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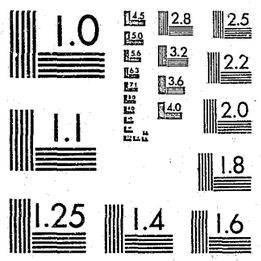

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MARYLAND CRIMINAL JUSTICE COORDINATING COUNCIL

83-1 • FEBRUARY 1983

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS CENTER BULLETIN

MARYLAND CRIMINAL JUSTICE DATA

NCJRS
FEB 22 1985
ACQUISITIONS

Introduction

Justice statistics provide valuable tools for understanding and measuring criminal justice activities. Criminal justice decision-makers, practitioners, legislators, members of the judiciary, academicians, and the general public frequently seek accurate information about the system's operation. Of particular interest is the application of statistics to describe the processing of adult individuals from arrest through release. Comprehensive, systemwide data are necessary for criminal justice officials to determine the effectiveness and efficiency of their policies and procedures. Yet, there are many factors that impede the assembly and interpretation of these statistics.

This *Bulletin* provides a summary of systemwide justice data in Maryland. The objectives of this presentation are:

- To offer an overview of the structure of the criminal justice system,
- To emphasize the complexities and difficulties of deriving systemwide criminal justice statistics, and
- To provide an update on the development of major justice information systems throughout Maryland.

Structure of the Maryland Criminal Justice System

Maryland's criminal justice system is a complex network of public agencies that operate within state, county, and municipal governments. These law enforcement, court, and correctional agencies operate under the authority of all three branches of government: the legislature defines criminal laws; the judiciary interprets these laws; the executive branch administers law enforcement, juvenile, and criminal justice agencies. By constitutional design, therefore, the structure of the criminal justice system in Maryland promotes separation of powers between each of the justice components while providing the checks and balances afforded under a constitutional system.

Each component of the criminal justice system operates under an autonomous set of policies and procedures governed by Maryland's legislative, judicial, and executive branches, as well as by the United States and Maryland constitutions, administrative guidelines, and regulations. Despite their independence and autonomy, all components depend on the cooperation of other agencies in order to operate effectively and efficiently. The arrest policies and practices of law enforcement agencies directly affect the operations of the State's Attorneys' offices, which, in turn, affect court and post-conviction activities. Thus, planning, coordination, and interaction among state and local agencies are essential for operating and maintaining an effective criminal justice system.

Justice Information Systems in Maryland

Because comprehensive justice statistics are key elements in furthering coordination, criminal justice officials in Maryland have stressed the importance of developing information systems that reflect all justice processing activities. Currently, there are two types of data bases that may be used to describe the criminal justice system on a statewide level:

- Agency-specific, aggregate data systems, which, taken together, provide statewide crime information, and
- The statewide Criminal Justice Information System (CJIS).

The two types of information vary significantly in their units of analysis. The aggregate data systems provide gross processing figures, such as the total number of arrests reported in a particular time period, but generally can not be used to ascertain information about individual crime incidents or defendants. CJIS, on the other hand, is a data base that is designed to provide data about individuals.

An example might be useful to clarify this distinction. Suppose that aggregate arrest data indicated that during a particular year there were 150,000 arrests and the aggregate court data for that same period reflected that there were 30,000 convictions. Reviewing this information, a person might immediately assume that 20 percent of the year's arrests resulted in conviction. However, that assumption would be erroneous since the aggregate arrest and court figures do not reflect information about the same groups of people, and therefore cannot provide a precise estimate of the conviction rate. Because of processing delays, some of any year's convictions are for arrests that were made during previous years. Consequently, the proportion of persons who are both arrested and convicted in the same year is actually higher or lower than the proportion obtained using figures from the two aggregate data bases.

Individual-level data such as those CJIS will provide are the only data that can be sorted, or, in other words, disaggregated, to pinpoint the actual conviction rate for

a given time period, offense, racial group, etc. Also, individual-level data can answer a host of questions about case processing. For instance, law enforcement personnel may want to know how many of the year's arrests resulted in convictions for charges that were reduced in number or seriousness. They may also wish to identify those factors that increased the likelihood of conviction, such as the availability of witnesses. Data that are based on information about individual defendants can provide answers to these and other questions and can also provide detailed case processing information for management purposes.

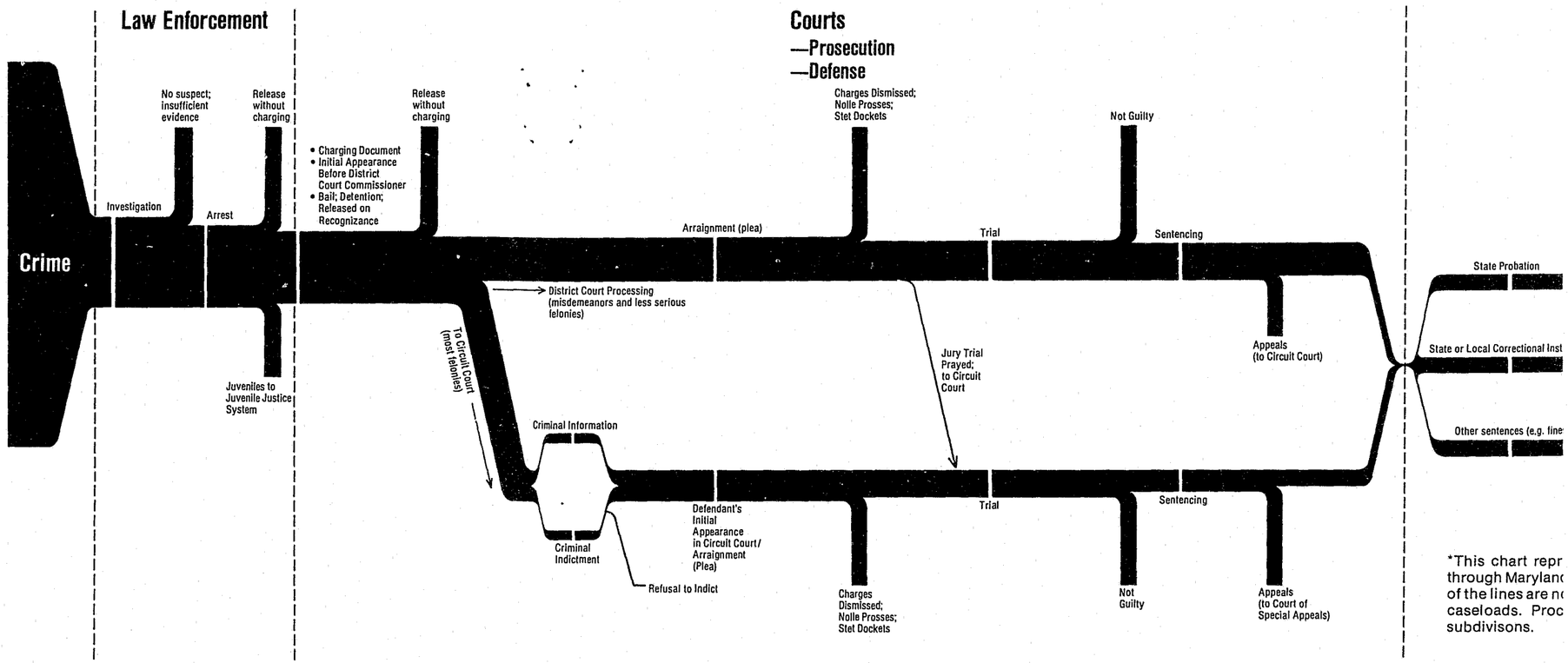
The accompanying flow diagram outlines the criminal justice system in Maryland and indicates the various sources of aggregate and CJIS information in the state. At present, more can be said about Maryland's aggregate data bases than about the CJIS data base, since the latter is only now becoming operational. However, it remains important to recognize not only the current status of criminal justice data, but the future status as well. Therefore, both types of data bases will be discussed here.

Agency-specific, Aggregate Data Systems.[1] Ideally, a systemwide analysis of criminal justice processing in Maryland should provide valuable information regarding the impact of specific agency policies and procedures on the total system. To conduct such an analysis, accurate and complete data reflecting all justice processing events are required. Unfortunately, the complexities of the criminal justice system and the unique needs of individual agencies place a number of constraints on the use of aggre-

(Continued on page 4)

[1]The processing statistics discussed in this *Bulletin* represent those most commonly used to describe the criminal justice system on a statewide basis. There are a number of other kinds of processing statistics maintained by state and local criminal justice agencies that are not included in this report.

OVERVIEW OF MARYLAND'S CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM*



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STATEWIDE CRIMINAL JUSTICE DATA SOURCES AND TYPES OF PROCESSING STATISTICS

Agency Specific Aggregate Data*

LAW ENFORCEMENT DATA

—Maryland State Police Uniform Crime Reports
- Part I Offenses Reported
- Arrests by Crime Type

DISTRICT COURT DATA

—District Court of Maryland, Monthly Criminal Reports
- Filings by defendant
- Types of dispositions by defendant

CIRCUIT COURT DATA

—Administrative Office of the Court's Statistical Analysis Reports
- Filings by inciden
- Terminations by incident

DIVISION OF CORRECTION (DOC) DATA

—DOC's Intake Breakdown Reports

—DOC's Daily Population and Capacities Report
- DOC Intakes
- DOC Departures

DIVISION OF PAROLE AND PROBATION DATA

—Intake, Discharge and Current Populations Automated Report of the Division of Parole and Probation
- Case Intakes
- Case Discharges

*Data sources and types of processing statistics listed here are a selective set of criminal justice processing data for the State. There are a number of other data sources and processing statistics used by criminal justice officials that are not included in this summary.

Automated Criminal Justice Information System (CJIS)

LAW ENFORCEMENT DATA

—Identification Index

DISTRICT COURT DATA

—District Court Data Tapes

CIRCUIT COURT DATA

—Circuit Court Data Tapes

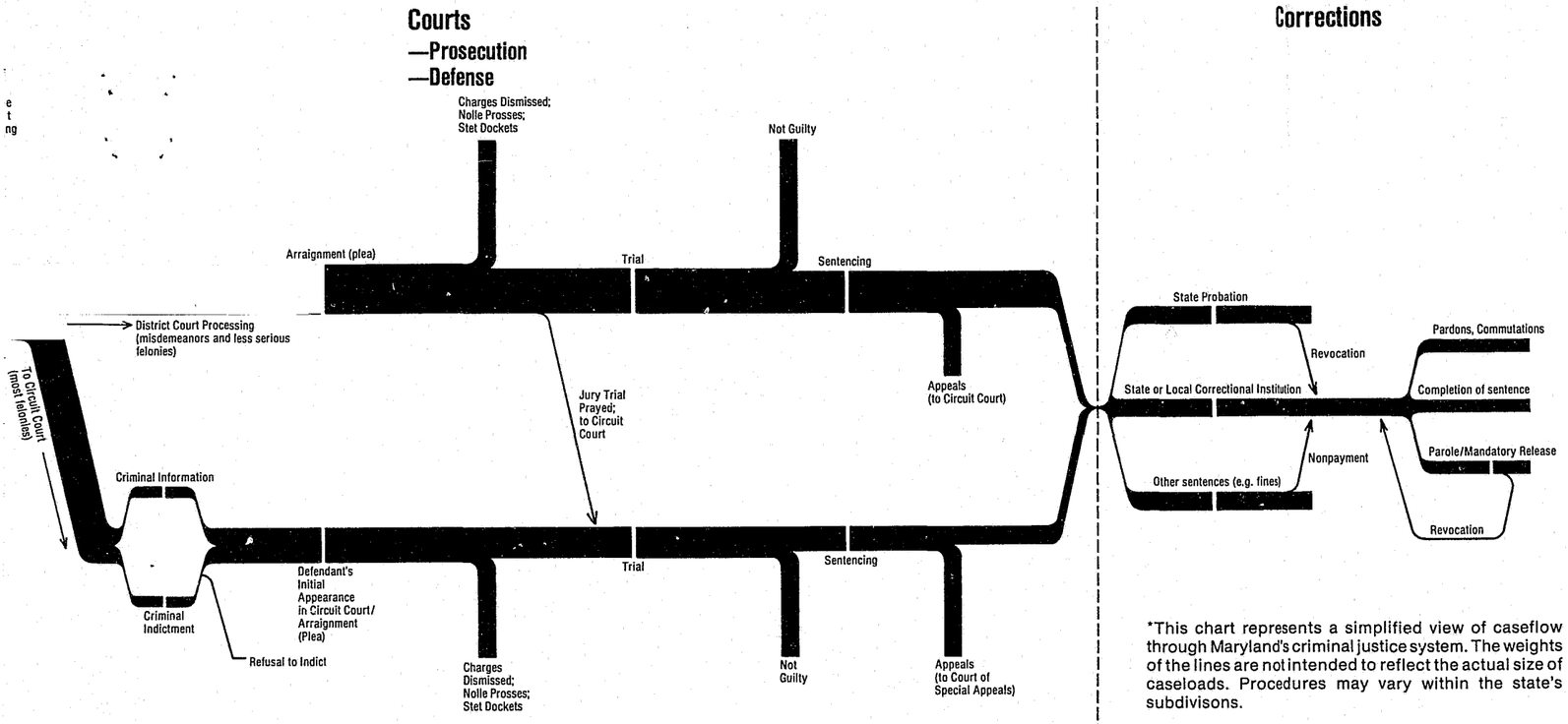
DIVISION OF CORRECTION (DOC) DATA

—OBSCIS I

DIVISION OF PAROLE AND PROBATION DATA

—OBSCIS II

JUSTICE SYSTEM*



*This chart represents a simplified view of caseflow through Maryland's criminal justice system. The weights of the lines are not intended to reflect the actual size of caseloads. Procedures may vary within the state's subdivisons.

STATEWIDE CRIMINAL JUSTICE DATA SOURCES AND TYPES OF PROCESSING STATISTICS

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- DOC Departures

DIVISION OF PAROLE AND PROBATION DATA

—Intake, Discharge and Current Populations Automated Report of the Division of Parole and Probation

- Case Intakes
- Case Discharges

LOCAL JAIL DATA

—Maryland Commission on Correctional Standards Summary of Monthly Jail Statistics

- Jail Intakes for those awaiting trial and those sentenced to jails
- Jail releases for those awaiting trial and those sentenced to jail

Automated Criminal Justice Information System (CJIS)

CIRCUIT COURT DATA

—Circuit Court Data Tapes

DIVISION OF CORRECTION (DOC) DATA

—OBSCIS I

DIVISION OF PAROLE AND PROBATION DATA

—OBSCIS II

LOCAL JAIL DATA

—Data Tapes

—Online Input

—Manual Reports

gate statistics as tools for describing the entire criminal justice process.

Every state and local agency responsible for the processing of individuals suspected of, charged with, and/or convicted of a crime maintains statistical records. These data reflect each agency's unique functions and activities.

Law enforcement agencies maintain offense and arrest statistics. Offense data only reflect the number of Part I crimes[2] reported to law enforcement agencies by victims, witnesses, and law enforcement personnel. Arrest data represent the number of individuals arrested by law enforcement agencies for every crime reported in the state.

The District Court of Maryland maintains records on individuals processed through that court. These records reflect the number of defendants whose cases are filed in the District Court and the number of defendants disposed, either in the District Court or as referrals to the Circuit Court.

Information on Circuit Court activities include the number of case filings and terminations. For the most part, these data are incident-based and represent all charges filed for each criminal incident.

Jail processing statistics represent the number of individuals entering and exiting local jails. These data include intakes and releases for those awaiting trial and the count of those serving local jail sentences.

Division of Correction (DOC) statistics reflect the number of individuals committed to and released from state correctional institutions.

Finally, the Division of Parole and Probation's data reflect the number of parole and probation case intakes and discharges.[3]

The data serve primarily as management tools for agency administrators who, with the constant variation in crime trends, must continuously review and re-evaluate the daily operations of their agencies. The information is used for altering and improving resource allocation, policy assessment, and planning.

These data are also linked, in a limited fashion, to describe general processing trends in the state's criminal justice system and to make system projections about such things as the size of future prison populations. However, as noted earlier, statistics from one agency are not always comparable to the statistics of another. For example, court data reflect the processing of defendants or incidents; parole and probation statistics reflect case processing. In addition, because it may take months between the identification and apprehension of an offender and the completion of a trial and sentencing, each agency's data base includes a mix of defendants who are different from those in the other data bases.

Table 1 summarizes information for Fiscal Year (FY) 1982 for each criminal justice agency in Maryland. This statistical summary illustrates how some of the most commonly used justice statistics can be attached to various processing stages in order to describe the total system. Administrators and planners can then use these statistics to interpret the relationship between specific agency caseloads and the entire criminal justice system.

The table also highlights two shortcomings of using aggregate data to describe the criminal justice system statewide. First, agencies do not maintain data at comparable levels of specificity. Although some of the state's subdi-

[2]Part I crimes include murder, manslaughter by negligence, non-negligent manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery, aggravated assaults, burglary, larceny, and motor vehicle theft as determined by the Uniform Crime Reports published by the FBI. In the future, arson will be included in the offense data.

[3]A processed case may differ from a processed individual because an individual may have more than one case.

TABLE 1: FY82 SUMMARY OF MARYLAND'S CRIMINAL JUSTICE PROCESSING STATISTICS

CRIME TYPE	REPORTED OFFENSES	ADULT ARRESTEES	DISTRICT COURT FINAL DISPOSITIONS	CIRCUIT COURT TERMINATIONS	JAIL INTAKES	PROBATION INTAKES*	DOC INTAKES*	PAROLE INTAKES*
MURDER	411	414	**	**	**	16	263	22
FORCIBLE RAPE	1,688	770	**	**	**	28	162	28
ROBBERY	16,342	3,189	**	**	**	351	641	385
AGGRAVATED ASSAULT	18,239	4,779	**	**	**	2,735	136	258
BREAKING AND ENTERING	64,750	7,150	**	**	**	1,623	852	394
LARCENY	146,465	19,043	**	**	**	5,082	765	370
MOTOR VEHICLE THEFT	17,491	1,669	**	**	**	***	47	***
TOTAL INDEX CRIMES	265,386	37,014	**	**	**	9,835	2,866	1,457
TOTAL NON-INDEX CRIMES	****	125,277	**	**	**	20,190	2,296	1,154
TOTAL CRIMES	****	162,291	117,847	28,923	64,398	30,025	5,162	2,611

*These figures were obtained from automated information and may not match manual figures.

**District Court, Circuit Court, and Local Jail Statistics are not routinely disaggregated by crime type on a statewide basis. These data may be available at the local level.

***Probation and Parole Intake Statistics for motor vehicle theft are included in the larceny category.

****Statistics on Offenses Reported to Law Enforcement are not collected for Non-Index crimes.

visions may maintain systemwide offense-specific information, Maryland's District Court, Circuit Court, and local jails do not routinely disaggregate their data by crime type for statewide presentation. Second, no statewide data are currently available from the State's Attorney's offices. This is true despite the fact that State's Attorneys play a significant role in determining who will be prosecuted, what charges will be filed, and whether to negotiate pleas. Three of the larger subdivisions in the state—Baltimore, Montgomery and Prince George's counties — are implementing an automated Prosecutor's Management Information System (PROMIS). Some subdivisions, such as Baltimore city, maintain other types of manual or automated records that reflect prosecutorial decisionmaking. Yet more remains to be accomplished to provide similar data for statewide analysis.

Maryland's Criminal Justice Information System (CJIS). In addition to the independent aggregate data systems within each justice agency, the state has an automated Criminal Justice Information System (CJIS). Created under Article 27, Sections 742-755 of Maryland's Annotated Code, CJIS was designed to create a central repository for criminal history record information and to require the reporting of accurate, relevant and current information to the central repository by all criminal justice agencies. CJIS consists of five separate but interrelated systems: (1) Identification Index—fingerprint-based identification data maintained by the State Police, (2) the criminal history data in the Arrest and Disposition Reporting system (ADR), (3) the State Police MILES system, (4) the Division of Correction's OBSCIS I, and (5) the Division of Parole and Probation's OBSCIS II.

The ADR component of CJIS is emerging as an offender-based tracking system that will provide information on the processing of individuals from arrest through disposition. The ADR system is a blend of data from the following sources: (1) Identification Index, (2) tapes from District and Circuit Courts, (3) tapes, reports, and transmissions from terminals at the detention facilities, (4) tapes from DOC, and (5) tapes from Parole and Probation.

The CJIS data base includes information from January 1, 1978 to the present. Inquiries about offenses that occurred before that date require manual processing of written files and documents. The system is evolving slowly; OBSCIS II information is only now being tested and integrated into the system. Assuring accurate data linkage through the use of fingerprint information continues to be an issue of major concern that will require constant system monitoring and modification.

There are future plans to interface CJIS with the Circuit Court system in Baltimore City, the District Court systems, and the PROMIS systems mentioned above. This would mean that data would be recorded in CJIS at the same time it is recorded in those systems, thus circumventing the transference of tapes and papers between agencies.

CJIS is currently the only readily available source of systemwide, state processing data that is based on a uniform unit of analysis—the defendant. Consequently, CJIS data are not limited by agency-specific processing definitions (e.g., case versus defendant) and will provide answers to systemwide processing and research questions that agency data cannot.

Although not yet fully operational, the CJIS data base will eventually provide information useful for system planning and research on such topics as processing time lags, plea bargaining, offense-specific sentencing patterns, and recidivism, among others. The data base will also be a useful management tool. For example, with more detailed court processing information provided by CJIS, data about an offender's prior criminal history will be readily available at all decision points in the criminal justice process. Finally, the CJIS data base will be used as a source of research data to describe what happens when charges are dropped, cases are dismissed, and serious offenders are processed. Answers to these and similar questions can serve not only to improve the operation of each agency within the criminal justice system but also to give each agency a better appreciation of its role in the entire system.

Conclusion. The collection and maintenance of accurate and reliable statistics that reflect the processing of individuals from arrest through release is essential for understanding and improving Maryland's criminal justice system. This has been recognized by the Governor, the General Assembly, and the Judiciary and over the past decade, many improvements have been made in the state's information systems.

Currently, planning decisions are generally made using aggregate data, which provide information about the activities of individual agencies but do not afford the most accurate and thorough analyses of state and systemwide criminal justice processing. Efforts to improve the state's automated information system are continuing, however. In the future, decision-makers will be able to make planning and processing decisions on the basis of information expressly designed to represent systemwide activities and to share information that is generated from a uniform data base.

Maryland Criminal Justice Coordinating Council

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