

CLERK-RECORDER-ELECTIONS DEPARTMENT 2015 PERFORMANCE REPORT

I. DEPARTMENT MISSION

A. ELECTIONS DIVISION MISSION

Provide the highest level of Voter Registration and Election Services to the citizens of the county by:

1. Processing all voter transactions properly and accurately, to ensure each voter is fully enfranchised
2. Employing accessible, safe and adequate locations for voting
3. Providing greater Vote-by-Mail capacity, as a convenient and secure method of voting
4. Accurately preparing, tabulating and reporting timely election results.
5. Eliminating obstacles to civic participation and voting, and meeting the needs of all voters
6. Managing all operations effectively and with respect for our fiduciary responsibility to the taxpayer

B. CLERK-RECORDER DIVISION MISSION

1. Accurately maintaining and preserving official records and indices relating to real property and vital records in Contra Costa County
2. Issuing marriage licenses, filing Fictitious Business Name statements, administering notary and other oaths and accepting filings, as provided by code
3. Exploring and implementing new technologies to increase access to public records
4. Maintaining the integrity of the public records

II. MAJOR PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

A. ELECTIONS

The Elections Division's responsibilities are to conduct elections in an accurate and timely manner, maintain a high level of voter registration, verify signatures on initiative, referendum and recall petitions, maintain voter registration records (including participating in vigorous voter roll maintenance programs), conduct voter registration outreach, file and certify nomination papers; prepare and mail sample ballots, candidate statements, measures, arguments and vote-by-mail ballots.

This budget includes the Administration Division, which provides administration for fiscal issues, facility issues, personnel, payroll, employee performance management and development, division clerical supervision and other department-wide issues, as well as special projects.

BUDGET: \$8,878,835
FTE: 32.5

B. RECORDER

The Recorder Division's responsibilities are to maintain, preserve and secure all official records relating to real property, subdivision maps, assessment districts and records of surveys offered for recording; maintain, preserve and secure records of all births, deaths and marriages occurring within Contra Costa County.

BUDGET: \$3,652,891
FTE: 38

C. RECORDER-DEDICATED PROJECT BUDGETS

Recorder Micrographics
Recorder Modernization
Vital Records Improvement Program (VRIP)
Recorder Redaction Program
Recorder Electronic Recording Program

The Recorder-dedicated project responsibilities are to digitize and convert all Clerk-Recorder documents into archival and electronic format (conversion of images to microfilm is used exclusively for archival and emergency backup purposes), provide for the development of procedures to efficiently identify and locate documents for the public and other County users, upgrade and support modernized systems for recording, indexing, cashiering, customer service and related systems, improve vital record processes and systems, redact Social Security Numbers from documents as required by law, to enhance security and address privacy issues, develop, implement and maintain an electronic recording system.

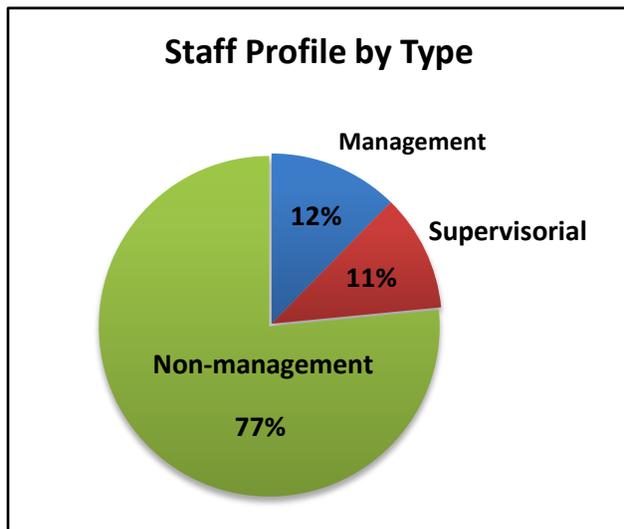
BUDGET: \$11,040,581
FTE: 12

D. TOTAL DEPARTMENT DATA

BUDGET: \$12,531,726 General Fund
\$11,040,581 Dedicated Funds
FTE: 82.5

Department Classifications

CLASSIFICATION	FTE
County Clerk-Recorder	1
Deputy County Clerk-Recorder	1
Assistant County Recorder/Registrar	2
Executive Secretary	1
Network Administrator II	1
Clerk-Recorder Services Manager	1
Election Services Manager	1
Voter Education and Engagement Assistant	1
Voter Education and Engagement Specialist	.5
Clerk-Recorder Services Supervisor	2
Clerical Supervisor	1
Election Processing Supervisor	5
Outreach Coordinator	1
Operations Manager	1
Information Systems Specialist II	2
Information Systems Technician I	1
Elections Reimbursements Technician	1
Elections Services Specialist	9
Clerk-Recorder Services Specialist	13
Elections Services Technician	9
Clerk-Recorder Services Technician	10
Recordable Documents Technician	3
Clerical (Experience 3, Senior 3, Specialist 3)	9
Information Systems Assistant II	5
Total	82.5



Staff Profile by Type		
Management	10	12.1%
Supervisorial	9	10.9%
Non-management	63.5	77.0%
Total	82.5	100.0%

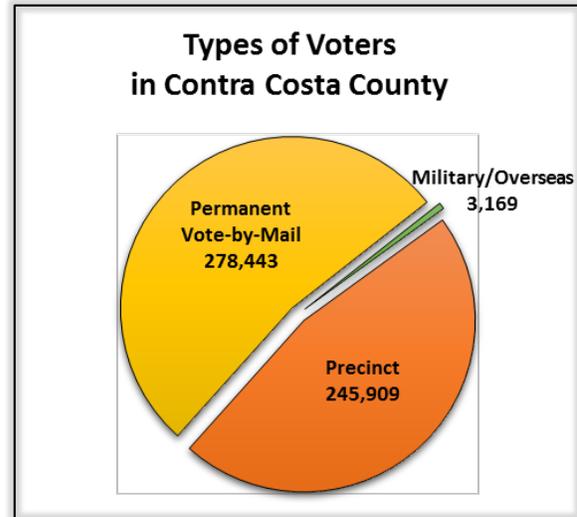
III. DEPARTMENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

A. DEPARTMENT-WIDE

1. We have developed a department-specific Performance Management Program (PMP) and continue to focus our staff and management on our Core Values. The program facilitates communication between management staff and line workers. Our PMP stresses clear and concise communications, training, recognition and Core Values. The program establishes uniform standards, identifies primary job responsibilities for each employee and monitors performance of those responsibilities on a regular basis. (It is also the basis for our annual evaluations.) Our PMP helps recognize outstanding performance, as well as identify and correct substandard performance through ongoing communication. This has contributed to increased employee morale and productivity. We were recognized in 2014 by the Grand Jury as a model department for this program.
2. Contra Costa County was the first Clerk-Recorder Department in California to go completely digital. While we have removed many of the “old” paper based documents from our day-to-day operations, we maintain valuable old records in their paper form for historical and legal purposes. We have aggressively archived, indexed, and restored many of those documents as a third tier back-up copy (behind digital and microfilm). We have an ongoing program to assess and restore old documents.
3. The Clerk-Recorder and Elections Divisions have embarked on a program to document our procedures and make them available to the public. In addition to documenting processes applied in our day-to-day operations, the procedures are useful when we are called to act as an expert witness in court proceedings.
4. To meet the specific needs of the Department, we successfully created Division-specific employee classifications in the Divisions. We established the level of expertise and salary to be the same between the two divisions. As we move toward the completion of our five year transition program to the new classifications, we plan to design a program to give our employees the opportunity to flex between the two divisions. Long-term employees are afforded the opportunity to opt in or out of this option. Newer employees and recent hires have embraced the opportunity to broaden their skills. From a management standpoint, this gives us another level of flexibility in meeting periodic peaks that occur in both divisions. This has resulted in a management and employee win-win.

B. ELECTIONS

1. Voting by mail has grown in California and in Contra Costa. At the 1996 Presidential General Election, 93,428 vote-by-mail ballots were cast (34% of the total vote cast). At the November General Election in 2014, 165,603 vote-by-mail ballots were cast (64% of the total vote cast). Vote-by-mail logistics cause us to virtually conduct a separate vote-by-mail election process from our precinct election process.



2. Currently, Contra Costa has 527,521 registered voters. Of the total registered voters, 278,443 are permanent vote-by-mail voters (53% of our total registration). We also have 3,169 military and civilian overseas voters.
3. The new Voter Outreach and Education Program promotes voter and citizen education and engagement and we believe it could become a model for other agencies. The Board authorized this project in late 2013. The Board allowed the department to add 1.5 positions to focus on our obligation to provide information to engage the public and encourage involvement, particularly by those that may feel left out or underrepresented. The program will also target schools and colleges to reach out to members of the younger generation, who as a whole are under-registered. The program will utilize resources that are already in place to support this campaign to become part of an active community. This includes groups like the League of Women Voters, American Association of University Women, Hispanic Chamber, Chinese American Political Association, Chambers of Commerce, etc. The program is expanding the use of social media and technology to promote civic engagement and get valuable information to the constituents of Contra Costa.
4. We studied the patterns of when vote-by-mail ballots were issued and returned. We monitored the error rate (rejection rate for cause; such as “late”, “no signature” or “no signature match”). We tracked and analyzed this data, and determined that our youngest and oldest voters made the most errors. We established programs to address and correct the level of mistakes. Contra Costa has been a leader at the state level and national level on such data collection, analysis and corrective programs. We were

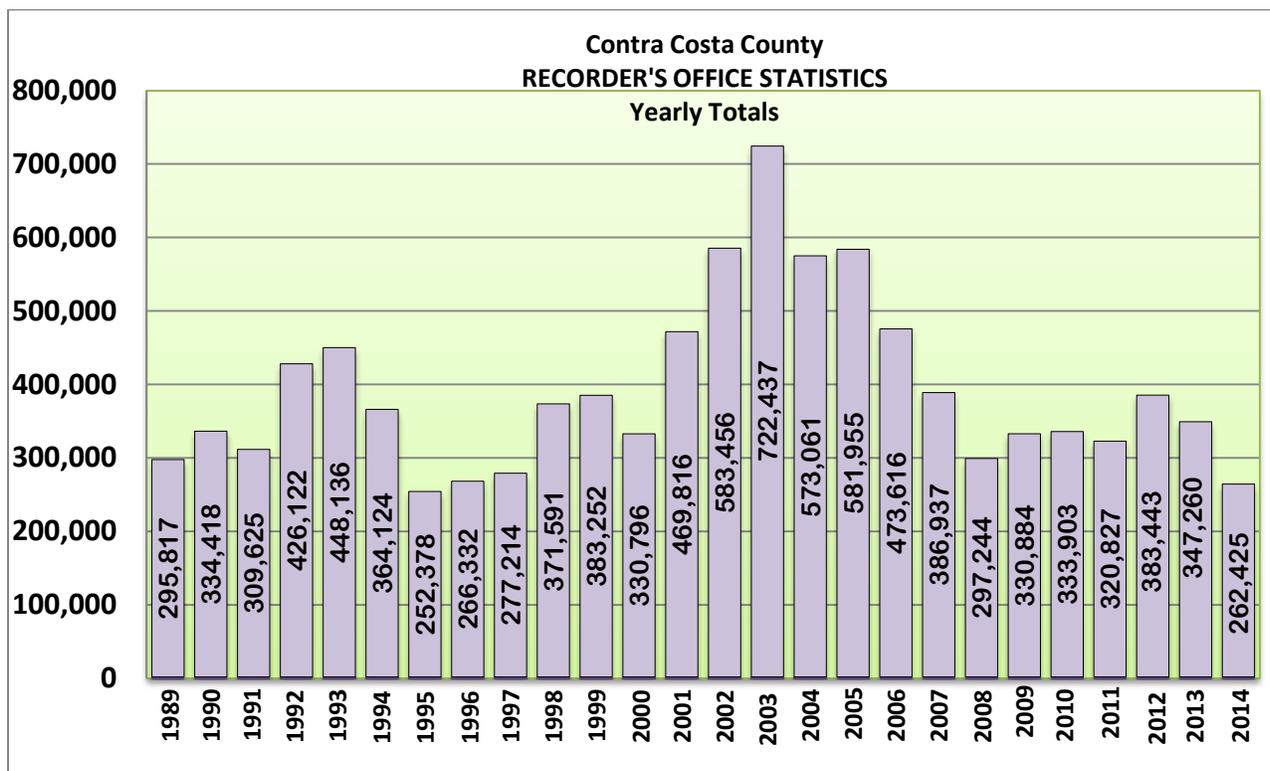
recognized for this innovative program with the Guardian Award from the National Election Center for our successful vote-by-mail error reduction program in 2009.

5. Through the RFP (Request for Proposal) process, Official Ballot printing and Sample Ballot printing products were evaluated, alternatives considered, and a cost study conducted, resulting in three major benefits:
 - i. Increased efficiency in ballot preparation/mailing and a reduction in the amount of equipment and supplies needed to conduct an election,
 - ii. Increased usability and readability of the Sample Ballot booklet, and
 - iii. A reduction in printing and production costs, which is then passed on to those districts that we conduct elections.
6. The Poll Worker Manual and Procedures Guide have been completely revised and updated into more effective publications. The corresponding poll worker training has been revised to train election workers in their communities.
7. The three major publications for the 2014 election cycle (Primary Candidate Guide, General Candidate Guide, and Local Measure Arguments Guide) were rewritten, resulting in the elimination of more than 50% of the pages, while increasing the readability and effectiveness of the communication pieces.
8. The election cost tracking and billing processes have been revised, which has resulted in more stable cost estimates and comparable bills for the same services. The changes have also resulted in timelier invoicing and reimbursements.
9. County precincts and polling places were revised to create stable relationships between precincts, voters, and the places where they vote. The changes are expected to reduce the number of lost, misdirected, and provisional voters; thereby reducing Election Day call volume. These changes will also permit cost efficiencies in supplies and staffing. We have already noticed an increase in efficiency as division staff now only have to find replacement poll workers to fill vacancies, rather than developing a completely new group of poll workers for each election.
10. The Elections website was rewritten to include new and improved lookup tools, as well as updated information in a more readable and user-friendly layout. The website was converted to a mobile module that allows constituents to access Elections information via their hand-held devices.

C. RECORDER

1. Real property document recordings have been fairly flat for five years. In 2014, we averaged 21,869 documents per month. By comparison, in 2003, the volume was 60,203 per month.

Due to the decreased volume, we have maintained several vacancies in the Recorder's Division. Through careful resource allocation, efficient use of supervisors and managers, and the use of seasonal and temporary employees, we have been able to manage our workload.



2. A mitigating feature of our work environment has been the introduction of electronic recording in 2012 - a process that Contra Costa was a leader in advocating in the late 1990's. (Contra Costa legislators carried two enabling bills.) Contra Costa has been in the forefront of government-to-government electronic recording, partnering with government agencies such as the County's Treasurer/Tax Collector, the Department of Child Support Services, and the California Franchise Tax Board to electronically process their recordable documents.
3. Contra Costa was among the first counties to embrace digitizing records and was the first in the state to finish a virtually complete conversion,

including documents back to 1848 (territorial documents). As a result, we were also among the first in the State to complete redaction of Social Security Numbers from the public records.

4. We have implemented a Real Estate Fraud Notification Program in conjunction with the District Attorney and County Assessor. This successful program identified incidents of fraud within the first two weeks of its implementation. The District Attorney was able to prosecute due to this program.
5. The Clerk-Recorder Division has an active customer service feedback program that includes customer comment cards, which are available in our lobby and the windows, and a website survey process. Feedback from customers is provided to staff, letting them know how their service has been received. Customer service rankings have been consistently high, giving employees positive reinforcement of their outstanding customer service.
6. We completed our signage program for the facility, which had been held off for several years for budgetary reasons.
7. Stained glass privacy panels were added to the Clerk's two wedding rooms in October 2014. In addition to obscuring the street view, the panels added ambiance and represent the Department's continuing efforts to enhance the appearance and operation of our wedding services.
8. In addition to online copy requests, we have implemented an online marriage license application process. The online application allows couples to complete the marriage license form online, prior to coming into the office. This expedites the application process and reduces data entry errors.
9. The Clerk-Recorder Division is able to process orders for copies of official documents on-line, providing customers the ability to get copies of their important documents, without actually having to travel to Martinez. Out-of-state customers especially appreciate that we have this process available.

D. RECORDER-DEDICATED PROJECT BUDGETS

The five dedicated funds listed below support specific functions and are not general fund accounts.

Recorder Micrographics
Recorder Modernization
Vital Records Improvement Program (VRIP)
Recorder Redaction Program
Recorder Electronic Recording Program

A large portion of the Clerk-Recorder's duties are designed to facilitate commerce; therefore, private interests advocate special funding for Clerks and Recorders to assure that: offices are open during regular business hours, indexes are produced and verified within set timelines, documents are recorded and certified copies are produced in a timely manner, and that images and the index are readily available to the public.

1. Microfilm is no longer our primary medium for document storage and retrieval. Therefore, we no longer collect the fee for this program. (We do continue to utilize microfilm as redundant storage medium for use in the event of a disaster.)
2. Map and Document Restoration Program. This phased program was implemented to restore old maps, books, and vital records in the Recorder's Division. All of these documents are currently in the Clerk-Recorder's custody. Many of these reference materials date back to the 1800's and early 1900's. Currently, a long range plan is being developed to identify records that should be restored. Complete preservation of these documents is estimated at well over ten million dollars. Our challenge is to prioritize which documents merit preservation and at what level (actual preservation or imaging and warehousing). Documents with historical significance that merit true museum quality restoration will be identified. Over the years, the Clerk-Recorder has worked to move Court-related and historical documents that are not required to be maintained by the Clerk-Recorder, to the Contra Costa Historical Society.
3. Queuing system. We have implemented a queuing system using our Modernization funds. The system is much like the one used by the DMV. It first intercepts customers at a customer service desk, to start the customer in the right direction (filling out the correct paperwork, etc.) and then assigns them to a public window whose clerk is prepared to process that customer's transaction. Our records are stored as images (instead of paper or microfilm images), so we can efficiently process customers without sending any customer back to some previous point in the process.
4. The Vital Records Improvement Program (VRIP) funds are used to purchase security bank note paper required to authenticate copies of birth, death, and marriage certificates and reduce the incidence of fraudulent or forged documents.

IV. DEPARTMENT CHALLENGES

A. ELECTIONS

1. Currently a major challenge is training and developing the skills of staff with technical job requirements, particularly GIS (Geographical Information System) and database administration.
2. The state has now suspended virtually all reimbursements for mandated election costs. (For Contra Costa, this can be more than \$500,000 per large election). SB 90 legislated that for any mandate the State placed on the County, the State would reimburse the County for the cost of performing the mandate and if the State isn't going to pay, the County doesn't have to perform the mandate. Our County Board has a policy that it will not backfill funding for mandates that are not reimbursed. After performing a fiscal risk assessment, we concluded that for us to drop the permanent vote-by-mail option (53% of our total voter roll) we may save some money in Primary Elections, but it would cost us more and place an untenable burden on our operations at General Elections. We have chosen to go forward with performing some mandates without reimbursement from the State, because it is better financially and operationally in the long run.
3. We face pressure from the closure of post offices and processing centers and the possible elimination of Saturday home delivery and pick up. On a parallel track, we are prepared to use this heightened awareness of postal problems to educate our voters for the need to send in (or deliver) their ballots in a timely manner. A new law allows us to count ballots if they are postmarked on or before Election Day and received by our office within three days after the election. This enfranchises hundreds of voters that would have had their ballots received too late to count.
4. We continue to seek ways to utilize technology to improve our workflows, increase file accuracy, and improve services.

B. RECORDER AND RECORDER MICRO/MOD

1. Positions have been reclassified to more accurately reflect duties and tasks required in response to emerging technologies. A program to train/cross-train staff continues to enhance office operations and customer service.
2. The Clerk-Recorder workload is affected by the fluctuation of the real estate market, which impacts the demand for recording. Activity in the

market remains flat and as a result, the recording volume is not recovering as quickly as it declined.

3. Electronic recording of documents will continue to transform our business practices in the future. Clerk-Recorder staff have embraced this change by opting for cross-training and contributing ideas to continue to improve the system.

V. PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

A. Elections Office

1. Objective: Maintain or increase productivity without increasing costs.
Note: Total costs for absentee voting will increase as the volume of vote-by-mail ballots increase.
 - a. Indicator: Percentage of votes cast by mail
2014 General Election (2 cards): 165,617 ballots, 63.9%
 - b. Indicator: Number of vote-by-mail ballots processed, counted, and reported on election night and as a percent of ballots cast
2014 General Election (2 cards): 70,842 ballots, 27.3%
 - c. Indicator: Cost per vote-by-mail ballot packet issued (includes permanent vote-by-mail, by-request, and mail only precincts)
2014 General Election (2 cards): \$1.19
2. Objective: Maintain a high level of voter registration and accurate roles.
 - a. Indicator: Number of active, registered voters (Report of Registration for the November 2014 election)
527,521
3. Objective: Conduct “successful” elections with increasing automation.
 - a. Indicator: Total cost per registered voter
2014 General Election (2 cards): \$6.12
 - b. Indicator: Time final unofficial Election Night results printed
2104 General Election (2 cards): 12:08 am
 - c. Indicator: Elections web site usage (2014)
152,634 visits and 110,804 unique visitors
10,417 page views and 6,666 unique visitors on Election Day

d. Indicator: Web pages viewed (2014)
381,270 pages viewed, average of 2.81 pages per visit

e. Indicator: Average time on the web site per visit (2014)
3:23 average time on site

B. Recorder and Recorder Micrographics/Modernization

1. Objective: Maintain or increase productivity without reducing accuracy.

a. Indicator: Annual recording volume
262,425 documents were recorded in 2014, a nearly 24% decrease from 2013, when 347,266 were recorded

b. Indicator: Percentage of time in compliance with statutory mandate
100% in compliance in 2014

2. Objective: Maintain or increase productivity through use of automation.

a. Indicator: Web “hits” - how many people accessed the Recorder’s Office Website
185,148

b. Indicator: Average time on website per user transaction
3:12 average time on site

c. Indicator: Customer wait time to be served
The percentage of customers served at lobby windows in under 10 minutes rose from 96.7% in 2013 to 98.4% in 2014 – a nearly 2% increase.

d. Indicator: Customer orders using E-commerce
Orders for vital records and official records increased 120% from 3,664 in 2013 to 8,037 in 2014.

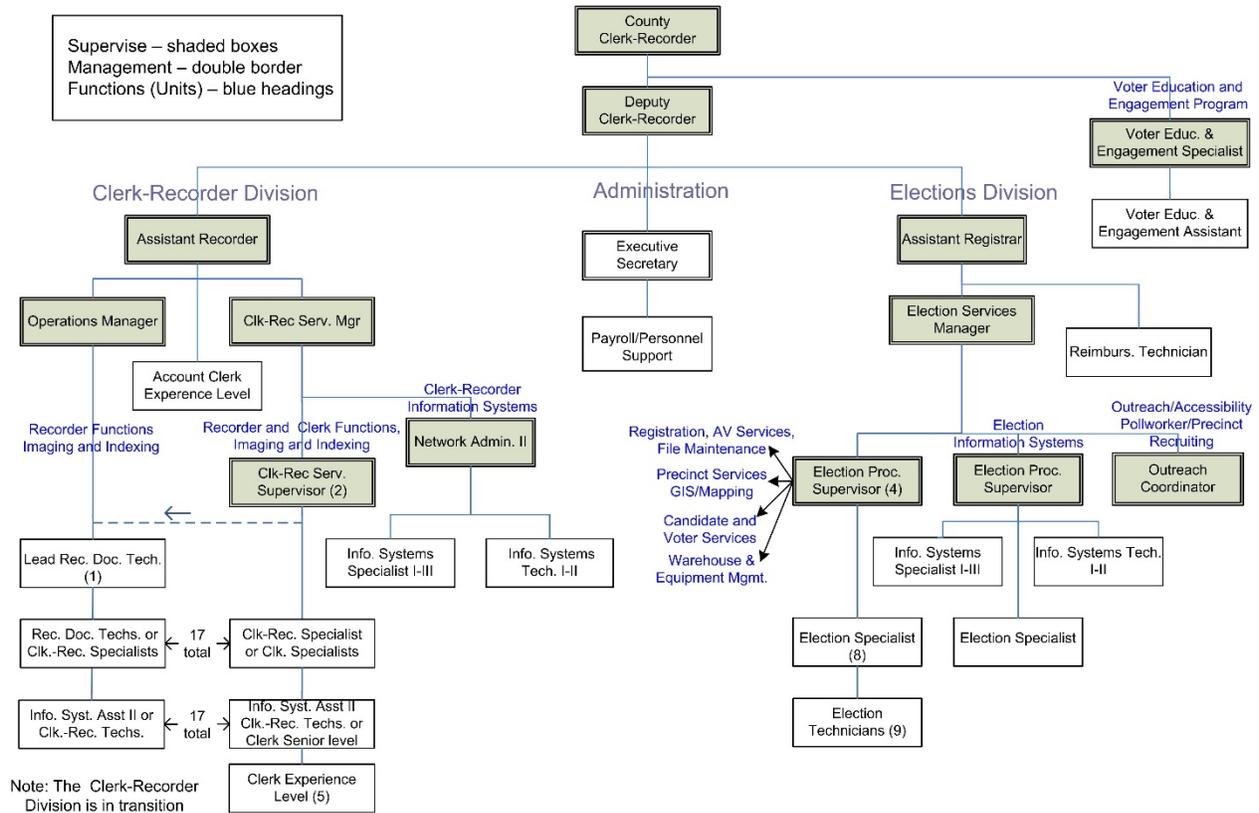
e. Indicator: Customer utilization of electronic payment convenience.
Use of credit and debit cards for payment of products and services at the counter (point of sale) increased 17% from 11,401 in 2013 to 12,290 in 2014.

Clerk-Recorder Performance Measures

Workload Indicator	2012	2013	2014	Difference	% change from 2013	
Marriage Licenses	4,501	5,052	5,004	-48	-0.95%	↓
Marriage Ceremonies	1,490	1,795	1,791	-4	-0.22%	↓
FBN Filings	7,987	7,737	7,886	149	1.93%	↑
Notaries	1,039	1,483	1,181	-302	-20.36%	↓
Birth Certificates	22,725	22,509	21,145	-1,364	-6.06%	↓
Death Certificates	5,719	8,476	5,287	-3,189	-37.62%	↓
Marriage Certificates	8,630	9,054	9,713	659	7.28%	↑
Recorded documents	383,443	347,260	262,425	-84,835	-24.43%	↓
Recorded docs per staff member	63,907	57,877	43,738	-14,139	-24.43%	↓

VI. DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

Clerk-Recorder-Election Department March 2015



For additional information regarding the Clerk-Recorder-Elections Department, please contact Administration at 925-335-7899 or visit our web site at www.cccounty.us.

Select "Departments", then "Clerk-Recorder" or "Elections".