Tennessee Criminal Justice Standards and Goals Project

CRIMINAL JUSTICE INFORMATION AND STATISTICS SYSTEMS

Tennessee Law Enforcement Planning Commission, 1975

PREFACE

This volume is one of eight reports adopted by the Tennessee Law Enforcement Planning Commission as goals and objectives for the criminal justice system in Tennessee. The development of the goals and objectives herein resulted from the award of Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA) discretionary funds to the Tennessee Law Enforcement Planning Commission. The Commission utilized the services of Midwest Research Institute, Kansas City, Missouri, for the coordination and operation of the goals and objectives effort.

The opinions and recommendations in this report are those of criminal justice practitioners and citizens of Tennessee. As goals and objectives are implemented, experience will dictate that some be upgraded, some modified, and perhaps some discarded. Practitioners and citizens will contribute to the process as the goals and objectives are tested in the field.

It is the hope of the Tennessee Law Enforcement Planning Commission that these goals and objectives will become an integral part of criminal justice planning throughout Tennessee and be utilized as a guideline for future program implementation.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE INFORMATION SYSTEM ACTION LIST

C - Corrections (State Department of)
Ct - Courts
DA - District Attorney General
DF - Defense Attorney
DS - Department of Safety
LE - Law Enforcement (includes Sheriffs and Police)
LG - Local Government
L - Legislature
S - Sheriff (local corrections)
TIES - Tennessee Information and Enforcement System
TLEPC - Tennessee Law Enforcement Planning Commission

Goal and Page Nos.	Description	AGENCY	'76	'77	'78	'79	'80	Byd '80
1. (9)	GOAL: ESTABLISH A NETWORK OF COMPUTERIZED INFORMATION SYSTEMS LINKING ALL COMPONENTS OF THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM							
1.1 (9)	TLEPC very strongly recommends that statutory authority be established for the development and operation of the state level information and statistical system.	L	1					
1.2 (9)	The state must establish a plan for the development of information and statistical systems and advise local levels to assure coordination with the state system.	TLEPC,DS	1					
1.3 (10)	The Tennessee Information and Enforcement System (TIES) must establish user groups that include state, regional and local representatives of law enforcement, courts and correction. User groups shall serve in an advisory capacity to the Commissioner of Safety only.	TIES,DS	1					
1.4 (10)	Every locality should be serviced by a local criminal justice information system (LCJIS) which supports the needs of criminal justice agencies.	LG						2
1.5 (13)	Every component agency of the criminal justice system should be served by an information system which supports its intraagency needs.	LE,C,Ct, DA,DT						2

CRIMINAL JUSTICE INFORMATION SYSTEM ACTION LIST (continued)

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1.6 (15)	If not economically feasible to establish local information support functions; these services must be provided through consolidation of adjacent units at the same organizational level or by the establishment of a "surrogate" at the next higher organizational level.	LE,Ct,C, TLEPC	1					
1.7 (18)	TLEPC must prepare for approval by the Governor, regulations to strictly limit system access to agencies demonstrating a need and a right to know, subject to the Tennessee Administrative Procedures Act.	TLEPC	1					
1.8 (20)	Each event involving an arrested individual must be recorded by the appropriate agency shortly after the event's occurrence. The file must originate in the arresting agency.	LE,Ct,C, DA,DF		1				
1.9 (23)	All criminal offender record information must be stored in a computer dedicated solely to and controlled by criminal justice agencies.	LE,Ct,C, DS		1				
1.10 (26)	The collection of data to satisfy both the Offender-Based Transaction Statistics (OBTS) and the Computerized Criminal History (CCH) systems should be gathered from operating criminal justice agencies in a single collection.	LE,Ct,C, DA,DF		2				
1.11 (27)	Files created as data bases for OBTS and CCH systems, should be developed simultaneously and maintained as mush as possible within a single activity.	LE,Ct,C, DA,DF		2				
1.12 (28)	Data for the Uniform Crime Reports should be expanded to include data from OBTS to facilitate crime oriented research.	LE,Ct,C DA,DF		2				
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1.16 (39)	Corrections information system should include necessary data.	S,C						2
1.17 (40)	The corrections system should collect, store, analyze and display information for planning, operational control, offender tracking and program review for all state and county correctional programs and agencies.	S,C						2
1.18 (42)	All but the largest components of the correction system should have a small information and statistics section capable of producing periodic reports and analyzing and interpreting policy and decisionmaking.	S,C						2
1.19 (42)	The performance of the correction system should be evaluated on two levels.	S,C						

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CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM INFORMATION SYSTEMS

Introduction

Organizing the nation's criminal justice information into a useful body of knowledge has been talked about for decades but little has been done. Recently, however, the urgency of the nation's crime problem, the availability of computers and data processing equipment, and the emergence of highly skilled professionals have made integrated local, state, and national information systems a possibility.

Along with many other disciplines, criminal justice has been experiencing an "information explosion" since the late 1960's. Its characteristics are steadily increasing capabilities for gathering, processing, and transmitting information, and steadily increasing information needs.

More frequent use of the computer and other automated technology is a national trend. In 1968, according to LEAA, there were just 10 states in the United States with automated state level criminal justice information systems. By 1972, 47 states had operational automated information systems serving at least one component of the system.

The uses of information and computers vary from jury selection to police manpower allocation to crime-oriented planning to correctional program placement. A recent survey of states by LEAA identified 39 separate police functions, 23 separate court functions, and 13 separate corrections functions performed by automated information systems in one or more states or cities.

As more sophisticated and expensive systems develop, it is essential that their testing, implementation, and use proceed in an efficient and orderly manner.

Criminal justice information needs involve data on offenders, crime events, and statistics on the operation of the criminal justice system.

For the effective administration of justice, information must be rapidly available on the identity, location, characteristics, and description of the known criminal offender. To this end, there is a continuing national effort to develop computerized criminal history (CCH) files that will be centrally stored and will be instantly available to any qualified agency in the law enforcement and criminal justice system in any state.

A second need is information about the event, the crime itself. At the federal level, the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) is a rapid-response system that can provide local agencies with information on wanted felons plus identification numbers for stolen weapons, vehicles, and serial-numbered properties.

Collecting this information on criminals and stolen property and making it almost instantly available to the criminal justice system nationwide is itself not enough to mount or support a successful campaign to reduce and prevent crime. Planners in criminal justice have learned that they also need working information about what the police do, what occurs in courts and in the prosecutors' offices, and what are the events of importance occurring during the corrections phase of the criminal justice system. Moreover, planners found that they would like to assemble and integrate the information about these various separate activities so that criminal justice could indeed be looked at as a single entity, an operating system.

To this end, the Offender Based Transaction System (OBTS) has been developed. No new information is required for OBTS, but rather a reordering and restructuring of currently available information. The OBTS follows the arrested person through the criminal justice system from the first encounter with the arresting officer until the final disposition of the case. The OBTS is not simply an assembly of facts; it is also an accounting of events, relationships, and time. When operative, the OBTS will be as informative about the criminal justice system as the NCIC is about crimes, and the CCH about criminals.

Historically, criminal justice information and statistics systems have been conceived, designed, and implemented separately, and often reflected the isolated environment in which their agencies operated. While a few states and major metropolitan areas had begun to establish basic information and statistics capabilities for local application, it was not until national attention was focused on the overall crime problem in the 1960's that major efforts were launched to establish more capable information handling and statistics systems.

Tennessee and many of its local agencies are acquiring and/or improving systems for collecting, processing, and disseminating data. Concerted efforts are being made to overcome the kind of traditional parochialism that for many years has hampered efforts to establish intra- and interagency information and statistics systems.

The overall intent of this report is to identify the information and information systems that will assist law enforcement, judicial, and correctional agencies at the state and local levels in reaching the basic goal established by the TLEPC.

It is to be noted there is some compliance with some of the objectives and strategies set forth in this report. Some others are in the planning stages but not yet implemented. At the present time, law enforcement agencies are the only components of the criminal justice system that participate to any appreciable extent in the criminal justice information system. The goal is that all components will participate fully and thereby gain the benefit that is possible through the information system. Through the resulting improved efficiency of the participating agencies, the public will be the eventual recipient of the benefits obtained from widespread use of this system.

This implementation report manual was compiled in cooperation with criminal justice agencies in Tennessee. Many of the goals, objectives and strategies were suggested by the National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals, by national groups such as the American Bar Association and American Warden's Association. Still others were added by professionals working in the criminal justice system who attended a series of task group meetings throughout the state. Much background research was done on the various components of the Tennessee Criminal Justice System and the material presented herein has gone through numerous revisions, modifications and additions.

The proposals for improving the criminal justice information system are presented in the form of a workbook designed to facilitate revision and updating of the proposals in future years. At the beginning of the report, there is an action list that serves two purposes. It is a table of contents for the main body of the report. It also shows at a glance the key proposals, the agency responsible for implementing them and the priorities assigned to them by the Tennessee Law Enforcement Planning Commission (TLEPC). The priorities assigned by the Commission will have important consequences in future years because, as is explained below, they will influence the funding of grant proposals made by criminal justice agencies in the state. It is important for agencies using this report to understand the meaning of certain terms of the numerical priorities assigned by the Commission.

Definition of Terms

Goal	A statement indicating a general direction or trend that is desired.
Objective	A specific program and a date by which that program is to be at least partially in effect.

Priorities:

1 Must	This is an objective that must be met by agencies seeking funds from the Commission. Each agency must meet all of the number one priorities applicable to it at any given time before it will be granted funds for objectives having lower priorities. The agency is expected to achieve the objective by the year indicated. In that year, it will not receive any funds for programs with a priority of less than one unless it has met all of the number one priorities for that and previous years. Agencies will not be penalized for failing to meet a priority one objective: (1) if that failure was due to a failure by the General Assembly or the Tennessee Supreme Court to take action required to carry out the program; (2) if the agency applied for funds to assist it in meeting the priority but did not receive a grant because the Commission was financially unable to fund the request. In the body of the report, the word "must" is used in stating each objective that was given a priority of one.
2 Should	Strongly recommended -- not a "must" but will be considered for funding ahead of objectives with lower priorities. In the body of the report the word "should" is used in stating objectives with a priority of 2. With respect to legislative proposals or actions by agencies that do not seek Commission funds, a priority of 2 means "strongly recommended."
3 Should consider	Recommended for consideration - included as an objective which has merit under specific circumstances. In the body of the report the term "should consider" is used in stating objectives with a priority of 3.
4 May consider	For consideration -- included for information purposes only. Indicated by the words "may consider" in stating the objective.

Following the action list is the main body of the report. It is organized in the same order as the goals and objectives in the action list. Most objectives have attached to them a list of "strategies" which are various ways in which objectives might be achieved and which should be considered by the agencies concerned. The goals, objectives and strategies are further explained and discussed through introductions to each goal and commentaries on an objective or set of objectives.

Most objectives or sets of objectives also have a "source" indicated. The source is the original written proposal from which the objective was taken. The objective may be in a form identical to the original source or may have been modified to meet the needs and conditions of Tennessee. In some cases, no source will be listed because the objective was developed in a task group meeting or by the commission itself and does not have an original written source. Also included are lists of references which can be used to obtain more information about the problems and issues addressed by particular objectives. References to relevant sections of the Tennessee Code Annotated (TCA) are also included.

Criminal justice personnel should be able to look at the action list, see what objectives require their actions, by what year, and look up the more detailed statement in the body of the report. The development of these proposals has emphasized not only what is desirable but what is workable and practical. Therein lies the strength of this document.

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GOAL: ESTABLISH A NETWORK OF COMPUTERIZED INFORMATION SYSTEMS LINKING ALL COMPONENTS OF THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

1.1 Objective. The Tennessee Law Enforcement Planning Commission very strongly recommends that by 1976, statutory authority be established for the development and operation of the state level information and statistical system. (This is presently being done through the Executive Order No. 9, dated May 13, 1975, which gives the responsibility to the Department of Safety.)

1.2 Objective. By 1976, the state must establish a plan for the development of information and statistical systems and advise local levels to assure coordination with the state system. (A 5-year plan, 1975-1980, has been prepared by the Tennessee Law Enforcement Planning Commission.)

1.3 Objective. By 1976, the Tennessee Information and Enforcement System (TIES) must establish user groups that include state, regional and local representatives of law enforcement, courts and corrections. User groups shall serve in an advisory capacity to the Commissioner of Safety only.

Strategies

1. User groups for correction information system could include representatives from the research community.

2. User groups should have advisory input regarding:

   a. the operation of the system

   b. the system's continuing development

   c. modifications to the system

Commentary

Because of the decentralized nature of the criminal justice system, it is important to have the advice and consent of the actual users. Much of the duplication that now exists in the country involving criminal justice information systems was caused by lack of understanding and cooperation between agencies.

One of the easier and more significant ways in which to achieve the essential ingredient of cooperation is through a properly constituted user group. This allows each of the members to serve not only as a valuable contributor to the development of the system, but also to become an involved partner in the final operating system.

Source

1. National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals, Criminal Justice System, Standard 10.2, Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office (1974).

1.4 Objective. By 1980, every locality should be serviced by a Local Criminal Justice Information System (LCJIS) which supports the needs of criminal justice agencies.

Strategies

1. The local criminal justice information system should:

   a. Contain information concerning every person arrested within that locality from the time of arrest until no further criminal justice procedures can be expected concerning that arrest.

   b. Contain a record of every local agency's contact with persons accused of a criminal offense and the reason for and results of each contact.

   c. Contain the present criminal justice status for each individual under the cognizance of criminal justice agencies.

   d. Provide prompt response to inquiries from criminal justice agencies which have furnished data base input.

   e. Provide information services for investigative support to police agencies within its geographic area of service.

   f. Provide a master name index of persons of interest to the criminal justice agencies within its jurisdiction.

   g. Provide to proper state agencies all information concerning postarrest offender statistical data as required.

   h. Provide to proper state agencies all postarrest data necessary to maintain a current criminal history on persons arrested and processed within a locality.

   i. Provide, if automated, telecommunications interface (direct connection between computers) between the state criminal justice information system and local criminal justice agencies within its jurisdication.

Commentary

Because of the traditional division of criminal justice responsibility among police, court, and correctional agencies, and because the jurisdictional boundaries of the three types of agencies are frequently not the same, substantial problems have always been encountered in the hand-off from

police to courts, and from courts to corrections. These problems affect the collection, aggregation, and dissemination of information concerning persons undergoing criminal justice processes. The role of the local criminal justice information system is to alleviate these problems by establishing an information system that will transcend agency boundaries. In many cases, the county will be found to be the appropriate level of government at which to institute a LCJIS.

The primary reason for establishing local CJIS facilities is to fill the need for prompt access to data concerning individuals and events by members of all affected agencies within a locality. For example, police need to know at the time of arrest whether a person is on bail for a previous offense; probation officers need to know when one of their clients has been arrested or has been the subject of a field interview report. Similarly, crime reports filed by one police agency may be of benefit to crime analysts in adjacent localities.

The goal is to avoid duplication of data entry for data needed by more than one agency, to minimize operating costs of making the data available and to provide a single source for reporting to state and federal systems. A LCJIS may be directly interfaced with component systems (police, courts, or corrections), where such systems are separately justifiable, or it may perform the functions of the component systems for its constituent agencies. In the latter case, file controls on access are required to insure total control. Larger cities will continue to develop police component systems by themselves, if only because of the demand for information primarily of interest to the police. The concept of a CJIS is not intended to deny this development, but rather to promote the logical development of systems that best serve the users. Coordination of such developing systems is the key to cost-effective solutions.

Source

1. National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals, Criminal Justice Systems, Standard 3.3, Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office (1974).

References

1. Santa Clara County, California Criminal Justice Information Control System.
2. City of Cincinnati Regional Information Center Project CLEAR as discussed in A Regional Approach to Criminal Justice Systems, Annual Report (1972).

1.5 Objective. By 1980, every component agency of the criminal justice system should be served by an information system which supports its intra-agency needs.

Strategies

1. The Component Information System (CIS) should:

   a. Provide rationale for the internal allocation of personnel and resources.

   b. Provide a rational basis for scheduling events, cases and transactions within the agency.

   c. Provide data required for the proper functioning of other systems as appropriate.

   d. Provide an interface between the local criminal justice information system and individual users within its own agency.

   e. Create and provide access to files needed by users that are not provided by other information systems.

Commentary

Whereas other information systems emphasize direct support to individual practitioners by the retrieval of single records, an important function of the CIS is in serving the needs of agency administrators through the manipulation and display of aggregate data.

In those applications (especially scheduling) in which individual records are considered, they are considered in the context of aggregate data representing activities competing for the scarce agency resources.

There will be operational files in police, courts, and corrections systems which may be unique to those systems. The CIS should certainly be designed to meet the needs of agency managers and operational users, but with the constraint of not duplicating those information services available through the local criminal justice information system.

If automated, the CIS should also provide communications interface between LCJIS and individual users. Determination of the number and location

of terminals is properly a function of the individual agency. In addition, users within an agency may use not only LCJIS but other information systems; in such cases, data reformatting, automatic switching, use of shared terminals and similar aspects of "horizontal integration" should be handled at the CIS level.

It should be clearly understood that this assignment of jurisdictional responsibility covers both manual and automated systems, and does not imply that automation is necessary. This standard primarily suggests that component systems should focus on satisfying internal needs which are not proper subjects for inclusion in a local or state criminal justice information system.

The problem of consolidation and providing support to smaller agencies is discussed in Objective 1.6.

Source

1. National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals, Criminal Justice Systems, Standard 3.4, Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office (1974).

References

1. Project SEARCH, International Symposium on Criminal Justice Information and Statistics Systems, Sacramento: California Crime Technological Research Foundation (1972).
2. Project SEARCH, National Symposium on Criminal Justice Information and Statistics Systems, Sacramento: California Crime Technological Research Foundation (1970).
3. Wisenand, Paul M., and Tug T. Tamara, Automated Police Information Systems, New York: John Wiley and Sons (1970).

1.6 Objective. If it is not economically feasible to establish local information support functions, these services must be provided, by 1976, through consolidation of adjacent units at the same organizational level or by the establishment of a "surrogate" at the next higher organizational level.

Strategies

1. Agency support should be provided within the agency requiring the support. When economically infeasible, such services should be provided by a consortium of nearby agencies of similar type (e.g., two nearby police departments). Alternatively, such services can be provided by the local CJIS on a "service bureau" basis.

2. Local criminal justice information system services, if economically unjustified for an individual locality, should be provided by a regional CJIS composed of adjacent localities. Alternatively, such services can be provided by the state CJIS on a service bureau basis.

3. Financial responsibility for the provision of services in cases where consolidation or surrogate provisions are carried out should remain at the organizational levels specified in this chapter. The basis for establishing the costs of such service, and the quality of performance deemed adequate for the provision of each individual service rendered should be expressed in contractual terms and agreed to be all parties to the consolidation or subrogate relationship.

4. In cases of consolidation or surrogate relationships, a strong voice in the policies and general procedures of the information system should be vested in a users group in which all users of the system are represented.

5. If at all practical, surrogate agencies should provide the same level of data that would be provided if the lower level agencies had their own systems.

Commentary

The development, implementation, and operation of an effective criminal justice information system is expensive both in direct monetary costs

and consumption of the limited technical capacity of the criminal justice agencies involved. This is particularly true in the case of development costs, which in general, do not vary in direct proportion to the data base size or transaction volume of the eventual system. As a result, many portions of the national criminal justice system are effectively excluded from using available information that would improve their performance.

Consolidation, which involves the banding together of users at a similar organizational level to provide them with adequate services, is the preferrable alternative method for assuring that all criminal justice agencies receive the support they need. Consolidation is most likely to succeed where one of the participants is sufficiently strong and well-developed to act as the leader in a consolidation activity. Consolidation should not be thought of as "letting others join our system" but rather as a partnership with both responsibility and authority vested in all participants.

When none of the potential system participants is strong enough to undertake a leadership role, or when the political realities of the localities involved prevent consolidation, the services can be provided by a higher organizational level as a service operation. In such cases, it is even more important that the individual participants have a strong role in the formulation of policy and general procedures for the operation of the system. Contracts stating relationships between the participants and the organization providing the service should be carefully drawn to assure that the users' voice in system operation does not become attenuated over time.

At present, neither consolidation nor provision of surrogate services is as prevalent as the incorporation of criminal justice information services into other governmental information systems. Although incorporation in some cases causes reduced central processor costs, it does not favorably affect development costs nor does it provide by itself for the high reliability, full-time access, or data confidentiality features which are crucial to criminal justice information needs (but to few other agencies). Such time-sharing situations, although now prevalent, should soon become reminders of a less-advanced state of automation technology development.

Source

1. National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals, Criminal Justice System, Chapter 10, Washington D.C., U.S. Government Printing Office (1974).

References

1. Bockelman, Melvin F., "Alert II--Progress Towards a Computerized Criminal Justice System," Rosenthal, Murry I., Russell D. Cramer, and Victor M. Suzuki, "Los Angeles County Regional Justice Information System (RJIS) Software System Design," and Pesce, Edward J., McDonald Anderson, and Donald Tobias, "Circle--A Comprehensive Regional Criminal Justice Information System" International Symposium on Criminal Justice Information and Statistics Systems, Project SEARCH, Sacrament: California Crime Technological Research Foundation (1972).
2. Atkinson, Andrews O., "Project Clear--An Integrated Regional Information System Serving Government, Law and Justice," National Symposium on Criminal Justice Information and Statistics Systems, Project SEARCH, Sacramento: California Crime Technological Research Foundation (1970).

1.7 Objective. By 1976, the Tennessee Law Enforcement Planning Commission must prepare for approval by the Governor, regulations to strictly limit system access to agencies demonstrating a need and a right to know, subject to the Tennessee Administrative Procedures Act.

Commentary

The members of the task groups and the TLEPC were unanimous in agreeing that close regulation of access to Tennessee's criminal justice information system is an urgent and absolute requirement for the proper operation of the system. They took the position that easy availability of criminal justice information files would be highly prejudicial to the operation of a secure information system that is intended to serve law enforcement purposes only.

Actually deciding who should have access to what information by what means and under what constraints is a difficult problem. It involves serious questions concerning both the security of the system and the right to privacy of individuals whose files are included in the system. There are people both within and without the criminal justice system who may wish to have access to criminal justice information. Police departments, licensing boards, news media, credit agencies and many others will want information from criminal justice files. The purpose of the system, however, is not to provide information to every individual or agency, public or private, who might find the information useful but to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of criminal justice agencies while preserving the rights of the individual. Thus, in drawing up regulations governing access, the burden of proof must rest with the agency seeking information. A clear need to know should be shown and that need must be related to the attainment of the ends of the criminal justice system in the state, not the attainment of other ends, worthy though they may be. The presumption should be that information will be made available to noncriminal justice agencies only when such access clearly serves a law enforcement purpose. There should be a strong presumption against permitting access by any private agency of any type.

Source

1. National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals, Criminal Justice Systems, Standard 8.3, Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office (1974).

References

1. Project SEARCH, A Model Act for Criminal Offender Record Information, Technical Memorandum No. 3, Sacramento: California Crime Technological Research Foundation, May 1971.
2. Project SEARCH, Model Administrative Regulations for Criminal Offender Record Information, Technical Memorandum No. 4, Sacramento: California Crime Technological Research Foundation, March 1972.
3. Miller, Herbert S., The Closed Door: The Effect of a Criminal Record on Employment with State and Local Public Agencies, Washington: U.S. Department of Labor, Manpower Administration (1972).

1.8 Objective. By 1977, each event involving an arrested individual must be recorded by the appropriate agency shortly after the event's occurrence. The file must originate in the arresting agency.

Commentary

This objective calls for the implementation, by 1977, of the very successful Basic Police Records System in all law enforcement departments across the state. Equal emphasis is given to expanding the concept of standardized record systems into the other criminal justice agencies The reason this objective was assigned a high priority was due in part to the success already achieved by the Basic Records System, and also, because there has to be a basic records capability in all local agencies before a statewide records system can be effective. Without this basic capability, the timeliness, completeness, and accuracy of a statewide system would be doubtful and the usefulness would be limited.

By the very nature of their records function, the clerks, prosecutors' offices, and correctional agencies have as much a need for a "balanced" records system as for a "basic" system. The concept of a "balanced" system dictates that the three criminal justice agencies concerned with the recording of the judicial processing of a defendant--the Sheriff, the States Attorney, and the Clerk--each maintain compatible records systems. In practice today in Tennessee, some clerks maintain criminal history files; some sheriffs update a Clerks Rule Docket (one of the five mandatory records to be kept by clerks); and some police departments employ secretaries to perform all the functions of court clerks and clerks of the court. In many cases, the prosecutors' criminal history file duplicates the police criminal history file, and both the prosecutor and clerk maintain the same basic case files. Because these examples are repeated many times across the state, the determination of total records needs and a separation of responsibilities to each of the agencies will reduce the costs and efforts involved in file maintenance for most agencies and increase the quality and completeness of the records systems for all.

A secondary benefit deriving from this objective would also satisfy a major training problem. At this time in Tennessee, a newly elected prosecutor, sheriff, or clerk usually has no one from whom to learn records responsibilities. At best, the newly elected official may have worked for the office or department for some period before running for election.

Although this experience may be valuable in understanding the existing system, that system may have been incorrectly formulated, inefficient, incomplete, and perhaps does not even meet the very basic legal requirements imposed by the Tennessee Code.

In most instances, however, the change in the elected official means changes in the records system. The new official, with no standards for guidance, must learn the intricacies of the total responsibilities of the position and may not place as much value in "records" during this initial period as is placed in satisfying the more immediate demands of the new job. The development of "uniform" records systems in all agencies would provide a tangible base from which newly elected officials can quickly provide accurate and beneficial reporting.

The Statistical Analysis Center (SAC) of the Tennessee Law Enforcement Planning Agency will coordinate the expansion phase of the Uniform Records System. This expansion represents coordinating the TBI's current efforts of promulgating the Basic Police Records System, in addition to providing the leadership in the development of the Uniform Records Systems for clerks, prosecutors, sheriffs' departments, and correctional agencies.

In addition to coordinating development of the forms and procedures involved in the Uniform Records Systems, the SAC has responsibility of coordinating direct technical assistance to local agencies in the process of implementing the systems.

When a department requests assistance, a records expert will visit that department to analyze the existing system and to define the steps necessary to implement the Basic Records System. Each department or agency--because each starts from a different base--has different requirements. For example, the clerks in Tennessee each have dissimilar forms, files, procedures, and amounts of historical data. Therefore, the need for technical assistance in the implementation and the initial stages of operation will be provided to the criminal justice agencies as was done for the police and sheriffs' departments.

The Basic Records System forms the foundation of all of the federal, state and regional systems to be developed and implemented in Tennessee. Many useful capabilities are currently available in state and federal systems, but it is a result of the lack of basic records in Tennessee's agencies that reporting compliance and/or use of these existing capabilities is extrememly low. Exceptions to this statement exist in those agencies where the Basic Records System (or one of equal capability) is currently operational.

Highly dependent upon the development of Basic Records Systems which will insure timeliness, completeness, and accuracy are the following systems:

- NCIC Police Operational Data Files
- NCIC Summary Criminal History
- Tennessee Police Operational Data Files
- Tennessee Offender Tracking System
- Tennessee Uniform Statistical System

In summary, this objective mandates the utilization of records systems concepts in all of the various criminal justice agencies that are basic, balanced, and uniform enabling advancement to the next level of systems enhancement.[1/]

1/ This commentary was adapted from the Tennessee Criminal Justice Information System Five-Year Action Plan prepared by the TLEPC (1975).

1.9 Objective. By 1977, all criminal offender record information must be stored in a computer dedicated solely to and controlled by criminal justice agencies.

Commentary

The requirement for dedicated systems is based on the clear need to insure the security of data and to protect personal privacy. Until about 1969, most computerized criminal justice information systems contained data that had relatively little potential to cause harm to the individual's right to privacy. Files typically included information about wanted persons, stolen vehicles, etc., information which would do little harm if disclosed without authorization. The computerized criminal history file holds entirely different kind of data, however, with a great potential for misuse. Court cases have amply demonstrated the way in which even nonautomated criminal history records can be used in a harmful manner, affecting, for instance, employment eligibility.

Thoughtful law enforcement officials recognize the danger which comes with both automation and the interstate exchange of records. While an automated system has the possibility of providing more accurate records through periodic review and updating and automatic purging of certain types of information after a given period of time, it also can contain and make easily available much more information. The very volume of information contained in the system provides greater possibilities for error. In addition, the process of taking information from an ordinary written record and recording it in the computerized system opens additional opportunities for inadvertent errors to be entered in the record. Thus, in a computerized system, the potential problems arising from disclosure, whether authorized or not, are increased many times over those existing in manual systems.

The interstate exchange of records while obviously highly desirable also increases the potential for abuse. Files in the control of a dedicated and closely controlled system in one state may be made available to another state with much weaker controls. While Tennessee cannot control the quality of data or system security of other states, it can insure that its own system operates in such a way as to maximize both the security of the system and the proper use of the data. The only way to accomplish that end is through a system dedicated solely to and controlled by criminal justice agencies.

In a dedicated system, criminal justice agencies are responsible for the collection, storage and dissemination of criminal history records and

the management control of these records. Elements of management control include, but are not necessarily confined to:

a. The power to hire, administer to, discipline and fire all personnel, both technical and nontechnical, within the system;

b. The authority to purchase, rent, lease or otherwise acquire and maintain all computer equipment and peripheral devices;

c. The total control of all phone lines, and other communication links which are part of the total automated criminal justice information/communication network.

When a computer system storing criminal history records is not dedicated to criminal justice, its control is not under a criminal agency. Therefore, complete control of the records does not lie within the criminal justice system. In the absence of management control over system operators and programmers, criminal justice officials cannot assure that the data are accurately transferred from manual records to automated ones; nor can they assure that the data are properly protected.

The concept of dedicated versus shared, as well as the changing Department of Justice rules and regulations on that subject was carefully discussed by both the CJIS task group and the CJIS Committee of the TLEPC. It was the majority opinion that in a dedicated environment, development and implementation proceeds at a much more rapid pace. Projects and priorities are totally within the criminal justice environment, and criminal justice information concerns are not intermingled with the concerns of multiple departments, agencies and commissions. Both groups recommended the dedicated concept. This objective--with a priority 1 rating assigned by the TLEPC CJIS committee--was discussed and unanimously passed by the TLEPC.

At present, there are no criminal justice computerized files maintained by the State of Tennessee that are available to state or local criminal justice agencies on an on-line basis. However, implementation of such is scheduled for the near future. The Tennessee Information and Enforcement System (TIES) is maintained by the Information Systems Services Division of the Department of Finance and Administration and only permits access to other governments' criminal justice files and facilities, such as NCIC and NLETS. It also provides free-text message switching and access to the vehicle registration and drivers history files maintained by the state.

Of the four metropolitan areas having or planning for CJIS, Nashville is the only totally dedicated system in Tennessee and is accepted as the most extensive automated system in the state.

The priority 1 rating on this objective for a dedicated CJIS includes the transferring of management control of all information systems in the state (except Nashville), to a criminal justice agency. Planning should begin immediately for the establishment of regional CJIS systems, probably at the development district level, and the accelerated development of TIES. This development and implementation will necessitate a strong financial commitment by TLEPC to obtain this objective.

Source

1. National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals, Criminal Justice System, Standard 7.6, Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office (1974).

References

1. Panel - "The Issue of Dedicated and Shared Systems," International Symposium on Criminal Justice Information and Statistics Systems, Sacramento: California Crime Technological Research Foundation (1972).

1.10 Objective. By 1977, the collection of data to satisfy both the Offender-Based Transaction Statistics (OBTS) and the Computerized Criminal History (CCH) systems should be gathered from operating criminal justice agencies in a single collection.

Strategies

1. Forms and procedures should be designed to assure that data collection and coding by agency personnel meet all requirements of the information and statistics systems, and that no duplication of data is requested.

Commentary

All collection of data to be included in the OBTS and CCH records originates in the operating criminal justice agencies. A single data collection procedure in each contributing agency is required.

The principal function of the operating criminal justice agency is not the collection of data. Yet, the activities of the agency as it processes the defendant/offender are the transactions that provide the data necessary for the information and statistics systems.

Minimum intrusion into the operations of criminal justice agencies should be the goal of data collection procedures. Forms designed for easy completion are essential. Therefore, a separate collection of data to satisfy each system, OBTS and CCH, would be unacceptable.

Source

1. National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals, Criminal Justice Systems, Standard 7.2, Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office (1974).

References

1. Slade, H. E., and Don Manson, "The Development, Uses and Problems of a Common Data Base for Criminal History and Statistics"; Reed, William L., "Problems Encountered in Developing a State-Level CCH-OBTS System and Interfacing it with the NCIC-CCH System," International Symposium on Criminal Justice Information and Statistics Systems, Project SEARCH, Sacramento: California Crime Technological Research Foundation (1972).

1.11 Objective. By 1977, files created as data bases for OBTS and CCS systems, because of their common data elements and their common data input from operating agencies, should be developed simultaneously and maintained as much as possible within a single activity.

Commentary

Since many of the data elements necessary for the separate functions of information and statistics are the same, and since in both cases the input data require processing to link indivdual transactions to the appropriate offender records, the files must be established simultaneously. Whether information is a derivative of a statistics system or statistics are derived from an on-line CCH file, the two functions have many elements in common. This objective serves to avoid duplication in all aspects of the system design.

Source

1. National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals, Criminal Justice Systems, Standard 7.3, Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office (1974).

1.12 Objective. By 1977, data for the Uniform Crime Reports should be expanded to include data from OBTS to facilitate crime oriented research.

Strategies

1. The data should be available to criminal justice agencies of other states and to federal agencies when there is legitimate need.

Commentary

The UCR system was designed to provide measurement of changes in the pattern of criminal activity. It was not designed to provide detailed data for planning and program evaluation or to meet other current needs for crime data.

The UCR program is generally adequate for its stated objectives. The program is well-established and the amount of participation on state and local levels continues to increase.

For these reasons, it is suggested that UCR be used as a basic standard and upgraded to satisfy addditional needs for information. In this sense, UCR represents a minimum level of data collection and reporting which should be adopted. Additional needs for information should be met by collecting data beyond that prescribed by UCR.

Source

1. National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals, Criminal Justice System, Chapters 4 and 7, Washington, D.C. Government Printing Office (1974).

1.13 Objective. By 1977, with the exception of intelligence files, collection of criminal justice information concerning individuals should be triggered only by a formal event in the criminal justice process and contain only verifiable data.

Commentary

While the initiation of a prosecution or other adjudicatory procedure is a "formal" event in the criminal justice process, some events, such as the report of a contact with an offender, are informal in nature. These informal events should be included only in specially identified intelligence files created for this purpose by the law enforcement agency; they shall not be included in the contents of other criminal information files.

Criminal justice information files are triggered by an external and formal event between the individual and the criminal justice system. While this procedure tends to reduce somewhat the amount of data collected, it also insures that the creation of the information file will serve a valid purpose. It will also help insure that the data collected are in fact, verifiable.

Source

1. National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals, Criminal Justice System, Standard 7.4, Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office (1974).

Reference

1. Project SEARCH, Security and Privacy Considerations in Criminal History Information Systems, Technical Report No. 2, Sacramento: California Crime Technological Research Foundation (1970).

1.14 Objective. By 1980, every police agency should have a well-defined, functioning information system.

Strategies

1. Functions of a police information system should include:

   a. Dispatching of information (which should be used as basis for "audit trail" on the quality of reports on crime, incidents and arrest).

   b. Event information including time, location, characteristics and consequences of incidents and crimes.

   c. Dossier file including fingerprints, photographs, arrest and disposition.

   d. Case information including offender characteristics, type of arrest, witnesses and evidence.

   e. Information for reports including Uniform Crime Reports.

   f. Patrol or investigation support data not supplied by external systems.

   g. Rapid access to National Crime Information Center and state system.

   h. Crime analysis capabilities bases where practical on geo-coding (coding according to location).

   i. Manpower resource allocation and controls including deployment of patrol officers.

2. Written procedures on reporting should be developed to guide officers.

3. Each police agency should establish a central records file and contribute information to a state information system.[1/]

4. Each agency should have the ability to retrieve information from its own and from the state's sytem.

1/ TCA 38-1202 directs law enforcement agencies to file reports with the Commissioner of Safety to assist in the gathering of criminal statistics.

5. The interagency exchange of information should be facilitated by providing each police agency with access to law enforcement telecommunication records.

Commentary

The basic functions listed above, when combined with the capabilities of external systems, provide the police department with the information essential to operations and management. Systems should be designed to support resource allocation and crime analysis, as well as other administrative needs of a police department. Careful consideration of the design and the data elements that are to be stored is essential if information use is to be effective.

Information is the basic tool in the operation of a police department from both an administrative and a tactical planning viewpoint. It must be one of the department's higher priorities.

The dispatch information function increases the efficiency of unit assignment and also provides the record of police response to a call for service, including elapsed time.

The event information should support all agency needs for crime data and generate UCR and other reports as a byproduct.

Case information, including the necessary indexes to offenders, victims, and events; the status of follow-up investigation; and the scheduling of prosecutional and court actions is needed to support management as well as individual investigatory decisions.

Some departments do not report "noncrime" dispositions in any detail. When a patrol is called into service, it simply states that no report is required. Therefore, the basis for audit is not as accurate as more detailed information on the reason for not reporting.

Reporting on self-initiated assignments needs to be improved. When an officer decides to interview a suspicious person or to check a building, he should call the dispatcher to be taken "out of service." The dispatcher then prepares a self-initiated dispatch record. These would then reflect either a crime report or a noncrime disposition code.

Allocating manpower under a scientific plan to meet the predicted workload is not a new concept. Only a few departments now perform this task routinely, and even these do not normally use the available technology for controlling activity of police officers or for evaluation.

To accomplish these tasks, a careful analysis and review of the data must be made. Appropriate manpower resources cannot be allocated without sufficient input data--data gathered routinely over a significant period of time.

Manpower resource allocation is predicated on determining the type of police service required and its distribution in space and time. The available manpower is then allocated to meet those requirements in a way which optimizes performance.

The results of a manpower resource allocation analysis are sizes of shifts (watches), boundaries for beats (districts), and shift starting and ending times. The performance standards selected may be equalization of workload, overall response time to calls for service, response time to emergency calls, or some combination.

Manpower resource control builds upon successful manpower allocation. Allocation deals with gross areas (i.e., beats) and large blocks of time (i.e., a shift duration), while manpower control concerns the detailed actions of individual officers. Based on these data, a manpower control system would provide a list of individual crime-prone locations to be investigated and specific times for each investigation.

While resource allocation is concerned largely with police response to events already completed, manpower control is concerned primarily with crime prevention and apprehension of criminals during criminal acts. Thus manpower control represents a centralized command and coordination of individual officers' preventive patrol time.

The application of this technology may aid significantly in the reduction of crime.

Source

1. National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals, Criminal Justice Systems, Chapter 4, Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office (1974).

References

1. St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department Program on Quality Control of Crime Reporting. This program has been in use since 1960 by St. Louis with the assistance of the Government Research Institute of that city.

2. District of Columbia Police Department, Report of MPD's Procedure for Collecting, Processing, and Reporting Crime Statistics, Washington, D.C.: Ernst and Ernst (1972).
3. Meyer, Morton, Census Bureau's Geographic Base (DIME) Files, paper presented to the Association of American Geographers, April 1972.
4. U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Geographic Base Files--Plans, Progress, and Prospects, Washington: Government Printing Office (1971).
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6. Wisenand, Paul M., and Tug T. Tamara, Automated Police Information Systems, New York: John Wiley and Sons (1970).
7. Larson, Richard C., Urban Police Patroal Analysis, Boston: The MIT Press (1972).
8. St. Louis, Missouri, Board of Police Commissioners, St. Louis Police Department, "Allocation of Patrol Manpower Resources for the St. Louis Police Department," St. Louis (1972).
9. Los Angeles Police Department, Law Enforcement Manpower Resource Allocation System as discussed in "LAPD and Computers," Los Angeles (1972).

1.15 Objective. By 1980, court information systems serving the judge, prosecutor, defense attorney and probation officer (for his role in preparing presentence reports), should include:

a. Defendant background data (information relative to appointment of counsel and data that might be determined by a bail agency interview).

b. Current individual case listings.

c. Caseflow data for calendar and court management including:

1. Disposition rates,

2. Attorney and witness schedules,

3. Judge and courtroom schedules,

4. Case status and complexity,

5. Defendant status (confined, on bail, etc.),

6. Potential case consolidations,

7. To aid the prosecutor: case priority, selection and rating criteria for witnesses and evidence.

d. Jury selection,

e. Computerized production of transcripts where practiced,

f. Participation in state transaction-based statistics systems for purposes of evaluation,

g. Automated legal research where relevant statistics and decisions are computerized.

Commentary

Case Information

The ability of the courts to use specific information about the cases before them increases the opportunity for effective prosecution

and fairness to all parties. Often when judges require information about the case before them, they must rely on the memory or unsupported statements of the parties concerned. With verified information on the history of each case, judges could control the granting of continuances and scheduling that create attorney conflicts.

Current information on the defendant's employment, residence, family status, etc., is relevant to issues like bail setting, bail reduction, release on own recognizance, approval of negotiated pleas, and sentencing. The criminal history is also an essential item of information and should be furnished as previously discussed.

Court Management Data

Applying modern management and administration techniques to the courts is a fundamental step in the promotion of efficient and equitable handling of the criminal caseload. Information is a tool of effective court management. A great many courts today are plagued with congestion and drawn out handling of cases. In addition to inefficient calendar management, causal factors are: limited physical resources, high rate of jury trials, and attorney attitudes. The results are: delay of due process and growing loss of public respect.

The application of modern management and administration techniques to alleviate these problems depends on the availability of information about what courts actually do. Most court systems lack information about their personnel, products (i.e., case dispositions), facilities, and the various participants in the court's processes.

Appropriate management information systems can provide these data. Their users are able to make sound deicisions based on valid current information; they can foster the best use of money, manpower, and material in daily operations. They can determine what policies to adopt and can measure the results of policy adoption.

Case Management for Prosecutors

At any one time, prosecutors are concerned with a large volume of cases, all in different stages of litigation. For case management, they require a system of information on case flow and statistical characteristics for their entire caseload.

Qualitatively, prosecutors' concerns include conviction rates, areas of criminal law where more emphasis should be placed, areas where prosecution may be deemphasized, and adequacy of law enforcement support. Strength of individual cases in terms of the supporting evidence and its possible erosion during long delays is another factor.

Prosecutors are also responsible for efficiency in the movement of cases. To a large extent, the flow of case processing to final disposition depends on procedures adopted by the courts. Nevertheless, the expeditious management of those resources and policies which prosecutors do control can contribute significantly. This is particularly true in regard to the decision to charge or to enter into plea negotiation. With regular information on patterns of case flow, prosecutors can identify bottlenecks, allocate resources, and modify dubious policies.

The decision to charge is one of the least scrutinized discretionary decisions in the administration of justice. The number of persons arrested, but not charged with crime, far exceeds the number that are ultimately tried in the courts.

Charging practices shape the workload of the courts; they indicate the relationship between expenditure of law enforcement resources and the use which prosecutors make of the results. These practices may have enormous effects on crime in the community.

Selection of Juries

Another major area for the use of computers in courts with a relatively large volume of work is the selection of juries. The process of recruiting, summoning, and paying jurors has become increasingly complex. However, in most jurisdictions, the computerization of jury selction can be a relatively simple process because the data base usually consists of voter registration lists, possibly supplemented by lists from other sources. Such lists are often ready for assimilation by a computer. The computer program can provide for random selection and printing of subpoenaes, juror payroll ledger, panel assignments, name slips, and juror information forms.

An important benefit to be obtained from such a system would be an accurate projection of the number of jurors required on a particular date. The projection would be made using as inputs the number of judges sitting, their requests for panels, the day of the week the case will be heard, and similar factors. The computer then would not only select the jurors, but also schedule their appearance and perhaps even assign them to a particular judge or courtroom. Juror waiting time would be substantially reduced. Jury selection by computer now is used in many jurisdictions throughout the country. A highly developed system is the one used in Houston, Texas.

Transcripts

Another area in which a court system may expand the use of computers is in the preparation of transcripts. Possibly the largest single barrier to expeditious review in criminal cases is the transcript preparation time. A system that can reduce that time radically can open the way to a major breakthrough in expeditious handling of appeals. Computers appear to have that potential.

A computer can be programmed to translate stenotype language into printouts in transcript form to comply with the format requirements of a particular jurisdiction. Corrections can be made on a rough draft printout or a display on a cathode ray terminal. Each court reporter could be equipped with a stenotype terminal that would prepare both a magnetic tape cassette and the usual printed record tape. The cassette would be delivered manually to the computer center or the contents transmitted over a data-communications telephone facility. The computer need not be in or near the court. Final corrected transcripts could be provided the same day as the court proceeding. Although the initial investment in terminals, software, and training would offset any shortrun reduction in preparation costs, the decrease in appeal preparation time and effort through elimination of manual transcription and typing of record tapes could produce significant cost savings in the long run.

Source

1. Nztional Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals, Criminal Justice Systems, Chapter 5, Washington: Government Printing Office (1974).

References

1. Polansky, Larry, and Jean M. White, "A Comparison of an Ideal Criminal Court Information System to the Philadephia Criminal Court Information System," National Symposium on Criminal Justice Information and Statistics Systems, Sacramento: California Crime Technological Research Foundation (1970).
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8. President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice, The Courts, Washington: Government Printing Office (1967).
8. Project SEARCH, Designing Statewide Criminal Justice Statistics Systems--The Demonstration of a Prototype, Technical Report No. 3, Sacramento: California Crime Technological Research Foundation (1970).

1.16 Objective. By 1980, the corrections information system should:

a. Provide complete and detailed criminal case histories on each offender.

b. Update offender's file regularly with his correctional history.

c. Conduct program analysis based on large numbers of case histories to find out what really does "rehabilitate" offenders.

d. The system should be uniform, statewide, and flexible so as to permit expansion.

Commentary

Achievement of correctional objectives depends on definition and execution of plans directed to their accomplishment. Plans must be based on reliable current information related to sequences of decisions to be made in their current information related to sequences of decisions to be made in their execution. At each step in the administration of a correction plan, large amounts of information must be digested and related to decision options.

Data collection, analysis, and display for correctional decision-making has been a laborious process carried out manually and having limited value for most decisionmakers. Availability of equipment and technology for comprehensive information systems has enabled correctional administrators to plan and review operations more effectively. Because information requirements in corrections differ from those of other criminal justice areas, design and implementation of independent information systems to serve the specific needs of corrections is recommeded. However, the system should be designed in such a way as to support development of an integrated offender-based transaction system.

1.17 Objective. By 1980, the corrections systems should collected, store, analyze and display information for planning, operational control, offender tracking, and program review for all state and county correctional programs and agencies.

Strategies

1. The correctional information systems data base should be designed to satisfy requirements for:

   a. Information-statistics function of offender accounting, administrative decisionmaking, and ongoing research;

   b. Easy compilation of an annual statistical report;

   c. Data required at decision points;

   d. Meeting the needs of other criminal justice information systems for correctional data;

   e. Accommodating expansion of the data base; and

   f. Rapid response to ad hoc inquiries.

Commentary

The corrections information system should be designed to support the management functions outlined. Specific output reports may change over time to remain useful to the administration; the data base itself should be broad enough to anticipate these needs. This does not imply that every data element conceived should be collected and stored. Administrators and those involved in research should outline their information needs, keeping in mind the questions that need to be answered. Some agencies may need assistance in deciding what information they will need. A carefully selected data base and a well-designed system will anticipate the kinds of information that will satisfy management requirements and research needs.

An excellent way to determine the data elements to be included is to detail the decision processes that involve the department and its clients. The development of a flow diagram of the corrections operation will pinpoint routine decisions. Once these decision points are known, analyses should be undertaken to determine the information necessary

to carry out the decision function. This procedure, besides providing a methodology for data element selection, results in a precise understanding of the correction decision process and the relationships among decision points. This provides invaluable background for statistical system design.

The corrections data base must meet requirements beyond those of the deparment. Because criminal justice planning must tie agencies together into a system, there are needs imposed from outside. Some state level criminal justice information/statistics systems already have established requirements for corrections data. In addition, national data assemblages such as the National Prisoners Statistics (NPS) require that certain common data elements be collected in each system. As development of criminal justice information and statistics systems continues, more will be required of the data base. Designers must be aware of these developments as they prepare to construct their own files.

Source

1. National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals, Criminal Justice Systems, Corrections, Washington, D.C. Government Printing Office (1970).

References

1. Hill, Harland, and Marshall J. Woodell, Correctionetics: Modular Approach to an Advanced Correctional Information System, Sacramento: The American Justice Institute (1972).

2. South Carolina Department of Corrections, Systems Study for a Correctional Information System, Phase I and II, Columbia (1972).

1.18 Objective. By 1980, all but the largest components of the corrections system should have a small information and statistics section capable of producing periodic reports and analyzing and interpreting policy and decisionmaking.

1.19 Objective. By 1980, the performance of the corrections system should be evaluated on two levels:

a. Overall performance or system review as measured by recidivism; and

b. Program reviews that emphasize measurement of achievement of short-range goals.

Commentary

Performance measurement is critical to evaluative program review. Standards of measurement should be uniform for external review and comparison. This requirement is especially important for fund-granting agencies, which must make decisions about program support on the basis of evaluated operational performance. Unless these measurements are based on standard criteria, reviews cannot be valid, nor can comparison be made when necessary.

A distinction is made between system review and program review. In a system review, performance of the entire system in achieving its goal is the object of measurement. In a program review, effectiveness of the program in the achievement of an immediate objective must be measured. This kind of evaluation calls for identification of specific goals and appropriate measures for determining whether they are achieved. While this level of measurement is essential for program control, the program's contribution to the system's success in meeting its goals also must be measured. This latter measurement must be made with the scale by which the system is measured.

Information system design and data collection efforts should reflect these considerations:

1. For system review, measurement of recidivism should be the primary but not the only evaluative criterion. A standard definition for recidivism has been proposed by the National Advisory Commision for adoption by all correctional agencies to facilitate comparisons among jurisdictions and compilation of national figures:

"Recidivism should be measured by criminal acts that resulted in conviction by a court, when committed by individuals who are under correctional supervision or who have been released from correctional supervision within the previous 3 years, and by technical violations of probation or parole in which a sentencing authority took action that resulted in an adverse change in the offender's legal status."

Technical violations should be maintained separately from data on reconvictions. All violators of probation or parole should be classified to show whether the violations are technical, involve criminal activity, or are a result of a reconviction for a new criminal offense. The nature of the offense or violation should be disclosed.

Recidivism should be reported in a manner to reflect patterns of change. At a minimum, statistical tables should present the number of recidivists in each annual disposition or release cohort at 6-month intervals for the 3-year follow-up period. Discriminations by age, offense, length of sentence, and disposition should be provided.

Measures of recidivism can be refined according to the type of offense and the number of repeats. In the future, measures of recidivism also may incorporate judgements concerning the seriousness of the offense, but more research is needed on this subject. Other performance measures also can be used to evaluate overall system performance. These are used to determine how well the offender is adjusting in the community.

2. Program review is a more specific type of evaluation that should entail these five criteria of measurement:

a. Measurement of effort, in terms of cost, time, and types of personnel employed in the project in question;

b. Measurement of performance, in terms of whether immediate goals of the program have been achieved;

c. Determination of adequacy of performance in terms of the program's value for offenders exposed to it as shown by individual follow up;

d. Determination of efficiency, assessing effort and performance for various programs to see which are most effective with comparable groups and at what cost; and

e. Study of process, to determine the relative contributions of process to goal achievement, such as attributes of the program related to success or failure, recipients of the program who are more or less benefited, conditions affecting program delivery, and effects produced by the program.

Program reviews should provide for classification of clients exposed by relevant types (age, offense category, base expectancy rating, psychological state or type, etc.). Evaluative measurements should be applied to discrete and defined cohorts. Where recidivism data are to be used, classifications should be related to reconvictions and technical violations of probation or parole as required in system reviews.

3. Assertions of system or program success should not be based on unprocessed percentages of offenders not reported in recidivism figures. That is, for individuals to be claimed as successes, their success must be clearly related in some demonstrable way to the program to which they were exposed.

Standards of performance in corrections previously have been based largely on the collective subjective opinions and judgments of administrators. While subjective consensus should not be eliminated entirely from the process of standard setting, objective statistical measurement could provide more guidance. Research to validate measurement and to determine optimum performance standards should be expedited in the interest of improving sentencing policy, setting expenditure priorities, and providing more effective services to offenders.

Source

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END

7 illustrations