
California Department of Consumer Affairs

2010 – 2012 Strategic Plan



Preface

To All Stakeholders:

I am pleased to present the Department of Consumer Affairs *2010 – 2012 Strategic Plan*. The Department and the State of California face enormous challenges in the years ahead, and I am proud of our staff's commitment to excellence in consumer protection. We are steadfast in our belief that the interests of consumers must be the guiding principle in all that we do. Our mission, vision, values goals and objectives clearly reflect that belief.

While many important themes and goals from our *2008-10 Strategic Plan* remain in this updated version – process improvement, customer service, efficient and timely licensing and regulation – some of the content is new. For example, the department has embarked on a Consumer Protection Enforcement Initiative, aimed at reducing the cycle time for our investigations. We have also taken steps to quickly reduce our licensing backlogs, in support of the Administration's job creation efforts.

We are committed to transparency and accountability. To that end, this version of the Strategic Plan contains a description of how we plan to measure our progress and success. Progress on most of the measures will be reported quarterly on the Department's website beginning in July 2010. In addition, we describe significant completed objectives from the previous plan.

We recognize the ambitiousness of many of the *2010 - 2012 Strategic Plan's* goals and objectives. We challenge ourselves to reach for them because we believe they will result in the level and quality of service that our customers – California consumers and licensees – want and deserve.

Sincerely,

BRIAN J. STIGER
Director
California Department of Consumer Affairs

Our Mission

To protect and serve the interests of California consumers.

Our Vision

California consumers make informed choices and have access to competent and ethical service providers.

Our Values

As a government agency dedicated to serving the interests of California consumers, the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) values:

Accountability – We are accountable to the people of California and each other as stakeholders. We operate transparently and encourage public participation in our decision-making whenever possible.

Efficiency – We diligently identify the best ways to deliver high-quality services with the most efficient use of our resources.

Effectiveness – We make informed decisions that make a difference and have a positive, measurable impact.

Integrity – We are honest, fair, and respectful in our treatment of everyone.

Customer Service -- We acknowledge all stakeholders as our customers, listen to them, and take their needs into account.

Employees – We are an employer of choice and strategically recruit, train, and retain employees. We value and recognize employee contributions and talent.

Unity – We draw strength from our organizational diversity as well as California's ever-changing cultural and economic diversity.

How Will We Achieve It?

Goals and Objectives

Goal 1

California is the recognized national leader in enforcement.

Objective 1.1

Set and maintain model professional standards in enforcement by December 31, 2012.

Major Activities for Objective 1.1

- Establish and track monthly Enforcement Improvement Plans for each board, bureau and program.
- Institute a mandatory Enforcement Academy for all sworn and non-sworn enforcement staff members.
- Reduce Division of Investigation case cycle time to six months.
- Institute a Best Practices Committee to research and identify internal and external best enforcement practices.
- Implement efficient department-wide uniform guidelines for: intake and complaint handling, anonymous complaint handling, electronic mail ballots for board members, and complaint prioritization.
- Facilitate a data exchange procedure with the Attorney General's office.
- Introduce an enforcement audit program.
- Create an Unlicensed Activity Initiative to address unlicensed activity violations.
- Develop standard procedures for contracting with subject matter experts.
- Hire health care consultants.
- Enable parallel investigations for the Division of Investigation.

- Establish an Enforcement Managers Roundtable to improve communications and exchange best practices.
- Establish a contract with a collection agency to collect outstanding licensee fees.

Objective 1.2

Update and optimize enforcement related operating systems, equipment, and software by December 31, 2012.

Major Activities for Objective 1.2

- Implement the Enforcement Activity Report.
- Redesign the department's computer coding system for intake, complaint resolution, investigations, and discipline.
- Utilize webcasting to broadcast the Director's enforcement message at Board, Bureau, and Program meetings.
- Implement enforcement fingerprinting regulations for new and retro-active licensees.
- Research, design, and apply a superior IT system.

Objective 1.3

Update current and introduce new legislation and regulations to more effectively conduct enforcement activities by December 31, 2010.

Major Activities for Objective 1.3

- Delegate subpoena authority to board executive officers to expedite investigation cycles.
- Develop new legislation for all healing arts programs to adopt more effective enforcement capabilities.
- Implement uniform standards for substance-abusing healing arts licensees within all healing arts programs.
- Develop new legislation for all non-healing arts programs to adopt more effective enforcement capabilities.

Objective 1.4

Identify and obtain the resources needed to implement objectives 1.1 – 1.3 by June 30, 2010.

Major Activities for Objective 1.4

- Generate a Budget Change Proposal for additional non-sworn investigators, training for non-sworn investigators, and hiring and training additional complaint intake staff.
- Generate a Budget Change Proposal to increase enforcement resources for non-healing arts boards.

Goal 2

Support the Administration's job-creation initiative by enabling individuals and/or businesses to expeditiously enter California's workforce and contribute to California's job growth.

Objective 2.1

Reduce our pending applications for licensure by fifty percent by July 1, 2010, allowing approximately 36,300 individuals and/or businesses to enter the workforce.

Major Activities for Objective 2.1

- Identify resources needed (overtime, temporary help).
- Obtain Department of Finance approval to utilize needed resources.
- Hire temporary staff to work on reducing the backlog.

Goal 3

California is the recognized national leader in professional licensing, and contributes effectively to job growth in California.

Objective 3.1

Evaluate the licensing process for efficiency by September 30, 2010.

Major Activities for Objective 3.1

- Evaluate the process for issuing licenses; identify process improvements and identify and eliminate redundancies and bottlenecks in the process.
- Evaluate the process for issuing renewal applications; identify process improvement, and identify and eliminate redundancies and bottlenecks in the process.

- Ensure that all Boards and Bureaus have current licensing procedures and desk manuals available to licensing staff.
- Research, design, and apply a superior IT system.

Objective 3.2

Evaluate the computer-based licensure examination process for efficiency by May 30, 2011.

Major Activities for Objective 3.2

Evaluate the computer-based licensure examination process, to identify process improvements.

Evaluate the effectiveness of the on-line occupational analyses for updating licensure examinations.

Objective 3.3

Evaluate and modify the minimum qualifications for licensure for efficiency, defensibility, and accessibility by June 30, 2012.

Major Activities for Objective 3.3

- Evaluate the minimum qualifications for licensure to ensure that they remain relevant and consistent with the standard of practice.
- Seek legislative amendments, if necessary, to modify minimum qualifications.

Goal 4

DCA's effective communication and outreach efforts provide consumers and licensees with relevant, timely, up-to-date information.

Objective 4.1

Measure the effectiveness of existing consumer education campaigns by February 28, 2011.

Major Activities for Objective 4.1

- Develop and implement consumer surveys for evaluating the effectiveness of the department's consumer education campaigns (Take Charge California; Drive Healthy; and Inquire Before You Hire).
- Analyze survey results and modify the campaigns as necessary.

Objective 4.2

Ensure that Consumer Information Call Center and staff are optimally equipped to respond effectively to consumer and licensee inquiries. Continuous, beginning April 2010.

Major Activities for Objective 4.2:

- Update the Consumer Information Center's Interactive Voice Recording system.
- Provide Consumer Information Center staff (Call Center and Correspondence Unit staff) with continuous team-building, and customer service and subject matter training, to ensure the information they provide to consumers and licensees is accurate and conveyed courteously and professionally.

Objective 4.3

Continuously provide information to licensees about current laws, regulations, and standards, beginning July 1, 2010.

Major Activities for Objective 4.3:

- Distribute information described above to all DCA licensees.
- Facilitate a roundtable discussion with professional associations no less than annually.

Objective 4.4

Develop partnerships with licensees to promote general consumer education by December 31, 2010.

Major Activities for 4.4:

- Partner with professional associations to disseminate consumer protection information to their members.

Objective 4.5

Provide opportunities for board members to learn and share best practices with each other by July 31, 2010.

Major Activities for Objective 4.5:

- Conduct at least one training day each year for board members.

Goal 5

DCA is “THE” state employer of choice in California.

Objective 5.1

Develop programs and tools by November 30, 2010 that will enhance employee’s professional development and help ensure a workforce that meets the Department’s strategic objectives and succession needs.

Major Activities for Objective 5.1

- Develop and implement an internal job rotation program on a pilot basis to enhance employee training opportunities and development.
- Evaluate the success of the supervisors’/managers’ pilot mentoring program.
- If pilot is successful, expand the program to include mentoring for Executive Officers and line staff.
- Complete the Knowledge Management Center and ensure that all boards, bureaus, and programs have plans to continuously update their procedures and desk manuals.

Objective 5.2

Provide opportunities for all employees to learn and share with one another and with management. (Internal communication program to begin July 1, 2010.)

Major Activities for Objective 5.2

- DCA Director will hold town hall meetings no less than quarterly for employees to share their opinions and suggestions.
- Develop a formal departmental internal communications program, which includes the internal *Did You Know* newsletter.

Goal 6

DCA provides excellent customer service to its external and internal stakeholders by adhering to the 7Cs of Customer Service – Complete, Concise, Correct, Concerned, Committed, Courteous, and Clear.

Objective 6.1

Evaluate customer service levels to external stakeholders and make improvements where necessary by July 30, 2011.

Major Activities for Objective 6.1

- Design and implement methods (e.g., surveys) and performance measures to continuously measure satisfaction of DCA's external customers (primarily, licensees and consumers).
- Evaluate feedback to determine the feasibility and viability of changing work practices to better meet licensees' and consumers' needs.
- Implement major recommendations.

Objective 6.2

Evaluate customer service levels to DCA's client boards, bureaus, and programs by July 31, 2010.

Major Activities for Objective 6.2

- Conduct internal client customer service surveys to ensure that DCA's divisions are providing good customer service to boards, bureaus, and programs.
- Evaluate feedback to determine the feasibility and viability of changing work practices to better meet employees' needs.
- Implement major recommendations.

Objective 6.3

SOLID staff will conduct three process improvement projects by January 30, 2011, to ensure that internal business processes are as efficient as possible.

Major Activities for Objective 6.3

- Complete the Human Resources Process Improvement Project, which includes an interactive Intranet tool and electronic versions of all human resource forms.
- Conduct process improvement for the DCA's licensing process.
- Conduct process improvement for the Correspondence Unit.

Goal 7

DCA will keep abreast of and utilize the latest technological advances to better serve its stakeholders.

Objective 7.1

Implement technology to enhance customer service for external and internal customers by December 31, 2012.

Major Activities for Objective 7.1

- Implement BreEZe, the Customer Service Center Web portal, ad-hoc reporting tool, and improved imaging capability.
- Promote the use of social media tools (Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube) as supported by the office of the State Chief Information Officer, to enhance customer service and communication with external stakeholders.
- Replace the department's Lotus Notes e-mail system with Outlook.

What Have We Accomplished?

This section describes the objectives DCA accomplished since our last Strategic Plan was issued in 2008.

Enforcement Enhancement and Improvement. DCA embarked on an ambitious Consumer Protection Enforcement Initiative. The initiative takes a three-pronged approach at improving the department's enforcement function through legislation, internal process improvement, and enhanced resources. Program objectives are listed under Goal 1 of this plan. Some of the objectives have already been completed: the development of an internal tracking system for enforcement case monitoring; a first-time Enforcement Academy for middle managers; and the development of performance measures, discussed below.

Job Creation. We recognize that DCA's licensing business function plays a critical role in the creation of jobs in California. To that end, in early 2010 we began another ambitious project, the Job Creation Initiative, aimed at quickly reducing our pending license application workload. Program objectives are listed under Goal 2 of this plan.

Process Improvement. We created the Strategic Organization, Leadership, and Individual Development (SOLID) unit in 2008. This unit is responsible for organizational development and strategic planning. Unit staff began implementing a process improvement project for the Office of Human Resources, which will be completed in April 2010. SOLID will perform process improvement work for DCA's contracting and correspondence functions as well in 2010.

The Process Improvement Team (PIT) was formed in November 2008 to serve as DCA's governing team for planning, developing, evaluating, and prioritizing process improvement initiatives with Department-wide impact. Under the mantra "Growing the Future of DCA," PIT members have completed a centralized database of DCA process improvement projects; identified quick solutions to the top three timesheet reporting errors; created two new department-wide mail routing slips; researched the most cost-effective courier service; assisted SOLID with developing enforcement performance measures; and continue to provide support for process improvement initiatives.

Performance Measures. In 2009, SOLID staff, working with executives, middle managers, and line staff, developed a set of nine performance measures for enforcement (pages 13 – 14), and is leading the effort to streamline and modernize DCA's thirty-year old data base coding system for reporting progress on cycle times, cost, and volume. SOLID has since proposed performance measures for DCA's licensing and education business functions, as well as

employee satisfaction (pages 14 – 18). These performance measures will be used to assess the progress of each board, bureau, and program toward meeting targets. DCA will begin publicly reporting on the measures in October 2010, through the use of a balanced scorecard reporting method and report-card like displays on each board/bureau/program website.

Best Practices. SOLID Training Solutions formed an Enforcement Best Practices committee, which researched best practices for complaint intake, investigations, and probation monitoring. The committee presented its findings to executive leadership in February 2010.

Consumer and Board Member Education. DCA developed a department-wide consumer education campaign titled *Take Charge California*. The goals of the campaign are to educate Californians about the importance of protecting themselves in the marketplace; provide information, resources, and assistance needed to make informed and appropriate choices; and compel consumers to improve their marketplace skills. DCA is partnering with local, state, and federal level agencies, community based organizations, and public libraries in this campaign to spread the word.

To spread the word about the perils of unlicensed activity, we created a consumer and licensee education campaign titled *Inquire Before You Hire*. The campaign urges consumers to check that practitioners are licensed before hiring them and potential licensees to obtain licensure. DCA partners with other state agencies and businesses in this effort. For example, we partnered with the Board of Equalization to conduct regional sweeps for unlicensed activity

We held the 2008 PACT (Professionals Achieving Consumer Trust) Summit in November 2008, as a learning and networking event for our 300 regulatory board members. Board members were provided with training on ethics, board governance, demographic and regulatory trends, and consumer protection issues. Conference participants rated their experience very highly.

We also held a Healing Arts Roundtable in 2009 with the Office of Statewide Health Planning Development. The Roundtable served as a forum for healing arts board chairpersons and their executive officers to discuss workforce shortage issues

Organizational and Employee Development. To help DCA evolve into THE employer of choice (Goal 3 in the previous plan), SOLID created and/or facilitates the following successful internal employee and leadership programs.

- Executive Leadership Forum – held bi-monthly, this forum is an opportunity for board and bureau leadership to meet with the department’s Director and other executive staff to hear updates, raise issues, and share accomplishments.

- Managers' Roundtables – held quarterly, the roundtables are an opportunity for the department's middle management to meet with the Director and other executive staff to hear updates, raise issues, and share accomplishments.
- Mentor Program – a pilot for supervisors and managers was implemented in 2009, and will be evaluated for expansion in 2010.
- Customer Service Program – this program consists of a customer service model for DCA, titled the 7Cs of Customer Service; new and improved customer service training, and a quarterly Customer Service Newsletter. Managers are encouraged to use the 7Cs in employee evaluations and considerations for promotion.
- New Employee Welcome and Orientation sessions.
- Employee Suggestion Box – SOLID staff respond to anonymous suggestions and complaints through this mechanism.
- Employee of the Year Award.
- Employee Appreciation Days (held annually in both Northern and Southern California).
- New Employee Survey and Employee Exit Survey. The data from these surveys are shared with executive leadership and middle management to help them understand the demographics of employees who are attracted to DCA, as well as the reasons they seek other employment.
- SOLID Training Solutions offers a competency-based training program for rank and file employees as well as workgroup learning modules designed specifically for the business needs of individual units and workgroups. Attendance in training classes has increased from 549 per calendar year to over 3,000 employees per calendar year since 2008.
- Management Academy - SOLID Training Solutions coordinates an HR Mod Leadership Competency based program available to managers and supervisors on an annual basis.
- Enforcement Academy - SOLID Training Solutions has coordinated and developed the first ever eight-day Academy to be launched in April 2010. The Academy is available to all enforcement personnel and will be offered four times per year.

Technology. We created a Technology Governance Committee. In addition, we began work on the BreEZe IT system. The DCA plans to acquire a new, integrated, enterprise-wide enforcement and licensing system (BreEZe) that will support the DCA's needs for applicant tracking, licensing, renewal, enforcement, monitoring, cashiering, and data management. BreEZe will replace the existing CAS, ATS, and multiple "workaround" systems with an integrated system for use by all DCA organizations. The BreEZe project was approved by the Office of the State Chief Information Officer (OCIO) in November 2009, and the Request For Proposal (RFP) for a solution vendor is currently under development. The system implementation date is anticipated in December 2012.