

2008 Colorado Actuarial Risk Assessment Scale (CARAS) 9-Item Instrument

The 2008 CARAS predicts the following events for those released from prison:

- *rearrest for any crime,*
- *rearrest for a violent crime, and*
- *new court filing.*

**** CONSTANT -88 ****

1. NUMBER OF CURRENT CONVICTION CHARGES

The total number of criminal conviction charges associated with the current incarceration.

	<u>Points</u>
1	12
2	21
3 to 4	23
Missing & 5 or More	33

2. NUMBER OF COPD VIOLATION CONVICTIONS

The total number of COPD infractions offender has been convicted of (this incarceration as well as prior incarcerations).

Missing (Means 0)	6
1 to 3	8
4 to 9	9
10 or More	12

3. LSI TOTAL SCORE

The total of the 54 Level of Supervision Inventory (LSI) items

20 or Lower	6
21 to 29	10
Missing & 30 to 38	12
39 or More	15

4. ARRESTED UNDER AGE 16

Offender was arrested for criminal activity before age 16, according to LSI instrument.

Missing & 0 (No)	11
1 (Yes)	17

5. AGE AT RELEASE

Age offender attains when released this time on parole.

47 or Older	9
40 to 46	18
Missing & 39 or Younger	23

6. ASSESSED CUSTODY LEVEL

Offender is assessed at minimum or minimum restrictive custody level supervision at time of release.

1 (Yes)	5
Missing & 0 (No)	8

7. PRIOR PAROLE RETURN ON NEW CRIME

Offender has been returned to prison from a prior parole as a result of a new crime. Does not include returns for technical violations. Includes all prior incarcerations at DOC.

Missing & 0 (No)	4
1 (Yes)	6

8. INCARCERATION #

The number of prison incarcerations resulting from a new court commitment offender has experienced. This does not include returns to prison for parole violations.

Missing & 1	23
2	30
3 or More	35

9. SUBSTANCE ABUSE NEED LEVEL

The DOC case management level of need for substance abuse treatment determined during the initial needs assessment

Missing & 1 or 2	13
3 or More	18

Brief Description

- The scale was built and validated on a group of all offenders released from DOC in FY2002 (611 women and 4769 men; 470 sex offenders; 5850 total).
 - The scale was validated on a hold-out sample and again on sex offenders.
 - The scale's predictive accuracy held almost perfectly on the validation sample, meaning that **the scale is very stable**.
- More than 175 possible predictors were analyzed. The 9 final CARAS survivors captured the maximum predictive power resident in the development database.
- The scale's accuracy depends on using the instrument with ALL the 9 items. Using the items individually will not predict recidivism accurately.
- The scale works equally well for men and women.
- The scale works well on sex offenders.
- One-third of the technical violators statistically resembled the recidivists, and two-thirds statistically resembled the NON-recidivists.
- For the purpose of developing the scale, recidivism was defined as new court filing within 3 years; however the scale also predicts any new arrest following release from prison.
 - For each increasing risk category, risk for any new arrest increases 81%; risk for a violent arrest increases 30% for each increasing risk category.
- The overall new court filing recidivism rate of the group of the 2002 release group was 47%.
- The new CARAS has 5 risk categories: (1) very low, (2) low, (3) medium, (4) high, and (5) very high.
- About 1/3 of the 2002 releases were very high risk, with 76% recidivating (3 out of 4).
- The very low risk groups recidivates at less than half the rate of the entire sample, at about 23% (about 1:5), demonstrating that the scale discriminates among risk groups very well.
- The scores range from 1-79.
 - This large score range significantly increases the precision of the instrument, and would be impossible to implement (with confidence that it would be consistently scored and added correctly) if the CARAS had to be hand-completed.
 - BT at DOC will ensure that the instrument is self-populating in DCIS.
- The average score for men is 38.1 and for women is 38.5 (no statistically significant difference).
- The scale can be used at various decision points in the release process, and can provide risk assessment information to the parole board, community corrections boards, and parole officers in the community.

Additional information about those in the risk categories:

- There is no real difference in gender across risk categories
- There is no real difference in ethnicity across risk categories
- There is no difference in mental health scores (P code), but those with high medical needs are about twice as likely to be low/lower risk
- There is no difference in risk level across incoming crime type. The categories for this analysis were violent, drug, escape, property, other nonviolent
- Those with NO escape charges or 1 escape charge are in the lower risk/med risk categories
- Those in the lower/low risk categories tend to have good attitudes, good companions, OK employment and substance abuse histories

Lower risk groups

- Nearly everyone in the low and lowest risk categories were classified as a “new court commitment” or a parole return/no new crime (DOC “most recent prison admission type”)
- Half of the lower/low offenders have a Felony Class 1 or 2 index crime (there were only 51 among the 2002 releases, about 1 percent of all those released on parole)
- The lower risk group is slightly more likely to be comprised of F6s
- Many of the low risk folks have very high vocational needs
- Many had poor family support on the LSI

High risk groups

- Those in the high risk group are much more likely to have anger problems
- Those in the high risk categories are likely to be serving a sentence for multiple drug counts
- Those with multiple violent index crimes are about twice as likely to fall in the very high risk category
- Those with MULTIPLE counts of escape are in the very high risk category
- Those in the very high risk category tend to have a bad attitude
- Those in the very high risk category are likely to be in medium and close custody