

SUMMARY REPORT

# THE REGIONAL INFORMATION SHARING SYSTEMS PROGRAM



## MEMBERSHIP AND SERVICE ACTIVITY OF THE RISS PROJECTS

1988 - 1990

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Bureau of Justice Assistance

Office of Justice Programs ■ U.S. Department of Justice

136702

**SUMMARY REPORT**

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**THE REGIONAL INFORMATION SHARING SYSTEMS PROGRAM****MEMBERSHIP AND SERVICE ACTIVITY  
OF THE  
RISS PROJECTS****1988 - 1990**

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**U.S. Department of Justice  
National Institute of Justice**

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**November 1991**

**Institute for Intergovernmental Research  
P.O. Box 12729  
Tallahassee, Florida 32317**

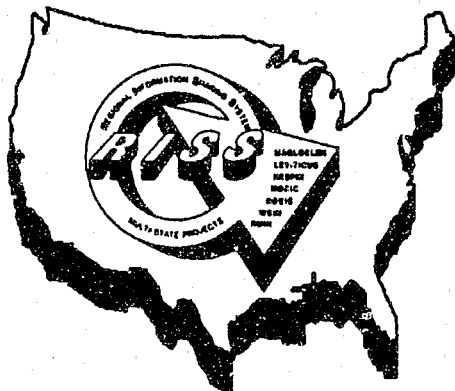
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# PREFACE

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The Office of Justice Programs Regional Information Sharing Systems (RISS) Program is a federally funded program to support law enforcement efforts to combat drug trafficking, organized criminal activity, and white collar crime. Six regional projects provide criminal information exchange and other related operational support services to local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies located in all fifty states. These projects are:

- The Middle Atlantic-Great Lakes Organized Crime Law Enforcement Network (MAGLOLEN);
- The Mid-States Organized Crime Information Center (MOCIC);
- The New England State Police Information Network (NESPIN);
- The Regional Organized Crime Information Center (ROCIC);
- The Rocky Mountain Information Network (RMIN); and
- The Western States Information Network (WSIN).

The Institute for Intergovernmental Research (IIR) provides management review, performance assessment, and operations analysis to the Regional Information Sharing Systems Program through grant awards received from the Office of Justice Programs (OJP), Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA).

This report contains a summary analysis of RISS project activity data relevant to the RISS Program guideline requirements established by OJP. RISS project activity data is routinely collected and analyzed with

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the cooperation and assistance of the projects. The activity data in this report covers the years 1988, 1989, and 1990. The summary briefly describes the RISS Program, project components, and activity data describing the various project components. Project activity and implementation of shared funding alternatives are discussed, as well as a summary of service and activity growth trends.

Additional, more detailed analysis of project activity is contained in other reports prepared by IIR, which are available upon request.

# **OVERVIEW OF THE RISS PROGRAM**

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**T**he Regional Information Sharing Systems (RISS) Program supports multiagency coordination and cooperation among local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies. The operation of a regional information sharing project was first supported by U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) grant funding in 1974. Six regional projects, MAGLOCLN, MOCIC, NESPIN, ROCIC, RMIN, and WSIN, are currently operational and provide their member agencies throughout the United States with a broad range of criminal intelligence and investigative support services.

## **Guidelines**

DOJ funding oversight and program management responsibilities for the six RISS projects are described in the RISS Program Guideline, which sets out program goals and objectives, strategy, project components, program administration, characteristics, and funding.

## **Goal**

The overall goal of the RISS Program is to enhance the ability of state and local criminal justice agencies to identify, target, and remove criminal conspiracies and activities spanning jurisdictional boundaries.

## **Projects**

Although the RISS projects focus on the overall goal stated above, each responds to regional differences in its membership and selects multijurisdictional crimes to target and implements services to support its participating member agencies.

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### *MAGLOCLN*

#### **The Middle Atlantic-Great Lakes Organized Crime Law Enforcement Network**

The MAGLOCLN project is headquartered in Trenton, New Jersey, and the project covers the states of Delaware, Indiana, Maryland, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, and Pennsylvania, in addition to the District of Columbia and the provinces of Ontario and Quebec, Canada. The project focus is organized criminal activity and narcotics trafficking.

### *MOCIC*

#### **Mid-States Organized Crime Information Center**

The MOCIC project headquarters is located in Springfield, Missouri. The project services member agencies in Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wisconsin, as well as Canada. Narcotics trafficking, professional traveling criminals, and organized crime are the focus of project service activity.

### *NESPIN*

#### **New England State Police Information Network**

Headquartered in Randolph, Massachusetts, the NESPIN project encompasses the states of Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont. NESPIN focuses on organized crime and narcotics trafficking.



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### *ROCIC*

### **Regional Organized Crime Information Center**

The ROCIC project is headquartered in Nashville, Tennessee, and serves member agencies in fourteen states: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia. ROCIC's priority is narcotics trafficking and organized traveling criminals.

### *RMIN*

### **Rocky Mountain Information Network**

The RMIN project headquarters is located in Phoenix, Arizona. The project serves member agencies in the states of Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, New Mexico, Nevada, Utah, and Wyoming, as well as Canada. The RMIN project focus is narcotics trafficking, organized crime, and traveling criminals.

### *WSIN*

### **Western States Information Network**

The WSIN project is headquartered in Sacramento, California, with member agencies in Alaska, California, Hawaii, Oregon, and Washington. Narcotics is the criminal activity focus of the WSIN project.

## Membership

Each RISS project has developed its own criteria for membership. The projects are comprised of state, local, and federal law enforcement agencies, prosecution agencies, and other agencies such as regulatory agencies or multijurisdictional task forces. Exhibit 1 displays a continued steady growth in RISS project membership during the nine year period 1982 through 1990. The projects as a whole increased total agency membership from approximately 1,000 agencies in 1982 to 2,874 agencies at the end of 1990.

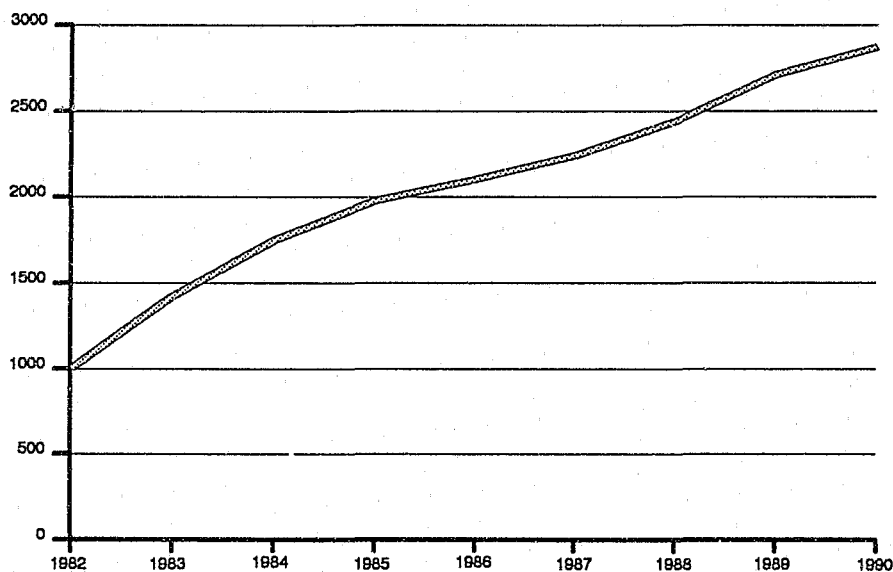


EXHIBIT 1  
RISS MEMBERSHIP

The 1990 project membership is comprised as follows:

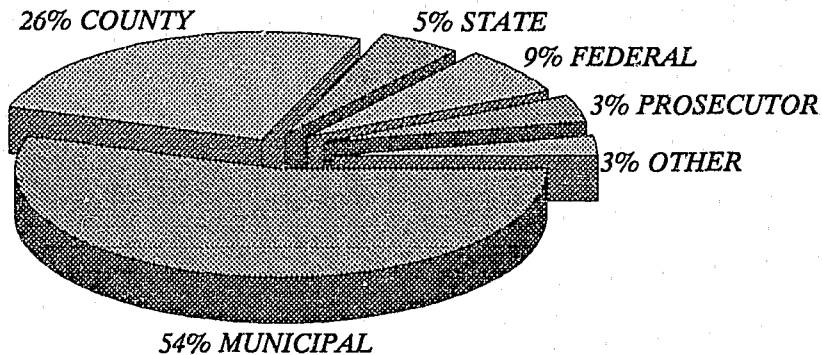
### Member Agencies

MAGLOCLN	242
MOCIC	636
NESPIN	236
RMIN	622
ROCIC	356
WSIN	782

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The MAGLOCLLEN, MOCIC, and RMIN project membership criteria allow law enforcement agencies in Canada to become project members. Currently 11 member agencies in the Canadian provinces are members.

Exhibit 2 displays the percentage of total membership by type of agency for 1990. For all six projects, local (municipal and county) law enforcement agencies represented 80% of the total membership in 1990. All six RISS projects have federal agency members. Federal agencies currently represent 9% of the total project membership.



**EXHIBIT 2**  
**RISS MEMBERSHIP BY**  
**TYPE OF AGENCY**

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## **Project Oversight**

Each RISS project has established an oversight group (policy board or executive committee) composed of representatives from state and local member agencies in the project's multistate region. The primary purpose of the oversight group is to provide policy and direction regarding project operations and administration. Each project policy board group holds regular meetings for this purpose.

## **Service Components**

Each project funded under the RISS Program has implemented both required and optional service components. Optional components are designed to support the required service components.

The service activity components of the six regional information sharing projects are:

### **Required Components**

- Information Sharing
- Analytical
- Telecommunications

### **Optional Components**

- Investigative Support
- Specialized Equipment
- Technical Assistance
- Training

# SERVICES PROVIDED

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## Required Services

Under the Program Guideline, three required law enforcement service components are maintained by each RISS project: (1) information sharing, (2) analytical, and (3) telecommunications.

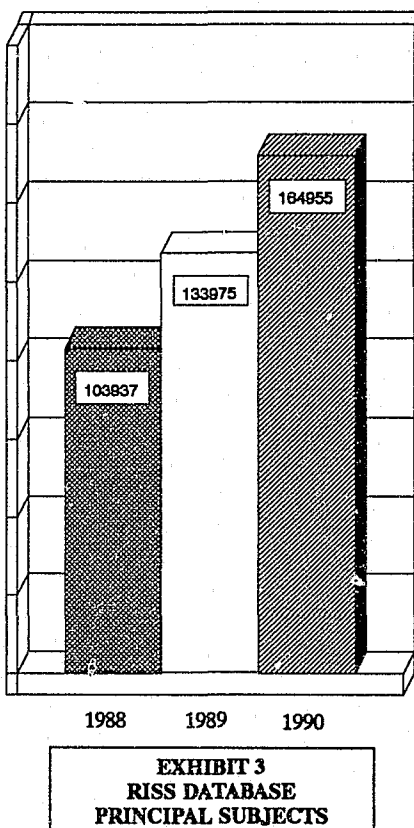
## Information Sharing

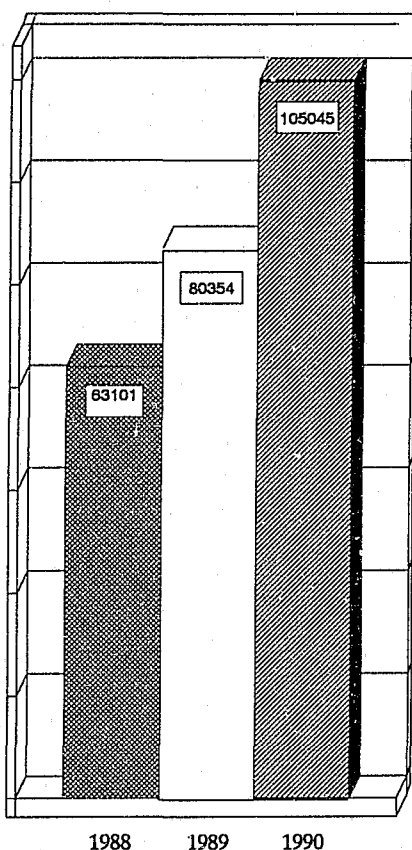
The primary function of the RISS Program is sharing of information about crimes, criminals, and criminal activity. The information sharing component operated by each project is multifaceted and consists primarily of a database with a system for submitting information and for inquiring about records in the database. The projects supplement and enhance their information sharing through membership conferences and formal publications.

All six projects have established automated criminal intelligence databases which contain information pertaining to known or suspected criminals or criminal activity. Project intelligence databases are utilized to respond to member agency intelligence information inquiries and needs. All projects have adopted formal guidelines setting forth operational procedures for information submission, inquiry, and file review which have been approved by the Bureau of Justice Assistance program management.

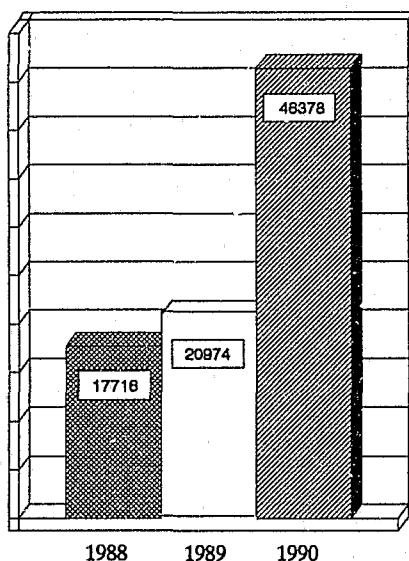
Detailed descriptive information on subjects engaged in multijurisdictional offenses and criminal conspiracies is submitted to project databases by member agencies according to established procedures and criteria. Each project provides a submission form or format for this purpose, with the type and amount of data captured varying from project to project.

The number of principal criminal subjects maintained in the individual project databases for the three year period 1988-1990 is displayed in Exhibit 3. A principal subject is defined as a





**EXHIBIT 4**  
**RISS DATABASE INQUIRIES**



**EXHIBIT 5**  
**HITS IN RISS PROJECT AND**  
**OTHER AGENCY FILES**

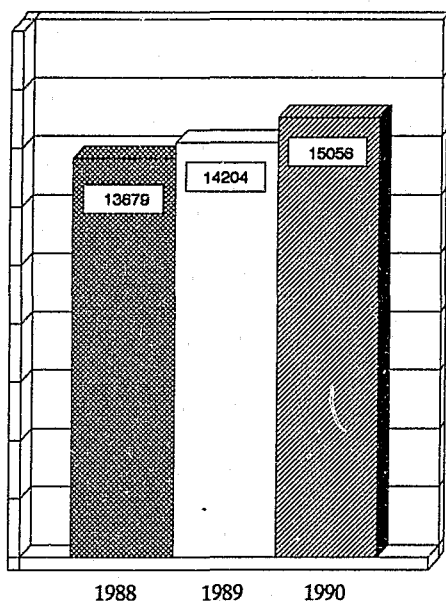
criminal individual, business, or group. At the end of 1990, the six projects maintained information on 164,955 principal subjects.

Inquiries to a database represent the most important use of this critical project service by members and other qualified agencies. The centralized databases are designed to encourage exchange of information and coordination among member agencies investigating the same individuals or organizations. Member agencies obtaining information on criminal subjects from the project database are referred to other agencies that have information on the subject. Inquiry service activity is displayed in Exhibit 4.

Member agency inquiries generate various types of activity by each project, including database searches in the project information system and contact with member agencies or other agencies for searches in their files. The projects record the number of "hits" (information found) on the subject of the inquiry.

Exhibit 5 displays "hits" in project and other agency files for the three years. The total number of hits in project and other agency files during 1990 for all projects combined was 46,378.

In addition to the databases, each project has implemented other services to enhance the required information sharing component. These services encompass project publications, conferences, and meetings held for the purpose of sharing information on specific investigations or emerging criminal groups (which are sometimes held in conjunction with the provision of training). Although the training service component is an optional component under the Program Guideline, project conference formats often provide a mixture of information sharing and training activity.



**EXHIBIT 6**  
**ATTENDANCE AT RISS**  
**INFORMATION SHARING/TRAINING**  
**CONFERENCES**

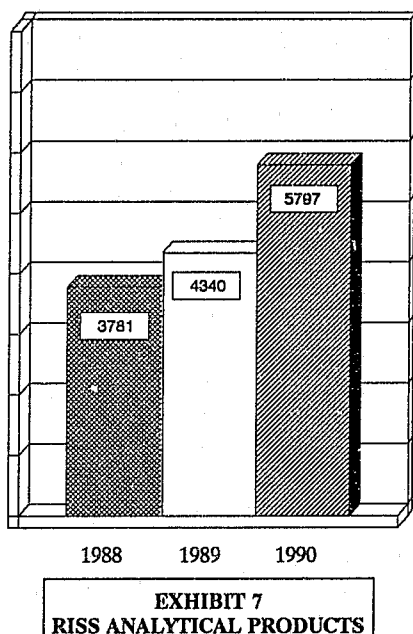
Types of conferences sponsored by the projects include subject areas related to specialized investigative equipment, analytical techniques, surveillance techniques, techniques for investigating narcotics trafficking, organized crime, economic crime, and terrorism, as well as project orientation and overview of services.

Exhibit 6 displays information on the number of agency representatives in attendance at project sponsored information sharing/training programs. Over 15,000 persons attended these programs during 1990.

## Analytical

The analytical component consists of investigative data compilation and analysis services to assist members in multijurisdictional investigations.

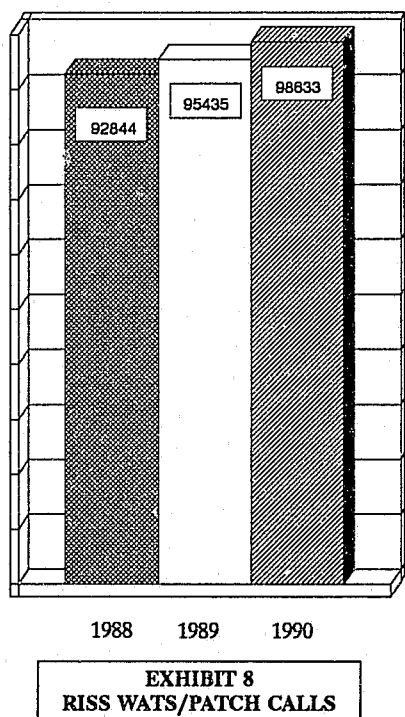
Each of the RISS projects makes available information analysis services to its member agencies. All projects have the capability to provide traditional analytical service activities (telephone toll analysis, investigative case analysis, financial analysis, and criminal activity analysis) which result in the dissemination of various products, such as investigative charts, link diagrams, special criminal activity reports, and automated listings of investigative data and telephone call data. The implementation of these analytical service activities differs among the projects primarily because of differences in member needs and service



requirements, as well as project management policies. The level of service activity is also affected by other factors such as the number of analytical and related support staff positions, the skill level of the project analysts, and the type and complexity of specific services and products.

Exhibit 7 displays analytical products delivered to member agency personnel as a result of various types of analytical service activities, including telephone toll analysis, investigative case analysis, financial analysis, and criminal activity trend analysis.

## Telecommunications



All six projects operate long distance telecommunications (WATS) systems for member agency use. Project telecommunications services include the optional service of call patching capabilities; however, NESPIN has adopted a policy of not providing call patching service to its members. The telecommunications systems are operated at no cost to member agencies and support the operation of the information sharing and analytical components of each project as well as project supported investigations and activities. Each of the projects has implemented procedures governing operation and control of the system.

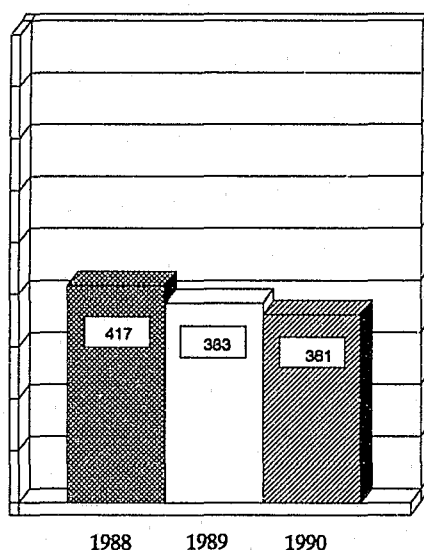
RISS WATS/patch service activity is displayed in Exhibit 8. Usage of project telecommunications systems varies widely among the projects and is based on the need of member agencies for such services or the management policy in each project region, and is not related to the total number of members in each project.



## Optional Services

Other services provided by the projects to participating member law enforcement agencies include the optional service components of investigative support (confidential funds), specialized investigative equipment, technical assistance, and training.

## Confidential Funds



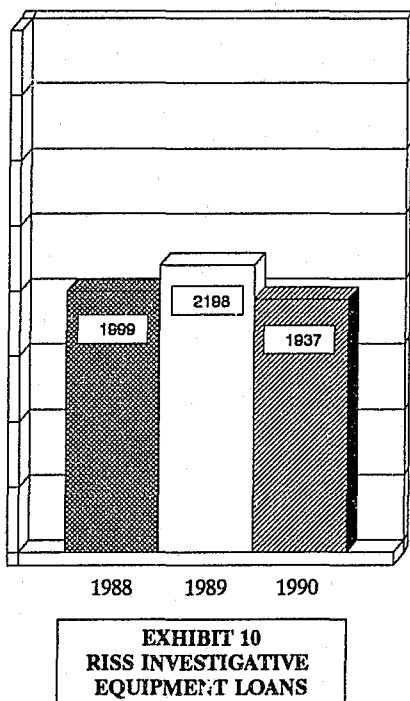
**EXHIBIT 9**  
**RISS CONFIDENTIAL FUNDS**  
**TRANSACTIONS**

All of the RISS projects have confidential funds available for use by member agencies for the purchase of investigative information, contraband, stolen property, and other items of an evidentiary nature, or to provide for other investigative expenses. The availability and use of confidential funds is strictly controlled by federal guidelines and internal policies and procedures developed by the projects. The projects require member agencies to report on the use and benefits of the confidential funds in supporting their investigative activity. These reports also include information for submission to project databases and sometimes lead to provision of other project services.

Information on the number of RISS confidential funds transactions is displayed in Exhibit 9. The net amount of confidential funds provided (confidential funds loaned less returns to the projects of unused funds) by the projects to member agencies totaled \$496,455 for calendar year 1990. Provision of confidential fund support services varies depending on individual project management policy and budget constraints.

## Investigative Equipment

Pools of specialized investigative equipment for loan to participating member agencies are maintained by each of the six projects. These project equipment pools generally contain the same types of investigative equipment (photographic,



communications, surveillance, etc.), differing primarily in the number of each type of equipment and the age of the various pieces. Each project has developed criteria to process requests by member agencies for loan of equipment, and each has implemented inventory controls and procedures for operation of this service activity. The projects require member agencies to provide reports on the use and benefits of the equipment in supporting their investigative activity. As in the use of confidential funds, these reports also provide information for submission to the project databases and sometimes lead to use of other project services.

The number of investigative equipment loans by the combined RISS projects is displayed in Exhibit 10 for each of the three years.

## Technical Assistance

The technical assistance service component encompasses consultation, advice, and information regarding submission of data to the project database, use of project specialized equipment, investigative procedures, confidential funds in support of multijurisdictional investigations, and information analysis. Technical assistance may be rendered by project staff to member agencies, or a project may facilitate assistance to another RISS project. All six projects have established active field staff units to support the implementation of the technical assistance component. While project staff members are prohibited from participating in member agency investigative activity, field staff personnel from the six projects are generally provided as needed to familiarize member agencies with the utilization of project information, equipment, and services.

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## **Training**

Each of the projects has established a training service component to enhance investigative coordination and information sharing skills of member agency personnel. This service activity is reported on pages 8-9 of this report in the section describing information sharing services.

# MEMBER PARTICIPATION IN PROJECT SERVICE ACTIVITY

Data regarding member agency participation in RISS project activities, including database submissions and service usage, are collected and analyzed to measure the extent to which member agencies become involved in project activities.

Exhibit 11 displays a summary of member agency participation information for all four quarters of calendar years 1988, 1989, and 1990. Because agencies may be added to the membership of individual projects during the year, a control group of member agencies was used for the analysis. The control group included all member agencies for each project as of the end of the first quarter of each of the calendar years (March 31). The participation of these agencies was then tracked for each of the four quarters. Due to technical problems at MAGLOCLN, the project was unable to capture data describing participation of member agencies during 1990. Exhibit 11 indicates the total number of members for the combined RISS projects who participated during the three years, with the exception of MAGLOCLN for 1990. The rate of participation in project services during at least one quarter out of the four quarters was 83% for 1988, 84% for 1989, and 87% in 1990.

	1988	1989	1990
Participation all Quarters	852 (37%)	916 (37%)	994 (39%)
Participation at least 3 Quarters	1204 (53%)	1353 (54%)	1409 (56%)
Participation at least 2 Quarters	1545 (68%)	1733 (69%)	1786 (70%)
Participation at least 1 Quarter	1900 (83%)	2091 (84%)	2201 (87%)
Did Not Participate	378 (17%)	406 (16%)	336 (13%)
Members as of 1st Quarter	2278	2497	2537

EXHIBIT 11  
MEMBER AGENCY PARTICIPATION  
ALL MEMBERS

Exhibit 12 displays a summary of federal agency member participation information. As in the analysis of total member agency participation, a control group of federal agencies was used which included all federal agency members for each RISS project as of the end of the first quarter of 1988, 1989, and 1990. The rate of federal agency member participation in project services during at least one quarter of the four quarters was 63% for 1988, 69% for 1989, and 73% for 1990. The 1990 participation data does not include the MAGLOCLN project due to technical problems mentioned above.

	<u>1988</u>	<u>1989</u>	<u>1990</u>
Participation all 4 Quarters	22 (16%)	24 (14%)	48 (24%)
Participation at least 3 Quarters	38 (28%)	49 (28%)	74 (37%)
Participation at least 2 Quarters	60 (44%)	87 (50%)	102 (52%)
Participation at least 1 Quarter	85 (63%)	121 (69%)	145 (73%)
Did Not Participate	51 (38%)	54 (31%)	53 (27%)
Members as of 1st Quarter	136	175	198

**EXHIBIT 12**  
**MEMBER AGENCY PARTICIPATION**  
**FEDERAL AGENCY MEMBERS**

# DEVELOPMENT OF ALTERNATIVE FUNDING SOURCES

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At the request of BJA, the policy boards of each RISS project have explored possible alternative sources of project funding other than federal support. The need to pursue this action was based on factors which included:

- Interest expressed by the Congress and the U.S. Department of Justice;
- Recurring attempts to reduce RISS Program funds;
- Interest by project member agencies in the sharing of financial support of the projects.

Project officials developed individual project responses to the alternative funding issues through study, survey of member agencies, and contact with potential funding sources in their regions. A summary of each project's status and activities to date follows.

## MAGLOCLLEN

The MAGLOCLLEN policy board adopted a uniform annual membership fee of \$300 per member agency, effective July 1, 1987. The project collected approximately \$77,000 from membership fees in fiscal year 1990-91. The policy board stipulated that membership fees be used to provide specialized training services for project member agencies. The project anticipates collecting approximately \$81,000 in membership fees in fiscal year 1991-92.

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## **MOCIC**

The MOCIC policy board adopted a variable annual membership fee ranging from \$100 to \$300 based on member agency size as indicated by the number of agency officers with law enforcement authority, effective January 1, 1988. The project collected \$95,228 from membership fees during calendar year 1990. The policy board stipulated that 1990 fees be used for purchase of computer hardware and software and to upgrade the project's telecommunication's system. The project anticipates collecting approximately \$97,000 from membership fees during 1991.

## **NESPIN**

The NESPIN project policy board examined various shared funding alternatives. Currently, the policy board has decided not to assess membership fees as a shared funding alternative.

During 1988, the project pursued shared funding in conjunction with a Commonwealth of Massachusetts award of state block grant funds. The project received funds in the amount of \$250,000 for fiscal year 1988-89, \$100,000 in fiscal year 1989-90, \$100,000 in 1990-91, and \$200,000 in fiscal year 1991-92. The NESPIN policy board stipulated that the funds be used by the project for purchase of specialized investigative and communications equipment and to make available confidential funds for loan in drug investigations conducted by Massachusetts law enforcement agencies.

## **RMIN**

The RMIN project policy board adopted a variable membership fee ranging from \$50 to \$250 based on the number of full time member agency personnel, including civilian personnel, effective July 1, 1987. The project collects approximately \$67,000 from membership fees during each calendar year. The RMIN policy board stipulated membership fees be

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used to provide specialized training for project member agencies.

## **ROCIC**

The ROCIC project has assessed fees from its member agencies since inception. During 1991, the ROCIC board of directors changed the membership fee structure and adopted a uniform annual fee of \$200 per member effective July 1, 1991. Previously, the membership fee was a variable fee ranging from \$410 to \$750 based on member agency size as indicated by the number of agency officers with law enforcement authority. The project collected \$157,296 from membership fees in fiscal year 1990-91.

## **WSIN**

The WSIN project policy board examined various shared funding alternatives including seeking state legislative appropriations from member states. Currently, the policy board has decided not to pursue membership fees as a shared funding alternative.

Although not cash contributions to the project, Alaska and Hawaii absorbed the personnel costs of the WSIN project field coordinators assigned to each of these states. However, effective January 1989, Alaska no longer contributed the personnel costs of the WSIN project field coordinator. This is due to requirements in the current Program Guideline that project personnel not be sworn law enforcement officers. The personnel costs for Hawaii for 1990-91 totaled approximately \$60,000.

During 1990, a representative of the National Guard was assigned to the WSIN project to assist in analysis of case investigative information on narcotics traffickers. This contribution enabled the project to save approximately \$44,000 in personnel costs. Also,



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in 1990 the project shared in disbursement of asset forfeiture and restitution fees as a result of assistance and support provided on member agency case investigations. The amount of this contribution was \$275,000.

# SERVICE AND ACTIVITY GROWTH TRENDS

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This chapter is a summary of a detailed analysis of RISS project activity and member agency service usage during the 1988-1990 time period. The source data for the original detailed analysis is presented in a separate IIR report of RISS Program activity.<sup>1</sup> Project activity and service data for the three year period were converted to trend line projections, and average annual growth rates were computed. The average annual growth rates referenced below are displayed in Exhibit 13.

## Principal Subjects

The growth rate for the number of principal criminal subjects maintained in project databases averaged 35% annually during the 1988-1990 period. A principal subject is the criminal individual, business, or group name submitted by a member agency on a submission form.

## Submissions

The growth rate for submissions of principal criminal subjects to project databases averaged 10% annually during the three year period.

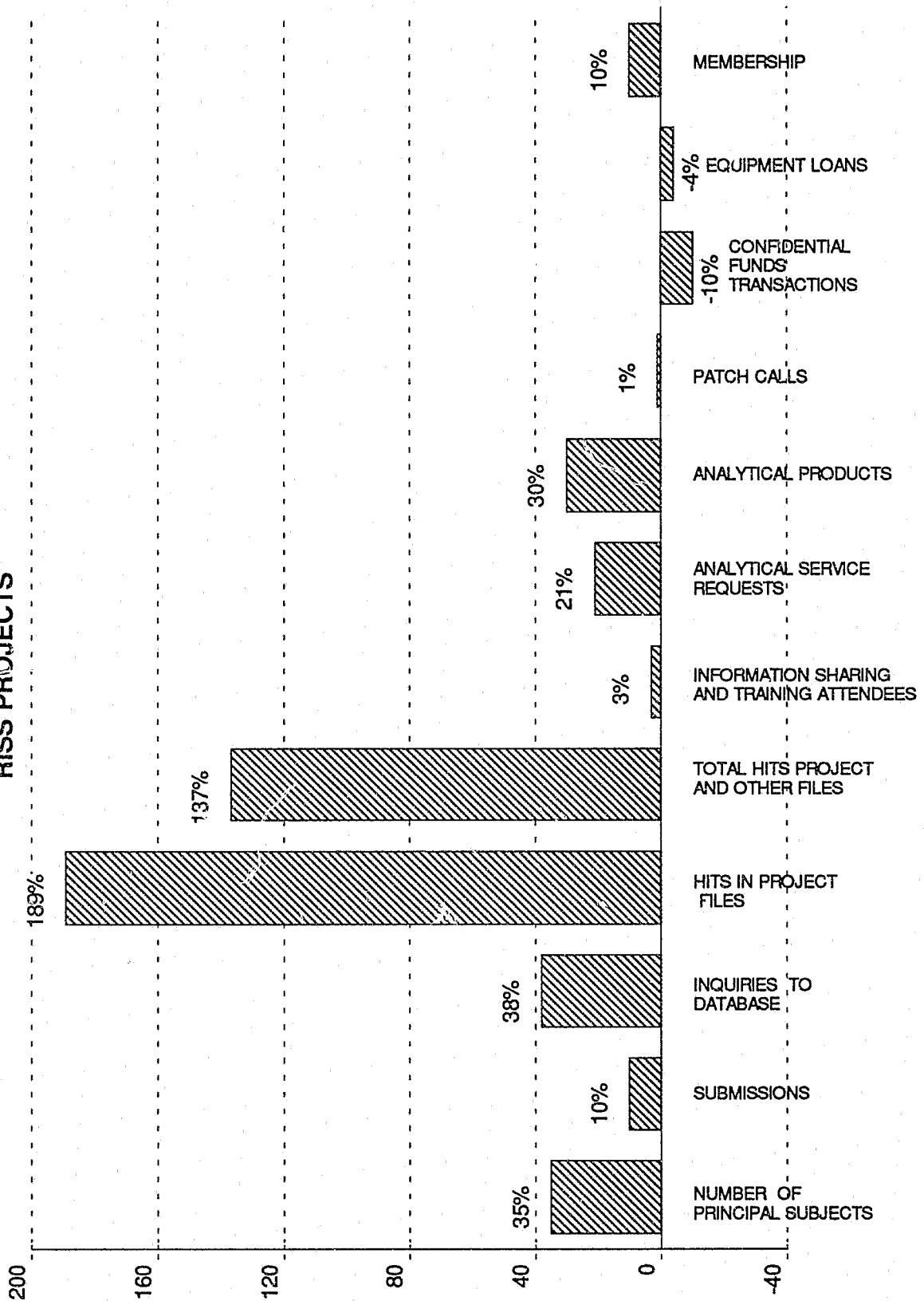
## Inquiries

The growth rate for inquiries averaged 38% annually during the 1988-1990 period. An inquiry occurs when a member or other authorized agency requests a project to check their database and other sources for information on subjects suspected of involvement in criminal activity.

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<sup>1</sup> IIR, The RISS Program, Analysis of Activity 1988-1990, November 1991.

**EXHIBIT 13**  
**AVERAGE ANNUAL GROWTH RATE**  
**FOR THREE YEAR PERIOD 1988-1990**  
**RISS PROJECTS**



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## **Hits**

The growth rate for total hits (information found on the subject of an inquiry) in project files for all projects combined increased an average of 189% annually for the three year period. The growth rate for total hits in project files plus hits in other agency files increased an average of 137% annually for the three year period.

## **Information Sharing/ Training**

Attendance at project sponsored information sharing and training programs increased, resulting in a 3% annual growth rate over the three year period. Almost 43,000 persons attended project sponsored information sharing and training programs during the period.

## **Analytical**

The overall growth rate for analytical service requests increased an average of 21% a year for the 1988-1990 period. The growth rate for analytical products delivered to member agencies increased an average of 30% annually for the three year period.

## **WATS/Patch**

During the 1988-1990 period, telecommunications call patching usage by member agencies indicated a growth rate averaging 1% annually. Call patching is a project service which allows law enforcement agencies to communicate with each other on a long distance, toll free basis on investigative matters.

## **Confidential Funds**

The confidential fund service growth rate decreased 10% a year for the 1988-1990 period. The provision of these funds is vulnerable to cutback when external or internal funding restrictions are anticipated.

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## **Equipment**

The growth rate for project investigative equipment loan services decreased 4% a year for the period 1988-1990. Future trends for this service area will continue to be affected primarily by new equipment purchases and the condition of available equipment, as well as member needs.

## **Membership**

Overall project membership continued to grow at a rate which averaged 10% annually during the 1988-1990 period.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE RISS PROJECTS MAY  
BE OBTAINED FROM THE PROJECTS AND IIR**

**Mid-States Organized Crime Information Center**

Host Agency: Missouri Attorney General's Office  
Headquarters: No. 4 Corporate Centre, Suite 205  
Springfield, Missouri 65804  
(417) 883-4383

**Regional Organized Crime Information Center**

Host Agency: City of Nashville  
Headquarters: 545 Marriott Drive, Suite 850  
Nashville, Tennessee 37210  
(615) 871-0013

**Middle Atlantic-Great Lakes Organized Crime  
Law Enforcement Network**

Host Agency: Pennsylvania Attorney General's Office  
Headquarters: 850 Bear Tavern Road, Suite 206  
West Trenton, New Jersey 08628  
(609) 530-2801

**Rocky Mountain Information Network**

Host Agency: Arizona Department of Public Safety  
Headquarters: 3802 North 53rd Avenue, Suite 301  
Phoenix, Arizona 85031-3019  
(602) 245-4180

**New England State Police Information Network**

Host Agency: Massachusetts Department of Public Safety  
Headquarters: P.O. Box 786  
Randolph, Massachusetts 02368  
(617) 986-6544

**Western States Information Network**

Host Agency: California Department of Justice  
Headquarters: 1825 Bell Street, Suite 205  
Sacramento, California 94203-1980  
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Tallahassee, Florida 32317  
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