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OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS

Report to the Governor and to the Legislature



State of California George Deukmejian Governor

1987





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STATE OF CALIFORNIA

GEORGE DEUKMEJIAN Governor

STATE AND CONSUMER SERVICES AGENCY

SHIRLEY R. CHILTON Secretary

DEPARTMENT OF GENERAL SERVICES

WILLIAM J. ANTHONY Director

OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS

DONALD S. MITCHELL Director 87-3-38

HONORABLE GEORGE DEUKMEJIAN Governor, State of California

and

MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATURE

This report is mandated¹ to describe developments in administrative law affecting the Office of Administrative Hearings and to make recommendations which promote fairness, uniformity and expedition of government's business.

Topics discussed include automation, electronic recording of hearings, proposed legislation, pre-hearing conferences, and arbitration of construction contract disputes.

W.J. ANTHONY, Director Department of General Services

DENALD S. MITCHELL, Director Office of Administrative Hearings

1. Government Code Section 11370.5

OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS

314 West First Street Los Angeles 90012 (213) 620-4650 501 J Street Suite 230 Sacramento 95814 (916) 445-4926

Donald S. Mitchell Director, San Francisco 455 Golden Gate Avenue Suite 2248 San Francisco 94102 (415) 557-1636

STEVEN MARTINI, Deputy Director, Sacramento JUDY CLAVERE, Administrative Officer, Sacramento MARY DAVIE, Supervising-Hearing Reporter, Los Angeles JEFFREY PRAG, Counsel, Sacramento ANDREA PRYCHUN, Executive Secretary, Sacramento

SACRAMENTO

KARL ENGEMAN, Administrative Law Judge in Charge

Administrative Law Judges

M. Amanda Behe Muriel Evens Catherine Frink Keith Levy Leonard Scott

Hearing Officers, Special Hearing Unit

FRANCIS BOGGUS DENNY DAVIS SPENCER JOE JANET SAUNDERS DANIEL TURNER

LOS ANGELES

JOHN WILLD, Administrative Law Judge in Charge

Administrative Law Judges

FRANK BRITT WILLIAM BYRNES ROSALYN CHAPMAN MARGUERITE GEFTAKYS RONALD GRUEN PAUL HOGAN RICHARD LOPEZ MILFORD MARON ROBERT NEHER MARILYN NELSON RICHARD RANGER JEROME SCHWIMMER JOHN WAGNER

SAN FRANCISCO

STEWART JUDSON, Administrative Law Judge in Charge

Administrative Law Judges

RUTH ASTLE Robert Coffman Michael Cohn Paul Doyle

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I. AUTOMATION SYSTEM

A. System Prior to Automation

The Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH) is located in three cities: Sacramento, San Francisco and Los Angeles. These three offices create and process large amounts of text information and related case tracking, time keeping and billing functions. Until recently OAH did not have any automated equipment, and all of the above work was accomplished by standard typewriters, photocopying and manually maintained logs.

Since the discussion on automation in the 1985 Report, OAH has procured and installed a system of automated equipment in each of its three offices. There are three specific elements that the equipment addresses:

1. Decision Typing

A substantial portion of the clerical workload involves the preparation of written hearing decisions. Needless duplication, due to the retyping of decisions, was required under the old system. Extensive revisions were often required, necessitating the retyping of large portions of decisions. The word processing capability of the automated system allows professional staff to receive draft decisions for revision, eliminates extensive retyping when revisions are made, and allows for storage and retrieval of standard formats and paragraphs, case captions, and introductory material, closings, orders and probationary terms and conditions.

2. Time Keeping and Billing

The Department of General Services is required by law to recover all costs to the State of maintaining and operating OAH. OAH bills clients monthly based on the number of case filings, professional staff time, hearing reporter and electronic reporting monitor and transcript hours. In the case of public entities, other than State agencies, OAH bills for time spent by OAH staff on a case-by-case basis after the case is closed. Monthly billing information is processed by General Services' Data Processing Services Section, and monthly invoicing and mailing is performed by General Services' Accounting Section.

The new system will automate the time keeping and billing functions, expedite billing, and allow for more accurate and useful accounting records.

OAH will also store and be able to retrieve information not previously collected which will be used for office management and planning purposes.

3. Case Tracking

Approximately 4,600 cases are filed annually with OAH. Of these, approximately 65% proceed to hearing, while the other 35% are settled or withdrawn prior to hearing. At any given time, over 2,200 cases are either awaiting a hearing date or are on calendar pending hearing.

All case tracking functions were performed manually. Tracking commenced when a case file was opened. A number was assigned and an index card was prepared with case information which was stored alphabetically by case name. The same case information was then entered in two separate log books, one kept by case number and the other by agency. Updated information was posted manually to the index cards and log books. When a file was closed, a separate close-out book was kept in Sacramento which recorded the case name and disposition. Thus, needless duplication of effort resulted due to multiple record keeping.

Procedures for recording case information varied somewhat between the three OAH offices. Furthermore, records maintained in Los Angeles had to be manually transferred to centralized ledgers kept in Sacramento, leading to clerical errors and inaccurate records as a result of multiple recording of data. OAH was frequently unable to respond to requests for statistical information from client agencies or the public due to the difficulty of data retrieval. In fact, some important information was simply not compiled because OAH lacked technology to store information in a usable form.

B. Automated System

The automated system is designed for site specific shared resource multiterminal word processing, data base management and spreadsheet capability in three locations in the State. The automated system has been implemented primarily in Sacramento; however, five workstations have been placed in Los Angeles and three workstations have been placed in San Francisco.

The system provides effective and acceptable backup and recovery methods and also provides high levels of availability. The successful bidder (contractor) was required to provide a phased-in installation plan to accommodate management of the system and user training. The plan had to be approved by OAH prior to the contract award date.

Generally, the office automation system implementation included:

- 1. Hardware, consisting of disk storage, either floppy and/or hard disk, video display terminals and keyboards, line printers, character printers, and appropriate control units designated and located for each site.
- 2. Software services, including software packages required to meet the Department's needs. The implementation included two specialized turn-key applications: a) Pleading (case tracking) and Calendaring System and b) Time and Billing Systems. The contractor provided the software applications utilizing standard software packages, complete with the necessary development, modifications and testing. The software runs on each system installed.
- 3. System installation, training, data conversion, and manual/procedural documentation.
 - a. System Implementation—The contractor provided site preparation specifications, delivery, installation, and hardware check.
 - b. Training—The contractor provided training plans and material and conducted the training.

c. Manuals and Procedure Guides—The contractor provided all necessary manuals and operator guides for the system.

The automated system was required to meet a minimum anticipated growth in the number of transactions of 10 percent annually for a period of 5 years. The equipment is configurated to accommodate the upgrades necessary to support such growth. Upgrades to equipment, as they occur, will require little or no modification to existing software.

The Sacramento office is responsible for all administrative requirements of the system. Therefore, the centralized storage and office automation software have been installed in the Sacramento location. San Francisco and Los Angeles sites will access the centralized storage and office automation capabilities through dial-up facilities.

II. ELECTRONIC RECORDING OF HEARINGS

In its 1985 Report, the Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH) described its prior efforts to secure legislation authorizing electronic recording of Administrative Procedure Act (APA) hearings, acknowledged the Legislature's positive response in 1983 through its enactment of AB 2034 (Ch. 635, Stats. 1983), and recounted certain preliminary results obtained after a six month voluntary program in OAH's San Francisco office. OAH has continued to employ an electronic hearing monitor on a half-time basis in its San Francisco office. During the 26 month period of September 4, 1984 through October 30, 1986, 365 cases were recorded involving a wide range of APA hearings. Over 70 percent of these cases were devoted either to the Department of Real Estate, Contractors State License Board, or Department of Motor Vehicles. The results have been both positive and consistent with those set forth in OAH's 1985 report. OAH has also attempted to expand the program to its Los Angeles office. However, there has been difficulty recruiting and retaining qualified individuals to perform the electronic hearing monitor duties.

III. PROPOSED LEGISLATION

The Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH) conducts hearings under the Administrative Procedure Act (APA), Government Code Section 11500 et seq. These hearings involve revocation, suspension and denial of licenses by a variety of State agencies. The hearings are subject to the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act, Government Code Section 11120 et seq., with a specific exception for deliberations once testimony is concluded.

A number of licensing proceedings involve testimony from minor witnesses. Some of this testimony is highly sensitive and, if disclosed publicly, could be potentially traumatic to the witness, e.g. recounting sexual molestation episodes at day care facilities licensed by the Department of Social Services. There is no current express authority for OAH to exclude members of the public during such testimony to protect the minor witness from serious psychological harm. Similar protections have been enacted for minor witnesses testifying in certain criminal proceedings (Penal Code Section 868 et seq.). In 1986 OAH sponsored AB 4230 (Wright). The bill would have allowed an administrative law judge (ALJ) employed by OAH to close a hearing held under the APA to the public, with stated exceptions, whenever in his or her opinion testimony before the public would likely cause serious psychological harm to a minor witness. Last minute opposition to AB 4230 prevented final passage of the bill. However, OAH is convinced there is a continuing need to address the problem of eliciting testimony from a minor witness in an APA hearing otherwise open to the public. While OAH is not proposing any other specific solution or language at this time, it believes the Legislature should examine this problem area.

IV. PRE-HEARING CONFERENCES

During the past year the Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH) has been conducting, on a strictly voluntary basis, pre-hearing conferences (PHCs). These PHCs have been held primarily in Board of Medical Quality Assurance disciplinary matters where the parties have estimated at least five days of hearing will be required. A PHC typically lasts several hours. OAH conducts these PHCs with the following goals in mind:

- 1. Initiate or pursue settlement possibilities.
- 2. Explore means to shorten actual trial time should the matter proceed to hearing, thereby effecting economies of time and money.
- 3. Resolve as many procedural and substantive matters as possible through stipulations and compromises.
- 4. Provide for full mutual discovery continuing up to the first hearing day.

Because the PHC program has recently begun, has not been mandatory, and has been confined primarily only to medical cases, OAH has not accumulated a large volume of data. There have been just 21 PHCs in Northern California and 42 in Southern California through October, 1986. But the Northern California data, for example, indicates the value of this procedure. Thirteen of the 21 cases settled following the pre-hearing conference, with a fourteenth case taking only two of the originally scheduled five days to hear. Some 91 days of scheduled hearing time were saved as a result.

In 1986 the Legislature granted OAH mandatory authority to conduct pre-hearing conferences effective January 1, 1987 by enacting a new Government Code Section 11511.5 (see AB 2769, Sher (Ch. 597, Stats. 1986) and AB 3482, Harris (Ch. 899, Stats. 1986)). The PHC will now be able to deal with one or more of the following matters: exploration of settlement possibilities, preparation of stipulations, clarification of issues, rulings on identity and limitation of the number of witnesses, objections to proffers of evidence, order of presentation of evidence and cross-examination, rulings regarding issuance of subpoenas and protective orders, schedules for submission of written briefs and schedules for the commencement and conduct of the hearing, or any other matters which will promote the orderly and prompt conduct of the hearing.

OAH believes pre-hearing conferences will reduce the costs of Administrative Procedure Act hearings for both State agencies and individuals (licensees and applicants for licenses) who appear before OAH. Settlements will be facilitated. OAH staff time will be more effectively utilized. Those cases that are heard should take less time and be conducted more efficiently.

V. ARBITRATION OF CONSTRUCTION CONTRACT DISPUTES

In its 1985 Report of the Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH) issued a comprehensive review of the first five years of the Public Works Construction Contract Arbitration Program (see Public Contract Code § 10240 et seq.). OAH is charged by the Legislature with responsibility for providing administrative services, facilities, and fiscal support to implement the program. OAH's costs are recovered through filing fees imposed on the parties to each arbitration (Public Contract Code § 10245.4).

Through October 30, 1986 there have been 184 demands for arbitration. The total by calendar year is: 1979—7, 1980—10, 1981—21, 1982—24, 1983— 23, 1984—26, 1985—40, and 1986—33. Of these cases 114 have been filed against the Department of Transportation (62%), 37 against the Department of General Services (20%), 6 against the Department of Water Resources (3%), 4 against the Department of Corrections (2%), and 23 against various local agencies (13%). The amounts claimed have ranged from \$1,240 to \$11.2 million. These 184 cases were resolved in the following manner: 23 dismissed for various reasons, 35 settled (31 without hearing, 4 after hearing), 74 decided after hearing, 1 decided without hearing, and 51 with no disposition (1 partially, 3 totally heard).

There have been 328 applicants to be arbitrators for the program. Of these, 137 have been certified and have indicated they are available to participate in the program at this time (additional individuals have been certified in the past but after annual inquiry have removed themselves from consideration). About 20% of the arbitrators are trained in more than one occupation. The current panel consists of 79 attorneys (58%), 29 contractors (21%), 56 engineers (41%), and 2 architects (1%). Their average hourly fee for arbitration is: attorneys—\$130.06, contractors—\$90.31, engineers—\$85.30, and architects—\$62.50. The fees range from \$30/hr. to \$215/hr.

Since May, 1984 either party to a dispute has had the opportunity to elect a simplified claims procedure for claims totaling no more than \$50,-000, provided the department or agency has issued a final written decision. Approximately one-third of all claims filed since that time have been eligible for such an election; the procedure has in fact been selected in about 60 percent of those cases. The typical simplified case will be resolved within nine months. If a hearing is held, it normally will not exceed one day. Arbitration costs assessed to each side will usually not surpass \$750, excluding the filing fee (or \$1,000, including the filing fee).

During the past two years all arbitration cases have been resolved on the average (either by hearing or settlement) within 11 months. For cases which took no longer than two days of hearing, including those that did not go to hearing at all, the average cost to each side has been \$1,234, excluding the filing fee. There have been a small number of cases taking

longer than two days to hear during the past two years. They have taken about 17 months on the average to resolve, with an average cost to each side of \$3,886, excluding the filing fee.

As OAH has indicated before in its 1983 and 1985 Reports, the program continues to work successfully.

VI. Filings For Fiscal Year 1984/85

Agency	North	South	State
ACCOUNTANCY	10	8	18
AUCTIONEERING BOARD	2	ĭ	3
ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL	313	633	946
ARCHITECTURAL EXAMINERS	1	2	3
AUTOMOTIVE REPAIR	17	12	29
BARBER EXAMINERS	11	54	65
BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE	3	3	6
CHIROPRACTIC EXAMINERS	13	16	29
CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY PATROL	1	0	1
CONTRACTORS STATE LICENSE BOARD	459	486	945
CONSERVATION (FORESTRY)	1	0	1
CORPORATIONS	3	18	21
COSMETOLOGY	5	20	25
DENTAL EXAMINERS	14	11	25
EDUCATION (CHILD DEVELOPMENT)	5	0	5
ELECTRONIC & APPLIANCE REPAIR	4	2	6
EMPLOYMENT AGENCIES	5	7	12
ENCINEERS	4	9	13
FAIR EMPLOYMENT & HOUSING	34	69	103
FAIR POLITICAL PRACTICES COMMISSION	1	0	1
FOOD & AGRICULTURE	3	0	3
FUNERAL DIRECTORS	2	3	5
HEALTH SERVICES	2	11	13
HOUSING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT	7	10	17
INSURANCE	44	97	141
INVESTIGATIVE SERVICES	6	23	29
MEDICAL QUALITY ASSURANCE	74	112	186
MOTOR VEHICLES	135	225	360
NURSES (REGISTERED)	76	124	200
NURSING HOME ADMINISTRATORS	1	8	9
OFFICE OF STATEWIDE HEALTH PLANNING	3	6	9
OPTOMETRY BOARD	1	1	2
PHARMACY	29	50	79
PODIATRY	3	5	8
PSYCHIATRIC TECHNICIANS	18	27	45
PSYCHOLOGY EXAMINERS	1	9	10
REAL ESTATE	155	133	288
RETIREMENT-PERS	36	44	80
RETIREMENT-TEACHERS	17	32	49
RETIREMENT—UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA	6	1	7
SECRETARY OF STATE	50	14	64
SOCIAL SERVICES	84	65	149
STRUCTURAL PEST CONTROL	17	37	54
TEACHER PREPARATION & LICENSING	8	14	22
VETERINARY MEDICINE	4	7	11
VOCATIONAL NURSE EXAMINERS	33	75	108
DEPARTMENT OF AGING	0	1	1
OSTEOPATHIC EXAMINERS	0	2	2
FABRIC CARE	0	3	3
CAMING.	0	2	2
GEOLOGIST	0	1	1
ALCOHOL/DRUG	0	1	1
BOARD OF GOVERNORS	0	1	1
GUIDE DOGS	0	1	1

VI. Filings For Fiscal Year 1984/85—Continued

Agency	North	South	State
LABOR STANDARDS	0	1	1
DISPENSING OPTICIANS	0	1	1
HEARING AID DISPENSERS	1	1	2
TRANSPORTATION	8	0	8
JUSTICE	1	. 0	1
FIRE MARSHAL'S OFFICE	7	3	10
BANKING	6	8	14
SHORTHAND REPORTERS	4	3	7
ALLIED HEALTH	1	0	1
INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS	1	0	1
PHYSICIAN'S ASSISTANTS	1	0	1
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT	2	0	2
REHABILITATION	1	0	1
DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES	5	0	5
TOTAL STATE AGENCIES	1,759	2,513	4,272
SCHOOLS			
CLASSIFIED EMPLOYEES	13	1	14
COMMUNITY COLLEGE (FACULTY) (for cause)	2	6	8
PROBATIONARY TEACHERS	45	27	72
STUDENTS (discipline/grievance)	1	0	1
TENURED TEACHERS	24	32	56
TOTAL SCHOOLS	85	66	151
CITY & COUNTY	190	4	194
TOTAL LOCAL GOVERNMENT	190	4	194
TOTAL ALL AGENCIES	2,034	2,583	4,617

VII. Filings For Fiscal Year 1985/86

1997 -

Agency	North	South	State
ACCOUNTANCY	10	6	16
AERONAUTICS	1	1	2
ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL	345	679	1,024
ARCHITECTURAL EXAMINERS	1	0	1
AUTOMOTIVE REPAIR	40	. 25	65
AUCTIONEERING BOARD	4	2	6
BANKING	ī	$\overline{2}$	3
BARBER EXAMINERS	4	41	45
BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE	2	17	19
CHIROPRACTIC EXAMINERS	6	24	30
COLLECTIONS AGENCY	0	24	2
CONTRACTORS STATE LICENSE BOARD	376	541	917
CONSERVATION (FORESTRY)	2	0	2
CORPORATIONS (FORESTRI)	3	17	20
	. 3		
COSMETOLOGY	-	8	11
DENTAL EXAMINERS	11	12	23
EDUCUATION (CHILD DEVELOPMENT)	1	0	1
ELECTRONIC & APPLIANCE REPAIR	5	4	9
EMPLOYMENT AGENCIES	0	5	÷ 5
ENGINEERS	5	2	7
FAIR EMPLOYMENT & HOUSING	26	34	60
FAIR POLITICAL PRACTICES COMMISSION	6	2	8
FIRE MARSHAL'S OFFICE	4	8	12
FOOD & AGRICULTURE	2	1	3
HEALTH SERVICES	11	14	25
HORSE RACING BOARD	6	4	10
HOUSING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT	6	15	21
INSURANCE	55	74	129
INVESTIGATIVE SERVICES	4	13	17
MEDICAL OUALITY ASSURANCE	53	104	157
MOTOR VEHICLES	207	212	419
NURSES (REGISTERED)	84	62	146
NURSING HOME ADMINISTRATORS	7	11	18
OFFICE OF STATEWIDE HEALTH PLANNING	2	5	7
OPTOMETRY BOARD	2	2	4
PHARMACY	24	42	66
PODIATRY	24	42	5
PSYCHIATRIC TECHNICIANS	32	30	62
PSYCHOLOGY EXAMINERS	32	30	4
	-	-	-
REAL ESTATE	159	219	378
RETIREMENT_PERS	60	48	108
RETIREMENT—TEACHERS	18	30	48
RETIREMENT—UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA	9	4	13
SECRETARY OF STATE	41	40	81
SOCIAL SERVICES	86	68	154
STRUCTURAL PEST CONTROL	16	30	46
TEACHER PREPARATION & LICENSING	14	9	23
VETERINARY MEDICINE	2	3	5
VOCATIONAL NURSE EXAMINERS	35	46	81
OSTEOPATHIC EXAMINERS	1	6	7
COMMISSION ON STATE MANDATES	6	0	6
TRANSPORTATION	13	0	13

Agency	North	South	State
MIGRANT EDUCATION	1	0	1
MIGRANT EDUCATION FABRIC CARE	* 1	0	1
JUSTICE	2	0	2
PARKS & RECREATION	* 1	. 0	1
PRIVATE INVESTIGATORS	2	0	2
BOARD OF GOVERNORS HIGHWAY PATROL	. 3	. 0	3
HIGHWAY PATROL	1	0	1
GEOLOGIST	0	5	5
GAMING	0	5	5
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT	0	1	1
PHYSICAL THERAPIST	0	3	3
ACUPUNCTURE	0	1	1
RESPIRATORY	0	1	1
BOATING AND WATERWAYS	0	1	1
HEARING AID DISPENSERS	0	1	1
TOTAL STATE AGENCIES	1,826	2,547	4,373
SCHOOLS			
CLASSIFIED EMPLOYEES	8	1	9
COMMUNITY COLLEGE (FACULTY) (for cause)	3	2	5
PROBATIONARY TEACHERS	58	23	81
STUDENTS (discipline/grievance)	2	8	10
TENURED TEACHERS	21	31	52
COLLEGE FACULTY MISCELLANEOUS	0	1	1
TOTAL SCHOOLS	92	66	158
CITY & COUNTY	129	12	141
TOTAL LOCAL GOVERNMENT	129	12	141
TOTAL ALL AGENCIES	2,047	2,625	4,672

VII. Filings For Fiscal Year 1985/86—Continued

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