



2007

Washington State Quality Award

Washington State Division of Child Support Feedback Report

Washington State Division of Child Support Lite (Assessment) Feedback Report

This document provides an assessment feedback report for the DCS. Used in conjunction with the Criteria for Performance Excellence and scoring guidelines, this Feedback Report is the conclusion of the Lite (Assessment) application process.

March 25, 2007

David Stillman, Director
Washington State Division of Child Support
PO Box 9162
Olympia, WA 98507-9162

Dear Mr Stillman,

Congratulations for taking the Washington State Quality Award challenge! We commend you for submitting an application for assessment. Your application for assessment and use of the Baldrige Criteria demonstrate your organization's commitment to performance excellence.

This feedback report was prepared for your organization by members of the Washington State Quality Award Board of Examiners in response to your application for the Washington State Quality Award (WSQA) Assessment. It presents an outline of the scoring for your organization and describes areas identified as strengths and opportunities for possible improvement. The report contains the Examiners' observations about your organization and is not intended to prescribe a specific course of action.

We are eager to ensure that the comments in the report are clear to you so that you can incorporate the feedback into your planning process to continue to improve your organization. As direct communication between Examiners and applicants is not allowed under the operating procedures for the application process, please contact me at 1-800-517-8264 if you wish to clarify the meaning of any comment in your report. We will contact the Examiners for clarification and convey their intentions to you. Additionally, WSQA also offers an opportunity for you to meet with WSQA (through the Executive Briefing) to discuss the feedback report. If you are interested, please phone the office to set up this meeting.

The feedback report is not your only source for ideas about organizational improvement. Current and previous Award recipients can be potential resources on your continuing journey to performance excellence. An Award recipients' contact list may be found at www.baldrige.nist.gov/Contacts_Profiles.htm or at www.wsqa.net.

Thank you for your participation in the Washington State Quality Award process. Best wishes for continued success with your performance excellence journey.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Sprecher
Executive Director
Washington State Quality Award

Enclosures

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Preparing to Read Your Feedback Report

Your feedback report contains Washington State Quality Award Examiners' observations that are based on their understanding of your organization. They have provided comments on your organization's strengths and opportunities for improvement relative to the Baldrige Performance Excellence Criteria. The feedback is non-prescriptive. It will tell you where Examiners think you have strengths to celebrate and where they think improvement opportunities exist. The feedback will not say specifically how you should address these opportunities. The specifics will depend on what you decide is most important to your organization. Applicant organizations read and use feedback comments (both strengths and opportunities for improvement) in different ways. We've gathered some tips and practices from prior Applicants for you to consider.

- Take a deep breath and prepare to benefit from the feedback process. You applied to get the feedback. Read it, take time to digest it, and read it again.
- Remember that you should not view your score on a normal scoring curve. The majority of organizations overall scores are in the 0-300 point range (0-30%). Industry leaders score in the 400-600 point range (40-60%) and role model organizations are in the 700-1000 point range (70-100%). A two year study of average National applicant scores from stage 2 of the review process (consensus) ranged from 19-49% at the item level.
- Celebrate your strengths. You've worked hard and should congratulate yourselves.
- Use your strengths comments to understand what the Examiners observed you do well and build upon them. Continue to evaluate and improve the things you do well.
- You know your organization better than the Examiners know it. There might be relevant information that was not communicated to them or that they did not fully understand. Therefore, not all of their comments may be equally accurate.
- Although we strive for "perfection," we do not achieve it in every comment. If Examiners have misread your application or misunderstood your organization on a particular point, don't discount the whole feedback report. Consider the other comments and focus on the most important ones.
- Prioritize your opportunities for improvement. You can't do everything all at once. Think about what's most important for your organization at this time and decide which things to work on first.
- You may decide to address all, some, or none of the opportunities in a particular Item. It depends on how important you think that Item or comment is to your organization.
- Use the feedback as input to your strategic planning process. Focus on the strengths and opportunities for improvement that have an impact on your strategic goals and objectives.

Introduction

By submitting a Washington State Quality Award (WSQA) application for assessment, you have differentiated yourself from most State of Washington organizations. We are eager to make your efforts achieve the maximum benefit possible. This feedback report was written for your consideration in accelerating your journey toward performance excellence.

The Board of Examiners has evaluated your application for the WSQA assessment. Strict confidentiality is observed at all times and in every aspect of the application review and feedback.

This feedback report contains a detailed listing of strengths and opportunities for improvement, and scoring information. Background information on the examination process is also provided.

We encourage you to use the feedback as input to your strategic planning process. As a WSQA assessment applicant, you are already a winner in the journey toward performance improvement!

Application Assessment Process

Stage 1, Independent Review

The application assessment process begins with Stage 1, the independent review; in which members of the Board of Examiners and/or Judges Panel are assigned to the assessment applications. Assignments are made according to the Examiners' areas of expertise and to avoid potential conflicts of interest. Each application is evaluated independently by Examiners who write comments relating to the applicants strengths and opportunities for improvement. All applicants go through the Stage 1 evaluation process.

Stage 2, Consensus Review

Applicants then move forward to Stage 2, consensus review. During Stage 2 Examiners conduct a series of conference calls and meetings to reach consensus on comments that capture the team's collective view of the Applicant's strengths and opportunities for improvement and the scoring range for each Category. Comments are documented in a consensus scorebook. The consensus process is shown in Figure 2.

Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
Consensus Planning: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prioritize items for discussion• Assign category/item discussion leaders• Review findings from the independent evaluations	Consensus Calls: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discuss key business/organization factors• Discuss items and key themes• Achieve consensus on comments, scores, and site visit issues• Document findings	Post-Consensus Call Activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prepare final consensus report• Prepare feedback report

Figure 2—Consensus Review Process

Scoring

This is scoring system (i.e., the 2006 Scoring Guidelines for Business Criteria) used to evaluate each Item is designed to facilitate feedback.

SCORE	PROCESS (For Use With Categories 1–6)	RESULTS (For Use With Category 7)
0% or 5%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No systematic approach is evident; information is anecdotal. (A) ▪ Little or no deployment of an approach is evident. (D) ▪ An improvement orientation is not evident; improvement is achieved through reacting to problems. (L) ▪ No organizational alignment is evident; individual areas or work units operate independently. (I) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There are no organizational performance results or poor results in areas reported. ▪ Trend data are either not reported or show mainly adverse trends. ▪ Comparative information is not reported. ▪ Results are not reported for any areas of importance to your organization's key mission or business requirements.
10%, 15%, 20%, or 25%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The beginning of a systematic approach to the basic requirements of the Item is evident. (A) ▪ The approach is in the early stages of deployment in most areas or work units, inhibiting progress in achieving the basic requirements of the Item. (D) ▪ Early stages of a transition from reacting to problems to a general improvement orientation are evident. (L) ▪ The approach is aligned with other areas or work units largely through joint problem solving. (I) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A few organizational performance results are reported; there are some improvements and/or early good performance levels in a few areas. ▪ Little or no trend data are reported. ▪ Little or no comparative information is reported. ▪ Results are reported for a few areas of importance to your organization's key mission or business requirements.
30%, 35%, 40%, or 45%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ An effective systematic approach, responsive to the basic requirements of the Item, is evident. (A) ▪ The approach is deployed, although some areas or work units are in early stages of deployment. (D) ▪ The beginning of a systematic approach to evaluation and improvement of key processes is evident. (L) ▪ The approach is in early stages of alignment with your basic organizational needs identified in response to the other Criteria Categories. (I) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improvements and/or good performance levels are reported in many areas addressed in the Item requirements. ▪ Early stages of developing trends are evident. ▪ Early stages of obtaining comparative information are evident. ▪ Results are reported for many areas of importance to your organization's key mission or business requirements.
50%, 55%, 60%, or 65%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ An effective systematic approach, responsive to the overall requirements of the Item, is evident. (A) ▪ The approach is well deployed, although deployment may vary in some areas or work units. (D) ▪ A fact-based, systematic evaluation and improvement process and some organizational learning are in place for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of key processes. (L) ▪ The approach is aligned with your organizational needs identified in response to the other Criteria Categories. (I) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improvement trends and/or good performance levels are reported for most areas addressed in the Item requirements. ▪ No pattern of adverse trends and no poor performance levels are evident in areas of importance to your organization's key mission or business requirements. ▪ Some trends and/or current performance levels—evaluated against relevant comparisons and/or benchmarks—show areas of good to very good relative performance. ▪ Organizational performance results address most key customer, market, and process requirements.
70%, 75%, 80%, or 85%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ An effective, systematic approach, responsive to the multiple requirements of the Item, is evident. (A) ▪ The approach is well deployed, with no significant gaps. (D) ▪ Fact-based, systematic evaluation and improvement and organizational learning are key management tools; there is clear evidence of refinement and innovation as a result of organizational-level analysis and sharing. (L) ▪ The approach is integrated with your organizational needs identified in response to the other Criteria Items. (I) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Current performance is good to excellent in most areas of importance to the Item requirements. ▪ Most improvement trends and/or current performance levels are sustained. ▪ Many to most reported trends and/or current performance levels—evaluated against relevant comparisons and/or benchmarks—show areas of leadership and very good relative performance. ▪ Organizational performance results address most key customer, market, process, and action plan requirements.
90%, 95%, or 100%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ An effective, systematic approach, fully responsive to the multiple requirements of the Item, is evident. (A) ▪ The approach is fully deployed without significant weaknesses or gaps in any areas or work units. (D) ▪ Fact-based, systematic evaluation and improvement and organizational learning are key organization-wide tools; refinement and innovation, backed by analysis and sharing, are evident throughout the organization. (L) ▪ The approach is well integrated with your organizational needs identified in response to the other Criteria Items. (I) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Current performance is excellent in most areas of importance to the Item requirements. ▪ Excellent improvement trends and/or sustained excellent performance levels are reported in most areas. ▪ Evidence of industry and benchmark leadership is demonstrated in many areas. ▪ Organizational performance results fully address key customer, market, process, and action plan requirements.

Details of Strengths and Opportunities for Improvement

Category 1 – Leadership

STRENGTHS

Senior Division of Child Support (DCS) Leaders establish and promote the organization mission, vision and values and maintain public confidence in the child support program by emphasizing performance results at all levels of the organization and by focusing on providing effective technology and continuous training to all staff.

The senior leadership team creates a performance focused culture by providing effective technology and training to staff and by speaking often about performance results. Formal performance reviews involve analyzing data, highlighting accomplishments, focusing on barrier removal through action plans, and establishing clear performance expectations and goals in staff evaluations. Staff has online access to how their casework results compare to others and how their performance feeds the organization's overall performance.

Senior leaders include a focus on creating and balancing value for customers and other stakeholders by consulting with customers, stakeholders and staff when making policy decisions.

Legal and ethical compliance is promoted through a variety of mechanisms including mandatory training for all staff, annual review and recertification of confidentiality standards and ethics by all staff, and advanced ethics classes for supervisors. Office training coordinators have tracking systems to ensure all training requirements are met. In addition, formal procedures are in place to apply disciplinary action for any breach of ethical conduct.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

Although DCS states that senior leaders strive to balance resource expenditures and collection results, the process for doing so is unclear. In addition, although DCS provides a number of examples for balancing value for customers and stakeholders (including senior leaders and policy authors soliciting stakeholder input, and using public hearings) a systematic process for creating and balancing value throughout the organization is not evident. Given DCS's environment of tight budgets, the ability to balance value to stakeholders is important in sustaining funding.

Although "State Ethics Board opinions, department policies, and messages from DCS leaders help delineate ethical boundaries", a system for assuring regulatory, legal, and ethical behavior is not evident. For example, while a number of methods for ensuring ethical behavior are in place, such as cameras, supervisor spot audits, and new employee reference checks, it is unclear how these methods are determined and how they are improved to deliver the organizational outcomes. Without a systems approach to assuring regulatory, legal and ethical behavior, DCS may be unable to improve its approaches, be more effective or ensure that all emerging issues are addressed.

Scoring range: **50-65** %

Category 2 – Strategic Planning

STRENGTHS

DCS has a systematic approach for developing its strategic plan which has resulted in strategic objectives, action plans, and associated measures for each of its four major goals. The objectives and action plans are also linked to DCS's mission and strategic challenges (Figure 2.2, Examples of How Strategic Objectives Address Key Strategic Challenges). DCS's strategic planning approach includes obtaining input from key stakeholders through statewide meetings with over 200 Economic Service Administration (ESA) staff, an on-line survey of 800 ESA staff, ESA Advisory Committee meetings, and aligning strategies with the ESA strategic plan. Cross-functional work groups, consisting of employees and key stakeholders, participate in the strategic planning process by reviewing data from stakeholders, conducting SWOT analysis, and using it to refine the mission, vision and values and develop supporting goals and objectives.

In addition, DCS keeps the strategic plan current by making adjustments to the plan based on monthly GMAP performance reviews. DCS also demonstrates the beginnings of a systematic process for evaluating and improving its strategic planning process, as it recently changed its approach to achieve better alignment with the ESA strategic plan.

DCS uses project managers and workgroups to deploy strategic initiatives throughout the organization. Grant opportunities are used to conduct pilot initiatives and are evaluated by independent consultants. In addition, a variety of mechanisms are used to communicate strategic objectives and action plans to staff throughout the organization. These mechanisms include intranet articles, Director all staff memos, conversations with Field Offices and Performance Analysts and participation in the GMAP process.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

Although DCS's performance plan for fiscal years 2006 – 2007 has strategic objectives and action plans linked to DCS's mission and strategic challenges (Figure 2.2) and there appears to be a systematic process in place for developing the performance plan and aligning it with the ESA plan, it is unclear how DCS's objectives and action plans are developed and derived from DCS's mission and strategic challenges. Without a systematic process for addressing mission and strategic challenges within the performance planning process, there is the potential for a strategic challenge or part of the mission not be accomplished.

Although workgroups are used for the deployment of strategic initiatives and various systems are used to communicate strategic initiatives to staff, it is unclear how objectives are deployed throughout the organization such that all staff participates in the achievement of strategic objectives.

Scoring range: **50-65** %

Category 3 – Customer and Market Focus

STRENGTHS

DCS uses a number of mechanisms to build relationships with its custodial and non-custodial parent groups. These include using policy formation and rule making to seek customer inputs; participating in child support workgroups and conferences; conducting customer surveys; funding staffing and multifaceted complaint resolution process; and maintaining ongoing contacts with customer advocates, citizen advisory groups, legislators, other government agencies, tribal leaders, and other child support agencies. In addition DCS uses outreach efforts such as the Fatherhood Campaign, customer service training for all newly hired staff, customer service standards for all staff, and tools, brochures and resource lists provided on-line.

DCS has identified its key customers to be custodial parents, non-custodial parents, and other child support agencies. A variety of mechanisms are used to determine customer requirements and changing expectations for these customer groups. These mechanisms include consulting with customer representatives prior to policy changes, customer surveys, the complaint resolution process, interstate workgroups and annual training conferences. In addition, DCS has used information from its customer surveys to make improvements to its services.

DCS uses workgroups and project teams to explore and make improvements. As part of this process, DCS uses five main criteria to evaluate the projects. They are: 1) Will the change improve collections or performance measures; 2) Will it save money or avoid future costs; 3) Will it reduce workloads; 4) Will it improve customer service; and 5) Does it meet (or enable DCS to meet) legal requirements? These criteria are evidence of a fact-based systematic evaluation and improvement process to providing customer focus.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

Although DCS indicates WICSEC and DCS Training conferences were held in 2006 to build relationships with other support enforcement agencies, it is unclear if this a one-time or on-going effort. Thus, it is not clear if a systematic process exists for building relationships with this customer group.

Although DCS employs a number of mechanisms for determining customer requirements, it is unclear if these mechanisms operate in an integrated manner. Without an integrated approach emerging themes in changing requirements and expectations may be overlooked.

Scoring range: **50-65**%

Category 4 – Measurement, Analysis, and Knowledge Management

STRENGTHS

DCS utilizes a systematic performance tool, the E-Model (Efficiency Model), developed by Support Enforcement Management Systems (SEMS) programmers. The E-Model tracks both positive and negative factors that contribute to or detract from maximizing the number of non-custodial parents (NCPs) paying monthly child support. This shows how DCS actions can result in positive performance outcomes. E-Model is available to staff and provides links for items needing action.

DCS uses trend and gap analysis during regular GMAP reviews to assess and improve its performance. Monthly, the Director reports organizational performance results at ESA-level GMAP reviews, and unit chiefs and district managers review their GMAP results with the Director. Some Field Offices use the GMAP process down to the team level. All leaders are expected to make decisions and take action on the GMAP results until the desired results are achieved. Extensive technology supports DCS's ability to complete organizational, unit, team and individual performance reviews. For example, on the EMAPS Performance Website is a Data Dashboard that presents performance measures to the individual worker level in a drill-down format.

DCS identifies its key performance measures as the five federally mandated measures, the total child support collected, and two WorkFirst measures mandated by the Governor's office. Key performance measures allow organizations to build understanding of how its actions and decisions impact their performance.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

While DCS describes a systematic process for reviewing organizational performance, it is unclear as to what performance measures are being reviewed. Without knowing what data and information is reviewed, it is difficult to assess whether DCS is reviewing the data and information that will lead to the achievement of objectives outlined in DCS's performance plan.

DCS uses a total of eight key performance measures (i.e., five federally mandated, plus the total child support collected and, two WorkFirst measures). These are key primarily for their use to establish funding for the agency. It is not clear if other measures (e.g. those listed in Figure 2.1, Representative Examples from the DCS Performance Plan for State Fiscal Year 2006-2007), important to the mission and performance of the organization, should also be included.

Although DCS states that it strives to learn and incorporate best practices from other state programs that have strong performance results, it is not clear how the information is collected, shared with senior leaders, managers and staff. There is no systematic information gathering tools to make sure that the learning obtained from other similar agencies is discussed and analyzed. Unless DCS creates a systematic approach to the way it incorporates the learning, DCS may not benefit from this learning.

While DCS uses state/territory comparative data for the five federally mandated measures, it is not evident whether comparative data is used for DCS's other performance measures, such as the WorkFirst measures or the measures listed in the performance plan (i.e., Figure 2.1).

Scoring range: **50-65** %

Category 5 – Human Resource Focus

STRENGTHS

DCS has a number of work systems that support its achievement of overall objectives and action plans. These include the use of the SEMS, a comprehensive data management system to manage job responsibilities; GMAP reviews; several communication and feedback systems including the ESA home page, all staff emails and memos from leaders, and information flows from regularly scheduled senior management, Field Office management, and individual team meetings; and a staff performance management system that includes goal alignment.

DCS employs a number of employee training systems to enable its employees to accomplish the work of the organization. Examples include its mentoring program, its six month new hire training program supported by an on-line training guide, and an annual conference for keeping abreast of new issues. DCS also has a training department that develops and delivers training to meet current training needs and to respond to new policies, procedures and technology. In addition, personal and professional development classes, such as The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People, are provided.

DCS uses a comprehensive benefits package, telework opportunities, flex hours, and programs such as Employee of the Year to recognize and motivate its staff. Other methods used to motivate staff include creating transparency by putting items such as the budget on-line and the director meeting with one Field Office staff every month.

DCS contributes to the satisfaction of employees by using an employee satisfaction survey process. Results from the survey are segmented by Field Office. Each unit within the organization tailors an approach for responding to the results.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

Although DCS outlines a step by step training assessment and development process (Figure 5.1), it is unclear as to who is involved in the process, the frequency with which the process is employed, and the data that is gathered and reviewed. Without this information it is difficult to assess whether the process is effective in determining training needs and programs that will lead to the achievement of the DCS's overall objectives and action plans. In addition, although examples of providing training to partners are provided, it is unclear as to the process that is used for identifying and responding to their needs. Without a systematic process for identifying partners' needs, DCS risks not identifying important training factors and needs.

Although DCS indicates that every Field Office has a safety committee that meets regularly, it is unclear as to the committee's process for identifying, responding to, and preventing employee injuries. Considering DCS's extensive training period for new employees and its challenge of maintaining adequate human resource capacity, it may be of particular benefit for DCS to have systems in place to prevent employee injury and time away from work.

Although DCS uses an employee satisfaction survey, the survey administration process and frequency are unclear. A systematic process is also not evident for responding to results—only an example was provided. Without a robust employee satisfaction measurement and follow-up process, DCS may have difficulty retaining staff. This may be of particular importance since maintaining adequate human resource capacity is a key strategic challenge.

Although DCS has a performance management system that is aligned with the goals of government, it is not clear how employee feedback is solicited regarding performance goals and career advancement desires. Without this feedback, it may be difficult to motivate and engage employees. This is particularly important to DCS given the strategic challenge of maintaining adequate human resource capacity.

Scoring range: **50-65** %

Category 6 – Process Management

STRENGTHS

DCS's key processes are establishing paternity, establishing and enforcing child support orders and collecting and distributing child support to custodial parents and other child support agencies. This includes the Bright Start Initiative which is a federally funded pilot grant to test ideas for increasing paternity establishment. In addition, administrative order establishment process is used by DCS to improve efficiencies, and the collection Goal team is another tool that improves collections processes and results. DCS's Central Services ensures that approximately 300,000 payments totaling more than \$50 each and 300,000 documents received by mail or courts are processed. Fig 6.1, DCS Key Work Processes and Example Measures, shows DCS's key work processes and examples of measures.

DCS was the leader nationally among IV-D programs regarding the design and implementation of imaging technology. In addition Central Services and DCS were recognized, in 2003, for outstanding achievement by the WA Software Association industry and received the Governor's Award of Public Value and Benefit for developing online Child Support Payment Services website. In 2005, DCS received the Governor's Award for Customer Services for implementing the DCS Secured Card.

DCS uses a variety of methods to design, manage and improve key processes based on the nature of the issue. These methods include: Cross sectional workgroups which investigate, gather data and staff input and test potential new processes; Pilot projects whereby deployment is done in stages using a test office to determine if the experimental data is validated in localized, real time release; Strong case and data management systems which generates information on more than 3 million individuals; Quality Assurance Systems and Audit E-MAPS perform self audits to ensure quality outcomes that comply with regulatory parameters; Incorporating best practices from other states by participating in national child support organizations, conferences and through site visits to other states.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

Although DCS incorporates best practices from other states by participating in national child support organizations, conferences and through site visits, it is not clear how DCS channel the learning to all parts of the organization. Failing to create a systemic approach to share obtained learning may hinder DCS staff from becoming the best in their industry.

Scoring range: **50-65**%

Category 7 – Results

STRENGTHS

Figures 7.1 – 7.5 provide results for DCS’s five key federal performance measures. The results indicate DCS compares favorably to the national average and to the top 10 federal territories in four of the five measures. In addition, Figure 7.10, Current Support Collections by Field Office, provides results segmented by Field Office for one of the five key federal measures and indicates DCS compares favorably to the national average in 9 of its 10 Field Offices. Figure 7.10 also indicates all ten of the Field Offices have sustained improvement trends over the three year period shown. All of these favorable results have been obtained in an environment of declining FTEs and increased caseloads (Figure 7.11, Average Total Cases and FTEs by FFY) and reduced total expenditures (Figure 7.12, DCS Share of Federal Incentives and DCS Expenditures).

Results for timely delivery of payment, a key custodial parent customer requirement are shown in Figures 7.15 – 7.17. The results demonstrate improvement trends over a five year period for Percent of Payment distributed electronically and over a two year period for Average Payment Processing Time. Figure 7.17, Payments Meeting the 2-Day Federal Timeline in 2006, indicates DCS has met the two day payment processing 100% of the time over a nine month period.

DCS compares favorably to its parent organization’s results on Timeliness of Performance Development Plans (Figure 7.14). In addition, DCS compares favorably to the federal minimum requirement on one key measure of social responsibility (Figure 7.13, Sample of Federal Program Compliance Areas by FFY).

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

Although DCS compares favorably to national comparisons in four of the five key federal measures (Figures 7.1 – 7.5) sustained improvement trends over the six year period shown are not evident for any of the five measures. Figure 7.1, IV-D Paternity Establishment Percentage (PEP) by FFY showed a steady decline in IV-D paternity establishment ranking from 3rd in 2002 down to 10th in 2006. Fig 7.2, Orders Established by FFY, shows flat performance levels from 2000 to 2006 though the performance levels are excellent in comparison to the average. Current Support Collected by FFY, Figure 7.3, showed a decline in ranking from 12th in 2000 to 17th in 2005. Cases with Arrears Payment Collected by FFY, Figure 7.4, show a flat performance level and a decline in the rank from 5 to 11 from 2003 to 2005. In addition, cost effectiveness by FFY shows a decline in ranking from 21st in 2000 to 29th in 2005.

The customer satisfaction results presented in Figure 7.18, Customer Satisfaction Survey Results for 2005, indicate DCS does not compare favorably to its parent organization’s results on any of the eight attributes shown for one key customer group, custodial parents. In addition, no historical data is presented, nor is any data presented for DCS’s other two key customer groups, non-custodial parents and Other Child Support Agencies. Without such data, it will be difficult for DCS to determine if it’s achieving its mission of “improving the lives of children and benefiting families...by providing quality child support services...”

Two key service performance measures, shown in Figures 7.8, Non-Custodial Parents (NCPs) Paying by SFY, and 7.9, WorkFirst Performance Results, do not have improvement trends. In addition, no comparative data is provided making it difficult to assess relative performance levels. Without sustained improvement DCS may be at risk for not receiving full state funding.

With the exception of Figure 7.13, Sample of Federal Program Compliance Areas by FFY, no social responsibility or governance results are presented. In addition, results for a number of performance measures shown in Figures 2.1 and 2.2 are not presented. For example, the results for the “percent of employers reporting and paying electronically” listed in Figure 2.2 is not shown.

With the exception of Figure 7.10, Current Support Collections by Field Office, segmented results are not presented. Without segmented results by Field Office, customer group, employee groups, or other relevant segments, it may be difficult for DCS to assess key areas of strengths and weaknesses and to design applicable action plans.

Scoring range: **30-45** %

Final Note

Thank you for taking the quality challenge to pursue the Washington State Quality Award. It is our sincere hope that the feedback provided in this Assessment report is both reaffirming to your strengths as well as insightful into your operation's opportunities for improvement. Excellence is a journey. We wish you well on your journey to performance excellence. Congratulations!

Sincerely,
WSQA Application Review Team
WSQA Board of Examiners