Pima County Consolidated Justice Court
115 N. Church Ave.
Tucson, Arizona 85701
(520) 740-3171

Arizona Supreme Court, AOC
Court Automation Coordinating Committee
1501 W. Washington
Phoenix, AZ 85007
September 17, 2007

Pima County Consolidated Justice Court (PCCJC)
Jason Epel, IT Manager
115 N. Church Ave.
Tucson, AZ 85701

To Whom It May Concern:

This status report is comprised of several documents:

1. PCCJC Fact Sheet
2. Cover letter for our 9/20/07 status report
3. Example of an IT bad day at PCCJC because of our situation
4. Dashboard status report

We intend to review and discuss this information at the CACC meeting on 9/20/07.

Respectfully,

Jason Epel
IT Manager
Pima County Consolidated Justice Court

Pima County Consolidated Justice Court
Fact Sheet

The Pima County Consolidated Justice Court is comprised of eight (8) separate precincts which have been consolidated and located at one location, although currently, two additional satellite locations are used for small claims and forcible detainer hearings. To elaborate on how we define "consolidated" and how it differs from co-located:

- Case assignment is based on a rotation method rather than precinct.
- Judges calendars are balanced equally.
- Filings, case processing and case management is not based on location or precinct.
- The average productivity credits (JPC's) per judge is 1,200 which is the maximum per legislature.

Staffing

- 118 Full Time Employees
- 8 Elected Judicial Officers
- 1 Pro Tem Judicial Officer, full time, Forcible Detainer Calendars
- 26 Small Claim Hearing Officers, who total 30 hours per week of volunteer time.

Filings

- 176,888 new filing for fiscal yr 2005-2006
- 20% increase over the past 10 years which included:
    - DUI filings increased 53%
    - Serious Traffic Violations increased 20%
    - Forcible Detainer filings increased 33%
    - Small Claims filings increased 43%
    - Domestic Violence filing increased 1,534% (due to an intergovernmental agreement between City of Tucson and Pima County Superior Court)

Customer Service

- 7500 people enter the court building each week
- 1750 telephone calls received by Customer Service staff weekly
- 1769 customers serviced at Counter Windows weekly

Specialty courts

- Domestic Violence Court –created in 2007 to ensure defendants are in compliance with court orders.
- Mental Health Court – oversees individuals with special mental health issues
- DUI Pilot Project

Significant Automation Functions

- Automated Default process
- Automated MVD Suspension and notification process
- Automated collections process
- Minute Entry Program
- Defensive Driving School data field for updates
- Warrants
- Utilize ACS for citation processing

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To Whom It May Concern:

This cover letter elaborates on the status of the PCCJC IT Stabilization Project ("the Project") as submitted for the September 20, 2007, CACC meeting. Upon assuming the IT manager position with the Pima County Consolidated Justice Court ("the Court") earlier this year, it became evident to me that the Court was using an aged and out of date case management system ("CMS"). I quickly learned that there have been problems with the CMS for several years prior to my arrival. The equipment on which the current CMS runs was installed back in 1991. Here we are, 16 years later, using the same software on the same VAX 4000 equipment. Business needs have changed over the years and limitations in the CMS software made it and continues to make it difficult for us to easily manage our caseload from inception to adjudication due to the extra steps staff need to take to accomplish simple tasks.

In an earlier attempt to try to replace the CMS, Lisa Royal, the Court Administrator, went before the Commission on Technology ("COT") on March 3, 2006, and provided members with the history of the then 14-year old CMS and its frailties. She requested that the COT authorize the court to seriously consider the iCIS case management system developed by Maricopa County until such time as a statewide CMS is in place. The COT approved the request and the court embarked on a very comprehensive gap analysis. At the time we were optimistic that the adoption of the iCIS system would solve the shortcomings of the current CMS.

Due to issues that surfaced during the gap analysis which restricted how iCIS would be implemented and supported at the PCCJC, we were not able to proceed with the implementation. As the newly hired IT manager, I was tasked with determining how to maintain and stabilize the existing system until such time as the AOC rolled out a new CMS.

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Lisa Royal and I spoke to this point during the COT session held on June 7 & 8, 2007 and sought approval to utilize local JCEF funds to stabilize our system. The COT approved the project but required CACC monitoring.

The IT Stabilization Project is an effort to plan out what we need to do so stabilize our environment until such time as the AOC approves a new CMS for our court as well as the other limited jurisdiction courts in the state. We remain extremely concerned that our current system will fail completely prior to the rollout of a new CMS. Given our caseload volume, it is inconceivable that we can return to a manual method of processing cases.

Many of the problems we have been experiencing relate to a cascade of service failures typically starting from the legacy CMS hardware. At one point one of the hard disks on a server used by the CMS crashed, which lead to instability and CMS crashing. Every time CMS crashes there's a risk of data integrity being compromised. We now have an ongoing task of monitoring data integrity due to the instabilities in our environment. Though not all of our CMS services actually reside on the old hardware, such as our calendaring system, the data that is used by that software resides on the old CMS hardware. When CMS becomes non-responsive, the calendar application ceases to function. Since the calendar program also updates other databases on other servers, such as SQL 2005, when the calendar program crashes, it also leads to instability of SQL 2005 services . We have seen numerous occasions where one small problem occurring on the CMS system lead to catastrophic events within a period of 1 to 2 hours.

With regard to the implementation of the Stabilization Project, certain expectations and assumptions were made in the development of our plan. For example, there were two key staff that had thorough knowledge of the system. They were expected to complete work in conjunction with the contractor and to complete the documentation of the system. Unfortunately, prior to the documentation being completed, the former IT manager retired and the key programmer accepted a position in another jurisdiction. We already had one vacant programmer position that we were unable to find qualified candidates, now we had two.

Complicating matters even further, software problems have been surfacing over the months due to problems with data. The original case management system is lacking field validation, so a combination of programming flaws and bad data, both due to data entry and previous system failures, has led to many instances of application or process failures.

The contractor we selected to help move the CMS off the failing 16+ year old hardware to newer equipment relied on having this documentation to complete his tasks.

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Consequently, we had no other viable alternative than to ask the contractor to complete this task. The project had been underway for approximately 1 week, when the contractor became very ill, resulting in much more delay. These incidents combined with not having sufficient staff to keep systems maintained and running, has led to unanticipated delays in the execution of this project.

We recently hired staff to fill the vacant positions and are in the process of training them. Unfortunately, this does not address the lack of needed knowledge to resume the Project. As a prerequisite for our being able to proceed with the project, we are reconstructing the knowledge that we had assumed would be present. This reconstruction effort is anticipated to be completed within 8 to 12 weeks. With having the missing information we will be able to reschedule the project tasks and proceed as planned.

We are also reviewing the hardware that was identified by the previous Network Administrator and are finding more cost effective alternatives. Our objective is to not exceed the dollar amount approved in this project and to get us back on track.

Due to these circumstances, our status report is unchanged. Despite our planned move (consolidating three court locations to two) and other disruptions caused by our current system, we are hopeful to have some more progress to report in the upcoming months.

We are also participating in the gap analysis meetings for the new AmCad Case Management System in an effort to determine whether this system will meet the needs of our courts as well as others in the state.

Respectfully,

Jason Epel
IT Manager
Pima County Consolidated Justice Court

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Example of an IT bad day at PCCJC because of our situation.

Programs, applications, processes that were delayed or did not run on Friday, August 24, 2007.

Codes or abbreviations used in this document:

Unavailable: Users could not log into the system, or system ran unreasonably slow with prolonged system wait times, or functionality was severely limited.

DNR: Did Not Run. The scheduled process did not run, or could not complete and was stopped. No output produced.

Late: The scheduled process did complete and produced output, but completed much later than normal. Output produced may have been unusable because of time sensitivity.

User Applications

JP Court Automation System (case management system) *Unavailable*:
This is a mission critical application on Nihil that all departments use.

Calendar web application could not connect to Nihil *Unavailable*:
This is a mission critical application used by many departments within the courts, including judges and JAs.

Minute Entry application could not connect to Nihil *Unavailable:*
This is a mission critical application used by the judges and Jas during hearings.

Merge *Unavailable*:
Since the processes that create the notices were *DNR*, this application could not be used.

Server Nihil

JPBatch_NIHIL *DNR*:
This process, along with merge_batch on webcom (see below), contributes data to process judicial forms such as Notices to appear in Court, notice of suspension of driver's license, Court abstracts, etc.

JPBATCH *DNR*:

This process updates the database and generates reports. Some examples, creates the debt set-off report, creates and sends domestic violence case information to PCAO, creates report on payments taken, creates and sends arraignment notices to attorney's offices, etc.

WQUASH *Late*:

Generates report on warrant quashes that users send to Sheriff's office. The report completed the next day.

SO_File (Sheriff's office list):

Generates report for Sheriff's office twice daily. Morning list *DNR*, afternoon list ran normally.

LEXIS *DNR*:

Generates and sends public information.

DDC_TRANSFER *DNR*:

Gets defensive driving school information from AZDDS.COM

Backup processes *DNR*:

BACKUP_DATA_TLZ06
BACKUP_SYSTEM_ALPHA
BACKUP_PC_TLZ06

Server pccjcjobs

Suspensions process could not connect to Nihil *DNR*:

The Suspensions process reads information from the civil traffic cases and sends (FTP) to MVD a list of defendants that should have their driver's license suspended because of either failure to pay their fines or failure to appear in court. That process was delayed until Saturday.

update_nihil process could not connect to Nihil *DNR*:

This process runs every few minutes to update Nihil with Calendar information. It was blocked from running for several hours.

Website_Update process could not connect to Nihil *DNR*:

This process ran and completed normally. However, since it pulls data from the Microsoft server and updates the Calendar and Casesearch information, the data was bad because the database copies on pccjcdata (see below) were *DNR*.

Juvenile_Reports:

This process ran and completed normally. However, since it pulls data from the Microsoft server and sends it to the Juvenile Courts, the data was bad because the database copies on pccjcdata (see below) were *DNR*.

importCalendar process could not connect to Nihil *DNR*:

This process imports calendar information from Nihil to the Calendar web application.

OCACExport process could not connect to Nihil *DNR*:

This process sends information to the OCAC for their attorneys' preparations. No file was sent to their office.

DDSupdates:

This process takes data from the reports the DDC_TRANSFER on Nihil to update calendar. It ran normally, but had bad data since the Nihil process *DNR*.

ACS_Data (new cases from traffic citations) process could not connect to Nihil *DNR*:

This process creates new cases from citations.

Server webcom

ePayments (online payment process) could not connect to Nihil *DNR*:

A defendant wanting to pay a fine would not have been able to do so successfully.

merge_batch on webcom could not connect to Nihil *DNR*:

This process, along with JPBatch_NIHIL (see above), contributes data to process judicial forms such as Notices to appear in Court, notice of suspension of driver's license, Court abstracts, etc.

CRP_Export process could not connect to Nihil *DNR*:

This application is used by staff at the jail to process conditions of releases for inmates.

Server pccjcdata

Nihil database copies could not connect to Nihil *DNR*:

There are two processes that run to copy information from the Nihil tables to the Microsoft database tables.

Project/Program Name - PCCJC IT Stabilization Stakeholders - Lisa Royal, Court Administrator Project/Progam Manager - Jason Epel, IT Manager	General Program Status	Red, Green, or Yellow		Target	Estimate	
			Budget	249,637.11	$0.00	
			End Date	12/31/2008	TBD	
Deliverables	**Current Status**	**% Complete**	**COT Baseline Delivery Date**	**CACC Target Delivery Date**	**Actual Delivery Date**	**Comment**
Project Plan	Yellow	75%				The scope and LJCEF financial commitments will not be exceeded. Yellow status due to project schedule revision.
Project Schedule	Yellow	75%				Under revision due to resource changes - changing dates and internal resource allocations.
Dev Proj Schedule	Yellow	75%				Under revision due to resource changes.
Project Budget	Green					
MAJOR MILESTONE 1 - INFRASTRUCTURE BUILD	Yellow					Implementation of systems purchased to offset and scale load as well as stabilize and secure our environment.
SubItem Analysis						
Subitem Design						
Subitem Development Phase 1						
Subitem QA Phase 1						
Subitem Deploy for						
Subitem Add Rules						
Subitem Task List Generation						
MAJOR MILESTONE 2 - APPLICATION MIGRATION	Yellow					Completed execution of LJCEF project funded application migration tasks.
Subitem Analysis						
Subitem Analysis						
Subitem Review and Signoffs on Models						
Subitem						
Subitem Development						
Subitem						
Subitem Reports and Statistics						
SubitemCanned Reports						
Subitem Report Generator						
Subitem Search Capability						
Subitem External Feeds						
Subitem						
Subitem Review Resources						
Subitem						
PROJECT COMPLETION						
Implementation Plan						
Support Plan						

Changes	Major /Minor	Reason/Impact
Hired full-time programmer analyst, start date 9/24/07.		Need to train.

Issue	Owner	Impact/Action

Risk	Probability	Status/Impact
		Problem jeopardizing project
		Problem impacting Deliverable
		Problem not yet realized