
APPENDIX

Summary of Efforts to Ensure the Optimal Utilization of Judicial Resources

The following provides over 90 brief examples of ways in which the judiciary is reducing spending and improving resource use. A number of these efforts are discussed in Chapters 1 through 5 of this report.

Judicial Resources

- Staffing courts at only 84% of workload measurement formulas, although a hardship on the courts, avoiding costs of over \$160 million annually.
- Using more conservative criteria for evaluating new district judgeship requests, resulting in approval of fewer requests and avoiding costs of over \$6 million annually from FY 1994 requests and additional savings in subsequent years.
- Using a new grade structure for career law clerks, saving more than \$3 million annually.
- Using a new policy for allocating resources for electronic court recorder operators in bankruptcy courts, saving \$2 million annually.

- Adjusting the district clerk's staffing formula to reflect reduced staffing needs associated with the processing of naturalization petitions, saving about \$1 million annually.
- Implementing the Judiciary Methods Analysis Program, a program to identify suggested business practices with the potential to result in more efficient and effective operations and to foster implementation of these practices in the courts.
- Using contractors in lieu of in-house judiciary employees where cost effective.
- Ensuring that court staff and judicial officer resources are distributed equitably and used efficiently through the use of staffing formulas, judgeship survey processes, temporary positions, senior judges, shared judgeship positions, and intercircuit and intracircuit assignments.

Automation and Technology

- Processing bankruptcy notices through the Bankruptcy Noticing Center, saving \$11 million over four years through FY 1998.
- Using numerous new approaches to the operations and maintenance of the automation program, saving over \$10 million annually.
- Using computer-based training to train systems staff on a new operating system, saving \$485,000 over five years over traditional instructor-led methods.
- Instituting quality assurance procedures for application software releases for the Integrated Case Management System, saving \$10,000 during each nine-month release cycle.
- Using enhanced district court case management software, resulting in savings for on-line storage and in the amount of time needed to produce reports.
- Implementing the Data Communications Network, which when fully installed is estimated to result in a return of \$1.45 for every dollar spent, and completing its installation through an amended contract, saving \$3 million.

- Exploring opportunities to realize efficiencies through videoconferencing applications for several uses, such as the handling of routine case-related administrative responsibilities, training, and the conduct of courtroom proceedings.
- Using and exploring the future potential of video and computer-based training as a means to conduct training more cost effectively.
- Exploring opportunities to realize savings and efficiencies by reducing the production and handling of paper documents through use of electronic case files.
- Experimenting with electronic filing to eliminate repetitive, time-consuming manual tasks involved in docketing.
- Using and exploring the future potential of electronic public access systems to save court staff resources in responding to public needs for information and to permit the public to gain direct, rapid, and easy access to official court records.
- Implementing about 100 automated systems to improve operating efficiency and effectiveness for routine, administrative-type tasks by automating manual business processes or updating outmoded systems and practices.
- Designing an electronic bankruptcy noticing system to transmit electronically bankruptcy notices to large creditors rather than through the more expensive printing and mailing system currently used.
- Exploring expanded use of Internet and Intranet technologies to distribute judiciary publications and other information at lower cost.
- Exploring opportunities to realize efficiencies through the use of document imaging, retrieval, and display technologies in the courtroom.
- Using real-time court reporting to improve the transcript services available during court proceedings.
- Conducting experiments in process innovation to examine how courts can reengineer business processes to make better use of automation and technology and identify efficiencies.

- Installing satellite downlinks for receiving education and administrative video broadcasts in more than 100 court sites to reduce travel costs.
- Using computer-assisted legal research to improve the efficiency of legal research, and providing this service through a new contract offering extremely competitive rates.
- Using Group Decision Support Systems software to facilitate meetings, which reduces the time and expense of planning, conducting, and documenting meetings.
- Adopting a judiciary-wide Information Systems Architecture, which results in savings in systems development, maintenance, support, and equipment costs by promoting interoperability of many applications on shared or compatible platforms.
- Deploying and enhancing automated case management systems, which facilitates speedy resolution of pending cases by providing critical information needed to manage caseload.
- Enhancing public access information systems, which results in administrative efficiencies by relieving clerks' offices from responding to in-person inquiries and provides better, faster service to the public.
- Using an automated system to produce semiannual reports required by the Civil Justice Reform Act, which saves judiciary staff resources through more efficient data collection and reporting.
- Establishing a systems test laboratory to assess the impact on the judiciary's Information Systems Architecture of new and modified software applications to maximize use of the judiciary's information systems infrastructures and keep total costs to a minimum.

Defender Services

- Allowing private panel attorneys to travel at government rates as a result of judiciary-initiated legislation, saving about \$100,000 a year.

- Imposing new financial and statistical reporting requirements upon federal defender organizations to capture more accurate data, resulting in more effective resource management.
- Imposing temporary spending restrictions for FY 1994 through 1996 on federal defender organizations, limiting funding for salary increases, travel, training, furniture and equipment, and space alterations.
- Using two tools to help improve court review of panel attorney compensation claims: new forms that provide important case-specific information examiners need to analyze vouchers; and a data package for courts that provides nationwide information on hours claimed for major case types.
- Studying and implementing recommendations on containing costs in death penalty representation.
- Reviewing and assessing operations of federal defender organizations to identify ways to improve effectiveness and efficiency.
- Developing an improved information management system to increase the type, quality, and consistency of data being collected on defender organizations and panel attorneys.
- Establishing Criminal Justice Act cost containment committees in individual districts to develop and implement cost-saving initiatives in the delivery of defense services.

Security, Space and Facilities

- Using a U.S. Marshals Service-developed staffing methodology for allocating court security officers, which reduced FY 1996 court funding requests by \$12.5 million.
- Using furniture cost ceilings for appeals, district, magistrate, and bankruptcy courtrooms, saving \$200,000 annually.
- Implementing numerous recommendations from a comprehensive space management plan, the purpose of which is to contain rent costs and improve space management practices throughout the judiciary. The plan includes

- Setting limits on space rental funding requested from Congress. For example, in formulating the FY 1998 budget request, the judiciary set a maximum level that would be included for rent, which was \$14 million below estimated needs, in anticipation of future actions to reduce the space inventory.
- Examining whether facilities without full-time resident judicial officers can be closed. Six such facilities have already been closed, saving about \$400,000 annually in rental costs.
- Considering what policy on courtroom sharing should be adopted.
- Reviewing the **U.S. Courts Design Guide**.
- Examining existing and planned space to identify any opportunities for savings. Efforts to date could reduce future rent costs by more than \$12 million annually.

Magistrate Judges System

- Designating fewer magistrate judges for accelerated funding in FYs 1995 and 1996, saving over \$1 million.
- Discontinuing a full-time magistrate judge position in the Eastern District of Michigan, saving over \$500,000 annually.
- Developing the automated magistrate judges statistical system, resulting in administrative efficiencies.
- Encouraging the use of recalled magistrate judges as an alternative to new full-time magistrate judges, when appropriate, saving salaries and other costs.
- Providing information to the courts on the initial and recurring costs of an additional magistrate judge position to facilitate consideration of the financial impact of new positions.
- Ensuring that magistrate judge resources are distributed equitably and used efficiently through use of survey processes, recalled judges, cross-designation of judges, and intercircuit and intracircuit assignments.

Bankruptcy System

- Reducing judicial officer costs by having withdrawn a request to Congress for eight new bankruptcy judgeships based on a reevaluation of needs, saving about \$6 million annually.
- Ensuring that bankruptcy judge resources are distributed equitably and used efficiently through use of survey processes, temporary positions, delayed filling of vacancies, recalled judges, shared positions, cross-designation of judges, and intercircuit and intracircuit assignments.

Probation and Pretrial Services

- Operating the electronic monitoring program, which monitors about 4,000 individuals in their homes on a daily basis, saving the government between \$31 million and \$62 million annually.
- Adopting a new method of allocating probation and pretrial services officer staff resources to the courts by basing the allocation on two-year average workload data rather than the most recent data to reduce the impact of workload fluctuations, which lowered the FY 1997 staffing allocation by \$8.5 million.
- Collecting reimbursements from offenders for the costs of electronic monitoring services, resulting in collections of \$3 million in FYs 1995 and 1996.
- Reducing costs for electronic monitoring services through award of a national contract, saving \$1 million a year.
- Conducting drug tests on a random vs. standard schedule, saving about \$300,000 annually.
- Using a computer-based training program for probation and pretrial services officers, saving \$476,000 over five years over traditional instructor-led methods.
- Using new standards for the preparation of petty offense presentence and post-sentence reports, allowing reports to be prepared more efficiently and making more time available to devote to supervision activities.

- Improving the quality of the supervision program through implementation of a comprehensive plan, helping to ensure that probation officer resources are put to the best possible use.
- Working to improve the sentencing guidelines by seeking clarification of guidelines that are ambiguous or troublesome in application to conserve judicial resources in the form of court time, preparation by the judicial officer for sentencing and/or appellate review, and time spent by the probation officer in producing presentence reports and being present in court.
- Improving administration of the drug treatment program based on recommendations from a December 1994 study to ensure that scarce drug treatment resources are used as effectively as possible.

Court Administration and Case Management

- Eliminating funding for certain lawbooks, saving \$2 million annually.
- Consolidating the Denver and San Antonio Central Violations Bureaus and implementing document imaging technology in its operations to increase administrative efficiencies, saving about \$400,000 annually.
- Conducting reviews to assist courts in managing their language interpreting programs, resulting in savings of about \$250,000 annually.
- Using videoconferencing for prisoner civil rights proceedings and certain types of bankruptcy proceedings, which saved about \$4,000 per month in two completed pilot projects.
- Expanding the settlement conference attorney program in the courts of appeals to help contain the need for, and costs associated with, new circuit judgeships.
- Providing interpreting services by telephone for certain types of proceedings to reduce the costs of this activity, and studying the potential for its expanded use.
- Evaluating less-costly methods for qualifying foreign language interpreters.

- Studying how courts can create alternative organizational structures to provide administrative services more efficiently.

Administrative Office

- Implementing a policy at the AO to control personnel spending, which saved about \$3 million in FYs 1995 and 1996.
- Implementing a procedure to increase the timeliness of investing newly appropriated funds from the judiciary's annuity plans to U.S. Treasury Securities, which earned about \$125,000 in additional interest in FY 1995.
- Training court unit executives to increase efficiency in the processing and investigation of, and counseling involved with, discrimination complaints, saving \$115,000 annually.
- Implementing policies to contain new furniture and personal computer spending, which saved about \$100,000 in FY 1995.
- Using a new review process to produce quality publications at less cost, saving about \$80,000 annually.
- Combining six newsletters into the "Federal Court Management Report", saving \$50,000 annually.
- Following new cost-saving policies relating to staff attendance at Judicial Conference committee and subcommittee meetings.
- Using an electronic means of transferring data from the courts to AO databases, and for making statistical data and tables available to the courts, which decreases costs associated with supplies, postage, and copier usage.
- Training court unit executives on policies, procedures, and cost-saving practices in a variety of administrative areas, such as procurement, property management, telecommunications acquisition, and mail management, among others.
- Beginning to implement the Long Range Plan for the Federal Courts, which provides a framework for establishing funding priorities and addresses the

optimal use of the judiciary's human, financial, physical, and technological resources.

- Implementing the Court Personnel System, which decentralizes personnel authority to the courts and improves the ability of court managers to maximize use of scarce personnel resources.
- Implementing the Cost Control Monitoring System for allotting salary dollars to the courts to increase court flexibility in using limited funds and to simplify the process of distributing funding.
- Simplifying the process of allotting funding to the courts to make the process more efficient and to increase court managers' flexibility in managing their spending plans.
- Conducting routine reviews, audits, and investigations of judiciary programs such as financial audits, court program unit reviews, and automation reviews.
- Conducting quarterly financial reviews to improve oversight of program spending and to identify funds that can be saved or redirected to meet higher priority needs.
- Implementing a management controls program to improve internal AO management and enhance program success while ensuring that waste, fraud, and abuse in the administration of judiciary programs are avoided.
- Implementing a planning and management-by-objectives program that drives overall agency goal setting and planning and monitors the agency's progress in accomplishing its objectives.
- Developing a database of cost-saving ideas offered by members of the judiciary family and pursuing promising ideas.
- Increasing financial oversight of the court security program by improving financial reporting processes, developing formal financial management procedures for transferring funds from the judiciary to the Marshals Service, and examining financial controls for managing court security funds.
- Examining ways to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the judiciary's advisory and automation user group structures and processes.

- Distributing comparative performance statistics to district and bankruptcy courts on a variety of key case processing measures and on the utilization of jurors.

Financial Management Policy

- Decentralizing certain budget functions to the courts to improve efficiency and court flexibility in managing funds.
- Increasing the judiciary's focus on cost containment through establishment of the Economy Subcommittee, which coordinates the judiciary's efforts to improve fiscal responsibility, accountability, and efficiency in its overall operations.
- Using a new way to develop the annual budget request, which results in requests being built from a lower base and requires any pending program increases to be reexamined along with new requested increases.