

STATE AUTOMATION SYSTEMS STUDY

SITE VISIT AUGUST 23-25, 1993

VERMONT STATE REPORT

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FINAL

Prepared for:

**Diana Perez, Project Officer
Office of Analysis and Evaluation
Food and Nutrition Service
3101 Park Center Drive
Alexandria, VA 22302**

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STATE PROFILE

System Name: ACCESS

Start Date: 1978

Completion Date: 1983

Contractor: Mathematica Policy Research (MPR)

Transfer From: In-house development

Cost:

Actual:	\$ 4,331,764
Projected:	\$ 3,800,000
FNS Share:	\$ 1,001,241
FNS %:	23.11%

Number of Users: 475

Basic Architecture:

Mainframe:	3090/300S
Workstations:	Northern Telecom 3270-type terminals, 286/386 type personal computers (PC)
Telecommunications Network:	19 - 9.6 KB SNA/SDLC circuits connecting 12 District Offices and the Central Office to the Communications and Information Technology (CIT) data center in Montpelier, T1 circuit

System Profile:

Programs:	Food Stamp Program (FSP), Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), Medicaid, Child Support Enforcement (CSE), General Assistance (GA), Reach-Up, Essential Persons, Supplemental Fuel, Emergency Assistance, Transitional Child Care
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1.0 STATE OPERATING ENVIRONMENT

The Human Services Agency is a cabinet level organization in Vermont. The agency's Department of Social Welfare (DSW) administers public assistance programs and contains the following organizational units:

- Administrative Services Division
- Family Services Division
- Medicaid Division
- Computer Services Division
- Welfare-to-Work Division
- Fraud Section

The Family Services Division (FSD), in conjunction with the Computer Services Division (CSD), operates the public assistance system that supports the Food Stamp Program as well as the Aid to Families with Dependent Children, Medicaid, Child Support Enforcement, and General Assistance programs in Vermont. Public assistance program management is integrated, and the only separate program-specific staff are in-house consultants.

The Family Services Division oversees public assistance programs at the local level (district offices) through district directors. FSD provides the following functions: human resource development, training coordination, planning and evaluation, policy, program area consulting, automated system support, welfare policy and procedures consulting, operations, and welfare emergency assistance services.

The Computer Services Division is responsible for operating and supporting the ACCESS system. In addition to the program areas noted previously, ACCESS also supports Supplemental Food, Transitional Day Care, and other State-specific programs. The following types of personnel are employed within CSD: senior system analysts, data processing systems analysts, welfare database administrators, welfare policy and procedures consultants, welfare information system operational specialists, and programmer/analysts.

The State Department of Administration also has a role in public assistance support. Although the ACCESS system is maintained by the DSW Computer Services Division, the system resides at the State data center and is operated by CIT personnel who are responsible for data center

The October 1992 report, *The Fiscal Survey of States*, provides the following information compiled by the National Association of State Budget Officers:

- Vermont's nominal expenditure growth for Fiscal Year (FY) 1993 was negative; the national average for expenditure growth was 2.4%.
- Vermont reduced the 1992 State budget by \$6.4 million after it was approved.
- State government employment levels in Vermont increased by 0.98 percent. This change differed in direction from the 0.60 percent national average decrease in State government employment.
- Vermont's revenue did not change for FY 1993.
- The regional outlook indicated that economic performance in New England was weaker than national economic performance in recent years. The regional weighted unemployment rate of 8.1 percent was higher than the national average of 7.8 percent, and the per capita regional personal income increase of 2.2 percent was less than the national average of 2.4 percent.

2.0 FOOD STAMP PROGRAM OPERATIONS

As mentioned in the previous section, the Food Stamp Program is administered through 12 district offices, which are located throughout the State. Generic eligibility workers (EW) staff these offices and determine eligibility for all program areas through the ACCESS system. District offices report to FSD district directors. The roles of each organizational group -- FSD, CSD, and CIT -- are described for the ACCESS system in the previous section. Since ACCESS is fully integrated, ACCESS responsibilities for each group also include the group's FSP responsibilities.

2.1 Food Stamp Program Participation

As indicated in Table 2.1, Food Stamp Program participation has increased dramatically between 1988 and 1992. The number of FSP households and recipients increased by approximately 63.4 percent and 66.6 percent respectively between 1988 and 1992.

Changes in participation levels for FSP and other public assistance programs for the last five years are provided in Table 2.1. While participation increases are evident for each program area for data are available, the magnitude of the increases varies among programs. For the five-year period, AFDC participation (cases) increased by approximately 45.1 percent, GA cases increased by 69.3 percent, and the number of individuals receiving Medicaid assistance increased by 54.1 percent. Foster Care and Child Support Enforcement caseload data were not available for the entire five year period. Foster care participation increased by 16.6 percent between 1990 and 1992, and

the Child Support Enforcement caseload increased by 29.5 percent between 1989 and 1992.

Table 2.1 Average Monthly Public Assistance Participation

PROGRAM	1992	1991	1990	1989	1988
AFDC					
Cases	9,985	9,287	7,790	6,792	6,881
Individuals	28,825	26,842	22,465	19,002	19,246
Foster Care	932	821	799	N/A	N/A
GA					
Cases	1,503	1,338	1,170	974	888
FSP					
Households	24,158	21,480	17,602	15,529	14,786
Individuals	56,218	50,137	40,391	35,140	33,746
Medicaid	68,828	62,988	51,502	45,655	44,667
CSE	19,756	17,197	15,213	15,254	N/A

2.2 FSP Benefits Issued Versus FSP Administrative Costs

The ratio of benefits issued to FSP administrative costs has deteriorated from 9.9:1 in 1986 to 8.3:1 in 1991.

Vermont's average monthly benefit issuance per household over the last five years, as provided in Table 2.2, has increased.¹

Table 2.2 FSP Benefits Issued

	1992	1991	1990	1989	1988
Average Monthly Benefit Per Household	\$131.52	\$120.63	\$108.80	\$95.30	\$95.25

¹ The number of households and benefit amounts use data reported in the FNS *State Activity Reports* each year.

2.3 FSP Administrative Costs

Vermont's Food Stamp Program administrative costs for the past five years are provided in Table 2.3.² While total cost increased each year until 1992, average cost per household increased from 1988 to 1989 and decreased each year from 1990 to 1992.

Table 2.3 FSP Federal Administrative Costs

	1992	1991	1990	1989	1988
Total FSP Federal Admin. Cost	\$3,584,628	\$3,612,646	\$3,458,149	\$3,392,066	\$2,622,457
Avg. Federal Admin. Cost Per Household Per Month	\$12.83	\$14.55	\$16.98	\$18.58	\$14.79

2.4 System Impacts on Program Performance

Areas of Food Stamp Program performance that could potentially be affected by the automated systems that support the program include:

- Staffing
- Responsiveness to Regulatory Change
- Combined Official Payment Error Rates
- Claims Collection
- Certification/Reviews

2.4.1 Staffing

State staff indicated that employment levels have not changed significantly in the past five years while public assistance caseloads have increased significantly during the same time period. Vermont currently employs 53 clerks or receptionists, 157 generic eligibility workers, 21 EW supervisors, four food stamp issuance employees, and 12 district directors. State staff believed that ACCESS system implementation, along with managerial and procedural changes, enabled the State to serve a larger caseload without increasing personnel.

² The number of households and FSP Federal administrative costs are derived from data reported in the FNS *State Activity Reports* each year.

2.4.2 Responsiveness to Regulatory Change

Vermont staff indicated that the State was unable to meet Federally required implementation dates for the following regulations:

- Code 1.3: 273.8(e)(17) - Implemented 6/9/92
- Code 1.4: 273.9(d)(5)(i) - Implemented 10/1/93
- Code 2.1: 273.8(e)(5), etc. - Implemented 1/1/90
- Code 3.2: 273.9(c)(14) - Implemented 3/1/89
- Code 3.4: 273.10(a)(1)(ii) - Implemented 1/1/90

State staff provided several reasons why these regulations were not implemented on time. One reason was the State's priorities; these changes were low priorities in Vermont. In some cases, for example codes 3.2 and 3.4, implementation delays were attributable in part to required changes in State policy or legislation. Vermont staff also noted that Federal regulations often were received with extremely short notice before required implementation dates. In addition, some regulations were deemed incomplete or unclear upon receipt and required extensive clarification prior to implementation.

State staff indicated that three other regulations were not implemented and provided the following reasons for each situation:

- Code 1.2 [273.9(c)(5)(i)(F)]: Not applicable in Vermont because the State does not pay school clothing allowances
- Code 2.3 [274.2(b)(3)]: Under a demonstration project, expedited service is provided by check in Vermont; therefore, the State did not implement this regulation which related to combined initial allotments under expedited service timeframes
- Code 4.1 [274.2(c)(1)]: State staff indicated that Vermont received a waiver for the regulation concerning staggering mail issuance over at least 10 days

Program staff, working in conjunction with analysts from CSD, determine the priorities of changes to the ACCESS system. Priorities are based upon the degree of need and the amount of effort necessary to make the change. First, staff determines the degree of need. In the case of Federal regulations, this involves examining the perceived level of exposure to sanctions and other Federal actions that may be taken if the regulation is not implemented on time. These determinations are important whenever changes are mandated by different programs.

2.4.3 Combined Official Payment Error Rate

Vermont's official combined error rate, as indicated in Table 2.4, fluctuated considerably between 1988 and 1992. The error rate decreased during the period.

Table 2.4 Official Combined Error Rate

	1992	1991	1990	1989	1988
Combined Error Rate	6.39	8.87	7.96	11.04	9.03

2.4.4 Claims Collection

Table 2.5 presents claims collection data, including the dollar value of claims established, the dollar value of claims collected, and the percentage of claims established that were collected. The overall annual dollar value of claims established and claims collected increased during the five-year period despite the decrease in claims established in 1990.

Vermont's claims collected as a percentage of claims established increased between 1988 and 1990 and decreased in 1991 and 1992. In 1992, the percentage of claims collected was 36.4 percent. This percentage is influenced by several factors, such as the total number of claims established, whether the individual is still receiving benefits, and the amount of available assets.

Table 2.5 Total Claims Established/Collected

	1992	1991	1990	1989	1988
Total Claims Established	\$307,730	\$247,071	\$210,318	\$227,357	\$226,483
Total Claims Collected	\$110,904	\$99,845	\$94,618	\$81,345	\$76,097
As a % of Total Claims Established	36.0%	40.4%	45.0%	35.8%	33.6%

2.4.5 Certification/Reviews

The ACCESS system became operational in late-1983, and the system has been reviewed by the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and FNS. DHHS conducted its Family Assistance Management Information System (FAMIS) certification review in May 1985, and FNS performed a Post-Implementation Review in 1985.

3.0 OVERVIEW OF THE SYSTEM

This section provides an overview of the various functions of the ACCESS system, its complexity and level of integration, and how it supports the Food Stamp Program in Vermont.

3.1 System Functionality

Major features of ACCESS functionality are described in this section. Areas addressed include:

- **Registration.** The initial point of contact is the receptionist or clerical support worker at a district office. This worker provides the applicant with a four-page application form. In completing this form, the applicant must indicate to which programs the household is applying for assistance. The applicant then returns the application form to the receptionist. Applicants also are allowed to mail the application form, as well as the Statement of Need Form, to the district office.

After the completed application form has been returned to the receptionist, the receptionist conducts a name clearance using the ACCESS system. A search is performed against the Client Index, which contains basic identifying information on all current and previous recipients and applicants for public assistance. Clearance is conducted on both name and Social Security Number (SSN), and the search may be conducted using either a phonetic or exact match routine. State-level food stamp disqualification files also are checked at this time. If the applicant is known to the system, the previous or current case number is used and information is updated as needed. This search is conducted only for the head of household.

The receptionist then examines the application form to determine whether the applicant might be eligible for expedited services and enters basic information from the application into ACCESS. This begins the 30-day standard of promptness. If the applicant is applying to FSP or several other programs, the applicant is required to complete the "Statement of Need" form. Through manual processes, an eligibility worker is assigned and an appointment is scheduled. Appointments may be scheduled for the same day.

- **Eligibility Determination.** During the eligibility interview, the eligibility worker reviews the Statement of Need Form with the applicant to ensure the information provided is accurate and complete. The applicant's eligibility is determined by a background processor, usually within 30 seconds of the transaction being released by the worker. Warnings and errors are sent to the worker's screen based on the internal logic checks, duplicate participation searches, and benefit calculations that are performed during this process. Benefits are issued in an overnight batch process.

The ACCESS system also determines the client's eligibility for expedited services. Vermont's regulations require expedited service to be rendered within 48 hours of application. Workers are notified of the need for expedited service by a notation on the "Worker's Daily Report" and by a system-generated message on the "ELIG 1" screen on the on-line ACCESS terminal.

As part of the eligibility determination process, all members of the household are searched against the ACCESS database of active and previously known clients. Searches are performed against Income and Eligibility Verification System (IEVS) data sources and Unemployment Compensation files as well. Any discrepancies identified are reported to the EW on the next working day via an "Edit Summary" screen that shows "pending" cases. A case will be designated as "pending" if verifications are missing.

- **Benefit Calculation.** Benefit calculation is on-line, real-time by the background processor. Eligibility workers verify that benefit calculations performed by the ACCESS system are correct.
- **Benefit Issuance.** The vast majority of food coupon issuance in Vermont is done through regular U.S. mail. Clients have the option of requesting certified issuance or district office coupon pick-up. State staff indicated that pick-up issuance is very limited, and certified issuance accounts for approximately 20 percent of total issuance. Certified issuance is highest in the Burlington area.

Under regular issuance procedures, food coupons are mailed from the central office once a month. This process is automated. The ACCESS system produces bar-coded cards at the State data center. The bar-coded cards contain the amount and denominations of coupons to be issued. The card is used in an automated sorting and stuffing machine at the central office to insert food coupons into mailing envelopes.

The Human Services Agency is currently negotiating with other State agencies for the purchase of a zip code software package that would add/correct zip code information for all issuances.

Vermont has other procedures for issuing benefits under special circumstances. The State issues a check for expedited issuances. This check is printed at the district office using a mainframe controlled printer. Vermont uses this "cash-out" issuance for both expedited benefits and SSI related payments. Direct deposit is available for "cash-out" issuances. Daily issuances are made for new applicants, monthly reporting households, and other special issuances. For households where monthly reporting is required, benefits are issued after the monthly reporting form has been received.

There are two methods for handling replacement issuances. If the issuance is returned to the central office because it is undeliverable, the issuance staff verifies

the client's address on ACCESS. If the address has recently changed, the issuance is mailed again, and an electronic mail (E-Mail) message is sent to the worker. No change to the issuance history in ACCESS is required when this procedure is used.

If an issuance was reported as not received, but it was not returned to the central office, the eligibility worker may request a replacement issuance by sending an E-Mail message to the Food Stamp accounting unit. This information automatically is sent to the issuance department where the original issuance is voided and a replacement issuance is authorized. The replacement issuance is mailed on the next working day. The worker is required to follow up on the electronic request with a paper form. The issuance history maintained on ACCESS is automatically updated with this information. The issuance history is maintained on-line for 36 months.

- **Notices.** The ACCESS system automatically generates the following notices to clients:
 - Key events related to household participation
 - Key events related to household eligibility
 - Warning that Monthly Report was not received
 - Denial because of failure to keep appointments
 - Eligibility determination results
 - Benefit reductions
 - Benefit increases
 - Application approval
 - Denial based on eligibility determination
 - Closure based on recertification information

EWs can generate notices and free-form letters to clients or add narrative to system-generated notices. Workers may generate notices relating to missing verifications. Workers have the ability to add up to 15 lines of narrative to system-generated notices. This feature is available on-line and is optional.

ACCESS notices are combined for all program areas served by the system. Approximately 30,500 notices are mailed each month for all program areas, but State staff did not know the distribution of notices by program type.

- **Claims System.** The claims system is fully integrated into ACCESS. The claims system performs the following functions: tracks the claim status, calculates the monthly recoupment amount and subtracts it from the recipient's monthly allotment, generates a notice to the client regarding overpayment or underpayment, and automatically creates a collection record.

An estimated 80 percent of the discrepancies between reported and verified data are handled by the State's centralized claims collection staff. Many automated

collection letters, reminders, and reports are built into the ACCESS system to assist the collection staff in recovering overpayments. The claims collection staff person or the eligibility worker enters the cause of the over/under payment and whether fraud is suspected into the system. The collection method is determined by ACCESS. Recoupment is selected if the case is still active.

The ACCESS system also performs the following claims-related functions:

- Automatic generation of initial 108FSA
 - Automatic billing and reminder notices
 - Automatic termination or suspension of claims
 - Ability to transfer claims between households
 - Verification of all pending Food Stamp applicants for involvement in unpaid FSP claims
 - Automatic suspension of client and fraud claims
- **Computer Matching.** Computer matching is performed every time information in the case is changed, either by the client, or through system-generated activities. Matching is performed against public assistance participants (current and closed cases), unemployment files, and IEVS sources.

Vermont utilizes a threshold targeting scheme to minimize unnecessary reporting of discrepancies. Discrepancies are reported to the eligibility worker via the "Worker's Daily Report" which is printed at the district office every working day. Most discrepancies are cleared by a central collection unit. The discrepancies are prioritized by age.

Discrepancies produced as a result of the certification process are shown on an on-line "Edit Summary" screen, while all other discrepancies are reported via the printed Daily Report. The Daily Report shows all due and coming due activities that must be performed by the eligibility worker. The system has the ability to page back and forth from the "Edit Summary" to the case record.

The worker, either the EW or the collection unit worker, has the ability to delete discrepancies once they have been resolved. Supervisors are responsible for tracking match resolutions. Discrepancies remain on the system until they have been resolved and deleted.

- **Alerts.** Vermont's ACCESS system was designed with on-line alerts as an integrated feature. This feature was disabled for two reasons: field staff indicated that it was too cumbersome to use effectively, and it required a large amount of system resources to run. Vermont now uses the printed "Worker's Daily Report" instead of on-line alerts.

The ACCESS system also utilizes an "Edit Summary" screen for discrepancies identified during the certification process. The information displayed by this

screen is generated as a result of internal edits and computer matching activities performed during the batch eligibility determination and benefit calculation process.

- **Monthly Reporting.** Vermont requires monthly reporting for approximately 3,465 cases. The ACCESS system has installed parameters that indicate whether a case should be required to report. In addition, eligibility workers may designate monthly reporting cases.

ACCESS produces the monthly reporting forms, directs the returned forms to the designated eligibility worker, generates warning notices for those cases for which monthly reports are late, and automatically closes the case if the monthly report is not received.

The status of the monthly report is shown on a system screen. Either the assigned eligibility worker or a designated clerical worker may input information regarding the receipt of the monthly report form and any changed information. These practices vary by district office. If an incomplete monthly report is received, the EW can send a notice to the household.

- **Report Generation.** The major operational report produced by ACCESS is the Worker's Daily Report, which functions as a printed alert notification showing due, past-due, and coming-due activities for which the worker is responsible. ACCESS supports worker generated on-line reports but they are used sparingly.

There is a well-defined set of management reports produced by ACCESS that encompass management, operations, and control functions within the Human Services Agency. These reports have been designed, programmed, and refined over time to suit the needs of the public assistance management group.

ACCESS supplies data that can be used by other State groups and Federal agencies. Federally-mandated reports are not automatically produced by the system, but ACCESS supplies data to staff members who reformat the data and complete the reports. Vermont also has the capacity to download defined data sets to the Planning and Evaluation Section which uses the data for statistical analysis and reporting purposes.

- **Program Management and Administration.** Vermont's ACCESS system provides an internally developed form of electronic mail for communication between the central offices and the district offices. All levels of staff are permitted access to the electronic mail system, which is used for internal communications, memos, correspondence, and initial notification of policy or procedural changes within the supported program areas.

Vermont also has a case complexity weighting formula within ACCESS that allows management personnel to make informed staffing and workload allocation

decisions. Its purpose is to determine appropriate staffing levels and staff disposition among the various district offices. This feature is not utilized to make decisions regarding individual case assignments; individual case assignment is a manual function.

ACCESS also supports an internally-developed task reporting and tracking system that allows individual operators to report system problems, via narrative text, and suggest improvements. The system then assigns a task number to the report and tracks it through priority assignment, coding, testing, and other life cycle stages.

The system has been in use for a number of years, and many modifications and refinements have been made to it.

Other ACCESS features that were considered desirable related to ease of use and update. ACCESS provides on-line help screens for users. The system also contains features that makes it easier to modify the system and to "back-out" changes that have unexpected effects upon other parts of the system. This is accomplished through version control of modules and tables within the ACCESS system.

3.2 Level of Integration/Complexity

ACCESS supports all public assistance programs in Vermont. The eligibility determination, benefit calculation, and notice functions are completely integrated among the various program areas. The claims system is well developed, comprehensive in scope, and completely integrated into the ACCESS system. Benefit issuance is automated, with ACCESS providing all input and reconciliation data necessary to meet Federal standards.

3.3 Workstation/Caseworker Ratio

There are a total of 210 eligibility workers and clerical staff, with an additional 33 staff employed as eligibility worker supervisors and district office directors. Each EW and receptionist has an assigned terminal.

ACCESS currently supports 475 terminals and over 200 micro-computers at sites throughout the State. Supervisory, managerial, and support staff at the central office also have dedicated terminals.

3.4 Current Automation Issues

Although ACCESS is a stable, operational system, the State continues to consider system enhancement activities. State staff believed that a current eligibility study may lead to a re-design of the eligibility component of the ACCESS system; however, decisions about future plans in this area have not been made yet.

Vermont also is working with Connecticut and New Hampshire to conduct an electronic benefit transfer (EBT) feasibility study. This study is in the preliminary stages, and firm plans have not been developed yet.

Another area that Vermont is exploring is the use of distributed architectures.

4.0 SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

This section discusses the approaches used in Vermont during the development and implementation of the ACCESS system.

- System life of 10 years
- \$6,000,000 in program savings per year
- \$165,000 in administrative savings per year

In addition, Vermont estimated labor savings of 57 person-years and associated annual cost savings of \$885,000. This figure was considered to be "soft" because it was based on reducing projected new staff hiring rather than actually reducing current staffing levels.

The State also expected to realize benefits through the reduction of error rates after the implementation of the new system. The estimated error rate reductions and cost savings for each program were as follows:

- For the FSP, the State estimated that the error rate would decline from 11 percent to 4 percent, a 7 percentage point decrease. The resulting cost savings -- based on \$25 million in benefits issued -- would be \$1.75 million.
- For the AFDC Program, the State estimated that the error rate would decrease by 2.5 percentage points (from 6.5 to 4 percent) with a resulting cost savings -- based on \$40 million in benefits issued -- of \$1.0 million.
- Medicaid error rates were expected to decrease by 6 percentage points (from 10 to 4 percent). The resulting costs savings -- assuming that \$55 million in program benefits were issued -- would be \$3.3 million.

Total projected cost savings that were expected due to lower error rates were \$6.05 million.

4.3 Development and Implementation Activities

The original State decision to develop a new system was made in 1978. ACCESS was originally funded under a grant from the Office of Income Policy Research of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW). A contractor, MPR, was hired and the general system design was completed in 1981.

The HEW grant was issued in 1978 to study and demonstrate the effects that monthly reporting and retrospective accounting had on welfare and welfare administration throughout the country. Vermont's project was linked to a similar effort in Colorado. The purpose of the effort was to produce model systems which could be transferred to other states. Colorado's participation in the project ended in late 1979. In May 1980, HEW notified Vermont that it could no longer fund a system of the scope and complexity of ACCESS through implementation due to recently enacted funding restraints. HEW's 100 percent funding ended in September 1981.

Vermont continued its development activities and sought ACCESS funding through the APD channel. The State submitted its initial APD in December 1981 and revised APDs in January 1982 and June 1982. The State planned a six-stage approach to system

development and implementation. In October 1983, Vermont submitted an APD that modified this approach to include only two phases.

Phase I of the project was completed in late 1983. The changes implemented during this phase had a significant impact on public assistance system operations in the State. The eligibility system was implemented to all district offices in the middle of 1983. The eligibility system impacted operations in several areas including: integration of eligibility determination for all supported program areas, elimination of turnaround documents and reduced reliance on manual files, and use of computer terminals by EWs and clerical workers in district offices.

Phase II of ACCESS implementation was completed in 1985. This phase focused on the "back-end" features of ACCESS and system modifications to correct problems identified during Phase I.

4.4 Conversion Approach

All open cases in the SWIS system at the changeover date were converted to ACCESS. For the majority of data elements that existed on SWIS, the State was able to perform an automated conversion. State staff indicated that the planned conversion time period was adequate. The State experienced staffing problems during this period. As a result, Vermont suspended case recertification during the conversion period.

ACCESS training consisted of a two-week classroom session for both eligibility workers and supervisors (conducted in the district offices), as well as more intensive training for expert workers from each district office. State staff indicated that workers had some difficulty learning to use the ACCESS system. The poor system response time, insufficient number of terminals, lack of staff familiarity with basic computer concepts, and fear of the system were identified as potential reasons for workers' problems with the new system.

4.5 Project Management

Vermont dedicated a full time staff of five persons to the ACCESS system. The project director reported directly to the deputy commissioner. The dedicated project staff consisted of the project director, one program consultant, one systems analyst, and two support staff.

Several other groups were formed to support and control the ACCESS project. A senior management group was formed to coordinate the development effort. This 10-member group was headed by the commissioner of the Department of Social Welfare and included senior contractor personnel, Department staff, and representatives from other State agencies. Other groups involved in the project included:

- Administrative Oversight Committee
- Recipient Oversight Committee

- **Income Maintenance Division Implementation Committee**

The ACCESS project team received contractor assistance from two sources: MPR and Joe Biar & Co. The contract with Joe Biar & Co. specified a period of performance between 1979 and 1981 and involved planning, implementation, oversight, and quality assurance services. MPR provided assistance in system development activities, including planning, general design, detailed design, coding, conversion, documentation, APD preparation, testing, and training. MPR brought extensive policy analysis experience in the public assistance area to the project, but the firm had little experience in the design or implementation of systems of similar size and scope.

4.6 FSP Participation

The Food Stamp Program was represented on the Income Maintenance Division Implementation Committee, and key project staff had extensive program experience prior to the beginning of the project. Program staff from the district offices had limited input. State staff indicated that the project manager limited program area participation by not fully involving policy consultants in the project.

4.7 MIS Participation

State management information services (MIS) staff were involved in the ACCESS project as members of the dedicated project team and through participation in project committees. MIS technical contributions to the project were limited, however, because the system was being developed using a language and database with which staff had no experience.

4.8 Problems Encountered During Development and Implementation

Several problems were encountered during ACCESS development; these problems included cost overruns, schedule delays, system changes, and contractor issues. Changing Federal regulations required modifications in the scope and nature of the project during the development phase. For example, the enactment of the 1981 Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act impacted monthly reporting as well as AFDC and FSP eligibility determination. Project cost increases resulted from changes in design specifications and basic design philosophy. Disagreements between the State and its contractors and programming problems also contributed to cost overruns.

During the early stages of the project, State staff had limited involvement in technical and design aspects of the project that were being performed by the development contractor. One reason for the limited technical involvement was that State staff lacked experience with the products being used for the development effort.

After the development contract was terminated, the State assumed responsibility for all aspects of the project. State staff indicated that the project team lacked necessary skills in documentation and technical programming, and that these deficiencies negatively

impacted the project by causing delays, increasing costs, removing functionality, and increasing code revisions required.

Problems with inefficient programs, insufficient hardware resources, and missing functionality presented problems during conversion and training. Additional problems identified during the conversion period included excessive system downtime and poor system response time. At the district offices, the transition from a paper-based, non-integrated system to a computer-based, integrated system created difficulties for workers.

5.0 TRANSFERABILITY

The ACCESS system was internally developed, initially as a monthly reporting and retrospective budgeting system. After changes to Federal regulations, the system was developed further to become a model FAMIS system. The problems encountered during system development and implementation were resolved, and ACCESS was FAMIS certified in 1985.

Since that time, ACCESS has been transferred to several States, either in whole or as a conceptual model. Today, ACCESS remains a viable candidate for transfer to smaller States.

6.0 SYSTEM OPERATIONS

The following section provides a description of the ACCESS system. The description includes a profile of system components and a discussion of the system operating environment.

6.1 System Profile

The components supporting the ACCESS system are as follows.

- **Mainframe:** IBM 3090/300S
MVS/ESA, CICS, ADABAS/NATURAL,
RACF
- **Disk:** IBM 3380/3390
- **Tape:** IBM 3480 Cartridges
IBM 3420 Reels
- **Printers:** IBM 4248 and 3203 impact printers
- **Front Ends:** IBM 3725
- **Workstations:** Northern Telecom NTOMO1AA 3270-type,
286/386 PCs

- **Telecommunications:** 19 - 9.6 KB point-to-point, SNA/SDLC circuits that connect the district offices to the CIT data center. A statewide backbone is currently being installed.

A detailed listing is provided as Exhibit A-6.1 in Appendix A.

6.2 Description of Operating Environment

The operating environment consists of several components. This section describes these components, which include the current operating environment, maintenance, telecommunications, performance, response time, system downtime, and plans for future hardware and software enhancements.

6.2.1 Operating Environment

ACCESS is run at the State data center in Montpelier. The Department of Administration's CIT department manages the data center. CIT has full control over application, database, and technical support for ACCESS.

The CIT data center operates seven days per week, 24 hours per day. The data center operates on an IBM 3090/300S platform. Seven months ago, the data center upgraded from a 3090/180S to the 300S to accommodate the planned implementation of a new Department of Transportation system. Since then, the Transportation system development has been terminated, and this has resulted in the new processor being slightly under utilized. Because of this available processing power, the CIT department was able to remove an IBM 3081 running DOS/VSE under VM and transfer the system's workload to the 300S.

The central processing unit (CPU) has two logically partitioned systems: the production region and the VM region. The production region contains four on-line CICS regions (one for ACCESS production and a separate one for development/testing; one for Scheduler and one for other users, such as Transportation, CIT, and other departmental systems). The VM region runs all DOS/VSE applications that have not been converted to MVS. Half of the production applications were converted when Vermont migrated to MVS nearly three years ago, and the other half are being processed in the VM region. CIT has not made specific plans regarding the time frame for converting remaining DOS applications to MVS.

ACCESS on-line processing can be performed daily nearly 24 hours per day. The CICS region is brought down once a day to perform region housekeeping, which requires approximately one half hour each night. Although the batch processing window officially extends from 4:30 p.m. until 8:00 a.m., normal ACCESS processing usually takes only two to three hours each night.

The system is supported by IBM 3380 and 3390 direct access storage devices (DASD), 3480 cartridge tape drives, and two remaining 3420 reel-to-reel tape drives that support a 5,000 volume tape library.

The data center has not yet installed an uninterruptible power supply (UPS) system. The data center has experienced an increase in power-related processing interruptions during the last two years, but data center staff has not yet made significant progress in evaluating the cost and benefits of an UPS system.

There are two disaster recovery plans in place. CIT has a hot site agreement with IBM for a New Jersey facility and a mobile cold site supply agreement to provide temporary on-site modules within one or two weeks of a declared emergency. The second plan is a PC-based ACCESS system for DSW that will provide minimum processing capability for a district office in case the district office, which is the telecommunications facility of the main CIT data center, is lost for a short time period (up to two weeks). Neither system has been tested to verify its ability to handle a major outage, and the CIT plan still is being revised.

6.2.2 State Operations and Maintenance

CIT provides both operational and technical support to its users, and DSW provides ACCESS support. CSD has a staff of 16 analysts, programmers, and database administrators supporting ACCESS enhancement and maintenance needs. CIT provides the following staffing resources: 16 computer operations personnel, whose responsibilities include scheduling and help desk functions, five systems programmers, and three network support personnel.

Both CSD and CIT feel that the current staffing levels for application support and operations support are adequate, but both groups believe that staff increases would provide them with more flexibility. Attracting and retaining qualified staff is not a problem for the State because economic conditions have limited other job opportunities in Vermont.

The State currently supports ACCESS without contractor assistance. After MPR's development contract was terminated in 1982, Vermont hired six of its staff as independent contractors to augment the in-house staff, continue ACCESS development, and provide on-going support. Some of these individuals have been hired by the State and currently work on the CSD ACCESS support team.

Major hardware reconfiguration, hardware and software maintenance, and file backup activities usually are performed over weekends and during overnight batch processing to minimize the disruption to on-line processing. Hardware maintenance is performed over weekends, and software maintenance usually is conducted at the same time. Application files are backed up four times a week during the batch cycle, and only system files are backed up by the data center each weekend. Backup files are stored off-site in Montpelier.

6.2.3 Telecommunications

The ACCESS telecommunications network consists of 19 9.6 KB, SNA/SDLC circuits that connect the 12 district offices and the central office in Waterbury to the CIT data center in Montpelier. The circuits are point-to-point connections that provide reasonable performance for the network. All the links except Waterbury use land lines; Waterbury uses microwave transmission. A T1 circuit recently was installed between Waterbury and Montpelier. CIT has a 3725 and a 3172 Front End Processor (FEP) that supports all of the ACCESS circuits.

There are additional networks installed within the State to support other agencies. An Information Systems Advisory Council (ISAC) currently is evaluating cost and technology issues related to the implementation of a statewide fiber optic shared backbone network. The emphasis is on providing necessary capacity and functionality to support distributed intelligent workstations, which may be implemented in the future by applications like ACCESS. The future protocol is expected to be TCP/IP, but the State has not yet made definitive plans or schedules.

6.2.4 System Performance

System performance has not been a problem in Vermont, and the under utilized processor can accommodate a substantial amount of growth in existing applications without any major upgrades to the processor. Until the DOS/VSE applications were migrated to the VM region of the 3090/300S, the 300S was running at 25 percent CPU utilization. With the addition of the VM workload, the utilization has reached the 50 percent range. Daily transaction volumes for ACCESS average approximately 50,000, and Food Stamp Program transactions account for roughly 10,000 of these transactions.

Space within the data center is limited. The removal of the 3081 has made floor space available and will permit the reorganization of the equipment in the data center. Even with this new space, there is just enough room to handle the current peripherals without the need to expand. There is room to upgrade the 300S into a 600 sized machine without much reconfiguration. Addition of a partial UPS system will tax the available floor space. Four IBM 3350 disk drives are still being used by VM DOS/VSE applications and are occupying valuable floor space. There are no current plans to convert the applications using the 3350s. Also, due to software limitations, the data center cannot take advantage of the newer 3380/3390 technology.

6.2.5 System Response

State program, CSD, and CIT staff all indicated that response time was in the two- to three-second range and was not a problem for field staff. During the last months that the 3090/180S was used, response time had increased to about four seconds, but the slower response was not a major problem. Based on current response time performance, CPU utilization, and the ISAC backbone network study, response time is not expected to be a problem in the foreseeable future.

6.2.6 System Downtime

CIT management staff estimated uptime to be in the 99.5 to 99.8 percent range. Some minor problems related to intermittent power fluctuations and 3380 HDA replacements were encountered during the last two years. Program operations and CSD staff also did not believe that system downtime represented a problem in Vermont.

6.2.7 Current Activities and Future Plans

The State has not finalized any plans regarding hardware and/or software changes over the next two years; however, several areas are being reviewed, including:

- Requirements and costs of a statewide telecommunications backbone;
- Use of distributed intelligent workstations for ACCESS and other applications, including consideration of how these workstations fit into the State's long term plans;
- Long term plans for the DOS/VSE workload and VM. This review examines the enhancements that should be undertaken to improve performance if DOS/VSE applications are to be part of the workload for an extended time period;
- Phase out of 3350 disks; and
- Upgrade of impact printers to IBM 6262s.

7.0 COST AND COST ALLOCATION

This section addresses ACCESS development costs since 1981 and approved Federal funding; ACCESS operating costs incurred during Federal Fiscal Years (FFY) 1990, 1991, 1992, and 1993 to date; and methodologies used to allocate development costs and ACCESS operating costs.

The sources of information used to generate this report are State of Vermont, Human Services Agency, Department of Social Welfare, *Advanced Planning Document for Automated Systems Development for the Vermont Department of Social Services*, December 1981 and all revisions; correspondence between DHHS (formerly HEW), FNS, and Vermont; worksheets containing development cost data maintained by Vermont staff; and spreadsheets used by State staff to allocate ACCESS operating costs to Federal programs.

ACCESS system development activities occurred between 1981 and 1985. Formal records from that period were not archived for future reference. Information relating to ACCESS development costs was extracted from records maintained by staff who were involved in ACCESS development activities.

7.1 ACCESS Development Costs and Federal Funding

Total costs for Phase 1 and Phase 2 ACCESS for the period of August 1, 1981 through March 31, 1985 are presented in Table 7.1, ACCESS Development Costs.³ The table shows that development costs incurred during both phases totalled more than \$4.3 million.

Table 7.1 ACCESS Development Costs

PHASE	TOTAL COSTS (8/1/81 - 3/31/85)	FNS SHARE		FNS FFP
		%	\$	
1	\$2,437,932	30.00%	\$731,380	\$550,450
2	\$1,893,832	14.25%	\$269,861	\$215,203
Total	\$4,331,764	23.11%	\$1,001,241	\$765,653

Initial development of the ACCESS system was funded by a grant awarded in 1978 by the Office of Income Policy Research (ISP) within the Department of Health Education and Welfare (HEW). The grant was earmarked for developing a model integrated welfare system that supported monthly reporting and retrospective accounting and could be transferred to other small states.

In September 1980, Vermont submitted *A Plan to Develop and Implement an Automated Monthly Reporting System for the Vermont Department of Social Welfare* to DHHS. The plan focussed on developing an ACCESS pilot which could support Title IV-D (Child Support Enforcement) by September 1981 when HEW grant funding was scheduled to end.

Meanwhile, the Comprehensive Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) of 1981 presented problems for continuing with ACCESS implementation because the system, as planned, could not meet COBRA requirements for integrated support to the Food Stamp Program and Title XIX (Medicaid), as well as Title IV-D. In response to the loss of grant funding, Vermont submitted the initial ACCESS APD in December 1981. This APD requested funding for an automated system that could support the administration of the AFDC, Medicaid, and Food Stamp Programs for the Vermont Department of Social Welfare. The system was to be fully integrated, supported by a single database, and include both batch and on-line processing capabilities.

The December 1981 APD proposed a development schedule that consisted of six phases. Table 7.2, ACCESS Development Phases 12/81 APD, lists each of these phases, the

³ Extracted from ACCESS/FAMIS Expenditures (as claimed) spreadsheet, dated 4/4/85.

period of development, the estimated cost of completing development activities during each phase, and the share of each phase's costs to be allocated to FNS.

Table 7.2 ACCESS Development Phases 12/81 APD

PHASE	PHASE DESCRIPTION	PHASE DATES	ESTIMATED PHASE COST (\$ millions)	FNS SHARE	
				%	\$ (millions)
1	Implement ACCESS Monthly Reporting	8/1/81 - 12/1/82	\$1.600	30.0%	\$ 0.480
2	Retroactivity Eligibility Archiving; Mass Changes; Other Programmatic Eligibility Functions	12/1/82 - 3/1/83	\$.350	14.1%	\$ 0.049
3	ACCESS Financial Subsystem	3/1/83 - 7/1/83	\$.500	12.5%	\$ 0.063
4	ACCESS MIS Subsystem (WEMIS)	7/1/83 - 11/1/83	\$.525	14.1%	\$ 0.074
5	ACCESS Interface Subsystem	11/1/83 - 2/1/84	\$.400	12.5%	\$ 0.050
6	Revision & Extension	2/1/84 - 4/1/84	\$.425	0	\$ 0.000
ALL	TOTAL	8/1/81 - 4/1/84	\$3.80	18.8%	\$ 0.716

A June 1982 revision to the December 1981 APD reduced the cost of Phase 1 to \$1.4 million.⁴ On June 23, 1982, DHHS approved Phase 1 for the period of August 1, 1981 through December 1, 1982 for \$1.4 million; the DHHS share was \$700,000, to be reimbursed at 90 percent Federal financial participation (FFP), or \$630,000.⁵ On July 13, 1982, FNS issued Phase 1 approval for \$1.4 million; approved a 30 percent share, or \$420,000; and approved a funding rate at 75 percent FFP, or \$315,000. Specific FNS Phase I approvals are listed in Table 7.3, FNS Phase 1 Approval Breakout.

⁴ The Phase 1 cost may have been reduced in an earlier revision submitted January 7, 1982. The June 1982 version was entitled "Addendum to the Advanced Planning Document... Originally Submitted January 7, 1982." The January 7, 1982 edition was not available for review.

⁵ The Office of Family Assistance agreed to co-fund the \$700,000.

Table 7.3 FNS Phase 1 Approval Breakout

PHASE 1 ACTIVITY	TOTAL COST	FNS SHARE	FNS FFP @ 75%
Statewide implementation of the ACCESS	\$1,150,000	\$345,000	\$258,750

- As a result of underestimating costs, an additional \$200,000 was requested to accommodate costs incurred through December 1, 1982 for State personnel, contractors, data center, and indirect charges.⁸

The increase in Phase 1 costs totalled \$757,547, increasing total funding requests to over \$2.1 million. DHHS approved the February 1983 request on June 6, 1983. The FNS share of this increase was 30 percent, or \$227,263. Of this amount, \$212,263 was to be funded at 75 percent FFP, or \$159,197; the remaining \$15,000 was to be funded at 50 percent FFP, or \$7,500. Total FNS funding for this additional request was \$166,697, increasing the total FFP for Phase 1 to \$481,697.

Phase 1 of ACCESS development was "effectively completed" in August 1983.⁹ By then, all district offices were fully utilizing existing ACCESS capabilities including automated eligibility determination and grant calculation.

In October 1983, Vermont submitted an APD for Phase 2. The October 1983 APD proposed that the remaining phases be combined into a single Phase 2 that would involve development and implementation of all remaining components of the ACCESS system. These components included: the financial subsystem, the management information system, and all interfaces with both Federal and State data sources. In addition, existing problems in the ACCESS system would be corrected and performance issues would be addressed during Phase 2. The cost of Phase 2 was set at \$2,905,010. FNS was allocated 15 percent, or \$435,752, to be funded at 75 percent FFP, or \$326,814.¹⁰

DHHS and FNS approved Phase 2. In March 1984, DHHS approved \$2,650,409.¹¹ In May 1984, FNS approved Phase 2 implementation costs of \$1.5 million; an FNS share of \$198,700; and a funding rate of 75 percent FFP, or \$149,016. Following discussions between FNS and Vermont, in January 1985, FNS approved its Phase 2 share at the requested amount of \$435,752 and funding at a rate of 75 percent FFP, or \$326,814.¹²

7.1.1 ACCESS System Components

Vermont was the "first State in the Nation to have a state-wide eligibility system."¹³ Phase 1 ACCESS supported three programs: AFDC, Medicaid Eligibility, and FSP. Phase 2 added support for Title IV-D, Fuel, and General Assistance.

⁸ Letter, 3/17/83, p. 6.

⁹ Letter, 10/18/83.

¹⁰ Letter, 10/18/83 and attachments to letter.

¹¹ Per 3/14/84 approval letter: HCFA determined that Vermont had failed to adequately justify the need for the \$232,401 in Title XIX funding but agreed to re-evaluate its position following receipt of more detailed documentation addressing Title XIX benefits to be provided.

¹² Letter, 1/16/85.

¹³ Letter, 5/18/84.

7.1.2 Major Development Cost Components

The July 1982 APD estimated ACCESS development costs at \$3.34 million. This represented a reduction of nearly \$450,000 from the \$3.8 million cost estimate provided in the December 1981 APD.¹⁴ The July 1982 budget is presented in Table 7.4, ACCESS Budget by Component. Estimated figures were not provided for computer operations support for the development period or site preparation.

Table 7.4 ACCESS Budget by Component

ACCESS COST COMPONENT	ESTIMATED COMPONENT COST	COMPONENT % OF TOTAL COST
Personnel and related expenses	\$893,920	26.73%
Contractor	\$1,997,026	59.72%
Equipment	\$341,740	10.22%
Other	\$111,498	3.33%
Total	\$3,344,184	100.00%

The following spreadsheets provided the majority of development cost data:

- Phase I, dated September 7, 1983, presented actual data from October 1, 1981 through June 30, 1983, and estimated data through Phase I statewide implementation (August 7, 1983).¹⁵
- Phase II, dated June 21, 1984, presented a total for 12 months ending October 1, 1983 and a total for the period of October 1, 1983 through May 31, 1984.¹⁶

All references to these spreadsheets will be as *Phase I* and *Phase II*, respectively.

7.1.2.1 Hardware

The 1981 APD estimated cost for ACCESS hardware and equipment was \$1,268,543. Of that amount, \$341,740 was earmarked for ACCESS development; the remaining \$926,803 was to support ACCESS operations. The State leased the majority of hardware and

¹⁴ The specific reason for this reduction was not documented in the available set of records.

¹⁵ Phase identification was designated Phase I and Phase II in some records, and Phase 1 and Phase 2 in others. The designation presented in this document mirrors the name used in the specific document from which the information was extracted.

¹⁶ According to a 12/21/83 letter, Phase 2 did not begin until 10/83. The assumption is that Phase 2 costs were incurred prior to the official start.

equipment that was acquired during the development effort. The following information on leased hardware was gathered from State records:

- In 1980, an IBM 4331 Model 2 was leased to support ACCESS development activities.
- In 1982, Vermont leased an IBM 4341 to support ACCESS development.
- In August 1982, two megabytes of additional memory were approved at an annual leasing cost of \$12,384.¹⁷
- In February 1983, the IBM 4341 was upgraded to an IBM 4341 Model 2 at \$12,000 per month; terminals were leased at \$10,000 per month; and leased lines and other equipment were leased at \$5,443 per month.
- In April 1984, Vermont requested \$342,098 to fund a Phase II hardware procurement. The FNS share was \$50,204. Approval documentation was not available.
- In May 1984, \$261,426 had been spent for terminals and related equipment.¹⁸
- In July 1984, Vermont requested approval to buy 131 terminals, 27 printers, and related support equipment and lease nine additional terminals. The total cost was \$339,325.¹⁹ The FNS share of this proposed procurement was \$92,928. In October 1984, FNS approved \$123,931 at an FFP rate of 50 percent, or \$61,966.

The total costs for hardware and equipment charged directly to ACCESS for both Phase 1 and Phase 2 was \$22.45 million.²⁰ Lease costs and depreciation costs were submitted to ACCESS as State data center costs and were not included in this amount.

7.1.2.2 Contractor Costs

Phase 1 contractor support for ACCESS development and support was provided by MPR. The original budget for contractor support was \$1.6 million.²¹ The revised January 1982

¹⁷ DHHS approval letter, 8/24/82.

¹⁸ Memorandum, May 15, 1984, in reference to an APD for equipment.

¹⁹ It is unclear from the records reviewed whether this request replaced the April 1984 request or was an addition to it.

²⁰ Phase I and II cost spreadsheets.

²¹ 12/81 APD.

budget increased this amount to \$1.997 million. Written approvals for MPR support totalled \$1,107,354.²²

Vermont terminated its contract with MPR in July 1982. Payments to MPR totalled \$776,251; payments through contract termination totalled \$686,205.²³ Two additional payments totalling \$90,046 were made following termination.²⁴

Following termination of the MPR contract, Vermont negotiated independent contracts with several former MPR employees.²⁵ Total costs for these contracting services were reported to be \$494,371. Phase 1 costs totalled \$253,845.²⁶ Phase 2 costs through May 31, 1984 totalled \$240,526.²⁷

7.1.2.3 State Personnel Cost

State personnel costs for ACCESS development and implementation were estimated to be \$893,920.²⁸ Total costs of State personnel salaries and benefits for Phases 1 and 2 were approximately \$756,811. Phase 1 costs totalled \$322,161, and Phase 2 costs totalled \$434,650.²⁹

7.2 Operational Costs

ACCESS operational costs, as submitted to FNS on the SF-269, include charges for MIS personnel time, mainframe usage and associated processing costs, and equipment maintenance.³⁰ Total ACCESS operational costs for FFY 1990 through FFY 1993 (two quarters), and the FNS share of these costs are presented in both total dollars and percentages in Table 7.5, ACCESS Operating Costs.³¹

²² Approvals were as follows: \$557,004 (10/1/81 - 10/1/82); \$550,350 (10/1/82 - 6/1/84).

²³ Phase 1 spreadsheet.

²⁴ Recorded during the period 10/1/82 through 12/31/82.

²⁵ Letter, 2/8/83.

²⁶ Spreadsheet: FAMIS/ACCESS Phase I, 9/7/83; Costs of \$22,360 were estimated for the period 7/1/83 through 8/7/83.

²⁷ Spreadsheet: ACCESS/FAMIS Phase II, 6/21/84.

²⁸ 12/81 APD.

²⁹ Phase I and II cost spreadsheets.

³⁰ Billed to the department by the State's centralized data center.

³¹ Source of numbers: Vermont Cost Accounting Interview Guide and Survey, Table B2.c.2, PAS Operating Costs.

Table 7.5 ACCESS Operating Costs

FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR	TOTAL ACCESS OPERATING COSTS (estimated)	FNS SHARE OF ACCESS OPERATING COSTS	
		\$	%
1990	\$1,307,855	\$261,571	20.00%
1991	\$1,650,000	\$329,877	19.99%
1992	\$1,813,000	\$362,602	20.00%
1993 (2 qtrs)	\$ 760,000	\$151,921	19.99%

7.2.1 Cost Per Case

The average monthly operational costs for FSP in FFY 1992 was \$30,217. Based on the 1992 average monthly food stamp caseload of 24,158 households, the monthly cost per case was \$1.25.

7.2.2 ADP Operational Cost Control Measures and Practices

Vermont's Department of Social Welfare is billed monthly for ACCESS operations by the State's centralized data center. The billing is based on three operational components tracked by the ADABAS Performance Analysis System (APAS): commands, database input/output (I/O), and CPU usage. For each processing module, APAS identifies its source system and records the number of commands (ADABAS calls), number of DASD I/O, and CPU usage as that module processes. These statistics are collected daily for all ACCESS modules that have processed during that period.

ACCESS Production Control (APC) is a device charge/time management system which associates specific assistance programs with specific system modules. If a module supports only the Food Stamp Program, all statistics collected during that module's processing time are added to total designated as Food Stamp. If a specific module supports multiple programs, the statistics collected during its processing are allocated automatically among supported programs based on average caseload counts.³² At the end of a monthly reporting period, these statistics then become the basis for allocating data center operating costs to each of the assistance programs supported by data center operations.³³

³² The caseload numbers used represent those of a recent period. Caseload numbers are maintained in a file accessed directly by APC.

³³ Data center operating costs are based on a budgeted cost that is adjusted on a yearly basis using the rates charged in the next year.

For July 1993, operating statistics compiled by APC showed that processing associated with Food Stamp Program support required more than 18 million commands, more than 21 million database requests, and over 5,700 units of CPU usage. Overall, the Food Stamp Program was allocated over 17 percent of data center resources. In comparison, AFDC and Medicaid were allocated 9 percent and 29 percent, respectively.

Department MIS personnel record their work time against billing codes that are associated with particular public assistance programs. Their salaries and benefits are then charged to the Food Stamp Program based on the total number of hours recorded for food stamp-related system work as a percentage of all system work performed by that department during the same period.

7.3 Vermont Cost Allocation Methodologies

This section discusses the methodologies used to allocate ACCESS development and operational costs. It addresses the methods and percentages used to allocate Phase 1 and Phase 2 development costs to FSP and other program areas. Appendix A provides a listing of the cost pools and basis for allocating each cost pool in the quarterly allocation of operating costs to the Food Stamp Program.

7.3.1 Historical Overview of Development Cost Allocation Methodology

The December 1981 APD proposed that ACCESS development costs be allocated in each of the phases as shown in Appendix A as Exhibit A-7.1, ACCESS Development Costs Allocation. Under this methodology, FNS would be allocated almost 19 percent of total ACCESS costs.

Each program area's allocation would vary by phase. The rationale underlying this methodology was that the allocation assigned to a particular program should reflect the perceived benefits to that program area if the phase was implemented. For example, FNS would receive a 30 percent allocation of all Phase 1 costs, but none of the costs associated with developing Phase 6.

The reorganization of the ACCESS project from a six-phase effort to a two-phase project resulted in modified allocation percentages among supported programs. This revision resulted in the following allocation of Phase 2 development costs among program areas:

- FNS, 15 percent
- AFDC, 58 percent
- Medicaid, 8 percent
- IV-D, 5 percent
- Fuel, 5 percent
- WIN, 3 percent
- General Assistance, 6 percent

7.3.2 ACCESS Operational Cost Allocation Methodology and Mechanics

Section 7.2.2 provides a detailed description of how ACCESS operating costs are allocated among public assistance programs. The remainder of this section describes the direct charge and allocation cost pools used to collect costs for allocation to Federal Programs.

7.3.2.1 Direct Charge Pools

Direct charge pools are used infrequently by DSW. The only direct cost pool specifically related to the Food Stamp Program identified in the Cost Allocation Plan is the pool associated with costs incurred by the Food Stamp Program consultant. The consultant assists the administrator of Planning and Evaluation in planning, development, and continuing assessment of the Food Stamp Program.

7.3.2.2 Allocation Cost Pools

Exhibit A-7.2 in Appendix A lists the major cost pools used by Vermont to allocate costs to the Food Stamp Program, the type of costs accumulated into each pool, and the basis for its allocation to the Food Stamp Program.

APPENDIX A

STATE OF VERMONT

EXHIBITS

**Exhibit A-2.1
Response to Regulatory Changes**

Code	Regulation	Provision	Federally Required Implementation Date	Implemented on Time (Y/N)?	Computer Programming Changes Required (Y/N)?	Changes to State Policy/ Legislation Required (Y/N)?
1.1	1: Mickey Leland Memorial Domestic Hunger Relief Act	1: Excludes as income State or local GA payments to HHS provided as vendor payments. 273.9(c)(1)(ii)(F)	8/1/91	Y	--	Y
1.2	1: Mickey Leland Memorial Domestic Hunger Relief Act	2: Excludes from income annual school clothing allowance however paid. 273.9(c)(5)(i)(F)	8/1/91	N/A	N/A	N/A
1.3	1: Mickey Leland Memorial Domestic Hunger Relief Act	3: Excludes as resource for Food Stamp purposes, household resources exempt by Public Assistance (PA) and SSI in mixed household. 273.8(e)(17)	2/1/92*	N	Y	Y
1.4	1: Mickey Leland Memorial Domestic Hunger Relief Act	4: State agency shall use a standard estimate of shelter expense for households with homeless members. 273.9(d)(5)(i)	2/1/92*	N	Y	Y
2.1	2: Administrative Improvement & Simplification Provisions of the Hunger Prevention Act	1: Extended resource exclusion of farm property and vehicles. 273.8(e)(5),etc.	7/1/89	N	N	Y
2.2	2: Administrative Improvement & Simplification Provisions of the Hunger Prevention Act	2: Combined initial allotment under normal time frames. 274.2(b)(2)	1/1/90	Y	N	N
2.3	2: Administrative Improvement & Simplification Provisions of the Hunger Prevention Act	3: Combined initial allotment under expedited service time frames. 274.2(b)(3)	1/1/90	N	--	--

**Exhibit A-2.1
Response to Regulatory Changes**

Code	Regulation	Provision	Federally Required Implementation Date	Implemented on Time (Y/N)?	Computer Programming Changes Required (Y/N)?	Changes to State Policy/ Legislation Required (Y/N)?
3.1	3: Disaster Assistance Act & Non-Discretionary Provisions of the Hunger Prevention Act	1: Exclusion of job stream migrant vendor payments. 273.9(c)(1)(ii)	9/1/88	Y	N	N
3.2	3: Disaster Assistance Act & Non-Discretionary Provisions of the Hunger Prevention Act	2: Exclusion of advance earned income tax credit payments. 273.9(c)(14)	1/1/89*	N	Y	Y
3.3	3: Disaster Assistance Act & Non-Discretionary Provisions of the Hunger Prevention Act	3: Increase dependent care deductions. 273.9(f)(4), etc.	10/1/88	Y	Y	Y
3.4	3: Disaster Assistance Act & Non-Discretionary Provisions of the Hunger Prevention Act	4: Eliminate migrant initial month proration. 273.10(a)(1)(ii)	9/1/88	N	N	Y
4.1	4: Issuance	1: Mail issuance must be staggered over at least ten days. 274.2(c)(1)	4/1/89	N/A	N/A	N/A
4.2	4: Issuance	2: Limitation on the number of replacement issuances. 274.6(b)(2)	10/1/89	Y	Y	N
4.3	4: Issuance	3: Destruction of unusable coupons within 30 days. 274.7(f)	4/1/89	Y	N	N

* These dates were changed after the State completed this form and the site visit occurred; therefore, the responses to these particular regulatory changes may be inaccurate.

**Exhibit A-6.1
State of Vermont Hardware Inventory**

Component	Make	Acquisition Method	Number/ Features
CPU			
3090/300S	IBM	Purchase	48 channels, 128 MB main storage, 128 MB expanded storage, 57 MIPS
DISK			
3390/3990	IBM	Purchase	Disk Controller (1) Drives - 3390 (1)
TAPE			
Reel Tape Drives	IBM	Purchase	3420 (2)
Cartridge Drives	IBM	Purchase	3480 (8)
PRINTERS			
Impact	IBM	Purchase	4248 (1) 3203 (2)
FRONT END PROCESSORS			
37XX	IBM	Purchase	3725 (1)
REMOTE EQUIPMENT			
Workstations	Northern Telecom	Purchase	3270-type (475)

Exhibit A-7.1
ACCESS Development Cost Allocation 12/81 APD (\$ millions)

PHASE & DESCRIPTION	APD COST	FNS SHARE		AFDC SHARE		MEDICAID SHARE		OTHER SHARE		IV-D SHARE		TOTAL	
		%	\$	%	\$	%	\$	%	\$	%	\$	%	\$
1 - Implement ACCESS Monthly Reporting	1.600	30	.480	50	.80	20	.32	0	0	0	0	100	1.60
2 - Retroactivity Eligibility Archiving; Mass changes; other Programmatic Eligibility Functions	.350	14.1	.0494	20.4	.0714	23.6	.0826	35.6	.1246	6.3	.0221	100	.35
3 - ACCESS Financial Subsystem	.500	12.5	.0625	50	.25	12.5	.0625	12.5	.0625	12.5	.0625	100	.50
4 - ACCESS MIS Subsystem (WEMIS)	.525	14.1	.074	20.4	.1071	23.6	.1239	35.6	.1869	6.3	.0331	100	.525
5 - ACCESS Interface Subsystem	.400	12.5	.05	50	.20	12.5	.05	12.5	.05	12.5	.05	100	.40
6 - Revision & Extension	.425	0	0	50	.2125	50	.2125	0	0	0	0	100	.425
TOTAL	3.80	18.84	0.7159	43.18	1.641	22.41	0.8515	11.16	.424	4.41	.1677	100	3.8

**Exhibit A.7-2
Allocated Cost Pools**

COST POOL	COST ITEMS	ALLOCATIONMETHODOLOGY
ACCESS/FAMIS Development	The costs of contractual computer analyst/programmers who develop and code applications software for the ACCESS system. Modifies, corrects and develops reports for existing applications.	Average percentages of commands executed, database I/Os executed, and CPU seconds used, by food stamp modules. (Reference 7.2.2)
Food Stamp Inserter Machine	Depreciation charge using 10-year straight line for inserter/mailling machine.	Quarterly statistics of machine time used by program as a percent of total machine time used.
Commissioner & Staff	Salaries and benefits of the commissioner, deputy commissioner, and secretarial staff.	Program percentages of the salaries and fringe benefits distribution for the entire department.
Computer Services Staff	Salaries and benefits of the computer services director and support staff who manage contractual and State staff who develop and support the operation of the ACCESS system; programmer analysts; and database administrators.	Average percentages of commands executed, database I/Os executed, and CPU seconds used, by food stamp modules. (Reference 7.2.2)
Data Processing Charges	Data processing costs associated with the development and operation of the ACCESS system other than CSD staff and their associated expenses. Includes charges for equipment, software, leased data lines, and maintenance agreements.	Allocated to Programs based on automated time logs of all time worked maintained by all programmers and system analysts. If development work is being done under an APD, time is allocated to the APD and spread to Programs based on the approved percentages in the APD plan.
Agency Microcomputer Coordinator	Salaries and benefits of personnel who assist programmers and end users in the development and use of databases, and monitors and maintains software and equipment needs.	Average percentages of commands executed, database I/Os executed, and CPU seconds used, by food stamp modules. (Reference 7.2.2)
Income Maintenance Division Director and Staff	Salaries and benefits of income maintenance division director and division staff who plan, manage and coordinate the operations of the Income Maintenance Division which administers the Food Stamp Program.	Program percentages derived from quarterly salaries and fringe benefit costs as distributed for all staff of the Family Services Division and district offices.
Planning & Evaluation Administrator	Salaries and benefits of the social welfare administrator of the Planning and Evaluation Division who supervises program consultants associated with the Food Stamp Program.	Program percentages derived from quarterly salaries and fringe benefit costs as distributed for all staff of the Planning and Evaluation Division.
Quality Assurance Supervisor/Specialists	Salaries and benefits of quality assurance specialists and their supervisors.	Proportional amount of time necessary to complete each review depending on the number and types of program(s) involved in the case.
Eligibility Specialist/Floater (districts)	Salaries and benefits of district office personnel who interview and input data on new applications to establish eligibility and determine continuing eligibility of clients by review of applications, interviews, correspondence and other sources for the Food Stamp Program.	RMS
Income Maintenance Supervisors (districts)	Salaries and benefits of district office supervisory personnel who plan, assign and review the work of eligibility specialists.	RMS

**Exhibit A.7-2
Allocated Cost Pools**

COST POOL	COST ITEMS	ALLOCATION METHODOLOGY
Food Stamp Accounting/Exams	Salaries and benefits of Administrative Services Division personnel who maintain the inventory of food coupons, prepare FSP mailings based on system generated eligible client listing, and prepare some of the response reports required for the Food Stamp Program. Operate inserter for mailings for other divisions and departments on a time spread basis.	Staff time worked by program as a percent of total worked time.
Social Welfare Administrator and Staff (Administrative)	Salaries and benefits for the Social Welfare Administrator, accounting and clerical staff who support the functions of other divisions; processes and initiates all payments made outside of the ACCESS/FAMIS system, including all administration payments; handles purchasing, inventory and state finance system accounting functions; prepares and monitors departments' budgets.	Program percentages of the salaries and fringe benefits distribution for the entire department.
Assistance Attorneys General & Staff	Salaries and benefits of staff attorneys, law clerks, and secretarial staff who represent the department in law suits and other legal matters especially regarding interpretation of Federal regulations pertaining to client rights.	Time records kept by the Assistance Attorney General which can be used to determine which departments were assisted during the quarter.

APPENDIX B

STATE OF VERMONT

ANALYSIS OF OPERATOR USER SATISFACTION SURVEYS

OVERVIEW

This appendix presents the results of the Operational Level User Satisfaction Survey. Frequency counts of responses to all applicable items on the survey are included, grouped by the topic covered by the item. The results for the items covering each topic are summarized as well.

The responses to the Operational Level User Satisfaction Survey represent the perceptions of eligibility workers (EWs) in Vermont. In other words, these responses do not necessarily represent a "true" description of the situation in Vermont. For example, the results presented regarding the response time of the system reflect the workers' perceptions about response time, not an objective measure of the actual speed of the response.

Description of the Sample

The following table summarizes the potential population size and the final size of the sample who responded.

Number of EWs in Vermont	Number Selected to Receive Survey	Percentage Selected
152	63	41.4%
	Number Responding to Survey	Response Rate
	43	68.3%

The eligibility workers selected to receive the survey were

selected randomly so their perceptions should be representative of eligibility workers in Vermont. The response rate of 68.3 percent is acceptable and produces a sample large enough for the results to be representative of those selected, rather than the opinions of just a few individuals.

Summary of Findings

Respondents generally are very satisfied with the computer system in Vermont. Most EWs think that system response time,

SYSTEM CHARACTERISTICS

Response Time

What is the quality of overall system response time?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents (%)
Good	14	32.6
Excellent	29	67.4

What is the quality of system response time during peak periods?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents (%)
Good	29	69.0
Excellent	13	31.0

How often is the system response time too slow?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents (%)
Rarely	24	55.8
Sometimes	18	41.9
Often	1	2.3

Eligibility workers in Vermont are satisfied with system response time. All of the respondents feel that overall system response, as well as response time during peak periods, is good or excellent. A majority also believes that response time rarely is too slow.

Availability

How often is the system available when you need to use it?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents (%)
Sometimes	2	4.7
Often	41	95.3

How often is the system down?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents (%)
Rarely	28	65.1
Sometimes	15	34.9

More than 95 percent of the eligibility workers believe that the system often is available when they need to use it, and a majority thinks the system rarely is down. Among most of the workers who feel that the system sometimes is down, this downtime does not seem to be intrusive enough to detract from the perception that the system generally is available.

Accuracy

What is the quality of the information in the system?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents (%)
Poor	1	2.3
Good	19	44.2
Excellent	23	53.5

How often is a case terminated in error?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents (%)
Rarely	39	90.7
Sometimes	4	9.3

How often is eligibility incorrectly determined?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents (%)
Rarely	38	88.4
Sometimes	5	11.6

How often is the system's data out-of-date?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents (%)
Rarely	39	90.7
Sometimes	4	9.3

Most eligibility workers think the system's data and computations are very accurate. Nearly 98 percent of the workers feel that the quality of the information in the system is good or excellent. Significant majorities also believe that problems related to obsolete data, cases terminated in error, and incorrect eligibility determination are rare.

Ease of Use

How often do you have difficulty obtaining necessary information from the system?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents (%)
Rarely	36	83.7
Sometimes	7	16.3

How often do you have difficulty learning to use the system?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents (%)
Rarely	33	76.7
Sometimes	9	20.9
Often	1	2.3

How often do you have difficulty tracking receipt of monthly reporting forms?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents (%)
Rarely	41	95.3
Sometimes	1	2.3
Often	1	2.3

How often do you have difficulty automatically terminating benefits for failure to file?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents (%)
Rarely	39	90.7
Sometimes	4	9.3

How often do you have difficulty generating adverse action notices?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents (%)
Rarely	36	85.7
Sometimes	6	14.3

How often do you have difficulty generating warning notices?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents (%)
Rarely	32	91.4
Sometimes	3	8.6

How often do you have difficulty determining monthly reporting status?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents (%)
Rarely	38	88.4
Sometimes	5	11.6

How often do you have difficulty restoring benefits?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents (%)
Rarely	32	74.4
Sometimes	11	25.6

How often do you have difficulty identifying recipients already known to the State?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents (%)
Rarely	38	88.4
Sometimes	5	11.6

How often do you have difficulty updating registration data?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents (%)
Rarely	38	90.5
Sometimes	4	9.5

How often do you have difficulty updating eligibility and benefit information from recertification data?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents (%)
Rarely	42	97.7
Sometimes	1	2.3

How often do you have difficulty identifying cases which are overdue for recertification?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents (%)
Rarely	39	90.7
Sometimes	4	9.3

How often do you have difficulty monitoring the status of all hearings?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents (%)
Rarely	9	47.4
Sometimes	7	36.8
Often	3	15.8

How often do you have difficulty tracking outstanding verifications?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents (%)
Rarely	17	81.0
Sometimes	1	4.8
Often	3	14.3

How often do you have difficulty automatically notifying households of case actions?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents (%)
Rarely	37	90.2
Sometimes	3	7.3
Often	1	2.4

How often do you have difficulty notifying recipients that recertification is overdue?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents (%)
Rarely	40	93.0
Sometimes	3	7.0

How often do you have difficulty identifying cases making payments through recoupment?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents (%)
Rarely	31	73.8
Sometimes	9	21.4
Often	2	4.8

How often do you have difficulty identifying error prone cases?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents (%)
Rarely	18	60.0
Sometimes	9	30.0
Often	3	10.0

How often do you have difficulty identifying cases involving suspected fraud?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents (%)
Rarely	14	51.9
Sometimes	11	40.7
Often	2	7.4

How often do you have difficulty assigning new case numbers?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents (%)
Rarely	27	79.4
Sometimes	6	17.6
Often	1	2.9

Eligibility workers generally believe that the system is easy to use. For most functions, a large majority reports rarely having difficulty. There are a few areas, however, in which large proportions of EWs report sometimes or often having problems. These functions include: monitoring the status of hearings (53 percent), identifying error prone cases (40 percent), and identifying suspected fraud cases (47 percent).

FOOD STAMP PROGRAM NEEDS

Worker Satisfaction Levels

How often is the system a great help to you in your job?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents (%)
Sometimes	2	4.7
Often	41	95.3

How often is the system an added stress in your job?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents (%)
Rarely	24	55.8
Sometimes	17	39.5
Often	2	4.7

How often is the system more of a problem than a help?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents (%)
Rarely	42	97.7
Sometimes	1	2.3

EWs generally think that the system positively influences job satisfaction. Over 95 percent of eligibility workers feel that the system is a great help to them in their jobs. A majority also believes that the system rarely contributes to job-related stress, and nearly 98 percent believe that the system usually is more helpful than problematic.

Client Service

How often is expedited service difficult to achieve?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents (%)
Rarely	35	81.4
Sometimes	8	18.6

How often do you have difficulty providing expedited services?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents (%)
Rarely	39	90.7
Sometimes	4	9.3

Most EWs feel that there rarely are problems associated with providing expedited service to clients.

Fraud and Errors

No data are available to address fraud and errors with the Vermont system because all the questions in this category compare the current and previous systems. Since Vermont's system was implemented more than five years ago, comparative questions are not applicable.

APPENDIX C

STATE OF VERMONT

ANALYSIS OF MANAGERIAL USER SATISFACTION SURVEYS

OVERVIEW

This appendix presents the results of the Managerial Level User Satisfaction Survey. Frequency counts of responses to all applicable items on the survey are included, grouped by the topic covered by the item. The results for the items covering each topic are summarized as well.

The responses to the Managerial Level User Satisfaction Survey are the perceptions of eligibility worker (EW) supervisors in Vermont. In other words, these responses do not necessarily represent a "true" description of the situation in the State. For example, the results presented regarding the response time of the system reflect the managers' perceptions about that response time, not an objective measure of the actual speed of the response.

Description of the Sample

The following table summarizes the potential population size and the final size of the sample who responded.

Number of EW Supervisors in Vermont	Number Selected to Receive Survey	Percentage Selected
18	18	100.0%
	Number Responding to Survey	Response Rate
	13	72.2%

Vermont only has 18 EW supervisors; therefore, the survey was sent to the entire population rather than a sample. The response rate of 72.2 percent is acceptable.

Summary of Findings

EW supervisors in Vermont regard the system positively and believe that it helps them in their jobs. All of the responding supervisors report that response time, system availability, and accuracy are good. EW supervisors find the system easy to use; for many specific functions, all supervisors report rarely having difficulty. EW supervisors also feel that the system contributes to job satisfaction and supports management needs.

Since Vermont's current system has been operational since 1984, comparisons between the current and previous systems would be of limited value. Responses to comparative questions, therefore, are not solicited for systems that were implemented more than five years ago.

SYSTEM CHARACTERISTICS

Response Time

What is the quality of overall system response time?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Good	1	7.7
Excellent	12	92.3

What is the quality of system response time during peak periods?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Good	4	30.8
Excellent	9	69.2

How often is the system response time too slow?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Rarely	12	92.3
Sometimes	1	7.7

EW supervisors in Vermont are very satisfied with system response time. All of the respondents feel that overall system response time and response time during peak processing periods are good or excellent.

Availability

How often is the system available when you need to use it?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Often	13	100.0

How often is the system down?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Rarely	12	92.3
Sometimes	1	7.7

Supervisors in Vermont are pleased with system availability. All responding EW supervisors report that the system often is available when they need to use it, and all but one supervisor feel there rarely are instances of downtime.

Accuracy

What is the quality of the information in the system?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Good	5	38.5
Excellent	8	61.5

All of the responding EW supervisors think that the quality of the system's data is excellent or good.

Ease of Use

How often do you have difficulty obtaining necessary information from the system?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Rarely	9	69.2
Sometimes	4	30.8

How often do you have difficulty learning to use the system?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Rarely	10	83.3
Sometimes	2	16.7

How often do you have difficulty tracking receipt of monthly reporting forms?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Rarely	12	100.0

How often do you have difficulty automatically terminating benefits for failure to file?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Rarely	13	100.0

How often do you have difficulty generating adverse action notices?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Rarely	13	100.0

How often do you have difficulty generating warning notices?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Rarely	13	100.0

How often do you have difficulty determining monthly reporting status?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Rarely	13	100.0

How often do you have difficulty restoring benefits?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Rarely	13	100.0

EW supervisors feel that the system is easy to use. For each specific function, a significant majority reports rarely having difficulty with the task. For six of the eight functions, all responding supervisors rarely experience difficulty. The task in which supervisors experience the most difficulty involves obtaining necessary information from the system. Four EW supervisors (31 percent) sometimes have problems with this function.

FOOD STAMP PROGRAM NEEDS

Supervisor Satisfaction Levels

How often is the system a great help to you in your job?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Often	13	100.0

How often is the system an added stress in your job?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Rarely	8	61.5
Sometimes	4	30.8
Often	1	7.7

EW supervisors generally feel that the system contributes to job satisfaction. All respondents believe that the system often is a great help in their jobs; however, nearly 39 percent of the EW supervisors also think it sometimes or often creates added stress.

Management Needs

What is the quality of the reports produced by the system?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Good	6	46.2
Excellent	7	53.8

What is the quality of the support provided by the technical staff supporting the automated system?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Good	2	15.4
Excellent	11	84.6

How often do you have difficulty making mass changes to the system?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Rarely	8	80.0
Sometimes	2	20.0

How often do you have difficulty meeting Federal reporting requirements?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Rarely	9	100.0

EW supervisors think that the system does a good job in supporting management needs. All responding supervisors feel that the quality of both the reports produced by the system and technical staff support is excellent or good. Large majorities also report rarely

having difficulties making mass changes and meeting Federal reporting requirements.

Client Service

No data are available to address client service because all the questions in this category compare the current and previous systems. Since Vermont's system was implemented more than five years ago, comparative questions are not applicable.

Fraud and Errors

No data are available to address fraud and errors with the Vermont system because all the questions in this category compare the current and previous systems. Since Vermont's system was implemented more than five years ago, comparative questions are not applicable.

APPENDIX D

STATE OF VERMONT

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION



DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE
Commissioner's Office
103 South Main Street
Waterbury, VT 05676
Telephone: (802) 241-2852
FAX: (802) 241-2830

December 22, 1993

Douglas MacAllister
Financial Management Director, Northeast Region
10 Causeway Street
Boston, MA 02222

RECEIVED

JAN 6 1994

IRM Section

Dear Mr. MacAllister:

Thank you for the opportunity to review the Final Draft Vermont State Report prepared by the Orkand Corporation and respond to your specific questions. We have replied to your questions first:

QUESTION 1:

"The report indicates that Vermont requires Burlington to use monthly reporting and certified issuance. Why are there special conditions for this area?"

RESPONSE:

The questions refers to the paragraph on page 10 of the draft report describing food stamp issuance. In our discussions, Burlington was used as an example to describe circumstances which would lead to certified issuance of food coupons; i.e. If a recipient reports loss or theft of food coupons more than twice in six months then they are sent by certified mail. This occurs more often in our more populous areas like Burlington, but does not reflect a separate procedure for the City of Burlington.

QUESTION 2:

"According to the report, the number of users of the system exceeds the number of workers. Who are the other users?"

RESPONSE:

Various other Departments within the Agency of Human Services and State of Vermont have authorized accounts to make inquiries of ACCESS, including Social and Rehabilitative Services and the Department of Employment and Training(DET). Some like DET have contractual

relationships with DSW and the Reach Up component of our systems to provide case management services for recipients. All procedures and security systems described in the survey apply equally to this group of users.

QUESTION 3:

"Why is the T-1 installed but not operational? Why is the UPS not being installed? Why did Vermont buy a 3090-300 for a project which was later cancelled?"

RESPONSE:

The questions suggest a basic misinterpretation of the role of CIT, Communications & Information Technology, in running the State's Data Center and the support it provides to our Department. The reference on page 22 implies that all operations are under the control of CIT. This is not true; DSW staff maintain control of the scheduling and production as it relates to ACCESS. This includes data base administration and help-desk support for ACCESS users.

CIT has full control over the operation of the hardware and system software. In this regard, CIT does not support only the Department of Social Welfare. Nearly all parts of Vermont State Government operations have some data which resides on the IBM 3090. Many of the Departments also have their own minicomputer systems and local area networks which are being linked throughout the State by a Wide Area Network, dubbed GOV-NET, which is operated by CIT. Part of this network included the installation of a T1 circuit between the two major locations of State personnel: Waterbury and Montpelier. This circuit is now operational and serves all Departments located in these cities. DSW also uses this service.

Because CIT is responsible for the State's computing facility, it develops plans that are consistent with the needs of all Departments. The migration to the 3090-300 was part of this plan. It is correct that one of the major systems of the Department of Transportation has been scrapped. However, many other systems are in development and will soon become operational that justify this migration. We referred to the scrapped project as a way of explaining our superb system response time and excess capacity that has been available to us. Similarly the UPS is related to the greater issues of system support and contingency planning. The cost of the UPS could not be justified to support the 3090 with other options available that were less costly. These include

the disaster plans described on page 23, and testing backup generators that could be used for mission critical processing.