

COMMISSION ON STATE MANDATES

980 NINTH STREET, SUITE 300

SACRAMENTO, CA 95814

PHONE: (916) 323-3562

FAX: (916) 445-0278

E-mail: csminfo@csm.ca.gov



March 14, 2007

Mr. Allan Burdick
MAXIMUS
4320 Auburn Blvd., Suite 2000
Sacramento, CA 95841

Ms. Jacqueline M. Gong
County of Napa
1195 Third Street, Suite 301
Napa, CA 94559

And Interested Parties and Affected State Agencies (See Enclosed Mailing List)

RE: Correction to Proposed Statement of Decision for Reconsideration of Prior Decision
Binding Arbitration, 01-TC-07
City of Palos Verdes Estates, County of Napa, Co-Claimants
Code of Civil Procedure, Sections 1281.1, 1299, 1299.2, 1299.3
1299.4, 1299.5, 1299.6, 1299.7, 1299.8, and 1299.9

Dear Mr. Burdick and Ms. Gong:

The proposed Statement of Decision for this Reconsideration of Prior Decision was corrected, and a copy is enclosed for your review. Two technical changes were made to this document: 1) in the caption on page three, the County of Napa was added as Co-claimant; and 2) in the second line of the second full paragraph on page four, the date referencing adoption of the original Statement of Decision was changed to July 28, 2006. Please discard the previous version of the proposed Statement of Decision for this item that was mailed on March 13, 2007.

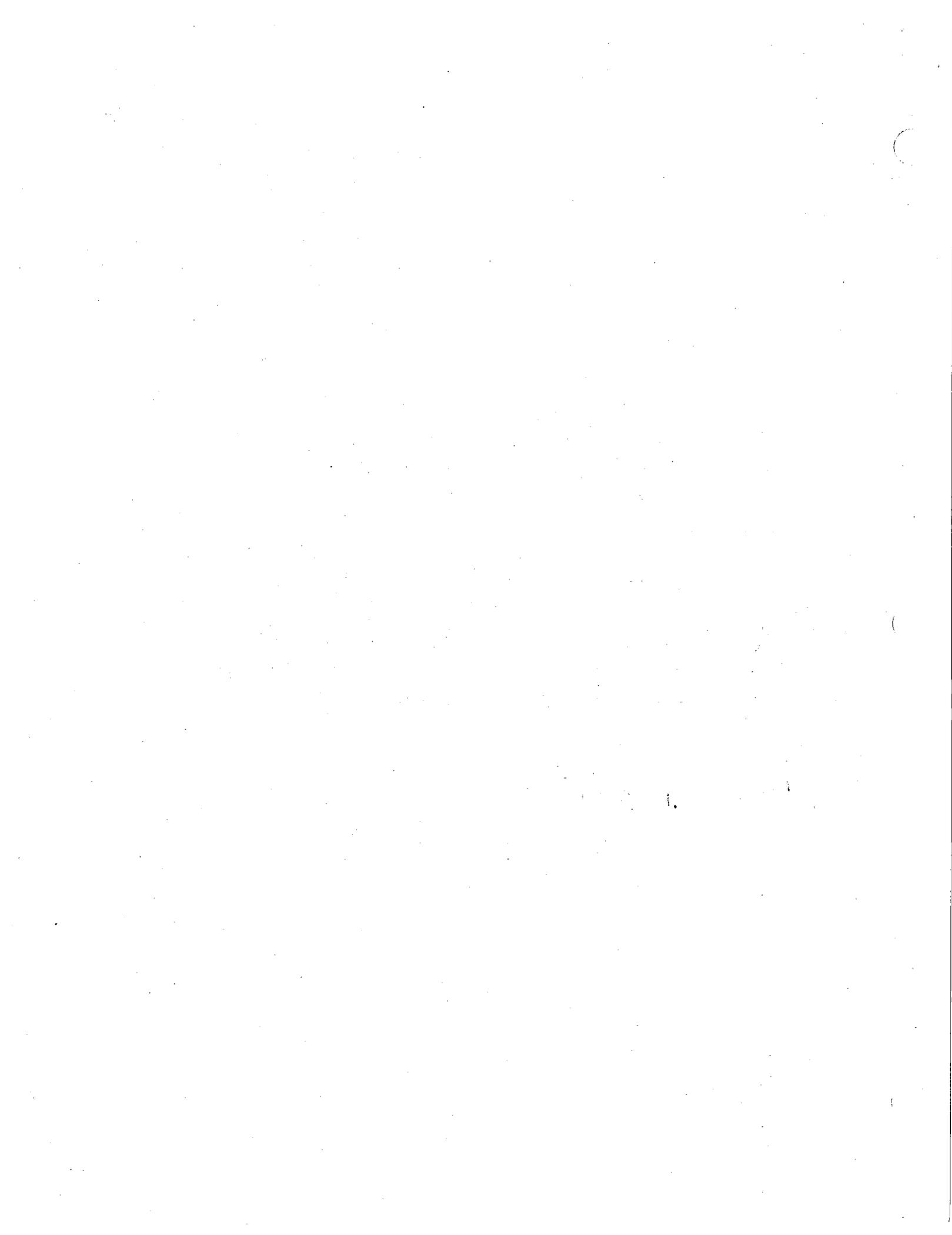
Please contact Deborah Borzelleri at (916) 322-4230 if you have questions.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Paula Higashi in cursive script.

PAULA HIGASHI
Executive Director

Enclosures



ITEM 4

**RECONSIDERATION OF PRIOR FINAL DECISION
PROPOSED STATEMENT OF DECISION**

Code of Civil Procedure Sections 1281.1, 1299, 1299.2,
1299.3, 1299.4, 1299.5, 1299.6, 1299.7, 1299.8, and 1299.9

As Added by Statutes 2000, Chapter 906 (S.B. 402)

Binding Arbitration

01-TC-07

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The sole issue before the Commission on State Mandates ("Commission") is whether the Proposed Statement of Decision accurately reflects the Commission's decision on the reconsideration of the *Binding Arbitration* test claim from the January 25, 2007 Commission hearing.¹

Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Commission adopt the Proposed Statement of Decision, beginning on page three, which accurately reflects the staff analysis and recommendation on this test claim.

¹ California Code of Regulations, title 2, section 1188.1, subdivision (a).

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BEFORE THE
COMMISSION ON STATE MANDATES
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

IN RE RECONSIDERATION OF PRIOR
FINAL DECISION:

Code of Civil Procedure Sections 1281.1, 1299,
1299.2, 1299.3, 1299.4, 1299.5, 1299.6, 1299.7,
1299.8, and 1299.9;

Statutes 2000, Chapter 906

Filed on October 24, 2001 by the City of
Palos Verdes Estates, Claimant; joined by
County of Napa, Co-claimant.

Case No.: 01-TC-07.

Binding Arbitration

PROPOSED STATEMENT OF DECISION
PURSUANT TO GOVERNMENT CODE
SECTION 17500 ET SEQ.; CALIFORNIA
CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 2,
DIVISION 2, CHAPTER 2.5, ARTICLE 7

(Proposed for Adoption on March 29, 2007)

PROPOSED STATEMENT OF DECISION

The Commission on State Mandates ("Commission") heard and decided the reconsideration of this test claim during a regularly scheduled hearing on January 25, 2007. Pamela Stone from MAXIMUS and Judy Smith from City of Palos Verdes Estates appeared on behalf of claimant. Jacqueline M. Gong from County of Napa appeared on behalf of co-claimant. Donna Ferebee and Carla Castaneda appeared on behalf of the Department of Finance.

The law applicable to the Commission's determination of a reimbursable state-mandated program is article XIII B, section 6 of the California Constitution, Government Code sections 17500 et seq., and related case law.

The Commission adopted the staff analysis at the hearing by a supermajority vote of 7-0 to change the prior final decision adopted on July 28, 2006, and to partially approve this test claim.

Summary of Findings

This is a reconsideration of a prior final decision that was adopted on July 28, 2006, to deny the *Binding Arbitration* test claim. Government Code section 17559 and section 1188.4 of the Commission's regulations provide authority for this action. A supermajority of five affirmative votes is required to change a prior final decision.

The *Binding Arbitration* statutes, in the context of improving labor relations between local agencies and their law enforcement officers and firefighters, provide that, where an impasse in negotiations has been declared, and if the employee organization so requests, the parties would be subject to binding arbitration. The test claim statutes were effective on January 1, 2001, but were declared unconstitutional by the California Supreme Court on April 21, 2003, as violating the "home rule" provisions of the California Constitution.

In the original test claim, the claimant sought reimbursement for employee compensation costs. The Commission's prior decision to deny the test claim was based on case law holding that

additional costs alone for employee compensation and litigation, in the absence of some increase in the actual level or quality of governmental services provided to the public, do not constitute a new program or higher level of service. Moreover, since strikes by law enforcement officers and fire services personnel are prohibited by law, the Commission found that no successful argument could be made that the test claim statutes affect law enforcement or firefighting service to the public.

However, the test claim was modified at the July 28, 2006 hearing to withdraw the reimbursement request for employee compensation and for litigating the constitutionality of the test claim statutes. Testimony was also provided at the hearing that, even if strikes by public safety personnel are illegal, strikes do still occur in the less obvious form of "blue flu" or via other methods. Thus, the Commission reconsidered the claim in light of the modification and analyzed the activities expressly required by the test claim statutes.

The Commission, on reconsideration, finds that the Statement of Decision adopted on July 28, 2006, was contrary to law. The Commission further finds that the test claim statutes mandate certain activities, constitute a "program" as well as a "new program or higher level of service," and also impose "costs mandated by the state" within the meaning of article XIII B, section 6 of the California Constitution and Government Code section 17514. Because the test claim statutes were declared unconstitutional on April 21, 2003, however, the reimbursement period is limited to January 1, 2001 through April 20, 2003.

On January 23, 2007, the County of Napa joined as co-claimant on this test claim, pursuant to California Code of Regulations, title 2, section 1183, subdivision (h), and provided a declaration signed under penalty of perjury outlining costs incurred as a result of the test claim statutes. The County declared that, after the passage of the test claim statutes and during the reimbursement period of January 1, 2001 through April 20, 2003, the County did engage in binding interest arbitration with the Napa County Deputy Sheriffs' Association to the final award of a decision by the arbitration panel. The County asserts that the costs to engage in this process exceeded \$10,000.

BACKGROUND

Jurisdiction on Reconsideration

Government Code section 17559, subdivision (a), grants the Commission, within statutory timeframes, discretion to reconsider a prior final decision. That section states the following:

The commission may order a reconsideration of all or part of a test claim or incorrect reduction claim on petition of any party. The power to order a reconsideration or amend a test claim decision shall expire 30 days after the statement of decision is delivered or mailed to the claimant. If additional time is needed to evaluate a petition for reconsideration filed prior to the expiration of the 30-day period, the commission may grant a stay of that expiration for no more than 30 days, solely for the purpose of considering the petition. If no action is taken on a petition within the time allowed for ordering reconsideration, the petition shall be deemed denied.

By regulation, the Commission has provided that any interested party, affected state agency or Commission member may file a petition with the Commission requesting that the Commission reconsider and change a prior final decision to correct an error of law.²

Before the Commission considers the request for reconsideration, Commission staff is required to prepare a written analysis and recommend whether the request for reconsideration should be granted.³ A supermajority of five affirmative votes is required to grant the request for reconsideration and schedule the matter for a hearing on the merits.⁴

If the Commission grants the request for reconsideration, a second hearing must be conducted to determine if the prior final decision is contrary to law and to correct an error of law.⁵ Prior to that hearing, Commission staff prepares and issues for public comment a draft staff analysis.⁶ Any comments are incorporated into a final staff analysis and presented to the Commission before the scheduled meeting.⁷ A supermajority of five affirmative votes is required to change a prior final decision.⁸

Binding Arbitration Test Claim

In the context of labor relations between local public agencies and their law enforcement officers and firefighters, the test claim statutes provide that, where an impasse in negotiations has been declared, and if the employee organization so requests, the parties would be subject to binding arbitration.

Since 1968, local public agency labor relations have been governed by the Meyers-Milias-Brown Act.⁹ The act requires local agencies to grant employees the right to self-organization, to form, join or assist labor organizations, and to present grievances and recommendations regarding wages, salaries, hours, and working conditions to the governing body. The California Supreme Court has recognized that it is not unlawful for public employees to strike unless it has been determined that the work stoppage poses an imminent threat to public health or safety.¹⁰ Employees of fire departments and fire services, however, are specifically denied the right to strike or to recognize a picket line of a labor organization while in the course of the performance of their official duties.¹¹ Additionally, the Fourth District Court of Appeal has held that police work stoppages are per se illegal.¹²

² California Code of Regulations, title 2, section 1188.4, subdivision (b).

³ California Code of Regulations, title 2, section 1188.4, subdivision (f).

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ California Code of Regulations, title 2, section 1188.4, subdivision (g).

⁶ California Code of Regulations, title 2, section 1188.4, subdivision (g)(1)(B).

⁷ California Code of Regulations, title 2, section 1188.4, subdivision (g)(1)(C).

⁸ California Code of Regulations, title 2, section 1188.4, subdivision (g)(2).

⁹ Government Code sections 3500 et seq.; Statutes 1968, chapter 1390.

¹⁰ *County Sanitation Dist. No. 2 v. Los Angeles County Employees' Assn.* (1985) 38 Cal.3d 564.

¹¹ Labor Code section 1962.

¹² *City of Santa Ana v. Santa Ana Police Benevolent Association* (1989) 207 Cal.App.3d 1568.

Under the Meyers-Milius-Brown Act, the local employer establishes rules and regulations regarding employer-employee relations, in consultation with employee organizations.¹³ The local agency employer is obligated to meet and confer in good faith with representatives of employee bargaining units on matters within the scope of representation.¹⁴ If agreement is reached between the employer and the employee representatives, that agreement is memorialized in a memorandum of understanding which becomes binding once the local governing body adopts it.¹⁵

The test claim statutes¹⁶ added Title 9.5 to the Code of Civil Procedure, providing new procedures that could be invoked by the employee organization in the event an impasse in negotiations has been declared. Section 1299 states the following legislative intent:

The Legislature hereby finds and declares that strikes taken by firefighters and law enforcement officers against public employers are a matter of statewide concern, are a predictable consequence of labor strife and poor morale that is often the outgrowth of substandard wages and benefits, and are not in the public interest. The Legislature further finds and declares that the dispute resolution procedures contained in this title provide the appropriate method for resolving public sector labor disputes that could otherwise lead to strikes by firefighters or law enforcement officers.

It is the intent of the Legislature to protect the health and welfare of the public by providing impasse remedies necessary to afford public employers the opportunity to safely alleviate the effects of labor strife that would otherwise lead to strikes by firefighters and law enforcement officers. It is further the intent of the Legislature that, in order to effectuate its predominant purpose, this title be construed to apply broadly to all public employers, including, but not limited to, charter cities, counties, and cities and counties in this state.

It is not the intent of the Legislature to alter the scope of issues subject to collective bargaining between public employers and employee organizations representing firefighters or law enforcement officers.

The provisions of this title are intended by the Legislature to govern the resolution of impasses reached in collective bargaining between public employers and employee organizations representing firefighters and law enforcement officers over economic issues that remain in dispute over their respective interests...

The statutes provide that if an impasse is declared after the parties exhaust their mutual efforts to reach agreement over matters within the scope of the negotiation, and the parties are unable to agree to the appointment of a mediator, or if a mediator agreed to by the parties has been unable

¹³ Government Code section 3507.

¹⁴ Government Code section 3505.

¹⁵ Government Code section 3505.1.

¹⁶ Statutes 2000, chapter 906 (Sen. Bill No. 402).

to effect settlement of a dispute between the parties, the employee organization can, by written notification to the employer, request that their differences be submitted to an arbitration panel.¹⁷ Within three days after receipt of written notification, each party is required to designate one member of the panel, and those two members, within five days thereafter, are required to designate an additional impartial person with experience in labor and management dispute resolution to act as chairperson of the arbitration panel.¹⁸

The arbitration panel is required to meet with the parties within ten days after its establishment, or after any additional periods of time mutually agreed upon.¹⁹ The panel is authorized to meet with the parties, make inquiries and investigations, hold hearings, and take any other action, including further mediation, that the panel deems appropriate.²⁰ The arbitration panel may, for purposes of its hearings, investigations or inquiries, subpoena witnesses, administer oaths, take the testimony of any person, and issue subpoenas duces tecum to require the production and examination of any employer's or employee organization's records.²¹

Five days prior to the commencement of the arbitration panel's hearings, each of the parties is required to submit a last best offer of settlement on the disputed issues.²² The panel decides the disputed issues separately, or if mutually agreed, by selecting the last best offer package that most nearly complies with specified factors.²³ The panel then delivers a copy of its decision to the parties, but the decision may not be publicly disclosed for five days.²⁴ The decision is not binding during that period, and the parties may meet privately to resolve their differences and, by mutual agreement, modify the panel's decision.²⁵ At the end of the five-day period, the decision as it may be modified by the parties is publicly disclosed and binding on the parties.²⁶

The provisions are not applicable to any employer that is a city, county, or city and county, governed by a charter that was amended prior to January 1, 2001, to incorporate a binding arbitration provision.²⁷ The provisions also state that, unless otherwise agreed to by the parties,

¹⁷ Code of Civil Procedure section 1299.4, subdivision (a).

¹⁸ Code of Civil Procedure section 1299.4, subdivision (b).

¹⁹ Code of Civil Procedure section 1299.5, subdivision (a).

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ Code of Civil Procedure section 1299.5, subdivision (b).

²² Code of Civil Procedure section 1299.6, subdivision (a).

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ Code of Civil Procedure section 1299.7, subdivision (a).

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ Code of Civil Procedure section 1299.7, subdivision (b).

²⁷ Code of Civil Procedure section 1299.9, subdivision (a); this provision was modified by Statutes 2003, chapter 877, to change the date of the amended charter to January 1, 2004, but since that amendment was not pled in the test claim, the Commission makes no finding with regard to it.

the costs of the arbitration proceeding and the expenses of the arbitration panel, except those of the employer representative, shall be borne by the employee organization.²⁸

Preexisting general arbitration provisions are applicable to arbitration that is triggered by the test claim statutes, unless otherwise provided in the test claim statutes.²⁹ Among other things, these general arbitration provisions set forth procedures for the conduct of hearings such as notice of hearings, witness lists, admissible evidence, subpoenas, and depositions.³⁰

When a party refuses to arbitrate a controversy as requested under Code of Civil Procedure section 1299.4, subdivision (a), that party may be subject to a court order to engage in arbitration pursuant to section 1281.2.³¹

The test claim statutes in their entirety were declared unconstitutional by the California Supreme Court on April 21, 2003, as violating portions of article XI of the California Constitution.³² The basis for the decision is that the statutes: 1) deprive the county of its authority to provide for the compensation of its employees as guaranteed in article XI, section 1, subdivision (b); and 2) delegate to a private body the power to interfere with local agency financial affairs and to perform a municipal function, as prohibited in article XI, section 11, subdivision (a).^{33, 34}

Accordingly, the analysis addresses only the period during which the test claim statutes were presumed to be constitutional, January 1, 2001 through April 20, 2003.

²⁸ Code of Civil Procedure section 1299.9, subdivision (b).

²⁹ Code of Civil Procedure section 1299.8.

³⁰ Code of Civil Procedure sections 1280 et seq.

³¹ Code of Civil Procedure section 1281.1.

³² *County of Riverside v. Superior Court of Riverside County* (2003) 30 Cal.4th 278 (*County of Riverside*).

³³ *County of Riverside* (2003) 30 Cal.4th 278, 282.

³⁴ Section 1299.7, subdivision (c), of the Code of Civil Procedure was subsequently amended to cure the constitutionality issue (Stats. 2003, ch. 877), by adding a provision allowing the local public agency employer to reject the decision of the arbitration panel:

The employer may by unanimous vote of all the members of the governing body reject the decision of the arbitration panel, except as specifically provided to the contrary in a city, county, or city and county charter with respect to the rejection of an arbitration award.³⁴

However, that statute was not pled in the test claim and the Commission makes no finding with regard to it.

The Commission's Prior Decision

The Commission denied this test claim, for the activities related to local government participation in binding arbitration, pursuant to Code of Civil Procedure sections 1281.1, and 1299 through 1299.9. The Commission concluded the following:

[T]he Commission finds that the test claim legislation does not constitute a new program or higher level of service. The test claim legislation requires the local agency to engage in a binding arbitration process that may result in increased costs associated with employee compensation or benefits. The cases have consistently held that additional costs alone, in absence of some increase in the actual level or quality of governmental services *provided to the public*, do not constitute an "enhanced service to the public" and therefore do not impose a new program or higher level of service on local governments within the meaning of article XIII B, section 6 of the California Constitution. Since strikes by law enforcement officers and fire services personnel are prohibited by law, no successful argument can be made that the test claim legislation affects law enforcement or firefighting service *to the public*.

The claimant had initially requested reimbursement for: 1) costs to litigate the constitutionality of the test claim statutes; 2) increased costs for salaries and benefits that could result from the binding arbitration award; 3) increased costs for compensation package "enhancements" that could be offered by the local agency as a result of vulnerabilities in its bargaining position; and 4) other costs related to binding arbitration activities.

At the hearing, however, the claimant withdrew its request for reimbursement for litigation, compensation and compensation enhancement costs.³⁵ Testimony was also provided at the hearing that regardless of the legality of strikes by public safety personnel, strikes do still occur in the less obvious form of "blue flu" or in other ways.³⁶ The claimant also presented exhibits at the hearing consisting of test claims and parameters and guidelines related to collective bargaining that were previously heard by the Commission.

Removing the costs for litigating the constitutionality of the test claim legislation and employee compensation significantly modified the test claim, causing the need for a reevaluation of activities that are required by the test claim statute (e.g., designating an arbitration panel member and participating in hearings) in light of the relevant case law.

The request for reconsideration alleged the following error of law:

The statement of decision relied upon cases supporting the concept that no higher level of service to the public is provided when there are increased costs for compensation or benefits *alone*. For example, *City of Richmond v. Commission on State Mandates* (1998) 64 Cal.App.4th 1190, cited in the statement of decision, held that even though increased employee benefits may generate a higher quality of local safety officers, the test claim legislation did not constitute a new program or higher level of service; the court stated that "[a] higher cost to the local government for compensating its employees is not the same as a higher cost of providing services to the public." However, *City of Richmond* was based on test claim legislation that

³⁵ Exhibit D, Reporter's Transcript of Proceedings, July 28, 2006, pages 104-106.

³⁶ Exhibit D, Reporter's Transcript of Proceedings, July 28, 2006, pages 98-99.

increased the cost for death benefits for local safety members, but did not result in actual mandated activities.

The statement of decision also relied upon *San Diego Unified School Dist. v. Commission on State Mandates* (2004) 33 Cal.4th 859, which summarized and reaffirmed several previous cases to illustrate what constitutes a “new program or higher level of service.” However, none of the older cases cited [— i.e., *County of Los Angeles v. State of California* (1987) 43 Cal.3d 46, *City of Anaheim v. State of California* (1987) 189 Cal.App.3d 1478, *City of Sacramento v. State of California* (1990) 50 Cal.3d 51, and *City of Richmond v. Commission On State Mandates, et al.* (1998) 64 Cal.App.4th 1190, —] denied reimbursement for actual activities imposed on the local agencies. In addition, *San Diego Unified School Dist.* did not address the issue of “new program or higher level of service” in the context of actual activities mandated by test claim legislation which increased the costs of employee compensation or benefits.³⁷

Claimant's Position

The claimant contends that the test claim statutes constitute a reimbursable state-mandated program within the meaning of article XIII B, section 6 of the California Constitution and Government Code section 17514.

Claimant asserts that costs for the following activities will be incurred and are reimbursable:

1. Costs for training agency management, counsel, staff and members of governing bodies regarding SB 402 as well as the intricacies thereof.
2. Costs incident to restructuring bargaining units that include employees that are covered by SB 402 and those which are not covered by SB 402.
3. Increased staff time in preparing for negotiations in order to collect and compile comparability data specified in Code of Civil Procedure, section 1299.4.
4. Increased time of agency negotiators, including staff, consultants, and attorneys, in handling two track negotiations: those economic issues which are subject to SB 402 arbitration and those issues which are not subject to arbitration.
5. Time to prepare for and consult with the governing board regarding the last best and final offer to be submitted to the arbitration panel.
6. Time to prepare for and participate in any mediation process.
7. Consulting time of negotiators, staff and counsel in selecting the agency panel member.
8. Time of the agency negotiators, staff and counsel in vetting and selecting a neutral arbitrator.
9. Time of the agency negotiators, staff and counsel in briefing the agency panel member.
10. Time of the agency negotiators, staff and counsel in preparing for the arbitration hearing.
11. Time of the agency negotiators, staff and counsel in vetting, selecting and preparing expert witnesses.
12. Time of the agency panel member and attorney in pre-arbitration meetings of the panel.
13. Staff and attorney time involved in discovery pursuant to Code of Civil Procedure, sections 1281.1, 1281.2 and 1299.8.
14. Staff, attorney, witness and agency panel member time for the hearings.

³⁷ Exhibit B, Request for Reconsideration, page 3.

15. Attorney time in preparing the closing brief.
16. Agency panel member time in consulting in closed sessions with the panel.
17. Time of the attorney, negotiators, and staff consulting with the agency panel member prior to the issuance of the award.
18. Time of the attorney, negotiators, staff, agency panel member, and governing board consulting regarding the award and giving directions to agency negotiators.
19. Time of the agency negotiators to negotiate with the union's negotiating representatives based on the award.
20. Costs of inevitable litigation regarding the interpretation of critical provisions of the law which are ambiguous, including the fact that the act covers "all other forms of remuneration;" and covers employees performing "any related duties" to firefighting and investigating.

Claimant argued, in its April 13, 2006 comments on the first draft staff analysis, that "[a]s of January 1, 2001, local government officials had no alternative other than to enforce the provisions of this statute until it was declared unconstitutional, otherwise they would be subject to a writ of mandate to compel binding arbitration." Claimant further states that "[i]n fact, it was because the County of Riverside refused to engage in binding arbitration that the writ of mandate action was commenced against it, resulting in the decision of the Supreme Court which made this test claim statute invalid as being unconstitutional." Claimant believes the cases cited by Commission staff in the analysis are not on point.

Claimant also points out that as legislation goes through the process of being adopted "there are a plethora of committee hearings and analyses performed" and "if there is any risk for a statute being declared unconstitutional, it should be borne by the State, which has the resources for a full and complete analysis of pending legislation prior to enactment." Claimant concludes that "[l]ocal authorities have no alternative than to assume that legislation is valid until such time as it is declared unconstitutional by the courts of the State of California." Therefore, claimant contends, the Commission should find that Binding Arbitration was a reimbursable, mandated program from its effective date until it was declared unconstitutional.

Claimant also provided testimony that, regardless of the legality of strikes by public safety personnel, strikes do still occur by these personnel in the less obvious form of "blue flu" or via other methods.

Co-Claimant's Position

The County of Napa joined as co-claimant on January 23, 2007, alleging costs exceeding \$10,000 to engage in binding arbitration with the Napa County Deputy Sheriffs' Association. The County appeared at the January 25, 2007, hearing and provided testimony agreeing with the final and supplemental staff analyses.

Department of Finance Position

Department of Finance submitted comments on the test claim concluding that the administrative and compensation costs claimed in the test claim are not reimbursable costs pursuant to article XIII B, section 6 of the California Constitution, based on various court decisions and the provisions of the test claim statutes. Specifically, the Department asserted that:

- 1) the test claim statutes do not create a new program or higher level of service in an existing program, and the costs alleged do not stem from the performance of a requirement unique to local government;
- 2) alleged higher costs for compensating the claimant's employees are not reimbursable, since compensation of employees in general is a cost that all employers must pay; furthermore, allowing reimbursement for any such costs could "undermine an employer's incentive to collectively bargain in good faith;"
- 3) alleged cost for increased compensation is not unique to local government; even though claimant may argue that compensation of firefighters and law enforcement officers is unique to local government, the "focus must be on the hardly unique function of compensating employees in general;" and
- 4) Code of Civil Procedure section 1299.9, subdivision (b), provides that costs of the arbitration proceeding and expenses of the arbitration panel, except those of the employer representative, are to be borne by the employee organization; in the test claim statutes, the Legislature specifically found that the duties of the local agency employer representatives are substantially similar to the duties required under the current collective bargaining procedures and therefore the costs incurred in performing those duties are not reimbursable state mandated costs; and thus, during the course of arbitration proceedings, "there are not any net costs that the employers would have to incur that would not have been incurred in good faith bargaining or that are not covered by the employee organizations."

The Department provided additional comments on the draft staff analysis for reconsideration of the prior decision, concurring in Commission staff's findings recommending the test claim be denied. However, at the January 25, 2007, hearing, after the County of Napa alleged actual costs for engaging in binding arbitration, the Department provided testimony agreeing with the final and supplemental staff analyses.

COMMISSION FINDINGS

The courts have found that article XIII B, section 6 of the California Constitution³⁸ recognizes the state constitutional restrictions on the powers of local government to tax and spend.³⁹ "Its purpose is to preclude the state from shifting financial responsibility for carrying out governmental functions to local agencies, which are 'ill equipped' to assume increased financial

³⁸ Article XIII B, section 6, subdivision (a), (as amended by Proposition 1A in November 2004) provides: "Whenever the Legislature or any state agency mandates a new program or higher level of service on any local government, the State shall provide a subvention of funds to reimburse that local government for the costs of the program or increased level of service, except that the Legislature may, but need not, provide a subvention of funds for the following mandates: (1) Legislative mandates requested by the local agency affected. (2) Legislation defining a new crime or changing an existing definition of a crime. (3) Legislative mandates enacted prior to January 1, 1975, or executive orders or regulations initially implementing legislation enacted prior to January 1, 1975."

³⁹ *Department of Finance v. Commission on State Mandates (Kern High School Dist.)* (2003) 30 Cal.4th 727, 735.

responsibilities because of the taxing and spending limitations that articles XIII A and XIII B impose.⁴⁰ A test claim statute or executive order may impose a reimbursable state-mandated program if it orders or commands a local agency or school district to engage in an activity or task.⁴¹ In addition, the required activity or task must be new, constituting a “new program,” and it must create a “higher level of service” over the previously required level of service.⁴²

The courts have defined a “program” subject to article XIII B, section 6, of the California Constitution, as one that carries out the governmental function of providing public services, or a law that imposes unique requirements on local agencies or school districts to implement a state policy, but does not apply generally to all residents and entities in the state.⁴³ To determine if the program is new or imposes a higher level of service, the test claim legislation must be compared with the legal requirements in effect immediately before the enactment of the test claim legislation.⁴⁴ A “higher level of service” occurs when there is “an increase in the actual level or quality of governmental services provided.”⁴⁵

Finally, the newly required activity or increased level of service must impose costs mandated by the state.⁴⁶

The Commission is vested with exclusive authority to adjudicate disputes over the existence of state-mandated programs within the meaning of article XIII B, section 6.⁴⁷ In making its decisions, the Commission must strictly construe article XIII B, section 6 and not apply it as an “equitable remedy to cure the perceived unfairness resulting from political decisions on funding priorities.”⁴⁸

⁴⁰ *County of San Diego v. State of California* (1997) 15 Cal.4th 68, 81.

⁴¹ *Long Beach Unified School Dist. v. State of California* (1990) 225 Cal.App.3d 155, 174.

⁴² *San Diego Unified School Dist. v. Commission on State Mandates* (2004) 33 Cal.4th 859, 878 (*San Diego Unified School Dist.*); *Lucia Mar Unified School District v. Honig* (1988) 44 Cal.3d 830, 835-836 (*Lucia Mar*).

⁴³ *San Diego Unified School Dist.*, *supra*, 33 Cal.4th 859, 874, (reaffirming the test set out in *County of Los Angeles v. State of California* (1987) 43 Cal.3d 46, 56 (*Los Angeles*); *Lucia Mar*, *supra*, 44 Cal.3d 830, 835).

⁴⁴ *San Diego Unified School Dist.*, *supra*, 33 Cal.4th 859, 877; *Lucia Mar*, *supra*, 44 Cal.3d 830, 835.

⁴⁵ *San Diego Unified School Dist.*, *supra*, 33 Cal.4th 859, 877.

⁴⁶ *County of Fresno v. State of California* (1991) 53 Cal.3d 482, 487; *County of Sonoma v. Commission on State Mandates* (2000) 84 Cal.App.4th 1265, 1284 (*County of Sonoma*); Government Code sections 17514 and 17556.

⁴⁷ *Kinlaw v. State of California* (1991) 54 Cal.3d 326, 331-334; Government Code sections 17551, 17552.

⁴⁸ *County of Sonoma*, *supra*, 84 Cal.App.4th 1264, 1280, citing *City of San Jose v. State of California* (1996) 45 Cal.App.4th 1802, 1817.

This reconsideration poses the following issues:

- Is the final decision on the *Binding Arbitration* test claim, adopted on July 28, 2006, contrary to law?
- Are the test claim statutes subject to article XIII B, section 6 of the California Constitution?
- Do the test claim statutes constitute a “new program or higher level of service” within the meaning of article XIII B, section 6 of the California Constitution?
- Do the test claim statutes impose “costs mandated by the state” within the meaning of article XIII B, section 6 of the California Constitution and Government Code section 17514?

Issue 1: Is the prior final decision on the *Binding Arbitration* test claim, adopted on July 28, 2006, contrary to law?

The *Binding Arbitration* test claim was denied based on the finding that it did not impose a “new program or higher level of service” on local agencies within the meaning of article XIII B, section 6 of the California Constitution. The test claim statutes were found to constitute a “program,” since they impose unique requirements on local agencies that do not apply generally to all residents and entities in the state. However, since strikes by public safety personnel are illegal, and no other service to the public could be identified, the test claim statutes were not found to constitute an enhanced service to the public.

Because the claimant requested reimbursement for employee compensation costs in the original test claim, the analysis relied upon case law applicable to that situation, i.e., where reimbursement was sought for employee compensation or other benefit-related costs *alone* and no actual activities had been claimed. However, since the test claim was modified at the hearing to withdraw the request for reimbursement for employee compensation costs, the costs and activities that remain must be re-analyzed as a factual situation that can be distinguished from the situations in the case law originally cited.

The prior final decision relied upon cases supporting the concept that no higher level of service to the public is provided when there are increased costs for compensation or benefits *alone*. For example, *City of Richmond v. Commission on State Mandates* (1998) 64 Cal.App.4th 1190, cited in the Statement of Decision, held that even though increased employee benefits may generate a higher quality of local safety officers, the test claim statutes did not constitute a new program or higher level of service; the court stated that “[a] higher cost to the local government for compensating its employees is not the same as a higher cost of providing services to the public.” However, *City of Richmond* was based on test claim statutes that increased the cost for death benefits for local safety members, but did not result in actual mandated activities.

The prior final decision also relied upon *San Diego Unified School Dist. v. Commission on State Mandates* (2004) 33 Cal.4th 859, which summarized and reaffirmed several previous cases to illustrate what constitutes a “new program or higher level of service.” However, none of the older cases cited — i.e., *County of Los Angeles v. State of California* (1987) 43 Cal.3d 46, *City of Anaheim v. State of California* (1987) 189 Cal.App.3d 1478, *City of Sacramento v. State of California* (1990) 50 Cal.3d 51, and *City of Richmond v. Commission On State Mandates, et al.* (1998) 64 Cal.App.4th 1190, — denied reimbursement for actual activities imposed on the local

agencies. In addition, *San Diego Unified School Dist.* did not address the issue of “new program or higher level of service” in the context of actual activities mandated by test claim statutes which increased the costs of employee compensation or benefits.

Although there is no case law directly on point for the situation where the test claim statutes impose activities that are unique to local government but do not clearly provide a service to the public, prior test claims have allowed reimbursement in such circumstances. Furthermore, since testimony was provided at the hearing that strikes by public safety personnel do occur, albeit in the less obvious form of “blue flu” or by other means, the legislative purpose for the test claim statutes must be reevaluated in the analysis to determine whether the provisions result in an increase in the level or quality of governmental services provided.

The Commission finds that the prior final decision for this test claim is contrary to law, and the Statement of Decision should be replaced to reflect the following new analysis and the resulting findings.

Issue 2: Are the test claim statutes subject to article XIII B, section 6 of the California Constitution?

Do the Test Claim Statutes Mandate Any Activities?

In order for a test claim statute or regulation to impose a reimbursable state-mandated program under article XIII B, section 6, the language must mandate an activity or task upon local governmental agencies. If the language does not mandate or require local agencies to perform a task, then article XIII B, section 6 is not triggered.⁴⁹

As amended at the hearing on this test claim, claimant is seeking reimbursement for the following activities: 1) costs for training on the test claim statute; 2) costs for restructuring bargaining units; 3) discovery activities pursuant to Code of Civil Procedure sections 1281.1, 1281.2 and 1299.8; 4) selecting the agency panel member and neutral arbitrator, and briefings; 5) preparing for and consulting with governing board regarding the last best and final offer; 6) preparing for and participating in negotiations, mediation and arbitration hearings; and 7) costs of litigating interpretation of the test claim statutes.

Training Costs

The Commission finds that training agency management, counsel, staff and members of governing bodies regarding binding arbitration is *not required* by the plain language of the test claim statutes. Therefore, these costs are not state-mandated or subject to article XIII B, section 6.

Costs for Restructuring Bargaining Units

The Commission finds that the plain language of the test claim statutes *does not require* bargaining units to be restructured. Therefore, any costs associated with such restructuring are not state-mandated or subject to article XIII B, section 6.

Discovery Activities Pursuant to Code of Civil Procedure Sections 1281.1, 1281.2 and 1299.8

When one party refuses to engage in arbitration, section 1281.2 establishes grounds for a court to determine whether there is a legal requirement to engage in arbitration, and to compel arbitration

⁴⁹*City of Merced v. State of California* (1984) 153 Cal.App.3d 777, 783 (*City of Merced*).

if necessary. Sections 1281.1 and 1299.8 make these provisions applicable to binding arbitration proceedings set forth under the test claim statutes. The Commission finds that activities related to discovery, pursuant to these sections, are not required.

Under the test claim statutes, arbitration is compelled when an impasse has been declared and the employee organization initiates arbitration. The only party that would refuse to engage in binding arbitration under this scenario is the local public agency employer, and such a decision to refuse to engage in arbitration is discretionary. Any discovery activities claimed by these provisions would be triggered by that discretionary decision, and thus are not state-mandated or subject to article XIII B, section 6.

Selecting Agency Panel Member and Neutral Arbitrator

Code of Civil Procedure section 1299.4, subdivision (b), states that:

Within three days after receipt of the written notification [triggering binding arbitration], each party shall designate a person to serve as its member of an arbitration panel. Within five days thereafter, or within additional periods to which they mutually agree, the two members of the arbitration panel appointed by the parties shall designate an impartial person with experience in labor and management dispute resolution to act as chairperson of the arbitration panel.

Subdivision (c) further states:

In the event that the parties are unable or unwilling to agree upon a third person to serve as chairperson, the two members of the arbitration panel shall jointly request from the American Arbitration Association a list of seven impartial and experienced persons who are familiar with matters of employer-employee relations. The two panel members may as an alternative, jointly request a list of seven names from the California State Mediation and Conciliation Service, or a list from either entity containing more or less than seven names, so long as the number requested is an odd number. If after five days of receipt of the list, the two panel members cannot agree on which of the listed persons shall serve as chairperson, they shall, within two days, alternately strike names from the list, with the first panel member to strike names being determined by lot. The last person whose name remains on the list shall be chairperson.

Claimant is seeking reimbursement for: 1) consulting time of negotiators, staff and counsel in selecting the agency panel member; 2) time of the agency negotiators, staff and counsel in vetting and selecting a neutral arbitrator; and 3) time of the agency negotiators, staff and counsel in briefing the agency panel member. The Commission finds that the plain language of the test claim statutes requires only that the public agency employer select an agency panel member. The test claim statutes require the arbitration *panel members* selected by the parties, rather than the employer or employee organization, to select the neutral third panel member to act as chairperson. Moreover, nothing in the test claim statutes requires the public agency panel member to be briefed.

Thus the only activity required is the selection of an agency panel member, and, therefore, that activity alone is state-mandated and subject to article XIII B, section 6.

Prepare for and Consult with Governing Board Regarding Last Best Offer of Settlement

Code of Civil Procedure section 1299.6, subdivision (a), requires that, once the arbitration process is triggered, the arbitration panel shall direct that five days prior to the commencement of its hearings the local public agency employer and employee organization shall submit "the last best offer of settlement as to each of the issues within the scope of arbitration ... made in bargaining as a proposal or counterproposal and not previously agreed to by the parties prior to any arbitration request" The test claim statutes *do not*, however, require the local public agency employer to prepare for and consult with the governing board regarding the last best offer of settlement. Thus the only activity required is to *submit* the last best final offer of settlement to the arbitration panel, and, therefore, that activity alone is state-mandated and subject to article XIII B, section 6.

Prepare for and Engage in Negotiations, Mediation and Hearings

The claimant is seeking reimbursement for increased costs associated with collecting and compiling comparability data specified in Code of Civil Procedure section 1299.4, handling two-track negotiations (for economic issues that are subject to arbitration and economic issues that are not subject to arbitration), and preparing for and participating in mediation.

The Commission finds that the plain language of the test claim statutes *does not require* the local public agency to collect and compile comparability data in preparation for negotiations, to handle "two-track" negotiations, or to participate in mediation, when such activities occur outside the arbitration process. Therefore, any costs associated with such preparation or negotiations prior to the arbitration process being triggered are not state-mandated or subject to article XIII B, section 6.

However, once the arbitration process is triggered — by declaration of the negotiation impasse and the employee organization's request for arbitration — the arbitration panel can direct the parties to take various actions. The panel may "meet with the parties or their representatives, either jointly or separately, make inquiries and investigations, hold hearings, and take any other action including further mediation, that the arbitration panel deems appropriate."⁵⁰ For the purposes of its hearings, investigations or inquiries, the panel may also "subpoena witnesses, administer oaths, take the testimony of any person, and issue subpoenas duces tecum to require the production and examination of any employer's or employee organization's records, books, or papers relating to any subject matter before the panel."⁵¹

Additionally, Code of Civil Procedure section 1299.8 states that, unless otherwise provided in the test claim statutes, the general provisions regarding arbitration found in the Code of Civil Procedure⁵² are applicable to binding arbitration proceedings under the test claim statutes. The relevant portions of these general arbitration provisions establish procedures for the conduct of hearings such as notice of hearings, witness lists, admissible evidence, subpoenas, and depositions.⁵³

⁵⁰ Code of Civil Procedure section 1299.5, subdivision (a).

⁵¹ Code of Civil Procedure section 1299.5, subdivision (b).

⁵² Code of Civil Procedure sections 1280 et seq.

⁵³ Code of Civil Procedure sections 1282 et seq.

Section 1299.9, subdivision (b), states that, unless otherwise agreed to by the parties, the costs of the arbitration proceeding and the expenses of the arbitration panel, *except those of the employer representative*, shall be borne by the employee organization. Thus, the public agency employer is responsible for costs of its agency panel member, but not the cost of the proceeding or the other panel members.

Claimant is seeking reimbursement for the following remaining activities:

1. time of the agency negotiators, staff and counsel in preparing for the arbitration hearing;
2. time of the agency negotiators, staff and counsel in vetting, selecting and preparing expert witnesses;
3. time of the agency panel member and attorney in pre-arbitration meetings of the panel;
4. staff, attorney, witness and agency panel member time for the hearings;
5. agency panel member time in consulting in closed sessions with the panel;
6. attorney time in preparing the closing brief;
7. time of the attorney, negotiators, and staff in consulting with the agency panel member prior to the issuance of the award;
8. time of the attorney, negotiators, staff, agency panel member, and governing board consulting regarding the award and giving directions to agency negotiators; and
9. time of the agency negotiators to negotiate with the union's negotiating representatives based on the award.

Once arbitration is triggered under Code of Civil Procedure section 1299.4, the arbitration panel, within the scope of its authority, may direct the parties to perform specified activities. Since the arbitration proceeding, once triggered, is mandatory, the Commission finds that the activities directed by the arbitration panel or activities initiated by the local public agency employer to participate in arbitration, are not discretionary. As noted above, the arbitration panel's authority includes meeting with the parties or their representatives, making inquiries and investigations, holding hearings, and taking any other action including further mediation, that the arbitration panel deems appropriate,⁵⁴ as well as subpoenaing witnesses, administering oaths, taking the testimony of any person, and issuing subpoenas duces tecum to require the production and examination of any employer's or employee organization's records, books, or papers relating to any subject matter before the panel.⁵⁵

The plain language of the test claim statutes does not require the local public agency, or its staff or governing board, to prepare for hearings, prepare expert witnesses, prepare a closing brief, consult with its panel member prior to issuance of the award, or negotiate with the employee organization representatives based on the award. Further, the plain language of the test claim statutes does not require the employer's arbitration panel member to participate in pre-arbitration meetings with local agency staff, consult with local agency staff prior to issuance of the award, consult in closed session with the arbitration panel, or consult with local agency staff and the

⁵⁴ Code of Civil Procedure section 1299.5, subdivision (a).

⁵⁵ Code of Civil Procedure section 1299.5, subdivision (b).

governing board regarding the award. However, to the extent that any of the above activities are directed by the arbitration panel within the scope of its authority, the activity is state-mandated.

Thus, once arbitration is triggered under Code of Civil Procedure section 1299.4, only the following activities, *to participate in the arbitration process or as required by the arbitration panel*, are state-mandated and subject to article XIII B, section 6:

1. Meet with the arbitration panel (Code Civ. Proc. § 1299.5, subd. (a)).
2. Cooperate in inquiries or investigations (Code Civ. Proc. § 1299.5, subd. (a)).
3. Participate in mediation (Code Civ. Proc. § 1299.5, subd. (a)).
4. Participate in hearings (Code Civ. Proc. § 1299.5, subd. (a)).
5. Respond to subpoenas and subpoenas duces tecum (Code Civ. Proc. § 1299.5, subd. (b)).
6. Respond to or make demands for witness lists and/or documents (Code Civ. Proc. § 1282.2, subd. (a)(2)).
7. Make application and respond to deposition requests (Code Civ. Proc. §§ 1283, 1283.05).
8. Conduct discovery or respond to discovery requests (Code Civ. Proc. § 1283.05).

Costs of Litigating Interpretation of the Test Claim Statutes

Claimant is seeking “[c]osts of inevitable litigation regarding the interpretation of critical provisions of the law which are ambiguous,” including the fact that the act covers “all other forms of remuneration,” and covers employees performing “any related duties” to firefighting and investigating. The Commission finds that litigating any aspect of the test claim statutes is *not required* by the plain language of the test claim statutes. Therefore, these costs are not state-mandated or subject to article XIII B, section 6.

Summary of State-Mandated Activities

In summary, the Commission finds the following activities are state-mandated, and therefore subject to article XIII B, section 6:

1. Selecting an arbitration panel member (Code Civ. Proc. § 1299.4, subd. (b)).
2. Submitting the last best final offer of settlement to the arbitration panel (Code Civ. Proc. § 1299.4, subd. (b)).
3. Once arbitration is triggered under Code of Civil Procedure section 1299.4, the following activities required by the arbitration panel or to participate in the arbitration process:
 - a. Meet with the arbitration panel (Code Civ. Proc. § 1299.5, subd. (a)).
 - b. Participate in inquiries or investigations (Code Civ. Proc. § 1299.5, subd. (a)).
 - c. Participate in mediation (Code Civ. Proc. § 1299.5, subd. (a)).
 - d. Participate in hearings (Code Civ. Proc. § 1299.5, subd. (a)).
 - e. Respond to subpoenas and subpoenas duces tecum (Code Civ. Proc. § 1299.5, subd. (b)).

- f. Respond to or make demands for witness lists and/or documents (Code Civ. Proc. § 1282.2, subd. (a)(2)).
- g. Make application and respond to deposition requests (Code Civ. Proc. §§ 1283, 1283.05).
- h. Conduct discovery or respond to discovery requests (Code Civ. Proc. § 1283.05).

These activities are only state-mandated for the time period in which the test claim statutes were presumed constitutional, January 1, 2001 through April 21, 2003.

Do the Mandated Activities Constitute a Program?

The courts have held that the term “program” within the meaning of article XIII B, section 6 means a program that carries out the governmental function of providing a service to the public, or laws which, to implement a state policy, impose unique requirements on local governments and do not apply generally to all residents and entities in the state.⁵⁶ Only one of these tests must be met in order to find that the test claim statutes constitute a “program.”

Here, the test claim statutes establish new binding arbitration activities for local public agency employers who employ peace officers and firefighters. The Department of Finance asserts that the costs alleged do not stem from the performance of a requirement unique to local government. The Commission disagrees with the Department, since the test claim statutes are *only* applicable to local public agency employers who employ peace officers and firefighters, and there is no other requirement statewide for employers to engage in binding arbitration with employee organizations. Hence the test claim statutes do not apply generally to all residents and entities in the state.

Moreover, based on the plain language of the test claim statutes, the Legislature’s intent in enacting the statutes was to “protect the health and welfare of the public by providing impasse remedies necessary to afford public employers the opportunity to safely alleviate the effects of labor strife that would otherwise lead to strikes by firefighters and law enforcement officers.”⁵⁷ Although strikes by law enforcement officers and firefighters are illegal, there is evidence in the record indicating that such strikes nevertheless occur.⁵⁸ Thus, the intent of these statutes is to prevent strikes by local safety officers thereby providing a service to the public.

Therefore, the Commission finds that the activities mandated by the test claim statutes constitute a “program,” within the meaning of article XIII B, section 6, under either of the tests set forth in *County of Los Angeles*.

Issue 3: Do the test claim statutes constitute a “new program or higher level of service” within the meaning of article XIII B, section 6 of the California Constitution?

A test claim statute or executive order imposes a “new program or higher level of service” when the mandated activities: a) are new in comparison with the pre-existing scheme; and

⁵⁶ *County of Los Angeles v. State of California* (1987) 43 Cal.3d 46, 56 (*County of Los Angeles*).

⁵⁷ Code of Civil Procedure section 1299.

⁵⁸ Exhibit D, Reporter’s Transcript of Proceedings, July 28, 2006, pages 98-99.

b) result in an increase in the actual level or quality of governmental services provided by the local public agency.⁵⁹ The first step in making this determination is to compare the mandated activities with the legal requirements in effect immediately before the enactment of the test claim statute and regulations.

Prior to the enactment of the test claim statutes, local public agency employers were required to meet and confer in good faith with recognized employee organizations under the Meyers-Milias-Brown Act. The test claim statutes added new state-mandated activities relating to binding arbitration. Thus, the program is new in comparison with the pre-existing scheme.

Because the Legislature's intent in enacting test claim statutes was to prevent strikes by local firefighters and peace officers, and the statutes require local public agencies that employ these local safety officers to engage in new activities to prevent such strikes, the statutes result in an increase in the actual level or quality of services provided by the local public agency.

Therefore, the Commission finds that the activities mandated by the test claim statutes constitute a "new program or higher level of service" within the meaning of article XIII B, section 6.

Issue 4: Do the test claim statutes impose "costs mandated by the state" within the meaning of article XIII B, section 6 of the California Constitution and Government Code section 17514?

For the test claim statutes to impose a reimbursable, state-mandated program, the new activities must impose costs mandated by the state pursuant to Government Code section 17514. Government Code section 17514 defines "costs mandated by the state" as any increased cost a local agency is required to incur as a result of a statute that mandates a new program or higher level of service.

The claimant stated in the test claim that "[t]he activities necessary to comply with the mandated activities cost well in excess of \$200.00 per year ..."⁶⁰ Thus, the claimant initially provided evidence in the record, signed under penalty of perjury, that there would be increased costs as a result of the test claim statutes. However, new evidence was provided at the July 25, 2006, Commission hearing for this test claim, under oath, that the claimant did not get to a stage in negotiations where binding arbitration was triggered.⁶¹ Since no activities are reimbursable prior to the point at which binding arbitration is triggered under Code of Civil Procedure section 1299.4, claimant did not in fact incur any costs mandated by the state to comply with the mandated activities during the limited reimbursement period in question (January 1, 2001 through April 21, 2003).

On January 23, 2007, co-claimant County of Napa provided a declaration stating that the binding arbitration process was triggered in that county, pursuant to Code of Civil Procedure sections

⁵⁹ *San Diego Unified School Dist.*, *supra*, 33 Cal.4th 859, 877; *Lucia Mar*, *supra*, 44 Cal.3d 830, 835.

⁶⁰ At the time the test claim was filed, Government Code section 17564, subdivision (a), stated that the no test claim or reimbursement claim shall be made unless the claim exceeds \$200. That section was subsequently modified in Statutes 2002, chapter 1124, to increase the minimum to \$1,000. If this test claim is approved, any reimbursement claims must exceed \$1,000.

⁶¹ Exhibit D, Reporter's Transcript of Proceedings, July 28, 2006, pages 115-116.

1299 et. seq., and County staff participated in the process during the reimbursement period by: 1) engaging in mediation; 2) designating an arbitration panel member; 3) meeting with the arbitrators; 4) gathering and exchanging requested information, exhibits, and witness lists; 5) conducting discovery; and 6) participating in a three-day arbitration hearing.⁶² Therefore, the County of Napa did engage in some of the state-mandated activities. The County further stated that its costs to participate in these activities exceeded \$10,000. Thus, there is now evidence in the record, signed under penalty of perjury, that there are increased costs mandated by the state pursuant to Government Code sections 17514 and 17564 of at least \$1,000.

Government Code section 17556 lists several exceptions which preclude the Commission from finding costs mandated by the state. The Commission finds that none of the exceptions are applicable to deny this test claim.

Accordingly, the Commission finds that the activities mandated by the test claim statutes do impose "costs mandated by the state" within the meaning of article XIII B, section 6 of the California Constitution and Government Code section 17514.

CONCLUSION

The Commission finds that the prior Statement of Decision adopted on July 28, 2006, was contrary to law, and, in applying the appropriate law to the test claim, the test claim statutes mandate the following activities:

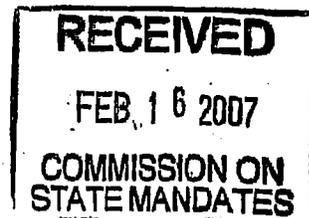
1. Selecting an arbitration panel member (Code Civ. Proc. § 1299.4, subd. (b)).
2. Submitting the last best final offer of settlement to the arbitration panel (Code Civ. Proc. § 1299.4, subd. (b)).
3. Once arbitration is triggered under Code of Civil Procedure section 1299.4, the following activities required by the arbitration panel or to participate in the arbitration process:
 - a. Meet with the arbitration panel (Code Civ. Proc. § 1299.5, subd. (a)).
 - b. Participate in inquiries or investigations (Code Civ. Proc. § 1299.5, subd. (a)).
 - c. Participate in mediation (Code Civ. Proc. § 1299.5, subd. (a)).
 - d. Participate in hearings (Code Civ. Proc. § 1299.5, subd. (a)).
 - e. Respond to subpoenas and subpoenas duces tecum (Code Civ. Proc. § 1299.5, subd. (b)).
 - f. Respond to or make demands for witness lists and/or documents (Code Civ. Proc. § 1282.2, subd. (a)(2)).
 - g. Make application and respond to deposition requests (Code Civ. Proc. §§ 1283, 1283.05).
 - h. Conduct discovery or respond to discovery requests (Code Civ. Proc. § 1283.05).

These activities constitute a "program" as well as a "new program or higher level of service." Furthermore, the activities impose "costs mandated by the state" within the meaning of

⁶² Declaration of Jacqueline M. Gong, Deputy County Counsel, Office of County Counsel, County of Napa, page 3, attached.

article XIII B, section 6 of the California Constitution, and Government Code section 17514. Because the test claim statutes were declared unconstitutional on April 21, 2003, however, the reimbursement period is limited to January 1, 2001 through April 20, 2003.

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ORIGINAL

PUBLIC HEARING

COMMISSION ON STATE MANDATES

--oOo--

TIME: 9:34 a.m.

DATE: Thursday, January 25, 2007

PLACE: State Capitol, Room 126
Sacramento, California

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REPORTER'S TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

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Reported by: Daniel P. Feldhaus
California Certified Shorthand Reporter #6949
Registered Diplomate Reporter, Certified Realtime Reporter

Daniel P. Feldhaus, C.S.R., Inc.
Certified Shorthand Reporters
8414 Yermo Way, Sacramento, California 95828
Telephone 916.682.9482 ♦ Fax 916.688.0723
FeldhausDepo@aol.com

A P P E A R A N C E S

COMMISSION STAFF PRESENT

PAULA HIGASHI
Executive Director

NANCY PATTON
Assistant Executive Director

CAMILLE SHELTON
Chief Legal Counsel
(Item 12)

DEBORAH BORZELLERI
Senior Commission Counsel
(Items 5 and 7)

KENNY LOUIE

---o0o---

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

Appearing Re Item 5:

For Co-Claimant City of Palos Verdes Estates:

PAMELA STONE
MAXIMUS
4320 Auburn Boulevard, Suite 2000
Sacramento, CA 95841

JUDY SMITH
Assistant City Manager
City of Palos Verdes Estates
340 Palos Verdes Drive West
Palos Verdes Estates, CA 90274

For Co-Claimant County of Napa:

JACQUELINE M. GONG
Deputy County Counsel
County of Napa
1195 Third Street, Room 301
Napa, CA 94559-3035

A P P E A R A N C E S

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

Appearing Re Item 5: *continued*

For Department of Finance:

DONNA FEREBEE
Staff Counsel III
Department of Finance
915 L Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

CARLA CASTAÑEDA
Principal Program Budget Analyst
Department of Finance
915 L Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Appearing Re Item 7:

For California State Association of Counties SB-90
Service:

ALLAN BURDICK
MAXIMUS
4320 Auburn Boulevard, Suite 2000
Sacramento, CA 95841

For Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training:

BRYON G. GUSTAFSON
Commission on POST
1601 Alhambra Boulevard
Sacramento, CA 95816-7083

For Department of Finance:

CARLA CASTAÑEDA
Principal Program Budget Analyst
Department of Finance

Commission on State Mandates - January 25, 2007

1 CHAIR SHEEHAN: Just to hold down the seat.

2 MS. STONE: Okay. I'm really good at holding
3 down seats.

4 CHAIR SHEEHAN: Exactly. She's there to --
5 So, I don't know -- Ms. Geanacou?

6 MS. GEANACOU: I think Ms. Castañeda will speak
7 first.

8 MS. CASTAÑEDA: Carla Castañeda, Department of
9 Finance.

10 We concur with the staff analysis that the POST
11 requirements are discretionary, and that any activities
12 required after that would not be reimbursable.

13 CHAIR SHEEHAN: Okay, and did you want to add
14 anything?

15 MR. GUSTAFSON: No, I think the staff analysis
16 is fine. Thank you.

17 *(Mr. Chivaro entered the room.)*

18 CHAIR SHEEHAN: All right, then why don't we
19 move on to the next item, and see if the individual --
20 did you want to --

21 MS. STONE: I'm not going to say anything right
22 now. I'm just holding the chair.

23 CHAIR SHEEHAN: All right. Then why don't we
24 move on to Item 12 -- well, we can go back to 5, I guess.
25 Actually, you can stay.

1 MS. STONE: Well, I'm here on Item 12, too,
2 so pick one.

3 MS. HIGASHI: Let's go back to Item 5.

4 CHAIR SHEEHAN: Let's do 5, yes, because you
5 guys can -- Finance can stay put, Ms. Stone, and then
6 Mr. Liebert and others can come forward. All right, and
7 then we'll just hold off on this one.

8 Ms. Borzelleri, is this one yours also?

9 MS. BORZELLERI: Correct.

10 This is the reconsideration of a prior final
11 decision on the *Binding Arbitration* test claim.

12 The prior final decision on this test claim, as
13 you're aware, was adopted at the Commission's July 28th,
14 2006, hearing. The binding arbitration statutes in the
15 context of labor relations between local public agencies
16 and their law enforcement officers and firefighters
17 provide that where an impasse in negotiations has been
18 declared and if the employee organization requests it,
19 the parties would be subjected to binding arbitration.

20 These statutes were effective January 1, 2001,
21 and then declared unconstitutional on April 21st, 2003.

22 The final staff analysis that we released
23 earlier this month recommended denial of the test claim,
24 since the claimant, City of Palos Verdes Estates, stated
25 that binding arbitration had not been triggered in its

1 jurisdiction. Therefore, the test claim statutes could
2 not have imposed costs mandated by the state. However,
3 on January 23rd, just a couple of days ago, the County of
4 Napa stepped forward and joined as a co-claimant on this
5 test claimant. The County submitted a declaration signed
6 under penalty of perjury that it, in fact, did reach an
7 impasse in negotiations with its deputy sheriffs
8 association, and did engage in some of the activities
9 that we determined, or are recommending were mandated by
10 the binding arbitration statutes.

11 The County alleged that it incurred costs of at
12 least a thousand dollars, which is the statutory minimum
13 to make a claim.

14 Staff then prepared a supplemental staff
15 analysis -- you should have received that, Members, there
16 are green copies on the table over there -- which
17 modified the staff's recommendation to partially approve
18 the test claim and adopt the final staff analysis, the
19 earlier release, with regard to issues 1, 2, and 3, and
20 adopt the supplemental staff analysis with regard to
21 issue 4.

22 The reimbursement period would be limited to
23 that period of time when the statutes were presumed
24 constitutional, which is January 1, 2001, through
25 April 20th, 2003.

1 The regulations require a super majority of
2 five affirmative votes of the Commission to adopt this
3 staff recommendation and change the prior final decision
4 that was adopted on July 28th, 2006.

5 Will the parties please state your name?

6 MS. STONE: Good morning, Madam Chair. Pamela
7 Stone on behalf of the City of Palos Verdes Estates.

8 MS. GONG: Good morning. Jacqueline Gong for
9 the County of Napa.

10 MS. SMITH: Judy Smith, Palos Verdes Estates.

11 MS. FEREBEE: Donna Ferebee, Department of
12 Finance.

13 MS. CASTAÑEDA: Carla Castañeda, Department of
14 Finance.

15 MS. STONE: Good morning, Madam Chair, Members
16 of the Commission. We would like to appreciate the fact
17 that your staff has undergone the analysis and come up
18 with the requests for reconsideration and the
19 supplemental analysis. And we would like to encourage
20 your Commission to adopt the new staff analysis,
21 including the supplement based on the findings of Napa
22 County.

23 And with us, we have Jacqueline Gong, Deputy
24 County Counsel from the County of Napa, who was the lucky

1 person to experience binding arbitration from start to
2 finish.

3 MS. GONG: Good morning. I just want to say
4 that we are fully in support of the staff analysis, and
5 would ask that you adopt the reconsideration.

6 Napa County is probably the one, if not the
7 only county in the state of California --

8 CHAIR SHEEHAN: So far. So far, yes.

9 MS. GONG: -- that went through the entire
10 SB 402 binding arbitration process in 2001. And I think
11 because of that, we do meet the test standards; and we
12 ask that you grant this petition to have us serve as a
13 co-test claimant here.

14 And if you have any questions, I'd be very open
15 to that.

16 CHAIR SHEEHAN: Any questions from the Members
17 for the Napa representative?

18 *(No response)*

19 CHAIR SHEEHAN: No? Okay.

20 MS. SMITH: I'm just -- Palos Verdes Estates
21 supports Napa joining as a co-test claimant.

22 CHAIR SHEEHAN: All right.

23 Finance?

24 MS. CASTAÑEDA: Carla Castañeda, Department of
25 Finance.

1 We have no objections to the staff analysis,
2 given this new submitted declaration of increased costs.

3 CHAIR SHEEHAN: Okay, all right.

4 Any questions from the Members on this one?

5 (No response)

6 CHAIR SHEEHAN: If not, we'll entertain a
7 motion.

8 MEMBER LUJANO: Move approval.

9 MEMBER GLAAB: Second.

10 CHAIR SHEEHAN: We have a motion by the
11 Treasurer's office, a second by Mr. Glaab, to adopt the
12 staff recommendation on the reconsideration.

13 Do you need a roll call, since we have a -- or
14 is a voice vote sufficient?

15 MS. HIGASHI: We should do a roll call.

16 CHAIR SHEEHAN: All right, so if we can call
17 the roll on this one, just because the requirements are
18 higher.

19 MS. HIGASHI: Ms. Bryant?

20 MEMBER BRYANT: Aye.

21 MS. HIGASHI: Mr. Chivaro?

22 MEMBER CHIVARO: Aye.

23 MS. HIGASHI: Mr. Glaab?

24 MEMBER GLAAB: Aye.

25 MS. HIGASHI: Mr. Lujano?

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1 MEMBER LUJANO: Aye.

2 MS. HIGASHI: Ms. Olsen?

3 MEMBER OLSEN: Aye.

4 MS. HIGASHI: Mr. Worthley?

5 MEMBER WORTHLEY: Aye.

6 MS. HIGASHI: Ms. Sheehan?

7 CHAIR SHEEHAN: Aye.

8 MS. HIGASHI: Thank you. The motion carries:

9 MS. STONE: Thank you very much.

10 CHAIR SHEEHAN: Thank you.

11 MS. HIGASHI: What we will do is we will
12 postpone Item 6 to the next hearing. We'll have to
13 update the Proposed Statement of Decision.

14 CHAIR SHEEHAN: All right, the final. That
15 sounds fine. So that will come back for vote only at our
16 next meeting.

17 MS. STONE: Thank you very much.

18 CHAIR SHEEHAN: Mr. Burdick?

19 So how did your phone call go?

20 MR. BURDICK: Members of the Commission, thank
21 you very much. Allan Burdick.

22 The phone call is, like many early ones, is
23 people are scurrying around to try to find the person, to
24 see if that person is sick or what the problem was.

25 Normally, I would have had some kind of --

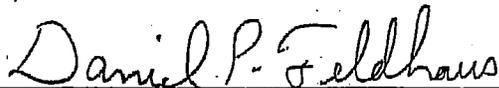
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I hereby certify that the foregoing proceedings were duly reported by me at the time and place herein specified;

That the proceedings were reported by me, a duly certified shorthand reporter and a disinterested person, and was thereafter transcribed into typewriting.

I further certify that I am not of counsel or attorney for either or any of the parties to said deposition, nor in any way interested in the outcome of the cause named in said caption.

In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand on February 15, 2007.



Daniel P. Feldhaus
California CSR #6949
Registered Diplomate Reporter
Certified Realtime Reporter

A P P E A R A N C E S

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

ANNE SHEEHAN, Chair
Representative for MICHAEL GENEST
Director
State Department of Finance

CYNTHIA BRYANT
Director
State Office of Planning and Research

RICHARD CHIVARO
Representative for JOHN CHIANG
State Controller

PAUL GLAAB
City Council Member
City of Laguna Niguel

FRANCISCO LUJANO
Representative for BILL LOCKYER
State Treasurer

SARAH OLSEN
Public Member

J. STEVEN WORTHLEY
Supervisor and Chairman of the Board
County of Tulare

--oOo--

Commission on State Mandates

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Mailing Information: Proposed SOD

Last Updated: 1/4/2007

List Print Date: 03/13/2007

Mailing List

Claim Number: 01-TC-07

Issue: Binding Arbitration

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Mr. Steve Shields

Shields Consulting Group, Inc.

1536 36th Street

Sacramento, CA 95816

Tel: (916) 454-7310

Fax: (916) 454-7312

Ms. Bonnie Ter Keurst

County of San Bernardino

Office of the Auditor/Controller-Recorder

222 West Hospitality Lane

San Bernardino, CA 92415-0018

Tel: (909) 386-8850

Fax: (909) 386-8830

Mr. Tom McMains

California Peace Officers' Association

1455 Response Road, Suite 190

Sacramento, CA 95815

Tel: (916) 263-0541

Fax: (916) 263-6090

Mr. Leonard Kaye, Esq.

County of Los Angeles

Auditor-Controller's Office

500 W. Temple Street, Room 603

Los Angeles, CA 90012

Tel: (213) 974-8564

Fax: (213) 617-8106

Ms. Susan Geanacou

Department of Finance (A-15)

915 L Street, Suite 1190

Sacramento, CA 95814

Tel: (916) 445-3274

Fax: (916) 324-4888

Mr. Steve Keil

California State Association of Counties

1100 K Street, Suite 101

Sacramento, CA 95814-3941

Tel: (916) 327-7523

Fax: (916) 441-5507

Ms. Annette Chinn
Cost Recovery Systems, Inc.
705-2 East Bidwell Street, #294
Folsom, CA 95630

Tel: (916) 939-7901
Fax: (916) 939-7801

Mr. David Wellhouse
David Wellhouse & Associates, Inc.
9175 Kiefer Blvd, Suite 121
Sacramento, CA 95826

Tel: (916) 368-9244
Fax: (916) 368-5723

Mr. Allan Burdick
MAXIMUS
4320 Auburn Blvd., Suite 2000
Sacramento, CA 95841

Claimant Representative
Tel: (916) 485-8102
Fax: (916) 485-0111

Mr. Jim Spano
State Controller's Office (B-08)
Division of Audits
300 Capitol Mall, Suite 518
Sacramento, CA 95814

Tel: (916) 323-5849
Fax: (916) 327-0832

Mr. John Liebert
Liebert Cassidy Whitmore
6033 W Century Blvd. #500
Los Angeles, CA 90045

Tel: (310) 645-6492
Fax:

Mr. James B. Hendrickson
City of Palos Verdes Estates
340 Palos Verdes Drive West
Palos Verdes Estates, CA 90274

Claimant
Tel: (310) 378-0383
Fax: (310) 378-7820

Mr. Steve Smith
Steve Smith Enterprises, Inc.
3323 Watt Avenue #291
Sacramento, CA 95821

Tel: (916) 216-4435
Fax: (916) 972-0873

Ms. Jacqueline M. Gong
County of Napa
1195 Third Street, Suite 301
Napa, CA 94559

Tel:
Fax:

Mr. J. Bradley Burgess
Public Resource Management Group
1380 Lead Hill Boulevard, Suite #106
Roseville, CA 95661

Tel: (916) 677-4233
Fax: (916) 677-2283

Ms. Amy Benton
California Professional Firefighters
1780 Creekside Oaks Drive, Suite 200

Tel: (916) 921-9111
Fax: (916) 921-1106

Sacramento, CA 95833

Ms. Carla Castaneda
Department of Finance (A-15)
915 L Street, 11th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

Tel: (916) 445-3274
Fax: (916) 323-9584

Ms. Donna Ferebee
Department of Finance (A-15)
915 L Street, 11th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

Tel: (916) 445-3274
Fax: (916) 323-9584

Ms. Pam Kindig
Napa County
Auditor-Controller's Office
1195 Third Street, Suite B-10
Napa, CA 94559

Tel:
Fax:

Ms. Nancy Watt
County of Napa
County Executive Office
1195 Third Street, Suite 310
Napa, CA 94559

Tel: (707) 253-4421
Fax: (707) 253-4176

Ms. Ginny Brummels
State Controller's Office (B-08)
Division of Accounting & Reporting
3301 C Street, Suite 500
Sacramento, CA 95816

Tel: (916) 324-0256
Fax: (916) 323-6527

Mr. Glen Everroad
City of Newport Beach
3300 Newport Blvd.
P. O. Box 1768
Newport Beach, CA 92659-1768

Tel: (949) 644-3127
Fax: (949) 644-3339

Ms. Beth Hunter
Centration, Inc.
8570 Utica Avenue, Suite 100
Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91730

Tel: (866) 481-2621
Fax: (866) 481-2682

Ms. Juliana F. Gmur
MAXIMUS
4320 Auburn Blvd., Suite 2000
Sacramento, CA 95841

Tel: (916) 485-8102
Fax: (916) 485-0111

