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IMPROVING EFFICIENCY, MANAGEMENT DECISION-MAKING, TRANSPARENCY, AND CUSTOMER SERVICE FOR THE STATE OF KANSAS

SMART

Statewide Management, Accounting and Reporting Tool

PROJECT PLANS HELP DESK

The SMART Help Desk will provide end-users with a mechanism to receive prompt and professional support

In preparation for the July 2010 go-live for the Statewide Management, Accounting and Reporting Tool (SMART) the Sunflower Project has started to plan and set up the SMART help desk. Mary Vanatta, Sunflower Project Transition and Help Desk Lead explains that "The vision of the SMART help desk is to provide end users prompt, professional support by giving them a reliable, efficient means to document and resolve incidents that occur in SMART."

In October, the project decided that it will use the web-based help desk software ServiceDesk Plus. "ServiceDesk Plus will allow the help desk to categorize and manage incidents, which are questions or issues that occur when an end-user interacts with SMART and has their ability to be productive interrupted," explains Vanatta. The project chose ServiceDesk Plus for its ease of use for end users, and because it includes an online knowledge base and self-service ticket functionality. "The software will send automatic email notifications to the user as their incident tickets are updated and resolved. The users will also be able to update their incident ticket."

Agencies will play an important part in resolving incidents in that they will be given tools to resolve many incidents at the agency level. ServiceDesk Plus is an online portal that allows end users to access a robust, searchable knowledge base. "The knowledge base will work much like Google and be fairly intuitive. Users can type in a keyword and see results related to that word," Vanatta says. "It will include links to training materials and solutions from previous incidents." Users will be able to see a history of reported incidents and their resolutions. An announcement board will communicate system-wide issues and important information. Soon, agencies will be asked to name a help desk contact. This person should be a subject matter expert and will be the liaison between the agency and the SMART help desk.

Users can also use the self-service aspect to create service tickets on their incidents if they cannot be resolved at the agency level. Although the help desk will not provide one-on-one training, Vanatta says there will also be a phone support line should a user need to speak directly to an analyst about an incident.

"We will begin testing the help desk environment in April as part of the User Acceptance Testing activity," Vanatta says. "This will give both help desk staff and user acceptance testers a chance to become familiar with the help desk software and processes before go-live. The help desk's mission will be to help make the transition to SMART a smooth one for agencies."

The Sunflower Project's help desk will help agencies resolve incidents they encounter after go-live.

SRS PREPARING TO GO LIVE ACROSS THE STATE

Agency uses a steering committee, Share Point site, and ongoing dialogue to prepare for transition

The transition to the Statewide Management, Accounting and Reporting Tool (SMART) will not be as easy as flipping a switch on July 1 for any State of Kansas agency, but for the Kansas Department of Social & Rehabilitation Services (SRS) comes additional challenges. Adding to the complexity is that their employees are spread throughout the state in regional offices, state hospitals, and several Topeka locations. The sheer number and geographic scope of the staff distribution means that SRS must rely on key people throughout the organization to carry the SMART message to the dispersed organization.

(cont. on p. 7)

KENT'S KORNER

A Message From the Sunflower Project Director

Happy New Year, everyone! As I drafted my resolutions for the upcoming year, I like my goals to really stretch me and cause me to grow. I found myself making an accounting of all I've done in the *last* year. It made me realize that the new year is more than just a time to set new goals for ourselves: It is a time to benchmark progress from where we've been. From there, we make our resolutions: goals for where we will go.

That made me think of the Statewide Management, Accounting and Reporting Tool (SMART) that we've designed and are now testing. SMART's benchmarks are strong. We have become an exemplar to other states and municipalities who watch what we are accomplishing together. In terms of benchmarks, we continue to be below budget, on scope, and on schedule to launch SMART on July 1 of this year. I know all of you are checking off your own items on the agency task list, and in some cases your agency project plan. Benchmarking—just like the close of the year.

> Consider the opportunities SMART will bring your agencies to improve processes, efficiencies, and effectiveness

The resolution part is an opportunity, though. We can build on the last year's benchmarks. Each of you in the agencies, together with each of us on the Sunflower Project, have the opportunity as we complete the Testing Phase and begin Deployment, to make the future bring what the State of Kansas needs in a financial management system.

Kent Olson, Sunflower Project Director, pauses at the Statehouse.

So I challenge each of you to consider the opportunities SMART will bring your agencies. What processes in your agency will SMART allow you to change? How can you make your agency both more efficient and more effective using SMART's capabilities? Then identify the steps you need to take to make that opportunity real. And drop us a line to let us know what you're doing—we'd love to hear your ideas!

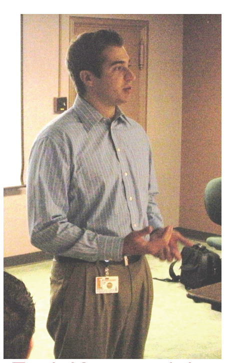
TESTING CONTINUES FOR INTERFACE, CONVERSION

Agencies receiving feedback on interface tests and mock conversions

The Sunflower Project's Technical Team continues testing and re-testing data conversion and interfaces for the Statewide Management, Accounting and Reporting Tool (SMART). Jenny Brately, Conversion Lead, and Zack Keys, Interface Lead, report that agencies are continuing to refine their conversion and interface processes in anticipation of SMART's go-live date on July 1 of this year.

"Agencies should have received feedback already on their Mock #1 Conversion File Submissions," says Brately. "The Mock #2 Conversion is due on January 18, so they are busy correcting their files and preparing them for that submission."

Keys notes that interfacing agencies are also in the middle of testing their interfaces. "We've been processing agency files and resolving defects with interfaces. Nearly all of the agencies have completed the first three stages of testing. Right now, they're working on stage 4."



Zack Keys explains interface testing processes at a recent meeting

Both Keys and Brately have noticed common errors as their teams have been processing test files. "The most common one is for invalid Chartfield errors," says Keys. Brately agrees, saying "For the assets conversion, the biggest problem is that values in fields come in longer than the field's length. Agencies can prevent this by double-checking the field lengths specified in the file layout/data entry template instructions, then verifying that the data is no longer than those field lengths. Other common issues are leaving required fields blank or providing invalid values in fields."

> The Finance Team will perform additional testing on converted data in January and February.
>
> JENNY BRATELY

In addition to Mock #2 conversion testing, January and February will see a start in system testing for conversions. "That will be additional testing on converted data that the project's Finance Team will perform," says Brately. Keys says that the interfacing agencies will work on the last stage of interface testing, stage 6—Agency-Defined Conditions testing. "We will also be hosting a test lab to help agencies view transactions and correct errors online related to interfaces," he says. Test labs will be available by appointment on Mondays through Thursdays from January 15 through March 15.

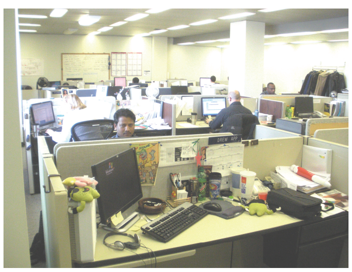
Brately and Keys agree on the importance of agencies quickly correcting and turning around error reports, both for conversions and interfaces. They recommend that agencies apply feedback to future file submissions, as well, to prevent issues from recurring.

MEET THE SMART DEVELOPERS

Diverse team developing online modifications, interfaces, conversions, and reports

Nearly two dozen Sunflower Project team members work on the Docking State Office Building's 10th floor as developers. Rabbani Shaik, Accenture's Development Lead, works with Tom Hins, State of Kansas Development Lead, and Jane Jackson, State of Kansas Reports Development Lead to coordinate the efforts of the various developers working on the Statewide Management, Accounting and Reporting Tool (SMART).

"Our development team works on the conversions, interfaces, reports, and online modifications for the project," explains Hins. "Rabbani, Jane, and I ensure we are meeting project schedules for development in these areas and we provide systems support as we encounter errors during testing." Hins came to the Project from Collective Brands, where he was a Senior PeopleSoft Developer working on the Human Capital Management (HCM) and Financial systems.



Developers work on various Sunflower Project tasks in their offices on the 10th floor of the Docking State Office Building.

Shaik was the Accenture Development Lead on the State of Ohio PeopleSoft implementation before coming to the Sunflower Project. He says, "I worked on both HCM and Financials projects."

"I worked at Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Kansas for thirteen years before joining the project," says Jackson. "I was responsible for the development efforts of the Interplan Teleprocessing System Claims Processing as a Senior Systems Analyst."

State of Kansas team members include Developers Cathy Jones, Baobin Li, Fred Barnes, Andrew Watkins, and Reports Developers Matthew Ollek, and Jody McKay. On the Accenture side are Developers Pallavi Narayan, Merin Mathew, Kaushik Rajan, Anupama BK, Amardeep Maken, Shantanu Kumar, Vincent Durant, Krishnakumar Narayanan, Matt Nunnally, Mohan Thakur, Michael Ojo, and Vinay Byrareddy. Team members are busy developing modifications, reports, and interfaces—"Whatever they assign to me," as Li puts it.

> I appreciate working with so many talented individuals.
>
> ANDY WATKINS

The team hails from places across the globe. Native Kansans include Ollek (El Dorado), Jones (Topeka), Watkins (Topeka), and Jackson (Jewell.) Hins grew up in North Dakota before serving in the U.S. Navy's Pacific fleet, and Durant calls Atlanta, Georgia home. Perhaps Barnes qualifies for the longest daily commute to work; he grew up in California and lives in western Missouri. Li was born in China. A number of developers were raised in India, including Shaik, Mathew, Maken, and Narayan.

Most of the team came to the Sunflower Project from other PeopleSoft Financials implementations. Mathew, who came to the project from Chicago, was one of those. Maken worked on a Financials project for Accenture in Silver Springs, Maryland. Durant worked on an upgrade to version 9.0 at the Academy of Art University. Li came to the project after working as a PeopleSoft Programmer/Analyst. Jones, however, is a longtime Kansas employee who has worked for several departments, most recently the Division of Information Systems and Communications. Watkins was a Systems Analyst/Programmer for Collective Brands in Topeka, and Ollek was an Investment Staff Accountant for the Security Benefit Group of Companies. Barnes has been a project lead for PeopleSoft Financials and Supply Chain Modules, and just before coming to the project was a technical consultant on Accounts Payable and General Ledger for a large financial institution.

Asked about their experiences on the Sunflower Project, a common theme unfolds among the developers: the quality of their teammates. "I really appreciate this opportunity to work with so many talented individuals," says Watkins. "It's a bonus that I get to develop my skills in PeopleSoft!" Durant agrees. "The most important part of this project to me has been working with such a high caliber of people on this team," he says.

"Working on this project is too good," says Narayan. "Both the State and Accenture employees are so helpful, and they make this a very comfortable place to work."

(cont. on p. 7)

AGENCY CHANGE AGENTS

The Sunflower Project website lists the Change Agents for each agency. Find it by pointing your browser to: http://da.ks.gov/smart/

UPCOMING DATES:

Things that will happen soon

- January 6-14: Role Mapping Workshops
- January 12: Monthly Interface Meeting
- January 20: Change Agent Network Meeting #8
- January 27: Train-the-Trainer Kickoff
- January 27: Monthly Conversion Meeting
- February 9: Monthly Interface Meeting
- February 17: Change Agent Network Meeting #9
- February 25: Monthly Conversion Meeting

MATCHING FUNCTIONALITY USEFUL

New system's Accounts Payable module will compare purchase orders against vouchers

The new Statewide Management, Accounting and Reporting Tool (SMART) will automate the accounts payable matching process most agencies currently conduct manually. "This new process occurs after voucher save and before budget check," says Shawn Miller, Accenture Accounts Payable Lead. "It's an automatic process that will run periodically throughout the day."

"SMART's 3-way matching consists of comparing the Purchase Order for goods and services against the voucher entered for those goods and services, and certain receiver information" says Jo Ann Remp, State of Kansas Accounts Payable Lead. "If the voucher does not pass matching, payment is not made for the order. This assures the agency that the Purchase Order is not overpaid, that the goods and services were properly received and, if applicable, inspected." While 3-way matching will probably be the most common, 2-way matching is also an option, comparing just the Purchase Order with the invoice. 4-way matching may also be used in certain cases which adds an inspection option.

> Matching assures agencies that Purchase Orders are not overpaid and that goods and services are received.
>
> JO ANN REMP

Miller adds that receiver and inspection information will be recorded in SMART. Matches will allow payments to be released, while non-matches will register in SMART as "exceptions" that must be resolved by an individual within the agency. Remp suggests that agencies prepare for matching by considering their current receiving processes, and how that information will be entered into SMART. They should also identify who will be responsible to work match exceptions. By making purchasing, receiving, and fiscal staff aware of how their agency's process will change with this new automation, agencies can help their employees be ready for this new functionality. Agencies will also learn more about matching during Change Agency Network meetings and training.

WORKFLOW WORKSHOPS WRAPPED UP

More than 250 attendees representing almost 100 agencies attended the Sunflower Project's Workflow Workshops in early December. (Please see the article in our October newsletter.) "I think these sessions went well," says Jo Ann Remp, State of Kansas Accounts Payable Lead. "Having the smaller breakout sessions for each workflow area facilitated more discussion between the presenters and the audience. It was less intimidating to ask questions in the smaller groups than in a general session atmosphere."

Agencies asked and received answers to questions such as whether workflow steps can be skipped, how to get requisitions approved, and expressed concerns that only requisitioners and buyers—and not approvers—can edit requisitions.

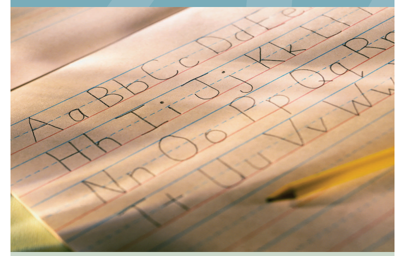
"We were able to hear what the agencies' concerns are with our workflow design. This gives us an opportunity to review our plans and make adjustments before the role mapping materials are published," says Remp. For example, the approach for who can edit requisitions was studied by the Purchasing Team and they identified an alternative that allowed the Approver role to edit requisitions. The specifics to this change was sent to the participants in a separate communication in December.

Remp's Accenture partner, Shawn Miller, said the workshops successfully communicated several key points. "We were able to discuss the concept of a worklist in SMART--the queue of items routed to an individual for approval," she says. "We talked about the differences in role-based and linear workflows, and which modules use each. We stressed that vouchers cannot be processed for payment until all approvals have been completed, including Accounts & Reports' approvals where those apply. We also talked about how all expense documents in an agency go through the same workflow steps. Finally, we were able to point out key differences in the Purchasing workflow from the other SMART modules."

The next step in this process will be the Role Mapping Workshops held this month. Agencies will assign SMART roles to their employees, including workflow roles, based on the duties those employees have.

GLOSSARY:

This section features acronyms or specific terms you should know. Here are some, in addition to those listed here last time. Watch here for more next time!



- Cash-Basis Accounting: A bookkeeping method that records financial events based on cash flows and cash position. Revenue is recognized when cash is received and expense is recognized when cash is paid.
- Item: In the Purchasing module, an item represents the goods and services purchased by the State of Kansas. Each item has a unique identifier. Multiple vendors can be associated to one item. Items allow analysis of the total purchase by the State and can facilitate both the negotiation of contracts with vendors and future strategic sourcing activities.
- Non-Capitalized Asset: An asset that does not meet the capitalization requirements (i.e., less than $5,000) but is tracked for stewardship or accountability purposes. These records do not contain cost or other financial information. Examples include: calculators, scanners, cordless phones, and printer stands.

ASSESSMENT SHOWS AGENCIES IMPROVE READINESS FOR SMART

Reformatted Agency Readiness Assessment Tool is agency-specific and improves user-friendliness

State of Kansas Agency Readiness Lead Jennifer Dennon, and her Accenture counterpart Bryan Loudermilk, immediately saw the difference between Agency Readiness Assessment (ARA) #2 and #3. "Agencies have made progress," Dennon says. "During the second assessment, agencies were deep in configuration tasks. They would often receive two tasks in a single week. Since then, however, most of the configuration tasks have been completed."

"Having most of the configuration tasks closed does not mean there are no agency tasks," stresses Loudermilk. "Agencies completed Workflow Workshops in December, are participating in Role Mapping Workshops starting this week, and will be completing role mapping tasks this month."

Dennon and Loudermilk say the Agency Readiness Team dramatically restructured the assessment process, incorporating suggestions received from agencies. "The new format is to send each agency an agency-specific spreadsheet."

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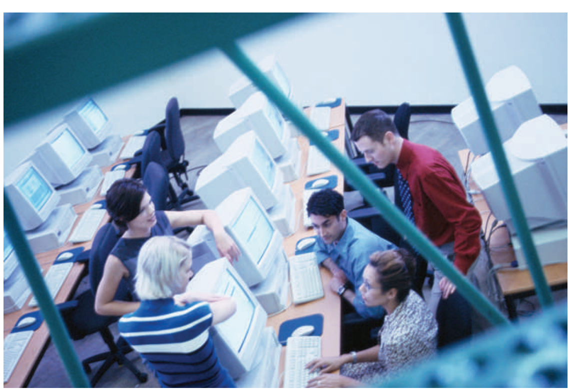
PROJECT PLANS TRAIN-THE-TRAINER KICKOFF

Training team makes preparations for training development

The Sunflower Project's Train-the-Trainer (TTT) kickoff will occur on January 27—just three weeks from now. Volunteer trainers from across State agencies will help ensure that State of Kansas employees who use the Statewide Management, Accounting and Reporting Tool (SMART) regularly have the knowledge they need to transition to this new system. Agencies are also providing training "drivers" who will assist the trainers in conducting classroom activities.

"The TTT kickoff will provide trainers and drivers with an introduction to the SMART training program, details on the processes and procedures that will be used for end user training, and facilitation instructions," says Emilie Kroner, Accenture Training Lead.

"Trainers and drivers will have a chance to meet their colleagues who will be training the same course," says State Training Lead Gina Vinyard. "They will receive their draft training schedules, and have a chance to switch out course dates with others training that same course if they have scheduling conflicts. That will, in turn, allow us to finalize trainer and driver availability and then load the schedule into our Learning Management System."



"Currently, we are piloting our web-based training courses with trainers and drivers," adds Kroner. "In early January, we are rolling out the prerequisite courses to all trainers and drivers. We will begin instructor-led pilot trainings in February." The training team is working on maintaining and updating training courses from test results and pilot training feedback. The team is also deploying a Learning Management System (LMS) which will be the registration tool and how agencies will access the web-based training.

> We are preparing a robust glossary page, a training-related frequently-asked questions page, and a training resource page.
>
> GINA VINYARD

"One of the exciting developments for our end users is the expansion of our website in support of SMART training," says Vinyard. "Our team is planning pages that will link to course materials for each course. We are also preparing a robust glossary page, a training-related frequently-asked questions page, and a training resource page."

"While putting together our draft schedule for training deployment, we were able to move from only estimating our need for trainers and training labs to visually seeing where the gaps are in our ability to meet the training needs," she continues. "We went back to request additional training help from agencies. They have been amazing in their willingness to make this successful! We recognize and appreciate the tremendous sacrifice this represents for these agencies. It is clear that, across all agencies, we are working as one giant team to make sure training deployment is a success."

As agencies complete and submit their role-mapping tasks, those roles will direct curriculum paths for the end-users. Kroner and Vinyard say the project will give agency training contacts information about the registration process for all employees based on their roles. 100- and 200-level web-based training courses will become available through the LMS in March 2010. "The sooner agencies accurately complete their role mapping activity, the sooner we will be able to load those employees into the LMS and the sooner they will be able to register for training," says Kroner.

TECHNICAL WORKSTATION REQUIREMENTS PREVIEWED

Derek Salzman, Accenture System Administration/Build Team Lead on the Sunflower Project, has been gathering information regarding minimum workstation requirements that State of Kansas employees will need to access and use the Statewide Accounting, Management and Reporting Tool (SMART). He is creating a checklist for agencies to use to ensure their employees have all the necessary software at their workstations.

> All SMART users will need to have their workstations made compatible for SMART and its web-based training packages prior to training and go-live.
>
> DEREK SALZMAN

"All SMART users will need to have their workstations made compatible for SMART and its web-based training packages prior to training and go-live," Salzman says. "Primarily, all that is needed is Windows XP or Vista (32-bit) with Internet Explorer 7.0 or 8.0. Users will also need Adobe's Acrobat Reader to view reports within SMART." For web-based training, users will need Adobe's Flash Player, version 10 or higher.

Other software necessary on workstations will include versions of Microsoft's Excel and Word. MSWord 2007 will be necessary for a buyer to collaborate on statewide contracts in Supplier Contract Management. "Excel 2003 or 2007 is required for users to take advantage of spreadsheet uploads," says Salzman. He notes that these include uploads for:

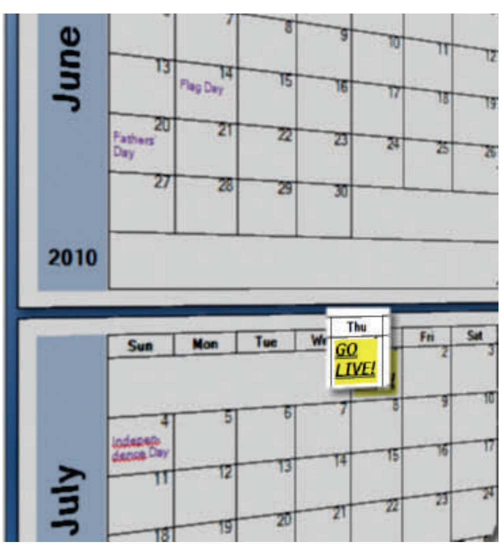
- General Ledger Journal
- General Ledger Budget Journal
- Accounts Payable Voucher
- Accounts Receivable Deposit

Salzman notes that each spreadsheet upload process will require an MSExcel template, and most will also require add-in files for Excel. Additionally, users may need to enable macros in Excel to use the spreadsheet uploads. "There will be quite a bit of detail on the checklist," says Salzman. "It will include instructions on how to retrieve necessary templates and add-in files. The helpdesk will also be available to answer common questions or to route specific issues to the team member who can help the user."

The checklist will be available on the SMART website once it is completed near the end of January.

CUTOVER ACTIVITIES UNDERWAY; TASKS WILL BEGIN IN JUNE

The day the Statewide Management, Accounting and Reporting Tool (SMART) will go-live is barely six months out. In July 2010 the State of Kansas will reach points where STARS, SOKI, and dozens of other legacy systems are no longer used, and SMART takes over: a period called "cutover."



Cutover, however, will not be as simple as turning SMART on and turning other systems off. "On major projects, such as Sunflower, this point is reached when the new software has been written, tested, and shown to run satisfactorily," according to Peggy Hanna, Sunflower Project Deputy Director and Cutover Lead. "The project team will run mock conversion and cutover activities starting this month and concluding in May. The actual cutover tasks begin in mid-June and run through mid-July."

"Sunflower Project team members will work with both central and agency systems' owners to create a detailed checklist of all cutover activities," she continues. Agencies will use a cutover template, which will be part of the cutover checklist, to create their own detailed cutover plans. The project will provide that "The checklist contains all of the conversions, tasks, timeframes, and dependencies involved in the cutover process. We will publish a calendar of cutover activities, including timelines and transaction cutoff dates. This will let agencies know when to send files, perform data entry into SMART, and decommission their legacy systems."

Hanna said the most important thing agencies can do immediately in anticipation of cutover is to continue working with the conversion and interface teams, and adhering to the timelines for completing mock conversions and interface testing.

Another item Hanna says agencies should consider is that there will be a short concurrent processing period where SMART, SOKI, and STARS will be operational at the same time. **June 30, 2010** will be the last day to create vouchers for FY2010 and initiate interfunds in SOKI. DA118s are anticipated to be submitted by **July 1**, with **July 6** the last scheduled day for agencies to reciprocate interfunds and enter journal vouchers and revenue transactions in SOKI. Agencies will receive more information on concurrent processing as the project nears cutover.

SRS INVOLVING MANY STAFF, *continued*

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The benefit SRS expects to see when SMART goes live is for their employees jobs to be less cumbersome. The expectation is that SMART will provide a better balance of people with technology. SMART will perform those operations that a system can do, and staff will do what only a person can do. This will allow staff to spend much less time worrying about clerical issues and more time thinking strategically.

To prepare SRS to realize those benefits, the agency has taken careful steps to prepare itself for go-live. A steering committee meets about every three weeks to discuss the agency's preparations for SMART. Representatives from SRS central accounting division, information technology team, division fiscal staff, and both regional and hospital fiscal staff participate in these meetings. When SRS receives specific task assignments from the Sunflower Project, the change agents and primary contact look at the current business processes to assess who should complete that task or participate in the learning activity. "We believe the people tied to the current processes are key to making intelligent changes in how we will do business, and they are integral to our agency's cultural change efforts," says Laura Howard, Deputy Secretary of SRS.

In addition to the steering committee meetings, SRS uses a Share Point site to disseminate information about SMART and the Sunflower Project to many SRS staff. The site contains basic information about SMART and includes lists of completed and upcoming tasks for SRS. Also, a portion of the agenda at each monthly fiscal officers meeting is devoted to discussion about SMART.

"One of our next steps will be to remind our agency's management team of the critical nature of the upcoming transition," says Theresa Addington, SRS' Director of Accounting and Administrative Operations. "We are continuing to educate the managers. We also want to ensure they understand that staff who will use the new system must also participate in relevant training before go-live."

One key to a successful transition for SRS is the ongoing dialogue between the finance and information technology staff. "With six legacy systems to interface with SMART, a major accounting system and its components to be decommissioned, along with decommissioning several major databases, this communication link has been critical in meeting the project's aggressive timelines. Another key to increasing our effectiveness has been to involve staff from various parts of the agency. One of our employees in the integrated service delivery division sits on the Data Warehouse Advisory Group," Howard says.

"We have identified several trainers across the department so that we will have knowledgeable staff who will be champions for SMART as we set it in place," Addington explains. "Staff from across the agency will participate in training, creating a trained and educated cadre of knowledge within SRS. We'll be stepping up our communications efforts, especially as we make decisions that change our current business processes. These communications will have a two-fold purpose. The first is to educate our employees about the changes that will take place. We also want to energize our staff by letting them see the opportunities for support and efficiency."

Although these preparations won't make going live for SRS like flipping that switch, Addington and Howard believe that involving a cross-section of agency staff in SRS's preparations for SMART has been very important to their change efforts. "However, it's also really important to know when the right time to involve them is," they add. "Too early, and it's not very relevant to their daily work. Too late, and they'll spend a lot of additional time building basic awareness and reassurance." SRS's efforts are ensuring they involve the right employees at the right time, which will pay dividends at go-live.

SMART DEVELOPERS, *continued*

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"The learning curve is high," Narayen continues, "but I get opportunities each day to push my limits."

Maken echoes Narayan's thoughts. "This is my second Financials implementation as a developer," he says. "I am learning so much by being part of such a dynamic, helpful, and friendly team."

Jones and Ollek clearly see the long-term benefits in store for Kansas when SMART goes live on July 1. "I enjoy knowing that what we do creates efficiencies for other users, saving them time from mundane tasks so they can focus their efforts and skills on more important financial aspects for the State," Ollek says. Jones agrees. "It's exciting to learn something new while also participating in the implementation of a system that will modernize the way the State does business and serve us well for years to come." "It is an honor to bring together all the Financials modules into a system which will benefit all the citizens of the State," reflects Hins.

(continued from p. 5)

Key changes to the new ARA format included:

- Adopting an Excel-based format to allow agencies to print and/or save copies
- Pre-populating status from records the Sunflower Project has on file—meaning no response was necessary when the status was correct
- Highlighting cells to focus on questions requiring updated responses
- Adding more comment fields for agency use
- Incorporating task applicability—required, optional, or not applicable—derived from the modules the agencies will use.

"Agencies are responding more quickly than with previous ARAs," says Dennon. "The new format both provides the agency with a snapshot of their individual agency's status as the project understands it, and is a great mechanism for the project to understand and respond to agency-specific items. Each agency's Liaison reviews their ARA and can follow up on discrepancies as needed."

Loudermilk concurs. "The project looks at each ARA closely. When we see trends or receive feedback through the ARA, we often create Change Agent Network topics from them. Another use is when an agency highlights an issue that may have wider implications for multiple agencies. We sometimes then create a survey to understand the issue's impacts to all agencies, not just the agency that raised the issue."

The project will conduct additional ARAs in February and April, and monthly thereafter until go-live. Dennon and Loudermilk offer some quick hints for agencies that will help them use this more flexible tool.

- Select the status for each ARA task from the drop-down list in the Agency Update column. Some agencies keyed their status in the Comments column; that column should be used only to communicate clarifying details regarding the task.
- Select a new status only if the reported status is incorrect or if the status cell is highlighted in red. The red highlighting is an indicator the project needs an updated status on the task.
- Adhere to timelines. As we near go-live, completing tasks on time becomes more and more imperative. Change Agent Network meetings will often review the impacts of not meeting task due dates.
- Prepare for tasks. Workshops, such as the current Role Mapping Workshops, are one means the project uses for communicating complex background information agency change agents need in order to successfully complete tasks. In fact, for non-interfacing agencies, Role Mapping will likely be their most time-consuming task to date.

Dennon and Loudermilk say that agencies have responded favorably to the ARA improvements. "We want to continue to improve this tool," says Loudermilk. "We want to hear from agencies both what they liked about this version, and what might be improved next time. The ARAs are a key tool the project uses to understand agencies' issues and risks, and we will conduct them until go-live. However, we want to make them more effective and want agencies to share their ideas with us."

Remember to Register for the Role Mapping Workshops if You Have Not Yet Done So!

Your agency's Primary Contact received registration instructions on December 11.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

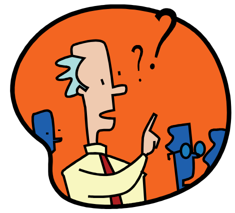
The Frequently Asked Questions section occurs regularly. It features questions asked about SMART. If you have specific questions to recommend for this section, please e-mail them to: Sunflowerfms@da.ks.gov

Q: *What happens if I create a purchase order for $4,000, but later realize I needed to encumber $4,200?*

A: The best practice is to go back to the purchase order and do a change request on the original purchase order to include the additional $200 so that the total amount is encumbered.

Q: *Are employees required to complete training to get view-only security access in SMART?*

A: Employees will need to complete two web-based training courses, GN101: Introduction to SMART and GN201: Introduction to Navigating in SMART, to gain view-only access. We also recommend that employees complete the introductory web-based training course(s) for the module(s) they will access. Additionally, any roles with reporting access will be required to complete an additional web-based training course, RP202: Introduction to Reporting in SMART. For the initial training deployment, instructor-led sessions are reserved for those needing add and update access to SMART. After go-live, employees with view-only access may enroll in instructor-led sessions if they feel they need additional training.



Q: *Will there be instructor-led training after go-live?*

A: Yes, we will continue to offer instructor-led training (ILT), as needed, past go-live. After, go-live the training courses will be re-evaluated to determine which will remain ILT and which will be converted to web-based training (WBT).

Q: *Will agencies with vehicles be able to record mileage for those vehicles in SMART, allowing them to determine when an agency's vehicle should be retired and a new vehicle purchased?*

A: Yes, this functionality exists in SMART. Odometer readings can be entered in SMART in the Asset Management module.

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SMART

Statewide Management, Accounting and Reporting Tool

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High-Level Project Timeline and Agency-Related Activities

Plan & Analyze Oct '08—Dec '08	Design Jan '09—Apr '09	Build May '09—Oct '09	Test & Deploy Nov '09—Jun '10	Support Jul '10—On
• Host Project Kickoff • Launch Website • Identify Agency Contacts • Conduct Conference Room Pilots • Publish Project Charter • Complete Agency Skills Assessment • Launch Project Newsletter DONE!!	• Conduct Agency Introduction Meetings • Launch Change Agent Network • Conduct Budget Structure Workshops • Conduct Interface Workshops • Distribute Initial Agency Readiness Assessment • Design Agency Interface • Create Agency Conversion Strategy • Design Training Curriculum DONE!	• Conduct Change Agent Meetings • Conduct Configuration Workshops • Conduct Conversion Workshops • Conduct Interface Workshops • Conduct Business Process Workshops • Distribute Agency Readiness Assessments • Modify System • Adjust Agency Interfaces • Clean Up Data • Build Data Conversion Processes • Build Training Courses DONE!!	• Conduct Change Agent Meetings • Conduct Role Mapping Workshops • Pilot Training Curriculum • Conduct Train-the-Trainer Programs • Train End-Users • Distribute Agency Readiness Assessments • Plan Cutover • Test Agency Interfaces • Test and Load Data for Conversions • Reconcile Data • Establish Help Desk • Perform User Acceptance Testing • Validate System • Cutover to New System: July 1, 2010	• Support Production • Respond to Agency Feedback • Decommission Redundant Agency Systems