SAFE MODERNIZATION IN THE DIVISION OF CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES

LEGISLATIVE FISCAL ANALYST
SOCIAL SERVICES APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE
STAFF: STEPHEN JARDINE

ISSUE BRIEF

SUMMARY

The Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS) is currently moving to more modern technology to provide a browser-based environment with which most DCFS workers are more familiar. Much of the work DCFS staff does is in the field and not in an office. SAFE is a computer system used by DCFS to provide for child abuse and neglect case management. SAFE began development in 1996 and became the system of record for Child Protective Services in May 1998 and for other DCFS services in November 1999. SAFE was written using older software language that is currently more difficult to support, not internet browser-based and cannot be modified to run on mobile devices, and not consistent with current Department of Technology database *standard platforms*. The Fiscal Analyst recommends inclusion of intent language requiring DCFS routinely report on the SAFE modernization project's status, current cost estimates, and anticipated or realized organization efficiencies and worker productivity increases.

LEGISLATIVE ACTION

1. The Fiscal Analyst recommends intent language be included requiring DCFS to routinely report at both interim and General Session subcommittee meetings as well as to the Office of the Legislative Fiscal Analyst on the SAFE Management Information System modernization project's status, current cost estimates, and organizational efficiencies and worker productivity anticipated and realized from the modernization project.

BACKGROUND

SAFE is a computer system that utilizes client-server technology and a relational database system to provide for child abuse and neglect case management. SAFE began development in 1996, became the system of record for Child Protective Services in May 1998, and became the system of record for other DCFS services in November 1999. SAFE was written in a *legacy* software language (a computer development environment that is no longer current and compatible with industry technology standards, has a limited product support level and enhancement path and has a shrinking customer base) called *PowerBuilder*. PowerBuilder is a technology that is "outdated in several respects and within which there is no clear technological path forward for large applications like SAFE. PowerBuilder has diminished significantly in its market share worldwide and as a result it is not expected that the vendor will put a significant effort into enhancing the product." In January 2011 the State's Department of Technology Services Architecture Review Board recommended that agencies utilizing Powerbuilder technology migrate away from the environment. Currently PowerBuilder developers are difficult to find and expensive to train. Due to limitations of the PowerBuilder environment, SAFE is not browser-based and cannot be modified to run on mobile devices. If SAFE were to be modified to run on mobile devices, DCFS would encounter significant licensing costs. DCFS is now moving to more modern technology, which will provide better responsiveness and more flexibility in making changes to the system and provide a browser-based environment with which DCFS workers are more familiar and more productive.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE HUMAN SERVICES IN-DEPTH BUDGET REVIEW AND THE DCFS PERFORMANCE AUDIT

Four recommendations from the Human Services In-depth Budget Review (found at http://le.utah.gov/interim/2010/pdf/00001613.pdf) and *A Performance Audit of the Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS)* found at http://le.utah.gov/audit/ad_2011dl.htm) dealt either directly or indirectly with improving technology in DCFS in order to increase DCFS worker productivity and effectiveness. These four recommendations are:

1. *Establish a pilot program that would decrease office time and increase field time by the use of non-traditional work schedules, laptops, cell phones, and other technologies* (in-depth review)
2. *DCFS further implement technologies such as the transcription service and portable laptops to enhance caseworker mobility* (performance audit)

3. *Plan in advance to take advantage of future funding opportunities in order to benefit from technology advances when the opportunity arises* (in-depth review)
4. *Explore alternatives to housing case workers in single, private offices and paying for multiple high-cost leases around the state* (in-depth review)

CURRENT COST ESTIMATE OF SAFE MODERNIZATION

Table 1 provides the department's current cost estimate for modernizing the SAFE system.

SAFE Modernization Cost Estimate

As of 01-23-2014

Ongoing Costs for Project:	# of Staff	Hourly rate	Est. Hours	Total Annual Est. Costs	Development timeframe*	Total Est. Project Costs	Notes - Changes from last estimates or explanations
4 Senior C#/ASP.Net Developers	4	90	2,080	748,800	8.0	5,990,400	SAFE Modernization Cost Estimate dated 8/27/2013
						(187,200)	Reduced 1 .Net Developer for 1 year
2 Senior Business Analysts	2	90	2,080	374,400	6.0	2,246,400	SAFE Modernization Cost Estimate dated 8/27/2013
						(748,000)	Reduced 1 Business Analyst, will not replace.
1 Senior C#/ASP.Net Architect	1	95	2,080	197,600	7.5	1,482,000	
Office Space, network Connections, phone	2	282	12	6,800	8.0	54,144	*Note that we are only paying for phones and additional space for two people
Annual Software Licenses				16,300	8.0	130,400	These are annual software renewals for the newer software related to modernization. Once all modules have been modernized we will be able to drop the older software licenses and these will become operational.
Annual Database server and hosting costs and rates (this is only an additional cost for modernization while we are working to convert the database, afterwards it becomes operational)				45,200	1.5	67,800	We have migrated the production SAFE SQL Server Database and are in the process of decommissioning the old Sybse / UNIX Servers. This MS SQL Server Hosting cost has been moved to operational, since it is now an operational system. Actual billings reflect a cost lower than previously estimated.
Web, application, and interface servers hosting costs				74,400	8.0	595,200	This is currently operational for interfaces but as modules are modernized and size increases rates may also increase. These costs are estimates at this time and may change as we modernize modules. DTS has changed some of their billing formulas for servers, it now includes an OS system support fee and a charge per Central Processing Unit (CPU), rather than usage. Source for the estimates was an aggregation for hosting costs published by DTS in the Reliability Management System (RMS) tool. Costs are slightly higher than previously anticipated
Total Ongoing Costs				714,700		9,631,144	
One-time Costs:							
Equipment, Network, and Data Hosting				-			We are not aware of any one time fees for equipment or network, DTS has gone to monthly rates for this instead of one time fees
One DBA to help with conversion for approximately 8 months	1	80	1,386	110,900			A DBA that assisted with the database migration
One Report Services Specialist to help with conversion for approximately 5 months	1	68	2,253	153,200			Report specialist is being retained a few months longer than originally estimated to assist with initialization of updated reporting system.
Training of operational staff and end users				47,500			
one time software				21,300			Reflects purchase of Kendo Framework Software and Team Foundation Server (TFS)
Total One-time Costs				332,900		332,900	
Sources of Revenue:							
Estimated General Fund Cost						3,069,600	
Estimated Title IV-E Federal Funds						2,495,800	
Estimated Adoption Incentive Grant						639,400	
Estimated Other Funds SSBG						3,758,900	
Estimated Total Funding						9,963,700	
Total Estimated Project Cost						9,964,044	
Estimated Federal Title IV-E SAFE rate						26.77%	*Note that reimbursement is based on SACWIS operational rates, this is not considered new development
Federal Administrative SAFE rate						100.00%	
Calculated Title IV-E SAFE rate amount (Cost x IV-E rate x Admin rate)						2,667,000	
Estimated Cost for Project						**9,964,044**	

Project to be re-evaluated on an annual basis by the division.

Table 1

GOALS OF THE SAFE MODERNIZATION PROJECT

The department has established the following goals regarding the SAFE Modernization Project:

- *Establish a sustainable technical path for SAFE using proven, modern technologies with large market share*
- *Simplify SAFE navigation and provide a better user interface*
- *Increase SAFE web presence*
- *Increase SAFE availability for DCFS and approved non-DCFS users*
- *Improve ability to recruit and retain technical staff*
- *Align with state and industry database and software standards*
- *Provide ability for SAFE to interface to other systems more easily*
- *Move toward a more agile process that allows for more timely releases to meet user business needs*

OTHER AGENCIES PARTICIPATING IN THE SAFE SYSTEM

The following agencies utilize the SAFE system to obtain DCFS data as required by federal or state law. These agencies do not input data into SAFE but only access information from the system. Given that fact, these agencies are not scheduled to participate financially in the modernization project.

- **Office of the Attorney General** – in order to have information to represent DCFS in court proceedings and provide legal advice.
- **Guardian ad Litem (GAL)** - in order to have information needed to be able to represent the child in court proceedings. In the future the GAL will only access SAFE information through an interface with its own system.
- **Office of Recovery Services** - SAFE and ORS share custody and child support information for the children in DCFS custody. This information is used in federal Adoption and Foster Care Reporting (AFCARS). ORS gathers child support payments as reimbursement to the state for the cost of foster care.
- **Department of Health** - for background MIS screening.
- **Department of Workforce Services (E-Rep)** – E-Rep has an interface with SAFE to provide access to and information for: 1) customer directory interface, 2) Title IV-E eligibility, and 3) Family Constellation interface.
- **Court clerks** - when looking up information for protective orders.
- **Office of Services Review** - to complete Case Process Reviews and Qualitative Case Reviews of the SAFE system as well as complete fatality reviews for children and other special studies that may arise.

The following agencies access SAFE in order to complete work that DCFS contracts with these agencies to provide:

- **Department of Health – Fostering Healthy Children** - to track the health needs and care of children in foster care.
- **Utah Foster Care Foundation** - to track recruitment and training of potential foster parents and in-service training for existing foster parents.
- **The Office of Licensing** (OL) uses SAFE to input data on foster parents and to do background checks on applicants as required by statute. The information on foster parents is shared between OL and DCFS and is required to be in SAFE for federal certification. As a result of the requirement to share and the assistance by OL in inputting data into SAFE, there has been no request for OL to share in the cost of SAFE.

Two agencies have participated in funding SAFE:

- **The Division of Aging and Adult Services** (DAAS) - uses SAFE as its system of record for Adult Protective Services Investigations and ongoing services. DAAS has provided funding for programming changes for those modules of SAFE that it uses. In the modernization project, DAAS would pay for programming specific to its own SAFE modules.

- **The Juvenile Court System** - a number of interfaces have been completed to share information with the Juvenile Court System. Data sharing includes things like address information for court cases and related person, phone information, termination of parental rights, attorney and judge assignments, and DCFS child placement information. There is a plan in place for further interfaces. Specifically, the Court Improvement Project, which oversees the interface between the Court CARE system and SAFE, has also participated directly in assisting with interface development and establishing infrastructure for the SAFE Modernization project and has provided funding for some of the new software tools needed for SAFE modernization.