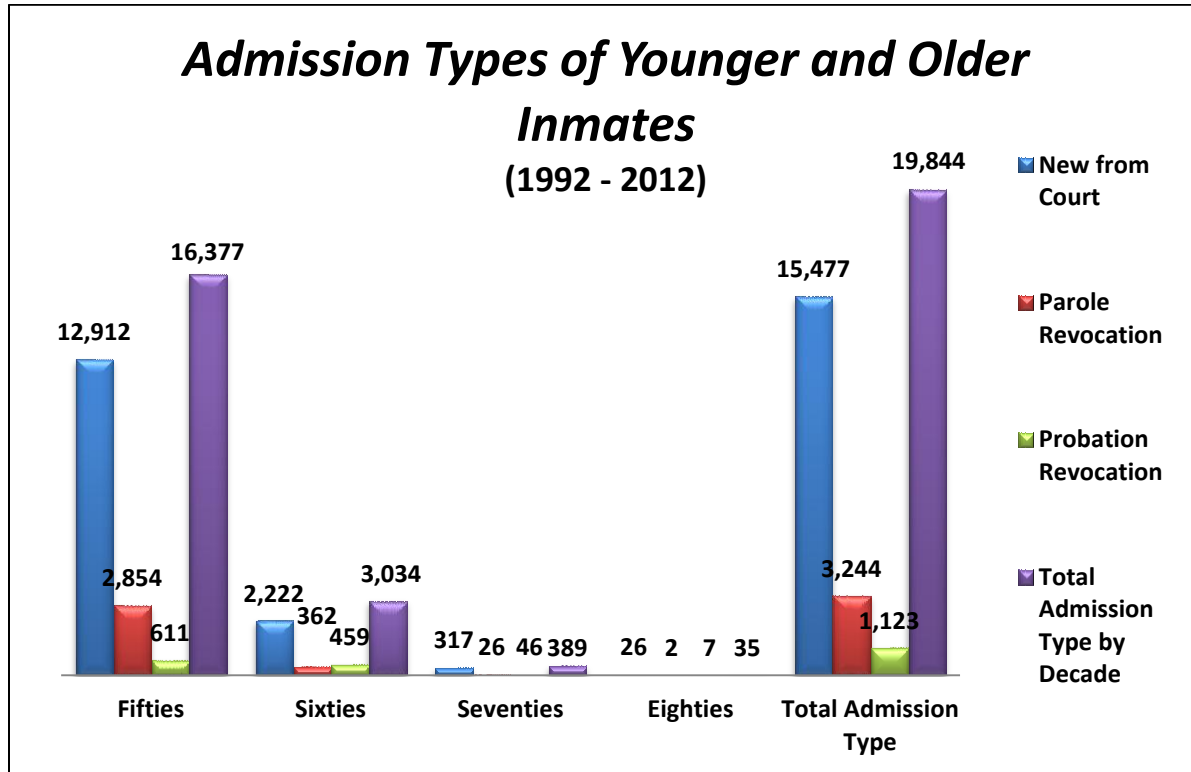


CHART 4: ADMISSION TYPES (%)

Age 50 and Older

(1992 - 2012)

	Fifties	Sixties	Seventies	Eighties	Total Admission Type
New from Court	79%	73%	81%	74%	78.0%
Parole Revocation	17%	12%	7%	6%	16.3%
Probation Revocation	4%	15%	12%	20%	5.7%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100.0%
Total Admission Type by Decade	16,377	3,034	389	35	19,844

GRAPH 5: CRIME TYPES

The inmate cohort age 50 and older in the standing inmate population is less violent than inmates in the teens, twenties, thirties and forties cohorts, but there are more sex offenders in the 50 and older cohort than inmates in the teens, twenties, thirties and forties cohorts. 55% of inmates 50 and older are serving sentences for violent and sex crimes.

Standing Population Inmates Age 50 and Older
(March 2013)

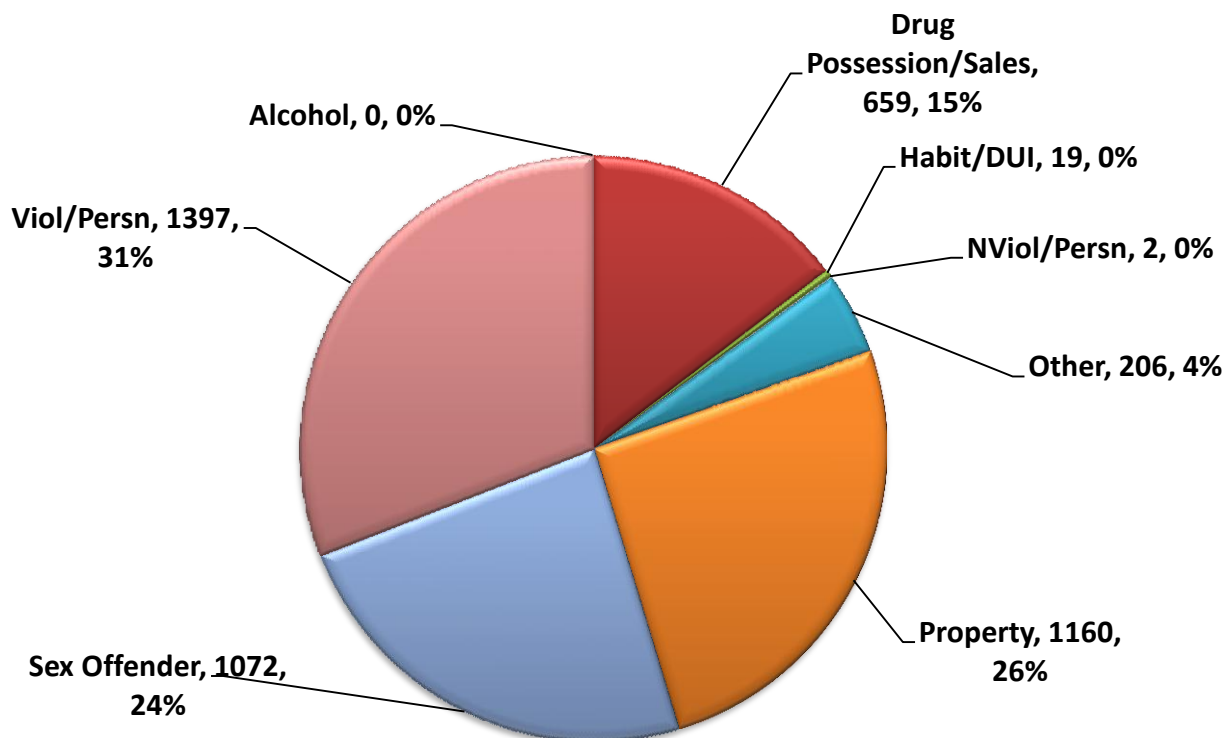
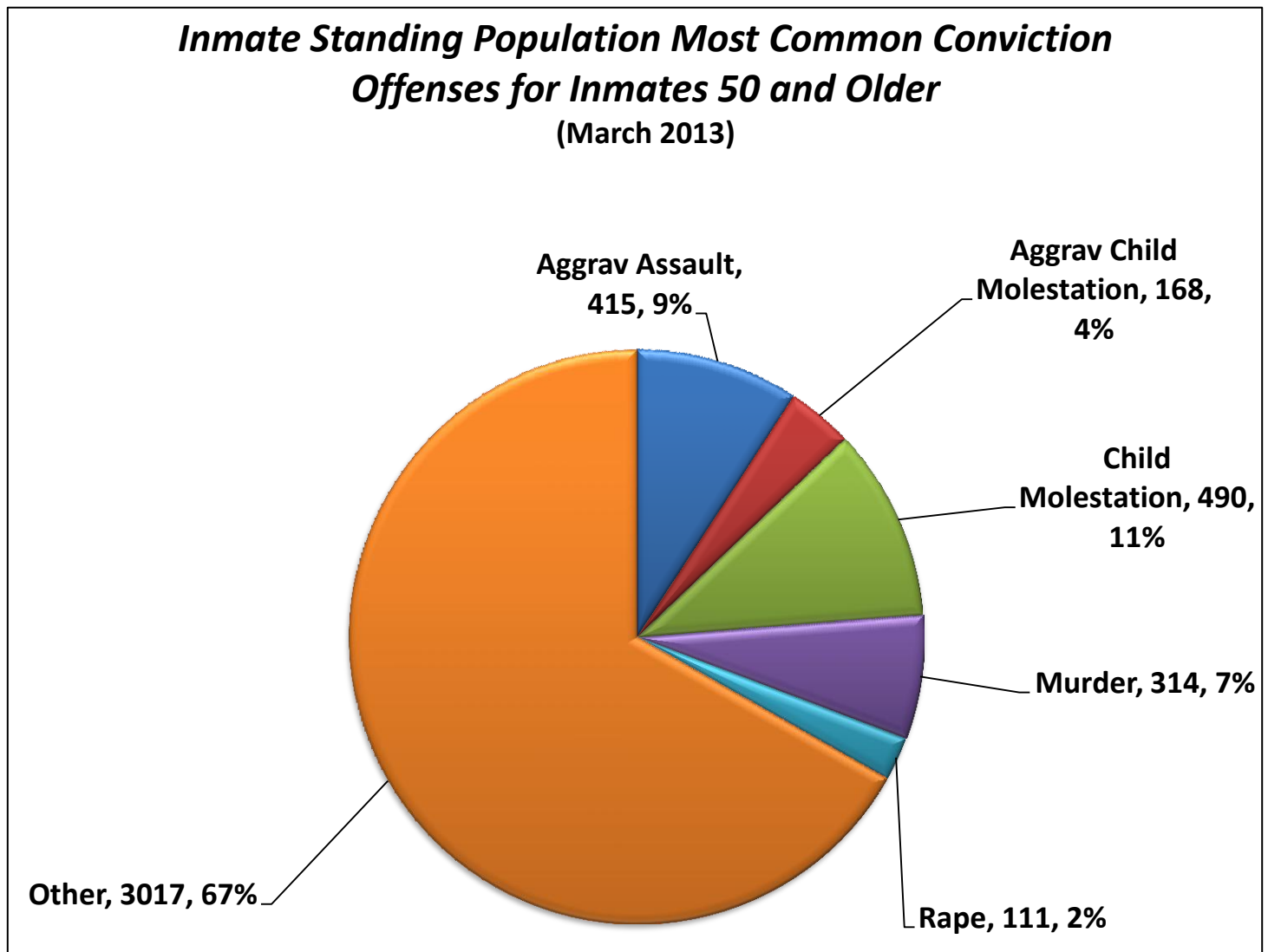


CHART 6: CONVICTION OFFENSES

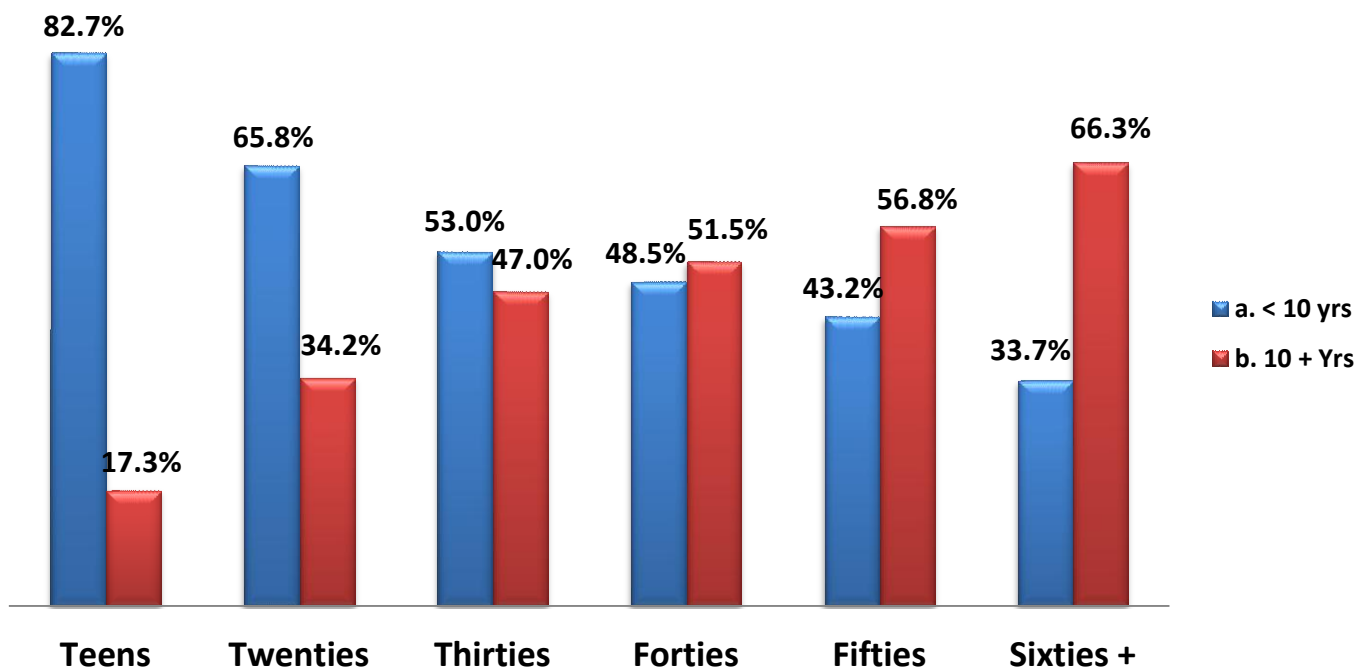
Of the 4,515 inmates age 50 and older in the standing inmate population as of December 3, 2012, about one-third (1,498) were serving sentences for the offenses of murder, child molestation, aggravated assault, aggravated child molestation or rape.



GRAPH 7A: DETERMINATE SENTENCE LENGTHS

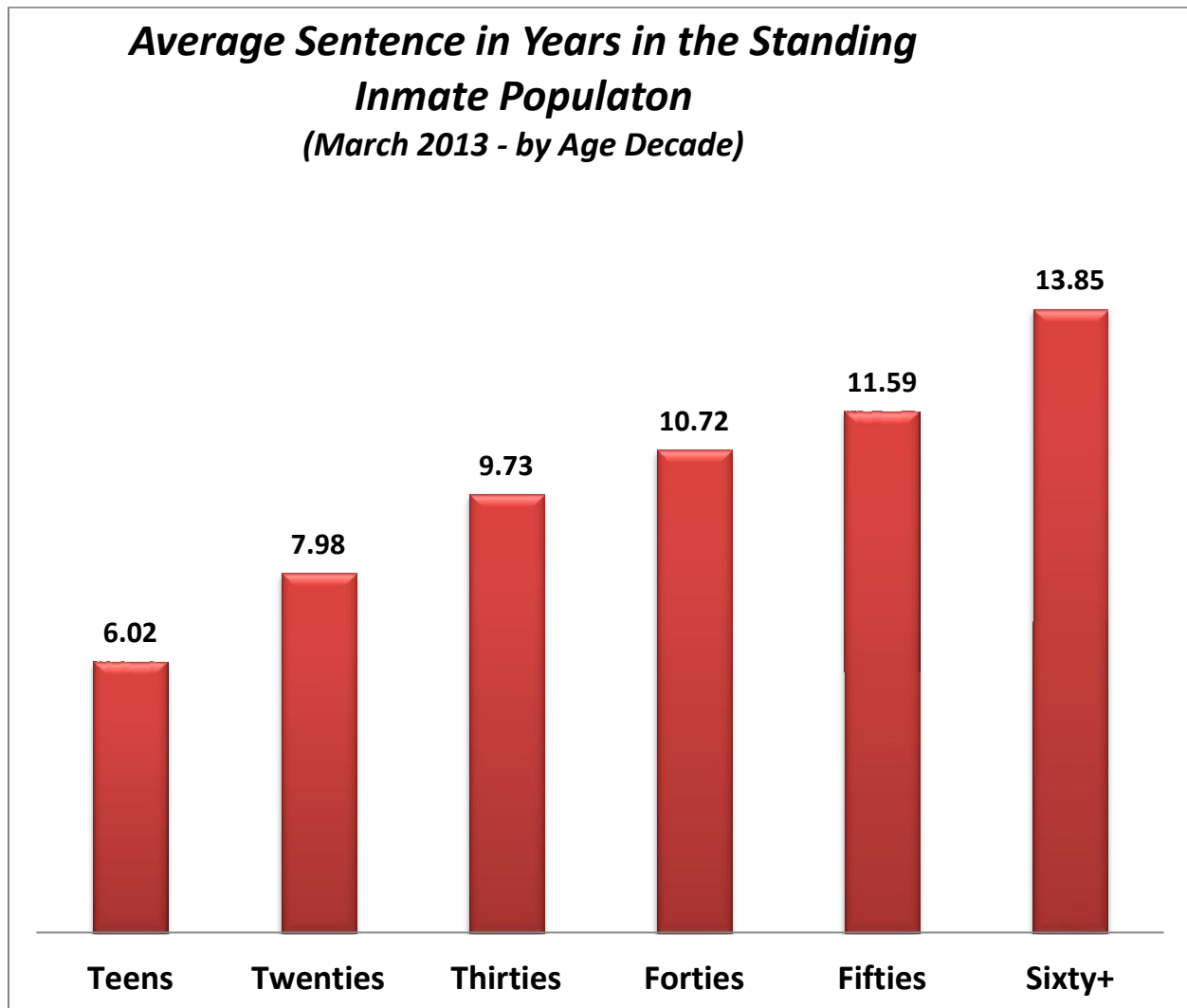
Given the severity of the offenses for which a majority of inmates age 50 and older are serving prison time, it follows that the age 50 and older cohort has longer sentence lengths as compared to other age groups. More than 43% of seniors in their fifties and nearly 34% of inmates in the 60 and older cohort are serving sentences less than 10 years. On the other hand, nearly 57% of seniors in their fifties and more than 66% of seniors 60 and older are serving sentences of 10 years or longer. Almost 49% of inmates in their forties are serving sentences less than 10 years and nearly 52% of inmates in their forties are serving sentences of 10 years or more. As for inmates in their thirties, 53% are serving sentences under 10 years and 47% are serving sentences of 10 years or more; nearly 66% inmates in their twenties are serving sentences less than 10 years and over 34% are serving sentences of 10 years or more. Lastly, nearly 83% of inmates in their teens are serving sentences less than 10 years and over 17% of teens are serving sentences of 10 years or more.

***Percent of Inmates by Age Group: Determinate Sentence Lengths Under and Over 10 Years
(March 2013)***



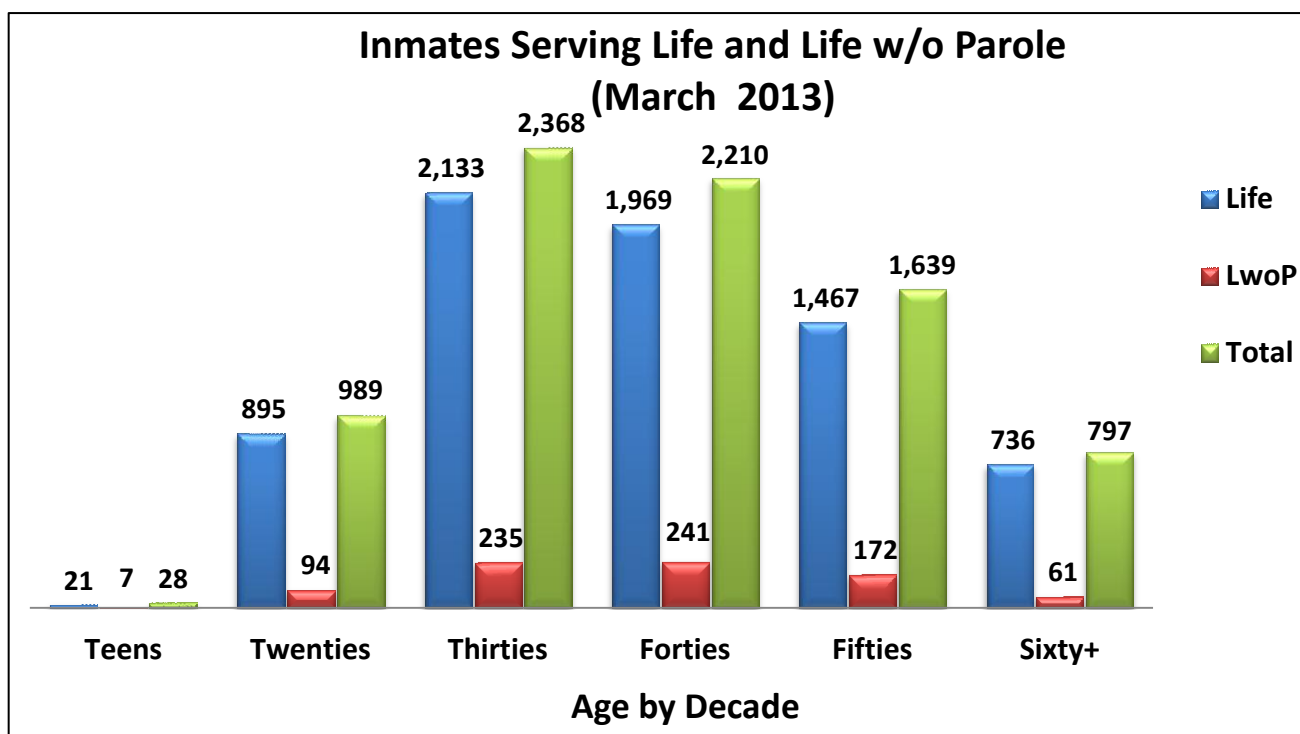
GRAPH 7B: DETERMINATE SENTENCE LENGTHS

Inmates in their teens have an average sentence length of 6.02 years; inmates in their twenties have an average sentence length of 7.98 years; inmates in their thirties have an average sentence length of 9.73 years; inmates in their forties have an average sentence length of 10.72 years; inmates in their fifties have an average sentence length of 11.59 years; and inmates 60 and older have an average sentence length of 13.85 years.



GRAPH 8: INMATES SERVING LIFE AND LIFE WITHOUT PAROLE (LWOP)

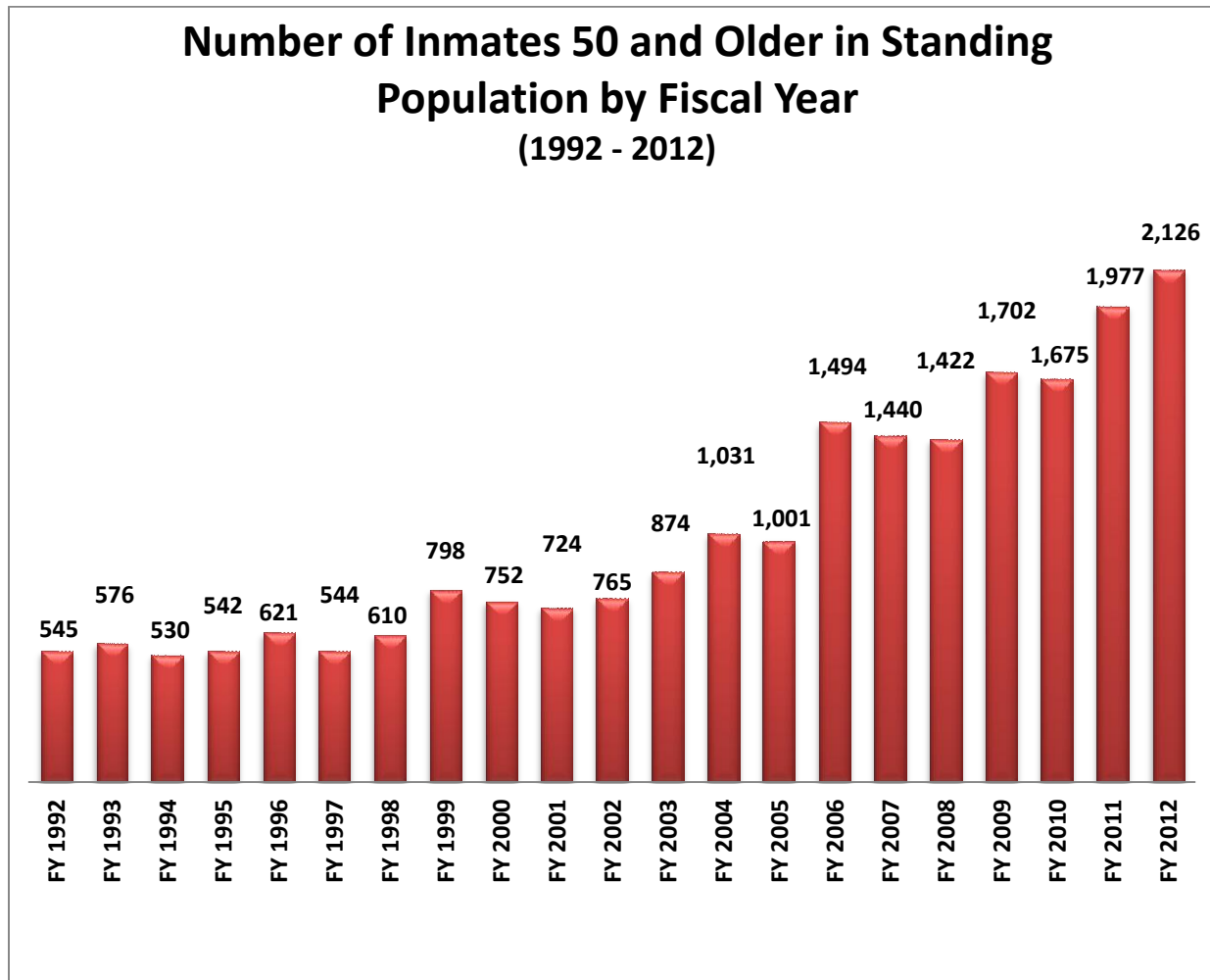
As of March 2013, there were 2,436 inmates age 50 and older serving sentences for either life or life without parole. Inmates in their thirties and forties combined, have a greater potential future effect on the aging of the inmate population due to their sheer number; in March 2013 there were a combined number of 4,578 inmates in the two age groups serving life or life without parole sentences. There are an additional 1,017 inmates in the combined age groups of the teens and twenties serving these sentences.



Current Age by Decade	Life	Life w/o Parole	Total
Teens	21	7	28
Twenties	895	94	989
Thirties	2,133	235	2,368
Forties	1,969	241	2,210
Fifties	1,467	172	1,639
Sixty+	736	61	797
	7,221	810	

CHART 9: 50 AND OLDER INMATES IN THE STANDING POPULATION

The number inmates 50 years old and older has nearly tripled over the past 10 years and nearly quadrupled over the past 20 years.



GRAPH 10: INMATE INSTITUTIONAL ASSIGNMENTS (1)

Georgia houses prison inmates in primarily four types of facilities: state prisons, private prisons, transition centers and county correctional institutions. The majority of prisoners are housed in state prisons (40,470) followed by private prisons (8,504), county correctional institutions (5,140), then by transitional centers (2,704).

The groups that consistently dominate the largest population in all of the four types of prisons are inmates in their twenties and those in their thirties. Most inmates are housed in state prisons.

The highest concentration of inmates, age 50 and over, are housed in the Georgia Diagnostic Classification Prison. Approximately 438 of the average daily population at Georgia Diagnostic Classification Prison are in the 50 or older age range.

PLEASE REFER TO CHART 10: INMATES INSTITUTIONAL ASSIGNMENTS ON THE NEXT PAGE

CHART 10: INMATE INSTITUTIONAL ASSIGNMENTS (2)

Inmate Current Institution Name	# of Inmates 50 and Older	Current Institution Type Desc	Inmate Current Institution Name	# of Inmates 50 and Older	Current Institution Type Desc
Ga Diag Class Prison	438	State Prison	Atl. Transitional Ctr (M)	19	Trans Ctr
Augusta State Med. Prison	228	State Prison	Valdosta Tc	18	Trans Ctr
Johnson State Prison	228	State Prison	Coastal Tc	17	Trans Ctr
Wheeler Corr Facility	214	Private Prison	Floyd County Ci	16	County CI
Coffee Corr Facility	202	Private Prison	Muscogee County Ci	16	County CI
Coastal State Prison	186	State Prison	Metro Transitional Ctr	14	Trans Ctr
Calhoun State Prison	182	State Prison	Troup County Ci	14	County CI
Autry State Prison	169	State Prison	Macon Transitional Ctr (M)	13	Trans Ctr
Dooly State Prison	166	State Prison	Coweta County Ci	12	County CI
Wilcox State Prison	159	State Prison	Lagrange Tc	11	Trans Ctr
Ga State Prison	152	State Prison	Clayton County Ci	10	County CI
Washington State Prison	137	State Prison	Sumter County Ci	10	County CI
Dodge State Prison	132	State Prison	Bulloch County Ci	9	County CI
Pulaski State Prison	121	State Prison	Jefferson County Ci	9	County CI
Arrendale State Prison	117	State Prison	Mitchell County Ci	9	County CI
Central State Prison	115	State Prison	Screven County Ci	9	County CI
Riverbend Corr Facility	106	Private Prison	Carroll County Ci	8	County CI
Valdosta Sp	106	State Prison	Hall County Ci	8	County CI
Hays State Prison	103	State Prison	Albany Transitional Ct	7	Trans Ctr
Macon State Prison	100	State Prison	Augusta Tc	7	Trans Ctr
Jenkins Corr Facility	99	Private Prison	Columbus Tc	7	Trans Ctr
Rogers State Prison	96	State Prison	Decatur County Ci	7	County CI
Ware State Prison	91	State Prison	Helms Facility	7	State Prison
Phillips State Prison	89	State Prison	Thomas County Ci	7	County CI
Lee State Prison	75	State Prison	Terrell County Ci	6	County CI
Rutledge State Prison	73	State Prison	Clarke County Ci	5	County CI
Baldwin State Prison	72	State Prison	Gwinnett County Ci	5	County CI
Hancock State Prison	67	State Prison	Harris County Ci	5	County CI
Telfair State Prison	64	State Prison	West Central	4	RSAT - Center
Smith State Prison	54	State Prison	Colquitt County Ci	3	County CI
Burrus Corr Trn Cntr	43	State Prison	Jackson County Ci	3	County CI
Emanuel - Swainsboro	40	State Prison	Effingham County Ci	2	County CI
Montgomery State Prison	40	State Prison	Richmond County Ci	2	County CI
Walker State Prison	37	State Prison	Bibb County	1	County Jail
Whitworth Facility	30	State Prison	Haralson County	1	County Jail
Long	28	State Prison	Henry County	1	County Jail
Spalding County Ci	24	County CI	Metro State Prison (W)	1	State Prison
Clayton Tc	20	Trans Ctr	Smith T.C	1	Trans Ctr
			SPALDING COUNTY	1	County Jail

GRAPH 11: PHYSICAL PROFILE

Inmates without major defects made up 58.2% of the population. 41% of inmates 50 and older represented the next largest group which had no physical limitations. Less than 1% of inmates have a major defect and less than 1% of inmates have a very major defect.

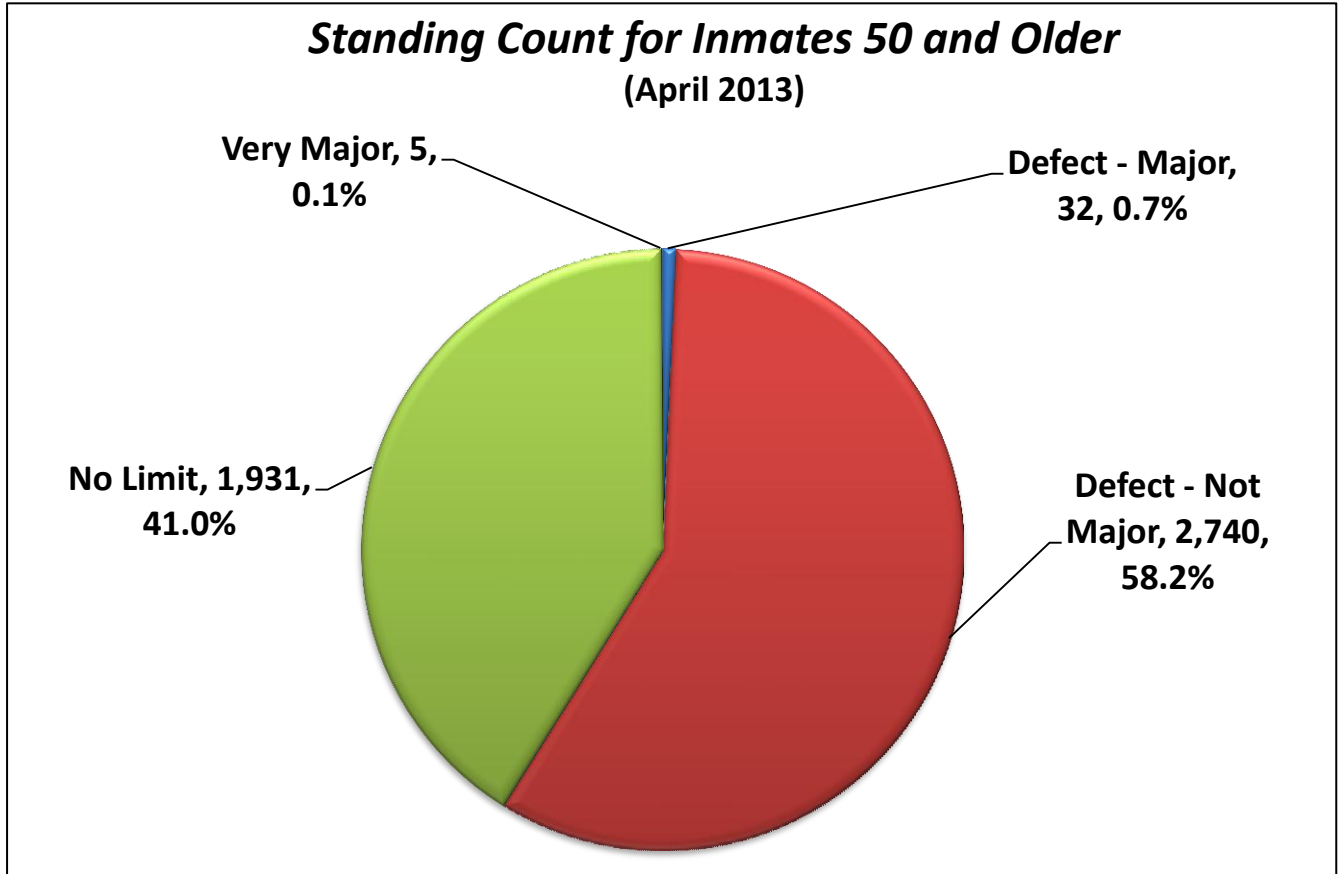
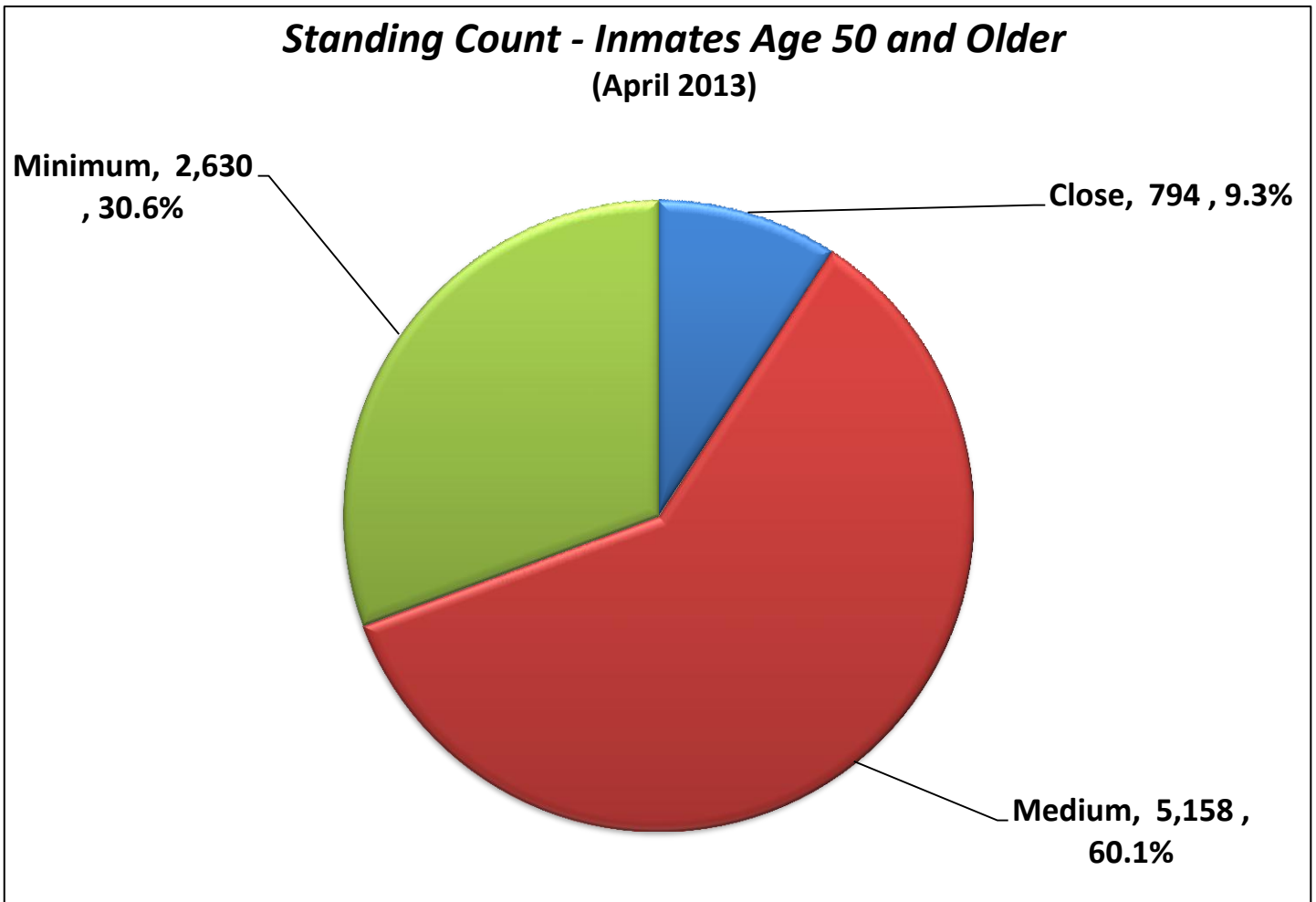


CHART 12: SUPERVISION LEVEL CLASSIFICATION

According to this report, 9.3% of the 50 and older inmate cohort is classified as close compared to 60.1% which are classified as medium and 30.6% are classified as minimum security risk. The older inmate cohort is less likely than all of the other cohorts, with the exception of the teens, to be classified as close or medium security.



THE AGING-INMATE POPULATION in the SOUTHEASTERN REGION

STATE	TOTAL POPULATION	50+ POPULATION	PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION 50+
Alabama	25,874	5,167	20%
Arkansas	14,043	2,639	19%
Florida	100,527	18,368	18%
Georgia	57,244	9,124	16%
Kentucky	12,815	2,535	20%
Louisiana	40,170	7,081	18%
Maryland	21,264	2,968	14%
Mississippi	26,563	3,334	13%
Missouri	31,247	2,719	9%
North Carolina	38,385	6,030	16%
South Carolina	22,711	3,403	15%
Tennessee	20,236	3,832	19%
Texas	148,824	27,258	19%
Virginia	29,740	6,283	21%