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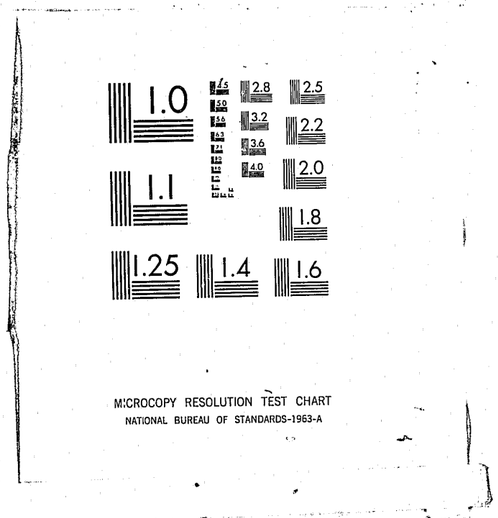

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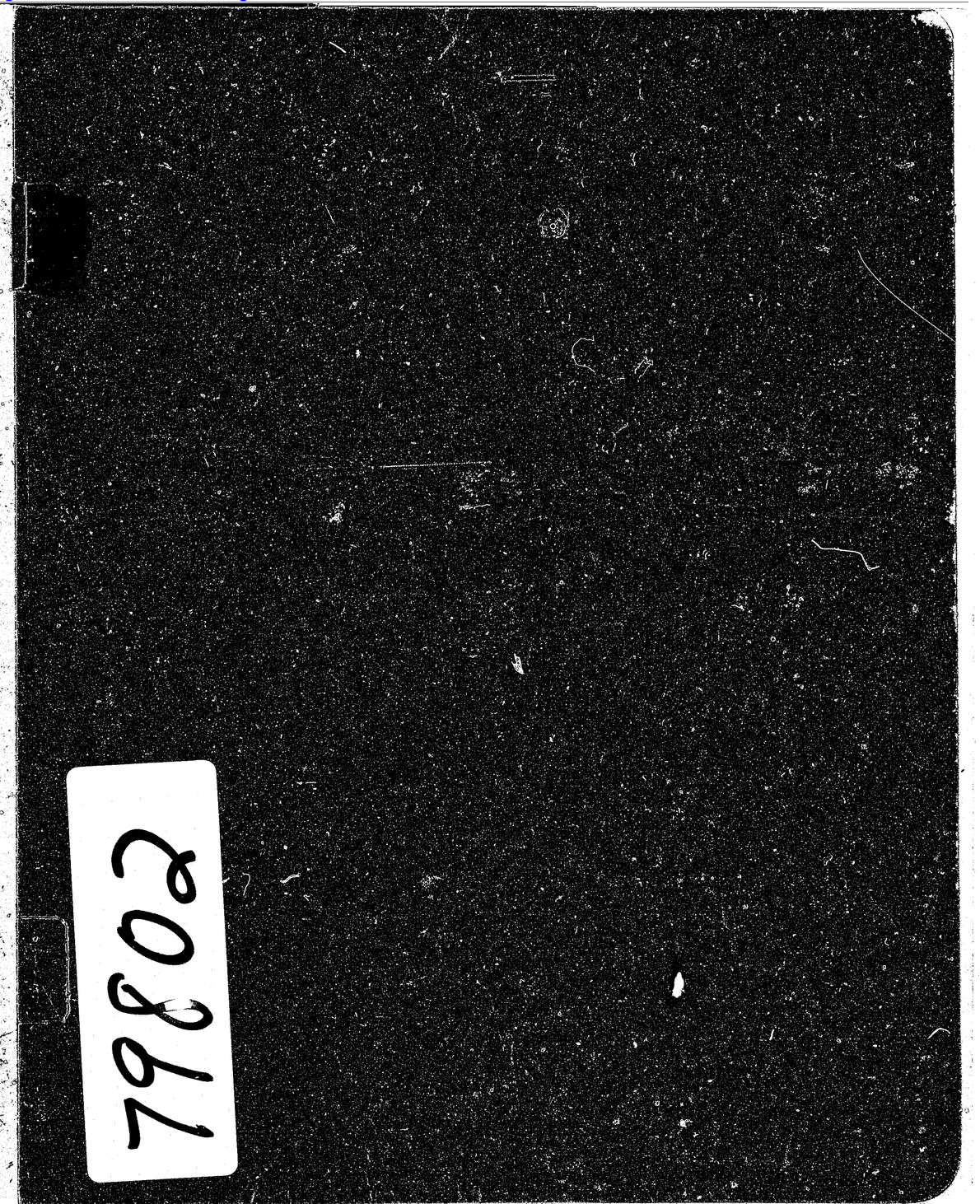

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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
LAW ENFORCEMENT ASSISTANCE ADMINISTRATION

DISCRETIONARY GRANT
PROGRESS REPORT

GRANTEE	LEAA GRANT NO.	DATE OF REPORT	REPORT NO.
SEARCH Group, Inc.	79SS-AX-0019	3/31/81	6

IMPLEMENTING SUBGRANTEE
SEARCH Group, Inc.

TYPE OF REPORT
☐ REGULAR QUARTERLY ☐ SPECIAL REQUEST
☒ FINAL REPORT

SHORT TITLE OF PROJECT
Corrections Management Information Systems

GRANT AMOUNT
$199,945

REPORT IS SUBMITTED FOR THE PERIOD 12/1/79 THROUGH 11/30/80

SIGNATURE OF PROJECT DIRECTOR

TYPED NAME & TITLE OF PROJECT DIRECTOR
Steve E. Kolodney
Executive Director

COMMENCE REPORT HERE (*Add continuation pages as required.*)

79-803

Background

Over the past five years, SEARCH Group, with the continuing support of the National Criminal Justice Information and Statistics Service and the Bureau of Justice Statistics, has been assisting state departments of corrections in designing and implementing OBSCIS (Offender-Based State Corrections Information System).

The original development of the OBSCIS model was supported by a project committee consisting of corrections practitioners from 10 states plus a number of additional experts representing all aspects of corrections administration. Their involvement insured that the model would be truly responsive to the needs of corrections. The product of this effort was the five volumes that document OBSCIS.

During the second project year, many more states joined in the OBSCIS effort. Emphasis was placed on implementation of the OBSCIS model as a functioning system. Each of the 18 states involved at that time had different internal priorities and needs, yet each utilized the OBSCIS model as the system's foundation. A summary of implementation experiences was documented in OBSCIS Volume 6.

In the third year of OBSCIS, five additional states initiated an OBSCIS program. It was a year for development as well as refinement of the original OBSCIS model. Examples of the progress made are OBSCIS Volume 7 (The Revised Data Dictionary) and the OBSCIS Compendium, a summary of proceedings from the OBSCIS Seminar held in September, 1977, in which 42 states participated. An additional major accomplishment during this phase was the development of the Basic OBSCIS Software Package for use by the states. This package was tested and implemented using two different hardware configurations, an IBM 370 and a minicomputer. This multiple hardware approach serves to show the flexibility designed into the Software Package.

The fourth year featured various states transferring the successfully tested Basic OBSCIS Software Package. Technical assistance was provided by SEARCH. This phase demonstrated the ease of transferability and provided states with an economical way to develop their own information system. Volume 8 in the OBSCIS series documented these achievements. Also during this period a model was developed which provided the foundation for expansion of a state's existing computer capabilities to include resource management functions such as: personnel management, budget control, prison industries, food management, inventory control, transportation and maintenance. Three volumes titled "State Corrections Resource Management Systems (SCRMS)" summarizes the model.

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During this grant period, the fifth year of assistance to state departments of corrections, consolidation of the OBSCIS model and the SCRMS model into a model Corrections Management Information System (CMIS) occurred. This most recent effort has enabled SEARCH to continue providing states technical assistance, system software and support materials necessary to design and install a comprehensive corrections information system.

Accomplishments

A. The CMIS National Users Group

The CMIS project successfully consolidated members of the OBSCIS Users Group and the SCRMS Advisory Committee to create a national forum of corrections information specialists, the CMIS National Users Group.

Two User Group meetings were held during this grant period to address information system issues and problems facing the state corrections community. These meetings provided a forum for the exchange of information relating to state preferences in developing and implementing resource management systems, methods of alleviating problems in system software and hardware operations and informing participants on the status of the CMIS program. Reports on specific developmental experiences from various states were encouraged, and selected systems were demonstrated. Examples include a review of the Missouri Division of Corrections Inmate Banking system detailing the computer hardware/software configuration, installation costs and problems encountered and a description of the Kansas and Florida approaches to system implementation.

Another significant feature of the meetings was the forum for discussion of national reporting programs such as National Prisoner Statistics and Uniform Parole Reports. Specific problems between the OBSCIS states and these national reporting programs were considered with the result that a better understanding of specific reporting requirements now exists.

In addition, other features of the CMIS meetings afforded participants the opportunity to gain knowledge about recent correctional information system developments. The panel discussions and workshops featured at these meetings included information on advanced system developments in health-care data bases for corrections, management systems in prison industries (Project Free Venture), and other, alternative modes of corrections information systems development.

B. Software Development

Enhancements to the Basic OBSCIS software were developed and made available to states wishing to implement them on existing inmate management systems. CMIS staff completed documentation for Visitor Control, Visitation Analysis and Inmate Fund Accounting systems. This system documentation was written per the Federal Information Processing Standards Publication No. 38 (FIPS PUB 38), including the necessary Functional Requirements, Data Requirements, System Specifications, Data Base Specifications, Operations Manual and Users Guide for each of the three systems.

The programming requirements for the Visitor Control module consist of nine programs (VNCT1 thru VCNTL 9) and a single file, the Visitor Master File (VMST). Backup for this file is created whenever the data base is updated. The organization of records in this file

will allow generation of reports into three forms: (1) Visitor Lists by Visitor Name, (2) Visitor Lists by Inmate Name, and (3) Visitor Lists by Inmate OBSCIS Number.

The Visitation Analysis module performs as a separate function distinct from the Visitor Control section of the module and may be operated as a stand-alone sub-system. Visitation analysis is keyed to the act of visiting, with data collected at the time that visitation occurs and entered into the system via a visitor request form.

The Inmate Fund Accounting system design consists of eighteen programs (IFS1 through IFS18) and an Inmate Fund Master File (IFMST) to support three major types of processing; i.e., the OBSCIS-Inmate Fund Interface, File Maintenance Processing, and Inmate-Bank Statement Processing. The IFMST file records are organized to allow the generation of reports to establish: (1) Inmate Accounts in OBSCIS Number Order by Institution; (2) Lists of Account Transfers by Institution; (3) Lists of Inmate Deposits and Withdrawals by Institution; (4) Summary Transaction Reports by Institution with Totals; (5) Inmate Accounts Proof Listing by Institution; and (6) Individual Inmate Bank Statements.

During this grant period, a CMIS Subcommittee of corrections professionals was assembled to assist in the design of computer software for the Inmate Fund Accounting module. This group of ten corrections information system specialists met once with project staff to assist in the design of a versatile, yet comprehensive inmate banking system which reflected the needs of the corrections community. In conjunction to assisting staff design this module, the subcommittee reviewed the functional and system specifications for the CMIS Visitor Control and Visitation Analysis modules.

C. Technical Assistance

In helping states plan for CMIS implementation, solve system problems and increase communication, SEARCH provided technical assistance to states implementing components of the OBSCIS and SCRMS models and to those states which are adopting the Basic OBSCIS Software Package. Specifically, this has included assistance for states which are developing software to conform to the OBSCIS model, adopting the Basic OBSCIS software, and those states which are in the process of transferring another states existing OBSCIS software.

By combining the knowledge of state's corrections environments and sharing the many suggestions and insights obtained during the system development and implementation process, SEARCH has been able to provide states with short-term educational technical assistance, together with long-term commitments to states implementing OBSCIS software.

The short-term technical assistance provided states has emphasized educational and training assistance for purposes of OBSCIS planning and implementation. Technical assistance also consisted of initial contacts with states through telephone or direct mail distribution of information pertaining to specific issues concerning offender-related or resource-related system development. On-site, short-term assistance including Basic OBSCIS demonstrations, system implementation strategies and recommendations for operating an efficient offender information system was provided the California, Virginia, and Territory of Guam Departments of Corrections.

On three separate occasions in 1980 SEARCH demonstrated the Basic OBSCIS system for the California Department of Corrections. SEARCH also provided CDC with a complete duplication of the Basic OBSCIS system software on magnetic tape.

SEARCH provided Virginia corrections staff with technical support to determine system development direction. This was accomplished in support of recommendations from a 1979 Virginia Adult Correctional System study which directed the development of a corrections management information system to include the addition of two functions (local State Prisoners and Commitments). This assistance assured the avoidance of system pitfalls at a later date since it was done prior to the general design phase.

During this grant period, SEARCH was contacted by the Territory of Guam Criminal Justice Planning Agency to help their correctional staff determine the feasibility of implementing a manual form of OBSCIS. This week-long, on-site review of the existing Guam system resulted in a report including a records management system flow diagram, and the necessary forms to be utilized.

In 1978-79, the Basic OBSCIS Demonstration Project provided a mechanism whereby states that desired to use Basic OBSCIS could receive technical assistance for system implementation at no cost. This approach was continued under the present CMIS program and was utilized by the states of Iowa, South Dakota, Utah and Alaska.

Of particular importance to Alaska was the assistance provided the Alaska Justice Information System (AJIS) users group committee which assisted in the redesign of an AJIS model system plan to include the capability of supporting OBSCIS and the Prosecutor's Management Information System (PROMIS).

In Iowa, the Division of Adult Corrections requested assistance regarding enhancements to their OBSCIS system and an orientation to the use and function of OBSCIS for the Data Processing Unit. The objective of this technical assistance was to provide a set of general recommendations addressing the process of OBSCIS development, as opposed to individual technical aspects such as hardware or software concerns.

At the request of the South Dakota Board of Charities and Corrections, SEARCH monitored the OBSCIS projects' software implementation efforts. CMIS staff assessed operation of OBSCIS software, together with South Dakota's efforts at converting existing manual records.

The Utah Department of Corrections was given assistance to expand their Basic OBSCIS design, acquired from Connecticut, to include a probation module.

In addition, the Idaho Department of Corrections was provided on-site assistance in transferring the OBSCIS software from Kansas.

D. Exchange of Information

Requests for CMIS literature was often requested by states to support information system developments. Such documentation included contact lists, brochures, conceptual models, technical reports and software documentation.

During the project period CMIS newsletters were published as part of the SEARCH quarterly publication, Interface. This periodical, sent to over 3,000 practitioners, has been used to introduce the CMIS concept and provide updates on CMIS activities. A CMIS National

Contact List was published and distributed throughout the country with an annual update also being distributed. This directory is compiled for the convenience of people involved in the planning, development, or enhancement of corrections information systems. It lists contacts for every state department of corrections, appropriate federal agencies, and national reporting bodies. This directory outlines computer hardware and software, staffing, brief system description and individual contacts for each state. Also, a CMIS brochure was developed and published describing in detail each of the eight systems comprising the CMIS model.

Conclusion

The CMIS Phase I project has continued to provide a wealth of technical expertise, software developments and invaluable literature to corrections departments wishing to design, expand, or install their information systems. A brief summary of these accomplishments has been described herein.

The ultimate goal of CMIS, Phase I, was to develop a system that would provide corrections administrators with complete information for decision affecting both offenders and departmental resources. This was accomplished - through successful consolidation of OBSCIS and SCRMS into a comprehensive corrections management information system. With CMIS, every vital piece of corrections information is packaged in one complete information system model. States now have access to necessary tools; conceptual models, applications designs, data dictionaries, implementation plans and some software packages for developing a complete corrections information system.

END