

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

744 P Street, Sacramento, CA 95814

October 22, 1980



ALL-COUNTY INFORMATION NOTICE NO. 1-115-80

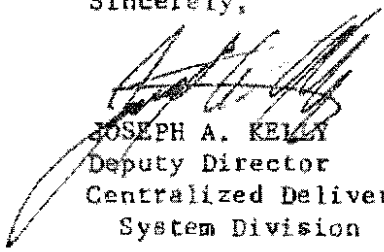
TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS
FAMILY SERVICES DIVISION CHIEFS
COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS
DISTRICT ATTORNEYS
COUNTY DATA PROCESSING MANAGERS
CHAIRPERSON, COUNTY BOARDS OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY AUDITOR-CONTROLLERS

SUBJECT: STATEWIDE PUBLIC ASSISTANCE NETWORK (SPAN) BULLETIN #4

The attached informational bulletin is the fourth in a series of updates on the status of the Statewide Public Assistance Network (SPAN). This bulletin covers key activities that have taken place over the past few months.

Should you wish to discuss any aspects of the SPAN project, please contact Bob Whittaker at (916) 323-3466.

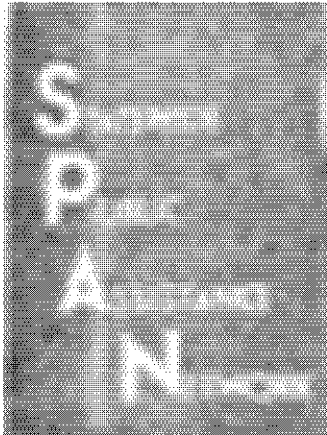
Sincerely,



JOSEPH A. KELLY
Deputy Director
Centralized Delivery
System Division

cc: CWDA
CDS Advisory Council Members
CWDA Technical Advisory Committee Members
Family Support Council Advisory Committee Members

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
744 P Street, Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 323-3466



A Project to Centralize the Delivery of Public Assistance Benefits in California

BULLETIN

NO. 4

October 15, 1980

The project activities taking place over the past few months have been significant to the development of SPAN. This bulletin is intended to bring you up to date in regard to these important developments.

SPAN Workshops

As described in SPAN Bulletin #3, a workshop for review of the System/Program Requirements Report (SPRR) was held in Sacramento on July 29, 30 and 31, 1980. Attendance figures collected during the workshop showed that approximately 300 persons attended over the three-day period, at the rate of about 100 individuals per day. Furthermore, 43 counties were represented at the workshop with each county having attended from one to nine of the ten program/report sessions held daily.

In addition to an impressive amount and range of representation from all areas of county welfare department operations, there were several persons in attendance from other county departments and offices. Included in these were representatives from District Attorney's Office, Auditor-Controller's Offices, Data Processing Departments, and County Administrative Offices. When considering existing limitations on travel budgets and personnel availability, counties were well represented and extensively involved in the detailed review of SPRR material included in each of the specific workshop sessions.

YOURDON Methodology

In the evening preceding each day of the three-day SPRR workshop sessions, a presentation on the Yourdon Methodology was provided by SPAN staff. These sessions were well attended, and feedback from those who attended indicated the information provided helped them to better understand the SPRR material.

Essentially, the Yourdon Methodology is a structured analysis approach to designing large EDP systems, such as SPAN. Starting as early as 1969, professionals within the field of computer sciences became keenly aware of the importance and need to standardize methods and language. As a result, structured managerial methods, such as the Yourdon Methodology, were developed. Although there are other structured analysis methods for EDP system designing, it was determined after much consideration by CDS management and technical staff, that the Yourdon Method was the one best suited for the development of the EDP system needed for SPAN. For instance, the Yourdon Method is geared for providing an encompassing delineation of information/data that produces: 1) a highly definitive pattern or breakout, and 2) a flexible base of preparation for subsequent technical and program design phases.

These characteristics are applied through the concrete steps and tools of analysis that the Yourdon Method is comprised of:

- o Current Physical Analysis - a study of processes presently taking place, including the relationship of those processes to physical elements, such as forms, machines, organizational entities, etc.
- o Current Logical Analysis - a study of processes presently in place, which removes all references to people, places, etc. What remains is a description of the data involved in a process and the decisions and actions that must be performed.
- o New Logical Analysis - a description of the processes as they should occur under the new system. This evolves from combining the results of the previous step with the performance requirements of the new system. The result should be a rearrangement of data flows, decisions and actions that meet management requirements and represent improved efficiency.
- o New Physical Analysis - a translation of the new logical processes into physical terms. The result is a system design that again includes physical elements such as forms, computer equipment, etc.

In reference to CDS' use of the steps described above, there are three resulting documents. The first two of these, the Current Environment Report and the SPRR, were based on the current physical and logical analysis and have been completed. The third is the Feasibility Study Report that will be completed in January, 1981. This report will include information resulting from the logical and physical analysis, as well as design and other study phases.

The primary technique for documenting the results or report content is the analysis tool called "data flow diagramming." This tool is highly useful because of its perceived strength for analysis tasks and its nonredundancy and reusability of documented products from one major project phase to the next.

The purpose of the pilot county operation is to field test the SPAN system. The actual pilot operation is scheduled to begin by October 1, 1981 and continue through January 1, 1983. However, prior to this operation period, the initial and critical phase of selecting the county or counties to be involved is being undertaken.

Basically, the selection phase includes a process that utilizes decision steps, a timetable and a set of criteria. The pilot county selection criteria were developed in conjunction with the County Welfare Director's Association (CWDA) Technical Advisory Committee. The structure of the selection process entails using the criteria, review steps and negotiative interactions between the first part of October and the middle of December, 1980 to complete the selection phase.

SPAN Conversion Survey

By mid-September, 1980, the survey material for gathering information from counties to be used in analyzing what will be involved in converting to SPAN was sent to all County Administrative Officers.

The intent of the survey is to obtain data that provides a profile of each county in respect to organizational structure, operations within each organization, information storage and movement, and existing equipment. The survey responses are due back by the beginning of the third week of October, and the analysis of the response data will be included in the FSR.

Family Support Council Technical Advisory Committee

As a result of meetings with the District Attorney's Association and California Family Support Council, a 14-member technical advisory committee was formed.

This Committee will work with the SPAN project in the development of the design of the IV-D program areas to be included in the SPAN system. It is expected that the indicated interest and expertise possessed by the Committee will contribute significantly to the successful completion of IV-D program related study/design tasks.

County Personnel Involvement

Starting in May through mid-July, 1980, 15 county welfare department staff from ten counties were brought to Sacramento to work directly with SPAN staff in the development of the SPRK. Since that time, some of these county staff have been made available to return to Sacramento to work on the development of the FSR.

In addition, the SPAN project has recently secured the use of two county staff (from two counties) to work with the SPAN Design Team between the end of October and December, 1980. Further, the arrangements for three county staff (from three counties) to work with SPAN staff on the development of the IV-D program study/design has also been recently finalized.

The important dividends already experienced, by having county staff on board, has not only led to better completion of project tasks, but has proven the point that such direct involvement is the best method for achieving the appropriate development of the SPAN system.

The documentation that evolves from data flow diagramming is actually a three-part integrated set. For all practical purposes, the value of any one part is negated without the presence of the other two:

- o Data flow diagrams - consist of circles or "bubbles," that represent processes and named arrows that represent data flowing into or out of the processes.
- o Process narratives - are descriptions of the action taking place "inside" the process bubbles.
- o Data Dictionary - are definitions of the data names appearing in the data flow diagrams and the process narratives.

The value that comes from such a structured approach to systems development is the assurance that all of the requirements have been incorporated and the resulting design is relatively easy to implement and maintain. Moreover, the objective and purpose of the Yourdon Structured Analysis Method is: 1) that it is "user friendly" or easy to understand and, therefore, an effective communications tool, and 2) that it has the capacity to analyze or break down something into its component parts. It is the latter that makes the Yourdon Methodology especially useful in conducting the current and necessary analysis of the major public assistance programs to be included in SPAN.

SPAN Fiscal Impact Task Force

During the last week of August, a task force comprised of two county welfare fiscal officers, staff from county administrative offices, and auditor-controller offices, welfare budget estimates personnel, data processing managers, computer systems personnel and state staff met in Los Angeles. This planning/working task force was created by the SPAN Project to work on identifying the specific information needed and a methodology for collecting the data necessary to determine an estimate of the cost impact SPAN will have on administrative costs and county operations. After four days of effort, it was the recommendation of the Task Force to delay collection of data until the SPAN alternative was selected and documented in the Feasibility Study Report to be released January 31, 1981. This recommendation was proposed to the CDS Advisory Council and received their concurrence.

During the next two to three months, the task force will concentrate on the development of the comprehensive methodology to be used. This joint state/county effort will enable us to produce the county-by-county SPAN cost estimates by May, 1981.

Pilot County Selection

In early September, an All-County Information Notice (I-95-30) was sent out to all County Welfare Directors with copies to all County Administrative Officers. This letter serves to provide information on pilot county operations, the process for pilot county selection, and to solicit county interest in becoming a pilot county.