White Paper on

The U.S. Department of Justice
Global Advisory Committee

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INTRODUCTION

For more than a decade, the U.S. Department of Justice's (DOJ) Global Justice Information Sharing Initiative (Global) Advisory Committee (GAC) has helped the United States meet current and emerging information sharing challenges and opportunities. Chartered in 1998 as a Federal Advisory Committee by former U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno, the GAC was carefully structured to function as a unique partnership of justice-interested leaders, providing recommendations to the Attorney General on standards-based electronic information exchange throughout the justice and public safety communities.

Today, the GAC is the preeminent voice of state, local, and tribal governments on information sharing matters. Crime is routinely organized across jurisdictional boundaries and must be addressed on a global level and in coordination with federal, state, local, and tribal partners.

Through guidance from DOJ's Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), the GAC facilitates Global's efforts with expert representation from the following constituencies:

- Law enforcement
- Prosecution
- Public defenders
- Courts
- Corrections
- Probation and parole
- First responders
- Industry
- Other agencies directly involved in the justice system

Ultimately, the ability to share justice and public safety data results in safer communities because crucial information is quickly and accurately available to all those protecting our nation's public.

THE CHALLENGE

Over the successive years, significant incidents have underscored the need for effective, efficient, and appropriate information sharing to address crimes such as identity theft and domestic and international terrorism, as well as new challenges such as pandemics. With different agencies building disparate information systems to address business-specific problems, the prospect of broadscale information sharing may seem, on its face, impossible. However, the collaborative process, which is a unique Global hallmark, has resulted in the development of numerous groundbreaking resources that have proven invaluable in overcoming information sharing obstacles. As a result, the GAC is uniquely poised to support many federal, state, local, and tribal information sharing priorities with work already accomplished or currently under way.

IMPROVING INTELLIGENCE CAPACITY AT ALL LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT

Global is working to improve intelligence capacity by supporting local- and state-level intelligence analysts, increasing capacity to share intelligence across all levels of government, and moving from a traditional "need-to-know and right-to-know" philosophy to a comprehensive and appropriate "responsibility-to-share" framework. Another part of the intelligence sharing equation is the fact that coordinating intelligence efforts requires national guidance and structure to achieve maximum effectiveness. For example, in the wake of 9/11, the GAC (through the Global Intelligence Working Group and the Criminal Intelligence Coordinating Council) was swift to respond with resources and recommendations to guide and support fusion centers, leveraging existing Global intelligence products (the *National Criminal Intelligence Sharing Plan*), supporting development of new resources (*Fusion Center Guidelines* and *Baseline Capabilities for State and Major Urban Area Fusion Centers*), and providing a consistent national framework for fusion centers (including analyst training resources). A key advantage of Global's involvement in fusion center activities is the Initiative's existing, inherent structure: a long-standing partnership of state, local, tribal, and federal justice partners dedicated to collaboratively achieving information sharing success.

PROTECTING CIVIL LIBERTIES BY STRENGTHENING PRIVACY PROTECTIONS

Without safeguarding the privacy and civil liberties of the nation's individuals with equal zeal as the pursuit of improving information exchanges, endeavors in this arena will ultimately fail. Responsively, the Global Privacy and Information Quality Working Group (GPIQWG) developed practical guidance on privacy policy development, resulting in a comprehensive series of resources that serve as essential elements in helping jurisdictions develop and implement privacy and civil liberties program efforts. GPIQWG's *Privacy and Civil Liberties Policy Development Guide and Implementation Templates*—the series' foundation document—

has become the standard-bearer for the justice community and is being leveraged by state and major urban area fusion centers and other intelligence entities, as well as state and local governments, in their privacy policy development, training, and technical assistance.

BUILDING CAPACITY TO MITIGATE NEW CHALLENGES

In making countless decisions every day, justice and public safety officials must have immediate access to timely, accurate, and complete information. Regardless of whether the situation involves a police officer conducting a routine traffic stop, a security officer conducting passenger screening at an airport, or a customs official screening cargo arriving at an international port, effective decision making requires information that often must be shared across a broad landscape of systems, agencies, and jurisdictions.

The GAC works to build capacity to mitigate both current and future challenges by linking critical partners that traditionally have not shared information to ensure that decision makers and law enforcement have the information and communication tools needed. For example, the National Information Exchange Model (NIEM) data exchange standard, based on the fundamental work supported by Global through the Global Justice XML Data Model (GJXDM), is helping link law enforcement agencies, fire departments, and other critical first responders (e.g., medical, environmental, and transportation personnel) to improve the speed and effectiveness of our nation's response to crime and other challenges, such as biological threats, pandemics, and natural disasters.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION QUALITY

With the rapid proliferation and evolution of new technologies, increased data sharing requires increased responsibility for information quality to ensure sound justice decision making. To that end, Global supported the development of documents and guidelines to provide practitioners with knowledge and assistance in evaluating the quality of information collected, maintained, managed, disposed of, and disseminated.

Information quality also plays an extremely important role in the protection of privacy rights

of individuals. Issues of privacy and information quality are inherently linked. Both concepts share multiple information attributes that influence appropriate treatment of personally identifiable information. Practitioners must ensure that sufficient integrity and context exist for mere data snapshots to prevent distortion of the whole picture. Ensuring quality of information furthers the integrity of the entire justice process and supports decisions that affect employment, housing, licensing, and myriad other day-to-day needs and activities of the citizens and residents of the United States.

PARTNERING ACROSS AGENCIES

GAC members represent 32 key organizations from across the justice landscape. Working together for more than a decade, this group has developed an invaluable commodity: trust. Representatives contribute ideas and recommendations on the front end of the process; state, local, and tribal members add their voices to justice information sharing policy discussions, as opposed to receiving mandates and requirements "from above." As a result, the GAC has engendered an esprit de corps among disparate constituencies and levels of government, resulting in a willingness to reconcile proprietary issues in pursuit of a common goal. Industry also plays a vital role in the collaboration process through a strong partnership among BJA, Global, and the IJIS Institute. This public/private partnership is extremely important since industry has some of the foremost thinking regarding emerging technology. When industry is involved in an appropriate and balanced way with Global activities, the private sector feels ownership in national policy and has pledged support to build products to meet national standards. These partnerships are critical in responding to large-scale emergencies requiring communication across the entire spectrum of justice-interested agencies.
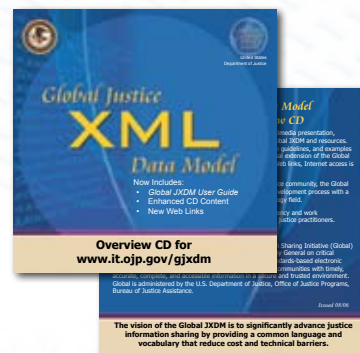
FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

Global gathers hundreds of the best and brightest minds—high-level executives, subject-matter experts, academicians, and industry representatives—in a volunteer capacity. These leaders dedicate their time and intellectual capital because they believe in the value of Global. To hire the collection of talent that supports Global-related activities at market price would simply be cost-prohibitive.

In addition, Global's support of open standards, new technology, and proven policies and practices knocks down barriers of siloed systems and the disparity of information for the "haves" and "have nots." The work of the GAC helps prevent incompatibilities, which can be costly; guides practitioner and industry partners in the development and reuse of technology components and solutions; and facilitates communication and interoperability between communities.

Global also decreases exposure to untested methods by incorporating knowledge and lessons learned from practitioners and technologists in the public sector, national associations, and industry who have gained experience. Global standards reflect concepts and mechanisms that are proved viable and beneficial in the real world.

VALUE AND RESULTS

The Global Justice XML Data Model (GJXDM) has greatly improved the ability of justice and public safety agencies to share information. Today, many justice information sharing projects are utilizing the GJXDM to revolutionize the justice system. The GJXDM has already proved its value in expediting crime solving. For example, police in Delaware County, Pennsylvania, were able to capture a bank robbery suspect in less than two hours by matching his bank surveillance photo with an image on the Pennsylvania Justice Network, or JNET, Pennsylvania's XML-enabled justice information sharing network. On another occasion, an officer assigned to the case of two slain New York City detectives contacted the Philadelphia/Camden High Intensity Drug Traffic Area authorities to request information on two

suspects. Again, by using JNET, it took officials just a few hours, rather than days or weeks, to gather and forward information on the suspects, including date of birth, social security number, fingerprints, photo, and vehicle information. As a result, the two suspects were located and brought into custody.

The GJXDM also aided police in Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, in quickly apprehending a homicide suspect. Within hours of learning of four homicides in one neighborhood, officers used a JNET photo image to confirm the suspect's identity. Through a stakeout, police apprehended the homicide suspect and recovered an assault weapon. These are only a few examples of the successful use of the GJXDM to solve crimes. In addition to solving cases, state and local jurisdictions that have implemented the Global Justice XML Data Model are reporting substantial cost savings.

Agencies at all levels of government are challenged with responding to increasing demands for their services. Yet many of these government entities spend valuable time rekeying data into their systems. For example, Orange County, Florida, has reported that eliminating redundant entry of arrest information saves an estimated $5 million to $7 million per year. NIEM provides a means to eliminate data entry redundancy—freeing resources to perform more valuable services for the public. Pennsylvania has implemented a standardized, repeatable process for all integrated technology solutions, reducing the message exchange development process from nine months to six weeks. This action is estimated to have resulted in millions of dollars in taxpayer savings.

In Missouri, the State Court Administrator also reports that since the adoption of NIEM-related standards, development time has been cut by 50 percent.

The private sector has been a big advocate in encouraging adoption of NIEM and other Global-related deliverables. Through support from the IJIS Institute, the collective voice of the private sector has reported that they will build products that meet NIEM requirements and claimed that NIEM will save the country billions of dollars.

CONCLUSION

DOJ's Global Initiative is working to help achieve the most important, overarching goal—protection of the American people—by providing the leadership and strategies to strengthen our security at home. The concept of Global is rooted in the Justice Department's priority of supporting, developing, and enhancing evidence-based practices; building upon current models; and encouraging innovative approaches and strategies nationwide.

BJA
Bureau of Justice Assistance
U.S. Department of Justice