

YOU'RE BOOKED

The Justice Department Accounts Division for Judge Dredd, by Marcus L Rowland

Justice Department Briefing – ACC-DIV 01-2106

The Accounts Division is probably the least understood and appreciated section of the Justice Department. Most Judges regard its members as a necessary nuisance, responsible for keeping the books and ensuring that the Justice Department receives enough tax revenue to cover expenses. While the Division is a useful brake on the excesses of Judges who squander the Justice Department's resources, it's also probable that Acc-Div is responsible for solving as many cases as any of the other specialised divisions, in its role as the Justice Department's fraud squad.

For example, the Pusey kidnap case [Ref JDC p20] initially came to Justice Department attention when Acc-Div noticed a large withdrawal from Pusey's bank account. The Da Vinci blackmail case [Ref JDC p22 and JDJM p6] was also cracked

by Acc-Div, though Judge Dredd made the final arrest in both cases.

While most of the specialised work of Acc-Div will not interest Judges who are working on the streets, some operations will, inevitably, require the co-operation of units from the general pool of Judges, and of other specialised divisions of the Justice Department. For example, evidence might be found to suggest that a well-known gangster is preparing to transfer funds from the Mega-City. As well as offering a golden opportunity to arrest such criminals for tax evasion, the reasons for such a transfer might be very interesting. Perhaps the mob has sold out to alien interests, another gang war is imminent, or a really large load of contraband is about to hit the streets. Payments to Blitzers and other criminal organisations might also be tracked by Acc-Div, leading to the arrest of the perps who put out the contracts. Occasionally an Acc-Div investigation will require the help of the Wally Squad (as plainclothes investigators) in cases of fraud, and Acc-Div is naturally dependent on the help of Tek-Div's computer expertise. Even Psi-Div have occasionally helped with Acc-Div investigations. Acc-Div has also participated in many SJS investigations; sudden acquisition of money is a sure sign of a corrupt Judge. Most Crime Blitz search teams include at least one member of Acc-Div, who is responsible for examining papers and other financial evidence.

Finally, a word of caution. Recently Acc-Div has received expense claims ranging from the ridiculous to the fantastic. One recent arrest (for littering) followed a chase which involved 6 Lawmasters, 4 H-Wagons, a Pat-Wagon, and the destruction of property worth more than thirty thousand Creds. The Klutz case [Ref JDC p38] is another classic example of over-spending; Judge Dredd made a special flight to the Asteroid Belt to arrest a minor perp on petty charges (ranging from littering to running on a walkway). Other Judges have shown similar disregard for the economics of the Justice Department, and are warned that their extravagance may eventually result in disciplinary action.

GM's Briefing

Acc-Div is most useful as a moderately active nuisance to players. Typically, the Acc-Div Judge is the person who's turned off a spaceship as dead weight [Ref TJC1 p45], vetoes projects because they are too expensive [Ref TJC3 p63], or fails to appreciate things which should be blindingly obvious [Ref TJC3 p60]. There is reason to believe that Cal himself may once have worked for Acc-Div [Ref JC1 p4]. However, not all Acc-Div Judges are wimps; remember that the Justice Department has incredibly high standards, and that even Acc-Div Judges may occasionally see action. If you want to emphasise this point, a nice touch might be a memorial to Acc-Div Judges who were killed defending a tax office, or some other strategic economic point, during the Apocalypse War.

Acc-Div Judges should always have the Use Data ability, and often the Sense Crime ability. Other abilities should be allocated as needed. Almost all Acc-Div Judges will be Judge – 1 personnel, with a few senior Judges at Sector level and above. Acc-Div is usually overworked, and its officers tend to look pallid and out of condition from continual poring over synthi-paper ledgers and computer displays. Many will be elderly or disabled Judges who have drifted into this relatively quiet backwater after street service; they probably deserve nearly as much respect as the Tutor-Judges of the Academy.



Typical Acc-Div Judge 1 Judge Winslow

S	I	CS	DS	TS	SS	MS	PS
1	26	28	32	47	43	27	32

Special Abilities: Use Data

Note: Pallid, balding, wears spectacles (an obsolete affectation which is probably against Justice Department regulations). Age mid-forties, stooped shoulders, light build. A career accountant. [Ref *TC1* p45].

The Chief Accountant Judge Quimby

S	I	CS	DS	TS	SS	MS	PS
2	37	44	45	62	46	29	000

Special Abilities: Use Data-2, Sense Crime. Quimby's special abilities gain an extra 10% bonus when he deals with financial records, due to intense training.

Note: Negroid, curly hair, fit. Probably a relatively recent transfer from general service or the SJS. Mid-thirties, stocky. [Ref *TJC3* p60.]

Player Judges should not be encouraged to join Acc-Div, but may be assigned to Acc-Div as 'muscle' on a raid, as spies, or in any other role the GM may prefer. Don't always assume that Acc-Div will be efficient, reliable, or even honest; an accounting error might easily leave a Judge with no expense money, under suspicion of graft, or deprived of equipment and other resources. Although senior Acc-Div Judges will probably be street veterans, and are likely to receive periodic vetting, constant exposure to money and the technology and techniques of fraud may eventually lead an occasional renegade astray.

Acc-Div is also useful as a way of forcing Judges to do things the hard way; occasionally tell players that lab work for their case has been delayed because Acc-Div won't authorise the invoice for some new piece of crimelab technology, or that there are no H-Wagons available because the case budget won't run to them. Don't use this idea too often; it works best if the players aren't too used to arguing with Acc-Div and don't realise that they are essentially paper tigers, easily forced to back down. For example, you might tell the Judges that the case they are investigating (for example, a local illegal gambling ring) won't warrant the use of an interrogation suite without much more evidence, and thus trick them into following a perp into some form of trap.

While GMs shouldn't try to enforce hard and fast rules in this area, they should be prepared to step in when a player is taking things to ridiculous extremes.

As a rough guide, use the following equation to work out the budget for any type of investigation:

$$\text{Budget} = (10000 \times P \times V \times Y) \div G$$

P = Number of perps (to maximum of 50).

G = Grade of offence.

V = Number of victims (count 'victimless' crimes as 1, to maximum of 50).

Y = Typical sentence (years; count 'Life' as 70, each month as 1/10 year, and each day as 1/300 year in short sentences).

Example 1: A gang of 3 cannibal mutants led by the evil Fanglord eat a Judge alive. There are four perps and one victim, the sentence is life, and it is a grade 1 offence. The budget will thus equal 2.8 million Creds. This may seem rather high, but remember that Judge murder investigations often involve hundreds or thousands of Judges, and massive resources. In practice the budget will probably expand as the investigation uncovers other criminal activities, and a Judge slaying should rarely be under strict budget control.

Example 2: A juve drops a gum wrapper on the street. There is one perp, the crime is victimless, the sentence is, on average, 100 days (1/3 year), and it's a grade 4 offence. The budget is thus 825 Creds. In practice most normal perps at this level will only be arrested if caught in the act, and the Justice Department will rarely bother to launch a full-scale investigation, unless some form of prevention campaign (such as a campaign against Scrawling) is in progress.

It's safe to assume that a minimum of a thousand Creds is available for any investigation, as a way of avoiding many petty calculations.

Obviously you need to have some idea of the cost of an investigation. Since our sources are rarely specific about costs, the following are shaky approximations that shouldn't be taken too seriously:

Item	Cost (Creds)
One Judge/hour	500 + (100 × level)
Tek or Med Judge/hour	900 + (100 × level)
Psi Judge/hour	2,000 + (400 × level)
Any road vehicle/hour	50 × size (tons)
Any air vehicle/hour	200 × size (tons)
Any spacecraft/hour	10,000 × size (tons)
A Lawmaster	50,000
A Lawgiver	2,500
Small gadget	500
Interrogation suite/minute	1000
MAC/minute	25
Any complex laboratory procedure	2d10 × 1000

Costs for Judges include the costs of training, food, transport, administration, etc. They don't include the potential cost of keeping a Judge from other duties; for example, the other crimes that might be committed while a Judge is tied down at a particular location. Costs for vehicles and other items per hour include initial construction, paid back throughout the service life of the vehicle. Similarly, costs per minute are based on the original cost of the equipment in use and its upkeep. Round vehicle weights *up* to the next ton for this calculation; if you don't know the size, make a guess then double it.

For example, assuming that Dredd is a Judge-8, it costs around 1350 Creds an hour to keep him and his bike on the streets, a real bargain for the Mega-City. If a Manta tank weighs 30 tons, it costs 9,000 Creds an hour to keep one in the air.

Scenario Outlines

1. Undercover Operation. Jim L Fixit, the famous kneepad importer, is suspected of evading tax by diverting some of his company's cash income (a relatively small part of the operation, but still worth having) via a system of multiple ledgers. Acc-Div want to prove that money is being siphoned off before it is entered into the company computer, and track its eventual destination. The Judges are to infiltrate the company, find the ledgers, and stop Fixit destroying them when an Acc-Div raiding party arrive. Unfortunately Fixit runs a very informal operation; his employees are on friendly terms, and the usual behaviour of a Judge would stick out like a sore thumb. There are three ledgers, all printed on 'flash' paper which will ignite if a ring-pull is ripped from the book's spine. One is in Fixit's office, one is in one of his shops, and the third is hidden in a false cover amongst a collection of antique books in his apartment. All three will be needed to prove the case.

2. Spending Cuts. McGruder is visiting the Luna-1 Colony, and the head of the SJS has just been hospitalised. In consequence the Chief Accountant is currently acting head of the Justice Department, and has decided to make some sweeping economies. Simultaneously an epidemic of harmless but embarrassing pranking has started; no one is being hurt, but the Judges' dignity will suffer several blows. The Judges must try to solve the pranking case while being studied by an Acc-Div efficiency expert who is trying to find ways of making the department more cost-effective. Meanwhile one of the Chief Accountant's assistants has realised that a lot of money will be saved if the number of guards on Devil Island is reduced, and authorised the change without consulting his superiors . . .

Sources

JDC = Judge Dredd Collection, *Titan Books*.

JDJM = Judge Dredd RPG Judges Manual, *Games Workshop*.

TJCN = The Judge Child Volume n, *Titan Books*.

JCN = Judge Caligula Volume n, *Titan Books*.

I would like to thank Rory McLean for the original idea of this article, and Terry Pratchett and other members of the Novacon 15 SF convention for suggestions. □

Marcus Rowland is the author of Judgement Day, Games Workshop's first scenario pack for Judge Dredd – The Role-Playing Game.