

Glossary

AIDS—“Automated Identification Division System,” a computerized system being developed for use within the FBI Identification Division that will eventually provide for automatic name and fingerprint searching.

arraignment—The judicial process by which an individual accused of a criminal offense is brought before a judge to enter a plea to the charge.

arrest record information—See Criminal Justice Information.

audit—The processes by which: a) the accuracy, completeness, and relevance of CCH record data are verified; b) CCH recordkeeping practices and CCH data are examined for compliance with applicable regulations. (See oversight.)

Comprehensive Data Systems Program—Launched in 1972 by LEAA, this program finances the development of State systems to standardize, integrate, and centralize the assembly and processing of criminal justice statistical data. Each system must include capability to track offenders through the criminal justice process and exchange criminal history records with other jurisdictions.

CCH—Computerized Criminal History—A record, maintained in machine-readable form, which contains information collected by a criminal justice agency on an individual and which includes: identification record information, arrest record information, criminal record information, and/or disposition information. (See “criminal justice information” for definitions of these terms.) An individual whose recorded charges were filed within a single State is represented by a “single-State” CCH record. If the charges were filed in more than one State, the entries comprise a “multi-State” CCH record.

correctional and release information—See Criminal Justice Information.

Criminal History Record Information System—A system including the equipment, facilities, procedures, agreements, and organizations

thereof, for the collection, processing, preservation, and/or dissemination of criminal history record information. The Department of Justice criminal history record information system encompasses the Identification Division and the Computerized Criminal History (CCH) file systems operated by the FBI.

criminal intelligence information—See Criminal Justice Information.

criminal investigative information—See Criminal Justice Information.

criminal justice agency—a) any court with criminal jurisdiction; b) a government agency or any subunit thereof which, pursuant to statute or executive order, has responsibilities involving the apprehension, detention, pretrial release, post-trial release, prosecution, defense, adjudication, or rehabilitation of accused individuals and/or convicted offenders.

criminal justice information—includes any or all of the following:

a) **Identification record**—information describing an individual that does not suggest he has committed a crime—e.g., voiceprints, photographs, fingerprints.

b) **Arrest record**—information concerning the arrest and charging of an individual who has been accused of a criminal offense. Arrest record information does not include any reference to disposition of charge(s).

c) **Criminal record**—when disposition information is added to an arrest record, it becomes a “criminal record” (sometimes called a conviction record).

d) **Disposition**—a record entry or entries disclosing 1) that a decision has been made not to bring criminal charges against the subject of the record, or 2) that criminal proceedings have been concluded, abandoned, or indefinitely postponed. If an individual is convicted and sentenced, the related disposition information includes the nature of the sentence and subsequent events—e.g., release from correctional supervision, the outcome of appellate review, and/or executive clemency action.

e) Correctional and release record—information on an individual compiled in connection with bail, pretrial or post-trial release proceedings, presentence investigations, and proceedings to determine the individual's physical or mental condition. The term also includes information on an inmate's participation in correctional /rehabilitative programs, as well as information related to probation/parole proceedings.

f) Criminal intelligence record—information on identifiable individuals compiled in an effort to anticipate, prevent, or monitor possible criminal activity.

g) Criminal investigative record—information on identifiable individuals compiled in the course of investigating specific criminal acts.

h) Wanted person record—identification record information on an individual against whom there is an outstanding arrest warrant.

criminal record information—See **Criminal Justice Information**.

data quality—A measure of the accuracy, recency, completeness, and validity of NCIC records.

dedicated system—A computer or terminal complex, managed by a criminal justice agency, and used entirely for a criminal justice data processing application.

disposition—See **Criminal Justice Information**,

distributed data processing (DDP)—An arrangement of computers and/or intelligent terminals that allows some processing to be done at a central location and the rest at remote locations connected to the site by communications circuits. In the NCIC system, remote processing usually occurs at the State level, but there may also be some done within terminals operated by local criminal justice agencies.

dossier society—A society in which computerized records are maintained on individual citizens and are used by government to monitor citizen activities so as to discourage political dissent and other types of disapproved behavior.

downtime—The total time that a computer system is out of service because of system outages and/or maintenance. "Outage time" refers to downtime which is due solely to system/component failure.

expungement—In connection with NCIC records, this term has been used interchangeably with "purging" or "sealing" of record informa-

tion. It may or may not mean that information has been physically destroyed.

FBI message-switching plan—A proposal, currently under review within the Department of Justice and Congress, which would alter the operation and architecture of the NCIC system. Basically, the plan calls for locating all single-State CCH records within the States originating these records and installing a computerized message-switching subsystem at the NCIC in Washington so that a user requesting information from such a record could be connected directly to the agency holding it.

flag-A proposed entry to the identification portion of SSORI and full CCH records. The flag would signify that a specified criminal justice agency wished to be informed if and when certain events occurred subsequently. For example, the flag could indicate that a parole or probation agency wanted to know if the subject of the record had been arrested prior to the termination of his parole or probation.

front-end controller—An interfacing device, placed between a computer and an associated communications network, which manages communications between the computer and remote terminals attached to the network circuits. This function generally includes, but is not limited to, initiation and termination of message transmission, error detection and control, routing of each message to its proper destination, and control of the message flow to prevent excessive transmission delays for specified types of messages and/or users. The front-end controller may also switch messages among multiple users of the network.

hit—A positive response to a request from an authorized user for an NCIC record. The response consists of either the text of the record (if it is held by the NCIC computer center) or an abbreviated summary containing a numeric code which identifies the State criminal justice agency holding the full text.

identification record information—See **Criminal Justice Information**.

Justice Department Blueprint—The popular name of a plan for future development of the Nation's criminal justice information systems. A basic aim of this effort, which began in the fall of 1977 after consultation with the House Subcommittee on Civil and Constitutional Rights, is to achieve a consensus—among users, Congress, and public interest groups—regarding the

needs for and uses of the NCIC system.

LEAA—An acronym for the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, a part of the Department of Justice. LEAA dispenses Federal funds to the States for criminal justice information systems and establishes many of the policies concerning their operation.

NCIC—An acronym for “National Crime Information Center,” the physical location within the FBI’s Washington, D. C., headquarters of the NCIC system’s central computer complex.

NCIC Advisory Policy Board—A 26-member group which makes recommendations concerning NCIC operations and procedures to the director of the system. The Board includes 20 representatives of local, State, and regional users, and six others appointed by the FBI.

NLETS—An acronym for “National Law Enforcement Telecommunications Systems,” a nationwide communication network operated by State law enforcement agencies, which provides them with the capability to exchange administrative messages. Exchange of full, single-State CCH records between States is part of the NLETS communications traffic stream.

node—The point where a communications network interconnects with access circuits to/from a user’s computer and/or terminal equipment. Typically, the node contains switching equipment designed to route messages among network users. The node may also include hardware/software to perform speed/code conversion, error-detection /control, and other communications-related functions.

oversight—The process by which Congress examines NCIC policies and practices to determine whether they comply with relevant legislation. (See audit.)

plea bargaining—The process of pleading guilty to a lesser charge in order to avoid standing trial for a more serious one.

pointer index—See “SSORI.”

Project SEARCH—A cooperative, 18-month Federal-State effort, begun in June 1969, to develop a prototype, online, computerized criminal history exchange system. A key feature of the design for SEARCH (“System for Electronic Analysis and Retrieval of Criminal Histories”) was the use of the central index containing references to criminal history records stored within each participating State. A major goal of the project was to test the effectiveness of this index as a means of relating record inquiries to

the actual records. In December 1970, when the SEARCH demonstration ended, Attorney General Mitchell authorized the FBI to take control of the index. This file became the nucleus of the present NCIC/CCH system. Project SEARCH was incorporated in 1974 as SEARCH Group, Inc., a research and policy advisory group representing present and prospective users of NCIC services. It includes participation of representatives from each of the .50 States and 3 territories.

purging—As used in connection with NCIC records, this term means the complete removal of information concerning an individual from access, via either routine or special access procedures. Purged information is not necessarily destroyed. However, a recommendation to make destruction mandatory for purged records has been proposed by the Committee on Security and Privacy of SEARCH Group, Inc.

rap sheet—Synonymous with “arrest record.”

response time—A measurement of the speed with which inquiries can be answered by an on-line information system. The response time measurement generally begins with the instant the first message character leaves the inquiring terminal and ends when the last character of the answer is received by that terminal.

sealing—As used in connection with NCIC records, sealing means the removal of information concerning an individual from routinely available access. The information remains available but only through special access procedures. (See also: “expungement,” “purging”.)

SSORI—An acronym for the proposed “Single State Offender Record Index,” central (“pointer”) index proposed to be incorporated into the NCIC/CCH file under the FBI’s proposed limited message switching implementation plan. The SSORI file would contain a physical description, and possibly information on the first arrest, of each individual represented by a single-State NCIC/CCH record. Complete details of each such record would be stored in the State which compiled it. When NCIC received a CCH inquiry, the SSORI file would be searched automatically to determine whether a single-State CCH record, relating to the subject of the inquiry, was in any State file. If such a record was found, the inquiring agency would be so informed and could then obtain a copy by communicating directly with the “holding” State.

stakeholders—As applied to NCIC, the term means individuals or groups whose interests will be materially affected by the manner in which the system is operated and/or its records are used.

wanted person information—See Criminal Justice Information.

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