Setting a Course for the Future of the Criminal Justice System in Virginia
ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services
www.dcjs.virginia.gov

April 2008

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Preface

Strategic planning is done to help establish broad goals and priorities, and develop ways to achieve them. A primary tenet of effective strategic planning is that the process should include conducting an "environmental scan" to identify the nature of the topic the planning will address. Sound strategic planning also requires the investment of stakeholders and others who can contribute to the plan's acceptance and implementation.

The *Code of Virginia* (§9.1-102.25) charges the Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) with developing and periodically updating a statewide plan for strengthening and improving law enforcement and the administration of criminal justice in the Commonwealth. To meet this responsibility, DCJS conducted an inclusive process involving representatives from law enforcement, prosecution, adult and community corrections, juvenile justice, mental health and substance abuse treatment, and other fields related to criminal justice. Representatives from the judiciary were also invited to participate.

The planning process incorporates an Oversight Committee which includes representatives from each of the criminal justice departments within the Public Safety Secretariat. Input was also gathered from eight regional multidisciplinary focus groups convened to identify critical issues affecting the criminal justice community throughout Virginia. Through the use of the regional focus groups, structured research and follow-up discussions with principle components of the system, this Criminal Justice System Environmental Scan has been developed.

The Scan attempts to identify trends and issues important to the criminal justice system, use these to identify important opportunities and challenges confronting the system, and provide guidance to establish a framework for subsequent strategic planning.

Although efforts have been made to ensure this environmental scan contains meaningful and important topics, it is not possible in this report to provide a complete documentation of all the factors affecting the criminal justice system, due to the breadth and complexity of the system. Furthermore, this scan report does not provide recommendations for strategies or actions to address the topics identified in the report. In mid-2008, working groups will use this document as the foundation for refining strategic criminal justice system issues, and developing broad goals, objectives and activities to address them.

Inclusion of a topic in this report does not imply that the system is not now taking steps to address the topic, or imply criticism of the steps that are being taken. It instead represents the consensus of the focus groups that we need to do more about the topic, or do it better. Additionally, the topics presented in this document have not been ordered or ranked by any measure of importance.

The intent of the criminal justice system planning process is to produce a document that promotes and sustains an effective and efficient criminal justice system. The Oversight Committee has been instrumental in setting the course for the process by clearly identifying the system's mission:

> ***The Commonwealth of Virginia's Criminal Justice System exists to improve public safety, provide services for victims of crime, reduce recidivism and promote fairness and justice for all.***

The planning process strives to support this mission, while allowing for substantive feedback and investment at all levels of the criminal justice system. This environmental scan is the first major step in the process. Although no one can predict the future, this planning effort is designed to influence it in a strategic way, to improve the lives and safety of the citizens of Virginia.

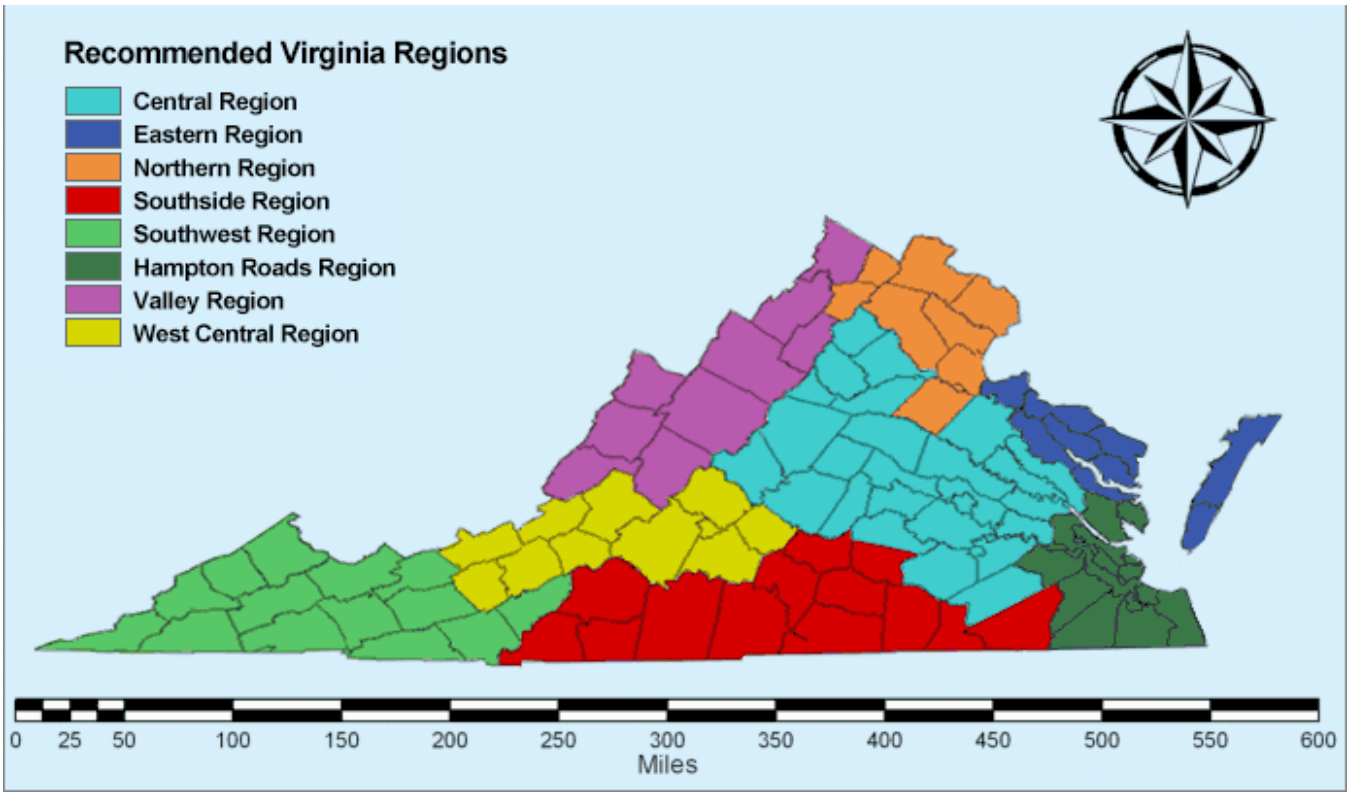
PROCESS
How The Environmental Scan Was Conducted

The environmental scan was designed to gather information to identify important topics and issues confronting Virginia's criminal justice system. DCJS used several approaches to do this. Focus groups were convened in eight different regions of Virginia, using members from all different components of the criminal justice system and related professions, to obtain local perspectives from across the Commonwealth about issues confronting the system. An additional state-level focus group was conducted with members of state government criminal justice and related agencies. Finally, the topics and issues identified by these groups were researched by DCJS to identify how these issues are perceived nationally and in other states, and to identify current Virginia efforts and initiatives addressing these topics.

Regional Focus Groups

During September 2007, the eight regional focus groups brought together criminal justice professionals and practitioners from across Virginia. Each group reviewed crime and socio-economic trends for their region of the state, and went through a process to identify major topics and issues confronting the criminal justice system. These eight regions were previously established by the Council on Virginia's Future to provide a defined yet broad demographic profile of the Commonwealth (see map below; focus group localities and meeting locations are listed in Appendix A and Appendix B).

CRIMINAL JUSTICE PLAN FOCUS GROUP REGIONS



More than 170 professionals and practitioners in criminal justice and associated fields attended the focus group meetings. A listing of the professions represented at the meetings is presented in Appendix C.

At each meeting, participants were first given information about the Criminal Justice Plan development process and how the environmental scan would be used to provide information to help develop the plan.

Participants were then presented with information to help inform and stimulate their discussions aimed at identifying broad topics and issues to include in the environmental scan. This information included:

- An overview of the components that make up Virginia's criminal justice system, and how individuals and cases "flow" through the system.
- Statewide and region-specific trends in violent and property crimes, drug arrests, domestic violence, correctional commitments, and recidivism rates.
- Statewide and region-specific trends in socio-economic factors related to crime, such as poverty, unemployment, education, and child abuse and neglect.

After receiving this information, each focus group spent the remainder of the day in a facilitated, guided process aimed at identifying the topics and issues facing the criminal justice system that the groups felt were critical. Each group was told that the information previously provided to it was not intended to suggest specific topics for discussion, nor limit what topics should be considered for discussion. The group was also asked to identify issues that had broad impacts on the system, rather than detailed issues or concerns that had only limited impacts or affected only one part of the system.

Focus group facilitators divided participants into teams composed of individuals from different areas of the criminal justice system and associated professions. Each team identified and developed several issues and topics that it considered important to the criminal justice system. All of these issues were then discussed and refined by the entire focus group, until the entire group reached a consensus on the topics and issues considered critical enough to be included in the environmental scan report. DCJS staff documented each of the critical topics identified, and all of the supporting information the group developed on each topic. This process was repeated for each of the eight regional focus groups.

To evaluate how the focus group method worked as an information-gathering process, in December, 2007, DCJS surveyed the focus groups participants about their perceptions of the process and whether it achieved its goals. Participants from seven of the eight regional focus groups responded to the survey. More than 80% of the participants said that the information presented at the meetings helped their understanding of the criminal justice system and major trends affecting the system. Ninety percent said that the process achieved its goal of identifying key issues facing the criminal justice system. Ninety-eight percent said that the process gave them ample opportunity to express their views and opinions about the system, and eighty percent said the groups had adequate representation from different parts of the criminal justice system.

State-Level Focus Group

Following the eight regional focus groups, a single state-level focus group was convened in October, 2007. This meeting brought together state representatives from different parts of the criminal justice system, and related non-criminal justice agencies and organizations. State public safety agencies and offices included were the Commonwealth's Attorney's Services Council, the Departments of Corrections, Criminal Justice Services, Juvenile Justice, and State Police, and the Office of the Attorney General. Non-criminal justice agencies included were the Departments of Education, Health, and Social Services, the Private Security Services Industry, and the Virginia Sexual & Domestic Violence Action Alliance.

This group was presented with the same introductory information as the regional focus groups, plus an overview of the issues identified by the regional focus groups. The state-level focus group then went through a similar process of identifying and discussing important topics and issues facing the criminal justice system, and developing a consensus on the critical issues to be included in the criminal justice system environmental scan report.

TOPICS

Major Criminal Justice Topics Identified by the Scan

After concluding the focus groups, DCJS staff conducted an intensive review of the information collected to identify the topics that were most commonly cited by the groups, where there were similarities and differences in how topics were defined and characterized, and which topics emerged as the most frequent and over-arching across the state and across the criminal justice system. Based on this review of the topics and issues identified by the focus groups, 21 major topics emerged from the environmental scan:

- ***Collaboration and coordination in the criminal justice system***
- ***Information sharing in the criminal justice system***
- ***Technology in the criminal justice system***
- ***Diverting nonviolent offenders from jail and prison***
- ***Prisoner reentry into society***
- ***Recruiting and retaining criminal justice system personnel***
- ***Multidisciplinary training for criminal justice system personnel***
- ***Standardized training and testing for law enforcement officers***
- ***Juvenile delinquency and crime prevention***
- ***Improving the juvenile justice system***
- ***Preventing crime***
- ***Security at schools and college/university campuses***
- ***Domestic preparedness and the criminal justice system***
- ***Mental health and the criminal justice system***
- ***The impact of drugs on the criminal justice system***
- ***Drug prevention and treatment***
- ***Knowing what works in criminal justice***
- ***Equality and consistency in the criminal justice system***
- ***Immigration and the criminal justice system***
- ***Victims of crime and the criminal justice system***
- ***Public awareness and the criminal justice system***

DCJS staff then did additional research to develop further information on each topic. This was done to provide users of the scan report with more detailed information, and a broader context for understanding the topic, than what was initially developed during the focus group meetings. It also was done to "validate" the topics, i.e., seek additional evidence — beyond that developed by the focus groups — that would help define these as major criminal justice topics and issues.

The topics were "validated" in two ways. One was by looking outside of Virginia for evidence that these topics are major concerns in criminal justice. Staff examined academic literature, federal sources, and reports and policy statements from major national criminal justice-related groups and associations. Another way was by looking within Virginia for evidence that these are important topics. DCJS reviewed Virginia *Code* and other sources to determine the following: Have past studies done by Virginia's executive, legislative or judicial branches recognized these as important issues? Are the issues recognized and addressed in Executive Orders or legislative studies, or in the strategic plans, mission statements, or research, policy and planning sections of major public safety agencies?

It is important to keep in mind that the topics above identified by this scan are presented only as issues for consideration in the development of a statewide criminal justice plan. They are not all-inclusive. Many other important topics raised during the focus group sessions were dropped out along the way toward reaching a consensus on which ones were considered most important. Some topics could have been defined or framed differently than they came to be stated in this report. Other topics could rightly have been defined in a similar way, but with a different emphasis or focus. This report attempts to define the topics in a way most amenable to further discussion as the statewide criminal justice plan is developed.

TRENDS

Trends Affecting the Criminal Justice System

Each of the regional criminal justice planning focus groups was presented with information about trends that affect the criminal justice system. The information presented was specific to the region where the focus group was being conducted, with state-level data also presented where appropriate. A similar presentation was made to the state-level focus group, with more emphasis on state-level trends.

The information presented to the focus groups included the following:

- Violent and property crime and arrest rates
- Domestic violence incident rates
- Drug arrest rates
- Frequency of drug seizures by drug type
- Number of sworn law enforcement personnel
- Number of commitments to the Department of Corrections
- Place of birth for felons committed to Virginia prisons
- Juvenile offense complaints for felonies and misdemeanors
- Poverty levels
- Unemployment levels
- Graduation levels
- Non-marital births
- Children in founded child abuse and neglect reports

The following pages present the information that was provided to the state level focus group conducted in October 2007.

As previously noted, the focus groups were informed that the trend information presented to them was not intended to direct their discussions toward identifying any particular topics or influence which topics the groups determined should ultimately be included in the environmental scan. Rather, it was provided merely to inform and stimulate their discussions.

The tables below show violent crime incident rates and violent crime arrest rates for Virginia and each of the regions that hosted a focus group. All rates are per 100,000 population (crime rates per total 100,000; arrest rates per 100,000 ages 10 and above).

VIOLENT CRIME RATES
1997 and 2006

Violent Crime Rate per 100,000 Population			
1997		**2006**	
Hampton Roads	521.5	Hampton Roads	469.4
Central	502.1	Central	347.9
VIRGINIA	*337.1*	**West Central**	**307.5**
Southside	332.8	*VIRGINIA*	*279.4*
West Central	270.7	Southside	234.9
Eastern	235.0	**Southwest**	**191.9**
Southwest	185.8	Eastern	175.5
Northern	184.4	**Valley**	**159.8**
Valley	155.4	Northern	153.2

VIOLENT CRIME ARREST RATES
1997 and 2006

Violent Arrest Rate per 100,000 Population			
1997		**2006**	
Hampton Roads	301.5	Central	159.5
Central	251.8	Hampton Roads	156.6
Eastern	220.2	West Central	138.3
Southside	196.8	Southwest	129.0
VIRGINIA	*194.8*	Southside	117.8
West Central	169.7	*VIRGINIA*	116.5
Southwest	154.4	Eastern	82.0
Northern	110.5	Valley	77.8
Valley	91.0	Northern	63.5

Rates are listed in order from highest to lowest. Regions with an increase in rates from 1997 to 2006 are **bolded**.

The tables below show property crime incident rates and property crime arrest rates for Virginia and each of the regions that hosted a focus group. All rates are per 100,000 population (crime rates per total 100,000; arrest rates per 100,000 ages 10 and above).

PROPERTY CRIME RATES
1997 and 2006

Property Crime Rate per 100,000 Population			
1997		**2006**	
Hampton Roads	4834.0	Hampton Roads	3430.2
Central	4043.4	Central	2816.4
VIRGINIA	*3439.1*	West Central	2464.3
Northern	3090.6	*VIRGINIA*	*2441.4*
West Central	2856.1	**Southwest**	**2287.6**
Southside	2327.1	Southside	2096.5
Valley	2259.1	Valley	1892.5
Eastern	1783.0	Northern	1780.9
Southwest	1665.8	Eastern	1566.7

PROPERTY CRIME ARREST RATES
1997 and 2006

Property Crime Arrest Rate per 100,000 Population			
1997		**2006**	
Central	1064.0	**Southwest**	**549.0**
Hampton Roads	940.0	Central	526.6
West Central	841.7	Hampton Roads	490.0
VIRGINIA	*764.0*	West Central	479.2
Southside	644.0	*VIRGINIA*	*392.7*
Valley	562.1	Southside	354.3
Northern	549.7	Valley	347.2
Southwest	483.3	Eastern	305.6
Eastern	431.5	Northern	211.5

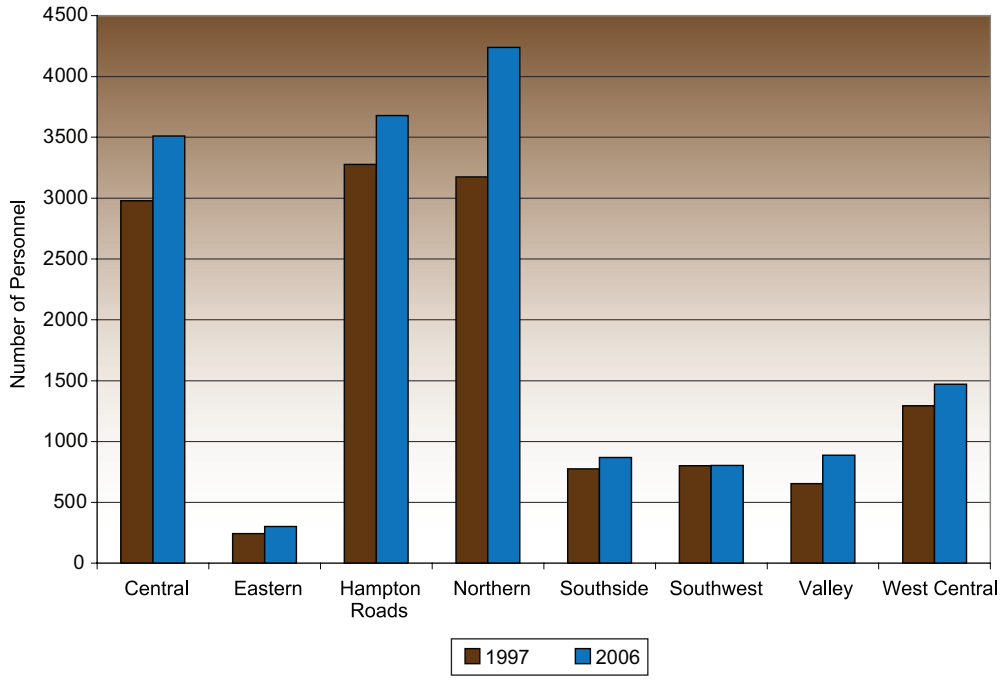
Rates are listed in order from highest to lowest. Regions with an increase in rates from 1997 to 2006 are **bolded**.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE INCIDENT RATES
2000 and 2006

Domestic Violence Incident Rate per 100,000 Population			
2000		**2006**	
Hampton Roads	816.6	**Hampton Roads**	**861.8**
West Central	689.6	**West Central**	**779.1**
Central	626.2	**Eastern**	**591.5**
VIRGINIA	*553.9*	Central	591.2
Valley	504.1	***VIRGINIA***	***577.4***
Southwest	501.0	**Southside**	**542.3**
Eastern	475.0	Southwest	481.5
Southside	435.1	Valley	479.9
Northern	316.9	**Northern**	**361.3**

Domestic violence includes simple assaults. Rates that increased from 2000 to 2006 are **bolded**.

NUMBER OF SWORN LAW ENFORCEMENT PERSONNEL
1997 and 2006



Based on annual survey conducted by Virginia State Police of *local* law enforcement staffing as of October of each year. Actual numbers are not the same as authorized numbers. Does not include State Police personnel.

DRUG ARREST RATES
1997 and 2006

Drug Arrest Rate per 100,000 Population			
1997		2006	
Hampton Roads	731.4	**Hampton Roads**	**773.4**
Central	714.3	**West Central**	**572.5**
VIRGINIA	*503.6*	Central	569.0
Eastern	484.1	*VIRGINIA*	*490.8*
West Central	394.2	**Valley**	**482.9**
Valley	377.0	**Southwest**	**478.4**
Northern	339.0	Eastern	425.5
Southside	313.4	**Southside**	**326.9**
Southwest	266.7	Northern	262.4

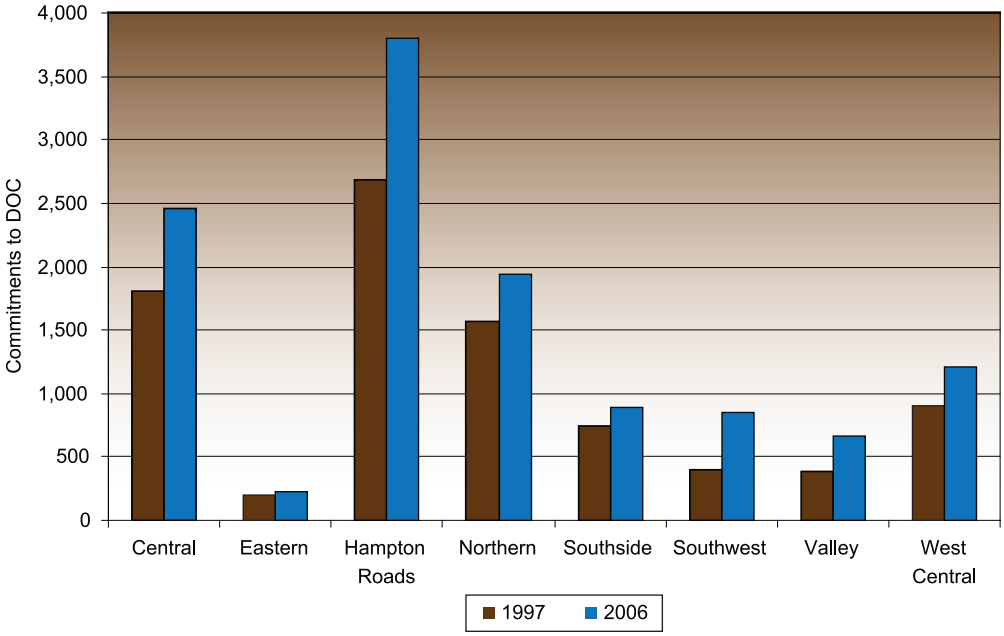
Arrest rates shown from highest to lowest. Rates that increased from 1997 to 2006 are **bolded**.

FREQUENCY OF DRUGS SEIZED, BY DRUG TYPE, 2006

Number of drug seizures is not the same as number of drug arrests. Up to three different drugs may be reported in a drug incident. A single type of drug may be seized multiple times in an incident and counted as a single drug type.

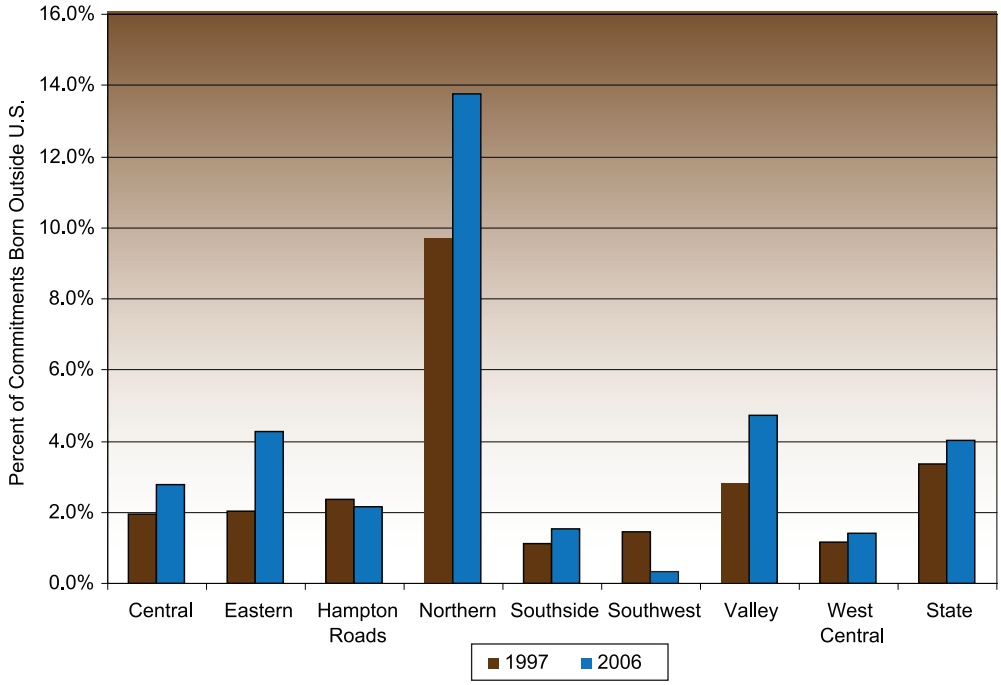
	Central	Eastern	Hampton Roads	Northern	Southside	Southwest	Valley	West Central	Virginia
Seized most frequently	Marijuana-Hashish	Marijuana-Hashish	Marijuana-Hashish	Marijuana-Hashish	Marijuana-Hashish	Marijuana-Hashish	Marijuana-Hashish	Marijuana-Hashish	Marijuana-Hashish
	Crack Cocaine	Crack Cocaine	Crack Cocaine	Cocaine	Crack Cocaine	Other Drugs	Cocaine	Crack Cocaine	Crack Cocaine
	Cocaine	Cocaine	Cocaine	Crack Cocaine	Cocaine	Amphetamine-Meth	Amphetamine-Meth	Cocaine	Cocaine
	Heroin-Other Opiates	Other Drugs	Heroin-Other Opiates	Other Drugs	Other Drugs	Crack Cocaine	Crack Cocaine	Other Drugs	Other Drugs
	Other Drugs	Heroin-Other Opiates	Other Drugs	Heroin-Other Opiates	Amphetamine-Meth	Cocaine	Other Drugs	Heroin-Other Opiates	Heroin-Other Opiates
	Hallucinogens	Amphetamine-Meth	Amphetamine-Meth	Amphetamine-Meth	Heroin-Other Opiates	Heroin-Other Opiates	Heroin-Other Opiates	Amphetamine-Meth	Amphetamine-Meth
Seized least frequently	Amphetamine-Meth	Hallucinogens	Hallucinogens	Hallucinogens	Hallucinogens	Hallucinogens	Hallucinogens	Hallucinogens	Hallucinogens

NUMBER OF COMMITMENTS TO DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
1997 and 2006



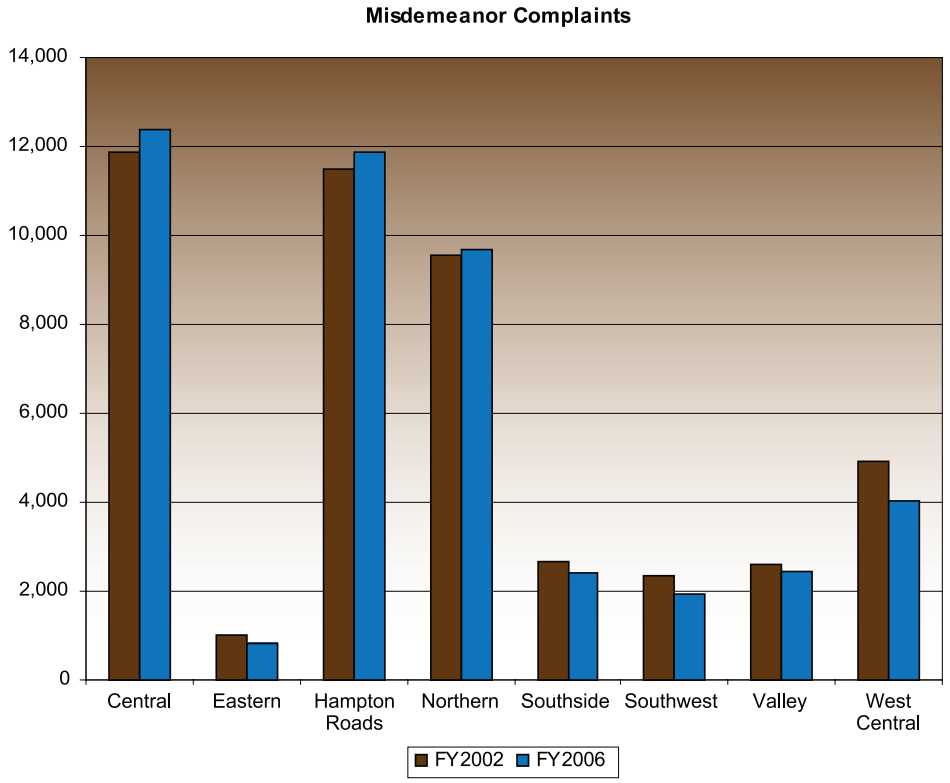
Urban areas with large populations (Hampton Roads, Central Regions) contributed the largest numbers of inmates to Virginia's prisons in 1997 and 2006.

PERCENT OF FELONS COMMITTED TO VIRGINIA PRISONS
WHO WERE BORN OUTSIDE THE U.S.
1997 and 2006

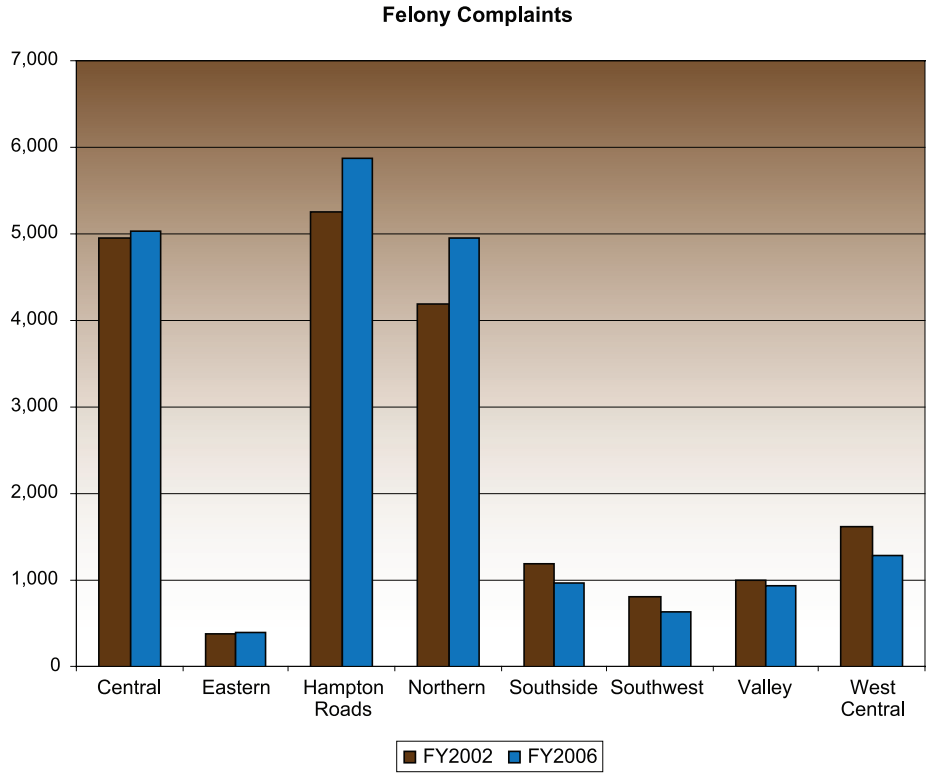


The percentage of inmates committed to Virginia prisons who were born outside the U.S. increased statewide and in 6 of the 8 regions from 1997 to 2006. The highest percentages were in the Northern region.

JUVENILE OFFENSE COMPLAINTS
Felonies and misdemeanors, 2002 and 2006

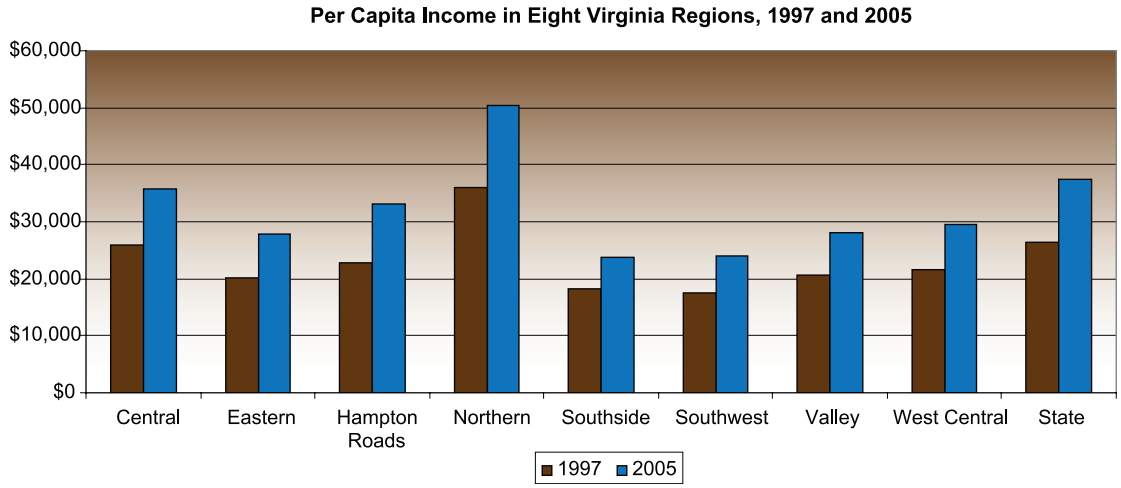


Misdemeanor complaints increased in 3 of the 8 regions, and dropped in the remaining 5 regions.



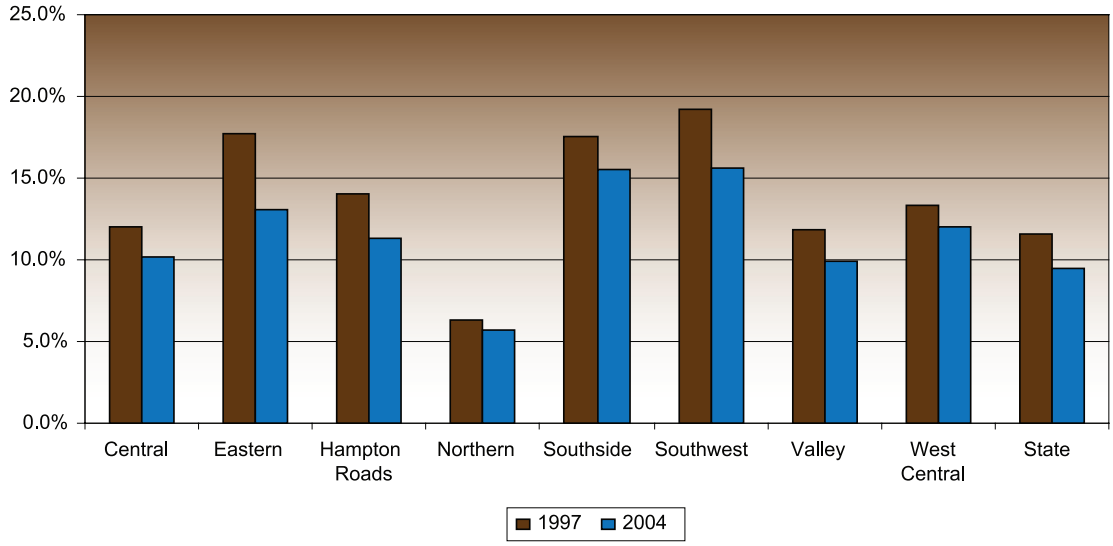
Felony complaints increased in 4 of the 8 regions, and dropped in 4 of the regions.

PER CAPITA INCOME IN EIGHT VIRGINIA REGIONS
1997 and 2005



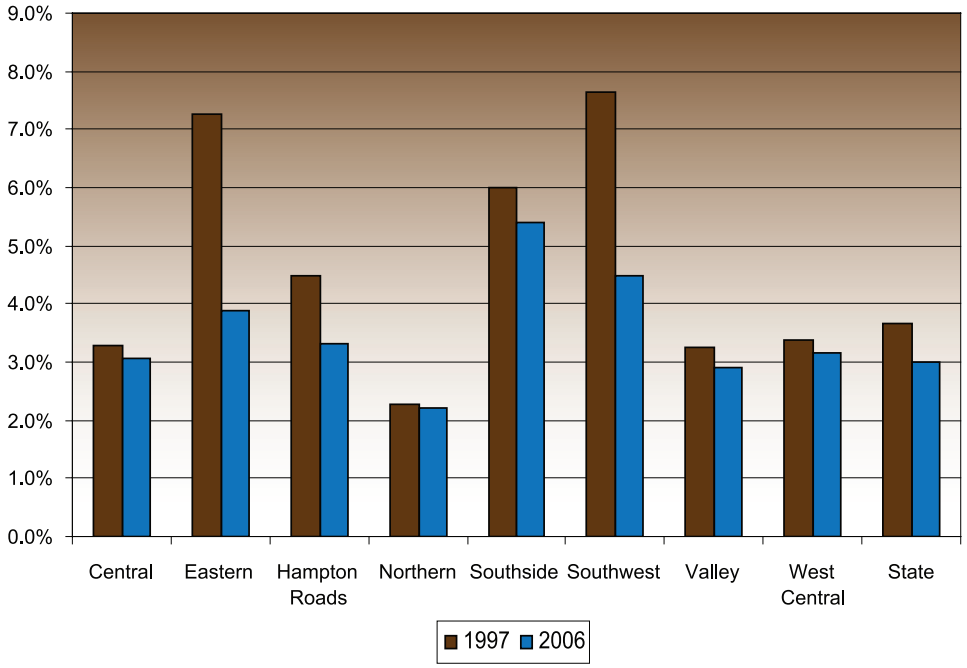
- All regions in Virginia saw an increase in per capita income between 1997 and 2005.
- The Northern region had the highest per capita income in both 1997 and 2005, and had the greatest income increase between the two years. The Northern region is the only region with a per capita income higher than the state average.
- The greatest percent increase in per capita income was in the Hampton Roads region.
- The Southwest and Southside regions had the lowest per capita incomes in 1997 and 2005, and had the smallest increases from 1997 to 2005.

POVERTY
Percent of persons in poverty, 1997 and 2004



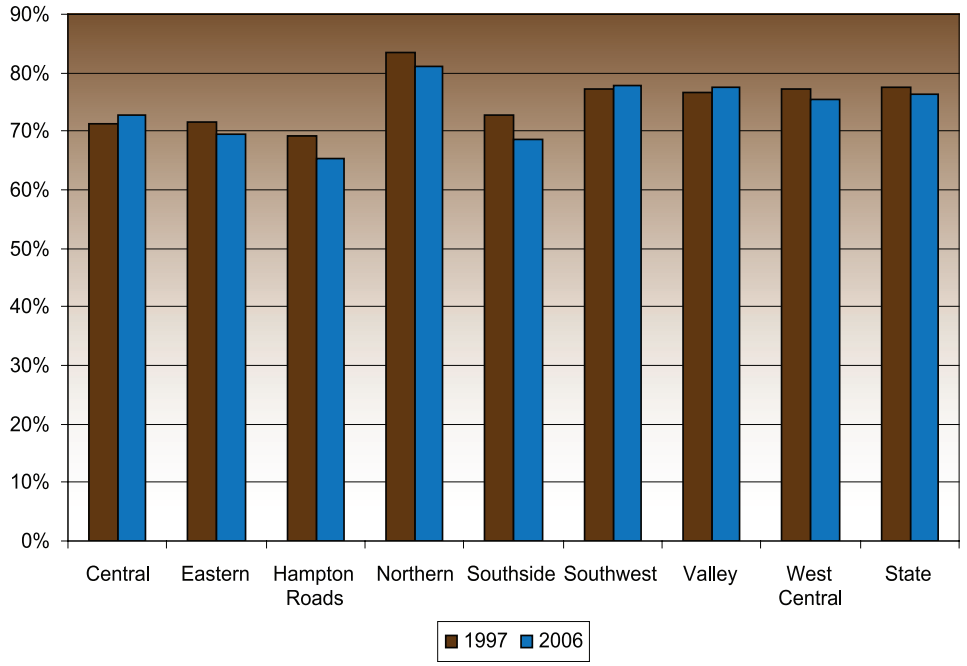
Poverty dropped statewide and in all Virginia regions from 1997 to 2004. Poverty was highest in the rural Eastern, Southside and Southwest regions.

UNEMPLOYMENT
1997 and 2006



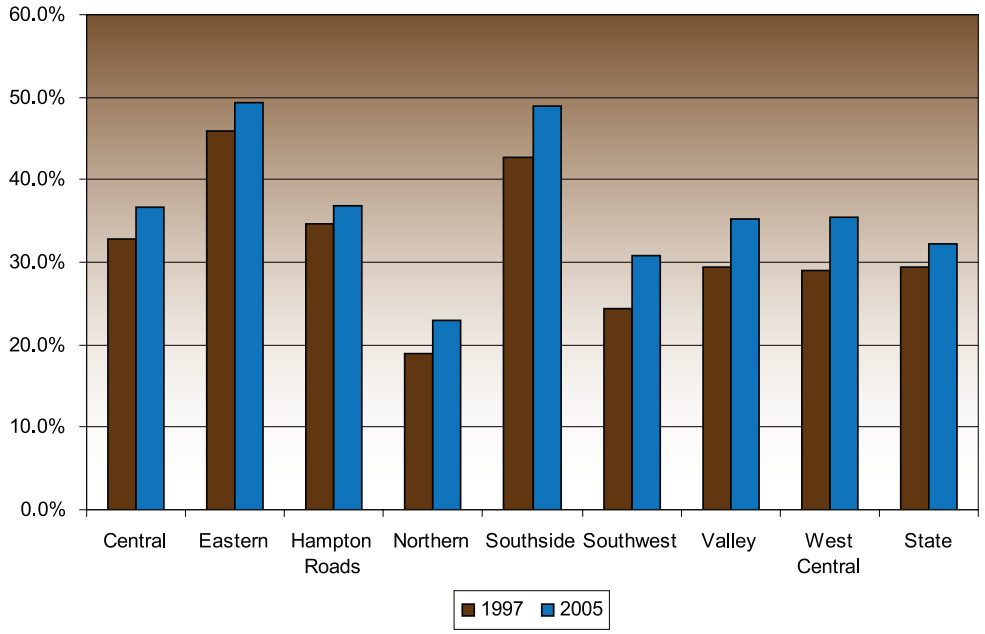
Unemployment dropped statewide and in all of the Virginia regions from 1997 to 2006. Unemployment was highest in the rural Eastern, Southside and Southwest regions.

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION
Percent of 9th graders graduating on time, 1997 and 2006



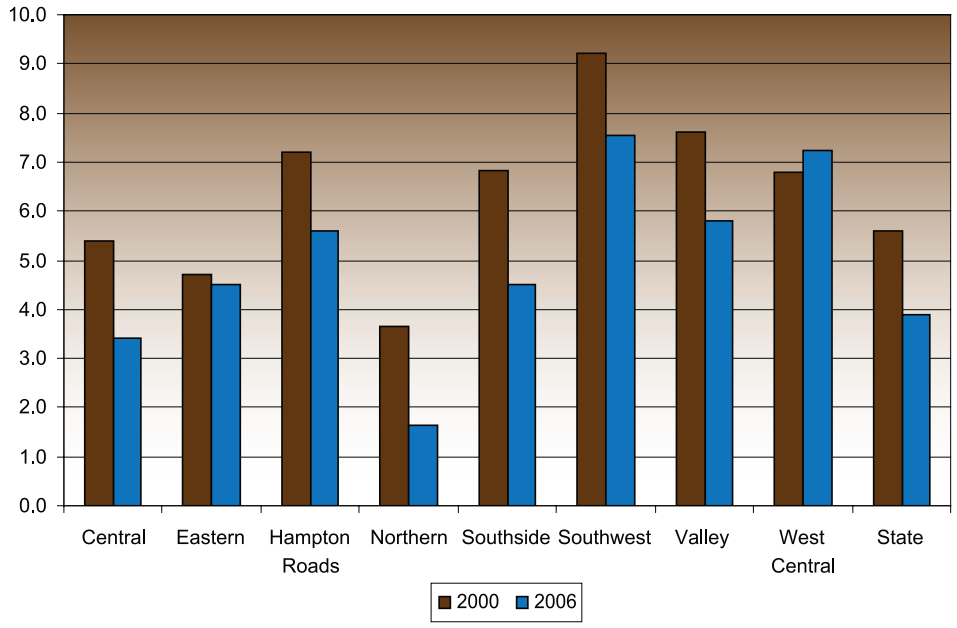
On-time graduation means 9th graders graduated from high school 4 years later. There were no striking differences across the 8 Virginia regions. On-time graduations dropped from 1997 to 2006 in 5 of the 8 regions.

NON-MARITAL BIRTHS
Percent of all births, 1997 and 2005



The percentage of non-marital births increased statewide and in all regions of the state from 1997 to 2005. Non-marital births were highest in the rural Eastern and Southside regions.

CHILDREN IN FOUNDED ABUSE AND NEGLECT REPORTS
Rate per thousand children, 2000 and 2006



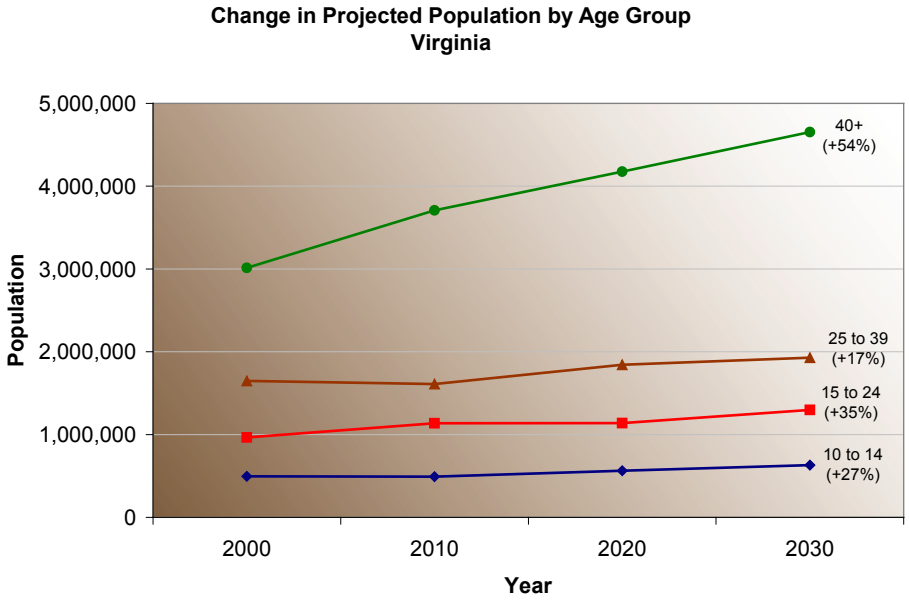
Rates of founded child abuse/neglect reports dropped from 2000 to 2006 in all regions of Virginia except the West Central region.

CHANGE IN PROJECTED POPULATION BY AGE GROUP IN EIGHT VIRGINIA REGIONS

Change in projected population from 2000 to 2030 is presented here for the following arrest age population groups: 10-to-14 years, 15-to-24 years, 25-to-39 years and 40 years and older. Age ranges start at 10, since 10 is generally the lowest age subject to arrest. Ages 14-to-24 are considered the "crime prone" age group. Statewide projected population change is shown along with projected population change for eight Virginia regions.

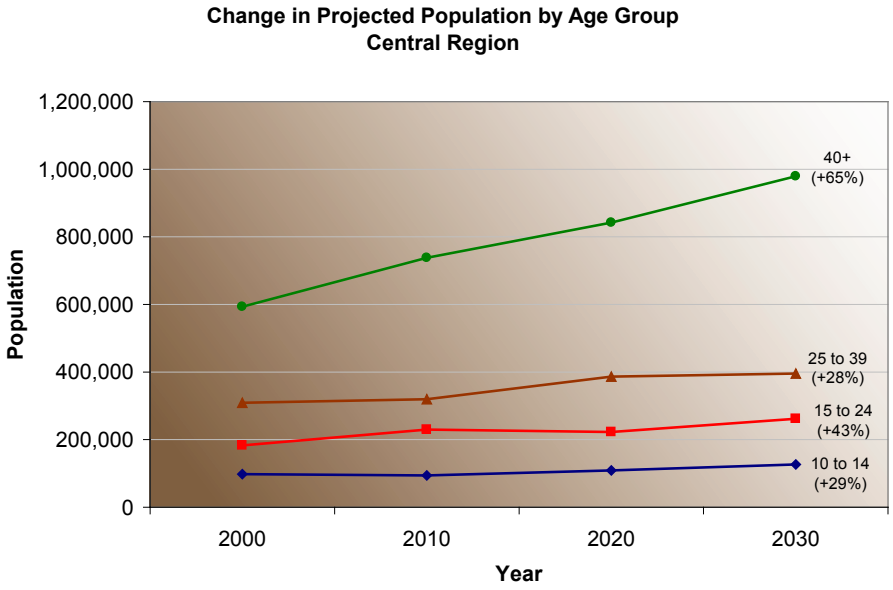
Statewide Population Projections

By 2030, the 15-to-24-year old population in Virginia is projected to grow by 35%. The statewide 40+ population group is expected to grow at the greatest rate, 54%, by 2030.

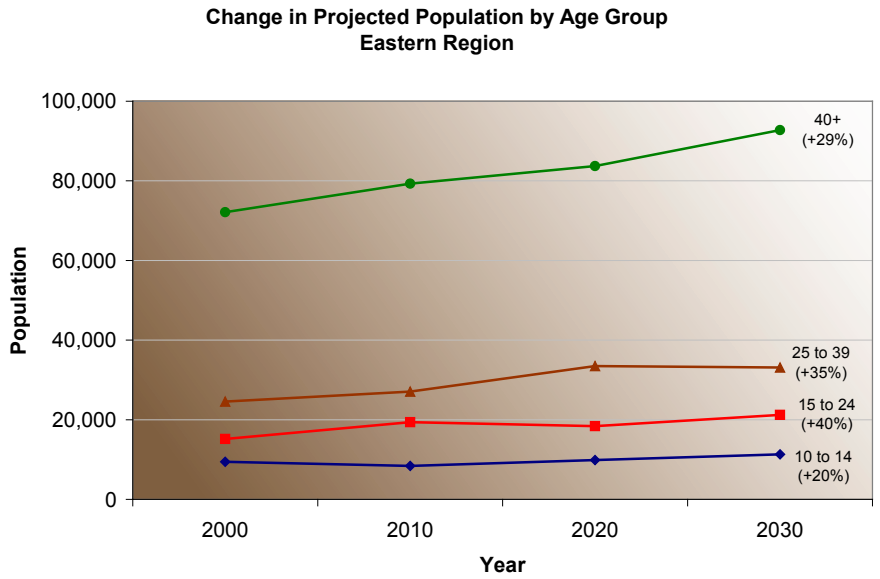


Central Region

Population increases are projected for all age groups in the Central region. The number of 15-to-24-year olds is projected to increase 43% by 2030. The 40+ age group will grow at the fastest rate, +65%.

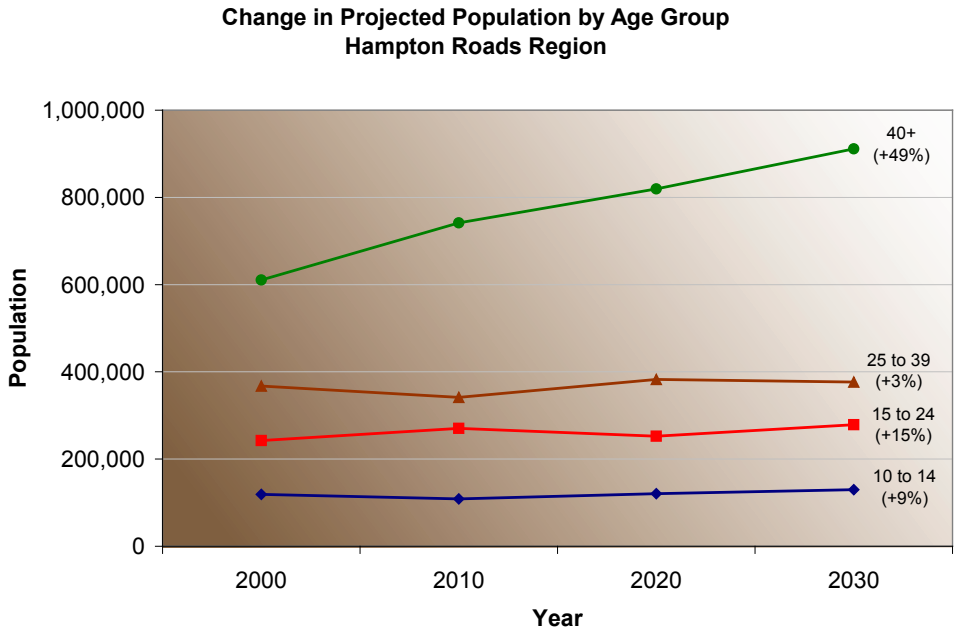


Eastern Region



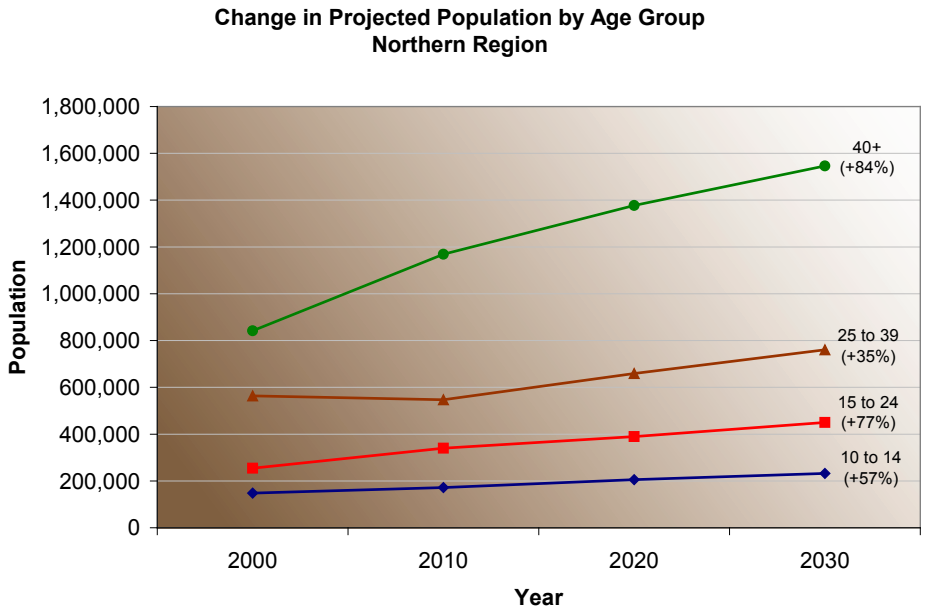
Population growth is projected in the Eastern region for all ages 10 years and up. By 2030 the 15-to-24-year old population is expected to increase by 40%. This group will grow at the fastest rate in this region.

Hampton Roads Region



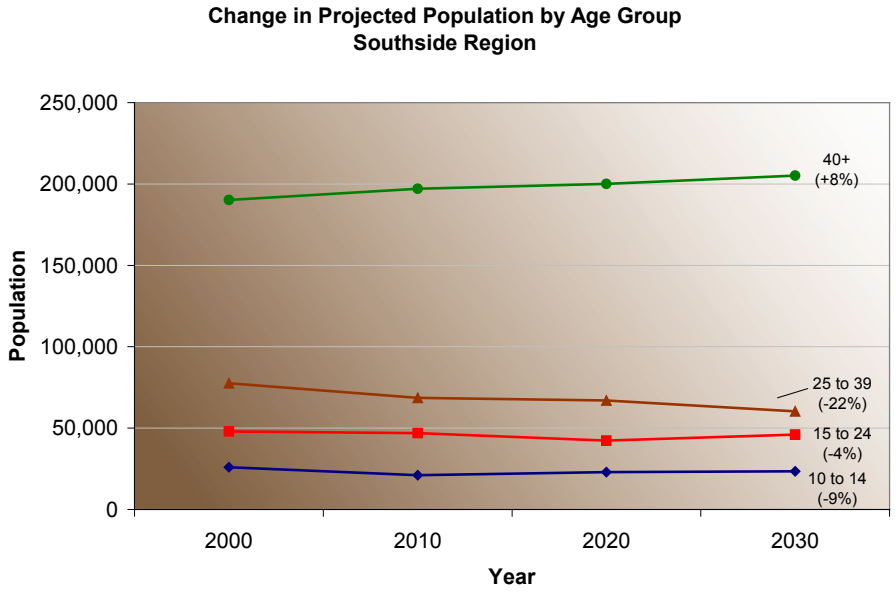
The 15-to-24-year old population is projected to increase by 15% in the Hampton Roads region by 2030. The 40+ year-old group is expected to increase almost by half (+49% increase) by 2030.

Northern Region



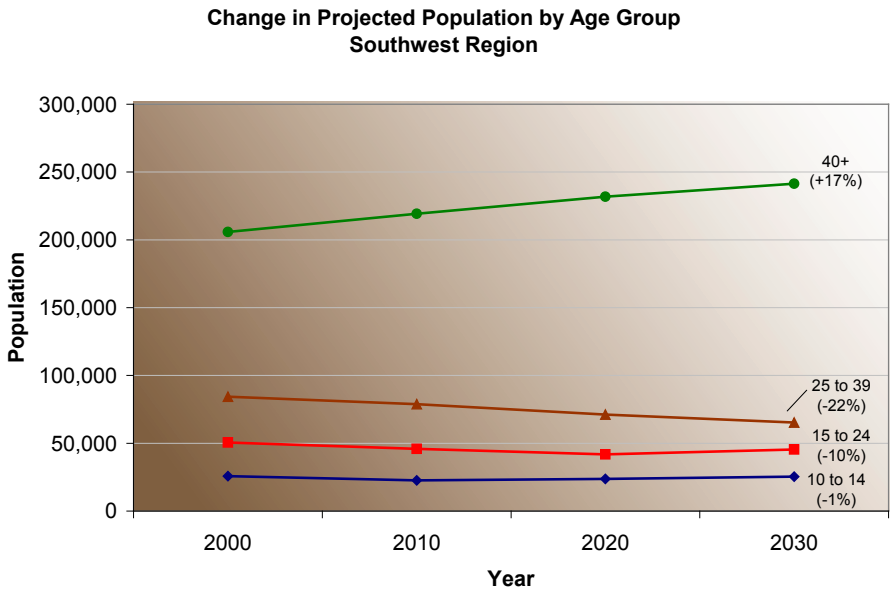
Not surprisingly, the Northern region will contribute most to the statewide population increase from 2000 to 2030. The 15-to-24-year old population in this region is projected to increase by 77% from the 2000 population. The 40+ year old population group comes close to doubling by 2030 with an 84% increase.

Southside Region



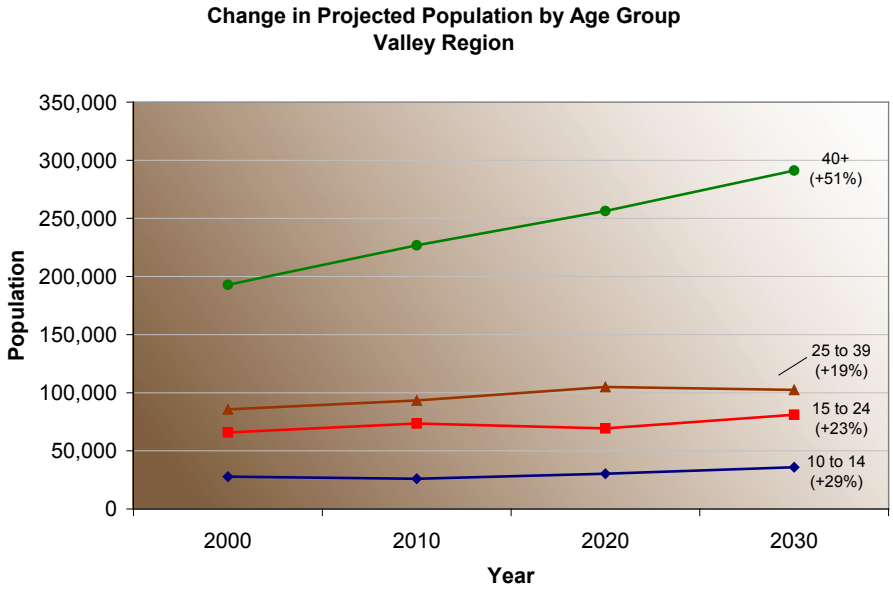
Decreases in population are projected in the Southside region for all ages between 10 and 39. The 15-to-24 year-old population is projected to decrease by 4% by 2030. The 40+ age group is projected to increase by 8% by 2030.

Southwest Region



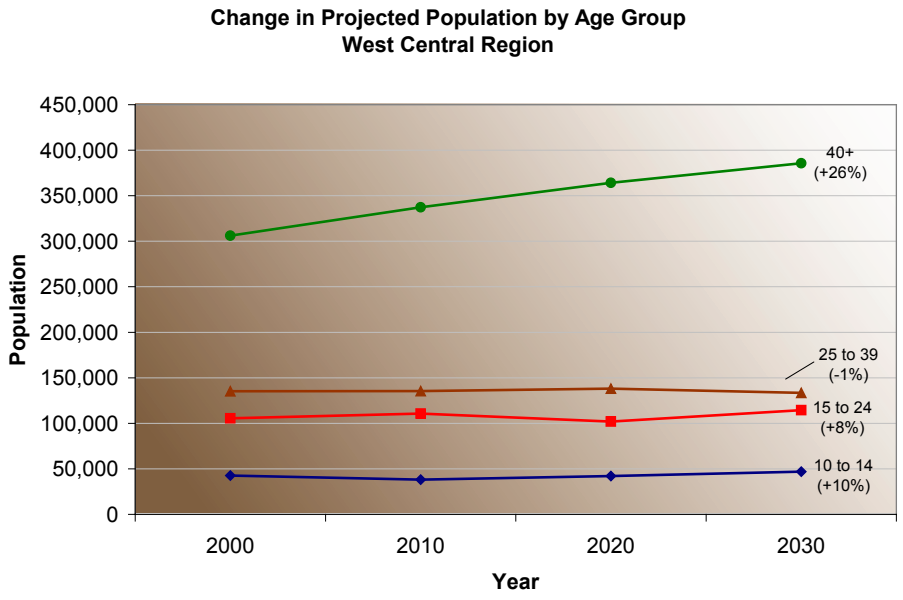
In the Southwest region the 25-to-39 year-old group is projected to decrease by 22% by 2030; the largest rate of decrease of any age group in any of the 8 regions. The 15-to-24-year old group is projected to decrease by 10% by 2030.

Valley Region



Population increases are projected for all ages 10 and up in the Valley region. The 15-to-24-year old age population is expected to increase by 23% by 2030.

West Central Region



The 15-to-24-year old population in the West Central region is projected to increase by 8% from 2000 to 2030. The 25-to-39-year old group is the only one expected to decrease (-1%) by 2030.

21 Discussion of the Major Topics Identified by the Criminal Justice System Environmental Scan

1 Collaboration and Coordination in the Criminal Justice System

Background

> "The need for coordination of criminal justice activities far outstrips current efforts to promote coordination."
>
> – *The Role of General Government Elected Officials in Criminal Justice*
> U.S. Advisory Committee on Intergovernmental Relations, 1993

> "In many cities and counties, a sentiment is expressed that the system of criminal justice should, and could, work better. Scarce local resources could be allocated more efficiently if city and county law enforcement activities, court practices, and corrections programs were planned and conducted in a coordinated fashion."
>
> - *Guidelines for Developing a Criminal Justice Coordinating Committee*
> U.S. Department of Justice, 2002

By design, the powers of the criminal justice system are spread across different parts of government. The U.S. Constitution and the Virginia Constitution establish a separation of powers and checks and balances to ensure that the branches of government that create laws, enforce laws, and interpret laws are deliberately held apart from one another. Additionally, these responsibilities are deliberately distributed among three different levels of government — federal, state and local.

Historically, the criminal justice system has created additional, artificial obstacles that hinder the coordination and collaboration needed to function efficiently as a system. Agencies and organizations within the system sometimes operate with a "silo" perspective, focusing on their own responsibilities and needs to the extent that it degrades their ability to work smoothly together. The criminal justice focus groups cited "turf issues" as one obstacle to greater cooperation between criminal justice agencies, as well as statutory and policy barriers, and established practices and procedures.

Why This Is Important

Lack of coordination among these pieces of the system often leads to actions in one part of the system causing harmful, unanticipated effects elsewhere. Sometimes called the "hydraulic" model of criminal justice, this means that squeezing one part of the system can produce a bulge somewhere else. For example, pouring increased resources into law enforcement without planning and coordination can have multiple effects elsewhere. Increases in arrests can translate into backlogs in forensic evidence processing, delaying prosecutions, producing backlogs in jails and detention facilities, and causing disarray in court dockets.

A coordinated criminal justice system is important because it is more manageable. It reflects the philosophy that the system can be managed, that it can do things to control and reduce crime and improve public safety, and that it is not victimized by circumstances and appearing to react to things beyond its control.

A better coordinated system can also lead to a better understanding of crime and criminal justice problems, greater cooperation among agencies and units of government, and clearer objectives and priorities. This, in turn, can save taxpayer money. Improved coordination and collaboration can help individual justice agencies become more efficient, productive, and effective. Such improvements also help government evaluate and make decisions about the justice system and its cost and performance.

Coordination is also important because crime crosses national, state and local borders. Criminals know that sometimes their activities can escape detection or effective investigation simply by crossing jurisdictional lines, due to a lack of coordination and information sharing between public safety agencies.

What's Being Done About It

The *Code of Virginia* establishes mechanisms for collaboration and coordination within the criminal justice system. The *Secretary of Public Safety* is responsible for oversight of the major pubic safety agencies, including Criminal Justice Services, Corrections, Juvenile Justice, the Parole Board and the State Police. The Secretary's office is also statutorily responsible for coordinating activities involving inmate reentry services, drug abusing offenders, and services to children of incarcerated parents.

To provide collaborative responses to specific issues, the Secretary of Public Safety often convenes or works with special Task Forces that may include work between multiple agencies and secretariats. Past task forces have addressed topics including violent crime, drug crime, gangs, sexual violence, and crime in minority communities.

The *Criminal Justice Services Board* and Department of Criminal Justice Services have statutory responsibilities including coordinating projects and activities designed to strengthen and improve law enforcement and the administration of criminal justice in Virginia. The Department of Criminal Justice Services, Virginia's criminal justice "umbrella agency," provides "Criminal Justice System Improvement" grants to state and local agencies to "Improve the functioning of the criminal justice system through strategies and programs that promote better system coordination, effectiveness and efficiency, and/or help agencies identify and respond to emerging criminal justice issues. Among other things, the FY 2008 grant program provides funding that may be used to evaluate or examine current policy or practices and recommend or make changes to improve coordination in the criminal justice system, and between criminal justice agencies and other agencies/systems; and to improve planning, effectiveness and functioning of the criminal justice system or specific agencies within the system.

At the local level, § 9.1-180 establishes *Community Criminal Justice Boards* to assist with coordination of local criminal justice plans and community-based pretrial services and community-based probation programs. § 37.2-504 establishes Community Services Boards which coordinate local efforts concerning mental health and substance abuse services with various local agencies including courts and law enforcement.

The statewide criminal justice plan may need to address the following:

How can Virginia increase and improve collaboration between agencies and organizations within the criminal justice system, and collaboration with organizations that interact with the criminal justice system?

2 Information Sharing in the Criminal Justice System

Background

> "Criminal justice information sharing is vital to making criminal justice a cohesive and effective system."
>
> – National Conference of State Legislators

> "While there are many justifications for the designed fragmentation of the criminal justice process from a constitutional basis, the opposite is true on an operational level. The processing of a criminal offender from the time of arrest to final release provides significant opportunities for improvements in the efficiency of the criminal justice system *if the data were standardized and shared*."
>
> – *The Role of General Government Elected Officials in Criminal Justice*
> U.S. Advisory Committee on Intergovernmental Relations, 1993

The need for better information sharing in the criminal justice system has been recognized for years. Every year, information on hundreds of thousands of incidents, cases, suspects, inmates, etc., flows through Virginia's criminal justice system. All of this information flows through the system from one organization to another, with the routine actions and decisions in one organization depending on information received from another. In recent years, the importance of information sharing has been made more evident by events in Virginia such as the terrorist attacks of September 2001, the "DC sniper" incident in 2002, and the Virginia Tech shootings in 2007.

The criminal justice plan focus groups noted that in recent years Virginia policy-makers and agencies have become more aware of the need for better information sharing, and that the technology to make this happen is more available and more affordable than in the past. However, the focus groups also noted that obstacles remain, including a reluctance to share information due to "turf issues," entrenched practices, fear of violating the law, and the lack of a coordinated system for information sharing.

Why This Is Important

Sharing criminal justice information is essential to maintaining public safety in Virginia. Currently, information is gathered and maintained for many purposes in a variety of different formats throughout the criminal justice system. These differences make it difficult for law enforcement, judicial, correctional and other criminal justice officials to effectively share vital information. This impedes efforts to maintain and improve public safety; promotes duplication of effort and wasted resources; imposes needless delays throughout the criminal justice system; and hinders the development of sound public safety policy.

What's Being Done About It

The National Conference of State Legislators has identified steps being taken by state legislatures across the nation to improve information sharing that include: actions to authorize and enable information sharing systems and provide funding to maintain these systems; efforts to update and integrate systems for better sharing information; and actions on policies regarding access to crime information, and how the use of such information contributes to public safety and is balanced with privacy interests.

In Virginia, various initiatives by the executive, legislative and judicial branches have been undertaken to improve and enhance information sharing within the criminal justice system and with other government organizations that interact with the justice system. Some of the major initiatives are summarized on the facing page.

The Department of Criminal Justice Services strategic plan includes the *Integrated Justice Program (IJP),* designed to improve the flow of information between state and local law enforcement agencies, the court system, corrections agencies, and other public safety/criminal justice agencies. The IJP has been incrementally working to merge information sharing and communications so they more effectively serve all parts and levels of Virginia's public safety system. The IJP is regularly reviewed by the Secretary of Public Safety, the Virginia Information Technology Agency, and the Public Safety Information Technology Oversight Committee. IJP also periodically reports to the Virginia General Assembly legislative committees responsible for public safety oversight.

The *Virginia Fusion Center* was created in 2006 as a partnership between the Virginia State Police and Virginia Department of Emergency Management to bring together key resources from local, state and federal agencies as well as private industries to facilitate information collection, prioritization, classification, analysis and sharing, in order to better defend the Commonwealth against terrorist threats and to deter criminal activity.

In 2006, the Governor's *Executive Order 30* created the *State Interoperability Executive Committee* to coordinate interoperable voice communications efforts in Virginia. The order cites the *Code of Virginia* requirement that all agencies and localities must be consistent with the *Statewide Strategic Plan for Interoperable Communications* by July 1, 2015 to remain eligible for state or federal funds for communications projects. The Strategic Plan fosters intercommunications to support tactical incident management and strategic emergency management activities, which support a continuity of government functions during catastrophic events. Much of this work is conducted under the auspices of the State Interoperability Executive Committee and the Commonwealth Interoperability Coordinator's Office.

Within the judicial system, the 2004-2006 *Strategic Plan of the Judicial System of Virginia* has established as on one of its objectives: "To expand collaborative relationships between the courts, state and local governments, and the private sector to facilitate greater ease in the electronic exchange of information and in the conduct of judicial proceedings."

Information sharing goes beyond sharing traditional criminal justice data. The recent shooting tragedy at Virginia Tech highlighted the need to improve the sharing of information between the mental health community and the criminal justice community, in cases in which persons with mental health problems may present a danger to the public.

The statewide criminal justice plan may need to address the following:

What more can Virginia do to structure laws, policies and practices to improve and foster information sharing within the criminal justice system and with other organizations that interact with the criminal justice system?

3 Technology and the Criminal Justice System

Background

> "[T]echnology is perceived as the single most potent force transforming the justice system landscape."
>
> – The Judicial System of Virginia 2004-2006 Strategic Plan

Technology is today an integral part of Virginia's criminal justice system. During the past two decades, the use of technology in the justice system has exploded. Throughout the system, computer technology is used to store, manage and share vast amounts of information about cases and offenders. Communications have grown faster and more sophisticated, and interoperability is expanding. Technology is being used by law enforcement agencies in many ways including non-lethal weapons; evidence detection, collection and management; crime analysis; and crime mapping. Courts are using automation to manage and schedule increasingly crowded dockets. Correctional agencies are using automation and global-positioning systems to monitor the locations of ever-growing offender populations.

The criminal justice focus groups noted that today technology is more powerful, flexible, affordable and widely available than ever before. Furthermore, justice policy-makers, directors and line staff are more familiar with and comfortable using technology than ever before. The focus groups recognized that increased use of technology has the potential to greatly improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the criminal justice system. At the same time, they recognized that there are obstacles to expanding the use of technology. These include obtaining the resources to keep up with technological change, the lack of technical expertise in justice agencies, and the lack of coordination and standards needed for the coordinated statewide applications of technologies.

Why This is Important

Technology drives the operation of the modern criminal justice system. Without sophisticated technology, the system could not begin to deal with the numbers of crimes that are reported and investigated, the numbers of cases that flow through the court system, or the numbers of individuals who flow through the jails and correctional system. Communications depends on technology, as does evidence detection and analysis, investigative and apprehension techniques, and correctional facilities and monitoring.

While technology benefits the criminal justice system, it also gives criminals sophisticated means for committing crimes such as on-line fraud, identity theft and "trolling" for victims by on-line sexual predators.

What's Being Done About It

Virginia has had some notable successes in applying technology to the criminal justice system. For example, Virginia was among the first states to adopt the widespread use of "live scan" and an electronic Automated Fingerprint Identification System, to develop an automated instant background check for firearms purchasers, to operate a statewide DNA databank, and to adopt a statewide automated Incident-Based Crime Reporting system.

The Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) has provided several services to enhance technology in Virginia's justice system. The *Code of Virginia* gives DCJS the responsibility for "coordination of the operation of a statewide comprehensive criminal justice information system.…" Overseen by the Criminal Justice Services Board, DCJS has provided grant funds to local, regional and state criminal justice agencies for information systems and network development and enhancement. DCJS has provided funding and technical assistance to state

and local agencies for implementing many technologies such as mobile data reporting; video teleconferencing; crime data collection, management and analysis systems; computer-aided dispatch systems; regional information sharing networks and data mining software.

One example of the benefits of this assistance is illustrated by the report *National Assessment of Technology and Training for Small and Rural Law Enforcement Agencies*, prepared by the Rural Law Enforcement Technology Center/Eastern Kentucky University Justice and Safety Center. The report examined the use of technology in rural law enforcement agencies and noted that Virginia's rural agencies operate automated systems that are more current and versatile than those used by peer agencies in many other states.

The Department of State Police provides assistance to local law enforcement agencies that use its Virginia Crime Information Network for reporting and obtaining information on crime and criminals, and its Automated Fingerprint Identification System. The Virginia State Police has formed an advisory group representing local and state criminal justice agencies to guide development of the Virginia Intelligence Management System, a statewide intelligence information network that will provide information for combating both criminal and terrorist activities using advanced systems networking technology and sophisticated data mining software.

The Supreme Court of Virginia's 2007 report *Commission on Virginia Courts in the 21st Century: To Benefit All, To Exclude None* cites as one of the court's visions for the future: "Technology will increase the access, convenience and ease of use of the courts for all citizens, and will enhance the quality of justice by increasing the courts' ability to determine facts and reach a fair decision." Currently, the Office of the Executive Secretary of the Supreme Court assists users of its Courts Automated Information System, which provides information on cases in most of Virginia's local courts.

The Department of Corrections is currently replacing its older, legacy information system with VirginiaCORIS, a new single, integrated technology application designed to improve how technology is used for offender management and to enable data sharing not previously available.

The Department of Criminal Justice Services, Department of State Police and the Supreme Court also assist with information technology initiatives by providing statewide forums for discussions of technology needs and priorities. For example, in 2006 and 2007, DCJS convened the *Blueprints for Change: Criminal Justice Policy Issues in Virginia* forums that included state and local representatives in sessions on the development and administration of regional information sharing networks.

Virginia has made great strides in applying technology throughout its criminal justice system. As the criminal justice system continues to deal with larger numbers of cases and individuals, technology will continue to offer opportunities for improving the services it provides.

The statewide criminal justice plan may need to address the following:

How can Virginia's criminal justice system make more and better use of technology to enhance public safety?

4 Diverting Non-Violent Offenders from Jail and Prison

Background

In the criminal justice system, diversion generally refers to providing non-incarceration sanctions for low-risk offenders who otherwise would have been incarcerated. Diversion can occur prior to trial, when a suspect who otherwise would have been jailed pending trial is not jailed, or after conviction and sentencing, when a convicted offender who otherwise would have been sentenced to jail or prison is given another sentence. Typically, offenders can be diverted to day reporting centers, half-way houses, drug treatment programs and other forms of monitoring or supervision.

The criminal justice plan focus groups noted that diversion — if used correctly — is beneficial for both offenders and the criminal justice system. For example, some juveniles and adult non-violent offenders may be incarcerated, exposed to more violent offenders, and thus leave the system more dangerous than when they entered. To make diversion effective, they noted, the criminal justice system must be willing to consider alternatives to incarceration, and employ methods for screening offenders to identify those who are appropriate candidates for diversion.

Why This Is Important

Programs to divert low-risk offenders from incarceration offer several potential benefits. They may provide needed services such a drug or mental health treatment that may not be available in jail or prison. They may provide opportunities for offenders to continue employment and maintain connections with their families and community, both critical elements for their eventual return to society. Diversion also provides opportunities to keep non-violent offenders from mixing with more serious violent populations.

Another often cited advantage of diversion programs is that they can help reduce prison costs by reducing the inmate population and freeing up expensive jail and prison space for more serious offenders. As the costs of incarceration continue to rise, it is important to use scarce resources wisely. New York's expanded use of diversion programs has reportedly contributed to a drop in its prison population at a time when many other states (including Virginia) were increasing their prison populations. New York's prison population dropped from almost 71,600 in 1999 to about 62,500 in 2007, and the drop is projected to continue. As a result, New York is planning to close three lower security facilities, with the savings helping to offset the costs of housing its violent offender populations and expanding needed sex offender and mental health programs for inmates.

What's Being Done About It

The federal government has recognized that incarceration may not be best for some non-violent offenders. The *Federal Prison Bureau Nonviolent Offender Relief Act of 2007,* currently before Congress, amends the federal criminal code to direct the Bureau of Prisons to provide early release for a prisoner who has served one-half or more of his or her term, if the prisoner has reached a certain age, never been convicted of a violent crime, and followed prison rules.

Virginia's criminal justice system has implemented a variety of diversion initiatives. Many of these efforts are based on the use of risk assessment instruments to identify offenders who present a low public safety risk and are appropriate candidates for diversion.

Virginia's *judicial sentencing guidelines*, enacted in 1994, consider elements of an offender's conviction offense and prior record to recommend, where appropriate, diversion to non-incarceration sentences for lower-risk offenders. The sentencing guidelines also now include a risk assessment instrument to identify prison-

bound larceny, fraud and drug offenders who may be eligible for non-incarceration sentences. The Sentencing Commission recently reported that these approaches are having their intended results. In 1994, 31% of Virginia's prison inmates were classified as violent offenders. By 2004, only 26% of prison inmates were classified as violent offenders, and by 2007 only 21% were classified as violent.

The Department of Corrections operates five *Diversion Centers* across Virginia. These centers offer a 20-week residential program in which offenders reside in the facility, and program staff monitors offenders working in the community at paid jobs and perform random urinalysis testing. The programs provide employment counseling, substance abuse education, NA/AA groups, basic education/GED preparation, parenting skills, independent living skills, transitional services, and coping with domestic violence. Offenders have a mandatory one year of probation supervision upon release following initial intensive supervision. Nonviolent offenders tried and convicted as adults are eligible for the program.

The Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) 2006 *Strategic Plan* includes as a goal: "Divert from DJJ those youth who are more appropriately served by other partners." The Department's *Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative* is intended to change policies, practices and programs to ensure that only youth who are the greatest risk to public safety are held in secure pre-trial detention. The Initiative's goals are to protect public safety, reduce unnecessary or inappropriate use of secure detention, and re-direct resources to more effective purposes.

DJJ continues to implement its *Detention Assessment Instrument*, a decision-making tool used by Intake Officers to guide detention decisions. The instrument is designed to enhance consistency and equity in the detention decision-making process and to ensure that only juveniles who represent a serious threat to public safety or failure to appear in court are held in secure pre-trial detention. A recent evaluation of these outcomes found that adherence to the instrument leads to satisfactory public safety outcomes.

DJJ also is developing a "third-generation" *Youth Assessment and Screening Instrument* which assesses risk, need and protective factors and which can be used at intake to assist in early decision-making such as appropriateness and targets for diversion.

The Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services developed the *Virginia Pretrial Risk Assessment Instrument* for use by pretrial services programs to provide information to magistrates and judges when making decisions about whether to release or detain a defendant pending trial. The instrument uses nine risk factors to classify a defendant's likelihood of failing to appear in court or of arrest for a new offense.

In addition to diverting low-risk criminal offenders, Virginia has been exploring methods for diverting individuals who have mental illness rather than true 'criminal' behaviors. The Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services has been partnering with Community Services Boards and with Behavioral Health Authorities to pilot test community-based jail diversion programs in areas that have large local or regional jails holding large numbers of inmates with mental illness.

The statewide criminal justice plan may need to address the following:

How can Virginia's criminal justice system enhance the use of alternative sentences for non-violent offenders while assuring public safety?

5 Prisoner Reentry into Society

Background

From 2001 to 2006, 54,000 inmates left Virginia's prison system to return to society. To appreciate the size of this population, consider the following: 73 of Virginia's 91 counties have a population less than 54,000. Charlottesville's population is only 36,900; Petersburg's is 31,300, and Winchester's is 25,700. These offenders often return to a relatively small number of cities, and concentrate in communities with few opportunities for employment, education or other services needed for reentering society.

Many of these returning inmates will reoffend. The U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics examined prisoners released in 1994 in 15 states (including Virginia) and found that, within three years of their release, 67% were rearrested, 47% were reconvicted, and 25% were returned to prison. A 2004 Urban Institute report examining Virginia's prison releases stated "In many ways, the dimensions and challenges of prisoner reentry observed on the national level are mirrored in Virginia."

The criminal justice plan focus groups noted that improving re-entry success would improve public safety, produce savings across the criminal justice system, and reduce other government spending. However, they noted that reentry efforts are uncoordinated and their outcomes are often unknown.

Why This Is Important

The National Governor's Association 2004 report *The Challenges and Impacts of Prisoner Reentry* noted that, nationally, an inmate returning to prison costs an average of $22,650 annually. The report stated that "Effective reentry policies save money and make better use of limited resources by establishing a more coordinated and comprehensive continuum of care and supervision. Even small reductions in recidivism rates will generate substantial cost-savings by avoiding more costly re-incarceration."

Recidivism studies suggest that the savings for Virginia could be substantial. The Department of Corrections tracked inmates released from prison in 1999, and found that 29% returned to prison within three years. The Department of Juvenile Justice tracked juveniles released from Juvenile Correctional Centers in 2004 and found that 21% were re-incarcerated within 12 months. In FY2007, spending on Virginia's prison system was nearly $940 million; FY2008 spending is projected to top $1 billion.

What's Being Done About It

Virginia is addressing offender reentry at the executive, legislative and judicial levels. Some of the major efforts recognizing or addressing prisoner reentry are summarized below.

The Governor's 2006 *Executive Order 22* created the *Virginia Prisoner Reentry Policy Academy* to improve prisoner reentry, noting that "It is essential that Virginia continue with its efforts of fostering a successful transition of offenders into their communities, and reducing the rates at which they are returned to prison." The Governor's *Council on Virginia's Future*, established to "Provide long-term focus on high priority issues" cited recidivism as a key public safety issue, noting that "Recidivism is the key statistic in determining whether or not criminal justice interventions, from diversion through incarceration, are making a difference in keeping offenders from committing more crimes."

The Secretary of Public Safety is directed by *Code* to "….establish an integrated system for coordinating the planning and provision of offender transitional and reentry services among and between state, local, and nonprofit agencies in order to prepare inmates for successful transition into their communities upon release from

incarceration and for improving opportunities for treatment, employment, and housing while on subsequent probation, parole, or post-release supervision."

In 2005, the Virginia General Assembly created the *Joint Subcommittee Studying the Commonwealth's Program for Prisoner Reentry to Society* to study and recommend ways to improve programs and practices concerning prisoner reentry to society. The subcommittee has been meeting since 2005 and continues to develop reports and recommendations.

Virginia's judiciary, in the *2002-2004 Strategic Plan of the Supreme Court of Virginia* identified one of the key future challenges to the court system as "….the rising number of incarcerated persons who will be released after having served longer sentences. These inmates will be released into an increasing technological world for which few will have the skills to compete for economically meaningful jobs."

The Virginia agencies which handle inmates are involved in various activities and initiatives to reduce recidivism. These efforts are reflected in the mission statements of these agencies, as noted below:

- The Department of Correctional Education mission statement cites the agency's efforts to "….enable incarcerated youth and adults to become responsible, productive, tax-paying members of their communities." Toward this end, part of the Department's Vision Statement is to "….improve the opportunities for successful reintegration and reduce the risk of future criminal recidivism."

- The Department of Corrections' Division of Community Corrections includes the following in its mission: "The Department strives to provide a seamless transition of the offender from incarceration to community supervision. This includes continuation of treatment program involvement where possible. The information flow between institution and community staff is encouraged. Throughout the incarceration process, the goal of the Department of Corrections is to prepare each offender for a successful release and return to a productive life in society."

- The Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) mission statement includes the major goals of "Reducing recidivism of youth involved with DJJ to strengthen community safety" and "improve successful community functioning of juveniles involved with the Department of Juvenile Justice."

Additionally, the Department of Criminal Justice Services provides funding to nine *Offender Re-Entry and Transition Services* programs across Virginia. The programs are aimed at reducing recidivism among offenders released to the community by offering employability skills training, life skills, job placement and other services. The Department also provides federal funding to support various services and programs including residential treatment, aftercare services, drug testing, and community-based planning.

The statewide criminal justice plan may need to address the following:

What can Virginia do to increase the chances that offenders who are released from the correctional system are able to successfully return to society and not return to crime?

6 Recruiting and Retaining Criminal Justice System Personnel

Background

> "One of the greatest challenges facing law enforcement organizations today is the successful recruitment and retention of highly qualified employees."
>
> – *Recruitment and Retention of Qualified Police Personnel*, International Association of Chiefs of Police, 2000

> "Today, a virtual "war for talent" is raging among employers (Partnership for Public Service, 2005) with community corrections agencies caught in the crossfire.... And bringing good people on board is only the first step. Even among agencies that are consistently able to attract competent and committed workers, there is still the challenge of engaging and retaining them."
>
> – *Building the Workplace of the Future: 21st Century Challenges for Community Corrections* National Institute of Corrections, 2005

As far back as January 1991, the Criminal Justice Services Board's Committee on Training identified issues which may have a critical impact on criminal justice training in its report *Future Directions II: A Framework for the 90's*. One of the issues it mentioned was the need to enhance career development opportunities in criminal justice.

Sixteen years later, Virginia's Department of Human Resource Management released the 2007 *State Workforce Planning Report* which summarized the Commonwealth's current workforce planning challenges. The report noted challenges, including constraints on agencies' ability to hire, develop and manage employees due to lack of funding for performance increases; lack of available skills due to strong competition from the private sector; perceived limited career and salary growth; and the perception of government or public service as the employer of last resort. Local units of government are facing the same challenges as they struggle to attract and retain qualified criminal justice professionals.

The focus groups cited recruitment and retention as major issues facing Virginia's criminal justice system. Focus group members said that the system needs to put more emphasis on attracting the younger generation into criminal justice as a profession, and on enhancing training and compensation to retain the best personnel.

Why This Is Important

A recent National Institute of Justice report cited a number of personnel challenges facing law enforcement. Among them are: retiring baby boomers; competition from federal and private hiring demands; diversion to homeland security duties; and challenges posed by changes in the recruiting pool such as a desire to have the force 'look like' the community it serves; increasing obesity rates; increasing financial indebtedness; prior illicit drug use; and negative publicity from racial profiling and excessive use of force cases.

Recruitment and retention are integral parts of any criminal justice agency's management of its human resources. Both present challenges as state and local agencies face an aging workforce, competitive private and federal benefits packages, generational issues, and a lack of job performance incentives.

What's Being Done About It

A review of the strategic plans published by Virginia's public safety agencies indicates that all of them are recognizing and taking actions to recruit and retain qualified personnel. Excerpts from some of these strategic plans are listed below:

- The Department of Corrections *Strategic Plan* cites several major workforce challenges for the Department in the next five years, including: 1) retirements in executive management positions; 2) staffing for new and expanded DOC facilities; 3) offering compensation to attract and retain a high quality workforce; and 4) providing training and staff development for Department.

- The Department of Juvenile Justice *2006 Strategic Plan* includes as one of its goals "Attract, develop, and retain a highly proficient work force."

- The Department of State Police *2002-2008 Strategic Plan* includes as a goal: Increase employee job satisfaction and retention. The plan notes one avenue to achieving this goal is to "Attract and retain a qualified workforce by strategically using existing human resource management flexibilities, pay practices, and benefits."

- The Supreme Court of Virginia's *2004-2006 Strategic Plan for the Judicial System of Virginia* holds as a vision "The court system will be adequately staffed by judges and court personnel of the highest professional qualification.…" To this end, the strategic plan has as an objective: "To ensure that the judicial system attracts and retains the most qualified persons for service on the bench."

The 2005 *Governor's Public Safety Summit* identified as one of its primary concerns the recruiting and retention of law enforcement officers in Virginia. Summit attendees noted that virtually every law enforcement agency in Virginia is experiencing a shortage of law enforcement personnel. In response to this, the Department of Criminal Justice Services is providing grant funding to local agencies for improving the recruitment and retention of law enforcement officers, and to support efforts to improve the recruitment and retention of minority or bilingual criminal justice professionals.

The 2005 report of *The Governor's Task Force on Preventing Crime in Virginia's Minority Communities* noted that "The Task Force heard from many minority community members, including Task Force members, that there is a need to encourage greater participation in public service positions at all levels by minority members." As a result, the report recommended that "All components of Virginia's criminal justice system should expand/emphasize minority recruitment.…"

The statewide criminal justice plan may need to address the following:

What more can Virginia's criminal justice system do to attract and retain qualified criminal justice professionals?

7 Multi-Disciplinary Training for Criminal Justice Personnel

Background

> "In jurisdictions across the country, locally-based initiatives, state-mandated efforts, and federally-supported criminal justice programs frequently rely on and require multi-disciplinary collaboration."
>
> – *Collaboration: A Training Curriculum to Enhance the Effectiveness of Criminal Justice Teams,* State Justice Institute, 2005

As Virginia's criminal justice system contends with a constantly changing society, cross-functional training and awareness are becoming essential. Changes in law, regulations, demographics, technology and other aspects of society affect the operations of state and local criminal justice agencies. To confront these changes, criminal justice personnel need broader, more multi-disciplinary skills than in the past. Additionally, the resources that many of these agencies have to deal with these changes often remain unchanged or are shrinking. Agencies are continually being asked to do more with less. Providing multidisciplinary, cross-functional training is one way to help stretch limited personnel resources.

The criminal justice plan focus groups noted the value of multi-disciplinary training for public safety professionals, and stated that Virginia should continue to develop and offer cross-discipline education/training throughout the criminal justice system. Focus group members cited as examples the need for cross-training in information collection and sharing, data analysis, intelligence gathering, "hold harmless" agreements, laws and regulations, best practices, and media relations.

Why This is Important

Personnel employed by Virginia's criminal justice system deal with many different, changing citizen populations and justice issues. Populations are changing due to immigration and generational differences, and the system must cope with growing numbers of persons with substance abuse or mental illness problems. Justice issues now involve homeland security, Internet crimes, identity theft, etc.

The need for multidisciplinary skills by law enforcement officers is illustrated in the 2005 Rand Corporation report *Police Personnel Challenges After September 11: Anticipating Expanded Duties and a Changing Labor Pool.* The report noted that the nature of policing has broadened to a more diverse range of missions requiring a complex set of skills from officers. Broad skill sets are needed to deal with changing population demographics, new-problem-solving community-based policing approaches, changing laws and new technologies. As the report stated, "In short, the expanded responsibilities for local police require an expanded set of police skills, and perhaps a different type of officer."

What's Being Done About It

Virginia law enforcement, corrections and other public safety agencies typically send their personnel to compulsory minimum entry-level, in-service and advanced training. Although most of this training is focused on tasks that are performed frequently or are a critical component of the job, both the *Code of Virginia* and regulations encourage cross-discipline collaboration in development of training and review of programs and courses. For example, § 9.1-102 directs the Criminal Justice Services Board and Department of Criminal Justice Services to consult and cooperate with counties, municipalities, state agencies, other state and federal governmental agencies and with universities, colleges and other institutions in the development of its trainings, programs and courses of instruction.

Many Virginia criminal justice agencies and organizations are recognizing the value of multidisciplinary training and multidisciplinary approaches to problem solving, and are incorporating this into their activities and practices. Some examples of these activities are summarized below.

The Supreme Court of Virginia's Drug Treatment Courts are built around the concept of a multidisciplinary, interagency approach to drug offender case management. As noted in the report *Commission on Virginia Courts in the 21st Century: To Benefit All, To Exclude None*, this approach combines the skills and resources of judges, Commonwealth's Attorneys, defense attorneys, treatment professionals, local law-enforcement, jail staff, personnel from the Department of Corrections, and local community corrections and pretrial programs.

The 2007 *Governor's Commission on Sexual Violence* report identified teams with multidisciplinary skills as a method for improving the ability of communities to effectively respond to victims of sexual violence. The commission recommended that the Secretary of Public Safety and the Secretary of Health and Human Resources establish a multidisciplinary advisory group to develop a statewide standard of care for healthcare professionals when responding to sexual violence.

The 2005 report *Review of Child Protective Services in Virginia* by the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC) noted the value of a multidisciplinary approach in responding to cases of child abuse and neglect. This approach combines the skills of law enforcement, child protective services workers, Commonwealth's Attorneys, physicians, nurses, educators, mental health clinicians and other professionals. The Department of Criminal Justice Services has provided multidisciplinary training conferences to help localities improve investigation and prosecution, and develop skills and procedures for handling child abuse cases.

The Serious Habitual Offender Comprehensive Action Program (SHOCAP) is a multidisciplinary, interagency case management and information sharing system which enables the juvenile and criminal justice system, schools, mental health, and social service agencies to make more informed decisions about juveniles who repeatedly commit serious criminal and delinquent acts. Local SHOCAP programs supervise serious or habitual juvenile offenders in the community and those under probation or parole supervision.

In mid-2008, Virginia will launch its first Virginia Victim Assistance Academy, which will provide a comprehensive, interdisciplinary training program for crime victim service providers, advocates, allied professionals and others who work with crime victims. The Academy is being designed by a multi-disciplinary committee including representatives from the Department of Criminal Justice Services, the University of Richmond and Virginia Commonwealth University, law enforcement, prosecution, the Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance, the Virginia Network for Victims and Witnesses of Crime, the Department of Corrections, the Parole Board, the Attorney General's Office, the Criminal Injuries Compensation Fund, local victim assistance programs, and crime victims.

The statewide criminal justice plan may need to address the following:

How can Virginia's criminal justice service providers improve broad-based service delivery through cross-functional/disciplinary awareness and training?

8 Standardized Training and Testing for Law Enforcement Officers

Background

> "Each State shall have an organization at the state level with adequate authority to set standards for the hiring, training, ethical conduct and retention of police officers, through certification, licensing, or an equivalent methodology."
>
> – Model Minimum Standards
> International Association of Directors of Law Enforcement Standards & Training

Virginia's law enforcement officers are required by statute to comply with minimum training standards established by the Commonwealth. This training is delivered by 28 certified law enforcement officer training academies. Ten of these are "regional" academies that serve groups of localities, and 18 are "independent" academies operated by individual localities, primarily large cities and suburban counties.

Although all law enforcement officers must meet minimum training standards, there has been a long-standing debate in Virginia about whether all officers are actually receiving adequate training, and whether this is affecting the quality of services provided by these officers. Much of this debate involves how Virginia's training academies are organized and how they deliver their training.

The criminal justice plan focus groups noted that law enforcement training and testing needs to become more standardized. Lesson plans and the implementation of mandated training standards vary greatly across Virginia, and result in differing or incompatible practices in the field.

Why This Is Important

The 1986 "*Gallagher Report*" on Virginia's system for delivering training to law enforcement officers cited two major reasons why officers need to be adequately trained in the knowledge, skills and abilities needed to perform their jobs. First, Virginia's citizens have an expectation that criminal justice officers acting in an official capacity have been trained properly to do their job. Second, training academies and their user agencies may be subject to liability lawsuits based upon the actions of improperly trained or untrained officers.

Because of questions about whether all officers are receiving the same level of training, some large law enforcement agencies require officers transferring into their departments to attend their full entry-level training programs. This results in significant costs for agencies and detracts from the overall intent of standardized law enforcement training. For example, the Virginia State Police estimates that it costs more than $40,000 to equip and train a new recruit.

The 1999 study, *Review of Regional Criminal Justice Training Academies,* by the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee (JLARC), cited various concerns about training quality and consistency among Virginia's academies. Entry-level training varies widely in content and length, with some academies meeting only the minimum standards and others providing substantially more than the minimum. Many academy instructors are volunteers from agencies served by the academies, with varied skill levels, experience and knowledge. Each academy develops its own tests and administers and grades them based on its own preferences. Academies decide how tests are constructed, how many questions are asked about performance objectives, and how test questions are validated. There is no standardized test of knowledge, skills and abilities for law enforcement officers.

Reports examining Virginia's training academies also noted that some chiefs and sheriffs see advantages to the current decentralized academy system. Having many academies means that trainees do not have to travel long distances for training. Agency costs for travel and lodging are reduced, and trainees spend less time away

from their agencies. Local academy discretion in how training is presented means that academies can recognize differing demographic, geographic, sociological and economic conditions across the state. Finally, localities pay most of the costs of law enforcement training and therefore should have substantial latitude in determining how the training is provided, as long as the minimum training standards are met.

What's Being Done About It

Suggestions for addressing the quality and consistency of law enforcement training range from maintaining the current decentralized system, to creating a more consolidated system of regional academies with more stringent standards set by the state, to creating a single centralized state training academy.

Other states take various approaches to ensure quality and consistency in law enforcement training. South Carolina, Georgia, Kentucky, Iowa, North Dakota, Vermont, New Hampshire and Indiana each have a single-source statewide academy which trains all law enforcement officers. For example, South Carolina trains all recruits at a central academy, but has satellite training facilities across the state for in-service training, and uses an electronic classroom system for broadcasting training programs to live audiences throughout the state.

The Gallagher Report recommended not more than two academies, or one statewide academy with satellites in the west and east, to ensure quality control and consistent training. This would ensure that an officer trained from any area of the state and from any agency would acquire the same basic training. This concept was also mentioned in the JLARC study as the optimal approach, but the JLARC study stopped short of recommending such a system.

In 2000, the General Assembly enacted legislation requiring all law enforcement trainees to pass a state-wide certification exam, which requires academies to train to a standardized level. However, no funding or resources were provided to develop and implement the examination. In 2003, the Department of Criminal Justice Services implemented a certification examination, but the lack of a comprehensive test validation process prevented it from recognizing its full potential.

The statewide criminal justice plan may need to address the following:

Would more standardized training and testing for Virginia's law enforcement officers contribute to a more unified and consistent law enforcement work force and better service to Virginia's citizens?

9 Juvenile Delinquency and Crime Prevention

Background

> "Preventing delinquency before it occurs, and intervening swiftly and appropriately when it does, are critical components of an effective response to juvenile delinquency and violence."
>
> – Robert J. Flores, Administrator, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention
> Testimony to the Senate Committee on the Judiciary, December, 2007

> "Prevention works better and is cheaper than treatment. The sobering reality is that improving to the optimum extent how juvenile criminals are treated once they are apprehended will only reduce recidivism by at most 10 percent, experts agree. While keeping that 10 percent from continually recycling through the juvenile justice system — and ultimately, the adult system — would free significant resources, the fact is that prevention and early intervention hold far more promise than good rehabilitation programs for actually reducing crime."
>
> – *The Juvenile Crime Challenge: Making Prevention a Priority*
> "Little Hoover Commission" report to the California Governor and Legislature, 1994

The juvenile justice system differs from the adult criminal justice system in that it emphasizes rehabilitative efforts rather than punishment. However, most of this attention comes only after an initial contact with the local juvenile court. Over the last 20 years there has been growing attention to a proactive, preventative approach. This public health model focuses on reducing the risk of delinquency and increasing resiliency against the factors that contribute to delinquent behavior. Research has demonstrated that a number of model programs can be effective in addressing risk factors.

Why This is Important

The best predictor of future behavior is past behavior. Studies show that juvenile offenders are at greater risk of becoming adult offenders, and that adult offenders are very likely to have been juvenile offenders. Most criminal careers begin when the offender is a juvenile, and each successive contact with the justice system tends to increase the risk of future contacts with the system. Preventing juvenile crime is the most cost-effective way to reduce the economic and other costs associated with crime.

Recent research has focused on the importance of early intervention and prevention efforts during the years from 7 to 12. This research indicates that children who begin very disruptive and delinquent behavior at this early age are much more at-risk for becoming long-term offenders than are those who begin delinquent acts during their teen years.

What's Being Done About It

At the federal level, the *Title V Delinquency Prevention Incentive Grant Program* supports local, comprehensive strategies for delinquency prevention. This strategy is based on assessments of risk factors associated with becoming delinquent. The assessment process and development of a comprehensive delinquency prevention plan are conducted by local boards whose membership reflects the cultural, ethnic and economic diversity of the community. Title V grants are administered in Virginia by the Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS). Title V funding has been reduced significantly in recent years.

In Virginia, a variety of agencies and organizations provide support for juvenile delinquency and crime prevention efforts. Virginia's *Advisory Committee on Juvenile Justice*, composed of individuals appointed by the Governor

who are knowledgeable in juvenile issues and the juvenile justice system, provides strategic direction for many of these efforts.

The Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) promotes early intervention for juvenile offenders. Low-level, first-time offenders can be diverted out of the official court process, and the Court Service Unit (CSU) can handle the case informally. The CSU can also work with the court to have the young offender placed into a community-based program that will provide services to the youth and family, reserving secure confinement for more serious offenders. The *Virginia Juvenile Community Crime Control Act* provides funds to localities to develop a continuum of such community-based programs.

In addition to providing grant funding to localities, DCJS sponsors an annual juvenile justice delinquency prevention conference, provides annual reports on activities and progress under Virginia's three-year plan for use of federal Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act funds, and provides information, training and support for practitioners. DCJS also provides the Virginia Center for School Safety, a resource and training center for information about national and statewide school safety initiatives.

The Department of Education also supports juvenile delinquency prevention efforts through programs and information aimed at reducing student truancy and drop-out rates, reducing student involvement with gangs and substance abuse, and generally promoting safe and nonviolent school settings for students.

The Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation, and Substance Abuse Services works to improve substance abuse treatment and prevention services in Virginia. The agency funds and works with local Community Services Boards, which provide prevention and early intervention services as well as other services to support a community's mental health and substance abuse needs.

The Governor's office created the *Prevention Comes First* initiative which includes efforts to promote positive youth development by addressing risk and protective factors. The initiative coordinates the prevention activities of law enforcement, educators, state and local prevention professionals, and families throughout Virginia. The Governor's office also has proposed the "*Start Strong*" initiative, aimed at advancing early childhood education programs. The national organization Fight Crime: Invest in Kids has cited research showing that at-risk children who attend high quality early education programs do better in school, commit fewer crimes later in life, and have better economic prospects as adults.

The *Governor's Office for Substance Abuse Prevention (GOSAP)* is authorized by §2.2-118, and the *GOSAP Collaborative* was established in 2006 by the Governor's Executive Directive 4. GOSAP provides federal funds from the U.S. Substance Abuse and Health Services Administration and the Governor's set-aside of Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act funds. GOSAP provides statewide leadership, fosters collaboration and resource sharing, and provides prevention tools and training to reduce substance abuse, violence, delinquency, school drop-out, criminal gang participation, and related risky behaviors.

The statewide criminal justice plan may need to address the following:

What more can Virginia do to enhance juvenile delinquency and crime prevention efforts?

10 Improving the Juvenile Justice System

Background

> "Lawmakers are torn between the views of youth advocates who defend a traditional juvenile court that no longer exists, and hardliners who want to send even more youths to an adult court system that is still not prepared to deal with them properly."
>
> "The central issue is what happens to young people following arrest… How quickly can the entire process take place, and does it ensure the safety of the public while guarding the rights of the offenders and maximizing their chances of rejoining the law-abiding community?"
>
> – *Delinquents or Criminals? Policy Options for Young Offenders*
> Urban Institute report, 1998

The number of juveniles entering Virginia's Juvenile Correctional Centers (JCCs) has dropped dramatically over the last decade. New admissions dropped from 1,592 in 1999 to 833 in 2007, a decline of 48%. Furthermore, the most recent correctional population forecast released by the Secretary of Public Safety projects that the lower number of annual admissions seen in 2007 will continue through FY 2012.

Despite this improvement, juvenile offending remains a problem. In 2007, the JCCs still held over 1,000 juveniles at any point in time, while another 1,000 were being held in secure detention homes. And although JCC admissions have dropped, those who are admitted are staying in longer, at an average cost of over $100,000 a year for each youth.

Recent actions by the General Assembly reflect desires for additional improvements in the juvenile justice system. House Joint Resolution 136 (2006), cited the need for a "…. complete review to determine, what, if any, steps can be taken to improve the deficiencies in Virginia's juvenile justice system," and directed the Virginia State Crime Commission to study the juvenile justice system. House Joint Resolution 113, passed by the 2008 General Assembly, directed the Commission to continue its study and report its findings to the 2009 session.

Why This is Important

The Council on Virginia's Future, created to advise the Governor and the General Assembly on "high priority issues" affecting the Commonwealth, identified juvenile intakes and juvenile recidivism as among the top five major public safety issues requiring attention. Most criminal careers begin with juvenile offending; juvenile delinquency can mark the beginning of criminal behavior that imposes high costs on both individuals and society for decades to come. Successfully dealing with juvenile offending can be the key to avoiding these costs.

What's Being Done About It

Research has shown that responding to juvenile offending is best accomplished through a coordinated approach that includes the traditional juvenile justice system, as well as child and social welfare agencies, mental health services providers, and the education system.

The Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) is the state agency with primary responsibility for dealing with juvenile offenders. DJJ provides a continuum of community-based services to juvenile offenders, and also operates the juvenile correctional centers that incarcerate juveniles committed to the state. DJJ's mission statement stresses "a balanced approach of accountability and comprehensive services that prevent and reduce delinquency." The Department is overseen by the Board of Juvenile Justice, which has among its statutory duties the responsibility to "ensure the development and implementation of a long-range youth services policy."

The Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) provides state and local governments with federal funds, including funding through the *Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (JJDP) Act*. Title V of the Act provides for delinquency prevention and Title II provides funds to improve the juvenile justice system. Juvenile Accountability Block Grants fund efforts to promote offender accountability. In addition to providing funding for juvenile justice system improvements, DCJS also provides funding for the replication of model programs and "best practices" for agencies and practitioners in the juvenile justice system, monitors compliance with JJDP Act requirements, and provides training, research and information to all components of Virginia's juvenile justice system.

Major Virginia legislation regarding juvenile justice includes the 1995 *Virginia Juvenile Community Crime Control Act*, which stresses a comprehensive approach to addressing juvenile offending "… by providing immediate, effective punishment that emphasizes accountability of the juvenile offender for his actions as well as reduces the pattern of repeat offending." The Act encourages localities to develop, implement, operate and evaluate programs and services responsive to their own specific juvenile offender needs and juvenile crime trends. Funds provided under the Act may be used to provide a broad range of sanctions and services to address these needs and trends.

Virginia's Juvenile and Domestic Relations (J&DR) District Courts handle cases involving juvenile delinquents, children in need of services and supervision, and children who have been subjected to abuse or neglect. J&DR Courts differ from other courts in their duty to protect the confidentiality and privacy of juveniles coming before the court, and in their commitment to rehabilitate those who come before the court, while also protecting the public and holding juvenile offenders accountable for their actions.

DJJ operates Court Service Units (CSU) which serve the J&DR courts and support the rehabilitation or treatment of juveniles who come before the courts. CSU functions include: intake, to determine if the court should be involved; investigation, conducting background studies; probation supervision; aftercare supervision for juveniles recently released from state institutions; and domestic care supervision for juveniles being held in detention or shelter care homes.

The Virginia Commission on Youth is a commission of the General Assembly with the duty to "to study and provide recommendations addressing the needs of and services to the Commonwealth's youth and families." The Commission assists in developing policies dealing with juvenile offenders. In recent years it has produced reports examining treatment for juvenile offenders with mental illness or substance abuse disorders, policies regarding juvenile offender records, female juvenile offenders, and an assessment of the Virginia Juvenile Community Crime Control Act funding formula.

The statewide criminal justice plan may need to address the following:

How can Virginia do more to prevent juvenile offending and reduce the likelihood of youth entering the criminal justice system?

11 Preventing Crime

Background

> "We have learned that prevention is the nation's best answer to crime. It is cheaper, safer, and healthier for communities to prevent crime than to have to treat its victims, deal with its perpetrators, and lose civic health and productivity."
>
> – National Crime Prevention Council, 2005

Crime prevention has been variously defined as "the anticipation, appraisal and assessment of a crime risk and the initiation of some activity to reduce or remove that risk." More simply put, it is the removal or reduction of the opportunity for crime.

When London's 1829 Metropolitan Police Act created the world's first modern police force, the London "Bobbies," the police were responsible only for the "detection and prevention of crime." English Bobbies were not armed, since armament was viewed as a reaction to crime, not a way to prevent it. Modern crime prevention grew out of responses to crime in the 1960s and 1970s, when it again became a major part of law enforcement's role. The National Sheriff's Association developed the Neighborhood Watch Program, and law enforcement agencies began emphasizing crime prevention efforts as part of their missions.

The criminal justice plan focus groups noted that crime prevention efforts should be more of a priority in the criminal justice system, and achieved through increased collaboration, resources, and involvement of all of the stakeholders with interests in crime prevention.

Why This Is Important

Preventing crime in the first place is the most effective way of reducing the physical, emotional and financial costs that crime imposes on society and individuals. This philosophy is reflected in the well-known proverb, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure."

The *Code of Virginia* (§ 15.2-1704, Powers and Duties of Police Force), defines the responsibilities and powers of the police force in Virginia. The first responsibility mentioned is the prevention of crime:

> A. The police force of a locality is hereby invested with all the power and authority which formerly belonged to the office of constable at common law and is responsible for the prevention and detection of crime, the apprehension of criminals, the safeguard of life and property, the preservation of peace and the enforcement of state and local laws, regulations, and ordinances.

What's Being Done About It

Crime prevention efforts and initiatives exist throughout state and local government, as well as in private organizations and groups. Some of these efforts and initiatives are summarized below.

In Virginia, the Governor's *Prevention Comes First* initiative includes a variety of efforts to promote the positive development of Virginia's youth by addressing the risk and protective factors associated with youth gang recruitment and activity, substance abuse, delinquency, violence, school drop-out, and related adolescent problem behaviors. The initiative coordinates the prevention activities of law enforcement, educators, state and local prevention professionals, and families in the Commonwealth.

The *Code of Virginia* established the *Crime Prevention Center* in the Department of Criminal Justice Services "for the purpose of providing crime prevention assistance and training, resource material, and research into methods and procedures to reduce the opportunity for crime." The Crime Prevention Center operates several programs designed to support and enhance crime prevention efforts:

- The *Crime Prevention Specialist Certification Program* establishes minimum standards for training and experience for crime prevention specialists and certifies law and non-law enforcement personnel who achieve this. About 625 practitioners throughout Virginia have received this certification.

- The *Private Crime Prevention Practitioner Certification Program*, modeled after the Crime Prevention Specialist program, provides certification and training opportunities for private security professionals specializing in crime prevention principles and practices.

- The *Certified Crime Prevention Community Program* certifies localities that have community safety strategies as part of a comprehensive community safety/crime prevention effort. The program strengthens local government and law enforcement agencies by showing that the locality can meet rigorous standards related to community safety. Currently 10 localities have received this certification.

The Department of State Police operates various programs aimed at enhancing crime prevention. The Department provides specialized training to selected troopers in crime prevention and personal safety, including *Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design*, business security and techniques to promote personal safety, and drug prevention education programs.

Juvenile delinquency prevention is a central component of the Department of Juvenile Justice's mission "To protect the public through a balanced approach of accountability and comprehensive services that prevent and reduce delinquency though partnerships with families, schools, communities, law enforcement, and others, while providing opportunities for delinquent youth to become responsible and productive citizens."

The Office of the Attorney General operates the *TRIAD program* to reduce criminal victimization of older citizens. TRIAD is a comprehensive crime prevention program and community policing strategy to combat the causes of crime, disorder, fear of crime, and other quality of life issues among senior citizens.

The *Virginia Crime Prevention Association* (VACP) is a non-profit organization established in 1978 to develop and implement programs that prevent crime by reducing opportunities for crime. The VCPA partners with law enforcement, community groups, state criminal justice agencies, schools, businesses, public housing, and other organizations to deliver programs and services aimed at crime prevention.

The statewide criminal justice plan may need to address the following:

How can Virginia do more to assess crime risks and enhance state and local crime prevention efforts?

12 Security at Schools and College/University Campuses

Background

> *"Talking about these tragedies gives you the sense that we're losing the fight to keep our schools safe. And yet, the statistics tell us a different story. In truth, school violence is on the decline. Two years ago, an annual study by [the] Bureau of Justice Statistics and the Department of Education found that violence in schools was at its lowest level in a decade. And last year's study showed that the rate of serious violent crime in schools continued to fall. [Still,] we can't pretend that what happened in Blacksburg, Nickel Mines, and Cleveland are just tragic aberrations. We have to do our best to prevent anything like them from happening again."*
>
> – Acting Assistant Attorney General Cybele K. Daley,
> 2007 National Conference on Safe Schools and Communities

Horrific events at Virginia educational institutions such as the 2002 slaying of three people at the Appalachian School of Law in Grundy, and the 2007 shootings at Virginia Tech, saturate the media and public with stories of violence on school and college campuses. Despite this, schools and colleges are overwhelmingly safe places. A child is more likely to be murdered at home than at school.

Nonetheless, crime and violence do occur at Virginia's public schools and on its college campuses. According to Virginia's incident-based crime statistics, an average of nearly 18,000 offenses at school and colleges campuses were reported to Virginia law enforcement agencies annually from 2000 to 2006. Most of these were less serious offenses such as thefts, simple assaults, vandalism and drug offenses.

The Virginia State Crime Commission's 2006 *Final Report: Study on Campus Safety* examined incidents that occurred at Virginia's colleges and universities. It found that, in 2003, reporting required under the federal Clery Act cited 1,116 crimes on campuses. The crimes most frequently reported were burglary, motor vehicle theft, forcible sex offenses, aggravated assault, robberies and arson.

The criminal justice plan focus groups noted that, while school and campus security is a growing concern, Virginia must find a way to balance safety measures against the need to maintain open and productive learning environments.

Why This Is Important

Schools, colleges and universities typically contain hundreds or thousands of students, teachers, staff and visitors moving about freely, many possibly strangers to one another. Some campuses are, in effect, small cities, with many different buildings and types of facilities. As potential targets, schools and educational institutions have vulnerabilities similar to those of shopping malls and transportation hubs – large numbers of people and relatively open public access. At research universities, they offer other targets – atomic reactors, biological research facilities, and stocks of dangerous materials.

What's Being Done About It

Virginia has taken numerous steps to improve safety at its public schools and its college/university campuses. Some of these major initiatives are summarized on the facing page.

K-12 school safety and security

In 1999 Virginia created the *School Resource Officer* program to place officers in the public schools to enhance the reporting of crime and violence in schools, increase school resources to address these problems, and promote better communication and collaboration.

In 2000 Virginia established the *Virginia Center for School Safety* within the Department of Criminal Justice Services. The Center conducts specialized trainings for school security personnel and other school officials to promote their development as school security experts; compiles and reports uniform school safety audit data to develop safety recommendations; and conducts safety training events and school safety conferences in Virginia. The Center also sets standards for and certifies School Security Officers.

The Virginia Department of Education in 2007 created the *Virginia Safe Schools Information Resource*, an on-line public database on school crime and safety, based on school discipline, crime, and violence data submitted to the Department by school divisions. The database is part of the Prevention Through Information initiative to improve the use of school discipline, crime and safety data to help assess school safety needs and implement programs and strategies to address these needs.

Security at Colleges and Universities

The State Crime Commission's 2006 *Final Report: Study on Campus Safety* recommended that that Department of Criminal Justice Services' School Safety Center be expanded to address college and university campus safety issues. In 2006 the *Office of Campus Policing and Security* was created in the Department. It is responsible for establishing minimum standards and certification requirements for campus security officers and providing technical assistance to campus police departments and security departments.

During 2008, the Department of Criminal Justice Services is making grant funds available to assist public school divisions and institutions of higher learning with initiatives to enhance protective services to their school or campus communities. The grants can be used for improving crime prevention strategies, target-hardening initiatives, threat assessment, crisis management systems, at-risk student intervention techniques, and to provide training to publicly funded security officers and law enforcement officers.

In the wake of the 2007 Virginia Tech shootings, the 2008 General Assembly considered various legislation to improve campus and university security, including mandating campus crisis response teams, emergency warning systems, improved screening and communication regarding potentially dangerous students, and efforts to restrict access to firearms by certain individuals.

The statewide criminal justice plan may need to address the following:

How can Virginia improve and enhance safety on its schools and college/university campuses?

13 Domestic Preparedness and the Criminal Justice System

Background

> "Virginia is at higher risk than most states for a disaster declaration, based upon the number of disaster declarations reported by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)."
>
> – Virginia Performs Website, 2008

Domestic preparedness initiatives, especially since the attacks of September 2001, have had major impacts on state and local criminal justice systems in Virginia and other states. Although much of this attention has been focused on preventing and preparing for terrorist attacks, potential threats such as Katrina-scale hurricanes and flu pandemics have created a need for an "all-hazards" approach to domestic emergency preparedness.

The *Council on Virginia's Future*, created to advise the Governor and the General Assembly on "high priority issues" affecting the Commonwealth, has identified "emergency preparedness" as one of the five major public safety issues requiring attention.

Why This Is Important

Domestic preparedness and homeland security have emerged as critical, although relatively new, aspects of public safety. Recent manmade and natural disasters have demonstrated that public safety planning and capabilities must focus on responding to events larger and more catastrophic than those typically envisioned in the past.

Although funding, resources and attention to domestic preparedness and homeland security have greatly expanded since, 2001, some see this as having mixed effects on "traditional" criminal justice functions. Local criminal justice agencies have reported that the emphasis on domestic preparedness has been draining resources from routine criminal justice and public safety activities. For example, law enforcement agencies have cited losses in personnel for routine crime fighting activities due to calls for protection of ports, bridges and other infrastructure. Federal funding that was previously used to support a host of routine criminal justice activities has been diverted to homeland security concerns.

What's Being Done About It

The *Virginia Emergency Services and Disaster Law of 2000* (Chapter 3.2, Title 44 of the *Code of Virginia*) authorized the Virginia Department of Emergency Management and the creation of local organizations for emergency management in the political subdivisions of Virginia, citing these reasons:

> "Because of the ever-present possibility of the occurrence of disasters of unprecedented size and destructiveness resulting from enemy attack, sabotage or other hostile action, resource shortage, or from fire, flood, earthquake, or other natural causes, and in order to insure that preparations of the Commonwealth and its political subdivisions will be adequate to deal with such emergencies, and generally to provide for the common defense and to protect the public peace, health, and safety, and to preserve the lives and property and economic well-being of the people of the Commonwealth…."

The Governor's 2007 *Executive Order 60* issued the *Commonwealth of Virginia Emergency Operations Plan*. The Plan provides for state government's response to emergencies and disasters where assistance is needed by affected local governments in order to save lives; to protect public health, safety, and property; to restore essential services; and to enable and assist with economic recovery.

In 2001 Virginia created the *Virginia Corps* to serve as a central clearinghouse for volunteer opportunities across Virginia. Virginia Corps includes the Virginia's Citizen Corps, which helps residents make their communities safer from emergencies and disasters by getting them involved in preparedness efforts. Citizen Corps' programs create trained, available pools of local people who can help during the first critical hours of a major disaster. Virginia Citizen Corps Programs include the Community Emergency Response Teams; the Public Safety Volunteers in Virginia; the Medical Reserve Corps; the Fire Corps; and Volunteers in Police Service.

The Department of Criminal Justice Services *Office of Homeland Security* helps to link Virginia's preparedness strategy with the law enforcement community. Its responsibilities include developing a conduit for law enforcement leaders to express needs and concerns related to homeland security and emergency management, Homeland Security Grant Program synchronization, National Incident Management System implementation, preparedness planning, training coordination, and liaison to federal and state agencies involved with domestic preparedness.

The Virginia Center for Policing Innovation created *Creating Vigilant, Prepared and Resilient Communities for Homeland Security* to train community members to work in cross-disciplinary teams to draw on collective skills, knowledge, and resources, to address existing or potential homeland security threats at the local community level.

The effect that domestic preparedness activities have on resources available for more traditional criminal justice activities is reflected in the Strategic Plan for the Department of Criminal Justice Services, which serves as the pass-through agency for much of the federal criminal justice funding provided to Virginia:

> "The continuing emphasis on homeland security and terrorism prevention will affect the Department's work in a number of ways. Federal grant funds that would ordinarily be available to us to support local and state projects aimed at a wide range of criminal/juvenile justice system improvements are likely to be reduced in coming years, replaced by Department of Homeland Security funding aimed primarily at law enforcement. This shift will affect our discretion in directing federal funds through grant programs and thus our ability to foster change in the broader criminal justice system."

The statewide criminal justice plan may need to address the following:

How can Virginia's criminal justice system enhance its ability to ensure domestic preparedness and at the same time adequately maintain its efforts to deal with routine law enforcement and other criminal justice functions?

14 Mental Health and the Criminal Justice System

Background

> "Law enforcement officers, prosecutors, defenders and judges – people on the front lines every day – believe too many people with mental illness become involved with the criminal justice system….they believe that if many of the people with mental illness received the services they needed, they would not end up under arrest, in jail, or facing charges in court."
>
> - *Criminal Justice – Mental Health Consensus Project*
> Council of State Governments

Virginia's criminal justice system does not have the expertise or the resources to deal with the number of mentally ill individuals it encounters. On the other hand, the mental health system does not have the resources either. The scarcity of state and community mental health treatment and facilities causes the criminal justice system to become the 'last resort' for obtaining mental health services.

This problem was illustrated by a January 2008 article in the Richmond Times-Dispatch entitled *Most Mentally Ill Inmates Get No Medication in City — Richmond Sheriff Says Jail Does Not Have the Resources to Cope*. The article stated: "Richmond Sheriff C.T. Woody says his aging, overcrowded facility has been a dumping ground for people with mental illness and that he doesn't have the resources to cope."

Why This Is Important

Virginia law enforcement agencies, courts and corrections agencies spend tremendous amounts of time and resources dealing with people who are not "criminals" but who are instead exhibiting signs of mental illness. Time and resources inappropriately devoted to dealing with mentally ill persons could be better spent on more traditional and pressing criminal justice issues. As a Council of State Governments report noted, "Given the dimensions and complexity of this issue, the demands on the criminal justice system are overwhelming."

The *Governor's Public Safety Summit of 2005* identified handling the mentally ill and drug abusers as one of the most difficult situations facing law enforcement officers. It is often dangerous and time consuming. Officers are neither well trained nor equipped to handle such persons properly. Mental health treatment resources and facilities are scarce in many Virginia localities. When even minor criminal activity is involved, persons needing mental health treatment may be committed to local or regional jails, where their needs may go undiagnosed or services may simply be unavailable.

The 2005 National Institute of Corrections report *Improving the Response to Offenders with Mental Illness Through Mental Health and Criminal Justice Collaboration* cited as a major emerging theme in criminal justice: "The need for strategic collaboration between the judiciary, criminal justice, and mental health agencies in diverting persons with mental illness from correctional institutions, when appropriate." Incarcerating the mentally ill can be doubly damaging, because prison and jail environments often exacerbate the symptoms of mental illness.

What's Being Done About It

The Governor's 2008 Executive Order 62 established the *Commonwealth Consortium for Mental Health/Criminal Justice Transformation*, directed by the Secretary of Health and Human Resources and the Secretary of Public Safety. The Consortium has the dual purpose of preventing unnecessary involvement of persons with mental illness in the criminal justice system, and promoting public safety by improving access to needed mental health treatment for persons with mental illness for whom arrest and incarceration cannot be prevented. The Consortium

includes the Attorney General, Secretary of Finance, members of the General Assembly and the Supreme Court of Virginia, directors of numerous relevant state agencies and local associations, and other organizations.

Studying Treatment Options for Offenders Who Have Mental Illness or Substance Abuse Disorders, a 2002 report by the Joint Commission on Behavioral Health Care, Virginia State Crime Commission and Virginia Commission on Youth, cited needed improvements where public safety and mental illness intersect: greater interagency collaboration; greater capacity for treating offenders with mental illness and substance abuse disorders; clinical guidelines for jails or detention homes to identify mental health services needed for people who are incarcerated; and training in dealing with the mentally ill for law enforcement, judges, jail and detention staff, and community treatment staff.

The 2006 *Blueprints for Change: Criminal Justice Policy Issues in Virginia* meeting gathered public safety officials from across the state to review leading-edge criminal justice issues, including a session on "Mental Health Issues in Jails and Detention Centers." The session made recommendations concerning: cross-secretariat work on the issue; screening to identify the mentally ill in jails or detention centers; interventions in jails and detention centers; facilities that combine criminal justice detention and mental health intervention; more regional, community-based, mental health facilities; and a better system for keeping those with behavioral health issues out of jails and detention centers in the first place.

The Department of Criminal Justice Services 2008 *Byrne Justice Assistance Grant Program* provides funding for activities to address the mentally ill in the criminal justice system. One activity is to "Improve the effectiveness of law enforcement agencies' response to situations involving persons who are mentally ill or under the influence of intoxicating drugs and who pose a danger to themselves or others." Another is "To establish, in a variety of settings, the means to better identify the mentally ill client, to assess the impact of such clients on the criminal and juvenile justice systems, and/or improve the effectiveness of the response to such clients."

Virginia is also exploring the use of *crisis intervention teams* to improve law enforcement's response to crisis situations involving persons with mental illness, substance abuse or both. Pilot programs are being tested in which the team will develop a protocol permitting law enforcement officers to release from custody persons whom they encounter in crisis situations, when the team has determined the person is sufficiently stable. Funding for pilot crisis intervention teams is being made available to localities though the Byrne Justice Assistance Grant Program.

The statewide criminal justice plan may need to address the following:

How can Virginia ensure that persons with mental health problems do not inappropriately enter the criminal justice system, and how can Virginia do more to handle persons with mental illness who do enter the criminal justice system?

15 The Impact of Drugs on the Criminal Justice System

Background

"We hear, anecdotally, that drugs are driving the criminal justice system."

– *Substance Abuse Services for Offenders in Virginia*
Report to the General Assembly, Virginia State Crime Commission, 1998

The Office of National Drug Control Policy in 2004 estimated the total economic cost of drug abuse in the U.S. at $181 billion dollars, with the cost increasing faster than the growth in the economy. This report noted a telling impact on the criminal justice system: "The most rapid increases in drug abuse costs have been in criminal justice efforts, particularly increased rates of incarceration for drug offenses and drug-related offenses and increased spending on law enforcement and adjudication."

The criminal justice plan focus groups noted that illegal drugs affect every part of Virginia's criminal justice system, and that providing resources needed for detecting, apprehending, adjudicating and sanctioning drug offenders is one of the biggest challenges faced by the system.

Why This is Important

Drugs are related to crime in multiple ways. Most directly, it is a crime to use, possess, manufacture, or distribute drugs classified as controlled substances. Drugs are also related to crime through the effects they have on the user's behavior and by generating violence in connection with drug trafficking and other crimes committed to obtain money to purchase drugs. Various statistics from across Virginia's criminal justice system illustrate the impact that drugs are having on the system.

In Virginia, the number of adults arrested for drug offenses rose from 20,806 in 2000 to 29,352 in 2006, an increase of 41%. Drug arrests outnumbered arrests for violent or property crimes in every year of this period. The 41% increase in drug offense arrests compares to an increase of 13% in violent crime arrests and 13% in property crime arrests during the same period. These large numbers of drug arrests also help to swell Virginia's growing prison population. From 2000 through 2006, drug offenses comprised 23% to 26% of all the new court commitments to the Department of Corrections.

What's Being Done About It

The most obvious way to reduce the impact of drug offending on the criminal justice system is to reduce the availability of illegal drugs and reduce the number of persons using these drugs. For information on steps Virginia is taking to prevent illegal drug use and provide treatment for drug users, refer to the section "**Drug Prevention and Treatment**."

In addition to initiatives to reduce the availability of illegal drugs and prevent illegal drug use, Virginia has taken steps to mitigate the effects that drug offenses have on the criminal justice system. Some of these efforts are summarized below.

In 2004, the General Assembly enacted the *Drug Treatment Court Act* to address the growing number of drug cases in the courts and develop services and sanctions that may reduce the number of cases that result in costly incarceration. Drug treatment courts try to focus on the root cause of drug-related crime, and the drug habit or addiction, through the coordinated efforts of prosecutors, defense counsel, probation officers, law enforcement officers, substance abuse treatment providers, mental health clinicians, and social services staff, to address participants' conduct. These programs provide an alternative to short-term incarceration for certain offenders. Drug treatment court participants may be ordered to undergo substance abuse treatment, mental health treatment,

drug testing, and intensive supervised probation — all in lieu of incarceration or detention — while appearing regularly before a judge for status hearings. Virginia currently has 28 operational drug treatment courts.

Virginia has established several mechanisms to help offset the costs imposed on the criminal justice system when dealing with drug offenses. These mechanisms, established in the *Code of Virginia*, include imposing fees on offenders which are used, in part, to fund anti-drug efforts, and seizing assets from convicted drug offenders. Among these mechanisms are:

- The *Drug Offender Assessment and Treatment Fund* collects fees imposed upon conviction for certain drug offenses. Monies realized from these fees are to be appropriated annually to assist the Department of Corrections, Department of Juvenile Justice, and the Commission on Virginia Alcohol Safety and Prevention to provide offender substance abuse screening and assessment; to the Department of Criminal Justice Services to support local community probation and pretrial services programs; and to the Supreme Court of Virginia to support drug treatment court programs.

- Under the *Forfeited Asset Sharing Program* coordinated by the Department of Criminal Justice Services, money, motor vehicles and other personal and real property used in substantial connection with the manufacture, sale or distribution illegal drugs is subject to seizure by law enforcement authorities. The forfeited assets can then be distributed to participating state and local law enforcement agencies. Since the program was established in 1991, it has provided more than $47.7 million to participating law enforcement agencies.

- The Department of State Police maintains the *Drug Investigation Special Trust Account* and the *Asset Forfeiture Account*. Cash and proceeds derived from the sale of forfeited assets are placed in these accounts and are drawn from as the need arises.

The statewide criminal justice plan may need to address the following:

What can Virginia do to help reduce the impact that illegal drug use has on the criminal justice system and on society?

16 Drug Prevention and Treatment

Background

"Drug treatment offers the best alternative for interrupting the drug abuse/criminal justice cycle."

– National Institute on Drug Abuse, National Institutes of Health, 2006

Federal research offers a compelling case for treating drug abusing offenders. The U.S. General Accounting Office review of the Treatment Alternatives to Street Crime program cited drug abuse treatment as effective when it includes: 1) coordinated criminal justice efforts, 2) incentives to enter treatment, 3) matching offenders with treatment, and 4) drug test monitoring. The justice system can apply pressure on offenders to undergo treatment, and research shows that these offenders have outcomes as good as or better than those who entered treatment without legal compulsion.

The financial case for treatment is also compelling. In 2004, the Office of National Drug Control Policy stated that in 2002 an estimated $108 billion was associated with drug-related crime, including criminal justice costs and costs borne by crime victims. The cost of treating drug abuse, including research, training and prevention efforts, was estimated at $16 billion.

The criminal justice plan focus groups noted that drug prevention and treatment programs are essential to healthy and productive communities. The groups also noted that the lack of substance abuse services has negative impacts on the criminal justice system, and that existing treatment programs often lack the resources and staff to deal with the extent of the illegal drug problem.

Why This Is Important

For information on the impact and costs that illegal drug abuse imposes on society and the criminal justice system, refer to the section "**The Impact of Drugs on the Criminal Justice System**."

Drug prevention and treatment can be incorporated into various points in the criminal justice system. Law enforcement and other agencies promote drug prevention education programs, treatment programs are offered in jails and prisons, and correctional agencies may include treatment as a condition of probation. Drug courts blend monitoring and sanctions with treatment, treatment in prison may be followed by community-based treatment after release, and treatment under parole or probation supervision.

What's Being Done About It

Substance abuse and treatment efforts are spread across a wide range of state offices and agencies. Some, but by no means all, of the major ones are summarized below.

Prevention efforts

- The *Governor's Office for Substance Abuse Prevention (GOSAP)* is authorized by §2.2-118, and the GOSAP Collaborative was established in 2006 by the Governor's Executive Directive 4. GOSAP promotes the sharing of resources and fostering collaboration for youth substance abuse prevention activities. GOSAP administers federal grant funds from the U.S. Substance Abuse and Health Services Administration, and the Governor's set-aside of Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act funds allocated to Virginia under the No Child Left Behind Act.

- The *Virginia State Police Drug Enforcement Section* was established to provide full-time attention to enforcing drug laws in Virginia. Its efforts include drug eradication initiatives and initiatives to reduce the supply of

illegal drugs entering Virginia. This work is coordinated with numerous federal and local law enforcement agencies.

- The Department of Criminal Justice Services administers the *Youth Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention Project (YADAPP),* which provides high school students with training and resources to assume peer leadership roles in their schools and communities to develop projects promoting school safety and drug use prevention among their peers. YADAPP provides this through three main activities: a Summer Leadership Conference, Regional Leadership Conferences/Trainings, and Year-Round Promotion and Assistance to Youth-Led Projects.

Treatment efforts

- The Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation, and Substance Abuse Services, the state authority for mental health, mental retardation, and substance abuse services, provides leadership and service to Virginia's system of treatment, habilitation, and prevention services for persons affected by mental illness, mental retardation, or substance abuse. The Department oversees local *Community Services Boards (CSBs),* the entry points for publicly-funded mental health, mental retardation, and substance abuse services. In FY2006, 52,416 people received services for substance abuse from CSBs.

- The Department of Corrections (DOC) operates *Institution Therapeutic Communities, Community-Based Residential Therapeutic Communities* and contractual *Residential Substance Abuse Treatment* programs. Research suggests that these programs—properly funded and implemented—reduce recidivism for the substance abusing offender population. DOC has been pilot-testing Evidence-Based Practices (EBP) treatment programs and services, and the Substance Abuse Council's 2007 state plan recommended increasing these programs and services for substance abusing offenders.

- Virginia's drug courts provide an alternative to short-term incarceration for certain offenders. Participants may undergo substance abuse treatment, mental health treatment, drug testing, and intensive supervised probation—in lieu of incarceration or detention—while appearing regularly before a judge for status hearings. Virginia currently has 28 operational drug treatment courts.

Many substance abuse prevention and treatment efforts in Virginia are coordinated by the *Substance Abuse Services Council,* created by the *Code of Virginia* in the executive branch to advise and make recommendations to the Governor, the General Assembly, and the State Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services Board on broad policies and goals and on the coordination of Virginia's public and private efforts to control substance abuse.

The statewide criminal justice plan may need to address the following:

What can Virginia do to provide additional substance abuse prevention and treatment services in the Commonwealth?

17 Knowing What Works in Criminal Justice

Background

> "The effectiveness of most crime prevention strategies will remain unknown until the nation invests more in evaluating them. This is the central conclusion of this report…. By scientific standards, there are "very few programs of proven effectiveness.""
>
> – *What Works, What Doesn't, What's Promising,* Office of Justice Programs, 1997

Virginia has a wide range of requirements for accountability in its criminal justice programming. Federal grant funding provided to Virginia often includes requirements for reporting on the progress of activities conducted under these awards. Additionally, state government appropriations and grants often come with requirements for progress reporting by localities and/or agencies that receive these funds.

Despite these requirements, it remains difficult for Virginia policy makers, funding agencies, and the public to cite hard evidence that these expenditures are paying for programs that "work." In practice, performance reporting often measures program activities and expenditures, but not whether or not programs are accomplishing their goals. For example, a program designed to reduce violent crime may report on how many anti-crime planning meetings were held, or how much money was spent on the meetings, but not report information on whether the program actually reduced violent crime rates.

The focus groups indicated that the criminal justice system needs to do more to identify productive and non-productive programs, and use this information when making budget decisions. The groups also noted that programs should see evaluations as aids to improvement, rather than as threats to their work.

Why This Is Important

According to the U.S. Census Bureau (State and Local Government Finances by Level of Government table), Virginia's combined expenditures for police protection, corrections, judicial and legal services in 2005 totaled $3.8 billion - $1.6 billion in state expenditures and $2.2 billion in local expenditures. When government cannot account for the effectiveness of such expenditures, there are various consequences:

- Resources spent on ineffective programs are unavailable for effective programs.
- Policy-makers cannot make informed decisions about where to put scarce resources, and may be swayed by anecdotes and speculation rather than by what is proven to be cost-effective.
- The public loses confidence in how effectively taxpayer money is being spent.
- Virginia could lose limited, competitive federal funding to states that can demonstrate effectiveness.
- Continued funding can become seen as an entitlement, not requiring results and accountability.

The National Criminal Justice Association (NCJA), the major association representing national criminal justice issues, cited the importance of knowing what works in a Policy Statement (1994):

> "The criminal justice system must have the public's support and confidence. Accountability is fundamental to securing and sustaining public confidence and support. The decisions and actions of that system therefore must be well founded and informed. The system's performance must be routinely monitored and assessed. Program evaluation provides a means for assessing the efficacy of programs in meeting performance objectives."

What's Being Done About It

Virginia and other states are moving toward doing more to evaluate criminal justice programs and policies. Governments are increasingly acknowledging that evaluating programs for success is important. Evaluation planning and reporting is being requested by legislators and policy-makers, and is increasingly being added to requirements for receiving funds from federal and state funding agencies.

The federal *Government Performance and Results Act of 1993* requires performance measures reporting as a condition of the federal grants that Virginia receives and uses to fund public safety and criminal justice activities. The Department of Criminal Justice Services, which acts as the "pass-through" agency that distributes much of this funding to Virginia's state and local public safety agencies, incorporates these requirements in its grant announcements. For example:

- Virginia's Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Program announcement of funding availability for FY 2007 informed potential grant recipients that: "To assist in fulfilling the Department's responsibilities under the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA), P.L. 103-62, applicants who receive funding under this solicitation must provide data that measures the results of their work."

- Applicants seeking funding for juvenile programs are advised that: "Applicants for OJJDP (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention) funding are required to collect and report data that measure the results of funded activities to ensure compliance with the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993."

In Virginia, Chapter 55.1 of the *Code of Virginia*, the *Government Performance and Results Act (2003),* requires each state agency to develop and maintain a strategic plan for its operations, which shall include "….performance measures of the agency that are linked into the performance management system directed by long-term objectives.…" Furthermore, the Act requires that each agency establish "…. input, output, and outcome measures for the agency." Virginia's major public safety agencies have established strategic plans that recognize this requirement. The strategic plans for the Departments of Correctional Education, Corrections, Juvenile Justice, and Criminal Justice Services all highlight the importance of evaluating programs using measurable objectives and outcomes.

Virginia's public safety agencies are increasing their efforts to evaluate programs. Many, particularly in corrections, are working diligently to incorporate Evidence-Based Practices into their activities. However, despite these requirements, obtaining objective, meaningful information on criminal justice program outcomes — on whether or not these programs are achieving their intended goals — remains a challenge.

The statewide criminal justice plan may need to address the following:

How can Virginia's criminal justice system evaluate its policies and programs to determine if they are achieving their goals, and to determine which policies and programs are providing benefits and which are not?

18 Equality and Consistency in the Criminal Justice System

Background

> "What we see today, with for example the notion of jury nullification, is a growing portion of our population…. that questions our system of justice. They do so in part because they have concluded our system is ineffective, but in larger part because they judge it to be unfair.... Public opinion polls show a consistent decline in assessments of police, courts, and corrections... The challenge today is to create a justice system in which there is cooperation and coordination, but which values those elements of a justice system which we have long cherished and which are embodied in our Constitution and laws. I think this is achievable. I think this is what we must do, but it will require that we pay as much attention to the measurement of justice as we do to the measurement of crime and criminal justice processes."
>
> "*The Challenge of Crime in a Free Society: Looking back, Looking Forward*"
> – U.S. Department of Justice, 1997

Fair, equal and consistent treatment of all individuals under the law is a cornerstone principle of the criminal justice system. Without public trust in the justice system and in the authorities who serve in it, justice cannot be achieved. The justice system cannot work unless the citizens it serves believe and trust that it works fairly.

The criminal justice focus groups cited concerns that the justice system does not treat all individuals fairly and equally. Media reports, for example, cite charges that law enforcement officers disproportionately stop and question minority motorists for "driving while black." The focus groups cited inconsistency in prosecution practices and in court sentencing as a concern, noting that perceived inconsistency contributes to the public's lack of confidence in the criminal justice system.

Why This Is Important

The importance of equality and consistency in the criminal justice system has been cited by organizations representing all parts of the criminal justice system, from law enforcement to the courts.

The International Association of Chiefs of Police in 2006 reported that "To be effective, a police department and its individual officers must be seen primarily as protectors of civil rights, rather than agents of social control whose main purpose is to limit individual freedoms."

The American Bar Association's 2007 article, *Racial Bias in the Criminal Justice System and Why We Should Care*, noted that when the criminal justice system is seen as unfair and unequal, it undermines the workings of the system. When people in the community don't trust the system, they are less likely to participate in it, and this has consequences. Crimes are not reported. People don't talk to the police to provide information needed in investigations, or come forward as witnesses. People don't come to court to testify, and cases fail. Juries are less likely to convict, regardless of the evidence.

In Virginia, the 2004-2006 *Strategic Plan for the Judicial System of Virginia* repeatedly cites the importance of the perception of equality and fairness in the courts, without which they cannot function. In stressing this, the plan document notes the words of Associate Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court Thurgood Marshall: "We must never forget that the only real source of power that we as judges can tap is the respect of the people."

What's Being Done About It

The *U.S. Sentencing Reform Act of 1984* created the United States Sentencing Commission and charged it with creating federal sentencing guidelines. A 2004 U.S. Sentencing Commission reported noted that, prior to the Act, "The sentencing process, a critical element of the criminal justice process, was opaque, undocumented, and largely discretionary. Because of its impenetrability to outside observers, there was a sense that the process was unfair, disparate, and ineffective for controlling crime."

Virginia established its *sentencing guidelines* system in 1994 to promote fairness and consistency in sentencing practices by removing "extra-legal" factors which may unfairly bias decision-making. The National Center for State Courts recently released preliminary results of an NIJ-funded study examining the extent to which Virginia's sentencing guidelines promote consistency and proportionality and minimizes discrimination. The report concluded that Virginia's sentencing guidelines system is achieving its goals of overall consistency in sanctioning practices, and that there is no evidence of systematic discrimination in sentences imposed in Virginia based on race, gender or court location (Virginia Criminal Sentencing Commission 2007 Annual Report).

Virginia's Commonwealth's Attorneys' Services Council (CASC) is the state agency responsible for providing training, education and services for Virginia's prosecutors. The Council's *2006 Strategic Plan* cites as one of its goals "ensuring a fair and effective system of justice."

The Virginia Association of Chiefs of Police and the Virginia Sheriffs' Association have sought to assist law enforcement agencies in the development of policies related to training personnel to be sensitive not only to what they can and cannot do legally but also what they can and cannot do professionally and ethically. Additionally, cultural diversity training standards are now included in the state-mandated basic law enforcement training that all Virginia law enforcement officers receive.

The 2007 *Blueprints for Change: Criminal Justice Policy Issues in Virginia* conference sponsored by the Department of Criminal Justice Services included a session on "*Using Technology to Guard Against Bias in Policing*." The session examined the use of in-car cameras, oversight of automated records and information, and polygraphs to help guard against biased-based policing.

The statewide criminal justice plan may need to address the following:

How can components of Virginia's criminal justice system ensure that equality and consistency is applied to all persons in the criminal justice system?

19 Immigration and the Criminal Justice System

Background

> "The connection between immigration and crime is one of the most contentious topics in contemporary society…. A general point on which both pro- and anti-immigration writers agree is that, as we enter the new millennium, the latest wave of immigration is likely to have a more important impact on society than any other issue."
>
> – *On Immigration and Crime*, Martinez and Lee, 2000
> In *The Nature of Crime: Continuity and Change*

The University of Virginia's Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service reported in 2007 that one in every ten Virginians is foreign-born. Responding to immigrants — both legal and illegal — has rapidly become one of the most pressing issues for Virginia's criminal justice system. The challenges are many. Differences in culture, in language, and in understanding and attitudes toward the justice system present challenges that will become more common as the immigrant population in Virginia continues to expand.

The criminal justice focus groups noted that every part of both the state and local criminal justice system is being affected by immigration, with most of the impact seen at the local level. The focus groups also noted that the challenges posed by immigration will grow in the future.

Why This Is Important

Responding to illegal immigrants is a growing problem for the justice system in Virginia and other states. The International Association of Chiefs of Police noted that current federal and state efforts to put responsibility for enforcing federal immigration laws on local law enforcement agencies may threaten the ability of local agencies to perform their most basic functions:

> "Local police agencies depend on the cooperation of immigrants, legal and illegal, in solving all sorts of crimes and in the maintenance of public order. Without assurances that they will not be subject to an immigration investigation and possible deportation, many immigrants with critical information would not come forward…. Because many families with undocumented family members also include legal immigrant members, this would drive a potential wedge between police and huge portions of the legal immigrant community as well."

Immigration creates confusion about the roles and responsibilities of local law enforcement. Illegal entry into the U.S. is a federal criminal felony for which local law enforcement can make an arrest. However, if an immigrant overstays a visa, this is a civil violation of federal law for which local police have no authority to arrest. Recently, in Prince William County, the county's 500-member police force was being trained in how to look for clues concerning the immigrant status of crime suspects. Regarding the complexity of this task, a deputy county attorney stated that "In order to do this right, a person almost has to thread a needle." The attorney said that county officers have no direct role or authority in carrying out federal immigration laws and shouldn't even attempt to understand them. (*County Is Training Officers to Focus on Criminals, Not Federal Laws*, Washington Post, February 9, 2008).

Law enforcement is not the only part of the system feeling the effects of immigration. The *2004-2006 Strategic Plan of the Judicial System of Virginia* cites challenges posed by Virginia's growing immigrant population, among them how the court will deal with the linguistic and cultural barriers that immigrant communities say they experience in using the courts. And a 2007 report by the Virginia State Crime Commission stated that 10% of Virginia's jail inmates are suspected of being illegal immigrants.

Immigrants are more likely to be crime victims than non-immigrants, but they are often afraid to report crime to authorities. A 1998 National Institute of Justice report noted that this failure to report crime allows criminals to go free and erodes the criminal justice system's ability to function. This problem is aggravated by the fact that immigrants, especially new ones, often settle in urban neighborhoods with high poverty levels, substandard housing, poor schools and high crime rates. A 2007 report by the Virginia Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC) noted that foreign-born populations, even when legally present, tend to be wary of law enforcement due to fear of deportation. Local police and community leaders told JLARC that that unreported crime is a significant problem in Virginia's immigrant communities and that this affects the safety of the general population.

What's Being Done About It

In Virginia, the 2007 General Assembly created the *Virginia Commission on Immigration* to study, report, and make recommendations to address the costs and benefits of immigration on Virginia, including the impact on education, health care, law enforcement, local demands for services and the economy, and the effect on the Commonwealth of federal immigration and funding policies. The Commission is expected to make recommendation on how Virginia can address immigration.

The Virginia State Crime Commission's *Illegal Immigration Task Force* has developed various recommendations for dealing with immigrants, including law enforcement issues, agreements with federal immigration authorities, and the role of Virginia prisons and jail in these issues. The Crime Commission's recommendations were presented to the 2008 General Assembly.

The Virginia Center for Policing Innovation (VCPI) has developed a *Multicultural Community Policing* series of trainings designed to help jurisdictions facing the challenges of policing a rapidly changing population. The VCPI trainings include topics such as Community Policing in Asian Communities, Community Policing in Hispanic Communities, and Basic Spanish for Corrections Personnel.

The Department of Criminal Justice Services has provided grant funding to state and local agencies to improve their response to Virginia's changing population. In FY2008, funding was offered for promoting partnerships between minority, refugee or immigrant communities and criminal or juvenile justice agencies to address crime and crime prevention needs; and for initiatives to increase access to resources and services to prevent these populations from entering the juvenile and criminal justice systems.

In 2005 *The Governor's Preventing Crime in Virginia's Minority Communities Task Force Report* issued recommendations including the need for "cultural competencies" in criminal justice system responses reflecting awareness of and sensitivity to Virginia's growing diverse populations.

The statewide criminal justice plan may need to address the following:

How can Virginia's criminal justice system respond to its immigrant populations and encourage reforms while providing appropriate and needed assistance?

20 Victims of Crime and the Criminal Justice System

Background

> "Although the overall treatment of crime victims has seen vast improvements, problems remain in enforcing victims' laws. The statutes often lack procedures for administration and execution of the rights and services they provide. At times the system may be overburdened, uninformed or otherwise unaware of its responsibilities to victims. Consequently, victims may not receive the proper notification they are entitled to, which prevents their ability to attend trial, to be heard or to participate in the system. Many jurisdictions also have no remedies available to victims, leaving them with no legal recourse."
>
> –National Conference of State Legislators, 2005

Crime victims' rights and services available for Virginia crime victims have expanded significantly over the past 20 years, including passage of the Crime Victim and Witness Rights Act in 1995 and the 1997 amendment to the Virginia Constitution that defines the rights of crime victims. Although victims' rights are defined in the Constitution, the actions necessary to provide these rights are the responsibility of Virginia's Executive, Legislative and Judicial branches of government. Victims' rights advocates have argued that in Virginia, as in other states, there are areas in which improvements are needed in how these rights are provided to crime victims.

The criminal justice plan focus groups noted that Virginia needs to improve how services are provided to crime victims. Crime victims are not always informed of the rights and services available, and don't always have a 'voice' in the criminal justice process. The groups noted that victims of sex crimes in particular often cite difficulties dealing with the system. Additionally, victims have no clear mechanism through which to enforce these rights and no available remedy when rights are ignored or violated.

Why This Is Important

The *Constitution of Virginia*, Section 8-A, provides the following for crime victims:

> "That in criminal prosecutions, the victim shall be accorded fairness, dignity and respect by the officers, employees and agents of the Commonwealth and its political subdivisions and officers of the courts and, as the General Assembly may define and provide by law, may be accorded rights to reasonable and appropriate notice, information, restitution, protection, and access to a meaningful role in the criminal justice process."

Virginia has a constitutional duty to provide victims of crime the rights they are accorded under the law. Furthermore, if victims feel that these rights and protections are not adequately provided or effective, they may be less willing to report crimes and participate in the investigation and prosecution of crimes. Finally, the quality of justice dispensed is undermined if victims are denied an appropriate and meaningful role in the criminal justice process. As Supreme Court Justice Benjamin Cardozo noted:

> Justice, though due the accused, is due the accuser also. The concept of fairness must not be strained till it is narrowed to a filament. We are to keep the balance true. (Snyder v. Massachusetts, 291 U.S. 97, 122 (1934)).

What's Being Done About It

Victims' rights have been addressed by various federal actions, many designed to enhance victims' rights at the state level as well. The *Victims of Crime Act of 1984* (VOCA) established provisions to assist state programs that

assist and compensate crime victims. Other federal statutes to assist crime victims include the *Violence Against Women Acts (VAWA) of 1994 and 2000*, the *Violence Against Women and Department of Justice Reauthorization Act of 2005*, and the *Justice for All Act of 2004*.

In Virginia, the 1995 *Crime Victim and Witness Rights Act* codified victims' rights. The Act provides that the impact of crime be brought to the attention of the courts; that crime victims and witnesses are treated with dignity, respect and sensitivity; that their privacy is protected; that victims and witnesses are informed of their legal rights and receive authorized services; and that they have the opportunity to be heard by authorities at all critical stages of the criminal justice process.

The *Code of Virginia* directs the Department of Criminal Justice Services to provide various types of support to programs serving crime victims, including: 1) providing grant funds to local governments for operating victim/witness programs; 2) providing grant funds for programs serving victims of domestic violence, sexual abuse and stalking; 3) establishing guidelines for local victim/witness programs; and 4) establishing training standards and model policy for law-enforcement in handling family abuse, domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking cases, and training standards and model policy and protocols for local and regional sexual assault response teams.

The Department is establishing the *Virginia Victim Assistance Academy* to provide a comprehensive training program for crime victim service providers, advocates, allied professionals and others who work with crime victims, and who have three or fewer years of experience. The academy will provide a foundation of victims' services and principles to enable participants to more effectively assist crime victims. The Department also maintains the *Crime Victim INFO-LINE*, a toll-free number providing victims with victims' rights information, crisis intervention and referrals. The Department also provides direct services and staff support, on a limited basis, in crimes involving mass casualties.

The Attorney General's *Victim Notification Program* ensures Virginia's victims their right to be notified of any appeal or habeas corpus proceeding involving the case or cases in which such person was a victim, provides victims with general information about the appellate process and habeas corpus proceedings, and provides referrals to victims when appropriate.

The Virginia Department of Corrections' *Victim Services Unit* provides certain services to crime victims, including advocacy on behalf of crime victims; and notification of inmate transfers, release dates, name changes, escapee and recaptures. The Virginia Parole Board's *Victim Services staff* also provides explanations about the parole process; accompaniment to parole board appointments when requested by victims; and ongoing support, crisis intervention, information, and referrals.

The statewide criminal justice plan may need to address the following:

What more can Virginia do to ensure that crime victims have access to a meaningful role in the criminal justice process and are provided with the rights and services that they are accorded under federal law, the Virginia constitution and Virginia statues?

21 Public Awareness and the Criminal Justice System

Background

"Educating the public is one of the most important strategies for preventing crime."

– *Raising Awareness and Educating the Public*, Office of Justice Programs

"At the heart of community justice is civic participation."

– *Toward the Ideal of Community Justice*, National Institute of Justice Journal, 2000

The government and the criminal justice system alone cannot combat crime and ensure public safety. The public plays a vital role in preventing, detecting and reporting crimes, in providing information to assist in investigating and solving crimes, and in participating in the judicial process as witnesses and jurors. The public lives in the communities into which offenders return after being incarcerated. Citizens also play a role in the criminal justice system when they are victims of crime.

The criminal justice plan focus groups noted that, although the criminal justice system must encourage public awareness and involvement, efforts to do this are limited and inconsistent. Resources for outreach and public awareness are often very limited. The focus groups cited the importance of public education programs in informing citizens about their responsibilities in public safety, and of engaging public work in the community to influence policy, funding, and building a permanent citizen role in public safety.

Why This Is Important

Many government public safety efforts depend heavily on citizen participation. Crime prevention, for example, is largely dependant on the actions of citizens. Citizens must know why and how to take steps to protect themselves, their residences, and property. Community policing programs rely heavily on public awareness and involvement in the community-based, problem solving approach. Evaluations of many criminal justice initiatives by the National Institute of Justice cite the importance of community support.

Citizens' knowledge about criminal justice can also counter media-driven misperceptions about the system. Crime dramas such as "CSI" and "Law and Order" contribute to unrealistic public expectations about how the system works. Prosecutors report that the "CSI effect" sometimes causes jury members to believe that prosecutors don't make convincing cases in court because they did not use the types of sophisticated gadgets and technology routinely shown in the TV dramas.

Moreover, print and broadcast news coverage tends to focus mainly on sensational incidents or cases, with little in-depth coverage of the complex problems and issues that routinely confront the criminal justice system. Public and political debates about criminal justice issues are often framed so simplistically that citizens don't have realistic information to make reasonable decisions about criminal justice issues.

What's Being Done About It

In Virginia, one example of fostering public awareness occurred in the City of Richmond. Homicide and violent crime rates in Richmond were very high in the 1990s. During the 1990s, Richmond law enforcement and prosecutors complained that lack of citizen participation made it difficult to investigate, solve and prosecute cases. Citizens did not want to "get involved." In response, Richmond authorities made a concerted effort to educate the public about the importance of coming forth with information about crime. Authorities have since cited increased public participation as a factor leading to increases in arrests and convictions, contributing to Richmond's success in lowering homicide and violent crime rates.

Another well-known Virginia effort was the highly public campaign that accompanied Project Exile aimed at reducing firearms violence. The campaign used professionally developed television ads, billboards, and other methods to publicize the anti-crime effort and garner citizen support and participation. Similarly, Virginia's Weed and Seed anti-crime programs included an emphasis on increasing residents' awareness and participation in community–based efforts at combating and preventing crime.

At Virginia's statewide *2007 Blueprints for Change Conference,* participants stated that some juries acquit defendants in drug trials even when there are strong cases against the defendant. Participants felt that some of this is due to a lack of understanding of the level of proof required for a conviction, and recommended that a focus on increasing public awareness and understanding could help address this.

Virginia's various public safety agencies and offices operate initiatives aimed at increasing public awareness, primarily with the aim of educating the public on crime prevention and how to avoid becoming a crime victim. Some of these efforts are summarized below:

- The Department of State Police promotes public awareness of Virginia's Amber Alert program, and publicizes information to help citizens avoid becoming victims of auto theft, computer crime, identity theft and insurance fraud.

- The Office of the Attorney General engages in various public safety/crime prevention activities. Recent efforts have focused on publicizing information about internet safety and crimes against the elderly.

- The November 2007 report of the *Governor's Commission on Sexual Violence* noted that increasing public awareness about how to prevent sexual violence and respond appropriately to sexual violence victims was a major need. The report recommended "a coordinated statewide multimedia public education campaign" to address this problem.

Technology is also playing a growing role in increasing public awareness. Citizens now have access via the Internet to information about the functions and services provided by many agencies in the criminal justice system. Through the Internet, national, state, community and even street-level crime and arrest data are now available to many citizens, as is information about court cases, the addresses of convicted sex offenders, and government expenditures for public safety efforts.

The statewide criminal justice plan may need to address the following:

How can Virginia improve the publics' understanding of the criminal justice system, and make the public more aware of its role in the system and more willing to participate in the system and in public safety efforts?

COMMENTS

Comments on the Criminal Justice Topics

The environmental scan identified 21 major, overarching topics that confront the criminal justice system and public safety in the Commonwealth. These topics are provided with the intent that they should be considered, but not constitute a defining or driving agenda, in the further development of a statewide criminal justice plan. However, DCJS believes that these issues are worthy of consideration for several reasons.

First, the process used to identify the topics was broad-based. The focus groups that identified these issues included professionals with experience and expertise from a wide range of areas — crime and delinquency prevention, law enforcement, prosecution, institutional and community corrections, education, mental health and substance abuse, crime victims' services and others. Furthermore, the experts assembled — more than 170 of them — represented both state and local points of view, drawn from different regions of Virginia with different populations, geographies, economies, and public safety concerns.

Additional research following the focus groups confirmed that these topics are major concerns nationally. Federal officials and agencies, public safety officials in other states, and numerous national organizations representing public safety-conscious governing officials and professional associations have documented their importance in public safety. Virginia has done the same, in its *Code*, in reports from its executive, legislative and judicial branches, and in the strategic plans and mission statements of its major public safety agencies and organizations.

The second reason these topics are worthy of consideration is the striking degree to which they overlap and interconnect with one another. Improved *collaboration* in the criminal justice system requires more *sharing of information*, which in turn depends on better use of *technology*. Increased *collaboration* with schools and colleges can enhance *security at schools and colleges* and foster efforts to *prevent juvenile crime*. Efforts to *divert nonviolent offenders* from incarceration reinforce efforts to remove from the justice system persons with primarily *mental illness* or *substance abuse* problems, which can free up resources for *improving reentry* for returning offenders. The basic need for *equality and consistency* in the criminal justice system emphasizes needs to respond to cultural differences challenging the system due to the growth in *immigration*, which in turn highlights needs for *multi-disciplinary training* to help criminal justice officials respond to these new and different challenges.

One way the many interrelated topics identified in this environmental scan can inform the development of a statewide criminal justice plan is to emphasize how closely, and in how many ways, the topics truly are interrelated. This helps to illustrate that, despite its seemingly disjointed nature; the criminal justice system is in fact a system. Because it is a system, any efforts to address these topics logically must contain some element of planning. These topics and issues cannot be addressed in any one place alone, or through any one approach alone, or by any single agency alone. Better collaboration, better information sharing, and better use of technology can help in every part of the criminal justice system, and they need to be addressed in every part of the system. Improving crime prevention, or police training, or services to crime victims, would benefit citizens in Fairfax County as well as Wise County, in the City of Virginia Beach as well as in the City of Winchester.

Many, perhaps most, of the topics identified in the scan might be considered as criminal justice "infrastructure" topics, as opposed to topics that are more narrowly focused. For example, there is little focus on particular types of crime — such as crimes involving violence or firearms or gangs — that are frequently targeted by intense, but often brief, campaigns and other high-profile reduction efforts. This also suggests that the topics identified by the scan are candidates for long-range, strategic planning aimed at improving the criminal justice system and public safety in the Commonwealth.

Next Steps

This environmental scan provides a broad description of the current status of the criminal justice system in the Commonwealth, based on topics identified by members of the regional and statewide focus groups. Emphasizing the most prevalent criminal justice issues, the scan is presented as a working document to assist policy-makers in developing improvements to the criminal justice system as a whole. The scan will also assist the Administration in establishing long-term goals and priorities for criminal justice system improvements and the development of effective strategies to achieving those goals.

The scan will serve as an integral component in influencing the development of effective public policy regarding criminal justice system issues and concerns. It will provide essential documentation in support of funding decisions and resource alignments leading to a more effective criminal justice system. Strategically aligning criminal justice system components and resources will establish opportunities for open communication, improved collaboration and continued cooperation among criminal justice system entities, emphasizing the importance of each component, while working together in providing the most successful and effective criminal justice plan for Virginia.

The environmental scan document will be submitted to a Work Group consisting of representatives from key public safety agencies. The Work Group will be assigned the task of conducting a more comprehensive review of the criminal justice system issues identified in the scan. The committee will recommend strategies for continued improvement in the criminal justice system, and, if necessary, will address additional criminal justice system strategic issues.

The end product of the Work Group will be the identification of strategic issues and potential resolutions to them, and methods describing how these resolutions will be integrated into broad system goals. The Work Group's comprehensive review of the environmental scan, and development of recommended strategies for continued improvements, will serve as a mechanism for guiding positive change and growth of the criminal justice system in the Commonwealth. The document will be a prominent tool for promoting well-managed government in Virginia, and will give further credence to Virginia's recognition as being one of the best managed states in the nation. The results of the Work Group's efforts will provide the content for the Criminal Justice System Plan.

Ultimately, after review and approval by the Oversight Committee the Plan will be submitted to the Office of the Secretary of Public Safety and to the Office of the Governor for further review and subsequent approval.

It is anticipated that publication and further dissemination of the final Statewide Criminal Justice System Plan will occur in August 2008. The Plan will be assessed and reviewed annually, with updates as needed.

Appendix A

Regional Focus Group Regions and Meeting Locations

Regional Focus Group Meeting Dates and Locations		
Region	*Date*	*Meeting Location*
Valley	September 4, 2007	Weyers Cave, VA
Southwest	September 5, 2007	Bristol, VA
West Central	September 6, 2007	Salem, VA
Northern	September 10, 2007	Manassas, VA
Eastern	September 11, 2007	Warsaw, VA
Hampton Roads	September 18, 2007	Newport News, VA
Central	September 20, 2007	Richmond, VA
Southside	September 26, 2007	Danville, VA

Appendix B

Localities in Each Focus Group Region of Virginia

Criminal Justice Plan Regions			
Central Region	*Northern Region*	*Eastern Region*	*Southside Region*
Cities • Charlottesville • Colonial Heights • Hopewell • Petersburg • Richmond Counties • Albemarle • Amelia • Buckingham • Caroline • Charles City • Chesterfield • Culpeper • Cumberland • Dinwiddie • Fluvanna • Goochland • Greene • Hanover • Henrico • King and Queen • King William • Louisa • Madison • Nelson • New Kent • Orange • Powhatan • Prince George • Rappahannock • Sussex	Cities • Alexandria • Fairfax • Falls Church • Manassas • Manassas Park • Fredericksburg Counties • Arlington • Clarke • Fairfax • Fauquier • Loudoun • Prince William • Stafford • Spotsylvania • Warren	Cities None Counties • Accomack • Essex • King George • Lancaster • Middlesex • Northampton • Northumberland • Richmond • Westmoreland	Cities • Emporia • Danville • Martinsville Counties • Brunswick • Greensville • Nottoway • Lunenburg • Patrick • Henry • Pittsylvania • Halifax • Charlotte • Prince Edward • Mecklenburg • Southampton

Localities in Each Focus Group Region of Virginia *(cont.)*

Criminal Justice Plan Regions			
Southwest Region	*Hampton Roads Region*	*Valley Region*	*West Central Region*
Cities • Bristol • Galax • Norton Counties • Bland • Buchanan • Carroll • Lee • Scott • Wise • Russell • Dickenson • Smyth • Wythe • Grayson • Tazewell • Floyd • Washington	Cities • Chesapeake • Franklin • Hampton • Newport News • Norfolk • Poquoson • Portsmouth • Suffolk • Virginia Beach • Williamsburg Counties • Gloucester • Isle of Wight • James City • York • Mathews • Surry	Cities • Winchester • Harrisonburg • Staunton • Lexington • Waynesboro • Buena Vista • Covington Counties • Allegheny • Bath • Augusta • Rockbridge • Rockingham • Page • Shenandoah • Frederick • Highland	Cities • Bedford • Lynchburg • Roanoke • Salem • Radford Counties • Amherst • Appomattox • Bedford • Campbell • Botetourt • Craig • Franklin • Roanoke • Pulaski • Montgomery • Giles

Appendix C

Professions Represented on the Criminal Justice Planning Focus Groups

A variety of criminal justice professions, and other professions that interact with the criminal justice system, were represented at the regional and state criminal justice planning focus group meetings. The range of professions that was represented at the meetings is listed below.

The Department of Criminal Justice Services expresses its sincere gratitude to these more than 170 individuals who attended the focus groups and provided the benefit of their skill and experience in identifying the topics for the environmental scan report.

Chiefs of Police

Sheriff's Office

Virginia State Police

Commonwealth's Attorneys' Office

Department Corrections

Department of Correctional Education

Probation & Pretrial Programs

Inmate Re-Entry Programs

Department of Juvenile Justice

Court Service Unit Directors

Department of Forensic Science

Law Enforcement Training Academy Directors

Crime Victims' Services Programs

Department of Social Services

Child Support Enforcement

Local Mental Health Services

Local Substance Abuse Services

Superintendent of Schools

Department of Education

Department of Health

City Government

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Acknowledgements

The following individuals at the Department of Criminal Justice Services provided assistance with the data collection and analysis, writing, review and editing of the Environmental Scan Report.

Division of Policy, Planning and Research

Mr. Craig Hartley
Dr. Jim McDonough
Mr. Joe Marshall
Ms. Eileen Guertler
Ms. Roslyn Trent
Mr. Baron Blakley
Mr. Ben Wood
Mr. Greg Lilley
Ms. Debbie Roberts
Ms. Sherri Johnson
Ms. Jessica Krack
Mr. Butch Johnstone
Ms. Lakeshia Kennedy-Flores

Division of Law Enforcement and Regulatory Services

Mr. Tim Paul
Mr. Ernie O'Boyle
Mr. Sam Hoffman
Ms. Donna Bowman
Ms. Neadie Lee
Mr. Steve Clark
Mr. George Gotschalk
Mr. Ron Bessent

Division of Administration

Ms. Marsha Dietz
Ms. Deborah Turk

Division of Programs and Services

Mr. Dan Catley
Ms. Carol Lee-Raimo
Mr. Tony Casale
Ms. Mandie Patterson
Mr. John Mahoney
Ms. Laurel Marks

The Department of Criminal Justice Services would like to thank the following organizations for generously providing meeting facilities for the regional criminal justice planning focus groups held throughout the Commonwealth.

Cardinal Criminal Justice Academy
Salem, Virginia

Central Shenandoah Criminal Justice Academy
Weyers Cave, Virginia

Danville Institute for Advanced Learning and Research
Danville, Virginia

Newport News Police Department
Newport News, Virginia

Prince William County North Government Center
Manassas, Virginia

Rappahannock Community College (Warsaw Campus)
Warsaw, Virginia

Southwest Virginia Criminal Justice Training Academy
Bristol, Virginia

Virginia State Police Academy
Richmond, Virginia

The Department of Criminal Justice Services would like to thank the following individuals who acted as facilitators for the regional criminal justice planning focus groups held throughout the Commonwealth.

Department of Criminal Justice Services

Mr. Dan Catley
Ms. Heather D'Amore
Ms. Kathleen Demro
Mr. George Gotschalk
Ms. Eileen Guertler
Mr. Craig Hartley
Ms. Neadie Lee
Mr. Joe Marshall
Ms. Laurel Marks

Department of State Police

Ms. Deborah Cox
Mr. Gunnar Kohlbeck
Mr. Scott D. Jones

Virginia State University

Dr. Jay Malcan

Blue Ridge Regional Jail Authority

Mr. Chris Webb