Public Service Commission

IT Plan 2016

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1. Executive Summary

The Montana Department of Public Service Regulation, also known as the Montana Public Service Commission (PSC or Agency), is a small agency of 33 staff and 5 elected commissioners. The PSC regulates private, investor-owned natural gas, electric, telephone, and water and sewer companies doing business in Montana. The PSC also regulates certain motor carriers hauling regulated commodities and enforces natural gas pipeline safety regulations.

Companies of all sizes fall within the PSC's jurisdiction, from small local water companies to multimillion-dollar multistate utilities. The operations and finances of a utility are extremely complex, and overseeing multiple entities is even more so. To facilitate effective regulation by the PSC, it is essential that the agency hire and retain professional staff. The economists, accountants, attorneys, and engineers of the PSC must be able to analyze large amounts of data quickly and use it to provide the best information possible to the commissioners for their decision-making process.

The Information Technology section (IT) of the PSC, part of the Centralized Services Division, provides support to all areas of the agency. Digital systems are vital to the commission's operation, and it is the goal of IT to provide timely, efficient, and cost effective support and upgrades for these systems.

2. Environment, Success, and Capabilities

PSC IT is dedicated to providing the best possible information systems to all users, be they commissioners, staff, or the citizens of Montana. PSC IT is responsible for threat management, system maintenance, user support, and timely upgrades of electronic information systems. This technology is integrated into nearly every aspect of the PSC, and is required to meet the commission's mission and statutory requirements. To this end, PSC IT is partnered with the State Information Technology Services Division (SITSD). SITSD provides high level support, extra security, and valuable infrastructure, securely hosting PSC servers and data at the State of Montana Data Center (SMDC). While the PSC maintains a local server for video streaming, utilizing SITSD for other systems results in a safer, more reliable work environment.
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3. IT Contributions and Strategies

Like all state agencies, the PSC is totally dependent on IT, not only to support and enhance business, but to enable it. The job of IT is to support the PSC mission by developing, delivering, and facilitating IT services and resources. Current projects include:

Modernizing data management and delivery;
Continuing the existing focus on e-Services and system upgrades;
Replacing the PSC intranet and public facing web application systems;
Enhancing the use of video to promote participation from remote areas; and
Increasing customer and user capabilities

To achieve these goals, the PSC is utilizing new technologies, its partnership with the SITSD, and currently existing resources to create a more reliable and system. Ensuring the continuation of core

services during periods of change is a top priority, and these resources will allow us to minimize user impact.

4. IT Principles

PSC IT is dedicated to providing effective, cost-efficient service to the Public Service Commission. To achieve this, PSC IT:

- Adheres to the Montana Information Technology act, as well as the State of Montana Information Technology Strategic Plan.

- Strives to allocate resources to plans that offer the greatest value to the commission while minimizing time and money wasted on superfluous projects.

- Works in conjunction with private, state, and federal entities to ensure the highest levels of data security

- Views all employees of the PSC as valuable team members, and works diligently to meet their needs and improve their performance.

- Clearly documents and justifies purchases to maintain accountability and transparency

- Endeavors to provide the public with accurate, user-friendly methods to work with the commission and interact with data

5. IT Governance

As part of a state entity, final authority for IT decisions rests with the elected commissioners of the PSC. However, to better facilitate operations, day to day management of PSC IT is handled by the Centralized Services Division Administrator along with the Communications Director and Computer Systems Analyst by utilizing the latest information, best practices, and commission goals to ensure IT works for the entirety of the PSC, and that commissioners are well informed and equipped to make decisions.

6. IT Financial Management

PSC IT does not generate any revenue and is funded entirely from the PSC budget, which is primarily state special revenue.

7. IT Services and Processes

The scope of PSC IT service offerings is broad and is comparable to similar agencies.

8. IT Infrastructure, Staffing and Resources

The PSC currently employs one full time Computer Systems Analyst, and utilizes SITSD Local Area Network (LAN) support when necessary. The PSC's desktop environment is hosted at the SMDC, as are the PSC website and system images. A video streaming server is present on-site.

9. Risks and Issues

In our 2014 IT plan, our risks and issues were:

Primary Risk	Probability	Impact	Mitigation Strategy
Security breach	Medium	High	Our agency has an active security program including, but not limited to, staff training and awareness, data encryption, and security policies.
Difficulty of hiring qualified technical staff	High	High	Increase pay for positions most affected by This issue. Career Ladder Implementation for existing staff.
Understaffed	High	High	Looking at hiring 2 Additional FTE's
PSC IT Environment is Outdated	High	High	Ongoing effort to bring all systems up to industry standards

Since that time, the PSC has overcome these risks and issues by utilizing SITSD for various services. By doing so, our security, vulnerability, and continuity issues are no longer a factor. The IT staffing issues have been addressed, and systems are being updated and modernized.

10. IT Goals and Objectives

Goal: New PSC Website

> *Supporting Objective/Action*
>> Ensure easy and reliable information access for employees and the public.
>
> *Supporting Objective/Action*
>> User security awareness and training
>> Develop and implement the National Institute of Standards and Technology
>> (NIST) based Security Standards to ensure the confidentiality, availability,
>> and integrity of PSC data and systems

Goal: Document Availability
>> Develop a way for commissioners and staff to have quick electronic
>> access to documents in business meetings and hearings.
>
> *Supporting Objective/Action*
>> Support and organize data relating to dockets in one secure location.
>
> *Supporting Objective/Action*

Provide Commissioners and staff the equipment needed to access information quickly and easily, regardless of location.

Goal: Move to Electronic Storage

Supporting Objective/Action

Develop a new process for the organization and retention of records.

Supporting Objective/Action

Scan and store information in an effective manner to allow for easy access and retrieval.

Goal: Case Management System

Supporting Objective/Action

Research various case management systems, participating in demonstrations when possible.

Supporting Objective/Action

Review costs and compare systems utilized by other state agencies.

Supporting Objective/Action

Select a system that is cost effective and beneficial to all divisions within the agency.

11. IT Projects

After achieving its current goals, the PSC will re-evaluate its IT position and determine new priorities.

12. Security and Business Continuity Programs

The PSC's Security and Business Continuity Programs are those of SITSD's, since they are providing us with fully hosted capabilities.

13. Planned IT Expenditures

Part of the process of meeting some significant IT related goals (listed above) is gathering and reviewing estimates and bids. At this point, we have no firm costs and won't have any to report until after commissioner decisions are made.

	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018	FY2019	FY2020	FY2021

14. Administrative Information

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