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EVALUATION REPORT

NUM Muxico - CRIMINAL DIVISION
WADMINISTRATIVE AND RECORDS IMPROVEMENT

SECOND JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT - ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO

SUBMITTED BY:

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and

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AUGUST, 1974

This project was supported by grant no. 72-DF-06-0047, awarded to the Second Judicial District Court, Criminal Division who engaged the authors for the purpose of evaluation. The grant was awarded by the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, U.S. Department of Justice, under the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, as amended. Points of view or opinions stated in this document are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position or 'icies of the U.S. Department of Justice.

26543 Evaluation

#### ABSTRACT

This report is an evaluation of a project entitled "Criminal Division Administrative and Records Improvement".

This project was funded by The Law Enforcement Assistance Administration. It was originally conceived by The Second Judicial District Court in Albuquerque, New Mexico and received Pilot Cities assistance.

The project was designed to modernize administrative procedures by implementing a system whereby closed cases would be microfiled for permanent storage. Easy indexing, quick retrieval, and economically providing hard copy was among the project goals. It was thought that a developed statistical system would form the foundation of a research and analysis capability.

The methodology used to analyze the project involved the collection of before and after data, interviews of personnel, physical "walk through", and on-site demonstration.

The findings point to project goal achievement. The overall impact has been to produce greater efficiency and coordination. The foundations for statistical reporting and analysis have been laid.

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#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This report includes an evaluation of a program entitled "Criminal Division Administrative and Records Improvement--Second Judicial District" (LEAA Grant No. 72-DF-06-0047).

On October 1, 1972, the court of the Second Judicial District began operation of a program to modernize its system. The criminal caseloads of the Second Judicial District have grown dramatically in recent years. Approximately 50% of the state's pending criminal cases are in this district.

The program was designed to implement a system whereby closed cases could be microfilmed for permanent storage. In addition, the easy indexing and quick retrieval designed within the system was to have allowed needed data to be located and reproduced quickly as well as economically on hard copy. Automatic addressing was to be another part of the design.

It was thought that along with the saving of space and labor, this process would allow for the implementation of a system for storage and retrieval of statistical data. Futuristically, the statistical aspect would form the foundation for a research and analysis capability. 1

The goals of the project, then, were the following:

1. Microfilm storage of case file data.

The project will implement a system whereby closed cases will be microfiled for permanent storage. The system used will enable easy indexing for quick retrieval of needed data plus provide a capability to reproduce needed data on hard copy quickly and economically.

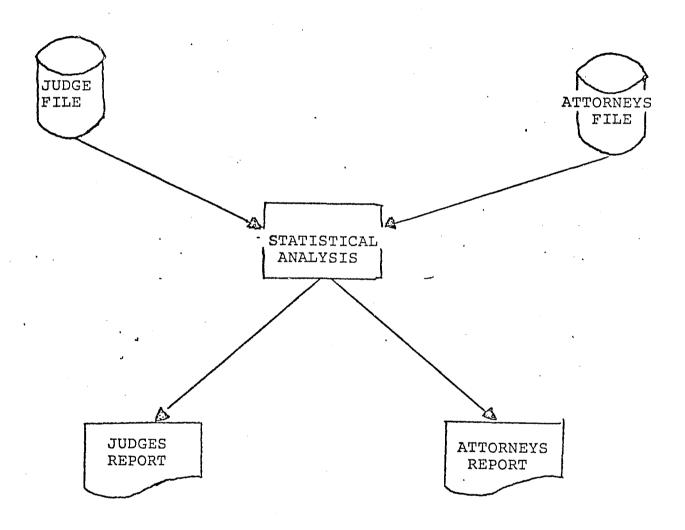
2. Computerized retrieval of statistical data.

The project will establish a parallel system to store statistical data for easy retrieval and print-out. The data will be stored in several categories to permit analysis and reporting of the caseload of the Second Judicial District by case category, sub-category, Judge, age, parties, sentences, etc. If successful, the

1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>l</sup> See Figure 1

FIGURE 1
STATISTICAL ANALYSIS



system may become the basis for future statistical reporting throughout the state.

3. Streamlining of administrative procedures.

activity.

The project will use timesaving devices such as reproduction machines and automatic addressing equipment to provide faster notifications at more economical cost. It will also explore the possibility of combining criminal and civil jury administration and provide for juror utilization evaluation on cost and time factors. It will also concentrate the appointment of indigent defense counsel in the Criminal Division so as to decrease the number of contact points currently needed for this

The suggested overall impact was to be a more orderly and faster process. The improved efficiency was to reduce larger staff build-up in the future.

In addition, it was expected that the program would result in greater file integrity and coordination of prosecution, defense and general court activity in a more efficient manner.

#### HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The program was scheduled for operation beginning October 1, 1972. Project implementors began by reviewing several different types of microfilm systems and equipment. A decision was made to obtain a cartridge type microfilms operation with an electric quick retrieval reader and dry copy printer.

After advertising bids, the 3M, 3400 BE Cartridge camera and 3M, 500 C Page Search Reader-Printer was selected.

Some delay was experienced in equipment delivery. Part of this time was used to proof previously microfilmed files and to train clerks for the process. In addition, some time was spent proofing the newly initiated process against the files to determine quality and reproduction. After determining the quality, the microfilming of files from the 1964 through the 1967 period was begun.

The rationale for the process beginning for these years was to provide immediate open file space that had become a premium. Once this was accomplished, the process was moved to the filming of prior years. Considerable time was spent during the equipment reviewing and training period in the development of uniform monthly statistical reports. The breakdown of cases had as its objective the eventual programming for storage and retrieval on a computor system.

Because the format was initiated prior to collection of raw data and prior to review by the Association of District Court Clerks (for possible revision) the actual programming and implementation was delayed.

The Criminal Division implemented the open docket system with simultaneous completion of index cards to expedite paper—work in initiating cases with sequential recording of case information on the docket. In addition, the Criminal Division put into operation an exhibit log to permit proper accounting for receipt and disposal of evidence after entry. The Division also initiated a procedure to systematically process exhibits on criminal cases for final disposition.

l 2See Figures 2 and 3 See Figure 4

FIGURE 2

EDIT

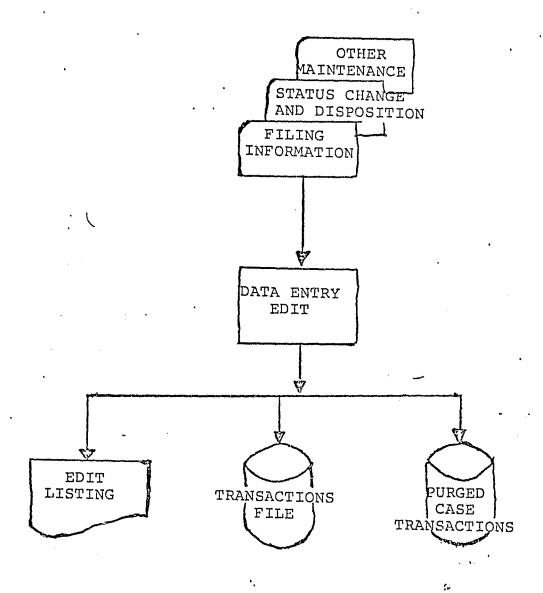


FIGURE 3
MAINTENANCE, PURGE, AND REINSTATEMENT

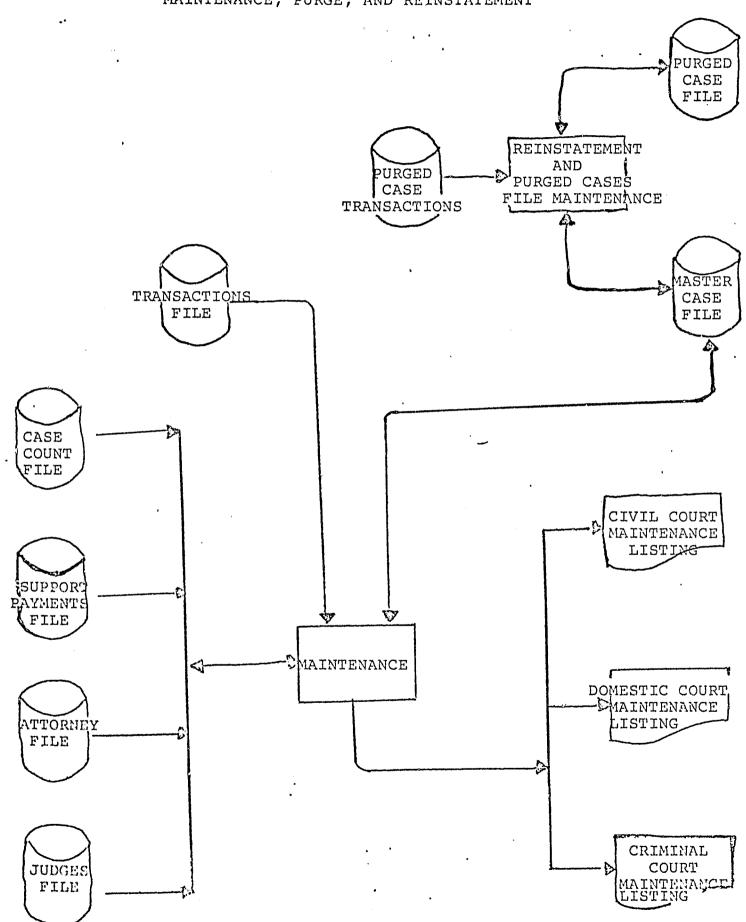


FIGURE 4 DOCKET REPORTS MASTER MASTER CASE CASE FILE FILE DOCKET DOCKET REPORT REPORT COUNT COUNT CASE DOCKET DOCKET COURT COURT COURT RECORDS FILE RECORDS DOCKET REPORT PRINT DISPOSITION CRIMINAL CIVIL DOMESTIC JUVENILE SUMMARY DICKET RELATIONS DOCKET DOCKET DOCKET

Another procedure initiated to streamline the administrative procedures involved the implementation of a master calendar system for all jury cases. What this does for the efficiency of the Criminal Division is to make possible the interchange of Civil and Criminal Jury Panels for more effective and greater economical utilization of Jurors.

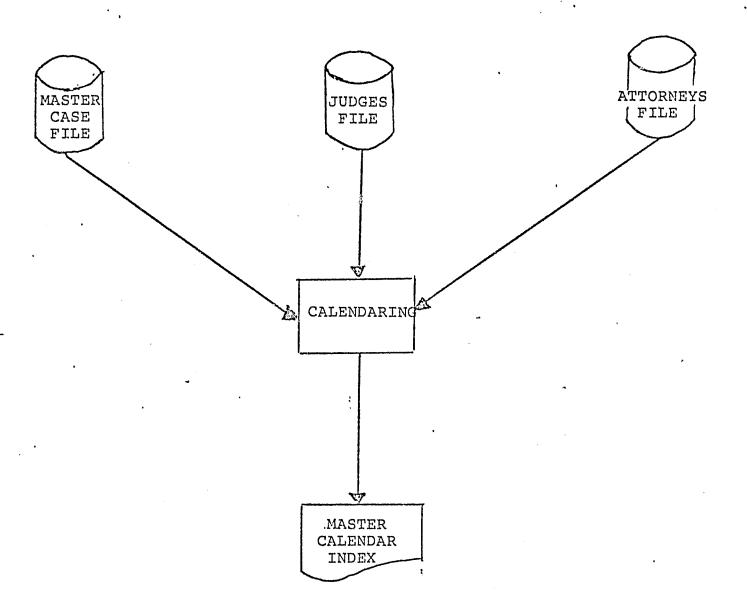
Events taking place during the program period that may have had an effect on properly assessing the improved efficiency brought about by the program are several additional responsibilities assumed by the Criminal Division since the programs inception. These additional responsibilities include the following:

- 1. Motion Calendar
- 2. Open Docket System
- 3. Arraignment notifications
- 4. Notices of jail (date and time)
- 5. Insanities
  - a. examinations
  - b. transportation orders
  - c. competency hearings
  - d. orders in re: competency
- 6. Specific settings on trial calendar--additional overall control of calendar.
- 7. Disposition of exhibits
- 8. Disposition of microfiled case files
- 9. Mandates (execution)
- 10. Juvenile Jury settings
- 11. Computorization project
  - · a. computor cards
    - b. docket information sheet
    - c. supervision
- 12. Jurors
  - a. processing
  - b. scheduling and assigning
  - c. records

<sup>1</sup> See Figure 5

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix A

FIGURE 5
CALENDARING



#### PROGRAM REVIEW AND DATA COLLECTION

After visiting the Office of the Court Administrator, the evaluators requested a "walk through" of the entire system as it is now in operation. In this procedure, it was felt that we could physically come into contact with not only personnel involved in the operation (so that time could be spent in interviewing them), but also we could see the equipment purchased and account for physical space utilized and projected.

Data gathered included the collection of the following information from the Court Administrator and the Court Clerk:

- 1. Total number of pending cases, by category, as of 10-1-72
- 2. Total number of pending cases, by category, as of 6-30-74
- 3. Total number of paper case files, by category, as of 10-1-72
- 4. Total number of paper case files, by category, as of 6-30-74
- 5. Average number of criminal cases disposed of during period 1-1-71 through 9-30-72
- 6. Average number of criminal cases disposed of during period 10-1-72 through 6-30-74
- 7. Percentage increases in criminal cases, 1-1-71 through 9-30-72, compared to 10-1-72 through 6-30-74
- 8. Average number of pleading (pages), by category, in each case file.
- 9. Case files, by dates and category, microfiled from 10-1-72 through 6-30-74
- 10. Criminal cases handled during period (21 Months) 1-1-71 through 9-30-72
- 11. Criminal cases handled during period 10-1-72 through 6-30-74
- 12. Cost of space utilized for criminal files when in hard copy and after copying on microfilm.
- 13. Cost of reproduction copies of criminal files and need therefor.
- 14. Number of criminal jury trials during period 1-1-71 through 9-30-72

15. Number of criminal jury trials during period 10-1-72 through 6-30-74.

In addition to data gathered concerning cases and files, all equipment purchased was documented by the evaluators.

One of the important aspects of the procedure to evaluate such a program is in the subjective views of the people operating within the area on which the program should have an impact.

Accordingly, time was set aside to conduct interviews with various personnel. The following personnel were interviewed in this process:

District Judge
Court Clerk
Court Administrator
Clerks
Microfilm Clerks

#### ANALYSIS

#### TOTAL NUMBER OF PENDING CASES AS OF 10-1-72

<del></del>	Inactive Active	560
Domestic Relations, other civil, Adopt., Insanity and Probate		8195
<u> </u>	Inactive Active	915
TOTAL P	ENDING	9670
TOTAL NUMBER	OF PENDING CASES AS OF 6-30-74	
	Inactive Active	570
Domestic Relations, other civil, Adopt., Insanity and Probate		8204
582	Inactive Active H.S.S.	1204
TOTAL P	ENDING	9978

#### CRIMINAL CASES COMPARED TIME PERIODS

1-1-71 through 9-3	30-72	10-1-72 through $6-30-74$
Pending (1-1-71)	1134	Pending (10-1-72) 560
Pending (9-30-72)	560	Pending (6-30-74) 570

The increased percentage in the closing of all court cases handled by the Second Judicial District during the period of this program was more than offset by the increase in new cases as shown above.

As of 10-1-72 there were 9,670 pending cases which included 560 criminal cases. This is compared to 9,978 pending cases as of 6-30-74 which included 570 criminal cases. The percentage increase in total pending cases is 3.1% and in criminal cases 1.8%. This clearly shows that the problem is a continuing one and requires constant attention.

#### TOTAL NUMBER OF CLOSED PAPER CASE FILES 10-1-72

Criminal (no cases microfilmed prior to 10-1-72)	17,201
Other Civil, Domestic Relations, Adoption	
Insanity and Probate	. 167,613
(on microfilm as of 10-1-72	118,499
Juvenile (no cases microfilmed)	13,261

#### TOTAL NUMBER OF CLOSED PAPER CASE FILES 6-30-74

Criminal	18,840
(microfilmed from $10-1-72$ to $6-30-74$ )	11,681
Other Civil, Domestic Relations, Adoption Insanity and Probate	185,956
(on microfilm as of 6-30-74)	123,913
(microfilmed from 10-1-72 to 6-30-74)	5,414
Juvenile	14,529

(No cases microfilmed as of 6-30-74)

As can be seen in the above comparison of time periods, all but 7,169 criminal closed paper files had been microfilmed by June 30, 1974. When one considers the fact that the actual composition of paper files is growing at a considerable rate because of the trend toward increased motions and other pleadings by both prosecution and defense, the space saving involved becomes significant.

Another item to be gleaned from the above information relates to total space and filing capability. Even though criminal proceedings are separated from civil, the administrative aspects of the District Court are housed on the same floor of an already overburdened (space-wise) District Court. Therefore, while the 5,414 closed files which were microfilmed on the new cartridge type from 10-1-72 to 6-30-74 were civil cases, the space savings from this area contributes to the overall space saved in the courts administration.

#### AVERAGE NUMBER OF CRIMINAL CASES DISPOSED OF COMPARED

10-1-71 through 9-30-72	•	10-1-72 through 6-30-74	
•			
Average filed per month	102	Average filed per month	113
Average closed per month	110	Average closed per month	126
Average jury trials per month	10	Average jury trials per month	15
Average time from arraign ment to trial	4.2 Mo.	Average time from arraign ment to trial	1.5 Mo.
Jury trials	222	Jury trials	315

The average number of criminal cases filed and closed per month during the period 10-1-71 to 9-30-72 were 102 and 110 respectively. The average number of criminal actions filed and closed during the period 10-1-72 to 6-30-74 were 113 and 126 respectively. This shows an increase of 10.08% in cases filed and 14.54% in cases closed during the implementation of this program as compared with a 21 month period prior to the program. The substantial higher percentage of closing cases over the opening of cases is a most desirable trend which will undoubtedly aid in shortening the time between an arrest and trial. By reducing the back log of pending criminal cases, the societal demands of forthwith trying an arrested individual will be met.

The average time from arraignment to trial during period 1-1-71 through 9-30-72 was 4.2 months. During the implementation of this program the average time from arraignment to trial was decreased to 1.5 months which is a reduction of 64.29% in the waiting time between an arraignment and trial of a subject now as compared with the waiting time 22 months ago. The utilization of only 35.7% of time formerly required between arraignment and trial placed an increasing burden upon staff. The equipment obtained for storage and retrieval of records by this grant has substantially contributed to the increased staff capability.

There were 222 jury trials held during period 1-1-71 through 9-30-72 and 315 during the period 10-1-72 through 6-30-74. This is an increase of 41.9% and therefore increased the burden of court personnel. The increased efficiency resulting from this program assisted the staff materially in meeting their expanding responsibilities.

The demands for copies of court records have been increasing every year. During the period 1-1-71 through 9-30-72, 100 pages of court records were copied. During the period 10-1-72 through 6-30-74, 511 pages of court records were reproduced. This shows a 411% increase in demand for reproduction copies. The fast retrieval time (1 1/2 minute from location of cartridge number to finished copy) has allowed the staff to adequately handle this otherwise overwhelming burden created by demands for copies of court records. Increasing demand for copies because of appeals and trials means that without the capability of fast retrieval brought about by the project, clerks would be hopelessly swamped with the demand increasing in an almost geometric manner.

It is estimated that \$2,200 was saved in expenditures for filing cabinets and folders by reason of the microfilming of closed criminal cases during the period 10-1-72 through 6-30-74. This amount does not include the cost of additional office space which would have been required for storage of the paper case files. There is no additional office space available in the court house. The microfilming, therefore, not only saved money, but averted a very real crisis in the future that would certainly have been brought on by an impossible space situation.

One item of particular interest is in the area of indexing. Since, in order to locate the microfilm on a closed file, the clerk had to go to the docket to obtain a microfilm cartridge number, the evaluators questioned the efficiency. Upon further investigation and interviews with both a judge and the court administrator, the evaluators discovered that considerable work has already been done in what was described as a futuristic program. One of the important reasons for not setting up the direct-index system for closed microfilm files was the bypassing of that system in favor of a comprehensive computerized system that has been planned. The following is a synopsis of that projected comprehensive system as of July 15, 1974 prepared by the Systems Analyst of the Data Processing Section of Bernalillo County:

The Bernalillo County District Court System is a comprehensive data collection and reporting system, the primary purpose of which

is docket reporting. These monthly dockets report the number of cases filed, number of cases disposed and method of disposition, total cases pending, and the age of the pending cases in each domestic, civil, or criminal category. In addition, data is collected which allows the system to report the status of a case and print the master indexes.

The data collection for the present court system is very comprehensive, thus the data transition between the present off-line and the proposed on-line system would be minimal.

The on-line system would allow the timely filing, status change, and disposition of cases. The time required by the court staff to prepare necessary input documents of filing, status change, and dispositions for the present system would be eliminated.

The proposed system would allow instant retrieval of selected information on any case in the file. These cases, for example, would be retrieved by defendant's name, plaintiff's name, arraignment date, or any other selected parameter. The system would also allow overall retrieval of cases belonging to a particular attorney or a trace of all actions taken in a particular case.

The retrieval capacity of the system is limited only by the entry files created in the data base. A careful analysis will be done to allow all feasible file entries.

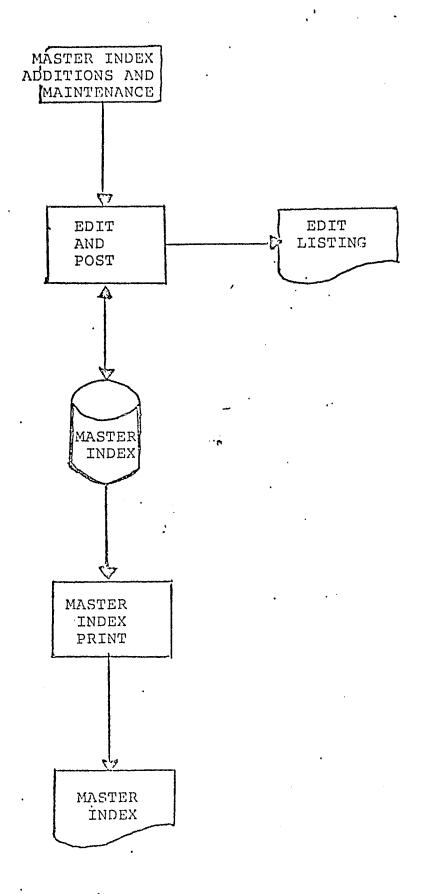
A master calendaring system would be feasible with the ability to use the on-line retrieval and update following instant changes to the calendar.

Security and privacy of the district court files will be maintained. Only district court employees will be allowed to retrieve and update their files. A terminal operator will be assigned a code and only with the proper use of this code will the terminal be enabled for data transmission. Each transmission will require a retrieval or update code. These terminal operators will be instructed to disable the terminal when leaving their area. Other measures of security and privacy will be implemented by the district courts.

<sup>1</sup> See Figure 6

• FIGURE 6

MASTER INDEX MAINTENANCE



The proposed on-line system would be an invaluable aid to the district courts administrative requirements for prompt handling and retrieval of data on all filed cases.

#### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The microfilm process is in complete operation. Presently, filming is used to allow space for filing and the process is well ahead of space needed for daily operation. In addition, early years and exhibits are being systematically microfilmed with one perminent and one copy in file.

The development of a uniform monthly statistical report proceeded to the point of breaking cases down in the following manner:

- (1) Number of cases filed, disposed and pending by general category of offense:
  - a. Crimes Against the Person
  - b. Crimes Against Property
  - c. Drug Offenses
  - d. Crimes Against Public Safety and Good Order
  - e. Miscellaneous
- (2) The general categories above are then further broken down into major offenses charged, i.e., murder, aggravated assult, robbery, etc.
- (3) The breakdown further reflects full charges or attempts to commit the specific offense.
- (4) The dispositions are categorized as to number of trials, guilty pleas, nolle prosequi, order of dismissals and then dismissals.
- (5) The pending cases are broken down into age categories,i.e., under 2 months, 2 to 4 months, 4 to 6 months, over6 months.

The open docket system has been completely implemented and an exhibit log is in use to permit proper accounting for and receipt and disposal of evidence after entry as exhibits.

With the growing caseload of this District Court, the initiation of the project can be seen as a vital aspect in the systematic approach to record-keeping and utilization. While the percentage of closed cases is increasing, the pending cases (presumably because of increased filing of cases) are also on the increase. Had not a system for greater efficiency in both time and space been introduced, the problems associated with these increases would continue

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix B

to multiply.

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After first accommodating "working room" needed for day to day operation, the microfilming process is now proceeding at a rapid pace toward systematically filming all of the closed files on record. At the same time, progress is being made toward computerizing statistical information for increased efficiency.

Comparison of available data pertaining to the 21 month period before the implementation of this program and the 21 month period of the program reflects that there was an increase of 10.08% in cases filed and 14.54% in cases closed during the latter period over the first 21 month period. This favorable trend of a higher percentage in cases closed over these filed is a large step toward the goal of shortening the time lag between arrest and trial. During the period of this program the average time from arraignment to trial was reduced by 64.29%. There was an increase of 41.9% in jury trials during the period of this program as compared to the previous 21 month period.

The equipment for storage and retrieval obtained for this project materially assisted the staff in the above accomplishments.

Important aspects of the interviews conducted included various patterns of screndipity that would be difficult to document with objective data. One judge, for example, spoke to us at length about hightened morald in office staff and a now-found obligation to consider new ways to increase efficiency. Instead of simply doing the same things in the same ways because traditionally that was how it had been done, more personnel are actively seeking way of positive innovation.

Work accomplished in preparation of receiving the grant and thus equipment (to best make use of the forthcoming equipment) was another item mentioned during the interviews. In other words, in just preparing for the receipt of the grant a great deal had been accomplished by way of changing office procedure.

Other items mentioned in the interview sessions included work-time saved and the lowering of frustrations in preparing monthly reports for State Supreme Court; feelings of overall employee participating in the comprehensive workings of the court,

rather than just those items with which a particular employee has to work. (The evaluators feel that this is important for a systems approach because if one does not recognize the system in its entirety you can hardly expect to see the relationship between what you are doing and the entire system. Innovation or increased efficiency is almost, then, an impossibility under those conditions); A savings of future staff build-up (the point stressed here by those interviewed was that while one has to provide a minimum base for the new operation which may be larger than the one in existance, i.e., microfilm clerks, the same base can continue into the future with smaller ratios of increase).

The evaluators viewed, and had the following pieces of equipment demonstrated for them:

Two microfilm cameras - Model 3400

One 3-M Model 500 Page Search Reader-Printer

One Plate Electric Roller Printer

In addition, the following pieces of equipment were documented as having been purchased:

One Printer Machine Table
One 12-Tray Cabinet
Two 3-M, ten-drawer microfilm cabinets

The goals of the project as far as the evaluators could ascertain have been accomplished. A system has been implemented to microfilm closed cases for permanent storage. While the indexing might have included a direct system for the microfilm files, the progress toward the computerized retrieval of statistical data has allowed, in addition to storage and pring-out, the printing-out of master indexes. The capability of statistical reporting is already superior to that used in the past. The amount of time taken away from daily routine to prepare these reports have been drastically reduced and, of course, the quality of reporting has greatly increased and includes the use of sub-categories.

The office has started the use of civil-criminal jury pools and is now attempting to work out the mechanical difficulties of attorney review of jurors when jurors are shifted and simultaneous calendar dates of trials.

The overall impact has been greater efficiency and coordination.

#### APPENDIX A

#### 1-1-71 thru 9-30-72

## Motion Calendar: Prepared and processed by District Attorney's office

# Arraignment Notices: Prepared and processed by District Attorney's office

### Notices to Jail: Done by District Attorney's office

### <u>Insanities:</u> Processed by District Attorney's office

### 10-1-72 thru 6-30-74 Responsibilities of Criminal Division

Prepared weekly. Setting is given to Attorney when motion is filed by stamping with motion stamp and the date dtamp. Calendar to be heard on Friday - to be prepared by Wednesday. Approximately 15-20 copies are made and delivered to District Attorney, Jail, and to Courtroom for Attorneys! use.

List of defendants, their addresses, and Attorneys are obtained from District Attorney's office the day after they are indicted. List is revised and delivered to the Jail. Notice of Arraignment form is typed and mailed, with a copy of the indictment, to the defendant, his/her Attorney, the District Attorney's office, and one copy is retained for the Court file.

Jail is notified by telephone the day before sentencings, change of pleas or odd arraignments:
Copies of the Motion and Arraignment Calendars are delivered on the day before the settings.

- a. Examinations-Appointment is scheduled with a psychiatrist after an order for said examination is filed. b. Transporation orders are typed for Judge to sign; then filed, and certified copies delivered to Sheriff to transport defendant to and from examination.
- c. Competency hearings are scheduled after a report is filed from the psychiatrist. Judge is contacted to set hearing. Attorney, District Attorney, and psychiatrist are notified of hearing date and time.
- d. Orders for competency after hearing, (which clerk attends), are prepared, signed by Judge, filed, and a copy delivered to Sheriff if defendant is declared incompetent. If defendant is found to be competent, calendar clerk is notified to set for trial.

#### 1-1-71 thru 9-30-72

Exhibits:

Retained permanently

Disposition of Microfilmed Court files:
Not applicable

Mandates: (Affirming Judgment and Sentence of District Court) Processed by District Attorney's office

Juvenile Jury Settings: Set by Civil Jury Calendar Clerk

Jurors: Individual Clerks in the different

divisions were responsible for a particular panel of Jurors.

Computer Input: Not applicable

Specific Settings on Trial
Calendar:
Specific settings given by
Judge at arraignment hearing.

10-1-72 thru 6-30-74
Responsibilities of Criminal Division

Exhibits are periodically examined and destroyed by Court Order.

Files are destroyed periodically, by Court order, to meet the demand for space. File jackets, in good condition, are retained for re-use.

Determine defendant's whereabouts by checking Court file. Verify incarceration with Penitentiary. If out on bond, contact Bonding Company and issue Bench Warrant (original and 4 copies). Original is filed in Court file; copies of Bench Warrant with copies of Judgment, Sentence, and committment are delivered to the Albuquerque Police Department, Sheriff's office, and State Police, and fourth copy to District Attorney's office.

Scheduled on regular weekly Trial Calendar:

One definate setting and one backup case set on Thursdays and two backup cases on Friday of each week. Mailed.

Processing, scheduling and assigning Jurors for all Divisions. Keeps records on all Jurors and is responsible for notifications in regard to Jury Duty.

Responsible for manually coding all status information for computer input.

Specific settings, backup cases, and case assignments to Judges are responsibility of Calendar Clerk.

APPENDIX B

SECOND

#### JUDICIAL DISTRICT

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STATE OF NEW MEXICO

DOCKET REPORT CRIMINAL CASES

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SUS-CATEGORY	PENDING FIRST OF MONTH	FILLD THIS MONTH	FROM OTHER	DISPOSED OF THIS MONTH	TOTAL CASES PENDING	JURY JAINT	TRIAL	GUILTY PLEA	NOI PROS	LE EQUI	CHANGE TO OTHER CHARGE	O TO 2 MCNTHS	2 TO 4 MCNTHS	4 TO 6	. 6 MONTHS 1 TO 2 YEARS	\$ 2 · C	
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Poss. of Mot. Veh. w/o Manuf. #'s B-TOTALS	1				1								<u> </u> 		1 1	<u> </u>	_
C - Drug Offenses Prescribing of Medicine									-							<u> </u>	
Distribution of Heroin	23	2		· 5	25			1	5			<u>6</u>	<u> </u>	8	S		-
Possession of Heroin	29	2		15	31	1	1	Ī	12			8	8	Ö	8	<u> </u>	
Distribution of Darbiturates	1				1								<u></u>		1		
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Distribution of LSD	4			2	4				2					3		1	_
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