

Strategic Planning

DPR has broad authority to regulate pesticides in California and a responsibility to regulate in a manner that is fair, effective, efficient, and responsive to our various constituencies. This mandate requires practical and productive planning. Realizing this, DPR has created a blueprint over the past five years from which to build a dynamic organization committed to environmental protection and with the capacity to anticipate and react to a changing world. Strategic planning gives us that blueprint.

DPR, working in concert with the County Agricultural Commissioners, began work on its first strategic plan in the fall of 1993, in response to the passage of legislation (Chapter 418, SB 1082, Statutes of 1993) that among other things required Cal/EPA and all its departments, boards, and offices to "institute quality government programs to achieve increased levels of environmental protection and the public's satisfaction through improving the quality, efficiency, and cost-effectiveness of the state programs which implement and enforce state and federal environmental protection statutes."

The legislation stated that the quality government programs must include:

1. A process for obtaining the views of employees, the regulated community, the public, environmental organizations, and governmental officials with regard to the performance, vision, and needs of the agency implementing the quality government program.
2. A process for developing measurable performance objectives using the views of the persons and organizations specified in the first paragraph.
3. Processes for continually improving quality and for training agency personnel, using the information obtained from implementing the first two paragraphs.

Strategic planning was given a further boost in 1994, with the passage of the State Government Strategic Planning and Performance and Review Act. The bill (Chapter 779, AB 2711) was an urgency statute that took effect when signed into law in September 1994. It required that "in developing its strategic plan, each agency, department, office, or commission shall consult with at least the following affected parties: employee organizations, the Legislature, client groups served, suppliers, and contractors." Strategic plans were also to "identify the steps being taken to develop

performance measures that could be used for a performance budgeting system or a performance review."

The legislation also required the State Department of Finance (DOF) to annually survey agencies to obtain specified information concerning strategic plans and to recommend which agencies should develop or update a strategic plan. It also required DOF to develop a plan for conducting performance reviews of those state agencies which DOF recommended have strategic plans. In 1996, in a report to the Legislature on strategic planning, DOF recommended that all agencies have a strategic plan and later that year, issued a strategic planning directive. It mandated that all agencies have strategic plans in place by July 1, 1997, and stated that future budgetary requests would only be approved if consistent with an approved strategic plan.

In its 1996 report to the Legislature, DOF identified DPR as one of the state entities having completed a strategic plan. That same month, DPR released the second volume of its strategic plan, which laid out more than 200 action items DPR identified to achieve its goals.

In October of 1997, DOF outlined minimum components of a strategic plan, including: a description of the agency and its core principles; an agency mission statement; internal/external evaluation of key factors which influence the success of the agency in achieving its mission and goals; its vision, i.e., the image of its desired future; strategic goals along with objectives for specific steps to fulfill those goals; and performance measures, the quantified results to be achieved. In response, the DPR Management Team updated its strategic plan to add performance measures and to reflect recent changes in its internal/external evaluation. DPR submitted its revised plan in July of 1997.

In early spring of 2000, the DOF expanded its planning process to include operational planning at the branch level, and DPR began a new strategic planning cycle. All DPR employees were offered the opportunity to participate in identifying key opportunities to improve human and business process results, in alignment with strategic goals. This planning approach will help to institutionalize the continuous improvement process of the pesticide regulatory program on a systematic basis and as an outcome of special projects, initiatives and team efforts.