

# Appendix H

## Report of the NIJ Sub-Committee

### I. Composition of the Committee

In July of 2011, Joan Petersilia was asked to work on a new committee by the Governor of California focusing on reducing prison populations in the state. Because of this Joan resigned her co-chair responsibilities, and David Weisburd was appointed Chair (as opposed to Co-Chair).

### II. Meetings of the NIJ Subcommittee

Since July, members of the sub-committee have met a series of times with each other and NIJ staff. There have been two smaller committees developing work (see below) focusing on specific issues (physical sciences, and NIJ “footprint”). The Chair of the committee has also met with Director Laub and other NIJ staff regarding directions of the committee a number of times in person and by phone.

On the Thursday of this SAB meeting, the sub-committee will meet with NIJ staff to discuss the role of the sub-committee and on-going projects. A main issue in this meeting will be the degree to which the SAB NIJ sub-committee can serve as the “advisory committee” recommended by the NRC NIJ report. The report envisioned an independent advisory committee for NIJ, but such an advisory committee seems unlikely to be created in the near future. This issue has been raised with the Director, who believes it is important for the sub-committee to speak directly about these issues to the staff.

There will also be a meeting of the SAB sub-committee physical sciences group (Tom Mitchell, George Whitesides, Eric Buel, and Tracey Meares as a member who was on the NRC NIJ panel) in the afternoon with NIJ representatives Michael Sheppo and Chris Tillary. (See below for discussion topics)

### III. NIJ Footprint Discussions

The sub-committee decided that an important topic for the SAB to examine is the role of NIJ in research more generally in OJP. Evidence Based Policy has become a key part of policy making decisions in OJP. Indeed with programs like CrimeSolutions.Gov, OJP has taken key steps to become an evidence based agency more generally. This focus on evidence based policy has naturally led all of the agencies within OJP, and others in the Justice Department, such as the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS), to look to research and evaluation as methods of defining not only what programs to support, but also to encourage evaluation and other types of research in their programs. Research, of course, has also been part of the portfolio of some of these agencies in the past.

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The sub-committee believes that it is important for the SAB to consider NIJ's appropriate role in such research efforts. Of course, this also raises the question of the statutory responsibilities of each agency, and what is the desirable research expertise of the other OJP agencies. In this sense this question is not only about NIJ's role but about the more general research portfolio of OJP.

The full Sub-committee met once to discuss this issue in September. A smaller committee was set up to develop an initial working paper, which was completed in December and passed on to the sub-committee as a whole. A number of comments were received. The memo was also shared with NIJ Director Laub and NIJ staff members Thomas Feucht and Kristina Rose. After discussions with NIJ representatives and considering the comments of the sub-committee members, it was decided that the memo needed greater development and discussion. We hope to have a document for discussion at the next meeting.

#### IV. Integrating Physical and Social Sciences at NIJ

NIJ has asked the sub-committee to add its voice to the important topic of the integration of the Physical and Social Sciences at NIJ. This was discussed at a sub-committee meeting. It was agreed that the physical sciences members of the sub-committee should work together, with Tracey Meares who served on the NRC NIJ committee, to assess this issue.

The smaller committee had conference calls with the Chair twice in the Fall and discussed the overall issue. But it was felt that significant progress could not be made without a face to face meeting with NIJ staff in this area. Given the proximity in time to the SAB meeting it was decided to wait until that meeting for a face to face meeting. The NIJ staff provided a memo on some of their activities for the committee members. The meeting is scheduled to take place on Thursday of the SAB meeting.