

Solano County Board of Supervisors
Response to Grand Jury
Issued February 27, 2009

Part 1

3-1-1 Call Center

Solano County Department of Information Technology and Board of Supervisors responses to the Grand Jury Report:

Finding #1

The 311 Call Center has received inadequate advertising/marketing.

Department of Information Technology Response to Finding #1

The Department of Information Technology partially disagrees with the finding. The County provided marketing of the Solano311 service through a number of channels and believes it has been adequately advertised. Use of the Solano311 service is not driven by advertising as much as it is by the way the County re-orientes its business processes and routes its incoming calls.

Board of Supervisors Response to Finding #1

The Board of Supervisors concurs with the Department's response to the Grand Jury's finding.

Recommendation #1

The County should explore additional avenues of advertising and marketing the program. One suggestion would be to include with County mailings to Solano residents information on the 311 Call Center. Another suggestion would be to have this item included on Solano County or city meeting agendas.

Department of Information Technology Response to Recommendation #1

This recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted. The Department feels use of Solano311 will continue to increase as an outcome of business process changes. Advertising 311 is expensive and of limited value since the "311" forwarding service provided by the public telephone utility is not available in all areas of the County nor is it available to users of internet telephone services.

Board of Supervisors Response to Recommendation #1

The Board of Supervisors agrees with the Department's response to the Grand Jury's recommendation.

Finding #2

The 311 Call Center is new and very few call statistics are available.

Department of Information Technology Response to Finding #2

The Department of Information Technology agrees with this finding as the Grand Jury reviewed the service center on October 20, 2008 after the call center was open for seven weeks. Call statistics are being reviewed on an on-going basis.

ATTACHMENT B

Board of Supervisors Response to Finding #2

The Board of Supervisors agrees with the finding of the Grand Jury.

Recommendation #2

The County should closely monitor reports from ACS and, in addition, perform independent analysis of the figures to assess the value and costs involved with the system.

Department of Information Technology Response to Recommendation #2

The recommendation has been implemented. The Department is monitoring and analyzing the data collected. Staff from the Department of Information Technology and the County Administrators Office review data and call statistics bi-weekly and the Solano311 service center staff review call data with departments on a monthly basis. The County review includes call volumes, calls by program, service request performance, call quality, customer satisfaction as well as other performance indicators.

Board of Supervisors Response to Recommendation #2

The recommendation has been implemented.

Finding #3

All calls are currently answered using only the English language.

Department of Information Technology Response to Finding #3

The Information Technology Department agrees with the finding. While calls could be “front-ended” by an automated system that could be used to determine language preference, the County chose not to implement this approach but instead chose to route the call to a human as quickly as possible. Once a customer service representative (CSR) answers the call they determine the language needs of the caller and either route the call to an appropriate CSR or conference in an external language interpreter service.

Board of Supervisors Response to Finding #3

The Board of Supervisors agrees with the Department's response to the Grand Jury's finding.

Recommendation #3

Some 311 Call Center staff should be bilingual potentially expediting response time for non-English speakers.

Information Technology Response to Recommendation #3

This recommendation has been implemented. The Department has endeavored to staff the service center with bilingual speakers and currently has three (3) Spanish-speaking staff. The service center also uses an external language line service that provides interpreter services in 170 languages that can be contacted in seconds and is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Currently, an average of two callers daily require language assistance.

Board of Supervisors Response to Recommendation #3

The Board of Supervisors agrees with the Department's response to the Grand Jury's recommendation.

Finding #4

Solano cities are not participating in the 311 Call Center Program.

Information Technology Response to Finding #4

The Information Technology Department agrees with this finding.

Board of Supervisors Response to Finding #4

The Board of Supervisors agrees with the Grand Jury's finding.

Recommendation #4

The County should develop more extensive marketing to each city to show the cost benefits of joining the program.

Information Technology Response to Recommendation #4

The recommendation has been implemented. The County has had numerous discussions with the cities regarding extending Solano311 to city services. At this time, the cities are not pursuing this option. The County is also discussing extending the service center to include other counties in order to reduce costs to Solano County. This option is currently being considered by two counties.

County Administrator's Response to Recommendation #4

Although not identified as the affected department, the County Administrator's Office would like to note that while the Information Technology Department provides cost information, the individual cities are responsible for performing a cost benefit analysis to determine if this service is advantageous.

Board of Supervisors Response to Recommendation #4

The Board of Supervisors agrees with the Department's response to the Grand Jury's recommendation.

Finding #5

Currently, there is no limit on the number of billable minutes.

Information Technology Response to Finding #5

The Department of Information Technology agrees with the finding.

Board of Supervisors Response to Finding #5

The Board of Supervisors agrees with the Grand Jury's finding.

Recommendation #5

The County should examine renegotiating the contract with Affiliated Computer Services with the goal of capping the monthly billable minutes.

Information Technology Response to Recommendation #5

This recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted at this time. The contract with ACS contains two cost categories, one fixed and one variable. The variable component is comprised of the cost of CSRs required to answer calls. The number of CSRs employed varies with call volume and the County only pays for actual call minutes answered. The number of billable call minutes in the contract is only an estimate and through March the County has paid less than the amount noted in the contract because call volumes have been under this estimate. If call volumes exceed the

current level (or the estimate in the contract), additional CSRs will need to be employed and ACS should be compensated for the increased staffing. The Department feels that it is in the County's best interest for this portion of the contract fee to be variable so that the County only pays for actual answered call minutes. While the amount is not capped, the County can also benefit from business process changes that reduce call volume.

Board of Supervisors Response to Recommendation #5

The Board concurs with the Department's response to the Grand Jury's recommendation.