



*The 2002 NAJIS conference will be held in Seattle, Washington, September 26 - 28, 2002, and will feature sessions on new technologies, justice integration efforts, recent developments in case management and more.*

**S**eattle, here we come! We're excited about our upcoming conference in the hi-tech hub of Seattle. Our conference will be held September 26-28 at the Westin Hotel. Time to make plans!

Many of us are facing funding cut-backs or other restrictions, which makes travel difficult. NAJIS offers a very reasonably priced training and networking opportunity. We want to make this an even greater value by offering a reduced rate to those of you who register before August 1.

Early registration entitles you to a \$100 discount (\$295 instead of \$395). Groups of three or more can receive the same discount without early registration. Please try to take advantage of these incentives.

For those of you with NGA integration grant funds, the NGA has granted permission for you to use these funds to attend our conference. This year's program offers many sessions related to integrated justice.

Integrated justice and data sharing has received significant attention this past year, and improved data sharing has been recognized as a key component of homeland security.

A hallmark of the NAJIS conference has been to focus on the practitioner. Many of our sessions are presented by state and local IT professionals with hands-on, practical experience of the topics at hand. We also try to draw on recognized experts. Our goal is always to provide quality presentations in an informal environment that promotes the open and frank exchange of information critical to our

members. Who better to ask than someone who has been there.

So, plan ahead! Get registered! The NAJIS conference offers a significant learning opportunity for all of us who work in criminal justice IT. And, don't forget to check for the latest conference information on our web site [www.najis.org](http://www.najis.org). See you in Seattle!

*Mark Perbix,*  
NAJIS President

*The conference will be held September 26 - 28 at the Westin Hotel, Seattle. For hotel reservations call 888-627-8513, or 206-728-1000. Room rates are \$134.00, single or double. When making reservations, please mention NAJIS. **Reservations must be made by August 28, 2002.** Call Terri Schaub, Conference Coordinator, 334-737-3446 ext 3441 with questions about the conference.*

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## What Is NAJIS?

The National Association for Justice Information Systems (NAJIS) is an organization of individuals who are responsible for the acquisition, operation and management of local, state and federal criminal justice information systems.

All managers in prosecutor's offices, the courts, law enforcement, and allied agencies who design, improve, implement or supervise information systems can benefit from NAJIS membership. Individuals who are investigating, evaluating and purchasing case tracking and management hardware or software for criminal justice are particularly encouraged to join and participate.

## Profile of Coconino County, Arizona's Integration Test Bed

by Rebecca Jahn

Television police work seems to be done at the click of a computer button, at warp speed. But anyone in the real world of cops and robbers knows that computer integration and information sharing among criminal justice agencies is just in its infancy; and most importantly it is not as simple as TV would have us all believe.

For one Arizona county, a series of baby steps and good old fashioned cooperation is making integration a reality. Since 1997, Coconino County has served as Arizona's model project on computer integration between the Sheriff, County Attorney's Office, Administrative Office of the Court (AOC) and Flagstaff PD. The County has been slowly building the foundation for integration by working with all stakeholder agencies to identify justice business processes and systems both at the county and at the municipal levels. Five years later and after a number of "work-arounds," Coconino County is leaps and bounds ahead of the rest of the state with justice systems integration.

The Arizona Criminal Justice Commission (ACJC) has provided nearly \$500,000 in federal grants since 1995 to aid in the development of information sharing between local, county and state criminal justice agencies for the project. ACJC Criminal Records Integration Program Manager Jerry Hardt said, "The Coconino County integration project serves as the state model for records integration and is extremely important because it will help other Arizona jurisdictions develop successful information sharing platforms.

Criminal justice agencies statewide will benefit from Coconino County's experience prior to heading down the integration path through a knowledge transfer process the ACJC is developing and preparing to deliver

to interested jurisdictions."

According to George Holland, Coconino County's Information Systems Director, "For more than eight years Coconino County Attorney Terry Hance and Sheriff Richards have wished to integrate their information systems, but were unable to do so because the technology to make it happen just wasn't there." Connections and cabling were a problem for Coconino County because of the geology of Flagstaff — it sits on solid granite. "Microwave technology has helped us link offices and information systems," he explained and added, "We don't use a single technology solution for connectivity, but a combination of fiber optics, microwave, T1 and DSL."

Coconino County is the first in the state to implement and use IBM's MQ Series middleware to develop a middleware solution between agencies. "Currently, Coconino County is the first in the state to be reporting 'No Files/Declines' to the state central repository via MQ Series," Coconino County Criminal Justice Integration Program Manager, Kevin Labranche, said, "Although in the planning stages at the moment, the AOC will begin developing a solution that will — through middleware — solve court calendaring problems between the Court, County Attorney's Office, Sheriff's Office and the police departments. By Fiscal Year 2003, the AOC in Coconino County will maintain a single court calendar that will be shared with respective agencies through MQSI." He added, "the AOC will need to write this functionality into their product and we will need to begin working on horizontal communication channels."

Holland explained that the Coconino County integration project is like putting a puzzle together: "first

you count the pieces to make sure everything is there. Next you turn all the pieces over to see what's similar and then you begin to frame out the border. Once that's done, you start plugging the pieces of the puzzle together."

Coconino County has completed the integration framework and is busily plugging the pieces of the bigger picture together. "People are taking ownership of the project now and that has helped expedite it," Holland explained. "Despite people saying this project couldn't be done, we have done it. By June 30, 2002, the Coconino County integration project will be complete and working."

According to County Attorney Terry Hance, "the Records Management System has been a work in progress for nearly 15 years — it's nice to see the project come to some sort of fruition."

The Coconino County Attorney's Office recently implemented DAMION, a new case management system developed by Constellation Data Systems. The office is extremely happy with the program. According to County Attorney Hance, "if you choose a discount product, you get discounted results." As a result, the ACJC hopes that Arizona's county attorneys settle on two or three products for case management that

will work in a coordinated fashion across the state.

Consistent product selection and implementation is essential for moving informa-

tion between agencies; fewer work-arounds are needed and this minimizes potential information sharing problems. Currently, 11 of Arizona's 15 county sheriffs have settled on a single technology solution developed by Spillman Technologies for records management. This move is significant because it means that the sheriffs have positioned themselves to

**"We understand the importance of this project and see that information sharing will reduce redundant work, increase efficiencies between agencies and provide speedy access to important information,"**

negotiate upgrades and future integration at a much lower cost than they would be able to do individually. Just as important to this economy of scale issue is the fact that the sheriffs will have fewer conversion issues.

As with all new technologies and processes, there were wrinkles to iron out, but Coconino County's venture into the unknown will aid all other counties integrating local, county and state record programs because lessons learned have been carefully detailed and will be shared.

For the Coconino County Sheriff's Office, one of the lessons learned was how to develop security

measures around criminal history information while still allowing vendors to work on the system. According to Cathy Allen of the Coconino County Sheriff's Office, "we are exploring security issues and how we limit computer vendor's access to sensitive criminal records information." Though issues related to integration must still be resolved, she's sold on the concept. "We understand the importance of this project and see that information sharing will reduce redundant work, increase efficiencies between agencies and provide speedy access to important information," she said,

succinctly summing up the benefits of computer integration for criminal justice agencies.

Coconino County is making what used to be TV fiction into reality. Coconino County stakeholders now see the benefits of information sharing and are setting aside turf issues to move collectively into the future. For more information about this Arizona model program, please contact ACJC Program Manager Jerry Hardt at 602-230-0252.

*Rebecca Jahn is the Public Information Officer for the Arizona Criminal Justice Commission. She can be reached by e-mail at [rjahn@acjc.state.az.us](mailto:rjahn@acjc.state.az.us).*

## Justice Systems Integration Defined

by Steve Prisoc

Those new to the concept of justice systems integration naturally assume that integration is merely an expensive consultant service or a product that can be purchased from a vendor. In actuality, since each situation requiring integration is different, there is no established product or service that can be purchased or easily adapted for new justice integration projects. This is due to significant differences between individual jurisdictions. Some have very little investment in automation and others have large, mature systems that have been in place for years; many have unique mix of new and old systems.

These various scenarios will require very different approaches to integration. Most jurisdictions are currently integrated to some degree since data sharing is an essential part of conducting the business of justice, but could do better if their approach to integration was systematically organized and based on emerging best-practices for systems integration.

Integration can be defined in a variety of ways. In the recent *Report of the National Task Force on Court Automation and Integration*, issued by the U.S. Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Assistance, integration is defined "as the electronic sharing of information by two or more distinct justice entities within a system." The Task Force qualified this definition with "the degree to which information systems are considered 'integrated' depends on who participates, what information is shared or exchanged, and how data are shared or exchanged within the system."

In the SEARCH Group's report, *Integration in the Context of Justice Information Systems: A Common Understanding*, the primary objective of integration is stated as "the elimination of duplicate data entry, access to information that is not otherwise available, and the timely sharing of critical data." In a later report by SEARCH, *Planning the Integration of Justice Information Systems: Developing Justice Information Exchange Points*, the authors state that "for the purpose of this project, we define integration as the ability to electronically access and exchange critical information at key decision points throughout the justice enterprise."

SEARCH emphasizes that integration does not force agencies to share or exchange all justice-related information, but only that information which is "relevant and appropriate at defined events and/or in defined circumstances." Decision-makers for the various agencies trying to achieve integration are those who must deal with the problem of deciding who gets what information and at what time. Of course, the object of integration should be to deliver timely, accurate information to justice decision makers in order to enhance the quality of their decision making.

No matter where integration starts, the process must be tailored to the needs of the entire justice enterprise. Integration efforts should also borrow from the wide range of successful integration initiatives that have already been implemented across the country. No government should begin the process just for the sake of integration but should carefully quantify the desired outcomes and then make sure that the results of the process actually meet those outcomes.

There is no canned definition of integration that will work in every instance, and no integration product that will work for everyone and every situation. A common solution must involve careful planning and participation by all stakeholders—involving both policy-makers and end-users. Without involvement and input from those most affected by changes introduced by integration, the process is much less likely to produce successful outcomes.

# NAJIS 2002 Meeting Registration: Seattle, September 26-28, 2002

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Dept./Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Registration fee \$295 (post-marked on or before July 31, 2002) or \$395 (postmarked after that date). \$295 for three or more from the same agency who register at the same time. Registration includes NAJIS membership, conference, program, luncheon, and activity. Additional charges for spouses and children to attend luncheons and event will be announced.

*Federal ID # 38-3448014*

Hotel reservations for the conference can be made by calling the 888-627-8513 or 206-728-1000. **Reservations must be made by August 28, 2002.** The official conference coordinator is Terri Schaub, 334.737-3446, extension 3441.

Please make check payable to NAJIS and mail registration to:

2002 NAJIS Conference  
Attn: John Goergen  
Prosecuting Attorney's Council  
116 W. Ottawa, Suite 200  
Lansing, MI 48933

## NAJIS

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