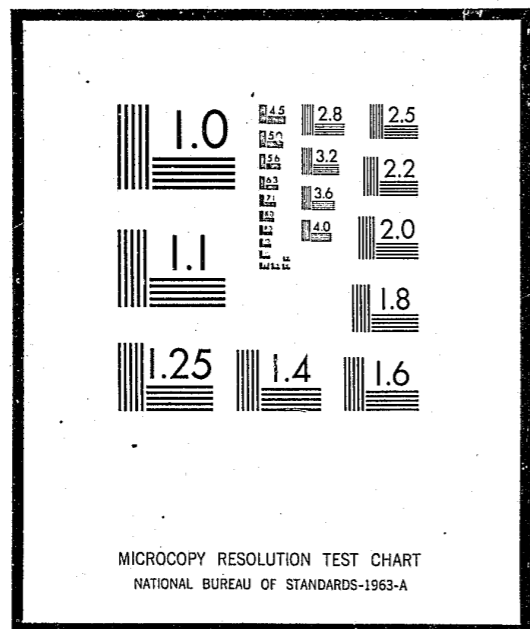


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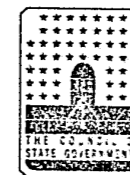
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EVALUATION

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STATE GOVERNMENT PROGRAM EVALUATION ACTIVITIES

(Summer 1972)



May 1973  
RM-512  
Price: \$2.00

The Council of State Governments  
Iron Works Pike  
Lexington, Kentucky 40511

RESULTS OF SURVEY OF STATE GOVERNMENT  
PROGRAM EVALUATION ACTIVITIES  
(Summer 1972)

FOREWORD

This report on state program evaluation activities was prepared by Harry Hatry, Director of the State and Local Government Research Program of The Urban Institute. Miss Anita Basak provided considerable assistance in the tabulations of the survey results.

The Council of State Governments and the author express their appreciation to the state budget officers who supplied the information for this report.

Brevard Crihfield  
Executive Director  
The Council of State Governments

INTRODUCTION

In the summer of 1972 The Urban Institute and the Council of State Governments jointly undertook a mail survey of the 50 state governments and outlying U.S. areas regarding their existing program evaluation activities. This survey was undertaken to provide information for use in the National Association of State Budget Officers Training Institute on program evaluation held in Albany, New York in September, 1972.

The survey questionnaire was mailed to all Governors, planning directors, and budget directors. It was, however, intended to encompass program evaluation activities not only in a central office such as budget or planning offices, but also in the various operating agencies.

The initial request was mailed out in mid July. Responses continued to come in through mid September 1972. In some cases we received more than one response from a State. Where these responses differed, we used our judgment in deciding which seemed to provide the most complete information.

Responses were received from 43 States and two territories.

As the results of this survey indicate, there has been an emergence of interest in program evaluation in state governments, particularly in providing information on the effectiveness and not solely the efficiency of programs in serving the citizens. This includes establishing staff to undertake program evaluations and providing funds for outside

evaluations. However, the state (as well as local) effort is considerably less than that of the federal government, where increasingly large sums of money have been made available to provide for systematic evaluations of major federal programs and to establish professional staffs in the agencies for this purpose.

For this survey, "program evaluation" was defined as "the systematic examination of individual, existing government programs to assess what the program has accomplished (over a specific time period) and what it has cost." Respondents were requested to exclude evaluation primarily aimed at assessing the efficiency or management of a program or agency rather than its effectiveness.

Two special caveats are needed in interpreting the findings.

1. In spite of the inclusion of the above definition it is clear that different respondents had different perceptions of the meaning of the term "program evaluation." That term has been used in many ways over many years. This survey was intended to be concerned with the more systematic approaches to program evaluation which have led to the identification of program evaluation, in some cases as a separate academic discipline, and even a literature of its own.

Despite the somewhat differing interpretations that undoubtedly exist among respondents as to the definition of program evaluation, the conservative responses on existing evaluation efforts imply that most respondents were restrained in their interpretation of program evaluation. Nevertheless, some of the evaluations listed would probably not be program evaluations in the strictest interpretations.

1. Appendix A is a selected bibliography of recent materials on program evaluation.

2. It seems very doubtful that most respondents were able within the short time requested for responses--approximately two weeks--to thoroughly survey the program evaluation efforts in all major agencies. This put a heavy burden on the existing knowledge of the respondent and his immediate staff. We suspect that some agencies with at least the beginnings of evaluation effort have been neglected in the survey. For example, it is quite possible that in some States such agencies as health and education agencies may have some evaluation activities underway which were not included in the responses. This, however, is a guess on our part; we have had no opportunity to check the information. We suspect, in any case, that this would not substantially alter the overall survey findings.

The States were also asked if they thought any of their program evaluations would be of interest to other States and would be available to them. Appendix B is a listing of those items that were identified as such.

A summary of the survey results follows:

SPECIFIC RESULTS

Question 1: "Does your State have any organizational units that have the explicit task of doing program evaluation and have full-time staff assigned to do it?"

YES	-	24	(53%)
NO	-	21	(47%)
		TOTAL	- 45 (100%)

Question 2: "If yes, please indicate in which state agencies staffing exists explicitly for program evaluation (responses should pertain to actual manning levels in the current fiscal year)."

Respondents were asked to group the agencies into the following thirteen functional areas. The number of governments that indicated they had one or more non-clerical staff involved in program evaluation are indicated below.

Agency	Number	Percent (of the 45 responding governments)
a. Government-wide central staff agencies. The specific agencies indicated were primarily state planning offices, departments of administration, and budget and finance offices.	15	33%
b. State legislature staffs including audit.	7	16%
c. Transportation/highways.	5	11%
d. Health, including drugs.	8	18%
e. Employment services.	3	7%
f. Social welfare services.	5	11%
g. State police.	4	9%
h. Corrections.	5	11%
i. Agricultural/industrial/commercial development.	3	7%
j. Natural resources/recreation.	3	7%
k. Regulatory agencies	2	4%
l. Education. Most of these appeared to be principally concerned with elementary and secondary rather than higher education.	9	20%
m. Other. Department of Community Affairs. (A number of governments placed agencies in the "Other" category. Most, however, we have grouped in one of the previous categories.)	1	2%

The largest activity was reported in central staff agencies. Education, health, and the legislature were the next three highest functions apparently served by formal evaluation staffs.

Two reservations should be pointed out.

1. Respondents' interpretations very likely differed as to what staff and what activities should be considered under "evaluation."

2. It seems unlikely that many of the States were able to survey thoroughly all of their agencies on their evaluation activities. For example, we conjecture that there are more state health agencies, highway (or transportation) agencies, criminal justice planning agencies, and education agencies that are doing some, though probably not very sophisticated, program evaluation.

Thus, the responses to this question should be treated with special care. These two reservations tend to compensate for each other; probably in balance the results are roughly indicative of the status of evaluation activities as of Summer 1972.

Question 3: "Have any major program evaluations been undertaken at the state government level since June 1970?"

	Number	Percent
YES	20	45%
NO	19	42%
NOT ANSWERED	6	13%
TOTAL	45	100%

It is to be noted that three States that had not indicated the existence of full-time program evaluation staff indicated that they had undertaken a major evaluation. Five States who had indicated they did have full-time program evaluation staffs did not report any major program evaluation since 1970. (This may suggest that the full-time staff indicated in Question 1 do not always have the "explicit task of doing program evaluation.")

Question 4: "Please provide the subject of each major program evaluation undertaken within your state government since 1970."

Responding States differed in the degree of specificity on the topics they listed. Also, in some cases, the topic listed did not appear

to fall into a category that we might normally label a program evaluation; few of the topics listed seemed as clearly to be a program evaluation as the one entitled: "Effectiveness of Employment Training Programs." Some might have been analytical efforts, but perhaps not after-the-fact program evaluations such as the one entitled: "Welfare Caseload Forecasting." However, the ones listed are included in the following tabulation unless clearly inappropriate.

The following is a grouping of the evaluations by functional area:

<u>Functional Area</u>	<u>Number</u>
Transportation	3
Health (including drugs)	21
Employment assistance	7
Human resources and social services	11
Police and crime control	4
Corrections	6
Economic development (including tourism)	8
Natural resources and recreation	8
Environmental protection	6
Regulation (including Department of Motor Vehicles)	4
Education (including higher education, elementary, secondary, and vocational education)	31
Miscellaneous: Consumer Protection	1
Housing	3
Community Development	2
	<hr/> 115

The areas of education, health and human resources and social services were the most frequently mentioned topics.

No attempt was made in the survey to consider the specific techniques that were used in the evaluations. From the authors' past experiences with the States, it seems unlikely that there were many, if any, "social experimentation" types of evaluations or even careful "before vs. after" evaluation designs.<sup>1</sup>

Question 4b: "Who actually did the evaluation: internal staff, outside consultants, or university personnel?"

Those reporting an evaluation since June 1970 were also asked to indicate who actually did the evaluation. The results were as follows:

	<u>Using this Type of Personnel</u>	<u>Using only this Type of Personnel</u>
Internal Staff	92%	(72%)
Outside Consultants	24%	( 7%)
University Personnel	6%	( 1%)

Question 5: "Is there a formal training course which explicitly covers program evaluation?"

Only three States (7%)--Hawaii, New Mexico and New Jersey--indicated they had such programs. New York State reported that in 1970-71 they had undertaken several two-day training sessions, but that they currently do not have any courses covering the topic. The State of Michigan also reported that they were in the process of developing training programs in both qualitative and quantitative analysis--as part of its Program Budget Evaluation System (PBES) efforts. It was not explicitly indicated whether this would cover program evaluation as a distinct topic.

Hawaii reported that their program was aimed at: (a) program evaluators and budget analysts in the Department of Budget and Finance, and (b) program managers and analysts in the operating departments. Programs

1. For further discussions of various types of program evaluations see the publications listed in the Selected Bibliography in Appendix A.

of four hours (given in-house), twenty hours (by the Civil Service Commission), and forty hours (by the University of Hawaii) were available. The State of New Jersey indicated that their program was aimed at top and middle managers with a duration of twelve course hours. Both States indicated that their training materials were available for use by other States. New Mexico reported a program of varying lengths (up to three days) for their Department of Education, Employment Security Commission and Personnel Offices.

Question 6: "What is your view as to the amount of program evaluation currently being done by state government?"

The following categories and the number of percentage of those responding is given in the following table:

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Considerably more than needed	1	2%
Somewhat more than needed	0	0%
About right amount	1	2%
Somewhat more is needed	7	16%
A great deal more is needed	28	62%
No opinion	3	7%
No answer	<u>5</u>	<u>11%</u>
TOTAL	45	100%

Questions 1, 3 and 6 Tabulated by Population Size

Exhibit 1 shows the findings on Questions 1, 3 and 6 tabulated by population size. The figures in parentheses indicate the number of States as a percentage of the States in each population category. No significant distinctions seem to be present among different size States on these three questions.

Exhibit 1

RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS 1, 3, AND 6 CLASSIFIED BY POPULATION

State Population (millions)	Full-time PE staff? Question 1		Major PE Since 1970? Question 3		View of Current PE Efforts Question 6					
	YES	NO	YES	NO*	Considerably more than needed	Somewhat greater than needed	Right amount	Somewhat more is needed	Great deal more is needed	No opinion or no answer
Under 0.5 - 0.5	3 (50%)	3 (50%)	3 (50%)	2 (33%)	1 (17%)				3 (50%)	2 (33%)
0.51 - 0.99	3 (50%)	3 (50%)	2 (33%)	3 (50%)				1 (17%)	4 (67%)	1 (17%)
1.00 - 4.99	12 (52%)	11 (48%)	9 (39%)	10 (43%)			1 (2%)	5 (22%)	13 (57%)	4 (17%)
5.00 - 9.99	3 (50%)	3 (50%)	3 (50%)	3 (50%)				1 (17%)	5 (83%)	
Over 10.00 - 10.00	3 (75%)	1 (25%)	3 (75%)	1 (25%)					3 (75%)	1 (25%)
TOTAL	24 (53%)	21 (47%)	20 (45%)	19 (42%)	1 (2%)	0	1 (2%)	7 (14%)	28 (63%)	8 (18%)

\*6 (13%) no answers.

Question 7: "Please provide any comments that you feel will help provide us a perspective on the extent and nature of program evaluation in the state government "

This question and Question 8 were "open-ended" questions; no check list of responses was provided to respondents. Thirty-two (71%) of the 45 governments made comments on this question.

- Perhaps the most important finding was that 22 governments explicitly indicated that they felt that their government had undertaken few or at best only preliminary steps toward program evaluation. Particularly, a number indicated the need for evaluation in terms of effectiveness rather than efficiency.
- Nine of these governments indicated that they had underway or were starting shortly the attempt to develop measures of effectiveness or evaluation measures for their main programs.
- Eleven of the governments indicated that they were proceeding with some form of program gudgeting or PPBS system involving identification of goals and objectives which would be preliminary steps toward developing a program evaluation capability.

Because of the widespread interest in program evaluation and associated management techniques such as program budgeting and PPB-type activities, we have excerpted in Exhibit 2 some of the responses to this question. These present at least some of the newer state activities in these directions. Note that these were written as of the summer of 1972 and details were not requested. Also, it is likely that many new significant activities were not included in the responses for individual States.

Exhibit 2

Excerpt From Responses To Question 7

Question 7 - Please provide any comments that you feel will help provide us a perspective on the extent and nature of program evaluation in the state government.

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**Arizona** Arizona has taken a few preliminary steps in preparation for program evaluation. For instance, state agency budget requests are submitted on a program-within-agency basis. Also, the Department of Economic Planning and Development will conduct a PPB pilot study during 1972-73 which will concentrate on developing agency analytical skills and techniques essential to program evaluation.

**Arkansas** The Program Planning Division is presently instituting a modified program budget process for all major departments. It incorporates the first comprehensive effort to incorporate some evaluative mechanism into the planning and budgeting processes.

**California** For approximately one year we have had a special task force effort of five to six Finance Department people working with seven selected departments to develop the means for evaluating programs on a continuing basis. Our emphasis has been on defining adequate specific criteria and yardsticks by which the relative level of achievement of program objectives might be judged. If our proposed measures of program achievement or effectiveness are accepted by the Legislature, the departments will then proceed to collect and organize the data necessary to produce reports of achievement. We intend also to make some selected measures a part of the ongoing budgeting process. We are entering our second year of development of program performance measures and we intend to add at least six more departments.

**Connecticut** In the Department of Finance and Control a PPB effort has been mounted which has included initial work with state agencies in the area of program indicators. Furthermore, at the present time the Commissioner of Finance and Control has directed that an organizational framework be developed within the Department to strengthen and better interrelate planning, budgeting, management and program evaluation.



Exhibit 2 continued

Delaware During FY 1972, the State Planning Office made a first attempt to introduce Program Budgeting techniques to Delaware. An extensive effort is being made to upgrade the information system capacity of state government.

Florida Florida has established embryonic effectiveness measures for all state governmental undertakings identified in its six-year plan development, with the expectation that these measures will undergo refinement and eventually permit sophisticated effectiveness analysis of the entire range of state programs.

Georgia In Georgia complete reorganization of executive government has just taken place (April 1972). The Governor's Office of Planning and Budget was created, and the Planning-Programming-Budgeting functions merged. First attempts at program evaluation now taking place with line item budget and program structure, display of budget only.

Hawaii Hawaii is in the midst of a transition to a highly formal, comprehensive, state-wide PPB system. Our plan provides for three integrated, overlapping analyst series with progressively higher requirements in terms of the level of professional sophistication. These are Budget Analysts, Program Evaluation Analysts, and Resource Allocation Systems Analysts. These analysts will work as integrated teams on each of the eleven major programs in our program structure.

Idaho The legislative branch conducts some "performance audits" which are not a true evaluation inasmuch as clearly defined objectives have not been set. The Budget Office is progressing with implementation of a PPB system, but will probably not be prepared to conduct broad scale evaluations for about two years.

Kansas The implementation of program evaluation responsibilities of the Division of Post Audit will create an optimum situation in Kansas State Government.

Michigan There is no statewide organization yet in force to examine systematically the effectiveness of state government programs. The Budget and Program Analysis Division is moving into that role with the inception of our Program Budget Evaluation System (PBES) effective with the 1973-74 fiscal year. Each department will have to establish a similar capability to evaluate its operations continuously and systematically.

Exhibit 2 continued

New York The bipartisan, permanent Legislative Commission on Expenditure Review was created to make comprehensive and continuing evaluations of State programs. Its studies supplement those performed by the professional, full-time staffs of the Senate Finance Committee, the Assembly Ways and Means Committee, and other standing committees.

North Carolina The Executive Organization Act of 1971 created seventeen new cabinet level departments and required each to prepare an annual report at the end. The annual reports will summarize activities and accomplishments for the fiscal year, providing useful information for judging program effectiveness. (First annual reports due in July 1973.) The annual plan of work includes a definition of programs and a statement of the goals and the means of operation of each. This information will provide a necessary starting point for the eventual development of a program evaluation system.

Tennessee Effective 1 July 1972, a division has been organized in the Department of Finance and Administration that will be responsible for state-wide program evaluation. The title of this unit is The Division of Program Coordination and Analysis. This division will evaluate the performances of the present programs of state government against planned objectives. Studies will be made to determine the impact of the establishment of new programs and the retention or revision of ongoing programs.

West Virginia A Catalog of State Programs yearly compiles "Measures of Effectiveness" and calls for annual reevaluation of criteria to fit changing conditions both from the programmatic level as well as the environment level.

Question 8: "Please indicate what, if anything, you feel is most needed to improve the program evaluation effort in your government."

Thirty-three (73%) of the 45 governments provided comments on this question. Assuming that strengthened program evaluation is desirable in state governments (as the states' respondents indicated on Question 6), the responses to this question are probably some of the most important in the survey. Since this was an open-ended question without a specific checklist, we have identified 12 categories of responses. The categories and the number and percent of responses is indicated below:

<u>Responses to Question 8: "What, if anything, is most needed to improve program evaluation efforts in your State?" (33 governments provided an answer)</u>	<u>Number of Governments</u>	<u>% of Those Responding to Q. 8 (33 governments)</u>	<u>% of Those Responding to Survey (a total of 45 governments)</u>
1. Need for top level support			
Executive	7	21%	16%
Legislative	5	15%	11%
Department	1	3%	2%
Number indicating at least one of above	(9)	(27%)	(20%)
2. Need for improved or additional resources and/or dollars.	13	39%	29%
3. Improved training for evaluation.	6	18%	13%
4. Statements of government program objectives or goals.	5	15%	11%
5. Identification of appropriate measures of effectiveness (i.e., evaluation criteria)	5	15%	11%
Subtotal of 4 and 5	(10)	(30%)	(22%)
6. Improved information systems	5	15%	11%
7. Recognition of importance of program evaluation.	5	15%	11%
8. Special organizational changes such as centralization.	2	6%	4%
9. Strengthen federal requirements and/or federal dollars.	2	6%	4%
10. Special unit to be set up for evaluation function.	1	3%	2%
11. Interagency cooperation.	1	3%	2%
12. Improved information flow between States.	1	3%	2%

Most often mentioned were the need for added or improved resources for evaluation (39% of those responding to the question), need for top level support (27%), and identification of objectives or measures of effectiveness (30%).

Since the question was an open-ended one without a checklist, one can only speculate as to how the response would have been had the respondents been asked to indicate their beliefs as to the degree of importance of each of the items listed on the foregoing table.

We close with two quotes from some of the respondents that seemed particularly to reflect the combined concerns of state officials.

"Within state government as a whole the greatest need is for acceptance by program managers of the notion that they can benefit from systematic program evaluation. This must be accompanied by making available sufficient resources both financial and personnel to carry out and follow through on program evaluation on a meaningful scale. Program evaluation, if done effectively, is expensive. Many program managers in state government and many members of the state legislature appear to believe it is a luxury we cannot afford."

Finally, a quote relevant to Response Category #1, "need for top level support."

"If the political leadership is not committed to considering research sensitive, objective based evaluation of the activities of government, then there is nothing we can do to improve state program evaluation. The willingness to evaluate one's activities or have another do it is largely attitudinal. If the political leadership is not willing to assign program objectives to its social values, then evaluation is subjective and largely argumentative ... Program evaluation and accountability have not been a way of life in state government ... If decision makers could just once arrive at resource allocations which separate the grain from the chaff for all to see, then the value and role of program evaluation would quickly be elevated to a level of respectability."

Appendix A

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Appendix B

Program Evaluations  
reported as available and of interest to other States

Arizona	Human Resources Agencies (emphasis on State Health Department Programs)
Arkansas	Public Safety (Highway)
Delaware	Vocational Education
Florida	Ad Valorem Tax Procedures Service Programs for the Aged
Georgia	Consumer Protection Adequate Foundation Program for Education Human Resources Services Comprehensive Delivery System Regulatory Revenue
Hawaii	Alternative levels of control for Faya Bush infestation Anti-Rabies Program (Depts. of Agriculture, and Budget/Finance) Alternative programs for the adult mentally retarded Marginal effectiveness of human disease control programs Location and sizing of new recreational facilities Decision rules for automotive equipment replacement Evaluation of school health services Employment training programs
Kentucky	Family planning services Venereal disease control in health Immunizations in health Data processing in finance Forest fire control in natural resources A-95 project review in KPDO
New Jersey	Manual for development and use of evaluation data Department of Health program plan Evaluation of personnel affected by recent changes in categorical assistants (Dept. of Institutions & Agencies) Development of management systems for child welfare All state, county and municipal corrections institutions in New Jersey State College operations Independent Colleges and Universities operations State University and Professional Schools operations Community college operations Student financial aid operations Community development agencies Public institutions for mentally retarded Career development project Technology for children Study of local districts, advisory committees (Advisory Council on Vocational Education)

New Jersey (cont'd)	Public information model for local districts (Advisory Council on Vocational Education) Analysis of funding sources (Advisory Council on Voc. Ed.) Self evaluation of practical nursing program Drug Education Institute Approval of LEA programs for handicapped Adult Education Bureau (Adult Basic Education Field Services) Pupil transportation field services Center for education technology field services
New Mexico	Statewide education programs
Pennsylvania	Radiation control School Health Vocational Training - State prisons Industrial development County probation and parole Local police training School lunch State medical education system Vocational rehabilitation child welfare Community mental health system
South Dakota	Master plan for public higher education
Virginia	All social service programs
Wisconsin	Corrections program Veterans' programs Workshop for the blind

**END**