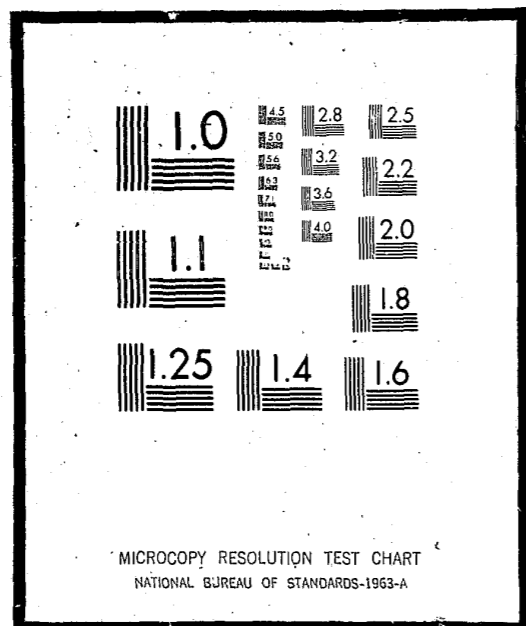


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NATIONAL CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFERENCE SERVICE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20531

Date filmed

5/12/76

30685

GOVERNOR'S JUSTICE COMMISSION
PROJECT EVALUATION SUMMARY

EVALUATION INITIATED BY: Philadelphia Region, F.J.C.
Philadelphia - Court of Common Pleas -
Research and Program Development Unit - CONTINUATION
PROJECT: Development Unit - NO:

CITY OF PHILA/COURT OF COMMON PLEAS
SUBGRANTEE: Adult Protection Department NO: PH-74-C-74-5-279

EVALUATION CONDUCTED BY: NAME: Jack C. Stambach, Ph.D.

ADDRESS: 801 Penn Square Building, 1317 Filbert St., Phila, Pa, 19107

DURATION OF PROJECT: July 1, 1974 TO: June 30, 1975

DURATION OF EVALUATION: January 7, 1975 TO: February 26, 1975

DATE OF REFUNDING REPORT: February 27, 1975

SECTION I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF EVALUATION REPORT.

1. Project objectives and activities.

a. The objectives of the project have been specified in great detail in the subgrant application; generally, however, they are directed toward two major goals (1) reduce scarcity of resources with which the probation department can pursue its goals, and (2) develop information on which departmental programs can be built. The second goal is seen as impacting on the first - in that better information will permit better decisions as to allocation of scarce resources.

b. The major activities of the project are:

1) External. This includes grant management, primarily with LEAA, and also a variety of community relations and technical advisory activities which are primarily the responsibility of the project director. Included here is generation of data for and work with outside evaluators on LEAA projects, a responsibility distributed among a number of project staff.

2) Internal. The major activity is development of the information base, primarily the responsibility of the project associate director. In addition, project staff are engaged in a variety of related activities; including development of several manuals for department staff and for judges, research activities, planning and improvement of communications with line staff in the department.

2. Evaluation Activities and Data sources.

a. Evaluation activities have included: (1) interviews with project director and associate director and with the research and planning supervisors, (2) interviews with the chief probation officer and his five top administrators, (3) Review of a variety of documents, both historical and current, (4) administration of a mail questionnaire to a sample of departmental administrators, supervisors and probation officers, (5) verification of a sample of client records taken from the computer print-out, (6) sample of internal mail to the project, (7) sample of daily time logs of all project staff, (8) telephone interviews with LEAA evaluators.

b. Data sources have included: (1) interview responses, (2) project documents - including subgrant applications past and present, files of research project, procedural memos, etc (3) responses to mail questionnaire (response rate of 64% at time responses tabulated for this report; further returns indicate a response rate of 76%), (4) percentage of errors

among a random sample of 1800 data elements when verified with probation officers, (5) incoming mail during a two week period, (6) activities engaged in by project staff during a two week period.

3. Major Results.

a. The project's most clearly successful activities were in development of the information base and the varieties of activities associated with service to the LEAA outside evaluators.

b. A variety of other activities present a mixed or unclear picture - some of this having to do with the fact that projects are in process but not necessarily completed at the time this report is prepared. Examples include: the policy and procedures manual and the judges manual & the predictive study.

c. Other activities indicate little or no results. The intention to improve communications with line staff shows some results where supervisors are concerned but essentially project staff are still gearing up to deal with this issue. One of the most striking results is the variety of research activities projected but not completed. Additionally, there does not appear to have been too much planning activity.

4. Major Findings.

a. The project appears to place its major resources in development of the information base and LEAA grant management. Research and planning activities, as a result, appear to have a lower operational priority.

b. The project indicates a wide and varied list of projected activities - many of which appear not to have been carried out. (The end of the subgrant year report can be more specific on this). While the achievement of a few goals may well be acceptable the evaluator is faced with the necessity of assessing the full range of goals.

c. Certain organizational aspects of project structure and function require focus in the evaluator's continuing work. Of particular interest is the split between research and planning and the centralized unit structure (as distinct from, for example, a decentralized unit with staff assigned to service units).

d. Lack of access (eg: effective utilization) to the courts computer appears to interrupt and slow work in several areas.

e. Most respondents, representing all levels of the department indicated a desire for greater (research and planning) service from the project. At the same time, as indicated above, the project's major resources are elsewhere. This difference, which is not new, could provoke serious organizational strain.

5. Major Recommendations.

a. That goals and activities in the subgrant application be expressed in measureable terms amenable to evaluation. This should include time-defined interim goals.

b. That priority be given to building those contacts, activities and relationships which can provide input and feedback to and from project staff throughout the department.

c. That organizational analysis focused on alternate structural arrangements be engaged in as a possible aid in resolving the differences (or meliorating them) referred to above in the findings section of this report.

d. Now that the LEAA grant period is over the project is urged to move ahead and attempt to meet goals in a number of areas specified in the subgrant application and referred to under results (# 3.b.) above.

e. That activities projected for the next subgrant year be somewhat more limited than is currently the case, and that especially where research and planning activities are concerned the resource strains within the project be carefully considered in advancing objectives in those two areas.

R & D Unit Objectives
and Activities

Evaluation
From 1/7/75 To 2/21/75

Findings

Probable
Impact

1. Alleviate the scarcity of resources with which the Dept. can pursue its objectives by:

1) Project director will continue to attend monthly meetings of the Philadelphia Regional Planning Council, the Corrections Subcommittee and the GJC, as required.

Activity: Interview with Project Director and analysis of work logs.
Data: Reported meetings, correspondence, log entries.
Limitations: Not all groups met during evaluation.

Volume of correspondence, evaluator's own knowledge and data from chief probation officer indicates high level of activity.

No data secured on director's perceived effectiveness. Continuation of LEAA funds is indirect indicator of effectiveness.

2) R & D staff provide technical assistance to Probation Dept. staff in preparation of proposals, budget modifications.

Activity: Interviews with administrative staff & responses by unit heads, supervisors and officers to questionnaires.
Data: Responses to interviews and to questionnaires
Limitations: Evaluator did not review proposals for adequacy and coherence.

The consensus is that R&D is helpful in securing LEAA funds. However, a frequent response was that R&D's currently limited technical and fiscal advisory function made extra work for project staff. At the same time, a frequent response (often from the same respondents) was that R&D spends too much time in LEAA work at the expense of research and planning activities.

3) Project Director reviews quarterly reports for Chief Probation Officer's signature and processes on to appropriate LEAA and State Board of Probation and Parole staff

Activity: Review copies of quarterly reports
Data: Quarterly reports
Limitations: None

Reports were written.

4) Project Director serves as liason with State Board of Parole for programmatic reviews and proposal processing.

Activity: Interview with Project Director; review correspondence
Data: Correspondence and meeting notes
Limitations:

Approval by Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole as to fiscal and match requirements, and project accordance with state goals indicates effective activity and impact in terms of support for securing LEAA funds.

5) Project Director serves as liason with LEAA regional office for selection of outside evaluators & response to evaluators reports.

Activity: Attend meetings on evaluator selection (3).
Data: Project Director interview Attendance and participation at meetings on selection.

Project director is actively involved in liason and selection. Responses to evaluator reports indicates thorough, if not exhaustive activity.

R & D staff works with outside evaluator and departmental LEAA program personnel

Activity: On-site observation of R & D liason staff on 3 LEAA projects.
Interview outside evaluators
Data: Staff attendance and participation.
Evaluators' comments
Limitations: 5 out of 10 evaluators interviewed.

R&D staff maintain overview and are intermittently present at evaluator-project staff conferences. Evaluators were essentially positive in commenting on their contacts with R&D staff; and staff helpfulness in helping them to get data.

6) R & D staff provide planning assistance to Dept. Administration in determination of LEAA proposal objectives, staffing patterns and resource allocation by identifying issues requiring administrative decisions and proposing alternatives

Activity: Interview Chief Probation Officer and Dept. Heads. Mail survey of supervisory personnel & Probation Officers.
Data: Interview responses and questionnaires returned
Limitations: None on interviews, 6 out of 6 completed.
Questionnaire response rate = 64%

While consensus (noted above) exists as to R&D role in securing LEAA funds no respondent volunteered data which would indicate the administrative planning and decision-making assistance function specifically alluded to in this section.

B. R & D will provide technical research and planning assistance to the Dept. in securing additional sources of funding. In the near future, it is expected that a committee comprised of key administrative persons in the Dept. will be selected to approach alternative funding sources for assistance. As viable sources are contacted and a determination is made of the program area of interest to those sources, R & D staff will prepare proposals for those program areas following the proposal format and guidelines of the particular funding source.

C. The development of an adequate information base to assess outcome for research and planning purposes is a top priority of the R & D Unit for this project year. Activities related to this are listed below:

1) Identifying data requirements for the evaluation of LEAA proposals for 1974-75.

Activity: Review committee notes and proposals when available

Data: None seen

Limitations: No sources of alternative funds identified.

Project director indicates appointment of a person to seek alternate funds. No such funds have been identified.

Activity: Interview with R&D staff and outside evaluators.

Data: Interview responses

Limitations: 5 out of 10 evaluators interviewed. Varying data element definitions, some variations in procedures used to secure data.

Evaluators were positive in suggesting that R&D staff were helpful in meeting evaluators' data requirements.

2) The project director is also currently negotiating with the Data Processing Unit of the Court of Common Pleas to provide recidivism data on the probation/parole population via computer summaries.

Activity: Request computer summary of criminal histories and recidivism.
Data: Summary reports on recidivism
Limitations: Results of negotiation not available.

Data not available from courts in summary form; only as criminal histories which each evaluator must calculate estimates of recidivism.

3) R & D staff will review present data items being collected in files of different units of the Department and different recording and reporting formats in use.

Activity: Interview Associate Director; inspect report formats.
Data: Report data elements
Limitations: Preliminary findings only; evaluation activity not completed.

The review has been completed under the guidance of the Associate Director. Interim forms were developed for use while new procedures were developed. The data collection procedures appear to be functioning well based on increased data file accuracy.

4) A preliminary proposal of data requirements and recommendations for recording and retrieving these data items will be made to the Administrative body of the Dept. for review. Out of this will come a Dept. commitment to provide certain data items to the LEAA evaluators in order to reduce LEAA evaluation costs.

Activity: Review preliminary proposal and Dept. policy with respect to providing data to LEAA evaluators
Interview LEAA evaluators about their data needs and access.
Data: Proposal and policy statement.
Interview responses.
Limitations: Preliminary findings only based on verbal responses; evaluation activity not completed.

Data needs by the evaluators have generally been met for the current period satisfactorily according to the evaluators interviewed. Most also indicated an improvement in accessibility.

No written policy statement concerning data access seen.

5) The information specialist will review the preliminary work of steps (1 - 4) and work in conjunction with the rest of the R&D staff, the records division of the department and administration to develop appropriate record keeping procedures and reporting forms to generate comparable data throughout the Dept.

Activity: Interview information specialist (Assoc. Director) and departmental staff. Questionnaire survey of supervisory personnel & Probation Officers.
Data: Interview and questionnaire responses
Limitations: Questionnaire response rate = 64%
Position of info specialist vacant; work being done by Assoc. Director. Preliminary findings only; additional interviews required.

6) The information specialist will serve as a consultant to the R&D staff regarding available data for research and planning activities.

Activity: Review R&D staff work logs
Data: Self-reports of consultation.
Limitations: Position of info specialist is vacant; work being done by Assoc. Director. Work period atypical (grant preparation occupied most time) Preliminary findings only.

7) The information specialist will serve as a liason between R&D and the computer section of the records division of the Dept.

Activity: Interview Info Specialist (Assoc. Director) and review work log.
Data: Interview response and work log records.
Limitations: Position of Info Specialist vacant; work being done by Assoc. Director. Preliminary findings only; evaluation activity incomplete.

The objectives and activities encompassed under e, f, and g are being carried out by the Associate Director while the position of Information Specialist is vacant. While there is no apparent conflict in function, the workload appears excessive for a single person for efficient unit operations.

Nevertheless, these functions are well done and the impact has been significant based on the overall improvement in data processing procedures and the increase in accuracy of data as preceived by Probation Officers and verified by examination of computer stored and retrieved client information.

6
8) The Project Director and Info Specialist will work with staff of CJAC toward the long term development of the Philadelphia Criminal Justice Information System.

Activity: Interview Project Director, Info Specialist, & Associate Director
Data: Interview responses.
Limitations: Position of Info Specialist vacant. Interviews not complete. No findings at this time.

None

D. By its very existence, the R&D Unit helps to increase the amount of resources allocated to research and planning in corrections, both nationally and locally. Activities for the coming year are elaborated below:

1) R&D staff will augment standardized information base with additional information as required for research and planning through:

- (1) library literature surveys
- (2) surveys of agencies and programs in other jurisdictions
- (3) regular meetings with professionals involved in the Criminal Justice System
- (4) formal mechanism for P.O. input
- (5) regular group meetings with each functional area of the Department
- (6) interviews with clients
- (7) questionnaires

Activity: Interview R&D staff; examine R&D unit records; surveys, literature searches; Questionnaire sample survey of Departmental staff about R&D staff contact.

Data: R&D records

Questionnaire responses.

Limitations: Questionnaire response rate = 64%. Time period assessed atypical for year's activity. Preliminary findings only.

(1) two library survey found

(2) one such activity noted

(3) An unspecified level of such activity is noted through anecdotal reports. Nor firm information exists to confirm such

(4) There are no formal mechanisms for P.O. input.*

(5) There are no regular group meetings.*

(6) There are no known interviews with clients.*

(7) There are no questionnaires.

The evaluator's conclusion is that there has been little impact on the objective of providing a higher level of research and planning activity.

*

Note: R&D staff indicate that their current training with the director of in-service training is to prepare them for more effective activity re; #4), 5) and 6).

2) The staff will continue to refine and implement the planning model for the Dept. which was adopted by the Administrative Council last Fall.

Activity: Review planning model with R&D staff; trace application of planning model through case study of planning project
Data: Alcohol Service Team project file
Limitations: No findings; data received 2/25/75

None

3) Priority research; study of the preparation of Pre-sentences in this department. Activities will include:

(a) literature review for national standards and relevant criteria for inclusion in the Pre-sentence report.

(b) interviews with Judges of the Court of Common Pleas and Municipal Court to ascertain their needs for information content and format.

(c) survey of other jurisdictions for formats and administrative structures.

(d) survey of corrections personnel who utilize the report to determine their needs for information content and format

(e) comparison of efficiency and effectiveness of two alternative pre-sentence models presently in use in this Dept.

(f) preparation of report & recommendations

Activity: Interview with Project Director
Data: None available
Limitations: Research not undertaken because no research staff yet hired

None

4) A major priority which will require attention for a number of years is the development of a predictive scale to assist Probation Officers in their caseload supervision. Steps to be taken in this direction include:

- a) Development of a departmental data base
- b) Review of literature
- c) Correlation of socio-psycho-legal factors with recidivism based on present experience
- d) Development of a weighted measure to determine probability of recidivism.
- e) Assignment of levels of supervision based on probability of outcome as well as experiments with treatment alternatives
- f) assessment of validity of scale and revision or discarding of scale depending on outcome
- g) simultaneously with c), determine validity of modified base expectance scale

Activity: Interview with Research Director; review of complete project file as provided by Research Director

Data: Project file

Limitations: Actual conduct of research operations unknown. Targetted date of recent computer run for base data not met due to SPSS program problems

This project, which has been underway for several years and is a joint activity of R&D and a number of federally funded service units, appears to be appropriately designed, based on what is known of the "state of the art", and indicates a process of collaboration between research and service staff. The time which lapses from one step to the next indicates two problems noted in other contexts: (1) the major focus of R&D staff in other than research activities; and (2) the problems with access to the courts computer.

The potential impact on the problem

There appears to be considerable potential impact on the problem but until further substantive activity occurs it is not possible to say more.

5) Another priority...is a comprehensive assessment of employment services provided by this Dept. and their relationship to recidivism. No detailed activities are specified in the sub-grant.

Activity: Interview researcher; Project Director, and review project file.

Data: Interview responses and file.

Limitations: This project is in a very preliminary state.

The initial research design has not been followed up on. Therefore, no findings are advanced and no statement possible about impact.

6) Additional research activities as needed.

Activity: Interview Associate Director to identify other research.

Data: Interview response

Limitations: No time to verify research activity; received information 2/22/75.

Based on information provided by the Associate Director it appears that R&D was able to provide information on which a policy change was based on the administrative level of the agency. It has not been possible to verify or analyze this process.

The evaluator does not know of any additional research activity.

7) Another area of activity...will be the final stages of preparation and publication of a policy and procedures manual for the Dept. Steps include:

- (1) preparation of a final draft by R&D staff based on input from a Departmental Committee chaired by the R&D Associate Director
- (2) printing & dissemination
- (3) updating of the manual

Activity: Interview Associate Director and project file review (sight verification).

Data: Interview response and project file

Limitations: Final draft not yet completed for review.

At this state the policy and procedures manual is still in rough. The evaluator has not read it in this form. Therefore, no findings are presented.

8) One final project will be completed...the preparation of a manual for use by judges in sentencing.

Activity: Interview Project Director with respect to project status.

Data: None available

No findings.

E. By virtue of its position within the Probation Dept., the R&D unit is in a unique position to serve as a bridge between professionals in university and corporate settings and practitioners.

Activity: Interview Project Director and Associate Director.

Data: Interview response

Limitations: The concept of a bridging function is subjective. No measurable goals are available.

R&D performs the liason function with outside evaluators described elsewhere in this report.

Members of the R&D staff, where qualified, supervise student placements.

SECTION IV. PROJECT RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

1. The "Results Anticipated" section of the subgrant will be commented on sequentially.

"Results Anticipated"

Analysis

a. "...continued success in securing LEAA funds."

Result not known until LEAA makes funding decisions.

b. "more effective utilization of LEAA money within the probation department."

This result not known to the evaluator

c. "Preparation of proposals for other funding sources...optimistic expectation would be the expansion of resources available to the department."

No alternate funding sources identified; no expansion of such resources. Result not achieved.

d. "development of a data base which is qualitatively and quantitatively enhanced over what is currently available in the department."

While no comparative quantitative data for 1973-74 exist our data for this year indicates a 93% accuracy rate. Most respondents indicate qualitative improvement as well. Result achieved.

"which will greatly enhance the ability of outside evaluators to assess program performance..."

Result achieved.

"and allow the R&D unit to conduct more and better research."

The issue is moot in that the unit conducted little research.

e. "improved channels of communication for both input and feedback from R&D to those areas of the Department where these channels were identified as weakest in this year's (1973-4) evaluation."

The levels identified in the 1973-74 evaluation were:
Supervisors and Probation Officers
Where Supervisors are concerned our findings indicate somewhat improved communication. Where Probation Officers are concerned no improvement.

Result partially achieved.

f. "continued use of the Departmental planning model... result in awareness...effective utilization of resources..."

Result not known to the evaluator.

g. "Pre-Sentence study will result in more efficient preparation of pre-sentences and..."

Result not achieved - no pre-sentence research staff hired.

h. "Predictive study (will result in) increased capacity on the part of the probation officer to classify his caseload and..."

Result not achieved.- study still in process.

i. "major purpose of an employment project will be to expand employment services."

Result not achieved - study inactive for several months.

j. "result of additional research...provide additional information...for decision making."

Result partially achieved - one such additional research project done.

k. "Dissemination of the policy and procedures manual would result in more informed and effective operations on the part of line officers..."

Result not achieved - manual not yet ready for dissemination.

l. "The Judges manual should provide assistance to the judges."

Result not achieved - manual not yet ready for dissemination.

m. "provide a bridge between University based professionals and practitioners..."

No measurable goals. Not amenable to evaluation. See comments in Section III.

Addendum: Although not explicitly listed in the subgrant application it is apparent that the unit, through the activities of its project director, has achieved certain other results. These results, which are in the nature of latent functions in the position of R & D director (and perhaps unique to the current incumbent in that position), involve the activity of the director both currently, and over the past 6 years, as one closely associated with the Chief Probation Officer. The latter credits the project director with playing a key role in helping him to professionalize the agency, in providing him with technical assistance, and in effective representation of departmental interests to a number of criminal justice committees and task forces.

Our finding is that the functions alluded to above: that of assistance in administrative planning; of technical advisory activity; and in community relations constitutes a species of "achieved results" relevant to the project objectives. As will be noted below there are both positive and negative spin-offs from these activities in terms of the subgrant section: "Results Anticipated".

2. What factors led to results other than those anticipated?

a. Timing of the evaluation report. Given that the evaluation activity has been underway only since January 1 data was simply not secured in several areas. In addition, the necessity of submitting a report in February does not permit any statement about activities still in process and which might (or might not) eventuate in a concrete result between this date and June, 1975. (eg: the Policy and procedures manual)

b. Problems in hiring staff. The failure to hire an information specialist had indirect negative effects in that the Associate Director had less time in internal coordination within the unit as he "covered" that job. The failure to hire staff for the pre-sentence study clearly explains the lack of activity.

c. Problems in computer access and function. Apparently although R & D has gained permission to the courts computer and its SPSS program no staff in the project have been taught and/or allowed to make direct use of that program. Therefore some delays are noted, most directly in the predictive study.

d. Decisions and Priorities set by Project: The decision of the project to engage in a process of self-development with the aid of the In-Service Training Director has precluded their development of structured contacts with other staff in the agency. Whether this training results in eventually effective contacts and two-way communication can not be known at this time.

e. Structural stress point and Competing Demands: It is clear that consensus exists in the department that the project makes its greatest contribution to the development of an information base and in grant management. There is also considerable consensus that more service internally is desired - in the form of research and planning aid. The project staff themselves (or at least the Director and Associate Director) concur in this.

Project staff feel that information base and LEAA management demands pre-empt time that might be devoted to providing greater service within the department.

The evaluator suggests that in addition the major function of the project director in her community relations work and back-up support to the Chief Probation Director impose a further system strain. This is magnified when we realize that the Associate Director, whose responsibility is that of internal project supervision has had to devote much of his time to activities for which the position of information specialist had been created.

The possible impact of these multiple stressors and demands on morale, productivity and objectives of R & D staff merit study. This will be a focus for evaluation in the next time period.

Be that as it may --- the continued projection of planning and research activity which does not result in achievement of such goals is not desirable. If the R & D unit is truly not able to balance these demands in a way which permits it to engage in research and planning then perhaps it might be advised to redefine its functions.

3. Impact on the "Problem"

To the extent that the information base provides more useful data there is impact on the problem. But, to the extent that the project staff are not able to engage in meaningful research and planning activity which makes use of the information base the impact on the problem is blunted.

Because the majority of the effort with respect to the development of the information base has been in the area of improvement of the existing files, the major opportunities for achieving impact have not been adequately tested. We anticipate that the greater and more direct payoffs in terms of impact will be achieved when, and if, the specific projects cited in the sub-grant application are completed and implemented. Such projects include the research in client classification and caseload management, employment services, the judge's manual, and the departmental policy and procedures manual.

Impact on the alleviation of the scarcity of resources in the department is also difficult to assess at this time. While virtually all of the energy of staff members being directed to this goal satisfaction is toward the preparation of project grant applications for refunding under LEAA. This is in part due to the coincidence of the evaluation falling at the LEAA grant deadline period. We did not, however, note any other grant sources identified or being actively pursued during the first six months of the current grant. Retrospectively, we note that all prior LEAA projects grants were refunded for 1974-75. To the extent that refunding of these projects is attributable to the efforts of the Research and Development Unit, direct impact has been demonstrated.

The Research and Development Unit is embedded within the larger Probation Department structure and forms an integral part of the supporting administrative services. Interviews with senior members of the Department administration and a sample survey of supervisory personnel and probation officers indicate differing levels of impact within the different functional strata. In general, the higher the level within the department, the greater the effort of the R&D Unit is valued. This result is similar to that observed by the previous evaluator. We note some improvement in communication and value of the unit as perceived by supervisory personnel, but no significant difference in the perceptions of Probation Officers. The project director is aware of this situation and has initiated action intended to improve contacts at the line level; however, implementation has not yet reached the stage of direct contact with Probation Officers, so impact at this level is not apparent.

4. Could these results have been obtained more efficiently by a different allocation of resources or project activity:

The evaluators are not prepared to respond to this question at this time. The evaluation period has been too short and the activities of the unit during the period observed too focused on LEAA grant activity to make a valid generalization about project management.

5. Based on evaluator's experience and knowledge, how do the results compare with others.

At this point in the evaluation, data on which to base a response to this question is insufficient to permit a response to the specific and detailed elements of this project referred to in the sub-grant application and Sections II and III of this report.

We are not aware of any other unit sufficiently similar in scope and function to be called comparable in an accurate experimental sense. Other units performing similar general functions of grant development/management and institutional research frequently take other organizational forms and employ different management strategies to good effect. The results vary from unit to unit; there is no statistically reliable or valid evidence to suggest that one approach is "better" than another. Situational factors, including the personalities of the individuals involved, appear to exert such an important influence in terms of the outcome, that generalizations about approach or methodology at a project-specific level are probably specious.

The evaluators intend to devote attention to this issue during the next evaluation period when unit activities are more typical of the total grant period.

6. Findings other than project-specific results.

No comment at this time.

7. Cost-effectiveness of the project.

At this time, we have no valid basis for estimating cost effectiveness of this project.

The "products" of the project as called for in the sub-grant application are not sufficiently well developed to assign a discrete cost to each. Based on our experience and knowledge, the cost of this unit is not excessive. At the time sub-grant goals are achieved, we will be able to develop denominators for the cost-effectiveness measure.

Major Findings.

a. The project appears to place its major resources in development of the information base and LEAA grant management. Research and planning activities, as a result, appear to have a lower operational priority.

b. The project indicates a wide and varied list of projected activities - many of which appear not to have been carried out. (The end of the subgrant year report can be more specific on this). While the achievement of a few goals may well be acceptable the evaluator is faced with the necessity of assessing the full range of goals.

c. Certain organizational aspects of project structure and function require focus in the evaluator's continuing work. Of particular interest is the split between research and planning and the centralized unit structure (as distinct from, for example, a decentralized unit with staff assigned to service units).

Major Recommendations.

a. That goals and activities in the subgrant application be expressed in measureable terms amenable to evaluation. This should include time-defined interim goals.

b. That priority be given to building those contacts, activities and relationships which can provide input and feedback to and from project staff throughout the department.

c. That organizational analysis focused on alternate structural arrangements be engaged in as a possible aid in resolving the differences (or meliorating them) referred to above in the findings section of this report.

d. Now that the LEAA grant period is over the project is urged to move ahead and attempt to meet goals in a number of areas specified in the subgrant application and referred to under results (# 3.b.) above.

e. That activities projected for the next subgrant year be somewhat more limited than is currently the case, and that especially where research and planning activities are concerned the resource strains within the project be carefully considered in advancing objectives in those two areas.

Name _____ Unit _____

Position _____

This questionnaire is part of the mandated evaluation activity of the Probation Department R & D (Research and Development) Unit which is funded by L.E.A.A.

In order to most accurately and fairly assess the R & D Unit, we are asking persons from all levels and units of the Probation Department to fill out this questionnaire. Therefore, we ask for your name to ensure that we secure a representative sample of responses. Individual responses will not be reported. We are interested in the overall picture provided by the several responses.

Please be assured that only the evaluators will see your response and that this material will be held in confidence.

Please do take the few minutes necessary to fill out this brief questionnaire and mail it to us in the enclosed pre-paid envelope. Thank you.

Jack Sternbach
Frank Betts

1) Within the last month, have you had a personal (telephone or face-to-face) contact with any R & D staff member?

___ None ___ One or Two ___ Three or Four ___ Five or More

2) Please list the name(s) of the R & D staff involved.

3) What were the contact(s) about? Briefly list topics discussed.

4) Number of contacts initiated . . . ___ by me ___ by R & D staffer

5) In the last month, have you received any documents, reports, information, etc, from the R & D Unit? (Written material)

___ None ___ One or Two ___ Three or Four ___ Five or More

6) Please list briefly the nature of such written material received.

END