



Report for the Sunset Review Committee

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**Ohio Organized Crime Investigations Commission
Office of Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine
Rocky W. Nelson, Executive Director
P.O. Box 968
Grove City, Ohio 43123
Tel: 614-277-1000
Rocky.Nelson@ohioattorneygeneral.gov**

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Chairman Jordan and members of the Sunset Review Committee:

My name is Rocky W. Nelson and I serve as the Executive Director of the Ohio Organized Crime Investigations Commission. I want to thank you for the opportunity to provide an overview of the Ohio Organized Crime Investigations Commission.

History of Ohio Organized Crime Commission:

The Ohio Organized Crime Investigations Commission (OOCIC) was created by the General Assembly in 1986 under Ohio Revised Code Section 177. The purpose of OOCIC is to provide a mechanism by which local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies join together to effectively investigate and prosecute organized criminal enterprises whose activities are impacting multiple jurisdictions.

The Ohio Organized Crime Investigations Commission was established as a State Board & Commission, housed within the Office of the Attorney General. The Commission does not provide funding for salaries for participating task force members, but OOCIC does cover the task force members under worker's compensation as required by statute. OOCIC provides support for task forces in three areas – administrative, technical, and legal.

Administrative support includes funding for the purchase of contraband, information, travel, training, equipment, office space, phones, and supplies. OOCIC can also provide clerical and other office services, as well as, consultants and expert witnesses.

OOCIC provides technical support by furnishing equipment which includes computers, vehicles, audio/video surveillance, recording devices, pen register, and wiretap units. OOCIC has a Forensic Audio/Video Laboratory whose services are available to all local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies at no charge. This technology is far too expensive for almost any agency to afford but the results can be priceless to a successful investigation and prosecution.

OOCIC also has Organized Crime Intelligence Analysts who assist task forces and law enforcement agencies with compiling raid books, phone toll databases, association/link charts, timelines/flow charts, and entity searches, etc. This service is in high demand as it provides the task forces with criminal intelligence necessary to further their investigations, a service most agencies do not have the manpower to perform.

Legal support for a task force includes everything from reviewing/entering into a contract or lease to the prosecution of the case. OOCIC is only available to assist in the prosecution of a case upon a request by the local county prosecutor's office and/or the U.S. Attorney's Office. Any and all questions of law or procedure concerning a task force are first directed to the participating prosecutor's office, then to an OOCIC attorney, if necessary.

Applicable O.R.C. Sections: 177.01, 177.011, 177.02, 177.03. All OOCIC activities, information and investigations are confidential; O.R.C. 177.02(F); 177.03(D) (4), (5), (6).

Mission Statement:

“To encourage and support cooperative law enforcement efforts to combat organized crime in the State of Ohio through partnership, service, and technology.”

Organized Crime Investigations Commission:

The Organized Crime Investigations Commission is composed of seven members requiring no more than four members of the same political party. The Attorney General, by statute, serves as the chairperson of the Commission for as long as he/she holds office. The statute requires the other six members to be comprised of two county sheriffs; two county prosecutors; and two chief municipal law enforcement officers. The Commission members are appointed by the Governor, with the advice and consent of the Senate. The terms of appointment are three years.

The members of the Commission serve without compensation, but may be reimbursed for actual and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their official duties. The Commission, by statute, is required to meet at least once every six months, or more often upon the call of the chairperson or the written request of two or more members. Four members constitute a quorum, and four votes are required to validate an action of the Commission.

The Commission appoints an Executive Director to manage the day to day operations of the Commission, the support staff, and the established task forces. The current Executive Director, Rocky W. Nelson, was appointed on 4/4/2011. The Executive Director and all employees of the Commission are members of the unclassified services as defined in Section 124.11 of the Ohio Revised Code.

OOCIC is headquartered in Grove City, Ohio.

Current OOCIC Commission Members:

Mike DeWine (R)	Chairperson, Ohio Attorney General
Victor Viglucci (D)	Portage County Prosecuting Attorney
Mark C. Miller (R)	Hancock County Prosecuting Attorney
Larry Mincks (R)	Washington County Sheriff
Timothy Bailey (D)	Marion County Sheriff
Jeffrey Kruithoff (I)	Springboro Police Chief
Vacant Police Chief	Waiting on appointment by Governor

OOCIC Funding:

OOCIC is not directly funded by the legislature. Funding for the operation of the Commission and support staff is included in the budget of the Ohio Attorney General, currently fund 4190 under the State Special Revenue Fund. GRF is not a funding source for OOCIC.

OOCIC’s budget funds the Executive Director’s and support staff’s salaries, OOCIC facility and operational costs, worker’s compensation for participating task force members, AV lab equipment, office/computer equipment, and task force operational costs. Task force operational costs includes the purchase of contraband, information, travel, training, surveillance and investigative equipment, office space, utilities, phones, and supplies.

OOCIC’s annual expenditures for OOCIC operations have varied according to the number of active task forces, type of task forces, and open staff vacancies. A breakdown of OOCIC’s expenditures for fiscal years 2011 – 2015 are listed below:

2011	\$ 2,171,669.00	
2012	\$ 2,225,351.00	purchased 12 vehicles (6 new & 6 used)/surveillance equipment
2013	\$ 1,926,827.00	one open position, reduced # of task forces
2014	\$ 2,511,525.00	position filled, increased # of task forces
2015	\$ 2,503,242.00	

OOCIC’s appropriation for FY16 budget is \$ 2,331,466.00. Future FY budget appropriations are anticipated to be the same amount or lower.

Through careful monitoring of task force objectives, OOCIC should be able to continue to provide the necessary support for task force operations in this budget cycle.

OOCIC's Workload:

Task Forces:

The first OOCIC task force was formed on August 11, 1988. The Commission has authorized 102 task forces since the Commission's creation, including 36 new task forces in the last five years.

These task forces have included operations that investigated Illegal Gambling, Home Invasion/Homicides, Mortgage Fraud, Organized Retail Theft, Counterfeit Checks, Narcotics, Vehicle Theft, Burglary/Fencing, Package Interdiction, Bulk Cash Smuggling, and Human Trafficking. Over 250 Ohio law enforcement agencies have participated in OOCIC task forces.

Task Force Statistics for 2011-2015

	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>
Indictments:	53	343	395	652	562
Arrests	284	321	620	811	800
Convictions	250	315	262	466	422
Search Warrants Served	516	301	322	600	592
U.S. Currency Seized	*	\$ 1.8**	\$ 5.2**	\$ 5.2**	\$ 4.5**
Street Value of Drugs Seized	*	\$ 9.6**	\$ 14.4**	\$ 23.5**	\$ 28.5**

* (reporting did not begin until 2012)

** (currency & street value listed as millions)

Forensic A/V Lab:

The OOCIC Forensic Audio/Video Analysts Lab has been in operation since January 2001. Cases submitted to the Forensic Audio/Video Lab have involved high profile cases of homicide, armed robbery, sexual abuse, hit skip, burglary, and officer involved shootings. The analysts' work has resulted in the identification of numerous suspects through enhancements of license plates, vehicles, clothing and/or facial identification that was not previously possible given the quality of the original surveillance video or photos.

Statistics for 2011 - 2015:	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>
# of Cases Submitted	214	200	247	189	219
Cases from # of Counties	47	46	50	49	55
Cases from # of Agencies		82	119	100	122

Organized Crime Intelligence Analyst Activity

The Organized Crime Intelligence Analyst assists task forces, as well as federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies, by compiling reports including raid books, phone toll databases, association/link charts, time-lines/flow charts, entity searches, and etc. This service is in high demand as it provides the task forces and law enforcement agencies with intelligence necessary to further their investigations, a service most agencies do not have the manpower to perform.

	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>
Phone Tolls (cases)	101	48	91	67	49
Phone Calls entered	4,474,393	2,883,298	5,394,539	5,386,509	1,506,477
Searches/Databases/Charts	116	140	4,912	2,957	3,992

OOCIC staffing:

Number of OOCIC staff required to complete workload: 15 including the Executive Director

Total number of staff at present: 12 (includes Executive Director) plus 3 vacancies

Breakdown of OOCIC's staffing positions:

- Executive Director
- Chief Legal Counsel
- Investigative Coordinator
- Operations Coordinator
- Commission Investigator
- 4 Forensic Audio/Video Analysts (one position currently vacant)
- 2 Organized Crime Intelligence Analysts (one position currently vacant)
- Finance Specialist
- OOCIC/Task Force Equipment Specialist
- Data Entry Specialist
- Task Force Liaison (Vacant position)

Conclusion:

The Ohio Organized Crime Investigations Commission plays an important role in combating organized criminal groups that prey on Ohio citizens. OOCIC provides a mechanism for local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies to join together when no single agency has the resources necessary to effectively investigate a criminal organization operating in multiple jurisdictions. OOCIC, by statute, provides task forces expanded jurisdiction and subpoena power.

As criminal enterprises adopt new concepts and technologies to further their criminal activities, law enforcement will have to meet the challenge by bringing their resources together. OOCIC has the authority and resources to bring together law enforcement agencies to combat criminal operations in an efficient and effective manner.

For these reasons, I humbly request OOCIC to remain in the statute.

Thank you for providing me with this opportunity. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.