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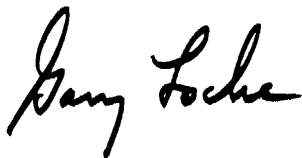
Taxpayers have demanded a better government and state workers have listened and are working hard to gain the public's trust.

Since the first publication of *Governing for Results* in December 1997, state agencies have reported results from over 800 quality improvement projects.

Inside this booklet are highlights of those efforts from the fourth quarter of 1998. 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 improvements 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. We recently received national recognition from Syracuse University's Government Performance Project as one of four states receiving the highest marks for excellence in management. This only further validates the good work of state employees to make Washington State a proud place to work, live 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.

Gary Locke
Governor

Welcome to the Fifth Edition of
Governing for Results

"Governing for Results 5" is the fifth 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 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 that Executive Order was issued, Washington state agencies have reported over 800 quality projects that have saved the state over $40 million. As a result of these efficiencies, approximately 335,000 staff hours have been saved and redirected to other work or eliminated the need for overtime. In addition, these efforts have produced over $8 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 Subcabinet 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 www.wa.gov/governor.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Department of Printing

Department of Retirement Systems

Department of Revenue

Department of Social and Health Services

Departments of Social and Health Service and Community, Trade and Economic Development

Departments of Social and Health Service and Personnel

Department of Transportation

Department of Veterans Affairs

Health Care Authority

Military Department

Office of Financial Management

State Library

State Parks and Recreation Commission

Utilities and Transportation Commission

Washington State School for the Blind

Washington State Lottery

Washington Pollution Liability Insurance Agency

Washington State Patrol

Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board

Board of Accountancy

Streamline Printing and Distribution of License Renewal Packets

The agency sends approximately 7,000 individuals certificate/license renewal packets annually. Previously, the agency:

- Sent the master form to the Department of Printing (PRT) to be printed
- Received the blank forms from PRT
- Printed the addressees' information on the blank forms
- Sent half a dozen inserts to PRT to be printed
- Received the printed inserts from PRT and
- Sent the printed forms and inserts to Consolidated Mail Services (CMS) for stuffing and mailing

The agency now sends one master copy of the form and inserts to PRT along with a disk containing addressees' information. PRT prints the forms and inserts, prints the addressee information on the forms, stuffs the packets, and coordinates the mailing of the renewal packets through CMS.

Results

★ The revisions reduced the effort required to coordinate the printing and distribution of the annual certificate/license renewal packets.
★ Staff focus is on oversight to ensure the accuracy of printing and distribution.
★ The need to coordinate a sizable amount of paper and forms was eliminated.
★ The process will easily translate to improve the efficiency of other agency processes.
★ Sound use of state resources.

Team Members: Sandra Shoemaker, Winnie Swanson

CONTACT: Dana McInturff, (360) 586-0163

Change in Database Systems Eliminates Year 2000 Problem, Improves Information Accuracy for All Customers

We were using a proprietary database system that would not allow us to take advantage of all the developments and advancements that are occurring in the information technology field. Over time, work-arounds in the database and programs had to be developed to accommodate changes in critical user reports and screens. Even that approach did not work in all cases. Eventually, we began to create a backlog of service requests that could not be processed.   In addition, the ominous year 2000 data issue was helping drive the process.

The BAIS 2000 project covered over two years of intensive effort.   The members dedicated themselves to intense periods of training, database migrations, and parallel testing.   The development team dedicated a considerable amount of off-duty hours, working weekends and late nights, to avoid impacting production systems.   Because of all this effort, implementation was completed on schedule.

Results

★ Replaced a departmental mini-computer with two lower cost Pentium servers at a saving of $ 27,600 per year in maintenance costs.
★ Replaced the proprietary database with a fully compliant database management system.
★ Additional enhancements and changes were made to the user screens.
★ Reports were simplified.
★ Brought agency's information system into year 2000 compliance.
★ New database has cleaner data.
★ Simplified the entire printing and job scheduling process.

Team Name: BAIS Development Team
Team Members: Gretchen Zatarain, Jeanie Parr, Tuyen Huynh

CONTACT: Mike Welsh, (360) 753-9639

Pilot Rule and Trial Study of New Vaccine -- RB-51 Brucellosis Vaccine

Prior to 1996 the only vaccine available to immunize cattle against the disease Brucellosis was an approved vaccine named Strain 19. Unless calves were inoculated well before reaching sexual maturity (8 months of age for dairy cattle, 12 months for beef cattle), cattle vaccinated with Strain 19 tested positive for Brucellosis well into adulthood and sometimes for life. Vaccinated adult animals that tested positive impeded the national animal disease eradication program. Each false positive animal had to be studied to determine if the animal or its herd were actually infected with Brucellosis or not.

In 1997 a new vaccine, RB-51, was conditionally approved by USDA. While RB-51 did not cause false positives, initially its use was restricted to animals less than 12 months of age. In 1997 the State Veterinarian designated RB-51 the official state vaccine. During 1998, the Washington State Department Of Agriculture's animal health program tested pilot rules allowing vaccination of animals more than 12 months old with RB-51. Non-vaccinated cattle have traditionally been worth $300 to $400 less than vaccinated cattle when offered for sale because state rules do not allow non-vaccinated cattle to be sold as breeding animals. Successful vaccination of mature animals has added an estimated $200,000 to $300,000 to the value of animals owned by the Washington state cattle industry during the six months of the trial study.

Results

★ Provided a method to vaccinate Washington cattle which had missed the calfhood maximum legal vaccination age of 12 months old.
★ Provided a method to vaccinate non-vaccinated female cattle imported from Canada under the Northwest Cattle Project in order to maintain the immunity level in our total state cattle population as high as possible.
★ Tested the feasibility of vaccinating cattle older than 12 months of age on a routine basis and allowing their sale as breeding animals.
★ Tested the feasibility of vaccinating pregnant animals. (Almost half of the animals vaccinated under this program were pregnant.)
★ Moved a new group of high risk animals into the national surveillance system by requiring a Brucellosis blood test prior to vaccinating mature animals.

Team Name: Animal Health Special Forces
Team Members: Jeff Howlett, Dick Vetter, Lee Williams, Peter Tran, Tamme Hertzel, Kathy Connell, Kerrie Pfalzgraf, and Robert Mead

CONTACT: Robert W. Mead, DVM, State Veterinarian, (360) 902-1881

New Metric Weight Test Kits Distributed

Weights and Measures Inspectors spent more than 40 extra hours and drove additional miles each year responding to requests from law enforcement jurisdictions to certify evidence scales. This situation resulted from nine state-wide field inspectors sharing only three metric weight kits. Driving time was needed whenever an inspector had to obtain a kit from another inspector.

The situation changed when the State Meteorologist suggested that the three large kits be divided into nine smaller kits--with the purchase of a few supplemental metric weight standards. Now all field inspectors have their own kits. They can respond promptly and efficiently to scale certification requests from law enforcement agencies.

Results

★ Inspectors respond promptly to law enforcement agencies' requests for service.
★ The time and mileage that inspectors drove to exchange kits has been eliminated.
★ Inspectors have fewer disruptions in regular work schedules for these service requests.
★ The weight kits are easier to handle. The old kits weighed 43 pounds; the new kits weigh 13 pounds.

Team Members: Dan Wright, Larry Kanouse, George Schmidt, John Allen, Art Fluharty, Mike Mann, John Martin, Mike McGee, Diane Rise, Jerry Buendel

CONTACTS: Jerry Buendel or Christie O'Loughlin
                 (360) 902-1856 or (360) 902-1975

New Tools Improve Training Methods for Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Inspectors

The Washington State Department Of Agriculture, Fruit and Vegetable program recently purchased a lap top computer, scanner, color printer, LCD projector, CD-ROM burner, and a digital camera. These tools allow them to create whole state-wide training programs on CD-ROM's. The CD-ROM's can be used by one or more employees at any time, at any location for the purpose of refresher training. The training time may be during normal working hours, thus saving overtime and mileage because training meetings were formerly groups brought together at centralized office locations during evening hours.

Using the new technology, program staff can scan pictures and slides, take digital pictures of new specimens, and save all of these in the computer. This is invaluable to demonstrate grading factors, and update training as needed. Pictures and text are arranged systematically in order to present the information in a clear, comprehensive manner. Eventually program staff could act as objective third parties for sellers and brokers of fresh fruits and vegetables by sending pictures of actual product specimens to domestic or international buyers.

Results

★ Improved quality of training.
★ Time required to present training and travel time to courses reduced—training may occur at any time at any location.
★ Long term reduction in training costs.
★ Training programs can be updated and the information distributed in a timely manner.
★ Increased availability of current training materials and refresher information.

Team Name: Moses Lake Standardization and Training Team
Team Members: Ron Fox, District Manager; Clyde Wraspir, Marion Agbisit, Lee Hall, Bob Perkins, Ken Tuttle, Elizabeth Erwin, Mickey Manly

CONTACT: Jim Quigley, (360) 902-1833

Strategic Planning at DSB

In the 1980s, DSB went under a Sunset Review and the director at the time brought in strategic planning to address the agency's challenges. Initially, the Management Team developed draft goals and objectives, but the Plan sat on a shelf. By 1996 the strategic plan was being developed by all staff and shared with all stakeholders. In the past three years, strategic planning has been extended to work teams and individuals who use the strategic plan to develop unit work plans that are directly linked to the agency plan.

Now, the strategic plan drives the day-to-day operations of the agency and its programs, and all programs and work teams have work plans aligned with the long-term agency plan. We update all individual, team and program work plans annually. Budget allocation planning and process improvement efforts take their directions from the Strategic Plan. We actively seek input from our State Rehabilitation Council and the community. We have a pervasive use of strategic planning at DSB.

Results

★ The Department continually meets or exceeds its annual goals because our strategic plan is developed and carried out by staff.

★ The Director's relations with our customers are stronger because of the strategic planning process. Customers see how department initiatives fit into the master plan and are excited about helping to decide what priorities to set.

★ We have received National recognition for our strategic planning:

★ During our annual Vocational Rehabilitation Program review in 1998, Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) told us that DSB is a "national model" among all the Blind agencies in the nation.

★ The Sterling Group, a management consulting firm, in the process of benchmarking for a project in New Jersey, found that both the Rehabilitation Services Administration and the National Federation of the Blind identified DSB as an excellent benchmark because it is high performing, consumer-focused and performance driven.

Team Name: Executive Team
Team Members: Shirley A. Smith (now retired), LouOma Durand, Fay Bronson (now with the Liquor Control Board), Bonnie Jindra, Patricia Anderson

CONTACT: LouOma Durand, (206) 721-6435

Automated Accounting Reports

Each month, accountants must reconcile their assigned programs by manually combining data from up to four different accounting reports from the statewide accounting system. This process took approximately 10 hours for the staff to perform and created numerous opportunities for data entry errors. In addition, the variety of manual reports created problems in cross-training other staff for this task.

The team created an automated reconciliation process using the technology available for downloading official accounting records at the agency level. This process now provides easier error detection, more accurate financial statements, standardized reporting and better cross-training.

Results

★ Reduced processing time 10 hours per month.

★ Reduced data entry errors.

★ Improved consistency of reporting.

★ Improved accuracy in agency's financial statements.

★ Improved cross-training among accounting staff.

Team Members: Sharon Lucey, Jacquie Andresen, Jennifer Martinez, Tom Mason, Jake Thomas

CONTACT: Sharon Lucey, (360) 664-2855

Reducing Overtime

In our prisons, there is a need to reduce overtime. Excessive use of sick leave results in high overtime costs, mandatory overtime for custody staff, and low staff morale.

At Washington Corrections Center for Woman, a team of staff members was formed to review and create processes which would assist in the reduction of overtime costs. A database was developed for use in tracking/reporting leave usage. Information regarding the proper use of sick leave was distributed to all employees. Supervisors received training in order to track leave and overtime and were given information regarding the use of the Agency's medical verification policy. In addition, they were required to submit monthly overtime reports.

Results

★ Decreased use of overtime by 236 hours per month.
★ Saved average of $33,600 a month in overtime costs.

Team Members: Kim Shaffer, Doug Coleman, Marcia Sanchez, Jim Lewis, Laurie Axe

CONTACT: Kim Shaffer, (253) 858-4200 ext. 583

Tracking and Managing Laboratory Samples

Ecology operates a certified environmental laboratory in Manchester. The lab receives an average of 3,000 samples for analysis each month from staff in our environmental programs (clients). The system lab staff used to track and manage samples, and the analytical process was outdated and did not meet the needs of clients or the lab analysts.

Lab analysts designed a new tracking and management system that eliminated the bottleneck in data entry from one computer operator to all of the lab analysts. Lab analysts enter sample data simultaneously and have the ability to track where samples are in the testing and analysis process. Reports are easier to generate and the lab workload is easier to manage.

Results

★ 98% of the sampling reports are automated, taking just minutes to produce.

★ Most sampling data is automatically transferred from the sampling equipment into the new data system. From there, data can be automatically transferred into other monitoring systems reducing the chances of error in data entry.

★ Laboratory staff use the system to manage their workload.

★ Clients receive up-to-date information on the status of their samples.

Team Name: LIMS (Laboratory Information Management System)
Team Members: Connie Davies, Stuart Magoon, Debi Case, Bill Kammin

CONTACT: Dee Peace Ragsdale, (360) 407-6986

Central Records Achieving Quality, Responsive Service

Ecology's Northwest Regional Office maintains voluminous records for over 40,000 files in the busiest metropolitan area of the state. The central record keeping staff of three were buried in files and overwhelmed with public disclosure requests (300 per month) on sites and projects.

Their objective for improving this situation was to reduce the time necessary to maintain files in central records and increase customer service quality. A staff team came up with the following solutions: file records alphabetically, not by county; rearrange the fileroom for increased efficiency in use of space; add a dedicated fax machine; develop a data system for tracking files; and, archive files more than 10 years old.

Results

★ 87% reduction in filing time: from 7-8 months to 3-4 weeks.

★ Increased number of boxes archived: from 2 per year to 8 per month.

★ Reduction in filing errors.

Team Name: CRAQRS
Team Members: Sally Perkins, Kris Jessett, Lori LeVander, Pat Locke, Louise Bardy, Erin Guthrie

CONTACT: Dee Peace Ragsdale, (360) 407-6986

Template of Boon

As one of the "big five" agency-wide process improvement teams begun early in '98, this team was asked to design a standardized, visual electronic tool for capturing data on performance measures. The team researched with affinity diagrams and gap analysis, then tested and fine-tuned a series of linked spreadsheets. The resulting *template* is now available on the department's wide-area-network (WAN) and is electronically linked to a one-page *master report* of graphs, qualitative data and narrative information. The solution is a "boon" for tracking performance and has also eliminated the expense of duplicative entry!

Results

★ Increased efficiency by streamlining the process, reducing labor costs and removing redundancies.
★ Data is readily accessible to management and key staff.
★ Improved knowledge of agency performance supports better decision making.
★ Issues of concern are addressed quicker, adding to improved customer service.
★ Provided increased accountability and ability to capture successes.

Team Name: Performance Measurement Process Improvement Team
Team Members: Janet Leach-Ruth (Lead), Jenny Deinlein, Martin Chaw, Philip Jones, Darrell Wallace, Gary Bodeutsch, Barb Pruett, Dwight Wood, John Ancock, Chris Webster, Ron Tuvey, Joe Jauquet, Bob Bergman, Floyd Richardson (Coach), Harry Lawson (Consultant).

CONTACT: Kathy Baros Friedt, (360) 902-9601

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

"*Certing*" the Web

Last year, Alien Employment Certification Program funding (for certifying foreign-born workers, the permission to work in the U.S.) was cut 78%, while the number of applications nearly doubled. This team was compelled to streamline their processes to assist employers with their hiring needs. The outcome was an information/analysis database to help employers with wage data. In addition, they now use an *automated* format for the Dictionary of Occupational Titles, a Department of Labor resource used for classifying worker skills. This cuts down on research time and encourages employers to increase their usage of the reduction in recruitment process, a streamlined method for obtaining certifications. These improvements allow the team the capacity to handle an increase in applications, significantly reduce processing time and more swiftly connect an eager workforce with those employers anxious to profit from their job skills!

Results

★ Able to handle an 87.2% increase in foreign job seekers applying for certification.

★ Increased the number of completed applications to Department of Labor by 58%, improving availability to work for clients.

★ When employers use the reduction in recruitment system, per case processing time drops from 12 to 1.5 months, making workers available sooner.

★ Employer hiring needs (especially those in hi-tech) are met more timely.

Team Name: Alien Employment Certification Unit, E&T
Team Members: Karen Walter, Bill Kartman

CONTACT: Tony Aragon, (360) 438-3266

Accuracy, Accessibility ReDirected!

Inmates at the Airway Heights Correctional Facility Computer Applications Project (CAP Lab), supply the labor for research, data collection and publication of *ReDirect*—a comprehensive directory of community service providers in Washington. They received input from several of their customers requesting they find a way to improve the accuracy, accessibility and general application of this resource. The inmate staff, with the assistance of team members from ESD's Corrections Clearinghouse, Spokane Community Colleges and the Department of Corrections, brainstormed and problem-solved several significant improvements!

Results

★ 6,500 employees at the Department of Corrections and legislative staff members now have electronic access to the directory on their respective intra-net systems.

★ 3,273 new listings were added in the last quarter resulting in more complete utilization of community resources.

★ 300% improvement in the accuracy of the listings due to a new 1-800 phone service that allows customers to call in updates or corrections to addresses, phone numbers, services, etc.

★ Reported errors, or the number of organizations closing, moving or changing phone numbers, *increased* from an average of 200/quarter to over 1,000 resulting in more valid information and referral.

★ Groundwork has been laid for posting *ReDirect* on the state government's internet web-site for increased self-service options.

Team Name: CAP Lab Team

Team Members: Mollie Patshkowski (ESD), Lynn Stettler, (Community Colleges of Spokane), Al Ramos (DOC) and the Offender Staff at Airway Heights

CONTACT: Douglas Jacques, (360) 438-4060

STARS Merge Right

This Walla Walla Job Service Center Team knew they had a cumbersome, time-consuming and error-prone authorization procedure for providing client support services. Hand-written notations on multiple forms were being transferred to another form, creating redundancies and a 50% error rate; all timing out at 18 minutes per authorization. The STARS brainstormed solutions, then tested a theory to scan information into a mail merge database, which in turn made documents available to all counselors on the office Local Area Network (LAN) system. The data merge eliminated duplicative entries, decreased processing time and improved accuracy.

Results

★ Processing time decreased from 18 minutes to five minutes.

★ Posting of duplicative information was eliminated.

★ Error-free rate improved from 50% to 92%.

★ Improved customer service for dislocated worker clients.

★ Reduced processing time for management information systems staff keying batches.

Team Name: STARS (Specialized Training and Re-employment Services) Team
Team Members: Rudy Alaniz, Mary Elia-Henry, Frank Sannar, Rosanne Lugo

CONTACT: Jennie Weber, (509) 527-1801

"Customer #1, Sign in Please"

A paper and pencil sign-in procedure, for clients in Wenatchee, was not only time consuming, but also an inconvenience to the customer. The Resource Center Team also identified a need to track "who" was using the center and "why", in order to improve services and use of resources. Customers indicated on survey cards that their preference was for a "quicker" sign-in process that would maintain confidentiality of social security numbers. By "benchmarking" and customizing a process in use at the Renton Career Development Center, Wenatchee's clients now provide pertinent information with a computer sign-in system. The software provides the tracking desired by staff, maintains confidentiality and saves staff time!

Results

★ Faster, more professional customer sign-in process.

★ Improved accuracy provides for better tracking of services.

★ Data produces more efficient deployment of staff.

★ Hours spent monthly maintaining JobNet data reduced from 3 hours to 90 minutes.

Team Name: Wenatchee Job Service Resource Center Team
Team Members: Donna Myers, Steve McCurry, Victor Rodriquez, Jane Hedges, Carla Boyd, Gail O'Brien, Loly Larson, Kay Bland, Jay Oliver, Mary Sanchez, Cindi Shaw, Judy Nikolas, Len Little, Nancy Betancourt

CONTACT: Donna Myers, (509) 665-3710

Automation *Form-*ation

Old handwritten forms to claimants were time consuming, often illegible and a frustration to the adjustment team. After brainstorming solutions, they chose to automate the forms in Microsoft Word and download them into each adjudicator's personal computer. Now staff can tab through each field to enter data, and information can be cut and pasted directly from the department's mainframe. Best of all, the new forms have eliminated errors and provide a more professional appearance!

Results

★ Decreased the complexity from the old adjustment forms.

★ Improved legibility and professional appearance that benefits all users.

★ As best practice, developed new forms from templates.

Team Name: Yakima UI Adjustment Team
Team Members: Linda Bunch, Shirley Clerf, Ghaane Hadee, Sharon Redifer, Consuelo Rodriguez, Ellen Shalton, Armando Arevalo

CONTACT: Ellen Shalton, (509) 574-0179

One-Stop Train Tracking!

This team was charged to recommend solutions for tracking information on customers using the One-Stop system and to capture performance outcomes on the service providers. With current guidelines and procedures, the team estimated a feasibility study would take 13 months. Knowing that timeframe would **not** meet stakeholder's needs, they eliminated one of two acquisition (RFP) processes, compressed the vendor's schedule and vigorously applied the internet and e-mail to accelerate the RFP process. The team's "I think I can, I think I can" mentality cut the length of the study by more than half!

Results

★ Reduced feasibility study projected completion time from 13 months to six months.

★ Enhanced state's ability to meet federal requirements for One-Stop technology.

★ Innovative application of internet and e-mail for RFP process.

★ Improved collaboration with public and private One-Stop partners.

Team Name: One-Stop Information Technology Workgroup
Team Members: Bill Bachmann, Gary Bodeutsch, Ron Byington, Eric Dazell, Paul Elliot, Dennis Laine, Joe Racek, Dan Reagan, Cinda Sackrison, Rick Sandler, Rob St. John (DSHS), Tom Campbell (SNONET), Stan Ditterline (DIS), Willie Gulbranson (DSHS), Larry Henderson (Pentad PIC), Alex Kosmides (Northwest PIC), Bob Lanouette (L&I), Don Lynne (Tacoma/Pierce County PIC), Andrew McGough (Southwest Washington PIC), Dave Pavelchek (Workforce Training), Michael Scroggins (State Board for Community & Technical Colleges), Larry Scott (Tacoma/Pierce County PIC), John Strong (Tri-Valley PIC), John Young (Seattle/King County PIC)

CONTACT: Rick Sandler, (360) 438-4785

Computer Configuration Process Improvement

DFI has 119 staff with computers. All computers are cycled every three years with approximately 40 new computers needing to be configured each year, usually in two groups of 20 each. The information services section also reconfigures an average of 4.5 laptop computers each month due to problems experienced by staff. Each annual configuration process required a minimum time of 6 hours. IS staff determined this was inefficient and researched ways to speed up the process. The Image MASSter was purchased reducing average time to configure/reconfigure a hard disk from 6 hours to 23.48 minutes. Other benefits include greater consistency in computer operation and less downtime for field staff.

Results

★ Annualized reduction in staff hours spent in configuration/reconfiguration of computer hard disks from 564 to 36.79 hours.

★ Increased efficiency and consistency in computer operation throughout the Department.

★ Reduced downtime for field examiners will allow for better customer service during examinations.

★ IS staff time savings redirected toward critical IS infrastructure issues affecting the entire Department.

Team Members: Juanita Bingham, Julia Boe, Bill Davis

CONTACT: Tom Parma, (360) 902-8788

Department of Financial Institutions

Distribution of Division Bulletins by PC FAX

The Division of Credit Unions sends out Bulletins regarding regulatory developments. The process of preparing, copying, making labels, stuffing envelopes, and mailing for the 150+ recipients was costly and time-consuming. With the ability to fax from the PC, the processing time was substantially reduced. The staffing requirements were reduced from 3 people to 1, and the time that was required to complete the process was reduced from 4 hours to 10 minutes per event.

Results

★ Annual savings of $2,916 including postage, supplies, and Central Mail Services charges.

★ More efficient use of staff time and efforts since staff are able to use the time saved for other projects.

★ The recipients have access to pertinent information as soon as it is written or developed as well as a listing of all opinions rendered for a six-month period.

Team Members: Diane Moye, Darlene Christianson, Tina Philippsen

CONTACT: Linda Jekel, (360) 902-8718

Application Processing Modification and Licensing Help Desk

Staff members in Consumer Services process applications for regulated entities. Unusual situations slowed the process while staff had to look up specifics. Clients complained of long processing times for applications and there was a risk that the thoroughness of research into applications would be compromised. Every licensing team member was viewed as responsible for every aspect of each license allowing for no specific accountability. The team examined the process, identified problems, reassigned routine tasks (individuals responsible for specific files), established a single Licensing Help Desk (handles all routine calls), and developed an "express lane" process for branch applications (main office application requires greater investigation). Results have increased customer satisfaction due to processing speed and uniform answers, improved team morale (less interruptions and expectations clearer), and fewer "incomplete" applications received.

Results

★ Percentage of returned client surveys rated "satisfactory" increased from 67% in April 1998 to 100% in October 1998.

★ Applications processed within targeted time frames increased from 14% in April 1998 to 70% in October 1998.

★ Backlog of applications waiting for review decreased from an average of 4 weeks in April 1998 to 3 days in October 1998.

★ Staff now have time to offer pre-filing conferences to license applicants providing the opportunity to decrease problems with submitted applications and increase in customer service.

Team Members: Kae McDonnell, Nicole Rems, Ronni Wharton, Ann Woolsey, Linda Pasta, Pauline Yale.

CONTACT: Whittier Johnson, (360) 902-8755

Department of General Administration

Everyone Wins! Rail Ties Recycled and $56,500 Saved

In February 1998, during the Heritage Park project, the Department of General Administration (GA) needed to dispose of 2,250 Burlington Northern Railroad rail ties. GA was determined to find a way to avoid dumping them into the landfill. The rail ties disposal costs were estimated at $40,000.

GA suggested involving The Plant Operations Support (POS) Consortium of interested and knowledgeable parties. A scenario was developed attracting the Washington National Guard which provided vehicles, labor, forklift and other heavy equipment. They transported hundreds of ties to Larch and Olympic Corrections Centers, School for the Deaf and Port of Ephrata. Thurston and Lewis County Facilities, Thurston County Fairgrounds and Parks, and DNR - Cedar Creek brought crews to the site and transported a number of ties.

Results

★ GA saved $34,000 and was able to recycle materials without charge.
★ Steel salvage generated $15,000; those funds defrayed 71% of the project costs.
★ GA donated 2,250 wood ties (estimated worth $22,500) to the School for the Deaf, Cedar Creek, Port of Ephrata, Thurston and Lewis Counties, the Military Department and Department of Corrections.
★ DOC involved 10 women inmates in a rehabilitation "work training" program.
★ Washington National Guard removed the debris at no cost to GA and dedicated the project as their "maneuvers" exercise.
★ Creosote-soaked rail ties were not dumped into the landfill.

Team Members: Department of General Administration: Gary Larson, Bob MacKenzie, Andy Stepelton; School for the Deaf: Mike Scott; Lewis County: Chet Higgin; Thurston County: Paul Repogle; Washington National Guard: A Company, 181 Support Battalion; Department of Corrections: Jim Tooley, Jerry Sullivan; DNR Cedar Creek Correction Center: David Alves; Port of Ephrata: Mel Woods

CONTACT: Andy Stepelton, (360) 664-2380

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

Damage Claim Payment Process Streamlined

In 1990, when the Office of Risk Management (ORM) began investigating and settling tort claims on behalf of state agencies, a full release was sent to the claimant for acceptance prior to payment being made. Once returned, the release and a payment certificate were submitted to the affected state agency to authorize payment.

Improved procedures are now in place that whenever applicable, a release is stamped on the issuing warrant. By signing and negotiating the warrant, claimant releases the State of Washington from any future damage claims. In addition, once verbal authorization has been received from the affected state agency to pay a claim, ORM now issues certificates of payment directly, noting that the agency has concurred with the terms of settlement, authorizing its payment. ORM continues to obtain full releases on any claim settlement of a significant or potentially significant nature.

Results

★ Payment processing time has been reduced from an average of 30 days to 4 days.
★ The number of required processing steps has been reduced from 14 to 3.
★ Reduction in administrative processing time and required staff work by affected state agencies.
★ Eliminates requirements that ORM staff prepare, copy, and mail a formal release to the claimant, a letter to the claimant explaining the release and the settlement agreement, and forwarding a cover memorandum and certificate to the affected State agency concerning claim payment.
★ As these procedures are now fully implemented, approximately 90% of all ORM claim payments now utilize some form of these streamlined procedures.

Team Members: J. Michael Kirkpatrick, John Bilbrey, Ron Shurer, Dan Sockle

CONTACT: John Bilbrey, (360) 902-7310

Inmate Property Claims Reporting

In the past, tort claims involving the loss or damage to inmates' property were forwarded to the Department of Corrections (DOC) institution responsible for the alleged loss, along with a request for institutional staff to conduct an investigation and report the results to the Office of Risk Management (ORM). When the institution recommended a claim denial, ORM investigators summarized the DOC findings in a written report.

ORM now relies on DOC's findings when sufficient evidence has been gathered concluding that no tortious liability was present. ORM has eliminated the need to prepare reports restating DOC's findings.

Results

★ Eliminated approximately 800 unnecessary reports of investigation per year

★ Reduced ORM staff time by approximately 267 hours per year

★ Redirected investigative staff to more complex claims and issues

Team Members: J. Michael Kirkpatrick, John Bilbrey, Ron Shurer, Dan Sockle

CONTACT: John Bilbrey, (360) 902-7310

Department of General Administration

Vehicle Order Process

During a study of the state's vehicle order process, several steps were identified that could be eliminated or enhanced. Prior to the process improvement, each of the 1,500 orders was handled at least 13 times by a minimum of 8 people. The average turn-around time from receipt of order to submission to the vendor was 5 days.

The improvements were accomplished by using technology. The number of people involved was reduced, the number of times the order was handled decreased, and the time it takes to submit an order to the vendor was reduced.

Results

★ The number of times the order was touched was reduced from 13 to 6, including the customer and the vendor.

★ The number of people involved in the process was reduced from 8 to 3.

★ The elapsed time spent per order was reduced by an average of 38 minutes.

★ Time savings equates to one half of a full time employee that has been redirected to improve other services to our customers.

★ Submission of the order to the contract vendor was reduced form 5 days to less than 1 day.

★ Response time to our customers was reduced from 5 days to 1 day or less.

★ Costs for printing and mailing were reduced by $4,560 per year.

Team Members*:* Judy Brian, Cami Feek, Bill Griffin, Robert Jacobson, Leanne McConnell, Dodie Needham-Crake, Ivan Rammel

CONTACT: Cami Feek, (360) 902-7420

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

Faster Distribution of Vaccines

As a result of increased demand for vaccines coupled with the addition of new vaccines, the Immunization Distribution Center had been experiencing increasing workloads. The facility was too small and needed to be upgraded and staffing was inadequate. The result was a long turn-around time for vaccine orders and slow customer response for other types of services.

To address these issues, staff knowledge was improved and 53 functions were upgraded. These upgrades included additional cold storage, new computers and software, United Parcel Service (UPS) Online, additional storage space, emergency backup plans and monitoring systems, broadcast fax system, etc.

This has resulted in better customer service, increased efficiency in vaccine storage and handling, and increased accountability within the vaccine distribution system.

Results

★ Vaccine distribution turnaround time was reduced by more than half; from approximately 10 to 20 working days to just five working days.

★ Local Health Jurisdictions (LHJ's) receive more training and technical support. The Immunization Program held four successful statewide training sessions this fall, compared to no training sessions in previous years.

★ Increased ability to track vaccine. Vaccine shipment boxes can be worth up to $80,000, so tracking ability is important to ensure vaccine is not spoiled due to delays in transit. With UPS Online, shipments can be consistently traced in a few minutes, compared with the old process of calling UPS, which could take a few minutes or a few hours.

Team Members: Steve McInelly, Shane Illies, Gary Soderberg, Steve Bichler, Bob Hayes

CONTACT: Steve McInelly, (360) 236-3541

Increased Voice for Customers in Budget Development

In previous budget development years, the Department of Health's communication and involvement of stakeholders lacked a clear, coordinated process. The results were mixed, with some stakeholders getting unclear messages and others feeling left out of a process that would have great impact on their organizations.

In preparation for the `99-01 biennial budget, DOH created a clear process and plan to improve communication and involvement of stakeholders. It included face to face meetings on both sides of the state, personal phone calls from the Secretary, and periodic written updates. A phone survey of a sampling of stakeholders demonstrated a vast improvement in their satisfaction with the communication and their involvement.

Results

★ On a scale of 1 to 4 (1 is worse, 2 is the same, 3 is better and 4 is much better) and compared to previous budget years, customers rated our improvement at 3.5 for both communications and involvement.

★ On the same scale above and compared to other agencies, our rating for communication was a 3.4.

★ On the same scale above and compared to other agencies, our rating for involvement was a 2.9.

Team Members: Patty Hayes, Renee Guillerie, Joan Brewster, Dan Rubin, Kris Van Gorkom, Mary Selecky, Vicki Bouvier, Dena Ackerman, Frank Hickey, Eric Slagle, Maxine Hayes, Faye Olson, Jack Williams, Elizabeth Ward, Greg Smith, Ron Weaver, Terry Reid.

CONTACT: Patty Hayes, (360) 236-4048

New Process Reduces HIV/AIDS Costs

Recent scientific breakthroughs in pharmaceutical treatment have dramatically improved the health of many people with HIV/AIDS. At the same time, the high cost of the new drugs has caused escalating expenses in the Department of Health's AIDS Prescription Drug Program. The Department of Health conducted a competitive process to procure pharmaceuticals and distribute them to over 1,400 clients through a new pharmacy benefits management network. The new process reduces costs to the Department of Health and improves services to clients by coordinating with insurance companies.

Results

★ With pharmacy ingredient costs reduced by 1.5%, the Department of Health saves up to $90,000 per year.

★ Department of Health clients with HIV/AIDS, who also have medical insurance, receive improved service through better coordination of benefits and faster reimbursement for claims.

Team Members: Theresa Fitzgerald, Gary Bell, Toni Wright, Barbara Gimenez, Patty Wynder, Lesa Hanchey, Rhonda Bierma, Maureen Considine, Vince Collins, Raleigh Watts.

CONTACT: Raleigh Watts, (360) 236-3477

Workload Report Streamlined

The Health Professions Quality Assurance Division (HPQAD) produces a monthly report tracking 46 different activities (e.g. complaints received, investigations conducted, etc.) for 50 different health profession programs. The report is used to track workload progress, trends and backlogs. Accumulating data and recording the information was a labor-intensive process involving numerous staff. Manual calculations, copying, distribution and re-entry of numbers to obtain division totals contributed to a time-consuming process with inaccurate numbers. A database was designed to allow programs to directly enter information and obtain their own unit reports. A division-wide report can be automatically run.

Results

★ The margin of error has been reduced by 50%.

★ Direct entry of data eliminated need for central data input function, saving 144 hours per year.

★ Programs have immediate access to current data.

★ On-line access eliminates the need for paper files. Cost savings are estimated at $8800 per year.

Team Members: Bruce Cramer, Tim Boorman, Renae Attwood, Chris Baker

CONTACT: Chris Baker, (360) 236-4996

Bill Review Made Easier

Because the agency legislative review process is complex and must operate quickly to match the pace of the legislature, a team of staff has continued to look for ways to reduce errors and confusion. The team targeted three components of the process: coordination of bill analyses that involve more than one division; how fiscal notes and bills are named; and, how policy decisions are made that involve more than one division or agency. The new process reduces re-work and time involved in cross-referencing assignments. In addition, the DOH legislative reference manual was reformatted to save money and time on revisions.

Results

★ For bills involving more than one division, reduced the turnaround time by two days per analysis.

★ Eliminating cross referencing of assignments, saves up to 200 hours per year.

★ More timely and less costly revisions of the manual, saves about $500 per year.

★ More complete analysis of bills that affect more than one agency division.

Team Members: Carrie Holbrook, Diana Ehri, Terry Bergener, Vicki Bouvier

CONTACT: Vicki Bouvier, (360) 236-4050

Electronic Supply Request Form

The manual process to order supplies required employees to complete and submit a two-part supply request form to Office Services. Upon receiving the completed form, Office Services would prepare a purchase document and send it to the appropriate cost center manager for signature approval. The request would take three days or longer to be approved and routed back to Office Services.

The e-mail Supply Request Form eliminated the paper-based process and streamlined the approval process from three days to minutes.

Results

★ Centralized point for requesting goods and services.

★ Approval process was reduced from 3 days to minutes.

★ Employees receive an electronic copy of their approved request.

★ 154 hours of Office Services staff time is saved.

Team Members: Mike Elliott, Joyce Riley, Doug Golden, Steve Roth, Les Dawes, Tom Jackson, Lee Taylor, Jim Reitz, Susan Hettinger.

CONTACT: Connie Michener, (360) 902-3471

Department of Information Services

Streamlining the Process for Security Staff

The Security Office is staffed in three shifts, 24-hours a day, seven days a week. During each shift, security staff are required to complete a manual activity form. In the event of an incident, a supplemental form is required to describe the incident. The paper-based manual process limited security staff access to sensitive information between shifts and limited their ability to produce timely reports for management.

Through a collaborative effort with the Computer Services Division and the Technology Business Solutions Division, an Intranet security application was designed. The application streamlined the process by eliminating the paper-based process, improving communication and accuracy of information between security shifts, and gave staff the ability to run reports in a timely manner.

Results

★ Eliminated the paper-based manual process.

★ Increased communication between security staff shifts; shifts now have access to instantaneous up-to-date detailed data.

★ The new application provides security staff with a database to track and produce reports in minutes rather than days.

★ Each day's log ins are saved into the database for investigations and archiving.

★ 548 hours of security staff time is saved by eliminating the manual process.

Team Members: Tuck Wilson, Jim Vane, Myrna Frasier, Jim Sexton, Duc Nguyen, Darla Mann

CONTACT: Connie Michener, (360) 902-3471

Contractors Can Re-Register with Speed

Construction Contractors are required to renew their state registration annually with L&I. But the process for doing so was almost hopelessly bogged down - at one point last year, it took nearly a month to process the paperwork associated with re-registration.   The Contractor Registration Process Improvement Team significantly streamlined the Contractor Registration renewal process, resulting in improved benefits for our customers, Labor & Industries and the State of Washington.

Results

★ In April 1998, it took 27 days to process a contractor renewal. On December 1, 1998, it took one day.

★ Mailroom staff saved between two-to-three hours per day by eliminating sorting renewals and documents by alphabet for each staff member.

★ Estimated time savings by the contractor registration staff is 3 hours per day.

★ Anticipated savings include avoiding having to hire temporary help for several weeks to catch up with the backlog that we've had to do for the past three years.

★ Contractors will not lose possible jobs due to the untimely processing of their renewal paperwork.

Team Name: Contractor Registration Process Improvement Team
Team Members: Pam Bergman, Larry Corbin, Anna Cox, Rhonda Freebury, Susan Gudde, Ernie LaPalm, Kevin Morris, Rose Pelegrin, Tami Philamalee, Frank Pope, Kelly Rosie, Roxanna Winn.

CONTACT: Larry Corbin, Quality Resources, (360) 902-4234

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

Help Desk Improvements Reduce the Wait

Staff calling the Information Services (IS) help-desk were experiencing excessive wait times during peak periods. At times, staff are unable to continue working until they receive assistance from the IS help desk, resulting in inefficiency.

To reduce the amount of time staff had to wait, phone lines and voice messaging were added to allow the help desk to handle more calls and allow customers with non-critical problems to leave messages. Internal procedures were also implemented to enable help-desk staff to better manage the peak period call load.

Results

★ Peak period wait times were reduced by 50 percent.

★ Help-desk staff productivity in assisting the business units improved.

Team Name: Help Desk Breakthrough Team
Team Members: Terry Goldsby, Darla Braniff, Francine Wilkowski, Patricia O'Neill, Leah Czikall, Carol Butterfield, Rex Garrett, Sanda Phillips, Liz Larsen, Kelly Rosie, Ed Bryan.

CONTACT: Teresa Goldsby, (360) 902-4656

Education before Enforcement Saves Time and Money

Industrial insurance revenue officers in L&I's central Washington region handle 300 - 500 new collection assignments each quarter. This represents about $1.5 million per quarter, of which 60 to 65 percent is "estimated debt" — owed by employers who failed to file their quarterly reports.

Using quality tools, L&I staff piloted a project to transfer all of these new estimated debt collection assignments from revenue officers to tax service representatives who could take the time needed to contact delinquent employers and explain the industrial insurance reporting requirements to them before subjecting them to the department's legal process. This saved both the customer and state government a great deal of time and money.

Results

★ Customers are now better served since the tax service representatives -- the first step of the collection ladder -- can give them more personal customer service.

★ The average monthly dollar value of the estimated debt in the central Washington region went down from $3,208,339 to $2,859,561 in two quarters.

★ Tax service representatives' regular caseloads went down by 74 percent as a result of this process.

★ The number of new estimated collection assignments to revenue officers was reduced by an average of 90% over two quarters.

★ Revenue officers are now better able to concentrate on contacting the most seriously delinquent customers.

Team Members: Mark Mayer, Marie Jones, Earlene Wilson, Connie Lind, Stacy Schlotman

CONTACT: Mark Mayer, (509) 527-4497.

Department of Labor and Industries

Improving Field Audits – Emphasizing Efficiency and Results

L&I's field audit program monitors employers to ensure that companies are correctly reporting employee hours – a primary factor in determining the amount of premium that companies pay for worker's compensation coverage. This team reviewed the audit process, and the result is a streamlined process that focuses agency resources on firms most likely to be reporting incorrectly.

Improvements included a redesigned set-up letter and pre-audit questionnaire, and an innovative procedure to ensure that account information is current.

Results

★ Employers are better prepared for audits

★ Reporting problems/issues are identified more quickly

★ Increased audit productivity/less employer time

★ Post-audit survey indicates employers are left with a clearer understanding of reporting requirements and expectations

★ Estimated increase of $4,550 in additional annual premium in Region 6

★ Changes and results being shared with agency's other five regions

Team Name: Field Audit Process Improvement Team
Team Members: Judy Paine, Neil Roper, Dave Busch, Steve Beaty

CONTACT: Kelly Honeychurch, (509) 324-2652

Department of Labor and Industries

Change Speeds Completion of Electrical Inspections

Department inspections of completed electrical work by contractors must be done within 48 hours. Department staff believed it could beat this requirement. A team redesigned territories assigned to each inspector with this goal: Within 12 weeks, have inspectors complete 77 percent of the necessary inspections within 24 hours of receiving a request.

Results

★ By the second month, 86 percent of all inspections were completed within 24 hours. This has resulted in 28% more customers receiving their inspections within 24 hours.

★ Stakeholders do not have to wait as long for electrical inspections in order to continue work on the construction sites.

★ Work site safety is enhanced when electrical equipment and trenches can be closed or covered sooner.

★ The inspectors have a more even workload.

Team Name: Region 3 Electrical Inspector's Area Redesign
Team Members: Chuck Paul, Jack Knottingham, John Boespflug, Mike Knutsen, Tim Eaton.

CONTACT: Chuck Paul, (253) 596-3815.

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

Technology Helps HERO

The High Occupancy Vehicle or HOV Program had an antiquated system for processing violations reported by the public through the HERO program. The old process was to batch a weeks worth of violation reports, drive to a nearby WSP communications center, access DOL databases from there, and print off the name and address of the owner of the violating vehicle that was reported to WSP's HERO call-in line. The average turn-around time on initial verification of reported violators was a minimum of 10 days with total processing time (from reported violation to mailing a brochure, letter or other follow up action) of four to six weeks.

DOL was able to link their state-of-the-art Web page inquiry system with WSDOT office in King County through existing data lines. Now the HERO program office can make it's own direct inquires from the DOL data base in almost real time. The information is current and provided at no expense (money or time) to DOL. Money and time saved is very significant to WSDOT and the HERO Progam.

Results

★ Reduced average turn-a-round time from the mininum of 10 days to one day or less.

★ Total processing time of four to six weeks (from reported violation to mailing a brochure, letter or other follow up action) was reduced to approximately one week (and is still decreasing).

★ An extremely manual process of batching, verifying (sometimes two or three times requiring two or three weeks holdover) and transcribing information from one data base to another was replaced with an online verification, cut and paste technique for transfering information from one data base to another.

★ WSDOT staff are keeping current with reported violations without the need for additional staff as required in the past and are able to devote full time to processing incoming reports.

★ The violator can more effectively relate the written follow up message from HERO to their action on the road because the response is now immediate.

Team Members: Washington State Department of Transportation: Jerry Ayres; King County DOT/Metro Transit: Mika Imori, Ray Gambill; Department of Licensing: John Hadden, Dave Purtee, Pat Zlateff

CONTACT: Jerry Ayres, WSDOT, (360) 705-7910;
            Dave Purtee, DOL; (360) 902-3661

Recruitment Cycle Time Project - Phase One

State agency customers have been dissatisfied with the length of time it takes to recruit, test, and set up registers with qualified job candidates. The average time has been approximately forty-five days. Our original goal was to reduce this time by at least 10 percent.

In September, the project team began implementation of Phase One improvements that would result in a reduction of three days. In December, the first landmark measurement showed a reduction of 15 days, which is a 33 percent reduction of recruitment time.

Further improvements in recruitment cycle time are expected as Phase Two of this Quality Improvement project is implemented.

Results

★ A fifteen day or 33 percent reduction in recruitment cycle time.

★ Will reduce hiring time frames for our customers.

★ Will help the state compete for hard-to-fill positions.

Team Members: Christina Valadez, Teri Thompson, Terri Morris, Gary Ernest, Melia Olsen, Art Irving, Connie Smith, Joan Darin, Theresa Eckroth, Patti Sherer-Abear, Jim Fitzgerald, Delia Balatbat, Joe Burgess, Bob Hahn, Rhonda Gibbs, Tom Rawlings, Rhonda Bell, Cathy Cardinal, Wendy Geist, LaQuira Perez, Sherrie Ilg, Fern Morrow, Bob Murff, Wendy Philbrook, Margaret Piephoff, Dorian Sanchez, Brad Bingham, Sally Grele, Georgia Frazier, Leta Danielson, Teresa Dillon, Mary Maine.

CONTACT: Christina Valadez, (360) 586-3329

Savings of Printing and Mailing Costs Due to Discontinuation of Printed Semi-Monthly Summary of Recruitments

The DOP had a long-standing practice of printing and mailing a bi-weekly summary of current job recruitments to various state agencies, organizations, and individuals. Staff questioned the necessity of this practice, since all the same information is on DOP's Internet homepage. After conducting appropriate research with our customers, staff ceased this process, thereby saving approximately 200 hours of staff time; $1,700 in printing costs, and $1,728 in postage.

Results

★ An annual savings of approximately $3,428 in printing and postage and 200 hours of staff time.

Team Members: Connie Smith

CONTACT: Connie Smith, (360) 586-7155

Department of Printing

Streamlining Workflow

Customer orders were being held up in the initial receipt and planning stage. An innovative training process was necessary for new employees in the Production Planning work unit. This training plan along with re-organization of workload enabled an increase of jobs processed providing an anticipated annual revenue increase of $191,000.

Results

★ Training Plan established.

★ Prevention of duplication of work.

★ More jobs processed/Revenue increased.

★ Customer jobs sent to production floor quicker.

Team Members: Sharie McCafferty, Carol Ames, Lance Jauken, Bill Youngblood, Leslie Oliphant, Becki Bretthauer (Customer Representative)

CONTACT: Dan Swisher/Kathy Forbes, (360) 753-6820

Department of Retirement Systems

Correspondence Tracking

Currently each of three Retirement Services units manages and tracks customer correspondence in a different way. Correspondence is sometimes difficult to locate, is delayed or misplaced, and is not easily measured or analyzed for trends or potential service improvements. The management reports produced in the current process are done manually. This project created a standardized, automated system for tracking correspondence received by the Retirement Services division. The prototype system improves correspondence management and allows for collection of meaningful data for management reports on workload indicators, processing time, and other key information.

Results

★ Improves customer service by ensuring better tracking and handling of correspondence, and allows quick assessment and adjustment of workloads to increase production.
★ Standardizes a "best practices" process among Retirement Services units and provides a model system for other agency units.
★ Provides performance measures about responsiveness of service to customers.
★ Provides a basis to analyze and measure correspondence by type, frequency, and categories of customer suggestions to implement future service improvements.
★ Reduces staff time needed to produce reports for assessing and managing workloads and production by 27 hours, a cost avoidance of $630 per year.

Team Members: Diana Brown, Dick Ellis, Jennifer Fielding, Doug Heaberlin, Garth Johnson, Cindy Miller, Jean Oakland, Claire Schwebke, Tim Valencia

CONTACT: Mariann Schols, (360) 664-7069

Dissolution Correspondence

During emotional and stressful divorce and dissolution cases, all parties and their attorneys rely on DRS to provide clear, accurate and timely information about retirement laws and the remedies enforceable against DRS for payment of benefits to alternate payees. In the prior process, staff in three different retirement systems managed and provided services in similar, but different ways. This project consolidated and revised the information provided in the initial customer response into a more concise, clear and professional looking format, tailored to meet the individual needs of the customers. The project team also reviewed flow charts for existing processes and applied "best practice" within all three retirement systems to streamline and simplify the steps for the initial responses to customers.

Results

★ Customer service improved through faster response time and clear, comprehensive information tailored to customers' needs.
★ Staff processing time reduced through the use of standardized materials and "best practice" approach in all units by a minimum 46 hours annually, equal to $666.
★ Anticipated reduction in phone calls from customers previously required to clarify information received. Measures will be taken during the pilot test of the new materials.
★ Standardized information pamphlets present professional materials for customers and their legal advisors.

Team Members: Larry Champine, Dea Clymens, Zanie Crow, Joe Littlemore, Nancy Rushton, Claire Schwebke, Sharlene Smith, Bev Wells

CONTACT: Dave Geiger, (360) 664-7285

Bank Deposited Warrants

Currently approximately 680 retiree and beneficiary warrants are produced and mailed to financial institutions each month, which the institutions must deposit to payees' accounts. Using Quality tools, the team determined that this could be accomplished more efficiently and with greater security through electronic deposit, provided the financial institution is a member of the Automated Clearinghouse. As a result, DRS will send a personalized letter, Authorization of Deposit of Payments form and self-addressed postage paid envelope to these retirees and beneficiaries to encourage them to convert to electronic deposit.

Results

★ Approximately $364 in costs will be avoided each month ($4,368 per year). Assuming payees continue to receive benefits for 10 years, the agency will avoid a total of approximately $43,680 in costs.
★ Retirement funds will be available to customers from one to three days earlier.
★ The potential risk of the warrant being lost, delayed, destroyed or stolen is eliminated.
★ The staff time required to process these deposits manually at financial institutions will be eliminated.

Team Members: Cathy Wolfe, Dick Ellis, Kevin Gripp, Ann Risdon, Lytell Weight, Dennis Wuerth

CONTACT: Johanna Shick, (360) 664-7287

Mailing Labels Project

Frequently, items being mailed to members or others will not fit in a standard window envelope and must, therefore, be addressed manually. From one of the agency's divisions, this type of mail amounts to more than 45,000 pieces each year. When an addressed envelope was required, staff either went to a centrally located typewriter to type the address or manipulated a word processing application in their computers to produce an envelope or label. Both processes were time-consuming. The other method was to hand address envelopes, resulting in an unprofessional looking product not easily processed by the postal service. Through analysis of the current situation and alternative solutions, this team found that the purchase of dedicated desktop label writers would save more than 600 hours of staff time each year.

Results

★ Streamlined workflow reduced processing time by approximately 72 percent, resulting in annual savings of 616 hours staff time, equaling a net cost avoidance of $9,812 per year.

★ Freed-up office space (eliminating typewriter, chair and table area).

★ Staff time redirected to other customer service needs.

★ Elimination of potential delay in mail handling and delivery.

Team Members: Sheryl Hall, Tom Dodson, Michelle Fearing, Ken Goolsby, Vivian Ward, Lytell Weight

CONTACT: Jilene Siegel, (360) 664-7283 or Johanna Shick, (360) 664-7287

Department of Revenue

Assessment Ratios Provided Earlier

Each year Revenue's Property Tax Division reviews every county in the State measuring how closely assessed values compare to the statutory mandate of market value. Adjustments are made to the county's state school levy to assure that each county pays their fair share based on fair market value. Recent changes made by the Property Tax Division have improved the timeliness of this information.

Results

★ 25 of 39 ratios were completed by November 25, 1998. This compares to 7 completed in 1997 and 11 in 1996.

★ The Utilities Section uses these completed ratios to allocate centrally assessed property values to the different taxing districts. More timely processing of this information gives taxing districts better assessment value estimates to use in their budgeting process.

★ Taxing districts are able to finalize their budgets earlier than normal.

Team Name: Ratio Assessment Improvement
Team Members: Deb Mandeville, Pat Baxter, Mary Hyman, Ha Haynes

CONTACT: Sandra Guilfoil, (360) 753-5503

Forest Tax Eliminates Duplicate Efforts

Issuing debits and credits to Forest Excise taxpayers involved duplicate efforts by staff and the use of paper forms. The process has been streamlined by technology and procedural improvements.

Results

★ Redundant information keying by data entry staff eliminated saving 196 hours annually.

★ Tax Examiners enter information directly into the computer.

★ The new program is year 2000 compliant.

★ Security functions and accuracy checks are built in the system eliminating errors.

★ Improved customer service with "turnaround time" for notification to taxpayers reduced as much as 10 days.

Team Name: Improvements in Forest Tax "Notice of Outstanding Balance" Program
Team Members: Nicole Mays, Tola Core, Ila McKinny, Barbie Proffitt, Kunth Plong, Kim Deyo, Bonnie Oberst, Judy Brown, Sonja Long, Barb Hutchinson, Julie Hoke

CONTACT: Tola Core, (360) 753-1368

Increased Efficiency with Computer Assisted Audits

One of the Department's goals is to be less intrusive to customers while continuing to seek efficiencies in agency programs. An audit program was established to transfer electronic financial information, from the taxpayer's computer system to the Department's, without manual input.

Results

★ A reduction in the amount of time an auditor is actually on site at the taxpayer's place of business.

★ Up to a 95% reduction in accounts payable invoices reviewed in a CAAP audit by using various sampling methods.

★ Review of supporting documentation minimized while maintaining sound audit procedures.

★ Manual data entry errors eliminated using taxpayer's electronic records, no retyping data into spreadsheets.

★ Established a foundation for auditing transactions in a paperless business environment. (Electronic Data Interchange)

Team Name: Computer Assisted Audit Program
Team Members: Scott Elliott, John Grant, Bob Sheldon, Doug Godfrey, Kathy Oline, Ted Morgan, Stan Woodwell, Dianne Fisher, Dean Johnson, Forrest Bush, Scott Garrison.

CONTACT: Scott Elliott, (509) 482-3838

Unclaimed Property Reporting Booklet

The Unclaimed Property section previously mailed individual forms to approximately 5,000 businesses once a year. Staff had to gather, stuff and mail the individual forms. The entire process took one week. Now, all the forms are included in one booklet. It also includes the instructions for reporting unclaimed property and is mailed directly from the State Printer.

Results

★ All companies and businesses get all the necessary forms the first time.

★ Mailing and printing costs reduction of $750 annually.

★ 240 staff hours time saved annually.

★ Other states are benchmarking with this booklet (Maine, Florida, and Arizona.)

★ Telephone calls to Unclaimed property (requesting additional forms and information) reduction anticipated.

Team Name: Unclaimed Property Reporting Booklet
Team Members: Mary Gisler, Shirley Styger, Kathy McIsaac, Denise Neeley, Darcy Floe, Debbie Larson, Pat Tate, Jack Neumann, Nancy Savage, Gloria Shawler, Bob Jones, Steve Griffith, Julie Herr, Patti Wilson, Deanna Jackson.

CONTACT: Patti Wilson, (360) 664-2200

Department of Social and Health Services

Revised Eligibility, Payment, Tracking and Reporting Processes for FPS/IFPS Programs

The Family Preservation Services (FPS) and Intensive Family Preservation Services (IFPS) programs in the Children's Administration have complicated eligibility, payment, tracking and reporting requirements. In the Region 1 Division of Children and Family Services office, many staff persons were involved in the original process, and mistakes were occurring frequently which were difficult and time consuming to correct.

The ultimate process was simplified to a short referral form for social workers to complete which, upon supervisory approval, gave authority for payments, budget tracking, receiving and sending reports, and a point of contact for providers to a single payment specialist.

Results

★ 1044 annual FTE hours saved.

★ Improved customer service, as vendors have one point of contact (payment specialist).

★ Timely and accurate payments to vendors. Overpayment errors virtually eliminated.

★ Increased accuracy of client eligibility and referral.

★ Increase accuracy, timeliness of monthly reports.

Team Name: FPS/IFPS Process Improvement Team, Region 1
Team Members: Mark St. John, Ned Panther, Connie Morlin, Carol Anderson, Bev McLaughlin, Pam Copeland, Lee Alsing

CONTACT: Bill Wegeleben, (360) 902-0865

Child Study and Treatment Center Juvenile Forensic Service Improves Quality and Quantity of Evaluations

The Child Study and Treatment Center (CSTC) has experienced an increase in the demand for court-ordered evaluations of juveniles to determine competency to stand trial (forensic evaluations), from 7 in 1992 to over 60 in 1998. In the past, all evaluations were conducted on an inpatient basis at a cost of $395 per day. This huge increase in forensic patients meant delays in admissions for severely emotionally disturbed children on the waiting list.

In 1997-1998, the juvenile forensic service was reorganized. CSTC began conducting evaluations on an outpatient basis by having CSTC psychologists go to detention facilities, or by having children brought to the hospital for interviews and testing without inpatient admission. In collaboration with the Washington Institute for Mental Illness Research and Training, a position was created at CSTC to train in juvenile forensics and to assist in conducting these evaluations. An additional Psychologist/Cottage Director position was also filled.

Results

★ The number of forensic evaluations has increased from 7 to 60 per year with a minimal addition of staff.

★ 840 bed days became available, allowing more severely mentally ill children who need hospital care to be admitted to CSTC.

★ The average cost per evaluation has decreased from approximately $11,850 (the average cost of an inpatient evaluation) to approximately $1,500 (the average cost of an outpatient evaluation).

★ Evaluations are completed in a more timely fashion, with most occurring within the 14 day time limit ordered by the court.

★ The quality of juvenile forensic evaluations has significantly improved.

Team Name: CSTC Juvenile Forensic Service Evaluation Team
Team Members: Holly N. Galbreath, Ph.D., Anthony DuBose, PsyD., Jon McCellan, M.D.

CONTACT: Bill Wegeleben, (360) 902-0865

Department of Social and Health Services

Best Practices Save a Lot of Money

The Department contracts with a major telephone carrier to provide telephone relay services for consumers making telephone calls using a teletypewriter (TTY). The Office of Deaf Services learned from community forums that many of its potential customers were not aware of the availability of telephone access services through Washington Relay Services, nor were they aware that a program existed for the distribution of telecommunications devices to eligible state residents.

The Office decided to solicit a bid from the relay provider to produce a public relations campaign to educate state residents and businesses. A bid of $1.9 million was received for a basic 3-year PR campaign. In the process of completing the bid, Office staff attended quality awareness training and learned the concept of "best practices". In checking with other states, staff learned that a televised media campaign could be developed for less than $80,000. As a result, three 30-second public service announcements were produced in conjunction with Washington Interactive Technologies and aired statewide, at a total cost of only $71,000.

Results

★ Saved $1.8 million over three years.

★ Public Service Announcements were aired to an audience of over two million people during busy day and evening programming.

★ Relay service usage during the first quarter of the new vendor's contract period has already increased 5% over that of the previous provider.

Team Name: PR Campaign for Telephone Access Services Team
Team Members: G.Leon Curtis, Robert Lichtenberg, Michelle Reed, Colleen Rozmaryn, Renee Klosterman, Fran Dunaway, Derek Himeda, Dawn Shaw

CONTACT: Bill Wegeleben, (360) 902-0865

Using One Standard Eliminates Duplicate Inspections

The Division of Alcohol and Substance Abuse regulates chemical dependency treatment programs statewide. Many of those agencies are also certified by national accreditation organizations. In the past, those agencies had to meet two sets of standards, pay separate fees, and had to be "inspected" by two different review teams. That process was costly for everyone involved.

The Division of Alcohol and Substance Abuse worked with the treatment agencies and national organizations to find a common ground. The Division negotiated a voluntary process to recognize a single standard. Now, the Division automatically recognizes agencies meeting the standards for national accreditation.

Results

★ Agreements have been executed with three national accreditation organizations.
★ Sixty-nine (14%) of the 480 state-certified facilities have voluntarily adopted this option.
★ Redundant inspections have been eliminated. The routine 2-3 day inspection has been replaced by a brief supplemental visit, conducted in conjunction with the national accreditation body.
★ Reduced inspection time means reduced fees. Fees charged to agencies have been significantly reduced by as much as 66% for outpatient facilities and over 80% for inpatient facilities.
★ More time is available for Division of Alcohol and Substance Abuse staff to review and provide technical assistance to agencies not participating.

Team Name: Deeming Chemical Dependency Treatment Facilities Team
Team Members: David Curts, Jean Phillips, Everett "Bud" Atkins, Fran Moellman

Contact: Bill Wegeleben, (360) 902-0865

Title XIX (Medicaid) Claim Improvement

Processing the Title XIX claim, which accounts for more than $1.8 billion in federal funds, has historically been extremely complex and time-consuming. The department had been unable to use information from the Cost Allocation System; extensive amounts of overtime were required; there was difficulty in meeting the federal deadline; and, much work was required to reconcile the data. The Office of Accounting Services (OAS) and the Information Technology Office (ITO) decided to develop an automated solution.

The Title XIX Automation Team developed the detailed framework and system design and worked closely with contracted programmers to create the Automated Title XIX Claim System. The team diligently worked to create this system with limited resources, limited time frame, and effective coordination with others in the agency to ensure impacts on stakeholders were minimized.

Results

★ Improved accuracy of Title XIX claim.

★ Relieved stress of Title XIX staff.

★ Simplified overall claim process and agency accounting methods.

★ Savings anticipated for this fiscal year is approximately 320 staff hours.

Team Name: Title XIX Claim Automation Team
Team Members: Bridgitt Butcher, Steve Lin, Marilyn McFarland

CONTACT: Bob Covington, (360) 902-8215

Standardizing Debt Calculations Saves Time and Money

Support Enforcement Officers (SEO's) are required to calculate the child support obligation/debt of a paying parent, on a month by month basis, at least once each year. Every time a significant event happens involving a respective case; i.e., child changes residence, child becomes emancipated, etc., this calculation is also required. As there was not a standardized process for debt calculation, SEO's normally completed the calculation in a variety of ways. The tracking of debt data is often difficult and cumbersome, especially when a case is transferred between SEO's and Field Offices.

The DCS Spokane Debt Calculation team developed a Local Area Network (LAN) calculation program, which standardized the format and allows the calculation to be completed online. All calculations are stored in a central data file within the Field Office and can now be easily accessed by any Support Enforcement Officer assigned to the case. The success of this process improvement in Spokane has statewide implications.

Results

★ Average time saved per calculation is 29 minutes. The Spokane Field Office has over 39,000 cases, therefore annual FTE savings of 18,979 hours is realized.

★ The accuracy of debt calculations has greatly improved by reducing the need for repeated calculations when cases change hands.

★ The LAN application has increased staff time available for all other collection action.

★ The SEO backlog of case review codes is reduced, as review codes for debt calculations are not required as often as in the past.

Team Name: Debt Calculation Team, DCS Spokane Field Office
Team Members: Julie Woods (Team Leader), Dan Petruso, Jeff Gunderson, Brian Coleman, Cathy Price, Lyla Hatfield

CONTACT: Bill Wegeleben, (360) 902-0865

Department of Social and Health Services

Less Paperwork Means More Time for Care Giving

Until recently, people caring for older and disabled people in "Adult Family Homes" were completing a lengthy application every year to renew their license. It took hours to fill out all the paperwork, and department staff was spending lots of time helping providers fill out forms and sending out new licenses.

Aging and Adult Services staff and providers formed a project team to make the process easier for everyone. Working as partners, they came up with a solution: eliminate the entire relicensing process and replace it with a simple statement from the provider declaring there are no changes. Department staff verifies this statement.

Results

★ Department staff and providers spend more time on quality assurance and client care.

★ Providers and department staff are happier with the process.

★ Providers spend 15 minutes on what used to take four hours or more.

★ The department saves 500 hours a year in staff time.

Team Name: Adult Family Home Licensing Simplification Team
Team Members: Jan Thomson, Ben Blake, Stacy Winokur, Geri Ruby-Jones, Janice Shurman (Aging and Adult Services staff); Dan Simminiw (Past President, Washington State Residential Care Conference of Adult Family Homes)

CONTACT: Bill Wegeleben, (360) 902-0865

Improving Communications with Counties

Each county in Washington has a person responsible for coordinating local substance abuse prevention programs. It is often very important to quickly get information out to each prevention coordinator about program activities. Many prevention coordinators have electronic mail, but some don't. Important FLASH messages and other "quick turn-around" communications needed to be faxed. There are between 15-20 episodes each year when a flash message is sent to each prevention coordinator. Each episode required several hours of staff time and machine time, at both ends, transmitting the faxes.

The Division of Alcohol and Substance Abuse worked with a federally funded program to develop an automated E-mail delivery system called a ListServe. That system allows for immediate communication through electronic mail to 31 of the 36 county prevention coordinators. Now, only five prevention coordinators require the use of fax to communicate these important messages.

Results

★ Staff time sending and monitoring fax machine operation was reduced from 1-3 hours per episode to less than ½ hour, saving 45 staff hours annually.

★ Fax machine use was reduced from 1-3 hours per episode to less than ½ hour.

★ Long distance telephone expenses are reduced by $190 each year.

★ Prevention Coordinators now receive important information quickly, can save the information in a useful format, and can electronically reply if necessary.

Team Name: Communication ListServ Team
Team Members: Earl Long, Michael Langer, Kris Reed

CONTACT: Bill Wegeleben, (360) 902-0865

Department of Social and Health Services

New Nursing Home Payment Process Saves Time, $$

The process for paying nursing homes is lengthy and complex. Until recently, there were several steps: setting the rates, paying the nursing home, and then auditing and reconciling the payment. The entire process often took five years to complete. Every minute of staff time in the Aging and Adult Services Office of Rates Management was devoted to these various steps. When the 1995 legislature asked these same staff to take on a major new task, setting rates for home and community-based care, there was no one to take on the workload.

A Rates Management project team took up the challenge to simplify their work so they could take on the new assignment. They combined the rate-setting with the auditing and reconciliation "up front", eliminating a lot of on-site work. This process improvement saved the time of ten staff who were reassigned to the new legislative assignment. An added benefit of the project: nursing homes are now getting paid faster and more accurately.

Results

★ The new procedures reduce the payment cycle from five to two years.

★ Rates Management staff have increased prompt identification of unallowable costs by $15.5 million in a single year.

★ Ten staff have been freed up to work on the new legislative assignment.

Team Name: Nursing Home Rates Team
Team Members: Joseph Perrino, Jill Brady, Bobbie Rae Howard, Lois Brighten, Allen Miller, Kenneth Callaghan, Anh Nguyen-Brooks, Robert Dumar, Arnie Olson, Haldor A. Finnerud, Donna Smith, Toni Zorn, Bert Veinot, Lyle Baker, Jr., Deb Burman, Phil Hansen, Shirley Smythe, Ben Wang.

CONTACT: Bill Wegeleben, (360) 902-0865

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

High-Quality Assessments Result In Better Long-Term Care

Aging and Adult Services staff collect and evaluate a lot of information to plan good care for elderly and disabled clients. This activity is called an assessment. When the assessment is complete and accurate, clients get faster service, tailored to their individual needs. High-quality assessments also help Area Agencies on Aging, who work as partners with the department to serve long-term care clients.

Over a two-year period, an Aging and Adult Services project team in the Southwest section of the state (Region 6) reviewed a sample of five client files per worker. Using an objective-monitoring tool, they identified the 41 most common problem areas. The team then designed and delivered a major training program to improve the quality and accuracy of client assessments.

Results

Two years later, there was:

★ 71% improvement in the 41 most common problem areas.

★ Total elimination of errors when calculating client payments.

★ Faster authorization of services, saving 700 staff hours per month.

★ Less time spent correcting errors.

★ More accurate information sent to the Area Agencies on Aging.

★ Most important - better service plans.

Team Name: Long-Term Care Case Management Team
Team Members: Penny Black,Terry Marker, Marrianne Backous, Debra Knauf, Barbara Follett, Brenda Langner, Jill Ramsey, Rosemary Kot, Carole Wetherington, Marjie Roberts, Hui Cha Le, Kate Kukas, Larry Heiner, Sharon Wightman, Dennis Humfleet, Caroline Tester, Marylyn White, Lois Simko, Mary Galvez, David Yarbrough, Ruben Castenada.

CONTACT: Bill Wegeleben, (360) 902-0865

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

Department of Social and Health Services

TRACKS Increased Inventory Efficiency and Accuracy

The department's inventory system currently tracks $130 million in fixed assets. The department had received 12 years of audit findings prior to 1994 and could not account for $17 million in fixed assets. Staff was buried in paper forms that had to be handled up to 5 times.

Asset Management staff, in collaboration with their customers and regulatory agencies, worked with in-house program designers for 15 months to develop a new inventory database (TRACKS) with an interface between Purchased Services Section and Asset Management. TRACKS is a WEB base application easily accessible by all field offices. The development of TRACKS enables staff to exchange information electronically, eliminate paper, and enhance communications with customers.

Results

★ User training time was cut by one-third.

★ No audit findings for the last two years. Assets that are unaccounted for have been reduced by 88%.

★ $80,000 is saved annually through the elimination of paper forms, postage, file storage and mainframe time. Staff time and paperwork has been reduced by more than 24,000 staff hours annually at headquarters and by 12,000 staff hours annually in agency field offices. Paper forms were replaced with on-line, real time updated records that have a six-year history on all transactions.

★ Advertising of surplus DSHS equipment to all DSHS offices before disposal has ensured the use of the full life of the equipment. Surplus equipment approval time has been reduced from 2 weeks to 1 day.

Team Name: TRACKS
Team Members: Charles Hunter, Robert Beets, Darin Matson, Dan Remey, Wanda Emmick, Ron Fisher, Rick Meyer, James Watson, Paul Nicholson, Lynn Graham, Diane DeLeon, Tom Hoey, Teresa Sapp, Roger Slack, Wayne Johns, Neil House, Pat Kohler, Brian Richardson, Mary Vernetti, Phil Harrison, Cheryl Hjelm, Tracy Sellens, Hector Garcia, and Phil Wozniak (Sponsor).

CONTACT: Wanda Emmick, (360) 902-7541

Family Group Conferences for Child Welfare

Extended family members were virtually excluded from the planning and decision-making that occurs when parents and their children become involved with Children's Services. As a result, an enormous resource was being left untapped, with the people who care most for a child and who often are in the best position to ensure the child's safety kept out of the loop.

Beginning in August 1996, the Kent office of the Division of Children and Family Services initiated a project that provides a forum for parents and their extended family members to develop plans to ensure the safety and welfare of children referred for child abuse and neglect. Borrowing a Best Practice from New Zealand, plans are built by the family. Professional services are augmented with family support and responsibility. With the success of the Kent project, and in partnership with the Northwest Institute for Children and Families, DCFS offices across the state are being trained to the model and are establishing local Family Group Conference (FGC) projects.

Results

★ 54 FGC meetings have been held representing 123 children, most of whom would have been placed in foster care. Nineteen of those children moved from foster care into relative care.

★ Permanency was achieved for 35 of the children by way of relative guardianships or relative adoptions.

★ 24 children were able to remain in their parents' care, through family support and assistance. Three children were safely returned to their parents' care after a stay in foster care.

★ Case resolution is speedier and less adversarial and court involvement is reduced or avoided.

Team Name: Family Group Conference Project, King South Office
Team Members: Bill Caughey, Melissa Hansen, Carol Mitchell

CONTACT: Bill Wegeleben, (360) 902-0865

**Departments of Social and Health Services and
Community, Trade and Economic Development**

Agency Coordination Reduces Duplicate Data Collection

Nineteen counties receive funding from two separate State agencies to support substance abuse prevention activities. Both State agencies require the counties to do a "needs assessment" to help identify priorities for the use of the funds. The requirements were similar, but the reporting formats were very different. To meet the requirement, the counties and contractors involved had to spend an average of two weeks for each needs assessment.

The Division of Alcohol and Substance Abuse and the Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development collaborated to find a compromise. A new process and a combined reporting format were designed. Now the counties must conduct only one needs assessment to satisfy both funding sources.

Results

★ Eliminating the duplicate process has saved up to 80 county-level staff hours for each of the nineteen counties.

★ The two State agencies involved have improved their coordination, collaboration, and information sharing.

Team Name: Needs Assessment Consolidation Team
Team Members: DASA: Michael Langer, Earl Long, Scott Waller, Pam Darby; CTED: Susie Roberts; Counties: Jack Pollard.

CONTACT: Bill Wegeleben, (360) 902-0865

North-End Computer Training Center

State employees in and north of Seattle had three options for obtaining computer training: travel to Tacoma, to Olympia or purchase training from private sector vendors. The first two alternatives represented significant commuting time and expense for staff. The third represented additional expenditures for the participating department.

Additionally, Fircrest Residential Habilitation Center staff needed training, but the facility had limited training dollars. Fircrest also wanted to heighten its role as a viable resource center for persons with developmental disabilities, and their caregivers, living in the surrounding communities.

The team comprised of staff from Office of Organization & Employee Development (OOED), Fircrest, and Department of Personnel, developed a North-End Training Center at Fircrest. The classes are advertised through Department of Personnel and conducted by OOED two weeks per month.

Results

★ State employees north of Seattle can attend needed training more easily. Travel time and expenses are greatly reduced.
★ For providing and maintaining the training facility, Fircrest receives three seats in every class. Fircrest staff who might not otherwise receive training now are.
★ Surplused equipment was used to set-up the new computer training lab; thus, saving the cost of purchasing new equipment.
★ Fircrest Plant Operations did extensive work remodeling an old, existing building and turning it into what is now a highly functional computer-training lab. When not in use by OOED, Fircrest utilizes the facility to conduct internal training. Plans are also underway to include a second classroom for video-conferencing.

Team Name: Fircrest/OOED/DOP Computer Training Team
Team Members: OOED: Gayle Robbins, Brian Clark, Karen Bruhn, Cheryl Burdett, Cath Moore, Tonia Frasier, Stan Freeman; Fircrest: Asha Singh, Bill Riddle, Chris Olsen, Gerard Duguay, David Lingwood, Dean Crawford, Mike Scott, Bob Love, Cliff Glines, Tim Cleary, Marvin Edison, Robert Forhan, Joyce Glover, Wagdi Hafzalla, Art Hedquist, Charlotte Kochopolus, Shin Lee, John Martin, Roland Nelson, Bert Richardson, Carl Robinson, Bradley Scott, James Stalker, Scott Thomas, Frank Webb, Dan Zeth, Bill Gega, Dave Chielens; DOP: David Dobson

CONTACT: Gayle Robbins, (253) 566-5760

Communication Improves Customer Service, Helps Staff

Communication within the SW Region's Information Technology (IT) office and between the office and their customers was insufficient. This resulted in a lack of information, which made it difficult to prioritize work; inequitable service, which depended on the customer's distance from the Regional Office; and poor response time to customer requests, averaging 3 - 4 weeks. A natural work group was formed to address these issues, and their efforts have greatly improved service to customers.

The team worked with customers to devise a system to prioritize customers' immediate and long-term needs. Then IT job descriptions were redefined and the workforce reassigned to address the prioritized needs. All requests for service now come in through a central help desk, where they are logged in and passed on to the appropriate staff person. A tracking system is being used to monitor results. The system will also be used to create a history to identify opportunities for further improvement and to direct future allocation of IT resources.

Results

★ Response time to customer requests dropped from 3-4 weeks to one day!

★ Response time is consistent throughout the Region, regardless of the customer's distance from the Regional Office.

★ Unresolved issues dropped from 90 per day to between 2 and 5 per day!

Team Name: SW Region Information Technology Team
Team Members: Bill Hilton, Dave Paradis, Debbie Hendrix, John Morris.

CONTACT: Bill Hilton, (360) 905-2040.

Local Agencies Receive Funds Twenty-two Days Sooner through New E-mail Billing Process

Local agencies receive federal funding through the Department of Transportation's TransAid Service Center. Those funds are used to pay for local transportation projects. From submission to receipt of funds, the average turn-around time, before this process improvement effort, was 27 to 30 days.

The TransAid Service Center staff recognized that reducing the time it took to reimburse local agencies on their federal aid projects would be a great help to those agencies.

Staff from DOT, the State Auditor's Office, and a local agency took on the challenge. They devised an electronic submission system and tested it for several months. The new billing system is now available to all TransAid customers.

Results

★ Local agencies electronically submit their progress billings to TransAid.

★ Total process time is between three and nine days for local agencies to receive reimbursement.

★ Time-savings are about 22 days, compared to the billing system used in the past.

Team Name: E-Mail Billing Process Improvement Team
Team Members: Nancy Huntley, Dick Egolf, Dan Contris, Marcy Yates, Randy Witt

CONTACT: Nancy Huntley, (360) 705-7378

Creative Ways to Save $ and Improve Continuity of Medical Care

Sometimes we just continue to work within a system because it is easier than asking the five "Why" questions. This has never been more apparent than with the issue of medical care at one of our two veteran's homes. Through the years, the number of physicians and nurse practitioners providing medical care to our residents has grown to a total of eight contracts. Each provided quality service on a limited basis which did not always allow for the best continuity of care. Veterans were not always happy with having a variety of care providers. Looking at the data and using quality tools to reach a decision, the team was able to save money and provide care that is more consistent with one physician and one to two nurse practitioners. A simple solution, but not one that would be identified if the "Why" questions had not been asked.

Results

★ Short term: The Medical Director position was terminated and duties assumed by Orting Medical Director for 3 months. Savings of $4,500.
★ New Medical Director hired effective Mid-January will work closely with their sister facility to provide consultation and support.
★ Other contracts terminated and opportunity to provide improved continuity of care continue to reduce costs and improve customer satisfaction.

Team Name: Medical Director Process ACTION TEAM
Team Members: Steve Erickson, Bless Mamerto, M.D., Ellen Watson, Po Dixon, Byron Williams, Ed Dolle

CONTACT: Ed Dolle, (360) 895-4358

Making Pet Therapy Safe for Everyone

There is plenty of research on how animals assist long-term care residents improve the quality of their life. At the two Veterans homes, our residents have enjoyed having pets to care for and spend time with them. The problem is there is a lack of consistency in the way the facility, residents, and visiting pets were managed. Issues of non-immunized pets and stray animals have become a safety issue.

A team was formed to discuss the issues and collect data about the number of times this happens, what we have done about it in the past and what can be done. A policy was created to assist all staff, residents and visitors in understanding why decisions about pets are made and the responsibilities about pet care.

Results

★ A standard set of guidelines to be followed by residents, volunteers, staff and visitors concerning pets on the grounds was created.
★ Staff are aware of general responsibility of pets and who has responsibility and will arrange for medical, nutritional and other needs of facility pets.
★ Guidelines will ensure all pets on premise have updated vaccinations and records on file.
★ Guidelines developed for dealing with stray animals; keeping residents and staff safe.
★ The pet committee will continue to meet quarterly to deal with issues as they arise.

Team Name: Pet ACTION TEAM (PAT)
Team Members: Ileen Gallagher, Joanna Curley, Shannah Rongen, Greg McKernon, Alice Wynalda

CONTACT: Ileen Gallagher, (360)-893-4566

Department of Veterans Affairs

Therapeutic Activities Cost savings

The cost of ceramic greenware and bisque used in therapeutic activities program at the Washington Soldiers Home has gone up dramatically over the past few years. The cost finally reached the point where many residents were either unable or unwilling to participate in creating ceramic art.

An ACTION TEAM was formed and brainstormed a variety of way to lower costs. One idea was to contact several Western Washington ceramic stores about donating their excess stock, seconds, and any ceramic pieces that were being eliminated through normal stock rotation. The response was so generous that such donations have become the source of 90% of the ceramic pieces used in WSH activities program. As an added benefit, the stores deliver most of the items. The combined effect is to allow the program to offer the ceramic program free of charge to residents.

Results

★ Motivated more residents to participate in therapeutic ceramics.

★ Residents saved $1500 annually in fees to participate.

★ Saves staff time to prep ceramics because they come ready to paint.

★ Created a community awareness of the WSH and the needs of Veterans.

★ Resident included in the ACTION TEAM helped to connect residents to improved quality of service and shared leadership philosophy.

Team Name: Recreation Therapy ACTION TEAM
Team Members: Gina Weekly, Lynn Zemke, Ileen Gallagher, Shannah Rongren, Kari Arthur, Bev Frawley, Robert Williams

CONTACT: Lynn Zemke, (360) 893-4511

Provider Notification

To assure that our customers' health needs are met by ensuring providers are notified when potentially dangerous drug interactions are identified, specific drug recalls have been initiated, or when prolonged drug usage has been identified for specified treatment programs.

Historically, the medical director of the Uniform Medical Plan (UMP) has received minimal information relative to specific drug utilization patterns of UMP members. The UMP participating pharmacies were linked via the Merck-Medco pharmacy network system, and the pharmacists were alerted when potentially dangerous drug interactions were identified. Medical director access to this information was limited due to lack of drug-specific data contained on the claims database. The data included the cost of the drugs and whether they were brand name or generic, but failed to provide the actual name and dosage of the drug.

Results

★ The new process has resulted in improved data to the UMP. Potentially dangerous utilization patterns (e.g. patients utilizing multiple providers to obtain narcotics, prolonged utilization of pharmaceuticals with best practice as short-term utilization, notification to providers recently prescribing drugs that have been recalled, etc.) have been identified and allow for expedient notification to providers.

★ The UMP goal for the first 90 days of this new process was to identify members with potential drug interactions and notify at least 100 practitioners whose patients were identified. Through HCA and Merck-Medco analysis, over 1500 cases were identified. Letters were sent to all prescribing providers whose patients matched one or more of the criteria described above. The practitioners were provided with pertinent information with which to make a clinically sound judgment regarding the patient's continued course of treatment.

Team Members: Beau Bergeron, Andrew Brunskill, Charles Hooper, Cheryl Mustard, Sharon Thompson, Richard Whitten.

CONTACT: Cheryl Mustard, (206) 521-2022

Mentoring Program, 1998 Initial Study Group, Air National Guard

Recruiters successfully increased the number of interested and qualified women and minorities recruited in 1998. However, promotions and advancement in the department did not reflect the same positive trends, specifically in the under-represented groups. The negative trend was evaluated by the feedback gathered in exit interviews, and a need for a formalized mentoring program became evident. Mentoring has occurred informally, but has not always been available to or initiated by minorities and women members. An active formalized mentoring program is a method to inform, encourage and develop future leaders. The intent is that the formalized mentoring program will benefit "green and growing" members, while giving the experienced mentors feedback and perspective from the workforce level member. The expectation is to see retention improve with members remaining in a part-time or full-time commitment in the National Guard for their full eligible tenure. These mentors and protegee's are both role models of continual learners, leaders, innovators; they are critical to keeping a balance in a workforce continually affected by drawdowns and the challenges of the new millenium.

Results

★ Mentor-Protégé Partnerships resulted in 24 volunteers, with a survey implemented quarterly for one year with positive results.   All participants plan to continue.
★ Members who regularly communicate with their mentor state they have increased confidence, self-awareness and see more clearly how they can contribute to the whole unit.
★ Testimony from Protégés include improved communication skills, another states she applied for a new military position in the state both due to a mentor's influence and encouragement. Several others have enrolled in college courses to initiate or complete degrees. Mentors felt valued and rewarded in new ways.
★ Increase in workforce diversity due to under-represented group member's receiving mentoring.
★ Increases capability in the present and the future.
★ Sets the stage for an organizational culture where all members can fully realize their potential.
★ Meets national goals and objectives, while building internal teams, partnerships and inviting workforce involvement.

Team Members: Capt Alonna Cliatt, CMS Joe Williams, SRA Mara Thorsen, Capt Maureen Phillips, LTC Yafeau Nantwi, LTC Joe Huden.

CONTACT: Capt Dana Sawyers, (253) 512-7790

"Feedback" E-Mail and Voice Mail Increases Employee's Involvement - These New Methods Showed a Dramatic 1600% Rise in Realistic, Affordable Ideas!

Feedback from employees is essential to the success of all businesses and agencies. Recognition of individual and team innovations and performance results promotes awareness of goals and objectives. An efficient and economic method for gathering results of implemented improvements and new ideas for continuous improvement was needed. The goal of "Feedback" is to inform and gather back information in the widest possible forum with the least use of paper possible. The Quality Center is the clearinghouse for Feedback inputs. Feedback@cpmurray.army.mil is set up for automated communication agency wide, as well as a phone line to allow for non-attribution inputs. In the fourth quarter this method picked up from 3 inputs to 47 suggestions received. This will pick up even more as newsletters and employees recognize the usefulness of the e-mail address and voice communication method to increase quality and innovation.

Results

★ Improves internal communication and removes barriers.

★ Institutionalizes the concept of employee participation.

★ Increased the internal and external customer and supplier satisfaction in getting information in a more timely manner.

★ Increased efficiencies of councils to deal with real improvements reporting.

★ Aligns "Feedback" as a business practice with continuous improvement methods.

Team Members: State Partnership Council Members: Mr. Curt Kyle, Mr. Tony Perez, Ms. Evelyn Peters, SMS Mona Kilbourne, Mr. Dave Rider, Mr. Brad Olson, Ms. Valjean Merrill, Ms. Jennifer Connally, Capt Dana Sawyers, SFC Bill Moreland, Ms. Nani McLaughlin, Ms. Linda Ramsey, Mr. Glen Woodbury, BG Lee Legowik, MG Frank Scoggins

CONTACT: Capt Dana Sawyers, (253) 512-7790

Budget Versions Are Analyzed On-Line

As the state legislature deliberates the state budget, agencies' proposed budgets can go through as many as five versions. Budget analysts in state agencies analyze and respond to those versions to the legislature, agency managers, and the Office of Financial Management. But getting the pages of budget information for analysis was awkward and time-consuming and the analysts ultimately had to rekey the data for their use.

In January 1999, the BASS project, through its Version Reporting System, began delivering on-line access to the state budget versions. Analysts in state agencies can now receive the versions at their desktops and avoid phone requests, printouts and rekeying into spreadsheets. The Version Reporting System is the latest OFM Intranet-based offering aimed at revamping state budget development.

Results

★ Use of the Intranet to deliver budget tools to agencies' desktops.

★ Reduced effort by an estimated four hours per agency per budget version.

Team Name: BASS Design Team
Team Members: Allen Schmidt, Art Overman, Sharon Novak, Thomas Heichelbech, Nancy Johnson, Dave Thorson, Patsy Nutt, Don Morris, Dan Wilson

CONTACT: Allen Schmidt, (360) 664-3381

Faster Bill Paying Serves Agency Clients

The Office of Financial Management serves as the fiscal office for approximately 40 small agencies. A key service is the prompt payment of agencies' bills. Prior to this process improvement, payments were taking many weeks. Customers lost the opportunity for early payment discounts and incurred late fees, and vendors complained of the poor business practices.

The work unit implemented several changes to reduce turnaround time from weeks to 85% paid within five days. The team is pushing ahead to further reduce this turnaround, with a goal of 94% paid within three days, to be accomplished by July 1, 1999.

Results

★   Achieved 85% of payments within five days.

★   Reduced the number of steps in the payables process by over 12%.

★   Eliminated the copying or filing of certain copies.

★   Developed new team collaboration among staff and customers.

★   Discontinued an ineffective imaging system.

Team Name: SACS Payables Improvement Project
Team Members: Yolanda Wilson, Carol Chatwood, Keith Cooper, Brain Hageman, Debbie Johnson, Melinda McNamara, Laurie Rippon, Brenda Taylor, Kristina Allen, Lynne McGuire and customers Vicki Flynn, Conservation Commission, Cheryl Sexton, Board of Accountancy.

CONTACT: Yolanda Wilson, (360) 664-3406

Performance Expectations and Process Streamlining Reduce Backlogs and Turnaround Time

Over many years, the cataloging team had developed sizable backlogs in their work. There were no protocols for the process, no individual performance expectations and no agreement on standards for either turnaround time or quality. The result was that new items could take three weeks to three years to be cataloged and on the shelf for users.   The team: Instituted process protocols, established and adopted performance expectations and accountability procedures, streamlined the process to eliminate redundancies and inefficiencies and introduced an additional cataloging database tool.

Results

★ Average turnaround for new items reduced from 151 to 70 days

★ All backlogs in books, federal documents, videos and toys eliminated

★ Average monthly production increased from 277 to 402

★ Work area cleaned up, allowing space for an additional staff person

★ Morale of team members raised dramatically

★ Catalog streams consolidated into one, making it easier for customers to find items in the queue

Team Name: Information Access Team
Team Members: Fumiko Coyne, Carol Frink, Janice Hammock, Milly Townsend, Virginia Balogh, Anne Whitney

CONTACT: Fumiko Coyne, (360) 704-5278

Motor Pool Evaluation and Management

The Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission is a decentralized agency with 125 parks sites, 10 central and remote headquarters locations and stakeholder/client locations throughout the state. A work force of 80-100 employees must travel among the various remote locations using a fleet of 18 vehicles. Because of budget constraints, the fleet is aging and replacement of vehicles must be delayed. The repairs required to keep these vehicles in operation are expected to be more costly and more frequent than for newer vehicles. Eight of the 18 vehicles have over 100,000 miles. No one in headquarters is qualified to evaluate quotes, identify needed repairs or determine the correctness or appropriateness of the service received on these vehicles.

To keep the aging vehicles in operation while avoiding excessive repair costs, the Administrative Services Division in cooperation with the agency's Equipment Shop has set up a comprehensive system to evaluate the entire fleet. Each vehicle in the fleet is assessed on the basis of condition, use patterns and potential life expectancy repair costs. Vehicles are given a service log and placed on a maintenance and replacement schedule.

Results

★	The results included an immediate reduction in the need to spend scarce dollars on repairs. The initial savings of $4500, resulting from in-house repairs suggests estimated annual savings in excess of $7000.
★	Vehicles can be selected on basis of local use or long distance travel.
★	The most significant impact that will result from this effort is the increased safety of employees on the road and the decrease in anxiety they feel driving older vehicles.
★	This team effort improved the quality of our motor pool and serves as a model for intra-agency cooperation and inter-divisional work.

Team Name: Motor Pool Team
Team Members: Ed Gianini, Rufino Ignacio, Rita Cooper, Edwin Maldonado

CONTACT: Rufino Ignacio, (360) 902-8548

Volunteer Park Host Training Program

To meet ever-increasing demands for staff support for Park Rangers, State Parks has been expanding its use of volunteers to perform many essential park operation functions including meeting and serving customers, litter collection, and serving as the Park Ranger's eyes and ears in parks. The Volunteer Park Hosts improve the overall atmosphere in the park and the camping experience for visitors and staff. To ensure Volunteers are properly trained to meet and deal with situations they may encounter, the State Parks Volunteer Program conducts and evaluates an annual training "Camporee". Improvements to the 1998 Volunteer Host Camporee focused on enhanced visitor service orientation, greater effectiveness in imparting information, increase participation and greater year-round efficiency in cost and use of staff time. Prioritizing the training offered allowed more time for Park Rangers and Hosts to discuss critical campground host issues and to build productive long-term partnerships.

Results

★ The 1998 Camporee was shortened by one half day, reducing staff per-diem and the cost of meals, saving $ 401. Yet the efficiencies gained resulted in an eleven percent increase in the number of Host hours donated (1998 total 125,000 hrs).

★ More effective Host orientation provided a saving of 5580 hours to our Park Rangers during camping season thanks to reductions in park familiarization and on-site training in policies and procedure and increases in the Host's abilities to take initiative or handle routine situations.

★ The Camp Hosts help park staff collect and ensure required camping fees are paid. Comparing the past history of non-payment of camping fee with the current rate, the Volunteer Program estimate that Camp Hosts generated over $72,000 in camping fees in 1998 (fees typically not paid by scofflaws).

★ Better preparation of Hosts allowed for increased participation and longevity for Volunteer Host and a reduction in the number of Hosts that unexpectedly quit because they were not prepared for the nature of their experience.

★ Other anticipated impacts include reduced vandalism due to improved Host awareness and presence in target areas at target times, reduced Tort claims due to improved Host understanding of hazardous areas and activities, quicker emergency response to visitor accidents due to awareness training.

Team Name: Volunteer Program Staff
Team Members: Brenda Moorfield, Joan Hauser-Crowe, Kathy Randall, Harry Louch, Sarah Oldfield

CONTACT: Joan Hauser-Crowe, (360) 902-8582

State Parks and Recreation Commission

Capital Budgeting Improved through Interdisciplinary Teamwork

In the past, the capital budgeting process was criticized for not fully including all agency divisions as participants in the creation and priority ranking of budget proposals. The process also lacked methods for changing priorities to respond to actual needs. Imprecise work plans and cost estimates led to under-funded and/or inaccurate scopes of work once the budget was approved and funds appropriated.

Beginning with the 1997/99 capital budget request, State Parks incorporated elements from the agency strategic plan to set policy statements (goals) and determine scoring criteria (objectives) to formulate and rank capital funded projects. An interdisciplinary, capital action team, participated in the nomination, scoring and ranking capital budget request by:
 (1) reviewing the agency strategic plan and identifying specific policy statements that should be directly linked to the capital budget request;
 (2) reviewing impacts from the capital budget on the operating and maintenance budgets; and
 (3) requesting funding for those projects which have a high probability for successful appropriation.

Results

★   This interdisciplinary team approach allows staff, at each level, to participate in the capital budget process so that funding requests represent agency-wide agreement on valid, current needs.
★   The Governor's Office and Legislature can evaluate the capitol budget request more objectively because it systematically reflects the agency's goals/objectives and strategic plan.
★   Staff and stakeholders are expressing the feelings that the process was fair, represented agency goals and objectives and that their interests were heard and appreciated throughout the entire budgeting process.
★   Future appropriation requests can reflect greater accuracy and efficiency and can result in the allocation of the highest project funding to those projects that serve the greatest needs.
★   Capital appropriations are more likely to cover the true costs for projects, and projects serving the greatest public needs are more likely to receive funding.

Team Name: Capital Action Team
Team Members: Tom Boyer; Terry Doran; Bill Jolly, Bill Koss, Paul George, Tom Oliva, Mike Anderson

CONTACT: Tom Boyer, (360) 902-8616

Utilities and Transportation Commission

Improved Tracking Process Brings in Outstanding Penalties

Companies regulated by the Commission can be assessed penalties for violations and/or noncompliance with laws and regulations.   Procedures for tracking outstanding penalties needed improvement. New procedures were implemented to better track outstanding penalties.

Results

★ $19,715 in penalties collected.

★   Payment arrangements made for $18,000.

★ $24,035 in outstanding penalties was suspended and are now being tracked to ensure compliance.

★ $2,500 penalty referred to collection.

★ $9,700 in penalties written off and records cleaned up.

Team Name: Outstanding Penalties Team
Team Members: Pat Dutton, Carolyn Caruso, Ray Gardner

CONTACT: Gloria Papiez, (360) 664-1157

New Automated System Improves Tracking of Consumer Contacts

The Commission receives thousands of contacts by consumers each year. Consumer contacts may be complaints against regulated companies, consumer inquiries, or consumer comments on matters before the Commission. An antiquated system was used to record and track consumer complaints. No system existed to track other types of consumer contacts.

A new database application was developed to track all types of consumer contacts. The new system will provide valuable information to the Commission on the volume and types of contacts made which will allow more focused and consistent public outreach services.

Results

★   Improved management and tracking of consumer contacts.

★   Improved outreach services.

★   Increased functionality for Consumer Affairs staff in responding to consumer complaints and managing their workload.

Team Name: Consumer Contacts Team
Team Members: Cathie Anderson, Melinda Carruth, Ray Ellis, Foster Hernandez, Carlene Hughes, Roger Kouchi, Mike Kretzler, Marilyn Meehan, Jeffrey Showman, Nancy Stanton, Mary Taylor

CONTACT: Gloria Papiez, (360) 664-1157

Inter-Agency and Inter-School Cooperation for the Promotion of Braille Literacy

For many years, the library at the Washington State School for the Blind has been unable to keep up the current literature and reference materials in braille format due to the high cost, yet it is the availability of such materials that help to insure literacy among blind students as required under Washington State Statutes and Federal mandates. Braille materials are extremely expensive. A typical novel selling for $15 in the bookstore can cost up to $300 in braille, and reference materials may run as high as $1,000 for a single book. Through informal agreements within Washington and throughout the country, WSSB has been able to increase the Braille collection 50% at no additional cost to taxpayers.

Results

★ In a three-year period, WSSB has added nearly 2,000 volumes of braille materials to its collection, including children's, juvenile, adult and reference materials.

★ Use of the library by students, staff and outside consumers has increased nearly 75%.

★ Cooperative relationships established with several Schools for the Blind nationally who were willing to share extra materials.

★ Cooperative relationship established with the Regional Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (Seattle) which now sends books to WSSB on permanent loan.

★ Cooperative loan relationships with Alabama Regional Instructional Resource Center, which will provide us with duplicate materials at no cost.

Team Members: James O. Bickford, Debbie Combs, Alan Roth

CONTACT: James O. Bickford, (360) 696-6321, ext. 140.

Electronic Fund Rejections

In order to collect payment from our retailers for scratch tickets, the Lottery's accounting system has the ability to obtain the funds electronically. Retailer Services staff noticed a high frequency of electronic fund transfer (EFT) rejections occurring in our Korean-speaking retailer population. Among Korean-speaking retailers EFT rejections accounted for 45 percent of the entire rejection by the fourth quarter of 1997.

Lottery management recognized the need to be able to communicate with our Korean-speaking retailers and hired dual language-speaking individuals. Written instructions and newly created forms in Korean enhance understanding, make scratch ticket management easier, and simplify ticket inventory procedures. Quarterly, the data collected shows a steady decline of EFT rejections. For example, 4th Qtr/97 rejections were 45 percent, 1st Qtr/98 were 42 percent, 2nd Qtr/98 were 37 percent, and 3rd Qtr/98 were 28 percent.

Results

★ Since December 1997, electronic fund transfer (EFT) rejections have been reduced from 45 percent to 28 percent for an overall reduction of 17 percent.

★ Increased retailer confidence in the product they sell and their ability to manage their scratch ticket inventory.

★ Increased retailer trust in the Lottery's willingness to provide them assistance to increase their sales.

★ About 132 FTE hours are saved by the reduced need to travel to retailers with a high occurrence of EFT rejections.

★ Forms are provided for Korean-speaking retailers as well as non-Korean speaking retailers, serving as easy and convenient ticket management and training tools.

Team Members: Kim Sauer, Seong Park, Chongsun Abbott, Young Kir, Alex Lee

CONTACT: Kim Sauer, (360) 586-2544

Dedicated Power Circuit for On-Line Terminals

In order to sell Lottery on-line games such as Lotto, Lucky for Life, Daily Game, Keno, and Quinto, retailers must have a piece of equipment called an ISYS terminal. To protect their equipment, most of our contractors require dedicated electric lines. Bringing in dedicated lines is costly to the retailer, leaves little flexibility for later remodeling, and compliance testing is hazardous to Washington State Lottery employees.

A Lottery District Sales Representative independently conducted research and found technology that could replace the need for dedicated lines. His discovery was a surge protection device developed for the NASA Space Program that could provide better protection for the ISYS terminal than dedicated lines.

This device will be cheaper than line installation, provides retailers more flexibility, and does not require hazardous compliance testing. The surge protection device solution is an excellent example of improving the work environment and service to our retailer customers.

Results

★ New on-line retailers will no longer be required to install dedicated power lines for ISYS terminals. This is a savings of about $215 per retailer.

★ At new store locations, District Sales Representatives will no longer be required to inspect for power compliance. The estimated savings in man hours would be about 1700 per year. That equates to approximately $39,600.

Team Members: Scott Syverson

CONTACT: Scott Syverson, (509) 575-2252

Broadcast Drawings Negotiation

The Washington State Lottery conducts drawings to randomly select winning numbers for our on-line games such as Lotto, Lucky for Life, Daily Game, Keno, and Quinto. These drawings are televised live statewide as a service to our players. For three years, the drawings were broadcast on KIRO-TV in Seattle, KNDO/KNDU-TV in Yakima, and KHQ in Spokane. The combined cost to televise the drawings was over $790,000. The problem we encountered was that the drawings were not broadcast at a consistent time. This caused confusion and frustration for our players.

Working with our advertising agency Publicis, we determined that a change to NorthWest Cable News was in the best interest of the Lottery and its players. NorthWest Cable News guaranteed consistent airtimes for our drawings. Rigorous negotiation efforts resulted in a savings of $584,000. NorthWest Cable News agreed to provide free airtime, while the Lottery pays an estimated $206,000 for production costs.

Results

★ Negotiating free airtime resulted in a savings of $584,000 for Fiscal Year 1999.

★ Consolidating the drawing broadcasts to one statewide channel provides consistent airtimes and reduces the possibility of preemptions due to alternate programming on three different television stations.

★ The new contract includes a provision to air the drawings more frequently. Currently the drawing results are broadcast hourly from 7:00 p.m. until 8:00 a.m. the following day. Previously, the results were aired twice a day.

★ NorthWest Cable News is airing daily commercials and has produced magazine advertising to promote the drawing broadcasts. This provides additional awareness and exposure for the Lottery at no additional cost.

Team Members: Kathy Kozu, Mary Jane Ferguson, Mara Sobel, Ron Jaco (Publicis), Mark Scott (Publicis)

CONTACT: Mara Sobel, (360) 753-3409

Pollution Liability Insurance for Petroleum Tanks

Federal and State laws require that owners and operators of petroleum underground storage tanks must demonstrate financial responsibility for the costs of environmental cleanup in case of a release or spill. The most visible operators of petroleum underground storage tanks are gas stations and convenience stores.   Other tank operators include hospitals, construction companies, county public works facilities, school and fire districts, automobile dealers, etc.

EPA rules allow eight different methods for the tank owner to demonstrate financial responsibility, but the only practical alternative for small or medium-size businesses is the purchase of pollution liability insurance. When the requirements for financial responsibility became effective in 1989, pollution liability insurance in Washington was neither readily available, nor affordable. The Pollution Liability Insurance Agency (PLIA) was created to respond to the predicament of pollution liability insurance being required, but not being available or affordable.

Results

★ PLIA commenced providing pollution liability insurance in December 1990. Tank owners and operators immediately experienced a savings of 40% to 70% in premiums, with lower deductible amounts; for example, $15,000 deductible instead of $50,000 deductible.

★ Since the inception of the PLIA program, insurance premiums have been reduced even more. Since 1991, the average premium per tank per year has been reduced from $930 to $552; the average premium per site has been reduced from $3100 per year to $1550. With over 6600 tanks insured, the savings to small businesses and local governments has been dramatic. The savings experienced by policyholders for the past two years, as well as for the life of the program, are: Savings 1997-98 of $284,746; Savings 1996-97: of $238,392; Savings 1991-98 of $2,503,116.

Team Name: Pollution Liability Insurance Agency
Team Members: Jim Sims, Sharon Martineau, Hun Seak Park, Tish Vessey, Ginny Ristine, Andrea Browne, Christie Turner, Jeff Wilcox.

CONTACT: Jim Sims, Director PLIA, (360) 586-5997

State Patrol Responds to Citizens' Road Rage Concerns

The Washington State Patrol contracts with Washington State University's Division of Governmental Services to conduct its biannual citizens' survey. In response to citizens' concerns regarding road rage, the Washington State Patrol has implemented an aggressive driver apprehension program. A cross-functional team reviewed programs in 14 other states. They recommended the use of unmarked cars targeting high traffic problem areas in Pierce and King Counties. The program has expanded to include other problem areas on state routes. The program consists of a line sergeant and two troopers. The troopers rotate every three months in order to provide more officers with the opportunity to participate.

Results

★ From July to December 1998, the 10 troopers assigned to the program were able to stop a total of 3,062 vehicles for aggressive driving resulting in:

  2,148 citations, including 97 for negligent driving, 27 for reckless driving, 62 for driving while license suspended, 19 for driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs and 1,128 for speeding (majority between 80 and 100 mph).

★ Effective training and awareness for troopers in increasing their response to issues surrounding aggressive drivers.

Team Members: Trooper Mark Anderson, Trooper Charles Arnold, Captain John Batiste, Trooper Mike Dahl, Sergeant Gary Gasseling, Trooper Eric Handley, Trooper Scott Jarmon, Sergeant Terry Ketcham, Trooper Tim Lenander, Trooper Ken Noland, Trooper Lance Ramsay, Lieutenant Charles Schreck, Trooper Greg Ulrich, Trooper Orest Wilson.

CONTACT: Lieutenant Glenn Cramer, (360) 753-0240 x114.

Gasoline Storage Tanks Partnership Saves Time, $$

For the past 25 years, the Washington State Patrol has managed an inventory of 23 large underground gasoline storage tanks for vehicle refueling on a statewide basis. On July 1, 1998, the Department of Transportation assumed maintenance and operation responsibility of the State Patrol's system along with its 117 tank inventory. Collectively the two agencies reviewed the individual operations and determined one agency could administer the combined programs more effectively and at less cost.

Results

★ The State Patrol will no longer have to maintain a system of data collection and operational issues.

★ The Department of Transportation can administer this system without additional personnel.

★ 117 additional refueling sites are now available for WSP vehicles and 23 for DOT vehicles statewide.

★ Enhances the partnership between the two transportation agencies.

★ Reduces the demand to purchase fuel from private vendors at a higher cost.

Team Members: John Alley, Fred Debolt, Dave Farnsworth, Dennis Kellogg, Sylvia Lewellen, Carla McAfferty, Thomas Neff, Al Perkins, Mark Ross.

CONTACT: Thomas A. Neff, (360) 412-8955

New Scheduling System Increases Staff Efficiency

The agency's system for communicating staff schedules was outdated and inefficient. Employees wanted a system that had sufficient detail and a better process for planning meetings. A new software package had recently been purchased, but the challenge was to encourage appropriate staff behavior to guarantee full participation in scheduling. A cross-functional team developed a scheduling process that informs the agency of individual staff schedules in a more efficient manner, creates a unified calendaring system for agency staff, and assists the agency in identifying when staff and resources are available for meetings. One month into the implementation of the new scheduling process, team members began conducting staff satisfaction interviews. Employees are very satisfied with the new system.

Results

★ Improved internal communications and enhanced productivity

★ Increased employee satisfaction.

★ Avoided purchasing more sophisticated tracking systems, thus saving $1,650.

Team Name: Scheduling Process Improvement Team
Team Members: Marlene Coplen, Program Specialist (Chairperson); Dave Pavelchek, Research Manager;Gena Anderson, Secretary Administrative; Wes Pruitt, Legislative Liaison; Mary Reister, Executive Secretary; Patricia Spencer, Program Specialist and QIP coach; Robert Hinsch, Computer Information Consultant

CONTACT: Marlene Coplen, (360) 753-5680