



Honorable Vincent P. Zurzolo  
Chief Judge

Jon D. Ceretto  
Executive Officer/Clerk of Court

# ANNUAL REPORT 2008



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## INTRODUCTION

Executive Summary .....	5
The Bankruptcy Judges of the Central District of California .....	6

## COURT APPOINTMENTS AND COMMITTEES

Appointments and Milestones .....	7
2008 Judicial Committees .....	8

## COMMUNITY OUTREACH

<i>Pro Se</i> Debtors and <i>Pro Bono</i> Services .....	9
San Fernando Valley Self-Help Desk Expands Service .....	9
Santa Ana <i>Pro Bono</i> Clinic for Chapter 7 Debtors .....	10
Debtor Assistance Project Honors Public Service .....	10
ECF Attorney Training Automated .....	10
Legal Community Training and Programs .....	10
2008 Combined Federal Campaign .....	11

## BANKRUPTCY FILINGS STATISTICS

Bankruptcy Cases Filed: 1996-2008 .....	12
Quarterly Bankruptcy Filings Post BAPCPA .....	13
Percent of Bankruptcy Filings by Division: 2008 .....	13

## COURT ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND INNOVATIONS

Major Revisions to Local Bankruptcy Rules, Forms and New Court Manual .....	14
Electronic Filing Now Required for the Statement of Social Security Number(s) .....	14
Cyclical Administrative Office Audit Results in No Findings .....	14
Automation Enhancements and Initiatives .....	14
Operations Commences Automatic Dismissal .....	15
Enhanced QC Editor Launched .....	15
Lodged Order Upload Program Usage Increases .....	15
Enhanced Calendaring Functions Available on New Versions of CIAO! .....	15
Cost-Saving Initiatives Implemented Throughout the Court .....	16
Archiving Projects Completed .....	16
Continuity of Operations Plan Updated .....	16
New Furniture and Workstation Reconfigurations Installed .....	16
Mediation Program .....	17
Courtesy Notification of Electronic Filing (NEF) Implemented .....	17
The U.S. Trustee Consents to Receive Electronic Notice and Service in the Central District .....	17

## HUMAN RESOURCES

Staffing Highlights .....	18
Training and Staff Development .....	18
Human Resource Management Information System Released to Court Staff .....	19
Career Intern Program Enters Second Year .....	19
Employee Recognition Program Continues (ePause) .....	19
Staff Awards Honored Service and Outstanding Achievement .....	20

## WHO WE ARE

District Profile .....	21
Population Served .....	21
Bankruptcy Filings and Percentage Change: 1980 - 2008 .....	22

## LONG RANGE PLAN

Accomplishments .....	27
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# INTRODUCTION

## Executive Summary

In 2008, the Court displayed uncommon initiative and flexibility in managing skyrocketing filings as the local economy contracted under the weight of the collapsing real estate market. Highlights for 2008 include:

- A total of 65,858 bankruptcy cases were filed in the Central District, a 94 percent increase over 2007. This increase is more than three times higher than the national average increase of 31 percent.
- The largest percentage increase of filings was for chapter 11 cases, which jumped 129 percent.
- Chapter 13 filings now represent nearly 24 percent of bankruptcy petitions filed at the Court, up from 9 percent prior to BAPCPA. Chapter 13 filings are significantly more labor intensive than chapter 7 filings.
- Filings in the Riverside Division increased even faster than the rest of the district and now represent 29 percent of the entire district's case filings.
- The Court completed a major revision and reorganization of its Local Bankruptcy Rules to make the rules easier to understand and apply. The revisions incorporated several existing General Orders, new rules for mandatory electronic filing, and service of documents by electronic means.
- The Court said a fond farewell to Judge Mitchel R. Goldberg and Judge David N. Naugle, both retiring from the Riverside Division.
- Judge Thomas B. Donovan and Judge Erithe A. Smith began their second 14 year term at the Court.
- Judge Robles held regularly scheduled hearings on Riverside Division relief from stay motions from his Los Angeles courtroom via video conference.
- Judges Bluebond, Donovan, and Neiter began receiving Riverside Division cases. The majority of the hearings were conducted via video conference from their Los Angeles Division courtrooms.
- Judge Goldberg took on the role of Ombudsperson for the Court upon his retirement in April 2008.
- The Court's Mediation Program has remained at the forefront of alternative dispute resolution (ADR) programs. A total of 3,916 matters have been assigned to mediation since the program's inception in 1995.
- Usage of the Court's electronic Lodged Order Upload (LOU) program during its first year continued to increase. By the second half of 2008, 64 percent of all orders were submitted electronically, as well as 90 percent of relief from stay orders.
- The latest version of CIAO! went public in May, offering users of this calendaring program numerous new features, enhancements, and user-interface improvements.
- The Clerk's Office released 15 online electronic learning modules for CM/ECF in December 2008. The modules instruct attorneys on filing procedures for a variety of documents and have replaced staff-conducted classroom training.
- Effective April 1, 2008, the U.S. Trustee consented to receiving electronic notice and service on most documents filed with the Court.
- The San Fernando Valley Self-Help Desk added an extra day of service in response to increased public demand.
- Following the success of the 2007 Career Intern Program, the Clerk's Office welcomed a second class of five Career Interns in September, bringing the total number of interns serving two-year appointments to ten.

THE BANKRUPTCY JUDGES OF THE CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

PHOTO NOT AVAILABLE FOR PUBLIC VIEWING

Top Row (From Left)

Theodor C. Albert, Victoria S. Kaufman, Ernest M. Robles, Peter H. Carroll, David N. Naugle (retired),  
Alan M. Ahart, Thomas B. Donovan

Center Row (From Left)

Richard M. Neiter, Robin L. Riblet, Robert N. Kwan, Erithe A. Smith, Meredith A. Jury,  
Samuel L. Bufford, Ellen Carroll

Front Row (From Left)

Geraldine Mund, Barry Russell, Maureen A. Tighe, Vincent P. Zurzolo (Chief Judge),  
Sheri Bluebond, Mitchel R. Goldberg (retired), Kathleen Thompson

## COURT APPOINTMENTS AND COMMITTEES

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### Appointments and Milestones

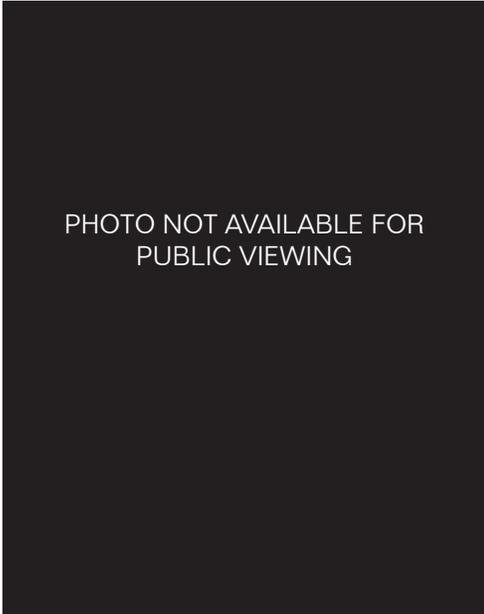


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**Judge Mitchel R. Goldberg** retired from the Riverside Division bench on April 1, 2008. Judge Goldberg was appointed to the bench on June 1, 1988.

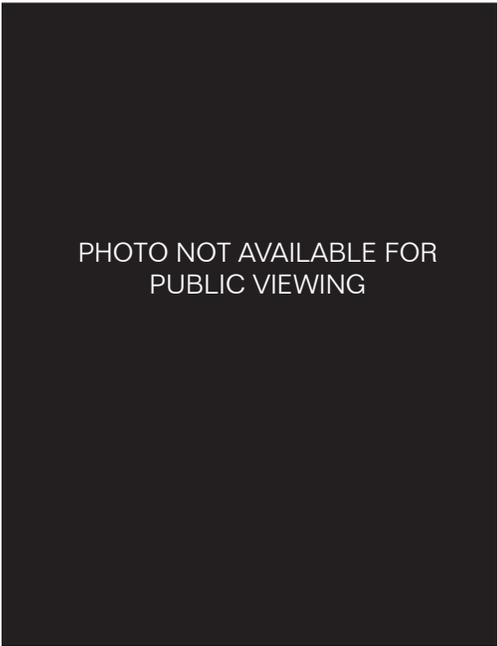


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**Judge David N. Naugle** retired from the Riverside Division bench on September 1, 2008. Judge Naugle began his career as a Bankruptcy Judge in 1976.

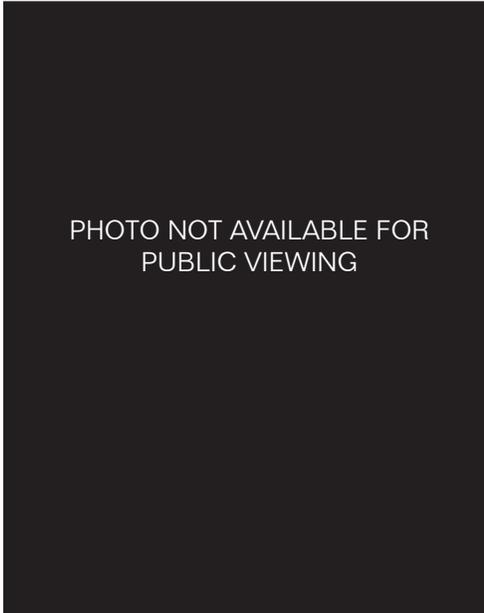


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**Judge Thomas B. Donovan** began his second 14 year term on March 21, 2008. Judge Donovan maintains chambers at the Los Angeles Division.

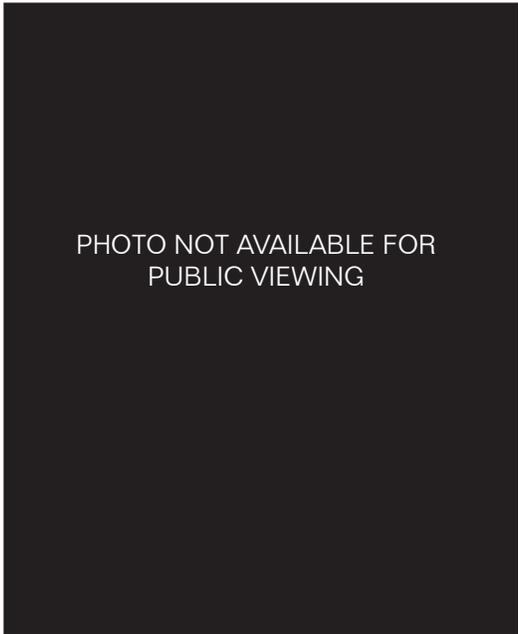


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**Judge Erithe A. Smith** began her second 14 year term on May 2, 2008. Judge Smith maintains chambers at the Santa Ana Division.

## 2008 Judicial Committees

In accordance with the Court Governance Plan, judicial committees appointed by the Chief Judge address court-related issues and provide feedback to the entire Board of Judges regarding court operations and administrative issues. Clerk's Office staff members attend meetings and support the judicial committees. Chief Judge Vincent P. Zurzolo and Executive Officer/Clerk of Court Jon D. Ceretto are ex-officio members of each committee. The members of the 2008 judicial committees were:

### EXECUTIVE

#### *Vincent P. Zurzolo, Chair*

Alan M. Ahart

Theodor C. Albert

Sheri Bluebond

Ellen Carroll

Peter H. Carroll

Kathleen Thompson

### CASE MANAGEMENT

#### *Sheri Bluebond, Chair*

Robert N. Kwan

Robin L. Riblet

Maureen Tighe

### CHAPTER 13

#### *Victoria S. Kaufman, Chair*

Meredith A. Jury

Robert N. Kwan

Kathleen Thompson

### EDUCATION AND TRAINING/RETREAT

#### *Alan M. Ahart, Chair*

Samuel L. Bufford

Geraldine Mund

Richard M. Neiter

### RULES

#### *Peter H. Carroll, Chair*

Theodor C. Albert

Thomas B. Donovan

### SPACE AND SECURITY

#### *Ellen Carroll, Chair*

Geraldine Mund

Peter H. Carroll

David N. Naugle

Robin L. Riblet

Erithe A. Smith

### ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION

#### *Maureen A. Tighe, Chair*

Mitchell R. Goldberg

Ernest M. Robles

Barry Russell

## COMMUNITY OUTREACH

### *Pro Se Debtors and Pro Bono Services*

The overall percentage of *pro se* debtors (i.e., debtors who file without attorney representation) increased in 2008, to 23 percent from 20 percent in 2007. Chapter 7 *pro se* filings remained stable at 17 percent; however, chapter 13 *pro se* filings increased dramatically to 45 percent, from 31 percent in 2007. *Pro se* debtors at all divisions have access to *pro bono* and low cost legal services. A complete listing of *pro bono* programs and contact information is available on the main page of the Court's website, under the prominent heading: "Don't Have an Attorney?"

U. S. Bankruptcy Court - Central District of California Pro Se Filings by Chapter 1998-2008			
Year	Chapter 7	Chapter 13	Total
1998	32%	32%	32%
1999	33%	29%	31%
2000	27%	19%	24%
2001	29%	24%	28%
2002	28%	22%	27%
2003	27%	22%	26%
2004	26%	22%	26%
2005	28%	19%	27%
2006	19%	28%	20%
2007	17%	31%	20%
2008	17%	45%	23%
Average	26%	27%	26%

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San Fernando Valley Self-Help Desk Staff

### San Fernando Valley Self-Help Desk Expands Service

Launched in 2007, the San Fernando Valley Self-Help Desk continued to provide *pro se* debtors with access to bankruptcy information, forms, and counsel. In 2008, a second service day each week was added to accommodate the increased volume of *pro se* debtors using this program. Debtors and creditors, regardless of filing division, income, or chapter, are welcome to use these services. The Self-Help Desk was developed in a collaborative effort between the Court, Neighborhood Legal Service of Los Angeles, the Central District Consumer Bankruptcy Attorney's Association, and the San Fernando Valley Bar Association Referral Service.

In addition, the Clerk's Office offers bankruptcy seminars at noon on the first Thursday of each month at the San Fernando Valley courthouse. These seminars are conducted by volunteer attorneys from the San Fernando Valley Bar Association and provide free legal information and access to reference materials. Topics commonly covered include bankruptcy filing requirements, the difference between chapter 7 and 13, and where to find a bankruptcy attorney.

## Santa Ana *Pro Bono* Clinic for Chapter 7 Debtors

In collaboration with the Public Law Center, Orange County Bar Association-Commercial Law and Bankruptcy Section, and the Orange County Bankruptcy Forum, the Santa Ana Division provides a two hour *pro bono* service to debtors every other Friday of the month. It offers a wide array of bankruptcy assistance, including answering bankruptcy questions, filing forms, assisting in reopening cases and providing additional case information. The clinic provides the opportunity to *pro se* debtors who meet financial requirements to receive free legal advice from attorneys.

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Left to Right:  
Ret. Judge William J. Lasarow,  
Judge Maureen Tighe,  
James King, Faye C. Barta,  
Judge Thomas Donovan, Marissa Hawkins

## Debtor Assistance Project Honors Public Service

The Debtor Assistance Project (DAP) works closely with the Los Angeles and San Fernando Valley Divisions to provide free legal services to qualifying low income debtors in Los Angeles County. Working with the Court, the DAP developed a plan for a *pro bono* clinic that will open at the Los Angeles Division in 2009. On April 17, 2008, the DAP hosted its annual reception to honor members of the bar who contributed to the local community with their *pro bono* work. Chief Judge Zurzolo, Judge Donovan, and Judge Tighe presented awards for outstanding *pro bono* service in bankruptcy.

## ECF Attorney Training Automated

The Clerk's Office developed online ECF training modules for external users that replicates and replaced in-house ECF classroom training. The 15 training modules became available in December 2008 to attorneys and their support staff. The modules feature exercises that simulate live CM/ECF and conclude with a quiz to test proficiency. This online training system is available around the clock and can be modified to quickly roll out new training modules. Successful completion of the online training program meets all requirements for the issuance of an attorney login or limited filer login to CM/ECF. As of April 2009, 912 attorneys have registered to participate in the online ECF training program, and 186 attorneys have completed all of the necessary coursework to receive their ECF login.

## Legal Community Training and Programs

The Court continues to build upon strong relationships with the legal community. During the 2008 year, judges throughout the district actively participated in local bar meetings and events. In addition, the judges also provided lunch and learn sessions, seminars, and other events for attorneys and legal staff. The events helped to explain, clarify, and present new information to individuals of the legal community.

- **Section 362 Lunch and Learn Session**

On June 16, 2008, Chief Judge Zurzolo hosted a "Brown Bag Lunch and Learn" session on "How to Get Section 362 Orders Entered and Served Correctly and Quickly." More than 80 members of the bar and public attended. The presentation focused on Section 362 orders, while also addressing generally applicable issues of notice, service, and acceptance of electronic signatures on stipulations and proofs of service.

- **Annual Consumer Law Seminar with Riverside Division Judges**

The Inland Empire Bankruptcy Forum hosted its 15th Annual Consumer Law Seminar in Riverside on August 23, 2008. Judge Naugle, Judge Jury, and Judge Peter Carroll served as distinguished panelists for the event.

- **Chapter 7 Debtor Representation Discussions across the District**

During the end of 2008 and in January 2009, Judge Tighe held brown bag discussions to obtain feedback from chapter 7 consumer debtor attorneys regarding limited scope representation, post-BAPCPA consumer debtor representation, and a possible chapter 7 Rights and Responsibilities Agreement. The discussions were held at all divisions of the Court.

- **Santa Ana Division Judges Provide LOU Pointers to Legal Staff**

The Santa Ana judges held a brown bag lunch on November 7, 2008, to provide information to attorneys and legal staff on how to get LOU orders entered and served correctly and quickly. The event was modeled after a similar brown bag session held at the Los Angeles Division by Chief Judge Zurzolo and was videotaped for future viewing.

## **2008 Combined Federal Campaign**

The Central District once again participated in the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC), a national workplace charity program in which Federal civilian, postal, and military employees can donate to participating nonprofit organizations of their choice. The Court has supported the CFC for over a decade and donated nearly \$20,000 in 2008.

# BANKRUPTCY FILING STATISTICS

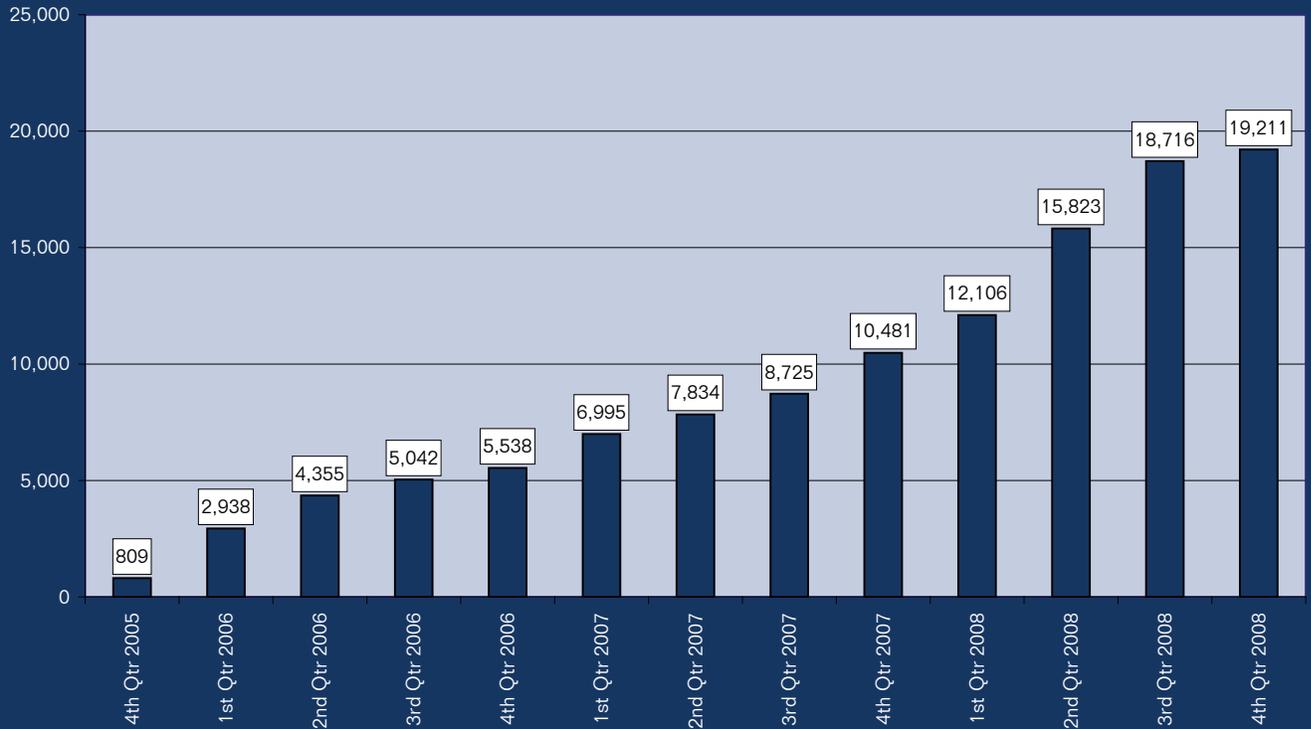
During 2008, 65,858 bankruptcy cases were filed in the Central District of California, a 94 percent increase over 2007, compared to a 31 percent increase nationally. The number of filings in 2008 surpassed the Court's pre-BAPCPA total of 60,633 filings in 2004. Of the filings in 2008, 75 percent were filed under chapter 7; approximately 1 percent under chapter 11; and approximately 24 percent under chapter 13. Chapter 13 filings, which increased 95 percent from 2007, are significantly more labor intensive than chapter 7 filings.

The economic conditions that caused the upswing in bankruptcy filings throughout the nation have impacted California dramatically. Four of the seven districts nationwide that experienced the greatest jump in filings in Fiscal Year 2008 were in California. The Central District of California is currently projecting over 106,000 filings in 2009, the highest caseload in 10 years.

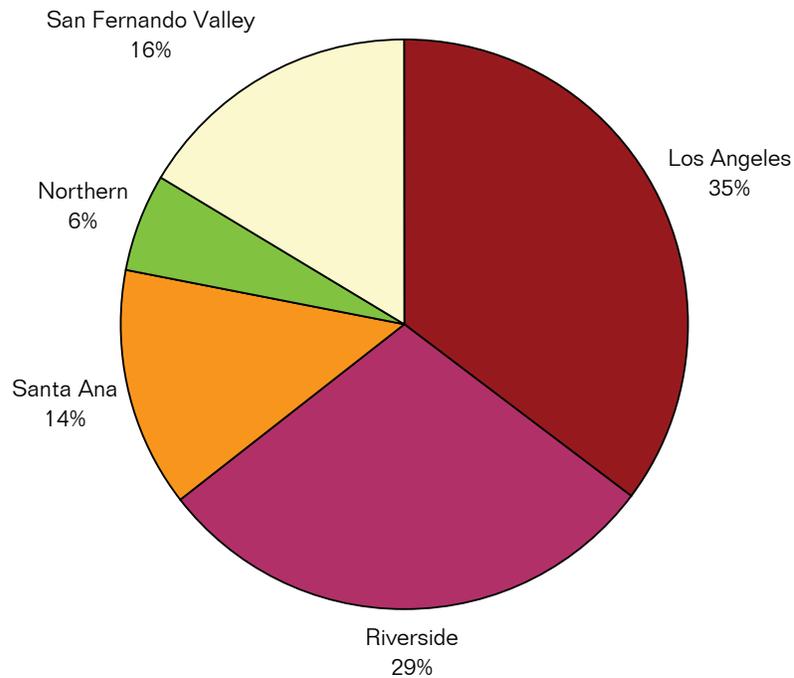
United States Bankruptcy Court - Central District of California  
Bankruptcy Cases Filed: 1996-2008



United States Bankruptcy Court - Central District of California  
 Quarterly Bankruptcy Filings Post BAPCPA  
 November 2005 - December 2008



United States Bankruptcy Court - Central District of California  
 Percent of Bankruptcy Filings by Division: 2008



## COURT ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND INNOVATIONS

### Major Revisions to Local Bankruptcy Rules, Forms and New Court Manual

A major revision of the Local Bankruptcy Rules (LBRs) and the new Court Manual were approved and became effective on January 5, 2009. The LBRs were reorganized to comply with the revised Uniform Numbering System for Local Bankruptcy Court Rules adopted by the Judicial Conference of the United States in May 2003. The revisions incorporated several existing General Orders, new rules for mandatory electronic filing of documents, and service by electronic means. Additionally, the LBRs were restyled in accordance with the *Guidelines for Drafting and Editing Court Rules*, published by the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, to make the LBRs easier to understand and apply. The new Court Manual superseded the Desk Reference Manual and consolidated procedures and forms previously located at various parts of the Court's website, including the CM/ECF Manual and LOU Procedures.

Along with a revised Rights and Responsibility Agreement and the addition of other chapter 13 LBR forms, a Proof of Service of Document, and Notice of Entered Order and Service List were also approved and incorporated into the applicable LBR forms. Public Notices 08-009, 08-026 and 08-027 were issued to advise the public of these changes.

### Electronic Filing Now Required for the Statement of Social Security Number(s)

In December 2008, the Court adopted a new policy mandating that attorneys electronically filing petitions through the Court's CM/ECF system are required to submit the Statement of Social Security Number(s) (Official Form B21) immediately after every new petition filed on or after January 1, 2009, on behalf of an individual debtor. Attorneys must use the private event within CM/ECF called "Statement of Social Security Number(s) - B21" (BK-"Other") when submitting the Statement of Social Security form.

### Cyclical Administrative Office Audit Results in No Findings

Kearney and Company, the Certified Public Accountant firm contracted by the Administrative Office (AO) of the United States Courts, performed a cyclical audit of the Court in 2008. Site visits were conducted at all of the divisions with the exception of the Northern Division, and no audit findings were identified. Some of the areas reviewed included the Court's financial and budget reporting, property management, time and attendance records, mail opening, and end-of-day balancing (Intake) functions. Auditors also reviewed the Court's internal control policies and procedures, and verified that annual internal reviews were performed. The Court was last audited by the AO in September 2005, with no reportable conditions cited. In September 2007, the AO reported that only 11 percent of bankruptcy courts in the entire nation had audits resulting in no findings.

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### Automation Enhancements and Initiatives

In 2008, the Court upgraded courtroom videoconference systems throughout the district to support the remote hearing of cases. A new system was installed to support the Riverside Division relief from stay hearings presided over by Judge Robles from May to September 2008. In September and October 2008, three additional

videoconference systems were installed to support hearings of Riverside Division cases by Judges Bluebond, Donovan, and Neiter from their Los Angeles Division courtrooms. Comprehensive procedures were developed to guide staff through the process, and two training sessions were held in September to ensure that all users of the system obtained the necessary skills.

Beginning in February 2008, dual monitors were rolled out to chambers district-wide. Dual monitors improve efficiency by providing the ability to have multiple applications and screens visible simultaneously.

The Clerk's Office developed an electronic message board to facilitate the judges' comment period for the extensive revision of the Local Bankruptcy Rules (LBRs) that began in February 2008. The electronic message board enabled the Board of Judges to participate in discussion threads for each LBR.

In December 2008, a new sound system was installed in the Board of Judges' conference room in the Los Angeles Division. The new sound system improves acoustics in the room and includes a microphone for each judge and other participants.

## Operations Commences Automatic Dismissal

The Board of Judges approved a new automatic dismissal policy for cases filed on or after March 31, 2008, that fail to provide all required documents within the required time frame. Debtors are provided with a list of deficiencies at the time that the petition is filed, along with the deadlines and consequences for not curing the deficiencies. Cases are automatically dismissed on the 20th day if the debtor, depending upon the chapter, has failed to file the documents or request an extension.

## Enhanced QC Editor Launched

On March 24, 2008, the enhanced Quality Control (QC) Editor was launched district-wide. The Clerk's Office quality control documents filed electronically and at the Intake areas throughout the Court. Modified by the Clerk's Office, the QC Editor is

designed to capture and categorize the type of errors identified by Clerk's Office staff on electronically filed documents. Attorney errors are collected and tracked, and staff can utilize the "notes" feature for annotating the correction progress. Identifying approximately 30 specific error types, this tool allows the Court to derive meaningful statistics about the completeness and accuracy of the petitions, adversary proceedings, and other documents submitted through CM/ECF by both attorneys and Court staff. The tool also offers a number of benefits to the Court, including the tailoring of the QC process to the types of errors being made most frequently and by whom; supporting the identification of specific training needs for internal and external users; and saving the Clerk's Office time and effort devoted to QC when filings increase but staffing levels do not.

## Lodged Order Upload Program Usage Increases

Developed by the Clerk's Office and introduced in November 2007, usage of the Court's electronic Lodged Order Upload (LOU) program increased in 2008. LOU works with the Court's case management program, CM/ECF, and the Court-developed calendaring program, CIAO!, to enable ECF users to electronically lodge orders. The Court upgraded LOU in June, to allow for the submission of additional order types. Users of LOU can now upload orders and relate them to complaints, reaffirmation agreements, objections to a claim, orders to show cause, scheduling orders, and Chapter 11 and Chapter 13 Plans. By the second half of 2008, 64 percent of all orders were submitted electronically through, including LOU as well as 90 percent of relief from stay orders.

## Enhanced Calendaring Functions Available on New Versions of CIAO!

On May 5, 2008, CIAO!, the Court's calendaring system, launched version 4.2 to support the processing of electronic orders by Judge Robles at the Los Angeles Division for his hearings on Riverside Division relief from stay motions. The update included the ability to move matters and electronic orders from one calendar to another. Some of the other new features include access to orders previously marked

as “unread;” the ability for the user to open a Word document from a disk or drive and save it into CIAO! as an order; and a new pop-up calendar to select a specific date to hold an order.

## Cost-Saving Initiatives Implemented Throughout the Court

To improve efficiency and reduce expenses, the Clerk’s Office centralized district-wide microfiche records at the Santa Ana Division in January 2008. All divisions forwarded microfiches of case information, creditors, and images of orders and paper dockets to the Santa Ana Division. The new microfiche scanner in Santa Ana produces a PDF file of the requested image that can be emailed to the requesting division or party.

On May 1, 2008, the Financial Services Department began using electronic certifications for invoices throughout the district. Using Lotus Notes, the new process enables Clerk’s Office staff to certify an invoice with just the click of a button. With the new electronic process in place, invoices are now certified quickly, reducing the certification process to within one day of delivery.

In September 2008, the Clerk’s Office completed an analysis on the usage of copiers throughout the district. The analysis recommended updating the pricing plan for all copiers, eliminating nine low-volume copiers and enhancing 21 copiers with the ability to print from networked computers, scan, fax, and copy documents. The adjustments are projected to save the Court upwards of \$40,000 in FY09. The replacement project was completed by December 2008.

## Archiving Projects Completed

During 2008, hundreds of case files and Court documents were archived across the district. The Los Angeles Division shipped 200 boxes containing files for 844 closed bankruptcy cases. The San Fernando Valley Division shipped 282 boxes of cases closed from 1992 to 2007. The Santa Ana Division shipped 625 boxes of cases and adversary proceedings closed from 1989 to 2006. The closed case files and other records for archiving were shipped to the Federal Records Center in Perris, California.

## Continuity of Operations Plan Updated

The Court’s Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP), which provides guidance for maintaining Court functionality in the event of an emergency, was updated in September 2008. The most recent version was distributed to the judges and made available on the internal Court website. Employee training on COOP was conducted in December at the Winter Education Seminar, and the Court’s COOP team has tested and validated the COOP plan through numerous workshops hosted by the Greater Los Angeles Federal Executive Board and the Ninth Circuit.

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## New Furniture and Workstation Reconfigurations Installed

To better accommodate the changed work requirements of electronic filing, 19 new workstations were installed in Operations in the Los Angeles Division. The reception area of the Human Resources Department was updated with an attractive modern look. Furnishings in the Computer Training Room were replaced with new furniture that enables a more efficient use of the space, and include flat-panel monitors and ergonomic keyboard trays. Systems furniture was also installed in two managers’ offices within the Technology Administration Division that provide better ergonomic support and addressed storage needs.

The Office Services Department completed several projects affecting the Los Angeles Intake section. The mail area was reconfigured to increase efficiency and provide much-needed office space for the review and quality control of filed documents.

## Mediation Program

The Court established its Bankruptcy Mediation Program in 1995 to provide the public with effective and reliable assistance in resolving disputes without the time and expense associated with litigation. The Court has remained at the forefront of alternative dispute resolution (ADR) programs since then. With approximately 185 mediators on the panel, it is the largest bankruptcy ADR program in the nation.



Tina Yepes, Judge Barry Russell, Peggy Stuart, Susan Doherty



Judge Margaret M. Morrow, Terry Nafisi, District Court Executive/Clerk, Judge Barry Russell, Susan Doherty

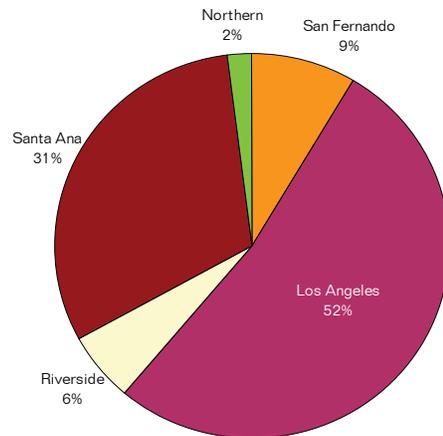
Since the program's inception, 3,916 matters have been assigned to mediation. The settlement rate has consistently averaged 63 percent. All participants are polled, and nearly 90 percent of respondents reported satisfaction with the mediation process; 96 percent indicated they would use the program again; and 93 percent stated they would use the same mediator more than once.

In October 2008, the Central District of California Bankruptcy Court and District Court hosted the tenth annual joint luncheon to honor the mediators and the District Court's settlement officers for their service in 2007 and 2008. More than 100 guests attended the event, including Judge Barry Russell, administrator of the Court's Mediation Program.

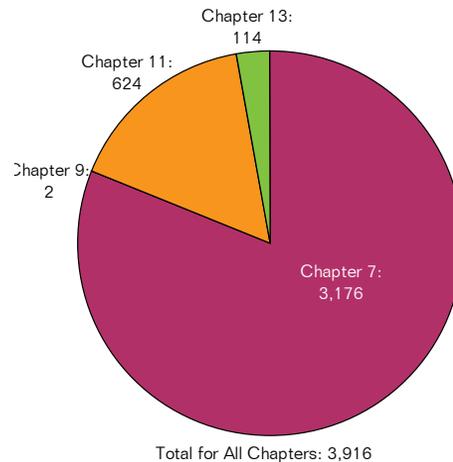
## Courtesy Notification of Electronic Filing (NEF) Implemented

In September 2008, the Court announced to CM/ECF users new procedures for receiving courtesy electronic notification of documents filed in a particular bankruptcy case. The new process saves the district the equivalent of nearly two Clerk's Office staff. In order to receive the courtesy notification of documents, CM/ECF users must submit a Request for Courtesy Notification of Electronic Filing (NEF), a new Court form, which is electronically filed through CM/ECF. In the first 30 days of implementation, over 1,000 courtesy notifications were filed.

United States Bankruptcy Court - Central District of California  
Mediation Matters by Division: 1995-2008



United States Bankruptcy Court - Central District of California  
Mediation Matters by Chapter: 1995-2008



## The U.S. Trustee Consents to Receive Electronic Notice and Service in the Central District

Effective April 1, 2008, the U.S. Trustee consented to receive a Notice of Electronic Filing (NEF) in lieu of a paper copies of documents filed in bankruptcy cases or adversary proceedings. The U.S. Trustee's agreement to accept NEFs eliminated the manual process previously required to serve paper copies to the U.S. Trustee, streamlining the process for all parties involved. The labor and expense associated with the manual process for serving and receiving this high volume of paper copies by U.S. Mail, for all parties, has been virtually eliminated. The U.S. Trustee can still continue to receive service by paper copy for select and limited situations.

# HUMAN RESOURCES

## Staffing Highlights

In 2008, chambers and Clerk’s Office staff totaled 282 employees, not including approximately 94 externs, who spend one semester with the Court. To address the surge in filings within the district, a Generalist Clerk position was announced in October 2008. There were over 100 applicants, of which over 70 candidates were interviewed for the position. Job offers were extended to seven individuals, who have been assigned to the Los Angeles, Riverside, and San Fernando Valley Divisions. The new employees began service with the Court in November and December of 2008, to help offset the impact of significant increases in district filings.

Four employees accepted the early retirement (“Early-out”) and voluntary separation (“Buyout”) packages offered by the Court. As in past years, the AO provided this opportunity to help courts manage anticipated reductions in future funding.

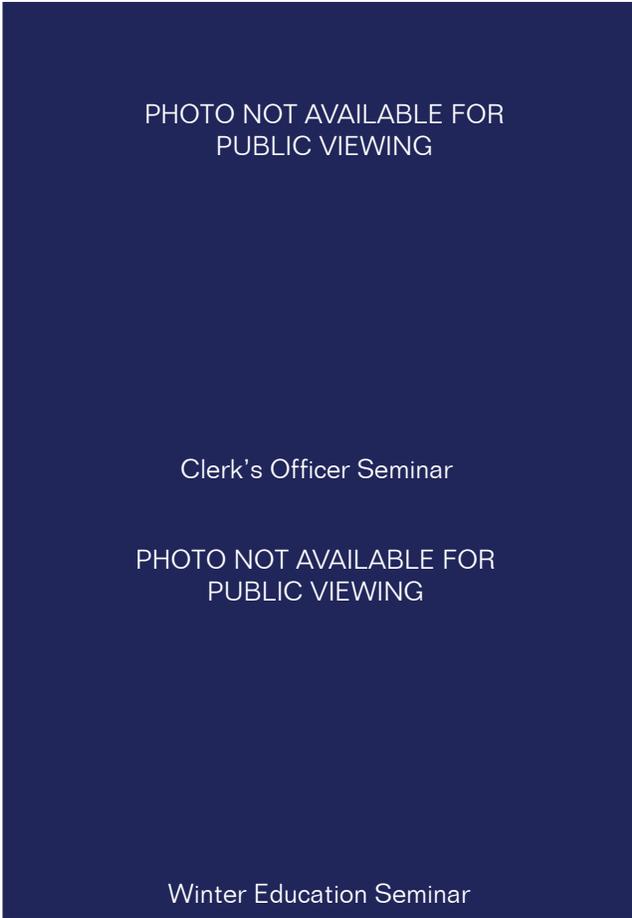
2008 Court Staff	
Bankruptcy Judges	19
Judicial Staff*	42
Clerk’s Office Staff	221
Total**	282

\* Does not include externs

\*\* Includes full-time, prt-time, temporary limited, and temporary indefinite employees

## Training and Staff Development

The training offered in 2008 included not only on-going staff development classes, but also several “lunch and learn” brown bag events open to the public. Attorneys and other interested parties attended seminars on topics such as Section 362 Orders, CM/ECF, and CIAO! The majority of the staff training offered was employee and management training, in contrast to 2007 when most of the training was automation/technical. The Court also sponsored three sessions for new law clerks and externs, with a record number of 68 externs attending the June 2008 session, including over one dozen from the U.S. District Court. The Court also offered a spring



seminar, the annual IT Security training, and the Winter Education Seminar, which was held this year at the Santa Ana Division courthouse. Human Resources provided training on the new employee self-service application, HR Access/eService, as well as on Long Term Care benefits.

2008 District-wide Training	
Number of Classes	Staff Participant Hours
133	4,387

## Human Resource Management Information System Released to Court Staff

Effective November 10, 2008, all Court staff gained online access to their personal information, payroll, and compensation records through the new version of the judiciary's Human Resource Management Information System (HRMIS II). HRMIS II provides a secure, accurate, and convenient way for judges, chambers, and Clerk's Office staff to view and manage personal and payroll information. Human Resources provided training on the features and benefits of HRMIS II, as well as assistance on setting up logon IDs.

### 2008 Career Interns

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*(Left to Right)*

Kandace Johnson, Melissa Wang, Arturo Arellano, Herbert Seales, Sally Quan

## Career Intern Program Enters Second Year

The Career Intern Program, launched in 2007 by the Clerk's Office, continued into its second year. Designed to prepare interns for future roles within the Clerk's Office as part of its succession planning strategy, a total of ten recent college graduates have joined the Clerk's Office as interns since its inception. The 2007 class of five Career Interns successfully completed their first year assignments and began their fifth and final year-long rotation on September 29, 2008. Court managers were asked to participate in determining where the interns should spend their rotations by submitting proposals to have an intern assigned to their department. Based on the proposals and the needs of the Court, the interns are currently working in both Operations and Administrative departments in

the Los Angeles, Riverside, and San Fernando Valley Divisions.

After a rigorous recruitment process which included individual and group interviews, five candidates of the 2008 class of Career Interns accepted offers and began their employment with the Court on September 22, 2008. The interns were assigned to various departments including Case Initiation, Courtroom Services, Financial Services, Human Resources and Procurement in the Los Angeles, Riverside, San Fernando Valley, and Santa Ana Divisions, based on both the Court's needs and the strengths and goals of each intern.

### Employee Recognition Program

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Los Angeles Division

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Riverside Division

## Employee Recognition Program Continues (ePlause)

A total of 50 Court staff members throughout the district were recognized at ePlause award ceremonies held at each division. ePlause, the Court's employee recognition program, recognizes employee accomplishments in the areas of Customer Service, Outstanding Performance,

Teamwork, Suggestion, Special Act, Special Service, and General Appreciation. Nine ePraise Recognition Team (ERT) members, representing a cross-section of departments and all divisions of the Court, evaluate all ePraise nominations submitted in a given month, and recommend award recipients to the Executive Team.

## Staff Awards Honored Service and Outstanding Achievement

In September 2008, award ceremonies were held at each division to honor and recognize Court personnel for their service to the Court. Length of Service Awards were presented to staff members for their years in federal service, from 5 to 30 years. Special Service Awards were also given out and recognized employees for their dedication and outstanding achievement in performing their duties.

### Award Ceremonies

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Riverside Division

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Santa Ana Division

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Los Angeles Division

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Northern Division

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San Fernando Valley Division

## WHO WE ARE



- Los Angeles Division
- Riverside Division
- Santa Ana Division
- Northern Division
- San Fernando Valley Division

### District Profile

The Central District of California is the largest bankruptcy court in the United States. From the coast of California eastward to the Nevada and Arizona borders, the Central District covers approximately 40,000 square miles. The Court has jurisdiction over the Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo, and Ventura Counties, with courthouses in Los Angeles, San Fernando Valley, Riverside, Santa Ana, and Santa Barbara.

The Central District is part of the Ninth Circuit, which encompasses the federal courts of Alaska, Arizona, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Washington, Guam (a U.S. Territory), and the Northern Mariana Islands (a U.S. Commonwealth). The Ninth Circuit is the largest of the 12 federal circuits in size, population, number of federal judges, and volume of litigation. There are 13 bankruptcy courts within the Ninth Circuit.

### Population Served

With a population of more than 19 million people, the Central District of California represents approximately 50 percent of the state's population. Based on estimates from the Demographic Research Unit of the California Department of Finance, the Central District of California is home to four of the five most populous counties in the state, and two of the five most populous counties in the United States (Los Angeles and Orange counties).

## Bankruptcy Filings and Percentage Change: 1980 - 2008

## CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

Year	Ch 7	% Chg	Ch 11	% Chg	Ch 13	% Chg	Total	% Chg
1980	17,935	N/A	317	N/A	1,963	N/A	20,215	N/A
1981	19,145	6.7%	787	148.3%	5,723	191.5%	25,655	26.9%
1982	21,027	9.8%	2,022	156.9%	10,528	84.0%	33,577	30.9%
1983	21,831	3.8%	2,128	5.2%	11,074	5.2%	35,033	4.3%
1984	22,669	3.8%	2,003	-5.9%	10,001	-9.7%	34,673	-1.0%
1285	25,983	14.6%	1,937	-3.3%	9,018	-9.8%	36,938	6.5%
1986	34,286	32.0%	2,079	7.3%	10,452	15.9%	46,817	26.7%
1987	38,097	11.1%	1,675	-19.4%	9,903	-5.3%	49,675	6.1%
1988	39,962	4.9%	1,360	-18.8%	9,548	-3.6%	50,870	2.4%
1989	41,869	4.8%	1,394	2.5%	10,838	13.5%	54,101	6.4%
1990	47,663	13.8%	1,482	6.3%	10,345	-4.5%	59,490	10.0%
1991	64,338	35.0%	2,272	53.3%	12,355	19.4%	78,965	32.7%
1992	76,842	19.4%	2,542	11.9%	14,483	17.2%	93,867	18.9%
1993	74,864	-2.6%	2,423	-4.7%	15,353	6.0%	92,640	-1.3%
1994	65,933	-11.9%	2,057	-15.1%	16,696	8.7%	84,686	-8.6%
1995	66,276	0.5%	1,449	-29.6%	15,104	-9.5%	82,829	-2.2%
1996	83,366	25.8%	1,065	-26.5%	18,253	20.8%	102,684	24.0%
1997	96,277	15.5%	911	-14.5%	20,999	15.0%	118,187	15.1%
1998	99,461	3.3%	622	-31.7%	20,904	-0.5%	120,987	2.4%
1999	82,623	-16.9%	472	-24.1%	19,340	-7.5%	102,435	-15.3%
2000	64,183	-22.3%	573	21.4%	16,028	-17.1%	80,784	-21.1%
2001	73,179	14.0%	573	0.0%	14,482	-9.6%	88,234	9.2%
2002	69,940	-4.4%	484	-15.5%	13,686	-5.5%	84,110	-4.7%
2003	65,227	-6.7%	371	-23.3%	10,088	-26.3%	75,686	-10.0%
2004	54,892	-15.8%	302	-18.6%	5,445	-46.0%	60,639	-19.9%
2005	79,948	45.6%	268	-11.3%	4,028	-26.0%	84,244	38.9%
2006	14,278	-82.1%	241	-10.1%	3,326	-17.4%	17,845	-78.8%
2007	25,688	79.9%	344	42.7%	8,014	141.0%	34,046	90.8%
2008	49,451	92.5%	789	129.4%	15,611	94.8%	65,851	93.4%

Note: Bankruptcy filings and percentage change figures for 2007 and 2008 are based on statistical data from the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts.

LOS ANGELES								
Year	Ch 7	% Chg	Ch 11	% Chg	Ch 13	% Chg	Total	% Chg
1980	12,430	N/A	202	N/A	1,041	N/A	13,673	N/A
1981	13,055	5.0%	508	151.5%	4,162	299.8%	17,725	29.6%
1982	13,868	6.2%	1,291	154.1%	7,655	83.9%	22,814	28.7%
1983	14,825	6.9%	1,361	5.4%	8,074	5.5%	24,260	6.3%
1984	15,950	7.6%	1,309	-3.8%	7,484	-7.3%	24,743	2.0%
1985	18,051	13.2%	1,263	-3.5%	6,473	-13.5%	25,787	4.2%
1986	23,206	28.6%	1,423	12.7%	7,169	10.8%	31,798	23.3%
1987	25,599	10.3%	1,125	-20.9%	6,392	-10.8%	33,116	4.1%
1988	26,365	3.0%	886	-21.2%	5,746	-10.1%	32,997	-0.4%
1989	28,017	6.3%	870	-1.8%	5,423	-5.6%	34,310	4.0%
1990	32,306	15.3%	1,008	15.9%	5,718	5.4%	39,032	13.8%
1991	42,894	32.8%	1,586	57.3%	7,107	24.3%	51,587	32.2%
1992	47,853	11.6%	1,768	11.5%	8,678	22.1%	58,299	13.0%
1993	44,065	-7.9%	1,694	-4.2%	9,286	7.0%	55,045	-5.6%
1994	27,701	-37.1%	1,190	-29.8%	9,189	-1.0%	38,080	-30.8%
1995	26,661	-3.8%	700	-41.2%	7,485	-18.5%	34,846	-8.5%
1996	34,165	28.1%	518	-26.0%	8,989	20.1%	43,672	25.3%
1997	39,533	15.7%	498	-3.9%	10,086	12.2%	50,117	14.8%
1998	42,181	6.7%	343	-31.1%	10,721	6.3%	53,245	6.2%
1999	36,837	-12.7%	220	-35.9%	10,668	-0.5%	47,725	-10.4%
2000	28,008	-24.0%	203	-7.7%	8,306	-22.1%	36,517	-23.5%
2001	32,010	14.3%	296	45.8%	7,009	-15.6%	39,315	7.7%
2002	30,626	-4.3%	181	-38.9%	6,252	-10.8%	37,059	-5.7%
2003	28,661	-6.4%	146	-19.3%	4,380	-29.9%	33,187	-10.4%
2004	24,664	-13.9%	153	4.8%	2,204	-49.7%	27,021	-18.6%
2005	37,166	50.7%	91	-40.5%	1,542	-30.0%	38,799	43.6%
2006	6,043	-83.7%	97	6.6%	1,119	-27.4%	7,259	-81.3%
2007	9,664	59.9%	115	18.6%	2,857	155.3%	12,636	74.1%
2008	16,574	71.5%	185	60.9%	6,438	125.3%	23,197	83.6%

Note: Bankruptcy filings and percentage change figures for 2007 and 2008 are based on statistical data from the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts.

**SAN FERNANDO VALLEY DIVISION**  
(Filings prior to 1994 were included in Los Angeles Division)

Year	Ch 7	% Chg	Ch 11	% Chg	Ch 13	% Chg	Total	% Chg
1994	8,560	N/A	261	N/A	1,859	N/A	10,680	N/A
1995	8,524	-0.4%	239	-8.4%	1,794	-3.5%	10,557	-1.2%
1996	12,470	46.3%	167	-30.1%	2,836	58.1%	15,473	46.6%
1997	14,451	15.9%	131	-21.6%	3,466	22.2%	18,048	16.6%
1998	14,490	0.3%	62	-52.7%	3,531	1.9%	18,083	0.2%
1999	12,005	-17.1%	68	9.7%	3,088	-12.5%	15,161	-16.2%
2000	9,344	-22.2%	101	48.5%	2,284	-26.0%	11,729	-22.6%
2001	10,123	8.3%	76	-24.8%	2,164	-5.3%	12,363	5.4%
2002	9,652	-4.7%	68	-10.5%	2,019	-6.7%	11,739	-5.0%
2003	9,063	-6.1%	52	-23.5%	1,505	-25.5%	10,620	-9.5%
2004	7,440	-17.9%	45	-13.5%	873	-42.0%	8,358	-21.3%
2005	11,083	49.0%	68	51.1%	658	-24.6%	11,809	41.3%
2006	2,054	-81.5%	41	-39.7%	626	-4.9%	2,721	-77.0%
2007	3,674	78.9%	75	82.9%	1,633	160.9%	5,382	97.8%
2008	7,123	93.9%	121	61.3%	3,579	119.2%	10,823	101.1%

Note: Bankruptcy filings and percentage change figures for 2007 and 2008 are based on statistical data from the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts.

**NORTHERN DIVISION**  
(Filings prior to 1992 were included in Los Angeles Division)

Year	Ch 7	% Chg	Ch 11	% Chg	Ch 13	% Chg	Total	% Chg
1992	2,179	N/A	121	N/A	351	N/A	2,651	N/A
1993	3,786	73.7%	122	0.8%	566	61.3%	4,474	68.8%
1994	4,897	29.3%	116	-4.9%	575	1.6%	5,588	24.9%
1995	4,927	0.6%	79	-31.9%	549	-4.5%	5,555	-0.6%
1996	4,886	-0.8%	47	-40.5%	551	0.4%	5,484	-1.3%
1997	5,838	19.5%	34	-27.7%	707	28.3%	6,579	20.0%
1998	5,481	-6.1%	28	-17.6%	654	-7.5%	6,163	-6.3%
1999	4,222	-23.0%	17	-39.3%	521	-20.3%	4,760	-22.8%
2000	3,299	-21.9%	26	52.9%	393	-24.6%	3,718	-21.9%
2001	3,770	14.3%	37	42.3%	330	-16.0%	4,137	11.3%
2002	3,544	-6.0%	27	-27.0%	306	-7.3%	3,877	-6.3%
2003	3,278	-7.5%	32	18.5%	223	-27.1%	3,533	-8.9%
2004	3,048	-7.0%	20	-37.5%	174	-22.0%	3,242	-8.2%
2005	4,571	50.0%	11	-45.0%	163	-6.3%	4,745	46.4%
2006	949	-79.2%	10	-9.1%	103	-36.8%	1,062	-77.6%
2007	1,903	100.5%	12	20.0%	235	128.2%	2,150	102.4%
2008	3,200	68.2%	24	100.0%	402	71.1%	3,626	68.7%

Note: Bankruptcy filings and percentage change figures for 2007 and 2008 are based on statistical data from the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts.

RIVERSIDE DIVISION								
Year	Ch 7	% Chg	Ch 11	% Chg	Ch 13	% Chg	Total	% Chg
1980	2,324	N/A	25	N/A	417	N/A	2,766	N/A
1981	2,886	24.2%	91	264.0%	696	66.9%	3,673	32.8%
1982	3,370	16.8%	200	119.8%	1,354	94.5%	4,924	34.1%
1983	3,394	0.7%	202	1.0%	1,540	13.7%	5,136	4.3%
1984	3,255	-4.1%	220	8.9%	1,384	-10.1%	4,859	-5.4%
1985	3,994	22.7%	194	-11.8%	1,363	-1.5%	5,551	14.2%
1986	5,622	40.8%	194	0.0%	1,861	36.5%	7,677	38.3%
1987	6,483	15.3%	166	-14.4%	2,091	12.4%	8,740	13.8%
1988	7,403	14.2%	164	-1.2%	2,570	22.9%	10,137	16.0%
1989	7,838	5.9%	162	-1.2%	3,428	33.4%	11,428	12.7%
1990	8,017	2.3%	164	1.2%	2,908	-15.2%	11,089	-3.0%
1991	11,494	43.4%	229	39.6%	3,255	11.9%	14,978	35.1%
1992	14,715	28.0%	237	3.5%	3,613	11.0%	18,565	23.9%
1993	15,080	2.5%	213	-10.1%	3,737	3.4%	19,030	2.5%
1994	13,846	-8.2%	189	-11.3%	3,128	-16.3%	17,163	-9.8%
1995	15,015	8.4%	146	-22.8%	3,343	6.9%	18,504	7.8%
1996	18,484	23.1%	116	-20.5%	3,841	14.9%	22,441	21.3%
1997	18,616	0.7%	77	-33.6%	4,093	6.6%	22,786	1.5%
1998	21,761	16.9%	65	-15.6%	4,062	-0.8%	25,888	13.6%
1999	18,110	-16.8%	48	-26.2%	3,658	-9.9%	21,816	-15.7%
2000	14,933	-17.5%	93	93.8%	3,951	8.0%	18,977	-13.0%
2001	17,540	17.5%	46	-50.5%	4,080	3.3%	21,666	14.2%
2002	17,026	-2.9%	67	45.7%	4,185	2.6%	21,278	-1.8%
2003	15,445	-9.3%	64	-4.5%	3,266	-22.0%	18,775	-11.8%
2004	12,306	-20.3%	31	-51.6%	1,751	-46.4%	14,088	-25.0%
2005	15,623	27.0%	40	29.0%	1,185	-32.3%	16,848	19.6%
2006	3,020	-80.7%	36	-10.0%	1,164	-1.8%	4,220	-75.0%
2007	6,440	113.2%	48	33.3%	2,660	128.5%	9,148	116.8%
2008	14,928	131.8%	302	529.2%	4,009	50.7%	19,239	110.3%

Note: Bankruptcy filings and percentage change figures for 2007 and 2008 are based on statistical data from the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts.

SANTA ANA DIVISION								
Year	Ch 7	% Chg	Ch 11	% Chg	Ch 13	% Chg	Total	% Chg
1980	3,181	N/A	90	N/A	505	N/A	3,776	N/A
1981	3,204	0.7%	188	108.9%	865	71.3%	4,257	12.7%
1982	3,789	18.3%	531	182.4%	1,519	75.6%	5,839	37.2%
1983	3,612	-4.7%	565	6.4%	1,460	-3.9%	5,637	-3.5%
1984	3,464	-4.1%	474	-16.1%	1,133	-22.4%	5,071	-10.0%
1985	3,938	13.7%	480	1.3%	1,182	4.3%	5,600	10.4%
1986	5,458	38.6%	462	-3.8%	1,422	20.3%	7,342	31.1%
1987	6,015	10.2%	384	-16.9%	1,420	-0.1%	7,819	6.5%
1988	6,194	3.0%	310	-19.3%	1,232	-13.2%	7,736	-1.1%
1989	6,014	-2.9%	362	16.8%	1,987	61.3%	8,363	8.1%
1990	7,340	22.0%	310	-14.4%	1,719	-13.5%	9,369	12.0%
1991	9,950	35.6%	457	47.4%	1,993	15.9%	12,400	32.4%
1992	12,095	21.6%	416	-9.0%	1,841	-7.6%	14,352	15.7%
1993	11,933	-1.3%	394	-5.3%	1,764	-4.2%	14,091	-1.8%
1994	10,929	-8.4%	301	-23.6%	1,945	10.3%	13,175	-6.5%
1995	11,149	2.0%	285	-5.3%	1,933	-0.6%	13,367	1.5%
1996	13,361	19.8%	217	-23.9%	2,036	5.3%	15,614	16.8%
1997*	17,839	33.5%	171	-21.2%	2,647	30.0%	20,657	32.3%
1998	15,548	-12.8%	124	-27.5%	1,936	-26.9%	17,608	-14.8%
1999	11,449	-26.4%	119	-4.0%	1,405	-27.4%	12,973	-26.3%
2000	8,599	-24.9%	150	26.1%	1,094	-22.1%	9,843	-24.1%
2001	9,736	13.2%	118	-21.3%	899	-17.8%	10,753	9.2%
2002	9,092	-6.6%	141	19.5%	924	2.8%	10,157	-5.5%
2003	8,780	-3.4%	77	-45.4%	714	-22.7%	9,571	-5.8%
2004	7,434	-15.3%	53	-31.2%	443	-38.0%	7,930	-17.1%
2005	11,505	54.8%	58	9.4%	480	8.4%	12,043	51.9%
2006	2,212	-80.8%	57	-1.7%	314	-34.6%	2,583	-78.6%
2007	4,007	81.1%	94	64.9%	629	100.3%	4,730	83.1%
2008	7,626	90.3%	157	67.0%	1,183	88.1%	8,966	89.6%

Note: Bankruptcy filings and percentage change figures for 2007 and 2008 are based on statistical data from the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts.

## LONG RANGE PLAN ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### Case Management

Obj. #	Objective	Accomplishments/Status
1	Expand site-based <i>pro bono</i> assistance program.	San Fernando Valley Division Self-Help Desk provides free legal information and reference materials. Santa Ana Division provides onsite <i>pro bono</i> assistance. Funding from the Attorney Admissions Fund for <i>pro bono</i> services at the Los Angeles Division has been provided.
2	Encourage increased use of telephonic and video appearances where appropriate.	Objective Completed.
3	Encourage judges to serve in a different division at least once a year	Judge Robles held hearings on Riverside Division motions for relief from stay by video conference from his Los Angeles Division courtroom. Judges Bluebond, Donovan, and Neiter were assigned a portion of the Riverside Division case filings that they heard by video conference from their Los Angeles Division courtrooms.
4	Facilitate the judges' ability to prepare more orders.	Lodged Order Upload (LOU) program launched in September 2007. Implemented multiple enhancements to CIAO!  Objective Completed.
5	Reduce Clerk's Office labor components for all case processing and case management functions.	Lodged Order Upload (LOU) program launched in September 2007, and usage has increased steadily to nearly 75 percent. ECF usage became mandatory on April 1, 2007. High volume claim filers registered to use ECF. Quality control tracking program developed to identify common errors and users with high error rates to target training/remedial action. Online training modules developed to replace CM/ECF classroom training. Reinstated automatic dismissal of deficient cases to reduce referrals to the judges. Adopted district-wide procedures for the electronic service of adequate protection orders and relief from stay orders.
6	Standardize docket entries.	Trained registered ECF attorneys to use correct docket codes. Discontinued routine docketing of unused orders. Quality control tracking program developed to identify common errors and users with high error rates to target training/remedial action. Online training modules developed to target common errors/inconsistencies.
7	Explore the ability to process documents while working at an alternate work location. (See also Human Resources Objective #1)	Telework program in place and expanded to include Operations staff. Clerk's Office staff at divisions using electronic systems to assist each other as needed, and a more formal plan for balancing work between divisions is being developed.
8	Facilitate, as appropriate, the administration of small cases.	Proposals from trustee working committee forwarded to Rules Committee for consideration. Made new national forms available on the Court's website for small business cases.

## Community Outreach

Obj. #	Objective	Accomplishments/Status
1	Expand relations with minority bar associations.	No status to report.
2	Obtain funding for foreign language interpretation and translation services.	The Debtor Assistance Project secured funding from the Attorney Admission Fund for translation of the Court's website.
3	Encourage effective cross-cultural communication in the courtroom.	Obtained approval to translate FAQ's on the Court's website and received funding from the Attorney Admission Fund to assist with this project.
4	Create bankruptcy education programs.	The Education Committee continues to arrange bankruptcy education programs for the off-site BOJ Seminar, other quarterly BOJ meetings, and for interns/law clerks.
5	Create pamphlets in Spanish available to the public and revise it to accord with changes in the law.	The Court secured funding from the Attorney Admission Fund to hire a translator to translate FAQs on the Court's website to Spanish.
6	Review all information available to the public and revise it to accord with changes in the law.	Public Information Quality Control Committee project underway to review the Court's website/some changes implemented including a major overhaul of the FAQs. "Don't Have An Attorney?" section added to the Court's website.
7	Provide public education on issues such as separation of powers, judicial independence, rule of law, and stare decisis.	Encourage judges to support attendance at programs sponsored by universities, law schools, bar associations, etc.
8	Update the Court's website periodically to keep it current and user-friendly.	The Court's website is updated regularly to reflect local rules, notices, etc. Additionally, the Court has begun testing new software and tools for the next iteration of the website.
9	Encourage legal assistance from <i>pro bono</i> attorneys for parties who cannot afford an attorney. (See also Facilities and Security Objective #7)	Ongoing effort with Los Angeles County Bar's <i>Pro Bono</i> Bankruptcy Subcommittee and other local bar associations.
10	Make electronic filing more accessible to the public.	Completed numerous ECF training sessions for members of the local and national bar. Online training modules developed to replace CM/ECF classroom training for new attorneys, as well as targeted error prone areas and LOU. Case Management Committee believes that in other respects, this objective is not feasible.
11	Publicize appropriate means to communicate suggestions for Court rules and procedures.	The Court continues to seek input from the public on local rules. Comments were requested through public notices and in the Court News publication.

## Facilities and Security

Obj. #	Objective	Accomplishments/Status
1	Review divisional organization of the Court.	Due to changes in the real estate market, the Court has voted to withdraw its San Fernando Valley Proposal. The Clerk of Court is currently working with GSA, the landlord of the San Fernando Valley courthouse, and the Ninth Circuit Space and Security Committee to obtain a new lease for the San Fernando Valley courthouse.
2	Create a plan for court operation in the event of a natural disaster or other catastrophe that affects all or substantially all of the district.	The Ninth Circuit recently conducted a COOP Planning seminar. It was decided during that seminar that Terry Nafisi, Clerk of the District Court, would create an inter-agency committee in the Central District of California to work on COOP plans for the various agencies in the Central District that are consistent with one another. The Court's Space and Security Committee will monitor the work of that inter-agency committee.
3	Determine the amount of space used by the court that is necessary to serve the public.	The Space and Security Committee has merged this Objective with Facilities and Security Objective #1 above.
4	Establish a "virtual" courtroom system.	Judges Bluebond, Donovan, and Neiter were assigned a portion of the Riverside Division case filings that they heard by video conference from their Los Angeles Division courtrooms. Judge Robles held Riverside Division hearings on motions for relief from stay by video conference from his Los Angeles Division courtroom.
5	Establish or create technology to enable litigants to appear from wherever they are.	Judges Bluebond, Donovan, Neiter, and Robles held routine hearings on Riverside Division cases by video conference from their Los Angeles Division courtrooms.
6	Validate efficacy of Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) on a continuing basis.	The Court's COOP plan is being updated to ensure it adheres to the latest available version/template and that it reflects the Court's current organizational structure. In addition, the COOP development/implementation team has attended several COOP workshops and validated the Court's plan with those suggested by these workshops. The team also drafted a COOP checklist and form aimed at facilitating the collection and sharing of critical information during a COOP emergency.
7	Explore providing space in the courthouses for providing <i>pro bono</i> legal assistance. (See also Community Outreach Objective #9)	San Fernando Valley Division Self-Help Desk established to provide free legal information and reference material. Santa Ana Division provides onsite <i>pro bono</i> assistance. Funding from the Attorney Admission Fund for <i>pro bono</i> services at the Los Angeles Division has been provided.
8	Make electronic locks and access to doors, elevators, and locations more universal, and limit physical keys and cipher locks.	Card readers and security cameras have been installed in the judicial chambers within the Roybal Federal building of the Los Angeles Division.

## Human Resources

Obj. #	Objective	Accomplishments/Status
1	Evaluate and modify, if necessary, the use of the telework program. (See also Case Management Objective #7).	The Clerk's Office reviewed the telework program in 2008 and plans to expand the program to enable Operations staff to perform quality control, case closing and dismissal. Productivity standards and monitoring measures developed.
2	Ensure a smooth transition as senior staff members retire.	The Clerk's Office initiated its Career Intern program in 2007 with five interns. A new class of five additional interns joined the Court in 2008.
3	Recruit and retain a workforce consistent with the court's technology.	The Clerk's Office hired staff proficient in network management and video conferencing during 2008. The Clerk's Office initiated its Career Intern program in 2007 with five interns. A new class of five additional interns joined the Court in 2008. Workforce received extensive training, as included in Human Resources Objective #4.
4	Enhance training for all staff.	<p>The 2008 Winter Education Seminar highlighted Local Bankruptcy Rules, as well as providing an update on the Court's Continuity of Operations (COOP) plan.</p> <p>Operations staff received training on the new QC Editor system, as well as ongoing training on CM, LOU, calendaring, and related topics.</p> <p>Human Resources (HR) provided training district-wide on HR Access/eService and coordinated webcasts on Open Season benefits. HR also coordinates the annual Constitution Day broadcast across the district.</p> <p>The Information Technology Department provided the Annual IT security training program, as well as training on the new video hearing systems.</p> <p>The Judicial Online University continues to be available to all staff, and provides online access to over 2,000 business, professional, and technical courses.</p>
5	Develop a new employee recognition program consistent with national guidelines.	The ePraise employee recognition program was created in 2006 to meet national guidelines. During 2008, 58 staff members were recognized during four ceremonies across the district.
6	Establish a mechanism for line staff to provide feedback to management staff.	The Workplace Liaison program was initiated by the Clerk's Office.
7	Explore alternative work schedules for staff.	The Court offers telework opportunities for staff.
8	Implement digital time card and leave tracking/management systems.	Implementation of digital time card and leave tracking is on hold. The AO is preparing to rollout a national time card system, and the Court has offered to participate in testing this new system.

## Information Management

Obj. #	Objective	Accomplishments/Status
1	Expand CM/ECF to all constituents.	The Court has trained over 1,500 attorneys to use CM/ECF, and nearly 2,300 attorneys have become registered CM/ECF users (attorneys certified to use CM/ECF at other courts are granted access).
2	Reduce paper/printer costs.	<p>New networked copiers were made available throughout the Court to enable duplex printing and eliminate the need for separate fax machines. The use of PDF files that can be viewed, either from e-mails or from the Court's website, continues to increase (e.g., judicial committee minutes, procedural manuals, reports, newsletters, etc.). The Court is studying current printing practices and costs. This study will help the Court to make business decisions on how to acquire supplies and services more effectively and efficiently to reduce costs.</p> <p>The Court continued to identify ways to reduce paper usage and printing costs. Currently, the Court is in the process of upgrading previously standalone copiers throughout the divisions, enabling printing and eliminating the need for separate fax machines. The Court expects to realize significant cost savings by the reduction of printers, faxes, and supplies needed to be purchased throughout the year.</p>
3	Enable <i>pro se</i> e-filing safely and in accordance with applicable laws.	Board of Judges approved proposal to enable <i>pro bono</i> attorneys to use ECF to file petitions with either fee waiver or fee installment applications.
4	Educate other bankruptcy courts regarding the benefits and advantages of CIAO! and other software developed by the court.	Judge Peter Carroll and members of the Clerk's Office provided an overview of CIAO! to a national panel from the AO and other courts in 2008.
5	Provide computer terminals in Clerk's Offices for <i>pro se</i> litigants to use for filing court documents electronically.	No Status to Report.
6	Enable e-filing of proofs of claim by high volume claim filers such as the IRS.	<p>The Court registered the Internal Revenue Service and other high volume claim filers to electronically file claims through CM/ECF.</p> <p>Objective Completed.</p>
7	Modify CIAO! so tentative rulings are easily included in the docket as findings of fact and conclusions of law in support of court findings.	No Status to Report.
8	Implement digital time card and leave tracking/management systems.	Implementation of digital timecard and leave tracking is on hold. The AO is preparing to rollout a national time card system, and the Court has offered to participate in testing this new system.



For additional information regarding this report or the Bankruptcy Court for the Central District of California, you may contact the Clerk's Office at the locations below.



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