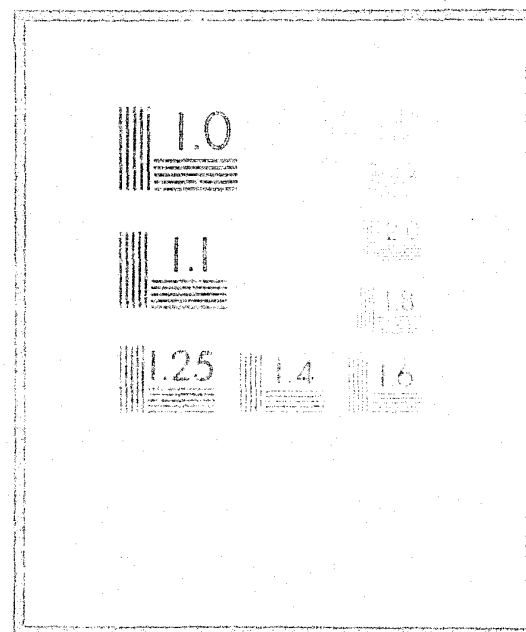


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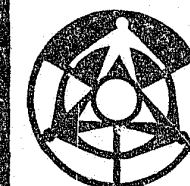
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RECOMMENDED AUTOMATED CASE TRACKING SYSTEM

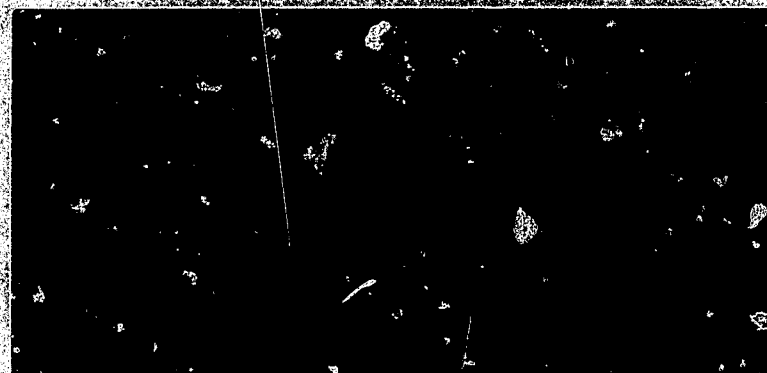
FOR SALT LAKE CITY COURT:

SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH



THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY

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RECOMMENDED AUTOMATED CASE TRACKING SYSTEM
FOR SALT LAKE CITY COURT:
SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH

February, 1976

CONSULTANT:
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NCJRS

MAR 8 1977

ACQUISITIONS

CRIMINAL COURTS TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROJECT
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I. INTRODUCTION

In July, 1975, Conrad Harrison, Mayor of Salt Lake City, Utah, requested technical assistance on behalf of the Salt Lake City Court to review the operation of the Court clerk's office with a view to improving coordination of information between the Court and other criminal justice agencies in Salt Lake City and County. In processing Mayor Harrison's request, the Utah Law Enforcement Planning Agency (SPA) expanded its focus to include the following tasks: 1) a design of the parameters of a computer processing and information system, 2) a requirements analysis and system design, 3) interfacing of the design with other criminal justice information systems currently planned or in progress, and 4) actual programming and testing of the system. This request was then forwarded through appropriate channels to LEAA's Criminal Courts Technical Assistance Project at The American Univeristy.

In view of the broad scope of effort outlined by the SPA, a preliminary site visit was made by Geoffrey Corbett, the consultant assigned by the project. Mr. Corbett has had considerable technical expertise in system development and had formerly been on the staff of the District of Columbia Office of Criminal Justice Plans and Analysis (SPA). This meeting was held in early August with Fred Oswald, Salt Lake City Court Administrator; Robert Springmeyer, Jr., of Utah's Region XII criminal justice planning unit; Arthur Hudacho of the Utah SPA; Larry Backus and John Jones of the LEAA Regional Office in Denver, and others who might be involved in the effort or contribute to its development.

Following this meeting, Mr. Corbett prepared a two-phase work plan by which technical assistance might be provided to develop the requested reporting

system for the Salt Lake City Court as well as to plan the regional system involving surrounding counties. The first phase envisioned working with the City Court Administrator to develop a court reporting system, determining system requirements, necessary individual reports, resources required and data collection formats. The second phase would be provided to a Committee of city, county and state representatives which would be established to determine the definition and development of a regional system geared to eventual statewide operation. It was assumed that these technical assistance services would be complemented with data collection, system analysis and administrative support, which would be provided during the first phase by the City's Director of Data Processing and the City Court Administrator, and during the second phase, by the Region XII planning unit and the Committee.

This proposed scope of work was approved by Mr. Hudacho and in September Mr. Corbett began the study, with the intention of completing both phases. During the course of the effort, however, it became apparent that the second phase, i.e., the regional-statewide system effort, could be conducted better after local and state officials were able to develop a statement of total system requirements which would be essential to subsequent system design and development. In view of numerous considerations, both on a federal and on a state level, which had bearing on such an effort and which had become apparent during the course of the consultant's work, Mr. Hudacho requested that assistance on this second phase be suspended for the time being and that Mr. Corbett focus his efforts upon the court reporting system for the City Court.

This report documents that effort and is the product of both the consultant's analysis and several meetings held during the course of the effort with Mr. Oswald and others involved in the project.

Concurrently with the conduct of this effort, a personnel assessment of the Court's staffing needs was undertaken by a local university. While the results of this latter study will certainly bear upon implementation efforts regarding the system recommended in this report, the design component is already going forward with the assistance of the city's Data Processing Department.

II. EXISTING SITUATION

The Salt Lake City Court is composed of five judges whose caseload consists of combined city and state criminal felonies and misdemeanors and a large proportion of moving violations. The Clerk of Court has a staff of approximately ten persons and reports to four commissioners representing the City's executive branch of government. Mr. Oswald, the Court Administrator, had been in office for approximately one year at the time of the study.

The Salt Lake City Court is currently in the rather unique situation of being able to develop certain procedural and administrative changes without having to remedy a significant backlog problem. Recent innovations in the Salt Lake City Court, (e.g., the hiring of a court administrator and an information specialist and instituting a pre-arraignment procedure for clearing certain traffic cases,) have created a positive environment within which change can be introduced.

However, current estimates indicate that there will be an increase in the workload of the Court. In order to more effectively process the current court caseload and have the capacity to easily accommodate future increases in caseload, it is recommended that an automated case tracking system be implemented. Such a system will provide the Court with a greater degree of control over the case jackets as well as improve the accessibility by various Court personnel and the public to information relating to individual cases.

III. PROPOSED SYSTEM

A. PURPOSE AND DESCRIPTION OF SYSTEM

The purpose of the Court Information System is to provide a case tracking and reporting capability for the Salt Lake City Court. The system will enable the Court to more effectively handle increases in caseloads in addition to streamlining certain existing functions. An additional feature of the system will enable the Court to evaluate its overall performance in terms of its primary goals of insuring speedy trial.

The basic building block of the system is a case. In those cases involving more than one defendant, the system will have the capability of identifying individual defendants. Each case to be adjudicated by the Court will be tracked by the system from its inception (citation, arrest or warrant) until it reaches final disposition.* At final disposition, the case record will be summarized and placed in a history file which will be utilized for research purposes as well as to provide notification to appropriate government agencies of the final disposition of certain cases that have been brought before the Court.

The result of the above actions will provide an automated data file which contains all cases which are either scheduled for a specific judicial proceeding or have reached final disposition. This automated file will constitute the base of the system. From it, the following reports can be developed:

A. DAILY CALENDARS

1. Misdemeanors

- a. Arraignment
- b. One day trial
- c. Five day trial
- d. Sentencing

* Final disposition is defined as: Dismissed, not guilty, stricken, payment of fine, completion of probation, incarceration, bound over to District Court.

2. Felonies

- a. Information hearing
- b. One day preliminary hearing
- c. Five day preliminary hearing

B. CASE STATUS

1. Register of Action

- a. Master File Summary
- b. Cross reference of Master File Summary

2. Delinquent cases by type of action

3. Public Defender Assignments

4. Probation Termination/Fine Payment

- a. Successful
- b. Unsuccessful

C. GENERAL

- 1. Inquiry- shows all cases meeting a defined set of criteria
- 2. Statistical- tabulation of cases in master file based on pre-defined criteria

Below are recommended layouts for certain of the above reports.

CALENDARS

Arraignment

Case No.	Defendant Name	DOB	Charges	Bond Status
----------	----------------	-----	---------	----------------

One-Day Trial

Case No.	Defendant Name	DOB	Charges	Court	Defense Counsel	Bond Status
----------	----------------	-----	---------	-------	--------------------	----------------

Sentencing

Case No.	Defendant Name	DOB	Charges	Bond Status	Trial Result
----------	----------------	-----	---------	----------------	-----------------

REPORT FORMATS

CASE STATUS

Fugitive List

Case No.	Defendant Name	Most Recent Court Action	Bench Warrant Date
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Master File Summary

(Alpha Sequence)

Case No.	Defendant Name	Next Scheduled Court Action	Most Recent Court Action	Charge	Court
----------	----------------	--------------------------------	-----------------------------	--------	-------

Cross Reference

(Case No. Sequence)

Case No.	Defendant Name
----------	----------------

B. MASTER FILE DESCRIPTION

The data elements which are to be included in the master file are listed below. This is a preliminary list which should be subjected to a detailed analysis prior to being finalized. During this process, decisions must be made as to:

- which data elements should be retained in history file;
- should sex and race designators be kept;
- should State identifiers be included; and
- should individuals connected with the case be identified.

<u>DATA ELEMENTS</u>	<u>ESTIMATED LENGTH</u>
court-key	
case no.	8
name	27
date of birth	6
jail docket number	6
date of arrest or booking	6
original charges (up to four charges of 5 characters in length)	20
type of case	
M= city misdemeanor	1
T= traffic	
F= felony	
S= state misdemeanor	
entry type	1
J= jail	1= complaint
W= warrant	2= 14-day citation
B= bench warrant	3= 5-day citation
	4= commitment

DATA ELEMENTS (continued)

ESTIMATED LENGTH

bond status	1
Ø= none	
O= own recognizance	
C= cash bail	
S= supervised own recognizance	
B= bond	
date released	4
bond amount	7
bondsman	5
arraignment date	4
lawyer status	1
Ø= none	
P= private	
D= public defender	
warrant no.	5
next action	1
J= jury trial	
N= bench trial	
S= sentencing	
H= pre-trial hearing	
P= preliminary hearing	
date of next action	6
preliminary hearing waived	1
new charges (up to four charges of 5 characters in length)	20
findings	4
G= guilty	
B= bound over	
C= continued	
N= not guilty	
U= under advisement	
D= dismissed	

IV. CONCLUSION

The implementation of the Court Information System will provide information essential for day-to-day management of the Court's caseload. In addition, this system will alleviate certain aspects of the Clerk of the Court's operation and free some of his staff by reducing the requirement for transcribing information from the case jackets to the Record of Action.

One of the concerns of the Court in developing this system was a statutory requirement enacted in the 1920's requiring the maintenance of a "written bound record of action." The Court interprets this requirement to mandate the keeping of a large bound record book. In the opinion of the consultant, however, the term "bound" need not be so narrowly interpreted. The purpose of the statute is to ensure that interested persons have access to information on the current status of specific cases pending before the Court. The proposed system meets this intent, although it does not comply with the specific literal wording of the statute. If the more narrow construction of the statute still holds, the Court can follow one of two courses of action: 1) utilize a permanent binding process for the automated Record of Action; or 2) request the legislature to modify the particular statute in a way that allows for automated reports.

With any significant change in operating procedure (as would occur with the recommended system), positive involvement by all personnel is a prerequisite to successful implementation. This is especially significant because the Salt Lake City Courts will be introducing an automated system to replace a predominantly manual procedure.

To relieve this difficulty, it is recommended that the City Data Processing Department be utilized for detailed system design and implementation. The Department has been involved in the requirements analysis as well as the general system design associated with the technical assistance effort.

Experience with the implementation of automated systems has not shown that there is a consequential reduction in staff levels, although the actual functions and responsibilities of current staff may change. This situation will probably occur in the Salt Lake City Court, and consideration should be given as to how the current staff can best be utilized in the light of the staffing requirements of the proposed system and the assessment of court personnel which is currently underway.

END

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