

**SAN MATEO COUNTY HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY  
INFORMATION DELIVERY SYSTEMS IN SUPPORT OF WELFARE REFORM  
BAY AREA SOCIAL SERVICES CONSORTIUM EXECUTIVE DEVELOPMENT  
PROGRAM INTER-AGENCY PROJECT**

**Stewart Smith\* (Alameda County)**

**INTRODUCTION**

Alameda County is undergoing a massive re-architecture of its service delivery system for the purpose of supporting its many Welfare-to-Work initiatives in the community. The present system, with its scattered array of services and disparate information delivery systems, must be redesigned and updated if it is to meet the expectations of the community and the mandates of welfare reform. For a Welfare-to-Work program to be successful, jobs obtained being the measure of success, transformation of the system must occur in three areas: in the client, in the staff, and in the office environment. The project I have chosen focuses on the office environment, specifically, changes needed in the information delivery systems. So I took the following questions to San Mateo County: What computer systems have been setup to support the workers? How are the various systems linked together? And has the County initiated an *Intranet*?

By way of background, Alameda County Social Services Agency currently provides case management and automated telephone support to recipients on over 44,000 cases. These cases are currently in four different locations throughout the County. We have determined that implementation of a Benefit Center with file management and information delivery technology is critical in helping us to meet the needs of our clients and enhance customer service.

The Benefit Center will consolidate recipient case-loads from around the County into a single building, allowing us to employ state-of-the-art file management and computer technologies, and house a telephone service center to expand our telephone support system.

Our Agency is in the process of modernizing its management information system, filing system, and telephone support system. Presently our filing system is setup alphabetically. We will be converting to a terminal-digit system that will allow us to employ the latest file management technology and systems. Eligibility Technicians will perform fewer clerical functions affording them more time for customer service activities. Additionally, greater accuracy and efficiency in file management will reduce errors in eligibility determinations. This PC based system will allow for improved communication such as email, shared folders, and an *Intranet*. This will allow Eligibility Technicians immediate access to updated procedures and regulations, and greatly enhance the County's CalWIN preparedness.

The Telephone Service Center (TSC) will be a major addition to our Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system. The TSC will have 26 dedicated agents to personally assist our customers who require help beyond IVR. TSC agents will be supported by Computer Telephony Integration; a system that automatically provides the customer's information

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on screen as the call arrives.

## **SAN MATEO COUNTY AUTOMATION SYSTEMS**

In 1996, San Mateo County implemented a study that became the basis for the design of a computer system that provides an electronic infrastructure to support the needs of an “integrated agency”. The system named SMART (San Mateo Access to Resource Tracking) links to several human services systems such as the Welfare Case Data System (WCDS), the GAIN Information System (GIS), and the Job Training Automation system (JTA), to name a few.

Because SMART has been created using an open architecture, it can be run using a variety of databases, web browsers (for their *Intranet*), and operating systems with little or no system changes required. The other enabling technologies are a Windows desktop, middleware, relational database management system, and an *Intranet*. In addition, SMART is a table-driven system, so variables such as city names and programs are controlled entirely by the County. The core modules of SMART are as follows:

### **Client and Household Information Management**

SMART supports the universal intake concept whereby one worker enters information about the client and/or household, then the data is available to computer systems that have been identified to interface with SMART. These interfaces reduce duplicate data entry while increasing data accuracy.

### **Service Management**

SMART supports a team approach in that a group of workers (benefit analysts, counselors, trainers, etc.) all work together to aid the client in attaining self-sufficiency. Electronic pre-screening can be performed and automatic referrals to various departments and community-based organization can be produced. All of these services and programs the client is participating in can be viewed, monitored, and tracked, and sanctions can be applied and monitored. The following programs are part of the collaboration to serve clients: Food Stamps, JOBS/One Stop, JTPA, housing, MediCal, mental health, protective services, school to work, and substance abuse, with other programs being added. Furthermore, feedback can be obtained via automated surveys and the recording of outcomes at various levels.

### **Program Coordination**

SMART enables users with appropriate security access to update program-specific elements in the system. For example, providers, courses, surveys, and regulations can all be entered and updated by users defined as Program Coordinators.

### **System Administration**

System administrators have full control over user profiles, system parameters, and reference table entries.

### **Workflow Management**

Tasks can be assigned to various users, and these tasks can be sorted and tracked.

SMART is now up and running in San Mateo

County. New modules are added monthly to the system through what is called an iterative and incremental developmental life cycle. One of the next modules to go into full production will be the Agency's Intranet. The expressed purpose of the Intranet is to "reduce or eliminate the need to distribute paper copies of the following document types by 'publishing' documents to the Human Services Agency Intranet: handbooks, all county letters, all county information notices, administrative memoranda, and forms". The benefits that the Agency expects from the Intranet are many:

- Provide online publishing, viewing and printing of all documents to all Agency staff via an easy-to-use Intranet browser.
- All online documents will be the latest version.
- Provide secure access to specific documents.
- Reduce or eliminate staff time for the distribution and maintenance of Agency forms and documents.
- Low cost relative to client/server based systems.
- Table of Contents (How it looks, how it is arranged, can staff find what they want?)
- Notification (How would staff like to be notified about Handbook or procedure updates? About all county letters? About memos?)
- Accessibility (Can staff easily access the *Intranet* when they need to look something up? Do they need hard copy backups available?)
- Culture Change (How can staff be encouraged to let go of the paper?)
- Training (What training will end users need? *Intranet* administrators?)

### WHAT IS AN INTRANET?

The Agency is still in the pilot phase and anticipates full roll out of the *Intranet* sometime in June of this year. Attached are copies of a search done on San Mateo County's *Intranet* prototype. It shows what an employee might see when searching for the latest information on Food Stamp income and budgeting.

During this pilot period, the emphasis was on Aid Program resources. A separate workgroup was formed with representatives from each aid program. They were asked to look at the following:

An *Intranet* is an Internet-like private network that runs within the walls of the Agency, usually behind an electronic barrier known as a "firewall." Typically, from an Intranet, you can pass through the firewall and get out to the Internet for the purpose of sending email. For agencies with internal networks such as LANs (Local Area Networks) and WANs (Wide Area Networks), there have long been obstacles that can keep users from utilizing the full network capabilities. For example, finding a file and having a means to share information within a particular department may not be as easy or as possible as employees and managers would like. Many networks still force users to employ commands that are unique to the systems.

The Internet, however, has been designed as an open system that allows users of many different kinds of computer platforms, such as PCs, or mainframe workstations to exchange text, graphics, and other files. So moving those capabilities to a sort of

mini-Internet behind a firewall gives an agency greatly improved capabilities for its network.

Basically, to create an *Intranet* that uses now-familiar Internet procedures, you add a Web-type server and appropriate software to your existing LAN or WAN and add appropriate browser software to the networked computers or workstations. Since the *Intranet* takes its technology directly from the Internet, the similarities make it possible for agencies to use the readily available HTML (hypertext markup language) to design Web pages for users and departments on their internal system.

With an agency *Intranet*, HTML formatting codes can be inserted into many documents, which will then make them searchable, viewable and downloadable on all connected workstations (PCs). With the addition of a good search engine, employees can hunt electronically for the files or information they need.

Documents such as procedures, employee handbooks, directories, and healthcare benefit summaries that are used by everyone in a company can be published on a Web server. All employees can then have access to the documents, and every update that is made can be posted immediately. For example, an employee may need information about a new procedure and can download it straight to his/her computer's hard drive. The easier information access provided by an *Intranet* can help reduce the cost of copying, retyping and distributing information; it can also eliminate the need to store multiple paper copies in the various departments or on employees' desks. Standardized internal forms also can be made available on the *Intranet*, so users can electronically fill in and submit purchase orders or provide updated personal information to the Human Resources Department, without physically trekking

from one building to another.

To summarize, an *Intranet* connects people together with Internet technology, using web servers, web browsers, and your current data warehouses (CDS and GIS, for example) in a single view that everyone can easily learn. It is not the Internet; an *Intranet* does not have to be connected to the Internet, although it can be for sending mail or other information to outside organizations. It is not the agency's LAN or WAN, the *Intranet* exists alongside and interconnects with these networks. It is not merely an email program, although that is one of its functions.

## ALAMEDA COUNTY

Where does Alameda County and its Social Services Agency stand now in regards to automation? The County is a member of the CDS Consortium and as such will be asked to vote on a joint maintenance agreement regarding the expansion of the SMART system to all CDS counties. The SMART system is being put forth as a possible transition from the present CDS to CalWIN (California Welfare Information Network), which is scheduled to come online in four years. A workgroup within the Agency is preparing a recommendation for the Director regarding the possible expansion of the CDS. Because this workgroup will be making a recommendation on SMART and CDS, the balance of this paper will focus on recommendations for an *Intranet* within the Agency.

At present, Alameda County's Information Technology Department has set up a web page on the Internet



## ALAMEDA COUNTY ON-LINE

Alameda County is located on the East Side of the San Francisco Bay and extends from Berkeley and Oakland in the north to Fremont in the south and Livermore in the east. Most of the County's population is concentrated in a narrow plain between the Bay and the East Bay Hills. North of Hayward, the area is highly urbanized and includes many older residential and industrial areas. South of Hayward there remains substantial buildable land, but this area is rapidly urbanizing. Fremont, in particular, is a rapidly expanding center for Silicon Valley high-tech firms. East of the East Bay Hills is the Livermore Valley area, which has been largely suburban or rural in character but is also rapidly urbanizing.

### OTHER ALAMEDA COUNTY SITES:

- Economic Development Alliance for Business (EDAB)
- Waste Reduction and Recycling Information
- Board of Supervisors/Departments and Agencies
- Employment Opportunities
- Home | Search
- The benefits of having an *Intranet* were adequately described above and will not be repeated here. Intranets have already been established in

a few County departments. The County Information Technology Department (ITD) has already obtained the requisite *Intranet* servers and server software. The Social Services Agency will not have to spend the approximately \$100,000 needed for these items to set up its own Intranet. I have attached as an appendix: the ITD's Procedure for Submitting Web Site/*Intranet* Materials dated 1/22/98, and the ALCOweb Home Page and ALCOforms Online (Example of online forms available on the Alameda County Intranet)

The Agency will have to obtain end user software (Microsoft Internet Explorer or Netscape Navigator) and have it installed on all machines that are to access its Intranet.

The immediate tasks for the Agency are to set up a Content Development Workgroup, and a Site Maintenance Workgroup. The Content group should be comprised of end-users and Information System's Division staff. It was strongly suggested to me that the program knowledgeable staff should take the lead, rather than the IS staff, to ensure a more usable end-product. The initial concentration should be on Aid Program resources. As the Benefit Center will be the first location to go online, these resources should be for Food Stamps, CalWORKS, and General Assistance. In addition to content, this group will have to design a table of contents, determine notification procedures, determine levels of accessibility, and work with Staff Development on training needs. The Site Maintenance group should focus on the technical aspects of keeping the site up and running.

Following is a list of questions to help direct the Content Development Workgroup:

### Determine the Following

1. Primary and secondary goals of the Intranet
2. Primary and secondary goals of the client/publisher
3. Primary and secondary audience description (interests, needs, skills, capabilities, assumptions)
4. Audience capabilities (platform, browser/app, connection speed, degree of Net savvy and net experience)
5. Platform descriptions (make, models, RAM, hard drives, CD-ROM, data load for each)
6. After you have thought through these issues, rethink the goals.
7. Are they the true goals or merely the obvious ones?

### Content

Does this *Intranet* use primarily existing content?

1. If yes, how is it to be repurposed? In what ways will it be made appropriate to the interactive medium?
2. If new, how will it be captured and created? How much will there need to be?
3. Does this *Intranet* use data entered by users? If so, how much and in what forms?
4. What can be done with it once entered?

### Structure and interpretations

1. What is the primary organization of the content?
2. What are other organizations that can be made available for other modes of searching, viewing, browsing, learning, exploring, and understanding?
3. What are the main presentation ideas of the structure of the title/project?
4. What are the most important and compelling features?
5. Are there any novel interactions? If so, what are they?

6. Will any new or emerging technologies be employed?
7. Will the audience be able to use them (or will the audience be given the necessary means and support to use them)?
8. What is the level of interactivity?

### Sensorial Design

1. Describe the overall visual elements and styles of this *Intranet* (use adjectives if necessary).
2. Describe the overall auditory elements and styles.
3. Describe the text elements and written portions.
4. Describe any ideas about animate style and use.
5. Describe any ideas about video style and use.
6. Describe the sophistication of programming needed.
7. Describe any current authoring systems that are intended for use or modification.

### Team

1. Who are the primary members of the production team? What are their roles and responsibilities?
2. What is their experience?
3. Are there technical, programming, and media professionals represented on the team?

## APPENDIX

- Alameda County Information Technology Department (Procedure for Submitting Web Site/*Intranet* Materials)
- ALCOweb Home Page + ALCOforms Online (Example of online forms available on the Alameda County Intranet)
- San Mateo County Human Services Agency (Example of an *Intranet* search for information on Food Stamps)

## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT Procedure for Submitting Web Site/Intranet Materials

rev. 1/22/98

### General Standards and Guidelines

In order to maintain a consistent look and feel and promote fast turnaround for your WEB requests, please review the following standards and guidelines.

For new or large projects, please call or e-mail Gloria Lemmon to schedule a planning/design session.

#### 1.0 Acceptable Document Formats

- 1.1 Microsoft Word e-mail attachment or diskette
- 1.2 WordPerfect e-mail attachment or diskette
- 1.3 e-mail

#### 2.0 Acceptable Graphic Formats

- 2.1 Wherever possible, electronic formats are best (TIFF, BMP, PDF, PICT, etc.)
- 2.2 Photographs
- 2.3 High-quality hard copy

#### 3.0 Content Quality Control

- 3.1 Spell-check documents
- 3.2 Proof read text for grammar
- 3.3 Use consistent heading sizes and indentations

#### 4.0 Document Formatting & Layout

- 4.1 For large documents, please use "Styles/Heading 1.2.3", to separate sections (this helps our automated conversion tools process documents much more quickly)

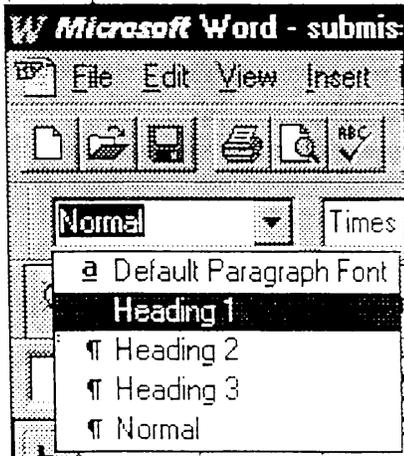


Figure 1: Heading Styles

- 4.2 Do not underline words, use italics instead
- 4.3 Do not use small caps
- 4.4 Columns and rows should be set up in tables rather than with tabs

## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT

### Procedure for Submitting Web Site/Intranet Materials - cont'd

rev. 1/22/98

#### 5.0 Navigation

- 5.1 Indicate where the page should be located
- 5.2 Indicate where it should link from. for example: "Attached is our Director's Bio. It should be a link from our main page." (meaning that it will be a clickable link from the main page).
- 5.3 If you want links within the page that take the user elsewhere, indicate this in a bold fashion. for example: **\*\*\*\*link here to directions to our department\*\*\*\***. (Note that you are not restricted to links within your own department. You may link to any spot within the Alameda County Web Site, or to a completely different site on the Internet.)

#### 6.0 Design

- 6.1 Include a Table of Contents and/or Index if so desired.
- 6.2 You may submit graphics for inclusion on your Web site such as: photos, logos, maps, etc.
- 6.3 If you have an idea that requires an illustration, draw a picture and fax or QIC code it to the Web Development Team [ fax: (510) 272-3608 QIC: 20117].

#### 7.0 Changes and Corrections

- 7.1 Submit a printout from your Web browser (hit Control-P from your browser window).
- 7.2 Highlight the areas to be changed.
- 7.3 Write instructions on the printout: indicate areas that you want moved around and/or removed.
- 7.4 For new content, please submit an e-mail attachment or diskette along with the printout.

#### 8.0 Forms

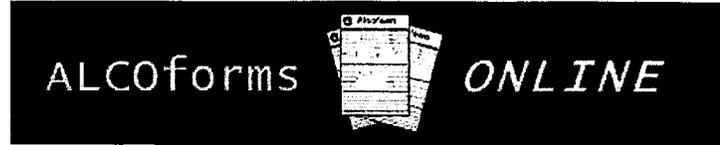
- 8.1 Specify Internet, Intranet, or both.
- 8.2 Indicate location of form on site.
- 8.3 Include instructions for users.
- 8.4 Give us the e-mail address where the completed form should be sent (if applicable).
- 8.5 Indicate whether the form is for private or public use (if applicable)
- 8.6 Include keywords for search engine (if desired).

#### 9.0 Site Maintenance

- 9.1 Assign a member of your staff to review the content of your Web Site *on a regular basis* (weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly, as appropriate) to ensure that all information is up-to-date and accurate.
- 9.2 Departments and agencies are responsible for tracking dated information. Notify us via e-mail when it is time to add, remove, or change dated information.

#### 10.0 Basic Workstation/Browser Recommendations for Alameda County Employees

- 10.1 Microsoft Windows '95 or Windows NT.
- 10.2 Netscape Navigator or Microsoft Internet Explorer 3.0 or higher.

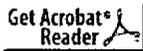


List by Name

List by Number

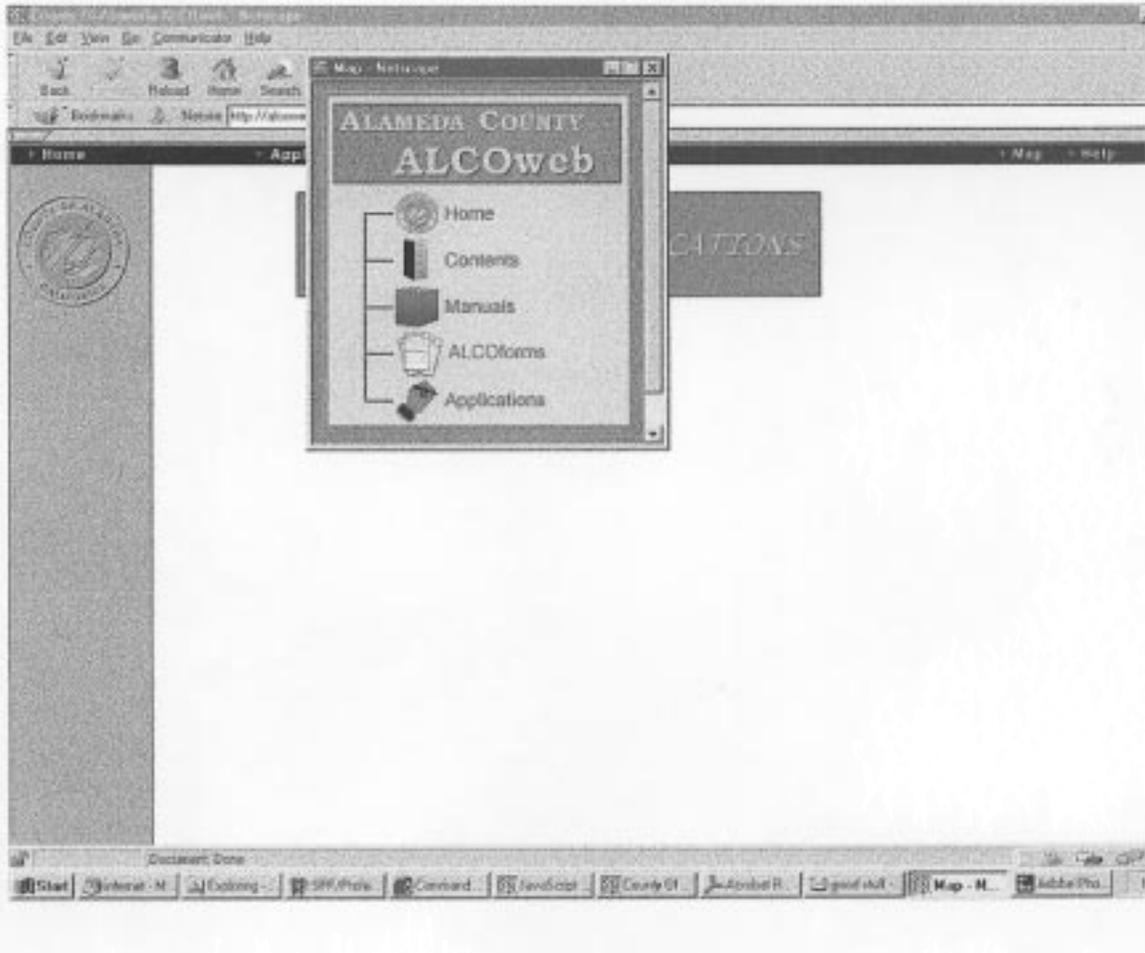
List by Department

Search ALCOforms



To view AlcoForms on-line, you must have Acrobat Reader installed. If you need assistance, select **Help** from the navigation bar at the top of the page.

Form Name	Number	Dept.
<u>Driver Card Application</u>	<u>140-30</u>	GSA
<u>GSA-BMD Service Request</u>	<u>6158392</u>	GSA
<u>ITD Absence Request</u>	<u>112-183</u>	ITD
<u>ITD Absence Request - On-Line</u>	<u>112-183</u>	ITD
<u>Local Travel Expense Claim</u>	<u>110-58</u>	Auditor/ Controller
<u>Management Cafeteria Benefit Reimbursement Claim</u>	<u>110-41A</u>	Auditor/ Controller
<u>Motor Vehicle Assignment Request/Electronic Equipment Request</u>	<u>148-5</u>	GSA
<u>Out-of County Travel Authorization</u>	<u>140-130</u>	GSA
<u>Out-of-State Travel Approval Request</u>	n/a	GSA
<u>Personal Expense Claim</u>	<u>110-30</u>	Auditor/ Controller
<u>Prepaid Tuition and Registration Fees</u>	<u>110-59</u>	Auditor/ Controller
<u>Printing Requisition</u>	<u>118-15</u>	GSA
<u>Request for Absence from Work</u>	<u>51-14</u>	SSA
<u>Request for Change in Space Allocation</u>	<u>141-90</u>	GSA
<u>Request for Replenishment of Revolving Fund (Petty Cash)</u>	<u>117-75</u>	Auditor/ Controller
<u>Surplus Property Transfer and Moving Request</u>	<u>100-6</u>	GSA
<u>Telephone Service Request</u>	<u>160-30</u>	GSA
<u>Time Sheet</u>	<u>110-8A</u>	all
<u>Travel Authorization</u>	<u>117-70</u>	Auditor/ Controller
<u>Vehicle Accident or Property Damage Report</u>	<u>140-C-3</u>	GSA
<u>Vehicle Assignment Request</u>	<u>140-60</u>	GSA
<u>Volunteers/Contractors Driving Agreement</u>	<u>140-70</u>	GSA



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## Human Services Agency

Welcome to *Intra.doc!* Management System

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	<a href="#">Information Search</a>
	<a href="#">Login to <i>Intra.doc!</i></a>
	<a href="#">Administration</a>

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## Human Services Agency

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	<a href="#">Job Training &amp; Economic Development</a>
	<a href="#">Youth &amp; Family Services</a>
	<a href="#">Regions (South, Central, North)</a>

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# Human Services Agency



## Assistance Programs



[All County Information Notices](#)



[All County Letters](#)



[Handbooks](#)



[Memos](#)



[Misc Documents](#)



# Human Services Agency



## Handbooks



[AFDC](#)



[Food Stamps](#)



[Medi-Cal](#)



[HSA Operations and Administration](#)  
(General HSA Operations and Administration)

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 **Human Services Agency** 

Found 1 document matching the query.

	Revisions	Info	CheckOut
 <u>Issue 2</u> Food Stamps Section 2 - Income and Budgeting	1	i	✓

.../s97\_cgi.exe?ResultTemplate=standardresults.htm&SortOrder=Asc&ResultCount=25&FromP 3/24/98

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Revision history for standoa

Revision: 2 Release Date: 2/3/98 2:33:00 PM  
Revision: 1 Release Date: 2/3/98 2:26:00 PM

http://hsa/inttadoc-cgi/uph-ldc\_cgi.exe?ldcService=REV\_HISTORY&dID=95 3/24/98