

Law Enforcement Information Technology Standards Council

Strategic Plan
FY2007-2008



Table of contents

Executive Summary	1
Strategic Plan Overview	3
Business Case for Justice IT Standards	5
Collaboration	6
Dissemination Strategy	7
Maintenance Plan	7
Training and Technical Assistance Plan	8
Outreach and Education Plan	9
Standards Development Plan	9
Policy Plan	11
Project Future	11

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Executive Summary

The Law Enforcement Information Technology Standards Council (LEITSC or the Council) is established to address the issue of information technology standards specific to the law enforcement community. The mission of LEITSC is to foster the growth of strategic planning and implementation of integrated justice systems. The Council strives to accomplish this mission by:

- Developing information technology standards for law enforcement
- Providing assistance to the law enforcement community on the implementation of standards
- Representing the voice of law enforcement on standards development issues
- Promoting the merits of information technology standards
- Sharing practical solutions and best practices

To successfully accomplish this mission, the Council will

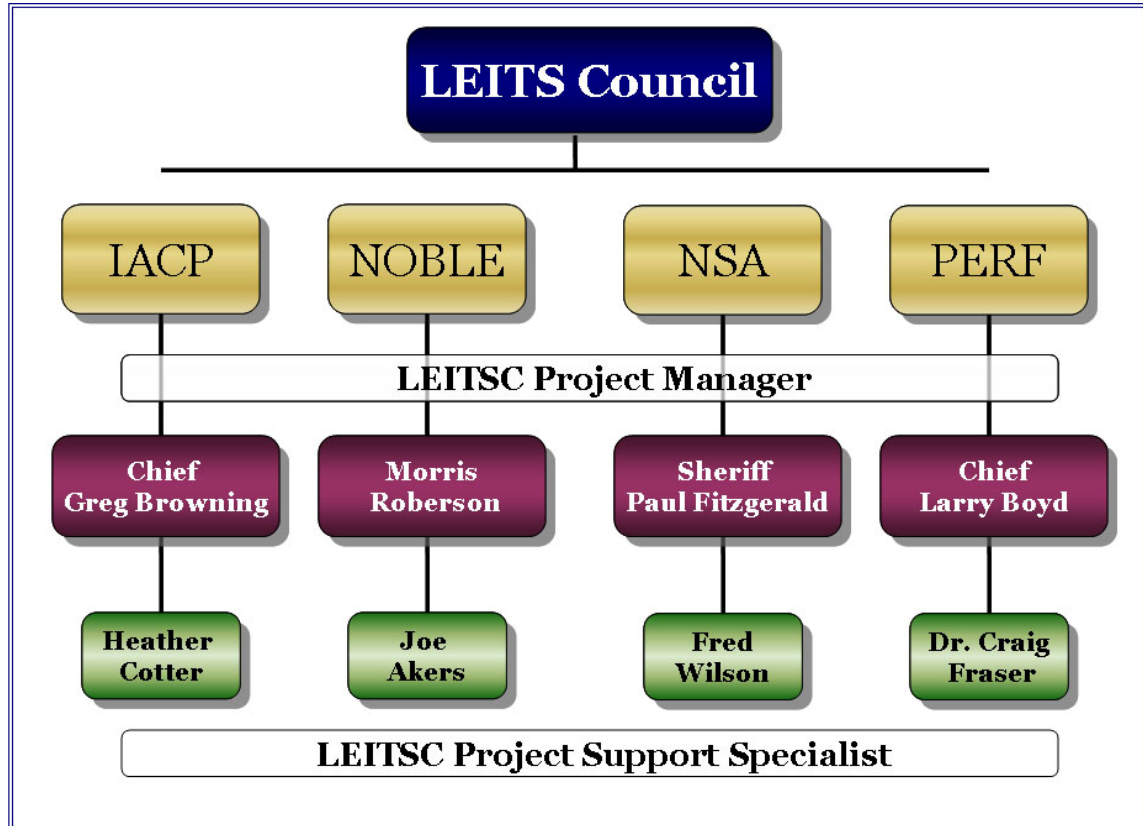
- A. *Influence, facilitate, and participate in the development of information technology standards* for justice communities to enable information sharing and interoperability.
- B. *Educate and encourage the law enforcement community* to adopt established standards, as well as involve industry in the process.
- C. *Act as conduit to collaborative justice information technology initiatives*, to identify, promote and collect standards specifically pertaining to law enforcement communities.

LEITSC was created in 2002 with funding (Grant No. 2002-LD-BX-0002) from the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), Office of Justice Programs (OJP), specifically the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) and continued in 2003 with funding (Grant No. 2003-MU-BX-0068) through a collaborative effort between BJA and the National Institute of Justice (NIJ). LEITSC is currently funded by BJA (Grant No. 2003-MU-BX-0068) and continues to work in cooperation with NIJ. LEITSC appreciates the opportunity provided by BJA to address the issue of information technology standards development for the law enforcement community.

Effective April 1, 2007, this project will be supported by Grant No. 2006-LD-BX-K005 awarded by BJA. BJA is a component of OJP, which also includes the Bureau of Justice Statistics, NIJ, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, and the Office for Victims of Crime. Points of view or opinions in this document are those of the author and do not represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.

During the first year of funding in 2002, provided by BJA, LEITSC laid a solid foundation for the project. Accomplishments of the first year include the organization and staffing of project; the identification of association staff and membership representatives;

creation of the project charter; the development and implementation of the operational plan; outreach by utilizing association information technology initiatives and collaboration with external initiatives; the coordination of quarterly council meetings;



and, the development of a strategic plan.

During the second, third, and fourth years of the project, LEITSC formed committees comprised of law enforcement information integration practitioners, industry representatives, and justice standards representatives to review and evaluate existing information technology standards, specifically functional and technical XML standards. As an outcome of this effort, LEITSC created two committees, known as the Functional Standards Committees (FSC), to develop Standard Functional Specifications for Law Enforcement Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) Systems and Records Management Systems (RMS). The FSC worked for approximately two years to develop the Standard Functional Specifications, and the final publications were released on June 30, 2006.

The original Strategic Plan was geared toward the development of the Standard Functional Specifications, and since LEITSC accomplished its first major goal, developing and publishing the *Standard Functional Specifications for Law Enforcement CAD and RMS*, the time has come for LEITSC to restructure its original Strategic Plan.

Strategic Plan Overview

Today, the idea of developing and using national information technology standards in the law enforcement community is no longer a conceptual thought, it is reality. There is an identified need for formalized involvement and support from law enforcement executives as information sharing and the development of information technology standards continue to broaden nationally and link directly to the justice community. LEITSC has responded to this need by facilitating the channel of communication between law enforcement practitioners, decision makers, the vendor community, and key stakeholders assigned to develop law enforcement information technology standards to further national information sharing and integrated justice systems.

As national information sharing initiatives mature, it is critical for justice decision makers to be educated on their roles and responsibilities while developing and implementing information technology standards. Furthermore, those who set information technology standards must continue to include the law enforcement community throughout the development process and make sure their needs are addressed. The active involvement, understanding, and leadership of law enforcement officials are vital to the success of national exchange of information. Given this, it is incumbent upon LEITSC to identify the needs of the law enforcement community and to address them with practical solutions that will create information sharing successes.

LEITSC was formed in 2002 to foster the growth of strategic planning and implementation of justice information sharing systems by promoting the merits of information technology standards, providing advice to the nation's law enforcement community on technical aspects of information technology standards, sharing practical solutions, and representing the voice of law enforcement in the expansion of justice and public safety information technology standards. LEITSC has proven its strength and commitment to this endeavor by providing access to law enforcement experts to give input to standards development initiatives, creating outreach and training opportunities to keep law enforcement executives engaged in the process, and continuing to leverage collaboration and work that is currently underway to address the information technology needs of the law enforcement community. The law enforcement community understands the value of using information technology standards in their technology implementation, and over the last few years, significant progress has been made in the development and implementation of information technology standards to advance information sharing. Projects within the Global Justice Information Sharing Initiative (Global), such as the Global Justice XML Data Model (GJXDM) and the National Information Exchange Model (NIEM), continue to evolve and develop standards that aim to ease information sharing across disciplinary lines from the law enforcement community to public safety to other social service areas. Through all of this, LEITSC has continued to promote information technology standards by exercising leadership and has brought the issues associated with information sharing to the forefront of the law enforcement executive's agenda.

This Strategic Plan is anticipated to cover a period of two years and was designed with input from the Council and advisors to LEITSC. The following proposed strategies and priority objectives will further the LEITSC goal to influence and facilitate the development of both functional and technical standards. LEITSC revised the strategic plan which places renewed emphasis on the following areas:

- **Business Case for Justice Information Technology Standards**
- **Collaboration**
- **Distribution Plan**
- **Maintenance Plan**
- **Training and Technical Assistance Plan**
- **Outreach and Education Plan**
- **Standards Development Plan**
- **Policy Plan**
- **Project Future**

Business Case for Justice Information Technology Standards

Law enforcement executives all over the country struggle with the difficult decisions associated with implementing information technology systems in their departments. The use of technology and sharing of information will arm their force with the tools necessary to protect the community and themselves. Integrated systems improve data accuracy, reduce redundant data entry, improve cost-effectiveness by decreasing staff and resources necessary to accomplish tasks, and improve overall decision-making capabilities. At the same time, law enforcement decision makers must deal with the autonomy of their department's business practices when entering into an information-sharing project with other law enforcement and justice agencies. In addition, they want to be sure that they are able to preserve the security of the data they exchange, as well as control the cost of procuring the necessary technology.

Proper planning in these areas can help to mitigate the risk of, and ultimately lower costs associated with, implementing integrated justice systems. But proper planning to share information does not come easily or without significant cost. Departments are often simply not able to supply the resources to thoroughly plan collaborative integrated justice projects involving courts, corrections, probation and parole and juvenile justice agencies. Unfortunately, those who are able to find the resources often spend millions of dollars "reinventing the wheel" by duplicating efforts in designing system architecture, writing requests for proposal (RFP) and developing technical and functional standards for their systems. In addition, industry representatives spend millions of dollars responding to RFP, ultimately driving up the cost of solutions provided to the public safety and justice communities.

The International Organization for Standardization (ISO) defines *standards* as, "documented agreements containing technical specifications or other precise criteria to be used consistently as rules, guidelines, or definitions of characteristics, to ensure that materials, products, processes and services are fit for their purpose".¹ As law enforcement agencies advance their use of technology to share information, it is essential to develop and utilize national information technology standards based on the common functional and technical needs of law enforcement information technology. Development and utilization of standards, designed with the input of law enforcement executives, managers and end users in collaboration with industry representatives, will promote information sharing across the justice spectrum. Utilization of nationally accepted technical and functional standards in the planning and development process will enable law enforcement agencies to design, procure and implement interoperable information technology at a reasonable cost.

The Justice Community has recognized the need for national justice IT standards to promote information sharing across regional jurisdictions, as well as across disciplines

¹ Definition found in the Introduction of International Organization for Standardization website at www.iso.org.

within the justice community. According to Global,² “successful data exchange is greatly facilitated by the development and adoption of standards that enable transparent integration of disparate systems.”³ In response, a number of groups are working to coordinate and design standards specific to integrated justice systems. Until recently, there had been no coordinated effort to represent and respond to the specific needs of law enforcement.

Collaboration

LEITSC is comprised of four of the nation’s leading law enforcement organizations, specifically, the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives (NOBLE), National Sheriffs’ Association (NSA), and Police Executive Research Forum (PERF). The partnership between the four associations sets the foundation for LEITSC, and is just the beginning of the multiple partnerships and relationships that LEITSC has established over the last few years.

Since the inception of the project, LEITSC established collaboration between multiple justice information technology and standards-focused bodies and has leveraged the experiences and “lessons learned” from previous standards work. LEITSC continues to collaborate with multiple organizations on various projects. Below is a list of organizations that LEITSC has worked with in the past and present:

- Association of Public Communications Officials (APCO)
- American Probation and Parole Association (APPA)
- Automated Regional Justice Information System (ARJIS)
- Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA)
- Corrections Technology Association (CTA)
- Global Infrastructure/Standards Working Group (GISWG)
- Global XML Structure Task Force (GXSTF)
- International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP)
- IJIS
- Institute for Intergovernmental Research (IIR)
- National Center for State Courts (NCSC)
- National Institute of Justice (NIJ)
- The National Consortium of Justice Information and Statistics (SEARCH)
- National Organization of Black Law Enforcement (NOBLE)
- National Sheriffs’ Association (NSA)
- Police Executive Research Forum (PERF)

² Global and its various groups and committees work to resolve information sharing issues facing the entire justice community. More detailed information can be found at www.it.ojp.gov/global.

³ More information on Justice Information Sharing Standards can be found at <http://www.it.ojp.gov/global/standards/index.html>.

Building on existing relationships and creating new alliances will ultimately strengthen LEITSC. The project was founded on partnership and LEITSC will continue to collaborate with organizations that focus on sharing practical solutions.

Dissemination Strategy

LEITSC will focus on distributing *Standard Functional Specifications for Law Enforcement CAD and RMS Version I and Version II* to the law enforcement and public safety communities. Interested parties will be able to access the specifications via the <http://it.ojp.gov> and www.leitsc.org websites. LEITSC has the benefit of full access to the membership of IACP, NSA, NOBLE, and PERF and will use this asset to its full advantage by assigning each association the task of distributing the materials to their membership through mailings, emails, and distribution at meetings and conferences. In addition, LEITSC has engaged in the following activities to market the release of the documents:

- *Press Releases*
- *Developing and Distributing Information Cards/LEITSC Brochures*
- *Posting the Specifications On-Line for Free Download*
- *Attending and Presenting at Major Conferences*
- *Notifying the Law Enforcement via E-mail Blast Distribution*

In order for the law enforcement and public safety communities to learn about the *Standard Functional Specifications for Law Enforcement CAD and RMS Version I and Version II*, LEITSC will continue marketing and promoting the release of the documents. Since the documents are considered “living” it is essential to keep the key stakeholders informed about new versions and updates.

Maintenance Plan

In 2006, LEITSC released the *Standard Functional Specifications for Law Enforcement CAD and RMS Version I*. Throughout the development of these tools, LEITSC advocated the importance of keeping the tools current and evolving with information technology and national initiatives. In order to stay true to this declaration, LEITSC has developed a plan to execute this task.

Create Two Committees: CAD and RMS

The task of reviewing and maintaining the *Standard Functional Specifications for Law Enforcement CAD and RMS* should be the role of two committees organized and established by the Council. To ensure the integrity of the Standard Functional

Specifications, the committee membership will be composed of a balance of practitioners, developers, and special interest groups such as standard-setting bodies who have expertise directly related to the respective areas. Similar to the composition of the two committees that developed Version 1 of the Standard Functional Specifications, there will be a CAD Committee and an RMS Committee assigned to review, make recommendations, and update the *Standard Functional Specifications for Law Enforcement CAD and RMS Version II*. The LEITSC Project Manager should be assigned oversight for each committee established and will be responsible for reporting back to the Council any recommendations set forth by the committees.

Committee Recommendations

The Council will receive updates and recommendations from the committee Chairpersons' or the LEITSC Project Manager during the bi-annual LEITSC meetings prior to making any significant revisions to the *Standard Functional Specifications for Law Enforcement CAD and RMS*. Only the Council members have the authority to announce the release of a new or updated version of the *Standard Functional Specifications for Law Enforcement CAD and/or RMS*. LEITSC anticipates releasing an updated version of the documents once per calendar year, however, should there be a recommended revision with significant impact, the Council has the authority to make that change and release an updated version within that same calendar year.

Training and Technical Assistance Plan

LEITSC received funding to provide training and technical assistance to law enforcement agencies (LEAs)⁴ that use the *Standard Functional Specifications for Law Enforcement CAD and/or RMS* and/or the IEPDs for CAD and RMS. The training and technical assistance is an opportunity for LEAs to receive answers to questions that might arise while working with the *Standard Functional Specifications for Law Enforcement CAD and/or RMS* and/or the IEPDs for CAD and RMS. The unique needs of each agency will be addressed on an individual basis. LEITSC will support delivery of appropriate training/technology assistance, as grant funding allows, during the development of an agency's RFP or the procurement process⁵. However, it is not the role of LEITSC to recommend any CAD or RMS vendor.

⁴ Federal law enforcement agencies are not eligible to receive training/technology assistance because LEITSC is a federally funded grant project.

⁵ LEITSC will not prepare RFPs for any participating agency.

Outreach and Education Plan

LEITSC will continue to educate, inform, and reach out to the law enforcement and public safety communities about the importance and adoption of standards. Establishing agenda time at meetings, conferences, workshops, and symposiums that are attended by a concentrated group of justice officials and practitioners is common practice for LEITSC and it will continue to be part of the outreach plan. Given the large number of conferences each year, it is important for LEITSC to be selective in deciding which meetings to attend.

LEITSC staff will continue to publish articles that focus on information related to integrated justice in their respective association's periodical, as well as other law enforcement related publications.

LEITSC will continue to build on existing collaborative relationships with external justice information technology initiatives to ensure coordination, not duplication of project activities. Furthermore, LEITSC will continue to act as a conduit to collaborative justice information technology initiatives. The Council will select members to represent the law enforcement community at appropriate events focusing on integrated justice information technology standards. This effort will involve LEITSC in all justice information technology standards initiatives, as well as any standards efforts that create or influence standards relating to law enforcement.

Educating the law enforcement and public safety communities about LEITSC and the importance of information technology standards is embedded in the project's mission. LEITSC will continue to leverage existing resources and expand into other justice arenas to keep the law enforcement and public safety communities informed.

Standards Development Plan for Future Projects

The task of standards review and development should be the role of committees organized and established by the Council.

Functional Standards define the tasks that must be carried out within an overall information systems design that supports the enterprise. The nature of the law enforcement function is such that standards must be scalable to accommodate the variety of entities that will use the standards. The path to scalability is to develop such standards in a modular fashion so that individual entities may select those standards that are applicable to their specific environment.

Functional standards should be developed from the lowest level upward, as the lowest level functional standards will combine to form larger level standards. LEITSC staff, in coordination with the committees, will conduct research in each selected area to collect and inventory existing standards in each area, particularly standards developed by state

and local level law enforcement agencies. In this process, LEITSC will discover bodies who have developed standards specific to law enforcement, such as the Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials (APCO), the National Emergency Number Association (NENA), and the National Records Management Association (NRMA). It is important to keep these groups in the loop.

In the case where standards are found to exist, the collected information will be given to committees to review and determine the appropriate action. In cases where standards are not available, LEITSC staff and/or consultants will work with the appropriate committee to develop a set of functional standards. One common method is to distill common practice by collecting and reviewing a number of RFPs, previously issued by law enforcement agencies, which cover that particular standard. Other methods involve interviewing both practitioners and developers who are experts in that area.

The committee reviewing the staff and/or consultant work will determine whether or not the standard is adequate and will make recommendations accordingly. Once the subcommittee approves a functional standard, the full Functional Standards Committee will review it. After approval by the Functional Standards Committee, the standard will be presented to the LEITSC for approval, as well as to the Strategic Planning Advisory Group for review and comment. Once requisite edits are made and the standard is approved by the LEITSC, the standard will be distributed to the LEITSC association membership for comment and submitted to the Justice Standards Clearinghouse.

Technical Standards, for the most part, are suggested or brought to the forefront as Functional Standards are developed. For example, most records management functions involve in some way the transport of data regarding persons and things. This, in turn, forces consideration of the XML work being carried out by several bodies to standardize the data descriptions used in such transport. The obvious first step in dealing with these technical standards is to extensively catalogue what currently exists and their applicability to the law enforcement functions.

In the case where standards are found to exist, the collected information will be given to subcommittees to review and determine the appropriate action. In cases where standards are not available, LEITSC staff and/or consultants will work with the appropriate subcommittee to determine appropriate action. For example, the committee may assign a subcommittee to design the standard, or may identify an outside body to develop the standard.

Once the assigned subcommittee recommends an appropriate course of action the Technical Standards Committee, as a whole, will review it. After approval by the Technical Standards Committee, the course of action will be reviewed by the Strategic Planning Advisory Group and presented to the LEITSC for approval. Once requisite edits are made and the standard is approved by the LEITSC, the standard will be distributed to the LEITSC association membership for comment and submitted to the Justice Standards Clearinghouse.

Policy Plan

The power of the LEITSC structure lies in its ability to involve each of the participating association's membership in project activities. This project will continue to work to involve its members in on-going development of information technology standards and guidelines that affect the law enforcement community.

The work completed under this project will impact local, tribal, state, and federal law enforcement agency policy and practice in a number of substantial ways. Behind LEITSC lies the credibility and power of the participating associations' membership – the oldest and most influential body of law enforcement executives in the nation. It is the responsibility of LEITSC to represent the concerns and needs of their members and officers and to bring that group to consensus in development of standards, models, and guidelines that will further the mission of seamless justice information sharing.

This project has successfully defined the *Standard Functional Specifications for Law Enforcement CAD and RMS*. The documents provide the necessary information that a law enforcement agency should include in systems dedicated to multi-jurisdictional and multi-disciplined information sharing. The *Standard Functional Specifications for Law Enforcement CAD and RMS* will be backed by the participating associations and recommended to law enforcement agencies across the country. In addition, through a collaborative effort with the IJIS Institute and APCO, LEITSC took the standard functional specifications a step further by adding Information Exchange Package Documents (IEPDs) for CAD and RMS to help link the work done by GJXDM to the functional specifications.

LEITSC will continue to be the driving force behind bringing information technology standards to the forefront of the law enforcement executive's agenda. LEITSC will continue to provide awareness and education to law enforcement executives on the development and implementation of information technology standards.

Project Future

The plan proposed herein is expansive in design. It will allow growth within the committees and subcommittees to address law enforcement's standards needs as technology grows and as law enforcement advances in its pursuit of integrated justice. Therefore, LEITSC will continually revise its strategic plan to accommodate priority projects. It will expand Functional and Technical Committees that will assign subcommittees and their task teams to address new applications (functional) and new technologies (technical).

In addition, future plans will broaden the scope of subcommittees to evaluate the status of standards use in the field and effectiveness of standards. The subcommittees will be tasked with identifying, analyzing and promoting the successful use of information technology standards in law enforcement. To further collaborate within the justice

community, LEITSC will share this important evaluation information with other groups who review and develop standards.

The ever-changing nature of technology and integrated justice precedes the need for continual evaluation and maintenance of the standards developed under the direction of this project. For now, LEITSC will retain guardianship of the standards produced, as well as be responsible for evaluating and maintaining the standards. Future Council discussions will focus on its responsibility to secure continued funding for evaluation and maintenance of standards or recommendations for the distribution of such responsibility.