



State of Arizona  
Office  
of the  
Auditor General

**PERFORMANCE AUDIT**

**DEPARTMENT  
OF  
PUBLIC SAFETY**

**Criminal Information  
Services Bureau,  
Access Integrity Unit, and  
Fingerprint Identification Bureau**

**Report to the Arizona Legislature  
By Debra K. Davenport  
Auditor General  
October 2001  
Report No. 01-28**

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AUDITOR GENERAL

STATE OF ARIZONA  
OFFICE OF THE  
AUDITOR GENERAL

WILLIAM THOMSON  
DEPUTY AUDITOR GENERAL

October 1, 2001

Members of the Arizona Legislature

The Honorable Jane Dee Hull, Governor

Colonel Dennis Garrett, Director  
Department of Public Safety

Transmitted herewith is a report of the Auditor General, A Performance Audit of the Department of Public Safety's Criminal Information Services Bureau, Access Integrity Unit, and Fingerprint Identification Bureau. This report is in response to a June 16, 1999, resolution of the Joint Legislative Audit Committee. The performance audit was conducted as part of the Sunset review set forth in A.R.S. §41-2951 et seq. I am also transmitting with this report a copy of the Report Highlights for this audit to provide a quick summary for your convenience.

As outlined in its response, the Department of Public Safety agrees with all of the findings and recommendations.

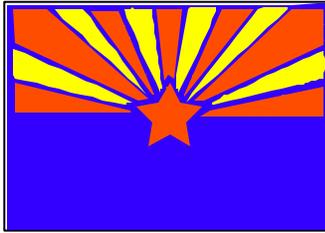
My staff and I will be pleased to discuss or clarify items in the report.

This report will be released to the public on October 2, 2001.

Sincerely,

Debra K. Davenport  
Auditor General

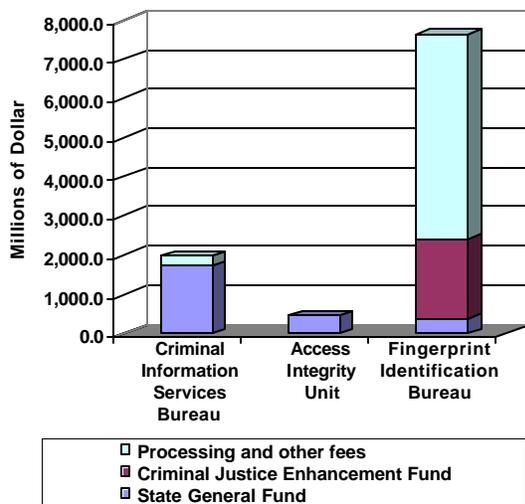
Enclosure



## Department of Public Safety— Criminal Information Services Bureau Access Integrity Unit Fingerprint Identification Bureau

**Services:** The Criminal Information Services Bureau, the Access Integrity Unit, and the Fingerprint Identification Bureau are part of the Department of Public Safety’s Criminal Justice Support Division. They are responsible for providing criminal justice information services to criminal justice agencies in Arizona, such as sheriff’s offices, police departments, and state courts. The entities reviewed for this audit are responsible for two DPS information systems: **1) *The Arizona Criminal Justice Information System (ACJIS)***, which is a system of databases with information regarding such things as criminal history records, sex offenders, and stolen property; and **2) *The Arizona Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AZAFIS)***, which is an automated system that links fingerprints to criminal history records.

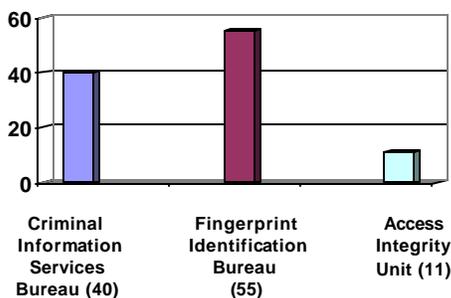
**Revenue: \$7.6 million**  
(fiscal year 2001)



### Responsibilities:

- **Criminal Information Services Bureau**— maintains criminal history records and other records, such as motor vehicle accident reports and Arizona’s sex offender database.
- **Access Integrity Unit**—coordinates access to ACJIS, and audits and provides training to criminal justice agencies that use ACJIS.
- **Fingerprint Identification Bureau**— maintains Arizona’s central repository of fingerprint information and performs criminal history background searches for employment and licensing purposes.

**Personnel: 106 full-time equivalent positions**



**Facilities:** The Criminal Information Services Bureau and the Fingerprint Identification Bureau perform their duties at the DPS Phoenix complex, a state-owned facility. The Criminal Information Services Bureau also leases approximately 8,000 sq. ft. of storage space at an annual cost of approximately \$71,000. The Access Integrity Unit is located in a leased building adjacent the DPS compound in Phoenix that costs approximately \$36,000 annually.

## Equipment:

The Criminal Information Services Bureau and the Access Integrity Unit perform their duties using standard office equipment. The Fingerprint Identification Bureau uses specialized equipment including:



- Machines that electronically digitize a person's fingerprints;
- Scanners that digitize fingerprints taken using ink and paper; and
- A computer system that stores and searches fingerprint archives for criminal and non-criminal justice purposes. This system was purchased in 1995 for approximately \$2 million.

The Criminal Information Services Bureau, the Access Integrity Unit, and the Fingerprint Identification Bureau are part of the Criminal Information and Licensing Subprogram, whose mission is:

***"To provide efficient and responsive criminal information and regulatory services to the criminal justice community and the public as mandated by federal and state law."***

## Adequacy of Goals and Performance Measures: (Fiscal Years 2001-2003)

The goals of the Criminal Information and Licensing Subprograms are: 1) To provide efficient, responsive, and effective service; 2) to provide professional development opportunities to employees and clients; 3) to improve efficiency and effectiveness in administering mandated programs; and 4) to improve customer service.

The mission and goals of the Criminal Information and Licensing Subprogram are reasonably aligned with each other. A review of the performance measures indicates:

- The measures do not incorporate the key responsibilities of all units. For example, the Access Integrity Unit devotes the majority of its resources to conducting audits of all ACJIS users on a biennial basis, yet there is no measure that addresses this activity.
- DPS should establish measures to better reflect such things as the cost, effectiveness, or quality of the services it provides. For example, DPS measures its employee satisfaction but does not have measures to assess the satisfaction of customers it serves, such as organizations that use background search results for employment or licensing decisions.
- Finally, because there are multiple entities contained in the subprogram, DPS should group its goals and measures by individual organizational units.

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## SUMMARY

The Office of the Auditor General has conducted a performance audit of the Criminal Information Services Bureau, Access Integrity Unit, and Fingerprint Identification Bureau within the Arizona Department of Public Safety (DPS). This audit was part of a Sunset review of DPS and was conducted pursuant to a June 16, 1999, resolution of the Joint Legislative Audit Committee. It was conducted under the authority vested in the Auditor General by Arizona Revised Statutes (A.R.S.) §41-2951 et seq and is the eighth in a series of nine audits of DPS.

The three Department entities reviewed for this audit are responsible for providing criminal justice information services to police departments, sheriff's offices, courts, and other criminal justice agencies in Arizona. The three entities have responsibilities for two DPS systems:

- **The Arizona Criminal Justice Information System (ACJIS)**, a system of databases with information such as criminal history records, sex offender registration, and stolen property information.
- **The Arizona Fingerprint Identification System (AZAFIS)**, an automated system linking fingerprints to criminal history records.

### **DPS Could Better Ensure the Integrity of the State's Criminal History Records System (See pages 9 through 18)**

DPS is statutorily mandated to serve as the central repository of criminal history records and related criminal justice information in Arizona. Recent efforts by DPS and other criminal justice agencies have improved the integrity of information in the State's criminal history records system, but many records remain

incomplete. A 1990 Auditor General's review found extensive problems with the system's management. However, since that time, DPS has taken action on a number of fronts. For example, DPS has added procedures and quality controls to help ensure timely and accurate data entry by its staff. It has also established an evaluation program to identify and address problems and has worked with criminal justice agencies to revise a key form for submitting information.

Other agencies have also taken action. The Arizona Criminal Justice Commission and the Arizona Administrative Office of the Courts are working with criminal justice agencies to help fund and develop technology allowing criminal justice agencies to submit information electronically to DPS.

However, these efforts have not fully addressed the problem. The Bureau of Justice Statistics reports that Arizona's system is 1 of 12 nationwide containing final disposition information for less than half of the arrests in its records. Criminal justice agencies are statutorily required to report criminal history information, such as details of arrest charges and how the charges were resolved, to DPS in a timely manner, but these agencies' compliance with reporting requirements vary widely. This is often because agencies are not fully aware of all requirements. As the State's central repository, DPS is statutorily responsible for the completeness and accuracy of all criminal justice information; therefore, DPS needs to pursue additional efforts to ensure the integrity of this information. These efforts should include significantly expanding its reviews of criminal justice agencies' reporting practices and specifying data submission requirements through administrative rules as required by statute.

### **DPS Should Expedite and Improve Background Checks (See pages 19 through 27)**

DPS needs to expedite and improve background checks. These checks, which are used to determine if an individual should work in sensitive areas, such as with children or handling money, involve searches of state and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) criminal history records. Because some em-

employers allow individuals to work in these areas while their background checks are being conducted, completing the checks as quickly as possible is important. However, under DPS' current technology and practices, these checks can take several weeks to complete. A large portion of the time is spent on the FBI's part of the check.

DPS is seeking ways to expedite and improve the background check process. Its plan centers on submitting fingerprints electronically to the FBI and conducting fingerprinting-based searches, rather than less reliable demographic-based searches, for the state record searches. While these efforts would result in quicker and more reliable searches, DPS estimates that the costs associated with computer system expansion and additional personnel would cost several million dollars. However, many factors have changed since DPS originally estimated these costs in 1999. Therefore, DPS needs to re-evaluate the costs associated with these changes and seek dedicated funding sources, such as grants, to fund the necessary start-up costs. Additionally, DPS should raise background check application fees as necessary to cover ongoing system maintenance and personnel costs if the program is to remain self-supporting.

Whether or not DPS obtains electronic submission technology, it should take the steps necessary to become a full participant in the National Crime Prevention and Privacy Compact. Full participation in this Compact, an information-sharing project involving the FBI and states that ratify the Compact, would allow DPS to perform some of its own national-level background searches and reduce the number of fingerprints DPS would need to send to the FBI. Although the Governor ratified the Compact by executive order, DPS should obtain legislative approval of the Compact. Additionally, DPS needs to work with the FBI to make necessary changes to its data systems and processes to fully participate.

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# INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The Office of the Auditor General has conducted a performance audit of the Department of Public Safety's (DPS) Criminal Information Services Bureau, the Access Integrity Unit, and the Fingerprint Identification Bureau as part of a Sunset review of the agency. This audit was conducted pursuant to a June 16, 1999, resolution of the Joint Legislative Audit Committee. This audit was conducted under the authority vested in the Auditor General by Arizona Revised Statutes (A.R.S.) §41-2951 et seq. This is the eighth in a series of nine audits of the Department of Public Safety.<sup>1</sup>

## Duties, Organization, and Staffing

The Criminal Information Services Bureau, the Access Integrity Unit, and the Fingerprint Identification Bureau are part of the Criminal Justice Support Division and are responsible for coordinating and providing criminal justice information services to criminal justice agencies. DPS serves as the central repository of criminal information in Arizona by maintaining the Arizona Criminal Justice Information System (ACJIS) and the Arizona Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AZAFIS):

- **ACJIS** is a computerized system of several different databases that contain criminal justice information, such as criminal history records, sex offender registration, wanted persons, and stolen property information. DPS oversees the input and use of information in the system by over 700 agencies throughout the State, such as sheriff's offices, local

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<sup>1</sup> Performance audits have been previously issued on DPS' Aviation Section (Report No. 00-7), Scientific Analysis Bureau (Report No. 00-12), Drug Abuse Resistance Education Program (Report No. 01-3), Telecommunications Bureau (Report No. 01-5), Licensing Bureau (Report No. 01-10), Highway Patrol Division (Report No. 01-20), and Criminal Investigation Division (Report No. 01-22). The remaining audit will cover the agency-wide Sunset Factors.

police departments, and Arizona's courts. These agencies have varying levels of access to both input and retrieve criminal justice information from the system. While many different agencies use the system, DPS is statutorily responsible for ensuring that it contains complete and accurate information.

- **AZAFIS** is a database of criminal fingerprints and related information received from Arizona's criminal justice agencies. The system can be used to positively identify arrested persons based on their fingerprints and to obtain criminal history information on these persons. It can also be used to compare fingerprints found at a crime scene to archived fingerprints to help investigators identify potential suspects.

The specific services provided by the Criminal Information Services Bureau, the Access Integrity Unit, and the Fingerprint Identification Bureau, including their responsibilities related to ACJIS and AZAFIS, and the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) employees for each, are described below.

- **The Criminal Information Services Bureau (40 FTEs)**—maintains criminal history and other records, such as motor vehicle accident reports. An administrative manager, who is assisted by a secretary, oversees the Bureau's three units:
  - **Criminal History Records Unit (24 FTEs)**—This unit maintains criminal history information and operates 24 hours a day to provide information regarding warrants to on-duty officers. The unit enters criminal history record information, submitted by criminal justice agencies throughout the State, into the Arizona Computerized Criminal History system, a component of ACJIS.

**Department Records Unit (7 FTEs)**—This unit maintains DPS' accident, offense, and incident reports, as well as supplemental paperwork, such as evidence analysis reports, by archiving paper files and electronically logging limited data into the Department Accident Report Tracking system. Upon request, the Department Records Unit also provides copies of accident reports and associated photos to the public for a fee.

- **Sex Offender Compliance Unit (7 FTEs)**—This unit confirms and updates the addresses of sex offenders registered in the State of Arizona, maintains a Web site of the more serious sex offenders sentenced or released after June 1996, and monitors the sex offender community notification process carried out by Arizona’s local law enforcement agencies. This information is maintained in the Sex Offender Profile and Notification File, which is part of ACJIS.
  
- **The Access Integrity Unit (11 FTEs)**—This unit’s activities are directly related to the accuracy and proper use of information contained in ACJIS. The unit conducts federal and state-mandated biennial operational audits of Arizona criminal justice agencies that record and use ACJIS information. These audits review input procedures and controls over terminal access and security, and ensure that the system is used only for criminal justice purposes. The unit also coordinates training for the ACJIS statewide operator certification program, oversees monthly validation of criminal justice data, and collects Arizona’s crime statistics for annual reports. Finally, the unit conducts an evaluation and training program to improve the exchange of criminal history information within counties.
  
- **The Fingerprint Identification Bureau (55 FTEs)**—Maintains Arizona’s central repository of criminal fingerprint information and performs criminal history background checks for employment and licensing purposes. It has six FTEs devoted to administrative oversight. There are also four full-time employees of the fingerprint computer system contractor who are assigned to maintain the system. The remaining Bureau personnel are divided between two sections.
  - **The Arizona Automated Fingerprint Identification System Section (17 FTEs)**—This section stores all criminal fingerprints and related information received from Arizona’s criminal justice agencies in AZAFIS and provides fingerprinting services to criminal justice agencies. These services include using an arrested person’s fingerprints to positively identify him or her and to obtain prior arrest information. Over 90 percent of fingerprints

are now submitted to DPS electronically. Other prints are mailed to DPS on fingerprint cards that use the traditional “ink and roll” method and must be scanned into the system.

- **Applicant Processing Group (32 FTEs)**—The DPS applicant processing group has two teams that perform background checks of individuals required to have them for certain types of employment or licensing purposes. These checks involve searches of Arizona criminal history records for disqualifying criminal information and sending the fingerprints to the FBI for a national background search. One team conducts background checks for general employment purposes and for licensing agencies. The Bureau distributes the search results to employers or licensing agencies to make hiring or licensing decisions. The second team conducts background checks for applicants who must receive a clearance card from DPS to work with vulnerable adult populations or children. DPS charges fees for these background checks that range from \$18 to \$44, depending upon the type of search conducted.

### **Funding and Budget**

As illustrated in Table 1 (see page 5), the Criminal Information Services Bureau’s total revenue in fiscal year 2001 was approximately \$2 million. The Bureau received approximately \$1.7 million (88 percent) from the General Fund, but also generated approximately \$238,000 from fees it collected for services it provides to the public, such as copies of accident reports.

The Access Integrity Unit’s fiscal year 2001 revenues were approximately \$449,000. This unit is entirely funded by the General Fund.

Table 1  
 Department of Public Safety  
 Criminal Information Service Bureau, Access Integrity Unit, and Fingerprint Identification Bureau  
 Statement of Revenues, Expenditures, and Changes in Fund Balance  
 Years Ended June 30, 2000 and 2001  
 (In Thousands)  
 (Unaudited)

	Criminal Information Service Bureau		Access Integrity Unit		Fingerprint Identification Bureau	
	2000	2001	2000	2001	2000	2001
Appropriations:						
State General Fund	\$1,760.6	\$1,725.4	\$468.9	\$449.0	\$1,667.1 <sup>1</sup>	\$ 386.9
Criminal Justice Enhancement Fund <sup>2</sup>					2,149.6	2,028.5
Processing and other fees	218.6	238.3			5,109.3	5,218.7
Total revenues	1,979.2	1,963.7	468.9	449.0	8,926.0	7,634.1
Expenditures:						
Personal services and employee-related	1,457.6	1,569.5	459.6	439.9	1,871.3	2,027.5
Professional and outside services	232.6	8.4	3.1	1.1	225.0	159.3
Travel	.9	2.4	5.7	7.1	4.6	5.2
Aid to organizations	106.4	167.3				51.2
Other operating	283.1	160.8	24.3	17.5	4,856.2 <sup>3</sup>	4,966.4 <sup>3</sup>
Equipment	246.0	75.1	15.1	2.5	1,384.1 <sup>4</sup>	1,678.9 <sup>4</sup>
Total expenditures	2,326.6	1,983.5	507.8	468.1	8,341.2	8,888.5
Excess of revenues over (under) expenditures	(347.4)	(19.8)	(38.9)	(19.1)	584.8	(1,254.4)
Reversion to the State General Fund	229.2	41.2	2.3	14.4	5.4	
Excess of revenues over (under) expenditures and reversions to the State General Fund	(576.6)	(61.0)	(41.2)	(33.5)	579.4	(1,254.4)
Fund balance, beginning of year	908.4	331.8	81.5	40.3	2,036.8	2,616.2
Fund balance, end of year	\$ 331.8	\$ 270.8	\$ 40.3	\$ 6.8	\$2,616.2	\$1,361.8

1 Includes \$876,000 appropriated for one-time costs of centralizing the state fingerprinting resources. In addition, includes \$308,000 to purchase equipment needed to process fingerprints of nursing care institutions, home health care agencies, and residential care institutions employees.  
 2 Consists of fines and forfeits deposited in the Criminal Justice Enhancement Fund and appropriated to the Department.  
 3 Includes approximately \$3.1 million and \$3.8 million for 2000 and 2001, respectively, paid to the Federal Bureau of Investigations for national-level background searches.  
 4 Consists primarily of equipment and software purchased to expand the Arizona Automated Fingerprint Identification System.

Source: Auditor General Staff analysis of financial information provided by the Department of Public Safety.

The Fingerprint Identification Bureau's total revenue for fiscal year 2001 was approximately \$7.6 million. A large portion, approximately \$5.2 million, or nearly 68 percent, of this revenue is derived from fees paid by background check applicants. Revenue raised through fees enables the Bureau's Applicant Processing Group to be self-supporting. The Bureau also received approximately \$2 million, or 27 percent of its revenues, from the Criminal Justice Enhancement Fund.<sup>1</sup> The Bureau also received approximately \$386,900 or nearly 5 percent, of its revenues from the General Fund.

### **Audit Scope and Methodology**

Audit work focused on two areas: 1) DPS' role as the central repository of criminal information in Arizona; and 2) the timeliness of DPS' criminal history background checks for employment and licensing purposes. This report contains findings and recommendations in two areas:

- The need for DPS to better ensure the integrity of the State's criminal history records system (see Finding I, pages 9 through 18); and
- The need for DPS to pursue methods of expediting and improving fingerprint background checks of individuals for employment and licensing purposes (see Finding II, pages 19 through 27).

Auditors used a number of research methods to study the issues addressed in this report. Specifically, to determine how DPS could better coordinate the timeliness, completeness, and accuracy of criminal history information, auditors:

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<sup>1</sup> The Criminal Justice Enhancement Fund was established by A.R.S. §41-2401. Monies in the fund come from a percentage of fines, penalties, and forfeitures imposed by the courts for criminal offenses, traffic violations, or violations of game and fish statutes. The funds are distributed by the State Treasurer's Office for various criminal justice purposes and monitored by the Arizona Criminal Justice Commission.

- Interviewed DPS staff and representatives of several other criminal-justice-related organizations, including the FBI, the Arizona Criminal Justice Commission, the Arizona Administrative Office of the Courts, and seven local criminal justice agencies;
- Reviewed Arizona Revised Statutes and related administrative rules to determine reporting requirements of agencies that submit criminal history information to DPS, and reviewed the Access Integrity Unit's audit and training functions.
- Interviewed representatives of six states identified by the Bureau of Justice Statistics as having the most complete criminal history records in the United States to identify how criminal justice agencies submit criminal history records in those states;<sup>1</sup> and
- Reviewed current procedures manuals and internal management reports regarding database statistics, data entry performance levels, and program administration from fiscal years 1999 through 2001.

To determine how DPS could improve and expedite fingerprint background check processing, auditors:

- Interviewed DPS staff regarding its current background check processes and representatives of the FBI regarding the benefits of electronically exchanging fingerprint information between DPS and the FBI and an interstate compact that enable participating states to perform some of their own national criminal record searches;
- Reviewed literature regarding the interstate compact and interviewed representatives of seven states that participate in the interstate compact and/or process background checks electronically with the FBI;<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Auditors interviewed representatives of Connecticut, Iowa, Maine, Massachusetts, North Carolina, and South Dakota.

<sup>2</sup> Auditors interviewed representatives of California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Montana, Oregon, and Texas.

## ***Introduction and Background***

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- Interviewed representatives from seven organizations who have a high volume of applicants going through the background check process. This included organizations such as a school district, healthcare organizations, and state agencies such as the Department of Gaming;
- Reviewed complaints filed with the State's Ombudsman/Citizens' Aide Office regarding background checks; and
- Compared data in the Fingerprint Identification Bureau's tracking database to paper files to determine the reliability of the database and to determine how long it takes DPS and the FBI to complete their portions of the background check.

This audit was conducted in accordance with government auditing standards.

The Auditor General and staff express appreciation to the director and staff of the Department of Public Safety for their cooperation and assistance during the audit.

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## FINDING I

# DPS COULD BETTER ENSURE THE INTEGRITY OF THE STATE'S CRIMINAL HISTORY RECORDS SYSTEM

Although the Department of Public Safety (DPS) is statutorily responsible for collecting criminal history information from Arizona's criminal justice agencies, about one-half of the records in the criminal history records system lack information on the final disposition of the arrest charges. Although statute requires criminal justice agencies to provide criminal history information to DPS in a timely manner, DPS remains ultimately accountable for the completeness and accuracy of Arizona's criminal history records. While DPS and other criminal justice agencies have undertaken efforts to improve the system, problems such as incomplete records persist. Because statute mandates that DPS ensure the integrity of the system, DPS should pursue additional efforts to better fulfill this responsibility.

### DPS Serves As Central Repository

DPS is statutorily mandated to serve as the central repository of criminal history records and related criminal justice information in Arizona. DPS is also responsible for ensuring that Arizona criminal justice agencies accurately record and appropriately use criminal justice information. As the central state repository, DPS uses a computerized network of databases called the Arizona Criminal Justice Information System (ACJIS) to maintain different types of criminal justice information. For example, the Arizona Computerized Criminal History (ACCH) database in ACJIS contains criminal history records for offenders arrested in Arizona. DPS also maintains an automated fingerprint identification system that links fingerprints from arrest records to ACCH. According to A.R.S. §41-1750, DPS is responsible for the completeness and accuracy of all criminal justice information in the repository.

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*Criminal history records contain arrest and disposition information.*

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**Item 1 Central State Repository Duties**

As the central state repository, DPS shall:

- Procure accurate and complete information from the State’s criminal justice agencies;
- Provide training and proficiency testing to these agencies; and
- Adopt rules to assist in carrying out its responsibility as the State’s central repository of criminal justice information.

Source: A.R.S. §41-1750.

Criminal justice agencies, including DPS, police departments, sheriff’s offices, county attorneys, and the courts, record and use criminal history record information to perform their duties. Criminal justice agencies are statutorily required to report criminal history record information, such as details of arrest charges and how the charges were resolved, to the central state repository. An individual’s criminal history record is considered complete when DPS has information about the outcome, or disposition, of each arrest charge in the person’s ACCH record.

Complete and accurate criminal history records are vital for both criminal justice and noncriminal justice purposes. For example, complete criminal history records are critical for ensuring that judges make appropriate sentencing decisions. Additionally, criminal history records are increasingly used for noncriminal justice purposes, such as employment and other types of background checks. For example, complete and accurate criminal history records are necessary to prevent people who have committed particular offenses from purchasing handguns or working with children.

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*Complete criminal history records are important for criminal and noncriminal justice purposes.*

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**Efforts Made To Improve Records Management and Integrity**

DPS and other criminal-justice-related agencies have worked to improve the management and integrity of Arizona’s criminal history records. DPS has corrected previously identified data

management problems and has initiated efforts to help other criminal justice agencies submit complete and accurate information to the central state repository. In addition, the Arizona Criminal Justice Commission and the Arizona Administrative Office of the Courts, a division of Arizona's Supreme Court, have also initiated projects to help improve criminal history records in the State.

***DPS has corrected past internal problems***—DPS has resolved issues identified by the Auditor General's Office in 1990 regarding problems with its data entry and monitoring of ACJIS use (see Report No. 90-5). Specifically, DPS has established procedural improvements and quality control methods that:

*DPS has improved quality control procedures.*

- **Verify accuracy**—Supervisors of DPS' data entry staff routinely check the accuracy of ACCH entries against paper records and direct staff to make appropriate corrections. In addition, DPS requires criminal justice agencies that directly enter data into ACJIS to validate their noncriminal history data, such as missing persons and stolen vehicle information, on a monthly basis. In contrast, in 1990, DPS data entry supervisors performed only periodic quality control checks, and local agencies did not regularly verify data they had entered.
- **Better ensure timeliness**—Supervisors better ensure timely entry of data in ACCH by closely monitoring work volume and adjusting staff time devoted to other activities, if necessary. DPS currently meets its goals for entering information it receives within 30 days. In 1990, DPS did not consistently enter arrest data in a timely manner and had a backlog of over 100,000 disposition forms awaiting entry into ACCH.
- **Audit system users**—Since 1992, DPS has biennially conducted operational audits of all agencies in Arizona that have direct computer terminal access to ACJIS, in accordance with a federal requirement. These audits, conducted by the Access Integrity Unit, ensure that each agency has adequate system security measures and that system users enter and use criminal information appropriately. In 1990, DPS did not comply with the federal audit requirement.

**DPS has assisted criminal justice agencies with data submission**—In addition to improving internal data management controls, DPS has also worked with other criminal justice agencies to assist them in submitting information to the central state repository. DPS' efforts include:

- **Electronic fingerprint imaging**—In 1994, DPS funded the installation of electronic fingerprint imaging equipment in all sheriff's offices throughout Arizona. In subsequent years, federal grants and other funds enabled other law enforcement agencies to install fingerprint-imaging equipment at their sites. The imaging system enables law enforcement to forward the fingerprint data electronically to DPS, thereby expediting the process that routes arrest charges through the criminal justice system. DPS reports that it currently receives 93 percent of arrest fingerprint data electronically.
- **Criminal History Reporting Reviews**—In early 1999, the Access Integrity Unit at DPS established an evaluation and training program called the Criminal History Reporting Review program, which focuses on improving the exchange of criminal history information within a county. The program was initially grant-funded through a federal initiative to improve the overall quality and completeness of state criminal history records. In the reviews, DPS staff first evaluate the accuracy, completeness, and timeliness of a sample of felony arrest documentation from various criminal justice agencies in a county, such as the sheriff's office, the county prosecutors' office, and Superior Court. DPS staff then provides customized, county-wide training to address the issues and problems revealed in the evaluation phase. As of June 2001, DPS had completed reviews of Graham, Greenlee, La Paz, and Pinal Counties.<sup>1</sup>
- **Revised disposition form**—In December 1999, DPS introduced a revised disposition form for law enforcement agencies, prosecutors, and the courts to report the outcomes of arrest charges to the central state repository. DPS worked with criminal justice agencies to modify the form in an attempt to make it easier to use and to ensure that it contained all neces-

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*DPS has established a program to improve the exchange of criminal history information.*

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<sup>1</sup> DPS was conducting a review of Navajo County at the time of this audit.

sary data fields. As a result of additional feedback from users of the revised form, DPS anticipates issuing a further modified version of the disposition form by mid-2002.

***Other agencies assist in improvement efforts***—The Arizona Criminal Justice Commission and the Administrative Office of the Courts have also been working to improve the exchange of criminal history records with the central state repository. The Arizona Criminal Justice Commission (Commission) is mandated by statute to assist in the coordination and enhancement of Arizona’s criminal justice system. The Commission requests and administers federal grant funds for a variety of criminal justice initiatives in Arizona, such as automating criminal history records. At the time of this audit, the Commission was also conducting an evaluation of the impact of federal grant projects in improving the accuracy and completeness of ACCH. In addition, Commission staff hold regular meetings with criminal justice agencies about criminal history records and annually update the Arizona Criminal Justice Records Improvement Plan to provide direction for the further automation and integration of criminal justice information throughout the State.

The Administrative Office of the Courts (Office) developed a manual and an automated distance-learning program on disposition reporting for clerks of the court. This effort aims to improve the quality and timeliness of disposition information submitted by the courts. Additionally, at the time of this audit, the Office was piloting a project at Peoria Municipal Court to submit dispositions electronically to DPS. Further, the Office plans to implement electronic transmission in Coconino County’s courts by the end of 2001 and eventually into courts throughout the State.

### **Problems with Inaccurate and Incomplete Records Continue**

In spite of various improvements, inaccurate and incomplete criminal history records remain a problem. According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, Arizona was 1 of 12 states reporting that it had no more than 50 percent of final disposition information

recorded for all arrests in its computerized criminal history record systems.<sup>1</sup> In July 2001, DPS reported that:

- Over 839,000, or 46 percent, of individual arrest charges in ACCH dating between 1995 and 1999 lack dispositions. However, DPS does not know which criminal justice agency failed to submit each disposition. Many arrest charges dating prior to 1995, as well as more recent arrests, also lack dispositions; however, DPS does not consider a record incomplete until arrest charges are two or more years old to allow time for the charges to be resolved.
  
- Over 20,000 dispositions were rejected by ACCH during fiscal year 2001 because information provided by criminal justice agencies did not meet system requirements. For example, if sentencing information for a guilty verdict is missing or a statutory violation code does not match the violation's description, ACCH rejects the disposition altogether. To resolve these rejected dispositions, DPS needs corrected or additional information from over 300 criminal justice agencies including sheriff's offices, county attorneys, and Superior Courts.

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*DPS depends on other criminal justice agencies to submit accurate and timely criminal history records.*

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Although DPS is statutorily responsible to collect such information, the success of DPS' efforts depends on the cooperation of other criminal justice agencies. These other agencies are mandated in statute to provide specific information to DPS in a timely manner; however, levels of compliance vary widely among agencies and their employees.

- In a Criminal History Reporting Review, DPS found that a county sheriff's office failed on numerous occasions to accurately and completely report to DPS all the charges contained in the arresting officers' reports. In addition, in two-thirds of the sampled cases where the county attorney's office decided not to file arrest charges in court, the county attorney's office failed to provide this information to DPS.

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics. Prepared by SEARCH, The National Consortium for Justice Information and Statistics. *Survey of State Criminal History Information Systems-1999*. Washington, D.C.: October 2000.

- Representatives from three superior courts informed auditors of other instances where dispositions are not correctly forwarded to DPS. Representatives from two superior courts informed auditors that some dispositions are not forwarded to DPS because the court never received the original disposition reports generated at the time of arrest. Without these reports, DPS would not be able to link the disposition to the original arrest charges. Further, DPS would not know if a county attorney or the court amended the original arrest charges. Additionally, a data entry clerk at another county superior court told auditors that she makes only one attempt to correct rejected dispositions. If DPS rejects the disposition a second time, the clerk files it with the court's own records and makes no further attempt to reconcile the disposition.

### **DPS Should Initiate Further Improvements**

Despite reliance on other criminal justice agencies to provide accurate and complete information, DPS is best positioned to improve the integrity of the State's criminal history records and should pursue additional efforts to do so. First, to better identify and address factors that contribute to inaccurate or incomplete criminal records, DPS should perform more comprehensive Criminal History Reporting Reviews of all counties on a regular basis and seek additional staff. Additionally, DPS should better communicate record submission requirements that criminal justice agencies must follow by formalizing such requirements in administrative rules as required by statute.

***DPS should conduct expanded Criminal History Reporting Reviews on a regular basis***—An expanded Criminal History Reporting Review program that includes reviews of criminal justice agencies in all counties on a regular basis could be an effective method for improving the integrity of the State's criminal history records. However, DPS does not have a plan or the resources for completing them.

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*Expanded Criminal History Reporting Reviews could improve criminal history information.*

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Regular Criminal History Reporting Reviews could help improve the integrity of Arizona's criminal history records in three main ways. First, criminal justice agencies' compliance with re-

cord submission requirements varies, and regular reviews would continually help DPS identify the reasons why agencies fail to comply. These reviews could help DPS recommend ways to help noncompliant agencies improve. Second, through regular reviews, DPS could continually adjust the training it provides to criminal justice agencies based on the reasons that some problems persist. Finally, DPS could follow up on recommendations it makes and the training it provides to verify that recommendations are implemented and determine if training has been effective.

Currently, DPS does not have a plan or the necessary resources to conduct these reviews in all counties on a regular basis. The program was initially staffed with three grant-funded positions, and DPS staff noted that the agencies reviewed had increased the completeness and accuracy of the disposition reports submitted shortly after the review. However, the grant has since expired, and DPS currently dedicates only one auditor position for conducting these reviews. The Arizona Criminal Justice Commission told auditors that losing these positions was a significant “setback” in DPS’ efforts to improve the State’s criminal history records.

Because of the benefits these reviews could have on identifying and correcting problems with criminal history reporting in Arizona, DPS should develop a plan for completing regular Criminal History Reporting Reviews that includes the following:

- Developing a schedule to complete reviews of criminal justice agencies within all counties on a regular basis;
- Seeking the additional staff necessary to complete those reviews;
- Ensuring that the recommendations and any training DPS provides address the reasons why problems identified in the reviews occur;
- Verifying that the reviews’ recommendations are fully implemented; and

## ***Finding I***

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- Establishing program goals and measures so DPS can measure the review's impact on criminal history information in Arizona.

***DPS should specify submission requirements in its administrative rules***—DPS could better communicate requirements for submitting criminal records to the central state repository by formalizing such requirements in administrative rules as required by statute. A.R.S. §41-1750 requires DPS to adopt administrative rules relating to the central state repository; however, it has not done so. Such rules should clarify the manner and methods by which criminal justice agencies should forward information. Criminal History Reporting Reviews have revealed that some criminal justice agencies were not always aware of the statutory requirements to report criminal history information to the central state repository.

## **Recommendations**

1. DPS should develop a plan for completing regular Criminal History Reporting Reviews that:
  - a. Includes a schedule to complete reviews of criminal justice agencies in all counties on a regular basis;
  - b. Seeks the additional staff necessary to complete those reviews;
  - c. Ensures that the recommendations and any training DPS provides continually address the reasons why problems identified in the reviews occur;
  - d. Verifies that the reviews' recommendations are fully implemented; and
  - e. Establishes program goals and measures so DPS can measure the review's impact on criminal history information in Arizona.
2. To better communicate requirements for submitting criminal history records to the central state repository, DPS should formalize such requirements in administrative rules as required by statute.

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## FINDING II

## DPS SHOULD EXPEDITE AND IMPROVE BACKGROUND CHECKS

DPS needs to take additional steps to ensure it completes thorough fingerprint background checks for employment and licensing purposes in a timely manner. Timely completion of background checks is important because many of the individuals required to have them work with populations such as children and vulnerable adults and are often able to do so while the background check is being completed. However, completing background checks currently can take several weeks, and involves a search of Arizona's criminal history records by DPS and a national search by the FBI. To expedite and improve this process, DPS should continue pursuing technology to electronically exchange fingerprint information with the FBI by re-evaluating its original cost estimates and seeking dedicated funding sources. Further, DPS should take the additional steps necessary to become full participants in an interstate compact that would allow it to conduct some of its own national searches.

### Background Checks Can Be Time Consuming

DPS performs background checks for individuals required to have them for employment or licensing purposes, but some of these checks take a long time. Individuals required to submit to background checks supply their fingerprints, and either the applicant or the organizations requiring the checks pay the processing costs.<sup>1</sup> DPS performs two different types of background checks that both include state- and national-level criminal history searches:

Background checks include state and national criminal history searches.

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<sup>1</sup> The processing fees range from \$18 to \$44 depending on the type of background check DPS must conduct. The type of check depends on if the search is for licensing, paid employment, or volunteer work purposes.

*Clearance cards are required to work with certain populations, such as children.*

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- **Clearance card checks**—For applications received during calendar year 2000, DPS completed 80 percent of the background checks in 83 days or less where it is responsible for determining if the applicant is eligible for employment.<sup>1</sup> For these checks, a DPS fingerprint technician scans applicant fingerprints into Arizona’s Automated Fingerprint Identification System. The automated system enables the fingerprint technician to compare the applicants’ fingerprints to thousands of criminally related fingerprints in the system to determine if applicants have been arrested and/or convicted of crimes in Arizona. If so, DPS staff can then link the fingerprints to criminal history records found in the Arizona Computerized Criminal History (ACCH) database. DPS also mails the fingerprints to the FBI for a national-level criminal history record search. Based on the information obtained from both searches, DPS issues clearance cards to applicants who have not committed disqualifying offenses, as specified by statute.<sup>2</sup>

**Item 2 Types of Agencies That Require Clearance Card Checks**

- Department of Economic Security for child care personnel
- Department of Education for teacher certification
- Department of Health Services for home- and community-based service providers

During calendar year 2000, DPS reports that it completed approximately 45,000 clearance checks.<sup>3</sup> While several factors

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<sup>1</sup> These checks typically took 48 or 76 days depending on the amount of time it took to conduct the state search portion of the background check. Reasons the state check may take longer include the applicant having a criminal record in Arizona or DPS having to reject the submitted fingerprints because they are of poor quality.

<sup>2</sup> Clearance cards are valid for three years. However, they can be suspended if a person commits a disqualifying offense after the clearance card was issued. Disqualifying offenses include such crimes as robbery, aggravated assault, and child abuse.

<sup>3</sup> In addition, DPS reports that it completed approximately 22,000 other checks during calendar year 2000 for applicants who had been issued a clearance letter. Because legislation during the 2001 regular session combined the clearance card and clearance letter processes into one, auditors did not evaluate the clearance letter process.

may affect the amount of time the state-level search takes, the FBI's national-level search typically takes about 28 days. Once DPS obtains the results of the state- and national-level searches, it typically takes about 18 days to determine an individual's eligibility for employment.

- **General employment and licensing checks**—DPS typically takes about 36 days to perform background checks for general employment and licensing purposes for organizations and state agencies. Like the clearance card checks, these searches also involve a state- and national-level search of criminal history records, but differ in two ways. First, DPS uses demographic data, such as the applicant's name or date of birth, rather than fingerprints, for its initial search of state criminal history records. DPS says it uses demographic information because its fingerprint system does not have the capacity to store these applicants' fingerprints and because it does not have the personnel to complete additional fingerprint-based searches. Second, rather than determining if the applicant is eligible to receive a clearance card, DPS simply forwards the results of the state and national searches to the organizations making employment or licensure decisions.

**Item 3      Examples of  
Agencies That Require  
General Employment  
and Licensing Checks**

- Department of Gaming
- Board of Nursing
- Department of Insurance

During calendar year 2000, DPS reports that it completed approximately 140,000 general employment and licensing checks. While these checks typically take approximately 36 days to be completed, the national-level searches take about 31 of those days according to DPS data.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Auditors could not verify the accuracy of this data because DPS does not maintain applicant files.

## **DPS Should Continue Efforts To Expedite and Improve Background Checks**

DPS should continue to pursue ways to expedite and improve the background checks it performs. Recently, DPS has sought a combination of computer system upgrades and additional personnel that would allow it to exchange fingerprint information electronically with the FBI and conduct fingerprint-based searches on all background check applicants. While these efforts would expedite and improve background checks, the costs associated with them have stalled their implementation. DPS should re-evaluate its cost estimates for each aspect of this endeavor and seek dedicated funding sources for their implementation.

***DPS has sought changes to expedite and improve background checks***—DPS has sought computer system upgrades and additional personnel that would allow it to significantly expedite the national-level searches done through the FBI and enable DPS to conduct fingerprint-based state searches on all background check applicants. By exchanging fingerprint information electronically with the FBI, DPS could reduce the time typically needed for the national-level searches from about one month to an estimated 24 hours or less. This would happen for two reasons. First, the FBI reports that the electronic transmission of applicant fingerprints and search results between DPS and the FBI would be instantaneous, rather than the days it now takes to mail fingerprint cards and search results. Second, according to the FBI, electronic processing of fingerprints also significantly reduces the FBI's processing time because mailed fingerprints have to be scanned into the FBI fingerprint system before it can run a fingerprint-based search. Currently, 25 states submit at least a portion of their applicant fingerprints to the FBI electronically. Auditors spoke with five of those states and they all indicated that their national-level searches were generally completed within a few hours.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Auditors spoke with representatives from the California Department of Justice, Georgia Department of Public Safety, Montana Department of Justice, Oregon State Police, and Texas Department of Public Safety.

## **Finding II**

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*Fingerprint-based searches are considered more reliable than demographic-based searches.*

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In addition to expediting the national-level search portion of background checks, DPS' proposed changes would also improve the effectiveness of its state criminal history record search by enabling DPS to complete fingerprint-based searches for all applicants. Currently, only clearance card applicants' state criminal history searches are fingerprint-based, while state searches of other applicants are based on demographic information. As mentioned previously, state searches for the approximately 140,000 annual general employment and licensing applicants begin with a demographic-based search only because DPS indicates its fingerprint system does not have the capacity to store these applicants' fingerprints and it does not have the personnel to complete additional searches. However, fingerprint-based searches are a much more reliable means of identifying a person's criminal history than demographic-based searches because an applicant can falsify information on the application. If an applicant with a criminal record falsifies information, his or her criminal history would not be identified until the FBI conducted its fingerprint-based national search.

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*Electronic submission could significantly reduce processing time.*

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### ***Costs associated with changes have stalled implementation—***

While DPS' proposed changes would expedite and improve the background checks it performs, DPS indicates that high costs have stalled implementation so far. DPS originally estimated that it would cost \$2.8 million to initially expand, equip, and staff its fingerprint system for electronic processing and conducting fingerprint-based searches on all applicants. In addition, DPS estimated it would need approximately \$950,000 annually to cover the ongoing personnel and maintenance costs associated with the proposed changes. In the 2001 legislative session, a bill failed that would have appropriated only \$2 million to DPS to allow for the electronic exchange of applicant information with the FBI and additional staff for conducting more fingerprint-based searches.

### ***DPS should re-evaluate costs and seek dedicated funding—***

DPS should re-evaluate the costs for both electronically exchanging fingerprint information with the FBI and for conducting fingerprint-based searches for all background check applicants. DPS should consider several factors when re-evaluating the cost estimates it originally calculated in 1999. Specifically,

- DPS should estimate the costs for implementing electronic processing and performing fingerprint-based state searches on all applicants separately. While both are important, they could be done independently of each other.
- DPS should look for ways to reduce its projected costs. For example, a portion of the 1999 estimate was related to buying additional electronic storage capacity for general employment applicants' fingerprints. However, storing fingerprints for general employment applicants, unlike clearance card applicants, is unnecessary because DPS does not continue to monitor the criminal history records of these applicants as it does for clearance card applicants.
- DPS should consider changes that have been made to the Fingerprint Identification Bureau's workload and staffing. For example, DPS has recently added one new fingerprint technician, which means it needs fewer additional staff. Additionally, the original cost projections were based on a projected workload of approximately 275,000 applications annually, but DPS now projects it would process closer to 250,000 applications annually.

After DPS re-evaluates the costs for pursuing each of these improvements, it should search for a viable funding source to cover its start-up costs. Several states have funded their electronic submission technology through federal grants. In addition, once these improvements are implemented, DPS should raise its application fees to cover the ongoing system maintenance and personnel costs if the program is to remain self-funded. Based on the number of applications DPS projects it will process under the proposed changes, an average fee increase of \$4 per application would provide over \$1 million annually.

### **DPS Should Become A Full Participant in An Interstate Compact**

Whether or not DPS obtains electronic submission technology, it should take the steps necessary to become a full participant in an interstate compact that would allow it to complete some of its

own national searches. The National Crime Prevention and Privacy Compact was established in 1998 to facilitate the direct exchange of criminal history information for noncriminal justice purposes, such as employment background checks, through an existing criminal history information network.<sup>1</sup> Full participation in the Compact will provide several benefits to Arizona, such as obtaining more detailed criminal history information quickly from participating states. The Governor ratified the Compact by executive order in August 2001; however, DPS still must take additional steps to become a full participant in the Compact.

***Compact will improve the quality and timeliness of some background searches***—The Compact will allow Arizona to quickly exchange comprehensive criminal history information with participating states for background check applicants who have existing criminal records in Arizona. To ensure the network is used for valid noncriminal justice purposes, states that join the compact may not make name-based inquiries through the network; rather, inquiries for noncriminal justice purposes must contain a unique state or FBI identification number. State and/or FBI numbers are assigned to individuals when they are arrested and their fingerprints are recorded on the state and/or FBI system. Therefore, under the Compact, if DPS found that a background check applicant had a criminal history record in Arizona, it could use the unique identifier number assigned to the applicant to immediately search an index of participating states' criminal history records.<sup>2</sup> The FBI would also supply information it has from nonparticipating states and for federal charges. However, if an applicant does not have a criminal history record in Arizona, DPS would have to send the applicant's fingerprints to the FBI for the national-level search because it would not have an identification number for the applicant. Therefore, participation in the Compact does not eliminate DPS' need for electronic processing with the FBI.

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<sup>1</sup> The Compact uses the Interstate Identification Index network, which 43 states (including Arizona) currently use for criminal justice purposes.

<sup>2</sup> Fourteen states had ratified the Compact as of September 2001: Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Iowa, Kansas, Maine, Montana, Nevada, Oklahoma, and South Carolina.

Full participation in the Compact will provide several benefits that include the following:

- DPS will be able to conduct some of its own national-level searches and reduce the number of fingerprints it has to send to the FBI.
- DPS will receive some applicants' criminal history records more quickly, with or without electronic processing.
- DPS will receive more comprehensive criminal history information from participating states than it receives currently from the FBI. States typically have much more comprehensive records of crimes that were committed in their states than those maintained by the FBI.
- The FBI is encouraging all states to participate in the Compact. If all states join the Compact, it will help decentralize criminal history records from the federal government to the states.

***DPS should take additional steps to fully implement the Compact***—Although the Governor ratified the Compact by executive order in August 2001 (No. 2001-15), DPS must take additional steps to become a full participant. For example, of the 14 states that have ratified the Compact, only Florida is prepared to begin exchanging information with the FBI and other Compact states. Other ratifying states are working with the FBI to make necessary changes to their data systems and processes to become full participants in the Compact. The FBI reports that states' start-up costs for joining the Compact are reasonable and all Compact states auditors spoke with reported little to no start-up costs.<sup>1</sup> In addition, DPS should obtain approval of the Compact from the Legislature. Although the Compact does not specifically prevent ratification of the Compact by executive order, recent interstate compacts joined by Arizona were first approved by the Legislature. Further, the FBI Compact coordinator indicated that the 13 other Compact states had ratified the Compact through their legislatures.

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<sup>1</sup> Auditors spoke with representatives from Colorado, Florida, Georgia, and Montana.

## **Recommendations**

1. DPS should continue to pursue methods to expedite and improve its processes for conducting fingerprint background checks. Specifically, DPS should do the following:
  - a. Re-evaluate its original cost estimates for electronically exchanging fingerprint information with the FBI and for conducting fingerprint-based searches for all applicants;
  - b. Seek viable funding sources, such as grants, to support the necessary computer system expansion costs; and,
  - c. Raise background check application fees as necessary to cover the ongoing system maintenance and personnel costs if the program is to remain self-funded.
2. DPS should take additional steps to become a full participant in the National Crime Prevention and Privacy Compact. Specifically, DPS should:
  - a. Obtain legislative approval of the Compact; and
  - b. Work with the FBI to make necessary changes to its data systems and processes.

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# **AGENCY RESPONSE**

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September 27, 2001

Ms. Debra K. Davenport, CPA  
Auditor General, State of Arizona  
Office of the Auditor General  
2910 North 44<sup>th</sup> Street  
Phoenix, Arizona 85018

Dear Ms. Davenport:

Enclosed is the Department's written response to the Auditor General's draft report of the performance audit of the Department of Public Safety Criminal Information Services bureau, Access Integrity Unit, and the Fingerprint Identification bureau. Please do not hesitate to contact my office if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Dennis A. Garrett, Colonel  
Director

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Enclosures

## GENERAL

The Arizona Department of Public Safety, Criminal Information Services Bureau, Access Integrity Unit, and the Fingerprint Identification Bureau recognizes that inspections and audits provide a valuable means to evaluate Department operations from an external source and make recommendations for improvement. The following is in response to the information provided and recommendations made.

## FINDING I

### **DPS COULD BETTER ENSURE THE INTEGRITY OF THE STATE'S CRIMINAL HISTORY RECORDS SYSTEM**

#### **Recommendations**

1. DPS should develop a plan for completing regular Criminal History Reporting Reviews (CHRR) that:
  - a. Includes a schedule to complete reviews of criminal justice agencies in all counties on a regular basis;
  - b. Seeks the additional staff necessary to complete those reviews;
  - c. Ensures that the recommendations and any training DPS provides continually address the reasons why problems identified in the reviews occur;
  - d. Verifies that the reviews' recommendations are fully implemented; and
  - e. Establishes program goals and measures so DPS can measure the review's impact on criminal history information in Arizona.

#### ***Response***

The finding of the Auditor General is agreed to and the audit recommendation will be implemented.

DPS customizes training for each county after the completion of each CHRR. Areas addressed in the reports are covered in each county wide training class.

DPS will develop and implement a plan for all the above recommendations. In order for complete arrest information to be reflected on the Arizona Computerized Criminal History database accurately and completely, all criminal justice entities statewide will need to make a cooperative effort to assist in achieving this goal.

2. To better communicate requirements for submitting criminal history records to the central state repository, DPS should formalize such requirements in administrative rules as required by statute.

***Response***

The finding of the Auditor General is agreed to and the audit recommendation will be implemented.

## FINDING II

## DPS SHOULD EXPEDITE AND IMPROVE BACKGROUND CHECKS

### Recommendations

- 1 DPS should continue to pursue methods to expedite and improve its processes for conducting fingerprint background checks. Specifically, DPS should do the following:
  - a. Re-evaluate its original cost estimates for electronically exchanging fingerprint information with the FBI and for conducting fingerprint-based searches for all applicants;
  - b. Seek viable funding sources, such as grants, to support the necessary computer system expansion cost; and,
  - c. Raise background check application fees as necessary to cover the ongoing system maintenance and personnel costs if the program is to remain self-funded.

### *Response*

- a. The finding of the Auditor General is agreed to and the audit recommendation will be implemented. Separate budget projections are being researched to determine the estimated costs and operational benefits of 1) electronically submitting applicant fingerprint records directly to the FBI, without first searching them against the Arizona Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AZAFIS), vs. 2) searching all applicant fingerprints against the State AFIS, followed by electronic submission the FBI to be searched against the bureau's Integrated Automated Fingerprint Identification System (IAFIS).
- b. The finding of the Auditor General is agreed to and the audit recommendation will be implemented.
- c. The finding of the Auditor General is agreed to and the audit recommendation will be implemented. If the Legislature approves either of the programs discussed in recommendation 1.a. (above), and if the Legislature deems the ongoing system maintenance and personnel costs be self-funded, the Fingerprint Identification Bureau will submit a fee-increase recommendation to the DPS Director.

2. DPS should take additional steps to become full participants in the National Crime Prevention and Privacy Compact. Specifically, DPS should:
  - a. Obtain legislative approval of the Compact; and
  - b. Work with the FBI to make necessary changes to its data systems and processes.

***Response***

The finding of the Auditor General is agreed to and the audit recommendation will be implemented.

## Other Performance Audit Reports Issued Within the Last 12 Months

01-1	Department of Economic Security— Child Support Enforcement	01-15	Department of Real Estate
01-2	Department of Economic Security— Healthy Families Program	01-16	Department of Veterans' Services Arizona State Veteran Home, Veterans' Conservatorship/ Guardianship Program, and Veterans' Services Program
01-3	Arizona Department of Public Safety—Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.) Program	01-17	Arizona Board of Dispensing Opticians
01-4	Arizona Department of Corrections—Human Resources Management	01-18	Arizona Department of Correct- ions—Administrative Services and Information Technology
01-5	Arizona Department of Public Safety—Telecommunications Bureau	01-19	Arizona Department of Education— Early Childhood Block Grant
01-6	Board of Osteopathic Examiners in Medicine and Surgery	01-20	Department of Public Safety— Highway Patrol
01-7	Arizona Department of Corrections—Support Services	01-21	Board of Nursing
01-8	Arizona Game and Fish Commission and Department—Wildlife Management Program	01-22	Department of Public Safety— Criminal Investigations Division
01-9	Arizona Game and Fish Commission—Heritage Fund	01-23	Department of Building and Fire Safety
01-10	Department of Public Safety— Licensing Bureau	01-24	Arizona Veterans' Service Advisory Commission
01-11	Arizona Commission on the Arts	01-25	Department of Corrections— Arizona Correctional Industries
01-12	Board of Chiropractic Examiners	01-26	Department of Corrections— Sunset Factors
01-13	Arizona Department of Corrections—Private Prisons	01-27	Arizona Board of Regents
01-14	Automobile Theft Authority		

## Future Performance Audit Reports

Department of Public Safety—Sunset Factors

Perinatal Substance Abuse Pilot Program