Psychiatric Security Review Board

At a Glance

ROBERT B. BERGER, ESQ., ***Chairman***
Established **- 1985**
Statutory authority **– CGS Sec. 17a-580 - 17a-603 inclusive**
Central office **- 505 Hudson Street, First Floor,**
Hartford, CT 06106
Number of employees **- 4**
Recurring operating expenses **- $352,494**
Organizational structure **- One Administrative Unit**

Mission

To protect the safety of Connecticut citizens and certain individuals by ordering appropriate treatment, confinement or conditional release of persons accused of crimes but found not guilty by reason of mental disease or mental defect.

Statutory Responsibility

The Psychiatric Security Review Board (the "Board"), determines the level of confinement and treatment, for those individuals found not guilty of a crime by reason of mental disease or defect, necessary to protect society. Acquittees are committed to the Board by the Superior Court. The Board, in turn, orders the appropriate level of supervision and treatment conditions under which an acquittee may be released into the community. The Board orders confinement in a maximum-security facility, approves temporary leave from a hospital setting, grants conditional

release into the community and provides recommendations to the Superior Court in the matters of discharge from the Board and continued commitment.

Public Service

The general public is the beneficiary of the agency's work. During fiscal year 2010-2011, 150 persons were under the Board's jurisdiction. A total of five persons were committed to the Board this fiscal year by the Superior Court and 16 individuals had their commitment terms extended by the Superior Court. The commitment terms for two individuals expired and three individuals were discharged prior to the end of their commitment by the Superior Court. While under the Board's jurisdiction, two individuals expired in this fiscal year.

As of June 30, 2011, 143 individuals remained under the Board's jurisdiction. Of the 143 individuals, 31 were confined in maximum-security at Connecticut Valley Hospital, one acquittee was confined in a high security setting with the Department of Developmental Services, 79 individuals were ordered confined in a secure non-maximum security setting at Connecticut Valley Hospital and 30 individuals had conditional release status. In addition, one acquittee remained in federal custody serving a concomitant sentence with his Board commitment and 1acquittee has been AWOL since June 1991.

The Board held 204 hearings and 27 Board conferences resulting in 125 Memoranda of Decision and 17 Reports to Court regarding the matters of Continued Commitment and Discharge from the jurisdiction of the Board.

During this fiscal year, there was one misdemeanor arrest for an individual on conditional release status. The charge was subsequently dropped.

Improvements/Achievements 2010-11

- Maintained zero percent criminal recidivism of conditionally released acquittees, as reflected by no criminal convictions.
- Participated in multi-agency initiative to introduce H.B. 6490, "An Act Establishing A Procedure For Relief From Certain Federal Firearms Prohibitions," affecting individuals acquitted of a crime by reason of mental disease or defect.
- Confirmed new Psychologist member to the Board.
- Collaborated with Judicial Department's Office of Victim Services to include the Board in Judicial's Statewide Automated Victim Information and Notification (SAVIN) program, a victim notification system.
- Initiated collaboration with the Department of Public Safety's Sex Offender Registry Unit to review the statutory language pertaining to sex offender registration requirements for applicable acquittees transitioning to the community.
- Expanded green technology initiatives through participation in a newly developed Single Stream Recycling program at the Board's administrative offices.
- Upgraded agency website content and transitioned to new state-wide website format.
- Continued modification of agency acquittee database by improving the data quality and automating additional reports.
- Apprised the public of all Board hearings and conferences via timely posting of information to agency website.
- Conducted agency procedures as required by law within statutorily mandated timeframes.

- Updated statistical information related to acquittee confinement and movement into the community.
- Maintained administrative meetings with the Commissioner of the Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services and Connecticut Valley Hospital administrators to improve collaboration and address system issues.
- Participated in regularly scheduled community providers meetings with the Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services regarding conditionally released acquittees.
- Conducted bimonthly Psychiatric Security Review Board (PSRB) trainings in partnership with the Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services and provided on-site statewide PSRB training to a variety of community providers.

Strategic Planning/Business Planning

The Board's strategic plan includes:

- Collaborate with the Office of Attorney General and the Board's Legislative Liaison to implement modifications and additions to the Board's statutes and regulations, as needed.
- Continue partnership with the Department of Information Technology, providing quality improvements to the agency acquittee database.
- Ensure the continued cross-training of agency employees to effectively manage continuity of operations.
- Continue the Board's collaborative planning process with the Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services to address ongoing service systems issues and best practice protocols.
- Maintain outreach to community agencies and the public regarding the Board's mission of public safety.
- Update Agency Continuity of Operations Business Plan.

Information Reported as Required by State Statute

The Board members as of June 30, 2011, were Robert Berger, Esq. (Chairman), John Ryan (expert in parole/probation), Mark Kirschner, Ph.D. (psychologist), Justin Schechter, M.D. (psychiatrist), Sylvia Cancela (member of the general public) and Susan Blair, M.S., L.P.C. (victim advocate).

The Board is assisted by the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services in meeting the Affirmative Action requirements of the statute and follows such regulations of the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services.