



---

# MEMORANDUM

---

Date: June 11, 2013

To: The Honorable Chairman and Members  
Pima County Board of Supervisors

From: C.H. Huckelberry  
County Administrator 

Re: **Tax Roll Corrections and Development of a System Independent of the Legacy Mainframe System**

In accordance with Arizona Revised Statutes, the Board of Supervisors is responsible for determining the classification of such properties for tax rolls that have been delivered to the Board by the Assessor. This Tax Roll Correction (TRC) has historically been done by the County Assessor. Transition of the TRC responsibility to the Board of Supervisors requires the development of a new TRC system.

Attached is a June 7, 2013 memorandum from our Information Technology Director that describes the process that has been developed. The process has been operating since late 2012 and continues to be modified and upgraded with clear and complete documentation of any customized program modifications. This is something that has been lacking in previous Information Technology programming of automated County functions.

CHH/dph

Attachment

c: The Honorable Bill Staples, Pima County Assessor  
Lionel Bittner, Director, Information Technology



---

# MEMORANDUM

## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT

---

**Date:** June 7, 2013

**To:** C. H. Huckelberry  
County Administrator

**From:** L. H. Bittner   
Chief Information Officer

**Re:** New Tax Roll Correction System to Mitigate Legacy Mainframe Risk and Enhance Assessor and Finance Efficiencies

In 2012, a joint Assessor, Finance, Information Technology (ITD), and Treasurer departmental effort was undertaken to develop and implement a new Tax Roll Correction (TRC) system to mitigate the risk of operating a legacy mainframe system. This project was Phase III of our Mainframe Decommissioning program and also had an objective to reduce the overall cycle time required to process on average 3,600 annual TRCs for real property.

The effort adhered to the County's standard software development methodology to define business requirements and manage the development, testing and user acceptance of the new system. The TRC system was developed in-house to directly interface with the in-house and ITD maintained Tax Assembly System (TAS). TAS receives the Assessment Roll conveyed from the Assessor and calculates all corresponding taxes for each property in Pima County, at which time the property Tax Roll is passed to the Treasurer to manage the associated receivables.

The legacy mainframe TRC system was an old data entry / overnight batch and paper validation process. Any TRC processed by the Assessor on this legacy system took a minimum of one day to verify and process, and a second day to be passed onto TAS. The new TRC system streamlines the entire process providing:

- Additional functionality and enhancements, including a user-friendly interface with; dashboards, what-if's calculations, on-screen reports, direct access to supporting documentation, increased security and workflow management capabilities, providing the TRC processor access to all information to enter and validate a TRC
- Immediate in-line validations to reduce errors and failures
- Compliance with A.R.S. §15-972 (tax credits) and BOS policy D22-10 which the legacy system did not fully achieve
- A per TRC process cycle time shortened from day(s) to minutes

The TRC version 1.0 system went live on December 21, 2012. Since then we have issued two patches in January and released additional features in June 2013 with version 1.1. The system is operating effectively and demonstrates what can be achieved when Departments collaborate to achieve a successful outcome on a technology project.

LHB/mjk

Attachment



---

# MEMORANDUM

## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT

---

Date: May 3, 2013

To: C. H. Huckelberry  
County Administrator

From: L. H. Bittner *L. H. Bittner*  
Chief Information Officer

Re: Rationale for Replacing Pima County's Legacy Payroll System Environment

---

Over the last few years, an initiative to eliminate use of mainframe and COBOL based systems has been underway in Pima County. This technology is outdated and no longer taught in a University setting or identified as a career path by technology employees. When the initiative was kicked off, County mainframe employees were retired or near retirement and the ability to maintain and support these systems and associated infrastructure on which they operated was a major risk for Pima County.

The initial plan to remediate this risk had four key phases:

- I. Phase I - to move Pima County's mainframe system processing from Pima County to the Arizona Department of Administration (ADOA) data center eliminating Pima County's mainframe and associated infrastructure environment. This move to ADOA was completed in 2010.
- II. Phase II - to progress a project, sponsored and managed by the Finance Department, to implement a new Financial and Human Resources/Payroll system to operate within the Pima County data center on modern technologies. This effort ultimately replaced the financial system, but due to vendor quality and warranty issues, the Human Resources/Payroll component of the project was cancelled.
- III. Phase III - for the Information Technology Department to rewrite the Assessor's mainframe Tax Roll Correction system for use by the Assessor and Finance Department. This project was completed in December 2012 and the Assessor's mainframe TRC system has since been decommissioned.
- IV. Phase IV - to decommission the Health Department's mainframe applications and replace with a new electronic Health Records (eHR) system to address legal requirements associated with the Affordable Care Act. This effort is currently being initiated and the component to eliminate mainframe reliance is planned for completion in FY 15.

At this time, our mainframe Human Resources/Payroll system risk remains high and is critical for the following reasons:

- This mainframe payroll system was highly customized by Pima County over the last 20 years. There is limited documentation on how this system operates and why the customizations were made. The system is therefore highly prone to error whenever a change is made.

C. H. Huckelberry, County Administrator

Re: Rationale for Replacing Pima County's Legacy Payroll System Environment

May 3, 2013

Page 2 of 2

- The system must be changed minimally on an annual basis based on changes in insurance, other rate and county structural changes. Due to the inflexible nature of this mainframe COBOL system, even rather easy changes on modern technology are difficult and complex to make in this legacy environment. The County has had two situations in the last year where system issues were resolved at the 12<sup>th</sup> hour allowing payroll to be produced on-time. Both payrolls were almost missed by the County.
- The IT employee that Pima County relied upon to keep this mainframe payroll system operating retired in October 2011. We now rely on a contract employee experienced in this mainframe software package to keep the system operating. Contractors with these specialized skills are limited in the marketplace at this time.
- Operating this mainframe payroll only system costs the County approximately \$700,000 annually. This \$700,000 covers the cost of vendor software maintenance, ADOA mainframe operating charges, and the cost of 1 contractor to support the system. Finance personnel costs to perform the payroll function are not included in this \$700,000 figure.
- The payroll processing function performed by the Financial Payroll team is highly manual in nature. This function requires employees with specialized skills and institutional knowledge to ensure payroll operates successfully throughout the year for Pima County.
- Pima County does not have an electronic Human Resources system. The entire human resources process is paper and data entry based. Only the Position Control and Payroll functions are somewhat automated in this mainframe environment and only capture payroll/benefits information electronically. Critical information such as training records, etc. is currently paper based. Not having this information in an electronic searchable format increases legislative compliance risks and reduces Pima County's competitiveness in attracting and retaining highly qualified employees longer term.

Based on the above risks, we have reviewed Human Resource/Payroll options and determined that leveraging a Maricopa County Cooperative agreement with ADP is the lowest risk approach to mitigate the above risks. At this time Tom Burke, Allyn Bulzomi and I are reviewing operating cost models to determine the scope of this ADP initiative prior to recommending a final direction to yourself and the Board of Supervisors. Once the final scope, operating cost/cash flow model and associated contract negotiations near completion, we will provide you the final business proposal for your use with the Board of Supervisors.

If you have any further questions, please contact me at 724-7580.

LHB/mk