



County of Ventura COUNTY EXECUTIVE OFFICE MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 9, 2004

TO: Thomas W. Womack, Chief Deputy Executive Officer

FROM: Suzy Watkins, CEO Management Analyst

SUBJECT: Response to 2003-04 Ventura County Grand Jury Report No. 13 entitled "Ventura County Contracting Practices" on behalf of the Board of Supervisors

R-1: The County review the information systems policies and practices to determine best overall design, development and maintenance strategy with the purpose of reducing long-term costs.

Response: Concur. Processes are in place to evaluate and reduce long-term costs related to maintenance and support of County information systems.

The Board of Supervisors adopted a Countywide Technology Strategy on February 4, 1997. This strategy, most recently revised June 11, 2003, includes principles and criteria for decisions on technology investments; policy statements; guidelines on key management issues; and a description and plan for IT architecture and infrastructure. Reduction or avoidance of costs is one of the stated goals of the technology strategy.

Under the strategy, the County Executive Office (CEO) and Information Technology Department (ISD) are jointly responsible for planning and implementation of technology at the County. Both departments participate on the Information Technology Committee (ITC), along with representative for the Board of Supervisors and five county department heads. The ITC is tasked with:

- Drafting and updating County Technology Strategy for Board approval.
- Recommending IT policies to the CEO for implementation.
- Approving all County IT Projects costing \$50K or more.
- On-going oversight of selected IT projects.
- Identifying opportunities for countywide, technology-related efficiencies, cost savings and operational improvements.
- Making other technology recommendations to the CEO.

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The process for approving IT projects includes review of system lifecycle management, planning for system operation and maintenance, and analysis of cost/benefit. Projects costing \$50K or more require evaluation and approval by ISD, CEO and ITC. The technology oversight processes currently in place provide for coordinated system planning and strategic resource development. Implementation expenses, as well as long-term maintenance costs are considered in the decision-making process.

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