TRAC

Transactional Records Access Clearinghouse

FEDERAL FUNDS

BUREAU OF ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, AND FIREARMS

DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION

COUNTY RANKINGS

CUSTOMS SERVICE

IMMIGRATION AND NATURALIZATION SERVICE

INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE

18 USC 241

WEAPONS

FEDERAL STAFFING

up 15%

up 11%

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

The Premier Online Source
for Federal Data

What is TRAC?

The Transactional Records Access Clearinghouse is a nonpartisan project of Syracuse University providing the American people with comprehensive information about the federal government's actions and employees. Using data obtained from many government organizations largely through the Freedom of Information Act, TRAC has built acdemocracy oversight tool of unprecedented accuracy, magnitude, and ease of use.

Once obtained, the data and records are rigorously checked for completeness and accuracy by statisticians at the university. These records are then provided in an online forum to citizens, scholars, journalists, lawyers, information professionals and the government itself.

From Human Rights Watch to the National Rifle Association, from The New York Times to The Evansville Courier, from U.S. Marshals to city councils, and from the Senate Finance Committee to law firms big and small, TRAC clients have obtained comprehensive nonpartisan information that allows them to grasp a huge variety of important government issues.

To provide the American people with comprehensive information they fairly judge the effectiveness of the federal government. It is no longer acceptable or necessary for citizens, watchdog groups, journalists, lawyers, scholars and Congress to rely on informal hunches, anecdotes, leaks or government handouts when data about what the government is actually doing are available.

How can I use TRAC

As the most comprehensive source for a wide range of accurate federal agency data, TRAC reveals critical and intriguing issues of bureaucratic efficiency, consistency and effectiveness. TRAC enables users to examine broad national trends or minute details of federal agency activity in three main areas:

Criminal

Civil

Admin

People

Money

Context

Criminal, Civil and Administrative Enforcement

TRAC data detail the day-to-day enforcement of federal law. For the first time, virtually the entire record of federal enforcement actions since 1986 are available on the Web.

Through a simple Web interface, users can see numerous layers of enforcement data:

-- Criminal enforcement activities, such as:

- o Prosecutions.
- o Convictions.
- o Prison sentences.
- o U.S. Attorney's Offices' workloads.

-- Civil and Administrative enforcement activites, including:

- o Civil suits by the government. Civil suits against the government.
- o Antitrust, civil rights, forfeiture, Clean Air Act, and FOIA cases.
- o Administrative enforcement of the tax laws -- for individuals, businesses and corporations.

Agency Staffing

TRAC provides unprecedented access to federal staffing data for virtually all civilian employees -- who they are, where they are, what they are paid, and what they do -- by agency, occupation, salary and grade level. TRAC's 25 years of data show statistical overviews to individual records -- by county, city, state, federal judicial district or the nation as a whole.

Agency Funding

In a single online location, TRAC enables users to view exactly what the government is spending, where the money goes and who benefits. Users can see details, rankings and comparisons by agency, program category, or class of expenditure for counties, states, federal judicial districts or the nation as a whole.

Down 44%

96

TRAC at Work

The best method for gauging the effectiveness of large organizations is to systematically examine what they do and do not do. How have their activities changed over time? Are there hard-to-explain geographic disparities? TRAC's data illustrate bureaucratic effectiveness in ways that individual cases cannot.

Detailed maps, tables and graphs allow users to monitor enforcement trends over time. TRAC transactional data shows which laws are being enforced and which are not. TRAC both answers and raises crucial questions about the workings of the government. Consider:

o   What does it mean that the Justice Department has prosecuted more than 90 percent of all immigration matters, compared to about five percent of all civil rights matters?

o   Who determines that Vermont receives over three times more money per capita for Head Start programs than New Hampshire?

o   Why are convicted white collar criminals in the Atlanta area much more likely to wind up behind bars than white collar criminals in the Boston region?

o   Why was there a 44 percent decline in referrals for prosecution by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms during the Clinton Administration? (see table/graph.)

ATF Referrals for Prosecution
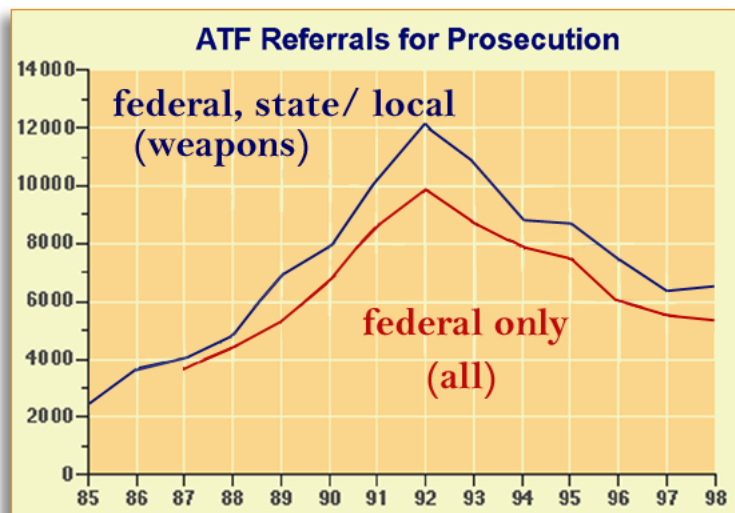
Year	referrals to:	Federal Prosecutors Only**
		na
		na
		3,650
		4,369
1990	7,797	6,598
1991	10,149	8,571
1992	12,084	9,885
1993	10,818	8,697
1994	8,676	7,859
1995	8,612	7,540
1996	***6,576 (7,471)	5,933
1997	***5,376 (6,302)	5,496
1998	***5,620 (6,470)	5,510
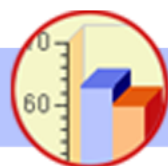
o How does the Justice Department explain the fact that it takes nearly twice as long to prosecute criminals now as it did fifteen years ago? (see table/graph.)

o How does the IRS explain why Kentucky, Kansas and Tennessee each have twice as many full-time IRS employees per capita as Michigan, Illinois, and Connecticut?

"Now, by searching with TRAC, you can crack the books on all the federal law enforcement agencies and undertake your own performace audit."

*– Dave Marash, ABC News*

	Fiscal Year	Days	Annual Change	Percent Change
Reagan	1986	113	-	-
	1987	122	9	8.0
	1988	130	8	6.6
Bush	1989	141	11	8.5
	1990	148	7	5.0
	1991	165	17	11.5
	1992	160	-5	-3.0
Clinton	1993	168	8	5.0
	94	186	18	10.7
	95	188	2	1.1
	96	186	-2	-1.1
	97	184	-2	-1.1
	98	205	21	11.4
	99	209	4	2.0
	00	212	3	1.4
	01	217	5	2.4

Median Days for Prosecution

Who Runs TRAC?

TRAC's co-directors and principal investigators are:

Susan Long, PhD., a professor and statistician at Syracuse University's School of Management. Long is a Freedom of Information Act pioneer who has specialized in the study and measurement of federal enforcement activities in such agencies as the IRS and the Justice Department.

David Burnham, an author and former investigative reporter with The New York Times. He has specialized in covering local, state, and federal enforcement agencies since 1966, writing numerous books and articles on the New York Police Department, the IRS, the Justice Department, the FBI, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the privacy issue. He is an associate research professor at the S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications.
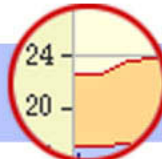
Getting TRAC

TRAC offers agency data, free reports and essays on a public Web site, available at http://trac.syr.edu. This resource is maintained as a public service. It provides national overview information on agencies including the DEA, INS, ATF, Customs and FBI. The TRAC public site also features informative analytical reports and essays based on the numbers.
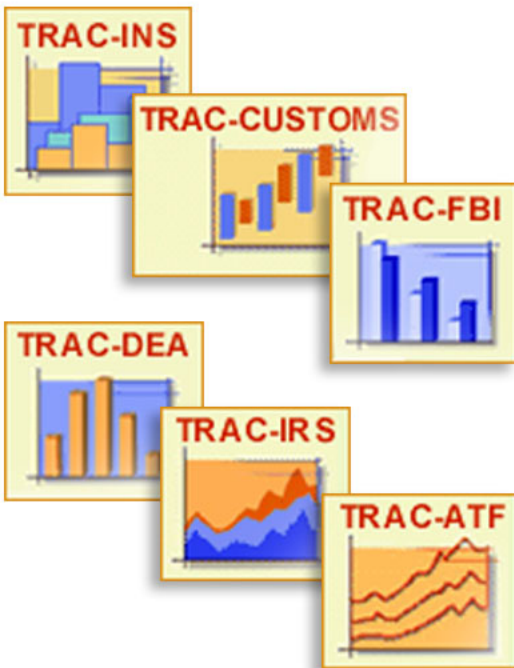
In addition to the public site, TRAC also offers a powerful and dynamic premium tool called TRACFED. This service is available through two ways:

Organizational License

The most cost-efficient way to receive TRACFED is to purchase an organizational site subscription. This ensures that every member of your organization has access to the complete data stores and analysis tools of the TRACFED. Included in the premium services are ongoing tech support, help and live tutorials. Pricing for TRACFED varies based on usage and is discounted for educational and non-profit institutions.

Individual subscription

Individual subscriptions are available to users who need their own password-protected TRAC accounts. A TRAC individual subscription allows users to use TRAC from any computer with Internet access. but is not intended for use by more than one user. Individual subscriptions are available on a monthly or annual basis.

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