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# APPENDIX G

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## Research Methodology

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### Summary of Methodologies

This evaluation was conducted according to statutory requirements and professional standards and methods for governmental audits. The research was conducted from February through June 2006.

#### **General Methodology**

To compile basic information about drug courts (W.S. § 5-10-101 through 107 and described in House Bill 82 (2001), we reviewed relevant statutes, rules, professional literature, legislative history, agency and Wyoming drug courts' literature, agency budget requests, previous studies and reports and other information. To gain further understanding, we interviewed a variety of state agency officials and managers, as well as other persons knowledgeable about the system. We interviewed local drug court stakeholders and observed both adult and juvenile drug court proceedings including staff meetings and courtroom hearings.

#### **Substance Abuse Division: documents and data**

We requested state agency documents to gather aggregate drug court cost information for all drug courts as well as by specific state-funded drug court. We obtained copies of quarterly service summaries and the most recent annual self-evaluations submitted by each court in operation long enough to have them. We also obtained various national and professional literature documents the Division uses to disseminate information about drug courts. Since there was no fully functional case management or management information system utilized by the Division to track drug court offenders' information, we did not ask for the Division to supply any field-level drug court offender data. However, LSO did engage a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the WDH/Division to access and obtain client level data from each individual drug court receiving state funds.

#### **Local Drug Courts: data**

In addition to Division supplied documentation, LSO staff received individual offender-level records from 19 of the 21 drug courts which had admitted offenders on or before March 31, 2006. LSO staff received aggregate-level offender data from the Tribal Adult and Juvenile drug courts.

LSO staff provided a template spreadsheet in Microsoft Excel format so each court would report commonly requested fields on their offenders. Basic analysis was done of offender characteristics including age, gender, length of stay while in drug court. Staff looked at the entire state drug court population of offenders as well as calculating figures for each drug court.

### **Limitations of Data Analysis**

**Overall:** The following drug courts have admitted offenders over at least the last two fiscal years (FY '05 and FY '06): Albany County Adult, Campbell County Adult and Juvenile, Fremont County Adult and Juvenile, Laramie County Adult, Lincoln County Adult, Natrona County Adult, Park County Adult, Sheridan County Adult and Juvenile, Teton County Adult, Uinta County Adult and Evanston Youth (juvenile). The following drug courts were not analyzed beyond overall offender tallies such as number of admitted offenders and their current status (active, graduated, or terminated) as they have not admitted offenders for one full fiscal year: Johnson County Adult, Sweetwater County Adult and Teton County Family. Two courts provided data which was incomplete and could not be used for further analysis other than to show how many people were documented to have been admitted: Big Horn County Juvenile and Johnson County Juvenile. Each court's data was cleaned and organized based the fields requested. Any offender that had an unreasonable admission, graduation, or termination date was tallied as a drug court offender, though their current status was labeled as "unknown."

**Offender Outcomes:** LSO staff used the data acquired from the individual drug courts to begin to calculate offender outcomes based on the national outcome measures proposed by the National Drug Court Institute's National Research Advisory Committee. For recidivism, all offenders who graduated on or before March 31, 2006 were selected with identifying fields that could be match with offender arrest records from Wyoming's Division of Criminal Investigation (DCI) of the Attorney General's office and violation records in the Wyoming Supreme Court's data system. LSO staff used both systems to corroborate and de-duplicate records for individuals shown to have arrests after their graduation date from drug court. DCI's system is based on fingerprint cards submitted to DCI for custodial arrests by local law enforcement agencies for felonies and high misdemeanors. It does not represent all arrests as not all fingerprint cards are sent to DCI and does not include any out-of-state arrests or federal arrests. The Wyoming Supreme Court data is gathered by the Circuit Courts of Wyoming and includes misdemeanor and preliminary hearings of felony violations of the law. Neither data system should be interpreted as complete or representing all arrests/violations for the state or the offenders LSO staff attempted to gather post-graduation recidivism.

**Costs-per-day and cost-per-offender:** The costs for Figure 3.3 were derived by dividing annual funds committed to drug courts (state grant funds and local matching funds claimed by individual courts) by the number of service units (days) offenders were enrolled in drug court. For example, the following table illustrates how the cost-per-day for each court was figured:

<b>Adult Court</b>	<b>FY '06</b>	<b>FY '05</b>	<b>FY '04</b>	<b>FY '03</b>	<b>FY '03 - '06</b>
<b>A.</b> Number of service days	13,200	16,055	12,607	8,966	<b>50,828</b>
<b>B.</b> Amount of state and local resources committed	\$277,142	\$407,764	\$390,986	\$355,219	<b>\$1,431,111</b>
<b>Cost per service day (B / A)</b>	<b>\$21.00</b>	<b>\$25.40</b>	<b>\$31.01</b>	<b>\$39.62</b>	<b>\$28.16</b>
<b>Juvenile Court</b>					
<b>A.</b> Number of service days	2,045	2,814	2,972	2,268	<b>10,099</b>
<b>B.</b> Amount of state and local resources committed	\$231,059	\$310,463	\$321,392	\$296,782	<b>\$1,159,696</b>
<b>Cost per service day (B / A)</b>	<b>\$112.99</b>	<b>\$110.33</b>	<b>\$108.14</b>	<b>\$130.86</b>	<b>\$114.83</b>

The cumulative average cost-per-day was calculated based on the cumulative service days and drug court dedicated funds. For the cost-per-offender, the per-day service cost was multiplied by the average length of stay for offenders that were currently active, terminated, or had graduated each drug court (refer to Appendix E). For example, at \$28.16 per day service cost in the example above and an average length of stay of 456 days for a graduate; a graduate for this court would cost \$12,839. Only courts with at least two years of funding history were analyzed to address potential biases in the number of service days in a courts first year where start-up costs and circumstances may inhibit broad admissions of offenders.

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