

NATIONAL SCENE



Implementing the Prison Rape Elimination Act

by Allen J. Beck, Ph.D., BJS Deputy Director

The Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) of 2003 (P.L. 108-79) requires the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) to develop new national data collections on the incidence and prevalence of sexual assault within correctional facilities. Specifically, Section 4 of the Act requires BJS to conduct an annual "comprehensive statistical review and analysis of the incidence and effects of prison rape" in federal, state, and local facilities. To fully implement PREA, BJS has developed a multiple-measure, multiple-method data collection strategy (Figure 1).

In 2004, as one step in the implementation strategy, BJS completed the first national survey of administrative records on sexual violence in adult and juvenile correctional facilities. Although results of administrative records surveys are limited to incidents reported to correctional officials, the surveys provide an understanding of what officials know, how many allegations are reported, and the outcomes of follow-up investigations.

In 2005, the survey was expanded to obtain data on each substantiated incident which was investigated and determined to have occurred. Using a separate incident form, the survey obtained incident-based data on all substantiated allegations, providing a basis for an in-depth analysis of sexual violence. New information included details on circumstances surrounding each incident, characteristics of victims and perpetrators, type of pressure or physical

force, victim injuries, sanctions imposed, and victim assistance.

Key Findings of the 2005 Survey

- Prison and jail authorities reported over 6,200 allegations of sexual violence in prisons and jails nationwide in 2005, up from nearly 5,400 in 2004.
- An estimated 38% of the allegations involved staff sexual misconduct; 35%, inmate-on-inmate nonconsensual sexual acts; 17%, staff sexual harassment; and 10%, inmate-on-inmate abusive sexual contact.

- Correctional authorities substantiated an estimated 885 incidents of sexual violence, or about 15% of incidents for which investigations had been completed.
- Half of inmate-on-inmate sexual violence involved physical force or threat of force; in nearly a third of the most serious incidents (nonconsensual sexual acts), the victim was physically held down or restrained; in a sixth, the victim was physically harmed or injured.

(See **PRISON RAPE**, p. 5)

Bureau of Justice Statistics: Environment, Constraints and Initiatives

[Jeffrey L. Sedgwick, Director of the Bureau of Justice Statistics, delivered these remarks to the JRSA Executive Board during its quarterly meeting on May 22, 2006.]

I'd like to begin by thanking the Board of the Justice Research and Statistics Association and its Executive Director, Joan Weiss, for inviting me here today to update you on the Bureau of Justice Statistics. I've been on the job as Director for six weeks, so it seems a good time to think out loud, if you will, and share some thoughts and observations I have about BJS now and in the future.

First and foremost, I should say that my first six weeks have been a mixture of the comfortingly familiar and the jarringly new. As many of you may know, I was Deputy Director of the Bureau of Justice Statistics some 22 years ago at the end of the first term of the Reagan Presidency. I was delighted to discover upon my return, now as Director, that there are a considerable number of familiar faces among the staff, that the organization of the agency is virtually identical to what I remember, and that BJS's principal products (Bulletins and

(See **BJS**, p. 6)

ANNOUNCEMENTS 

NIDA Issues Report on Effective Drug Abuse Treatment Strategies

The National Institute on Drug Abuse recently released a research-based guide on effective approaches to treating criminal justice offenders with drug abuse problems. "Principles of Drug Abuse Treatment for Criminal Justice Populations," as well as its companion publication, "Principles of Drug Addiction Treatment" (issued in 1999) can be accessed on NIDA's Web site <http://www.drugabuse.gov> or by calling 1-800-729-6686.

The guide contains four main sections: the first describes 13 principles of treatment that are based on existing research findings; the second provides an introduction to the subject; the third presents frequently asked questions, along with answers; and the fourth lists Web sites and URLs where additional useful information can be found. Excerpts from a NIDA press release about the report follow.

Principles of Drug Abuse Treatment for Criminal Justice Populations outlines some of the proven components for suc-

cessful treatment of drug abusers who have entered the criminal justice system, leading to lower rates of drug abuse and criminal activity.

"This report is part of our ongoing commitment to using scientific research to provide solutions to some of the most complex public health and safety issues of our time," said Dr. Elias A. Zerhouni, NIH Director. "Not only does it offer research-based treatment solutions to judges and communities, it also provides information on how the criminal justice system can help reduce the spread of HIV/AIDS, hepatitis, and other infectious diseases among drug abusing offenders—all critically important issues in today's society."


Untreated substance abuse adds significant costs to communities, including violent and property crimes, prison expenses, court and criminal costs, emergency room visits, child abuse and neglect, lost child support, foster care and welfare costs, reduced productivity, unemployment, and victimization. The cost to society of drug abuse in the year 2002 was \$181 billion—\$107 billion associated with drug-related crime.

proven treatment and therapeutic followup in a community setting, addicted offenders are at a high risk of relapse despite a long period of forced sobriety," she added. "These principles also apply to court-mandated treatment interventions that replace incarceration with community programs."

It is estimated that 70% of individuals in state prisons and local jails have abused drugs regularly, compared with approximately 9% of the general population. Studies show that treatment cuts drug abuse in half, reduces criminal activity up to 80%, and reduces arrests up to 64%. However, fewer than one fifth of these offenders receive treatment. Treatment not only lowers recidivism rates, it is also cost-effective. It is estimated that for every dollar spent on addiction treatment programs, there is a \$4 to \$7 reduction in the cost of drug-related crimes. With some outpatient programs, total savings can exceed costs by a ratio of 12 to 1.

The failure to treat addicts in the criminal justice system contributes to a continuous cycle of substance abuse and crime. In 1999, 1.5 million minor children—most under the age of 10—had a parent in prison. Fifty-eight percent of these imprisoned parents used drugs in the month before their offense. Children of addicted parents are four times more likely to become addicted if they choose to use drugs or alcohol, and many will also enter the criminal justice system.

In addition to outlining treatment principles for criminal justice populations, NIDA's publication includes answers to frequently asked questions about addiction as a chronic disease, co-occurring mental, emotional and environmental conditions that make relapse likely upon return to society, recommendations for the components of adequate treatment programs, cost-effectiveness of treatment, and the role of medication in treating offenders with substance abuse.

For more information, visit NIDA's Web site at <http://www.drugabuse.gov> or call 800-729-6686. 

"The principles of drug abuse treatment [contained in this report] represent the translation of research into practice," Dr. Nora Volkow, NIDA Director, said. She called them "powerful and practical tools that will allow communities to choose between ongoing treatment or ongoing crime."

Principles of Drug Abuse Treatment for Criminal Justice Populations offers 13 principles based on a review of the scientific literature on drug abuse treatment and criminal behavior. The principles include an acknowledgement that drug addiction is a brain disease that affects behavior; that recovery requires effective individualized treatment that might include medication; and that continuity of care is essential for drug abusers re-entering the community after a period of incarceration.

"Detox alone in jail or prison is not treatment," said Dr. Volkow. "Without

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SAC NEWS



Georgia Releases Publication on Meth

The Georgia Statistical Analysis Center recently published *The Impact of Methamphetamine on Georgia*, which is available online at <http://www.ganet.org/cjcc/sac.html>. A news release regarding the publication is provided at the same Web site location.

Minnesota Issues Report on Human Trafficking

The Minnesota Statistical Analysis Center has published the first *Trafficking in Minnesota* report. This report is legislatively mandated and is scheduled to be published again next September. This first report is intended to give legislators a general understanding of trafficking and to create a baseline look at victims in the state. The next report, which will include an expanded data collection protocol, will focus on Native American girls and attempt to gather better information on labor trafficking as well. The report is available in hardcopy from the SAC, but is also posted online at: http://www.ojp.state.mn.us/cj/publications/Reports/2006_Human_Trafficking.pdf.

Nevada SAC Appoints New Director

Timothy Hart was recently named the Director of Nevada's Center for the Analysis of Crime Statistics (the Nevada SAC), located on the campus of the University of Nevada Las Vegas. Dr. Hart received his Ph.D. in criminology from the University of South Florida in 2006. His areas of interest include survey research, applied statistics, geographic information systems (GIS), and victimization. Prior to joining the faculty at UNLV, Dr. Hart worked as a Statistician for the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS), a Program Analyst for the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and a Research Analyst for the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office (HCSO).

North Carolina SAC Wins Thrasher Research Award

The North Carolina Statistical Analysis

Center won a Frederick Thrasher "superior research" award last month from the National Gang Crime Research Center (NGCRC) for its Hispanic gang study, *The Nature and Scope of Latino/Hispanic Gangs in North Carolina* (www.ncgccd.org/pdfs/pubs/Hispanic-Gangs.pdf). The Thrasher Award is named in honor of Frederic Milton Thrasher, the 1927 author of the classic study of Chicago gangs, who generated the first social scientific analysis of gangs. Thrasher is known for his book *The Gang: 1,313 Gangs in Chicago*. The Thrasher Awards recognize outstanding contributions in research, scholarship, service, and accomplishments in dealing with the gang problem. The award was presented during NCGRC's 2006 Ninth International Gang Specialist Training.

JRSA ACTIVITIES



Improving Crime Data Project Update

Although law enforcement has long needed a system for sharing national information, no system currently in place provides these agencies with up-to-date, incident-based information for strategic, tactical, or investigative purposes. National systems, like the Federal Bureau of Investigation's National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS), have improved the amount and quality of information collected, but they do not provide the information quickly enough to be of operational use to law enforcement agencies. Several regional systems provide good and timely information, but most do not reach a broad audience.

To address this situation, Urban Serving Universities (formerly Great Cities Universities), led by Georgia State University and the University of Missouri – St. Louis, has created the Improving Crime Data (ICD) system. Funded through grants from the National Institute of Justice and the Bureau of Justice Assistance, the ICD project has been working with law enforcement agencies to develop a system that would allow access to current information over the Internet.

Tennessee Announces Recent Studies

The Tennessee Statistical Analysis Center released the 2005 *Domestic Violence Research Brief* and the *Sex Offenses Study* in late August using the new Tennessee Crime Online Web site.

Wyoming SAC Evaluates New DOC Tobacco-Free Policy

The Wyoming Department of Corrections (WDOC) mandated that all WDOC facilities will be tobacco-free beginning July 1, 2006. This policy covers administrative as well as correctional facilities and staff as well as inmates and offenders. The Wyoming Survey & Analysis Center (WYSAC) recently completed an evaluation of the new policy. Reports will be available soon on the WYSAC Web site at <http://www.uwyo.edu/wysac/>

ICD System

Working with the National Consortium on Violence Research (NCOVR), the ICD project developed a system using COGNOS software that allows agencies to submit data that can be accessed and manipulated directly from the NCOVR Web site. The site, password protected for members, permits agencies to view data and create tables without any additional software or hardware requirements.

The basis of the ICD system is the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS). In addition to the 53 NIBRS data elements, including administrative, offense, property, victim, offender, and arrestee information, the ICD system allows users to submit additional information currently collected in their agency's Records Management System (RMS). These data will be converted to the Global Justice XML Standards format and included in COGNOS cubes. Agencies have the discretion to allow all ICD members to access their data or to restrict some data for agency use only.

(See ICD, p. 8)

JRSA ACTIVITIES



Evaluation of Utah's 4-H Mentoring Program: Youth and Families with Promise

by Mary Poulin, JRSA Program Manager

Last fall JRSA began a six-year project to evaluate the Youth and Families with Promise (YFP) program, a statewide 4-H mentoring program in Utah for at-risk youths who are approximately 10–14 years old. Youths are paired with mentors to engage in skill-building, 4-H, and family activities. The National Institute of Justice is funding the evaluation.

The goals of the evaluation study are to determine: whether the program is achieving its desired outcomes, if the program is being implemented with a reasonable degree of fidelity, how easily others could adopt the program, and whether the program appears to be cost-effective.

In order to accomplish these objectives, JRSA is collecting data on youths who enter the YFP program, along with a matched comparison group of 4th – 8th grade students who do not participate in the program. (Data are collected only on those youths whose parents/guardians consent to participate in the evaluation.) Data are collected for YFP youths at the start and end of their participation in YFP, and for comparison youths at the start and

end of the school year. Follow-up data will be collected for both groups for up to three years after program completion or the end of the school year.

The data collected measure the primary objectives of the program and program implementation. This includes data collected from YFP youths and school students, parents of youths in YFP, program documentation, staff and mentors affiliated with YFP, and youths' official school and Utah court records.

Pre-post test data collection for YFP youths and school students includes socio-demographic information, questions pertaining to risky behavior, and the Behavioral and Emotional Rating Scale, Second Edition (BERS-2), a scale that measures interpersonal strength, family involvement, intrapersonal strength, school functioning, affective strength, and career strength. Parents of YFP youths complete a pre-post test similar to the one their children complete. Finally, YFP youths report on their experiences and involvement with the program at the post-test as well as their relationship with their mentor.

In the past year we have been working closely with program staff and management to develop an approach to data collection. Since program staff play a key role in data collection, we have used techniques such as online video conferencing to hold discussions with staff who are located across the state. Program staff have been critical partners in helping us develop relationships with local schools that will participate in the comparison group data collection.

To assess program design and implementation, program documentation regarding mentoring and services received is collected and interviews with program personnel, mentors, and YFP youths are being conducted. In addition, data from the program sites, Utah Board of Juvenile Justice, and the justice system will be used to assess the program cost relative to other juvenile programs in Utah and potential savings achieved by participation in YFP.

Follow-up will include review of official school and Utah court records to assess school performance and involvement in delinquent behavior. Phone calls will be made to YFP youths and school students during follow-up to collect information on perceptions of the YFP program (YFP youths only), academic performance, behavior, perceptions, and current home situation. 📞

ANNOUNCEMENTS



The New School Hosts Conference on Punishment

The New School for Social Research is holding the latest in their conference series: *Punishment: The U.S. Record* on November 30 and December 1 at their campus in New York City. The conference will examine the foundations of our ideas of punishment, explore the social effects of current practices, and search for viable alternatives to our carceral state. To view the agenda or register, go to <http://www.socres.org/punishment/index.htm> or contact the Social Research Conference Office at (212) 229-5776 x 3121 or socres@newschool.edu.

BJA Sponsors Regional Information Sharing Meetings

The Bureau of Justice Assistance is holding four *Regional Information Sharing Conferences* to discuss planning, managing, and implementing technology solutions for information sharing systems, and how agencies can benefit from initiatives and developments like fusion centers, the National Information Exchange Model, and service-oriented architecture. Conferences will be held on November 28-30 in San Diego, California; February 6-8 in Houston, Texas; March 27-29 in Minneapolis, Minnesota; and June 4-6 in Jacksonville, Florida. For more information, go to <http://www.search.org/conferences/2006reginfosharing/>. 📞

New Staff Member Comes Onboard

Janice Iwama joined JRSA in August as a research assistant. Ms. Iwama recently completed her M.S. in Justice, Law and Society at American University in Washington, D.C. While attending school, she worked for the Department of Justice, Criminal Division, Capital Cases Unit, and the Office of Citizen Complaint Review. Ms. Iwama will be providing assistance in a variety of JRSA projects including the Utah Youth and Families with Promise Program evaluation, the Pennsylvania Victim Compensation Assistance Program, and the Improving Crime Data Systems project.

(PRISON RAPE, from p. 1)

- In more than two thirds of all inmate-on-inmate incidents, the sexual violence occurred in the victim's cell or dormitory.
- Incidents of inmate sexual violence were the most common (44%) in the evening between 6 p.m. and midnight and the least common (18%) overnight between midnight and 6 a.m.
- The most common response following a reported incident was to place the victim in administrative segregation (44%) or to transfer the victim to another facility (11%). In more than two thirds of the most serious incidents of inmate sexual violence, victims received medical attention, counseling, or mental health treatment.
- Perpetrators were referred for prosecution in more than half of the substantiated incidents of nonconsensual sexual acts and moved to solitary confinement in nearly three quarters of the incidents.

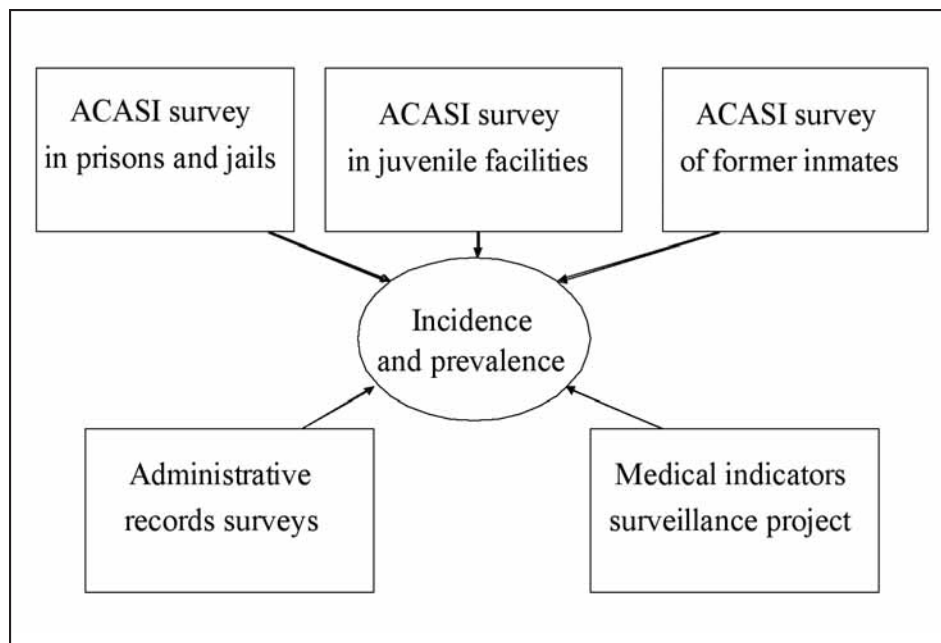


Figure 1.
BJS's Multiple Measure, Multiple Mode Strategy of Implementation

“ In state and federal prisons, 67% of victims of staff sexual misconduct and harassment were male, while 62% of perpetrators were female. In local jails, 78% of the victims of staff sexual misconduct were female; 87% of perpetrators, male. ”

- In state and federal prisons, 67% of victims of staff sexual misconduct and harassment were male, while 62% of perpetrators were female. In local jails, 78% of the victims of staff sexual misconduct were female; 87% of perpetrators, male.
- In two thirds of the incidents, correctional authorities determined that staff

had a romantic relationship with the inmates. Although legally all sexual relationships between staff and inmates are considered nonconsensual, correctional authorities determined that staff had used physical force, pressure, or other forms of abuse of power in fewer than 15% of the substantiated incidents.

- Correctional authorities indicated that in 82% of the substantiated incidents staff had been discharged or resigned; in 45%, staff were arrested or referred for prosecution; and in 17%, staff were disciplined, transferred, or demoted.

(Source: BJS Special Report, *Sexual Violence Reported by Correctional Authorities, 2005*, July 2006.)

Later this year BJS will issue a report summarizing findings from the 2005 survey of sexual violence in state juvenile systems and local/private operated juvenile facilities.

BJS will conduct a similar survey for 2006, covering all prison systems, facilities operated by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and the U.S. military, and a 10% sample of local jail jurisdictions, private prisons and jails, and jails in Indian county. For the first time, the survey will also include a sample of lockups operated by local police and sheriff's departments.

Progress in Developing ACASI Surveys

Administrative records surveys alone cannot provide a full understanding of sexual violence in correctional facilities. As part of the implementation strategy, BJS has been developing and testing methods to obtain information directly from victims of sexual violence. These methods rely on computer-assisted technologies to provide anonymity to victims when reporting their experiences and to ensure uniform conditions under which inmates complete the survey.

Through cooperative agreements with Research Triangle International (RTI), Westat, and National Opinion Research Center (NORC), BJS has been developing an Audio Computer-Assisted Self Interview (ACASI) application in which respondents interact with a computer-administered questionnaire using a touch screen and follow audio instructions delivered via headphones. The ACASI surveys will be administered to inmates in prisons and jails, to youth in juvenile facilities, and to former inmates under parole/post-custody supervision.

As of August 30, 2006, the following work had been completed or was underway:

(See **PRISON RAPE**, p. 6)

(PRISON RAPE, from p. 5)*Prison and Jail Inmates*

- The ACASI questionnaire and survey protocols for adult inmates have been developed and tested. Between January and May 2006, BJS and RTI completed a pretest with more than 1,400 inmates in four state prisons, four local jail facilities, and one federal prison. Results of the pretest will be published in November and presented at a national meeting of stakeholders in December.
- In September, BJS will submit an overview of all survey procedures, sampling methods, and questionnaires to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for approval to begin national implementation.
- Procedures for selecting prison and jail facilities and for sampling inmates within selected facilities have been developed. In the first year of implementation, BJS expects to select 450 public and private prisons and jails and to interview up to 80,000 inmates.
- Upon OMB approval, RTI field staff will begin obtaining approval from state-level Institutional Review Boards (IRB) and begin interviews in January 2007.

Youth in Juvenile Facilities

- Survey procedures and questionnaires have been developed and reviewed by state and local administrators and other stakeholders. Cognitive testing of questionnaires with eligible youth were completed in August.
- A formal pretest of collection methods in 10 juvenile facilities with up to 600 youth is planned for September 2006.
- National implementation is expected in 2007. Initial survey efforts will focus on more than 14,000 adjudicated youth in a sample of 150 state-operated facilities and 30 large, local, or private facilities.

Former State Prisoners

- An ACASI questionnaire, an administrative records form, and survey protocols have been developed to survey former inmates under active parole or post-custody supervision.
- A formal pretest of collection methods in 16 parole offices with up to 1,000 former inmates will be conducted between October 1 and December 15, 2006.
- National implementation is scheduled in 2007, with more than 11,500 com-

pleted interviews expected in 285 parole field offices.

Progress in Developing a National Surveillance System

As part of the implementation strategy, BJS, in partnership with the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), has initiated the development of a national passive surveillance system for clinical (medical, dental, mental health) indicators of sexual violence in prisons and jails. BJS and NIJ have entered into an interagency agreement with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), National Center for Hepatitis, HIV, STD and TB Prevention, and the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control. The system, when implemented, will utilize medical and mental health care staff to provide further monitoring

(BJS, from p. 1)

Special Reports) are essentially unchanged. All this makes me feel very much at home.

There are, however, a number of aspects that are new and unfamiliar. Each calls into question the viability of established routines, demanding thoughtful consideration and innovation. Precisely because BJS has been so successful in meeting its mission in the past, the demand for innovation is particularly challenging. After all, very few folks resist innovating away from failure; almost any change is preferable to a continuing sense of futility and embarrassment. But innovating away from success is truly intimidating; as the old saying goes, "If it ain't broke, why fix it?" I'm of the opinion, however, that organizations must keep innovating, even when they are successful, because their context, their constraints, and their challenges or opportunities are always in flux. Let me address each of these in turn.

BJS operates in a context or environment shaped by others' priorities. For example, the administration has articulated priorities that include counterterrorism (including cybersecurity), trafficking in persons, family violence, and the initiative to advance justice through DNA technology. The Attorney General has his priorities, as well, which include

of indicators of sexual violence in correctional settings.

Work is divided into three phases: In Phase I, August 2006 to March 2007, CDC will develop the surveillance instrument and protocol for administration. In Phase II, April to December 2007, CDC will develop training material for medical and mental health staff. In addition, BJS and NIJ, with assistance from the Justice Research and Statistics Association, will convene a national workshop in May 2007 to obtain input from correctional administrators, medical and mental health staff, and other stakeholders. In Phase III, beginning in January 2008, CDC will implement the surveillance system in 35 participating facilities. Additional facilities will be added based on feasibility and funding availability. ❧

assisting state, local, and tribal efforts to prevent or reduce crime and violence. Specifically targeted are: a gun crime initiative called Project Safe Neighborhoods; assisting law enforcement with information sharing; tribal justice; DNA, improving forensic science, solving cold cases, and missing persons cases; prisoner reentry; human trafficking; juvenile delinquency, prevention, and intervention; and Internet crimes against children. And finally, the Assistant Attorney General to whom BJS reports has priorities for the Office of Justice Programs including: increasing the nation's capacity to prevent and control crime; improving the fair administration of justice; reducing the impact of crime on victims and holding offenders accountable; and increasing understanding of justice issues and developing successful interventions. These priorities are the coin of the realm, so to speak. We aim to meet these priorities in the work we do.

In BJS, our ability to meet these priorities is constrained by a variety of factors. Perhaps the most familiar and enduring to anyone working in the public sector is the budget. It would be unrealistic to expect BJS's financial resources to expand as rapidly as the issues we are tasked to benchmark. The challenges that confront the criminal justice system multiply as those who would break the law continue to innovate – think of the new challenges of identity theft, Internet crime, human trafficking, et cetera.

In addition to the budgetary constraints facing us, we also have staffing constraints. BJS staff are responsible for supervising some four dozen statistical series spread across the criminal justice system (and, increasingly, the civil justice system). We are fortunate in BJS to have a highly educated workforce who embody the notion of public service and are careful stewards of the taxpayers' trust. They face both an ever expanding range of criminal justice issues and a public with a voracious appetite for more information.

Third, we face communications challenges, as many agencies do in an era when exciting new technologies are regularly being invented. When BJS burst on the scene more than 30 years ago, it was on the cutting edge of government statistics and criminal justice statistics. Our Bulletins and Special Reports were oftentimes the first if not sole source of information on crime and justice in the United States; our stakeholders read them eagerly. Today, we face a changed reader: less patient, less willing to wade through 6 or 12 pages of text and tables to find what they want to know, and more demanding of geographically specific information. In short, our readers want information tailored to their specific need, they want it delivered to them more conveniently, and they want it faster; we are aiming to meet those challenges.

And finally, we face a series of strategic challenges (or shall we say, "opportunities"). The Office of Justice Programs (OJP) has adopted a "knowledge to practice" business model that moves the work of BJS (benchmarks) and NIJ (best practices) from the periphery to the core of what it does. The "One OJP" model of operation enhances cooperation by using benchmarks and best practices to guide funding allocation decisions in the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, the Office for Victims of Crime, the Community Capacity Development Office, and the Bureau of Justice Assistance. This means, however, that we are being tasked with anticipating strategic priorities and having statistical information collected, analyzed, and ready to be put in the hands of decision makers in program agencies when they are ready to act.

Ordinarily a set of challenges and constraints such as the above would drive an

agency head to despair (and likely produce institutional paralysis). I seem to have arrived in BJS at a uniquely fortuitous time, however. We have an enormously hardworking staff that is eager to push the envelope and think outside the box. My role, as I see it, is to give permission to innovate and experiment, unleashing the creative potential of a very talented group of public servants. As a result, BJS is embarking upon a number of key initiatives:

“ It would be unrealistic to expect BJS's financial resources to expand as rapidly as the issues we are tasked to benchmark. The challenges that confront the criminal justice system multiply as those who would break the law continue to innovate – think of the new challenges of identity theft, Internet crime, human trafficking, et cetera. ”

- BJS is becoming increasingly sophisticated in its use of information technology and scientific methodologies in carrying out data collection programs and disseminating findings (for example, we have adopted Audio Computer Assisted Self-Interview [ACASI] technology for the Prison Rape Elimination Act inmate surveys).
- With support from both management and staff, BJS is making its "move into the 21st century" by looking at ways to implement electronic Web-based content and assist staff (analysts, management, and publication professionals) in transferring skills into new processes that benefit users of BJS products. At this point, BJS has identified three needs: to improve the untapped potential of team members by increasing their understanding of online information structure, specifically as it relates to online text (writing for the Web) and

visual presentation of online data; to reshape the organizational process to reflect changes in products, services, and modes of dissemination; and to develop electronic content that supports user groups by being more desirable, valuable, useful, and usable. To guide us through addressing each of these needs, we have contracted for the services of an information architect.

- Already underway is a major new initiative in collaboration with the FBI to provide a single national portal for all crime statistics. In addition, BJS has begun the transition from paper-based data collection to direct Internet submission of information to a database. New capabilities, emerging technologies, more efficient computer languages, and improved standards offer promising improvements for the way BJS collects justice statistics. BJS will continue to increase its use of the Web to collect administrative data from state and local criminal justice agencies aimed at minimizing respondent burden, achieving cost-savings, and improving data quality and timeliness.
- BJS is initiating a comprehensive evaluation by the Committee on National Statistics (CNSTAT) of the National Academies of Science that will examine the full range of its programs to determine ways to improve the relevance, quality, and cost-effectiveness of justice statistics. The review will: examine the ways in which BJS statistics are used by Congress, executive agencies, the courts, state and local agencies, and researchers in order to determine the impact of BJS programs and the means to enhance that impact; assess the organization of BJS and its relationships with other data gathering entities in the Department of Justice, as well as with state and local governments; and identify priority uses for funding that may be obtained through budget initiatives or reallocation of resources within the agency. As part of the CNSTAT evaluation, BJS will undertake a review to evaluate alternative options for conducting the National Crime Victimization Survey, which is the largest BJS program, taking up 57% of our budget.

This is an ambitious agenda, but one that we hope will keep BJS at the cutting edge of criminal justice information collection, analysis, and dissemination. We've started on a long and exciting journey at BJS; I look forward to giving you periodic updates along the way! 🚀

(ICD, from p. 3)

Current Status

There are currently 16 agencies committed to participating in the ICD system, as outlined in Table 1. All of these agencies have signed Memoranda of Understanding and 8 have submitted data. The NCOVR Center is in the process of converting these data to fit the system parameters and developing the COGNOS cubes.


JRSA's Role

As discussed in previous *Forum* articles, JRSA's role in the project was to gather data and information on current sharing/integration efforts and their uses for policymaking and to identify needs and capacities for data usage. Information gathered at regional focus groups was used to develop surveys for police chiefs and data analysts. These surveys, distrib-

Table 1. ICD Participants

State	Agency
Delaware	Dover PD
Georgia	Atlanta PD Cobb County PD DeKalb County PD East Point PD Fulton PD Griffin PD Marietta PD Riverdale PD
Kentucky	Lexington PD
Louisiana	Lake Charles PD
South Carolina	N. Charleston PD
Texas	Houston PD Overland Park PD Waco PD
Utah	Salt Lake City PD

uted in 2004, asked about the data currently being used in law enforcement agencies, as well as the data that would be helpful if available. The surveys also focused on how the data are used in agencies and by community leaders. Respondents were asked about the collection of incident-based data and the impediments to reporting to the National Incident-Based Reporting System.

In 2006, additional surveys were designed to identify information-sharing systems currently in use and being developed to share police information between agencies. These surveys were distributed via email and also made available online. For more information on the ICD project and to see the JRSA project findings, visit the project Web site, <http://www.cjgsu.net/initiatives/ICD.htm>, or contact Robbie Friedmann of Georgia State University (gilee@gsu.edu). 

The JRSA Forum is supported by the U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics. JRSA is a national nonprofit organization. For membership or other information, call (202) 842-9330, e-mail cjinfo@jrsa.org, or visit our Web site: <http://www.jrsa.org>.

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