

ROLE 5: ASSIST ELECTED OFFICIALS OR CITIZENS

Practice 5a. External advocacy: Advocate to, or assist, external stakeholders, concerning the development, implementation, or improvement of government performance management systems.

Florida Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (OPPAGA, www.oppaga.state.fl.us): OPPAGA regularly advocates for improving accountability by, for example, providing to the legislature briefings, user-friendly short reports, and guidance in using and improving Florida's performance management system. For example, from 1997 to 2001 OPPAGA prepared a series of "PB² Summary Reports" (sometimes called "Commentary" or "Status" reports) to inform the legislature of progress in implementing the state's Performance Based Program Budgeting system and how particular performance management initiatives were faring, and to recommend system improvements. All but the first of these reports (which provided an historical context for performance budgeting in Florida) have been quite brief, from eight to sixteen pages. For example, a January 1999 report concluded that Florida's PB² experience had led to improved accountability, better public services, and cost savings, but that agencies needed to develop more comprehensive performance measurement systems, improve data quality, and develop more reasonable standards. The report also recommended ways the legislature could make PB² more useful for policy and budget decisions, such as by improving the presentation of performance information in the budget, requiring agencies to identify how requests for budget changes would affect performance on PB² measures, and requiring agencies to develop unit cost measures. One of the recommendations that the legislature followed was to require agency unit cost measures. In 2001 OPPAGA reviewed how that was working and issued an eight-page report to the legislature. The report notes that the categories that agencies are using to report costs are useful for budgetary purposes, but the precision of agency cost estimates varied, and that for some programs, problems with the manner in which the outputs have been defined may limit the accuracy and usefulness of these unit costs.

The following are available from OPPAGA's Florida Monitor website (www.oppaga.state.fl.us):

- 1997-2001 PB² Summary and Status Reports
- Full list of PB² publications