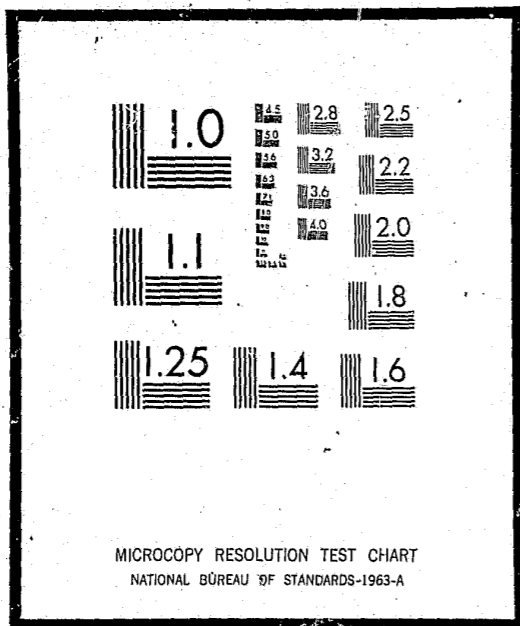


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Dallas County (Tx) -

SPECIAL COURT PROCESSING OF IMPACT CASES

INTERIM EVALUATION REPORT

May 15, 1975

Prepared by: DALLAS AREA CRIMINAL JUSTICE COUNCIL

26595  
LOAN (4)  
EVALUATION

DEFINITION OF TERMS

\* Impact Case: A murder, rape, robbery, burglary, or attempted murder, rape, robbery, or burglary committed within the city limits of Dallas, in which the perpetrator and the victim are not previously known to each other (stranger to stranger)

Non-Impact Case: A felony case (offense) which is not an Impact case(offense)

\* Repeat Offender: Those offenders who have been re-arrested, indicted, and jailed for a felony while out of custody on a felony bond

Impact Case Coordinator: The person responsible for development, compilation, and reporting of this project's data and responsible for the general operation and supervision of this project

State's Brief: Upon appeal of a case disposition from one of the Criminal District Courts, the District Attorneys Office is charged with the responsibility of writing up its prosecution of the case and must answer the points of appeal submitted by defense counsel in the defense brief

Mandate: The decision on an appeal from the Court of Criminal Appeals, either affirmation or denial of the appeal

Apprehended Offender: Status of a case on a defendant whose whereabouts are known

Unapprehended Offender: Status of a case on a defendant whose whereabouts are unknown

\* These definitions have been modified from the definitions given in the second year grant application. The modifications and the reasons for these modifications are explained in this report.

Special Court Processing of Impact Cases  
Original Title: Two Temporary District Courts

Second Interim Evaluation Report - June, 1975

Report Period: January 1, 1974 - December 31, 1974

The Special Court Processing of Impact Cases project is a three year project (January, 1973 - January, 1976) designed to increase prosecution of Impact offenders and to strengthen the entire Dallas County Criminal Justice System by providing two district courts, additional personnel for these courts, for the District Attorney's Office, Sheriff's Office, and the District Clerk's Office. As will be recalled, the first interim evaluation report of this project prepared by this office was distributed in July, 1974, and covered project operation and project data for the period January 1, 1973 through March 31, 1974. This second evaluation report covers the remainder of the project's second year of operation (April 1 through December 31, 1974), and in so doing, evaluates all available data generated from this project to date.

Grant Personnel

All personnel authorized by the grant award have been hired except for the positions of the three floating court reporters. These positions have never been filled according to the procedure proposed in the original grant application which called for three full-time salaried reporters to be hired in addition to the "regular" nine Court Reporters (one per Court). Instead of following the proposed procedure, it was decided that a more efficient method would be to have Court Reporters on an "as need" basis and that each of the nine courts would be responsible for determining its own need and likewise responsible for hiring its own additional reporters.

Throughout the life of this project, Court Reporters have been hired on an as need basis and are paid a daily salary of \$73.11. Official authorization of this procedural change was made in February, 1975, although the change had been verbally agreed upon many months prior to the formal authorization.

Also, a new Impact Case Coordinator was hired in September, 1974, upon resignation of the previous Coordinator. Other than these changes, the second year grant positions are identical to the first year's positions and all positions are filled at this time.

#### Evaluation Analysis

As was previously mentioned, the first evaluation report prepared by this office covered project operation and data from the first quarter of the project's second year (January 1, 1974 - March 31, 1974). However, for the sake of clarity and continuity, all second year project data will be presented in this report. Operational periods will be referred to as follows:

- Quarter 1: January 1, 1974 - March 31, 1974
- Quarter 2: April 1, 1974 - June 30, 1974
- Quarter 3: July 1, 1974 - September 30, 1974
- Quarter 4: October 1, 1974 - December 31, 1974

Also, any discussion of Impact or Impact-related cases in regard to this project does not include the Impact crime of aggravated assault. The omission of assault data in this project was done for the following reasons:

- 1) Under the new Texas Penal Code (effective January 1, 1974) aggravated assault is a felony, however, during the project's first year of operation under the old Penal Code, aggravated assaults were misdemeanors. Since aggravated assaults were misdemeanors under the old Code, they were not disposed of by the Criminal District Courts unless another charge was reduced to aggravated

assault and heard by a District Court Judge or unless a jury found a defendant guilty of a lesser included offense of aggravated assault. Otherwise, aggravated assaults were tried in County Criminal Courts exclusively.

- 2) Even though aggravated assaults are classified as felonious assaults under the new Texas Penal Code and therefore classed as felonious assaults during this project's second year, they are not tracked in this project based on reason (1) above and based on the results of the Dallas Police Department Study (Repeat Offender Study, 1971) which estimated that less than 10 percent of all aggravated assaults were stranger-to-stranger; hence, the expense of tracking these cases through the criminal justice system is not justified.
- 3) Finally, referring to Page 5 of the second year grant application for this project, a clarification should be made in the Definitions section. Assaults to murder, assaults to rape, and assaults to rob are no longer crime categories under the new Texas Penal Code, rather crimes of this nature are charged as attempted murder, attempted rape, or attempted robbery. Consequently, the offense of assault in relation to these crime categories is no longer statutable.

For all of these reasons, then, the concept of Impact assaults has little application in this project.

#### Quantified Project Objectives

Project Objective 1: Reduce the number of Repeat Impact and non-Impact offenses by persons on release while awaiting trial.

	<u>Baseline</u>
Re-arrests of persons released on bond	Not Available

The "arrest while on bond" objective has been one of the most difficult project objectives to work with because actual data addressing this project objective was not available until January 1, 1975.

Collection and compilation of re-arrest data is obviously two years late, however, this tardiness was created by problems which were beyond the control of project personnel. First of all, prior to the fourth quarter, 1974, there was little effort made to update the automated report used to flag Impact offenders who were booked-in to the County Jail.

The second problem which hindered collection of bond data for this project, moreover, altered the entire bonding system in Dallas County, was the irregularities uncovered by accusations that several bail bondsmen had exceeded their statutory limits in issuing bonds. As was mentioned in the first evaluation report, one of the immediate outcomes of this controversy was an effort by Sheriff's Office personnel to maintain accurate manual bond records and to update automated files only when time permitted. This action impeded the collection of bond data for project purposes.

Beginning January 1, 1975, data was available to address project objective #1; the automated report flagging Impact offenders at book-in has been updated\* and is compared by offender name with automated bond files to determine the number of re-arrests while on bond. In cases where there are more than one arrest and more than one bond issued, determination of "re-arrest while on bond" will be made by comparing the dates of arrest and the dates of bond issuance.

Comparison of book-in data and bond data by offender name poses the problem that there is no way to be certain that a Charles H. Jones, for example, on the automated book-in report is the same Charles Jones on the automated bond reports; book-in dates and bond issuance dates are expected to facilitate this identification process.

\*This process will be discussed in relation to project objective #5 which pertains to average length of stay in the County Jail by inmates.

The purpose for collecting re-arrest data is to place parameters on the repeat offender problem in Dallas County. An immediate obstacle encountered, before data collection could begin, was defining what type of offender actually constitutes a repeat offender; for example, a person may be re-arrested while on bond, charged with an offense and later the charges may be dropped without the offender ever being jailed or indicted. Consequently, for the purposes of this project, re-arrest while on bond, i.e., repeat offenders, will be those offenders who have been re-arrested, indicted, and jailed for a felony while out of custody on a felony bond. Re-arrest statistics will address both Impact and non-Impact offenders.

In the next evaluation report, two quarters of "re-arrest while on bond" data will be available for preliminary evaluation of project efforts to achieve project objective #1.

Project Objective #2: Reduce the elapsed time between arrest and disposition of cases.

	<u>Baseline</u>	<u>1973</u>	<u>1974</u>	<u>1975</u>
Elapsed time between arrest and disposition	330 days	225 days	150 days	110 days

As discussed in the previous evaluation report, several problems were encountered in collecting data addressing average elapsed time between arrest and disposition.

As a result of these problems, data by which to measure annual project accomplishments toward project objective #2 were officially revised via letter from the Texas Criminal Justice Council (August 26, 1974) to the numbers that appear in this report under project objective #2.

The revised arrest-disposition data called for a reduction to an average 150 days by the year's end, 1974. Examination of the data shows the following (see Table I):

1. Impact Offenders: The number of Impact offenses filed increased during each quarter and the number of Impact cases disposed,

TABLE I

	IMPACT	NON-IMPACT	TOTAL
<u>QUARTER 1:</u>			
-cases filed	562	3,188	3,750
-cases disposed	429	2,980	3,409
-average elapsed time between arrest-disposition per case	65 days	72 days	71 days
<u>QUARTER 2:</u>			
-cases filed	700	2,684	3,384
-cases disposed	442	2,817	3,259
-average elapsed time between arrest-disposition per case	81 days	94 days	92 days
<u>QUARTER 3:</u>			
-cases filed	872	3,033	3,905
-cases disposed	420	2,890	3,310
-average elapsed time between arrest-disposition per case	86 days	91 days	90 days
<u>QUARTER 4:</u>			
-cases filed	881	2,919	3,800
-cases disposed	574	3,113	3,687
-average elapsed time between arrest-disposition per case	104 days	103 days	103 days
<u>OVERALL AVERAGES:</u>			
-cases filed	754	2,956	3,710
-cases disposed	466	2,950	3,416
-average elapsed time between arrest-disposition per case	86* days	90* days	89* days

\*Rather than averaging the averages, these means were calculated by compiling the elapsed time between each arrest and its subsequent disposition for each quarter and dividing by the total dispositions for the four quarters.

with the exception of Quarter 3, likewise increased. The average elapsed time per case between arrest and and disposition increased during each quarter; yet the overall average time elapsed for arrest-disposition of each Impact case was 86 days.

2. Non-Impact Offenders: During the quarters of 1974, the numbers of non-Impact cases filed fluctuated while the number of cases disposed decreased during Quarter 2 from the number disposed during the first quarter; however, during Quarters 3 and 4, the number of case dispositions began to increase again. The overall average time elapsed for each non-Impact case during the project's second year was 90 days. For two reasons, (a) the priority assignment of Impact cases to court and (b) the obvious volume of non-Impact cases, it is surprising that this average is so much lower than the 1974 objective.

Table Ia compares the overall averages from the project's second year with the baseline data from which the project objectives were designed.

TABLE Ia

	Baseline Period (October 1, 1973-December 31, 1973)			Overall Averages per Quarter 2nd Year Data		
	Impact	Non-Impact	Total	Impact	Non-Impact	Total
Cases Filed	658	3,229	3,887	754	2,956	3,710
Cases Disposed	303	2,666	2,969	466	2,950	3,416
Project Objective 1974 (Arrest-disposition)	150 Days	150 Days	150 Days	86 Days	90 Days	89 Days



Examination of the data in Table Ia shows that during 1974 more cases were disposed of than during the baseline period and were disposed of more rapidly. Considering these results, the obvious conclusion is that project efforts have been very successful in reducing the average elapsed time between arrest and disposition.

It is easily seen that subsequent quarters of data collection will be critical in terms of evaluating this project's capability for reducing arrest-disposition time. Although exceptions can be seen in the data presented in Table I, the general feel of court personnel is that there are and will continue to be increases in the incidences of crimes, reported crimes, number of arrests, and the numbers of cases tried in the courts. If this prediction is substantiated by future quarters of data collection, then the remaining four quarters of project operation will be critical in determining whether or not the project can sustain its current level of achievement toward meeting this project objective.

Project Objective #3: Reduce the elapsed time between trial and final appeal.

	<u>Baseline</u>	<u>1973</u>	<u>1974</u>	<u>1975</u>
Elapsed time between trial and final appeal	24 Mos.	22 Mos.	20 Mos.	18 Mos.

Referring again to the first evaluation report, it was stated that appeal information has, in the past, been incomplete and inaccurate; adding to these complications, the Impact Case Coordinator has examined the sources from which appeal information is generated and from his examination has raised a question with important implications for this project's ability to accomplish project objective #3. As read in the objective, it was estimated that project efforts could reduce the total elapsed time between trial and final appeal, however, it was not previously recognized that project efforts could affect only a portion of the total time elapsed between trial and final appeal for any case. That is, appeals generated from judicial dispositions handed down by Dallas County District Judges are filed in the Court of Criminal

Appeals located in Austin. Consequently, the period of time elapsed between the filing of the State's Brief and the time of affirmation or negation of the mandate, cannot be affected by project efforts since all action during this time block is virtually out of the hands of project personnel. Therefore, no matter how effective project efforts are in reducing the elapsed time between trial and filing of the State's Brief, it will always be only a portion of the total time elapsed between trial (disposition) and final appeal. Some discussion ensued as to whether or not this project objective should be revised for the project's third year in order to more accurately address this problem, but the DACJC objected. Two primary reasons founded the objections: (a) the data was already being reported in a manner which would enable us to know how successful project efforts were in regard to the portion of appeal time that they could affect, and (b) we felt that even though the objective revision was warranted, it was too late in project operation to begin re-adjustment of project objectives. Consequently, in this and all future evaluation reports, the project objective will be evaluated by measuring two blocks of time (disposition-State's Brief and State's Brief-final appeal) along with figures that address the overall average elapsed time between disposition and final appeal; actual project success, for evaluative purposes, will concern only the reduction of elapsed time between disposition and filing of the State's Brief.

Table II presents statistics collected in reference to project objective #3; statistics are available only for Quarter 3 and Quarter 4\*.

Examination of the available data in regard to the project objective as it reads (disposition-final appeal) shows the following for Impact and non-Impact cases:

\*It was stated in the first evaluation report that data addressing this project objective would be available by the second quarter of 1974. In September, a new Impact Case Coordinator was hired; in familiarizing himself with project data, he discovered a mistake in the established collection process of "elapsed time" data for this project objective. Consequently, it was necessary to develop a new procedure of data collection and "good" data were not available until the third quarter of 1974. If time permits, first and second quarter data from 1974 will be picked up before the project ends.

(a) Impact Cases: The average elapsed time between disposition and filing of the State's Brief actually increased for Impact cases during Quarter 4; during Quarter 3, an average 217 days (7.23 months) passed between disposition-State's Brief while during Quarter 4, 227 days or 7.57 months elapsed.

Examination of the data addressing average elapsed time between filing of the State's Brief and decision on the appeal (final appeal) for Impact cases shows that during both Quarters 3 and 4, an average 120 days (4 months) elapsed per case.

The overall average disposition-final appeal time for Impact cases at the end of the project's third quarter was 337 days (11.23 months) and at the end of the project's fourth quarter or second year, it was 347 days (11.57 months).

(b) Non-Impact Cases: Non-Impact cases, on the other hand, experienced a decreased overall average disposition-State's Brief time at the end of Quarter 4; during Quarter 4, 343 days (11.43 months) elapsed between disposition and State's Brief whereas an average 405 days (13.50 months) elapsed during this time block in Quarter 3.

An average of 138 days (4.60 months) elapsed between State's Brief and the final appeal for non-Impact cases during Quarter 3, which increased to an average 152 days (5.07 months) during Quarter 4.

The overall average elapsed disposition-final appeal time for non-Impact cases at the end of Quarter 3 was 543 days (18.10 months) and at the end of the second year, 495 days or 16.50 months.

By virtue of the overall disposition-final appeal data collected for Quarters 3 and 4 (14.67 months during quarter 3 and 14.03 months during quarter 4), both the 1974 and 1975 project objectives have been accomplished.

In line with the opening narrative concerning this project objective and in regard to the project's immediate operation, efforts to reduce the elapsed time between disposition and filing of the State's Brief must be the primary focus of examination.

(a) Impact Cases: During Quarter 3, the average disposition-State's Brief time was 217 days (7.23 months); and during Quarter 4, this time increased to an average 227 days or 7.57 months. Reduction in the average elapsed time was not accomplished.

(b) Non-Impact Cases: For non-Impact cases, the reverse situation occurred. During Quarter 3, the State's Brief was filed within an average of 405 days (13.50 months) after disposition while during Quarter 4, the State's Brief was filed within an average of 343 days (11.43 months). For non-Impact cases, a reduction was achieved.

Strict evaluation of project success or failure to meet this project objective is complicated since there are forces now operative in the Dallas County criminal justice system which tend to lengthen the time elapsed between case disposition and filing of the State's Brief. These forces are described as follows:

(a) Ninety-Day Allowance Within Which to Submit an Appeal: Under the present law a person has 90 days from the time of case disposition to submit his appeal for court approval; if court approval is forthcoming, then the appeal process begins (filing of briefs, etc.). However, since the average elapsed time for this appeal objective is measured from the actual time of case disposition, cases submitted for court approval during the latter part of the 90-day period tend to lengthen the overall average.

(b) Lack of an Automated Court Reporting System: Probably the major system complication in terms of this project objective is the slowness in which "records of proceedings" of cases are transcribed and made available. Although this grant funded additional court reporters, the steadily increasing caseloads in the Criminal District Courts create a constant strain on the system; because of these increases, court reporters are unable to promptly transcribe the "records of proceedings" for defense attorneys and as a result, the appeal process is slowed. Likewise, the prosecuting attorney cannot file the State's Brief until the defense attorney has filed a brief, thus lengthening the average disposition-State's Brief time.

In consideration of the entire foregoing discussion concerning project objective #3, only preliminary conclusions can be made. The overall average time elapsed for Impact and non-Impact offenses between disposition and final appeal meets the project objective for both 1974 and 1975 and actually "betters" them. In the time frame that the project can directly affect (disposition-State's Brief), the average elapsed time has increased slightly for Impact offenses and has been reduced for non-Impact offenses; given the system problems, cited on Pages 11 and 12, it is expected that project efforts will not be able to effect a substantial reduction in elapsed appeal time and may possibly experience an increase in the overall averages, if the numbers of appealed cases increase with the anticipated increases in the numbers of cases filed and disposed.

Generally speaking, it is felt that this project objective is not a valid evaluative indicator of project efforts since the project cannot affect all areas of operation necessary to achieve this objective.

TABLE II

OPERATIONAL PERIOD*	DATA ELEMENT	IMPACT	NON-IMPACT	AVERAGE TIME PER CASE**
QUARTER 3	Disposition- State's Brief Days/Months***	217 days 7.23 Mos.	405 days 13.50 mos.	311 days 10.37 Mos.
	State's Brief- Final Appeal Days/Months	120 days 4.00 Mos.	138 days 4.60 Mos.	129 days 4.30 Mos.
	Disposition- Final Appeal Days/Months	337 days 11.23 Mos.	543 days 18.10 Mos.	440 days 14.67 Mos.
QUARTER 4.	Disposition- State's Brief Days/Months	227 days 7.57 Mos.	343 days 11.43 Mos.	285 days 9.50 Mos.
	State's Brief- Final Appeal Days/Months	120 days 4.00 Mos.	152 days 5.07 Mos.	136 days 4.53 Mos.
	Disposition- Final Appeal Days/Months	347 days 11.57 Mos.	495 days 16.50 Mos.	421 days 14.03 Mos.

\*Quarters 1 and 2 are not available (see narrative)

\*\*The figures appearing in this column were calculated from the averages appearing in the table. The raw data was not available.

\*\*\*Month = 30 days



Project Objective #4: Reduce the increase in case backlog of Criminal District Courts.

	<u>Baseline</u>	<u>1973</u>	<u>1974</u>	<u>1975</u>
Reduce the increase in case backlog	12,000	9,500	7,000	5,000 (Total)

NOTE: The baseline data and annual projected achievements appearing under project objective #4 are actually the objectives set forth in the evaluation component of the first year grant application. The figures used in the second year evaluation component were the following:

<u>Baseline</u>	<u>1973</u>	<u>1974</u>	<u>1975</u>
1,500	1,200	1,000	500 (Total)
600	500	400	200 (Impact)

It is impossible that these objectives were meant to be projections for the total backlog reduction and it is doubtful that the project objective was actually intended to "reduce the increase" as the wording indicates. Obviously, the problem is one of interpretation and due to past personnel changes, clarification is not possible. Therefore, baseline data set forth in the first year grant application is being used to evaluate this project objective.

Also, it should be re-emphasized here that the definition of case backlog for this project is the number of indicted cases remaining in a court after the number of cases disposed of is subtracted from the new cases entering that court for the same period of time.

Prior to project implementation and as of December 31, 1972, the seven Dallas County Criminal District Courts had a combined case backlog of 12,000 cases; during 1972, 11,692 cases were indicted and 10,218 cases were disposed.

By the end of the project's second year, December 31, 1974, the combined case backlog for the nine courts was 10,086 cases; during 1974, 10,536 cases were indicted while 13,665 cases were disposed. Referring to Page E4 of the evaluation component of the Special Court Processing grant application (second year), it was estimated that each of the Criminal District Courts could dispose of 1,500 cases per year; using this estimate, the nine courts should have disposed of 13,500 cases during 1974. As stated previously, the courts disposed of 13,665 cases.

Included in Table IIIa are statistics representing indictment and disposition activity as well as quarterly backlog statistics.

Considering first the Impact category, it is seen that the numbers of cases indicted tended to seesaw back and forth during each quarter with no discernible trends, while the numbers of cases disposed tended to increase during each quarter except during the third quarter.

Looking at the case backlog for apprehended Impact offenders, statistics show that the backlog was initially low (519 cases), increased by the end of the second quarter (to 696) and was subsequently reduced in Quarters 3 and 4 (686 and 597 respectively). For unapprehended Impact offenders, the reverse situation occurred. That is, the number of backlogged cases was initially high (305 at the end of the first quarter), was substantially lower at the end of the second quarter (137 cases), and in Quarters 3 and 4 began to increase again (167 and 192 respectively).

For non-Impact categories, the number of indictments tended to decrease during the quarters of the second year, with the exception of Quarter 4 which showed an increase from Quarter 3; the number of non-Impact cases disposed was initially high (2,980), decreased in the 2nd Quarter to 2,817, and increased again in Quarters 3 and 4 to 2,890 and 3,113 cases respectively. Statistics addressing apprehended non-Impact offenders show an overall decrease in case backlog except for a heavy second quarter, while for unapprehended non-Impact offenders, there was also an overall decrease in case backlog except for a light second quarter.

Per this data, all offender categories, except the unapprehended Impact category, have experienced an overall decrease in case backlog.

In interpreting this backlog data, two considerations should be emphasized. The first of these considerations is that all "trends", set forth in this report, are tentative since only four quarters of useable data have been collected; subsequent quarters of data collection should indicate whether present backlog increases and

decreases are spurious or established trends. The second consideration is especially important in terms of court operation and court backlog and involves the unapprehended categories of both Impact and non-Impact offenders; although unapprehended cases constitute a considerable portion of the case backlog, especially in the non-Impact category, this backlog cannot be directly attacked by the courts until the offender is apprehended.

Therefore, in order to make conclusive evaluations of project efforts toward reducing backlog, it is necessary to have indictment data broken down into the apprehended and unapprehended categories as well as the backlog data; such a breakdown of indictment data would enable direct comparison of the numbers of indictments returned for apprehended offenders and the numbers of cases disposed.\* This breakdown was not previously recognized by either project personnel or DACJC as being a necessary data requirement, however, the Impact Case Coordinator is now attempting to collect apprehended and unapprehended indictment data for all quarters of project operation in 1974; per this report, the Coordinator has been able to collect this data for the period October-December, 1974, and all second-year data which can be collected and broken down will be reported in the next evaluation report. Apprehended and unapprehended indictment data for the project's third year will be collected and reported in subsequent evaluation reports.

It was written on Page E4 of the evaluation component (second year) that "historically, about 46.7% (of the offenders) are apprehended while 53.3% are unapprehended." Using these estimates against the indictment data now available, the following numbers of cases would fall into the apprehended and unapprehended categories. (See Table III.)

\*In most instances, the numbers of cases disposed will have no application to unapprehended categories. However, in rare circumstances, an unapprehended offender may be indicted and later have his case dismissed without ever being apprehended; when this occurs, the dismissal would be counted as a disposition for the court to which the case is assigned but the indictment would not appear under the apprehended category.

TABLE III

Impact:	No. of Indictments	Estimated Indictments Apprehended (46.7%)	No. of Dispositions	Estimated Indictments Unapprehended (53.3%)
Quarter 1	557	260	429	297
Quarter 2	451	211	442	240
Quarter 3	595	278	420	317
Quarter 4	458	214	574	244
Total	2,061	963	1,865	1,098
Non-Impact:				
Quarter 1	2,341	1,093	2,980	1,248
Quarter 2	2,276	1,063	2,817	1,213
Quarter 3	1,883	879	2,890	1,004
Quarter 4	1,975	922	3,113	1,053
Total	8,475	3,957	11,800	4,518

Examination of data in Table III shows that the courts consistently dispose of all cases for which the offender is apprehended as well as older cases which, for one reason or another, are still on the court dockets.

By virtue of the annual data discussed on Page 14 of this report, and by virtue of the quarterly data presented in Tables III and IIIa, the preliminary conclusion is that the overall case backlog is being reduced.

In order to strengthen this conclusion and to re-affirm the feeling that the Criminal District Courts are moving their caseloads more efficiently than before project implementation, an attempt was made to determine whether or not there was any correlation between the low arrest-disposition times (see Table I, Page 6) and a reduced backlog. However, because there were only four quarters of "good" data, we were unable to make any conclusions or even guesses as to probable correlations. We have discussed with the Impact Case Coordinator the possibilities of breaking down quarterly data from the project's second year and re-collecting it on a monthly basis from the automated reports so that enough data will be available to identify any existing correlations; the capability to test for possible correlations, however, will necessarily depend upon the availability of the weekly Grand Jury reports made during 1974. (It will be remembered that backlog is determined by indictment and disposition data in this project.) Monthly arrest-disposition and backlog data will be collected for the project's third year of operation for the specific purpose of correlative testing.

In concluding this discussion on project objective #4, it appears that the case backlog is definitely being reduced even though the combined case backlog of 10,086 cases was much greater than the 1974 estimated backlog in the project objective; although baseline data and projected yearly accomplishments are necessary, project progress should not be inextricably tied to previously estimated accomplishments.

TABLE IIIa

NUMBER OF TRUE BILLS (INDICTMENTS)

QTR/YEAR	IMPACT	NON-IMPACT	TOTAL	IMPACT-% OF TOTAL
1/1974	557	2341	2898	19.2
2/1974	451	2276	2727	16.5
3/1974	595	1883	2478	24.0
4/1974	<u>458</u>	<u>1975</u>	<u>2433</u>	<u>18.8</u>
TOTAL	2,061	8,475	10,536	19.56

NUMBER OF CASES DISPOSED

QTR/YEAR	IMPACT	NON-IMPACT	TOTAL	IMPACT-% OF TOTAL
1/1974	429	2980	3409	12.6
2/1974	442	2817	3259	13.6
3/1974	420	2890	3310	12.7
4/1974	<u>574</u>	<u>3113</u>	<u>3687</u>	<u>15.6</u>
TOTAL	1,865	11,800	13,665	13.65

NUMBER OF BACKLOG CASES IN CRIMINAL DISTRICT COURTS

QTR/YEAR	IMPACT		NON-IMPACT		TOTAL		IMPACT-% OF TOTAL	
	APPRE-HENDED	UNAPPRE-HENDED	APPRE-HENDED	UNAPPRE-HENDED	APPRE-HENDED	UNAPPRE-HENDED	APPRE-HENDED	UNAPPRE-HENDED
1/1974	519	305	3712	6831	4231	7136	12.3	4.3
2/1974	696	137	4150	6294	4846	6431	14.4	2.1
3/1974	686	167	3490	6602	4176	6769	16.4	2.5
4/1974	597	192	2943	6354	3540	6546	16.9	2.9
TOTAL BACKLOG	597	192	2943	6354	3540	6546	16.86	2.93

Project Objective #5: Reduce the average length of stay by inmates in the county jail.

	<u>BASELINE</u>	<u>1973</u>	<u>1974</u>	<u>1975</u>
Reduce the average length of stay in county jail.	110 Days	104 Days	99 Days	94 Days

In the first evaluation report, there were no baseline data available, however, this data has now been calculated; project objective #5 above shows the correct baseline data and projected annual accomplishments. It was also stated in the last report that the automated book-in report which identifies Impact offenders in the County Jail was only sporadically updated; this situation has been corrected through efforts of the Impact Case Coordinator, and Impact offenders in the County Jail are now being identified. The procedure used is described as follows:

1. The Impact Case Coordinator receives an indictment list weekly which contains the following information:
  - a. offender's name
  - b. whether the offender is apprehended or unapprehended
  - c. bond number or book-in number depending upon whether the offender is on bond or in jail (apprehended)
  - d. case number
  - e. the crime for which he is indicted
  - f. names of co-conspirators, if applicable
  - g. identification as an Impact offender, if applicable
2. The Impact Case Coordinator in turn delivers this list to the Book-In Division of the Sheriff's Office.
3. The indictment list is compared to the book-in log to identify Impact offenders.
4. When Impact offenders are identified, the automated report is updated.

As of this report, the Book-In Section of the Sheriff's Department is the only project area where manual statistics are still compiled and it is hoped that by the end of the first quarter of 1975, all project reports will be automated.

Table IV shows the jail statistics collected for 1974 which address this project objective. Data addressing the "number of convicted inmates pending appeal" and "number of convicted inmates transferred to the Texas Department of Corrections" are included in the table; inclusion of these data elements is made because, by Texas statutes, inmates convicted for crimes carrying sentences of less than 15 years imprisonment can exercise their right to remain in the County Jail pending case appeal rather than being transferred to the Texas Department of Corrections. Although it is not reflected in the data in Table IV, most convicted inmates do not exercise this option because if they eventually do serve their sentence or a portion of it, they receive more time against their sentence for time served, if they go to TDC. In other words, for each day served at TDC pending appeal, the inmate receives two days against any future prison sentence imposed and three days for each day if he becomes a state approved trustee; however, if the inmate chooses to exercise his option and wait for the decision on his appeal in the County Jail, then he receives only one day for each day served.

Examination of the data in Table IV shows that the average length of stay in the County Jail for Impact offenders awaiting trial was 82 days while for non-Impact offenders the average wait was 96.5 days. The overall average length of stay in the County Jail for inmates awaiting trial was 89.25 days which is better than the projected second year accomplishment of an average 99 days.

TABLE IV

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	Average Length of Stay in County Jail for Inmates Awaiting Trial (days)			Average Jail Population (Inmates)				Number of Unconvicted Inmates in the County Jail				Number of Convicted Inmates Pending Appeal				Number of Convicted Inmates Transferred to Texas Dept. of Corrections Pending Appeal			
	IMPACT	NON-IMPACT	TOTAL*	IMPACT	NON-IMPACT	TOTAL	IMPACT % OF TOTAL	IMPACT	NON-IMPACT	TOTAL	IMPACT % OF TOTAL	IMPACT	NON-IMPACT	TOTAL	IMPACT % OF TOTAL	IMPACT	NON-IMPACT	TOTAL	IMPACT % OF TOTAL
Quarter 1	102	91	97	135	1,115	1,250	10.8	113	762	875	12.9	28	97	125	22.4	13	22	35	37.1
Quarter 2	72	98	85	323	1,052	1,375	23.5	192	626	818	23.5	49	147	196	25.0	12	21	33	36.4
Quarter 3	73	99	86	460	1,211	1,671	27.5	191	610	801	23.8	25	167	192	13.0	12	23	35	34.3
Quarter 4	81	98	89	204	1,427	1,631	12.5	128	861	989	12.9	65	156	221	29.4	18	5	23	78.3
Quarterly Averages	82	96.50	89.25	280.50	1201.25	1481.75	18.93	156	714.75	870.75	17.92	41.75	141.75	183.50	22.75	13.75	17.75	31.5	46.53



Project Objective #6: Develop a more comprehensive data bank for computer retrieval of information pertaining to felony cases and the workload of the judicial system.

This objective primarily addresses the providing of information to evaluate the court project. The Impact Case Coordinator wrote in his October-December, 1974, report that "the District Clerk's Office, District Attorney's Office, and the Sheriff's Office have been supplying needed information to the Information Services Department (County Auditor's Office) for total collection and computation. The Information Services Department in turn produces automated reports to be used for the purpose of evaluation. The Book-In Section of the Sheriff's Department is the only area where manual statistics are still compiled. It is hoped that during the first quarter of 1975 all reports can be automated."

To date, all project data is automated except in the Book-In Section in the Sheriff's Office. The following list identifies automated reports which are the primary sources of project data:

- (a) Judicial Information File: produced weekly and includes the number of active cases, cases set for investigations, extensions, Writs of Habeas Corpus, bond forfeitures, sureties, etc.
- (b) Case Review Activity Progress Periodic Evaluation Report: produced monthly and includes the District Attorney's case number, defendant's name, offense code, offense date, arrest date, and average elapsed time between arrest and (1) examining trial, (2) waiver of indictment, (3) Grand Jury action, and (4) disposition, etc.
- (c) Term Report: produced quarterly and describes court case activity per court, i.e., new cases received and the manner received, cases disposed and type of dispositions, cases reinstated, backlog, bonds granted, number of court appointed attorneys, etc.
- (d) Case Review Disposition Report: produced quarterly and includes the total number of cases disposed, filed, indicted, no billed, offenders on probation, etc.
- (e) Jail Statistics: produced daily and includes average jail population, total jail population on the day the report is produced, number of releases in the previous 24-hour period, etc.

- (f) Appellate Report: produced weekly and includes date of court approval for the appeal, elapsed time between case disposition and defense/state's brief, elapsed time between disposition and final appeal, etc.
- (g) Grand Jury Report: produced weekly and includes offender's name, whether apprehended or unapprehended, bond number or book-in number if apprehended, the crime for which indicted, etc.
- (h) Re-Arrest While on Bond (began January 1, 1975): includes offender's name, date of original arrest, indictment number, book-in number, offense, date of re-arrest, indictment number, and book-in number, offense, etc.

Project Objective #7: Provide greater efficiency and capability in the District Attorney's Office, the Sheriff's Office, the District Clerk's Office and the Courts.

Although Objective #7 was not quantified in the grant, provisions were established between the grantee and the Texas Criminal Justice Division that evaluation teams, selected from a list provided by Mr. Willis Whatley, Program Director, Judicial Processes and Law Reform, Texas Criminal Justice Division, would perform qualitative evaluations of the progress and effectiveness of the project at the end of each year.

One such qualitative evaluation was made of the project's first year but, to date, no known evaluation of this nature has been performed for the project's second year.

In addition to the quantified project objectives, statistics pertaining to the following data elements were collected to reflect overall court activity during the project's second year. Periodic examination of this data not only flags areas of the project's strengths and weaknesses but also represents a major success in the automation of critical judicial data.

● Number of cases filed (felonies filed with D.A.)

QTR/YEAR	IMPACT	NON-IMPACT	TOTAL	IMPACT-% OF TOTAL
1/1974	562	3188	3750	15.0
2/1974	700	2684	3384	20.7
3/1974	872	3033	3905	22.3
4/1974	881	2919	3800	23.2
TOTAL	3,015	11,824	14,839	20.32

● Number of True Bills

QTR/YEAR	IMPACT	NON-IMPACT	TOTAL	IMPACT-% OF TOTAL
1/1974	557	2341	2898	19.2
2/1974	451	2276	2727	16.5
3/1974	595	1883	2478	24.0
4/1974	458	1975	2433	18.8
TOTAL	2,061	8,475	10,536	19.56

● Number of No Bills

QTR/YEAR	IMPACT	NON-IMPACT	TOTAL	IMPACT-% OF TOTAL
1/1974	185	794	979	18.9
2/1974	114	799	913	12.5
3/1974	138	638	776	17.8
4/1974	166	580	746	22.3
TOTAL	603	2811	3414	17.66

● Number of Dismissals

QTR/YEAR	IMPACT	NON-IMPACT	TOTAL	IMPACT-% OF TOTAL
1/1974	105	695	800	13.1
2/1974	100	784	884	11.3
3/1974	320	628	948	33.8
4/1974	168	976	1144	14.7
TOTAL	693	3083	3776	18.35

● Number of Jury Trials

QTR/YEAR	IMPACT	NON-IMPACT	TOTAL	IMPACT-% OF TOTAL
1/1974	55	139	194	28.4
2/1974	46	134	180	25.6
3/1974	41	137	178	23.0
4/1974	60	99	159	37.7
TOTAL	202	509	711	28.41

● Number of Trials before the Court (Bench Trials)

QTR/YEAR	IMPACT	NON-IMPACT	TOTAL	IMPACT-% OF TOTAL
1/1974	4	49	53	7.5
2/1974	5	56	61	8.2
3/1974	14	26	40	35.0
4/1974	7	49	56	12.5
TOTAL	30	180	210	14.29

• Number of Guilty Pleas

QTR/YEAR	IMPACT	NON-IMPACT	TOTAL	IMPACT-% OF TOTAL
1/1974	261	1730	1991	13.1
2/1974	261	1579	1840	14.2
3/1974	785	1144	1929	40.7
4/1974	333	1752	2085	16.0
TOTAL	1640	6205	7845	20.91

• Number of Cases Disposed

QTR/YEAR	IMPACT	NON-IMPACT	TOTAL	IMPACT-% OF TOTAL
1/1974	429	2980	3409	12.6
2/1974	442	2817	3259	13.6
3/1974	420	2890	3310	12.7
4/1974	574	3113	3687	15.6
TOTAL	1865	11,800	13,665	13.65

• Number of Unconvicted Inmates in the County Jail

QTR/YEAR	IMPACT	NON-IMPACT	TOTAL	IMPACT-% OF TOTAL
1/1974	113	762	875	12.9
2/1974	192	626	818	23.5
3/1974	191	610	801	23.8
4/1974	128	861	989	12.9
TOTAL	624	2859	3483	17.92

• Number of cases with Court-Appointed Attorney

QTR/YEAR	IMPACT	NON-IMPACT	TOTAL
1/1974	306	729	1035
2/1974	396	937	1333
3/1974	281	601	882
4/1974	330	931	1261
TOTAL	1313	3198	4511

• Number of cases in backlog - Apprehended and Unapprehended

QTR/YEAR	IMPACT		NON-IMPACT		TOTAL		IMPACT-% OF TOTAL		
	APPRE-HENDED	UNAPPRE-HENDED	APPRE-HENDED	UNAPPRE-HENDED	APPRE-HENDED	UNAPPRE-HENDED	APPRE-HENDED	UNAPPRE-HENDED	
1/1974	519	305	3712	6831	4231	7136	12.3	4.3	
2/1974	696	137	4150	6294	4846	6431	14.4	2.1	
3/1974	686	167	3490	6602	4176	6769	16.4	2.5	
4/1974	597	192	2943	6354	3540	6546	16.9	2.9	
TOTAL BACKLOG	597	192	2943	6354	3540	6546	16.86	2.93	
							10,086		

● Number Convicted Inmates Pending Appeal

QTR/YEAR	IMPACT	NON-IMPACT	TOTAL	IMPACT-% OF TOTAL
1/1974	28	97	125	22.4
2/1974	49	147	196	25.0
3/1974	25	167	192	13.0
4/1974	65	156	221	29.4
TOTAL	167	567	734	22.75

● Number Convicted Inmates Transferred to TDC Pending Appeal

QTR/YEAR	IMPACT	NON-IMPACT	TOTAL	IMPACT-% OF TOTAL
1/1974	13	22	35	37.1
2/1974	12	21	33	36.4
3/1974	12	23	35	34.3
4/1974	18	5	23	78.3
TOTAL	55	71	126	43.65

Summary

The Special Court Processing Project is a very broad based project which depends upon the coordination of several functions within five county governmental departments and within the criminal justice system itself; it is likely that this broad base has caused most of the project's problems. During the second year, however, it was obvious to project personnel and to people working with the project, that rapid recovery was being made from a very slow start and that during the third year (1975), all project data would be made available.

If, in subsequent quarters of operation, project efforts can continue to reduce case-time elapsed in the system, it will not only expedite future "speedy trial" statutory requirements but also will be a laudable effort to facilitate coordination within the Dallas County criminal justice system.