



Bureau of Justice Statistics Strategic Plan FY 2003-2004

August 2002

Introduction

The Bureau of Justice Statistics — BJS — was established on December 27, 1979, under the Justice Systems Improvement Act of 1979, an amendment to the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968. Previous criminal justice statistical efforts were authorized within the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration created by the 1968 Act. As the statistical arm of the Department, BJS is responsible for the collection, analysis, publication, and dissemination of statistical information on crime, criminal offenders, victims of crime, and the operations of justice systems at all levels of government.

Since its inception, BJS has emerged as the principal fact-finding agency in the Nation, dealing with the administration of American justice. BJS's most fundamental accomplishment is providing accurate and objective information to Federal, State, and local policymakers in combating crime and ensuring that justice is both efficient and evenhanded. Whether through national data collection or assistance to States and communities, BJS's paramount goal is to improve the quality of our national intelligence on crime and justice and to enhance the quality of the debate concerning societal policies.

BJS is dedicated to developing, maintaining, and disseminating all of its statistics in accordance with the highest professional and statistical standards. BJS has long maintained the strongest commitment to integrity and objectivity while striving to produce impartial, timely, and accurate statistics

as established in its governing statute. In carrying out its mission, BJS adheres to the principles and practices established by the Federal statistical community.

BJS maintains over three dozen major statistical series designed to cover every stage of the criminal justice system. BJS statistics are published annually on the following topics: criminal victimization, populations under correctional supervision, and Federal criminal offenders and case processing.

In addition to its annual series, BJS maintains periodic data series that cover the following:

- the administration of law enforcement agencies and correctional facilities
- prosecutorial practices and policies
- State court case processing
- felony convictions
- characteristics of correctional populations
- criminal justice expenditure and employment
- civil case processing in State courts
- special studies on other criminal justice topics.

BJS provides financial and technical support to State and local governments to develop their capabilities to provide criminal justice statistics, particularly targeting the development of information systems to foster participation in national statistical programs —

- implementing the National Incident-Based Reporting System
- improving the accuracy, utility, and interstate accessibility of criminal history records

- enhancing the availability and completeness of records of protective orders involving domestic violence and stalking
- enhancing the availability of sex offender records
- improving automated identification systems and other State systems supporting national records systems and their use for background checks.

Principles and Practices for a Federal Statistical Agency

- ♦ A clearly-defined and well-accepted mission
- ♦ A strong position of independence
- ♦ Continual development of more useful data
- ♦ Openness about the data provided
- ♦ Wide dissemination of data
- ♦ Cooperation with data users
- ♦ Fair treatment of data providers
- ♦ Commitment to quality and professional standards of practice
- ♦ An active research program
- ♦ Professional advancement of staff
- ♦ Coordination and cooperation with other statistical agencies.

Source: 2001 National Research Council report, *Principles and Practices for a Federal Statistical Agency* (National Academy Press, 2nd ed., 2001)

BJS provides technical expertise on issues relating to criminal records policy, covering topics such as State criminal history record procedures and systems, privacy and security standards, and interstate exchange of criminal history records for noncriminal justice purposes.

Performance Mandate

In recent years, the Department, the Office of Justice Programs, and the Federal Government in general, has begun implementing performance-based management and budgeting. At its core, performance-based management encourages organizations to focus on its mission, agree on goals, and report results — a process which is designed to guide the agency toward improved performance. Congress has mandated performance-based management primarily through the enactment of the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 which requires agencies to identify their strategic goals and the outcomes necessary to achieve these goals.

Organization of BJS's Plan

The following plan includes four main components:

- I. Overview of recent crime and justice trends for purposes of identifying and measuring the problem
- II. Statement of BJS mission, strategic goals, and performance measurement concepts
- III. Description of each strategic goal and associated outcomes
- IV. Description of the role of professional review in strategic and program planning.

Section I. **Overview of recent crime and justice trends: Identifying and measuring the problem**

Violence

Law Enforcement

Prosecution and Adjudication

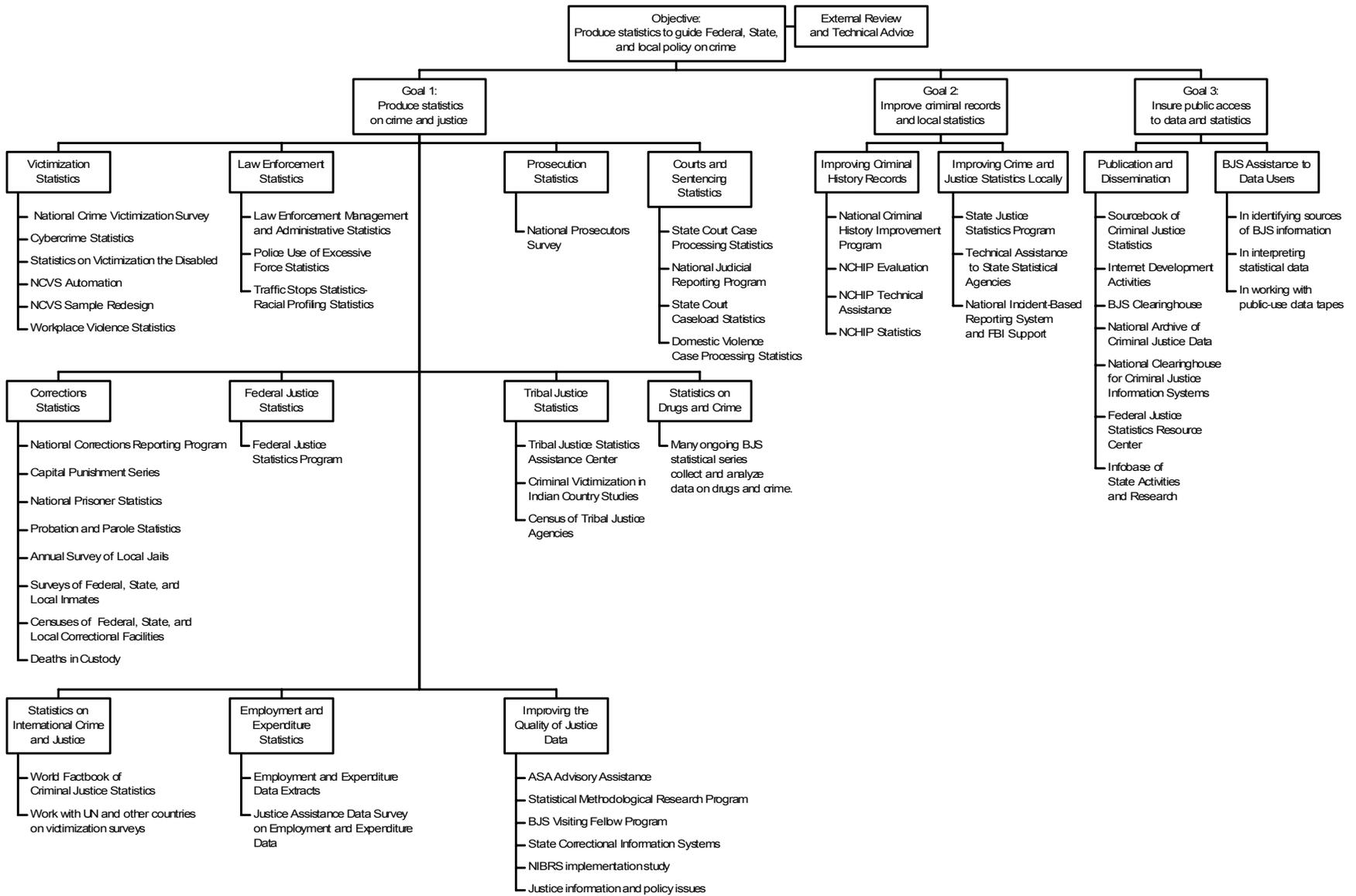
Corrections

Federal Criminal Justice

Fairness in the Criminal Justice System

Criminal History Records

**Figure 1. Strategic Plan for the Bureau of Justice Statistics:
Strategies to Achieve the Objective with Principal Series and State and Local Assistance Programs**



I. Overview of recent crime and justice trends

As the national repository for statistical information on crime and the administration of justice, BJS maintains data on victimizations experienced by the public and the response of the nearly 50,000 offices and agencies which compose the criminal justice system. This section of the plan briefly presents key facts and nationwide trends. BJS is a user of its own data in carrying out program planning, development, and implementation. In order to successfully fulfill emerging data needs and build long-term statistical series for longitudinal and trend analyses, it is necessary to be informed about the major developments in crime and justice and challenges facing the criminal justice system.

Violence

Serious violent crime (murder, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault) has continued to decline as measured through both victim accounts and the number of incidents reported to law enforcement agencies. The number of these violent crimes experienced by the public in 2000 was the lowest recorded since 1973 when BJS initiated collecting data from crime victims.

- The per capita rate of homicide in 2000, about 5.5 per 100,000 persons, is the lowest recorded since the mid-1960's and reflects a decline of 33% since 1995.

- In 2000, there were an estimated 533,000 serious violent crimes in which the victim faced an offender armed with a firearm, accounting for about 23% of all serious violent crime. Victims receiving a gunshot wound accounted for less than 1% of those experiencing these serious violent crimes. In 2000, there were an estimated 10,182 murders with firearms, about two-thirds of all murders that year.

- Just over 4% of murders in 2000 were identified as drug-related by local law enforcement agencies. About 1 in 6 victims of violence believed the offender had been using drugs at the time of the offense. Based on self-reports from probationers, jail inmates, and those serving time in Federal and State prisons, an estimated 20% of convicted offenders had been using drugs at the

time they committed the offense for which they were convicted. This translates into about 1.1 million offenders involved with the criminal justice system nationwide. Offender use of alcohol at the time of the offense was described about twice as often as drug use by both victims and offenders.

School crime Data for the school year ending June 30, 1999, indicate that there were 47 school-associated violent deaths including 38 homicides, 6 suicides, and 2 teenagers killed by a law enforcement officer in the line of duty, and 1 unintentional death. During 1999, there were an estimated 186,000 serious violent crimes against schoolchildren (ages 12-18) while at school and an estimated 476,000 away from school.

Law Enforcement

In 2000, approximately 17,000 State and local law enforcement agencies nationwide employed nearly 700,000 full-time law enforcement officers. There are 69 Federal law enforcement agencies employing more than 88,000 persons with arrest powers and authority to carry a firearm.

In 2000, State and local law enforcement agencies made about 14 million arrests; of these, nearly 1.6 million were for drug violations (11%), 625,000 were for violent crimes (4%), and 159,000 (1%) were for weapons violations. In 2000, Federal law

enforcement officers made almost 116,000 arrests; of these, 32,630 (28%) were for drug violations, 5,203 were for weapons offenses (5%), and about 4,250 (4%) were for violent crimes.

Prosecution and Adjudication

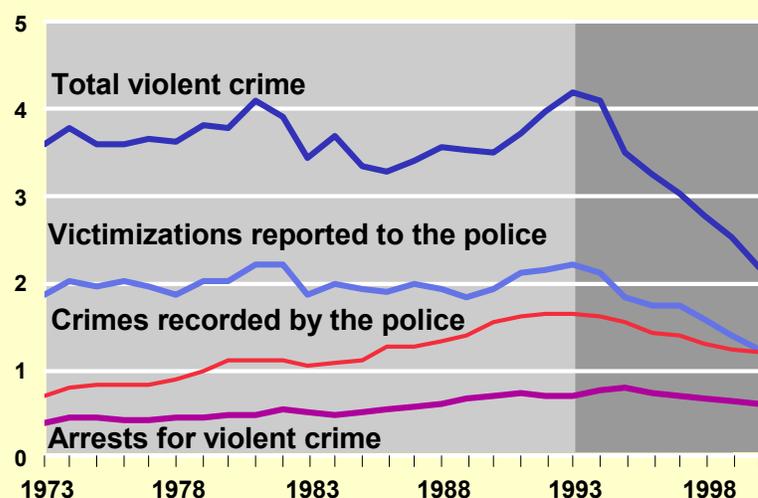
State courts convict an average of about 1 million persons of a felony each year. Violent felonies account for about 17% of the total conviction caseload, property offenses compose 30% of all felony convictions, drug offenses make up 35% of those convicted of felonies, and weapons offenses are just over 3%.

- An estimated 91% of persons convicted of a felony pleaded guilty. In State courts, the average time between arrest and sentencing for a felony offense was 219 days.

- Of those convicted of felonies, 38% are sentenced to prison, 31% to a term in a local jail, and 31% receive a sentence to probation. The average (mean) prison term imposed by State courts after conviction for a felony is 62 months — for violent offenses the average sentence is 105 months, for property offenses the average sentence is 49 months, 51 months on average is imposed after conviction for a drug felony, and weapons offenders receive an average term of 45 months.

Four measures of serious violent crime

Offenses in millions



Corrections

At the end of 2000, there were 6.5 million adult men and women under the care, custody, or control of Federal, State, and local correctional authorities. This translates into about 3.1% of all adults in the United States or about 1 of every 32 adult residents. Of the total, 3.8 million were under probation supervision in the community, 600,000 were in local jails, just under 1.3 million were in State and Federal prisons, and 700,000 were under conditional parole supervision in the community.

- Among those in State prisons at yearend 2001, 49% had been convicted of a violent crime, 20% a property crime, 21% a drug offense, and 10% were serving a term after conviction for a public-order crime (such as weapons, commercial vice, and DWI). Prison populations are 93% male with whites accounting for 36% of those imprisoned, blacks composing 46%, Hispanics 16%, and the remaining 2% consisting of Asians, Pacific Islanders, and American Indians.
- Those discharged from State prisons in 1998 had served an average of 28 months on an average sentence of 65 months. For violent offenders the ratio was 43 months/86 months, for property offenders it was 25 months/60 months, and for drug offenders it was 22 months/61 months.
- At the end of 2000, 37 States and the Federal prison system held a total of 3,593 offenders under sentence of death. In 2000, 85 executions were carried out and 66 in 2001. For the 683 offenders executed between 1977 and 2000, the average elapsed time from sentencing to execution was 121 months.

Federal Criminal Justice

In 2000, U.S. Attorneys opened matters for investigation against 123,600 suspects. Of these, 32% were investigated for drug offenses, 7% for weapons offenses, and 5% for violent offenses. About 13% of all suspects were investigated for immigration violations. About 3 out of 4 suspects were referred for prosecution.

- During the year, criminal cases were commenced against 83,300 defendants in district courts. Thirty-seven percent of these defendants were charged with a drug offense and 15% were charged with an immigration violation. Among Federal defendants whose cases terminated during the year (77,000), 89% were convicted. Among those convicted, 95% pleaded guilty or no-contest.

- Among convicted defendants in 2000, 74% received a sentence to imprisonment. The average prison term imposed was 57 months. Weapons felonies (91 months), violent felonies (87 months), and drug felonies (76 months) received the longest average sentences.

- During 2000, the Federal Bureau of Prisons received just under 49,700 inmates from district courts and slightly more than 15,000 from other sources including supervision violators. Federal inmates entering from district courts could expect to serve 88% of the sentence they received.

Fairness in the Criminal Justice System

- In 1999, an estimated 44 million persons age 16 or older had a contact with a police officer. About half of those with contacts indicated the reason for the contact was a traffic stop. An estimated 10% of white drivers, 12% of black drivers, and 9% of Hispanic drivers experienced at least one traffic stop during the year. Following the stop, black and Hispanic drivers were more likely to be searched or to have their vehicles searched than white drivers.

- BJS surveys of victims generally show a close correspondence for personal contact crimes between the victim-reported distributions of offender characteristics and the characteristics of those arrested by police and processed by the justice system.

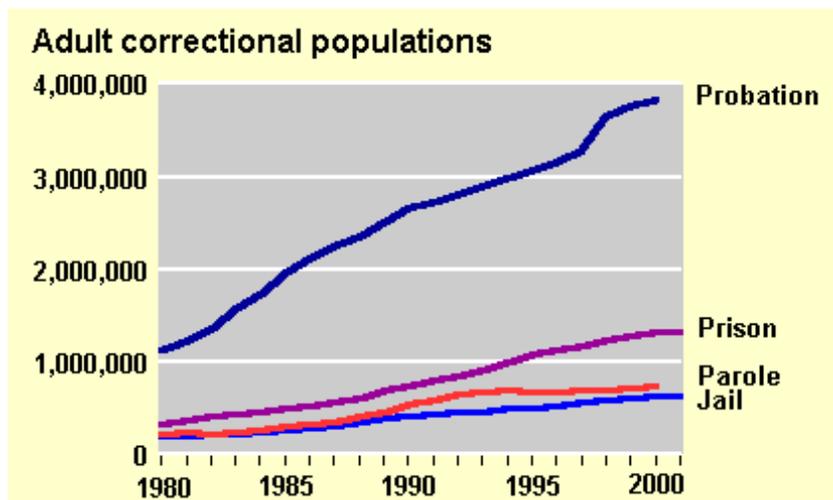
Criminal History Records

Between FY 1995 and FY 2002, BJS distributed more than \$390 million to the States to support improvements to State records systems which would permit participation in national background check systems for point-of-sale firearms sales, sex offender registries, national protection order files, and automated fingerprint identification systems.

- At the close of 1999, States and the FBI maintained criminal history records on approximately 62 million individuals. Of these, 37 million records were available for interstate background checks, and 23 million of these had complete disposition data available.

- Since the initiation of the BJS National Criminal History Record Improvement Program (NCHIP) in 1995, the number of criminal records has increased 23%, the number of records which are now shareable among the States increased 46%, and the number with disposition information available has grown by 79%.

- BJS estimates that between March 1, 1994 and December 31, 2000, about 689,000 applications to purchase firearms have been rejected from among the nearly 30 million applications received.



Section II. **Bureau of Justice Statistics:
Mission and strategic vision**

BJS Mission
BJS Strategic Goals
Performance Measurement

II. Mission and Strategic Vision

BJS Mission

The central purpose for the operation and maintenance of the BJS is described in its enabling legislation (42 USC 3731-3735). BJS is required to provide justice statistics to the President, the Congress, the judiciary, State and local governments, and the general public. This general statutory statement of purpose has been operationalized by BJS into the following mission statement:

It is the mission of BJS to collect, process, analyze, and disseminate accurate and timely information on crime and the administration of justice and to assist States and localities to improve criminal justice record-keeping.

BJS Strategic Goals

In fulfilling its mission, BJS will produce statistics and will support assistance programs which can be used to guide and inform Federal, State, and local policymaking on crime and the administration of justice and improve the quality of and access to information used for decision-making. This strategic objective encompasses the following set of goals:

Goal 1 To produce national statistics on crime and the administration of justice that facilitate measurement over time and across geographic areas.

Goal 2 To improve record-keeping by State and local governments and to improve the ability of States and localities to produce statistics on crime and the administration of justice.

Goal 3 To ensure public access to statistics and criminal justice data.

Performance Measurement

Last year, the Interagency Council for Statistical Policy (ICSP), the consortium of Federal Statistical Agencies,

created an Interagency Team on Performance Reporting to examine the issue of outcome measurement among statistical agencies. The panel concluded that "the relationship between statistical program outputs and their beneficial uses and outcomes is often complex and difficult to track." The panel noted that there are essentially two major kinds of outcomes associated with statistical work — identifying or tracking the performance of indicators which are thought to be important for public policy and contributing to the decision-making process with respect to the mission of

Departments, other parts of government, or the public good.

The output of a statistical agency is information which, most often consists of statistics, analyses, forecasts, or research. BJS performance measures are conceptualized to satisfy three major elements or components to an information-generating activity: how well was the activity operationalized, how well did the activity do in generating the desired knowledge, and how well did the activity meet the needs of users and policymakers. Each goal, therefore, has three sets of measures associated with it: measures of operational outcome, measures of educational outcomes, and measures of evaluative outcome.

Measuring the output of a statistical agency often entails both quantitative and qualitative performance measures. While BJS measures tend to emphasize measurable achievements, there are many indices describing performance which may not be easily quantified. For example, citation of BJS data with respect to major legal issues and significant court cases may be more important than the frequency of such citations. In addition, issues of integrity and trustworthiness associated with statistical data are not easy to measure. Finally, BJS data often play a direct role in policy development which cannot be characterized with traditional quantitative methods for cataloguing performance. BJS, along with other statistical agencies, endorses the concept of reporting the achievement of final outcomes by documenting examples that demonstrate use of agency data. An illustration of uses of BJS data can be found in Attachment A.

In our largest single grant program activity, the National Criminal History Improvement Program (NCHIP), BJS uses a large number of measurement activities which allow us to provide estimates of the effectiveness of the NICS in stopping prohibited firearms purchasers. In addition, there are collected in each State numerous recurring measures of record quality

U.S. Department of Justice and Office of Justice Programs: Mission Statements

By carrying out its fundamental purpose to provide accurate and objective information to Federal, State, and local policymakers, BJS inherently supports the missions of the Department and the Office of Justice Programs and the strategic goals and objectives as established under the Department's Strategic Plan.

Department of Justice

The mission of the Department of Justice is "...to enforce the law and defend the interests of the United States according to the law; to ensure public safety against threats foreign and domestic; to provide federal leadership in preventing and controlling crime; to seek just punishment for those guilty of unlawful behavior; to administer and enforce the nation's immigration laws fairly and effectively; and to ensure fair and impartial administration of justice for all Americans."

Office of Justice Programs

The mission of the Office of Justice Programs (OJP) is "To provide federal leadership in developing the nation's capacity to prevent and control crime, administer justice, and assist crime victims."

which identify progress in record improvement and serve as the basis for subsequent year funding allocations.

Other BJS grant activities encompass support to the States for conversion to the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) and for the centralization of State statistical functions in a Statistical Analysis Center (SAC). In addition, BJS provides limited grant funds for a variety of technical assistance, privacy research, and other activities related to statistical issues and concerns. The NIBRS program employs a continuing set of measures of participation both in terms of agencies and population coverage. The SAC program entails a number of expected statistical and research products which also are monitored.

Measuring an agency's achievements related to providing public access of its data and statistics centers on the creation of customer satisfaction — and the elimination of dissatisfaction — among all the audiences for BJS numbers, as measured by continuous surveys and monitoring of feedback. These consumers include the research and academic community, all components of the media, State and city officials from jurisdictions of all sizes, and their Federal counterparts.

Section III. **Principal goals and outcome measures**

Goal 1. Produce statistics on crime and justice

- 1.1 Measures of Operational Outcomes
 - Major statistical series conducted
 - Levels of accuracy and operational coverage
 - Levels of reliability and validity
- 1.2 Measures of Educational Outcomes
 - Measuring data utilization
 - Measuring report utilization
- 1.3 Measures of Evaluative Outcomes
 - Measuring temporal change
 - Measuring spatial variation

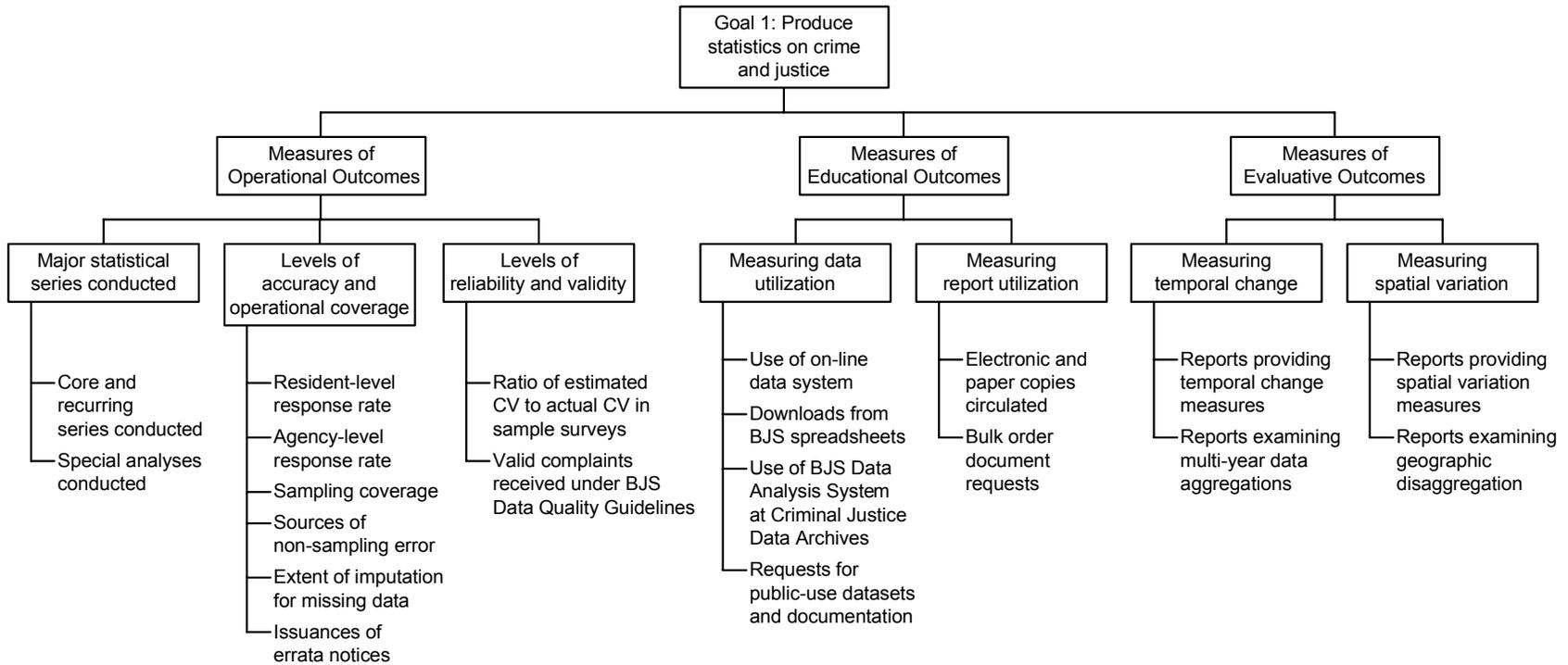
Goal 2. Improving criminal records and local statistics

- 2.1 Measures of Operational Outcomes
 - Status of criminal history records and interface between States and national system
 - Status of National Incident-Based Reporting System implementation
- 2.2 Measures of Educational Outcomes
 - Provide technical assistance for improved statistical reporting
- 2.3 Measures of Evaluative Outcomes
 - Effectiveness of criminal history record and system improvements

Goal 3. Insuring public access to data and statistics

- 3.1 Measures of Operational Outcomes
 - Products and services available
- 3.2 Measures of Educational Outcomes
 - Addressing customer needs
- 3.3 Measures of Evaluative Outcomes
 - Measuring customer satisfaction

**Figure 2. Strategic Plan for the Bureau of Justice Statistics:
Goal 1 Outcome Measures**



Goal 1. Produce statistics on crime and justice

BJS carries out this goal through a series of recurring statistical programs covering criminal victimization, law enforcement, prosecution, courts and sentencing, corrections, Federal justice, tribal justice, and efforts designed to provide data needed by other OJP components for use in formula-based grant programs or other program initiatives involving State or local crime and justice data.

Victimization statistics The National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) collects data from a nationally representative sample that contacts approximately 43,000 households comprising nearly 78,000 persons on the impact, frequency and consequences of criminal victimization. Survey data, collected through more than 150,000 interviews annually, reveal the number of rapes, sexual assaults, robberies, assaults, thefts, household burglaries and motor vehicle thefts U.S. residents and their households experience each year.

The NCVS provides details on victims and offenders and the circumstances under which they come together and the contingencies of crime, such as weapon use, place and time of occurrence, costs of crime, and perceived alcohol and drug use by the offender.

The NCVS enables BJS to conduct small-area analyses and to study discrete population segments. In addition, NCVS serves as a national platform for measuring school crime, workplace violence, racial profiling, and other topical concerns and has been enhanced to capture data on hate crime, computer crime, and crime against the disabled. It provides the largest forum for victims to describe their experiences of victimization, the impact of crime, and the characteristics of violent offenders.

The public uses the information provided in these reports to better understand the extent and nature of crime, to evaluate their susceptibility to crime and to learn how to avoid placing

themselves into situations that may increase their vulnerability to crime. Policy makers use the data from these reports to help develop laws and programs to combat crime. The media rely on NCVS data as one of the most reliable sources of crime statistics in the Nation, and researchers rely on these reports as benchmarks for their own research findings. The NCVS has been continuously conducted since 1973.

Law enforcement statistics This data collection is the only source for complete national counts of law enforcement personnel in the United States, as well as information on the primary duties and the operations of law enforcement agencies and forensic crime laboratories.

BJS collects and analyzes sample data drawn to represent over 18,000 law enforcement agencies nationwide on the organization and administration of police and sheriffs' departments. Censuses of Federal, State, and local law enforcement agencies are conducted periodically, as well as a survey of campus law enforcement agencies. These programs allow for the examination of changes over time in staffing levels, minority and female representation among officers, officer education and training requirements, operating budgets, salaries and special pay for officers, UCR crime rates, type of special units operated, drug enforcement activities, sidearm and armor policies, type and number of vehicles operated, and new technologies being employed. The data are relied upon by law enforcement agencies nationwide to provide systematic comparative information.

Surveys of DNA and forensic crime laboratories provide national data on the personnel, budgets and expenditures, workloads, equipment, and procedures and policies of these publicly operated laboratories. In addition, BJS collects information from the public about the nature and outcomes of their interactions with law enforcement officers, including data on traffic stops and use of force.

This program has been of signal importance to the COPS program, the bullet-proof vest program, and other programs across OJP, which require management and administrative data on the operations of these agencies. Data collected on traffic stops and use of force, as well as the operations of law enforcement training academies have been used by Police Corps, COPS, and other components. The collection of administrative data from law enforcement agencies began in 1986.

Prosecution statistics BJS collects data on resources, policies, and practices of local prosecutors from a nationally representative sample of chief prosecutors who handle felony cases in State courts on a variety of topics including the use of innovative prosecution techniques, intermediate sanctions, plea bargaining and work-related assaults and threats. It provides data on temporal change in the administration of prosecution activities and the emerging types of cases and knowledge now required (such as DNA and computer crime), and documents the costs associated with prosecution activities. Ongoing since 1974.

Courts and sentencing statistics BJS provides data on the following:

- State court sentencing of convicted felons, including demographic characteristics of felons, conviction offenses, types of sentences, sentence lengths, and length of time from arrest to conviction and sentencing (ongoing since 1986)
- criminal justice processing of persons charged with felonies, including demographic characteristics, arrest offense, criminal justice status at time of arrest, prior arrests and convictions, bail and pretrial release, court appearance record, rearrests while on pretrial release, type and outcome of adjudication, disposition, and type and length of sentence (ongoing since 1974)

- State-by-State data on civil and criminal workload in all State and local courts including case type, case filings, case processing, disposition, and appellate opinions (ongoing since 1975). In 2002 BJS, with funding from the Office of Violence Against Women, began a statistical series to gather domestic violence case-processing data annually.

This data series provides the only national source of information on judicial decision-making and the manner in which cases are managed and adjudicated as they traverse the justice system. Through this collection, BJS maintains the only national data series which prospectively tracks felons from arrest through final disposition in order to determine the outcomes of case decision-making at each decision-point in the justice system. In addition, this is the only nationally representative data that documents such estimates as the number of persons convicted of a felony in State courts nationwide during the year, the different types of sentences they receive, the demographic characteristics of the convicted felons, and the sentences received by type of offense. Finally, this collection represents the only national data on sentencing by jury and bench trials and provides detailed information on defendants sentenced after entering a plea, and produces the only national data on the time required from arrest to conviction.

Federal justice statistics BJS provides annual data on workload, activities, and outcomes associated with Federal criminal cases collected from the Executive Office of U.S. Attorneys, the Federal Pretrial Services Agency, the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, the U.S. Sentencing Commission, and the Federal Bureau of Prisons. The Federal Justice Statistics Program (FJSP) provides a key benefit to DOJ in that it is the only source for combined data from both the Executive and Judicial branches on the handling of Federal offenders. These data are heavily relied upon by DOJ (particularly the Office of Legal Policy and the Criminal Division) for planning

initiatives, evaluating performance, and setting budget priorities. The website for these data permits additional customized analyses and has been a continuing source of District-level data on Federal justice. Ongoing since 1980.

Corrections statistics Information is provided on correctional populations and facilities gathered from Federal, State, and local governments, and covers the major sub-units of the corrections system — probation, jails, prisons, and parole. The overall program consists of the following components:

- annual and midyear counts of incarcerated persons in State and Federal prisons and local jails (ongoing since 1850 and 1933, respectively)
- annual counts and characteristics of persons entering or exiting probation and parole (ongoing since 1965)
- annual statistics on persons admitted or released from State and Federal prisons and on persons released from parole supervision (ongoing since 1926)
- annual counts and characteristics of persons sentenced to death (ongoing since 1930)
- data on deaths of offenders in custody (ongoing since 2000)
- quinquennial surveys of national samples of prison and jail inmates and adult probationers (ongoing since 1974)
- censuses of State and local correctional facilities and parole and probation agencies (ongoing since 1970)
- the study of recidivism of prisoners (ongoing since 1983).

These series detail information on the resources and demand for correctional sanctions and are highly valued by both policymakers and the practitioner community for the capability to introduce consistent measures of correctional activity. These data have been used by every component in OJP and

heavily used by divisions of the U.S. Department of Justice including the Criminal Division and the Office of Legal Policy.

Tribal justice statistics BJS supports development of statistics on crime and the administration of justice in Indian country. The work in tribal statistics is designed to fill an informational gap by pursuing diverse efforts, including the following:

- The Tribal Justice Statistics Assistance Center, funded by BJS and administered by the Justice Research and Statistics Association, provides technical assistance and training to American Indian and Native Alaska jurisdictions to improve their criminal justice statistical systems
- Criminal victimization studies in three American Indian jurisdictions with special emphasis on the role of alcohol in violent crime victimizations and the characteristics of domestic violence incidents
- Census of Tribal Justice Systems which will obtain baseline information about tribal justice institutions including prosecution, court systems, and where available, law enforcement and detention facilities
- Survey of Jails in Indian Country that each year obtains baseline characteristics of all 69 Indian country detention facilities and the inmates housed in them.

Justice expenditure and employment BJS provides expenditure and employment data from Federal, State, and local criminal justice agencies nationwide. This series includes National and State-by-State estimates of government expenditures and employment for the following justice categories: police protection, all judicial functions (including prosecution, courts, and public defense), and corrections. The justice employment and expenditure data are the Nation's only source for tracking the Nation's commitment to the justice system. These data are used to support all major formula programs in

OJP and by other by Federal, State and local officials to assess their relevant justice costs in terms of financial and human resources. Ongoing since 1972.

International statistics Through the International Statistics Program BJS cooperates with other countries and the United Nations to improve the collection of statistics on crime and criminal justice systems. A long-term goal is to enable cross-national comparisons and examination of the relationship between crime trends in the United States and those in other countries.

World Factbook of Criminal Justice Systems provides narrative descriptions of the criminal justice systems of more than 40 countries. These descriptions, available electronically through the BJS Internet site, are written to a common template to facilitate comparisons.

Drugs, alcohol, and crime Many of BJS's ongoing statistical data series collect drug- and alcohol-related information, including data on victim perception of offender substance use; drug-related programs of State and local police agencies; adjudication and sentencing of drug offenders at the Federal and State level; and inmate past drug and alcohol use, substance use at the time of the offense, and participation in substance abuse treatment programs. The Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics presents data on drug use in the general population, on public opinion toward drugs, and on enforcement of drug laws. A complete online reference to statistics on drugs and crime is accessible on the BJS website.

Improving the quality of justice data BJS conducts, supports, and implements methodological and statistical research and initiatives designed to improve the quality and coverage of justice statistics, records, and information systems. These activities include assessing the technology and legislative status of criminal history and other record systems and participating in the development and implementation of privacy, security, and information policies which impact on Federal and

State operational and statistical activities.

Statistical methodological research Under the aegis of the **American Statistical Association (ASA)**, BJS administers a methodological research program designed to foster improvements in the methods used to obtain, analyze, and report national level data on crime and criminal justice. BJS supports studies designed to yield new insights to affect current practice in areas such as developing the methods, definitions, and protocols to obtain nationally representative data; analyzing longitudinal data to examine reporting variations and their effects on estimates of national rates; and examining new ways of addressing missing and incomplete data.

The **BJS Visiting Fellows Program** selects researchers to come to Washington, D.C., to conduct crime-related studies using the agency's rich array of datasets and software. Fellows interact with BJS staff and gain first-hand knowledge of some of the most recent developments in the field of criminal justice statistical research.

Quality and coverage improvements BJS works with Federal and State operating agencies to improve information systems to produce accurate and comparable data. Such efforts include:

- BJS, in collaboration with the National Institute of Justice and the OJP Corrections Program Office, is working closely with the Association of State Corrections Administrators (ASCA) to improve correctional information systems. The project is designed to reach common definitions and counting rules for selected data categories and determine the capability of capturing these measures electronically.
- BJS is collecting detailed information from systems/data management personnel and personnel from a variety of other units within law enforcement agencies on departmental information systems and the varying levels of agency effort to switch to an incident-based reporting

system compatible with the FBI's requirements. The findings will be used to assist law enforcement agencies in implementing NIBRS-compliant systems.

Justice information and privacy Technological development has raised new questions about privacy policy relevant to justice records and systems. To meet these needs, BJS has for over 20 years supported a privacy program to identify and analyze the privacy impact of changes in the systems environment, to provide a forum for the discussion of these issues, and to develop standards which may be applicable to the collection, maintenance, and dissemination of criminal record data. BJS provides technical expertise to States in implementing privacy regulations governing access to criminal justice data. Primary emphasis is on accuracy and completeness of records, limitations on dissemination, commingling of juvenile and adult records, data auditing techniques, and the interstate exchange of records. Ongoing since 1972.

Goal 1. Produce statistics on crime and justice

1.1 Measures of Operational Outcomes

1. Major statistical series conducted

BJS carries out approximately three dozen separate data collection programs covering crime and the administration of justice. These series generally recur at specific intervals in order to facilitate trend analysis. In general, all BJS recurring and core programs are considered to be a part of the statistical portfolio, regardless of whether a collection is occurring in a particular fiscal or calendar year. The following outcome measures are used to assess the implementation of these series:

Core and recurring series conducted

The number of data collection series scheduled to be conducted during a

particular calendar year and the number actually conducted.

Special analyses conducted BJS periodically conducts special collections or analyses for specific purposes, such as a collaborative effort with other Federal agencies or fulfilling a congressional mandate. The number of special analyses conducted is maintained as an indicator of the utility of specific datasets for unanticipated requirements.

II. Levels of accuracy and operational coverage

BJS establishes standards and collection protocols for each statistical program. These methodological considerations are the best gauge of the quality of the data ultimately produced. Outcome measures systematically examined for each statistical program are:

Resident-level response rate Calculated as the percentage of respondents who voluntarily participate in the BJS data collection activity. Changes in response rates indicate a change in the willingness of respondents to participate in the data collection program. Reductions in response rate may result in increased project costs due to more extensive followup to attempt to secure participation.

Agency-level response rate Calculated as the percentage of agencies which voluntarily participate in the BJS data collection activity. Changes in response rates indicate a change in the willingness of respondents to participate in the data collection program. Reductions in response rate may result in increased project costs due to more extensive followup to attempt to secure participation.

Sampling coverage The probability of being selected to be in a representative sample. Changes in the probability of selection directly affect the size of the error associated with estimates derived from sample data and key determinants of the reliability and precision of the sample data. The sample must also be evaluated to insure its representativeness if it is to be considered valid.

Sources of non-sampling error Non-sampling error is essentially defined as response mistakes. BJS must continually examine the impact on sample estimates of factors which are external to the data collection process but which may affect estimates. The ability of respondents to recall or record information, tendencies to telescope incidents, or failure to be able to describe certain contingencies of an incident in terms of the categories being asked are examples of non-sampling errors about which BJS must be concerned. For example, the NCVS sampling procedures utilize a panel design which means that the same households may be in sample for up to 3 years. A source of non-sampling error would be conditioning of respondents not to describe victimizations because of their experience that such descriptions trigger a series of additional questions and a lengthier interview.

Extent of imputation for missing data When BJS establishes that a reliable and valid data collection procedure has been used, it is necessary to address the problem of missing data since not every respondent will complete every item on a data collection inventory. Imputation is normally done through a ratio adjustment where the distribution of known responses is applied to the responses for which data are missing. BJS must continuously monitor problems of missing data, ascertain the reasons, and determine the optimal procedure for imputing the value to a case. The amount of missing data is an important indicator of the quality and utility of the data collected.

Issuance of errata notices BJS maintains a period of several weeks between report release and the final printing of a report. During that period, errors in text or data may be discovered which survived the verification process. Prior to printing such errors can be corrected. Occasionally, errors may appear in a final version of a report. In such cases, BJS issues an errata sheet and notes the modification on the electronic version of the report. Proper management of statistical releases requires BJS to examine the reasons for such errors and verification improvement which may be needed.

III. Levels of reliability and validity

BJS places a high emphasis on the reliability and utility of the data collected. In addition, a core value of BJS is that all data should be accessible and replicable. Outcome measures include:

Ratio of estimated coefficient of variation (CV) to actual estimates of error calculated from the sample data BJS, at the time of sample development, establishes a threshold for the precision of the data collection activity to be undertaken. This decision is a key determinant of the size of the sample needed. BJS must continuously evaluate year-to-year changes in CV to assess changing levels of precision in sample surveys. Decreasing precision, which is usually the result of budget reductions, is a major concern for recurring estimates of both the magnitude and rate of occurrence of what is being estimated.

Number of valid complaints received under BJS Data Quality Guidelines BJS makes available a complaint facility through our website for data and statistics users to offer complaints and suggestions indicating errors or other presentational problems or analytic non-duplicability.

Goal 1. Produce statistics on crime and justice

1.2 Measures of Educational Outcomes

I. Measuring data utilization

BJS data releases are intended for wide distribution and use. Data and statistics are made available in a variety of formats including traditional paper, electronic datasets and files, on-demand tabular presentations, and archived data and spreadsheets. In addition, detailed files and analytic setups are made available to insure complete documentation of all public-use data. Outcome measures include:

Use of online data system The number of user accessions to the BJS Data Online will be counted with a particular emphasis on identifying user interest and priorities with respect to specific data sources and collection programs.

Downloads from BJS spreadsheets BJS currently maintains an inventory of approximately 4,000 staff-generated spreadsheets covering current and historical data on crime and the administration of justice. The frequency of use for individual spreadsheets will be measured in order to assess user interests.

Use of BJS Data Analysis System at the Criminal Justice Data Archive The Data Analysis System permits unsophisticated users to replicate and extend BJS report findings. The Archive gathers systematic data on customer use of BJS datasets.

Requests for public use datasets/documentation Number of requests to BJS or the Archive for datasets and documentation either directly via download or by other means.

II. Measuring report utilization

BJS reports, both electronic and in paper, CD or other format, receive wide distribution. Current usage of the website shows up to 15,000 users per day with multiple locations visited and multiple document downloads

occurring per user visit. In addition, there are more than 1,000,000 BJS reports disseminated per user request. Outcome measures include the following:

Number of electronic and paper copies distributed BJS measures the distribution of reports annually.

Number of bulk order document requests Data on large user requests will provide a measure of the distribution of documents among primarily educational users and institutions.

Goal 1. Produce statistics on crime and justice

1.3 Measures of Evaluative Outcomes

I. Measuring temporal change

A major responsibility for any statistical agency is to generate measures of variables of interest over time. Prisoner counts, for example, have been conducted since 1850 by the Federal government. Outcome measures include:

Number of reports providing temporal change measures This represents a key measure of activity for BJS as describing changes over time in rates and levels of criminal events or workload of the criminal justice system is a basic responsibility.

Number of reports examining multi-year data aggregations Multi-year data aggregations or topical aggregations represent a set of procedures used by BJS with sample data for insuring periodic information on low-rate events or small subgroups of the population.

II. Measuring spatial variation

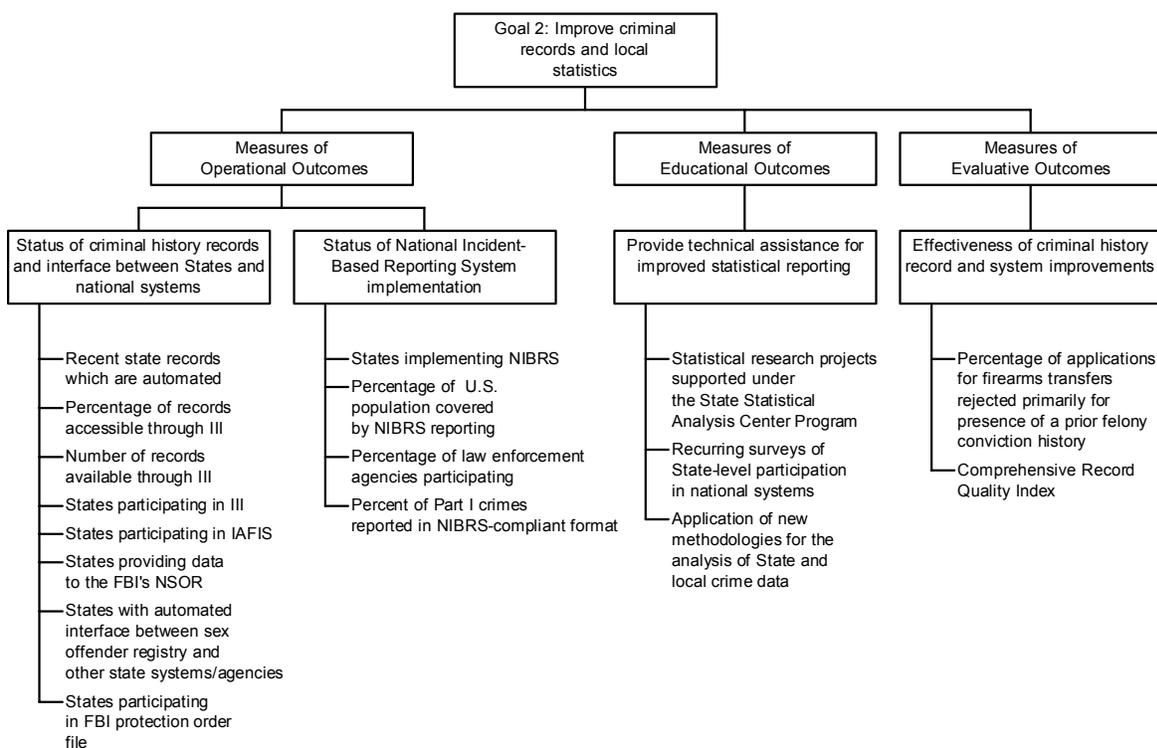
Geographic distributions of crime data have long been a concern. The first prisoners report in 1850 provided the per capita rates of imprisonment for

each State and territory. Outcome measures include the following:

Number of reports providing spatial variation measures This represents a key measure of activity for BJS as describing changes and differences across geographic areas in rates and levels of criminal events or workload of the criminal justice system is a basic responsibility.

Number of reports examining geographic disaggregations BJS should provide relevant data, where budget permits, for sub-national geographic units. This may require the development of new procedures, such as rolling multi-year data from self-representing sampling units together, to be able to detect certain geographic trends and differences.

**Figure 3. Strategic Plan for the Bureau of Justice Statistics:
Goal 2 Outcome Measures**



Goal 2. Improving criminal records and local statistics

BJS's enabling legislation focuses not only on national statistics, but on systems to support the development of data systems for states and local communities calling for "primary emphasis to the problems of state and local justice systems." Thus the Bureau recognizes the objectives of improving the quality and coverage of such systems and supporting the entire statistical research and development process for critical analysis and criminal record utilization.

Improving Criminal History Records

BJS has been assisting States to improve their criminal records since 1972. In 1994, the Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act provided a national grant program, the National Criminal History Improvement Program (NCHIP).

National Criminal History Improvement Program The goal of the NCHIP program is to ensure that accurate records are available for use in law enforcement, including sex offender registry requirements, and to permit States to identify ineligible firearm purchasers, persons ineligible to hold positions involving children, the elderly, or the disabled, and persons subject to protective orders or wanted, arrested, or convicted of stalking and/or domestic violence. Recent emphasis has been placed on anti-terrorism and homeland security issues related to the use of criminal history records.

Direct funding and technical assistance are provided to States to:

- improve the quality, timeliness, and immediate accessibility of criminal history and related records
- build their infrastructure to connect to national record check systems both to supply information and to conduct the requisite checks, including the FBI-operated National Instant Criminal Background

Check System (NICS), the National Sex Offender Registry (NSOR), and the National Protective Order File.

Technical assistance Direct assistance is provided to States to implement programs, policies, and technologies to upgrade criminal records and improve interface with the FBI's national systems. TA is provided through onsite visits, web training, telephone, training classes, and workshops and conferences. Onsite TA visits are coordinated with the FBI to facilitate participation in FBI programs such as the Interstate Identification Index (III).

Evaluation efforts A comprehensive record quality index is currently being developed which will evaluate state progress in record improvement and allow for comparison across states.

Statistical data collections BJS conducts several statistical series to produce annual estimates of the results of the background checks and to ascertain the quality of record-holdings

in each State and to quantitatively identify areas where additional resources or concentrations of effort are required.

- The Firearm Inquiry Statistics (FIST) series collects data on the number of inquiries processed by States in connection with presale firearm checks and the number and basis for rejection of such applications. Data are also collected describing procedures followed by each of the 50 States in connection with firearm checks.
- The 50-State Survey of Criminal History Information Systems provides information on the technology, policy, and legislative status of criminal history records.
- The National Instant Background Check (NIC) Survey collects data from the States to identify major impediments to disposition completeness, with a primary focus on the linkage between criminal records repositories and the courts and prosecutors.

Improving Local Data

State Justice Statistics (SJS) Program for Statistical Analysis Centers Beginning in 1972, BJS initiated incentives to the States to create statistical centers in each State and to provide liaison to BJS in the collection of data from State and local agencies. Under the BJS State Justice Statistics Program, all States and most territories have established these Statistical Analysis Centers (SACs) designed to centralize and integrate criminal justice statistical functions within the State. BJS provides limited funds to each State to coordinate statistical activities within the State, conduct research as needed to estimate impacts of legislative and policy changes, and serve a liaison role in assisting BJS to gather data from respondent agencies within their States.

Technical assistance for SACs TA is provided for purposes of coordinating statistical activities across the States; providing training to all SAC's in statistical and presentational methods; and fostering shared knowledge about methodologies which have been used across the States to address common measurement concerns.

National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) Implementation Program The FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) program, which began in 1929, collects information about crimes reported to the police. In 1982 BJS and the FBI sponsored a study of the UCR Program with the objective of revising it to meet law enforcement needs into the 21st century. Since this time, BJS has participated in the design and development of NIBRS and supports several related efforts to encourage the use of incident-based data. The NIBRS Implementation Program is designed to improve the quality of crime statistics in the United States through financial support and technical assistance to States for implementation of NIBRS-compliant systems. The technical assistance and research program builds upon extensive previous efforts to review ongoing NIBRS activity and to identify impediments to NIBRS implementation and recommend solutions to these problems.

The Incident-Based Reporting Resource Center This online resource for incident-based crime data seeks to put practical analytical information and tools into the hands of analysts who want to work with incident-based data, and to provide a forum where analysts can exchange information and ideas about using incident-based data.

Goal 2. Improve criminal records and local statistics

2.1 Measures of Operational Outcomes

I. Measuring the status of criminal history records and the interface between state and national systems

Since 1970, BJS has promoted both the technical and conceptual improvements in the maintenance of information systems related to criminal history records. Since 1995, BJS has provided substantial funding to the States, largely as a consequence of the Brady Act, to upgrade these records and make them shareable for purposes of a background check prior to a firearms purchase. Such improved record systems, however, have substantial utility for other types of background check applications. BJS maintains on a continuous basis, a variety of program performance measures including:

Percentage of State records which are automated Biennially, BJS conducts a data collection activity among criminal records repositories to estimate the level of automation of records.

Percentage of records accessible through the Interstate Identification Index (III) of the FBI The III is the national system for sharing criminal records. On a near-monthly basis, BJS keeps track of the status of each State with respect to participation.

Number of records shareable through the III The number of III records maintained by the States versus those maintained by the FBI is an important measure of the ability to decentralize the background check system.

Number of States participating in III The is an important measure of the quality of criminal records in each State and the extent to which they may be conforming to national record quality standards.

Number of States participating in the FBI's Integrated Automated Fingerprint Identification System (IAFIS) This measures the transition among the States to digitized fingerprint systems from rolled and inked prints.

Number of States providing data to the FBI's National Sex Offender Registry (NSOR) This important component of the background check system is based upon State submission of data on sex offenders meeting registry requirements.

Number of States with automated interface between sex offender registry and other State systems and agencies This is primarily a concern in Point-of-Contact background check States where the State-conducted check must integrate State sex offender information.

Number of States participating in FBI National Protection Order File This important component of the background check system is based upon State and local submission of data on protection orders issued by local courts.

II. Measuring the status of National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) implementation

In 1984, BJS designed NIBRS as the next-generation of law enforcement agency data on crime. The FBI and its Advisory Policy Board have embraced the transition to NIBRS by the nation's 18,000 law enforcement agencies. BJS has played a supportive role to the FBI through occasional funding and ongoing technical assistance. Outcome measures include the following:

Number of States implementing NIBRS States must first become certified as NIBRS-compliant prior to the submission of data to the FBI.

Percentage of U.S. population covered by NIBRS reporting An ongoing measure of the reach of NIBRS statistical information and an annual change indicator on growth in participation.

Percentage of law enforcement agencies participating in NIBRS An ongoing measure of the reach of NIBRS statistical information and coverage among agencies nationwide and an annual change indicator on growth in participation.

Percent of Part I crimes reported in NIBRS-compliant format Since 1930, annual measurement of Part I crimes has been available; this measure will document the transition from summary UCR-based data to NIBRS data.

Goal 2. Improve criminal records and local statistics

2.2 Measures of Educational Outcomes

I. Provide technical assistance for improved statistical reporting

Since its initiation, BJS has always perceived the production of statistical data on crime and justice as the product of its partnership with the 50,000 agencies, offices, and institutions which compose the criminal justice system nationwide. To facilitate that relationship in order to generate these data, BJS has continuously provided assistance to the States to centralize and give impetus to the collection and analysis of data at the State level. Over this period, the awareness of and recognition of the need for data-driven policies and practices has become an important element of the improvement in the administration of justice.

Number of statistical projects supported under the State Statistical Analysis Centers (SAC) Program BJS has encouraged a wide range of statistical and methodological research and development in the States and has encouraged the exchange of findings through the Infobase System.

Recurring surveys of statewide participation in national systems The SAC program often requires State centers to assist BJS by conducting surveys within their States to address

emerging national policy issues or new legislative mandates.

Application of new methodologies for the analysis of State and local crime data An annual measure of the extent to which States have begun measuring emerging crime problems (such as cybercrime) or are utilizing new technologies to achieve a better understanding of crime data (such as mapping).

Goal 2. Improve criminal records and local statistics

2.3 Measures of Evaluative Outcomes

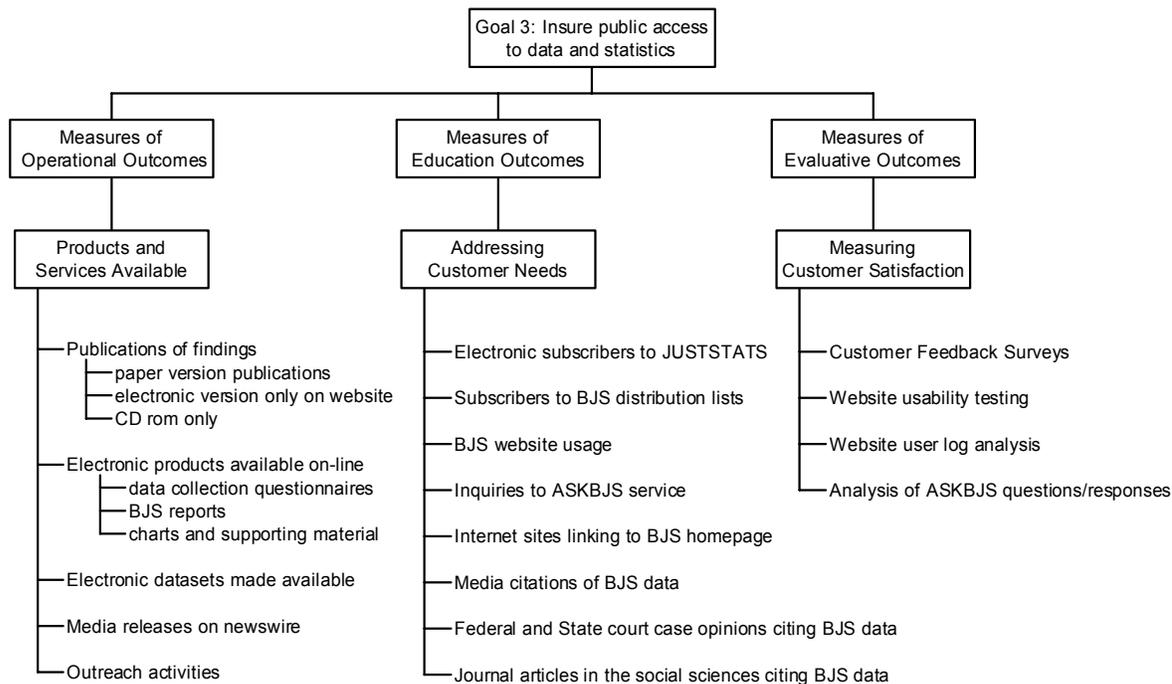
I. Effectiveness of criminal history record and system improvements

With the appropriation of funds to build the infrastructure to support the National Instant Background Check System (NICS), BJS simultaneously initiated the use of measures of the most important outcomes sought in terms of firearms checks and the upgrading of records nationwide to facilitate a wide range of additional types of checks associated with employment and licensing, sex offenders, stalkers, domestic violence offenders, and non-citizens.

Percentage of applications for firearms transfers rejected primarily for the presence of a prior felony conviction history BJS has maintained the Firearms Inquiries Statistical System (FIST) since passage of the Brady Act. This statistical series measures the results of the NICS checks conducted.

Comprehensive Records Quality Index for comparisons across States This statistical effort measures a number of variables related to the completeness, timeliness, and shareability of records by producing a composite index for each State of performance measures.

**Figure 4. Strategic Plan for the Bureau of Justice Statistics
Goal 3 Outcome Measures**



Goal 3. Insuring public access to data and statistics

The BJS's audience is primarily the entire nation — every institution and individual concerned with any aspect of crime and the response to crime — as well as an international one. The potential pool of customers and constituents is endless. Thus the goal of improved public access that follows the increasingly sophisticated linkage options of our customers. The objectives are to provide useful, timely products, increase electronic access and online capabilities, and assist users in understanding the BJS's interpretations and underlying methodologies.

Publish, disseminate, and facilitate electronic access BJS publishes approximately 50-60 reports annually and produces hundreds of electronic spreadsheets. Well over 1 million copies of our reports are disseminated annually and the website, which has become the principal vehicle for dissemination, receives up to 15,000 users per day with downloads of

thousands of reports each day and hundreds of datasets weekly; over the last several years, BJS has recorded nearly 7 million visitors to the website who utilize the data or the statistical reports — in calendar 2002, we project close to 3 million visits alone.

BJS Internet World Wide Web site Providing information on the Internet has proven to be the most timely, efficient, and cost-effective way BJS can make its data accessible. BJS information is updated continuously. The site provides:

- summary findings including statistical graphics, publications, selected statistics, and related sites presented by crime and justice topics
- every BJS report produced by BJS since 1994 is available electronically
- data for analysis, including spreadsheets, datasets, and online tabulation capabilities
- descriptions of BJS data collections and assistance programs.

Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics This compilation, maintained by the State University of New York at Albany, is available online at <www.albany.edu/sourcebook> with continuously updated data from more than 150 sources. Annual editions of the Sourcebook with over 600 tables are also available in print and on CD-ROM.

Clearinghouses and archives BJS maintains national archives of data and reports for dissemination and direct, interactive access by the public. This permits any researcher or member of the public to replicate any number published by BJS.

BJS Clearinghouse A component of the National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS), the Clearinghouse provides information about crime and justice statistics. The clearinghouse offers products and services tailored to the needs of the criminal justice professional. The BJS Clearinghouse serves as the primary repository for BJS products for distribution.

By referral from BJS, the Clearinghouse handles major distributions as needed for White House and DOJ events and attends major conferences representing the statistical products available from BJS.

National Archive of Criminal Justice Data (NACJD) The Archive, located with the central staff of the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) in the Institute for Social Research at the University of Michigan, maintains data files, documents them and makes them available to researchers, scholars, journalists and other users. The data from most BJS statistical series — more than 300 individual data sets — are held by the archive and distributed through electronic and traditional means, including downloading from NACJD Internet site, datatapes, CD-ROM or diskettes. Online data analysis can now be conducted from the NACJD website. The NACJD provides all data management services for BJS and public access for the replication and secondary analysis of BJS statistics and findings. The NACJD produces the required documentation for data users and provides electronic access to source data for public data users around the world.

National Clearinghouse for Criminal Justice Information Systems The clearinghouse operates an automated index accessible through the Internet of more than 1,000 criminal justice information systems maintained by state and local governments throughout the Nation, issues technical publications, provides technical assistance and training for state and local government officials, and operates the National Criminal Justice Computer Laboratory and Training Center. The clearinghouse provides linking services for BJS data users to all accessible public information systems. This vehicle promotes the cross-jurisdiction use of data and permits localities to systematically examine the types of information systems and capabilities for data management present in other jurisdictions.

Federal Justice Statistics Resource Center (FJSRC) The Federal Justice Statistics Resource Center maintains the BJS Federal Justice Statistics Program database which contains information about suspects and defendants processed in the Federal criminal justice system. Data are currently obtained from the U.S. Marshals Service, U.S. Attorneys, Federal Judiciary, U.S. Sentencing Commission, and the Federal Bureau of Prisons. These data are available for online query and analysis.

Infobase of State Activities and Research (ISAR) The ISAR database contains current information about the research, activities, and publications of the State Statistical Analysis Centers which conduct research and analyze statistics concerning criminal justice issues of State interest. The ISAR is searchable by State, keyword, and date and includes over 4,000 research projects, publications, and other state-level products and activities.

BJS Support for Data Users

BJS staff provide direct assistance to users identifying sources of BJS information, interpret statistical data from BJS statistical series and data collections, and provide technical assistance related to methodologies of BJS surveys.

BJS Clearinghouse staff who specialize in BJS statistical resources can assist users in locating data that best meet their particular information needs. BJS specialists also have access to a variety of other criminal justice data and can direct users to those resources.

National Archive staff supply technical assistance in analyzing data collections and selecting the computer hardware and software for analyzing data efficiently and effectively and offer training in quantitative methods of social science research to facilitate secondary analysis of criminal justice data.

Goal 3. Insuring public access to data and statistics

3.1 Measures of Operational Outcomes

BJS provides a wide array of products and services each of which can be counted and measured in terms of customer demand and use. These operational activities are designed to place statistical findings, prepared data, and datasets for public use in the hands of the public, including the media, policymakers, students, and researchers.

Publication of findings The number of paper reports, electronic reports, and CD-ROMs made available to the public and the number requested or downloaded.

Electronic products available online BJS has been expanding the number of such products available to address growing demand for electronic versions of data including questionnaires, tables and charts, and a vast array of prepared spreadsheets. The measure provides information user visits to these particular sites and the number of downloads per visit.

Electronic datasets made available Datasets with supporting documentation are made available in a variety of formats ranging from online direct electronic access to traditional ordering of datasets or remote mounting of datasets through the National Archive of Criminal Justice Data's University of Michigan terminal system. BJS counts the number of accessions via each modality to ascertain data usage.

Media releases on newswire BJS releases reports and other announcements directly to the media via the newswire. BJS keeps track of the number of releases to the media and the number of accessions to electronic versions of press releases and announcements on the BJS website.

Outreach activities BJS makes substantial effort to insure that new audiences for reports and data are continuously developed. Measures of the number of conferences attended and the number of BJS reports distributed and requested are maintained.

Goal 3. Insuring public access to data and statistics

3.2 Measures of Educational Outcomes

Among the most important measures of accomplishment for BJS is the use of BJS data in promoting a better understanding of crime and the administration of justice. Among the types of measures indicative of customer need for the data and use of BJS data are:

Electronic subscribers to JUSTATS This database of interested data users has grown dramatically since it was created by BJS. Counts of both membership and items requested or used are maintained by BJS in order to assess utilization.

Subscribers to BJS distribution lists BJS maintains listings of persons who have indicated a particular topical interest and who would like copies of reports on those topics. The number of such subscribers is another measure of utilization of BJS products and services.

BJS website usage BJS maintains detailed information on web users and their method of entry to the BJS website as well as their level and type of activities while visiting the site.

Inquiries to ASKBJS service The BJS website provides a portal to BJS staff for users to inquire about findings, methods, and additional information. BJS maintains detailed logs of these transactions with the public and uses these data to evaluate the quality and responsiveness of staff to these external requests.

Internet sites linking to BJS homepage BJS, in its analyses of web usage, can ascertain the number of websites linking to BJS's homepage. The number of such links is an important measure of the utility other sites have attributed to the BJS website.

Media citations of BJS data BJS measures the frequency and type of citation of BJS data in order to better understand the kinds of information of greatest use by the media and the different presentational forms used in which they illustrate our findings. BJS calculates an estimated number of media citations based on — the number of press releases issued by BJS multiplied by fifty percent (for a conservative figure) of the total daily newspapers on the AP newswire; and the number of press releases issued by BJS multiplied by fifty percent of registered radio stations and television stations (also a conservative figure of those likely to pick up AP news stories).

Federal and State court opinions citing BJS data BJS tracks the appearance of reports and findings in case decisions using Lexis/Nexis searches.

Journal articles citing BJS data BJS tracks the citations of reports and findings in journals, books, and other publications.

Goal 3. Insuring public access to data and statistics

3.3 Measures of Evaluative Outcomes

Measuring customer satisfaction with BJS products and services is an ongoing process. Such measurement entails learning about the customer's ability to navigate the website is, in many ways, as important or more important than the data or information they sought to acquire. BJS uses a variety of techniques for measuring customer satisfaction including:

Customer feedback surveys BJS periodically conducts surveys among those using both electronic and print materials. The findings of these surveys are regularly published on the BJS website.

Website usability testing BJS utilizes a vigorous program of usability testing prior to initiating any change in the content or presentation of web-based BJS materials or information.

Website user log analysis BJS maintains detailed data on user visits to identify areas of most frequent visit and download and areas of infrequent use for purposes of optimizing access to the most sought-after information.

Analysis of ASKBJS questions/responses Apart from measuring whether a response was given and how timely the response was, BJS examines the content of all questions and replies to identify opportunities for data needed by the public which are not now being collected.

Section IV. **Importance of a professional review
process in strategic and program planning**

Internal Assessments

External Assessments

Public Access and Replicability of Findings

Importance of a Professional Review Process

The ICSP panel has noted the importance of extensive professional review involving agency staff (an internal perspective) and external subject matter experts (an external perspective). Data programs and analysis and statistical reports are subject to thorough internal reviews to monitor and maintain their quality. These varied vehicles of professional peer review are conducted to maintain the quality of agency programs and to ensure that users and other experts can have an impact on them.

BJS maintains a stringent oversight program for its national statistical programs. As with many other statistical agencies, BJS's programs are typically subject to ongoing and periodic professional reviews by experts to ensure validity and relevance. BJS meets with external groups to review current programs, solicit input on program initiatives, suggest new products, and recommend changes. Program managers frequently meet with academic researchers, government data users, government policy experts, practitioners, and other stakeholders, to review and evaluate products, programs, and technical methodology.

Through a variety of peer review activities as described below, BJS maintains the quality and utility of programs, and encourage data users and other stakeholders to contribute to the agency's data collection and dissemination program. Brief written statements summarizing these activities and their impact on agency programs serve as performance indicators.

Internal Assessments

On a continuous basis, BJS staff and managers examine emerging data needs as expressed through Attorney General priorities and Congressional mandates. BJS staff regularly evaluate new legislative initiatives and required reporting programs to insure conformity

with data collection and reporting requirements imposed. In addition, BJS staff meet regularly with Federal, State, and local officials to identify emerging data needs or desirable modifications to existing collection and reporting programs. Finally, where available, BJS carries out systematic comparisons across both BJS and non-BJS data series; for example, BJS posts on our website the relationship between FBI-recorded crime data gathered from State and local police departments and NCVS data on reporting the same crimes to the police as described by victims.

BJS staff maintain a rigorous verification procedure to insure accuracy and replicability for all published numbers and estimates. In addition, all analytic routines and protocols are independently verified and tested.

External Assessments

BJS utilizes a variety of external organizations to regularly critique ongoing statistical programs and series.

American Statistical Association For nearly 30 years, BJS has utilized the ASA to review and critique statistical programs through a Technical Committee established to address Law and Justice Statistics. The Committee, composed primarily of academic statisticians and criminologists, provides technical advice and methodological evaluations to BJS and identifies substantive and methodological issues that BJS should address.

In addition, the ASA sponsors a program of research designed to tap high-quality researchers to periodically study issues of interest to BJS relating to methodology and/or analyses drawn from our statistical series. For example, BJS has had a growing interest in the problem of survey non-response and missing data; BJS and ASA jointly sponsored a meeting to better understand the reasons for growth in non-response and techniques for ameliorating the problem. Through this relationship, ASA insures that BJS activities and procedures are regularly reviewed and evaluated before receiving the organization's imprimatur.

Office of Management and Budget BJS, as one of the principal Federal statistical agencies, adheres to common policy and practice expectations defined by OMB's Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs as well as the notice and review requirements under the Paperwork Reduction Act. In this regard, BJS practices are continually subject to the review of the Chief Statistician of the U.S. located in OMB. BJS collection programs are regularly subject to OMB and public scrutiny as set forth in OMB regulations governing Federal statistical series and the operations of statistical agencies.

The Committee on National Statistics (CNSTAT) of the National Academy of Sciences, National Research Council CNSTAT works to improve the understanding of national issues through improvement to the statistical methods and information on which important public policy decisions are based. BJS has had a long standing relationship with NRC to systematically evaluate the suitability of BJS findings and data for inclusion in reports on crime-related issues. BJS staff have appeared from time to time as presenters to NRC panels and have written papers for inclusion in NRC published reports.

Interagency Council on Statistical Policy BJS is a member of the Interagency Council on Statistical Policy (ICSP), a council of federal statistical agency heads that is chaired by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). Since its inception, the ICSP has been an important vehicle for coordinating federal statistical agencies and their practices, particularly when statistical activities and issues overlap or cut across agencies. The ICSP has also facilitated the exchange of information about agency programs and activities, and has provided advice and counsel to OMB on statistical matters.

FedStats In order to insure one-stop shopping for the public as users of BJS statistical data, BJS seeks to conform our data dissemination and distribution procedures to the requirements of *FedStats* — the new electronic window on the full range of official statistical information available to the public from the Federal Government. BJS statistical programs, analytic procedures, and reports and datasets made available to the public are all continuously evaluated in terms of these external requirements and standards and BJS has been a major contributor to those Federal initiatives devised to insure greater access to such data.

Public Interest Organizations BJS regularly seeks the advice and input of public interest groups and organizations with respect to collection instruments, collection procedures, and publications. Among the organizations that are regularly solicited for their assessments of our products are: International Association of Chiefs of Police, National Sheriff's Association, American Correctional Association, Association of State Corrections Administrators, American Jail Association, American Probation and Parole Association, National District Attorney's Association, Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, Executive Office for U.S. Attorneys, and National Legal Aid and Defenders Association.

BJS also utilizes periodic focus groups composed of experts, both from the practitioner and academic communities, to evaluate new initiatives and ongoing programs as well as a visiting fellows program to afford staff the opportunity to obtain additional external review and comment.

Council of Professional Associations on Federal Statistics COPAFS has been an ongoing partner to BJS in assuring the utility and value of BJS statistics for the wide variety of user communities. COPAFS, as a consortium of many dozens of member and affiliate organizations relying upon Federal statistical data, provides a superb sounding-board for BJS initiatives. In particular, BJS has asked COPAFS for comments on the usefulness and usability of the BJS website. BJS staff have made presentations at COPAFS meetings designed to elicit evaluative criticism and such exchanges have proven to be helpful and constructive opportunities to gather feedback on how to improve the utility of the BJS website.

Public Access and Replicability of Findings

Another element of the evaluation process within BJS is the self-imposed requirement to make all datasets and accompanying documentation available to the public in close temporal proximity to the release of a report from that dataset. This is perhaps the most important evaluation tool as every reported finding should be replicable by those external to BJS. BJS facilitates such use of the data by providing analytic tools directly to users.

Through use of our two main online data repositories, the National Archive of Criminal Justice Data and the Federal Justice Statistics website, BJS has provided both access to the BJS data and easy-to-use software which permits any user to conduct analyses from the data without prior training in the use of the software. In this fashion, even an untrained user of BJS data can challenge a number in our reports and ascertain whether the number can be reproduced.

The Bureau of Justice Statistics is the statistical agency of the U.S. Department of Justice. Lawrence A. Greenfeld is director.

This strategic plan for BJS represents the combined efforts of BJS staff and managers under the direction of Lawrence A. Greenfeld. Maureen A. Henneberg, Associate Director, managed the implementation of the planning process and preparation of the report. Tom Hester edited and produced the report.

**BJS Data -- An invaluable resource to policy makers
and the criminal justice community**

Those responsible for determining or operating the criminal justice process - legislators and their staff, policy makers, police, prosecutors, and corrections officers - rank among the most frequent users of BJS statistics. The following represents a small sampling of requests for data per year:

| <u>BJS data requester</u> | <u>Type of data</u> | <u>Purpose</u> |
|--|--|--|
| Federal: | | |
| Senator Helm's Office | Victimization of elderly and children | Drafting legislation on increased prison sentences for crimes against "vulnerable" populations |
| Congressman Blagojevich's Office | State-by-State age restrictions on possession of firearms | Use in proposed legislation on aged-based statutes for firearms |
| Congressional Research Service | Parole and death penalty data | Respond to congressional inquiries |
| House Judiciary Committee | Sentences served by State prisoners | Use in a subcommittee report on truth-in-sentencing |
| White House Office on AIDS Policy | AIDS in correctional facilities | Examining the prevalence of HIV/AIDS among the incarcerated population |
| White House Domestic Policy Council | Costs of crime | Inform domestic policy on costs of crime to the U.S. and increasing burden on economy |
| DOJ Justice Management Division | Per capita costs of Federal and State prisoners | Analyze budget and costs associated with prisons |
| U.S. Attorney's Office, Washington, DC | Sex offenses and offenders | Only U.S. Attorney's Office with a sex crimes unit |
| DOJ Civil Division | State and Federal civil caseload trend data | Tort reform legislation |
| DOJ Criminal Division Federal Bureau of Prisons | Corrections data | Evaluate the condition of DC Dept. of Corrections facilities and inmate population in anticipation of Federal takeover |
| FBI's DNA Laboratory | Violent sex offenders, criminal history record systems | Assist in encouraging participation of local crime labs in national DNA databank |
| State and local: | | |
| Center for Urban Studies, Oregon | Victimization survey | Use NCVS as prototype for State of Oregon victimization survey |
| South Dakota Attorney General's Office | Operating cost and expenditure data for jails | AG document monetary needs of jail systems in SD and address proposed legislation |
| Florida Department of Corrections | National corrections statistics relating to offender drug use | Justify hiring more drug abuse counselors for inmates |
| Inglewood Drugs and Violence Prevention Coalition | Drugs and crime | Developing local drug-related violence resource center |
| Virginia State Police Department | NIBRS information and current States that interface with NIBRS | To set up interface for the VA Uniform Crime Reporting Office |
| Massachusetts' Department of Probation | Trend data on domestic violence in relation to civil protection orders | Assess impact of legislation and correlation to increased reporting and filing of orders |

Attachment B

Examples of Federal and State court cases citing BJS data

| <u>Court</u> | <u>Case</u> | <u>BJS data cited</u> |
|--|--|---|
| Supreme Court of the U.S. | United States v. Armstrong | Data on sentencing disparity from "Sentencing in the Federal Courts: Does Race Matter?" |
| U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia | United States v. Dyce | Data on prisoners with minor children from "Women in Prison" |
| U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit | United States v. Smith | Data on cocaine and crack use from "A National Report: Drugs, Crime, and the Justice System" |
| U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit | Anderson v. Romero | HIV/AIDS prevalence in correctional populations from "HIV in Prisons and Jails" |
| United States District Court for the Southern District of New York | Benjamin v. Jacobson | Recidivism data from "State Prison Inmates, 1991" |
| United States District Court for the Northern District of California | United States v. Medjuck | Data on Federal drug control expenditures from "Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Data" |
| United States District Court for the Eastern District of New York | Hamilton v. Accu-tek | Gun-related crime data from "Firearms and Crimes of Violence" and "Weapons Offenses and Offenders" |
| United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois | United States ex rel Green v. Washington | Data from first analysis of indigent defense systems conducted in U.S. |
| Supreme Court of Alabama | Life Ins. Co v. Johnson | Civil case data from "Civil Jury Cases and Verdicts in Large Counties" |
| Supreme Court of Kansas | Peden v. State | Data on juvenile offenders from "Surveys of Youth in Custody, 1987" |
| Supreme Court of Nevada | Earl v. State | Domestic violence and homicide data |
| Supreme Court of New York New York County | People v. Yates | Rape and sexual assault victimization data from National Crime Victimization Survey |
| Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts | Mendonza v. Commonwealth | Domestic violence data from NCVS report "Family Violence" and "Sourcebook" |
| Supreme Court of Minnesota | In re Linehan | Recidivism and rape data from "Recidivism of Prisoners Released in 1983" and "Criminal Victimization in the U.S." |