

JCOTS
May 4, 2005

The Joint Commission on Technology and Science (JCOTS) held its first meeting of the 2005 Interim on May 4, 2005 in Richmond. Delegates John A. Cosgrove, Joe T. May, Harry R. Purkey, Kenneth C. Alexander, and Kenneth R. Plum, and Senator John Watkins were present. The members of JCOTS re-elected Delegate May as chairman of JCOTS, and Senator Stephen D. Newman as vice-chair for 2005.

After an introduction of the members and staff, Delegate May began the meeting with an overview of past work of JCOTS, and a discussion of the goals of JCOTS. JCOTS was created as a permanent legislative agency in 1997 at the recommendation of a Joint Legislative Task Force on Science and Technology in order to provide leadership in collecting, managing, and monitoring reliable and accurate information about science and technology. Since its inception, JCOTS has sought to examine and implement sound technology and science-related public policy for the Commonwealth. Numerous pieces of important legislation have been adopted by the General Assembly as a result of the work of JCOTS, including adoption of the Uniform Computer Information Transaction Act (UCITA), the centralization of information technology functions in the Commonwealth, and most recently, a broad update of the Computer Crimes Act in cooperation with the Virginia State Crime Commission. For a more comprehensive list of topics studied by JCOTS, please see the document entitled "Overview of JCOTS: Where It's Been, Where It's Going." JCOTS continues to work to identify emerging technology issues, with a goal of acting proactively in the creation of public policy.

Three representatives from the Virginia Information Technologies Agency (VITA) -- Diane Horvath, Manager of Legal and Legislative Services, Susan Wooley, Director of Supply Chain Management, and Jeff Deason, Director of Security Services -- briefed JCOTS on the current work and initiatives of VITA. Since its creation 18 months ago, VITA has defined the new organization and its services and culture; consolidated agency resources from 90 executive branch agencies; moved from traditional procurement methods to a strategic sourcing approach; and met all of its commitments without any disruptions in services. VITA is in the process of launching a transformation of service delivery by consolidating, standardizing, and leveraging a common infrastructure. The Council on Virginia's Future, in collecting data for a move towards performance-based budgeting, has identified a number of agencies involved in repetitive services. For example, 50 different regulatory permits are issued in the Commonwealth. Members of JCOTS commented that it would like to follow-up and learn more about this type of data, as it will be very relevant to evaluating and creating an enterprise architecture in the Commonwealth.

Ms. Horvath shared that VITA brings value to the Commonwealth in several different ways. The Information Technology Investment Board (ITIB) and the Chief Information Officer structure work to improve governance and oversight of IT investments in the Commonwealth. VITA benefits the citizens of the Commonwealth by providing 100 interactive services online through Virginia Interactive. Ms. Horvath stated that the

virginia.gov portal was accessed 32 million times in 2004, and that nearly 35 percent of these accesses occurred outside of normal business hours, demonstrating convenience to the customer. In addition, VITA provides \$1.3 million annually in free web design, consulting, accessibility, and hosting services for agencies lacking resources. The consolidation benefits localities as well as state agencies, with \$8 million of cost savings have been provided to localities.

Ms. Wooley briefed JCOTS on VITA's sourcing strategy efforts. In developing its new sourcing strategy, VITA seeks to increase total value as well as degrees of commonality. This includes a four-pronged approach. VITA has collaborated with agencies to meet a particular agency's specific needs and has provided consulting and oversight services; VITA has taken a full-service, leadership role in providing end to end assistance and by activity managing sourcing and establishing a direct supplier relationship through Commonwealth Enterprise agreements; VITA has taken on a partnership role in developing efficiencies and managing cycle times through prime contractor statewide agreements; and VITA has enabled self-service by providing tools and capabilities that are easy to access.

Due to budgetary issues, VITA anticipates rate changes for its services over the next few years. In the approved 2005 budget, VITA was allocated \$500,000, earmarked for the Virginia Base Mapping Program. This is a departure from the over \$8 million recommended by the Governor. As a result, VITA anticipates that rates will rise to \$9.9 million for fiscal year 2006, \$10.9 million for fiscal year 2007, and fall to \$5.3 for fiscal year 2008. This information lead to a brief discussion by the members of JCOTS about eVA, Virginia's e-procurement system. It was mentioned by members that they had concerns about difficulty of vendors using the eVA system, and it was suggested that they contact the CIO with their concerns. Discussion also focused on the current rate structure of eVA. Ms. Horvath indicated that the administrative fees were established as a cost-recovery method, as the eVA system is currently self-funded.

The security of electronic databases is an issue of increasing concern both in the Commonwealth as well as across the country. Mr. Deason briefed JCOTS on its enterprise security program. There are three key elements of ensuring security of the Commonwealth's databases: protection, through the establishment of effective incident management and the creation of a secure infrastructure; security awareness, through information security training; and program compliance, through the development of security policies, standards and procedures, and risk management.

Ms. Horvath next touched on the status of the review of proposals received by VITA under the Public-Private Education Facilities and Infrastructure Act (§ 56-576 et seq. of the Code of Virginia). The conceptual review of the proposals was completed in November, 2004, and Secretary of Technology Eugene Huang approved the course of action recommendation for detailed review. The recommendation will review proposals from IBM and Northrop Grumman relating to infrastructure and will review proposals from CGI-AMS and IBM relating to enterprise applications. The infrastructure proposals relate to providing the hardware, networks and associated services and staff required to

support the information systems that agencies use to operate and provide services to citizens. The enterprise architecture proposals relate to providing the business processes and software applications used across state government to provide management and administrative support within agencies, such as human resource management, accounting, and procurement. If a detailed proposals is accepted by VITA, comprehensive agreements could be negotiated by mid-October, 2005.

Finally, Ms. Horvath explained current work being done to create a statewide enterprise business architecture. Ultimately, transformation would establish VITA as an enabler of services by operating a common, standardized IT infrastructure that would allow the Commonwealth to shift its resources from infrastructure support to service delivery. This would involve a focus on process redesign and the ability to recognize and adopt new technology opportunities for responsive service delivery. These changes, in turn, would lead to better citizen service, more economic development opportunities, and more cost savings.

After the VITA presentation, JCOTS staff provided a brief review of technology initiatives in other states. At least 11 other states have a joint legislative committee or commission dedicated to technology. However, many of these entities are fairly limited in their scope. For example, Maryland's commission was established to review the implementation of the Uniform Computer Information Transaction Act, and is set to expire June 30, 2005. Other entities are limited by statute to only review issues relating to government information technology or technology procurement. JCOTS, it appears, has a unique position in the realm of legislative technology commissions in that its authority and scope is broad to look at any policy issue relating to science and technology.

Next, staff reviewed the status of the bills recommended by JCOTS to the 2005 Session of the General Assembly. The legislation recommended by the 2004 Computer Crimes Advisory Committee, in cooperation with the Virginia State Crime Commission, was adopted. The 2004 Integrated Government Advisory Committee recommended four bills. Recommendations amending the electronic meeting provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), creating a pilot program for the VITA to use alternative dispute resolution, and clarifying methods of procurement that may be used were all adopted by the General Assembly. The fourth recommendation creating a FOIA meetings exemption for certain discussions relating to the Public-Private Educational Facilities and Infrastructure Act was referred to the Virginia FOIA Council for further study. A similar exemption already exists for discussions relating to the Public-Private Transportation Act. However, concern existed about the application of the existing exemption, and it was suggested that the FOIA Council review both the existing and proposed meeting exemptions. Bills recommended by the 2004 Privacy Advisory Committee relating to the posting of certain information by court clerks offices on the Internet and the dissemination of Social Security Numbers were both adopted. A third recommendation relating to event data recorders was tabled in the House Committee on Transportation, but will be further reviewed by JCOTS during the 2005 Interim. Finally, a bill recommended by JCOTS amending the JCOTS enabling statutes was adopted by the General Assembly.

At the end of the meeting, JCOTS discussed and adopted a work plan to guide its work during the 2005 Interim. The work plan included the creation of four advisory committees, focusing on privacy, emerging technology issues, nanotechnology, and integrated government. Topics for study include several issues referred by the General Assembly to JCOTS for study, such as the use of electronic toll collection, off-shoring, the use of cell phones while driving, database breach legislation, and intellectual property commercialization. Other topics identified by JCOTS for study include the use of underground transmission lines, education and workforce development, the modeling and simulation industry, continued monitoring of the use of social security numbers, and event data recorders. For a complete list of topics of study, please see the work plan. Staff also identified other legislative studies with technology or science implications that will be monitored throughout the year. In addition, JCOTS will visit locations in southwest, and possibly southside, Virginia, to learn about technology innovations and opportunities in these regions.

The meeting was adjourned, and future meeting dates of JCOTS have not yet been set. A calendar of meeting dates of the JCOTS Advisory Committees is available.