Report # 1

This is IISAC:

The Intergovernmental Information Systems Advisory Council.

Abstract

IISAC (Intergovernmental Information Services Advisory Council) helps local governments in the development of computer assisted information systems. This report explains how IISAC came to be, how it operates and how it can help to provide a basis for sharing and utilizing information which can be practically standardized and commonly applied for cost-effectiveness, accuracy and timeliness.

Genesis/Makeup

IISAC, as it is now structured, was established by the Minnesota State Legislature and is governed by Chapter 494, Laws of Minn. 1974 M.S. 16.911.

It is composed of 25 members appointed by the Governor to four-year terms. The members represent local governments as well as state agencies.

Operation

The Executive committee of IISAC provides the day-to-day management, in concert with the Executive Director (the only full-time employee).

The full Intergovernmental Information Systems Advisory Council meets regularly on the first Thursday of each month to act on recommendations of the Executive committee. Such actions involve the awarding of grants, as well as decisions affecting other IISAC functions.

Upon approval of a grant request by IISAC, the Executive Director forwards this action to the Commissioner of Administration for funding approval.

Committees

Except for the Executive committee, IISAC has no standing committees. They are, instead, formed as needed for specific tasks and missions. Currently. . .

A Steering committee has been named to provide a communications base for the consulting firm which is conducting an analysis of the state of automation among Minnesota governmental units at the request of the Government Training Service (GTS).

A Land Records committee is guiding an evaluation of the potential for a computer-assisted property appraisal system among counties.

A Legislative committee is examining current regulations governing the operation of IISAC, with an eye to suggesting additional legislation, when appropriate, to enhance the Council's effectiveness.

A Fiscal Data committee is monitoring the performance of a consulting contract intended to create a standard county-wide chart of accounts.

As the work of these committees is completed, they are disbanded, and their members reassigned to new committees as they are needed to satisfy the ongoing IISAC commitment to help local governments develop computer-assisted information systems.

Activities

IISAC's main task is providing decision makers within governmental agencies with information and assistance in the areas of system design and implementation. Through an awareness program, a variety of special reports are being developed and distributed. (This is the first of these reports.) Educational programs with one-half and two day sessions will be available to employees and officials of local and county governments. Assistance in planning for conversion to current technology is yet one more area in which IISAC is involved. Development of various standarized "software" packages is being made available to facilitate uniform reporting by city and county governments and improve their day-to-day operations.

One of IISAC's key functions is the awarding of grant monies to local governments whose requests indicate cost-effective automation will likely be achieved.

Education

Information

Evaluation

Planning

Standardization

Uniform Reporting

**Pre-planning
Assistance Free
for the Asking**

Equally important IISAC functions include:

(a) Providing educational and training opportunities for local governmental units in the process of automating. . .

(b) Providing an information resource to those units contemplating automation. . .

(c) Analysis of the automation process being tested or employed by local governments, stressing both advantages and disadvantages—problems and potentials—of the various systems. The analysis concerns itself with the effectiveness of the systems per se, and does not attempt to evaluate the hardware and software of specific suppliers.

(d) Assisting the Commissioner of Administration in the development of guidelines for the improved use of computer techniques and capabilities by local governments.

(e) The development and promotion of meaningful program (software) standards, stressing the need for flexibility as well as sharability within and among governmental units to meet a variety of information processing needs.

(f) Assist in the determination of commonly required information by State Agencies and others, and the incorporation of these requirements into local government information systems.

Awareness of data processing automation alternatives on the part of local governmental units is of prime concern to IISAC. Government officials are being encouraged to adopt computer assisted data processing systems through a program of education and quidance. The mystery and fears that are associated with technology are overcome through information and knowledge that can be shared through IISAC.

Automation (software and hardware) are in place and working for many Minnesota communities, large and small. IISAC can and will assist with the implementation of these tools at the request of the local goverments.

It Works

**Partial list of
IISAC Grants in
Fiscal 1979**

A wealth of information—including Special Reports on specific subjects—is available free for the asking. (See card enclosed)

The Intergovernmental Information Services Advisory Council exists to help local governments better serve their constituencies. Here are some examples of how it has been of assistance to its own constituency:

$11,490 to the Government Training Service (GTS) to:

(1) Determine the level of need for education in the area of automation. . .

(2) Develop the educational materials required to satisfy existing needs. . .

(3) Conduct educational seminars on data processing in outstate locations.

$87,400 to the Association of Minnesota Counties to develop:

(1) A standard county-wide chart of accounts. . .

(2) Procedure manuals. . .

(3) Training materials. . .

(4) Training (orientation) seminars.

$52,800 to Carlton County/Region III MECC)/DPW to:

(1) Transfer the Carlton County Welfare Grant Payment and Financial Accounting System from the county to Region III. . .

(2) Pilot test the Region III system by three counties. . .

(3) Purchase of the "Carlton County System" by the Department of Public Welfare so that the software will be available to any county without cost.

$43,954 to the Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency for the development of a model Community Action Program Information System.

$64,500 to the Government Training Service to analyze, compare and evaluate the various automation approaches taken by Minnesota local governments for the purposes of:

(1) Upgrading the educational seminars with objective information relevant to the Minnesota experience. . .

(2) Provide IISAC with planning information. . .

(Results of this effort will be available upon completion as Special Report # 6).

Grant Criteria

Grants are based on the following criteria:

(a) Available funding. . .

(b) Potential technological advancements. . .

(c) Transferability (sharability) of anticipated technological advancements to other potential users. . .

(d) Applicant's experience and expertise in the field of data processing and analysis. . .

(e) Applicant's financial need.

In addition to the written grant request, oral presentations may be requested by IISAC to obtain clarification or further explanation.

Complete details are available in the IISAC publication "Rules for Grant Application and Processing."

Remember

IISAC is yours to use—write Roger Sell, Executive Director, 305 Hanover Building, 480 Cedar St., St. Paul, MN 55101. . .or call (612) 297-2172.