Governing For Results 13
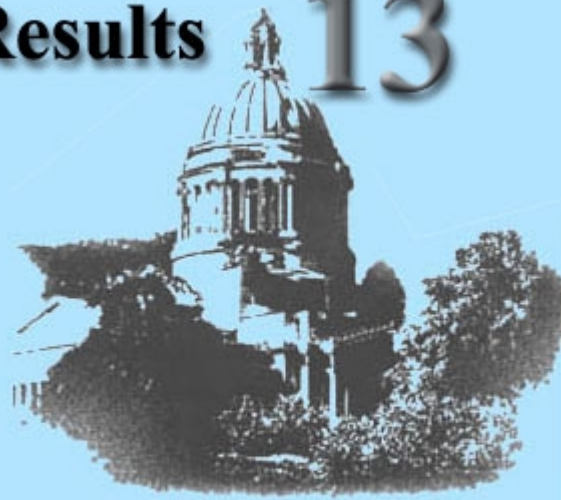
An updated progress report on how state agencies are improving the quality, service and efficiency of state government.

**January 2001**

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 1700 quality improvement projects, saving $71 million.
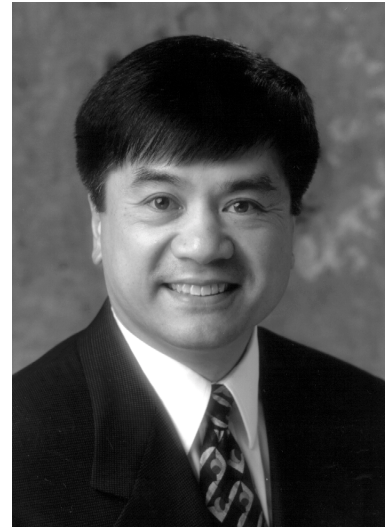
Inside this booklet are highlights of those efforts from the fourth quarter of 2000. They range from quality efforts to reduce the time a citizen waits for service, to providing clear rules and instructions, to increased revenues to the state while providing better service to citizens.

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

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

Gary Locke

Gary Locke
Governor

Welcome to the Thirteenth Edition of
Governing for Results

Governing for Results 13 is the thirteenth edition of highlights on quality improvement projects under way in Washington State government.

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

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

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

Since the Executive Order was issued, Washington state agencies have reported over 1700 quality projects, saving the state over $71 million. As a result of these efficiencies, approximately 869,000 staff hours have been saved. This represents overtime hours eliminated or hours redirected to other work. In addition, these efforts have produced over $70 million in new revenue.

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

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

Governor's Award for Service and Quality Improvement

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

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

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

Team Name/Agency	Book Edition Number	Page Number
Electronic 267-Aform (Surplus Property Disposal) Department of General Administration	Book 10	14
Improving Customer Service with PEBB Online Form Health Care Authority	Book 13	93
Improving Employee Satisfaction Through Recognition Health Care Authority	Book 13	94
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Computer 4 Kids Program

In 1998 more than 20 million computers hit obsolescence, but only 11 percent were recycled. It is estimated that there is 9.2 pounds of lead in every computer monitor tube. It is critical to keep this toxic substance out of landfills and burn sites. At the same time, budget restraints have kept schools from purchasing enough computers to serve the needs of Washington State's school children.

The Department of Corrections (DOC) began a partnership with the Community Colleges of Spokane, the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), Department of General Administration (GA), Department of Ecology (ECY), and Association of Washington Businesses (AWB), to develop the Computer 4 Kids Program. This program evaluates computers that have been stored, designated as surplus, or thrown away. Those computers that meet specific standards are refurbished by trained inmates and given to school districts throughout the state. The non-standard computers are accepted for recycling or parted out to support the refurbishing effort.

Results

★ 5,516 refurbished computers have been given to K-12 schools, saving Washington State taxpayers approximately $4.4 million.

★ Diverted over 80,000 pounds of computer waste from being deposited in landfills.

★ Provided 66 inmates institutional jobs during incarceration.

★ 55 inmates have learned a new technology language, and knowledge about the operation and repair of computers.

Team Name: Computer 4 Kids
Team Members: DOC: Doreen Geiger, Gary Gunning, Larry McKinstry, Al Ramos, Fred Straub, Phil Aikman; OSPI: Joe Clark, Dennis Small; Community Colleges of Spokane Foundation: Gail Stevenson, John Heffernan; GA: Neil House; ECY: Doug Jayne, Betty Verd; AWB: Don Brunnell

CONTACT: Doreen Geiger, (360) 753-1508

**Department of Information Services;
Department of Labor and Industries; Department of Licensing;
Office of Financial Management; Department of Transportation;
Office of the State Auditor; Office of the State Treasurer**

Applications Template and Outfitting Model – ATOM

"Washington's online source of just-in-time expertise for Internet application development"

ATOM is an online guide that provides project teams with a step-by-step approach to developing Internet applications quickly and smartly, without duplication of effort. Built on a half decade of experience with emerging technologies, it is a common reference point for deploying an application in the Digital Washington environment. As such, the required policies, necessary infrastructure components, and useful technologies are in one place, integrated into a task list that orders everything into a start-to-finish timeline for use over the lifecycle of a project.

ATOM provides a mechanism to streamline the time and effort required in developing an application in the Digital Washington environment. In the brick and mortar world, the planning of communities and the definition of their shared amenities is commonly codified in a building code. ATOM codifies a similar approach for new developments on the Internet. ATOM provides a unified "click and order" method that creates efficiencies for business and program managers, project managers and developers, as well as private sector companies that work with state agencies in developing Internet applications. ATOM assists agencies in avoiding missteps – thereby reducing the time, cost, and risk of development.

For the citizen, ATOM ensures a common experience while conducting business online with various agencies. Citizens are increasingly inundated everyday with information. While online services offer potential savings in time and effort for the citizen, the proliferation of these services can also create potential inconsistencies in ease of use, ability to navigate with a common look and feel, security, and even availability -- if not developed with a common, tested approach. ATOM helps ensure the development of well-behaved applications that co-exist peacefully on the citizen's desktop that are easy and convenient to use.

To those ends, ATOM provides information and links to the business decisions and development work needed to create and maintain an application built with

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common elements in Digital Washington. Developers who use common sets of building blocks can take advantage of project development tools to speed time-to-market for their applications. ATOM helps project teams avoid missed steps and time consuming restarts, ensures a final product that meets state standards, and reduces frustrations and inefficiencies of continually "reinventing the wheel."

ATOM was created through the Digital Government Applications Academy and reflects the shared expertise of the participating agencies. ATOM is an online library of the community's knowledge and experience. It is updated iteratively in real time, meaning that it gets better the more it gets used.

The elements of the end-to-end project guide have been validated by a number of customer agencies and by those in the authorizing environment – most notably, the Office of Financial Management, the Office of State Treasurer, the Office of State Auditor and the Information Services Board. View ATOM online on the Washington State Digital Government website at **access.wa.gov/e-gov/ATOM**.

Results

★ One place in government to find a step-by-step comprehensive Web-based guide for building e-commerce applications for digital government in Washington.

★ 6,000 hours saved in research and development time on 150 projects this year.

★ Improved services to WA citizens by deploying online services quicker.

★ Reduced development time and cost by downloading templates, code and script.

★ Reduced research time and costly errors in missed development steps.

★ Increased knowledge and comfort level of knowing new technologies such as digital signatures, Web server hosting, e-forms and online applications support.

Team Name: Applications Template and Outfitting Model – ATOM Team

Team Members: DIS: Paul Piper (lead), Lourdes Collins, Linda Jo Demery, Cheryl Freymond (IT team), Andy Hix, Dave Kirk, Dave Koch, Darlene Kosoff (EBS team), Joe McGavick (consultant), Megan McKay, Diane Robertson, Susie Rolland, John Specht, Glen Tapanila, Cammy Webster; DOL: Robin Griggs; DOT: Ken Cureton; L&I: Larry Blankenship, Carol Isley; OFM: Deborah Feinstein; SAO: Chuck Pfeil, Glenn Shepherd, Dai Le, Pete Donnell; TRE: Debbie Hamrick; DIS Executive Sponsor: Paul W. Taylor

CONTACT: Paul Piper, (360) 902-3471

Department of Transportation; Washington State Patrol;
Washington Traffic Safety Commission;
Department of Licensing; Transportation Improvement Board;
City of Kirkland; Federal Highway Administration;
Pierce County Public Works

Local, State, Federal Team Reduces Pedestrian Fatalities

Twelve to fifteen percent of all vehicle-related fatalities involve pedestrians. In 1996 alone, the societal cost of these tragic collisions was over $450 million. People dependent on walking are most at-risk for pedestrian collisions – children under 15 have the highest injury rate, citizens over 65 have the highest fatality rate, and many high collision locations on state roadways are adjacent to transit stops. A chartered, multi-agency, multi-disciplinary team developed a set of recommendations to reduce these collisions. Extensive outreach and education has created broad support and lead to implementation of the recommendations.

Results

★ Early good results: 1999 data show a 30% reduction in pedestrian fatalities from the 1996 figures.

★ Increased emphasis by Department of Transportation (DOT), including pedestrian facilities in all agency roadway projects.

★ Enhanced enforcement of crosswalk laws involving the WA Traffic Safety Commission (WTSC) and other agencies.

★ Enhanced pedestrian safety education programs and public service announcements implemented by various partner agencies.

★ Efforts in place to strengthen pedestrian design linkages between transportation engineering and land use planning, through educational elements and model ordinances.

Team Name: Washington Quality Initiative's Pedestrian Safety Improvement
Team Members: DOT: Julie Matlick (Team Leader), Jim Shanafelt, Pam Hughley, Brian Walsh, Larry Hinson; WTSC: John Moffat, Dick Nuse; Washington State Patrol: Captain John Batiste; City of Kirkland: Iris Cabrera; Federal Highway Administration: Megan Hall; Transportation Improvement Board: Omar Mehyar; Pierce County Public Works: Bob Vogel; Department of Licensing: Gary Lamberson

CONTACT: Julie Matlick, (360) 705-7505

Department of Transportation;
Klickitat County Public Works

State/County Collaboration Saves Time, Dollars

In remote areas of southwest Washington, staffing highway construction projects is always a challenge. Last summer an opportunity presented itself that had benefits far beyond the work force issue.

Klickitat County Public Works had programmed a very large construction project but had insufficient workforce and equipment to administer it. They asked the Department of Transportation (DOT) if resources could be loaned to help meet their need. The DOT went a step further, rescheduling a large adjacent project, allowing both projects to be built at the same time. A single contract covered the combined work and both agencies enjoyed the benefits of resource sharing.

Results

★ More bidders were attracted to the larger, combined project, increasing competition and lowering the bid amount. The low bid turned out to be $888,522 below the engineer's estimate.

★ Sharing resources between agencies reduced overall administration costs below statewide averages and avoided hiring and training costs.

★ This effort provided a foundation for future resource sharing and cost avoidance in the Klickitat County area. Already, the City of Bingen has inquired of DOT about a similar application for an upcoming project.

★ A total savings of $1,388,522 was realized on this project.

Team Name: WSDOT/Kozy Kamp, Klickitat County Public Works Team
Team Members: DOT (Columbia River East Area Engineer Office): Patrick Axlund, Daniel Crigler, Margaret Ecklund, Rick Henderson, James Hockett, Romeo Ibarreta, Jeffrey Katzer, Alan Kumma, Carol Larson, Jim McClellan, Danne Presler, Charles Ruhsenberger, David Sanchez, David Schultz, Kern Shim, Kenneth Storlie, Michael Virgil; Klickitat County Public Works: Jim Miller, Bjorn Hedges

CONTACT: Jim McClellan, (360) 759-1314

**Department of General Administration;
Department of Information Services;
Department of Printing**

**Three Agencies Working Together?
They Said It Couldn't Be Done!**

Currently, state agencies work with three different agencies to fulfill their print, mail and distribution needs. Among the Department of Information Services, Department of Printing, and Department of General Administration's Consolidated Mail Services, 225 state agencies and political subdivisions are served for print and mail jobs.

In September 1999, Department of Information Services, Department of Printing, and Department of General Administration's Consolidated Mail Services began a project called Accelerated Print and Mail (APM). The purpose of the APM is to provide state agencies with more coordinated and efficient print, mail and distribution. We knew that in mapping current practices, efficiencies would become apparent. We designed process improvement as part of the project approach. By working together, the three agencies have reduced duplications, delays, and process steps in their own operations and their customers. With APM, printing and mail distribution services become faster, cheaper, and more efficient.

In phase one of the project, the team conducted nine agency interviews with large, medium and small agencies. The APM vision was shared with these customers and feedback was solicited from them to help build it. Customers who attended were asked what they thought of this effort. Comments included*: "It's about time!" "The three partners fit perfectly,"* and *"You mean I can do the document and mailing list and just send them to you? I don't have to print everything out on a desktop printer, box everything up and send it to you…Cool! When does it start?"*

By working together, 23 process improvements were made in phase two, four of which have already been recognized in "Governing for Results." These improvements built the foundation for continual development among the three agencies and their customers. Employment Security Department and Department of Labor and Industries were two customers involved in the process improvements.

The APM team has just begun and anticipates additional improvements and efficiencies. Highlights from accomplishments to date include:

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Results

★ The State Printer and Consolidated Mail Services worked to eliminate 6 steps in the process of billing, communicating, and documenting by improving instructions for customer jobs that were printed at the State Printer and mailed by Consolidated Mail Services. This improvement cut this process in half for both agencies.

★ Increased communication regarding pick up times, customer inquiries, and clarification of procedures resulted in 261 hours saved annually for the three partner agencies.

★ Consolidated Mail Services and the State Printer worked together to coordinate job ordering practices resulting in a one-time cost avoidance of $738, a greater awareness of each other's processes, and 50% increase in response time from going from multiple contacts to a single point of contact.

★ By working together and using available technology to make manual processes become faster and more streamlined for customers, the team saved 1,256 hours for internal and external customers and $12,300 annually (as previously reported in *Governing for Results*).

★ Employment Security met with the APM team and addressed processes shared by the four agencies. The team's effort eliminated delays in response time during off-hour communications, reduced the amount of "surprise jobs," and decreased the time it took to resolve inquiries by using a universal job name for jobs that run through all four agencies.

★ All the efforts made by the partnership enhanced interagency cooperation and responsiveness and increased awareness of stakeholders concerns, interests and expectations.

If we can provide you coordinated printing and mailing services, give the APM Project Line a call, at (360) 664-9508. We'd like you to be our next success story!

Team Name: Accelerated Print and Mail Process Improvement Team

Team Members: Department of Labor and Industries: Anita Noah; Employment Security Department: Judy Carlson, Tom Lepique, Linda Cochran; Department of Information Services: Bonnie Beatty, Linda Jackson, Linda Harden, Jason Beers, Jason Lucarelli, Dan McDaniel, Oren Steplight; Department of Printing: Bob Cross, Kelley Kellerman, Sharie McCafferty, Larry Weber; Department of General Administration: Jenene Huston, Greg Lawrence, Martin Peters, Neil Tuggle, Tuan Hoang, Jack Weeks

CONTACT: Greg Lawrence, APM Project Manager, (360) 664-9508

Department of Licensing;
Department of Revenue;
Employment Security Department;
Department of Labor and Industries;
Secretary of State;
Department of Information Services;
State Treasurer's Office

On-Line Business Registration Goes Live in Washington State

In December, Washington became the second state in the U.S. to offer business registration and credit card payment over the Internet to customers through Department of Licensing (DOL). This service allows individuals wanting to start a new business to apply and pay for a Master Business License from the comfort of their own home 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The new Master Business License application and payment option went live on the Internet Friday, December 29 - on time and under budget. As of January 26, more than 800 new business licenses were issued over the Internet.

Before the Internet option was available, a new business owner could pick up the Master Business License form in person, request a form by telephone, or download and print it from the DOL Internet site. The form was then filled out by hand and submitted with an application fee for processing. Through this single Master Business License, business owners take care of tax registration, industrial insurance, unemployment insurance, and trade name registration. About 80% of new businesses need only this license to get started.

Not only was this a multi-divisional effort within DOL but also a multiple agency cooperation. Agencies working with DOL to create the Internet option included Department of Revenue (DOR), Employment Security Department (ESD), Labor and Industries (L&I), Secretary of State, Department of Information Services and the State Treasurer's office (STO).

Results

★ Pioneers use of Internet technology to provide enhanced service to business owners. Customers can submit an application over the Internet whenever it is convenient for them, from their home without utilizing the United States postal service or making a visit to state offices.

★ Gets business owners licensed quicker through shorter turnaround times and more accurate information submitted the first time around.

★ Saves significant time and money for all future DOL projects requiring credit card and revenue processing components, including a project to renew vehicle tabs over the Internet.

★ Builds a Revenue-In-Process reconciliation system that integrates with existing legacy computer systems (Master License Service [MLS], DOR, Office of Financial Management [OFM], STO) and can be used by multiple programs.

★ Provides "real world" testing of new technology before being piloted with other complex, high volume processes within the agency.

★ Trains DOL staff to be competent in developing and maintaining the e-commerce and client/server infrastructure.

★ Builds re-usable components for processing credit cards on the Internet.

Team Name: Master Business License IPO Team

Team Members: Nearly 70 employees from seven state agencies contributed to this project. Core team members devoting 75 or more hours include: DOL/MLS*: Nancy Skewis, Jody Miller, Dennis Roth, Clyde Zahn, Mark Bockhorst; DOL/MLS/IS*: Susan McRae, Karen Gerrits, Holly Burch; DOL/IS*: Jackie Dimonde, John Hadden, Dean Schwickerath; Mark Bortel, Michael Coyner, Kirk Kaiser; DOL/AS*: Phyllis Oborne, Lesley Kinley, June Lewis, Gary Russell; DOL/AS/IS*: Wendy Kalat, Charlie Serna, Hung Quach, Anhphuong Ha; *D*OR*: Denise Kennedy, Sue Kim, Gary Dubuque, Matt Althauser, Kevin Thrasher, Mark Bigelow; ESD*: Brenda Westfall; L&I*: Carla Reynolds, Kaki McClanahan; State Treasurer*: Debbie Hamrick; Contractor (LOGICAL) team members: Amy Hafen, Patt Dronen, Judy Hauser, Jake Kiehl, Corina Mccleary, Steve Campbell, Mark Clerget, Toby Gosney, Dan Remy, Ron McKay

CONTACT: Nancy Skewis, (360) 664-1446

Washington State Patrol;
Traffic Safety Commission;
Department of Transportation;
Liquor Control Board;
Department of Fish and Wildlife

Highway 97A Corridor Is Focus of Coalition

Over a six-year period, one 39-mile stretch of Washington highway claimed 23 lives in ten fatal collisions. On this two-lane Wenatchee-to-Chelan roadway, the leading cause of collisions was excessive speed; the leading cause of death: driving under the influence (DUI). DUI collisions were 188 percent higher here than on nearby roads, resulting in 176 percent more fatalities and disabling injuries, while collisions caused by speed were 38 percent higher.

A powerful coalition was formed to reduce the number and severity of crashes and collisions. The coalition was comprised of state and local agencies, businesses, local elected officials, private individuals, and media representatives, and facilitated by the local education superintendent. The group drew up a plan for increased enforcement, heightened emergency response, intensified public awareness and driver education, wildlife restriction, and low cost engineering improvements. Accidents dropped 26 percent during the plan's first year of operation, and alcohol-related fatalities were reduced to zero. Now in its second year, the 97A Corridor Safety Project continues to pay dividends.

Results

★ SR 97A public safety awareness increased from 20 percent to 85-90 percent.

★ Innovative, high-profile DUI awareness signs, with pictures of victims, are drawing widespread media interest.

★ Local emergency services now use Global Positioning System equipment.

★ 'Lights on for Safety' program with road signs is established.

★ Zero drug- or alcohol-related fatalities have been recorded since plan start-up.

Team Name: SR 97A Corridor Safety Project Team

Team Members: WSP: Commander Tom Robbins, Secretary Marian Adams, and staff; North Central Education Service District: Dr. Gene Sharratt, Superintendent; Secretary Eldene Wall, and staff; WTSC: Marv Ryser, Dick Nuse; DOT: Don Senn, Jennene Ring, Brian Walsh, DeWayne Standerford; LCB: Kevin Starkey, Robert Knowles; DFW: Sergeant Doug Ward; City of Chelan: Police Chief Ed Bush; Chelan County: Sheriff Mike Brickert; Douglas County: Sheriff Dan LaRoche; Chelan Public Utility District: Merilee White; local community, business, and emergency services representatives

CONTACT: Marv Ryser, (360) 586-3870; Commander Tom Robbins, (360) 586-2340

**Department of Licensing;
Department of Revenue**

Automated Valuation System

When citizens and businesses purchase vehicles and vessels from dealers, the dealers collect sales tax on the value of the purchase. If citizens make these purchases and sales tax was not collected, use tax is collected when the vehicle/vessel is titled. Because of the varying valuation systems, sometimes agents and subagents incorrectly or inconsistently applied the use tax laws resulting in varying values. Department of Revenue, Department of Licensing, Washington State Auditors Association, and the Washington Association of Vehicle Subagents partnered to develop the new Automated Valuation System. The system verifies the taxable value of most transactions at Department of Revenue offices, Department of Licensing offices, county auditor and subagent locations.

Results

★ More accurate use tax values resulted in an additional $6,115,343 for August, September and October 2000 compared with the same three months in 1999. Projected additional revenue is $24 million annually.

★ Uniform application of use tax laws and procedures prevents 'shopping' for the best tax rate and provides consistency between Departments of Licensing and Revenue field offices.

★ Saves Subagents, Agents, and Department of Licensing the time spent phoning Department of Revenue to verify valuations.

★ Generates reports that each office may utilize to identify trends and training issues.

★ Phase 2 of the project, to be implemented in late Spring 2001, will include motor homes, travel trailers, campers and vessels.

Team Name: Automated Valuation System Team
Team Members: DOR: Drew Shirk, Diane Kelley, Peggy North, Sue Nelson, Mike Gowrylow, Deanna Jackson; DOL: Eric Andersen, Rachel Nedrow, Deb McCurley, Doug Pierce, Rob Cook, Bill Kehoe, Dee Dhillon, Marshall Garcia-Schlenz, Pat Zlateff, Bonnie Glenn, Karen Wilson, Gary VanCamp; Outside agency: Subagents: Sandy Foraker, Ronnie Mattern, Don McCallum; County Auditors: Diane Tischer, Carolyn Diepenbrock (

CONTACT: Drew Shirk (DOR), (360) 570-6043; Eric Andersen (DOL), (360) 902-4045

**Employment Security Department;
Department of Labor & Industries**

Apprenticeship Programs On-Line

The Washington State Apprenticeship Council works with the Employment Security Department (ESD) to expand access to apprenticeship programs. Each apprenticeship component advertised their service or program individually making it very difficult for the public to find the information on the various apprenticeship programs. ESD staff partnered with the Department of Labor and Industries (L&I) to improve access to apprenticeship programs. A team was charged to develop, design, and implement a single point of contact that would create universal availability to the general public. A web site provides access to 28 apprenticeship programs that represent approximately 100 trades. Additionally, ongoing training and information for private sector apprenticeship programs are available by request from ESD, L&I, and Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) staff who provide direct customer service.

Results

★ Designed and implemented a web site that provides access for the general public to information and the application process to 28 apprenticeship programs representing 100 trades.

★ A total of 818 applicant information request forms were submitted by 406 potential applicants since the site became operational in September 2000.

★ Developed and made available training and information on private sector apprenticeship programs for ESD, L&I, and DSHS staff who provide direct customer service, promoting apprenticeships as viable career options for dislocated workers, young job seekers, and WorkFirst customers.

★ Developed a stronger link between WorkSource centers and apprenticeship community, including L&I, State Labor Council, and private employers.

★ Created the first electronic system in the nation for apprenticeship program information and an on-line request for an application package.

Team Name: Automating Apprenticeship Programs Information
Team Members: ESD: Gerri M. Woolf; L&I: Nancy Mason, Michael Thurman, Shannon Beigert

CONTACT: Gerri M. Woolf, (360) 438-4037

**Employment Security Department;
Department of Social and Health Services**

Child Support Coalition Channels Defendants into Jobs!

The WorkSource Cowlitz/Wahkiakum East noticed it was not receiving many job search referrals for defendants with delinquent child support payments. Discussions with representatives of the county's Superior Court and Department of Health and Social Services' (DSHS's) Division of Child Support identified a need to establish a process to network unemployed defendants with WorkSource for placement into jobs. The alternative was for the defendants to be sentenced to jail time—a losing proposition for them, their children, and the taxpayers.

Results

★ Reduces welfare payments by an average of $3,600 annually per defendant.

★ Increases repayment of past-due child support by an average of $310 per month per defendant.

★ Reduces court costs by an average of $1,200 per defendant.

★ Reduces jail time costs by an average of $210 per defendant.

★ Increases taxes collected by approximately $41,200 annually per defendant.

Team Name: Cowlitz Child Support Coalition
Team Members: ESD: June Trusty, Steve Martin; Cowlitz County Superior Court: Barbara Vining, Elaine Coats; DSHS: Timothy Hammond

CONTACT: June Trusty, (360) 578-4222

Employment Security Department;
Department of Labor and Industries

Unemployment Insurance Tax Recovery

This is an update of an improvement that was previously submitted July 1999, titled: "Unemployment Insurance (UI) Tax Recovery." The team has continued to track savings generated for the Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund. After becoming aware of Department of Labor & Industries (L&I) intention to pay some $200 million in dividends to 130,000 employers from the Workers Compensation System Accident Fund, the team developed a method for employers to use the dividends to pay arrears on UI tax payments. Crossmatching of data files was used to identify those owing taxes, then L&I transferred funds to Employment Security Department after receipt of legal notification.

Results

★ Returned $334,088 to the UI Trust Fund, which would otherwise have been an outstanding debt for the period of July 1999 - December 2000.

★ Continued collections accomplished without additional expense to staff.

★ Continued reducing amount of employer tax liability.

★ Increased cooperation and data sharing between agencies.

Team Name: UI Employer Tax Administration Team
Team Members: L&I: Kathy Kimbel; ESD: Kurt Malizio, Phillip Fecteau, Jim Schodt, Dale Zimmerman, Ellen Moe, Barbara Vogel, Jan Visser, David Belles, Wanda McTigue, Karen Mussman

CONTACT: Dale Zimmerman, (360) 902-9614

**Employment Security Department;
Department of Social and Health Services;
Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board**

Washington Work Incentive Consortium

Washington State did not have a consistent service delivery process in place for people with disabilities. Various organizations were working at cross-purposes with no uniformity in goals of programs and little or no coordination. The Governor's Committee on Disability Issues and Employment partnered to ensure that the Washington State Workforce System provides access to services, effective outreach, and work-related counseling for customers with disabilities. Participants brainstormed ideas on services, addressed issues, set priorities and developed an action plan. Twenty-three organizations committed $526,000 in funding for specific services and additional hundreds of thousands of dollars of in-kind contributions. Additionally, grant funds were secured totaling $1,284,000. Implementation of the plan will help consortium members achieve coordination and improve access to WorkSource services.

Results

★ Increased coordination between 23 service organizations and the WorkSource Centers by developing and committing to an action plan for improving services.

★ Committing $256,000 and hundreds of thousands of in-kind contributions to improve and provide services.

★ Increased capacity to provide outreach and work-related counseling services through receipt of a five-year grant of $1,284,165 or $256,833 per year from the federal Social Security Department.

★ Improved access to services to customers by adopting coordinated approaches to service delivery and committing resources.

Team Name: Washington Work Incentive Consortium Team
Team Members: ESD: Toby Olson, Leslye Miller, Chris Webster, Mary Massey, Peggy Zimmerman, Howard Patshkowski; DSHS: Don Kay, Abby Cooper, Roberto Reyes-Colon, Bob Lichtenberg; WTECB: Martin McCallum; Health Improvement Partnership: Diane Weldert; Positive Solutions: Alex Hesse-Siegert; Goodwill Industries of Spokane: Gail Kogle

CONTACT: Toby Olson, (360) 438-3168

Department of General Administration
Department of Labor and Industries

Saving Time and Money on Labor and Industries' Quarterly Statement

The Department of Labor and Industries (L&I) sends 150,000 tax statements to businesses each quarter. The reports were printed at L&I and then sent to the State Printer for separating and folding. After processing at the State Printer, Consolidated Mail Services would insert them into envelopes and submit the mailing to the United States Postal Service.

Changes have been made to streamline the process. Consolidated Mail Services now trims, separates, folds and inserts the mailing, eliminating the intermediate charges at the State Printer.

Results

★ Eliminated 4 process steps.

★ Cost savings of $4,800 annually to L&I.

★ Reduced cycle time from 3 weeks to 4 days for L&I.

Team Name: L&I's Quarterly Statement Team
Team Members: L&I: Annita Noah; GA: Martin Peters, Jack Weeks, Wayne Williams, Tim Sorg, Todd Bures, Paul Love, John Stillwell, Howard Lorton

CONTACT: Jenene Huston, (360) 664-9508

**Office of Community Development;
Office of Trade and Economic Development**

Automated Batch Track System

Batch Track is an automated system designed to replace the manual process for batching Agency Financial Reporting System (AFRS) transactions. At the heart of the project is a simple replacement for the handwritten log used for recording AFRS batch numbers and document numbers. The automated system adds additional efficiency components including: automatic assignment of batch and document numbers in strict conformance to AFRS business rules, automatic calculation of batch totals, hash totals, and transaction counts, automatic generation of required forms, creation of searchable records of every transaction in every document, and support for multiple simultaneous users.

Results

★ Improves internal controls for batches and documents.

★ Saves times when researching accounting problems, through the creation of searchable records. Users can quickly locate original source documents without searching through file cabinets.

★ Eliminates duplication of data entry and adding machine tape verifications.

★ Reduces workload by automating labor-intensive steps of the batching process.

★ Saves time by allowing multiple users to batch AFRS transactions simultaneously.

Team Name: Automated Batch Track Team
Team Members: Jake Thomas, Sharon Lucey, Linda Hanlon, Jim Lambert, David Rings, Liz Alexander, Larry Booth, Jeanette Hoage, Pat Bunce

CONTACT: Jake Thomas, (360) 725-2708

**Department of Printing;
Office of the Attorney General**

Facilities Management

The Office of the Attorney General (ATG) was concerned about the cost and efficiency of their current document management workflow. They asked the Department of Printing (PRT) to analyze, design, and suggest new processes to help maximize copier and document flow productivity. PRT provided ATG a document flow analysis, which investigated and evaluated the use of copiers, workflows, and contracts with outside vendors. PRT identified the most cost-efficient copier contracts for ATG. PRT will save ATG an estimated $190,000 over the next two years by renegotiating 25 current analog copier contracts, purchasing 19 previously leased analog copiers, and upgrading 6 copiers from analog to digital. PRT will also save ATG approximately 250 FTE hours per year by requiring copier vendors to consolidate billing from multiple invoices to a single invoice per month.

Results

★ Saves ATG an estimated $190,000 over next two years.

★ Saves ATG approximately 250 FTE hours processing vendor invoices.

★ Educated ATG in productivity enhancement.

★ Ensured routine equipment servicing.

Team Name: Facilities Management
Team Members: PRT: John Young: ATG: Fred Olsen, Kim McLain, Jim Martin, Sally Whisman

CONTACT: John Young, (360) 570-5078

**Department of Printing;
Department of Social and Health Services**

Forget the Lamination

Frequently, Department of Printing (PRT) customers request wallet size informational cards to be printed and laminated. The cards are laminated to increase their longevity and usefulness. The process of lamination can be costly, especially for an agency the size of Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS). A team comprised of PRT and DSHS staff researched alternatives to lamination. The team implemented use of synthetic paper that is both tear-resistant and waterproof in lieu of traditional card stock and lamination. The improvement reduces time, labor and materials related to lamination for both PRT and its customers while continuing to extend the life of the card.

Results

★ Decreases cost-of-print job by an average of 60%.

★ Decreases turn-around time by an estimated 30%.

★ Increases the longevity of the product.

★ Increases customer satisfaction.

Team Name: Forget the Lamination
Team Members: PRT: Jason Bippert, Richard Platt, Brian Rapacz; DSHS: Lynn Morgan, Kindra Benavidez, Eva Rooks

CONTACT: Jason Bippert, (360) 570-5025

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Single Agency Projects

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National Award Winning Website

The Board was awarded the National Association of State Boards of Accountancy (NASBA) first annual "Outstanding Website" award. When making the award NASBA noted the Board's website was:

- ♦ visually appealing,
- ♦ very complete as far as content,
- ♦ easy to navigate through, and
- ♦ only website out of the 54 websites reviewed that was ADA compliant.

Since receiving this award we have enhanced our website by adding a **new search process** and a **Calendar of Events**. The **new search process** allows the public to verify the licensing status of CPAs and/or CPA firms via our website. The **Calendar of Events** allows customers to log into our website to determine the date, location and purpose of Board meetings, rules hearings, committee and other public meetings, and presentations by Board members or the Executive Director. The **Calendar of Events** is hot linked to agendas, handouts, presentation materials, proposed rules, minutes, other sites, etc.

Prior to these enhancements, our customers had to call us during standard business hours to obtain this information. Customers now can go directly to our website.

Results

- ★ Focus on "Instantaneous" and "Self Service" customer service.

- ★ Provides 24/7 customer service.

- ★ Increased public awareness of the necessity for, and ease in creating, an ADA compliant website.

- ★ Reduced staff time to respond to customer inquiries and prepare correspondence.

- ★ Agency pride at being a leader out of the 54 states and jurisdictions in NASBA.

Team Name: Winning Website
Team Members: Cheryl Sexton (Webmaster), Carl Lew, Julian Soh, Colin Corbin
CONTACT: Tim R. Hoefer, (360) 664-9193

Post Order Review Activity

Our case tracking and management system did not allow us to capture accurate data on those cases that did not follow a standard dispute resolution process. For example, an agreement between the parties normally takes place in mediation, but can occur at any stage of the process. In those cases where, for instance, a proposed decision has already been issued yet the parties want an agreed order issued, we were not able to accurately capture data for case management purposes, or from an agency resource standpoint. As a result, certain events that were "exceptions" to the process were either not captured, or were handled by a variety of creative methods by staff. This project, called "Something Magical Happens," defined a process for these cases and built an enhancement to our case management system to more accurately capture data and reflect how cases are resolved.

Results

★ More accurate data and reports for decision-making.

★ Increased efficiency in handling the files.

★ Eliminated time-consuming manual processes that were maintained (saving approximately 156 hours annually).

Team Name: Something Magical Happens
Team Members: Donalda Ball, Jeanie Parr, Susana Tapia, Larry Ramsey, David Threedy, Gretchen Zatarain

CONTACT: Gretchen Zatarain, (360) 586-6346, extension 226

Department of Agriculture

Apple Press for Testing Sugar Content

Red Delicious and Golden Delicious apples are tested for sugar content to help ensure a quality product for consumers. These apples are tested from the beginning of the harvest season until a general release date is set by a subcommittee of the Washington State Horticulture Association. Inpectors have done the test by taking one slice of apple from 20 apples, squeezing the juice from each slice, mixing the juice for all 20 slices, and testing the juice using a refractometer.

Horticulture inspectors from the state Department of Agriculture's Fruit and Vegetable Inspection Program originally used a garlic press to squeeze the juice from the apple slices. They then developed a "press," welding a metal piece to each side of a pair of pliers. Although this worked, it had limitations. A better way was found by developing an "apple press," a device that presses the juice for all 20 slices at one time, allowing the juice to be mixed. This saves time and produces a more accurate sample to be tested.

Results

★ A time savings of 30 percent has been achieved to run this test.

★ A better sample is produced as all the juice is captured. This ensures a more accurate sample.

★ Use of the apple press results in a cleaner and safer workstation for the horticulture inspectors.

Team Name: District 2 Apple Press Redesign
Team Members: Dave Mabee, Steve Birge, Denny Davis

CONTACT: Jerry Wuitschick or Karen Cozetto, (509) 225-2650

Automation of Phytosanitary Certificates

Phytosanitary certificates are required for certain fruits and vegetables for export. The certificates, which are issued under the state Department of Agriculture's Fruit and Vegetable Inspection Program, show that commodities are free of pests and diseases. They certify items being shipped meet the importing country's requirements. About 30 percent of the apples shipped from Washington are exported.

Previously, each certificate was being word processed onto a form that was hand-fed into the printer. New software was developed where much of the required information is pulled from a database making it unnecessary to do repetitive entries. The form is now printed on continuous printed forms.

Results

★ Between 16,000 and 17,000 phytosanitary certificates are issued annually. A time savings of 50 percent has been realized for this task.

★ Repetitive information is stored and automatically entered reducing the number of input errors on the certificates.

★ Customers receive their certificates quicker allowing them to ship sooner.

Team Name: Phytosanitary Certificate Improvement Team
Team Members: Addie Siebol, Pat Houtz, Karen Cozetto

CONTACT: Karen Cozetto, (509) 225-2650

Department of Corrections

Fast Track Hiring for Correctional Officers

Traditionally, it has taken nine to twelve weeks for the hiring process for new Corrections Officers. Tests were given to prospective individuals and then sent to Olympia for scoring. This would require a two to three week wait before applicants were advised if they were eligible to move to the next step, individual interviews. Meanwhile, institutions had high staff vacancies, requiring "mandatory overtime" for staff. This resulted in morale issues and high overtime costs.

Staff from Clallam Bay and Olympic Corrections Centers worked together and organized a "fast track" approach to the hiring process. All testing, including interviews are done at one time. The applicants who are viable are identified immediately. Those who are not identified as eligible are immediately notified and are not required to take any further steps.

Results

★ 50% decrease in hiring processing time.

★ New employees have been able to start work 4-6 weeks earlier than in the past.

★ 47% reduction in overtime costs.

★ $13,514 saved in overtime costs from July-October, 2000.

★ 25% increase of validated candidates due to shortened process.

Team Name: Fast Track Hiring Team
Team Members: Stacey Schimetz, Amy King, Stephen Sinclair, Bill Barnes, Scott Speer, Lori Dedman, Lori Lawson

CONTACT: Barbara Anderson, (360) 512-6510

Pictures of Offender

There is a need to have current pictures of inmates in prisons and offenders in the community. These pictures are often shared with various law enforcement stakeholders. Traditionally, these pictures have been taken with a Polaroid camera. It costs approximately $1 per picture for Polaroid film and often 3-4 pictures would have to be taken of the same person.

The East Vancouver field office and Larch Corrections Center worked together to solve this problem. In both sites, offenders were also getting their picture taken by a digital camera for other purposes. The East Vancouver Office bought a color printer to print copies of offenders' pictures from the digital camera. Larch Corrections Center worked with their external stakeholders to accept the digital image for their purposes. Once this was accomplished, the need for Polaroid pictures was eliminated.

Results

★ Reduced cost of picture by 80% (from $1 per picture to $.20).

★ Eliminated wasted/duplicated Polaroid pictures by 67% (from average of 3 pictures per offender to 1).

★ Corrections staff time saved by not moving inmate from population to Records to have picture taken.

★ Records and Identification staff time saved by not having to take and process picture for file.

★ Community Corrections staff time saved by not having to take offenders picture, maintain camera, maintain/order supplies, etc.

Team Name: Eliminate Polaroid Pictures Team
Team Members: Larry Hansen, Kristina Anderson, Edmund Jimenez

CONTACT: Larry Hansen, (360) 260-6207

Increased Efficiency for Plant Maintenance

Inmates at Washington Corrections Center for Women who were assigned to plant maintenance had to work schedules that were in conflict with other institutional activities and appointments. Additionally, uniforms were being issued daily after the inmates arrived at the job and they would change during working hours. Both of these issues affected productivity on the job and wasted time for maintenance worker supervisors, having to transport inmates back and forth from job to appointments and wait while inmates changed into work uniforms.

A team looked at the problem and identified several solutions. Appointments and activities are now scheduled either before or after work hours. Sick call was changed to 0500 hours to accommodate the maintenance crews' work hours. Uniforms are issued and maintained by each inmate and worn to the job site. Each of these solutions "mirrors" what employees do in the outside work environment. This helps inmates better prepare for employment after they leave the institution.

Results

★ Increased productivity by 17% per inmate, (went from 6 to 7 hours productive work each day).

★ Inmates spend an additional 8,680 hours per year on productive work (1 hour x 31 inmates x 280 workdays).

★ Redirected 2,800 hours of staff time from downtime, (transporting, processing at gates, and waiting for inmates) to productive maintenance work.

★ More workers available during scheduled shift due to sick call in the morning.

Team Name: Plant Maintenance/Offender Efficiency Improvement Team
Team Members: Santos Lamas, Kelly Kelly, Stan Huelett, Doug Yonker, Prescila Werner, Mike Quiggle, Richard Hayward, Richard Eckley

CONTACT: Santos R. Lamas, (253) 858-4233, extension 233

Streamlined Shift Summary

At Ahtanum View Corrections Center, compilation of payroll data was done on several different handwritten forms. It was cumbersome due to the various schedules staff worked at the facility. This created stress in the work force between custody staff tracking time and clerical staff hunting down answers to questions about staff time on 24-hour shifts. Staff were complaining about mistakes on payroll because paperwork was missing at the time of payroll cutoff. Additionally, copying, filing, and routing redundant information was not the best use of time nor the most efficient process.

A team was formed to look at this problem. They developed a form that contained slots for all the required information. Local technology staff assisted in getting the form on the shared server at the facility. Now staff compile information on one form, in one location. The payroll clerk can now access the file and get the information needed to complete payroll.

Results

★ Saved eight hours per pay period for Lead Secretary on payroll processing.

★ Saved 1.5 hours per day for Sergeant on entering payroll data.

★ Reduced complaints from staff by 60%.

★ Form is available for viewing by staff 24 hours a day.

★ Reduced paperwork by requiring less copying and distribution since information can be viewed by staff on computer.

Team Name: Streamlined Shift Summary Team
Team Members: Richard Robideau, Charles Reed, Linda Davis

CONTACT: Richard Robideau, (509) 573-6336

Indexing and Cataloging Archived Records

Over 60,000 individual files are maintained in Ecology's archives. Information regarding each file and any cross-reference between files was cataloged on a unique 3x5 index card. When a public disclosure request was received, the cards had to be manually searched.

Staff developed an electronic system that has standardized the information on each file and the business practice for maintaining archives. In addition, the system has been integrated with other Ecology data systems.

Results

★ Standardized all Ecology Archive Transmittal Forms to comply with state standard forms.

★ Reduced preparation of new forms by eliminating redundant data (previously entered data that can be pulled from the database).

★ Reduced the cost of reconciliation between what is currently archived at the State Records Center and what our internal records show.

★ Simplifies the searching for Public Disclosure Requests and internal retrieval of information.

★ Provides access to approximately 750 historical transmittals, 2,000 boxes of archived materials and 30,000 file folders.

Team Name: Central Records Indexing and Information System
Team Members: Nancy Bolton, Judy Hanson, Julie Little, Bob Monn, Dale Myers, Miles Neale, Diane Pratt, Paul Rosscup, Debbie Stewart

CONTACT: Diane Pratt, (360) 407-6046

Voluntary Spill Prevention Program for Oil Tank Vessels

In June 2000, Ecology suspended enforcement of all state oil spill prevention rules for oil tankers and tank barges as a result of the U.S. Supreme Court case INTERTANKO vs. Locke. The Court ruled that several of Washington's regulations for tank vessels are pre-empted by federal laws and regulations.

As a result, Ecology developed the Voluntary Best Achievable Protection (VBAP) Program for oil tank vessels. Under this program, tank vessel owners and operators agree to voluntarily meet Washington's Best Achievable Protection (BAP) standards. These standards, representing the best practices found on tank vessels throughout the world, are designed to protect Washington's irreplaceable coastlines and waterways from the harm of an oil spill. Companies that enroll in the VBAP Program are rewarded with public recognition.

Results

★ Since the inception of the non-regulatory, volunteer program in mid 2000, 30% of the tanker companies that transport oil through Washington's waters have voluntarily registered with Ecology's BAP standards representing 50% of the oil tanker transits moving through our waters.

★ Companies voluntarily participating in this program receive public recognition for their commitment to marine safety and environmental stewardship.

★ The Best Achievable Protection List of companies means that those vessels meet Washington's standards and that compliance has been confirmed by an onsite inspection.

★ The incidence of the threat of a major oil spill is reduced.

Team Name: Voluntary Best Achievable Protection Program
Team Members: Jack Barfield, Lori Crews, Norm Davis, Jeff Fishel, Guy Grayson, Linda Kempkes, Dodge Kenyon, Mike Lynch, Stan Norman, Ted Paige, Valerie Scott, Laura Stratton, Deborah Stroshine, John Thornton

CONTACT: Stan Norman, (360) 407-7465

Department of Financial Institutions

Statutes and Rules for Licensees Added to Website

The Consumer Services Division of Department of Financial Institutions licenses and regulates mortgage brokers, check cashers/sellers (payday lenders), escrow companies and consumer loan companies. Often licensees or those interested in doing business with a licensee call the division asking "what the law says" regarding an aspect of their business transaction. Informal surveys of those making the inquiries indicated they did not have copies of the laws in question and that they would look the answer up themselves if copies of the laws were accessible. The Mortgage Broker Practices Act, the Consumer Loan Act, the Escrow Agent Registration Act and the law Relating to Check Cashers and Sellers were placed on the Consumer Services web page along with the rules supporting each act.

Results

★ Calls asking what the laws said declined.

★ Copies of laws being sent to customers were reduced by approximately 35%.

★ Staff were able to devote more time to license review as fewer calls regarding the Acts were received.

★ Enforcement and consumer complaint staff handled fewer inquiries regarding the Acts, thus were able to devote more time to investigations and consumer complaints.

Team Name: Consumer Services Website Statutes and Rules Team
Team Members: Kae McDonnell, Ed Ives

CONTACT: Gloria Papiez, (360) 902-8820

Department of Financial Institutions

Division of Credit Unions Revamps Exam Report

The Department of Financial Institutions, Division of Credit Unions, examines credit unions that do business in Washington State for safety and soundness in order to protect their members' financial interests. The previous safety and soundness examination report format had grown outdated, lacked professional presentation, was poorly organized and lacked key elements that contribute to correction of weaknesses by credit unions. As a result, credit union management could overlook an issue as they sorted through the report to address weaknesses. In addition, advances in software tools had not been incorporated into the report. A team was formed to redesign the report into a more effective format.

Results

★ Improved visual presentation, readability, and professional look to the report.

★ Various reader groups are now able to quickly focus on their areas of interest.

★ More clarity on improvements needed in a credit union's operation.

Team Name: Credit Unions' Examination Report Team
Team Members: Sue Graham, Feryl Woodworth, Rick Ullrich, Austine Izuagbe, Caryl Ausejo, Glenn Ross, Jay Weintraub, Mike Delimont, Linda Jekel, Parker Cann

CONTACT: Gloria Papiez, (360) 902-8820

Mail Hygiene Save Bucks

More than 250 pieces of General Administration's (GA's) outgoing mail were rejected by the Optical Character Reader/Bar Code Reader (OCR/BCR) each day at Consolidated Mail Services (CMS). Each piece of rejected mail costs an additional $.05. After studying the problem, it became apparent that agency employees were not aware of the correct standards (hygiene) for addressing envelopes.

A team of experts from CMS and GA employees was created to provide education on the correct standards to address envelopes. Team members developed a process to train staff responsible for outgoing mail. After the training crusade, the rejection rate dropped from 31% to 12%. GA continues to explore ways to reduce rejection rates.

Results

★ Saved $204 per year by reducing the number of pieces of mail rejected.

★ Saved 52 CMS staff hours by reducing the number of pieces of mail rejected.

★ Staff was trained in the proper mail hygiene for addressing outgoing mail.

Team Name: Mail Rejection Breakthrough Strategy Team
Team Members: Steven Braley, Judy Brian, Barbara Conophy, Shanna Dell, Marcia Horovitz, Shawndra Michell, Bjarne Nilssen, Sally Schlesinger, Sothy Uon

CONTACT: Bjarne Nilssen, (360) 664-9619

Web-Based Nursing Publications

The Nursing Commission engaged the US Postal Service to periodically distribute documents and notices to a variety of mailing lists. That process was both costly and time-consuming. The documents and notices are now posted on the Internet. Standardized e-mails or postcards are sent to the appropriate recipients, alerting them to the Internet posting.

This change provides the information more quickly and to a broader audience. The electronic format allows the available data to be sorted in a variety of ways, making it more valuable to the potential users. These changes allow the department to better serve the community by providing appropriate, timely information to a variety of constituents.

Results

★ Send 95% of Nursing Agenda notices (300+) through e-mail distribution list.

★ Publish 85-page Nursing Disciplinary Summary on the Internet. Send notification three times per year to 1,100 licensees.

★ Publish Nursing Newsletter on the Internet. Send reminder postcards semi-annually to nursing licensees. Printed Newsletters are available on request.

★ The information and available data is more usable. It can be accessed as needed, and sorted in a variety of ways.

★ The estimated savings for printing and mailing costs is approximately $58,000.

★ The estimated savings for staff time is 76 hours per year.

Team Name: Nursing Commission Electronic Publication Team
Team Members: Terry J. West, Nancy Eddy, Barb Haws, Kris McLaughlin, Shamim Noormuhammad

CONTACT: Terry J. West, (360) 236-4712

Department of Information Services

Online Harassment Course – Increases Awareness

Sexual harassment and discrimination in the workplace can be devastating and expensive in terms of employee morale, motivation and productivity. Employee awareness and prompt intervention to prevent harassment and discrimination can be key factors in reducing such behaviors. Providing training to all Department of Information Services (DIS) employees on mandatory training requirements, such as harassment and discrimination topics, is difficult to arrange and expensive. DIS has staff on duty 7 days a week, 24 hours a day, requiring elaborate scheduling requirements when staff are out attending mandatory training.   To support WA state executive order and DIS agency policy of ensuring all employees complete a sexual harassment and discrimination training course, we contracted with a vendor named SmartForce to offer our employees this course online.   The course defines the legal concepts of discrimination and harassment in the workplace. It explains the implications of such behavior and outlines the strategy a manager should use in dealing with a complaint from an employee. The course takes 2-3 hours to complete. It cost DIS $2.75 per employee to enroll and within 6 months of widely launching the online training course 98% of our staff have completed the course. To view the course online go to *Inside Washington* at:
http://inside.wa.gov/content/channels/training/smartforce.asp

Results

★ Increased awareness through consistent training curriculum.

★ 98% of the agency's staff completed the course in 6 months (July - Dec).

★ Reduced training registration fee from $50 to $2.75 per employee resulting in a cost avoidance of $18,900 dollars for 400 DIS employees.

★ Eliminated travel and overtime expenses.

★ Increased accessibility of training opportunity (available 24 hours) anytime, anywhere training opportunity.

Team Name: Online Discrimination and Harassment Training Team
Team Members: Carol Wozniak, David Norman, Shelly Bray-Mark, Kris Baumgarten

CONTACT: Carol Wozniak, (360) 902-3506

Department of Labor and Industries

Cross-Match Finds Auto Dealers Needing Workers' Comp

Employers who don't pay workers' compensation premiums have an unfair advantage. By cutting premiums out of their operating expenses, they drive up premium costs for honest employers. Employers are required by law to pay premiums to pay for medical, wage replacement and other benefits when workers are injured on the job. The Department of Labor and Industries (L&I) manages the workers' compensation system.

Staff from L&I's Region 6 initiated a project to level the playing field among auto industry employers. Cross-matches with the Departments of Licensing (DOL) and Revenue produced a list of 161 auto dealers without active workers' compensation accounts. Those dealers were sent applications and information on opening an account and the consequences of not paying premiums.

Results

★ Established 11 new accounts.

★ One firm is being audited.

★ Three firms have been identified for potential audits.

★ Estimate more than $6,000 in annual premium revenue from new accounts.

★ Other regions and program areas are looking at using a similar process.

Team Name: Unregistered Auto Dealer DOL Cross-match
Team Members: Steve Beaty, Daniel Brown, Dave Busch, Judy Paine, Gary Robinson, Neil Roper

CONTACT: Daniel Brown, (509) 324-2605

Electrical Refund Process

Occasionally, customers who purchase electrical permits request a refund because of duplicate permits or cancellation of a job. For customers with contractor deposit accounts, refunds are made directly at region offices. For all other customers, refund requests are routed through the Central Office (Tumwater) for processing.

In 1999, the refunds in Region 1, which is Everett north to Bellingham, took an average of six months to completely process. The region set a goal to handle the refunds more quickly, and, as a result, increase customer satisfaction. Their goal: to process electrical-contractor deposit permit refunds within five working days 75% of the time.

A refund log and checklist were established and used as tools in auditing the process in Region 1 as well as the Central Office resulting in a faster response time.

Results

★ Contractor deposit refunds were processed within five working days 85% of the time.

★ In 2000, refunds took an average of 7.5 days to process.

Team Members: Mary Ann Kingma (Team Leader), Cassie Black, Don Slocum, Dennis Patterson, Beverly Kendall

CONTACT: Mary Ann Kingma, (425) 647-7277

Department of Labor and Industries

Injured Workers Get Exams Quicker

Labor and Industries arranges Independent Medical Exams (IMEs) for injured workers to ensure they are receiving appropriate medical care or to rate permanent impairment. Requests for IMEs originate from the agency's central office. The request along with the workers medical history is mailed to a field service location for scheduling with local physicians. Sometimes this process can delay claim resolution, leaving the claimant or employer frustrated. In many cases, the worker cannot return to work without the IME, costing unnecessary wage-replacement benefits.

With the cooperation of several divisions within the agency, a team found a way to save many days. The authorization letter is transmitted electronically to the scheduler, and the medical history information is mailed directly to the service location.

Results

★ Statewide, injured workers see a doctor an average of at least 5 days faster.

★ In Eastern Washington, injured workers see a doctor an average of 6-13 days faster.

★ Cost avoidance of about $1.2 million annually for unnecessary wage-replacement benefits for the 5-13 additional days off work.

★ Decrease in customer frustration with less wait.

Team Name: IME Scheduling Project Team
Team Members: Linda Amundson, Nancy Barnes, Marsha Benson, Carol Britton, Steve Clement, Loris Gies, Don Green, Jeanne Guthrie, Sheryl Jessen, Barbara Kendrick, Sandra Leighton, Shirley Morris, Dave Owens, George Pickett, Carolyn Randall, Wanda Smid, Lori Warren, Rick Wickman

CONTACT: Carol Britton, (360) 902-6818

Department of Labor and Industries

Infractions Collections

Every year, Department of Labor and Industries (L&I) forfeits hundreds of thousands of dollars in uncollected fines levied against Washington contractors and plumbers who have been cited for violating contractor and plumbing laws and requirements.

Historically, past-due infraction payments (fines) were turned over to private collection agencies; these agencies typically collected about 3 percent of the accounts receivable. This resulted in L&I forfeiting significant penalty revenue, and left many unregistered contractors with the perception that they could get away without paying penalties because the department would not pursue them. Additionally, Specialty Compliance Services morale suffered as staff questioned the worth of its work when it seemed like little effort was made to collect the assessed penalties.

A cross-divisional project team met and decided to utilize an existing internal collections unit housed in the agency's Insurance Services Division to collect the overdue penalties. A 60-day pilot project was launched.

Results

★ In the first 60 days, a total of $6,000 was collected.

★ Of 11 timely referrals, 64 percent (7) resulted in payment or resolution of the account.

★ Of 64 debts in the 1-to-3 year-old category, 8 percent (5) resulted in payment or resolution of the account.

Team Name: Region 4 Collections
Team Members: Carleen Anderson, Sam Haigh, James Kreusch, Paula Kerr, Suzette Wells, Candy Gleason, Goldie Butler, Denise Whitcraft, Maureen Strand, Jane Schermerhorn

CONTACT: Candy Gleason, (360) 902-4700

Department Identifies Non-Compliant Contractors

Labor and Industries depends on local building departments to verify that contractors are registered with the agency before granting building permits. These status checks were not always occurring. And, even if a contractor is registered, building departments don't have the ability to see if contractors need to pay industrial insurance premiums. Many contractors are not paying these premiums for workers.

Aberdeen's regional office began working with local counties and municipalities in Grays Harbor and Pacific County. Each month, they report on the building permits granted. Each contractor is checked for registration and reporting of worker hours. Cross-checks also are done with the Department of Employment Security. Compliance inspectors check the contractor's site if there are any questions. If no worker hours are reported, the case is referred to field auditors for investigation or audit. In just two months, the following results were achieved from the Aberdeen office.

Results

★ 46 contractors were referred to Field Auditors; 32 contractors were referred to Compliance Inspectors.

★ Six accounts were opened with anticipated premiums of $49,000 annually.

★ Three $1,000 infractions were issued for unlicensed/suspended contractors.

★ Two safety violations were referred to the agency's Safety Compliance section.

★ 15 accounts will be audited.

★ Estimate 30 new accounts a year will pay premiums of more than $244,000.

Team Name: Regional Services - Aberdeen Service Location
Team Members: Sharon Vlastelica, Linda Hathway, Linda Beerbower, Steve Dalthorp, Paula Kerr, Carolyn Randall

CONTACT: Carolyn Randall, (360) 533-8222

Timely Resolution of Wage-Replacement Claims

The Region 5 field claims unit was given a goal of appropriately resolving wage-replacement issues on 450 claims in a three month period. Doing so would help Department of Labor and Industries (L&I) meet it's mandate from the Legislature for a 7.5% reduction in the time loss duration index, which incorporates the number of claims, how long those claims remain open, the levels of benefits and the amount of benefits paid.

Region 5 made several process changes that helped to reach that goal. One example: Vocational service consultants started taking all calls from private vocational counselors and handling any vocational issues that arise on a claim. The effect was to give the claims unit more time to resolve claims. Another example: Risk management services began targeting employers with high injury rates and offering consultation services to those employers, with one of the goals being to get employers' participation in getting people back to work.

Results

★ Resolved wage-replacement issues on 480 claims, exceeding the team goal by 7%.

★ Increased the unit's productivity on wage-replacement claims by 103% compared to the baseline.

★ Successful teaming of claims, vocational and risk management programs.

★ On average, vocational service consultants made available an 8% increase in hours per week for the claims unit to manage claims - almost 2,000 hours per year.

Team Members: Jeanette Newkirk (Lead), Mary Garza, Raquel Garza, Ruby Gonzalez, Maria Cruz Guzman, Maria Jimenez, Kelli Kashishian, Julie Rodriguez, Stephanie Snell, Steven Yunker, Leticia Zesati, Roy Callahan, Norma Martinez, Annabea Alvarado, Manuel Heredia, Jack Patton, Barbara Pyle (Consultant)

CONTACT: Barbara Pyle, (509) 886-6564

Department of Labor and Industries

Inspection Report Timeline

Under authority of the Washington Industrial Safety and Health Act (WISHA), Department of Labor and Industries (L&I) compliance officers conduct work site inspections to verify that employers are ensuring the safety and health of their workers as required. Once an inspection is completed, the officer must write a report and submit it to Central Office to be processed and issued. In Region 6 (Spokane), the lapse in time between the completion of the inspection and the writing of the report was averaging 69 days.

Inspectors, striving to achieve goals for the number of inspections conducted, were beginning new inspections before previous ones were written up, thus accumulating growing backlogs of uncompleted inspections.

To reduce the lapsed time between completed inspections and written reports, supervisors began tracking completed reports, and requiring inspectors with more than three unfinished reports to complete those reports before new inspections are initiated.

Additionally, new work unit protocols were implemented to discourage staff from interrupting inspectors who are writing reports. Inspectors also receive coaching on report writing.

Results

★ Elapsed time from inspection to writing and entering the report into the computerized tracking system has been reduced from 69 days to 11 days.

★ Report writing skills have improved, resulting in more defensible legal reports.

★ With report writing skills improving, the time required to write the report is decreasing.

★ Employers now receive written reports within two weeks of the completed inspection, compared to the 8 to 9 weeks previously.

Team Name: Region 6 WISHA Compliance
Team Members: Will Skuse (Team Lead), Mark Aguiar, Tom Anselmo, Steve Belnap, Steve Brooks, Deborah Haigh, Joe Luce, Garry Newbry

CONTACT: Will Skuse, (509) 324-2544

Department of Labor and Industries

"Show Me the Safe Workplaces!"

The Washington Industrial Safety and Health Act (WISHA) Safety Compliance program inspects Washington work sites to verify that employers are meeting their responsibilities under WISHA to ensure the safety and health of their workers. Compliance officers in Northwest Washington (Region 1) were conducting insufficient numbers of inspections, limiting the program's effectiveness in preventing workplace injury and illness. Further, it was taking compliance officers too long to write up inspection reports, delaying the issuance of citations.

The program set two goals:
- ♦ Conduct 930 inspections (up from 522 the previous year)
- ♦ Decrease the citation lapse period to less than 30 days (down from 69 days the previous year)

Several strategies were used to achieve the results:
- ♦ Inspectors were assigned geographic areas to reduce travel time
- ♦ Inspectors were assigned to specific industries
- ♦ Clear goals and deadlines for report writing were established
- ♦ Case documentation and management procedures were streamlined

Results

- ★ Safety Compliance conducted 867 inspections in 2000, falling short of a goal, but nevertheless completing 343 more than the previous year for a 66 percent improvement.

- ★ Citation lapse time averaged 13 days per case in 2000, an 81 percent improvement.

- ★ Inspectors increased the number of inspections completed per month.

- ★ Inspectors increased the number of violations identified.

Team Name: The Enforcers
Team Members: Harvey Bell, Cameron Fischer, Eric Wiseman, Kim Hodne, John Kiely, Rick Sutton, Rick Freitas, Mike Naylor, Geri Woods, Mark Mcharg, Kurt Kaufold, Evelyn Balch, Thyrza Melsby, John Ecker

Contact: John Ecker, (425) 290-1406

Dealer Late Title Transfer Process

When a Washington automobile, mobile home or vessel dealer makes a sale, the ownership documents must be transferred to the new owner within 45 days of the sale. There was a history, within the industry, of ownership documents that were being transferred as late as 90 days beyond the required 45 days. Dealer Services began investigating these late transfers; however, it drastically increased the workload for the Dealer Investigators in the field. In order to continue to provide this customer service, Dealer Services underwent a realignment of staff which freed two Investigators to work on the audits for Late Title Transfers. The late titles are now examined by Title & Registration Liaison Officers who provide information to the Investigators. When the Investigators visit the Dealership, they provide training to the Dealership staff to ensure that they have the expertise to correctly transfer the title within the required time frame.

Results

★ Improved customer service in the transfer of ownership documents.

★ Training for the the staff, at the Dealership, who do the title work associated with the transfers.

★ Enhance compliance with state statutes.

★ Reduce Compliance actions.

★ Reduction in field investigations.

Team Name: Dealer Late Title Transfer Improvement Team

Team Members: Robert Smith, Evelyn Barker, Chuck Coach, Lewis Dennie, Carol Andrew, Brad Boman, Alma Christensen, Mary Ellen Maddocks, Bonnie Glen, Laval Houskeeper, Gary Van Camp, Clain Lust, Karen Wilson, Toni Wilson

CONTACT: Chuck Coach, (360) 664-6453

Financial Responsibility Hearings

The team's mission was to examine the necessity of Attorney General (AG) involvement in the Financial Responsibility (FR) hearing process. During fiscal year 2000, the unit conducted 98 FR hearings. This was down from 168, the number conducted during fiscal year 1999. Each hearing required the presence of an Assistant Attorney General to present the state's case. AG involvement averages a cost of about $250 per FR hearing.

An examination of the process revealed that FR hearings could be presided over by a Department of Licensing (DOL) hearing officer without the assistance of the AG. This was accomplished by having a Hearings Unit manager review the file, and prepare the evidentiary exhibits necessary for the hearing. During fiscal year 2000, when the process was fully implemented, it resulted in savings of about $25,000 in AG expenditures.

Results

★ Reduced the cost of the Attorney General's involvement by $250 per hearing, or approximately $25,000 in fiscal year 2000.

★ Redesigned the Financial Responsibility hearing process.

★ Savings were redirected to the Business & Professions Division's AG needs.

Team Name: FR Hearings Team
Team Members: Jeff Burkhardt (Team Lead), Alan Verme, Glenn MacDonald, Terry Hawes, Hawes Landis, Debbie Sloan, Nancy Wicker; AAG: Kelley Sweeney

CONTACT: Jeff Burkhardt, (360) 902-3849

Fleet Billing Process Improvement

Once a year, Department of Licensing's (DOL's) Vehicle Licensing unit sends out billings to over 700 fleet customers, notifying them of their renewal obligations. In the past, this billing report was printed in triplicate on 12"x15" greenbar paper. One copy was kept on file, the other two copies were sent to the customer – one for their files and the other to return with their payment and amendments. The two sets of reports had to be sorted, folded and inserted by hand into 9"x12" envelopes. This took 16 staff members some 7 hours each (total of 115 hours), and cost over $1200 in postage alone.

With the changes made, the reports are printed on plain 8-1/2"x11" paper, only one copy is mailed to the customer (they copy their report for their files) who indicates amendments on that copy and returns it with their payment. The customer copy is now pre-folded – saving labor on envelope insertion. Staff time saved is 86 hours and postage has been reduced to $456, saving $776.

A DOL vehicle fleet website was developed to provide fleet customers answers to their most commonly asked questions – decreasing calls to DOL offices and increasing customer service.

Results

★ Reduction in staff time completing the billing from 115 hours to 29 hours.

★ Reduced cost of postage from $1232 to $456.

★ Improved customer service and reduced phone calls to DOL offices.

★ We can now fax copies of customer billings for those who need an immediate copy – which was not possible using the computer printout paper.

Team Name: Fleet Billing Process Improvement Team
Team Members: Cheryl Ross, Bob Turcotte, Rick Breidenbach, Rob Cook, Denise Carr, Christina Blue

CONTACT: Cheryl Ross, (360) 902-3789

Vessel Decal/Tab Return Rate Improvements

In 1991 the rate for "returns" of Vessel decals and validation was at 24%. This meant that 24% of the decals and tabs produced for distribution were destroyed once returned because they weren't sold. Tom Richardson, our supply officer, established control charts in order to monitor the process and gather data to indicate areas for potential process improvement. He gradually began to cut back on the amount of decals and tabs that were delivered to our customers -- more closely matching demand with the supply of decals and tabs. It took time for our customers to become comfortable with the cutback in supplies (or surplus stock) being delivered. In 1994 it was decided that a 12% return rate would be acceptable. However through Tom's efforts he was able to reduce the return rate to the present 4.6%.

Results

★ A savings of $7,980 as a result of going from the "acceptable return rate" of 12% to the actual return rate of 4.6%.

★ An imputed savings of $32,000 when comparing the high return rate of 31% in 1991 to the current rate of 4.6%.

★ Reduction in the time spent by staff (Agents and sub-agents) in identifying and inventorying tabs designated for return to Department of Licensing (DOL).

★ DOL staff time saved not having to perform the "de-assigning" function for expired inventory (assignment of tabs to counties and then to agents/sub-agents). For example, in King County the returned inventory decreased from 500,000 tabs to 70,000.

Team Name: Vessel Tab/Decal Return Rate Improvement
Team Members: Tom Richardson

CONTACT: Tom Richardson, (360) 902-3831

Department of Personnel

Creating a Better Looking, Easier to Use, and Less Expensive Training and Development Services Catalog

The Department of Personnel's (DOP's) Training and Development Services Division has provided the state workforce annually with over 1,000 training and development courses. The services are printed monthly in a catalog that has a distribution list of approximately 3,000. A three-phased plan to reduce costs was developed. Phase 1 involved the use of a customer survey to reduce the recipient mailing list. Phase II used new printing technologies and generated a better publication at less cost. Phase III will involve redesigning the publication itself to reduce the number of pages by 50% which is a result of increased use of the Training and Development Services website.

Results

★ Savings of $57,396 per year in printing and distribution costs.

★ An easier to read and more professional looking publication was produced.

★ Shipping and handling was reduced for both DOP and other agencies.

★ Use of the website is growing thereby reducing the need of hard copies.

Team Name: Course Catalog Cost-Containment Committee
Team Members: Doug Spohn, Judy Storey, Carol Daugherty, Rod Bracken, Tammy Wood, Janet Krueger, Pam Oyler, Rod Bracken, Marty Hodgkinson, Jean Backman

CONTACT: Judy Storey, (360) 664-1928

Department of Personnel

Washington Personnel Resources Board Meetings Reduction

For decades the Washington Personnel Resources Board met once a month to deliberate and adopt amendments to the Merit System Rules, compensation plan, and related business. Through improved planning and customer coordination, the length of the meeting has been drastically reduced. In addition, the frequency of meetings has been significantly reduced; meetings are now every other month unless an emergency issue needs to be dealt with.

Results

★ Savings in travel time and expense for clients who need to attend.

★ Savings of $4,470 in Department of Personnel printing and mailing costs.

★ Savings of $1,500 in time and salary costs for Board members.

★ More time for analysis of items submitted for Board rulings, thereby resulting in fewer postponements.

Team Members: Dorothy Gerard, Lisa Skriletz

CONTACT: Dorothy Gerard, (360) 664-6343

Department of Printing

Increase Copy Center Billing Capabilities

State agencies often contact the Department of Printing (PRT) inquiring and requesting information pertaining to copy center billing. Access to this information by Copy Center Billing staff had been restricted to the current and previous month, which made it difficult to answer customer questions. Through customer inquiries, PRT became aware that customers needed to obtain this information promptly for accounting verification. This team implemented the use of a new ticket, which allows storage of billing information for one year. Copy Center Billing staff are able to quickly respond to customer inquiries, thus saving time and increasing efficiency for PRT staff and customers.

Results

★ Saves 144 FTE hours per year for PRT staff.

★ Increases response time for customer inquiries.

★ Increases accessibility to Copy Center Billing information.

★ Increases customer satisfaction.

Team Name: Bigger, Better Billing
Team Members: Patrice Lucas, Debbie Molenda

CONTACT: Patrice Lucas, (360) 570-5072

Merge Purge

The Department of Printing (PRT) frequently receives customer mailing lists that contain duplicate names and/or addresses. Traditionally, identifying and removing duplicate records has not been feasible for customers or PRT due to the volume of mail jobs and records. This has resulted in unnecessary printing and postage expenses for customer agencies and mail recipients receiving duplicate mailings. The team implemented a process utilizing computer software that enables PRT to analyze customer databases for duplicate records prior to printing. This process eliminates duplicate records received from customers, decreases printing and postage costs associated with duplicates, and increases customer satisfaction for PRT and other agency customers.

Results

★ Removed 11,788 duplicate records in two weeks.

★ Saved customers $3,173 in printing and postage costs in two weeks.

★ Increases customer satisfaction.

Team Name: No More Duplicates
Team Members: Chad Perschon, Glenn Bowlsby, Sharie McCafferty, Doug Dow

CONTACT: Chad Perschon, (360) 570-5063

Customer Service Representative Program

Through customer surveys and other customer feedback methods, the Department of Printing (PRT) discovered that some customers were frustrated by their inability to get consistent answers from PRT. Customers did not know whom to contact for assistance or would receive different information depending on whom they contacted. Accessing the services provided by PRT could be confusing and frustrating. A Customer Service Representative (CSR) Program was developed to provide a single point of contact for each customer. The CSR receives and tracks customer print jobs throughout the entire printing process. The CSR also answers any questions that might arise regarding print jobs and serves as a liaison between the customer and production. The CSR Program has substantially improved customer satisfaction.

Results

★ Increases customer satisfaction, by providing a single point of contact for all printing services.

★ Provides training to customers on methods to reduce costs.

★ Allows PRT production planning staff to concentrate on production issues.

★ Reduces turn-around time for all jobs.

★ Saves PRT customers an estimated $18,240 per year.

Team Name: It's all about you, the customer!
Team Members: Dan Swisher, Larry Weber, Doug Dow, Evonne Anderson, Brian Rapacz, Jennifer Forté, Bob Cross

CONTACT: Evonne Anderson, (360) 570-5020

Reliable Retirement Planning Information Is Now Online!

The Online Retirement Benefit Estimators (ORBE) are available to more than 245,000 customers, in eight of the 12 retirement plans the agency administers. They provide instant, informal, estimates via the Internet. These estimates are based on projected age and salary information entered by the customer. The ORBEs are a reliable retirement planning resource, accessible 24 hours a day, seven days a week. They produce estimates close to the benefit the member can expect to receive if the salary and retirement age information entered holds true at the time of their retirement.

When requested by public retirement plan members, the Department of Retirement Systems (DRS) provides formal estimates of pension benefits using actual information from the individual's retirement account. Most members request and are provided estimates for only one retirement scenario, based on age, service and beneficiary information. DRS averages a little over five days to research and respond with formal estimates. Due to the volume of requests in some plans, formal estimates are provided only to members who are within two years of retirement eligibility. Other members in those plans receive a worksheet for manually calculating an estimate of their benefits. The ORBEs help deliver new customer service options, without an increase in staff resources.

Results

★ Provides immediate pension benefit information for customers' personal retirement planning, via the Internet, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

★ Expands service to customers statewide by providing a convenient new retirement planning tool, with no increase in staff resources.

★ Enhances service by allowing customers to obtain retirement planning information for multiple scenarios, based on their own projections for salary and retirement age.

★ Provides online retirement planning information to customers that would otherwise require an estimated 9,500 hours annually and postage costs of more than $33,000, if produced by staff.

Team Name: Online Retirement Benefit Estimators (ORBE)

Team Members: Larry Champine, Kris Fjalstad, Ken Goolsby, Dennis Gustafson, An Huynh, Garth Johnson, Pat Millar, Donna Reilly, Ann Risdon, Johanna Shick, Jilene Siegel, Mark Tremblay, Vickie Worgum

CONTACT: Dennis Gustafson, (360) 664-7278

Simplified Employer Auditing

The Employer Audit Team streamlined the employer auditing process by implementing several improvements. The team designed an automated program that quickly identifies employer reporting discrepancies. An employer's employee records are compared against retirement system enrollees to identify unreported employees who may be entitled to retirement benefits. Employers can then take immediate action to ensure their employees receive their entitlements. Using the program saves days of tedious manual work previously required for the employer and auditor to discover and correct reporting discrepancies. The team created a findings tracking database to increase customer service to employers. Trend data of frequently encountered errors are gathered by criteria and type of employer. The information is used to alert all employers of frequently encountered errors so they can correct possible reporting errors. The data is also used to develop training for employers in specific areas.

The team developed a standard audit format that improves the final audit report production. The new easy-to-read format clearly identifies potential violations that the employer is responsible for correcting and provides a short administrative letter of minor discrepancies. The team implemented a new training program that combined innovation and automation. Instead of the previous one year on-the-job training approach, now new auditors receive computer-based specialized law and theory training. The training design is based on scenario type questions used to ensure auditors know the rules before they begin field audits.

Results

★ Increased the number of employers audited from 24 to 160 audits annually.

★ Increased audit report clarity and brevity resulting in fewer complaints from employers about conditions found.

★ Decreased average audit duration from 15 days to 5 days.

★ Decreased auditor training time by 66 percent from 12 months to 4 months.

Team Name: Employer Audit Team
Team Members: Phil Jones, Carlos Benavidez, Cerjio Castillo, Helene Olsen, Mitch Thompson
CONTACT: Phil Jones, (360) 664-7172

Public List of Delinquent Taxpayers

When initial attempts to collect unpaid taxes and penalties fail, a legal document called a warrant for unpaid taxes if filed with the county court. When the warrant is filed, it becomes a lien. The Department of Revenue created a Public List of Delinquent Taxpayers and posted it on the agency's Internet site for public access. The site contains two lists: one for Western Washington and one for Eastern Washington. The warrants are for liabilities $5,000 or greater and the taxpayer has not made a satisfactory repayment agreement.

Results

★ By notifying taxpayers prior to their inclusion on the Internet list, 79 businesses made satisfactory payment agreements to avoid the internet listing.

★ 23 accounts paid in full, over $411,000, to avoid being on the Internet listing.

★ Provides the public a list of businesses owing the state large tax liabilities.

★ Internet listing encourages timely payment of taxes for businesses wanting to avoid public scrutiny of their tax problems by their customers or creditors.

Team Name: Top Warrant Delinquencies on Internet
Team Members: Tremaine Smith, Mike Grundhoffer, Vikki Riffe, Ralph Osgood, Jennine Purrington, Madelon Barton, Bret Bretthauer, Pat Ancock, Jim Thomas, Brad Grunenfelder, Anita Ady, Tom Trujillo, Diep Huynh, Steve Desselle

CONTACT: Jennine Purrington, (360) 570-6049

Local Sales and Use Tax Publications Re-engineering

Department of Revenue (DOR) publishes compilations of local sales and use tax distributions every other month. Costs and staff time are involved to format, print, and mail six editions of Local Tax Distributions each year. Lag times associated with publication cause delays in getting current information to customers. Research Division team members identified opportunities to improve response times and decrease costs by putting tables on the DOR Internet site as soon as they are available and reducing the frequency of paper reports to once a year. Historical data for multiple years will be on the site as well for the customer to build their own table.

Results

★ Reduced Local Tax Distributions publication frequency, gives direct cost savings of $11,250 annually in printing and postage.

★ Eliminated up to two months delay in getting tax distribution information to customers.

★ Less staff time expended on special data requests for historical data and for customized tables.

Team Name: Research Publications Group
Team Members: Mary Welsh, Don Taylor, Margaret Knudson, Ray Philen, Diane Mielke, Scott Maddox, Don Gutmann, Marc Morley, Greg Charles, John Hansen

CONTACT: Margaret Knudson, (360) 570-6082

Receivables Reduction

Beginning July 1, 1999, the Department of Revenue Compliance Division established a goal to reduce the outstanding tax dollar liabilities by 2.5% per fiscal year for the next four years. Compliance unveiled a new purpose statement, Maximize Collections-Minimize Losses, to better identify the purpose of the division. The new focus concentrates efforts on maximizing collections by prioritizing collection efforts on higher liability accounts. Education efforts minimize losses by working on voluntary compliance of the state's tax laws.

Results

★ Receivables reduced in the first fiscal year by 12%.

★ New purpose statement provides a clearly stated priority allowing employees to focus their work efforts to meet the Receivables Reduction goal.

★ Transferred lower liability accounts to the Central Collection Unit, allowing Revenue Agents in the Field Offices to concentrate efforts on higher liability accounts.

Team Name: Compliance Division
Team Members: The entire Compliance Division

CONTACT: Michael Grundhoffer, (360) 570-6047

Operations Efficiencies for Estate Tax Program

Due to the continually increasing number of estates that are required to file estate tax returns, several efficiency improvements were made within the program. A new data base was created that saved duplicate typing on form letters and reduced typing errors for the support staff. A duplicate form was removed from the refund process in addition to streamlining efforts. A new system was set up to contact the IRS directly for closing letter verification, saving two pieces of correspondence per file. Cross training, an automated interest calculator and the utilization of the Bankruptcy and Attorney General's Office staff on more complex estates have all helped make the program more efficient. Finally, a quicker, less extreme collection process was established to avoid filing 'Findings' against estates when possible.

Results

★ 50% reduction in errors in outgoing correspondence.

★ Savings of 10 hours per week for support staff by avoiding duplicate typing and less general correspondence; and savings of 5 hours per week for Tax Specialists through automation and other process improvements.

★ More expedited responses to taxpayers.

★ A broader knowledge base of Estate Tax program via cross training.

★ Savings of Assistant Attorney General time by not having to deal with as many Findings cases.

Team Name: Estate Tax Process Improvement Team
Team Members: Julie Japhet, Phoebe Hein, Teresa Hansen, Melanie Piccin, Kim Davis, Debra Casparian

CONTACT: Julie Japhet, (360) 902-8867

Department of Revenue

Tips for Completing Your Forest Excise Tax Return

Forest Excise taxpayers are often one time only reporters on their harvest and are unfamiliar with the reporting forms and terminology. Tax Examiners provide telephone assistance and have found the same types of questions were asked repeatedly. A form was designed in which the instructions were more visual and taxpayer "friendly." This form was sent with the quarterly tax return with the goal of providing additional taxpayer service and reducing the number of incoming telephone calls to the Forest Tax Section for taxpayer assistance on simplistic questions.

Results

★ Less telephone time for Examiners assisting taxpayers with basic questions saving approximately 40 hours a year.

★ Supports the agency's cultural attribute of being taxpayer centric as the taxpayers have the information at their fingertips.

★ Supports the agency goal of "making conducting business as simple as possible for our customers and employees."

★ A 15% reduction in taxpayer reporting errors is expected.

Team Members: Barbie Proffitt, Jenny Smith

CONTACT: Barbie Proffitt, (360) 664-0155

Internet Advances Leading to Better Customer Service

On a semi-annual basis, the Forest Tax Section, Special Programs Division, Department of Revenue has to update the Stumpage Value Tables (tables that value timber for excise tax purposes). At a minimum, there are three public hearing notices that are mailed to taxpayers. Often, there are many copies going to different individuals within a company. We wanted a means that would provide better service to the customer and would reduce costs to the state.

Results

★ Moving at least 25% of the large harvesters off of the mailing list to the e-mail list.

★ Eliminated the need to mail hard copies to these harvesters—eliminating postage costs, handling costs (CMS) and time to "stuff" the envelopes by our staff.

★ Provides faster, better and more effective service to our customers.

★ Allows them to correspond electronically before the hearing date if they have questions or concerns.

Team Members: Mark Longrie, Steve Vermillion, Laurence Reeves

CONTACT: Steve Vermillion, (360) 664-8432

Performance Evaluation Tracking System

In the past, the agency did not have an effective tool for notifying supervisors when employee performance evaluations were to be completed and a process for monitoring completed evaluations. The agency recognized that effective and consistent performance management was an area that could be improved and enhanced upon. As a result, the Performance Evaluation Tracking System, known as PETS, was developed. The goal of this new system is to provide a tool to assist managers and supervisors in effective performance management, including the timely completion of performance evaluations for all classified employees.

Results

★ Since implementation, this system has provided Employee Services with the opportunity to increase awareness and understanding of the process, requirements and benefits of effective performance management.

★ In addition, there has been a significant increase in the timely completion of probationary, trial service and annual performance evaluations. From 3-5 per week to 10-15 per week on average—a 300% increase!

★ The PETS system has enabled us to provide timely and accurate notification to supervisors regarding the evaluation due dates and completed training activities of their employees.

★ We have the increased ability to continuously monitor performance evaluation activity to ensure timely completion of evaluations and enhance communication between supervisors and employees.

★ Notification is provided to Executive Management regarding performance management to increase compliance throughout the agency.

Team Name: PETS Team
Team Members: Inita Kazi, Tim Anderson, Beth Fleury, Barb Vane

CONTACT: Beth Fleury, (360) 570-6179

Department of Social and Health Services

Region 2 Home Based Services Improvement

In Region 2 (Southeastern Washington), the Division of Children and Family Services (DCFS) spends approximately $780,000 each year for Home Based Services (HBS). This funding can be used to purchase case specific resources, including food, clothing, shelter, furniture, utilities, transportation, or services, such as professional or paraprofessional, and parent training for children and families. These resources and services are used to prevent out-of-home placement of children, maintain a permanent or long-term stable home for a child, or to reunify a child with family or relatives. This is a highly used program with a low budget allocation and inadequate controls.

A regional team developed new policy and procedures clarifying expectations for social workers, supervisors, and support staff regarding approval, use, and monitoring of HBS funds. Local offices are using logs to track budgets and expenditures to ensure funds are used appropriately and within budget. The team provided training in the local offices, using the format of 'Frequently Asked Questions' about the Home Based Services program, and encouraged use of alternative community resources.

Results

★ Established clear and consistent process for approving, using and monitoring the HBS budget.

★ Anticipated savings of $217,000 per year to serve more families.

★ Trained 155 employees regarding program expectations.

★ Increased efficiency and effective use of purchased services.

Team Name: Home Based Service Made Us Nervous
Team Members: Jim Carter, Gayle Chamberlain-Smith, Yvette Colfax, Bob Craig, Joe Crawford, Greg Dootson, Pam Lamb, Paul Mantz-Powers, Sharon Root, Les Rucker, Rory Schilling

CONTACT: Elizabeth Jones, (206) 923-4892

Children's Administration (CA) Vancouver Office Achieves Accreditation

Recruitment and retention of employees are on-going concerns often connected to low employee morale. Risk management is also an issue in our service to children and families. At times, the credibility of Children's Administration (CA) is not as high as we would like with legislators, community, customers, and service providers.

The Vancouver office of the Division of Children and Family Services (DCFS) volunteered to pilot test the costs and benefits of becoming an accredited public child welfare agency by undertaking the process through the Council on Accreditation of Services to Children and Families (COA). A team from the Vancouver office completed the accreditation requirements, including a written comprehensive self assessment covering 741 standards and and a site visit of peer reviewers from the COA. Accreditation was received on October 20th, 2000. The Vancouver DCFS Office is the first public child welfare agency in the Western United States to achieve this status. Emphasis on improving quality in the agency and participation of customers and stakeholders are major benefits of accreditation. The Vancouver office demonstrated that it meets high standards in the areas of accountability, management and child welfare practice.

Results

★ Full accreditation status for the Vancouver DCFS Office.

★ Demonstrated accountability in service delivery and management of resources.

★ Definitive demonstration to consumers, legislators, and the community that the office is effective and professionally sound.

★ Increased staff morale, teamwork, and participation of customers and stakeholders.

★ Improved focus on data-driven continuous quality improvement.

Team Name: The "A" Team
Team Members: Doug Lehrman, Ed Cote, Dee Wilson, Helen Sullivan, Cindy Hardcastle, Mary Scott, Marian Gilmore, Susan Cunningham, Denise Serafin, Billie Smith, Cameron Preas, Theresa Cole, Linda Minnick, Karen Gorini, Bernie Gerhardt, Eric Anderson, Chris Trujillo, Gayle Davis
CONTACT: Elizabeth Jones, (206) 923-4892

Department of Social and Health Services

Eastern State Hospital Patient Complaint Performance Improvement Project

Patients expressed concerns about the complaint procedure, including having limited access to forms, lack of privacy in submitting complaints, and the time elapsed before investigation and resolution. Administrative staff were responsible for developing resolutions, with an average resolution time greater than 30 days.

A performance improvement team revised the system to ensure privacy, easy access to forms, and a quicker response. Blank complaint forms are now available on each ward with a locked submission box that is accessible to patients for privacy and security. Only designated staff in Quality Management have keys to the boxes. A Complaint Review Team is now responsible for the collection and review of all complaints daily, Monday through Friday (excluding holidays). Each complaint is assigned for investigation to the staff who provide services to the patient. A copy of the complaint with a memorandum identifying the staff investigator is sent to the patient. The patient receives a written report at the point of resolution.

Results

★ Patient surveys show a high level of satisfaction with the way that complaints are heard and resolved at the hospital. Average "grade" given to the new system by patients rating it now is a "B+." The hospital is working to continue to improve this process based on evaluations by patients and their families.

★ In November 2000, 72 percent of the complaint investigation and response processes were completed within 10 days and 95 percent were handled within 30 days.

★ Patient's privacy is maintained by the new system.

Team Name: Complaint Review Team
Team Members: Terrie Scott (team leader), Bob Mair, John Murphy, Mark Kreilkamp, Wes Miller, Dave Denio, Tom Seymour, Patty Soderquist, Tom Peters (facilitator)

CONTACT: Patty Soderquist, (509) 299-4556

Automated Client Notification System

The Mt. Vernon Community Service Office implemented an automated system of notifying workers that clients are waiting in the lobby to see them. The old paper system required a client to fill out a reception (blue) slip and turn the slip into the receptionist, who then hand delivered the slip to the appropriate worker. The paper system resulted in long lines in the lobby as clients waited to turn in the slip and receptionists left the counter to deliver the slip.

A quality improvement team developed a pilot to test the viability of replacing the paper process with a personal pager system. The team selected equipment, developed a process, and provided training to staff. Under the new automated system, clients no longer need to complete a paper reception slip. They give their name to the receptionist who then immediately pages the appropriate worker — letting them know that a client is waiting to see them.

Results

★ Enhanced customer service as clients spend less time waiting in lines.

★ Increased efficiency at the reception counter.

★ Workers notified immediately of clients waiting.

Team Name: Mt. Vernon Pager Team
Team Members: Ronnie-Sue Johnson, Sylvia Jacobs, Celica Tijerina, Ruth Hagerty, Judi Morgan, Reva Johnson, Bill Grissom

CONTACT: Patti Omdal, (360) 416-7301

Department of Social and Health Services

Childcare Fraud Project

The Childcare Unit at the Mt. Vernon Community Service Office (CSO) completed a review of its Working Connections Childcare caseload to determine the accuracy of childcare payments. The review identified a number of cases involving duplicate payments made to different providers for the same children, payments made to unlicensed in-home care providers providing childcare outside of a child's home (in violation of program rules), and payments made for hours of childcare beyond what had been approved by CSO staff.

A team comprised of CSO and Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) Division of Fraud Investigation (DFI) staff was established to address concerns of provider fraud in the childcare program and the safety of children receiving care from unlicensed providers. The team identified areas of potential fraud, and provided training to CSO childcare staff that focused on identifying questionable circumstances and preparing fraud investigation referrals. After training, 75 referrals were made to DFI investigators.

Results

★ Increased safety to children by ensuring childcare program requirements are being met.

★ Estimated savings of $14,036 in childcare payments.

★ Enhanced communication between CSO and DFI staff.

★ Increased communication between CSO staff and clients regarding client childcare choices.

★ Childcare staff trained to identify areas of questionable circumstances.

Team Name: Childcare Fraud Team
Team Members: Jack Arntzen, Pat Park, Lowell Bieber, Rick Gaynor, Greg Powell, Patti Omdal

CONTACT: Patti Omdal, (360) 416-7301

Mt. Vernon Call Center

The Mt. Vernon Community Service Office (CSO) has followed the agency's administrative policy requiring that telephone calls from clients be returned within 24 hours. However, customer surveys indicated that clients felt the 24-hour policy did not meet their needs and that telephone service could be improved. A Quality Improvement Team (QIT) was chartered to develop a call center approach to meeting customer needs.

The QIT developed and implemented a Customer Service Call Center effective January 10, 2001, to provide immediate response to all incoming phone calls. Call Center staff are capable of addressing the needs of the caller, accepting childcare and medical applications over the phone, and providing information and referral as appropriate. The Call Center provides a higher level of customer service to clients being served by the CSO and allows workers to spend more value-added time delivering case management services that help families move from welfare to work.

Call Center staff handled 2,758 calls during the first 19 days in operation, with an average wait time of four seconds for callers.

Results

★ Enhances customer service — providing immediate response by knowledgeable staff to incoming calls and telephone inquiries.

★ Significantly reduce staff time associated with taking messages and returning telephone calls.

★ Saves clients a trip to CSO (savings in time and transportation costs), especially important for employed clients who don't lose time at work having to come to the office.

★ Streamlines service to internal and external customers.

Team Name: Mt. Vernon Call Center
Team Members: Jack Arntzen, Mary Roal, Pat Crumrine, Elaine Conder, Willyne Adams, Bill Grissom, Sharon Nielson, Faye Hoyt, Robin Ford, Diane Linnell, Michelle McKinnon, Darcy Deach, Jade East

CONTACT: Patti Omdal, (360) 416-7301

Van Decentralization Improves Client and Staff Satisfaction

In order to take developmentally disabled clients from Fircrest School on an outing that required transportation, staff had to schedule ahead and obtain a van from a central motor pool. This process was cumbersome and involved a significant amount of planning, paperwork, waiting, and required many trips to the motor pool. Also, the process did not allow for the spontaneity typical of many family trips and outings.

The team redesigned the process to allow more flexibility and reduce the amount of time to procure a van. The team verified the process redesign via a pilot.

Client satisfaction has been improved by providing more opportunities for individualized meaningful trips. Staff satisfaction has increased by eliminating five process steps, and the process redesign ensures the current levels of safety and maintenance for the vans.

Results

★ Increased the number of community outings with clients from 147 to 188 during the 2-month pilot.

★ Eliminated 5 process steps, which resulted in 94 staff hours saved in one month.

★ Vehicles and equipment maintained to ensure safety and accountability. Quality assurance checks were made during the pilot.

★ Increased flexibility and allowed staff to focus more on client interests.

★ Increased morale by enhancing staff's ability to provide quality services with immediate access to transportation.

Team Name: Van Decentralization Team
Team Members: Diane Malmoe, Selina Chan, Angela Morasch, Diana Flory, Lois Snyder, Wanda Reed, Shan Wilson, Sandy Keiffer; Dan Drischel (Facilitator), Chris Olsen (Management Sponsor)

CONTACT: Diane Malmoe, (206) 361-3658

Department of Social and Health Services

Video Technology Provides Reasonable Accommodations

When the Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (ODHH) learned from staff at the Twin Rivers Corrections Center that a hearing impaired inmate was being transferred to the McNeil Island Special Commitment Center (SCC), it became clear that providing sign language interpreting services on the island would not be cost-effective and would be difficult to procure on a regular basis. To address this need, Video Relay Interpreting Services were established between an office room in the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) headquarters building and a group meeting room at the McNeil Island site.

While the SCC was struggling to procure interpreters for treatment sessions for the client, ODHH purchased two video conferencing setups and contracted with a certified sign language interpreter to provide interpreting services for the client of the SCC through the video conferencing link. Beginning in October, the video interpreting service began serving the client an average of 9 hours a week.

Results

★ Created savings of over $22,000 per year, a 60% savings.

★ Relieved SCC staff of the need to secure sign language interpreters.

★ Paid for actual service delivery costs for interpreted and obviated the need to pay vendors for travel time/ferry costs, mileage, and "hourly downtime" between assignments during the day.

★ Allowed for a "cost-benefit" study to be conducted in anticipation of future Federal requirements for the provision of video relay services over the public telephone network.

★ Reduced civil liability and possible court sanctions for failure to provide federal and state mandated access for persons with hearing loss.

Team Name: Video Interpreting Services Project
Team Members: ODHH: G. Leon Curtis, Robert Lichtenberg, Lisa Flatt, Lien Ngo-Tran; SCC: Allen Ziegler, Nancy Farrell; DIS: Kathy Hernandez, Alice Zillah; ISSD: Lynda Vintilio

CONTACT: Robert Lichtenberg, (360)-902-8000

Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Customer Database and Inventory Tracking Project

Accurate assistive telecommunications equipment inventory information for the Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (ODHH) was often unavailable. The customer database was duplicated by ODHH staff, each with different information about equipment in the possession of vendors and clients. This resulted in tracking system errors and inventory management inefficiencies. In addition, it caused delays in delivery of equipment statewide to deaf and hard of hearing clients when demand for assistive telecommunications devices exceeded inventory stores or vendors failed to receive needed inventory. Asset management was compromised when vendors' inventory counts did not reconcile with the master database, which also created opportunities for loss of state property.

This improvement consolidated databases, enabling staff to identify inventory levels, know which vendors possessed specific items for clients, and which clients owned specific items. This also allowed for timely reorder of needed inventory and timely delivery to vendors.

Results

★ Eliminated duplicated data entry by staff.

★ Provided more reliable reports with less human error through reduced data handling.

★ Ensured timely access to statistical information by use of electronic tracking options.

★ Provided better identification and preservation of state assets.

★ Provided more accurate inventory levels and timely procurement.

Team Name: Telecommunications Internal Process Improvement Team (TIPIT)
Team Members: Kelly D. Buckner, Colleen Rozmaryn, Sandra Johns, Riley Beerbower, Lien Ngo-Tran, Jerry Heath

CONTACT: Kelly D. Buckner, (360) 902-8001

Sharing is Caring - Christmas 2000

In order to provide a more personalized and "homelike" Christmas for the residents of the Washington Veterans Home at Retsil, a staff team comprised of Activities, Nursing, and Social Work brainstormed the idea of developing a database. The database would house personal data identifying a wide range of demographic information, interest and needs of the residents.   This team worked together to gather data on each individual resident's personal interest, hobbies, military service and a list of what the resident would like to receive as Christmas gifts.

The database also includes volunteer information, organization contact information, and other resident needs that remain unfunded. The database allows for generating a variety of lists and labels all while maintaining resident confidentiality. The database also provides a centralized information storehouse for data on non-budgeted needs.

Results

★ The database allowed for the residents to receive *personalized* gifts from the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard.

★ The database allowed for the generous number of generic gifts (donated by Fort Lewis and MCChord AFB AFEES, The Elks, Eagles, VFW post and Auxiliaries, American Legion and Auxiliaries) to be distributed to residents with additional request.

★ Several monetary donations/grants were made that were to be used for specific needs. The database was searched and a replacement Public Address System for the auditorium is now being purchased as well as a CD Juke box with CD's.

Team Name: Project Sharing is Caring
Team Members: Carol Denton, Catherine Shaw, Mary Ann Hemple, Bill Shea, Dewey Abbott, Tami Reuter, Mitsy Barnes, Dan Caton, Brenda McCormick, Diane Benjamin, Ed Dolle, Nursing Department direct care staff; Team Leaders: Ed Dolle, Catherine Shaw

CONTACT: Catherine Shaw, (360) 895-4363

Contracting Clean-Up

Employment Security Department's (ESD)'s Contracts Office manages transactions for personal and purchased services and serves as the central repository for hard copy and electronic data files. Its two databases were contaminated with duplications, incomplete information, and errors. Staff struggled to retrieve accurate contract status and details. Customers wanted more reliable information and better access to status reports. The system demanded security features allowing only designated personnel to make changes to template fields. Most importantly, information in hard copy and electronic data files needed to match for business and legal purposes. Joined by a professional computer consultant, the team brainstormed solutions, evaluated options, identified an approach, established an action plan, and completed the project. Desired modifications and revisions include regular quality reviews to prevent future contamination.

Results

★ Merged old with new database, reducing active files from 7,318 to 3,275 and archiving the rest. Applied standardized procedures for data entry.

★ Security features have purified database and project codes have been added for more accurate and efficient referencing for customers.

★ Estimate 126 staff hours saved annually retrieving information.

★ A preliminary random sampling of 40 files revealed a 16% error rate in key data elements. After improvement, sampling showed the error rate dropped to less than 1%.

★ Now able to query the database, check individual contract status, and run reports by project code, division, region, dollar amount, or contract type.

Team Name: Contracts Sub-Task Team
Team Members: ESD: Lorna Smith, Arnold Fajardo, Milly LaPalm, Marsha Phillips, Sonja McMurray, Larry Oline, Barney Hilliard; Paragon Group: Bernie Benson

CONTACT: Barney Hilliard, (360) 438-4008

Spokane Automated Referral Card System

The Spokane Automated Referral Card System generates referral notices to connect workers with employers job openings. There were a number of problems with the system. The automated system operated from Olympia with one special printer available in Spokane to produce the notices. Outstationed staff did not have access to the printer. The only printer broke down frequently requiring staff to complete the referral notices manually. Customers also had to wait for job referrals when the system was down. Printer repairs were made from Olympia or by local computer network staff. Job orders with large referral numbers created long waits while notices were printed. The notices did not market Employment Security Department (ESD) services well or provide employers a copy of their job order. The team analyzed problems, brainstormed solutions, mapped, and tested. Solutions included multiple, locally controlled printers and a newly designed referral notice that market the agency and provide employers' copies.

Results

★ Saved 225.66 FTE hours per year.

★ Improved customer service – clients do not have to wait – outstations have access.

★ Saved $40 by eliminating phone calls to Olympia for repairs.

★ Potential best practice for ESD as well as other agencies.

★ Ownership for the process at the local level.

Team Name: Automated Card Review Team
Team Members: Luis Cerna, Donna Drewry, Ed Klaus, Daniel Lambert, Bob Matzinger

CONTACT: Luis Cerna, (509) 532-3053

Improved Scheduling Process

WorkSource Wenatchee staff had concerns regarding the scheduling of customers for the Job Hunter Workshops. Processes were time intensive for staff, customers found the paperwork intimidating, with both staff and customers dissatisfied with the scheduling system. Frustration levels were high and workshop attendance was low. Customers desiring to attend a workshop had to complete five forms including registration. Staff had to send out appointment letters to schedule and remind people. Partner agencies were also frustrated by having to contact the office by phone to schedule participants for workshops. A process improvement team surveyed customers and staff, brainstormed options, developed a registration form, tested and implemented a new process that eliminates paperwork and mailing costs. A new registration form is used for marketing workshops. Partner agencies use the form to register participants for workshops and fax the information to WorkSource staff saving time for all.

Results

★ Workshop attendance increased 135%, from 46 to 108 participants.

★ Scheduling increased 54%, from 156 to 240.

★ Paperwork reduced from five forms to one and added a calendar and schedule of workshops to the single form, increasing customer satisfaction.

★ Saved $1,030 in postage by eliminating the need to mail the schedule.

★ Saved an estimated 416 FTE hours by streamlining the scheduling procedures.

Team Name: Improved Scheduling Process Team
Team Members: Mary Sanchez, Len Little, Kay Bland, Pam Hoffner

CONTACT: Mary Sanchez, (509) 665-3728

End to End Collection Process

Until May 2000, Employment Security Department's (ESD's) Benefit Payment Control Unit (BPC) had two distinct business operation teams to recover overpayments of Unemployment Insurance Benefits—one for initial collections and another for garnishment. Processes did not work well for overpayment customers because they had to deal with different people on the Collections and Garnishment Teams. Collectors were performing repetitive clerical support tasks that kept them from taking on more revenue producing accounts. The two BPC teams flow charted processes, brainstormed, and designed a flow chart for the new process. They created a management system where one BPC team member works with an overpayment customer throughout the entire repayment process. FTE's have been converted to clerical support positions preparing legal documents, freeing up the professional and technical positions. Technology was introduced allowing easier access to account files. The phone system has also been improved. When overpayment customers call in and identify the last four digits of their social security number, they are immediately connected to a personal account manager.

Results

★ Increased revenues to the Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund from overpayment accounts by 20% or a total of $1,172,000 in the first six months.

★ Saved $45,844 a year in staff salaries by converting two FTEs to clerical support.

★ Increased the solvency of the Trust Fund through faster recovery of the principle portion of a benefit overpayment.

★ Improved collection and detection methods from increased interest revenue.

★ Improved customer service by timely release of garnishment documents, eliminating unnecessary withholding of money.

Team Name: Benefit Payment Control Team

Team Members: Carole Bernhardt, Becky Richards, Bill McDonald, Pam Sulenes, Pat Kirk, Maria Laucirica, Leovy Cabrera, Terry Casillas, Linda Marshall, Kathlyn Sweet, Renee O'Hara, Matthew Thompson, Iris Riutort, Debbie Calcote, Robin Hedden, Lisa Zolman

CONTACT: Carole Bernhardt, (360) 902-9787

Tax Legal Correspondence

The Employment Security Department Tax Administration staff are responsible for issuing legal documents that include notice of assessment, liens, release of liens, satisfaction of warrants, deferred payment contracts, and notice to withhold and delivery to employers who have outstanding Unemployment Insurance tax debts. The processes were time intensive, manual, and the legal documents lacked professional and consistent appearance. Microsoft Word was used to create documents with a professional appearance, and NAPERSOFT provided the capacity to calculate penalties and interest rates. The team used new Web technology to develop and design a system that eliminated the inadequacies of using two systems to create the legal documents. The new Intranet system provides quality legal documents for use by statewide tax staff saving FTE hours.

Results

★ Saved 3,120 FTE hours by streamlining and automating the production of legal documents from a manual personal computer word application.

★ Decreased risk to the agency and improved the quality, appearance, and consistency of legal documents.

★ Increased efficiency and accuracy for issuing legal documents by eliminating keying errors.

★ Eliminated unnecessary work and improved employee morale.

★ Provided assurance that all employers with delinquent accounts are treated fairly.

Team Name: Tax Legal Correspondence
Team Members: Sam Simpson, Dale Zimmerman, Peiter van Amerongen, Jim Schodt, Kurt Malizio, Joe Rueter, Angela Siegel, Michael Cobb, Don Wilson

CONTACT: Sam Simpson, (360) 438-3298

Keep the Customer Satisfied

The process for vendor payment invoices was a laborious and inefficient system in the Office of Public Affairs (OPA). It resulted in delays, confusion, lost staff time, stress, late fees, and communication breakdowns. Using Continunous Quality Improvement (CQI) tools such as flow charting, brainstorming and prototype testing, the OPA team initially developed and tested a solution using a cover sheet. However, the team found that process, while an improvement, was inadequate. So again using teaming skills, they developed a two-fold solution. The team designed and purchased customized rubber stamps that tie invoices to cost centers. They also streamlined detail by using customized folders to batch and track invoices. The average processing time for invoices dropped from 19 to 6.9 working days. Clarity replaced confusion, vendors were paid in a more timely manner, and late fees were trimmed. Bookkeeping is concise, staff stress is reduced, and chasing invoice paperwork is virtually eliminated.

Results

★ Reduced processing time invoices from 19 days to 6.9 days.

★ Saved $240 annually by eliminating an average of $20 per month in late fees.

★ Saved 257 FTE hours annually by eliminating unnessary processes.

★ Improved and strengthened internal and external customer relationships.

★ Reduced staff stress by eliminating unnecessary work.

Team Name: OPA Staff
Team Members: Kay Jarvela, Mali Gunn, Rosalund Jenkins

CONTACT: Kay Jarvela, (360) 902-9310

Youth Leadership Forum for Students with Disabilities

The Governor's Committee on Disability Issues and Employment implements programs and provides information to adults with disabilities; however, there has been a void reaching disabled youth. Thirty-seven states in the nation offer Youth Leadership Forums to disabled youth, but Washington does not. By partnering with state, federal agencies and private industry, the team planned and implemented the first Washington Forum using the California model as a best practice. They recruited volunteers and received donations so high schoolers with disabilities could learn about resources, explore options for educational and career goals, and experience successful adult role models with disabilities. The students experienced life on a college campus, attended workshops, and participated in activities designed to help set and reach goals.

Results

★ Provided information to 32 disabled youth who would not have otherwise received services.

★ A total of 1,900 volunteer hours were donated by partnering with private and public organizations to plan and implement the Youth Forum.

★ Applied for and received state and federal grants, and private industry donations of $69,000 to fund the Youth Forum by partnering with other state, federal, and private entities.

Team Name: Youth Leadership Forum
Team Members: Employment Security Department: Debbie Himes, Toby Olson, Glorita McIntyre; Eastern Washington University: Christy Hamilton; Human Rights Commission: Marilyn Akita; Bates Technical College: Dan Eberle; University of Washington: Doug Hayman; Division of Vocational Rehabilitation: Esther Bennett; State Board of Community and Technical Colleges: Michael Tate; Spokane School District: Sue Gurnari; Social Security Administration: Beth Hidano; Yakima Comprehensive Mental Health Services: Tom Hoisington; Washington Mutual Bank: Vicki Winn, Morresia Johnson-Harris; Casey Family Foundation: Julie Smallman; NW Paralyzed Veterans of America: Jack Michaels

CONTACT: Debbie Himes, (360) 438-3246

E&T Division Annual Policy and Procedures Review

Agency employees are required to review certain policies and procedures on a yearly basis. The Employment and Training (E&T) Division did not have a consistent process in place to ensure that a yearly review was conducted. In addition, the process was time intensive and burdensome for the administrative support staff. The team designed and implemented procedures that include providing each employee a memo and spiral bound booklet with information on all the required policies. Several other non-required policies, that employees should be aware of, are also included in the booklet. Now each employee reviews, signs the cover memo, and returns it to the Assistant Commissioner's office attesting that they have read, understand, and agree to adhere to the policies.

Results

★ Increased the number of employees completing annual review of policies from 20% to 92% (November 1999 - 27 of 135 employees completed the review; November 2000 - 123 of 135 employees completed the review).

★ Reduced risk to the agency and employee by having employee review policies and sign a compliance statement.

★ Other pertinent policies are reviewed by all division employees on a yearly basis.

★ The process is easily managed, saving 48 FTE hours.

★ Improves employee morale by eliminating unnecessary work.

Team Name: E&T Policy Review Team
Team Members: Sharon Lindley, Elise McKnight

CONTACT: Sharon Lindley, (360) 438-4610

Employment Security Department

North Seattle Tax Office Back Tax Reduction

North Seattle Tax Office staff decided to reduce the number and dollar amounts for employers owing over $100 in back taxes. They formed a team to develop and implement a plan to reduce the tax debt. They discovered that the Collection Manual was out-of-date, new staff needed training, legal correspondence processes were time consuming, and that employer information and addresses were not up-to-date. They revised the Collection Manual which now provides consistent, timely and useful information to all staff. Additionally, training is provided to all staff on use of the agency's new software that updates employer information and streamlines the legal correspondence process. By using the software for legal tax correspondence for collection documents, the Notice of Assessment, Liens and Warrants can be produced on the auditor's desk top rather than forwarded to support staff for typing.

Results

★ Decreased accounts receivable by $305,887 or 23% (baseline data in April 2000 was $1,305,875 in back taxes owed - October 2000, $999,988 was owed).

★ Saved 128 FTE hours by updating the Collection Manual and training staff.

★ Improved staff morale by providing training and streamlining processes.

★ Improved customer service by using the automated Legal Correspondence software.

Team Name: Reduction Task Force
Team Members: Janet Chinn, Julie Coleman, Terrell Deere

CONTACT: Terrell Deere, (206) 706-3809

Employment Security Department

Job Net Job Order Demand List

The process of producing lists of daily job openings used by WorkSource Columbia Basin staff and other community organizations assisting customers seeking employment was inefficient and time consuming. Over 20 organizations relied on the WorkSource Center to fax them the list daily. If not received by 9:00 a.m., they called to see where it was. The list was printed from a standard report produced from the automated system that contains information about job openings—JobNet. It was printed, folded to cover confidential information, transferred to a header sheet to look professional, enlarged, copied and faxed. The list used by WorkSource center staff was photocopied and then hand delivered to approximately 70 people. The new process allows staff responsible for creating the report to search the JobNet system using codes from the dictionary of occupational titles (DOT), highlight the open job orders, and copy them over to an Excel spreadsheet. The report is then e-mailed to internal staff and placed on the web for universal access.

Results

★ Saved 430 hours of staff time per year.

★ Saved $960 in paper costs.

★ Community organizations can access the job list on the Internet.

★ Increased customer satisfaction by reducing wait time for the job list.

★ Potential "best practice."

Team Name: WorkSource Columbia Basin
Team Members: Josie Acob-Campbell, Rudy Alaniz, Paul Bailey, Mike Channel, John Hood, Donna Kunk

CONTACT: Donna Kunk, (509) 734-5974

Claimant Placement Program Orientation Scheduling

The process of scheduling Unemployment Insurance (UI) claimants to attend job seeking skills workshops at the WorkSource Columbia Basin was a lengthy, labor intensive, 4-step process. Claimants were first identified from a list produced by the automated UI system, then three screens had to be checked to determine various information—such as payment history, employer attachment, name, and address. Once the identification process was complete, names, addresses, and social security numbers were entered into Windows; then using the merge data feature, appointment letters were printed. The letters were checked for accuracy, corrections made, and copies prepared for the local file. The last step was to create a list of individuals scheduled to attend the workshop by typing their names into an Excel schedule form. Because the scheduling process took so long, not every claimant that was identified to attend the workshop got scheduled. The team explored other scheduling alternatives and found that WorkSource Walla Walla was using an Access downloading process. This eliminated the need to key information into Windows for printing appointment letters and into Excel to produce the workshop schedule. The team coordinated and collaborated with Walla Walla staff to adapt their system and train staff.

Results

★ Saved 819 FTE hours by reducing staff time from 936 hours per year to 117 hours per year.

★ Doubled the number of claimants scheduled each week for workshops, from 80 to 160.

★ Doubled the number of workshops held each week from four to eight.

★ Improved accuracy of data.

★ Adapted and implemented as a "best practice."

Team Name: WorkSource Columbia Basin
Team Members: Josie Acob-Campbell, Daryl Campbell, Sally Casey, Sandra Ortega

CONTACT: Sally Casey, (509) 734-5946

Electronic Occupation and Wage Data Sharing

Several community and technical colleges were having trouble filling out the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey form. Many survey forms were not being completed or returned. The processes for collecting and completing the forms were burdensome and time consuming—an estimated 16 hours per form. A team was created to improve the process. They reviewed data already collected by the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) to determine if it included information sought by the OES survey. It was determined that additional data was necessary to identify occupations and that other data was needed to link to the original file by using common fields. Now the OES survey forms are no longer sent out to Community and Technical Colleges. Employment Security Department 's (ESD) Labor Market Information Unit receives information in a database format, then adds occupational and wage codes to each. The data is also available earlier in the year, which gives the team more time to process it.

Results

★ Saved ESD 20 FTE hours by eliminating the need to contact colleges to request responses to survey, clarification, or additional information.

★ Increases the reliability of the estimates by gaining 2,400 additional occupations and wages each year.

★ Eliminated duplication of effort and streamlined the workload without compromising confidentiality.

★ Enhanced the partnership with the colleges by providing better data and eliminating unnecessary work.

★ Increased the capacity to provide more and better occupational and wage data to ESD customers.

Team Name: Data Sharing Team
Team Members: ESD: Charlie Saibel, Bob Dellwo, Ted Halstead, Beverly Batson, Dick Armstrong, Michael Paris, Jim Salomon; SBCTC: Carmen Grose, Terry Wheeler, John Boesenberg

CONTACT: Charlie Saibel, (360) 438-4802

Customer Feedback

The WorkForce Investment Act (WIA) requires the One-Stop Delivery System to provide measurable performance accountability at the local level. WorkSource Bellevue formed a team to develop a customer satisfaction survey process. Using team tools, they did research and found that most surveys were paper and pencil and determined the need to use new technology. They developed and implemented a web-based survey, analysis/report-generating tool. A three-month contract was signed with an applied software provider (Infopol) to assist with survey development and provide analysis and reports. The web-based survey allows job seekers, businesses, and web-site users to respond. The results are published in a user-friendly format that is capable of identifying the attributes that most contribute or detract from overall customer satisfaction. The results can be viewed on-line in real time. Additionally, the survey hyperlinks back to the respondent creating the capacity for timely response to customer questions, and also links to the WorkSource Bellevue web site.

Results

★ Developed and implemented a web-based customer satisfaction survey and published the results on-line.

★ Increased customer satisfaction by creating capacity to collect customer feedback so staff can improve services.

★ Created a method to market WorkSource services by linking to the WorkSource Bellevue web site.

★ Created a best practice by designing a survey that is easily adaptable across the WorkSource system with the capacity to break out data for individual sites.

Team Name: CAST (Customer Assessment Satisfaction Team)
Team Members: ESD: Nancy Troxel, Anna Romero, Kurt Simmons, Alan Medley; Pacific Associates: Chris Ibanez

CONTACT: Nancy Troxel, (425) 990-3745

Getting Basic Health Materials to Helpers

Many organizations, including social service, non-profit, religous and 'helping' organizations, distribute applications and information about the Basic Health plan to their members/clients and frequently assist with the application process. Historically, an organization would request applications or information, and experience a two-week backlog before the material was mailed. When Basic Health received a request for bulk material, they requested and received the materials from the warehouse, assembled and packaged the material, and returned it to the warehouse for mailing. This process required one full-time FTE at Basic Health, 16 hours per month for warehouse transportation, duplication of tasks and extensive use of Next Day mail services. Improvements include moving .5 FTE to the warehouse and centralized mailing function.

Results

★ From two-week backlog to no backlog and all orders processed within 24 hours.

★ Order form available to organizations on HCA Website.

★ Streamlined from 6-step process to 2-step process.

★ FTE .5 plus 16 hours a month redeployed to direct customer service.

★ Increased efficiency through centralization of packaging and shipping functions.

Team Name: Bulk Mail Process Improvement Team
Team Members: Preston Cody, Nikki Jognson, Jeff Coler, Martha Wells, Matt Berry, Kathy Eberle, Becky Loomis, Mike Angel, Rebecca Burch, Glenn Raiha, Letitia Howard

CONTACT: Preston Cody, (360) 412-4361

Basic Health Translation Process, Phase II

The turnaround time for all language translation of Basic Health's member correspondence had been 4.98 days. Previous streamlining and process improvement decreased that time by approximately three days, to 2.01 days. Spanish translation, because of the volume, averaged 3.08 days. The time spent in the translation process delays the staff's response time to members' applications and letters of concern, including serious or time-sensitive issues. The team felt that further improvements could be made by centralizing the translation efforts, and the Spanish language pilot began in October 2000. A Spanish translator was added for instances in which correspondence is received, which is now translated immediately upon receipt.

Results

★ Spanish translation process time decreased from 3.08 to .17 days, allowing faster response time to member correspondence.

★ The translation process moved from direct customer service staff to administrative staff, adding .75 FTE to front line direct customer support.

★ The improvement in turnaround time occurred during a time of increased member correspondence, from 166 Spanish translations to 395 per month.

★ The three-step process was streamlined to one step. Previously, a document requiring Spanish translation was received, routed to a customer service staff member for translation, returned to receiving to be scanned, and routed to the approprite account representative for action/response. Now the document is received, translated, scanned and routed by one administrative staff member within four hours of receipt

Team Name: Translation Improvement Team

Team members: Preston Cody, Nicole Ross, Cindy McKinzie, Gail Burris, Elvia SanMartin, Anton Cooper, Lois Johanson, Sun Watkins, Kyle Vu and Jose Gonzalez

CONTACT: Preston Cody, (360) 412-4361

PEBB Online Form Pilot = Big Success

The Health Care Authority (HCA) Public Employees Benefits Board (PEBB) program relies heavily on telephone and paper documents as its main contact with customers. During the annual open enrollment period, PEBB staff receives 10 times as many phone calls compared to other months, from about 20,000 families who wish to make account changes or who have questions about their coverage. The PEBB also receives thousands of enrollment change forms from members interested in making account changes.

During last year's open enrollment period, public employees who were interested in making PEBB account changes were required to obtain an enrollment/change form from their payroll/benefits office, complete the form and then return it to their payroll/benefits office. Payroll/benefits staff then keyed the changes into the insurance eligibility system. Additionally, due to increased workloads during the open enrollment period, it is often difficult for customers to get through to a benefits specialist via telephone. A prompt response to members' inquiries is a high priority for the HCA.

Results

★ An online form was developed, piloted and implemented on the HCA Website for 2001 Open enrollment.

★ Customers had immediate access to account information and allowed all employees to change their medical and dental plans during open enrollment, 24 hours per day, 7 days per week.

★ Over 38%, or 4,438 out of 11,687 changes were made using the online form, compared to anticipated 10 percent.

★ More than 12,000 individual subscribers from 98 agencies accessed the site.

★ Paper forms require an average 8 minutes for a payroll/benefits employee to review and process. The online form saved 592 hours.

Team Name: PEBB Open Enrollment Improvement Team
Team Members: Beau Bergeron, Lonnie Budd, Michelle George, MaryAnne Lindeblad, Mich'l Needham, Tom Neitzel, Pam Powers, Romeo Solis, Dave Wasser, Department of Personnel: Dionna Klotz

CONTACT: Tom Neitze, (360) 923-2848

Rewards & Recognition and HCA's Balanced Scorecard

In 1998, Health Care Authority (HCA) administered an employee satisfaction survey (ESS). Lack of recognition and feedback were identified as employee concerns, with HCA's scores in those areas below the state averages. Management felt that effort in these areas could improve overall morale, increase commitment to HCA's mission and vision, and, with appropriate recognition and feedback strategies, would reinforce the core value of "Our customer is the main thing." As a part of the agency-wide Quality Steering Committee (QSC) several action teams were formed to develop and put in place to improve activities. One team was the Recognition Action Team. An executive sponsor and the team created a variety of ways to improve recognition and feedback.

Results

★ A half-day training course, Giving Recognition, was selected and 92% of all HCA supervisors attended.

★ Monthly "Bright Ideas" bulletins are sent to all supervisors from HR, providing new and innovative ideas for rewards and recognition.

★ The performance evaluation policy was revised requiring all supervisors be evaluated on giving recognition.

★ "Recipe Books" depicting employees' "desirable ingredients for a rewarding and meaningful thank-you" were created throughout the agency.

★ Basic Health Bucks and Basic Health Store is a new recognition initiative within the Basic Health division and is a tool for staff, supervisors and managers to recognize each other's accomplishments on an on-going basis.

Team Name: Rewards and Recognition Improvement Action Team

Team Members: Preston Cody, Lynda Walley, Becky DeBoer, Barbara Bauman, Beau Bergeron, Claudia Beyer, Megan Blume, John Bowden, Cheri Bowen, Tina Brien, Larry Causey, Gary Christianson, Stephanie Claire, Martha Cortes-Leon, Mandy Day, Pam Dickey, Elizabeth Duncan,Teresa Edwards, Audrey Frisch, Michelle George, Marlys Hamilton, Jill Hanks, Bobbie Hathaway, Aimee Wagner, Letitia Howard, Ha Huynh, Diana Lessard, Lamia Mackoul, Laurie Milligan, Sherry Meyer, Cherie Narrance, Megan Nervik, Phuong Nguyen, Diana Parkison, Kathy Plaquet, Glenn Raiha, Rosanne Reynolds, Vicky Rideout, Amy Ridgeway, Judy Runyon, Debbie Sanders, Bev Skinner, Christie Stelzig, Sharon Treadwell, Cheryl Thietje, Janet Tyrolt, Brad Underwood, Donna Walter, Dave Wasser, Janice Wright, Leslie Brundige, Melodie Bankers, Becky Loomis, Barbara Burgener

CONTACT: Melodie Bankers, (360) 923-2728

UMP Fee Schedules and Provider Reimbursement Policies

Prior to July 1, the Uniform Medical Plan (UMP) professional provider fee schedule applied the same reimbursement rates regardless of where the procedure was performed. These reimbursement rates included a facility component, representing the overhead costs that would be incurred by a physician who performed the procedure in his/her own office.   In cases where the procedure was performed in a hospital or other health care facility, the UMP would also usually pay a separate claim submitted by the facility for their costs. Effective July 1, 2000, the UMP implemented a dual-level reimbursement approach for professional procedures that recognized the site of service.   This change effectively eliminated the duplicate payment of overhead costs and provides more appropriate reimbursement of the actual costs incurred by the physician in providing the service. Also effective July 1, 2000, the UMP began reimbursing laboratory, radiology, and therapy services billed by hospitals using the same fee schedules that apply for independent laboratories and other providers billing these same services. Previously, the UMP reimbursement to hospitals for these services was based on a percentage of billed charges. As a result, hospitals were frequently receiving higher reimbursement than other providers for comparable services.

Results

★ Applies UMP reimbursement policies more equitably to different types of providers and practice arrangements.

★ Eliminated duplicate payment of facility overhead for certain professional procedures.

★ Improves UMP's ability to control increases in hospital reimbursement for laboratory, radiology, and therapy services.

★ Reduces member coinsurance costs for these services.

★ Supports UMP goal of controlling premium increases and providing health care to customers at an affordable cost.

Team Name: Improving Provider Reimbursement Policies
Team Members: Kathy Fancher, Cheryl Mustard, Krista Shufelt, Cynthia Ray, Janet Peterson

CONTACT: Janet Peterson, (206) 521-2013

Health Care Authority

Prescription Pricing Information Added to UMP Website

In response to several requests from Uniform Medical Plan (UMP) members, price information regarding 200 commonly prescribed medications was added to the UMP Website. This information will help members determine the approximate prices that they will pay for prescriptions, whether they will pay less through retail or mail order, and how much they may be able to save by using a generic drug or other alternative treatment. Pharmacy costs per UMP member are currently increasing around 30 percent per year as a result of increases in utilization as well as the development and marketing of new, highly-priced drugs. As a result, it has become increasingly important to ensure that UMP members are informed consumers and to assist them in making wise purchasing decisions.

Results

★ Increases member involvement in prescription purchasing decisions and awareness of drug costs.

★ Helps UMP members determine in advance the approximate price that they will pay for prescriptions.

★ Helps UMP members determine if they will pay more by purchasing prescriptions through retail or through mail order.

★ During November 2000, there were 240 hits (or approximately 157 unique users) for this portion of the UMP Website.

★ Improved customer service.

Team Name: Customer Information Action Team
Team Members: UMP: Krista Shufelt, Janet Peterson; UMP Pharmacy Consultant: Donna Marshall

CONTACT: Krista Shufelt, (206) 521-2014

Improve .100/Cashaw Hearing Process

It is the Indeterminate Sentence Review Board's responsibility to make decisions to parole or to further incarcerate offenders under their jurisdiction and to balance the public safety and rehabilitation of the offender when making these decisions. In order to accomplish this mission, the entire Parolability and Cashaw Hearing Process was reviewed. The goal was to streamline the process, provide the Hearing Officers with the information needed to complete the hearing work-up and make recommendations to the Board, and to ensure the Board Members have everything they need to make an informed decision on each offender.

Results

★ The hearing process has been streamlined and made uniform. Everyone in the agency is on the same page.

★ Unnecessary steps in the process were eliminated, which saves time for the Correctional Records Specialists who prepare each file for a hearing.

★ The Hearing Officer work-up form was reviewed and found to be outdated. A new form was created to provide the information needed by the Hearing Officers to prepare their file work-ups.

★ The Board Members have the information they need to make an informed decision, which in turn benefits each offender under review.

★ The review process resulted in better communication throughout the agency.

Team Name: QI Group II
Team Members: Robin Riley, Irene Seifert, Russell Snelson, Frances Spreier, Jody Swails

CONTACT: Robin Riley, (360) 493-9266

Resolution of Violation Notification Now Available On-Site

An Administrative Violation Notice (AVN) is issued when a retail outlet (licensee) is notified they have violated a state liquor-related law. Processing an AVN involved eight Liquor Control Board (LCB) staff and two Attorney General (AG) staff and up to 47 specific steps. Processing time ranged from three to six months. It was difficult to check the status of a violation because so many people were responsible for the process at different stages. The process was further complicated in that it was not linear, but actions often passed back and forth between the staff members and/or the AG's office.

The improved process provides for resolution options of the violation notice on-site. The licensee is advised of penalty and disposition options at the time the violation is issued. The customer will now know their case status immediately and in the case of a requested hearing, resolution processing should not exceed one month.

This theory for change was initially tested and implemented with first-time violators in July 1999. The theory is now being implemented with licensees who have multiple violations.

Results

★ Reduced the specific steps in the AVN process for violations from 47 to 29.

★ Redirected 1140 FTE hours of AVN processing time annually.

★ Reduced the average AVN processing time from four months to one month.

★ Reduced number of staff involved in processing 684 of 760 violations annually, from 8 to 3. Reduced the number of staff involved in processing the remaining 76 of 760 violations that require a formal hearing, from 8 to 6.

★ Eliminated 760 certified mailings of Noticeable Action to licensee's (customer's) which saved $2,359 in postage and associated materials.

★ Saved $76,570 annually by eliminating 760 hours of AG processing charges.

Team Name: Administrative Violation Process Team
Team Members: LCB: Ted Taketa, Michael Burke, Sherry Frederick, Randy Reynolds, Pat McFerran, Frances Munez-Carter; AG: Steve Reinmuth

CONTACT: Ted Taketa, (425) 513-5114

Postage Costs Saved Using Messenger Service

In May 2000, state agency mail delivery service was eliminated in Yakima. Rather than pay the cost of postage for individual items or documents, the Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH) staff in Yakima arranged for a local messenger service to deliver these documents each day to various governmental agencies and law firms in the Yakima area. Using the messenger service has proven very dependable and has resulted in net savings of at least $85 per month. In addition to the postage, the OAH Yakima staff is saving envelopes and clerical staff time.

Results

★ Postage cost savings of $85 per month.

★ Reduced usage of envelopes.

★ Reduced clerical staff time in processing mailings.

★ Quicker delivery of documents to customers.

Team Members: Pam VanDeBrake, Margaret Bollman, Lorene Doonan, Michele Lenberg

CONTACT: Pam VanDeBrake, (509) 575-2147

Office of Trade and Economic Development

Community Economic Assistance Center Database

The Community Economic Assistance Center (CEAC) manages multiple funding sources for federal and state grants and loans. Staff wanted to provide seamless services for contractors with single contracts for multiple projects with multiple state and federal funding sources. For reimbursement and reporting purposes, federal grants needed to be tracked separately and accurately by grant years and category of expenditures.

Results

★ The CEAC database tracks contracts by contract number, amendment, county benefit, funding source, and other detailed information. It has streamlined the unit's contract process and saved staff time. It has evolved to also track contractors' outcomes and deliverables, to produce boilerplate speaker agreement, contracts, and form letters. It allows staff to access up-to-date contract information; i.e., payments, progress reports, local contacts.

★ Staff can produce streamlined, seamless services for contractors by giving them one contract for multiple projects involving multiple state and federal funding sources. This reduces the number of contracts that are processed by the unit and by the agency's fiscal and contracting offices.

★ Reconciliation of multiple fund sources and contract payments requires less time and is more accurate than before.

★ The database can be used for form letters, contract boilerplates, mailing labels and other combinations of information. User-friendly forms make all information, form letters, and reports available to all staff at the click of the mouse. This information is always current and accurate.

★ Contractor customized Contract Information Sheet, A19, and quarterly report forms are available at the touch of a button with accurate up-to-date information.

Team Name: CEAC Database Team
Team Members: Eileen Ackerman, Tina Cohen, Kathleen Kannas, Barbara Yake, Angie Bentler, Monica Hautzenrader

CONTACT: Kathleen Kannas, (360) 725-4055

Infrastructure Financing Manual

- Most infrastructure programs use competitive processes to select projects.
- Small communities send applications to every possible funder.
- This "shotgun" approach can increase local project costs, overload local debt capacity, and produce less than optimal infrastructure systems.

Efforts to coordinate state and federal agency responses to economic crises have taught the value of working with resource partners to evaluate projects and investment decisions from a comprehensive, systems perspective. This project sought to create a systems approach to infrastructure financing for small communities by using a team to develop a detailed infrastructure financing manual and workshop curriculum.

Results

★ The Community Economic Assistance Center (CEAC) sponsored "Infrastructure Financing Manual" produced in cooperation with Rural Community Assistance Corporation debuted at the annual Infrastructure Assistance Coordinating Council conference in a daylong training session. Over 80 conference participants attended the session.

★ Since that session, over 500 copies of the manual have been distributed to municipal and county governments and special districts. In addition to distributing hard copies, CEAC makes the manual available via the Internet as a downloadable PDF file.

★ The Rural Community Assistance Corporation is currently circulating a draft companion manual called "An Introductory Guide to Developing Water and Wastewater Projects in Small Communities" for comment. This manual will also be posted on the CEAC Web page in a downloadable PDF file when it is finalized.

★ Together, these manuals and the workshop curriculum provide elected officials and other responsible local government managers with a good basic foundation for making wise infrastructure investment decisions for their communities.

Team Name: Infrastructure Financing Manual Team
Team Members: All state and federal agencies involved in financing infrastructure were involved in the development and testing of this publication.
CONTACT: Linda Alongi, (360) 725-4031

Compacting the Trash

State Parks accumulates trash. Lots of it. At Lake Sammamish, it took three people to empty the garbage cans during the busy summer months: a driver and two more to empty the cans into the truck. Then there was unloading to the dumpster and a back-hoe to pack it all down.

Installation of a trash compactor system has reduced by half both the trash and the time needed for garbage pick-up. One person can now accomplish what three did before. There is added safety and efficiency as well as increased sanitation. Lake Sammamish staff figures that the new system will pay for itself within three years. This team coordination between Headquarters Maintenance, Region Construction and Maintenance, and the park has allowed park staff to spend less time on garbage detail.

Results

★ Freed up staff time by half.

★ Less refuse – reduced by half.

★ Cost effective.

★ Increased sanitation and safety.

Team Members: John Lawrence, John Stoner, Dave Johnson, Dwayne Ratliff, Dave Smith, Willie Rosenow, Tor Bjorklund

CONTACT: Lisa Dunn, (360) 902-8636

E-Scheduling Shared Resources

Scheduling shared resources was accomplished by various manual means specific to the resource itself. Locating resources for meetings required employees to go to the various divisions and learn a variety of manual procedures.

The e-scheduling team automated the scheduling of shared resources through use of Microsoft Outlook Calendar scheduler. They created a user manual of the automated process and put it on the agency shared drive for all to access. The team leader then held a series of training sessions. Implementation was in stages so staff could get used to the new system. The automated scheduling system now includes the conference rooms for all divisions, the audio/visual equipment, and the agency HQ vehicles.

Results

★ Streamline scheduling shared resources.

★ Made schedules available to all work locations.

★ Made scheduling possible from all work locations.

★ Reduced time to schedule shared resources.

★ Improved ability to react to changing conditions.

★ Efficient use of agency resources.

Team Members: Harley Graves, Deaydra Stewart, Don Powell, Suzi Davis, Edwin Maldinado, Cathy Silva, Valeria Veasley-Munroe, Lisa Dunn

CONTACT: Lisa Dunn, (360) 902-8636

Sharing Knowledge Electronically

The agency was storing information on individual Personal Computers. There were shared drives available, but no organization of these drives, so agency information was difficult to find.

Representatives from each division met to organize an electronic shared file. They established the structure, developed authorization procedures, and determined update responsibility. Training of staff launched the project and now the "N:Drive" has become the place to go to find current agency information.

Results

★ Staff is able to access critical agency information quickly and efficiently.

★ Information is always current as it is being created and updated directly on the shared drive.

★ State Records are being carefully managed and maintained.

★ Provides an example and methodology for division and individual electronic records filing.

★ Printing and distribution cost savings.

Team Members: Valeria Veasley-Munroe, Bonnie Steinley, Sherri Clarke, Sharon Howdeshell, Renee Pacana, Cindy Jorgensen, Lisa Dunn, Linda Burnett, Roxie Stancil

CONTACT: Lisa Dunn, (360) 902-8636

Consumer Information Made Easy on the NET

Three years ago, librarians across Washington State agreed that good consumer protection information was very difficult to find. The Washington State Library (WSL) took the lead and leveraged $100,000 in federal grant money to create Find-It! Consumer. The team involved eight other state agencies as sponsors and contributors, reviewed scores of existing sites to identify those which were credible and reliable sources, and brought them together under one search engine.   Water and air quality, pesticide use, and food safety are just a few topics Find-it! Consumer will help citizens to research. By visiting the site, consumers can search more than 70 consumer-protection sites that have been reviewed and recommended by consumer experts and librarians. Find-It! Consumer also will provide consumer alerts and advice.

Results

★ Made it possible for Washington citizens, from their desktops, to access consumer protection information available from state government agencies and national Internet sites that have been reviewed and recommended for their credibility.

Team Name: Find-It! Consumer Project
Team Members: Karen Goettling, Gayle Palmer, Callie Goldsby, Peter Sundholm, Ellen Levesque

CONTACT: Karen Goettling, (360) 704-5205

Children's Day in Washington State

Children's Day is the second Sunday of October every year. In 1997, Washington Council for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (WCPCAN) committed to raising the public's awareness of Children's Day by providing mini-grants to communities across the state to help them plan and implement Children's Day celebrations. This year WCPCAN expanded our outreach efforts to increase community-based participation by focusing on child health and safety and expanding our outreach to special populations.

Results

★ Received 20 grant applications. This is a record number.
★ The mini-grant review committee included parent participation.
★ Designed outreach materials with key messages to increase program capacity to leverage resources around child health and safety.
★ The Thurston Community Network funded four programs, Whatcom Community Network funded one program and Island County/Stanwood Community Public Health and Safety Network participated.
★ Sent do-it-yourself Children's Day planning packets to 171 programs and/or organizations.
★ We had tremendous media support. Children's Day articles were also featured in seven "state" publications.
★ Our events included a health fair for Hispanic families, a cultural awareness day at a housing authority facility, a homeless teen task force, an event fostering relationships in a rural community, a fireside chat to mobilize the African American community to support academic achievement, and a culturally significant tribal celebration.
★ Over 755 children, 476 adults, 55 organizations, and 168 volunteers participated in WCPCAN funded events.

Team Name: WCPCAN staff & Children's Day Grant Reviewers
Team Members: Kikora Dorsey, Tim Gahm, Kelly Stockman Reid, Toni Peycheff, Ellen Tracht, Cheryl Reed, Lolo Arévalo, Ann Benedict, Oliver Tuthill, Natalie Gendler

CONTACT: Cheryl Reed, (206) 389-2412

Improving Student Life

Washington School for the Deaf is a residential school housing deaf students from around the state. For over 100 years students were housed in an institutional dormitory setting according to gender and grade which meant the same students were together 24 hours a day. Spending this much time with your peers is not normal and contributed to behavior problems during the school day and in the residence.

In 1997 the legislature approved funding for new residential cottages to be built. Staff realized this was an opportunity to establish a new program for the residential students. A committee was formed and, using frequent flyer miles, residential staff flew to many deaf schools across the country looking at different residential programs. After evaluating the data collected, the committee determined the best way to deinstitutionalize the program and use the cottages to their full potential was to group the students into multi-age families. A parent survey was conducted and parents were supportive of the multi-age groupings.

Results

★ Groups more resemble family life than the institutional way of life.

★ Decrease in behavior referral and overall suspensions.

★ Increase in incidental learning and language development for younger children by observing older students living in their family.

★ Improved behavior in school and residential program.

★ Decrease cost for staff overtime, transportation, use of intermittent personnel.

Team Name: Student Life Improvement Team
Team Members: Larry Cole, Nancy Sinkovitz, James Thompson, Don Redford, Sarazan Torelli, Susan Barnett, JoAnne Coelho, Debbi Sorensen, Julie Papalia, Terry Sasser

CONTACT: Nancy Sinkovitz, (360) 418-3480

Automated Scheduling Saves Steps

Previously, the Commission's three conference room schedules were kept in the Administration Office area in a hard copy, monthly calendar format. To schedule meetings in any of the three conference rooms, staff needed to either make a physical trip to the calendar location or several phone calls to check or confirm dates. Although this process worked, it was time consuming and inconvenient for both scheduler and user, particularly to staff whose worksite was other than the Lacey office. This team proposed that by using our existing calendar system in our Outlook Program, the conference room schedules could be readily available to all agency users, in every office statewide. Now this information is on line and the conference room schedules are within a few keystrokes for everyone.

Results

★ Improved efficiency by providing agency-wide computer access to each of the three conference room schedules.

★ Improved accuracy in scheduling meeting arrangements, avoiding duplicate scheduling.

★ Increased worker satisfaction due to convenience of computer use rather than having to make the physical trip(s) to the Administration office.

★ Improved customer service to external users.

Team Name: Conference Room Schedule Team
Team Members: Vicki Sprague, Tom Means

CONTACT: Vicki Sprague, (360) 438-7654, extension 373

Inventory Control System

In order to provide the Lottery with an increased ability to track and maintain Washington State Lottery resources and to improve customer service for the installation and servicing of merchandising items for our customers (the retailers), the Lottery needed to design and implement a new system.

The Inventory Control System was designed to track retailer point of sale inventory items at retailer locations throughout the State, from the time a given product was ordered, shipped, delivered, installed, removed, serviced, repaired and relocated. It finds all the retailers that have the given product installed. It provides required budget reporting and all costs in regards to returns, repairs and service. This system links the 6 Regional Offices throughout the State into a Centralized Network DataBase at Headquarters—providing the Lottery with more and better tools for conducting physical inventories of resources.

Results

★ An estimated annual savings of 276 FTE hours.

★ Increased the ability to develop a timely and accurate budget.

Team Name: Inventory System Control Project
Team Members: Carl Seitz, Bill Funk, Bruce Eisentrout, Lori Wada, Kathlene Bragg, Vanessa Hogan, Ellen Smith, Karen Thomen, Thiet Vo, Mona Moberg, Jenna Parque

CONTACT: Bill Funk, Daniel Nguyen, (360) 664-4706

Lottery *Scratch* Ticket Order Packaging

The Lottery spends nearly $40,000 annually on packaging materials used to ship *scratch* ticket orders to retailers. The packaging materials must provide physical protection to the tickets while enroute. They also must be secure, must be easy to work with and easy to store. At the time this project began, *scratch* ticket orders were being packaged in either cardboard boxes or manila envelopes lined with bubble wrap.

Several changes in the *scratch* ticket distribution system resulted in an opportunity to change packaging materials. The team members analyzed the costs and benefits of changing to polyethylene bags for small orders. The team found that performance and handling characteristics of the polyethylene bags were as good or better than existing packaging and costs were less. The group also confirmed that the new bags allowed for printing on the exterior of packages. In addition, the new bags increased our customers' ability to identify packages that may otherwise have been mishandled.

Results

★ An estimated annual saving of $6,716 based on 3,300 packages per month.

★ Polyethylene bags eliminated the need to order two different sizes of shipping boxes.

Team Name: Lottery *Scratch* Ticket Order Packaging
Team Members: Ken Balko, Gus Gustafson, Dustin Adams, Jerry Jansen, Rich Koochagian, Bruce Eisentrout

CONTACT: Bruce Eisentrout, (360) 664-4790

Pilots Take on Traffic Congestion

Aviation Section pilots formerly focused primarily on speed violations, but as traffic congestion in Puget Sound's I-5 corridor became a higher public priority, State Patrol pilots tested ways they could address this public concern as well. The outcome was the Metro Air Patrol project, operating 1500 feet over the highway grid, and providing invaluable timesaving and safety-enhancing data to ground troopers on the Everett-to-Tacoma I-5 roadway.

Pilots now spot collisions not yet reported and reduce response time by informing dispatch personnel. They observe motorists with car trouble, enabling faster assistance. They scan reported accident scenes, notifying troopers when blocking accidents are moved to the shoulder, so the response car can travel at safer speeds. And when drivers themselves clear reported incidents before law enforcement arrives, pilots notify dispatch to disregard, freeing troopers to respond to the next call. Pilots have also assisted in criminal and hit-and-run apprehensions and pursuits. In spearheading this new air-to-ground information network and working in conjunction with radio and television traffic spotters, Aviation Section pilots help WSP troopers, Seattle Police Department, and King County Sheriff's personnel in their daily traffic congestion challenges.

Results

★ In seven months, pilots have identified 144 lane-blocking incidents before dispatch got calls, reducing traffic back-ups by 104 hours and 1,247 miles.

★ Pilots identified fully 32% or 513 reported accidents as 'unable-to locate,' allowing troopers to redirect over 85 hours to needed responses.

★ Traffic information is exchanged with media and other aircraft, enhancing both emergency response efforts and the driving public's ability to react.

Team Name: Metro Aviation Program Team
Team Members: Sergeants Ed McAvoy, Tim Walters; Lieutenant Robert Johnson; Troopers Darryl Russell, Paul Speckmaier, Jim Nobach, Dwayne Korthuis-Smith; KIRO-TV: Clark Stahl; KOMO-Radio: Paul Tosch

CONTACT: Sergeant Ed McAvoy, (360) 753-6173

Simplified Wiring Pays off in Savings

Analog wiring systems controlling patrol cars' emergency equipment (light bars, lights, and sirens) required a complicated system of connections running throughout the vehicle from front to rear, terminating in a center mounted console box. Control of emergency equipment was accomplished through seven switches mounted on the console box. This complex control arrangement required troopers to take their eyes off the road and interfered with safe vehicle operation. Due to the complexity of the wiring design, there was no standardization between different types of patrol cars. The unique designs created a wide variety of wiring schematics, making standardized maintenance and repair impossible.

Washington State Patrol (WSP) employees designed and constructed a new wiring harness; this new harness allows for standardized equipment installation in all types of patrol cars. This simplified the installation process and shortened the wire run. The new harness supports a digital wiring system, allowing 'hands-free' control of emergency equipment.

Results

★ Patrol car equipping costs are reduced by $35,000 for the current biennium.

★ With each installation taking three to four hours less time, between 525 – 700 hours of staff time are saved yearly, and after factory delivery, patrol cars are on the road faster.

★ Future maintenance and repair of patrol cars is simplified with a standardized equipment wiring design.

Team Name: Vehicle Equipping Team
Team Members: Bob Green, Ralph Stablein, Bryan Pritchett, Scott Johnson, Casmir Kryzanowski, William Garrido, Paul Ingram, Curt Danell, Jesus Nieves, Rich Huisingh

CONTACT: Bob Green, (360) 412-8945