JIS Data Standards for Alternative Electronic Court Record Systems
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

10/01/2014

1. Will courts that are not now directly using a JIS supported application to manage court cases, be expected to meet these standards, or will they be "grandfathered" in?

   ~~*Yes, all courts are expected to meet the standards. However, the Standards Implementation Plan provides for a five-year incremental compliance plan for courts that are currently not using JIS as their primary case management system. The plan provides an incremental phase in period for courts to provide the most important data in the earlier years, such as data needed for public safety, followed by less significant data in the subsequent years (individual case history, proceedings, caseload statistics, etc.).*~~

   The Implementation plan for the JIS Data Standards for Alternative Electronic Court Record Systems requires trial courts not using JIS as their primary case management system as of April 4, 2014 (Seattle Municipal, Spokane Municipal, and Pierce Superior) to continue to enter data into JIS at the same level entered as of April 4, 2014.

   The previous version (version 1.2) of the implementation plan, required a five-year phase-in of the standards

2. If a court already has an established method for transmitting required data to the Department of Licensing or to Washington State Patrol, will they have to change the existing data exchange to conform to these guidelines?

   No, the standards do not require changes to your existing data exchanges with the Department of Licensing (DOL) and the Washington State Patrol (WSP). The AOC does not have any authority over the data standards required by DOL and WSP. These standards only apply for data between alternative court systems and the JIS.

3. Will courts be required to provide AOC/JIS all of the "shared data elements" in Appendix A?

   No, courts will not have to share all of the shared data elements. Courts will only have to provide the shared data elements that are identified as "baseline" for their court level. For example, Detention Population and Detention Episode are only for juvenile departments.

4. How would we resolve a situation where a non-JIS court is prepared to develop its portion of the data exchange, but due to a lack of AOC resources, the ISD division is not ready?

   For courts that are currently not using JIS as their primary case management system, see answer to FAQ #1.

   For courts that leave JIS in the future, there are two ways for non-JIS courts to meet the requirements:

   1) through an automated data exchange or
   2) via direct data entry into JIS.

AOC resources are currently focused on legacy system replacement efforts. Requests for AOC resources can be made through the ITG process. AOC will focus on working to implement the data exchanges with non-Odyssey (Pierce County and King County) superior courts after the state-wide implementation of Odyssey is completed. Eventually, the INH team will develop services for non-JIS courts of limited jurisdiction.

5. Are the time standards for data sharing new or are they currently in place?

   These time standards are partially what is done currently and partially needed to maintain the status quo.

6. How was it determined what data elements should be included in the standards?

   There was a very extensive process used to identify the data elements for the standards. The starting point of the standard data elements came from the JIS Baseline Services. The JIS baseline Services Identified 13 major CMS functions and 64 sub-functions. Each sub-function was evaluated by a JISC workgroup to determine its applicability for shared data and common process. The workgroup had consensus on 40 of the shared data sub-functions. Those 40 were used to limit the initial scope.

   Next, the following statewide level outputs were analyzed. The data elements from each where cataloged and cross referenced:

Name	Type	Source
Judicial Output Browser System Screens	Existing JIS Output	JIS Application
JIS Statewide Screens	Existing JIS Output	JIS Application
CLJ Statistical Reports	Existing Output	Data Warehouse
Superior Court Caseload Reports	Existing Output	Data Warehouse
SCOMIS Docket Analysis	Analysis of SCOMIS Docket	Enterprise Architecture
JIS Table and Column Analysis	JIS Database Analysis	JIS database
Odyssey Table and Column Analysis	Odyssey	JIS database
Required Data Fields for DX Non-JIS Courts (SMC)	Proposal for expanded Seattle Municipal Court Upload to JIS	ITG 27 Governance Request
JIS Data Exchanges	Registry of Operational Data Exchanges	Maintenance Team

Table 1 Major statewide outputs and data sources

Next a list of reasons (rationales) for requiring data to be shared outside of an individual court was developed. This list included: state statute or other mandates, judicial decision making, judicial needs, caseload statistics, etc. The list of common shared data elements was then evaluated against the rationale. Data elements that were supported by a rationale were kept, all other data elements were discarded.

Next, data elements with the same meaning and usage were consolidated. The data elements were then assigned to sub-functions from baseline services – participant, case, participant, charge etc.

The final step was to vet the data elements with AOC personnel that are considered experts in certain areas. The AOC staff were from: AOC Data and Development (Data Warehouse), Database Administrations, Architecture and Strategy, Court Business Liaisons, Trail Court Services and Judicial Education, Court Business and Technology Integration (business analysts and others), Management Services (accounting data), and Court Innovation – Washington State Center for Court Research.

The result is 255 data elements, 215 of which are unique (some elements such as case identifier, person identifier, etc. are repeated in multiple groups.). These data elements represent a very small percentage as compared to the existing JIS and the new Odyssey databases. The JIS database currently has 3,834 data elements and the Odyssey database has in excess of 30,000 data elements.

7. Where did the data element names come from? Some of the data element names in Appendix 'A' Shared Data Elements do not make sense for my court. For example, 'Conditions' is confusing for Superior Courts.

   When naming the data elements an attempt was made to have a common name that spanned all court levels. It was anticipated that some of the names used might need additional reconciliation to bring a common understanding between court levels. During the development of the standards, the terminology from the National Center for State Court (NCSC) Consolidated Case Management System Functional Standards was used whenever appropriate.

8. Why do the standards include data elements that are not being provided today?

   The standards are a combination of what is available now plus what is needed in the future. The standards includes data elements that are needed but not currently available in the existing applications. One example is detailed conditions of sentence from the Judgment and Sentence for Superior Courts. This data is needed for sharing between courts, probation, and other organizations such and Juvenile Rehabilitation Association (JRA). The detailed conditions of sentence are not completely provided in a common (non-textual) format by SCOMIS. The Standards for Alternative Court Electronic Record Systems anticipates that this information will be provided in new replacement systems for the courts.

As such, the data is marked as a "future" requirement in the standards.

9. There are no references to data exchanges for NCOs, warrants, convictions. Should there be something that is responsive to the Washington State Patrol (WSP) CJIS Security requirements?

   The standards fully support No Contact Orders (NCO's) using the standards from the 'Significant Document Index' and 'Significant Document Index parties". Warrants and convictions are also fully supported. The Criminal Justice Information System (CJIS) security requirements are not applicable to this standard as there is not proposed direct interaction between CJIS and JIS (information from AOC Information Security Officer, Terry Overton).

10. If a data exchange is required to meet these data standards, will funding to support the data exchange be available through the AOC?"

    No. In accordance with the 2014 legislative budget proviso, funding for the local court part of the data exchange work is the responsibility of that court. The legislature has directed that all courts use a common set of data standards.

11. Will courts have the ability to add to the AOC managed code list to reflect any local ordinances that may have different existing local codes? As new laws are adopted additional updates will be required, so it is important to know how local codes will be handled as part of these new standards."

    The data standards have the requirement to provide both the local law along with the statewide standard law. Any local law will be accepted providing that a valid statewide standard law is also provided.

12. The Information Networking Hub (INH) is a fundamental component supporting the Data Standards, yet there is little or no current information about the status of INH and the inter-play between it and the Data Standards.

    The INH project involves several major efforts.

    Work Completed

    - *INH has developed 21 data exchange services in addition to 66 data exchange services developed as part of the Superior Court Data Exchange (SCDX) project. These 87 services together will be utilized to support the SC-CMS integration efforts.*

    Work Currently Underway

- *The primary focus of the INH team at this time is on the integration between JIS and Odyssey for the SC-CMS project.*
- *The INH project team is working on an Enterprise Data Repository (EDR) prototype. This effort will help create a design and strategy for developing a comprehensive central data repository that can store and share statewide data with disparate court systems based on the JIS data standards.*

Future Plans

- *AOC will focus on working to implement the 87 data exchanges with non-Odyssey (Pierce County and King County) superior courts after the state-wide implementation of Odyssey is completed.*
- *The INH team will eventually develop services to support a CLJ Case Management System. AOC has presented a budget decision package for potential inclusion in the request for the upcoming legislative session. No funding has yet been authorized for this effort.*

13. The standards have several policy statements included or inferred in them. Having policies to guide the standards is essential in developing consistent and appropriate data standards. We are concerned that the policies are either unintentional or un-vetted outcomes of the standards rather than being developed in a transparent and thorough process.

    In 2014, the legislature issued a proviso which requires AOC and the JISC to develop the JIS standards. AOC based the development of the standards on JISC Rule 13 and the JIS General Policies, which are revised, reviewed and approved by the JISC through an established process. The intent of the policy-like statements in the standard is not to replace those policies or rules, but to elaborate, supplement and clarify the JIS policies and rules in the context of the standards.

14. The Stated Purpose of the JIS Data Standards (page 2) indicates that this document "contains the requirements for trial courts to interface independent automated court record systems with the state Judicial Information System." We agree that an "interface" is essential and note that duplicate data entry is not an interface. *"*

    The use of the word "interface" is proper as used in the standards document on page 2. The exchange can be between software, computer hardware, peripheral devices, humans and combinations of these.

15. This policy contains references to a variety of statutes, court rules and general rules, which cause some confusion and lack of clarity. Very few of the rules or statutes pertain to a statewide data standard. We ask that they be removed from this document."

    The authoritative references (Court Rules and Statutes) noted in the Standard provide direction to a court if they choose to operate an alternative electronic court record system.

Inclusion of these rules provides an easy reference for the courts on what statues, rules, and other items apply so that they can effectively plan for and operate an alternative system.

16. Data should not only be provided by the courts to the AOC, but courts should also be able to have access to data that is provided by other courts and clerks. Our understanding is that no exchange mechanism is in place for us to use, and when it is, it will be only a one way avenue for courts to send data to the state. In the interest of public safety, the data exchange initiative should be a two way initiative."

    The purpose of this standard is to address the issue that statewide justice data is not lost when courts choose to move off of JIS. We also agree that two-way data exchanges are beneficial. For courts needing data from the statewide database, AOC currently supports a large number of data exchanges, data feeds, and reports. AOC is currently working on the revision or definition of standards and specifications for these outbound data exchanges and reports through other programs and projects.

17. Roughly 40% of the data contained within JIS is from courts that are not now using JIS, or from courts that are planning to migrate to other systems (King County District, King County Superior Court and County Clerk's Office, Seattle Municipal Court, Pierce County Superior Court, and Spokane Municipal Court). Given the volume of data managed by these courts, it is important that their data be made available to other courts in a timely and cost effective manner. All courts in the state should have accurate, real-time information about defendants with cases in other courts. There is a significant public safety risk by our current state where multiple systems have to be accessed to gather current case information. In developing these Data Standards and in discussing data exchange mechanisms, AOC's intent should be to develop standards and mechanisms that are reasonable, manageable and acceptable to us all and not just to the smaller courts. It would be unfortunate if AOC prevented courts that need to develop local systems from having a cost effective mechanism for providing their data to other courts across the state.

    AOC acknowledges and recognizes that King County provides a significant percentage of data that is currently being used by other courts statewide. The purpose of the standard is to continue the vital needs by all courts to have this information, and to ensure, that if a court chooses to move away from the statewide JIS, that this data is still available for all courts statewide.