

Financial System Leadership Group Meeting Minutes

April 12, 2010

Attendees: George Anderson, Cathy Bye, Tony Carpenter, Jean Carr, Catherine Chan, Mike Chang, Tony Chen, John Cordary, David Ellis, Trish Erndt, Mike Glisson, Margie Hattenbach, Karin Livingston, Keith Martin, Theresa Meneley, Carla West, Samantha Yurus

Tools Upgrade

Finance and HR/SA are currently on 8.49 Tools. HR/SA is considering an upgrade to 8.5 Tools as early as May 31, 2010. Features/requirements of 8.5 Tools include:

- Menu does not automatically appear on the Home page. Users have to click on the Menu button at the top of the page.
- Users can hover over a menu item with their mouse to see sub-menu items.
- Once a menu item is selected, the menu disappears and users see a full screen display of pages grouped by category.
- Users can limit the number of items that appear in an online search. Also, Enterprise Systems (ES) can increase the maximum number of items that appear in a search box.
- When users begin entering a value (e.g., business unit), they will see a list of values to choose from in a drop down box.
- When users click on a link to open a page, the page underneath is darkened but remains visible. Users can move the smaller open page on top, if they wish.
- The following internet browsers are recommended for 8.5 Tools:
 - Internet Explorer 7 or 8
 - Fire Fox 3.5.1
 - Safari 3.1x or 3.2x

Mike Chang and Keith Martin believe that 8.5 Tools may be required for upgrading to Finance Application 9.1. If it is not required currently (Mike Chang is going to check), it may be required a year from now when the upgrade is planned.

If HR/SA upgrade to 8.5 Tools, the group agreed that Finance should upgrade to 8.5 Tools as well shortly thereafter to reduce confusion among users that use both HR/SA and Finance. Of course, we would need to test the impact of 8.5 Tools on Finance before installing it.

Finance Application Upgrade

The following individuals reviewed their findings about new features and requirements in Finance applications 9.0 and 9.1 for the areas indicated below:

- Karin Livingston – General Ledger and Asset Management
- Samantha Yurus – Accounts Payable
- Carla West – Purchasing
- Catherine Chan – Security and Commitment Control

Significant features/requirements discussed include:

- Combination editing is available for budget journals in 9.1, which is a big improvement

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- Chartfield security is available in 9.1, which allows restriction of certain chartfields for certain types of transactions (e.g., don't permit revenue accounts on vouchers)
- Financials audit framework in 9.1 provides an efficient way to log changes in Finance that are not currently tracked by workflow approval history
- Improvements to the allocation process in 9.1, which will reduce the number of steps required to complete the monthly closing process
- Budget checking changes in 9.0 (and 9.1) from COBOL to AppEngine, which could cause delays in budget checking. This is the biggest negative consequence discussed of upgrading to 9.0 or 9.1, but testing is required to determine the impact.

The group agreed that we should upgrade to 9.1, instead of 9.0, because 9.1 offers some additional features that are useful, and because upgrades are so time consuming to prepare for it is better to upgrade as much as possible at one time. That means we would do a two-step upgrade: (1) 8.4 to 9.0 and (2) 9.0 to 9.1.

Functional testing will occur in the 9.1 environment, which may make it more challenging for ES to investigate problems encountered during testing because they will need to determine if the problem stems from the upgrade to 9.0 or from the upgrade to 9.1. However, Mike Chang did not think it would be that big of a problem.

One of the tasks that must be accomplished just before upgrading to 9.1 is completely processing and posting all vouchers. This is a significant task for UH, but we can prepare the departments for this task months ahead of time so that it can be accomplished. We will discuss other specific tasks that need to be accomplished prior to the upgrade in future meetings. Mike Chang should be able to provide us with a list.

The timing of the upgrade is tentatively planned for March 2011, but concern was expressed that we lock down the upgrade dates, so that other activities (budget cycle, etc.) can be planned around the upgrade.

Cost Center Manager Run Control

ES created a process, which is currently in FSTST, to populate the 1074 report with cost centers assigned to a particular cost center manager. The purpose is to allow departments to quickly and easily run the 1074 verification worksheet for a particular cost center manager in order to perform the monthly cost center verification process. Currently, departments have to manually enter cost centers associated with a cost center manager into the 1074 report and manually update the run control whenever a cost center is added or inactivated for that manager.

However, when a cost center manager has several dozen cost centers, the new process takes several minutes to pull the cost centers into the 1074 report setup page and several minutes to run the report. John Cordary, who has over 500 cost centers, could not get his cost centers to populate the 1074 report page at all.

Group members expressed concerns that departments would be frustrated if this process were put into production, because of the time required to complete the process when many cost centers are involved. More testing and perhaps a redesign of the process are needed.