NCJP a project of the National Criminal Justice Association

SAA Taskforce Performance Measures

A Look At Metrics Used to Evaluate MJTFs

In response to member requests, the National Criminal Justice Association (NCJA) compiled performance metrics used by State Administrating Agencies (SAAs) to monitor the activities of state- and grant-funded multi-jurisdictional taskforces (MJTF). These performance measures were gathered in an effort to collect and disseminate common, promising and innovative measures being used by SAAs. As part of this work, NCJA conducted a content analysis of the performance measures found in MJTF state and grant reporting forms. This analysis is presented to help the field understand the current state of MJTF performance measurement and to provide SAAs with a peer comparison and the opportunity to learn from others in the field.

Performance Metrics

Over the past 15 years, SAAs and the U.S. Department of Justice have continued to promote the use of measures to track the outputs and outcomes of state and federally funded criminal justice programing. Programmatic measurements like recidivism rates, case closure rates, conviction rates and rates of programmatic completion have helped policymakers set benchmarks for success. To say it succinctly, "What gets measured gets done."

For taskforces receiving federal funds, the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) requires quarterly reporting on performance measurement data through its Performance Measurement Tool (PMT). The PMT is an online data collection tool developed to gather data and information on BJA's established performance measures for grant-funded projects. The data are used to indicate the progress of Federal programs toward their intended goals and objectives. BJA uses the data to inform management and program decisions that may affect funding, and grantees can use the data to enhance and monitor program operations. In addition to the BJA performance measures , many SAAs also require taskforce sub-grantees to report performance measures directly to the SAA. Among the 39 states that support MJTF activities with Byrne JAG funds the majority (28) require additional performance measurement from their respective state SAAs. SAAs also provide oversight beyond the federal monitoring required. BJA as well as the SAAs use performance measures to help monitor the impact of individual taskforces, the state level multi-jurisdictional enforcement model and to make sure grant funds are being well spent.

Content Analysis

Scope: This content analysis looks at the quantitative measures contained in the 24 measurement forms used by SAAs to monitor MJTF enforcement efforts. A full list of the SAAs involved in this assessment can be found on the last page.

Data Collection: During late 2011–early 2012, the 39 SAAs that use dedicated state funds or Byrne JAG grants to support MJTFs were asked to provide copies of the measures they used to monitor program performance. Of the 39 SAAs that funded MJTF efforts, 28 indicated that they require additional performance measures in addition to BJA's performance measurement. Of those 28 SAAs, 24 used quantitative performance measures to track MJTF activity.

Taskforce Reporting and Key Statistics

- In 2011, 585 multi-jurisdictional taskforces were funded by 39 SAAs.
- 72 percent of SAAs used additional measures outside of BJA's required performance measures
- 74 percent of all SAA funded MJTF's (433) were monitored at both the federal and state level

Reporting Frequency	SAAs	Percent
Monthly	4	14%
Quarterly	12	43%
Semi-Annually	4	14%
Annually	8	29%

Reporting

In addition to monitoring progress toward MJTF goals and objectives, SAA staff indicated that performance metrics were used for:

- State Level Annual Reports
- Legislative Briefings
- Identification of Drug Enforcement and Trafficking Trends
- Information Necessary for SAA Review of the BJA performance measures

Although SAAs indicated that reporting frequency is often determined by need (i.e. annual reports and state legislative or federal reporting), the frequency can also impact the level of measurement. For example, states using measures to closely track enforcement outputs, predict illegal drug trends, or make assertions on drug availability should rely on monthly or quarterly reporting. However, yearly or semi –annual reporting allows an SAA to expand the number of metrics tracked, which in turn can allow for richer data collection and analysis. When an SAA is deciding frequency of reporting, it is important to consider how closely enforcement efforts need to be tracked, what indicators will be measured, and how these metrics will be used.

Reporting Format	SAAs	Percent
Numeric	10	36%
Narrative	4	14%
Both	14	50%

Although 86 percent of the forms used for reporting contain numeric metrics, it should be noted that 64 percent of reporting forms also used a narrative structure that allowed taskforces to report on efforts that do not lend themselves to numeric measurement. Narrative questions most often asked variations of the following four prompts:

1. Provide a description of the progress you have made on identified goals and objectives.
2. Describe progress on significant cases.
3. Please describe any emerging crime, drug or gang issues in your community.
4. Is there anything that the SAA can do to help the taskforce reach its goals, improve functioning, etc.

Common Measures

Below is an analysis of the most common measures SAAs use to monitor MJTF activity. Measures are grouped together into the larger outcomes or outputs SAAs are trying to monitor. A brief description of the measure, its use, or how it reflects on program outcomes is provided for context.

Note: All percentages represent the proportion of SAAs in the analysis that used the described measure to monitor the selected output or outcome.

Law Enforcement and Investigative Partnerships

Improving cross-jurisdictional communication and collaboration is often considered a key benefit to a multi-jurisdictional approach. Through improved collaboration, law enforcement agencies can leverage additional resources and expertise to enhance enforcement and improve investigative outcomes. By tracking the number of cases partnered on and the name or jurisdiction of partners, program evaluators can enhance their understanding of taskforce work and its impact on the state's enforcement efforts. Tracking these partnerships also allows for

Taskforce Partnership Partnership Measures	Percent of SAAs Measuring
Investigations Partnered W/Outside Agency	42%
Name of Partnering Entities	33%
Jurisdictional Authority of Partnering Entity	29%
Number of Partners	25%
Number of Assists	21%
Number of Deconflictions Submitted	13%

the use of advanced metrics related to collaboration including cross system/level investigation percentages, case partnering and assist rates, etc. When used in collaboration with traditional measurement, advanced metrics allow for the concurrent examination of multiple indicators, allowing for enhanced measurement.

Taskforce Investigations

The most basic output measure of any investigative body – the number of investigations initiated—is the back bone of more insightful measures, such as closure rates, case success rates and multi-arrest case rates. Although the number of investigations is often seen as a key indicator of success, investigations of complex or multi-layered criminal organizations often lead to higher multi-arrest case rates, increased case success rates and an increase in the percentage of investigations ending in state or federal prosecution, even though fewer cases are opened.

Search Warrants

The tracking of warrants is a process measure often used to gauge the strength of an investigation or to track a specific type or level of enforcement. In addition, the tracking of warrants can provide evaluators with an early indicator of investigative activity. The majority (87 percent) of SAAs asked at least one question aimed at measuring this investigative output. In addition, tracking the level of warrant or warrant by drug type can help evaluators get a better understanding of the scope and types of cases being pursued by an MJTF.

Investigations

Investigation Measures	Percent of SAAs Measuring
Investigations Opened	100%
Meth Investigations Opened	46%
Investigations Closed	54%
Investigations Closed by Arrest	21%
Investigations Resulting in Prosecution Federal	17%
Investigations Resulting in Prosecution State	13%

"The number of investigations initiated is the back bone of more insightful measures, such as closure rates, case success rates and multi-arrest case rates."

Warrants

Warrant Measures	Percent of SAAs Measuring
Any Warrant Related Measure	87%
Number of Warrants Served	75%
Number of Warrants Issued	29%
Number of Meth Related Warrants	29%
Number of Federal Warrants	29%
Number of State Warrants	29%
Number of Consent Searches	25%

Charging Level

Charging Measures	Percent of SAAs Measuring
Charged at the State Level	63%
Charged at the Federal Level	58%
Charged With A Misdemeanor	46%
Charged With A Felony	46%

Arrests	
Arrest Measures	
	Percent of SAAs Measuring
Total Number of Arrests	92%
- Arrests Tracked By Juvenile vs. Adult	21%
- Arrests Tracked By Gender	17%
- Arrests Tracked By Race	17%
Total Number of Felony Arrests	63%
Total Number of Misdemeanor Arrests	63%
Number of Arrests Broken Down By Level/Charge	67%
Total Arrest Broken Down By Drug	58%
Total Number of Arrests for Violent Crime	25%
Total Number of Gang Members Arrested	54%
Number of Arrests Resulting in Prosecution	21%
Number of Arrests Resulting in Conviction	13%

Taskforce Arrests and Charging Level

Often considered an outcome for law enforcement investigations, the number of arrests is more accurately an intermediate measure of MJTF enforcement efforts. Although the number of arrests tells evaluators about the activity of a taskforce, it does not indicate the strength or depth of an investigation. Tracking the level or type of arrest, for example, can help provide a more accurate picture of the MJTF enforcement efforts. In an effort to track outputs/outcomes as cases move across the criminal justice system (enforcement through adjudication), some states have begun tracking the number of arrests/investigations resulting in prosecution or conviction. Although this can be more burdensome administratively, it can provide a great deal of information to policymakers and evaluators about how enforcement systems are working or not working together. Three states in this assessment indicated that they fund dedicated prosecutors for their MJTF efforts; by tracking taskforce cases through adjudication states can get a cross-system measure of enforcement efforts.

An intermediary measure between arrest and disposition, charging levels can provide evaluators with a measure related to investigative strength that disposition tracking will not. Due to the fact that investigations must meet minimum evidentiary standards for charging, this measure can help evaluators better understand the functioning of the investigative process and evidence collection/documentation. It should also be noted that charging level can be influenced by both the nature of offense and the jurisdiction of investigative partners.

Seizures	
Seizure Measures	
	Percent of SAAs Measuring
Type of Drug Seized	100%
Quantity of Drug Seized	100%
Value of Drugs Seized	71%
Number of Drug Labs Seized	88%
Number of Drug Lab/Dump Site Clean Ups	58%
Number of Marijuana Grows Seized	54%
Number of Taskforce Drug Purchases	42%
Number of Guns/Weapons Seized	82%
Number of Weapons Seized	75%
Number of Guns or Guns Broken Down By Gun Type	46%
Number of NIBIN Reports on Seized Guns	29%
Number of NIBIN Hits on Seized Guns	29%
Property Seized	50%
Cash Seized	46%

Forfeitures	
Forfeiture Measures	
	Percent of SAAs Measuring
Number of Successful Forfeitures	46%
Number of Forfeiture Cases Initiated	42%
Value of Currency Forfeited	54%
Non Cash Forfeiture Value	54%

Seizures and Forfeiture

The most basic output of drug taskforce investigations, narcotic seizures, is also the most commonly tracked measure of taskforce activity. Drugs are most commonly tracked by type, weight/dosage and value. States that have problems with specific drugs like methamphetamine or prescription opioids often have additional measures to track drug specific enforcement efforts. In addition to telling evaluators about the activity of a taskforce, tracking of drugs by type can provide a measure on investigative focus/scope, geographic drug availability and can provide law enforcement with a broad quantitative measure for reduction in drug availability. In addition to tracking drugs, the majority of SAAs track law enforcement's seizure of at least two of the following: guns, cash or property. When taken together the number of drugs, guns, cash and property seized gives evaluators a better picture of the size of organizations being targeted for investigation.

The confiscation of cash or property believed to be instrumental in, or the product of, a crime is another measure used to inform taskforce activity. This measure can help evaluators understand the scope of MJTF investigations, the success of evidence processing, and put a monetary value on the financial impact MJTF investigations are having on criminal organizations.

Prosecution Measures

Although not yet common, when taskforce investigations are tracked through adjudication, evaluators can not only look at enforcement and prosecutorial outcomes, but can obtain a measure of system-wide enforcement success. In addition, cross system measures can give evaluators an indication of how investigative and prosecutorial systems are working together. For example, a low rate of cases accepted for prosecution can indicate flaws in investigative procedures, evidence collection, poor cross system communication or issues with selective prosecution.

In an effort to obtain cross system measures and to help improve the MJTF enforcement model, some states have begun using grant dollars to fund and integrate dedicated prosecutors. Illinois, California and Arizona, for example, use this model, and are able to track cases from the start of an investigation through adjudication. Although adjudication measures are not yet used widely, they can be very valuable for both MJTFs and for policymakers looking to better understand the impact of enforcement efforts. To see some of the measures used for dedicated prosecutors or MJTFs please visit http://bit.ly/McZA1D.

Additional Measures

In addition to the other measures discussed here, many SAAs also tracked:

- Number of Trainings Attended
- Number of Community Trainings Given
- Number of Drug Endangered Children Calls
- Number of Drug Seizures Involving Children
- Number of Confidential Informants Used
- Number of Drug Trafficking or Money Laundering Operations Disrupted/Dismantled

Moving Forward

The foundation of many state drug and gang enforcement strategies, MJTFs are often at the front line of state and local drug interdiction efforts. By working with federal, state and local

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law enforcement agencies, taskforces are able to investigate sweeping and complex cases that stretch across jurisdictional boundaries and may go beyond the capacity of local agencies acting alone. By leveraging resources and expertise from multiple partners and enhancing cross-jurisdictional coordination, MJTFs are able to break down information siloes that can hinder effective enforcement efforts. In recent years, SAAs and BJA have brought the spotlight of performance measurement and best practices replication to task force management. With this new focus, SAAs have worked with local law enforcement to enhance oversight, encourage standardization and institute strong management and investigative practices. Below are some common approaches SAAs have employed to strengthen the task force model:

Performance Measures

The basis for program monitoring, management and evaluation, performance measures allow evaluators to monitor desired outputs and outcomes of MJTF activity. Regular monitoring can help evaluators both demonstrate impact and proactively identify taskforce problems, needs and crime trends. In addition the use of targeted performance measures can help change the focus of individual taskforces by placing specific focus on the types of outputs that lead to desired outcomes. The use of targeted measures that track outputs such as: types of arrests, charging levels, and the number of charges can provide the SAA with valuable information about the type of investigations individual taskforces are undertaking. Lastly, the collection of taskforce performance measures are the basis for more advanced metrics which look at case success rates, case closure rates, arrests per investigation, arrests ending in adjudication, taskforce partnerships and the successful dismantling or disruption of mid-upper level criminal organizations.

Benchmarking

With the collection of taskforce process and output data, evaluators have an opportunity to create benchmarks against which taskforce activities and successes are measured. Common examples of taskforce benchmarking are the percentage of felony level arrests, drug class investigation rates, case closure rates and officer training requirements. Minnesota, for example, uses benchmarking to measure its MJTFs against state enforcement policy goals and priorities. In specific, Minnesota's expectation that MJTF arrests should be primarily at the felony level has led to on average a 92 percent felony arrest rate for the state's taskforces in 2009-2011. By setting clear expectations, the taskforces were able to prioritize specific types of operations that focused on larger scale investigations and a higher level of offender. In addition, it should be noted that benchmarking provides the opportunity to scale success to the type, scope and capacity of an individual taskforce.

Governing Boards

In addition to the use of benchmarks, some states have created statewide and/or taskforce-specific governing boards. These bodies are most often tasked with reviewing cases, financial management procedures and investigative officer management protocols. Local boards are often composed of lead prosecutors and law enforcement from represented counties. Other governing boards include neighboring taskforce leadership, representatives from the Attorney General's office and subject matter experts. Governing boards help leverage resources, knowledge and expertise. In addition, increased communication and oversight creates buy-in from multiple elements of the justice system and can improve evidence collection and case processing. The State of Washington, which invests heavily in its MJTF enforcement model, uses a peer review board to monitor and audit local taskforces. In addition to monitoring success, the oversight body examines taskforce compliance with its standardized operational best practices. Minnesota has created both individual taskforce and state-level oversight bodies to help improve the MJTF model, coordinate enforcement efforts across the state and help underperforming taskforces improve. To read more about Minnesota's state and local MJTF oversight click here. To read more about Washington state's MJTF Peer Review Model click here.

While only a few states have state-level governing boards, many local taskforces have adopted governing or advisory boards to help improve local oversight and advance taskforce activities. Although less common, state oversight bodies also help promote common state level standards for taskforce investi-

"The number of state/Byrne JAG funded taskforces has declined from an estimated 1,000 in 1990 to less than 600 today."

"The 12 elements of successful MJTFs provide a common sense and research informed blueprint for improving taskforce structures, investigations and long term outcomes."

gative and operational protocols and procedures. Common investigative and administrative protocols help not only inter-taskforce operations but give evaluators a set of standards on which to build best practices.

Best Practices

Just as important as performance measurement and proper oversight, the use of industry best practices promotes increased capacity and helps build structures that promote MJTF success and efficiency. In 2000, BJA published a monograph which highlighted evaluations of multiple sectors of the criminal justice system. Included was a section on MJTFs which highlighted 12 critical elements of successful multijurisdictional taskforces. To see the original click here (p.81) and an expanded version created by the Washington Department of Commerce, the SAA click here (p10). The 12 elements of successful multi-jurisdictional taskforces provide a research-informed blueprint for improving taskforce structures, investigations and long term outcomes. In addition, some states have standardized their best practices into investigative manuals which lay out the state's best practices for task force informant management, investigative protocols, evidence processing, and seizure and forfeiture-related procedures. To see an example of Minnesota's manual click here.

Evaluations and Assessments

Although individual MJTF efforts do not lend themselves well to traditional program evaluation (due to a lack of standardization around composition, focus and capacity), states have looked to evaluate the impact of the larger enforcement model. Many states have taken the first step of creating statewide taskforce reports which publish both a compilation of MJTF metrics and highlights from individual taskforces. SAAs have indicated that these assessments are not only useful tools for legislative assessment, but also have the secondary benefit of giving taskforces something against which to compare. Other states have created taskforce to taskforce comparisons by matching MJTF similarities on a number of variables including counties served, population density and Uniform Crime Report (UCR) data. This model for evaluating performance can help states create peer comparisons and better understand the types of results that can be expected for taskforces of different sizes and scopes. Moving beyond local comparisons, states like Illinois have worked to compare taskforce drug interdiction activities to those of other state and local law enforcement. Both 2003 and 2012 evaluations show that Illinois MJTF efforts targeted higher level crimes, saw larger seizures and forfeitures, resulted in more felony arrests, and dealt with higher levels of controlled substances than other state and local law enforcement operations. Whether looking at doing complex evaluations or more simple assessments, much of the information needed is already being gathered through the federal PMT and in state performance metrics.

Thanks to their role within the state criminal justice systems, SAAs are uniquely positioned to support both local taskforce operations and the state's MJTF enforcement model. Through the use of the tools mentioned above, SAAs can enhance their monitoring, oversight and evaluation capabilities. In addition to supporting taskforce operations, SAAs have the opportunity to reframe how they tell the story of taskforce success. Through the use of performance measurement and benchmarking, SAAs can provide quantitative measures of taskforce activities that enhance the credibility of anecdotal success stories. By supporting strong oversight and the adoption of best practices, SAAs can demonstrate fidelity to established models and promote the use of common protocols. In addition, when done in concert with regular performance assessment and periodic evaluation, SAAs can demonstrate the effect that the taskforce enforcement model is having within a state, region or locality.

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About this Assessment

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SAAs Involved in this Assessment

During late 2011–early 2012 the 39 SAAs who use dedicated state funds or Byrne JAG grants to support MJTFs were asked to provide copies of the measures they used to monitor program performance. Of the 39 SAAs that funded MJTF efforts, 28 indicated that they required additional performance measures outside of BJA's measurement tool. Of those 28 SAAs, 24 used quantitative performance measures to track MJTF activity.

Alabama	Arizona	California	Georgia
Illinois	Indiana	Iowa	Kentucky
Michigan	Minnesota	Mississippi	Missouri
Montana	New Mexico	North Dakota	Ohio
Oklahoma	South Carolina	Tennessee	Utah
Vermont	Washington	West Virginia	Wyoming

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This document is supported by Grant No. 2010-DB-BX-K086 awarded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance. The Bureau of Justice Assistance is a component of the Office of Justice Programs, which also includes the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the National Institute of Justice, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, the SMART Office, and the Office for Victims of Crime. Points of view or opinions are those of the speakers.