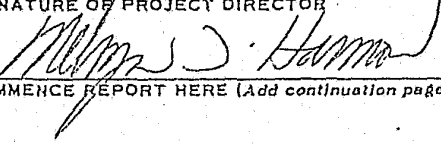
 U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE LAW ENFORCEMENT ASSISTANCE ADMINISTRATION		DISCRETIONARY GRANT PROGRESS REPORT	
GRANTEE Nevada Commission on Crime Delinquency and Corrections		LEAA GRANT NO. 76-DF-09-0028 76-ED-09-0012	DATE OF REPORT
IMPLEMENTING SUBGRANTEE Clark County District Attorney Las Vegas, Nevada		REPORT NO. 8	
TYPE OF REPORT <input type="checkbox"/> REGULAR <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FINAL REPORT		<input type="checkbox"/> SPECIAL REQUEST	
SHORT TITLE OF PROJECT Major Violators Unit		GRANT AMOUNT \$164,956	
REPORT IS SUBMITTED FOR THE PERIOD July 1, 1976		THROUGH August 31, 1977	
SIGNATURE OF PROJECT DIRECTOR 		TYPED NAME & TITLE OF PROJECT DIRECTOR MELVYN T. HARMON Chief Deputy District Attorney	
COMMENCE REPORT HERE (Add continuation pages as required.)			

RECEIVED

NOV 14 1977

MAJOR VIOLATORS PROJECT

Nevada Crime
Commission

1976-1977*

FINAL REPORT

(See Attached)

- * A sixty day grant extension made the 1st year funding period from July 1, 1976 through August 31, 1977.

NCJRS

FEB 28 1978

ACQUISITIONS

RECEIVED BY GRANTEE STATE PLANNING AGENCY (Optional)

(signed) JAMES A. BARRETT, DIRECTOR

DATE

45506^a

MAJOR VIOLATORS PROJECT (MVU)

1976-1977*

FINAL REPORT

Discretionary Grant #76-DF-09-0028
#76-ED-09-0012

PROJECT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Project goals and objectives have been narrowed from the grant narrative description. Originally, the target crimes were stated as homicide, forcible rape, robbery, assault, and burglary. However, after the Project Director and staff attorneys for the program reviewed the project potential, the local situation, visited San Diego, and in consulting with the District Attorney, it was decided that the original goals were too broad.

It was felt that in order to have an impact in measurable terms on the reduction of crime that the target group should be narrowed to less of a "shotgun" approach. The new goals and objectives are clearly stated in the developed screening criteria:

"The Major Violators Unit will be concentrating solely on prosecution of the robbery, burglary and robbery/burglary related homicide or rape defendant."

* A sixty day grant extension made the 1st year funding period from July 1, 1976 through August 31, 1977.

The screening criteria were designed to identify the career criminal within these target crimes.

Robberies, in fact, have been the number one crime prosecuted by the MVU.

Also, originally the first listed Sub-Goal was "Reduction of plea negotiation resulting in lesser charge." This goal was narrowed to:

- Reduction of plea negotiation to zero-NO PLEA NEGOTIATION;

Other Sub-Goals for the prosecution of the above mentioned target crimes involving career criminals remain the same as stated in the project narrative, that is,

- Reduce pre-trial and trial delay;
- Reduce the number of cases dismissed on grounds other than the merits of the case;
- Reduce the number of continuances on cases involving major violators;
- Deter through successful prosecution and conviction of major violators, those who would seek to emulate the lifestyle of the career criminal;
- Reduce slack in the criminal justice system by aggressively prosecuting probation revocations;
- Assist local parole and probation authorities in increasing their efficiency by providing better prepared prosecutors to help eliminate repeated continuances at revocation proceedings.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM IN MEASURABLE TERMS

Criminal Justice Research on a national level has shown that the majority of serious crimes committed in this country are by a relatively few number of career criminals. These "repeat offenders" must be charged and quickly prosecuted, if we are to make any impact on the crime rate.

It is felt that national statistics have been well established as a basis for the first nineteen Career Criminal Programs. Representative statements reflecting the Career Criminal (Major Violator) problem are noted in the following excerpts in an Administrative Report prepared by the Rand Corporation for the National Institute of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice Department of Justice (dated December 1976).

p. 7 "The percentage who have been previously convicted of felonies but not sent to prison is quite large (28-45 per cent)."
"---72 per cent of the defendants who were charged with robbery and eventually convicted, who had previously been to prison, received prison sentences."

p. 10 "All together, our sample of 49 offenders reported a total of 10,505 offences, or 214 per offender. Since the average "street time" career length was approximately ten years, that was 20 of these offenses committed per year per offender."

In a presidential address in Congress in 1975 the following statement was made to illustrate the nature of the career

criminal problem--"in one city over 60 rapes, more than 200 burglaries and 14 murders were committed by only 10 persons in less than 12 months. Unfortunately, this example is not unique."

The problem of Career Criminals and the Career Criminal program was given national coverage in the November 22, 1976 U. S. News & World Report which stated the theory as:

"Much of the nation's serious crime is committed by a relatively small number of people who make crime their business. So, one way to reduce crime is to identify such criminals and make sure that they are prosecuted swiftly and vigorously, convicted if guilty and locked up for the maximum sentence if they are convicted."

One indication of the local repeat offender problem is reflected in a Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department's Narcotics Task Force Analysis of arrests made by the LVMPD for sale of controlled substances. It was found that 80 per cent had a previous arrest record. Thirty-three per cent had previous arrests for Larceny, 10 per cent had previous arrests for Robbery and 21 per cent had previous arrests for Assault. Twenty per cent were ex-felons.

Another study by the National Clearing House for use in the Nevada State Correction's Master Plan based on a one-time survey of inmates of the Clark County Jail, indicated that 80 per cent of post-sentence inmates had previous convictions

(felony and/or misdemeanor), 80 per cent of inmates awaiting sentencing had previous convictions and 67 per cent of the remaining inmates (detainers, etc.,) had been convicted previously.

A study of the prisons in the State of Nevada shows that 67 per cent of the prison population had at least one prior felony conviction and 20 per cent of the total had three or more prior felony convictions.

Clark County (Las Vegas S. M. S. A.), with an estimated population of 398,000 persons (July 1, 1976 Clark County Regional Planning Council) and approximately 10,000,000 annual tourist visitors (Clark County Convention and Visitors Authority), has experienced a continually rising crime rate.

FBI crime reports for 1975 shows that Clark County has a ratio of serious crimes per 100,000 population which is almost double the national average--the highest crime rate in the nation.

Rates of increase of index crimes in Clark County are as follows:

TABLE I
REPORTED OFFENSES* AND PERCENT CHANGE IN CLARK COUNTY

	<u>1971</u>	<u>1975</u>	<u>1976</u>	<u>% Change 1976 over 1971</u>	<u>% Change 1976 over 1975</u>
TOTAL INDEX	16,242	32,696	34,598	+113	+6
VIOLENT CRIME	1,254	3,109	3,204	+156	+3
PROPERTY CRIME	14,988	29,587	31,394	+109	+6
MURDER	39	50	46	+18	-8
RAPE	86	207	203	+136	-2
AGGRAVATED ASSAULT	500	1,371	1,513	+203	+10
ROBBERY	629	1,481	1,442	+129	-3
BURGLARY	4,936	10,622	10,448	+112	-2
LARCENY	8,130	16,788	18,759	+131	+12
MOTOR VEHICLE THEFT	1,922	2,177	2,187	+14	0

* Includes Larceny under \$50.00

STATEMENT OF HYPOTHESES AND WORKING ASSUMPTIONS

WHICH PROVIDED THE CONCEPTUAL FOUNDATION

AND THRUST OF THE PROJECT

Hypotheses and working assumptions would include:

- Major Violators can be identified;
- Many crimes are committed by major violators with repeated arrests and felony convictions;
- Average times to dispositions can be shortened;
- Percentages of defendants convicted with subsequent incarceration will be high;

It is hypothesized that with the operation of a Major Violators Unit (MVU) THAT THE LEVEL OF INCREASE IN TARGETED CRIMES CAN BE HALTED AND/OR DIMINISHED!

STATEMENT OF SPECIFIC INDICATORS AND MEASURES

--DATA SOURCES

Data (Career Criminal Case Data Forms) were forwarded to the National Legal Data Center, Inc., and thus, computerized processing allowed the Center to produce statistical summaries measuring performance in 75 separate and distinct areas.

An independant third party was contracted to assist the Project Analyst in performing an evaluation design. The evaluator participated in setting up the statistical model and

the data collection process as well as submitting a first year final evaluation.

The Program Analyst collected data manually relative to a number of measurements in felony cases in the District Attorney's Office. This data were used for comparison and model purposes relative to Major Violator data.

STATEMENT OF RESULTS ACHIEVED BY THE PROJECT

Attachment I is the first year evaluation document as submitted by L. A. Wilson II, Ph. D. who was contracted as program evaluation consultant.

The document discusses statistical problems and limited data for this first year evaluation. A conclusion statement is as follows:

Even with this very cautious approach to these data, however, it is difficult to avoid concluding that several of the major goals of the Major Violators Unit have been achieved in this first year: a substantial reduction in time from arrest to final disposition has been noted; a significant increase in the severity of sentences handed offenders appears to have been achieved; and a high rate of success has been achieved in gaining pleas of guilty and jury convictions for offenders without charge reduction.

A "Career Criminal Unit Performance Summary" (Attachment II) includes data on additional defendants. The results

reported in the updated summary not only substantiates the data used in the writing of the evaluation but also demonstrates a consistency of results.

The crime rate appears to have slowed in Clark County. A crime rate summary with contrasts the first six months of 1976 and 1977 is as follows:

TABLE II
CRIME RATE SUMMARY (1976 and 1977)
ACTUAL OFFENSES CONTRAST FIRST SIX MONTHS

TOTAL ACTUAL OFFENSES DOWN:

1976	-	18,178
1977	-	<u>17,599</u>
		579 -3%

<u>CLASSIFICATION</u>	<u>ACTUAL OFFENSES</u>	
	<u>1976</u>	<u>1977</u>
1. Criminal Homicide	47	34
2. Forcible Rape	88	91
3. Robbery	673	665
Firearm	(376)	(319)
4. Assault	1,976	1,886
5. Breaking & Entering	5,098	5,613
6. Larceny-Theft	9,272	8,158
7. Motor Vehicle Theft	<u>1,024</u>	<u>1,154</u>
TOTALS	18,178	17,599

Hopefully, Clark County will be able to maintain a halted and/or diminished crime rate. Also, it is hoped that these data reflect an improvement of the over-all criminal justice system including the District Attorney's Office.

The data that is of particular note for the Major Violator Unit concerns robbery with a firearm. Robbery, in the above crime rate summary, shows a decline of 1 per cent. However, robbery with a firearm had a 15 per cent decline. Robbery with a firearm has been the highest target crime prosecuted by the MVU.

THE RESULTS ACHIEVED BY THE MAJOR VIOLATOR UNIT DURING THE FIRST YEAR ARE FELT TO BE GRATIFYING AND SATISFACTORY.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANT ADMINISTRATIVE, BUDGETARY,
AND PROGRAMMATIC PROBLEMS

Significant problems were basically (1) time delays in project start-up and (2) the development of fast and effective screening. The first problem obviously was solved as the program was fully staffed and in operation in early October, 1976. The second problem was solved over several months of development of the identification and screening system.

There presently are no significant administrative, budgetary, or programmatic problems.

A FIRST YEAR EVALUATION OF THE MAJOR VIOLATORS UNIT
OF THE CLARK COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

Prepared by

L.A. Wilson II, Ph.D.

The data upon which this report is based were provided by Tad Corbett,
Program Analyst, Major Violators Unit, and the National Legal Data Center,
Thousand Oaks, California.

INTRODUCTION

The Major Violators Unit of the Clark County, Nevada, District Attorney's Office became operational in October of 1976. Funded at a level of \$185,391 through a combination of federal and county monies, this unit of the District Attorney's Office concentrates upon the identification and prosecution of career criminals who committ robbery, residential burglary and robbery/residential burglary related homicide or rape.

This unit of the District Attorney's Office is staffed with one Chief Deputy District Attorney, two Deputy District Attorneys, one investigator, one program analyst, one legal secretary, and one clerk-typist. While the major thrust of this unit is the identification and prosecution of career criminals who committ the crimes specified above, one of the Deputy District Attorneys directs most of his attention to questions of parole revocation of career criminals.¹

Evaluation Design

The first question that must be addressed in the evaluation of any program concerns the identification of the goals of the program. The major goals of the Major Violators Unit are the improvement of the prosecution of career criminals, thereby increasing the conviction rate of repeat offenders, and the reduction of the time from arrest to final disposition.

Along with the two major goals of the Major Violators Unit, a series of subgoals have also been identified. These are:

1. the reduction of rate of plea negotiation which resulted in a lesser charge;
2. the reduction of pre-trial and trial delay;
3. the reduction in the number of cases which are dismissed on grounds other than the merits of the case;
4. the reduction in the number of continuances in cases involving major violators;
5. the deterrence, through the successful prosecution and conviction of major violators, of those who would seek to emulate the life-style of the career criminal.

These major and sub-goals of the Major Violators Unit, then, are the principal bases upon which an evaluation of this program should be conducted.

Any number of unintended consequences of a project such as that of the Major Violators Unit could also be considered as criteria by which its success or failure could be assessed: does reduction in the time from arrest to final disposition for major violators result in an increase in time from arrest to final disposition for those not considered career criminals? Does the creation of special group of prosecutors such as the Major Violators Unit have a negative impact upon the morale of prosecutors not within the unit?

The second question that must be addressed in conducting an evaluation of a program such as this one is that of the identification of relevant control and experimental groups. That is, against the performance of what group is the performance of this group to be compared? The experimental group is clearly the career criminals who have been designated as such by the criteria outlined by the Major Violators Unit. However, at least three

different control groups can be identified: individuals who have been prosecuted by the Clark County District Attorney's Office prior to the creation of the Major Violators Unit; individuals who have been prosecuted by District Attorneys in Clark County who are not from the Major Violators Unit; and individuals who have been prosecuted by other career criminal projects in other jurisdictions. The selection of any one of these as a control group poses distinct threats to the inferences one might draw from one's data.

If preprogram prosecutions are to be used as the control group, cases selected for comparison purposes should be screened so as to make use of only those cases which would have qualified for treatment by the Major Violators Unit, should it have been in existence at that time. Otherwise, comparisons of time from arrest to final disposition and, particularly, severity of sentencing would have to be highly qualified.

The use of contemporaneous offenders being prosecuted by the regular staff of the Clark County District Attorney's Office as a control group simply magnifies the problem that may be present in the use of preprogram prosecutions. That is, cases found in this time period will be precisely those that did not qualify for treatment by the Major Violators Project and, therefore, are not valid candidates for use as a control group.

The selection of individuals who have been treated by other career criminal projects in other parts of the country introduces a series of problems for analysis and, in fact, changes the nature of questions that can be addressed by the data. Selection of other programs as a control group(s) introduces error into the analysis by varying the characteristics of the criminal justice systems under investigation as well as the demographic

characteristics of the communities involved. By restricting analysis to one criminal justice system (that of Clark County, Nevada) control is exercised for a whole range of exogenous variables that may otherwise confound the analysis. In addition, the comparison of the experience of this Major Violators Unit with other career criminal programs around the country changes the focus of analysis from change in the experience of a particular subset of offenders (career criminals) within one jurisdiction (Clark County, Nevada) as a result of this innovation to that of investigating the success of this program in meeting the performance of other career criminal programs in other jurisdictions. For instance, the fact that close to ten million tourists visit Las Vegas yearly and are frequently the target of criminals may pose problems relating to witness availability that are not experienced--at least in the same magnitude--by other jurisdictions. Hence, it is argued here that use of national data in the evaluation of this program is unwarranted both because it will confound the analysis and because it addresses the wrong question.

Of the three available control groups, the one which is chosen for use in this analysis is a group of preprogram offenders who were prosecuted by the Clark County District Attorney's Office. In particular, the offenders included in the control group are those who were prosecuted in the early months of 1975.

A final consideration in the specification of an evaluation design is the nature of the statistics which are to be employed in the investigation of the impact of a program such as this one. Ideally, sufficient observations would be present to permit one to use a quasi-experimental interrupted time-series design. There is a clear isomorphism between the logic of this

design and the fact that observations could be taken over time with the creation of the Major Violators Project as the innovation. Statistics such as those of the tests of Walker-Lev could then be used to test for existence of effects which could be attributed to the introduction of the innovation.

Unfortunately, the number of observations which are available in both pre- and post-change time periods are very limited and would give rise to very unstable estimates of true system experience for any particular time point. Hence, comparisons which will be made in this evaluation will simply be those of pre- and post-change observations with no explicit introduction of time.

Control Group

Prior to the contracting of consulting services, the program analyst of the Major Violators Project directed the collection of pre-program data from the archives of the Clark County Court House. The first one hundred and forty-four case folders for the year 1975 were accessed and a selection of data transcribed for later analysis. While only one hundred and forty-four case folders were found, the case numbers ran from 75-F2 through 75-F-261 indicating that approximately one hundred case folders had been systematically withdrawn from the archives and destroyed. Upon further investigation, the program analyst discovered that most of the destroyed folders dealt with offenders whose cases had been dismissed.

Because the purposes of the program analyst were initially different from those of creating base-line data for the evaluation of the Major Violators Project, all cases, both felonies and misdemeanors, were included in the one hundred and forty-four cases included in the abstract.

Since the requirements of this evaluation mandate the collection of pre-program data for offenders who might, theoretically, qualify for the Major Violators Project, all of those not charged with murder, robbery, and burglary were systematically excluded. That resulted in the retention of twenty-eight pre-program cases which could have conceivably qualified for treatment by the Major Violators Unit, had it existed at their time of prosecution.

It was noted earlier, in the discussion of the identification of a control group, that pre-program cases should be screened for inclusion using the same criteria currently in use by the Major Violators Unit. Unfortunately, neither was the data collected for 1975 sufficient for such screening nor was prosecutor time deemed sufficient for the screening of these pre-program offenders. Hence, the twenty-eight pre-program cases used to characterize this time period presumably includes cases that would and would not have qualified as career criminals. Findings reported in this analysis must, therefore, be qualified for that reason.

Experimental Group

The experimental group--that group of offenders actually prosecuted by the Major Violators Unit--numbers nineteen. These nineteen offenders are those for whom the National Legal Data Center had data as of August 18, 1977. Arrest dates for these offenders range from April 18, 1974 through February 24, 1977. These nineteen offenders had a total of eighty-five charges pending against them.

For purposes of the Major Violator Unit, a career criminal is defined as an individual who:

1. commits felonies regularly and habitually and/or;

2. generally has two or more open cases pending in the criminal justice system at any given time and/or;
3. may have suffered a prior felony conviction and/or;
4. utilizes his familiarity with the criminal justice system to avoid prosecution and punishment and/or;
5. has generally not been influenced by traditional social service rehabilitative programs.

Actual cases reaching the District Attorney's Office are screened for possible treatment by the Major Violators Unit and, based upon a series of precise criteria, assigned scores indicating the extent to which they satisfy the requirements of the Major Violators Unit for selection. (A copy of this scoring procedure is included in Appendix A).

The median age of the offenders treated by the Major Violators Unit was twenty-five. Of these nineteen, ten were anglo and eight were black (no data is presented for the nineteenth). Eight were married, seven were single, two were divorced, and two were cohabitating. Two of the nineteen were employed full-time, one was employed part-time, and sixteen were unemployed. The median number of years in the jurisdiction of these offenders is 1.5 and their median number of prior arrests is seven.

Analysis: Number of Days from Arrest to Final Disposition

The most straightforward test of the difference in pre- and post-program days from arrest to final disposition is given by simply comparing the mean number of days required for those offenders found in each of the two different groups. For all offenders for whom data is available in the pre-program period, the mean number of days from arrest to final disposition is found to be 247.5. For those offenses charged in the post-program period, the mean number of days from arrest to final disposition is found to be 241.2.²

A second, less straightforward but much more accurate, method of comparing time from arrest to final disposition of those cases handled before and after the creation of the Major Violators Unit is to break the times down by offense category. That is, it should be expected that different types of crimes will, on the average, take different amounts of time to be processed by the criminal justice system. Such a breakdown of existing data is presented in Table 1. Examination of the data presented in

INSERT TABLE 1 HERE

Table 1 reveals that there is considerable variation in the amount of time required to pass from arrest to final disposition for different classes of offenses. According to these data, the greatest amount of time is required for processing murder charges, regardless of whether one is referencing the pre- or post-change (MVU) period, than any of the other classes of offenses. Most interestingly, the cases handled by the Major Violators Unit consistently consumed fewer days for moving from arrest to final disposition than did those prosecuted prior to its creation. Additionally, the magnitude of the difference in means is much greater, for all crimes, than that revealed in the comparison of pooled means.

It should be borne in mind that the number of cases for both pre- and post-change periods are very small. Obviously, the number of entries in each cell when controlling for something such as offense type simply serves to compound the problem of a small n. Even with these provisos, however, the pattern which emerges from the data presented in Table 1 is consistent: it appears that very substantial differences exist in the time required to move from arrest to final disposition between pre- and post-change periods.

TABLE I

Time from Arrest to Final Disposition

	Pre-Change	Post-Change
Homicide	Mean: 312.0 S.D.: 127.7 N: 4	Mean: 281.0 S.D.: 191.0 N: 5
Robbery with Deadly Weapon	Mean: 307.4 S.D.: 348.4 N: 8	Mean: 230.3 S.D.: 229.9 N: 21
Robbery *	Mean: 194.4 S.D.: 153.8 N: 5	
Burglary	Mean: 286.4 S.D.: 201.6 N: 11	Mean: 125.5 S.D.: .7 N: 2

*It is probable that these cases would have failed to pass the screening of the Major Violators Unit.

Sentence Severity

The comparison of outcomes of prosecution of different types of offenses between pre- and post-change periods is somewhat difficult.. In the pre-change period, the charge is in all instances the equivalent of the offender. That is, the charge and the offender are, one and the same time, the unit of analysis. In the post-change period, almost every offender is charged with more than one offense. In fact, a total of eighty-five charges have been filed against the nineteen offenders handled by the Major Violators Unit.

A very conservative test of the impact of the Major Violators Unit upon the severity of sentence outcomes, therefore, would be to use the individual offense as the unit of analysis in the post-change period and the offender (offense) as the unit of analysis in the pre-change period. The conservative nature of this test is exemplified by the offender who received two consecutive and two concurrent life sentences along with two consecutive and two concurrent terms of fifteen years. In this test of the impact of the Major Violators Unit, each of these separate charges and sentences will be dealt with as a single case.

In order to make comparisons between the two groups (pre- and post-change), sentence severity weights developed by Ronald Beattie³ will be used. The use of sentence severity weights permits the investigator to place numerical values to sentences such as fines, jail terms, prison terms, and life sentences which would otherwise not be comparable units of measurement. The weighting scheme developed by Beattie is presented in Table 2.

INSERT TABLE 2 HERE

TABLE 2

SENTENCE SEVERITY WEIGHTS

TYPE OF DISPOSITION	TERM	WEIGHT
Probation	0-6 months	01
	-1 year	02
	-2 years	04
	-3 years	06
	-4 years	08
	-5 years	10
	-over 5 years	12
Jail	1 month	01
	2 months	02
	3 months	03
	4 months	04
	5 months	05
	6 months	06
	7 months	07
	8 months	08
	9 months	09
	10 months	10
	11 months	11
	12 months	12
Fines	0-500	01
	600-1000	02
	1100-5000	03
	over 5000	04
Prison	0,1,2-5 years	20
	0,1,2-6 years	22
	0,1,2-10 years	26
	0,1,2-15 years	30
	0,1,2-25 years	34
	0,1,2-50 years, life	42
	3,5-life	54
	10-life	60
	life	90

When these weights are applied to the sentences given offenders in the pre- and post-change periods, some very substantial differences are noted, particularly for those charged with murder. In Table 3 are the means, standard deviations, and number of cases for those charged with

INSERT TABLE 3 HERE

homicide, robbery (with deadly weapon in pre-change period), and burglary. Once again, the number of cases contained in each cell is very small. Additionally, there are problems of sampling in the pre-change period and the unit of analysis (the charge) in the post-change period. However, once again the differences in the two sets of data are remarkably consistent: offenders receiving the attention of the Major Violators Unit are receiving substantially more severe sentences than those who were processed under the prior method of handling felony offenders.

Method of Disposition

The final comparison which is supported by pre- and post-change data is that of the method of disposition. That is, whether the final disposition of the case was achieved through a guilty plea, jury trial, or dismissal. In Table 4 is presented these data for the pre- and post-change periods.

INSERT TABLE 4 HERE

As can be seen from these data, the incidence of pleas of guilty to the top felony charged is the major method of disposition for each of the three offense categories for the post-change (MVU) period. This contrasts very starkly with the modal method of disposition--the plea of guilty to a reduced

TABLE 3
Sentence Severity

	Pre-Change	Post-Change
Homicide	Mean: 26.5 S.D.: 21.1 N: 4	Mean: 80.9 S.D.: 24.2 N: 7
Robbery with Deadly Weapon	Mean: 22.8 S.D.: 7.2 N: 8	Mean: 31.6 S.D.: 15.5 N: 33
Burglary	Mean: 10.2 S.D.: 10.8 N: 10	Mean: 23.0 S.D.: 4.2 N: 2

TABLE 4
Method of Disposition

		Pre-Change	Post-Change
Homicide	PG		5
	PG/RC	3	
	G/JT	1	2
	G/JT/RC		
	DISM		
Robbery	PG	1	20
	PG/RC	5	
	G/JT		13
	G/JT/RC	1	
	DISM	1	2
Burglary	PG	4	2
	PG/RC	6	
	G/JT		
	G/JT/RC		
	DISM	1	

PG: plead guilty

PG/RC: plead guilty to reduced charge

G/JT: guilty after jury trial

G/JT/RC: guilty after jury trial of reduced charge

DISM: dismissed

charge--that was employed in the pre-change period. Also of major note is the fact that jury trials resulting in findings of guilt have also been achieved without reduction of charge.

Although not noted in Table 4, two plea agreements were reached by the prosecutors office in the post-change period. In one case, a plea agreement was reached with a defendant who plead guilty to two charges of homicide and received two consecutive life sentences. In the second case, a plea agreement was reached with a defendant who plead guilty to a charge of burglary and was sentenced to a ten year term to run concurrently with another sentence being served in another state prison.

Conclusions

The data presented above support an inference that the Major Violators Unit of the Clark County, Nevada, District Attorney's Office has had a very substantial impact upon shortening the time between arrest and final disposition, insuring that defendants identified as career criminals are given severe prison sentences, and that findings of guilt, when warranted, are found for the top felony charged.

There are obvious shortcomings to be found in the design and application of this evaluation. Most of these shortcomings have been identified earlier in this report. It should be emphasized, however, that many of these shortcomings are the inevitable consequences of attempting to evaluate a program which has had but a short history. Stable estimates for data taken in the post-change period are impossible when working with such limited data.

In this light, therefore, one might wish to take the results presented above as simply "suggestive" of what might be found should a more systematic

and more solidly grounded study of a larger data set be undertaken. Even with this very cautious approach to these data, however, it is difficult to avoid concluding that several of the major goals of the Major Violators Unit have been achieved in this first year: a substantial reduction in time from arrest to final disposition has been noted; a significant increase in the severity of sentences handed offenders appears to have been achieved; and a very high rate of success has been achieved in gaining pleas of guilty and jury convictions for offenders without charge reduction.

Recommendations

The major recommendations which should be made based upon this evaluation deal with the nature of the second year evaluation. It has been recognized by both this researcher and the program analyst of the Major Violators Unit that currently available data for both pre- and post-change periods are inadequate for purposes of a solid and scientifically sound evaluation of this project. In part, this situation is a function of the fact that few cases have been handled by the Major Violators Unit at this point in time. As this program moves into its second year of funding, the number of cases in this post-change period will obviously be increased, leading to much more stable estimates of system performance.

For the pre-change period, it has been decided that the program analyst for the Major Violators Unit will supervise the gathering of data from 1976 which will give rise to much more direct testing of the effects of the Major Violators Unit innovation. That is, a greater number of cases will be selected for analysis which fit within the general crime categories of interest. In addition, an attempt will be made to gather enough data about

each of the selected cases which will permit the screening of these cases to approximate the process currently used by the Major Violators Unit. By making use of data taken from 1976, the problem of cases ending in dismissal having been destroyed will also be avoided. As a result, comparisons of the bases for dismissal in the pre- and post-change time periods will be possible.

Footnotes

¹The Deputy District Attorney in charge of parole revocation reviews every parole revocation case presented to the District Attorney's Office. Approximately twenty percent of these cases are selected for attention by the Major Violators Unit. Although the results of these parole revocation hearings are not part of the data submitted to the National Legal Data Center, records from the Major Violators Unit indicate that in the months January through June, 1977, these parole revocation hearings resulted in the restoring of sentences totalling seventy-two years. Approximately ten parole revocation cases per month are handled by the Major Violators Unit.

²The data file reported from the National Legal Data Center contains two errors in date of final disposition. As a result, they report an average time from arrest to final disposition for Major Violator Unit cases as being 221.

³Cited in Marlene W. Lehtinen and Gerald W. Smith, "Statistical Analysis of Public Defender Activity," a research monograph published by the Ohio State University.

CAREER CRIMINAL CLASSIFICATION CRITERIA
ROBBERY AND RESIDENTIAL BURGLARY DEFENDANTS*

Any score of 20 or more identifies a robbery, burglary and robbery/burglary related homicide or rape defendant as a career criminal who will be prosecuted by the Major Violators Unit.

DEFENDANT _____

DA# _____ DATE OF OFFENSE _____

POLICE AGENCY _____ DR# _____

CO-DEFENDANT(S) _____

		Score each Crime or Conviction
1.	TARGET CRIMES	
	(a) Robbery	(2)
	(b) Burglary	(2)
	(c) Robbery/burglary related homicide or rape	(2)
	(d) Crimes committed in con- nection with (a), (b) or (c)	(1)
2.	USE OF WEAPONS	
	(a) Target Crimes	
	(1) Armed w/Firearm	(2)
	(a) Shots fired	(2)
	(2) Armed w/Knife or other deadly wpn.	(1)
	(a) Use of knife or other D/W	(1)
	(b) Prior Crimes	
	(1) Armed w/Firearm	(2)
	(a) Shots fired	(2)
	(2) Armed w/Knife or other deadly wpn.	(1)
	(a) Use of knife or other D/W	(1)
3.	CONDITION OF VICTIM(S)	
	(a) Target Crimes	
	(1) Injured by D/W	(2)
	(2) Injured by other means	(1)
	(3) Victim killed	(2)
	(4) Substantial bodily harm	(2)

* The Major Violators Unit will be concentrating solely on prosecution of the robbery, burglary and robbery/burglary related homicide or rape defendant.

Score
each
Crime or
Conviction

- (b) Prior Crimes
- (1) Injured by D/W _____ (2)
- (2) Injured by other _____ (1)
means
- (3) Victim killed _____ (2)
- (4) Substantial bodily _____ (2)
harm
4. RESIDENTIAL CRIMES
- (a) Target Crimes
- (1) Residential burglary _____ (2)
(a) Occupants inside _____ (2)
- (2) Night-time _____ (2)
- (3) Breaking & Entering _____ (2)
- (4) Every additional _____ (1)
partner
- (b) Prior Crimes
- (1) Residential burglary _____ (2)
(a) Occupants inside _____ (2)
- (2) Night-time _____ (2)
- (3) Breaking & Entering _____ (2)
- (4) Every additional _____ (1)
partner
5. STATUS OF DEFENDANT
- (a) Pending felony charges
- (1) Robbery _____ (2)
- (2) Burglary _____ (2)
- (3) Robbery/burglary _____
related homicide
- or rape _____ (2)
- (4) Other _____ (1)
- (b) Prior arrest record
- (1) Every ten felony _____ (2)
arrests
- (2) Every twenty mis- _____ (2)
demeanor arrests
- (c) Prior felony convictions
- (1) Robbery _____ (2)
- (2) Burglary _____ (2)
- (3) Robbery/burglary _____
related homicide
- or rape _____ (2)
- (4) Other _____ (1)
- (d) Reliable informational resources of law
enforcement substantiate that person
under investigation for target crimes has
repeatedly committed target crimes in the
past and has evaded arrest or conviction _____ (2)
6. PROSECUTORIAL DISCRETION
- (a) Prosecutorial evaluation (optional) (+5)
Add five points or subtract five points (-5)

TOTAL SCORE _____

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CAREER CRIMINAL UNIT
PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

From October 1976 to July 31, 1977 the Career Criminal Unit of the Clark County, comprised of 3 prosecutors has forwarded documentation on the conviction of 33 defendants (who were accepted for priority prosecution) on a total of 109 separate criminal convictions.

I. THE FOLLOWING RESULTS WERE ACHIEVED:

59 of the crime convictions were by trial.

50 of the crime convictions were by pleas of guilty.

97.1% was the defendant conviction rate (defendant convictions ÷ defendant acquittals + defendant convictions).

100 % of the defendants were convicted on a top felony as originally charged.

105 prison/jail sentences were pronounced.

(Note: Sentences may be more than convictions because the conviction occurred in a prior reporting period. Also, sentences may be significantly less than convictions where the sentence was not pronounced until after the reporting period.)

31.55 years was the average non-enhanced sentence.

1 sentences were enhanced under a repeat (second or habitual) offender statute (not all jurisdictions have such a statute).

226 days was the average time from arrest to trial commencement date where such date was within the reporting period (includes times beyond prosecutor's control such as court ordered or defendants jumping bail).

220 days was the average time from filing to disposition on all charged crimes (includes times beyond prosecutor's control such as court ordered or defendants jumping bail).

II. DEFENDANTS WERE CONVICTED FOR THE FOLLOWING MAJOR CRIMES (included attempts):

44 Robberies

3 Burglaries

9 Homicides

-- Rapes

-- Felonious Assaults

-- Grand Larcenies

8 Kidnappings

III. TO ACHIEVE THESE RESULTS OVER 285 COURT EVENTS WERE REQUIRED.

IV. THE DEFENDANTS DISPOSED OF BY THE UNIT:

Had a total of 279 prior (non-juvenile) arrests.

Had a total of 133 prior (non-juvenile) convictions.

Actually used weapon/physical force in 55.3 % of the criminal events handled by the Unit.

(Note: One criminal event may result in more than one crime conviction).

Were already on conditional release (parole, probation, etc.) on another crime 50 % of the time when they committed the crime prosecuted by the Unit.

END