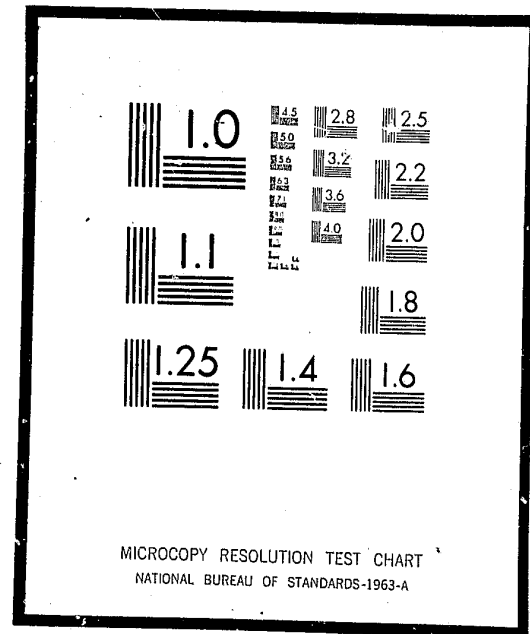


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FINAL EVALUATION REPORT
ON
DELAWARE COUNTY TOTAL
INFORMATION SYSTEM PROJECT

LEAA GRANT SE-490-47A

June 3, 1975

LARRY POLANSKY
PROJECT EVALUATOR

SECTION I Executive Summary

A. Goals and Objectives of the Project

In that this project is a continuation of the implementation of the Delaware County Total Information System which has been previously evaluated during the early design and implementation stages, the current funding was directed toward some very specific goals. These, as articulated in the grant request, are as follows:

1. Implementation of the Adult Criminal Docket
2. Design and Implementation of District Justice Audit Reports
3. Design and Implementation of A.R.D. Report Programs
4. Design and Implementation of Selective Report Programs
5. Design and Implementation of a Juvenile System
6. Design and Implementation of Statistical Reports Programs

B. Major Activities

The project has addressed all six of the above areas and has created two basic data bases to support all six sub-projects. (An adult and a juvenile data base).

Through the design of a comprehensive "Criminal Case Progress Report" form for use at the District Justice level, the standardized collection of case data was ensured. Then, by accomplishing numeric control of the forms for each District Justice, the completeness of the files was assured. Current efforts are aimed at enhancing the timeliness and accuracy of these reports as well.

Basically the information project has fulfilled the goals of the grant request and is "on-target" with the work plan filed on August 8, 1974.

1. The Adult Criminal Docket is in operation and provides multiple reports to support the operation of the system. All agencies appear well satisfied. However, the District Attorney's office continues to maintain a key-punched duplicate file.
2. District Justice audit reports were successfully completed early in the development of the information system.
3. A.R.D. (Accelerated Rehabilitative Disposition) reports on cases reaching termination date are completed and are being revised to provide additional useful information.

4. Selective Report Programs, in a limited number, are being provided. Their quality and functional utilization is excellent.
5. The Juvenile System programming is completed to the apparent complete satisfaction of the juvenile administrator.
6. Statistical report programming is virtually complete. Delays have been occasioned by failure of the state agency to clearly specify its requirements.

C. Results and Accomplishments

1. Useful information is flowing to every criminal justice agency
2. A unique numbering system, to be utilized by every participating criminal justice agency has been formulated and is being implemented.
3. Plans and testing is completed for the publication of the trial books by computer.
4. An effective Policy Committee has been formed, educated and utilized. Inter-agency communication and coordination has been initiated and has been phenomenally fruitful.
5. Many non information system problems have been solved and/or addressed through the medium of the information system and the Policy Committee.
6. More than a dozen recommendations for improvement from the evaluator have been successfully implemented.

D. Major Remaining Problems

1. The timeliness, completeness, and accuracy of the data being collected is still not satisfactory to all parties.
2. There is no single point or agency totally responsible for data collection. (It is not appropriate for data processing, a non-operations oriented agency to take this responsibility).
3. The data base usage for management reporting and case tracking is still far too narrow.
4. Systems and programming staff is very small and is required to operate the computer (at night and on weekends) as well as design and program the system.
5. Documentation of the project is quite inadequate.

6. Symptomatic of the less than full acceptance of the system by a small number of agencies is the continued (perhaps expanded) maintenance of a duplicative key-punched card file by the District Attorney's office.

E. Major Recommendations

1. A central collection point for all data to be captured should be established, probably in the clerk's office.
2. All data must be captured and entered into the automated system at the earliest possible moment. (Perhaps as soon as the form or file returns to the clerk's office).
3. Quality control standards must be set, monitored and maintained.
4. The Policy Committee must identify and the staff quickly provide additional reports and case tracking information for use of operating agencies from the excellent data base.
5. The systems staff must be supplemented with a person (perhaps less than full time) who will be responsible for all court computer operation.
6. Reasonable systems documentation standards must be set and achieved immediately.
7. Acceptance of the utility of the system and abandonment of duplicative record keeping must be attained.
8. All specific recommendations of this evaluator must be reviewed in detail and either implemented or reasonably rejected.
9. Continuation funding should be pursued.
10. Future evaluation activity should utilize the services of the systems expert on the State Court Administrator's staff either in place of or in conjunction with the independent evaluator required by the Governor's Justice Commission.
11. The concept of computerized dockets replacing manual dockets in the clerk's office should be pursued.
12. The "Central Arraignment" concept should be pursued for its obvious advantages but also because of the improvement which it promises for centralized and controlled data collection at the District Justice level.

SECTION II Project Activities

A. Goals and Objectives of the Project

In that this project is a continuation of the implementation of the Delaware County Total Information System which has been previously evaluated during the early design and implementation stages, the current funding was directed toward some very specific goals. These, as articulated in the grant request, are as follows:

1. Implementation of the Adult Criminal Docket
2. Design and Implementation of District Justice Audit Reports
3. Design and Implementation of A.R.D. Report Programs
4. Design and Implementation of Selective Report Programs
5. Design and Implementation of a Juvenile System
6. Design and Implementation of Statistical Reports Programs

B. Activities

Many phases of the automation project are now in operation and the process can best be analyzed by describing data collection, data flow and "products":

a. Case Initiation

All case data is initiated at the District Justice level where seven (7) major pieces of data are captured on a form entitled the Criminal Case Progress Report Form (Exhibit I).

These data items are:

- 1) District Justice Number
- 2) The District Justice number of a second District Justice to whom the case is transferred (when applicable)
- 3) Docket number and year
- 4) Name of the Defendant
- 5) Date of the Criminal Act
- 6) Date of the filing of the complaint
- 7) Statutory reference for each charge

This data was originally collected for all criminal cases processed by the District Justices but the volume of activity was excessive and control all but impossible. It was therefore decided that summary offenses would not be included in the system thereby limiting workload to a manageable volume and making the project feasible.

This form is filled out by each District Justice and transmitted to the Information System Unit in Media where it is keypunched and entered into the computer system. A consecutive number check is made for every District Justice submission and a report of missing numbers is provided for the District Justice Administrator.

- b. At preliminary hearing a new Criminal Case Progress Report is prepared for every disposition whether dismissed or held for court. Copies are also forwarded to identify defendants who fail to appear as fugitives in order to initiate the apprehension process.

Approximately ten (10) additional data items are filled in by the District Justice at this stage of processing.

- c. All Criminal Case Progress Reports, when received by the Information Systems Unit are transcribed to various Criminal Input Forms (Exhibits II, III & IV) and then are keypunched. All additional data received are transcribed to other input forms (Exhibits V, VI, VII and VIII).

- d. The District Justice Administrator is receiving two basic reports:

- 1) 151 Day Aging Report - All cases with less than 151 days remaining under Rule 1100 (Speedy Trial Rule) (One full copy stays with the Administrator and each District Justice receives his portion of the other copy).
- 2) Missing Case Docket Listing - A listing of consecutive numbers which never reached Data Processing - this report depends upon a standard numbering system which was not instituted until mid 1974 or the beginning of 1975.

- e. No statistical reports are yet prepared for the District Justice Administrator. The first report anticipated and holding the highest priority will be the mandatory "State Report".

- f. When the District Justice determines a case is to be bound over for court the appropriate papers (transcripts) are forwarded to the Clerk of the Court of Common Pleas who assigns a transcript number which is picked up by Data Processing and initiates Common Pleas "processing" by the Information System.

- g. Three basic Common Pleas reports are prepared:

- 1) Unindicted - Includes all transcripts which have not resulted in indictment or in diversion through Accelerated Rehabilitative Disposition (A.R.D.). This report is primarily utilized by the District Attorney's Office.
- 2) Untried - Includes all cases which have been indicted but not yet tried.
- 3) Commenced - Consists of all cases wherein trial has been initiated.

- h. Other products which have been provided are:

- 1) Charge Code Tables - to identify the specific charges against the defendant to applicable statute or code.
- 2) Edit Report - to review all data being entered for completeness and logical accuracy.
- 3) Edit and Update - to record changes and add new cases to the file after running the edit report and making any necessary corrections.
- 4) Output Program - provides a physical printout of all cases on record with the information system.
- 5) Index Report - provides a name to case number cross reference for all "non-closed" cases.
- 6) Report of persons who appear to have completed their A.R.D. commitment.

- i. Other areas in Process, Operating or Discarded

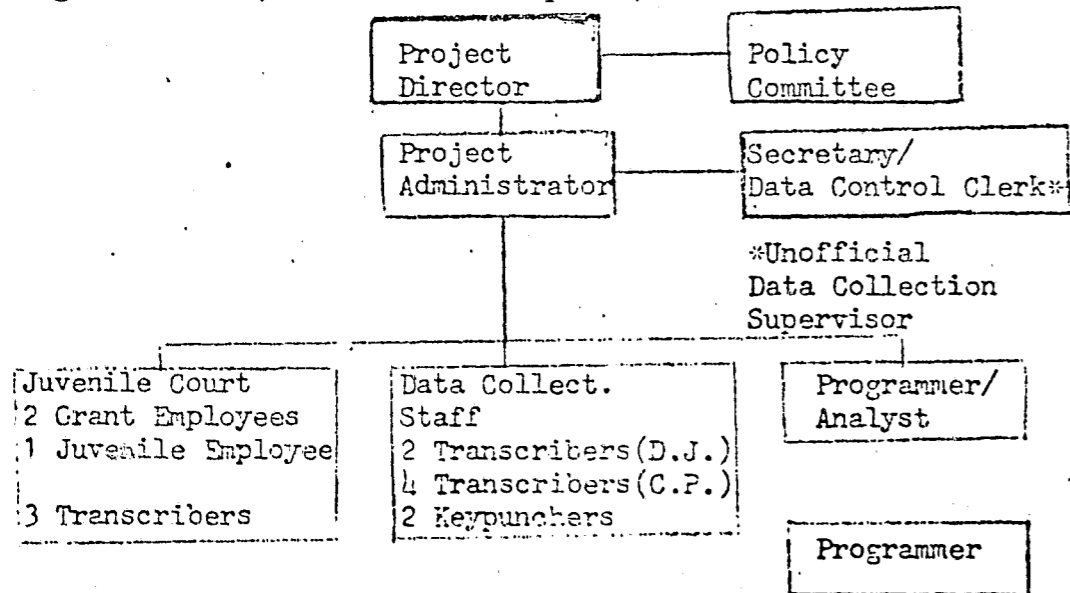
- 1) Juvenile - A system for the processing of Juvenile Cases very similar to the Adult Criminal system has been programmed and tested. (See Exhibits IX, X and XI for input forms).
- 2) An individual disposition "301" report (report of Judicial Criminal Proceedings) required by the Attorney General's Bureau of Criminal Justice Statistics is designed as a natural by-product of the disposition of an adult criminal case.
- 3) Clerk of Courts Index

- 4) "District Attorney Programs" - A data processing card is punched by the District Attorney staff for each case entering the office and the cards are maintained in separate groupings relating to cases pending to be listed, fugitives, etc.
- 5) District Justice fines and costs audit data - all District Justice receipts are punched in order to enable creation of state report and appropriate distribution of monies. Project includes six (6) programs.
- 6) Bail Bond Agency Programs - Recorded basic information re each client and his case. All cards keypunched and then sorted by case number and a case number report prepared. Provides summary of cases by bail type and data on who was doing interviewing and when. The system has been discarded because "they could not keep up with the key-punch effort required".

j. Data Base and Programs

- 1) All programming is done in COBOL.
- 2) The data base is tape resident.
- 3) Disk storage on the computer system is used only for temporary translation files (e.g. charge descriptions).

k. Organization -(Evaluator's Perception)



SECTION III Evaluation Activities

A. Evaluation Dates

During the project year, from the final notification of the appointment of the evaluator until this report date (August 22, 1974 to June 3, 1975), there were five site visits to the Media Court House.

The first visit was preceded by a full days review of all the materials available on the project:

- a. American University Technical Assistance Team Report - June 1973 (John Clark, Cliff Kirsch and Larry Polansky).
- b. Previous Grant - SE-285-72A Project Duration February 1973 to January 1974.
- c. Interim evaluation report on previous grant dated January 1974 prepared by Systems & Computer Technology Corporation.
- d. Final evaluation report on previous grant dated January 1974 prepared by Systems & Computer Technology Corporation.
- e. Current grant (SE-490-74A) Project Duration April 1, 1974 to March 31, 1975.
- f. Report by Patrick Flynn to John T. Snavely, Esq. re: plan for meeting security, privacy and expungement procedures and submission of work plan and milestone chart.

The first actual site visit was on September 19, 1974 during which the evaluator attempted to familiarize himself with the project staff and the project itself. During the visit the data collection process was reviewed and audited and samples of all computer products were collected for evaluation.

The second site visit by the evaluator (no consultant fee charged) was on October 3, 1974, and the third visit was on October 16, 1974 and followed a detailed analysis of the materials accumulated on the first visit. During the third visit the evaluator's emphasis was on determining the automation goals of the various agencies. Morning and afternoon meetings were held to first explore the understanding of possible benefits to be derived from automation and later to assist the agencies in articulating their goals in terms of automation products.

There was one site visit during the period November to January 30, 1975 supplemented by a full day visit (January 28, 1975) by members of the Policy Committee to the Philadelphia Court System to view the Philadelphia Court Information System in operation and to review with the evaluator a series of computer products (both hard copy and Cathode-ray terminal responses).

The evaluator compiled and provided to the Delaware County Group a set of reports prepared for management and operations staff to support the court process in Philadelphia. Each report was discussed and where applicable, evaluated for future utility to the Delaware County System.

The site visit was coordinated with a morning Policy Committee meeting where, primarily, user satisfaction was monitored and achievement analyzed from the viewpoint of the interdisciplinary group and the evaluator.

The afternoon was spent with the staff for an on-site review of progress and problems.

All available materials on the Juvenile system in its final development stages, was collected by the evaluator and later reviewed in detail.

The final site visit on April 29, 1975 was again coordinated with a morning Policy Committee meeting where user attitudes and achievement as perceived by the full user group was monitored. Progress reports were orally delivered by project staff and comments from the State Court Administrator's systems and data processing chief, James Vaselick, were also heard.

A final review of input forms and output products as well as data processing documentation was performed by the evaluator. Extensive discussion was held with the staff director and a request was made for delivery of samples of all system products.

B. Evaluation Methodology and Scope

No special data collection was required for the evaluator who was able to sample and test collection and accuracy during site visits.

Production evaluation was accomplished by requiring samples of actual reports for review and discussing each of the reports with users as well as objectively analyzing these reports for their informative value.

Evaluation of effectiveness was achieved through reviewing timeliness, accuracy and use of automated products.

The evaluator encountered no difficulty in implementing his evaluation.

The Policy Committee and staff have been extremely cooperative and responsive and have made every document and operation available for view and review.

Interviews with operational agency personnel and interaction with these same individuals at and after Policy Committee meetings were an integral part of the evaluation process.

C. Feedback

The evaluator's site visits have been timed to coincide with Policy Committee meetings and have included discussions with the Chairman of the Policy Committee, the Project Director and the Administrator of the grant.

In addition to the previous two evaluation reports, many suggestions for improved methods of data collection, additions or adjustments to automated outputs and new uses for the accumulated data base have been made to the committee and staff.

Many of the suggested changes and improvements have already been implemented.

Several specific instances of successful feedback activity were:

- a. Organization - Although generally well organized, this project did not appear initially to have strong direction from the top. The Policy Committee and the project director roles were interpreted as relatively passive ones. Discussions and meetings during the first two site visits appear to have changed this posture to an active one.
- b. Data Base Accuracy and Timeliness - The most significant problem appears to be the validation of the accuracy of the data base and the timeliness of the data entered. The perception of the user agencies had been that of inaccurate and late data and therefore the system had thus far not been accepted. This problem was identified during the site visits and it appears that extensive effort was made by all to provide an accurate and timely data base acceptable to all resulting in much greater utilization of work products.

- c. Utilization of the Data Base and of Existing Work Products - The evaluator sensed that there was very narrow use of the data base and the few reports being prepared. Through extensive Policy (User) Group discussion many uses of current outputs (sometimes with slight modifications) were identified and many future possible uses for the information already collected in the data base were articulated. Future meetings of the Policy Group should lead to prioritization of desired outputs and further analysis of possible multiple agency utilization of specific products.

SECTION IV Project Results

A. Progress and Problems of Data Collection

Early data collection efforts were error prone and unproductive but experience appears to have led to a rational method for capturing most of the activity on Common Pleas criminal cases via cooperation with and location near the Clerk's office.

District Justice data collection problems also appear to have been extensive but have been solved by reducing the scope (elimination of summary and traffic offenses) and design (and redesign) of a standard reporting form.

The final design of the "Basic Docket Transcript - Criminal Case Progress Report" is excellent and was, incidentally, adopted almost without change by Chester County officials for their new Criminal Justice Information System at the suggestion of the evaluator.

B. Implementation of the Adult Criminal Docket

The progress in Adult Criminal Docket is quite heartening. Early in the report year data was being collected and reported but little use and little acceptance was evident.

At this date, although the system is still being "duplicated" in the District Attorney's office (a subject I will speak to later in the report), most agencies are utilizing the data services and benefiting from them. Reports are more timely and accuracy level has improved considerably.

Clerk, Criminal Administrator and Public Defender all appear quite satisfied with efforts in this area. District Attorney appears satisfied with progress but not yet ready to eliminate a duplicative process performed within that office.

C. District Justice Audit Reports

Project programming was completed early in the development of the Delaware County Information System. All programming is complete and the data is being reported from the District Justices.

The data flow, however, is slow and precludes the timely preparation of reports for the state.

The late reporting was a problem because it placed the District Justice in default of a state required reporting schedule which made the Justice subject to the payment of a fine for lateness. This problem has been eliminated according to information supplied by Mr. Patrick Flynn.

Logic and economics dictate that consideration be given to tying these reports into the basic reporting system instead of continuing a "stand-alone" project which at some points is duplicative of other information system efforts.

D. A.R.D. Report Programs

Programs have been written to provide the District Attorney with lists of outstanding A.R.D. cases and reports of cases reaching A.R.D. termination date. First program outputs were prepared in March and further work in the area is called for to increase the usefulness of the products. This satisfies the scope of the original project goals but, in my opinion, falls just short of providing a full service to the District Attorney.

I strongly suggest that some thought be given to an attempt to automatically identify A.R.D. "participants" who are again arrested prior to their A.R.D. termination date.

E. Selective Report Programs

This topic covers reports being provided to each department supporting the needs or desires of that department. The number of different products provided at this time is limited. However, the quality and functional utilization of the few reports is excellent. Continuing effort is expended in identifying additional needs and satisfying them. This is a process which should continue for the life of the information system.

F. Juvenile System

The Evaluator has reviewed all available materials from this system. Materials consisted of sample reports now being prepared and documentation of most of the programs which have been completed.

A review of those reports revealed substantial progress during the project year.

Discussion with the Juvenile Administrator during Policy Committee meeting indicated almost complete satisfaction on part of the user but reservations as to stage of completion. It appears that almost all of original design has been implemented but, understandably, additional requirements were identified during implementation period. These added requirements are "just about complete" as of the end of the evaluation period.

G. Statistical Reports

The statistical reports programming is almost completed. Staff anticipated completion of programming by early March with no additional problems anticipated, however, some added difficulty in obtaining clarification from the state agency for whom the reports are prepared has caused some added delay.

Delay is understandable and is primarily due to difficulty in getting state people to finalize their requirements.

Basically the information system project has fulfilled the goals of the grant request and is "on target" when compared to the 90 day work plan supplied to Mr. John T. Snavely, Executive Director of the Governor's Justice Commission on August 8, 1974.

H. General Progress

The Delaware County Criminal Justice System seems to be making excellent use of many information system innovations:

- (a) Lists of all open, indicted and unindicted defendants have proven valuable to multiple agencies.
- (b) The "150 Day" report has been a tremendous help in staying on top of "Rule 1100" (Speedy Trial Rule) problem cases.
- (c) A unique numbering system which will follow the case from arrest to final disposition and which will be utilized by every criminal justice agency involved has been formulated and is now being implemented.
- (d) Plans are being made to publish the trial books from computer lists. Some problems still remain relating to cases which started prior to the computer system, but they are now few enough to warrant consideration of conversion of the remaining open "old" cases.
- (e) The Policy Committee has visited several other operating court computer installations and has come back with numerous ideas for expansion and improvement of the Delaware County Information System.
- (f) The Policy Committee has provided the communication link between the criminal justice agencies which apparently was lacking prior to this project. There are excellent discussions of inter-agency problems.

Most gratifying is the inter-disciplinary coordination and problem solution flowing from these meetings. Many times the problems and solutions are not even information system related, but are uncovered and answered by the Information System Policy Committee.

- (g) A central arraignment court is being designed and implementation appears likely.

I. Problems Identified

- (1) Quality Control - The evaluator still has reservations about the accuracy of the data. Although well accepted principles of data collection and key-punch verification are utilized, there is a need for an accuracy level higher than normally provided in industry when dealing with criminal court records.
- (2) Computer Operations - All computer runs are prepared utilizing information systems programming staff as machine operators. This means that every time an operational product is required a man has to be pulled from the development effort. Further, staff paid for technical level expertise is being utilized for production type duties. A part time operator was hired but has now "resigned". It is imperative that the systems and programming staff get out of operations.
- (3) The decision to avoid converting "old" cases continues to contribute to the less than complete acceptance of the information system. It has been reported to the evaluator that "old cases" are now being put into the system.
- (4) Utilization of the Data Base - There appears to have been a great expansion of the use of the information system reports. For example, the Criminal Court Administrator has used reports in the trial date scheduling operation recently taken over by the Court. Alphabetic lists appear to have been prepared with great benefit to the Clerk, the Public Defender, the District Attorney and others.

J. Previous Recommendations (From earlier reports of this evaluator)

- (1) The Criminal Case Progress Report should be prepared in multiple part copy so that the District Justice once he initiates the case does not have to re-enter the basic

seven (7) data items for subsequent transmittals but need only fill out the additional data on second, third, fourth copy.

- (2) The data transcription effort calls for the transcribers to transfer all data from the original document (Criminal Case Progress Report) to a data processing input form to be key-punched and finally key-verified. It is very likely that a review of the most modern data collection devices could provide a much more economical method wherein information from the original documents would be entered on a data collection device which would provide video input formats for prompting the entry of particular pieces of the information directly from the original documents. The data collected would reside on magnetic tape or disc and would provide a faster and more economical mode for entry into the computer file.
- (3) All of the currently produced reports should be reviewed for the feasibility of providing group and over-all totals to make an administrator's task easier. Many specific suggestions have been passed along to the staff.
- (4) The missing number report, for the year 1974, appears to be valueless because of faulty numbering which occurred during the first months of 1974. I suggest that a small amount of computer programming could restrict the analysis to numbers assigned after a particular date and could provide a usable product now.
- (5) A definite emphasis must be placed now on defining management type reports which can be extracted from the extensive and valuable data base that has been created. The true value of an information system can only be realized when the users recognize the varied uses of the data within. Perhaps now is an appropriate time for Policy Group members to visit other operational sites to see what uses others are making of similar data bases.
- (6) One specific by-product which appears to be feasible, economical and quite useful is the possible production of major parts of the Court Session Quarterly Trial List by use of the listings of all cases in the system by their future action date. This should be an excellent work-saving tool for whoever is presently charged with the duty for preparing original copy for the printer. Further savings may be available by utilizing the camera ready copy provided by the computer printer for the making of printing "mats" rather than utilizing the much more costly typesetting method presently employed.
- (7) In response to the requirements of Rule 1100 (Speedy Trial Rule) it is suggested that all printouts used for scheduling carry the date by which trial must commence for every case.

- (8) Thought should be given to preparing "60 Day" reports for cases held by a judge after trial without final disposition.
- (9) Disposition files appear to be planned for maintenance by year of case initiation rather than year of case disposition. This will make it very difficult to provide comparative reports on case dispositions which will probably be the most frequent use for the historical data. I suggest serious thought be given for the organization of disposed case files.
- (10) It would seem to the evaluator that an end of year alphabetic index (cross reference to case numbers) would be a very valuable tool to several of the agencies and I suggest therefore that this very simply prepared report be considered.
- (11) The evaluator has provided staff with a copy of the procedures followed in Philadelphia for automatic expungement of cases tried under the Controlled Substance Act and for qualifying A.R.D. cases. I recommend that the Policy Group review this topic extensively before giving direction to the staff.
- (12) The card file system utilized by the District Attorney's office should be eliminated as soon as the system's data base has been validated. The functions performed with these cards are fully duplicative of the major information system effort and represent a highly unreliable approach to case control. Extensive effort and inter-agency cooperation must be directed to the cleansing and bringing up-to-date of the system's master file.
- (13) The staff appears appropriately reticent about moving head long into the extension of the system. This is a healthy position as long as the reticence doesn't become an excuse for not moving forward at all. The staff cannot afford to take on too many tasks at one time, but it must move forward aggressively with as many tasks as it can if Delaware County is to properly benefit from the extensive funding utilized to put this system together.
- (14) In light of the excellent progress shown and the extensive promise of things to come from the broad data base being accumulated, I recommend very strongly that the project pursue continuation funding as well as added funding for expanded staffing.
- (15) There is an obvious need for a quality control unit to assure the level of accuracy that Criminal Justice records demand.
- (16) A computer operator is absolutely necessary to relieve the uneconomical and inefficient demands for operations duty placed upon the programming staff.

K. Responses to Previous Recommendations

The response to evaluator recommendations has been impressive. Virtually every suggestion has been implemented and, in fact,

Improved upon:

- (1) Criminal Case Progress Report form has been revised and the number of copies expanded.
- (2) Little progress has yet been shown on studying alternate methods of data conversion, however, contacts have been made with possible suppliers and the topic will be pursued.
- (3) Several levels of totals have been added to many of the reports being prepared by the computer adding untold value to these reports as administrative tools.
- (4) The numbering system for 1975 is "in control" and working well.
- (5) Other operational sites have been visited and the Policy Group has taken on the task of expanding the reporting capabilities of the system. (There is need for continuing sessions wherein the committee "brainstorms" possible extensions in order to keep the system responsive to changing needs).
- (6) Only the conversion of a relatively small number of "old" cases prevents the initiation of this cost/beneficial improvement and the evaluator is informed that this conversion has now been started. A "parallel trial list was prepared for the trial list printing" and if acceptable will be the media for trial lists in the future.
- (7) "Must Try" dates are now being carried on reports.
- (8) No work has yet been done on "60 Day" reporting.
- (9) Organization of disposed records has been re-planned and system now includes a practical method for organization of historical disposed case files.
- (10) An annual alphabetic index report is now in the process of implementation.
- (11) The difficult area of expungement is still under consideration. Additional thought is being given to an automated probation detainer process which was viewed during one of the site visits.
- (12) An extensive effort has been made to cleanse and bring up-to-date the system's master file. This effort appears to have been quite successful, but it appears that the District Attorney is no closer to the elimination of the duplicative key-punching process performed in his office. He appears even more reluctant to accept the new product as gospel. In fact, he has expended resources to "improve" the duplicative effort.

- (13) Much progress is noticeable since the last evaluation visit. Staff is still reluctant to take on multiple tasks at the same time but appears to be moving much more quickly than before.
- (14) Continuation funding is being pursued.
- (15) Policy Committee discussion has been extensive regarding the concept of Quality Control and the evaluator has every reason to believe that the recommendation will be implemented.
- (16) The project supervisor has informed the evaluator that the project had little success with a part-time operator (who was also a full time county data processing employee). Efforts were now being made to include a full time operator in the next budget whose allegiance is directly to the court project. The evaluator considers this latter move much more responsive to his recommendation.

SECTION V Additional Recommendations and Findings

- A. Previous recommendations which have not been responded to or have been incompletely responded to should be fully adopted or satisfactorily negated by reasonable argument.
- B. Data Processing documentation is extremely poor and an intensive effort must be made to bring it up to par. The evaluator found no documentation standards and no typical documentation available. It is possible that programmers are required to work at night to run operational jobs because there are no prepared "run instructions" to provide to an operations staff.

Standard documentation files which would include items such as:

- (a) General system design summary and literal description of the goals of the total system
- (b) Detail systems design of individual programs including flow charts and inter-relationships with other programs and files.
- (c) Detail file designs
- (d) Project flow charts
- (e) Operator run books etc.

Any elementary standard text on automation project documentation will reveal literally dozens of missing documentation steps in this project.

- C. It is the evaluator's understanding that the County Data Processing Center is in the process (or has already) converted their computer hardware from a Burroughs 2700 to a Burroughs 4700. Much to my chagrin, I found that there had been no pre-testing of operational programs on this new machine prior to installation to determine whether program changes were necessary to assure uninterrupted flow of required reports. If it is still possible to test before installation is effected then I feel such testing must be done regardless of cost. If it is too late, I leave you with the advice that a situation such as this not be allowed to occur again.
- D. Continuing evaluation - I suggest strongly that use be made of the offered services of Mr. James Vaselick of the State Court Administrator's staff to supplement or even replace the evaluator for the proposed continuation project. Mr. Vaselick is an extremely competent and experienced data processor whose constructive criticism and evaluation will be quite valuable to your project. This evaluator stands ready and willing to continue his relationship with the project but he feels his role should be a reduced one and be coupled with another independent view.

- E. An extensive effort must be made to expand attorney data in the record and to assure its accuracy. Any attempt at scheduling will require complete data on real trial attorney.
- F. Reports (and trial lists) appear cluttered with cases of fugitives. These cases should be given a special classification and removed from the normal working reports.
- G. Staff should pursue the possibility of preparing the "trial book" on 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 11" continuous form paper which should provide camera ready copy right from the computer.
- H. Staff must become more responsive to the requests of the participating agencies. A means must be devised to get "easy" new reports from the data base in days and not the weeks and months presently required.
- I. The entire criminal justice system would benefit greatly from some screening mechanism prior to indictment. The proposed central arraignment court will allow the prosecutor an earlier look at the cases but this will only be fruitful if he uses experienced personnel at that level to cull the junk cases which clog the system.
- J. Collection of data must be centralized and standardized. Perhaps a central collection location (in the Clerk's office) should be selected and arrangements made for every file to be immediately available to Data Processing upon return of the file to the Clerk. Further thought should be given to the Clerk preparing the data collection documents.
- K. The concept of computer dockets replacing manual dockets should be pursued.

SECTION VI Analysis

A. Results Versus Anticipated Results

Inspection of the progress of the project and review of the grant request and work plan reveals that the project has generally kept up-to-date with the commitments in their plan. The only tardiness I can point to is the slow progress in the area of "Selective Report Programs". I would have hoped for (and expected) more extensive utilization of the fine data base which has been put together.

B. Factors leading to unanticipated results

There are two factors which I feel have contributed the most to the current level of success:

- (a) Initially, the named Project Director for this grant played a rather passive role in the management of the operation of the project. The first evaluation report pointed this out and the response was quick and effective.

The Project Director took an active part in management and spearheaded the active participation of the Policy Committee resulting in excellent progress for the grant year.

- (b) The systems staff continues to move slowly in the expansion of their system. They are extremely cautious and perhaps this is the appropriate approach in the implementation of difficult data processing innovation. I feel, however, that they are overly cautious and that more can be done and more quickly than is being done at present.

- C. The impact of an information system on the operation and effectiveness of a complex criminal justice system is hard to describe and impossible to quantify.

In this particular case, it has been the catalyst that has opened the lines of communication between the criminal justice agencies and started them working cooperatively toward mutually beneficial improvements.

More and better data is available to expedite the criminal court process and supporting materials are available to effectively monitor the problems created by Supreme Court Rule 1100 (Speedy Trial Rule).

The mere fact that more extensive information is available to analyze and monitor the entire system results in both actual and psychological improvement to the system.

Questions which were heretofore unanswered because of the difficulty in analyzing individual cases is now available by case and in aggregate form with relative ease. Much added benefit is expected as soon as the accuracy and timeliness level of the system is improved and the current perception of most of the users (that the system is usable and valuable), is extended to the last small group of persons.

- D. It is my opinion that no other court oriented project could have reached as far as this one has into the related agencies or engendered as much self-inspection and evaluation nor been successful in fostering change for the better.

Any other allocation of resources would have solved a single problem whereas this project has produced "ripples" which touch every facet of the criminal justice operation.

- E. The project's progress and success compares most favorably with that of other similar projects with which I am or have been involved. Although the progress has been very slow, the agencies are beginning to receive useful products and a data base has been developed which can produce extensive useful reports. Many similar projects have utilized fancy computer terminals which have immediate access to data bases which are valueless for day to day operation of the system. This project is not "on-line" but it does have a useful data base. On balance, it is far ahead of comparable projects.
- F. In my opinion the greatest lesson learned by this project was the effectiveness of the use of a multi-agency policy committee. The success of this group's activity in many areas divorced from the information system operation as well as in that area has opened the door to effective inter-agency communication and has fostered a cooperative attitude which must at all costs be maintained.

In the future, when the project is completely operational, it is imperative that the policy group continue to meet and "lay their cards on the table".

Respectfully submitted,

Larry P. Polansky
Larry P. Polansky
Project Evaluator
June 3, 1975

LPP:az

END