

# **Vandenberg Village Community Services District**

## **Classification & Compensation Study Final Report**

**Prepared by:**



**Reward Strategy Group, Inc.**

9276 Scranton Road, Suite 120

San Diego, CA 92121

(858) 404-0080

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## SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

### Background & Study Objectives

Reward Strategy Group, Inc. (RSG) was retained by the District to conduct a classification and compensation study covering all of its employees and job classes.

The primary objectives for this study were:

- Identify the most appropriate ACWA benchmarks and demographic groupings for the District to utilize for salary comparison purposes.
- Compare the District's current salaries to the selected benchmarks in the 2003 ACWA Survey and develop base salary recommendations based on the results of those comparisons *and* internal salary relationship considerations.
- Make recommendations for any necessary changes to the District's current classification plan and job descriptions.
- Compare the District's current employee benefit package to the benefits reported in the ACWA Survey.

### Study Methodology

Methodologies used in conducting this study are summarized here to provide an overview of the steps leading to RSG's recommendations. In some instances, further detail is provided in report sections.

- RSG reviewed available documentation regarding the District's current employee classification and compensation plans and practices, including:
  - ▶ Job descriptions
  - ▶ Organization chart
  - ▶ Salary schedule
  - ▶ Previous salary surveys
  - ▶ Benefits plan
  - ▶ Certification and incentive plans
  - ▶ Budget
  - ▶ Personnel ordinance



- Each District employee was interviewed by an RSG consultant to ensure a full and complete understanding of his/her essential duties and responsibilities.
- District job classes were compared to the ACWA Survey benchmark job descriptions to identify the *most appropriate* benchmark comparisons.
- The District's current (02/03) salaries were compared to selected ACWA data groupings to assess their relative competitiveness.
- Survey comparison results and internal job content relationships were integrated by RSG to formulate recommendations for a new base salary plan.

### **The General Manager Position**

RSG's analysis and recommendations for this position are presented under separate cover.

### **Summary of Principal Recommendations**

Following are highlights of RSG's recommendations.

- The annual ACWA Salary Survey should continue to be utilized as the basis for making employee compensation decisions. However, we recommend the District look to other public employers in the local labor market to keep apprised of local labor supply and demand trends that may develop over time.
- Make the following changes in ACWA Survey job matching:
  - O&M Manager – From #15 to #14
  - Service Person II – From #37 to #36
  - Administrative/Accounting Assistant – From #45 to #48
- ACWA Salary Survey's Zone 3 – All Agencies is the most relevant data group for salary comparison purposes, *below the General Manager position.*



- The District should implement a new base salary structure that is competitive at approximately the average of salaries paid for *comparable* jobs in the ACWA Survey's Zone 3 – All Agencies data group.
- In order to maintain its relative competitiveness in the labor market, RSG recommends the District make annual salary adjustments based on actions taken by other ACWA participants, not the Consumer Price Index. Annual salary adjustments made by utility industry employers seldom have a high correlation to the CPI. For example, the average salary range adjustment made by the ACWA Survey Zone 3 districts was 3.5 percent, while VVCSD adjusted salaries by 1.9 percent based on the CPI.
- The District should discontinue the use of certification pay for the Service Person I and II job classes. The District's job descriptions list these certifications as job requirements, and the certifications are recognized in the ACWA Survey data.

## SECTION 2: CLASSIFICATION PLAN ANALYSIS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Overall, the District's classification plan and job descriptions are in very good shape. This is due to the fact that earlier this year, in anticipation of this study, each District employee was given the opportunity to review and update his/her job description to ensure they accurately reflect current essential duties and qualifications.

RSG has no recommendations for changes to the current classification plan and job descriptions.

## SECTION 3: ACWA SURVEY JOB MATCHING ASSESSMENT

Exhibit 1, following, presents RSG's recommendations for the most appropriate ACWA Survey benchmark for each of the District's job classes. We are recommending the District change the survey benchmark job matching for three jobs: O&M Manager, Service Person II and Administrative/Accounting Assistant.



**Exhibit 1**

Position	Past ACWA Job #	RSG Comments	RSG Recommendations
O&M Manager	15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Job #15 is a first-line supervisor. This survey benchmark (#15) is more comparable to a Lead Worker or Crew Chief and doesn't reflect the VVCSD position's administrative and managerial responsibilities.</li> <li>▪ Most (nearly all) agencies reporting a job #15 also report a #14 and/or #13, which are second-level supervisors.</li> <li>▪ Job #15 is geared primarily to first-level supervisors in water distribution, while the District's position has distribution, treatment and wastewater collection, requiring more certifications than is typically represented by incumbents of job #15.</li> </ul>	Use job #14.
Finance Administrator	17	This is the appropriate match.	No change.
HR/Support Systems Administrator	17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ While this is not a "perfect" fit, it is the closest. It doesn't cover the incumbent's responsibilities for human resources, purchasing, information systems and other related administrative functions.</li> <li>▪ Although a case could be made for an adjustment to the market data based on those additional duties, we evaluate the position as being comparable to the Finance Administrator and recommend both positions continue to be paid the same. The Finance Administrator should be considered the actual benchmark for both jobs.</li> </ul>	No change.



Position	Past ACWA Job #	RSG Comments	RSG Recommendations
Service Person II	37	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ ACWA Survey job #37 has a more limited scope of duties and responsibilities than the District’s class. Most significantly, VVCSD’s position requires multiple certifications (Grade 2 Distribution and Treatment; Grade 1 Wastewater Collection); basic electrical and electronics repair know-how; lift and pump station repairs; construction equipment operation; and water treatment plant maintenance and operation. ACWA job #37 is focused primarily on distribution system maintenance.</li> <li>▪ ACWA Survey job #36 appears to be a more comparable match.</li> </ul>	Use job #36.
Service Person I	38	VVCSD’s position is comparable to ACWA’s Survey job #38.	No change.
Administrative/Accounting Asst	45	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ This District position is a combination of three ACWA benchmarks, #45, 46 and 48, Board Secretary, General Manager’s Secretary and Accounting Technician, respectively. The incumbent reports spending approximately one-third of her time providing administrative support to the Board and General manager and two-thirds of her time to finance/accounting functions.</li> <li>▪ Since the finance/accounting aspects account for two-thirds of the position’s duties and responsibilities, we recommend utilizing job #48 (Accounting Technician) with a +5.0 percent adjustment for the added Board and General Manager duties.</li> </ul>	Use job #48, plus 5.0% adjustment.
Customer Service Representative	52	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The District’s position is most comparable to the ACWA benchmark #52, since customer service activities account for the majority of the incumbent’s duties.</li> </ul>	No change.



**SECTION 4: ACWA SURVEY – PARTICIPANT BASE ASSESSMENT**

Exhibit 2 displays the size and scope of the survey’s database for each District benchmark, excluding General Manager, in terms of the number of agencies reporting and the number of positions reported for each. Two data groups are shown: 1) Zone 3, 6–25 Employee group, and 2) Zone 3 – All Agencies group.

We found that the Zone 3, 6–25 Employees group for six of the eight benchmarks contain *insufficient* data for salary comparison purposes. For this reason, RSG recommends the use of Zone 3 – All Agencies for salary survey purposes. The recommendation for General Manager is contained in a separate document.

**Exhibit 2**

Position	Job #	Zone 3	
		6–25 Employees (# Agencies/# Positions)	All Agencies (# Agencies/# Positions)
O&M Manager	14	3/3	8/9
Finance Administrator	17	2/3	6/7
HR/Support Systems Administrator	17	2/3	6/7
Service Person II	36	3/5	7/11
Service Person I	38	9/15	16/40
Administrative/Accounting Assistant	48	2/2	5/5
Customer Service Representative	52	1/1	4/8

**Notes:**

- ▶ All figures for # Agencies Reporting/# Positions Reported *include* Vandenberg Village CSD.
- ▶ Shaded figures highlight ACWA Survey with a participant total that is too small to be used for salary comparison purposes.





### SECTION 5: ACWA SALARY SURVEY COMPARISONS

RSG compared the District's FY 02/03 salary range maximums (step 5) to the mean salary range maximums reported in the 2003 ACWA Survey for Zone 3 – All Agencies. The results of this comparison are presented in Exhibit 3, following.

This comparison reveals that VVCSD's current base salaries for *all* job classes are significantly *below* the average of salaries paid in the comparison agencies. We believe that the past practice of making annual cost-of-living salary adjustments based on the Consumer Price Index, combined with other factors discussed in this report's introduction, have contributed to the District's falling behind the marketplace in recent years. For example, the District's 2002 salary adjustment of 1.9 percent based on the CPI is nearly one-half the average salary adjustment granted by the survey agencies. Annual salary increase data are reported annually in the ACWA Salary Survey and should be the District's reference point for making future annual salary adjustments. This practice will assist the District in maintaining its relative competitiveness in the labor market.

Exhibit 3

Position	ACWA Job #	VVCSD Current Step 5 (\$)	ACWA Survey <sup>(1)</sup> Mean Salary (\$)	Adjustment (%)	Adjusted Survey Salary (\$)	VVCSD Current vs Adjusted Survey Salary	
						\$	%
O&M Manager	14	52,760	66,744	–	66,744	(13,984)	(26.5)
Finance Admin	17	49,851	58,968	–	58,968	(9,117)	(18.3)
HR/Support Systems Admin	17	49,851	58,968	–	58,968	(9,117)	(18.3)
Administrative/Actg Asst	48	34,517	40,560	+5.0	42,588	(8,071)	(23.4)
Customer Service Rep	52	29,809	37,488	–	37,488	(7,679)	(25.8)
Service Person II	36	41,386 <sup>(2)</sup>	52,704	–	52,704	(11,318)	(27.4)
Service Person I	38	36,399 <sup>(3)</sup>	40,332	–	40,332	(3,933)	(10.8)

**Notes:**

- (1) ACWA Survey Mean Salary: This is the report's salary range maximum for Zone 3 – all agencies. All salaries are those in effect for July 2002. Among this agency group, two adjust their salaries in January and the others in July of each year.
- (2) The District's class specification requires a Grade 2 Treatment and a Grade 2 Distribution certificate. Under the current Certification Bonus Pay Plan (+\$175 for a T2 and +\$75 for a D2), this results in an annual salary of \$41,386.
- (3) The annual salary for Service Person I, assuming T1 and D1 certifications, is \$36,399.



**SECTION 6: PROPOSED BASE SALARY SCHEDULE**

RSG recommends the District adopt the use of an integrated base salary structure common among public agencies in California. This structure has salary grades/ranges that are approximately 5 percent apart. Each grade/range contains five steps that are approximately 5 percent apart. The use of such a structure allows an organization to address issues of *both* external market competitiveness and internal equity, rather than relying solely on what others are paying. Research and our experience indicated that employees are as much concerned with what others in the organization are paid as with what other agencies are paying.

Each of the District’s job classes was placed on this new structure based on *both* market data *and* internal salary relationship considerations. For example, while the Zone 3 survey data for Service Person II would suggest grade 8, we have slotted it at grade 7 for internal salary relationship considerations (15 percent above Service Person I). This is further supported by a review of other ACWA databases (see Exhibit 8).

**Exhibit 4**

Proposed New Salary Structure						
Grade	Position	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5
13	O&M Manager	54,874	57,618	60,499	63,524	66,700
12	Vacant	52,261	54,874	57,618	60,499	63,524
11	Finance Administrator HR/Support Systems Administrator	49,772	52,261	54,874	57,618	60,499
10	Vacant	47,402	49,772	52,261	54,874	57,618
9	Vacant	45,145	47,402	49,772	52,261	54,874
8	Vacant	42,995	45,145	47,402	49,772	52,261
7	Service Person II	40,948	42,995	45,145	47,402	49,772
6	Vacant	38,998	40,948	42,995	45,145	47,402
5	Vacant	37,141	38,998	40,948	42,995	45,145
4	Admin/Accounting Assistant Service Person I	35,372	37,141	38,998	40,948	42,995
3	Vacant	33,688	35,372	37,141	38,998	40,948
2	Customer Service Representative	32,083	33,688	35,372	37,141	38,998
1	Vacant	30,555	32,083	33,688	35,372	37,141

**Note:** Approx 5.0 percent dollar differentials between each grade; approx 5.0 percent dollar differentials between each step within grades.



## SECTION 7: CURRENT SALARY GRADES COMPARED TO PROPOSED SALARY GRADES

In this exhibit, the District's current step 5's are compared to the proposed salary structure's step 5's. For each District job, the proposed step 5 is higher than the current step 5. This exhibit also contains the survey data for reference purposes.

**Exhibit 5**

Grade	Position	PROPOSED Step 5	Adjusted Survey Mean	CURRENT Step 5	Proposed Step 5 vs Current Step 5	
					\$	%
13	O&M Manager	\$66,700	\$66,744	\$52,760	13,940	26.4
12	Vacant	63,524	—	—	—	—
11	Finance Administrator	60,499	58,968	49,851	10,648	21.4
	HR/Support System Administrator	60,499	58,968	49,851	10,648	21.4
10	Vacant	57,618	—	—	—	—
9	Vacant	54,874	—	—	—	—
8	Vacant	52,261	—	—	—	—
7	Service Person II	49,772	52,704	41,386*	8,386	20.3
6	Vacant	42,402	—	—	—	—
5	Vacant	45,145	—	—	—	—
4	Admin/Accounting Assistant	42,995	42,588	34,517	8,478	24.6
	Service Person I	42,995	40,332	36,399*	6,596	18.1
3	Vacant	40,948	—	—	—	—
2	Customer Service Representative	38,998	37,488	29,809	9,189	30.8
1	Vacant	—	—	—	—	—

\* Salaries shown for Service Person I and II contain the certification awards.



**SECTION 8: PROPOSED SALARY STRUCTURE – SUGGESTED IMPLEMENTATION**

RSG recommends the District implement this new structure by allocating employees to the new grade on that step that is closest to and higher than their current salary. This will accomplish two important objectives:

1. Reduce the new structure’s initial cost impact.
2. Because all employees will be at step one or two, future annual performance appraisals will be made more effective by being directly linked to merit increases.

**Exhibit 6**

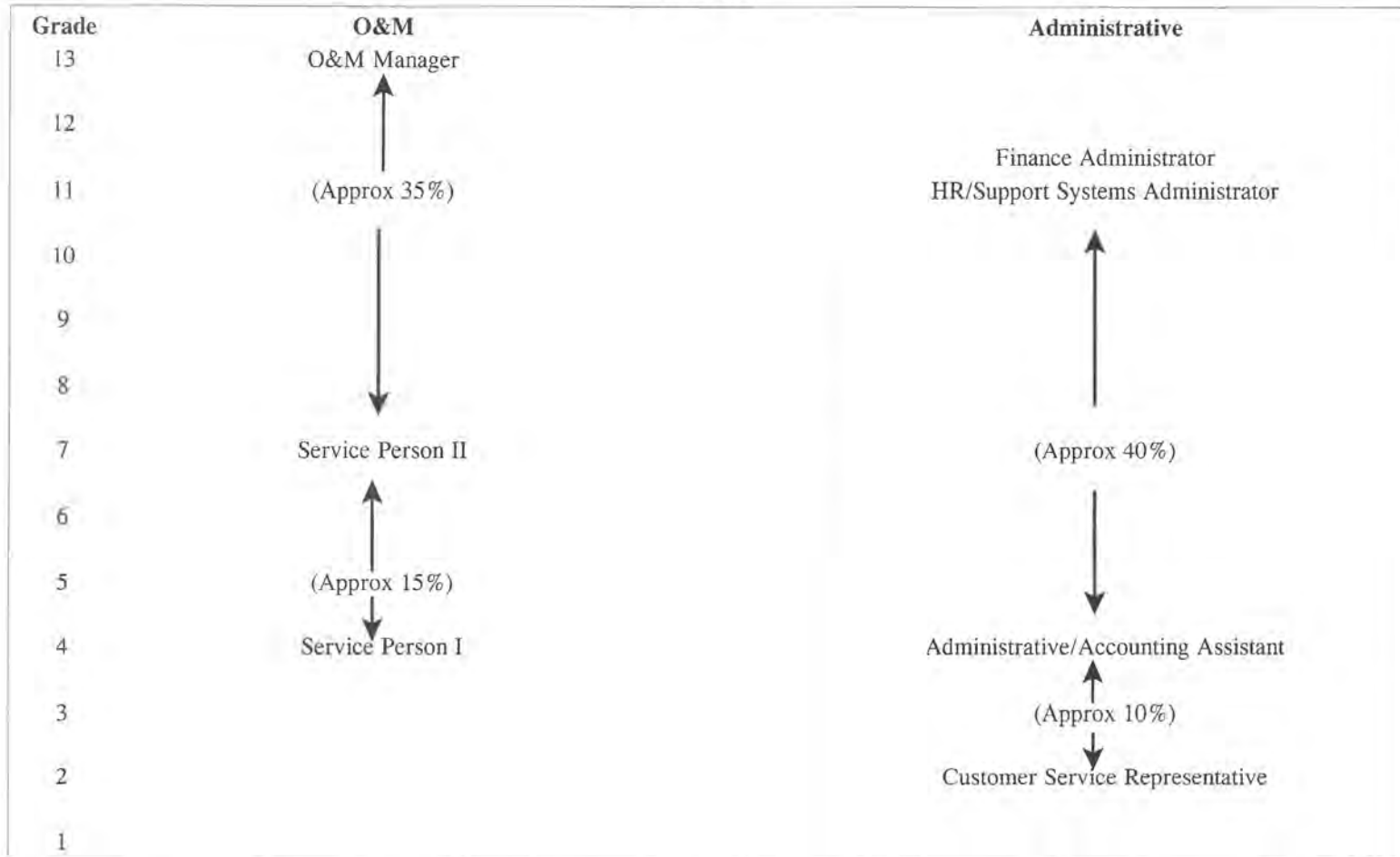
Incumbent	Position	Current		Proposed		Proposed vs Current	
		Step	\$	Step	\$	\$	%
M. Damwyk	O&M Manager	5	52,760	1	54,874	2,114	4.0
R. Karr	Finance Administrator	4	47,477	1	49,772	2,295	4.8
C. Allen	HR/Support Systems Admin	3	45,216	1	49,772	4,556	10.1
J. Levingston	Service Person II	5	41,386	2	42,995	1,609	3.9
M. Garner	Service Person II	5	41,386	2	42,995	1,609	3.9
S. Vlahos-Rivera	Admin/Accounting Assistant	2	29,818	1	35,372	5,554	18.6
J. Cole	Service Person I	trial	27,580	1	35,372	7,792	28.3
K. Mc Manigal	Customer Service Representative	3	27,038	1	32,083	5,045	18.7



**SECTION 9: PROPOSED INTERNAL SALARY RELATIONSHIPS**

Exhibit 7, following, displays the internal salary relationships that will result from the proposed structure.

**Exhibit 7**



## SECTION 10: COMPARISON OF VARIOUS ACWA SURVEY DATA GROUPS

This data is presented for informational purposes only. We believe Zone 6 data is worth looking at because the regions' demographics are somewhat similar to Zone 3: urban, suburban and rural areas.

**Exhibit 8**

Position	ACWA Job #	Zone 3 All		Statewide 6-25		Statewide All		Zone 6 All *	
		Mean	# Agencies	Mean	# Agencies	Mean	# Agencies	Mean	# Agencies
O&M Manager	14	\$66,744	20	\$63,984	18	\$72,372	83	\$81,324	25
Finance Administrator	17	58,968	6	55,824	20	64,116	17	71,496	24
HR/Support Sys Adm	17	58,968	6	55,824	20	64,116	17	71,496	24
Adm/Accounting Asst	48	40,560	5	37,308	11	41,652	57	41,376	15
Customer Service Rep	52	37,488	4	34,368	14	38,308	50	38,424	13
Service Person II	36	42,704	7	49,320	13	47,580	71	48,744	24
Service Person I	38	40,332	16	39,288	27	40,764	90	40,944	26

\* Zone 6 = Counties of San Bernardino, Riverside, Imperial and San Diego.



**VANDENBERG VILLAGE COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT  
PAYROLL SCHEDULE  
2003 ADJUSTMENT (CONSULTANT SUGGESTION)**

01-Jul-03

JOB TITLE	TRIAL PERIOD			STEP 1			STEP 2			STEP 3			STEP 4			STEP 5			Percentage of Increase	
	Monthly	Hourly	Annual	Monthly	Hourly	Annual	Monthly	Hourly	Annual	Monthly	Hourly	Annual	Monthly	Hourly	Annual	Monthly	Hourly	Annual	Calculated	Implemented
OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE MANAGER	\$4,355.10	\$25.13	\$52,261.20	\$4,572.85	\$26.38	\$54,874.26	\$4,801.50	\$27.70	\$57,617.97	\$5,041.57	\$29.09	\$60,498.87	\$5,293.65	\$30.54	\$63,523.81	\$5,558.33	\$32.07	\$66,700.00	26.42%	4.01%
VACANT	\$4,147.73	\$23.93	\$49,772.72	\$4,355.11	\$25.13	\$52,261.35	\$4,572.87	\$26.38	\$54,874.42	\$4,801.51	\$27.70	\$57,618.14	\$5,041.59	\$29.09	\$60,499.05	\$5,293.67	\$30.54	\$63,524.00		
OFFICE MANAGER	\$3,950.21	\$22.79	\$47,402.55	\$4,147.72	\$23.93	\$49,772.68	\$4,355.11	\$25.13	\$52,261.31	\$4,572.86	\$26.38	\$54,874.38	\$4,801.51	\$27.70	\$57,618.10	\$5,041.58	\$29.09	\$60,499.00	21.36%	10.08%
FINANCE ADMINISTRATOR II	\$3,950.21	\$22.79	\$47,402.55	\$4,147.72	\$23.93	\$49,772.68	\$4,355.11	\$25.13	\$52,261.31	\$4,572.86	\$26.38	\$54,874.38	\$4,801.51	\$27.70	\$57,618.10	\$5,041.58	\$29.09	\$60,499.00	21.36%	4.84%
FINANCE ADMINISTRATOR I (VACANT)	\$3,762.10	\$21.70	\$45,145.21	\$3,950.21	\$22.79	\$47,402.47	\$4,147.72	\$23.93	\$49,772.59	\$4,355.10	\$25.13	\$52,261.22	\$4,572.86	\$26.38	\$54,874.29	\$4,801.50	\$27.70	\$57,618.00		
VACANT	\$3,582.93	\$20.67	\$42,995.21	\$3,762.08	\$21.70	\$45,144.98	\$3,950.19	\$22.79	\$47,402.22	\$4,147.69	\$23.93	\$49,772.34	\$4,355.08	\$25.13	\$52,260.95	\$4,572.83	\$26.38	\$54,874.00		
VACANT	\$3,412.32	\$19.69	\$40,947.86	\$3,582.94	\$20.67	\$42,995.25	\$3,762.08	\$21.70	\$45,145.02	\$3,950.19	\$22.79	\$47,402.27	\$4,147.70	\$23.93	\$49,772.38	\$4,355.08	\$25.13	\$52,261.00		
SERVICE PERSON II	\$3,249.81	\$18.75	\$38,997.66	\$3,412.30	\$19.69	\$40,947.55	\$3,582.91	\$20.67	\$42,994.92	\$3,762.06	\$21.70	\$45,144.67	\$3,950.16	\$22.79	\$47,401.90	\$4,147.67	\$23.93	\$49,772.00	29.66%	12.01%
ACCOUNTANT II (VACANT)	\$3,098.78	\$17.88	\$37,185.37	\$3,253.72	\$18.77	\$39,044.64	\$3,416.41	\$19.71	\$40,996.87	\$3,587.23	\$20.70	\$43,046.71	\$3,766.59	\$21.73	\$45,199.05	\$3,954.92	\$22.82	\$47,459.00		
ACCOUNTANT I (VACANT)	\$2,947.69	\$17.01	\$35,372.29	\$3,095.08	\$17.86	\$37,140.90	\$3,249.83	\$18.75	\$38,997.95	\$3,412.32	\$19.69	\$40,947.85	\$3,582.94	\$20.67	\$42,995.24	\$3,762.08	\$21.70	\$45,145.00		
SERVICE PERSON I	\$2,807.31	\$16.20	\$33,687.71	\$2,947.67	\$17.01	\$35,372.09	\$3,095.06	\$17.86	\$37,140.70	\$3,249.81	\$18.75	\$38,997.73	\$3,412.30	\$19.69	\$40,947.62	\$3,582.92	\$20.67	\$42,995.00	22.15%	22.15%
BOARD SECRETARY/ADMINISTRATIVE & ACCOUNTING ASSISTANT	\$2,807.31	\$16.20	\$33,687.71	\$2,947.67	\$17.01	\$35,372.09	\$3,095.06	\$17.86	\$37,140.70	\$3,249.81	\$18.75	\$38,997.73	\$3,412.30	\$19.69	\$40,947.62	\$3,582.92	\$20.67	\$42,995.00	24.56%	18.63%
CUSTOMER SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE II (VACANT)	\$2,673.65	\$15.42	\$32,083.83	\$2,807.34	\$16.20	\$33,688.02	\$2,947.70	\$17.01	\$35,372.42	\$3,095.09	\$17.86	\$37,141.04	\$3,249.84	\$18.75	\$38,998.10	\$3,412.33	\$19.69	\$40,948.00		
CUSTOMER SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE	\$2,546.33	\$14.69	\$30,555.95	\$2,673.65	\$15.42	\$32,083.75	\$2,807.33	\$16.20	\$33,687.94	\$2,947.69	\$17.01	\$35,372.34	\$3,095.08	\$17.86	\$37,140.95	\$3,249.83	\$18.75	\$38,998.00	30.83%	13.01%
																			25.19%	12.10%

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**VANDENBERG VILLAGE COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT**

**Special Analysis & Recommendations  
for  
General Manager**

Prepared by:



**Reward Strategy Group, Inc.**

9276 Scranton Road, Suite 120

San Diego, CA 92121

(858) 404-0080

December 2002

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**VANDENBERG VILLAGE COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT**  
**Individual Salary Analysis & Recommendations**  
**For the General Manager Position**

- We agree the appropriate ACWA Survey benchmark for this position is job #7.
- The relevant competitive labor market for this position should include both regional and statewide comparisons. We recommend using the following ACWA Survey comparisons:
  - ▶ Zone 3, 6-25 employees group
  - ▶ Zone 3, all agencies group
  - ▶ Statewide, 6-25 employees group
- Following are the mean salary range maximums reported for each of these groups. It should be noted that most (nearly all) water district's report a single, flat-rate salary for General Manager. For example, within Zone 3, only three of the 25 participating agencies report a range minimum and range maximum for the top executive position.

ACWA Survey Group	Agencies Reporting	Mean Salary
Statewide, 6-25 employees	53	\$100,812
Zone 3, 6-25 employees	11	92,820
Zone 3, all agencies	20	109,932

- Based on this data, we recommend a salary of \$95,000 - \$105,000 be the range of salary *target* for recruiting a full-time General Manager.
- The attached exhibit provides additional data supporting this recommendation.
- RSG recommends the District discontinue reporting the part-time General Manager's salary to the ACWA Survey, as it tends to distort the relatively small database in the survey's Zone 3 summaries.



**VANDENBERG VILLAGE COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT**  
**General Manager Salary Analysis**

Following are the Zone 3 agencies in the 6-25 employee group that reported a salary for job #7 – top executive position. Salaries shown are for the salary range maximum; however, all but one of the districts (Mission Hills CSD) reported a single flat rate for this position.

Rank	Agency	# Employees	Salary
1	Santa Ynez River WD	15	\$120,744
2	Montecito WD	25	114,996
3	Central Coast WA	25	114,996
4	Atascadero MWD	24	110,352
5	Scott's Valley WD	14	105,624
6	Carpenteria Valley WD	14	105,000
7	City of Buellton Utility Dept	16	100,272
8	Pajaro Valley WMA	11	91,620
9	Mission Hills CSD	8	87,420
10	Los Osos CSD	22	80,400
11	San Benito County WD	17	79,992
		Average:	\$101,038
		Median:	\$105,000

