New and Improved ICAOS Website

Communication is paramount in what we do and while our website is primarily a one-way street, it is an invaluable information sharing tool. After researching current website applications, the National Office determined that the original website lacked new communication tools that would benefit everyone involved in Compact business.

The new website features new ways of sharing information between Compact Offices, Regions, Committees, and the National Office. Benefits include simple navigation, discussion forums, real-time website updates available by email, user-submitted event calendars, additional software modules to meet growing needs, meeting notifications that can be added directly to Outlook, e-newsletters and improved navigation.

New online tools available in the new website are surveys which offer a quick polling of topics and interactive event calendars which give compact offices the ability to add their office closings, state council meetings, etc. to a shared Commission-wide calendar. The original website did not have a database of names and contact information for Commission members. The new database allows users to search, sort and print by state, region, committee, commission role, committee role or any combination of these. Also, newly developed is the Advisory Opinions At-a-Glance page. This is a faster scanning of Advisory Opinions which lists the opinion details, issues, and findings in a concise and easily digestible format. Unique sections were developed for Deputy Compact Administrators and Victim’s Representatives which include their own interactive calendars, discussion forums and surveys.

The combination of all these new web technologies resulted in a website that greatly benefits users and improves communication within the Commission. This re-engineered website was conceived and designed with the evolving needs of the Commission in mind.

The Backbone of the Compact

A repeated phrase at the 2006 and 2007 ICAOS Annual Business meetings is “the Spirit of the Compact.” As the Compact continues to grow and evolve, the practical application behind this could not be more important. When Compact Offices from state to state work together, it ensures public safety around the entire country.

Deputy Compact Administrator’s are the individuals who conduct the daily business of the Compact. They not only ensure their state complies with the ICAOS rules, they also work within the framework of their own state’s system. Each state must walk a fine line to protect its own interest while making sure they follow federal law. A DCA’s role includes running the daily operations of their unit, keeping open communication with offices in other states, and providing training to all stakeholders of the Compact;
from line staff and offenders to commissioners and judges. It is evident that DCAs currently working in the Compact possess a wealth of experience and expertise. It is imperative that Commissioners from each state look to their staff for feedback and ideas as we continue to move forward with the Compact.

The Commission recognizes the need to involve DCAs in the work of the Compact, therefore DCAs are on each of the standing and ad hoc committees. They are involved in the training of staff around the country, and participate in the DCA Conference at the Annual Business Meeting. One of the more exciting advancements to involve DCA’s is the formation of the Deputy Compact Administrators Liaison Committee. The ICAOS Executive Committee voted to make this a standing committee and appointed me as Chair shortly after the Annual Business Meeting in Phoenix this last fall. The goals of this committee are to ensure a flow of communication and ideas between the Commission and DCAs, continue the involvement of DCAs in Commission business, and provide continuing training opportunities for the working staff.

The Commission supported bringing DCA’s to the last two ICAOS Annual Business Meetings and the benefit of their participation is already being realized. At the 2006 meeting in Phoenix, they participated in training and developed a list of the most critical items currently facing the Compact. The 2007 conference in Orlando centered on looking at those critical items and putting together a plan of action to deal with them. The top four issues reviewed by the DCA’s were:

- Rules-mandated time frames
- Retaking offenders
- Lack of response and communication from Compact Offices
- Offenders in the receiving state without permission

The DCA Liaison Committee will take this information and prepare recommendations to present to the Commission in the upcoming year. This committee looks forward to serving the Commission by bringing all of the key players together and working efficiently in order to ensure public safety.

2007 Annual Meeting Recap

Every year the National Office does an extensive search to find a location for an annual business meeting that will accommodate our main session needs and be enjoyable for Commission members. Amazingly, resorts not only offer better rates, but also adequate meeting space for our trainings, committee meetings and most importantly the general session. After researching more than 200 hotels, the National Office found that resorts were actually more cost effective because they did not require meeting rooms and convention center rentals; and frequently provided such amenities as airport shuttle and complimentary rooms based on our occupancy. This year, the Commission’s Annual Business Meeting was held in Orlando, Florida and more than 70 people extended their stay and took full advantage of Disney’s attractions.

did you know...

Barno worked on an international project developing orphans’ rights in Uzbekistan.

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This was another energetic year with the inclusion of Deputy Compact Administrators and a reformatted Commissioner’s Training. Regions were able to have their own spirited meetings, which included visits from the Commission’s Treasurer, Scott Taylor, and voting for Region Chairs. The region elected Chairs are:

East: Rich Bitel  
Midwest: Ken Merz  
South: Gary Tullock  
West: Dori Ege

The main session was also productive with the passage of a new Sex Offender Rule and a budget ensuring fundamental services are provided to the Commission. The Chair of the Commission, Warren Emmer, worked through the day's agenda and ended the meeting early. From the reception on Monday night to an impromptu gathering Wednesday evening, the tone of the meeting was celebratory giving great anticipation to the 2008 meeting in Palm Springs.

2008 Annual Meeting Announcement

Please join us in Palm Springs, California from September 8-11, 2008 at the Wyndham Palm Springs Hotel for the Commission's 7th Annual Business Meeting. With panoramic views of the majestic San Jacinto Mountains, the Wyndham Palm Springs Hotel offers spa services in addition to nearby golf, tennis and world-class shopping. Participants are welcome to extend their stay at the group rate and take advantage of hiking and trail riding, which are as close as the nearby mountains or enjoy the views with a hot-air balloon ride over the desert.

The National Office has secured a special government rate of $115 (plus applicable taxes) for Commission members planning on attending this year’s meeting. Attendees have the option of renting rooms at this rate for three days prior to September 8, 2008 and three days after September 11, 2008 at their own expense, but they will need to register through the National Office.

Be on the lookout for next year's agenda which will include NEW training opportunities for Commissioners and Deputy Compact Administrators! Detailed information regarding the agenda and registration will be sent out in the spring. We look forward to seeing everyone in California!
Helping Those Left Behind by Homicide

In 1999, Peyton became the tragic icon for the development of the Compact serving as a reminder to policymakers across the nation to preserve public safety when she was killed by an unsupervised offender who was transferred from Maryland to Colorado. As the rest of the world thinks about “how sad and how horrible the homicide” and then moves on, survivors do not. It is a long journey of fear, pain, grief, anger, blaming, sadness and truly a struggle to find hope in the face of such adversity to reclaim their life and eventually smile at memories of their loved one.

At the September 2007 Annual Business Meeting of the National Commission the Peyton Tuthill Foundation was announced. Established by the Tuthill family to continue Peyton’s legacy of reaching out to others in need, the Foundation will award 4 academic scholarships in the spring of 2008. Proceeds from the Foundation are to promote public safety, victims’ rights and provide scholarships to siblings and children who have been left behind by homicide. One scholarship will be awarded in each region of the country. As the Foundation’s resources grow, more scholarships will be provided.

To assist the Foundation in awarding scholarships, Commissioners, Compact Administrators, Deputy Compact Administrators and victim representatives are encouraged to help promote awareness of the scholarship opportunities which help families reclaim their lives through education and awareness. Information about the scholarship eligibility requirements and applications are online at the Foundation website www.peytontuthill.org. Two upcoming fundraisers have been planned for Florida. In addition, the Colorado Victim Services and North Carolina Parole and Probation have also expressed interest in helping with fundraising activities in their states.

did you know...

Pat Tuthill also sits on the Rules, Executive, and Sex Offender Ad Hoc Committees?