



Newsletter – Winter 2010

OREGON CRIMINAL JUSTICE COMMISSION

Executive Director's Column – Craig Prins:

Are Oregonians irrationally afraid of crime? If they are, what, if anything, should a police officer, prosecutor, deputy sheriff, legislator or sentencing commission do about it? This question has become more than rhetorical as I have reviewed Oregon's crime rates and the most recent Gallup Polls.

Oregon's violent crime rate, as measured by the FBI's Uniform Crime Reports (UCR) violent crime index is at its lowest point since 1970. In 2008, Oregon's violent crime rate decreased by 11 percent, the largest drop of any state. That source of data is saying that Oregonians are less likely to be a victim of violent crime today than they have been since 1970. National UCR numbers and the national victimization survey show the same trend.

We also monitor Oregon's property crime as measured by the FBI's UCR property crime index. It is at the lowest point since 1966. Since 2004, the property crime rate has fallen by 29 percent, the largest decrease of any state.

On December 21, 2009 the FBI released the preliminary data for 2009, reporting crime data for Oregon's four largest cities (Portland, Salem, Eugene, Gresham) from January to June of 2009. These are the first data that the FBI has reported on since the economic recession, and we have all been concerned that the recession might drive crime up. The numbers show that the violent crime index and property crime index total for those four cities fell more than 7 percent compared with January to June of 2008.

That doesn't mean crime is down in every community in Oregon. For example, those reductions are in the face of increasing crime in Eugene, where both violent and property crime bucked the national trend by increasing again. But the fact remains: looking at the state as a whole Oregonians are less likely to be victims of crime today than they have been in decades.

By contrast, Gallup's annual Crime poll found that 74 percent of Americans say there is more crime in the United States than there was a year ago, the highest percentage measured since the early 1990s. I believe that these two indicators show that perceptions about crime and the amount of actual crime are headed in opposite directions. Conversely, in the same Gallup poll, a majority of Americans have consistently described the crime problem in their local areas as "not too serious" or "not serious at all." The same Gallup poll states, "The ratings of the seriousness of the crime problem are not much higher now than in the recent past, and crime continues to rank fairly low when Americans are asked to name the most important problem facing the country":

<http://www.gallup.com/poll/123644/Americans-Perceive-Increased-Crime.aspx>

Dr. Mark Warr of the University of Texas points to media coverage on crime and lack of social connections as a part of the disconnect between perception and reality. His research is described in "Fear of Crime in the United States" http://www.ncjrs.gov/criminal_justice2000/vol_4/04i.pdf.

I am left with some nagging questions: are there negative consequences to a belief that crime is on the rise when it isn't? If that belief is founded on crime coverage on TV rather than reality, does it make for poor policy through the ballot box in Oregon? Does this fear have local policy implications as local governments allocate resources based on this perception? Is there a point at which prudence and ensuring Oregonians take steps to avoid being victimized crosses over into a negative avoidance of social interactions based upon a faulty perception of how dangerous our communities are?

Because of these divergent trends in crime rates and perceptions on crime, the CJC is going to take a couple of actions. First, we will try to provide folks the context surrounding information that is requested, including the reduced state crime rates when crime information is requested. Dr. Warr gives some examples of how to do so in his articles. Second, we have also decided to conduct an Oregon victimization survey for the first time in several years to learn more about what has become two separate issues in Oregon: crime and the perception of crime.

Chair's Column – Judge Darryl Larson:

There is no doubt that these are lean times for governments at all levels. Oregon is fortunate, however, to have received a considerable sum of the stimulus money from the federal government as part of the Federal Stimulus package. CJC is in receipt of about \$13 million of this funding. CJC dedicated two million dollars of that money for assistance to Oregon's Drug Courts via a grant application process. Another \$11 million is being set aside for evidence based programs targeted at offenders who would be Measure 57 offenders. The grants applications are initially reviewed and scored by a team of criminal justice practitioners with significant experience and from diverse sectors of the justice system. Their expert review of the applications provided the Commission with considerable assistance in identifying not only the best written applications but with an eye to all relevant considerations.

We received 25 Drug Court applications for funding assistance totaling \$5.3 million in requests. Having been on the scoring team, I am even more impressed than ever as to the quality and creativity of Oregon's Drug Courts. While all of the programs were deserving of added funding, decisions had to be made to parcel out the available funding. The CJC voted to fund as many of the programs as feasibly possible.

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We are confident that the funding will help at least some of Oregon's Drug Courts to get even better results in the future.

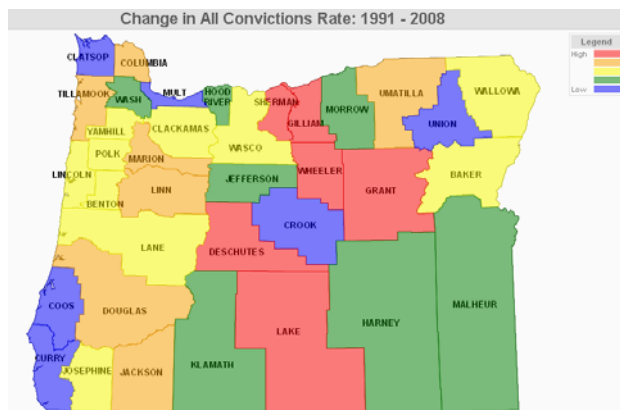
Although the Legislative session put Measure 57 (Repeat Property Offenders Mandatory Sentencing) on hold due to the budget situation, the CJC chose to utilize the interim to provide county Community Corrections agencies with an opportunity to explore and test creative treatment/problem-solving court type programs with the clientele who would otherwise have been within Measure 57's ambit. This has been done via a grant application process and applications have now been received and scored. On December 18, 2009, the CJC voted for approval of funding to as many of the complying programs as possible. CJC looks forward to working with counties receiving these grants to maximize outcomes and measure effectiveness. We hope to be able to provide legislators and policy makers with some additional data concerning programmatic options that may add to public safety while being cost-effective for taxpayer public.

The CJC is engaged in increasingly sophisticated efforts to measure outcomes and cost-benefits of the criminal justice programs in operation in Oregon. Public safety is our mission but fidelity to what works and what is budgetarily defensible are also high priorities. In order to do that, we are putting ever more resources into our ability to measure process, outcomes and cost-benefits. We appreciate the steps being taken by the other public and private agencies in Oregon to help make these developments possible. Together, we can make considerable progress.

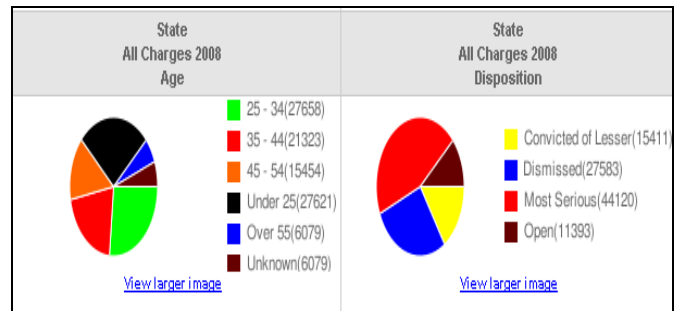
**Oregon Statistical Analysis Center (SAC)
– Mike Wilson:**

New SAC website tool:

With the help of the Oregon Geospatial Enterprise Office we have created a new feature of our website that takes criminal justice data and creates maps, charts and tables. The website allows users to get county level data for reported offenses, arrests, charges and convictions and compare changes over time. The website allows users to generate over 15,000 unique maps that compare counties across time or for a single year. The map below is one example of how a user can quickly see how their county compares to the rest of the state.



Users can also find information on age, gender, ethnicity, disposition and sentence type for a single year. Below is an example of more detailed information on the age and disposition of all charges in 2008.



This tool is designed to be used by law enforcement, policy makers, the media and the general public to answer many of the most common questions in an easy to use and visually appealing format. The website can be on the CJC website at: <http://www.oregon.gov/CJC/index.shtml>, any feedback is welcomed.

FBI Preliminary 2009 Semi-Annual Crime Statistics

According to the FBI Preliminary Uniform Crime Report, crime is down across the nation for the first six months of 2009. Violent crime fell by 4.4 percent nationally and 3.3 percent in the West. Property crime also had a decrease of 6.1 percent nationally and 6.7 percent in the West.

The report provides data on Oregon cities with 100,000 or more population which includes Eugene, Gresham, Portland and Salem. These four cities account for just under 960,000 people or 25 percent of the state. Portland experienced the largest crime decreases of the four cities with an 8.6 percent decrease in the number of violent crimes and a 15.7 percent decrease in the number of property crimes. Salem had a decrease of 7.3 percent in property crime and an increase of 3.6 percent in violent crime. Eugene continued to have increases in both property and violent crime, with a large increase of 15.6 percent in the number of property crimes and a 3.9 percent increase in the number of violent crimes. Finally, Gresham had the largest violent crime decrease of the four cities of 26 percent and an increase of 8.6 percent in the number of property crimes. The four city total saw decreases that were larger than the nation with a 7.7 percent decrease in violent crimes and a 7.3 percent decrease in property crimes.

January to June FBI Preliminary Uniform Crime Report						
	Violent Crime			Property Crime		
	2008	2009	% Change	2008	2009	% Change
Portland	1,651	1,509	-8.6%	14,610	12,323	-15.7%
Salem	279	289	3.6%	3,357	3,111	-7.3%
Eugene	228	237	3.9%	4,033	4,663	15.6%
Gresham	235	174	-26.0%	1,785	1,943	8.9%
4 City Total	2,393	2,209	-7.7%	23,785	22,040	-7.3%
West	N/A	N/A	-3.3%	N/A	N/A	-6.7%
Nation	N/A	N/A	-4.4%	N/A	N/A	-6.1%

Crime and Incarceration Trends

Overview

In Oregon, both property and violent crime peaked in 1995 and has substantially decreased over the past 13 years with the property crime rate falling 46 percent and the violent crime rate falling more than 50 percent. The last time the violent crime rate in Oregon was lower was 1970 and the property crime rate has not been lower since 1966. This moves Oregon down to the 40th highest violent crime rate and the 23rd

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highest property crime rate, both of these rankings are record lows for Oregon.

Part of the decrease in crime is likely attributable to incarceration increases that took place through the 1990s and the early part of the 2000s. In Oregon, from 1995 to 2008, the incarceration rate (including local control) increased by 65 percent. Research conducted by the Oregon Criminal Justice Commission found that there is a relationship between incarceration and crime. Part of the crime decrease can be attributed to increased incarceration, but the benefits of this have decreased as we have incarcerated more offenders.

Research by Dr. William Spelman shows that every 10 percent increase in the incarceration rate leads to a two to four percent decrease in the crime rate. Oregon estimates of this relationship show that incarceration accounted for about a 15 percent reduction in the crime rate from 1995 to 2008. The total crime rate decrease was 46 percent so roughly one third of the decrease in crime can be explained by incarceration and two thirds cannot.

In recent years Oregon has experienced the largest crime decreases in the nation. In 2006 Oregon's property crime rate dropped nearly 17 percent, the largest decrease of any state. Since 2004, the property crime rate has fallen by 29 percent, again the largest decrease of any state. In 2008 Oregon's violent crime rate decreased by 11 percent and since 2004 the violent crime rate has fallen 14 percent, both are the largest decreases of any state. Were the large crime decreases over the past five years because of increased incarceration? The answer appears to be no. While the number of inmates at the Oregon Department of Corrections went up by nearly 1,000 this basically went up at the same rate as the population so the incarceration rate was constant (see table).

DOC Average Annual Population and Incarceration Rate			
Year	Inmates	Population	Incarceration Rate per 1,000
2004	12,624	3,582,600	3.5
2005	12,841	3,631,440	3.5
2006	13,214	3,690,505	3.6
2007	13,451	3,745,455	3.6
2008	13,576	3,791,075	3.6

Grant Management – Devarshi Bajpai:

Grants Team

- Devarshi Bajpai- Grant Program Manager
- Amber Kaatz- Drug Court Grants
- Lorin Dunlop- Prisoner Re-entry, Residential Substance Abuse Treatment (RSAT), and Law Enforcement Grants
- Mark Werner- Grant Accountant/Fiscal Analyst

The Grants Team at the CJC has been incredibly busy over the last six months. Our three major areas of focus have been:

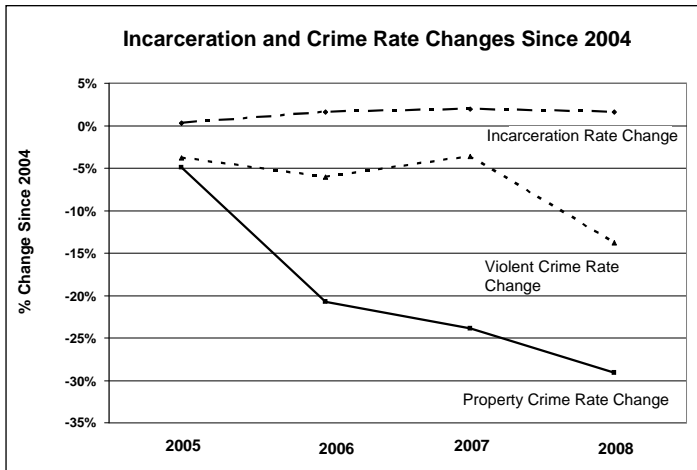
- Working with federal agencies to complete the transition of federal funds from State Police to CJC. This process has been slower than expected and we hope to have it completed soon.
- Rolling out several new grant programs, including Prisoner Re-entry Resource Centers and Intensive Treatment Courts for Measure 57 offenders.
- Initiating a new online grants management system- www.cjcgrants.com. The Oregon Online Grants System is being rolled out starting now, and we expect to have all of our grants managed through the system in the next two years. We expect the system to save grant recipients a lot of time and significantly reduce errors and duplication. Asset forfeiture reporting will also be managed through this system.

Amber Kaatz-

My introduction to the world of grant coordination has certainly been a crazy, albeit enjoyable, whirlwind! I am very lucky to be working with such a great group of people and the grantees have been incredibly kind, helpful, and patient! Oregon is extremely fortunate to have such dedicated treatment court professionals.

The 2006 Byrne/JAG Drug Court grant program ended in September. In anticipation of the loss of those funds, we added a new Byrne/JAG treatment court grant program and will be distributing approximately \$2 million to 13 adult and juvenile treatment court programs over the next two years. We continue to utilize State funds to operate a drug court program for 22 adult and juvenile programs and are currently in the process of implementing a Measure 57 Treatment Court Program, through which \$11 million in Recovery Act funds will be distributed. This funding will end in March of 2013.

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The Legislature is considering budget cuts in light of revenue shortfalls and the potential of larger shortfalls in the event that Measures 66 and 67 fail. In October CJC was asked to provide the Legislature with several budget cut options. CJC is proposing a reduction in drug court funds of \$204,093 in its first 5% and another cut of \$268,233 in its second 5%. The proposed cuts would be applied proportionally to our grantees. We will be contacting grantees shortly to request budget cut scenarios, as we want to give the individual programs as much control as possible throughout this budgetary crisis.

Lorin Dunlop-

Oregon Online Grants Management System

I will be coordinating teleconference trainings which will start taking place for grantees and applicants in January and will continue throughout the year. CJC is one of the first state agencies to offer an online grants management system, which speaks to our commitment to provide quality services to our current and future grantees and stakeholders. The online system will provide an efficient archival depository for CJC grant applications; financial reports as well as progress reports.

Update on Current and Upcoming CJC Grant Programs:

Law Enforcement Grants

17 JAG Law Enforcement Grantees were awarded a second year of funding through September 30, 2010. The next competitive RFA for JAG Law Enforcement Grants will be issued in the spring of 2010. Law Enforcement applicants will be able to apply online for the first time.

Offender Re-entry Grants

Grantees continued into their 3rd quarter of funding of the first year of this grant. Second year renewals will be due in the spring of 2010.

Re-entry Resource Center Grant Program

Approximately \$1.5 million of JAG 2009 funds will be distributed to community corrections agencies from Multnomah, Lane and Klamath counties over the course of two years, starting in January 2010. Funding is to be used for the purpose of enhancing one-stop, re-entry resource centers in the three counties. This is a one-time, non-competitive solicitation, offering support for a maximum period of 24 months.

Residential Substance Abuse Treatment for State Prisoners Program

In late spring 2010 CJC will be issuing a new RFA for the Bureau of Justice Assistance RSAT program.

AFOAC – Mike Stafford:

The change that will affect most people beginning early this year is that AFOAC reporting will be web-based on the CJC website. We will begin training for the process as soon as we go live. Form 1 will be filled in online and the information on that form will repopulate subsequent forms. These forms will be automatically submitted to the AFOAC electronically, meaning that forfeiting agencies will no longer need to print and submit paper copies of Forms 1, 2 and 3. The only form that will need to be printed and sent in will be Form 4 which will accompany forfeiture payments submitted. This is to

provide a method to make sure that any payments submitted will be credited to the correct forfeiture.

The AFOAC met on December 22nd to approve this change and to review the forms. First, since we did not have a quorum no official action was taken. Several changes to the forms were requested and CJC staff is currently working with our contractor to make those changes.

The committee members agreed to try to change the legislative requirement that a copy of the judgment accompany the Form 1 when filing. I have already met with Legislative Counsel and Bill Taylor (counsel for the Judiciary Committee) and they will try to add this housekeeping change to another bill in the 2010 session. This is needed because when we go to online reporting, these judgments would be coming in without any accompanying documentation and since we will now have all the docket numbers for all cases we will be able to go directly to each case to get the documents ourselves (if necessary). This will also save staff time and money for both the CJC and all filing agencies.

Also, Senator Prozanski (AFOAC Chair) requested that the AFOAC report to the Judiciary Committee in the fall of 2010 to report on the implementation of online reporting with the idea of being able to make changes to the law or the actual process if problems arise.

Office location:

885 Summer Street NE
Salem, OR 97301
(in the McGilchrist House across from the State Archives Building)

CJC Website:

<http://www.oregon.gov/CJC/index.shtml>

CJC Contacts:

Craig Prins, Executive Director – (503) 378-4858
Craig.prins@state.or.us

Devarshi Bajpai, Grant Program Manager – (503) 378-4848
Devarshi.Bajpai@state.or.us

Lorin Dunlop, Grant Coordinator – (503) 378-4078
Lorin.DUNLOP@state.or.us

Amber Kaatz, Drug Court Grant Coordinator – (503) 378-5796
Amber.Kaatz@state.or.us

Susan Schwartz, Research Analyst – (503) 378-4854
Susan.Schwartz@state.or.us

Liz Skinner, Executive Assistant – (503) 378-4830
liz.skinner@state.or.us

Mike Stafford, Public Safety Coordinator – (503) 378-4845
Mike.Stafford@state.or.us

Mark Werner, Fiscal Analyst – (503) 378-4068
Mark.WERNER@state.or.us

Mike Wilson, Economist – (503) 378-4850
Michael.K.WILSON@state.or.us