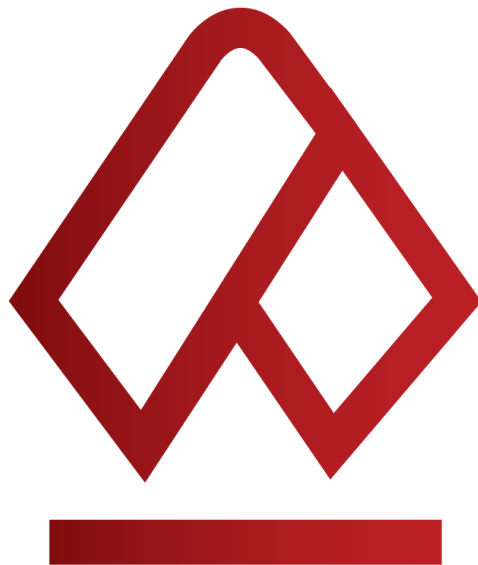


Georgia Superior Court Clerks' Cooperative Authority



**2015-2016
Accomplishments &
Year-end Report**

Executive Summary

There is an old adage that says ...

***“A pessimist complains about the winds,
an optimist hopes they will improve,
and a realist adjusts the sails.”***

Navigating through years of turbulent waters – legislative battles, technological challenges and economic adversity – the Authority has continually adjusted its sails and stayed on course, delivering solid results through excellent revenue management, tight cost controls and outstanding innovation and productivity.

Adjusting our course throughout the journey has been critical, but our success was only made possible by the willingness of 159 clerks of Superior Court to work together for the good of all clerks and the State of Georgia. The Authority was created by clerks for the benefit of clerks, and this symbiotic relationship is paramount to building on our progress to date and achieving even greater results in the future. Below are a few recent comments from clerks about the Authority and its importance to their work:

“The [Authority] staff is absolutely wonderful. I am so thankful that all of you are there for us. I can’t imagine trying to do my job without you.”

– Regina McIntyre
Barrow County Clerk of Superior Court

“You are a lifesaver. You’ll never know how much I appreciate your work and I appreciate your help. You have made my day. It will be wonderful to have a complete index. Thank you again.

– Patti Grimsley
Twiggs County Clerk of Superior Court

“I really appreciate your help. Authority employees are the best. Thanks.

– Charles Baker
Hall County Clerk of Superior Court

From the beginning and rooted to its core, innovation, collaboration and vision have defined the Authority. Although the culture remains the same, the GSCCCA is a very different organization today than the one that opened its doors in 1995. Since its establishment, the Authority has not only fulfilled its original purpose of establishing a statewide system for the indexing of UCC documents, but has successfully developed and implemented, at no cost to the state, a variety of additional projects. Effective collaboration with other state agencies and numerous not-for-profit groups for the benefit of the State of

Georgia and its citizens has become one of the hallmarks of the Authority's success and why it is respected both locally and nationally for its progressive, innovative and effective approach to problem solving. Read the comments below from one of the Authority's partners:

“My work at the Department of Revenue allows me many opportunities to work with many different entities and agencies. No other party I interact with is better, faster, more accurate, or more efficient than the crew at GSCCCA. Top shelf folks and performance. It is literally inspiring.”

*– Tracy Thomas, Business Analyst
Georgia Department of Revenue*

For over two decades, the Authority has been an innovator within the public records arena and has led the State of Georgia to the forefront of court technology. Using a mix of old-fashioned cooperation and state-of-the-art technology, the GSCCCA has turned ideas that most thought were not possible into realities, and in so doing, has changed the way many do business and made life easier for those accessing real estate records, financing statements, civil and criminal case data, and other legal documents.

Today the Clerks' Authority is a diverse entity that oversees the following divisions, projects, programs and registries:

- Notary Division
- Fines & Fees Division
- UCC Project
- Real Estate Deed Project
- Historical Deed Re-Indexing Project
- County-Funded Historical Deed, Lien and Plat Re-Indexing Project
- Lien, Plat & Map Project
- Historical Plat & Map Project
- PT-61 Project
- Premium Search Account
- Clerks' Authority Map Search Application
- Data Archive Project (MyVault Online Archive Service)
- Microfilm Project
- eFile Project
- Civil Case Data Project
- Georgia Protective Order Registry
- Criminal Case Data Project (Offender-Based Tracking System)
- Carbon Sequestration Registry

In successfully developing and implementing these projects, the Authority modernized Superior Court clerk offices and created several one-of-a-kind systems that integrated and standardized information from

each of Georgia's 159 counties on a central website, www.gscca.org. The Authority databases provide accountability, uniformity, efficiencies and cost-savings by affording:

- Unprecedented access to valuable information ... free access through search terminals installed in all clerk of Superior Court offices, and convenient internet access, by subscription, for those desiring 24-hour, 7-day-a-week access.
- Additional funding for clerks' offices.
- Information that allows lawmakers to more effectively set public policy.
- Critical and timely crime data to protect the safety of the public and law enforcement officers throughout Georgia.

The GSCCCA is governed by a board of ten members whose meetings are open to the public. The Authority was created, implemented and continues to operate without receiving any funds through local, state or federal taxes, and its activities undergo constant legislative oversight. The Authority has been continually praised for its wise use of available resources, and has proven to be a resounding success for offering unique services for Georgia counties and citizens.

Following are some of the highlights from FY 2016:

- Began work on the **expansion of the Historical Deed Re-Indexing Project** to include all deed instruments filed with clerks of Superior Court in the calendar years 1990 and 1991. The Authority began preparing a timeline and implementation schedule for the project, and it is expected that commencement will begin with the ability to transmit historical index data and images to the Authority on and after January 2, 2017. The Authority Board voted to compensate the offices of those clerks of Superior Court who have previously completed their 1990 and 1991 historical deed imaging indexing pursuant to a *Clerk-Funded Historical Indexing Agreement*. Throughout the year, the Authority administered the project to complete the deed indexing for all incomplete indexing and imaging for the year 1992 so as to move the inclusive range of deed data back to 1992 for all counties. In FY 2016, over 40,500 additional deed instruments were added to the system under this program.
- Added over 365,000 deed and 12,500 plat instruments through the **County-Funded Historical Deed, Lien and Plat Re-Indexing Project**, for a total of over 1.3 million additional instruments in production since the program was implemented in 2013. As a result of this project, the public has access to additional real estate information at no additional cost to the Authority, and clerks' offices have access to additional resources through print image fees initiated through the Authority's website. Forty-one counties are now participating in the program.
- Managed the financial transactions relating to **GSCCCA Image Agreements**. During FY 2016, the Authority compensated Superior Court clerk offices over **\$5 million** for print monies generated and over **\$801,000** for deed images transmitted to the Authority by clerks' offices.
- Added "**Lien**" and "**Bulk Lien**" **eFiling capability** to GSCCCA eFile portal for convenient online filing of county and state tax liens.

- Renegotiated **office leases** for primary Authority management location (located at 1875 Century Boulevard, Atlanta) and for UCC operations (located at 3980 DeKalb Technology Parkway, Atlanta). Through the execution of these new lease agreements, several months of free rent were negotiated by Authority management providing administrative cost savings.
- Upgraded the website for **MyVault Online Archive Service** with major enhancements to reporting features and administrative functionality. An online dashboard serves as the portal through which clerks have access to their vault information. The dashboard provides live statistics about the last backup and allows users to view and restore items from their vault. In addition to the website, appliance software was also upgraded to improve software functionality, reporting features and other administrative functions.
- Increased the number of **Premium Search accounts** by 15% for a fiscal year-end total of **3,036 accounts**. Launched in 2012, this premium account includes the Clerks' Authority Map Search Application and allows users to search by property address as well as land lot making it attractive to realtors, bankers, attorneys, surveyors, appraisers, and other members of the business community.
- Published **Android Tablet Map Search application** completing our iOS and Android app lineup. Full functionality is now available on all iOS and Android devices providing 24/7 access to valuable real estate information through multiple devices. The Authority also increased addresses searchable in the Clerks' Authority Map Search application by over 183,000 properties for a fiscal year-end total of nearly **2.2 million** searchable addresses, making the Map Search app even more valuable.
- Implemented a **new backup system** that will centralize all backups into one platform and replace an aging tape library system. The new environment will greatly ease the recovery of data when a loss occurs, narrow backup windows for increased system availability, and simplify administration.
- Set up an **alternate server and software infrastructure** in response to SB 135, the Clerk Custodianship Bill, which mandates that all clerks back up their electronic records locally as well as online to the GSCCCA. Prior to the bill passing, the Authority already offered the MyVault backup and archival system to all clerks in order to facilitate voluntary, free online backup of clerk data to the GSCCCA. Since passage of the bill, the Authority has engineered a variety of other online backup methodologies for those counties that have either elected not to participate in the MyVault program, or have been unable to participate due to technological or policy barriers.
- Performed **31 network line upgrades**, including physical office moves for 5 counties. These upgrades resulted in a 1400% overall increase in bandwidth and provided a major improvement in staff's ability to administer, troubleshoot and diagnose network issues.
- Maintained a compliance rate of close to **100%** for all courts through a dedicated and consistent notification process by the Fines & Fees Division.

In addition to the many enhancements and new features that were added over the last twelve months, the Authority continued to successfully manage its many existing programs. Numbers don't tell the full story but the following statistics show the volume of work handled by the Authority and are further evidence of our growth and success over the past two decades.

Following are some of the highlights from FY 2016:

- Added nearly **11.5 million** images to the system for a fiscal year-end total of nearly **241 million** images.
- Had nearly **364 million** page views and nearly **1.1 million** unique visitors to www.gsccca.org. The public accessed the Authority's invaluable data via the Internet over **4.8 million times** from 211 countries this past fiscal year.
- Compensated clerks' offices over **\$801,000** for deed images this fiscal year and **\$13.8 million** for deed images since the inception of the project.
- Compensated clerks' office over **\$5 million** for prints (\$.50 per print) off the Authority website and **\$46 million** for prints since the Authority was established.
- Restored over **90 GBs of data** for 14 counties through the Authority's **MyVault Online Archive Service** in FY 2016. Currently, **143 counties** participate in the program with 12 counties added this fiscal year. The statistics continue to stagger with the online vault storing and protecting over **550 million** files totaling more than **77 TBs** of live data.
- Ordered, processed and shipped a total of **899 pieces of new equipment** to clerks' offices including CPUs, monitors, servers, laptops and scanners. The Authority has provided over **24,500** pieces of new equipment to clerks' offices since opening its doors in 1995.
- Deployed **551 pieces of new equipment** (388 computers, 107 monitors and 56 scanners) to 46 Superior Court clerk offices to replace depreciated equipment as part of the Statewide Computer Replacement Project for all 159 counties.
- Electronically transmitted to the Georgia Crime Information Center (GCIC), a division of the GBI, nearly **42,000 Protective Orders** indexed by clerks.
- Electronically transmitted to GCIC over **295,000 records** of criminal court dispositions from various courts in Georgia for the purpose of compiling criminal histories and background checks.
- Received over **17,000 calls** and over **7,600 email requests** to HelpDesk.
- Increased participation in **Notary Online** to **129 counties**.
- Maintained the **statewide notary database** (A statewide total of **46,250 notary commissions** were issued by clerks of Superior Court and then submitted to the Authority for inclusion in the statewide database.) and issued **28,800 apostilles**. (Apostille documents originated in 131 Georgia counties to be used in 85 countries.) In FY 2016, the Notary Division served over **8,600 walk-in customers**, processed **3,400 mail-in orders**, answered **8,000 phone calls**, and sold **1,478 Notary Handbooks**, a 28% increase from the previous year.
- Backed up over **1,076 TBs** of GSCCCA operational data, the equivalent of backing up the printed collection of the U.S. Library of Congress about 107 times!
- Collected and disbursed approximately **\$87.4 million** in court fees.
- Conducted **102** classroom training sessions, webinars and one-on-one programs on various subjects for over **4,000** participants at **40** different locations around the state. The Authority also trained over 10,000 people through its five online courses.
- Indexed over **238,000** UCCs and conducted over **7,300** Certified Searches for FY 2016. Since the project's inception in 1995, the Authority has indexed over **5.6 million** UCCs and conducted over **238,000** Certified Searches.

- Submitted 13,222 real estate deed books and 8,867,677 images for the production and delivery of archival-quality microfilm to the State Archives Center for long-term security. **156** counties participate in the Authority’s Microfilm Project, offered free-of-charge to clerks of Superior Court.
- Blocked **17 million** pieces of spam and virus-laden emails. This amounts to over 96% of all incoming email.

Beyond the numbers, though, we gauge our success by the response and feedback we continue to receive from clerks, bankers, lawyers, realtors and other customers about how integral our products have become to their business. In addition to the comments included earlier, below are some of the recent kudos we have received from clerks and website customers:

“I really appreciate all the Authority does for me and my office.”

“Thanks again for all you do for us clerks.”

“Oh yes, this will make me so happy! We will improve our operations, backup capability, virus protection, everything. I can’t thank you enough.”

“I always enjoy reading your newsletters. They are always so informative and constantly remind me of how much you and your staff do for us. It is just amazing.”

“Thank you for all your help! Your staff is wonderful! Please continue to be there for us!”

“Thanks so much for your help – appreciate it. I upgraded our account to monthly premium account.”

“This is a blessing and like a Christmas present from the Clerks’ Authority. Thanks again for your prompt reply!”

“I really appreciate you taking the time to explain what happened with my account and for your help in clearing up the charge. I really appreciate the customer service.”

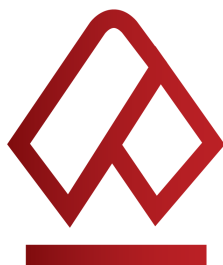
In addition to supporting Superior Court clerks, the Authority enables convenient access to invaluable information – from real estate records and lending information to active notaries and court fines and fees. The Authority’s statewide indexes and other programs help everyday Georgians and give the business community innovative tools for making their work more efficient and effective.

Our productivity and success are no accident, but rather the result of the outstanding and prudent leadership of our actively engaged Board who informs and strengthens our business, the effort, skill and dedication of our professional staff who remain vested and fully engaged in our organization’s mission,

and the continuing support of 159 clerks of Superior Court and their willingness to work together for the good of all clerks and the State of Georgia.

As we enter our 22nd year of service, we should not expect the waters to be any calmer than the ones we have already sailed through. In fact, there are signs that the winds may pick up. The pace of change is accelerating, creating new opportunities, new challenges, and new uncertainties. In this environment, we will have to be more nimble and more adept, continuously reevaluate and reimagine every aspect of our business, and out-innovate today, so that we can outperform tomorrow. We are committed to remaining entrepreneurial and strategic, and positioning the Authority for continued preeminence. The Authority is poised to sail through any rough waters ahead and continue our stellar record of innovation and success for decades to come.

The following pages provide an overview of the Authority and its numerous projects, and a more detailed review of the many accomplishments of the past fiscal year.



Information about www.gsccca.org

The Authority's website, www.gsccca.org, allows centralized, online searches of data from Georgia's 159 counties giving the public unprecedented access to valuable information including UCC financing statements, real estate deeds, liens, plats and maps, PT-61s, and more. Free access to this information is available during regular business hours through public search terminals installed in each county's Superior Court clerk office. Convenient internet access is also available, by subscription, and provides users with 24-hour, 7-day-a-week access. The public accessed the Authority's invaluable data via the Internet over 4.8 million times from 211 countries in FY 2016. Information that previously required physical trips to county courthouses to retrieve can now be gained from the convenience of one's home or office through the Authority website saving Georgia citizens and businesses an unquantifiable amount of time and money every year.

Website Statistics for FY 2016

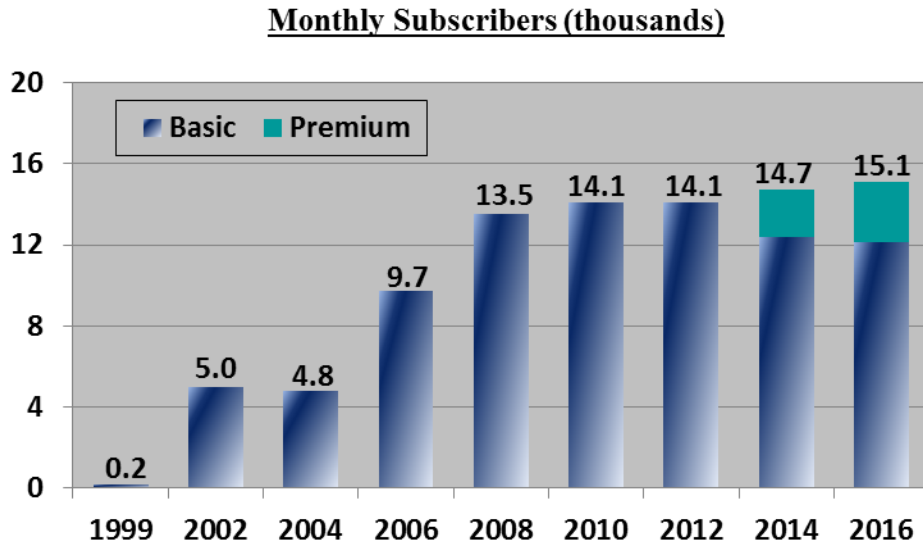
- Images added to the system: **11.5 million**
- Sessions: **4.8 million**
- Data transmitted: **7.97 TBs**
- Page views: **364 million**
- Unique visitors: **nearly 1.1 million**
- Percentage of visitors who were new this year: **21.31%**
- Average page views per visit: **31**
- Average visit duration: **13:07 minutes**
- Number of countries that visited: **211**
- Top 5 countries: U.S., India, Philippines, China and Pakistan
- Top browsers: 58.67% of all visitors use Internet Explorer; 84.23% of these visitors use IE 9 or higher. 18.69% of all visitors use Google Chrome, and 17.28% use Firefox.

In 2013, the Authority completely redesigned www.gsccca.org in an effort to better serve its customers and to capitalize in the digital space on the value of its data. The success of the redesigned website has been measured by increased subscribers, better organization of information, improved and easier user experience, and positive customer feedback.

With the volume and diversity of information contained in the website and the variety of audiences that it serves, the Authority wants to ensure that each visitor is provided a user-centric experience that is tailored to his or her needs ... whether the visitor is a clerk of court, a real estate professional, a notary public, or a property lawyer. As web users evolve and their needs and devices change, it is more important than ever for online services to grow and expand their online presence. And with over a million annual visitors to www.gsccca.org, the Authority believes that it is critical for its site to be clear, responsive and easy-to-use for its customers, and will continue to look at ways to improve the user experience.

Website Subscribers

- Total (Regular + Premium Search) monthly subscribers as of 6/30/16: **15,136**
- Regular monthly subscribers as of 6/30/16: **12,100**
- Premium Search monthly subscribers as of 6/30/16: **3,036**
- Percentage increase in Premium Search accounts for FY 2016: **14.61%**
- Single-use subscribers added during fiscal year: **20,943**



Since 1999, website subscriptions have increased dramatically, clear evidence of the Authority’s growth and the growing value of its statewide indexes. Beyond the numbers, though, the Authority gauges its success and relevance on the response and feedback from its customers and how integral the Authority’s website and databases have become to their businesses.

Scott Swafford, chief credit officer at United Bank in Barnesville, spoke of the website’s ease of navigation as one of the many benefits. Having used the system for more than ten years to research UCCs, deed records, and more, he notes that the bank’s entire lending force and their assistants now access the site daily as well. Read his comments below.

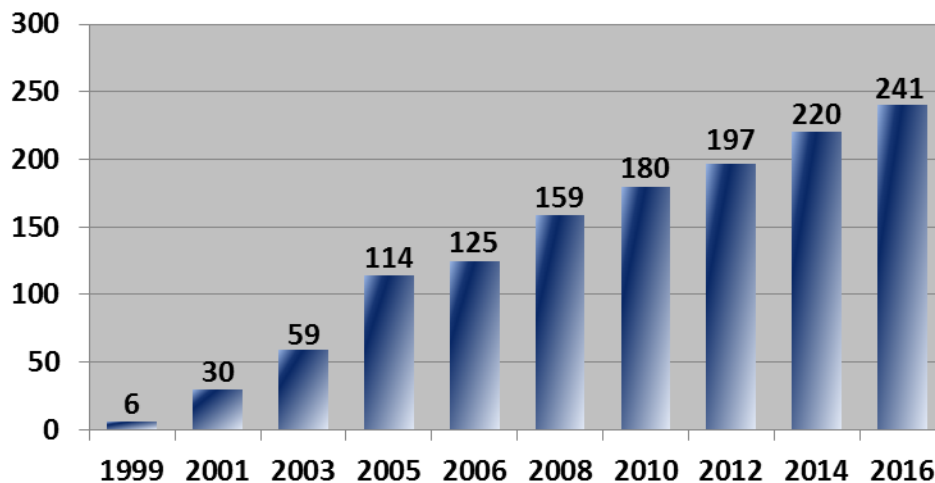
“The GSCCCA’s website is an efficient tool for those in the banking industry. It gives us the ability to do our jobs more effectively, and it’s a system that the clerks should be very proud of.”

Images Added to Website

Each year, millions of images are added to www.gsccca.org making it an even more valuable resource to our customers. During FY 2016, nearly **11.5 million** images were added to the system for a fiscal year-end total of nearly **241 million images**. See the chart and bar graph below for more details.

	Images Added in FY 2016	Total Images 6/30/16
Deeds	9,277,834	209,872,329
Liens	1,377,156	17,075,320
Plats	121,015	1,024,550
UCCs	313,188	7,512,295
PT-61s	390,500	5,189,803
Total	11,479,693	240,674,297

Total Images in System (millions)



Website Reliability & Security

The Authority places a high priority on providing its subscribers reliable, 24/7 service. Soon after opening, it was realized that any web-based reporting system had points where system failures could occur. In response, the Authority began distributing thousands of PCs, scanners and other equipment to Georgia's 159 counties – over **24,500 pieces of new equipment** since opening its doors in 1995 – to ensure the quality of their equipment. The Authority systematically upgraded its network service and main data center, and continually takes preventive action to avoid service interruptions. Despite growth of 200 subscribers in 1999 to over **15,000 subscribers** today, nearly **364 million page views** in FY 2016,

and nearly **241 million images** online, the Authority has virtually eliminated “downtime.” Whether a user searches the records after lunch on Tuesday or at 2:00 a.m. on Saturday morning, the Authority’s database servers provide the search results in seconds.

The Authority is committed to the preservation of the data with which it has been entrusted and the public’s access to it. To this end, the Authority established a fully redundant remote data center and brought it online in 2009. As a result, the public will be able to search the Authority’s databases through www.gscca.org without interruption, even if the Authority’s primary data center is destroyed in a disaster. In fact, the Authority routinely operates from its remote data center during scheduled maintenance in order to prevent users from experiencing downtime during necessary maintenance.

As important, the Authority takes the security of its websites very seriously and constantly evaluates its practices against current standards and industry best practices. If an issue is identified, the IT staff takes appropriate actions to resolve it immediately. See the following comments from Jeff Prater, senior information management specialist with AgGeorgia Farm Credit:

“Thanks for the update. I’m glad to see you guys took my concerns seriously and implemented them in a timely manner. If I ever notice any bugs/concerns with your website, I will most definitely let you know. (Haven’t found any lately – knock on wood!) You have created a very nice, clean, easy-to-use website and it pleases me to know you are constantly improving it. Thanks again and have a great day!”

The Authority values its customers and recognizes that their input serves to make our systems cleaner and better. For example, the Authority added an image reporting function to our image viewers so customers can quickly and easily report issues with any image on our site. Whether it’s suggesting an additional feature to a particular program or reporting a problem with an image, customer feedback – good or bad – is valued and encouraged. The Authority enhances its programs and upgrades its systems regularly, and proudly incorporates customer feedback and suggestions.

Financial Overview

The Authority receives no appropriated funds from the legislature of the State of Georgia. Its primary source of funding is through the real estate deed fee. (The Authority receives a \$5 fee for every deed filed with a Superior Court clerk.) These fees, in addition to subscription fees for access to the Authority’s statewide indexes, provide the majority of the funding to operate many of the Authority’s programs.

The financial condition of the Authority remained healthy throughout FY 2016 with overall revenues ahead of budget. This surplus is primarily due to deed fee revenue performing better than in recent fiscal years, but also due to other projects performing ahead of expectations. Additionally, the Authority staff continued to aggressively manage project and administrative costs, and management effectively renegotiated two office leases that provided some reduced administrative expenses.

Based on the stronger financial outlook, the board recently voted to expand the Historical Deed Re-Indexing Project to include all deed instruments filed with clerks of Superior Court in the 1990 and 1991 calendar years. The Board also voted to compensate the offices of those clerks of Superior Court who have previously completed their 1990 and 1991 historical deed imaging indexing pursuant to a *Clerk-Funded Historical Indexing Agreement*.

FY 2015 Year-end Audit Completed by Mauldin & Jenkins

- Received an unqualified “clean” opinion from Mauldin & Jenkins for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2015 audit.
- No audit adjustments were proposed by the auditors.
- Coordinated all requests with auditors from Mauldin & Jenkins & Georgia Department of Audits.

Monthly Financial Information

- Provided accurate and timely monthly financial statements, along with an executive summary, to the Authority’s executive director and board members helping facilitate informed decisions.
- Provided quarterly financial reviews at all board meetings.
- Completed monthly reconciliations and review of all general ledger accounts to ensure proper recording of financial data included in the monthly financial statements.
- Updated fixed asset database monthly for all asset additions and dispositions.
- Aggressively managed GSCCCA subscriber accounts to help boost a collection rate of 98%.
- Sent monthly past-due collection letters to help reduce the amount of bad debt write-offs.
- Ensured timely deactivation of past-due accounts to help reduce the amount of charges that can be incurred by delinquent subscribers.
- Provided monthly Image Agreement statements to Superior Court clerks.

Accounting Information:

- Total active subscriber accounts as of June 30, 2016: **15,136**
This includes **3,036** Premium Search accounts.
- Average monthly direct access subscription revenue during FY 2016: **\$214,840**
- Single-use subscription revenue during FY 2016: **\$105,955**
- Number of monthly check payments processed during FY 2016: **15,072**
- Purchased **\$500,294** of equipment for counties during FY 2016 as part of the Authority’s Statewide Computer Replacement Project.
- Amount compensated to clerks’ offices for deed images during FY 2016: **\$801,347**
- Amount compensated to clerks’ offices for deed images since inception of project: **\$13.8 million**
- Amount compensated to clerks’ offices for prints (\$.50 per print) off the Authority website during FY 2016: **\$5,036,119**
- Amount compensated to clerks’ offices for prints (\$.50 per print) off the Authority website since inception of project: **\$46 million**.

The FY 2016 break-down for prints is as follows:

- Deeds \$4,428,565
- Liens \$242,746
- Plats \$202,078
- PT-61s \$46,559
- UCCs \$116,171

Administrative

- Managed the financial transactions relating to GSCCCA Image Agreements. During FY 2016, the Authority compensated Superior Court clerk offices over \$5 million for print monies generated and over \$801,000 for deed images transmitted to the Authority by clerks' offices.
- Renegotiated office leases for primary Authority management location (located at 1875 Century Boulevard, Atlanta) and for UCC operations (located at 3980 DeKalb Technology Parkway, Atlanta). Through the execution of these new lease agreements, several months of free rent were negotiated by Authority management providing administrative cost savings.

Divisions

Notary Public Division

In 1997, the Authority was asked by the Georgia Secretary of State to begin maintaining the central database of notaries public. This project contains the following elements:

- Maintenance of a central database of all active notaries public (approximately 172,000).
- Issuance of apostilles and notary certifications. (An apostille is an international certification of a public document for use in another Hague Convention country.)

In 2004, the Authority developed Notary Online with three goals:

- To make the processing of notary applications more efficient in clerks' offices,
- To allow counties immediate access to their notary filings and images, and
- To simplify the notary application process for the public.

Through the Authority website, the public has free access to search Georgia's notary database. An individual desiring to be a notary public in the State of Georgia can obtain an application from the clerk of Superior Court of the county in which he/she resides. 129 or 81% of Georgia counties are now providing web-based, notary applications using software developed by the Authority.

Serving a vital role in international commerce, the Authority was recognized in 1998 by the U.S. State Department as the only agency, outside of a Secretary of State office, to issue apostilles. The Apostille Treaty is an international treaty (of which the U.S. is a signatory member) that provides for a simplified method of authenticating documents for use in other countries. It certifies the origin (i.e. country) of the public document by authenticating the signature and seal of the issuing public official. Currently, 112 countries participate in the Apostille Treaty, and approximately 4 million apostilles are issued worldwide on an annual basis.

During FY 2016, the Authority's Notary Division:

- Maintained the statewide notary database. A statewide total of **46,250 notary commissions**, an increase of over 13% from the previous fiscal year, were issued by clerks of Superior Court and then submitted to the Authority for inclusion in the statewide database. 84% of these notary commissions were processed through the Authority's web-based system and 16% through traditional methods.
- Issued **28,800 apostilles** destined for 85 different countries. These documents originated in 131 different Georgia counties. Four additional countries will be joining the Apostille Treaty: Brazil, Chile, Morocco and Kosovo. It's expected that the inclusion of Brazil will cause an increase in apostille requests.
- Issued **193 certificates of authority**, primarily for use in Puerto Rico.
- Served **8,600 walk-in customers**; processed **3,400 mail-in requests**; and answered **8,000 phone calls**.
- Continued promoting Notary Online with **84%** of notary applications submitted electronically to the Authority via the Notary Online application system. Participation in the program increased to **129 counties**. The Authority provides one-on-one training sessions for new counties.
- Sold **1,478 Notary Handbooks**, an increase of 28% from the previous year. The increase is credited to the expanded number of notary training classes offered by the Authority and to a feature added to the Authority website a couple years ago to allow ordering the Notary Handbook online.
- Conducted **55 training classes** for notaries public at 35 locations around the state with over 3,700 people attending. Hosted by clerks of Superior Court, these classes provide tremendous exposure for clerks while also providing a valuable service to constituents. Compared to last fiscal year, the Authority offered nearly three times as many notary classes and had an additional 3,000 notaries attend.
- Maintained **Notary Online training course** with nearly **10,000** people participating in the training and over **4,800** taking the Notary Public Final Exam.
- Helped develop an electronic notarization implementation guide that will benefit states adopting an e-notary process being produced by the Notary Public Administrators.
- Monitored HB 381, a bill to rewrite **Georgia's notary law**. The Authority board appointed a committee comprised of board members, industry experts and Authority staff, and charged the group with making the revisions to notary law. The goal is to modernize Georgia's notary law and to bring it in line with the Revised Uniform Law on Notarial Acts as promulgated by the Uniform Law Commission. A bill based on the group's work was introduced during the 2016 legislative session but failed to gain passage.
- Hosted a meeting of state notary administrators (NPA), the National Association of Secretaries of State (NASS), and other notary industry stakeholders. Attendees from across the country gathered at the Authority office to discuss the National Electronic Notarization Standards. Adopted in 2006,

the Standards are scheduled for re-affirmation, so the purpose of the meeting was to review the Standards and provide recommended changes to NASS for consideration.

Fines & Fees Division

Legislation was passed in 2004 which established a new funding mechanism for indigent defense. The Authority was mandated to collect, account for, and disburse to the state treasury and/or beneficiary funds the new and existing fees being collected. Additionally, the Authority was mandated to develop data on the collection and disbursement of all court fees being collected by the over 1,100 courts throughout the state. Court fines and fees had been added incrementally over many years and little accountability or standards for their collection existed.

To fulfill its new obligations, the Authority established a new division to handle the mandates of the legislation and promulgated rules and regulations to enable the collection of new and existing fees. Information now provided by the Authority's Fines & Fees Division allows policy makers to make more informed decisions as they formulate future legislation.

In 2006, the Authority developed and began offering a Fines & Fees Online Training course to help educate court personnel, private probation companies, clerks and their staff on the reporting of fines and fees and how to comply with the law. The online course enables the different courts and others with an interest in the court fee system to train their personnel at a time of their choosing and save travel costs. The course is updated annually to include legislative changes.

Since being entrusted to oversee court fines and fees, the Authority has:

- Developed a website, www.courttrax.org, to support court compliance with the law.
- Created uniform reports.
- Provided statewide training.
- Issued guidance to all parties affected.
- Created an online calculator to help courts properly calculate and assess fines and fees.
- Developed internal accounting systems to support the indexing and processing of these fees to ensure that collection data can be timely and accurately made available to the public.

In FY 2016, the Authority's Fines & Fees Division:

- Collected and disbursed approximately **\$87.4 million** in court fees.
- Performed bi-annual court reviews on approximately **1,100 courts** to help ensure the accuracy of the data being reported to the Authority.
- Maintained a **compliance rate of close to 100%** for all courts through a dedicated and consistent notification system.
- Processed nearly **31,000 monthly reports** submitted by reporting entities.
- Continued to hold operational costs to well under the statutory limit of \$500,000.
- Continued to refine procedures to ensure the accuracy of the indexed data in the Fines & Fees database. This included adding several new audit and indexer reports to help track and measure data quality and performance.
- Updated www.courttrax.org to reflect legislative changes.
- Maintained Fines & Fees Online Training course.

- Continued partnering with the Institute of Continuing Judicial Education at the University of Georgia to offer Fines & Fees training to various courts and other groups, in addition to offering training classes around the state, and utilizing remote training by offering webinars on the subject.

Through its efforts to provide accountability and uniformity to the collection of court fees, the Authority continues its leadership in providing timely and accurate court fee information to the public.

Projects

UCC (Uniform Commercial Code) Project

With the passage of legislation in 1993, the State of Georgia established a statewide system for the indexing of Uniform Commercial Code documents. When the Authority began operation on January 1, 1995, Georgia became the first state in the nation to privatize this traditional state function by outsourcing the indexing of the instruments to a third-party vendor.

Personal property is recorded as a UCC (Uniform Commercial Code) Financing Statement. The purpose of this recording is to provide public notice that personal properties have outstanding liens against them. Under the Authority's system, a secured party need only file in one county to receive statewide notification of his lien position. When a filing is presented to a local clerk of Superior Court, the clerk has 24 hours in which to transmit the UCC document to the Authority and the Authority then has 24 hours in which to add the filing to the statewide index. Before 1995, it was necessary to file in all 159 Georgia counties to receive statewide notification. The Authority's central index provides secured parties with greater protection while saving them both time and money.

In an effort to stay at the forefront of technology and meet the changing needs of users, the Authority successfully launched its **UCC eFile** site to the public in 2010 and began accepting UCC documents for electronic filing. Since the pilot project began in May 2009, over **341,000 UCCs** have been electronically filed. **98 counties** currently participate in the program with 10 of those counties added this year.

During FY 2016, the Authority:

- Indexed and added to www.gscca.org **238,499 UCCs**.
- Conducted **7,366 Certified Searches**.
- Continued promoting **UCC eFile** with over **107,000 UCCs** electronically filed during FY 2016 and **98 counties** now participating in the program, with 10 of those activated this fiscal year.
- Created monthly **UCC bulk image DVDs** for clients throughout the year.
- Maintained **UCC Online Training** course and conducted **webinars** for Superior Court clerk personnel, banks and the legal community on UCC legislative changes.
- Fielded numerous UCC inquiries supporting staff, clerks' offices, the banking industry, private law offices, and the general public.

Since opening in 1995, the Authority has indexed and added to its database over **5.6 million UCCs** (approximately 22,000 per month) and conducted over **238,000 Certified Searches**. The Authority provides free, statewide access to its valuable database through search terminals installed in all clerk of

Superior Court offices. Additionally, the system allows internet access by subscription for parties desiring the convenience of searching the indexes from their office or home.

Real Estate Deed Project

In 1996, legislation was passed in Georgia that required the Authority to develop a consolidated database of the official real and personal property records of all 159 clerks of Superior Court. With this mandate, the Authority created a one-of-a-kind system with no direct cost to the State of Georgia. When the system became operational on January 1, 1999, the public gained unprecedented free access to information within the office of the Superior Court clerk through search terminals installed by the Authority. Additionally, the business community gained 24/7 access to official land records through the Authority's website, www.gscca.org (by subscription).

The Real Estate Deed Project contains the following elements:

- Computer access to real property deed indexes of all 159 counties.
- Integration of all 159 counties into an online statewide system.
- Implementation of standards for data files, fields, and index data.
- Standardization of all printed indexes statewide.

Since passage of the enabling legislation, the Authority developed and implemented the only statewide intranet network in state government. The system started collecting data from all 159 clerks of Superior Court on January 1, 1999. This data includes the name of the seller and buyer of property, the location of the property, the book and page where the actual deed or property record is filed in the county, and cross index information to other related records. Searches can be performed by name, book and page, property location, or instrument type, and can be done by county, region (i.e. a county plus all counties that border it) or statewide. Additionally, images of the corresponding records are constantly being added to the online system.

The Authority added nearly **9.3 million deed images** to the system during FY 2016 to bring the total to nearly **210 million deed images** in the system. Print fees generated from the system are compensated to the clerk's office where the original document resides. Since launching the project, the Authority has compensated Georgia clerks' offices **\$13.8 million** for deed images (over **\$801,000** in FY 2016) and **\$44 million** for real estate-related prints including liens, plats and PT-61s made from www.gscca.org (over **\$4.9 million** in FY 2016).

In 2004, a new feature was added to the system: access to Real Estate Transfer Tax forms (**PT-61s**). This new feature has added even more valuable information to the real estate system. The Authority worked with the Department of Revenue, the Department of Audits, and the Real Property Section of the State Bar of Georgia to bring this project online. (See the section on the PT-61 Project for more information.)

At the end of 2011, the Authority successfully launched **Real Estate eRecording** statewide. Clerks retain control of the process, and their participation is completely voluntary and at no charge. During FY 2016, over **38,000 real estate documents** were eFiled in **54 participating counties**, and over **82,000 documents** have been eFiled since the inception of the program.

Following is a summary of efforts during FY 2016 to support and enhance the Real Estate Deed Project:

- Made improvements to processes that monitor incoming real estate data for completeness and accuracy. These processes help ensure incoming data stays synchronized with local courthouse data and create a complete record of real estate document filings.
- Continued using software and monitoring procedures to detect land record data that is not in conformance with the *Indexing Standards for Real and Personal Property Records for the State of Georgia*. This is intended to highlight possible errors in the index data for deed records thus extending the Authority's ability to check the accuracy and ensure the quality of existing and incoming historical deed records. Tens of thousands of real estate, lien and plat data records and images have been reviewed throughout the fiscal year through automated and manual processes.
- Continued the administration of the Authority's "Indexing Certification Test" resulting in clerks, deputies, and private vendor personnel becoming certified by the Authority to index real and personal property records in accordance with the *Indexing Standards for Real and Personal Property Records for the State of Georgia*. Thus far, 62 active clerks and deputies from 22 counties have completed the Indexing Certification.
- Concluded 39 clerks' office Docket Surveys in FY 2016 resulting in the issuance of official historical indexing guidance to be followed when indexing historical deed, lien and plat instruments. The comprehensive surveys and guidance provide direction to indexers in order to avoid unintentional errors relating to the various book naming conventions and methodologies in use throughout the state. To date, 74 docket surveys have been submitted for staff review and analysis.
- Continued efforts to certify the land record recording computer systems of private vendors that are used by clerks for compatibility and compliance with the Authority's data collection system and the Indexing Standards. One new vendor achieved certification for their land record recording system in FY 2016.
- Conducted training classes and continued to offer an online course to train clerks and staff across Georgia on the *Indexing Standards for Real and Personal Property Records for the State of Georgia*.
- Provided continuous troubleshooting of issues relating to the deed, lien, and plat filings of all clerks of Superior Court and the transmitting and storage of the related index data to the Authority.
- Provided ongoing telephone and email assistance, available to all clerks of Superior Court, regarding the proper indexing of land records in accordance with the *Indexing Standards for Real and Personal Property Records for the State of Georgia*.

Historical Deed Re-Indexing Project

In 2002, the Authority launched the Historical Deed Re-Indexing Project with the goal of adding land records from Georgia's 159 counties that were filed before the central collection system was implemented to the Authority's online system. (Gwinnett County was the first county to accomplish this feat with a "good-from" date of 1871.) To support this project, the Authority developed further Indexing Standards guidance to help address the challenge of applying current indexing standards to real and personal property records that were locally recorded before the advent of statewide indexing standards.

The project is complex and challenging as the Authority requires the complete re-indexing of these older land records in conformance with current Indexing Standards so as to create a cohesive record with current data in the system. All indexers performing this re-indexing must pass a Deed Indexing

Certification Test developed by the Authority, and collected data is quarantined or held in a queue until quality checks are completed. After passing the quality control checks, the data is released to the Authority's website for public access.

The current statewide "good-from" date is 1993. The cost to add each additional historical year to the database is approximately \$3.6 to 4.5 million dollars. A formal program was launched to complete the deed indexing project for all incomplete indexing and imaging for the year 1992 so as to move the inclusive range of deed data back to 1992 for all counties. Agreements were put in place with authorized vendors chosen by the clerks for the completion of the 1992 data. All twenty-four participant clerks' offices and their chosen vendors cooperated with the preparation of formal docket surveys which are reviewed by the Authority for the issuance of indexing and imaging guidance so as to minimize conflicting data and image issues as the project moves forward. In FY 2016, over 40,500 additional deed instruments were added to the system under this program.

With a more optimistic economic forecast, the board recently adopted a resolution to expand the Historical Deed Re-Indexing Project to include all deed instruments filed with clerks of Superior Court in the calendar years 1990 and 1991. The Authority staff was authorized to prepare a timeline and implementation schedule for the project, and it is expected that commencement will begin with the ability to transmit historical index data and images to the Authority on and after January 2, 2017. The Board also voted to compensate the offices of those clerks of Superior Court who have previously completed their 1990 and 1991 historical deed imaging indexing pursuant to a *Clerk-Funded Historical Indexing Agreement*.

County-Funded Historical Deed, Lien and Plat Re-Indexing Project

In 2013, the Authority developed and implemented a *County-Funded* Historical Deed, Lien and Plat Re-Indexing Project allowing clerks on their own initiative and funding to image and re-index their property records for inclusion in the Authority's system. Forty-one counties are now participating in this program which allows additional index and image data for deeds, liens, and plats at the clerk's option. Participation is completely voluntary and at the election of the clerk of Superior Court. Highlights of the program include the documentation and comprehensive analysis of all county books and dockets along with the issuance of indexing guidance for the prevention of unintentional book naming conflicts. The result of the process provides an indexing roadmap for all future historical indexing for the clerk as well as awareness of the importance of consistency for current indexing.

In FY 2013, in just a few months of operation, over 103,000 deed instruments from four participating counties were added to the Authority's website. Many additional deed and plat instruments (index and associated images) were added from participating counties over the next two years: 435,000 in FY 2014 and 258,000 instruments in FY 2015. This past fiscal year, 365,000 instruments were added to the system, for a total of over **1.3 million additional instruments** since the program began. As a result of this project, the public has access to additional real estate information at no additional cost to the Authority, and clerks' offices have the opportunity to generate additional funding through print image fees initiated through the Authority's website. Many more instruments are expected to be added in the future.

Lien, Plat & Map Project

When H.B. 1582 took effect in January of 2004, clerks of Superior Court began to transmit to the GSCCCA lien, map and plat indices and digital images. The Authority worked to certify all existing vendors, train clerks of Superior Court, and provide necessary equipment. New scanners and PCs were distributed to counties and bandwidth (both locally and at the Authority) was increased to accommodate this project.

In 2011, the Authority increased storage capacity of the system to handle the influx of new data. The storage arrays were increased from 36 terabytes to a current capacity of approximately 71 terabytes. The Authority also designed and developed a standard that can be used to electronically file state tax liens directly from the Department of Revenue to the GSCCCA, and subsequently to the counties.

Historical Plat & Map Project

The Historical Plat & Map Project, the most requested new project from users, has been authorized by the Authority board and will proceed as funds become available. Plat and map historical indexing standards are being developed, so when funding is available, the project will move quickly to catch up to the Historical Deed Re-Indexing Project. The goal is to take plats and maps back as far as historical deeds.

PT-61 Project

Launched in September of 2004, PT-61 e-Filing is a collaborative program between the GSCCCA and the Department of Revenue (DOR) to provide a more efficient process for filing a Real Estate Transfer Tax form (PT-61 form). Rather than completing a multi-part paper form, the new system allows the filer to log onto www.gsccca.org from his/her office and complete the form online. The program provides for the more efficient transfer of tax data to the DOR and local tax assessors via weekly electronic reports.

With the 2012 launch of the Authority's Premium Search account (see more information below), users have additional search and view options related to PT-61 data. The Authority also integrated PT-61 form generation with the Real Estate eFiling process. By combining these two separate systems, eFilers save time and records are filed faster and more accurately.

During FY 2016, the Authority:

- Added **390,500** PT-61 filings to the system for a total of nearly **5.2 million** PT-61 records. These filings were accepted and activated by the counties and then sent to the Georgia Department of Revenue and Georgia Department of Audits.
- Compensated nearly **\$47,000** to clerks' offices for prints (\$.50 per print) off the Authority website related to the PT-61 Project.
- Added over **183,000** properties during FY 2016 for a total of nearly 2.2 million searchable addresses.
- Improved clerks' access to their PT-61 data by providing reports and downloads of their cross-referenced PT-61 and real estate data.

Premium Search Account

In January of 2012, the Authority launched a Premium Search account with new search and view options for the Authority's valuable statewide indexes. Based on suggestions from subscribers, the premium account allows users to:

- Pinpoint the property for which they are searching by simply entering the street address.
- Browse PT-61s for a specific day, week, or month.
- Search real estate by county and instrument type.
- Page through documents.
- View data in a variety of new options.
- Access data anytime and anywhere through mobile application using GPS data. (See more information below on the Clerks' Authority Map Search Application.)

The Premium Search account, which includes the Clerks' Authority Map Search Application, is a valuable tool, and helps realtors, bankers, attorneys, surveyors, appraisers, and other members of the business community do their jobs more efficiently and effectively. Read the comments below from real estate appraiser Bruce Hill who has used the Authority's website for years.

"THANK YOU sooooo much for enabling this search! I'm a real estate appraiser and work many small, rural counties where there is no MLS. Your site is invaluable in searching sales in these counties. If you are a business professional and you are not a Premium member, you are missing out on valuable information, available right from your desktop. The GSCCCA is meeting the needs of various industries that rely on online data."

During FY 2016, the Authority increased the number of Premium Search accounts by **15%** for a fiscal year-end total of **3,036 accounts**. This number will grow in the coming years as the Authority continues to market the Premium Search account.

Clerks' Authority Map Search Application

Launched in 2012, the Clerks' Authority Map Search Application provides the most up-to-date and accurate real estate sales data in the state of Georgia, and is the only mobile app that provides real-time sales data on the official source of property transfer tax data in Georgia. Since launching, the application has received rave reviews from users, and is available free-of-charge to Premium Search account subscribers.

Features of the Map Search app include:

- Real-time sales information
- Sales history
- Official county records
- Deeds
- Liens
- Plats

The application has been available on Android devices, iPhones and iPads. This past fiscal year, the Authority completed its iOS and Android app lineup by publishing its **Android Tablet Map Search application**. Full functionality is now available on all iOS and Android devices providing access to valuable real estate information through multiple devices. To add more value, over 183,000 addresses were added for a fiscal year-end total of nearly **2.2 million searchable addresses** in the application.

Through the Authority's Map Search application, real estate professionals, and all other consumers, now have 24/7 access to the most comprehensive real estate information anywhere in Georgia right at their fingertips from their smartphones or tablets.

Data Archive Project (MyVault Online Archive Service)

In 2007, the Authority began offering **MyVault Online Archive Service** in an effort to help clerks of Superior Court protect their irreplaceable public records in the event of a simple hard-drive failure or a larger disaster at the courthouse. MyVault is an automated online data protection service provided free-of-charge to all clerks of Superior Court, but to participate, the clerk must agree to include all real estate data in the nightly backup. The service is managed and monitored daily using live reporting tools and software analytics to ensure that the nightly archive job runs smoothly and successfully.

For the last nine years, MyVault has been providing remote storage and protection for Superior Court clerks' digital information at a secure data center in Atlanta. In 2015, MyVault expanded its service to include a second remote storage site in Colorado. With this expansion, MyVault now stores archived data in three geographically unique locations: on the local appliance, offsite in Atlanta, and offsite in Colorado.

MyVault is currently storing and protecting over **550 million files** totaling more than **77 TBs of live data**, available for recovery in the event of a disaster. The Authority performs proactive data auditing to reduce the amount of redundant data that must be stored. Even as the vault has grown and more new data has been archived, the Authority has been able to proactively and effectively manage storage space and cost.

In addition to the 77 TBs of live data (current versions of files), the MyVault system is currently maintaining an additional **159 TBs** of previous file versions. Maintaining previous versions of files provides critical protection against modern virus attacks such as crypto lockers. Such viruses encrypt files on a server and demand a monetary ransom to obtain a key to decrypt the affected files. By maintaining a vast quantity of previous file versions, the Authority has been able to successfully help some affected counties bypass the ransom demands and safely restore files to an operational state.

It is estimated that as much as 80% of the data backed up through MyVault is directly related to real estate records. The amount of real estate data backed up from participating counties actually exceeds the amount of real estate data in the GSCCCA search systems. Through MyVault, all real estate data in participating counties can be archived and protected, regardless of filing date.

In FY 2016, the Authority received 14 requests to restore data, resulting in 90 GBs of data successfully restored. The Authority has received over 80 requests to restore data since MyVault began in 2007, and over 1.5 TBs of data has been successfully restored to date. Requests for data recovery have ranged from a single file to an entire volume of data. Server failure, human error, and weather events are the most common reasons for data recovery requests. The Authority has received 14 inquiries since 2009, 2 this

fiscal year, to restore data from counties that were NOT participating in MyVault. In one case, the impact was substantial. Many of these counties have since enrolled in the program.

During this past fiscal year, the MyVault website was upgraded and major enhancements were made to the interface in terms of reporting features and administrative functionality. An online dashboard serves as the portal through which clerks have access to their vault information. The dashboard provides live statistics about the last backup and allows users to view and restore items from their vault. In addition to the website, appliance software was also upgraded to improve software functionality, reporting features and other administrative functions.

Below are statistics and other information on MyVault for FY 2016:

- 143 counties currently participate in MyVault with 12 added during FY 2016. 2 additional counties are pursuing enrollment and 2 other counties are not MyVault users but are fulfilling the requirements of SB 135 by sending data to the Authority using alternate means. (SB 135 is legislation that requires clerks to back up data locally and also with the Authority.)
- MyVault stores and protects over 550 million files totaling more than 77 TBs of live data. The system is currently maintaining an additional 159 TBs of previous file versions.
- In FY 2016, the Authority received 14 requests to restore data, resulting in 90 GBs of data successfully restored.
- 43% of enrolled counties are storing between 10 and 100 GBs of data.
- 43% of enrolled counties are storing between 100 and 500 GBs of data.
- 6% of enrolled counties are storing between 500 GBs and 1 TB of data.
- 8% of enrolled counties are storing over 1 TB of data.

Microfilm Project

In addition to the MyVault Online Archive Service, the Authority also manages a Microfilm Project which provides a redundant microfilm back-up of all real estate images for clerks of Superior Court who elect to take advantage of this free project. Initially launched in 1999, the service includes the collection and review of the source images, the production of archive-quality microfilm, and the delivery of the microfilm to the State Archives Center for long-term security. In 2011, the Authority consolidated the process internally (using a single film processor) and added monitoring and control features. This consolidation allowed the Authority to save hundreds of thousands of dollars annually in microfilm production costs.

Following are statistics for the Microfilm Project for FY 2016:

- Participating counties: 156
- Books submitted for microfilm: 13,222
- Images submitted for microfilm: 8,867,677

eFile Project

In 2009, the Georgia legislature mandated that the Authority develop rules and regulations related to the electronic filing of documents. Anticipating this need and with the continuing goal of keeping clerks'

offices at the forefront of technology, the Authority had spent years prior to this legislative mandate researching, planning, programming, and testing their eFiling program through an extensive pilot project. Essential to the project was developing a platform that was flexible enough for clerks, bankers, attorneys, and the general public to use.

In 2010, the Authority successfully launched **UCC eFile** to the public and began accepting UCC documents for electronic filing. Over **107,000 UCCs** were electronically filed during FY 2016, and over **341,000 UCCs** have been electronically filed since May 2009 when the pilot project began. Ten new counties were activated this fiscal year for a current total of **98 participating counties**.

The Authority also launched **Child Support eFile** in 2010 by developing a system that automatically interfaces with the eFiling system of the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC), so that clerks can receive child support cases initiated by the Department of Human Services (DHS) directly through the GSCCCA portal. The AOC has contracted with DHS to provide a workflow and eFiling service for child support cases. Currently, **120 counties** are participating in Child Support eFile with **13** of those activated during FY 2016. Since January 1, 2010, over **330,000** filings have been accepted, with over **101,000** of those filings during FY 2016.

In 2011, the Authority built a real estate eFiling portal and successfully launched **Real Estate eRecording** statewide. This portal initially allowed filers to use an approved vendor to submit real estate documents on their behalf. Two years later, the Authority extended **Real Estate eRecording** by making it fully accessible to the public through a web interface, further streamlining the eFiling of real estate documents in Georgia. With this added web-based application, users in Georgia, who are eligible to participate in the electronic recording of real estate documents, can access the Authority's website, **efile.gscca.org**, to file directly with counties from the convenience of their home or office rather than having to travel to the county clerk's office. Clerks retain control of the process, and their participation is completely voluntary and at no charge.

During FY 2016, participation in Real Estate eFile has continued to grow. The Authority nearly tripled the number of participating counties adding **36 counties** this past fiscal year for a total of **54 participating counties**. Since 2011, participants have filed over 82,000 real estate documents with over 38,000 of those filed in FY 2016. It is expected that these numbers will continue to rise as more and more counties choose to participate.

To support Real Estate eRecording, the Authority developed and published the **www.efileregistry.org** website in 2011. This site was designed to facilitate the registration, maintenance and verification of real estate eFile participants. Working in cooperation with the State Bar of Georgia and the Georgia Superior Court Clerks' Association, the Authority created the eFile registry to provide a secure location for housing approved participants in the eFiling of real estate documents in Georgia. In FY 2016, **206** participants were added to the eFile Registry for a current total of **643 registered participants**. To further support eFile participants, the Authority maintains an eFile User Manual, a guide to assist filers as they navigate within the site and to provide support for technical questions.

From the beginning, the Authority's goal has been to protect the autonomy of Superior Court clerks, improve the technology within their offices, streamline the document-filing process, and give the public access to convenient and effective tools – all at no cost to state or local government. And to add to these benefits, the Authority offers its eFiling service without imposing additional fees above the base filing fee.

Today, the Authority's electronic filing portal, efile.gsccca.org, allows for the filing of UCC, real estate, lien, PT-61, civil case, and child support documents, and the list will continue to grow. As thousands of documents are now being eFiled annually, the Authority continues to assess, improve, and streamline the user experience in its ongoing efforts to stay ahead of the curve and provide state-of-the-art services.

Civil Case Data Project

Legislation was passed in 2000 that requires the filing of case initiation and case disposition forms for each civil case filed in Superior or State Court. Under the law, anyone filing a civil case with the clerk of Superior or State Court must complete a Civil Case Filing form. By law, the clerk must send the data/forms to the Authority. The Authority then indexes the information for inclusion into the statewide database that is then sent to the Georgia Court Automation Commission for analysis.

At the request of the State Bar of Georgia, this information is being gathered for the purpose of studying the number of tort cases filed, the number of overall civil cases filed, the size and scope of the verdicts, and other relevant information. This civil justice database enables Georgia lawmakers to more effectively set public policy regarding judicial reform and allocation of resources to the state's judicial circuits.

Georgia Protective Order Registry

The Georgia Protective Order Registry is an online service that stores all Protective Orders issued by the Superior Courts of Georgia as authorized by the Family Violence statutes of the state. Clerks of Superior Court are responsible for indexing the required data for Orders filed in their courts, electronically scanning the Orders, and attaching the images of the Orders to the indexed data. Clerks transmit the indexed data and the Order images to the Authority. The Authority then verifies and forwards the transmissions to the Georgia Crime Information Center (GCIC) computer system.

The Georgia Protective Order Registry, accessed by law enforcement through GCIC terminals, displays all Protective Orders and related data. In FY 2016, nearly **42,000 Protective Orders** were indexed by clerks, and then electronically transmitted by the Authority to GCIC. Through the efforts of the Authority, critical information for protecting the public is now easily accessible to law enforcement officials nationwide.

During this past fiscal year, the Authority maintained system continuity during a GCIC computer system crash assuring that no Orders were lost while GCIC rebuilt its systems. Once the new systems were in place, the Authority worked with GCIC to test the new systems and services.

Criminal Case Data Project (Offender-Based Tracking System)

Launched in 2003, the Offender-Based Tracking System provides electronic transmission of criminal case disposition data from clerks of Superior Court. Legislation passed in 2001 mandated the electronic collection and reporting of final dispositions, and required that clerks of Superior Court provide electronic collection and transmission of disposition data to the Authority. The Authority then transmits the disposition data to the Georgia Crime Information Center (GCIC), a division of the Georgia Bureau of Investigation (GBI), where it is used to populate the GBI's Computerized Criminal History Database. The

Authority worked with the clerks of Superior Court case management system vendors to develop transmission standards and protocols.

In FY 2016, over **295,000 records** of criminal court dispositions were electronically transmitted from the various criminal courts in Georgia to the GSCCCA and then forwarded to GCIC for the purpose of compiling criminal histories and background checks. This system provides critical and timely information to protect the safety of the public and law enforcement officers throughout Georgia.

Carbon Sequestration Registry

The Georgia legislature passed the “Georgia Carbon Sequestration Registry Act” in 2004 to provide for a registry to promote offsetting reductions in greenhouse gases by sequestering carbon. The Authority worked with the Georgia Forestry Commission (GFC) to create the Carbon Sequestration Registry.

The registry has multiple objectives. Its primary objective is to promote the establishment and protection/conservation of forests to mitigate the effects of harmful emissions worldwide. Beyond this, a second objective is to create a new medium of exchange and revenue stream for owners of the sequestered carbon. This is accomplished by creating “carbon credits” based on the amount of carbon sequestered. Such credits can be sold to industrial clients who have emission “deficits” because they are producing excessive harmful emissions. On one hand, emission violators can “buy” absolution in the form of credits, and, on the other hand, carbon owners profit from their good work in preserving forests or timberlands.

The registry documents and tracks the acreage of timberland that owners will agree to preserve. Periodic and partial re-inspections ensure that the quantities remain accurate in case of wildfires, storms or other destructive events. Independent inspectors are used to verify the original registration as well as to re-inspect the sequestered timber.

IT Department

Responsible for the upkeep of our computer and data systems, the IT Department is also the backbone of the Authority ... turning legislative mandates and project “dreams” into technological realities. The Authority’s IT staff develops and implements cutting-edge programs that offer unique services to Georgia’s counties and citizens. The staff is committed to the preservation of the data with which the Authority has been entrusted and ensuring that it is available to the public at all times. Important enhancements and upgrades are made each year to fulfill this commitment. Additionally, the Authority continually seeks ways to increase the speed and improve the efficiency, flexibility, reliability and usability of its systems while also reducing cost. The staff values user/customer feedback and is committed to incorporating it into the Authority’s products and technical decisions.

Following is a summary of the many accomplishments of the Authority’s IT Department for FY 2016. Whether large or small, these activities enable us to meet our goals and grow and innovate in a constantly changing environment.

Development – eFiling & eRecording

After restructuring its entire eFile site three years ago, the Authority continues to make adjustments in order to incorporate customer feedback, improve the user experience, implement new features, and enhance performance and efficiency. Below are some of the changes made during FY 2016:

- Grew eFile Project both in terms of filers and participating counties. (See Pages 24-26 for more details on the history of this project and its growth this past fiscal year.)
- Added “Lien” eFiling capability to GSCCCA eFile portal for convenient online filing of liens.
- Added “Bulk Lien” eFiling capability to GSCCCA eFile portal for convenient online filing of county and state tax liens.
- Changed collection process of filing fees for government entities to reflect the reality that such entities often have “in house” methods of transferring filing fees to the clerk of Superior Court. For such entities, the GSCCCA web portal does not require that filing fees be paid at the time of filing submission.
- Made eFiling dashboard improvements including adding advanced search and filter features.
- Added feature to portal that informs filers whether the county will be collecting intangible tax on real estate filings or if they will need to pay it to another entity.
- Added feature that allows clerks to restrict which value-added submitters can submit filings in their county.
- Created Daily County Disbursement Reports.

Development – eFile Registry

The eFile Registry was developed by the Authority to facilitate the registration, maintenance and verification of real estate eFile participants. The site provides a secure location for housing approved participants in the eFiling of real estate documents in Georgia. The eFile Registry has been up and running since November 2011.

Following is data and other information from FY 2016:

- Added 206 participants to the registry for a total of 643 registered participants.
- Continued to provide the capability for third-party systems to automatically verify the validity of participant ID numbers in real time.
 - Over 100,000 queries processed this fiscal year.
 - Over 217,000 queries processed since the eFile Registry opened in November 2011.

Development – Website (www.gsccca.org)

After launching a completely redesigned version of www.gsccca.org to rave reviews three years ago, the Authority continues to tweak and improve the site to better serve its customers. Following are some of the changes from FY 2016:

- Filmed, edited and published monthly “Featured Clerk” videos to website. This improved format, from a solo narrative to a casual conversation/interview, highlights each clerk’s personality and

continues the Authority's goal of making the website more engaging for users. The Authority shot 13 "Featured Clerk" interviews during FY 2016.

- Added "Report this Image" to imaging system to allow customers to easily report an issue with an image.
- Created Image Reporting Administrative site to process image reports.
- Added next generation HTML5 Imaging Viewer to website giving customers the option to view images using either our Java viewer or the new HTML5 viewer.
- Expanded list of supported browsers allowing desktop, tablet and mobile access to our public website. This was possible due to the new HTML5 Imaging Viewer's support of mobile devices. Over 13,000 customers have elected to use the new HTML5 viewer as their primary viewer.
- Increased the rate at which users are allowed to view document images in order to facilitate a better user experience. Image rate limits were instituted years ago to help prevent against "terms of use" violations. However, these limits must be occasionally reevaluated and adjusted as user network and computing speeds increase.
- Improved login page functionality and display of clerk information on mobile devices.
- Standardized email validation requirements throughout website.
- Updated county information pages on website due to changes brought about by 2016 legislation.

Development – Premium Search Account & Map Search Application

- Improved functionality of Android phone application.
- Published Android Tablet Map Search application completing our iOS and Android app lineup. Full functionality is now available on all iOS and Android devices.
- Increased addresses searchable in our Premium Account's Map Search application. Over 183,000 properties were added during FY 2016 for a total of nearly 2.2 million searchable addresses.

Development – Notary

- Continued serving the notary needs of Georgia counties through Notary Online. 129 counties currently participate, with 4 of those counties added this year.
- Modified Notary system to show who processed a commission.
- Improved "inactive and active" and "public official" search features.
- Added support for searching web commissions.
- Improved Notary Bulk Data export by allowing option to exclude headers.
- Modified address data collection.

Development – Fines & Fees

- Added several new audit and indexer reports to help track and measure data quality and performance.
- Implemented indexing improvements to help reduce indexing errors.
- Added a "waiver" feature to remove waived courts from applicable reports.
- Added "waiver" and "deactivated court" notification features.
- Improved Contact Management features.

- Improved compliance reporting.
- Added ability to “flag/unflag” a court and provide a reason.

Development – QA

QA is a quality assurance system created by the Authority to review historical deed, lien and plat transmissions to ensure the data and images conform to Authority requirements. Following are some of the QA improvements made during FY 2016:

- Added functionality to allow QA staff to efficiently review index data cross references.
- Added ability for Authority data managers to control the release of historical index data to the public search index.
- Created a database and processes for entering, storing, and using information from “Deed, Lien, Plat Docket Surveys” to improve the Surveys and allow for future use by integrating into other GSCCCA applications.
- Created program to allow batch submission of images for redaction processing by QA team.
- Added ability for real estate index data managers to migrate deed, lien, and plat data from “Quarantine” database tables so it will not get released to the public GSCCCA search website.

Development – Other

- Managed “Change Control” document which is used by management and IT staff to track change requests and thoughtfully prioritize development efforts to determine the best use of resources. 99 tracked projects were completed this past fiscal year.
- Added new features to the Program Status Report (PSR), including Clerk Custodianship and Disaster Planning, to provide more value and usability.
- Maintained system continuity during GCIC (Georgia Crime Information Center) system crash assuring that no Protective Orders were lost.
- Ensured continued credit card and ACH processing capabilities throughout GSCCCA by responding to changes that affect these services.
- Improved clerk access to their PT-61 data by providing reports and downloads of their cross referenced PT-61 and real estate data.
- Improved ScanSend by consolidating web services and updating installer to Installshield.
- Improved index data import processes by enhancing “filed date” validation to enforce stricter control over daily and historical index data.
- Created monthly UCC bulk image DVDs for clients throughout the year.

Systems

- Implemented a new backup system that will centralize all backups into one platform and replace an aging tape library system. The new environment will greatly ease the recovery of data when a loss occurs, narrow backup windows for increased system availability, and simplify administration.
- Set up an alternate server and software infrastructure in response to SB 135, the Clerk Custodianship Bill, which mandates that all clerks back up their electronic records locally as well

as online to the GSCCCA. Prior to the bill passing, the Authority already offered the MyVault backup and archival system to all clerks in order to facilitate voluntary, free online backup of clerk data to the GSCCCA. Since passage of the bill, the Authority has engineered a variety of other online backup methodologies for those counties that have either elected not to participate in the MyVault program, or have been unable to participate due to technological or policy barriers.

- Upgraded one of our core database servers to a contemporary version of Microsoft SQL Server, a high performance and widely respected relational database management system. As a database server, its primary function is to store and retrieve data as requested by other software applications. This server is where many of our critical databases reside, including eFile, eFileRegistry and eInvoicing. The deployment required extensive database, application, and website testing. This upgrade brings the databases to a more current version, which is critical to support, and also provides access to additional features and functionality.
- Upgraded the VMware ESXi hardware platform at both datacenters and virtualized all remaining database servers making the GSCCCA 93% virtualized. These products allow us to run multiple servers on a shared hardware platform. The effect is that, on ten physical servers, we run 123 virtualized servers. This allows us to maximize utilization of physical server resources decreasing server hardware costs.
- Upgraded our hard disk array with additional storage capacity, disk speed, and added redundancy. The hard disk array and its 128 hard drives have a total storage capacity of 75 TBs. The storage array handles all of the production data and is one of the single most important pieces of equipment owned by the GSCCCA.
- Implemented Windows Server Update Services. This is a security patch management solution from Microsoft that allows for the automated patching of servers and PCs. This move saves management time, ensures more consistency of patching, and will save the GSCCCA \$6,000 annually moving forward.
- Implemented new system monitoring servers. These servers monitor all GSCCCA resources and send alerts notifying staff of potential issues to ensure maximum uptime.
- Updated the Windows 7 install software that is used in all GSCCCA computers to ensure reliability and ease-of-use for customers.
- Upgraded the Mitel application server which integrates with our phone system allowing better management of phone calls for improved customer satisfaction.
- Upgraded the data replication server to ensure that data is distributed correctly to the remote datacenter in case of an outage at the primary datacenter.
- Upgraded the Web Deploy application to enable the development staff to publish new code to only one server and then the code is replicated to all other servers. This simplifies the publishing process and ensures that all the servers have the same code.
- Implemented a new antivirus server ensuring that GSCCCA computers remain protected against the latest types of malicious attacks and viruses. The new server platform will also ensure future compatibility with the widest range of operating systems.
- Implemented a new search terminal management server. Search terminals were installed in all Superior Court clerk offices to provide the public free access to the Authority's data. The search terminal management server restricts access to most functions and websites to ensure that the search terminals are only used for their intended purpose.
- Assisted development team with modifications to the image viewing rate limiting process, including the creation of a logging mechanism to conduct analysis retrospectively. These modifications were done to improve the effectiveness of rate limiting to improve customer satisfaction.

- Created the “County Disbursement Report” for the Fines and Fees department. It is a monthly summary report of all ACH deposits the Authority has made for a county for any UCC and/or real estate eFiling fees collected on the clerk’s behalf.
- Designed and built four new real estate and UCC redaction reports to allow management to monitor the status of the Redaction Project.
- Upgraded accounting software to ensure continued support and compatibility for accounting staff.
- Tested Windows 10 with commonly used applications in order to determine if the latest Microsoft operating system works for the GSCCCA.
- Updated operating system on spam filter ensuring that the GSCCCA email system is protected against the latest types of viruses and unwanted email. The system blocked 17 million pieces of spam and virus-laden emails. This amounts to over 96% of all incoming email.
- Regularly tested backup system to ensure that data could be restored in the event of a data loss.
- Backed up over 1,076 TBs of GSCCCA operational data, the equivalent of backing up the printed collection of the U.S. Library of Congress about 107 times!

Network

- Began installation and deployment of redundant network access control servers (CISCO ISE). The new platform will ensure greater reliability and control our wireless and VPN networks.
- Performed SSL cipher updates across websites to ensure compliance with industry standards.
- Performed 31 network line upgrades, including physical office moves for 5 counties. These upgrades resulted in a 1400% overall increase in bandwidth and provided a major improvement in staff’s ability to administer, troubleshoot and diagnose network issues.
- Continued migration of Legacy AT&T MPLS sites to our new VPN-based network. Only 35 Legacy sites remain.
- Worked with IT staffs from 14 counties to join networks in order to enable clerks' offices to share data and resources with other local offices.
- Maintained a consolidated list of valid bills for the accounting department to reference. This has enabled us to more accurately track the cancellation of lines, and ensure that internet service providers are billing appropriately.
- Worked with HelpDesk to resolve 330 network-related support tickets, coordinating with internal teams, county resources, and vendor technical support where necessary.
- Upgraded external firewall software to remove potential Java security flaws.
- Continued to maintain PCI site certification which guarantees customers that the security measures we provide on the GSCCCA websites are strong enough to protect their data and online transactions.
- Performed the required duties to remain a Cisco Certified Partner.
- Expanded office wireless network for greater coverage.

HelpDesk – Customer Support

HelpDesk is the Authority’s customer support team which provides technical support for clerks, clerks’ office staff, and website customers. This team of technical support reps responds to thousands of calls and emails annually, providing support from 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. throughout the work week. Their outstanding work is critical to the continued success of the Authority, and is utilized and appreciated daily by clerks and website customers. See the following comments from clerks and staff:

“Problem was fixed with the server. Praise the Good Lord!!!!”

“Thank you so much for your help. [Your staff] has come and gone leaving us with a working printer! (I had no doubts.) I look forward to working with you in the future. Thanks again.”

Emails from satisfied website customers are also common. See the comments below:

“I spent 3 hours with my computer tech trying to get my computer to download images from your website; he couldn’t fix it but when I called your technical support team, Cassandra fixed it within 5 minutes. Thanks!!!!”

“I wanted to send a message telling you how terrific your associate Carlos was. He helped me tremendously to resolve my issue and retrieve my documents. He was really wonderful.”

The following annual statistics speak to the volume of work this team handles each year and the efficiency of their performance.

HelpDesk Stats

- Total Calls: **17,066**
- Answer Rate: **98%**
- Average Talk Time: **5 minutes 56 seconds**
- Average Speed of Answer: **56 seconds**
- Total Email Requests Received: **7,600+**
- Total Hardware/Repair Requests: **286**
- Tickets Received: **14,146**
- Tickets Resolved (during initial contact): **12,413**
- Ticket Resolution Rate: **88%**

Top 10 Requests

- GSCCCA Website: General Information/Non-Tech Q/A (1,483)
- GSCCCA Website: Username/Password Requests (1,387)
- Account Management: New Account Request (850)
- GSCCCA Website: Site Navigation Assistance (825)
- GSCCCA Website: Unable to View Images (784)

- GSCCCA Website: Java Install/Update (459)
- GSCCCA Website: Java Error (374)
- PT-61: Non-Tech Q/A (332)
- eFile UCC: Customer Filing Question (277)
- Outlook: Unable to Send/Receive Emails (248)

Equipment Outreach

In order to successfully implement its many legislatively mandated projects, the Authority has modernized all Superior Court clerk offices in the state by providing thousands of computers, printers, scanners, servers and other equipment. For many offices, this meant automating them for the first time when the UCC project began in 1995. In addition to providing equipment, the Authority's IT staff travels to all 159 counties to service equipment, which is eligible for replacement every three years. By continuing to provide equipment, in addition to technological assistance and high-speed communications, the Authority supports all counties in their efforts to comply with Authority programs. Acquiring this equipment for most counties would not have been possible without the Authority due to the significant tightening of county budgets.

Connie Cheatham, Superior Court clerk of McDuffie County, one of the state's smallest counties, recognizes this benefit from the Authority:

"I wouldn't have the amount of equipment that I have now, and I would not have the IT assistance because, in my county, the IT Department serves both the city and the county, and there are only two people in the department."

Jean Rogers, Superior Court clerk of Crisp County, another very small county, also appreciates the IT support from the Authority:

"My county could not afford the technical support that the Authority provides for me and the two courts that I serve. The technology from the Authority has allowed me to do more with less."

In addition to providing cutting-edge programs that offer unique services to Georgia's counties and citizens, the Authority can take pride in the fact that Georgia's Superior Court clerk offices have not only entered the 21st century, but have embraced its technology and, in many areas, lead their counterparts from around the country.

Below is a summary of the Authority's equipment outreach efforts during FY 2016:

- Ordered, processed and shipped a total of **899 pieces of new equipment** to clerks' offices including CPUs, monitors, servers, laptops and scanners. The Authority has provided over **24,500** pieces of new equipment to clerks' offices since opening its doors in 1995.
- Deployed **551 pieces of new equipment** (388 computers, 107 monitors and 56 scanners) to 46 Superior Court clerk offices to replace depreciated equipment as part of the Authority's Statewide Computer Replacement Project for all 159 counties.

- Increased efforts to replace remaining Windows XP PCs with new Windows 7 PCs to prevent against malware and viruses since XP is no longer supported by Microsoft. Currently, the Authority has 4,141 Lenovo PCs in use across Georgia and approximately 600 are still running Windows XP. The Authority is committed to ensuring the security and reliability of all the PCs on its network and will continue to aggressively work to replace these remaining Windows XP PCs in the coming months.
- Handled **92** Purchase Orders totaling over **\$1 million** including equipment for the Remote Data Center and Archive Project.
- Handled **59** contracts from counties for equipment totaling **\$93,000**. This included county purchases, Image Trade purchases and county requests for additional equipment.
- Performed detailed evaluation of all returned inventory sheets from counties and processed **874** county equipment returns.
- Processed **129** equipment repairs essential for daily operations within clerk offices including computers, flat-panel monitors and scanners.
- Tracked all repairs of county equipment and ensured that items were returned in a timely manner.
- Shipped approximately **167** non-inventory items including switches, cables, keyboards and mice.
- Obtained **189** quotes for equipment purchases for counties.
- Saved over **\$50,000** through competitive bidding, state contract, and contract with the Western States Contracting Alliance, a group of companies that have banded together to form a buying cooperative.
- Saved over **\$13,000** by implementing in-house imaging.
- Transferred **647** pieces of equipment to the Georgia Department of Administrative Services for proper disposal per state guidelines.
- Continued to promote open communication with counties for the purpose of encouraging compliance with all Authority projects including UCC Project, Real Estate Deed Project, and Lien, Plat & Map Project.
- Maintained an inventory management tracking component helping to ensure that all county inquiries, problems and other issues are addressed promptly and accurately.
- Distributed inventory sheets, detailed memos and Q&A sheets to all counties for sustained inventory project success.
- Continued to streamline and simplify communication between counties and the Authority by providing real-time information on their inventory, GSCCCA equipment policies and frequently asked questions.

Training

Since the UCC Project launched, training has become one of the Authority's core services and, each year, this critical resource is developed even further. Through this department, the Authority provides the most accurate and current information to clerks, their staff, and other interested constituencies while also prioritizing the convenience and accessibility of the training. Read the comments below from Charles Baker, Superior Court clerk of Hall County:

“The Authority is tremendous with the training. They’re very hands-on, and they stay on the cutting edge of technology. Whether it’s Fines & Fees, Real Estate, or Notary Online training, the Authority staff is so well educated.”

The Authority's goal is to create learning opportunities that are flexible, personalized, and relevant, and, to this end, offers many types of training including classroom, webinars, online, and one-on-one. See more detailed information below.

Classroom

Classroom training is usually hosted by a Superior Court clerk and offered free-of-charge. For FY 2016, the Authority conducted 67 programs at over 40 locations across the state. The following topics were offered:

- Real Estate Indexing Standards
- eFile Training
- Notary Public Training (over 3,700 people attended this training)
- Fines & Fees

The Authority continues to successfully partner with other groups to conduct some of its training. For example, Fines & Fees training was conducted in conjunction with the Institute of Continuing Judicial Education at UGA for various courts and other groups. The Authority also provided training classes to a variety of groups in the real estate and legal communities.

Webinars

Webinars are remote training conducted via the Internet and phone and allow a clerk to have as many staff members as they wish participate in training without the time and cost of travel. During FY 2016, the Authority continued to utilize this internet-based training tool by hosting 13 webinars for 240 participants. The following topics were covered:

- UCC Training
- Real Estate Indexing Standards
- Advanced Real Estate Indexing Standards
- Fines and Fees
- Protective Orders
- Authority eFile Projects
- Get to Know the Authority
- Windows 10

Online

The Authority continues to offer a wide variety of online training opportunities. Courses are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, making training completely flexible. Following are the online courses that the Authority offers and the number of clerks, clerk employees, and other Georgia citizens who took advantage of this training during FY 2016:

- Introduction to GSCCCA Indexing Standards
 - 112 people participated in the training
 - 58 users took the Real Estate Indexing Certification Exam and 15 clerk employees successfully passed the exam
- Extended Real Estate Indexing Standards Training
 - 74 people participated in the training
- Fines & Fees Training
 - 81 people participated in the training
- Notary Online
 - 9,839 people participated in the training
 - 4,809 took the Notary Public Final Exam
- UCC Training
 - 47 people participated in the training

Additionally, the Authority conducted 22 one-on-one training sessions for clerks, other courts, banks, and realtors. The Authority also presented a variety of training programs to different constituencies, and provided training and hosted a computer lab at the 2015 Fall COAG Conference and 2016 Spring Clerks' Conference.

Outreach & Professional Development

The Authority recognizes and values its symbiotic relationship with Superior Court clerks, and in this vein, works hard to provide support to clerks and their staff in many ways. The Authority also seeks and takes advantage of opportunities to reach the public and provide education on who we are and what we do. Additionally, the Authority recognizes the value of professional development and encourages staff to be involved in industry groups and work toward furthering their own training and education. To that end and with a continuing emphasis on improving service to all constituencies, the Authority hosted a two-day, in-house "Service in Excellence" course for its entire staff to build customer support and interaction skills. Prior to that, department managers participated in a "coaching" class to develop those critical skills.

Below is a summary of the Authority's outreach and professional development activities for FY 2016.

- Continually update and add new information to the Clerk Resource Center. This password-protected website was designed by the Authority to support Superior Court clerks and their staffs. The site contains clerk-specific information including program status reports, conference materials, and links to Notary Online, PT-61 Online, and the Authority's Training Center. The site also provides a one-stop location for the Authority to post and for clerks to access updated information on legislative changes and other dynamic issues that will affect Superior Court clerk offices.
- Produce quarterly newsletter for clerks that is posted on the Authority website.
- Filmed, edited and published monthly "Featured Clerk" videos to website. This improved format, from a solo narrative to a casual conversation/interview, highlights each clerk's personality and continues the Authority's goal of making the website more engaging for users. The Authority shot 13 "Featured Clerk" interviews during FY 2016.

- Continued to strengthen the Authority's social media presence. By utilizing Facebook and Twitter, the Authority is better able to communicate with its customers and reach out to potential subscribers while keeping clerks better informed.
- Finished initial processing of over 20 hours of Superior Court clerk history interviews for the Council of Superior Court Clerks of Georgia for use in an upcoming history project.
- Handled and processed to resolution UCC, notary public, real estate, fines and fees, and training inquiries from clerks' offices, UCC filers, online users and the general public.
- Provided a computer lab for the Fall COAG Conference and Spring Clerks' Conference. Conference materials were posted in the Authority's Clerk Resource Center.
- Visited with clerks of Superior Court across the state and participated in clerk district meetings to discuss joint projects and legislative issues and to promote the benefits of Authority projects including the Premium Search account and eFile Project
- Created 2016 Promo cards to promote the Authority's Premium Search account by providing one month of free access. The cards are given to clerks to market the Premium Search account to customers and are distributed at various eFile training programs.
- Conducted various presentations and training for clerks of Superior Court districts, other courts, and outside groups including members of the banking and legal communities, the National Association of Secretaries of State, the Georgia Real Estate Closing Attorneys Association, the University of Georgia School of Law in Athens, and multiple boards of realtors and tax commissioners' offices.
- Maintained liaison roles with the State Bar, public users, title examiners, surveyors, GCIC, and courthouse vendors.
- Regularly communicate with the FBI's Domestic Terrorism Unit regarding sovereign citizen issues. The Authority serves in a liaison capacity between the FBI and Superior Court clerk offices.
- Participated in an FBI work group addressing mortgage fraud. The Authority's database is viewed as a valuable tool in the research and discovery process for law enforcement.
- Handled, in conjunction with the Attorney General's office, open records requests from the public.
- Monitored HB 381, a bill to rewrite Georgia's notary law. The Authority board appointed a committee comprised of board members, industry experts and Authority staff, and charged the group with making the revisions to notary law. The goal is to modernize Georgia's notary law and to bring it in line with the Revised Uniform Law on Notarial Acts as promulgated by the Uniform Law Commission. A bill based on the group's work was introduced during the 2016 legislative session but failed to gain passage.
- Hosted a meeting of state notary administrators (NPA), the National Association of Secretaries of State (NASS), and other notary industry stakeholders. Attendees from across the country gathered at the Authority office to discuss the National Electronic Notarization Standards. Adopted in 2006, the Standards are scheduled for re-affirmation, so the purpose of the meeting was to review the Standards and provide recommended changes to NASS for consideration.
- Helped develop an electronic notarization implementation guide that will benefit states adopting an e-notary process being produced by the Notary Public Administrators.
- Benefitted from staff members serving in industry leadership positions:
 - Authority communications director serving as vice-president of the board for 2015-2016 of the Notary Public Administrators (NPA), a section of the National Association of Secretaries of State (NASS). Comprised of state notary administrators, the NPA brings together public and private stakeholders in the notary industry. The Authority's participation in NASS/NPA allows us to monitor changes and trends in the area of notary law nationally that could affect the state of Georgia. As NPA vice-president, he

represented the Clerks' Authority at the annual NASS 2016 Winter Conference and reported on the activities and 2016 goals of NPA to the full body of NASS, which is comprised of secretaries of state from all fifty states.

- Authority communications director serving as immediate past-president of the International Association of Commercial Administrators (IACA) for 2015-2016. In this position, he represents the Clerks' Authority by promoting the vital role that IACA plays in the UCC filing office. IACA brings together UCC industry representatives from the private (filings parties) and public (filing offices) sectors.
 - Authority communications director serving as member of IACA's UCC Model Administrative Rules Committee. This international group is charged with reviewing and making appropriate recommendations to update current rules.
- Benefitted from staff members furthering education and training:
- IT manager and development manager maintained PMP (Project Management Professional) certification.
 - Network administrator maintained his Cisco Certified Network Associate (CCNA) certification.
- Benefitted from staff members being honored for exemplary work within the community:
- Authority ombudsman awarded the "Georgia PTA Volunteer of the Year" and asked to serve on a committee with other professionals to help local state representative craft legislation on education reform.

Conclusion

Since opening its doors in 1995, the Authority has seen tremendous growth and strategic innovation, and through its many programs, the following has become a reality without any funding from local, state or federal taxes:

- The public has unprecedented access to valuable information in the Superior Court clerk's office.
- The business community has new, innovative tools for making their work more efficient and effective.
- The State of Georgia benefits from more modernized clerk of Superior Court offices.
- Clerks' offices enjoy additional resources as budgets are stretched thin.
- Georgia lawmakers have access to data that allows them to more effectively set public policy.
- Law enforcement officials have access to critical and timely crime data to protect the public.

Much has been accomplished since the Authority was created over twenty years ago but our goals remain ambitious and unchanged. We will continue to:

- Strengthen our relationship with clerks of Superior Court and ensure they have the resources they need for success.
- Sustain our robust culture of innovation, remain flexible, rethink how we work, listen to our customers, and continually streamline and add value to our programs.
- Provide superior customer service to all our constituencies.

- Foster existing relationships and partnerships and embrace new opportunities.
- Anticipate shifts in the business environment and meet them head-on by preemptively retooling our organization for advantage and growth.
- Strategically transform our operations for long-term efficiency.
- Seek sustainable solutions to the financial issues with which we are faced.
- Achieve preeminence as an acknowledged leader in the public records arena.

The information contained in this report is respectfully presented to provide an overview of the Authority and a more detailed review of the many accomplishments of the past fiscal year. These achievements would not have been possible without the support and tremendous contributions of Georgia's Superior Court clerks, the vision and leadership of the Authority Board of Directors, and the outstanding abilities and tireless efforts of our dedicated professional staff.

For additional information on any of the programs listed or the content of this report, please contact Mike Smith, GSCCCA communications director, at mike.smith@gsccca.org.

