
SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT



Audit of the District's Training Program

Audit #02- 06

Prepared By
Office of Inspector General

Allen Vann, Inspector General
Christian Flierl, Lead Consulting Auditor



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

3301 Gun Club Road, West Palm Beach, Florida 33406 • (561) 686-8800 • FL WATS 1-800-432-2045 • TDD (561) 697-2574
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 24680, West Palm Beach, FL 33416-4680 • www.sfwmd.gov

MGT 08-06F

August 22, 2002

Audit Committee Members:

Mr. Gerardo B. Fernandez, Chairman
Mr. Lennart E. Lindahl, Vice-Chair
Ms. Pamela D. Brooks-Thomas, Member
Mr. Michael Collins, Member
Mr. Patrick J. Gleason, Member

RE: Final Report –
Audit of the District’s
Training Program
Audit # 02-06

This audit was performed pursuant to the Inspector General’s authority set forth in Chapter 20.055, F.S. This audit evaluated the process that the District has in place to train its employees. We reviewed the District’s current training process and compared it with other organizations. We computed FY00 training performance measures and compared them with published industry standards and we analyzed the District’s FY01 Training Database. This report was prepared by Chris Flierl.

Sincerely,

Allen Vann
Inspector General

AV/cf
Enclosure

c: Henry Dean
Alvin Jackson

GOVERNING BOARD

Trudi K. Williams, *Chair*
Lennart E. Lindahl, *Vice Chairman*
Pamela Brooks-Thomas

Michael Collins
Hugh M. English
Gerardo B. Fernandez

Patrick J. Gleason, Ph.D., P.G.
Nicolas J. Gutierrez, Jr., Esq.
Harkley R. Thornton

EXECUTIVE OFFICE

Henry Dean, *Executive Director*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
BACKGROUND	1
OBJECTIVES, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY	3
FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	
Executive Summary	4
Training Costs Comparable To Industry Standards But Rising.....	5
Amount of Training Higher Than Industry Standards.....	7
Alternative Training Strategies & Greater Accountability Could Reduce Costs	11
Training Process Similar To Other Organizations	16
Employee's Generally Satisfied With Training Program	23
<i>Training Quality Is Sufficient But May Not Always Be Enough</i>	24
<i>Employees Mainly Select Training Courses</i>	26
<i>Primary Reasons for Taking Training “To Better Perform Job Duties” and “Career Development”</i>	27

<i>Training Almost Always Improves Job performance.....</i>	<i>29</i>
<i>District is Primary Training Location</i>	<i>30</i>
<i>Educational Reimbursement Program Perceived to be a Useful Career Development Tool</i>	<i>31</i>
<i>Survey Conclusions.....</i>	<i>33</i>

INTRODUCTION

This audit addresses the adequacy and effectiveness of the program that the District has in place to train and develop its employees. This audit was conducted pursuant to our approved annual audit plan.

BACKGROUND

The Employee Development/Compensation Unit of the Human Resources Department (the "Unit") administers the District's training program. They sponsor agency-wide training initiatives, determine how budgeted training dollars are allocated to other Departments, and administer District training policies.

Agency-wide training administered by the Unit includes mandatory managerial/supervisor core training such as performance management training, training in the recruitment and hiring process, equal employment opportunity training, sexual harassment training, Americans with Disabilities Act and Fair Labor Standards Act, emergency management, ethics, sunshine law, and public records training. In addition, the Unit sponsors diversity, computer, systems, and project management training initiatives.

The Educational Reimbursement Program is another training program administered by the Employee Development/Compensation Unit. Under the program, employees are reimbursed for 24 credit hours of tuition annually, paid at the state tuition rate, to an approved educational institution. All other expenses, such as books, lab fees, and test fees (that are not considered tuition) are reimbursed at 50%. The courses taken and the certificate/degree programs eligible for reimbursement include those related to an employee's job or future career with the District.

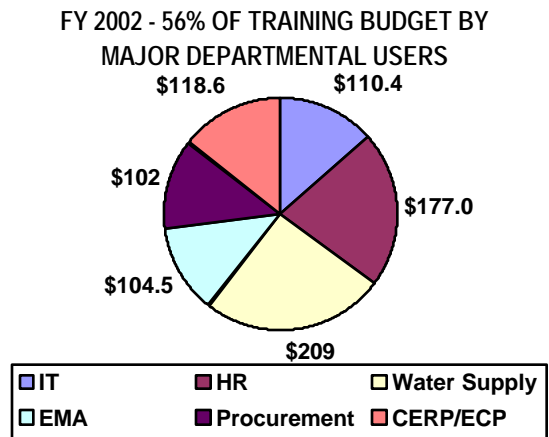
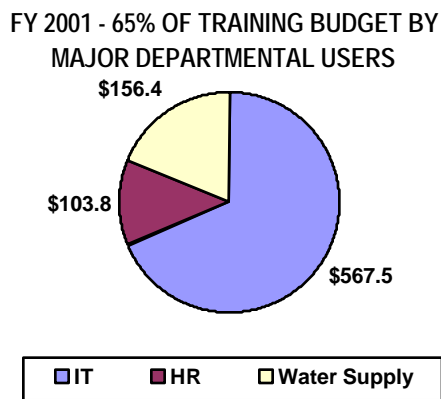
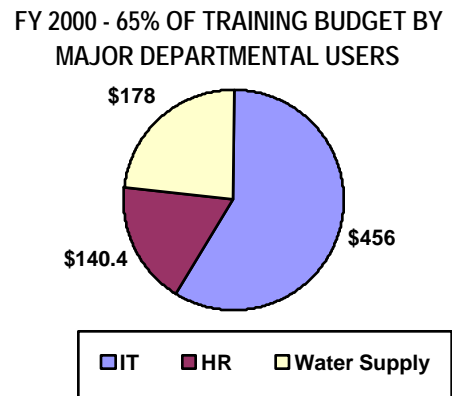
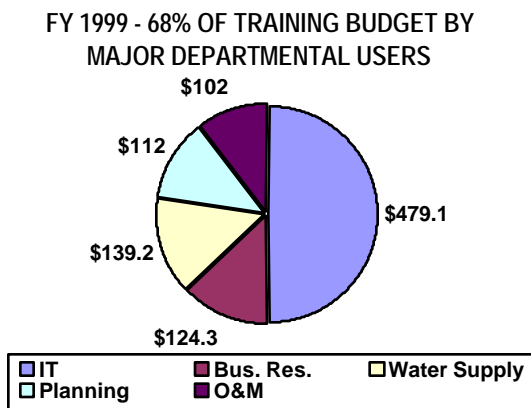
In addition to training sponsored directly by the Employee Development/Compensation Unit the various District departments are also provided with an annual training budget. The amount allocated to the departments varies and is based on the job classification of staff. Generally, staff with certain technical and Information Technology (IT) skills receive a higher allocation of training dollars. The departments have discretion as to the training their personnel can receive; however, most training is job related. Included in the individual department training budgets are ancillary costs such as the cost of travel and lodging for the trainee and any required training materials.

The following table shows total training costs over the last several years:

Fiscal Year	Training Costs
FY99 – Actual	\$2,087,480
FY00 - Actual	1,810,879
FY01 - Actual	2,094,796
FY02 – Budgeted/Annualized ¹	2,197,549
FY03 - Budgeted	2,529,953

These amounts contain all costs associated with District training including registration fees, travel and lodging, contract and employee trainers, and administrative costs. As can be seen from the table, the amount spent on training ranges between approximately \$1.8 and \$2.2 million annually. The amount budgeted for FY02 is greater than what the actual expenditures were for the three preceding fiscal years.

The top users of budgeted training dollars at the department level are depicted in the following table:



¹ Includes the annualized cost of employee trainers through the first half of FY02.

The amounts shown for Human Resources primarily represent payments or amounts budgeted for vendors who provide District-wide in-house training. The amounts for the other departments represent the cost associated with external and internal training provided from their respective training budgets. With the exception of the FY02 budgeted amounts, Information Systems was the top user of training dollars for the preceding three years. For all years presented, Water Supply/Management expended significant amounts on training. For FY02, Environmental Monitoring, Procurement, and Program Control have substantial training budgets.

The Employee Development/Compensation Unit determines what the training budget of the various departments will be based on the number of employees in the unit, and the job classification of those personnel. For example, for FY03, management and exempt employees were budgeted \$750 each, IT, Legal, Inspector General, and Emergency Management were allocated \$1,500 for each staff professional, non-exempt employees were allocated \$175 while non-exempt technical employees were each budgeted \$375 for training.

OBJECTIVES, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY

The objectives of our audit were to:

- evaluate whether the goals and objectives established by the training program are consistent with that of other organizations,
- determine the extent to which the program goals and objectives are being achieved,
- determine whether the District has a comprehensive strategy for training its employees, and
- gauge employee satisfaction with the training program.

We reviewed FY01 training expenditures in detail and compared them to industry benchmarks. We also conducted an employee training satisfaction survey to solicit employee feedback on the District's training program.

The audit was performed in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Executive Summary

During FY00 the District spent approximately \$1.8 million to train its employees. When compared to industry standards, the District's level of training cost is similar to other public sector organizations. However, during FY01, District training costs increased 17% to approximately \$2.1 million.

While incurring comparable FY00 training costs, the District was able to provide higher than average training hours to its employees than other public sector organizations. While this highlights the efficiency of the District's training program we noted wide disparities in the number of training hours that employees with similar job titles or in the same division are provided. This raises the question whether the distribution of training is equitable. We recommend that an annual ceiling on the number of hours of training taken by any one employee be established. Exceptions should only be allowed when justified.

Given that District training costs are rising, there are measures that can be taken to further increase the efficiency of the training program. Capturing and monitoring all of the costs of training in the HR Training Database would result in better program management. Also, exploring training alternatives such as e-learning could result in a decrease in training costs while increasing learning efficiency.

The District's training process is similar to other organizations in that the effectiveness of training is not evaluated. This occurs due to the inherent difficulty in doing so. Studies have been conducted that show that training provides benefits to organizations. Through our survey, we obtained anecdotal evidence that the District's training program is effective. Nevertheless, the District should develop more in-depth, results-oriented evaluations of the training program. Moreover, a comprehensive training program should go beyond one year in its assessment of the skills needed to support its mission. This should be prepared in conjunction with the long range strategic plan.

Training Costs Comparable To Industry Standards But Rising

The District's training costs, as a percentage of payroll and per employee, were comparable to other public sector organizations during FY00, however, they increased significantly during FY01. The cost to the District of training its employees in FY00 and FY01 totaled approximately \$1.8 million and \$2.1 million, respectively. The following table details those training costs.

	<u>FY00</u>	<u>FY01</u>	<u>% Increase</u>
Direct Costs:			
On-site Training	\$ 584,914	\$ 502,893	
Training Staff Costs	225,536	316,123	
Education Reimbursement	198,978	286,309	
Registration Fees-External Training	144,709	241,074	
District Employee Trainers	36,100	41,369	
Total Direct Costs	<u>\$ 1,190,237</u>	<u>\$ 1,387,768</u>	<u>17%</u>
Other Costs:			
Travel & Lodging Cost	\$ 387,160	\$ 429,338	
Administrative Costs	150,414	175,672	
Conference Registration	83,068	102,018	
Total Other Costs	<u>\$ 620,642</u>	<u>\$ 707,028</u>	<u>14%</u>
Total FY01 Training Costs	<u>\$ 1,810,879</u>	<u>\$ 2,094,796</u>	<u>16%</u>

Using this cost data we computed two key ratios that measure an organization's level of training expenditures and compared them to a benchmark study published by the American Society for Training & Development (ASTD).

ASTD is a professional association devoted to workplace training and performance. In February 2002, they issued a *State of the Industry: Report 2002*, which includes the results of benchmarking that they performed on training activities occurring during 2000.² Two key ratios that the ASTD uses to measure an organization's financial commitment to training are *Total Training Expenditures per Training Eligible Employee* and *Total Training*

² The ASTD benchmarking study had 367 contributors from US organizations representing ten different industries.

Expenditures as a Percent of Payroll. The following table illustrates how the District's FY00 training activities compared with ASTD survey participants.

Key Ratio	Total Training Expenditures per Training Eligible Employee	Total Training Expenditures as a % of Payroll
FY00 South Florida Water Management District	\$ 663	1.4%
FY00 ASTD - Public Sector	\$ 643	1.7%
ASTD Survey - Overall	\$ 704	2.0%
ASTD Training Investment Leaders ³	\$1,574	3.2%

For FY00 the District's training expenditures as a percent of total payroll is lower than the ASTD public sector benchmarking participants, the \$663 spent per employee is slightly higher (3%) than reported by the ASTD public sector survey participants.⁴ We noted an increase in these ratios for FY01. The District's training expenditures per training eligible employee rose to \$765 and the training expenditures as a percent of payroll rose to 1.6%. Comparable industry data is not available at this time.

Without detailed knowledge of the type of public sector organizations who contributed to the ASTD survey it is not possible to determine with any certainty the exact reason for the District's contrasting ratios. However, it is likely that the training expense as a percentage of payroll is somewhat lower because the District's salary structure is higher than the typical public sector organization due to the high number of professional/technical workers it employs. The higher cost and amount of training being provided to the

³ The survey highlighted a subset of survey participants in the top 10% referred to as "Training Investment Leaders." This select group of survey participants consists of organizations meeting various criteria indicating that they had made a dedicated commitment to developing the knowledge, skills, and abilities of their employees. Overall, training investment leaders spent over twice as much on training as the District.

⁴ The two ratios, *Total Training Expenditures per Training Eligible Employee* and *Total Training Expenditures as a Percent of Payroll*, exclude costs that the District normally includes as training expenditures: conference registration and training related travel and lodging. Also, certain administrative costs are not considered training costs. These costs are significant and add \$346, or 52%, more to the per employee cost of training.

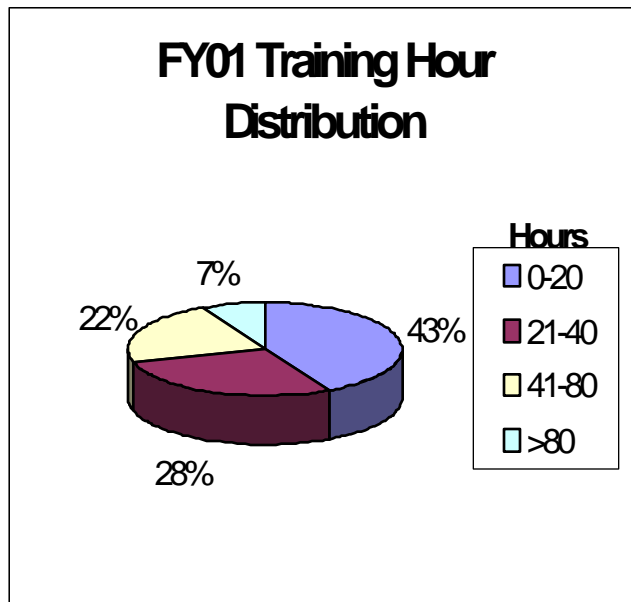
District's more highly skilled employee population might explain why the District's per employee training cost is higher.

Opportunities to further reduce the cost of the District's Training program follow.

Amount of Training Higher Than Industry Standards

One way to manage training costs would be to limit employees from taking excessive training. During FY00 District employees received an average of 34.5 hours of training which is 59% higher than the 21.7 hours taken by ASTD (Government) survey participants. Average training hours remained high during FY01 at 33.15 hours with half of the employees receiving 25 hours or less of training. Further analysis reveals that in FY01 there was a wide disparity in the number of training hours taken by employees; some employees took amounts of training many times the median and average hours per annum.

The chart to the right depicts the percentage of employees who took various ranges of training hours during FY01. As can be seen, 22% of District employees (398) took between 41 and 80 hours of training in FY01 and 7% of District employees (134) took over 80 hours of training during FY01. Two employees received over 200 hours, or 5 weeks, of training. This occurred because the departments have sole discretion when determining their training needs and allocate training in a totally discretionary manner.



The following table provides further FY01 training hours statistics.

FY01 Training Hour Statistics	
Total Training Hours Provided	60,172 (28.9 work-years)
Number of Employees Provided with Training	1,815
Average Training Hours Per Employee	33.15 hrs.
Median Training Hours Provided	25 hrs.
Most Hours Provided to an Employee:	
See Case study 1 below:	227 hrs.
See Case study 2 below:	208 hrs.
See Case study 3 below:	195 hrs.

Source: FY01 Training Database

Case Studies:

1. The employee with the most training hours in FY01 was a Senior Geographer who was provided with a total of 227 hours. Nine courses were taken, all of them classified as either computer or technical courses. Of the total hours provided, 42 were taken outside of the District. This is considerably more than what other geographer's at the District took during FY01. In the FY01 Training Database there were 39 employees with "Geographer" contained in their job title. This included Geographers of all levels from Staff Geographer to Senior Supervising Geographer. The average number of training hours taken for this group of employees was 63 and the median was 49 hours. Thirteen of these Geographers were provided with 80 or more hours of training. One other Geographer took 167 hours of training.

The employee's supervisor justified the excessive amount of training explaining that the training was necessary to orient the employee to the major information system changes that occurred during the year. However, it should be noted that the same Senior Geographer has a comparable amount of upcoming training listed on his *Individual Development Plan*.

-
2. The employee with the second highest training hours received during FY01 was a Lead Engineer who took ten courses totaling 208 hours of training. All but 3½ hours of this training were in computer or technical subjects. Of the total hours provided, 90 training hours were taken outside the District. This employee's supervisor stated that the training was necessary because the employee is involved in computer modeling which requires certain specialized programming knowledge. According to his supervisor, a change in this employee's job description from supervisor to lead warranted the training in order to bolster his technical expertise.

Of the 30 Lead Engineers in the training database the average number of hours of training taken during FY01 was 41 (the median was 29 hours). Four individuals received over 80 hours. While there is a significant disparity compared to other Lead Engineers, the disparity wasn't as pronounced when compared to other employees within the division who also took relatively large amounts of training. The 23 employee's from the Division who were in the training database took an average of 99 hours in FY01 with a median of 96 hours. The next highest in the division were also Lead Engineers who took 172 and 163 hours of training during FY01.

3. We performed the same analysis for the third highest District trainee, a Senior Systems Analyst/Programmer who took ten training courses totaling 196 hours during FY01. Again, the subject matter was skewed heavily towards computer and technical topics with only 8½ hours of training devoted to other subject matter. Of the total hours provided, 60 hours of training were taken outside of the District. This employee's supervisor stated that the training was necessary because the employee was new to the position but needed training in computer programming despite having the desired engineering background. We found 49 other employees with Systems Analyst/Programmers in their job titles at the District who received an average of 73 hours of training during FY01 (the median was 61 hours). Two other Senior Systems Analyst/Programmers took 171 and 157 hours of training.

The District uses a needs-based training process. However, it is questionable that fully qualified staff should be provided such high amounts of annual training. Certain disparities in the amount of training taken by employees with the same or similar job titles and between employees in the same division can be expected. Department and Division supervisors are supposed to decide how their budgeted training dollars will be allocated based on the individual needs of their staff. Training needs of employees are determined annually when the employee and supervisor review the employee's performance evaluation and identify where additional training is needed. However, when

some employee's are taking two weeks or more of training annually, while others with the same job description or in the same division are taking significantly less, it raises the question whether the distribution of training is fair and well thought out.

In order to reduce the cost of the training program, Human Resources should ensure that employees don't receive excessive training. Accordingly, the Employee Development/Compensation Unit should establish an annual ceiling on the number of hours of training that can be taken by any one employee. Exceptions should only be allowed when justified.

Recommendation

- 1. Quantitative training thresholds should be established, allowing for exceptions where there is a documented justification, authorized by the Department and approved by Human Resources.**

Management Response: Management agrees with this recommendation and will implement it by establishing a quantitative annual maximum training threshold of 80 hours and require Department management justification/authorization and approved by Human Resources before that number can be exceeded.

Responsible Department: Human Resources

Estimated Completion Date: October 1, 2002

Alternative Training Strategies & Greater Accountability Could Reduce Costs

There are opportunities that the Employee Development/Compensation Unit should explore that could result in a more efficient and cost effective training program. Enhancing accountability over training costs would be a good first step towards achieving this. We found that certain training related costs, including travel and lodging, and the cost of using District employees as trainers were not always recorded in the FY01 HR Training Database. Had all the costs been recorded and analyzed, it would have been found that:

- Using employees as trainers, ostensibly the least costly training alternative, costs more per training hour delivered than using outside vendors.
- Travel and lodging costs represented over 55% of the cost of external training.

The Employee Development/Compensation Unit should also explore alternative training delivery systems such as e-learning that could prove to be more cost effective.

We found that the cost of training performed by District staff (other than staff in the Employee Development/Compensation Unit) is not being recorded. This lack of accountability conceals the fact that the training cost per hour for this program is actually higher than the cost of using outside contract trainers brought on-site. Tracking the cost of this type of training and establishing a break-even class size would make this program more cost effective.

The District has a training program known as SMART (Subject Matter Application Resource Team) that uses knowledgeable District staff to train other employees. There is a real cost when District staff, who are not full time trainers, take time away from their regular job duties to train other employees. The type of training typically provided consists of instruction on District software and information systems, safety, leadership, EEO, and EOC training. The amount of time invested by a District trainer could be in excess of two weeks annually. A review of the February 1 to April 30, 2002 Training Calendar revealed several very small class sizes when employee trainers were used. Small class sizes result in higher per hour training costs. For FY01, the average cost of using employee trainers was approximately \$17.78 per hour compared to \$14.24 per hour when a contract trainer was brought in-house. Even the cost of external training was less, \$17.48 per training hour,

when travel and lodging was not considered.⁵ Further, the cost of the SMART program is actually higher than computed because it does not factor in the lost productivity/availability of the employee trainer to perform their normal duties.

We noted that a recurring, monthly, one-day class on the DbHydro database, taught by a District employee, had only two attendees for the two dates that it was offered, February 7 and March 7, 2002. This resulted in a District trainer devoting two entire workdays to train four individuals at a cost of \$19 per training hour delivered. As a general rule, the Employee Development/Compensation Unit requires a minimum class size of three for the SMART program. This was noted in the training system for this class. However, this does not preclude the employee/trainer from conducting the class for fewer than the minimum recommended attendees. If one more employee had attended the class for each of the days that the class was held (three for each day) it would have lowered the hourly cost to a more reasonable \$13 per training hour delivered.

Human Resources indicated that absenteeism is a chronic occurrence for SMART program classes resulting in smaller class sizes than planned. We recommend that a break-even class size be computed for each District trainer that would result in an hourly training cost no greater than the average cost of bringing a contract trainer on-site. If class attendance falls below the computed minimum class size, the trainer should either cancel the class or justify why it should be held.

We noted that there is no substantial absenteeism problem when contract vendors are used. HR can charge back departments for the cost of the contract trainer when staff are absent from class. This practice has not been incorporated into the SMART program training but should be considered.

In addition to the costs of the SMART program not being adequately accounted for, a significant amount of the ancillary costs of training, specifically travel and lodging, were not included in the Human Resources Training Database. This occurred because external training is budgeted by the departments where there is no distinction made between airline ticket fees and course registration fees. It is up to the various departmental training coordinators to update the database for actual travel cost associated with training. This is not occurring.

⁵ Including travel and lodging in the cost of external training would raise the cost to \$39.35 per hour.

We found that for FY01 approximately \$277,000 in travel and lodging costs were not entered into the HR Training Database. This results in the Employee Development/Compensation Unit having incomplete cost data with regards to training. Either the department training representative should update the Training Database for these costs or consideration should be given to segregating the travel and lodging costs of training in the LGFS Financial System so that they can be adequately accounted for and managed.

In addition to better management and control of training costs, the Employee Development/Compensation Unit should consider other low cost training opportunities. One way is through greater use of learning technologies. Learning technologies, also referred to as “e-learning,” are cost efficient methods for presenting and distributing training. It reduces the need for employees to attend formal classes to receive training. Our survey indicated that this was the least used training method at the District as well as being the least favored means of taking training by District employees. The ASTD benchmarking study indicates that governmental organizations under-utilize learning technologies. While there are certain costs unique to e-learning, including incremental desktop computer costs, course development costs, and IT support costs, the most obvious savings is on the cost of travel. However, there are other hard savings as well, including facility costs (room rental or overhead, refreshments, training materials, teaching aids) and instructor costs, (instructor salary or fees, and travel). Also, there are certain intangible benefits to e-learning such as increased learning efficiency.

Recommendations

- 2. The Employee Development/Compensation Unit should ensure that all training costs are included in their training database including travel and lodging costs and the cost of using District employees as trainers.**

Management Response: Management agrees with this recommendation. Human Resources is currently in the process of creating and implementing a new training evaluation form and related database that will capture travel, lodging and meal expenses tied to training events. In addition, this new tracking process will capture the costs of employees conducting training.

Responsible Department: Human Resources

Estimated Completion Date: January 1, 2003

-
3. **A break-even class size should be computed for each employee trainer so that employee taught classes are comparable to the cost of contract trainers.**

Management Response to Recommendations #3, 4 and 5:

Recommendations 3, 4 and 5 all relate to the current practice of using District employees to conduct training in order to offset the costs of hiring high-priced external trainers. This process taps into the existing expertise and talent of District staff, with prior supervisor approval, thereby avoiding paying for external trainers. This has proved to be especially successful in providing IT related training on skills that are needed for employees to meet their job responsibilities, oftentimes with very short notice.

Management commits to reviewing the process of using internal District staff to provide training to ensure that small classes are the exception and only occur when absolutely necessary.

In some cases with new hires, reassignments or transfers, employees need immediate training on subjects directly related to their jobs and unique to the District. The employee is unable to fully perform their duties until they have the training. In these cases, it may make sense to provide the training using a District employee without going through the lengthy and expensive process of hiring an external trainer. In these specific cases, the cost of not providing the training justifies small class sizes. Therefore, direct comparison between these specific cases and industry standards does not capture the true costs and benefits.

Responsible Department: Human Resources

Estimated Completion Date: A review and analysis of the existing program of using District staff to provide employee training will take place by January 1, 2003. By February 1, 2003 HR staff will also consult with Finance and Administration Department staff to determine the feasibility of a charge back system for employee delivered training.

-
4. **Written justification should be provided when classes are conducted with fewer than the minimal class size.**

Management Response: Same as Management Response at Recommendation #3.

Responsible Department: Human Resources

Estimated Completion Date: Same as Recommendation #3.

5. **A charge-back system for employee taught classes should be considered.**

Management Response: Same as Management Response at Recommendation #3.

Responsible Department: Human Resources

Estimated Completion Date: Same as Recommendation #3.

6. **E-learning type programs and opportunities should be developed.**

Management Response: Management agrees with this recommendation and is currently implementing several e-learning initiatives, and will support new initiatives. The District is currently using e-learning technology to provide training in the IT and GIS arenas and other specific subjects such as sexual harassment prevention and equal employment opportunities. The Hydrologic Data Processing and Streamgauging Section of the Hydrology and Hydraulics Division has also established an online Learning Center for its employees and contractors working for the section. In addition, with the move to the new B-2 building, HR is re-establishing a Learning Resource Center that will offer numerous e-learning opportunities to all employees on a variety of subjects.

Responsible Department: Human Resources

Estimated Completion Date: Currently being implemented and will be ongoing. An Open House will take place in March 2003 to showcase the Learning Resource Center.

Training Process Similar To Other Organizations

The District has in place a formal training process that encompasses many of the same elements used by other organizations. Consistent with other organizations, the District's training program focuses primarily on identifying and delivering required training. Absent is a means of formally evaluating the effectiveness of the training that was provided. As a result, it was not possible for us to quantify the impact that the training program, or even a training course, has on productivity at the District. However, we were able to gather some good anecdotal evidence through our survey that indicates that the District's training program is effective.

The District's training program consists of six different phases:

- Data Collection
- Data Analysis
- Draft Training Plan
- Internal Review
- Budget Input
- Final Training Plan

The *Data Collection* phase takes place from January through March and consists of several related activities. During this phase, the employee and supervisor prepare the employee's *Performance Plan* which is a mutually agreed upon set of key result objectives, performance measures and training needs for the upcoming year. *Performance Evaluations* are also being prepared during this time period to document how well the employee did at meeting the key result objectives and performance measures developed in the previous year. Finally, training needs are identified during this phase and are documented on the employee's *Individual Development Plan* (IDP). The training listed on the IDP's are then input into the Human Resources Information System (HRIS).

Once the training requirements of all employees have been entered into the HRIS, the Employee Development/Compensation Unit reviews the data in order to identify agency-wide and business group-wide training needs. This *Data Analysis* phase takes place through April. Once completed, the agency and business group-wide training needs are incorporated into a *Draft Training Plan*.

An internal review of the *Draft Training Plan* is conducted during April and May. This culminates in a review by the Governing Board's Human Resources Committee.

Budget input occurs during May and June of each year. The agency-wide and resource area proposed training budgets are input into the preliminary District budget for the following fiscal year. The District's budget then goes through the regular internal and external review, which results in the Final Training Plan.

The Final Training Plan describes in more detail the agency-wide and resource area training initiatives proposed for the next fiscal year. Proposed training, topics, schedules, and audiences are identified in the plan. The plan is then presented to senior managers for approval.

Next, the training that has been planned is taken and the employee evaluates the course, usually by means of an evaluation form filled out immediately after taking the course. At this point the process comes full-circle and it is time again for the annual Performance Evaluation.

By comparison, the US General Accounting Office (the "GAO") in their report entitled HUMAN CAPITAL, Design, Implementation, and Evaluation of Training at Selected Agencies, issued on May 18, 2000 found that high-performing organizations consistently approached the design and implementation of their training and development programs by taking the following four steps:

1. Identifying the knowledge, skills, abilities and behaviors employees need to support organizational missions and goals;
2. measuring the extent to which employees actually possess those competencies;
3. designing and implementing training programs to meet identified gaps in those needs; and
4. evaluating the extent to which the training programs actually increase employee's individual competencies and performance levels as well as overall organizational performance.

The District's training process encompasses essentially the same steps as those described in the GAO report. Step 1 above, "identifying the knowledge, skills, abilities and behaviors employees need to support organizational missions and goals," is accomplished at the District with the preparation of the employee's *Performance Plan*, which identifies key result objectives and performance measures for the upcoming year. It should be noted that a truly

comprehensive training plan would be forward looking and go beyond one year in its assessment of the skills needed to support its mission. Ideally, a long range Human Resources Plan that was a part of a larger District Strategic Plan would be able to identify the knowledge, skills and abilities that will be needed five years⁶ from now. If this were known, the District could start training current employees in those skills that will be needed in the future. However, this first requires the development of a long-range human resources plan. We first recommended that such a plan be developed in our Audit of the Human Resources Division issued in October 1996. Due to numerous reorganizations and changes in leadership a plan has never been completed.

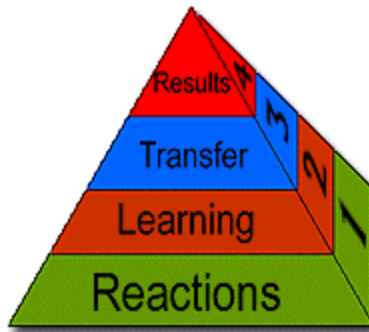
Step 2 above, “measuring the extent to which employees actually possess those competencies” is addressed in the annual Performance Evaluation. The preparation of the Individual Development Plan addresses Step 3, “designing and implementing training programs to meet identified gaps in those needs.”

Not addressed by the District is Step 4, which assesses the extent to which the participant actually uses what is taught at a training course and evaluates the extent to which it impacts productivity. This is the most difficult type of training evaluation to perform and as such, is performed the least. Instead, the District, like many organizations, relies mainly on standard end-of-course evaluations to collect information on participant satisfaction rather than increased knowledge and skills. This is consistent among most organizations.

Further expanding on the fourth step Donald Kirkpatrick, an expert in the field of organizational training and development, developed a four level training model in 1959 that is still in use today. The four levels that Dr. Kirkpatrick identified are:

- Reactions
- Learning
- Transfer
- Results

⁶ The Defense Finance and Accounting Service, which is responsible for making all payments and maintaining the core finance and accounting records for the Department of Defense, is piloting a process whereby they are assessing the training needs of the agency five years into the future.



Level 1 - Reactions

Evaluation at this level measures how participants in a training program react to it. It attempts to answer questions regarding the participants' perceptions - Did they like it? Was the material relevant to their work? The course evaluation is the typical example of this level of evaluation. According to Kirkpatrick, every program should at least be evaluated at this level to provide for the improvement of a training program. In addition, the participants' reactions have important consequences for learning (level two). Although a positive reaction does not guarantee learning, a negative reaction almost certainly reduces its possibility.

Level 2 - Learning

Assessing at this level moves the evaluation beyond learner satisfaction and attempts to assess the extent students have advanced in skills, knowledge, or attitude. Measurement at this level is more difficult and laborious than level one. Methods range from formal to informal testing to team assessment and self-assessment. If possible, participants take a test or assessment before the training (pretest) and after training (posttest) to determine the amount of learning that has occurred.

Level 3 - Transfer

This level measures the transfer that has occurred in learners' behavior due to the training program. Evaluating at this level attempts to answer the question - Are the newly acquired skills, knowledge, or attitude being used in the everyday environment of the learner? For many trainers this level represents the truest assessment of a program's effectiveness. However, measuring at this level is difficult, as it is often impossible to predict when the change in behavior will occur, and thus requires important decisions in terms of when to evaluate, how often to evaluate, and how to evaluate.

Level 4 - Results

Frequently thought of as the bottom line, this level measures the success of the program in terms that managers and executives can understand including increased production, improved quality, decreased costs, reduced frequency of accidents, increased sales, and even higher profits or return on investment. From a business and organizational perspective, this is the overall reason for a training program, yet level four results are not typically addressed. Determining results in financial terms is difficult to measure, and is hard to link directly with training.

Most organizations evaluate employee reaction to a training course (level 1), but go no further. The 2002 ASTD State of the Industry Report indicates that 78% of the organizations surveyed perform "Level 1" evaluations but only one third perform level 2 evaluations. Further evaluation drops off dramatically with those performing level 3 and level 4 evaluations falling to 9% and 7%, respectively.

The District performs formal level 1 evaluations and informal levels 2 and 3 evaluations. Levels 2 and 3 are addressed if the training was taken in response to a deficiency noted on the trainee's Performance Review. The effectiveness of the training would ostensibly be reflected in the subsequent Performance Evaluation with the employee receiving a higher rating in the deficient area. Consistent with most other organizations, the District does not quantify the impact of training on productivity (level 4). However, it might be possible to measure and quantify the effectiveness of some training courses. For example, the number of consecutive accident free days could be an objective measure of the effectiveness of a related safety course. A measure of the effectiveness of the Educational Reimbursement Program might be how many District employee's who received their degrees through the program were able to advance their career's at the District.

While no quantitative analysis is performed that would determine the cost-effectiveness of training, we were able to gather some anecdotal evidence regarding the effectiveness of training in our Training Satisfaction Survey. A majority of the survey participants (54%) indicated that the primary reason that they took training was to better perform job duties. The Survey further shows that a high percentage of the respondents (77%) indicated that they were able to use their training either most of the time or all of the time. This indicates that the training that is being taken is related to job duties and is being used on the job.

While it may be difficult to evaluate the effectiveness of training on a class by class basis, studies have been conducted that conclude that an organization's investment in education and training do pay off. A study performed by the ASTD in 1997 indicates that there is a direct correlation between the amount spent per employee on training and company performance. Since that initial study, companies in the ASTD database that ranked in the top 20 percent in spending on training and development have improved their profitability by an average of 16.2 percent, annualized in the five years through 2001. Over those same five years companies at the bottom of the training-expense ranking had significantly lower returns.

Recommendations

7. More in depth results oriented evaluations of the training program should be developed.

Management Response: Management agrees with this recommendation and is implementing it on several fronts. Results oriented training evaluations are an integral part of the long-term job profile initiative described in Management's Response to Recommendation #9.

In the meantime, evaluation of training results is integrated into the District's Training Policy, approved by the Governing Board in December 2001, and the Employee Performance Planning and Evaluation program recently rolled out to all employees. The Training Policy establishes the overall cycle for identifying and assessing training needs, budgeting to meet those needs and then linking the delivered training to expected employee performance goals, culminating in conducting employee evaluations at the end of the review period. By doing so, the employee and their supervisor can determine the effectiveness of training and development activities as they relate to their specific annual performance goals. Attachment 1 displays the Performance Planning and Evaluation Cycle. Attachment 2 portrays the District's Training Planning Cycle as outlined in the Training Policy.

In addition, HR currently evaluates training using end of class surveys that are used to determine the quality and appropriateness of provided training. Information from these surveys is critical to HR's ongoing quality improvement efforts.

Responsible Department: Human Resources

Estimated Completion Date: Ongoing implementation.

8. **The long-range Human Resources Plan, when completed, should incorporate an assessment of the long-term training needs of the District.**

Management Response: Management agrees with this recommendation. HR is currently developing the District's long-range HR Plan that will include the implementation of the job profile initiative described below in Management's Response to Recommendation #10. These solutions are the ultimate long-term fix for this issue.

The District will also continue to implement the District's Training Policy and Performance Planning and Evaluation system that collectively establish an annual process for performing the training needs assessment. This process is described above in Management's Response to Recommendation #7. In that process, each year when the supervisor and employee sit down to review and document the performance goals and measures for the employee, they will also identify the training that the employee will need to accomplish their goals. The information from the employee Performance Plans, including training needs, are then used to establish the District's training plan and budget for the next fiscal year.

Responsible Department: Human Resources

Estimated Completion Date: Ongoing implementation.

Employees Generally Satisfied With District Training Program

We conducted a web-based survey of employee satisfaction with the District's training program in order to assess employee attitudes. We found that District employees were overwhelmingly satisfied with the quality of training that they were provided but were split when asked about the sufficiency of training. Employees in job groups who were provided with the most training most often expressed that it wasn't enough. We also found that while supervisors and employees mutually agreed on the type of training needed, employees had considerable latitude in actual course selection.

The main reason cited by District employees for taking training was to better perform their job duties. They indicated that the training they received was fulfilling this goal. Additionally, employees believe that the Educational Reimbursement Program is a good career development tool. Nevertheless, we found a considerable lag between receiving a degree and advancing at the District. Finally, Craft employees responses to survey questions differed more often than any other group. This is probably due to their uniqueness in the District workforce.

In the survey, we asked various questions regarding the quality, quantity, and benefits of District training. We also sought to determine the reasons that training was taken and who selects the training courses. Finally, we asked respondents to provide us with demographic information to identify any trends amongst various groups at the District.

A total of 328 District employees responded to our survey. While the survey participants represented a broad demographic profile, the majority were well-educated white professionals who have been at the District less than ten years. Approximately 60% of the respondents reported being professionals with at least a bachelor's degree and 77% of the survey respondents who chose to reveal their race⁷ identified themselves as Non-Hispanic whites. For those who chose to disclose their gender, men and women were split evenly.

Following are the results of our survey.

⁷ The racial composition of the survey participants who revealed their race mirrors the overall racial composition of the District as a whole.

**Training Quality Is Sufficient
But May Not Always Be Enough**

A large percentage of respondents were satisfied with the quality of the training that they received, however, almost half expressed dissatisfaction with the amount of training available to them. The most often cited reason for the deficiency in training was to keep pace with technological advancements. A significant majority of those surveyed felt that, overall, the training that they received was either excellent or good. Only 5% thought that the quality was fair or poor. The following table details how survey respondents answered the question about the quantity of training.

How would you characterize the amount of training that you receive?

Category⁸	Response
Overall	About right 52% Not enough 47%
Gender	
Male	About right 52%
Female	About right 53%
Job Classification	
Administrative	About right 70%
Craft	About right 55%
IT Professional	Not enough 71%
Management	About right 74%
Professional	About right 52%
Supervising Professional	About right 54%
Technical	Not enough 63%
Ethnicity	
African-American	About Right 57%
Asian-American	About right 50%
Hispanic	Not enough 59%
White	About right 54%
Education Level	
High School	About right 73%
Some College	About right 57%
AA Degree	About right 53%
Bachelors Degree	Not enough 61%
Some Post-Grad	Not enough, 54%
Masters Degree	About right 58%
Ph.D.	Not enough 57%
JD	About right 50%

⁸ The race and gender questions in the survey were optional and the results herein only reflect the responses of those who chose to answer these questions.

Overall, almost half of those surveyed indicated that they thought that the amount of training received was “not enough.” The groups for which the majority expressed this included IT Professionals and Technical employees, Hispanics, and respondents with bachelors degrees, some post-grad work, and those with Ph.D’s. Conversely, over 70% of Administrative employees and those whose highest level of education was high school indicated that the amount of training was about right.

A review of the FY01 Training Database was revealing. Employees in the two job groups with the highest level of dissatisfaction with training amounts, IT Professionals and Technical employees, on average received hours of training far in excess of the average of 33 hours per employee. The following table lists the job titles, excluding directors, which were provided with the most training hours during FY01.

Job Title	FY01 Average Training Hours
Staff Infrastructure Analyst	131
Web Apps Developer	124
Sr. Geographer	122
Sr. Accountant	119
Assoc. EM Specialist	118
Safety Manager	107
Sr. Supervising Geographer	103
Chief Technologist	95
Staff Systems Analyst Programmer	93
Technical Support Analyst	92
Supervising Systems Analyst/Programmer	90

As can be seen, some of the highest average training hours taken were by IT Professionals and other Technical employees. Further, the Training Database indicates that, for FY01, computer and technical training constituted approximately 53% of all training hours provided to District employees.

While survey respondents were divided as to their feelings on the quantity of training, they were almost unanimous in their rating of the overall quality of training that they receive. Overall, 86% of the survey respondents felt that the quality of training was excellent or good. The lowest rating came from Craft workers only 64% of who felt that training was either excellent or good. The highest rating came from Management employees where 95% indicated that the quality of training was excellent or good. While rated somewhat lower, the

quality of in-house training was rated excellent or good by 79% of the survey participants overall. Again, Craft workers rated it the lowest with only 55% indicating that it was excellent or good. IT Professionals felt the strongest about the quality of in-house training and 88% felt that it was excellent or good.

***Employees Mainly
Select Training Courses***

Our survey revealed that most employees select the training courses they receive almost entirely by themselves. They are provided training at the District in a classroom situation for the purpose of being better able to perform their job duties.

The majority of survey respondents (70%) indicated that they primarily select training courses by themselves. This contrasts with the Training Policy which describes a needs based approach to selecting training. The policy describes a process whereby employees, together with their supervisors, choose the training the employee needs for the next year. This should occur during the development of the employee's annual performance plan. HR representatives that we discussed this with were also concerned that employees appear to have too much input into the training that they take. In order to validate this we contacted supervisors for whom their staff took large amounts of training. The supervisors stated that they had significant input into the type of training their staff took but many left the actual course selection up to the employee. This practice, as described, is consistent with the District's training policy.

**Primary Reasons for Taking Training
“To Better Perform Job Duties” and
“Career Development”**

The majority of the survey participants (54%) indicated that the number one reason that they took training was to better perform job duties. The next most important reason cited for taking training was for career development indicated by 42% of survey respondents. The following table outlines the results of the survey.

Category	Response	
Overall	Better Perform Job Duties	54%
Male	Better Perform Job Duties	46%
Female	Better Perform Job Duties	61%
Administrative	Better Perform Job Duties	74%
Craft	Career Development	45%
IT Professional	Better Perform Job Duties	62%
Management	Better Perform Job Duties	58%
Professional	Better Perform Job Duties	51%
Supervising Professional	Better Perform Job Duties	36%
Technical	Better Perform Job Duties	46%
African-American	Better Perform Job Duties	54%
Asian-American	Better Perform Job Duties	60%
Hispanic	Better Perform Job Duties	45%
White	Better Perform Job Duties	55%
High School	Better Perform Job Duties	73%
Some College	Better Perform Job Duties	61%
AA Degree	Better Perform Job Duties	56%
Bachelors Degree	Better Perform Job Duties	51%
Some Post-Grad	Better Perform Job Duties	48%
Masters Degree	Better Perform Job Duties	46%
Ph.D.	Better Perform Job Duties	52%
JD	Better Perform Job Duties	50%

Note that a higher percentage of females than males indicated that they selected training to better perform job duties. Females chose “to better perform job duties” as the number one reason over “career development” 3:1 while men chose “to better perform job duties” over “career development” 2:1.

Analyzing responses by job classification revealed that to “better perform job duties” was the primary reason cited by employees in all job classifications

except Craft employees, who indicated that “career development” was the overriding reason for taking training. We found that for Supervising Professionals, “to better perform job duties” was the number one reason cited, however, “it’s required” came in at a close second (29%). Administrative staff cited “to better perform job duties” as the primary reason that they took training 74% of the time.

Analyzing the responses by racial classification (using only those who chose to disclose it) revealed that African-Americans’ and non-Hispanic whites’ primary reason for selecting training mirrored the overall average of 54% who cited to “better perform job duties” as the number one reason to take training. Hispanics were somewhat lower (45%) while a higher percentage of Asian-Americans (60%) indicated “to better perform job duties” as the number one reason that training is taken.

Finally, employees with lower educational levels were more apt to take training to “better perform job duties” than those employees with higher levels of education. Those employees with no education beyond a high school diploma, some college and an AA degree took training primarily to “better perform job duties” at rates of 73%, 61%, and 56%, respectively. All other educational background categories fell below 52% to a low of 46% for those survey participants with a Masters degree.

Training Almost Always Improves Job Performance

The majority of survey participants indicated that the primary goal of training, to “better perform job duties,” is being met. We asked the survey participants to tell us if they felt that the training that they received helps them to better perform their job duties. The following table details the results and our analysis.

Category	Response
Overall	Always or most of the time 77%
Male	Always or most of the time 74%
Female	Always or most of the time 80%
Administrative	Always or most of the time 82%
Craft	Always or most of the time 82%
IT Professional	Always or most of the time 97%
Management	Always or most of the time 89%
Professional	Always or most of the time 70%
Supervising Professional	Always or most of the time 59%
Technical	Always or most of the time 77%
African-American	Always or most of the time 79%
Asian-American	Always or most of the time 80%
Hispanic	Always or most of the time 77%
White	Always or most of the time 78%
High School	All either most of the time or always
Some College	Always or most of the time, 75%
AA Degree	Always or most of the time, 79%
Bachelors Degree	Always or most of the time, 70%
Some Post-Grad	Always or most of the time, 71%
Masters Degree	Always or most of the time, 77%
Ph.D.	Always or most of the time, 68%
JD	Most of the time 75%

Overall, 77% of the respondents indicated that the training they received helped them perform their job duties better. IT Professionals had the strongest feelings about this. Also recall that 71% of IT Professionals characterized the amount of training that they received as “not enough.” This might indicate that there is a high return on investment in IT training.

***District is Primary
Training Location***

The survey respondents indicated that training was mainly taken at the District in a classroom situation. Sixty-five percent of the respondents indicated that for them, the primary place that training was taken was at the District, eliminating the need for travel and lodging expenses. Again, a significant percentage of Craft employees (73%) who completed the survey represented a departure from the norm and indicated that they primarily went outside the District for their training. This is probably due to the specialized nature of their jobs. This is consistent with the FY01 Training Database that indicates that two thirds of the training provided occurs at the District.

***Educational Reimbursement Program
Perceived to be a Useful
Career Development Tool***

The survey revealed that somewhat less than half of the survey participants used the Education Reimbursement Program, but the majority of those who have used it indicated that it was a good career development tool.

Overall, 45% of the respondents indicated that they had used the Educational Reimbursement Program. The following table details program usage.

Category	Response
Overall	Yes 45%
Male	Yes 38%
Female	Yes 53%
Administrative	Yes 30%
Craft	Yes 55%
IT Professional	Yes 65%
Management	Yes 47%
Professional	Yes 43%
Supervising Professional	Yes 54%
Technical	Yes 46%
African-American	Yes 64%
Asian-American	Yes 50%
Hispanic	Yes 23%
White	Yes 45%
High School	Yes 13%
Some College	Yes 45%
AA Degree	Yes 53%
Bachelors Degree	Yes 38%
Some Post-Grad	Yes 54%
Masters Degree	Yes 53%
Ph.D.	Yes 32%
JD	Yes 25%

Of the survey participants we found that women indicated that they used the program more so than men. By job classification Administrative staff used the program the least (30%) while IT Professionals used the program the most (65%). African-American respondents used the program often (64%) almost three times that of Hispanics who indicated very little usage (23%). Those with the least and the most education indicated limited usage of the program.

Employee's with AA degrees, Masters degrees or some post graduate work indicated that they used the Education Reimbursement Program the most, while staff with High School diplomas, Bachelors degrees, Ph.D.'s and JD's used it the least. The high use amongst those with AA degrees and those with some post graduate work is probably due to those individuals working towards the next degree level.

While those seeking to maintain a professional license also use the program, we asked whether the respondent used the program to earn a degree, or were in a degree program. Seventy-five of the 149 respondents who said that they used the program indicated that they did so to earn a degree. As with overall usage, there were somewhat more women who used the program to earn a degree than men. The Educational Reimbursement Program was popular with African-Americans who used the program to earn a degree (89%).

We also asked the survey participants to tell us what they thought of the Educational Reimbursement Program as a career development program. Overall, 82% of the respondents to the question rated the program as either excellent or good. Of the 243 respondents who actually answered the question, 104 rated it as excellent, 96 good, 28 average, 8 fair, and 7 poor. Craft employees were the least satisfied with the program with only 64% of the respondents saying that the program was excellent or good. This is due to the fact that the craft workers are generally stationed at (and live in) more remote areas with less access to educational institutions.

Next, we sought to determine whether those employees who earned their degrees advanced at the District. The following table illustrates what happened to 54 employees who indicated when they used the program to earn their degrees.

Months Since Receiving Degree	Promotions	Increase In Pay Grade	Promotion & Increase In Pay Grade	Transfer	No Change	Totals
12 mos.	1	0	1		15	17
18 mos.	2	0	1		3	6
24 mos.	0	1	1		5	7
30 mos.	2	0	3		1	6
>30 mos.	2	1	8	2	4	17
Totals	7	2	14	2	28	53*

* 1 other employee reported a decrease in pay grade.

Of the 54 people who reported using the Program to earn a degree, almost half (25) have advanced since earning their degrees. We defined advancement as a promotion, an increase in pay grade, or moving to another job. There were 21 promotions (including 14 who also received an increase in pay grade), two who received an increase in pay grade without a promotion, and two that were transferred. For 28 employees there was no change since receiving their degree, one person was demoted, and two others were transferred. As can be seen from the table, the amount of time elapsing since receiving the degree was a factor in whether or not the employee advanced. Of the 25 employees who advanced, 13 of them had received their degrees over 30 months prior.

Survey Conclusions

Overall, our Training Satisfaction Survey indicated satisfaction with the District's training program. Most respondents were satisfied with the amount and quality of the training provided. In addition, the responses indicate that the training process is effective. Supervisors provide employee's with input in areas where training should be focused but give the employee's latitude in course selection.

Respondents indicated that they take training most often to "better perform job duties" and also indicated that the training they received accomplishes that. Respondents also took training for career development and indicated that the Educational Reimbursement Program was useful to them in that regard. There were, however, certain groups who were less satisfied with aspects of the District's training program including IT Professionals, Technical employees and Craft employees.

A significant majority of the IT Professionals and Technical staff who responded to our survey indicated that they were not provided with sufficient training to keep pace with technological advancement. This sentiment was expressed despite the fact that IT and Technical job groups receive the highest levels of training at the District. Various factors influence the amount of technical training that needs to be provided. For example, a new system or major systems change usually results in an increased need for technical training.

Craft employee responses differed considerably from the responses provided by any other employee group. Craft employees' departures from the survey are as follows:

- They were the only group that chose training primarily for career development. All other groups indicated that the primary reason for taking training was to "better perform job duties."
- They were the only group that indicated that their supervisors selected their training courses for them. All other groups indicated that the trainee mainly selected training.
- They were the only group that indicated that their training was taken mainly outside of the District.
- They rated the quality of training and the Education Reimbursement Program lower than any other group.

The Craft worker responses do not suggest that the training needs of this group of District employees are not being met. Rather, their responses highlight some of the differences that exist between the Craft workers and the rest of the work force. Logistically, Craft workers at the District are dispersed throughout the entire service area, but organizationally the Craft workers are all in one department. This explains the focus on career development and who selects training. The fact that many of these employees work at the more remote areas of the District (the field stations) explains why the Education Reimbursement Program isn't a valued training program. Also, Craft workers typically practice a skilled trade such as heavy equipment operators, mechanics, machinists, electricians, welders, millwrights and maintenance technicians. These are not the types of jobs that are likely to be enhanced by taking college/university courses even if there were such educational institutions nearby. Instead, courses provided by companies such as Fairbanks Morse, John Deere, and GM are taken.

Recommendation

9. **HR should work with the Departments (particularly Operations & Maintenance and Information Technology) to ensure that training programs are developed with more employee input and focus on the individual needs of each employee.**

Management Response: Management agrees with the recommendation and a long-term effort is currently underway to implement it. HR is progressively moving towards replacing the current job description methodology with a skills-based initiative resulting in job profiles. The foundation of the new program is a skills-based inventory of what employees need to perform on their jobs to be successful. After the inventory is established, job profiles can be created which would replace and be less numerous than the current job descriptions.

Employees will then be assessed against their job profile skill requirements to determine training and development needs. These needs will be incorporated into their annual performance plans that will then create the District's annual training budget needs. This process will ensure the most important training needs of the employees will be identified and considered as part of the overall budgeting process. Additionally, this process will enable the District to tie skill requirements and job profiles to long term staffing needs and be consistent with the long range staffing plan.

The intention of training is to develop the most important and relevant skills for the District to succeed. The following steps summarize the overall process of applying job profile skill requirements to determine training and staffing needs:

1. Creation of an annual snapshot of skill level baseline.
2. Identification of the gap analysis between the skill level baseline requirements and employees' capabilities.
3. Identification of training and development needs based upon gap analysis.
4. Implementation of training and development programs.
5. Follow-up evaluation of training and development effectiveness through the use of an annual report of skill level baseline data to identify accomplishments and new requirements.

Responsible Department: Human Resources

Estimated Completion Date: HR is currently working with the IT, Management, and Project Management jobs on a pilot basis to apply the skills-based process to their jobs. There is also a Request for Proposals being issued to develop skills-based Administrative job profiles as part of an Administrative job study. This is anticipated to take until mid-2003 to implement due to resource constraints. Under current resource constraints, it would take 5-10 years to rollout this effort to all District positions. In an effort to facilitate this effort, HR will develop a 3-5 year plan for the full implementation of this effort, including timelines, deliverables and resource requirements and bring this to the Governing Board in January 2003 for their consideration.