

TACTICAL PLAN FOR COURT TECHNOLOGY

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	1
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	2
JUDICIAL BRANCH TECHNOLOGY.....	4
<i>Tactical Plan Objectives.....</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Integrating Strategic Technology Planning</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Funding Technology From the Statewide Perspective</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Achieving Economies Through Collaboration.....</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Managing a Multiyear Implementation Process</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Encouraging Trial Court Innovation</i>	<i>8</i>
TACTICAL PLAN FRAMEWORK.....	9
<i>Guiding Principles.....</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>Defining Characteristics.....</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>Trial Court Groups.....</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>Options for Court Groups</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>Administrative Systems Options for All Courts</i>	<i>15</i>
IMPLEMENTATION PLAN.....	17
<i>Tactical Plan Implementation</i>	<i>17</i>
<i>Project Timeline.....</i>	<i>18</i>
<i>Evaluation of Tactical Plan.....</i>	<i>19</i>
<i>Fiscal Year 1999–2000 Transition Steps.....</i>	<i>19</i>
<i>Modernization Fund Allocations</i>	<i>19</i>
<i>Funding Strategy</i>	<i>21</i>
<i>Oversight Roles and Responsibility.....</i>	<i>21</i>
CONCLUSION	23

INTRODUCTION

The Tactical Plan for Court Technology, which has been developed to respond to historic underfunding of technology in the judicial branch, presents a coordinated and integrated approach to building a statewide technology infrastructure for all courts. For the past several years, the judicial branch has been unable to articulate a comprehensive plan for technology that includes clear objectives and measurable outcomes. The tactical plan provides a framework not only to obtain funding for statewide technology initiatives but also to move the trial courts forward toward more coordinated and integrated technology solutions to their business needs.

The tactical plan manages technology in the context of court groups. A significant shift from past practice, this approach is necessary to implement the Trial Court Funding Act, which envisions trial courts as components of a statewide judicial system rather than as autonomous local entities. The plan acknowledges the accomplishments and diversity of the trial courts and intends to utilize the rich administrative and technical management resources of the courts with regard to information technology. The plan encourages courts to work together in a cooperative strategic planning approach to consider, refine, and apply statewide directives to meet their operational needs and the statewide objectives as articulated by the Judicial Council in its coordinated strategic planning efforts. The plan also encourages the development of regional strategic plans that integrate court's local community-focused planning and strategic technology planning efforts.

Under the framework of the tactical plan, court groups are defined based on business activities as they are reflected in the technology and computing environments of the courts. Managing technology in groups will ensure that initiatives are both coherent and effective from a statewide perspective and appropriate to the courts in incorporating local expertise, requirements, and innovation. Courts will be encouraged to collaborate regionally to develop shared strategic plans in order to move forward with the development of integrated justice systems.

Developed by the Court Technology Committee, which has primary oversight responsibility for the plan, the Tactical Plan for Court Technology builds upon the strategic planning efforts of the Judicial Council and reinforces the council's longstanding commitment to improving the state of technology in California's courts.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The California judicial branch is positioned to significantly improve the state of its technology. Since the implementation of the Trial Court Funding Act of 1997 (Assem. Bill 233; Stats. 1997, ch. 850), which transferred funding responsibility for the trial courts to the state, the branch has focused on coordinating and integrating its functions and improving the technology that supports court operations. The inability of courts to share data with one another and with their local, state, and federal partners in the justice system is a priority issue for the judicial branch. Efforts to remedy these problems are supported by the legislative commitment indicated in the funding of the Judicial Administration Efficiency and Modernization Fund (JAEMF, hereinafter referred to as the Modernization Fund), which provides money for branchwide technology that was previously unavailable on an annual basis.

Although the 58 countywide court systems in California have distinctive needs, judicial officers and court managers throughout the state are committed to establishing standards that assure the accessibility and consistency of justice in California. A key component of these initiatives is technology that ensures that all courts have the information systems required to manage court operations and that encourages innovation among those courts that are the leaders in justice administration.

Technology in the California trial courts has been implemented without a comprehensive statewide spending plan. While some courts have court management systems that meet local case management needs, communicate with partners in the justice community, and meet established statewide standards, many have lacked the resources to address local needs, and nearly all have given scant, if any, attention to the needs beyond their immediate jurisdictions. The executive and legislative branches are unwilling to provide technology funding that perpetuates 58 different approaches to the same problem. While they are aware from their own failures that a single solution may not be the answer, the executive and legislative branches expect the judicial branch to propose a comprehensive approach that meets its business objectives in a coordinated and cost-effective manner.

Consequently, courts throughout the state face serious issues related to information sharing and case management, most conspicuously with regard to criminal justice. Inadequate technology has often had disastrous effects in the community at large: criminal defendants have escaped legally prescribed penalties because judges have lacked full information on their prior offenses; jurors have sat idle because prisoners have not been scheduled for transportation to a courtroom;

warrants have gone unserved because police lack current information; and public access to information has been slowed because of lack of automated tracking systems or mishandling of paper files. Solutions to such problems, which require major amounts of funding for statewide consistency, have been dogged by multimillion-dollar systems failures such as those experienced by the Department of Motor Vehicles and the Department of Social Services.

The Tactical Plan for Court Technology proposes to change the way that technology is funded within the branch by managing all funding related to technology and by identifying a limited number of common solutions for technology in the courts. It is only through a departure from current methods that the branch can meet local and statewide needs in manageable increments. The tactical plan provides the policy foundation on which to develop a statewide judicial branch strategic technology plan.

Under the tactical plan, groupings will be developed in collaboration with individual courts and updated annually based on strategic technology plans. Courts with common characteristics and similar technology needs will be expected to choose from established menus when their existing technology has reached the end of its useful life. Primary grouping factors will be regional proximity, similarity in size, caseload, and expenditures, as they are reflected in technology-specific characteristics such as complexity of court management systems, ratio of support staff to end users, the extent of state and local integration and other connectivity, development efforts, public access, system replacement plans, contractual obligations, and level of automation. The Court Technology Advisory Committee (CTC) will have primary responsibility for annual oversight functions and for ensuring that the tactical plan is integrated with the judicial branch budget development process.

JUDICIAL BRANCH TECHNOLOGY

This section defines the scope of the tactical plan objectives and provides a detailed explanation of each objective.

Tactical Plan Objectives

Because trial courts until recently have been funded primarily by their counties, courts have not been adequately funded to meet statewide standards, have had no reason to account to the state for technology expenditures in detail, and have lacked incentives to participate in coordinated efforts with other courts or members of the justice community. The Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) and the state have had little opportunity to coordinate efforts, ensure that standards were met, determine costs of large-scale development efforts, and take advantage of untapped funding sources through federal and private grants. While some courts have been innovative in the implementation of technology, many courts have lacked the resources to provide minimally effective systems and infrastructures.

The Tactical Plan for Court Technology addresses these shortcomings by proposing a change in the way the judicial branch manages, procures, and accounts for its technology. The tactical plan builds upon the five broad strategic themes for technology that have been incorporated by the Judicial Council into its Long-Range Strategic Plan: court management systems; technology infrastructure; communications; planning; and information standards. Focusing primarily on court management systems and the closely related objectives of technology infrastructure and communications, the tactical plan:

- Integrates the technology strategic planning process with the branchwide strategic planning and funding initiatives;
- Funds technology from the statewide, rather than the local, perspective;
- Coordinates funding for technology;
- Achieves economies by encouraging collaborative approaches and common solutions to technology issues;
- Provides the foundation for a multiyear implementation plan; and
- Maintains flexibility to encourage innovation among trial courts.

Integrating Strategic Technology Planning

The CTC is charged with recommending standards for technology in the judicial branch; reviewing funding requests for technology projects to ensure compatibility with statewide goals and standards; assisting courts in acquiring and developing useful technologies; and maintaining a strategic plan for technology (Cal. Rules of Court, rule 6.53). To carry out its charge, the CTC has focused on the related issues of strategic planning and technology funding. For the past several years, the CTC has participated in the trial court budget process by reviewing technology requests. Until the implementation of the Trial Court Funding Act, no state funding was available for trial court technology in any significant manner. Consequently, the CTC's recommendations that would have moved toward a more coordinated approach to technology were not implemented.

The recent changes in the judicial branch precipitated by the implementation of the Trial Court Funding Act have necessitated a more coordinated statewide view of technology. The CTC has consistently articulated that although funding and planning efforts within the branch historically focused on local courts' needs, the state's significant interest in technology requires a coordinated approach under the leadership of the Judicial Council. This approach requires significant capital investment to bring many courts, particularly the smaller courts, to a minimum functional level of technology and must encompass all sources of technology funding. The CTC strongly recommends integrated strategic planning and budgeting processes that not only ensure that courts are able to meet standards and operational needs but also leverage state funding as fully as possible.

As part of its community-focused planning efforts and with the guidance of the CTC, each of the 58 countywide trial court systems will have a strategic plan for technology that has been developed in concert with similarly situated counties. These group-generated plans will articulate how Judicial Council objectives for improved operational efficiency, integrated justice information systems, and enhanced public access can best be achieved at the local level. By linking statewide and local strategic planning processes to statewide funding, the Tactical Plan will ensure that the council's comprehensive objectives are being met in a manner that realistically acknowledges the complexities of local environments.

Funding Technology From the Statewide Perspective

Trial court revenues derive from a variety of funding sources, each of which has separate requirements and distinct allocation authorities. These funding sources include the Trial Court Operations Fund and the Modernization Fund, which is available only to courts unified to the fullest extent possible.

The majority of trial court baseline funding comes from the Trial Court Improvement Fund, which is administered under the direction of the Judicial Council through the Trial Court Budget Commission (TCBC). Trial courts are not required to report technology expenditures from baseline in detail, and, as a result, it is impossible to determine how much is being spent on technology within the branch. Similarly, the absence of information on technology funding available from these various sources precludes efficiencies and results in duplicative expenditures. The tactical plan suggests that rule 810 of the California Rules of Court, which governs trial court operations and fiscal reporting, be reviewed to evaluate the feasibility of more detailed reporting of technology expenditures. The technology components of the state chart of accounts could be included in the scope of this review. Proposed revisions to the state chart of accounts and rule 810 reporting structures could create a financial reporting system that comprehensively identifies all the funding applied to trial court technology.

In order to effectively manage technology funding from the statewide perspective, the tactical plan must be integrated with the budget development and allocation processes. As both those processes are changing for fiscal year 2000–2001, it is difficult to state the impact the plan will have. However, the tactical plan is flexible and will integrate with whatever methodology is proposed. For example, if the budget development process views the smaller courts, even the smallest 38 courts as a single group, the plan could be modified to allow for smaller regional or common business issue groups within that structure. If a purely regional approach to budget development were adopted, the tactical plan would require regional groups to form that could then subdivide along common business issue or vendor system lines.

Achieving Economies Through Collaboration

Technology vendors in California have enjoyed a tremendously beneficial relationship with the 58 separate trial court systems. The lack of statewide coordination has impaired the local courts' abilities to leverage their technology dollars with vendors. The state now has an opportunity to develop information system standards, maximize the benefit of expenditures, eliminate duplicative costs, replace outdated technology, and ensure that the public receives a consistent level of service from the court system. The tactical plan recommendations provide the framework to realize this opportunity.

By providing procurement resources, the AOC can ensure that courts receive the maximum benefit from each technology dollar. The purchasing power of the judicial branch, once coordinated, will result in significant savings across the spectrum of technology expenditures. For example, the state will be in a position to require that case management system vendors develop California-specific

versions of software that meet all applicable statutory, reporting, and legislative requirements, and to update those annually for a fixed price. The state can similarly ensure that courts receive fair pricing for customizations to case management systems and that those modifications are made available to other courts using the same systems.

A comprehensive technology resource management program will allow the judicial branch to maximize its leverage with vendors, negotiating favorable maintenance and support agreements, and providing staff with the most current equipment as court management systems are upgraded or replaced. Without a comprehensive and statewide technology resource management program to draw upon, courts will be left to deal individually with vendors and likely will not acquire the best possible contract terms and pricing. Continuing uncoordinated procurement efforts will complicate the development of a standard approach to technology throughout the branch and will hinder implementation of the tactical plan recommendations. Further, the development of standard contracting procedures for technology services, such as Internet access and computer-assisted legal research, should considerably improve the courts' negotiating posture.

Managing a Multiyear Implementation Process

The tactical plan proposes a rolling, annually updated multiyear implementation timeline. As implementation begins, technology funding requests will be evaluated by the extent to which they advance the objectives of the tactical plan and the degree to which they are consistent with the court's local and group strategic plans. Courts' annual updates to their strategic technology plans will be used to evaluate and prioritize growth funding requests. The significant capital investment required to bring all courts to a minimum level of technology, provided at least partially from the Modernization Fund, will be phased to ensure that the implementation process remains manageable.

Implementation of the tactical plan will begin in fiscal year 2000–2001, subject to legislative appropriation of funding for the Modernization Fund. Although the budget requests for fiscal year 1999–2000 have already been submitted and approved, the CTC recommends that consistency with tactical plan objectives be a major criterion in fiscal year 1999–2000 allocations for technology projects. Beginning in fiscal year 2000–2001, requests for technology funding will be reviewed from the statewide perspective in each year of implementation to identify opportunities for cost savings and collaborative efforts.

Encouraging Trial Court Innovation

Throughout most of their history, trial courts have operated as autonomous entities. The implementation of trial court funding requires courts to view themselves as part of the statewide judicial system. This transition means that trial courts must achieve the common good as defined from a statewide perspective. Only by encouraging coordinated efforts and managing technology options can the Judicial Council achieve its technology-dependent strategic objectives and the state realize an optimal return on its technology investment. While acknowledging that state and local priorities are unlikely to coincide completely, the tactical plan ensures that all courts are capable of providing basic services and strives to maintain as much flexibility as possible in determining how those services are best provided at the local level.

To encourage courts to apply technology solutions to their business problems in innovative ways, funding will be allocated annually from the Modernization Fund to qualified courts engaged in collaborative efforts that can be expanded to other courts on a regional or statewide basis. The innovative courts that have the benefit of the new technology thus would play a role in the development of broader standards.

TACTICAL PLAN FRAMEWORK

This section identifies and explains the rationale for viewing courts in groups; outlines the guiding principles that form the foundation of the tactical plan recommendations; defines the criteria that will be used to determine court groups; defines the court groupings; and identifies court management system, infrastructure, and administrative systems options for the court groups.

Guiding Principles

In proposing a departure from the traditional judicial branch approach to managing technology, the tactical plan acknowledges the risks inherent in change. In acknowledging that some tradeoffs are necessary, from both the courts' and state's perspectives, the plan attempts to balance competing interests in its recommendations. In developing recommendations, the tactical plan builds upon the following guiding principles:

- **Functionality:** Judicial Council-approved technological solutions must allow courts to meet state requirements, which include but are not limited to those for statistical reporting, fiscal transactions, and human resources functions; must provide for public access to court data; and must ensure effective communication with partners in the justice community.
- **Economy:** To contain information technology expenditures, court groups must identify the minimum number of alternative technological solutions that meet group or regional needs and achieve state objectives.
- **Consistency:** Technology should foster a common experience of the court system, irrespective of court size or location.
- **Innovation:** Individual courts should be encouraged to develop innovative technological solutions that can be replicated cost-effectively within their region or throughout the state.
- **Proven Solutions:** Proven technologies should be favored when they minimize risk of failure and reduce costs. Custom-built solutions should be funded when there is no proven alternative, risk is reasonable, and the likelihood of attaining objectives can be demonstrated through a project plan.

- ***Existing Investment:*** Technology should be used as long as it functions effectively.

Defining Characteristics

To allow for the varied local needs of the trial courts, the tactical plan groups courts regionally on the basis of their common business practices. The defining characteristics of each court group include: size and caseload; technology and computing environments; and common business issues. These defining characteristics or descriptive factors provide the foundation for the common regional strategic planning efforts that will complement state objectives to shape the development of a statewide approach to technology.

Size and Caseload Descriptors

The characteristics used to describe size and caseload include:

- Number of judicial position equivalents (JPEs) and authorized judicial positions (AJPs);
- Number of approved full-time equivalent (FTE) non-judicial positions;
- Total operating budget;
- Number of court locations; and
- Total annual case filings;

Technology and Computing Environment Descriptors

The criteria used to describe court's technology and computing environments include:

- Ratio of technology staff to approved full-time equivalent positions;
- Technology baseline expenditures, including those for maintenance, support, and development;
- Level of complexity of caseload and existing court management systems;
- Level of automation of mission-critical court management systems;
- Level of integration at local, county, and state levels;

- Level of connectivity with partners in the justice community;
- Degree and means of public access;
- Extent of local system development efforts;
- Planned system replacement;
- Existing contractual obligations for systems and technology services;
- Degree of enabling technology required to link physical court locations; and
- Local availability of technology support resources and services.

Regional Descriptors

The criteria used to describe courts' geographic and regional similarities include:

- Regional consortia based on proximity, business practice or technology vendor (e.g., case management systems);
- Memoranda of understanding or service level agreements between courts or counties;
- Geographic considerations such as common county borders or topography; and
- Cross-jurisdictional caseloads or case similarities.

Trial Court Groups

The tactical plan views courts in regional or common business practice groups. Courts within a group share similar characteristics that include the grouping criteria defined above, such as volume of work, number of judicial officers and staff, technology environment, and geographic relationships. The court groups will be charged with implementing the Judicial Council Strategic Plan for Court Technology through locally or regionally developed technology plans that offer common technology solutions to business problems. Each year's technology allocations will be made on the basis of their local plans, to the extent that they are consistent with state directives and raise no objection from a member of a group. If a member of a group takes exception to a proposal advanced by its region or if the Administrative Office of the Courts determines that a plan is inconsistent with state objectives, it will ask the Court Technology Committee to recommend a

solution to the Judicial Council. Thus, because technology funding will be requested and allocated within the context of these court groups, the tactical plan will acknowledge and support unique local needs.

Trial court groups would be composed of court executives (or designees) and information technology managers. The groups would be responsible for formulating and implementing regional or groupwide strategic plans; proposing technology funding requests that are consistent with local and group plans; assisting member courts with needs assessments; and developing common technology solutions to business problems within the group.

Based upon their defining characteristics and in consultation with individual courts, courts will form groups either regionally or based on common business issues. In either case, courts with common characteristics will be provided with a menu of choices for court management systems, telecommunications links, and network infrastructures. When replacing existing systems, upgrading networks, or installing new telecommunications equipment, courts will choose from among the options provided for their group or request an exception for a more appropriate course of action.

As noted above, court groupings will be updated annually based on the updates of the strategic technology plans and in consultation with the courts. The tactical plan acknowledges that flexibility is required to accommodate the unique local priorities of each court and to value the existing strategic technology plans that many courts have continued to update annually. Strategic planning for technology should be viewed as an component part of the courts' existing community-focused strategic planning efforts. Courts continue to be required to include technology planning in their annual strategic planning processes and updates.

One of the keys to the successful implementation of the tactical plan is the ability of the AOC to work jointly with the trial courts to develop a statewide technology plan. Such a plan will represent the aggregation of local needs, as expressed in the local court's strategic plans, and reflect statewide priorities as articulated by the Judicial Council and supported by the CTC.

Options for Court Groups

The range of systems options for the court groups includes three broad possibilities:

Judicial Council-sponsored system

A Judicial Council-sponsored system will provide a single solution that is hosted by a third-party vendor. This system will include all telecommunications, infrastructure, and desktop equipment needs and will be delivered by the vendor in a service bureau arrangement. The system will meet Judicial Council functional requirements and accommodate a wide range of local needs. Services will be delivered to the courts from a central facility and include appropriate redundancy, disaster recovery, and security mechanisms to ensure that each court has exclusive access to its data. Larger courts in a geographic region or county information technology departments could serve as service bureaus for other courts in a court group or region.

A Judicial Council-sponsored system may be most appropriate for groups of smaller courts that have limited funding available for technology or that are located in regions where hiring specialized technical support staff is difficult. Groups of courts that currently share a vendor-supplied system may benefit from jointly contracting with a vendor for support of the case management system, technology infrastructure, and desktop hardware within the courts.

Judicial Council-approved systems

Like a Judicial Council-sponsored system, Judicial Council-approved systems are provided by vendors and certified by the Judicial Council to ensure compliance with state requirements. These systems are installed and managed locally, but procurement is led by the AOC to ensure the maximum leveraging of technology dollars. Judicial Council-approved systems could also represent collaborative development efforts of individual courts or court consortia. Systems will be approved by trial court volunteers and members of the JBSIS workgroups with the staff support of the AOC.

Certifying or approving systems raises the issue of California-specific versions of case management systems. Currently, no vendor provides a version of a case management system that meets all of the state's reporting requirements. The most complex reporting issues involve cashiering and accounting functions (e.g., the ability to allocate fees and forfeitures across many account codes) and compliance with Judicial Branch Statistical Information System (JBSIS) standards. When requested by a court to meet California standards or to modify a system to meet newly enacted legislative or statutory requirements, vendors have often viewed these requests as enhancements, charged as custom development, which entail

significantly higher expense than routine upgrade and maintenance. If a vendor has systems installed in several courts, there is the potential for duplicative expenditures for the same modification. A certification process that requires vendor compliance with California-specific functional specifications will guarantee California-specific versions as a criterion for certification. By clearly defining modifications, enhancements, and upgrades, contracts can be more clearly written and duplicative expenditures eliminated. Most significantly, courts would not be faced with the prospect of exorbitant fees for annual upgrades in response to legislative and statutory changes.

Judicial Council-approved systems may be most appropriate for those courts with moderate case volumes and specialized court functions in more than one location, such as court facilities dedicated to drug courts or family courts. Because these court management systems are managed locally, it is critical that the court have access to dedicated technology support personnel to maintain the systems.

Custom-developed systems

In some circumstances, a court's need for case management systems cannot be met exclusively by a vendor-provided system because court operations are complex or highly sophisticated. In these instances and with appropriate justification, courts may contract for custom-developed systems.

Custom-developed systems may be most appropriate for those courts with very complex technology environments and highly specialized court management systems in multiple locations. The integration issues that these courts present may preclude the more straightforward solutions of Judicial Council-sponsored and Judicial Council-approved systems. Any custom development effort should be undertaken with a view to developing a system that can be replicated in other courts within the region or statewide.

All of the case management systems, whether Judicial Council-sponsored, Judicial Council-approved or custom developed, will meet functional and technical standards. These standards will be developed using the input of trial court representatives, vendor group participants, and JBSIS workgroup members. Additionally, systems will include education and training options for court judicial and administrative staff. Infrastructure standards will be developed with the participation of trial court technology personnel. Such standards will allow for technology platforms that will serve the courts moving forward. Additionally, infrastructure standards will include technology capabilities such as Internet

protocol standards, integration of video technology standards to enable new modes of delivery of educational programs, and electronic data sharing definitions and protocols.

Administrative Systems Options for All Courts

Human Resources System

The Task Force on Trial Court Employees is charged with developing recommendations on the myriad of issues facing court and county employees as the judicial branch transitions to being a state-funded entity. Key recommendations will center on determining the status of employees as either court, county, or some combination of the two. Requirements for a human resources system cannot be determined until the task force's recommendations are presented to the Judicial Council no later than January 1, 2000, for implementation in January 2001. Consequently, the tactical plan recommends that courts in each of the three groups remain on county-provided systems.

Should the task force recommend that the state assume an oversight role as related to court employees, a Judicial Council-sponsored human resources system will be developed. Some of the smaller courts, particularly those dependent upon the state for funding, could require a Judicial Council-sponsored human resources system if there is no viable option offered by their counties. Other courts may find that a Judicial Council-sponsored system is a more economically feasible alternative to them paying counties to process payroll transactions and track benefits information. The largest courts may require an option for a Judicial Council-approved system to account for the many employee classifications and labor relations agreements that are unique to the large, complex courts.

Fiscal System

Most, if not all, courts currently rely on their counties for fiscal systems. The link with the county accounting structure will continue to be significant, even for courts that transition away from other county systems, because of the county components of the fees and forfeitures. Any Judicial Council-sponsored fiscal system will have to include clearly defined interfaces with county systems and be able to meet the county's as well as the state's needs for account tracking. While the vision of a Judicial Council-sponsored fiscal system is appealing, it may be unrealistic to expect that such a system could provide 58 unique links to county systems. As they should for human resources systems, courts in all groups should remain on county-provided fiscal systems until a viable option for a Judicial Council-sponsored fiscal system can be developed. The state must develop fiscal system requirements and revise reporting requirements and the chart of accounts

before a system can be selected and approved. Although a task force is not specifically addressing this issue, many recommendations of the Task Force on Trial Court Employees will impact fiscal systems requirements.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

This section provides a high-level implementation plan for tactical plan objectives; identifies transition steps for fiscal year 1999–2000 in support of tactical plan recommendations; details the funding strategy for the tactical plan; and defines oversight responsibility and authority for the tactical plan.

Tactical Plan Implementation

Formation of Trial Court Groups

In order to assist with the formation of regional or common business practice court groups, the AOC will sponsor a series of meetings at which courts will be presented with the tactical plan and provided an opportunity to comment on it. Using a facilitator, courts will be asked to preliminarily indicate which other courts they feel would form an appropriate group. For instance, the community-focused strategic plans that the courts have submitted with updated technology profiles may suggest appropriate court groupings. After these meetings have concluded, the court groups will be presented to the CTC for adoption as part of the implementation plan.

Once formed, trial court groups, whether regional or based on common business issues, will be charged with developing a collaborative strategic plan. It is anticipated that funding from the Modernization Fund will be available to these courts, perhaps for consulting assistance with plan development. Local courts might also need to request funding to enhance the technology components of their community-focused strategic plans. Annually, court groups will be required to submit their collaborative technology plans as a component part of the existing community-focused court strategic planning efforts. These plans will form the basis of the courts' funding requests, whether for growth funding or Modernization Funding.

Annually, courts will submit growth funding requests that include technology funding requests. These technology requests will be evaluated by the extent to which they advance the tactical plan's objectives and to which they are consistent with the court's local, group and regional strategic plan. Requests appropriate for funding under the tactical plan would be recommended to the Court Technology Committee in the Modernization Fund. Requests appropriate for growth funding would be recommended by the Court Technology Committee to the Trial Court Budget Commission. Courts' annual updates to their strategic plans and data

provided in the needs assessment survey process will provide the foundation for this evaluation. Additionally, as regional or court groups form, participating members could review and endorse the technology funding requests of courts within that group.

Development of Statewide Funding Plan

As the court groups prepare and submit regional or group strategic plans, the AOC will use these plans to draft a statewide funding plan. The CTC will review the draft, adjust it as appropriate, and recommend specific funding alternatives to the Judicial Council. This statewide plan would be updated annually and targeted for funding from the Modernization Fund.

Development of Implementation Plan

Under the direction of the CTC, ISB staff will prepare an annual implementation plan for the major objectives of the tactical plan. The implementation plan will include such details as funding available from the Modernization Fund and other funding sources; technology requests received from the trial courts; priorities for technology projects as expressed in local and regional strategic plans; and recommendations for tactical plan work in the coming fiscal year. This document will be prepared annually in January and circulated to the courts prior to the initiation of the budget development process.

Project Timeline

Implementation of tactical plan objectives will begin with the budget allocations for fiscal year 2000–2001, which will be proposed by the Trial Court Budget Commission in the spring of 2000. Allocations from the Modernization Fund are available during that fiscal year to pilot a Judicial Council-sponsored case management system and fund innovative applications of technology or development of integrated justice systems. Beginning in fiscal year 2001–2002, the tactical plan implementation will impact budget development and allocation processes.

Annual tactical plan maintenance will include updating the inventory of judicial branch technology, reviewing the need for additional significant capital investment in technology, and reevaluating vendor options for Judicial Council-sponsored and Judicial Council-approved systems. This review will be the responsibility of the Court Technology Committee.

Evaluation of Tactical Plan

Annually in the fall, the CTC will evaluate the tactical plan. This evaluation will be based upon activities of trial court groups and will consider the effectiveness of technology infrastructure investment and system implementation. The CTC will direct staff to use the outcome of this evaluation to develop the tactical plan priorities for the following year. Trial court groups will also be asked to report to the CTC directly on the effectiveness of their group activities and recommend changes as appropriate.

Fiscal Year 1999–2000 Transition Steps

Even though the first year of formal implementation of the tactical plan occurs in fiscal year 2000–2001, work has begun in the current fiscal year to advance the plan's objectives. Much of the preparatory work focuses on finalizing case management system specifications, preparing requests for proposals for a Judicial Council-sponsored case management system, developing functional requirements for administrative systems, evaluating options for service bureau delivery of systems, and initiating discussions with vendors on the statewide approach to technology.

Modernization Fund Allocations

The Judicial Council has approved allocations from the fiscal year 1999–2000 Modernization Fund as follows:

\$2.5 million for case management system for the smaller courts

This funding will allow the AOC to initiate a pilot project with three or four of the smaller courts that meet the characteristics of Group A to install a Judicial Council-sponsored case management system in a service bureau environment. Concurrent upgrades to telecommunications and network infrastructures will allow these courts to benefit from additional technology services such as electronic mail, Internet access, and online legal research services. Related work will include updating case management system requirements and system specifications; evaluating viable vendors for a Judicial Council-sponsored case management system; selecting a Judicial Council-sponsored case management system; researching possible vendors for delivering a Judicial Council-sponsored case management system via a service bureau; and developing master contracts with vendors.

\$1.4 million for complex courts engaged in collaborative efforts

Many of the larger, complex courts are currently engaged in collaborative efforts to develop integrated justice systems or to apply innovative technology solutions to business problems. This funding will enable qualifying courts to continue these efforts in the absence of additional needs assessment survey funding. Allowing courts to continue innovative system development should benefit other courts that use the same systems or architectures.

\$500,000 for administrative systems requirements

This funding will allow the AOC to develop preliminary minimum functional requirements for fiscal and human resources systems. This work will include revisions to the state chart of accounts to allow more accurate tracking of technology expenditures and comparable revisions to rule 810 of the California Rules of Court, which governs trial court fiscal reporting requirements.

\$800,000 for computer-assisted legal research services

This funding will be used to provide computer-assisted legal research services to the trial courts. This funding will be prioritized for courts that do not have access to computer-assisted legal research services and allocated on a per judge basis. This pilot effort will also allow for a more accurate estimation of the cost to provide computer-assisted legal research services under a statewide master contract.

Funding Strategy

Modernization Fund

The Modernization Fund will provide the initial capital investment required to meet some of the minimum technology needs of the courts, but over time that fund cannot provide the capital that is required to meet all the courts' technology needs. An accurate estimate of the new funding required to meet these needs requires reliable data on the various sources available for trial court technology funding, including the existing baseline budget. The collection of this data will form the basis of the statewide implementation plan.

Although the Modernization Fund will enable significant progress on tactical plan initiatives, a court could be asked to contribute funding from its baseline to augment the Modernization Fund allocations. Conversely, if a court's baseline technology allocation is insufficient to meet its ongoing maintenance needs, the court could request an augmentation to baseline. It is anticipated that as the Modernization Fund enables implementation of tactical plan objectives within a court group, requests for significant new funding for technology will decrease. Courts could be asked to review their baseline allocations to determine if they can assist with funding of tactical plan objectives within their court. Such a comprehensive approach to funding technology acknowledges the need to assess new funding in light of existing resources.

Oversight Roles and Responsibility

Because the tactical plan changes the way technology is funded within the judicial branch, clarifications in the oversight roles and responsibilities of the Judicial Council Court Technology Committee, trial court groups, and AOC with regard to the tactical plan are specified below.

Judicial Council:

- Sets the strategic and tactical direction for court technology statewide; and
- Resolves intragroup conflicts with input from the CTC.

Court Technology Advisory Committee:

- Drafts statewide strategic plan;
- Drafts tactical plan;

- Defines functional criteria that lay the foundation for the charge to the trial court groups;
- Recommends technology budget requests and priorities to the Trial Court Budget Commission;
- Recommends solutions of intragroup conflicts to the Judicial Council; and
- Oversees annual evaluation of the tactical plan.

Administrative Office of the Courts:

- Defines statewide requirements and standards (i.e., those required by the tactical plan, such as legislation, rules of court or standards of judicial administration);
- Integrates technology planning procedures with court community-focused planning and budget development;
- Facilitates court groups and provides funding for consulting assistance where required;
- Assists in technology procurement and contract negotiations as requested; and
- Provides support service to the courts as requested.

Trial Court Group

- Recommends how functional criteria and statewide requirements can best be met within the group;
- Develops groupwide strategic plans that include specific technology objectives;
- Develops innovative proposals for Modernization Fund allocations;
- Develops and proposes distribution of regional technology funding requests; and
- Reports outcomes of funding received for technology expenditures.

CONCLUSION

This section explains how an annual allocation from the Modernization Fund will be used for tactical plan objectives.

Tactical plan recommendations are based on the assumption that a consistent, multiyear funding stream will be available from the Modernization Fund. While not the sole source for achieving the plan's objectives, this stable funding source is critical if the judicial branch is to meet its technology objectives.

For instance, an analysis of budget requests for fiscal year 2001–2002 indicates that funding requests for case management systems represent more than 60% of the total technology funding requests. All of the 20 smallest courts have requested funding for case management systems (CMS) as indicated in the table below.

COURT	CMS REQUEST	AMOUNT
Alpine	Install new CMS	\$ 172,292
Amador	Upgrade CMS	\$ 209,596
Calaveras	Install new CMS	\$ 331,200
Colusa	Upgrade CMS	\$ 349,500
Del Norte	Install new CMS	\$ 96,902
Glenn	Install new CMS	\$ 1,398,916
Inyo	Install new CMS	\$ 354,500
Lake	Install new CMS	\$ 613,437
Lassen	Upgrade CMS	\$ 571,667
Mariposa	Upgrade CMS	\$ 115,200
Modoc	Install new CMS	\$ 180,000
Mono	Install new CMS	\$ 300,000
Plumas	Upgrade CMS	\$ 356,000
San Benito	Upgrade CMS	\$ 328,294
Sierra	Upgrade CMS	\$ 41,433
Siskiyou	Upgrade CMS	\$ 1,103,502
Tehama	Enhance CMS	\$ 71,500
Trinity	Enhance CMS	\$ 33,982
Tuolumne	Convert CMS	\$ 48,266
Yuba	Install new CMS	\$ 654,680
Total Requests		\$ 7,431,200

It is important to note that the requests above do **not** include all costs for replacing personal computers to accommodate the new case management systems, upgrading or installing the required telecommunications networks, adding specialized staffing to support the case management systems, and budgeting adequately for ongoing maintenance and licensing needs.

Providing courts such as these with a common case management system that meets state requirements would achieve significant savings, both in one-time requests and in ongoing support costs. A Judicial Council-sponsored system, for instance, could also include the required infrastructure and telecommunications links that can provide the court with services in addition to the case management system, such as Internet access, e-mail capability, and online legal research services. It could eliminate the extreme problems smaller courts face in hiring and retaining specialized information technology support staff.

The tactical plan will not focus solely on the court management system needs of the court groups in its initial years of implementation. Court groups that present common needs will also be eligible for funding in the early stages of plan implementation. An analysis of the budget requests from the trial courts indicates several significant opportunities that will directly support the tactical plan objectives:

Judicial Branch Statistical Information System Requirements

The Judicial Branch Statistical Information System (JBSIS) standards govern the collection and reporting of case-level aggregate statistics. Mandated by the Judicial Council, these standards become effective January 1, 2001, pending availability of funding. In addition to providing standard data from all courts, JBSIS provides for automated data collection directly from the case management system. Many courts have requested funding to modify existing case management systems to comply with the JBSIS standards. Budget requests for programming or customizations to meet JBSIS standards for fiscal year 2000–2001 total approximately \$7 million, excluding requests for new case management systems. The Judicial Council can play a significant role in assisting with contract negotiations with the vendors that supply these systems in order to ensure that courts are charged appropriately for services.

Integrated Criminal Justice Information Systems

Five courts have requested funding to significantly enhance the Criminal Justice Information System (CJIS). The CJIS system allows courts and related justice agencies to share criminal history and background

information. Data is transferred to and from the courts, the Department of Motor Vehicles, and county district attorneys' offices electronically via a secure network. The 15-year-old system requires significant modifications to modernize its technology platform and to provide users with enhanced functionality and query tools. Budget requests for fiscal year 2001–2002 total approximately \$1 million for the CJIS system. The courts have developed a common project plan over a three-year time frame and divided responsibility for the various components of the system. This effort is consistent with the objectives of the tactical plan and could benefit from funding so that the enhanced system could be expanded to other courts throughout the state.

Hand-held Traffic Citations

The California Highway Patrol (CHP) has completed a successful pilot project demonstrating the effectiveness of hand-held computers for traffic citations. The hand-held traffic citation system allows CHP field officers to enter infraction information at the time of ticketing and transfer this data electronically to the appropriate court. In addition to eliminating the transfer of paper tickets from the CHP to the court, this system eliminates errors in data entry. Traffic fines provide a significant source of revenue to many of the rural and suburban counties, and the automated system has increased the percentage of fees collected. To receive and process the data electronically from the CHP's automated data transfer system, the courts must modify the case management systems used in traffic courts. Several courts have requested funding for the automated traffic citation system; budget requests for fiscal year 2001–2002 total \$500,000 for this purpose. The Judicial Council can play a role by working with the vendors to ensure that the courts receive maximum benefit from the limited technology resources allocated for traffic courts.

Jury Management Systems

The Judicial Council has mandated that by January 2001, courts move to a one-day/one-trial jury system. The courts are now faced with the task of re-engineering the jury process to change the way jury pools are selected, summonses are issued, and jurors are accommodated within court facilities. Courts must renegotiate contracts with vendors that provide summons servicing, refurbish juror assembly rooms, contract for parking or public transit vouchers for jurors, provide daycare facilities, and modify or install automated jury management systems as part of the court's case management system. Budget requests for fiscal year 2001–2002 total approximately \$864,000 for jury management systems. The role of the

Judicial Council could be significant in working with the vendors to ensure that the jury management systems meet the courts' functionality requirements and can accommodate future enhancements to the jury management process.

Although it is impossible to estimate a total cost for all technology endeavors within the judicial branch over the next five years, it is clear that an annual allocation from the Modernization Fund will allow for significant progress. Historically underfunded, technology efforts within the branch have struggled in the absence of a coordinated, centralized approach to technology management. The tactical plan provides a framework to ensure that technology projects are coordinated, managed, integrated, and consistently funded to enable the judicial branch to meet its technology-dependent strategic objectives.

Appendix A: List of Interviewees

Court Technology Committee

Hon. Judith Donna Ford, Chair
Superior Court of California,
County of Alameda

Hon. Debra L. Bowen
Member of the Senate

Hon. Thomas M. Cecil
Presiding Judge
Superior Court of California,
County of Sacramento

Mr. Frederick H. Klunder
Director, Information Systems
Bureau,
Los Angeles Superior Court

Mr. Robert B. Kuhel
Executive Officer,
Superior Court of California,
County of Orange

Mr. Michael Roddy
Executive Officer,
Superior Court of California,
County of Sacramento

Trial Court Representatives
Open Session,
California Judicial Administration
Conference, March 1999

Administrative Office of the Courts

Mr. William C. Vickrey
Administrative Director

Mr. Dennis B. Jones
Chief Deputy Director

Ms. Karen Cannata
Information Services Bureau

Mr. Mark Dusman
Information Services Bureau

Ms. Patricia Haggerty
Finance Bureau

Ms. Bonnie Kong
Information Services Bureau

Mr. Barry Lynch
Information Services Bureau

Ms. Kim McCord
Office of Governmental Affairs

Mr. Martin Moshier
Finance Bureau

Ms. Judy Myers
Human Resources Bureau

Ms. Nini Redway
Office of Governmental Affairs

Ms. Kiri Torre
Trial Court Services Division

Mr. Jonathan Wolin
Trial Court Services Division