

Karen Gennette, Esq., Executive Director  
Robin Joy Weber, Ph.D., J.D., Director of Research  
Crime Research Group  
House Judiciary Committee, 1/12/2017



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Crime Research Group, Inc. is a non-profit research center providing research to promote a fair and effective criminal justice system. Crime Research Group is a unique, Vermont-based group of professional researchers, college faculty, practitioners, attorneys and former law enforcement officers with decades of experience. We provide information/data, research and evaluations based on research findings in the fields of criminal justice, juvenile justice, the administration of justice and related issues. CRG has a contract with the Department of Public Safety to provide the services as the Statistical Analysis Center for Vermont. (see page 2)

#### Meet the Staff:

Robin Weber, J.D., Ph.D., Director of Research  
Max Shlueter, Ph.D., Senior Research Associate  
Marcia Bellas, Ph.D., Research Associate  
Peter Wicklund, Ph.D., Research Associate  
Travis Morris, Ph.D., Research Associate  
Karen Gennette, Esq., Executive Director

#### Services offered:

- Responding to data requests on the “going rate” for sentences for crimes
- Evaluation planning and design, including results first and RBA
- Qualitative work, including in-depth interviews, focus groups & observations
- Crime mapping and analysis
- Survey design, management and analysis
- Secondary data analysis including benefit-cost analysis
- Supporting others planning research or managing research projects
- Data collection consultation for evaluations
- Understanding the interface between crime, and other issues such as substance abuse and mental health disorders

Statistical Analysis Centers (SACs) are units or agencies at the state government level that use operational, management, and research information from all components of the criminal justice system to conduct objective analyses of state-wide and system-wide policy issues.

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SACs are in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the Northern Mariana Islands.

The systematic collection and analysis of criminal justice data enables the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) to comply with its authority to publish and disseminate statistical information on crime and the operation of justice systems. State and local governments use these data for policy analysis, planning, assessing justice system operations, and evaluating programs.

BJS distributes grants to the SACs for research and evaluation at the state and local level for:

1. Collecting, analyzing, and publishing criminal justice data;
2. Analyzing data in support of public policy, especially on the themes identified by BJS;
3. Establishing and maintaining contacts with state criminal justice agencies, the courts, victims' organizations, and local governments and their criminal justice agencies;
4. Assisting criminal justice agencies with defining their needs for specific statistical and other information needed to plan, implement, and evaluate criminal justice programs;
5. Providing technical assistance to collect, interpret, use, & share statistical information;
6. Performing program evaluations.

#### Examples of Projects in Vermont:

- Law Enforcement Data Sharing Initiative: this project addresses the data sharing needs of the criminal justice community in Vermont with a specific focus on the use of law enforcement data for research and statistical analysis purposes.
- Traffic Stops and Race: this project uses best practices in the collection and analysis of traffic stop and race data to study the reasons for the disparities in the stops. CRG will use the commuting population, resident analysis and veil of darkness analysis for this work.
- Race and Sentencing: this project analyzed the effect of race in sentencing decisions and concludes that there is no evidence of systemic bias for the crimes studied. The report also outlines prior research on race & sentencing in Vermont.
- Act 61 Criminal Code Reclassification: In the 2013-2014 Legislative Session, the Vermont Legislature passed Act 61, creating a Working Group to review Vermont's criminal penalties, to review other state's sentencing structures and to recommend a sentencing structure that allows for sentencing consistent with "the gravity of the offense, the culpability of the offender, the offender's criminal history, and the personal characteristics of an individual offender that may be taken into account."