



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Social Security Administration

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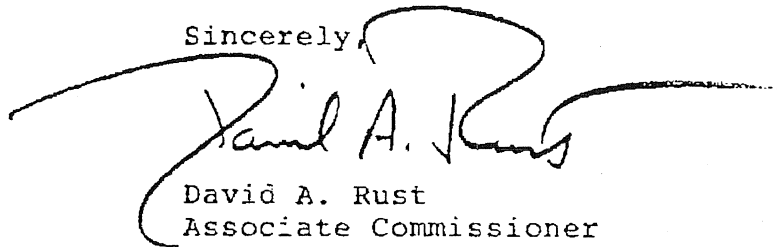
Mr. George Watters
President
Ability Information Systems, Inc.
N. 2721 Van Marter #3
Spokane, Washington 99206

Dear Mr. Watters:

I am providing you with a copy of the final report on the test of the Computer-Assisted Vocational Evaluation System, as I agreed in our meeting of April 3, 1987. A copy of the report has also been sent to United States Representative Jerry Lewis, (R-CA), in response to his recent inquiry about the results of this project.

I hope this report is responsive to your concerns. After you have reviewed the report, we can meet to discuss the results if this would be of assistance to you. If you have any technical questions about the findings, you may call the Director of the Division of Disability Program Information and Studies, Malcolm H. Morrison, Ph.D., at (301) 965-0091.

Sincerely,



David A. Rust
Associate Commissioner
for Disability

Enclosure

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Computer-Assisted Vocational Evaluation System:
Final Report of Study in Three Disability
Determination Services,
November 1985 - October 1986

Division of Disability Program
Information and Studies
Office of Disability
September 1987

SYNOPSIS

- o A Computer-Assisted Vocational Evaluation System (CAVES) is an automated job-matching system that was tested in the Kansas, Texas, and Washington State Disability Determination Services for a period of about 1 year.
- o A CAVES system developed by Ability Information Systems, Inc., was tested in the adjudication of initial disability claims to find out whether an automated occupational data base would increase the adjudicator's efficiency in evaluating a disability claimant's ability to work.
- o Information about disability decisions, accuracy, and processing time was collected for a test and control group of cases to determine what differences in these variables, if any, might be attributed to CAVES.
- o There was little difference in the tested variables between the test and the control groups, and the gross findings showed that there was no aggregate saving of processing time.
- o The data showed that CAVES was used in only 25 percent of the test cases, because it was not needed in cases that could be decided on the basis of the medical evidence or the vocational information that was provided by the claimant.

- o Further analysis to determine if the use of CAVES saved time in vocational evaluation produced a mixed result. Some complex cases were evaluated very quickly, but in other cases the evaluation took much longer. It was concluded that the CAVES system tested does not definitely increase the overall efficiency of case evaluation, but may be more efficient in some circumstances, depending on the facts of the case and the experience and proficiency of the adjudicator.

- o It is not recommended that SSA pursue CAVES further at this time. SSA should develop a comprehensive plan for an automated system that considers all segments of the disability adjudication process, including case development, medical and vocational evaluation, and decision processing.

c 1.--Number of study decisions by type and basis of decision and study group status

Study group	All cases			Allowances			Denials		
	Total	Vocational only	Medical and other	Total	Vocational only	Medical and other	Total	Vocational only	Medical and other
Total.....	7,608	4,078	3,530	3,015	721	2,294	4,593	3,357	1,236
cases.....	3,807	2,033	1,774	1,518	364	1,154	2,289	1,669	620
total cases..	3,801	2,045	1,756	1,497	357	1,140	2,304	1,688	616

Table 2.--Number and percentage distribution of study cases where CAVES
s used by type of vocational decision

Type of vocational decision	Number	Percent
Total decisions based on CAVES	798	(100%)
<u>4th Step in Sequential Process</u>		
Allowance--Arduous unskilled work	1	----
Denial--Capacity for <u>past</u> work	246	(31%)
<u>5th Step in Sequential Process</u>		
Allowance--Capacity for <u>other</u> work	180	(23%)
Denial--Capacity for <u>other</u> work	371	(46%)

Table 3.--Number and percent of all study decisions by type of decision and study group status

Study group	Total		Allowances		Denials	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total.....	7,608	(100%)	3,015	(40%)	4,593	(60%)
Test cases.....	3,807	(100%)	1,518	(40%)	2,289	(60%)
Control cases....	3,801	(100%)	1,497	(39%)	2,304	(61%)

Table 4.--Number and percent of "vocational only" decisions by type of decision and study group status

Study group	Total		Allowances		Denials	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total.....	4,078	(100%)	721	(18%)	3,357	(82%)
Test cases.....	2,033	(100%)	364	(18%)	1,669	(82%)
Control cases....	2,045	(100%)	357	(17%)	1,688	(83%)

Table 5.--Number and percent of all study decisions decided at the 4th (capacity for past work) and 5th (capacity for other work) steps of the sequential evaluation process by type of decision and status of study group

Study group	Total		Allowances		Denials	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total 4th Step	2,026	(100%)	3	----	2,023	(100%)
Test cases.....	990	(100%)	1	----	989	(100%)
Control cases...	1,036	(100%)	2	----	1,034	(100%)
Total 5th Step	2,050	(100%)	716	(35%)	1,334	(65%)
Test cases.....	1,043	(100%)	363	(35%)	680	(65%)
Control cases...	1,007	(100%)	353	(35%)	654	(65%)

Table 6.--Disability Quality Branch Review (SSA-3094)
(Vocational Decisions Only)

	Agree with case evaluation		Disagree with case evaluation	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Test.. .. .	1,269	(90%)	142	(10%)
Control.....	871	(90%)	95	(10%)

Table 7.--Disability Quality Branch Review - Type of disagreement
(SSA-3094) (Vocational Decisions Only)

	Disagree with medical evaluation only		Disagree with vocational evaluation only		Disagree with medical and vocational evaluation	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Test.....	70	(49%)	55	(39%)	17	(12%)
Control.....	34	(36%)	50	(53%)	11	(11%)

Table 8.--Calendar days processing time--vocational cases percent distribution, by test and control groups (Disability Examiner Case Processing Form)

Calendar days, intake to clearance	1-30	31-60	61-90	91-120	Over 120
Test cases.....	20%	38%	23%	12%	07%
Control cases.....	23%	37%	22%	12%	06%

Table 9.--Time spent in vocational evaluation (Disability Examiner Case Processing Form)*

Minutes	30 or less		31-60		61-90		Over 90	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Test.....	11	(18%)	25	(42%)	20	(33%)	4	(6%)
Control.....	24	(40%)	21	(35%)	12	(20%)	3	(5%)

*Subsample of vocational decision cases.