

27007

### Applications of Geographic Base Files to Law Enforcement - The LEAA Interest

III

G. PAUL SYLVESTRE

(Law Enforcement Assistance Administration)

LEAA is not an operating agency, which is one way of saying that it doesn't do any work, so what I have to say here this afternoon won't take quite as much time. You are going to hear, after I finish, from a working agency, the New Orleans Police Department, and they will be describing actual hands-on applications of GBF. LEAA though, and specifically the National Criminal Justice Statistics and Information Service, has been aware for some time about the type of program that New Orleans is working on. As far back as 1966, the St. Louis Police Department was using its own GBF, or as they called it, the New Location Code for analyzing calls for services. This made possible, among other things, a manpower resource allocation project for that agency which received quite a lot of notice. Dallas is one of the several cities which is using a GBF in what is called Computer System Dispatch, or sometimes, Command and Control System.

It is no longer a novelty to see a room full of complaint clerks receiving telephone complaints and dispatchers sending cards out to the scene of the incident, all of this going on without anybody looking at a map. The status map with the flashing lights is no longer there. It is all in the computer.

In April of 1971, Sergeant Eddie Bradford of the Office of the Sheriff, consolidated city of Jacksonville, described to a conference similar to this one the use of a GBF in facilitating dispatch in the newly combined Jacksonville Police Agency for their combined city-county.

Many of you, I am sure, are familiar with other specific projects. Some of which I do not know about even though they may have been funded by LEAA. That's the nature of the block grant beast. We are sure that there is going to be considerably more new activity in this area involving a lot of LEAA money. Out of this we have several concerns.

These are: One, duplication of effort. That is, a city may pay a consultant to do such work as requirements analysis and programing, which should already be on the shelf from work done in another city, perhaps by a different consultant. Two, unnecessary effort. That is extensive geocoding work not taking advantage of the DIME or Census GBF, and requiring additional debugging and editing and perhaps not even coming up with the level of quality of the GBF. Three, a less than optimum system. Some of the systems that we have looked at do not seem to take full advantage of the full capability of a GBF. For instance, the agency may have designed the system to assist dispatchers and that is largely what it does. All of the information is there, that is, fine

geographical detail, time of the event, and so forth, to provide sophisticated spatial and temporal analysis of crime or to provide workload analysis on individual patrolmen. But nobody is using it. Or sometimes, if data is being produced which would seem to serve these purposes, because it was designed by "the systems types" and the consultant, the operational people don't look upon it as their system; "It is something for headquarters, you know, and we don't use that." Four, compatibility with other systems. There may also occur a loss of usefulness if the data from other agencies cannot be matched to crime data.

I want to be careful what I say here; I don't mean that information of a specific address from the health department, or the school department should be in a police file. But it would be useful to match data on truancy or housing conditions against patterns of specific crimes on a small-area basis. But if the development of a police GBF is independent of that used by the general government, this will be made more difficult. Also, if a police GBF is developed without the attention to what is going on elsewhere, certain useful programs of one department cannot be readily adapted to another. So LEAA has begun to address these concerns.

We have made a small grant to the police department in New Orleans, so it could work with Long Beach in the transfer of its LOCUS system. This is the report that you will be hearing more about this afternoon. While this was under consideration, the Birmingham Police Department asked our Atlanta Regional Office for funds for an improved method of coding and tabulating crime data. In this instance, the regional office asked for our advice. We made a hurried one-day trip to Birmingham, and after calling Mr. Silver to get the name of the right person, we actually introduced the police people to the regional planning people. I won't say they did not know each other existed, but they did not know that they could help each other out. And this resulted in the decision that the police would subgrant part of the funds to the planning commission to speed up and upgrade its CUE effort to meet the needs of the police.

At the same time we informed Birmingham of the New Orleans project, and Birmingham decided to schedule its project a few months behind New Orleans to obtain benefit of their experience and obtain some nearly free programs. Unfortunately from the NCJISS point of view, many of the grants for such projects come directly from the State-controlled block funds. It is only accidently that we find out there is something going on in the area. So, if a project

comes to your attention, where you think that an agency should be working more closely with a regional planning commission or COG, let us know, or let our regional office know. We have phones to the Census Bureau and Mr. Silver is very good in telling us whom to contact and sometimes this works and sometimes it does not. After they get the money, they are very hard to control.

We are now giving serious consideration to a grant to a nonprofit agency or organization, which will permit an advisory committee consisting largely of police administrators, but including some criminal justice planners and geoprocessing specialists, to take a good look at existing projects. They will consider other practical applications as

#### Question Period

Mr. Hearle—Do any of you know of any law enforcement-related GBF-type activity going on in your areas apart from the presentation?

Mr. Voye—The St. Paul Police Department is utilizing the GBF, and the Police Department of the City of Minneapolis is looking into the applications at present.

Mr. Hearle—Are they working closely with you in terms of your central role?

Mr. Voye—Yes, they are.

Mr. Weaver—The Police Department with the city of Charlotte is part of the IMIS USAC project and is working directly with the GBF/DIME file. We are breaking the file into two different subfiles. One is a street segment that has been area coded automatically to response areas. We are also taking the same GBF/DIME file and building an intersection file. We are area coding the files so that when the address

perceived by police administrators. Out of this, we hope that we can synthesize and document an optimum system. By disseminating such a concept widely we hope to affect not only new systems to be developed in the future, but to enhance such existing systems that presently fail to include some of the more desirable but less obvious features of GBF's applications. This is presently planned as a 2-year effort, but there will be interim reports to be published at the end of 33 weeks and approximately at the end of 44 weeks. The Geography Division of the Census Bureau will participate in all phases of this project under a separate interagency agreement. This should allow us next year to have a lot more to tell you about what LEAA has been able to do in GBF.

matches a block face they immediately know what unit to assign and, likewise, an intersection pair.

Mr. Sylvestre—I am glad to hear of those that are taking place with the cooperation of the law enforcement agency and the others working in the GBF area.

Mr. Voye—Some of the work in St. Paul was done with LEAA funds.

Mr. Sylvestre—Well, I am sure that most of it is, and that's not bad. I have no objection to LEAA funds going to it. I would just like to get as much GBF out of it as I can without duplicating or doing over work that has already been done elsewhere in the city.

Mr. Controvich—Springfield Police Department is also using the GBF/DIME, and they are currently thinking about using the nodes for accident location purposes.