

**Final Progress Report –
Criminal Justice System Informatics Analysis
Grant # 2007- BJ-CX-KO12
Bureau of Justice Statistics**

The Georgia Statistical Analysis Center (SAC) of the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council was awarded Grant #2007-BJ-CX-K012 from the Bureau of Justice Statistics. This funding was used to support the SAC as it continues to fulfill the vision of quality criminal justice research, programs, and services for the State of Georgia. In March 2007, SAC Advisory Committee chose **SJS THEME (4) Increased Web Access to Data** for that year's application for funding. This is the final progress report on this part of this project, which has continued through the 2008 Project Year.

The 1992 Executive Order regarding the establishment of the Georgia SAC makes the following declarations: "the Governor has determined a need to ensure the coordinated and systemic analysis, interpretation, and use of criminal justice statistics by an independently created and non-affected agency of state government." The CJCC subsequently was designated as the Georgia Statistical Analysis Center. The CJCC's Strategic Plan adopted in May 2006 reiterated the importance of this function by identifying the need to (1) conduct objective analysis to meet the critical planning needs of system wide policy issues; (2) develop reports, publications, and documents, which will be disseminated with the purpose of informing and educating both the criminal justice community and the public of relevant issues; and (3) work closely with agencies throughout the State of Georgia in serving as a clearinghouse for research-based information and analysis. The 2007 SJS grant supports the further development of these functions.

The activities related to this project included an internal review of business processes and an upgrade of our web-site, including training for a member of the Planning, Research, and Evaluation staff, Ms. Nichole Eubanks. Ms. Eubanks attended a week-long training in Vermont on managing and updating our new Ektronics™ based website. The internal review of business processes was done in support of acquiring new software to manage our grants, victims' compensation, fiscal, and research & reporting functions. CJCC is in transition to conduct more agency business on the web. Designing part of the site to give the public and policy-makers access to criminal justice statistics and summary data is a part of this larger agency enterprise.

The primary component of the first phase of our effort to become a web-based information clearinghouse for criminal justice system information, including agency statistics, program evaluations, and current research projects, was to conduct an environmental scan of the statistical information, on-going statistical analyses, and statistical reporting of the major state-level criminal justice system agencies. As discussions with our contractor progressed, CJCC also asked the contractor to explore issues related to how this information was used and how it was stored and manipulated electronically.

CJCC staff finalized a contract with Applied Research Services, Inc (ARS) in February 2008 to conduct the expanded criminal justice information analysis originally described as an environmental scan. CJCC also continued to conduct activities related to this project using staff resources. These activities included the following: staffing bi-monthly meetings of an expanded Research and Evaluation Advisory Group, conducting an analysis of other state statistical analysis centers and their activities related to collecting and disseminating criminal justice system statistical information and research.

Criminal Justice System Informatics Analysis

Applied Research Services, Inc., under contract with the CJCC, completed a descriptive analysis and report on the key criminal justice databases in Georgia. They provided detailed information on each data collection system. The report is divided into sections by agency. Each of the sections begins with a narrative highlighting key information about each database, including information about key indicators collected in each database, current data reporting practices, access agreements required for data sharing, key data sharing arrangements, barriers to data exchange, and ways in which the data are used both internally and by external agencies. Following the narrative are detailed data tables; when available, these tables outline the specific data fields or record layouts.

The following agencies provided detailed information about their data systems for inclusion in this report: Georgia Department of Corrections, Georgia Department of Community Affairs, Administrative Office of the Courts of Georgia; Georgia Bureau of Investigations; Criminal Justice Coordinating Council; and the Georgia Board of Pardons and Paroles.

The information about each agency database was gathered through direct communications with representatives in each state agency. The majority of the information in the report was collected through detailed telephone interviews and in-person meetings with agency personnel. Supplemental information was collected via email communication. A summary of the narrative information is presented below.

Agency Specific Databases – State Law Enforcement

The Georgia Bureau of Investigation's Georgia Crime Information Center is the primary criminal justice repository in the state. They host the Computerized Criminal History (CCH) database, the Uniform Crime Reports (UCR) database, the Sex Offender Registry, and the Protective Order Registry. While the public has access to information in these databases, access to raw data is not routinely provided to outside agencies.

The ***Computerized Criminal History (CCH) Records database*** contains information on all arrests in the state for which offenders are required under law to be fingerprinted. Data includes all arrest charge (s), date of arrest, arresting agency, disposition, court amendments, as well as offender status from both the Department of Corrections (supervises probationers) and the Georgia State Board of Pardons and Paroles

(supervises parolees). The CCH Records database primarily serves as a source of real-time information for local and state law enforcement agencies, and GCIC's primary concern has been assuring the completeness and accuracy of the data in the database. External agencies routinely access the CCH Records database, especially the Department of Corrections (DOC) and the Georgia State Board of Pardons and Paroles (SBPP). Other agencies that request data include policymakers, researchers, and lobbyists. The general public can search the database for specific information on a particular felon via a special website for a fee. This website is used by employers and others seeking to know if someone has a criminal record and if so, for what types of offenses. Georgia law regulates access to CCH data. The GCIC does not employ crime analysts to examine the data and run routine statistical reports.

The data in the CCH Report database is a rich source of information for tracking criminal justice system indicators. Some of these potential indicators include: specific crimes or groupings of crimes by state or geographic location (as defined by agency ORI), as can conviction and disposition data on any offense listed in the database. In addition, different groups of offenders can be compared on their demographic characteristics, criminal histories, and histories of incarceration and community supervision.

As a part of the JRSA project undertaken simultaneously by CJCC, ARS transferred to CJCC a copy of 20 years of archived CCH data that had been converted by ARS to a SPSS database. ARS conducted a training for CJCC staff on the file structure and data analysis using the files. The data transferred covered the period from the late 1980s through July 2007. In August 2007, GCIC began using a new data platform and revised the architecture of the CCH database. The data is now held in an Oracle-based relational database maintained by the Georgia Technology Authority (GTA). CJCC has not finalized arrangements to work with ARS and GCIC to develop new data access and extraction protocols, but that work is planned for this coming year's application.

The **Uniform Crime Reports** database contains data on Part I and Part II crimes as defined by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). Local law enforcement agencies file monthly data reports. The data is typically transmitted electronically, but hate crime data arrives to the GCIC on paper forms. In addition to reporting this data through the UCR database, the information is also transmitted to the FBI. The GCIC only serves as the central depository of UCR data and is published as summary tables on their website and the GBI Agency Annual Report. This is the extent of GBI's use of the UCR data. Interested agencies and individuals can access the UCR data from the GBI's website. The data is used by a wide variety of external agencies, including city and county officials, policymakers, researchers, realtors, and others. Other purposes for which the data is accessed include evaluating crime reduction strategies, research purposes, and media purposes. The UCR data is also used by the Department of Justice to determine eligibility for a variety of federal grants made directly to local entities, including the Byrne JAG Local Grants, the COPS grants, Weed and Seed grants, and the PSN grants.

The UCR database could provide criminal justice system indicators for both state and local jurisdictions, such as tracking increases/decreases in different Part I and Part II crimes. However, a 2003 study conducted by ARS compared arrests using Georgia's UCR and computerized criminal history (CCH) records data indicated that while the UCR data reflected general arrest trends, it did not reflect the exact magnitude of arrest activity in Georgia (Speir, et al., 2003 *Georgia UCR Arrest Statistics: Assessing Accuracy Using Computerized Criminal History Records*). The FBI "counting rules" used to compute the administrative report referred to as the UCR (counting crimes and arrests by jurisdiction and state) do not translate directly into the same volume of arrest data discernable in the operational CCH data.

Since Georgia does not have a state-level effort to bring local jurisdictions into compliance with NIBRS and collect data on crime incidents, there is a large gap in data on crime in Georgia that is very noticeable in terms of statistical reports produced by other state statistical analysis centers. This will be discussed in more detail below.

The **Sex Offender Registry** contains data on convicted sex offenders that are required under Georgia law to register and keep updated information on their places of residence and employments. When a sex offender is released from prison, the DOC submits an online Georgia Sex Offender Registration Notification Form to the GBI. When offenders from other states enter Georgia, the GBI receives a paper sex offender information form since states submit their own forms, not the Georgia form. GBI staff then enter the data into the registry. GBI's function with the Sex Offender Registry is to provide data to the public. GBI does not analyze the data nor use it for any internal purpose. Since the information is public access through a website, GBI does not track who is accessing the database nor for what purpose the data are being accessed. The DOC and the SBPP access the database to determine whether probationers and parolees are in compliance with the reporting requirements that are a condition of their release (keeping the information current in the Sex Offender Registry).

The Sex Offender Registry could provide the following criminal justice system indicators: the number of registered sex offenders in the state, by county, the number of incarcerated registered sex offenders, the number of predatory sex offenders by county, and the number of absconded sex offenders by county.

The **Protective Order Registry** contains data directly obtained from court-ordered protective orders. In Georgia, temporary and permanent protective orders are issued by civil court, not criminal court. The data is entered by the court clerks in the circuits where the protective orders are issued. The GCIC's only function is to forward the protective order data to the National Crime Information system and to maintain the data in an online database accessible to law enforcement and court personnel. The data is not analyzed nor used internally by the GBI. The data is used in criminal investigations and the prosecution and sentencing of offenders. The data in the Protective Order Registry could provide criminal justice system indicators such as the number of active protective orders in the state and by county.

Agency Specific Databases – Courts

The Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) collects data on **Criminal Case Filings** from the Georgia Supreme Court, and all Georgia Superior, State, Juvenile, Probate, Magistrate, and Municipal Courts. The courts provide data to AOC either electronically or by mail. The data is then compiled by the AOC into an annual report which is available to the public through their website. The AOC also reports the data directly to the Judicial Council of Georgia. No information was forthcoming from AOC about external users of their data. The data collected by the AOC could provide the following criminal justice system indicators: caseload by state or judicial circuit, by type of court, volume of felony cases filed by state or judicial circuit, volume of misdemeanor cases filed by state or judicial circuit, volume of serious traffic cases filed by state or judicial circuit, and to monitor trends in the juvenile courts such as the number of delinquency cases filed, the number of deprived petitions filed, etc. The AOC data is maintained in an Excel database.

Agency Specific Databases – State and Local Corrections and Community Supervision

The Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) and the Georgia Crime Information Center (GCIC) of the Georgia Bureau of Investigation (GBI) collaborate to produce the monthly Jail Report. The GCIC collects the data each month from county sheriff's departments who by Georgia law maintain all local jails. The raw data collected by GCIC is compiled and faxed to the DCA who pulls the data into Microsoft programs to create the monthly jail report that is posted on their website. Neither GCIC nor DCA use the data internally, they merely coordinate efforts to make the data available to the public. A variety of other agencies use the data, including sheriff's departments, police departments, district attorneys, government agencies, researchers, and jail architects. The data is also used to comply with federal reporting requirements. The Jail Report data could provide criminal justice system indicators at the local level such as state and county jail populations and jail over-crowding.

Individual level data is not available on jail inmates in Georgia. Jail inmates include individuals under arrest and awaiting trial as well as individuals convicted of misdemeanors and sentenced to jail time. Individuals who receive probation from state courts for misdemeanors are supervised by local probation agencies, some of which are units of local county governments and some of which are private agencies under contract with counties. Since these are not units of state government and no state agency collects data from them, information about data relating local probation was not included in the ARS Report.

The Georgia Department of Corrections (DOC) maintains two primary databases. The first is the Offender Tracking Information System (OTIS), while the second is SCRIBE. SCRIBE is a newer program that will contain information on offenders sentenced to prison and probation; SCRIBE will eventually replace OTIS. The OTIS system houses all information going through the penal system of Georgia. All data

collected during the initial inmate classification process is included in OTIS, as is all information collected during prison incarceration (i.e., behavior, programming, facility transfers). OTIS is very complex and detailed and contains hundreds of data fields.

The OTIS data could provide many key criminal justice indicators in Georgia including: number of persons incarcerated in Georgia prisons, number of persons incarcerated for specific offenses, number of persons incarcerated with mental health problems, number of persons incarcerated with substance abuse problems, average number prior incarcerations among imprisoned population, average age of incarcerated offenders, average age of incarcerated offenders for specific offenses, and geographic origin of incarcerated offenders.

DOC uses OTIS data for planning and program evaluation purposes, as well as to prepare several annual and monthly reports containing summary data on the penal system. Many other agencies, including law enforcement, media outlets, researchers, and other state agencies, and individuals request data from OTIS. The other state agency that uses OTIS extensively is the Georgia State Board of Pardons and Paroles (SBPP) described below.

As mentioned above, DOC is in transition from OTIS to SCRIBE. SCRIBE contains information on offenders sentenced to prison and probation. In 2008, data was being entered into both OTIS and SCRIBE. It is expected that SCRIBE will fully replace OTIS in 2009. Archival data from OTIS will not be transferred into SCRIBE, but it will become the place where all new inmate data is housed. SCRIBE data will serve the same purposes for DOC as OTIS data does and will be a primary source to fulfill external requests for data.

DOC and SBPP are collaborating to create a Data Warehouse that will serve to provide access to OTIS, SCRIBE and two of SBPP's databases described in more detail below. This will be an Oracle database that will provide access to authorized users to all of the data in each of the four databases via the internet. An exact roll-out date has not been set but is expected to be in 2009.

Georgia State Board of Pardons and Paroles (SBPP)

Under the division of labor between state criminal justice agencies in Georgia, the DOC manages individuals released from prison who remain on probation, imposed as a part of their original sentence after conviction. The Georgia State Board of Pardons and Paroles manages individuals who receive early release from prison due to reductions in time served due to behavior in prison, mandated early releases, and other mechanisms. It is possible for individuals to be on both probation and parole simultaneously.

The Georgia State Board of Pardons and Paroles (SBPP) houses several databases. The Parole Case Management System and the Investigations system are the main databases containing information of relevance to the criminal justice system. The Parole Case Management System (formerly known as FLOID) is the primary data

system used by SBPP to track the day-to-day activities of parolees. The Case Management System uses some demographic information and personal identifiers from OTIS but most of the information is generated by parole officers during parole supervision. Parole officers enter all case interactions and parolee information into the system where it is updated nightly. The data is used by SBPP to record supervision activities, manage agency processes, track workload, analyze agency policies and practice, and plan to improve agency processes. The DOC Probation Office receives summaries of supervision data on parolees leaving parole and reporting to probation. In addition, data is regularly provided to the Georgia Crime Information Center (GCIC) the agency that maintains the state offender registry, local law enforcement agencies, policy makers, researchers, and the media.

The Parole Case Management System could provide several key criminal justice system indicators, including the number of persons under parole supervision in Georgia and by county, demographic profiles of persons under parole supervision, the percentage of parolees falling into different risk levels, the percentage of parolees employed, the percentage of parolees that test positive for drug use, and the type of parole supervision completions (success versus revocations).

The other major database maintained by the SBPP is the Investigations System (previously called "Barney") that houses the data collected by parole officers and parole investigators to assist the Parole Board in making clemency decisions. Some of the data comes from OTIS, while other information is collected and entered by parole staff from a variety of sources, including police records, local district attorney and prosecution files, as well as interviews with family members, previous employers, and public officials. The final report from the database is placed in the case file for Parole Board Member review before voting. Victim's Services also uses some of the data from the Investigations System. The majority of the data contained in this database is confidential and not released to the public. Most of the data in this database is not criminal justice system data, although analyses of decisions might be of interest to researchers.

Other databases in use or under development at SBPP include the Clemency Online Navigation System (CONS), the Victim Services Database, and the Victim Information Program (VIP System). CONS is still under development but is being designed to link to SCRIBE and to reengineer workflow in the collection of information for the Clemency process. The Victim's Services Database contains data shared between DOC and SBPP, providing a single place for victim information to be entered and maintained. Victim impact statements, notification requests, and address changes are completed online and the data is stored in the existing database. Contact information in this database allows victims to register for offender updates from both DOC and SBPP.

The Victim Information Program (VIP System) is a voice response system that allows victims to call and access information on offenders in DOC, on probation, or on parole. Each victim that registers receives a PIN number which allows them to use the phone system to look up an offender, obtain the status of the offender, and when available, a

tentative parole month, maximum release date, supervision information, and a contact phone number for the supervising officers. The system also provides outbound voice-based notification to victims when an offender's status has changed.'

Agency Specific Databases – Victims' Compensation & Federal Sub-Grant Recipients

The ***Criminal Justice Coordinating Council*** houses two databases that could provide criminal justice system indicator data. One database supports the grants management functions of the Criminal Justice System Improvement Division, while the other database supports the victims' compensation functions of the Victims' Services Division. Both databases exist for internal management purposes; data is reviewed for quality improvement purposes and to provide data on performance management targets. The summary information from both divisions is reported in CJCC's Annual Agency Report, and is provided to the Office of Planning and Budget, other state criminal justice agencies, legislators, and sub-grant recipients. The information is also provided to members of the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council for decision-making purposes.

The Grants Management Information System (GMIS) contains information on all CJCC-issued sub-grant recipients, including detailed information on grantees, budgets, disbursements, and award conditions. The data is entered by CJCC staff and is used for internal management purposes; the database is not accessible to the public. Data in GMIS could provide criminal justice system indicators on distribution of grants by type of program funded, geographic area, and amount of grants disbursed by type of program.

The Claims Management Information System (CMIS) contains information on all victims' applying for and receiving compensation payments from CJCC. The database includes information on the victim, the crime, as well as monies provided for different types of allowable reimbursements. The data comes in from applications and is entered by CJCC staff. The data could provide criminal justice system indicators about the number of victims applying for compensation, by type of claim and by geographic location, as well as the volume and types of benefits provided to victims across the state and by jurisdiction.

Gaps in Criminal Justice System Data Resources in Georgia

In addition to the inventory conducted by ARS, CJCC staff conducted a brief review of other states' statistical analysis centers with a focus on their collection, compilation, and use of criminal justice system data. Five states were identified as potential models for Georgia as it develops its capacity: Tennessee, North Carolina, South Carolina, Alabama, and Florida. Invitations to SAC Directors from these states to come to Georgia for a planning meeting in December 2008 were extended and accepted. However, Jackie Vandercook from Tennessee was unable to come at the last minute. Presentations made by the SAC Directors, materials shared, and subsequent discussions indicated several gaps in criminal justice system data resources in Georgia.

The first gap is to public health information, particularly vital records, hospital discharge, and behavioral health risk surveys, that can shed light on causes of death, hospitalization, and exposure to violence and substance abuse.

The second gap is to information from child and adult protective services which can offer information on child and elder abuse.

The third gap is to information from local law enforcement agencies, specifically any incident-based reporting (IBR), which provides information on crimes reported and investigated by law enforcement. At present, Georgia has the CCH Report database which contains much valuable information on persons arrested and the charges filed, as well as subsequent dispositions and history with corrections, probation, and parole. However, the information contained in incident-based reports on details of the crime, the victim, circumstances of the crime, and other factors, including geographic locations, are missing from the CCH Report database. While the UCR database contains information about crimes reported, it is limited to certain types of crimes and does not yield much information about victims and circumstances of crimes.

The fourth gap is information on local law enforcement resources, especially their capacity to conduct various types of investigations, their use of technology, their access to crime scene investigators and crime lab resources, and other information beyond the number of sworn officers and support personnel employed at agencies.

The fifth gap is information on victims and victim services in Georgia. It has been over 10 years since Georgia did a state victimization survey. A comprehensive assessment of victim services with more detailed information about staff and resources has never been done.

Next Steps & Beyond

The next steps in this project to be pursued over the remainder of the FY 2008 Project Year and into the FY 2009 Project Year for the Georgia Statistical Analysis Center include the following:

- (1) hold several strategic planning meetings with key stakeholders to determine which key indicators will be used or need to be identified, collected, and analyzed, for different major components of the criminal justice system in Georgia. This work will proceed alongside of work being done by the Safe Georgia Policy Collaborative and the Office of Planning and Budget. The Safe Georgia Policy Collaborative consists of agency directors and other key management staff of state-level criminal justice system agencies in Georgia. They have identified performance measures for different state agencies; however, the differences and distinctions between indicators that can be used across the system and reflect potential larger underlying issues, and those that will be used to track improvements in state agency functioning, need to be explored and reviewed with both the Research and Evaluation Advisory Group and the Safe Georgia Policy Collaborative. The Office of

Planning and Budget is represented on both groups and will play a pivotal role in this process. One issue that has not been addressed to date is identifying indicators for the functioning of the criminal justice system at the local level, and how local level processes and events affect the state level.

- (2) Explore other data resources and build relationships with agencies and organizations collecting, managing, analyzing, and using this data (see listing below of some additional data resources identified by CJCC staff).
- (3) Design and develop a “dashboard metrics” or “criminal justice system report card” using the key indicators for display on the CJCC website and build in description and links to other agencies’ data resources and summary statistical information.
- (4) Continue to build relationships with university and college-based researchers and evaluators to develop linkages to current research and evaluation findings of relevance to criminal justice agency leadership, policymakers, and the public.
- (5) Develop and implement assessments exploring the availability of data to fill the existing “gaps” in knowledge and statistical information about crime, victimization, law enforcement, and other aspects of the criminal justice system in Georgia.
- (6) Where possible, begin projects to standardize the collection, management, and analysis of data needed to fill existing gaps in knowledge.
- (7) Continue to build internal capacity at the CJCC to conduct analysis and issue reports on crime, victimization, and other issues important to policy makers, local and state CJS agency leadership, and the public.

Other Data Sources to Explore

The following is a partial listing of other data sources, including other agencies, to explore:

- **Department of Juvenile Justice**
- **Department of Human Resources:**
 - **Division of Child & Family Resources, Division of Aging Services – child and adult protective services**
 - **Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disorders, and Addictive Diseases – substance abuse service records**
 - **Division of Public Health – Vital Records; Georgia Violent Death Registry; BRFSS, YRBS, PRAMS data on substance abuse, violence, victimization; hospital discharge data; OASIS on-line data system**
- **Department of Community Health – Medicare & Medicaid databases**
- **Department of Education – Office of Safe & Drug-Free Schools; graduation & drop-out information**

- **Department of Labor – unemployment statistics**
- **University of Georgia/Regional Development Centers – Georgia demographic data, GIS data**
- **Office for Children & Families – Child Fatality Review data**
- **Georgia Family Connections – Georgia Kids Count**
- **Georgia Commission on Family Violence – Domestic Violence Fatality Review Initiative, Family Violence Intervention Program records**
- **Local law enforcement agencies – IBR data from local jurisdictions; 911 call response data**
- **Sheriff’s departments – Deaths in Custody data (local jails)**
- **Department of Corrections – Deaths in Custody data (prisons)**
- **University System of Georgia – departments of criminal justice, criminal justice programs/concentrations/research resources/statistical analysis resources**
- **Department of Motor Vehicles -- drivers’ licenses, DUI school records**