

PERFORMANCE AUDITS

A NEW NAME FOR AN OLD FUNCTION

The term "Performance Audit" is relatively new but performing them — under a different name — has been a primary function of CRAB for nearly forty years. Although historically CRAB has called them "Official County Visits", the issues raised, the questions asked, and the discussions that ensue are the stuff of the modern Performance Audit.

A performance audit is generally agreed to be an objective and systematic assessment of an entity's programs, functions, or activities in order to help that entity improve efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability. This assessment of County Road Department programs and activities and of the County's adherence to laws and regulations is carried out through the biennial Official County visits as well as through the Annual Certification Program and annual review of various County submittals to CRAB.

THE OFFICIAL COUNTY VISIT

The Official County Visit involves meeting not only with the County Engineer but also with the Legislative Authority. During the Visit, at least the following topics are discussed in detail, with the goal of ascertaining that the Road Department is operated in accordance with laws and regulations and to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of Road Department programs:

- Road Department organizational structure, including staff turnover and training
- Department administration, including Departmental policies
- Current Road Fund Budget, including levy shifts and diversion issues
- Policies and procedures relating to the development of the Annual Construction Program and Six-Year Transportation Improvement Plan, including priority programming procedures
- Construction Management issues, including Day Labor projects and the ability of the County to complete its adopted Annual Construction Program
- Maintenance Management Issues
- Emergency Management Issues
- Use of Pavement Management System

Specific projects may also be reviewed to ensure appropriate use of State grant funds administered by CRAB. Other items of particular interest to the specific County may also be discussed. Suggestions for changes or improvements may be offered.

HOW CRAB AUDITS COUNTY COMPLIANCE

CRAB audits County compliance with laws, administrative rules, and the Standards of Good Practice on three levels:

At the County Level

- Perform Official County Visits to assess County Road Department programs and activities
- Require Annual Certification of the Road Levy
- Review Annual Construction Program and Six-Year Transportation Improvement Plans
- Conduct annual County Roadlog updates
- Review annual County Road Fund budgets
- Verify implementation of County Road administrative policies
- Review financial audits performed by the State Auditor's Office
- Review County Road and Street Reports submitted to WSDOT

At the Project Level

- Perform Project Management Reviews
- Review Rural Arterial Project Prospectuses
- Review Rural Arterial Project payment vouchers
- Perform on-site project inspections
- Require year-end reports of use of County Arterial Preservation Program funds
- Review Annual Construction Reports

At the Road Fund and Budget Level

- Require Annual Sheriff's Certification of Road Levy Expenditures
- Require Annual Certification of Road Fund Expenditures for Fish Passage Barrier Removal
- Require Annual Certification of Road Levy
- Require submittal of Road Fund budgets
- Review financial audits performed by the State Auditor's Office
- Review Annual Construction Program and Six-Year Transportation Improvement Plans



**Washington State
County Road Administration Board**