

**CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS
IN BRITISH COLUMBIA, 2011**

ABNORMAL
Working Conditions

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Executive Summary

This paper reports on the results of a survey of more than 200 correctional officers in the province of British Columbia, conducted during the spring and summer of 2011. The survey was created after consultation with the Correctional Component of the BCGEU and individual correctional officers working in B.C.'s Correctional Centres. We first asked correctional officers a series of demographic questions regarding age, gender, years on the job, location of workplace, and level of educational attainment. We then asked about the extent of their involvement with 15 kinds of potentially stressful incidents during both the past month and the past year: exposure to blood, feces, saliva or spit, urine, and vomit; responding to Code Yellow (staff needs assistance) and Code Blue (medical emergency); suicidal inmate watch, inmate drug overdose, receiving a credible threat of harm from an inmate, responding to a serious injury to an inmate, being personally physically assaulted by an inmate, having been hit by feces, blood, vomit, urine or spit, discovering a weapon in an inmate's cell, and observing the death – homicide or suicide – of an inmate.

Correctional officers in British Columbia are significantly more likely to experience on the job violence than any other protective service occupations in British Columbia.

The prevalence of involvement in these activities during the past year was quite significant: more than 90 per cent had been exposed to blood, and more than 75 per cent to feces, spit and urine. Notably, more than 90 per cent had responded to requests for staff assistance and to medical emergencies, two-thirds had received a credible threat of harm from an inmate, almost 40 per cent had been hit by feces, urine, vomit spit, more than one in four had been physically assaulted by

an inmate, more than 80 per cent had responded to a serious injury to an inmate, and almost 20 per cent had witnessed the death of an inmate. Most correctional officers, typically about 80 per cent or more, found these kinds of exposures to be “somewhat” or “very stressful”.

Further, more than 90 per cent of correctional officers indicated that their jobs have become more difficult and more stressful during the past years. The most commonly cited reasons for this greater stress and difficulty

were increased concern for their personal safety at work, increases in inmate to staff ratios, poor relationships between management and staff, and increased counts of both mentally disordered inmates and gang-involved inmates within the province's correctional centres.

Correctional officers with more years of service were not less affected by these circumstances. In fact it appears that those with three or more years of service were more likely to be exposed to stressful situations, and more

The most appropriate remedy is to reduce the inmate to staff ratio to the pre-2002 level of 20 to 1.

likely to regard these situations as "somewhat" or very stressful".

Finally, claims data from WorkSafeBC indicate that correctional officers in British Columbia are significantly more likely to experience on the job violence than any other protective service occupations in British Columbia: police, security guards, or firefighters. Four recommendations follow, focused on inmate to staff ratios, the model of direct supervision, current working conditions, and the need for improved management-labour responses to the changing inmate population.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. REDUCE THE INMATE TO STAFF RATIO.

The current inmate to staff ratios continue to produce stress, tension and significant concerns for personal safety among B.C.'s correctional officers and must be re-examined. The Fisher Report, commissioned by the provincial government, reported in 2008 of experiences in provincial corrections during the preceding five years, "Ten centres were closed... Inmate counts have continued to rise over the interval... with increased counts, crowding and decreased staff-inmate ratios... Throughout this difficult interval the corporate culture has been impacted, staff morale has suffered, and the personal costs have been high". The difficulties documented in 2008 appear to have worsened; the provincial government must respond to these concerns. The most appropriate remedy is to reduce the inmate to staff ratio to the pre-2002 level of 20 to 1.

2. REVIEW DIRECT SUPERVISION.

The model of direct supervision – of direct correctional officer involvement in the everyday life of inmates – is not working, largely because inmate to staff ratios of 40 to 1 and up to 60 to 1 make meaningful contact virtually impossible, and focus staff attention solely on issues of their personal safety and inmate safety. While there is considerable support among correctional officers for the philosophy of direct supervision, there is very little support for it within the current working environment.

3. ADDRESS ABNORMAL WORKING CONDITIONS.

The provincial government should acknowledge and address the abnormal working conditions of the correctional officers of British Columbia, relative to all other protective service occupations within the province. It is clear that during the past five years, officers have been asked to do more with less – higher inmate to staff ratios, more mentally disordered and gang-involved inmates, and the highest provincial rate of WorkSafeBC claims for on the job violence.

4. WORK WITH STAFF TO IMPROVE WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY.

Given the significant pre-trial remand population, and the changing nature of the inmate populations in B.C. Correctional Centres (a greater proportion of mentally disordered and gang-involved inmates, with the former particularly vulnerable to abuse and violence from other inmates), correctional officers and those responsible for management of B.C. Corrections should work collaboratively to find solutions in creative regulation of the workplace, solutions that will increase both inmate and correctional officer safety, in recognition of these changing realities.

**CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS
IN BRITISH COLUMBIA, 2011**

ABNORMAL
Working Conditions

THE REPORT

NOVEMBER 2011

“Once, when I was taking an inmate to segregation, I started by trying to talk the inmate into coming with me. The inmate went on the attack and I received a 3 inch gash on my forehead, blinded by the blood from my forehead falling into my eyes. I had to hit the inmate in order to subdue him and put handcuffs on him, all of which exposed me to the inmate’s blood. I am still taking the necessary tests – the inmate had both HIV and hepatitis.

I have been continuously exposed to all kinds of bodily fluids. Blood exposure results from the inmate fights, which occur daily – sometimes more often. Spitting at me – or urine being thrown at me- usually occurs when I open cell doors, as our facility houses many inmates who are mentally ill.

It’s a common occurrence for staff to receive threats from inmates. This year I’ve received seven threats, all documented appropriately... My facility is like 10 pounds of potatoes in a five-pound bag. Inmates are sleeping on filthy mattresses on filthy floors because of the lack of space, and the health care is atrocious. Men with problems such as an abscessed tooth can wait 3 or 4 weeks for dental treatment, and men with open wounds are living in filthy conditions, which lead to constant infections. And even when people do see a doctor or dentist, there is little follow-up. The inmates are treated like animals, in conditions that I would not be able to tolerate myself.

Management shows little interest in suggestions from line staff about the many improvements that could be made in safety procedures, and doesn’t encourage or adopt innovative suggestions unless they can be used as an excuse to “come down” on staff for having done things in a more problematic way until then. There are few if any incentives for COs any more... we used to get letters of recognition on their files, but now we just get corrective letters.

Some of the violence I have personally been involved with, and witnessed in the last 5 years is so extreme, that it doesn’t even compare to the first 7 years of my career. The first 7 years, I can count on one hand the situations that actually made me lose sleep. In the past 5 years, I have witnessed many violent acts and many numerous group attacks that make me lose sleep. My anxiety has increased considerably enough that I daily question my decision to have a corrections career and realize it is too late in my life to change now.

How about watching an inmate sneak up on another inmate with a brew jug and proceed to smash him over the head with it? Then while he’s unconscious, bleeding on the ground, proceed to repeatedly beat him with the brew jug and stomp on his head with his feet. Or how about watching four to six inmates take a guy from behind and beat him, jump on him, stomp his head, jump off a table, and landing on him. Or how about watching a staff member get attacked by an inmate, punched, kicked, wrestled, until backup arrives. Or how about a staff member who attempts to stop an escape from the hospital and gets beat up in the parking lot, with no help in sight – and management sent him there alone, with no background on the inmate who had been received from the RCMP. I can tell you of so many incidents such as these and more, but there is not the room on this paper or enough ink in this pen. The level of violence in this jail has increased so much that it is extremely scary. Most days before entering a unit I have to stop, take a deep breath, prepare mentally, and pray for the day to go well: that I will walk out of here and go home at the end of it.”¹

¹ These comments are excerpted from telephone interviews with correctional officers and from comments made on the survey questionnaire and compiled in Appendix E. Appendix E has been edited for grammar and for spelling, in order to provide a greater clarity to the comments provided by the respondents.

The statements above are dramatic, but not unusual examples of the concerns expressed by correctional officers in British Columbia, compiled from a survey of more than 200 officers in the spring and summer of 2011. For the past decade British Columbia's correctional officers have continued to experience higher rates of on-the-job criminal violence than any other workers in the province (WorkSafeBC, Occupational Injuries by Accident Type and Occupation in British Columbia, 2000-2009).

In the most recent WorkSafeBC publication, covering the decade from 2000 to 2009, claims for injuries from acts of force or violence comprise 1.96 per cent of injury claims for all workers in B.C. between 2000 and 2009. For those who work in protective services (police officers, correctional officers, other regulatory officers, fire fighters and security guards) 19.6 per cent of all claims flow from injuries due to acts of force or violence. For correctional officers and police officers, the relative contribution of criminal acts of force or violence is greater than for any other occupational category within the realm of protective services: 33 per cent of all claims for correctional officers and 32 per cent for municipal police officers. But, as has been the case in past analyses, when we drill down into the data and compare B.C.'s police officers with our correctional officers, we find that correctional officers experience a higher rate of injury from criminal violence than do our police officers; correctional officers have averaged 45 claims annually for the past decade, in contrast to about 50 from municipal police officers – but there are 50 per cent more municipal police officers in B.C. than there are correctional officers.

British Columbia's correctional officers have a difficult task, working in secure facilities: North Fraser Pre-Trial Services Centre, Kamloops Regional Correctional Centre, Prince George Regional Correctional Centre, Vancouver Island Correctional Centre, Fraser Regional Correctional Centre, Surrey Pre-Trial Services Centre, and Alouette Correctional Centre for Women. This report documents the results of a survey of correctional officers in all of these facilities.

The relatively recent backdrop to these working environments was captured in a January 2008 report from Patricia Fisher and Associates, commissioned by the provincial government. The Fisher report noted:

“Over the past five years BC Adult Custody has experienced major restructuring and deep cuts to staffing levels. Ten centres were closed and a substantial proportion of remaining staff were redistributed to other centres, resulting in bumping and significant social/cultural disruption. Inmate counts have continued to rise over the interval and the centres were required to deal with increased counts, crowding and decreased staff/inmate ratios. At the same time, the profile of offenders has changed, with a younger more volatile population containing more mentally disordered and psychiatrically compromised inmates. Throughout this difficult interval the corporate culture has been impacted, staff morale has suffered, and the personal costs have been high.”²

² Fisher and Associates, “BC Corrections – Adult Custody Division: Organizational Health Assessment Report and Recommendations, January 2008”, www.fisherandassociates.org

A SURVEY OF CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS, 2011

What can we say about staff morale, inmate population profiles, crowding, staff to inmate ratios and corporate culture three years after the Fisher report? This survey (see Appendix F) is a mechanism for describing the current challenges facing adult correctional officers and adult correctional institutions in the province of British Columbia.³

The 205 responses we received by mail were relatively evenly spread across the seven secure facilities that we canvassed, with the exception of Alouette Correctional (see Table 1: Workplace Locations, below). We also conducted a number of telephone interviews with individuals in five of the seven secure facilities. We cannot conclude that the responses collected are entirely representative of all correctional officers, given the constraints of our sampling method (surveys were mailed to us in individually sealed envelopes from each of the sites, and telephone interviews were dependent on willingness to participate). But the significant number of responses, the resulting expression of a range of viewpoints, and the geographic dispersion of survey responses all serve to suggest that the opinions of these 205 officers (161 men and 44 women) are likely to represent the opinions of correctional officers in British Columbia.

Table 2 provides demographic information regarding the 205 respondents. The profile of respondents is fairly similar to the profile of those who work in the province as correctional officers, another indication that we are tapping into a representative sample of the approximately 1500 officers who work in British Columbia's Correctional Centres.

Table 1: Workplace Locations

Workplace Locations	
Workplace	Respondents (%)
Vancouver Island Correctional Centre	25
Kamloops Regional Correctional Centre	19
Prince George Regional Correctional Centre	19
Surrey Pre-trial Services Centre	14
North Fraser Pre-trial Services Centre	13
Fraser Regional Correctional Centre	9
Alouette Correctional Centre for Women	1

³ This survey was completed by correctional officers on their own time; the research was commissioned by the BCGEU and the responses given in both surveys and telephone interviews were not a part of any work undertaken by correctional officers as employees of the British Columbia government.

Table 2: Gender and Age of Respondents

Respondent Demographics	
Gender	Respondents (%)
Male	80
Female	20
Age	Respondents (%)
18-24	4
25-34	26
35-45	40
46 or Older	30

Tables 3 and 4 provide information regarding the years of correctional service of the respondents and their educational backgrounds. As Table 3 indicates, more than 50 per cent have at least six years of service and 85 per cent of those responding have completed at least three years of work in provincial corrections. Most have high school education and completion of certificate or diploma courses; less than 20 per cent of correctional officer respondents hold university degrees.

Table 3: Years of Work as a Correctional Officer

Years as Correctional Officer	
Years	Respondents (%)
Less than One	5
One to Two Years	10
Three to Five Years	28
Six to Nine Years	7
Ten to Fifteen Years	22
Sixteen or More Years	27

Table 4: Educational Histories of Respondents

Highest Level of Completed Education	
Years	Respondents (%)
Less than High School Diploma	1
High School Diploma	35
One-Year Certificate	17
Two-Year Diploma	31
Four-Year Degree	15
Graduate Degree	3

As Appendix F (The Working Conditions of Correctional Officers in British Columbia, 2011: A Membership Survey) makes clear, we have tried, in constructing this survey, to determine the prevalence of certain kinds of exposures and experiences within the population of correctional officers in British Columbia. Tables 5 and 6 report on the personal exposure of respondents to blood, feces, vomit, spit and urine, and personal involvement in Code Yellow incidents (staff needs assistance), Code Blue incidents (medical emergency) and suicidal inmate watches. Table 5 documents exposures within the past month and Table 6 documents the extent of exposure within the past year.

Table 5: Exposures to Blood et al/Past Month

Percentage of Respondents: Personally Involved With over past Month					
Kind of Incident	Not at all	Once	More than Once	More than 5 Separate Events	More than 10 Separate Events
Exposure to Blood	18%	22%	40%	16%	4%
Exposure to Feces	44%	24%	22%	8%	4%
Exposure to Vomit	57%	14%	23%	5%	2%
Exposure to Saliva or Spit	43%	13%	29%	10%	5%
Exposure to Urine	40%	18%	26%	9%	7%
Code Yellow/Staff Needs Assistance	11%	8%	31%	34%	17%
Code Blue/Medical Emergency	30%	18%	37%	11%	4%
Q15/Suicidal Inmate Watch	30%	9%	28%	14%	20%

Table 6: Exposures to Blood et al/Past Year

Percentage of Respondents: Personally Involved With over past Year					
Kind of Incident	Not at all	Once	More than Once	More than 5 Separate Events	More than 10 Separate Events
Exposure to Blood	6%	4%	45%	27%	18%
Exposure to Feces	22%	11%	47%	12%	7%
Exposure to Vomit	35%	13%	36%	10%	7%
Exposure to Saliva or Spit	25%	9%	41%	15%	11%
Exposure to Urine	24%	10%	44%	14%	9%
Code Yellow/Staff Needs Assistance	4%	1%	20%	32%	43%
Code Blue/Medical Emergency	9%	8%	43%	31%	8%
Q15/Suicidal Inmate Watch	15%	6%	30%	22%	28%

Tables 5 and 6 indicate that 60 per cent of correctional officers have been personally exposed to blood within the past month on at least two occasions, 34 per cent to feces, 30 per cent to vomit, 44 per cent to spit or saliva, and 42 per cent to urine. Further, more than 80 per cent have had to respond to at least two Code Yellows in the past month, more than 50 per cent to at least two medical emergencies, and more than 60 per cent to at least two suicidal inmate watches. When we asked a similar question with respect to experiences during the past year, about 90 per cent reported repeated exposure to blood, 65 per cent repeated exposure to feces, 50 per cent exposure to vomit, 65 per cent exposure to saliva or spit, 65 per cent exposure to urine, 95 per cent to Code Yellows, 85 per cent to medical emergencies, and 80 per cent to suicidal inmate watches.

Tables 7 and 8 report on the prevalence of more significant events in the workplace: witnessing an inmate drug overdose, receiving a credible threat of harm, responding to a serious injury, being physically assaulted by an inmate, hit by bodily fluids, discovering a weapon, breaking up a fight between two or more inmates, and witnessing the death of an inmate. Table 8 indicates that 50 per cent of respondents have witnessed a drug overdose within the past year, more than two-thirds have received a credible threat of harm from an inmate, more than 80 per cent have responded to a serious injury to an inmate, more than 50 per cent have been assaulted by an inmate and hit by bodily fluids, almost 80 per cent have discovered weapons in an inmate's possession, almost 20 per cent have witnessed the killing or suicide of an inmate, and almost 95 per cent have had to intervene in a fight between two or more inmates.

Table 7: Personal Involvement in Incidents Within the Past Month

Percentage of Respondents: Personally Involved With over past Month					
Kind of Incident	Not at all	Once	More than Once	More than 5 Separate Events	More than 10 Separate Events
Inmate Drug Overdose	75%	13%	10%	2%	0%
Receiving a Credible Verbal or Written Threat of Harm from an Inmate	49%	15%	26%	6%	5%
Responding to a Serious Injury to an Inmate	39%	16%	30%	11%	5%
A Physical Assault by an Inmate	62%	14%	12%	9%	3%
Hit by Feces, Blood, Vomit, Spit or Urine	76%	14%	8%	2%	1%
Discovering Weapon in an Inmate's cell, Living Unit or in his/her Possession	45%	19%	25%	8%	3%
Observing the Death -- Homicide or Suicide -- of an Inmate.	94%	4%	2%	0%	0%
A Fight between Two or More Inmates	12%	14%	37%	24%	13%

Table 8: Personal Involvement in Incidents Within the Past Year

Percentage of Respondents: Personally Involved With over past Year					
Kind of Incident	Not at all	Once	More than Once	More than 5 Separate Events	More than 10 Separate Events
Inmate Drug Overdose	50%	22%	24%	3%	1%
Receiving a Credible Verbal or Written Threat of Harm from an Inmate	33%	14%	33%	14%	8%
Responding to a Serious Injury to an Inmate	12%	9%	43%	23%	12%
A Physical Assault by an Inmate	49%	12%	21%	12%	6%
Hit by Feces, Blood, Vomit, Spit or Urine	48%	10%	30%	8%	4%
Discovering Weapon in an Inmate's cell, Living Unit or in his/her Possession	21%	11%	43%	17%	7%
Observing the Death -- Homicide or Suicide -- of an Inmate.	81%	14%	4%	1%	0%
A Fight between Two or More Inmates	6%	3%	24%	34%	32%

While these data do indicate a significant prevalence of acts of violence in the workplace within provincial correctional centres, an issue of greater concern is how this violence is understood and responded to by correctional officers. Tables 9, 10 and 11 document respondents' perception of stress after exposure to bodily fluids, and other significant events, within

the past year. Table 9 reveals that 84 per cent of those exposed to blood found it “somewhat or very stressful, as did 86 per cent of those exposed to feces, 85 per cent exposed to spit, 81 per cent exposed to urine, and 75 per cent exposed to vomit.

Table 9: Percentage of Respondents Finding Specific Events Stressful

Percentage of Respondents: Personally Involved With over past Year					
Kind of Incident	Involved (Yes)	Not Involved (No)	Not Particularly Stressful	Somewhat stressful	Very stressful
Exposure to Blood	92%	8%	17%	45%	39%
Exposure to Feces	77%	23%	14%	42%	44%
Exposure to Saliva or Spit	75%	25%	13%	44%	41%
Exposure to Urine	77%	22%	18%	45%	36%
Exposure to Vomit	57%	42%	26%	47%	28%

Tables 10 and 11 provide information regarding the reactions of correctional officers to arguably more significant events within their workplaces. Table 10 indicates that more than 90 per cent find responding to Code Yellows “somewhat or very stressful”, almost 80 per cent find responding to Code Blues “somewhat or very stressful”, 55 per cent find responding to suicidal inmates “somewhat or very stressful”, 80 per cent find responding to an inmate drug overdose “somewhat or very stressful”, and, finally, 90 per cent find a threat of credible harm from an inmate to be “somewhat or very stressful”. Table 11 reveals that almost 90 per cent find responding to a serious injury to an inmate “somewhat or very stressful”, more than 95 per cent find being assaulted by an inmate to be “somewhat or very stressful”, more than 95 per cent find being hit by an inmate’s bodily fluids “somewhat or very stressful”, 85 per cent find discovering a weapon in an inmate’s possession to be “somewhat or very stressful”, and almost 90 per cent find observing the suicide or homicide of an inmate to be “somewhat or very stressful”.

Table 10: Perceptions of Officer Stress Within the Past Year

Percentage of Respondents: Personally Involved With over past Year					
Kind of Incident	Involved (Yes)	Not Involved (No)	Not Particularly Stressful	Somewhat stressful	Very stressful
Code Yellow: Staff needs Assistance	96%	4%	9%	43%	48%
Code Blue: Medical Emergency	92%	8%	21%	42%	37%
Q15: Suicidal Inmate Watch	80%	20%	35%	39%	26%
Inmate Drug Overdose	50%	50%	20%	28%	52%
Receiving a credible threat of harm from an inmate	67%	33%	10%	27%	63%

Table 11: Perceptions of Officer Stress Within the Past Year

Percentage of Respondents: Personally Involved With over past Year					
Kind of Incident	Involved (Yes)	Not Involved (No)	Not Particularly Stressful	Somewhat stressful	Very stressful
Responding to a serious injury to an inmate	82%	18%	13%	39%	49%
Being personally physically assaulted by an inmate	27%	73%	7%	7%	89%
Having been hit by feces, blood, vomit, urine, or spit	39%	61%	3%	18%	79%
Discovering weapon in an inmate's cell or in his possession	74%	26%	14%	46%	39%
Observing the death - homicide or suicide - of an inmate	17%	83%	12%	29%	59%

What is driving these relatively high levels of incidents and their consequence, relatively high levels of reported stress? We tested a number of possibilities – that there are significant differences by specific facility, by years on the job, or by gender. Only the variable of years on the job

appeared to be related to exposure to violent incidents and somewhat or very high levels of stress. Table 12 documents the extent of exposure to violence by years on the job and Table 13 documents perceptions of stress, again in relation to years on the job. It appears that those with at least three years of experience are both exposed to more incidents of violence and are more likely to regard these incidents as “somewhat stressful” or “very stressful”.

Table 12: Percentage Reporting Violence, by Years of Experience

Percentage of Respondents by Experience: Reporting Experiencing Violent Incidents in Past Month	
Years of Experience	Respondents (%)
Less than One	20
One to Two Years	32
Three to Five Years	34
Six to Nine Years	38
Ten to Fifteen Years	46
Sixteen or More Years	40

Note: This table reports the average percentage of respondents who have experienced violent incidents in the past month (receiving a credible threat of harm from an inmate, being personally physically assaulted by an inmate, and having been hit by feces, blood, vomit, urine or spit)

Table 13: Percentage Reporting Stress, by Years of Experience

Percentage of Respondents by Experience: Involved with Violent Incidents– Reporting Somewhat or Very Stressful	
Years of Experience	Respondents (%)
Less than One	16
One to Two Years	18
Three to Five Years	22
Six to Nine Years	19
Ten to Fifteen Years	23
Sixteen or More Years	25

Note: This table reports the average percentage of respondents who reported personal involvement in violent incidents in the past month (receiving a credible threat of harm from an inmate, being personally physically assaulted by an inmate, and having been hit by feces, blood, vomit, urine or spit) and who reported these experiences as being somewhat stressful or very stressful.

Perhaps most noteworthy, those with 10 or more years of experience are most likely to have experienced violent incidents within the past month, and to regard those incidents as “somewhat” or “very stressful”. This suggests that correctional officers do not easily accommodate to the demands of the job as they increase their years of service. Rather, their exposure to violent incidents increases and they are more likely than those with less experience to regard their jobs as “somewhat” or “very stressful”.

HAS WORK AS A CORRECTIONAL OFFICER BECOME MORE STRESSFUL?

It is not particularly surprising that correctional officers and police officers experience high levels of violence in their work, relative to other occupations. They both have responsibility for responding to individuals who have histories of violence and histories of involvement in other illegal activities. What is more telling, however, is how they regard their jobs over time. This survey of 205 correctional officers revealed that the overwhelming majority of respondents (about 90 per cent) believe that their jobs have become more stressful over the past years. Table 14 reveals the most common kinds of comments with respect to the reasons for this increased stress, and Table 15 provides a more quantitative assessment of the data that we have collected, pointing to inmate to staff ratios, violence and safety issues, and management and workplace policies as the three most critical sources of increased stress.

Table 14: Reasons for Increased Stress Among Correctional Officers

Has Your Job Become More Stressful Over the Past Years?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Results lean very strongly to Yes (~90% of Respondents) • Comments include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Higher inmate to officer ratio, higher workload by way of additional duties/responsibilities ○ Yes - over crowding, more serious incidents ○ More fights with more persons involved. More serious assault involving more of a gang-type mentality. More issues of a legal matter and being accountable for more issues. More staffing issues than in previous years. A more stressful work environment involving staffing and employee/employment issues. ○ More violence towards staff. More serious attacks. ○ More violent gangs. They don't care what physical harm comes to us.

Table 15: Most Cited Reasons for Increased Stress

Has Your Job Become More Stressful Over the Past Years?	
Most Common Themes	Count of Responses
Inmate to Staff Ratio: overcrowding, understaffing	111
Violence and safety	76
Management and workplace policies	53
Mentally Disordered and Gangster Inmates	35
Miscellaneous: staff training, technology, pay/compensation, inmate rights	35
Workload	30
No increase in stress	17

Appendix A documents the individual written responses of 191 correctional officers, in response to the question, “Has your job become more stressful or difficult during the past years? If yes, explain how it has changed”. These comments provide dramatic evidence that the problems cited in the Fisher and Associates Report of 2008 – high inmate counts, a more volatile inmate population, poor morale, and overcrowding – remain in 2011: there is no indication that these concerns have been systematically addressed in any way.⁴

WHAT IS THE MOST DIFFICULT PART OF THE JOB?

We also asked respondents to identify the three most difficult parts of their jobs. Appendix B sets out the responses of correctional officers to the first – and hence most difficult part of their work. We have not included second and third responses, as these tended to be very similar to the first of the three cited areas of difficulty. Table 16 documents personal safety, inappropriately high staffing levels, and a poor working relationship with management, in descending order, as the three most difficult parts of the job. Officers also cited staff training, the rate of pay, mentally disordered and gangster inmates, and lack of regular hours as additional sources of difficulty. About 5 per cent of respondents indicated that they did not find any particular difficulty in their work.⁵

⁴ Appendix A has been edited for grammar and for spelling, in order to provide a greater clarity to the comments provided by the respondents.

⁵ Appendix B has been edited for grammar and for spelling, in order to provide a greater clarity to the comments provided by the respondents.

Table 16: The Three Most Difficult Parts of the Job

Please Describe Most Difficult Parts of Your Job:	
Themes: Most Difficult	Count of Responses
Personal safety on the job	61
Staffing levels	60
Management	40
Miscellaneous: staff training, pay/compensation, inmate rights	13
Mentally Disordered and Gangster Inmates	11
Nothing difficult	9
Lack of regular hours of work, and on call	8

UNUSUAL WORKING CONDITIONS?

When we asked respondents whether they thought their working conditions were unusual, more than 90 per cent indicated that the conditions are properly described as unusual. They cited the very high inmate to staff ratios, the changing inmate population (more inmates with gang involvements and more mentally disordered inmates), the increased fear for one’s personal safety, the uncertainty of not knowing whether you will be “hit, shanked, witness a beating, be hit with feces, blood or urine, or have your family threatened”.

Table 17 cites the most common responses from comments within Appendix C, “Is your job unusual in terms of its working conditions? If yes, please explain why. If no, please explain why”.⁶

⁶ Appendix C has been edited for grammar and for spelling, in order to provide a greater clarity to the comments provided by the respondents.

Table 17: Most Commonly Cited Reasons for Unusual Working Conditions

Is Your Job Unusual in terms of Working Conditions?	
Themes: Unusual	Count of Responses
Violence, Conflict, Unsafe work environment	86
Negative work environment	48
Miscellaneous: staff training, compensation, access to technology, shiftwork	41
Exposure to bodily fluids	38
Inmate to Staff Ratio: Overcrowding, Understaffing	36
Mentally Disordered and Gangster Inmates	19
Management and Workplace Policies	19
Not Unusual	15

DIRECT SUPERVISION: IS IT WORKING?

The responses of B.C. correctional officers to a question regarding direct supervision – direct contact with inmates in their living environments – indicated both a level of support for the concept of direct supervision, but also a fairly clear statement that direct supervision is not working now and cannot work effectively with the current very high inmate to staff ratios, the negative and stressful environment, and ongoing conflicts with management and workplace policies. Appendix D provides detailed commentaries from individual correctional officers regarding the model of direct supervision. As noted above, the objection to direct supervision does not appear to be an objection to its philosophy of engaging with inmates, but with its current safety, efficacy and practicality, given current inmate-staff ratios, concerns regarding personal safety, and poor management-staff relations. Table 18 sets out the most commonly cited experiences with direct supervision, compiled from Appendix D.⁷

⁷ Appendix D has been edited for grammar and for spelling, in order to provide a greater clarity to the comments provided by the respondents.

Table 18: Most Commonly Cited Experiences of Direct Supervision

Please Describe your Experiences with Direct Supervision:	
Themes:	Count of Responses
Inmate to Staff Ratio: overcrowding, understaffing	69
Stressful, negative and/or excessively noisy environment	49
Violence, danger, safety issues	47
Positive– effective in theory or practice	33
Too many responsibilities, overworked	25
Issues with management and policy	24
Miscellaneous: staff training, pay/compensation, inmate rights	24
Challenging work environment	18

The Road Ahead:

Inmate to Staff Ratios, the Changing Inmate Population and Management-Staff Relations

The correctional officers of British Columbia perceive that their jobs have become more difficult, less safe, more stressful and more poorly managed during recent years. Their descriptions of their workplaces are, in turn, depressing, frightening, appalling, and, only occasionally, positive in tone.

The question of inmate to staff ratios and their relationship to both inmate on inmate and inmate on staff violence has been studied extensively during the past 25 years and the research has revealed positive, negative and null relationships.⁸ The researchers have noted that inmate to staff ratios are likely very significant, but each study possesses confounding variables: different facility designs, different inmate populations, the widely varying reliability of official reports of prison incidents, and different deployments of the model of direct supervision. To date, researchers have, metaphorically speaking, been comparing apples and oranges.

There is some clear evidence in the research cited above, however, that the nature of the inmate population is an issue of relevance – generally speaking, the more serious the charges or convictions of the inmate population, the more likely one is to experience more violence within the institution. Additionally, a transient population is cited by Tartaro, note 8, above, as a factor contributing to increased levels of violence.

What we can say about correctional institutions in British Columbia is that they house both a transient population of inmates and inmates who face very serious charges, most specifically those inmates on remand. Our longest serving correctional officers are very concerned about changes in their facilities during the past decade: about their safety, inmate safety, the extent of mentally disordered and gang involved inmates in their facilities, and the lack of agreement between management and staff regarding policies within their workplace.

It is this last point that is most critical and perhaps most hopeful. There is an emerging body of research which suggests that officer input into

⁸ See Christine Tartaro, "The impact of density on jail violence", 30 *Journal of Criminal Justice* 499-510, (2002); John Woolredge and Benjamin Steiner, "Comparing Methods for Examining Relationships Between Prison Crowding and Inmate Violence", 26 (4) *Justice Quarterly* (2009); T. Franklin, C. Franklin and T. Pratt, "Examining the empirical relationship between prison crowding and inmate misconduct: A meta-analysis of conflicting research results", 34 *Journal of Criminal Justice* 401-412 (2006).

decision-making – and officer perceptions of fairness and equity – are critical to reducing job stress and increasing organizational commitment.⁹

The question asked at the outset of this paper – whether correctional officers in the province of British Columbia have unusual or abnormal working conditions – is likely best answered by the statements of correctional officers themselves. But the more difficult task is a route forward: a mechanism for improving the safety and reducing the stress of this kind of work; that will depend upon addressing the issues that Patricia Fisher and Associates first identified for the province three years ago: poor staff morale, increased stress, overcrowding, and the need to develop more effective responses to a changing inmate population. Can management and staff work together to create a workplace that, despite its inherent difficulties, is perceived to be both fair in its decision making and inclusive in its organizational commitment?

⁹ See Eric Lambert, Nancy Hogan and Kasey Tucker, "Problems at Work: Exploring the Correlates of Role Stress Among Correctional Staff", 89 (4) *Prison Journal* 460-481, 2009; Fay Taxman and Jill Gordon, "Do Fairness and Equity Matter?: An Examination of Organizational Justice Among Correctional Officers", 36 (7) *Criminal Justice and Behaviour*, 695-711, 2009.

Appendix A: Job Stress

Has your job become more stressful or difficult during the past years? If yes, explain how it has changed:

1. Inmate to staff ratio was 20 to 1. Now it is 60 to 1. Inmates are a lot younger, with no respect for each other. They have a gang mentality. There are more group assaults. Seniority carries no weight.
2. Housing of inmates, the type of inmates, how many inmates.
3. More inmates/ less staff. Units designed for 20 inmates now house 40. More staff assaults. More violence.
4. More mentally disordered offenders who are ready and willing to fight.
5. More stressful – more responsibility
6. Officers often perform duties in the unit without any direct observation from other staff. An example is cell inspection. It is impossible for the Pod officer to supervise 4 unit officers, each in their own unit, supervise visits, supervise the hallway below him or her, answer the telephone, answer the door calls and be satisfied all officers are safe. Also, contrary to centre policy, a single staff escort into the community cannot maintain observation of the inmate at all time. How is he/she to go to the washroom? Protection of the community seems to be secondary to budget limitations. A review of the branch's "mission statement & core beliefs" contradicts this practice.
7. Inmate counts have increased, causing more staff and inmate conflicts.
8. Higher inmate to officer ratio, higher workload by way of additional duties/responsibilities.
9. Yes – increased inmate count, increase in risk levels associated with inmate profiles (i.e. gang members), not enough staff.
10. Higher ratio of inmate to staff (40-1), overcrowding, double-bunking of inmates, severely mentally disordered offenders being placed on regular units due to lack of space in special handling units, inmates doing segregation time on regular units, seconded inmates doing their time on regular units, noise levels quite high with 40 inmates on unit designed for 20 inmates, distant management who won't listen to staff concerns, gangs taking over and running the units.

11. One staff member has to control and supervise 40 inmates. Need more staff when watching and working with inmates. Yes, more stressful, not very safe.
12. Yes – overcrowding, more serious incidents.
13. Yes, the inmates on the units have changed, more physical altercations amongst inmates, inmates not getting along with staff. A lot more code yellows and code blues to respond to.
14. Changing inmate behaviour-gangs; Demand by BC Corrections to change method of managing inmates. Changing style of correctional staff... change of inmate individual attitude – entitlement, lack of values; rapid changes in supervisory & management personnel & styles.
15. Large increase in I/M counts, influx of detainees, outside low security tents to housing inmates. Large staff turnover, no real raises except for the TMA, no respect for seniority
16. No
17. I've become more aware of how bad management is. They are horrible. It is all about saving money and NOT about safety. They don't have a clue what goes on in the secure side. The unit officer is left alone with up to 40 inmates and management is on the other side and does not listen to any of us.
18. More fights with more persons involved. More serious assaults involving more of a gang-type mentality. More issues of a legal matter and being accountable for more issues. More staffing issues than in previous years. A more stressful work environment involving staffing and employee/employment issues.
19. Yes – there have been more and more duties and responsibilities placed on most CO's. We are expected to keep an eye on inmates while logging up to 38 inmates, handing out canteen, doing paperwork, assisting healthcare and performing 30 minute checks. Sometimes these things happen all at once and there are no support staff to be seen. Inmates can easily come up beside you and assault you when you are trying to get logging done since your desk is out in the open, leaving you exposed and vulnerable at all times. Staff safety is sacrificed to ensure that inmates are safe and that their rights are not infringed on. One example would be from segregation. We used to give inmates paper plates in segregation for everyone's safety. Now we have to give them hard plastic trays that they could break to create a nice shank. All inmates get razorblades... which have been fashioned into dangerous weapons. Inmates' rights take precedence over staff safety the majority of times.
20. There is more violence now than ever in the past 5 years. There are more inmates with mental health issues. The staff to inmate ratios have doubled over the past 8-10 years. The count in our jail is considerably higher now than 8-10 years ago. Staff assaults are very common.

21. Yes, workload has increased 4X; staffing levels are less than other centres. More emergency runs to hospitals due to # of inmate assaults. The assaults are more severe in last five years. Overcrowding problems. Work ethic of staff severely decreased. Management not supportive of staff.
22. Yes it has. We have the same amount of staff for 330 to 380 inmates as we did for 200 – 220. The units are small and have doubled in population. Charging an inmate means that he does segregation. Time on the unit. Violence by inmates has increased and the assaults can be really bad. Threats to staff have increased. I have noticed that the role of I.N.S. has increased to the point that they have more to say then that of the jail.
23. The same as when I started. I just go day to day and hope for the best.
24. Yes, increase in staff and inmate ratio. E.g., 1 staff, 52 inmates. Hard to get time off granted, staff shortage. Long response time to critical incident/staff shortage. Inexperienced supervisors.
25. My job is more stressful now due to increased gang activities as well as increased drug, weapon and overall contraband such as shanks etc. being smuggled into the jail.
26. Yes, counts keep getting higher and there are not enough prowls able to respond. They are constantly re-deployed to other tasks and cannot spend more than a few minutes on the units.
27. Yes, my job has become more stressful/difficult. The workload has increased, policy always changing & the inmates have changed. I find that the inmates are more prone to act out verbally & physically. The types of inmates now are less respectful towards corrections staff. Last but not least, the staff ratio to inmates has gone up drastically. I have worked at remand centre where there were 60 inmates to 1 staff.
28. Increased numbers in units and gang violence.
29. Yes, double bunking of offenders increases tension, anxiety and pressure amongst them – a larger population of antisocial personalities and constantly increasing numbers and decreasing of personal space leads to frequent incidents. Furthermore, as a carry-over from their street life is a “gangland” mentality amongst the offenders. They have become more organized, structured and as a result... more dangerous. Finally, the increasing numbers of mentally disordered offenders who are more unpredictable and impulsive in their actions which again adds to the risk level for officers.
30. For me. I have been able to cope better because of my experience with dealing with these situations has enabled me to cope with not as much stress as I would expect. I have had headaches and some pretty messed up dreams, but for some reason I am keeping it together.

31. Less staff to do more jobs. Negative staff interactions.
32. Increased counts. Cameras spying on staff. Poor leadership.
33. This job has become more stressful and difficult in the past few years due to overcrowding, inmate attitude and rights and less pay than our counterparts for dealing with the same issues and frustrations. Inmates over the last 20 years have grown up with the “Gangsta” attitude. No respect for anything or anyone and a willingness to do anything to anyone without fear of real consequence. With these changing times it is even more stressful as a correctional officer to be in a union which is comprised of mostly secretarial personnel who couldn’t care less about our issues as CO’s. Sheriffs and Corrections should be in a separate union or be absorbed into the police union where our issues and needs are better understood and can be obtained. With administration making up the majority of our present union it is like describing colours to a blind man who has never seen, when addressing our concerns. Inmates Rights are too many with too many avenues and organizations to address issues which are usually too trivial to merit addressing. We do not live in a 3rd world country which necessitates such overkill when it comes to an inmate’s options to have as many avenues of redress as to why he should have not lost remission time for not having made his bed and followed the basic rules which are set down. Canada should ease up on treating the garbage of society like “National Treasures” and concentrate some of this effort on the victims which are left in the wake of the offender. Rather than seeing our wages increase we see a pay cheque half that of our counterparts and benefits clawed back. Being told by a contingent of sycophants as to how great a job we do and how invaluable and appreciated our services are except when it comes to adequately paying for these services, is quite simply “dehumanizing” and demeaning. There are infinitely more over paid people in the top end of government who could more easily be replaced than someone employed in front line Corrections. Government states if you want to retain and keep talent you have to be willing to pay for it. Why does this not apply to Corrections? How many of these people, and anyone else for that matter, would do the job of a correctional officer, knowing its true nature? The replies would likely be “I wouldn’t do that job for any amount of money”, “You couldn’t pay me enough to do your job” or “I wouldn’t do that job for a million dollars”. The bottom line is that staff who can function in this profession is in a constant state of flux, adapting to and overcoming the environment in which we have chosen to work. The least which can be done is to adequately pay us for our ability to contain and manage the human cesspool in which we work. If not, officers will gradually develop a “who cares” attitude which will cost more to change than if wages and workplace conditions are not addressed now. Presently, there is a feeling amongst staff that we are valued less than the absolute worst inmates that society has to offer. Another stressful aspect

of this profession is, no disrespect intended, is the constant number of surveys in which we are asked to participate in which appear to never end in any change. They are completed, forwarded, reviewed and totally ignored except for placating empty expressions about our value as employees and promise for our concerns to be reviewed. In the end it only serves to gather and over pay some government appointed committee members who in the end do nothing more than verbally flip you the provincial “bird”, “pooh-pooh” away the thought of granting or addressing any concerns presented and leave you with the choice of “liking what we have” or “go find another job” if you don’t like what we choose to give or take from you. Nothing changes. Corrections officers are viewed as the knuckle dragging, Down’s syndrome crack baby of the Law Enforcement Family and the “dirty little secret” government refuses to acknowledge unless an issue “oozes” to the media. Perhaps they should try and run things without CO’s for a month or so and see whether or not we deserve to be constantly ignored for the service we provide.

34. Yes. Higher counts on units. High profile gang members.
35. New S.O.P.s being sent to line officers and not knowing what the hell they are doing because they have not been in a unit for so long they can’t remember.
36. Yes – increased inmate to staff ratios in areas designed for approximately 50% less inmates (i.e. 40 inmates per 1 staff in units designed for 20 inmates). Understandably this creates tension amongst inmates with the predictable and actual result of routine violence on a frequent basis. It is not possible to interact and relate with inmates with numbers this high-staff are relegated to “putting out fires” (conflicts) throughout their shift and are thankful if they finish their shift without being directly or indirectly exposed to violence, In effect inmates just being warehoused, with a little programming thrown in for good measure. The increased inmate/staff ratios account for a great deal of stress among Correctional officers. Another issue is rates of pay. It is very frustrating getting paid approximately 30-40% less than police agencies who are dealing with the same inmates, in fewer numbers. There is a general consensus among officers that the BC government doesn’t think we’re worth any more.
37. No.
38. Double bunking all the cells/increasing the numbers in the units, changes the dynamics so that it is much more difficult to be a positive influence. I am a strong person and I believe in the concept of pro-social modelling, but when the numbers are high that kind of influence is not possible and it’s a constant battle to maintain calm.
39. Security is lacking, staff, visitors could easily pack a gun or weapon. 40 inmates to 1 staff is insane. Extremely overcrowded! Radio and intercoms do not work. Camera system extremely poor. Training for

new staff and all staff is non-existent or very poor. Lack of tools to do our jobs and be safe.

40. Inmates are running the jails. No support from management to properly deal with them. More stressful.
41. In the last year we have seen some changes that have made the job more stressful – specifically the staff offices have been moved out onto the living units. This creates a scenario where an officer can be bombarded by inmate requests at the same time they (officers) are trying to stay on top of paperwork, moves, case management etc. Also my sense of camaraderie has waned from the time of my hiring. We are led to believe that we are a team and a family but I have seen more decisions based on fear of reprimand than teamwork or mutual goal achievement.
42. Yes. The unit has been double bunked from 20 – to > 30. There are more incidents between inmates. A lot of little irritations that are easily escalated. So more stress on officer and inmates. Also, the noise levels went up 10 fold. Hardly any quiet moments anymore.
43. Yes, the higher counts have increased the number of inmates I get to deal with during a shift. For example, if every inmate asks for one thing, then now, I must receive 28-40 requests per day; as opposed to 24. If they ask for more than one thing per day, then it gets very overwhelming.
44. The job changes. Inmates change, the jail is overcrowded. Too many inmates and not enough space. As well, some of the staff that have been hired are not competent or do not have enough life experience to deal with the problems of staff inmates throw out to them.
45. Yes. Since I have been a CO every year more and more gets added onto our plates which makes it harder for us to concentrate on the more important evaluations like staff safety etc. Pay.
46. More no control and no support from management & Province. Not very good supervision.
47. The constant changes – the business has changed so much in the past any attempts to make things easier or less redundant are met by lack of decisiveness by management.
48. More violence towards staff. More serious attacks.
49. 2 years of service + still on call
50. Yes – more Inmates = more inmates being placed on ESP program, more inmates to watch, more tension in the unit. Unit officers do not see their Unit Support Officer (USO) all day due to being on full escort protocol. The workload on both USO and Unit Staff seems to have doubled, which in turn affects security and safety. Technology not working which make running the jail more stressful, higher likelihood of mistakes and putting staff and inmates at Risk. More inmates that are sectioned for special handling.

51. Yes – higher counts of /M in the same square footage, this leads to higher tension/violence levels. The “style” of I/M is changing – younger, more aggressive, high maintenance, more violent, unreasonable, does not care about/will not accept regulations or consequences.
52. No
53. Yes – inmates have become more violent & aggressive in all aspects of life. The beatings are more frequently 2 or 3 on 1. They are using weapons more frequently... don't care who is around or gets hit with it, neither officer nor inmate is safe.
54. The inmate/staff ratio is considerably higher. Loss of double staffing.
55. Yes. High I/M count. Low staffing levels. Ratio of inmates to staff too high. Generation of inmates has become more violent.
56. Putting support staff for escorts, shift coverage, lack of direction.
57. Yes, more gang affiliated inmates, trying to keep different Gangs separate in the building. They live by a violent code and resort to violence & threats as a rule. Always worry that they may bring this intimidation to your home and family as retribution. High unit counts due to increase in crime is unsettling and difficult to manage for unit officers as their workload has increased and...
58. Depending on the inmates in custody and the atmosphere of the units, each day can be more stressful than the last.
59. High counts, more violent inmates, Gang threats & Intimidation, Increased Paperwork & Administrative function
60. Yes the clients have become younger and much more violent, more gangs and with that comes street issues with our inmates. It has become much more difficult to keep inmates safe from each other with all the existing gangs & the up & coming gangs.
61. No
62. Yes, more inmates with same amount or fewer officers with different type of inmate population/alleged crimes.
63. The counts have gone up here; this causes more stress on staff. To manage the increased #s there are more fights, and issues with stacking inmates up like this. There also is an increase in staff assaults as the inmates have lost the fear/respect for crossing that line.
64. LR issues only as an observer.
65. Having more inmates crowded into units, that were originally designed for almost half the present number. More inmates that have dementia-type symptoms usually starting in their 40s, usually caused by substance abuse. Monitoring these types of inmates in crowded units, is added stress, along with their neediness and inability to live by the “normal” inmate standard.

66. Yes, job satisfaction is lower due to less support by employer. Inmate counts and violence continue to rise. More and more routines and schedules outlining minute to minute responsibilities for correctional officers are making jobs less flexible. Staff being sent off grounds all the time for escorts, leaving the building short staffed.
67. Physical assaults are hardly ever one on one. It is more of a gang mentality of 3 or more to one.
68. Yes. Increasingly violent/aggressive inmates. Little or no protection on the units. Increasing inmate to staff ratio.
69. Less stressful since posted to a desk job four years ago.
70. Favouritism. Disrespect. "Leadership Team"? Supervisors. Not enough staff.
71. (1) Inmates resorting to more violent behaviours. (2) More scheduled duties than previous.
72. Yes, it has become more stressful as new staff come online (lots) – it's more difficult to standardize policy/procedure to keep staff safe. More gangs are entering jails and in some cases one or more living units are dominated by gang members – giving it an unsafe place to work or live as an inmate or staff. Gangs = stress = unpredictable behaviour.
73. The type of inmate – more violent. The number of inmates to look after. Less staff to share the workload. Staff without proper training being placed in work areas.
74. (1) FOI = less awareness of serious disease carriers. (2) Inmates more demanding of rights. (3) Management less experienced with inmates. (4) Policy changes biased towards inmates. (5) Greater emphasis on public and political perception. (6) Reduced concern for staff needs. See item no. 3. (7) Inmates changing style. More gang and increased group violence creates tougher managing of unit. (8) Much less involvement of staff in decisions. (9) Inmate sense of entitlement is bigger.
75. Work in the oldest Provincial Jail in BC & it has started showing its age. As computer systems go down daily it causes safety issues with the staff, staff are worked until they are exhausted to make up for these problems.
76. Yes – overcrowding, majority of managers unfamiliar with the job of C.O. Influx of gang members, less staff, softening of CAR Charge system, in my opinion poor quality training of new staff & almost not updated training of ASP, OC, Self Defense
77. Yes, when I was trained in control, the first few months working in control were stressful. That is not the case anymore.
78. Yes. Stress comes with lack of management support. The hierarchy is: Management – inmates – Staff – In terms of who is listened to, or taken at their word (who is believed). You attempt to do your job,

however your duties have increased, you have more supervisors to monitor you, but not assist in any way + the jail is a pressure cooker with not enough staff to deal with the amount of inmates housed.

79. With an increasing number of inmates my job has become more difficult and stressful.
80. Much more stressful. Over-crowding from 20:1 ratio to 40:1 ratio being the overwhelming factor. Much more violent inmates. Quality of staff has decreased due to poor hiring practices, leads to loss of control at unit level resulting in increased problems and stress. Prison management has created an extremely stressful environment & culture of fear for staff. Always worried we will be disciplined. Policies changing every day (no consistency). No consequences for inmate bad behaviour.
81. Inmate Staff Ratio: 16-30 A typical unit held 16 inmates, now normal is 30, one unit has 40.
82. Higher counts harder to keep an eye on all the inmates. More serious assaults are taking place because inmates are distracting the officer on the unit. More supervision of the inmates is needed.
83. Yes, extremely. I came from Alberta Corrections and we had a code (two inmates fighting) an average of once per week. It seems like in BC there is a code an average of once per day. What makes this job increasingly stressful however is the continuous lack of support by our management. Not only are we paid less than most other branches of government, but we are forced to do a job of maintaining control of a growing inmate population with no actual means to do so. The management continue to limit our authority and power to maintain safety and security. Meanwhile our jails are increasing in numbers, yet our staffing remains the same with an inmate to officer ratio of 1:40.
84. When I first started I felt supported and valued. My supervisors and the managers seemed to understand what I was going through (health issues) but as time progressed it seemed to get harder and harder. I feel like I am being discriminated against now. The managers act as though my issues are a burden to them and a direct affront to them personally. I feel like they're punishing me for something that is completely outside of my control. I used to be able to talk to them but now it seems as though the managers are using this against me. I'm scared now. I feel like I cannot trust the people who are supposed to be "on my side" at all. All they appear to worry about is the bottom lines. I am nothing more than a number; my health means nothing to them. Regardless of how it may negatively affect me or my family, making me come to work even when I am ill is more important to them. I am always watching my back now and am afraid to talk to anyone... and it's not the inmates I worry about.

85. Yes it has become more stressful. The building's security system is out-dated and management is dragging their heels to get it fixed. INMATES are escorted everywhere and this has been going on for months and months. If an INMATE were injured because of this situation management would have it fixed overnight (or sooner) but if an officer were injured (or worse) then they would do something in a little while. It feels as though they would fix it to prevent a lawsuit to save money, but let it go if it involved helping staff.
86. The counts keep going up we have more staff but NOT in the living units a lot more managers with a lot more directives to try to remember.
87. YES – I have 20+ years in Corrections. The assaults between inmates have increased more than double. Serious assaults have increased against staff. The TARGETS of assaults have changed IE no one in jail is safe from potential assaults. Assaults on elderly or very young or mentally disordered inmates increases.
88. Yes 1) Workload
89. Yes – poorly integrated, poorly designed, non-user friendly computer systems coming into use. Insufficient training causes stress. Otherwise, after many years, I notice increased counts i.e. double bunking because increased stress on the living unit which causes increased stress on staff. Since changing from three shifts to many more than that (7 or 8 shift groups) less team work, less team spirit as every two days the employees change.
90. No, I have only had one year on the job and the main stressors remain – inmates, shiftwork. No change for the worse or better.
91. My job has become more stressful in the past year due to several factors. The first factor is hearing about and witnessing an increase in violent events between multiple inmates and assaults on staff. Situations like these cause a significant amount of stress in me because there is constantly the potential for these events to occur without warning. As well, the increasing number of inmates housed in living units exponentially increases the change of violent events occurring as well as creating several unit management issues for unit officers, myself included, on a daily basis.
92. Yes, the job has become more stressful and difficult in the past few years. Staff to inmate ratio has increased from 1-20, 1-30 and now is 1-40. With count increases comes all the additional work that comes from inmates. Inmates generate paperwork in form of health-care requests, complaint grievances, program attendance, canteen requests, letters, special requests and many more. Staff don't have the time to deal with all these in a timely manner. Technology has not simplified things – it has increased workload as computer programs are not easily navigated. Trying to put everything “on glass” has not made it efficient or streamlined for staff. Things are looked at from

a manager perspective, not from a living staff perspective on how it could be more efficient & easier for the staff directly involved + how efficient it would be for the living unit.

93. No
94. Yes the job has become more stressful in the past year. Counts going up on all the units. Ratio between staff and inmates decreasing. More serious criminals/more violent offenders coming in. Increase in staff assaults. More workload on staff. Low morale because staff feel we are underpaid in comparison to our counterparts - federal corrections, police, and transit police.
95. Yes it has because (1) Staffing shortages. (2) Overcrowding. (3) More inexperienced staff.
96. The staff to inmate ratio has gone from 20 to 1 to 40:1. Overcrowded, the jail was built for 156 we have 325. No training for self-defence. Violence is through the roof. Assaults, fights, are way more severe. Way more gang members. Only 5 segregation cells for the whole jail! Nowhere to put disciplined inmates therefore they don't receive any punishment for infractions. Wardens dispositions are ridiculously lenient. (No deterrent). Work load on staff tripled. Computer systems are all failing and still have not been replaced. Authority from staff has been stripped. Not allowed to lock an inmate for 23 hrs anymore. Staff have to put up with way more abuse than ever because the jail again does not have any room to put them. Segregation beds. Lack of tools provided, will not allow staff to have pepper spray.
97. Increased frequency of violent offenders. Increased levels of drug use within the facility. Elevated levels of violence between inmates. Decreased levels of punishment of inmates when institutional infractions are committed (violence, drugs, behaviour). Weak managerial staff, with little or no line experience – inconsistent and obvious double standards when dealing with female and visible minority staff.
98. Yes, more inmates to deal with without adequate increases to staffing levels. Our central control computers keep failing, causing all movements to be escorted, which adds to workload and radio traffic. More regulations that limit officer's ability to discipline inmates for infractions. Leniency of Warden's Court discipline leading to further offences by the same inmates.
99. Yes. Since I started with corrections units have had an increase in inmate numbers. Extra beds or cots have been placed in units designed to handle 16 men now handle 28+. The quarters are cramped, same as common area. Inmates are able to walk behind officer's desk. Someone above has not taken the time to learn about what this job is & potential (actual) hazards of the workplace.
100. Yes, due to the numerous assaults at other facilities.

101. Yes. More gang activity.
102. Yes. Count has doubled + workload has more than doubled. Much more difficult housing inmates due to gang connections, no contact + contact concerns. Housing males + females in same building increases workload and slows movement. Increase in number of programs causing an increase in movement for control and makes the building busier. Housing segregation, enhanced supervision and sectioned inmates or regular living units increases workload + stress levels. Not supplying living units and inmates with mandated clothing + bedding supplies increases tension between staff + inmates and increases staff frustration and stress levels. Many more mentally disordered inmates are staying long + longer.
103. More stress – there are more inmates per unit, therefore they fight more often.
104. Yes, very much as many more inmates. Inmates are now much more prone to violence.
105. Very much so... Inmates are more violent than before. They are more violent towards each other. More and more I see 3 or more Inmates assaulting another one. Also, Inmates are not scared to use weapons (brew jugs, hot butter, hard items in socks, etc. etc.). The branch should press outside charges on serious assaults in here. I don't get it, we have serious unprovoked attacks with weapons (caught on camera) and nobody steps up and street charges these guys. Why? It would be an open and closed case in court.
106. More stressful due to higher counts + increase in the danger from inmates.
107. The workload has increased, due to inmate counts increasing at a high rate. There is a lot of tension in the units now, as there is the double amount of inmates now. The amount of group assaults has increased as well. There appears to be an increase in mentally ill inmates in the last 5 years, and these inmates have a lack of impulse control, reacting in more violent situations. There is an increase in gang activity, which isn't good with overcrowding.
108. No, just getting used to it.
109. Inmate population continues to rise, while staffing levels are being cut due to overtime. They want us to do more with less staff.
110. As new adult custody policies are released or refreshed, it is becoming increasingly difficult to read emails, policies during work time, while running a living unit with 30-40 inmates (in concert with the rest of the centre). This kind of "online" learning cannot be done outside the center from a non B.C. Gov. PC. (Various CAR's + adult custody protocols can be length + time consuming to read/learn/understand). There is seldom time for this during staff training times.

111. Yes. Inmate counts increasing + jail counts increasing + tension increasing + space per inmate decreasing + increasing inmate on inmate assaults + multiple inmates on inmate assaults increasing + increase in mentally unstable inmates + increase in violence inmates are willing to do + increase in gang activities + members in the institutions + increase in no contacts + etc. = increase in stress every day.
112. Yes. Inmates are more violent and have less respect for the officers; overcrowding and double bunking has made corrections more dangerous.
113. Yes. Counts have increased and inmates are younger, more reckless/aggressive, and many more of them are exhibiting mental disorders that we as staff are not trained to handle.
114. Higher numbers, higher counts – increasing numbers to supervise. Change in inmate culture – more group attacks/violence. Same amount of resources (microwaves, phones, etc.) only. Changes with little or no explanation. No stentaphone, intercom system – all internal movements escorted = higher workload on prowl staff with same #FIE means USO/prowl seldom available to assist unit officers. Increase in #'s with no increase in access to medical/M/C MD still only in for 12 hours/week. Increase in inmates with drug and mental health issues and no resources to assist them. Lack of work programs for inmates means they sit around all day and scheme.
115. Increasing counts have made the job difficult. In the past a correctional officer supervised up to 20 inmates at a time. Now a correctional officer is expected to supervise up to 40 inmates at a time, which soon will be up to 72 inmates once centre has expanded.
116. This job has become less stressful when considering the amount of knowledge being applied day to day. However, the stress level created in enforcing the knowledge and rules combined with typical negative receipt by inmate has increased; likely, this will become exponential as my career continues.
117. Yes, high count & overcrowding and changes to policies that take away our power to effectively manage Inmates.
118. Due to the nature of the job itself, it can be very stressful when dealing within a negative environment. In fact within the last couple of years, I have seen a higher burn out factor, increase of sick time and the loss of good staff to other careers, some prior to retirement. This leaves inexperienced and junior staff to deal with the daily operations of running this centre. There appears to be a higher turnover with staff, in addition to supervisors and ADW's working in various new positions.
119. Yes. More gang related activity and better organized. Cell phones on the unit. Hell they can even check Facebook in here. At times we can hear the cell phone ring but cannot locate them. A \$300 device can

- locate them but the centre doesn't have one. A \$40.00 jammer could be installed in units making the cell phones useless.
120. The amount of assaults has increased in the past year. We have more paperwork, and it needs to be recorded on C-log. This means less time for supervision of the 40 inmates we have on each unit. New policies and procedures are put into place that are not practical and make the job more stressful.
 121. There are twice as many inmates as in the past and inmates are much more violent than even 5 years ago. More fights and more situations where multiple inmates assault officers.
 122. Yes, I have noticed there are too many inmates – inmate to staff ratio. The inmates are becoming more violent. Management does not in my opinion support staff in their concerns such as: staff assaults, inmates on inmate assaults, work overload, violent inmates. I get very stressed when I have a concern or want to speak my mind because management tends to intimidate staff.
 123. Dealing with management is the most stressful as they don't care what staff have to deal with during their shift. If an inmate complains about staff, staff are usually wrong as they are investigated or at times not told about the complaints until they apply for a different work location then told "no" as they are not suitable due to inmates complaints. Why are the inmates given the benefit of the doubt and staff not? Being told by certain management "Do you know how many people I've fired" while pounding their fist on the desk. "Come on give me a break".
 124. No it has not, that is because over the last year I have been working in control. Therefore a lot less contact with inmates.
 125. Go back to 20 inmates 1 staff. 21 inmates 2 staff. Higher wages!
 126. No.
 127. Definitely. The assaults in jail are becoming more and more severe. Weapons are becoming more common in the living units. It is just becoming a more violent place daily.
 128. More inmates on unit with less staff. Inmates care less about consequences.
 129. Yes the inmates are more violent than ever. I fear for my life now more than when I started.
 130. Micro managed by management and supervisors so you don't have the ability to make educated decisions. Dealing with other incompetent staff that have been hired. 6 month trial is for a reason, if they don't work get rid of them.
 131. Staff shortages and inmate overcrowding have definitely created stress.

132. The expectations have become very high on us. Due to budget cuts by the provincial government we feel a real pinch that everything has to be done with no money involved. Any ideas that improve staff safety are ignored and laughed at by managers if they involve money. Our workloads keep increasing yet no additional staff are hired. I have been assaulted recently where I was afraid to fight back, fearing I might get in trouble for excessive force, as management is quick to suspend good officers. They give us no self defence equipment and it's very stressful for a handful of officers to respond with 60 aggressive criminals ready to fight us if the opportunity presents. Being outnumbered it is stressful to gain their compliance while you worry you might get assaulted.
133. Yes, with the increase in inmate count on units recently there has been more tension, friction, inmate assaults and attendant stress level.
134. Yes! The inmate population has increased. See below!
135. Not applicable. I have only been employed for approx. 10 months at this point.
136. Yes – joining corrections. Part time regulars are married to their phones. We have to work as and when required and it is not unusual to work a late shift and early the next morning. Bouncing all over the place at all hours, forget family or having a life. We also have too many managers. Each trying to make their mark, so there is constant debate, constant change, and very little consistency. One boss will want something done one way, the next another. Change upsets and unsettles inmates and if they are like that, our shifts are going to be difficult. Health care is a major issue. They are regularly cutting off or changing inmates meds, they go nuts and we end up with Codes and issues, and they keep doing it. Inmates are supposed to have TVs off at 2300 but watch all night, sleep all morning and wake up at lunch. Try changing that by rules and end up wearing a honey bucket.
137. More difficult. I am a control officer. During my shifts in the past year I have experienced total failure of all door controls, lighting and CCTV and electronic communications (simultaneous). While alone in control or with two trainees. We have no intercoms (stenophone) for over 3 mos. Staff have been told that repairs will be completed by Christmas 2010, then April 2011, now Sept 2011. Increased inmate population has resulted in an increase in inmate movement and in PC population. Each results in more work for escorts and control officers.
138. More inmates in this jail. High counts. More violent inmates then when I started. Increase in violence in the jail.
139. Yes – Larger inmate numbers and fewer staff stationed on the units.
140. Drugs, double bunking, younger more aggressive/violent inmates.

141. I feel that the job has become less stressful through the experience that I have gained personally and the hell that I have gained professionally from other co-workers.
142. Younger inmates more violent. More work load. More risk of getting personally charged. No power to enforce rules. Less staffing on units. More movement of inmates through jail. More mentally disordered type patients (inmates). Younger staff with less time on the front line. Management making rules and doing things they don't understand, making the life of a CO harder.
143. Higher unit count - increase in inmate to staff ratio. Inmates are more aggressive towards staff and other inmates. Street drugs. Drug induced mental disorders. Mentally disordered inmate population has increased. Steady increase in threats of violence towards staff and inmates.
144. Increased inmate/staff ratio. Double bunking increase.
145. (1) Overcrowding has caused an increase in violence – beatings now are attempted murders. (2) Cannot manage the unit properly with one officer. (3) Afraid for my wellbeing when I'm at work. (4) Threatened and verbally abused almost every shift. (5) Institution is in crisis mode during every shift now. (6) Direct supervision model puts single staff in units in harm's way. (7) Inmates are more violent. (8) Inmates are affiliated to gangs and make threats. (9) Cannot keep up to job duties. (10) Management and ministry has lost touch in how to manage an overcrowded direct supervision model.
146. Yes! It has become more stressful because the unit I work in has changed to something completely different. It is now an overflow unit that feeds other living units, where there are all types of inmates being housed (GP, PC, Sectioned, ESP, Hideouts, etc.). Often the most difficult to manage inmates are in my unit. In addition, the way we are supposed to manage the different groups of inmates keep changing (e.g., the tier times). This was a challenge for unit staff and every time we made another change the inmates would get upset. Then there would be a constant flow of complaint forms from inmates that we/I had to process.
147. Most of all of the centre rules mean nothing to staff. When an inmate has been charged, he gets nothing – it is like a slap in the face. And most feel why should we uphold the centre rules when our safety means nothing to the people who make the rules.
148. More inmates, respond to more codes. More shanks, and more fights.
149. My job has become more difficult over the past year due to the nature of the amount of paperwork which coincides with direct lack of supervision of inmate behaviour. Being unable to monitor inmates because of logging mail, updating cornet log, and tedious other pointless paperwork take away from time monitoring any

inconsistent behaviour. Not only this, but also catering to the needs of 40 inmates, curious about a number of judicial issues, as well as personal issues, leads to the first aspect of the use of force model (Officer Presence) to be obsolete because of constant time being taken to answer and help with issues – and this doesn't include daily paper issues.

150. Much more stressful. Lack of experience and common sense are rampant. Things get overlooked and the training that does happen is insufficient. New staff learn from new staff. Too many people leave for other law enforcement to make more money. It is not an attractive place to work for those suitable to the profession. Overcrowding and the focus is on programs more than staff safety. Inmates should be locked down 23 hours if secure.
151. Yes, inmates are becoming more violent, especially the younger ones. Inmates have no respect for correctional officers.
152. Yes, more violence than ever before. Morale is at an all-time low.
153. The level of stress seems to be ever increasing. We deal with inmates who only increase the type of violence (always taking violence to new levels) they commit against other inmates and staff (both physical and verbal). Violence in the jail is seldom reported to the RCMP and sends the message to the inmate population that it is accepted as a day to day part of prison life (somewhat the way fighting is accepted as being “part of hockey”). Hope that makes sense.
154. Yes, the stress has increased greatly. Increased inmate to staff ratio. Increased work load. Increased violence from Inmates towards staff. Physical assaults on staff. Increased intimidation of staff by inmates. Staff getting body fluids, human waste thrown at them.
155. The younger type of inmate is changing in how violent they are and to what level of brutality they rise to over seemingly insignificant matters; staff assaults have increased steadily and in intensity of viciousness, resulting in serious injuries.
156. Do to my present post, less stressful. But over the years the codes have risen significantly. One to two code yellows used to be a busy month, now it's 1-2 every couple of days.
157. There are more group assaults, as a result, more serious assaults, of inmates since I started in 2006. There are more gang related assaults, as a result, more contact concerns that we need to worry about every day. More inmates are crammed into the units with 40:1 ratio, significantly increasing incidents and risk to staff, both in the unit and responding.
158. Yes, inmate count increased from 20 to 40. Warehousing inmates created more personal conflicts between inmates, leading to violence. Insufficient personal space because the unit was designed for 20 inmates. No privacy due to all cells are double bunking now. Again,

this created conflicts between inmates. All of the above contributed to the increase of violence in our work place.

159. Inmate to staff ratio is unmanageable (staff no longer have any control of units). Assaults are more violent and usually done by two or more Inmates. Too many duties to keep up with (paperwork, I/M requests, etc.) while trying to monitor units and USOs are too busy with escorts to be in the units to assist staff with monitoring. Ministry and management are so out of touch with the reality of what actually goes on in the secure side of the jail.
160. Yes it has, higher population. Up front (Deputy Warden, Warden) are so out to lunch and there is zero support from the people with the power to do anything. The wrong people have been and keep being promoted and tools keep being taken away from correctional officers and Inmates seem to have more rights.
161. Yes it has; we are dealing with a number of issues, but the main 3 are 1. Overcrowding, 2. Increase in violence, 3. Poor wages/benefits.
(1) The jails are overcrowded – when I started we had an inmate population of 150-160 inmates and we are now between 350-400 inmates – while staffing levels have remained the same or decreased.
(2) The frequency and level of violence has multiplied tenfold. Whether it is inmate on inmate or inmate on staff or inmates on inmate the use of violence and the use of weapons is out of control.
(3) We feel extremely undervalued for the work we do. The stress we endure and the fact that we put our physical wellbeing on the line every day when at work.
162. No
163. Yes, a lot of policy that don't make sense. More inmates, not enough staff – 60 to 1. More responsibility that becomes overwhelming. No support from managers.
164. It's become more stressful and difficult – we are forced to do a job that is underpaid and under-appreciated. The environment is negative & constricting pressures from above (Government & Managers) do nothing to assist the minds of the line staff. We are tasked to uphold the line and “make it work”... but when we do we are critiqued and punished for it... the “inmates make false complaints and abuse their given rights to the point where line staff have to walk on egg shells because managers are scared to have a back bone... plus changing times... all inmates are gang or drug motivated in some way... no tools to combat and feel safe! Under-appreciated/underpaid/insufficient resources.
165. Yes: Much higher counts, Staff Ratios, Increase Work Load, Change in Inmate Type: more violent & gang affiliated.
166. Yes. But only due to job rotation. New positions dealing with more violent inmates. Was a control officer before dealing with a different kind of stress.

167. Gang inmates
168. Yes – no support or communication from managers. No decisions being made by management quickly. Time off refused. Inmates threatening staff more. Increasing number of staff assaults. Increase in inmate fights and assaults. High counts.
169. Yes, higher numbers, more violent inmates. Time off refused, more threats, verbally, physically. More risk of serious injury. More stressful due to all of the above. More staff assaults. More violent inmate fights, assaults. More serious gang wars, more mentally disordered inmates.
170. The job has not changed much since I started. Some days are stressful, some are not.
171. The numbers of inmates is increasing all of the time.
172. Inmates have more rights than staff. We don't seem to have the control we used to have.
173. Yes – way more gang connections, way more cell phones and drugs muled in.
174. More stressful – the units are overcrowded, with guys sleeping on the floor, younger inmates who don't care, or government taking staff rights away to handle inmates.
175. More gangs and gang violence in the jail
176. Workload has gone up quite a bit due to high # of inmates per unit.
177. No
178. Yes, my job has become more stressful and difficult. The work load has quadrupled from inmates to documentation.
179. No
180. Yes, inmate population is higher now, causing more tension in the jail. The workload the employer has implemented on officers is higher.
181. Yes. Officers are the ones blamed for everything.
182. Union will not give us the proper representation we need.
183. Of course the increasing numbers have made it more difficult. It is much more violent, so this requires much more responsibilities, with this comes more stress.
184. During my first seven years of employment as a correctional officer staff to inmate ratio was one officer to twenty inmates. If the inmate count went over twenty we were double staffed. Even with double staffing the count on any unit never exceeded 28 inmates. Most inmates were single bunked, and only a few were double bunked. This kept work load manageable, and a lot less stressful. Since 2002, the inmate count, and staff to inmate ratio has increased to one staff for

up to 60 inmates; and almost every inmate is double bunked. This has increased stress among the inmates and resulted in increased violence in our work place, and drastically increased work-load and stress for staff.

185. Yes. I feel like the inmate-to-staff ratio is completely unreasonable and unsafe. There have been many times where I feel important information about new/current inmates are held from staff.
186. Nobody cares anymore. I just want to finish the day in one peace.
187. No one cares what we have to say about our job.
188. Have you ever read the papers this year? YES!!!
189. Every day I deal with scum and get shit thrown at me. This is acceptable?? Every year it seems that there's less staff and more inmates. Management doesn't seem to do anything about it.
190. I feel they care more about inmates' rights and making jail a nice cozy place to visit, than our safety and wellbeing.
191. More violent gangs. They don't care what physical harm comes to us.

Appendix B: The Most Difficult Parts of the Job

Please describe the most difficult parts of your job – try to list at least three points, with the most difficult first.

Most Difficult – #1:

1. Responding to Code Blues and not knowing what type of scene you may encounter. Especially after responding to a murder (inmate death) in the past.
2. Dealing with mentally disordered inmates.
3. Dealing with management
4. Tolerance for negative rude hateful behaviour towards your uniform and role by angry inmates
5. Inadequate staffing
6. Constant threat of physical conflict
7. Staff to inmate ratio
8. Managing an increasingly more difficult inmate population
9. Trying to deal and reason with inmates who really belong in a psych ward
10. High counts, overcrowding
11. I work in a very negative environment.
12. Violent nature of inmates
13. Responding to code yellows knowing the unknown sometimes if it's staff or inmates in a physical altercation
14. Consistency across leadership
15. Poor management
16. Workload
17. Management
18. The issues of dealing with the risks presented by inmates towards staff & themselves

19. Being alone with 38 inmates who hate you because you are a figure of authority.
20. Trying to stay safe in such a violent atmosphere.
21. Workload
22. Trying to keep the peace in the inmate population.
23. 40:1 ratio (inmate to officer)
24. Inmate to staff ratio.
25. Trying to keep job stress in check.
26. Being needed in many places at once, not enough time to fully help.
27. Dealing with irrational & belligerent inmates.
28. Dealing with mentally disordered inmates
29. Violence against officers. The physical and emotional damage staff suffer when they are assaulted. Also, the effect this has on the morale of staff.
30. Being bounced around unit to unit. Not being able to work the same unit very often.
31. Cost reduction measures limit resources.
32. Increased counts.
33. Dealing with the overcrowding of inmates and their “Gangsta” mentality and not having enough staff coverage during night shifts to adequately cover the high number of inmates.
34. Keeping the peace.
35. Compensation-comparatively low wages are a major source of poor morale and stress. Why are we expected to work with the same inmates as police and Federal Corrections officers do, but for a fraction of the salary? This affects perceptions of self worth and “professionalism”.
36. Long shifts.
37. Enduring periods of intense hostility from a group of inmates for hours or days on end.
38. Dealing with staff who are very poorly under trained. Very unsafe.
39. Dangerous Inmates living on normal ranges, able to assault staff.
40. The human factor – over crowding of the centre has one officer supervising 40 inmates, most of whom exhibit behaviour and language toward a solitary officer.
41. Inconsistency with the way officers work, making my life difficult when I have to explain to inmates why they have to do certain things.
42. Unpredictable schedule (part-time)

43. Incompetent staff.
44. Workload at times.
45. No support from management.
46. Coping with change.
47. Being on call. Not knowing when I work or have days off. Not knowing how much money I will make in a month.
48. Working with inmates that generally don't like us.
49. Being on call
50. Workload – seems the Unit staff are doing double the amount of work. Which affect security & Safety. Staff become stressed, tired and complacent quicker.
51. Constant hostile atmosphere, verbal abuse, confrontation and possibility of abuse, confrontation and possibility of violence at any time.
52. Being honest with Management, supervisors and schedulers without being judged or treated unfairly.
53. Responding to two inmates stabbing another inmate over 27 times and not having any idea what we respond to.
54. Dealing with management
55. Inmate violence and threats
56. Lack of direction
57. Covering sick leave
58. Consistent hours
59. Huge amount of paperwork to process charges, risk assessments, inmate Complaints, staffing issues, incident reports.
60. I find it very hard to stay positive in such a negative environment. This affects not only my professional life, but my personal life as well.
61. Being on call
62. Getting hours/work availability
63. Communication
64. It is difficult when I do this job everyday to feel so under appreciated every time I read my pay stub
65. Time management.
66. Inmate numbers
67. Managers/Supervisors – no real jail experience making decisions that affect others. No training for those supervisors/managers to better develop their skills.
68. Lack of support (management)

69. Inmates have too much freedom. They become violent when told no and we have little recourse against them.
70. Interviewing difficult clients.
71. "Leadership Team" – not there for staff – untrustworthy
72. Fulfilling duties (added) that management has no experience doing or attempting.
73. Keeping staff safe.
74. Over population of inmates. Having to deal with constant inmate questions with little or no support.
75. Poor management.
76. 40 inmates to 1 staff.
77. Managing all the different contact concerns between Inmates – gangs, protective custody, unstable offenders
78. Dealing with mentally disordered inmates
79. Overcrowding, inmate to staff ratio is highly skewed... (to the advantage of the inmates). You are outnumbered.
80. Dealing with overpopulation of inmates
81. Dealing with a management regime that doesn't appear to be competent.
82. Reduced Staff
83. Management does not discipline inmates as necessary
84. Dealing with the stress of the inmates on a daily basis.
85. Staffing - more unit support officers and double staff per unit. Violence is a daily occurrence, and the frequency and seriousness of assaults is growing. We need 2 staff per unit.
86. Management
87. Lack of support from Management. We are asked to "charge" inmates under the CAR, but when it goes to Warden's Court the charge is dropped or IM is found not guilty b/c they take the Inmate's word over ours. As well punishments are non-existent.
88. Living unit counts have doubled with the same staffing levels in units.
89. Dealing with mentally ill or violent inmates
90. Overworked and exhausted by the end of the day
91. Dealing with confrontational inmates i.e. getting compliance from non-compliant Inmates.
92. Being on call constantly – very difficult to plan life when you don't know your work schedule.

93. Attempting to mitigate potential issues on the unit by moving inmates between cells and cellmates as to avoid violence & bullying or “heaving”. (You spend time dealing with the potentially big issues on the unit).
94. How to get managers to listen to issues that arise + have them understand + work with the line staff in decision-making and changes. Many managers have no experience working as a correctional officer on a living unit.
95. Dealing with management
96. Dealing with unpredictable mentally disordered offenders. You never know what they are going to do – throw feces @ you; punch you; spit at you; grab you.
97. Responding to code yellows and the resulting paperwork.
98. Overcrowding, there are not enough beds to house these inmates! There are more agitated, aggressive, belligerent, and the type of inmate nowadays is different, they don’t have respect! They are more violent and seems they are all starting to affiliate with some gang.
99. Trying to maintain control of up to 40 inmates by myself.
100. Understaffed – too many inmates to too little staff.
101. High inmate counts.
102. Dealing with the “buildup” of daily stress and potential hazards. Over time many things build up and something often small can trigger an unusual response.
103. Being on call. Not having a set schedule.
104. Completing day to day duties such as inmate checks and counts on time; security inspections on time due to the increase of inmates and their increased demand for staff attention often leaves staff with not enough time to perform duties.
105. Prevention of violence towards myself and other inmates.
106. Control of inmates.
107. Dealing with extreme violence, and having no consequences for the assault.
108. Not knowing who you are dealing with + what reaction they may have to something you say/doing part of your job.
109. Workload due to increased inmate counts. Management expects to run like we did 7 years ago, but the amount of inmates has doubled.
110. Very aggressive inmates.
111. Maintaining proper security of all of our inmates at all times.
112. Maintaining a positive + professional demeanour in such a toxic environment.

113. A lack of knowledge + rule enforcement by management towards inmates + lack of support from management for their staff when staff enforce the rules.
114. Supervising overcrowded units.
115. Increasing count – staff to inmate is 40 to 1.
116. Overcrowding! Workload increase in inmate numbers, paperwork, reports, movements, problems, peer issues among populations, behaviour problems.
117. Increased counts.
118. Risk of contact with disease or illness, detrimental on a long term.
119. Dealing with reactive instead of proactive management.
120. Inconsistencies within the Management, Supervisors and line staff.
121. There have been many new changes to the unit schedule and at times it can be very confusing and misleading. That brings us into conflict with the inmates if we are not up to speed on the changes.
122. Monitoring and supervising 40 inmates and trying to ensure their safety from their peers.
123. Dealing with so many inmates.
124. Working in a living unit with 60 inmates. It is difficult to monitor all inmates and worry about their personal staff and my own.
125. Management: not caring or listening to staff concerns, managers lying when the truth would do, managers not dealing with fellow managers until Victoria is informed about dirty deeds.
126. Increased workload
127. 60 to 1 inmates
128. Verbal abuse
129. Dealing with daily threats to inmates and staff.
130. Trying to observe and deal with too many inmates for one officer.
131. Violent inmates
132. Dealing with other staff.
133. Excessive number of inmates having to be managed by one officer on the units.
134. Feeling safe. I struggle everyday to make my heart and mind believe I am safe at work and that my government would not give me an unsafe workplace.
135. Managing inmate law-defying behaviour with the attendant possibility of psychological and physical violence or threat.

136. Making sure that the dentist, doctor, street nurse, frequent monitor parade, nurse parade, psychologist, psychiatrist and medication parade all get completed at the same time. All this while not mixing general population.
137. The hardest part of my job is watching everyone at all times in order to keep people safe.
138. Diffusing verbal/physical confrontations between inmates or inmates and myself.
139. Trying to live on call, have a life-as a part timer.
140. Lack of respect for unit staff and their efforts by senior management.
141. More rights for inmates than staff.
142. Lack of support by Government.
143. In circumstances with officer duties on units different = different inmate expectations = a harder job to manage an inmate population.
144. Amount of inmates on the units and monitoring them. Double staff needed.
145. Higher unit counts (staff / inmate ratio)
146. Increased medically disordered offender population.
147. Dealing with violence in the institution: multiple Code Yellows on day to day basis.
148. Dealing with difficult inmates who get upset really easy and when they do they become a threat to the safety of staff and other inmates.
149. Monitor 60 inmates with consistent movement of inmates, courts, transfers, etc.
150. Dealing with inmates and the unexpected. First responder.
151. Meeting the demands of management – unrealistic expectations with a 40 inmate unit. (Job performance) It's difficult to be happy with what you do when no one else is.
152. Overcrowding.
153. Staff to inmate ratio
154. Responding to codes.
155. Dealing with new staff – We have a large percentage of new staff who are trained by new staff and learn bad habits. Senior staff seem to be viewed as “negative” and are isolated in a way from new staff to avoid contaminating them with negativity.
156. Increased inmate to staff ratio.
157. Witnessing violence with 2 or more inmates and trying to control the other 30 or 40 to avoid further participation in the melee.

158. Calming down a violent inmate who is threatening harm to staff or self.
159. Management, specifically, their complete lack of care or understanding of safety issues.
160. Inmate's drug got cut off without prior notification to inmate. Even methadone re-order creates unnecessary stress for unit officers.
161. Trying to run the units safely with too many inmates to monitor, not to mention the daily paper/computer work that has to be completed.
162. Not getting supported.
163. Overcrowding of the gaols – most lockups are over 200% of capacity.
164. The negativity.
165. Task saturation
166. Enforcement of Rules of Inmates, because upper management is weak. There are major inconsistencies about which rules should be enforced and to what degree.
167. Harassment
168. Problematic inmates - "new school cons" who don't have fears and respect for authority.
169. High Counts
170. Dealing with high profile and high risk/violent inmates in jail. Constant threat of assault.
171. Management
172. Cannot do your job properly due to inmate counts/management giving you shit for not doing your job.
173. Staff/to inmate ratios too high + impossible to do a proper job.
174. Keeping up with policy changes and standing order changes. These areas change constantly and sometimes the changes are good and sometimes not at all.
175. Not trusting supervisors.
176. Placing staff in dangerous positions.
177. Inmates having better access to internet and cellphones
178. Over crowding
179. Not always able to be aware of what is going on in the unit due to being busy.
180. Dealing with inmates
181. Too many inmates.
182. Isolation

183. Trying to maintain a safe workplace with a large population of inmates and low staffing
184. Violence against officers. The physical and emotional damage staff suffer when they are assaulted. Also, the effect this has on the morale of staff.
185. Showing up.
186. Lack of control. Very limited and minor repercussions for inmates.
187. Trying to adequately provide safe and secure supervision of inmates.
188. The ratio between inmates and staff.
189. People in charge keep their heads buried in the sand.
190. No respect.
191. No self defense training... nothing??
192. Management not caring about our concerns.
193. Watching Victoria make decisions that destroy a once honourable profession.
194. Upper management.

ABNORMAL

Working Conditions

Appendix C: Is This Job Unusual?

Is your job unusual, in terms of its working conditions?
If yes, please explain why. If no, please explain why.

1. Dealing with inmates masturbating, having sex, doing drugs, making weapons. 2) Mentally disordered inmates painting cells with feces, eating their feces. 3) Dealing with numerous different gangs and the violence that accompanies them.
2. You are constantly dealing with a population with poor social skills – very difficult to remain positive + non judgemental.
3. Imagine going to work knowing that you are going to deal with conflict, tell inmates things they do not want to hear, profanity and threats made towards staff, likely witness or be involved in a violent act. Exposure to all bodily fluids.
4. Red tape and bureaucracy
5. We are working with a captive population who reside in a premise that they do not generally want to be in. The majority have a history of anti-social behaviour. Imagine how difficult it may be to show forgiveness and compassion to some one who has beaten up your mother randomly, or worse.
6. Actual and implied violence is common. Swearing is common. Jokes that would get you fired in most jobs are seen as funny, very funny.
7. Very negative work environment due to inmate population
8. It is a job where you are dealing with a criminal subculture with antisocial behaviour and rules. As a correctional officer, you can never truly relax and always have to be thinking about the worst case “what if” situation occurring.
9. Inmate to staff ratio of 60:1.
10. Not too many jobs you go to wondering if today is going to be the day your luck runs out and you get assaulted or exposed to feces and urine or having hot meals thrown on you. Or witnessing serious assaults take place and then wondering if management is going to discipline you. Dealing with high profile gang members whose

arrogance and lawyers constantly remind you of their rights while they violate others with their violence.

11. We are always outnumbered by inmates – high counts. Low wages – federal correctional officers make 20% more money
12. I work with inmates. It is a horrible group of individuals.
13. Exposed to contamination and bio-hazards, exposed to violence on a daily basis – inmates in a physical altercation – Code Blues – inmate deaths, Code Yellows – staff in danger; inmates in physical altercations.
14. Violent workplace, bureaucratic attitudes of new staff, constantly changing management style.
15. The work atmosphere is very negative in a jail.
16. As officers, we are expected to do too much. We do not have the ability to keep up our workload and maintain a safe and secure unit, let alone facility. In my opinion, we should have a separate staff member specifically assigned to do all paperwork, except the unit logs and paysheets – to allow unit staff to effectively maintain the units. Another option is mandatory long lock-ups to help us catch up.
17. One officer looks after 40 inmates all alone. This was a good idea when you looked after 20 inmates, but now they are double bunked. This officer is all alone because his “unit support office” is too busy elsewhere to be there.
18. We are always at risk of being assaulted by inmates. It is draining to have to watch what you do, what you say to these inmates, some of them are drug addicts coming off the street, some are murderers that are looking at life in jail with nothing to lose. We have to work on a unit alone with society’s most dangerous people.
19. Because we go to work each day putting our lives on the line, working in conditions with violence, death, drugs, blood, stress, vomit, urine, serious assaults, feces, threats to staff.
20. Office area poorly designed – workload increased due to higher counts & staffing not there.
21. First we have a lot of problems with the security system. Which needs to be upgraded. That can make things difficult when transporting inmates. Inmates in general are disrespectful, uncooperative and always plotting something. They smuggle drugs, make weapons out of things that they are allowed to have. Basically I am a servant to the inmate. They can yell at me, they can spit on me, they can throw feces on me, and through all that I should smile and show them respect.
22. 40 criminals all in for different things & only 1 officer with no means to defend yourself.

23. Of course is an unusual job where “average Joe” gets exposed to bodily fluids, pepper spray, death, and not knowing if you will go home at the end of the day with our inmate and staff ratio.
24. My job working conditions are unusual because being a unit support staff I am usually at an incident first or close to first and I see what has occurred first hand.
25. In charge of 40 inmates, managing them, making sure there is no chaos. Also, responding to and breaking up fights among both genders. Definitely too many staff always re-deployed, which makes it feel as though there is no support. Supervisors are too busy or don't want to deal with the issue.
26. We deal with the society that the general public wants to lock away. We deal with the most vile & violent people and to boot, there are 60 inmates to 1 staff.
27. The working environment is permeated with a high level of stress. There is constant hostility directed at officers. Hostility, from offenders for whom violence is a way of life. The constant threat of being assaulted, suffering grievous bodily harm, being taken hostage, being contaminated with an infectious disease threatened, etc. Take a toll on officers, not unlike peace-keeping soldiers who are surrounded by threats and hostility.
28. We work with inmates in close proximity, with no weapons and the violence and hazards are very great.
29. I work by myself with a special classification of inmate.
30. My building is extremely old. The physical conditions are poor.
31. This job is unusual just by the nature of the first 18 questions of this survey. What other job exposes people to this? Police are exposed, but for short periods of time and then they move on, leaving the mess behind. (I know – I was a police officer for many years before entering corrections) Corrections officers are exposed to, and have to clean up, whatever substances an inmate can, and in some cases, do literally throw at them. We are exposed to the worst collection of human beings our society has managed to produce. Unlike police who deal with them on a short term basis, we deal with not just one at a time, but dozens at a time, all day long in a closed unit environment with little more than a pager to summon aid if attacked.
32. Negative environment. Long hours. Different shifts. Different inmates (they change) (new faces).
33. I am still on call so I never know what job I will be doing.
34. Absolutely. It is an artificial environment unlike any other kind of working environment I've ever experienced. It has a culture that exists only here and which dictates, among many other things, that

- the colour of my shirt dictates that I am the de facto enemy for all these men that I live with day after day.
35. This is the worst I have seen it in 10 years. Very poor trained staff. Unsafe due to broken or faulty equipment. Building itself is poorly kept. Run down condition. Support is lacking from the top all the way to the bottom. Exposed to extreme violent incidents. Exposure to garbage leaking bags and poor clean-up of blood and other fluids.
 36. As a CO we can work at least 30 different positions any given day. We must know all these by the book or face discipline. We are also in charge of 40 sometimes 60 inmates while working alone. We face death, injury and disease. And are not acknowledged for it. We work a very sad job, with no motivation.
 37. Simply getting up in the morning uncertain of whether you will be harmed, spat on, shanked, witness a beating, blood, vomit, feces, or be the victim of manipulation and hostile behaviour makes the job “unusual”.
 38. You deal with not the average person. Many need individual approaches.
 39. While many jobs require attention to people, I think that the type of clients, along with the amount of work, is difficult.
 40. Most people in their work lives don't have to deal with people who are locked up for whatever the reason is. You may end up being the only person in a unit with 40 inmates. These inmates don't care about anything but getting what they feel is their right. It is unusual working conditions because as an officer you are locked up with these inmates for as long as 12 hours a day and it is up to you to control what happens in that unit.
 41. Everyday situations arise that are different. Dealing with inmates and staff.
 42. Being a paid hostage that deals with some of the worst things imaginable. Also babysitting adults sounds pretty unusual.
 43. Being on call all the time. Getting called into work half an hour before a shift.
 44. We get physically assaulted when we go to work. We get shit thrown at us.
 45. Violence is becoming normal, to see a guy's jaw broken in 3 places, or to watch an inmate smearing feces on himself and all over the cell, or to see a guy masturbating 30 times a day becomes another day at the office. We see people at their worst regularly and try not to let it effect us mentally, but it does. You become distrustful of people, you judge people on the street regularly, you become very aware of your surroundings when in public.

46. Officer isolation – Unit officers by themselves with 25 to 40 inmates; Constant violence – and situational awareness required at all times. Witnessing/being involved with violence and verbal abuse is routine, “considered normal”.
47. Forced to work with unstable and mentally disordered offenders
48. No other job requires you to be prepared to have someone’s urine & feces thrown at you on a daily basis? No other job allows violence to happen and just accepts it as “part of the job”.
49. Dealing with scum of society, with no backing from our bosses.
50. There is no other job like ours. Exposure to violence on a daily basis. High stress due to potential risk of serious injury.
51. New area within centre - no guidelines put in place to give clear direction on the areas operation
52. Living & moving schedule. Staff are often displaced without notice. Inmates have been allowed to bring in lawyers and consequently are rapidly learning how to manipulate our system to their benefit. Charges are constantly getting dismissed because of technical mistakes. Working (mental conditions) push people to a negative level.
53. Working in different areas every shift does not allow you to build a rapport – that can distress working units.
54. Long hours, fast paced tempo
55. The people we deal with, address, transport & supervise are under-educated, and for the most part very violent. The overall population knows anger & violence as their emotions & their best way to deal with their issues. Most of the inmates do not think of consequences & if they do, they simply don’t care.
56. We work with different inmates, some civil, some angry sociopaths. It takes a certain kind of person to be a corrections officer and I’m proud to work side by side with the best. It’s why I love my job.
57. Poor ventilation in units causing more illness and chronic allergies.
58. I work most of the time in the Control tower where it is always busy and hectic dealing with all movements, communications and emergencies.
59. My position is unique within the jail. I have been on secondment for the last three years as an instructor and have now taken on the role of recruiter.
60. Other than working on a unit where cells do not have toilets and inmates have to regularly sleep on the floor due to over crowding
61. For the most part I sit in an office and do paperwork. I respond to codes and other issues. The abuse (verbal and physical) makes the days hard. The way the inmates have more rights than we do. The

CAR process is a joke, they are making it beyond a reasonable doubt instead of the balance of probabilities.

62. One unarmed officer to control 40 inmates.
63. We work with violent offenders with very little in the way of protection for ourselves.
64. Yes, in that there are few desk & officer type posts in the jail setting. Not that a number of the desk job posts are similar to a normal office in the community.
65. Favouritism. Disrespect. No staff experience. No manager or supervisors with backbone or integrity.
66. (1) High inmate count. (2) More gang conflicts/tensions. (3) Less respectful inmates. (4) More violent inmates, including mentally disordered offenders with wildly unpredictable behaviours.
67. No other job is unpredictable as this job, with violent offenders crammed into such a small area. We receive so little training because we are so far from the justice institute.
68. Violence, intimidation, victimization and drug abuse are every day activities. There is a constant level of alertness and consciousness of the need for personal safety built into every thing I do.
69. 40:1 inmate to staff ratio in the units – locked in the unit with the inmates, I have to deal with numerous people at a time that: hate women, physical/mental problems, anger issues, violent, etc.
70. Work in good crew – safer due to number of staff on shift.
71. Working in a jail is very different than an average job (office worker). Just being exposed to bodily fluids and witnessing fights, assaults or suicides attempts makes it unusual, especially since we get desensitized to it after a short period of time working here.
72. Our job exposes us to raw animal violence that we see enough that we have become desensitized to it. It is not normal. Then we have managers who are so detached from what a dangerous place their staff are exposed to + are more concerned with spending the budget on fixing the gazebo outside or giving the secretaries a fireplace than addressing problems in the jail.
73. Working with an overcrowded facility exposes me to more danger. Lack of protective gear also endangers my job. There is no combat training provided. High stress environment.
74. It is unusual in comparison to every other job in the world but in the context of corrections it is not. My working conditions on a living unit are the same as every other officer in the province: Absolutely terrible.

75. We work with very high risk offenders and they can turn on you or anyone for that matter. You have to be ready for any situation. That makes it a stressful environment to work in.
76. As the healthcare officer I handle blood, urine, saliva, feces on a regular basis. I also see almost every inmate who is sick, beaten up or tried to hurt himself.
77. Of course it's unusual. The general public don't want to know what happens here. In addition, most people wouldn't do our job even if I paid them to. Seeing inmates seriously assaulting one another on almost a daily basis, or standing ankle deep in feces because inmates decided to flood their cells are not "normal" working conditions.
78. We are isolated. We work all day by ourselves in a negative, sometimes dangerous environment. When problems happen and you have to ask for help you get looked down on. We are just as "locked-in" as the inmates are. We can't leave either unless "they" say so. Our jobs seem pretty easy, mundane but at any second we could be harmed, hurt, attacked, whatever. We always have to be wary and ready for anything - pretty hard to do when you're sick or over-tired.
79. We deal with society's most unwanted and undesirable people. These people are true deviants and psycho/sociopaths. They care only of themselves and they see us (blueshirts as they call us) as nobody. This is in no way a normal way of working. We need to be on our guard constantly.
80. It's unlike any other type of work in that we are exposed daily to fights, gangs, bodily fluids and other things. If you were to tell someone they would not believe you as to how the jail society is in general. For instance, someone getting a beating for leaving some crumbs in the butter dish or calling someone a goof. Letting the microwave beep too long will get you in trouble. Flushing your toilet at the wrong time of day.
81. Work with specific type of inmate (Mentally disordered offender) in special handling unit. Work with partner in a two-unit couplet with mental health coordinator on staff. Not all staff want or should work in this specialized workplace. Work close with healthcare staff and mental health coordinators.
82. Yes, it is unusual to work in overcrowding facilities, with inmate to staff ratios as high as they are. I don't feel safe, and I am paid less than a grocery store employee.
83. Shift work. Away from family in evenings and weekends. Sleeping at odd hours. Basically working alone on a living unit. Breaks are often work related, picking up mail and supplies and conferring with peers/supervisors – not breaks! Confrontation is common – trying to obtain compliance from non-compliant inmates. Working alone facing many adversaries.

84. Shift work means coming and going at all times of the day. Being on call to fill shifts means I won't be where I am working until I arrive on shift and have to adjust to wherever I am needed – General Population, Protective Custody, Special Duties, etc.
85. As a correctional officer, my job leaves me to deal with unpredictable and potentially hazardous situations everyday. Inmates can be, at the best of times, unpredictable and aggressive towards each other and towards officers. As a result, I need to be observing and assessing my surroundings, thinking quickly and making fast decisions. This can leave me feeling stressed and anxious by the end of my shift.
86. Work in control - which is the area that runs the entire building. We call all codes, fires or any other emergencies. Monitor the fire panels + all the various emergency systems panels in the control room. Monitor the alarms that staff wear for safety. We access + move all staff + inmates through the entire building. It is very stressful + fast paced position. You need to be able to call all codes in a cool, calm manner + get staff through them in a very quick, efficient + safe manner.
87. Correctional officers deal with inmates, violence, etc, most jobs don't.
88. We deal with a variety of different/unpredictable/violent offenders. Therefore, working conditions are always going to be stressful. However, the general public doesn't see what job we do on a day to day basis. The stress we endure and take with us every day. The forensic hospitals don't take most of these unpredictable mentally disordered offenders – therefore we have to deal with them the best we can. We are not qualified to do this, but we do it because we have no other choice.
89. It has the highest inmate to staff ratios in the province. The turnover of staff within the institution is very high. Nothing ever seems to change within the institution.
90. Who goes to work with the anticipation that they could be assaulted, killed, raped, etc. at any given time! Your stress levels are constantly up and down everyday! Your family can be threatened and often-times this happens. You and ultimately your family can be exposed to all the communicable diseases that are here. You witness violence constantly as it happens! And most times you are by yourself until help gets there. Even when you're on the street you can run into inmates that could harm you or your family. The mental exhaustion far exceeds the physical. It changes your personality (all of us in different ways). It is constant negativity. There is no support from the employer. You have to use force (physical) all the time. Whether to gain compliance or to protect yourself or inmates.
91. Shift requirements. Lack of sleep. And a very volatile work place.

92. I have never worked at a job where you have to watch your back so much. The area I work in is the only area in the jail where inmates cannot be secured in their cells. This leads to stress from knowing if a riot happens, there is very little I can do to stop it from escalating.
93. Of course! I am a correctional officer in a max security jail. I am not an office worker or anything like that. There are real dangers to this job. Personally I believe body armour & access to weapons would be a good idea. As well as rethinking the unit design. For what we do & the dangers & risks involved I believe we are not properly paid or benefited.
94. It is a high stress job and doesn't pay overly well.
95. Most people work in an environment where getting along and co-operation is the norm. Working here staff deal with uncooperative, abusive, violent, and mentally disordered inmates with ever increasing regularity. Often these people have communicable diseases, open sores and are generally filthy. They are poorly educated, which makes communicating more difficult and often frustrating.
96. I have to control and maintain peace without weapons or a vest. More inmates confined to the same space equals dangerous circumstances.
97. The very high inmate counts.
98. I see some very messed up things. We have a very high percentage of mentally disordered inmates in the system. The violence I see is horrendous, hard to see. People smashing brew jugs on another's face, almost killing him.
99. I'm sure it is but I have not worked anywhere else. My family + friends tell me, things like that don't happen @ their work place!
100. Our lives are in peril of danger everyday. We make less money than the people who fix the building, yet we are constantly put in unusual situations where our lives are at potential risk. We are at least 50% walking around with post-traumatic stress, from the exposure to violence. We submerge ourselves in the criminal underworld every 4 days and are expected to be normal citizens for 4 days. Unusual working conditions, YES!
101. I deal with a lot of inmates, codes, mentally disordered, suicidal individuals, aggressive behaviour.
102. Isolation within center away from staff is unlike any other employment experience I've ever had. I think an after shift debriefing could be as helpful as our pre-shift briefing.
103. (1) The computer system that runs the jail has been failing for some time + attempts to fix it have been either few or far between or long in coming. (2) Post traumatic stress is a large concern due to the amount of violence + seriousness of the assaults, threats to staff,

exposure to violence, immersion into the criminal subculture, always alert to everything around you on + off work, threats to family members. (3) The extreme negativity of this environment is far above any standards. (4) Contract reviews/renewals – no pay increases, no medical increases, no time off increases, management issues. (5) Just being “normal” on days off is very hard. We are trained in this environment to be on our toes every minute; to be at risk in a violent situation + accept it as standard; to see people beat to unconsciousness and to accept that as standard; to be threatened... What on earth could be normal about us in this job?

104. At 350 inmates in a “GAOL” built for 168 we work everyday in an atmosphere that is negative.
105. Many people outside of corrections do not understand what we do or the difficulties we deal with. A bad day for someone at the office can be that the photocopier ran out of toner, for us it can be a staff assault, having feces thrown at you, and dealing with difficult inmates.
106. I spend a 12 hour shift locked in a room with 36 offenders. I have to try to balance rapport and pro-social modelling against their antisocial behaviours and values. I have to try to supervise their interactions, ensure no-one is victimized, ensure myself and other staff are safe, enforce R&R, all the while following strict rules and guidelines that only staff have to follow. I am regularly exposed to violence, indecent acts, confrontations, see people at their worst. I have to do all this while maintaining a professional facade and burying the stress of it. But at least I’m badly paid, and they just get our pension benefits.
107. Job is different everyday. One day could be managing several combative inmates. Another day might have urine, blood, or feces thrown at you. Another day you may be assaulted by an inmate.
108. This job is far from usual, we do a job most people do not want to do, let alone have the level of risks we endure day to day. Often we deal with confrontation with an inmate from Day 1. Typically, jobs adjust as we fit into the role. Corrections does not – it is a constant dynamic, with constant pressure and negativity.
109. I spend my entire work day with 50-60 people who would be happy to see me dead.
110. During the majority of my career with exception of the last 7 years, the staffing to inmate ratio has changed. Units over 21 had two staff working on the unit. Within the last 7 years this has changed to 1 staff with up to 40 inmates and some centres up to 60 inmates. However the Management team have more than tripled their staffing levels.
111. You are alone, for the most part with 40 inmates and you have your gift of conversation for protection. The units were built for 20

- inmates not 40. Tension does get high and the amount of assaults is rising. On 4 nights counting every 30 min can be monotonous and mentally draining when normal people are sleeping. The environment can be very negative and violent so you need the ability to leave all that at work.
112. I work in segregation, where I do have to deal with the worst of the worst behaved inmates.
 113. We deal with dangerous offenders and even mentally disordered offenders. At any time there can be an assault or a threat. We at times are short staff and are not safe from violence. If the power to the buildings fails we are at risk from hostage takings. To sum it up, there is nothing usual about this job.
 114. Our authority to fire inmates who work on the units. Even though we have worked for years and know which inmates should be given a job. Reasons vary. Supervisors of programs feel they know better, even though they haven't worked a unit in years.
 115. Everyday we are dealing with the perception something that puts us at risk could happen. Just the thought of this can be very stressful.
 116. Low wages, higher danger, 60 to 1 inmates.
 117. When you are thrown into an open area with 40 inmates to 1 staff trying to correct their behaviour and make sure other inmates and myself stays safe, I'd consider that unusual. They have access to many items that can be used as weapons, and it puts my life in jeopardy daily.
 118. Compared to what? Yes, because I work with criminals all day and most people don't.
 119. We don't work with normal people. The inmates are sick people that we lock up.
 120. You are always around inmates who have violent tendencies and you have to work in close quarters with them. The threat of biohazards are around you, as soon as you walk into the building.
 121. As a correctional officer we have to wear many hats. We have to be caring and understanding, we have to be firm and commanding and we have to be prepared for violent physical attacks at any given time. We are exposed to wide array of bodily fluids from saliva, blood, vomit and urine to feces – and it's all in a day's work.
 122. No other self-respecting job subjects people to blood, urine, and feces being thrown at them. No other job locks you up with 60 violent criminals in one area with no escape route.
 123. Yes, my job is unusual as I deal with "clients" who consider me "the enemy" in terms of values. This value conflict is invariably captured in staff assault, abuse, and threats. I wear a uniform symbolizing the authority my clients "live" to defy.

124. I work in a specialized post. I co-ordinate inmate movement through health care.
125. It's a jail, therefore you deal with all sorts of people and situations. You see all sorts of unusual situations with mentally disordered and hostile offenders.
126. We are working with a population of individuals that in most cases chooses to offend. Once incarcerated they don't care about their safety, the safety of others or staff. These types of inmates are very dangerous, and stressful. We work in an environment where we are managing individuals in a place that they don't want to be. Where we enforce regulations and rules (that by human nature) they don't want to follow.
127. Few jobs expect such military discipline. Expect you to hold large numbers of aggressive, manipulative, disturbed people in check "alone". Expect you to wear honey buckets and insults, assaults as if you signed up for it, then don't support you.
128. General. 1. I work in a jail. 2. I usually work with one or two other staff (not alone like unit staff). 3. I have very little direct contact with inmates.
129. Underpaid to walk into a risky environment every day. Every situation is potentially dangerous.
130. We deal with "all" types of personalities. Mental health to ADHD.
131. No, the expectations are those I have come to expect as a new unit officer.
132. I deal with people who society thinks of being unsuitable for communities they have every disease and virus in the book and hate us. Nobody sees what I do and nobody cares. I deal with up to 60 inmates every day and most, if not all, of those interactions are negative.
133. It is a 24/7 operation. Shift work/shift patterns. Subjected to violence, violent acts on a daily basis. Very negative and unpredictable environment. Health conditions/germs/virus prevalent among inmate population and this increases the risk of spreading to staff.
134. Offender population is overcrowded and heated emotionally. Offenders lack anger management and coping skills. Officers spend too much time diffusing intense situations. Once a situation escalates officers are exposed to violence and increased risk of transferable disease – offender population has increased incidence of Hep C, HIV, MRSA, etc.
135. Working in a dangerous, negative environment, dealing with inmates who have hepatitis, AIDS, T.B., quarantined inmates with viruses. Exposure to body fluids, blood, urine, feces. Threat of being assaulted or killed on the job.

136. I'm working with very difficult offenders who do not want to comply, who get upset, angry and hostile easily. Every shift I never know what could happen or what I might have to deal with. My living unit is very challenging and difficult because of the diverse clients. I have to deal with – PCs, GPs, ESPs, Sectioned.
137. Very negative environment, where the inmates are very disrespectful! Bad violent acts towards inmates and staff. Working with mentally challenged inmates. Various different languages with no help. But most of all, the hard working staff don't get any recognition, only the preferred staff get the pat on the back.
138. Not every job you have has to put up with body fluid and weapons, drugs, and fighting amongst inmates.
139. How many individuals work in an environment where manipulation, psychological warfare and barbaric violence can be seen, not only daily, but hourly. Not only that, you constantly have the needs of management and clients constantly in a contradictory tug of war. Add also the elements of body fluids (blood, feces, urine, saliva, vomit), communicable diseases, and violence into the mix.
140. The nature of being an officer. The workload increases while staffing decreases. Less full time employees per inmate. We are overworked and more is steadily added. Yet we are expected to be accountable for our mistakes. We are forced to take shortcuts and cut corners to try to keep up. Too much work causes stress and burnout.
141. Dealing with hostile, violent offenders who have no regard and respect for others.
142. We deal with the worst of society. HIV, hepatitis, etc. Ratios are ever increasing within our prisons. Violence is ever rising and the degree of violence is ever increasing. Inmate privacy re: medical conditions is put ahead of staff safety and violence is seldom reported to the RCMP, unless there is serious injury or death.
143. Staff are working with the worst elements of society with the minimal amounts of compensation, support from managers and the branch. And the minimal amount of training and protection.
144. On a daily basis I spend my shift in a mostly hostile environment of 30 to 40 inmates who I am locked in with. It can feel quite isolating being on your own without peers on hand for backup or camaraderie. The level of violence which is common to experience as an officer can be initially traumatizing, but we're expected to "suck it up" as it's part of being in the profession.
145. Daily have the chance of being assaulted or insulted. Deal with a majority of non-compliant personalities. Responsible for safety and security of up to 40 inmates and peers. Try to pro-social model individuals who are not receptive. Play to peace make daily. Shift work.

146. This question is confusing: does it mean unusual compared to “normal” jobs? Or unusual compared to other centres? At our centre, we currently face (1) an intercom system that doesn’t work, requiring all inmates to be escorted. (2) We are under staffed. (3) We have extremely low morale and a management team which deflects blame onto front line staff.
147. Just imagine how many students a teacher has in his/her class. The students are considered as law-abiding citizens. In a living unit we are taking care of 40 inmates. And the reason they are here is because they have broken the law and are dangerous for our society – and still our branch is considering having 60 to 70 inmates in a living unit for one unit officer. Just do the simple arithmetic – how well will it work??? Mind you, we signed up as correctional officers, not warehouse workers, and inmates are human beings and they have feelings too.
148. We are exposed to either verbal/physical violence on a daily basis. We are exposed to HIV/Hep A/B/C/TB/Noro viruses/etc/blood, feces, urine, vomit.
149. It’s demanded of us to manage our units, manage and monitor safety and security of our work place, but it’s contradictory to have more paperwork, documentation; we are glued to paperwork or computer work – which takes 75% of our attention away from what we should be watching: “the inmates”.
150. My working conditions are an ever-present danger to my physical well being – fear of being assaulted, of being taken hostage, of being infected with Hep C/HIV or any other number of pathogens. On almost a daily basis my life and the life of my wife and children are threatened. There is no job satisfaction in my line of work. I have a thankless dangerous stressful job for little to no recognition. And I am not fairly compensated for the danger I face everyday on the job.
151. I work in an open living compound. Inmates are selected based on no recent tendency for violence. There is no ready available way to secure an inmate and assistance is much further away in time and distance than in a usual unit.
152. Standard for a correctional officer.
153. Not adequate in tools for officer safety – lacks. Not enough staff on unit to manage group inmate population and behaviour.
154. It is negative/manipulative and is a field everyone knows about, yet fails to acknowledge. Its mental impact is unacknowledged. Government fails to acknowledge. Public fails to acknowledge. Our union fails to afford our interests and champion our rights like the federal counterparts. Our profession is difficult. We live with society’s problems, yet gov’t fails to acknowledge our importance.

155. Strictly speaking, my position is in records, while also being a responder. However speaking to the overall, yes we collectively work in very unusual conditions.
156. I deal with a hugely diverse inmate population. I have transvestites and extremely violent inmates on the same unit. And mentally disordered inmates on the other side.
157. High risk of assaults, lack of support from management, increase in gang member inmates. High stress work environment, mental and physical stress, high risk of getting medical illness from inmates. Dealing with the mentally disordered, with no training for staff.
158. Shift work, unknown outcome each day – could be assaulted, killed, body fluid exposures, fights, violence “Locked in”, like an inmate. Mental/Physical stress. Working with mentally disordered people daily.
159. I treat every job the same. As long as I can support my family and be able to spend time with them, then the job is worth it. I come to work when I’m scheduled and get the job done and go home to my family.
160. Changes that are constantly happening. Working without the proper tools and equipment and expected to keep things secure.
161. Dealing with violent and repeat offenders with gang connections. More gang conflicts.
162. It is expected as part of a Job to be ridiculed every day, be assaulted and to just take it?
163. Most jobs don’t deal with criminals, gangs, serious crimes.
164. Management place staff at risk, they say safety comes first for staff, but when increased costs are involved ie: overtime, the risk factor is not considered.
165. This is not a normal type of job.
166. It has been well documented.
167. Think this is pretty straight forward I work at a jail where violence is common. (1) Most of us work shift work, days, afternoons, nights, weekends, and 12 hour shifts. (2) We deal with people with poor communication and coping skills and as a result they are aggressive and hostile in nature. (3) On a daily basis we deal with a large group of people within a small space, most of whom can’t function in society. There is conflict, and at times violence between them. As a result we have to intervene and deal with them appropriately. What makes all of this the most difficult is that we are provided with a limited amount of resources (i.e. understaffed) to deal with them.
168. Honestly, where else is violence in the work place an accepted part of their job? Where else is it ok to have feces/urine thrown at me?

169. See my previous answer.
170. It's so unusual, we can't even talk about it.
171. Why do we put members of different gangs in the same unit? This should not happen. This is why we find weapons everywhere.
172. I have to worry about having other man's piss and shit thrown at me, just because I show up to work.
173. I don't think there is anything like this.
174. We are, by law, peace officers. Yet our management treats us like we are idiots and our own words mean nothing.

Appendix D: Direct Supervision

Please describe your experience with direct supervision – staff working directly with inmates within the living units.

1. With the ratio at 60 to 1 it is impossible to properly monitor their interactions. The noise levels can be intolerable for both staff and inmates.
2. Constant bickering at each other : thieves + fights.
3. 18 years.
4. 20+ years – Go back to warehousing inmates.
5. Extensive – it is a difficult and challenging position.
6. I usually have no problems of my own making. It is always hard to predict how an inmate, especially a mentally disordered inmate, is going to react to instruction. But we all make mistakes. Most violence is inmate on inmate. They are often happy when we stop such fights. At least one of them is.
7. Stressful and negative
8. As a unit officer you have to deal with every issue they have, from legal, clothing, healthcare, food, personal conflict, etc. While doing this, you must also be aware of personal safety issues as well as inmate safety issues.
9. The number of inmates does not allow for “direct supervision” – the desk duties are overwhelming and the numbers too large.
10. Run off your feet, with 40 inmates to 1 staff : it’s hard to maintain control or even be aware of problems that arise due to gang members recruiting and asserting their will over other inmates and staff. Constant headaches from high noise levels due to TVs, radios, and 40 inmates talking over or yelling over each other. Dealing with all the mentally disordered offenders who won’t take their meds, making them unpredictable and volatile.
11. Very stressful, not safe, dealing more with aggressive inmates
12. Over a period of time staff develop a negative attitude and outlook on life, hence extended sick leave and health problems for many.

13. More inmates = more stress, more violence.
14. Everyday working with inmates is different each day. Staff (I) work with volatile inmates and mentally disordered offenders in segregation, spitting on you, throwing feces, using vulgar language e.g. [expletive deleted] you, Bitch, [expletive deleted] off, discovering weapons on inmates/cells on a daily basis.
15. Some good, some not so good, depends on varying levels of work ethic. Never see managers.
16. I have a reasonable relationship with the inmates. I am a mature, experienced (20+ years) individual. It is just so busy & noisy in the units. A crowded, small environment causes a lot of friction.
17. In my opinion, it is an unnecessary safety risk. Staff should be separated by a partition.
18. There are too many people driving the truck. The clutch is messed up and the transmission is shot! Each unit will have too many officers running it. Part time regulars are always filling in because of sick leave. It's a mess.
19. In the past years I've been threatened, physically assaulted, saw fellow officers assaulted and the inmates always get a slap on the wrist while the officer carries the bad experience with them for years. It's very dangerous, I was personally shocked to be thrown on a unit alone for a 12 hour shift with 38 sociopaths with nothing but a radio and a button I can press (which does not always work) to call for help should I be dying in a pool of blood. It really does feel as if our safety comes third behind inmates rights and our budget.
20. Direct supervision works somewhat if the counts are low, there is no double bunking, and the living unit is designed properly. With our over crowded living units there is more noise, less resources for inmates, more violence, and a more stressful work space.
21. Staff not supervising by not interacting on a social level. Not moving around observing moods & the interaction of inmates with each other. These skills are lacking in the newer staff of today & management does not see this.
22. When I first stated at the jail the population was lower. The units cleaner and the control better. Now the units are jammed packed, the cells dirty and disorganized, and the graffiti has increased on the cell walls. The living unit concept of 25 years ago is not working here. Corrections and management have not kept up with the changing times. On any given day you watch gambling, corruption, intimidation, and bullying.
23. Bugged down with paper work, and the movements of in and out of the unit. One officer just cannot supervise 40 inmates.
24. You're always looking behind your back & expect the unexpected.

25. This form of supervision has become more and more dangerous to staff due to increased violence and gang activity in the units.
26. Certain units are way too busy to even have time for a formal check to be conducted. Certain programs, health care and other volunteers always requesting inmates, while they also need things. Some staff can be over accommodating, especially when new & get overwhelmed.
27. It can be difficult at times as a large amount of the inmate population have some form of issues. Either it's drug dependency, psychological, violent, anti-social, sexually deviant behaviour – you have to have a lot of patience & good communication skills in order to deal with inmates effectively.
28. It works if all staff do their job. I believe the numbers are getting too high for the physical space provided for staff and inmates.
29. This can be a challenging environment for obvious reasons. Additionally, there is isolation from your peers and colleagues.
30. They are very violent towards each other with little regard for permanent injuries. It is a place I would never want to be as an inmate due to this.
31. Good experience – staff usually are doing a good job. More hands on training required.
32. Increased tension. Increased physical space. More violence because of this.
33. Hard. Dealing with 40 inmates to 1 officer. In the open, at risk.
34. It would be better if the management could make up their minds and stick to it.
35. Enables better relationships between staff and inmates. Can be a little stressful when dealing with an agitated aggressive inmate.
36. I am a huge fan of direct supervision. I would not do this job if it were any other way. It is the numbers that I object to. The counts in the units are too high. I believe it would be a hugely regressive step to eliminate direct supervision.
37. Threats. Violent assaults. Exposure to blood, spit, feces, urine. Very over crowded. Dirty, poor air quality.
38. It is extremely dangerous. Inmates do not listen to officers when in numbers. With a 40 to 1 inmate to staff ratio it is a losing battle. Given the tasks we need to perform during a shift one staff cannot run a unit of this size without discrepancies.
39. I personally have experienced being manipulated, verbally berated, humiliated, physically pushed, spat on, had urine thrown at me, discovered weapons and contraband. I have also been witness to severe physical violence and death.

40. I like working with inmates but the increased numbers gives me hardly any time any more to talk to individual persons. More guarding, less grinding.
41. It can be good sometimes, but again it can be challenging as I try to please everyone.
42. Most days the living unit concept works. That being said, there are no disturbances, that doesn't mean that everything is fine. You are always the person in blue and the inmates will always try and do what they think they can but make you feel you are in charge. Things can change very quickly and go from quiet to utter madness in a second. I worked in a very big unit for a long time. I believe that one officer in a unit with that many inmates is not in control but only there to let someone know when something starts to go wrong.
43. I have been in units for the past 3 years. Everyday is different. I find I treat clients with respect until it is not shown for me. Overall it has worked fairly well.
44. Poor, don't have a clue.
45. Most of the units are so poorly designed that an officer cannot effectively monitor all areas at once.
46. When there are more officers in a unit there is much less inappropriate/bad behaviour from inmates.
47. Challenging.
48. One staff to 38 inmates. Could be better managed with 2.
49. Living unit staff now have more of a workload, with little or no help from the Unit Support Officer. With all of the paper work unit officers do they are still supposed to watch 40 guys whose tension are high at all times, because of various reasons (Remand, away from family, not able to make phone calls, withdrawing from drugs or alcohol, scared, they have mental issues, having no help from healthcare, they have enemies or contact concerns with another inmate, etc). Violence within the units is becoming a more common problem, drugs are brought in, and unit staff on their own are having to deal with all this.
50. Very isolating, just you and 25-40 inmates. Very demanding, Inmates requiring/asking for things constantly while you must maintain situational awareness for safety. Very stressful/demeaning/taxing, subject to a constant atmosphere of hostility, verbal abuse, possibility of violence at any time.
51. You always have to be on guard
52. We cannot watch 60 inmates all at once. We are supposed to protect the public & protect the inmates from each other. It is impossible to do with all the extra job management adds to our workload, on a daily basis.

53. I have worked 15 years as a unit officer (direct supervision) The average inmate has become more violent and disrespectful. More gang ties.
54. Ratio of inmates to staff too high! Not enough support positions.
55. Needy, orchestrate situations, mental disorders, do not understand consequences, intimidation, bullying, literacy, health care, hygiene, loud, unpredictable, manipulative, contraband, weapon making material everywhere, inmate rights & privileges are ridiculous, demanding, disrespectful, violent.
56. It is a day by day experience. Some days you are fighting with them all day, other days are easier.
57. I supervise the staff working the units. They are overworked, under-trained, Staff lack proper force options in my centre.
58. I work Monday to Friday, I am called names daily from Bitch, Goof, [expletive deleted], even donkey. I am told to [expletive deleted] off or to go [expletive deleted] myself regularly. I am fair and treat everyone equal, and still get treated like shit.
59. I don't have a problem doing it. Having said that I think the whole "open concept" is a terrible idea as far as staff safety goes. I've had volatile inmates charge around the staff station at me and they stop only because I get up to confront them. Not to mention you're open to any number of bodily fluids being thrown on you, which has happened.
60. Depends on inmates and one's sense of humour and ability to take sarcasm. I feel building a good rapport with inmates assists with and makes supervision easier.
61. I worked in units for my time as an Aux. And for 5 years as a Regular officer.
62. I have almost twenty-eight years of service, many in direct inmate supervision, but also in support areas and supervisory.
63. Generally supportive, but some infer that a problem on a unit is the staff's mismanagement of the unit. Blame the unit and avoid doing something themselves.
64. Staff working with inmates are simply supervising the units. They take abuse every day that no one should and by day four you can see the defeat in their eyes. They just want to make it to their days off. There are more duties/responsibilities placed on the unit staff and no more resources. We have more supervisors and managers than ever and they have more time to micro manage the line staff. There are more fights and threats than I have ever seen or experienced in my career.
65. It can be difficult to supervise 40 inmates all the time. Too many computer related duties take up too much of your time to be 100% effective in your supervision.

66. Inmates can be extremely difficult to deal with. They have too much freedom on the units.
67. A trying job at the best of times; multi-tasking within a limited time from the full shift long – answering clients questions, maintaining accurate counts, maintaining a visible presence and observing activities and sequential programs in a proactive manner, staying informed via email, completing incident reports and charge sheets as required. Remaining vigilant, defusing potentially volatile situations. At times responding to sudden emergency calls as required.
68. Favoritism. Disrespect. Same as above.
69. (1) Teaching/facilitating programs is mostly good. (2) Working/supervising units is good for me. (3) Inmate behaviour is deteriorating & becoming less respectful & more violent, requiring more & more intervention & general “counselling”.
70. There is a constant threat that every day that an incident can happen. Inmates are frustrated and angry about sharing a small space with so many other inmates, which makes for an angry environment.
71. Interaction is intermittent. Only direct involvement occurs during the performance of routine duties, a code, or when staff make a mistake. I almost never see management on the line. Some supervisors are very good, too many very poor.
72. Inmates are usually fine until you tell them “no”. I’ve had inmates write complaint forms about me, threaten to cause mayhem on the unit etc. because I said no. Most issues I have with inmates are with those that are young and are out to make a name for themselves or are easily manipulated/heavied into doing the dirty work on the unit.
73. 10 years working on LU as front line staff – 15 years as supervisor – the tasks were manageable when the staff to IM ratio was lower – now it is simply crazy & unsafe.
74. It seems strange at first but that is the job, so we get used to it. Not everyone is meant for this job.
75. The inmates run the jail. There are too many of them + their negative behaviour is reinforced by line staff’s supervisors + Deputy Wardens through Wardens Courts + bowing down to inmate demands. It’s pathetic + dangerous for the line staff stuck with dealing with the inmates. Everyone knows the inmates run the jail, even the inmates.
76. For the most part my interactions with my supervisors are good. There is still a rigid way of thinking in the centre.
77. Working in a living unit is something all staff try to avoid. It is a depressing, mind-numbing, stressful and dangerous place. You are alone all day with 40 violent people who hate you. From the beginning of your shift until the end, you are confronted with people

who defy you, disrespect you, argue with you. You rarely see a supervisor and never see a manager. At 2001 it was bearable. Now every shift is horrible. I hate it.

78. Management does not always take seriously concerns of staff, actually siding with inmate concerns, not backing up staff
79. Overall it is not too bad, it's management where the trouble lies.
80. Supervision? We don't supervise! Management gives us so much paperwork to do we are doing secretary work. My role is either deep in an inmate request form or in the computer logging mail or checking inmate account balances. This is another reason we need two staff so that even if I'm busy, another staff can be supervising and maintaining safety and security.
81. Easiest part of the job really. The inmates know what to expect, we on the other hand, have no idea. Though we are isolated, if there is a time where assistance is required, we know help will be through the door in moments. Unfortunately, while this is an easier part of the job, there are times when the Unit Officer is not empowered, supported or backed-up by the line-supervisors/management and it belittles our authority on the unit in front of the inmates. When our decisions are not supported we can look like fools to the inmates.
82. When there are 36-40 inmates on tier, there is just too much going on for one staff to monitor everything. We are required to make C-Log entries on CORNET (Computer) as well as to perform a multitude of other duties when inmates are on tier. We can only be spread so thin when working the unit. There is only one Unit Support Officer between 2 units and these people are so busy with escorts and other duties that they are almost never on the units supporting us.
83. With the number of inmates in the units today you cannot possibly watch them all and they distract you on purpose, not enough time to deal with individuals as it should be – as it was with 20 in a unit before, it's noisy busy, can be very stressful watching the bullying that goes on with the gangs and the heavies, we need more staff in the live units and less in the program areas.
84. Constantly on watch for mood swings, violent or emotional outbursts between inmates. Constantly enforcing and re-explaining rules of correctional centre to inmates who many times cannot grasp the fact that they are incarcerated and that the justice system is in "control" of their present situation.
85. Most inmates are no problem. A minority are verbally abusive and non compliant. That minority can be removed if caught or properly documented.
86. There is more open communication in this model, but also the potential to be exposed to violence more. The units keep getting

larger in population, with only one staff member. This makes it difficult to address issues with an inmate because you can't keep an eye on other inmates. It is also more dangerous.

87. My experience has been mixed and challenging, working directly with the inmates in the living units. With so many inmates in a living unit and being the only officer, inmates have a mob mentality at times, which has resulted in management issues on occasion. I have been threatened, sworn at, I have had to break up a fight by getting physically involved, and had to deal with high-risk offenders and inmates with mental disorders. These issues create a hazardous work environment on a regular daily basis.
88. Overall good. Inmates are overall well behaved, but when they do cause a code it can be stressful because you don't know if you'll have one or two officers responding now that management keeps pulling the unit support officers off the floor, without replacing them, to take inmates to the hospital. Also if there's one unit support officer left on the floor, he/she is usually stuck with the nurse and unable to respond to code yellows.
89. The counts are rising on the living units. However the ratio of staff to inmates is decreasing. We are supervising up to 40 male inmates on regular living unit with only 1 officer. Increase in assaults on staff members, increase in inmate on inmate assaults, assaults are getting more and more serious, increase in the creativity of the violent weapons made, inmates are more violent/unpredictable, unsure at times of past behaviour of inmates – inmates flooding their cells, destroying their cells.
90. Up to 60 inmates to one staff. It is often very difficult to detect inmate assaults until after they occur in these conditions. If the unit is very crowded there is no flexibility to deal with circumstances where two inmates are in conflict.
91. The direct supervision model does not apply in our setting. We are warehousing inmates with these counts! They (inmates) could kill you anytime they want! One would stand no chance! The jails now are also 75% (or higher) remand inmates! The remand inmates are here for long trials because their charges are serious. What I'm getting at is a lot of our inmates are Federal inmates. It's just that the counts are so backed up they have to stay in our jails until they are finally sentenced. A lot of these inmates go straight from our jail after 2 or 3 years to a penitentiary and the Pens are not direct supervision! It's too dangerous at a Pen, not at a provincial jail, even though they are the same inmates!
92. Volatile, unpredictable, mentally disordered, irrational and violent would best describe the inmate population. Combine that with constant exposure to very unknown communicable disease and blood disorder known to man.

93. There is no such thing as direct supervision in my workplace. I physically see a supervisor in my work area maybe once a work week. Supervisors tend to be too busy dealing with paperwork from incidents to spend much time in the living units supporting staff. Some prefer to “supervise” from their offices.
94. You are outnumbered at least 20+ to one 98% of the time. The inmates come & go in the unit as they please. They have more rights and protection than a c/o. Maybe fewer than 5% respect your rights or authority, even fewer agree with your mere existence. These are everything from murderers & serial killers to rapists and drunk drivers. They workout/train heavily on a daily basis. They are armed and willing to use weapons, young men on steroids watching UFC on TV... what do you think it is like?
95. By developing a good rapport with inmates + being consistent + fair works in running a living unit with little difficulty.
96. I sometimes feel overwhelmed when I am alone with inmates and paperwork is piling up and the inmates are being difficult.
97. Inmates are become increasingly violent and uncooperative. I believe it's due to cultural changes in society. “Hip hop” “gangster rap” and gang influences migrating from south of the border. There seems to be a trend that is happening more and more frequently in that inmates are also becoming less tolerant of each other. PC's are even running other PCs off PC units because they have sex offences. General population inmates get run off more frequently because of increased gang affiliation and conflict, and peer issues on the street.
98. The numbers of inmates have increased in living units so codes are much more common.
99. It is much more difficult. The personality types of inmates are much more challenging, little or no respect for authority. Inmates do not fear corrections internal discipline system. Staff now just try to survive a shift at a time. Staff majority do not enforce living unit rules like they have in the past.
100. Inmates are too close to staff at all times. Not enough room for 40 guys, inmates are bumping into each other.
101. You can do your job properly as long as it doesn't go over 24:1. As soon as you put more inmates in a unit you no longer have control or know what is going on behind the scenes.
102. It's been quite an experience working with direct supervision. You are dealing with people who are constantly trying to manipulate you. It's mental warfare that normal staff break from within years. These people are repetitive by nature, and the programs' success rate is dismal at best, so you see the same offenders year after year. It's a fine line between building a rapport, and friendship, as you try and convince these inmates you are attempting to help them, rather

than this us against them attitude. As the counts have increased with this model, the paranoia in the units for both staff and inmates has increased exponentially, the violence in the units has as well.

103. Everywhere we go we are always told to use the buddy system. Diving in water, hiking in bush, we teach our kids this. Corrections, 1 unit officer, 30+ inmates. Think about it, you try it.
104. Not enough staff to properly watch all of the inmates at all times.
105. See above answers. The manipulation from 40 inmates who can think up things 24/7, is staggering. Mental head games from the start of your shift to the end of it to stay a head of 40 inmates + stay safe in the process. Building respect + communication rapport is the first line of defense you can have to keep yourself + other staff safe in your unit. If inmates want to take you out there is nothing that will stop them. Responders + exit routes are too far away if they want you + your daily life is about keeping them from taking you out in there.
106. When I started in 1989 the direct supervision model worked "OK", but since then our counts and staffing ratios have gone through the roof! Also the ratio of sentenced/remand has risen dramatically. This system no longer works!
107. It is a ratio that is as high as 40 inmates to 1 staff. Inmates who come in are displaying increasing signs of mental disorders and are younger, with the gang members makes contact concerns more difficult and system is allowing gang members the opportunity to recruit new members.
108. This model is designed for < 25 inmates per unit when #'s climb it is no longer feasible to keep adequate level of supervision, yet still do all of the other expected duties (reports, paperwork, etc.) as a single staff member. In general I am able to maintain and run a living unit well, however, this is the most challenging job, and also the least supported. As a living unit officer, you are the face of "the man", you are the target when some frustration with the system occurs, you are expected to do everything instantly to resolve the issues, or at least know how to get the info. And due to overcrowding, when inmates act out, there often aren't beds in segregation or the special handling unit so you're stuck having to deal with problematic behaviours.
109. Some days you are required to break up fights. Some days there are so may reports to complete that you are unable to watch inmates properly.
110. This is such a hard question to answer well: we listen, assist, direct and hope to make a difference. One officer with as many as 40 minutes is as futile and stressful one can imagine... most often one gets a feeling of being more a babysitter than an officer. We need to be able to be more functional in our role, making consequences have clear impact on more reluctant inmates. The level of freedom

- inmates have on a unit create more stress and issues than one person can manage properly.
111. Regardless of how hard one tries there is no way of being truly effective at the job because of the sheer number of inmates that we are forced to lock after.
 112. With the staffing ratio to inmate supervision the workload increases, with the amount of tension,, incidents and assaults on a consistent basis. These risk factors are higher due to the increased population, over-crowding and limited space to keep inmate populations separate.
 113. I think the direct supervision model could work if it was a 20 to 1 ratio and not 40. With 40 it is harder to control the unit and the rapport you could build with 20 you can't with 40. Also the tension when you put 40 men in a space built for 20 causes obvious problems. Many of the tools available to the officers when only 20 were on a unit are now gone. The inmates do not respect the direct supervision, they go about their day and only a few care that you are in the unit.
 114. Inmates have all the rights. More violent. More abusive. Less respect. Inmates think our system is not a deterrent.
 115. Working in a living unit is very loud and busy. We have to constantly monitor all 60 inmates, answer phone calls, make cornet entries, do 45 minute check of each cell, hand out requests and mail, conduct cell inspection, conduct living unit inspections, make sure all 60 inmates are fed and make sure all food has arrived for all 60 inmates. Constantly answer inmate questions and their concerns. We have to fill out living unit reports, cell assignments, and log books. With all this mentioned I rarely get to provide direct supervision.
 116. Watching fellow peers not doing their job as they fear for their safety if they confront an inmate or wrongdoing. Working for supervisors who don't care about your safety: "just do it" so they look good.
 117. I have worked in the units first as an SO and then for 4 years as a CO. I now work in control and do have contact throughout all units by being a control runner for 1/2 the day.
 118. As best as can be.
 119. When the ratio is 40 inmates to 1, it becomes extremely stressful. We are expected to carry out daily duties while making sure the inmates follow all rules. That is a complete joke. It is impossible to keep an eye on all inmates at all times. Drugs, alcohol and weapons are a daily threat to staff.
 120. At times very difficult. We have many duties and forms to complete as well as being expected to give full supervision to the inmates.
 121. I feel alone and always on edge for fear of being assaulted by inmates.

122. The threat of violence is always there. They have to show how macho they are to their peers. The phrase “the strongest survives” is true in jail. The weak get picked on, the strong control the jail. Intimidation is used by inmates on inmates and on staff. Some days I walk out of work thinking inmates have all the rights and guards have none.
123. We work in direct contact with unit populations ranging from 24-40 inmates. We have no bars or glass for protection as we sit behind our desks amongst the inmate population. As a CO we have no pepper spray or batons, in the event of a staff assault we rely on our personal pagers and our own abilities. We just hope and pray that assistance arrives in a timely manner.
124. Direct supervision doesn’t work the way we implement it in BC. Inmates run the units. I have to go ask a unit heavy (usually big time gangster) to calm a unit down, or run my ideas by him first of pending charges. The reason unit heavies have so much leverage is because they openly tell us how they see us short staffed, and brag to us how we have no idea what’s going on in the unit as it’s too big for one staff to monitor. They get FOI reports for their Cornet logs and mock us by calling us by our first names since they are listed on FOI requests. Some inmates have taunted/intimidated me by figuring out where I live, by using this information. Inmates tell us how the cameras “suck” and a staff assault or death would be hard to prove using cameras, for conviction. They cite a couple of federal inmate on inmate murders as being proof of this theory. I believe they told me that one of those murders was at Kent and other in an Edmonton area CSC Jail.
125. My experience with direct supervision is basically analogous to baby-sitting students of a “crime school”. The management of such students in a direct supervision setting undermines the authority and ability of officers (at the level of proxies) to enforce institutional standards in unison, without the default resort of taking the path of least resistance just to keep safe.
126. This is the hardest part. 30 plus inmates with 1 officer makes it very hard to keep everyone safe. Also there are too many blind spots that are not covered by cameras.
127. It’s a humbling experience knowing that at any minute 30-40 inmates can either cause a riot, attack me or another individual. Rules and regulations have to be enforced consistently for the unit to run efficiently. It is a stressful environment, it just requires one to be attentive to ones surroundings.
128. Apart from dealing with the numbers, it’s usually not bad. The problem is our tools are taken away. E.g. when insults are thrown from “crowd”, we aren’t allowed to instantly lock them down for a time out, so it emboldens them to continue and expand it. The whole GP/PC thing is pathetic. It’s been allowed to spiral out of control

- instead of being clamped down on. ISO won't let us take TVs when they do stupid things with them. We have to do charges etc. Health care is a joke. Everyone on meds, the Dr. screws the meds up and all hell breaks loose. Not having time to do anything pro-social. Being ignored. All the time thinking outside "their" box is just ignored.
129. This has given inmates the opportunity to come into contact with each other as well, and in larger numbers. Lots of gang related activity.
 130. Inmates have a great "lack of" respect for officers or any authority figure.
 131. My experience has been extremely positive, though I wish to have my own unit soon as this will allow me to better the rapport with the inmates that I manage, which will lead to a more productive living unit environment.
 132. Unless you have the correct tools and skills to communicate with inmates this job is not for you. Inmates for the most part are able to understand that I'm doing a job but there is always that chance that I could be hurt or killed at work. I work with killers, rapists, con artists, thieves, and people deemed to violent and yet I get paid peanuts and management constantly hounds us to cutback sick time.
 133. Crowded. Noise level a concern. Unpredictable. Punk/gang mentality of the inmate population now compared to 10-20 years ago.
 134. My experience with direct supervision, has been that an overcrowded direct supervision model is dangerous to the single staffed unit officer. When violence breaks out I am in the middle of it. Our alarm system doesn't always work; there have been times when I have hit my alarm and have not got backup. The CCTV cameras system is not monitored... Constant threats directed at myself when carrying out my duties: To much to do in the unit as far as duties, which takes away from carrying out my security duties. Dealing with management that have never worked a unit and have lost complete touch with what we are dealing with.
 135. Good when everything is going well. Controlled for the most part. Unpredictable. Stressful at times, very extremely stressful at times. Tiring, exhausting at times. Unsafe at times. Abusive, disrespectful, abusive, violent behaviour. Exposure to violence, injuries, and blood.
 136. Staff have very little time to do anything other than paperwork or computer work with the amount of movement in and out of the units. There is a lot of movement in and out of inmate cells when staff are unable to supervise because they are busy catering to the inmate needs.
 137. Overcrowding on units puts more pressure on inmates and more workload for unit staff. However work load means less supervision of inmates.

138. Staff are asked to go directly into inmate living quarters with no support other than the hope of someone watching a camera. We are also to go into cells and frisk by ourselves and if something happens, push an alarm and hope that back up can arrive within 30 seconds.
139. The inmates seem to care more about keeping face with other inmates and not so much about respecting staff. The scary part is the lack of respect – you never know what inmates will do. The peer pressure to act out coupled with the effects of stronger street drugs make inmates very unpredictable.
140. Inmates do not always follow staff direction.
141. I work directly with up to 60 inmates at one time alone for most 8 hour shifts.
142. Physical and verbal violence within the correctional centre has become an accepted part of the job. I expect it on a regular basis now, which leaves me with constant stress and fear. I have 11 years left before I can retire (21 years in) and I dread the future!!
143. Direct supervision of inmates is very stressful due to the following: inmate staff ratio (higher number of inmates to staff), threats and violence from inmates towards each other and towards staff have increased, Staff workload has increased. Staff are held to a higher and higher standards while inmates and managers are not. Double standards.
144. With direct supervision, officers are forced to forge much more personal relationships with inmates as opposed to being behind glass. Along with the benefit of possible rapport building with inmates comes the real possibility of assault or worse on an officer, on a unit with 30 or 40 inmates.
145. Staff are taxed more with the higher counts in the living units. So many needs to deal with, paperwork increases. Staff getting stressed out and I think start to let things slide to make their day easier.
146. Each day is stressful. On any given day, you are bogged down with paper work that needs to be done, or you are disciplined. See above, there are no additional staff to help with this, as they are escorting inmates. As they are always escorting inmates there are fewer responders or a delayed response to codes. We've asked for support and we receive a flat "no".
147. Here are pros and cons about direct supervision. Pros: inmate concerns and issues will be dealt with faster in a timely manner. Relationship building between officer and inmates. If unit officers know their inmates better, background, preferences, mostly just easier to deal with. When inmate issues get dealt with in a timely manner, prevent the issues and concerns. Cons: create and encourage needy and whining behaviour of certain inmates. Once relationship exists it is more difficult to deal with inmates objectively. E.g.,

you tend to have better allowances for inmates listening with you, you tend to do more for inmates who make your job easier. It creates a more stressful work environment for staff because inmates issues and concerns keep coming up one after another at times. And issues and concerns may not be able to resolved on the unit level. Needy inmates may make their concerns escalate within a short period of time.

148. I started when the ratio was 20:1 and found that there was control in the unit, not to mention the noise level and violence wasn't as high. I felt safer than I do now. The assaults are now @ least 2 or more inmates on one and this is harder to deal with because there are always officers pulled off the floor to backfill on hospital escorts or sit in units, rather than showing their presence in the units. If unit staff had OC spray on their belts, the assaults wouldn't be as lengthy.
149. Way too many inmates in a small space, so when walking around it is so important to know what is going on around you 360 degrees, 120% of the time. Noise levels high, tensions high, units hold 2X the amount of inmates as they were built for.
150. The direct supervision model does not work. The ratios are too high for it to be effective. The way the direct supervision model is set up in our gaols the staff are reactive, not pro-active.
151. 20 years of it. Nearly exclusively done within my normal personality- rarely is an act portrayed. Style could be categorized as laissez-faire. Only once did I feel threatened by an inmate's stance and vocalization and I did not call for back-up, rather I stayed @ my safe distance and spoke calmly.
152. Too much to do with so little time (unit officer gets dumped with all tasks).
153. Working on units – from general population to mentally unstable designated. Working in “Segregation” where the most problematic and difficult inmates go when too much of a management concern for regular programming.
154. Very ineffective, officer safety, with increased counts very high risk.
155. I have done it all. It was definitely a lot less stressful when we had double staffing. There is a constant threat of assault. It sucks ass.
156. Not in last year
157. Too many inmates, cannot perform your job properly. High stress level. Threat of assaults, physical and verbal. No management support.
158. It is no different than dealing with people in society other than these who got caught breaking the law. Only thing that makes things difficult is that inmates seem to think about themselves more often than not. When they get angry about something not going their way.

- Happens on a regular basis. It is a daily reminder to them that they are in a prison and not a hotel.
159. Good Times/bad times. The more experienced officer seems to get by in a unit a little easier.
 160. Too many inmates to one staff. Second staff get pulled to do other duties because there's shortage of staff.
 161. There seems to be very little difference, as every time they come back with the same troubles and attitude.
 162. With the over crowding, inmates who are part of gangs – and we don't have the tools to discipline them the proper way. Management changing rules and regulations every other day.
 163. Staff station is right in the unit with the inmates. They can come behind you at any time if you are busy and can't always pay close attention to one's surroundings.
 164. The inmate ratio to staff is very high it's 38 inmates to 1 staff. Letting inmates out every 1/2 hour to use washrooms.
 165. I am constantly working on a living unit with direct contact with inmates for 10 years.
 166. The lack of other staff – 38 to 1 is not conducive to maintaining control (effective)
 167. Direct supervision makes for a more stressful work environment for staff. You cannot truly feel relaxed while working open custody.
 168. It is so unpredictable, 60-1 is just asking for one of us to get hurt or screw up.
 169. Scary.
 170. Inmates (many) do not respond well to orders.
 171. When I first started and during my first several years I worked directly with inmates and the ratio was up to a maximum of 20 inmates. Direct supervision was much more effective with these numbers. However now we have one officer supervising up to 60 inmates. Although the concept of direct supervision is good, one can't provide adequate supervision alone with up to 60 inmates.
 172. It's unrealistic to ask us, one person, to be responsible for 60 inmates! At times it can be extremely scary. There are many times where I feel like it's just an accident waiting to happen.
 173. Too many cons = ridiculous.
 174. One big blur.
 175. Dangerous.

176. The ratio is pathetic! Hire more people. 60 inmates to 1 staff is not right. I don't want our centre to have a situation like the one in Washington where the female inmate was killed due to low staff numbers.
177. I sit and hand out toothbrushes and soap and look up account balances while inmates plot to beat and hurt others while I am distracted. Great idea doesn't work at all, but we are going to keep doing it, no matter what common sense and every one says, correction is never wrong.
178. Never know what to expect.
179. Impossible. Useless.

Appendix E: Comments

Descriptions of specific instances of risk or harm experienced within the workplace.

1. Physical altercations with inmates where I received kicks, punches, scratches; First aid given to attempted suicides, needle pokes, razor cuts – and seeing co-workers assaulted.
2. Have seen a fellow staff member get shot by an inmate during a hostage taking. Have seen three serious riots. Had to take a warning shot at an inmate with a shotgun (I had the shotgun, not the inmate) during a major disturbance. Have seen many serious inmate assaults.
3. I have had 2 random physical attacks on my person that I was fortunate to escape without serious injury.
4. Threatened with being punched out for telling inmates to keep noise level down. Informing management of security concerns and being ignored. Informing shop stewards of security concerns and seeing them ignored by union. Having to deal with inmates who spend their entire day screaming, yelling, kicking and banging cell doors.
5. Was sent on an escort by myself with an inmate. The inmate was not properly assessed & I fought with him because he tried to escape. Was stressed over the situation & received serious injury. The assessment process has not changed & staff are put @ serious risk every time they go out on escort.
6. In a 3-year period I have had 3 physical assaults against myself. Two of the charges that I made against them never even made it to Warden's Court due to the back log. So the time ran out on the charge. The strange thing about the system is that it's designed to protect the inmates, but who is protecting the correctional officers?
7. I witnessed an inmate trying to hang herself in her cell. I pulled her down before she had a chance, but it still overwhelmed me. I've seen inmates slash their arms severely before anybody did anything. Three inmates destroyed our segregation area, including the staff office window. It took 3 hours for our ERT team to arrive and extract them. They could have gotten to staff and assaulted us, but chose

not to. We either need a lower count per staff or another staff when counts are as high as they are – to ensure safety of other inmates and staff.

8. In my many years of service I have been directly involved in quelling countless violent incidents, assaults on officers, cell extractions, riots, serious inmate attacks on one another, hangings, suicide attempts, escape attempts and all types of disturbances. I would like to see more emphasis on officer safety in the future, More tools for corrections tactical teams to deal with large scale disturbances (non-lethal force options). Finally, I would like to see recognition for corrections officers for the work we do every day. We deal with the most dangerous segment of society. Unlike police we wear no body armour, no pepper spray, no baton, no taser and no sidearm. We are grossly outnumbered and are constantly in harm's way.
9. Specifically, in 16 years I have been physically threatened over 100 times. I have been physically assaulted once.
10. I have been assaulted personally in the workplace, and have been hurt. We went to court and the inmate received extra time for assault. The centre staff, the courts and the judge were all amazing and did their jobs and made me feel better, but unfortunately the inmate got away with only a little bit of extra time and I believe didn't pay for hurting me and because of that short amount of time he received, he likely believes what he did was of no big consequence in his life. Although in my life it made a big difference.
11. I was attacked by an inmate while doing a cell inspection. I was also attacked and cut by a hospital inmate trying to escape.
12. I had to protect a Correctional Supervisor from being stabbed by an inmate who tried to attack him with 2 pencils. Inmates are constantly in your face, with the uncertainty of violence.
13. In the past year I have had numerous threats from gang affiliated inmates. I have had something thrown at me during a disciplinary panel. My family and I were threatened at that time. I have been spit on.
14. Officers wear "honey buckets" – a mixture of urine & feces thrown on us by inmates. There is no real protection from such an attack that could happen @ any time. We are threatened and spoken to poorly on a regular basis.
15. I was interviewed by the local paper today about the rising gas prices, they jotted down some notes, took my name & a few pictures of me filling up. As I was driving away I thought because of this the inmates (who get the paper) could now have my full name, picture of me & my car & it was a little unsettling to think of the extremes that they could go to with this information. That's a toll of this job that

I don't think I will ever see in a statistic. Not only can I be stressed about my job at work, but outside of work, work can still stress me.

16. One inmate was in separate custody in every other institution – until he arrived at our jail, where he was allowed to be housed in a regular unit, double-bunked with another inmate. Days later I took that inmate who was his roommate out of the unit because he refused to go back in the cell with the guy + wanted off the unit. We took him to healthcare where I proceeded to take pictures of numerous deep bite marks all over his body + stab marks from a pen. The inmate who was given a 2nd chance had bitten, choked out to unconsciousness + stabbed him with a pen numerous times – his roommate. Because we are so overcrowded + had sloppy supervisory decision making when it came to placement, we exposed other inmates + potentially staff to unnecessary danger.
17. Over-crowding is the main issue but when an inmate can attack two officers at two prisons, then come to our jail and be put on a living unit because management says “he’s been good for a few months” – then attack the officer on that unit, one can infer that management is not making the right decisions. This is one of a thousand decisions they make that endanger us every day. Can you sense my frustration?
18. Segregation is the most dangerous post in the jail. It is here I have been hit with a 10 gallon garbage can, punched, spit on, had feces thrown on me and been threatened. Once an inmate spit in my face. I was worried about HIV entering through my eye. I was not entitled to info about the HIV status of my assailant. That was stressful, wondering if I was going to bring HIV home to my family. I still think of it often, I do not want to infect my family but take the risk in my own right (For myself). In segregation a designated dangerous offender was not following direction. He threatened to kill me if I did not stop telling him what to do. He pointed out he had nothing to lose by killing me and that he didn't care anymore and that there was nothing else the system could do to him if he did kill me. I recall the shock of realization that he was probably correct. Feces are also a common weapon in segregation. Inmates put feces in a cup of water or urine to steep into a porridge like mixture to better stick to clothing. I have had this thrown on me. The smell seems to be worse like this too. Inmates often smear it on the walls but a little vapo-rub under the nostrils can lessen the aroma that permeates segregation when this happens.
19. Where do you begin? I have been kicked in the face, spit at, punched, threatened. I have been covered in blood, feces. I have had to look through human feces for concealed drugs. I have witnessed assaults where inmates have been stabbed, their skulls crushed or fractured, jaws completely shattered, broken bones. I have been personally threatened too many times to count... I have found

hundreds of weapons. I have seen numerous escape attempts. Many of my fellow staff have been assaulted over the years. I have personally been involved in a riot where three staff locked themselves in a staff washroom for one hour and the inmates did everything they could to breach the door to kill them. Thank God the door held. They even tried to burn them out by setting a huge bonfire at the door. It took over an hour to get the ERT in place so we could set them out. Nobody seems to care about our safety.

I am angry and disgusted that we are unappreciated, under funded, not trained, and no one will step in to do their best at ensuring our safety.

20. I have been the victim of many threats to my person in the last 2 years. More threats than the last 4 years.
21. I had a pen held to my throat in records – He was going to try to take me hostage. I grabbed his arm as he was about to do his first stab in my throat. I fought him + help came shortly after that.
22. Some of the violence I have personally been involved with, and witnessed in the last 5 years is so extreme, that it doesn't even compare to the first 7 years of my career. The first 7 years, I can count on one hand the situations that actually made me lose sleep. In the past 5 years, I have witnessed many violent acts and many numerous group attacks that make me lose sleep. My anxiety has increased considerably enough that I daily question my decision to have a corrections career and realize it is too late in my life to change now. This gives you a feeling of hopelessness, especially when your upper level leadership is turning a blind eye, or is oblivious to this. This is a direct relation to increased inmate counts. There have been too many personal instances of risk to even tap into that and talk about.
23. How about watching an inmate sneak up on another inmate with a brew jug and proceed to smash him over the head with it? Then while he's unconscious, bleeding on the ground, proceed to repeatedly beat him with the brew jug and stomp on his head with his feet. Or how about watching four to six inmates take a guy from behind and beat him, jump on him, stomp his head, jump off a table landing on him, etc. etc. Or how about watching a staff member get attacked by an inmate, punched, kicked, wrestled, till backup arrives. Or how about a staff member who attempts to stop an escape from the hospital + gets beat up in the parking lot, with no help in sight – and management sent him there alone, with no background on the inmate who had been received from the RCMP. I can tell you of so many incidents such as these and more, but there is not the room on this paper or enough ink in this pen. The level of violence in this jail has increased so much that it is extremely scary. Most days before entering a unit I have to stop, take a deep breath, prepare mentally, and pray for the day to go well: that I will walk out of here and go home at the end of it.

24. The other day I was doing cell inspections and noticed the wall-mounted radio in a cell had been tampered with. I called my supervisor who brought tools and took out the radio to find a lighter, scissors and a 1" square x 10" metal bar which was being fashioned into a shank. The inmate in the cell is on a murder remand. Just another day at the office. While doing final count I was counting holding cells. I observed an inmate getting wild, yelling at nobody, slapping the walls, and barely responding to me. I called my supervisor and had him moved to an observation cell and put in a safety gown, which he promptly removed. His mental health continued to deteriorate until he was smearing feces on himself, his cell, and splashing in the toilet water. I had to watch him all night, and smell the feces through three doors.
25. Almost daily inmate assaults. Homemade weapons found in cells. Having been pushed by an inmate so he could assault another inmate. Constant verbal assaults. Meals being thrown at me. All around mental fatigue at the end of shift. An extremely negative intimidating environment.
26. Over the last 5 years I have run into a lot of former inmates. A few of them have threatened to harm me and since our facility is a revolving door you remember faces not inmate names, but the inmate always knows your name. I don't feel safe. It's affected my quality of life as I have to be careful if I go out late that it's safe for me to be there. I also fear that one day in the near future an officer will get killed on duty. My spouse hates me working this job and asks me often to just quit and find something where you are respected. Over the last 2 years I have come very close many times to giving my 30 days notice. I discourage people from joining this profession. I tell people they are better off pursuing policing as they will be safer, have a firearm, better pay and be respected – without urine and feces thrown in their faces.
27. What you might consider as risk, we treat as a normal day. We put up with and deal with homemade weapons, physical violence, urine and fecal matter thrown at us and smeared on walls. We intervene with people on the brink of suicide. We calm people down who want to do serious harm to others on the units. Not all of this happens everyday. Having said that, it happens often enough. Correctional officers are a special breed of person. I really don't think most people know or understand the level of stress we have – nor is it fully appreciated the level of professionalism we have. This survey won't help you much. You have to be in the environment to understand it.
28. We need double staffing in the living units. I have been threatened personally (too many to list). My family has been threatened (too many to list). I have been spit on (multiple). I have had feces and urine thrown at me (multiple). I have been assaulted (multiple). I have been involved in sit-downs, which are the seeds of a riot. I have

- dealt with attempted suicides (too many to list). Dealt with inmate on inmate assaults, some of which were attempted murders: slit throat, multiple beatings, too many to count.
29. With the unique set up of my unit with a wide variety of inmates, some of whom are problematic, non-compliant and potentially dangerous – this has made my job as a correctional officer more complicated, more stressful, more unpredictable, and unsafe. Just recently, I felt truly unsafe in my unit, so much so, that I kept my distance from the number of inmates who were heated up, angry and hostile towards staff, myself, and the Centre. Now, I find myself getting stressed, anxious, and unmotivated when it's time to go back to work after days off.
 30. Found a pocket knife in a living unit. It made it through the security, which is now in place. A good size knife put all of us in direct harm.
 31. I personally have been assaulted twice this year by inmates. Staff workloads have increased greatly. Increase in the number of staff that have had bodily fluids, spit, , human waste thrown at them by inmates.
 32. When a unit is quarantined for a serious biohazard and although supplied masks and latex gloves, entering and staying for a 12 hour shift in that environment is unnerving. It's a worry to think of bringing diseases home to my family in the regular circumstances.
 33. In my past years I have had blood thrown on me. Food thrown at me. Objects thrown at me (cups). Been involved where inmate assaulted a staff member a couple of times that were unprovoked. Threats of harm towards myself or other staff.
 34. Last summer witnessed an inmate overdose and die from drugs. An inmate alone is sometimes hard enough to deal with, but an inmate that is high or drunk is a risk to my safety. I had 3 fights @ once in my unit because some of the inmates were drunk. My PMT alarm wasn't working properly and it took responders 56 seconds to get there. I was almost struck in the head from something that was thrown off the top tier when we entered. I walked in on an inmate slashing both of his wrists. Had to glove up and hold towels around his wrists. I was in a unit when two inmates assaulted another inmate. They repeatedly kicked him in the head/face even while I was spraying them with OC spray. They wouldn't stop even while I was spraying them because they had so much adrenaline going.
 35. Its rare to see 1 on 1 fights, now its 3 to 6 on 1, brutal assaults because there are far too many inmates in too small a space.
 36. Verbal threats & abuse daily. Physical harm is always conceivable and officers are always on heightened state of alert. Biological threats and risk of disease rampant. Inmates high or coming off substances a daily occurrence. Toilet water flooding w/ biological

contaminants rampant. Weapons from everyday resources rampant. No self-protection on line level despite known threats.

37. I for one am looking forward to early retirement. The level of violence has risen substantially since I started in 1995 and I feel officer safety has decreased. Where I once thought I would work 30 years, I am now planning on leaving at age 50. I think if this trend of increased counts and decreased staff continues this will happen to more and more staff. I am certain that it is only a matter of time before one of us is killed on the job.
38. Within my first month I had an inmate try and stab me with a pencil. I now work with inmates who have a history of staff assaults. I feel my job now from 8 or 9 years ago has changed because of a new type of inmate. Way more violent inmates. Staff assaults are more frequent and more vicious.
39. Have been physically assaulted 3 times in 5 years. Threatened – and my family threatened more times than I can remember. It is just a matter of time for someone to be killed (staff) at our jail. But this is all a normal part of our job. Doesn't every job in the public sector deal with the same things we deal with?
40. It's pretty bad when after 12 years as an officer, seeing violence, body fluids, having your life threatened, family's threatened, death, is all "normal" and acceptable in a days work – and you become immune or numb to. That can't be normal or acceptable.
41. About two and half years ago I had an inmate take his own life very violently, by jumping backwards off the railing of the third tier, and landing on his head. I was off for a week on WCB for post-traumatic stress.

Appendix F: The Working Conditions of Correctional Officers in British Columbia, 2011: A Membership Survey

This survey is part of a research project that is looking at the current working conditions of B.C. Correctional Officers. In addition to this survey, we will carry out in-depth interviews and analysis of relevant literature and available documents. The questions in this survey are designed to ask about your experiences within your workplace during the past two years.

The principal researcher commissioned by the BCGEU is a professor at Simon Fraser University's School of Criminology, and has no ties to the BCGEU. The results of this survey will form a part of a larger research document that will be submitted to the Correctional and Sheriff Services component of the BCGEU.

Your **VOLUNTARY** participation marks an important step in the successful completion of this project. There are no foreseeable risks in participating in this survey. Please be assured that everything collected in the course of this research project is **COMPLETELY CONFIDENTIAL AND YOUR IDENTITY WILL REMAIN ANONYMOUS**. Please do not identify yourself in your answers. This survey is in compliance with the research ethics guidelines as established by Simon Fraser University. All research materials, data, survey data, communications, interview notes or any other data will be held in confidence by the researcher, Neil Boyd. Please note that confidentiality is guaranteed to the full extent permitted by law. The Research Ethics Board of Simon Fraser University also requires that the following statement be added to all research with this guarantee of confidentiality, "Information with respect to child abuse or the threat of physical harm has to be reported to the relevant authorities". Please note that permission to conduct this survey has not been obtained by BCGEU from the employer; I am required by SFU Ethics to make this statement.

If you have any questions, concerns or comments, you may contact Hal Weinberg, SFU Ethics, at 778-782-6593, or by email, hal_Weinberg@sfu.ca

Please mail your completed survey directly to Neil Boyd, School of Criminology, Saywell Hall, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, B.C. V5A 1S6. Research results may be obtained from Neil Boyd, nboyd@sfu.ca, or 778-782-3324.

Thank you for your time and consideration in completing this survey.

Part 1: Background

In order to understand a little about your Correctional Service background, we need to ask a few basic questions. Please tick the appropriate answer.

Q01. What is your gender?

- Male Female

Q02. What was your age in years, as of January 1, 2011?

- 18-24 25-34 35-45 46 or Older

Q03. Please indicate where you work.

- Fraser Regional Correctional Centre
 North Fraser Pre-trial Services Centre
 Prince George Regional Correctional Centre
 Surrey Pre-trial Services Centre
 Nanaimo Correctional Centre
 Alouette Correctional Centre for Women
 Vancouver Island Correctional Centre
 Ford Mountain Correctional Centre
 Other, please specify: _____

Q04. Please indicate approximately how long you have worked as a Correctional Officer.

- Less than one year
 One to two years
 Three to five years
 Six to nine years
 Ten to fifteen years
 Sixteen or more years

Q05. What is **THE HIGHEST** level of formal education that you have completed?

- Less than High School Diploma
 High School Diploma
 One-Year Certificate
 Two-Year Diploma
 Four-Year Degree
 Graduate Degree

Q06. Please indicate whether you have been personally involved with the following kinds of incidents **DURING THE PAST MONTH**. If – and only if – you have indicated **YES**, please proceed to check whether you viewed this incident or incidents as (1) not particularly stressful, (2) somewhat stressful, or (3) very stressful.

Kind of Incident	Involved (YES)	Not Involved (NO)	Not Particularly Stressful	Somewhat Stressful	Very Stressful
Exposure to blood					
Exposure to feces					
Exposure to saliva or spit					
Exposure to urine					
Exposure to vomit					

Q07. Please indicate whether you have been personally involved with the following kinds of incidents **DURING THE PAST YEAR**. If – and only if – you have indicated **YES**, please proceed to check whether you viewed this incident or incidents as (1) not particularly stressful, (2) somewhat stressful, (3) very stressful.

Kind of Incident	Involved (YES)	Not Involved (NO)	Not Particularly Stressful	Somewhat Stressful	Very Stressful
Exposure to blood					
Exposure to feces					
Exposure to saliva or spit					
Exposure to urine					
Exposure to vomit					

Q08. Please indicate whether you have been personally involved with the following kinds of incidents **DURING THE PAST MONTH**. If – and only if – you have indicated **YES**, please proceed to check whether you viewed this incident or incidents as (1) not particularly stressful, (2) somewhat stressful, or (3) very stressful.

Kind of Incident	Involved (YES)	Not Involved (NO)	Not Particularly Stressful	Somewhat Stressful	Very Stressful
Code Yellow: Staff needs assistance					
Code Blue: Medical emergency					
Q15: Suicidal inmate watch					
Inmate drug overdose					
Receiving a credible threat of harm from an inmate					

Q09. Please indicate whether you have been personally involved with the following kinds of incidents **DURING THE PAST YEAR**. If – and only if – you have indicated **YES**, please proceed to check whether you viewed this incident or incidents as (1) not particularly stressful, (2) somewhat stressful, or (3) very stressful.

Kind of Incident	Involved (YES)	Not Involved (NO)	Not Particularly Stressful	Somewhat Stressful	Very Stressful
Code Yellow: Staff needs assistance					
Code Blue: Medical emergency					
Q15: Suicidal inmate watch					
Inmate drug overdose					
Receiving a credible threat of harm from an inmate					

Q10. Please indicate whether you have been personally involved with the following kinds of incidents **DURING THE PAST MONTH**. If – and only if – you have indicated **YES**, please proceed to check whether you viewed this incident or incidents as (1) not particularly stressful, (2) somewhat stressful, or (3) very stressful.

Kind of Incident	Involved (YES)	Not Involved (NO)	Not Particularly Stressful	Somewhat Stressful	Very Stressful
Responding to a serious injury to an inmate					
Being personally physically assaulted by an inmate					
Having been hit by feces, blood, vomit, urine, or spit					
Discovering weapon in an inmate's cell or in his possession					
Observing the death – homicide or suicide – of an inmate					

Q11. Please indicate whether you have been personally involved with the following kinds of incidents **DURING THE PAST YEAR**. If – and only if – you have indicated **YES**, please proceed to check whether you viewed this incident or incidents as (1) not particularly stressful, (2) somewhat stressful, or (3) very stressful.

Kind of Incident	Involved (YES)	Not Involved (NO)	Not Particularly Stressful	Somewhat Stressful	Very Stressful
Responding to a serious injury to an inmate					
Being personally physically assaulted by an inmate					
Having been hit by feces, blood, vomit, urine, or spit					
Discovering weapon in an inmate's cell or in his possession					
Observing the death – homicide or suicide – of an inmate					

Q12. How much time have you taken off from work due to an act of violence in the workplace within the past year? Please tick the appropriate answer.

- None
- 1 – 2 days
- 3 – 5 days
- 6 – 10 days
- 11 – 15 days
- Over 15 days

Q13. Through what means did you take time off from work due to an act of violence in the workplace? Please tick or specify.

WCB claim

Sick leave

Another form of absence, please specify:_____

Q14. Have you ever taken time off from work due to work-related stress?

Yes No

Q15. How much time have you taken off from work due to work-related stress in the past year? Please circle the appropriate response.

None

1 - 2 days

3 - 5 days

6 - 10 days

11 - 15 days

Over 15 days

Q16. Through what means did you take time off from work due to work-related stress? Please circle or specify.

WCB claim

Sick leave

Another form of absence, specify:_____

Part 2: How Common are These Events in Your Workplace?

This section asks you to reflect on how commonly you experience the kinds of events we have just canvassed.

Q17. Please indicate how many times you have personally experienced each of the following **DURING THE PAST MONTH**.

	Not At All	Once	More Than Once	More Than 5 Separate Events	More Than 10 Separate Events
Exposure to blood					
Exposure to feces					
Exposure to vomit					
Exposure to saliva or spit					
Exposure to urine					
Code Yellow: Staff needs assistance					
Code Blue: Medical emergency					
Q15: Suicidal inmate watch					
Inmate drug overdose					
Receiving a credible threat of harm from an inmate					
Responding to a serious injury to an inmate					
A physical assault by an inmate					
Hit by feces, blood, vomit, spit or urine					
Discovering weapon in an inmate's cell or in his possession					
Observing the death - homicide or suicide - of an inmate					

Q18. Please indicate how many times you have personally experienced each of the following **DURING THE PAST YEAR**.

	Not At All	Once	More Than Once	More Than 5 Separate Events	More Than 10 Separate Events
Exposure to blood					
Exposure to feces					
Exposure to vomit					
Exposure to saliva or spit					
Exposure to urine					
Code Yellow: Staff needs assistance					
Code Blue: Medical emergency					
Q15: Suicidal inmate watch					
Inmate drug overdose					
Receiving a credible threat of harm from an inmate					
Responding to a serious injury to an inmate					
A physical assault by an inmate					
Hit by feces, blood, vomit, spit or urine					
Discovering weapon in an inmate's cell or in his possession					
Observing the death - homicide or suicide - of an inmate					

Q19. Has your job become more stressful or difficult during the past years? If yes, explain how it has changed below.

Q20. Please describe the most difficult parts of your job – try to list at least three points, with the most difficult first.

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

Q21. Is your job unusual, in terms of its working conditions? If yes, please explain why. If no, please explain why.

Yes: _____
No: _____

Q22. Please provide any additional comments that you would like to make, or any descriptions of specific instances of risk or harm that you have experienced within your workplace.
