



MONTANA LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

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Legislative Fiscal Analyst
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DATE: May 19, 2008

TO: Members of the Legislative Finance Committee

FROM: Barbara Smith, Fiscal Analyst II

RE: Performance Measurement

The Performance Measurement Reports for the period ending April 15, 2008 have been completed and those relevant to your work group assignment are attached to this memo. The purpose of this memo is to describe the process for the upcoming performance measurement workgroups and provide leading questions for the discussion.

Workgroup Process

The process for the workgroup has been designed to allow for the most efficient use of time. Prior to the meeting, the staff will prioritize the reports by agency, so that the most critical reports are heard first. At the beginning of each agency, the LFD staffer will review the priority list. The LFD analyst will introduce each goal or initiative, summarize the agency response, and provide the LFD position. The workgroup members can ask questions of the agency staff, LFD analyst, or act on the report without further input. Workgroup members will need to determine whether to accept or edit the LFD ranking and determine whether another report should be heard in October. After hearing all agencies within a section, the LFD analyst will assist the workgroup in developing the summary. Each workgroup needs to be prepared to address the overall tone of the reports, any successes and any particular challenges.

Ratings and Leading Questions

This set of reports provides a unique opportunity to examine progress at nearly the half-way point of the biennium. You will be able to examine current progress, establish the final rating and discuss what agency plans are for the next biennium. To assist you with your tasks, rating terms were clarified and potential leading questions were identified. This information is provided based on the ratings: on track, warning and critical.

On Track

Definition - The report provides significant data and the corresponding story behind the data to indicate that progress toward the goal is being met. For new projects, an on-track ranking would also support that the agency has achieved the appropriation milestones during this time frame. If the information does not provide a reasonable basis for the goal being met by the end of the biennium, this ranking is not appropriate. If exceptional progress has been made, please note this.

Potential Questions:

- o What budget changes are being considered for the 2011 biennium for this program and why?
- o What are the next steps in implementation to assure continued positive outcomes?
- o Are there any potential obstacles in the near future that may change the course of this initiative or progress toward the goal?
- o How is this level of performance going to be sustained?
- o Why was this particularly successful?
- o How do these results compare to similar programs in other states?

Warning

Definition - The report provides some data and the corresponding story, but does not indicate that progress is being made toward the goal. For new projects, the agency has not met some milestones, but does provide a reasonable explanation to the missed milestones. This could include difficulty in hiring, change in federal regulations or federal response, inability to contract, difficulty in negotiations with partners, etc. In addition the appropriation information was not complete or not provided.

Potential Questions:

- o What steps are being taken to improve progress, and when will improved results be achieved?
- o Are there any potential obstacles in the near future that may change the course of this initiative or progress toward the goal?
- o What happened that was not anticipated?
- o Have there been any positive unintended outcomes of this situation?
- o What are the low or no cost solutions to the factors impeding success?
- o What is the plan for the next biennium?
- o Are there items that need to be considered by the legislature for increased performance?

Critical

Definition - The report does not provide any relevant data and does not include a corresponding story to describe the situation. It is not possible to determine that any progress is being made towards the goal. For new projects, the agency has not met a majority of the milestones and may or may not provide a reasonable explanation. It is clear that progress will not be made by the end of the biennium.

Potential Questions:

- o What steps are being taken to turn the situation around?
- o What kind of progress is anticipated by the time session convenes?
- o What happened that was not anticipated?
- o Have there been any positive unintended outcomes of this situation?
- o What are the low or no cost solutions to the factors impeding success?
- o What is the plan for the next biennium?
- o Is there a need for a drastic change in course?
- o How much is anticipated for reversions?
- o What MT population is not receiving services due to the delay?
- o What is the risk to the state if the activity was abandoned?

In the course of reviewing the attached reports, please do not hesitate to contact the LFD analyst listed on the report. If you have general questions regarding performance measurement, please contact me at 444-5347 or Kris Wilkinson at 444-5384.