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INDIVIDUAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE REPORT

In Response to a Request for Technical Assistance

By the

Winnebago County, Wisconsin, Sheriff's Department

October 31, 1973

NCJRS

NOV 30 1976

Prepared by:

Public Administration Service
1313 East 60th Street
Chicago, Illinois 60637

ACQUISITIONS

(Per Contract J-LEAA-015-072)

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I. PRELIMINARY INFORMATION

A. **Consultant Assigned:**

Patrick T. Maher
Staff Associate
Public Administration Service

Gene M. Tate
Staff Associate
Public Administration Service

B. **Date Assignment Received:**

September 14, 1973

C. **Date of Contact with LEAA Regional Coordinator:**

September 19, 1973

D. **Date of On-Site Consultation:**

October 8, 1973

E. **Individuals Contacted:**

Marvin R. Pepler
Sheriff

Barbara Kamp
Secretary

Berwin R. Jordan
Chief Deputy

Ethel Yarbrow
Secretary

Edward Misch
Lieutenant and Assistant Chief Deputy

Kathleen Shores
Clerk/Steno II

Jerry Lang
County Personnel Director

Diane Swanson
Clerk/Steno II

Kenneth Hetue
Lieutenant and Huber Officer

Diane Havemann
Clerk/Steno II

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

A. **Problem as per Request for Technical Assistance:**

Members of the Winnebago County Sheriff's Department expressed concern that their present records system may be understaffed or work poorly distributed.

Instructions were to conduct an evaluation of the records management system to determine the possible need for additional records personnel and to evaluate the present record system's compatibility with computerized equipment. The on-site visit was limited to one day.

B. **Problems Actually Observed:**

As stated.

III. FACTS BEARING ON THE PROBLEM

See attached Consultant's Report.

IV. DISCUSSION OF POSSIBLE COURSES OF ACTION

See attached Consultant's Report.

V. RECOMMENDED COURSE OF ACTION

See attached Consultant's Report.

CONSULTANT'S REPORT

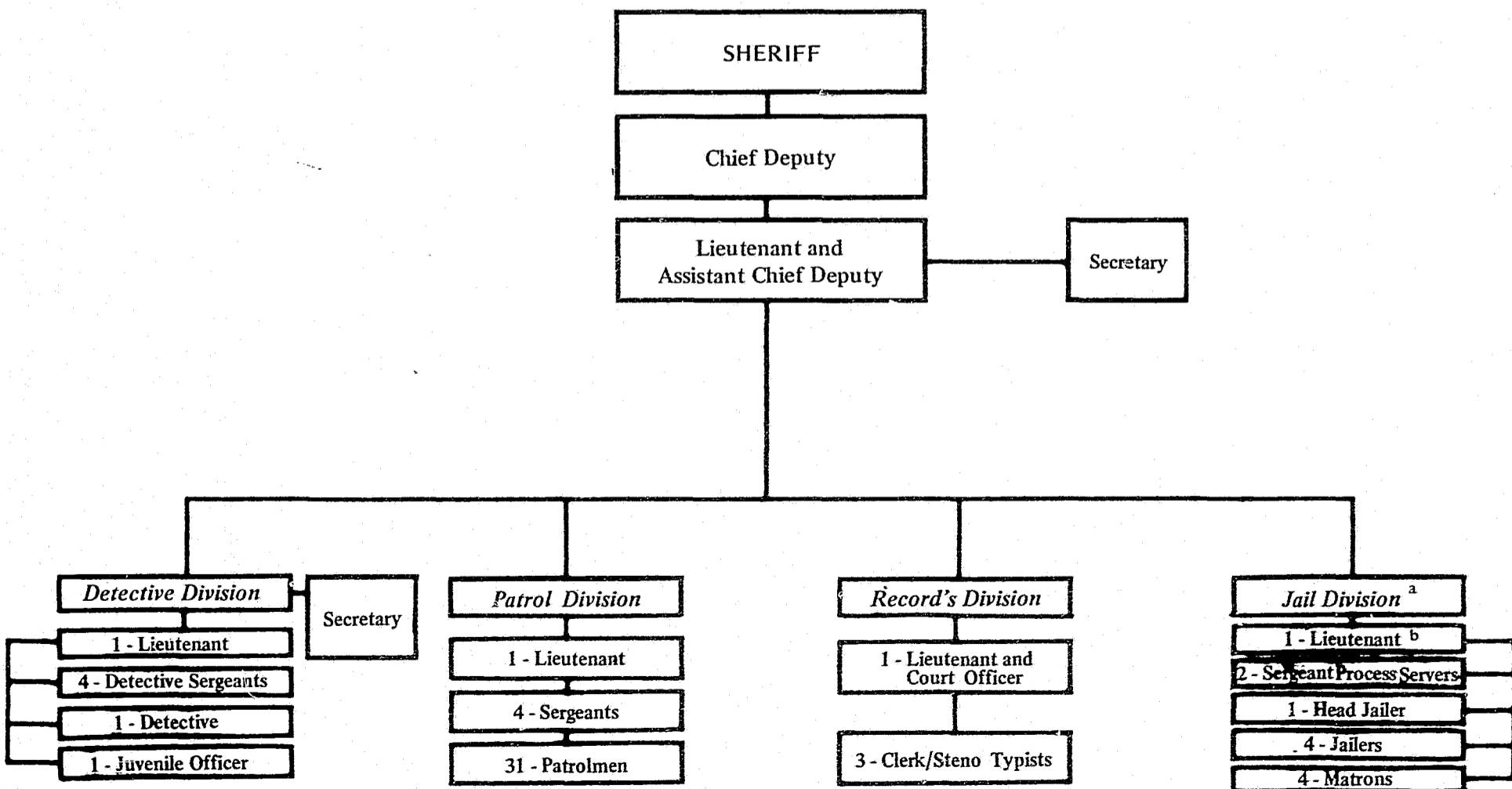
I. INTRODUCTION

Winnebago County is located in the east central portion of Wisconsin. Oshkosh is the County Seat and principal city. According to the census of 1970, Winnebago County's population is 133,658. Winnebago and neighboring Fond du Lac, Calumet, and Outagamie rank among the 14 most highly urbanized counties in the State and have had the most rapid economic and population growth in Wisconsin during the past decade.

The Winnebago County Sheriff's Department has a total of 62 employees. The current organizational chart of the Department is presented in Chart I. With respect to law enforcement activities, the Sheriff's Department made 4,255 arrests during 1972, and the majority of Part I offenses were crimes against property.

Members of the Winnebago County Sheriff's Department requested technical assistance to improve records management. Instructions were to evaluate the records system to determine the possible need for additional records personnel and to evaluate the present records system's compatibility with computerized equipment. The limited time for technical assistance precluded a comprehensive evaluation of the entire records system. However, several major problem areas were observed. The remainder of this report will address these problems and propose recommendations that will improve the present records system and, in turn, increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the entire Department.

Chart I
 CURRENT ORGANIZATIONAL CHART
 OF THE SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT
 WINNEBAGO COUNTY, WISCONSIN



^a Does not represent part-time employees.

^b Huber Officer.



- A - Robbery
- B - Boats & Water
- C - Felony, Theft
- D - Petty Larceny
- E - Assault
- F - Fraud
- G - Firearms
- H - Fires
- I - Animals
- J - Family
- K - Bikes
- L - Neighbor

- M - Drugs
- N - Deaths
- O - Drinking
- P - Vehicles
- Q - Vandalism
- R - Morals Offenses
- S - Snowmobiles
- T - Articles Found
- U - Aircraft
- V - Miscellaneous
- X - Checks
- Y - Burglary

In addition to assigning a complaint code, the records personnel type the entire report submitted by the officer(s) and file it according to the classification code. This process is repeated every time a complaint is received by the Department regardless of its relative importance.

Every call-for-service is made the subject of a complaint report, even if there is no reason for any follow-up or police record. This procedure has resulted in an excessive number of useless records that consume man-hours needed for more critical tasks. A log book of complaints is also maintained in the Central Records Division. All complaints are received by the clerk/steno typists who notifies the dispatcher. However, during the nonworking hours of records personnel, the dispatchers simply receive the complaints and dispatch units accordingly. As a result, there is generally an enormous backlog of typing and filing to be performed when the records personnel resume work.

3. *Traffic Citation Forms.* These forms are filed numerically, recorded in a traffic citation log book, and maintained indefinitely.
4. *Traffic Accident File.* The traffic accident investigation report form is used by the investigating officer to record information acquired while investigating a traffic accident. All accident reports are given a complaint number, filed numerically, and maintained indefinitely.

5. *Traffic Arrest Reports.* These reports are completed by the officer investigating a traffic accident where an arrest is necessary. These forms receive a number and are filed permanently.
6. *Adult and Juvenile Arrest Files.* According to the records personnel, these files have been replaced by the offense/complaint files. However, there are files that contain these previously completed forms despite the fact that no use is being made of them.
7. *Warrants File.* These files are classified as either active or inactive. The active warrant file is arranged alphabetically, the inactive file is arranged numerically. These files are maintained permanently.
8. *Fingerprint/Photo File.* These files are arranged alphabetically. However, the Department is in the process of transferring these files to the Jail Division's record section.
9. *Object-Struck File.* These files indicate the object(s) struck and property damage as a result of a traffic accident. These files are arranged alphabetically and kept permanently.
10. *Tavern Complaints.* These forms are filed alphabetically and permanently maintained.
11. *Mail Box Complaints.* There are no filing procedures, and records are kept permanently.

Detective Division

The secretary for the Detective Division makes copies of all of the complaint forms that are received by the Central Records Division and distributes these copies to the detectives. If the complaint does not require follow-up by a detective, the copy is discarded, a practice that is costly in terms of wasted man-hours and forms. If action is taken by a detective, however, an investigation report file is implemented. The investigation report files contain a variety of items such as a copy of the original complaint form, reports conducted by the detective, and statements from individuals involved in the case. These reports are given an identification number which is assigned in the Detective Division. They are then filed and maintained permanently. A master index of all cases involving investigations conducted by the Detective Division is also maintained, filed alphabetically, and kept indefinitely. A daily log book of important complaints and cases being investigated by the detectives is maintained. A resume of items of major importance is distributed to members of the Winnebago County Sheriff's Department and other law enforcement agencies.

Jail Records

Members of the Jail Division search, assign a classification number, and take fingerprints and photographs of every individual brought to the jail. In addition, the jail personnel complete the following forms: jail record form, prisoner's jail record, canteen record, and property envelope. These forms are placed in a folder which is called a "case jacket."

A "star number" is assigned to every inmate. The jail personnel maintain and refer to this number each time the individual is incarcerated. However, a new jail "inmate number" is assigned each time the individual is incarcerated. All reports and forms are maintained in an original "case jacket" and referred to by the original "star number."

The case jacket files are arranged numerically and are stored in conventional stand-up metal files. A master index file is maintained indefinitely and is arranged alphabetically. A master jail register is also maintained and contains the same information as the master index cards. State law requires a master jail register and the maintenance of all records for a period of 30 years.

Administrative Office

A full-time secretary files various types of reports in this office. The officer's daily worksheet, semimonthly and monthly worksheets, are submitted by the officers and maintained in this office. These forms describe an officer's activity during his tour of duty, regular work and overtime hours, and hours taken for earned holidays, vacations, sick leave, funeral leave, and other activities. In addition to these reports, vehicle maintenance reports which are submitted by the officers are filed in this office.

III. RECORDS SYSTEM

The importance of proper records procedures in terms of the total operation of any law enforcement agency cannot be overemphasized. A law enforcement agency is unable to function effectively and efficiently without rational records procedures. In order to place the forthcoming recommendations in proper perspective, a brief discussion of the purposes and uses of police records will be presented.

A police records system determines the amount and quality of stored information and the recall ability of the Department. Systematically stored records will yield valuable information which may be used for:

- Fulfilling legal obligations
- Effective interagency relations
- Public information
- Administrative purposes
- Operational decisions
- Assistance to field personnel

Most governmental jurisdictions legally require the provision of records by various governmental agencies. There may be no reciprocal provision of service among various law enforcement agencies, and the Police Department may have no interest in the requirement other than compliance. However, proper records management does assist a department in fulfilling its legal obligations.

The flow of records between cooperating agencies often provides valuable service to both agencies. For example, statistical information provided on a regular basis to the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the National Safety Council can promote a basis for general comparative studies, trend analysis, and self-analysis. Direct informational exchanges with other law enforcement agencies can result in solving many crimes, the arrest of known and wanted criminals, and the recovery of stolen property. Informational exchanges will also be of value in accident prevention programs, establishing security measures, and correcting service problems. The exchange of information with official, quasi-official, private, and social service agencies can improve problem identification and program coordination.

A law enforcement agency can fully meet the responsibility of providing information to the public about its policies, programs, and procedures, and provide the basis for police educational efforts which allow the public to take necessary security measures from various types of criminal activity with an adequate records system. Proper records management can assist police administrators in performing critical administrative functions. Administrators can use crime data to evaluate the performance of a department. For example, the number of cases that are successfully cleared, the number of offenders convicted, the amount of stolen property recovered, and other factors indicate the effectiveness of a department.

Personnel can be allocated on the basis of information on the location, rate of occurrence, and nature of criminal activity. In addition, criminal statistics are valuable in identifying a department's training needs and special police problems. If police reporting is honest, accurate, and complete, the time, effort, and expense put in organizing and maintaining adequate reporting procedures will result in increased service to the public, increased police effectiveness, and marked economy in both personnel costs, equipment, and operating expenses.

A properly maintained police records system provides valid, concise, and meaningful information to a variety of agencies, departments, and individuals. To accomplish this, police administrators should design and implement a records system that has the following characteristics:

1. Adequate reporting system.
2. Control procedures for written forms.
3. Use of multipurpose forms.
4. Use of specialized forms when absolutely necessary.
5. Training in proper report preparation.
6. Centralized records.
7. Control of records.
8. Sound records retention policies.
9. Available operational files at *all* times.
10. A single control index file.
11. Retrieval of recorded information.

Recommendations for the improvement of the current records management system will now be made.

IV. RECOMMENDED COURSES OF ACTION

1. It is recommended that the Winnebago County Sheriff's Department establish and maintain a sound records system and eliminate existing practices which are inconsistent with the new arrangements.

The responsibility for organizing and implementing a new records system should belong to a responsible administrator within the Department. The administrator should design appropriate forms, develop procedures for reporting and filing, and supervise the personnel involved in records' activities.

2. It is recommended that all original records be maintained in the Central Records Division and that most records-keeping functions by other sections of the Department be discontinued.

Records should be located near the center of operations, which is that location in the Department where calls-for-services are received, police radio communications are controlled, and arrested persons are booked. Some major purposes for the centralization of records are as follows:

- To establish control.
- To establish responsibility in the proper maintenance of the records system.
- To enhance the availability of the filed information on a continual basis.
- To increase uniformity and reduce duplication of effort.
- To increase the coordination among all functions in the Department.
- To increase productivity in a records system.

If it becomes necessary for any member of the Department to remove an original report from the central records file, a colored card of similar size should be placed in the file in place of the removed report. In addition, all records should be physically secured from unauthorized persons to prevent tampering or loss.

This method will eliminate all indexes and files in the Detective Division. Detectives will only receive a copy of reports that they are assigned to investigate (the records manual should indicate these specific cases). When a detective dictates a supplemental report, a copy is typed and returned to the investigator and the original is forwarded to the Central Records Division for filing in the case file folder. When an investigation is completed or made inactive, the investigator's copies can be destroyed or placed in the central case file. The Detective Division will only have files on cases actively being investigated. A simple case assignment log will serve as the only necessary index and also as a control on case assignment.

3. The Department should design a policy and procedure manual for its records system.

This manual should explain the reporting system, techniques, and procedures utilized by the Department. The Department should not rely on a few assorted written orders and verbal instructions. This manual should be reviewed and evaluated by departmental personnel before it is implemented. However, once it has been approved and implemented, all employees should be held responsible for complying with it.

4. The Central Records Division should be staffed 24 hours a day to facilitate the ability of the Department to provide necessary information when needed.

Studies indicate that approximately 1.6 personnel are required to fill one position 24 hours per day, seven days a week. By using this ratio of 1.6 and multiplying it by the three existing shifts used by the Department, 4.8 or 5 individuals are needed to staff the Central Records Division on a 24-hour basis. However, because of the increased amount of work to be performed during the day shift, it is recommended that two individuals be scheduled to work during this shift Monday through Friday. Thus, the total number of recommended personnel to effectively operate the Central Records Division is six. To accomplish this recommendation, the Department will need to employ three additional clerical personnel.

5. A review of reports submitted to the Central Records Division should be established.

The shift supervisors should be responsible for the accuracy and completeness of reports compiled by the officers. If the reports fail to meet necessary standards, they should be returned to the officer and corrected. When the shift supervisor is satisfied that the report is a quality product, it should be approved and forwarded to the Central Records Division. Because of this additional responsibility, the shift supervisor will find it necessary to spend most of his time in the office. The lieutenant in charge of the Central Records Division should periodically review reports approved by shift supervisors to insure that they are properly reviewing and controlling the reports compiled by the officers.

6. The Department should consider purchasing a power drum file(s) for storage purposes.

Because of the quantity of index cards and reports generated by the Department, and limited space in the Central Records Division, power drum files which accommodate index cards and reports would be a sound investment. These files will reduce the amount of storage space and improve retrieval of information. Because an estimate of neither the quantity of records nor the records production rate was determined during the on-site visit, it is suggested that a study be conducted by members of the Department to determine the number of necessary files.

7. The master index cards currently used by the Department are inadequate and should be replaced.

The master index card should contain the following information:

1. Full legal name.
2. Status (i.e., victim, defendant, etc.)
3. Present address.
4. File number.
5. Charges.
6. Date.

8. It is recommended that the officer's daily worksheet be discontinued and the Department should adopt an activity log form.

The proposed activity log form should be placed on key-punch cards which the Department recently designed. The cards should be completed by the radio dispatcher when a call for police service is received. The upper right-hand corner of the form should contain the sequential service number. The reverse side of the form should be divided down the center. The left half of the card should contain the following:

1. Nature of complaint.
2. Name of complainant.
3. Telephone number of complainant.
4. Remarks section.
5. Dispatcher's initials or number.
6. Unit(s) assigned.

The right half of the form should contain the following:

1. Actual nature of the complaint.
2. Actual location of the complaint.
3. Remarks section that will be used to record pertinent information (names of persons contacted and action of officers if there is no other report). If there is a report, the remarks section should reference the sequential file number.

As previously indicated, the Department initiates an offense/complaint report for every incident regardless of its relative importance. This practice should be discontinued, as only those complaints requiring an arrest or an investigative follow-up should be recorded. For example, public disturbances and loitering generally do not involve either an arrest or follow-up investigation. Therefore, they should be recorded on the proposed activity log form in lieu of completing a complaint report.

9. The Department should adopt the following 13 digit file number: 00-0000-0000-000.

The first two digits will represent the year in which the report was initiated. The second series, consisting of four digits, will designate the sequential number. The third series of digits will designate the reporting district, and the last series of digits will represent the crime classification code.

The need for the first series of digits is obvious. The sequential number will assist in determining if a report is missing from the files and serve as a quantitative indicator of compiled reports. The third series of digits will indicate the reporting districts. Reporting districts are developed by using the existing district (township) number and adding the township section number for each district. This method can be used to identify the location of criminal activity in a specific jurisdiction. When used in conjunction with the criminal classification code, which is described below, an index for statistical tabulations can be made. For example, it will be possible to ascertain the number of burglaries through forcible entry that have occurred in a specific district. Personnel can then be deployed according to the location of such activity. The last series, consisting of three digits, can be used to designate specific crime categories. For example, burglary with forcible entry could be coded as 012. The file number can then be used as an index to determine the exact nature of criminal activity. The crime code classification will expedite tabulation of criminal statistics by eliminating the necessity of reading each report to determine the proper crime classification. In addition, it will insure that the most serious crime is reported when multiple crime classifications are involved.

10. A complaint report log should be established.

This log should be maintained as an active file for one full year and then destroyed. The following information should be contained in the complaint report log:

1. Year of complaint.
2. Sequential number.
3. Reporting district.
4. Crime classification code.
5. Name.
6. Location.

The information used should be sent to the data processing area. By using the coded information, print-outs can be tabulated which will indicate the type of criminal activity, year, district in which the incident occurred, and the total. An example of the computer print-out is presented in Table 1. This procedure will assist the Department in preparing monthly, quarterly, and annual crime reports.

Table 1
AN EXAMPLE OF A
COMPUTER PRINT-OUT

Code	Reporting Districts			
	1517	1518	1519	1520
001	3 ^{a/}		2	4
002	1	2		3
003	2			1
004	4	3	1	2
Total				

^{a/} This number indicates the number of incidents in each district for the reporting period.

11. The present complaint/offense report should be discontinued. Proposed sample forms have been sent under separate cover.

For greater efficiency, the officers should block print the reports with a Number 2 pencil as opposed to having them typed. This method will reduce clerical man-hours for report production which will result in budgetary savings. These reports should be reproduced by a dry copy machine. Procedures for report distribution should be established by the Department. Copies should be posted in the briefing room and copies should also be made available to the press if the disclosure of information will not jeopardize the investigation. If the incident requires a follow-up investigation, a copy should be forwarded to the Detective Division. Copies of unusual and/or controversial incidents, e.g., murder, racial conflicts, riots, etc., should be sent to the Sheriff and other important law enforcement officials.

The recommended system, if adopted, will affect access to reports by media representatives. Reports will constantly be produced and available, but they will usually be distributed out of sequence. The press representatives will have to take the information as it is available and not expect records personnel to constantly check on unfinished reports. While a good press relations policy is necessary, departmental operations must come first. The Department should, however, develop a system of immediately releasing pertinent information on unusual or newsworthy incidents so that press deadlines can be met.

12. The Department should design and maintain case file folders.

The original copy of all reports related to each situation encountered by the Department, including follow-up investigation reports, should be filed in the case file folder and kept in the Central Records Division. For example, if a follow-up report is generated, the original report *must* be maintained in the case file folder. A copy of the follow-up report can be maintained in the Detective Division if necessary. This system will group all materials related to each individual situation or incident, reduce duplicate files, and provide improved retrieval of stored information.

13. Criminal history files should be implemented.

These files should be filed according to the present "star numbers" currently assigned by the Jail Division. However, the criminal history files should be maintained in the Central Records Division. These files should include mug shots, fingerprint cards, rap sheets, and the booking/property report.

14. Records with limited value should be eliminated or consolidated with other records.

Traffic accident files should be consolidated with the master file. Each accident report should be assigned the file number recommended above and placed in its own case file folder in the central records system. Traffic arrest reports should receive the same file number as the traffic accident that they are related to and also be filed in the case file folder.

The fingerprint/photo file should be made a part of the recommended criminal history file.

Adult and juvenile arrest files should be microfilmed as soon as possible to provide additional space.

The inactive warrant file should be microfilmed. Inactive warrants should be maintained in the Central Records Division only for 30 days prior to microfilming.

The object-struck file and the mail box complaints file should be eliminated. The amount of time consumed to maintain them is not returned in actual use or value.

15. A booking/property report form should be established. Proposed sample forms have been sent under separate cover.

If a suspect is charged with an offense and taken into custody, a booking/property form should be used. This form will provide vital information on all persons charged and also serve as a receipt for property taken from a prisoner when booked. The original copy will be placed in the case file folder, the first copy will be placed in the criminal history file, and the second copy will be forwarded to the Detective Division. The third copy will be sent to the court officer, and the fourth copy will be given to the prisoner. A 3 x 5 index card should be attached to the booking/property report which would contain the following: name, address, date of arrest, and charge(s). This card will be maintained in the Jail Division and will indicate whether the prisoner should be photographed and/or fingerprinted.

16. An arrest index card should be adopted by the Department.

The 3 x 5 index card should contain the following information:

1. Full legal name.
2. Present address.
3. Social Security number, FBI number, fingerprint classification.
4. Date.
5. Date of birth, sex, race.
6. Height, weight, hair, eyes.
7. Arresting officer and agency.
8. Charge(s).
9. File number.
10. Arrest number.
11. Disposition.

The original arrest index card should be maintained in the master index file in the Central Records Division.

17. The property envelope currently being used by the Department should be replaced by clear plastic envelopes of various sizes.

A copy of the booking/property form or the property tag can be inserted inside the envelope to identify ownership. The plastic envelope has two advantages: (1) the contents can be sealed and readily identified without breaking the seal; and (2) the envelope can be made into compartments, allowing several different items to be placed in the same envelope.

Conclusion

The preceding report and recommendations do not address all of the problems of the Winnebago County Sheriff's Department. However, an attempt was made to identify some of the major problem areas and recommend methods of reducing the problems that were identified. The proposed recommendations will improve the efficiency of the Department and facilitate interfacing with records computerization.

Appendix I

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDED FILES

In order to assist department personnel in implementing the recommended system, a brief summary of each file is provided below. This guide should also be of assistance in developing a procedure manual for the records system.

CENTRAL RECORDS DIVISION

Master Case File

This file contains all offense/complaint reports, accident reports, and traffic arrest reports. Case files are filed by year and sequential number. They should be maintained for two years and then microfilmed.

Criminal History File

This file contains a copy of the booking/property form, rap sheet, fingerprints, and photographs of each person booked into the jail. The files are filed by the "star" number.

Master Index

This serves as an index to both the master case file and the criminal history file.

Traffic Citation Forms

There is no change from the present system except that the forms should be microfilmed after two years.

Warrants File

The active warrant file is maintained without modification. The inactive file is arranged numerically, but microfilmed after 30 days.

Tavern Complaints

No change.

Activity Log

This consists of the key-punch cards on all police activity. After they are returned from data processing, they are filed by their own sequential number. They should be maintained in an active file for one year, archived for two years, and then destroyed.

DETECTIVE DIVISION

Active Case File

Each investigator maintains a file of the cases he is actively investigating. No other files or indexes are maintained, except for field interview reports and a case assignment log.

JAIL DIVISION

Arrest Index

This index consists of a 3 x 5 section of the booking/property slip filed alphabetically by name of arrested person. It also has the suspect's physical description and date of arrest. When a person is booked in the jail, the jailor can check the index to ascertain the last time of arrest in order to determine the processing procedure. Except for criminal history files, and indexes, no other change in jail records is recommended at this time.