

TEXAS JUSTICE INFORMATION SHARING

AN ACTION PLAN

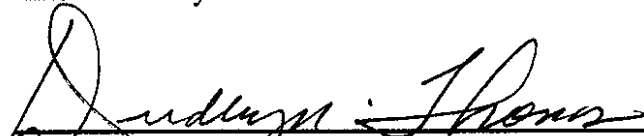
January 14, 2000


STATE AGENCY JUSTICE INFORMATION COORDINATING COMMITTEE

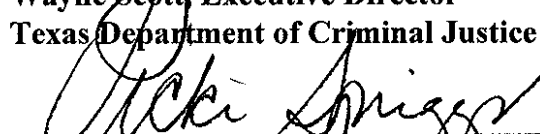
Executive Approval


This document represents the plans of the below state agencies regarding enhancement and development of the justice information systems they manage. The emphasis is on cooperation and coordination by the agencies with a goal of better service to the users through increased integration of the systems. The agencies have formed a committee (State Agency Justice Information Coordinating Committee) to write a *Strategic Plan* to meet this goal.

We, as Directors, endorse and fully support the efforts of our staff activities in the State Agency Justice Information Coordinating Committee to improve the sharing of information among information systems to enhance the administration of justice in Texas.



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PART I: INTRODUCTION

The Problem

There are burdensome and redundant requirements placed on local justice agencies for the reporting of justice data to state agencies.

The state agencies all manage systems and data bases built from overlapping legislative and operational requirements for the collection of data that begins at the local level. There has not been adequate coordination among Texas state justice agencies once the data is stored at the state level. That lack of coordination has hindered the ease of access and usability of the information once it is retrieved.

The Solution

In order to fulfill state agency responsibilities regarding integration of justice information systems and sharing of justice data, the following state agencies have formed a committee for the planning and coordination of integration of justice systems and networking in Texas. The committee's mission is:

To coordinate the development and operation of statewide justice systems maintained or managed by the participating state agencies so that those systems are able to share information in a manner that maximizes the services provided to justice users in Texas.

The participating agencies are:

- Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS)
- Texas Department of Criminal Justice (DCJ)
- Office of Court Administration (OCA)
- Texas Juvenile Probation Commission (JPC)
- Texas Youth Commission (TYC)
- Office of the Attorney General (OAG)

The committee also includes membership of advisory state agencies to assist in this process.

The advisory agencies are:

- Texas Criminal Justice Policy Council (CJPC)
- Texas Department of Information Resources (DIR)
- Texas State Auditor's Office (SAO)
- Criminal Justice Division, Governor's Office (CJD)
- Legislative Budget Board (LBB)

The 75th Legislative Session created the Judicial Committee on Information Technology (JCIT) with the charge of guiding the automation of courts at all levels throughout Texas. The Office of Court Administration, as the staff agency for that committee, represents their interests on the State Agency Justice Information Coordinating Committee. The Department of Information Resources and Legislative Budget Board are participating in an advisory capacity, but their presence on the committee does not convey oversight approval of the committees' resulting products. The respective agencies must still comply with all DIR and LBB planning, reporting, and oversight requirements. Likewise, the State Auditor's presence on the committee is cooperative and advisory, and does not exempt any agency or project from review and reporting.

PART II. THE SYSTEMS AND BENEFITS

Which systems are under discussion?

1. The **Criminal Justice Information System (CJIS)**, which is comprised of the following two systems:
 - a) The enhanced **Computerized Criminal History system (CCH)** at the DPS
 - b) The **Corrections Tracking System (CTS)** at TDCJ, now referred to as the Offender Information Management System (OIMS)
2. The **Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS)** at the DPS
3. **CASEWORKER/4** at the Juvenile Probation Commission
4. The *reporting requirements* promulgated by the Texas Judicial Council and the *standards for Judicial Information Management Systems* promulgated by the Judicial Committee on Information Technology (JCIT) for courts throughout Texas
5. **Correctional Care Information System (CCIS)** administered by the Texas Youth Commission
6. The **Texas Crime Information Center (TCIC)** at the DPS
7. The **Texas Child Support Enforcement System (TXCSES)**

What data is stored in these systems?

Primarily these systems hold the data associated with a person's processing (juvenile or adult) through the criminal justice system after having been arrested. That is, information associated with arrest, prosecution, adjudication, supervision and incarceration of persons arrested for crimes in Texas. Also involved in the plan are data stored in associated criminal justice systems (e.g. TCIC, including stolen vehicles, wanted persons, sex offenders, protective orders), and data associated with non-criminal court proceedings.

Who are the users of these systems?

The primary criminal justice users are:

- The investigative/law enforcement agencies: Police Officers, Sheriffs' Deputies, Constables, DPS Officers, Parks and Wildlife Wardens, Alcoholic Beverage Commission Agents, the Attorneys General, federal enforcement agents, etc;
- Prosecutors: County and District Attorneys, municipal prosecutors;
- Courts: municipal, justice, county-level, district, Court of Appeals, Court of Criminal Appeals, and the Supreme Court of Texas justices, judges, clerks, and court administrators;
- Supervisory/Corrections agencies: Officers and employees of the county jails, Texas Youth Commission, Texas Juvenile Probation Commission, and the DCJ institutional, parole, community justice assistance divisions, and local juvenile probation departments.

The primary non-criminal justice users are:

- Courts, court clerks, court administrators, IV-D Court Masters;
- Non-criminal justice licensing and regulatory agencies authorized to use the data for suitability determinations in placing licensees or employees with vulnerable clients;
- Child Support Enforcement Officers;
- Crime Victims;
- The General Public.

What are the expected benefits of the committee's efforts?

The agencies are each involved in their separate mandates to deliver services to their constituents, that is, the users named above. Those services overlap in a number of areas, and the agencies have been involved at various levels in communication and coordination efforts with each other. What has not been present, however, is a formalized strategic plan for the integration of justice systems in Texas that spans across all the agencies and has been signed off by all the agency directors. A primary benefit of this effort will be the development of a formalized plan, which will serve as a blueprint for justice system development. The plan will insure the greatest interoperability of these systems and the highest level of service to the named users.

In addition to increased efficiency for the users of the systems, this increased interoperability will bring with it cost savings in system development over the long term.

What are the benefits of integration of justice systems?

Increased efficiency of state agency operations and increased effectiveness of state agency programs are the primary state benefits. The primary benefits to the users of these systems are that they will have more accurate and timely information available to them for use in the "administration of criminal justice". Examples include a prosecutor with a current "rap sheet" for appropriate charging of a subject so that the ultimate conviction is based upon the person's complete criminal history, or an arresting agency with quick and accurate identification of a person in their custody who turns out to be using fictitious identification in an attempt to escape detection on a warrant that exists under his true identity.

Local users will realize cost savings through more efficient use of their time and greater effectiveness in their duties. Having the appropriate information at their disposal allows critical decisions to be made on time and correctly, avoiding the delays in the criminal justice process, which affects citizens and increase costs. In addition, greater cooperation at the state level will result in reduced reporting requirements upon local justice agencies.

The ultimate benefit is to the citizens of Texas. The increased efficiency of criminal justice agencies will assist in the effort to reduce crime and increase public safety. Crime victims benefit from knowing that perpetrators are charged and adjudicated based upon the best information available.

PART III. THE COURSE OF ACTION

Creation of the Strategic Plan

The Committee will create a strategic plan for identification and implementation of those enhancements that the agencies and the users consider to be most beneficial to justice services in Texas. Below are the activities anticipated by the Committee that will result in the creation of the strategic plan.

Action Item #1: Formalize the SAJICC Committee

The state agencies have voluntarily met in the SAJICC forum, with no formal structure. In order for the state planning effort to take on the necessary momentum, the SAJICC committee will be formalized with a charter, mission statement, and executive endorsement

Action Item #2: Identify Current Status

Independent of SAJICC, each agency has been developing justice information systems for some time. There has been informal cooperation in some areas and statutory requirements for coordination in others. Currently, there are a number of major system changes underway at the respective participating state agencies that will increase justice information sharing. In order to create a plan for increasing information sharing, the agencies must first make a clear statement of the current status of justice automation and of justice information sharing in Texas. That statement will serve as the baseline from which changes will be made.

Action Item #3: Defining Functional Requirements of the Integrated System

The most important step is to define the operational requirements of the integrated system. What is it that we expect the integrated system to do in a very practical, tangible way? The committee will spell out these requirements in a very direct way, complete with performance requirements. For example:

- Every authorized Texas criminal justice agency shall be able to determine the correctional status of a person (e.g., incarcerated, on parole, on probation, under community services or correctional supervision, and the applicable conditions) within 2 minutes, with a status currency of 24 hours.
- Every authorized Texas criminal justice agency shall be able to obtain the criminal history record of a person who has one, within 2 minutes, with a status currency of 24 hours.
- Every authorized Texas judicial reporting agency shall be able to send their court case data to one recipient state agency for distribution to all other state agencies who need the data. The recipient state agency will forward the data to all other agencies within 2 hours of receipt, and the other agencies will reply with receipt or error notifications within 8 hours.

The committee will look at similar requirements around a variety of activities, as they relate to the state agency systems, such as:

- Positive identification;
- Generation of warrants, building upon data provided by law enforcement;
- Determining pending charges, bail status, pre-trial status statewide;
- Subscription notification of change in status of offenders;
- Determining case status.

Action Item #4: Identify the Expectations from Users, Administrators, Legislators, the Public

There is an increasing emphasis on justice information sharing in Texas and across the country currently. With advancing technology providing the general public unprecedented access to information via the Internet, there is a corresponding expectation that government is moving quickly to take advantage of those technologies. The users of the state systems also have increased expectations. Along with identifying the user requirements identified above, the Committee will identify any other user, administrative, legislative or public expectations.

Action Item #5: Identify the Limitations

Once the user requirements and expectations are established, and the desired level of information sharing is identified, the committee will identify the obstacles to accomplishing that sharing. Each agency will have to evaluate the impact upon its own information resources strategic plan. The committee members will have to identify the changes necessary in each system and place a cost and time measure on those changes. Those measures will be a part of the strategic plan. Any other limitations, such as additional reporting or automation requirements being placed upon local agencies, time needed to accomplish the changes, the effect of local agencies who continue to report on paper, etc. will also have to be identified.

Action Item #6: Agree upon the Scope of Activities to Undertake

Based upon the limitations and obstacles identified, the committee will have to agree upon a scope of activity that is realistic to undertake. Each agency is participating in the SAJICC initiative voluntarily, without additional resources. The statement of scope will include that which the agencies can do within their current resources, as well as a plan for presenting the legislature with the costs and benefits of increased information sharing that can only be accomplished with additional resources. From that presentation, the legislature will establish the scope of activities beyond that which the agencies can accomplish within their present resources. In addition, the Committee will pursue any additional funding sources that are available.

Action Item #7: Write the Plan

With the information gathered from the previous steps, the committee will write the strategic plan. It is the intention of the committee to accomplish these action items in time for the respective agencies to include the appropriate planning factors in their agency operating plans, strategic plans, and legislative appropriation requests for the upcoming legislative session.

Implementation of the Strategic Plan

Following the creation of the strategic plan, the state agencies will only be able to perform those activities for which they have resources. Additional actions will depend upon future resources.

The state agencies will investigate sources of funding to provide resources for execution of the plan. In addition, the agencies will identify the required resources within each respective agency Legislative Appropriations Request.

Upon approval of the plan through agency and legislative channels, the agencies will execute the plan according to the resources available.