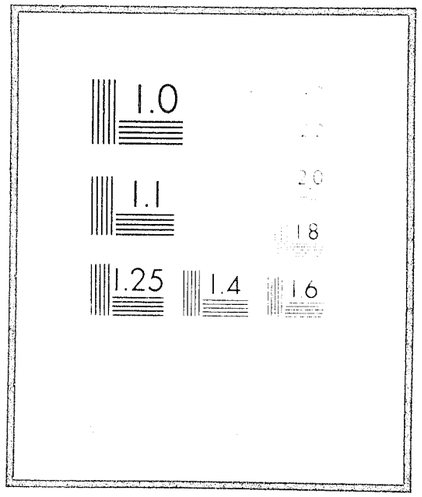

SUPPLEMENT TO
TECHNICAL REPORT NO. 10

OBSCIS
OFFENDER-BASED STATE CORRECTIONS INFORMATION SYSTEM

VOLUME 5
LAUNCHING OBSCIS — A COMPOSITE EXAMPLE

SEARCH GROUP Inc.
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Supplement to
TECHNICAL REPORT NO. 10
MAY, 1975

OBSCIS

OFFENDER-BASED STATE CORRECTIONS INFORMATION SYSTEM

VOLUME 5

Launching OBSCIS — A Composite Example

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

Submitted by SEARCH Group, Inc.
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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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FIGURE LIST

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 corrections 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. OBSCIS FOR *COMPOSITE*

VALUE THROUGH EXAMPLE

Composite is a hypothetical state. It is not a single state with its name changed. It is, truly, a series of parts put together to demonstrate the transition from the OBSCIS *Model* to an individual state Corrections Information *System*.

This volume provides a demonstration, an example of how the OBSCIS model and its accompanying *OBSCIS Implementation Guide* work plan can be used to tailor a Corrections Information System (CIS) for an individual state. The OBSCIS model has been cast in the role of a tool. It follows logically, then, that one way to learn how to use the tool is to watch somebody else. That is the purpose of this volume. A tool is worthless unless it is applied — in this case, for building an individual state CIS.

Among the important values and purposes in developing a composite study is a recognition of the fact that every information system must be tailored to the needs of its users. This study shows how a hypothetical group of users went about identifying their needs and specifying a system to meet them. It demonstrates the individuality of the considerations and decisions involved. The situation at *Composite* illustrates an essential point which should be recognized by anyone involved in developing and implementing OBSCIS systems: *information system development is more of an art than a science*. As an art, it is responsive to the tastes and preferences of widely different individuals.

Given this individuality, it follows that there may, in fact, never be two identical information systems serving corrections agencies. However, it is also true that there are a number of general similarities associated with all correctional information systems. The OBSCIS model has attempted to illustrate the inevitable individuality within a standard methodology. The implementation plan for the OBSCIS model, therefore, provides a series of orderly steps, taken in sequence — a process with universal potential for developing systems that are individualized to the needs of specific users.

The whole point of this volume is to show how the OBSCIS model and the Implementation Guide can be used to develop a state CIS. As would be the case in any state implementing the OBSCIS model, portions of the work plan guide have been abridged or adapted to specific needs.

The specific objectives of this case study, then, include:

- Its use an an additional tool to aid individual states in implementing the OBSCIS model. The intent is to provide some idea starters — *not* an image to be mirrored fifty times.
- The application of the OBSCIS model to an actual situation. Although *Composite* is hypothetical, the considerations covered in this case study are real. The content of the study has been extrapolated from surveys of the ten OBSCIS project states and from actual experience in states which have already implemented Corrections Information Systems. The specific intent is to show that the environment within an individual state does, in fact, impact the plan of work for the development of an information system, as well as the makeup and definition of the system itself. In any given case, system planners and developers look at a combination of possibilities for inclusion within their system. The combinations, literally, approach the infinite. The challenge lies largely in selecting what is appropriate for the individual situation. This, hopefully, is demonstrated in the *Composite* study.

Composite is truly a composite. The points and lessons developed in this study are intended specifically to be appropriate in a wide range of actual situations, for every state, regardless of the local conditions which impact the corrections function. At the same time, however, it is vital to recognize that the case study presents just one way, one approach or technique, for developing a state CIS from the OBSCIS model. It is *not* the only way.

This approach works and is repeatable. However, officials in each state must act individually, must

perform their duties as they interpret them. Thus, even if an individual state is similar to *Composite*, the CIS it evolves may be entirely different from the one described in this study.

THE *COMPOSITE* STUDY

This case study:

* Describes the environment in *Composite* as it affects the development of a CIS.
* Covers the implementation of the Project Planning phase of the OBSCIS work plan.
* Describes completion of the State Self-Analysis phase, through to the construction of an individual work plan for the development and implementation of a CIS.

CHAPTER 2. THE *COMPOSITE* ENVIRONMENT

CORRECTIONS ORGANIZATION

In *Composite*, Corrections is a department within Public Safety, an umbrella agency. The jurisdiction of the Corrections Department covers adult offenders only. Juveniles fall under a separate agency. However, probation and parole are handled by a single entity within the Corrections Department.

The Corrections Department is headed by a Director who has five Assistant Directors reporting to him. Responsibility areas for these assistant directors are:

- Institutions
- Probation and Parole
- Research and Planning
- Administrative Services
- Treatment and Rehabilitative Services

INSTITUTION STRUCTURE

The *Composite* Corrections Department has a population of some 5,000 male inmates housed in six institutions. Some 200 female inmates are housed in a separate institution. One of the six institutions that houses male offenders has a special-care facility housing 300 offenders with psychiatric, drug, alcoholic, or geriatric conditions.

The Department also operates seven pre-release centers, each with an average population of 40 offenders. These centers are extensions of the six confinement institutions. Two of the pre-release centers are physically located on the grounds of the confinement institution.

The largest single institution houses approximately 1,400 offenders. This facility generates the greatest single amount of information on corrections and has a significant need for information systems to process data for management and administration. The other five facilities are of varying sizes and security levels.

OFFENDER RECEPTION PROCESS

Two of the six institutions have centralized intake capabilities. They screen all incoming male offenders within the state.

Reception processing averages one month in duration. It includes a series of diagnostic steps, including psychological tests, information verification procedures, and interviewing. Typically, one social worker on the professional staff of the reception center gathers all information on an individual offender. This person prepares an assessment and presents it to a group of professionals who, in turn, recommend programs in which the offender should participate and the security level for his confinement. Determination of the institution to which an offender will be sent is made, in most cases, by the administrative staff on the basis of current population levels and proximity to the person's home area.

Under the existing system in *Composite*, there is only limited follow-up to determine whether program-participation recommendations of the reception staff have been followed in the institutions where offenders are confined. In general, internal institution program decisions are made on the basis of local conditions within the individual institution rather than on the recommendations of the reception staff. The only opportunity for follow-up on program implementation occurs when an offender is readmitted through additional convictions or parole violations. At this point, the diagnostic group at the reception center can review the record to determine whether its program recommendations were followed during the previous incarceration.

PAROLE FUNCTIONS

Parole eligibility is manually calculated and reported on the basis of a prescribed time/sentence formula. Upon eligibility, the offender's name is placed on a parole docket and sent to the Parole Board along with relevant behavior data on offenders being considered.

Recently the *Composite* Parole Board has moved in the direction of leniency in granting paroles. This has led to an increase in the case loads of parole officers. Parolees are assigned to one of the state's

nine parole offices on the basis of proximity to their homes. Within individual parole offices, responsibilities for parolees are assigned to officers on a random basis. Case loads are currently averaging 80 or 90 parolees per officer. Officers are able to conduct personal interviews with only about half of the parolees assigned to them during any given month.

The *Composite* Corrections Department has recently implemented a program for for raising the professional standards of parole officers. The staff is considered highly competent professionally, but is handicapped by a lack of relevant information. For example, it takes an average of more than 30 days before the parole officer receives background information on parolees assigned to him. Further, there is no statistical reporting system covering case loads and the activities of parolees. Thus, it is impossible to determine the impact of programs and treatment by individual officers on the parolees who represent their case load. Information on parole case loads and program impact is essential to the management of the parole function.

CURRENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS

Almost all of the offender information processing and reporting is done manually. A file jacket and face sheet are created for each offender as part of the reception process. This file follows the offender through the system, residing in a records office within each institution.

Only one information processing application has been automated. Population movement reporting is handled on a contract basis by a data processing center operated by the *Composite* Department of Finance. It is the policy of the current state administration that all data processing for state agencies be handled at this one central facility. However, pressures are building to remove law enforcement applications from the Department of Finance computer.

The population movement application uses input from transfer documents covering movement of offenders between institutions. Processing is on an off-line batch basis. The transfer documents are accumulated for a full month, then punched into cards and processed through the computer. By the time the statistical reports output from this application are returned to corrections officials, they are largely out of date. There is little or no operational management value to be derived from them except perhaps in predicting population trends for budgeting purposes and in meeting requests for statistical data.

CHAPTER 3. PROJECT PLANNING

START-UP

In *Composite*, the Assistant Director of Research and Planning within the Corrections Department learned about the OBSCIS program and secured information on it. After contacting a local LEAA representative and gathering some further information, he set up an appointment with the Director of Research and Planning.

On hearing of the scope and intent of the overall OBSCIS program, the Director was concerned. He was frankly reluctant to approve anything so expensive. This provided an opening for the Assistant Director to explain the OBSCIS philosophy. He pointed out that the OBSCIS work plan is modular, providing a series of related steps with management checkpoints built in at the conclusion of each step.

The Director approved the idea when he learned that the initial phase, Project Planning, required only about three to four man weeks of effort. He became interested in the possibility of LEAA funding for the project, particularly when he heard that the OBSCIS program was structured so that his state would end with an operational information system as part of its program to implement its national reporting capabilities.

The Director recognized, however, that any proposed change would encounter resistance. Therefore, he counseled with the Assistant Director of Research on the best way to introduce the idea to the management group and to the organization as a whole. They decided to plan the first discussion of the program at the next management meeting to be attended by all of the Assistant Directors. Further, they decided it would be better not to have the work of the initial phase performed by the research and planning staff since this could give the appearance that the Director and Assistant Director of Research were forcing the project. The project planning assignment would be given to the Assistant Director of Administrative Services, who would assign one of his managers to head the initial project team. Staff for the first phase of the work would be provided by both Administrative Services and Research and Planning.

At the staff meeting, the OBSCIS program was presented as an opportunity to acquire an advanced information system within the department as a by-product of the implementation of a program to be funded by LEAA. The immediate defensive reaction was held in check by the fact that the Director was proposing only a preliminary study which could be completed within a few weeks. Neither decision nor commitment were requested.

The Director realized after this meeting that the management review checkpoints specified in the *OBSCIS Implementation Guide* would help considerably in overcoming initial reluctance if the program were to proceed into development. He also realized that some of the meetings should be conducted in a remote site to insure concentration on resolving any difficulties.

ORGANIZING THE TEAM

Data gathering would be handled by a staff member each from Research and Planning and Administrative Services. The review functions implicit within the OBSCIS work plan were to be performed by representatives of each of the five functions within the Corrections Department.

After the project team had reviewed the OBSCIS model documentation, their first assignment was to prepare a preliminary work plan.

The planning process is illustrated on the planning form shown in Figures 5-3-1a and b, which encompasses Project Planning. The key activities for the Project Planning phase are listed at the left. Seceeding columns are as follows:

- Four columns are provided to represent working time for each activity for involved persons — an assistant director of administration, an assistant to the director, a representative of research and planning, and an administrative assistant. Figures above the columns are daily cost rates.
- Another column shows elapsed time in days for the completion of the activity. This will

provide the basis for scheduling the project.

To complete the planning, the project manager analyzed each of the activities by determining the volume of work to be done, estimating how much could be done in a day, and then dividing this work volume among the total staff available. Where multiple working days were involved for a single activity, the work was divided as evenly as possible among the project staff. The number of working days was totaled in each column and multiplied by the appropriate rate.

Following this, they began to interview key personnel in the state to gather inputs for definitions of the scope and goals of their project. Interviews were conducted with:

- The Director of the Department of Corrections.
- The five corrections Assistant Directors.
- Personnel in the State Planning Agency. (The persons sought for these interviews were those responsible for information system planning and for budgeting for the corrections function.)
- Key legislative personnel. (Team members talked with persons involved in drafting and working for passage of a pending bill dealing with security and privacy of information. Also interviewed were persons involved in legislation supporting community corrections programs.)
- Key personnel in the Public Safety Agency. Inputs were sought from administrative and financial specialists.

INITIAL FINDINGS

During these preliminary interviews, the project team acquired a number of impressions and observations, including:

- The Department's only existing computer system handled population and population-movement data. The reports it produced were received too late for use as operating information tools. Also, the integrity of the data was not closely monitored.
- There were no existing plans to upgrade the established EDP system or to develop new ones.
- Administrators and legislators were tending toward policies of leniency in the granting of paroles.
- It was stipulated that the parole function should be monitored closely.
- The parole group was assigning cases on a random basis to its officers. The officers were finding existing work loads staggering. At best, they could conduct interviews with only half of their assigned parolees each month.
- There was no capability for reporting corrections data to national programs. Administrators indicated a desire to implement such capabilities.
- Existing clerical information processing systems appeared to be working adequately, but cost/benefit ratios were generally regarded as being too high.
- The prospect of a computerized system was causing apprehension. Concern was expressed over the possibility that the corrections function would become dependent upon a computer.
- Concern was found to be increasing in the areas of privacy, confidentiality, and security of offender information, as well as in the area of equal treatment of offenders.
- Existing systems lacked centralized reference and control capabilities. All clerical processing was done in the individual institutions.
- The department had no appreciable capabilities for computer system development or operation.
- Initiation of an offender record was limited to the reception facilities. There was no central point for reference to offender status or treatment history records, since the records followed offenders throughout their confinement.
- Insufficient information was being generated for research, statistical analyses, and program evaluation.
- Legislative and criminal justice personnel interviewed showed active concern over methods of measuring the rates of success or failure of the rehabilitation process.

GOALS

The management group approved a series of tentative goals which represented distillations of the findings of the initial survey. At this point, it was still understood that the group was establishing management goals as though a system were to be developed, but that no commitment had yet been made.

Figure V-3-1a

PLANNING FORM

ORGANIZATION State of Composite

JOB NAME Project Planning

PROJECT NAME OBSCIS

ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION	Asst. Director of Administration $96	Assist. to Director $80	Research & Planning $72	Admin. Assistant $72	Elapsed Time in days	
Organize the Project Team	.5	1	1	1	3.5	$ 272
Define Scope	.5	1	1	1	3.5	$ 272
Define Goals	.5	3	3	1	7.5	$ 576
Review	.5	1	1	1	3.5	$ 272
Plan Self-Analysis	0	3	3	2	8.0	$ 600
Determine Resources	.5	2	2	2	6.5	$ 496
Develop Schedule	0	2	2	0	4.0	$ 304
Review Plans	.5	1	1	1	3.5	$ 272
					days	dollars

Continued on Next Page

Figure 5-3-1a, Project Planning Form

Figure V-3-1b

PLANNING FORM

State of Composite

Project Planning Phase

OBSCIS

	Asst. Director of Administration $96	Assist. to Director $80	Research & Planning $72	Admin. Assistant $72	Elapsed Time in days	
Prepare Request for Funds	.5	5	5	1	11.5	$ 880
Establish Project Control Method	0	1	1	0	2.0	$ 152
TOTALS days	3.5	20	20	10	53.5	
dollars	$336	$1600	$1440	$720		$4096

PREPARED BY _____ DATE STARTED _____

APPROVED BY _____ DATE _____

Figure 5-3-1b, Project Planning Form

- An OBSCIS data base was to be established to the "Recommended" level. This would provide the state with capabilities *both* for meeting national reporting requirements and for implementing additional applications to comprise an integrated information system covering departmental needs. With this level of data-base implementation, the state would be in a position to support reporting requirements for OBTS and CCH as well as for OBSCIS.
- Count control on the population of offenders, parolees, and program participants must be maintained by the system on an up-to-date basis in order to be useful.
- Specific measures were to be established to monitor the elements of equality in treatment for offenders. This would give administrators the ability to inquire about items that arose in this controversial area.
- The system was to provide help in the parole area with case load analysis and monitoring. This reporting capability was expected to improve both the quality and the quantity of parole reporting. These data, in turn, would be used in evaluation of the corrections function.

SCOPE

The management group specified three items that limited the OBSCIS scope in *Composite*. These were:

- The OBSCIS development must be limited to the funds available from LEAA. Development beyond that scope could only be planned for the future based on available funding at that time.
- All computerizations must be performed within the capabilities of the Department of Finance Service Bureau.
- Operational costs for the new system must be held to a reasonable level. All applications must be developed with cost/benefit approval from Corrections Management. Priority should be given to applications which would potentially reduce costs.

All of these statements of scope and goals were recorded and included in the project documentation. The intent was to be able to review and modify goals as study activities grew more intensive.

PLAN NEXT PHASE

After the management team consisting of the Director and Assistant Directors had approved statements of scope and goals, the project moved ahead with a series of steps which called for the development of requirements, plans, schedules, and cost projections for the completion of State Self-Analysis.

To determine the activities appropriate for State Self-Analysis within the specified project, members of the team performed a detailed review of the OBSCIS work plan for this phase. Activities appropriate within *Composite* were listed on a planning form which provided room for entry of time and cost data.

For example, one of the activities selected by the *Composite* team for inclusion in this State Self-Analysis plan was entitled "Define Present Systems." The planners then analyzed their organization and its functions to list the persons who would have to be interviewed to gather data on existing systems in the eight areas covered by the OBSCIS model. This indicated that there were some 120 persons to be contacted. Based on research experience, the Project Manager estimated that three persons per day could be interviewed. At this point, four persons were available to do the work — a project manager, a member of the research staff, and two systems analysts recruited from the Department of Finance. Based on the estimate of three interviews daily, the project leader estimated that interviews would require 40 working days, 10 each for the four persons who would conduct them.

Figures 5-3-2a and b illustrate *Composite's* planning for the activities required in State Self-Analysis. The project manager estimated that State Self-Analysis would require 77 elapsed days and a total of 322 man days budgeted for $25,984.

This kind of planning is essential in preparation for a systems development project. The Director of Corrections and his five assistants were in the best position to evaluate the results to be derived from implementing the OBSCIS data base and key applications. By structuring the project so that they got realistic costs at each stage, they were able to determine whether the investment was justified by the projected results.

FINAL MANAGEMENT REVIEW

In the situation at *Composite*, the Director of Corrections determined that it would be worthwhile to proceed with the next phase of the project. He based his decision on a number of factors, including the availability of LEAA support and the growing need for information system support in his parole function.

This conclusion was reached at an all-day management meeting in a remote location at which the various concerns of the management group were addressed and resolved. Confidence in the end results was heightened by the structured step-by-step approach taken and the provision for constant management review.

All those present stated that it was the first time they, as management, had had control over an EDP project.

Options open at this point included:

- The *Composite* Department of Corrections should elect to fund its own Self-Analysis phase.
- A funding request could be submitted to LEAA for the Self-Analysis phase only.
- A funding request could be submitted to LEAA for the entire OBSCIS project.

Based on his knowledge of the situation, the Director elected to apply for funding for the entire project, since he was aware that such grants were available. At the same time, however, he authorized his staff to proceed with the Self-Analysis phase, electing to fund these efforts on an interim basis from his own budget.

ESTABLISH PROJECT CONTROL

Once the "go" signal was received, the project team prepared for the work that lay ahead. As the project moved into its next phase, considerably more work and numbers of people were involved. For example, in *Composite*, the State Self-Analysis phase of the OBSCIS project was seen as requiring 77 days and five people. This was almost five times the amount of work that had gone into the Project Planning phase. Thus, it became necessary to devise a method for scheduling the work and to follow up by gathering data as the effort progressed.

Methods for project scheduling and control are myriad. There is no "best" way for scheduling and controlling the OBSCIS development effort. Individual states may have computerized scheduling systems and a wide assortment of project control techniques. Anything that works can do the job. In *Composite*, the team elected to establish a Gantt chart which provided a graphic display of the schedule for all activities. This control document is illustrated in Figure 5-3-3 for the Self-Analysis phase. With the completion of this control document, the project was ready to move forward into the next phase, State Self-Analysis.

Figure V-3-2a

PLANNING FORM

1 2

X

State of Composite

State Self-Analysis

OBSCIS

	Assistant Director $96	Project Manager $96	Planning & Research $80	Systems Analyst $72	Systems Analyst $72	Elapsed Time in days		
Initiate Self-Analysis Phase	.5	4	4	4	4	12.5	$1328	
Investigate Factors Affecting Design	1	5	5	5	5	21.0	$1696	
Define Present Systems	0	10	10	10	10	40.0	$3200	
Define Future Plans for Present Systems	0	3	3	3	3	12.0	$960	
Document and Verify	0	11	11	11	11	44.0	$3520	
Define Requirements and Prioritize	1	5	5	5	5	21.0	$1696	
Management Review	1	3	3	3	3	13.0	$1056	
Review OBSCIS model	1	2	2	2	2	9.0	$736	
								days dollars

Continued on Next Page

Figure 5-3-2a, Self-Analysis Planning Form

PLANNING FORM

State of Composite

State Self-Analysis

OBSCIS

	$96 Assistant Director	$96 Project Manager	$80 Planning & Research	$72 Systems Analyst	$72 Systems Analyst		Elapsed Time in days		2	2
Select Applications								20.0		
	0	5	5	5	5		5	$1600		
Balance Applications								20.0		
	0	5	5	5	5		5	$1600		
Define the Composite CIS								41.0		
	1	10	10	10	10		10	$3296		
Plan for Implementation								33.0		
	5	7	7	7	7		7	$2720		
Define Required Resources								13.0		
	1	3	3	3	3		3	$1056		
Determine Costs & Schedule								9.0		
	1	2	2	2	2		2	$736		
Review Implementation Plans								14.0		
	1.5	2	2	2	2		2	$784		
TOTALS days / dollars	14.0 / $1344	77.0 / $7392	77.0 / $6160	77.0 / $5544	77.0 / $5544		77	322.5 / $25,984		X

PREPARED BY

APPROVED BY

days / dollars

Figure V-3-2b

Figure 5-3-2b, Self-Analysis Planning Form

ORGANIZATION State of Composite

WORK LEVEL State Self-Analysis

GENERAL PURPOSE GANTT CHART

DATE

PAGE OF

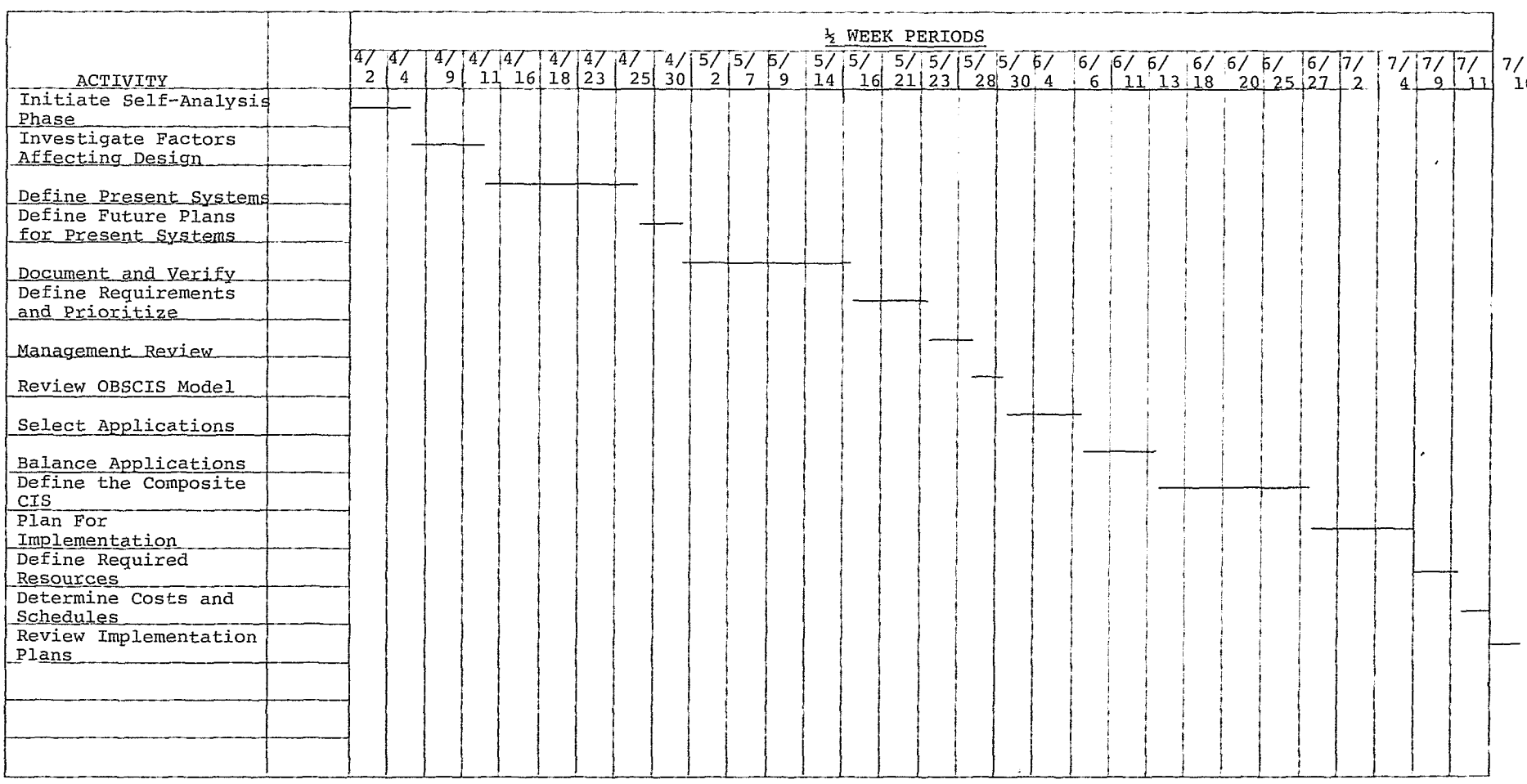

Figure 5-3-3, Self-Analysis Gantt Chart

CHAPTER 4. STATE SELF-ANALYSIS

START-UP

Perhaps the greatest single challenge in systems development lies in coordinating the efforts of diverse groups of people to produce a unified, integrated product. To accomplish this, coordination must start at the outset. Thus, the State Self-Analysis phase of an OBSCIS project begins with an in-depth orientation of the entire project team.

To put this in perspective, a four-man team like the one described for the *Composite* project could accomplish its orientation with a few days of review and study, based on needs of individual team members.

The project manager at *Composite* found it logical to start with a review of the findings of the Project Planning phase and their relationship to the OBSCIS model. These were reviewed and discussed in depth. One of the discussions relating to priorities dwelt on the need for improved supervision of parolees because of tendencies toward liberalized parole policies that led to ever greater case loads of parolees.

The review of the *Composite* scope and goals and the OBSCIS report gave the group an overview. At the next level of orientation, the group studied the findings summarized following the interviews during the Project Planning phase.

To finish the orientation, efforts, plans were made for the two systems analysts "borrowed" from Finance to visit the largest of the correctional institutions and to observe the processes at first hand.

Following orientation, attention turned to planning for the work of the State Self-Analysis phase. One of the first requirements was the drafting of introductory letters from the *Composite* Director of Corrections to all personnel in his department. In addition, letters were sent to those whose jobs would be affected by the system in other agencies and within the Public Safety organization at large. This would render the job of making initial contacts much easier.

Planning for the work at hand also centered around reviews of the content of the different activities. At *Composite*, the project manager found it valuable to establish standard formats or end product forms for documenting the results of system functions and processing activities. Topical lists of questions and subject areas were also constructed as a guide for the conduct of interviews. Calls were made in order to set up the required interviews.

Finally, the *Composite* group reviewed the schedules for the Self-Analysis phase and adjusted them to reflect all changes. Based on the schedule revisions, the group believed that it could accomplish the Self-Analysis phase within the established budget.

Coordination with the Director of Finance provided particular assistance at *Composite*. He was aware of the nature and scope of the OBSCIS project and offered the aid of his staff in determining recordkeeping standards. It is essential on OBSCIS projects that meticulous records of time spent and costs incurred be maintained on a current basis. The major incentive for setting up this caliber of recordkeeping was the special requirements for grant accounting. However, the project staff at *Composite* also learned that these records can be valuable in ongoing control of the project itself.

To define requirements for their CIS, the project team at *Composite* completed a series of activities specified in the OBSCIS work plan:

- Investigate Basic Factors Affecting Design.
- Collect Data to Define Current Manual and Automated Systems.
- Document Future Plans for Existing Systems.
- Assemble and Review Documentation Produced by Current Systems.
- Define and Prioritize Information Requirements.
- Perform a Management Review.

INTERVIEWS

The prime technique for accomplishing these activities was interviewing of managers and clerical personnel involved in existing systems or in manag-

ing corrections operations. In particular, the first activity listed above — Investigate Basic Factors Affecting Design — called for in-depth reviews with the policymakers in the corrections areas and in areas impacting corrections. This activity has been designed into the OBSCIS work plan specifically to provide assurance that recommendations produced will fall within a framework of the basic operating environments of the corrections function in each individual state. To accomplish this, interviews were conducted with legislators, judicial officials, and others who would influence corrections operations but were not necessarily part of the corrections function.

The interview guideline developed for the subjects to be investigated in *Composite* included:

- Current key operational problem areas.
- Potential policy changes within corrections.
- Future corrections trends in the state.
- Forthcoming legislative changes.
- Organization changes within the corrections functions or affecting corrections.
- History of interest in and attention to corrections in the state.
- Current levels and positions of staff members who would utilize information generated by an OBSCIS system.
- General overall needs for corrections information.
- Current satisfaction with present information systems.
- Potential implementation problems should an OBSCIS system be initiated.
- History of acceptance of EDP among state agencies and in corrections.
- Relationships with other agencies, particularly with regard to information exchange.
- Financial resources and projected budgets which could be available to operate a CIS.
- Projected changes in corrections regarding type of offender, treatment programs, physical structures planned, etc.
- Prior corrections experience with other state/federal criminal justice planning or information system programs or projects.
- Relationships with the state data processing center.
- Assessment of state data processing center capabilities, resources, and available capacity for use by corrections.
- Determination and assessment of current information processing capabilities within corrections.
- Recent requests for offender information which were most difficult or impossible to satisfy.
- Planning/research projects, projected or under way, which would require new data.

FINDINGS

Notes accumulated during these interviews were analyzed and key points were listed and reconfirmed with the interview subjects. Also, existing reports and documentation relating to current corrections information procedures were reviewed. The resulting list of observations included:

- The parole officers were spending too much time on clerical tasks.
- The same data were collected repeatedly throughout an offender's stay, including his entry to parole status.
- Great difficulties were experienced in attempting to collect a complete history of an individual through the corrections and parole process.
- There was difficulty in determining whether a new inmate was a repeater and, if so, locating prior information about him.
- Needs were increasing for identifying characteristics of the offender and parole population for legislative, research, and management purposes.
- Capabilities for evaluating a program's effect on the offender population were limited.
- Data from the current system were not responsive enough to user needs.
- Information system expenditures currently equalled about 0.2 percent of the total corrections budget.
- Individuals and citizen groups constantly requested data on the status of certain offenders.
- Users on the corrections staff were found to have a low level of understanding about information system processes.
- There was a multiplicity of forms containing the same offender information, as well as nonstandard use of these documents at every institution.
- The intake procedure at the two reception centers was not uniform.

- Capabilities for monitoring the value of diagnostic assessments made at the receiving centers were extremely limited.
- A significant increase was anticipated in funding for new programs.
- A selection process for matching offender types with parole officers who had proven experience in their particular problems was identified as an important need.
- There was interest in obtaining information on CIS experience in other states.
- Increased amounts of more appropriate data were needed on offenders under drug, psychiatric, or geriatric care.
- Corrections management was interested in phasing out large institutions in favor of smaller sites and community corrections facilities.
- Difficulties were foreseen in maintaining management control and reporting about offenders as decentralization of facilities continued.
- Limited development had been undertaken in the state for judicial information systems.
- There was interest in making parole information available to law enforcement personnel so that they could aid in parole violation cases if required.
- The Finance Department data center was in the process of upgrading its computer capabilities and adding programming expertise.

In addition to the interviews, current documentation and statistics were reviewed to determine the average offender inventory in intake, institution, community center, and parole status. In addition, information on rates at which offenders were entering or leaving these status points was gathered, together with length-of-stay data on the population within each status. A review of this material indicated that:

- Although the incidence of crime and arrest were increasing, more persons were going on probation.
- The intake rate was decreasing but the average population in the intake process was increasing because the length of stay in intake was growing.
- The institution population was decreasing and the size of community centers was increasing; but the length of institutional stay was greater due to longer average sentences.
- The parole population had been steadily increasing.

These conclusions indicated that more priority, in terms of information needs, must be given to parole and overall movement monitoring.

PRESENT SYSTEMS REVIEW

The next steps were to review all the present systems in terms of their inputs, outputs, functions performed, volumes, and methods of processing. This analysis included both the clerical systems and the single computer system. The method used was to follow information processing on an offender through the corrections system from intake to final release from parole. Also, a review of available systems documentation and discussion with operational personnel was performed to identify all the data currently collected or needed with regard to an offender. The following correctional functions were investigated:

- The process of accepting an offender into corrections and obtaining prior data on the person.
- The establishing of the inmate's basic file and other related new files, such as treatment or custody files. This included the collection and verification of data.
- The diagnostic and assessment process.
- The classification process.
- The physical transfer process and population movement control.
- The receiving and program/work assignment process at each institution.
- The collection of offender data at an institution regarding program participation, discipline, treatment, and adjustment.
- The collection of data on hearings by institutions or boards which affected the offender.
- Typical file folders on offenders at each institution.
- The length-of-stay calculation process.
- The parole planning and parole hearing process.
- The acceptance of a person to parole custody and setting up of his records.
- The parole supervision, violation hearing, and final release processes.
- The consolidation of data on an offender after his final release.
- Management research and planning activities

FUTURE PLANS AND TRENDS

USING THE MODEL

REQUIREMENTS SUMMARY

Figure 5-4-1. Reception and Diagnostic Process Flow Chart

of funds and, most importantly, because the organization could not absorb all the systems available through OBSCIS at once. It was also deemed desirable to have a listing of successful implementation before implementing the more extensive applications.

The OBSCIS model and its associated tools were an effective guideline for performance of these activities in *Composite*. The job was facilitated because the OBSCIS model and its implementation tools were designed specifically for a modular approach to making information systems happen in a corrections environment. Without the availability of these tools, it would have been necessary to go through the laborious process traditional in systems design. This usually begins with specification of outputs. Once the outputs are decided, a project team following traditional approaches has to identify appropriate inputs needed to produce them. After the inputs have been defined, a determination must be made of what processing has to be done to get from inputs to output. With the OBSCIS model and its associated tools, it was possible to short-cut some of these procedures because OBSCIS applications are grouped for information system implementation convenience.

OBSCIS provides data elements which are of possible intereest for operations, management, and research within corrections organizations. Applications, in turn, were built from this data base. This was done through a modular approach. In effect, the *OBSCIS Application Guide* (Volume 2 of this report) provides a series of data processing system increments which can be implemented individually, in groups, or as a total corrections system continuity.

SETTING PRIORITIES

The challenge faced by the project team in *Composite* involved the matching of priorities. Compliance with the Core requirements of OBSCIS was necessary in the design of the CIS. That was also prerequisite to qualifying for the LEAA grant which would make the development effort possible. The Core system required implementation of three applications:

- Establish Offender Record
- Status Tracking
- OBSCIS Reporting

Beyond that, the team wanted to develop priorities for those applications most likely to produce significant benefits for the state. The high priority applications identified in *Composite* were parole reporting and population movement statistics. The team felt that these applications would bring the most benefit to the Department.

Having made this selection, the group then identified unique requirements within their own organization which could not be met by OBSCIS applications. For these, also, priorities and values had to be established. Specifically, the group had to determine whether it was worth the extended effort which would be required to implement applications identified as falling beyond the OBSCIS scope. Options ranged from discarding applications which were beyond OBSCIS, through planning the data base for the *Composite* system to provide room for future expansion to accommodate these applications, to a possible decision to allocate the extra resources and develop these additional applications as part of the project.

The final list of application priorities is shown in Figure 5-4-2. Their descriptions are given in Volume 2, *The OBSCIS Application Guide*.

Figure 5-4-2

STATE OF *COMPOSITE*

SELECTED APPLICATIONS

1. Establish Offender Record
2. Disciplinary Infraction Reporting
3. Parole Status Reporting
4. Parole Case Load Analysis
5. Legal Status Reporting
6. Parole Eligibility/Discharge Date Calculation
7. Offender Tracking
8. Population Movement Reporting
9. OBSCIS Reporting

DATA BASE SELECTION

Following a review of the applications selected and the *OBSCIS Data Dictionary* (Volume 3 of this report), the project team made a decision to implement the OBSCIS recommended data base. By setting up the data base at this level, the group reasoned, *Composite* would be in a position both to meet any foreseeable national reporting requirements and also to support substantial information system development for its own operating management, research, and public reporting needs. In other words, the group saw implementation at this level as an opportunity to derive maximum benefits for operation of their own function while implementing federally funded programs.

ROOM FOR THE FUTURE

One appropriate technique identified in *Composite* was to design all data base segments and applications so as to leave room for addition or expansion. To illustrate, the group in *Composite* noted that there was an OBSCIS application for scoring and reporting on psychological tests. They determined that they were not in a position to implement this application at the time, but they decided to design the data base to leave space for addition of these elements as soon as capabilities became available. Application design was also left expandible in the same manner. The group realized that the test scoring application could simply be "plugged in" with other applications at the time they were ready to implement it.

The next function of the group was to prepare a preliminary definition of the proposed Corrections Information System. To complete this activity, the project team prepared a series of documents including:

- Functional descriptions of processing to be done.
- A general flow chart of the proposed system.
- A list of data base elements and organization of input.
- A list of tentative reports to be produced.

A list of the reports specified the the *Composite* system is shown in Figure 5-4-3. At this point, the project team had identified by means of a series of documents what the new CIS would look like. Their next step was to determine how they would make it happen — to develop a plan for implementation along with specifications for required resources and schedules.

Figure 5-4-3

STATE OF *COMPOSITE*

LIST OF PLANNED OUTPUTS

1. Admissions by ethnic group and sex
2. Admissions by county and offense classifications
3. Weekly detailed admissions report
4. Disciplinary tickets by class
5. Disciplinary tickets by location
6. Disciplinary tickets by officer
7. Weekly and monthly summaries of 4, 5, and 6
8. Summary of parolees by job classification
9. Summary by parole stability
10. Detail list of parole population for each parole officer
11. List of parolees for each officer
12. Parole officer visit report
13. Parole dockets
14. Offender profile at time of parole eligibility
15. Audit trail of date calculations
16. Weekly and monthly population movement reports

PLANNING FOR IMPLEMENTATION

The final activities in the Self-Analysis phase are perhaps the most critical of the entire Corrections Informations Systems development project. Certainly, these activities weigh most heavily in establishing the prospective success or failure of a system development effort. This is where time, resource, equipment, and other requirements are established. This is where budgets are set. If any predictions, schedules, or lists of needs are inadequate — particularly if they are understated or optimistic — the project is predestined, at this point, to run over its budget. If scheduling has not been done effectively, systems will not be operational on the projected dates, users will not get promised information, and the entire project will be suspect for some time to come. Management authorizations and project funding are based on the outputs of

these last activities. Within a system development context, this is where accountability rules.

The final activities of State Self-Analysis include:

- Determine the Activities Required to complete the implementation of OBSCIS.
- Determine resource requirements for project completion.
- Develop a schedule and project the associated costs — both for completion of the systems project and for ongoing operation of the applications.
- Present complete recommendations to management and secure approval for the remainder of the project.
- Verify that funding will be available.

There are no shortcuts in the performance of these activities. These projections and estimates should be prepared by persons with extensive experience in the processing of corrections information. The persons who do this work should have thorough command of both the corrections and the data processing functions involved. It should be kept in mind at this point that the primary concern in laying the plans for the implementation phase of the project is accountability. Funds are allocated on the basis of forecasts.

In preparing the final State Self-Analysis documentation at *Composite*, the team recognized that computerized processing would be relatively new to most of the corrections personnel who would have to be involved in implementing the new system. Therefore, liberal time allowances were made for the activities associated with defining and designing new applications. The team was able to use the OBSCIS work plan in its entirety. The list of activities in the work plan became the basis for implementation planning and scheduling.

Following the State Self-Analysis phase, development of a CIS gets quite technical. Thus, a good part of the work involved in completing the phase lay in identifying the skills and resources which would be needed. Because of the limited data processing experience in the *Composite* corrections organization, it was decided to contract for some of the systems design and programming services with the Finance Department data processing organization.

The activities scheduled for the implementation of the *Composite* system, along with specifications for staff and allocation of working time, are shown in the accompanying work plan, illustrated in Figures 5-4-4a through d. Note that the total amount of required funds planned for all phases of the entire project was less than $250,000.

MANAGEMENT REVIEW

The work plan, along with the system definition, was presented to the *Composite* Corrections Management Review Group. Additional supporting documentation included:

- Estimates of operating costs
- Estimates of benefits
- A revised Gantt chart plan

The operations were estimated to cost under $300,000 on an annual basis. This figure was arrived at by estimating the number of programs to be run monthly and making preliminary estimates of run times based upon volumes of transactions. These times were extended by data center rates for processing time. Since the system was a batch one, no additional hardware was needed. Additional costs were estimated for supplies, and for a full-time EDP coordinator for corrections. Also, the equivalent of one full-time programmer was added for maintenance of the system on an ongoing basis. It was recognized that any additional development would require additional funds and could have an impact on operational costs.

The management group, after much deliberation, approved the plan. At this point, the *Composite* Corrections Department was ready to build its information system.

PLANNING FORM

ORGANIZATION State of Composite
JOB NAME Corrections System Specifications
PROJECT NAME OBSCIS

ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION	$96 Project Manager	$80 Systems Analyst	$80 Systems Analyst	$72 Programmer	Elapsed time in Days	
Detail Requirements	40	40	40	10	40	130 $10,960
Conceptual Design	40	40	40	10	40	130 $10,960
Refine Work Plan	5	5	5	2	5	17 $1,424
Review	2	2	2	2	2	8 $656
TOTALS Days / Dollars	87 / $8352	87 / $6960	87 / $6960	24 / $1728	87	285 $24,000

Days
Dollars

PREPARED BY
APPROVED BY

Figure 5-4-4a, Work Plan

PLANNING FORM

State of Composite

Technical System Design

OBSCIS

	Project Manager $96	Systems Analyst $80	Systems Analyst $80	Programmer $72	Elapsed Time in Days	
						160
Complete System Specification	40	40	40	40	40	$13,120
						5
Equipment Requirements	5	5	5	5	5	$1640
						17
Refine Work Plan	5	5	5	2	5	$1424
						7
Refine Costs	2	2	2	1	2	$584
						4
Review	1	1	1	1	1	$328
						15
Get Additional Resources	5	5	5	0		$1280
						223
TOTALS Days / Dollars	58	$5568	58 $4640	58 $4640	49 $3528	$18,376

Days
Dollars

Figure 5-4-4b, Work Plan

PLANNING FORM

State of Composite

Achieving Operational Status

OBSCIS

	Project Manager $96	Systems Analyst $80	Systems Analyst $80	Systems Analyst $72	Programmer $72	Programmer $60	Programmer $60	Programmer $60	Elapsed Time in Days	
										240
Program Specifications	40	40	40	40	40	20	10	10	40	$18,400
										580
Program	80	80	80	20	80	80	80	80	80	$42,080
										25
Plan Training	5	5	5	5	5	0	0	0	5	$2,000
										100
Write Procedures and Perform Training	20	20	20	20	5	5	5	5	20	$7820
										20
Plan System Test	5	5	5	5	0	0	0	0	5	$1640
										160
Conduct System Test	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	$11,600
										20
Plan Conversion/ Implementation	5	5	5	5	0	0	0	0	5	$1,640
										20
Conversion	5	5	5	5	0	0	0	0	5	$1,640

Continued on next page . . .

PREPARED BY ... DATE ... START ... END

APPROVED BY ... DATE ... DAYS ... HRS

Days
Dollars

Figure V-4-4c

Figure 5-4-4c, Work Plan

Figure V-4-4d

PLANNING FORM

State of Composite

Achieving Operational Status (Continued)

OBSCIS

	$96 Project Manager	$80 Systems Analyst	$80 Systems Analyst	$72 Programmer	$60 Programmer	$60 Programmer	Elapsed Time in Days
Implementation	20	20	20	20	20	20	20
							20
Final Review	5	5	5	0	0	0	5
							160
							$11,600
							20
				0	0	0	$1,640
TOTALS Days	205	205	205	170	145	135	205
Dollars	$19,680	$16,400	$16,400	$12,240	$8,700	$8,100	$3,100
							1345
							$100,060
							Days
							Dollars

PREPARED BY — DATE START END

APPROVED BY — NAME DAYS HRS

Figure 5-4-4d, Work Plan

CHAPTER 5. SUMMARY

There is, of course, no state named *Composite*. Neither has anyone ever, up to this writing, implemented an OBSCIS-compatible information system. Therefore, it is impractical, at this time, to carry the case history further. As a matter of fact, documenting a case history on the implementation of an OBSCIS state information system would involve as much cost and effort as the construction of an actual system.

Further, from this point forward, the development of a Corrections Information System follows proven patterns already established in the development and implementation of many hundreds of computerized data processing systems. The uniqueness of the OBSCIS approach lies in the processes of the first two phases of the project structure. The work plan for these first two phases was developed specifically to meet the needs of correctional organizations. From this point forward, the functional and technical aspects of designing and implementing a data processing system lose their uniqueness. Established methods can prevail. For these continuing activities, the OBSCIS work plan is largely self-explanatory to those with experience in the development of Corrections Information Systems.

It is also worth repeating that none of the documentation in this presentation — none of the elements of the OBSCIS Report or its supporting volumes — should be treated as if they were a cookbook. System development is, and for some time promises to remain, more of an art than a science. Individuals will innovate. Hopefully, they will never stop innovating. That is how progress takes place.

In summary, the OBSCIS Report represents a starting point, a sound basis from which individual states can build Offender-Based Corrections Information Systems which will serve both to meet national reporting requirements and to answer their own needs for improved operations and management.