Starting Over

Planning For A New Child Support Enforcement System

A Description and Discussion

a presentation of the Office of Child Support Enforcement

The Planning Phase

The Planning APD

Purpose of a Planning APD

First: a planning APD provides the federal government with the initial start-up data necessary to fund a state's planning activities for a new automation project

Second: an APD provides the state and federal agencies with the kind of high level data generally used to monitor a project's progress

Types of APD's

Two Major Types of APD Submissions

- **Planning APD**
  Used to seek reimbursement for planning costs
- **Implementation APD**
  Used to seek reimbursement for costs of designing, developing, and implementing a system

Planning APD

- Generally used in support of major system development projects, as opposed to less complex computer acquisitions like hardware and software buys
- This is a brief document of usually not more than 15-30 pages

Elements of a Planning APD

1. Problem Statement
2. Project Management Plan (PMP)
3. Planning Budget
4. Total Project Cost Estimate

Elements of a Planning APD

The Problem Statement

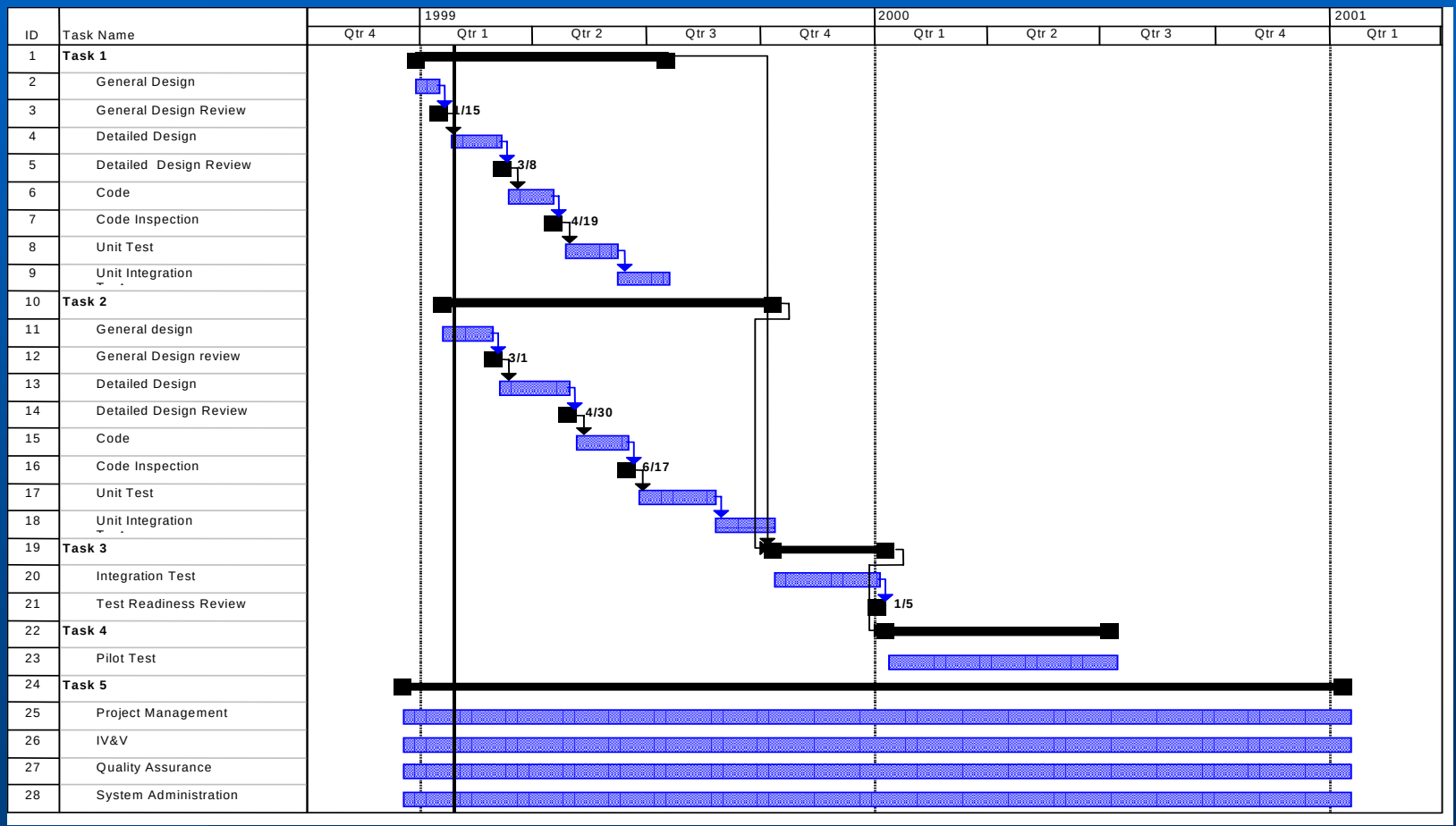
a. **1-3 pages of general discussion of the problem(s) faced by the agency and of the need to seek a remedy**
b. **Cites examples of issues and problems being faced**

Elements of a Planning APD

The Project Management Plan (PMP)

a. **Provides a list of key personnel**
b. **Provides an organization chart for the planning effort**
c. **Provides a task-oriented list of planning activities to be conducted including project schedule information**

A Project Schedule Example



Elements of a Planning APD

The Project Management Plan (PMP)

- **The task-oriented list of activities to be conducted must include *commitments to conduct* a:**
  - ✓ **Needs Assessment**
  - ✓ **Feasibility Study**
  - ✓ **Alternatives Analysis**
  - ✓ **Cost Benefit Analysis**

Elements of a Planning APD

The Project Management Plan (PMP)

- **Other task-oriented activities that a PMP might include are:**
  - ✓ **Developing RFP's / ITB's**
  - ✓ **Conducting procurements for:**
    - **Quality Assurance and IV&V**
    - **Software development**
    - **Project management support**
    - **Hardware and Software purchasing**
    - **Implementation APD development, etc.**

Elements of a Planning APD

Planning Budget

- **Provide a budget spreadsheet showing costs broken-down by Federal Fiscal Quarter (FFQ) and summed to the Federal Fiscal Year (FFY).**
- **Best presentation is to have one page per FFY.**
- **Have last column of each budget spreadsheet show state and Federal shares for each FFY**

Elements of a Planning APD

Budget Categories Include:

- **State staff,**
- **contractors (listed by contract), hardware and software,**
- **training,**
- **miscellaneous/supplies,**
- **travel,**
- **data center (listing both operations and development separately).**

The Implementation APD

1. Executive Summary
2. Statement of Needs and Objectives
3. Feasibility Study ***(Includes a summary of the study and the Analysis of Alternatives)***
4. Project Management Plan
5. Interface Requirements
6. Security
7. Budget *(Including cost allocation, if needed)*
8. Cost Benefit Analysis

Feasibility, Alternatives and Cost Benefit Analysis

A Description and Discussion

Feasibility Studies

In Complex, Large Scale Application Development Projects

Feasibility Studies: Purpose

- **The Preliminary Study That Determines Whether a Proposed Systems Project is Technically, Financially, and Operationally Viable**
- **The Foundation for Approval of the Project's IAPD**

Feasibility Studies

- **Include an Alternatives Analysis, Identifying Viable Options for System Design and Development. Together, They Provide:**
  - **Analysis of the System Objectives, Functional Requirements, and System Design Concepts**
  - **Feasibility of Applying Automation To Economically Improve Program Operations**
  - **Evaluation of Each of the Alternatives and Selection of an Optimal Solution**

Feasibility Study Process

- Describe the Status Quo
- Define the Problem
- Define System Objectives
- Identify System Constraints and Assumptions
- Develop Initial Requirements
- Assess Project Feasibility

Describe the Status Quo

- **Understanding of How the Current System Works**
  - **Work Flow Analysis**
  - **Technical Architecture of Hardware**
  - **Software Components**
  - **Manual Components**
  - **Interfaces**

Define the Problem

- **What Functionality is Missing or in Need of Automation From the Current System**
- **What Functionality is in Need of Improvement or Modification in the Current System**
- **Obsolescence of Technological Platforms and Architectures**

Define System Objectives

- **Functionality for the New System**
  - **Added**
  - **Automated**
  - **Improved**
- **Define Technical and Organizational Objectives**
- **Define Ranking Criteria to Evaluate Alternatives**

Identify System Constraints

- **Law and Regulations**
- **Technological**
- **Socio-political**
- **Financial**
- **Operational**
- **Functional**

Identify Assumptions

- **Cost and Budget**
- **Resources**
- **Functional and Programmatic**
- **Technical**
- **Organizational**
- **System Life**

Identify Assumptions

- **Include All Assumptions That Will Affect the Analysis**
- **Document the Logic Underlying the Assumptions**

Initial Requirements

- **Reorganize All of the Previous Work Into a List of Requirements the System Must Fulfill**
- **Ensure Requirements Definitions for the Current System Were Considered**
- **Identify the Universe of Existing and Theoretical Options**

Assess Project Feasibility

- **Assess Project Feasibility Against the Universe of Options:**
  - **Technical**
  - **Political**
  - **Impact on Users**
  - **Cost**
  - **Resources**
  - **Risk**
  - **Organizational**

Results

- **Ability to Reduce the Universe of Potential Options to 2-4 Realistic Possibilities**
- **These Now Undergo Detailed Evaluation as Part of the "Analysis of Alternatives"**

Alternatives Analysis

In Complex, Large Scale Application Development Projects

Alternatives Analysis

An Analysis Which Considers the Alternatives Available for Automation.

Development Alternatives

- **Status Quo**
- **Enhance Existing System**
- **New Development**
- **Transfer**
- **Hybrid**

Technical Alternatives

- Client Server vs. Main Frame
- Thin Client vs. Thick Client
- Web Technology vs Closed System
- Distributed vs. Centralized
- Custom vs. COTS

Alternatives Analysis

- **Map Requirements to Hardware, Software, Processes and Personnel.**
- **Determine Risks and Effects**
- **Rank Alternatives**
- **Delete Non-viable Alternatives**

Determine Risks and Effects

- **Program Impact**
- **Equipment Impact**
- **Software Impact**
- **Information Impact**
- **Organizational Impact**
- **Operational Impact**
- **Developmental Impact**

Cost Benefit Analysis

In Complex, Large Scale Application Development Projects

Cost Benefit Analysis

Detailed Evaluation of the Costs and Benefits of Each Alternative Identified During the Alternatives Analysis Is Critical …

… Pass or Fail Critical !
From a Federal Standpoint !

Costs

- Cost the Status Quo
- Cost Alternatives to Status Quo
- Identify and Characterize All Costs
- Determine Whether to Use Constant or Current Dollars
- Build Each Cost Profile Year by Year

Cost the Status Quo

- **Cost of Maintaining Current System With No Enhancements.**
- **Used As Control Group to Evaluate Other Alternatives.**

Cost Alternatives to Status Quo

- **Recurring Costs**
- **Non-Recurring Costs**

Identify and Characterize Costs

- **Hardware**
- **Software**
- **Training**
- **Personnel**
- **Database Conversion**
- **Other (examples in Guide)**

Determine Constant or Current $

- **Project Constant Dollar Cost and Benefits**
- **Convert Constant Dollars to Current Dollars**
- **Convert Future Dollars to Today's Dollars**

Build Each Cost Profile Year by Year

- **Estimate Effort Based on Metrics**
  - **COCOMO**
  - **Price-S**
  - **Function Points**
- **Compare to Similar Systems**
- **Run Experiments**
- **Measure Actuals**

Benefits

- **Identify and Characterize All Benefits**
  - **Tangible Benefits**
  - **Intangible Benefits**

Identify and Characterize All Benefits

- **Increased Collections**
- **Reduced Error Rates**
- **Reduced Costs**
- **Reduced Staffing**
- **Improved Security**
- **Improved Access**
- **Improved Interface**

Tangible Benefits

- **Derive Cost Saving From Benefit**
- **Document Assumptions Used in Derivation**

Intangible Benefits

- List and Rate
- Examples
  - Worker Satisfaction
  - System Downtime
  - User Friendliness
  - Useful Life of System

Cost Benefit Analysis

- **Convert Costs and Benefits to Current Dollars**
- **Compare Quantitative Factors**
  - **Net Benefit (Cost)**
  - **Benefit/Cost Ratio Based on the Full System Life Cycle**
  - **Breakeven or Payback**

Cost Benefit Analysis: Issues

- **Apply Assumptions, Costs, and Benefits Evenly Across All Alternatives**
- **Costs Are Not Always Known but May Be Estimated in a Range or With a Given Probability.**
- **Decide Evaluation Criteria Up-front**
- **Intangible Benefits May Matter**

Cost Benefit Analysis

Evaluation Criteria

Evaluation Criteria

- **Are Results Credible**
- **Are Assumptions and Estimates Reasonable**
- **Are Results Reproducible**
- **Are Assumptions Applied Evenly Across All Alternatives**

Analysis Guide Evaluation Criteria

- That a Status Quo is Thoroughly Described
- That All Reasonable Alternatives Were Considered
- That a Full Cost Benefit Analysis to at Least Two (2) Alternatives is Accomplished
- That Alternatives Were Evaluated on System Life Cycle Basis
- That Present Value Analysis Was Used

Analysis Evaluation Criteria (cont'd)

- That Cost and Benefit Projections Appear Reasonable
- That Net Benefits or Ratios Were Calculated for All Alternatives
- That the Study Resulted in a Clear Cost and Benefit Plan
- Results Are Summarized for Selection Justification in the IAPD

OVERVIEW

OCSE'S TYPICAL REVIEW PROCESS BASED UPON PAST EXPERIENCE

OCSE Typical FS Review

- **OCSE Review Process Is Approximately Eight (8) Weeks**
- **Uses OCSE Staff and Contractors to Conduct the Review**
- **Review Initiated Upon State Submittal of a Feasibility Study and Cost/Benefit Analysis**
- **Some Prior Review and TA of Preliminary Data (E.G. Evaluation Criteria)**

OCSE FS Review: WEEK 1

- **Assemble Team - OCSE Lead, OCSE Contractor Staff**
- **Start-Up Meeting to Discuss Overall Scope Collect Documentation - FS, CBA, Status Quo Document, Historical Data**

OCSE FS Review: WEEK 2

- **Initial Contractor Staff Review of Documentation**
- **Develop Initial Set of Comments**
- **Develop List of Questions for State Staff**
- **Develop Agenda for On-Site Review with the State**

OCSE FS Review: WEEK 3

- On-Site Review With State Staff
- Provide Initial Comments to the State
- Ask Questions Developed During Initial Review
- Interview State and Their Contractors On the Processes Used to Develop the FS
- Collect Additional Documentation

OCSE FS Review: WEEKS 4-6

- **Detailed Review of FS, CBA, and Other Documentation**
- **Follow-Up Conference Calls With State Staff, As Required**
- **Draft Report Developed by OCSE Contractor and Submitted to OCSE Lead**

OCSE FS Review: WEEKS 7-8

- **OCSE Lead Review of the Draft Report**
- **Additional Follow-Up Calls With the State As Required**
- **Incorporate OCSE Lead Comments Into Report**
- **Release Final Report**

OCSE FS Review: Documentation

- **Final FS, CBA, and Status Quo Document**
- **Interim Versions of Documents**
- **White Papers**
- **Review Correspondence (Review Comments and Responses)**
- **Requirements Analysis Documentation**
- **Gap Analysis**

OCSE FS Review: Documentation

- **Spreadsheets and Other Tools and Work Products**
- **Alternative Evaluation Criteria, Evaluation Worksheets, Ranking Worksheets**
- **Evaluation Methodology Documents**
- **Analysis Assumptions and Constraints**
- **Meeting Minutes and Notes**

OCSE REVIEWS OF NEW YORK, SOUTH CAROLINA, AND FLORIDA FEASIBILITY STUDIES

New York Review

- New York Already Had a Federally Certified Statewide System
- The State Developed a Feasibility Study to Analyze Alternatives for Potential Replacement of Their System
- Goals: To Make System More Technically Up-to-Date, Consolidate Platforms, and Enhance System Performance

New York's FS Approach

- **Two Part Study:**
  - **Features Matrix and Cost/Benefit Analysis**
  - **Alternatives Analysis and Recommendation**
- **Contractor Hired (Renaissance - Now GovConnect) to Conduct the Analysis and Develop the Report**

New York's FS Approach

- **Evaluation Criteria - Two Categories**
  - **Compliance - Ability to Meet Performance Goals, as Well as Functional and Technical Requirements and Level of Risk**
  - **Economic Value - Criteria By Which the Economic Viability of Each Alternative Could Be Assessed, Including Costs and Benefits**

New York's FS Approach

- **Compliance (2400 Points)**
  - Performance Goals - 800 Points: **Meeting Federally Mandated Performance Goals**
  - Functional Compliance - 700 Points: **Meeting Federal Certification and State Requirements**
  - Business Compliance - 200 Points: **Meeting Federal Automation Expectations to Support the Child Support Businesses Processes**

New York's FS Approach

- Technical Considerations - 200 Points: **General System Characteristics, On-going Maintenance, Size and Scope of the Application, and Systems Operations**
- System Development Risk - 300 Points: **Based On Development Process and Environment, and on the State's Program Constraints (E.G. Resources, Interfaces)**
- Confidence Level - 200 Points: **Meeting Program, Equipment, Software, Information, Organization, Operations, Development, Security, and Privacy Confidence Levels**

New York's FS Approach

- **Economic Value (600 Points)**
  - **Total Cost - 400 Points**
  - **Cost/Benefit Ratio - 200 Points**

New York's FS Approach

- **Four Options Considered**
  - OPTION 1: **Enhancement to Current System (Non-COTS Software Enhancements Only)**
  - OPTION 2: **Develop New System with Open Architecture**
  - OPTION 3: **Combination of New and Legacy System Architecture**
  - OPTION 4: **Transfer an Existing Certifiable System** (Massachusetts' "COMETS" and Los Angeles' "ARS")

New York's FS Results

- **Concluded That Option 3, the Hybrid Approach, Would Be the Most Beneficial to the State.**
- **Driven By the Following Conclusions:**
  - **Option 1 Does Not Provide Enough Benefit.**
  - **Options 2 and 4 are Contractor Managed and Therefore Incur the Cost of Quality Assurance and Project Management for Both the State and the Contractor**

New York's FS Results

- **Options 1 and 3 Are Able to Start Accruing Benefits Periodically During Development, Whereas Options 2 and 4 Only Begin Accruing Benefits at the End of the Development Cycle.**
- **Option 4 Requires a High Degree of System Re-engineering.**

New York - OCSE Findings
Status Quo Not Defined

- **Option 1 Was a Modified Version of the State's Current System**
- **Enhancements Allowed Provided They Do Not Require New Hardware or COTS Software**
- **This Does Not Meet Federal Guideline for Status Quo**
- **Recommendation - Rework Option 1 With No Changes to the Legacy System or Split Into Two Options**

New York - OCSE Findings
Inconsistent Assumptions & Constraints

- **Assumed Options 1 & 3 Would Be State Managed, 2 & 4 Would Be Contractor Managed**
- **In the Analysis, Option 3 Given Superior Cost Rating For Costs Saved By Using State Management**
- **In Fact, Any of the Options Could Be State Managed**
- **Recommendation - Separate Management Models From the Development Choice**

New York - OCSE Findings
Improved Collections Calculations

- **Improved Collections Expressed as X% Improvement Over Time**
- **In Fact, This Should Be Expressed as Exponential Over Time, Not Linear**
- **There Is, In Actuality, Some Finite Number of Cases That Can Be Collected (<100% of Total)**
- **Improvement Efforts Will Not Approach This Limit Evenly, But as Some Sort of Diminishing Returns Over Time**
- **Recommendation - Re-Think to More Accurately Reflect a Non-Linear Improvement Rate and the Finite Number of Cases That Can Be Collected**

New York - OCSE Findings
Number of Releases in Option 3

- **Option 3 Was Combination of New and Legacy Architecture**
- **Scheduled for Completion In 29 Months**
- **20 Different Overlapping Program Releases Scheduled in This Time Frame**
- **Risks Associated With This Aggressive Approach Not Addressed**
- **Impacts Configuration Management, Quality Assurance, and Training**
- **Recommendation - Rework Options 1 & 3 With a Manageable Number of Releases**

New York - OCSE Findings
Re-Use Percentage

- **“Reasonableness” Check on the Figures Indicated Transfer System Appeared to Score Lower Than One Might Expect**
- **Analysis Revealed This Was Due to an Estimate of 80% Rework Required for a Transfer System**
- **Figure Based Upon State, Federal, and Contractor Past Experience.**
- **Recommendation - Because It Has Such a Devastating Impact on the Transfer Option, the 80% Estimate Should Be Listed As An Assumption.**

New York - OCSE Findings
Cost Avoidance

- **Some Benefits Were Quantified by Multiplying the Number of Hours Saved by the Given Employee's Hourly Rate**
- **Employees Were Full Time State Staff**
- **Must Take Care To Do This Only If the Employee's Time Saved Can Be Used Processing Other Cases or Performing Other Savings-Generating Activities**
- **Recommendation - Recalculate as a Function of Extra Income Generated Rather Than Salaries Saved.**

New York - Status

- **Feasibility Study Withdrawn**
- **The State Terminated Their New System Development Effort For Financial Reasons**
- **Current Emphasis is Achieving PRWORA Certification With Their Existing System**

South Carolina Review

- South Carolina Does Not Have a Federally Certified Statewide System
- Previous Development Effort Ended in Failure
- The State Developed a Feasibility Study to Examine Alternatives for Their Statewide System Solution
- Contractor Hired (AMS) to Conduct the Analysis and Develop the Report

South Carolina's FS Approach

- **Six-Phased Approach**
  - **Identify Viable Options**
  - **Compare the Functional and Technical Merits of Each Option**
  - **Evaluate Risks**
  - **Determine Costs and Benefits of Each Option**
  - **Assess the Technical Currency of Each Option's Architecture**
  - **Score Each Option Based on Assigned Weighting Factors**

South Carolina's FS Approach
Documentation Developed

- **Baseline Requirements Report**
  - **Functional and Technical Requirements**
  - **Opportunities For Enhancement**
  - **System Objectives**
  - **System Constraints**
  - **System Assumptions**
  - **Performance Measures Defined By Key Stakeholders**

South Carolina's FS Approach
Documentation Developed

- **Evaluation Framework Report**
  - **Defines the Options to Be Assessed**
  - **Details the Research and Analysis Methodology**
  - **Establishes the Evaluation Criteria**
  - **Specifies the Scoring (Weighting) and Ranking Methodology Used to Arrive at the Recommended Option**

South Carolina's FS Approach
Documentation Developed

- **Course of Action Plan (CAP)**
  - **Feasibility Study**
  - **Gap Analysis**
  - **Cost/Benefit Analysis**
  - **Ranking of Alternatives**
- **Status Quo Report**
  - **Separate Volume Containing Federally Required Status Quo Data**

South Carolina's FS Approach

- **Evaluation Criteria - Four Categories**
  - Comparative Assessment - 20 %: **Meeting Functional and Technical Requirements, Including Federal Certification**
  - Cost/Benefit Analysis - 32.5 %:
    - **Total Cost**
    - **Total Benefit**
    - **Cost/Benefit Ratio**
    - **Break Even Point**

South Carolina's FS Approach

- **Evaluation Criteria (continued)**
  - Risk Assessment - 15 %: **Based on Technology, Staffing, Project Organization, Business, and Implementation Risks**
  - Technical Currency - 32.5 %: **Meeting Specific Technical Requirements:**
    - **Component Based Design**
    - **N-Tier Architecture**
    - **Clusters of Servers**
    - **Object-Oriented Architecture**
    - **Visual Programming**
    - **RAD Tools**
    - **Web Presence**

South Carolina's FS Approach

- **Three Options Considered:**
  - OPTION 1: **Modified CSES - Continue Development Using Uncompleted Software From the Failed Project (Transfer System)**
  - OPTION 2: **"Custom Integrated System" - New Centralized System**
  - OPTION 3: **"Custom Linked System" - Alternative System Linking a New Statewide Court System to a New IV-D System**

South Carolina's FS Results

- **Concluded That Option 2, the New Custom Integrated System Approach, Would Be the Most Beneficial to the State**
- **Driven By the Following Conclusions:**
  - **Option 1 Does Not Provide a Long Term, Technically Viable Solution**
  - **Options 1 and 2 Are Able to Start Accruing Benefits Earlier Than Option 3**
  - **Option 3 is Not Eligible For Federal Financial Participation**

South Carolina - OCSE Findings
Weighting Factors Issues

- **Weight of CBA and Risk Expected to Be Higher Given State's Past Experience**
- **Weighting Factors Were Changed Twice During the Course of the Analysis**
- **Most Significant Change Added the "Technical Currency" Factor**
- **This Changed the Final Outcome of the Analysis from the Modified CSES to the Custom Integrated System**

South Carolina - OCSE Findings
Assumptions and Constraints

- **Some Assumptions Appear Unrealistic and Arbitrary**
  - **Design and Development of the Custom Integrated System is Only 1/3 Longer Than Modified CSES, Which is 70% Complete**
  - **In Part Due To Initial Schedule Estimates Rounded to the Nearest 12-Month Period**

South Carolina - OCSE Findings
Assumptions and Constraints

- **System Constraints Not Clearly Defined**
  - **For the Status Quo, No Attempt is Made to Clarify and Summarize Constraints**
  - **References to Constraints Appear In Various Sections of the Report**
- **Recommendations -**
  - **Consolidate Assumptions and Constraints**
  - **Eliminate Excessive Rounding of Data**

South Carolina - OCSE Findings
Benefit Data Incomplete

- **Evaluation of Quantitative Benefits Was Limited to Increases in Collections**
- **Recommendation - Other Benefits Could Be Included:**
  - **Use of Integrated Database in Option 2 Would Reduce Cost, Risk, and Data Redundancy**
  - **N-Tier Technology May Reduce Programming Time and Errors**
  - **Increased Productivity**
  - **Increased Caseload Capacity**

South Carolina - OCSE Findings
Number of Reports

- **Number of Reports Required is Higher for Option 1 Than for Option 2**
- **AMS Indicated This Was Because Option 2 Would Be Capable of Generating More Reports**
- **CAP is Inappropriately Basing Requirements on System Capabilities**
- **Recommendation - Apply Consistent Requirements To All Options.**

South Carolina - Status

- **Based on Re-Examination of the Analysis, the State Concluded That Option 1 Was More Economically Feasible and Produced Less Risk**
- **Currently In Process of Procuring a Development Vendor for Option 1**

Florida Review

- **Florida Already Had a Federally Certified (FSA ‘88) Statewide System**
- **The State Developed a Feasibility Study to Analyze Alternatives for Potential New System Development**
- **Contractor Hired (TRW) to Conduct the Analysis and Develop the Report**

Florida's FS Approach

Evaluation Criteria:

- **Two Primary Categories**
  - **Meeting System Objectives - Ability to Meet Objectives Taken From the ACF Feasibility Study Guide**
  - **Cost/Benefits Analysis**
- **Subjective Ratings Applied**
- **No Weighting Applied**

Florida's FS Approach

- **Four Options Considered**
  - OPTION 1: **Transfer Existing CSE Software From State Mainframe to a Department of Revenue Platform**
  - OPTION 2: **Transfer From Another State (Not Identified)**
  - OPTION 3: **Develop New System**
  - OPTION 4: **Status Quo**

Florida's FS Results

- **Concluded That Option 3, New System Development Would Be Most Beneficial to the State**
- **Driven By the Following:**
  - **Cost Effectiveness**
  - **Flexibility**
  - **Allows a UNIX Environment**
  - **Best Environment for GUI Front End**

Florida - OCSE Findings

- **Upon Submittal of Final FS Report (December 1998), OCSE Met With State**
- **Key OCSE Comment: Cost of New System Development Appeared Low Based on Experience From Other States**
- **State Withdrew the Study and Decided to Re-Work the Analysis**

Florida - Status

- New Study Revealed Cost of New System Development Would Be Significantly Higher Than Original Analysis
- As a Result, the State Withdrew Plans to Develop a New System
- Currently in Process of Acquiring a Vendor to Modify Existing Statewide System

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- Title 45 Public Welfare and Human Services Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 95--General Administration-Grant Programs (Public Assistance and Medical Assistance)
- Title 45 Public Welfare and Human Services Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 74 - Uniform Administrative Requirements for Awards and Subawards to Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, Other Nonprofit Organizations, and Commercial Organizations; and Certain Grants and Agreements with States, Local Governments and Indian Tribal Governments

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