

A REPORT ON THE
ASSESSMENT OF THE
FACILITIES DIVISION
AT
AUBURN UNIVERSITY
AUBURN, ALABAMA



BY:
THE DERISO CONSULTING GROUP
MARIETTA, GEORGIA

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report was developed in the light of recognizing that the Facilities Division at Auburn University is not the same organization that existed twenty years ago. We recognize that the growth and expansion of AU over the last twenty years presented very unique operating problems within the facilities function due to funding problems, the standing of the division within the university, and the lack of trust and confidence exhibited toward the Facilities Division.

While presenting problems, the changes at Auburn also presented some very unique opportunities for radical change, and implementation of new ideas that would result in dramatic improvements, and recognition of the people responsible for achieving these improvements. The Facilities Division has evolved into its present state, and this evolution has not been without some problems. It is not the intent of this report to focus criticism or blame on any individual, group, policy, or practice.

The current Facilities Division “is what it is”, and it got to this point through much hard work and sacrifice on the part of several people. However, the Facilities Division now needs to progress to the next level to be able to efficiently function and protect and preserve the assets of Auburn University through the next century. It cannot achieve this higher level of performance without change, some of which may seem radical or harsh, but of which all is necessary.

The recommendations contained in this report are practical, and can be implemented over a reasonable period of time. Implementation of the recommendations will also form the basis for the accumulation of the data and information required by the upcoming SACS Accreditation process.

We recommend the following:

- Rename the Facilities Division to the Facilities Management Division.
- Elevate the division to “cabinet status” to reflect its importance at Auburn University.
- Create the position of Vice President of Facilities Management
- Consolidate University Planning into the Facilities Management Division.
- Reorganize at practically every level to achieve consolidation and encourage individual responsibility.

- Form four (4) distinct and separate operating units, each managed by a Director. The units are: University Planning, Design/Construction Services, Facilities Operations, and Management Support Services.
- Develop a new Master Plan, integrating deferred maintenance needs, programming needs, in conjunction with the “branding” process.
- Implement new CMMS, and plan for expansion of the software in the future so the Facilities Management Division is supported by fully integrated software.
- Reduce the central shop and implement a zone maintenance plan, including the addition of a preventive maintenance program.
- Reorganize to reduce the levels of management from seven (7) to three (3) in all areas.
- Combine Design and Construction; implement “cradle to grave” project management.
- The Project Construction Group should complete all in-house construction.
- The Maintenance & Operations construction workers should be combined with the Project Construction Group, eliminating the M&O group from doing construction work.
- The in-house construction group should be completely self sufficient and operated as a private company.
- Develop and implement performance standards that will form the basis for employee performance evaluations.
- Consider implementing the merit pay portion of the new compensation plan.
- Develop and implement a comprehensive Quality Assurance Plan for all units.
- Develop a simple Mission Statement that can be easily memorized.
- Develop comprehensive Design Standards for all design and construction.
- Update the deferred maintenance plan for facilities.
- Implement training programs for each unit.

- Hire a Training /Safety Coordinator to implement a Safety Plan for the Division.
- The reorganization can substantially reduce the number of management/supervisory and operative level positions.
- Move control of the Human Resources function back to the AU Human Resources Department.
- Provide comprehensive development training to the management and supervisory staff, and then allow them to supervise the workforce without interference.
- Develop and implement a Maintenance Apprenticeship Program to enhance the addition of personnel to the maintenance staff, and reducing the current hiring problems and delays.

These recommendations can be implemented over a reasonable period of time, provided a sound strategy is developed, incorporating “triage” methodology to determine the order and urgency of the recommendation. We are encouraged by the improvements that can result from the implementation of the recommendations, and are sure they will provide the basis for an even more efficient and effective Facilities Management Division at Auburn University.

Thank you for the opportunity to prepare this report.

Respectfully submitted,

THE DERISO CONSULTING GROUP

Jerald L. Deriso, P.E.
Founder and Chief

INTRODUCTION

In late November 2000, The Deriso Consulting Group, Marietta, GA., was retained by Auburn University to conduct an assessment of the Facilities Division and University Planning at Auburn University. The basic objectives of the study were to study the on-going operations in detail, identify opportunities for performance improvement, and to begin to accumulate the information required by the upcoming Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) accreditation process.

This report is the result of an identification and analysis of the variables that directly and indirectly affect the day-to-day and long range performance of the Facilities Division at Auburn University. The variables were identified by an intensive on-campus collection of data. This data collection process was started on December 4th, 2000 and completed on January 26, 2001. The consulting staff (Jerald L. Deriso, P.E., Dr. Paula Wells, Mr. Paul Valvo, and Mr. Lance Skelton) utilized various methods to identify and collect the data, including:

- Conducting forty-five (45) meetings with individual groups of operative level employees;
- Conducting sixty (60) one-one-one interviews with management and supervisory employees, as well as operative employees;
- Collection and review of extensive documentation, including budgets, cost histories, organization charts, staffing summaries, work backlogs, and other documentation;
- Review of contracted services for the facilities division such as custodial, fire alarms, building system controls, elevator maintenance, and the like;
- Detailed analysis of the major work processes to identify production bottlenecks, redundancy, and inefficient approaches;
- Detailed analysis of the proposed new Computerized Maintenance Management System (Assetworks);
- Physical inspection of mechanical rooms, central plants, buildings, grounds, and infrastructure.

In addition to the collection and analysis of data indicating the levels of performance, the Consultant was able to use a recently completed Customer Satisfaction Survey Report for the Facilities Division (included in the Exhibits Section of this report). The CSS provided invaluable information concerning the customer's perception of the quality of and the satisfaction (or lack of satisfaction) with the level of service being provided by the various operating units of the Facilities Division. The overall summary of customer satisfaction and dissatisfaction is shown below:

Levels of Customer Satisfaction with Facilities Division Services

<u>Class of Service</u>	<u>% of Satisfied Customers</u>
Customer Service	57%
Housekeeping Quality	57%
Maintenance Quality	46%
Grounds Care Quality	63%
Design/Development Services	45%
Construction Services	47%
Quality of Pest Control Services	59%
Quality of Mail Services	83%
Quality of Moving Services	54%

Levels of Customer Dissatisfaction with Facilities Division Services

<u>Class of Service</u>	<u>% of Dissatisfied Customers</u>
Customer Service	17%
Housekeeping Quality	18%
Maintenance Quality	22%
Grounds Care Quality	12%
Design/Development Services	28%
Construction Services	26%
Pest Control Services	17%
Mail Services	5%
Moving Services	22%

A reasonable expectation for levels of *Satisfaction* for a major university such as Auburn is a **minimum** of seventy percent (**70%**) for the various classes of service. A reasonable threshold for levels of Dissatisfaction is a **maximum** of ten percent (**10%**) or less.

It can be seen from the above results, and reviewing the entire report contained in the Exhibits Section of this report, that there is much room for improving the services in the opinion of the customers being served.

In our opinion, the poor ratings are a combination of under-staffing, inadequate management procedures, bureaucratic delays, inadequate employee performance, inadequate management and supervision of the workforce, and an overall lack of a sense of purpose and urgency in the Facilities Division.

An integral part of the data collection effort was to distribute management data questionnaires to all management and supervisor personnel. Not all questionnaires were returned, but of those that were, the results are shown below. The percentages shown represent the percentage of the total responses received.

Question – List the three things your unit does best

<u>Category of Response</u>	<u>% of Total Responses</u>
High quality and quantity of work	37%
Positive response to deadlines and problems	23%
Positive attitude and pride toward work	11%
Satisfy customer needs	11%
Cooperate with each other/teamwork	10%
Communicate well with customer	3%
Act safely and keep work areas clean	3%

Question – List the three things your unit does worst

<u>Category of Response</u>	<u>% of Total Responses</u>
Poor management practices	22%
Don't communicate well with customer	16%
Poor quality and quantity of work	15%
Poor employee attitudes and motivation	11%
Disruptive management procedures	9%
Don't keep vehicles and equipment clean	7%
Don't complete jobs on time	5%
Low employee productivity	5%
Not allowed to supervise	4%
Poor response to problems/requests	3%
Workers not trained	3%

Question – List the five things you think should be changed

<u>Category of recommended change</u>	<u>% of Total Responses</u>
Higher quality workforce	17%
Increase levels of compensation	15%
Better work facilities	10%
Additional staff	9%
Improved management practices	8%
Better tools and equipment	8%
Worker incentive program	7%
Streamline procedures	7%
More and better training	6%
More supervisory authority	5%
More effective communications	5%
Consistent HR policies	3%