

**ALASKA LEGAL SERVICES CORPORATION
STATE PLANNING SELF-EVALUATION REPORT**

March 13, 2002

Introduction

State planning in Alaska was initiated when a series of closures of ALSC's bush offices in Dillingham, Kodiak, Kotzebue and Nome in 1995-96 provided the impetus for the ALSC Board to hold a strategic planning session in May of 1997,¹ and for the Alaska Supreme Court to establish the "Access to Civil Justice Task Force" in November 1997. Under the leadership of Alaska Supreme Court Justice (now Chief Justice) Dana Fabe, the Task Force worked in eight subcommittees² and worked very hard over a 30-month period, eventually issuing a final report in May 2000 containing twenty-two recommendations to the Alaska Supreme Court. This self-evaluation report begins by focusing on the current status of those recommendations.

This self-evaluation reflects a somewhat mixed state of affairs with respect to the progress that has been made in state planning in Alaska, and two situational factors have played a large role in that. First, ALSC's Executive Director Robert Hickerson became ill in early 2001 and went on medical leave, passing away in June of that year. Until appointment of a new Executive Director in February 2002, ALSC was administered by a Management Team. During that period, new initiatives had to be subordinated to the necessities of keeping the day-to-day operations of ALSC performing smoothly. ALSC had had the benefit of Robert's leadership for almost twenty years, and without that leadership some of the

¹ See ALSC's State Planning Report of October 1, 1998, page 19. The five "philosophy statements" which emerged from that session were: (1) ALSC is committed to the delivery of rural services; (2) [ALSC should] strive to develop a board that is a fair representation of the cultural diversity of our clients; (3) [ALSC should] provide legal services to all Alaskans who qualify to meet their most basic needs; (4) [ALSC should] strive to get the judicial system to take a leadership role in the provision of equal access to justice; and (5) equal access to justice in Alaska is the responsibility of all Alaskans.

² There were originally six subcommittees. One, the subcommittee on those ineligible for ALSC representation, split into two subcommittees, the first focusing on immigration issues, the second on those financially ineligible and on other statutory restrictions on service provision by ALSC as an LSC-funded provider. An eighth subcommittee served as an adjunct committee to the Task Force, assembled by ALSC's then-Development Director to focus specifically on ALSC fundraising and public relations.

follow-through on the state planning recommendations was not as strong as it would have been. Second, the Alaska Pro Bono Program Inc., intended to play a major role in implementation of several of the recommendations, underwent a significant deterioration in its management, culminating in the termination of its Executive Director in December 2001. However, despite these setbacks, there has been significant progress made on several fronts, most noticeably in initiatives made by the Alaska Court System with ALSC involvement, and in ALSC's technology component, as detailed below.

I. STATUS OF ACCESS TO CIVIL JUSTICE TASK FORCE REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

A. The Alaska Supreme Court should establish an "Access to Civil Justice Implementation Task Force" to act upon and put into place the recommendations forwarded by this Task Force.

The Implementation Committee was created, with participants from ALSC, Catholic Social Services, the Alaska Court System, and other key agencies. ALSC's participation on this Implementation Committee was hampered somewhat by turnovers in ALSC personnel. Since the appointment of ALSC's current representative, a staff attorney from ALSC's Anchorage office, only one meeting was scheduled, which was cancelled. In fact the Implementation Committee itself has not met for the past six months. The superior court judge who chairs the Implementation Committee has been assigned the case challenging Alaska's election redistricting plan following the 2000 census, and that time-consuming litigation has left him unable to reconvene the Implementation Committee for several months.

ALSC's new Executive Director will now be assuming the role of ALSC's representative on this Implementation Committee and pressing for another meeting, in an attempt to reinvigorate its important work.

B. The Alaska Bar Association should develop an Alaska "Modest Means Program" to provide moderate-income Alaskans (those who do not qualify for Alaska Legal Services) access to representation by attorneys who have agreed to charge a reduced hourly rate for their services.

This was not done. (It represents a secondary goal for ALSC, although an important one for a state system overall.) The minutes of the August 6, 2001 Implementation Committee meeting reflect that concerns were expressed over where the resources for such a program would come from, and whether it might dilute the number of attorneys willing to participate in the pro bono programs.

C. A “One-Stop Shopping” customer-oriented intake and referral service for low-income clients with potential legal problems should be established. The service would include the development of a mentoring program for volunteer lawyers and would provide information on alternative dispute resolution and other resources. All resources in this “One-Stop Shopping” service would be available in as many different languages and formats as possible in order to assist the greatest number of people. This service would be available on-line and by an 800-number.

This has not been done. The Alaska Court System did submit a grant proposal for such a center, but it was not approved. Most of the agencies providing some measure of legal assistance (see list below) have their own 800-numbers and websites. The three pro bono programs have developed their own mentoring programs. The court system’s own website includes information on alternative dispute resolution. Most services are not available in different languages; the primary exceptions are the Catholic Social Services’ Immigration and Refugee Services program and the Alaska Pro Bono Program, which offer services in Spanish. Although there are links between the websites, there has been little effort to provide a comprehensive “one-stop shopping” site in cyberspace; but efforts towards this end are underway pursuant to the Alaska Legal Services Corporation’s Technology Initiative Grant (TIG), pursuant to which a “stakeholders” committee representing other service providers has been assembled and has held several meetings over the past three months (see detailed description below). Also, the court system, which has significantly more resources than the smaller non-profits, has established a “Family Law Self-Help Center” in Anchorage, with a toll-free number. This office opened in October 2001 and is presently limited in subject matter to family law issues, although in the future it may expand into other subject matter areas. ALSC’s Executive Director is on the Center’s advisory committee.

D. By the year 2001, secure significant increased funding for Alaska Legal Services, at a minimum to 1982 levels. Even in 1982, the funding level was only minimally adequate funding for Alaska Legal Services. Updated to 2001 dollars, that figure would be \$5,000,000 that should be raised from traditional and new sources.

This goal has not been achieved. Although ALSC has embarked on several new initiatives to solicit funds from new sources, with some success, that has not reached anywhere near the \$5,000,000 goal. ALSC’s budget has, however, grown from \$2,307,000 in 1997 to \$3,037,000 for 2002. A comparison of ALSC’s grant revenues for 1997 and for 2001 shows the following funding sources added during that interval: a grant from the Department of Justice Violence Against Women Office; a subgrant from the Alaska Network on Domestic Violence and Sexual

Assault, for additional VAWA funds; a grant from the Alaska Children's Trust for a "Children At Risk" program; a grant from Kawerak (a regional nonprofit corporation in the Nome area) to help re-establish ALSC's Nome office; a grant from Maniilaq (a regional nonprofit Native corporation in the Kotzebue area) re-establishing and fully funding ALSC's Kotzebue office; a grant from Bristol Bay Native Association (BBNA) to help re-establish ALSC's Dillingham office; a NAPIL Housing Assistance Grant to fund two positions in ALSC's Anchorage office; a Technology Initiative Grant from LSC; a contract with Covenant House; a grant from the Alaska Office on Aging to provide legal assistance to caregivers; and revenues from the Partners in Justice Campaign, ALSC's annual solicitation of donations from Alaskan attorneys, started in 1998. State legislative appropriations, after an increase from \$150,000 to \$175,000 in 1999, have remained static since then, although that maintenance in and of itself is something of an accomplishment.

ALSC remains committed to fundraising. It currently has one grant proposal pending to supplement its Native Allotment unit, another to establish a new Native law bureau, and a third to recover funding from the Municipality of Anchorage, which ALSC had obtained in past years but which had been severely cut back during the most recent two-year funding cycle. Further grant proposals are in the preparation stage.

One specific Task Force recommendation had been that a litigation filing fee surcharge be implemented. Although explored, this ran up against two obstacles: first, the prohibition in Alaska's Constitution against "dedicated funds," and second, strong opposition from the Alaska Court System, which on virtually every other Task Force component was highly supportive of ALSC.

After ALSC's Development Director resigned in September 2001, the Management Team had decided to try to run the immediately upcoming "Partners in Justice" Campaign in-house using existing staff, and to utilize a private contractor to develop significant grant applications. It is apparent that running the campaign in-house has resulted in a significant and inordinate workload being placed on ALSC's Administrative and Technology Coordinator, who has taken on most of the burden for that campaign. She has obtained a grant from the Rasmuson Foundation which includes funding for new software that may enable future campaigns to be run without quite so much effort. Still, following conclusion of the campaign in June 2002, ALSC will be assessing the advisability of doing without a Development Director. ALSC is using a private contractor to try to develop larger grant proposals, and this too will be evaluated in comparison to the in-house Development Director model.

E. Increase rural Alaska Legal Services staff and open an Alaska Legal Services office with attorneys on staff in every community that maintains an Alaska Superior Court.

Although ALSC has not been able to open an attorney-staffed office in each superior court community, it has been able to double the number of its staffers in rural offices, from five to ten, and has been able to re-establish three of the four rural offices which budgetary constraints had forced it to close in 1996; all three (Nome, Kotzebue, and Dillingham) are heavily dependent on local funding. The fourth (Kodiak) has not re-opened, but there are some possible local funding sources which ALSC is exploring.

The communities with superior courts which do not have an ALSC attorney-staffed office are Kenai, Ketchikan, Kodiak, Palmer, and Sitka. Of these, Ketchikan has an ALSC office staffed by a part-time paralegal. As noted above, there is a proposal to establish an office in Kodiak, for which local funding is being sought. Also of significance is the fact that the community of Sitka has an office staffed by the Alaska Network on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, with two attorney positions (with a third position currently vacant, awaiting renewed funding).

Location of the state's superior courts is keyed primarily to total population, whereas ALSC offices are geared more towards poverty populations. ALSC is awaiting the results of the 2000 census poverty population figures before making a concerted effort to open additional offices beyond Kodiak.

F. Alaska Legal Services should increase coordination with other service providers, particularly in rural areas where there already may be a network of providers or staff willing and able to establish an affiliation with Alaska Legal Services.

This has been pursued to some extent. Generally, ALSC has a strong working relationship with local agencies that provide services to local clientele in smaller villages where ALSC does not have an office of its own. What these agencies are, and the nature and extent of that working relationship, varies from area to area within the state; and frequently the ability of that agency to work along with ALSC may wax and wane over time as key personnel come and go.

The Task Force specifically mentioned increasing coordination with the Alaska Network on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (ANDVSA) and increasing utilization of local paralegals. ALSC has developed a strong relationship with ANDVSA over the past several years, including joint funding proposals submitted by the two organizations, and ALSC staffer participation in

Continuing Legal Education programs put on by ANDVSA. ALSC does utilize paralegals in three of its offices, one of which (Ketchikan) is staffed solely by a local paralegal, supervised by the Juneau office. Local ALSC offices work with paralegals within other offices (e.g., the paralegals in the non-Anchorage offices of the Disability Law Center, and the advocates at several of the women's shelters throughout the state).

G. Alaska Legal Services and the Alaska Bar Association should coordinate a request to the American Bar Association regarding law students' externships outside a school's geographic area, to permit law students to come to Alaska (a state with no law school), and work at Alaska Legal Services for the externship period.

Although no request has been written to the ABA, ALSC has had summer clerks, and occasionally school semester externs, placed at several of its offices. The minutes of the most recent Implementation Task Force meeting noted that this might not be an issue that requires action.

H. The concept of an expanded and liberated (free of Congressional restrictions) Pro Bono Program should be explored.

This was implemented. After obtaining approval from LSC for its proposed structure, ALSC proceeded with establishing the Alaska Pro Bono Program as a separate corporation (Alaska Pro Bono Program Inc., known as APBP Inc.). It commenced its independent operations in August 2000. As originally set up, APBP was funded by (non-LSC) IOLTA moneys passed along by ALSC to APBP, with APBP handling all attorney recruitment and case placement for both LSC-permissible and LSC-impermissible cases, and providing ALSC with case reporting and financial data on the LSC-permissible cases for ALSC to count towards its 12.5% PAI requirement.

Over the next eighteen months, APBP experienced unfortunate and inordinate management problems, which its Board addressed in December 2001. No sooner had the management problems been resolved, however, than APBP was informed that its primary funding (IOLTA money, awarded by the Alaska Bar Foundation) was going to have to be drastically reduced due to low interest rates. ALSC and APBP are currently working on restructuring the program to fit within its new funding constraints.

As originally structured, attorney recruitment and case placement for LSC-permissible cases will be brought back in-house at ALSC. APBP will continue its separate existence to service solely the relatively small number of ongoing LSC-impermissible cases (ten as of December 31, 2001) plus referrals of additional

impermissible cases in the future. It is felt that this will enable ALSC to recover some of the cost efficiencies which were lost when APBP was established as a separate program.

I. A Pro Bono Asylum Project should be created to assist immigrants seeking political asylum in the United States.

This had already been initiated during the formulation of the Task Force report, with free Continuing Legal Education classes in March 1999 and March 2000. Approximately thirty attorneys signed up to take cases. This program is administered by the Immigrant and Refugee Services Program of Catholic Social Services.

J. A Pro Bono Naturalization Program should be created to work with elderly and disabled immigrants.

This was not done. What naturalization work is being done is performed in-house by CSS staffers, rather than by pro bono attorneys.

K. The Alaska Pro Bono Program should adopt administrative procedures that would allow for attorneys to assist other pro bono attorneys by doing discrete tasks such as research or motion preparation.

Apparently nothing formal was done to accomplish this under the former APBP management, although it is not clear what if any administrative obstacles there were to allowing some pro bono attorneys to assist other pro bono attorneys with discrete tasks. As noted above, APBP will be undergoing a major restructuring as a result of the reduction in IOLTA funds; subsequent to that, attempts will be made to ascertain what if any changes should be made so there are no administrative procedure obstacles to “discrete task” pro bono work.

L. The Alaska Pro Bono Program should adopt a mentoring program.

The original task force report indicated that this had already been implemented. Mentoring has been an important element of the ANDVSA and CSS pro bono programs, and will assume a more prominent role in ALSC’s in-house pro bono program as well.

M. The Alaska Bar Foundation should continue to seek new ways of increasing “Interest on Lawyer Trust Accounts” funding.

The Alaska Bar Foundation has not undertaken any initiatives in this regard. The Bar Foundation, run by the Bar Association with no staff assigned to

the Foundation in particular, relies on the volunteer efforts of its members. There is apparently no Bar Foundation representative on the Implementation Task Force.

N. The Alaska Bar Association should recommend that the Alaska Supreme Court adopt the American Bar Association’s Model Rule 6.1, an aspirational guideline that all attorneys should perform 50 hours of pro bono work per year.

The current version of Alaska’s Rule of Professional Conduct 6.1 does not contain this aspirational guideline. Two separate proposals had been placed before the Board of Governors; one contained the aspirational 50-hour guideline, originally proposed at a 1996 bar convention, and the other an aspirational 15-hour guideline, proposed at a 2001 bar convention. At its January 2002 meeting, the Board of Governors of the Alaska Bar Association decided that, since the proposed 50-hour rule was hortatory and could not be the subject of attorney discipline, it was inappropriate to include it in the Rules of Professional Conduct. The 15-hour proposal had not been published to the bar membership for comments, and so the Board of Governors decided to have it published for comment from Bar Association members, following which the Board will decide on it at its May 2002 meeting. The 15-hour rule would appear to contain the same component which led the Board to reject its 50-hour counterpart, and obviously sets a lower aspirational standard, but its presence on the May agenda may give ALSC and APBP a chance to counter the reasons given by the Board for rejecting it, or to suggest alternatives such as placing the aspirational rule in the commentary or including it as a Bar Rule rather than a Rule of Professional Conduct.

O. The Alaska Bar Association should especially encourage public sector attorneys to perform pro bono work.

This has been partially achieved. On December 28, 2001, Alaska State Attorney General Bruce Botelho released a memorandum declaring “It is the policy of the Department of Law to encourage and support efforts by employees to provide pro bono legal services within their communities consistent with state laws governing conflicts of interest and outside activities,” and detailing the procedures and limitations applicable to Department of Law employees. The letter also included a sample retainer letter.

P. The Alaska Bar Association should provide free continuing legal education to pro bono attorneys in poverty law areas, with the condition that the attorneys would then be obligated to take a pro bono case.

The Task Force report notes that this was initiated in March 1999 with the presentation of two such seminars, one sponsored by CSS dealing with immigration law issues and one sponsored by ANDVSA dealing with domestic violence cases. (ALSC attorneys participated as panelists in the latter.) The DV CLE has continued annually; the immigration CLE has been discontinued, although a “pro bono summit” was held in October 2001 sponsored by CSS in lieu of the CLEs of previous years. It was suggested at the August 2001 Implementation Committee meeting that APBP try this approach as well, with Social Security Disability cases suggested as a logical subject matter area for this.

Q. The University of Alaska (at Anchorage, Fairbanks and Juneau) Paralegal Certificate Program should explore the placement of interns in the programs proposed in Recommendations B and C.

The Paralegal Programs in these three cities do place interns in the ALSC offices, especially in Fairbanks and Juneau, both of which have a good working relationship with their local programs. The “Modest Means” and “One-Stop Shopping” programs referred to have not been implemented.

R. Establish a Statewide “Alternative Dispute Resolution Steering and Implementation Committee” to evaluate and coordinate statewide alternative dispute resolution needs and make periodic recommendations to the Judicial Council. The committee’s scope would include issues raised in this report as well as identifying sources of funding. The membership would include stakeholders listed in this report in addition to people who work in the field of domestic violence, from the community at large, and from the municipal government.

This Committee has not been established. The Alaska Court System obtained funding for a Child Custody and Visitation Mediation Project operating in southeast Alaska, Fairbanks, and Anchorage; and for a “Child in Need of Aid Mediation and Family Group Conferencing” project focusing on child protection cases, which has received 166 referrals as of the time of the Chief Justice’s “State of the Judiciary Address” to the Legislature in February 2002. The Bar Association continues to have an active section focusing on alternative dispute resolution.

S. Establish a salaried statewide alternative dispute resolution Coordinator position. The person in this position would act as staff to the “Alternative Dispute Resolution Steering and Implementation Committee,” and would establish a resource center for alternative dispute resolution materials.

The Court System has a full-time mediation coordinator for the custody/visitation and CINA mediation projects mentioned above. This person does not act as staff for the Steering Committee and is limited to those subject matter areas noted above; but as the Steering Committee doesn't exist and the subject matter areas within which this coordinator functions do represent the areas of highest demand for civil alternative dispute resolution, it is accurate to state that this task has been accomplished.

T. Establishment of a “Pro Se Steering and Implementation Committee” which would regularly meet with court staff to discuss and develop pro se assistance. This committee would be court-administered and organized with as broad a membership as possible. This committee would also coordinate with the “One-Stop Shopping” Service described in Recommendation C and with the Pro Se Forms Committee described in Recommendation U.

This has been accomplished, in the form of a Steering Committee for the new “Family Law Self-Help Center,” for which the Alaska Court System recently obtained funding, and which opened in the fall of 2001. The Self-Help Center focuses on family law issues, perceived to be the largest area of pro se litigant demands. It has not billed itself as a “One-Stop Shopping” center, but has developed as comprehensive a set of referrals as possible. It has started to play a role with respect to the development of pro se forms.

U. The court system’s existing Forms Committee membership should be modified to include forms users and practitioners. The work of this modified committee should be broadened to include regular review of court forms. The Forms Committee should focus on making the forms available in as many languages and formats as possible.

Membership on the Forms Committee has not been expanded beyond court system personnel. However, the demand for more user-friendly forms has led to the creation of several sets of forms by the “Family Law Self-Help Center”; although these are not official court forms, at least some of this need is being met through that new office.

V. Systemic civil justice, legal and administrative snags should be reviewed and changes made to make the systems and agencies more client-oriented.

No structure has been set up by the non-profit providers to review such systemic problems. However, various discussion groups or task forces are in place which focus on specific subject matter areas, and raise and address systemic

problems within that area. For example, the immigration law section of the bar association brings together CSS's attorneys and private attorneys to discuss changes in the laws, procedures, and local policies of INS and other agencies impacting on the immigrant population; a loose coalition in Anchorage has been working on predatory lending problems, with participation from ALSC, the Attorney General's consumer protection office, consumer credit counseling, and better business bureaus; and ALSC's newly-hired attorneys under its VAWA rural domestic violence grant will be teleconferencing regularly with their counterparts at the Alaska Network on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault on systemic problems facing domestic violence victims.

II. DISCUSSION OF QUESTIONS IN PROGRAM LETTER 2000-7

A. To what extent has a comprehensive, integrated and client-centered legal services delivery system been achieved in a particular state?

1. What are the important issues that impact upon low-income people within your state? How is your state responding to these issues?

Low-income families in Alaska face the same issues as low-income families in other states. Domestic violence is a huge problem in Alaska, fueled by chronic alcohol and drug abuse. Alaska's TANF and SSI supplement programs had benefits frozen at their 1993 levels. Legislative enactments over the last decade have eroded the protections for Alaska's tenants and consumers. The higher cost of living in Alaska exacerbates the problems faced by the state's indigent population.

Besides these problems which the poor in Alaska share with the poor of other states, there are some issues that are Alaska-specific. The "urban-rural divide" has pitted the interests of Alaska's three main cities and other urban areas against the interests of Alaska's rural or "bush" communities. This casts its shadow over many issues, including school funding, local taxation, and the future of Alaska's "Permanent Fund Dividend," which in many rural communities constitutes a significant portion of the cash economy. But this divide has special pertinence to two particular issues that are of central importance to ALSC's rural clientele, *i.e.*, rights to subsistence hunting and fishing, and rights to self-governance as federally recognized tribes. The state's response on these two critical issues is somewhat complex, as the legislative and executive branches of state government have charted inconsistent, and sometimes conflicting, approaches to both of these questions. ALSC has litigated extensively on both issues.

2. What are the components of the delivery system?

ALSC's service delivery system consists of nine local offices (Anchorage, Barrow, Bethel, Dillingham, Fairbanks, Juneau, Ketchikan, Kotzebue, and Nome). One (Ketchikan) is staffed by a part-time paralegal. One (Barrow) is staffed solely by a full-time attorney. Two (Dillingham and Nome) are staffed by a full-time attorney and part-time support staffer. Three are staffed by two attorneys and one support staffer (Bethel, Juneau and Kotzebue). Two have multiple attorneys, at least one paralegal, and support staffers (Anchorage and Fairbanks).

Besides ALSC, there are six other significant legal service providers, five of which offer lawyer-provided assistance. First is the Alaska Pro Bono Program. Formerly run in-house by ALSC, it was separated in 2000 after an extended planning process, primarily to free its pro bono attorneys from the LSC restrictions, which had impacted on ALSC's advocacy in particularly unfortunate ways due to Alaska's adherence to the "English" attorney fee rule; as currently staffed, APBP has a part-time attorney as its Executive Director and a full-time support staffer, but IOLTA shortfalls due to interest rate reductions are forcing a restructuring on APBP soon. Second is the Disability Law Center of Alaska, focusing on disability issues; it has several attorneys in its Anchorage office, and one-paralegal offices in Bethel, Fairbanks, and Juneau. Third is the Immigration and Refugee Services program, run by Catholic Social Services; it has one office, in Anchorage, with two attorneys and a support staffer. Fourth is the Alaska Network on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, with offices in Juneau and Sitka; it currently has two attorneys and several support staffers; its two attorneys for the most part do not provide direct service, as one is the director of the Legal Assistance Program and one is the Pro Bono Mentoring Attorney for that program. A third attorney formerly did direct service work, but has left ANDVSA and a replacement will not be hired until a funding source is in place. There is a fifth program, the Alaska Mental Health Web, just recently established, which will have two staff attorneys, also focusing on disability issues. The sixth program, the Alaska Native Justice Center, offers legal advocate services to Alaska Natives embroiled in the civil or criminal justice system at the local, state, and federal level, assists individuals and families involved with child welfare issues, and works collaboratively with other organizations to promote changes in legislation that adversely affects Alaska Natives.

Also of note, although not a private non-profit, is the newly-established Family Law Self-Help Center established within the Alaska Court System, staffed by one attorney and two paralegals, with the mission not of providing representation or legal advice, but general information and assistance to self-representing litigants in domestic relations cases.

One notable aspect of these programs is that the informal networks among them have to some extent been perceived as reducing the need for a more formal structure for planning. The Executive Director of the Disability Law Center, the Pro Bono Mentoring Attorney for the ANDVSA, the director of the Immigrant and Refugee Services program at CSS, and the director of the Family Law Self-Help Center are all former employees of ALSC, and there are good working relationships among and between all the agencies.

There are also twelve regional non-profit Native organizations, loosely covering the same areas as the twelve regional for-profit corporations created under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) in 1971. Those organizations tend to have staff attorneys, but their primary role is to provide services to the organization itself and to surrounding village governments, rather than to individuals. However, there are non-attorney service providers in other departments of those organizations, notably those who work on Native allotment issues and those who prepare wills for owners of restricted Native property, so ALSC tends to work closely with them. In many instances the regional non-profit is a major source of funding for ALSC's local offices (Dillingham, Kotzebue and Nome).

3. Has this system created mechanisms to assess its performance in relationship to commonly-accepted external guides such as the ABA Standards for Providers of Civil Legal Services to the Poor, the LSC Performance Criteria or some other set of objective criteria? What is the protocol for undertaking system performance review and when was a review last undertaken?

ALSC has not created such a mechanism. ALSC's Executive Director reviews the Open Case Status Reports and any grievances not resolved at the Supervising Attorney level, and ALSC complies with the LSC self-inspection requirements. But these are not general performance-assessment mechanisms.

In former years, ALSC had an "office review" system under which experienced personnel would be sent to each local office to conduct and write a review. The last such written review appears to have been performed by ALSC's Chief Counsel in 1994. ALSC's current Executive Director has set a goal of reviving a modified version of this system by visiting each local office before the end of the year.

4. Does your statewide system work to ensure the availability of equitable legal assistance capacities to clients -- regardless of who the clients are, where they reside or the languages they speak? How does your system ensure that clients have equitable access to necessary assistance including self-help, legal education,

advice, brief service, and representation in all relevant forums? Please describe what steps you anticipate taking to ensure equitable access in the coming years.

ALSC and the other components of the system strive for this. Since ALSC does have to withhold services from some applicants based on who they are, it has to rely on other component agencies to try to provide such services; the most effective performance in this area has been by Catholic Social Services' Immigration and Refugee Services program.

ALSC established its formerly in-house pro bono component as a separate organization in accordance with the program integrity requirements, to allow pro bono attorneys wanting to volunteer under the program the full range of available cases without regard to ALSC's own restrictions. The new APBP did serve this purpose, but not as effectively as had been hoped. The original hope that the new organization could operate for only slightly more than it had in-house at ALSC was not realized, and the new organization's budget was larger than some of its original architects had envisioned. Management problems prevented the organization from fulfilling its full potential, and as of its 18-month birthday, there were only ten LSC-impermissible cases for which pro bono attorneys had been arranged. Now, with those management problems having been addressed, but with a radical restructuring necessitated by the dramatic reduction in IOLTA funds, the current plan is for APBP to continue at a much-reduced level of operations, to maintain support for those ten cases and an anticipated commensurate number of referrals over the next twelve months. Responsibility for placement and support of the LSC-permissible cases will be brought back in-house at ALSC.

As to where the clients reside: ALSC strives to keep its service delivery equitable as between rural and urban residents. Maintenance of the small ALSC offices in the smaller Alaskan communities is absolutely essential to this. Our experience during those intervals when the Dillingham, Kotzebue and Nome offices were closed down, and those areas serviced out of ALSC's urban offices in Anchorage and Fairbanks, is that rural clients were disproportionately underserved. Existing clients were adequately served, but new intake was unable to get the attention it needed. We learned that the availability of a toll-free number just was not an adequate substitute for having a staffer on the ground in the community. Since the urban staffs could not be increased due to the same budget problems that necessitated closure of the bush offices, urban staffers were unable to travel to the affected areas with sufficient frequency to encourage and maintain client intake. Urban clients had better access, due not just to proximity, but also to the fact that local urban funding sources demanded accountability, such that it was important to meet the numerical goals laid out in those local urban grants.

Equitable access over various parts of the state has also defied quantification in that there are differing levels of financial support from the local communities. Local support from Nome, Dillingham, Kotzebue and Barrow has been crucial to keeping those offices open, but it is difficult to impossible to set a standard formula for how much local support will have to be forthcoming for ALSC to maintain an office. The Bethel office receives no local money; the Nome office is funded about 36% by local money; the Kotzebue office is funded entirely by local money. The Executive Director is working on a formula that utilizes the statewide (i.e., non-local) dollars per poor person as a benchmark by which to assess the “equitable access” ALSC provides from area to area within the state, but application of this formula awaits updated 2000 poverty population figures.

The most concrete step ALSC contemplates at this point in furthering equitable access will be the AlaskaLawHelp website described below. The Internet is increasingly accessible even in small communities, and a well-designed website should go a long ways towards evening out the urban/rural differential access to valuable legal information.

5. How does the legal service delivery system employ technology to provide increased access and enhanced services to clients throughout the state? What technological initiatives are currently underway and how will they support the integrated statewide delivery system?

Clients in rural Alaska face challenges that, while not unique to the legal services world, differ from those faced by clients residing in urban areas. Geographic distances between communities are exacerbated by the lack of a road system in much of rural Alaska. A river serving as the main transportation corridor for village residents may be accessible during the winter or summer but will be dangerously impassable during the spring “break-up” and fall “freeze-up” periods. Access to legal and social services resources, including access to pro bono attorneys in the local community, may be limited or non-existent for isolated rural residents. With this in mind, and recognizing that Alaska has a strong network of organizations that serve the low-income community, ALSC applied for and received a 2001 LSC Technology Initiative Grant (TIG) for the development of a statewide website. The client-oriented side of the site, built on the Pro Bono Net template, will be ready for configuration and content posting later this month.

Alaska’s statewide website uses the URL www.AlaskaLawHelp.org. An active stakeholders committee, which meets monthly, is made up of representatives from the Alaska Bar Association, Catholic Social Services, the Alaska Court System’s Family Law Self-Help Center, the Alaska State Court Law Library, the Alaska Network on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, the Immigration and Refugee Services Project of Catholic Social Services, the

Disability Law Center of Alaska, the Alaska Mental Health Web, the Alaska Native Justice Center, Alaska Pro Bono Program, Inc., and Alaska Legal Services Corporation.

ALSC plans to submit a 2002 TIG application for an innovation/statewide technology project that will place public access terminals and pro se resources in each of the Alaska Superior Court locations. This initiative is a collaborative effort between ALSC and the Alaska Court System. If funded, this project will increase access to legal information and self-help resources for clients in under-served areas of the state in which there is no local ALSC office. The development of new, modularized self-help and information resources will provide a cost-efficient, effective mechanism for expanding service delivery to those who cannot be accepted for representation by one of ALSC's under-staffed offices.

6. How has the legal service delivery system expanded its resources to provide critical legal services to low income clients including hard to reach groups such as migrant farmworkers, Native Americans, the elderly, those with physical or mental disabilities, those confined to institutions, immigrants and the rural poor?

Alaska has few if any migrant farmworkers.

Native Americans represent a significant component of Alaska's population and ALSC's clientele. ALSC has found that the re-establishment and maintenance of its rural offices is the most effective way to reach Native American clientele. ALSC has a special grant to work on Alaska Native allotment hearings and appeals. ALSC has a strong track record of litigating on behalf of Native American clientele on such vital issues as self-rule and subsistence use of fish and game resources.

The elderly have been served by ALSC's grant from the Alaska Office on Aging. A program coordinator in Anchorage oversees service delivery by all of ALSC's local offices. Outreach to senior centers and other agencies is an important component of the work done under this grant. Additionally, ALSC has recently been awarded a "caregiver" grant by the same Office, to focus on the legal problems of financially-eligible families trying to cope with the additional demands of caring for an aged or disabled relative.

Persons with physical or mental disabilities are served by ALSC with respect to their general civil legal problems. Legal problems specific to those disabilities are the focus of the Disability Law Center, which has several attorneys in Anchorage, and single-paralegal offices in Juneau, Bethel, and Fairbanks. ALSC maintains a good working relationship with the DLC to insure that services are not

duplicated. ALSC receives a special appropriation from the state to appeal denials of SSI disability for certain applicants (those receiving “Interim Assistance” from the State, which gets repaid from the applicant’s retroactive SSI award if the appeal is successful). ALSC has also received a special grant from the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority to focus on civil work for those with mental disabilities; the administrative work necessary to make these funds available to ALSC has not yet been completed by the Trust Authority.

As to those confined to institutions: individuals in nursing homes or mental health facilities are serviced by both ALSC and the DLC, depending on the nature of their problem. Those confined in prison facilities cannot, of course, receive services from ALSC, and there is at present no particular organization addressing the civil legal needs of Alaska’s prisoners. APBP Inc. has been able to provide pro bono attorneys to prisoners, generally upon referral from the federal courts.

Although immigrants are a significant sector of Alaska’s population, the LSC restrictions preclude ALSC from providing assistance to many immigrant clients. Fortunately, the CSS Immigrant and Refugee Services Project exists specifically to address the needs of this population.

7. What steps have been implemented within the legal services delivery system and among client communities to identify and nurture new leaders? Do the existing leaders reflect the diversity within the state and within client communities that your delivery system serves? Do your state’s equal justice leaders reflect the gender, race, ethnic and economic concerns of important but sometimes overlooked groups within your state? Does the leadership provide opportunities for innovation and experimentation; does it support creative solutions to meet changing needs; are new ideas welcomed; are clients nurtured as leaders? Has the leadership been given sufficient authority and resources to implement needed changes?

ALSC values diversity, employs a diverse staff, and operates on an organizational model that provides opportunities for innovation and development of leadership potential. ALSC’s 15-member Board of Directors is made up of nine attorneys (one of whom is Alaska Native) and six client members (all of whom are Alaska Native). Each of the representatives is a leader in his/her own community, either by virtue of being a tribal or village leader, serving as a board member or officer of another organization that assists low-income Alaskans, being a leader within the Alaska Bar Association, or having a strong affiliation with an Alaska Native organization or coalition. Board members are selected on a regional basis, either as attorney appointees from one of the four judicial districts or as client representatives selected by client councils. The Board’s Executive Committee is made up of two client members, two attorney members, and the president. The

membership of each committee (Program Operations, Audit and Finance, Development, and Client Grievance) reflects a mix of attorney and client representatives. Client members were actively involved in ALSC's recent executive director search committee process, and a client member is currently serving on the Program Operations sub-committee that is charged with examining the organization's sexual harassment policy.

Within ALSC, the staffing pattern reflects diversity in cultural and ethnic background, age, gender, and life orientation. Leadership opportunities within the organization extend not only to the local office supervising attorneys but also to others in the organization who have a particular interest and talent in taking on new responsibilities. The expansion of leadership opportunities within ALSC is looked upon not as a diminution of the responsibility of the executive director; rather, this expansion is looked upon as a way to engage staff in meaningful and relevant activities that allow for the development and sharing of subject matter expertise, thus strengthening ALSC's ability to provide client-oriented services.

8. What do you envision will be your next steps to achieve a client-centered integrated and comprehensive delivery system within your state or territory? How will clients be actively involved in the determination of these next steps?

Initially, the new Executive Director intends to formulate, in conjunction with ALSC staff and Board members, a brief but substantive "mission statement" emphasizing the client as the focus of ALSC's services. Such a mission statement has been articulated by the Alaska Court System, and by other LSC grantees, and appears in those contexts to have been a valuable tool both in the discussion and attention generated during the course of its formulation, and in its communication to the public of the agency's central purpose. The statement will try to incorporate aspects of the five "philosophy statements" generated at the May 1997 strategizing session discussed above. Since the first of these was "ALSC is committed to the delivery of rural services," ALSC's lay Board members, who for the most part represent the rural parts of the state, will be especially encouraged to take on a role in the formulation of this mission statement.

The mission statement will be a means to the larger end of inculcating a culture of client-oriented service within ALSC.

Another concrete step will be the Executive Director's direct participation on the Implementation Committee for the Access to Civil Justice Task Force described above. It is vitally important that this group review, prioritize, and act upon those unfulfilled components of the Task Force recommendations.

Another concrete step will be the establishment of the AlaskaLawHelp website discussed above.

9. What has been the greatest obstacle to achieving a statewide, integrated, client-centered delivery system and how was that obstacle overcome or, alternatively, how do you plan to overcome that obstacle?

Although the lack of resources has probably been the greatest obstacle, it is also the case that the situational problems noted in the introduction to this report hampered both the internal progress within ALSC and APBP, as well as the integration of their services into a congruent whole with each other and with the other service providers. Those situational problems are now in the past. ALSC and APBP are now finding themselves able to (and in some respects forced to) achieve a higher level of cooperation, both with each other and with CSS, in addressing the most pressing task, that of more efficiently allocating the now-dramatically reduced IOLTA funds. As was commented at the February “Building Justice Communities” conference in Indianapolis, it is when funding crises hit that inter-agency coordination becomes most essential, but is most often lacking; the fact that ALSC, APBP and CSS have (thus far) been able to work constructively to help each other through this crisis speaks well for the future cooperation among them and the other Alaska service providers.

10. Has any benefit-to-cost analysis been made in terms of creating a comprehensive, integrated and client-centered legal services delivery system in your state? If yes, what does your analysis show?

No cost-benefit analysis has been undertaken.

11. What resources, technical assistance and support would help you meet your goals?

The Indianapolis “Building Justice Communities” conference for unitary state programs was very helpful. The availability of the TIG grants and the technical assistance accompanying them is a very important component of ALSC’s planning and goals.

To what extent have intended outcomes of a comprehensive, integrated client-centered legal service delivery system been achieved including but not limited to service effectiveness/quality; efficiency; equity in terms of client access; greater involvement by members of the private bar in the legal lives of clients, and client-community empowerment?

Areas of exploration include:

1. In terms of the issues impacting upon low-income persons within your state, what strategies have you designed to address these issues and how do you plan to measure your future success in addressing your objectives?

ALSC's strategies for addressing the issues impacting on low-income Alaskans vary from subject matter area to subject matter area, and sometimes over time as well. It must be stressed that these issues are brought to ALSC by clients who are experiencing real problems, and ALSC's "strategy" can be basically boiled down to trying to win its cases on behalf of its clients. However, ALSC is more likely to appeal an issue if it represents a problem that has arisen in several prior cases as well.

In the family law area, several issues have brought themselves to ALSC's attention:

- The State's Division of Family and Youth Services has a practice of taking custody of the children from a parent, and then immediately releasing the child to a non-parent, without having filed either a child protective case or any kind of child custody case. This long-standing and widespread practice is an end-run around the parent's due process rights, and ALSC is currently challenging that practice on behalf of two parents..
- The increased array of remedies available under, and longer period of effectiveness of, a protective order against domestic violence has provided incentives for increasing numbers of domestic violence perpetrators to challenge various aspects of Alaska's protective order statute, e.g., whether seriatim orders can be issued based on the same violent incident, whether an order allowing the petitioner the use of a home can be overcome by a subsequently-filed Forcible Entry and Detainer action, etc. Although the limited duration of the protective order frequently makes such issues moot by the time an appeal can be resolved, nonetheless ALSC will litigate to protect the rights of the victim for as long as the issue is relevant.
- The issue of the appropriate disposition of a child support arrearage following the vacation of an erroneous determination of paternity is one that impacts on a significant number of low-income clients, and recurs with distressing frequency. ALSC has taken up several appeals in an attempt to limit the authority of the Alaska Child Support Enforcement Division to continue collecting child support arrears after the erroneous paternity determination has been vacated.
- Another recurring issue for ALSC clientele is the insufficient weight in child custody determinations given to the fact that ALSC's client has handled most of the day-to-day responsibility for child-rearing. A

“primary caretaker” presumption such as that adopted by other state courts would be of significant benefit to ALSC’s clients and their children.

In the housing area:

- It is a common practice for a landlord to include in a “late-rent” notice an amount which includes other charges in addition to the rent. By overstating the amount which has to be paid to avoid summary eviction, the landlord (intentionally or inadvertently) makes it less likely that the tenant will be able to or willing to pay the required amount. ALSC has litigated this issue in the past; although most court rulings find that inclusion of non-rent amounts makes the summary eviction procedure unavailable, district court judges and magistrates have not been entirely consistent about this. A clear rule would be of significant benefit to ALSC’s clientele overall.
- The Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC) provides HUD money through section 8 to subsidize indigent tenants’ rent payments. Notwithstanding the fact that eviction from such housing must be premised on “good cause” under federal regulations, AHFC has approved leases which purport to permit “no cause” eviction notices. When challenged on this practice in court, AHFC prevailed on the landlords to withdraw their “no-cause” notice and to issue new leases complying with federal law; however, AHFC has refused to accept responsibility for reviewing other leases it has approved which contain this prohibited clause. ALSC is litigating to try to establish this responsibility on AHFC’s part.

In the benefits area:

- Alaska has not adopted a “medically needy” spend-down under its Medicaid program; this has the effect of placing Medicaid beyond reach for individuals who are as little as \$1.00 over the income limit, even if their medical expenses dwarf that \$1.00 excess income. However, federal law also requires Alaska to recognize the efficacy of an “income trust” in bringing an individual’s income within the Medicaid limit. ALSC routinely drafts such trusts for people who are slightly over-income for Medicaid, and will continue to do so unless and until Alaska adopts a medically needy option to make such trusts obsolete.
- Alaska’s Division of Medical Assistance has a tendency to categorically refuse Medicaid coverage for adult dental care regardless of whether such care is “medically necessary” (e.g., orthodontic treatment necessary to alleviate headaches due to malocclusion caused by domestic violence assaults; dental treatment for a developmentally

delayed 33-year-old unable to self-care or convey feelings of pain or discomfort). ALSC is pursuing challenges to this categorical denial in appropriate cases.

In the area of uniquely Alaskan issues of subsistence and Native self-rule:

- ALSC’s rural clientele have a subsistence preference right under federal law over lands and waters governed by that federal law, but the parallel state law was struck down as unconstitutional by the Alaska Supreme Court. Until such time as the Alaska Legislature approves and Alaska’s voters ratify a constitutional amendment to allow state law to recognize this subsistence preference, the dividing line between areas governed by federal and state law, although not always well-defined, is of critical importance to Alaska’s rural clientele, and ALSC will be repeatedly called upon by those clients to fight to maximize the areas within which they can exercise their federally-protected rights.
- Alaska’s Native Villages, although the territorial extent of their jurisdiction has been considerably reduced by the 1998 United States Supreme Court ruling finding lands granted under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) as not constituting “Indian country,” nonetheless continue to have a non-territorial, membership-based jurisdiction over the internal domestic relations of tribal members and children eligible for tribal membership, which has only recently come to be recognized by the Alaska Supreme Court. After seven years of litigating in state court to obtain that ruling, ALSC now finds itself defending that ruling against a collateral attack in federal court, on behalf of the same client it represented in the state court proceeding. Because Alaska’s Native Village courts are an important component of dispute resolution and access to justice in rural Alaska, ALSC’s strategy in this area is to protect the rights of Alaska Natives to be governed by their own Councils and Courts.

The extent of ALSC’s success in its advocacy on these issues will be measured, in the first instance, in the same way ALSC measures its success in all its representation, i.e., by the outcome of the case. ALSC uses the Western New York Law Center “TIME” system, and so ALSC case handlers when closing out a file choose from among a qualitative set of over 125 subject-matter specific client outcomes.

2. Has the legal services delivery system expanded access and services through coordination with providers throughout the state? Can this be quantified?

Qualitatively, the re-establishment of the bush offices, which was achieved through coordination with (and funding provided by) the regional Native non-

profit in each instance, has expanded access and services to the persons in those regions. This might be quantified by comparing the intakes from those regions for the years 1996 (when the offices were closed), 1997 (when they remained closed), and 1998 (when they re-opened). However, ALSC's record-keeping system underwent a change during that time frame, and counting up the intake from those regions for years prior to 1999 would be inordinately time-consuming and cost-inefficient.

3. Has the quality of services provided by the legal services delivery system improved? How?

It is believed that it has. This is based on data from the WNYLC TIME system concerning case outcomes, which indicates that in 1999, the proportion of persons helped for whom the client objective was not met was 20.3%; in 2000, that went to 14.5%; and in 2001, that went to 13.8%.

4. Since 1998, has there been improvement in the relative equity of client access throughout the state for all low income clients regardless of who they are, where in the state they reside, what languages they speak, their race/gender/national origin, or the existence of other access barriers? How is this equity achieved?

Again, the re-establishment of the bush offices has been the most major component of restoring some measure of relative equity regardless of location. ALSC's rural offices try to hire support staffers who are bilingual in the language of the locality, so that language barriers are minimized.

5. Since 1998, has there been improvement in the relative equity in terms of the availability of the full range of civil equal justice delivery capacities throughout the state? What mechanisms have been developed to ensure such relative equity is achieved and maintained? Since 1998, has there been improvement in the relative equity in the development and distribution of civil equal justice resources throughout the state? Are there areas of the state that suffer from a disproportionate lack of resources (funding as well as in-kind/pro bono)? If so, is there a strategy to overcome such inequities?

There has been improvement. The full range of civil equal justice delivery capacities throughout the state has been enhanced by the re-establishment of the bush offices; a rural client may get advice as easily at an 800-number in Anchorage almost as easily as from an 800-number office in Nome, but the chances of that client getting full representation from Anchorage are much less than the chances of getting full representation from an attorney stationed in a Nome ALSC office.

Although there has been improvement, it remains the case that not all areas of the state are adequately serviced. Kodiak suffers from a disproportionate lack of resources; other areas may as well. There is clearly a disparity in the availability of pro bono and in-kind resources, measured in terms of lawyers per 1000 general population, on which scale Juneau ranks first at 7.6, Anchorage second at 6.0, Ketchikan third at 2.6, Fairbanks fourth at 2.2, and all other areas below 2.0.

There are also disparities in terms of the local support received for ALSC's rural offices. ALSC gets nothing in local support for its Bethel office (two attorneys, one support staff); it gets approximately 36% of the support for its Nome office (one attorney, one part-time support staff) from Kawerak, the Nome area regional Native non-profit organization; and it gets virtually 100% of the support for its Kotzebue office (two attorneys one full-time support staff) from Maniilaq, the Kotzebue area regional Native non-profit organization. The well-known tension between wanting to be responsive to local funding offers, and the need to provide adequate service to other areas regardless of that area's inability to generate local funding, is a constant factor for ALSC's funding decisions. ALSC is trying to develop a criterion for calculating the statewide (i.e., non-local) dollars per poor person from area to area, and keeping that statistic within a reasonably comparable range across the offices, taking into account cost-of-living differentials. Application of that benchmark to ALSC's current office pattern is awaiting the release of the 2000 census poverty data.

6. Does this legal services delivery system operate efficiently? Are there areas of duplication?

The system operates relatively efficiently, with few areas of duplication. With the exception of ALSC and APBP, each provider has a narrow focus with respect to the clientele and the services to be rendered, so although the clientele may overlap, the services are less likely to. The number of providers is relatively small, and the communication among all of them is relatively good, such that any duplicative efforts are apt to become apparent and be dealt with fairly quickly.

7. Has the system expanded the way it involves private lawyers in the delivery of essential services to low-income persons? Does the system effectively and efficiently use the private bar to deliver essential services to low income people?

The establishment of two separate pro bono programs (by CSS and ANDVSA) has expanded the way in which private attorneys are involved in the delivery of essential services to low-income persons. APBP Inc. had not been operating particularly efficiently prior to December 2001. The new funding constraints under IOLTA caused by falling interest rates are forcing APBP to

restructure dramatically. Attorney recruitment and placement of LSC-permissible cases will be brought back in-house at ALSC. It is planned that both ALSC and APBP will operate their pro bono programs more effectively and efficiently under this model.

AlaskaLawHelp website stakeholders have been advised that the Pro Bono Net template's password-protected advocate practice areas have been designed to facilitate placement of pro bono cases, to recruit new volunteer attorneys, and to make available resource and reference materials for attorneys engaging in pro bono work. All three state pro bono programs are represented on the AlaskaLawHelp stakeholders committee; all stand to benefit from the access to these recruiting, placement, and practice area resources as they come on line in the next few months.

Are the best organizational and human resource management configurations and approaches being used?

Areas of exploration include:

1. For calendar year 2001, what is the current configuration of programs (LSC and non-LSC) that deliver services to low income clients -- i.e., what are the components (size, areas of responsibility, governance) of the delivery system? What are the funding sources and levels for each of these components of the delivery system?

We have tried to provide this information in our response to Question (A)(2) above. ALSC, APBP, the Disability Law Center, Catholic Social Services, the Alaska Network on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, the Alaska Mental Health Web, and the Family Law Self-Help Center all have statewide missions.

2. Since October 1998, what other configurations and/or approaches have been seriously explored? Were any adopted? Were any rejected? Are any changes contemplated in the coming year?

As described above, ALSC's pro bono program was established as an independent program in 2000. Changes in the coming year are being necessitated by the drastic reduction in IOLTA funding.

3. Is there any identifiable duplication in capacities or services in the state? How many duplicative systems -- accounting systems, human resources management systems, case management systems, etc. -- currently exist? Does the service delivery system now in use minimize or eliminate duplications that existed prior to October 1, 1998?

Each component has its own accounting system, human resources management system, and case management system. The differing subject matters and areas of focus of the various service providers probably preclude consolidation of human resources management systems or case management systems. Some consolidation of financial and fundraising services may be practicable; an organization called the Foraker Group is exploring the possibility of having smaller non-profits contract with it for accounting and fundraising services.

4. Since Oct. 1998, what innovative service delivery systems/mechanisms/initiatives been adopted in the state? Have any been explored and then rejected?

See discussions above concerning the separate establishment of APBP Inc.; the Court System's development of the Family Law Self-Help Center; and ALSC's incipient work with the TIG Grant.

CONCLUSION

Although it has been a little overwhelming for one who has been in office for about six weeks to be asked to recapitulate the last several years' worth of the agency's progress, this has in fact been an extremely valuable exercise. This is not to suggest that a similar status report should be required of every incoming Executive Director, but this one, at least, has arrived at a much better grasp of where ALSC stands and where it needs to go, by virtue of having prepared this.

Contact person:

Andy Harrington, Executive Director
Alaska Legal Services Corporation
1648 South Cushman Suite 300
Fairbanks AK 99701
Telephone 907-452-5181
Fax 907-456-6359
Email: aharrington@alasc-law.org