

The Bureau of Land Management National Training Center presents Supervisors Audio Forum.

Good morning. Welcome to the National Training Center's Supervisors Audio Forum. My name is Kim Flanders. I am your host for today and a training coordinator for the leadership development here at NTC. Today our topic is countdown to D5 FBMS, which of course stands for Financial and Business Management System. Joining us today we have Tim Riley, Division Chief of Business Services at the National Operations Center; Leslie Peabody, Deputy Chief Financial Officer and FBMS Bureau Lead; John Foster, FBMS Project Coordinator. Welcome, and let's get started.

Thanks much, Kim. We really appreciate everybody joining us for this forum as we provide an overview to the events leading up to Deployment 5 of FBMS. Much of the material that we will cover today has been presented in multiple venues, whether it be the biweekly FBMS calls, the presentations to the Business Management Council, or through various IMs or IBs. Of the three of us here, John has been the stable member who has experienced all parts of the previous deployment and has been driving our preparation for D5, and in doing so, much of the behind-the-scenes work coordinating all of our multiple events that occur simultaneously like testing, blueprinting, training coordination, role certifications, and so much more. Leslie has joined us in the last year and a half from OSM and has brought a wealth of FBMS experience, and primarily the two of us spend

a lot of time with the department talking through where the department is going with FBMS, so hopefully we'll be able to give you a little bit of that perspective also in this presentation. We wanted to make sure that you as supervisors listening in on this forum have the same opportunity to get many of that same information that has been passed and to make sure the BLM as a whole is prepared for Deployment 5 of FBMS.

Before going to the slide deck, I'd like to spend a little bit of time talking about the FBMS journey and where we are on that path. When the BLM deployed FBMS as part of Deployment 4 in December 2008, it represented the largest and most complex deployment of FBMS within the Department of the Interior. Prior to our deployment, two of the smaller bureaus, OSM and the bureau formerly known as MMS, deployed FBMS. Our deployment also included part of the functionality that had been previously deployed as well as a number of new modules including Fleet and Personal Property. What was different about Deployment 4 as opposed to Deployment 5 was we deployed FBMS during a year where there were many, many other changes occurring. It was the year of the initial deployment of GovTrip, changes in our chargecard providers, and also a new cell phone contract. Needless to say, it was a lot to deal with at the same time and we paid the price for trying to do so much with so little people in so little time. But having said that, there has been a lot of progress over the last two years, and I think it's all gonna help us as we move forward on Deployment 5. During that first year of Deployment 4, we trained and certified over 5500 users within the

BLM. That was an extraordinary amount of work to be able to bring that many people onto the system and get them certified and we went through a lot of the trials and tribulations of who should be role map to one particular role, so we accomplished that primarily over a six-month period getting that many users on. We've learned a lot as an organization over the past two years and have really taken a look at who should be using the system and how to use the system and how to maximize the use of the system itself. We currently have reduced our users to just over 2900. This has been primarily driven by suggestions and new processes brought forward from the field to better prepare us for Deployment 5. We've also gone through a two-year period without another deployment, and D5 represents the Department of the Interior going back to a yearly deployment, and these yearly deployments will continue through Deployment 8. We were able to be able to go through last year and year-end closing without any new functionality being added nor any additional downtime for another deployment. We've also seen many upgrades in hardware that houses FBMS at the DOI's National Business Center, which we've seen a marked improvement in overall system performance.

I keep referring to D5, so let me give you a little bit more information about what it will include. Deployment 5 is primarily the FBMS for USGS. It will include all of the D4 functionality that BLM currently uses as well as Real Property, Commitment Accounting, and changes in requisitioning, approving, and receiving of goods and services. While for us, the new functionality will represent

additional roles, it will also represent the changes in how we do business and how we see things in the system, especially in the requisitioning, approving and receiving roles.

Going now to the slides, I'd like to point out some key events as they relate to training, end-of-year activities, cutover, and finally go-live. As we go through these dates and once we finish up with these dates, both John and Leslie can jump in at any time to reinforce key areas in any of those areas, and then we'll also have times for questions at the end to give you a chance to ask your questions and give you a better understanding of where we are on this journey.

In the first slide on the schedule of events that relates to training, the first event that's listed there is user acceptance testing. That's where we currently are as far as our overall deployment. We have just gone through a lengthy process of integration testing and data conversion, so where we're at and the next thing that we're gonna go through is user acceptance testing. That is scheduled to start on August 23 and continue through September 10. We also wanted to make sure in this particular deployment that we took advantage of as many training opportunities as possible, so we wanted to make sure that we had key users and super users, people that were very, very familiar with the system, provide them with an opportunity to have some training so that they could take it back to the states. The next line down is super user pilot training for requisitioner, approver, and COR/RO, and that's scheduled to go, a little bit of an update here from

September 22 through September 24. Then finally, the last training-related event that is on this particular slide is the computer-based training for that same thing, for requisitioners, approvers, CORs, and ROs, and that's scheduled to start on October 2, and that will be facilitated by the CBT as well as those super users that had gotten the training earlier and will be done out at the state centers. On the next slide is focused primarily on those events relating to the end of the year. There's been an end-of-year memo that has gone out very similar to in past years. The first event that we really want to make sure that you're aware of is the September 22 close date when FBMS closes to the field. Now when we say it closes to the field on that day, you have to be aware that if you have lengthy processes or processes that are gonna take a while, make sure that you get those started as early as possible rather than starting one part of the process say at 23:59 on September 22 and then thinking that it'll actually go through. This is especially if for some reason you're putting in a PR at that time or anything that goes through a lengthy approval process. Treat that as you should really have things done prior to the 22nd as that gets ready. During that period after the 22nd, here at the NOC we'll be doing a lot of work to prepare for close. The Washington office will be coming here to help us on preparation for close, and then finally on September 30, as a whole BLM and FBMS will be completely closed all the way through October 5. During the period after October 5, FBMS will be loaded with the opening balances and any upgrades or enhancements that have to be done to SAP, which is the provider of FBMS, and that will occur from October 6 through 18. So from a field perspective, FBMS will really be

down or you will not have access to it from September 22 until October 19 when FBMS opens back up to the field.

Now because we have USGS coming on line and this is basically their deployment, one of the things that we stressed for probably over the last year was the need to make sure that we had access to FBMS as soon as we could, especially in this year where we still have a lot of our projects that are out there, which hopefully will all be obligated long before September 22, but there are ongoing projects where vendors have got to be paid and ongoing payments, and we really wanted to stress the fact that we could not have an extended period of downtime. We really faced this during Deployment 4 where it was a long time that we were down because of a number of things, and finally bringing the system on it was not advantageous. So through the DOI, through the PMO, they've worked extensively to ensure that we have the ability to access FBMS for periods of time to be able to do our business as well as US go ahead and do their conversion itself.

October 18 through November 7, the next slide on cutover, is when USGS initiates their data conversion. They can't do that prior to October 18. What's interesting here is when we come up on October 19 we will actually be using Deployment 5 FBMS. USGS won't be doing that until it completes all of its data conversion and does that through November 7, so we'll actually be working the system about three weeks before they do so they'll have more of an extended

downtime. The three agencies that are already on FBMS, OSM, the Bureau of Ocean Energy, Management, Regulation Enforcement, and BLM, will be open for business on October 19 with the D5 configuration. For us to be able to have this open window, we'll be able to process transactions Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Mountain Standard Time, so we've basically got a 12-hour window. Weekends and evenings will be reserved for batch processing and data conversions, so we will not have access to FBMS on the weekends. As I mentioned, the intent of us being able to have those windows, and the PMO really went out of their way for the deployed bureaus to make sure that we had that so we wouldn't be down, is to make sure that we don't get into a situation where we're spending all of January, February, and March doing catch-up invoices and trying to get people paid, so I see this as a real positive and a real improvement over where we were on D4.

The other portion there, the screen presentations for Fleet and Personal Property will be changed. There will also be some knowledge transfer sessions, which will be presented in late August and September to the staff that are affected by that to make sure they have an idea of what's going on with that and how those changes will be made and what that will look like on those screens. On the next slide we talk about go-live and just a little bit more reinforcement of what's actually going to happen during that period. Go-live for USGS is November 8 USGS will come on board, so that will give us four deployed bureaus with full FBMS functionality, and then for the rest of us D4 bureaus that had deployed

earlier, we will focus on the changes that we have, especially with Real Property, there will be instructor-led training at NTC, two classes currently scheduled November 1 through 5 and November 15 through 19, and then Commitment Accounting. That will be available for those requisitions processed through Prism including financial assistance. For us, we see Commitment Accounting, which many of those of you out in the field have had that prior to us going to FBMS, see that as a very good thing for us especially as far as being able to get more accurate financial data much quicker and get those funds committed. One of the primary complaints on D4, as with any agency that goes through a significant financial system transition, is the ability to get reports and the ability to get information that you really need having gone through this transition. We're really now starting to refine those reports that we need as an agency and making progress in that much better than we were last year or two years ago where it was pretty dismal. I think this transition and the addition of Commitment Accounting will help us overall and be able to make this a much more seamless deployment. We're almost in the back seat, but we are gonna have changes as we go through and add these two functionalities.

The last slide, kind of the take-away points or some of the key things, for the requisitioners, approvers, and CORs and ROs, it's gonna be a number of new processes to learn, and I know probably the cringe that most people feel when we first started talking about this is we finally have got this figured out after two years of working with this, why are you gonna change it. I think these will be

refinements in how we do the process. There will be some new looks to what we actually see within the system, but we want to make sure that especially since that's a key driver in our workflow, that those people have the ability to get the training prior to going live on October 19. Between October 18 and November 7 there will be limited processing availability, again, the stress that we're not gonna be able to do any weekend work or evening work. So remember, you've got those 12-hour windows every day Monday through Friday. Think about that, and as soon as you can get on the system and start exploring and start working with it, make sure that you take a look at those transactions that really need to get done and really need to be processed.

For the Fleet and Personnel Property staff, as I mentioned, they'll have a series of knowledge transfer sessions to inform them of screen presentation changes, and that will occur this month and next month. Then finally, the Real Property will be available on November 8 and the training will be at the NTC in November.

So this was a very high-level overview kind of to give you an idea of where we're going and kind of where we're at on the D5 deployment. The other thing I want to stress is this is the D5 deployment. Next year we'll be talking about the D6, the year after that D7, and D8, and they'll be I would say limited functionality adds during each one of those, but it'll be another bureau coming on board until we finally get the entire department on board on the same system, and I think that's when we'll really see a lot of the process changes that we're gonna do over

the long process and a lot of these benefits to the enhancements. For us on this particular deployment, we've at least got a strong cadre of people who have had two years of experience or one year of experience with FBMS, so it's not gonna be a brand-new screen that you turn on on October 19 and have to learn completely from the beginning.

So with that, I'd like to open up either to Leslie or to John any points to reinforce.

This is Leslie. I just wanted to thank everybody out there for the support that we've been getting in changing our business processes. I know that we're working very closely with people out in the field on the sales and distribution balances and the project balances. We're having a test close beginning August 25 to see how quickly we can close all the funds in the BLM, so we have asked your teams to get their data balance by August 20. I know that's a big job. We have 117 SD projects which still need balanced, and we have 743 projects which need balanced, so appreciate your help in that and please give me a call if there's anything that I can do to help you out with that. John, anything else?

I'd like to stress on the requisitioners, approvers, CORs and ROs, the requisitioners will be facing a fairly new complex process, so as managers you need to be supportive of them. They will not be taken out of the system if they're currently mapped and working today, but we are stressing that they either engage in the facilitated CBTs being offered by each state center or they take the

CBT by themselves and get through it before they sign on to the new D5 processes on October 19. If they don't go through that CBT, when they sign on on October 19 they will see whole new, foreign-looking screens which will confuse them. Although they'll be able to access the system, they won't understand it. So as managers you need to make sure the requisitioners, the approvers, and the CORs at least complete the CBT during the blackout between October 1 and October 18 so that when they sign on on the 19th they'll be familiar with what they're going to see. I can't stress that more. We are working with the states and centers to get super users totally trained up to support your offices and your staff to get through this conversion during the blackout. When you're trying to maximize the use of the blackout because most of them will be idling or at least preparing for the requisition they'll have to put in on the 19th. We've also asked the states and centers to prioritize their requisitions that have to go in and get those in early, the first ones that need to be done, get those folks trained and ready to go on the 19th so that we don't have a major collision of not getting requisitions in on time for our contractors and what have you. So with that said, for managers, you need to be focusing on prioritizing your requisitions and making sure your requisitioners, your approvers, and your CORs have completed the CBT before the 19th when they sign on. Once again, I can't stress this more, the period of time between October 19 and November 7 will be kind of chaotic. There will be daily calls adjusting those 12-hour windows depending on how successful they are with USGS. We will notify you if there's any change to that 12-hour window so you can plan accordingly, but understand there is a lot of

moving parts to getting USGS up and running by November 8. And with that, Tim, I'll turn it back to you.

Thanks Leslie and John. Kim, we're open for questions.

Okay. I personally have a question. Will there be any manuals or tutorials that we can check out while this is going on or once we do get put on live October 19?

PMO has said that they will provide manuals for all the new processes sometime in mid to late September and will post those on line for the super users in each state and center to pull down and distribute accordingly. Those manuals will be reflective upon the CBT training, so it'll be a hand-in-glove situation as you go through it. Also, there will be fact sheets, cheat sheets, and short tips and stuff going to be provided sometime in mid to late September. They can't really finish the manuals until they finish all this testing that's going on to make sure the tests are correcting the processes and consequently the processes are correcting the tests, so that's the reason some of it is not going to be provided until mid to late September after they get through the UAT testing on September 10.

You may also want to mention the website. There is actually a Sharepoint website for the FBMS portal that has tons of information, tips and techniques, and everything you want to know about every portion of FBMS, and that's

updated on a daily basis. In fact, yesterday John put out a sheet on Commitment Accounting that talked about that and how it will be affected by FBMS and that, so it's a good source of information, even if you're not an active user, just to take a look at what's on there.

It's a tips and technical solutions Sharepoint site for FBMS, and if you have any questions about where it is then please contact your state and center leads and they'll be happy to show you where it is.

Quick question on that Sharepoint site, does everyone have access?

The tips and technical solutions are open to every employee in the bureau.

Good to know. Sharepoint, you can put so much information.

Kim, I'd like to mention that NTC is standing up a knowledge resource center also that they're attempting to put material out there also. Is that correct?

I believe so. I'm not sure when that is going to be completed. I'm not sure of that.

Okay.

Okay. We do have a question from Kara. Kara, can you go ahead and ask your question?

Yeah. I was just wondering if we know when the CBT for the requisitioner training is going to be available.

IBM is right now developing the course, and they're saying expect it sometime after the first of October. Contractually they really don't have to deliver it until the 18th, but they've made the commitment to have it on the Learning Management System by the first week of October. When we do have it posted out there, we'll be sure to get the word out to everybody to start going to it.

Great. Okay. We have the next question from Chip Calamio. Chip, go ahead and ask your question please.

I just have to ask, are these FBMS \_\_\_\_\_ when we go through these different variations, is this stuff gonna get anymore user friendly? It's an extremely complicated system, especially for casual users, CORs, requisitioners. Is there any attempt being made at all in terms of the navigation, the layouts, the screens, the terminology, to make this a little easier for people to comprehend who are not accountants?

Chip, it's a good question, and it's one of the things that we've struggled with in fact. You brought up a good point about infrequent users. Many of the systems, whether you're using \_\_\_\_\_, LR2000, or GIS, if you're an infrequent user it becomes a very difficult system, and that's one of the reasons we've seen a decrease looking at over 5500 users to 2900 users trying to really get a core of people that are almost \_\_\_\_\_ that are more familiar with the system or spend more time in the system, and that's one of the reasons, especially on the COR roles because we've heard a lot over the last two years about the workload that has been involved with that. I can't say that we're gonna get to the point where we're gonna have better or more user-friendly screens. It's definitely the goal to try to make sure that we follow up at least with training, and especially with the changes that we're having on D5 in those particular roles, to try and prepare people as much as possible for those particular roles.

That's great. As long as you guys are thinking about it, because you know, if I do a service entry sheet, I know how to do it, I've done tons of them, but I do it by route and I have really no understanding of exactly what I'm doing, you know, in some of these terms, and that would really help if you guys are just thinking about it.

Okay. Appreciate that. And also, if you've got specific questions, feel free to E-mail any one of us, either Leslie, John, or myself, and it'll give us some more

input on specifics and things that we may need to stress as far as making it a better system all along.

You bet.

Great. Thanks Chip. We do have another call. Dan from Eugene, Oregon, please go ahead with your question.

Yeah. It strikes me that some of the approval authorities that existed in FBMS are different than what's laid down in terms of delegation of authority in our existing manuals. Is there ever gonna be an effort to bring those two into line?

That's a good question. The delegation of authority, you're talking about the 1202?

Yep. In terms of like dollar values of requisitions that should be approved at different levels on the line. Well basically, that disappears if you only have a hand-full of users that are able to validate, certify, and/or approve requisitions.

That's a good point, Dan. I'm gonna tell you there's a take-away to align the 1202 with the authorities that we have in FBMS. That's a good point. That has kind of slipped by the wayside.

Well what I find is a lot of the managers that should be responsible for approving some of these things aren't even on FBMS.

That's an interesting question. That's something each state and center will need to deal with.

We do have another question. Sherman, please go ahead with your question.

Yes. My question is you've given us the two-week period of October to take the test in the middle of the holiday to be approved by the 18th. Is that really a fact or just local of what we need to be accomplishing?

October 11? Is that what you're referring to?

Yes.

The CBT can be taken any time at your discretion. It's not anything we need to schedule or anything else, so you might want to work with your business management council member in your organization to figure out if you're gonna have to facilitate a CBT and make sure they avoid the holiday.

Okay. That's the \_\_\_\_\_ then.

Yeah. We'll work that in.

Because the 18th we will not be able to use it if it's not completed. That's a fact.

The 19th.

I think what he's asking is if you don't complete it by the 18th will it no longer be available.

It'll be available. You just won't understand what you're seeing.

Hahaha.

No, the CBT.

Oh, the CBT will be available.

That's the point. So if you don't get the CBT done by the 18th, it will still be out there. It won't disappear.

Okay. That's what my question is.

Sorry. I misunderstood your question. I got a hundred things running around.

Did we get it answered?

Yeah. The answer – I think he was asking will the CBT be available in perpetuity. Yes it will.

Okay, great. Good to know because we all need a little help out there with FBMS.

You can take it as many times as you want by the way.

Great. And how long will that be up? Is that going to be ongoing?

It'll be on the LMS as long as NTC nurtures it.

Good to know. Just a quick question, again from my perspective, what is the purpose of the pilot training in September, and who should attend. I'm just curious.

Well, the pilot training is to prepare the state and center super users to lead classroom settings of facilitated CBT. We've already been working through a list of folks to come in, they'll be here for a two-day session, and they'll get IBM instructional oversight on how to lead a facilitated session on requisitioners, approvers, and CORs and ROs. That's if a state wishes to have what I call

facilitated sessions, and what those really are, we understand that some people can take CBT on their own, they'd be fine, they can move on, but there's others who like to work in group sessions in a classroom setting, so what we're advocating and supporting is what we call the facilitated CBTs where a super user who is familiar with the material will actually lead a group of requisitioners or approvers or whatever through their CBTs together in a classroom where they can network and ask questions and have some dialogue and not be alone and be able to answer each other's questions and show each other, so we've used that in D4 to some extent and found it very successful, especially in some of these processes that are somewhat complicated and new. So in an effort to meet that demand, we're having 22 people come in from around the states and centers to participate in some instructor-led materials to be able to facilitate the CBTs in September. If you have any questions of who from your organization is going to be attending, check with your business management council member that's in your organization and they will know.

Great. Thank you. That is helpful. We do have another call. Felicia from Washington, what's your question please.

Good afternoon. I just wanted to find out from Tim or Leslie who can we work with. We're in the process of updating our delegation of authority manual. Who can I work with out there? A caller did bring up a good question. I wanted to make sure we validate with you guys what's in the manual.

Felicia, this is Leslie. You can go ahead and coordinate that through me here at the NOC and I'll get the right people in at the right time.

Thanks Leslie.

Great. I'm gonna ask another question because I'm full of questions this morning. Why is DOI changing the requisitioner process?

With the advent of this Commitment Accounting, the process that we're currently learning was a customized requisition, approver, and COR process that didn't have Commitment Accounting in it, so to change all that out they're gonna leave behind the process we're using now and actually use a SAP pre-prescribed process that's consistent and standard within SAP itself, and that means that we have to learn a new process in order to take advantage of the Commitment Accounting features in SAP. That's basically the rationale of why we have to retrain all the requisitioners, approvers, and CORs and receiving officials to the new standardized SAP process, and for those who wish to have the insider track, it's called the ME5-1-2-3-4-5-7 processes, so you can speak at the cocktail parties with some authority about SAP.

Great. I can't wait. How many phases are there? I'm just curious now that you mention it.

How many what?

How many phases are left with the FBMS deployment?

It goes through Deployment 8. Deployment 6, which is a year from now, will be US Fish and Wildlife Service and the Office of the secretary. The D7 will be, and this is gonna be the fun one, Parks Service, Bureau of Reclamation, and Bureau of Indian Affairs. That's gonna be a fun ride. D8 is being focused primarily on what you all have come to love as the Budget Planning System change-out, and the whole Deployment 8 is focused on getting the whole department onto one budget planning system, so that one will be a joyride also.

That will be. Well we certainly do appreciate your time. Are there any closing comments that you guys would like to make? I don't have any other questions here.

No, we don't have any. We appreciate people's time, and hopefully this has been beneficial.

I'm sure it has been. Anybody else? Leslie?

Thank you for all your support and you guys know how to find us if you need us.

I'd like to thank everyone for participating and a special thanks to Tim, Leslie, and John for taking time out of your busy schedules to help us out today. Just to let you know that this audio forum will be posted on our KRC, which is our Knowledge Resource Center, here at the National Training Center. It is located on our homepage. Just go ahead and click on KRC and type in audio forum and you'll be able to pull up all of the past audio forums as well. So with that, I'd like to say thank you so much and have a great day. You guys know who to contact if you have any further questions. Thank you so much. See you later.

This has been a production of the Bureau of Land Management's National Training Center.