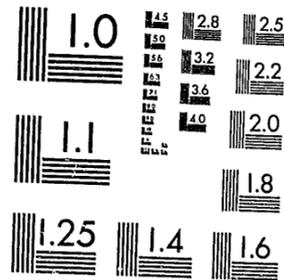


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STATE OF THE STATES REPORT:
STATISTICAL ANALYSIS CENTERS
(EMPHASIS OHIO)

NCJRS
NOV 28 1984
ACQUISITIONS

Jeffrey J. Knowles
Ohio Statistical Analysis Center
Office of Criminal Justice Services

95868

OVERVIEW

Despite the presence of statistical analysis centers (SACs) in nearly all of the states and the national Criminal Justice Statistics Association (CJSA) which loosely binds the SAC directors, SACs display a good deal of variety in their operations and structures. All are influenced more by the dictates of state government than by the federal Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS, formerly NCJISS), the major funding source for the majority of SAC operations in the United States. Hence, differences among the various SACs exist with regard to organizational placement in government, authorizing legislation (or the lack of such), local "pick-up" commitments, staff size and turnover, research priorities, and the composition of advisory boards.

In order to create a national profile of the SACs, the CJSA conducted a survey of all active SACs in April of 1980. Thirty-seven (37) of the Nation's forty (40) SACs responded to the questionnaire, yielding a solid base of data which was subsequently incorporated into the "State of the States: Statistical Analysis Centers," a report released in early July.

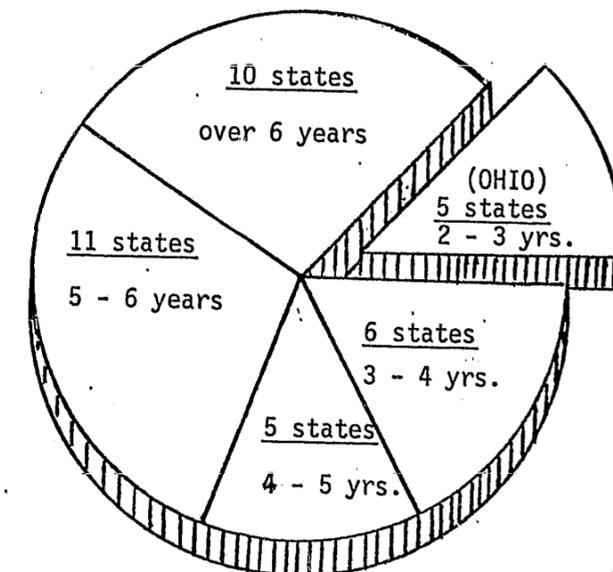
What follows is an attempt to profile Ohio's SAC operations against those found in the rest of the country. For the most part, the analysis is confined to similarities and differences of those operations without rendering judgements of quality (i.e., better, worse, etc.).

Dimensions of Funding

By any standard, the Ohio SAC is relatively new among the 40 other units throughout the Country. Eighty-eight percent (88%) of the other states have been operational longer than Ohio (see Fig. 1), and even this figure may be conservative since Ohio's length of operation includes an earlier year in which the Unit was not actually functional. The present SAC had been operational for a year-and-a-half at the time of the Survey. In contrast, most of the respondents (56.8%) had been operating for at least five years by April, 1980.

As might be expected, most of the states are also ahead of Ohio in their BJS funding cycles, which usually call for three years of full

Figure 1
SACs IN THE U.S.:
LENGTH OF TIME IN OPERATION



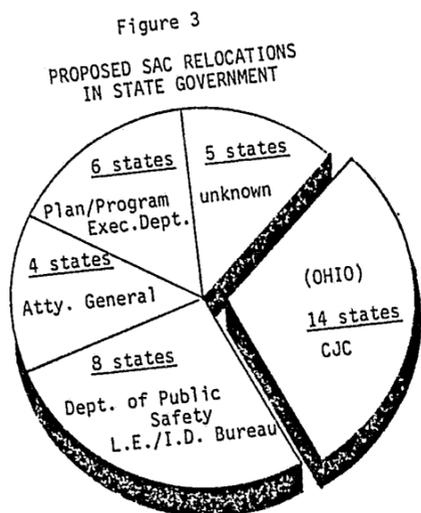
funds through the proposed "cooperative agreement" program of BJS. However, the future of that program is at best uncertain. Nevertheless, 32 of the states (including Ohio) indicated that state funds would play a major role in the continuation of the SAC unit. Of the twelve states that have completed the CDS funding cycle seven indicated that they no longer receive any direct funding from the federal government (although

some continue to rely upon funds from the Criminal Justice Council).

Organizational Structure

Twenty-two (22) of the thirty-seven (37) responding states (including Ohio) cited legislation specific to the Criminal Justice Council (CJC) for their authorization. Ohio is one of the 14 states from among these in which the CJC legislation specifically mentions SAC operations.

The Ohio SAC is located within the Office of Criminal Justice Services, the State's Criminal Justice Council. This is a practice repeated in 27 of the other 36 SACs in the Survey with three SACs



located in the attorney general's office, three others located in the state department of public safety for identification bureau, two in an executive planning/programming department, and one in the state judiciary. However, the respondents indicated that this organizational pattern may change in the near future. Figure 3 illustrates that while Ohio expects to remain within the CJC, more than half of the current CJC-based SACs anticipate changing locations in the near future. (Note: It is probable that at least several of the SACs were assuming that their CJC would cease operations altogether with the apparent termination of the LEAA program.) Five states indicated uncertainty about their future placement in local government, while the others saw themselves fitting into the previously mentioned categories (excepting the judiciary).

Ohio was not among the 30% of the respondents who stated that current organizational constraints inhibited or impeded SAC operations. The most frequently cited complaints in regard to parent agency relations were conflicting priorities, lack of support, and low visibility.

The 37 responding SACs were asked to list five types of agencies with which they had a great deal of communication for purposes of "justice information system development, justice information and data access, and justice analysis and statistics generation." The most frequently cited agencies were:

- corrections (25 SACs)
- state courts (20 SACs)
- public safety department (13 SACs)
- state police (12 SACs)
- local police/sheriffs (7 SACs)
- attorney general (6 SACs)
- state legislature (5 SACs)
- CJCs (5 SACs)
- data processing operations (5 SACs)
- juvenile services agency (10 SACs)
- other executive departments (10 SACs)

In less than two years of operations Ohio's SAC has invested a good deal of time with local law enforcement officials, all major Criminal Justice System components at the State level, and the Office of Criminal Justice Services. In recent months there has been a rapid increase in communications with state legislators, academicians and consultants concerned with criminal justice, and various officials in other states and the federal government.

Staffing

Although Ohio was the fourth largest of the 37 responding states in terms of population, it was only average with regard to staff size. With an authorization for six full-time staff persons, Ohio is smaller than eight other units which are authorized for eight or more staff, and falls into the upper middle of the 21 states with staffs ranging from 4-7 persons. One reason for this seeming discrepancy is that several SACs are directly responsible for other portions of the CDS program (eg., Uniform Crime Reporting, Computerized Criminal Histories, etc.), whereas Ohio has no such responsibilities since those functions are performed by other agencies.

Ohio's staff does seem to conform to other SACs regarding the type of staff in service. All five of the professional staff are oriented more toward research than pure statistics or data processing. This is similar to the national trend which breaks out as follows:

- SAC directors.19%
- analysts/researchers . .41%
- statisticians.16%
- computer programmers . .9%
- statistical clerks . . .3%
- planners3%
- publication editors. . .2%
- interns.1%
- other.5%

There is a significant though not unusual amount of turnover among the Nation's SACs. Less than half of the respondents were not at full staff strength at the time of the Survey, although all six of Ohio's positions were filled. SAC directors, in particular, demonstrated a high degree of job instability. During the ten months preceding the survey seven states experienced a vacancy or replacement of that position, and only 12 SAC directors remain from the start of SAC funding in their states. Ohio is among the 9 states which have seen three SAC directors. In total, 77 persons have served as SAC directors in the 37 states surveyed.

SAC Advisory Boards

There is a wide variation in the scope and functions of the federally mandated SAC advisory bodies. They range in size from less than five to more than twenty-six persons, meet at varying intervals during the year, and may be either advisory or supervisory in nature.

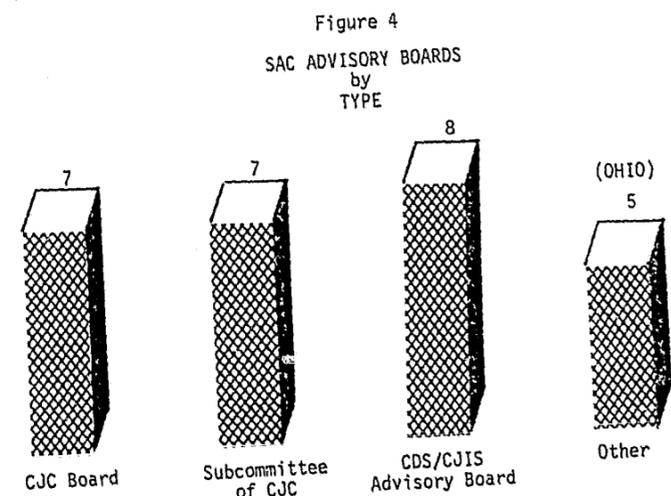


Figure 4 illustrates that these boards may be the actual supervisory commission of the state CJC, a subcommittee of that group, a special body oriented toward criminal justice information systems (CJIS), or yet another special board impaneled to address the unique concerns of SAC. The basic difference between these last two types of groups is that the CJIS boards are primarily interested in information systems per se, whereas the "other" boards are concerned with a broader range of research issues.

Ohio's SAC Advisory Board clearly falls into this fourth type. It was created in November, 1978, through twelve appointments made by Mr. James Duerk, Director of the State's Department of Economic and Community Development. It is not limited to information system concerns alone, but is unique to the Ohio SAC. It serves no other function.

SAC Priorities

Figure 5 indicates that Ohio's operational priorities are fairly consistent with those of SACs in other states. The question asked respondents not only to rate priorities but also to indicate how those same priorities were ranked in the past and would be ranked in the future. Given this, Ohio's response to "Analysis of Crime and Criminal Justice Processing" is already out of date, that issue having become a high priority in the four months since the Survey was conducted. Major studies in the areas of victimization, the operations of Ohio county prosecutors, and law enforcement in the State have radically increased the time and effort expended in this area.

In the past years, only one of the areas noted in Figure 5 could have been considered a high priority in Ohio, that being the activities related to the development of criminal justice information systems, particularly at the local level. Since that time the Ohio SAC has moved away from the CJIS orientation and toward a research orientation.

Figure 5
SAC Priorities:
Ohio v. The Nation

	OHIO			Nation*		
	High	Medium	Low	High	Medium	Low
Analysis of Crime and Criminal Justice Processing		X		X		
CJS Employment and Expenditure Data	X					X
Information Request/Responses	X			X		
Monitoring/Coordination of UCR, CCH and OBTS		X		X		
Technical Assistance in Increasing Statistical/Analytical Capabilities in the State		X		X		
Information System Grant Activities			X		X	
Other CJC Grant Activities			X		X	
Privacy and Security Concerns			X			X
Management Information System (MIS)			X			X
Communications Planning			X			X

*Denotes most frequently cited response category

END