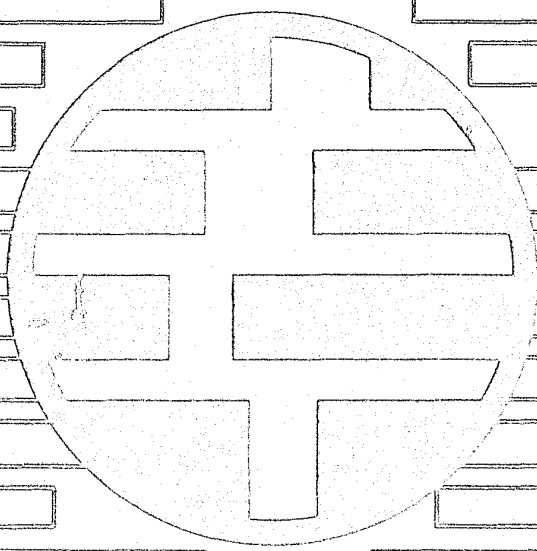


ILLINOIS
CRIMINAL JUSTICE
INFORMATION AUTHORITY

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**1992 Audit of the Illinois
Computerized Criminal History
System**

December 1992

Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority

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143611

**U.S. Department of Justice
National Institute of Justice**

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Printed by authority of the State of Illinois
Printing order number 93-23, 500 copies
February 1993

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1992 AUDIT OF THE ILLINOIS COMPUTERIZED CRIMINAL HISTORY SYSTEM

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Illinois State Police (ISP) has initiated several efforts since the 1990 audit of the Illinois Computerized Criminal History (CCH) System to improve the accuracy and completeness of criminal history records. It established a Disposition Acquisition Unit in 1990 which, during 1992, acquired nearly 150,000 dispositions from local agencies. Starting in January 1991, ISP also began local agency auditing. These audits have helped identify specific problems which impair arrest and disposition reporting. In addition, ISP received a grant in 1991 from the Bureau of Justice Statistics for additional improvements of criminal history records -- including the acquisition of historical arrest information from the Chicago Police Department.

This audit of the Illinois CCH System examines correctional information -- an area of criminal history record quality that has not been examined in any depth by the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority in recent years.

Illinois is now faced with an ever-expanding state prison population and an increasingly severe prison crowding problem. The prison crowding crisis has far-reaching implications, potentially affecting public safety and the quality of life for citizens throughout the state. To develop appropriate strategies for dealing with prison crowding, it will be important to accurately define and identify those offenders who can reasonably and safely be diverted from the prison system, as well as those who should appropriately be in prison. And, because the inmate population in the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) includes the offenders convicted of the most serious crimes, many of whom are likely to have extensive prior criminal histories and are likely to recidivate upon release, it is critical that accurate and timely criminal history record information (CHRI) be available to assist the state's criminal justice officials in making the most appropriate and effective decisions regarding these offenders.

Information Related to the Most Recent Incarceration

The ability to link recent custodial information with the arrest and conviction information that preceded the incarceration is critical to law enforcement officials, prosecutors, judges, and other rap sheet users. Without the ability to link these events, the user is left with several disparate rap sheet entries rather than a clear sequential picture of the offender's interaction with the criminal justice system. In many cases, the user cannot even ascertain why the offender was in prison.

The first phase of this year's audit was an assessment of the accuracy and completeness of CHRI for a sample of 362 inmates who were in IDOC custody on March 31, 1992. With the understanding that criminal justice transactions relating to an inmate's *most recent incarceration* are of paramount importance to rap sheet users, data from ISP's CCH System and from IDOC's Offender Tracking System (OTS) were analyzed to determine whether these specific transactions appeared on inmates' rap sheets.

This phase of the audit produced the following findings:

- More than one-quarter of the inmates (26.2 percent) had rap sheets that did not convey that they had been admitted to IDOC custody for their present incarceration.
- Even when IDOC receipt information for present incarcerations was found on subjects' criminal history records, it was often not possible to identify on the rap sheet the originating arrest that corresponded to that incarceration. Only 36.5 percent of the inmates had rap sheets which clearly reflected both the custodial receipt event and the originating arrest(s). Rap sheet users, therefore, have no documentation of the specific underlying offense(s) for nearly two-thirds of the inmates.

The ability of rap sheet users to obtain a complete picture of all events corresponding to the most recent incarceration is often hampered by the lack of disposition information on rap sheets:

- Only 14.1 percent of the inmates had rap sheets which clearly reflected the custodial receipt, the originating arrest, the state's attorney disposition, and a final court disposition which specified a *prison sentence*. This indicates that for only *one out of every seven* IDOC inmates will rap sheet users have information about the *present incarceration* and each of the case events leading up to it -- that is, the complete criminal justice process from arrest through incarceration.

Overall Completeness of Records

The second phase of the audit examined the *overall* completeness of those 362 inmates' criminal history records and produced the following findings:

- More than half (56.2 percent) of the total arrests appearing on inmates' rap sheets were lacking state's attorney dispositions, an average of four state's attorney dispositions absent per inmate.
- Nearly half (46.3 percent) of the total arrests appearing on inmates' rap sheets were lacking final court dispositions, an average of 3.3 final court dispositions absent per inmate.
- 42.2 percent of the total prison sentences appearing on inmates' rap sheets were lacking IDOC custodial receipts, an average of one custodial receipt lacking per inmate.

The completeness of subjects' rap sheets has improved since the Authority's 1990 audit. The 56.2 percent of total arrests lacking state's attorney dispositions compares favorably to the 79.2 percent lacking in 1990. Similarly, the 46.3 percent of the total arrests lacking final court dispositions represents a improvement from the 1990 audit, in which 66.5 percent of the arrests were lacking these dispositions.

Custodial Releases

The final phase of the audit was an assessment of the existence of custodial release information on the rap sheets of 331 IDOC inmates released from institutional custody during 1991. This phase found that:

- Nearly 20 percent of the inmates released from institutional custody in 1991 had rap sheets which did not reflect that release information.

Recommendations

The findings and conclusions of the 1992 audit provided the basis for seven recommendations:

1. The Illinois State Police should develop an implementation strategy and timetable for updating inmates' criminal histories, to ensure that all persons who are received at the Illinois Department of Corrections have accurate and complete criminal history records before they are released. The period of incarceration should be viewed as a "window" during which this process can be completed. IDOC should provide the necessary assistance to implement this program. The strategy should be reviewed by the Ad Hoc Committee on Dispositional Reporting, and submitted as a recommendation to the Authority.
2. The custodial reporting form should be modified to allow more than two court case numbers to be reported, or in lieu of that option, a supplemental form should be implemented to serve this purpose. The form should also be modified to allow custodial agencies to report the current holding charge to assist ISP in verifying whether it is a reportable offense.
3. The Illinois Supreme Court and Illinois State Police should establish a policy that the court case number is a *mandatory field* for the reporting of all court and custodial submissions to CCH. ISP should take steps to obtain the number in a timely manner when it is absent from those submissions.
4. The Illinois State Police should perform tests of the CCH System to determine whether its programming is consistently associating custodial information with linkable case events, and consistently configuring criminal history transcripts to reflect that association.
5. The Illinois State Police should provide training or other guidance to help criminal justice personnel interpret criminal history transcripts (rap sheets), especially with respect to the linking of corresponding case events that appear in separate rap sheet segments. This should be included as a component of the comprehensive training program to be implemented under the Criminal History Records Improvement Plan.

6. The Illinois State Police should take immediate steps to reduce its backlogs of CHRI submissions.
7. The long-range Criminal History Records Improvement Plan being developed by the Ad Hoc Committee on Dispositional Reporting should strive to:
 - a. implement a unified tracking mechanism which links all corresponding criminal justice case events -- from arrest through incarceration; and
 - b. optimize the use of electronic data transfer between criminal justice agencies which report criminal history record information, including the Illinois Department of Corrections, and as a reporting medium to the Computerized Criminal History system maintained by the Illinois State Police -- in order to eliminate errors and omissions associated with manual data handling.

BACKGROUND

Accurate and complete criminal history record information (CHRI) is of paramount importance to the effective administration of criminal justice. In Illinois, CHRI affects the quality of decision-making at all stages of the criminal justice process and has profound impact on individual rights and civil liberties. In today's economic climate in particular, this information is increasingly critical, as criminal justice decision-makers are faced with competing realities -- dwindling resources and increasing demands for service. Reliable CHRI is essential to help identify serious offenders and distinguish them from those who are less dangerous, in order to best allocate limited resources and apply appropriate sanctions. CHRI is also increasingly being used for non-criminal justice purposes, to make determinations regarding the suitability of individuals for such things as employment, professional licensing, and access to firearms.

The importance of CHRI has long been recognized by the Authority. Over the years, many of the Authority's efforts, including, but not limited to, its statutorily mandated audits of the state central repositories for criminal history records, have been focused on improving the quality of these data. In general, past Authority audits have examined the quality of CHRI maintained by the Illinois State Police (ISP) in the Computerized Criminal History (CCH) system, most recently with emphasis on dispositional information.

One area of criminal history record quality that has not been examined in any depth by the Authority in recent years, however, is correctional information.¹ Two factors make this an appropriate and worthwhile audit topic for the 1992 audit.

First, Illinois, like many other states in the nation, is now faced with an ever-expanding state prison population and an increasingly severe prison crowding problem. The prison crowding crisis has far-reaching implications, potentially affecting public safety and the quality of life for citizens throughout the state. In response, Governor Edgar has convened a special task force charged with conducting an in-depth examination of the nature and extent of Illinois' prison crowding problem and developing constructive recommendations and solutions, including practical cost-effective alternatives to incarceration.

The key to developing appropriate strategies for dealing with prison crowding will be the ability to accurately define and identify those offenders who can reasonably and

safely be diverted from the prison system, as well as those who should appropriately be in prison. And, because the inmate population in the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) includes the offenders convicted of the most serious crimes, many of whom are likely to have extensive prior criminal histories and are likely to recidivate upon release, it is critical that accurate and timely CHRI be available to assist the state's criminal justice officials in making the most appropriate and effective decisions regarding the housing and program placement of these offenders.

Second, the concern for ensuring the quality of state criminal history records, including corrections data, is being strongly echoed at the federal level as well, as efforts are being made to help states improve the accuracy, completeness and timeliness of CHRI. As a condition of receiving this year's federal anti-drug abuse block grants, states are required to set aside at least 5 percent of these funds for improving criminal history records. In May 1992, Illinois submitted to the U.S. Department of Justice its criminal history records improvement plan, which was developed and drafted cooperatively by the Authority, ISP, IDOC and representatives of local criminal justice agencies and courts. As part of the plan, states are required to provide an assessment of the quality of correctional dispositions in their CHRI systems.

This 1992 audit of the state central repository for CHRI is the eighth time the state central repository has been audited. Six of these previous audits were conducted by the Authority and its predecessor agency, the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Council. One previous audit was conducted by the Office of the Auditor General.

The Authority's Audit Powers

Federal regulations governing the collection, maintenance, and dissemination of CHRI have been in place since 1976.² These regulations require that audits of the state central repository be conducted to help ensure the quality, privacy, and security of criminal history records.

Under the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Act of 1983, the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority is mandated to audit the quality of data maintained by the state central repositories for criminal CHRI. This enabling legislation mandates the Authority to "act as the sole, official, criminal justice body in the state of Illinois to conduct annual and periodic audits of the procedures, policies, and practices of the state central repositories for criminal history record information."³ The Authority

is also authorized to "monitor the operation of existing criminal justice information systems in order to protect the constitutional rights and privacy of individuals about whom criminal history record information has been collected." ⁴

Goals of the Present Audit

The 1992 Criminal History Records Audit includes:

1. An assessment of the completeness and accuracy of criminal history records for the IDOC inmate population;
2. An assessment of the completeness and accuracy of custodial release information for IDOC inmates recently released from institutional custody;
3. A narrative overview of IDOC reporting practices to CCH; including a description of data quality limitations and weaknesses; and
4. A statistical description of the IDOC inmate population, including prior arrests.

1992 AUDIT METHODOLOGY

The primary purpose of this year's audit was to assess the accuracy and completeness of CHRI maintained on ISP's CCH system for a sample of inmates in IDOC custody. The data were drawn from two sources -- CCH and IDOC's Offender Tracking System (OTS). This approach allowed audit staff to assess the completeness of inmates' criminal history records with respect to all reportable events (arrest, state's attorney disposition, final court disposition, and custodial receipt), and also to compare common data elements which exist both on the rap sheet and in the OTS database (sentence date, holding charge, and prior incarcerations).

The second phase of analysis involved an assessment of the completeness and accuracy of custodial release information maintained on CCH for a sample of IDOC inmates released from institutional custody during 1991. Here again, the data were drawn from CCH and OTS.

In addition, a site visit was conducted at the IDOC reception and classification (R & C) center in Joliet to document the procedures by which custodial information is obtained and then reported to CCH. Although IDOC was not the primary subject of the 1992 audit, this activity was viewed as critical in understanding the data quality issues.

Sample Selections

For the analysis of inmates in IDOC custody, data from OTS were retrieved for a random sample of 389 inmates incarcerated in IDOC on March 31, 1992. The sample size was determined using an attributes sampling formula appropriate for auditing.⁵

Printouts were supplied by IDOC with a cross-listing of both IDOC identification numbers and the state identification (SID) numbers used by ISP to uniquely identify subjects for whom criminal history records exist in CCH. The printout also contained identification record (IR) numbers for Chicago Police Department (CPD) arrestees, which are used by CPD as unique subject identifiers. In addition, the printouts contained four personal identifier parameters for each subject -- name, sex, race, and date of birth -- which can often be used for identification when SID or IR numbers are not available. According to IDOC officials, the lack of some SID numbers in OTS is partly due to the workload associated with processing large numbers of inmates at the IDOC R & C centers.

This information allowed ISP staff to retrieve rap sheets for 368 of the sample subjects. The 21 sample subjects for whom rap sheets could not be retrieved were, therefore, excluded from all rap sheet analyses. Additionally, since Illinois statutes require IDOC to report custodial receipts within 30 days, six subjects were removed from these analyses who had current receipt dates that were less than 30 days prior to the date when the rap sheets were generated (April 14, 1992).

For the analysis of custodial releases, data from OTS were retrieved for a random sample of 376 inmates released from institutional custody during 1991. Sample size again was determined using the attributes sampling formula. Printouts were supplied by IDOC with the cross-listing of IDOC identification numbers and SID/IR numbers, as well as the personal identifier parameters (name, sex, race, and date of birth) used in the identification process. This information allowed ISP to generate rap sheets for 331 of the releasees in this sample (on September 29-30, 1992). The 45 subjects for whom rap sheets could not be retrieved were excluded from this analysis.

Analytical Activities

Analysis of Inmate Population

The first audit activity was an assessment of the completeness of criminal history records with respect to arrests, as well as state's attorney, court, and custodial disposition information for inmates in IDOC as of March 31, 1992.

The initial phase of this activity focused on criminal justice events pertaining to the inmate's most recent incarceration. Audit staff first determined whether the custodial receipt information was contained on the subject's rap sheet. If so, staff then determined whether the corresponding arrest, state's attorney filing decision, and final court decision had been posted to the rap sheet as well.

In the absence of a posted IDOC custodial receipt, it was not possible to identify whether posted arrest and/or disposition information corresponded to that incarceration.

Audit staff also documented difficulties or ambiguities in linking custodial records on rap sheets to these corresponding case events.

In the second phase of this analysis, audit staff assessed the *overall* completeness of inmates' rap sheets:

- For each arrest posted to the rap sheet, it was determined whether the corresponding state's attorney filing decision and final court decision had been posted as well.
- For each final court disposition posted to the rap sheet which specified a prison sentence, it was determined whether a corresponding custodial receipt had been posted.

Comparison of CCH and OTS Data

Audit staff also compared notations in OTS with those in CCH pertaining to inmates' sentence dates, current holding charge(s), and prior incarcerations. This comparison was not viewed as a means to assess the accuracy of rap sheet information pertaining to those data elements, but as a way to examine the consistency of CCH and OTS data. Since the scope of this audit did not include an examination of actual source documents, it was not possible to attribute inconsistencies between CCH and OTS to inaccuracies in either of those databases.

Only a partial analysis was possible in comparing OTS and CCH notations of prior incarcerations. The OTS database distinguishes between a first-time prison admission and a readmission, but does not enumerate prior incarcerations. This analysis therefore was limited to a determination of whether prior prison admissions were indicated on rap sheets for those inmates identified in OTS as readmissions. The results of these comparisons are presented in Appendix A.

Analysis of Released Inmates

The audit also assessed the completeness of custodial release information on the criminal history records of a sample of inmates released in 1991. This required, in addition to the rap sheets, OTS data from IDOC containing the specific dates of release from institutional custody. The rap sheets for these subjects were then analyzed to determine whether the custodial release information was posted to subjects' criminal history records, whether the release dates in CCH and OTS matched, and which types of institutional release were specifically denoted on the rap sheets.

THE REPORTING OF IDOC CUSTODIAL INFORMATION TO CCH

The Illinois Department of Corrections is required by law ⁶ to report to ISP "all information concerning the receipt, escape, execution, death, release, pardon, parole, commutation of sentence, granting of executive clemency, or discharge of an individual who has been sentenced to the agency's custody for any offenses which are mandated by statute to be collected, maintained, or disseminated by [ISP]." ⁷ This then becomes part of the information maintained in ISP's CCH system.

Information concerning the receipt of adults at IDOC is generated at the four sites where they are initially received prior to institutional assignment. After being sentenced to prison by the courts, newly convicted offenders (or former inmates who have violated the conditions of their release) are transferred from a county jail to one of four IDOC "reception and classification" (R & C) centers. Approximately 65 percent of all IDOC prisoners are processed at the R & C center at the Joliet Correctional Center. The remaining male inmates are processed at the Graham or Menard R & C centers, and all female prisoners are processed at the Dwight R & C center. Besides receiving medical tests and evaluations of educational, vocational, and psychological background, inmates are fingerprinted early in this process so that their identities can be verified and criminal histories can be obtained.

The information obtained through these tests, evaluations, and interviews is entered into IDOC's Offender Tracking System (OTS) through remote terminals located at each R & C center, and is maintained as part of IDOC's overall correctional management system. The specific receipt information required for CCH is derived from the court mittimus document (committing the offender to IDOC custody) and from the interview process. IDOC sends this information along with the subject's fingerprints to ISP on a multi-copy *custodial reporting form* -- which is different from the multi-copy *arrest fingerprint form* used by police, prosecutors, and court clerks' offices to report CHRI. (Copies of both forms are included in Appendix C.)

Information about each of the physical descriptors on the custodial form -- sex, race, hair color, skin tone, height, weight, eye color, scars/marks/tattoos -- as well as place of birth, are derived from the mittimus, as well as through observation and interview by IDOC intake staff. The subject's name, date of birth, the state identification (SID) number, and court case number(s) are also derived from the mittimus. If it is determined that the inmate has been previously incarcerated in IDOC, OTS will also

produce an existing IDOC identification number for inclusion on the custodial reporting form. After the information has been collected and entered into OTS, it is printed on the custodial reporting form at each R & C center. One copy is then sent to ISP with the fingerprints, while the other three copies are sent with the subject to his or her institutional assignment.

Staff at the Joliet, Graham, and Dwight R & C centers transport custodial reporting forms by car to ISP's Bureau of Identification (located in Joliet). In this way, they are able to deliver original copies of fingerprints (instead of lower-quality telefaxed fingerprints) so that positive identification can be confirmed and criminal histories obtained in an expeditious manner. Officials at the Joliet R & C center report that the turnaround time for receiving rap sheets from ISP generally takes a few days. Because they are located much further from ISP's Bureau of Identification, staff at the Menard R & C center telefax their custodial fingerprint cards to ISP for identification purposes, and then mail the entire custodial form for reporting purposes.

At the time the rap sheets were generated for the sample of IDOC inmates (April 1992), there were substantial backlogs of custodial reporting forms awaiting data entry and verification. At that time, there were 13,448 custodial fingerprint cards to be classified, and more than 300 custodial receipts to be data entered. In addition, each custodial receipt must be "data verified."⁸

Information about changes in custodial status that is required for CCH (escape, execution, death, release, pardon, parole, commutation of sentence, granting of executive clemency, or discharge) is reported to CCH by each of the IDOC institutions, including prisons and community correctional centers. The "parole" category is seldom reported in its pure sense -- that is, for subjects serving indeterminate sentences who are released from institutional custody by Illinois Prisoner Review Board officials and then supervised in the community. The most commonly reported release category is mandatory supervised release (MSR), which involves community supervision for determinately sentenced subjects upon their release from institutional custody.⁹ A "discharge" occurs when subjects are released outright from IDOC without any further correctional supervision -- either as the result of having successfully completed parole or MSR, or of having violated MSR/parole, being returned to institutional custody for the rest of their MSR/parole term, and then being released.

Transfers of inmates to and from various IDOC institutions and community correctional centers are not currently reported to ISP. Prior to the early 1980s,

however, these transfers were reported to CCH, even though they were not required by law.

At the time the rap sheets for 1991 releasees were generated (September 1992), ISP officials reported that the backlog for posting IDOC custodial status changes included 1,586 IDOC custodial status changes to be entered in CCH, and 651 to be data verified.¹⁰ They estimated that this backlog would require approximately 25 "person days" to be eliminated.

Issues Concerning Custodial Submissions to ISP

The criminal justice events which precede a subject's incarceration (arrest, state's attorney disposition, and final court disposition) are reported to CCH by the local agencies which execute those events (arresting agencies, prosecutors, and circuit court clerks' offices) on a multi-copy *arrest fingerprint form*. A unique tracking number known as the "Document Control Number" (DCN) is pre-printed on all five copies of that form, which ensures a link between reported arrests and subsequent dispositions on the subject's rap sheet.

The *custodial reporting form* used for reporting custodial dispositions to CCH has a separate DCN pre-printed on it, effectively bifurcating the tracking system. A copy of this form, which also contains the subject's fingerprints, is submitted to CCH. This provides positive identification of the subject to ISP, and allows the custodial receipt to be posted to CCH without requiring linkage to any other corresponding criminal justice events. Thus, if the arrest is not posted to CCH for any reason (e.g., not reported by arresting agency, lost in mail, in process at ISP, etc.), the custodial receipt can still be posted. The absence of one unified tracking number from arrest through incarceration, however, creates difficulties for those attempting to link the custodial information to the corresponding events.

Without a unified DCN to link the custodial information to its originating arrest(s) and disposition(s), the court case number becomes the only mechanism for linking these events. The court case number is one of the data elements on the custodial reporting form, and is reported to CCH by circuit court clerks when the case is first initiated and the number assigned and/or as part of the final court disposition. (When a case has begun as the result of a warrant arrest, the court case number may also be submitted by the arresting agency and/or the state's attorney's office.)

The same court case numbers are used by circuit court clerks from different county-level jurisdictions, however. Therefore, in order to link custodial receipt information to corresponding criminal justice events, ISP must receive both a court case number and a county identifier on the court dispositions and custodial receipts.¹¹ The linkage can then be displayed accordingly on rap sheets.

Often, however, the linkage between custodial information and corresponding case events is *not* clearly displayed on rap sheets – custodial receipts are not displayed in the same segment with the corresponding arrest and dispositions, but in an isolated segments.¹² These *custodial* segments are interspersed on the rap sheet with *arrest/disposition* segments in reverse chronological order. Rap sheet users may attempt to visually link custodial disposition segments to arrest/disposition segments by matching the court case number from each segment. This is problematic though, because the court case number is not as reliable a linking mechanism as the DCN. Since the DCN is pre-printed on arrest fingerprint forms and custodial reporting forms, it is automatically received by ISP when those forms are submitted. The court case number, however, must be filled in by reporting agencies and therefore is subject to error or omission. Although the court case number is a required data element in the reporting of all court and custodial submissions to CCH, these submissions will still be *posted* to a subject's record even if the court case number is missing or unreadable.¹³

There are two major factors which can account for the absence of a court case number from the custodial reporting form:

- Staff at the R & C center do not always capture and report to CCH every court case number associated with a subject's IDOC commitment. The intake process proceeds even if the subject's court case number is missing from mittimus documents, is unreadable, or is seemingly incorrect.¹⁴ Although R & C staff will then contact the originating court clerk's office in order to recover the correct number, it is possible for the custodial reporting form to be sent to ISP before that occurs.
- The custodial reporting form only allows for a maximum of two court case numbers to be recorded. Hence, if one or more court case numbers are omitted from the custodial reporting form, that information will not be posted to the subject's record. When this happens, neither ISP nor rap sheet users will have all the linking tools they need to establish a complete criminal history.

Even if custodial receipts containing the court case number are successfully posted to subjects' rap sheets, rap sheet users may not be able to locate a matching court case number in an arrest/disposition segment of the rap sheet. There are several possible explanations for this:

- The court case was not initiated by an arrest, but rather through a summons or a "notice-to-appear" issued by the court.
- The corresponding arrest was either not reported by the arresting agency or not posted to the subject's record by ISP. At the time of this audit, the delay in posting arrest information was between six months and a year, according to ISP officials .
- Similarly, a linkage would not be possible if the final court disposition was either not reported or not posted to CCH. The backlog in posting arrests prevents the posting of corresponding state's attorney and final court dispositions as well.
- The court case number was either absent or unreadable on the court submissions (either a court initiation or final disposition). ISP officials say that court case numbers on court submissions are sometimes too faint to read, since the court clerk's copy of the arrest fingerprint form is at the bottom of the carboned multi-copy form set.

Prior to the 1987 redesign of the CCH system, the custodial reporting form allowed correctional officials to report a "holding charge" for which the subject was being incarcerated. This information provided ISP staff an additional manual tool for linking custodial receipts to their corresponding arrests and dispositions by matching the holding charge with arrest or conviction charges that had been reported to CCH. The custodial reporting form that has been in place since 1987, however, does not contain the "holding charge" data field. Therefore, that linkage tool is no longer available. This also means that there is no mechanism on the form that can be used by ISP to verify the reportability of the receipt. There are a small number of offenses for which an offender may be committed to IDOC, yet are not reportable to CCH -- for example, "Aggravated Driving Under the Influence of Alcohol or Drugs." Without any information concerning the holding charge on the custodial reporting form, the receipt of an individual convicted of this charge will be erroneously entered into CCH.

AUDIT FINDINGS

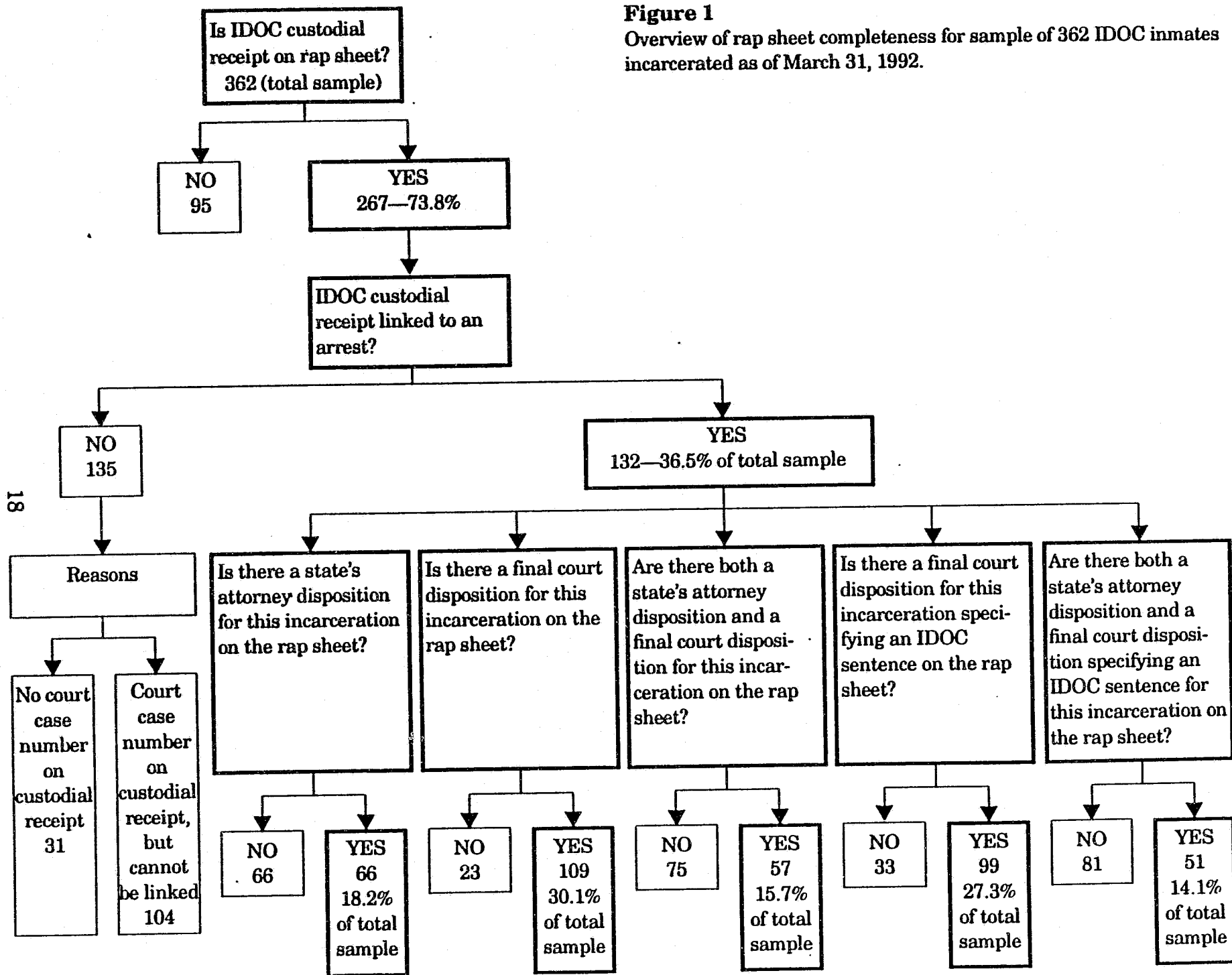
Analysis of Inmates Incarcerated in IDOC

Rap sheets and OTS data were initially analyzed to determine whether each of the reportable events *pertaining to the present incarceration* appeared on subjects' rap sheets. The appearance of each case event is discussed independently in this section. Figure 1, however, provides an overview of rap sheet completeness for the 362 subjects in the inmate sample. As each "sub-analysis" proceeds in this section, it will be helpful for readers to refer back to Figure 1 for this overall perspective.

An assessment was also made of the *overall* completeness of subjects' rap sheets -- (a) whether each arrest had associated state's attorney and final court dispositions and (b) whether each final court disposition specifying an IDOC sentence had an associated IDOC custodial receipt.

Figure 1

Overview of rap sheet completeness for sample of 362 IDOC inmates incarcerated as of March 31, 1992.



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Reportable Events Pertaining to Present Incarceration

Existence of IDOC Custodial Receipt on Rap Sheet

OTS data were utilized to identify the IDOC date of receipt for the latest incarceration of each sample subject. Rap sheets for each subject were then analyzed to determine whether an IDOC custodial receipt with that receipt date appeared anywhere on the subject's record. Table I-1 shows that of these 362 subjects, 26.2 percent did not have the IDOC receipt corresponding to the incarceration anywhere on their rap sheets. Therefore, more than one-quarter of the inmates in the analysis had rap sheets that *did not accurately convey* that they had been admitted to IDOC custody for this incarceration. This is partly due to ISP's backlog of non-posted custodial receipts which existed at that time.

Table I-1 Is IDOC custodial receipt on rap sheet? (N = 362)		
Yes	No	Total
267 (73.8%)	95 (26.2%)	362 (100%)

Ability to Link the Custodial Receipt to a Corresponding Arrest

Although for 267 subjects IDOC receipts for present incarcerations were found on their criminal history records (see Table I-1), rap sheet users do not always find correctional information linkable to the originating arrest and to state's attorney and court dispositions (see pages 14-16).

As seen in Table I-2, among the 267 inmates whose most recent custodial receipts were found on their rap sheets, more than half those receipts could not be linked to an originating arrest (or any preceding dispositions). Therefore, *just slightly more than one-third* (36.5 percent) of the 362 inmates in the overall analysis had rap sheets which clearly reflected both the custodial receipt and the originating arrest(s) (see Figure 1).

Table I-2 If IDOC custodial receipt is on rap sheet (N=267 out of overall sample of 362), is it linked to an arrest?		
Yes	No	Total
132 (49.4%)	135 (50.6%)	267 (100%)

When the custodial segment could not be linked to an arrest/disposition segment, the audit found that in some cases the custodial receipt did not contain a court case number. However, in other cases, there was a court case number on the receipt, but it did not match a court case number found in any arrest/disposition segment.

As seen in Table I-3, the inability to match the court case number was the more common problem on rap sheets. In *more than three-fourths* of the occurrences where the custodial receipt could not be linked to an arrest, a court case number on the receipt did not match any court case number found in an arrest/disposition segment.

<p style="text-align: center;">Table I-3 Reason for IDOC custodial receipt not linked to an arrest (N=135 out of overall sample of 362)</p>		
No court case number on receipt	Court case number cannot be linked	Total
31 (23.0%)	104 (77.0%)	135 (100%)

Linkage Issues

While attempting to establish and understand the linkages between custodial events and the arrest/disposition events on subjects' rap sheets, several types of problems were encountered by audit staff:

- There were two instances where the date of an IDOC custodial receipt on a subject's rap sheet followed by one or two days the date of a sentence to IDOC -- but the court case numbers of these events did not match. In this situation a rap sheet user must decide whether to link the two events based on the proximity of the dates, without having absolute confirmation of that link.
- There were five instances where an IDOC custodial receipt was linked (by matching court case numbers) to a final disposition specifying a sentence to probation, rather than a prison sentence. A rap sheet user would likely conclude that the subject violated probation, which resulted in probation being revoked and the subject being committed to IDOC. This was not confirmed, however, on the rap sheets -- thus leaving the actual course of events open to speculation. This situation is not necessarily due to the non-reporting or non-posting of reportable events to CCH. A violation of probation is *not* a reportable event unless the violation is itself a felony or a Class A or B misdemeanor. Even so, the arrest will be reported as though it were a new

offense charge, not a probation violation.

- The Cook County Circuit Court Clerk's Office has, in recent years, reported final court dispositions to ISP on magnetic tape. The automated version of the court case number differs somewhat from the standard hard copy format the clerk's office conveys to IDOC -- although a large portion of the number is the same. Thus, a rap sheet user must decide if the standard version of the court case number found on the custodial receipt (for example, 89CR21322) matches the automated version of the number found on the court disposition (for example, 89CF000213220011). Although these are, in actuality, two versions of the same court case number, that fact may not be clear to the rap sheet user.
- Audit staff noted rap sheets on which a custodial receipt was positively linked (via matching court case numbers) to only one arrest/disposition segment on the basis of matching court case numbers, even though it seemed to logically link with other arrest/disposition segments. These other segments also contained sentences to IDOC which took place on the same date, but with different court case numbers.

Custodial receipts received by ISP prior to 1987 were displayed in corresponding arrest/disposition segments of subjects' rap sheets, after the correct linkage was established by individual ISP staff members (rather than by CCH system software). Audit staff noted instances where the accuracy of that linkage might be questioned by rap sheet users:

- Custodial receipts were posted to only one arrest/disposition segment, even when the IDOC commitment seemed to stem from multiple cases. In one instance, for example, the custodial receipt was linked by ISP to a segment containing a prison sentence for aggravated battery occurring the same day as the receipt. It was not linked, however, to a much lengthier prison sentence for murder that the subject received three weeks earlier. In another instance a similar scenario occurred in which the custodial receipt was linked to one prison sentence (in one rap sheet segment), but not to another sentence (in another segment) occurring on the same date.
- In two instances, custodial receipts were linked by ISP to prison sentences that had occurred approximately two years prior to prison admission -- despite the

fact that other prison sentences occurring a few days before admission were found elsewhere on the rap sheets.

- In another instance, multiple IDOC custodial receipts were linked by ISP to a single arrest/disposition segment, with no further information. The two receipts appeared adjacent to one another within the rap sheet segment, with no further arrest or charging information to explain the reason for a second prison admission. It was unclear whether the second receipt was actually connected to the first (for example, because the inmate was readmitted following a temporary release for court appearance), or whether there was an error on the rap sheet.

Existence of Dispositions on Rap Sheet

There were 132 subjects whose rap sheets *did* reflect both the latest custodial receipt and the originating arrest. Audit staff examined those rap sheets to determine whether the originating arrest was accompanied by a state's attorney disposition. As seen in Table I-4, half the state's attorney dispositions were absent from those rap sheets.¹⁵ Therefore, *only 18.2 percent* of the 362 inmates in the overall analysis had rap sheets which clearly reflected the custodial receipt, the originating arrest, and the state's attorney disposition (see Figure 1).

Table I-4		
If present incarceration is linked to rap sheet arrest (N = 132 out of overall sample of 362), is there a state's attorney disposition?		
Yes	No	Total
66 (50.0%)	66 (50.0%)	132 (100%)

Audit staff also examined those 132 rap sheets which reflected both the latest custodial receipt and the originating arrest, to determine whether the final court disposition appeared with the originating arrest. As seen in Table I-5, 17.4 percent of the final court dispositions for these originating arrests were absent from the rap sheets. Therefore, *30.1 percent* of the 362 inmates in the overall analysis had rap sheets which clearly reflected their latest custodial receipt, the originating arrest, and the final court disposition (see Figure 1).

Table I-5		
If present incarceration is linked to rap sheet arrest (N=132 out of overall sample of 362), is there a final court disposition?		
Yes	No	Total
109 (82.6%)	23 (17.4%)	132 (100%)

Audit staff then examined those same 132 rap sheets to determine whether the state's attorney disposition *and* final court disposition *both* appeared with the originating arrest. As seen in Table I-6, 43.2 percent of the subjects had both dispositions to the originating arrest posted to their rap sheets. Therefore, *only 15.7 percent* of the 362 inmates in the overall analysis had rap sheets which clearly reflected the latest custodial receipt, the originating arrest, the state's attorney disposition, *and* the final court disposition (see Figure 1).

Table I-6		
If present incarceration is linked to rap sheet arrest (N=132 out of overall sample of 362), is there <i>both</i> a state's attorney disposition and a final court disposition?		
Yes	No	Total
57 (43.2%)	75 (56.8%)	132 (100%)

For subjects whose rap sheets did contain a final court disposition pertaining to the originating arrest, that disposition did not always accurately reflect a sentence to IDOC. Several of the dispositions, for example, were sentences to probation. In such instances, rap sheet users are left to surmise that the subject at some point committed a probation violation, resulting in a prison sentence – even though that sequence of events does not appear on the rap sheet. As seen in Table I-7, for one-quarter of the 132 subjects whose rap sheets reflected the custodial receipt and the originating arrest, a final court disposition *specifying a prison sentence* was missing. Therefore, *27.3 percent* of the 362 inmates in the overall analysis had rap sheets which clearly reflected the latest custodial receipt, the originating arrest, and a final court disposition *which specified the prison sentence* (see Figure 1).

Table I-7

If present incarceration is linked to rap sheet arrest (N=132 out of overall sample of 362), is there a final court disposition *specifying an IDOC sentence*?

Yes	No	Total
99 (75.0%)	33 (25.0%)	132 (100%)

Finally, for those same 132 subjects whose rap sheets reflected both the latest custodial receipt and the originating arrest, audit staff looked for the state's attorney disposition *and* a final court disposition *specifying an IDOC sentence*. As seen in Table I-8, 38.6 percent of those 132 subjects had this complete dispositional information posted to their rap sheets for the originating arrest. Therefore, *only 14.1 percent* of the 362 inmates in the overall analysis had rap sheets which clearly reflected their latest custodial receipt, the originating arrest, the state's attorney disposition, and a final court disposition *which specified a prison sentence*.

This is a critical finding of the 1992 audit. It indicates that for only *one out of every seven* IDOC inmates will rap sheet users have information about the latest incarceration and each of the case events leading up to it -- that is, the complete criminal justice process from arrest through incarceration.

Table I-8		
If present incarceration is linked to rap sheet arrest (N=132 out of overall sample of 362), is there <i>both</i> a state's attorney disposition and a final court disposition <i>specifying an IDOC sentence</i> ?		
Yes	No	Total
51 (38.6%)	81 (61.4%)	132 (100%)

Overall Completeness of Subjects' Rap Sheets

Rap sheet users seeking complete criminal history on a current IDOC inmate require more than just the information pertaining to the present incarceration and the corresponding arrest and dispositions. A complete history of previous arrests and dispositions is also needed. Therefore, following the initial assessment of information pertaining to the present incarceration, the audit also focused on the overall completeness of the inmates' rap sheets.

Twelve of the 362 subjects in the analysis had no arrest information posted to their rap sheets (only custodial information). Rap sheets were therefore analyzed for the *remaining 350 subjects* who had at least one arrest posted. Those 350 subjects had a total of 2,514 arrests posted to their rap sheets, an *average of 7.2 arrests* per subject.

State's Attorney Dispositions

Audit staff assessed the *total* number of arrests posted to subjects' rap sheets which had corresponding state's attorney dispositions. Table II-1 shows that *more than half* (56.2 percent) of the total arrests appearing on subjects' rap sheets were lacking state's attorney dispositions, an average of four state's attorney dispositions absent per subject.

Table II-1 Overall completeness of subjects' rap sheets: <i>total</i> arrests lacking state's attorney dispositions (N=350 out of overall sample of 362)			
Subjects	Total arrests	Total state's attorney dispositions	Total arrests lacking state's attorney dispositions
350	2,514	1,101	1,413 (56.2%)

An additional breakdown of these findings is presented in Table II-2 to illustrate the number of absent state's attorney dispositions on a "per subject" basis. As shown, 83.4 percent of the subjects had at least one arrest on their rap sheet lacking a state's attorney disposition. More than half of the subjects (52.3 percent) were lacking state's attorney dispositions for three or more arrests, and nearly 10 percent of the subjects had 10 or more arrests lacking these dispositions.

<p align="center">Table II-2 Overall completeness of subjects' rap sheets: arrests lacking state's attorney dispositions - per subject (N=350 out of overall sample of 362)</p>		
# Arrests lacking state's attorney dispositions	Number/percentage	Cumulative percentage
10 or more arrests lacking state's attorney dispositions	34 (9.7%)	9.7%
5 - 9 arrests lacking state's attorney dispositions	72 (20.6%)	30.3%
3 - 4 arrests lacking state's attorney dispositions	77 (22.0%)	52.3%
2 arrests lacking state's attorney dispositions	53 (15.1%)	67.4%
1 arrest lacking state's attorney disposition	56 (16.0%)	83.4%
No arrests lacking state's attorney dispositions	58 (16.6%)	100%

Final Court Dispositions

Rap sheets for the 350 subjects with at least one posted arrest were again analyzed to assess the number of *total arrests* which had final court dispositions. Table II-3 shows that *nearly half* (46.3%) of the total arrests appearing on subjects' rap sheets were lacking final court dispositions, an average of 3.3 final court dispositions absent per subject.

Table II-3 Overall completeness of subjects' rap sheets: <i>total</i> arrests lacking final court dispositions (N = 350 out of overall sample of 362)			
Subjects	Total arrests	Total final court dispositions	Total arrests lacking final court dispositions
350	2,514	1,350	1,164 (46.3%)

An additional breakdown of these findings is presented in Table II-4 to illustrate the number of absent court dispositions on a "per subject" basis. As shown, 80.6 percent of the subjects had at least one arrest on their rap sheet lacking a final court disposition. More than half of the subjects (57.2 percent) were lacking final court dispositions for two or more arrests, and almost one-quarter (24.3 percent) of the subjects had five or more arrests lacking these dispositions.

Table II-4
Overall completeness of subjects' rap sheets: arrests lacking final court dispositions - per subject (N=350 out of overall sample of 362)

# Arrests lacking final court dispositions	Number/percentage	Cumulative percentage
10 or more arrests lacking final court dispositions	21 (6.0%)	6.0%
5 - 9 arrests lacking final court dispositions	64 (18.3%)	24.3%
3 - 4 arrests lacking final court dispositions	64 (18.3%)	42.6%
2 arrests lacking final court dispositions	51 (14.6%)	57.2%
1 arrest lacking final court disposition	82 (23.4%)	80.6%
No arrests lacking final court dispositions	68 (19.4%)	100%

IDOC Custodial Receipts

152 of the 362 subjects in the analysis had no final court dispositions posted to their rap sheets which specified a sentence to IDOC. Rap sheets were analyzed for *the remaining 210 subjects* who had at least one disposition specifying a prison sentence. Rap sheets for these subjects were analyzed to assess the total number of prison sentences which had a corresponding IDOC custodial receipt. As seen in Table II-5, *42.2 percent* of the total prison sentences appearing on subjects' rap sheets were lacking IDOC custodial receipts, an average of one custodial receipt absent per subject. This is partly due to the backlog of non-posted custodial receipt which existed at the time the rap sheets were generated. Another factor is that there are some offenders who receive a prison sentence and are never received at IDOC. This is because they have been credited with the time spent in a county jail while awaiting trial -- and that time equals or exceeds their prison term.

Table II-5

Overall completeness of subjects' rap sheets: *total* court dispositions with prison sentence that are lacking IDOC custodial receipts (N=210 out of overall sample of 362)

Subjects	Total court dispositions with prison sentence	Total court dispositions with prison sentence that are followed by IDOC custodial receipt	Total court dispositions with prison sentence that are lacking IDOC custodial receipt
210	502	290	212 (42.2%)

An additional breakdown of these findings is presented in Table II-6 to illustrate the number of absent custodial receipts on a "per subject" basis. As shown, more than half of the subjects (55.7 percent) had at least one prison sentence on their rap sheet lacking an IDOC custodial receipt, and nearly one-quarter were lacking two or more receipts.

<p align="center">Table II-6 Overall completeness of subjects' rap sheets: court dispositions with prison sentence that are lacking IDOC custodial receipts - per subject (N=210 out of overall sample of 362)</p>		
# Court dispositions with prison sentence lacking IDOC custodial receipts	Number/percentage	Cumulative percentage
4 or more prison sentences lacking IDOC custodial receipts	14 (6.7%)	6.7%
3 prison sentences lacking IDOC custodial receipts	11 (5.2%)	11.9%
2 prison sentences lacking IDOC custodial receipts	25 (11.9%)	23.8%
1 prison sentence lacking IDOC custodial receipt	67 (31.9%)	55.7%
No prison sentences lacking IDOC custodial receipts	93 (44.3%)	100%

A substantial number of IDOC custodial receipts (26.2 percent) pertaining to subjects' present incarcerations did not appear on their rap sheets (see Table I-1). It was not possible to determine the specific number of subjects' *total* IDOC receipts that did not appear on their rap sheets. OTS does not tabulate the total number of prior incarcerations for each inmate. An analysis of the rap sheets found, however, that 44, or 12.2 percent of the 362 subjects had *no* IDOC custodial receipts on their rap sheets. In other words, the rap sheets of those 44 inmates contained no indication that they had *ever* been incarcerated in IDOC.

Analysis of IDOC Inmates Released from Custody

Rap sheet users not only require knowledge of the events leading up to and including a subject's incarceration, but also information pertaining to the *release* of the individual from institutional custody. Because the IDOC inmate population includes offenders convicted of the most serious crimes, many of whom are likely to recidivate upon release, the release information is critical from a public safety viewpoint.¹⁶

Existence of IDOC Custodial Release on Rap Sheet

OTS data were retrieved for a random sample of inmates released from institutional custody during 1991. These data were also utilized to identify the specific date of release from institutional custody for each sample subject. Rap sheets for each subject were then analyzed to determine whether an IDOC "custodial change" (denoting a release from custody) with the OTS release date appeared anywhere on the subject's record.

Table III-1 shows that, of these 331 subjects, *nearly 20 percent* had rap sheets that did not reflect their 1991 release from custody. An additional 5.4 percent had custodial releases on their rap sheet with an exit date that did not match the exit date recorded in OTS, but was within a few days of it. Nine of the 18 subjects in this category had exit date discrepancies of only one day, and four had discrepancies of three days, leaving four subjects with exit date discrepancies of four to eight days. In half these cases, the rap sheet exit date was after the OTS exit date; for the other half, the opposite was true.

<p style="text-align: center;">Table III-1 Does IDOC custodial release appear on rap sheet? (N=331)</p>			
<p>IDOC custodial release appears on rap sheet with same exit date as OTS</p>	<p>IDOC custodial release appears on rap sheet with different exit date from OTS</p>	<p>IDOC custodial release does not appear on rap sheet</p>	<p>Total</p>
<p>248 (74.9%)</p>	<p>18 (5.4%)</p>	<p>65 (19.6%)</p>	<p>331 (100%)</p>

Types of Custodial Release

The specific type of custodial release recorded on the rap sheet was documented by audit staff. One of four release categories was denoted on each of the 266 rap sheets on which an IDOC custodial release appeared. As seen in Table III-2, the most frequent was "released/correctional supervision." These are largely releases from institutional custody to mandatory supervised release (MSR), but also include some subjects who served an indeterminate sentence and were released to parole.

Released/ correctional supervision	Discharged	Mandatory release	Parole	Total
223 (83.8%)	20 (7.5%)	21 (7.9%)	2 (0.8%)	266 (100%)

The release type for 7.5 percent of the sample subjects was "discharge." These subjects were released outright from institutional custody without additional correctional supervision -- usually as a result of having violated a previous MSR or parole, being returned to institutional custody for the rest of their MSR/parole term, and then finally being discharged.

IDOC officials indicated to audit staff that the two other release categories found on the rap sheets, "mandatory release" and "parole," referred to categories on the old custodial reporting form that was used prior to the 1987 redesign of the CCH system.¹⁷ Because custodial changes are reported to ISP using the original form set from the subject's receipt and classification at IDOC, release information pertaining to inmates admitted prior to 1987 is reported on those older forms as well.

According to IDOC officials, "mandatory release" notations on rap sheets may either be a shortened label for subjects released to MSR, or may refer to subjects serving indeterminate sentences who had not been released by parole authorities, but were now eligible for mandatory release because they had served their maximum prison terms.¹⁸

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Audit Conclusions

Many of the Authority's past CCH audits have found that incomplete rap sheets present the most serious and persistent problem to users of the CCH system. The last audit in 1990 reconfirmed that this problem continued to undermine the quality and usefulness of CCH data.

While this finding has always warranted concern with respect to the general Illinois offender population sampled in past audits, it is particularly troubling as it pertains to the IDOC inmate population targeted in this year's audit. Nearly 40 percent of that population have been incarcerated for the most serious offenses -- murder or Class X felonies. Because the IDOC inmate population includes so many offenders convicted of the most serious crimes, many of whom are likely to have extensive prior criminal histories and are likely to recidivate upon release, it is critical that accurate and complete rap sheets be available to assist criminal justice officials and others so that appropriate decisions that affect public safety can be made.

The sole recommendation of the 1990 CCH Audit was the formation of an ad hoc committee to examine and address the problems related to the quality of the state's criminal history records. The Authority's *Ad Hoc Committee on Dispositional Reporting*, comprising key state and local criminal justice officials, was charged with assessing those factors that contribute to poor criminal history data quality. The committee was also charged with serving as the state's criminal justice records improvement task force, and for developing and implementing Illinois' criminal justice records improvement plan, as required by the Crime Control Act of 1990. To date, the Committee has compiled a detailed problem statement relating to the reporting and usage of Illinois CHRI, and developed a comprehensive strategy to address these problems.

As a starting point for its work, the Committee identified a number of principles to guide its efforts. These principles mirror many of the tenets set forth in the findings and recommendations of the National Task Force on Criminal History Disposition Reporting. Two of the most fundamental principles are that:

1. Illinois' criminal history record information must be accurate, complete, and current; and

2. Illinois' criminal history record information must be guided by and responsive to the needs and requirements of its users.

The findings of this 1992 audit clearly illustrate that these principles are presently not being met. For criminal history users, the most vital aspect of an inmate's rap sheet pertains to the criminal justice transactions relating to the most current incarceration. This audit revealed, however, that only one in seven IDOC inmates has a rap sheet which reflects the most current custodial receipt, the originating arrest, the state's attorney disposition, and a final court disposition which specifies a prison sentence. In fact, more than one-fourth of the inmates have rap sheets with no indication of their present incarceration, and one in eight has no indication that he or she was ever incarcerated in IDOC. Therefore, the offenders for whom criminal history record information is perhaps most critical have rap sheets that are incomplete, and hence are not current.

As far as accuracy is concerned, inconsistencies between OTS and CCH that are documented in Appendix A did not pinpoint which of the two systems contained which errors. These inconsistencies are at least partly due to the fact that OTS and CCH do not interface with one another electronically, despite the need for data exchange between the two systems. This type of interface would flag instances in which IDOC and ISP received contradictory information from reporting agencies.

The primary means of linking information from CCH and OTS is through subjects' SID numbers and through the DCNs which connect specific custodial events. Following submission of the custodial reporting form and the delivery of inmates' fingerprints to ISP, SID numbers are returned by ISP to R & C centers on the subjects' updated rap sheets so that proper identification can be confirmed and criminal history information obtained. However, for both the inmate population and released inmate samples employed in this audit, a considerable number of rap sheets could not be retrieved due to the absence of an SID number in OTS. This suggests breakdowns either in the exchange between IDOC and ISP, or in the entry of the number into OTS after it has been received.

Since the audit used the custodial receipt as the base from which to search for the corresponding case events, Authority audit staff were able this year to assess the absence of arrest information -- at least as it pertains to a particular incarceration. The audit revealed, in fact, that among those inmates whose latest custodial receipts were found on their rap sheets, more than half those receipts could not be linked to

originating arrests. ISP's substantial backlog in posting arrest information contributes to this problem. Without the originating arrest, rap sheet users have no documentation of a specific underlying offense, since the IDOC holding charge is not included as a data element on the custodial reporting form.

The process of linking custodial segments to arrest/disposition segments is often confusing and ambiguous because the document control numbers in those segments are derived from separate reporting forms, and hence do not produce a comprehensive unified tracking system. For rap sheet users, the process of visually scanning these segments in order to locate matching court case numbers is at best cumbersome. These segments are often located several pages apart on the subject's rap sheet. Moreover, when matching court case numbers cannot be found, the task often entails deduction and guesswork. The process of matching court case numbers also breaks down when arrests and court dispositions are either not reported, or not posted to CCH.

Even when a linkage is established between the custodial and arrest/disposition segments of a subject's rap sheet, these connected events may still leave informational gaps for rap sheet users -- such as when a custodial segment is linked (through matching court case numbers) to a court disposition that specifies a probation sentence.

ISP officials agreed that the linkage should be positively established by CCH system software based on data reported by agencies and posted by ISP -- not inferred by rap sheet users. Although they reported that CCH continues to configure rap sheets to reflect these linkages, recent custodial receipts found on audited rap sheets were located in isolated segments. This may, therefore, signal a CCH software problem requiring further investigation.

The inability of rap sheet users to associate custodial information to associated case events should be of serious concern to criminal history users. Without the ability to link these events, the user is left with several disparate rap sheet entries, rather than a clear sequential picture of the offender's interaction with the criminal justice system.

Information concerning a release from institutional custody is another aspect of an inmate's criminal history record that is vital to rap sheet users. Law enforcement officials, for example, must be able to determine whether a dangerous violent offender

is back on the street as a potential recidivist -- particularly if that individual has exhibited a pattern of violent behavior as part of a criminal career. The audit showed, however, that as of September 30, 1992, one in five inmates released in 1991 had rap sheets that did not reflect that release.

With respect to state's attorney and final court dispositions, the 1992 audit suggests that some improvement has taken place in the completeness of subjects' rap sheets. For the total arrests that appeared on inmates' rap sheets, 56.2 percent were lacking state's attorney dispositions. Although this indicates that the majority of arrests lacked these dispositions, this represents improvement since the Authority's 1990 audit (which was based on arrests occurring between April 1, 1988, and April 30, 1989). That audit found 79.2 percent of the arrests to be lacking state's attorney dispositions. Similarly, the 1992 audit found that 46.3 percent of the total arrests appearing on inmates' rap sheets were lacking final court dispositions. This is also an improvement from the 1990 audit in which 66.5 percent of the arrests were found to be lacking final court dispositions.

Finally, this audit focused only on the reporting and posting of *IDOC* custodial information to CCH. It did not address *county jail* receipts and status changes. There are some indications that the reporting and/or posting of county jail receipts may be more problematic than for *IDOC* receipts. An analysis was conducted by the Ad Hoc Committee on Dispositional Reporting, based on data supplied by *IDOC* and *ISP*. This analysis suggested that only 18.6 percent of reportable jail admissions may be getting reported to *ISP* by local agencies. Further analysis revealed that the problem is about evenly divided between Cook County and the rest of the state. A full audit would be needed in order to precisely measure the magnitude of this problem.

Significance of the Audit

The 1992 Criminal History Record Audit marks the first time since 1983 that custodial information in CCH has been examined. By focusing on the entire range of criminal justice transactions that precede and include a person's commitment to the Illinois Department of Corrections, the audit calls attention to the inability of criminal justice officials to consistently obtain complete criminal history profiles -- from arrest through incarceration. This problem is shared by those who need CHRI in order to make decisions concerning employment, licensing, and access to firearms.

Although Illinois prisons contain the state's most violent and chronic convicted felons,

most will be returned to society at some time. When that occurs, criminal history records will be critical for effecting sound decisions which not only impact upon public safety, but also assist in the reintegration of ex-offenders back into our communities. The lack of accurate, complete, and timely rap sheets on these persons prevents us from reaching those goals.

When complete criminal histories are not available from CCH, criminal justice officials and others must either make decisions based on insufficient information, or must seek the information from the local police, prosecutorial, court, and correctional agencies which generate the original source documentation. When this takes place, valuable resources are wasted at a time when public and private organizations are already finding it difficult to meet increasing demands without a corresponding increase in revenue. To maintain public safety, the State of Illinois currently appropriates considerable funding to set up, maintain, and operate a criminal history system. These audit findings, however, demonstrate the need for additional improvements to ensure that practitioners who utilize this information are consistently receiving this service in an adequate manner.

Recommendations

The findings and conclusions of this audit provided the basis for the following recommendations:

1. The Illinois State Police should develop an implementation strategy and timetable for updating inmates' criminal histories, to ensure that all persons who are received at the Illinois Department of Corrections have accurate and complete criminal history records before they are released. The period of incarceration should be viewed as a "window" during which this process can be completed. IDOC should provide the necessary assistance to implement this program. The strategy should be reviewed by the Ad Hoc Committee on Dispositional Reporting, and submitted as a recommendation to the Authority.
2. The custodial reporting form should be modified to allow more than two court case numbers to be reported or, in lieu of that option, a supplemental form should be implemented to serve this purpose. The form should also be modified to allow custodial agencies to report the current holding charge to assist ISP in verifying whether it is a reportable offense.

3. The Illinois Supreme Court and Illinois State Police should establish a policy that the court case number is a *mandatory field* for the reporting of all court and custodial submissions to CCH. ISP should take steps to obtain the number in a timely manner when it is absent from those submissions.
4. The Illinois State Police should perform tests of the CCH System to determine whether its programming is consistently associating custodial information with linkable case events, and consistently configuring criminal history transcripts to reflect that association.
5. The Illinois State Police should provide training or other guidance to help criminal justice personnel interpret criminal history transcripts (rap sheets), especially with respect to the linking of corresponding case events that appear in separate rap sheet segments. This should be included as a component of the comprehensive training program to be implemented under the Criminal History Records Improvement Plan.
6. The Illinois State Police should take immediate steps to reduce its backlogs of CHRI submissions.
7. The long-range Criminal History Records Improvement Plan being developed by the Ad Hoc Committee on Dispositional Reporting should strive to:
 - a. implement a unified tracking mechanism which links all corresponding criminal justice case events -- from arrest through incarceration; and
 - b. optimize the use of electronic data transfer between criminal justice agencies which report criminal history record information, including the Illinois Department of Corrections, and as a reporting medium to the Computerized Criminal History system maintained by the Illinois State Police -- in order to eliminate errors and omissions associated with manual data handling.

ENDNOTES

1. The last Authority audit of correctional information in the state central repository for CHRI was in 1983.
2. 28 U.S. Code of Federal Regulations, part 20 et seq.
3. Ill. Rev. Stat., Ch. 38, par. 210-7(i).
4. Ill. Rev. Stat., Ch. 38, par. 210-7(e). Further details regarding the Authority's audit powers are outlined in the Authority's administrative rules entitled, The Uniform Consideration of Annual and Periodic Audits of the State Central Repositories for Criminal History Record Information - 20 Illinois Administrative Code 1500.
5. Attributes sampling is used to estimate the frequency of occurrence of a specific event, in this case data errors. The sample size was chosen so that data errors, at an expected rate of occurrence of 50 percent would be detected. Sampling precision of ± 5 at a 95 percent confidence level was used in the sampling formula $n = p(1-p)/SE/t^2$, where n = sample, p = percent of occurrence in the population, t = confidence level factor, and SE = sampling precision. For further explanation of this sampling technique, see Arkin, Herbert, *Handbook of Sampling for Auditing and Accounting*, 1984.
6. Ill. Rev. Stat. ch. 38, par. 206-2.1(e).
7. IDOC reports this information not only for adults, but also for juveniles who are charged and convicted as adults, and committed to the juvenile division of IDOC.
8. The data verification process involves redundant data entry by a second ISP staff person. The computer then flags any discrepancies in the two data entry operations. The second operator is then authorized to resolve the discrepancy.
9. Some currently incarcerated inmates were sentenced to an indeterminate prison term for offenses occurring prior to February 1978. These inmates are still subject to parole conditions upon release from institutional custody.
10. Interview with John Loverude, First Assistant Bureau Chief of ISP Bureau of Identification, Sept. 11, 1992.

11. Circuit court clerks include on court submissions their originating agency identifier (ORI) -- which uniquely identifies their agencies. IDOC includes on custodial receipts the ORI of the sheriff's office which delivered the subject. Since the first three digits of the ORI codify the agency's county, and since the "delivering" sheriff's office is in the county of the "committing" clerk's office, these numbers can be used as a linking tool.

12. ISP officials report that the redesigned CCH system is programmed to place custodial information within corresponding arrest/disposition segments of subjects' rap sheets -- providing that all necessary data elements have been reported and posted. There was no evidence of this capability, however, among rap sheets pertaining to the subjects in the audit inmate sample (see Audit Findings). This may indicate a CCH software problem affecting the system's ability to confirm linkages and/or configure rap sheets accordingly.

13. In these instances, a notice is automatically generated from CCH which requests the missing information from the reporting agency.

14. Staff at IDOC's R & C centers investigate the veracity of the court case number on the mittimus if the subject denies the accuracy of the conviction and sentencing information, or if the mittimus information for a returning inmate contradicts existing OTS data.

15. The tabulation of rap sheet arrests lacking state's attorney dispositions includes instances where the rap sheet appeared to reflect a state's attorney submission, but the charge information contained the notations "not reported" or "not available." ISP officials explained that these notations represent unsuccessful efforts by their Disposition Acquisition Unit to actively acquire the disposition.

16. The Authority's 1985 Repeat Offender Project found that nearly half the releasees who were tracked in that study were re-arrested within 18 to 20 months of being released. See *Repeat Offenders in Illinois* (Chicago: Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority Research Bulletin, November 1985).

17. Interview with John Groves, Manager of IDOC Identification Section, September 14, 1992.

18. Actually mandatory release of indeterminately sentenced individuals takes place six months prior to completion of the maximum term.

APPENDIX A

CONSISTENCY OF OTS AND CCH DATA

Each final court disposition posted to a subject's rap sheet includes the date of sentencing. For subjects admitted to IDOC, such as those in the inmate sample, the sentencing date is also recorded into OTS at the time of intake -- based on information from the court mittimus which accompanies the subject to the IDOC R & C center. A comparison of the sentencing date reflected in these two information sources was conducted to check for consistency. The *99 subjects* whose CCH rap sheets accurately reflected the court disposition containing their present prison sentence were therefore the focus of this analysis.

Table A-1 illustrates that for nearly one-quarter of these subjects the sentencing dates as recorded in OTS and CCH did not match.

Table A-1		
If sentence to IDOC appears on subject's rap sheet (N=99 out of overall sample of 362), does OTS sentence date match rap sheet sentence date?		
Yes	No	Total
75 (75.8%)	24 (24.2%)	99 (100%)

Each final court disposition posted to a rap sheet also includes the specific statutory charge(s) for which the subject was convicted and sentenced (or acquitted). For subjects admitted to IDOC, the "holding charge" is recorded into OTS at the time of intake -- again, from information on the court mittimus which accompanies the subject to the IDOC R & C center. The "holding charge" is defined by IDOC officials as the charge or charges in the sentence which carry the longest prison term.

For the 99 subjects whose rap sheets accurately reflected the court disposition containing their present prison sentence, the OTS "holding charge" was compared for consistency with the charge(s) on the subject's rap sheet which carried the longest prison term. Table A-2 illustrates that for 88.9 percent of the subjects the "holding charge" information was consistent between OTS and CCH.

Table A-2		
If sentence to IDOC appears on subject's rap sheet (N=99 out of overall sample of 362), does OTS holding charge match rap sheet holding charge?		
Yes	No	Total
88 (88.9%)	11 (11.1%)	99 (100%)

Finally although OTS does not tabulate prior incarcerations, the database does contain an "admission type" data field which may be used to determine whether or not an inmate is a "first-timer" (i.e., has no prior IDOC incarcerations). The OTS "admission type" was compared with subjects' rap sheets to see if there was agreement between the two information systems regarding prior incarcerations. Table A-3 illustrates that there are only a small number of such discrepancies that can be documented. For 5 percent of the subjects, OTS indicated one or more prior incarcerations, while the rap sheet reflected no more than one IDOC receipt. For another 2.2 percent of the subjects, the opposite was true -- OTS indicated a first-time IDOC admission, while the rap sheet reflected two or more IDOC receipts.

Table A-3
Do OTS and rap sheet agree about prior incarcerations?
(N = 362)

OTS and rap sheet both show no prior incarcerations	OTS and rap sheet both show prior incarcerations	Rap sheet shows prior incarcerations/ OTS shows no prior incarcerations	OTS shows prior incarcerations/ rap sheet shows no prior incarcerations
233 (64.4%)	103 (28.5%)	8 (2.2%)	20 (5.0%)

APPENDIX B

DESCRIPTIVE PROFILE OF INMATE POPULATION

OTS data were retrieved for the original random sample of 389 inmates incarcerated in IDOC on March 31, 1992. Audit staff utilized OTS data elements to construct a demographic and criminal history profile for these sample subjects. As seen in Table B-1, the sample subjects were predominantly (97.2 percent) male.

Table B-1 Sex of inmate sample N = 389		
Female	Male	Total
11 (2.8%)	378 (97.2%)	389 (100%)

The sample subjects ranged in age from 17 to 76 years of age, with a mean of 29.4. As seen in Table B-2, more than 60 percent of the inmates were 30 years of age or younger. Fewer than 10 percent were over 40 years of age.

Table B-2 Age of inmate sample N=389		
Age	Number/ percentage	Cumulative percentage
17 - 20 years old	60 (15.4%)	15.4%
21 - 25 years old	90 (23.1%)	38.5%
26 - 30 years old	84 (21.6%)	60.1%
31 - 35 years old	70 (18.0%)	78.1%
36 - 40 years old	49 (12.6%)	90.7%
Over 40 years old	36 (9.3%)	100%

The race breakdown in Table B-3 shows that the majority (65.3 percent) of sample subjects were black, about one-quarter white, and the rest Latino.

Table B-3 Race of inmate sample N=389			
Black	White	Latino	Total
254 (65.3%)	104 (26.7%)	31 (8.0%)	389 (100%)

Table B-4 shows that more than 60 percent of the inmates in this sample were admitted for their most current incarcerations in 1991 or the first two months of 1992. In other words, they had been incarcerated less than fourteen months. Nearly three-fourths of the inmates had been incarcerated less than 26 months. Only 6.6 percent of the subjects were serving incarcerations which began prior to 1985.

<p style="text-align: center;">Table B-4 Year admitted for present incarceration of inmate sample N=389</p>		
YEAR	# Admitted	Cumulative percentage
1992	46 (11.8%)	11.8%
1991	194 (49.9%)	61.7%
1990	49 (12.6%)	74.3%
1985 - 1989	74 (19.1%)	93.4%
1980 - 1984	17 (4.3%)	97.7%
1971 - 1979	9 (2.3%)	100%

Some sample subjects were sentenced to an indeterminate prison term under the Illinois sentencing structure in place prior to February 1978. Given that 14 years have passed since then, it is not surprising that only 2.1 percent (Table B-5) of the inmates in the sample were serving indeterminate prison sentences.

<p style="text-align: center;">Table B-5 Sentence type for present incarceration of inmate sample N=389</p>	
Determinate	381 (97.9%)
Indeterminate	8 (2.1%)

The inmates in the audit sample were primarily "first-timers" -- having no prior IDOC incarcerations. Table B-6 shows that about two-thirds of the subjects were classified this way ("Direct from court") by IDOC. Another 18.5 percent were previously discharged from IDOC and then recommitted for new offense(s). Most of the remainder of the sample (14.1 percent) were serving sentences for violating either mandatory supervised release or parole.

Table B-6 Admission type for present incarceration of inmate sample N = 389	
Direct from court	260 (66.8%)
Discharged & recommitted	72 (18.5%)
MSR violation, new sentence	53 (13.6%)
Parole violation, new sentence	2 (0.5%)
Admit from other custody	1 (0.3%)
Transfer from juvenile division	1 (0.3%)

As seen in Table B-7, the majority of inmates in the sample (62.7 percent) were committed to IDOC from the Cook County court system. In addition, more than 9 percent were committed from the collar region surrounding Cook County (DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry, and Will counties).

Table B-7 Committing county for present incarceration of inmate sample N=389	
Cook	244 (62.7%)
St. Clair	16 (4.1%)
Lake	13 (3.3%)
Peoria	11 (2.8%)
DuPage	9 (2.3%)
Kane	9 (2.3%)
Macon	7 (1.8%)
Madison	6 (1.5%)
McLean	5 (1.3%)
Other counties	69 (17.7%)

As stated earlier, a subject's "holding charge" is recorded into OTS at the time of intake. The "holding charge" is defined by IDOC officials as the charge or charges in the sentence which carry the longest prison term. As seen in Table B-8, for approximately one in five sample subjects burglary or residential burglary was the holding charge for their present incarceration. Approximately 40 percent of the sample subjects were committed to IDOC for violent index crimes, including 17.5 percent for murder or voluntary manslaughter, and 16.5 percent for armed or "strong-arm" robbery. In addition, for 15.7 percent of the subjects the holding offense was some violation of the Controlled Substance Act.

Table B-8
Holding offense for present incarceration of inmate sample
N = 389

Murder/voluntary manslaughter	54 (13.9%)
Attempted murder	14 (3.6%)
Rape/criminal sexual assault/ aggravated criminal sexual assault	20 (5.1%)
Robbery/armed robbery	64 (16.5%)
Aggravated battery/heinous battery	6 (1.5%)
Home invasion	11 (2.8%)
Burglary/residential burglary	77 (19.8%)
Theft/retail theft	18 (4.6%)
Motor vehicle theft	19 (4.9%)
Possession/Manufacture/Delivery Controlled Substance	61 (15.7%)
Other offenses	45 (11.6%)

The felony class of a subject's "holding charge" is also recorded into OTS at the time of intake. As seen in Table B-9, Class X, Class 1, and Class 2 felons make up more than three-fourths of the sample subjects. Those convicted and sentenced for first-degree murder make up 12.3 percent of the sample.

Table B-9 Holding offense felony class for present incarceration of inmate sample N=389	
Murder	48 (12.3%)
Class X	105 (27.0%)
Class 1	72 (18.5%)
Class 2	115 (29.6%)
Class 3	33 (8.5%)
Class 4	16 (4.1%)

APPENDIX C
CHRI REPORTING FORMS

The Criminal Identification and Investigation Act requires that arresting agencies submit the Arrest Fingerprint Card to the Bureau of Identification for all felony, class A misdemeanor or class B misdemeanor arrests.

ARREST	STATE USE			ARRESTING AGENCY - ORI				State Use Only			Process Control Number 841740009			
	FP	FBI	PP	IL										
Document Control Number 237047646	Department Name							Subject's Name LAST FIRST MIDDLE			Birthdate MONTH DAY YEAR			
Document Control Number								Also Known As - AKA			Alias JOB MONTH DAY YEAR			
State Use Only							Sex	Race	POB	Hair Color	Skin Tone	Height	Weight	Eyes
							Photo Taken <input type="checkbox"/> Yes / <input type="checkbox"/> No		Scars, Marks, Tattoos			Miscellaneous Number		
							Social Security Number			Driver's License Number			State	
							SID Number IL			FBI Number				
							Agency's Offender Identification Number			Agency's Case Number				
Official's Signature							ID Number		Subject's Signature			Date Printed MONTH DAY YEAR		

ARREST NUMBER	STATUTE CITATION	CLASS	OFFENSE DESCRIPTION	WARRANT ARRESTS			STATE USE ONLY	ARREST CHARGE DISPOSITION
				WARRANT TYPE	COUNTY ISSUING WARRANT	WARRANT COURT CASE NUMBER		
1								<input type="checkbox"/> Direct Filed (1) <input type="checkbox"/> Referred to S.A. (2)
2								<input type="checkbox"/> Direct Filed (1) <input type="checkbox"/> Referred to S.A. (2)
3								<input type="checkbox"/> Direct Filed (1) <input type="checkbox"/> Referred to S.A. (2)
4								<input type="checkbox"/> Direct Filed (1) <input type="checkbox"/> Referred to S.A. (2)
5								<input type="checkbox"/> Direct Filed (1) <input type="checkbox"/> Referred to S.A. (2)

Date of Arrest MONTH DAY YEAR	Date of Offense MONTH DAY YEAR	County of Prosecution	Caution <input type="checkbox"/> Yes / <input type="checkbox"/> No	Basis for Caution
Minor's Fingerprints submitted <input type="checkbox"/> By Law <input type="checkbox"/> Court Order		Post Sentence Fingerprints <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		Inquiry Only <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Date Bond Deposited MONTH DAY YEAR	Bond Receipt Number	Bond Amount	Cash Bond Deposited	Bond Type Posted Cash (04) <input type="checkbox"/> No Bond (01) <input type="checkbox"/> Drivers License (02) <input type="checkbox"/> Recognizance (03) <input type="checkbox"/> 10% Bond (06) <input type="checkbox"/> Other (13) <input type="checkbox"/>
Send Copy of CHRI To: NCIC			Agency	
NCIC			Agency	

Copies 2, 3 & 4 are to be retained by institution for reporting future status changes.
 Copies 1 & 5 are to be forwarded to Bureau of Identification upon receipt of resident.
 NOTE: PRESS HARD, YOU ARE WRITING THROUGH FIVE (5) COPIES

CUSTODIAL			STATE USE				CONFINING INSTITUTION - ORI				AGENCY RECEIVED FROM - ORI				State Use Only				Process Control Number											
			FP	FBI	PP	IL				IL								346341017												
Document Control Number 102241018			Department Name								Subject's Name												Birthdate		MONTH		DAY		YEAR	
Document Control Number																							Sex	Race		POB		Hair Color		Skin Tone
State Use Only												Photo Taken				Scars, Marks, Tattoos								Misc Number						
												- Yes / No -																		
Social Security Number								Driver's License Number								State														
SID Number								FBI Number																						
Court Case Number								County				Correctional Number																		
Court Case Number								County				Date Received				MONTH		DAY		YEAR										
Official's Signature						ID Number				Subject's Signature												Date Printed		MONTH		DAY		YEAR		

<u>STATUS</u>	<u>CODE</u>
Absconded	<input type="checkbox"/> 401
Deceased	<input type="checkbox"/> 408
Discharged	<input type="checkbox"/> 409
Escaped	<input type="checkbox"/> 410
Executed	<input type="checkbox"/> 411
Pardoned	<input type="checkbox"/> 416
Received	<input type="checkbox"/> 421
Released by Court Order	<input type="checkbox"/> 422

<u>STATUS</u>	<u>CODE</u>
Released on Appeal Bond	<input type="checkbox"/> 423
Sentence Commuted	<input type="checkbox"/> 424
Released on Correctional Supervision	<input type="checkbox"/> 431
Returned from Correctional Supervision	<input type="checkbox"/> 432
Revocation of Correctional Supervision	<input type="checkbox"/> 433
Received for Periodic Imprisonment	<input type="checkbox"/> 434
Reprieved	<input type="checkbox"/> 435
Returned to Institution	<input type="checkbox"/> 436

Status Change Date				Official's Signature								Date Signed			
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APPENDIX D
ISP AUDIT RESPONSE



ILLINOIS STATE POLICE

Office of the Director

Jim Edgar
Governor

January 8, 1993

Terrance W. Gainer
Director

Sheriff Robert Nall, Chairman
Operations and Audits Committee
Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority
120 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 1016
Chicago, Illinois 60606

Dear Sheriff Nall:

The 1992 audit of the Illinois Computerized Criminal History (CCH) system recognizes the progress and improvements made since the last audit. It also makes seven specific recommendations for further improvements. I concur with those recommendations.

For almost two years, an ad hoc committee of the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority has been examining closely related issues. The recommendations of that committee will result in the implementation of several new programs during 1993 which will assist in addressing the audit recommendations and accelerate our progress. The ad hoc committee should also be utilized to refine the audit recommendations into specific implementation plans where necessary.

A successful criminal history system is dependent on those who report criminal history events, those who use the information, and those who operate the system. As director of the agency responsible for the operation of the criminal history system, I am committed to a responsive, cost effective system.

The criminal history system will continue to evolve as new uses, users and technology impact the system. We must continually evaluate the system to ensure its effective operation. The reporting of criminal justice events, completed accurately and in a timely manner, is the foundation of that system. It will require the cooperative efforts of all criminal justice agencies in Illinois to have the criminal history system we all need.

Respectfully,

Terrance W. Gainer
Director



ILLINOIS
CRIMINAL JUSTICE
INFORMATION AUTHORITY

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