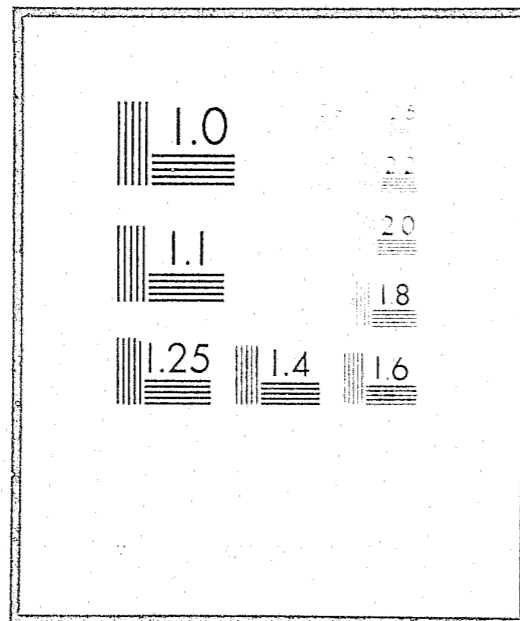


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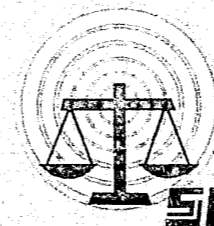
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TECHNICAL REPORT NO. 10

OBSCIS OFFENDER-BASED STATE CORRECTIONS INFORMATION SYSTEM

VOLUME 1
The OBSCIS Approach

28033 Dup



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TECHNICAL REPORT NO. 10
MAY 1975

OBSCIS
OFFENDER-BASED STATE
CORRECTIONS INFORMATION SYSTEM

VOLUME 1
THE OBSCIS APPROACH

Final report of work performed under Law Enforcement Assistance Administration Grant No. 75-SS-99-6010, awarded to SEARCH Group, Inc.

Submitted by SEARCH Group, Inc.
OBSCIS Committee
Charles M. Friel, Ph.D., Chairman
Steve E. Kolodney, Project Coordinator

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FOREWORD

This volume is one of five that constitute the OBSCIS Report, a definitive work developed by the Offender-Based State Corrections Information System (OBSCIS) Committee. OBSCIS is a Project of SEARCH Group, Inc. (SGI). It has been funded by a grant from the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA), U. S. Department of Justice.

The five volumes, their purposes, and their interrelationships are described below:

- I. THE OBSCIS APPROACH.** This is an overview description of the needs for corrections information reporting and how these needs can be met by the OBSCIS model and its accompanying tools. *This volume is prerequisite reading for all the others.*
- II. OBSCIS APPLICATION GUIDE.** This is a reference workbook that describes and provides system development selection criteria for 20 separate information processing applications, which can be incorporated into OBSCIS systems in individual states on a modular basis. This guide will be for structuring and developing the applications in each state's system.
- III. OBSCIS DATA DICTIONARY.** This volume contains descriptions, definitions, and suggested coding structures for the data elements used to establish the data base for an OBSCIS system. It will be used as a reference guide in the development of each state's data base.
- IV. OBSCIS IMPLEMENTATION PLAN.** This volume contains a detailed listing of a sequence of activities, tasks, and subtasks to be performed in the specification, design, and development of an OBSCIS system. This, in effect, is a reference guide describing the development methodology for establishing an OBSCIS system within any participating state.
- V. LAUNCHING OBSCIS — A COMPOSITE EXAMPLE.** This is a hypothetical example of how one imaginary state, named Composite, proceeds with the planning and analysis phases which initiate an OBSCIS project. The project is carried through the initial procedures for tailoring system specifications to the needs of a specific corrections authority.

NOTE: *Volume I in this series is prerequisite to all of the others. The remaining volumes are resource workbooks for the guidance of persons involved in the implementation of OBSCIS systems.*

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PREFACE

This book and its companion works are about cooperation. They result from cooperation. They are tools for implementing cooperation on a national scale between state and federal programs for the gathering and reporting of information on criminal offenders under the care of state collections organizations nationally.

OBSCIS stands for Offender-Based State Corrections Information System. This name alone describes some of the uniqueness of the OBSCIS project. Creation of OBSCIS has been federally initiated and federally funded — through grants from the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA) of the Department of Justice. Yet, in name and in fact, OBSCIS systems are state programs. An implemented OBSCIS system becomes a first-line management tool in each state corrections authority.

The approach is designed so that everyone associated with OBSCIS comes out a winner — the whole of the results should be greater than the sum of the parts. The underlying need at the national level is for a comprehensive criminal justice information system. To accomplish this, it is necessary to set in motion data gathering, processing, and reporting systems covering law enforcement agencies, the courts, and corrections authorities. OBSCIS represents the corrections segment of this total.

The logic for making OBSCIS happen is based on an approach of pragmatic cooperation: in order to report data so vitally needed at the national level, individual states will require information processing systems. Thus, the national program has opted to assist the states in funding and implementing these prerequisite systems.

The theory is relatively simple, straightforward. But making OBSCIS happen has been something else. Responsibility for developing OBSCIS has fallen to a group of representatives from 10 states selected for implementation of pilot systems, plus others serving on a voluntary basis.

Outwardly, the charge given to this Committee might seem relatively simple: to find information common denominators of the corrections process and to specify them for inclusion in state information and national reporting systems.

But anyone familiar with the workings of government will realize that the efforts required were both herculean and horrendous. Representatives on the Committee came from many separate and individually sovereign states as well as from a number of federal agencies.

More than a year of determined, dedicated effort — thousands of working days of toil — went into the development of the OBSCIS model described in this multi-volume report. Members of the OBSCIS Committee have constructed an important segment of the foundation of our future criminal justice information system. It is a pleasure to recognize them in the listing that follows.

OBSCIS is a project of SEARCH Group, Inc. It has been funded through a grant by LEAA. Steve E. Kolodney, Deputy Director of SEARCH Group, Inc., has been a primary force in keeping the work of the Committee moving and on track through publication of this document.

Thanks are due to the Management Services organization of Touche Ross & Co., who served as staff and technical mainstay for the work of the OBSCIS Committee. Their in-depth experience in the design and implementation of criminal justice information systems has been vital to the success of the OBSCIS Committee in developing the model and the accompanying guides and tools documented here.

Finally, thanks are due, in advance, for the dedicated efforts which will lead to implementation of OBSCIS systems in each separate and sovereign state.

Huntsville, Texas
May, 1975

Charles M. Friel, Ph.D.
Chairman, OBSCIS Committee

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CHAPTER 1.

THE CORRECTIONS MANAGEMENT CHALLENGE



CHAPTER 1. THE CORRECTIONS MANAGEMENT CHALLENGE

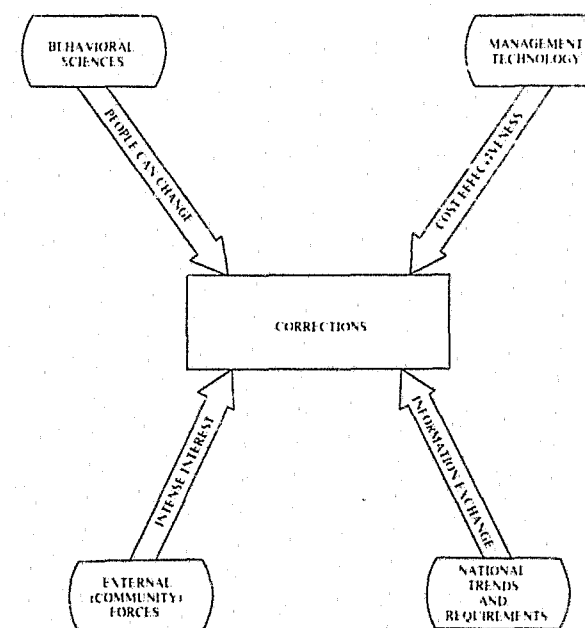
INFLUENCES

Correctional institutions are not what they used to be. As one illustration, consider the fact that what we now know as correctional facilities used to be called penal institutions. This change in terminology alone reflects part of the transition that has taken place. Broadly, the evolution from penal to correctional institutions has involved four major kinds of influences:

- * Behavioral sciences
- * Management technology
- * External (community) forces
- * National trends and requirements

The relationship of these influences is illustrated in Figure I-1-1.

Figure I-1-1. - Influences on Corrections



BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES

Perhaps the basic, underlying change in the corrections field has stemmed from the recognition that prisoners are people. Correctional systems have been reoriented in recent years around the principle that people develop; people change.

This change in emphasis has corresponded with changes in the behavioral sciences — in their

philosophies, development, evolution, and practical application. The effect of these changes has been evident in all walks of life. Schools have changed. Law enforcement agencies have gone into prevention programs to supplement apprehension efforts. Even the armed forces have noticeably changed their outlooks on discipline and individuality.

Professionals associated with corrections have noted the same trend in their own field. On the surface, there is the transition from emphasis on confinement to one of rehabilitation and reintegration into the community. Administratively, prisons are no longer just warehouses. Their function is widely recognized today as including the treatment of those in their custody and the returning of functional citizens to their communities and to society at large. This trend is reflected in the makeup of their staffs. A few decades ago, corrections institutions were staffed chiefly by custodial personnel. Today, increasing numbers of staff members are behavioral-science professionals assigned to treat, rather than to restrain, offenders.

Far from the least of the impacts of the behavioral sciences upon corrections has been in the training and performance standards under which custodial personnel operate. Custodial personnel themselves are coming to deal with prisoners as people capable of change. The custodial function has thus become an essential part of the treatment concept which has contributed to the transition from warehousing to rehabilitation.

With this behavioral-level transition, there has come a multiplying of information requirements. In its information requirements, a system oriented toward confinement is static. A minimal amount of statistical information therefore suffices. A correctional - oriented system is dynamic. It should run on accurate and timely information. When information resources are inadequate, both the functions of the system and the measurement of its progress are constrained.

MANAGEMENT TECHNOLOGY

Running a correctional organization is a big business. There are payrolls to meet. There are people to feed, equipment and supplies to buy, expenses to

control, budgets to live within. As a management enterprise, corrections organizations are becoming increasingly complex with the trend toward smaller, community-centered facilities. Within a management context, decentralization generally adds complexity. There are more functions to watch, more facilities to manage. The farther things are spread out, the more elements there are to manage, the more difficult management becomes.

Just as the behavioral scientists have found their niche in the corrections field, so also have professional managers. This is reflected in the increasing proportion of staff members with backgrounds or special training in administration, planning and research. Such appointments have, in large measure, been responsive to the times. In an era of continuing inflation, it was inevitable that accountability and concern for cost/effectiveness would have an impact upon the operation of correctional institutions. Management in this field has been under the same kinds of pressures as elsewhere to prove its value, to show results, in effect, to keep score on where dollars are going and what is being done with them.

For correctional managers, cost/effectiveness responsibilities have a special dimension — the need to measure, evaluate, and explain apparent trends. At the same time, correctional managers must identify new techniques to evaluate and measure success. Correctional managers have been particularly handicapped in this area of their responsibilities.

Management technology has also played an important part in enabling corrections administrators to keep pace with trends and demands centering around accountability in government. Accountability requires that corrections officials be able to assess total statistical trends within their responsibilities and, at the same time, be able to select and present individual items of data. Information systems responsive to these demands have called for increasingly sophisticated data processing systems.

The information requirements of correctional managers can be identified at several key levels:

Operations and Control In most states and on a national basis, correctional systems lack basic information on the people who have been committed to their care. It is frequently difficult to get a current, detailed accounting of offenders on a day-to-day basis. Lacking this and other information system elements,

managers do not have a sound basis for reaching effective decisions on even basic requirements — such as the placement of individuals within programs and institutions on the basis of available facilities and services. Beyond the basics of prisoner and population control, corrections managers often have little, if any, information on programs and services provided by other institutions.

Planning and Research Correctional managers require information to support their responsibilities in planning for facilities, programs, staff, and budgets. The very transition from a penal to a correctional orientation has required a continuing, increasing emphasis on research. Researchers associated with correctional institutions have, in turn, lamented a continuing shortage of information resources.

Evaluation and Accountability Once operations have been planned and implemented, management needs feedback information to tell it how things are going. As a group, correctional managers are given responsibilities for which they are held accountable without being provided with even an acceptable minimum of information support. Certainly, few information systems are adequate to enable managers to monitor the progress of individuals, their adjustments, and their probabilities of future success.

EXTERNAL (COMMUNITY) FORCES

Inevitably, corrections arouses intense interest and extreme reactions from the public. Correctional professionals are invariably caught in the middle. Conflicts arise continually between the demand from the public that offenders be segregated from society and the public's opposition to increases in taxes. Attempts at community-based rehabilitation — including work-release programs, community centers, half-way houses, or furloughs — draw severe criticism, particularly when individual abuses are reported in the news media.

At the other extreme, correctional officials are faced with increasing demands centering around the civil rights of prisoners as people. They must provide information conforming to administrative policy, as well as meeting demands of advocate groups, news media, and others. In addition, sec-

urity and privacy bills are now pending in the legislatures.

Laws of individual states vary in the areas of civil rights and rights of privacy with respect to the confidentiality and accessibility of information. Because dealings between correctional officials and the public in these areas raise issues of principle and emotion, it is important that correctional agencies have access to objective, reliable, timely information.

Lacking such information, corrections officials and their institutions have often been subjected to unjust — or at best unfounded — finger pointing and blame placing. Any correctional official dealing with the public should be able to inquire for and receive information about treatment, discipline, or program participation.

NATIONAL TRENDS AND REQUIREMENTS

Corrections is part of a larger, encompassing system — criminal justice. Nationwide, criminal justice consists of a series of independent federal, state, and local entities which, collectively, compose an overall picture for which information interchange is becoming essential. An inherent information continuity stems from the fact that the same offenders move in sequence through these related parts of the criminal justice system. Therefore, information reporting between these elements of a continuous system should have a relationship and a necessary amount or degree of uniformity. This requires the collection and uniform processing of common data elements across the offender-based areas of the continuous criminal justice system. At this writing, there is no comprehensive national data collection or reporting on offender populations, population movement, offender characteristics, treatment, or outcome. National uniform information concerning corrections has been a recognized need since at least 1931, when the landmark report of the National Commission on Law Enforcement and Observance (The Wickersham Commission)¹ was issued. For all intents and purposes, this far-seeing report lay dormant for more than 35 years. During this period, the major thrust of the developments in corrections information came from the individual states. The diffusion of professionals into state corrections organizations

brought about the evolution of isolated areas of advancement.

The need for uniform, national criminal justice information was given great impetus by the work of the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice² in 1967. The need for a national criminal justice reporting system was further developed in 1974 with the work of the National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals³.

Many people, of varying viewpoints, have pointed out that corrections - related legislation is behind the times. Without comprehensive national, comparative, respected sources of information, enlightened legislation rarely happens. These are requirements both at the national level and in the individual states. Further, since legislatures are also the source of funds for the operation of correctional systems, comparative, meaningful information can also serve as the basis for priority setting and allocation according to real, recognized needs.

Professional interchange, or transferability and repeatability, of successful approaches to rehabilitation cannot occur until there are comparative measures between states pointing out positive results and making it possible to weigh the merits of proposed innovations and improvements.

National information interchange is also necessary to close a long-lamented loophole in correctional information — the incidence of criminal behavior following release — recidivism. As noted in Appendix B — Toward a Definition of Recidivism — there is no uniform definition or set of standards for reporting recidivism at this time. Such statistics tend to be almost entirely negative. Public references lament the rate and frequency of recommitment among offenders. At the very least, uniform national reporting would lend the perspective of comparability. Corrections officials would

1. National Commission on Law Observance and Enforcement. *Criminal Statistics*. Washington, D. C., U. S. Government Printing Office, 1931.
2. President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice. *The Challenge of Crime in a Free Society*. Washington, D.C., U. S. Government Printing Office, 1967.
3. National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals. *Criminal Justice System*. Washington, D. C., U. S. Government Printing Office, 1974. (528-394)

then be in a position to demonstrate their successes as well as their failures.

Clearly, states have mutual interests. Because there are obvious interstate relationships within the corrections field, it is logical that the required information interchange be handled at a national

level. The existence of a basic, uniform, national program of information exchange would serve the combined needs of corrections managers, behavioral scientists, and groups of concerned citizens. The evolution of the response to this demand forms the subject matter of the chapter that follows.

CHAPTER 2.

PERSPECTIVE

CHAPTER 2. PERSPECTIVE

A CHRONOLOGY OF PRECEDENTS

Historically, the need for reporting, accumulating, and sharing corrections information on a national basis has been recognized for more than a century. Steps in this direction, initially feeble, have grown more forceful. A brief chronology follows:

1850 The Bureau of the Census included its first statistics on prisoner populations.

1904 The Bureau made its first independent count of prisoners. This process was repeated in 1910 and 1923.

1909 Between this date and 1929, three separate requests were filed with the Bureau of the Census for criminal statistics by the National Conference on Law and Criminology, the American Crime Study Commission, and the American Prison Association.

1911 The office of the United States Attorney General published its first statistics on parole activities. In 1929, these reports were expanded to include the number of prisoners considered for parole, movements of persons on parole, institutions from which prisoners were released, judicial district to which parolees were committed, and offenses of parolees. In 1930, the report format was curtailed to include only the first two items listed above.

1926 The Bureau of the Census began publishing annual summaries of prisoner statistics. This activity was continued until 1946.

1931 The National Commission on Law Observance and Enforcement (Wickersham Commission) published *Criminal Statistics*, the third of 11 reports on crime in the United States. This landmark report stated that the only criminal statistics printed that were both adequate and comparable on a national scale were those contained in the federal decennial and annual censuses of prisoners in institutions. Even those limited statistics, the report went on to note, lacked the completeness and accuracy necessary for nationwide comparability.

1936 A national survey conducted under the auspices of the office of the United States Attorney General described practice in all states in the areas of sentencing, probation, confinement, and parole. This report also contained brief statistical summaries on prison populations.

1950 The decennial census included a special enumeration of prisoners. This was repeated in 1960. However, the census report in 1959 highlighted the lack of an adequate national source of data on crime and corrections that covers all of the activities of criminal law enforcement. The 1960s saw the launching of major efforts aimed at dealing with crime problems. These activities highlight the lack of adequate information processing and statistical systems.

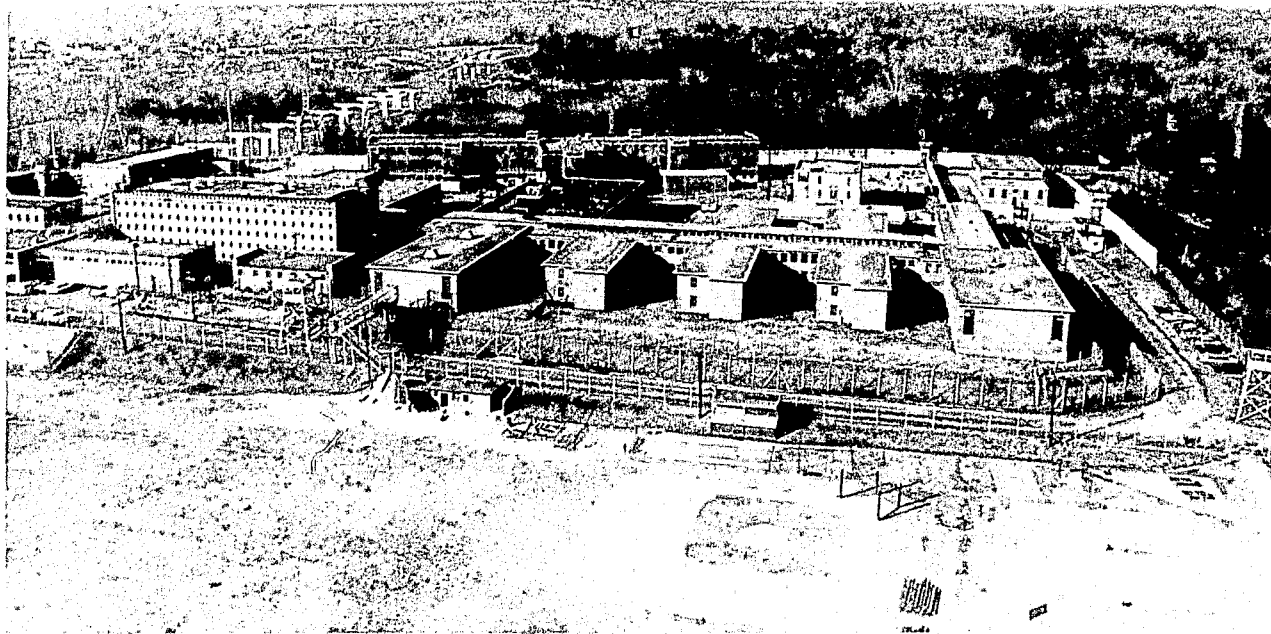
1951 The United States Bureau of Prisons began issuing a brief annual summary of prisoner statistics, known as "National Prisoner Statistics." These reports have been chiefly of an inventory nature, listing the number of prisoners received in institutions of each state, and of the federal government, as well as the number and types of releases.

1966 The National Crime Information Center (NCIC) was established. Its initial mission was to supply an almost instantaneous response to inquiries about fugitives, wanted persons, stolen cars, stolen guns, and similar items.

1967 National Needs for Criminal Justice Statistics was published in three conference reports by the Bureau of Census. One volume updated the work of the correctional statistics work group.

1967 President Johnson's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice published *The Challenge of Crime in a Free Society*. The report recommended the creation of a National Criminal Justice Statistical Center.

1968 The first Omnibus Crime Bill, later amended and expanded, provided recognition



and funding for unprecedented efforts in criminal justice technology.

1969 Project SEARCH (System for Electronic Analysis and Retrieval of Criminal Histories) was funded by the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA) of the U. S. Department of Justice. This landmark activity initially developed computerized information files in seven states.

1969 Project SEARCH launched two projects which are major efforts in the criminal justice information area. The first of these was the information exchange program, Computerized Criminal History (CCH).¹ The second was the development of new methods of accumulating criminal justice statistics, Offender Based Transaction Statistics (OBTS)². These projects have come together as major components of the LEAA Activity, Comprehensive Data Systems (CDS). When fully implemented, OBTS/CCH will become a central source for criminal information throughout the United States.

1970 CCH, as a national system, was established as part of the National Criminal Information Center (NCIC), coordinated by the FBI.

1973 LEAA released the report of the National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals, destined to have a major impact on criminal justice management, corrections included.

1974 Project SEARCH was reorganized as SEARCH Group, Inc. (SGI). As an incorporated entity, SGI was able to take over the administration of activities previously launched under Project SEARCH.

1974 The National Institute of Corrections was established to concentrate upon developmental efforts in the corrections area of the criminal justice field.

INFORMATION SYSTEM LANDMARKS IN CORRECTIONS

Behind these milestones is a general, broader trend. During the years covered by these milestone dates, the country, the general population, the size of businesses, the wealth, and the crime rate in America have all grown. Organizations have gotten bigger. As they have, the information they generate has increased in volume. The ability of managers to keep up with the information avalanche has demanded advanced techniques for processing, monitoring, and summarizing data. Unfortunately, the corrections field has not been in the vanguard of the data processing revolution which has swept the country since the end of World War II. Large-scale improvements in information processing in corrections agencies had to wait upon the funding made available by congress through LEAA.

With the impetus of LEAA funding, attention to information - processing potential has progressed in two broad areas:

- Advanced manual, mechanical, and electronic techniques have been employed for statistical reporting used in the analyses of correctional organizations. It has taken massive data processing capabilities to track, and analyze, the growing numbers of incarcerated persons, as well as to keep up with the shift in emphasis to rehabilitation and the growing numbers of parolees. In addition, statistical analyses and forecasts are essential if there is to be effective planning to provide for the services and facilities which corrections organizations will need.
- Corrections has become a big business. This requirement speaks for itself. Business data processing and management reporting have become essentials in the corrections agencies of our larger states.

Today, then, the use of modern, advanced data processing systems among correctional agencies can be described as a major endeavor, one which is still undergoing massive growth. The attention of

LEAA has come to this field at a fortunate time. The opportunity exists to take hold of computers and to use data processing development techniques before the runaway duplication of effort and outlandish expense, which have plagued other areas, occur. This is the time to look at what has been done, to identify the best, most logical approaches available, and to encourage their use on an orderly, effective, economical basis. OBSCIS is a major effort in this direction. As part of the OBSCIS effort, extensive surveys have been made of the data processing systems already set up by the corrections organizations of a number of states. The OBSCIS program builds upon these experiences, particularly upon those of the pioneering systems.

Statistical Reporting

California was one of the first states to establish a professional statistical function in its corrections organization. Even before computers entered the scene, California had set up extensive data-gathering and summarizing procedures to provide its correction officials with summaries and analyses of offender populations and program trends. These may still be unsurpassed in their completeness and integrity.

Georgia used many of the same statistical approaches and data-gathering techniques. However, Georgia was one of the first of the state correction authorities to use a computer in statistical processing and reporting. Georgia's computer system was the off-line, batch-processing type. Further enhancements have included on-line research capabilities at a local university.

On-line Computer Systems

Illinois was the first state to implement an automated, highly sophisticated computer system with on-line capabilities. Illinois was also the first to utilize LEAA funds for the development of a corrections information system. The scope of the computerized system in Illinois is also quite broad, including both operational as well as statistical functions. All of the institutions in the corrections system use on-line computer terminals for data entry of offender status changes. Computer terminals have also successfully overcome problems in parole offices and clinical areas where data have been difficult to obtain.

This system of on-line, computerized techniques allows Illinois corrections officials to retrieve data instantaneously. Inquiries can be structured to retrieve any portion of an offender's record. In addition, reports can be generated through interaction with the terminal.

Transferability

Significant portions of the Illinois corrections information system have already been transferred to Ohio and Texas.

Experience in Louisiana has proved that modular, "packaged" systems can find a place within the corrections field. Louisiana was able to install and implement an advanced, on-line computerized processing system for corrections information in just three months. This was accomplished by utilizing and adapting programs, procedures, and specifications established by a LEAA project — the Correctional Records Information System (CRISYS). CRISYS was up and running at a facility in Washington, D. C. Recognizing that they needed to advance their own data processing capabilities, officials from Louisiana reviewed the system in Washington, then duplicated and implemented it, with minor modifications and adaptations, for their own use.

NATIONAL BUILDUP

On the national level too, the momentum of which the OBSCIS project is a part has also been building cumulatively. Starting with manual filing systems implemented back in the thirties, the FBI accumulated criminal history and identification files, including "rap" sheets and fingerprint coding, on all known criminals about whom information was available. This led to the liaison of state and local law enforcement agencies to accumulate and dispense this data.

Right from the beginning, national programs were a two-way street in information exchange. State and local agencies willingly provided data to the FBI in full knowledge that the national organization would be highly responsive, in turn, to their requests for information.

Computers entered this scene in a major public-service sense in 1966 with the establishment of the National Crime Information Center (NCIC), coor-

1. CCH information can be found in the NCIC publication: National Crime Information Center. *Computerized Criminal History Program - Background, Concept and Policy as Approved by NCIC Advisory Policy Board*. Washington, D.C., Federal Bureau of Investigation, 1974.

2. OBTS documentation can be found in three major SEARCH Group, Inc. publications:

Project SEARCH. *Technical Report No. 3, Designing Statewide Criminal Justice Statistics Systems - The Demonstration of a Prototype*. Sacramento: SEARCH Group, Inc., 1970.

Project SEARCH. *Technical Report No. 4, Implementing Statewide Criminal Justice Statistics Systems - The Model and Implementation Environment*. Sacramento: SEARCH Group, Inc., 1972.

Project SEARCH. *Technical Report No. 5, Designing Statewide Statistics Systems - An Examination of the Five-State Implementation*. Sacramento: SEARCH Group, Inc., 1972.

minated by the FBI. NCIC served to prove the feasibility and value of computerized communications systems for the collection and dissemination of criminal-history information. The system was set up on a communication - oriented computer which could be accessed automatically by participating states for either input or inquiry. However, the scope of NCIC was limited to wanted persons or items. Something more extensive was still required.

Following the legislation which established LEAA in 1968, Project SEARCH began to move into this field of integrated, computer-maintained criminal histories. Activities of Project SEARCH, continued by SEARCH Group, Inc., stimulated a number of projects which are currently leading toward implementation of a national, comprehensive, computerized criminal history recordkeeping and inquiry service. These capabilities, of course, would be incorporated in OBTS/CCH.

When implemented, OBTS/CCH will be an umbrella-type service or system which interacts with or integrates a number of existing efforts. When it becomes operational, this master system will provide offender tracking throughout the crim-

inal justice processes of the United States, including law enforcement agencies, courts, and corrections.

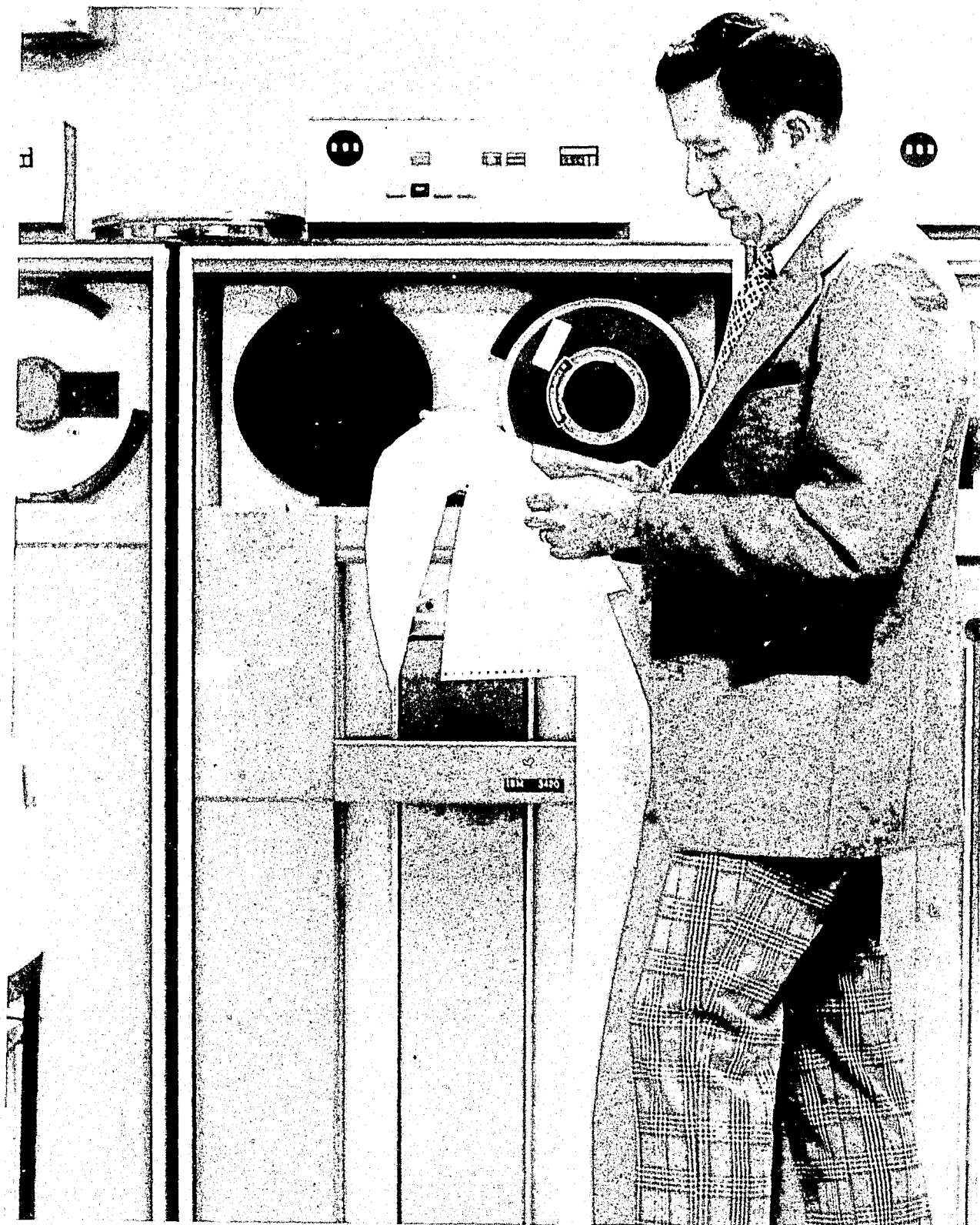
An undertaking of this magnitude, obviously, will require massive coordination. Significantly, the charter of SEARCH Group, Inc. has been drawn specifically with this function in mind. The corporation was set up to act as a criminal justice information system catalyst. Committee activities sponsored and coordinated by SEARCH include members from all 50 states.

OBSCIS is an integral part of this picture. When fully implemented, OBSCIS will provide tracking throughout the corrections process in all participating states. Ultimately, this will become a vital element in the formation of a truly national, comprehensive, responsive criminal justice information system.

This, then, is the tradition, the heritage, upon which OBSCIS has been built. The OBSCIS model, described in the next chapter, responds to these identified needs, and provides a framework for the development of a corrections information system in each individual, sovereign state.

CHAPTER 3.

A MODEL FOR THE FUTURE



CHAPTER 3. A MODEL FOR THE FUTURE

THE OBSCIS MODEL

The OBSCIS model is a broad, general-purpose tool for each state to use in developing its own individualized corrections information system. The OBSCIS model is *not* a system. In point of fact, a system that satisfies the requirements of all states could not be designed or implemented. In effect, each individual corrections entity can build its own system by selecting and developing the pieces of the model which, when put together, meet the state's specific needs and restrictions. Specifically, the OBSCIS model consists of two items:

Applications The OBSCIS model is based on twenty separate applications of offender-based state corrections information systems. The applications provide input, processing, and output capabilities. States can select and give priority to the development of those applications which satisfy their particular needs. Each application is sufficiently flexible to satisfy the dynamic requirements in differing environments.

Data Base OBSCIS provides a structured data base. This consists of a series of uniform data element definitions to be used in the development of the OBSCIS applications. Each data element is defined at three levels to allow each state to tailor the system to its own needs while providing uniformity among all states.

The model then is a flexible tool for states to use in building an Offender-Based Corrections Information System. Constraints placed upon the OBSCIS model are:

- OBSCIS provides a model for corrections offender-based systems. OBSCIS does not deal in other areas of corrections information systems (e.g., payroll, personnel, fiscal, and budgetary), nor does it provide consideration for probation and offenders under the jurisdiction of other agencies.
- OBSCIS is oriented toward adult felons. OBSCIS does not attempt to cover unique considerations for misdemeanants and juveniles.

The OBSCIS model is the result of the analysis of the correctional operation in the ten participating OBSCIS states. The OBSCIS model was structured from the findings and implications of that review. A detailed description of the review is presented in Appendix A — The Ten-State Environment.

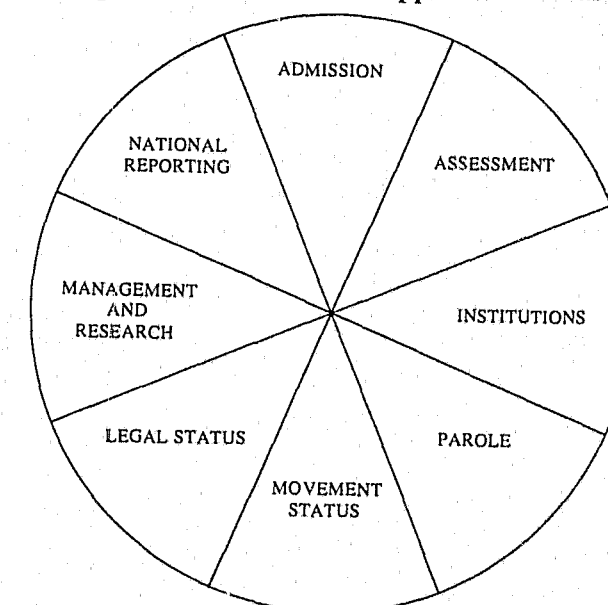
APPLICATIONS

The OBSCIS applications are information processing common denominators for state corrections information systems. That is, the applications represent functions in which data are collected, processed, and reported. The OBSCIS model, through designation of these common-denominator applications, recognizes that there are wide areas of both similarity and dissimilarity of operations and reporting in individual states.

Those applications that are similar may be transferred in part or in whole from one state to another. Those applications that are dissimilar allow a state to develop and extend an application to fit its own particular needs and requirements.

An overview of the applications is best illustrated by grouping them into eight basic application areas. These are shown in Figure I-3-1. In the discussion

Figure I-3-1. - OBSCIS Application Areas



which follows, specific applications are identified within each application area. These are the designations for the OBSCIS applications that are specified in detail in Volume II of this report — *OBSCIS Application Guide*. Part of the capability for establishing a uniform corrections reporting system between states and at the national level lies in identifying applications so that the same terminology means the same thing to all users. Thus, the application names cited below are intended to have specific meanings.

The OBSCIS applications are not to be considered as encompassing all functions of corrections. They are, however, representative of the basic information processing common-denominator applications that are similar from one jurisdiction to another. Although specific applications may cross application area boundaries, each application has been placed in one area where it is most appropriate.

Admission, the intake process, is an application area having closely similar requirements and functions in the separate states. Certain basic things must be done in any corrections system when offenders are incarcerated. Numbers must be assigned. Offender records must be established. Certain basic reports, admission summaries, are considered standard for most correctional systems. These may be extended to include the establishment of cross-reference capabilities for retrieving offender records on the basis of identifying information (e.g., name, FBI number, OBTS identifiers, etc.).

Specific OBSCIS applications in the Admission area are:

- Establish Offender Record,
- Admission Reporting,
- Cross Index Retrieval.

Assessment is an application area where there is a basic similarity in intent and functional role accompanied by wide variations in technique and methodology among individual states. The functions involved, by and large, center around interviews and tests conducted by a professional staff. There are wide variations in the areas of testing performed and in the actual tests used. This, in itself, makes for a dissimilarity among states in the information reported as a result of the assessment function. There are also wide variations in the extent of assessment, and the time at which assessment is performed. By and large, most states per-

form some assessments immediately following admission. However, there are few similarities beyond that. Some states reassess periodically. Other states reassess prior to parole; still others assess following admission only and do no further diagnostics thereafter.

Specific OBSCIS applications in the Assessment area are:

- Offender Profile,
- Medical/Diagnostic Reporting,
- Test Scoring,
- Test Scheduling.

Institutions applications, in general, center around two types of operational data — programs and disciplinary infractions. There are many other functions within institutions, but these two applications are common denominators for information system reporting. Program information indicates the work or rehabilitative activities in which an offender has participated. Disciplinary infractions are violations committed during an offender's confinement. These data are particularly critical because of their potential impact on parole or time-to-serve considerations.

Specific OBSCIS applications in the Institutions area are:

- Program Reporting,
- Disciplinary Incident Reporting.

Parole has been separated from institutional information considerations because the organizational structures differ in participating states. Specifically, there are some states in which parole is a separate entity from corrections. In those states it is impossible for the corrections authority to undertake reporting on the parole area. Thus Parole has been separated as an application area to highlight the fact that this reporting may be performed by a separate agency.

Specific OBSCIS applications in the Parole area are:

- Parole Status Reporting
- Parole Caseload Analysis.

Movement Status is a basic requirement in any correctional system, but the extent to which it is implemented will vary widely among states. These variations stem from the degree of detail of data collected and reported, as well as differences in frequency of reporting. Movement Status applications provide the ability to track the progress of offenders through the corrections process.

Specific OBSCIS applications in the Movement Status area are:

- Offender Tracking,
- Population Movement Reporting.

Legal Status centers around obligatory requirements for the determination of the basic information associated with the legal status of individual offenders. This includes parole eligibility and discharge. Both formulae and methods for computing discharge dates vary widely among states. These range from complex mathematical algorithms, to subjective evaluations by a parole board, to simple elapsed-time dating based on sentences passed by courts. Uses of data in this area include reports prepared for parole boards in individual states.

Specific OBSCIS applications in the Legal Status area are:

- Parole/Discharge Eligibility Date
- Legal Status Reporting.

Management and Research has a potential for unlimited expansion as an application area. It is necessary to recognize that wide variations exist and to focus upon key areas which are of potential value to all administrators.

Specific OBSCIS applications in the Management and Research area are:

- Population Statistical Reporting and Trend Analysis,
- Population Prediction,
- Program Evaluation,
- Research and Inquiry.

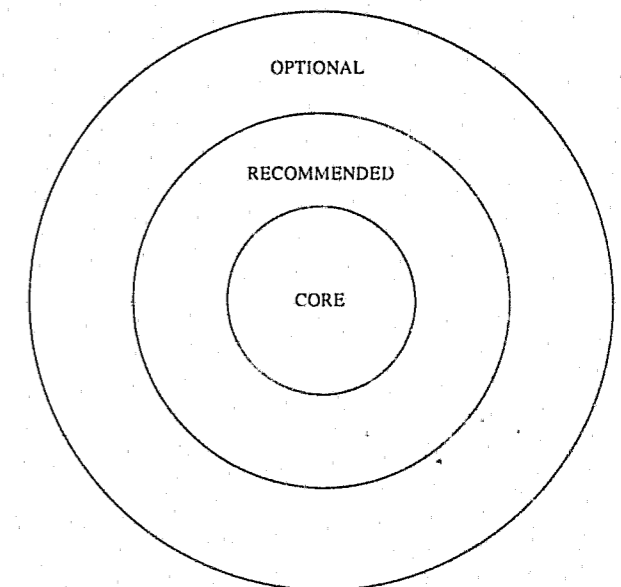
National Reporting satisfies the reporting obligations at a national level. OBSCIS includes reporting to a national program on corrections statistics. In addition, as OBTS/CCH and other national-level programs evolve, new requirements will have their impact on this application area. At present, however, there is one application:

- OBSCIS Reporting.

THE OBSCIS DATA BASE

Support for the applications described above will be built upon a uniform data base to be established by the corrections authority in each participating state. The OBSCIS data base is shown schematically in Figure I-3-2. This indicates three separate strata of data elements¹:

Figure I-3-2. - The OBSCIS Data Base



- A group of data elements forms the *core* of the OBSCIS data base. This *core* is the minimum level necessary to support all national programs.
- Extending beyond the core is a *recommended* group of data elements which will form the basis for correctional information systems in individual states. These data elements deal with offender-based information vital to the operating continuity of individual correctional systems but not essential to national statistical reporting programs.
- At the outer perimeter of the data base are *optional* data elements particular to the implementation of correctional information systems in individual states. These vary in use and scope because of state variations in organization, statutes, and requirements.

Extended definitions are provided in Volume III of this report, *OBSCIS Data Dictionary*.

Core Data Base

The Core Data Base includes a group of statistical data elements needed to support a national corrections information reporting system. These same data elements will be necessary for meeting state reporting obligations for the implementation of

1. Within this context, a data element is any reportable unit of information. A data element could consist of a single digit; an identification; an alphabetic description, such as name, county, state, or other descriptor; or a combination of these information units.

OBTS/CCH. These same data elements, of course, are also applicable to the implementation of management and statistical reporting systems to support operations for individual state correction authorities. Exhibit 3-A; at the end of this chapter, presents a brief definition of each element in the OBSCIS Core Data Base.

Recommended Data Base

As the basis for the building of systems particularized to the needs of individual states, the model recommends additional data elements which, when added to core elements, comprise a data base on which state corrections information systems can be built. Exhibit 3-B, at the end of this chapter, contains a listing and brief definition of the data elements in the recommended data base. Enhancements are in the form of additional elements or altered formats to cover extended needs.

Optional Data Base

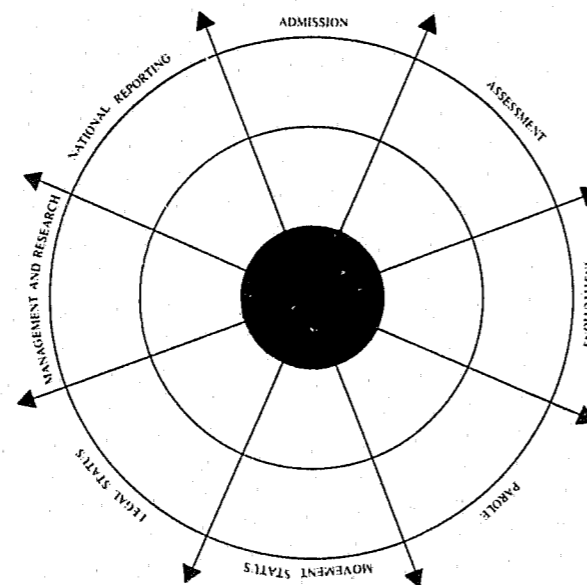
The optional data base provides for the addition of a number of data elements which enhance the corrections information system further and allow individual systems to be tailored to the particular needs of state authorities using them. These include legal, structural, operational, or other reporting requirements particular to individual states and essential to the implementation of corrections information systems within those states.

THE OBSCIS MODEL SCHEMATIC

The model itself is *not* a system, but a set of application descriptions overlaid upon specifications for a data base. This is illustrated conceptually in Figure I-3-3, which shows the schematic of OBSCIS applications overlaid upon the schematic of the data base. The outward - pointing arrows dividing the application areas indicate expandability of corrections systems implemented through use of the OBSCIS model.

At the hub of the model is a minimum system which consists of the Core Data Base and three applications: Establish Offender Record, Offender Tracking, and OBSCIS Reporting. This minimum system is the Core Statistical System. It contains those portions of OBSCIS that are required for participation in the national reporting programs.

Figure I-3-3. - The OBSCIS model



THE TECHNICAL STRUCTURE

Input record and data base formats for the Core Statistical System have been adopted from the outstanding successes achieved in operations of correctional systems within pioneering states. Specifically, the input and data base record approach was introduced in a corrections information system implemented in Illinois in a project launched in 1970 and expanded further in a subsequent project in Ohio.

Conceptually, this structure recognizes that corrections information system files utilize two types of input transactions — static and dynamic. Static data are those items of information about an offender which usually do not change over time. These are referred to in data processing circles as master-file items. For example, a correctional agency will always keep the name under which an offender was admitted. Other permanent information items would be admission date, adult commitment history, certain physical descriptions, and others.

Dynamic data reflect things that happen to an offender following admission. These include program reporting, disciplinary incident reporting, and offender tracking. Obviously, such items occur continuously.

The technical structure includes separate computer files for the static and dynamic portions of the system. The interrelationship of each file is main-

tained such that data can be collected efficiently while providing capabilities for retrieving combined data from both types of files.

Though the data and reporting needs of correctional agencies are unique, the OBSCIS model has been able to take advantage of the fact that similar technological problems have been faced and surmounted in other industries. Although the information has different designation and application, the processing of master-file items and status changes involves procedures similar to those used in applications such as industrial inventory control and commercial bank accounts. For example, when a customer opens a checking account at a commercial bank, the bank separates the setting up of an account from the processing of transactions which affect its status. At the time the account is opened, a master file is created for each customer. Then, as each transaction — depositing of money or writing of checks — takes place, dynamic status-changing records must be processed. The bank obviously needs to be able to report the status of an account at any time. For management purposes, it is desirable to be able to track the history of the account.

The same activities basically happen on intake to a correctional system in the OBSCIS Core Statistical System. As activities or events take place, the system provides for entries which update the status. In a corrections system, activities or events affecting status include institutional transfers, parole, release, discharge, and so on.

In each case, the last event or transaction recorded is structured and processed to reflect the

current status. In a banking system, the key information lies in the current balance of the depositor. In a corrections system, offender status information deals with where an inmate is at any given point in time. In each case, the last status/transaction record is related within the system to the previous one. The previous one is then related to the one before it, providing a continuous audit trail for tracking an account or an offender.

USING THE OBSCIS MODEL

The OBSCIS model has been developed from this structure. It has sufficient breadth so that the processing can take place in a range of systems, from a manual statistical system up through the reporting byproducts of sophisticated computerized systems. In a manual system, tracking would be accomplished through successive ledger-card-type entries which would accumulate a status history for any offender on a single document. Under a computerized system, tracking would be accomplished through reference to successive records of movement and changes in status.

The transition from the OBSCIS model to a workable corrections information system in individual states proceeds along an orderly path. The OBSCIS model is the basic foundation upon which a state may build a system tailored to its own specific needs. Techniques for developing and implementing these individualized systems form the subject matter of the next chapter.

OBSCIS CORE DATA ELEMENTS

In this Exhibit, the following notations will be used:

- (1) Indicates that a suggested coding structure is provided in Volume III of this report — *OBSCIS Data Dictionary*.
- (2) Indicates that the element will be used for the OBTS data interchange.

Admission Date (2)

The admission date is the month, day, and year that an offender who is not currently under a corrections jurisdiction is placed under a state corrections jurisdiction, or the date that a prior offender who has been completely discharged from the corrections system is placed under a state corrections jurisdiction.

Adult Criminal Commitment History

This element indicates the number of times the offender has been incarcerated with a sentence of one year or more, excluding the present incarceration.

Birth Date (2)

This element records the date of birth of the offender, verified when possible.

Commitment Name

The commitment name includes the last, first, and middle names of the offender as they appear on the commitment papers.

Consecutive/Concurrent Indicator (1)

In the case of multiple sentences, this data element indicates whether the offenses for which the offender was committed are to run consecutively or concurrently.

County of Commitment

The name of the county in which the offender was committed is recorded by this element. The coding structure will be unique to each state.

Current Address (1)

The name of the state and county in which the offender lived at the time of his arrest will be recorded under this element. The state code is standardized, and the county code will be specific to each state.

Ethnic Origin (1) (2)

The ethnic group with which the offender identifies most strongly will be coded, using the coding structure established by CCH.

FBI Number

The number assigned to the offender by the Federal Bureau of Investigation is collected by this element.

Intelligence (1)

This element provides for a code indicating the offender's intelligence category.

Last Grade Completed (1)

The highest academic school grade the offender had completed at the time of his arrest will be indicated by this element.

Minimum Eligible Parole Date

This date, which is set at the time the offender is admitted to the corrections jurisdiction or by parole board action, indicates the month, day, and year on which the offender will first be eligible for parole. It takes into consideration factors such as the admission date, the sentence, and time credit deductions.

OBTS Identification Number (2)

This number will be assigned to the offender by the Offender-Based Transaction Statistics System.

Offense Code (1) (2)

The offense code indicates the major offense for which the offender was committed on the current sentence. The coding structure consists of two parts. (1) The first part is a code for the major offense, which will be specific to each state, depending on the particular state's statutes. (2) The second part of the offense code enables individual states to "translate" their own offense codes into a standardized code to allow for national comparability of offenses.

Physical and other Disabilities (1)

This element serves as a flag to indicate whether the offender's program or work activities must be restricted due to physiological and/or psychological disabilities.

Sentence Minimum/Maximum (2)

This is a two-part element, specifying the cumulative sentence for the offender. It is coded in years/months/days. The two parts consist of the overall minimum and the overall maximum sentence (i.e., the largest minimum and maximum in the case of consecutive sentences). Life, death, and undetermined sentences will be specified as required by individual states.

Sentence Modification (1)

The sentence modification element is an indication of whether or not the offender's sentence has been aggravated.

Sex (1) (2)

The sex of the offender — male, female, or not reported — is indicated by this element.

State Identification Number (2)

This element records the number assigned to the offender by the state bureau of investigation.

State Corrections Identification Number (2)

The state corrections identification number is that assigned to the offender by the state department or division of corrections or by the correctional institution in which the offender is placed. States may, under certain circumstances, have the need to assign more than one number. In those cases, the core requirement is the most recent number.

Status Action (1) (2)

This element records the reason for the offender's latest status change.

Status Date (2)

This date is the month, day, and year when any element of the offender's status changes. The date, in effect, indicates the termination of one status and the beginning of the next.

Status Jurisdiction (1) (2)

This status element is an indication of the entity which has overall legal authority and responsibility for the offender.

Status Location (2)

The location of status refers to the actual physical location of the offender. The coding of this element will be specific to each state. It is suggested that names of locations such as institutions, parole offices, work release centers, half-way houses, diagnostic and classification centers, federal and out-of-state institutions, hospitals, etc., be included in the coding structure.

Status Type (1) (2)

The status type refers to the offender's specific standing within the jurisdiction of the corrections agency. It provides a general structure for coding such things as admission, institutional, release, discharge, and special status.

Tested Grade Level (1)

The tested grade level is the score of the reading or grade level test taken by the offender during the assessment and diagnostic process.

OBSCIS RECOMMENDED DATA ELEMENTS

In this Exhibit, the following notations will be used:

- (1) Indicates that a suggested coding structure is provided in Volume III of this report — *OBSCIS Data Dictionary*.
- (2) Indicates that the element will be used in the OBTS data interchange.
- (3) Indicates that the element appears in the core data base in the same format.
- (4) Indicates that the element is found in the core data base, but is expanded in scope at the recommended level.

Admission Date (2) (3)

The admission date is the month, day, and year that an offender who is not currently under a corrections jurisdiction is placed under a state corrections jurisdiction, or the date that a prior offender who has been completely discharged from the corrections system is placed under a state corrections jurisdiction.

Adult Criminal Commitment History (1) (4)

This expansion of the core data element specifies the number of each type of four types of previous adult incarceration served by the offender. It includes federal, in-state, out-of-state, and other incarcerations.

Alias (1)

This element indicates whether or not the offender has ever been known to use an alias.

Birth Date (2) (3)

This element records the date of birth of the offender, verified when possible.

Birthplace (1)

The standardized state/country code developed by NCIC is used to designate the state or country in which the offender was born.

Commitment Name (3)

The commitment name includes the last, first, and middle names of the offender as they appear on the commitment papers.

Consecutive/Concurrent Indicator (1) (3)

In the case of multiple sentences, this data element indicates whether the offenses for

which the offender was committed are to run consecutively or concurrently.

County of Commitment (3)

A code for the county in which the offender was committed is recorded by this element. The coding structure will be unique to each state.

Cultural Identification

This element is used to indicate whether the offender has any "alliances" which might influence housing and treatment decisions. It includes the offender's indication of participation in or identification with street gangs, militant groups, political activist groups, etc. A Yes/No indicator is used at this level.

Current Address (1) (3)

The name of the state and county in which the offender lived at the time of his arrest will be recorded under this element. The state code is standardized, and the county code will be specific to each state.

Detainer/Warrant (1)

At the recommended level, the detainer/warrant element is a three-part code. (1) The first part indicates the number of detainers or warrants currently out on an offender. (2) The second provides for a general code indicating the type of warrant or detainer. (3) The third part indicates that the agency has been notified of the offender's location.

Ethnic Origin (1) (2) (3)

The ethnic group with which the offender identifies most strongly will be coded using the coding structure established by CCH.

FBI Number (3)

The number assigned to the offender by the Federal Bureau of Investigation is collected by this element.

Financial Source (1)

Financial source indicates the primary source of the offender's income at the time of his arrest.

Employment (1)

This is a five-part code. (1) Job Classification denotes the job which the offender perceives as being his most usual occupation. It is coded by the two-digit occupational divisions code outlined in the *Dictionary of Occupational Titles*. (2) Employment Status at Time of Arrest is a general code indicating whether the offender was employed full-time, part-time, etc. at the time of his arrest. (3) Skill Level indicates the level of skill used by the offender in his most usual occupation. (4) Pay Rate is the highest gross income attained in a one-week period in any job(s), coded in dollars. (5) Length of Employment is the longest period of continuous employment of any type coded in months.

Infractions (1)

This is a three-part code. (1) Infraction Type is a code which specifies the category of the most recent infraction or incidents. These include escape, fighting, etc. (2) Number of Incidents indicates the total occurrences of disciplinary infractions (i.e., tickets issued) during the offender's incarceration. (3) Infraction Date is the month, day, and year that the most recent incident, infraction or escape occurred while the offender was incarcerated or in a partial-release program.

Infraction Disposition (1)

This is a two-part element. (1) Infraction Actions indicates the total number of times that an offender has been officially disciplined during his current period of incarceration. (2) Action Date indicates the date that the most recent disciplinary infraction action was taken.

Institution Security**Level (1)**

The required security level of the offender — maximum, medium, and minimum — while he is incarcerated or on a partial-release program is indicated by this element.

Intelligence (1)

At the recommended level, this element reflects the offender's most recent I.Q. test. It includes the score of the most recent exam, the date on which it was taken, and the type of test used.

Last Grade Completed (1) (4)

The highest academic school grade which the

offender had completed at the time of his arrest will be indicated by this element.

Legal Name

The legal name includes the last, first, and middle names as used by the offender for legal transactions. (For various reasons, this may differ from the commitment name.)

Marital Status (1)

At the recommended level, this element indicates the marital status of the offender at the time of his arrest.

Medical Exam

At the recommended level, this element records the most recent date that the offender had a medical exam while under the jurisdiction of the corrections authority.

Minimum Eligible Parole Date (3)

This date, which is set at the time the offender is admitted to the corrections jurisdiction or by parole board action, indicates the month, day, and year on which the offender will first be eligible for parole. It takes into consideration factors such as the admission date, the sentence, and time credit deductions.

Next Eligible Parole Date

This date indicates the month, day, and year that the offender is next scheduled to appear before the parole board.

Number of Dependents (1)

The number of dependents claimed on the offender's most recent income tax return is indicated with a one-digit code.

OBTS Identification Number (2) (3)

This number will be assigned to the offender by the Offender-Based Transaction Statistics System.

Offense Code (1) (2) (4)

The Offense Code indicates all offenses for which the offender was committed on the current sentence. The coding structure consists of two parts. (1) The first is a code for each offense which will be specific to each state, depending on the particular state's statutes. (2) The second section of the offense code enables individual states to "translate" their own offense codes into a standardized code to allow for national comparability of offenses. The offense(s) indicated is that for which the offender was committed. The coding structure

suggested by OBSCIS is that currently being proposed by NCIC. At this level, a classification of each offense is used, using the full four digits.

Parole Address/Habitation Unit (1)

This is the present location of the offender while on parole. It has two parts: (1) State, using the standardized state, country code developed by NCIC; and (2) County, which will be specific to each state.

Parole Board Decisions (1)

This element indicates the disposition made by the parole board at its most recent hearing.

Parole Employment/Employer

This is a two-part element indicating: (1) present employment status of the parolee (full-time, part-time, etc.); and (2) general classification of the job in which he is employed, using the two-digit code outlined in the *Dictionary of Occupational Titles*.

Programs Prescribed (1)

The programs prescribed refer to those programs recommended for the offender by the reception/classification team or by institutional personnel. It is a three-part element, coded for each program that is prescribed: (1) program category, which includes educational, vocational, work assignment, counseling, or other; (2) specific programs recommended for the offender by the reception/classification team or by institutional personnel (this coding structure will be specific to each state); and (3) the priority of the program as it relates to the specific offender.

Religious Preference (1)

This element indicates the religious denomination or sect with which the offender identifies.

Sentence Effective Date

This is the date on which the offender's sentence began. Some states may have to calculate this date due to time credits.

Sentence Minimum/Maximum (2) (4)

This element is recorded for each offense for which the offender is committed. It consists of two parts, the minimum and the maximum, each coded in years/months/days.

Sentence Modification (3)

The sentence modification element is an indication of whether or not the offender's sentence has been aggravated.

Sex (2) (3)

The sex of the offender — male, female, or not reported — is indicated by this element.

State Identification Number (2) (3)

This element records the number assigned to the offender by the state bureau of investigation.

State Corrections Identification Number (2) (4)

The state corrections identification number is that assigned to the offender by the state department or division of corrections or by the correctional institution to which the offender is assigned. States may, under certain circumstances, have the need to assign more than one number to an offender. The recommended data base includes the recording of all such numbers.

Status Action (1) (2)

This element records the reason for the offender's latest status change.

Status Date (2) (3)

This date is the month, day, and year that any element of the offender's status changes. The date, in effect, indicates the termination of one status and the beginning of the next.

Status Jurisdiction (1) (2) (4)

Status jurisdiction is a two-part code at this level. (1) Primary Jurisdiction consists of an indication of the entity which has overall legal authority and responsibility for the offender. These are federal, state, and out-of-state. (2) State Jurisdiction is an indication of the agency within the state which has jurisdiction over the offender. The coding structure will be specific to each state and will include agencies such as the department or division of corrections, board of pardon and paroles, institutions, partial-release, other state agencies, out-of-state jurisdiction, and other.

Status Location (2) (3)

The location of status refers to the actual physical location of the offender. The coding of this element will be specific to each state. It is

suggested that names of locations such as institutions, parole offices, work-release centers, half-way houses, diagnostic and classification centers, federal and out-of-state institutions, hospitals, etc. be included in the coding structure.

Status Type (2) (4)

The status type code refers to the offender's specific standing within the jurisdiction of the corrections agency. It provides a general structure for coding such things as admission, institutional, release, discharge, and special status.

Tested Grade Level (1) (4)

This is a two-part element. (1) Grade Level is the score of the reading or grade level tests taken by the offender while under corrections jurisdiction. (2) Test Name indicates the type of each reading or grade level test that is administered. The coding structure will be specific to each state.

Time Lost Due To Disciplinary Actions

The number of days which the offender lost against his current sentence due to official disciplinary actions (resulting from parole violations, bond escapes, etc.) will be noted with this element.

Time Served With Other Agencies (2)

This is a two-part code at the recommended level: (1) a code for each agency, institution, etc., granting time credit and (2) the total time credit for each, coded in days.

Parole Financial Status (1)

A general code is used for this element to indicate the primary source of income of the offender while he is on parole.

Parole History

The parole history is an indication of the number of times that the offender has previously been released on parole, excluding the current parole.

Parole Income

This is the average monthly income in dollars of the offender while on parole or other supervised release.

Parole Performance (1)

Parole performance refers to the adjustment that the parolee is making in the community, as assessed by the parole officer.

Parole Special Conditions (1)

Any special conditions which the parole board imposes on the parolee are indicated by this element. It includes such things as participation in Alcoholics Anonymous, drug abuse programs, mental health treatment, etc.

Parole Supervisory level

The required supervisory level of the parolee, as determined in his parole plan, is indicated by this element. States may code this element in further detail to satisfy their own needs and requirements.

Parole Violation Action date

This date indicates the month, day, and year that a disposition was made by the corrections authority concerning a parole violation.

Parole Violation Date

The month, day, and year that the parolee violated the parole agreement is noted by this element.

Parole Violation/New Offense (1)

The type of the reported parole violation or offense committed while on parole is recorded with a one-digit code.

Physical And Other Disabilities (1) (4)

This expansion of the core data element notes the general type of disabilities found during the assessment process.

Probation History

This two-part element includes the number of previous felony probations which the offender has served, and the number of previous misdemeanor probations.

Program Assignment (1)

Program assignment is a four-part element which indicates (1) the general program type to which the offender has been assigned, such as work, educational, vocational, counseling, and other; (2) the specific program to which the offender is assigned (this coding structure will be unique to each state); (3) the date the offender entered the program; and (4) the date the offender left the program.

CHAPTER 4.
IMPLEMENTING OBSCIS



CHAPTER 4. IMPLEMENTING OBSCIS

UNIQUE APPROACH

Implementing an OBSCIS system at the state level will, truly, be a unique experience. Implementation is where the challenge lies. Each state corrections administrator has his own shop to run, his own responsibilities to fulfill, his own legislature to report to, his own governor to account to, and therefore his own unique system to develop. On the other hand, he has an obligation to provide certain minimal necessary information to national processing and reporting programs.

The implementation approach which will make it possible to carry out both of these responsibilities may be unique in the entire field of information system development. The techniques developed specifically for OBSCIS combine proven methods for the development of individual information systems with an unprecedented "front end" approach tailored specifically to the field of corrections. The OBSCIS process involves the following series of phases:

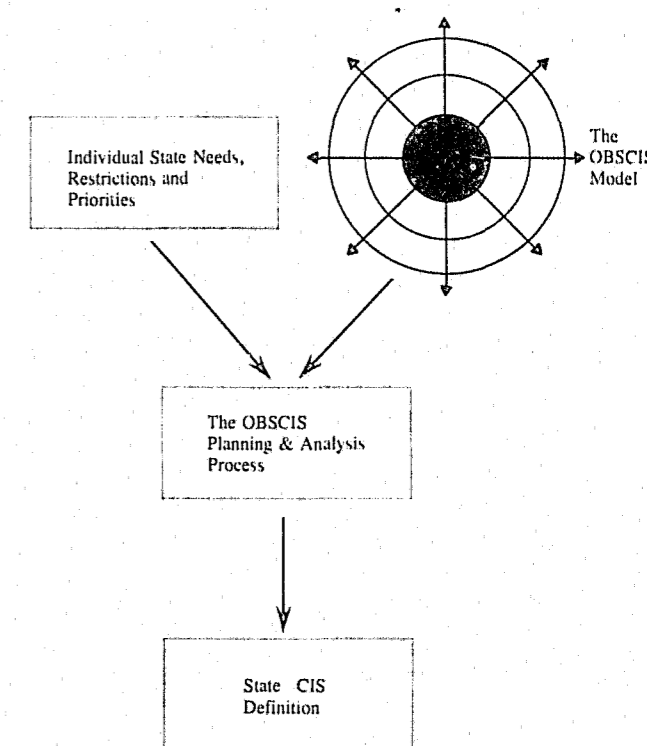
- OBSCIS Planning and Analysis Process
 - Project Planning
 - State Self-Analysis
- OBSCIS Implementation Process
 - Correctional Systems Specifications
 - Technical System Design
 - Achieving Operational Status

By breaking OBSCIS implementation into specific phases, the development of an information system is rendered manageable by and on behalf of corrections officials who may have little or no information processing background. The initial process, Planning and Analysis, is almost entirely corrections oriented. It is designed specifically so that corrections officials can state and analyze their needs and plan to meet them. The outputs of this process, in turn, become inputs to the technical procedures which follow in the implementation activities. A detailed step-by-step guide to the OBSCIS development activities can be found in *Volume IV - OBSCIS Implementation Plan*. A summary discussion follows.

THE OBSCIS PLANNING AND ANALYSIS PROCESS

The OBSCIS Planning and Analysis Process is diagrammed in Figure I-4-1. As indicated, planning

Figure I-4-1. - The OBSCIS Process



and analysis for OBSCIS begins with two separate inputs. One is the OBSCIS model, as described in Chapter 3. The other input is actually a set of specifications delineating the requirements in each individual state. These include definitions of needs, restrictions, and priorities.

These inputs are considered and processed, literally processed, under a series of structured, step-by-step procedures. The diagram in Figure I-4-1

emphasizes this by showing a processor which accepts the inputs and generates from them a specific, highly particular definition for each state's corrections information system.

The OBSCIS Planning and Analysis Process is divided into two phases:

- Project Planning
- State Self-Analysis

Project Planning

The first phase of the OBSCIS process is Project Planning. This is a series of ordered steps aimed at getting started, determining what needs to be done. During this phase, the project team organizes itself to do its work. Most particularly, the people and the key resources necessary to get started are identified and brought together. The scope of the Project Planning phase is limited, but its importance cannot be overstated. The accomplishment lies in planning, outlining, and scheduling the work of the remaining phases.

The Project Planning phase of an OBSCIS project serves to introduce a proven management methodology for systems development¹ within the corrections authority. The impact and intent of the process transcends the immediacy of the individual system under development. By introducing and installing a management process of this type and caliber, the corrections organization enhances its capabilities and contributes to the development of the people who participate. In effect, implementation of the process serves, over and above the end products of the project itself, to leave each corrections organization with an in-place systems management discipline — a body of knowledge and a set of planning capabilities. These capabilities will become essential as the corrections field moves forward in its information processing sophistication through implementation of successful, integrated local and national programs.

Because the OBSCIS process is designed to support management needs in a corrections organization, it is important that the project enjoy both support and participation at the highest level within the corrections organization itself. This is not to say that the director of corrections must be intimately

involved in every detail of system development. Rather, it is to say that nothing effective will happen unless the OBSCIS project has management approval, cognizance, and review. This can be effectively accomplished through the establishment of a steering committee which should include all levels of the project team:

- Key management personnel of the various treatment, custody, and administrative functions. They should review the goals and outputs of the OBSCIS process. Members of their staff should participate in detail system developmental activities.
- Executives of the departments or organizations, both internal and external, which will use information produced by the corrections information system. They should be active participants throughout the process.
- Information system specialists. They will be essential members of the project team. At the very minimum, the persons leading the information systems technical group should have extensive experience with corrections information systems. To the extent possible, all information systems specialists associated with the project should have a grounding in the corrections field, even if this requires a special indoctrination effort prior to project start-up.

In system development terms, the Project Planning phase specifically consists of the following activities:

- Organize the Project Team
- Define the Scope of the Project
- Establish Management Goals for the New CIS
- Review Corrections Management
- Determine the Activities Required to Complete the State Self-Analysis
- Determine Resource Requirements Needed for the Next Phase
- Develop a Plan with Associated Costs to Perform the State Self-Analysis Phase
- Review by Corrections Management of the Planned Activities, Required Resources, Associated Costs, and Schedules for the Self-Analysis Phase
- Prepare Fund Request, if Required
- Establish Methods of Project Control and Management Review

At the end of Project Planning, the state will have the basis for continuing development.

State Self-Analysis

The State Self-Analysis phase is the point in the OBSCIS process where the state develops its own individualized system definition. The phase begins with an in-depth review of the state's activities and operations in all offender-based areas. This information is used to select and adapt the appropriate pieces of the OBSCIS model. The phase concludes with a documentation of requirements, scheduling of resources, and estimation of costs for the remaining phases of the OBSCIS process.

Each state has its own unique needs, priorities, legislation, policies, and restrictions. A state corrections information system must be designed to fit within these needs and restrictions. The first portion of the State Self-Analysis phase includes a number of detail steps which direct a state to investigate these factors and collect the necessary data to determine the specific requirements.

These requirements then provide a foundation for the selection and adaptation of the OBSCIS applications and data base. The state must select the appropriate pieces and integrate the components into a preliminary definition of the state's corrections information system.

Remaining effort in the State Self-Analysis phase deals with developing the schedule of resources required for the remaining phases. This includes determining the activities required and developing a schedule of estimated cost for the entire OBSCIS process.

Throughout the State Self-Analysis phase, management participation is critical. Without management concurrence and support, an OBSCIS project cannot be successful.

In system development terms, the State Self-Analysis phase consists of the following activities:

- Initiate State Self-Analysis Phase
- Investigate Basic Factors Affecting the Design of the New State CIS
- Collect Necessary Data and Define Current Manual and Automated Information Systems
- Determine What Future Plans Exist for the Present Systems
- Assemble Documentation and Review
- Perform Management Review
- Review the OBSCIS Model
- Select Data Elements, Applications, and Levels of Implementation

- Balance all Chosen Applications to Identify Conflicts. Select Alternatives
- Prepare a Preliminary Definition of the State's CIS
- Determine the Activities Required to Complete the OBSCIS Implementation Phase
- Determine Resource Requirements for Implementation
- Develop a Schedule with Associated Costs to Perform the Implementation Phase
- Define Requirements and Prioritize
- Perform Corrections Management Review of the Planned Activities, Required Resources, Associated Costs, and Schedules for the Implementation Phase
- Determine if a Request for Additional Funding will be Required to Complete the Implementation Phase and, if required, Prepare Funding Request.

At the end of the Planning and Analysis process, the state will have a preliminary definition of its corrections information system. This will take the form of a management-approved set of detail requirements, priorities, and a plan for their implementation. The state will be ready to proceed with the OBSCIS Implementation process.

OBSCIS IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

Applying the OBSCIS model, systems are developed individually, uniquely within each state. Actual development follows a set of detailed working guides — the OBSCIS Implementation Process.

The OBSCIS Implementation Process covers all of the design and technical steps necessary to proceed from the end products of State Self-Analysis through to an operational information processing system. This can include either an installed, operating computer system or a set of manual and/or mechanical procedures which produce defined results on a scheduled, dependable basis. The OBSCIS Implementation Process is divided within the work plan into three phases:

- Correctional System Specifications
- Technical System Design
- Achieving Operational Status

¹ I. Shaw, John C., and William Atkins; *Managing Computer System Projects*. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1970.

Correctional System Specifications

This phase marks a transitional step in the OBSCIS process. At the conclusion of the previous phase, the requirements and definition for the new corrections information system were stated in correctional management terms. Within this phase, corrections managers interact closely with information processing technicians who will provide technical solutions for the development and implementation of the system. The idea is to make sure that management requirements are taken care of, and that communication of needs has taken place at a level which both managers and technicians can understand. The structured steps built into the step-by-step work plan for this process provide a high level of assurance that this will happen.

In this phase, managers and technicians must review and refine the information systems definitions developed during the Self-Analysis phase. During these sessions, the technicians develop a graphic diagram or flow chart, showing what processing will take place in the course of each application to be implemented, and for the system as a whole. Also indicated in this documentation are the specific end products to be delivered by the system and the inputs required. A definition of the data elements and files to be retained in the system will also be determined.

The work plan, related resources, and cost for the remainder of the project must be refined as necessary to reflect the more detailed design of the system that has been created.

In system development terms, this phase consists of the following activities:

- Refine the Defined CIS Through a More Detailed Requirements Analysis
- Convert the Defined CIS into Corrections System Specifications
- Refine the Work Plan Developed in the Self-Analysis Phase
- Perform Corrections Management and User Review of the Conceptual Systems Design

Management must review the conceptual design produced during this phase with close scrutiny. This is an important, critical review. More than 60 percent of the money to be spent in developing the correctional information system will be expended

during the phases which follow. Beyond this point, activities will be at a highly technical level beyond the comprehension of most corrections managers. Therefore, understanding between managers and technicians is critical at this point.

Technical System Design

This is a highly technical series of activities which bring the project documentation to the level necessary to make computerized (or complex manual) systems happen. Documentation is down to the level of computer logic decision tables, file and record layouts, designs for all input and output forms, and so on.

Specific activities include:

- Complete System Specifications
- Establish Final Requirements for Processing Resources
- Refine Work Plan and Schedule for the Final Phase of the Project
- Establish Final Estimates of the One-time and Continuing Costs of the New System
- Perform Management Review Prior to Final Phase
- Procure Additional Resources as Required

Achieving Operational Status

This phase of the OBSCIS project includes another transition. The purely technical, detailed work of getting a system ready to operate is completed during this phase. Then technicians, information users, and managers are rejoined in a unified group which shares the results of all of the efforts which have gone before. The working sequence within this phase is highly structured, team oriented. A number of things happen in parallel, coming together under tight schedules that result in working systems which process data and product output. The activities associated with this phase include the following:

- Develop Programming Specifications
- Perform Programming
- Plan for User Training

- Complete Necessary User Training
- Plan the System Test
- Conduct System Test
- Plan for System Conversion and Implementation
- Perform the System Conversion
- Perform Final Implementation
- Perform Final Review
- Initiate New Projects Using Future Project List

The final two activities listed above add a dimension to the OBSCIS process which make for the continuity necessary if effective corrections information systems are to be realized. As indicated at the very outset of this presentation, the basic need for corrections information stems from the fact that corrections has become a highly dynamic, professional area. Given that this is so, it follows that the information systems which support the evolving, developing, growing corrections activities will require continual modification, expansion, or enhancement of previously developed information systems.

These continually evolving activities require significant effort and dedication. Only with adequate staff and organization will an OBSCIS system continue to derive benefits. Specifically:

Technical staff is required to monitor and enhance information systems. Staff members must have the skill to develop systems which meet the ever-changing needs of corrections. *Professional researchers* must be available to use the data from the OBSCIS system. The value of an OBSCIS system is not in the data — the value comes from the analysis of the data and the application of information derived.

Information exchange is critical if OBSCIS is to have an impact. Technicians, researchers, and administrators must coordinate their efforts to derive the full benefits of OBSCIS systems.

It is the nature of information system development that the work involved is never really completed. There is always some new dimension or refinement which can be added to any information

system. Of course, sound management practice says that any project effort must have a defined termination point. Without a structured process like the one which has been described here, it would literally be possible to have a system under development which remained 99 percent complete, indefinitely.

Thus, it is important to recognize that the initial OBSCIS project must come to an end. The final review activity considers steps that the project team wishes, in retrospect, it could have taken earlier. Rather than risking the continual patching of a viable system which is doing a job at the moment, the approach specified under the OBSCIS process is to catalog these desired changes and to plan for implementing them, on a formal and systematic basis. Thus, at the conclusion of any OBSCIS project, the next step, should a next step be necessary, is identified.

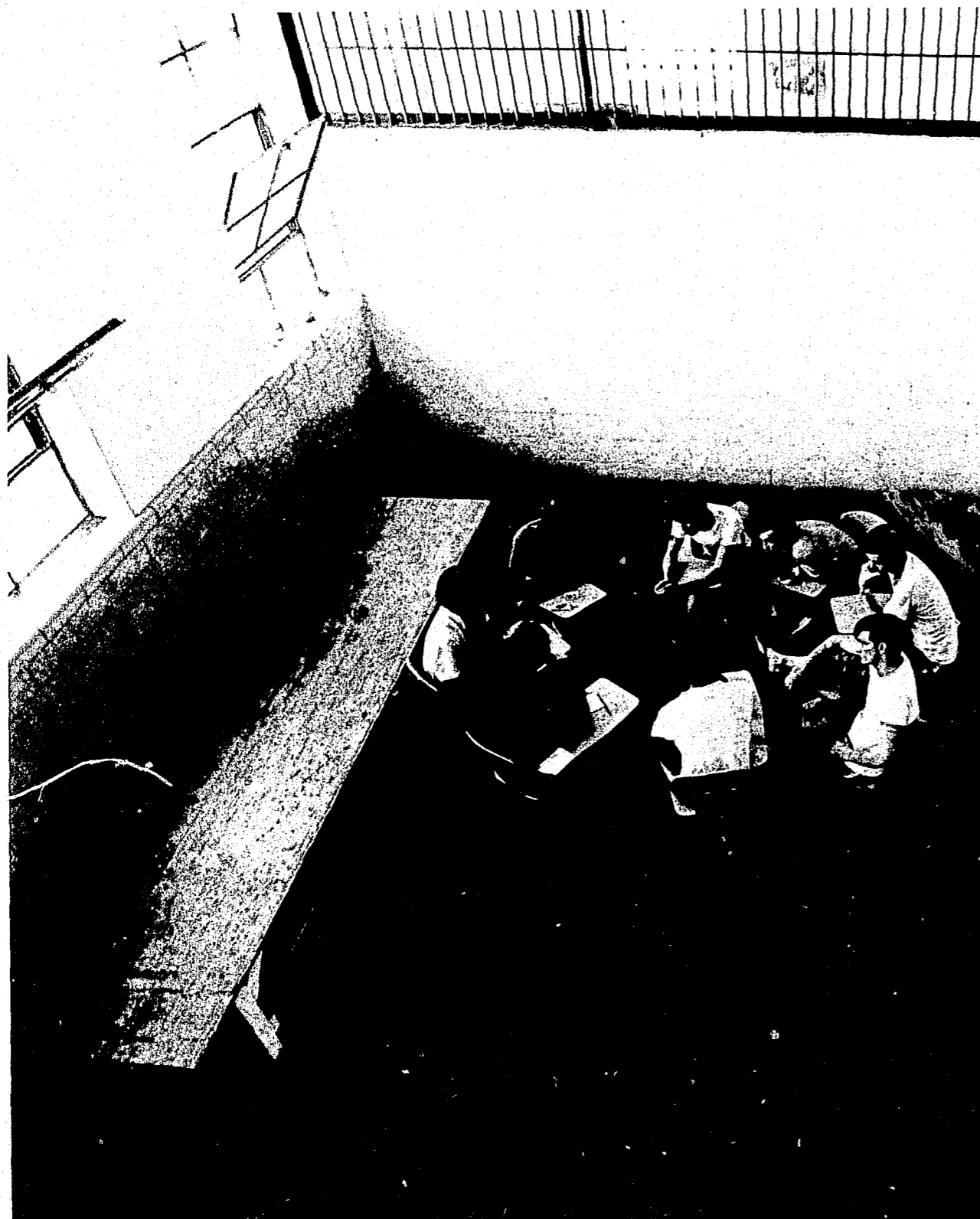
OTHER FORCES

Within the OBSCIS work plan there are a number of activities, interspersed at key points, which direct the project team to consider environmental factors of a political or legal nature which could shape or constrain parts of the corrections information system. Because these elements do not involve system design or information processing technologies, they have not been covered in this chapter.

In the real world, these are separate, individual, dynamically changing entities. They are the legislative, administrative, or political considerations to which corrections managers must be ever sensitive. Laws change through legislative action; they are also modified, abridged, or annulled by court decisions. Involved, sometimes aroused, citizens bring pressures to bear. Even affirmative action plans may require certain considerations.

In other words, the environment surrounding corrections operations is political, dynamically so. Thus, a separate, nontechnical necessity for the development of a state corrections information system lies in considering and analyzing the security, privacy, and confidentiality factors which shape and constrain an information system. These factors form the subject matter for the chapter which follows.

CHAPTER 5.
SECURITY, PRIVACY AND
CONFIDENTIALITY CONSIDERATIONS



CHAPTER 5. SECURITY, PRIVACY, AND CONFIDENTIALITY CONSIDERATIONS

A POTENTIAL FOR CONFLICT

The need to know can, in today's environment, be at odds with recent legislation and court decisions on rights of information usage. The potential for conflict is particularly strong in the corrections field. On the one hand, there is the need to limit access and distribution of data that are critical to the future lives of individuals. On the other, there is a need for management information which provides guidance in the development of correctional and rehabilitation - oriented programs.

The design of OBSCIS systems must guarantee the security, privacy, and confidentiality of offenders. The OBSCIS model and the supporting work plan for its implementation include activities that call for investigation and action upon these legal and environmental demands. At a very minimum, the responsible manager associated with the development of a state corrections information system must know the laws applying to security and privacy of data. In particular, he must see that the system conforms with any rules and regulations applicable to the accessing of sensitive files and the dissemination of such information. Laws and legal rulings in these areas are highly dynamic, sensitive to an extreme. Someone in each state must be assigned responsibility for monitoring these considerations on a continuing basis. Publications relevant to the security, privacy, access, and dissemination of information from criminal justice files must be studied and assimilated by key members of each project team.¹

The security, privacy, and confidentiality definitions below have been used as a guide in the design of the OBSCIS model. These definitions are taken from the Second International Symposium on Crimi-

1. A number of key publications covering security and privacy are cited in the bibliographical appendix to this report. The most definitive of these publications is:

Project SEARCH. *Technical Report No. 2, Security and Privacy Considerations in Criminal History Information Systems*. Sacramento: SEARCH Group, Inc., 1970.

2. Project SEARCH. *Second International Symposium on Criminal Justice Information and Statistics Systems*. Sacramento: SEARCH Group, Inc., 1974.

3. *The Privacy Act of 1974*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1974. (Public Law 93-579)

nal Justice Information and Statistics Systems of Project SEARCH (1974).²

Security means insuring that information is not lost, destroyed, modified, or disseminated improperly.

Privacy is the individual's right to review, challenge, and control information about himself. Increasingly, civil libertarians are arguing that unless there is a legitimate governmental need to know; which flows from some specific constitutional or legislative mandate, the individual should not be required to volunteer personal information to the government. Like honesty and integrity, privacy is one of those things that cannot be recaptured once it is lost.

Confidentiality, on the other hand, is an explicit or implicit agreement between the individual providing information and the organization gathering it: information will be used specifically for the purposes for which it was collected. This includes withholding information from people who do not have a right and need to know it.

LEGAL PRECEDENTS

The degree and extent to which special provisions must be made within information systems for privacy, confidentiality, and security depend largely on applicable laws, regulations, and court decisions. Applicability varies with local legislation and court decisions. In general, federal laws take precedence in this area. However, these have been effectively modified or interpreted by a continuing series of court decisions. Further, a number of states have enlarged upon or supplemented the federal laws.

As laws continue to change, it is critical to consider the current issues:

- On December 31, 1974, President Ford signed the "Privacy Act of 1974"³ into law. This is among the first legislation to guarantee an individual's right to privacy. It represents the beginning of an era of restrictions for the collection and dissemination of information. The

Act provides safeguards against the invasion of personal privacy by federal agencies. Although the Privacy Act specifically excludes all criminal justice agencies, it is an indication of the trend of recent legislation.

- On January 14, 1975, two bills were introduced into Congress as the "Criminal Justice Information Control and Privacy Act of 1975."¹ The final provisions of the Act probably will be a compromise between the two bills. When passed, it will provide extensive controls over criminal justice information systems at federal, state, and local levels. Systems will be affected that are:

1. operated by the federal government
2. operated by a state or local government and funded in whole or in part by the federal government
3. operated as interstate systems
4. operated by a state or local government and engaged in the exchange of information with a system covered by 1., 2., or 3. above, but only to the extent of the exchange.

Both bills provide limitations on content, accessibility, and dissemination of criminal justice information system data. Both also provide for the offender's right to review criminal justice information at state and local levels. In addition, both bills include provisions for the creation of a national board or commission that will be responsible for the administration of the Act.

Future legislative developments are destined to impact the criminal justice information systems at all levels. These will be important considerations for states implementing OBSCIS systems.

OBSCIS APPROACH

Provisions for handling privacy, confidentiality, and security of information within OBSCIS systems include established techniques proven in the development and implementation of other information

systems faced with the same general problems. Broad categories can be established along the lines discussed below.

Personnel

People are the main sources of exposure in information systems. Potential problems can range from shortages of qualified, experienced personnel up through deliberate fraud. Areas in between include clerical errors, training, retraining, illness, personnel problems, and many others.

A wide range of preventive, detective, and corrective controls should be designed into OBSCIS systems to minimize the impact of personnel problems. These begin at the preventive level, with screening, security checking, initial training, and enforcement of verification procedures. Detective controls include reviews of work performed, balancing, inspections of packages brought to and taken from processing areas, and similar precautions. Corrective measures can include job rotation, retraining to overcome error patterns, removal of individuals from jobs where they have not performed to standards, or, at the extreme, discharge and prosecution for fraud.

Physical Site

Exposures at the physical location of systems operations apply to both manually implemented and computerized systems. For example, the danger of destruction of vital records as a result of fire or natural disaster is just as real for a clerical system as it is for one that is highly computerized. Similarly, both types of systems are equally susceptible to damage through accidental or malicious intent. Categories of exposure affecting the security, privacy, or confidentiality of data include misplacement, mishandling, malfunctions, natural hazards, accident, and malicious misuse.

Preventive controls, for either clerical or computer-operated systems, begin with physical security. One convincing way to assure privacy of system content is simply to put a stout lock on the front door and then be extremely careful about who you let in. Another valuable preventive measure can be the physical dispersion of processing facilities.

In a computer installation, this could involve separating the tape library from the processing center itself.

Detective controls at the physical site would include recorders covering temperature and humidity, TV monitors, smoke detectors, sign-out procedures, and so on.

Corrective measures center around backup files of documents and computer media. Most important are restart procedures for the resumption of service after an interruption.

Software, Programs, and Procedures

Controls must be designed to assure the integrity of processing. The danger lies in undetected processing "bugs." Erroneous processing can be programmed into systems software and application programs, or into procedures of manual systems. Typically, bugs that escape initial detection prior to implementation of a system are associated with exception situations or little-used processing "loops." These can bring about potentially major problems, such as processing of the wrong data or the wrong files, performing the wrong functions upon data, or even destruction of information records.

Controls at this level tend to be highly sophisticated, even where clerical processing is involved. They range from enforcement of established procedures to maintenance of error logs as well as follow-up procedures for re-entry and validation.

File Access

Unauthorized persons simply should not have access to files which are sensitive. Further, even where persons have authorization to the content of sensitive files, there should be a verification requirement, a need to know associated with each inquiry. The key control techniques lie in establishing accountability for all file references and assuring appropriate records are purged, whether they are entered from a computer terminal or involve the actual checking out of documents.

Most of the controls in this area are preventive. If a person does not have identification, access to data must not be available to him. This can be handled through the use of identification badges in a manual system or through passwords and access controls in

a computerized system. Controls can be enhanced by requiring the entry of a transaction code with each inquiry, indicating the purpose for which the data are to be used. Thus, even if a person had an identification number or password giving him access to a file, he would still have to stipulate the intended use of the information.

Of special importance are the controls over the dissemination of information outside the correction agency.

Data Transmission

Data transmission involves the movement of information or records from one location to another. The records involved may be moving from a source location to a computer for input, from an outlying facility to a central administrative point, or as computer output back to source locations or to users. Major exposure occurs during transmission or transportation of data. Where physical records are involved, they are subject to loss. Where common-carrier line transmission is used, there can be interruptions in service or malfunctions of terminal equipment.

Controls in this area center around checking outputs back to inputs. Typically, for example, a central computer system will report back to source-data locations on the number of messages received during a preceding period. If the number does not correspond with records kept at the origination point, an error has taken place. Where records have to be moved physically, batch control tickets are an effective technique: the originator logs in the number of records which left his location, the processing point logs in the number of records received, and the two are compared periodically. There can also be anticipation controls. That is, a central point can be programmed, either automatically or manually, to expect data from a given number of sources at regular intervals. If no transmissions are received, it will initiate an inquiry.

THE RISK/COST TRADEOFF

A perfect, totally secure, privacy-protected system is not even theoretically available. If it were, it would probably not be affordable. Thus, in matters of security, privacy, and confidentiality, a compromise has to be reached through tradeoffs be-

1. *The Criminal Justice Information Control and Privacy Act of 1975*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1975. (HR61 and HR62, 94th Congress, 1st Session)

tween amount of protection and affordable measures.

The equation is simple: the more secure a system is, the most expensive it will be; the less secure, the less costly. This applies both to development and to operational costs.

At the extreme, it is both technically and intellectually impossible to design a perfectly secure system. As long as information about people must be compiled, there are inherent risks that privacy will be invaded. System designers and responsible managers should recognize and understand these risks and their corresponding costs. Recognizing that perfection is unattainable, it becomes necessary, within each state implementing an OBSCIS system, to make conscious tradeoffs. There must be a balancing, in each, between exposures to invasions of security, privacy, and confidentiality and the costs associated with eliminating those exposures. In each case, individual administrators will have to arrive at tradeoff decisions which represent a compromise between what they would like and what they can afford.

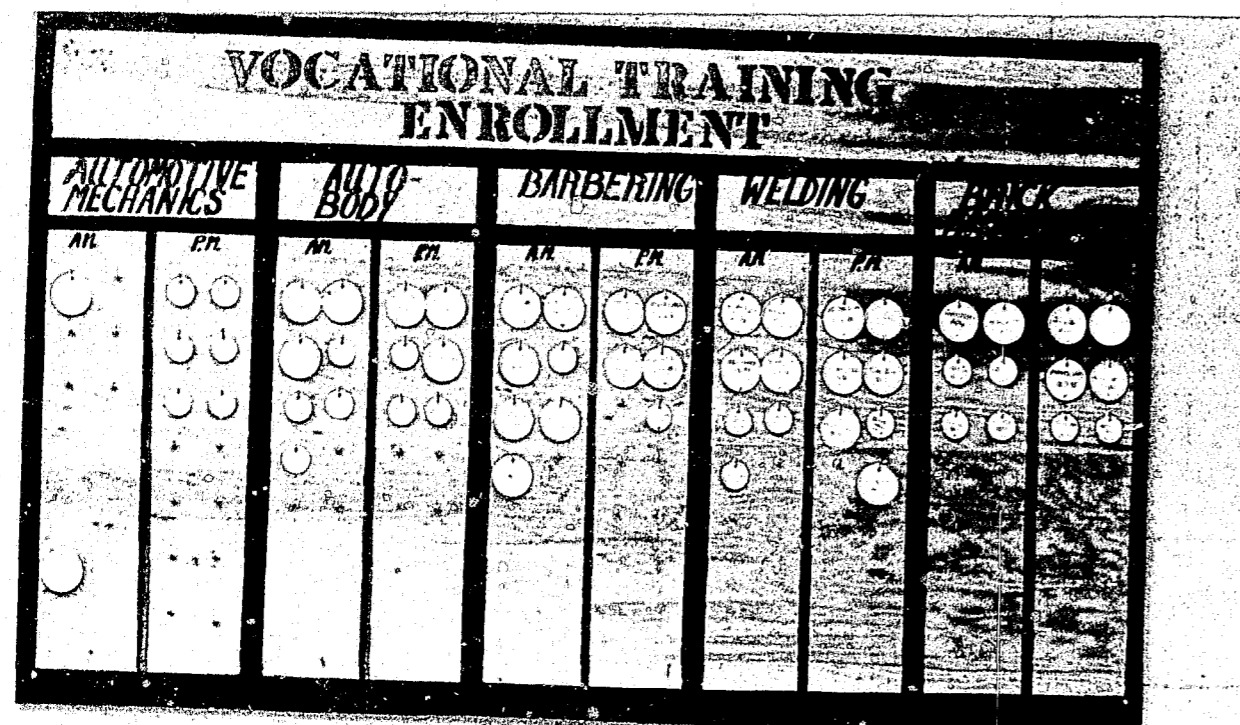
ASSURING SUCCESS

Developing a sound, productive, usable information system involves major investment and risk at every point. Over and above the risks associated with security and privacy, managers should be aware that the major investment in which they are interested, the bottom line, is in the results to be delivered by an OBSCIS system.

If OBSCIS is to deliver its potential values and benefits, it is essential that, in each state, steps be taken to assure that the system will, in fact, produce usable results. Keeping this in mind, the real concentration must be on specifying results clearly and definitively so that the system is developed toward these ends rather than in the direction of technical niceties. The manager must think results! If an OBSCIS implementation project is oriented toward results, it will provide real values and benefits. These values and benefits form the subject matter for the next chapter.

CHAPTER 6.

OBSCIS VALUES AND BENEFITS



CHAPTER 6. OBSCIS VALUES AND BENEFITS

IMPACT

The value of an OBSCIS system lies in reliable, timely offender information. This information, when tailored to the unique needs and constraints of each individual state, will enable correctional managers to provide better corrections — to make more effective use of resources while responding to the everchanging environment.

Moreover, OBSCIS will allow correctional managers to plan for the future, to base the future on the logic of the past. OBSCIS will provide a basis for correctional managers to plan future budget needs from extended projections of population size and composition.

OBSCIS will facilitate the answering of innumerable questions arising from legislatures, the public, federal agencies, and from other states.

The OBSCIS core applications and data base will provide basic offender information which is not now available in many states. This information will allow the correctional manager to track individual offenders through the corrections and parole processes. The core data base and applications will provide basic offender characteristics, such as age, sex, ethnic background, offense, and physical location within the corrections jurisdiction. The ability to know where an offender is and where he has been will give the background for planning and decisions pertaining to the offender. Taken at an aggregate level, this will provide vital statistical information — numbers of offenders, commitments by offense, ethnic breakdowns, age distributions, and other categories.

Beyond the core, it is a logical natural next step for the corrections manager to use OBSCIS information for operations, planning, and evaluation of the corrections activity. This will allow the corrections manager to enhance the overall effectiveness of the corrections process. One must bear in mind that no two OBSCIS systems will be exactly alike. In each state, there will be a unique system structured to meet that state's needs and constraints. Although the benefits and impact in each state will differ, the potential value is similar for all.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS

The OBSCIS model encompasses eight application areas. Although these do not represent all possible applications, they do represent common-denominator areas of corrections information systems among all states. A detailed description and numerous examples of OBSCIS values and benefits can be found in *Volume II — OBSCIS Application Guide*. A summary list of the potential information and benefits derived from these application areas are discussed below:

- **The Admission** application area establishes the basic offender record at the time an offender is admitted to a corrections jurisdiction. Admitting information will provide statistics and data for analyses regarding the number and types of offenders admitted over specific time periods. This includes distributions of offenders received by age, sentence, race, sex, religious preference, etc. These reports will give management immediate information on the size and composition of the corrections population. Such information is vital to correctional managers charged with reacting to the changing environment.

Assessment applications provide information on clinical tests, interviews, and offender classification. Such assessment information, made available rapidly, will assist in the offender diagnostic and classification functions and will highlight urgent medical, psychological, custody, or classification problems. Techniques such as automated test scoring and rapid availability of assessment information will facilitate the movement of offenders through the reception and diagnostic processes rapidly. As this information is added to the offender data base, it becomes available for continuing statistical analyses.

The Institutions area provides two basic capabilities. The first allows management to track offenders through various corrections programs. The second provides analyses of offender disciplinary incidents. Program data will be used to evaluate the success or failure

of specific programs and policies. On a long-term basis, such information will be critical in evaluating the effectiveness of corrections as a whole. When combined with parole and assessment data, program information will enable a correlation between parole or discharge "success" with program and assessment history. Disciplinary data will be used for both day-to-day institution operations and as input to the parole board decision-making process. Such data will also be useful in responding to circumstances and causes of infractions.

Parole reporting provides the basis for tracking offenders through the parole process. Parole applications provide the potential for reducing parole office paper work, allocating parole resources, measuring effectiveness, and reporting on individual parole adjustment. Management information reported will include offender parole status, location, employment, tentative discharge date, actual discharge date, and parole adjustment. These data can then be expanded to provide information on offenders within the responsibility of individual parole offices and officers. Case loads will be analyzed and assignments will be made on the basis of reliable timely information.

Movement Status provides the basic offender tracking that is required for all facets of corrections management. This gives a corrections manager the ability to know where offenders are at any point in time. This application area provides a record of each movement of an offender through the corrections process. The net result provides current status information on all offenders with an "audit trail" of all

movements.

Legal Status applications provide techniques for calculating and monitoring parole and discharge eligibility dates. In those states where they are feasible, such computations alleviate significant manual effort and provide assurance that custody data are accurate and reliable. As legislatures revise statutes relating to parole and discharge, the effect of such new legislation will be accumulated and changes will be made rapidly. Legal Status applications also provide information for parole boards when an offender is eligible to be considered for parole. Such information can include a complete profile of each offender as well as assist the scheduling of parole board hearings.

Management and Research applications are directed specifically at the correctional manager and researcher. They utilize data that have been collected in other application areas and stored in the OBSCIS data base. Management and Research functions include long-range planning, program evaluation, population prediction, statistical research, and inquiry. These functions will provide critical information for the ongoing management of correctional jurisdictions.

National Reporting will become an integral part of the correctional reporting process. Information derived from OBSCIS systems implemented in individual states, taken as a whole, will form a national compendium of information for corrections agencies. OBSCIS holds the key to bringing together a long-needed national program in corrections and criminal justice.

CHAPTER 7.

ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL PROGRAM



CHAPTER 7. ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL PROGRAM

THE NATIONAL NEED

At the national level, there is a long-recognized need for a facility that will collect and derive meaning from data on the criminal, criminal behavior, and criminal justice processes. In dealing with criminal behavior within a free society, it is essential that a representative government be able to interpret, evaluate, and predict problems before their full impact materializes. Appropriate methods for implementing such capabilities center around accumulation of the necessary data, evaluation and analysis of their content, and application of these analyses.

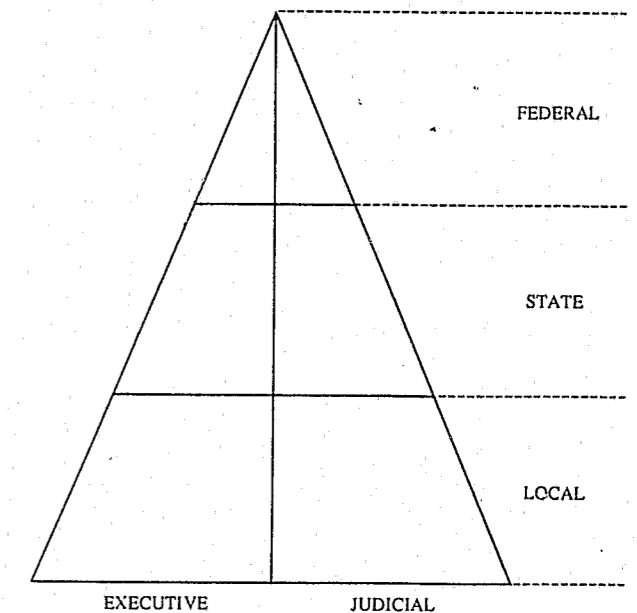
Though the need is clearly recognized, the decentralized structure of government in the United States has inhibited its fulfillment. It is significant, in this regard, that the United States is the only nation among Western democracies which lacks a national-level capability to accumulate, analyze, project from, and act upon information from a comprehensive criminal justice statistical clearing house and service organization.

In the United States, formation of a national criminal justice statistics center has been a publicly recognized need for almost half a century. The Wickersham Commission strongly recommended, in 1931, establishment of such a facility¹. The President's Commission urged establishment of such a facility in its 1967 report² and Congress subsequently conducted hearings in 1968³ pursuant to the development of a national criminal justice statistics center. In concert with their efforts, the statistics division of LEAA has initiated national statistical reporting in some areas such as the 1970 National Jail Census.

Although the idea itself has been widely accepted and broadly supported, implementation has been

inhibited because ours is a system of separation of responsibility and authority. Criminal justice is concerned with two major fragmentations of administration. These are shown in Figure I-7-1. The two areas are:

Figure I-7-1 - Administration of Criminal Justice



- Federal, state, and local entities are set up as separate, largely independent jurisdictions. Each establishes its own legal structure, administrative procedures, and data gathering and reporting practices. Even where the field has been narrowed to some extent through jurisdictional definitions, diversities have been too great to facilitate any type of comparison or guidance at a national level. Consider, for example, the existence of 50-plus corrections agencies assigned responsibility for felons. With each collecting different data in its own way, there simply has been no basis for a national-level statistical program.
- Criminal justice unavoidably constitutes a system of continuity of processing and responsibility. At each level, the administration of justice requires the coordination across two separate,

1. National Commission on Law Observance and Enforcement. *Criminal Statistics*. op. cit.
 2. President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice. *The Challenge of Crime in a Free Society*. op. cit.
 3. Subcommittee on Census and Statistics, Committee on Post Office and Civil Services, House of Representatives. *Proposed National Criminal Statistics Center*. 90th Congress, Second Session. 1968. U.S. Government Printing Office. (90-38)

but equal, branches of government; executive and judicial. However, the basic structure established by the Constitution of the United States decrees a series of separate, functionally unrelated parts. Each represents a separate branch of government which, by definition under our system, must maintain their separateness. This structure has inhibited national integration of information.

In the United States, the only way a capability such as a national criminal justice statistical center can be brought into existence is through cooperative, coordinated efforts by separately sovereign agencies and/or organizations. Although forces are moving toward the formation of the national criminal justice statistics center, they are, unavoidably, moving slowly.

The corrections segment of the criminal justice system is plainly one of the areas where coordination of operations and integration of information must take place if this requirement is to be realized. OBSCIS will play an important role within the establishment of an overall national criminal justice statistics program.

UNIFORM DATA — A STARTING POINT

If a national program is to emerge, its foundations must be built upon a continuing flow of data which are uniformly structured and comparable in meaning. The core statistical system, which is an integral part of OBSCIS, is correction's first step in this direction. As the individual states implement their own, separate OBSCIS systems, they will begin to generate and deliver to the national level some basic, uniform statistical data on the status and functions of the nation's corrections system.

To the extent that OBSCIS succeeds in developing uniform data with a commonality of meaning, OBSCIS national reports will become building blocks for a national criminal justice statistics center.

ANALYSIS MUST FOLLOW ACCUMULATION

If a national program is to realize its potential in aiding the anticipation and prevention of criminal acts, a transition must take place in the way data are

regarded and utilized. Traditionally, there has been a census-type approach to the collection and processing of corrections information. That is, emphasis has been on the collection of raw data and the reporting of numbers accumulated from them. The comparison of data between reporting periods, plotting of trends, analysis of content, and planning of projections on the basis of evidence have been woefully lacking.

As OBSCIS programs are implemented and data are accumulated at the state level, a program is envisioned under which this data will begin to be used to realize their potential as national planning and management tools. A first, necessary step lies in collecting data and reporting basic statistics. But the national criminal justice statistical reporting program should not stop at this point.

A vital next step lies in bringing together the talent and expertise necessary to analyze what these data are attempting to say about the current and future needs of the country's criminal justice community. Analysis and projection of data are vital if an adequate return is to be realized on the OBSCIS investment.

THE CORRECTIONS INFORMATION COLLECTION FUNCTION

One of the critical followups to the OBSCIS program lies in providing a mechanism for actually doing the job of collecting, processing, and analyzing corrections data. This will develop in stages.

The first step is to begin generating and collecting corrections data from OBSCIS states as quickly as possible. To accomplish this, the only practical solution may be to identify a governmental or quasi-governmental organization which is already in the business of collecting and reporting data. The initial job of building files and issuing reports on the raw data collected can be assigned to any of several qualified organizations.

As soon as feasible, however, steps should begin which will lead to establishment of an efficient, dedicated organization set up specifically to begin to analyze and give meaning to corrections information. As quickly as the data files themselves warrant, this group should begin developing ap-

proaches toward viable forecasting and planning capabilities in the corrections area.

THE NATIONAL CRIMINAL JUSTICE STATISTICS CENTER

Hopefully, parallel activities will take place in other segments of the criminal justice spectrum. Each of these capabilities, in turn, should become a resource for the national criminal justice statistics center. Such a center should be created as soon as possible. Its leaders should have authority to encourage, guide, and lead groups within the separate disciplines toward the formation and success of this integrated facility.

When such a center exists, it should begin to develop and enunciate a body of knowledge with a potential for dispelling much of the misinformation and outright ignorance which have prevailed as a basis for legislative and management decision-making in the criminal justice area.

ULTIMATE VALUES AND BENEFITS

The ultimate value of information is enlightenment. The future national criminal justice statistics center will be in a position to contribute to a situation where facts replace conjecture and assumption as the basis for criminal justice legislation, resource allocation, management, and, always as the end target, recognizing and dealing with criminal trends and criminality.

The United States is a country built by the imaginations of creative people. The national center will fill an essential need in providing the basis for the application of imaginative techniques for coping with, anticipating, and minimizing the cost and other impacts of crime upon our society as a whole. Such a capability is essential if the costs and other consequences of crime are to be contained.

OBSCIS is a small part of this vast picture. But it is a vital part. Implementation and follow-through of OBSCIS is corrections' key to establishing a national program.

APPENDIX A

THE TEN-STATE ENVIRONMENT

THE OBSCIS PARTICIPATING STATES

A considerable amount of time and effort has been spent in reviewing the correctional jurisdictions of the ten participating states. These states were selected by LEAA to implement demonstration OBSCIS systems:

California	Illinois
Colorado	Maryland
Florida	Massachusetts
Georgia	Minnesota
Hawaii	Oregon

A team selected from the OBSCIS staff visited each of these states to review the current operations in corrections. These reviews contributed significantly to the development of the OBSCIS model. Some specific findings from the reviews are summarized in this chapter. These are divided into several specific categories:

- Organization
- Jurisdiction
- Assessment Procedures
- Institution
- Parole
- Current Correctional Information Systems

The final section of this appendix deals with the implications of the ten-state environment for the OBSCIS model.

ORGANIZATION

The administrative organization of corrections on the state level varies significantly from state to state. State correctional systems generally fall into one of two categories:

Those that have placed corrections responsibility under some larger, existing agency or department. In this case, the corrections function may fall under one or more departmental responsibilities such as public safety, institutions, health and welfare, mental health, or hospitals.

The emphasis in these organizations tends not to be on the total correctional process, but rather on that aspect of corrections determined by the agency's or-

ganization. Seven of the ten pilot states, California, Maryland, Florida, Oregon, Colorado, Massachusetts, and Hawaii, organize their corrections function under an "umbrella" agency. In "umbrella" agencies, the functions of parole and probation may be included in departments separate from those which administer other corrective functions.

Those that administer corrections in an independent department (an integrated agency). Even in states where most corrective functions fall under one department, there is often a separate department to deal with juveniles and/or youthful offenders. In integrated agencies, probation and parole may be included together as one division. In other cases, probation is often a function of the courts.

Some states, such as Minnesota, have divided the administrative function into regions, with the regional directors responsible for all of the corrective functions — institutions, probation, and parole. Maryland, Florida, Georgia, and Hawaii are examples of states which include county facilities such as jails and detention centers within the jurisdiction of the Department or Division of Corrections.

Figure I-A-1 presents an overview of the organization of the corrections component in each of the ten states.

JURISDICTION

Whether an offender comes under the jurisdiction of the department or division of corrections depends on his age and/or the offense committed. There is much diversity in the populations included in the states' departments and divisions of corrections and in correctional institutions, due mainly to the various ways the states have of defining juvenile delinquents and youthful offenders.

Juveniles are generally included in a separate department or division from adult offenders. In states with relatively small offender populations, such as Hawaii and Minnesota, however, juveniles are

often included under adult corrections. While all other states do have separate departments or divisions which deal with juvenile delinquents, often juveniles who have committed serious offenses are placed in state correctional institutions. Florida's correctional institutions, for instance, house felons starting at age 14, Oregon and Colorado from age 16, Illinois from age 17, California from age 18, and Georgia from age 19.

Youthful offenders (usually classified as individuals between the ages of 16 and 24 who have committed a misdemeanor or felony) are often included under the jurisdiction of the state corrections department or division. In such instances, they may be assigned to separate institutions or to correctional institutions which also house adult offenders. In some states, a separate division or department has jurisdiction over youthful offenders. Georgia includes the Youthful Offender Division within the Department of Offender Rehabilitation, and Illinois places youthful offenders under the jurisdiction of the Juvenile Division. Even in these states, however, some youthful offenders may be incarcerated in adult institutions.

Misdemeanants, while included within the corrections department or division in most states, may be assigned to jails, to separate institutions, or to institutions which also receive felons. Florida and Oregon, for instance, house misdemeanants in city and county institutions. Massachusetts, Maryland, and Georgia house felons and misdemeanants together in state correctional institutions, although they may be housed in separate facilities on the same grounds. Illinois separates misdemeanants from felons in separate correctional facilities. Female offenders are generally housed in separate institutions or in separate facilities on the same grounds with male offenders.

As noted above, the various methods of treatment and placement of the different age groups and offender types are based on the criminal statutes of each particular state, as well as the size of the offender population of each state. Figure I-A-2 describes various characteristics of the institutions and the offender population in the ten participating states.

ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES

In some states, each correctional institution houses its own reception and classification center.

In a centralized system of classification, there are a few reception and classification centers which are responsible for all of the committed offenders. These centers are generally located on the grounds of correctional institutions. In Georgia, for example, assessment and diagnosis are done in one of four centers, depending on the age and offense of the offender. One center processes offenders under 19 years of age regardless of the offense; another provides diagnoses and classification for offenders 20 years and over with a sentence of under 20 years; a third provides services for offenders 20 years and over with sentences over 20 years, and a fourth is used exclusively for females.

Examples of decentralized reception and classification include Minnesota and Colorado, where each institution is responsible for the diagnosis and assessment of each of its admissions.

The length of time needed to process incoming offenders varies widely. At one extreme, the Illinois reception and classification process generally takes one week. Within that time, the offender is given a physical examination, a battery of tests including MMPI, GATB, Stanford Achievement, and the revised BETA. He is seen by an educational placement counselor, a vocational placement counselor, and a psychiatrist. All of their reports plus the test results and the offender's criminal history are then given to a sociologist who interviews the offender and makes the final assessment and recommendation for assignment.

Normally, the reception and initial classification process may take up to two months to complete. States such as Georgia, Maryland, Minnesota, Florida, and California take 4 to 8 weeks to complete the reception and classification process. At the end of this period, all of the material that has been gathered is considered by a classification team, which makes the recommendations as to institution assignment, rehabilitative and work programs, and security recommendations for each offender. In many cases, however, it is difficult to ascertain whether the recommendations of the classification team are acted upon.

If the initial classification has been done by a central agency, the assessment process generally continues in the correctional institution to which the offender has been assigned and on parole. The institutional classification team considers all of the diagnostic information which has been gathered

concerning each offender and makes recommendations as to which programs, custody level, etc., would be most appropriate for the offender, according to what the institution has to offer.

INSTITUTIONS

Institutions are often classified according to their principal security level — maximum, medium, or minimum. Most institutions include at least two security levels on the same grounds. Recently, there has been a significant increase in the growth of less restrictive units, such as the forestry or conservation camps of Minnesota, California, and Maryland; farm units; the honor camps of Colorado, California, and Hawaii; the road camps or prisons of Florida and California; and residential community-based centers found in almost all of the ten states. These units generally house offenders who have served some time in a more restrictive correctional institution and are not considered to need a closely guarded enclosure. The population of these units is small, usually under 50, with some housing up to 100. These units are used as pre-release centers, as work and study-release centers, as centers for parolees, or as alternatives to incarceration in a correctional institution, depending on the state.

Many of the ten states are moving toward placing offenders in these smaller, less restrictive units. Often these units are placed under a separate bureau or division within the Department of Corrections. Transitional Services in Oregon, for example, is responsible for community centers, work-release, and educational-release. Florida, Georgia, and Hawaii also include community services in a separate bureau or branch within the division or department of corrections.

Another type of institution included in the department or division of corrections of some states is the medical or psychiatric institution. These are set up to provide for the care and the custody of offenders who need special treatment for psychiatric, medical, alcohol, or drug problems. The Menard Psychiatric Division in Illinois, The California Medical Facility, the Massachusetts Correctional Institution at Bridgewater are examples of this type of institution. In states which do not have separate institutions for these specific type of offenders, often a ward or building is set apart for them on the

grounds of a correctional institution, as is done in the Minnesota State Prison.

PAROLE

Eligibility

The method of determining the minimum parole eligibility date varies according to the statutes of the particular state. Georgia statutes, for instance, set forth a formula for determining the minimum parole eligibility date:

Misdemeanant — 6 months or $\frac{1}{3}$ of the sentence, whichever is more

Felon or felon/misdemeanant with a sentence of less than 21 years — 9 months or $\frac{1}{3}$ of sentence, whichever is more

Felon or felon/misdemeanant with a sentence of 21 years to life — 7 years

The Maryland Parole Board, by policy, reviews a case after $\frac{1}{4}$ of the offender's sentence has been served. The minimum parole eligibility date for a life sentence in Maryland is 11- $\frac{1}{2}$ years. Some states, such as Florida and Hawaii, do not set a minimum parole eligibility date by statute. In Hawaii, it is set by the parole board. In Florida, the only minimum parole eligibility date is 25 years, set for first class felony charges such as murder.

Minnesota implements a Contract Parole Plan whereby selected offenders enter into a contract with institution personnel before parole. The offender "earns" his parole by doing such things as completing a training course, getting his G.E.D., participating in an AA program, etc. Illinois and Maryland are also experimenting with this arrangement.

Parole Boards

The parole boards of each state are generally provided staff from within the department or division of corrections, but operate independently. The number of members on each parole board varies from three in Oregon to fourteen in California. Parole board members are generally appointed, salaried, and fulltime, with the exception of smaller states such as Hawaii, where they are part-time. Hawaii's board consists of laymen, where some states, such as Colorado, employ interdepartmental staff and professionals from the corrections field.

Colorado's executive clemency board reviews, on a monthly basis, all offenders who have been incarcerated for two years.

Parole Planning

Parole planning may be done exclusively by management, by institutional personnel by parole officers, or by all working together. In Maryland and Minnesota, for example, parole agents are located within the correctional institutions. Part of the function of the institutional parole agents in Maryland is to help the offender make the transition from the institution to the community from the time that the people plan is approved to his release from the institution. In Oregon, planning is done by the Institution Unit Team and, in California, the parole agents from the community work closely with the institutional personnel. In most cases, the parole plan must be approved by the parole board before it can be implemented. Georgia stipulates that inmates must have a job offer lined up before the parole plan will be approved.

Parole Supervision

In all states except Florida, parole supervision is included within the umbrella or integrated agency. In Massachusetts, the parole supervisory function falls under the Parole Board. Probation supervision is included with parole in Maryland, Georgia, Minnesota, and Oregon. In these states, the probation/parole officers are generally responsible for presentence investigations, postsentence investigations, executive clemency investigations (in Maryland), preparole board hearing reports, and parole and probation supervision.

In some states, parolees may be assigned to parole officers in a more-or-less random fashion. California and Maryland make use of differential case loads, where the number and type of parolees assigned to an officer depend on the type of case. In Maryland, the parole cases are ranked according to the need of supervision before they are assigned.

Georgia offers an example of the type of guidelines which can be set up to determine the degree of supervision which will be assigned to each offender. The degree is set by the parole board, but may be increased or decreased after six months of parole by the parole/probation supervisor. The degrees of supervision, in Georgia, are as follows:

Maximum: Visit the family within 30 days, one in-depth interview with offender each month, one field contact each month (employer, home, or community), one family visit each quarter, and assignment of a volunteer.

Medium: Family visit within 30 days, one in-depth interview each month with offender, and one field contact each quarter (employer, home, or community). A field contact would suffice for the in-depth interview.

Minimum: Report by mail each month and meet with family within 30 days after receiving for supervision.

Statistics on case loads are not readily available, although most states report that they are too large for proper supervision. Georgia reports that the average probation/parole supervision load is 125, while Minnesota's case loads average 50 to 70. Both Georgia and Minnesota operate their probation and parole offices on a regional basis, while the other states operate out of a central office. Illinois is moving toward regionalization of parole supervision.

Some states operate half-way houses located in the community for parolees and ex-offenders. California and Maryland, for example, operate community half-way houses for some parolees in their first few weeks of parole and for those parolees with special problems who require a structured environment after their release from the institution. Maryland offers several community-based programs for probationers and parolees whose offenses are alcohol or drug-related, and Georgia operates the Andromeda Drug Prerelease Center.

Other Partial-release Programs

Several kinds of partial-release programs were observed in the ten states. All of the ten states operate work-release programs in some form. In some states, the offenders continue to live in the correctional institution while spending the day working in the community. Other states operate special prerelease centers which house the inmates participating in the work-release program. In Oregon and California, for example, work-release inmates are housed in county jails, in community centers, or in special facilities set apart on the grounds of the correctional institutions. In Minnesota, a restitution center is operated for property offenders. After serving at least four months in the correctional in-

stitution, these property offenders are sent to the restitution center and work in the community to repay the victims of their crimes. Florida operates several specialized prerelease treatment centers for the mentally retarded and those who are marginally employable.

Most states make work-release programs available to "qualified" inmates. California stipulates that offenders are eligible for work-release only during the last five months of their incarceration. In almost all cases, the earnings of the inmates on work-release go to pay for room, board, and transportation costs, with the remainder set aside for the inmates' families.

Work-release programs are generally administered by the institution which houses the offender. Oregon offers an example of a more centralized program. It has a program of transitional services which includes the supervision of work, study, and training-release; transitional field supervision; case management coordination; and community centers. Maryland also administers all prerelease and community centers from one central correctional camp center.

Another partial-release program which operates in some of the ten states is work-furlough, which differs from work-release in that the offender stays in the community at night rather than returning to the institution. Not all states make the distinction between work-release and work-furlough clear, with some states using the terms interchangeably.

Other types of partial release include inmate leave, family/weekend leaves, study release, training release, and special leaves.

CURRENT CORRECTIONAL INFORMATION SYSTEMS

The formal responsibility for information systems in corrections is most typically restricted to the maintenance of a primarily statistically oriented data base. Organizationally, this responsibility is most often located within the research area of the department or division. Corrections management typically looks to this group for the production of annual statistical reports and to provide information and response to management and ad hoc inquiries. Additional duties include the performance of management-oriented studies and analysis. This group also usually has the responsibility to provide data to

exchange with national programs such as OBTS/CCH.

Historically, the primary function of many of these statistical data bases has been to produce various statutorily required reports describing correctional populations. In a few states, correctional managers have come to view the data bases and the statistical systems as a source of evaluative and planning data for the correctional process. In these states, data-base information tends to be relatively timely and accurate. In those states the management has chosen to be less involved with the use of the data, the information contained in the data base is seldom subjected to outside verification or test of its accuracy. There are delays of as much as six months in recording offender movement. In some systems, there is no mechanism for removing escapees from the rolls, even though some have been missing for a number of years.

Most corrections information systems recently developed or under development, however, show a much increased orientation toward correctional operations. For example, Georgia uses its data base to print wallet identification cards for the offender at discharge time. Illinois interfaces directly with field personnel in the acquisition of data and uses the system for such functions as preparation of parole dockets and calculation of sentences. Illinois also enables the field personnel to directly access the data base in order to respond to ad hoc inquiries. These innovations have had the effect of requiring that the data base be substantially more accurate and up-to-date than it has been in many cases in the past. They also provide some incentive to see that the data is accurate and timely.

Additional demands for accuracy and timeliness of data will be placed on existing systems as they are required to interface with such programs as OBTS/CCH. Historically, all demands for individual or case data within the correctional system have been satisfied from the inmate folder. Generally, these demands have been in response to inquiries about a specific individual or related to the management decision process on a particular offender's case. The demands placed on the system by OBTS/CCH require that the information system monitor movement of offenders and changes in status.

As mentioned above, the responsibility for monitoring offender status for the system as a whole

generally falls to a group within the division or department of corrections, such as research, which has a larger organizational responsibility than data processing.

Figure I-A-3 describes the location of the OBS-CIS responsibility and criminal justice information system responsibility for each of the participant states and also describes any additional data processing support and the data processing equipment available to each organization. As indicated by the chart, the equipment available to each correctional information system varies widely and is generally dedicated to some other principal purpose, such as public safety or welfare. In most of these cases, the potential demands of even the most advanced correctional information systems will be quite small relative to these usually large applications. Personnel support for the development and operation of the corrections systems also tends to be located in the "umbrella" agency data processing staff or in the central service staff available to all state agencies within the particular state. As a general rule, the expertise available for the operation of the corrections information system is held by a few individuals on the corrections staff who may have some shared responsibility for other activities, such as research or administration.

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE OBSCIS MODEL

The scope of the OBSCIS model has been limited to adult felons, institutions, and parole. While this definition may represent a "best fit," it is clear from the above discussion that any particular definition and scope will require substantial modification in order to be implemented in each of the ten demonstration states. For example, a state which has a combined probation/parole caseload would probably implement a system which would monitor probation supervision as well as the parole portion of the work load. Correctional systems which house juveniles and/or misdemeanants in the same institutions as adult felons would probably adapt the system to fit both populations. States in which the function of parole is excluded from the authority of the correctional agency may have to find alternative ways to interface the parole informational requirement with the remainder of the correctional system.

In an attempt to facilitate each state's ability to adapt the system to its own needs, the correctional model must be segmented into logically consistent

components. These components must be developed with the probable sequence and problems of implementation in mind. It is desirable, for example, to segregate all parole-related functions into separate components from the institutional-related functions in order to facilitate the omission of parole in those states where it is excluded from correctional jurisdiction.

Similarly, those functions which tend to be unique from state to state, such as sentence calculation, should be segregated into separate components so as to enhance the transferability of the remaining components between states. Each component should also be as logically independent of the others as far as possible to encourage a stepwise implementation of the components in each individual state.

In addition to dealing with the organizational and jurisdictional differences between the states, the model must also take into account the processing and procedural variances which were described above. From the discussion of variances in the assessment process, there is substantial lack of uniformity between the states as to the information necessary to the assessment process.

Additional procedural variations often revolve around the use of different techniques or observations which serve the same basic purpose. For example, a corrections professional in one state may rely upon a particular test to measure intelligence while another may rely upon a totally different procedure. Some states make extensive use of testing techniques, while others rely more on personal interviews. In other words, while all states have an assessment function, specifics vary substantially from one to another. This situation is further complicated by a substantial variation in definition of terms from one state to another. In some cases, a particular term, such as felon or misdemeanor, is prescribed specifically in the statutes of the individual states. In other states, the same term may not be defined at all.

These factors place a limit on the specificity of any conceptual model which will remain descriptive of overall functions. As a result, primary attention has been given to the development of a common terminology and data base definition, so as to assure the maximum capability of statistics and numbers and measures which are the output of all systems. This approach also allows each state to take maximum

advantage of the experience of others without risking unnecessary misinterpretation.

In addition to the implementation variations to be expected as a result of organizational and procedural differences, the information system to be implemented will also vary greatly in sophistication, according to the computer resources and personnel available. For example, if a state has only a relatively small processing requirement, it may still elect to develop a rather sophisticated on-line data base, if it has the computing resources and personnel with the necessary capability readily available. In most cases, such a decision would probably be

predicated on the existence of a similar or larger data base already in existence into which the corrections information system could be integrated. This factor in itself will result in the information systems which are implemented having a great variety in specific form even when similar hardware is used to support similar systems. Even if it were possible to describe with great detail a uniform and universal corrections information system, it is doubtful that, at least for the immediate future, correctional information needs will be considered independent of existing hardware and software configurations.

Figure I-A-1, Organization of Corrections Component in Ten States

STATE	NAME OF DEPARTMENT OR DIVISION	YOUTHFUL OFFENDERS	JUVENILES	PROBATION/PAROLE
INTEGRATED				
Georgia	Department of Offender Rehabilitation	Youthful Offender Division in D.O.O.R.	Department of Children and Family Services	Both included in Department
Illinois	Department of Corrections	Included in Department	Juvenile Division in D.O.C.	Parole included in Department
Minnesota	Department of Corrections	Included in Department	Included in Department	Both included in Department — regional
UMBRELLA				
California	Health and Welfare Agency, Department of Corrections	Both Corrections and Department of Youth Authority	Health and Welfare Agency, Department of Youth Authority	Department of Corrections, Parole and Community Services Division
Colorado	State Department of Institutions, Division of Corrections	Included in Division of Corrections	State Department of Institutions, Division of Youth Services	Adult Parole included in Division of Corrections
Florida	Department of Health and Rehabilitative Serv. Div. of Corrections	Included in Division of Corrections	Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services, Division of Youth Services	Pardon and Parole Commission outside Department
Hawaii	Department of Social Services and Housing, Corrections Division	Included in Corrections Division	Included in Corrections Division	Parole field services included in Department
Maryland	Department of Public Safety and Corrective Serv. Div. of Corrections	Included in Division of Corrections	Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Division of Juvenile Services	Division of Parole and Probation
Massachusetts	Executive Office of Human Services, Department of Correction	Included in Department	Executive Office of Human Services, Department of Youth Services	Parole supervision under Parole Board outside Department
Oregon	Department of Human Resources, Corrections Division	Included in Corrections Division	Department of Human Resources, Children's Services Division	Both included in Corrections Division

Figure I-A-2, Corrections Statistics, March 1975

STATE	ADULT INSTITUTION POPULATION ²		NUMBER ADULT FACILITIES ¹		ADULT PAROLE POPULATION		MISDEMEANANTS SENTENCED TO CORRECTIONS		MINIMUM AGE		YOUTHFUL OFFENDER AGE RESTRICTION	
	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	NO	YES	NONE	16	17	17-24
California	19,000	700	10	1	13,000	1	No	No	None	16	17	17-24
Colorado	1,200	100	7	1	2,800	1	No	No	16	17	17	17-24
Florida	10,000	400	10	1	4,500 ³	1	No	Yes	17	17	17-21	17-21
Georgia	9,300	100	15	1	2,700	1	Yes	Yes	18	18	18-22	18-22
Hawaii	300	0	5	0	500	0	Yes	Yes	17	17	—	—
Illinois	6,400	100	7	1	3,800	1	Yes	Yes	18	18	—	—
Maryland	5,600	200	12	1	4,600 ³	1	Yes	Yes	17	17	Administrative	Administrative
Massachusetts	2,600	100	13	2 ⁴	4,000 ³	2 ⁴	Yes	Yes	18	18	18-25 (Discontinued)	18-25 (Discontinued)
Minnesota	1,300	100	3	1	3,000	1	No	No	18	18	Under 27	Under 27
Oregon	2,000	100	2	1	1,200	1	No	No	18	18	—	—

¹Adult correctional facilities include camps and youthful offender institutions
²Approximate population as of fiscal 1973 rounded to nearest 100
³Division of parole not included within the Division of Corrections
⁴One facility houses both males and females

Figure I-A-3, Organizational Summary, May, 1975

STATE	CALIFORNIA	COLORADO	FLORIDA	GEORGIA	HAWAII
Umbrella Agency	Health and Welfare Agency	Dept. of Institutions	Dept. of Health & Rehabilitative Services		Dept. of Social Services &
Department of Corrections				Dept. of Offender Rehabilitation	
EDP Hardware (available to OBSCIS):					
Department	Dept. of Corrections	Dept. of Institutions	Dept. of Health & Rehabilitative Services	Dept. of Administrative Services	Dept. of Budget & Finance - Electronic Data Processing Div. IBM
Type	RCA	UNIVAC	Burroughs	IBM	
C.J.I.S. Interface					
Department Responsible	California Dept. of Justice	Colorado Crime Information Center	Florida Crime Information Center	Dept. of Administrative Services C.J.I.S.	Hawaii Statistical Analysis Ctr.
OBSCIS Responsibility:					
Organization	Dept. of Correction, Admin. Infor. & Statistics	Div. of Corrections Services	Research & Statistics Section, Bureau of Research	Dept. Offender Rehabilitation Admin. Services	Corrections Research & Statistics Bureau
Staff Size	30	9	8	16	6

* Information recorded in this chart represents states at time of interview, and may not accurately reflect present conditions.

STATE	ILLINOIS	MARYLAND	MASSACHUSETTS	MINNESOTA	OREGON
Umbrella Agency		Dept. of Public Safety	Executive Office of Human Services		Dept. of Human Resources
Department of Corrections	Dept. of Correction			Dept. of Corrections	
EDP Hardware (available to OBSCIS):					
Department	Dept. of Finance Management Information Systems	Dept. of Public Safety	Dept. of Public Safety	Dept. of Administration	Dept. of Human Resources
Type	IBM	IBM	Burroughs	UNIVAC	IBM
C.J.I.S. Interface					
Department Responsible	Dept. of Law Enforcement Bureau of Identification	Dept. of Public Safety, C.J.I.S. Component	Criminal History Systems Board	Dept. of Administration	Executive Co. Region Infor. System
OBSCIS Responsibility:					
Organization	Dept. of Corrections Information Systems	Division of Corrections Planning & Research	Dept. of Correction Parole Board: Research & Planning in each	Dept. of Correction Information System	A.D.P. Support Services, Div. of Corrections
Staff Size	33	5	8*	7	5

* Equivalent of 2 of the EDP staff obligated to Parole Board

* Information recorded in this chart represents states at time of interview, and may not accurately reflect present conditions.

APPENDIX B

TOWARD A DEFINITION OF RECIDIVISM

WHAT IS RECIDIVISM?

An answer to this question depends very much on who is asked. There is no uniform definition of recidivism which is accepted and respected by corrections professionals everywhere. As a matter of fact, it appears impossible to establish a hard-and-fast definition of recidivism consistently applicable at a national level. Definition and collection of recidivism data currently must be worked out on a state-by-state basis.

WHY BOTHER WITH A DEFINITION?

Strangely, everyone in corrections knows what recidivism is, even though they know it is impossible to get consensus on a uniform definition. Given that a uniform national definition is impossible at this time, and given that it is impossible to report recidivism statistics on a nationally comparative basis with any meaning, why bother at all? Why not either leave it out or find something else to measure?

For corrections officials, recidivism is one of those things which just will not be left alone. Recidivism is the way the world keeps score on the effectiveness of a corrections organization. Politicians and citizens clamor for rehabilitation of offenders. Corrections officials innovate, experiment, do everything in their power to accomplish rehabilitation. The world at large then tends to rule that when a person who has had a correctional experience is recommitted or reconvicted for any reason, the correctional system and society in general has taken a step backward.

STATE-LEVEL DEFINITION

To develop a definition which could work in all states, it was necessary to make a general statement of when recidivism occurs:

Recidivism occurs with the renewal of offender status or a nonsuccessful termination of either parole or mandatory-release supervision within a specified time after discharge, pardon, conditional pardon, sentence commutation, or any of the other releases from institutional custody.

Now, to define the definition, some terms should be explained:

- Renewal of offender status will occur on arrest and conviction for a crime, death during commission of a crime, or recommitment to a correctional institution.
- A nonsuccessful termination of parole or mandatory-release supervision implies that a new offense is involved. The word "non-successful" rules out situations where, for example, an offender might be recommitted to a correctional authority for surgery or medical treatment.
- A specified time period after discharge or other release from institutions simply means that there is a time period following which offenders are considered to be rehabilitated if they do not become recidivists. For example, in many states, an offender who is not recommitted for twenty-four months is considered to be rehabilitated for statutory purposes.

Minimum Level Measurement

At the minimum measurement level, recidivism occurs on recommitment (or readmission) to state or federal correctional institutions or programs under control of these institutions, such as community corrections facilities.

Optional Level Measurement

At the option of individual states, recidivism can be measured to include arrest and conviction (or guilty plea) or death in connection with the commitment of a new crime. The criminal offenses involved in measurement according to arrest and conviction are those defined under the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) system.

By including an optional level of measurement, it is possible to measure recidivism in terms of crimes committed rather than requiring a recommitment to a correctional institution, as is the case under the minimum level. This level is highly desirable, but it

is optional because, at best, it is extremely difficult to gather the data for optional level measurement with any degree of reliability.

MEASURING AND REPORTING RECIDIVISM

The most workable method for reporting recidivism is according to percentages of a cohort group reported as recidivists during specified periods following release. For a specified period after release, an offender is considered, for the purposes of recidivism reporting, to be "at risk."

- A *cohort group* consists of persons released during a period of time for the purpose of recidivism reporting — typically one month or one year.
- A *follow-up period* is the time duration over which recidivism is measured. Follow-up periods of one and two years are suggested.
- The *period at risk* is the time from institutional release to the end of follow-up periods. Persons are considered to be at risk any time they have continuous access to the community or to the public.

Several categories of failure or recidivism recurrence recommended for classification are:

1. Rules violations
2. Conviction following arrest
3. Return in lieu of conviction
4. Absconders or deaths in connection with commitment of a new crime
5. Total failure count.

In addition, other considerations or conditions have a bearing on the measurement of the occurrence or nonoccurrence of recidivism. These include the following:

- Reinstatement of parole.
- Offenders who are awaiting trial or are in any other suspense condition.
- Occurrence of death or total incapacitation.

A NATIONAL DEFINITION

Recognizing that many significant efforts have preceded OBSCIS, and because a national-level consistent definition of recidivism is considered es-

sential, a national study program should be undertaken to develop such a definition. This would include the following:

- Development of a national OBSCIS return rate model, utilizing state differences in relevant variables, such as:
 1. Law enforcement practice
 2. Plea bargaining
 3. Sentencing practice
 - a. Dismissal
 - b. Withheld sentence
 - c. Fine in lieu of other court obligation
 - d. Probation
 - e. Jail plus probation
 - f. Other
 4. Diversion practice
 - a. Informal probation
 - b. Voluntary service
 5. Differential institution sentence length
 6. Differential parole or other institution release
 7. Parolee case load per parole agent
 8. Community resources
 9. Legal structure
 10. Mandatory (or administrative practice-influenced) termination or supervision
 11. Other
- Development of a scaling method using the offense resulting in return to an institution so as to provide an indication of the relative severity of current and prior offenses.
- Investigation of the cost/benefit relationships of using differential periods at risk.
- An empirical challenge to the structure of the proposed measures with the intent of simplifying them where possible. In addition, an investigation of the potential of a composite measure of recidivism, combining the notions of relative severity (second point above) and time to violation.
- A national study of recidivism, including the collection and analysis of data with the objective of developing

consistent definitions of recidivism for the remaining components of the en-

tire criminal justice system.

APPENDIX C

OBSCIS BIBLIOGRAPHY

OBSCIS has evolved from cooperation. Cooperation between national and state levels has required the collection and evaluation of an immense volume of information and literature. The OBSCIS bibliography is presented in five functional categories:

- Issues in Corrections
- Corrections Management
- Security and Privacy
- Corrections Information Systems
- Bibliographic Information

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