

# **MAJIC Recommendation to the Criminal Justice Information Advisory Board (CJIAB) for a Proof of Concept (POC) Project to Demonstrate the Global Reference Architecture (GRA)**

## **Municipality of Anchorage, Office of the Prosecutor (MOA) & Alaska Court System (ACS)**

### **Misdemeanor Charging Document Data Exchange**

Project Title/Name: MOA to ACS Electronic Misdemeanor Charging Document Exchange

Project Manager: Cindy Franklin, MOA Prosecutor.

MOA Project Team: Cindy Franklin; Angie Rosales; Lance Ahern or designee from MOA IT.

ACS Project Team: Charlene Dolphin, Brenda Axtell, Sharon Chen, Helen Sharratt, Joe Mannion, Bob Roper.

Technical Assistance: SEARCH

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#### **Exchange Project Participants:**

MOA Prosecutor's Office  
Alaska Court System

Department of Law and local prosecutor input would be needed when developing data content for the exchange.

Other MAJIC agencies would be welcome to observe the process.

#### **Project Objective**

The objective is a secure exchange of data necessary for an initial misdemeanor charging document and any amendments to that charging document, from the MOA's JustWare into the ACS' system using GRA standards, with the necessary adapters and connectors to transport the data via an intermediary (broker) that can be used for future data exchanges between Alaska's criminal justice agencies.

#### **Current Work Flow**

The MOA Prosecutor's office creates the charging document in the MOA's case management system, JustWare. The MOA sends the paper document to the ACS via courier for filing. The court clerk then reviews the charging document to determine if a new case needs to be opened in CourtView or if an existing case needs to be updated. The court clerk hand-enters information from the charging document into the ACS' case management system, Courtview.

#### **Business Need and Timing**

The ACS is in the beginning stages of a comprehensive e filing project (LYNX), to transform the ACS from a paper-based system to a paper-on-demand system. The electronic filing of municipal misdemeanor cases is a significant component within the e filing project and city prosecutors are aware that mandatory e filing will be required at some point. In CY 2012 the MOA Prosecutor's Office filed 22% of the total number of criminal cases filed statewide with the ACS. The MOA has already been proactive in instituting work flow and system updates to be ready for compulsory e filing. The

MOA is also embarking on a project to add e discovery and e filing capabilities to its system by the end of the first quarter of CY 2014, when ACS is expected to have the necessary electronic case filing (ECF) conformance for data exchanges in place. Getting partners to an exchange ready at the same time is always a significant challenge, but the ACS and MOA are well aligned to plan and implement this exchange. Both agencies need and support an electronic exchange to move critical data from the MOA into the ACS' case management system.

### **Anticipated Benefits**

There are frequently problems with the data on paper charging documents, e.g., wrong or missing APSIN, ATN, DOB, misspelled name, statutes, DV indicator missing, etc. Corrections have to be made after contact with the MOA and these can be time consuming and result in delays. With electronic filing, the system can be programmed to reject a charging document where missing or incorrect data is defined as mandatory for a case to be filed. Any time data has to be hand-entered a second or subsequent time, there is further risk of error. An appreciable amount of time is spent by both court clerks and MOA clerks/attorneys on manual research and corrections.

The electronic exchange of the Misdemeanor charging document from the MOA to the ACS would:

- ✓ Increase the accuracy and completeness of data
- ✓ Promote uniformity and consistency
- ✓ Avoid duplicate and time consuming data entry and the accompanying errors
- ✓ Increase timeliness for both the MOA and the ACS in case processing
- ✓ Reduce the time spent by both agencies researching and correcting data needed to properly file a misdemeanor case.
- ✓ Provide the ACS, the MOA, the DOL and all other prosecutors with the opportunity to ensure that all data elements needed for the ACS e filing project for criminal cases are defined and contained within the Electronic Case Filing (ECF) design at the outset, and can be repurposed by other agencies.
- ✓ The defendant, the defendant's attorney and the public will also benefit from being able to access charge information in a timely manner. In many cases the paper files must circulate from the courtrooms, including jail court, back to the clerks before any information can be input manually from the paper.
- ✓ Provide criminal justice agencies with an example of the Global Reference Architecture applied to an exchange that is both necessary to the ACS' e filing project, to other criminal data exchanges and that can be replicated for other prosecuting agencies that will need to be able to file criminal charging documents electronically.

### **Project Scope**

The data model and content will be designed to include all data elements needed for both the MOA and other prosecuting agencies so that when other agencies are ready to file criminal charging documents electronically, this part of the project will be complete. In other words, designing the content for all criminal case filing at the outset will avoid having to redo aspects of the design and the costs associated with system modifications, while at the same time demonstrating the GRA. This broader approach supports the GRA approach in and of itself – it promotes a NIEM conformant data exchange for re-use that will benefit the larger prosecutor community which includes the Department of Law, and local prosecutors around the state.

1. The data content will address Criminal Rule 3 requirements.
2. The interface will be designed to pull in all data from the MOA JustWare application required to generate the entire misdemeanor charging document to be transmitted to the ACS.
3. The interface will also be designed to transmit amended charging documents.

4. This POC will address how to electronically transfer and provide the judicial officer access to data required by Criminal Rule 3 (a): the written statement of the essential facts constituting the offense charged (probable cause)
5. This POC will allow some form of electronic signature by the prosecutor who is filing the charging document.
6. This exchange will address the need to provide the defendant and the defendant's attorney a copy of the charging document.
7. When an officer issues a misdemeanor citation to a defendant, the citation lists the date and time for the defendant's first court appearance. Currently, the municipal prosecutor creates and files a new charging document, together with the citation as notice of the date/time the defendant was given to appear in court. The POC will need to address how to provide appearance date/time information in these situations.
8. The interface will be designed to reject any error that is considered fatal. Fatal errors will be decided by the stakeholders but would include inaccuracies regarding the offense code cited, which will be pulled from the UOCT and UMOT.

## Requirements

1. For this POC, the MOA and the ACS are committed to the use of Global Reference Architecture (GRA). SEARCH has offered technical assistance at no cost to this project to assist with the design and implementation according to GRA standards.
2. The ability of both agencies to send and receive the data is required and this has been favorably evaluated by SEARCH. Both agency systems anticipate that modifications will be needed to their systems and both agencies have committed the financial resources to ensure that their respective systems will be able to meet the technical requirements necessary for this exchange.
3. The ACS and SEARCH have underscored that this exchange must be aligned with the ACS e filing project (LYNX). This exchange must therefore be designed with the same architecture to be determined for the ACS e filing initiative. This means that once the initial specifications are identified, the exchange itself must be implemented in sync with the ACS' development of the methodology for criminal e filing, which is a priority for the ACS, but which has not yet been determined. This constraint does not, however, mean that this project should not be selected. It simply means that the timeline for implementation of the exchange may need to be extended. As SEARCH has pointed out, one of the advantages of following the GRA and NIEM is that everyone agrees at the outset to adhere to the NIEM standard (the language the broker or intermediary will use to connect the systems – the Esperanto, if you will). Therefore, after working on the data model as the first phase of this POC, the MOA can work on their export independently from the ACS' ability to receive/consume it. The MOA would be able to complete its part ahead of the ACS as long as the MOA adheres to the NIEM standard.
4. The location of the broker still needs to be determined. For example, at the last CJIB meeting, there was discussion that the Department of Administration might consider hosting the broker.

## Estimated Project Costs

Both agencies have committed to provide the financial resources needed for any hardware, modifications and programming needed within their respective agencies to ensure the success of this data exchange.

## **Projected Timeline**

The MOA and ACS project teams can convene a meeting as soon as possible with SEARCH to work on a project charter, outlining all the GRA compliant steps and documentation needed. An initial phase of the POC, which can begin in October/November 2013, will be the development of specifications/data content for the exchange. This can be concluded by early CY 2014. By the end of the first quarter of CY 2014, it is anticipated that the ACS may be in a position with the e filing project design to continue work on implementation requirements for receiving the data from the MOA however it is likely that this may need to be later in the year. In the interim, however, the MOA will work on their export design, ensuring that it is NIEM conformant. SEARCH will assist the MOA as needed. An approximate time from design to testing and implementation is 18 months.

## **Notes:**

Ideally, this process could eventually begin with the generation of an electronic CCID. That electronic "form" would likely reside in APSIN, where officers could complete it, and then either the SOA or MOAs would draw from it, populate the required information from the CCID on the Complaint or Information, and send that electronically into CourtView. Numerous and complex events occur leading up to the decision by the MOA Prosecutor to file charges (APD filing own complaints, SOA complaint not MOA complaint, warrants, bail, etc.). Therefore, to simplify this exchange the scope is limited to beginning at the point when the MOA files a charging document with the court. This is the trigger for generating the complaint in the MOA's system to be sent to CourtView electronically.

By limiting this exchange to the MOA to the ACS, this is an achievable project which also constitutes an exchange that is going to be required statewide by the ACS in the near future. It therefore makes sense to design and implement this project as the POC, which will both demonstrate the application of the GRA and result in a process that can be re-used by the Department of Law and other prosecutors around the state.

This POC received the support of the majority of MAJIC agencies who attended meetings in August 2013 to arrive at this recommendation. Agencies endorsing this proposal also participated in the SEARCH GRA workshop hosted by MAJIC in December 2012.