STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY
P.O. Box 47600 • Olympia, Washington 98504-7600
(360) 407-6000 • TDD Only (Hearing Impaired) (360) 407-6006

August 19, 1998

RECEIVED
AUG 27 1998
JLARC

Mr. Ronald Perry, Acting Legislative Auditor
Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee
P.O. Box 40910
506 – 16th Avenue SE
Olympia, WA 98501-2323

Dear Mr. Perry:

I am writing in response to your June 25, 1998 letter requesting a formal Department of Ecology (Ecology) response to JLARC's June 23, 1998 Preliminary Report on the Permit Assistance Center Sunset Review. In short, I can say that Ecology is very pleased with the thoroughness and comprehensiveness of the PAC sunset review. I also can say that the recommendations contained in the report (i.e., reauthorize the PAC at Ecology and institute an outcome and performance based measurement system for the PAC) are on-track and consistent with state and legislative objectives to make the regulatory process clearer, more accessible, and more responsive to all.

Consistent with your request for Ecology's position and comments, I have summarized these in the table below for each of the JLARC recommendations presented on page V of the report.

RECOMMENDATION	AGENCY POSITION	COMMENT
1	Concur	Ecology supports this recommendation, and will work with the PAC to develop a budget-based performance and outcome measurement system.
2	Concur	Ecology concurs with this recommendation. ** ** Note: Ecology believes the $1,000,000 fiscal impact figure for the 1999-2001 biennium is overstated and inconsistent with actual PAC budget and expenditure data as reported on page 8 (Exhibit 2) of the report. Ecology will work with JLARC to refine and revise the fiscal impact of operating the PAC at Ecology for the 1999-2001 biennium.

The Department of Ecology looks forward to continuing to work with JLARC through the conclusion of the PAC sunset review. I appreciate the fine work done to date, and encourage you to continue to work with the PAC as you finalize the June 23, 1998 report. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me. I can be reached at 360/407-7001. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Tom Fitzsimmons
Director

cc: Scott Boettcher — Ecology, Permit Assistance Center
Nancy Stevenson — Ecology, Chief Financial Officer
Jim Cahill — Office of Financial Management

September 18, 1998

Mr. Thomas M. Sykes
Legislative Auditor
Post Office Box 40910
Olympia, Washington 98504-0910

Dear Mr. Sykes: Tom

Thank you for your letter requesting the Office of Financial Management's (OFM) response to the preliminary report on the Sunset Review of the Permit Assistance Center by the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee as required under RCW 43.21J.800. Attached is OFM's response to this review in the format you requested. OFM will rely on this report rather than conducting its own program and fiscal review as allowed under RCW 43.131.050. If you have any questions regarding this response, please contact Jim Cahill at 902-0569.

Sincerely,

Dick

Dick Thompson
Director

DT:JC:lh
Enclosure
cc: Candace Espeseth

Office of Financial Management
Comments on the Preliminary Report for the Department of Ecology's Permit Assistance Center Sunset Review
September 18, 1998

Recommendation	Agency Position	Comments
Recommendation 1 *The Department of Ecology (DOE) should work with the Permit Assistance Center (PAC) to establish a strategic planning process and performance measurement system for the Center's operation, consistent with the requirements of Chapter 43.88 RCW (Budget and Accounting Act) that will provide the agency and the Legislature with better information about the effectiveness of the program.*	Concur	Additional performance measure data focused upon outcomes and effectiveness would greatly assist the Governor and the Legislature in evaluating the PAC's and other state agencies' permit processing activities.
Recommendation 2 *The Legislature should reauthorize the PAC within the DOE.* *As part of that legislation, consideration should be given to amending RCW 90.60.030 (5) to change the timing and content of the PAC annual report to a periodic report; which would be submitted at the discretion of the DOE and would contain specific policy and operational recommendations for enhancement of state environmental permitting coordination efforts, and include a status of the implementation of a strategic planning process and performance measurement system for the Center.*	Concur	OFM supports the continued operation of the PAC. Changing the reporting date and requirements will allow DOE to provide more timely and focused information on the PAC's effectiveness and comparison to other state permitting activities.