# *Justice Information Systems Integration Summary*

Justice agencies throughout the nation increasingly recognize the importance of integrating their information systems in order to share critical data, documents, images and key transactions. In recognition of this need to share information, many state and local jurisdictions, including the State of Iowa, are actively developing and implementing plans for comprehensive integrated justice information systems. Integrated systems improve the quality of information and thereby: improves public safety, eliminates data entry errors and redundant data entry, provides complete, current and timely data, improves the ability to evaluate policy decisions and changes, maximizes available resources, improves data retrieval response time, provides for better, more informed decision making, and improves the operational effectiveness of existing systems.

It is well known that each justice agency makes decisions regarding persons or cases that should be shared with other persons or agencies. However, many systems have been developed in isolation of one another. This results in independent systems that may share common data concepts but cannot easily communicate with each other. The goal of integration is to design a system or "variety of functions" to enable the efficient, accurate and timely sharing of information within and between justice agencies.

The challenge of criminal justice integration is widely known to those in the field, and to many, if not all policymakers. Communication among law enforcement, the judicial branch, and corrections at the local, state, and federal levels remains a major challenge in maximizing the equity, efficiency, and effectiveness of the national justice system. The Executive, Judicial, and Legislative branches all play a lead role in bringing justice information users within their states together to achieve the benefits of information integration through the use of information technology (IT).