

ANNUAL REPORT 2005



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November 15, 2005



INTRODUCTION

History of the Personnel Board of Jefferson County

The Personnel Board of Jefferson County (PBJC) was established in 1935 by Act 284 of the Alabama legislature. This Act, more commonly known as the Enabling Act, sets forth the authority for and the regulations under which a county's Civil Service (Merit) System operates in the State of Alabama. The Act applies to all counties in the state with four-hundred thousand (400,000) or more inhabitants, which includes Jefferson County.

Within counties having multiple municipalities, such as Jefferson, the Merit System is inclusive of municipalities having five thousand (5,000) or more inhabitants and whose borders lie geographically within the county. Police Officers of municipalities having two-thousand five hundred (2,500) inhabitants are also statutorily included. For purposes of inclusion, the population of the counties and their respective municipalities is counted as of the last official federal census. Currently, employees of nineteen (19) municipalities throughout Jefferson County are part of the Merit System. These nineteen municipalities, together with several countywide entities such as The Jefferson County Department of Health, The Emergency Management Agency (EMA), Judges, and the Personnel Board itself make up the twenty-three "jurisdictions" that are part of the Merit System of Jefferson County.

There are approximately ten-thousand (10,000) employees throughout the twenty-three jurisdictions served by the Personnel Board. All employees of covered municipalities and the other defined countywide entities are automatically covered by the Merit System unless they are statutorily exempted. These 10,000 individuals hold positions in approximately 850 separate job classes.

The Personnel Board of Jefferson County was established by the Enabling Act as the administrative body responsible for governing the county's Merit System, for providing human resource services to member jurisdictions, and for assuring compliance with the requirements contained within the Act. Compliance is accomplished through a set of Rules and Regulations that serve as the administrative and procedural guidelines applicable and adhered to by all Merit System jurisdictions and their respective employees.

Consent Decree & Appointment of Receiver

The PBJC entered into a Consent Decree in 1981 aimed at alleviating alleged discrimination regarding employment selection practices. A Consent Decree is an enforceable judge's order based upon an out-of-court agreement between opposing parties to a lawsuit. The modified Consent Decree holds that it is the

responsibility of the PBJC to establish and maintain selection procedures, to include minimum qualifications, assessment techniques, the ranking of candidates and candidate certification procedures, that either have (a) no adverse impact on the basis of race or sex as defined by the 1978 Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures (Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, The Civil Service Commission, The Department of Labor, and The Department of Justice, 1978) or (b) are job-related for the classes (i.e., positions) in question and consistent with business necessity. With 37 non-public-safety classifications still under court scrutiny, a Receiver, Dr. Ronald Sims, was appointed in 2002 to control and supervise all aspects of the PBJC's daily operations. Under the Receivership, undisputed compliance was achieved on all the 37 Consent Decree job classifications. Key initiatives implemented during the course of the Receivership include:

- A new information technology infrastructure eliminating the need for paper applications, leave slips, and personnel action forms. All of these transactions and recordkeeping functions have been automated.
- An automated Interactive Voice Response system providing merit system employees and job-seekers access to application and merit system information over the telephone at any time, day or night, seven days per week.
- Several key reforms in the Five Year Survey to improve the efficiency of the process. Employees now complete a computer-based Position Description Questionnaire. This replaced the former paper-based method of collecting job-related data, and allows the Board to efficiently collect and analyze data from merit system employees. Using the computer-based Position Description Questionnaire, the survey of classifications is now conducted on a "rolling" basis, rather than all at once every five years. The Board's classification staff will review approximately 20% of Merit System positions annually.
- Three extensive revisions of the Rules and Regulations were completed during the Receivership to eliminate substantial confusion created by the use of "unofficial" versions of the Rules and Regulations by staff and the Appointing Authorities. The most recent revision was completed on April 4, 2005. The official Rules and Regulations of the Personnel Board are now freely available for download from the Board's web site, in the form of a secure compatible PDF (Portable Document Format) document.
- Jefferson County renovated portions of the 2121 Building to create functional spaces to accommodate Personnel Board service activities. This included the creation of a reception area where members of the public can search and apply for merit system jobs online, and receive career counseling; workable space for the on-site administration of standardized interviews, video-based simulations, and other modern methods of personnel assessment.

Transition from Receivership

With the Receivership coming to an end, the Three-Member Board was elected in the fall of 2004. The current Board Members are Tommy Hagler who is a pastor of a local church, Juanita Hull who is a former Police Captain and Lita Clark, a psychologist. Juanita Hull was appointed as the Board chair. The Board members are appointed by the Citizen's Supervisory Commission (CSC) and serve staggered six-year terms.

Personnel Board Members

Capt. Juanita Hull
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838-1430 (Fax) Call before faxing
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Citizens' Supervisory Commission (CSC)

The Personnel Board of Jefferson County reports to a Citizens' Supervisory Commission (CSC) comprised of seventeen (17) community leaders, including heads of local colleges, universities, and civic groups. The CSC must have 9 members present at their meetings in order to conduct business. The current CSC members are listed below.

Citizens Supervisory Commission

NAME & ADDRESS

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VACANT

President
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Municipal Employee Representative
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Conclusion of Receivership & Likely Appointment of a Monitor

In the spring of 2005, the Receiver and the Three-Member Board worked together to ensure a smooth transition of power from the Receiver back to the Three-Member Board. On July 11, 2005, full authority for the Personnel Board operations officially returned to the Three-Member Board. This includes authority over the Board's day-to-day operations, finances, contracts, budget, staff, and overall management. Although the Court has not yet released or discharged the Receiver, he is no longer on-site and has no operational responsibilities. The Court has indicated, however, that a monitor will likely be appointed to observe and report on the Board's progress in fully complying with the Consent Decree. The monitor will be an agent of the Court and be completely independent of the parties.

Leadership and Management Changes

Since the May 2005 CSC meeting, the Board has experienced other important transitions. In late August, Personnel Director Bruce M. Nichols decided not to continue in that role. The Board's day-to-day management team has since been led by Deputy Director Lorren Oliver, who was designated Interim Personnel Director. The Three-Member Board meets weekly with Interim Director to remain apprised of the Board's progress in achieving full compliance with the consent decree. The Three-Member Board has undertaken a search for a new Personnel Director and anticipates making a selection from internal candidates in late November.

The Three Member Board's Quasi-Judicial Activities

The Three-Member Board has decided approximately 14 disciplinary cases and 3 paid injury leave appeals on recommendations from hearing officers, and approximately 10 grievances since the May 2005 CSC meeting. The Three-Member Board has defended its decisions in appeals to three-judge panels of circuit judges and has been upheld in 7 cases and reversed in 0 cases.

Personnel Board of Jefferson County Services

The PBJC provides a variety of human resource related services to the jurisdictions within the Merit System (see website for more detail; <http://www.pbjcal.org>). These services include:

- Facilitating the hiring of qualified individuals to fill vacancies within the jurisdictions. The responsibility of the Personnel Board is to manage job requisitions, recruit, accept and screen applicants, test qualified applicants, and send names of qualified applicants who pass legally defensible tests to the employers within the Merit System.
- Managing and administering job classification and salary structures across the jurisdictions. The responsibility of the Personnel Board is to survey and develop class specifications via job evaluations and analyses, conduct salary surveys, establish compensation plans and salary schedules, and address position and salary management requests throughout the jurisdictions.
- Managing and maintaining employee history. The responsibility of the Personnel Board is to maintain the civil service record of employment for all employees under the Merit System. This includes employee set up upon hiring, administration of employee changes such as promotions, leave of absences, merit increases, job classification changes, and voluntary or involuntary separation.
- Managing and facilitating employee relations and employee development. The responsibility of the Personnel Board is to mediate any employee appeals or grievances, as well as administer the standard for Performance Appraisals across the jurisdictions.

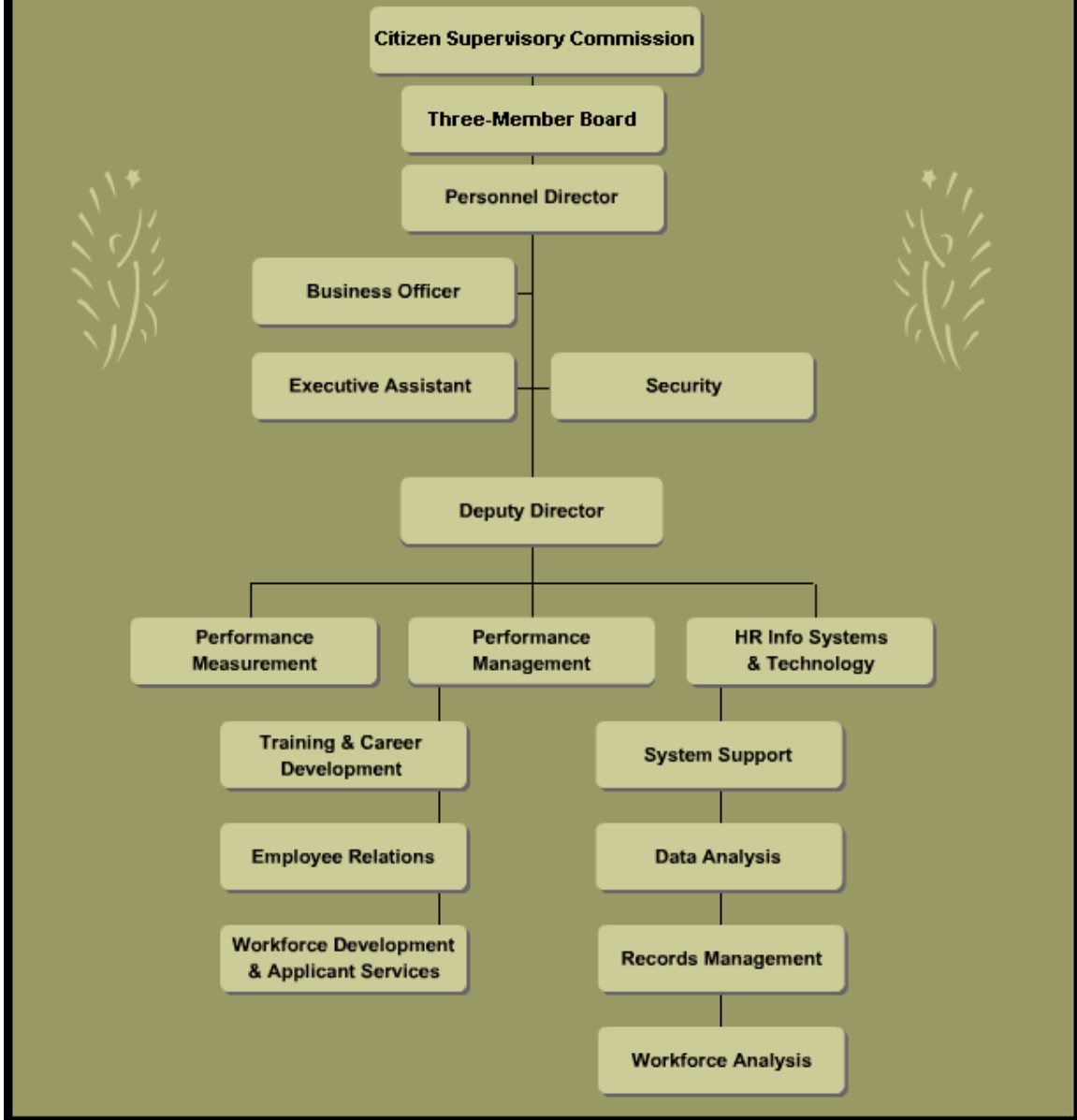
Rules & Regulations

Many of these services provided by the PBJC are regulated by the Personnel Board Rules and Regulations. These Rules and Regulations explain a variety of things from how leave can be accrued and used to the number of days an announcement must be posted. A copy of the current Personnel Board Rules and Regulations may be obtained from the PBJC website at <http://www.pbjcal.org/RulesRegsApril2005.pdf>

PBJC Organizational Structure & Staffing

The Personnel Board employs eighty-six (86) full-time staff to carry out its functions. The current structure has staff members assigned to one of three divisions: Performance Measurement, Performance Management and Human Resources Information and Technology Services. The organizational structure appears below.

Personnel Board of Jefferson County Organizational Chart



Administration provides oversight for all areas, departments, and functions within the Personnel Board of Jefferson County. It is responsible for the equitable application and execution of the Rules and Regulations, for protecting the interests of civil service employees throughout Jefferson County, for establishing and maintaining positive and productive relationships with member jurisdictions, and for the proper management of the Board's assets.

Performance Measurement Division

Performance Measurement is responsible for the development, validation and certification of all entry level and promotional selection procedures within the Merit System. This includes conducting job analyses, developing selection measures, administering and scoring tests, establishing registers and notifying candidates of their eligibility status.

Performance Management Division

Training and Career Development is all about learning. The department strives to help make Jefferson County a great place to work and a great place to live. The Department offers Merit System employees access to courses and classes to positively affect their careers and to exceed expectations of citizens they serve. Classes include training in computer software, human relations, effective customer service and management and leadership.

Employee Relations is responsible for providing information, guidance, and instruction to employees, elected officials, department heads, attorneys, and the citizenry concerning Personnel Board Rules and Regulations pertaining to disciplinary appeals, grievances, paid injury leave appeals, citizen's complaints, administrative leave, leave of absence, fitness for duty examinations, reduction in force, military leave, and performance appraisals. In addition, trained Employee Relations staff members provide intervention services through a formal mediation program as a means of resolving work-related conflicts before they reach the grievance stage.

Workforce Development and Applicant Services encourages applicants for employment to consider careers in civil service and to market Jefferson County as an employer of choice in the greater Birmingham area. The department advertises job vacancies utilizing a variety of media to attract a broad and diverse pool of qualified candidates for open positions within the Jefferson County Merit System and strives to establish a presence in the employment community locally, regionally, and nationally through job announcements, attendance at career fairs, recruiting at high schools, colleges and universities, special recruiting events, and by participation in professional and civic organizations. Workforce Development and Applicant Services works with member jurisdictions to develop

and execute recruitment strategies and to identify quality candidates for employment.

Human Resource Information Systems and Technology Division

System Support/Data Analysis provides the infrastructure and support for all of the information network and data reporting and analysis needs of the Personnel Board and provides technical assistance to jurisdictions using the PBJC online information systems.

Records Management serves as the central operations unit and point of contact for the processing of all Merit System personnel actions, including, but not limited to, hires, transfers, promotions, status changes, salary adjustments, premiums, leaves of absences, and terminations and is responsible for managing all Merit System employee personnel records. In addition, Records Management is responsible for processing Requests for Certification for all types of appointments, providing certification lists to hiring jurisdictions, and is responsible for the process of certifying payrolls.

Workforce Analysis is responsible for establishing classifications for all Merit System jobs, assuring that employees are properly assigned to classifications, and that classifications are appropriately assigned to salary grades. Workforce Analysis reviews position description questionnaires, conducts job audits, develops classification specifications, and collects and analyzes labor market data to assure the competitive positioning of Merit System jobs. It is the objective of the Workforce Analysis Department to create and maintain a compensation and classification system that fosters career growth and is both externally competitive with regard to relevant labor markets and equitable internally.

ADMINISTRATION

Overview

Administration provides oversight for all areas, departments, and functions within the Personnel Board of Jefferson County. It is responsible for the equitable application and execution of the Rules and Regulations, for protecting the interests of civil service employees throughout the Merit System, for establishing and maintaining positive and productive relationships with member jurisdictions, and for the proper management of the Board's assets.

Responsibilities

The following are Administration's responsibilities:

- Ensuring compliance of the Rules and Regulations
- Clarifying personnel policy issues
- Creating policies and procedures to assist in the operation of the organization
- Managing daily operations of the departments
- Developing and monitoring annual budget

Activities and Accomplishments

- Provided guidance in achieving and maintaining a sound, comprehensive, and uniform system of human resource management through rules, decisions, communication, and training.
- Ensured that employment decisions were based on current Human Resource Management policies and practices.
- As conscientious stewards of public resources, the Board (including the receiver) expended only \$11.9 million of its \$15.2 million 2004/2005 operating budget.
- Completed the 2005/2006 annual budget and instituted the practice of publicly posting the operating budget on the website. The 2005-2006 operating budget is projected to be \$10.6 million, a significant reduction compared to the budget from this reporting period.
- Implemented tighter fiscal controls by developing a departmental budget, which will require accountability of public resources by each department's team leader and manager.
- As of April 4, 2005, implemented the revised Rules and Regulations.
- Completed the PBJC Employee Handbook.
- Developed and implemented the following internal policies and procedures to assist in the daily operation of the organization and streamline processes:

- Office Supply & Equipment Policy
- System Security Policy
- Equipment Security Policy
- Parking Policy
- Key Issuance Policy
- Workplace Injury Policy
- Harassment Policy
- Bereavement Policy
- Procedures for Screening Internal PBJC Candidates

Future Plans

Continue to serve the citizens of Jefferson County, Bessemer, Birmingham, Center Point, Fairfield, Fultondale, Gardendale, Graysville, Homewood, Hueytown, Irondale, Leeds, Midfield, Mountain Brook, Pleasant Grove, Tarrant, Trussville, Vestavia Hills and Warrior by ensuring that the filling of local government jobs is based on merit and ability, and not based on political factors, nepotism, or favoritism.

Continue to serve as conscientious stewards of public resources and ensure the efficient utilization of all resources provided to fund critical initiatives such as recruiting, employee testing, training and development and the overall management of the data and records systems for some 10,000 merit system employees.

Develop and institute initiatives to rebuild the image of the Board and foster stronger relationships with employees, departments, and Appointing Authorities.

Pursue grant funding opportunities to help meet the needs of the jurisdictions which we serve.

Financial Report

2004 – 2005 EXPENDITURES

	<u>PBJC</u>	<u>Receiver</u>
Salaries	3,958,788.57	
FICA, Pension, Health, Life, Unemployment	894,814.03	
Tuition Refund	3,888.00	
Insurance Premiums	32,998.00	
Legal	468,226.20	826,667.25
Other Professional Services (Consultants, etc).	553,930.09	2,228,554.24
Other Contractual Services (IT Hosting, Video Development, etc.)	371,094.61	
IT System Support (Licenses, Maintenance Service Contracts, etc.)	215,230.83	
Rental Charges for External Test Administration	233,294.16	
Office Equipment Rental, Service Contracts, Repairs, Renovations	18,104.89	
Telephone Service & Data Lines	32,450.66	
Postage & Express Mail	23,058.59	
Advertising	69,887.33	

	<u>PBJC</u>	<u>Receiver</u>
Staff Development	92,642.55	
Staff Mileage Reimbursement	2,204.53	
Assessor Travel, Accommodation, Per Diem & Reimbursement	38,743.82	
Legislated Allowance	49,294.21	
Books, Periodicals, Membership Dues & Subscriptions	10,607.10	
General Office	34,641.24	
Printing & Binding	4,046.20	
Equipment Purchase & Lease	59,667.87	
Other Technical Materials	51,101.49	
Hospitality	2,079.78	
Miscellaneous Equipment	19,467.11	6,110.24
Major Software	633,238.09	
Fixed Equipment & Furniture	8,614.00	
Jefferson County Data Processing, Archival, Motor Charges	88,315.65	
Jefferson County Square Footage, Indirect Charges, Depreciation	<u>896,465.18</u>	(5,923.56)
Total Expenditures	<u>8,866,894.78</u>	<u>3,055,408.17</u>
Total Combined PBJC and Receiver Expenditures	<u>11,922,302.95</u>	

PBJC Unencumbered Balance	425,049.60
Receiver Unencumbered Balance	<u>278,255.97</u>
Total Combined Unencumbered Balance	703,305.57

PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

Overview

The Performance Measurement Division is responsible for the development, administration, scoring, and validation of all selection procedures used to establish registers for all entry level and promotional job classes within the Merit System. The scope of this responsibility is substantial given the number of job classes in the Merit System, the extensive duties falling under this division, and the need to ensure that all work is performed in a manner that is consistent with the relevant employment laws and professional standards.

Major Work Activities

In order to provide a better understanding of the work performed within this division, brief descriptions of the major work activities required for the development of valid and legally defensible selection procedures are presented below. Each of the following activities must be performed for all job classes in need of an eligible register:

- *Job Analysis* – A thorough job analysis is a requirement and serves as a building block for developing valid, fair, and legally defensible selection systems. A job analysis involves the identification of the tasks and duties performed on the job and the knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) necessary to perform them. An appropriate analysis of the job involves gathering and reviewing literature/material relevant to the job, conducting observations of incumbents performing the work, holding focus group meetings with incumbents and supervisors, developing thorough lists of tasks performed and KSAs needed, administering questionnaires to incumbents and supervisors, and analyzing data to determine the tasks and KSAs that meet legal requirements for inclusion in selection test development. It should be noted for a job analysis to meet professional and legal requirements, heavy involvement of incumbents and supervisors is necessary in every job analysis activity presented above.
- *Test Development* – Any instrument used to make a decision about an applicant's fit for a given job is considered part of the overall selection procedure and must conform to all applicable employment laws, guidelines, and professional standards. Many different types of tests/measures can be used as components of a selection procedure. Examples of selection tests that are commonly used by the Performance Measurement Division include minimum qualifications, structured interviews, low- and high-fidelity work samples, job knowledge tests, biodata instruments, and job simulations. The development of these tests varies to some degree based on the type of measure; however, the development of any test used by the Performance Measurement Division is based on a thorough job analysis and requires significant input from job

- incumbents and their supervisors in every step of the development process. These steps include determining the most appropriate type of test(s) to use for a given job, conducting focus group meetings to gather information to use for test development, writing test content, developing scoring guidelines, administering questionnaires that require reviewing and rating test content, pilot testing the measure, analyzing pilot test results, and conducting reviews with and gathering feedback from supervisors over the positions.
- *Job Announcement* – A job announcement is the means by which the PBJC notifies the general public that applications are being accepted for a particular job. All job announcements are presented on the PBJC website and all applications are accepted via an online application system. PBJC rules require a job announcement to extend a minimum of a two week period. However, announcements often extend well beyond the two-week minimum for jobs in which the pool of qualified applicants is limited. Job announcements include the following information: a list of duties performed on the job, a list of KSAs determined to be important for the position, the minimum qualifications for the position, any details known at the time of the announcement regarding the examination process, the closing date, and information on how to apply.
 - *Screening Applications* – After a job has been announced, each application must be reviewed to determine whether the applicant met the minimum qualifications for the position and to ensure that all necessary documentation (e.g., certifications, transcripts, etc.) is present. After the screening of all applications for a job has been completed, the applicants are then notified by mail of the status of their application and provided a 10 business day appeal period during which, if they so choose, they may appeal the status determination. All appeals are reviewed and evaluated for merit and a written response is provided to inform the applicant of the outcome of the appeal.
 - *Test Administration* – After all applications have been screened and all test development activities have concluded, the candidates are invited to participate in the further stages of the selection process. The test administration process includes distributing tutorial/orientation information to candidates prior to the test date, conducting all tutorial/orientation sessions, securing appropriate testing facilities and supplies/equipment, duplicating and/or producing all test materials, developing test administration schedules, inviting candidates to assigned test times, training all test administration staff of their various roles, conducting the test administration, and securing all candidate test materials at the conclusion of the examination.
 - *Test Assessment* – After candidates have completed the test(s) required for a given job, the candidates' responses must be evaluated. The manner in which they are evaluated depends on the type of test; however, most tests utilized by the Performance Measurement Division require an assessor panel (consisting of two assessors) to observe video and audio
-

recorded verbal responses provided by the candidates. In order to complete the evaluation, a substantial number of qualified assessors must be recruited to assist with this process. During this recruitment, attention is given to the demographic representation of the assessors to ensure that assessor panels are made up of a diverse set of assessors with regard to sex and race. All assessors are recruited on a *volunteer* basis (i.e., they are provided no monetary compensation for the work performed for the PBJC). Assessors typically work a 40-hour work week during their volunteer assessment. In addition to recruiting assessors for participation in the assessment, the Performance Measurement Division conducts a thorough training with all assessors prior to starting the assessment process.

- *Test Scoring* – Once all test components for a given job have been administered and assessed it is necessary to enter all of the data, ensure the accuracy of the resulting datasets, analyze the data obtained in order to evaluate the psychometric properties of the test items, and calculate final scores for all candidates. All data entry and scoring analyses are performed independently by two staff members in order to ensure accuracy of the scoring process. Staff members utilize a statistical software package (i.e., SPSS) to conduct all data analyses and scoring procedures and write programming syntax to ensure the scoring process can be replicated, if necessary, at a later date.
- *Applicant Score Notification* – All candidate scores for a given job are imported from SPSS into the PBJC's applicant tracking database (i.e., SIGMA) and then a notice containing test score, pass/fail status, seniority points (if applicable), and appeal period end date is generated and mailed to each candidate. The applicants are provided an appeal period (i.e., 10 business days) during which, if they so choose, they may appeal the score received on the test. All appeals are reviewed and evaluated for merit and a written response is provided to inform the candidate of the outcome of the appeal.
- *Register Establishment* – At the conclusion of the appeal period the staff member handling the testing for a given job addresses all applicant appeals. After all appeals have been settled, the Performance Measurement Division establishes the eligible register. The eligible register is a list of all candidates who passed all phases of the selection process and their corresponding scores. This eligible register is then sent to the Records Management Department for ranking and distribution of certification lists to the jurisdiction(s) with a vacancy.
- *Validation Report Writing* – Throughout all phases of the selection process outlined above, the Performance Measurement staff member must document, in a validation report, all steps performed and the rationale behind decisions made. This report includes all activities performed, all individuals involved in each step, considerations and rationale for all decisions, results of data analyses performed on the test, and all data on adverse impact for race and sex resulting from each stage of the selection

process. After the validation report is complete the selection procedure development process for the given job is complete.

Overview of Positions

The Performance Measurement Division is currently composed of twenty-six permanent employees and four temporary/part-time employees. The permanent positions are made up of two Industrial-Organizational Psychologists, four Senior Assessment & Development Specialists, sixteen Assessment & Development Specialists, two Administrative Assistant IIIs, and one Administrative Assistant I. The temporary/part-time positions are comprised of four Assessment & Development Interns. A description of each of these positions is presented below:

- *Industrial-Organizational Psychologist* – Industrial-Organizational Psychologists are responsible for providing leadership and technical guidance to project teams working within the Performance Measurement Division. Major duties include setting measurable project objectives and creating plans to achieve them; identifying and making process improvements; establishing departmental procedures and guidelines; monitoring incoming requests and coordinating announcement processes; coordinating activities with other functional areas and divisions; identifying and communicating work priorities to staff; recruiting, testing, and selecting competent and qualified staff members; ensuring orientation and training of new employees; establishing division and functional area goals and schedules; motivating employees to complete work in a timely and high quality manner; developing and implementing division-wide and organizational change initiatives; identifying employee development and training needs; observing and evaluating employee performance; conducting performance appraisals; reviewing targeted work for quality control; identifying and acquiring needed supplies, resources, and equipment; and ensuring own work, and work of team is performed in accordance with relevant employment law and to high professional standards.
- *Senior Assessment & Development Specialist* – Senior Assessment & Development Specialists are responsible for managing the job analysis, test development, test administration, test scoring functions for a team of Assessment & Development Specialists. This job involves providing guidance, supervision, and technical expertise to professional staff carrying out multiple projects related to specific job classes. Project work includes conducting job analyses; developing selection procedures such as minimum qualifications, structured interviews, work simulations, job knowledge tests, or other testing devices; administering and scoring selection procedures; conducting data analyses; writing technical reports; classifying jobs; and developing and implementing performance management systems. The job involves providing substantive feedback,

coaching, and guidance to staff members regarding work products; evaluating job performance of individual staff members; identifying skill deficiencies among staff members; and providing appropriate developmental opportunities and training with staff. Individuals in this job coordinate and integrate project work to efficiently make use of departmental and human resources, continuously evaluate procedures for improvement, and to ensure that deadlines are met. This position is responsible for ensuring the completion of all work within the project team by specified deadlines.

- *Assessment & Development Specialist* – Assessment & Development Specialists provide systematic development and implementation of job analysis, test development, test administration, and test scoring procedures for job classes within the Merit System in accordance with relevant employment laws and guidelines. In addition, the position requires mentoring new employees by providing guidance and direction to ensure thorough understanding of the work processes and requirements and identifying own developmental opportunities.
- *Administrative Assistant III* – Work of an Administrative Assistant III involves operating various computerized record keeping and document processing systems to input, retrieve, and manage documents/data of a sensitive and confidential nature in support of departmental operations. The work also involves generating various types of communications to applicants and individuals at various levels in the jurisdictions served by the PBJC. Administrative Assistant IIIs also create announcements, review applications to assist in determining whether an applicant meets the minimum qualifications for the job, and perform other routine clerical functions of limited complexity which require the execution of established policies and procedures. Work performed is often a segment of an assignment, process, procedure or project.
- *Administrative Assistant I* – An Administrative Assistant I in the Performance Measurement Division is responsible for answering, screening and routing telephone calls or taking messages; coordinating meetings, facility, and equipment use, and making appointments. This position also receives, records, and responds to informational inquiries and questions from the public concerning the appropriate forms, applications, records, and procedures to follow. Position performs other routine clerical functions of limited complexity which require the execution of established policies and procedures.
- *Assessment & Development Intern* – Assessment & Development Interns are students in graduate programs in the area of Industrial-Organizational Psychology. These individuals work on a temporary basis (a maximum of 1040 hours within a one year period) and provide assistance in the development and implementation of job analysis, test development, test administration, and test scoring procedures for job classes within the Merit System in accordance with relevant employment laws and guidelines. Individuals in the Intern position will often have a selection project for a

given job assigned to him/her to be performed under the close supervision of the team leader. Most interns work full-time for a six-month period. The Intern position serves to help promote the PBJC and serves as a recruiting tool by helping to provide a pool of qualified candidates for permanent positions within the division that become vacant.

Activities and Accomplishments

The goal of the Performance Measurement Division is to effectively serve the jurisdictions in the Merit System by developing fair, valid, and legally defensible selection systems in an efficient and customer-service oriented manner. In order to achieve this goal the Performance Measurement Division continues to work diligently to improve the effectiveness of the work processes by staying abreast of developments in the field of employee selection and by leveraging available technology to improve the efficiency and accuracy of the work performed. Additionally, the division is constantly striving to restore and repair the image of the PBJC not only within the government agencies and jurisdictions served, but also with regard to public perception both locally and nationally. The following sections will outline the major activities and accomplishments of Performance Measurement that have moved the division closer to the stated goal and helped to improve the image of the PBJC.

Release of Remaining Jobs from Consent Decree

In 2002, after decades of failure to meet the requirements of the Consent Decree, the Federal Court appointed a Receiver, Dr. Ronald Sims, to take control and supervise all aspects of PBJC's daily operations. At the time of the appointment of the Receiver, the selection procedures for 37 job classes were still under court scrutiny. However, since that time the Performance Measurement Division has performed all necessary activities to ensure that valid and legally defensible selection procedures were established for all 37 jobs classes that remained under the Consent Decree. In July of 2005, through extensive job analysis and test development procedures, discussions with parties to the Consent Decree and experts in industrial-organizational psychology, and self-critical analyses of all selection processes, the PBJC achieved undisputed compliance with the requirements of the decree for all 37 remaining job classes. The release of these jobs has been a major step toward fully complying with the requirements of the Consent Decree and ending the court imposed Receivership. The PBJC is continuing to move toward complete release from the Consent Decree and the Performance Measurement Division is continuously reviewing and improving procedures to ensure the maintenance of a functional and efficient division and development of legally valid selection procedures for all job classes within the Merit System.

Establishment of Public Safety Registers

At the onset of the Receivership, another major point of emphasis was the development of selection procedures for the public safety (i.e., police and fire) jobs. Due to significant delays since the previous establishment of the entry level and promotional series registers and other past selection related problems, the relationship between the police and fire departments and the PBJC had become fractured. However, since that time, the staff has worked extensively to repair these relationships by conducting thorough job analyses and developing and administering valid selection procedures for the public safety positions. Within the past year, the Performance Measurement Division has: (1) administered the third round of the entry level Police Officer selection process since the Receivership began, (2) developed and administered the second round of police promotional tests since the start of the Receivership, (3) established the second register for entry level Firefighter since the Receivership and have announced and scheduled the third test for January of 2006, and (4) established registers for all fire promotional series jobs, with the exception of Fire Apparatus Operator (which is due to have a register released by February of 2006). During the past year alone, the Performance Measurement Division has recruited and trained over 200 volunteer public safety assessors from across the country to provide a minimum of one full week of work to ensure that each of the aforementioned public safety selection procedures were appropriately evaluated.

The Performance Measurement Division is working to ensure that with each additional test development process for the public safety positions information is gathered to improve the selection processes for and the service provided to the police and fire departments. The PBJC has committed to testing for entry level Police Officer and Firefighter on an annual basis and testing for the promotional series police and fire jobs every 18 months.

Progress toward Completion of the Backlog

At the time the Personnel Board of Jefferson County was placed under Receivership there were a significant number of job classes in need of updated registers. After the appointment of the Receiver, the number of jobs with outstanding requests for certification lists grew steadily. The reasons for this growth were the need to:

- establish valid and legally defensible job analysis and test development procedures;
- recruit and hire individuals with the appropriate skill base to conduct job analyses and develop employee selection tests;
- orient and train new staff members; and
- complete the development of selection processes for the 37 job classes that, at the start of the Receivership, were still under the Consent Decree.

The number of jobs in need of eligible registers reached a peak near the end of the year in 2004. Since that time, the Performance Measurement Division has

worked to reduce the number of jobs in need of an eligible register and made significant progress toward this objective. Since January of this year, 120 eligible registers have been released, resulting in a substantive drop in the overall number of jobs needing eligible registers. As of November of 2005, the number of jobs with current vacancies (or provisional appointments) and no eligible register is still significant; however, the Performance Measurement Division continues to work diligently to address these jobs and is committed to eliminate this backlog of work as quickly as possible. Further information regarding the jobs in need of eligible registers will be discussed in greater detail later in the report.

Procedure Manual Development

A major obstacle to addressing the backlog of job classes in need of an eligible register was the need for a “ground up” development of procedures and processes for conducting all phases of work falling under the responsibility of the Performance Measurement Division. The staff worked to establish procedures, processes, work forms, templates, and many other needed resources to make the work performed within the division both efficient and effective. Within the last year the Performance Measurement Division has translated all of this effort into the development of a thorough procedure manual and training program for new and existing staff. The procedure manual outlines all aspects of the work performed within the division and introduces other relevant topics such as the services provided by each department in the PBJC, the jurisdictions and government agencies in the Merit System, and information about the history of the PBJC and the Consent Decree. The PBJC Performance Measurement Procedure Manual is comprised of nine chapters, and over 300 pages, with each chapter covering a major work activity. Presented below is a short overview of each of these chapters:

- *Chapter 1: Introduction* – Chapter 1 contains an introduction to the PBJC. Information in this chapter includes the PBJC’s history, purpose, and structure as well as the responsibilities and services offered by each of its divisions.
- *Chapter 2: Job Analysis* – This chapter presents in detail the procedures used when conducting a job analyses for jobs within the PBJC Merit System. Since job analysis is the foundation for many personnel efforts, guidance is given at each step so that common obstacles/pitfalls may be avoided and so that important decisions are made appropriately. This chapter also includes an alternative job analysis procedure that may be used for very small classes (i.e., job classes with 7 or fewer subject matter experts).
- *Chapter 3: Test Development* – Chapter 3 covers a variety of test development related issues. These include issues of test security, pros/cons of commonly used selection procedures, requirements of the *Uniform Guidelines* involving test validation, how to determine the most

appropriate test(s) to use in a given situation, and general test development concerns. The chapter also covers procedures for developing commonly used selection tests such as minimum qualifications, structured interviews, work samples, and written job knowledge tests.

- *Chapter 4: Creating Announcements & Screening Applications* – This chapter contains a step-by-step process for creating and posting an electronic announcement, as well as for screening electronic applications using PeopleAdmin (i.e., PBJC’s on-line application system). The chapter also includes administrative procedures for ensuring a smooth work flow and communication of announcement information between divisions.
- *Chapter 5: Test Administration* – Chapter 5 is designed to provide a step-by-step guide for the administration of various types of selection procedures used to fill vacancies in classes under the purview of the PBJC. Covered topics include test administration preparation, test security and storage, candidate scheduling, notification, candidate tracking, acquisition of test facilities and staff, and administration training.
- *Chapter 6: Test Assessment* – This chapter outlines the activities associated with planning, preparing for, and conducting an assessment of candidate performance following a test administration. It focuses on steps such as identifying and recruiting assessors, making travel arrangements for assessors, preparing materials for the assessment, conducting assessor training, and running the assessment process.
- *Chapter 7: Data Management* – Chapter 7 reviews the procedures that should be followed in order to ensure the integrity of all data. Specific instructions are provided for entering, cleaning, and verifying data, as well as creating and saving data files, and using SPSS syntax files.
- *Chapter 8: Analyzing and Scoring Test Data* – This chapter expands on data management processes by covering a variety of procedures used to analyze and score test data. Specific statistical analyses are discussed, as well as various weighting, rounding, and cut score procedures. Also, several procedures for calculating and analyzing adverse impact are presented.
- *Chapter 9: Establishing a Register* – Chapter 9 outlines the administrative steps involved in transferring candidate data/scores from SPSS to Sigma in order to create a certificate of eligible candidates. It also includes procedures for verifying candidate scores, notifying candidates of test results, and the PBJC appeal process.

Test & Assessment Facility

As mentioned previously, the Performance Measurement Division has continuously investigated means of creating more efficient work processes. A major obstacle faced by the Performance Measurement Division has been the lack of adequate testing facilities at the PBJC. Because of this, the division has primarily utilized a local hotel for test administrations. In these instances, the

PBJC was required to rent hotel rooms, banquet rooms, and exhibition halls to house the entire administration and assessment processes. This came at a significant expense both with regard to cost, given the repeated payments for hotel facilities for extended periods of time, and with regard to time as Performance Measurement staff members were required to transport equipment and supplies from the PBJC to the hotel (often including over 25 televisions, video cameras, and tape recorders along with large quantities of various testing supplies and materials), move furniture within the hotel rooms, set up test rooms, and test all equipment.

Over the past two years, upper management of the PBJC, staff members from the Performance Measurement Division, architects, General Services staff members, and audio/video technical consultants have worked to establish a plan for constructing a state-of-the-art assessment/testing facility. The purpose of this facility is to minimize the cost and time requirements associated with test administrations and assessments and enhance the capabilities and quality of the test administration processes. After significant research and discussion a viable plan was established to house the assessment/testing facility on the second floor of the 2121 Building and in July of this year construction on the facility was completed. The assessment/testing facility is comprised of a candidate report/check-in room, four group testing and preparation rooms, 19 individual testing rooms, and a centralized audio/video control room. Each of the rooms in the facility includes audio and video presentation and DVD recording capabilities, which are centrally controlled and monitored via computers, video displays, and DVD recorders housed within the control room.

After construction was completed on the testing/assessment facility, Performance Measurement staff members were trained to utilize the equipment. After testing the various aspects of the facility and practicing using the equipment, the Performance Measurement Division scheduled the first administration in the facility in mid-August. All aspects of the administration were a success and since that time ten additional test administrations have been conducted using the facility. In the short time since its completion the test administration facility has resulted in a savings of approximately \$50,000 on hotel/banquet room costs alone and has saved numerous human resource hours due the reduced time required for administration set up.

Revisions to the PBJC Rules & Regulations

Two members of the Performance Measurement staff were involved in an extensive review of the PBJC Rules & Regulations. The rules were reviewed for clarity, consistency, ease of interpretation, and alignment with the Personnel Board responsibilities and authority as outlined by the Enabling Act. The Performance Measurement staff gave significant input into the review process, particularly with regard to rules pertaining to selection test administration and the establishment of registers. The newly revised set of Rules & Regulations was adopted and implemented on April 4, 2005.

Professional Development & Promoting the PBJC

As discussed earlier, the longstanding Consent Decree has led to a tarnished image of the PBJC in the eyes of many within the Merit System jurisdictions, the local public, and in the national arena of employee testing and selection. While the aforementioned activities and accomplishments have started the process of improving the perceptions of the PBJC, additional strides are necessary to help promote the Board as a positive, productive, and progressive organization in the area of employee selection. Staff members from the Performance Measurement Division have been very active in presenting employee selection related research papers and lectures under the PBJC name at educational institutions, professional conferences, training seminars, and in professional journals. Over the past year the staff members have been involved in the following research and teaching/training related activities:

- Bellenger, Brian & McGhee, Bronze (2005). Lectures presented at the University of West Florida:
 - The Personnel Board of Jefferson County: The Legal History and Practical Remedies of Consent Decree. Lecture presented in University of West Florida's graduate level Legal Issues course.
 - Life Under Consent Decree: The Work of an I/O Psychologist. Lecture presented in University of West Florida's graduate level Current Issues course.

- Selection Strategies for Maximizing Performance and Ethnic Diversity. Symposium given by Performance Measurement staff members at the 20th Annual Conference for the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology (SIOP), Los Angeles, CA. PBJC Presentations/papers included in the symposium:
 - Brink, Kyle E. & Miller, Libby (2005). Selection Test Orientation: Characteristics of Attendees and the Influence on Subgroup Differences.
 - Lange, Stacey C. (2005). Content Validity of Minimum Qualifications: Does it Reduce Adverse Impact?
 - Bellenger, Brian L. & Jones, Robert M. (2005). Pretest Exposure and Preparation Time and the Effects on Subgroup Differences.
 - Crenshaw, Jeffrey L. (2005). The Use of Video in the Structured Interview Process: A Meta-Analytic Review of the Impact on Reliability and Black-White Group Differences.
 - Sutton, Michael & Thorsteinson, Todd J. (2005). *Applicants' Reactions to Drug Testing: An Application of Fairness Theory*. Paper presented at the 20th Annual Conference for the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology (SIOP), Los Angeles, CA.

- Lyon, Julie; Dean, Courtney; & Ramesh, Anu (2005). *Beyond Selection System Improvements: Overcoming the “Applicant Pool Problem” to Reduce Adverse Impact*. Paper session presented at 28th Annual Conference on Personnel Assessment: International Public Management Association – Assessment Council (IPMAAC), Orlando, FL.
- Lezama, Mellissa (2005). Managing HIV in the Workplace: A Primer for Managers and Supervisors. *The Psychologist-Manager Journal*.
- Dawson, Craig R.; Crenshaw, Jeffrey L.; & Alvarez, Kaye (2004). *Influence of Test Development Involvement on Perceptions of Test Fairness*. Paper session presented at 28th Annual Conference on Personnel Assessment: International Public Management Association – Assessment Council, Seattle, Washington.
- Bellenger, Brian; Jones, Robert; Kendrick, Brooke; Lange, Stacey; & McGhee, Bronze (2004). *Human Resource Management: Overview of Federal and State Law*. Two-day training workshop presented at the Alabama Association of Public Personnel Administrators (AAPPA).

Improving the perceptions of the PBJC in the eyes of the general public and the employee testing community is of great importance. Visibility and participation of PBJC staff at professional and educational functions, such as those listed above, provide a significant amount of positive publicity that goes a long way in erasing the troubled history that has been associated with the Consent Decree and the PBJC.

The Performance Measurement Division values employee and professional development. Along these lines, a dissertation support group was established as an effort to provide assistance and support to those PBJC employees who are finishing their doctoral degrees. At its inception, the group was comprised of two lead facilitators (i.e., employees who have completed their doctoral degrees) as well as employees who were at various phases of completion. The group meets before work on a bi-weekly basis to share progress updates and gain feedback or guidance regarding their research. This year three group members have successfully defended their dissertations and received their doctoral degrees, while two others have made significant progress toward completion and expect to defend their dissertations in the very near future.

Future Plans

The Performance Measurement Division has performed in an exemplary manner with regard to making progress toward meeting the requirements of the Consent Decree, establishing sound procedures and practices designed to develop valid and legally defensible selection procedures, re-establishing positive relationships with the jurisdictions, and improving the image of the PBJC. However, there is still significant work that lies ahead in order to continue to improve in these areas and to satisfy the needs of the jurisdictions in the Merit System. Although the

Performance Measurement Division plans to continue to work in the areas previously outlined, additional activities are being planned to help facilitate the achievement and maintenance of the division goal. The following sections will outline the plans for the immediate future of Performance Measurement that will be geared toward moving the division closer to its stated goal and toward permanent release from Consent Decree.

Future Work on Backlog Eligible Register Requests

Although significant progress has been made in the establishment of registers for job classes in need of a register, there are still a large number of jobs in which valid selection procedures must be developed. At its peak, in December of 2004, the backlog of jobs with requests for eligible registers included approximately 240 separate job classes. Since that time 32 requests have been dropped, 120 registers have been released, and 96 additional job classes have had a request submitted. This results in 184 current requests. Of these 184 requests, 65 are currently assigned to an analyst and are under development. It is projected that the majority of these assigned job classes will have a register by the end of January of 2006. This will result in approximately 120 of the current request remaining at that time. It should be noted, however, that during this time additional requests will be received, leading to more than 120 job classes in need of eligible registers. Although the future job requests are unknown, it is projected based on past data that approximately 25 additional requests for eligible registers will be sent to Performance Measurement by the end of January of 2006. It should also be noted that while work is continuing on the backlog jobs, selection procedures are also being developed for a number of jobs which have current registers in order to ensure that these registers stay up to date. The vast majority of these jobs are public safety.

The Performance Measurement Division is working as quickly as possible to get through the backlog while also maintaining up to date registers for jobs with heavy demand (e.g., administrative, police, fire, and medical series jobs). In order to meet the needs of the jurisdictions with regard to these backlog jobs and for future selection procedure needs, the division faces some obstacles. However, work is being performed to minimize, if not eliminate, these obstacles to ensure that the needs of the jurisdictions can be met in as timely a manner as possible.

One significant obstacle has been the ability to ensure sufficient participation on the part of the jurisdictions in order to proceed in an efficient manner with the completion of the selection processes necessary to establish eligible registers. As mentioned in the overview section for the Performance Measurement Division, the development of valid and legally defensible selection procedures relies very heavily on input at many stages from incumbents and supervisors. However, very often, participation from incumbents and/or supervisors is insufficient to meet the needs of legal requirements and, therefore, meetings have to be rescheduled and re-conducted. Such occurrences result in significant

delays in the completion of a project. While the reasons for the lack of participation are not always clear, many of the issues appear to relate to the damaged relationships between the jurisdictions and the PBJC and the strain placed on the jurisdictions from having to operate without necessary staff due to the lack of eligible registers for the jobs in the current backlog.

The strain placed on the jurisdictions due to the inability to fill vacancies in these backlog jobs can only be alleviated through provisional appointment of individuals to these vacancies (which only partially alleviates the burden and only for a temporary basis) or through the establishment of eligible registers from which they can hire. Unfortunately, the latter requires the participation from the jurisdictions that is often difficult for them to provide. The Performance Measurement Division is aware of this strain and continues to work to minimize the time commitments necessary for the jurisdictions. These efforts include, where possible, conducting meetings at the jurisdiction, allowing significant input from the jurisdictions in the establishment of the scheduled meeting times, and through condensed selection procedures for jobs with a small number of incumbents.

As mentioned, the damaged relationship between the PBJC and some jurisdictions or departments is another apparent cause of lack of participation on the part of incumbents and supervisors for various job analysis and test development activities. The backlog of work that needs to be completed has obviously led to the lack of service provided by the Performance Measurement Division to the jurisdictions or departments in need. As such, the perception or approval of the PBJC by some jurisdictions or departments with vacancies can be quite low. The Performance Measurement staff continue to work very hard to repair these relationships as they work through the processes; however, re-establishing faith in the system is often difficult and can only be fully achieved by working diligently to meet their needs. Given this, in order to ensure progress is made toward getting through the backlog of jobs, it is necessary at times for the Performance Measurement Division to put hard deadlines in place for incumbents/supervisors who are unable or unwilling to participate in the selection procedure development process. In cases where these deadlines are not met, the division may place the job in question back into the backlog of jobs and proceed with the development of selection procedures for other jobs in need.

Another obstacle is the difficulty filling vacant positions in the Performance Measurement Division. Currently the division has one vacancy for Assessment & Development Intern and seven vacancies for the position of Assessment & Development Specialist. The Intern position is projected to be filled by January of 2006; however, a projected date for filling all of the Assessment & Development Specialist positions is less clear. The division is working to create new recruiting strategies and opportunities to ensure qualified applicants are aware and attracted to the positions within the PBJC. The specific recruiting activities will be discussed in greater detail in the next subsection of this report.

It is the primary goal of the Performance Measurement Division to get through the backlog of jobs and maintain eligible registers in a timely fashion for all future jurisdiction requests. Based on the current completion rate and the projected number of job requests received by Performance Measurement each year, the division projects being completed with all jobs currently in the backlog by the end of 2006. As mentioned previously job requests continue to be made while work is being completed on current requests. The Performance Measurement Division is committed to meeting the needs of the jurisdictions and will continue to work to remove this backlog and reduce the burden it places of the Merit System.

Recruiting for Open Positions in Performance Measurement

The Performance Measurement Division has developed schedules for completing the current backlog of job requests and for analyzing jobs that do not have existing requests in order to ensure that current and future requests can be addressed in an efficient and effective manner. However, these schedules were based on the Performance Measurement Division being fully staffed. At this time there are seven Assessment & Development Specialists vacancies that need to be filled. Despite aggressively recruiting to fill these vacancies, the Performance Measurement Division has had difficulty attracting qualified applicants. As a result, various other recruitment strategies are being explored to ensure adequate candidate pools are available to fulfill the Personnel Board's employment needs.

The recruiting strategies include establishing co-operative internship programs with industrial-organizational graduate programs, advertising on professional career-based websites, conducting mass mail-outs regarding the positions to graduate program directors to share with their students, visiting local schools to conduct guest lectures and share information about the testing analyst positions, and investigating the opportunity to publish articles in relevant publications (e.g., TIP, Public Personnel Management, and IPMA News) to promote the positive work being performed by the PBJC. The Performance Measurement Department is confident that these recruiting efforts will result in well-qualified individuals to fill vacant positions; however, the division is realistic in its view of the timeframe for having all positions filled. Given the significant number of positions to fill it is projected that all vacancies within the division will be filled by April of 2006.

Collaboration with Workforce Analysis

The Performance Measurement Division has started to discuss with the PBJC Workforce Analysis Department ways of combining some work efforts, sharing information gathered about various job classes, and providing guidance and assistance across departments to ensure that the PBJC Merit System has a functional and effective job classification system. The goal of this collaboration is to ensure that data gathered by the Performance Measurement Division and potential issues uncovered during the job analysis phase of the selection

procedure are shared with Workforce Analysis in order to assist them with the process of appropriately classifying jobs or positions. Work will continue in this area and efforts between the two departments may be combined, where feasible, to ensure that the work is performed in as efficient a manner as possible.

Workshops

The Performance Measurement Division values employee development and feels it is of utmost importance that staff stays up-to-date with regard to new research and developments in the field. As such, several initiatives are underway to help ensure that constant employee development is achieved. Staff members in the Performance Measurement Division are planning semi-annual workshops to be given by leaders in the field of industrial-organizational psychology who have particular expertise in employment testing. Each workshop would focus on different aspects of employment law, scientific research, and/or professional guidelines in selection. Decisions regarding topic areas will be made based on input from all staff members in the division as well as upper management at the PBJC.

In addition to workshops presented by experts outside of the PBJC, the Performance Measurement Division is starting a monthly internal professional development “lunch & learn” presentation/discussion on topics of interest in the field of industrial-organizational psychology. Each month’s discussion will be led by a different staff member(s) who will be in charge of selecting the particular topic for the month, identifying required readings, and leading discussion among staff members regarding the readings. Such efforts are designed to encourage individuals to maintain a commitment to developing as an employee and as a professional in field of selection.

Finally, in addition to the aforementioned activities, the Performance Measurement Division plans to send representatives from the staff to professional conferences to gain knowledge and gather information to share with the division after returning for the conference. Conference attendees will be required to attend sessions related to the work at the PBJC and make presentations summarizing the sessions and distributing materials gathered from the conference. Currently, the PBJC is considering sending representatives to the Annual Conference for the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology, the Annual Conference on Personnel Assessment: International Public Management Association – Assessment Council (IPMAAC), the Annual Conference of the Southeastern Psychological Association, and/or the Annual Conference of the Personnel Testing Council. Attendance at these conferences not only provides professional development opportunities, but also provides positive exposure nationally for the PBJC.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Training & Career Development

Overview

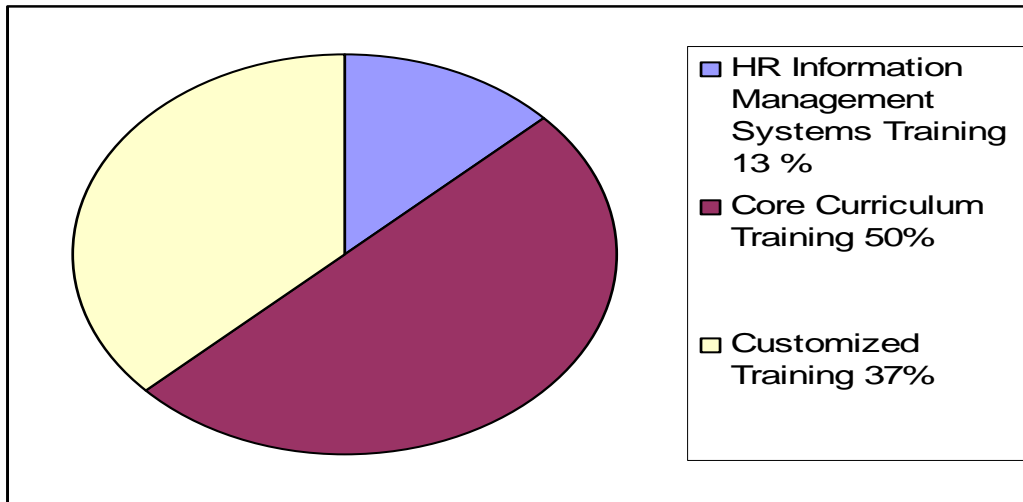
The Training and Career Development Department is all about learning. Our goal is to make Jefferson County a great place to work and a great place to live, placing Merit System employees at the heart of Department efforts. Training is responsible for providing Merit System employees access to courses and classes to positively affect their job performance and to enable them to grow and excel in their careers. Our ideal is that, with training, employees feel greater satisfaction in their jobs and are better prepared and motivated to meet and exceed customer expectations.

A core curriculum of classes provides ongoing training in computer software, human relations, effective customer service, supervision, management and leadership. The Department works collaboratively with other Merit System training functions such as the City of Birmingham Training Department to prevent unneeded duplication of services. It partners with local community colleges, agencies and businesses to share information, ideas, resources and funding to reach mutual goals. Increasingly, Training is responding to particular requests for classes tailored to the needs of specific jurisdiction departments.

Training classes and activities developed and offered during FY 2004-05 may be grouped into three broad categories described below:

- *HR Information Management Systems Training* – Training to support the implementation and ongoing use of PBJC's new information management software (PeopleAdmin, Sigma, Lawson, Aspen and Image Now).
- *Core Curriculum Training* – A continuing series of classes identified by a 2003 Needs Assessment Task Force in computer skills, supervisory, management and leadership training, professional development, customer service and workplace legal training. Monthly calendars and weekly reminder flyers sent by email promote classes in all jurisdictions.
- *Customized Training Classes* – Training to support PBJC and other jurisdiction initiatives, requested by Appointing Authorities and department heads, and delivered onsite at the requesting jurisdiction. Examples are candidate test orientations provided at the PBJC and the Tarrant Onboard for Professional Public Service at Tarrant City Hall.

Chart 1: Percentage of Participants by Training Category



The above chart reflects the percentage of the total number of participants each training category represents. For example, the greatest percentage of total attendance, 50 percent was in the Core Curriculum category.

Activities and Accomplishments

Completed HR Information Management System Project Training. FY 2004-2005 began with roll out user training for the Lawson personnel actions portion of the PBJC's new information management system. Trainers had worked closely with other Board RIMS project staff since early 2004 in the year-long design and implementation of the project. The Department had already trained users in the system's recruiting, imaging and testing capabilities.

Trainers met with project staff to develop a training curriculum and classes. They tested and delivered classes to over 150 Board and jurisdiction personnel who use the systems. All PBJC staff received orientation or in-depth training on all systems. The Training Department also developed and published email monthly newsletters to jurisdictions to keep users apprised of system implementation progress and to alert them to upcoming training.

After implementation and roll-out training was completed, the Department has continued to work on an as-needed basis to provide help clinics, do onsite problem solving and to offer initial training for new employees using the system. In addition, training has worked with the Records Management Department to prepare jurisdictions for the payroll interface training.

Implemented Learning Management System. In May 2005, the Training Department completed implementation of the new ASPEN training learning management system. Training worked closely with the software vendor to ensure

that system features would serve the Department's needs to publicize classes online, allow employees to register themselves, receive online confirmation, and maintain training records. The Department has used the PBJC website to disseminate instructions on how to use the system and demonstrates in each IT class how to log into Aspen and enjoy its benefits.

Training now has an opportunity to provide classes online using computer-based technology. Employees with internet access will be able to take classes at their own pace, on any shift without leaving the job site. The Department is building a bank of courses, which will be available in FY 2005-2006.

Renovated Training Space for Greater Flexibility and Efficiency. The Department moved into renovated quarters in January 2005 with former space converted into four classrooms and a break area for class participants. With breakout partitions, the space may be used as a large area for lectures or as smaller areas for interactive, group participation for smaller classes. The space proved valuable when Training was able to accommodate training sessions for 247 police and sheriffs.

The space now allows trainers more flexibility in designing courses with multiple training formats. In the future, it will enable Training to host mini conferences with convocations of large numbers followed by simultaneous workshops and breakout sessions. It increases the opportunity for Training to continue its offerings while accommodating other jurisdictions that need training space.

Significantly Increased Professional Development and Supervisory Training. The Department completed development of 70% of the supervisory skills curriculum plus additional courses in the professional development category. Completion of the supervisory courses now positions the Department to develop the guidelines for and offer a Certificate in Merit System Supervision.

PBJC trainers provided classes both onsite at PBJC and offsite at jurisdictions. In addition, the Department collaborated with government agency trainers to provide specific HR-legal training.

Classes developed this year are listed in the following table.

Supervisory Skills	Professional Development
Coaching	Excelling at the Front Desk
Delegating	From Conflict to Collaboration
Effective Meetings	Netiquette and Writing Well
Giving and Receiving Feedback	Stress Management
Leading the Work Team	Writing Well for Police
Managing Change	Listening for Understanding
Motivation in the Workplace	

Conducting Merit System Performance Appraisals	
Building a Team that Works	
The Supervisor's Job	
Structured Selection Interviewing (Developed by Performance Management, edited by Training) Development complete; training upcoming	

Table 1: 2004-2005 Supervisory Skills and Professional Development Classes

Offered Customized Classes for PBJC and Other Jurisdictions. The Training Department ambitiously seeks to be a problem-solving partner with jurisdictions when training is indicated as part of the resolution. In FY 2004-05, customized training accounted for 37 percent of attendees.

Jurisdictions requesting training for special needs included Birmingham for Basic Email; Trussville for Excel Basic; Health Department for Basic Email, Excel and Teamwork; Family Court for Performance Appraisals; Tarrant for Customer Service, Conflict Resolution and Building a Respectful Workplace; and Cooper Green Pharmacy, Community Development and the Revenue Department for Access classes. A course entitled "Write it Right" was also developed for law enforcement.

At PBJC, Training continued to work with Performance Measurement in providing orientations for test taking. In August 2005, the Department dedicated two weeks to work with Performance Management and provided orientation to police and sheriffs taking promotional examinations for positions of sergeant, lieutenant or captain. Other classes developed specifically for PBJC included updated Rules and Regulations, Systems Security, and Communications Tracking Database classes.

Continued HR Legal and Rules and Regulations Training. Legal updates keep managers and supervisors apprised of changes in employment law. Their interest in this topic was evident when sixty-three (63) managers attended an update on the revisions to the Fair Labor Standards Act presented by a Department of Labor representative. Similarly, Training completed a thorough analysis of revisions to the April 2005 PBJC Rules and Regulations and presented classes for the 3-member Personnel Board and Appointing Authorities of the jurisdictions. New PBJC employees received Workplace Harassment training.

Expanded into a new Computer Lab and Increased Opportunities for IT Training. As a result of the Board's renovation project, in August 2005, Training began utilizing a new computer training lab that doubles the number of participants who can attend classes. The lab has 23 computer stations and a state-of-the-art instructor station, allowing projection of course materials onto two walls.

During these first two month, having this space has already enabled Training to host other jurisdictions' specialized IT training, as well as offer the Local Government Leadership Center (LGLC) a secondary centrally located site for training Merit System employees whose jurisdictions are LGLC members. In future months, having this space will enable trainers to proactively offer more IT training services to jurisdictions.

Worked with Jefferson State Community College LGLC. Training served on the LGLC advisory committee, meeting monthly with Merit System jurisdiction members, Jefferson State Workforce Development and LGLC staff to discuss training for local government employees. PBJC staff assisted the LGLC in offering computer training and in laying the groundwork to expand occupational Spanish classes into jurisdictions with a heavy Hispanic population.

Future Plans

The Training Department aspires to be innovative, highly responsive and energetic in assessing training needs and providing appropriate training solutions. This involves first building relationships with PBJC and jurisdiction management and leadership, and then learning the strategic goals of jurisdictions to determine if, when and how Training can support those goals.

Plans include:

- Implementing in January 2006 an account management strategy to build relationships with jurisdictions and to market Training Department services to its stakeholders. Training will physically touch each jurisdiction on a scheduled basis, with each trainer assigned to particular jurisdictions and departments. Responsibilities will include visiting all departments, introducing themselves, the Department and its services, showing employees how to view and sign up for training online, making appointments to talk about their needs, seeing worksites first hand, following up with recommendations for training or other interventions as determined by need.
- Developing collateral materials to facilitate this structure such as a Training Department brochure and needs assessment questionnaires.
- Distinguishing the PBJC Training and Career Development Department as distinct and unique from other Merit System training functions such as those in the Health Department, City of Birmingham, Jefferson County,

and Sheriff's Department and police departments. Whereas these functions serve particular jurisdiction needs, the PBJC Training Department is able to cross jurisdiction lines and provide training that serves the entire system.

- Developing an annual training initiative that addresses a current issue of consequence for the Merit System. The issue would be complex, requiring a shared understanding and collaboration by diverse constituents to arrive at a solution.
- Increasing the development of computer based training; i.e., orientation to the Merit System for new employees; effective meetings, and other instructor-led classes suitable for reformatting for CBT.
- Increasing jurisdiction use of the online training registration and recordkeeping system.
- Collaborating with other PBJC departments when a training intervention is appropriate. Examples are test orientations for Performance Measurement, payroll certification training for jurisdictions for Records Management.
- Developing a technology initiative to ensure that all jurisdiction employees have access to computer training.
- Creating certificate curricula in management and supervision, IT, customer service, and new employee orientation.
- Working with PBJC departments to develop consistency in style for procedures manuals, documents and other written communication.
- Collaborating with other training departments (Birmingham, Jefferson County, and Health Department) to align content for career paths or certificate programs so that employees may receive recognition for courses taken at PBJC or in their jurisdiction.
- Developing management and supervisory courses and supplementing the computer training with Microsoft Publisher.
- Strengthening Training's infrastructure, analyzing strengths and weaknesses, and completing procedures manual.
- Expanding the PBJC new employee orientation into an Orientation to the Merit System for new jurisdiction employees. Included are developing a routine quarterly report of employees entering the system and ensuring that they are invited to attend. As mentioned earlier, Training will incorporate the content into an alternative method of presentation via CBT modules.

Employee Relations

Overview

Employee Relations endeavors to take proactive steps to reduce workplace conflict, prevent unnecessary and costly litigation, and promote positive working relationships within the Merit System. The department is dedicated to serving the Merit System, by functioning as a resource for jurisdictions, by supplying information, exploring options, and providing advice as it relates to matters concerning the rules and regulations, policies and procedures, federal and state law (especially the Enabling Act) that impact the Personnel Board and Merit System.

Employee Relations regularly provides information and guidance to employees, elected officials, department heads, attorneys, and the citizenry concerning Personnel Board Rules and Regulations pertaining to:

- Disciplinary appeals (appeals by employees of dismissals, suspensions, or demotions)
- Grievances (complaints filed by employees against other employees or supervisors)
- Paid injury leave appeals
- Citizen’s complaints (complaints against employees from non-employees)
- Administrative leave with or without pay
- Fitness for duty examinations
- Reductions in force
- Reorganizations

Activities and Accomplishments

During the preceding fiscal year, Employee Relations received notification of 440 employee actions (grievances, disciplinary etc.). In 267 of these actions, Employee Relations determined that the occurrence was unappealable under PBJC Rules and Regulations (see Table 1 for a breakdown). The remaining 173 actions were deemed appealable (see Table 2 for a breakdown). However, actual appeals were filed in only 91 occurrences (see Table 3).

Table 1: Unappealable under PBJC Rules

Disciplinary Action	Total
Suspensions	135
Dismissals	22
Grievances	21
Other	89
Total	267

**Table 2: Actions Deemed Appealable
(Some employees chose not to appeal)**

Disciplinary Action	Total
Suspensions	52
Dismissals	57
Grievances	48
Admin Leave w/o Pay	2
Other	14
Total	173

Table 3: Actual Appeals Filed

Disciplinary Action	Total
Suspensions	30
Dismissals	37
Grievances	10
Admin Leave w/o Pay	2
Other	12
Total	91

The Three-Member Board decides the outcome of disciplinary and paid injury leave (IWP) appeals. During FY '04-05, the Three-Member Board rendered decisions in 40 disciplinary appeals and two IWP appeals (see Table 4).

Table 4. Disciplinary and Paid Injury Leave Appeals

Style	Sustained By Board	Dismissed or Closed	Settled or Withdrawn	Pending
IWP	1	1	2	1
Disciplinary Appeals	0	40	5	3

The Three-Member Board decides the outcome of grievance appeals. During FY '04-05 the Three-Member Board rendered decision on eight grievance appeals.

Table 5. Three-Member Board Decisions – Grievances

Sustained By Board	Dismissed or Closed
4	4

Decision of the Three-Member Board may be appealed to the Circuit Court of Jefferson County. During FY '04-05 the Circuit Court received 11 appeals to be

heard. Of these 11, to date, seven appeals were actually heard by a three judge panel (see Table 6).

Table 6. Board’s Decisions Appealed to Circuit Court

Appeals Received	Sustained Board’s Decision	Modified Board’s Decision	Pending
11	7	0	4

Future Plans

While historically, Employee Relations functioned to handle existing complaints, grievances and appeals, the department will increasingly move in the direction of becoming more proactive in problem prevention and conflict resolution.

Employee Relations’ goals for the next 12 months are outlined below:

- Gather and analyze system data to identify recurring issues/problems and formulate measures to prevent or reduce them.
- Collaborate with Training Department to develop and deliver appropriate training interventions.
- Build stronger relationships with employees, departments, and jurisdictions in order to reduce the number of complaints and conflicts.
- Obtain mediation and conflict resolution training for staff.
- Reduce the amount of paper handled in the department by sending and receiving more documents and reports electronically.
- Keep abreast of the latest developments in employment law by attending seminars and conferences.

Workforce Development & Applicant Services

Overview

Workforce Development and Applicant Services (WDAS) supports the Personnel Board's charge to create registers for hiring jurisdictions by recruiting diverse, highly-qualified individuals for positions in the Merit System. WDAS provides two primary functions: Applicant Services and Recruitment.

Applicant Services

Located in the newly renovated public-accessible 1st floor lobby, Applicant Services is the 'face' of the Personnel Board. Staff members are available to welcome visitors, answer questions, and assist the general public with the application process. Although job seekers can search and apply for Merit System postings using any computer with internet access, for convenience and accessibility the PBJC supplies kiosk-style computers in the 1st floor lobby for use by the general public. Applicant Services staff is on-site to provide hands-on assistance to applicants who have little or no previous computer skills. WDAS Staff also assists those individuals who call in when they have questions about the online application system. In addition to informational services, the Applicant Services staff also distributes job announcements and other departmental notices to the various jurisdictions served by the PBJC. Finally, staff are also responsible for scanning and attaching supplemental documents such as transcripts, resumes, certificate and licenses to applicants' online application records.

In these functions, Applicant Services supports the following customers:

- Applicants
- Potential applicants
- Merit System Employees
- General Public
- Jurisdiction Officials

Recruitment

The recruitment function of WDAS focuses on finding and attracting highly-qualified applicants to fill openings in the 850 job classes within the Merit System. This includes:

Researching innovative ways to reach job seekers and provide the jurisdictions with the best applicants.

Developing strategic plans for publicizing job opportunities

Working to raise public awareness of the Personnel Board as an employer of choice

Creating effective advertising for newspaper, magazine, radio and internet to reach individuals who represent the diversity of the community

Building working relationships in the education and training community by attending campus job fairs and serving on advisory boards and participating in panel discussions.

Additionally, WDAS reaches out to assist job seekers in developing the skills needed for employment. In-house career events are held and individualized career development assistance is now offered on a regular basis. Recently established on-site job preparation services consist of resume preparation, interviewing tips and computer access for internet job searches.

WDAS is committed to continuous learning and development in order to meet the needs of the organization and county jurisdictions. Through one-on-one communications, surveys and focus groups, WDAS partners with members of our jurisdictions as well as members of the community to develop and implement programs that add value to the Civil Service workforce.

Activities and Accomplishments

Applicant Services

September 2005 marked the 1-year anniversary of the Board's transition from a paper-based application system to an online application system. During implementation, Applicant Services staff was faced with a significant change in the manner and level of customer service that they would be providing to the job-seeking community. Staff met the challenge by attending training designed to introduce them to the new system and enhance their technical problem solving skills. This training allowed staff to interact more intimately with customers and assist with completing applications and resolving technical problems. The transition to online applications also fostered a more team-oriented relationship among the entire staff resulting in better service to the public.

Specific statistics of activities over the last twelve months for the Applicant Services provide greater insight into the types of activities performed:

Activity	Frequency
Online Kiosk Users	1420
Position Notification Postcards Mailed	706
Documents Attached	4687

Recruiting

Over the last year, Recruiting has successfully established working relationships with many members of the jurisdictions designed to improve the level of service provided by WDAS through one-on-one interaction and focus groups with key members of the jurisdictions. Recruitment has worked with various Merit System employees to gain insight into the jurisdictions' specific needs and to explore ways to more effectively recruit the types of candidates needed.

In addition to working with the jurisdictions and Merit System employees, WDAS has built relationships with junior colleges and universities throughout the state to increase visibility of the Merit System among job seekers. This was accomplished by hosting a Law Enforcement Career Fair on March 31, 2005, attending various job fairs at local and regional universities, and forming communication partnerships with career development departments and academic department heads. The following figures reflect the type and number of Recruitment's interaction in this area.

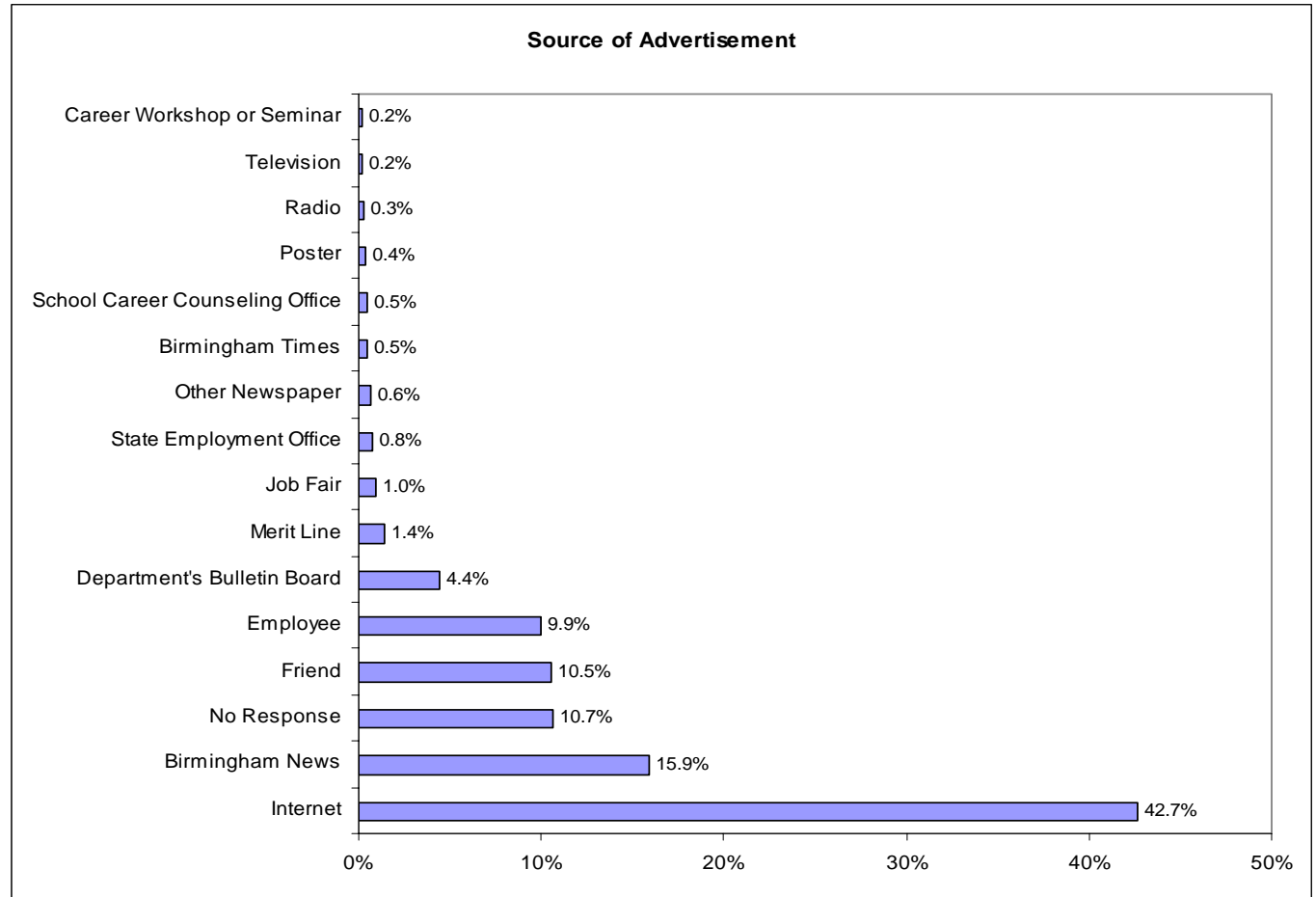
Activity	Frequency
Emails/Calls (Recruitment)	442
Career Events	49
Event Contacts	2792

Recruiting has successfully created brochures and other recruiting tools, including Web-based, radio, newspaper, and magazine/journal advertisements. In order to assess the overall effectiveness of the various recruiting strategies, WDAS gathers data from each applicant regarding how they heard about the job opening. The following table and accompanying chart present the ways that applicants learned of position openings during the last 12 months.

How Applicants Learned of Merit System Positions

<u>Answer</u>	<u>Qty</u>
Internet	6386
Birmingham News	2386
No Response	1597
Friend	1577
Employee	1487
Department's Bulletin Bd.	664
Merit Line	214
Job Fair	145
State Employment Office	118
Other Newspaper	96
Birmingham Times	75
School Career Counseling	70
Poster	56
Radio	42
Television	25
Career Workshop/Seminar	25

14963



Future

Workforce Development and Applicant Services strives to exceed the expectations of its customers. One of the greatest challenges is attracting highly qualified individuals to replace the large number of outgoing employees resulting from massive retirements over the next 5-10 years. Replacing these retirees will require the use of innovative methods of name branding and substantial increase in innovative recruitment activity.

The Manager of WDAS, currently being recruited, will lead the team to accomplish the following over the next 12 months:

- Establish a website that will increase public awareness of Merit System jobs, member jurisdictions' workforce needs and WDAS services.
- Continue building relationships with the jurisdictions through more collaborative efforts; learn more about the needs of the members through the use of focus groups and surveys; and implement the measures that will best meet their staffing needs
- Expand the job preparation program by offering computerized-interest assessments that will be used to aid new and returning workers in identifying career interests and skills needed on the job
- Improve effectiveness of recruitment strategies by continually researching the best recruiting practices
- Develop eye-catching and informative literature to highlight the benefits of civil service employment
- Continue efforts to expand the Board's geographic presence in the employment world by attending more regional and out-of-state career events and workforce-related events
- Improve customer service to jurisdictions and our community through continued staff development and education

HR INFORMATION SYSTEMS & TECHNOLOGY

Overview

Human Resource Information Systems & Technology is comprised of System Support, Data Analysis, Records Management and Workforce Analysis.

System Support

The role of System Support is to provide the infrastructure and support for all of the information network needs of the Personnel Board and to provide technical assistance to the jurisdictions using the Board's online information systems. The Department consists of two units – System Support and Data Analysis.

Activities of the System Support unit include:

- Network Administration
- PC Maintenance and Support
- Interface Management
- System Documentation
- System Security
- Disaster Recovery Planning

The System Support unit has three and one-half (3.5) FTEs – A Network Administrator (IT Manager), Systems Administrator (Interface Manager), PC/Network Technician, and a Business Systems Analyst who is shared with the Data Analysis unit. The Business Systems Analyst position serves as a bridge between the functional and technical activities of the PBJC. The System Support unit supports ninety (90) users, two training labs, and five integrated IT systems. These systems are:

Lawson

Lawson is the Board's automated employee records management system. This web-based system provides the capability to electronically route employee-related actions from a jurisdiction to the PBJC. These actions might include new appointments of various types, promotions/demotions, transfers, leaves of absence, disciplinary actions, and separations from service. They are stored as part of the employee's virtual personnel file.

PeopleAdmin

PeopleAdmin is the Board's web-based applicant management system. The system provides the capability for applicants to create online applications and to apply to open jobs. It also provides the capability for jurisdictions to submit

requests for and receive certification lists electronically. In addition, PeopleAdmin contains an online Position Description Questionnaire module that is used by jurisdictions to request that new positions be established, to request the reclassification of existing positions, and is used by employees participating in the Annual Classification Survey to provide information about their positions.

Aspen

The Aspen System is the Board's learning management system. This online application allows Merit System employees to identify course offerings, preview training course content, register for courses, and evaluate training received. It also allows supervisors the ability to establish employee-specific training curricula for their staffs. In addition, Aspen provides online course delivery through computer-based training modules.

Sigma

The Sigma database houses information about applicants relating specifically to the jobs for which they apply and maintains information at each stage of the application process, such as, whether applicants meet the minimum qualifications for the jobs in which they have expressed interest, whether their application information is complete, and whether they are eligible for further testing. Sigma also maintains records of applicant test scores, eligibility registers, and certification lists.

ImageNow

ImageNow provides the Board with document imaging functionality. It allows the PBJC to capture document images, index, store, and retrieve those images online. ImageNow has replaced 1.7 million paper documents to date.

Data Analysis

Data Analysis is responsible for providing reporting and analysis services to PBJC departments. Since the Board has transitioned from a manual to an electronic environment, the ability to design and develop reports and reporting tools and to analyze information contained in the IT systems is a critical support function. The Data Analysis staff creates standard and ad hoc reports used in decision making, designs and develops databases, and assists other areas of the Board with understanding not only what data is available, but how data can be used to guide strategic planning and monitor and improve operations. The Data Analysis staff also assists other Board departments in identifying and resolving systems problems by monitoring online processes. In addition this unit is responsible for designing and developing process flow – the functionality in the systems that allow transactions to flow appropriately through jurisdictions to

and through the PBJC and that triggers notifications, and alerts and routes these notices to appropriate recipients.

Data Analysis has four and one-half FTEs – Three Data Management Specialists, a Data Analyst, and shares the Business Systems Analyst with the System Support unit. One of the DMS positions is vacant and is currently being recruited.

Activities and Accomplishments

Perhaps no area of the Board has seen more change than System Support. At the beginning of the Receivership, the Board had few systems in place and the Board staff was not oriented toward the use of technology to conduct business. Personnel Records were maintained in an obsolete mainframe system accessible only to a few. Reporting and analysis was difficult. Virtually all transactions were manual.

The Board set about implementing an ambitious technology solution to achieve the following goals:

- Transform the Personnel Board into a strong and competent civil service agency delivering a continually expanding level and quality of service to its constituents.
- Deliver significant cycle time improvements in high-impact areas.
- Reduce manual and labor-intensive data entry.
- Provide an information technology infrastructure that would enable and sustain continuous improvement as shifts in customer expectations change.
- Facilitate decision making through improved management reporting and analysis capability.
- Move toward a 'paperless organization' to the extent practicable.

These goals have been met through the creation of a comprehensive Human Resource Information Management System (HRIMS). The HRIMS at the Board is not one system, but the integration of the five applications referenced above. Each application performs a distinct function, is written in a unique computer language, and operates on a different database. In order to facilitate communication between the systems, interface files are utilized.

The Sigma application had been in place for many years, but was upgraded in July, 2004 to a Windows platform. The PeopleAdmin application was implemented in September, 2004, followed by the Lawson and Aspen applications in December, 2004. ImageNow, the Board's document imaging software was integrated in November, 2004.

With completion of the HRIMS during the 2004-2005 fiscal year, the Board has effectively accomplished the goals set out above. As evidence of the efficiencies gained, as of September 30, 2005, twenty six thousand eight hundred seventy eight (26,878) personnel actions had been processed through the HRIMS with no manual intervention. Prior to implementation of the new HRIMS, all of these actions would have required manual input. This is a reflection of the efficiencies gained by the PBJC through the use of technology.

During the report period, the System Support Department implemented an Interactive Voice Response System (IVR). This system can provide a wide array of file information telephonically, reducing the need for personnel to provide the same information.

The IVR provides callers with the following:

- Rank on a Register
- Test Scores
- User Name Information for Board Systems
- Merit System Employee Information
- Ability to Make Contact Information Changes

In addition, the System Support staff oversaw the imaging of 1.7 million Board documents. These documents included personnel files, employee relations files, certification documentation, and performance evaluations. These documents can now be viewed online through the Board's ImageNow software.

Future Plans

- High-end systems require a highly trained and competent staff. Training has become a critical success factor to be able to support the complex systems in place at the Board. Consequently, the staff will engage in available opportunities to maintain their knowledge and skills in the areas they support.
- System documentation is equally a success factor in supporting IT systems. Documenting the Board's systems, processes, and procedures will be a focus of activity in the coming year.
- The need for disaster recovery planning has been underscored by the recent hurricanes. The System Support staff will be engaged in establishing and implementing a comprehensive disaster recovery plan that will allow the Board to continue IT operations and access to Board systems in the event of a problem that shuts down, damages, or destroys the Board's IT equipment. This will include electronic file back-up.
- Two additional IVR scripts will be developed by the System Support staff. One will provide Merit System employees with information about the location of position vacancies for purposes of lateral transfer, and the other will be used to provide information regarding reallocation determinations resulting from the Annual Classification Survey.

- Introducing software that allows PBJC employees to work remotely is a key objective of the System Support staff during the new fiscal year. Working remotely will include the capability to check emails and to access the Board's systems from any location having internet access through Virtual Private Network (VPN) technology. This will also be an important element in the disaster recovery plan.
- The further development of the Board's website is a key objective for FY2005-2006. It is the intent of the Board to add functionality to its website that targets specific audiences, is more user friendly to job seekers, and better markets the Jefferson County Merit System as an employer of choice. The new site is currently in the design phase.

Records Management

Overview

Records Management is the central operations unit and point of contact for processing all personnel actions. This Department processes hire and re-hire actions for regular, provisional, temporary, and other limited appointments, merit increases, leaves of absence, promotions, demotions, transfers, terminations, and all other employee-related personnel transactions. In addition, the Department is responsible for the process of creating and issuing certification lists.

The Department is responsible for assuring that all personnel actions are consistent with the Rules and Regulations, as well as with PBJC operating policy and procedure. Records Management continually reviews electronic transactions and assures that all system edits and validations are working as designed. In addition, the staff reviews error reports, resolves processing problems, and provides end-user assistance.

Records Management is a new Board department created in January, 2005, to manage the processing of all electronic transactions in PBJC's Human Resources Information Management System (HRIMS). Several of the staff were part of the Lawson and PeopleAdmin development teams and possess a particular knowledge of the functionality of the systems. The Department has eight (8) FTEs – four Records Management Specialists, three Certification and Examination Assistants, and a Team Lead.

Actions handled by the Department include:

- Creation of Certification/Recertification Lists
- Maintenance of Employee History Records
- Requests for Production of Employee Documents
- Certification of Payrolls
- Processing Personnel Actions
- Administration of the Performance Appraisal Process
- Register Reinstatements
- Production of Salary Schedules

Activities and Accomplishments

The first year post-implementation has been challenging for the Records Management staff. As with all new systems, unanticipated issues arise that must be researched and corrected. The Board's HRIMS is complex. The integration of the five systems and the associated interfaces add a significant level of difficulty

in the management of the system. Both the system and the Records Management staff have performed in an exemplary manner. The staff members have proven themselves capable of researching and resolving most of the functional problems with little intervention from external consultants and demonstrate an impressive understanding of the system's functionality.

Since 'go-live', the Department has processed:

- Twenty-four (24) transfer requests with an average turnaround time of one (1) business day.
- Fifty eight (58) new provisional appointment Requests for Certification with an average turnaround time of two (2) business days.
- Nine (9) emergency appointments with an average turnaround time of two (2) business days.
- One thousand four hundred seventy one (1,471) requests for certification lists with an average turnaround time of a two (2) business day.
- Twenty six (26) requests for reinstatement to a register within an average of one (1) business day.

Since 'go-live', twenty six thousand eight hundred seventy eight (26,878) personnel actions have been processed through the HRIMS. A Personnel Action is an event that affects an employee's record, either by adding, changing, or updating specific information. Examples of personnel actions include new appointments, salary increases, promotions or demotions, transfers, suspensions, and separations from service. Of the 26,878 personnel actions processed, seven hundred sixty three (763) hit the work queues and required some manual intervention by the Records Management staff. Actions stop in Records Management by design. They either require some review for compliance with policy or they contain errors. During the normal course of business, the staff reviews these actions from their work queues or from error logs and processes them as appropriate. Ninety three percent (93%) of all transactions are processing automatically consistent the systems edits and validations.

Future Plans

The first year following implementation of the HRIMS has kept the staff busy fine tuning the interfaces and debugging the system. The staff is looking forward to moving into a more normal operating environment during the new report year with more concentration on improving system functionality.

Cross training the staff is an important goal of the new fiscal year. The intent is for all Records Management staff to move from more specialist roles and function as generalists.

The complexity of the HRIMS requires adequate documentation from both the functional and technical perspectives. A goal of the Records Management staff in the new report year is to develop a comprehensive procedures manual for the Department.

Another goal of the Department is to improve the efficiency of its processing procedures, including reducing the average turnaround period for processing requests for certification lists to one day.

An important goal of the Department is to initiate the payroll certification process. Payroll Certification modules have been developed and tested and are ready for implementation. These modules allow jurisdictions to submit their payrolls electronically. The payrolls are programmatically compared to Lawson values and exception reports are automatically generated.

Workforce Analysis

Overview

Workforce Analysis is responsible for establishing classifications for all Merit System jobs, assuring that employees are properly assigned to classifications, and that classifications are appropriately assigned to salary grades. Workforce Analysis reviews position description questionnaires, conducts job audits, writes classification specifications, and collects and analyzes labor market data to assure competitive positioning of Merit System jobs. It is the objective of the Workforce Analysis Department to create and maintain a classification and compensation system that fosters career growth and is both externally competitive with regard to relevant labor markets and is equitable internally.

Activities include the review of reclassification requests initiated by jurisdiction authorities, as well as requests for new positions; the creation of new classifications, the deletion or collapsing of existing classifications; the review of requests for advanced steps; the review and analysis of labor market data; and, the conduct of the Annual Classification Survey in accordance with Section 12 of the *Enabling Act* of the State of Alabama, which mandates the review of all positions in the Merit System at least once in a five-year period.

The Workforce Analysis Department is staffed with 3 FTEs – two Compensation Advisors and a Manager.

Activities and Accomplishments

During the report year, implementation of the 2002-2004 Five-Year Survey was completed and planning began for a new approach to surveying positions in the Merit System. It was determined that the Five-Year Survey process was not efficient and did not serve the Merit System, the Personnel Board, or the jurisdictions well. The new strategy will require that approximately twenty percent (20%) of the employee population be surveyed annually. The first Annual Classification Survey kicked-off July 1, 2005 and included one hundred ninety five (195) Merit System classifications.

A new online Position Description Questionnaire (PDQ) was developed specifically for use during the Classification Survey. The PDQ product utilizes workflow, so that it can be electronically routed for review, comment, and approval through appropriate administrative levels. The Workforce Analysis staff spent the months of June and July training employees and supervisors in the use of the new PDQ, answering questions, resolving issues, and otherwise providing assistance to survey participants as necessary following roll-out. Of the one thousand two hundred twenty two (1,222) positions included in the

Survey in year one, one thousand sixty nine (1,069) employees completed Survey PDQs. This represents eighty seven and one-half percent (87.5%) of the Survey population and approximates the percentage responding in the previous Five-Year Survey.

During August, the staff received training from Dr. Stephen Condrey, a compensation consultant engaged by the Board, to hone their skills in the area of interviewing for information prior to beginning the process of job audits. Dr. Condrey provided both classroom instruction as well as field supervision to prepare the staff for the task of collecting and analyzing job information. He is scheduled to return in November for further field supervision.

Online PDQ applications were also developed for purposes of reclassifying existing positions and requesting new positions. These PDQs are a module of the PeopleAdmin product purchased by the PBJC in 2003. PeopleAdmin also hosts the Board's online application system and the online Request for Certification system. PeopleAdmin is a fully electronic system and eliminates the need for much of the paper previously required. In addition, PeopleAdmin provides the capability to electronically track transactions from the time they are initiated and fully integrates with the Board's Lawson and Sigma systems, eliminating the need for duplicate data entry.

Also during the report year, Workforce Analysis built an extensive salary survey library that includes sixteen locally, regionally, and nationally published surveys. These will be used in association with the Board's annual customized salary survey of Merit System classifications, to be released in January, 2006, to provide critical information about salary practices in relevant labor markets. This data is used for analyzing the Merit System's competitive position and as a basis for recommending changes to the pay plan.

In July, 2005, a new Workforce Analysis Manager was hired.

Future Plans

- The Annual Classification Survey is the most time consuming activity in which the Department is engaged. A focus of the Department during the coming year will be to both conduct and evaluate the Annual Classification Survey process and establish methodologies that will improve the efficiency with which it is conducted in future years.
- Accurate labor market data is essential to managing an effective compensation system and maintaining an appropriately competitive salary position. During the coming fiscal year, the Department will continue to place emphasis on building its salary survey library and to collect, refine, and analyze labor market data and best salary practices information and seek ways to apply best practice information to the Jefferson County Merit System.

- A recommendation was made in 2003 by CPS Human Resource Consulting to reduce the number of steps in the existing salary ranges from ten to seven. This would entail reducing the steps starting from the bottom over the next three years and would result in more market competitive ranges. The minimum step of each range would approximate the 25th percentile in the market. Step four would approximate the 50th percentile and step seven would approximate the 75th percentile. This is a project scheduled for further review and analysis during the coming fiscal year.
- During 2005-2006, the Department will examine the possibility of moving department heads throughout the Merit System from the step plan to a range plan, providing appointing authorities more flexibility with regard to salary distribution based on performance. This would be a first step toward introducing true pay-for-performance into the Merit System.