

JUDICIARY AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEES

Oversight Hearing on 2008 Criminal Justice Reforms

October 16, 2008

Submitted by Sean Thakkar, Executive Director, CJIS Governing Board

Good afternoon Senator McDonald, Senator Harp, Representative Lawlor, Representative Merrill, members of the Judiciary and Appropriations Committee. Because I have just come on board as the Executive Director of the CJIS, I would like to briefly introduce myself and share my initial findings and thoughts.

I have been involved in the IT industry for 20 plus years and more specifically in the public sector for more than 12 years. While at Gartner, I was part of the public safety practice, where we assisted the criminal justice agencies with IT strategic planning to IT systems procurement. I was involved with Criminal Justice information exchange point analysis for the County of San Luis Obispo, CA and Clark County, NV, where the information exchange engine was designed for six criminal justice agencies. I served as the CTO in the US Marshals Service in the Central District for over 3 years and CIO for San Luis Obispo County.

Status / Accomplishment to-date:

My tenure with the State of Connecticut has just begun. I started in my position on September 26th, 2008. In this short time, I have:

1. Met with nine CJIS Governing Board members so far to get a better understanding of their CJIS vision for their agency, the CJIS Governing Board and the State. Other meetings are scheduled.
2. Met with on-going Criminal Justice Information Systems (CJIS) projects teams for Offender Based Tracking System (OBTs), CJIS Blueprint, Connecticut Impaired Driving Records Information System (CIDRIS), Connecticut On-line Law Enforcement Communication Teleprocessing (COLLECT) V2 and Statewide Automated Victim Notification (SAVIN).
3. Met with Department of Information Technology (DOIT) to get a better understanding of its organization, operations and the Systems Development Methodology (SDM).
4. Met with the Judicial Information Systems (JIS) Division for an orientation to the Judicial IT programs.
5. Provided CJIS Blueprint team with seventeen specific recommendations to be considered in the initial RFP process for a vendor to assist in the CJIS systems assessment and requirements development.
6. Contacted Colorado, Nebraska and Pennsylvania CJIS Directors, as a start, to get a better understanding of their respective CJIS environment and operations.

Findings:

Thus far, I have found there are diverse information technology (IT) systems spread throughout the CJIS agencies. Many of the systems are old and coming to the end of

their life-cycle. There is little documentation associated with these systems. There is a heavy reliance on institutional memory.

There are dedicated IT professionals in DOIT and CJIS agencies who want to do the right things. However, more than 40% of the DOIT and IT employees in the agencies could be eligible for retirement in the next 5 to 7 years.

I have recognized a demonstrated high level of co-operation between executive, judicial and municipal CJIS agencies. There is a commitment to a common goal of quickly completing the data sharing system initiative specified in PA 08-01.

Business Objective:

My business objectives developed thus far are to:

- Provide the CJIS Governing Board with independent and objective opinions and expertise on the implementation of CJIS;
- Optimize and leverage State's existing application infrastructure;
- Develop easy to implement technology for participating agencies; and
- Develop a secure environment for information exchange.

Project Approach:

With respect to managing the Information Sharing Initiative under Section 40 of PA 08-01 of the January 2008 Special Session, I am looking to follow a three phase approach.

The initial focus will be to Define, Design and Architect a solution which will lead to initiating an implementation RFP process and procurement, which would include vendor selection. Implementation would occur as a result of the procurement and be carried out by the selected vendor, utilizing project management procedures administered under the direction of the CJIS Governing Board. As importantly, the operation, maintenance, and management will be provided to carry the implemented solution forward.

To assist in the definition, design, and architecture of the Information Sharing Initiative, the services of a vendor are being sought, via a RFP process already initiated, which we are calling the development of a CJIS "Blueprint".

Budget:

The budget for the CJIS Governing Board for year 2008 – 2009 is \$2,250,000, for the initiation of the Information Sharing Initiative.

These funds, which remain intact, will provide a bridge until the CJIS systems assessment is completed as a result of the initial RFP initiative and the design requirements for the data sharing system are better known. It is expected that there will be information technology needs associated with the CJIS agencies as they may be required to interface with the data sharing system.

While the Information System Initiative application development is underway, we may expect CJIS agencies will be responding to ongoing requirements for systems

maintenance of established systems, upgrades, and changes such as may be forthcoming from legislative and Federal program requirements. Together, these responsibilities become part of the array of the criminal justice information system (CJIS) to be addressed systematically and methodically.

I would like to thank the committees for giving me the opportunity to present my testimony. I will be happy to answer any questions.