



# CALIFORNIA STATE AUDITOR

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## FACT SHEET

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Report: 2010-102

The California State Auditor released the following report today:

### Administrative Office of the Courts

*The Statewide Case Management Project Faces Significant Challenges  
Due to Poor Project Management*

#### BACKGROUND

With as many as 10 million case filings in a year, the California court system has 400 locations statewide—each county's superior court has between one and 55 courthouse branches. In 2003, after finding over 200 varieties of case management systems in use by superior courts, and wishing to improve access, quality, and timeliness of the judicial system, the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC)—staff agency to the Judicial Council of California, the policy and rule-making body over California's judicial branch—was directed to continue developing a statewide case management system for the superior courts. That same year, the AOC entered into contracts to develop two interim systems—currently used by seven courts—and later decided to develop one comprehensive system—the California Court Case Management System (CCMS).

#### KEY FINDINGS

Our review of the AOC's management and oversight of the statewide case management project revealed the following:

- The AOC inadequately planned the project since 2003. Specifically, the AOC:
  - Did not conduct a business needs assessment at the onset of the project nor has it performed a cost-benefit analysis to ensure that the CCMS is the most cost-effective technology solution for the courts' needs.
  - Did not structure its contract with the development vendor to adequately control the project costs and scope—over the course of seven years, the AOC entered into 102 contract amendments and increased the cost of the contract from \$33 million to \$310 million.
- The AOC has consistently failed to develop accurate cost estimates or timelines for the project.
  - Cost estimates have gone from \$260 million in 2004 to nearly \$1.9 billion in 2010. Moreover, this estimate excludes other significant costs such as those that the superior courts and justice partners are likely to incur in deploying CCMS.
  - Annual reports to the Legislature did not provide complete cost information.
  - The estimated date for complete deployment has been pushed back by seven years.
- The majority of the courts believe their current case management systems will serve them for the foreseeable future and users of interim systems expressed reservations about using CCMS. Some of these users say they will not adopt CCMS until the AOC makes significant improvements in the areas of performance, stability, and product management.
- The AOC's attempt at independent oversight came late in the life of the project and the scope of services it contracted for fell short of best practices for a project of this size and scope. Nevertheless, the AOC did not adequately address significant concerns raised by the consultant providing the oversight and thus, the project may have future quality issues.

#### KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

We made numerous recommendations to the AOC, including the following:

- Conduct a thorough analysis of the costs and benefits of the CCMS to determine the course of action to take.
- Update cost information and estimates on a regular basis and report true costs to the Legislature and others.
- Develop a realistic overall funding strategy for the CCMS in light of the current fiscal crisis facing the State.
- Take steps to fully understand and address the courts' concerns as implementation moves forward.
- Retain an independent consultant to review CCMS before deployment to determine if there are quality issues and problems.

