
Office of Legislative Auditor

Steve J. Theriot, CPA, Legislative Auditor



Informational Report: Potential Duplication Between Agencies That Manage State Museums

November 2009

Audit Control # 40090013

About This Informational Report

Louisiana Revised Statute 24:522(C) requires the Louisiana Legislative Auditor (LLA) to evaluate programs and services of state government agencies and identify areas needing improvement. In the last regular session, the legislature formed the Commission on Streamlining Government (Commission), and LLA has been assigned to assist the Commission. One of the topics the Commission is focusing on is duplication of services provided by two or more programs.

To assist the Commission, we will report on areas of potential duplication by two or more agencies in delivering services. We defined duplication as identical or similar activities performed by more than one agency leading to accomplishment of the same or similar goal. We will issue individual reports addressing different areas of duplication.

To be responsive in a timely manner, we obtained information from state law, budget documents, agency interviews, and other sources. We did not conduct this audit in accordance with all government auditing standards. Though we performed procedures adequate to identify potential duplication, we did not perform sufficient procedures to make definitive conclusions or estimate potential savings, if any, that may result from any action taken by these entities to eliminate such potential duplication.

We identified two state agencies that manage state museums. These agencies are the Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism (CRT), Office of State Museums and the Department of State (DOS), Museum and Other Operations. Also, we identified potential duplication within DOS. Finally, we identified state museums that had less than 10,000 visitors in fiscal year 2009 and the operational costs for these museums (potential non-essential services).

Potential Duplication Between DOS and CRT

Potential duplication exists because both agencies are managing state museums to present Louisiana culture and history. Total funding for these two programs was \$15,369,864 in fiscal year 2009, including \$14,183,676 in state general funds.

POTENTIAL DUPLICATION BETWEEN AGENCIES THAT MANAGE STATE MUSEUMS ___

DOS and CRT employed a total of 10 administrators to manage their museums with total administrative expenditures of \$701,261 during fiscal year 2009.

CRT

CRT's mission is to maintain the museum system as a statewide museum system that reveals Louisiana's history and culture. CRT manages nine museums, all of which are nationally accredited. The museum system includes 21 properties.

In fiscal year 2009, CRT spent \$8,413,852 on museum operations. The expenditures were funded by \$7,575,465 of state general funds and \$838,387 from federal dollars and rental property income. CRT had 107 employees, including 106 classified and one unclassified. In fiscal year 2009, CRT had seven administrative positions and administrative expenditures were \$530,586 of which \$376,716 was state general funds.

DOS

The mission of the museum program is to present exhibits and educational programs to the public that emphasize the political, social, and economic influences, personalities, institutions, and events that have shaped the landscape of Louisiana's history and culture and its place in the world. In fiscal year 2009, DOS had 11 museums open, including one nationally accredited museum and one Smithsonian affiliate museum. DOS plans to open five more museums during fiscal year 2010.

The DOS expenditures for museum operations were \$6,956,012 in fiscal year 2009 of which \$6,608,211 was state general funds. Included in this amount was \$3,000,000 in one-time expenditures for exhibit design and construction at the Old State Capitol. Net of the one-time expenditures, the actual expenditures for ongoing museum operations were \$3,956,012 for fiscal year 2009.

DOS has 42 employees, including 36 classified and six unclassified. According to a DOS official, DOS employed three administrators and administrative expenditures were \$170,675 in fiscal year 2009. Approximately \$162,141 of this amount was state general funds. DOS informed us that one of these positions was eliminated for fiscal year 2010.

Potential Duplication Within DOS

Duplication may exist because DOS will operate three museums focusing on Louisiana military history. DOS will soon manage three military-themed museums. These museums focus on different aspects of the military, such as northeast Louisiana military history, a collection of weapons, and telling the stories of Louisiana veterans.

In fiscal year 2009, the Chennault Aviation and Military Museum of Louisiana in Monroe and the Louisiana Military Museum in Ruston were open and had operational cost of \$250,053. A DOS official informed us that approximately 95 percent of their administrative and operational expenditures for fiscal year 2009 were funded by state general funds. Thus, state general funds comprised approximately \$237,550 (\$250,053 x .95) of the funding for the two military museums in fiscal 2009. In fiscal year 2010, the Louisiana Military Hall of Fame and Museum will open in Abbeville. Operations for this museum are budgeted at \$86,121 for fiscal year 2010. Exhibit 1 summarizes visitors and operational costs for these three museums.

Exhibit 1 DOS Military Museums Visitors and Operational Costs for Three Museums Fiscal Year 2009		
Museum	Number of Visitors	Operational Cost
Louisiana Military Hall of Fame and Museum*	*	*
Chennault Aviation and Military Museum of Louisiana	17,648	\$172,931
Louisiana Military Museum	31,421	77,122
Total	49,069	\$250,053
*The Louisiana Military Hall of Fame and Museum was not open in fiscal year 2009. The operational cost is budgeted at \$86,121 for fiscal year 2010. Source: Prepared by legislative auditor's staff based on information provided by DOS.		

DOS and CRT Museums With Less Than 10,000 Visitors Annually

In doing work to identify potential duplication, we discovered that some museums had more visitors than others. Eleven had from 15,461 to 85,958 or an annual average of 45,363 visitors. However, we did notice that 10 had fewer than 10,000 visitors in fiscal year 2009. The range was from 758 to 9,876.

We spoke with several museum experts who informed us there is no commonly accepted minimum number of visitors used to determine if a museum is being fully used. We also asked CRT and DOS what would be considered a low number, but they did not provide us a number.

Without visitor criteria, we question whether this number is low attendance. Also, could these lower visitor numbers be an indication that these museums are non-essential?

POTENTIAL DUPLICATION BETWEEN AGENCIES THAT MANAGE STATE MUSEUMS ___

According to agency officials, the total operational cost of these 10 museums in fiscal year 2009 was \$1,169,178 of which approximately \$1,151,364 was state general funds. Of this amount, approximately \$338,475 was funded from DOS and \$812,889 from CRT.

CRT

In fiscal year 2009, CRT had four museums operating with less than 10,000 visitors. Exhibit 2 below summarizes visitors and operational costs for these four museums.

Exhibit 2 CRT, Office of State Museums Visitors and Operational Costs for Three Museums Fiscal Year 2009		
Museum	Number of Visitors	Operational Cost
Edward Douglass White Historic Site	1,526	\$134,431
Madame John's Legacy	7,621	*44,424
Louisiana State Museum - Patterson	8,547	438,361
Natchitoches Parish Old Courthouse Museum	9,876	195,673
Total	27,570	\$812,889
*Utility cost only. Other costs could not be determined because of how CRT tracks its museum expenses in New Orleans. Source: Prepared by legislative auditor's staff based on information provided by CRT.		

DOS

In fiscal year 2009, DOS had six museums operating with less than 10,000 visitors. Exhibit 3 on page 5 summarizes the number of visitors and operational costs for these six museums.

Exhibit 3 DOS Museums Visitors and Operational Costs for Six Museums Fiscal Year 2009		
Museum	Number of Visitors	Operational Cost
Mansfield Female College Museum	758*	\$58,772
Shreveport Water Works Museum	1,858	49,760
Tioga Heritage Park & Museum	1,941**	17,350
Spring Street Historical Museum	4,037	61,193
Louisiana State Oil & Gas Museum	7,448	165,097
Old Arsenal Museum	9,229	4,117
Total	25,271	\$356,289
*Did not open until March 14, 2009. **Will open to the public in Fiscal Year 2010. The attendance figure is from events. Source: Prepared by legislative auditor's staff based on information provided by DOS.		

FOR QUESTIONS RELATED TO THIS INFORMATIONAL REPORT,
 CONTACT MIKE BATTLE, PERFORMANCE AUDIT MANAGER,
 AT (225) 339-3800.

A copy of this report is available at our Web site www.lla.la.gov.

Under the provisions of state law, this report is a public document. A copy of this report has been submitted to the Governor, to the Attorney General, and to other public officials as required by state law. A copy of this report has been made available for public inspection at the Baton Rouge office of the Legislative Auditor.

This document is produced by the Legislative Auditor, State of Louisiana, Post Office Box 94397, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70804-9397 in accordance with Louisiana Revised Statute 24:513. Eight copies of this public document were produced at an approximate cost of \$22.56. This material was produced in accordance with the standards for state agencies established pursuant to R.S. 43:31. This report is available on the Legislative Auditor's Web site at www.lla.la.gov. When contacting the office, you may refer to Agency ID No. 9726 or Report ID No. 40090013 for additional information.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance relative to this document, or any documents of the Legislative Auditor, please contact Wayne "Skip" Irwin, Administration Manager, at 225-339-3800.

This page is intentionally blank.