LEGAL DEPARTMENT

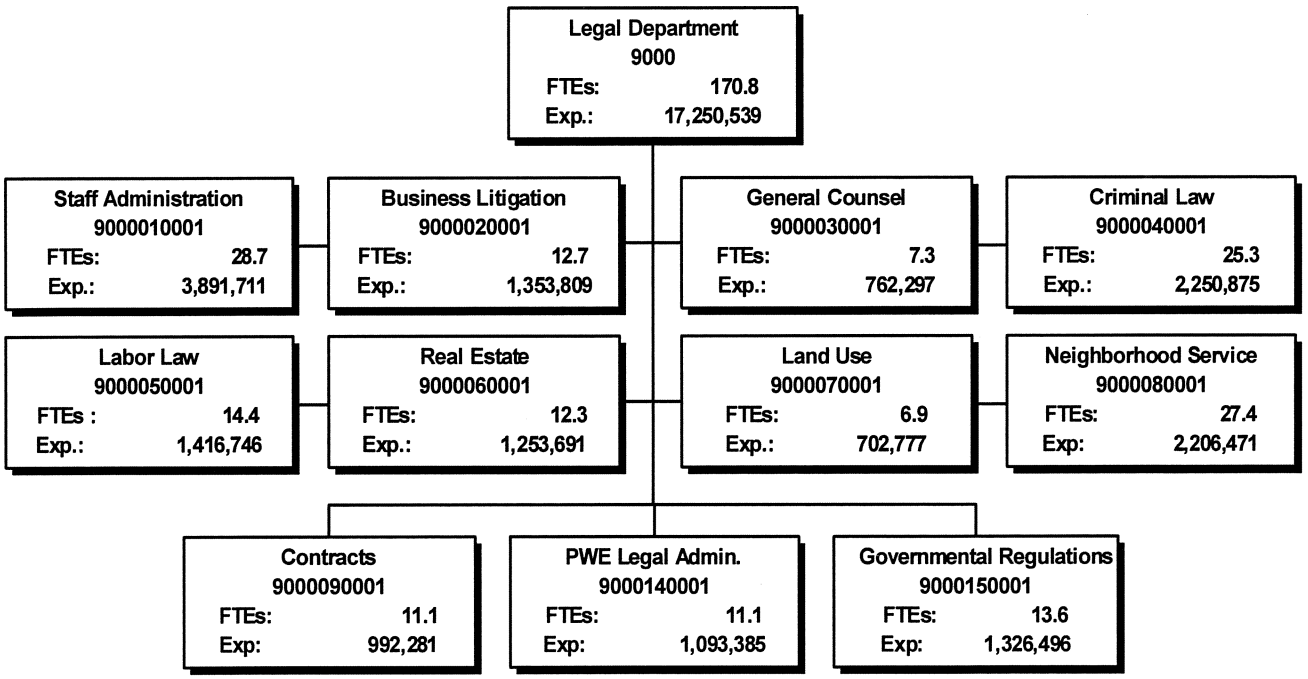
Department Description and Mission

The mission of the Legal Department is to provide the City of Houston with the highest quality municipal legal services, facilitate the operations of the City and protect its interests. The Department is organized into eleven (General Fund) divisions to accomplish this mission: Staff Administration, Business Litigation, General Counsel, Criminal Law, Labor Law, Real Estate, Land Use, Neighborhood Service, Contracts, Public Works & Engineering Legal Administration, and Governmental Regulations.

The Legal Department's work is funded primarily from the General Fund and the Property and Casualty Fund. Additionally, some legal services related to workers compensation benefits are funded out of the Workers Compensation Administration Fund.

The central duties of the Legal Department funded from the General Fund include the preparation of City ordinances and resolutions, research and drafting of legal opinions, preparation of contracts, bond issue representation, deed restriction enforcement, support for the dangerous building demolition project, utility regulation, collection of revenue on past due accounts, claims resolution, personnel actions, prosecution of violators of City ordinances, and represent the City in commercial and employment litigation.

Department Organization



Business Area Budget Summary

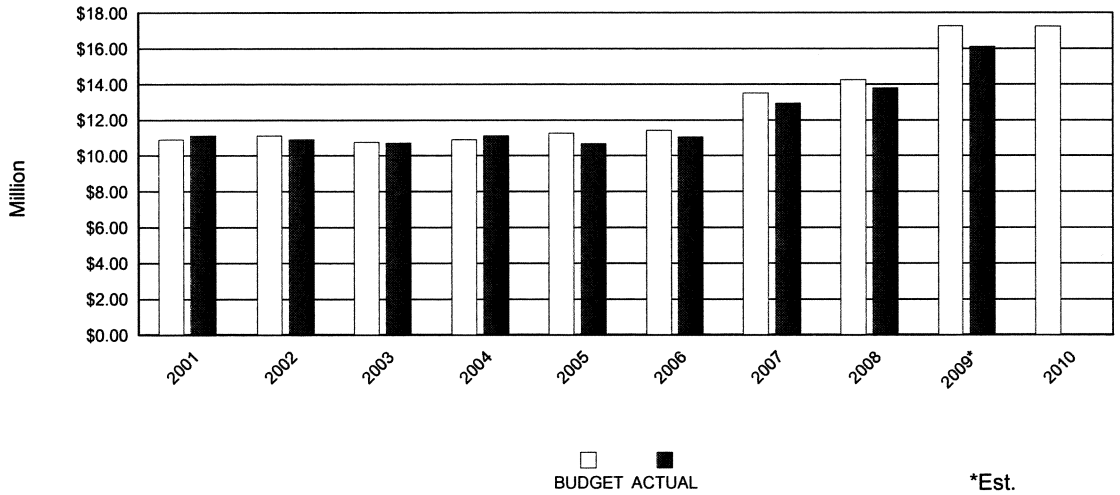
Fund Name : General Fund
Business Area Name : Legal
Fund No./Bus. Area No. : 1000 / 9000

		FY2008 Actual	FY2009 Current Budget	FY2009 Estimate	FY2010 Budget
Expenditures	Personnel Services	12,453,519	15,106,756	14,552,921	**15,710,835**
	Supplies	368,837	469,688	457,300	**462,841**
	Other Services and Charges	944,693	1,673,811	1,086,719	**1,068,279**
	Total M & O Expenditures	13,767,049	17,250,255	16,096,940	**17,241,955**
	Debt Service & Other Uses	11,923	10,745	10,745	**8,584**
	Total Expenditures	13,778,972	17,261,000	16,107,685	**17,250,539**
Revenues		1,141,071	1,069,950	1,248,796	**1,417,831**
Staffing	Full-Time Equivalents - Civilian	158.7	170.8	167.9	**170.8**
	Full-Time Equivalents - Classified	0.0	0.0	0.0	**0.0**
	Full-Time Equivalents - Cadets	0.0	0.0	0.0	**0.0**
	Total	158.7	170.8	167.9	**170.8**
	Full-Time Equivalents-Overtime	0.0	0.0	0.0	**0.0**

Budget Highlights

- o Continue provision of core legal services.
- o Continue to pursue collection of debts owing to the City.
- o Enhance the efficiencies and effectiveness of the Legal Department in the dangerous buildings process.
- o Provide detailed procedures and protocols citywide for electronic records management and electronic discovery.
- o Includes 3% HOPE and 1.25% Pay for Performance increases.

Legal
Current Budget vs Actual Expenditures



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Business Area Cost Center Summary

Fund Name : General Fund
Business Area Name : Legal
Fund No./Bus Area No. : 1000 / 9000

Cost Center Description	Cost Center Objectives
LGL - Staff Administration 9000010001	
Responsible for records management, accounts payable, personnel functions, facility maintenance, law library, budget, financial and management analysis, and maintenance of the Legal Department's fixed asset management system.	Maintain efficiency of the department's local area network (LAN). Develop workflow aging report from file management database system. Review law library collection.
LGL - Business Litigation 9000020001	
Commercial and construction litigation; hotel occupancy tax, franchise fee and other collections; and contract disputes and litigation.	Defend and prosecute claims and litigation in assigned areas of responsibility. Assist in recovering revenues for other departments. Report on affirmative and defensive claims and litigation matters handled by the division.
LGL - General Counsel 9000030001	
Research and draft Code amendments, special ordinances and opinions; represent City Council and citizen committees; handle sign code issues and represent the Ethics Committee.	Improve response time for ordinances and opinions; track requests and response status more fully; interface with Council and Departments on their needs.
LGL - Criminal Law 9000040001	
Represent the State in most cases filed in the municipal courts.	Maintain consistency among prosecutors regarding the use of professional judgment and implement a new process for serving and prosecuting business entities.
LGL - Labor Law 9000050001	
Represent City in personnel hearings, arbitrations, litigation appeals from adverse rulings and judgements. Act on EEOC and TX Commission on Human Rights matters. Review pension issues and FMLA/ADA accommodations. Provide legal opinions on personnel matters.	Represent City on appeals from indefinite suspensions, arbitrations, litigation, unemployment claims, EEOC and other personnel actions; advise Departments proactively on employee issues to reduce claims; and provide monthly reports.
LGL - Real Estate 9000060001	
Provide legal svcs/draft ordinances relating to land sales, acquisitions, eminent domain proceedings, leases, abandonment, encroachments, opinions, purch.and sale agreements, title exam. reports, bankruptcy matters, writing of Community Development Block Grants (CDBG).	Improve production statistics and reporting format by attorney through closer coordination with PWE and access to their computerized tracking systems. Manage Continuing Legal Education (CLE) program, reduce file turnaround time, and increase use of on-line resources.

Business Area Cost Center Summary

Fund Name : General Fund
Business Area Name : Legal
Fund No./Bus Area No. : 1000 / 9000

Performance Measures	FY2008 Actual			FY2009 Estimate			FY2010 Budget		
	Activities	FTEs	Costs $	Activities	FTEs	Costs $	Activities	FTEs	Costs $
Workflow aging reports		4			4			**4**	
Internal satisfaction survey		1			1			**1**	
Client-dept satisfaction survey		1			1			**1**	
		29.6	3,436,583		28.5	3,510,965		**28.7**	**3,891,711**
New litigation filed		53			50			**45**	
Matters in litigation		85			90			**85**	
Lost revenue recovered ($)		3,869,714			750,000			**2,500,000**	
		12.3	1,046,824		13.0	1,253,909		**12.7**	**1,353,809**
Code amend/ords prepared		198			208			**218**	
Tracking reports		12			12			**12**	
Opinions prepared		15			15			**18**	
		13.5	1,084,186		4.6	601,438		**7.3**	**762,297**
Cases filed per year		1,110,295			1,065,885			**1,088,090**	
Summary reports		12			12			**12**	
In-House continuing legal education courses		6			6			**6**	
		23.8	1,865,898		24.8	2,220,052		**25.3**	**2,250,875**
EEOC charges filed/TWC		293			379			**400**	
Personnel actions/hearings		739			800			**800**	
Trials/appeals		35			24			**30**	
Opinions/special issues		491			29			**10**	
Arbitrations		3			12			**15**	
		13.7	1,097,808		13.8	1,289,570		**14.4**	**1,416,746**
Title examinations		22			24			**26**	
General property matters		787			866			**953**	
HCD matters resolved		298			328			**361**	
File management reports		12			12			**12**	
		13.3	1,180,612		12.7	1,275,999		**12.3**	**1,253,691**

Business Area Cost Center Summary

Fund Name : **General Fund**
Business Area Name : **Legal**
Fund No./Bus Area No. : **1000 / 9000**

Cost Center Description	Cost Center Objectives
LGL - Land Use **9000070001**	
Land use planning, pollution law enforcement, utility franchise issues and rate hearings before the Public Utility Commission and Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, and tax abatement and special districts.	Maintain and improve assignment tracking, improve turnaround time, and manage Continuing Education Program.
LGL - Neighborhood Services **9000080001**	
Handles admin. proceedings and civil litigation related to dangerous buildings, deed restrictions ("DR"), alcohol beverage permits, sexually oriented businesses, and places of habitual crime. Provide real estate title info. to various COH depts. Attend public meetings.	Continue to improve deed restriction enforcement process, dangerous bldg hearing process, related title search activities; Sexually Oriented Business (SOB) enforcement litigation; cross train; crime based nuisance abatement.
LGL - Contracts **9000090001**	
Prepare, review, negotiate City contracts; draft approp.ords and opinions; research and issue bid irregularity opinions; handle McGregor Act claims and grants in excess of $400,000.	Revise and update construction contract documents; expedite high technology contract process; implement new Developer Participation Contract policy; provide training to client depts.
LGL-PWE Legal Admin. **9000140001**	
Personnel in this cost center are members of the Labor, Contracts, Real Estate and Land Use divisions; PWE covers their payroll because they work exclusively on PWE matters.	Included in their respective operating divisions.
LGL - Governmental Regulations **9000150001**	
Handle ad valorem taxation, public information requests, financial disclosure statements, DOJ submissions, subpoenas, muni. finance, legislation, elections, redistricting, annexation, utility franchise/rate setting matters; counsel regulatory boards and commissions.	Attend regulatory bid and comm. meeting. Handle pub. info. and subpoena requests; work with Planning Dept re: strategic partnerships agrmnts with MUDs. Track collection of delinquent taxes. Establish mentoring programs on annex., taxation, utility reg. and pub.finance.

Business Area Cost Center Summary

Fund Name : General Fund
Business Area Name : Legal
Fund No./Bus Area No. : 1000 / 9000

Performance Measures	FY2008 Actual			FY2009 Estimate			FY2010 Budget		
	Activities	FTEs	Costs $	Activities	FTEs	Costs $	Activities	FTEs	Costs $
Land use issues	303			380			**260**		
Environmental issues	59			74			**60**		
Utility/insur. rate cases	0			0			**0**		
Ordinances drafted	268			256			**225**		
		12.9	1,049,499		6.5	745,899		**6.9**	**702,777**
Admin. matters resolved	1422			750			**1,086**		
Lawsuits resolved	56			134			**95**		
DR complaints resolved	1,035			950			**993**		
Public meetings attended	31			35			**33**		
Title reports provided	3,291			1,611			**2,451**		
		19.3	1,390,090		28.8	2,182,718		**27.4**	**2,206,471**
Contracts (Ks) prepared	1,194			1,190			**1,200**		
Ks reviewed by legal assts	213			200			**225**		
Other:grants, bond claims, opinions, ordinances	0			0			**300**		
Attorneys supported	6			6			**6**		
		11.4	875,703		11.8	980,717		**11.1**	**992,281**
Attorneys Supported	6			6			**6**		
		8.9	751,769		10.0	1,073,418		**11.1**	**1,093,385**
Bd/Comm. mtgs attended	N/A			519			**663**		
AG-related TPIAs	N/A			1,122			**1,268**		
Non-AG related TPIAs	N/A			493			**557**		
Subpoenas	N/A			1,542			**2,586**		
Utility regulatory matters	N/A			80			**80**		
		0.0	0		13.4	973,000		**13.6**	**1,326,496**
Total		158.7	13,778,972		167.9	16,107,685		**170.8**	**17,250,539**

Fund Name : **General Fund**
Business Area Name : **Legal**
Fund No./Bus Area No. : **1000 / 9000**

JOB DESCRIPTION	PAY GRADE	FY2009 Current Budget FTE	FY2010 Budget FTE	Change
ADMINISTRATION MANAGER	26	1.0	1.0	
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT	17	6.0	5.0	(1.0)
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT (EXE LEV)	17	4.0	4.0	
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSOCIATE	13	1.0	1.0	
ADMINISTRATIVE COORDINATOR (EXE LEV)	24	1.0	1.0	
ADMINISTRATIVE SPECIALIST	20	2.0	2.0	
ADMINISTRATIVE SPECIALIST (EXE LEV)	20	1.0	1.0	
ADMINISTRATIVE SUPERVISOR	22	3.0	3.0	
ADMINISTRATIVE SUPERVISOR (EXE LEV)	22	1.0	1.0	
ASSISTANT CITY ATTORNEY I	21	24.0	21.0	(3.0)
ASSISTANT CITY ATTORNEY II	24	14.0	16.0	2.0
ASSISTANT CITY ATTORNEY III	27	9.0	8.0	(1.0)
CITY ATTORNEY	39	1.0	1.0	
CLERK	5	5.0	5.0	
COMMUNITY LIAISON	18	0.0	1.0	1.0
DEPUTY CITY ATTORNEY	38	1.0	1.0	
DIVISION MANAGER	29	1.0	1.0	
EXECUTIVE OFFICE ASSISTANT	15	2.0	3.0	1.0
FIRST ASSISTANT CITY ATTORNEY	37	1.0	1.0	
LAN SPECIALIST	26	1.0	1.0	
LEGAL ABSTRACTOR	10	1.0	1.0	
LEGAL INVESTIGATOR	18	2.0	2.0	
LEGAL WORD PROCESSOR	11	2.0	0.0	(2.0)
MESSENGER	6	2.0	2.0	
PARALEGAL I	12	11.0	9.0	(2.0)
PARALEGAL II	14	7.0	6.0	(1.0)
PARALEGAL III	16	8.0	9.0	1.0
PAYROLL CLERK	9	0.0	1.0	1.0
RECEPTIONIST	7	1.0	1.0	
SENIOR ACCOUNT CLERK	13	2.0	2.0	
SENIOR ASSISTANT CITY ATTORNEY I	30	5.0	7.0	2.0
SENIOR ASSISTANT CITY ATTORNEY II	32	14.0	14.0	
SENIOR ASSISTANT CITY ATTORNEY III	34	8.0	9.0	1.0
SENIOR ASSISTANT CITY ATTORNEY IV	35	3.0	3.0	
SENIOR ASSISTANT CITY ATTORNEY,DIVISION CHIEF	35	9.0	9.0	
SENIOR LEGAL ABSTRACTOR	13	2.0	2.0	
SENIOR LEGAL WORD PROCESSOR	13	2.0	4.0	2.0
SENIOR OFFICE ASSISTANT	12	2.0	1.0	(1.0)
SENIOR PARALEGAL	19	12.0	15.0	3.0
SENIOR STAFF ANALYST (EXE LEV)	28	1.0	1.0	
STAFF ANALYST	26	1.0	0.0	(1.0)
STUDENT INTERN II	10	1.0	1.0	
SYSTEMS CONSULTANT	26	1.0	1.0	
Total FTEs		**176.0**	**178.0**	**2.0**
Less adjustment for Civilian Vacancy Factor		**5.2**	**7.2**	**2.0**
Full-Time Equivalents		**170.8**	**170.8**	**0.0**

Business Area Revenue Summary

Fund Name : General Fund
Business Area Name : Legal
Fund No./Bus Area No. : 1000 / 9000

Commit Item	Description	FY2009 Current Budget	FY2009 Estimate	FY2010 Budget
9000010001	**LGL - Staff Administration**			
424070	Interfund Legal Services	1,052,000	1,207,072	**1,404,731**
426330	Miscellaneous Copies Fees	7,750	5,500	**3,000**
434305	Judgments & Claims	9,100	20,000	**5,000**
452020	Recoveries & Refunds	1,000	15,000	**5,000**
452030	Miscellaneous Revenue	100	100	**100**
Total	**LGL - Staff Administration**	1,069,950	1,247,672	**1,417,831**
9000100001	**LGL-Claims&Subrog**			
425020	Indirect Cost Recovery - Civic Center	0	1,124	**0**
Total	**Legal**	1,069,950	1,248,796	**1,417,831**

Business Area Expenditure Summary

Fund Name : General Fund
Business Area Name : Legal
Fund No./Bus. Area No. : 1000 / 9000

Commit Item	Description	FY2008 Actual	FY2009 Current Budget	FY2009 Estimate	FY2010 Budget
500010	Salary Base Pay - Civilian	9,161,791	11,331,484	10,980,600	**11,664,593**
500060	Overtime - Civilian	48	0	1,664	**0**
500110	Bilingual Pay - Civilian	10,837	10,900	10,900	**9,400**
500180	Temporary Employees	9,576	11,484	10,037	**9,709**
501070	Pension - Civilian	1,429,996	1,684,767	1,640,028	**1,714,696**
501120	Termination Pay - Civilian	326,719	148,506	228,407	**243,000**
501160	Vehicle Allowance - Civilian	4,216	4,200	4,200	**4,200**
502010	FICA - Civilian	686,508	848,672	804,778	**854,670**
503010	Health Ins-Act Civilian	755,930	859,280	812,335	**992,366**
503015	Basic Life Insurance - Active Civilian	11,494	14,137	8,882	**6,730**
503040	Health/Life Ins.Ret-Classified	373	0	0	**0**
503060	Long Term Disability-Civilian	20,493	14,437	14,364	**14,437**
503090	Workers Compensation-Civilian-Admin	33,216	31,230	35,726	**35,868**
503100	Workers Compensation-Civilian-Claim	2,322	1,500	1,000	**1,500**
504020	Compensation Contingency	0	140,212	0	**153,719**
504030	Unemployment Claims	0	5,947	0	**5,947**
Total	**Personnel Services**	**12,453,519**	**15,106,756**	**14,552,921**	**15,710,835**
511045	Computer Supplies	51,015	63,000	62,000	**62,000**
511050	Paper & Printing Supplies	16,319	17,000	17,000	**17,000**
511055	Publications & Printed Materials	194,222	279,388	253,000	**262,541**
511060	Postage	40,799	43,000	40,000	**43,000**
511070	Miscellaneous Office Supplies	62,524	62,000	80,000	**73,000**
511110	Fuel	2,163	2,600	2,700	**2,600**
511150	Miscellaneous Parts & Supplies	1,795	2,700	2,600	**2,700**
Total	**Supplies**	**368,837**	**469,688**	**457,300**	**462,841**
520107	Computer Info/Contr	288	0	0	**0**
520108	Information Resource Services	10	700	700	**700**
520109	Medical Dental & Laboratory Services	840	1,000	1,100	**1,000**
520110	Management Consulting Services	218,489	535,000	0	**0**
520112	Banking Services	335	250	250	**250**
520114	Miscellaneous Support Services	195,156	344,680	268,027	**267,457**
520119	Computer Equipment/Software Maintenance	740	36,000	40,000	**42,000**
520121	IT Application Svcs	3,657	5,289	5,289	**5,395**
520122	Office Equipment Services	85	500	500	**500**
520123	Vehicle & Motor Equipment Services	4,343	2,000	1,500	**2,000**
520143	Credit/Bank Card Services	26	0	0	**0**
520510	Mail/Delivery Services	1,530	2,800	2,600	**2,800**
520515	Print Shop Services	3,606	5,200	8,200	**5,200**
520520	Printing & Reproduction Services	26,974	34,800	24,000	**34,800**
520705	Insurance Fees	1,259	2,089	2,100	**1,244**
520740	Document Recording/Filing Fees	575	1,000	0	**1,000**
520765	Membership & Professional Fees	43,029	30,900	32,900	**32,750**
520805	Education & Training	25,455	28,800	35,000	**48,800**
520905	Travel - Training Related	8,821	11,500	14,500	**19,300**
520910	Travel - Non-Training Related	5,001	6,700	8,075	**6,900**
521605	Data Services	27,211	20,775	20,775	**21,814**
521610	Voice Services	121,451	29,008	79,940	**30,458**
521620	Voice Equipment	3,667	1,820	14,000	**1,911**
521625	Voice Labor	1,051	0	185	**0**
521715	Office Equipment Rental	2,364	1,800	1,600	**1,800**
521725	Other Rental	1,661	1,800	1,200	**1,800**
521730	Parking Space Rental	72,239	118,000	120,000	**123,000**

Business Area Expenditure Summary

Fund Name : General Fund
Business Area Name : Legal
Fund No./Bus. Area No. : 1000 / 9000

Commit Item	Description	FY2008 Actual	FY2009 Current Budget	FY2009 Estimate	FY2010 Budget
521905	Legal Services	125,367	401,000	357,578	**365,000**
521920	Legal Svcs -Med Svcs	250	0	0	**0**
521950	Legal Svcs -Doc Rec	678	0	0	**0**
522420	Petty Cash/Change Special Fund	1,524	1,200	1,300	**1,200**
522430	Miscellaneous Other Services & Charges	5,239	4,100	3,400	**4,100**
522435	Interest Charges Past Due Accounts	106	0	0	**0**
522735	Interfund Communication Equipment Repair	0	100	0	**100**
522780	Interfund Photo Copy Services	41,666	45,000	42,000	**45,000**
Total	**Other Services and Charges**	**944,693**	**1,673,811**	**1,086,719**	**1,068,279**
532120	Transfer to Fleet/Eq	11,923	10,745	10,745	**8,584**
Total	**Debt Service and Other Uses**	**11,923**	**10,745**	**10,745**	**8,584**
	Grand Total Expenditures	**13,778,972**	**17,261,000**	**16,107,685**	**17,250,539**