

**CENTRAL CRIMINAL RECORDS EXCHANGE
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA**

**SPECIAL REPORT
JANUARY 15, 2001**



AUDIT SUMMARY

The findings and recommendations within this report highlight the need for criminal justice agencies to develop and follow standards for the exchange of information and future systems development. Almost all of the errors within the Central Criminal Record Exchange (the Exchange) arise from either the manual entry of data or the lack of standards within the Commonwealth to exchange information.

Without standards, local and state criminal justice agencies will continue to acquire systems that will not allow for the exchange of complete and accurate information. Agencies will need to acquire systems to meet workload demands and provide information for the management of their operations. However, while these systems may improve the operations of an agency, the lack of standards will prevent other agencies from efficiently and effectively gathering and using the information.

The State Police continue to successfully gather and maintain the Central Criminal Record Exchange within the confines of the present systems. The State Police and state and local criminal justice agencies need to evaluate and determine what information the Exchange should have and appropriately plan to gather and maintain that information.

In the year since our initial review of the criminal offense reporting process, there have been enhancements to the case disposition reporting process. The State Police and Supreme Court have significantly increased the number of courts that provide case disposition data electronically. The State Police have also implemented a tracking and monitoring process that improves the follow-up of incomplete or inaccurate data.

Our recommendations to improve the accuracy and completeness of criminal history data include:

- The General Assembly may wish to consider designating an oversight authority to set and enforce criminal information data exchange and information systems development standards for criminal justice computers and databases;
- The General Assembly may wish to consider legislation requiring that a person arrested and released on a summons report to the jurisdictional law enforcement agency for fingerprinting within a specified period;
- Wherever feasible, regional jails with LiveScan technology should assist localities for criminal intake and booking; and
- The State Police should continue to develop and implement follow-up procedures to resolve incomplete and inaccurate records.

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January 15, 2001

The Honorable Vincent F. Callahan, Jr.
Co-Chairman, House Appropriations
Committee

The Honorable V. Earl Dickinson
Co-Chairman, House Appropriations
Committee

The Honorable John H. Chichester
Chairman, Senate Finance Committee

Gentlemen:

The Auditor of Public Accounts has continued to review the criminal offense reporting process used by law enforcement agencies, courts, and correctional facilities within the Commonwealth. The purpose of the review was to determine the accuracy and completeness of criminal offender information forwarded to the Department of State Police for inclusion in the Central Criminal Records Exchange. This study was conducted as a follow-up to the special report issued by the Auditor of Public Accounts on November 29, 1999.

In the year since our initial review of the criminal offense reporting process, there have been enhancements to the case disposition reporting process. The State Police and Supreme Court have significantly increased the number of courts that provide case disposition data electronically. The State Police have also implemented a tracking and monitoring process that improves the follow-up of incomplete or inaccurate data.

CONCLUSION

The State Police continue to successfully gather and maintain the Central Criminal Record Exchange within the confines of the present systems. The State Police and state and local criminal justice agencies need to evaluate and determine what information the Exchange should have and appropriately plan to gather and maintain that information.

Our analysis of the Exchange's criminal history database determined that approximately eight percent of arrest data, 14 percent of case disposition data, and 65 percent of confinement data are incomplete. Additionally, we found circumstances where an individual has more than one unique identification number within the database resulting in disjointed criminal history records. Finally, the criminal information provided to the database does not meet the needs of all users. For example, sufficient information is not available to those officials who make decisions regarding an individual's propensity for violence, their custody level, or their probation or parole status.

The findings and recommendations within this report highlight the need for criminal justice agencies to develop and follow standards for the exchange of information and future systems development. Almost all of the errors within the Central Criminal Record Exchange arise from either the manual entry of data or the inability of systems to efficiently exchange information due to the lack of standards within the Commonwealth.

Our recommendations to improve the accuracy and completeness of criminal history data include:

- The General Assembly may wish to consider designating an oversight authority to set and enforce criminal information data exchange and information systems development standards for criminal justice computers and databases;
- Criminal justice information systems should adhere to information systems development and data exchange standards to ensure the accurate and timely sharing of information among systems;
- The General Assembly may wish to consider legislation requiring that a person arrested and released on a summons report to the jurisdictional law enforcement agency for fingerprinting within a specified period;
- Wherever feasible, regional jails with LiveScan technology should assist localities for criminal intake and booking;
- All correctional facilities should report initial confinement, changes in confinement status, and any release, parole, or probation information as required by the Code of Virginia. The exchange of this information should take electronic form to reduce errors and rejected transactions. Additionally, the Department of Criminal Justice Services should implement a statewide training program to ensure that management and staff of these institutions understand the reporting requirements;
- Future criminal information database enhancements should consider the diverse needs of users. Enhancements should include requiring the Virginia Code statute citations and the dissemination of those juvenile records as required by the Code of Virginia;
- A uniform numbering system should be implemented to facilitate the communication of criminal records among criminal justice agencies; and
- The State Police should continue to develop and implement follow-up procedures to resolve incomplete and inaccurate records.

EXIT CONFERENCE

We discussed this report with representatives of the Department of State Police on January 29, 2001.

AUDITOR OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

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SPECIAL REVIEW – THE CRIMINAL OFFENSE REPORTING PROCESS

Purpose of the Study

Chapter 1073 of the 2000 Acts of Assembly required that the Auditor of Public Accounts conduct a review of the reporting, completeness, and accuracy of criminal offender information forwarded to the Department of State Police for inclusion into the Central Criminal Records Exchange (the Exchange.) This study was a follow-up review to the special report titled, *Review of the Criminal Offense Reporting Process*, issued by the Auditor of Public Accounts on November 29, 1999.

Methodology

In conducting this review, we researched reporting criteria in the Code of Virginia and reviewed the manual and automated reporting processes used by law enforcement agencies, courts, and correctional facilities. We interviewed personnel from the Central Criminal Record Exchange, the Department of Corrections, and selected law enforcement agencies. We also interviewed several regional and local jail administrators, Commonwealth Attorneys, and personnel from the State Board of Elections, the Virginia Criminal Sentencing Commission, and the Secretary of the Commonwealth.

Using a copy provided by the State Police, we reviewed and analyzed the records maintained in their Computerized Criminal History database. Our database copy included all records maintained since the creation of the database in 1968 up to and including November 4, 2000.

We also reviewed reports for the current year maintained by the newly implemented tracking and research function within the Exchange. These reports reflect the accuracy and completeness of information received from courts that participate in the electronic submission of data.

Background

In 1966, the General Assembly established the Central Criminal Records Exchange as a function within the Office of the Attorney General to receive, classify, and file criminal history record information. Initially, the Exchange maintained fingerprint records from both the Department of State Police and the Department of Corrections. In 1968, law enforcement officials, clerks of courts, and corrections officials became statutorily required to submit criminal data. Reportable information includes arrest data and fingerprints from law enforcement agencies, final criminal case disposition and sentencing data from courts, and confinement and supervisory data from correctional facilities and probation officers.

In 1970, the Exchange became a section within the Department of State Police. Today, the Exchange maintains over 1.2 million criminal records. The Exchange receives and processes over 330,000 charges and nearly 300,000 case dispositions annually.

As the sole criminal record repository in the Commonwealth of Virginia, the Exchange makes information available to criminal justice entities at the local, state, and national levels. Criminal justice officials should be able to use criminal history records for a wide range of decisions including determining an individual's propensity for violence, a judge's review prior to sentencing, assigning an inmate's custody level, determining an individual's probation or parole status, or to support criminal justice initiatives such as computerized firearms transaction programs at the state and national levels.

The Exchange performs criminal record searches for selected non-criminal justice entities and individuals for employment and/or licensure purposes. Section 19.2-389 of the Code of Virginia governs the dissemination of criminal history information. Pursuant to this section, certain non-criminal justice entities can receive conviction data on criminal record name searches for the purpose of employment and/or licensure. These agencies will receive only arrest records that have associated disposition data. There are, however, certain agencies that by law are entitled to receive complete criminal record information including all arrest records with or without corresponding dispositions. These agencies include all criminal justice agencies, foster care and adoption agencies, as well as fire departments, rescue squads, and public school systems.

Additionally, beginning January 1, 2001, the Code of Virginia Section 19.2-392.02 requires national criminal background checks by businesses and organizations for employees or volunteers providing care to children, the elderly, or the disabled. Background checks will provide information on an individual who has been convicted of or under indictment for any offense set forth in Sections 63.1-198.1 or 63.1-248.7:2 of the Code regardless of whether the person was a juvenile or adult at the time of the conviction or indictment.

Each month the Exchange also sends an electronic copy of all felony convictions for the preceding month to the State Board of Elections for comparison with the voter registration system. Virginia election laws do not permit convicted felons to vote.

Reporting Requirements

The Code of Virginia establishes that every law enforcement official or agency having the power to arrest for a felony must make a report to the Central Criminal Records Exchange of any arrest involving reportable offenses. Reportable offenses include treason, felonies, misdemeanors under Title 54.1 (Professions and Occupations), and most misdemeanors punishable by confinement in jail under Title 18.2 (Crimes and Offenses) or Title 19.2 (Criminal Procedures). These offenses also include arrests by summons. When a person is arrested by summons, they are not held in custody; therefore, the report is not submitted until the case is adjudicated with one of the following outcomes: conviction (and the conviction is upheld after any appeal); acquittal by reason of insanity; or dismissal under the First Offender Drug Probation statute.

Clerks of courts must report the case dispositions of those individuals arrested for reportable offenses. Dispositions may include acquittal, dismissal, indefinite postponement, nolle prosequi, or conviction.

To assist criminal justice officials in making informed decisions, there is an adult criminal history for certain juvenile offenses. Section 16.1-307 of the Code of Virginia requires courts to report cases involving a juvenile, fourteen years of age or older at the time of the offense, who is adjudicated delinquent in juvenile court on the basis of an act that would be a felony if committed by an adult, or is found guilty of a felony in the circuit court. In these cases, the juvenile's record is available and treated in the same manner as adult criminal records.

Corrections officials, sheriffs, and regional jail administrators must report changes in correctional status information. Reports to the Exchange must include any commitment to or release or escape from a state, regional, or local correctional facility, including commitment to or release from a parole or probation agency.

Finally, the Secretary of the Commonwealth must report any pardon, reprieve, or commutation of sentence of an individual convicted of a reportable offense.

The Code of Virginia establishes the policy that each reporting agency must have procedures that reasonably ensure the accurate and timely report of data by the most expeditious means and in no instance

later than thirty days after occurrence of the disposition or correctional change of status. They must also promptly report any correction, deletion, or revision of the information.

A description of the criminal information reporting processes used by arresting agencies, clerks of court, and correctional officials may be found at Appendix A to this report. Appendix A also describes the Exchange's internal procedures to add information to the criminal history database.

Follow-up to Initial Report Findings

In our initial report, we identified weaknesses in the reporting process that hindered the accuracy and completeness of the information maintained in the State Police criminal history database. We found that even though required by statute, not all arresting agencies, court clerks, and correctional facilities reported criminal information to the Exchange. We also found that only a limited number of courts provided case disposition data to the Exchange using electronic means. Finally, we noted that the Exchange did not have effective follow-up procedures when it received incomplete reports.

In the year since our initial findings, there have been enhancements to the case disposition reporting process.

Electronic Reporting of Case Dispositions

The State Police and the Office of the Executive Secretary of the Supreme Court, working together, have increased the number of courts that report case disposition data electronically. As of December 1, 2000, 270 courts have a weekly tape transfer that uploads the Supreme Court's Case Management System data to the Exchange's Computerized Criminal History database. This is a significant increase from the 20 courts included in the process last year. Electronic reporting by all courts should improve both the accuracy and completeness of case disposition information maintained in the database.

Tracking and Monitoring of Case Dispositions

The State Police have also implemented a tracking and monitoring function that attempts to resolve electronically transmitted case disposition reports that the Exchange has rejected. According to the State Police, the most common reasons for rejections are missing arrest data or inaccurate document control numbers. Keying errors by reporting agencies also contribute to rejections. The Exchange has a holding queue that has most of the rejected dispositions pending resolution.

According to weekly reports from the tracking and monitoring system, the State Police received almost 91,500 electronic dispositions over the last seven months. Rejections due to errors totaled over 27,000 (30 percent.) Approximately 7,000 of the rejections represent keying errors by clerks of court that the Exchange later corrected. The remaining 20,000 rejections (22 percent of all dispositions received) were primarily the result of missing arrest information or inaccurate document control numbers. The Exchange will hold these records in the queue until it receives the required information.

When an electronic disposition record does not have a matching arrest record the system automatically generates letters to the arresting agency with a copy to the applicable court requesting information. There is, however, no follow-up of the rejected transactions resulting from missing document control numbers. These records remain in the hold queue until the Exchange receives a document control

number from the applicable court. Since the system does not automatically generate an action, these records could stay in the holding queue indefinitely.

Because the tracking and monitoring system has existed for less than a year, we cannot determine its long-term effectiveness or if the rejection rates discussed above are excessive.

Follow-up Recommendations

CCRE Review Findings and Recommendations

The State Police continue to successfully gather and maintain the Central Criminal Record Exchange within the confines of the present systems. The State Police and state and local criminal justice agencies need to evaluate and determine what information the Exchange should have and appropriately plan to gather and maintain that information.

Analysis of the Database

The State Police provided us with a copy of the Computerized Criminal History database as of November 4, 2000. We reviewed the completeness and accuracy of the information using a series of database queries. Since typically there is a time lag between arrest and final case adjudication, we did not analyze records less than two years old. Our review of the database and associated reports led to the following findings:

Finding: 14 percent of arrest records do not have case disposition data.

Finding: 65 percent of disposition records resulting in incarceration do not have corresponding confinement records.

Various factors contribute to missing or inaccurate data. As we reported previously, there are weaknesses in the reporting process. The biggest weakness occurs whenever arresting agencies, court clerks, or correctional officials fail to report or report inaccurate or incomplete information. Also, the Exchange's attempts to obtain missing court dispositions are stalled by the court clerks' inability or unwillingness to provide necessary assistance.

The Code of Virginia tasked the Exchange with receiving, classifying, and filing criminal history information. In this role, the Exchange acts as a repository for criminal information. The Code of Virginia also gave the Criminal Justice Services Board the authority to promulgate regulations relating to criminal history record information. The board has issued regulations but they are administrative in nature. There are no sanctions for those agencies or officials who fail to comply with their statutory reporting requirements.

Also, in the course of this study, we found that the automated exchange of criminal information among the various entities in the Commonwealth's criminal justice community is often times inefficient and ineffective. There is no common data dictionary and computer systems lack common data elements. For example, as discussed later in this report, the Department of Corrections' system does not interface with the Exchange's database, and the flow of data from the Supreme Court's case management system is often hampered by the absence of common data elements between the systems.

The development of a common data dictionary and data elements for all criminal justice computer systems and databases would allow for common reporting, exchanging, and sharing of information. Also, an environment of integrated information management will best accomplish data sharing.

We found that most criminal justice agencies use technology to some extent, but there is little planning or cooperation among participants to integrate the various applications. This hinders the flow of information among participants. Addressing and removing these obstacles will increase the efficiency and effectiveness of communications and help provide a truly integrated criminal justice system.

Until now, criminal justice agencies have worked independently, sharing only select pieces of information. The criminal justice community has been slow to embrace recently developed technologies. What were once state of the art systems are becoming increasingly antiquated. The lack of an integrated criminal justice system reduces the timeliness and accuracy of pertinent information. It also can pose a threat to public safety and individual civil rights. The criminal justice community must incorporate technology standards to make the flow of information run more efficiently and effectively. This will only happen when each of the participants make the necessary changes to integrate the information processes involved in criminal justice administration.

Any planning, development, or acquisition of criminal record information technology must first consider the overall criminal justice system and the information used within. An integrated criminal justice system should support interoperable, portable, and scalable applications through data standards and formats, interfaces, and protocols. Future development and maintenance of criminal justice related information systems must advance a commitment to system responsiveness and reliability. The systems must address data quality and integrity maintenance while providing users value-added functionality.

An oversight authority would create, promote, and enforce reporting policies and standards, and establish common data standards for sharing information that would ensure all criminal justice agencies are using common crime definitions for consistent data entry.

Recommendation: *The General Assembly may wish to consider designating an oversight authority to set and enforce criminal information data exchange and information systems development standards for criminal justice computers and databases.*

Recommendation: *Criminal justice information systems should adhere to information system development and data exchange standards to ensure accurate and timely sharing of information among systems.*

Finding: Approximately 8 percent of arrest records are not reported timely.

There are several reasons for the untimely reporting of arrest records. A very small percentage may relate to manual arrest records with illegible fingerprints, which require the Exchange to return the record to the arresting agency for new prints. The Exchange does not follow-up on these arrest records.

The major reason for delay occurs when the arresting agency releases the individual on a summons after arrest. In these instances, there is no report to the Exchange until after the case's adjudication results in a conviction, an acquittal by reason of insanity, or a dismissal under the First Offender Drug Probation statute. Unfortunately, these circumstances lead to delays in reporting arrest information because many times the first opportunity to fingerprint the individual occurs after the court appearance. Judges do not always remand the individual to the arresting officer for fingerprinting and completion of the CCRE form. Other times, the arresting officer is not present in the courtroom or no one has fingerprinting experience. In these circumstances, CCRE never receives the arrest information.

Recommendation: *The General Assembly may wish to consider requiring that a person arrested and released on a summons report to the jurisdictional law enforcement agency for fingerprinting within a specified period.*

Finding: Some individuals have more than one unique state identification numbers.

We estimate that there are at least 5,500 individuals with more than one unique identification number in the database. This means that these individuals each have more than one criminal history file in the database. The State Police assert there is no risk of retrieving only a partial criminal history because Exchange personnel review results of record check queries. Although the estimated 5,500 individuals with more than one identification number represent a small percentage of the 1.2 million individuals in the database, the State Police should consolidate any individual's multiple records to easily retrieve histories for non-criminal agency record checks.

Fingerprints are the unique identifiers for individuals in the Computerized Criminal History database. Each fingerprint has distinct characteristics. When these characteristics are illegible due to poor quality prints, a misidentification may occur. Poor quality fingerprints are the primary cause of multiple identification numbers. Manual fingerprints come to the Exchange and go through a scanning process to get into the database. This process will further diminish the quality of the fingerprint.

Fingerprint technology such as LiveScan produces clear, electronic fingerprints that provide immediate feedback, accepting or rejecting prints immediately upon input. This greatly reduces fingerprint-matching errors. LiveScan technology should continue to be expanded in the Commonwealth for the intake and processing of prisoners.

We recognize that training and equipment costs of the LiveScan technology does not make providing this technology cost beneficial to every law enforcement agency. Several regional jails that perform the intake and booking function for law enforcement agencies within a given geographical area do not have this technology. Our study found 10 of the 16 regional jails already have or plan to implement LiveScan and expanding the use of the technology into the remaining regional jails would help.

Recommendation: *Wherever feasible, regional jails with LiveScan technology should assist localities for criminal intake and booking.*

Confinement Data Reporting

Finding: The reporting of confinement data is neither consistent nor timely.

The Code of Virginia requires initial confinement records, which include sentencing information and fingerprints, to go to the Exchange within 30 days of confinement. We determined that the Exchange receives approximately only 35 percent of all confinement information. Also, none of the three regional jail administrators that we interviewed were aware of these statutory reporting responsibilities.

The Department of Corrections notifies the State Police when an offender moves from institutional supervision to community supervision and when the offender is released from community supervision. Corrections provides the release data once a month via tape transfer. To accommodate the State Police's computer hardware, Corrections must create a special tape at the Department of Technology and deliver the tape to State Police Headquarters.

After receiving the release data, the State Police send Corrections a monthly edit report that shows which records the database accepted. Most rejections occur because the identification number or name does not match the information in the Exchange's database. Our review of the July 2000 edit report showed that of the 2,268 records submitted, 106 records (5 percent) were rejected. Corrections does not have the resources to follow up on these edit reports.

Recommendation: *All correctional facilities should report initial confinement, changes in confinement status, and any release, parole, or probation information as required by the Code of Virginia. The exchange of this information should take electronic form to reduce errors and rejected transactions. Additionally, the Department of Criminal Justice Services should implement a statewide training program to ensure that management and staff of these institutions understand the reporting requirements.*

Other Users of Criminal Data

Finding: The criminal information provided to the database does not always meet the needs of significant end users.

Finding: Approximately 20 percent of case dispositions reported over the last two years do not include specific Virginia statute citations.

During our interviews with personnel from the Virginia Criminal Sentencing Commission and various Commonwealth Attorneys, we learned that the information in the Computerized Criminal History database does not meet their needs. Frequently, the records requested are incomplete or do not contain the information they need for providing sentencing information.

An individual's arrest record should include the statute number under which the individual's conviction occurred. Commonwealth Attorneys and the Criminal Sentencing Commission use these statute numbers as indicators of an individual's propensity for violent or severe crimes.

However, the specific statute references do not always come to the Exchange with case dispositions. Exchange personnel recognize the benefit of statute numbers and encourage criminal justice agencies to provide this information when reporting. We found that approximately 20 percent of case dispositions reported to the Exchange over the last two years do not have corresponding statute numbers.

In an effort to assist criminal justice officials in making informed decisions the Code of Virginia requires the maintenance of certain juvenile offense information as part of an individual's adult criminal history. However, contributing agencies are not providing this information as required.

Recommendation: *Future database enhancements should consider the diverse needs of users. These enhancements should include requiring the Virginia Code statute numbers and the dissemination of those juvenile records as required by the Code of Virginia.*

Tracking Offenders Through the Criminal Justice System

Finding: Throughout the criminal justice system an individual is assigned many identifying numbers. The lack of a uniform numbering system often causes a breakdown in communication among the various criminal justice agencies.

As an individual goes through the criminal justice system, they are assigned many identifying numbers. These numbers include at a minimum the arrest warrant number, court case number, state identifying number (SID), and inmate number. Each criminal justice agency tracks this individual with their particular tracking number. For example, the State Police use SID numbers, Corrections uses inmate numbers, and the court system uses the court case or docket number. Because there is not a tracking number for an individual through the system, it is difficult for agencies to share information and communicate concerning an individual. Much of the missing information within the CCRE database comes from the inability to have uniformity of information at even the most basic level - the identification number.

Recommendation: *A uniform numbering system should be implemented to facilitate the communication of criminal records among criminal justice agencies.*

Follow Up Actions at the Exchange

As noted earlier in this report, the Exchange has implemented a tracking and monitoring system to resolve incomplete or inaccurate electronic case disposition data. The system generates weekly reports to track the number of case dispositions received from the Supreme Court and the number and nature of rejected records.

The tracking and monitoring system automatically generates letters to an arresting agency when case disposition data from a court has no corresponding arrest information on file. If the Exchange does not receive this information from the arresting agency, there is a request for information sent to the reporting court. Case dispositions are sometimes held indefinitely awaiting receipt of a report from the arresting agency or the applicable court. In some instances, the information never gets added to the database because the Exchange never receives it from the arresting agency or court.

The Exchange should consider implementing a similar notification process for those dispositions from courts without proper document control numbers. In addition, a secondary search of the database on a disposition record's social security number may help in matching the case disposition data to an existing arrest record. This process may not work in every case, but could reduce the number of unmatched records.

The Computerized Criminal History database is the sole repository for criminal records in the Commonwealth of Virginia. The accuracy of criminal history searches for law enforcement agencies as well as non-criminal justice agencies depends on the accuracy and completeness of this data.

Recommendation: *The Exchange should continue to develop and implement its follow-up procedures to resolve incomplete or inaccurate criminal history records.*

Criminal Justice Information Systems

The findings and recommendations listed in this report highlight the need for criminal justice agencies to develop and follow standards for the exchange of information and future systems development. Almost all of the errors within the Central Criminal Record Exchange arise from either the manual entry of data or the inability of systems to efficiently exchange information due to the lack of standards within the Commonwealth.

Without standards, local and state criminal justice agencies will continue to acquire systems that will not allow for the exchange of complete and accurate information. Agencies will acquire systems that meet workload demands and provide information for the management of their operations. However, while these systems may improve the operations of an agency, the lack of standards will prevent other agencies from efficiently and effectively gathering and using the information.

The Criminal Offense Reporting Process

Arrest Data

The Exchange receives the majority of arrest information in the Commonwealth electronically. Forty-one law enforcement agencies use LiveScan, an automated booking system, to submit arrest and fingerprint data. According to the Exchange, approximately 400 records, or 60 percent of their daily arrests records come from LiveScan facilities. Unlike the pre-printed form in the manual process, the LiveScan form can include up to fifteen offenses. The form automatically goes to the Exchange, which ensures the prompt reporting of the arrest data. LiveScan also produces a court disposition form for each reportable offense, which goes to the jurisdictional court clerk. LiveScan uses an automated lookup table to determine what the valid offenses are, which significantly reduces reporting errors. Also, LiveScan reduces keying errors because its use eliminates manual data entry at the Exchange. The Exchange can take reported information, save it into the system, and run the data through a series of edits.

The remaining law enforcement agencies within the Commonwealth report arrests using a manual reporting process in which the arresting officer completes a pre-printed CCRE form for each reportable offense charged. The arresting officer sends one copy of the form with the fingerprints to the Exchange. Another copy goes to the jurisdictional court clerk.

Case Disposition Data

In the manual reporting process, court clerk reporting compliance depends highly upon the arresting agency performing its statutory reporting responsibilities. When the arresting officer does not provide the CCRE form, the court clerk cannot submit case disposition data without first contacting the arresting agency in an effort to obtain the CCRE form.

Unlike the manual process, the clerk may electronically report case dispositions despite the absence of the CCRE form from the arresting officer. If a clerk sends the disposition information electronically and the clerk has not received an arrest form or the document control number, the clerk may enter a generic number to indicate the absence of the arrest information. If the clerk sends a disposition to the Exchange without a document control number, the record falls into a hold queue pending receipt of the number.

Confinement Data

Upon conviction, the local jail, regional jail, or Department of Corrections reports the initial confinement data manually using a CCRE confinement form. The Department of Corrections reports supervised release information monthly via an electronic tape transfer. The Exchange considers confinement data separate and posts information without regard to whether it has received the arrest and/or case disposition. The Department of Corrections does not have procedures to follow-up on missing or inaccurate confinement data.

Processing Criminal Information at the Exchange

The Exchange uses several systems to record, store, and distribute criminal data. All arrest and court disposition data resides in the Computerized Criminal History (CCH) database, accompanied by fingerprints in the Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS.) After updating the CCH database, the information becomes available on the Virginia Criminal Identification Network (VCIN), which provides criminal history, wanted, and motor vehicle information to law enforcement agencies statewide. VCIN also provides the Commonwealth's tie-in to the National Criminal Information Center (NCIC.)

Arrest Data

The Exchange uses the Networked AFIS Transaction Management system (NATMS) to process most arrest reports. In the manual process, a data entry clerk enters all information from the CCRE form into NATMS and scans the fingerprints into AFIS. Once the clerk determines that the information is complete, the clerk releases the data to NATMS, which electronically sends the information to the CCH database for processing.

In the manual reporting process when CCRE forms contain incomplete or illegible information, the Exchange returns the form to the arresting officer. The Exchange does not keep a record of forms sent back to the arresting officer, and therefore, cannot track a form to monitor its correction and return.

Arrest data, which comes electronically via LiveScan, flows through NATMS as well. The LiveScan system provides instant feedback when it notifies the booking agency immediately if they have sent illegible fingerprints. Once processed, the system prints a CCRE arrest form and fingerprint card at the Exchange and a CCRE case disposition form at the booking agency. When the Exchange receives LiveScan data, all information goes through a series of edit checks before entry into the database. The Exchange also maintains a printed copy for internal use.

Case Disposition Data

As discussed earlier, most courts send disposition information electronically, though some courts still report this information manually. The Exchange uses the document control number from the CCRE form to match case disposition data with the corresponding arrest data. When they match, the Exchange enters case disposition data into the record in the CCH database.

In most cases, the Exchange cannot enter disposition data from the court clerk when there is no corresponding arrest record. The Exchange establishes a new record or updates an existing record with the disposition data if the court's copy of the CCRE form has a legible thumbprint. When creating this record, the Exchange flags the record to show that a full set of fingerprints is not available.

When a court reports disposition data electronically and does not have the document control number, the court may enter a generic document control number. A lack of proper document control numbers causes the rejection of electronically reported dispositions. These records fall into a hold queue until there is a corresponding arrest record.