

### **ROLE 3: DEFINE OR MEASURE PERFORMANCE**

#### ***Practice 3b. Collect data: Collect performance measurement data.***

**Prince William County, Virginia, Internal Audit** (within the County Office of Executive Management: [www.pwcgov.org/oem](http://www.pwcgov.org/oem)): Since 1993, the Internal Auditor has acted as contract manager and the primary point of contact between the County and the contractor for the annual Prince William County Citizen Satisfaction Survey. As contract manager, the audit office screens the results to see if the information appears accurate, and coordinates changes to the question set within the County government. Generally, Internal Audit staff devote about 150 hours per year to this practice. The contractor, the University of Virginia (UVA) Center for Survey Research, is responsible for testing and fielding the survey, analyzing results, preparing the report, and presenting the report in a public session. The surveys are conducted by telephone, using random-digit dialing to households in the county. The 2003 survey was based on a random sample of 1,484 respondents, for a countywide margin of error of  $\pm 2.5\%$  (at a 95% confidence level). In past surveys, rural areas had margins of error as high as  $\pm 10\%$ . So for 2003, rural areas were over-sampled with the intent of keeping the margin of error for all eight county geographic areas of analysis down close to  $\pm 3\%$ . To compensate for over-sampling, UVA used statistical weighting by geographic area to determine county-wide results.

New survey questions come from two sources: the County's strategic planning process and agency requests. Every four years, when, by ordinance the County engages in a major update of its strategic plan, part of the process involves strategic area task forces composed of citizens and staff, who identify desired measurable outcomes. Often these outcomes relate to citizen satisfaction and must be measured through the Citizen Satisfaction Survey. Also, annually in preparation for the survey, Internal Audit notifies agencies of the upcoming survey and provides them with an opportunity to add questions. However, agencies are told that they have limited space available in the survey, so only critical questions should be submitted. The County Executive must approve new questions.

When the UVA Center for Survey Research analyzes the survey data they conduct a subgroup analysis. In the subgroup analysis they look for statistically significant variances for each question in any of eleven types of demographic subgroups: geographic area, length of residence, homeowner status, work status, presence of children under 18 in the household, education level, marital status, household income, race/ethnicity, age, and gender.

The survey report is first presented to the Board of County Supervisors by the Center for Survey Research during a public Board Meeting (usually in August). The survey results are also reported by agency in the County's Budget and the results are reported in the SEA Report. Also, a copy of the complete report is available to the public on the County's web site (Office of Executive Management pages). Report appendices contain the survey questions, and the survey methodology. A presentation of the report is also made to County senior management shortly after the report to the Board. What to do about results are discussed during budget meetings, internal SEA focus group meetings, and the senior management presentation. Also, such a discussion may come up during the Board presentation or informally after the meeting.

Relevant publications available from the County Office of Executive Management web site ([www.pwcgov.org/oem](http://www.pwcgov.org/oem)) include:

- *FY 2003 Citizen Satisfaction Survey*, August 2003
- *FY 2003 Service Efforts & Accomplishments Report*, January 2004