

2003 NASCIO Recognition Awards

**NOMINATION FORM**

**Title of Nomination:** Civil Workflow Control System (CWCS) – [pronounced QUICKS]  
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***Category for judging: 7- Innovative Use of Technology***

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**ONE-PAGE EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

CWCS (pronounced "quicks") - the Civil Workflow Control System - provides technology that allows non-criminal justice agencies to electronically "scan" fingerprints and enter information to request criminal history record checks through secure email over the Internet. FDLE responds with state and national criminal history checks through secure email within 48 hours (often much less), compared to 5-7 weeks using hard copy fingerprint cards.

In late 2001, FDLE developed and implemented a pilot of the Civil Workflow Control System (CWCS) as a mechanism to perform automated non-criminal applicant background checks using Livescan based technology. Livescan technology allows fingerprints to be submitted in an automated form by electronically scanning the fingerprint rather than using fingerprint cards requiring the ink and roll method.

Initially used in Florida's seaports as a way to guard against smuggling, theft, and sabotage, the system has evolved and is expanding to other agencies for use in a wide array of sensitive employment, licensing, and permit checks.

This new system, the result of forward thinking and adapted technology, has expedited criminal history record requests and benefited state and local agencies, private businesses, and citizens. Prior to CWCS, state and local agencies and private entities would often be forced to make critical decisions about sensitive employment, licensing, and permitting in the absence of a criminal history record. Other times the appointment or certification would be delayed until the criminal history was received. FDLE recognized a distinct problem and desired to create a mutually beneficial outcome, a comprehensive state and national criminal history record check completed in a timely fashion. Without CWCS and the automated processing of these prints, the estimated response time is 5 days for FDLE and 4-6 weeks for the FBI (excluding mailing time).

Over the past year, and in an effort to pass this enhanced service on to more of Florida's citizens, FDLE has encouraged other state and regulatory agencies (required to conduct fingerprint based background checks) to utilize the CWCS system. To date, automated requests make up over 34% of all fingerprint based non-criminal applicant background checks. During the January-March 2003 quarter alone, there were over 45,000 checks performed.

Agencies are anxious to participate in the service to expedite their criminal history requests and the ease with which the requests are processed benefits all parties involved. The system has greatly increased productivity and customer satisfaction at a minimal cost.

Written Justification

**a) Description of project, including length of time in operation.**

CWCS provides technology that allows non-criminal justice agencies to electronically "scan" fingerprints and enter information to request criminal history record checks through secure email over the Internet. FDLE responds with state and national criminal history checks through secure email within 48 hours, compared to 4-6 weeks using hard copy fingerprint cards.

In late 2001, FDLE developed and implemented a pilot of the Civil Workflow Control System (CWCS) as a mechanism to perform automated non-criminal applicant background checks using Livescan based technology. Livescan technology allows fingerprints to be submitted in an automated form by electronically scanning the fingerprint rather than using fingerprint cards requiring the ink and roll method. This endeavor was in response to Florida Statute 311.12(3)(a) requiring that Florida's commercial seaports perform fingerprint based criminal history background checks on employees and other persons having access to restricted areas within the ports - the high turnover and transient nature of this particular workforce required a quicker turnaround time than could be provided through the routine paper fingerprint card submission processes. CWCS was developed to expedite criminal history record checks and simplify the request process.

Initially used in Florida's seaports as a way to guard against smuggling, theft, and sabotage, the system has evolved and is expanding to other agencies for use in a wide array of sensitive employment, licensing, and permit checks. This new system, the result of forward thinking and adapted technology, has expedited criminal history record requests and benefited state and local agencies, private businesses, and citizens. Prior to CWCS, state and local agencies and private entities would often be forced to make critical decisions about sensitive employment, licensing, and permitting in the absence of a criminal history record. Other times the appointment or certification would be delayed until the criminal history was received. FDLE recognized a distinct problem and desired to create a mutually beneficial outcome, a comprehensive state and national criminal history record check completed in a timely fashion.

The pilot program began in December of 2001 and became fully operational in January 2002. Initially placed in seaports and at a select set of other regulatory / licensing agencies, FDLE has continued to add customers and expand the system.

July 2001	CWCS Development Began
December 2001	First Test Station on line Jacksonville Port
January 2002	System On Line to all Seaports
March 2002	CWCS expanded to Dept of State (first non port on system)
May 2002	CWCS expanded to Dept of Education
June 2002	CWCS expanded to all 15 DCF districts
August 2002	CWCS accepts non-governmental agencies (employers, volunteer groups)
March 2003	Expansion to Sheriff's Offices began

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July 2003

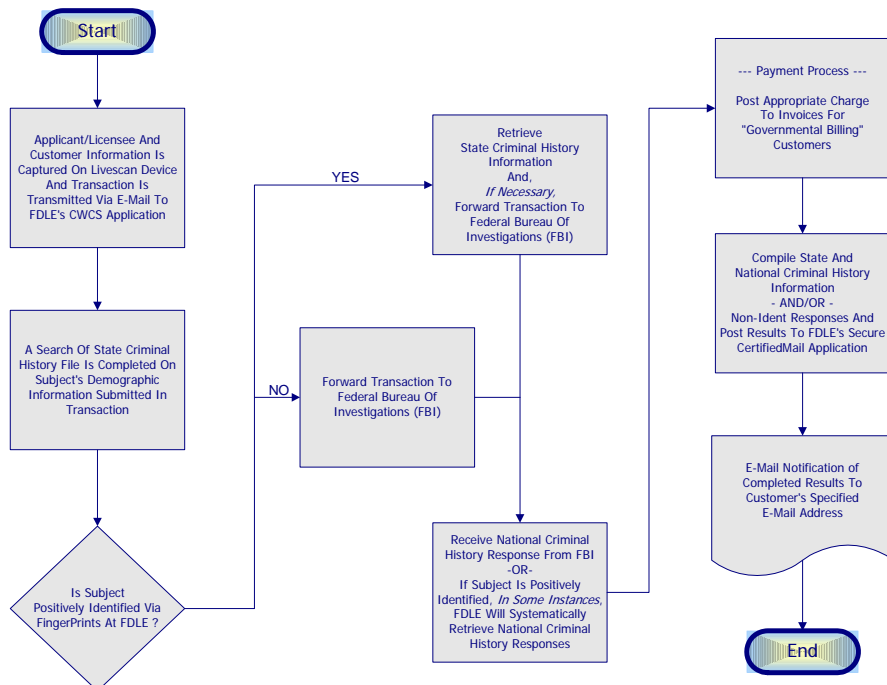
Expansion to 64 Sheriff's Offices (anticipated)

Over the past year, and in an effort to pass this enhanced service on to more of Florida's citizens, FDLE has encouraged other state and regulatory agencies (required to conduct fingerprint based background checks) to utilize the CWCS system. To date, automated requests make up over 34% of all fingerprint based non-criminal applicant background checks. During the January-March 2003 quarter alone, there were over 45,000 checks performed.

These non-applicant criminal history record checks play an important role in ensuring only appropriate individuals are considered for sensitive employment and licensing. The FBI has committed to 24 hour turnaround time and FDLE is committed to prioritized processing, as such, customers are able to get criminal history results within a maximum of 2 working days (often within 5 hours) of the submission of fingerprints. Without CWCS and the automated processing of these prints, the estimated response time is 5 days for FDLE and 4-6 weeks for the FBI (excluding mailing time).



CWCS Is An Application Developed By The Florida Department Of Law Enforcement (FDLE) For Processing Automated Criminal History Requests Via Fingerprint Based Livescan Technology



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### b) **Significance to the improvement of the operation of government.**

CWCS greatly improves the timeliness of criminal history response to the requesting agency. Because the FBI has committed to 24 hour turnaround time and FDLE committed to prioritized processing, customers are able to get results within a maximum of 2 working days (often within 5 hours) of the submission of fingerprints - eliminating criminals from positions or situations where they could harm both private industry and the public. Without CWCS and the automated processing of these prints, the estimated response time is 5 days for FDLE and 4-6 weeks for the FBI (excluding mailing time).

In addition, CWCS applies an e-commerce component that allows the state to automatically charge the appropriate criminal history record check fee (set by the Florida Legislature) to the appropriate agency or entity.

### c) **Benefits realized by service recipients, taxpayers, agency or state.**

Quick response is the greatest advantage CWCS offers.

The hard card process takes 5 days at FDLE and 4-6 weeks at the FBI (not including mailing time). The CWCS benchmark is 48 hours - but most of the submissions are completed within 5 hours.

This is a significant boon for such agencies as Department of Insurance that issues agent licenses before background checks are complete, thus putting the citizens of Florida at risk of insurance fraud. This is also a great aid to Florida's Department of Children and Families (DCF) when placing children in the hands of caregivers. The Department of State can now process concealed weapons permits in a timely fashion, and private security companies and those agencies charged with care of children and the elderly can ensure that their employees do not have a criminal record or disqualifying offense.

With the passage of the National Child Protection Act (1993), and section 943.0542, Florida Statutes (1999), public attention focused on individuals that volunteer to work with children and the elderly - the most vulnerable among us. The CWCS system was expanded to provide quick and easy access to criminal history records *before* the individual is allowed access to potential victims. This system can be used in any instance where a background check is necessary for employment or licensing

Agencies are anxious to participate in the service to expedite their criminal history requests and the ease with which the requests are processed benefits all parties involved. The system has effectively increased productivity at a minimal cost.

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**d) Return on investment, short-term/long-term payback (include summary calculations).  
Projects must exhibit measurable operational benefit.**

The CWCS did not result in any specific cost savings to the agency, however, CWCS allowed FDLE to eliminate weeks from the standard response time for a criminal history background check.

In addition, with the expansion of the concept of conducting background checks on all prospective employees and volunteers, the CWCS has allowed FDLE to process a growing number of criminal history checks almost immediately (by historical standards). The CWCS benchmark is 48 hours - but most of the submissions are completed within 5 hours. This represents a huge improvement over the historical process of ink and mail fingerprint cards that often took 7-8 weeks to process and return.

**Brief Narrative on Hardware and Software**

Customer Equipment Required:

Livescan Workstation or PC with fingerprint scanner with Internet Access

FDLE Equipment in Place:

One Windows 2000 Server with the following:

- Network access to receive email from the Internet
- CWCS Software (a Windows Service, written in Visual C++ and a Web Application, written in Javascript and implemented using Microsoft ASP pages, and several SQL Stored Procedures)
- SQL Server 2000
- Network access to FBI Store n' Forward via SMTP and IMAP4
- Internet Information Services (a component of windows 2000)
- Network access to post credit card charges to the VeriSign Payflow Pro online credit card processor
- Message Queuing Services (a component of Windows 2000)
- Message Forwarding Service (MFS) to process communications between CWCS and CCH (Computerized Criminal History)
- SwitchMsg Com object, written in Visual Basic, to provide sending and receiving of FCIC (Florida Crime Information Center) Switch messages between CWCS and the MFS

The initial cost of image technology could be an obstacle to implementing this system in other agencies. However, the cost of this technology has lowered significantly in the past few years and there are increased opportunities for partnering governmental agencies and private service providers.