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Chief Administrative Officer of the House: History and Organization

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Abstract. The Chief Administrative Officer of the House (CAO) is an officer elected by the House of Representatives at the beginning of each Congress. The office of the CAO consists of three divisions, the Immediate Office of the CAO, Operations, and Customer Solutions. Together, these divisions oversee human resources, financial services, technology infrastructure, procurement, facilities management, and other House support functions. The position of CAO was initially created at the beginning of the 104th Congress to assume the duties previously performed by the director of non-legislative and financial services, as well as to manage the operations of other House administrative offices and support services.

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CRS Report for Congress

Chief Administrative Officer of the House: History and Organization

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Summary

The Chief Administrative Officer of the House (CAO) is an officer elected by the House of Representatives at the beginning of each Congress. The office of the CAO consists of three divisions: the Immediate Office of the CAO, Operations, and Customer Solutions. Together, these divisions oversee human resources, financial services, technology infrastructure, procurement, facilities management, and other House support functions. The position of CAO was initially created at the beginning of the 104th Congress to assume the duties previously performed by the director of non-legislative and financial services, as well as to manage the operations of other House administrative offices and support services.¹

History of the Chief Administrative Officer

The CAO was established at the beginning of the 104th Congress as a replacement for the director of non-legislative and financial services. The director of non-legislative and financial services was established by H.Res. 423 during the 102nd Congress and given authority over the “Office of Employee Assistance, Finance Office, pay and mileage of Members, House Information Systems, Office Furnishings, Office Supply Service, Office Systems Management, Placement Office, Special Services Office, Telecommunications, Telephone Exchange, Typewriter Repair, Barber Shop, Beauty Shop, House Restaurant System, Office of Photography, Inside Mail and Internal Mail Operations (including coordination with postal substations to be operated by the United States Postal Service), Guide Service, and Child Care Center, and the non-legislative functions of the Printing Services, Recording Studio, and Records and Registration.”²

¹ This report was originally written by Paul E. Dwyer, Specialist in American National Government at CRS. Mr. Dwyer has retired, but the listed author updated the report and is available to answer questions concerning its contents.

² Sections 6 and 7 of H.Res. 423 (102nd Congress), “House Administrative Reform Resolution (continued...)”

The 104th Congress abolished the appointed director of non-legislative and financial services and created the office of the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO). To choose a CAO nominee, the 105th Congress used an outside search firm to select James Eagan. With Eagan's resignation in the 110th Congress, the Speaker of the House personally chose Daniel Beard.³ After the candidate for CAO is chosen, he or she is elected by the House of Representatives.⁴ The CAO is subject to oversight by, but not the policy direction of, the House Administration Committee.⁵

The CAO provides the infrastructure and support for Members and committees to operate their offices. That includes managing employee payroll, benefits, child care, parking, dining services, and installing furniture in Member offices.⁶

Structure of the CAO's Office

The CAO's office supervises the non-legislative functions of the House of Representatives. CAO office divisions are organized along operational and mission lines that include the immediate office of the CAO, operations, and customer solutions.⁷

Immediate Office. The immediate office includes the office of the chief administrative officer and his support staff. It is responsible for oversight of the operations and customer solutions divisions and directing studies ordered by the House leadership. The immediate office also supervises the management of the three House media galleries,⁸ which provide facilities for press coverage of the House; assists Members of Congress and staff with press inquiries and distribution of press releases;⁹ issues the CAO's semi-

² (...continued)

of 1992," agreed to April 9, 1992. Section 6 created a new House Rule LII, director of non-legislative and financial services.

³ Susan Davis and John McArdle, "Pelosi Picks New Clerk and CAO," *Roll Call*, January 31, 2007, [http://www.rollcall.com/issues/52_72/news/16794-1.html], accessed July 11, 2008.

⁴ H.Res. 6 (104th Congress), agreed to January 4, 1995. Title II amending (Rule V) established the Chief Administrative Office of the House. Codified today at Rule II, cl. 4, *Constitution, Jefferson's Manual, and Rules of the House of Representatives, 110th Congress* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2007).

⁵ "Rule II, cl. 4(a), (b), and (c), and Rule X, cl. 4(d)(1)(A)," *Constitution, Jefferson's Manual, and Rules of the House of Representatives of the United States, 110th Congress* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2007).

⁶ U.S. Congress, House Chief Administrative Officer, "What We Do," *Chief Administrative Office of the House of Representatives*, [<http://cao.house.gov/what.shtml>], accessed July 11, 2008.

⁷ Telephone conversation between the author and the office of the Chief Administrative Officer of the House, Sept. 10, 2007.

⁸ The media galleries consist of the daily press gallery, the periodical press gallery, and the radio and television correspondents gallery.

⁹ "Media Resources - United States House of Representatives, 110th Congress-1st Session," [<http://www.house.gov/house/mediagallery.shtml>], accessed July 11, 2008.

annual report on the offices activities and accomplishments;¹⁰ and issues the “Statement of Disbursements of the House.”¹¹ The immediate office also maintains a public website, [<http://cao.house.gov>].

Operations. Operations is responsible for developing and maintaining facilities and systems that are used by the House of Representatives, including financial management, procurement, technology, and human resources. In addition, operations staff serve as consultants to Members’ offices on their internal operations and systems. Operations is divided into four groups:

- *Administration and Financial Services*, handling procurement, financial counseling, payroll and benefits, budget management, resources management, human resources, and workplace safety;
- *Workforce Services*, handling employee and organizational development, employee assistance, the House learning center, and House child care;
- *House Information Resources*, handling technology support, technology infrastructure, business solutions, web solutions, facilities management, informational security, and systems engineering; and
- *Immediate Operations Office*, handling business continuity and disaster recovery, business improvement, portfolio management, and committee hearing rooms renovation.¹²

In addition, operations manages projects that affect all House employees. These include improving payroll and benefit services, introducing new financial and purchasing systems, upgrading “HouseNet,”¹³ and updating the House messaging system.

Customer Solutions. Customer Solutions is responsible for simplifying the daily work of congressional staff members through the CAO Customer Solutions Center (CCSC), which includes FirstCall+.¹⁴ Customer Solutions is divided into three groups:

- *Customer Solutions Delivery*, handling the CCSC, the House recording studio, the office supply store, the House gift shop, and photography;

¹⁰ “Rule II, cl. 4(b),” *Constitution, Jefferson’s Manual, and Rules of the House of Representatives of the United States, 110th Congress* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2007).

¹¹ U.S. Congress, House, *Statement of Disbursements of the House as compiled by the Chief Administrative Officer from October 1, 2006 to December 31, 2006*, 110th Cong., 1st sess., H.Doc. 110-9 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 2006).

¹² U.S. Congress, House Chief Administrative Officer, “Operations,” *CAO Semi-Annual Report*, 110th Cong., 1st sess. [<http://cao.house.gov/report/cao-ops.shtml>], accessed July 11, 2008.

¹³ HouseNet, [<http://housenet.house.gov>], is the House of Representatives’ intranet site supported by the CAO and is available only to House offices.

¹⁴ FirstCall+ consists of a call-in phone number (202-225-8000) and a walk-in customer service center (B-227 Longworth House Office Building). FirstCall+ is designed to answer Member and committee offices’ questions on ordering, acquisition, and production.

- *Assets, Furnishings and Logistics*, handling acquisition, payments, equipment maintenance, equipment inventory management, warehousing, carpet, drapes, upholstery, cabinetry, finishing, and modular furniture;¹⁵ and
- *Immediate Customer Solutions Office*, handling the disbursement of House resources and supplies and the management of customer relationships.¹⁶

Customer Solutions is also responsible for office renovations and moving Members of the House and their staff to new offices. This responsibility includes holding equipment fairs to demonstrate new technology and products, and service fairs to highlight support offices, including the Architect of the Capitol, the Library of Congress (including the Congressional Research Service), the clerk of the House, and the sergeant at arms.

¹⁵ The CAO works with the General Services Administration's (GSA's) congressional service representatives to coordinate office space and furnishings for district offices. See Judy Schneider and Michael L. Koempel, *Congressional Deskbook 2005-2007 109th Congress* (Alexandria, VA: TheCapitol.Net, 2005), p. 131.

¹⁶ U.S. Congress, House Chief Administrative Officer, "Customer Solutions," *CAO Semi-Annual Report*, 110th Cong., 1st sess. [<http://cao.house.gov/report/cao-cs.shtml>], accessed July 11, 2008.

Table 1. Directors of Non-Legislative and Financial Services and Chief Administrative Officers of the House of Representatives

Congress	Director of Non-Legislative and Financial Services	Date Appointed ^a
102 nd (1991-1993)	Leonard P. Wishart, III	October 23, 1992
103 rd (1993-1995)	Leonard P. Wishart, III	January 5, 1993
	Randall B. Medlock	January 1994 ^b
Congress	Chief Administrative Officer	Date Elected
104 th (1995-1997)	Scot M. Faulkner	January 4, 1995
	Jeff Trandahl	November 22, 1996 ^c
105 th (1997-1999)	Jeff Trandahl	January 9, 1997 ^d
	James M. Eagen, III	July 31, 1997 ^e
106 th (1999-2001)	James M. Eagen, III	January 6, 1999
107 th (2001-2003)	James M. Eagen, III	January 3, 2001
108 th (2003-2005)	James M. Eagen, III	January 7, 2003
109 th (2005-2007)	James M. Eagen, III	January 4, 2005
110 th (2007-2009)	James M. Eagen, III	January 4, 2007 ^f
	Daniel P. Beard	February 6, 2007 ^g

Source: Clerk of the House, [http://clerk.house.gov/art_history/house_history/cao.html].

Notes:

- a. In the 102nd Congress, H.Res. 423, “House Administrative Reform Resolution of 1992,” created the director of non-legislative and financial services and established his or her joint appointment by the Speaker of the House, the majority leader, and the minority leader, pursuant to Rule LII, cl. 1.
- b. A specific appointment date is not available. Randall Medlock was appointed on a temporary basis following the resignation of Leonard Wishart on January 21, 1994. See *Congressional Quarterly Almanac*, 103rd Congress, 2nd Session, vol. L (Washington: Congressional Quarterly, Inc., 1994), p. 13, for additional information.
- c. Appointed November 22, 1995. “Congressional (Speaker) Press Release,” *Roll Call*, November 25, 2006, p. 16.
- d. Appointed January 9, 1997 as acting CAO. See *Congressional Record*, 105th Congress, 1st Session, January 9, 1997, p. 76.
- e. Elected by H.Res. 207 on July 31, 1997.
- f. Resigned February 14, 2007. See *Congressional Record*, 110th Congress, 1st Session, February 6, 2007, p. H1230.
- g. Elected by H.Res. 129 on February 6, 2007. See *Congressional Record*, 110th Congress, 1st Session, February 6, 2007, p. H1230.