

Safeguards

Security precautions will be taken to maintain both the internal integrity of the system and freedom of use by the participating agencies. Interchanges of facts within the system will be made to users on a confidential basis within specific legal, right-to-know and need-to-know requirements. Users will be restricted to a defined category of public officials and agencies. Information will not be available to the general public, subjects of investigation, news media, or private attorneys. If so requested, selective, highly sensitive data will be tagged in the system to insure that its distribution is under the exclusive control of the contributing agency.

Following the commission of a crime, the investigating agency assembles various forms of investigative leads and potential evidence—physical or otherwise—such as testimony. These include latent fingerprints, intelligence data, photographs, handwriting samples, and descriptions of property left at the scene of the crime.

In addition, it attempts to furnish descriptions of the manner in which the crime is committed and, if possible, a description of the alleged criminal. This material, transmitted to the central facility, is compared to relevant files that are stored either in the computer or on microfilm.

If any of these comparisons are successful in providing a match, the system supplies the investigating agency with a list of possible suspects. Upon request, it will provide further specific information that may be stored in this system concerning these suspects.

In addition, the system maintains continually updated information on open cases and stolen property. When the investigating agency arrests a suspect, and if the crime is a felony, the agency prepares an arrest report and a fingerprint card, which are transmitted to the central facility by means of a facsimile transmission device.

There, names and prints are searched for a match with relevant files. If either search is successful, the criminal record is retrieved from the computer and sent to the arresting agency. This agency takes the criminal record together with available intelligence information along with the suspect into court for arraignment and determination of bail.

In the meantime, the system notifies the judicial conference, the court monitoring agency in the State, of the arrest so that the conference can keep track of the court transactions with its own data processing system.

The district attorney begins to prepare his case. He may ask the system for additional relevant information on the crime, including a list of unsolved crimes that resemble the one being prosecuted. If any of the unsolved crimes listed by the computer can be associated with the suspect, they may also become the subject of a prosecution.

If conviction results, the court may ask the probation officer to make a pre-sentence investigation. He may begin his work by obtaining background data on the defendant and on his crime from the system.

If the defendant is sentenced to an institution or put on probation, the appropriate agency registers its custody and any significant events happening during custody with the system. If the offender is placed under parole supervision, a similar process takes place. In this way, the system keeps track of the individual as he moves from one custodian to another and stores this record in the event of any future contact with the State. The data base of the system is thus continually enriched. In summary, a variety of users, each concerned with a particular aspect of the administration of criminal justice, are served by the system.

This system represents a considerable advance in the coordination of relevant facts that, up to now, have not been coordinated and, as a result, are not readily accessible in the complex interrelationships among agencies involved.

The objective of the system is to collect, maintain, and coordinate the maximum amount of relevant data for New York State and local user agencies.

The concept is to provide, through a data processing system, a central store of accurate, complete, and timely information while reducing redundancy and mass of the data and bringing about long-range financial benefits.

SYSTEM IMPLEMENTATION

Building blocks approach

In order to implement the system, a "building blocks" approach was evolved: particular sets of operational capabilities (including the techniques and data) will be produced for the system in modules or blocks; at the same time, system