



Bureau of Justice Statistics Technical Report

State Criminal Records Repositories

A State central repository is a State agency that maintains comprehensive files of criminal history record information covering persons who are processed by the criminal justice system. For 15 years the repositories have been the focus of a data-gathering effort more massive and more coordinated than any other in criminal justice. There has been extensive Federal involvement in the planning and financing of the development of repositories, automation of their data bases, interstate exchange and indexing of criminal record information, and development of statistical capabilities.

This report presents the results of a survey of the administrators of State central repositories conducted in December of 1984 by SEARCH Group, Inc. Fifty-three jurisdictions were asked for information about their central repositories: the 50 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. Responses were received from 47 States. (Oklahoma, Rhode Island, Tennessee, and the three non-State jurisdictions did not respond.) Nevada had no central repository in December 1984.

Size and growth of data bases

The States were asked to provide counts or estimates of the number of subject records held and of the number of arrests and final dispositions reported to the central repository in the years 1981-83. A "subject record" is a record pertaining to a specific

Nine years ago in the "Privacy and Security Planning Instructions" issued by the National Criminal Justice Information and Statistics Service (the predecessor agency of the Bureau of Justice Statistics), the Federal Government provided guidelines to the States recommending the establishment of centralized criminal history record repositories to serve the needs of all criminal justice agencies in the States. The purpose was to simplify the problem of disposition reporting and to ensure that criminal justice agencies used and disseminated the most current and accurate data available. Completeness and accuracy of criminal history record information are important both for operational criminal justice use and for offender-based transaction statistics reported to BJS.

person who has entered the criminal justice system.

Forty-four States provided counts or estimates of the number of subject records maintained in central repository data bases (table 1). These States reported an estimated total of about 35 million subject records. This does not necessarily mean, however, that 35 million Americans have criminal records maintained in State

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This BJS technical report presents findings of a survey of State repository administrators conducted in December of 1984 by SEARCH Group Inc. This survey provides the first composite picture of the number of subject records in State repositories, the number of arrests and final dispositions reported each year, the extent of automation of repository data, the legal requirements on law enforcement agencies for disposition reporting, and the production of statistical reports by the repositories. Such information should be useful to those who administer the State repositories, to criminal justice practitioners generally, to those who influence State policy on repositories, and to the research community.

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Director

repositories, since two or more records may exist for the same person. The American criminal justice system is decentralized, with the powers to make and enforce criminal law vested in each State. Accordingly, a person will have a separate record in each different State where he or she has been involved with the criminal justice system. Moreover, in a single State one person may have multiple records because of failure to make positive identification

Table 1. Number of subject records in State criminal history repositories, 1984

Responding States	Estimated number of subject records in repository data bases
Total	34,676,603*
Alabama	900,000*
Alaska	124,416
Arizona	500,449
Arkansas	550,114
California	3,600,000*
Colorado	336,329
Connecticut	30,000*
Delaware	206,014
Florida	1,651,671
Georgia	782,000*
Hawaii	203,582
Idaho	137,136
Illinois	1,900,000*
Indiana	375,000*
Iowa	275,000*
Kansas	400,000*
Kentucky	297,000*
Louisiana	261,406
Maine	285,000*
Maryland	250,000*
Massachusetts	6,000,000*
Michigan	668,819
Minnesota	143,000*
Missouri	503,000*
Montana	70,670
Nebraska	180,000*
New Hampshire	135,000*
New Jersey	1,000,000*
New York	4,000,000*
North Carolina	306,724
North Dakota	179,544
Ohio	1,541,309*
Oregon	337,644
Pennsylvania	1,053,339
South Carolina	383,934
South Dakota	150,000*
Texas	3,000,960
Utah	226,278
Vermont	150,000*
Virginia	570,000*
Washington	275,000*
West Virginia	192,100
Wisconsin	371,565
Wyoming	52,100

NOTE: The District of Columbia, Oklahoma, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, Tennessee, and the Virgin Islands did not respond to the questionnaire. Mississippi and New Mexico did not report the number of records in the State repository. Nevada does not have a State repository.
*Estimate provided by Survey respondents.

or linkage when arrests occurred in different jurisdictions within the State. Finally, the number of records may be inflated through failure to purge the records of those who die.

Approximately 4 million arrests were reported in 1983 to the repositories in the 39 States that provided information, covering 83% of the Nation's population (table 2); and almost 2 million final dispositions were reported in the same year to the 30 States with data, covering 59% of the Nation's population (table 3). Both the number of arrests and of final dispositions

Table 2. Number of arrests reported to State criminal history repositories, 1981-83

Responding States	1981	1982	1983
Total	3,979,065	4,046,147	4,043,777 ^a
Alabama	117,854	137,930	146,913
Alaska	16,713	20,740	18,453
Arizona	55,364	55,146	52,361
Arkansas	17,246	14,187	10,863
California	787,180	673,653	687,744
Colorado ^{b,c}	68,900	77,000	76,800
Connecticut	104,308	105,399	104,419
Delaware	42,855	44,299	43,986
Florida	393,556	449,761	399,100
Hawaii ^b	22,063	21,414	21,025
Idaho	43,475	38,965	38,349
Illinois ^c	263,704	244,799	246,749
Indiana	54,438	48,724	49,999
Iowa	26,073	28,064	29,171
Kansas	29,113	32,170	32,898
Kentucky	...	...	46,355
Louisiana	108,856	114,523	109,512
Maine	6,456	6,368	5,609
Massachusetts ^b	235,000	230,000	220,000
Michigan	126,004	129,245	131,364
Minnesota	15,697	18,026	20,338
Missouri	39,976	40,535	46,088
Montana	20,886	21,695	26,176
Nebraska	12,472	11,605	11,656
New Hampshire	38,017	35,852	33,638
New Jersey	88,375	91,572	94,108
New York	351,665	385,839	394,839
North Carolina	52,241	62,562	44,482
North Dakota	2,073	2,345	4,077
Ohio	92,923	93,844	89,710
Oregon	64,231	67,493	64,333
Pennsylvania	116,648	127,570	138,440
South Carolina ^c	97,404	105,145	113,747
South Dakota ^c	12,780	15,117	16,515
Texas	329,738	369,420	381,695
Utah	26,076	28,784	25,523
Washington	57,634	61,009	61,980
West Virginia	25,071	18,956	35,866
Wyoming	16,000 ^b	16,391	15,253

NOTE: In addition to the nonresponding States and territories (the District of Columbia, Oklahoma, Nevada, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, Tennessee and Virgin Islands), the other States not included in this table did not report the number of arrests.
^aExcludes Kentucky, for which data were not reported in 1981 or 1982.
^bEstimate provided by survey respondent.
^cFiscal year, July-June.
...not available.

reported to repositories showed a slight increase between 1981 and 1983.

A very large majority of the records in State central repositories pertain to adults. More than half of the responding States (26) indicated that they had no juvenile records or that records pertaining to juveniles are not retained. Of the other 20 respondents, only two indicated that juvenile records make up as much as 5% of the data base.

Data base automation

Much of the information contained in central repository data bases and, more particularly, much of the information pertaining to offenders who are currently active, is contained in automated files. Thirty-five States now have at least some automated criminal history record information (CHRI) (table 4). Steady gains are being made

in increased automation of criminal records. Among the survey respondents, 27 States had at least partially automated CHRI as of 1981. Three States began automation during 1982 (Louisiana, Montana, New Hampshire). Three more began automating CHRI in 1983 (Arizona, Connecticut, Wyoming). Two additional States (Idaho, Pennsylvania) began automation in 1984. Among the 11 States reporting that they currently have only manual CHRI, 3 stated that automation plans are under way (Maine, Vermont, and Wisconsin).

Five States (Alaska, Hawaii, Oregon, Utah, Washington) reported complete automation of State-held CHRI. Thirty States reported partial automation in varying degrees. The most common form of partial automation, reported by 11 States, is "day one" conversion of records of active subjects. Starting on the date that the

Table 3. Number of final dispositions reported to State criminal history repositories, 1981-83

Responding States	1981	1982	1983
Total	1,813,770	1,791,738	1,874,825 ^a
Alaska ^b	14,000	18,500	16,600
Arizona	63,085	67,338	59,856
Arkansas	4,933	5,079	3,964
California ^{b,c}	590,000	590,000	590,000
Colorado ^{b,c}	19,800	17,800	24,600
Connecticut	144,918	115,360	110,293
Delaware	21,226	22,735	20,845
Florida	217,092	153,815	171,269
Hawaii	21,536	20,866	21,811
Indiana	17,138	34,124	30,866
Kansas	23,844	22,669	24,701
Kentucky	...	...	25,215
Louisiana	21,928	14,526	19,482
Maine	2,281	1,505	1,941
Michigan	53,439	54,160	54,692
Minnesota	16,832	19,623	24,021
Nebraska	...	...	16,195
New Hampshire	36,009	35,186	32,198
New Jersey	91,765	90,271	95,594
North Carolina	32,803	66,436	66,202
North Dakota	1,144	1,513	2,296
Ohio ^b	41,815	42,247	40,370
Oregon	45,433	43,038	50,353
South Carolina ^c	128,518	131,929	162,412
Texas	84,305	97,874	113,090
Utah ^b	20,000	20,000	20,000
Washington	37,244	39,808	41,825
West Virginia ^b	3,877	4,141	12,788
Wisconsin ^b	43,405	45,995	49,036
Wyoming ^b	15,400	15,200	13,720

NOTE: For survey purposes, "final disposition" was defined as "police have elected not to refer the matter to a prosecutor, ... prosecutor has elected not to commence criminal proceedings, or ... judicial decision has been rendered." In addition to the nonresponding States and territories (the District of Columbia, Oklahoma, Nevada, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, Tennessee and Virgin Islands), the other States not included in this table did not report the number of dispositions.
^aExcludes Kentucky and Nebraska, for which data were not reported in 1981 or 1982.
^bEstimate provided by survey respondent.
^cFiscal year, July-June.
...not available.

automated system becomes operational, all new arrests reported to the repository are entered into the automated system. In addition, any previous manual record pertaining to the subject of a new arrest is automated at the time of the new arrest. Five other States follow the "day one" conversion procedure and, in addition, automate the manual records of the subjects of CHRI inquiries. Six additional States use "day one" conversion and also have, or have had, programs resulting in bulk conversion of a portion of their inactive manual records.

Two States perform only partial conversions of existing manual records of active subjects. Delaware does not automate data relating to arrests prior to 1972. Pennsylvania converts data on no more than three prior arrests when automating a record.

Six States create and maintain automated records for only certain active persons. Alabama, Minnesota, and New Hampshire automate new arrests only for subjects who have no

prior manual record. If a manual record exists, it is maintained and is updated by adding the new arrest. Ohio follows a similar policy, but prior manual records may be automated if they are short. Iowa automates subject records only where an FBI number is available; records of other subjects are maintained in a manual system. Before 1985, Virginia did not automate records of first arrests. Such records were maintained manually; they would be automated when a second arrest occurred. In 1985 Virginia began to automate records of all new arrests.

Reporting of dispositions

Much of the data that is maintained by a State central repository consists of dispositions that are reported to the repository by the various agencies that comprise the criminal justice system in the State. There are differences among the States in the reporting of dispositions by the several parts of the criminal justice system, both in the scope of reporting and in whether such

Table 4. Extent of automated name indexes and criminal histories on State repositories, 1984

Responding States	Automated name index	Automated criminal histories
Alabama	Yes	Partial
Alaska	Yes	Yes
Arizona	Yes	Partial
Arkansas	Partial	Partial
California	Yes	Partial
Colorado	Yes	Partial
Connecticut	Yes	Partial
Delaware	Yes	Partial
Florida	Yes	Partial
Georgia	Yes	Partial
Hawaii	Yes	Yes
Idaho	Yes	Partial
Illinois	Partial	Partial
Indiana	Partial	No
Iowa	Yes	Partial
Kansas	Partial	No
Kentucky	Partial	Partial
Louisiana	Yes	Partial
Maine	No	No
Maryland	Yes	Partial
Massachusetts	No	No
Michigan	Partial	Partial
Minnesota	Yes	Partial
Mississippi	No	No
Missouri	Yes	Partial
Montana	No	Partial
Nebraska	Partial	Partial
New Hampshire	Yes	Partial
New Jersey	Partial	Partial
New Mexico	Partial	No
New York	Partial	Partial
North Carolina	Yes	Partial
North Dakota	No	No
Ohio	Partial	Partial
Oregon	Yes	Yes
Pennsylvania	Yes	Partial
South Carolina	Yes	Partial
South Dakota	Partial	No
Texas	Yes	Partial
Utah	Partial	Yes
Vermont	No	No
Virginia	Yes	Partial
Washington	Yes	Yes
West Virginia	No	No
Wisconsin	Yes	No
Wyoming	Partial	Partial

NOTE: The District of Columbia, Oklahoma, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, Tennessee, and Virgin Islands did not respond to questionnaire. Nevada does not have a State repository.

reporting is mandatory or voluntary (table 5).

Two States, Connecticut and Montana, do not include correctional dispositions in their criminal history records. Virginia does not include local corrections dispositions. Wisconsin does not include conditional release disposition data.

Reporting of court dispositions is mandatory in 35 States, either by statute or by administrative policy. Only 17 States have mandatory reporting of parole and probation release data. Reporting of law enforcement dispositions is mandatory in 34 States.

Thirty-one States mandate reporting of State corrections admissions; 29 mandate reporting of releases from State corrections. Twenty-three States mandate the reporting of prosecutorial dispositions. Local corrections reporting is mandatory in 21 States.

Respondents were asked to estimate the percentages of dispositions that are reported to the repository. The resulting data do not permit firm conclusions to be drawn. For most disposition categories, fewer than half of the responding States were able to provide estimates and these show very wide variations from State to State.

A few generalizations, however, can be drawn from the responses. The highest reporting percentages are found in reporting from State corrections agencies; overall, they are estimated to report nearly 95% of dispositions. The lowest overall reporting percentages are for law enforcement dispositions, prosecution dispositions, and local corrections; it is estimated that only about half of these dispositions are reported.

Not surprisingly, the average reporting percentages are substantially higher in States with mandatory reporting than in States where reporting is voluntary. This is true of each disposition category.

Data base quality

According to the repository administrators, there has been a significant and continuing trend of improvement in the completeness and accuracy of data bases maintained by the repositories. With regard to the percentages of dispositions that are reported to the repository, 32 States reported significant improvement in the recent past, or anticipated improvement in the near future, or both. Nineteen of these States noted past improvement in reporting percentages, and 26 identified ongoing or planned activities expected to have a significant positive impact.

With regard to the accuracy of records in the repository, 35 States reported recent improvement, anticipated future improvement, or both. Of these, 23 noted significant improvement in data accuracy in recent years, and 27 identified current activities or plans expressly designed to improve accuracy or expected to provide improvement as a byproduct.

Overall, only 7 of 44 repositories responding to questions in this portion

Table 5. Requirements for reporting dispositions to State criminal history repositories, mandatory vs. voluntary, 1984

Responding States	Law enforcement	Courts	Prosecution	State corrections	Local corrections	Parole	Probation
Alabama	Mandatory	Mandatory	Voluntary	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory
Alaska	Mandatory	Voluntary	Voluntary	Mandatory	Mandatory	Voluntary	Voluntary
Arizona	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Voluntary	Voluntary	Voluntary	Voluntary
Arkansas	Voluntary	Voluntary	Voluntary	Voluntary	Voluntary	Voluntary	Voluntary
California	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Voluntary	Voluntary
Colorado	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory
Connecticut ^{a,b}	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory
Delaware	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory
Florida	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory
Georgia	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory
Hawaii	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory
Idaho	Mandatory	Mandatory	Voluntary	Mandatory	Voluntary	Voluntary	Voluntary
Illinois	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory
Indiana	Mandatory	Mandatory	Voluntary	Mandatory	Mandatory	Voluntary	Voluntary
Iowa	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Voluntary	Voluntary
Kansas	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	...	...	...
Kentucky	Mandatory	Voluntary	Voluntary	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory
Louisiana	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory
Maine	Mandatory	Mandatory	Voluntary	Voluntary	Voluntary	Voluntary	Voluntary
Maryland	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory
Massachusetts	Mandatory	Mandatory	...	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory
Michigan	Mandatory	Voluntary	Voluntary	Voluntary	Voluntary	Voluntary	Voluntary
Minnesota	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory
Mississippi	Voluntary	Voluntary	Voluntary	Mandatory	Voluntary	Voluntary	Voluntary
Missouri	Voluntary	Voluntary	Voluntary	Voluntary	Voluntary	Voluntary	Voluntary
Montana ^b	Mandatory	Mandatory	Voluntary	...	...	...	...
Nebraska	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory
N. Hampshire ^a	Mandatory	Mandatory	...	Both ^c	Mandatory	Voluntary	Voluntary
New Jersey	Voluntary	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	...	Mandatory
New Mexico	Voluntary	Voluntary	Voluntary	Voluntary	Voluntary	Voluntary	Voluntary
New York	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Both ^c	Mandatory	Voluntary	Voluntary
N. Carolina	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	...	...	...	...
N. Dakota	Mandatory	Voluntary	Voluntary	Voluntary	Voluntary	Voluntary	Voluntary
Ohio	Voluntary	Voluntary	Voluntary	Voluntary	Voluntary	Voluntary	Voluntary
Oregon	Voluntary	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Voluntary	Voluntary	Voluntary
Pennsylvania	Voluntary	Mandatory	Voluntary	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory
S. Carolina	Voluntary	Voluntary	Voluntary	Voluntary	Voluntary	Voluntary	Voluntary
S. Dakota	Voluntary	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Voluntary	Voluntary	Voluntary
Texas	Voluntary	Voluntary	Voluntary	Voluntary	Voluntary	Voluntary	Voluntary
Utah	Mandatory	Mandatory	Voluntary	Mandatory	Voluntary	Mandatory	Voluntary
Vermont	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Voluntary	Voluntary	Voluntary	Voluntary
Virginia ^{a,d}	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	...	Mandatory	Mandatory
Washington ^e	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Voluntary	...	...	...
W. Virginia	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Voluntary	Voluntary	Voluntary
Wisconsin	Mandatory	Mandatory	Voluntary	Mandatory	Voluntary	Mandatory	Voluntary
Wyoming	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Voluntary	Mandatory	Mandatory

NOTE: The District of Columbia, Oklahoma, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, Tennessee, and the Virgin Islands did not respond to the questionnaire. Nevada did not then have a State repository in operation.

^aDispositions are reported by the courts.

^bCorrections disposition data are not included in Criminal History Record Information.

^cAdmissions data are mandatory; release data are voluntary.

^dLocal corrections disposition data are not included in Criminal History Record Information.

^eAll corrections disposition data for Criminal History Record Information are reported through State Department of Corrections.

^fAdmissions data only.

...not available.

of the survey did not indicate current progress in improving completeness or accuracy.

A wide variety of activities were cited as reasons for improvement or expected improvement. There was considerable overlap between the stated means of achieving increased completeness and improved accuracy, suggesting that improvements in both areas often go hand in hand. Increased automation was one of the most frequently cited reasons for improve-

ment. Initiating or increasing the automation of repository data was mentioned in eight responses. Automation of information processing by source agencies and automated reporting were mentioned by 13 States, with three specific mentions of prosecution management systems.

Interagency cooperation among State-level agencies with common information goals was a second theme. Active involvement of the State court administrator's office as the primary

collection agency for court dispositions was cited eight times as the reason for improvements in both quantity and quality of disposition reporting. Reconciliation of different State-level data bases with overlapping content was cited in four responses.

Periodic audits were noted as a source of improvement a total of 12 times, with 6 responses mentioning audits of the repository data base and 6 mentioning audits of source agencies. Other frequently cited reasons for improvement included increased editing and quality control at the repository, systematic flagging and solicitation of missing dispositions, training of source agency personnel, changes in reporting laws, and implementation of a tracking number system for arrest and disposition reporting.

Statistical utilization

The survey requested information about the utilization of criminal history data bases for statistical purposes. The responses indicated that 17 central repositories currently produce statistical outputs on a routine basis, and 11 repositories have current capabilities of producing, or have at some time produced, nonroutine statistical outputs (table 6). Twelve repositories reported plans for future statistical activities utilizing criminal history record information. Overall, the central repositories in 20 States are producing or have produced statistical outputs derived in some way from criminal history record. Eight of these repositories report plans for expanded activity in the future. Four central repositories that have not to date undertaken statistical activities noted future plans in this area.

Although nearly half of the responding repositories noted current or past statistical activity, the reported overall level of activity was quite low. Of the repositories reporting routine statistical outputs, most identified only one or two such reports. Of 32 routine statistical reports identified in the responses, 25 consist of management and administrative statistics for use in direct support of repository operations, rather than for analysis of the data's substance. They include such reports as activity volume by type of transaction, contributing agency, or individual employee; counts of receipts and rejections (fingerprints, dispositions); and data base size and growth. In addition, a number of error listings, missing data listings, and exception reports were identified.

Of the repositories that reported

Table 6. Statistical reports from State criminal history repositories, 1984

Responding States	Statistical data produced	
	Routine	Special
Alabama	No	No
Alaska	No	No
Arizona	No	No
Arkansas	Yes	No
California	Yes	Yes
Colorado	Yes	Yes
Connecticut	No	No
Delaware	Yes	Yes
Florida	No	No
Georgia	Yes	Yes
Hawaii	No	No
Idaho	Yes	No
Illinois	Yes	Yes
Indiana	Yes	No
Iowa	No	No
Kansas	No	No
Kentucky	No	No
Louisiana	No	No
Maine	Yes	Yes
Maryland	No	No
Massachusetts	No	No
Michigan	No	No
Minnesota	No	Yes
Mississippi	No	No
Missouri	No	No
Montana	No	No
Nebraska	Yes	No
New Hampshire	No	No
New Jersey	No	No
New Mexico	Yes	No
New York	Yes	Yes
North Carolina	Yes	Yes
North Dakota	No	No
Ohio	No	No
Oregon	No	No
Pennsylvania	No	Yes
South Carolina	No	No
South Dakota	Yes	No
Texas	Yes	No
Utah	No	Yes
Vermont	No	No
Virginia	Yes	No
Washington	No	No
West Virginia	No	No
Wisconsin	Yes	No
Wyoming	No	No

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special statistical outputs, only four indicated extensive activity. North Carolina identified several types of special reports that were generated in response to specific outside requests. California, Colorado, and New York indicated both the ability to respond to a wide range of information requests and a high volume of activity in producing nonroutine statistical reports. California estimated that it responds to 350 information requests each year.

With the exception of New Hampshire, Pennsylvania and Washington, those repositories that indicated that statistical outputs could be made available at all stated that they are

generally available to all categories of potential users.

Part of the reason why there is not greater use of central repository data for substantive statistical analysis is because the primary function of the repository is to collect, organize, and disseminate information pertaining to individuals. Where resources are limited, as is often the case, this work must be given priority. A number of repositories indicated that maintenance of general operations, automation of records, and improvement of reporting and response take precedence over the development of specific statistical capabilities.

Because the administrators were asked to describe only statistical reports produced by the repository itself and not those produced by others from the repository's data base, it seems likely that the responses do not present a complete picture of statistical utilization of repository data. In this regard, it is noteworthy that those repositories reporting the most extensive statistical activities are in States where the central repository and the State's Statistical Analysis Center (SAC) are parts of the same agency and where SAC activities are included in the repository's response. Also, four repositories that reported no statistical products at all noted specifically that in their States statistical work is done by the SAC, not the repository.

These reports suggest a greater potential for substantive statistical analysis based on repository data than might at first appear from the survey's findings. Because many States still lack automation of criminal history data bases and even those with automation suffer from incomplete disposition reporting, the development of a 50-State statistical base appears to be many years off. For the near future, a more fruitful approach will be studies based on data from a small number of States with reliable and comparable data.

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