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CONTROL SELF-ASSESSMENT & PROCESS IMPROVEMENT BY THE

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR / **PUBLIC GUARDIAN**

Two Workshops Facilitated by the Internal Audit Department in October 2011

> Control Self-Assessment & Process Improvement (CSA-PI) is a management tool where work teams within a department or agency assess their own effectiveness in meeting select business and control objectives.

The Internal Audit Department facilitated two CSA-PI workshops in the Public Administrator/Public Guardian's Office (PA/PG) at the request of the Public Administrator and the newly-appointed Public Guardian/Assistant Public Administrator. The two workshops were conducted in October 2011.

CSA-PI is not an audit; rather, it is a consulting service that assists County departments in conducting their own internal assessment of the effectiveness of their controls and business processes. PA/PG executive management has been diligent in partnering with the CSA work teams and in taking action to address issues raised in the two workshops.

> **REPORT NO: 1150** REPORT DATE: JANUARY 12, 2012

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RISK BASED AUDITING

GAO & IIA Peer Review Compliant - 2001, 2004, 2007, 2010

AICPA American Institute of Certified Public Accountants Award to Dr. Peter Hughes as 2010 Outstanding CPA of the Year for Local Government

GRC (Government, Risk & Compliance) Group 2010 Award to IAD as MVP in Risk Management









GAO & IIA Peer Review Compliant - 2001, 2004, 2007, 2010

Providing Facts and Perspectives Countywide

RISK BASED AUDITING

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OC Fraud Hotline (714) 834-3608



Transmittal Letter



Report No. 1150 January 12, 2012

TO: John Williams, Public Administrator Lucille Lyon, Public Guardian/ Assistant Public Administrator

FROM: Dr. Peter Hughes, CPA, Director Internal Audit Department

SUBJECT: Control Self-Assessment & Process Improvement by the Public Administrator/

Public Guardian

We have completed our facilitation of a Control Self-Assessment & Process Improvement (CSA-PI) by the Public Administrator/Public Guardian. The Public Administrator and newly-appointed Public Guardian/Assistant Public Administrator requested a CSA-PI due to significant changes in executive management in the department over the past few years. As such, we conducted two CSA-PI workshops with the Public Administrator/Public Guardian in October 2011. The Control Self-Assessment & Process Improvement Report is attached.

The CSA-PI process was approved by the Audit Oversight Committee on April 27, 2011, with the understanding that the impressions and perspectives captured in the workshop summaries would be retained exclusively by those elected officials who requested a CSA-PI. It was further understood that: 1) the Internal Audit Department would provide a draft workshop summary to the CEO for those departments and agencies reporting directly to the CEO; 2) the Internal Audit Department would follow up on any internal control weaknesses or issues identified in the workshop in the manner they deemed warranted; and 3) the Internal Audit Department would provide a summary notice of completion in the format and with the content contained in this Control Self-Assessment & Process Improvement Report.

Each month I submit an **Audit Status Report** to the Board of Supervisors (BOS) where I detail any critical or significant audit findings released in reports during the prior month and the implementation status of audit recommendations as disclosed by our Follow-Up Audits. Although the CSA-PI process is not considered an audit, this report will be included in a future status report to the BOS.

Attachments

Other recipients of this report are listed on the Control Self-Assessment & Process Improvement Report on page 4.



Control Self-Assessment & Process Improvement by the Public Administrator/Public Guardian Report No. 1150

Two Workshops Conducted in October 2011

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Report No. 1150

January 12, 2012

TO: John Williams, Public Administrator

Lucille Lyon, Public Guardian/Assistant Public Administrator

FROM: Dr. Peter Hughes, CPA, Director

Internal Audit Department

SUBJECT: Control Self-Assessment & Process Improvement by the Public

Administrator/Public Guardian

OVERVIEW AND PURPOSE OF CSA-PI

This report is regarding our facilitation of two Control Self-Assessment & Process Improvement (CSA-PI – formerly referred to as CSA) workshops in the Public Administrator/Public Guardian. The primary purpose of CSA-PI is to help teams assess their effectiveness in meeting select departmental business and control objectives. One workshop was comprised of employees mainly from Public Administrator section, and one workshop was comprised of employees from the Public Guardian section.

In order to ensure workshop participants are comfortable in providing assessments that may be critical of existing processes and procedures, the Internal Audit Department uses anonymous voting technology to capture the participants' perceptions regarding the effectiveness of resolving internal conflicts, promoting and supporting teamwork, establishing achievable goals, measuring performance, empowering employees, providing recognition, inviting employee comments and suggestions, communicating expectations, sharing financial and operational information, and training and developing staff.

CSA-PI workshops have three fundamental purposes. **First**, the workshops provide the teams with a formal process for <u>self-evaluation</u>. This process addresses strengths and obstacles that impact the teams' ability to achieve their objectives and to decide upon appropriate action. **Secondly**, the Internal Audit Department prepares a draft summary of results of the workshops that provides a basis for upper management to evaluate the control environment within their department. **Lastly**, the process provides a methodology for participants to apply these workshop principles and dynamics in the workplace by identifying problems and obstacles, and developing action plans to address concerns and build upon strengths. Participants are encouraged to communicate openly, identify concerns, and collaborate in deciding on appropriate actions.

The Internal Audit Department serves primarily as workshop facilitators and not auditors. This process is based on the <u>consensus of impressions</u>, <u>comments</u>, <u>opinions</u>, <u>and perspectives of the workshop teams</u> and is not "audited or validated" by the Internal Audit Department. Nevertheless, we find that the workshop results provide useful insights regarding the status of the Public Administrator/Public Guardian's control environment. Also, the Internal Audit Department will follow up on any internal control weaknesses or issues identified in the workshops in the manner they deem warranted.

CSA-PI Highlight

The Internal Audit
Department facilitated
two Control SelfAssessment & Process
Improvement workshops
in PA/PG at the request
of the Public
Administrator and newlyappointed Public
Guardian/Assistant
Public Administrator.

One team included 11 participants consisting of staff, supervisors and a manager from the Public Administrator, and some staff from Personal Property, Real Property and Administration. The other team had 12 participants consisting of staff, supervisors and a manager from the Public Guardian, Each team assessed their department's effectiveness in meeting its business and control objectives.

CSA-PI is a consulting service to assist County departments assess the effectiveness of their business processes.



Control Self-Assessment & Process Improvement is a process where managers and employees of a unit led by trained facilitators (Internal Audit Department) come together to discuss the strengths and concerns impacting their ability to accomplish their objectives. Workshop participants, using anonymous voting technology, vote on a series of 51 statements in 11 categories of control elements (see Attachment A). The statements are used to assess business operations and help both the participants and management focus on common business objectives and controls.

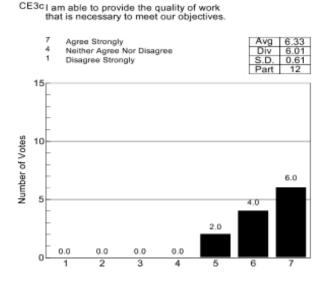
The categories presented to the group for voting and discussion are:

Values & Beliefs
Team Environment & Responsibilities
Communication & Relations
Setting Team Objectives
Planning & Risk Assessment
Resources

Information
Skills & Knowledge
Rewards & Recognition
Control Activities
Monitoring, Learning & Managing Change

The teams are asked to vote anonymously on whether they agree or disagree with the 51 statements. The voting is on a scale of 1 through 7, with 1 corresponding to "disagree strongly" and 7 corresponding to "agree strongly."

For example, one statement under the category "Skills & Knowledge" reads: "I am able to provide the quality of work that is necessary to meet our objectives." After the participants voted on this statement, graphic results were instantly displayed showing the results similar to the **sample** graph below:



After viewing the results of their voting, comments are shared and recorded relating to strengths, concerns, and possible actions to be taken to address the issues raised in the statements. The impressions and perceptions reflected in the statements are used by management to stimulate further discussions with the objective of revising, enhancing or improving controls, processes and managerial issues identified.



WORKSHOP IMPRESSIONS

As noted above, CSA-PI workshops are based on the consensus of impressions, comments, opinions, and perspectives of the workshop teams. The benefit of the workshop is to get issues out so management and the team participants can evaluate, research, clarify, and ultimately verify the observations expressed. Management responds by working with employees and developing concrete corrective actions that the workshop team and management determine have validity to pursue. CSA-PI is a multi-step process: **First**, the Internal Audit Department acts as facilitators to flush out strengths and concerns from the participants in meeting department objectives. **Secondly**, management and the teams evaluate the workshop results. **Thirdly**, management and the team develop concrete corrective actions in an action plan. Management implements the action plan and ensures they are provided to workshop participants and to all employees. **Lastly**, the Internal Audit Department will pursue any control concerns that come out of a CSA-PI workshop, either through a separate audit, or discussions with management as considered warranted.

RESULTS

After completion of the two CSA-PI workshops, each team worked with management to prepare an internal action plan addressing the higher-priority issues brought forward during the workshops. We received a copy of the action plan from the workshops, which included items that had been initiated or planned. The few issues raised in the workshops were typical of an organization that experienced significant changes in executive management. Issues that were raised included the need for better defined roles and responsibilities; improved communication between management and staff; assessment of workloads; clarification of work priorities; and updated and comprehensive policies and procedures for select duties. We noted that PA/PG executive management is taking the CSA-PI process very seriously and has been diligent in taking action to address issues raised in the workshops.

The draft summaries of the raw and unverified comments, impressions and voting results were provided to PA/PG. As such we limited distribution strictly to PA/PG for use as a management tool in facilitating their internal assessment. However, because the Public Guardian/Assistant Public Administrator is appointed and reports to the CEO, we provided the Public Guardian draft workshop summary to the County Executive Office on November 10, 2011. Although not required, the Public Administrator, an elected position, voluntarily shared the results of the Public Administrator workshop summary with the County Executive Office.

CSA-PI TEAMS' EVALUATION

At the conclusion of the workshops, facilitators ask teams to evaluate the CSA-PI process by anonymously voting on five standard quality assurance statements. The participants provided high ratings for the CSA-PI process and their individual workshops as indicated by their voting. The average scores from the 23 participants evaluating the CSA-PI process are shown below. The participants vote by selecting a numerical rating from a scale of 1 through 7. A score of 7 indicates the participants strongly agree with the statement. A score of 4 indicates they neither agree nor disagree. A score of 1 indicates the participants strongly disagree with the statement.

See the table below of Evaluation Statements for the averaged score results for the two workshops.



	Top Score	Average	
Evaluation Statement	Possible	Score	Percentage
I understand the purpose of CSA-PI.	7.00	6.53	93.3%
The workshop helped to highlight issues significant to this team.	7.00	6.61	94.4%
I was able to express my opinions freely.	7.00	5.91	84.4%
The Internal Audit Department facilitators did a good job.	7.00	6.91	98.7%
I would recommend this process to other teams.	7.00	6.70	95.7%

SOME TEAM COMMENTS

- ✓ "It was great to be able to identify strengths and weaknesses as a team and work together for possible solutions!"
- ✓ "I enjoyed looking at the ideas brought up by others and brainstorming for changes that will be effective."
- ✓ "Very comfortable environment which allowed for the flow of ideas. The voting system was very informative."
- ✓ "We really appreciate this opportunity and kudos to the OC Internal Audit Department for an excellent job!"

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We appreciate the courtesy and cooperation extended to us by the personnel at the Public Administrator/Public Guardian's Office. If you have any questions regarding the CSA-PI process, please call me directly or Eli Littner, Deputy Director at (714) 834-5899, or Mike Goodwin, Senior Audit Manager at (714) 834-6066.

Distribution Pursuant to Audit Oversight Committee Procedure No. 1:

Members, Board of Supervisors
Members, Audit Oversight Committee
Thomas G. Mauk, County Executive Officer
Tim Beason, Chief Deputy, Public Guardian Probate/LPS Programs
Frank Tuanai, Chief of Fiscal Services, Public Guardian
Rosy Arellano, Supervising Deputy, Public Administrator
Shelia Roberge, Supervising Deputy, Public Guardian/Internal Audit Unit
Foreperson, Grand Jury
Susan Novak, Interim Clerk of the Board of Supervisors



ATTACHMENT A: Control Self-Assessment/Process Improvement Workshop Overview

CONTROL SELF-ASSESSMENT / PROCESS IMPROVEMENT WORKSHOP OC INTERNAL AUDIT DEPARTMENT

Section 1 - Introduction to Control Self-Assessment/Process Improvement

The objective is to understand Control Self-Assessment/Process Improvement (CSA-PI) and the internal control framework, as a method used by the Internal Audit Department to help work-teams assess control effectiveness.

Section 2 - Situation Appraisal Section (Post It Note Exercise)

The objective is to identify your team's strengths and concerns and evaluate their relative impact on your ability to meet business objectives.

STRENGTHS - Items that help us to meet our objectives

- SA1a Rate the current impact of this item on your objectives
 - 1 No Impact
 - 4 Moderate Impact
 - 7 High Impact
- SA1b Rate the future benefit of this item, i.e. the benefits that would occur by further application of this strength
 - 1 No Benefit
 - 4 Moderate Benefit
 - 7 High Benefit

CONCERNS - Items that hinder our ability to meet our objectives

- SA2a Rate the current impact of this item on your objectives
 - 1 No Impact
 - 4 Moderate Impact
 - 7 High Impact
- SA2b Rate the future risk of this item, i.e. the future risk this item poses to the objectives if it is not addressed
 - 1 No Risk
 - 4 Moderate Risk
 - 7 High Risk

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ATTACHMENT A: Control Self-Assessment/Process Improvement Workshop Overview (continued)

Section 3 - Control Appraisal Section

The objective is to examine the key controls of the internal control framework to measure how effective they are in your area of responsibility.

A number of statements will be made in each of the following categories and you will be asked to vote on how strongly you agree or disagree with each of the statements. After voting on all the statements in a category, the results will be graphically displayed and the team will have the opportunity to discuss them and decide whether to take any action and, if so, what needs to be done.



Area of Control Voting Category

Control Environment (CE1) Values & Beliefs

Control Environment (CE2) Team Environment & Responsibilities

Information & Comm. (CI1) Communications & Relations

Risk Assessment (RA1) Setting Team Objectives

Risk Assessment (RA2) Planning & Risk Assessment

Risk Assessment (RA3) Resources

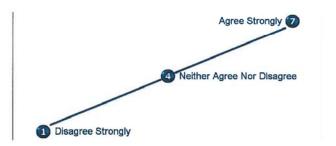
Information & Comm. (CI2) Information

Control Environment (CE3) Skills & Knowledge

Control Environment (CE4) Rewards & Recognition

Control Activities (CA1) Control Activities

Monitoring (ML1) Monitoring, Learning & Managing Change



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ATTACHMENT A: Control Self-Assessment/Process Improvement Workshop Overview (continued)

el.					
	VALUI	ES & BELIEFS			
	CE 1a	Our department demonstrates commitment to its mission.	1 2		
	CE 1b	Our department demonstrates commitment to equity (fairness) in the workplace.	1 2	3 4 5	
	CE 1c	Our department's standards of values and ethics have been clearly communicated to me.	1 2	3 4 5	
	CE 1d	People in leadership positions in our department set a good example.	1 2	3 4 5	
	CE 1e	Our department operates in an ethical manner.	1 2	3 4 5	
	TEAM	ENVIRONMENT & RESPONSIBILITIES			
	CE 2a	We are an effective team.	1 2	3 4 5	
×	CE 2b	My role and responsibility in the team is clearly understood by other team members.	1 2	3 4 5	
	CE 2c	I am empowered to carry out my job responsibilities.	1 2		
	CE 2d	Our team considers the effects of its actions on others.	1 2	3 4 5	
	COMIN	IUNICATION & RELATIONS			
	CI 1a	I can discuss bad news freely with all members of our team.	1 2	3 4 5	
	CI 1b	I can discuss bad news freely with the next level of management.	1 2	3 4 5	
	CI 1c	Our team openly discusses those matters that need to be discussed.	1 2	3 4 5	
	SETTI	NG TEAM OBJECTIVES			
	RA 1a	Our team members are currently working to achieve common team objectives.	1 2	3 4 5	
	RA 1b	I have sufficient involvement in setting our team's objectives.	1 2	3 4 5	
	RA 1c	Our team's objectives are aligned with our department's overall objectives and strategies.	1 2	3 4 5	
	RA 1d	Our team's objectives are compatible with the objectives of other related teams.	1 2	3 4 5	6 7
	RA 1e	We have an effective method to resolve conflicting objectives between teams.	1 2	3 4 5	□□ 6 7
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Control Self Assessment & Process Improvement By The Public Administrator/Public Guardian Report No. 1150



ATTACHMENT A: Control Self-Assessment/Process Improvement Workshop Overview (continued)

	NING & RISK ASSESSMENT			
RA 2a	I have a clear understanding of the things that could go wrong (risks) in my work.	1 2	3 4 5	6
RA 2b	I understand the level of risk acceptable to the department when establishing team objectives.	1 2	3 4 5	6
RA 2c	Our team effectively applies risk assessment to our business.	1 2	3 4 5	6
RA 2d	Our team has targets against which progress can be measured and monitored.	1 2	3 4 5	6
RA 2e	Our team will meet its objectives.	1 2	3 4 5	
RESC	URCES			
RA 3a	Our planning process includes estimates of the resources required to meet our team's objectives.	1 2	3 4 5	6
RA 3b	The resources our team has available will allow us to achieve our business objectives.	1 2	3 4 5	6
RA 3c	The resources available to our team are sufficient to ensure high quality output.	1 2	3 4 5	6
RA 3d	Our organizational structure is effective in providing the resources required to meet our team's objectives.	1 2	3 4 5	6
INFO	RMATION			
CI 2a	The information I need to do my job is easily accessible.	1 2	3 4 5	6
CI 2b	The information systems I use are helpful to me.	1 2	3 4 5	6
CI 2c	I have confidence in the accuracy of the information I receive.	1 2	3 4 5	6
CI 2d	Adequate steps are taken to ensure information is safeguarded.	1 2	3 4 5	6
CI 2e	Our team has a plan to recover from a loss of information.	1 2	3 4 5	
SKILL	.S & KNOWLEDGE			
	I have adequate skills to do my job.	1 2	3 4 5	6
CE 3a	I d t d h i i t i d l // t f d d t	1 2	3 4 5	
	I understand how my job inter-relates with other people/parts of the department.		000	
CE 3a	I am able to provide the quality of work that is necessary to meet our objectives.	1 2	3 4 5	6
CE 3a				1



ATTACHMENT A: Control Self-Assessment/Process Improvement Workshop Overview (continued)

*			
	ARDS & RECOGNITION	22 222	-
CE 4a	I know the standards against which my performance will be measured.	1 2 3 4 5	
CE 4b	I receive adequate compensation for my performance.	1 2 3 4 5	
CE 4c	I receive adequate recognition for my performance.	1 2 3 4 5	
CE 4d	I enjoy my work.	1 2 3 4 5	
CONT	FROL ACTIVITIES		
CA 1a	Our team's procedures are well documented and understood.	1 2 3 4 5	
CA 1b	Our team's procedures help ensure work is carried out effectively.	1 2 3 4 5	
CA 1c	Our team's procedures help ensure consistent quality of output.	1 2 3 4 5	
CA 1d	Our team's policies and procedures are adequate to ensure that the most significant risks are effectively controlled.	1 2 3 4 5	
CA 1e	Our team adheres to established policies and procedures.	1 2 3 4 5	
CA 1f	Our team's major work processes are efficient.	1 2 3 4 5	
MONI	TORING, LEARNING & MANAGING CHANGE		
ML 1a	Our team does a good job of analyzing our results.	1 2 3 4 5	
ML 1b	Our team measures the value of the services we provide.	1 2 3 4 5	6 7
ML 1c	Our team compares our practices with other groups (internal and external).	1 2 3 4 5	6 7
ML 1d	Our team regularly analyzes external conditions that may affect our objectives.	1 2 3 4 5	
ML 1e	Our team periodically challenges our objectives to determine if they are still appropriate.	1 2 3 4 5	
ML 1f	Our team makes effective changes based on what we learn from our analysis.	1 2 3 4 5	
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ATTACHMENT A: Control Self-Assessment/Process Improvement Workshop Overview (continued)

Section 4 - Next Steps Section

What are the Next Steps for our team?

Section 5 - Evaluation of the Workshop

Please provide feedback on today's workshop by either agreeing or disagreeing with the following statements:

EV 1a	I understand the purpose of Control Self-Assessment/Process Improvement.		gly Str 3 4 5	
EV 1b	The workshop helped to highlight issues significant to this team.		3 4 5	
EV 1c	I was able to express my opinions freely.		3 4 5	
EV 1d	The facilitators did a good job.		3 4 5	
EV 1e	I would recommend this process to other teams.	1 2	3 4 5	

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Disagree

Agree