



**ILLINOIS
CRIMINAL JUSTICE
INFORMATION AUTHORITY**

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Candice M. Kane
Executive Director

FROM: Gerard F. Ramker, Ph.D.
Associate Director, Research and Analysis Unit

DATE: February 28, 2001

RE: Executive Director's Briefing #10 - March 2, 2001 Authority Meeting

This memorandum highlights the work performed by Research and Analysis Unit staff since the Authority's last quarterly meeting:

Publications

- With the assistance of the Office of Public Information and the Office of Administrative Services, R & A staff published six (6) reports since the last Authority meeting, including:
 1. *Evaluation Report: An Implementation Evaluation of the Specialized Sex Offender Probation Projects in Coles, Madison and Vermilion Counties* (December 2000).
 2. *Evaluation Report: Community Policing in Chicago- Year Seven, An Interim Report* (November 2000).
 3. *Evaluation Report: Evaluation of the Kankakee Metropolitan Enforcement Group* (December 2000).
 4. *Trends and Issues Update: Trends in Illinois Crime: 1995-1999* (December 2000).
 5. *On Good Authority: Supervising Sex Offenders in Coles, Madison and Vermilion Counties* (December 2000).
 6. *On Good Authority: Specialized Unit Takes a Problem-Solving Approach to Crime in Kankakee* (December 2000).

Web Site Development

- Staff also contributes toward the continued development of the Authority's Web site (www.icjia.state.il.us):
 - We continue to expand the criminal justice data and information available the site. Workplans are under development to add a host of court-related county data to the site.

- We continue to gather user satisfaction information and other feedback "on-line."
- We continue to upload publications to the site and have perfected our on-line ordering forms and protocols.
- We continue to average about 500 daily user sessions.
- We have about 500 registered users of the Authority's email program that automatically alerts Web site visitors to new information added to the site.
- Staff also continue to contribute to the ongoing development of the Authority's secure intranet site (www2.icjia.state.il.us) as well.
 - We have instituted an on-line periodical/journal review and routing feature, which allows staff to examine the contents of over six (6) dozen paper and electronic periodicals, journals, newsletters and other publications.
 - Agency forms, policies, rules, schedules and other materials have begun to be uploaded to the site.
 - We have added web site and information request handling monthly reports to the site.

Web Site Traffic Report

	LAST QUARTER 10/1-12/31/2000	PREVIOUS QUARTER 7/1-9/30/2000
Hits for Home Page	24,396	25,486
Number of User Sessions	37,709	36,891
Average Hits Per Day	5,521	9,849
Average User Sessions Per Day	409	438
Average Use Session Length (minutes)	23	20
Number of Unique Visitors	12,227	7,173*
Number of Visitors Who Visited Once	9,367	5,583*
Number of Visitors Who Visited More Than Once	2,860	1,509*

*Includes only a two-month period (Aug and Sep 2000).

Planning and Research Committee

- The Planning and Research Committee met on January 30, 2001. Staff reviewed the finalized draft *Criminal Justice Plan for the State of Illinois* and a *preliminary Action Plan* for the Authority. A joint meeting with the Budget Committee is being planned for March 2001.

State Criminal Justice Plan

Staff finalized the first State Criminal Justice Plan. It will be considered for adoption at the Authority's March 2, 2001 meeting. Work continues on the research & evaluation portion of the Authority's Action Plan.

Information Request Handling

ITEM	LAST QUARTER 10/1-12/31/2000	PREVIOUS QUARTER 7/1-9/30/2000
Information requests handled:	372	354
Monthly average number of requests:	124	118
Percent of requests completed within two (2) days:	81%	86%
Geographic Origin of requesters:		
Chicago metropolitan area	27%	26%
Other region of Illinois	39%	44%
U.S. other than Illinois	20%	21%
Outside the U.S.	4%	3%
Unknown	10%	6%
Type of requester:		
Government agency	31%	36%
Private citizen	22%	26%
Private agency	17%	19%
Researcher	12%	8%
Student	11%	6%
Media	3%	2%
Legislators	1%	<1%
Inmates	2%	2%
Unknown	-	-
Method of request:		
Telephone/fax	48%	52%
Mail	4%	7%
Email/Internet	24%	25%
In-person	5%	2%
ICJIA Web site	19%	14%
Publications disseminated:		
Mailed in response to written requests	19,949	21,957
Mailed in response to Web site requests	7,301	158
Downloaded from Web Site	9,687	6,201
Total	36,937	28,316
Persons registered for CJ Dispatch (Email notification of updates)	549	512

Briefings/Presentations

- Staff made presentations and/or attended at:
 - juvenile justice county council meetings in McHenry, Winnebago and Ford counties;

- Motor Vehicle Theft Prevention and Grant Review Committee meetings;
- Domestic Violence evaluation project advisory committee meeting with evaluators Scott Decker and Tim Bynum;
- National Criminal Justice Association winter meeting;
- Information Systems Committee and integration workgroup meetings;
- Cook County Girls Link program development committee;
- Illinois Juvenile Justice Forum and Restorative Justice Committee meetings;
- Great Cities Forum sponsored by the University of Illinois at Chicago;
- Juvenile Justice Summit sponsored by the Juvenile Justice Initiative;
- Illinois Association of Chiefs of Police winter meeting;
- Loyola's Center for the Advancement of Research, Training & Education conference on multisystemic therapy for adolescent offenders; and
- U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention annual meeting.

Institutional Review Board

- Staff presented two applications for review by the Institutional Review Board in connection with:
 - A study of disproportionate minority representation in the Cook County juvenile justice system; and
 - A study of adult and juvenile probation outcomes in collaboration with the Department of Corrections, Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts and Loyol University.

These applications were approved with certain revisions to forms and protocols.

- Staff also reviewed the status of the three human subject research projects previously dealt with by the IRB. This will likely take place in January.

Grant Awards/Applications

- Staff continues to work on the next State Justice Statistics (SJS) program grant application to the U.S. Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Statistics, which will

provide further support for our continuing effort to analyze and demonstrate the utility of incident-based crime data.

- Staff developed an initial draft of the ADAA-funded CHRI audit grant for review by the Federal and State Grants Unit.
- Staff developed an initial draft of the ADAA-funded Evaluation Program grant and the Research and Evaluation Action Plan which is a component of the grant.
- Staff is discussing potential grant opportunities with the Justice Research and Statistics Association and may submit joint applications to the U.S. Justice Department in three (3) areas:
 - disproportionate minority representation in the juvenile justice system;
 - incident-based homicide data study; and
 - geo-archive training for local law enforcement.

Other Projects/Activities

- **CHRI Audit** - Data collection, coding and entry on the current audit continue. Staff have redesigned the methodology slightly to test livescan submissions and other electronic reporting. A software problem caused a significant loss of data which is being re-collected. The problem was due to the use of two different versions of the SPSS program. The problem has been rectified, but the net result is that the targeted completion date for the audit has been moved back to the Fall of 2001. Some local data collection continues for the accuracy & completeness portion of the audit. A number of on-site data collection visits have taken place and a number of agencies have submitted copies of source documents. Staff also continues to interview Bureau of Identification staff as part of the ongoing effort to document data handling and processing procedures and policies.
- **Chicago Women's Health Risk Study** - staff held a special forum to present and discuss key findings of this research. The forum was well-attended and we have received much positive feedback. We continue to plan further dissemination of the results of this important study.
- **Evaluation of the Cook County State's Attorney's Victim-Witness Program:** a draft of the final report has been forwarded to the Cook County State's Attorney's Office for review and comment. We have also requested a no-cost extension of the NIJ grant to allow for the use of funds for printing and distribution of the final report.
- **Gun Crime Study:** this is the BJS-funded project being carried out in partnership with the Illinois State Police, which we hope will establish on-line access to criminal history record information for research purposes. Due to the complexity of the new CHRI database design, ISP found they could not develop queries that would be successful in extracting the data we needed from the "live" database. The subsequent

solution discussed was to procure data warehousing software and hardware which would accomplish the same type of functionalities. Unfortunately, due to cost and time considerations, this potential data extraction solution is not feasible at this time. At the present time, we are seeking a raw data "dump" from CHRI database tables to populate a SQL database application we have already developed in-house. Together with ISP we developed a "request for proposals" for a consultant to write the data extract programs for this purpose. Unfortunately, only one response was received and the cost submitted was deemed unreasonable. We are now seeking consultant assistance to perform an initial assessment of the complexity and feasibility of the data extraction task. In the meantime, we are also moving forward with plans for an alternative data collection strategy using Illinois Department of Corrections data. The BJS grant project is scheduled to conclude on June 30, 2001.

- **The study of MEG Unit and Local Police Department Drug Targets:** this is a BJA funded study being carried out in partnership with Loyola University's Department of Criminal Justice. Data collection and coding continues for information from task forces. Comprehensive statistical profiles for each unit presenting the context of surrounding agencies have been developed. Criminal history profiles of task force arrestees are currently being developed. The project was recently extended through 2001.
- Staff continued work on research projects funded by the Illinois Juvenile Justice Commission: (1) **an evaluation of the impact of the Juvenile Justice Reform Act;** and (2) **a study on minority over-representation in the Cook County juvenile justice system.** Surveys and other data collection instruments have been prepared and are being implemented. Case studies are underway and preliminary data collection plans and protocols have been established.
- **Needs Assessment Guidebook and Evaluation Manual for Juvenile Justice County Councils project** - Through a grant awarded by the Justice Research and Statistics Association (JRSA) in connection with the U.S. Department of Justice Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, R & A staff are developing a needs assessment guidebook and evaluation manual for use by local juvenile justice county councils. The needs assessment guidebook will assist county councils in developing an inventory of data indicators, including juvenile risk factor data, to determine areas of need and provide information and guidance on how to assess and evaluate the needs and resources of local juvenile justice systems. The evaluation manual will describe the types of accountability-based and competency skill building programs that are consistent with a balanced and restorative justice philosophy as is encouraged by the new juvenile court act (PA90-590) and provide direction on how to evaluate and measure the effectiveness of local juvenile justice programs. Staff will meet with three partnering counties and the Illinois Juvenile Justice Commission to gain feedback in the development of the materials. The guidebook and manual will be made available statewide, with expected distribution later this year.

- **Profiles of Metropolitan Enforcement Groups and Drug Task Forces project** - Through activities under the Drug and Violent Crime Evaluation Program, R & A staff have amassed a large amount of data measuring the extent and nature of drug and violent crime in Illinois and the impact these crimes have had on the criminal justice system. In addition, as part of its monitoring and evaluation efforts, the Authority also requires funded programs to submit monthly data reports describing their activities and accomplishments. To put this information into the hands of Metropolitan Enforcement Group and Drug Task Force directors and policy board members, staff periodically develop comprehensive profiles for each MEG and Task Force. The profile is intended to provide a general overview of the drug and violent crime problem in the jurisdictions covered by Illinois' MEGs and Task Forces, and the response to these problems by the units. The updated profiles will be completed later this month.
- **Study of Probation Outcomes:** Staff finalized plans with officials from Loyola University, Treatment Alternatives for Safe Communities, Department of Human Service Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse and the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts, for our special study of all probationers (adult & juvenile) discharged in the state during a selected time period in 2000. Data collection was completed. The study is examining performance while on probation including criminal justice contacts, treatment participation, and other interesting information.
- **Henry/Mercer Counties Drug Task Force Evaluation** - Work continues on this project, which is part of R & A staff's ongoing efforts to assess the impact of multi-jurisdictional drug task forces and Metropolitan Enforcement Group (MEG) Units (funded by the Authority). With respect to the limited life span of the Henry/Mercer Task Force (1991-1996) we are evaluating its effects on drug crime and arrest activity both during its existence, as well as how its termination affected these measures within the geographic region that it covered. We are attempting to study the impact of the unit on the types of drug arrests made, the numbers of persons arrested who were subsequently convicted and committed to the Department of Corrections, and the number of offenders referred for drug treatment. The project will be completed later this year.
- Staff met with officials of Abt & Associates who are conducting a national assessment of multi-jurisdictional drug task forces on behalf of the U.S. Department of Justice. They have selected Illinois as a "pilot state" for the development and testing of a national data collection instrument to support evaluation. Staff responded to their fact-finding inquiries, arranged for site visits to Illinois drug enforcement units, and have had follow-up meetings to brief Abt on our research and evaluation efforts in this area. On February 1 and 2, Abt held focus group meetings involving Illinois law enforcement officials and MEG/TF members to discuss and test data collection strategies. FSGU and R&A staff helped arrange and facilitate these meetings and participated in the sessions. Abt will forward a progress report on the national project in the Spring.

- Staff continue to provide technical assistance to the Governor's Capital Punishment Commission in: (1) the design and conduct of a special analysis of capital cases in Illinois. Staff will help the commission's researchers link Chicago Homicide Dataset data to information maintained by the Illinois Department of Corrections; and (2) the design of a proposal to study the cost of capital litigation in Illinois.
- Staff is meeting with officials of Loyola University, TASC and the John Howard Association to discuss a proposal for a comprehensive study of criminal sentencing in Illinois.

Staff Development/Training

- Staff have initiated a more formal staff development program which, at present, includes:
 - A hands-on course on research methods and statistics is being held every other week following a course syllabus and involving practical exercises;
 - Quality assurance assessment practices are being developed pertaining to information request handling.
 - Staff met with IDOC and Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts officials to discuss areas of mutual research interest. Plans are being made to have similar meetings with research staff from the Illinois State Police, Attorney General's Office and the Chicago Police Department.

Staff/Personnel Changes

- Departures: None
- Arrivals: Susan Williams, research analyst, CHRI Audit Center
- Transfers: Karen McCanna to CHRI Audit Center
David Katz to Criminal Justice Information Clearinghouse
Alissa Clark to Planning & Program Evaluation Center

Please let me know if you would like further information on any of these activities.

Cc: Executive Staff
 Becky Block
 Mark Myrent
 Tracy Hahn
 Karen Levy McCanna

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