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BUREAU OF JUSTICE STATISTICS
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FOUR IN 10 INDIAN COUNTRY JAIL INMATES WERE HELD FOR A VIOLENT OFFENSE

WASHINGTON – At midyear 2007, an estimated 4 in 10 inmates in Indian country jails were confined for a violent offense, the Justice Department’s Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) announced today. Domestic violence (20 percent) accounted for the largest group of violent offenders, followed by simple or aggravated assault (13 percent) and rape or sexual assault (2 percent). Six percent of Indian country jail inmates were being held for unspecified violent offenses.

The percentage of Indian Country jail inmates held for drug offenses was unchanged from 2004 to 2007 (7 percent each year), and DWI/DUI offenses dropped, from 14 percent in 2004 to 8 percent in 2007.

Eighty-three jails in Indian country held an estimated 2,163 inmates at midyear 2007, up from 1,745 inmates held in 68 facilities at midyear 2004. The Indian country jail population increased an estimated 24 percent since 2004 when the last BJS Survey of Jails in Indian Country was conducted. The survey collects information from correctional facilities operated by tribal authorities in Indian country or by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, U.S. Department of the Interior.

Since 2004, available bed space for inmates held in Indian country jails grew faster (34 percent) than growth in the inmate population (24 percent). Jails in Indian country were rated to hold an estimated 2,900 persons at midyear 2007, and were operating at 75 percent of their rated capacity at that time. On their most crowded day in June 2007, 31 of these facilities were operating above their rated capacity.

Inmates were held an average of 4.5 days, up from four days during the same period in 2004. The average length of stay for inmates was the highest (9.4 days) in facilities rated to hold 50 or more persons. Inmates held in jails rated to hold 10 to 24 persons experienced the shortest average length of stay (2.1 days).

American Indians and Alaska Natives under correctional supervision in the U. S. increased by 4.5 percent, from 68,177 in 2004 to 71,274 in 2007. Most were under community supervision on probation or parole (43,600 or 61.2 percent) in 2007. Of the 27,674 American Indians and Alaska Natives held in custody at midyear 2007, the majority were in state prison (13,956 or 50.4 percent), followed by other local jails (8,600 or 31.1 percent), federal prison (2,955 or 10.7 percent) and Indian country jails (2,163 or 7.8 percent).

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Seventy-seven Indian country jails reporting on job functions employed 870 jail operations staff (correctional officers and other staff who spent over 50 percent of their time supervising inmates). There were approximately 2.3 inmates to every jail operations employee at midyear 2007, down from 2.5 inmates at midyear 2004.

An addendum to the 2007 survey obtained information on inmate health services and facility programs. Seventy-eight out of 83 facilities responded to at least some of the addendum, covering 91 percent of inmates held at midyear 2007.

All of the facilities that responded to the addendum provided some form of medical care to inmates. The majority (69) provided medical services off site through the Indian Health Service, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Most facilities said they had policies to test for infectious diseases: 55 facilities tested for HIV, 62 for hepatitis B, 61 for hepatitis C and 63 for tuberculosis.

Seventy-two Indian country jails provided mental health services to inmates, including 41 jails that screened inmates for mental health disorders at intake. Seventy-three facilities reported having at least one suicide prevention policy, and 63 performed risk assessment at intake.

Specialized programs or training for inmates were also offered to inmates held in Indian country jails: 59 facilities provided drug or alcohol dependency counseling or awareness programs, 38 offered domestic violence counseling, 9 provided sex offender treatment, 56 offered religious and spiritual counseling, 12 offered vocational training, and 14 provided job seeking and interviewing skills training.

Forty-one jails in Indian country offered inmates GED classes, 28 offered basic and high school education classes, and 48 offered inmate work assignments which included facility support services, public work assignments, farming and agriculture work, and correctional industries.

The report, *Jails in Indian Country, 2007* (NCJ 223760), was written by BJS statistician Todd D. Minton. Following release, the report can be found at: <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/abstract/jic07.htm>.

For additional information about the Bureau of Justice Statistics' statistical reports and programs, please visit the BJS Web site at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs>.

The Office of Justice Programs (OJP), headed by Assistant Attorney General Jeffrey L. Sedgwick, provides federal leadership in developing the nation's capacity to prevent and control crime, administer justice, and assist victims. OJP has five component bureaus: the Bureau of Justice Assistance; the Bureau of Justice Statistics; the National Institute of Justice; the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention; and the Office for Victims of Crime. Additionally, OJP has two program offices: the Community Capacity Development Office, which incorporates the Weed and Seed strategy, and the Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Registering and Tracking (SMART) Office. More information can be found at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov>.

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