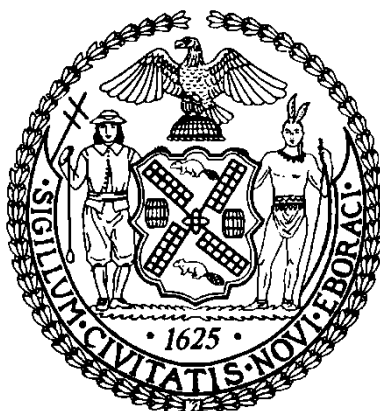


**CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE COMPTROLLER**

**John C. Liu
COMPTROLLER**

**IT Audit and Research
H. Tina Kim
Deputy Comptroller for Audit**



**Audit Report on the Restructuring of
Information Systems in the New York City
Department of Probation**

7A10-110

March 28, 2011

<http://comptroller.nyc.gov>



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE COMPTROLLER
1 CENTRE STREET
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10007-2341

John C. Liu
COMPTROLLER

March 28, 2011

To the Residents of the City of New York:

My office has audited the Department of Probation (Department) to determine whether the agency has met the overall goals described in its 2003 Information Technology Strategic Plan. We audit entities such as the Department as a means of ensuring that systems and technological resources of City agencies are cost-effective, efficient, secure, and operate in the best interest of the public.

The Department has met the overall goals described in its 2003 Plan by having created an operational database system to replace ARTS and a data warehouse system for management reporting. RCMS is adequately serving the Department's needs in terms of functionality and the standard reporting functions. The RCMS Data Warehouse functionality is also adequately serving the Department's needs. However, the standard and ad hoc reporting features of the RCMS Data Warehouse require quality control analyses to identify and remedy reporting discrepancies. Additionally, the audit noted that both RCMS and the Data Warehouse rely upon outside vendor support for maintenance and future upgrades or enhancements, subject to the availability of the vendor and annual funding to retain the vendor. The Department should establish in-house capabilities to maintain both systems due to the mission critical nature of the applications. The audit contains two recommendations that, if implemented, should improve the value of the RCMS Data Warehouse reporting feature and alleviate the Department's reliance on outside vendor for RCMS and RCMS Data Warehouse maintenance, enhancements, or upgrades.

The results of the audit have been discussed with Department officials, and their comments have been considered in preparing this report. Their complete written response is attached to this report.

If you have any questions concerning this report, please e-mail my audit bureau at audit@comptroller.nyc.gov.

Sincerely,


John C. Liu

Table of Contents

AUDIT REPORT IN BRIEF	1
Audit Findings and Conclusions	1
Audit Recommendations	2
Agency Response	2
INTRODUCTION	3
Background	3
Objectives	5
Scope and Methodology	5
Discussion of Audit Results	7
FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	8
Data Warehouse Standard Reports Need Retesting	8
RCMS and RCMS Data Warehouse Should Have In-House Support	9
Recommendation 1: Perform quality assurance testing on all Data Warehouse reports	10
Recommendation 2: Establish technical training programs for its staff	10
APPENDIX	
Appendix I RCMS Reports	
Appendix II RCMS Data Warehouse Reports	
Appendix III Adult Supervision Report Discrepancies	
Appendix IV PSI Report Discrepancies	
ADDENDUM Department of Probation Response	

*The City of New York
Office of the Comptroller
IT Audit and Research*

**Audit Report on the
Restructuring of Information Systems
in the New York City Department of Probation**

7A10-110

AUDIT REPORT IN BRIEF

This audit determined whether the Department of Probation (Department) has met the overall goals described in its 2003 Information Technology Strategic Plan.

In 2002, the Department began an assessment of its information technology (IT) and operational needs and developed its *2003 IT Strategic Plan*¹ (2003 Plan) with the primary objectives of creating an operational database system to replace the Adult Restructuring Tracking System² (ARTS), and a data warehouse system for reporting and information sharing. The ARTS replacement and new data warehouse system were named the Reusable Case Management System (RCMS) and the new RCMS Data Warehouse system for management reporting, data analyses, and data sharing with other agencies.

The Department's overall goal was to enable the agency to deliver better public safety with fewer fiscal and human resources; eliminate redundant data spread throughout the agency; automate paper processes; and integrate the Department's Administration, Adult Services, and Family Court Services for unified IT support. The primary business goals of the Department's 2003 Plan were for the Department to be able to easily share information with other city, state, and federal agencies, and streamline work processes for efficiency improvement. These goals relied on the successful replacement of its existing case management system and creation of a data warehouse facility for management reporting, data analyses, and data sharing.

Audit Findings and Conclusions

The Department has met the overall goals described in its 2003 Plan by having created an operational database system to replace ARTS and a data warehouse system for management reporting. RCMS is adequately serving the Department's needs in terms of functionality and the standard reporting functions. The RCMS Data Warehouse functionality is also adequately

¹ Entitled *NYC Department of Probation Information Technology Strategic Plan, January 2003 Version 2.0*.

² A case management system created in 1996 that had served over 700 probation officers who used it daily as part of their tasks in adult supervision. ARTS was the Department's first centralized database only for internal use in adult supervision.

serving the Department's needs. However, the standard and ad hoc reporting features of the RCMS Data Warehouse require quality control analyses to identify and remedy reporting discrepancies.

Additionally, both RCMS and the Data Warehouse rely upon outside vendor support for maintenance and future upgrades or enhancements, subject to the availability of the vendor and annual funding to retain the vendor. The Department should establish in-house capabilities to maintain both systems due to the mission critical nature of the applications.

Audit Recommendations

To address these issues, we made two recommendations, that the Department should:

- Perform quality assurance testing on all Data Warehouse reports to be certain information being reported is consistently uniform and accurate throughout the entire range of RCMS Data Warehouse reports when the reports contain an identical data component being reported.
- Establish technical training programs for its staff to develop in-house capability for in-house RCMS maintenance and programming to protect its current investment in the system as well as to be able to upgrade or enhance RCMS when and if new business requirements arise.

Agency Response

Department officials agreed with our two recommendations in their response.

INTRODUCTION

Background

The mission of the Department is to promote public safety in the City of New York by providing community-oriented justice sanctions. The Department fulfills its responsibilities by supplying Criminal and Juvenile Courts with information and dispositional recommendations; by supervising offenders through the monitoring and enforcing of their counseling and providing access to rehabilitative services; and by giving victims and their communities a voice in the justice process.

The Department provides both Adult Services and Juvenile Services. Adult Services include processing state law-mandated Pre-Sentence Investigation (PSI)³ reports and supervising individuals placed on probation. Juvenile Services include conducting any Family Court-ordered investigations to assist the court in making the best decision and supervising juvenile delinquents placed on probation. The Department annually provides intake services, investigations, and/or probation supervision for between 40,000 and 67,000 adults, and between 16,000 and 25,000 juveniles each year during the last seven fiscal years in New York City.

In addition, the Department is required by law to submit investigation (PSI) reports to assist Criminal and Supreme Court judges in making sentencing decisions for adult cases, including recommendations for the terms of probation. The Department is also required by law to submit Investigations & Reports (I&Rs) to the Family Court prior to sentencing in juvenile delinquency cases.

The Department's 2003 IT Strategic Plan

In 2002, the Department began an assessment of its information technology (IT) and operational needs and developed its *2003 IT Strategic Plan*⁴ (2003 Plan) with the primary objectives of creating an operational database system to replace the Adult Restructuring Tracking System⁵ (ARTS), and a data warehouse system for reporting and information sharing. The ARTS replacement and new data warehouse system were named the Reusable Case Management System (RCMS) and the new RCMS Data Warehouse system for management reporting, data analyses, and data sharing with other agencies. The 2003 Plan also included computing and networking infrastructure upgrades.

The Department's overall goal was to enable the agency to deliver better public safety with fewer fiscal and human resources; eliminate redundant data spread throughout the agency; automate paper processes; and integrate the Department's Administration, Adult Services, and

³ PSIs are used by State and City Corrections to assess and classify inmates and as a reference for NYC Parole when conducting parole hearings.

⁴ Entitled *NYC Department of Probation Information Technology Strategic Plan, January 2003 Version 2.0*.

⁵ A case management system created in 1996 that had served over 700 probation officers who used it daily as part of their tasks in adult supervision. ARTS was the Department's first centralized database only for internal use in adult supervision.

Family Court Services for unified IT support. The primary business goals of the Department’s 2003 Plan were for the Department to be able to easily share information with other city, state, and federal agencies, and streamline work processes for efficiency improvement. These goals relied on the successful replacement of its existing case management system and creation of a data warehouse facility for management reporting, data analyses, and data sharing. As shown in table I, the restructuring took place between the years 2004 and 2008.

Table I
Department’s IT Plan Execution Timeline

Time Period	Highlight
2002	Conducted agency-wide operational needs assessment.
January 2003	Documented the agency’s information technology improvement strategy into a plan for implementation— <i>NYC Department of Probation Information Technology Strategy Plan, January 2003 (Version 2.0)</i> .
2003	Formed in-house design team consisting of IT personnel, probation officers, and supervisors to consider the operational and management needs for a new comprehensive case management system. The result of this effort was the road map for the creation of RCMS.
2004	IT re-engineering effort began.
2006	Book I (case management system for Juvenile Services) placed online—an in-house developed interim system (precursor to RCMS).
2007	Book II (case management system for Adult Services) placed online—an in-house developed interim system (precursor to RCMS).
August 2008	RCMS user testing was conducted during a three-week period. Over 50 probation officers, managers, and clerical staff participated.
October 2008	Agency-wide RCMS training began.
November 2008	RCMS and its Data Warehouse component became operational. CJIS ⁶ , Book I, and Book II ⁷ were placed into dormant state for legacy information reference use only.

RCMS-A Case Management Computer Software Application

RCMS collects information about the adults, juveniles, and families who pass through Probation each year and makes that information easily accessible to the courts and other law enforcement agencies.

RCMS provides electronic preparation and distribution of pre-sentence investigation reports (PSIs and I&Rs) to New York City adult and family courts, and RCMS has information-sharing capability with criminal justice agencies, including The New York City Department of Juvenile Justice, New York City Department of Correction, New York City Administration for Children Services, New York City Department of Health & Mental Hygiene, New York State Department of Correctional Services, and New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services.

⁶ Comprehensive Justice Information System (CJIS) is a database for tracking a youth’s case through the system. It is shared by various City agencies, including the Law Department, the Department of Probation, and the Police Department. It was developed jointly by Department of Juvenile Justice, Criminal Justice Coordinator, Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications, Department of Probation, and the Law Department.

⁷ Book I and Book II were interim systems, which supported Juvenile and Adult case tracking needs of the Department while RCMS specifications were being finalized.

RCMS features remote access capability with automatic notification to Probation Officers, supervisors, and management, by email alert, when items require their attention. Additional features include automatic forms generation, automatic statistics and monthly summaries preparation, and electronic distribution of RCMS reports.

RCMS is capable of producing various management reports. The Data Warehouse is a replica of the RCMS designed for use by Department senior management and by other users for the specific purposes of performing data analyses, research, planning, management, and statistical reporting, and information sharing.

Objective

The objective of this audit is to determine whether the Department has met the overall goals described in its 2003 Information Technology Strategic Plan.

Scope and Methodology

We conducted this audit in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. This audit was conducted in accordance with the audit responsibilities of the City Comptroller as set forth in Chapter 5, §93, of the New York City Charter.

Our audit scope focused on performance results and issues related to the two primary objectives of the Department's 2003 Plan, which were for the Department to create both an operational database system to replace the ARTS as well as a data warehouse system for management reporting, data analyses, and data sharing with other agencies. In our test for data accuracy, we made reasonable assumptions based on data format and structure information and other correlated aspects of the system functions to determine whether there is a data accuracy issue. However, due to the online nature of the systems examined, data accuracy (in the traditional definition) cannot be assured absent the source document from which to compare.

Our fieldwork was conducted from February 2010 to September 2010. To achieve our audit objectives, we:

- Met with key Department IT personnel involved in the IT restructuring and current IT operations for background information and an overview of the current IT environment;
- Completed a walk-through of the Department's IT central data-processing environment;
- Obtained and reviewed the procurement documentation pertaining to the Department's 2003 IT Re-Engineering Initiative;

- Reviewed the *Project Definition to Provide Development and Systems Integration Services Relating to the Department of Probation's IT Re-Engineering Initiative, April 14, 2003 (Revision 1)*, to obtain new system specification details;
- Reviewed and analyzed data migration strategies employed to extract legacy data for import into the new system;
- Reviewed and analyzed user test information to determine the thoroughness of tests and adequacy of system developer follow-up procedures in response to user comments;
- Reviewed the Department's new system training program documentation to assess its content and coverage;
- Sampled six-month training schedule to determine whether there are training sessions, scheduled at different Department locations, covering various topics of RCMS operations, for various users levels of assigned responsibilities⁸;
- Analyzed and determined whether the executed IT tasks accomplished the primary goals of creating an operational database for day-to-day transactions and a data warehouse for management reporting, analysis, and data sharing as described in DOP's 2003 Strategic Plan;
- Generated 21 of 21 types of standard RCMS reports to test for data integrity⁹, data structure¹⁰, and data accuracy¹¹ (see Appendix I);
- Tested the output from the 21 RCMS reports to ensure normal results and that there were no indications of anomalies (such as report structure problems and missing requested data elements); and
- Generated 16 RCMS Data Warehouse reports and selected a minimum of one from each of the nine categories of available standard reports to test its data integrity, data structure, and data accuracy (See Appendix II).

⁸ RCMS training is for users of various levels respective of their assigned responsibilities (support, supervisor, intake, investigations, etc.) for adult and juvenile supervision.

⁹ The definition of data integrity is the accuracy and consistency of stored data indicated by an absence of any alteration in data between two updates of a data record. Data integrity is imposed within a database at its design stage using standard rules and procedures, and data integrity is maintained using error checking and validation routines. RCMS's design incorporates error checking and validation routines.

¹⁰ The definition of data structure is the interrelationship among data elements that determine how data is recorded, manipulated, stored, and presented by a database. Report outputs generally provide indications of data structure problems. In the case of RCMS reports, there was no appearance of data structure problems.

¹¹ Data Accuracy is difficult to determine and allowances are generally given for normal amounts of typographical errors originating from the data entry level, which is the most common place for data to be inaccurate. This means that the wrong value was entered initially, which may be due to lack of training, poor data entry form design, and unintentional or deliberate mistakes.

As criteria for our tests, we obtained and reviewed the *Project Definition for the Provision of Development and System Integration Services Relating to Strategic Technology Projects* (a guidance document from the Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications) for understanding the basic requirements in requesting system development and integration services. We also used Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications (DoITT) Citywide Information Security Policies and Directives and National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Standards.

Discussion of Audit Results

The matters covered in this report were discussed with Department officials during and at the conclusion of this audit. A preliminary draft report was sent to Department officials and was discussed at an exit conference held on February 10, 2011. On February 16, 2011, we submitted a draft report to Department officials with a request for comments. We received a written response from the Department on March 3, 2011. In their response, Department officials agreed with our two recommendations.

The full text of the Department response is included as an addendum to this final report.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Department has met the overall goals described in its 2003 Plan by having created an operational database system to replace ARTS and a data warehouse system for management reporting. RCMS is adequately serving the Department's needs in terms of functionality and the standard reporting functions. The RCMS Data Warehouse functionality is also adequately serving the Department's needs. However, the standard and ad hoc reporting features of the RCMS Data Warehouse require quality control analyses to identify and remedy reporting discrepancies described below.

Additionally, both RCMS and the Data Warehouse rely upon outside vendor support for maintenance and future upgrades or enhancements, subject to the availability of the vendor and annual funding to retain the vendor. The Department should establish in-house capabilities to maintain both systems due to the mission critical nature of the applications.

Data Warehouse Standard Reports Need Retesting

The launch of the Data Warehouse, due to its unique purpose, did not have the same degree of user testing as it did in the case of the RCMS. In addition, there is no specific user training or refresher training as is appropriate in the case of the RCMS. The Data Warehouse has the capability of reporting on the information collected from both Adult & Juvenile operations through the Department's usage of the RCMS. However, six reports had issues.

Adult Supervision Report Discrepancies

Two Data Warehouse reports, which covered the identical information for the same time period, did not have the same results. The reports were to show the number of adult probation cases handled by various Department branches. Both reports covered the 19-month period between November 21, 2008, and June 21, 2010. One report showed 9,068 cases, and the other showed 9,320 cases—a difference of 252. (See Appendix III for details)

The two reports in question were:

- **Adult Supervision Report** for the period from November 21, 2008, to June 21, 2010 (227 pages).
- **Adult Supervision Cases** for the period from November 21, 2008, to June 21, 2010 (210 pages).

PSI Report Discrepancies

Four Data Warehouse reports containing identical information were run. The reports were to show the number of PSI reports produced pertaining to adult probation cases handled by various Department branches. One report covered the 19-month period between November 21, 2008, and June 21, 2010. The other three reports covered the same time period combined, but

were broken out into three time periods. We compared the results of the reports and found a discrepancy of 19 cases between the 19-month report and the three separate reports. (See Appendix IV for details)

The four reports in question were:

	<u>PSI cases</u>	<u>PSI cases</u>
• November 21, 2008, through June 21, 2010 (790 pages)	35,497	
• November 21, 2008, through December 31, 2008 (53 pages)		2,327
• January 1, 2009, through December 31, 2009 (503 pages)		22,604
• January 1, 2010, through June 21, 2010 (235 pages)		<u>10,547</u>
Total of three reports		35,478

The causes of the report discrepancies are the result of insufficient quality control monitoring during the development phase of the RCMS Data Warehouse and/or lack of testing of the finished application. Unless the RCMS Data Warehouse is fully tested to eliminate the instances of discrepancies as described, the Department would not be able to gain maximum value from the RCMS Data Warehouse. Its primary design functions are for management reporting and statistical analyses.

RCMS and RCMS Data Warehouse Should Have In-House Support

The RCMS and RCMS Data Warehouse are the Department’s strategic investments, which were developed over many years. They cost in excess of \$5 million and meet the Department’s immediate mission critical needs and upgradeable future operational needs.

The RCMS maintenance was being handled by the original developer. The same vendor would have been relied upon for any future enhancements or upgrades—the Department is currently seeking a replacement vendor for RCMS maintenance. Given the strategic importance of the two systems and due to the customized features of RCMS, this is not a desirable position because both funding and vendor availability is required to meet maintenance, enhancement, or upgrade needs.

The consequence of not having adequate trained in-house resources would place the Department in indefinite need of outside resources for its RCMS and RCMS Data Warehouse maintenance and any future enhancements or upgrades. A further detriment is that it assumes the outside resource would be available when needed for these highly customized Department applications.

Recommendations

To address the issues we found during this audit, the Department should:

1. Perform quality assurance testing on all Data Warehouse reports to be certain information being reported is consistently uniform and accurate throughout the entire range of RCMS Data Warehouse reports when the reports contain an identical data component being reported.

Department Response: The Department agreed with this recommendation and stated, "...the Department's Management Analysis and Planning Unit (MAP) began routinely performing quality assurance testing of data that is obtained via the RCMS data warehouse. The data is checked for validity and reliability versus data that exists in the RCMS application..."

2. Establish technical training programs for its staff to develop in-house capability for in-house RCMS maintenance and programming to protect its current investment in the system as well as to be able to upgrade or enhance RCMS when and if new business requirements arise.

Department Response: The Department agreed with this recommendation and stated, "In agreement with the findings and recommendation, DOP is exploring options to fund our need to create the capability to provide in-house maintenance and upgrade and enhance the system as necessary..."

RCMS Reports

Report Count	Report Title	Adult RCMS Users	Juvenile RCMS Users
01	Case Assignment Report	X	
02	Case Sealing Report		X
03	Case Transfer Report	X	
04	Caseload Summary Report		X
05	Citywide Caseload Monthly Report	X	
06	CIU Case Status Report		X
07	DNA Owed Report	X	
08	Incomplete Investigations in RCMS		X
09	Investigation On Time Report	X	
10	IPRS Transaction Report	X	
11	Juvenile Intake Status Report		X
12	MED Eligibility Report		X
13	Monthly Disposition Report	X	X
14	PAT Report	X	X
15	Probationer Without Supervision Plan	X	X
16	Program and Referral Report	X	X
17	Re-Arrest Summary	X	X
18	SORA Transaction Report	X	
19	Total Investigation Ordered Monthly Report	X	X
20	Track Duration Report	X	X
21	VOP Disposition Report	X	X

RCMS Data Warehouse Reports

1. PSI report for the period November 21, 2008, to June 21, 2010
2. PSI report for the period November 21, 2008, to December 31, 2008
3. PSI report for the period January 1, 2009, to December 31, 2009
4. PSI report for the period January 1, 2010, to June 21, 2010
5. Adult Supervision Report for the period November 21, 2008, to June 21, 2010
6. Adult Supervision Cases for the period November 21, 2008, to June 21, 2010
7. Monthly Report of Criminal Workload in Probation Departments-Bronx-June 2010
8. Total Juvenile Intake Cases (run date and time, July 08, 2010, 16:52:49 EDT)
9. Total Juvenile Investigations Ordered (run date and time, July 08, 2010, 16:45:11 EDT)
10. Active Juvenile Sentenced to Probation (run date and time, July 08, 2010, 16:41:07 EDT)
11. RCMS DW Stars Report List
12. Adult Caseload Report-Bronx-June 2010
13. ISP Citywide Report, June 2010 to June 2009
14. Re-arrest City Wide Report, June 2010 to June 2009
15. Re-arrest Warrant Report, June 2010 to June 2009
16. ESP Citywide Report, June 2010 to June 2009

Adult Supervision Report Discrepancies

Branch	Number of Cases	Number of Cases	Variance
	Source Report: 'Adult Supervision Report' 11-21-2008 to 06-21-2010 ¹²	Source Report: 'Adult Supervision Cases' 11-21-2008 to 06-21-2010 ¹³	'Cases' Compared to 'Report'
Not Indicated		107	107
BAIV	6	18	12
BASR	525	519	-6
BHRN	552	563	11
BHRS	684	702	18
BSOU	174	177	3
BSPU	274	275	1
KAIV	1	15	14
KASR	675	666	-9
KHRN	757	757	0
KSOU	618	632	14
KSOU	350	352	2
MAIV	85	107	22
MASR	408	404	-4
MCIU	330	348	18
MHRU	590	595	5
MSOU	189	189	0
MSPU	407	402	-5
QAIV	16	30	14
QAS1	26	26	0
QASR	596	591	-5
QHRN	288	298	10
QHRS	602	620	18
QISP	90	90	0
QSOU	280	281	1
SIAS	545	556	11
TOTAL	9068	9320	252

¹² The **Adult Supervision Report** contained the data elements of CASE NO., LAST NAME, FIRST NAME, NYSID, and CASE START DT sectioned by Department branches with totals for each branch.

¹³ The **Adult Supervision Cases** report contained the data elements of LAST NAME, FIRST NAME, NYSID, CASE NO., and CASE START DT sectioned by Department branches with totals for each branch.

PSI Report Discrepancies

Report Item #	Report Source ¹⁴	Branch	Case QTY	Report Item #1 Totals	Reports #2 thru #4 Totals	Variance (Report #1 vs. #2 thru #4)
1	AdultInvestigations_11212008_06212010.pdf	BAIV	7172			
		KAIV	8512			
		MAIV	11121			
		QAIV	6745			
		SIAS	1947			
	Report (11212008_06212010) Total		35497	35497		
2	AdultInvestigations_11212008_12312008.pdf	BAIV	457			
		KAIV	623			
		MAIV	699			
		QAIV	433			
		SIAS	115			
	Report (11212008_12312008)Total		2327		2327	
3	AdultInvestigations_01012009_12312009.pdf	BAIV	4557			
		KAIV	5563			
		MAIV	6968			
		QAIV	4271			
		SIAS	1245			
	Report (01012009_12312009) Total		22604		22604	
4	AdultInvestigations_01012010_06212010.pdf	BAIV	2151			
		KAIV	2323			
		MAIV	3449			
		QAIV	2038			
		SIAS	586			
	Report (01012010_06212010) Total		10547		10547	
	Report #1 and #2 thru #4 Totals; and Variance			35497	35478	19

¹⁴ All reports contained the data elements CASE NO., NYSID, LAST NAME, FIRST NAME, and CASE START DATE sectioned by Department branches with totals for each branch.



Vincent N. Schiraldi
Commissioner

March 3, 2011

33 Beaver Street
23rd Floor
New York, NY 10004

212-361-8976 tel
212-361-8985 fax

Tina Kim, Deputy Comptroller
The City of New York
Office of the Comptroller
1 Centre Street, Room 1100
New York, N.Y. 10007-2341

**Re: Audit # 7A10-110 – Audit Report on the Restructuring of
Information Systems in the New York City
Department of Probation (DOP)**

Dear Ms. Kim:

This letter constitutes the formal response of the NYC Department of Probation to the above-mentioned draft report.

I am pleased with the audit and your assertion that the Department met its overall goals described in the 2003 IT Strategic Plan by having created an operational database system to replace ARTS and a data warehouse system for management reporting. In ongoing efforts to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the Department, we are constantly trying to improve the way in which we deliver services, document interaction with clients and utilize technology to help us do both. In this spirit, we also appreciate the effort of your audit in helping us to do our work better through your recommendations. Specifically, we respond that:

Recommendation #1

Perform quality assurance testing on all Data Warehouse reports to be certain information being reported is consistently uniform and accurate throughout the entire range of RCMS data warehouse reports when the reports contain an identical data component being reported.

Response:

Since the time of the audit and at least partly based on your findings, the Department's Management Analysis and Planning Unit (MAP) began routinely performing quality assurance testing of data that is obtained via the RCMS data warehouse. The data is checked for validity and reliability versus data that exists



in the RCMS application. In addition, as new data warehouse elements are developed, MAP works with DOP's I.T. division to perform validity testing.

Recommendation #2

Establish technical training programs for its staff to develop in-house capability for in-house RCMS maintenance and programming to protect its current investment in the system as well as to be able to upgrade or enhance RCMS when and if new business requirements arise.

Response:

In agreement with the findings and recommendations, DOP is exploring options to fund our need to create the capability to provide in-house maintenance and upgrade and enhance the system as necessary. Training is ongoing and will be upgraded to reflect changes and updated as these changes occur.

Going forward, we will continue to provide the most effective and efficient data systems within the confines of our budget. If you require additional information or have questions, the Department's contact is Charles Harris, Deputy Director of Internal Audit, who can be reached at (212) 232-0712.

Thank you for your courteous and efficient interactions with our staff during this audit.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Vincent N. Schiraldi".

Vincent Schiraldi