Dear Colleague:

I am very pleased to announce that the Office of Justice Programs (OJP), together with the Global Justice Information Sharing Initiative (Global), is releasing the first operational version of the Global Justice Extensible Markup Language (XML) Data Model (GJXDM), Version 3.0, to the justice community.

What began in March 2001 as a reconciliation of data definitions evolved into a broad two-year endeavor to develop an XML-based framework that would enable the entire justice and public safety community to effectively share information at all levels? laying the foundation for local, state, and national justice interoperability.

Developed by the Global Initiative and OJP, the GJXDM is an object-oriented data model comprised of a well-defined vocabulary of approximately 2,500 stable data objects, or reusable components, that facilitate the exchange and reuse of information from multiple sources and multiple applications.

Prior to the development of the GJXDM, justice agencies generally operated within their own computer networks and database systems, resulting in a fragmented justice environment where requests for critical information took days or weeks to get to the appropriate agencies.

Since its first prerelease in April 2003, the GJXDM has undergone an intensive review and validation process that included an open public comment period, pilot validation projects, an online feedback and error-reporting mechanism, and a listserv for sharing expertise and support. As a result, three more recent prerelease versions have evolved that incorporated more than 100 modifications. Today, more than 50 law enforcement and justice-related projects have been implemented utilizing the GJXDM prerelease versions, further demonstrating the flexibility and stability of the GJXDM. One such project is Pennsylvania's Justice Network (JNET), whose online Driver History Record application successfully employs the GJXDM.

For 2004 we are planning to introduce: new training for the Data Model, a content-based search tool for the Data Model, performance testing, and an online database that will allow practitioners to post information about their applications of the GJXDM. We are excited about the upcoming developments and hope that justice professionals like you will stay engaged in the evolution of the GJXDM.

More information on the GJXDM is available at the GJXDM Web site at http://it.ojp.gov/gjxdm.

Deborah J. Daniels,
Assistant Attorney General