Background

STC was instituted following corrections system studies, conducted in the 1970's, pointing to the inadequacy of the selection and training of corrections personnel employed in California's jails and probation departments. The studies identified selection and training inconsistencies as major factors in safety, security, and litigation problems that troubled California's local corrections system. Personnel selection criteria and training standards varied widely among the scores of city and county corrections jurisdictions. Many lacked formal training policies and, in some cases, staff training was nonexistent.

As a remedy, legislation in 1979 directed the Board of Corrections to set statewide selection and training standards and to develop a selection and training process to support legislative goals.

The Law and Regulations

The Board of Corrections has legal responsibility to establish selection and training standards for local corrections personnel and to assist in offsetting costs by providing statewide subvention from the Corrections Training Fund. STC Program mandates are in Penal Code Sections 6025-6037 and Sections 6040-6044.

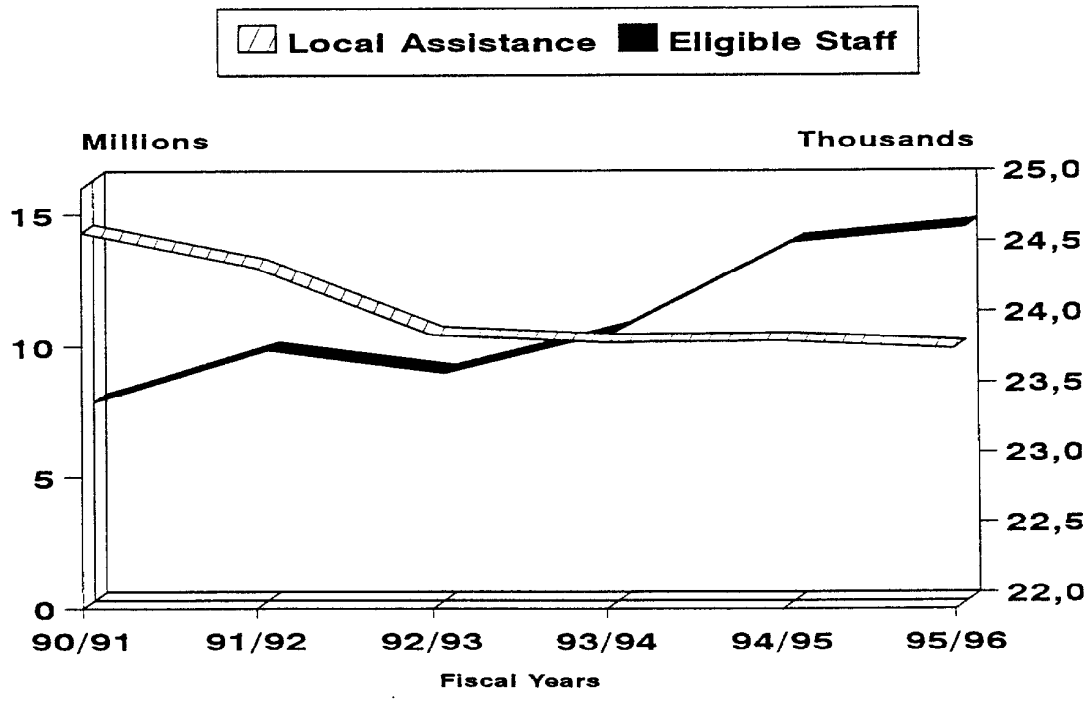
The intent of the law is to improve the skills and raise the level of competency of local corrections personnel. The concept underlying the STC Program is to provide a standardized local corrections selection and training system. STC Program regulations are in Title 15, California Code of Regulations, Division 1, Subchapter 1, Sections 100-358.

A comprehensive revision of the STC Program regulations was completed and the revised regulations should be effective on

Funding

The Legislature created the Corrections Training Fund, derived from court fines and penalty assessments. It is one of eight special funds that comprise the State Penalty Fund and is administered by the Board of Corrections. Revenue into the fund directly impacts the amount of local assistance money available to counties and cities to assist in meeting statewide selection and training standards for local corrections.

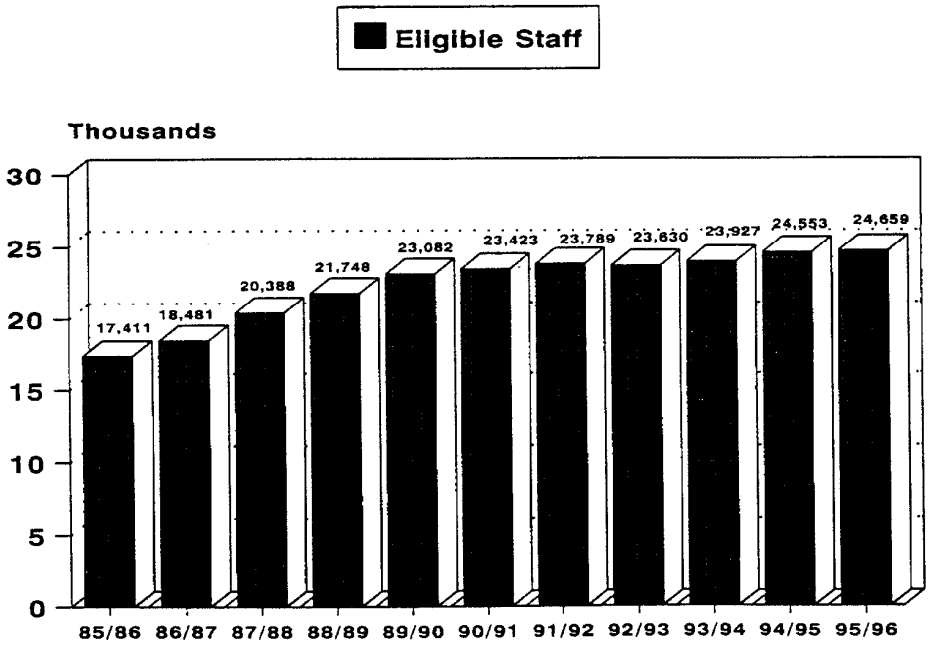
STC uses a per capita funding mechanism to ensure that available funds are fairly and equitably distributed to local corrections agencies. The graph shows the condition of the Corrections Training Fund for the past several years. From its peak in FY 1989/90, it declined over 29 percent by FY 95/96, resulting in a reduction in per capita funding available to local corrections agencies.



Participants

Participation in STC is voluntary and is open to county probation departments, sheriff departments, departments of corrections and to police departments operating city jails. Participating departments must agree to conform to the standards established by the Board of Corrections. In FY 1995/96 there were 165 separately administered local agencies participating in STC, including 58 probation departments, 54 sheriffs departments, 48 police departments operating city jails, 3 county departments of corrections, and 3 juvenile institutions, camps and ranches.

The graph shows the number of local corrections staff positions participating in STC for the past ten years. The growth in local corrections staff positions is due primarily to voter approval of four major bond measures that resulted in new jail construction and expansion during the 1980's and 1990's. Nearly $3 billion of state and local investment in jail construction and remodeling has resulted in a 94 percent increase in local jail capacity, and accompanying growth of corrections officers to staff local jails.



Process

STC works closely with local jurisdictions and subject matter experts, utilizing their input and data compiled through ongoing research, for standard setting and policy direction. In addition, five regional local training managers associations assess training needs of member agencies and coordinate shared training on a regional basis.

STC focuses on planning and technical assistance to accomplish program goals. An Annual Training Plan is the key element for participation in STC. It is developed by local officials through a process of assessing local agency needs. The Plan is designed to meet minimum selection and training standards and takes into consideration departmental goals, problem areas and unique circumstances.

As part of its technical assistance, STC Field Representatives monitor the progress of each participating department and meet with appropriate local officials to review, revise and update the Plan. Special issues, needs and changes can be accommodated to adapt to new priorities. At the conclusion of each year, participating departments and STC conduct a comprehensive review of department goals as expressed in their Plan. The purpose of this formal review is to determine compliance with selection and training standards and to aid the department in future planning.