

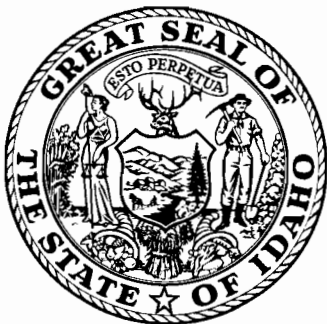
State of Idaho

Office of the Secretary of State

FIVE YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

FY2010 – FY2015

Updated July 1, 2009



Ben Yursa

SECRETARY OF STATE

By *Joseph Lew* Chief Deputy

Mission Statement

The Secretary of State will provide timely, accurate and affordable services to the public, while maintaining a high standard of integrity and customer service through the use of efficient, cost-effective technologies and administrative techniques, including the recruiting and retention of the highest quality work force possible, within a fiscally responsible budget. Furthermore, the Secretary of State will provide these services and will maintain the other functions of this position while closely monitoring and adhering to the laws of the State of Idaho and of the United States of America.

Introduction

The Secretary of State is wholly responsible for any matter relative to any duty imposed upon his office by law, including membership with the State Board of Land Commissioners, membership with the State Board of Examiners and acting as chairman to the State Board of Canvassers.

The major functions of the Secretary of State's office include the filing of many documents, such as: bills of the Legislature, proclamations, extraditions, tort claims, executive orders of the Governor, business entity documents, Uniform Commercial Code financing statements, trademark and service mark registrations and other miscellaneous legislative and executive documents. The Secretary of State's office also compiles, publishes and administers election laws, publishes an election calendar, certifies abstracts of votes from counties, issues certificates of election, and administers the "Sunshine Law" for campaign financing and lobbyist activity disclosure. Other duties include the commissioning of notaries, reporting and making public the information retained in the office, distributing the Idaho Code and its supplements as approved by the Board of Examiners, biennially preparing and distributing the Idaho Blue Book, keeping a register of and attesting to the official acts of the Governor, and affixing the Great Seal while attesting to commissions, pardons and other public instruments on which the official signature of the Governor is required.

To this end, the Secretary of State currently maintains a staff of thirty people who are spread throughout five divisions of responsibility within the office: Elections, Legislative and Executive Affairs, Commercial Affairs, Fiscal, and Information Technology. Two deputies have been assigned to directly administrate the Commercial Affairs and Legislative and Executive Affairs divisions. Each of these divisions reports directly to the Chief Deputy Secretary of State, and the Chief Deputy keeps the Secretary of State apprised of all division administrative functions.

The goals and objectives of the Secretary of State's office are defined by each separate division and are presented in alphabetical order.

Corporate Affairs Division

The Corporate Affairs Division of the Secretary of State includes three sections: the Corporations Section, the Uniform Commercial Code Section and the Notary and Trademark Section.

Corporations Section

The Corporation Section of the Commercial Division is responsible for processing domestic and foreign corporate filings, limited partnerships, limited liability companies, assumed business names and other business entities. Processing includes new business filings, as well as amendments, annual reports and the reinstatement of dissolved business entities.

Mission Statement

The Corporation Section of the Commercial Division will provide quality business services, by maintaining a high standard of customer service and by offering timely, accurate and affordable business filings.

Goals:

First: With the recent changeover to the electronic filing of annual reports, it has become necessary to be able to mark business entities that wish to have a paper version of their annual report mailed to them. With this, a report should be generated that would indicate which entities require these mailings.

Second: With the change to electronic filing of annual reports another need has been recognized. As people file their annual reports, they need to be able to make changes to registered agent information, as part of the electronic process.

Third: Assumed Business Names were required to file a continuation until 2003, when the statute was changed. Currently, there is no continuation requirement. In an effort to clean up the corporation database of old, unused Assumed Business Names, it is recommended that this requirement be reinstated. Assumed Business Names should be required to renew their entity once every five years, which would allow for the removal of defunct Assumed Business Names from the database. Electronic filing and continuation for Assumed Business Names should also be implemented as part of this requirement.

Fourth: In conjunction with the Information Technology Section, a new software application is being developed for manual entry and administration of business entities.

Objectives:

The primary objective of all goals listed is to improve an outdated system, which does not accommodate current technology. With these changes, efficiency, accuracy and customer service will improve significantly.

Discussion has begun with the Information Technology Section on development of software construction or alteration to include indicators as to which customers require annual report mailings. This is in the beginning stages, and is ongoing.

Allowing for changes to be made to registered agent information electronically may require a change to the Registered Agent Act. Research is being done to determine what changes may have to be made to include this option. The Deputy overseeing the Commercial Division has been included in this process and will advise as necessary.

Requiring Assumed Business Names to register every five years is in the beginning stages. Discussion has taken place with the Deputy to determine which statutes will require amendment to put this requirement in place. Further, research is being done to understand how other states administer Assumed Business Names, and how they process online filings.

Consultation with the Information Technologies Section continues on a weekly basis, regarding the development of new software. Progress has been made toward the completion of this application, but it is still in the beginning stages.

External Factors:

The major constraints toward completion of these goals are time, budget, and Legislature. The Legislature will be required to see the changes to the appropriate statutes as necessary, and must be willing to make the requisite changes. Furthermore, budget constraints brought on by the ailing economy will also be a factor which challenges the completion of these goals.

Notary and Trademark Section

The Notary and Trademark Section of the Secretary of State is responsible for the filing of trade names, trademarks, service marks, certification marks, and collective marks. Notary Public commissions are also granted through this section, with a certificate of commission being issued to qualified applicants.

Mission Statement

The Notary and Trademark Section of the Secretary of State will determine if the necessary prerequisites have been met for the filing of all submitted documents. All filings, including new applications, renewals and amendments, will be processed in a timely and accurate manner, while maintaining a high level of customer service.

Goals:

First: To provide business information to users in a variety of forms and formats which are timely, accurate, and easily accessible.

Second: To provide services at fees which are cost-effective to the users, and which cover the incurred cost of providing the services.

Third: To make filing of business documents easy and fast, in a choice of media, with rapid acceptance decisions and acknowledgment to the filing parties.

Objectives:

To respond to routine requests for information for trademark information and notary public information, within five working days of receipt for at least 95% of all requests.

To make acceptance decisions on business document filings not later than the close of business on the day following receipt for at least 98% of all filings.

The Division will work with the Information Services Division to provide Trademark & Notary databases and search engines to enable online data searches.

External Factors:

1. Growth or decline in the level of demand for the business services of the Division, which are in turn determined by the state of the economy, financing and legal practices, population growth and other factors.
2. Development of new uniform and model acts governing business organizations, secured transactions and trademarks, and their adoption by the Legislature.

Uniform Commercial Code Section

The Uniform Commercial Code Section of the Secretary of State is responsible for the receiving and processing of liens and amendments relating to those liens. The filing of these finance statements allows for creditors to hold a security interest in collateral such as equipment and agricultural products.

Mission Statement

The Uniform Commercial Code Section of the Secretary of State will maintain a high level of customer service, to include accurate and timely filing of all lien types as mandated by the Legislature. The UCC Section will also provide information in a timely manner, and will certify that information if so requested.

Goals:

First: A major goal of the UCC Section is to allow for electronic filing of agricultural liens and amendments (UCC-1F and UCC-3F). Many customers have requested this service and it makes sense to add this service to our other online offerings.

Second: In the beginning stages of discussion is the ability to provide other electronic agricultural filings and amendments, including commodity liens and seed and labor liens.

Third: Also in the beginning stages of discussion is the ability of the county welfare offices to file medical indigent liens electronically.

Fourth: Work has begun on a new software application for the manual processing of lien filing, amendment filings, and certified searches. This has been discussed at length with the Information Technology Section and is scheduled to begin development in the near future.

Objectives:

The major objective of the first three goals is improved customer service. By allowing customers to file electronically we offer them the opportunity to save time and money. This also provides customers with an extra level of flexibility as electronic filing can and should be available twenty-four hours a day. Furthermore, this will provide a greater level of efficiency on the part of the UCC Section and will allow a redistribution of manpower, offering a more focused work environment.

With regard to the UCC-1F and UCC-3F filings, the issue of social security numbers needs to be resolved. Currently, social security numbers are used to identify the debtors/producers listed on these public filings. A unique identifier numbering system needs to be implemented so that social security numbers are no longer needed. This has been delayed pending approval from the USDA regarding adherence to the Federal Food Security Act.

Development of a new software application will provide the UCC Section with increased efficiency and functionality, ultimately offering a greater level of customer service. Collaboration between the UCC Section and the Information Technology Division will continue throughout the process so that the software is developed with the needs of the UCC Section fully understood.

External Factors:

As with other sections and divisions, budgetary constraints will be a contributing factor toward the accomplishment of these goals. Furthermore, the ability of the Legislature to pass appropriate statutes and amendments may inhibit completion. Also, there is the added issue of approval from the USDA which could delay these goals.

Elections Division

The Election Division of the Secretary of State administers the election laws, seeks legal interpretation to resolve ambiguities, and prepares recommended legislation where improvements are necessary. This division registers qualified lobbyists, implements and administers procedures for certifying political treasurers, and makes available for public inspection all required records and documents.

Mission Statement

The Election Division of the Secretary of State will administer fair and impartial state elections while ensuring compliance with candidate filing, campaign finance disclosure and lobbyist registration and reporting. This division will provide accurate information to the public in a timely manner.

Goals:

First: The Elections Division is pushing forward with adding online filing capability for lobbyist reporting.

Second: Online campaign disclosure reporting is another service that we will eventually provide. While this is slated for development, the process has not yet begun.

Third: We wish to develop additional election administration training classes and training materials which will be made available to all county clerks throughout Idaho.

Fourth: With the passing of HB372, which provides for the consolidation of elections, we will be working toward implementing this law by the requisite date of January 1, 2011.

Objectives:

The Elections Division, with the Information Technology Division, is in the planning stages of development for online lobbyist reporting. Once a time table has been established we will locate an online filing program that closely fits Idaho law. It will then be up to the Information Technology Division to alter the software to meet the needs of our division and they will be responsible for implementation as well. We will develop training and materials to educate our staff on the operation and troubleshooting of this new system. Training and materials will also be developed to assist the users of the new online lobbyist reporting service.

Development of the online campaign disclosure reporting service will have objectives that are similar to the lobbyist reporting service.

The Elections Division is in the process of identifying discrepancies between current election processes/practices and the Idaho Code. Training will be developed to address

these discrepancies which will be administered through appropriate and diversified media. Another training program will be developed for county clerks to provide uniform training of election personnel and poll workers.

To begin the process of election consolidation we will need to identify the impact on current county election processes and costs. Furthermore, we will need to develop grant program and distribution guidelines for the \$1.5 million appropriation. A training program will be developed for internal staff and county election personnel with regard to election administration covering multiple elections.

External Factors:

External factors which will affect the Elections Division's operations are federal legislation as well as Federal Voting Assistance Commission regulations which impose mandates. The Federal Election Assistance Commission's guidelines concerning election registration and the conduct of elections will also be a factor. Additional mandates relating to election and campaign disclosure law imposed by the Legislature will need to be considered, as well as petition efforts by Idaho citizens which result in ballot measures.

Fiscal Division

The Fiscal Division is responsible for handling all monies collected by the Office of the Secretary of State. Budget preparation, payroll, accounts receivable and accounts payable are the major duties of this division and its Fiscal Officer.

Mission Statement

The Fiscal Division of the Secretary of State will prepare and maintain a fiscally responsible budget. This budget will allow for continued operation and maintenance of the Secretary of State's offices, within the limitations set forth by the Legislature. The Fiscal Division will provide high quality customer service, including timely and accurate receipting and account maintenance.

Goals:

First: Work is proceeding on the development of new software which will help focus and streamline accounts receivable, accounts payable, and other routine fiscal functions.

Second: As part of the functionality of the new application an addition will be requested that will allow the Fiscal Division to generate a report which will indicate all prepaid accounts that have fallen below a certain dollar amount, yet show recent activity.

Third: Still in the discussion and planning stages is the development of an online service that will allow customers to view their account activity and balances.

Objectives:

Functions developed within the new application will provide the opportunity for improved customer service, with options such as e-mailing customers their monthly statements. Weekly meetings with the Information Technology Division has allowed the new application to progress at a reasonable pace, however a date for implementation has not yet been set.

With the ability to determine which prepaid accounts are lacking in funds it will be possible to generate letters and/or e-mail to our customers, providing them time to replenish these accounts. Not only will this improve customer service, but it should reduce the number of documents that are being held for lack of funds, which means that the timeliness of filings also improves.

Allowing customers to view their account activity and balances online will also improve customer service. This would allow customers to view and print receipts. Customers would also be given the opportunity to monitor their activity allowing them the ability to see when their filings have been processed.

External Factors:

Time and the budgetary constraints of an ailing economy will be the primary external factors that inhibit the completion of these goals. Furthermore, the availability of Information Technology Division resources may prohibit timely completion of these goals.

Information Technology Division

The Information Services Division is responsible for operation, development and maintenance of all information systems for the Office of the Secretary of State. This includes installation and maintenance of all computer hardware and software, internal data network management, facilitating the exchange of information between the Office of the Secretary of State and other state agencies, facilitating access to public information, and supporting the election process.

Mission Statement

The Information Technology Division of the Secretary of State will provide the highest level of service to employees and customers by maintaining a stable and effective infrastructure to support the business service needs of the Office of the Secretary of State. This division will provide accurate, efficient and economical business services, while maintaining a secure information systems environment.

Goals:

First: We will continue to expand our online services. Many projects are in various stages of development, including online lobbyist financial reporting, online access to account activity and balances, allowing changes to registered agent information during online annual report filing, online filing and continuation of assumed business names, and online filing of various UCC liens and amendments.

Second: The migration from a Sybase database structure to an SQL database is proceeding. All databases and in-house applications are in the process of being transferred to the new database structure.

Third: We are continuing to provide Information Technology services as required in an effort to provide a functional office which meets or exceeds our mandated filing duties. To this end, development of updated in-house applications has begun.

Fourth: When the Secretary of State's offices move back into the Capitol building we will review, update and refine our disaster recovery plan.

Objectives:

With regard to adding online services, the current focus is on the production of lobbyist financial reporting capability. Providing lobbyists the opportunity to file electronically will improve customer service by providing options to the user. Furthermore, this will also reduce the manpower requirements of the Elections Division. We expect to test and roll out this service by the end of the next fiscal year. Other online service offerings are in various stages of early development and continue to be addressed on an item by item basis as the various sections and divisions overcome the obstacles necessary to see these projects through to fruition.

The database migration is nearing completion and has been managed in a smooth manner, with as little interruption to service as possible.

We have begun development of updated in-house applications. The framework is being structured for these applications and when that is complete, our focus will be on the Fiscal Division's application, which should be programmed, tested and in operation by the end of FY2010. Development of other applications, such as UCC and Corporations software, will follow.

Regarding our disaster recovery plan, discussion has begun and will continue periodically until our office moves into the Capitol building in November of 2009. Once the move takes place, this will be addressed in greater detail and will be updated and restructured as necessary to reflect our new setup and circumstances.

External Factors:

The slow economy and level of appropriation by the Legislature are issues, beyond our control, that will affect the outcome of these goals. Another factor that could inhibit progress is the continued availability of persons with technical ability, who also have knowledge and familiarity with our projects.

Legislative and Executive Affairs Division

The Secretary of State's Legislative and Executive Affairs division, overseen by a Deputy Secretary of State, is responsible for filing tort claims, bills enacted by the Legislature and signed by the Governor, proclamations, oaths, appointments, and executive orders issued by the Governor and required by statute to be filed with the Secretary of State.

Mission Statement

The Legislative and Executive Affairs division will provide timely, accurate filing of the above referenced documents, and shall make these records available for public inspection.

Goals:

First: A continued review of all records in this division has been underway for the last few years. The review consists of a comparison of the daily journals for recorded documents and the databases that have been created for each of these functions. Where there is a discrepancy between the journal entry and the database, the actual record is being reviewed if it is available for inspection.

Second: The Chief Deputy and the Secretary of State have been apprised of the necessity for a complete review of all archived records to determine the practicality and statutory requirements for continued retention. In a recent instance, when a record was requested, it was realized that this division has archived materials that are not clearly identified. This deficiency can and should be remedied by supplying additional information to the labeling for the Department of Administration database. Once the reviewing and relabeling project is complete a purge, of all records and documents that have been identified as not necessary for retention, would result. Guidance for this purge will be solicited from the Office of the Attorney General and the State Archivist. The first inquiry has been made, and a written guideline from the Office of the Attorney General is expected.

Third: Until recently, there has been no written procedural guidance provided to the management or employees of the Legislative and Executive Affairs division. Formulating complete documentation of the procedures implemented in this division has been undertaken. Although this is tedious, due to the exceptions that should be recorded, it is necessary to ensure that statutory responsibilities are carried out properly and documented for future administrations.

Objectives:

The records review has been ongoing for several years. Currently, records that are pertinent to this division have been prioritized by level of importance and substantial progress has been made toward completing this accuracy review.

In the matter of document retention, continuing education with regard to what archivists deem to be of importance in records retention, is key. This will allow the implementation of procedures to approve transmission of records for storage so that seamless transfers will be accomplished.

A review of the archived records of this division and a purge of unnecessary documents will result in a cost savings both to this division and to the State Historical Library and the Records Services Division of the Department of Administration. Information and guidelines pertinent to document retention and storage methods has been requested to ensure maximum cooperation between this division and the agencies responsible for retaining historical records.

Performance measures:

The primary measure for all of the projects listed above is accuracy. This division is often requested to provide certifications to be used in a court of law. Especially in the area of tort claim filings, it is necessary to maintain optimal accuracy as the court is dependant upon our certification to make judgments in favor of the State of Idaho.

During the course of these projects, an analysis will be made to determine the practicality of each of the databases used in the Legislative and Executive Affairs Information System. Working with the Information Technologies section, the necessity and feasibility of adding to or revamping these databases will be determined.

Documentation of all procedures of the Legislative and Executive Affairs division will ensure continuity for the future. This documentation is underway, with procedures being analyzed for efficiency, as they are recorded. Furthermore, the education and training of more than one individual on staff who can manage the affairs of this division is necessary and advisable.

External Factors:

The major constraints for achieving the goals listed are time, additional statutory responsibilities and budget. It has been the practice of the Idaho Legislature to continue to assign new statutory responsibilities to the Office of the Secretary of State. In most cases, these new duties must be absorbed into a daily routine that is already occupied. Furthermore, budget constraints brought on by the ailing economy will also be a factor which challenges the completion of these goals.