State of Florida

ANNUAL REPORT

2002

The Office Of Statewide Prosecution Annual Report For Calendar Year 2002

with Caseload and Financial Statistics for Fiscal Year 2001-2002

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Office of Statewide Prosecution is authorized to investigate and prosecute multi-circuit organized crime. The Office utilizes a police/prosecutor team approach in multi-offender, multi-offense, multi-jurisdictional criminal cases. The goal of the teams is to dismantle the organizations through effective prosecution and civil, administrative, and regulatory sanctions where appropriate. To achieve this goal, the staff relies on four fundamental values: justice, integrity, innovation, and commitment.

The priorities of the Office are: (1) white collar crimes (including identity theft, health care fraud, government contract fraud, insurance fraud, telemarketing fraud, title loan fraud, securities fraud, and fraud against the elderly); (2) computer crimes (including identity theft, fraud, intrusions, and child pornography); and (3) violent offenses (including narcotics trafficking and money laundering) perpetrated by organized groups.

In FY 2001-2002, the Office handled a total volume of 1,067 complex criminal investigations, including 588 filed cases, and worked in conjunction with 115 law enforcement agencies and numerous State and Federal Task Forces. The conviction rate was 95%. The dispositions achieved are detailed herein. Financial benefit to the citizens of the State in the form of assessed fines, penalties, and restitution amounted to almost \$29 million dollars. Collections exceeded the total operating budget. Law enforcement and victims gave the Office positive service ratings in annual surveys.

For its work in the area of identity theft, the Office was commended in a Cabinet Resolution, recognized by Congress and the U.S. Postal Service, and highlighted in a report by the U.S. General Accounting Office. For its efforts against workers' compensation fraud, the Office was recognized in a Resolution from the Florida League of Cities and by the Division of Insurance Fraud of the Department of Insurance.

The Office of Statewide Prosecution, with its specialized assignments and multi-circuit jurisdiction, fills a unique role in Florida's criminal justice system. This report illustrates its effectiveness.

INTRODUCTION

The Office of Statewide Prosecution was created by constitutional amendment in 1986. Article IV, Section 4 of the Florida Constitution, together with Section 16.56, of the Florida Statutes, sets forth the jurisdiction and authority of the Office.

The mission of the Office is to investigate and prosecute multi-circuit organized crime and to assist other law enforcement officials in their efforts against organized crime.

Pursuant to Section 16.56 (2), Florida Statutes, this report is submitted to the Governor and the Attorney General of the State of Florida.

II INVESTIGATIONS AND PROSECUTIONS

A. CASELOAD STATISTICS

[Consistent with the Long Range Planning Report and the Legislative Budget Request, caseload data is reported herein on a fiscal year basis.]

The active caseload of the Office includes: (1) cases filed in FY 2001-2002; (2) cases filed in prior years which remained in litigation during FY 2001-2002; (3) long-term, complex criminal investigations; and (4) Statewide Grand Jury presentations.

1. CASES FILED IN FY 2001-2002

The Office filed 4,301 criminal charges against 658 defendants in 416 complex, multi-circuit cases.

The criminal charges filed by the Office are among the most serious felonies prohibited by law. They are often joined together in Racketeering indictments. These charges are: Bribery, Burglary, Usury, Extortion, Gambling, Kidnapping, Theft, Murder, Prostitution, Perjury, Robbery, Home-Invasion Robbery, Car-Jacking, Narcotics Violations, Antitrust Violations, Anti-Fencing Violations, Crimes Involving Fraud and Deceit, Computer Crimes, and Attempts, Solicitations, or Conspiracies to commit these offenses.

2. TOTAL INVENTORY OF FILED CASES HANDLED IN FY 2001-2002.

The Office handled a total inventory of 588 filed cases (inclusive of those described above). The cases were litigated in 37 counties: Alachua; Bradford; Brevard; Broward; Charlotte; Clay; Collier; Columbia; Dade; Duval; Escambia; Flagler; Glades; Hamilton; Hernando; Hillsborough; Lake; Lee; Leon; Manatee; Marion; Monroe; Orange; Osceola; Palm Beach; Pasco; Pinellas; Polk; Putnam; Sarasota; Seminole; St. Johns; St. Lucie; Sumter; Suwanee; Taylor; & Volusia.

3. ACTIVE INVESTIGATIONS PENDING IN FY 2001-2002

The caseload of the Office includes legal and operational assistance to law enforcement officers in major criminal investigations and task force operations. The Office received 540 new requests from law enforcement to assist in their investigations of multi-circuit organized criminal activity. The total inventory of active investigations was 1,067.

The investigations were conducted by, or in coordination with, 115 law enforcement or regulatory agencies, and numerous State and Federal Task Forces.

4. CASES DISPOSED OF IN FY 2001-2002

The State prevailed against 96% of the defendants reaching disposition.

The sentences total:

Prison Terms:	1,123.14 years/ 1 Life
Jail time:	14,743 days
Probation Terms:	1,524 years
Community Control:	52 years
Community Service Hours:	9,432
Victim Restitution:	\$23,682,938
Number of Victims:	681 (including 31 government agencies)
Fines:	\$2,844,809
Court Costs:	\$ 87,584
Costs of Prosecution:	\$1,009,739
Costs of Investigation:	\$1,887,020
Total Monetary Assessments:	\$29,512,090

B. STATEWIDE GRAND JURY

Pursuant to Section 905.36, Florida Statutes, the Statewide Prosecutor and Assistants serve as legal advisers to the Statewide Grand Jury.

The Sixteenth Statewide Grand Jury was impaneled in July of 2001. The term ended in December 2002. In FY 01-02, the Office, along with the Statewide Grand Jury, charged 149 defendants with criminal use of personal identifying information, racketeering, organized fraud, grand theft, money laundering and other crimes. By the end of the fiscal year, 45 of these defendants had been sentenced to a total of 83 years of incarceration, and 186 years of community supervision, and were ordered to pay \$1,161,375 in restitution.

The Statewide Grand Jury issued three reports on identity theft during its term. The reports are posted on http://myfloridalegal.com/swp

Just prior to the filing of this report, the Governor called for the impanelment of the Seventeenth Statewide Grand Jury, for the purpose of investigating crimes related to the theft or diversion of high-end prescription drugs and the manufacture of counterfeit prescription drugs. The grand jury will be seated in South Florida.

C. THE POLICE/PROSECUTOR TEAM APPROACH

The Office utilizes a police/prosecutor team approach to attack multi-offender, multi-offense, multi-jurisdictional criminal organizations. The goal of the teams is to dismantle these organizations through effective prosecution and civil, administrative, and regulatory sanctions where appropriate. This requires coordination with a number of law enforcement agencies and other executive branch agencies

throughout the State. Every case involves detailed investigative planning using a "task force" approach, complex charging documents followed by intensive pre-trial motion activity, and possible parallel litigation for civil remedies, all of which must be coordinated by the handling prosecutor.

In addition to the individual case teams, the Office created prosecution teams to handle as priority issues the following types of cases: insurance fraud; health care fraud, fraud against the government; crimes against the elderly; narcotics cases; and computer crimes. A priority leader directs the Units described below and coordinate with the Assistant Statewide Prosecutors handling these cases throughout the State to ensure consistency in investigative techniques, charges, procedures, and dispositions.

1. Computer Crime Unit

In FY 2000-2001, the Computer Crime Unit was created by funding of two prosecutors devoted to cases involving fraud and theft, system intrusions, on-line solicitations and threats, and child pornography. These positions are assigned to Orlando.

In FY 01-02, the Unit conducted numerous computer crime training and awareness sessions for law enforcement, prosecutors, judges, government agencies, and the public. In conjunction with the National Cyber-crime Training Partnership and the National White Collar Crime Center, the Unit assisted in the continued training for computer evidence recovery and computer crimes investigations.

The prosecutors served on numerous state, local, and federal task forces addressing computer crimes. The leader of the Unit was appointed to serve as Florida's representative on the Department of Justice Computer Crime State Contact Committee.

The impact of the work of the Office on computer crime in this State can best be described as follows: increased awareness of criminal liability through prosecution of hackers; increased public awareness as to safety on the Internet; increased government awareness as to security of electronic information, the vulnerabilities in computer systems, and the potential danger to the State's infrastructure; and increased awareness for businesses on potential victimization.

2. Identity Theft Unit

In FY 2001-2002, the Legislature appropriated three new GR positions for the prosecution of identity theft cases. These are located in Orlando, Tampa, and Ft. Lauderdale, and work under the supervision of the Computer Crimes Priority Leader. The Unit worked in conjunction with the Statewide Grand Jury.

The Office was directed by the Legislature to assist in the creation of a fraud proof driver license. The Office issued a report in January on a comparison of licenses throughout the country and the security issues involved in production. The Statewide Grand Jury issued recommendations for changes in the issuance process. Following these reports, the Office worked with the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles on the bidding process for the vendor contract for the new driver license.

The Unit worked with a public/private partnership to address the issues presented. Training was provided to prosecutors, law enforcement, citizen groups, and industry throughout the State, and in other parts of the country. Staff of the Unit assisted in the development of a curriculum for a forensic science course at a major university. The Office participated in seminars on public records and an

identity theft summit held in November 2002. The Office presented testimony to the Florida Public Records Study Committee.

The Office received a federal grant to add victims' assistance personnel to the identity theft Unit. One position was added to the Orlando Unit in 2002. The grant reports contain details of victim contact data.

3. Narcotics Prosecutions

In FY 2000-2001, the Legislature appropriated four new GR positions for the prosecution of narcotics trafficking and money laundering offenses. The Unit, based in Miami, has exceeded caseload standard projections.

The Office serves on the Drug Policy Advisory Council and the Violent Crime and Drug Control Council. The expansion of the Council, recommended by the Fifteenth Statewide Grand Jury, is being supported at the local level by OSWP participation in the regional teams. In addition, the prosecutors are working closely with several local, state, and federal Task Forces, including Fincrest, the HIDTAs, and the South Florida Money Laundering Strike Force.

The Office works closely with the Governor's Office of Drug Control Policy and provides support for implementation of the Governor's Drug Control Strategy.

In FY 01-02, the Office received a federal gun violence prosecution grant for one prosecutor position to handle weapons cases generally associated with narcotics offenses. Grant reports contain details of results.

4. White Collar Crime

In FY 1999-2000, the Legislature funded an expiring federal grant program for the investigation and prosecution of white collar crime. The Office has used these resources to focus on health care fraud, fraud against the elderly, insurance fraud, and fraud against the government.

The Unit is an active member of the "Strike Force Against Fraudulent Enterprises" (SAFE), a coordinated effort of law enforcement agencies working together to combat fraud in Florida, staffed by FDLE, and the Environmental Strike Force formed by the Department of Environmental Protection. The Unit has access to the databases of the Florida Crime Information Center (FCIC) and the Florida Medicaid Management Information Service (FMMIS). The Unit is active in the National White Collar Crime Center and the National Health Care Anti-Fraud Association.

In terms of results achieved for the victims of fraud, the sentencing data for FY 2001-2002 includes:

Restitution to Citizens:	\$16,557,523
Number of Victims:	650
Restitution to Government Agencies:	\$7,125,415
Number of Agencies:	31

The Office continued to lead the Attorney General's Telemarketing Task Force, served as a cooperating agency with a federally funded telemarketing fraud investigation and prosecution project with Hillsborough county law enforcement officials, and remained on as a supporting agency with the

Miami-Dade State Attorney on a Motor Vehicle Theft Prevention grant. The Office also worked with numerous state, local, and federal Task Forces dedicated to combating white collar crime, thefts, and fraud.

In the area of health care fraud, the Office testified before the "Pedigree Paper" Committee of the Department of Health, created to evaluate the effectiveness of Florida's oversight of pharmaceutical origination documents.

In the area of environmental crimes, the Office remained active in the Southeastern Environmental Enforcement Network and taught a portion of a course sponsored by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for investigators.

5. Task Forces

a. Anti-Terrorist Task Forces

Each Bureau participated in the multi-agency anti-terrorist task forces created after September 11, 2002. Specific assistance consisted of advice on jurisdiction and authority, evidence analysis, interpretations of existing laws, and recommendations for law changes. The Office also participated in the work-shops on terrorist legislation.

b. Cargo Theft Task Forces

Several task forces around the State are dealing with the thefts of cargo containers and haulers, which have obvious economic consequences, as well as terrorism possibilities. The Office is actively participating in these enforcement efforts.

c. Other Task Forces and Intelligence Units

The Office is engaged in pro-active work with a number of Task Forces around the State dedicated to tackling the crimes that fall within its jurisdiction. The Office supports the work of intelligence units and serves with them throughout the State.

6. In 2002, the Office conducted its tenth annual satisfaction survey of referring law enforcement agencies. With a 64% response rate, the Office received above-average ratings in every category evaluated, with 97% indicating intent to refer future investigations.

7. The Office has received a total of seven Resolutions issued by the Florida Cabinet for its work on insurance fraud and fraud against the government, and a total of six Davis Productivity Awards for its work on telemarketing fraud, Medicaid fraud, and sales tax fraud.

8. In FY 2001-2002, 16 prosecutors were cross-designated to work cooperatively with State Attorneys, the Attorney General, and the Department of Insurance in complex, multi-circuit cases.

9. Law Enforcement Training: Assistant Statewide Prosecutors and Financial Analysts are available to provide and have provided training to law enforcement officers throughout the State in the following topics:

Advice of Counsel Defense Auto Theft Rings Cable Theft Charging Decisions Computer Crimes Computer Evidence Recovery Construction Fraud Contraband Forfeiture Courtroom Testimony and Demeanor for Law Enforcement Agents Courtroom Testimony and Demeanor for Financial Analysts Cross Examination of Expert Witnesses **Deposition Procedures** Elder Abuse and Neglect Electronic Surveillance Environmental Crime Extradition (National and International) Financial Investigation, Practical Skills Financial Records Examination Government Contract Fraud Health Care Fraud Investigation Identity Theft Informant Handling Information Technology - Security Awareness Insurance Fraud Prosecution Investigative Planning Jurisdiction and Operations of the Office of Statewide Prosecution Medicaid Fraud Narcotics Prosecutions and Designer Drugs Organized Crime Parallel Proceedings Patient Brokering Prosecution of "Con" Artists Prosecution of Transient Crime Groups Prosecution of Street Gangs Racketeering Law Search and Seizure Search and Seizure of Electronic Evidence Securities Fraud Sentencing Guidelines (Punishment Code) Statewide Grand Jury, Law and Procedure Telemarketing Fraud Title Loan Prosecutions White Collar Crime

10. The Office co-sponsored a seminar with the Florida Prosecuting Attorneys Association on identity theft, and co-sponsored a Financial Investigative Practical Skills course with the National White Collar Crime Center.

11. In addition to the above, three Assistant Statewide Prosecutors and two Financial Analysts served as volunteer instructors for the National White Collar Crime Center, and two prosecutors lectured for the National District Attorneys Association.

III

CRIMINAL JUSTICE POLICY AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

A. LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS

In 2002, the Office continued its work in crime prevention and deterrence by working on legislative proposals to accomplish these goals. These efforts included review of draft legislation, testimony at committee meetings, and proposals for new laws. This year, several new laws went into effect after input from the Office in the areas of white collar crime, computer crime, identity theft, insurance fraud, and narcotics trafficking.

B. BOARDS, COMMITTEES AND ASSOCIATIONS

1. Violent Crime and Drug Control Council: The Statewide Prosecutor continued to serve as the Attorney General's representative on the Council established by the Legislature in 1993. See Section 943.031, Florida Statutes. This past year, the Council was expanded to include drug control efforts. The work of the Council is reported annually to the Legislature by FDLE.

2. The Statewide Prosecutor served as the Attorney General's representative on the Statewide Drug Policy Advisory Board, and co-led the Law Enforcement work group at the annual Drug Summit.

3. In FY 2001-2002, an employee of the Office was a leader, member, or was active within, the following criminal justice associations:

Big Bend Law Enforcement Association Central Florida Criminal Justice Council Certified Fraud Examiners' Association Florida Council on Crime and Delinquency Florida Gang Investigators Association Florida Narcotics Officers Association Florida Network of Victim/Witness Services Association Florida Prosecuting Attorneys Association Florida Sheriffs Association National Association of Bunco Investigators National Association of Computer Crimes Investigators National Black Prosecuting Attorneys Association National District Attorneys Association National Health Care Anti-Fraud Association National White Collar Crime Center State Law Enforcement Chiefs Association

C. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

1. In FY 2001-2002, Assistant Statewide Prosecutors were distinguished as experts in Cable Theft Computer Crimes **Construction Fraud** Elder Abuse and Neglect **Environmental Investigations and Prosecutions** Environmental Self-Audit Legislation Grand Jury Law and Procedure Health Care Fraud Home-Invasion Robbery Prosecutions Identity Theft Insurance Fraud International and National Extradition Money Laundering Mortgage Fraud Narcotics Prosecutions Organized Crime Racketeering Telemarketing Fraud The Prosecution of Gangs, "Travelers", and Con Artists Trial Skills

These attorneys have lectured at state, federal, and international conferences; have published articles in legal periodicals; and have been interviewed on local and national television programs. Many Assistant Statewide Prosecutors are listed as subject matter experts by the Florida Prosecuting Attorneys Association.

- 2. The following achievements should be noted:
- < 6 attorneys are Board Certified in criminal law
- < 19 attorneys are rated "AV" or "BV" by Martindale-Hubbell
- < 2 attorneys are Criminal Justice Executive Institute/Senior Leadership graduates
- < 11 attorneys are Criminal Justice Executive Institute/Chief Executive Seminar graduates</p>
- < 2 attorneys teach graduate and law enforcement training academy courses

< 5 members volunteer as faculty for the National White Collar Crime Center and one attorney taught courses for foreign prosecutors for the Department of Justice

< several attorneys have published in Bar journals, and other legal and law enforcement related publications

< the attorneys are admitted to practice in all state and federal courts in Florida, as well as the state courts of California, Colorado, District of Columbia, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Missouri, New York, Ohio, and Wisconsin</p>

< many Assistant Statewide Prosecutors are members of the American Bar Association American Inns of Court, and National Bar Association, and are active in local Bar Associations, serving as committee chairs and on grievance committees

< 1 attorney serves on the Board of Directors of the National Black Prosecuting Attorneys Association

< 6 attorneys serve on Florida Bar Committees

< 1 attorney serves on the FPAA education committee and received a distinguished service award from the FPAA

< 1 attorney was appointed by the Governor to serve as a Circuit Court Judge

< 6 members of the Office are certified to operate the FCIC/NCIC computerized criminal history database and the Court Ordered Payment System of the Department of Corrections

< 2 Financial Analysts became Certified Fraud Examiners

3. The staff received 1,405 hours of continuing education.

4. The Office participated in two State and one national minority recruitment events.

5. The members of the Office volunteer their time to community projects, criminal justice oriented civic work, and pro bono legal assistance. Two members serve in military reserve units. Many members of the Office serve as mentors to young children in Florida schools.

IV ADMINISTRATION

A. STAFFING

In FY 2001-2002, the Office of Statewide Prosecution operated 8 Bureaus: North Florida Bureau -- Tallahassee Northeast Florida Bureau -- Jacksonville Central Florida Bureau -- Orlando South Florida Bureau -- Ft. Lauderdale Southwest Florida Bureau -- Ft. Myers West Florida Bureau -- Tampa Miami-Dade Bureau -- Miami West Palm Bureau – West Palm Beach

The Office was staffed with 71 FTE (full-time equivalent) positions: 45 attorneys, 6 financial analysts, 3 paralegals, 15 executive secretaries, and 2 executive support personnel. Additional personnel (OPS) assisted with clerical and receptionist duties.

B. BUDGET

1. The total appropriation for the Office in FY 2001-2002 was \$5.9 million (general revenue and trust fund). This amount covers salaries, rent, utilities, furniture, library materials, computers, expert witness fees, court reporter bills, and travel expenses. The Office receives no funding from any county government.

2. The Office also receives an appropriation from the State Courts in the amount of \$158,000 to fund the investigations, operations, and case-related work of the Statewide Grand Jury. The statutory grand jury fees and travel reimbursements are made from this fund. This amount has not been increased since 1991.

3. In FY 2001-2002, the prosecutors and financial analysts worked a combined annual overtime total of 4,021 hours. As Select Exempt employees, the attorneys and analysts are not compensated for this extra work. At an average hourly rate of \$ 33.09 per hour plus 26% for benefits, this amounts to an added value of \$167,635 to the taxpayers.

4. The Office continued to require traveling employees to rent subcompact cars rather than the State contract authorized compact cars. This cost reduction effort resulted in a savings of over \$8,225 during FY 2001-2002.

5. The Office utilizes video-teleconferencing for interviews and meetings whenever possible.

C. PROGRAM EVALUATION

1. In late 2001, the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Governmental Accountability (OPPAGA) conducted a comprehensive operational review and reported that the Office is "effective and economically viable." See Report No. 02-03 at: http://www.oppaga.state.fl.us

2. In 2000, OPPAGA reported that the Office of Statewide Prosecution "maintains a high conviction rate and is highly regarded by law enforcement agencies." Report No. 99-53.

3. In 2000, the OAG Inspector General reported that "the existing management control

system [for validity and reliability of reported measures] exceeds average and assures data integrity." Data Validation Review Memo. A recommendation to conduct a random sampling of case files was adopted and completed by the end of 2000 by a staff financial analyst who reported finding that "substantial supporting documentation exists for the reporting elements examined." Final Audit Report Memo dated 12/13/2000.

4. In 2002, FDLE audited the use of the FCIC/NCIC system and found that the Office "is operating in compliance with FCIC/NCIC rules, regulations, and user agreements."

5. In 2001-2002, the Office conducted its tenth annual satisfaction survey of referring law enforcement agencies. With a 64% response rate, the Office received above-average ratings in every category evaluated, with 97% indicating intent to refer future investigations.

6. The Office continued to use its post-case review system to analyze the performance of the police/prosecutor teams.

7. In 2002, the Office received above average marks in victim surveys in the categories of rights' notification, attention to the case, professionalism, results achieved, and effectiveness.

D. ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION AND DATA PROCESSING

All personnel are using PC-based computer technology for electronic mail, data processing, legal research, and document production, as created and maintained by the Office of the Attorney General. The Office posts its public documents of general interest on the Internet at: http://myfloridalegal.com/swp

In mid-2000, the Office added a victim notification system to its website, which allows victims and witnesses access to information about victims' rights, the next court proceeding in any filed case, and a password protected performance survey.

E. PLANNING

Pursuant to Chapter 186, Florida Statutes, the Office submitted its Long Range Program Plan for 2003-2008, which includes agency mission, goals, performance measures, objectives, outcomes, trends and conditions, and performance projections.

The goals and objectives are:

(1) Coordinate effectively with multi-jurisdictional enforcement efforts, by

- a. committing resources to pro-active, problem solving investigative strategies
- b. actively participating in multi-agency task forces
- c. maintaining substantial caseload of complex investigations
- d. providing training to law enforcement in relevant areas
- e. analyzing crime prevention/deterrence possibilities
- f. receiving positive evaluations from law enforcement surveys

(2) Effectively prosecute multi-circuit crime, by

a. committing resources to recruiting, retaining, and training professional prosecution/support teams

b. maintaining substantial caseload of complex prosecutions

- c. seeking maximum disruption of criminal activity
- d. seeking effective case results
- e. providing effective services to victims

The strategies to achieve these objectives were developed internally with input from all members of the Office. Copies of the Report are available upon request.

V

CONCLUSION

The Office just completed its sixteenth year of operation. Over the years, the Office has had a significant impact on major criminal organizations operating throughout the State. It has maintained strong working relations with law enforcement, been active in the development of criminal justice policy, and achieved the objectives set forth in its Long Range Program Plan.

It has been a privilege to serve as the Statewide Prosecutor for the past twelve years and to work in the Office since its creation in 1987. I am honored to have served with the finest lawyers, financial analysts, paralegals, victim advocates, secretaries, executive and administrative assistants, receptionists, and clerks, all of whom are outstanding professionals in their fields and extraordinarily dedicated public servants. Continue to rely on them for positive results.

Melanie Ann Hines Statewide Prosecutor January 6, 2003