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Evaluation of the Status and Effectiveness of State and  
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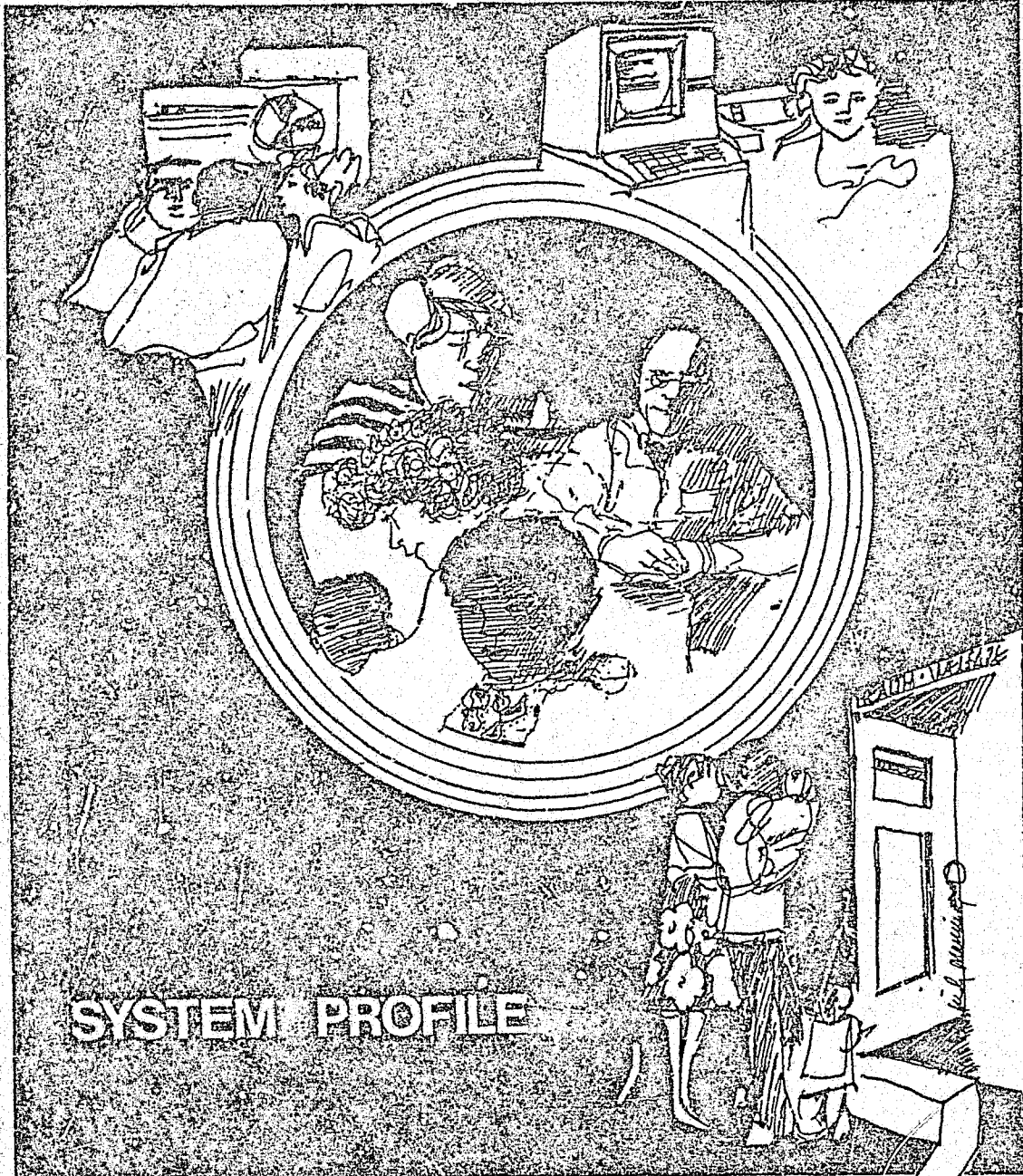
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# ACQUISITIONS

EVALUATION OF THE STATUS AND  
EFFECTIVENESS OF STATE AND LOCAL  
HUMAN SERVICES INFORMATION SYSTEMS



## SYSTEM PROFILE

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NATIONAL TECHNICAL  
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EVALUATION OF THE STATUS AND EFFECTIVENESS  
OF STATE AND LOCAL HUMAN SERVICES  
INFORMATION SYSTEMS

Contract No. HEW-100-76-0010

SYSTEM PROFILE:

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT REPORT AND INQUIRY SYSTEM (CANRIS)  
State Department of Public Welfare  
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## SYSTEM PROFILE

### CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT REPORT AND INQUIRY SYSTEM (CANRIS)

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#### SECTION I: PERSPECTIVE OF THE SYSTEM

The Child Abuse and Neglect Report and Inquiry System (CANRIS) is a specialized information registry and retrieval system utilized by the State of Texas to aid in the investigation of suspected cases of child abuse and neglect. Operated and maintained by the State Department of Public Welfare (DPW), CANRIS is one of four components of the Social Services Management System (SSMS). Other SSMS components include Direct Delivery, Purchase of Services, and Cost-Information systems.

Mandated by the State Legislature, CANRIS is a statewide automated network providing linkage to all DPW protective service units for the purpose of reporting or retrieving information pertaining to incidents of child abuse or neglect. The basic objectives of the system are:

- To provide the DPW protective services worker with a computer printout of a new incident of child abuse/neglect reported to the Central Registry.
- To provide the DPW protective services worker with written information regarding previous incidents on any person(s) involved in the current incident.
- To serve as a case record of child abuse and neglect incidents reported to the Central Registry.
- To enable the DPW protective services worker to correct, change, delete, and add information to the original report.
- To record the findings of the child abuse/neglect investigation and the final court disposition in the case record and the Central Registry.



- To serve as a source of data for tabulation and analysis toward developing a basis for preventive work with the families.

Reporting, inquiry, and statistics are three basic features of CANRIS. The Department of Public Welfare utilizes each of these features in identifying, tracking, and evaluating child abuse and neglect in the State and in planning for preventive programs at the immediate worker level as well as ongoing DPW policy making. Each of these features is described below.

Reporting: Any person suspecting or having knowledge of an incidence of child abuse or neglect is required by law to report this information to a local protective services unit or law enforcement agency. Reports to a law enforcement agency are referred to the protective services unit for investigation and followup. When a report is received by the protective services unit, the incident is reported by telephone into CANRIS via the area telecommunications center. The reported information is maintained in the computerized Central Registry file. Only authorized DPW protective services workers are allowed access to the information. During the course of the investigation, the initial information may be updated as necessary.

Inquiry: This feature allows the DPW protective services workers to interrogate the Central Registry file via the telecommunications operator to determine if an individual(s) listed on the current report has been involved in a previous abuse or neglect incident. For reasons of confidentiality, DPW policy, and system security, however, only authorized DPW protective services workers are allowed to interrogate the system and then only on specific names and only after entering a report on that name. The system does not allow random inquiry of the files. The inquiry feature allows DPW protective services workers to maintain linkage with all protective services units throughout the State and to retrieve data on individuals involved in prior reports even though they may have moved from one area of the State to another.

Statistics: Statistical reports are generated from information stored in the CANRIS data files. The information in these reports provides data for determining activity by region, victim, and perpetrator profiles; sources of reports; and types of abuse and neglect; as well as information designed to provide worker accountability. These reports also provide data for DPW policy making and implementation of preventive programs.

CANRIS is operated by DPW as an internal support service to the protective services unit. Although DPW is the primary user of the system, all agencies, organizations, and citizens can "participate" in the system by reporting abuse and neglect incidents. CANRIS serves the entire State which includes approximately 4 million residents 18 years of age and under. Approximately 3,000 incidents of suspected abuse and neglect are reported to CANRIS monthly.

Two aspects of CANRIS were reported as noteworthy by system staff. The first is the commitment by the State Legislature to the system and to the problem of child abuse and neglect. This commitment is evidenced by the mandate to establish and maintain CANRIS. The second noteworthy aspect is the rapid accessibility of data on a statewide level.

CANRIS systems design and flow were developed by Booz, Allen and Hamilton under contract to the State Executive Department. DPW was responsible for all implementation activities. Planning and development activities were conducted in 1972 and early 1973. The system was implemented in December 1973.

Because CANRIS is a subsystem of SSMS, specific CANRIS-related funding information was not available. Year-to-year operational funding was not reported as being a problem primarily because CANRIS is a State-mandated system.

## SECTION II: DESCRIPTION OF OPERATIONAL COMPONENTS

Operationally, CANRIS serves as a resource for DPW in investigating incidents of child abuse and neglect and in planning for

preventive programs to combat abuse and neglect. Direct client contact and service delivery are not CANRIS functions but are functions of the DPW protective service workers who utilize CANRIS. Therefore, a discussion of how the system is utilized by these workers is useful in describing what CANRIS does.

Before beginning this discussion however it is also important to briefly note that CANRIS does not conduct eligibility determinations and, therefore, maintains no eligibility determination component. Information and referral to other agencies are made by DPW protective services workers as a by-product of the investigation. Resource directories are developed locally, Although CANRIS is not directly involved in client-oriented services, the information collected for (and maintained in) the system is used by DPW protective services workers for case management and tracking. All CANRIS client data are validated through the DPW protective services worker's incident investigation.

- Client In-Take and Problem Assessment

All reports of child abuse or neglect are made or referred to DPW protective services units. Incoming reports are made either by telephone, office contact, letter, or referral form. Regardless of how the incident is reported, the DPW protective services worker records the pertinent information on a standardized in-take form (Form 206). Form 206 serves as the initial report document as well as the document used to report the incident into CANRIS. The following data elements are included on this form:

- Initiating worker identification
- Incident report data
- Individual information
- Name of last worker servicing report

Under each of these broad categories, more detailed information is required.



Upon completion of Form 206, the DPW protective services worker reports the incident to the CANRIS Central Registry via a telecommunication operator. At the request of the DPW protective services worker, the telecommunications operator can interrogate the Central Registry and provide the DPW protective services worker with any historical information relating to persons involved in the reported incident. SOUNDEX procedures are utilized to facilitate the search.

Once the information from Form 206 has been processed and entered into the Central Registry, the computer produces a Child Abuse and Neglect Incident Report (Form 202). Form 202 is the hard copy of the CANRIS telecommunications system and is sent, in duplicate, to the initiating DPW protective services worker. One copy remains in the DPW protective services worker's files and the other is used for correcting and/or updating Central Registry data.

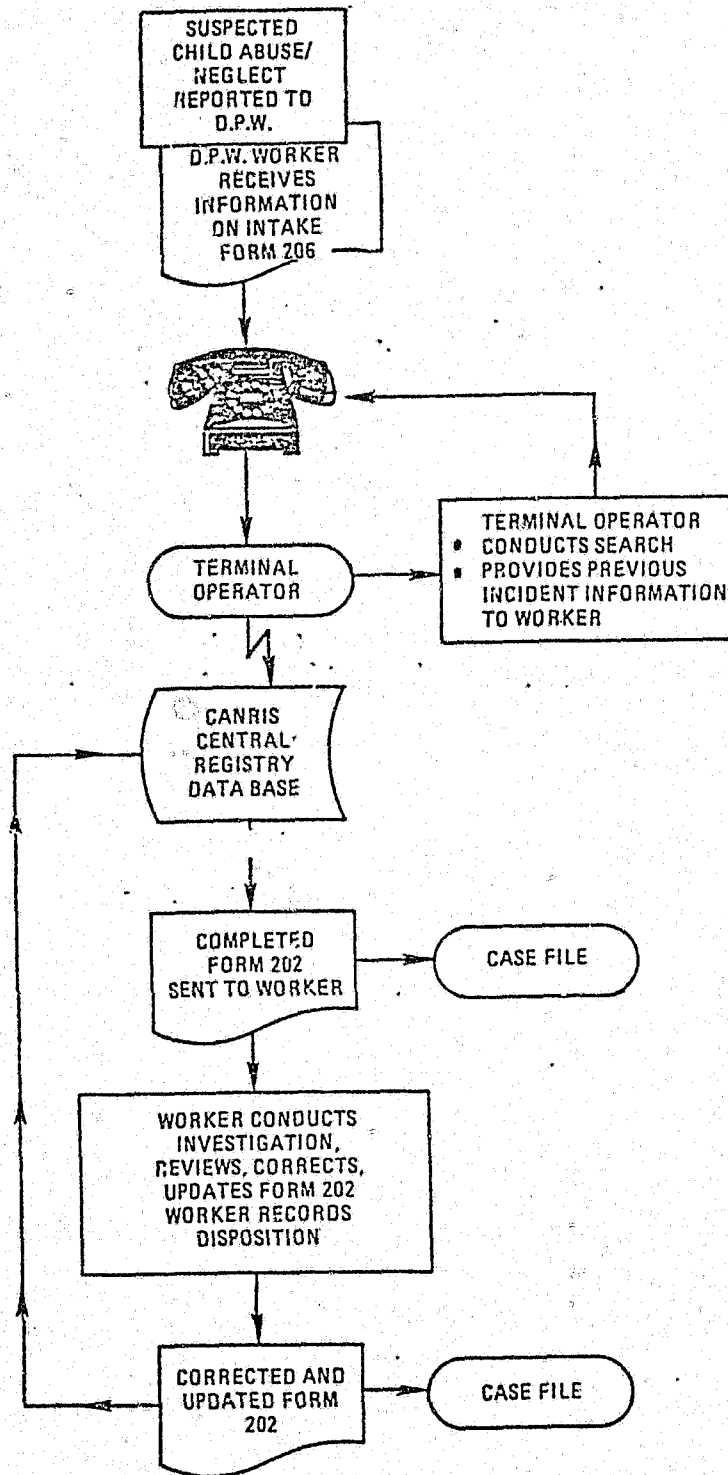
Form 202 is a two-part form. Part I contains information supplied to the telecommunications operator by the DPW protective services worker, and Part II is used to enter information into the Central Registry as the incident investigation proceeds. Significant corrections and updates to Part I are transmitted to CANRIS as they occur. A finalized Part II must be submitted to the Central Registry immediately upon completion of the investigation. This information then becomes part of the CANRIS Central Registry data base.

The CANRIS system flow is illustrated in Exhibit I.

- Client Confidentiality

To ensure client confidentiality, only authorized persons are allowed to interrogate the Central Registry and have access to the client information. The telecommunications operators are authorized to interrogate the Central Registry files, but only after being given a specific name or case number by DPW protective services worker. The Central Registry files cannot be searched randomly.

# EXHIBIT 1: CANRIS SYSTEM FLOW



Information contained in the Central Registry data files is made available to DPW protective services workers only. Problems regarding the utilization of client data arise in deciding what and how much of the CANRIS client data should be released to outside agencies. Another problem regarding client data is how long and what names should be maintained in the Central Registry data files.

- Management Reporting

As mentioned previously, one of the basic features of CANRIS is statistical and management reporting. The reports are used for DPW program management, State and Federal reporting requirements, and program planning and evaluation. The integrity of all data contained in the reports is ensured through internal validity checks, periodic review, file comparability to other data, and error messages provided by the data processing system. In addition, all aggregate data are de-identified to ensure client confidentiality. These quality control measures are performed on all the data in the Central Registry.

The following statistical reports are generated using information compiled from CANRIS data files:

- Victim Profile Information
  - Types of Injury
  - Court Action
  - Fatalities
  - Perpetrator Age
  - Victim Age
  - Victim Ethnic Group
  - Perpetrator Relationship
- Quarterly Report on Results of Investigation of Alleged Abuse and Neglect
  - Abuse
  - Neglect
  - Both
  - Fatalities
- Reports of Alleged Abuse and Neglect of Children Initiated Over Thirty Days Ago - No Final Report Yet Filed
  - State Summary
  - Total Incidents by Region

- Quarterly Report of Alleged Abuse and Neglect for Which No Final Report Has Been Filed
  - By Region
  - By Unit
- Quarterly Report on Initial Reports of Abuse and Neglect
  - State Summary
  - By Region
- Monthly Report of Results of Investigation of Abuse
  - State Summary
  - By Region
  - Number of Children
  - Fatalities
- Monthly Report of Abuse and Neglect
  - State Summary
  - By Region
  - Initial Reports
  - Finalized Reports
  - By County
- County Totals of All Suspected Abuse and Neglect Incidents
  - Cumulative Totals
  - Initial Reports
  - Finalized Reports and Percent
- Source of Initial Reports to CANRI:
  - Cumulative Total
  - By Category
- Income of Family Provider of Abused and Neglected Children
  - Cumulative Total
  - State Summary
  - By Injury
  - By Income
- Relationship of Perpetrator to Injury/Neglect
  - Cumulative Total
  - State Summary
  - Injury Type
  - Relationship to Victim
- Monthly Report of Abuse, Neglect of Children by Region
  - Oldest Child
  - Date of Request
  - Reporting Worker

- Administrative Services

CANRIS is not involved in administrative service programs such as budget and payroll preparation, grants management, funds acquisition, and disbursement or purchase of service agreements. Indirectly, however, CANRIS has an impact on DPW protective services budget and personnel allocations as a result of the volume/case load reports that are generated. The volume reports can be used to indicate where and how personnel and/or funds should be reallocated or redirected.

- Planning and Evaluation

Identification and prevention of child abuse and neglect are the primary goals of CANRIS, and all planning activities, both system and community oriented, are directed toward achieving these goals. All levels of CANRIS and DPW personnel are involved in planning activities. In general, the users of the system (i.e., DPW protective services workers and telecommunications operators) are involved in identifying system and community problem areas and in making planning recommendations to management who have the authority to revise and authorize planning efforts aimed at goal achievement.

The Child Abuse and Negligence Research Demonstration (CANRED) Project is currently conducting evaluation and historical analyses of CANRIS. Specifically, CANRED is evaluating the CANRIS internal functions, community and agency coordination and participation, system utilization, and overall system effectiveness. It is anticipated that the evaluation will be completed in mid-1976.

### SECTION III: DESCRIPTION OF THE DATA SYSTEM AND ROLE OF DATA OUTPUT

- Description of the Data System

CANRIS is essentially a fully computerized, on-line system. Only a small percentage of activities are performed manually (i.e., filling in the initial intake form, information updates, and

corrections). CANRIS was developed as an automated system because of the State's desire to identify abused and neglected children and to track perpetrators on a statewide basis.

It was reported that the present equipment and processing arrangements are sufficient to meet data requirements. Data processing manpower was also reported as being adequate at the present time. However, because the files are currently unblocked and the system is running out of disk storage, CANRIS will be receiving some interim equipment in the near future to handle the increased data processing activities as the data files increase.

All data processing equipment (i.e., computer, printers, tape drives, disk units, card readers, key punch machines, and terminals) are owned by the State. All processing activities are conducted by CANRIS or State Office Data Control personnel. Except for the telecommunications terminals, all equipment is located in Austin. The terminals, approximately 200 of them, are located on-site at the DPW protective services units. Most of the terminals are not used exclusively for CANRIS activities, but also for other SSMS related activities.

Source data are input to the system on key/desk, key/tape, and on-line equipment. On-line processing is utilized for initial reporting and batching for updating. Computer turnaround time for the batching process is one day. The computer hardware configuration and operating system are IBM/OS/VS. COBOL and Assembler are the principal languages/compiler programs utilized by CANRIS. Reports are generated using Mark IV. Report data are stored on tape, whereas the Central Registry Master file is stored on disk.

#### • Role of Data Output

As mentioned previously, the management and statistical reports generated from the CANIS data files are used for DPW program management, State and Federal reporting requirements, and program planning and evaluation. Data generated to be used to meet Federal reporting



requirements (i.e., the protective services aspects of Title XX) are compiled and forwarded to DPW to prepare the reports. In addition to the 14 statistical reports routinely generated, CANRIS has the capability of generating ad hoc reports. Depending upon the contents, the reports are disseminated to local DPW protective services units, DPW planners, and Executive Branch personnel.

#### SECTION IV: SPECIAL OR UNIQUE FEATURES OF THE SYSTEM

Two aspects of CANRIS were described as noteworthy by system personnel. The first is the commitment to the system from not only those persons who use the system, but from the highest levels of the State government. The system was developed as a result of DPW interest and concern in the area of child abuse and neglect. The primary concerns of DPW were identifying potential victims and perpetrators, understanding the scope of the abuse and neglect problem in the State, and planning for programs aimed at preventive action. As a result of this concern, the State Legislature enacted legislation creating CANRIS, thus supporting DPW in their identification and prevention efforts. Further evidencing their concern in this area, the Legislature enacted a statute making failure to report actual or suspected cases of child abuse or neglect a misdemeanor punishable by a fine and/or imprisonment.

The second noteworthy aspect is the immediate accessibility of information on a statewide basis. As previously described in Section II, DPW protective services workers have immediate access to data contained in the CANRIS Central Registry files. The immediacy of the data is critical for prompt investigation and for developing service delivery plans to ameliorate the conditions that resulted in the abuse or neglect incident and to plan preventative action particularly if the reported incident is found to be valid.

## SECTION V: COORDINATION ACTIVITIES

Coordination efforts and activities between DPW protective services workers and CANRIS continue until final case resolution. Coordination consists mainly of data input from the DPW protective services worker and data output from CANRIS. Because all DPW protective services workers use standardized intake forms and inputting and accessing procedures, and receive the same type of statistical reports, coordination problems between CANRIS and local DPW protective services units are minimal.

As DPW protective services workers investigate the child abuse or neglect report, it may be necessary to coordinate with agencies outside of the protective services unit as part of a services delivery plan. In these cases, the coordination is not CANRIS-related, but a function of the DPW protective services worker.

## SECTION VI: --TRANSFER ACTIVITIES

Since implementation, many individuals and groups have expressed an interest in CANRIS. CANRIS and DPW personnel have talked with many groups regarding all phases and aspects of the system. However, it is not known if the system has been transferred, either formally or informally, to any other sites. No current or potential transfer plans or activities were reported.

## SECTION VII: SYSTEM UTILITY

CANRIS serves as an in-house, support resource for DPW protective services workers to use in the investigation of reported incidents of child abuse and neglect, as well as a resource providing child abuse and neglect statistics, to aid DPW in planning and implementing prevention programs. CANRIS is an invaluable aid in resolving the 3,000 new incidents of child abuse and neglect reported every month. Each of these cases must be, and are resolved, as either a valid or invalid abuse or neglect incident. Without the assistance of CANRIS, this task would be overwhelming with a resulting

tremendous backlog of cases. From the information contained in the CANRIS Central Registry, DPW protective services workers are aided in developing and determining ongoing casework plans for services to children and their families.

#### SECTION VIII: STAFFING AND TRAINING CHARACTERISTICS

Being a Statewide system and one that is utilized in the investigation of all reported cases of child abuse and neglect, there are many individuals involved in CANRIS at different stages and levels of operation. DPW protective services workers represent the intake and input level. There are approximately 1,500 DPW protective services workers located throughout the State in local protective services units. The DPW protective services workers have a "hands off" relationship to CANRIS. In their roles as DPW protective services workers, they are not authorized to directly interrogate the Central Registry files, but are trained to input data via the telecommunications operators, update information, and utilize CANRIS output data.

File interrogation or "hands on" functions are performed by the telecommunications operators. These individuals are also located throughout the State and operate the 200 on-line terminals. The telecommunications operators are DPW employees, but in most cases are not exclusively CANRIS operators. They also perform on-line activities of the other SSMS components. Other process staff include State Office Data Control personnel who edit and prepare the hard copy forms sent to the DPW protective services workers. In addition, five systems analysts are employed by DPW for CANRIS operations.

Three individuals have direct management responsibilities for CANRIS. Indirectly, members of the State Executive Office have management input by virtue of the fact that they have direct authority over DPW and Social Services agencies.

A number of procedures are utilized to train those individuals most directly involved with CANRIS (i.e., DPW protective services workers and telecommunications operators). These procedures include orientation programs, training sessions, and on going, in-service training sessions. Procedures manuals are issued to supplement the training procedures. Although the training procedures and manuals differ somewhat by nature of the particular duties and responsibilities involved, each individual involved in CANRIS is aware of the interfacing that must occur for the system to operate effectively and efficiently.

Assessment of staff personnel and their job performance is an on-going activity. As part of this activity, a monthly statistical report is generated from the CANRIS files that compiles data designed to provide accountability for worker activity. In this regard, on-going, in-service training sessions are conducted, not only for the purpose of training, but also to maximize staff performance. It was reported that although there is always a need for more DPW protective services workers, the overall staffing is adequate to ensure effective and efficient CANRIS operations.

#### SECTION IX: PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT, AND FUTURE PLANS OF THE SYSTEM

##### • Planning of the System

As mentioned in previous sections, the main impetus for the establishment of CANRIS was DPW concern in the area of child abuse and neglect, and the State's inability to identify abused and neglected children and to track perpetrators on a statewide basis. Through the efforts of DPW administrative, management, systems, and service provision personnel, coupled with the probability of Federal funding, the result of a State-mandated central registry of reported cases of child abuse and neglect occurred. Since its inception CANRIS has been operated and maintained by DPW.

- Development of the System

The general systems design and flow were developed by Booz, Allen and Hamilton in 1972 and early 1973. It is not known if visits were made to other systems or if other services or models were studied during the planning or development phases. CANRIS was implemented in December 1973. All implementation activities and pilot study were conducted by DPW.

A pilot test of CANRIS was conducted during the initial months of implementation and consisted of a parallel study with the prior manual system. The main problems encountered during initial implementation were terminal downtime, reentry of data, and inadequate report design. It was determined that worker access to the system needed to be improved (i.e., more telephone lines were needed), turnaround time needed to be shortened, telecommunications operators needed more data entry training, and output reports needed to be more field oriented.

- Future Plans of the System

No major revisions have been made to the system since implementation. However, system revisions have been designed and approved and will take effect in June 1976. The revisions and modifications are the result of comments from the field workers, reviews of the current system flow, and conferences held with State office personnel who are engaged in all levels of operation and responsibility related to CANRIS. The objectives of the revisions are to "provide an improved data reporting system by enhancing rather than replacing the current system with improved forms format and operational flow to reduce system access and turnaround times, data collection, and dissemination and to provide linkage to the Social Services Management System." Revisions are proposed in the following areas:

- Forms
- Screens

- Telecommunications
- Data systems
- Data edits
- Expungement
- Statistical reports
- SSMS linkage

CANRIS Forms 202 and 206 will be combined into a single form to be used for intake, reporting, feedback, and updating of CANRIS reports. Data elements will be clustered by individual and the document will provide for an unlimited number of individuals to be submitted on initial reports. The combined form will allow for a more complete initial report and will reduce the number of updates for the worker.

The telecommunications screen format will be modified to match the layout of the revised CANRIS reporting document. By doing this, the information flow will become more standardized and the telecommunications operators will be able to enter data from the field more rapidly. In order to reduce update data entry time and to eliminate the need for keypunch activities related to CANRIS documents, all reporting and updating will be performed on-site by the telecommunications operators.

With regard to data systems revisions, a software package will be utilized by internal processing to enable CANRIS to provide inter-incident linkage by internal manipulation of the files. This revision will enhance the inquiry component of the system. In addition, SOUNDEX methods will be improved to reduce the amount of time required to search the files for possible matches. Instead of mailing large volumes of paper reports to the National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect in Denver, CANRIS will now supply the statistics on data tapes. This will result in a reduction of costs for supplies and personnel.



The edit requirements of CANRIS will be revised to improve the amount and quality of data collected. This will ensure that the CANRIS information is reliable and complete and will be properly maintained in order to improve the effectiveness of the system and quality of the files. It is expected that this revision will require a minimal increase in worker responsibility.

The revisions also propose the inclusion of an expungement feature. This will provide for removal of a name determined to be invalid after investigation. Resolution of this issue is still being debated at the Executive level.

Output reports will be revised to improve titles, increase breakouts, and provide better data for DPW decision-making, particularly in the area of prevention. The proposed output reports are designed to meet the following objectives:

- Data Edit Reports - To assist in the detection and correction of data elements in error
- Telecommunication Activity Reports
  - .. To identify the source of all transactions on a daily basis
  - .. To assist in reconciling transactions submitted from field staff with data captured in the Central Registry
  - .. To monitor all inquiries to insure proper system utilization as defined by program policy
- Incident Reports
  - .. To meet all information requirements
  - .. To assist staff at all levels responsible for program management
  - .. To accurately measure program functioning
  - .. To provide documentation for accountability

- Statistical Reports

- .. To provide statistical reports capable of identifying situations of potential abuse or neglect
- .. To provide information to assist in the prediction of behavioral patterns

- CANRIS/SSMS Registration Report

- .. To allow the State Office to register identified clients into SSMS, thereby reducing the duplication of data reported to the State Office

The revised reports consist of both new and existing reports. Some of the existing reports have been modified to present CANRIS data in a more readable format. The following list is an index of the proposed output reports.

- Data Edit Reports

- .. CANRIS Edit Report
- .. CANRIS Update Report

- Telecommunication Activity Reports

- .. Monthly CANRIS Telecommunications Activity
- .. Daily CANRIS Telecommunications Activity

- Incident Reports

- .. Incidents of Alleged Child Abuse and Neglect Reported to Central Registry for the Month of \_\_\_\_\_
- .. Incidents of Alleged Child Abuse and Neglect Not Finalized as of \_\_\_\_\_
- .. Incidents of Alleged Child Abuse and Neglect Reported and Finalized During the Month of \_\_\_\_\_
- .. Finalized Incidents of Alleged Child Abuse Neglect and the Results from Investigation
- .. Number of Children Involved in Alleged Abuse and Neglect Incidents and the Results of Investigation
- .. County Totals of All Alleged Child Abuse and Neglect Incidents Reported From \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

- Statistical Reports

- .. Source of Referrals of Alleged Child Abuse and Neglect Incidents
- .. Income of Family Provider of Alleged Abused and Neglected Children
- .. Relationship of Perpetrator to Injury-Neglect as Reported in Validated Incidents

- Client Registration Report - CANRIS/SSMS Registration Report

The revised system will also provide for linkage between CANRIS and SSMS. Specified data will be taken from CANRIS finalized reports, transferred to SSMS via data processing, and SSMS registration on identified individuals will be sent back to the field.

SECTION X: BIBLIOGRAPHY OF AVAILABLE SYSTEM DOCUMENTATION

1. Child Abuse and Neglect Incident Report (Form 202) and Coding Instructions
2. Conceptual Design Revision to Child Abuse and Neglect Report and Inquiry System (CANRIS)
3. Child Abuse and Negligence Research Demonstration (CANRED) Project Evaluation of the Child Abuse and Neglect Report Inquiry System (CANRIS).

NOTE: This report will be available in mid-1976 from:

CANRED Project  
Janne B. Dinges, Director  
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Austin, Texas 78701

