

2016-18 Executive Progress Report

Commonwealth of Virginia
Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security
Commonwealth's Attorneys' Services Council

At A Glance

The Commonwealth's Attorneys' Services Council (CASC) provides continuing legal education, training and technical assistance to Virginia's elected prosecuting attorneys to improve prosecutor effectiveness in enforcing the law and thereby strengthening the criminal justice system in the Commonwealth.

Staffing 6 Salaried Employees, 0 Contracted Employees, 0 Authorized, and 1 Wage Employees.

Financials Budget FY 2017, \$2.04 million, 30.95% from the General Fund.

Trends Legend ↑ Increase, ↓ Decrease, → Steady

Key Perf Areas → CASC annual programs

Productivity → Unit cost per CLE hour

Legend ↑ Improving, ↓ Worsening, → Maintaining

For more information on administrative key, and productivity measures, go to www.vaperforms.virginia.gov

Background and History

Agency Background Statement

The Commonwealth's Attorneys' Services Council (CASC) was established as a state agency in 1978 to upgrade the criminal justice administration by providing training and other services for Virginia's prosecutors. Commonwealth's Attorneys' Services Council conducts prosecutor training and mandatory continuing legal education programs, disseminates information of interest to Virginia's prosecutors, and coordinates with other state agencies, the Judicial Council, and the Attorney General, concerning matters relative to upgrading the professional status of attorneys for the Commonwealth. Virginia Code §2.2-2617. The Council is comprised of 14 Commonwealth's Attorneys. Commonwealth's Attorneys' Services Council staff consists of an agency director, 3 staff attorneys, a program specialist, a computer systems engineer, and a fiscal officer/administrative coordinator.

Major Products and Services

Commonwealth's Attorneys' Services Council offers prosecutors cost effective opportunities to meet Virginia's professional requirements regarding continuing legal education while improving prosecution skills and criminal law knowledge. Our major product is our training.

The Commonwealth's Attorneys' Services Council website, www.cas.state.va.us, provides current information on prosecutor training opportunities and on-line program registration, prosecutor position announcements, and a public Commonwealth's Attorney locator. Commonwealth's Attorneys' Services Council staff collects gang information reported from public safety agencies for distribution to prosecutors and law enforcement. Commonwealth's Attorneys receive a weekly email update of court decisions, legislative actions, and topical news, along with information about training opportunities. Commonwealth's Attorneys' Services Council also provides Commonwealth's Attorneys with an annual legislative update and a program for training local law enforcement on new laws.

Customers

Customer Summary

Commonwealth's Attorneys' Services Council focuses specifically on Virginia's 120 independently elected Commonwealth's Attorneys and their staffs - currently about 689 prosecutors. The number of assistants has declined slightly due to budgetary cutbacks since FY2008.

Training needs vary, but all prosecutors benefit from quality training for relevant core knowledge and skills, supplemented by specialized training

and information in response to emerging legislative, judicial and societal developments. Providing adequate training opportunities in lean budget times will require creative efforts to expand the size of programs and add alternative programs. The increased expense of traveling has prompted the agency to expand the availability of regional programs closer to our customers. In the long term, Commonwealth's Attorneys' Services Council expects increased reliance on distance learning alternatives to central site training programs.

Customer Table

Predefined Group	User Defined Group	Number Served Annually	Potential Number of Annual Customers	Projected Customer Trend
Local or Regional Government Authorities	120 Locally-elected Commonwealth's Attorneys and their assistants	689	689	Stable

Finance and Performance Management

Finance

Financial Summary

Despite budget cutbacks, CASC has been able to continue the DUI training programs, Trial Advocacy, insurance fraud and sexual assault prosecution training with the assistance of grant funding. For the past 3 years, CASC has charged prosecutors a \$50 registration fee for attending each of the 3 major statewide training programs: Spring Institute, Annual Summer Conference and Executive Program.

Fund Sources

Fund Code	Fund Name	FY 2017	FY 2018

Revenue Summary

CASC's general fund appropriations cover the agencies personnel costs. Registration fees collected from prosecutors attending the 3 major statewide programs are intended to cover the costs of those programs.

Performance

Performance Highlights

CASC offers prosecutors cost-effective opportunities to meet Virginia's professional requirements regarding continuing legal education while improving prosecution skills and criminal law knowledge. In FY2012, CASC presented 22 programs. Attendance for 3 annual statewide prosecutor programs exceeded 1000. More than 670 prosecutors and other government attorneys attended the Spring Institute. CASC conducts a week-long Trial Advocacy program for prosecutors and a variety of specialty and regional programs for teams of prosecutors and law enforcement officers, including Advanced DUI Prosecution (2locations), DUI-D (Drug) Prosecution (4 locations), an Insurance Fraud program, the "Top Gun" drug prosecution course, the "Trauma to Trial" sexual assault investigation and prosecution course, and a Child Fatalities investigation and prosecution course. CASC partnered with other public safety agencies and the Office of the Attorney General to present gang training for law enforcement officers and prosecutors.

CASC closely monitors the quality of the programs from student evaluations. In FY2012, 100 percent of attendee evaluations rated CASC programs as "Excellent" or "Good."

Selected Measures

Measure ID	Measure	Alternative Name	Estimated Trend
95732604.001.001	Percentage of Commonwealth's Attorneys that rate Commonwealth's Attorneys' Services Council training programs good or excellent on program evaluations.	Percentage of Commonwealth's Attorneys that rate Commonwealth's Attorneys' Services Council training programs good or excellent on program evaluations.	
95732604.002.001	Number of Continuing Legal Education programs offered.	CASC annual programs	Maintaining
95732604.002.002	Unit cost of producing Continuing Legal Education (CLE) training hours (cost of producing Council training programs ÷ number of CLE training hours).	Unit cost per CLE hour	Maintaining

Key Risk Factors

The Commonwealth's Attorneys' Services Council currently manages its core responsibilities with a small workforce – 7 staff members- and a modest budget. Four of six CASC staff will be eligible to retire with unreduced benefits within five years. Maintaining CASC services at even its current level requires registration fees for major programs, grant funding, volunteer program faculty drawn from among Commonwealth's Attorneys and public safety agencies, and a highly efficient and well-motivated staff. Alternative (grant) funding resources and partnering opportunities have

proved valuable to CASC, but do not offer a stable and predictable foundation for planning training and related services. Well-planned training programs require substantial lead time in preparation and as much as two years advance commitment to a meeting location.

The Virginia Commonwealth's Attorneys' Information System (VCAIS) administered by CASC is now in its 15th year of use and has been installed in approximately 60 local Commonwealth's Attorneys offices. As of now, VCAIS remains a stable and reliable case management system, but its continued viability cannot be guaranteed and it currently is supported by one CASC computer systems engineer. The agency is preparing for the need to transition offices to different case management solutions.

Agency Statistics

Statistics Summary

Statistics Table

Description Value

Management Discussion

General Information About Ongoing Status of Agency

CASC focuses on its training activities. Prosecutors need targeted training to improve their trial skills and knowledge of the criminal law. There are few opportunities for Virginia prosecutors to obtain this training from other sources and CASC intends to continue to be the resource of choice for all of Virginia's prosecutors. Maintaining core services of the agency - professional training and information support services – within limited budgetary resources will continue as CASC's priority.

Information Technology

CASC continues to support the VCAIS case management system but has begun to plan for the next solution for local prosecutors' case management needs by investigating commercially available products that local offices may choose as a replacement.

Workforce Development

CASC has benefitted from a stable workforce but, within 5 years, more than half of the CASC staff will be eligible for retirement. Because of the agency's small size, most CASC staff members already are cross trained on a variety of functions and the agency is able to continue operations while new personnel are trained.

Physical Plant

CASC offices are located in the William & Mary Law School in Williamsburg.