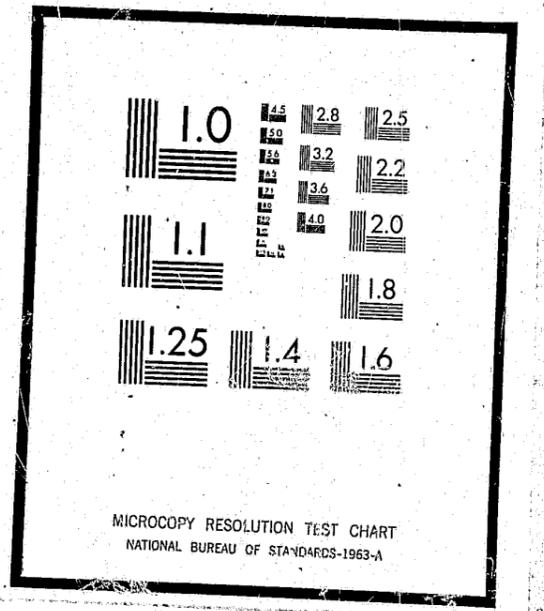


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26173 Evaluation

RESEARCH AND PLANNING IN
A COURT BUREAUCRACY

Refunding Evaluation Report
Philadelphia Family Court
Research & Planning Unit

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Section I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The evaluation of the Philadelphia Family Court Research and Planning Unit (PH-263-74A) for 1974-5 continued the evaluation begun in March, 1974. Because a late start date for the evaluation and an early resubmission date for the project itself, two major components of the evaluation design have yet to be implemented. 1) The evaluators are developing in conjunction with the R & P Unit staff and director an ideal model for a court research and planning unit. This model has three phases, of which only the first is reported in this refunding report. 2) The evaluators will continue their evaluation design of assessing impact not only by reviewing documents and interviewing unit personnel and top court administration, but also by interviewing a number of court managers who have had dealings with the R & P Unit. These interviews with other managers are to be conducted in March. Therefore only data from reports and from interviews with top administration and unit personnel are reported within. The evaluation update report to be submitted in June will be more extensive than most update reports, since it will include explanation of phases II and III of the ideal model and the interview results with other managers.

A. Project Objectives and Activities

The research and planning unit for the Philadelphia Family Court was initiated in March, 1973. The major objectives of the Unit are the provision to the Court of two basic management support functions. 1) The Unit is to provide developmental and analysis aide to court executives by studying Court and Court Unit procedures, by making recommendations for improving these procedures, and by monitoring and aiding in implementation of recommended changes. 2) The Unit is to provide the Court with research and planning functions in two ways. The first way involves intensive study of individual court units in terms of the goals of these units and efficiency and effectiveness in meeting unit goals. The second way involves longer range research and planning activities which may focus in such things as demographic characteristics of juveniles processed by the court, relative effectiveness of alternative dispositions, and alternate organizational and management structures for implementing fundamental court policy and goals. This second set of research and planning activities includes the investigation not only of the present operational situation of the court, but also the hypothesis of optimal court goals and structures and the comparison of the integrated court output to these ideal policies and implementation mechanisms.

To date, the Court R & P Unit has been concentrating on tasks of a developmental and analytical nature: that is the present projects do not deliberate except in a superficial and implicit manner about present Court or Unit goals and policies.

Instead the present projects perform the very important function of documenting present procedures and improving gross inefficiencies in operations so that court operations can be stabilized and continued prior to the initiation of fundamental changes, should any be desired.

The Unit provides managers with very valuable staff support functions that cannot be feasibly integrated into the role and responsibilities of line management itself. Through this writing, the Unit has undertaken about two dozen major projects and about 60% of its recommendations have been quickly implemented.

Some of the Projects are:

- #24 Procedures of the Enforcement Unit
- #21 Juvenile Detention Control Procedures
- #24 Transfer of Juveniles from Municipal to Family Court
- #14 Special Intake Procedures: Youth Study Center
- #13 Procedures for Adult Cases
- # 8 Detention Hearing Documents
- # 3 Information System

B. Evaluation Activities and Records

The evaluators have relied so far on two kinds of information and information sources. All project documents, and the separate task reports within each task have been reviewed carefully with attention to their scope, proficiency, organization and consequences. Questions specific to each project have been raised with Unit staff directly responsible for each task as well as with the Project Director and the top court administrators. Secondly, the evaluators have conducted eight site visits to date in which the evaluators have led group discussions with staff, held conferences with the project director and his staff and with the top court administrators, and conducted a series of individual interviews with the same people.

Intensive, standardized interviews with all court managers or outside agency personnel who have been working with the Unit will be conducted in March. In addition, the evaluators have been developing a model of an ideal court research and planning unit and will use this model in evaluating the project by comparing the present Unit operations and functions to the operations and functions of such an optimal unit.

C. Results, Findings, and Recommendations

1. Results of the project

Basically, the results of the project thus far have been in the area of analysis and development. The Unit has produced valuable procedural and operational studies that are of value in standardizing and documenting court operations, and has made valuable recommendations for improving communication, flow of documents, and processing of clients. Additional project objectives of producing intensive studies of individual unit functions and goals and of producing long range research and planning materials for use in changing the court, will be implemented during the continuation of the project.

The one unanticipated result that the evaluators have documented thus far is a decrease in Unit personnel morale and a feeling on their part of lack of integration to the entire court structure and ambiguity about their long range mission and function. Although some of these difficulties must be attributed to individual preferences and experiences and some are certainly inherent in the difficult task of beginning a research and planning unit, some of these unanticipated problems may be resolved by modification in program planning and project management. The Court

Administrators have met with the the evaluators and the unit staff about these problems. The evaluators think that an adequate start has been made in resolving some of these problems in a very short period of time.

C. Evaluation Findings

A brief summary of findings are as follows.

1. Primary project objectives have been implemented and are being maintained, while a second stage of research and planning concerning intensive study of individual units is now beginning. The incremental development of different research and planning functions is about on schedule.

2. Impact of the project on the court is evident in a series of project recommendations, the majority of which have been implemented. Greater impact on the entire Family Court system must await implementation of more complex functions.

3. A full blown cost-effectiveness evaluation of the project will not be possible until the difficult tasks of modeling the R & P Unit (which is still developing itself) and identifying the quantifiable benefits of the unit are achieved. These steps should occur within the next evaluation. At this point, the cost of the unit appears in keeping with its products.

4. Some internal problems in the project have been identified and step begun to initiate improvement. These steps involve clarifying Unit role and station in the court, and the phasing of unit evaluations and long range research and planning.

D. Evaluation Recommendations

Recommendations concerning the operation of the project fall into several areas listed below:

1. The evaluators recommend that the court administrators and project director consider how and in what areas that longer range research and planning should begin, and that preliminary projects on the ideal goals and structures of the court should be undertaken by the unit.

2. The evaluators recommend, in conjunction with recommendation #1 that implementation of R & P Unit objectives continue to be incremental, but that ideal and real dimensions of court operation be studied simultaneously. In that conjunction, we also recommend more frequent meetings between the Project Director and his staff and both the Deputy Court Administrator for Management and Staff and the unit supervisors in the Juvenile Branch. Agenda schedule and purpose of these latter meetings should be carefully structured and analyzed. We also recommend that the unit build and utilize a larger working collection of relevant managerial and justice periodicals and books.

3. We recommend that cost-benefit deliberations be withheld until a whole model can be developed in 1975-6.

4. We recommend that the project be continued and that modifications in internal operations should be the prerogative of the court administration, monitored by the evaluators.

5. We recommend that the evaluation continue with the present use of site visits, interviews, conferences and document review, but that interviews become increasingly quantified over time and that a conceptual framework for a cost/benefit analysis be developed. We also recommend that changes in internal unit morale, productivity, and attitude be

monitored as an evaluation of the present modifications now being made by Court Administration and Unit Personnel.

Section II. PROJECT ACTIVITIES

A. Project Goals and Problems to be Alleviated

The Research and Planning Unit of the Philadelphia Family Court was established in March, 1973 to provide the Court with both research and planning and development and analysis capabilities, primarily for the Juvenile Branch. The Unit has the goals of studying and documenting present procedures in the various units of the Court, recommending changes in those procedures, and developing operational manuals for all units and unit officials. In addition the Unit is to study the goals for particular units, examine the extent to which those goals are achieved, and the degree to which these unit goals contribute to the overall mission of the entire Court. Finally, the unit is to undertake longer range research tasks, concerning either the nature and problems of the Court clients, the nature of Court goals and policy, the management of Court processes to achieve or maintain policy, and the effectiveness of particular Court operations in delivering mandated and/or necessary services to the families of Philadelphia Community.

The Court needs, or the Court problems to be alleviated throughout the operation of the Research and Planning Unit are implied in the above goals. The Family Court is a large and complex component of the largest unified court system in the country. The Family Court has existed for over fifty years, and until 1973 was operated and modified with no comprehensive, written set of court procedures or unit manuals. Court employees learned by doing, and the functions and duties of particular officials and units were decided on an ad-hoc informal basis. An organization with approximately 800 employees cannot continue to operate

effectively or adapt adequately within the complexity of the present urban environment without a formal mechanism for documenting and changing its operational practices, training its new personnel, integrating its many sub-divisions, and in general achieving and modifying its long-range, guiding policies.

Prior to the inception of the Research and Planning Unit, the functions of the unit were the responsibility of unit and branch supervisors, who in the context of administering their daily programs rarely found time for these important administrative support functions.

B. Activities of the Project

While not all the activities and on-going concerns of the Research and Planning Unit can be systematically described, the bulk of the Unit output can be charted in terms of its structured projects and the separate tasks identified within each of these projects. A listing and description of these projects for the Units of fifteen months of operation are found in Duffee and Wright Refunding Evaluation Report of The Research and Planning Unit of the Philadelphia Family Court (PH-214-73A), pp. 3-5 and Appendix D. A chronology of this year's Projects can be found in the Interim Evaluation Report for the current year. Rather than reiterate that chronology, the Projects and tasks are listed below in terms of the sequence of task completion by project title. The written reports of each project task have been primary documents in the current evaluation.

Project 23. Procedures of the Enforcement Unit

Task 1. Procedures Manual: Enforcement Unit R. Bickel, Court Program Analyst

This task documents the current functions and procedures of the Administrative Support agency that provides people with information about the Court and/or particular clients and aides the officials with enforcement order authority.

Task 2. Recommendations for Changes in Juvenile Enforcement Unit Procedures.
R. Bickel
Deals with the difficulties in unit operation when unit activity is largely dependent on highly variable requests from outside agencies or persons; provides preliminary steps in stabilizing unit operations.

Project 21. Juvenile Detention Control Procedures

Task 1. Manual of Detention Control Procedures.
A. Hoffman, Court Program Analyst
This task describes the functions and procedures of the detention control office, which describes programs available for disposition of juveniles and documents institutional capacity and population.

Task 2. Recommendations for Changes in Detention Control Procedures.
A. Hoffman
This task recommended changes in unit procedures regarding reporting format, use and flow of bench warrant information.

Task 3. Implementation of Recommendations, Juvenile Detention Control Procedures.
A. Hoffman
This task clarifies the means by which to implement the above recommendations, including examples of new reporting formats and forms.

Project 24. Transfer of Juveniles from Municipal Court to Family Court

Task 1. Procedure for Transfer of Juveniles from Municipal Court to Family Court's Juvenile Branch.
R. Bickel
This task documents the necessary contacts and procedures from Municipal Court, through the Sheriff, to the Juvenile Court, in order to transfer an individual found in Municipal Court proceedings to be a juvenile.

Task 2. Directive: re Transfer of Juveniles.
R. Bickel
This document sets out new procedures for transfer of juveniles and accompanying police and court records.

Project 19. Procedures for Expunging Records: Juvenile Branch

Task 1. Documentation of Procedures.
A. Hoffman
This report documents the existant methods for expunging a juvenile's records, and the difficulties in carrying out this procedure.

Task 2. Recommendations for Change in Juvenile Expungement Procedures.
A. Hoffman
This task suggests new forms and new paper flow in order to expedite expungement, and discusses expungement from terminal display of records.

Project 14. Special Intake Procedures: Youth Study Center

Task 1. Manual of Special Intake Procedures: Youth Study Center.
A. Hoffman
This task describes the current procedures in regard to intake involving sex cases, including a detailed flow chart.

Task 2. Recommended Changes in Special Intake Procedures.
A. Hoffman
This document suggests methods of speeding up special intake and reducing the number of stops and officials with whom involved families and complainants must deal in order to get a case to court.

Task 3. Implementation of Recommendations: Special Intake Procedures.
A. Hoffman
A memorandum concerning implementation of changes, as approved by the Juvenile Branch Supervisor.

Project 16. Procedure for Court Referral of Cases to Community Referral Services.
A. Cassel, Court Administrative Officer V (R & P Unit Director)
Documents used for and presents new forms by which to process referral of cases to C.R.S., along with memorandum of adoption of new forms.

Project 17. Procedure for Friendly Service Cases Handled by Medical Branch
R. Bickel
Documents current procedure for handling of informal cases by Medical Branch for outside agencies, and recommends dropping Juvenile Enforcement Unit duties for such cases.

Project 15. Feasibility of a Date Certain Hearing Procedure within The Juvenile Branch
P. Carter, Court Programs Analyst
This project is a general discussion of whether or not a date certain hearing system can be established in The Juvenile Branch. Discussions of difficulties with rapid rotation of judges, date certain in other Divisions of the Court, and recommendations for changes in rotation are included.

Project 13. Procedures for Adult Cases

Task 1. Procedures Manual for Adult Cases.
P. Carter

This document describes present operations in the Adult Unit of the Juvenile Branch.

Task 2. Recommended Changes in Adult Procedures.
P. Carter
Discussion centers on problem of internal changes when adult cases are highly dependent on direct interface with other agencies of adult criminal justice system.

Task 3. Implementation of Recommendations for Changes in Adult Procedures.
Adoption of some of the above recommendations, concerning listings for types of cases and bench warrants.

Project 8. Detention Hearing Documents

Task 1. Revised Instructions for Detention Procedures.
M. Alken, Court Program Analyst
Discussion of procedures and documents necessary to implement court in hearings, need for receiving petition rather than intake unit reports.

Task 13. Procedure for Preparation and Handling of Disposition Notices.
R. Bickel
Implemented procedure for notifying all relevant officials of case dispositions.

Task 14. Mental Health/Mental Retardation Cases Originating in Court.
R. Bickel
Discusses necessary guidelines for handling those cases under D.P.W.

Task 15. Procedure for Handling Out-of-Town Petitions.
M. Alken
Provides first procedures and forms for transfer of out-of-town cases for adjudication and for disposition, under Juvenile Court Act of 1972.

Project 3. Information System

Task 6. Unit Record Processing Data: Modification of Juvenile Disposition Data Card.
M. Alken
Suggests addition of certain variables to cards to provide demographic research, methods and facilities to analyze unit records.

Task 7. Retention of Computer Records.
M. Alken
This report discusses which information should be stored on disc and which on tape in order to utilize storage for record of continuances in open cases.

Other Activities:

Deprived Cases: Tables for Annual Report.

Current project on Medical Unit.

Meeting on January 15, 1975 with Juvenile Branch Unit Supervisors.

Section III. EVALUATION ACTIVITIES

A. Nature, Depth, and Timing of Evaluation

The evaluation did not begin until September 28, 1974 about three full months after the continuation start date for the project itself. Since the project must resubmit for refunding on February 28, 1975 and this report is due at that time, the evaluators have only been active at this writing for four and one half months. A considerable portion of the evaluation design has yet to be implemented; and the evaluators plan to be active in the court through June, 1975. Because of the late start date and early resubmission date, The Evaluation Update Report, to be submitted in June will be of more than usual significance, particularly in its documentation of continuing project activities and in its presentation of stages 2 and 3 of the "ideal model" for a Family Court Research and Planning Unit. Documentation of Unit activities in this report is current through the site visit of February 11, 1975, and stage 1 of the ideal model is presented, infra.

Site visits to the Unit and The Court took place on the following dates and involved the following people:

- #1 October 23, 1974 Meeting on Project progress since July 1, 1974, with attention to current problems and plans. Clarification and discussion of evaluation design. Primary participants were Mr. Cassel, and the evaluators, Duffee and Wright.
- #2 December 3, 1974 Continuation of discussion of evaluation design, particularly modification to delay quantitative measurement of Unit operations and impact on court, and to emphasize internal-to-unit operations with emphasis on development of ideal model and examination of unit operations in light of that model. Participants were Mr. Cassel, and Duffee & Wright.
- #3 December 18, 1974 Major conference on role of evaluators in provision of assistance to unit, particularly on solving rather technical research and planning unit issues, design and use of ideal model of

research and planning unit, utility of current evaluation to Court and Unit program planning. Participants were Administrative Judge Montemuro, Chief Deputy Court Administrator Rosengarten, Deputy Court Administrator Davis, Chief of Juvenile Branch Hopson, Unit Director Cassel, and Duffee & Wright.

- #4 January 15, 1975 Interviews with Unit staff concerning roles, individual goals and problems, perception of Unit role, management of Unit, progress toward research and planning functions (i.e. rather than procedural documentation-recommendation-implementation tasks); questions on particular project and task documents. Interviews with P. Carter, A. Hoffman, M. Alken, & R. Bickel by Wright.
- #5 January 24, 1975 Continuation of individual staff interviews, particularly on certain staff complaints and dissatisfactions, recommendations for change in Unit activities, structuring and clarification of unit goals, examination of staff backgrounds and reasons for accepting present positions, discussion of career plans, receipt of project budget. Interviews with M. Alken, P. Carter, A. Hoffman by Duffee.
- #6 January 31, 1975 Interviews with Unit staff concerning perceptions of unit director, court administration, staff training needs, problems with internal conflicts, review and assessment of important meetings on Unit Record project, Medical Branch Project. Interviews with M. Alken, P. Carter, R. Bickel, A. Hoffman, and V. Watson by Wright.
- #7 February 11, 1975 Three separate meetings concerning data and observations from meetings 4, 5, & 6 with attention to internal problems and relation of Unit to Court Administration, and function of R & P Unit. 11:30 - 1:00 meeting with Rosengarten, Duffee, & Wright concerning planned unit staff meeting on internal problems, role of evaluators, relation of Unit to Court. 1:00 - 2:30 meeting of four unit staff and director with Duffee and Wright on problems of communication, mutual staff support, leadership and direction of program. 2:30 - 4:45 meeting with Rosengarten, Davis, Hopson, Cassel, Duffee and Wright on review of staff meeting, clarification of unit goals, long range administrative planning for unit.
- #8 February 19, 1975 Meeting of Duffee with Davis and Cassel to review outcome of February 13, 1975 meeting between Davis and staff of unit, to discuss original and present priorities of administration for unit projects, to discuss management criteria for review of unit reports, and to discuss Refunding Evaluation Report and resubmission evaluation design.

Some future site visits involve discussion into Unit and Administration concerning the implementation of steps by which to reduce staff ambiguity over administrative plans for the unit and to develop in joint

fashion the second and third stages of the ideal model of the research and planning unit. Other site visits have the important function of studying the impact of unit activities and reports upon the various units or branches under study by the unit. This evaluation component will be achieved by continuing to monitor project progress and tasks, observation of Unit staff in the field, attendance at future joint staff meetings of Juvenile Branch managers and the Unit staff, and particularly a series of structured interviews with various unit and branch managers selected for the extent and importance of their contact with the Unit.

B. Data and Information in the Evaluation

By and large, data and information about the operation of the Research and Planning Unit have been obtained in two ways. First, all major documents concerning projects or sub-tasks have been collected and analyzed. Copies of these documents have been made available very promptly to the evaluators, soon after their conception and submission to either Mr. Cassel for review or to the Court Administration for approval and action. The bulk of these documents completed from July 1, 1974 to October 23, 1974 were presented to the evaluators at the first site visit. The evaluators have received new documents on every site visit thereafter. A copy of the project budget was presented for review by the evaluators on January 24, 1975, and resumes of Carter, Alken and Bickel were presented on February 11, 1975. Resumes of Cassel and Hoffman have yet to be collected. The evaluators understand that the director has not submitted quarterly or final project reports during this project period, and hence we have not been able to compare such reports with our own perceptions of project accomplishments.

The second major source of evaluative information has come from a series of weekly interviews conducted with project staff from January 16 through January 31, 1975. In addition to the individual interviews, we have conducted a series of important group conferences; one with the unit staff and director, and three with Court Administrators, the dates for which are listed above.

Method of collection to date, has therefore been through loosely structured and ex tempore conferences and interviews, as well as monitoring of all current projects through detailed analysis of project and task reports and subsequent questions with relevant staff. One important limitation of the conferences and interviews is basically a matter of their developmental and periodic nature. While the evaluators have attempted to remain in close contact with all project staff and court administrators, we are not present daily in the court. Therefore we must compare the variation in responses from the same individuals over time, variations in report, perception, and assessment of progress when reported in individual and group settings, and variations in accounts of the project of involved personnel from the different informational sources. At this point, we are basically concerned with the reliability and internal validity of our procedures (i.e. whether our strategy is providing an accurate picture of the unit operations and goals). In comparing individual responses of staff over time, we have observed a large discrepancy in the kind of information presented before and after January 16. Prior to that date, our contact with individual staff was restricted and staff were pleasant and cautious. After that date our contact has been frequent and intense. In order to check the validity of the individual complaints and frustrations raised in the series of weekly interviews a group meeting was held February 11, 1975. The apparent

consensus of all four professional staff and the director at that time suggests that there are internal conflicts, but that most of them have roots in program structure for the unit and timing of unit development by administration rather than in personal differences among staff. We are, to that extent confident in the projects results and analysis reported below.

In terms of the reliability of responses from Court Administration, including Montemuro, Rosengarten, Davis, and Hopson, the evaluators can report both a high degree of consistency from both the individuals and from the group contacts over the course of the entire year that we have been associated with the project. It is evident to us that the discussion below on results and analysis involving the administrative group is a product of a high degree of consensus from this group on the planning of the unit, its goals, current questions and problems, and future.

Overall, the internal validity of the following results and analysis section appears to us as high as possible given the current evaluative techniques, and the current data and information sources. As the techniques became more standardized and quantified in the following months (on this funding and on the continuation) and as the information sources grow more varied (to include branch and unit responses in addition to Mr. Hopson), the presently satisfactory validity should improve.

External validity, or the ability to generalize from this research to operations of other research and planning units and other courts is an additional value of this year's evaluation that was not a goal in the Spring, 1974, evaluation. This ability to generalize stems from our employment this year of an ideal model of a research and planning unit as a means to evaluate the current operations of the R & P Unit in the Philadelphia

Family Court. This design component should be applicable, with minor modifications to any other Family Court R & P Unit, and with slightly greater modifications to any juvenile court R & P Unit.

Beyond these issues of reliability and validity, the basic limitations of the data and information collected so far is the fact that information with a third important source has yet to be obtained. Interviews with various court officials outside the R & P Unit and the administrative group already covered will be conducted in March. The Governor's Justice Commission should remember, however, that such interviews were conducted in April, 1974, and that the basic court situation and unit operations have not changed drastically in that period of time.

Since the evaluation has to date investigated unit output only in terms of document analysis and opinion and action of three court administrators, the following discussion on results must be read conservatively. Furthermore, the evaluation of intra-unit processes has turned up some internal problems that were not apparent in the evaluation in Spring, 1974. While it is possible that these problems have affected the impact of unit activities on the court, as perceived by unit managers (or that as yet uninvestigated conflicts between the unit and these managers may have resulted in some internal conflict), it is also true that the majority of program recommendations have been implemented, and the implemented changes have been monitored with no evidence of significant difficulty in most cases.

There does at this time appear to be some conflict or difference of opinion on a unit project involving the medical branch, but it is too early to evaluate this project, since it is still in the documentation process.

C. Scope and Limitations of the Evaluation Effort

The only discussion of evaluation scope and limitations that are not fully explicated in the above discussion of data and information, might be the ability of the evaluators to standardize evaluation procedures and quantify the observation of particular unit operations, output, and impact of output. We do not at this time perceive these issues as worrisome. The manner in which we can standardize and quantify the evaluation has been discussed at length with Mr. Cassel, and the phase of unit program in which these steps can begin has been identified. A field experiment utilizing R & P Unit intervention as the manipulated independent variable, and response of probation districts on management, policy, and morale indicators has been prepared in outline form and can be implemented when the R & P unit is prepared to begin the examination of probation units. It is crucial to this increase in the sophistication of the evaluation design that the evaluators are provided with sufficient notice and opportunity to administer the pre-test materials for probation units prior to the active coverage by the R & P Unit.

D. Feedback to the Project and Project Modifications

Feedback of information from the evaluators to the staff, the director, and the court administration has been provided on an on-going basis since the site visit on December 18, 1974. So far there has been 1) feedback that corroborated administrative perception of intra-unit difficulties; 2) feedback to unit staff concerning particular projects; 3) feedback to staff and administration on the evaluators' perception of reasons for staff frustration and speed of project advance toward research and planning issues, and the advisability of two-dimensionality of the

incremental progress of the unit so as to include in current operations of the unit initiation of research on ideal court operations.

As the result of this feedback, particularly during the meeting on February 11, 1975; the administration has agreed to clarify long range goals for the unit with the unit staff and to allow staff to undertake preliminary investigations of court ideal operations prior to the completion of the documentation of present court operations and recommendations concerning more documented procedures.

The value of this feedback and modification by administration will be evaluated in coming months in terms of reduction in staff frustration level, intra-unit conflict, and changes in productivity of reports and/or quality of reports.

Section IV. PROJECT RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

In order to maintain consistency of evaluation reports, the evaluators have adhered in this section to the sequencing of the questions raised by the Commission in the outline for the Refunding Report. In doing so however, we have had some problem in deciding on the logical location of our discussion of the ideal model of a research and planning unit. It could fit fairly well under IV A, since some difference between real and anticipated results might be explained by divergence of unit operations from the ideal model. But the ideal model was not utilized in the project application but is instead a creature of the evaluation. It could fit under IV B in the elaboration of factors that led to results other than those anticipated. Indeed, this location might be quite good since many of the unanticipated results can be traced to the divergence of the operational and ideal models, in the consensus of opinion from staff, administrators and evaluators. However the anticipated results still refer in section IV B to the Subgrant Application. Again we did not include the discussion of the model here. Instead we have placed this discussion in Section IV E, which concerns our experience in the field and comparison of similar or contrasting methods and procedures in the literature. This point seems most relevant since the model is derived both from the literature and from the evaluators' personal experiences in research and planning as well as their knowledge of other programs. Readers who would like to read this presentation of the model in conjunction with this discussion of anticipated and actual results should skip momentarily to Section IV E on pages 31 - 37.

A. Actual and Anticipated Project Results

The differences between the actual program results and those results anticipated in the project application will take some time to explain, and require some caution be the reader before conclusions are drawn. There have been differences between real and ideal results, but it would be inaccurate to state at this point that the operation of the unit has been diverted from the goals assigned to it. It would be more accurate to say that the project has not yet seen achieved all of the anticipated results, in that some unit goals are still to be implemented.

But we must also clarify what we mean by this delay in implementation. In many respects, the goals for a research and planning unit cannot be achieved, in the sense that goals for services to a certain client target population can be achieved. Research and planning is an on-going, continual organizational process that would be conducted even in the absence of this unit, albeit in a much less effective and concerted fashion. The Unit will never achieve its goals in the sense that the need for research, planning, court operational study and program monitoring will ever be complete. On the other hand, all the necessary unit processes and tasks by which to pursue all unit goals can one day be initiated and maintained, so that the unit is fully operational on all levels and on all dimensions within which results are anticipated.

To this date, the designation of "Research and Planning Unit" is somewhat a misnomer. The unit has carried out some research of an exploratory, survey, and operational and descriptive nature, such as is entailed in the study of continuances, the mapping of various unit procedures, the examination of the feasibility of date-certain listings, and the monitoring of the implementation of recommendations. The unit has also conducted some

very short range planning in terms of formulating alternative procedures and choosing from those alternatives those to be recommended and the priority of recommended changes for implementation. However, the unit has done very little comparative research. Examination of a variety of existing information systems and the study of other date-certain listing procedures are two that come to mind. Neither has the unit formulated and/or tested any hypotheses except those implicit in the decision as to feasibility of certain recommendations. Utilization of research methods involving control and comparison groups and the utilization of relevant criminological, sociological, psychological, and organizational theory remains in the future of the unit. Still to be implemented as well are planning methods that utilize comparative and experimental research or capitalize on modeling and predictive techniques. Thus, we might characterize the bulk of the unit activities to date to be developmental and analysis functions rather than research and planning functions. (A more detailed distinction between these functions, and their relationship is presented in Section IV E, infra).

While the title of the unit explicitly mentions research and planning, it is clear from the project subgrant that developmental and analysis functions were also clearly intended. It is also clear from discussions with the project director and the court administration that the developmental and analysis functions and research and planning functions were to be implemented in an incremental fashion as placed in the following sequence.

Phase I operational analysis and development. Unit concentrates on the process of studying and documenting current unit and court operational procedures, making recommendations about these procedures to improve the efficiency in achieving assumed or implicit operational goals, and monitoring value and practicability of implemented recommendations.

Phase II Unit concentrates on unit operations that have been documented and altered for surface efficiencies in terms of establishing firm goals for each unit and assessing effectiveness in achieving these goals.

Phase III Unit adds to on-going activities of Phase I and II the longer range planning and research functions which include utilization of operational research, comparative and experimental methods, predictive planning and modeling.

As more fully explicated in Section IV E below, this uni-dimensional incrementation has had the unintended consequences of increasing the frustration of staff with beginning to moderately experienced research and planning backgrounds and accompanying research and planning values and personal goals. This frustration is manifested in complaints 1) about administrative ambiguity about unit goals, 2) distance of staff from operational managers, 3) lack of unit leadership and coherent unit program or policy, 4) lowered morale, 5) feeling of slackening productivity in developmental and analysis projects, 6) desire to remain with the unit.

To this date, the evaluators do not perceive that these staff complaints are as yet evident in reduced quality of unit documents or frequency of documents, or in reduced satisfaction of administration in the unit output and/or administrator's willingness to implement feasible recommendations. The validity of the maintenance of high unit output has yet to be checked with operational managers.

On the other hand, these unanticipated consequences have been noticed by both the Unit Director as well as Deputy Court Administrator Davis and Chief Deputy Rosengarten and steps to alleviate these dysfunctions have already begun. While the evaluators are uncertain at this point whether these steps will or should enable retention of the entire present staff complement or whether these steps will keep the additional planned unit phases on their original schedule, the evaluators have been impressed with

the sincerity and intensity of administration concern and with the flexibility of the administration manifested in the February 11 meeting concerning the exact phasing of the two basic unit functions for analysis on the one hand and research and planning on the other.

B. Factors Leading to Unanticipated Results

1. Administrative structure of the project

The Research and Planning Unit is formally situated in the Family Court Division of Management and Staff. The Unit reports directly to the Deputy Court Administrator for Management and Staff, Mr. Davis. Through the Unit Director, Mr. Cassel, and through Mr. Davis, the Unit has close contact with all Branch supervisors and important unit heads, and weekly, if not daily contact, with the Chief Deputy for the Family Court.

The principle concern of the Unit is with the operations, plans, and goals of the Juvenile Branch, supervised by Mr. Hopson.

Although there is little literature as yet on the proper organizational location of research and planning units, these units in most cases are perceived and handled as staff rather than line functions, and in most cases they report to supervisors at least one level above the supervisor whose operations they are responsible for evaluating.

There is an apparent dilemma in the location and operation of units with research and planning functions: They should not be identified with or receive their organizational authority immediately from the line units that are being investigated, but at the same time, the researchers and planners should be close enough to line personnel that members of the unit are immediately familiar with and have sufficient rapport with the line managers and personnel that they can conduct their research.

Formally, the location, line of authority, and reporting patterns for the Research and Planning Unit appear appropriate and workable. The only option that the evaluators could suggest would be to have the unit directly supervised by and directly reporting to Dr. Rosengarten. It seems doubtful that on a formal level this alternative would produce stronger linkages.

On an informal level, however, many of the complaints of the unit staff in the last month have involved their lack of sufficient contact with line supervisors and personnel. The validity of this complaint will be investigated in March and April during interviews with the supervisors in question. At this point, the evaluators cannot say whether or not this complaint of lack of contact is rooted in actual problems with the administrative structure of the project. We are convinced, however, about the validity of the Unit's perception of that problem. Easing this feeling of ambiguity could be eased somewhat by increasing the contact between the unit and Mr. Hopson and his subordinates. It was suggested in the Refunding Report of the first evaluation that periodic meetings of this group be established. A first such meeting was held on January 15, 1975, but the results of this first meeting were mixed. We recommend that similar meetings be scheduled with more advanced notice to the unit, and that the value of these meetings be reevaluated in June.

Staff also complained of lack of knowledge about the long range goals of the Administration for both the Court and the Unit. During the third meeting of February 11, the administration promised to meet more regularly with the Unit staff, and a first such meeting chaired by Mr. Davis was held on February 13. The evaluators would agree that such meetings should be held with Mr. Davis rather than Dr. Rosengarten, and that they

should continue for four to six months, at which time their value should be reevaluated.

2. The Operation and Management of the Project

An additional difficulty, which really occurs at the interface of the formal and informal communications system of the Court, involves the Administrative supervision patterns used with the Unit. While it would appear to us that the Court Administrators are highly competent, intelligent, and rather far sighted; it is also true that they do not have much experience in managing a research and planning unit. As discussed in Section IV A, the administrators have a rather complex and detailed three-stage plan for the development and function of the Unit. They have given the unit considerably more thought than is the case of many organizational executives who attempt to establish formal research and planning organizations. But even as the several site visit conferences with the court top administrative team (particularly the conferences on February 11), demonstrated their concern for and flexibility with operations of the Unit, these discussions also demonstrated a rather well established administrative style for dealing with subordinates that may not be optimal in the course of dealing with research and planning functions or personnel.

In brief, the administrators are applying to the unit professional personnel, if not to its director, the same task-oriented management style that would seem appropriate with line units. The top executives appear heavily concerned that the R & P staff communicate as frequently as possible through formal administrative channels, just as they would require of district probation supervisors. Holding line managers to this channel is important in most cases so that policy is consistent at all organizational levels and so that anticipated or real changes are known by all affected administrators.

There is considerable evidence, however, that holding research and planning staff to the same channel can negatively affect the quality of the research conducted, since it reduces the variety of information flowing to the type that can be submitted within the superordinate-subordinate protocol.

While we have no evidence, at this juncture, that Davis and Rosen- garten, in particular, are aware of this problem in channeling research and planning communication, we believe that the top executives possess the flexibility to alter the communication flow in order to reduce the dysfunc- tions as they become aware of them. On the other side of the coin, however, the administrators do have a valid concern that the Unit Director's authority should not be undercut. Through the February 11th meeting, the Administrators were apparently more concerned with the possibility of this diminishing of authority than they were with maintaining the formality and reducing the variety of information available to staff in their research.

The evaluators agree with the administration to this extent: at all times that the unit is preparing or presenting recommendations for procedural change, communication of those recommendations must proceed through formal channels. But we would also suggest to administration that they consider loosening commitment to the bureaucratic communication channels during the goal clarification and investigative phases of R & P projects.

Lastly, it appears at this time that the Unit could benefit from some teamwork and inter-competency mixing during the completion of investiga- tive tasks. Presently R & P projects are assigned to individuals and individual staff remain fairly independent of their colleagues during the completion of any particular project tasks. Tasks are assigned to unit members depending on professional background, interest, and experiences on

other projects, so that there is some match between personnel and task requirements. But this one-to-one project allocation may entail considerable duplication of effort on the part of individuals, since in many cases Family Court structure is duplicative and reiterative. An alternate method of project allocation that should be explored, at least with some projects, would be group allocation, with responsibility for particular tasks assigned to individuals or smaller teams as decided upon by the unit itself. Such a work distribution strategy might cut down on duplication but even more importantly would multiply the kinds of expertise and disciplines brought to bear on various projects and problems within projects. Decentralizing the task allocation decisions to the group itself would increase the team work in the Unit and could improve group morale and problem solving behavior. We would hypothesize that this kind of allocation strategy would reduce staff complaints about lack of technical competence and knowledge of resources by increasing the groups' dependence on each other. Such complaints about needed technical skills and resources are now directed by the staff toward the administration and the Unit Director, and this behavior in many instances may not be necessary.

3. The personnel involved in the project

It is uncertain at this juncture how much of the dysfunctional consequences of the Unit might be attributed to its structure and operation and how much might be attributed to Unit personnel.

The personal resumes of staff have been reviewed, and discussions have been held with individuals in the R & P Unit about their reasons for taking the position and their long range career goals. At this point the group has developed a fairly detailed understanding of the operations of the Philadelphia Family Court. This knowledge may have been obtained more

quickly if at least one member of the R & P team had been a member of the Family Court prior to the inception of the Unit. While this deficiency is now fairly well behind the unit, if personnel changes do occur, the inclusion of a Family Court official who is familiar with operations and interested in research and planning might still be valuable.

Another need for such an R & P Unit, would be a detailed familiarity with juvenile delinquency, juvenile and criminal justice, the history and evolution of juvenile courts, and the application of organizational and administrative theory in their court and criminal justice contexts. If the present members of the unit have this knowledge or can apply it, they have not manifested it in their discussions with us or in their first two years of R & P documents.

This kind of knowledge can of course be gained in the course of their duties, if sufficient time is provided for a great deal of reading and other kinds of contacts with experts in the field. This kind of knowledge could be utilized even on the development and analysis tasks that now consume the bulk of staff time. Knowledge of other court systems and knowledge of the basic and general goals of a juvenile justice system would provide comparisons (even on a nominal scale) that would strengthen the validity of the recommendations made. In the long run this kind of knowledge is absolutely essential to the study of Unit efficiency and effectiveness and long term research and planning projects.

While we are not certain of this, it would seem logical to the evaluators that this knowledge deficiency on the part of staff might be one reason for their doubts and confusions about Administrative priorities and goals. Understanding the evolution and trends in juvenile justice on a national level can be very important to comprehending and interpreting the short term behaviors of particular court administrators.

4. The evaluation process

In identifying possible contributors to the unintended results of the project, we would like to consider two evaluation processes: the one by the external evaluators and the one by the court administration.

Evident in the three reports previously submitted by the evaluators is our own concern with the research and planning needs of the court and our concern that the R & P Unit has not yet added research and planning duties to their present development and analysis functions. As outlined in Section IV E, below, the evaluators concur with the administrators that the procedure of the Unit should be incremental, but we do not agree that research and planning should be withheld for the second and third phases of the implementation plan. However, we also recognize that our R & P Unit model in Section IV E is ideal in the sense that it does not as yet include the particular capabilities and interests of the R & P Unit as presently staffed. It is our feeling that the present staff dissatisfaction stems in part from the divergence between the model outlined in IV E and the present operations of the Unit. The Administration, of course, will have to balance our analysis of R & P Unit productivity and problems and our suggestion that research and planning should begin now against their assessment of Unit capabilities and skills and court priorities and needs.

Two ways in which the Administration can discount our analysis is to attribute present problems totally to the present personnel in the Unit, or totally to the Hawthorne affect that may have been created by the fact that evaluators' interests in research and planning are apparent to the staff and may therefore have artificially heightened their own concern.

The evaluators find some weight in both of these possible arguments. The staff might have been selected so that they possessed more knowledge of

criminal/juvenile justice theory and practice, or so that they possessed less interest in research and planning rather than procedural analysis and improvement. Since the original staff cannot now be usefully questioned, the present options in regard to personnel appear to be hiring people less interested in research and planning, accomodating these interests in either procedural or substantive ways, or in convincing staff that research and planning should be delayed.

While these are all legitimate Administrative options, the evaluators would suggest that large staff turnover is unjustifiable when compared to the technical competency and two years court experience of the present staff. We would also hold to our research and planning unit model described in Section IV E.

In regards to the "Hawthorne effect" we admit its possibility but doubt that it is a valid explanation of present problems. The evaluators have had much more contact with the Unit Director and the Administration than with the Unit staff, and prior to January 16, the staff communicated little of their dissatisfaction, although it has been building for a period of time. Indeed, the evaluators feel that the model presented in IV E was developed independently of the present staff mood and would argue that present staff perceptions and feelings corroborate the need for simultaneous implementation of research and planning or analysis and development functions, simply for its value to the group process and group morale, let alone its long term value to the Court.

The second evaluation process, that of Administrative evaluation of Unit output, has probably had a greater impact on Unit results. As we stated in Sections II and IV A, supra, the administration is well satisfied with the output of the Unit. As reported in the first Refunding Report (May,

1974), the evaluators feel that this highly positive reaction may itself have dysfunctional consequences for the Unit. It is a fairly well accepted and documented organizational principle at this time that positive sanctions by superiors tend to produce repeated behavior by the unit or individual receiving the sanction. Since the Administrative plan for the Unit involves incremental phasing of analysis and research and planning functions, this positive evaluation may serve to delay the implementation of the later program phases and hence to delay the inherent rewards research and planning staff would tend to receive simply by conducting research and planning studies.

Secondly, we would tend to question the effect of these positive evaluations upon the objectivity and time-perspective of the Administrators themselves. While they are competent and experienced managers, the continuation of development and analysis tasks promises favorable output from the Unit for some time to come, while the initiation of research and planning functions, simply because they would be new, presents some risk to Administration.

To put these observations in layman's terms, we would suggest that the research and planning project may receive long range benefits if the Administration were less pleased with the current output of the Unit, and that a functional amount of dissatisfaction might be obtained by the initiation of research and planning studies.

Presently the Unit seems headed for the same delimitation of function that has stalled the operations research programs of many industrial firms: namely, the methods and values identified with the unit are only those associated with the Unit's first substantive success.

5. The planning of the project

Due to the complexity of the preceding discussion, the planning of the project, as that planning contributed to unanticipated results, has been adequately covered.

6. Basic approach or method of the program

The essential problems of the Court that stimulated the development of the R & P Unit are discussed in Section II A, supra. To reiterate: the Unit was established to increase knowledge about and predictability in present court operations and procedures and to study efficiency and effectiveness in meeting goals. The method has been one of establishing as a separate administrative entity a functional court unit that could attend to procedural and substantive court goals at a distance and with an intensity not available to line managers or other staff units.

In only one way do the evaluators perceive this method contributing to the unanticipated results, and we perceive this consequence as unavoidable. Research and planning units, regardless of Administration structure or operation and management will operate on the periphery of an organization's daily routine and daily goals. In such a position a certain amount of staff unrest and ambivalence as to status and purpose must be expected, particularly when such a unit is just beginning. We think, however, that reducing the impact of other contributors to present dysfunctions would reduce this basic dissatisfaction and uncertainty.

7. Level and timing of funding

We see no problem with the timing of program funding, except that an external evaluation for this project was not contemplated until the project had been operational for a full year. To the extent that the evaluators have been helpful to the Unit and the Administration, further introduction to the

project may have been helpful. In some ways, the evaluators are "still catching up".

In terms of level of funding, staff salaries, particularly in today's market, seem competitive and capable of attracting top flight staff. Maintaining the optimum output from staff could be improved by increasing budget items for both attendance at professional conferences and for building an in-unit working library. Of these two, the evaluators perceive the second deficiency as more important. The Unit should have subscriptions to many criminal justice and management journals, and should be able to produce the leading texts and research monographs in the field. Having these materials immediately available would increase the opportunity to utilize important methodological and theoretical comparisons and references, even in the course of development and analysis work.

8. The allocation of resources

By far the greatest project expenditure is project personnel salaries. We can conceive of no visible alternative. However, as discussed above, we definitely do see alternatives to the present allocation of staff time. We would recommend more meetings with line management, more meetings with Administration, more time in joint rather than individual project responsibility, and initiation of research and planning studies.

However, the allocation of the majority of staff time to development and analysis tasks seems appropriate.

At some stage in the life of the R & P Unit, if not now, it may be valuable to collapse a position or add one or in some other way provide funds for the hiring of one senior researcher who has had considerable experience in juvenile justice research and management.

9. External events beyond the control of the project

Several events beyond the control of the project have contributed to the tremendous amount of time that the unit has expended on procedural study and recommendations. The most notable of these is the Juvenile Court Act of 1972, as discussed in the first Refunding Report. Entire tasks and projects, such as the study of out of town petitions have been necessitated by changes in the juvenile law. This kind of pressure should ease as the Unit continues its work and becomes cognizant enough of major outside impacts that it can plan for them and adjust ahead of time to an altered work load.

C. Impact of Project Results

1. The problem as stated in the subgrant

This kind of impact is fairly well detailed in Section IV A. The Unit has not achieved all project goals as yet, but it should not have been expected to do so. The opportunity to provide more quantitative measures of this impact will occur when the project begins its study of probation units. At this point, impact can be measured in terms of kinds of problems and processes addressed (approximately two dozen major court operations) and the number of recommendations implemented (approximately 60%).

2. The relevant component of the criminal justice system

Impact that the Unit might have on the Family Court, independent of its impact on the problems described in the subgrant application are probably not important. Project impact on the Court is coterminous with its impact on procedures, operations, and management patterns. Given sufficient longevity, the Unit might eventually impact on the effectiveness of dispositions, when it can enter its research phase. In addition, the Unit might

eventually impact on the entire social climate of the court, conceived separately from any of its particular operations and outputs. This effect would be possible if Unit procedures and outputs are sufficiently well received and effective that the unit instills in operational units such as the probation units an emphasis and data-based evaluation and democratic staff communication patterns. These effects are obviously long term in nature.

D. Alternative Methods for Obtaining Project Results

Several operational research texts discuss alternate means of initiating and staffing an operations research unit. The most frequent options are:

- 1) Staffing within in-house personnel, or hiring one outside person experienced in operations research to aid the in-house team.
- 2) Staffing jointly with an organizational unit and an outside consulting team until in-house unit is operating at full capacity.
- 3) Contracting operations research projects to an outside agency.

Alternative number three sometimes has the quickest sophisticated results, but does not develop an on-going operations research capacity in the organization. The other two options seem to have had fairly similar results, and both alternatives are different than the hiring and staffing patterns of the Research and Planning Unit. This unit was made entirely of outsiders, few of whom had much experience in courts, or juvenile justice. The evaluators cannot tell, however, if these different methods would have produced different results.

E. Other Alternatives: An Ideal Type Organizational Research and Planning Process

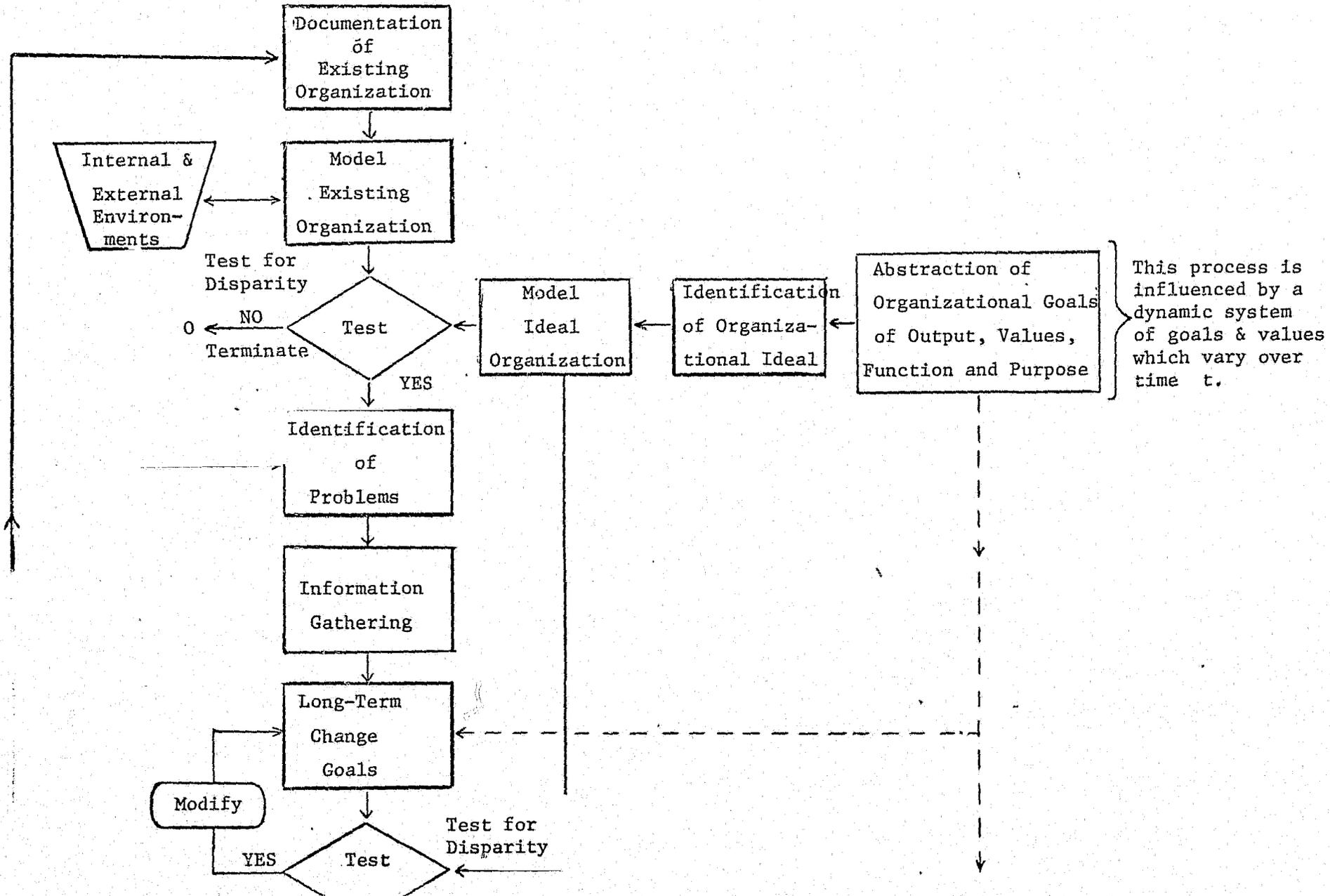
Quite often, research and planning are considered to be two separate

functions which are performed in an organization. Planning is considered to be the conjecture of desirable future states and the identification of methods to achieve those states. Research, on the other hand, is considered to be the evaluation of some state or states. Yet, if research and planning are to produce the optimal output of their processes, they cannot be considered as separate entities, but must be a component of a single process, ideal organization engineering. Research and planning should have the combined goal and function of moving the organization toward the ideal state which is defined for it. Logically, ideal states can never be achieved or they would cease to be ideals, yet it is only through a combined process that an organization can approximate such a state. It is the purpose of this section to consider an operational model of such a process.

Figure 1 presents an organizational research and planning operational model. Since ideal organizational engineering is a process, it can be depicted by a flow-chart of consecutive stages, which at decisive points may take one of two directions. Each stage is also a process since some action must be taken at each point. Since each stage involves some activity, a explanation of each process label will be beneficial before explicating the model.

Documentation of Existing Organization -- this process involves the identification of the structure of the organization of interest, the function of each of its units, their operations, and the inter-relationship of the various units, at a particular point in time.

Model Existing Organization -- a mapping of the operations, including the elements documented in the above process, of the entire organization is conducted by this process. In essence, the objective of this stage is to "photograph" the organization as it presently exists, but to generalize from the concrete actions of the documentation stage to a smoothed out or extremity free version of the organization, in its present state.



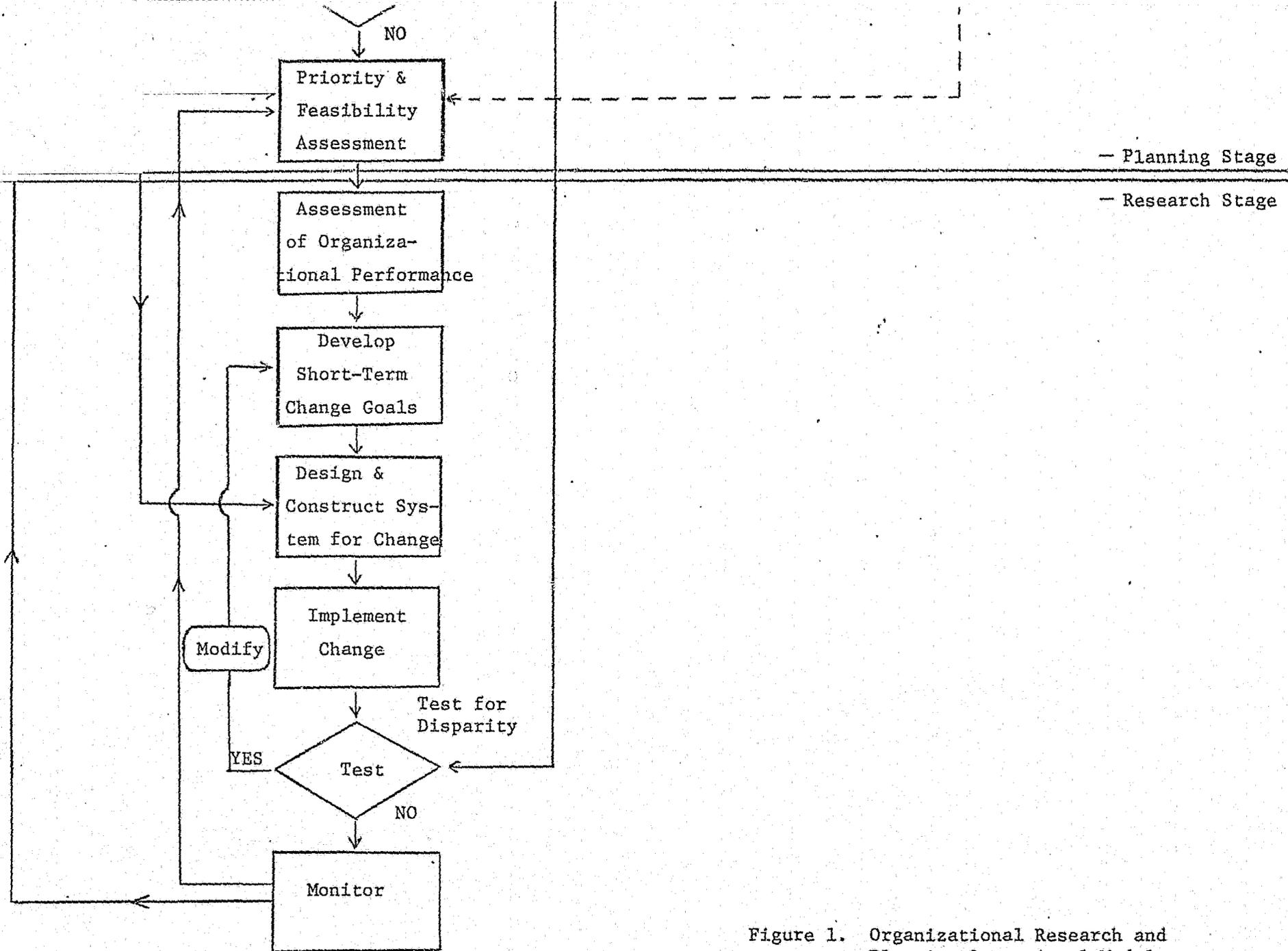


Figure 1. Organizational Research and Planning Operational Model

Abstraction of Organizational Goals of Output, Values, Function and Purpose -- this process involves the collection and analysis of information which will provide the substantial basis for the ideal model. The process concentrates on the perceived ideal goals of output, values, function and purpose of the administration of the organization, but cannot neglect the same perception of organizational members and the environment.

Identification of Organizational Ideal -- the information collected in the above process is negotiated and factored into a concise conceptualization of the reason for the organization's existence. Both "what the organization does" and "how it does it" should be identified for optimal situations.

Model Ideal Organization -- a mapping or photograph of what the ideal organization should look like is conducted during this phase.

Test -- A test for disparity involves the comparison of the output of two processes for difference or consequence. For example, the model of the existing organization is compared to the model of the ideal organization. If they are found to be different, then steps need to be taken changing the existing organization so that it will look more like the ideal organization type.

Identification of Problems -- If a difference has been found between the ideal model and the existing model, then the problem areas where such differences lie are identified during this process. In other words, the apparent or assumed areas of divergence are identified. Additional research is necessary to test whether indeed the assumed problems are the real sources of disparity.

Information Gathering -- This process involves the collection of information relevant to change of the existing organization in order to alleviate the problems which have been identified in the preceding stage.

Long-term Change Goals - the pointing of long-term change goals serves as a macro-approach to organizational change. In essence, the process identifies a plan which will be implemented over some specified length of time in order that an organization can be changed from its existing state to a more desirable state in the future. It is necessary at this point to test whether the ideal model might also have changed or need to be changed.

Priority and Feasibility Assessment -- After a series of long-term goals have been identified, the organization must decide the priority of goals implementation. Two criterion are used to make such a judgment -- importance and feasibility. That is, the need for a given change and the probability of accomplishing that change, given the existing status of the organization and its environment, must be considered in the identification of tasks.

Assessment of Organizational-Unit Performance -- This process resembles a pre-test. The unit of the organization which has been perceived as needing change is assessed in terms of its current operations.

Develop Short-Term Change Goals -- Given that an organizational unit is operating at some level of performance and it is perceived that change is needed to change that level, short-term goals of change are posited in this stage.

Design and Construct System for Change -- This process involves the development of a strategy for implementation of the short-term change goals.

Implement Change -- The changes which have been identified by the short-term goals are implemented under the strategy developed in the above stage.

Monitor -- After a change has been implemented it should be monitored over a period of time until that change has been integrated into the organization, or until evaluation of the implementation suggests the change is not feasible or not desirable.

Internal and External Environment -- This element is not a process, but does continually impact an organization and therefore must be considered during the research and planning process. The internal environment are those factors which are internal to the organizational structure but external to the recognized organizational processes, and which effect the operation of the organization as a whole. The external environment lies outside both the organizational structure and processes, yet also impacts the organization and its processes.

The first thing to be noted about the Organizational Research and Planning Operational Model is that it is a dynamic process which will be operationalized in a dynamic system. That is, since the organization of interest will be continually changing, then planning and research outputs must be continually changing.

The research and planning process begins on two dimensions, simultaneously, that of examining how the organization exists and how it should exist. It should not be expected that either of the two models be completely comprehensive or accurate initially. Rather, the models should be very general and only after several reiterations of the process in which

additional information is collected should the models assume a comprehensive nature. Such an operational strategy will prevent research and planning from becoming "bogged down" in their initial stages and neglecting needed changes within the organization of interest.

After models of the existing and the ideal organization are developed, a test for disparity is conducted. If no differences are found, which is highly unlikely, then only monitoring of present operations is necessary. If a difference is found, then steps to change the existing model should be taken. Problems with the existing organization are identified with reference to the internal and external environments of the organization. Information is gathered about the problems, and long-term goals of organization change are posited. These goals must be made with special consideration given to the organizational goals of output, values, function

A second test for disparity is performed between the formulated long-term goals and the model of the ideal organization. If a difference is found, then one or the other or both must be modified, so that congruence with the ideal type will be established. If no difference is found between long-term change strategies and the ideal type, then additional steps toward the solution of the problems may be taken.

The last step of the planning stage is the assessment of the priorities of organizational changes. Both the internal and external environment and the organizational goals of output, values, function, and purpose must be used during this process. The environmental variables affect primarily the feasibility of change, while the organizational goals affect importance. Both issues together determine priorities. Once this listing has been

developed, the organization is ready to begin to research and implement change. Such a process is usually concentrated in sub-units of the organization, but changes in sub-units must be coordinated with each other and with the overall ideal and real models of the entire organization.

The implementation of change is conducted in four steps. First, an assessment is conducted of unit functioning at the present time. Secondly, short-term change goals can be developed which are hypothesized as the objectives whose achievement will reduce the disparity between unit achievement and organizational function for the unit. The final two steps involve developing a strategy for change and implementing that strategy.

After the change has taken place, a third test is performed between the performance of the changed unit and the affect of that performance on the previous disparity (Test #1) in the mapping of the ideal and existant organizational models. If a disparity still exists, then the change process is modified and reiterated. If no disparity is found, then the change is monitored for a period of time until the change has become internalized by the organization, or the environments have changed, or the ideal model needs alteration.

At this point in the process, reiteration occurs in two directions. First the process returns to the listing of priorities and selects the next problem area to be changed. Secondly, the process returns to the documentation of the existing organization and the entire process is started again taking into consideration those changes which have just been implemented and those which have occurred exogenous to the planned change process.

F. Issues to Pursue

The researchers will feel more confident making recommendations about additional items that might interest the Governor's Justice Commission in the June update report. At this point we can say that the issue of research utilization in the criminal justice system is a worthy issue for investigation. Whether this issue be addressed by studying which projects of the R & P Unit are implemented and which are not, or by some other means, is not important right now. But it is clear that more attention could be paid to the process of introducing research into an on-going organization, and the consequences that introduction entails, both for the research unit and the host organization.

G. Analysis of the Project in Terms of its Cost

The evaluators are familiar with several cost/benefit techniques, and we have applied them elsewhere. At this point in time we have not found a satisfactory method of quantifying the benefits of the project, and therefore we cannot provide a usual cost/benefit analysis. We have discussed in several sections above (IV B7, 8, IV D) alternate allocation patterns and possible alternate staffing patterns.

Section V. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Findings and Conclusions

1. Fulfilling of project objectives

The Research and Planning Unit of the Philadelphia Family Court is still in its first of three planned developmental stages. In the first two years of its existence, many analysis and development tasks have been undertaken, and success in these endeavors appears moderate to good. The evaluators believe that the project is progressing more slowly than it should toward its research and planning functions. In general we found the project sound, and the goals of the project valuable to the court. But we also conclude that the Research and Planning Unit will experience some turnover in personnel, that staff dissatisfaction will continue for some time, and that management is fairly inexperienced in managing research staff rather than line personnel. We also find that the Court Administrators believe that a functioning research and planning unit is very important to the court and that they are at this point committed to working out internal difficulties in the Unit. In brief, unit output has shown considerable proficiency, and internal problems have apparently not yet affected final products.

2. The overall impact of the project.

The overall impact of the project needs more investigation. The Unit should not exist merely to do research for its own sake or because Administrators are pleased with it. It should exist if its operations ease the operational problems of the court and improve court efficiency and effectiveness in the pursuit of stated Court objectives. Because the Unit has not at this

stage been involved in the measurement of court goals, or in issues of discrepancy between goals and measured achievement, it would be impossible for the evaluators to investigate overall impact without performing our own research and planning about court structure and processes. We do not perceive this as our function.

We have no evidence at this point that the Unit is not having the desired impact: procedural recommendations by the Unit are followed by Administrative implementation in a majority of the cases.

3. The cost-effectiveness of the project

We feel that the Court might get more mileage out of the Unit if groups rather than individual allocation of projects was introduced at least in some instances, and if the Unit had more communication concerning general goals, plans, and general problems with Administrators and line supervisors. We also think that long range benefits would outweigh a relatively higher short term cost, if long range planning and research projects were begun now. In other words, not all Unit time should be allocated to analysis and development problems.

In general the unit produces rather high quality documents that are responsible for needed changes and simplification in court process and structure, and it does so for a sum of under \$100,000 per year.

4. Factors affecting achievement of objectives

There have been some unanticipated consequences evident in the project currently. Most of these involve internal dissatisfaction and low morale in the unit. These consequences appear to be affected by the Administrative structure of the project, operation and management of the project, and planning of the project. The evaluators would rate these internal problems as mild for the program but severe for the present personnel at

this stage in their career development. We think these problems need work and attention but are resolvable.

B. Recommendations.

1. Appropriateness and practicality of objectives

The evaluators recommend that project objectives should include some that are less practical and usable than the operational objectives are now. The appropriate and presently operational objective of court analysis and development should be joined by longer range objectives of research and planning. The first research and planning tasks undertaken should be modest, and the projects should be carefully monitored but provided with sufficient time to develop.

2. The value of the basic problem solving approach

We perceive the basic approach as one of reducing Court organizational inefficiencies and increasing organization predictability by providing a formal unit to do the long range tasks of the organizations management system. Other than that it should continue, we have no recommendations.

3. The operation of the project

The present planning for the R & P Unit entails an incremental development. The evaluators recommend that incremental development should occur on analysis and development and research and planning dimensions simultaneously. We also suggest that team allocation of projects and tasks be investigated, and that periodic meetings between Mr. Davis, Mr. Cassel and the staff, and between Mr. Cassel, his staff, and the juvenile branch supervisors be established with some mutually established guidelines for agenda and frequency. Such meetings should be reevaluated this summer.

We also recommend the establishment of a larger Unit working collection and the use of references or other kinds of contacts in the recommendations about Court operations and procedures.

4. Modifications in objectives, methods, and operations

We have no other recommendations concerning modifications that are not expressed above in subsections #1, 2, and 3.

5. The cost of the project

We recommend that specific deliberations about project cost be withheld until the continuing evaluation has the opportunity to devise a sophisticated quantitative methodology by which to study project impact.

At this juncture we suggest that the present funding level is satisfactory and that the product delivered for the cost is very adequate.

6. The continuation of the project

We recommend that the project be continued, and that modifications in internal operations and particular objectives remain the prerogative of the Court, as monitored by the outside evaluators.

7. The evaluation of the project

The evaluation should continue with the present methodology of frequent site visits, and progressively more structured interviews with Administrators and the supervisors of units and outside agencies who are in contact with and are affected by the R & P Unit. Within a year, a preliminary process cost/benefit model should be and can be developed, as well as standardized questionnaires for use with the unit and agencies interfacing with Research and Planning.

Secondly, evaluation of the improvement of the internal operations of the unit should be conducted to monitor the efficacy of the changes

that the Court administration is now implementing.

C. Implications of this Project and this Evaluation for Governor's Justice Commission Policy.

The evaluators have made, we believe, some major improvements in evaluation design and the phasing of evaluation activities during this project year. Some critical issues relevant to a variety of research and planning units in the criminal justice system are being identified and a model for court research and planning units is being developed.

The commission might consider cluster evaluations of all research and planning units funded by the commission as one means of improving the generalizability and utility of specific project evaluations.

The present evaluators are also in preliminary discussions with Dr. Rosengarten and Hunter Hurst in Pittsburgh about the possibility of additional outside funding by which to study research and planning and research utilization issues in greater depth. Suggestions from the Governor's Justice Commission about such projects would be most welcome.

END