



Intelligence Management System

Category: Business Process Innovations

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Executive Summary

The Pennsylvania Department of Corrections (PA DOC) oversees nearly 50,000 inmates across 24 state correctional institutions, one motivational boot camp, 14 community corrections centers, nearly 40 contract facilities and a training academy.

Although one of the goals of incarceration is to rehabilitate offenders, the reality is that the prison environment can provide criminals with the ability to network and to continue to commit crimes while incarcerated. The types of incidents that occur within prisons include fights, assaults, extortion, drug-related offenses, thefts, rapes and homicides. Many of these incidents are related to gang affiliation, also known as a Security Threat Group (STG). The prison environment can also mimic the culture in prisoners' home communities, with neighborhood, family and gang dynamics, conflicts and behaviors.

As the PA DOC has moved toward an intelligence-led approach to reduce violence, improve the detection and deterrence of contraband and mitigate gang activities in state correctional facilities, it needed to put more emphasis on identification and monitoring of STG inmates and their activities. The department also wanted to reduce the use of solitary confinement of inmates, which also requires more data collection to assist with population management.

In May 2017, the department implemented a new Intelligence Management System (IMS) to be a repository for intelligence that would ultimately result in safer prisons and communities. Through the initiative, the PA DOC has created an innovative, one-of-a-kind system to enhance its investigative techniques and serve as a standard for analysis in the Pennsylvania corrections community.

The IMS and associated business process improvements have allowed the PA DOC to more effectively collect, manage, retrieve, analyze and share data on STG members and activities. The improved functionality is generating over \$6 million in productivity savings per year across the PA DOC. The insights gained from data in the system have helped to reduce violence and criminal activity within correctional institutions and have facilitated more informed decisions about where to house inmates based on STG data.

Concept

The concept of the Intelligence Management System (IMS) was born out of the necessity to capture gang information electronically in a manner that was consistent, efficient, able to be shared and would provide investigational value.

The PA DOC has gathered and maintained information on gang involvement during incarcerations for many years but struggled with the technology to unlock the full potential of the data. The existing affiliations (e.g. gang) tracking system had limited usefulness due its inability to maintain historical information and was difficult to enhance to meet the growing needs of users. Another application was added to integrate and supplement the information being gathered; however, it was also cumbersome and information was limited and restricted to only a few users.

There was also no consistent identification or validation of an inmate's gang involvement and/or activity. Records were kept on paper locally at each institution and frequently did not follow the inmate when his or her location changed, requiring the new facility to begin gathering intelligence on its own. As a result, information sharing was inconsistent and inefficient. There was also no centralized repository for intelligence information and no centralized oversight for the process. As a result, minimal analysis could be done on the intelligence being gathered.

In late 2015, the department decided to pursue a new system and assigned a project team to work alongside key members of the Office of Special Investigations (OSII) Analytics Unit to examine its current procedures and protocols for collecting STG information. The team worked extensively to identify the overarching business process in order to recognize inefficiencies and opportunities to streamline. Ultimately, this analysis resulted in the creation of the IMS.

During analysis, it became clear that OSII needed to capture an STG member's interactions with both inmates and non-inmates, rank, leader status (institutional/statewide) within the STG and subset and involvement in institutional activities (e.g. contraband, violence, third-party mail, etc.). The data also needed to be centralized so that data on activities and associations could be exposed in a manner that would provide a more complete picture of a member and his or her involvement in an STG. OSII needed to be able to perform searches against the collected information with only a keyword or a few pieces of data and export the results.

Once the needs of the system were identified, the team began to develop a comprehensive, user-friendly application. Because the system would be replacing a primarily paper-based process, ease of use was key. In order to get institutional staff to buy-in, the data entry screens had to be efficient and intuitive, while the screens used to search for information had to be robust and nimble. The team utilized industry

standards, coupled with a tile-based approach, to present the required information in an easy-to-view and consumable format. Consequently, more information can be visually retrieved and analyzed in shorter time.

Significance

The IMS is an innovative, one-of-a-kind system that enhances OSII's investigative techniques and serves as a standard for analysis in the Pennsylvania Corrections community. The PA DOC developed the Intelligence Management System with the intent it would be a repository for intelligence which would ultimately result in safer prisons and communities.

The deployment of IMS has greatly improved OSII's ability to identify and track STGs, their members and their members' associations. Consequently, institutions are able to immediately gather and store supporting evidence of an inmate's affiliation. IMS has implemented an approval process for validation that has been adopted across the PA DOC to standardize the criteria used to confirm an inmate's affiliation. The records entered into IMS are immediately available to users of the system even when an inmate is transferred between institutions.

IMS also provides the ability to capture information on the ranking of members within the STG at each institution and statewide so that high-ranking members can be monitored more closely to detect institutional recruitment or statewide coordination of gang activities. Additional IMS functionality includes the ability to record activities of inmates, including assaults, fights, STG-related incidents and drug-related incidents. By examining institutional activities and inmate/non-inmate involvement, OSII is able to determine trends in behaviors and perform predictive analysis. As the information collected in IMS grows, the system's benefits will increase as both historical and current data can be used to investigate the intricacies of STGs, their members and activities.

Future deployments to the system will provide informant tracking, a systemized dissemination log, the ability to record activities against a DOC institution (in situations where inmate participation cannot be identified) and automated tracking and reporting on STGs and their subsets.

The intelligence gathering process implemented in IMS is crucial, as it is used to influence decisions that impact the criminal environment through crime reduction policies. Information extracted out of IMS on released inmates with STG affiliations is shared and leveraged by the law enforcement community. Ultimately, IMS is a tool used to make institutions and communities safer. By equipping the staff with the information they need, they can make informed decisions and institute best practices for reducing violence and increasing inmate and staff safety.

Financial Impact

Estimated IMS Savings

The IMS system has made it possible to quickly locate data, centrally maintain intelligence data and make it easily accessible electronically to all. The system has enabled quicker data collection, validations, investigations and analysis. IMS has saved numerous staff hours that were previously needed to:

- gather and document intelligence data,
- perform analysis of paper documents,
- scan and mail paper documents to the validation committee for review
- call other security offices for intelligence information on transferred inmates prior to arrival of paper files.
- package and transfer intelligence files when an inmate changed location
- compile monthly intelligence reports to submit to OSII

The estimated staff time savings is detailed below. The number of hours previously spent on intelligence gathering prior to IMS has been translated into a financial savings based on the decreased hours of work spent on the related tasks.

Analytics Unit:

4 people (~30.00 per hour) * 25 hours (per month) * 12 months =
\$36,000.00

Intelligence Unit:

7 people (~75 per hour) * 10 hours * 12 months = \$63,249.00

Security Offices:

175 people (various salaries) * 1 hour a day * 12 months = \$4,527,400.00

Institutional Staff (Major, Superintendents, Deputy):

52 hours/year per person (various salaries) = ~\$1,476,123 dollars

Approximate Total Hours Saved = 66,071 per year

Total Average Salary Savings = \$6,102,772.00 per year

Program Impact

In addition to the financial benefits of IMS, there is also a programmatic benefit in the reduction of assaults, fights, drug offenses, weapon offenses and other criminal activity. By utilizing data collected in IMS, the PA DOC can restrict an STG's ability to further expand his or her institutional footprint. It provides the ability to manage STG populations based on the potential for violence between two groups, essentially preventing the violence from occurring. IMS also provides the ability to immediately identify new drug trends within prisons. By providing this information to security officers, they can better interdict the drugs to prevent them from getting into the prisons. Recently, an inmate was identified as the suspect of a drug ring. Data from IMS and other DOC systems led to the identification of additional suspects and their gang involvement by monitoring their activities and associations with other inmates and people in the community.

The ability to maintain data in IMS provides OSII with the means to conduct additional analysis to identify trends in recruitment and associations that were often not recognized or detected in the past. The collection of this data helps with population management. The PA DOC is able to determine an STG inmate's location down to the housing unit, section and cell level. This allows staff to ensure that housing decisions do not put staff or inmates at risk due to gang violence. IMS enables institutional staff the ability to make informed decisions about where to house STGs in relation to each other.

The IMS provides prison officials with insights that can help them prevent violence and criminal activity and make more informed inmate housing decisions. As the intelligence housed in IMS continues to grow, it will enable even deeper analysis into STGs, their members and activities. The PA DOC has implemented a comprehensive, intelligence-based approach to STGs – one many correctional agencies across the United States are lacking and that serves as a standard for analysis in the Pennsylvania corrections community.

OSII is beginning to pilot the use of the system for parole agents in the field to assist with the supervision of reentrants, further extending the ability of IMS to enhance the safety of the public and criminal justice professionals.