

Digital Recording in the Courtroom

Alberta Justice
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Status before Digital Recording

- **analog cassette recorders (Lanier) were primarily used to record everyday court sessions.**

Cabling

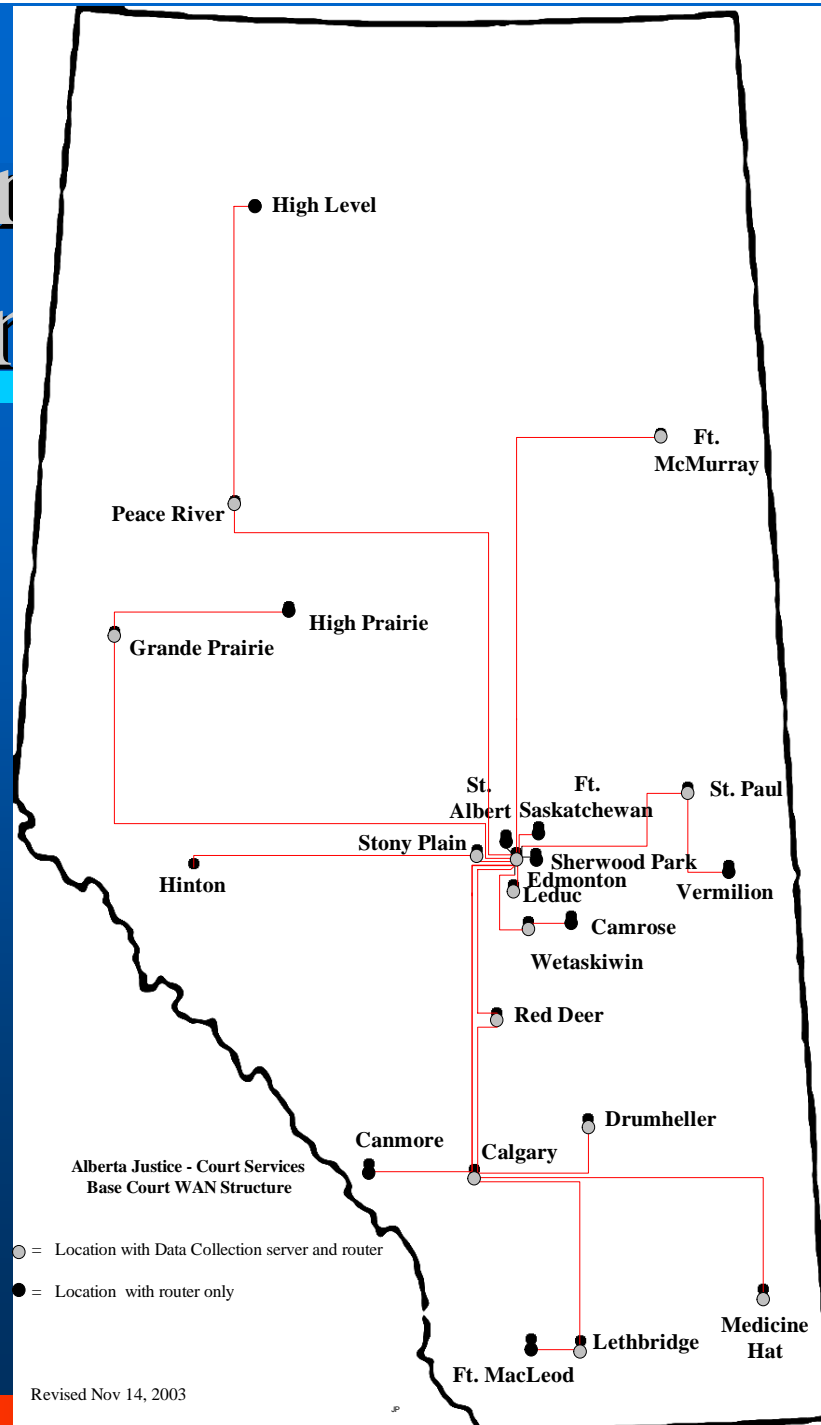
- Before Digital Recording was implemented, only 5 Courthouses were wired. Edmonton, Calgary, Red Deer, Lethbridge, and Grande Prairie.
- All Courthouses were Wired with CATEGORY 5 and CATEGORY 5E cabling.
- All other base points needed to be wired. This project was handled by Alberta Infrastructure, and then contracted out to a third party.
- 18 more base points throughout Alberta from Medicine Hat to High Level needed to be wired. IT Services was responsible for the setup and configuration of all Switches and Routers.
- All Base Points were connected through the AGNPac (Alberta Government Network).

Cabling

- As of 2004, we are not yet using Supernet however it is anticipated that we will have our first connection in production by November.
- By 2005 we hope to have 30 additional Courthouses wired. These would be our Circuit Points like Grande Cache, Jasper, Red Earth and Slave Lake.

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Division of Work

- **Acoustics** - For installation of new microphones, FTR Mixers (MX3 & MX4), calibration of microphones & acoustic cabling, was provided by Axe Music.
- **Software** - For the first year, July 1 2000 to July 15 2001, we used FTR Recorder 1.3, and FTR Log Notes 1.3 SP1. After mid July we implemented FTR Recorder 2.0, which had an improved codec algorithm to shrink 5 minute files from 7MB to 3.5MB. This greatly reduced our storage requirements and WAN utilization by 50%. Recently, we have upgraded to FTR Log Notes 2.1 and FTR Reporter 2.1.
- To assimilate both programs to start automatically, instead of a clerk having to open two separate programs, we created a VB application that would open both applications at different times. We called it FTR Starter.

Division of Work, continued

- **Computer** - Every courtroom across Alberta has the same computer equipment. In 2004 we upgraded all computers as follows:
- HP/Compaq EVO d530
- Intel 865G Chipset (200Mhz FSB)
- Intel Pentium 4 2.8Ghz Hyperthreading CPU
- 512MB of 3200DDR Dual Channel Memory
- 160GB hard drives
- Intel Onboard graphics
- Onboard Soundcard (SoundMax Integrated audio) (Strictly for playback)
- Antex LX-44 PCI for 4 channel recording
- Broadcom 10/100 NIC
- Each computer has a 48X CD burner
- Operating System & Software: Windows 2000 SP4, Novell Client 4.90Sp1, Roxio Drag-to-Disc 6.0 (the packet writing software FTR uses to archive audio to a CD)& McAfee 7.1.0
- Original installation services were provided by Acrodex, formerly called Comp Canada.



Pre-Install Work

- **Training of the trainers-** We had FTR representatives who came up from Phoenix to Edmonton to train a number of our trainers.
- From there our trainers would train the rest of their staff.
- Currently, for new employees, trainers from the Alberta Justice College will come in to the Edmonton Courthouse location, and train several new employees.
- This is an ongoing process, each month new employees are being trained, as well as refresher courses for clerks who would like to be updated.

Installation

- **FTR and audio equipment:** Installation services was provided by Axe music (<http://www.axemusic.com>)
 - They installed all audio mixers, wiring, and the microphones themselves.
 - For Edmonton only, the existing mixers were used.
- **Computer equipment:**
 - Installation services was provided by Acrodex (<http://www.acrodex.com>) (formerly known as Comp Canada).
 - All computers, monitors, and speakers were installed by Acrodex throughout the province of Alberta, including all circuit points like Fort Chip, Boyle, Cold Lake, & Lolydminister.
 - IT Services provided Acrodex with a computer image to install on every computer.

Role of Clerk

- The Clerk's main duty is to maintain accurate records before, during and after court. These Records include logging and recording the minutes of the proceedings in court, maintaining and controlling exhibits and administering oaths to witness and interpreters.
- In order to have a dignified and efficiently run court, the Judge and the Clerk should be knowledgeable of each other's duties.
- It is normally the clerk's responsibility to maintain order in and about the courtroom. Check with the Judge's preference as to personally attending to problems that may arise or leaving it as a clerk's responsibility.

Log Notes and their Role

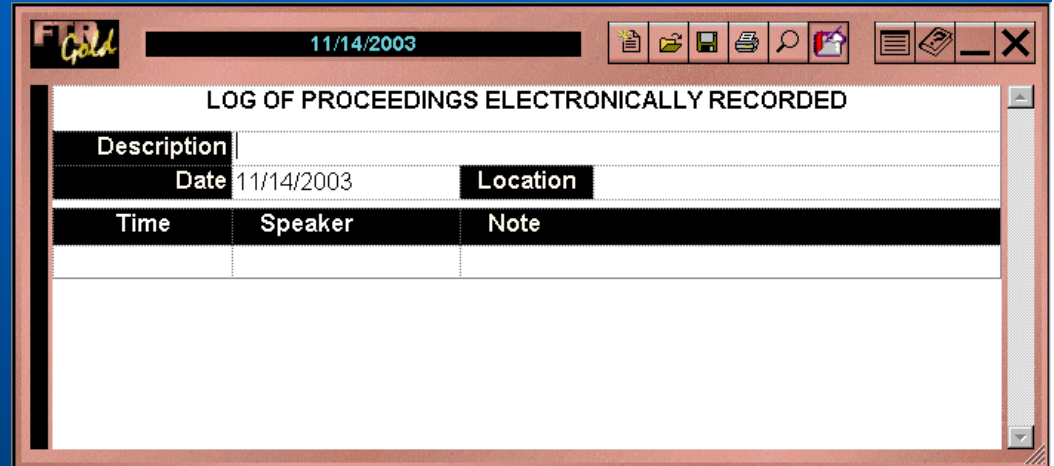
- Inefficient paper log notes are now obsolete. With FTR Log Notes you can automatically annotate your FTR Gold courtroom audio right on your PC. With this stand-alone, electronic note-taking software, clerks can create notes while listening to real-time audio. All notes are automatically time-stamped with a hyperlink to the associated testimony for immediate access.
- **With FTR Log Notes you can:**
 - Enter log notes quickly and easily
 - Link directly to audio segments through your notes
 - Make notes before, during and after recording
 - Search testimony for key words and phrases
 - Share notes and linked audio with others on your network

Log Notes and their Role continued

- With FTR Log Notes, judges and attorneys can take notes for future reference. Managers can use FTR Log Notes for faster transcription and distribution of testimony.
- At the end of each month Administrators can check for **utilization** of a courtroom. A session may start at 9:00am and end at 4:00pm, but actual session may only be 3 to 4 hours long. By using Log notes, Administrators can determine how long their courtrooms are actually in session.
- FTR Log Notes minimum requirements:
 - ☐ 166 MHz Intel® Pentium® processor
 - ☐ Recommended memory specification for the chosen operating system plus additional 16MB RAM
 - ☐ Microsoft® Windows® 98SE/2000 SP3 or XP Pro SP1
 - ☐ Windows compatible, full duplex stereo sound card
 - ☐ 256-color 800x600 video display adapter and monitor

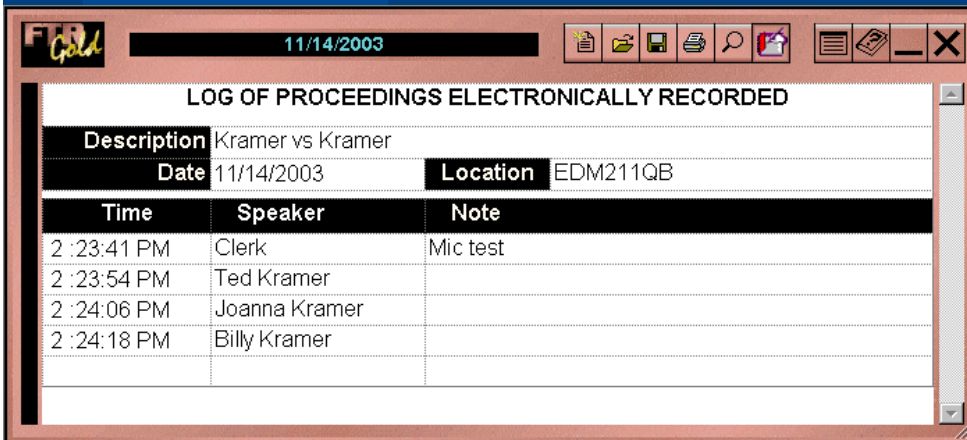
Log Notes and their Role continued

FTR Screen shots of FTR Log Notes



The screenshot shows the FTR Gold interface with a window titled "LOG OF PROCEEDINGS ELECTRONICALLY RECORDED". The window has a menu bar with icons for file operations and a toolbar. The main area contains a table with the following structure:

LOG OF PROCEEDINGS ELECTRONICALLY RECORDED		
Description		
Date	11/14/2003	Location
Time	Speaker	Note



The screenshot shows the FTR Gold interface with a window titled "LOG OF PROCEEDINGS ELECTRONICALLY RECORDED". The window has a menu bar with icons for file operations and a toolbar. The main area contains a table with the following data:

LOG OF PROCEEDINGS ELECTRONICALLY RECORDED			
Description	Kramer vs Kramer		
Date	11/14/2003	Location	EDM211QB
Time	Speaker	Note	
2 :23:41 PM	Clerk	Mic test	
2 :23:54 PM	Ted Kramer		
2 :24:06 PM	Joanna Kramer		
2 :24:18 PM	Billy Kramer		

Transcript Management Services and the Web

- **alberta.fortherecord.com**

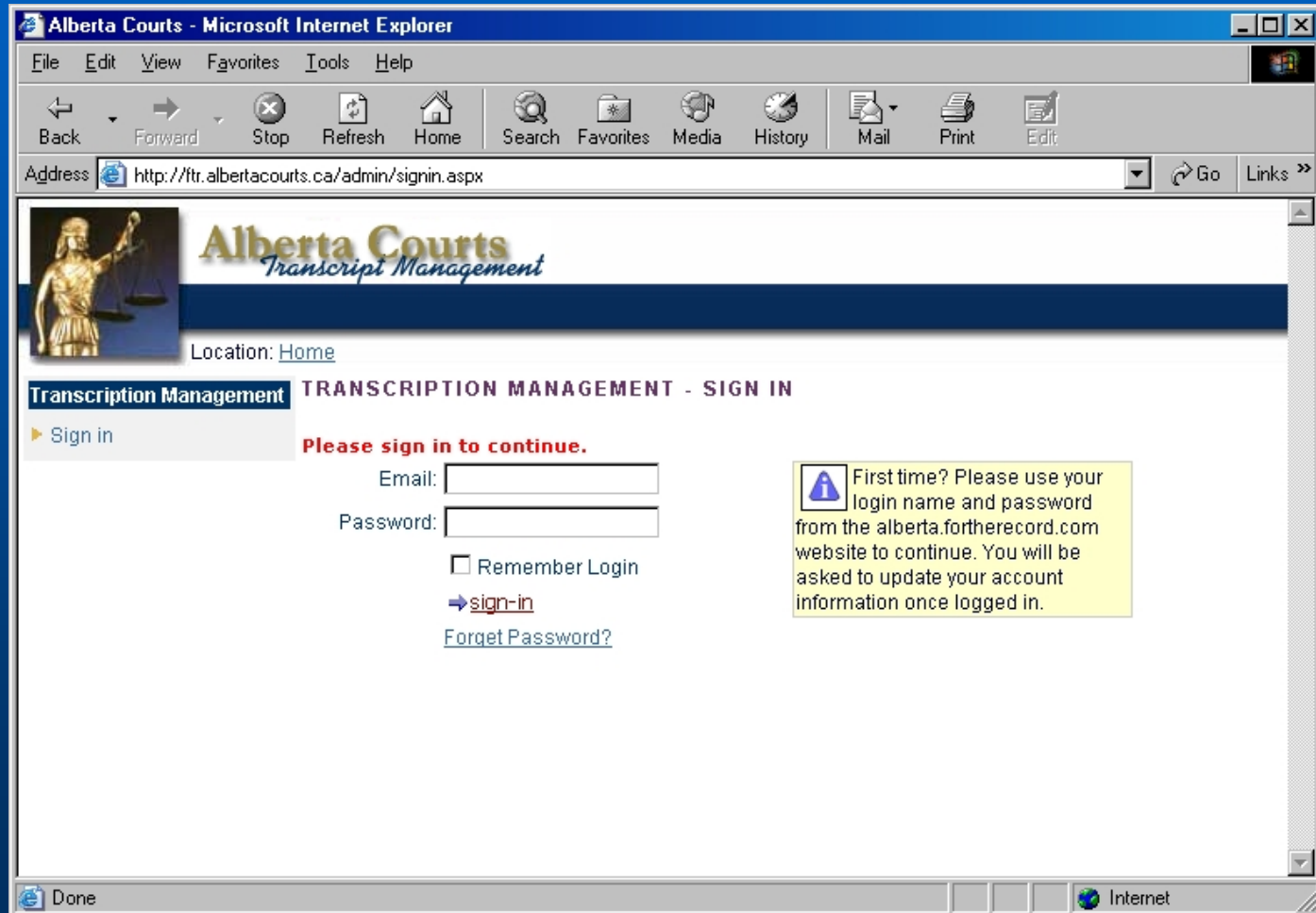
- Since the beginning of using FTR, we have implemented a service whereby TMS can upload an audio job and Log Note to our servers via a web based interface to share with at home contract transcribers. That web server was situated in Phoenix while the audio was stored on our servers. The problem was when the web server in Phoenix went down, audio became unavailable.

- **www.albertacourts.ca/tms/**

- In April 2004, Court Services launched a website that replaced the requirement for the web server in Phoenix. This web server is located in Edmonton, and serves as a job management tool. This allows a contract typist the ability to login from home and download audio and log notes right to their home PC.

Transcript Management Services and the Web continued

New way of
logging into
local Edmonton
Web server.



The screenshot shows a Microsoft Internet Explorer browser window displaying the login page for the Alberta Courts Transcript Management system. The address bar shows the URL <http://tr.albertacourts.ca/admin/signin.aspx>. The page features the Alberta Courts logo and a sign-in form with the following elements:

- Transcription Management** (tab)
- TRANSCRIPTION MANAGEMENT - SIGN IN** (page title)
- Sign in** (link)
- Please sign in to continue.** (red text)
- Email:**
- Password:**
- Remember Login
- [→ sign-in](#)
- [Forget Password?](#)
- Message box:** First time? Please use your login name and password from the alberta.fortherecord.com website to continue. You will be asked to update your account information once logged in.

Transcript Management Services and the Web continued

Pending Jobs
screen viewed
by at home
contract typist

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL <https://www.albertacourts.ca/tms/go.aspx?tabid=18>. The page header includes the "Alberta Courts Transcript Management" logo and a navigation menu with "Transcript Management" and "Admin". The user is signed in as webmaster@just.gov.ab.ca. The breadcrumb trail is: [Courts Home](#) > [TMS Home](#) > [Transcript Management](#) > [My Pending Jobs](#).

The main content area is titled "PENDING TRANSCRIPTION JOBS" and contains a table with one entry:

Job Description	Amount	Manager	Date Assigned	Date Downloaded	Log Notes
Ohrn June 16/04 AM (E)	03:00:01	Anita.Bondli@gov.ab.ca	9/30/2004		Log ✓

At the bottom of the page, there is a VeriSign Secure Site logo with the text "Click to verify".

Security

● Server- Digital Court Room Recording

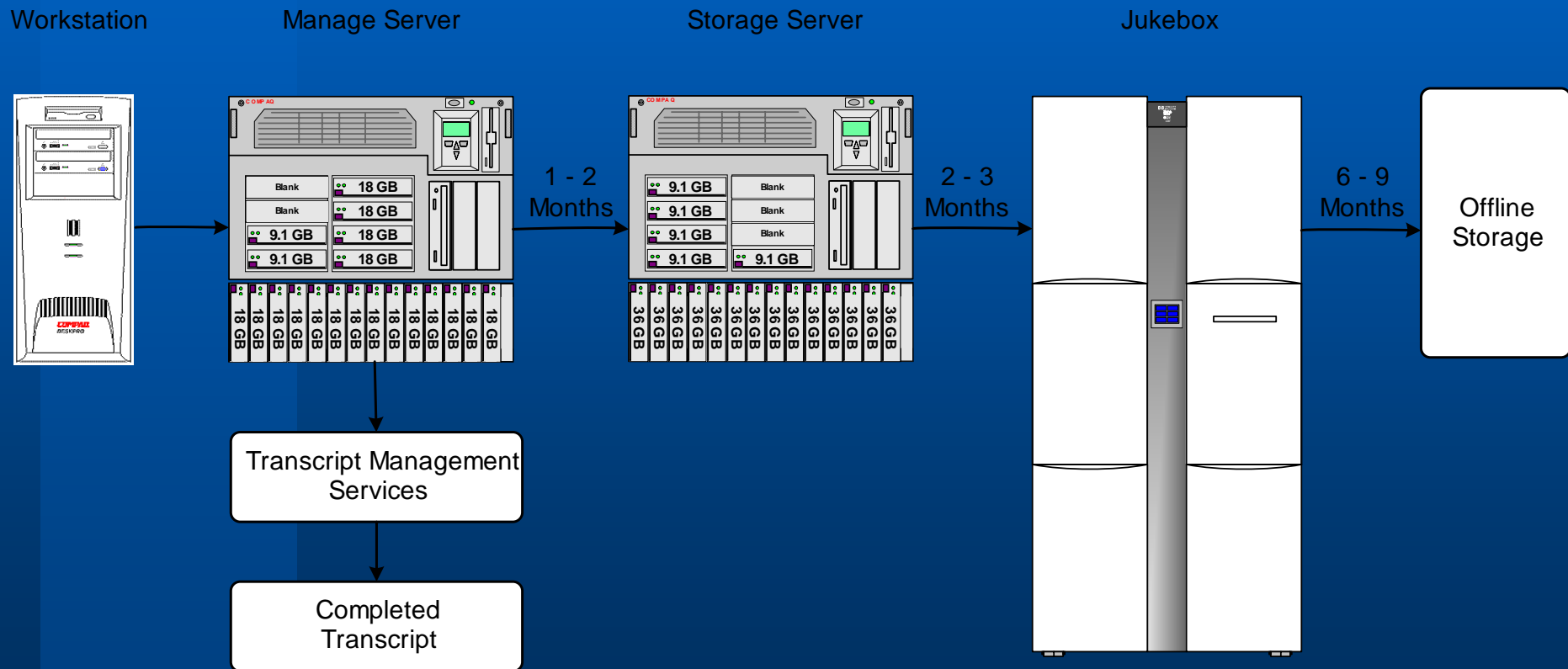
- The DCR system has its own folder structure on the root of each Managed server volume. Access to these folders is controlled with Novell Directory Services authentication on a per user basis. A Digital Clerk group has been created for each base Court House location. This control group has the access rights required to access the DCR directory contents. Membership of the group is required to list and access the digital audio on the network.
- Each server is housed in a controlled access area. They are backed up on a regular schedule, with the monthly tapes stored in a secure off site lockup.

Security continued

● Desktop- Digital Court Room Recording

- The court room computer has both the physical security of the court room and the court house. The computer also employs security measures of the Windows 2000 operating system and Novell Directory Services.
- Court Rooms are locked at all times when court is not in session. The Court Houses also have a cadre of security personnel.
- The Digital Recording computer utilises the NT OS as the primary means of access security. It is enhanced with the Novell client using NDS authentication to enforce access policies on the network.

Flow of Information within the system



Overview of the directory

