

A MESSAGE FROM DCAD CHIEF BOB LOWNEY

When Bob Heinemann offered the opportunity to contribute to the *FCCA Journal*, I saw it as an excellent chance to report on the District Court Administration Division's (DCAD) activities and to reiterate the division's commitment to serving district court clerks.

What is DCAD's role in court administration? Simply stated, it is to provide district court clerks' offices with the highest level of administrative support possible. DCAD fulfills that mission by guiding and supporting court programs such as court reporting, jury utilization, and interpreting; by conducting management and program reviews; and by allocating staffing and other resources. DCAD also works to provide clerks with training and information they need to do their jobs and to help courts use advances in technology to their best advantage.

DCAD can do none of these things without the support and assistance of clerks of court and their staffs. Your service on work groups, membership on advisory groups, and participation as pilot districts help ensure that policies and programs are not developed in a vacuum. Our success depends on our ability to work with you to assess needs and requirements and to establish a basis for future plans.

DCAD continually works with the Judicial Conference, the courts, various AO components, and other government entities such as the Federal Judicial Center on initiatives to improve work processes in clerks' offices and generally increase efficiency in the courts. Several current projects are prime examples:

- The Jury Management System (JMS) is an automated tool designed to streamline jury operations. The goal of the JMS is to make the courts' management of the jury process more uniform from district to district. The JMS, among other things, prints and scans qualifications questionnaires, prints summonses, tracks jurors, and provides information for statistical reports. Installing the JMS in all district courts between now and the end of 2001 is one of DCAD's highest priorities.
- The Telephone Interpreting Program is an initiative that has enhanced the overall quality of available interpreting resources by making such services available over the phone. The program makes it possible for districts rich in interpreter resources to share them with other districts. For instance, a courtroom in Wyoming can be connected with a qualified interpreter through the telephone interpreting site in Los Angeles. The program offers ready access to interpreting on short notice and makes scheduling court proceedings easier.
- Another tool also helps courts fulfill their responsibility to provide qualified interpreters. The National Court Interpreter Database--available to all courts through the InfoWeb and the J-Net and maintained by DCAD--helps courts locate interpreters. The database contains names and contact information for "AO certified," "professionally qualified," and "language skilled" interpreters. Information still is

being entered into the database. Once data entry is completed, courts will be able to search for specific interpreters by language, qualification ratings, or state.

To boost our “front-line” liaison services to the courts and to focus on crucial interpreter responsibilities, DCAD in recent months has appointed three new staff members--Regional Administrators Jim Caldwell and Katharine Mason Brown and Interpreter Program Administrator Marijke van der Heide. Jim previously served as chief deputy of the Court of Veterans Appeals and, before that, as the Policy Branch chief in the AO’s Personnel Division. Katherine formerly served in the AO’s Defender Services Division as an attorney advisor, a position she held for five years. Marijke came to us from the FBI, where she worked for 17 years in language programming.

All of us look forward to working with you. Please know that we value your experience and opinions and encourage you to share them with us.