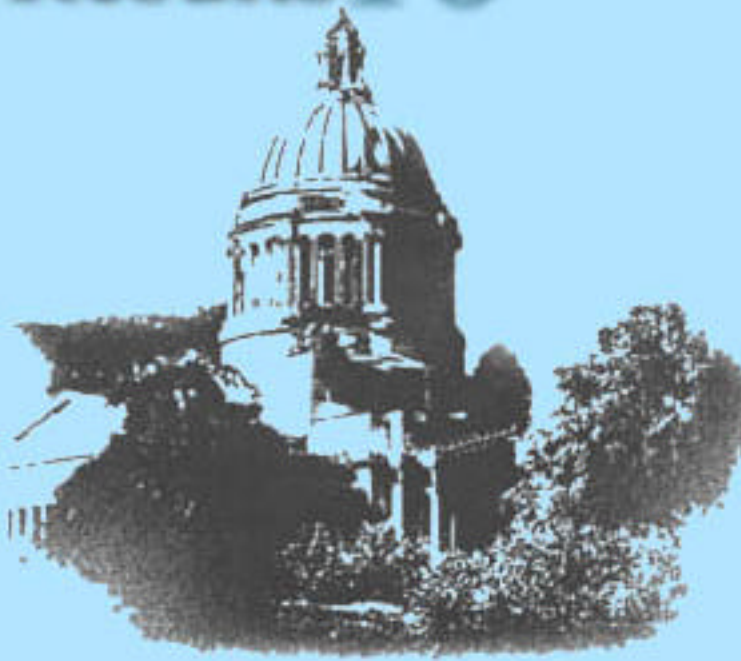


Governing For Results 10



An updated progress report on how state agencies
are improving the quality, service and
efficiency of state government.

April 2000

Dear Fellow Citizens:

I am pleased to report once again that state agencies are continuing to make improvements to our government that save us money, generate revenue and provide better service for all of us.

Taxpayers have demanded a better government and state workers have listened and are working hard to gain the public's trust.

Since the first publication of *Governing for Results* in December 1997, state agencies have reported results from over 1,350 quality improvement projects.



Inside this booklet are highlights of those efforts from the first quarter of 2000. They range from quality efforts to reduce the time a citizen waits for service, to providing clear rules and instructions, to increased revenues to the state while providing better service to citizens.

Collectively these efforts show the commitment our state workers are making to improve our government. They are learning from the past and reshaping how we do business in the future. The good work of state employees is making Washington State a great place to live, work and raise a family.

I applaud each agency's contributions to the quality of service we offer and commit to you that these efforts will continue. Our goal remains firm: make government work better, renew respect for public service and secure the public's trust.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gary Locke". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Gary Locke
Governor

Welcome to the Tenth Edition of *Governing for Results*

Governing for Results 10 is the tenth edition of highlights on quality improvement projects under way in Washington State government.

The projects reported here have already produced tangible results, including new revenue generation, resources and dollars saved, and streamlined processes providing better and quicker service.

These improvements have been initiated by state agencies in response to an Executive Order issued by Governor Locke in April 1997.

Executive Order 97-03, Quality Improvement, requires each agency to develop and implement a plan to improve the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of the public services it provides.

Since the Executive Order was issued, Washington state agencies have reported over 1,350 quality projects, saving the state over \$56 million. As a result of these efficiencies, approximately 626,000 staff hours have been saved and redirected to other work or eliminated the need for overtime. In addition, these efforts have produced over \$23 million in new revenue.

The projects in this booklet were selected from the quarterly quality reports submitted by agencies. These quality efforts are led by the Governor's Office, with oversight by the Sub-cabinet on Management and Quality Improvement.

Agency contacts are listed for each project, if more information is needed. Additional copies of this publication are available through the Governor's Office or on the Governor's Home Page at www.governor.wa.gov.



Governor's Award for Service and Quality Improvement

The following teams were selected as winners of the Governor's Award for Service and Quality Improvement for the first quarter of 2000. The story of each team's success can be found in the edition of the *Governing for Results* book indicated below. Our congratulations to these outstanding teams.

Team Name/Agency	Book Edition Number	Page Number
Pharmacy Point-of-Service Project Team Department of Labor and Industries	Book 10	27
Streamlining Bid Opportunity Process Department of General Administration	Book 6	28
On-Line New Employee Orientation Department of General Administration	Book 6	27
Personalized License Plate Process Improvement Team Departments of Licensing and Corrections	Book 8	36
Customer Telephone Access Project Team Department of Retirement Systems	Book 10	36



**TEAMS NOMINATED FOR THE
GOVERNOR'S AWARD FOR
SERVICE AND QUALITY IMPROVEMENT**

The following teams were nominated for the Governor's Award for Service and Quality Improvement for the first quarter of 2000. The story of each team's success can be found in the edition of the *Governing for Results* book indicated below. Our congratulations to these outstanding teams.

Team Name/Agency	Book Edition Number	Page Number
WorkFirst Vendor Payment Process Improvement Team Employment Security Department	Book 9	51
Contractor Registration Easy Renewal Team Department of Labor and Industries	Book 5	32
Underground Economy Task Force Department of Labor and Industries	Book 10	29
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Board of Accountancy

A New Monitoring Process for a New Communications Tool

As of January 2000 our customers were able to send e-mail directly to each agency employee via the agency's website. Entering the "age of the net" brought a new management issue: How do we ensure all e-mail communication is accurate? And, how could we use this communication to improving our website.

In February, the routing of e-mail was changed so that all of the incoming e-mail inquiries were directed to the Licensing Manager. Each morning the Licensing Manager responds to all incoming e-mail inquiries and the responses are copied to executive management. Management monitors the nature and type of electronic inquiries and responses. As commonly asked questions are identified, questions and responses are forwarded to the Webmaster to be posted in the FAQs on the agency's website.

This process allows the agency management to monitor and track e-mail communications; provide consistent, accurate, and timely responses to customer inquiries; and make timely improvements to the website to address new commonly asked questions.

Results

- ★ Improved customer service through timely and accurate responses to all inquiries.
- ★ Constantly updated website to address our customers' most current inquiries.
- ★ Support for the agency's goal of full compliance with the Governor's Executive Order on responding to public inquiries.

Team Name: E-mail Management Team

Team Members: Tim Hoefler, Sandra Shoemaker, Cheryl Sexton, Dana McInturff

Contact: Tim R. Hoefler, (360) 664-9193

Board of Industrial Insurance Appeals

Continuing Legal Education Credits

Our Industrial Appeals Judges are required to maintain active status with the Washington State Bar Association, which requires that they complete 45 hours of continuing legal education (CLE) credits every three years. This has been accomplished through outside vendors at a significant cost to the agency. Industrial Appeals Judges have requested more specialized training. An in-house group was formed to utilize agency legal expertise and to provide training on the Board's Significant Decisions for one hour each quarter. Attendees obtain one CLE credit for each hour of training. For each hour of in-house CLE credit earned per judge, the agency saves approximately \$25.

Results

- ★ Reduced training costs by \$25 for each in-house CLE credit earned per judge.
- ★ Customized training for judicial staff.
- ★ Enhanced training opportunities for legal support staff.

Team Name: Significant Decision Discussion Group

Team Members: Charles McCullough, Ward Rathbone, Susana Tapia, Jane Beaulieu, Melody Younglove, Teresa Loe

CONTACT: Ward Rathbone, (360) 753-6823

Board of Industrial Insurance Appeals

Better Accuracy of WISHA Orders

Appeals of citations issued under the WISHA (Washington Industrial Safety & Health Act) involve very technical language and complex numbering systems of specific citations and penalties. This information is easily, but inadvertently, transposed and is difficult to proof, resulting in a greater potential for typographical errors than other Board orders. Errors require the issuance of a corrected order, delaying final resolution for the parties.

In those cases where the parties reach an agreement, the parties prepare a stipulation of the agreement for the Industrial Appeals Judge. Traditionally, once the judge approved the settlement, the legal secretary would transcribe the agreement into the body of the order. Because of the difficulty of typing these stipulations into the order, a modification to the order was made to allow the stipulation to be incorporated into the order as an attachment.

Results

- ★ Reduced secretarial time in preparing orders.
- ★ Reduced errors in transcription.
- ★ Reduced judicial time required for proofing.
- ★ Improved efficiency in processing settlement agreements.

Team Members: Charles McCullough, Lynn Hendrickson, Mark Jaffe

CONTACT: Charles McCullough, (360) 753-6823

Board of Industrial Insurance Appeals

Increased Efficiency in Order Processing

Of appeals granted by the Board of Industrial Insurance Appeals, 44 percent are resolved by settlement or voluntary dismissal. Each of these cases involves preparation of a Board Order, which is reviewed and approved by an Assistant Chief or Program Assistant. The original order is maintained in the file and copies are mailed to the parties. When a legal secretary prepared the file, he/she would make an extra copy for the file, which would be initialed by the individual approving the order.

A "green sheet" was later implemented to capture and maintain information about each order and related time frames for processing. Analysis of this process revealed that the extra file copy was no longer necessary. The step of making an extra file copy was immediately discontinued.

Results

- ★ Reduced amount of paper used (approximately 7,500 sheets per year).
- ★ Reviewer only needs to initial one page instead of two.
- ★ Reduction in processing time.
- ★ More efficient use of resources.

Team Members: Pam Crowley, Melody Younglove

CONTACT: Pam Crowley, (360) 753-6823

Automated Licensing, Bonding and Case Tracking

The Commission Merchant Program licenses and bonds over 700 agricultural businesses and investigates over 100 complaints annually. The program is headquartered in Olympia with an investigative office in Yakima.

Questions from the public and Yakima staff concerning licensing, bonding or complaints required several phone calls, research time, and paperwork. While complaints were processed on a database in Olympia, information was not transferable to Yakima staff. To track progress on cases and inquiries, conference calls and travel often were involved.

A computer-based tracking system now directly links licensing, bonding, and complaint information, along with journal updates, providing immediate and identical information to Olympia and Yakima staff. Service to the public is improved.

Results

- ★ Members of the program have instant access to licensing, bonding and case information.
- ★ Time spent responding to inquiries has been reduced.
- ★ Files are reduced in size and volume by half; the manual case-tracking system is eliminated.
- ★ Staff time on telephone calls, faxing, mailing and copying has been reduced.
- ★ Automated reports facilitate tracking of performance measures.

Team Name: Commission Merchant Program

Team Members: Jodie Vosburgh, Julie Chess, Kathy Hayner, Brenda Player, Bob Radke, Rich Medley, Bambi Quinn, Phil Madalosso, Bonni Johnson, Julie Sandberg, Jerry Buendel

CONTACT: Jodie Vosburgh, (360) 902-1822

Department of Corrections

Bus Passes for Work Release Residents

Offenders living at Progress House work release were having difficulty getting their Pierce County bus passes before the beginning of the month. This resulted in two problems: 1) Each offender would have to take time off work to go to the Transport Authority and get their bus pass; and/or 2) Work Release and business office staff would spend several hours helping offenders get emergency bus passes.

Community Corrections Officer Randy Walker worked with staff from Pierce Transit and Inmate banking to develop a new process. An account was set up with Pierce Transit to purchase bus passes for all offenders. All offenders needing bus passes now sign a collective promissory note in advance of receiving their pass. After the bus pass check is written, a Progress House staff member goes to the Transport Authority and collects enough bus passes for all offenders. This process ensures offenders now have their bus passes before the beginning of each month.

Results

- ★ Offenders don't have to take time off work to obtain bus passes. Average increase in offenders' paycheck is \$40 per month.
- ★ Work Release staff time saved equals 22 hours per month.
- ★ Increased partnership between the agency and community resources.

Team Name: Bus Pass Team

Team Members: Stanley Ahlquist, Robert Anderson, Frank Besaw, Roger Hansen, Randy Walker, Sandra Ware, Martha Woods, Marlina Wright

CONTACT: Robert Anderson, (253) 593-2884

Department of Corrections

Improving DOC's Correspondence Process

The Correspondence Process Improvement Team (CPIT) was asked to review Department of Corrections procedures for processing correspondence and certain types of phone inquiries. The team was charged with making recommendations for streamlining these procedures to improve quality, timeliness, consistency and efficiency.

The main areas of concern with the process included:

- Lengthy, multi-layer process made it difficult to meet expected turnaround times;
- Large number of staff involved in correspondence process resulted in workload and training issues;
- Correspondence format and responses varied across the agency, resulting in inconsistencies;
- Duplication frequently occurred, resulting in inefficient use of staff resources.

The team reviewed past and current correspondence procedures at DOC; contacted other agencies and states to research their correspondence procedures; and identified areas that could be improved immediately. The CPIT also developed a proposal that will continue to reduce duplication of efforts, reduce turnaround time of responses, and improve customer service related to correspondence.

Results

- ★ Eliminated duplication and confusion by combining five logging systems into one.
- ★ Automated certain tasks within process to reduce staff time by 13.2 hours per month.
- ★ Reduced the volume of late correspondence by 7%.
- ★ Developed DOC "For Friends and Family" booklet. The booklet explains such items as mail, property, funds, telephone contacts, visiting, and medical and dental services.

Team Name: Correspondence Process Improvement Team

Team Members: Nancy Abbott, Mona Decoy, Cly Evans, Carmen Harris, Cheryl Healey, Rose Marquis, Gloria Miller, Kathy Norris, Barbara Parry, Earl Wright

CONTACT: Barbara Parry, (360) 753-2769

Department of Corrections

Intensive Management Unit

At the Washington Corrections Center, there is an Intensive Management Unit (IMU) for offenders segregated from the general population due to self destructive, disorderly, dangerous or violent behaviors. Inmates had no programs to occupy their time so they directed their energies in negative ways. Incidents of destroying/damaging the physical plant, staff assaults and inmate infractions were high.

The staff of the IMU developed the following Mission Statement: "Manage the challenges of safety and security through professional interaction and structured programming." As well as "Provide the tools necessary and the atmosphere conducive to inmate change with continuous evaluation and focus on quality for the future."

Physical plant and technology upgrades were made. In addition, education programs were designed to teach offenders skills and competencies to achieve greater self-control. Offenders are now being managed in a way that enhances prison security and safety as each inmate transitions back to general population.

Results

- ★ Number of inmate infractions decreased from 128 in 1997 to 60 in 1999 (54%).
- ★ Number of assaults on staff decreased from 11 in 1997 to 0 in 1999 (100%).
- ★ Number of "use of force on inmates" incidents decreased from 45 in 1997 to 2 in 1999 (96%).
- ★ Overtime costs associated with IMU destruction reduced from \$72,950.89 in 1997 to zero dollars in 1999 (100%).
- ★ Cost of damage to physical plant decreased from \$40,500 in 1997 to zero dollars in 1999 (100%).

Team Name: IMU Mission/Repair Team

Team Members: Timothy Birley, Edward Ewald, Dawn Johnson, Gary Jones, Jay Rothrock, James Tucker, Jack Uglick, Ron Wineinger, Edward Woods

CONTACT: Ron Wineinger, (360) 427-4635

Department of Corrections

Satellite Training Consortium

Previously there were only two sites (Spokane and Olympia) that had the ability to provide satellite video-conference training on corrections related topics. Participants had to drive long distances to take advantage of the training broadcasts. This resulted in significant travel, backfill, and overtime expenditures. Consequently, participation was limited.

A "Training Consortium" was developed to provide Corrections staff the capacity of receiving relevant satellite training as close as possible to their work site. Through a coordinated partnership with 30 Criminal Justice organizations, the Department of Corrections is now able to share resources and offer increased accessibility to satellite video training at 12 locations across the state.

Results

- ★ Increased number of satellite video training sites from 2 to 12.
- ★ Decreased time away from work spent in travel commutes by 576 hours per year.
- ★ Increased availability of training delivered via satellite from 288 staff per year to 1,728 staff per year. (500% increase).
- ★ Decreased average travel and backfill/overtime expenditures by \$11,520.
- ★ Increased ability to access and exchange ideas, best practices, and other resources with Criminal Justice Consortium partners.

Team Name: Satellite Training Consortium Team

Team Members: DOC: Peter "PJ" Braun, Susan Lawson, Lorna Sutliff;
Labor and Industries: Karen Yong

CONTACT: Susan Lawson, (360) 664-9692

Improved Testing for Pesticide Contamination

Historically, laboratory testing of soil, water and tissue for pesticide contamination has been limited to approximately 40 pesticide compounds per test method versus the hundreds of pesticides registered or previously used. A scientist in Ecology's environmental laboratory developed a method to test for over 150 pesticide compounds using one comprehensive method. He consulted with the equipment manufacturer and other scientists to develop the methodology.

This has greatly improved our ability to accurately identify pesticide compounds polluting soil and water. This analytical method has become nationally accepted by the federal Environmental Protection Agency and is now available for use by other laboratories.

Results

- ★ The new test method and equipment are highly selective leading to a higher probability of pesticide detection in complex samples.
- ★ A wide variety of pesticide compounds can be tested using one comprehensive method.
- ★ The test method, Method 8085, is nationally recognized and approved for testing pesticide contamination in soil, water and tissue.

Team Name: Method 8085

Team Members: Norman Olson

CONTACT: Norman Olson, (360) 871-8820

Department of Financial Institutions

Database Allows Applicants to Check Status of Applications Using the Internet

The Department of Financial Institutions (DFI) regulates Washington's financial services industry to ensure public confidence in our state's financial markets. The Securities Division, within DFI, processes nearly 25,000 mutual fund and securities applications annually.

A database application was developed to allow applicants to check on the status of their applications using the Internet. As an added benefit, investors and the public have also found the site useful to see if a mutual fund or investment opportunity is properly registered.

Results

- ★ Search site received 65,667 hits in the first six months of use.
- ★ Call volumes for application status inquiries were reduced by 41%.
- ★ Customers have access to data 24 hours a day.
- ★ Customers continually praise the usefulness of the website.

Team Name: Financial Institutions License, Exemption and Registration Search (FILERS) Team

Team Members: Bruce Johnson, Juanita Bingham, Bill Beatty, Nelda Shannon

CONTACT: Gloria Papiez, (360) 902-8728

Department of Financial Institutions

Division of Credit Unions Completes Accreditation Program

The Department of Financial Institutions, Division of Credit Unions, examines and supervises credit unions that do business in Washington State in order to protect their members' financial interests. The Division recently completed a rigorous accreditation program that reviewed their operations to determine how well the Division met the stated goal of achieving highly professional, competent, and consistent regulation. On August 31, 1999, the Division was notified that it became the 22nd state to receive an accreditation certification.

Results

- ★ Quality of examination process was improved based on implementing efficiencies.
- ★ Mailing time for final examination reports was reduced from an average of 59 days to an average of 35 days after examiner completes field work.
- ★ Review time was reduced from an average of 16 hours per examination to 8 hours per examination.

Team Name: Accreditation Team

Team Members: All employees in the Division of Credit Unions

CONTACT: Gloria Papiez, (360) 902-8820

Technology Puts Building on a Disk

Due to the rapid growth at community colleges and school districts, facility managers needed help organizing and keeping current the blueprints and other documents on their buildings. Buildings on a Disk creates a library for each building, keeping the construction data current and linking manuals and operating procedures directly into the data. Research time is saved each time blueprints need to be referenced. Additionally, electronic versions can be sent to others when assistance is needed.

As a health and safety consideration, if local emergency services organizations are capable of utilizing data stored on CD ROM disks, the emergency response plan can be attached to the information and accessed by the police or fire department personnel as they respond.

Results

- ★ K-12 schools can supply emergency response plans for in-route use.
- ★ Saved approximately 1,250 staff hours per year for two customers.
- ★ All building information is in one area, an easy-to-access electronic library. Operations and manuals are linked to the blueprints and all are conveniently updated at anytime.
- ★ Construction documents are easily updated and shared with contractors.
- ★ Cost is about \$30,000 for the electronic records, saving the college or school district about \$12,000 over the private vendor price for the same service.
- ★ Electronic versions of plans are available for capital projects in the future.

Team Name: Technology Puts Building on a Disk

Team Members: E&AS: Chuck Leyster, Gerry Hanlon, Cipriano Araize; Big Bend Community College: Bill Wilkie; South Puget Sound Community College: Nancy Johns; Community Colleges of Spokane: Greg Plummer

Contact: Chuck Leyster, (360) 902-7236

Department of General Administration

Electronic 267-A

In the past, to surplus items, state agencies were required to complete a seven-part form called a 267-A and mail it to State Surplus. The new Electronic Disposal Request eliminates paper forms, saves staff time, facilitates a 24-hour response to agencies and creates a database for generating invoices, inventory and reports.

Results

- ★ Instead of three days, the agency gets a GA# and completes action within 24 hours.
- ★ Process time reduced from 5 minutes to 1 minute per document, saving GA staff 258 hours per year.
- ★ Creates the foundation for a database to develop reports, invoices and inventory.
- ★ Because there is no time required to send paperwork back and forth, the process is now completed in 24 hours, compared to seven days when paper forms were used.

Team Name: Electronic 267-A

Team Members: Chris Martin, Brian Richardson, Diane Savisky, Wanda Emmick (DSHS), Stacey Sitko, Marcy Belles (DIS), Fred Throgmorton (CTED), Suzy Davis (State Parks), Jerry Aarts (DOL), Pat Kohler, Gladys Guzman

Contact: Neil House, (253) 597-3733

Department of General Administration

Delegated Scrap Authority

Until January 1, 2000, state agencies wishing to dispose of broken or unuseable surplus had to submit a surplus disposal request and wait for approval from the State Surplus Program. Now they have delegated authority to dispose of these items without submitting a disposal request.

Results

- ★ Agencies can now do their own scrap actions immediately.
- ★ It places responsibility where it belongs--with the agency that owns the property.
- ★ GA's State Surplus does not add value by authorizing "scrap" on items they never see.
- ★ State Surplus staff saved 64 hours.

Team Name: Delegated Scrap Authority

Team Members: Stacey Sitko, Pat Kohler, Cindy Runger, Leanne McConnell, Sherm Heathers, Neil House

Contact: Neil House, (253) 597-3733

Department of General Administration

CMS Incoming Sort Project

Incoming mail for the State of Washington was picked up at the United States Postal Service (USPS) plant in Tumwater and delivered to Consolidated Mail Services (CMS), where it was hand sorted to 393 delivery points representing various state agencies. Due to USPS schedule changes, CMS began receiving incoming mail an hour later, making it increasingly difficult to meet daily timelines and delivery schedules. However, incoming mail sorting staff noticed that a greater percentage of incoming mail now had 11-digit barcodes applied by the USPS.

Because of the new barcodes, it became possible to use CMS' existing Optical Character Reader/Bar Code Reader (OCR/BCR) sort machine to sort letter-size mail. This process improvement saves many staff hours. Though accuracy of the postal bar codes was sometimes questionable, it was still possible to sort more mail in less time with the missorted rate staying below 1%.

Results

- ★ By utilizing the OCR/BCR, the mail is sorted faster, allowing us to use personnel in other areas. By using this process, we are able to sort all the daily mail and get it to the customer in a timely fashion, thus elevating the level of customer service.
- ★ This process enabled the staff to get exposure to the technology of automated sortation, broadening their knowledge of both the equipment and of the different work areas of CMS.
- ★ Because the mail is sorted faster and more efficiently, we were able to reduce the number of days needed to process the mail from 7 to 5. This also allowed us to cut down on the amount of overtime needed to process the mail and for staff to have weekends off.
- ★ Using this process, missorts are now less than 1% compared to approximately 1.5% accuracy in the past.
- ★ Saved 5,868 staff hours.

Team Name: Incoming Sort Project

Team Members: Sher Dotson, Doug Howell, Martin Peters, Ron Anderson, Mary Henderickson

Contact: Sher Dotson, (360) 664-9617

Everything Including the Kitchen Sink

When the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) Southwest Region purchased a new headquarters building in Vancouver, there was an 18-year-old commercial-grade kitchen occupying 2,000 square feet on the first floor. The WSDOT wanted to renovate the building, reducing the kitchen to only 315 square feet. The kitchen equipment was worth \$187,000 new, but WSDOT would only capture \$15,000 in salvage value - the cost to contract someone to remove it.

Department of General Administration's Plant Operations Support (POS) program was notified by GA project manager Roy Childers to contact WSDOT. POS was offered the opportunity to donate the equipment to public agency members in the POS program. POS identified the Washington School for the Deaf (WSD) and Clark College as members both located in Vancouver. WSD is a residential school that serves 12,000 meals a month, and the school jumped at the chance to upgrade its kitchen. Clark College has an extensive culinary training program and campus food service operation and would use anything the WSD could not.

POS tied three more agencies into the equipment removal process: a DNR workcrew of correctional inmates, DOC and Clark College electricians. This cooperative link saved the WSD over \$19,000 in removal costs and resulted in five state agencies working together.

Results

- ★ WSD saved an estimated \$90,000 on equipment.
- ★ WSD saved an estimated \$19,000 salvaging the equipment.
- ★ Clark College saved an estimated \$500 on equipment.
- ★ WSDOT saved \$15,000 in salvage contractor fees.
- ★ WSDOT cut a week of contract labor from their remodeling schedule.

Team Name: Everything Including the Kitchen Sink

Team Members: Bob MacKenzie (GA/POS); David Turpen and Despo Varkados (WSD); Jim Ray (WSDOT); Dave Halme (Clark College); Jim Tooley (DOC); Roy Childers (GA/E&AS).

Contact: Bob MacKenzie, (360) 902-7257

Invoicing Replaces Costly Contract Amendments

The Perinatal Hepatitis B Program was a small part of the Department of Health's contract with Local Health Jurisdictions. Changes in the contract require amendments, and this is a challenge in unpredictable programs like Perinatal Hepatitis B. The time consuming amendments were often for very small amounts of money. The process was simplified by removing the program from the contract and conducting reimbursement through invoices.

Results

- ★ Saved more than 198 hours for the department and the Local Health Jurisdictions.
- ★ Saved about \$90 per year in reduced printing and postage.
- ★ Improved customer service.
- ★ Program staff can monitor payments more closely, thereby reducing payment errors.

Team Name: Hepatitis B Program Reimbursement

Team Members: Brad Halstead, Trang Kuss, Elizabeth Williams, Claire Norby, Suzette Frederick, Rhonda Reinke, Jim Robertson

CONTACT: Brad Halstead, (360) 236-3912

Duplication Eliminated for Visitor Badges

The Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program frequently conducts training for non-Department of Health staff. This requires the use of department visitor badges and an accompanying badge log. WIC also had its own process for providing trainees with training name badges as well as maintaining a class roster. The duplicative processes were eliminated and replaced with the use of training name badges that include the training dates and the words “DOH Visitor.”

Results

- ★ Saved about six hours per year.
- ★ Fewer visitor badges need to be made and distributed.
- ★ Departmental security and liability requirements as well as WIC program needs are both met.

Team Name: WIC Visitor Badge System

Team Members: Jacque Beard, Lori Holt, Cathy Franklin

CONTACT: Jacque Beard, (360) 236-3656

Toll-Free Number Service Improved

The Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program has a toll-free number used by the general public. WIC staff was concerned that the system failed to meet several customer service goals, including reaching a “live” person. Working with communications staff, they designed a system to meet the goals. Callers now more frequently reach someone to talk to and, when lines are busy, callers have the option of staying on the line for a staff person or leaving a voice mail.

Results

- ★ About 390 hours saved through less voice mail retrieval, fewer returned phone calls, and less need to leave messages.
- ★ Callers more frequently reach someone to talk to.
- ★ Callers have a choice of waiting on hold or leaving a voice mail message.
- ★ By adding more staff to the group responsible for covering the line, the workload of staffing the line for each individual has been reduced.
- ★ The quantity and quality of customer service has been improved.

Team Name: Toll-Free Number Improvements Team

Team Members: Karen Valenzuela, Kim Wallace, Becky Waite, Cathy Franklin, Jim Hammond, Bob Smith, Rick McNeely, Susan Chamberland, Ingrid Hansen, Laura Balthrop, Lori Holt, Nina Benson, Linza Sheldon, John Swanson, Flo Zikas, Carol Knight-Wallace

CONTACT: Karen Valenzuela, (360) 236-3700

Department of Information Services

E- Mall Internet Single Point of Access

Problem: Agencies are faced with a confusing set of options for making information technology purchases. Customers spend considerable time searching for information and prices from various sources for information technology purchases.

Improvement: Create an "E-mall" that would provide a single point of access through the Internet for all DIS customers. Through the E-mall, customers can locate information and make purchases from over 40 DIS contracts ranging from cellular phone service to on-line ordering of new personal computer equipment.

Results

- ★ Estimated customer savings of 833 hours per month for transaction time saved by grouping all contract information in one easy-to-use Internet site available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- ★ Estimated customer savings of 3% to 5% over regular government computer prices, which equates to a \$900,000 to \$1,500,000 customer savings this fiscal year.
- ★ Increased customer knowledge by creating an E-Mall with over 160 pages of informative usable content in one location for our customers to research technology-related purchases.
- ★ Improved customer satisfaction by enabling statewide access to over 40 DIS contracts totalling over \$50 million of annual usage.
- ★ Provided new direct ordering option for PC master contracts for 5 major computer brands.
- ★ Eliminated the need for mailing paper price lists to hundreds of customers by providing pricing in an electronic form that is updated daily.

Team Name: E-Mall Team

Team Members: Bob DeShaye, John Flanagan, Mike Hauser, Bruce Hooker, Jeff Martin, Scott Smith, Debbie Sprehn, Tim Vanderhoof

CONTACT: Scott Smith, (360) 902-0306

Department of Information Services

Electronic Single Sheet Order Forms

The Department of Information Services (DIS) purchases commodities on contract and under general authority from the Office of State Procurement. The forms used for these purchases are pre-printed six-part carbon-less state forms. The A17-A Field Order costs .23 each, and the A21-A Print Requisition cost .26 each. The purchase order information was entered electronically at a single dedicated workstation and printed on two dedicated impact printers.

We created an electronic template of the forms. The purchase order information can be entered electronically at any workstation in our workgroup. The new forms are printed on a shared laser printer using plain paper that cost .01 each.

Results

- ★ Reduced the total cost of printed forms from \$295 to \$12.50 per year achieving savings of \$282.50 per year.
- ★ Eliminated pre-printed multi-part purchasing forms.
- ★ Eliminated the A17-1A Field Order Continuation Form.
- ★ Eliminated two dedicated impact printers and their supplies.
- ★ Increased accessibility to create purchase documents from any workstation in our workgroup.
- ★ Improved process of printing forms on plain paper using shared laser printer.

Team Name: Electronic Single Sheet Order Form Team

Team Members: Don Coulter, Mike Elliott, Doug Golden, Jerry Messer, Chuck Smith, Norm Todd, Jerry Wiatt

CONTACT: Mike Elliott, (360) 753-4484

Department of Information Services

Interactive Intranet Portal – Inside DIS

By 1999, the Department of Information Services' (DIS) intranet was outdated and far from a central source of agency information. It offered little, if any, transaction capability; was inconsistent in content, look and feel; and lacked web tools such as links.

Two cross-agency teams developed an interactive intranet portal, "Inside DIS." The project included infrastructure investments, hardware/software design and creation of an easily navigable structure featuring daily front-page news updates.

"Inside DIS" makes all agency forms available to employees, who simply download and print – at their work areas – forms they need to accomplish daily tasks. This has made DIS the first printed form-free zone in state government.

Results

- ★ Annual \$270 savings for space in 7 buildings used to store pre-printed forms.
- ★ Average of 149 user sessions daily during first full month of operation, or about 35 percent of agency workforce; sessions last 11 minutes on average.
- ★ Handling supply requests and similar tasks online cuts processing time.
- ★ Reduced time spent searching for agency information online and researching solutions to business problems without benefit of cross-agency collaboration.
- ★ Aids communication as agency's first central space for news and information.
- ★ Enhanced training through online courses provides all employees with opportunities for career development.
- ★ Daily news updates reduce need for all-agency e-mails.
- ★ Supplies convenient test bed for pilots, releases of online forms and services.
- ★ Online forms transactions speed completion of day-to-day tasks.
- ★ Enhanced internal newsgroups enable convenient knowledge sharing and facilitate collaboration to let employees work faster and smarter together.

Team Name: "Inside DIS" Operations Board

Team Members: Rich App, Darlene Kosoff, Gene Martel, John Vargas, Kathleen White

CONTACT: Kathleen White, (360) 902-3520

New Website Encourages Employees to Write Clearly

The frustration of citizens and businesses that receive unclear, bureaucratic correspondence from public agencies is well known. How to go about training and encouraging employees to write clearly is a new science. The Department of Labor and Industries (L&I) began that effort by creating an in-house website containing simple general guidelines for drafting letters and other written materials so they could be quickly and easily understood. The website also offered a selection of some 100 "plain language" sample letters and phrases, advice on page formatting and links to other writing sites. The site has been updated to include news on plain language efforts around the agency, writing tips and a letter-of-the-month employee recognition feature.

Results

- ★ The website's well-publicized presence has made clear the agency's expectations for clear writing.
- ★ At least four major department form-letter rewrite projects are now under way, with the help of the site's writing consultant.
- ★ Managers now regularly seek clear-writing assistance when undertaking major presentation packets and presentations.
- ★ Employees now have a place to go for help with difficult writing assignments because the website has a link to the agency's writing consultant.

Team Name: Clear Writing Website Team

Team Members: Dana Howard Botka, Sue Hedrick

Contact: Sue Hedrick, (360) 902-4204

Department of Labor and Industries

From Weeks to Days to 5 Minutes...

Contractors are required to renew registration with the Department of Labor and Industries (L&I) each year and certify they meet state bonding and insurance requirements. L&I had received complaints that the registration renewal process took too long and resulted in inaccurate information being given to the public. In an award-winning effort, L&I staff succeeded in reducing the registration renewal time from several weeks to a few days.

It would have been natural for L&I staff to believe they had “fixed” the problem, but staff saw opportunities for further improvement. They set up a pilot project allowing contractors to register at L&I’s 22 service locations around the state instead of having to mail in their registration forms. The project included training service location staff and monitoring the effectiveness and accuracy of the new registration method.

Results

- ★ Registration renewal at L&I’s service locations requires only about five minutes rather than several days using the mail-in system.
- ★ Mistakes in the documents are caught immediately, so a contractor can make corrections and still register in a timely manner. The contractor also can ask questions.
- ★ Contractors who need quick renewal now can avoid the cost of going to Tumwater or express mailing their registration forms.
- ★ Service location staff who had spent a lot of time finding out about registration status instead use their time to register contractors.
- ★ 30% of contractors now renew registration at service locations.

Team Name: Contractor Registration Easy Renewal Team

Team Members: Leslie Imbler, Pam Bergman, Roger Washburn, Carol Hinrichs, Linda Amundson, Amos Atkinson, Jane Sullivan, Debbie Carlin, Bonnie Crist

Contact: Leslie Imbler, (360) 902-5793

After-hours Computer Upgrades Means No Bother to Staff

A team of computer technicians needed to spend an hour at each of Department of Labor and Industries' (L&I) 2,800 PCs to install new hardware and software. But asking staff to drop what they were doing for an hour wasn't a good plan. To reduce impacts on staff, the team decided to do their work after normal business hours. This approach was used for the Ethernet Upgrade Project and is being planned for other future computer upgrades as well.

Results

- ★ At least 2,800 hours of lost production time is avoided.
- ★ Customers are not interrupted to perform ANY upgrade tasks.

Team Name: Ethernet Upgrade Team

Team Members: John Coate, Scott Rehm, Russ Kalista, Dave Reubens, Jerry Swenson, Khoi Hua, Marv Clarambeau, Don Wood, Dave Newsom, Ray McQuillion, Linda Johnnigk

CONTACT: John Coate, (360) 902-6010

Department of Labor and Industries

Instant Connection Provides Long-term Savings

To verify a prescription was allowed by an injured worker's claim, pharmacies had to call the Department of Labor and Industries (L&I). That took a lot of staff time for which L&I paid high professional fees. Pharmacies could fill the prescription without verification, but they were risking recovering the money from the department or the worker. Or, they could require the injured worker to pay for it up front. Either way, the department was receiving about half of the bills by paper, which had to be manually entered.

In September 1999, the department launched the Pharmacy Point-of-Service Billing System that allows bills to be settled before the prescriptions are dispensed — in just four seconds. Pharmacies are connected with the agency by updating the software in their existing computers. By the end of February, 714 of the 1,291 pharmacies that bill the department (55 percent) were on-line. Bills settled by the new system are automatically entered.

Results

- ★ Injured workers know up front if the department will cover their prescription.
- ★ Pharmacies' risk reduced to almost zero.
- ★ Bill processing time reduced to 4 seconds.
- ★ Manual prescription entry cut by about 13,000 a month.
- ★ Staff will save about 1800 hours annually.
- ★ Saved about \$131,000 in professional fees the first month.
- ★ Estimated professional fees reduced about \$2 million annually.

Team Name: Pharmacy Point-of-Service Project Team

Team Members: Tom Davis, Carol Edinger, Cathy Williams, Cecilia Maskell, Charlene Williams, Dave Dobbs, Dave Sheldon, Diane Arnold, Don Green, Ed Armstrong, Fran Mauritson, Ginny Keefe-Hardy, Gordon Welch, Jacquee McNerney, Karen Ahrens, Kathy Betzig, Lucille LaPalm, Mary Shatto, Melinda Darmody, Pam Hitter, Richard Kelm, Russ Nesbitt, Selvius Turner, Sherry Prince, Simon Tee, Susan Moriarty, Vivian Roberts, Yasha Conrad, Judy Malamphy, Darren Smith, Marion Freel, Cathy Howell, Patsy Quintus, Barry K. Clarke, Charlotte Silva, Marilyn Battin, Tom Goldsby, Joyce VanDeventer, Mary Cunningham, Rob Darin

CONTACT: Tom Davis, (360) 902-6687

★ Winner of Governor's Quarterly Service and Quality Improvement Award ★

Department of Labor and Industries

Customer Wait Time Reduced when Calling Everett Office

The Department of Labor and Industries' (L&I) Everett Office uses an automated call distribution system. Staff could see a small blinking light when a call was waiting, but had no idea of how many calls were waiting, how long or what type.

In July 1999, a team worked with the voice and video department to upgrade the automatic call system. A reader board visible from all work areas was added. Staff can see how many calls are holding and how long the longest call has been waiting.

Results

- ★ Average wait time reduced 56 percent while answering more than 19 percent more calls during the same eight-month period from the previous year.
- ★ Increased customer satisfaction by reducing the average wait time from 3:38 minutes to 1:37 minutes.

Team Name: Stop the Wait

Team Members: Shari Purves-Reiter, Kathryn Black, Carol Hinrich, Babs Edwards, Randy Kurtz, June Kamada, Amy Reach, Be Grimberg, Ron Fischer, Melissa Reynolds, Danielle Bond, Glenda Phillips, Susan Oluo, Paul Amundsen, Jack Wilson

CONTACT: Shari Purves-Reiter, (425) 290-1305

Burying the Underground Economy

The “underground economy” is a colorful name given to unregistered contractors who operate in Washington without adequate bonding and insurance. Homeowners who have problems with an unregistered contractor’s work have no way to recover economic losses. The Department of Labor and Industries (L&I) has been locating illegal contractors through random stops at construction sites, but we suspected that many more were operating throughout the state.

An L&I staff team developed a pilot project for Snohomish County. The project used two efforts to attack the underground economy. First, contractor advertisements in newspapers and classified advertising papers were checked to make sure the contractor was registered. Unregistered contractors were notified of registration requirements. Repeat unregistered advertisers were cited. Second, a major educational campaign was launched aimed at homeowners. Advertisements were run in local newspapers and radio stations emphasizing how much money homeowners could lose by using unregistered contractors. News reporters were also contacted and a number of stories were run in area newspapers and on television regarding the dangers of unregistered contractors.

Results

- ★ The number of newly registered Snohomish County contractors increased 22%.
- ★ The percentage of illegal contractors located by random stops in Snohomish County decreased by 40%, indicating that more contractors were becoming registered.
- ★ Contractors indicated to L&I staff that they recognized the agency is on a “campaign against fraudulent contractors.”
- ★ Homeowners reported that they now knew how to find out if their contractors were registered.

Team Name: Underground Economy Task Force

Team Members: Joel Sacks, Patrick Woods, Kerry Ivey, Kevin Morris, John Ecker, Larry Corbin, Rich Metcalfe, Dennis Yonker, Shari Purves-Reiter, Mason Reiter, Linda Merz, Ada Kreckow, Nancy Dicus, Steve Valandra

Contact: Kerry Ivey, (425) 290-1424

Expanded Recognition Action Team (RAT)

The Department of Licensing (DOL) Employee Survey, conducted in late 1998, contained questions related to Recognition, Trust and Respect. The lowest scores for Driver Services (DS) were recorded in the answers to "When I improve my performance, my accomplishments are recognized" and "My manager recognizes workgroups/employees for their contribution to customer satisfaction." The *average response* for these two questions fell below "Occasionally" – not a place we wanted to be. Many employees suggested that low morale was related to lack of genuine, timely recognition by supervisors and peers.

An expanded group of employees from various DOL divisions planned and executed the distribution of recognition packets, as was done in the Driver's division which had acted as pilot for the agency. Team members personally met with employees and managers encouraging them to catch people in the act of doing something right and modeling other good recognition techniques. The packet is a catalyst and has been used to provide a base for ideas that can be expanded on and customized for individuals and work units.

Results

- ★ Recognition packets were compiled and personally distributed to every employee in Drivers Services Division, covering 64 Licensing Service Office locations.
- ★ Each employee was encouraged to take responsibility for recognition and become actively engaged in recognizing their colleague's positive efforts.
- ★ Teams focusing on recognition were started in the Vehicles Services Division, Business & Professions Division and the Administrative Services Division.

Team Name: Expanded R.A.T. Team

Team Members: Kathy Strand, Molly Larson and Vickie McDougall (Co-Team Leaders), Joann Ryan, Joe Omlor, Ismael "Izzy" Anaya, Patrick Pockat, Ron Hamblin, Rick Notestine, Greg Gurske, Bonnie Rocha, Latika Chandler, Jody Bates

CONTACT: Kathy Strand, (360) 902-4096

Correspondence Templates in Prorate & Fuel Tax

Two work units – the Motor Carrier Financial Unit and the International Registration Plan – of the Department of Licensing’s Prorate & Fuel Tax area (a part of our Vehicle Services Division) have many customer letters that are generated for customer correspondence or for billing purposes. In two units of six and four members, and in two field locations, the consistency of format and verbiage varied greatly. The lack of consistency caused frustration amongst the workforce, caused by the many formats and incoherent ways in which employees changed and used those formats.

The two work units involved personnel from our Information Services Division to create templates that would be used by all concerned. The team determined which kinds of correspondence needed template creation, set up those templates and got feedback from everyone, then finalized the templates for use. The resulting templates were placed on the Agency’s computer network and set up on each unit member’s personal computer. Training on how to access and use the templates was provided to all unit members and field locations. This has resulted in improved consistency of our correspondence to our customers and created a better way for us to do business.

Results

- ★ Consistency in letter format and verbiage, it looks more professional and meets DOL Correspondence Guidelines.
- ★ Easy to use, eliminating unit frustrations.
- ★ All field locations have access to the same templates.

Team Name: Correspondence Templates Improvements Team

Team Members: Dora Duval, Lora Jungmayer, Nina Lemmon, Tami Jones, Gail McDonald, Lavonne Fromm, Bob Johnson, Ivetta Sullivan, Suzanne Hanson, Hank Snow, Patti Marzwick, Jim Turcotte

CONTACT: Sherri Black, (360) 902-3743

Broadbanding Salaries of Exempt Positions

For decades, agency directors have had to come before the Personnel Resources Board (PRB) to make any adjustment to the salary of an exempt position. Because the PRB meets only once a month and items brought to them require 20 days of public notice, the process to adjust exempt management salaries commonly took a minimum of 4-6 weeks and much staff work. The ability to adjust executive salaries was far less flexible and more time consuming than the ability to adjust salaries of mid-management positions that report to the executives.

The PRB and the Department of Personnel adopted a significant change in the exempt salary setting process. Upon request, agencies may now be authorized to broadband and adjust salaries of their exempt positions without going before the PRB. This greatly increases agency directors' flexibility to address pay issues for exempt management staff. It also significantly reduces associated administrative time.

Results

- ★ As of April 2000, 18 agencies have been granted exempt broadbanding authority, thus resulting in salary-setting flexibility for over 370 exempt management positions.
- ★ Estimated annual savings of 1,200 staff hours.
- ★ Service improvement – increased flexibility and timeliness will facilitate customer agencies' business management and the ability to recruit, mobilize, and retain high quality managers.

Team Name: Exempt Banding

Team Members: Bob Hahn, Cary Randow

Contact: Bob Hahn, (360) 664-6256

Department of Printing

Online Estimate Request Form

In the past, customers requested estimates from the Department of Printing by submitting a paper form by mail or fax, or by calling the estimating staff to discuss job specifications. Customers sometimes found the hard-copy request form confusing, causing important information to be omitted from the request received by estimating staff. As a result, estimating staff spent much of the day on the telephone, verifying job specifications instead of producing estimates.

Recognizing the need for change, Production Planning and Information Technology employees developed an estimate request form, and it was placed online at the Department of Printing website. Customers may now fill out, review, and submit their estimate requests electronically, as well as print a copy for their records. A help topic is attached to each data entry space, so customers receive immediate answers to questions about the form. The electronic form is sent directly to the e-mail address of the Department of Printing estimator, so there is no need to translate telephone messages into the proper format. The online form enables estimators to concentrate more fully on producing quotes, resulting in faster turnaround times and more accurate estimates.

Results

- ★ Reduced errors by allowing customers to draft, correct, and complete estimate requests online, print copies for their records, and send them electronically directly to the estimator.
- ★ Decreased time to process estimate request from customer to estimator and completed estimate back to the customer, which increases productivity for both customer and estimator.
- ★ Online help feature allows the customer to complete the form with greater ease utilizing necessary portions for individual, specific orders.
- ★ Saved 390 hour/year in gathering estimate information by telephone which can be redirected to producing estimates, reducing the need for employee overtime.

Team Name: Online Estimate Request Form

Team Members: Bob Cross, Jeanese Mabin, Kelley Kellerman

CONTACT: Bob Cross, (360) 753-6820

Department of Printing

Scitex Electronic Plotter

The traditional method of blueline proofing involved outputting negatives and manually exposing each negative onto photo sensitive paper. Each graphic element would then be marked for each different color. Employees of the Pre-Press Department researched and recommended the purchase of the Scitex "IRIS 43 Wide" Electronic Blueline Plotter which allows our customers the opportunity to view a much more accurate representation of what their finished job will look like. Because the new process uses less camera film and is faster, customers also will enjoy cost savings and improved turnaround times.

Results

- ★ Reduced cost - \$15 for new proof vs. \$69 for old proof, equaling anticipated savings for this fiscal year of \$189,756.
- ★ Reduced staff time - 10 minutes for new proof vs. 45 minutes for old proof which translates to 2,050 FTE hours per year in anticipated staff time savings.
- ★ Customer satisfaction - customers prefer to see a color proof vs. old blueline proof.
- ★ Environmentally friendly - reducing film and chemical waste to 0%.

Team Name: Here's The Proof

Team Members: Scott Keith, Starlit Bear, John Smith, Joseph Holmes, Patrick Senko, Niki Loftus, Marcia Best, Linda Darragh, Paul Gisi

CONTACT: Scott Keith, (360) 753-6820

Department of Retirement Systems

Quicker Response Helps Customers Plan Retirement

The number one concern expressed in written comments from the first two annual DRS customer surveys was “timeliness of response” to requests for estimates of retirement benefits. Slow response to these requests in the past has negatively impacted customers’ ability to make timely, informed decisions about their retirement options. On average, the department was responding in 15.31 days. Analysis of the process and performance measures quickly revealed causes for delays in the process. The estimate process was completed several different ways, lacking consistency. One key improvement the team implemented was a notification message to alert units when mail is available for processing. A second major improvement was automating the review of account historical data. The automated review eliminates a time consuming manual step in the process and reduces the need to retrieve paper files.

Results

- ★ Reduces the average response time to customer requests for estimates by 72 percent, from 15.31 to 4.24 days.
- ★ Saves a minimum of 943 hours annually of projected staff time - a significant savings in a small agency.
- ★ Applies automated review of historical data to at least one other core agency business process and is transferable to other organizations.
- ★ Provides regular, consistent automated measures from which to assess progress.
- ★ Exceeds the team goal by almost threefold, in less than half the time projected.

Team Name: Estimate of Benefits

Team Members: Dave Bartruff, Marilyn Donaldson, Dick Ellis, Jackie Hanson, Sharon Houseman, Geri Mortenson, Terry Sammons, Lytell Weight, Dennis Wuerth

CONTACT: Dave Geiger, (360) 664-7285

Department of Retirement Systems

DRS Improves Response to Customers' Calls

Customer calls to the agency's main telephone number were answered first by the Central Reception Unit (CRU) and then often forwarded to a specific Retirement Services Analyst (RSA). Frequently, the RSA's telephone calls were routed to voice mail because the RSA was on another call, away from his/her desk, or performing other production work. Many of the agency's customers don't have telephone access to receive callbacks during work hours (such as teachers, law enforcement officers, etc.), so "telephone tag" became a constant problem. Many callers didn't like being transferred. They liked leaving voice mail messages even less. To improve the telephone service, procedures were revised and an Automated Call Distribution (ACD) system was implemented. The new telephone process responds to customers' desires that their questions be answered without being transferred, and that they speak to a person rather than voice mail.

Results

- ★ Reduces the number of calls answered by voice mail by 57 percent.
- ★ Calls receive an answer from a knowledgeable person rather than voice mail.
- ★ Callers receive an immediate response to inquiries - even when the assigned analyst is unavailable.
- ★ Allowed staff in one unit to absorb a 75 percent increase in the total number of incoming calls with only a slight fluctuation in the number of calls going to voice mail.
- ★ Provides real-time data to allow immediate response to changes in call traffic, and accurate management reporting for analysis and monitoring.

Team Name: Customer Telephone Access Project Team

Team Members: David Alexander, Debbie Callar, Richard Cashatt, Jose Escobar, Kris Fjalstad, Sis Koval, Tammie Meyers, Dina Morrow, Dave Rakestraw, Stella Satter, Claire Schwebke, Jilene Siegel, Jenice Thompson, Eric Talberg (DIS)

CONTACT: Chris Spaulding, (360) 664-7269

★ Winner of Governor's Quarterly Service and Quality Improvement Award ★

Promotions and Hiring Handbook

The 2054 Committee created a Promotions and Hiring Handbook that provides information for both supervisors and employees on best practices for hiring and promotional processes. It was a collaborative effort by representatives of labor and management, working together, dedicating themselves to improve perceptions and inconsistencies in the hiring/promotional process. Eighteen months were spent researching, testing, and refining the Handbook so it would be a useful tool for both an employee seeking advancement and for a supervisor seeking to fill a position.

Results

- ★ Handbook dedicated to improving the hiring and promotion process was distributed to all employees of the Department of Revenue.
- ★ Creation of a tool to help the agency develop, recruit, retain and value a high quality, diverse workforce.
- ★ Electronic version with most recent updates available on the agency's Intranet.
- ★ Creation of a tool to aid employees seeking career advancement and for supervisors to ensure a well-grounded and fair process for hiring and promoting decisions.

Team Name: 2054 Committee

Team Members: Mark Andrews, Susan Borg, Linda Brown, Jill Bussard, Ken Capek, Wendy Fraser, Deanna Jackson, David Lazar, Marv Ostby, Jackie Rydel, Michiko Sell, Teresa Sweeney, Janetta Taylor, Sharon Yaeger, Jon Yrjanson

CONTACT: Wendy Fraser, (360) 902-8825

Department of Revenue

Process Improvement Team

In 1990, the Department of Revenue began training staff in Quality Improvement tools and methodology. By 1999, these tools and methods were well ingrained into the culture, and were discussed and encouraged at staff meetings and retreats. The Compliance Division is separated by geography into 15 Field Offices. Because of this, the entire division cannot assemble in one place and time for meetings. Communication, enthusiasm, and participation in Quality Improvement varied in each geographical location. The team visited each Field Office, met with staff, and ascertained ways to encourage participation in the improvement process.

Results

- ★ Established individual office liaisons to encourage and communicate Quality efforts both into and out of the Field Offices.
- ★ Process Improvement suggestions increased by 245 percent in less than 1 year.
- ★ Renewed enthusiasm and increased collaboration by Field Office staff.
- ★ Geographically separated offices in the division are working together as a team instead of as separate entities.

Team Name: Process Improvement Team

Team Members: Kristi Barnes, Rick Bell, Linda Brown, Leonor Castellanos, Chuck Currier, Lori Durringer, Michael Grundhoffer, Stan Harris, Melinda Haeffele, Celeste Morgan, Randy Littlefield, Ralph Osgood, Steve Roberts, Joyce Siden

CONTACT: Linda Brown, (253) 902-2088

Unclaimed Property Voluntary Compliance Program

Every year, the Department of Revenue receives millions of dollars of unclaimed property from various sources. Estimates on the percentage of holders complying with the reporting laws ranged from 20 to 50 percent. The primary reasons identified for noncompliance were: industry accounting practices, lack of awareness, and enforcement barriers (late filing fees).

In 1998, the Department initiated a Voluntary Compliance Program. The objective of this program was to promote and encourage voluntary reporting of unclaimed property held by companies through a statewide education program. The Department expanded the program in 1999 to allow Washington State to participate in a National Voluntary Compliance program with more than 30 other states' unclaimed property programs.

Results

- ★ Conducted over 300 educational conferences with larger non-reporting businesses.
- ★ Received over \$2 million in unclaimed property owed Washington citizens via voluntary compliance reporting.
- ★ Set customer friendly guidelines for initial reporting while emphasizing accurate and complete future reporting.
- ★ Enlisted the support of the accounting industry to encourage client participation.
- ★ Educated non-reporting, state organizations of their reporting requirements.

Team Name: Unclaimed Property Audit Team

Team Members: Patrick Tate, Gloria Shawler, Jack Neumann, Nancy Savage, Steve Griffith, Bob Jones

CONTACT: Patrick Tate, (360) 753-5531

Department of Revenue

Delinquency Reduction

The number of businesses registering with the Department of Revenue is dramatically increasing each year. Along with this increase in registration is an increase in delinquent tax accounts. With budget constraints, solutions had to be found that did not include an increase in employees. In addition, the agency entered into an agreement to decrease the total outstanding delinquent liability by 2.5% each year. The team targeted all smaller-dollar accounts for mass mailings of a “final” notice. This resulted in a 16% reduction in accounts referred for collection.

Results

- ★ “Final” notice results in an additional 16% reduction in delinquent referrals.
- ★ Decrease in referrals of smaller-dollar accounts allows employees to concentrate on larger, higher liability accounts.
- ★ Reduced workload increases employee morale and allows for more meaningful work.
- ★ Encourages voluntary compliance of state tax laws with every account being worked with minimized enforced collection activity.

Team Name: Delinquency Reduction Team

Team Members: Mark Bigelow, Becki Bretthauer, Bret Bretthauer, Sue Flaherty, Tracye Fralick, Cynda Johnson, Dianne Law, Mark Lewis, John Roberts, Brenda Smith, Lynette Williamson, Ralph Osgood

CONTACT: John Roberts, (360) 664-8117

Department of Revenue

Solution to Common Reporting Errors

One of the goals of the Department of Revenue is to make conducting business as simple as possible for its customers and employees. When a business registers with the agency, their first encounter is through written materials. The team's focus was to help businesses find answers to their most common questions and give them a resource on where to go for additional assistance. The result is a quick, easy-to-read reference guide aimed at eliminating reporting errors.

Results

- ★ A colorful, quick reference guide of solutions to common reporting errors.
- ★ List of agency phone numbers and Intranet sites distributed in the New Business Packets, at New Business Orientation workshops, and at the agency's field offices.
- ★ Customers and employees appreciate the reference guide.

Team Name: 10 Most Common Tax Return Errors

Team Members: Scott Amrine, Sharon Brown, Alyson Carlson, Don Gutmann, Mike Helms, Rebecca Johnston, Karen Oakes, Vikki Riffe, Jackie Rydel, Winnie Savitch

CONTACT: Winnie Savitch, (360) 676-2117

Department of Revenue

Registration Round Up

The Department of Revenue cross-referenced its tax reporting account records with those of the Secretary of State's incorporation records, and found that there were 47,986 active corporations registered with the Secretary of State between 1987 and 1999 that had not registered with the Department of Revenue. Three separate mailings went out to 19,925 of those businesses that were incorporated with the Secretary of State under the Unified Business Identifier program between 1995 and 1997 but were not registered with the Department of Revenue. The purpose was to determine if the current process of registering a corporation without a Master Business Application resulted in some corporations who should be registered with Unified Business Identifier agencies being missed. From the replies to the letter, it could be determined if the corporations had any tax liability.

Results

- ★ Increased taxpayer education, letting corporations know if they needed to register with Revenue and other Unified Business Identifier agencies.
- ★ 295 new Tax Reporting accounts were set up because of the inquiry. Back tax collected was \$102,197.
- ★ Estimated revenue on future returns is \$140,000 per year.
- ★ Corrected 516 Tax Reporting Accounts that were reporting under the wrong Unified Business Identifier number.
- ★ New procedures were developed to contact new accounts set up by the Secretary of State where a Master Business Application was not completed for the Unified Business Identifier program to determine early if there is any potential tax liability with other agencies.

Team Name: SOS Project

Team Members: Debbie Young, Charlotte Craven, Drew Shirk, Bret Bretthauer, Sue Kim, Sherree Christiansen, Kim Gonia, David Milhollin, Kurt Wieburg, Patsy Wilder, Sary Sam, Jany Easter, Carol Bilyeu, Sharon Brown, Mike Grundhoffer

CONTACT: Charlotte Craven, (360) 902-7062

Review of Appealed Penalty Waiver Requests

Requests for waiver of penalty on tax returns previously denied by Taxpayer Account Administration (TAA) staff are sometimes petitioned through the Appeals Division for reconsideration. Often, additional information will be provided by the taxpayer that would change the decision of the original request. Since the appeals process is much more formal and time-consuming than what is necessary to re-evaluate the request in these situations, a new process has been put into place. The requests are sent back to TAA to see if the new information contained in the appeal would result in a different decision. If there is adequate information for a change in the decision, staff can make the appropriate adjustments and notify the requestor of the change.

Results

- ★ Quicker response time for penalty waiver appeals; an average request will take about 30 minutes, while a request sent through the appeals process can take up to 40 hours.
- ★ 1,000 staff hours saved annually by the Appeals Division when penalty waiver appeals are processed in the Operating Division.
- ★ Potential time and money saved by taxpayers when they don't have to participate in the formal appeals process.
- ★ Consistent application of penalty waiver policies within TAA.

Team Members: Steve Zagelow, Rob Rice, Pat Moses, Debbie Young, Lisa Faker

CONTACT: Rob Rice, (360) 902-7076

Clear, Concise Nursing Home Reports Help Customers and the Public Make Informed Choices

Inspections of nursing home facilities result in survey reports written according to federal specifications. These reports contain a lot of very useful information about the quality of care and safety provided by the nursing homes but are often difficult for most people to read and understand. As a result, most clients, family and community advocates are not able to use the reports to make good decisions about nursing home care.

A Residential Care Services team developed and tested a revised and simplified survey report written in clear, concise language in large print. The improved survey report was tested with a group of clients, families and regional nursing facility ombudsman. Interviews were held with the participants.

Results

- ★ Most participants preferred the simplified nursing home survey report.
- ★ Further, the customers indicated that the report was understandable to read and they requested additional copies.
- ★ Improved communication of important survey findings on quality of care and safety led to improved decision making and informed choices by clients, family and the public.
- ★ Team members identified additional questions and refinements for future quality improvement efforts.

Team Name: Clear and Concise Survey Report Team

Team Members: Elaine Odom, Glenn Knepper, Donna DeVore, Linda McKinney, Irene Lund, Gladyce Hurlburt, Sharon Butay, Ann M. Martin, Phil Bertrand

CONTACT: Deanna Rankos, (360) 493-2613

Washington State Training and Registry Systems (STARS)

The Legislature mandated that child care providers receive 20 hours of training within six months of becoming licensed and 10 hours training each year thereafter. The Office of Child Care Policy (OCCP), working with the Child Care Coordinating Committee, was given the task of developing and implementing a process to ensure that providers know they are required to have training, that the training provided meets standards, that independent trainers from non-accredited institutions are approved, that scholarships are available for low-income providers, and that there is tracking of providers who are trained.

The project resulted in an electronic database and interactive website called the Washington State Training and Registry System (STARS). The website is accessed directly by child care providers. The Registry is now an on-going partnership between the state, the Washington Association for the Education of Young Children, and local and statewide community groups.

Results

- ★ Improved access to information for child care providers through the Internet, saving staff time by 1,640 hours per year.
- ★ Improved tracking of training received by child care providers.
- ★ Increased number of skilled child care providers.
- ★ Strengthened community partnerships.

Team Name: STARS

Team Members: DSHS: Susan Kavanaugh, Gretchen Stahr-Breunig, Lee Williams, Jim Teeters, Martha Standley, Hilda Chang, Marta Hernandez, Mary Kay Quinlan, Pat Dickason, Paul Noski, Jan Starling, Bronwyn Vincent, Charlotte Jahn, Susan Thomas, Tram Hoang, Marge Johnson. **STAKEHOLDERS:** Barbara Giachetti, Maria Vera, Elaine Larson, Judy Serquinia, Stu Jacobson, Gloria Trinidad, Paula Keddie, Jennifer Karshna, Agda Burchard, Deborah Duitch, Janet Frieling, Mary Garguile, Brenetta Ward, Pam Grigsby-Jones, Micaela Guberlet, Kathy Hopkins, Lowest Jefferson, Fern Bettridge, Judy Konopaski, Pat McPherson, Julie Nelson, Diane Nunez, Margie Reeves, Patsy Sullivan, Colleen VanWormer, Sherril Richarz, Julie Visson, Nancy Gerber, Michelle Kuwasaki, Jean Sloan

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A Journey through the Healing Circle: A Foster Parent's Guide to FAS/FAE Prevention Training

Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) and Fetal Alcohol Effects (FAE) refer to a group of physical and mental birth defects resulting from a woman's drinking alcohol during pregnancy. This can result in devastating disabilities to the child, and the child can be difficult to care for. With prevention and adequate training, 10 to 12 FAS births can be prevented each year.

This team created four books and four videos as training resources for foster parents, clients, tribes, schools, social service agencies and medical professionals. The stories are told in the Native American story telling format and have multicultural and multigenerational appeal. Teaching and learning are accomplished through the use of animals of the forest as the main story characters. The series demystifies FAS/FAE in a sensitive and non-judgmental way. It covers issues such as physical appearance, behavior, grief, abandonment, foster care, sexuality, school, the influence of peers, living independently and developing relationships. While giving a realistic look at life-long problems, viewers are left with the message that there is hope and we all have something to contribute to this world.

The series has won awards for broadcasting and editing, and a Silver Telly Award in the social issues category, honoring outstanding television commercials, video productions and films.

Results

- ★ Improved tools for FAS/FAE community awareness and prevention programs.
- ★ Increased education for caregivers of FAS/FAE children through innovative and culturally inspired training tools.
- ★ Improved growth and well-being for children with FAS/FAE.
- ★ Reduced foster care costs of \$93,600 a year by avoiding need for placement through education of caregivers.

Team Name: A Journey Through the Healing Circle

Team Members: Barbara Stone, Ruthie Morris, Sharon Newcomer, Kay Gedrose, Carolyn Hartness, Dr. Robin LaDue, Floyd "Red Crow" Westerman

CONTACT: Chris Trujillo, (425) 649-4181

Reducing Barriers to Foster Home Licensing

A team of foster parent licensors, foster parents and their representatives determined that the process of completing the licensing application packet was a barrier to providing good customer service to people interested in becoming foster parents. Prior to the creation of the state Office of Foster Care Licensing, local offices created their own licensing application packets with wide variety in the kind and amount of information collected from prospective applicants. There was little consideration for the customers' need for simplicity and for easy-to-use forms. Many of the foster parents surveyed stated that the volume of paper work diminished their interest in following through with becoming licensed to care for children.

The team developed a streamlined foster home licensing packet, used statewide, which requires only critical information from applicants, in a simple and easy to follow format. Individual offices are not permitted to add any other paperwork to the application packet. This new packet is more customer friendly, without eliminating information that is necessary in order to assess the applicant's suitability for becoming a foster parent.

Results

- ★ Reduced paperwork for applicants, from as much as 55 pages to 13 pages.
- ★ Made forms easier to read and to complete.
- ★ Revised materials to meet current federal, state and ADA requirements.
- ★ Ensured consistency statewide so that all applicants conform to the same standards.
- ★ Increased the likelihood of a greater number of available licensed foster homes.
- ★ Reduced paper waste, saving \$2,520 per year.

Team Name: Office of Foster Care Licensing Study – Reducing Barriers

Team Members: Ruthie Morris, Joyce Drake, Claire Anable, Rhonda Coplen, Susan Corwin, Peggy Devoy, Darlene Flowers, Gary Fontaine, Lydia Frias, Sharon Porter, Mark Sideman, Patty Todd, Gwendolyn Townsend, Eloise Valdez

CONTACT: Chris Trujillo, (425) 649-4181

Foster Care Licensing Packet Printing Reduction

The Tacoma Office of Foster Care Licensing uses five separate packets of information for distribution to customers. These packets are prepared for people who express interest in fostering children, for those who are in the licensing process and those who need to be fingerprinted by the FBI. The other packets are given to foster parents who are due for re-licensing and to people who apply to provide respite care in a licensed home. Each month, licensors and other staff spent 50 hours producing the packets using the office copy machine and supplies. The copied materials were of poor quality and difficult to read. The packets were haphazardly produced, with 20% of the packets containing missing items or information that was not necessary.

The team produced an electronic version of each packet and worked with the local Department of Printing to produce them more quickly and more cost effectively. The packets are of high quality and present a positive and professional image to customers.

Results

- ★ Reduced packet preparation time from 600 hours to 12 hours per year.
- ★ Reduced paper waste, saving \$1,000 per year.
- ★ Improved quality and clarity of materials.
- ★ Increased professional image of foster parenting.

Team Name: Region 5 OFCL Packet Printing Reduction CQI Team

Team Members: Fred Determan, Minnie Allen, Karen Matagi, Matt Cleary, Yolanda Singleton, Gary Fontaine

CONTACT: Chris Trujillo, (425) 649-4181

Yakima DCS Collection Strategies Analysis - Phase Two

The federal government bases funding for child support agencies on a performance-based incentive formula. To receive 100% funding, we must collect 80% of the available child support collections and 80% of the collections in arrears. The Division of Child Support is not currently meeting those goals. Child Support collections for FY2000 average 56.4%, and arrears collections average 45.3%. Increased collections are necessary to maintain maximum funding for the program and are also critical to the WorkFirst mandates.

In order to increase the percentage of collections, the Collection Strategies Work Group developed a plan that tested specialization of functions within the office based on individual interest, skills, choice on casework re-assignment and combined caseloads. Some of the specialized job functions include: negotiations, location of parents or parent's collectable assets, interstate cases, etc. This work group developed new performance measures, tracked and analyzed data resulting from the test implemented.

Results

- ★ Increased child support collections an average of 12% over a 10-month period.
- ★ Improved staff satisfaction as measured by survey when compared to two control groups.
- ★ Improved teamwork and communication as evidenced by increased team meetings and planning.
- ★ Increased self-direction and self-management as evidenced by less reliance on supervision and management.
- ★ Eliminated back-up issues - all team members act as back ups to all other members - collectively a greater resource pool.
- ★ Increased skills and expertise - communication increased and knowledge shared.
- ★ Improved and increased training to units as shown by increased requests for sharing tools and techniques with teams not included in team trial.

Team Name: Collections Strategies Analysis Work Group, Phase Two

Team Members: Doug Acosta, Pam Caton, Thad Taylor, Greg Weedon

CONTACT: Frans Wood, (509) 249-6069

Seattle DCS Collections Quality Improvement Team (QIT)

Continuous changes in state and federal laws, as well as the political, social and economic environment, require constant changes in the child support program and the approach to collections. Some of these changes require additional resources to effectively address the needs of the children. Anecdotal customer information and traditional sources of data indicate the need to review the enforcement process to determine where efficiencies might be gained while maintaining quality customer service.

The Collection Improvement Team developed a simple and efficient one-page guide/check list, a Locate and Enforcement Guide (LEG) for reference. The one page guide is easy to use and provides a one-stop resource check list for Locate and Best Practices information regarding appropriate case closure. By closing unworkable cases, the Division of Child Support (DCS) is able to improve its overall collection ratios by removing non-cost effective and uncollectable cases from consideration. Each Officer can save time when using the LEG because they do not have to maintain their own guides. Each Officer has an increased number of up-to-date guides for collection remedies at their fingertips in a user-friendly format. The LEG is found on the Seattle DCS Home Page and may be used “as-is” or may be downloaded for “hard copy” use.

Results

- ★ Reduced time needed to process child support actions.
- ★ Better use of data obtained from existing reports improves the potential for appropriately choosing to work or close cases. 36.4% of the Management and Program Services (MAPS) flat file and 16% of the Decision Support System (DSS) cases fit the discretionary criteria for case closure.
- ★ The most unworkable cases that met immediate case closure criteria were TANF-only subrogated debt cases of less than \$500 owed.

Team Name: Collections QIT

Team Members: Elaine Becker (Team Leader), Christine Servin, Hiroko Kobuki, Alan Brown, Gina DeCamp, Kyle Killibrew, Jim Burkhead; Facilitators - Michael Red Earth, Christine Jessup

CONTACT: Elaine Becker, (206) 341-7051

Improving Clerical Functions in the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Process

The Division of Vocation Rehabilitation (DVR) helps individuals with disabilities get and keep employment. Service delivery involves a multi-step vocational rehabilitation (VR) process that includes application, eligibility determination, assessments, plan development, implementation, and follow through. VR teams of counseling and support staff provide individualized services to clients.

Over several years, the clerical functions in the VR process changed dramatically because of new federal rules, technology advances, staff re-allocations and position reductions. These changes created a need for counseling staff to perform more clerical functions and led to service delivery delays.

DVR's Clerical Quality Improvement Team (QIT) was formed to improve the clerical functions in the VR process and thereby improve direct service delivery. This QIT developed products that help each unique VR team clarify roles, identify and diagnose issues, and create action plans for improvement.

Results

- ★ Curriculum developed to help VR teams in 37 field offices better perform clerical functions.
- ★ Clerical Desk Reference created that improves access to relevant procedures and fiscal guidelines.
- ★ Process developed to identify training needs for performing clerical tasks.
- ★ Training and skill development opportunities increased for 30% of division staff.
- ★ Customized action plans created at local level to improve delivery of VR.

Team Name: DVR's QIT-Clerical

Team Members: Patti Bassen, Cindy Beckman, Dorita Clemans, Sherri Mason, Dianne McKay, Sharon Steele, Christine Zehnder, Sandy Adams

CONTACT: Sandy Adams, (360) 438-8023

Substance Abuse Prevention Management System

In the past, state agencies and communities needed a tool to evaluate substance abuse prevention activities at the level of the individual participant. The Department of Social and Health Services developed and implemented an evaluation system named Project Everest. Project Everest allows the tracking of significant performance outcomes for teens participating in prevention services. Outcomes include measures of school success, antisocial behaviors, involvement with antisocial friends, and attitude toward community and family.

The system components compare prevention services to risk and protective factors in specific communities. These factors correlate with risk of alcohol and substance abuse and include family support, availability of drugs, availability of firearms, and economic characteristics.

Communities receiving funding through the Washington State Incentive Grant are using the system to evaluate and plan substance abuse prevention activities. State agencies and community providers now have the tool to show the effectiveness of prevention services provided within their community based on information from individual teens.

Results

- ★ Able to track individual teens who have participated in prevention efforts to measure positive outcomes for them within their community.
- ★ Able to report on community effectiveness and to aid in future prevention planning.
- ★ Able to identify prevention strategies that work in different communities from urban to rural.

Team Name: “Everest” System Development Team

Team Members: Fritz Wrede, Michael Langer, Earl Long, Margaret Shaklee, MaryAnn LaFazia, Corki Hirsch, Dario Longhi, Christine Roberts

CONTACT: MaryAnn LaFazia, (360) 438-8058

Case Notes Standards Project

The case notes which are completed by Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration (JRA) community counselors and counselor assistants are a primary tool to document contacts with juvenile offenders on parole, parolee/family responses to interventions, and to track parolee movement through the parole process. However, a quality assurance review of case files revealed there was not a standard process or clear expectations for case note content and completion.

In response to these concerns, a process improvement plan was developed. This involved researching various case note models, selecting a model which best fit the JRA, training staff in the use of the selected model, and regional implementation of the model for a three-month period. Baseline information was gathered to measure changes in staff's understanding of the expectations regarding case notes, the length of time required to complete them, and the quality of case note content.

Results

- ★ Quality and content of case notes improved, resulting in enhanced ability for staff to systematically track parolee progress and increase accountability.
- ★ Increased program accountability based on standardized case note system, enhancing the ability to monitor and assess parolee case plans.
- ★ Ability for continued improvement based on the information gained in the staff survey on case note expectations.
- ★ Even though the new structured case notes model takes longer and requires additional effort, staff are highly supportive in using the new model because of the quality of the results.
- ★ Ability to duplicate the model and improve the quality of the case note system statewide.

Team Name: Case Note Content Improvement Team

Team Members: Linda Beal, Karen Burnett, Anne Kelley, Reed Mayer, Monica McAlister, Pamela Shotwell, Michael Tyers, Crystal Wagner

CONTACT: Michael Tyers, (425) 339-1856

Consolidated Contract for Juvenile Court Services

The Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration (JRA) funds juvenile courts for numerous programs designed to provide treatment and supervision for juvenile offenders. With minimal flexibility to move dollars between programs, services to youth have not always been determined by need nor delivered efficiently. Programs were not based on outcome achievement.

In 1999, the JRA and juvenile court administrators designed and implemented a consolidated contract based on a risk assessment of youth needs. The team created statewide outcome measures, gave flexibility to establish local interim outcomes, and created a collaborative review process. A major feature of this partnership is the ability to move funds between programs to better address the risk and needs of youth on county probation.

Results

- ★ Ninety-nine (99) contracts with counties were eliminated, resulting in staff time savings.
- ★ Designed and implemented a consistent statewide approach to move funds between programs.
- ★ Designed and implemented consistent statewide outcomes for state contracts with juvenile courts.
- ★ Created review processes where staff from across juvenile justice meet to assess outcome attainment and, as necessary, adjust programs to better serve youth, families and communities.
- ★ Eliminated less meaningful reports in favor of assessing each program's established outcomes.

Team Name: Consolidated Contract Team

Team Members: Juvenile Courts: Dan Erker (Pierce County), Audrey Fetters (Yakima County), Phil Jans (Chelan County), Lyman Legters (King County), Richard Carlson (Snohomish County), Barbara Johnson (Jefferson County). Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration: Virginia Swanson, Pam Shotwell, Lois Nicholas, Marilyn Perry, Judy Neal, M. Kathleen McBride, Mark Wirschem, Susan Rogel, Dana Phelps, Doug Kopp

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School Notification Process Automation

Legislation passed to increase school safety requires the Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration (JRA) staff to notify school administrators in writing when a JRA client, about to be released from custody, may be attending a school in their district. To meet the unfunded legislative requirements, the JRA notifies each youth's school district office, and all private schools in the district area. This can range from 1 to 73 letters for each client. Feedback from several support staff prompted work to improve this process. Before the improvement, it is estimated support staff would spend an average of approximately 30 minutes for each of the 1,500 releases each year--a huge increase to, and impact on, their workload.

After consultation with stakeholder groups and a pilot of the process, automated school notification was fully implemented so schools have the option of being notified via e-mail. With a push of a button, those schools with e-mail addresses immediately receive notification--the entire process now takes only 15 minutes. Support staff now spend considerably less time typing notification letters, stuffing envelopes, and mailing these letters, and are able to return to their other work priorities.

Results

- ★ Legislative intent to increase school safety more effectively met through improved communication.
- ★ Fewer hours spent by support staff processing school notifications.
- ★ Cost savings from reduction in postage and materials used by not mailing notifications.
- ★ More effectively meets needs of schools (e.g., faster delivery of notifications, easier for schools to track), thereby strengthening JRA/school relationships.
- ★ Important successful "trial" for further automation of time-consuming JRA processes.

Team Name: School Notification Process Automation Team

Team Members: Patrick Schoch (Project Lead) Dan Cathers, Lee Fairley, Thuy Ha, Rachel Harris, Erik Lindebloom, Lisa Meek, Debbie Spoonhoward

CONTACT: Dave Guthmann, (360) 902-8085

Department of Social and Health Services

MAA and JRA Title XIX Federal Revenue Match Team

When the Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration (JRA) released young people back to the community—either into an institution or to their family—the young person’s individual eligibility for Medicaid coverage was often lost between JRA and Medical Assistance Administration’s database. This resulted in a substantial loss of federal matching dollars for medical coverage.

To identify the unmatched youth, JRA worked with Medical Assistance Administration/Medical Eligibility Determination Services/Foster Care Medical Unit (MAA/MEDS/FCMU) to research the names of the unmatched youth. The Automated Client Eligibility System (ACES) is used to determine whether the youth is eligible and to correct any discrepancies. MAA/MEDS/FCMU now reports the findings to JRA, and the agency files a revised claim for the Title XIX matching funds.

Results

- ★ Eligible youth have increased from 78% of the total youth to 96% (January 2000). Therefore, the target of 87% has been exceeded.
- ★ The process resulted in an immediate increase of eligible parole youth from 25% to 40% (January 2000) of the total parole youth population. With continued work on the Patient Identification Code (PIC) entry method and possible further Client Tracking System (CTS) program revisions, there is potential for the percentage of eligible youth to continue to increase.
- ★ MAA/MEDS/FCMU is able to correct between 50 and 80% of the mismatched youth.

Team Name: MAA and JRA Title XIX Federal Revenue Match Team

Team Members: Cyndy Mills, John Pelkey, Susie Bahr

CONTACT: Susie Bahr, (360) 725-1517

Department of Social and Health Services

Healthy Options Enrollment Improvement Team

The Medical Assistance Customer Service Center Enrollment Unit is responsible for enrolling eligible Medicaid clients into a Managed Care Health Plan. The Enrollment Unit receives approximately 65,000 enrollment forms annually, of which 20,000 enrollments are received during the peak work period of October, November, and December.

The Healthy Options Enrollment Improvement Team was formed to develop and implement a process to accomplish two goals: First, to decrease the number of FTE hours necessary to process enrollment forms; and second, to decrease the turnaround time to process each enrollment form.

The Team implemented a new process called Day Batching. The new process mandates that all enrollment forms be date-stamped the day received, then batched by 25 enrollment forms and placed on a shelf to be processed. Each of the 12 staff is responsible for the oldest batch on the shelf. No longer is work distributed by region.

Results

- ★ Decreased total FTE hours from 7,268 in 1998 to 5,968 in 1999.
- ★ Decreased the cost to process each enrollment form from \$5.91 in 1998 to \$4.76 in 1999 with a cost avoidance of \$29,172 during the peak work period due to the reduction in overtime.
- ★ Decreased the number of enrollments processed in 7 or more working days from 66% in 1998 to 7% in 1999.
- ★ Increased the number of enrollments processed in 4 to 6 working days from 21% in 1998 to 54% in 1999.
- ★ Increased the number of enrollments processed in 1 to 3 working days from 13% in 1998 to 39% in 1999.
- ★ Clients have increased access to health care providers of their choice.

Team Name: Health Options Enrollment Improvement Team

Team Members: Lindy Blankenship, Brenda Carey, Melissa Craig, Sheila Hicks, Stacy Lowe, Kim Ly, Huong Mai, Cecilia Mikler, Janet Nast, Kelley Nurmi, Rich Pannkuk, Don Russell, Wendy Short, Kathy Smith, Jessie Springer

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WSDOT Audit Guide for Consultants

Consultants new to government agreements are often unaware of the criteria ruling such agreements; these include the Federal Acquisition Regulations (CFR 48) and WSDOT overhead policies. As a result, agreement criteria have been violated, unknowingly by some and knowingly by others. Consultants asked that we put the criteria into a consistent, easy-to-use format. We did this, and issued the first audit guide in 1993. We distributed it to anyone who wanted a copy, including consultants, accountants, and other government agencies around the country. It eventually became the basis for the nationwide American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO) Audit Guide.

We now have updated the Audit Guide to bring it up-to-date with state and federal changes. This year, we posted the document on our home page, rather than printing it, so that anyone can have immediate access to it. This also makes it much easier to update the guide when federal and state criteria change.

Results

- ★ Updated Audit Guide includes the latest in federal and state criteria.
- ★ Brings information from several sources together in one publication.
- ★ Easy access - Guide is posted on the WSDOT Audit home page.
- ★ Provides consultants with free and easy access to information.
- ★ Useful information for WSDOT project managers as well.

Team Name: WSDOT Audit Guide for Consultants

Team Members: Wayne Donaldson, Robby Robinson, Grant Boyer, Eli Esber, Cal Granbois, Rick Griffith, Roger Heskin

CONTACT: Robby Robinson, (360) 705-7006

Stone Sign Restoration at WA Veterans' Home

In the 1920s, residents of the WA Veterans' Home built a stone sign on the hillside facing Bremerton. It was visible until WWII when it was covered up for security reasons. The Retsil Wellness Action Team brainstormed ideas that would benefit both employees and the Home and came up with the idea of uncovering the stone sign and restoring it to its former glory.

The project involved working many Saturdays during 1999 -- all on a volunteer basis. The Home's Activity Director, with her many contacts in the community, was able to work with the United States Navy and the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard (PSNS) to bring out a team who helped clear the hillside and uncover even more of the sign. On a cold and rainy November day, the Navy and PSNS workers along with volunteer employees at the Home helped to clear away over 20 cords of overgrowth and were treated to a chili dog feast at the end of the day.

Results

- ★ Saved the agency close to \$4,000 in staff hours. Everything was on a voluntary basis so there was no cost associated with the project. The Navy provided all of the tools; the local Home Depot provided gloves free of charge; and the Navy carried away the debris.
- ★ Involved the Navy and Puget Sound Naval Shipyard communities.
- ★ Created a sense of pride and accomplishment for employees and members of the local community.
- ★ The local newspaper ran an article about the project; this article created more community awareness about the Veterans' Home.

Team Name: Stone Sign Restoration Team

Team Members: Liz Berens, Carmela Platon, Ed Dolle, Billy Elliott, John Sanders, Karen Horvath, John Horvath, Catherine Clark, Paul Wray

CONTACT: Liz Berens, (360) 895-4723

Department of Veterans' Affairs

No Fee is a Free Fee

At the Veterans' Home, professional educational opportunities for nursing staff are limited due to the workload of the facility and their location. Typically, professional training sessions cost an average of \$125 per person and staff must travel 60 - 150 miles to Tacoma, Seattle, or Olympia. The expense of a four-hour professional educational class would cost an average of \$361 per student, which includes the cost of training, travel and replacement nursing staff.

The Staff Development Coordinator, at the WA Veterans' Home in Retsil, developed a partnership with the DSHS/Residential Care Services and the Evergreen and Jantzen Pharmaceutical companies to bring three training sessions to the Home. In doing so, our nursing staff were able attend those sessions for FREE!

By providing our facility for training and coordinating the events, Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) participants were not charged, did not have to travel, and could work at least half of their normal shift. Three pilot events have proven that partnering with others is successful in saving dollars, reducing stress on staff, and providing professional educational opportunities.

Results

- ★ Savings of \$3,750 actual training dollars (10 employees x \$125 x 3 sessions).
- ★ Savings of \$5,054 FTE dollars for overtime and intermittent expenses as well as 105 FTE hours in travel time for those 3 sessions.
- ★ Partnership between DVA, other state agencies and private vendors.
- ★ Staff given a greater opportunity to participate in professional training sessions.

Team Name: Staff Development

Team Members: Ed Dolle

CONTACT: Ed Dolle, (360) 895-4358

Employment Security Department

ImageX Files

WorkSource Centers are organizational partnerships dedicated to addressing local employment needs for job seekers and employers. In order to market the new WorkSource logo with speed and consistency, a team explored different options for managing the development, duplication and distribution of business cards, letterhead and brochures. Print management in state government is labor intensive and requires manual updating of computer files and typesetting. The purchasing process is particularly slow, involving multiple hand-written, typed or electronic forms channeled through agency purchasing units. But, together with the ImageX Company and Department of Printing, the team introduced "online" print management to WorkSource. A website now allows offices to place orders electronically for customized marketing materials. Changes and corrections can be made online and proofed in "real time" with savings realized through the recovery of graphic design staff time and enhanced internal purchasing procedures.

Results

- ★ Staff savings realized by streamlining paperwork, typesetting, proofing and handling of print orders estimated at 155 hours annually.
- ★ Greater speed and convenience afforded from updated files and electronic access—processing time for business card delivery reduced from an estimated six weeks to two weeks.
- ★ Process minimizes duplication and promotes localized publication.
- ★ Creates uniformity of image and identity for printed WorkSource materials.
- ★ Enhances agency-level control of print purchasing while expanding “public/private partnerships” and promoting efficiency.

Team Name: WorkSource ImageX Team

Team Members: Rosalund Jenkins, Bill Tarrow, Brenda Fehlhafer (ESD); Ken Mays (University of Washington); Jeff Ostrom (ImageX); Doug Dow, Dick Yarboro (Department of Printing)

CONTACT: Rosalund Jenkins, (360) 902-9289

Employment Security Department

Roll-Out Referrals

The King South WorkFirst Team brainstormed ways to increase awareness of services available to welfare clients. They found a perfect opportunity during the Department of Social and Health Service's "Roll-Out Week" in early November. Working with their partners, they stocked WorkFirst tables with banners and flyers to accommodate the hundreds of clients expected to attend. The results were immediately obvious—dozens of welfare clients signed up during the week for workshops and Job Clubs. In addition, staff made *direct* job referrals. The team also developed more aggressive contact and follow-up procedures for client referral. These efforts continue to promote client awareness of services and provide valuable job search information to individuals seeking employment.

Results

- ★ Job Club attendance jumped 100%.
- ★ Workshop attendance increased 300%.
- ★ Positive partner comments.
- ★ Team confidence.
- ★ Anticipated increase in individuals gaining employment.

Team Name: King South WorkFirst Team

Team Members: Roy Pleasant, Ann Gilbreath, Richard Livingston, Shirley Fata, Yevgeniy Gorash, Carolyn Kleinbeck, Janeane La Casse, Bob Mullen, Tom Reidy, Susan Swedelson, Jesse Valdez, Joe Wong

CONTACT: Joe Wong, (253) 395-5411

Employment Security Department

Better Than Bloodhounds!

Until January 2000, both the manual referral process of Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) clients to WorkFirst and the manual WorkFirst tracking system were cumbersome, time consuming, and out-of-date. Using flow charting and CQI tools, the Port Angeles WorkFirst Team developed an improved job search tracking system. They automated the client files on a common server where counselors now can easily update and access information on each client's job search status. Staff also use the database to identify employment referrals by cross-matching their client's file with the JobNet computer tracking system. Additionally, job search counselors now sign up newly referred DSHS clients on the spot, avoiding return trips to the office.

Results

- ★ Increased active participants in job search by 200% from December 1999 through January 2000 (48 to 96 clients).
- ★ Saved 712 FTE hours/yearly sending letters and keeping records--time now used to provide more assistance with job search.
- ★ Saved \$343 annually in postage for client letters.
- ★ Eliminated additional client trips to enroll in job search.
- ★ Improvements adapted by other WorkFirst job search operations statewide.

Team Name: Port Angeles WorkFirst Team

Team Members: Merl Pender, Janet McDonald, Gloria Smith, Phil Libott, Schehera Gates

CONTACT: Merl Pender, (360) 457-2115

Employment Security Department

Alma Matters at Job Club

With the focus of the WorkFirst Program changing from just “getting a job” to “getting a career” and exiting welfare altogether, a more intensive Job Club was required. Job Club enhances job-finding skills for clients. The Aberdeen WorkFirst Team found they needed two sessions of Job Club to meet customer’s needs. Since no staffing or funding increases had been planned, they teamed up with Grays Harbor College to determine how best to provide high quality job search services. Using problem solving, the team came up with solutions benefiting everyone involved. Clients now receive high quality job search instruction while they are earning Adult Basic Education Credit; Aberdeen staff is available to provide intensive one-on-one services to WorkFirst clients; and Grays Harbor College earns extra staffing resources through increases in student population.

Results

- ★ Time savings redirected to job-finding services for WorkFirst clients.
- ★ Clients receive job retention and training service at Grays Harbor College.
- ★ Students tally college credits for Job Club attendance.
- ★ College earns additional staffing for increasing enrollments in Job Club program.
- ★ Successful partnering produces a win-win for all participants.

Team Name: Wonderful Wizards of WorkFirst & Grays Harbor College

Team Members: Jo Vanucie, J’Neil Lee, Tina Simons, Debbie Richters (ESD); Mary Pearson, Gary Thomasson, Linda Farren (Grays Harbor College)

CONTACT: Jo Vanucie, (360) 538-2385

Employment Security Department

Stop, Look, Learn

The Employment Security Department's labor market information for occupational projections was based on long-term (ten-year) projections. Easily available information was needed to indicate *short-term* occupational changes. The Labor Market Information Short Term Occupational Projections Team (LMI-STOP) came together to brainstorm and develop short-term projections. They identified appropriate data and software needs using Unemployment Insurance (UI) claimant data to assess competition for jobs and evaluate short-term projections. What resulted was a readily accessible electronic information system on the Internet with estimates of month-to-month occupational employment changes by area, highlighting occupations with the largest immediate demand. Information became available in June 1999 resulting, in over 2,100 site visits since September.

Results

- ★ Customers can now obtain short-term and long-term occupational projections for demand occupations and assistance on training and career goals.
- ★ Information is accessible on Internet instead of hard copies.
- ★ Information is now delivered based on Regional Partnership WorkSource Areas, providing specific and relevant data for customers.
- ★ Occupational information updated monthly at: www.wa.gov/esd/lmea.
- ★ System allows for more efficient job searches and can be used to determine allocations of short-term training resources.

Team Name: LMI-STOP

Team Members: Ivars Graudins, Alexander Roubinchtein, Carol Stoker, Dick Armstrong, Sandra Bailey

CONTACT: Ivars Graudins, (360) 438-4825

Employment Security Department

Talkin' 'bout Us

The orientation process for new employees was over seven years old and included little more than getting required forms signed. Information about our agency mission, vision, goals, and purpose was left to individual discovery! The Office of Staff Development Services Team designed a new approach that includes an orientation compact disc (CD) and guide. The CD provides all employees with the information they need to fully understand their responsibilities and the department. The guide is a step-by-step process for managers/supervisors and the new employee. The package has also been identified as a best practice and nominated for recognition with the International Association of Personnel at Employment Security (IAPES).

Results

- ★ Saved approximately 1,650 FTE hours, a 75% time reduction explaining agency complexities.
- ★ Used technology to create an accessible, attractive, “just-in-time” orientation package.
- ★ A 200% increase in New Employee Orientations provided (second quarter PY 99).
- ★ Nominated for recognition at the Washington Chapter of the International Association of Personnel at Employment Security (IAPES).

Team Name: Office of Staff Development Services Team

Team Members: Gail Swanson, Rennie Mead-Cornish, Patricia Durston, Laurie Olson

CONTACT: Gail Swanson, (360) 902-9474

Employment Security Department

Ring a Ding . . . Bingo!

Customers calling the Colville Job Service Center for assistance waited an average of 3 minutes, 12 seconds before connecting to a staff person. Employers waited an average of 48 seconds. Additionally, calls were improperly routed and re-routed, compounding frustration for customers and staff alike. A Telephone Customer Redesign Team flow charted the existing process, analyzed previous data from phone logs, brainstormed theories for change, and surveyed staff. Based on data, the team crafted new procedures for routing and answering incoming calls. With technical assistance they developed new calling queues, recordings, and automatic call distribution (ACD) groups. They charted how incoming calls should be routed, implemented the changes and closely monitored the data for a two-month period. Monitoring precipitates on-going adjustments in an effort to continuously improve. Changes have resulted in improved customer relations, reduced frustration, and more efficient use of staff time.

Results

- ★ Reduced client customer waiting times by 44% - from 3 minutes 12 seconds to 1 minute 48 seconds per call.
- ★ Reduced length of employer customers waiting times by 60 % - from 48 to 19 seconds per call.
- ★ Reduced the number of customers hanging up before service by 50% - from 48 to 24 per month.
- ★ Reduced the number of customers transfers by 79% - from 220 to 46 calls per month.
- ★ Saved 12 hours of staff time per year.

Team Name: Telephone Customer Service Redesign Team

Team Members: Kenneth Walden, Kimberly Holling, Joanne Rice

CONTACT: Joanne Rice, (509) 685-2114

Employment Security Department

Compliance? Not a Question!

For the past several years WorkFirst has been out of compliance with both internal and state audits. An evaluation process was developed to assess the performance of all WorkFirst offices. The self-evaluation tool is based on qualitative and quantitative standards that reflect each element of the WorkFirst program. A workgroup was formed and an evaluation manual was produced. Training was provided to all WorkFirst supervisors on how to conduct the self-evaluation checklists monthly. Another team worked with the offices on improvement of their processes, clarification of the standards, and other technical assistance. Regional staff and WorkFirst administration staff completed quarterly and annual evaluations.

Results

- ★ After six years of compliance shortfalls, the program passed both internal and state audits.
- ★ On-site technical assistance given to WorkFirst staff regarding fiscal management.
- ★ Best practices shared with all WorkFirst offices and a best practices guide created.
- ★ WorkFirst supervisors more accountable for operations of their offices.
- ★ A process was created to solicit improvements from WorkFirst staff.

Team Name: WorkFirst Continuous Quality Support Team

Team Members: Sheri Ammerman, Marti Anderson, Jackie Bergener, Kathy Carpenter, Larry Domingo, Steve Gobin, Trudi Goodman, Mali Gunn, Dick Hancock, Jeanice Jarvis, Viola De Ochoa, Bonnie Ross, Linda Williams, Katherine Vasquez

CONTACT: Kathy Carpenter, (360) 438-4120

Employment Security Department

E-Clears, “How Sweet It Is!”

At Employment Security, new or updated policies were sent through a clearance process where hard copies of draft agency policies were sent out for review and comment. In the old process, it took an average of 75 days to get responses to the policy. Sometimes, appropriate parties never received a copy. The Electronic Policy Clearance (EPC) Team came up with a solution to decrease the review time for policies in the process. The policies are now sent out for review and comment by e-mail, and reviewers are not required to respond if they have no comments.

Results

- ★ Cost savings for paper and toner--\$558 annually.
- ★ Staff time saved for copying and distribution—255 hours annually.
- ★ Easier for author to receive and incorporate comments into documents.
- ★ Wider participation in the review process.
- ★ 60% reduction in turnaround time—from 75 days too less than one month.

Team Name: Electronic Policy Clearance Team

Team Members: Mary Kristofferson, Jill Schwenke, Pam Ames, Robert Page, Judy Corcoran, Brian Kerr

CONTACT: Mary Kristofferson, (360) 902-9728

Customer Service Cards Help with Communication

Previously, Health Care Authority (HCA) Information Services (IS) users would submit a Service Request (SR) through the agency Help Desk when they needed assistance with software or hardware problems. Users were unsure if some of the issues were ever resolved or whether the technician had been to their workstation. A two-fold approach was taken to resolve the problem. Now, a confirmation e-mail is sent to users who submit a Help Desk work order and they are assigned an SR for follow-up if needed. Also, IS has created and is using Customer Service cards for the technician to leave on workstations when the user is not physically present. The card lists the technician's name, SR number, work completed, and requests feedback about service satisfaction.

Results

- ★ Users either return the Customer Service Cards or e-mail back their response.
- ★ The IS staff gather other helpful suggestions on how they can improve their processes and have started a monthly column of tips in the agency internal newsletter.
- ★ Technicians keep the message simple about how they have fixed the problem when leaving the cards.
- ★ The feedback allows the SR database to stay up-to-date.
- ★ An Automation Working Group (AWG) was formed consisting of user representatives to look at user tips, helpful hints and continuous feedback.

Team Name: Service Requests Improvement Action Team

Team Members: Wes Acdal, Don Berry, June Dizon, Jeff Dobyns, Charles Hooper, Bob Owen, Amy Ridgeway, Debbie Sanders

CONTACT: Amy Ridgeway, (360) 923-2845

Indeterminate Sentence Review Board

Time Expansion for Submission of Parole Plans

One of the goals of the Indeterminate Sentence Review Board (ISRB) is to ensure that offenders with approved parole plans are released on their parole eligibility review date (PERD). However, due to the sometimes hard to place indeterminate inmate population, and the fact that the average parole plan takes 4 to 6 months to be developed, it is not always easy to achieve this goal.

By scheduling parolability hearings 120 days from the offender's parole eligibility review date vs. the previous 90 days, we allow more time to develop and process a parole plan if an offender is found parolable at his/her hearing. Due to the need for the most current information at the parolability hearing, 120 days is as far as the Board wants to go prior to the PERD. Our goal to expand by 30% the time available for submission of parole plans has been met.

Results

- ★ The Department of Corrections has more time to prepare required reports for Board Hearings.
- ★ Parolable offenders have a better chance of paroling on their PERD.
- ★ Those who do parole on their PERD save the Department of Corrections on an average of \$62.96 a day.
- ★ ISRB staff has a better understanding of how the process of developing a parole plan works.

Team Name: QI Group I & II

Team Members: John L. Austin, III; Steve Eckstrom; Richard LaRosa; Robin Riley; Irene Seifert; Russell Snelson; Frances Spreier; Jody Swails

CONTACT: Robin Riley, (360) 493-9266

Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation

Streamlining Grant Applications

In recent years, the number of major grant programs we administer has grown 170 percent, from three (before 1990) to eight (in 2000). Annually, this means IAC-SRFB (Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation -- Salmon Recovery Funding Board) processes hundreds of grant applications. In 1999, for example, we reviewed, evaluated, and made recommendations on over 600 funding requests.

This translates into thousands of hours of application work, both on the part of our clients from government and nonprofit organizations, but also our staff and advisory committees. This is why, periodically, we review our application requirements to find ways to simplify and streamline. As a part of a recently completed review, we made changes based on information collected at focus group sessions and from responses to a printed questionnaire.

Results

- ★ Substituted shorter, customized individual program applications for the older, much longer single booklet previously used for all programs.
- ★ Clarified requirements by improving over-all application layout, creating checklists for each program, and enhancing readability.
- ★ Saved applicant and evaluator time and increased convenience by allowing projects to be reviewed in the homes and offices of evaluators, rather than in formal, multi-day meetings.

Team Name: Application Streamlining Team

Team Members: Debra Wilhelmi, Darrell Jennings, Greg Lovelady, Cecie Vatne

CONTACT: Greg Lovelady, (360) 902-3008

Innovative Use of File Transfer Protocol Increases Accuracy and Efficiency

A Process Improvement Team (PIT) used quality tools and techniques to streamline a duplicative process of rekeying accounts payable data/information from Excel forms into the Agency Financial Reporting System (AFRS). The process incurred excessive time from multiple staff and often resulted in a moderate error rate. The team developed a File Transfer Protocol (FTP) process to send information directly to the AFRS without rekeying from original vouchers.

FTP is a set of standards available with most operating systems that allows transfer of data from one operating system to another. This improvement is currently used for recurring monthly accounts payable in the following categories: Phone bills, janitorial expenses, laundry bills, property tax payments, lease payments, daily field order encumbrance transactions (about 62,000 transactions annually). In the near future the application will be used with freight bills and travel vouchers as well. The application and user team can redirect the total FTE hours saved toward current priorities in the Financial Division.

Results

- ★ Eliminates duplicate keying of information into AFRS and saves 1281 FTE hours annually.
- ★ Increases accuracy of data transferred by 99%.
- ★ Provides specialized selection criteria for timely payment research.
- ★ Automates batch and entry totals.
- ★ Eliminates one manual 10-key calculation in each category

Team Name: FTP/ Application & User Team

Team Members: Keith Greig (LCB), Cliff Wilder (OFM), Jillian Lamont (SPSCC); LCB Application Users: Jamie Schultz, Vicki Garrett, Sherri Berg, Judy Layne, Debora Koepp, Tonya Atkinson

Contact: Fay Bronson, (360) 664-1673

Automated and Innovative Surety Bond Database Increases Efficiency and Effectiveness

A Process Improvement Team (PIT) assessed the need to develop an automated and innovative surety bond data base, gathered data, tested the theory for change and recommended development of the new database. The improvement was implemented in January 2000, and combines license, tax liability and surety bond information from two divisions and three separate databases. The system provides automated comparative data regarding tax liability and surety bond amount (previously this was done manually one bond at a time). Correspondence necessary for administering most surety bond requirements is automated and staff can either update or research all information in this database via their desktop PC. FTE hours saved are redirected to existing priorities within the divisions.

Results:

- ★ Data is shared electronically between two divisions (three work areas).
- ★ Saved 138 FTE hours annually in fiscal year-end processing.
- ★ Saved 22 FTE hours annually through automation of individualized cancellation letters.
- ★ Saved 20 hours annually by using a desktop PC for researching licensing related bond information.
- ★ Created individualized reports used to administer surety bond requirements.
- ★ Improved efficiency in the annual update of surety bonds, reducing the turnaround time from 3 months to 22 days.

Team Name: Surety Bond Database Team

Team Members: Nancy Harry, Heidi Whisman, Jamie Conwell, Fern Norton, Heidi Ensign, Dave Weiland, Sun Taylor

Contact: Heidi Whisman, (360) 664-1641

Office of Administrative Hearings

Access to Justice Improved with “First In Touch” Manual

The Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH) wanted to maximize its potential for improving access to justice. We reviewed our current procedures as well as services provided by others. Legal service organizations and other agencies also participated.

We determined that we could offer better access if we had more readable informational pamphlets for our Employment Security Department and our Department of Social and Health Services caseloads, and if support staff were better equipped to answer procedural legal questions.

We developed reference materials, collectively called the “First in Touch (FIT)” manual, for support staff who are the first contact for the public and who directly answer questions from hearing participants. The manual includes a comprehensive list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and preferred answers. We tested these in two field offices during a pilot project. They helped both for responding to inquiries and for training new staff.

Results

- ★ Better customer service, as questions from hearing participants are answered more accurately and completely both in the hearing rights brochure and by support staff.
- ★ The First in Touch manual allows staff to be quickly trained in answering complex questions, something particularly important in an era of high staff turnover due to a tight job market.
- ★ Support staff can answer more questions. This results in fewer referrals, saving time for hearing participants and other agencies.

Team Name: Access to Justice/Pro Se Project Team

Team Members: OAH: Jill Geary, Anita Davidson, Dave Hansen, Wynne O’Brien, Gina Hale, Johnette Sullivan, Gordon Griggs, Leslie Fleury, Jim Skeel, Barbara Boivin, Jan Grant; Unemployment Law Project: Pam Crone, Joel Nichols; Employment Security Department: Juanita Meyers; Gates-MacDonald: Pam Ottinger; DSHS Division of Child Support: Robin Engel, Tom Atkinson; Former Courthouse facilitator, Pierce County Superior Court: Carolyn Mayer; Northwest Justice Project: Norma Bayes, Kelly Owen, Pat McIntyre; DSHS Economic Services: Connie Peterson, BJ Bailey; DSHS Board of Appeals: Kristal Wiitala Knutson

CONTACT: Barbara Boivin, (206) 464-6322

Office of Administrative Hearings

New Website Makes Law Accessible to Citizens

The Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH) handles approximately 48,000 administrative cases per year. Most hearings are conducted with citizens representing themselves. The new OAH website (www.oah.wa.gov) provides consumer-friendly access to applicable laws and also provides clear information to help citizens prepare for different kinds of hearings.

The website addresses issues such as how to request a hearing, what happens after that request, how to prepare for a hearing, what happens during the hearing, how the Administrative Law Judge makes the decision, and what happens after the hearing. It also provides easy access to a wide variety of other resources, including other state agencies and legal research sites.

Results

- ★ Provides Washington residents with easy access to a wide variety of legal information about common types of hearings, including child support, public assistance, unemployment benefits, and special education.
- ★ Makes easily available the Washington and federal laws that apply to many hearings in which citizens typically represent their own interests.

Team Name: Webpage Committee

Team Members: Barbara Boivin, Barb Cleveland, John Gaffney, Jeremy Hagquist, Gina Hale, Zee Hix, Bob Kingsley, Gail Newkirk, Rebekah Ross, Matt Wacker, Art Wang

CONTACT: Zee Hix, (360) 664-8717

Early Start for 2001-03 Budget Instructions

Agencies have indicated that an earlier distribution of the biennial budget instructions would fit better with their internal planning schedules. Both Office of Financial Management (OFM) and agency staff incur extra workload if additional data is needed after the agency submittal, or if the budget request fails to articulate the outcomes that relate to budget dollars.

OFM's 2001-03 budget instructions have been redesigned to include an early release document that focuses on context setting for agency budget preparation. It outlines the expected link between strategic planning, performance, and budget outcomes, and describes how budget decisions fit within a managing-for-results framework. A new element, called the "budget jump start," engages agencies and OFM budget analysts in a formal exchange of information to promote early identification of emerging issues.

Results

- ★ Part 1 of the 2001-03 OFM budget instructions to agencies was released nearly two months earlier than the last biennial budget instructions.
- ★ An improved format makes it easier to identify the OFM-required elements of the agency budget submittal.
- ★ The document adds narrative and graphics describing the link between management strategies and budget outcomes.
- ★ The instructions communicate how planning and performance information is used and identify the types of questions that will be asked of agencies.
- ★ The new "budget jump start" concept reinforces the value of the OFM budget analyst and agency staff exchanging information earlier in the process in order to identify emerging problems or needs for data.

Team Name: Budget Instructions Team

Team Members: Lynne McGuire, Pam Davidson, Meagan Macvie, Dave Workman, Linda Steinmann, Gina Terry, Theo Yu, Tom Saelid, Marsh Taylor, Jeff Cherry, Jim Crawford, Kay Baxstrom, Irv Lefberg, Jim Cahill, Jim Hurst, Mike Roberts, Tom Boyer, Debbie Hoines, Laurie Lien, Harold Nelson, Theresa Lowe

CONTACT: Lynn McGuire, (360)-902-0581; Pam Davidson, (360)-902-0550

Administrative Support Tasks Manual

The administrative support staff of various units of the agency are required to have thorough knowledge of processing routine and independent tasks. However, the turnover of support staff disrupts the day-to-day operation of some offices. The learning process for the incoming staff is tedious and long. Mistakes are made.

A team was organized to develop a manual that will guide support staff with various scenarios of policies, procedures and tasks. Instead of stressed days of mistakes, it now takes only a few hours of orientation to do a good job using the manual. The user-friendly Administrative Support Tasks Manual becomes an excellent resource providing direction for new employees and staff to satisfy various work demands.

The team reviews and updates the manual regularly as new policies, procedures and tasks are identified.

Results

- ★ Ready reference for administrative support staff to perform routine and special tasks.
- ★ Minimizes training hours and supervision of support staff.
- ★ Reduces backlog in processing paperwork.
- ★ Inculcates teamwork among administrative support staff from other divisions and regional offices.

Team Name: Administrative Support Tasks Manual

Team Members: Valeria Veasley-Munroe, Christie Vaught, Bonnie Stanley, Sherri Sweeney

Contact: Valeria Veasley-Munroe, (360) 902-8597

Parks and Recreation Commission

Dalles Mountain Paragliding Plan

In 1993 State Parks acquired the 3,000-acre Dalles Mountain Ranch. An Interim Plan was developed and approved. Since then Parks managed the property under the said plan. Recently, a park users group requested portions of the Ranch for paragliding take off and landing. Since this type of use was not addressed in the operating component of the plan, a team was organized to review the request and, if feasible, to develop an addendum provision to the plan.

The team collected exhaustive cultural and natural resource data and other relevant materials. The information was mapped and analyzed vis-à-vis other functions and usage of the park. The team held the requisite meetings with paragliders and the public. The result was an addendum to the Plan allowing for limited paragliding without necessarily disturbing the other functions of the park.

Results

- ★ The insistent public clamor for paragliding was satisfied.
- ★ There is an increased patronage of the park.
- ★ The team appreciated and learned from the planning process.
- ★ Safety for paragliders was enhanced.
- ★ The park Interim Plan became a dynamic tool for interaction with the public.

Team Name: Dalles Mountain Paragliding Plan Team

Team Members: Pam McConkey, Wayne McLaughlin, Dan Meatte, Tom Ernsberger, John Scarola, Rich Davis, Rob Fimbel, Dan Ingman, Gary Long

Contact: Tom Ernsberger, (509) 665-3329

Parks and Recreation Commission

Sequim Bay State Park Planning Process

The planning process for a state park takes time -- months to come up with a meaningful output. A chartered team was organized to develop, on a fast-track mode, a five-year operation plan for adjacently situated parks: Sequim Bay State Park, Ramblewood Environmental Learning Center and the Miller Peninsula in Clallam County.

In a day of site briefing and three days of intensive meetings on-site, the team developed a five-year plan of operation that:

- ◆ Set a vision for the operation of the three parks;
- ◆ Identified operational changes necessary;
- ◆ Identified priorities for work on facilities and infrastructure;
- ◆ Looked at staffing levels as they compare to operational needs for future impact funding; and
- ◆ Identified preservation, maintenance and capital projects that need priority consideration.

The team output is being given serious consideration for funding and implementation. With the fruitful exercise, the fast-track planning process will be replicated in other parks.

Results

- ★ The project proved the efficiency of the chartered team process.
- ★ Saved \$9,000 and 12 months of total elapsed time.
- ★ Provided a guide and tool for the development of the subject parks.
- ★ Inter-divisional team gained knowledge of the needs and complexities of managing parks with limited resources.
- ★ Raised the morale of parks staff in relation to the attention given to them by top officials.

Team Name: Sequim Bay State Park Planning Team

Team Members: Eric Watilo, Peter Herzog, Terry Doran, Steve Gilstrom, Kathy Smith, Gerry Tays, Dan Ingman, Jim Ellis, Selma Bjarnadottir, Dave Howett, Steve Christensen, Billie Gwen Russell, Rufino Ignacio

Contact: Eric Watilo, (509) 884-8702

Washington State School for the Blind Educational Service District 112, City of Vancouver

Partnerships Result in Child Care Center

The availability of quality child care is a problem in most communities. Approximately eight years ago, the Washington State School for the Blind formed a partnership with Southwest Washington Child Care Consortium (SWWCCC), a non-profit program operated under the umbrella of Educational Service District (ESD) #112. Recently through an expanded partnership made up of the City of Vancouver, various private sector organizations, and various foundations, a new child care facility was built on the campus at the Washington State School for the Blind. This partnership demonstrates that by combining resources and eliminating turfdom issues, quality facilities and services can be made available to the community. The Washington State School for the Blind takes pride in being an active partner in the Central Neighborhood Association and working with SWWCCC in helping make quality child care available in this part of Vancouver.

Results

- ★ Provides child care for over 80 children.
- ★ Provides an integration program in which blind youngsters can play with sighted peers. (Helps young children understand blindness and visually impaired children understand their sighted peers.)
- ★ Provides a vocational work experience site for blind and visually impaired youth.
- ★ Provides the Washington State School for the Blind staff and students the opportunity to educate another part of our society about blindness and reduce stereotypes.
- ★ Provides child care options for Washington State School for the Blind employees.
- ★ Demonstrates that Washington State School for the Blind is an active partner in the community.

Team Name: Child Care Team

Team Members: ESD #112: Dr. Twyla Barnes, Jada Rupley, Vicki Prendergast; SWWCCC: Karla Baker; Washington State School for the Blind: Dr. Dean O. Stenehjem, Rod Lee

CONTACT: Tim Stolle, (360) 696-6321, extension 155

Washington State Gambling Commission

Mandatory Training for Card Room Employees

The Gambling Commission issues licenses to people who qualify to work in the gambling industry. All card room employees must attend a pre-licensing training class as part of the requirement to receive their license. At the class, they receive information from agency staff about the rules and regulations they must follow while performing the duties of a card room employee.

These classes were offered once a month at regional field offices or rented hotel conference rooms across the state. During the past several years, the number of card room employees has greatly increased. As a result, more classes were being offered to accommodate them.

Trainers determined that classes could be conducted more efficiently if they are held at the card room where a card room employee worked. It is more convenient for card room employees to attend training at their place of employment, rather than trying to locate a training site locally, or even hundreds of miles away.

Results:

- ★ Training is more customized to the card room where the card room employees will actually be working.
- ★ Training is more conveniently located for the card room employees because it is at their employer's business, which decreases their travel time to attend.
- ★ Fifty percent reduction in number of phone calls by card room employees to Commission staff asking where the training is going to be held and asking for directions to it.
- ★ In the Eastern Region, staff time was decreased by 75 percent in some cases because the agent could give the training once instead of four times, as the agency's conference room could not accommodate all of the card room employees at once.

Team Name: Field Operations

Team Members: Northwest Region: Bill Kesel, Mark Harris, Karen Rea, Claudia Biermann, Cassandra Blocker; Southwest Region: Pat Parmer, Stephanie Bussell, Susan Blanchett, Lisa Saila, Debby Vandall; Eastern Region: Ben McDonald, Larry Boyd, Tom Young, Brian Lane

CONTACT: John Brinsmead, (253) 471-5312, extension 228

Washington State Gambling Commission

E-Mail Speeds Notice to Local Jurisdictions

When the Gambling Commission issues a license to a business, it is also required to notify the local taxing authority and law enforcement jurisdiction that a license has been issued. This notice helps the local taxing authority because they can contact the business and ensure local gambling taxes are paid. In the past, Licensing Services staff completed this notice by sending the local jurisdictions letters through the U.S. Postal Service; there were about 30 letters sent each month. Sending the letters by mail was inefficient because of the extra time it took to print and mail the letters; in addition, there were costs for paper, envelopes, and stamps.

The Licensing Services Team determined the notices could be made faster and with fewer costs if the notices were e-mailed. Staff contacted 570 jurisdictions to see if they had an e-mail address; nearly 50% responded that they did. Notices are now sent to these jurisdictions via e-mail. Staff plan to follow up with the remaining jurisdictions periodically to see if they have acquired e-mail services, with the hope that all notices can eventually be made by e-mail.

Results

- ★ Reduced the number of letters mailed by 50%.
- ★ Decreased delivery time from 3-7 days to zero because notice can be e-mailed in one day instead.
- ★ Saved \$125 in paper, envelopes, and postage costs.
- ★ Saved 45 hours in staff time in printing letters and mailing them.

Team Name: Licensing Services Team

Team Members: Artis Collins, Ken Malmin, Collene Kiefer, Dawn Warren, Joelene McCoy, Loren Husted

CONTACT: Derry Fries, (360) 438-7654, extension 339

Washington State Gambling Commission

Posting Information on Agency Website Saves Time and Money

The Gambling Commission mails agendas for its monthly Commission meetings to all stakeholders who have requested to be on its mailing lists. There are two versions of the agenda: a “short version” or outline received by 230 stakeholders which is about 6 pages long, and the “long version” or full agenda received by 60 stakeholders which is between 75 and 180 pages long. Mailing the agendas was becoming increasingly inefficient because of the time required to stuff the nearly 300 envelopes each month; there were also additional costs for paper, envelopes, and postage.

The Communications and Legal Department Team determined the mailings could be reduced substantially if the agenda information was posted on the agency’s website, instead of mailing hard copies of it. The Public Information Officer sent letters to all stakeholders who receive the agenda and gave them the option of either continuing to receive the agendas in the mail or getting the information off the agency’s website instead.

Results

- ★ Reduced the number of agendas mailed by over 70%.
- ★ Saved over \$3,500 in paper, envelopes, and postage costs.
- ★ Reduced staff time needed to mail agendas by over 50%.
- ★ Improved customer service by decreasing printing and mailing delays -- stakeholders can get the information off the agency’s website as soon as it is posted.

Team Name: Communications and Legal Department

Team Members: Susan Arland, Cindy Reed, Tom Means

CONTACT: Susan Arland, (360) 438-7654, extension 374

Report of Lottery Prizes Remaining

In order to provide timely service to our customers, the Lottery has two different 1-800 telephone service lines. Currently, approximately 4.1 million calls annually are routed through these systems, which equates to about 340,000 calls a month. When a customer calls either 1-800 phone number, they hear a variety of options to choose for assistance. Specific options include: 1) Lottery business hours, 2) winning Lottery numbers for the various games, 3) special promotion information, 4) how to order scratch tickets through the Lottery's Telemarketing office, 5) assistance with scratch ticket cancellations and returns, 6) licensing application assistance (including change of ownership), 7) retailer accounting customer service, and 8) how to reach a person directly.

Until May 1999, this phone service was provided by a vendor located in San Diego, California. The service was costly to the Lottery, so in an effort to continually improve how we deliver services to our customers at reduced costs, the Lottery researched other options for providing this phone service. As a result, AT&T, a local company, was selected. Through AT&T, customers have more direct access to get assistance, even with a large volume of calls. In addition, AT&T gives the Lottery a discount for using their services and agreeing to a three-year contract.

Results

- ★ An estimated annual savings of \$156,000 which equates to about \$13,000 a month.
- ★ Callers have dual language options to choose instructions in English or Korean.

Team Name: 1-800 Customer Telephone Service Lines

Team Members: Ron Robbins, Sue Flaig, Kristi Seay, Terri Norris

CONTACT: Ron Robbins, (360) 664-4708

“Forms Revision” on a Grand Scale

Ordering, stocking, and distributing Washington State Patrol’s 570 agency-wide forms, 244 of which were stored in a warehouse, consumed a great deal of employee time and warehouse space. When form layouts or contents were revised, copies already in print frequently had to be thrown out. Problems with timely revision and replenishment of forms resulted in recurring shortages of current forms. Shortages generated delays in submitting forms, and multiple versions on office shelves created confusion and inconsistent data recording by forms users.

To radically streamline the process, employees charged with managing the forms storage, revision and distribution processes developed a phased approach to adopting an electronic forms system. Beginning with an initial purchase of 75 copies of a forms software program, the team has prepared 100 department forms for computer use. Most of the historic problems with these 100 forms are being resolved. A majority of them are no longer stocked at all, and as the program matures, the remaining paper forms will also be removed from stock.

Results

- ★ An estimated annual net printing cost of \$27,690 has been saved.
- ★ The current version of 100 forms is instantly accessible in each district and division.
- ★ The forms manager’s time has been redirected to more timely revision of department forms and to bringing outdated technology up to an agency-wide standard.
- ★ Warehouse space has been converted to storage needed for other supplies.
- ★ There is a considerable reduction in the waste of outdated materials.

Team Name: Forms Conversion Team

Team Members: Nancy Davis, John Scarfo

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Optimizing Data Entry Skills

When a criminal suspect is arrested and found guilty, the court sends a record of the proceedings, verdict and sentence - called a Disposition Transfer Report - to the Washington State Patrol. These reports were frequently arriving without certain basic identification data attached, and data entry personnel had to write or stamp the needed information on each report by hand. This created interruptions in their workflow and made poor use of these employees' unique skills. Rubber stamps used to affix the information added unnecessary cost and were sometime misplaced, draining even more productivity from the records entry process.

The team removed these obstacles by advocating for programming changes to the original, computer-generated documents. By working with the Office of Administrator of the Courts, approval for this modification was quickly agreed to and the idea implemented with both the District Court and the Superior Court. The hundreds of hours saved by this change are now reallocated to make optimum use of data entry skills.

Results

- ★ Time (312 hours per year) previously spent stamping documents is being refocused on skilled data entry tasks.
- ★ A consistent Disposition Transfer Report format, now displaying identification codes in exactly the same way on every document, speeds up data entry and shortens the overall processing time.
- ★ Costs of rubber stamps and ink are eliminated.

Team Name: Data Entry Optimization Team

Team Members: Diane Kovac, Emma Viray, Reginald Amaral

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