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KENTUCKY
CRIMINAL
JUSTICE



STATISTICAL ACQUISITIONS
ANALYSIS
CENTER

DAVID L. ARMSTRONG
ATTORNEY GENERAL

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URBAN STUDIES CENTER
UNIVERSITY OF LOUISVILLE

A DATA INVENTORY OF KENTUCKY'S CRIMINAL JUSTICE AGENCIES

One of the six research projects selected for the first year of SAC was a Data Inventory of Kentucky's state level criminal justice agencies. The impetus for the study stemmed from the Joint Committee on Appropriations and Revenue for Courts, Corrections, and the Judiciary in Kentucky which held hearings during the summer of 1985 in an attempt to clarify the following:

- What kind of data is each agency currently collecting?
- What is the extent of interaction among the criminal justice agencies?
- Is there a foundation for establishing a cooperative, statewide Offender Based Tracking System within these agencies?

The agency data inventory was designed to focus on "where are we now"--that is, compile an accurate picture of current data collection procedures in order to assist the various agencies and the Kentucky legislature to: 1) assess the efficiency and usefulness of these practices; and 2) begin the process of creating uniformity among the various criminal justice agencies' data collection.

It is hoped that the study will stimulate inter- and intra-agency discussion of, and cooperation in defining common data elements and using a systems approach rather than relying solely on an agency perspective.

Agency Participation

In the Administrative Office of the Courts, three positions are responsible for information dissemination: (1) the information and statistics manager who handles data requests for the agency, (2) the Pretrial Services manager, and (3) the data processing manager, who are responsible for dissemination of information in their respective units. The data processing manager also provides information from the computerized Statewide Criminal History.

The Planning and Evaluation Branch of the Corrections Cabinet handles data requests for the agency. The branch

manager disseminates information on institutionalized inmates. Most of the information is computerized on the Offender Record Information Operation Network (ORION). Requests for probation and parole data are handled by the director of the Probation and Parole Division.

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A MESSAGE FROM THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

In this 1986 General Assembly we saw, for the first time, an emphasis being placed on creating statistical and data systems for criminal justice agencies. HB 572 which confirmed the Governor's executive order that created the SAC was steered successfully through the legislature by Representative Mark O'Brien and Senator Ed O'Daniel. In addition, General Fund dollars were allocated to the SAC to continue its existence once the Federal funds are exhausted.

The State Police, Administrative Office of the Courts and Corrections all received funds to continue and/or update their present recordkeeping systems. HB 774, sponsored by Representative Ernesto Scorsone, mandates that the state's criminal justice agencies work together to develop compatible data systems so that offenders can be tracked throughout the criminal justice system. Future issues of this newsletter will review these developments in greater detail.

For now, I just want to say thanks to all of those legislators who worked and voted on behalf of the Statistical Analysis Center. We will do our best to provide high quality and policy-relevant research in the years to come.

To those of you on the front-lines of the criminal justice system, we look forward to continue working with you to meet your research needs.

DAVID L. ARMSTRONG

All requests for information from the Department of Public Advocacy are administered by the agency's management information specialist.

The Kentucky State Police collect information from arrest to disposition on all cases originating in their agency. All other cases are handled by local agencies throughout the state. The supervisor of the records section handles hardcopy requests for information on arrests. The administrative section supervisor handles hardcopy requests for disposition information. Dissemination of computerized information on offenders and victims is the responsibility of the director of information services.

The Department of Social Services systems administrator handles any computer requests for case information involving child or domestic abuse. The executive director for the Crime Victims Compensation Board fields any requests for information from the agency.

The remaining seven agencies do not collect offender/victim data on an ongoing basis. These agencies that were contacted during the study include the Commission of Women, Department for Information Services, Department of Justice, Governor's Office, Jailors Association, Legislative Research Commission, and the Office of Attorney General.

Administrative Office of the Courts

From an Offender Based Tracking System perspective, the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) is responsible for maintaining the majority of criminal justice data. Information is collected throughout the criminal justice process from arraignment in district court to disposition in either district court or circuit court. The court clerks are responsible for completing district and circuit court cards on a daily basis. Also, information on juvenile and domestic abuse cases is collected on separate cards by these court clerks in each county. AOC is currently revising the district and circuit court reporting systems to allow for the linkage of each charge to the final disposition and to establish a common identifier for the two systems as well as increasing the number of variables being collected.

Contact: Pam Sims
Information & Statistics Manager
403 Wapping Street
Frankfort, KY 40601
(502) 564-2350

Pretrial Services has a noncomputerized interview form which is designed to provide judges with information for making bail decisions. The local offices of Pretrial Service complete these interview forms for each arrestee and maintain a card file on offenders in their jurisdictions. The interview form is then used for compiling a monthly statistical report. The monthly summary is then entered on the agency's computer (primarily for management purposes) and is also available to interested persons on a monthly, quarterly and yearly basis.

Contact: John Hendricks
Pretrial Services Manager
403 Wapping Street
Frankfort, KY 40601
(502) 564-7486

The agency has developed a version of an Offender Based Tracking System (OBTS) which is called Statewide Criminal History. The system contains information on traffic violations, misdemeanors, and felony cases. Currently, this system is serving four Kentucky counties (Boyd, Campbell, Kenton and Montgomery); Fayette County is expected to join the system in the near future. The statewide criminal history is not linked to the Kentucky State Police System of Computerized Criminal Histories (CCH).

Since the criminal history system contains only eleven variables, research capabilities are very limited. However, one very important component contained in the system is a "soundex" which is linked to defendant records. This feature allows the retrieval and screen display of similar-sounding names, which are spelled differently.

Contact: Mike Donnelly
Data Processing Manager
403 Wapping Street
Frankfort, KY 40601
(502) 564-2350

Corrections Cabinet

The Corrections Cabinet maintains a computer database, Offender Records Information Operation Network (ORION), on all institutionalized inmates in the state prison system. The system is easily accessible and information is reliable. Updates are made on a daily basis in the prisons as well as in the central office in Frankfort.

Additionally, a variety of forms are maintained for the institutional file and for those persons currently on probation or parole. A Classification Form collects data for purposes of identifying problem, violent, and/or other offenders with special needs. The information is entered on a freestanding computerized system tied to Corrections' Offender Records Information Operation Network (ORION) but is not part of it. The Resident Record Card is included in the institutional file and contains current offenses, sentence calculations, parole eligibility, and several identifying numbers.

Contact: Dr. Deborah Wilson
Director, Planning &
Evaluation Branch
State Office Building
Frankfort, KY 40601
(502) 564-4360

Each local Probation and Parole Office maintains an Initial Felony Probation card on each defendant. The Client Profile and the Presentence Investigation (PSI) are also hardcopy forms which stay with the file. The PSI contains

an extensive amount of data on each defendant including a detailed account of the offense, employment and family history, past criminal record, education, personal and identifying data, and a evaluative summary. A separate PSI is prepared with each new offense, instead of updating old reports. At present, none of the criminal history information or other data contained in the PSI is computerized on ORION or a freestanding system.

Contact: Danny Yeary
Director, Probation & Parole
State Office Building
Frankfort, KY 40601
(502) 564-4221

Department for Public Advocacy

The Department for Public Advocacy collects data on client, charges, defense attorney, judge, opening and closing dates, and disposition. Most of this information is acquired at the beginning of a case using the Case Opening Form. The information is then sent to Frankfort and entered on the state computer from disks created at the department. A Client Interview Form similar to the PSI is used to record charges, family and employment history, prior offenses, education, etc. However, the form is kept in each defendant's file, and none of the information is computerized. Data gathered from these forms are used primarily for management information purposes.

Contact: Bill Curtis
Management Information Specialist
151 Elkhorn Court
Frankfort, KY 40601
(502) 564-5235

Kentucky State Police

The Kentucky State Police (KSP), which serves as the first step of the criminal justice system, maintains data primarily on arrest information. A uniform citation is issued for all offenses. Citations, including those for misdemeanor and felony offenses, are computerized after being sent to the central office and each offense can be assigned a unique citation number for tracing purposes. Two fingerprint cards are also completed upon arrest; one card is sent to the FBI, and one card is retained for the KSP files. These fingerprint cards are made available to any local, state or federal law enforcement agency and can be used for persistent felony offender (PFO) identification.

Contact: Ann Banta
Supervisor, Record Section
1250 Louisville Road
Frankfort, KY 40601
(502) 227-8700

A Uniform Offense Report (UOR), which contains information about the arrest location and offense plus victim and offender data, is completed for each crime. As with the Uniform Citation, not all agencies use the same form; thus it remains impossible to enter the collection of

comprehensive data from across the Commonwealth on the KSP computer system. The UOR report is in the process of being revised to consolidate existing child and domestic abuse forms and to reduce duplication.

The Crime Victims Information System (CVIS) was written for the Kentucky State Police under a federal grant. Under the grant, the Victim Assistance Network (VAN) and KSP each supplied personnel to design the system. Both victim and offender data relating to the victim were selected and are useful for statistical analyses. The CVIS contains about half of the 56 data items on the Uniform Offense Report. Some of the data categories include violation code, stolen property value, relationship to victim, and whether the victim or perpetrator was under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Analysis of the CVIS data was included in the latest edition of **Crime In Kentucky**. A drawback, as with other state data from the UOR-1 Report, is that information is almost exclusively from rural areas. Data from urban areas are submitted only in summary form on a monthly basis from local agencies throughout the state.

Contact: Major Bobby Stallins
Records Section
1250 Louisville Road
Frankfort, KY 40601
(502) 227-8700



The author of this **SAC Report** is Jack Ellis, SAC Manager. This **Report** is a synopsis of one of the SAC's first year reports--**A Data Inventory of Kentucky's Criminal Justice Agencies** published in December 1985. Other SAC reports include:

Persistent Felony Offenders in Kentucky: A Profile of the Institutional Population, by Deborah G. Wilson.

Child Abuse and Neglect in Kentucky: 1978-1984, by Dr. Gordon Bonham.

The Aftermath of Criminal Victimization: A Statewide Survey, by Dr. Knowlton Johnson, Dr. Gary Sykes and Ned Snow.

An Offender-based Tracking System Study of Three Judicial Districts in the Commonwealth of Kentucky, by Dr. Gennaro Vito and Jack Ellis.

Strengthening Kentucky's Capacity to Produce Criminal Justice Statistical Information: A Needs-Use Assessment, by Dr. Knowlton Johnson, Linda Burgess, and Sherry Hutchinson.

Kentucky Inmate Population: Profile and Projections, by Dr. Knowlton Johnson, Dr. Michael Price, Jack Ellis and Barbara Meredith.

Executive summaries or complete copies of these reports are available by writing:

Mr. Jack Ellis
Kentucky Criminal Justice SAC
Urban Studies Center
University of Louisville
1020 Alta Vista Road
Louisville, KY 40292

Cabinet for Human Resources

The Cabinet for Human Resources has computerized data on child and spouse abuse. The Initial Child Abuse-Neglect Investigation forms and Adult Protective Services Investigation forms are collected by hardcopy in the local office and sent to Frankfort for keypunching. Both forms are eventually computerized on the state IBM mainframe, but they are essentially freestanding systems. The child abuse form also collects some information on the perpetrator for substantiated cases. Data collection using a new Initial Child Abuse-Neglect Investigation form was begun on July 1, 1985, and the Adult Protective Services Investigation form is to be revised in 1986. The addition of new variables and the linkage of type(s) of abuse to each child necessitated the revision in data collection forms. A limited amount of editing of the data already entered on the system is the only limitation listed for either system.

Contact: Jean Kendall
DSS Systems Administrator
CHR Building, 6th Floor
Frankfort, KY 40601
(502) 564-3850

Crime Victims Compensation Board

The Crime Victims Compensation Board was established to hear claims from crime victims seeking some relief due to a violent, personal crime. Persons who may be eligible for compensation may also contact the person listed

below. At present, the Board has no computer for entering claims or analyzing data but is interested in computerizing parts of the interview forms. The number of claims approved and denied is currently counted manually.

Contact: Ilse Dickerson
Executive Director
113 Third Street
Frankfort, KY 40601
(502) 564-2290

IMPLICATIONS

The diversity of forms and systems directs attention toward the need for uniformity across agencies, especially for computerized data. Common data elements, such as charge and disposition, need identical definitions within all systems. At the current time, the three largest parts of the state criminal justice system--Kentucky State Police, the Administrative Office of the Courts, and the Corrections Cabinet--are looking to modify and/or upgrade their computer systems (KSP is in the process of implementing a new incident-based system). Such coordination would allow the merging of data files and the possibility of a more systemwide approach to criminal justice problems. Agencies would be able to analyze data utilizing information gathered before and after the offender has passed through each agency's part of the system. This type of analysis would allow law enforcement agencies to follow the offender after disposition, and the Corrections Cabinet would be better able to anticipate inmate population.

