

# ***A REVIEW OF OREGON OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS***

**RESPONSE AS PRESENTED TO THE OAH OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE ON OCTOBER 3, 2007**

**BY**

**THOMAS E. EWING, CHIEF ALJ  
OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS**

## **Section 1: Statutory Consolidation**

*Recommendation 1.1: Reinforce public perception of judicial independence.*

### Actions:

- Consolidation in offices (Portland and Salem) visibly separate from agencies served by the OAH. Status: Completion December 2007.
- Increased use of hearing rooms in OAH rather than agency facilities. Status: To begin December 2007.
- Deemphasis of references to the Employment Department in OAH's website, business cards, and stationary. Status: Completed except for Cherry Ave. stationary.

## **Section 2: Organizational Development and Management**

*Recommendation 2.1: Implement a plan for managing change.*

### Actions:

- Vision statement to be taken to staff for comment, revision, and ultimate adoption, with the following proposed elements:
  - ✓ Independence
  - ✓ Quality hearings and decision-making, and
  - ✓ Operational efficiency. Status: To begin October/November 2007.
- Strategic plan to be taken to staff for comment, revision, and ultimate adoption, with the following proposed elements:
  - A. Communication
    - ✓ Creation of staff forums (Leadership Team, "collaborative decision-making committee") for feedback to OAH management. Status: Completion October/November 2007.
    - ✓ More frequent and regular management-staff meetings. Status: Completion October 2007.
    - ✓ Publication of minutes of management team, steering committees in OAH's intranet. Status: Completion November 2007.
  - B. Cross-Training
    - ✓ Plan for improved cross-training programs of OAH ALJs, operational staff, and technical team. Status: Completion June 2008.
    - ✓ Cross-training of OAH ALJs in unemployment insurance law. Status: Completion April 2008.
    - ✓ Case equity and blending initiative. Status: Completion March 2008.

- C. Technology
  - ✓ New all-OAH case management (including calendaring) system. Status: Completion 2009-11 biennium.
  - ✓ Improved electronic library of legal resources. Status: Beginning date TBA.
  - ✓ Improved use by customers of OAH's internet website. Status: Beginning date TBA.
- D. Organization
  - ✓ Independent review by the Employment Department's Budget & Program Analysis Division for a business-case analysis of a proposed full-time dedicated UI ALJ panel. Status: To begin December 2007.

*Recommendation 2.2: Restart regular meetings of the Oversight Committee.*  
Status: Completed

*Recommendation 2.3: Consider organizing a full-time dedicated UI Panel.*  
Action:

- See actions under Recommendation 2.1.

### **Section 3: Key Performance Measures**

*Recommendation 3.1: Develop a strategic plan for the OAH.*  
Action:

- See actions under Recommendation 2.1.

*Recommendation 3.2: Adopt and report on a balanced and comprehensive set of performance measures.*  
Action:

- The OAH will continue to develop and use measures to evaluate performance.  
Status: On-going.

*Recommendation 3.3: Report performance measurements to an expanded internal and external stakeholder audience.*  
Actions:

- OAH's key performance measures are set by the Legislature and are reported as requested. Status: On-going.
- Report important measures to staff and external customers. Status: To be implemented after strategic plan is formally adopted.

*Recommendation 3.4: Produce an annual summary report.*  
Action:

- Issuance of a biennial report focusing on progress toward implementing the strategic plan. Status: Completion January 2007 for 2005-07 biennium.

*Recommendation 3.5: Use performance measures to make decisions about OAH programs and policies.*

Action:

- See action under Recommendation 3.2.

*Recommendation 3.6: Streamline front-end data input procedures.*

Action:

- The OAH will continuously evaluate staffing levels to ensure a minimal error rate. Status: On-going.

#### **Section 4: Customer Satisfaction**

*Recommendation 4.1: Use customer satisfaction surveys that link to performance measures.*

Action:

- Develop measures (e.g., perceptions of ALJ bias, impartial hearing, timely hearing, professionalism of ALJs and operational staff) based on customer satisfaction surveys. Status: Completion December 2007.

*Recommendation 4.2: Administer surveys before the final order is issued.*

Actions:

- Because quality of decisions is a critical part of the hearing process, it is important that the OAH continue to receive citizen feedback on its decision-making, despite the potential for bias. Status: On-going.

*Recommendation 4.3: Conduct focused analyses of customer satisfaction data.*

Action:

- The OAH will look for opportunities to use surveys for stakeholder feedback on specific issues. Status: On-going.

*Recommendation 4.4: Use customer satisfaction data to track progress toward specific agency goals.*

Action:

- When appropriate, the OAH will use customer satisfaction data to track progress toward specific goals. Status: On-going.