Project Startup Report
Presented to the IT Committee June 2010

Project Name: Crime Lab Information Management System (LIMS)

Agency: Attorney General (AG) Office

Business Unit/Program Area: AG-IT and AG-Crime Lab

Project Sponsor: Cher Thomas and Hope Olson

Project Director: Teri Evenson

Project Manager: Brenda Bulawa

Project Description

The objective of this project is to implement a Crime Lab Information Management System (LIMS) to manage cases, evidence tracking and processing, training records, statistical information, and the tests, analysis, and results for disciplines such as arson, drug chemistry, firearms, DNA, toxicology and trace evidence. This system will replace the current in-house written system, along with numerous spreadsheets, Access databases, and other files used today to track information not in the current LIMS system. Information sharing with other criminal justice entities will be an additional component of this project. The new system will facilitate the bar coding of evidence and the tracking of evidence from point of collection through conclusion.

Business Needs and Problems

Information that the Crime Laboratory Division needs to operate on a daily basis is scattered across multiple databases and spreadsheets. This makes it extremely time consuming to validate the information as well as gather the information for reports and statistical analysis.

Each instrument at the crime lab that is connected to a computer, gathers information on that computer. Currently, there are no interfaces from the instruments to a database or management system. Information must be gathered at the instrument and then entered into some other form, usually a spreadsheet so analysis and comparisons can be accomplished.

The current LIMS system was designed for the forensic area, but still lacks ability in key areas of operation. The current LIMS in the Forensic Section does not provide a clear economical solution for several disciplines; blood alcohol analysis, breath alcohol, drug screening, DNA casework, convicted offender analysis, drug chemistry, firearms, arson, and trace. The current LIMS in use in the Forensic Section is not fully operational for instance, some disciplines handle chain of custody manually, statistical information from drug cases are manually tracked and then entered into a separate database, and automatic reporting and tracking features are lacking.

The current system does not cover any of the toxicology area. In the Toxicology Section in most instances, reporting is handled by individually written or typed reports that are stored in hardcopy form in file cabinets.

Evidence processing and tracking, especially in the areas of sample receipt, log-in for chain of custody, and reporting, is cumbersome and inefficient. Chain of custody only covers the time the evidence is in the crime lab, and does not currently account for the chain of custody at the point of collection, which happens outside of the crime lab. Presenting the chain of custody in court cases, then is not an easy process. With modern technology, not available in the past, this process could be greatly enhanced.

The laboratory is responsible for tracking and certifying over 50 breath alcohol instruments and over 1,400 law enforcement officers. Currently this is a manual process that is time-consuming and very tedious.

It is absolutely critical to be able to turn cases around quickly for law enforcement in order to meet court case deadlines. With the increase in DNA samples as well as overall caseload, the time-consuming manual processes overloaded with paper must be replaced with faster automated processes utilizing electronically stored information. Relating DNA to fingerprints and criminal records is an example of a completely manual time-consuming process.

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> The current LIMS system does not share information with any other applications, other than sharing of whether the lab has a DNA sample for an individual through State Radio and CJIS. There is a need to be able to share additional information with other related applications, as well as share information from those systems with the crime lab.

Key Metrics		
Project Start Date	**Project End Date**	**Original Baseline Budget**
04/12/2010	10/14/2011	$700,000

Objectives	
Project Objectives	**Measurement Description**
• Implement a LIMS for the Crime Lab that manages both forensic and toxicology processes.	• Selected a COTS product that manages both forensic and toxicology processes.
• Keep information in one application (without the need of downloading information into spreadsheets).	• The new functionality of LIMS will replace 13 manually created/updated spreadsheets.
• Integrate instrument information and provide reports and statistical analysis.	• 75% of instruments data used in the Crime Lab today will be available in LIMS.
• Administer the certification of instruments and law enforcement officers.	• Automate the tracking and certifying over 50 breath alcohol instruments. • Automate the tracking and certification of training for over 1400 law enforcement officers.
• Ease of gathering information for statistical and external reporting.	• Automate 100% of current manual statistical report.
• Facilitate the bar coding of evidence and the tracking of evidence from point of submittal till final disposition at the crime lab.	• The Crime Lab will decrease the turnaround time, (from the time evidence is received to disposition) in the toxicology section by at least 10%.
• Meet International Organization of Standardization (ISO) requirements.	• The project sponsor will submit for ISO accreditation after implementation of the LIMS project. The project sponsor will update Legislative IT of its status pending the accreditation audit.
• To meet the Adam Walsh requirements requiring DNA status being sent to the FBI.	• Automate a service to extract DNA information from LIMS to be forwarded to the FBI monthly. At the time of project closing there will be a successful run of this service.

Cost/Benefit Analysis

Many of the current manual processes that take hours for crime lab personnel to complete will be reduced to minutes. All information will be complete within one application, without the need of downloading information into spreadsheets to produce statistics and analysis. An automated system will allow the crime lab in their new building to handle the current increase in workload efficiently. With the increased sophistication of the instruments, a new automated system will better ensure the accuracy of the analysis, and help eliminate the checking and cross-checking done today in order to minimize or eliminate human error.

The increased continuity of information that a unified system provides will minimize the risk of criminal charges being dismissed and will provide a higher level of credibility of the information being presented.

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Crime laboratories adhere to rigid federal standards. Vendors monitor these standards constantly. The vendor purchased system will help insure we are meeting International Organization of Standardization (ISO) requirements.

Key Constraints or Risks

- All funds must be expended by June 30, 2011. If not expended, a request to carryover the remaining dollars will need to be made to OMB and/or the remaining amount will be included in the Attorney General Budget request for the 2011_2013 biennium.

- Cost, Schedule, Scope and Quality are often in conflict during projects. The Sponsor elected to prioritize as follows:

    1. Quality - The Quality of product is included for the AG-IT and AG-Crime Lab to sign off on deliverables. The product and project will need to meet project objectives.

    2. Scope - Functionality is outlined in the scope statement and additional detail was gathered during the FA gap analysis sessions.

    3. Cost – AG-IT and AG-Crime Lab is sponsor of the LIMS project and will be limited by the budgeted amount. Forensic Advantage (FA) contract is a fixed bid contract and Eide Bailly is a time and material contract.

    4. Schedule - The project schedule outlines the duration of the project and timelines for AG-IT, AG-Crime Lab, Eide Bailly and FA involvement. If addition time is necessary it would require a change order requiring Sponsor approval.