



Bureau of Justice Assistance Technology Innovation Success Story

The Interstate Commission for Adult Offender Supervision ICAOS – New York State Intelligence Center (NYSIC) Information Exchange

Project Overview

Greater information sharing between law enforcement and community corrections, specifically the exchange of information regarding potentially dangerous probationers/parolees transferring supervision from one state to another, is essential to ensuring public safety. Improved information sharing capability in this area increases situational awareness and helps ensure both community and officer safety.

The Interstate Commission for Adult Offender Supervision (ICAOS) leverages the Interstate Compact Offender Tracking System (ICOTS), a nationwide information system, to track all probationers/parolees authorized to relocate across state lines. The intent is not to target formerly incarcerated individuals for inappropriate police action but to alert officers to exercise caution when in circumstances in which interaction occurs or may occur with potentially high-risk offenders.

Serving as a pilot for a larger information sharing project, the U.S. Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), through a cooperative agreement with the American Probation and Parole Association (APPA), implemented an exchange with ICAOS and NYSIC per the principles of the Global Justice Information Sharing Initiative—Global Reference Architecture (GRA)—and guided by the Offender Transfer Notification Service (OTNS) specification (v. 1.0). After establishing the transfer of information and debugging systematic technical issues, NYSIC began sharing information with local police departments through its e-mail distribution known as the WIRE (Weekly Information Report and Exchange) in September 2013. Over 100 notifications of potentially dangerous probationer/parolee state transfers were disseminated by the end of 2013—about five to ten notifications per week.

ICAOS, through ICOTS, provides real-time information to law enforcement regarding potential threats to their communities that they might not otherwise receive.

The exchange process is straightforward: ICAOS, through ICOTS, provides information on potentially dangerous probationers/parolees to NYSIC. NYSIC, in turn, disseminates this information to local law enforcement agencies.

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The result is a one-dimensional exchange of information from ICAOS to NYSIC, which is not required to return any substantive information to ICAOS.

Notifications vary in content based on the needs and desires of the fusion center. Currently, the exchange provides data elements to identify the probationer/parolee, including pictures and alias(es), sending state, receiving state, address, gang affiliation, whether the probationer/parolee is a registered sex offender, compact case status, National Crime Information Center code and description, arrival notice, and contact information for the supervising agency. In the case of NYSIC, the notifications are compiled and disseminated weekly.

The exchange was built on the principles of GRA; therefore, it has reusable components that are ready to be deployed with any fusion center. In order for fusion centers to participate and receive notification, they simply have to provide a server that allows their system to receive the OTNS information. From there, it is up to each individual fusion center to determine how and in what format it wishes to disseminate the information to state and local law enforcement. Alternatively, prospective fusion centers may wish to leverage existing connections through the Regional Information Sharing Systems® Secure Cloud (RISSNET™) to receive the ICOTS alerts for their state.

The American Probation and Parole Association (APPA), through a cooperative agreement with the Bureau of Justice Assistance, can provide technical assistance and support for those fusion centers that wish to participate. One of the requirements to participate in the exchange is a signed memorandum of understanding (MOU) with ICAOS that outlines the roles and expectations of the exchange partners, including appropriate uses of the supplied information.

Broader Implications of the Pilot

The ICAOS to NYSIC exchange described in this overview was a pilot project to explore and demonstrate the benefits to fusion centers in receiving and sharing information regarding relocation of potentially high-risk offenders. The initial pilot has been in operation for over nine months, and early feedback from the field suggests that it is a valuable asset. The pilot also clearly revealed that there are many benefits to implementing this type of exchange in a broader law enforcement arena. The exchange promotes public safety, officer safety, and the collaboration of law enforcement with probation and parole agencies; provides information to law enforcement that might not otherwise be known; and has the potential to mitigate potential threats to the communities they serve.

Benefits of the Exchange to the Field

- Leverages existing Global standards and resources, including GRA and OTNS service specification v. 1.0
- Utilizes the National Information Exchange Model (NIEM)
- Promotes interoperability
- ICOTS messages can be routed through existing architecture
- Increases sharing of information pertinent to officer safety and awareness
- Encourages communication and partnerships between probation/parole and law enforcement agencies
- Promotes increased probationer/parolee accountability

For More Information

For more information about BJA's Global, please visit it.ojp.gov/gist.