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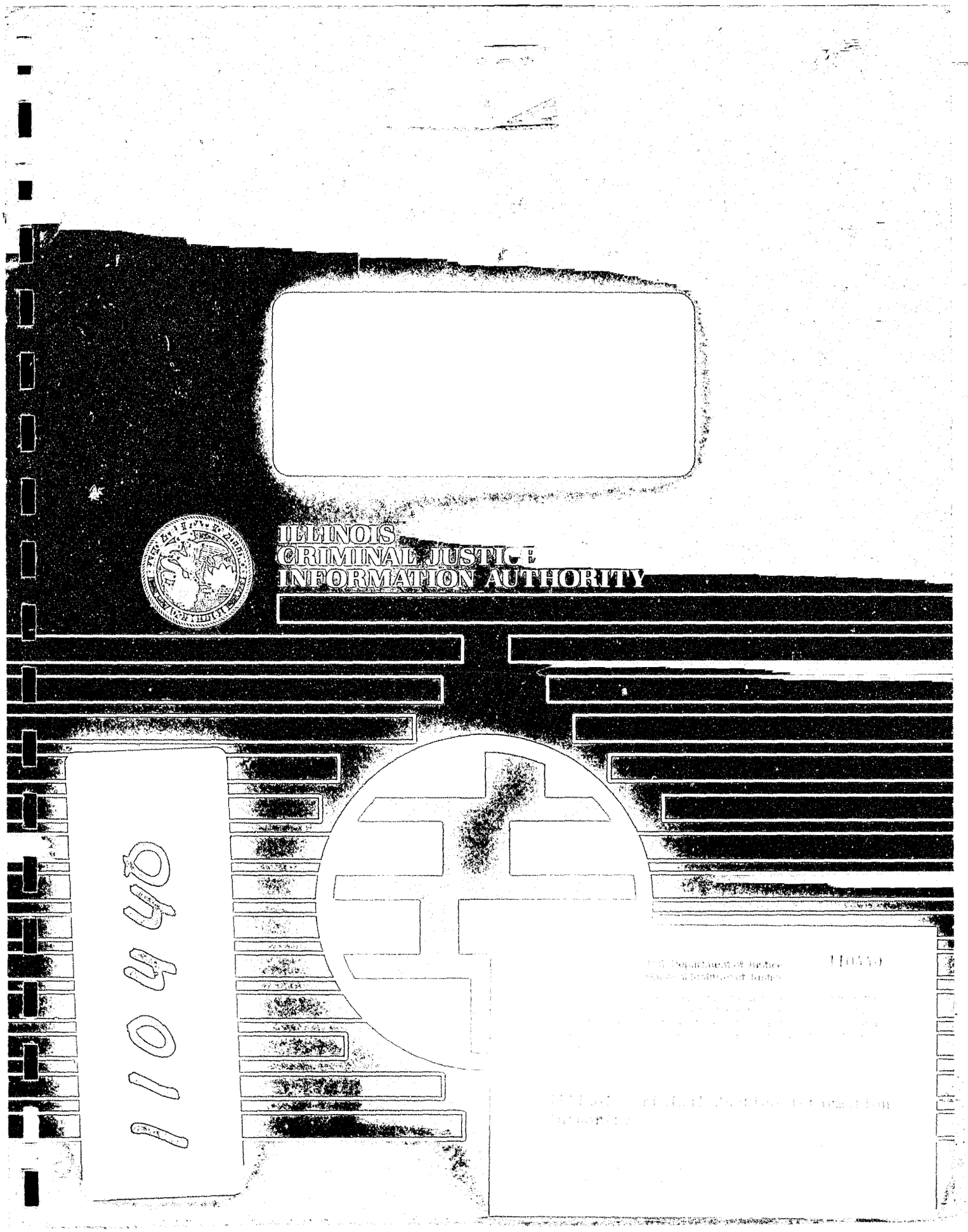

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IDOC-CIMIS AUDIT REPORT

Accuracy and Completeness of the Illinois
Department of Corrections CIMIS Database

March 1986

ILLINOIS CRIMINAL JUSTICE INFORMATION AUTHORITY

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APR 11 1988

ACQUISITIONS

Printed by authority of the State of Illinois
March 1986
Number of copies: 150
Printing order number: 86-57

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The cooperation received from the Illinois Department of Corrections, from all levels of its administration, stands out as the most important contribution to the completion and usefulness of this audit report. In particular, John Dreiske, deputy director of the IDOC's Bureau of Policy Development, Larry Laird and Andy Krok of the Information Services Unit (ISU), Nola Joyce of the Research and Evaluation Unit, and John Groves, chief records officer, provided input and comments on the design and conduct of the audit.

David Larson, from the ISU, was instrumental in the design, coordination, and implementation of the audit and the formulation of the findings and recommendations presented in this report. Lynn Kennedy, Leona Wombacher, Sandy McLendon, and Mike Smith all contributed their time and energy to various audit tasks.

The audit team received a great deal of cooperation from the institutional staffs at each CIMIS site, including correctional officers, Records Office and CIMIS personnel, and the other staff who answered our questions and helped us during the audits. The cooperation received from these people contributed to the successful completion of the project.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As criminal justice agencies become more automated, the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority is working to improve the quality of criminal justice data. The Authority has conducted database audits to measure data accuracy, completeness, and security in the belief that by documenting and evaluating these factors, the quality and availability of data in criminal justice will be improved.

Previously, the Authority conducted three audits of the Computerized Criminal History database maintained at the Illinois Department of State Police (formerly the Illinois Department of Law Enforcement), and one audit of the Correctional Institution Management Information System (CIMIS) implemented at the Cook County Department of Corrections (CCDOC) in 1975.

The Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) has used a version of CIMIS since 1974. Both the IDOC and the CCDOC versions of CIMIS were designed by the Authority. In August 1982, the IDOC expanded its CIMIS operations departmentwide and requested that the Authority help design and implement an IDOC-CIMIS database audit.

This audit report is the product of that request. The audit was a cooperative effort between the Authority and the IDOC and was planned and executed by an audit team made up of both Authority and IDOC employees. The design of the IDOC-CIMIS audit also will serve as a model for future data quality audits.

The audit of the IDOC-CIMIS database was conducted from November 1982 to June 1983 and included the 13 adult correctional centers in which CIMIS was operating during that time.[1] A special audit was also conducted on a sample of new admissions to the Joliet Reception Center to document problems in the transfer of data from the CCDOC-CIMIS to the IDOC-CIMIS.

The audit focused on four groups of IDOC-CIMIS data elements:

- Inmate Record Jacket Elements
- Inmate Job Assignment Elements
- Inmate Release Date Elements
- Inmate Field Services Elements

The actual data elements included in these four groups were chosen through discussion and review with the IDOC. They represent the CIMIS elements of primary concern to the IDOC.

The procedures used in the audit were meant to measure the accuracy with which manual data, from which IDOC-CIMIS records are created, were recorded to the IDOC-CIMIS. Thus, for audit purposes, CIMIS records were defined as *accurate* when they corresponded with *manual* (source) records; the audit did not determine whether the manual records themselves were correct. Any disparities between CIMIS entries and the manual documents were brought to the attention of CIMIS and Records Office staff. Decisions regarding the corrections that had to be made were left up to the IDOC. The only exception to this procedure occurred for the field services audit. In that audit, the current status of discrepant cases was checked to determine whether or not those inmates were still on parole or work release.

[1] The institutions audited were: Centralia, Dwight, East Moline, Graham, Joliet, Logan, Menard, Menard Psychiatric Center, Pontiac, Sheridan, Stateville, Vandalia, and Vienna.

Inmate Record Jacket Audit[2]

A total of 2,471 inmate record jackets were audited across all 13 institutions (for an average of 190 record jackets per institution). This statistically valid sample revealed that, in general, charge and sentence information on CIMIS was highly accurate when compared with the documents in the inmate record jackets. The data were 94 percent to 100 percent accurate across all adult correctional centers.

On the other hand, the inmate record jacket audit revealed that law enforcement identification numbers (Illinois Bureau of Identification number [BOI#], Chicago Police Department Identification Report number [IR#], Federal Bureau of Investigation number [FBI#]) were missing from 33 percent of the CIMIS records across all institutions. This renders CIMIS records less useful to other criminal justice agencies who need to access the information in IDOC files. For example, the Cook County Central Warrants Unit relies on CIMIS-IDOC identification numbers to track down persons with outstanding warrants who already may be incarcerated in the IDOC for another offense. Such efforts are hampered when these numbers are not entered into the system.

Some problems also were observed with the ADMIT TYPE, ADMIT DATE, and SECURITY CLASSIFICATION elements in CIMIS.[3] The procedures for entering these elements are not followed consistently at the IDOC, and time lags for data entry into CIMIS pose data quality problems.

Job Assignment Audit

The job assignment audit was based on a sample of 2,735 job assignment entries, or an average of 210 per institution. This statistically valid sample revealed that the job assignment elements in most institutions were highly accurate, and that there were no major problems in this area. Job assignment is one of the few areas in which the IDOC relies almost totally on CIMIS.

Release Date Audit

A total of 14,504 release date entries were audited across all institutions, representing the entire population of release date records for the 13 institutions audited. The release date audit revealed a problem regarding the updating of CIMIS and manual release dates. Inmates receiving *compensatory time*[4] have their CIMIS entries updated automatically on a monthly basis via a computer program, while the actual sentence time cards are updated manually by Records Office personnel. Since these records are updated on a different schedule than are CIMIS entries, the two sets of release date records rarely coincide on any given day. It is also possible for an inmate to forfeit compensatory time at any time by violating institutional rules. Because an adjustment of CIMIS entries to reflect this loss of time will not be made until the following month, the manual sentence time cards will usually be more current, and are thus relied upon to a greater extent than CIMIS entries when determining inmates' release dates.

Inmate Field Services Audit

A total of 14,239 field services entries were audited across all the institutions, representing the entire population of inmates on parole and work release at the IDOC during the course of the audit. The field services audit revealed information problems regarding: 1) work release inmates on transfer (TR) status between the Joliet and Sheridan correctional centers, 2) inmates missing from CIMIS parole lists, and 3) inmates on the CIMIS parole lists whose parole records should not appear on the lists.

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[2] An inmate record jacket is the manual file that contains copies of all documents pertinent to incarceration, including the court commitment papers (mittimi), law enforcement rap sheets, physical/social descriptions, and a chronological history of the inmate's incarceration (for example, changes in security classification, transfers to other institutions, documentation of rule violations, etc.).

[3] ADMIT TYPE refers to the status of an inmate at the time of admission to the IDOC, and includes such designations as *Direct from Court* (that is, first-time offender), *Discharged and Recommitted*, and *Parole Violator*.

[4] These inmates are those serving indeterminate sentences, who earn 7 1/2 to 8 days *good time* per month, rather than being assigned a fixed mandatory supervised release (MSR) date.

INTRODUCTION

In Illinois, as in many other states and jurisdictions, criminal justice administrators are increasingly relying on automated information systems. Part of the impetus for this trend comes from the general move toward increased computer use in most business sectors. Another, perhaps more powerful influence, has been the need for *rapid* access to *high-quality* information by criminal justice officials. Computers can increase the speed of access and the quality of the data.

The Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority is the State agency responsible for auditing the central repositories of criminal history information and is charged with developing programs to improve the quality of that information. Because of the widespread availability of computerized data, the Authority has devoted a substantial portion of its resources to documenting the data maintained in State repositories and, in particular, to assessing the quality of data maintained on computers. In the past, the Authority has audited both the Computerized Criminal History database at the Illinois Department of State Police and the Correctional Institution Management Information System (CIMIS) at the Cook County Department of Corrections.

This audit was conducted as part of a continuing effort to improve the quality of criminal justice data in Illinois. It represents the first comprehensive audit of CIMIS at the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) and was conducted in close cooperation with IDOC personnel who work with CIMIS. The IDOC determined the data elements that were to be audited and suggested the appropriate source documents to use in verifying CIMIS entries. The audit team was composed of both Authority and IDOC staff. The IDOC also reviewed early drafts of this report.

The methods used to determine discrepancies in this audit were uncomplicated in design, but difficult to implement. Two audit tasks--the inmate record jacket audit and the inmate job assignment audit--were based on statistically valid samples of IDOC-CIMIS inmate records. Two other audit tasks--the field services audit and the release date audit--were based on the total populations of the relevant CIMIS records.

In each audit task, CIMIS record entries were checked against the corresponding entries in source (paper) documents. Because each correctional center varied in its use and organization of manual records, there were slight variations in the implementation of these methods.[5] However, these variations do not detract from the validity of the report findings.

This report is organized into the following sections:

- A discussion of IDOC and CIMIS operations
- An explanation of the audit procedures
- A presentation of the findings and recommendations of the audit

Detailed audit reports for each of the correctional facilities audited are available from the Authority.

[5] See the *Audit Methods* section for detailed explanations of the audit procedures and methods.

THE ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS AND CIMIS

This section presents a brief description of the IDOC and CIMIS. It describes generally how the IDOC uses CIMIS to accomplish certain daily operational tasks.

Installed in the mid-1970s, the original Stateville Manpower Information System (SMIS) was used primarily as a tool for assigning inmates to jobs at the IDOC's Stateville Correctional Center. Eventually, SMIS was renamed the Correctional Institution Management Information System (CIMIS) and was installed in all IDOC adult correctional centers. In 1981, CIMIS functions were combined with the information management functions, which the IDOC's Corrections Institution System (CIS) had performed previously. At that time, the IDOC abadoned CIS, and CIMIS became the sole departmentwide computerized offender information system. CIMIS also was used for additional information support functions.

At the time of the audit, the IDOC operated 15 adult correctional centers, nine juvenile facilities, and numerous other departments. CIMIS was in use at only 13 off the 15 adult correctional centers.[6] Thus, this report is concerned with CIMIS as it operates at the 13 sites.

The broad tasks that CIMIS supports at the IDOC include:

- Inmate reception and classification
- Inmate population control and assignment scheduling
- Parole and work release management
- Maintenance of historical data
- Sentence calculation

These tasks, and the manner in which CIMIS supports them, are beyond the scope of this report. The interested reader may refer to the IDOC-CIMIS manual and to the Information Services Unit (ISU) at the IDOC for further details.

Each CIMIS site uses one or more CIMIS terminals (depending on the size of the institution and the workload CIMIS must support), which are linked to the central database at the ISU in Springfield. The CIMIS users at each site are primarily data entry operators, assignment coordinators, Records Office personnel, and other incidental users.[7] CIMIS is also used by correctional officers, but primarily as a source of information on inmates, rather than as a management tool.[8]

CIMIS is a transaction-driven system; users type transaction names into a terminal to call up various screens. These screens are used to read, add, delete, or modify data in the CIMIS database. The screens can also be used to generate reports.

Access to CIMIS is regulated to a certain degree by the ISU through terminal and transaction security controls, the user's manual, administrative regulations, and training.[9] However, each adult correctional center represents a unique application of CIMIS. Factors such as institution size, resident population characteristics, staff levels, and staff experience with CIMIS all contribute to the manner and extent the institutions rely on CIMIS. The extent to which CIMIS data are accurate and complete are also affected by these factors.

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[6] CIMIS was not operating at the Danville and Dixon adult correctional centers when the audit began.

[7] CIMIS users also include wardens and other institution administrators to the extent that they rely on CIMIS-generated reports and products. CIMIS users in the context of this report are primarily those who enter, modify, or search CIMIS data via computer terminals.

[8] The Cook County Department of Corrections, for example, uses CIMIS primarily for inmate information. See the *Data Survey Report* (1981), and the *Operations Report* (1982) for the Cook County Department of Corrections for detailed accounts of CCDOC-CIMIS.

[9] The issue of security (for example, how unauthorized access or tampering is guarded against) was not addressed by this audit.

AUDIT METHODS

This audit of the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC)-CIMIS database focused on the *accuracy* of the computerized entries as compared to the corresponding entries in the *manual* (source) files. This accuracy audit included four components of the IDOC-CIMIS database:

- Inmate Record Jacket Elements
- Inmate Job Assignment Elements
- Inmate Release Date Elements
- Inmate Field Services Elements

This section briefly discusses the implementation of each of these audit components, with primary focus on problems that were encountered in carrying out the procedures as designed.

Because this was the first comprehensive audit of the IDOC-CIMIS, the entire audit can be considered a test of the audit procedures. Although these procedures were designed in close cooperation with the IDOC, some problems were still encountered. Some procedures were found to be more reliable than others, and some were not as appropriate as originally thought. It is hoped that this section will aid future auditors of the IDOC-CIMIS to surpass the accomplishments of this first audit.

Methods and Problems of Each Audit Component

Inmate Record Jacket Audit

The purpose of the inmate record jacket audit was to determine the extent to which CIMIS entries corresponded to the information recorded on various documents in the manual record jacket.[10]

Sampling

It was not feasible to audit *all* CIMIS elements found in the record jackets (there are hundreds), nor was it feasible to audit a limited number of elements in *every* record jacket. However, it was possible to select a large enough sample at each CIMIS site to estimate the status of all records at the site. To accomplish this, the following sampling procedure was designed and implemented:

- Based on a confidence level of 90 percent, sampling precision of 5 percent, and an expected rate of occurrence of 50 percent, a sample size at each site was determined.[11]

- A systematic random sample was drawn by picking every *n*th record from the alphabetic inmate roster at each institution. This procedure continued until the desired sample size was obtained.

In a few instances, the actual number of records sampled and audited fell short of the desired sample size, but only by a few records. The sampling error of the estimates in those cases was barely affected. Thus, for each CIMIS site, and for the entire sample of inmate records drawn, the number and percentage of discrepancies found are accurate within plus or minus 5 percent of the levels observed.

[10] See the *Executive Summary* for a more detailed description of the inmate record jacket.

[11] The formula used to calculate sample size included a finite population correction. Extensive explanations of statistical sampling may be found in Kish (1968) and Arkin (1975).

Data Elements Audited

The original design of this task called for an audit of 20 data elements, including inmate identification, charge, sentence, and security classification elements. There were three significant deviations from this procedure during the course of the audit:

- Although the PLEA element was audited at each CIMIS site, the IDOC asked that it be excluded from the final report because the element has been redesigned in CIMIS.[12] Findings regarding the PLEA element are excluded from this report.

- Only 17 elements were audited at Stateville. Neither of the two admit dates was audited, and the PLEA element was excluded from the final report.

- ORIGINAL ADMIT DATE was not included on the CIMIS CLASSIFICATION report (the CIMIS source for this element) until the midpoint of the audit; this element could be audited only at the five institutions completed after that time.

Because all the CIMIS elements selected were not audited at every site, care should be taken in comparing audit results across sites. It would be better to compare individual elements or element groups across the sites at which they were audited, rather than to compare summary results across all institutions.[13]

The *Findings and Recommendations* section in this report accounts for all of these factors. Recommendations are made regarding specific elements or element groups, not for all elements at all institutions.

Source Documents

In order to assess the accuracy of CIMIS inmate information, it was necessary to identify the documents in the manual record jackets that were used to make the CIMIS entries (referred to as *source* documents for the purposes of this audit). Identifying the source documents posed some problems, however, since there is no uniform policy at the IDOC regarding source documents for CIMIS data entry. An attempt was made to identify the most accurate source in the record jackets (for example, rap sheets for identification numbers, court mittimi for charge and sentence information). In many cases, however, a CIMIS entry *could* have been made from a document other than the one identified as a source for the purpose of the audit (for example, date of birth from a statement of facts rather than from a rap sheet, social security number from a custodial card or rap sheet rather than from the record jacket FACE SHEET). In addition, some elements are reported by inmates to intake workers, in which case there is no real source document.

Due to this ambiguity in the actual documents used to make CIMIS entries, the results of the audit may have overestimated the number of elements missing from record jackets (since the audit procedures specified that if a document designated as a source document for the audit was not found in the record jacket, the auditors should not spend a lot of time searching through other documents for that particular element). This problem will not be resolved until standardized data entry procedures are implemented.[14]

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[12] PLEA refers to whether or not the inmate had pled guilty to the charge(s) in court, as indicated on the court mittimus (the document committing the defendant to the IDOC).

[13] The inmate record jacket audit included 17 elements for Stateville, 18 for the Dwight, East Moline, Joliet, Menard, Pontiac, and Sheridan correctional centers, and the Menard Psychiatric Center, and 19 for the Centralia, Graham, Logan, Vandalia, and Vienna correctional centers.

[14] Since the completion of these CIMIS site audits, the IDOC has indicated that standardized data entry source documents are being identified.

Joliet Reception Center Special Audit

A special inmate record jacket audit was conducted on the CIMIS records for inmates transferred to the IDOC from the Cook County Department of Corrections (CCDOC). The purpose of this special IDOC-CIMIS audit was to identify information quality problems resulting from the transfer of these inmate records between the CCDOC-CIMIS and the IDOC-CIMIS.

No major problems were encountered during this audit, though its special nature required slight changes in the inmate record jacket audit procedures. Because the CIMIS lists of inmates being transferred from the CCDOC to the IDOC do not contain all of the elements audited at the other adult correctional centers, only eight CIMIS elements were available for comparison among entries in the CCDOC-CIMIS, the IDOC-CIMIS, and IDOC inmate record jackets.[15] Six other elements, not included on the CCDOC-CIMIS inmate transfer report, were audited by comparing the IDOC-CIMIS entries to corresponding entries in the inmate record jackets.[16]

Job Assignment Audit

Each inmate within an institution is assigned a primary *job*, in addition to a cell location. This job may be official duties performed in some area of the institution (for example, kitchen, laundry, etc.), enrollment in classes, or merely a designation that the inmate is currently not assigned to any duties. The purpose of the job assignment audit was to determine the extent to which the JOB ASSIGNMENT and START DATE entries listed in CIMIS corresponded to the entries in the manual job assignment files maintained by the Placement Office.

Since the job assignment audit originally was designed to be a part of the inmate record jacket audit, the only JOB ASSIGNMENT entries that were audited were for those inmates already selected for the record jacket audit. However, this was a sufficient sample to be able to generalize the findings to all JOB ASSIGNMENT entries at each site.

With minor exceptions, the job assignment audit proceeded smoothly at all institutions. However, it was not possible to audit the START DATE of the job assignments at some institutions because of complex assignment records or problems in generating the CIMIS PAYLIST report.[17] Since omission of the START DATE element greatly reduced the total possible number of discrepancies that could be observed, the results of the job assignment audit for these institutions are not comparable to those obtained at the other institutions.

Release Date Audit

The purpose of the release date audit was to determine the extent to which the mandatory supervised release (MSR) or parole date on CIMIS for each inmate corresponded to the date written on the manual file card (sentence time card) maintained by the Records Office. Because only these dates were audited, it was feasible to audit the total number of relevant CIMIS records.

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15 These elements include BIRTHDATE, BOI NUMBER, FBI NUMBER, IR NUMBER, SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER, CRIMINAL CHARGE, MITTIMUS NUMBER, and SENTENCE.

16 These elements include CONCURRENT/CONSECUTIVE SENTENCE, COUNTS, SENTENCE TYPE, GRADE, SECURITY, and ATTEMPT ESCAPE. It should be noted that the PLEA element was excluded from this special audit also. See the final audit report in *Appendix F: Joliet Reception Center* for details concerning this audit component.

17 These institutions are Centralia, Graham, Stateville, and Vienna.

The release date audit was the most difficult and time-consuming audit component to complete. Some problems encountered include the following:

- The audit team did not completely understand the complexities and intricacies of release date record management. This was due not only to the team's lack of experience, but also to the lack of standardization of release date recordkeeping procedures among the various institutions.

- There is no consistent policy regarding how to maintain release date records for inmates out of the IDOC's custody on writ or appeal bond.

- The procedures established for this audit also did not differentiate those cases with pending Prisoner Review Board hearings. These cases were included in the audit, although there was no reason for the release dates listed in CIMIS and the manual records to match.

- Inmates with indeterminate sentences (who receive *compensatory time* for good behavior) also presented special problems. These release date records are updated automatically once a month for all institutions via a CIMIS program that is run in Springfield. However, the sentence time cards (the source documents used to verify CIMIS release dates) are updated manually by each Records Office on a monthly schedule that differs at every site. Thus, the timing of the release date audit (for example, before the CIMIS update but after the manual update, or vice versa) had a significant impact on the type and number of release date discrepancies observed.

Because of the problems mentioned above, the *Findings and Recommendations* section discusses only what needs to be done to strengthen this aspect of the IDOC-CIMIS audit.

Field Services Audit

The purpose of the field services audit was to determine the extent to which the CIMIS entries for inmates on work release and parole corresponded to the manual work release and parole files maintained by the Field Services Office. Because only two data elements (PAROLE/WORK RELEASE STATUS and START DATE) were included in this audit task, the entire population of relevant CIMIS records was audited, instead of a smaller sample as chosen for the record jacket audit.

This audit also proceeded without much difficulty. The only problem encountered was that two institutions did not maintain parole card files containing entries for PAROLE START DATE. This problem required that parole jackets be used as source documents. Although this change did not affect the results of the audit, it made the audit task more difficult to accomplish.

The field services audit was one of the most time-consuming audit tasks because it included *all* parole records and because many discrepancies were found at some sites. This audit task also consisted of an additional procedure, checking the current status of discrepant cases on CIMIS to ascertain whether or not those inmates were still on parole or work release. At one site, as many as 659 cases had to be investigated in this manner.

The recordkeeping practices in the Field Services Office varied greatly across institutions, which resulted in a wide variety of discrepancy types. Again, caution should be exercised in comparing the results of the field services audits across the institutions. Different recordkeeping procedures may render some comparisons invalid.

Audit Conditions

Audit conditions refer to the resources that were available to the audit team at each institution and to the conditions under which the audits were conducted. Each of these factors had a slight impact on the conduct of the audits at the various sites.

At the outset of the audit, the regular members of the audit team had not been decided upon. Thus, the audit at the Stateville Correctional Center (the first site audited) was the most difficult. Most of the staff members who served as auditors had little or no experience with IDOC data and documents, which resulted in a lack of uniformity among coders. After the Stateville audit was completed, a regular audit team of Authority and IDOC staff members was formed. After a few audits, the benefit of experience produced fewer coding errors and fewer procedural irregularities.

Working space and support staff available to the audit team varied across CIMIS sites. Some institutions were able to provide adequate workspace for the audit team, and some were not. Some were able to provide staff assistance to answer questions or pull records and return them to their files. Others were too busy or short-staffed to provide that assistance. To an extent, audits that were conducted with institutional staff assistance proceeded more smoothly than audits conducted with little help.

Each institution also varied as to the organization and format of the manual files maintained by its Records Office. For example, files might be kept by IDOC number in one institution, by name or date at another institution, and elsewhere by some other system that was not compatible with the format of the CIMIS report against which the records were being checked. In addition, special cases (for example, those inmates about to be released, those out on writ, etc.) might be kept in separate files altogether. The differences in filing procedures required checking several files to audit all the required elements, which greatly added to the time needed to complete an audit task. In addition, the existence of special files could not be known unless brought to the attention of the audit team by Records Office staff; unfortunately, this was not always done.

Summary

None of the problems experienced and explained here invalidates any of the findings presented in this report, though the problems may have tempered some of the conclusions drawn for *specific* audit components. Overall, many important issues regarding the accuracy and completeness of IDOC-CIMIS data were uncovered, and many conclusions can be made with confidence. The main purpose of this section was to describe the problems encountered in conducting the audit, so that they may be overcome in future audits.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This section presents the findings of the CIMIS audit at the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC). These findings are based on the observations in each of the final reports for the individual correctional centers. Each finding is accompanied by a discussion of its importance to the quality of IDOC-CIMIS data and by recommended steps to improve the quality of those data. The purpose of this section is to point directly to specific conclusions reached as a result of this audit and to provide specific suggestions for improving CIMIS at the IDOC.

FINDING #1:

In many instances, time lags in the entry of data into CIMIS seriously compromise the quality of that information, rendering it essentially inadequate for any tactical decisions.

DISCUSSION:

This finding points to a backlog of pending CIMIS data entries or procedural difficulties with data entry. Time lags in data entry limit CIMIS's effectiveness as a management tool. For example, delays in entering inmate field services status (parole or work release) reduce the validity of counts in those areas.

This finding also points to a staffing problem. In some of the larger and busier correctional centers, the amount of CIMIS-related work that must be done in order to keep the system up-to-date exceeds the amount of staff time available to perform the related tasks.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

To the greatest extent possible, data entry procedures for CIMIS should be accelerated. Events involving inmates (movements, status changes, assignment changes) should be entered into the system *as close in time as possible* to the actual occurrence of the event. To accomplish this, the focus should be redirected from creating CIMIS entries from manual records to immediately entering information into CIMIS when events occur. Any necessary manual records can then be generated directly from the database.

In addition, adequate staff should be made available to the Records Office and CIMIS staffs to complete the data entry and updating tasks required to avoid backlogs.

FINDING #2:

No standard procedure exists for regularly updating CIMIS inmate records to reflect changes that have occurred since inmate admission. As a result, many CIMIS records do not reflect the most current inmate information.

DISCUSSION:

The only time that CIMIS inmate records are thoroughly updated is when inmates are readmitted to the IDOC. If a past record for an incoming inmate exists in CIMIS, it is recalled and updated by the counselor at Joliet who interviews the inmate. It is important that all inmate records be reviewed and updated on a more regular basis for a number of reasons:

1. The volume of incoming inmates at the Joliet Reception Center is too large for the staff there to update CIMIS records for all incoming inmates; errors and missed status changes are bound to slip through.

2. The IDOC is a complex organization, housing more than 13,000 inmates on any given day. The sheer number of events and status changes regarding inmates that occur on any day, or in any brief time period, requires that records be monitored and updated on a continuous basis. If the practice of recording these changes manually rather than reporting them directly into CIMIS persists, it is inevitable that CIMIS entries will always lag behind in reflecting the most current inmate status.

3. There are also changes that occur over a longer time span that are important to monitor on a more regular basis. For example, changes may occur in an inmate's physical appearance, important documents (such as law enforcement rap sheets) may be added to the record jacket since admission, and new job skills may be acquired.

RECOMMENDATION:

Each time an adult correctional center receives an inmate for any reason (for example, transfer, new admission, return from writ), the entire CIMIS record for the inmate should be reviewed to identify any changes that have occurred since the last time the record was examined. Since procedures exist whereby all incoming inmates undergo complete entrance interviews by correctional counselors, CIMIS CLASSIFICATION reports should be run and used to update CIMIS inmate records as a part of that process.

FINDING #3:

There is no consistent policy regarding the most appropriate source documents to be used when entering information into CIMIS from the inmate record jacket (file).

DISCUSSION:

For any computerized system such as CIMIS to maintain a high degree of data accuracy, it is important that controls be established to ensure consistent and accurate data entry. This is especially important for information entered from the inmate record jacket, since this manual file contains many documents in which any given data element can be found, and not all of these documents will necessarily agree with one another.[18]

Rules and regulations regarding data entry and source documents are important controls for several reasons:

1. They introduce an element of accountability into the system. Logical rules that are enforced regarding data entry will pinpoint problem areas and provide an objective source of error detection. They also provide *audit trails* (that is, an objective means of detecting deviations from rules).

2. The existence and enforcement of rules and regulations regarding data entry and source documents provide an impetus and structure for standardized training in data entry across all institutions. In the absence of rules, training tends to occur on an informal and irregular basis. Once rules are established, training can begin, and retraining can be systematically done whenever the rules are significantly changed.

[18] This point reveals an underlying problem not addressed by this audit-- the accuracy of the information in the manual records from which the CIMIS entries are made. To a certain extent, the accuracy of inmate information reported by other agencies is beyond the control of the IDOC, although every effort should be made to resolve discrepant information before CIMIS entries are made.

These comments are made with the awareness that the IDOC trains its CIMIS users, and that rules for data entry in most areas have been developed and enforced on a regular basis. However, without standard rules regarding source documents, the other efforts of the IDOC regarding data quality assurance are weakened.

RECOMMENDATION:

The IDOC should develop rules regarding source documents for data entry of all of the elements covered in the inmate record jacket audit and for other elements deemed important enough to audit on a regular basis. The next audit of CIMIS inmate records should be revised to include these rules.

FINDING #4:

A large percentage of CIMIS records do not contain law enforcement identification numbers (Illinois Bureau of Identification number [BOI#], Federal Bureau of Identification number [FBI#], Chicago Police Department Identification Report number [IR#]), although sources for CIMIS entries of these elements exist in the manual inmate record jackets.

DISCUSSION:

This finding applies to almost every institution. It was also a major finding of the Joliet Reception Center special audit. There are two primary causes for this problem: (1) the law enforcement identification numbers are not entered into CIMIS during the receiving process at the Joliet Reception Center, and (2) CIMIS identification number entries are rarely checked for completeness when inmates arrive at institutions after leaving Joliet. In addition, the entry of these identification numbers from rap sheets that arrive after the inmate has been admitted to an institution is often assigned last priority by CIMIS operators, because of staff shortages and entry backlogs. Sometimes the identification numbers are set aside as the last elements to be updated by CIMIS operators.

These law enforcement identification numbers are particularly important to record in CIMIS. They are the means by which any law enforcement agency in Illinois or the rest of the country can locate persons with outstanding warrants who may already be incarcerated in the IDOC for another offense. Such efforts are hampered when these numbers are not entered into the system.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

An attempt should be made to enter all identification numbers found in manual records into CIMIS during the reception process at the Joliet Reception Center.

Whenever an inmate is transferred from one correctional center to another, the receiving center should ensure that all identification numbers have been entered into CIMIS, and the center should enter any missing numbers.

FINDING #5:

Two significant problems were observed in the ADMIT TYPE element: (1) a small percentage of inmates have entries in CIMIS for ADMIT TO OPERATIONS MODULE or ADMIT FROM COOK COUNTY CIMIS, and (2) some CIMIS records do not correctly reflect violator status (that is, those inmates who have violated their parole conditions and have been readmitted to the IDOC to serve out the remainder of their original sentence).

DISCUSSION:

ADMIT TYPE is an important element for inmate classification and other purposes. The CIMIS entries ADMIT TO OPERATIONS MODULE and ADMIT FROM COOK COUNTY CIMIS are particularly troublesome since they are essentially default options used by CIMIS operators to expedite the transfer of information from the Cook County Department of Corrections-CIMIS to the IDOC-CIMIS; as such, these entries convey no information about the inmate's actual ADMIT TYPE.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

An effort should be made to clear up all ADMIT TYPE entries of ADMIT TO OPERATIONS MODULE and ADMIT FROM COOK COUNTY CIMIS.

The policy regarding the recording of ADMIT TYPE on manual records and entering the element into CIMIS should be standardized for all correctional centers.

FINDING #6:

The RACE element proved to be one of the most consistently accurate elements in CIMIS. However, a small problem exists in the coding of Latinos. Race is self-reported by inmates, and some inmates with Spanish surnames call themselves black, while others call themselves white.

DISCUSSION:

The CCDOC-CIMIS and the IDOC-CIMIS use different race codes. When inmate records are transferred from the CCDOC to the IDOC, some of the CCDOC race codes are not updated in the IDOC-CIMIS. This problem is minor, but important, because race, like date of birth, is an important identifier used by many law enforcement agencies.

RECOMMENDATION:

A consistent policy regarding the coding of RACE in CIMIS should be developed. These codes should be compatible with the race codes used in the Department of State Police's Computerized Criminal History system.

FINDING #7:

With the exception of the PLEA element, which has been excluded from this report (see *Audit Methods*), all the charge and sentence-related elements were highly accurate. These elements include CONCURRENT/CONSECUTIVE SENTENCE, CHARGE, COUNTS, COMMITTING COUNTY, MITTIMUS NUMBER, SENTENCE and SENTENCE TYPE. The only systematic error observed resulted from a few charge codes (for example, solicitation, conspiracy) that were not included in the CIMIS Statutory Offense Table (Table 50).

DISCUSSION:

During the course of the audit, the IDOC released a new version of Table 50 for the IDOC-CIMIS. It is believed that this new version clears up this problem, although this component was not investigated during this audit.

RECOMMENDATION:

The IDOC should audit the new version of the CIMIS Statutory Offense Table.

FINDING #8:

The GRADE element was accurate to a consistently high degree in all of the institutions audited.

DISCUSSION:

The GRADE element refers to levels of privileges and security within each security classification (minimum, medium, maximum). Inmates' grades can be lowered as punishment for rule violations, although they will usually remain within the same overall security classification (for example, demoted from medium security A to B grade).

RECOMMENDATION:

None.

FINDING #9:

A small but statistically significant number of records in most of the institutions audited were discrepant on the SECURITY element.

DISCUSSION:

The SECURITY element in CIMIS is extremely important for the related purposes of inmate classification, movement, and control. An inmate whose security is *maximum*, but whose CIMIS record shows a security of *medium*, may be placed in the wrong institution or given a job assignment not normally given to maximum-security inmates. Inaccuracies in SECURITY can be serious.

The discrepancies observed in this element fall into two categories:

1. There is a time lag between assignment of inmate security and entry of the new security status in CIMIS.

2. The documentation for security status in inmate record jackets in some institutions is confusing. Not all of the official forms (VOTE SHEETS) used to request a security change contained the required warden's signature, indicating approval of the proposed security change. In some instances, the VOTE SHEET or PROGRAM CONSIDERATIONS report were not clearly or completely filled out, so that it was difficult to determine what change had been granted.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Procedures should be instituted to ensure that the inmate SECURITY is entered into CIMIS *as close in time as possible* to the actual assignment or change of security, using consistent source documents.

The rules regarding the use of VOTE SHEETS should be clarified and enforced.

FINDING #10:

The ATTEMPT ESCAPE warning element was not used consistently, if at all, at all of the institutions.

DISCUSSION:

Inconsistencies were observed regarding what information in an inmate's record warrants an escape risk warning. For example, an indication of bail jumping charges or AWOL status from the armed forces was included in the criteria of escape risk at some institutions. At others, the only criterion was a documented attempted (or successful) escape from the IDOC. In some instances, the record jacket was clearly marked *Escape Risk*, but this information was not updated in CIMIS. The audit team was unable to obtain from the personnel at any of the institutions audited any official policies that exist concerning this element.

RECOMMENDATION:

The definition of *Escape Risk* status for inmates should be clarified. After that, data entry rules for coding the ATTEMPT ESCAPE element in CIMIS should be standardized and enforced. A policy of periodic review and update of this element should be established.

FINDING #11:

The CIMIS work release count for the Sheridan Correctional Center is inaccurate because inmates on work release from Sheridan who are on transfer (TR) status at the Joliet Correctional Center are not counted in Sheridan's work release population.

DISCUSSION:

This counting method is a problem because it invalidates the population counts at both Sheridan and Joliet, making it difficult to determine true population figures within the IDOC. Information Services Unit staff indicated that this problem is being resolved through changes in CIMIS programs.

RECOMMENDATION:

When the programmatic problem regarding this finding is resolved, new work release audits at both the Sheridan and Joliet Correctional Centers should be conducted.

FINDING #12:

A significant number of inmates do not appear on the parole lists in many institutions because the proper CIMIS transaction PARLADD has not been executed, or because the institution from which an inmate is paroled (parent institution) is not documented in the CIMIS records for the inmate.

DISCUSSION:

These problems with parole records in CIMIS have two sources:

1. The omission of PARLADD transactions is a procedural problem, due to inconsistent application of a standard procedure.

2. The lack of parent institution documentation in many records stems from the conversion process from CIS to CIMIS that took place in August 1982. During that month, there was confusion regarding the new procedures for updating parole records. A large number of the parole records not appearing on CIMIS lists were records of inmates paroled during August 1982. This problem has since been corrected at all the institutions audited.

RECOMMENDATION:

Since the parole record audit encompassed all parole records in each adult institution (computerized and manual), it is recommended that the IDOC follow up this audit to ensure that all discrepancies identified have been corrected.

FINDING #13:

In most of the institutions audited, a large number of release date records for inmates receiving compensatory time were observed to be discrepant when compared with the manual sentence time cards maintained by the Records Office.

DISCUSSION:

Inmates with indeterminate sentences (those receiving compensatory time, usually seven and one-half to eight days credit per month) have their release date records updated once a month, via a program run at the Information Services Unit in Springfield. The manual release date files (sentence time cards) are updated on a monthly schedule set by each Records Office; these schedules do not necessarily coincide with the automatic update of CIMIS release date entries. In addition, the CIMIS program is not capable of making changes to a release date entry to reflect loss of time for rule violations that may occur between automatic updates. Thus, there is no reason to expect that, on any given day, CIMIS release date records for these inmates will match the manual records at the institutions, although the records should not be discrepant by more than eight days.

The release date audit was the most difficult of the four audit tasks to implement (see *Audit Methods*). The audit procedures designed for this task were inadequate for verifying all inmate release dates. No provision was made to account for inmates on writ or appeal bond, nor was any provision made to verify dates for inmates awaiting Prisoner Review Board hearings. For these reasons, specific conclusions are not drawn about the accuracy of release dates in this report.

RECOMMENDATION:

New release date audit procedures should be developed by the IDOC. Once the new release date audit procedures are developed, all CIMIS release date records should be audited.

FINDING #14:

Significant problems were observed during the special audit conducted at the Joliet Reception Center, including:

1. In many instances, charge and sentence-related elements do not match between the CCDOC-CIMIS and the IDOC-CIMIS.

2. In many cases, law enforcement identification numbers (BOI#, FBI#, Chicago IR#) were found in the IDOC-CIMIS inmate records, but not in the records transferred from the CCDOC-CIMIS.

3. In many other cases, identification number elements were missing from both CIMIS sources. Sometimes, inmates will be received, processed and transferred out of the Joliet Reception Center before correct identification is received from the Illinois Bureau of Identification (see Finding #4).

DISCUSSION:

The purpose of transferring CIMIS inmate records from the CCDOC-CIMIS to the IDOC-CIMIS during the weekly transfer of inmates is to quicken the transfer and receiving process and to provide information pertinent to security and classification decisions when the inmate arrives at the IDOC. For the most part, this goal is achieved. But the discrepancies observed in the charge-related and sentence-related elements, which accounted for approximately 20 percent of the total discrepancies uncovered in the record jacket audit, indicate that some problems remain to be resolved.

The problems observed regarding identification number elements confirm Finding #4 and suggest that the problem is not specific to the IDOC. Checking and entering missing identification information requires extra work on the part of the IDOC staff. It also contributes to the lag in entering those elements into CIMIS.

RECOMMENDATION:

The IDOC and the CCDOC should initiate a full investigation into the problems observed with the CIMIS transfer of inmate records. Once the exact problem sources are identified, steps should be taken to resolve them. Periodic audits of this information transfer should be conducted until improved data quality is demonstrated.

FINAL RECOMMENDATION:

The IDOC, upon reviewing these findings and recommendations, should communicate its official response to the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority for inclusion in the published report. In addition, the IDOC should develop a regular audit procedure and schedule for detecting errors in the CIMIS database and should present these to the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority for review.

IDOC RESPONSE

ILLINOIS
DEPARTMENT
OF
CORRECTIONS

MICHAEL P. LANE
Director

1301 Concordia Court / Springfield, Illinois 62702 / Telephone (217) 522-2666

April 17, 1984

Mr. William Gould, Chairman
Illinois Criminal Justice
Information Authority
120 South Riverside Plaza
Chicago, Illinois 60606

Dear Mr. Gould:

Reference is made to the Final Audit Report, Accuracy and Completeness of the Illinois Department of Corrections CIMIS Database, which was completed by the Authority in March, 1984. Attached is our response to the findings and recommendations of the audit.

Sincerely,

Michael P. Lane
Director

Attachment

cc: J. David Coldren
Executive Director

RESPONSE TO FINDING #1:

During the period of this audit, the offender information system was undergoing consolidation from two independent systems into a single system, CIMIS. The conversion and cleanup of data did cause some delay in the timely entry of data. Although information from CIMIS is not used extensively for tactical decisions at this time, a major effort is being made to accelerate the entry of key data items into CIMIS. These key items have been identified and are included in an administrative directive, which defines the requirement for entry of data into CIMIS. In support of this directive, a *Functional Transaction Manual* and a *CIMIS Data Dictionary* will be distributed to the institutions in April 1984. Training on the use of the manual and dictionary will be conducted for appropriate personnel from the institutions. (See Attachment A--a sample page from the *CIMIS Data Dictionary.*) The source document for data entry and time schedule of data entry are a part of the *CIMIS Data Dictionary.*

CIMIS data elements are being reviewed as a part of a continuing audit process. A CIMIS auditor is assigned to the audit team which conducts the scheduled program audits of the institutions.

The Records Office and CIMIS staffs are consistent with the current budget constraints. After the planned computer upgrade with resulting system performance improvements, the need for staff changes will be reviewed.

RESPONSE TO FINDING #2:

A procedure requiring data review of specified elements and necessary updates annually on all inmates will be implemented as part of the inmate reclassification process. INMATE RECLASSIFICATION reports will be run as part of this process. In addition, the data will be reviewed by the receiving institution when an inmate transfer takes place. The current INSTITUTION PROFILE AUDIT report identifies missing and illogical elements for correction and update by the correctional centers. In addition, several reports are run monthly for each institution in order to identify other missing or illogical data. A comprehensive procedure will be developed by July 1984 to periodically audit all key data elements in the system.

RESPONSE TO FINDING #3:

As indicated in our response to FINDING #1, the *CIMIS Data Dictionary* identifies the only source document(s) allowed to be used as a source to enter information into the CIMIS database.

RESPONSE TO FINDING #4:

In most cases, these identification numbers are obtained from the Illinois Bureau of Identification's rap sheets. In order to insure timely entry of the identification numbers, a MISSING IDENTIFICATION NUMBERS report is sent monthly to each institution to provide a reference for data entry. In addition, the *Functional Transaction Manual* and the *CIMIS Data Dictionary* described in FINDING #1 establish the source document(s) and timing for data entry.

RESPONSE TO FINDING #5:

The policy for data entry of the ADMIT TYPE element has been established in the *Functional Transaction Manual* and *CIMIS Data Dictionary* discussed in our response to FINDING #1. In addition, a listing has been made of all inmate offenses which include ADMIT TYPE codes for each institution. This listing is being used at the institution to update the ADMIT TYPE element.

RESPONSE TO FINDING #6:

A consistent policy for the entry of race codes was established at the IDOC as part of the inmate classification process. A special audit report which includes race code validity is printed monthly by the institutions. The procedure for entry of the race code is defined in the *Functional Transaction Manual*, the Joliet Reception and Classification Center *Users' Manual*, and the *CIMIS Data Dictionary*.

RESPONSE TO FINDING #7:

The CIMIS Code Table 50 has been updated to include those charge codes stated as missing at the close of this audit (completed August 1983).

RESPONSE TO FINDING #9:

The SECURITY element has been reviewed and updated for all active inmates. Each month, the INSTITUTION PROFILE AUDIT report is run to identify any discrepant SECURITY elements. In addition, the administrative directive and supporting documents described in FINDING #1 require that the SECURITY element be entered or updated within one day of the change.

The current procedures for inmate classification and planned approach for inmate reclassification will provide the necessary guidelines for the use of VOTE SHEETS.

RESPONSE TO FINDING #10:

The definition, source document(s), and timeliness for data entry of the ATTEMPT ESCAPE warning elements are included in the *CIMIS Data Dictionary*. As indicated in the response to FINDING #2, all key elements will be audited.

RESPONSE TO FINDING #11:

The CIMIS system is presently capable of tracking inmates' movements and assignments by entering data as movements occur. No change in procedure is required to comply with this finding. All movement is being entered at Sheridan and Joliet, and parent institution changes are made by the Information Services Unit upon request of Joliet. The accuracy of their data has been verified.

RESPONSE TO FINDING #12:

The parent institution and parole add (PARLADD) transaction have been entered for all active CIMIS records. The updates were made as the CIMIS audit progressed from institution to institution. Effective April 1984, the IDOC will implement a new PARLADD transaction, which must be completed on the date

of parole to remove the inmate from the active institutional count. When this transaction is completed by the paroling Records Office, the inmate will appear on the parole lists for the institution.

RESPONSE TO FINDING #13:

The CIMIS and manual indeterminate sentence release data records are updated during the same time period for the preceding month. The automated CIMIS update for indeterminate sentences occurs on the 10th of the month for the preceding month, and the manual records are updated by the 10th of the month. In addition, a release date report for all inmate sentence types is run each month by the institutions to verify release dates. Each institution has the option to manually adjust the release dates for inmates with indeterminate sentences.

RESPONSE TO FINDING #14:

1. The IDOC enters only the charges and sentences shown on the mittimus as received at the Joliet Reception and Classification Center. The Cook County transfer of inmates to the Joliet Correctional Center each Friday is preceded by a computer file transfer of data on each inmate Thursday night. The file, which is sent from the Cook County Department of Corrections (CCDOC) via the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority computer to the IDOC computer, contains incomplete sentence information in some cases, and the description table for sentences used by Cook County does not match the IDOC Statutory Offense Table (Table 50) in all cases.

2. Missing identification numbers will be identified and corrected as described in the response to FINDING #4.

3. A meeting will be scheduled with the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority and the CCDOC to discuss the transfer of inmate information.

ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
INFORMATION SERVICES UNIT
DATA BASE ELEMENT DESCRIPTION FORM

DOC Common Element Name	OFFENSE CODE
IDOCDB Data Element	EXPANDED-CHARGE
Edit Mask	NONE
Heading Text	EXPANDED CHARGE
Entry Text	EXPANDED-CHARGE

Files using this element

SENTENCE-DETAIL

Trans using this element	Reports using this element	Tables used
SENT-ADD SENT-CHG SENT-DEL SENT-VIEW	CLNSVRPT CLASSRPT ADMTRPTD ADMTRPTO	0050

Element Specifications

Type	Size	Occurences
X	30	

Collection/entry Responsibility	RECORD OFFICE
Data entry Deadline	1 DAY FROM DATE OF TRANSFER
Documentation Source	MITTIMUS OR COURT ORDER

DEFINITION

The statute associated with a committed offense as stated on mittimus.

COMMENTS

Table 0050 - Charge Codes.

APPROVALS

Chief Records Officer/Chief Medical Officer	Information Services Unit	Planning - Research

APPENDICES

A: Centralia Correctional Center

B: Dwight Correctional Center

C: East Moline Correctional Center

D: Graham Correctional Center

E: Joliet Correctional Center

F: Joliet Reception Center

G: Logan Correctional Center

H: Menard Correctional Center

I: Menard Psychiatric Center

J: Pontiac Correctional Center

K: Sheridan Correctional Center

L: Stateville Correctional Center

M: Vandalia Correctional Center

N: Vienna Correctional Center

Copies of the individual audit reports for each of these correctional centers are available from the Authority. For more information, contact the **Administrative Clerk** at **312-793-8550.**

ILLINOIS
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