

Chapter One

Commission Overview

The Sentencing Commission's seven voting members are appointed to staggered six-year terms by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate. At least three of the commissioners must be federal judges, and no more than four can be members of the same political party. By statute, the chairman and vice chairmen hold full-time positions, while other commissioners have part-time status.

Organization

The Commission staff (approximately 100 employees) is headed by a staff director who oversees five offices: General Counsel, Monitoring, Policy Analysis, Training and Technical Assistance, and Administration (*see* organization chart, Figure A).

The **Office of the Staff Director** supervises, supports, and coordinates all agency functions. The five office directors report to the staff director. In addition, the communications, computer support, and special projects groups are part of the staff director's office. The communications group coordinates all public information matters and inquiries as well as principal editing, graphic design, and printing for all published Commission materials. The computer support group maintains and services the Commission's computer hardware and software, while the special projects group designs and coordinates interdisciplinary research projects.

The **Office of General Counsel** provides support to the Commission on a variety of legal issues, including the formulation and application of guidelines and guideline amendments, legislative proposals, and statutory interpretations. Legal staff members monitor district and circuit court application and interpretation of the guidelines and advise commissioners about statutes and legislation affecting the Commission's work. The legal staff oper-

ates a "hotline" on guideline application issues for prosecutors and defense attorneys and provides training support in conjunction with the Office of Training and Technical Assistance.

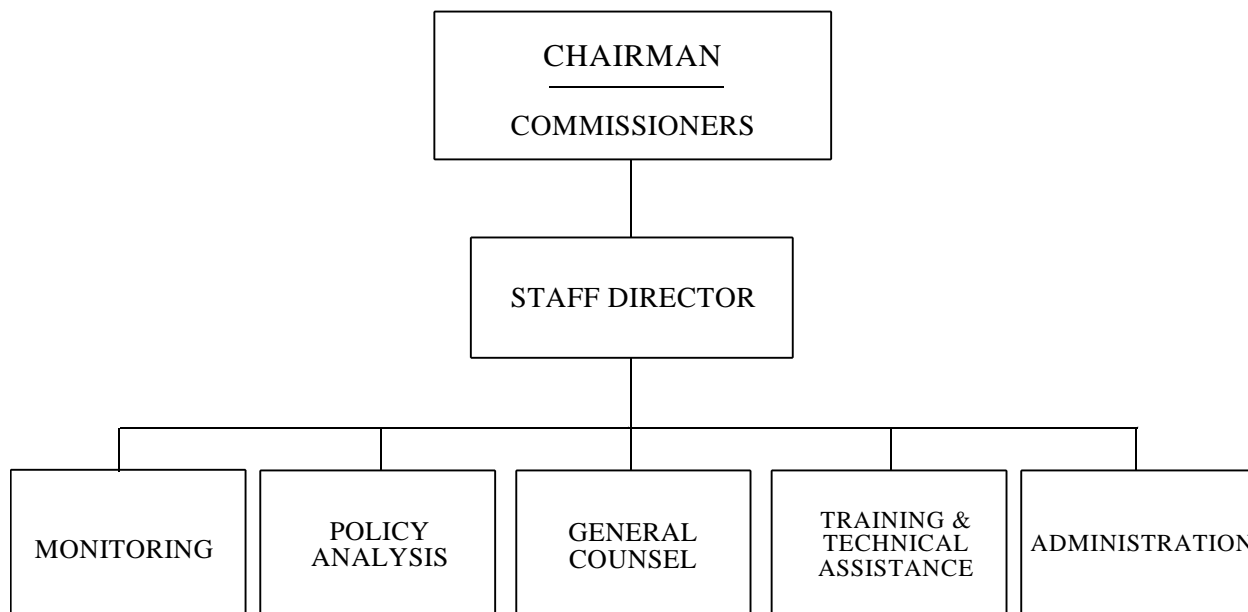
The **Office of Monitoring** maintains a comprehensive computerized data collection system to report on federal sentencing practices and to track application of the guidelines for individual cases. The staff receives and enters case data and produces periodic reports about guideline application, providing significant information for Commission review as it monitors the national implementation process or considers amending individual guidelines. In addition to information related to individual offenders, the Commission collects data on appeals and organizational guideline sentences. The Commission has expanded its data collection efforts to include information on indictments. A new module, containing real offense information, will enter production in 1996. The office maintains a master file of guideline sentencing data, available to the public through the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research at the University of Michigan.

The **Office of Policy Analysis**, working with the Commission's comprehensive sentencing database, provides short- and long-term guideline and sentencing-related research and analyses. The office studies a variety of research topics including recidivism, just punishment, selective incapacitation, the effect of proposed guideline amendments on projections of the federal prison population, sentencing practices related to organizational defendants, and appeals. In addition, the office provides data and analyses on specific criminal justice issues at the request of Congress and the courts.

The **Office of Training and Technical Assistance** teaches guideline application to judges, probation officers, prosecuting and defense attorneys, and other criminal justice professionals. The

Figure A

**ORGANIZATION OF
THE UNITED STATES SENTENCING COMMISSION**



staff develops training materials, participates in the sentencing guideline segments of training programs sponsored by other agencies, and informs the Commission of current guideline application practices. The office also operates a “hotline” to respond to guideline application questions from judges and probation officers.

The **Office of Administration** provides general administrative support to commissioners and staff regarding budget and finance, contracting, personnel management, reference services, facilities, and a variety of other office activities. The office provides support to the staff director and senior managers in accomplishing project planning and budget forecasting on a short- and long-term basis.

Staffing

During fiscal year 1995, the Commission used

staff resources totaling 101 workyears. Approximately 32 percent of staff resources was spent in various aspects of sentence monitoring efforts, 14 percent in research and analysis, ten percent in technical assistance and training, 17 percent in legal activities, seven percent in the commissioners’ offices, 11 percent in the Office of the Staff Director, and nine percent in the Office of Administration.

Budget and Expenditures

For fiscal year 1995, Public Law 103-317 provided an appropriation of \$8,800,000 for the Commission’s salaries and expenses. For fiscal year 1996, Public Law 104-91 granted the Commission an appropriation of \$8,500,000 (see Table 1).

Table 1
BUDGET AUTHORITY AND OBLIGATIONS
(dollar amounts in thousands)

	<u>FY 1995</u>	<u>FY 1996</u>
New Budget Authority	\$8,800	\$8,500
Personnel Compensation	\$5,096	\$6,083
Personnel Benefits	\$1,119	\$1,532
Travel and Transportation	\$ 495	\$ 515
Communications, Utilities and Other Rent	\$ 136	\$ 139
Printing and Reproduction	\$ 64	\$ 175
Other Services	\$ 990	\$ 625
Supplies and Equipment	<u>\$ 620</u>	<u>\$ 378</u>
Total Obligations	\$8,520	\$9,447*

*Total obligation amount includes funds carried forward from previous “no-year” appropriations.