

I. INTRODUCTION

Protection and Advocacy, Inc. (PAI) submits this Annual Report to the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) to comply with Exhibit D, Paragraph 13, of Contract HD019001.

The Office of Clients' Rights Advocacy (OCRA) was established September 11, 1998, pursuant to a contract between DDS and PAI, to implement Welfare and Institutions Code 4433 which requires the establishment of a program to provide state-wide clients' rights advocacy services to consumers of California's 21 regional centers. Under the contract, OCRA assumed responsibility for the provision of advocacy services to regional center consumers starting July 1, 1999. The contract was renewed for an additional three years effective July 1, 2001.

OCRA takes great pride in its accomplishments during the past year. The statistics and work product for last year, which are discussed throughout this report, give ample evidence of those accomplishments.

OCRA currently operates 23 offices throughout the state of California, most of which are staffed by one CRA and one Assistant CRA. A list of the current staff and office locations is attached as Exhibit A.

PAI greatly appreciates the support and efforts of DDS and the regional centers in OCRA's performance of this contract. Without support from those agencies serving people with developmental disabilities, OCRA's efforts to ensure the rights of people with developmental disabilities throughout the state of California would not be so successful.

Paragraph 14, Exhibit D, specifies that the following information is to be contained in the Annual Report:

- 1) Number and type of clients' rights denials;
- 2) Nature, status, and outcome of complaints filed under the Contractor's grievance procedure;
- 3) Nature, status, and outcome of complaints filed under Title 17, California Code of Regulations, Section 50540 Complaint Procedure;

- 4) Aggregate data on consumers provided with services, including, but not limited to, age, sex, primary disability, ethnicity, type of residence, type of services provided, and examples of the outcomes of those services;
- 5) Achievement of the performance objectives;
- 6) Summary of the content, attendance, frequency; and evaluation of self-advocacy training provided;
- 7) The amount and source of any attorney's fees and costs collected; and
- 8) Recommendations for enhancement of services to be provided under the terms of the contract.

II. PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES

PAI's contract with DDS requires performance evaluation measures. On January 8, 2002, the Contract Manager met with PAI and gave verbal approval to the performance objectives that OCRA had proposed to DDS.

1. 75 percent of requests for assistance will be resolved informally as measured by the quarterly data.

OCRA exceeded this performance objective during the first year of the current contract. OCRA handled 8,395 requests for assistance during this reporting period. From August 1, 2001, through July 31, 2002, 224 (or less than 3 percent) were handled as requests for direct representation at hearing with more than 97 percent of the requests for assistance being resolved informally. Informal is defined as all services resolved below the due process hearing level. Therefore, significantly more than the required 75 percent of the cases were resolved informally. Data showing this is attached as Exhibit B. Data on whether cases were resolved informally for the month of July, 2001, was not captured by OCRA's Rhombus computer program, which was replaced by OCRA's DAD program effective August 1, 2001.

2. 7,560 issues will be resolved for people with developmental disabilities on an annual basis.

OCRA has continued its tradition of serving a large number of people with developmental disabilities and exceeded this performance objective by 11 percent. The performance objectives require OCRA to resolve 7,560 issues for people with developmental disabilities during the time period covered in this report. The statistics, attached as Exhibit C, show that OCRA served 8,397 consumers during this time period. It is important to note that during July, 2001, OCRA was using a computer program called Rhombus to maintain its cases and changed to DAD effective August 1, 2002. The reporting capabilities of the two programs are not compatible so one single report could not be generated. Instead, there are two separate reports for the different time periods. In this narrative, the figures from the two reports have been added together to correctly state the annual figures. It is clear that OCRA served significantly more people with developmental disabilities than required by the performance objective.

3. 80 percent of individuals with developmental disabilities receiving service from OCRA will be satisfied with those services as measured by the consumer satisfaction survey.

OCRA exceeded this performance standard with all areas of satisfaction exceeding 80 percent. From the results of the annual survey, it is clear that OCRA consumers are overwhelmingly satisfied with the services provided by OCRA. With a 38 percent return rate, 92 percent of the responders felt they were treated well by the staff, 90 percent understood the information they were provided, 92 percent believed their CRA listened to them, 84 percent believed they were helped by the CRA, and 88 percent would ask for help from the CRA again. See Exhibit D which discusses the results of OCRA's survey.

OCRA continues to utilize the original consumer satisfaction survey though OCRA and DDS have agreed that the consumer satisfaction survey currently used by OCRA will be modified. OCRA is in the process of developing a new survey instrument. Until the new survey tool is developed, OCRA has continued to measure consumer satisfaction by use of the instrument that was previously developed.

4. 75 percent of individuals with developmental disabilities receiving services from OCRA will indicate that their issue(s) was resolved in a timely manner as measured by the consumer satisfaction survey.

See Exhibit D which shows that OCRA provided timely services to over 75 percent of the consumers that OCRA served last year. In fact, 80 percent of the responders to the consumer satisfaction survey indicated that they received a call back within two days.

5. A minimum of one self advocacy training for individuals with developmental disabilities and/or their families will be held each year in each regional center catchment area.

At least one self advocacy training for consumers and their families was held in each regional center catchment area during the past year. OCRA developed two separate packets of information for staff to use in the mandated trainings on self-advocacy. The original self-advocacy packet was approved by DDS, as required under the previous contract. The most recent packet has been sent to DDS under separate cover and though the current contract does not require the approval of DDS, OCRA welcomes comments from DDS. If DDS wishes additional copies of the self-advocacy materials, please let OCRA know.

Self-Advocacy Trainings were held as follows:

Los Angeles Area	July 28, 2001
Valley Mountain Regional Center	August 14, 2001
East Los Angeles Regional Center	September 15, 2001
Golden Gate Regional Center	September 19, 2001
Statewide Training	October 5, 2001
North Bay Regional Center	October 10, 2001
Far Northern Regional Center	December 5, 2001
Tri-Counties Regional Center	February 20, 2002
Valley Mountain Regional Center	March 29, 2002
Inland Regional Center	April 11, 2002
Central Valley Regional Center	May 2, 2002
North Los Angeles County RC	May 3, 2002
San Diego Regional Center	May 11, 2002
Westside Regional Center	May 28, 2002

North Los Angeles County RC	May 28, 2002
Regional Center of the East Bay	June 2, 2002
Redwood Coast RC (Ukiah)	June 3, 2002
San Andreas Regional Center	June 3, 2002
Kern Regional Center	June 6, 2002
Redwood Coast RC (Clearlake)	June 7, 2002
Statewide Training	June 8, 2002
Redwood Coast RC (Eureka)	June 17, 2002
Far Northern Regional Center	June 21, 2002
South Central Los Angeles RC	June 25, 2002
San Gabriel/Pomona RC	June 26, 2002
Valley Mountain Regional Center	June 28, 2002
Regional Center of Orange County	July 20, 2002

As requested by DDS, individual critiques of the trainings are attached as Exhibit E.

6. OCRA will present at a minimum of 160 trainings per year on a variety of topics of interest to consumers, their families, regional center staff or other interested persons.

OCRA presented at 55 more trainings during the past year than required by this performance objective. One reason for this is that OCRA recognizes that outreach and training is an essential part of providing effective advocacy for regional center consumers. In fact, one of the essential services that OCRA offers is training on a wide variety of issues, including but not limited to, consumers' rights, abuse and neglect issues, special education, and conservatorships.

During the past year, OCRA presented at 215 trainings with a total attendance of approximately 14,068 people at the various trainings. This is significantly more than the 160 trainings required during this time period. It is obvious that OCRA presented information to a tremendous number of people.

7. In addition to the self-advocacy trainings, OCRA offices will present at a minimum of three outreach trainings to underrepresented communities each year.

OCRA has a priority of providing assistance to individuals from traditionally underserved communities. Eva Casas-Sarmiento serves as the Statewide Outreach Coordinator and Lisa Navarro serves as the Northern California Outreach Coordinator to assist the OCRA offices in implementation of their outreach plans. The plans were initially written last year for a year's time period and identified underrepresented groups in each catchment area for the offices to target for extra contact. The implementation of the plans for the past year was evaluated by the outreach coordinators. Based upon that evaluation, and using new census data and updated figures from DDS regarding the ethnicity of consumers served by each regional center, OCRA offices updated their outreach plans effective January 1, 2002. A detailed report on outreach and training is included here as Exhibit F.

8. To lead to greater cooperation with regional centers, OCRA will:

A. Develop or revise Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with each regional center that address that center's individual needs, concerns, and method of operation by July 1, 2002.

The OCRA Director met with the all of the regional centers during the last year to revise the existing MOUs except Golden Gate Regional Center (GGRC). The GGRC Executive Director and OCRA have mutually agreed to wait until a regular CRA was hired to begin discussion of the revised MOU. As a regular CRA was recently hired for Golden Gate, it is anticipated that the initial revision of the MOU will soon be accomplished.

Copies of all revised MOUs that have been finalized have been forwarded to DDS. Discussions are continuing with the following regional centers regarding the proposed revisions:

Frank D. Lanterman Regional Center
Kern Regional Center
North Los Angeles County Regional Center
Regional Center of the East Bay

In general, the meetings regarding the MOUs have been productive and extremely congenial. It is clear that OCRA's working relationships with the various regional centers have become well established and that concerns between the two agencies can be addressed with minimum difficulty in almost every situation. Copies of the MOUs will be forwarded to DDS as the few remaining agreements are finalized.

B. PAI's Executive Director and OCRA's Director will offer to meet with ARCA on an annual basis to discuss any issues of concern.

Catherine Blakemore and Jeanne Molineaux met with Bob Baldo, the Executive Director of the Association of Regional Center Directors, on December 18, 2001. At that time, it was agreed that there were no outstanding issues between OCRA and the regional center directors. Meetings will be convened, should concerns arise.

III. OCRA ADVISORY COMMITTEE

PAI's contract with DDS requires that, "(t)he provision of clients' rights advocacy services (will be) coordinated in consultation with the DDS Contract Manager, stakeholder organizations, and persons with developmental disabilities and their families representing California's multi-cultural diversity(.)" OCRA meets this outcome by working with the OCRA Advisory Committee, as discussed below.

OCRA works through the OCRA Advisory Committee to ensure that this performance outcome is achieved. The PAI Board of Directors has appointed three new members during the period this report covers. Attached as Exhibit G is a list of the current members of the committee.

The vacancies on the committee are listed on PAI's website and in its quarterly newsletter. In the selection process, the Board considers geographical diversity, both rural and urban and north and south, type of developmental disability represented, and ethnic background, in addition to

the qualifications of the individual applicants. The current committee has three consumer members and four family members who represent diverse geographical and ethnic backgrounds. Additionally, most of the members belong to several stakeholder organizations.

The Advisory Committee drafted a Statement of Organization and Purpose for the Advisory Committee to the Office of Clients' Rights Advocacy that was approved by PAI's Board of Directors at its May, 2000, meeting. The Statement of Purpose is attached as Exhibit H.

The OCRA Advisory Committee is a knowledgeable, constructive, and helpful group of volunteers who continue to provide valuable guidance to the OCRA staff. The meetings are lively and informative and provide a forum for exchange of ideas and information. The Committee met four times a year. During this reporting period, due to budget constraints, the Committee will meet three times a year in the next year. Minutes for the meetings held in Oakland on August 4, 2001, and November 3, 2001, in San Diego, were attached as Exhibit D in OCRA's semi-annual report provided to DDS on February 1, 2002. Minutes from the February 2, 2002 meeting in Sacramento and the June 22, 2002, meeting in San Jose, are attached here as Exhibit I.

DDS staff is invited and encouraged to participate in any of the meetings. The last date scheduled for the committee to meet this calendar year is October 12, 2002, in Los Angeles. OCRA will notify DDS of the dates for the committee meeting for the next calendar year once the dates have been determined.

IV. EXAMPLES OF OUTCOMES OF SERVICES PROVIDED

OCRA has requested that each advocate provide on a quarterly basis a summary of an administrative hearing or other case that has unique situations from which other advocates can learn and that can be used as examples of the advocacy that OCRA is accomplishing. These summaries for the last two quarters are compiled and attached as Exhibit J. OCRA is extremely pleased that such outstanding examples of advocacy are available to show the value of the work that OCRA accomplishes. A few examples of the advocacy:

OCRA Representation Helps M.K. Succeed in SSI Overpayment Hearing.

M.K. lives with her mother and two brothers, and uses her SSI to pay her share of the family's basic household expenses. Social Security became convinced that M.K. lived with her mother and only one brother. As a result, Social Security determined that the family's expenses were too high for M.K. to pay her fair share, which in turn meant she was receiving in-kind food and shelter and was ineligible for the maximum SSI payment. M.K. received a lowered amount of SSI and an SSI overpayment covering the years she had received the full SSI amount. M.K.'s mother spent many days visiting the Social Security office in an effort to understand what was happening. This proved impossible, in part because SSI rules are complex, and in part because her primary language is Mandarin. She turned to OCRA for assistance in an appeal of the overpayment.

Working with M.K., her mother, and the Asian Community Mental Health Services case manager, who speaks Mandarin and English, OCRA was able to understand what the household situation was and why Social Security had become convinced of something quite different. The second brother did live with M.K. but was absent much of the time. Social Security had not spent sufficient time to get the full story and M.K.'s mother did not understand Social Security terminology. OCRA explained the rules and issues to the family and then presented testimony and documentary evidence that convinced the administrative law judge to issue a hearing decision granting M.K.'s claim. Her SSI check has been increased, and Social Security reimbursed her for the SSI money she had lost during the appeal period. Marsha Siegel, CRA, Regional Center of the East Bay.

Worker Reinstated With Apology and Back Pay.

L.C. works at a Department of Rehabilitation subsidized janitorial program. Ten dollars was missing from a job site. The crew's supervisor made the crew empty their pockets and questioned the crew, using intimidation to prompt a confession from a crew member. L.C. stated that he would accept responsibility so no one else on the crew would get in trouble. Although he persisted in stating that he had not actually stolen the money, L.C. was fired when the supervisor found a ten dollar bill in his wallet.

L.C.'s sister asked the CRA to help L.C. get his job back because the sister had given L.C. the bill that had been found in his wallet. The CRA pointed

out to the employer that the way they had obtained the information used to fire L.C. guaranteed that it was unreliable, there was a completely legitimate reason for him to have the money, and the employer had violated all of its own policies in the manner in which it had terminated L.C. The employer agreed to reinstate L.C. with a public apology and back pay was well as agreeing to revise its policies and train its staff better. Frank Broadhead, CRA, Redwood Coast Regional Center.

Consumer on Her Way to the Alter!

O.R. has been dating her boyfriend, J.V., a Lanterman Regional Center consumer, for over 2 years. O.R. and J.V. decided to get married a few months ago and preparations for their wedding began. Unfortunately, they ran into an obstacle. O.R.'s mother refused to give O.R. a copy of her birth certificate. O.R. needed her birth certificate in order to obtain a marriage license. O.R. was put in contact with the CRA through her residential care provider for assistance in obtaining her birth certificate.

After speaking with O.R., the CRA agreed to help her obtain her birth certificate or identify alternative documentation that would allow her and J.V. to obtain a marriage license. The CRA contacted O.R.'s mother in an attempt to obtain O.R.'s birth certificate through non-adversarial means. Although O.R.'s mother was receptive to the CRA's call and had agreed to send a copy of the birth certificate, nothing happened. Therefore, a demand letter was sent. In the meantime, the CRA began to explore what alternatives existed to obtaining a birth certificate. However, O.R.'s mother responded to the demand letter and forwarded a copy of O.R.'s birth certificate. O.R. and J.V. are now in the final stages of planning their wedding. Patricia N. Carlos, CRA, South Central Los Angeles Regional Center.

H.R. Transfers to His Neighborhood School.

H.R. is a 17-year-old regional center consumer. H.R. was attending a special day class at Hueneme High School but he wanted to go to a different school. H.R.'s mother made several requests at IEP meetings to have H.R. transferred to his neighborhood school. H.R.'s mother informed the school that H.R. was bored in his current program and that H.R. was not making any progress. The school district refused to transfer H.R. OCRA agreed to represent H.R. and hired an educational specialist to evaluate H.R.'s current

placement and proposed placement. The educational specialist agreed that H.R. was not making progress in his current school placement. She recommended that H.R. move to a post-secondary classroom at his neighborhood school. H.R. and his mother agreed. At the next IEP meeting, the educational specialist presented her findings. The district finally agreed to change H.R.'s school placement to the post secondary classroom. Katherine Mottarella, CRA, Tri-Counties Regional Center.

V. DENIAL OF CLIENTS' RIGHTS

CCR, Title 17, Sec. 50530, sets forth a procedure whereby a care provider may deny one of the basic rights of a consumer if there is a danger to self or others or a danger of property destruction caused by the actions of a consumer. The CRA must approve the procedure and submit a quarterly report to DDS by the last day of each January, April, July, and October. OCRA is including the reports concurrently with the contractual date to provide OCRA's semi-annual and annual report. If this is not acceptable to DDS, OCRA will submit duplicate reports as requested. Attached as Exhibit K is the current log of Denials of Rights from the OCRA Offices.

VI. TITLE 17, SECTION 50540 COMPLAINTS

CCR, Title 17, Section 50540, sets forth a Complaint procedure whereby a regional center consumer, or his or her authorized representative, who believes a right has been abused, punitatively withheld or improperly or unreasonably denied, may file a complaint with the Clients' Rights Advocate. The Complaint process is similar to that established by the Welfare & Institution Code, Section 4731. However, the later law offers more consumer protections. There were no Title 17 Complaints filed during the past year.

VII. COLLECTION OF ATTORNEY'S FEES

Clients' Rights Advocates can collect attorney's fees and costs similar to those collected by private attorneys or advocates for special education cases

or other cases where there are statutory attorney's fees. OCRA collects fees only in special education cases. Fees and costs may be negotiated at mediation or can be received in those cases where an Administrative Law Judge has made a determination that the petitioner is the prevailing party. Fees are collected from the opposing party, which is normally the school district. Costs include any expenses to the Petitioner or OCRA for bringing the suit, such as filing fees or costs of expert evaluations. Neither PAI nor OCRA ever collect attorney's fees from consumers.

The amount collected depends upon several factors such as the geographical location where the Petitioner lives, and the years of experience of the attorney. Attached as Exhibit L is a chart showing the amount and source of any attorney's fees and costs collected.

VIII. CONSUMER GRIEVANCES

Exhibit C, Paragraph 11, of the contract between DDS and PAI requires OCRA to establish a grievance procedure and to inform all clients about the procedure. DDS has approved the grievance procedure developed by OCRA. The procedure is posted prominently in both English and Spanish at each office. Additionally, the grievance procedure is included in all letters to consumers or others who contact OCRA, when a CRA declines to provide service requested by that person.

Five grievances were filed by consumers or their families against OCRA last year. The grievances were all resolved at the first level and information concerning the grievances has previously been submitted to DDS. Attached as Exhibit M is a chart detailing the grievances filed against OCRA.

IX. ANALYSIS OF CONSUMERS SERVED

OCRA handled a total of 8,395 cases from July 1, 2001, through June 30, 2002. This represents a significant amount of advocacy assistance. Because of the change in OCRA's data base effective August 1, 2001, it is impossible to precisely correlate information from the month of July to all the

categories for the ensuing months as different data was compiled for the two time periods.

It is important to note that the statistics from OCRA's previous annual report cannot be directly compared to this report. OCRA's previous report showed the cases open during a particular quarter, so a case could show open during each of two consecutive quarters. With the new computer program, statistics are run for the entire year, so a case would show as one open case during the year even though the advocate may well have worked on the case for several quarters. This difference in reporting accounts for any apparent decline in the services provided by OCRA. Even with the new data system, OCRA has handled the number of issues established as appropriate in the performance objectives. This number may have to be revised when a full year's data is recorded using the new data base.

Included as Exhibit C is the complete compilation of data for the last fiscal year. The data for the month of July, 2001, has been compiled by:

1. Age
2. County
3. Disability
4. Ethnicity
5. Gender
6. Living Arrangement
7. Problem Areas
8. Summary of Intakes by Regional Center

The data for the months of August, 2001, through June, 2002, has been compiled by:

1. Age
2. County
3. Disability
4. Ethnicity
5. Gender
6. Living Arrangement
7. Problem Areas
8. Service Level

The majority of the OCRA statistics remain consistent with OCRA's previous statistics. For example, the largest number of consumers served by age, 2,821, has consistently been the 3-to-17 years-old age group. The next largest is the 22-40 age group with 1,515 people served. The consistency remains in the ratio of males to females served, also. OCRA has traditionally served more males than females, with approximately 60 percent of the consumers served being male and 38 percent being female, and 2 percent of the cases where the sex was not identified by the OCRA office. This is consistent with the percentage of regional center consumers who are male versus female. As of July, 2001, 59 percent of all regional center consumers were male and 41 percent female.

Consumers residing in their parental or other family home remains by far the largest number of consumers served, with 4,129 consumers or 49 percent of those OCRA served living in their family home. The next largest group served are those living independently, with OCRA serving 774 people or 9 percent with this living arrangement. Interestingly, only five percent of the consumers served by OCRA live in adult community care facilities. DDS statistics show that 68.3 percent of regional center consumers live independently or in their parent's home and 16 percent live in community care facilities. Presumably the state figures for community care facilities include children, while OCRA's figures do not.

OCRA's statistics on the ethnicity of consumers served from July 1, 2001, through June 30, 2002, show OCRA's continuing commitment to serve underserved communities, though it is clear that continuing efforts need to be made to diversify caseloads. The percentage of consumers from various ethnicities served by OCRA was:

Ethnicity	Current Year %	2000-2001 %	1999-2001 %	Regional Centers %
Amer. Indian or Alaskan Native	1	1	1	.4
African American	9	9	8	10.1
Asian	3	5	4	4.6
Hispanic/Latino	24	24	24	27.8
Self-identified Multicultural	4	4	3	Not listed
Pacific Islander	1	1	1	1.9

White	47	48	56	43.7
Unknown/Other	11	8	8	11.5

OCRA's statistics show constant service to almost the same percentage of ethnicities except for Asian and White, both of which have decreased during the past three years. The percentage of unknown ethnicities creates difficulty in attempting to determine if OCRA has continually improved its record for serving diverse populations. OCRA acknowledges that the 11 percent of consumers served whose ethnicities were not recorded show that staff needs continued training in this area. As results of training to the general staff have not proved successful, OCRA will focus on training of individual office staff that appear to be having difficulties collecting this data.

The types of problems which OCRA handles remain fairly consistent. For the time period covered by this report, OCRA handled 1,759 Special Education cases, 1,699 Regional Center matters, and over 200 cases each in the following categories: alleged abuse; conservatorships; consumer finance; family law matters; health issues; housing matters; income maintenance which includes Social Security and In-Home Support Services; placement; and privacy/personal autonomy. Over 100 cases each were handled dealing with discrimination other than employment and legal representation.

Lastly, the statistics once again point out the discrepancy between the number of cases that arise in any one regional center. OCRA believes that the number is affected by many factors, including but not limited to, the number of consumers served by the regional center, the level of experience of the advocate and the assistant advocate, the willingness of a regional center to work cooperatively with OCRA in making referrals, the availability of other advocacy resources in the catchment area, and the effectiveness of OCRA's outreach in a catchment area. Approximately 115 of the cases handled by OCRA last year are not assigned to a regional center. OCRA is attempting to ascertain why a case would not be assigned to a specific regional center and will correct its computer program so that this is not a problem with next year's data.

OCRA's new data base has the capacity to collect information on the level of service provided which will offer new opportunities to compare service provided among the catchment areas. In developing the statistics for its

semi-annual report, OCRA learned that there is significant discrepancy among employees as to the definition of each service category. In response to this information, OCRA immediately developed written definitions of each category and is training staff on the correct input by category. For this annual report, OCRA's statistics should be consistent among offices for the last six-month reporting period but statistics for the initial six months of the year may have some discrepancies among offices.

X. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ENHANCEMENT OF SERVICES UNDER THE CONTRACT

During the past four years, several concerns regarding the provision of advocacy services have become obvious to OCRA. There is simply not enough staff to meet the advocacy needs of consumers. This concern is supported by statistics gathered from May 15, 2002, to June 30, 2002, that show that of the 861 service requests closed during this time period, 301 people served did not receive the level of services they originally requested. This means that 35 percent of the people desiring OCRA services did not receive the level of services they desired. Ongoing data will be collected on this issue so that a more statistically meaningful sample may be obtained.

The legislature stated in Welfare and Institutions Code, Section 4433, "Persons with developmental disabilities are vulnerable to abuse, neglect, and deprivations of their rights." If averaged out, OCRA handled over 400 intakes per office last year. The level of advocacy varied on those intakes from direct representation at administration hearings, undoubtedly the most time consuming, to information and referral, which in itself can be very time consuming. OCRA is deeply concerned about the number of consumers who request a greater level of service than OCRA is able to provide due to lack of sufficient staff.

OCRA remains concerned about the fact that one advocate is hired for each regional center in spite of the disparate number of consumers served by the regional centers. For example, Inland Regional Center's CRA serves approximately 15,420 consumers and Redwood Coast Regional Center's CRA serves approximately 1,907. These problems must be addressed by providing sufficient funds to ensure equal access to OCRA's services.

OCRA believes that the disparity in services based upon regional center census can be eliminated only by the addition of staff at each regional center with 10,000 or more consumers. As of July 2002, based upon the data generated from the CDERs by DDS, this includes:

Alta California Regional Center
Inland Regional Center
Regional Center of Orange County
San Diego Regional Center

The addition of four new advocates would require the addition of appropriate support staff. OCRA strongly recommends the funding of additional staff and support at those regional centers with more than 10,000 consumers. In the future, if funds become available, an additional advocate at those regional centers with more than 8,000 consumers would seem to best serve the needs of regional center consumers.

XI. CONCLUSION

OCRA's statistics show its staff's continuing commitment to the protection of the rights of people with developmental disabilities. OCRA handled over 8,395 cases last year, provided 215 trainings to over 14,068 people, and met each of its performance objectives. OCRA remains dedicated to ensuring that the rights of all of California's citizens with developmental disabilities are enforced.