



STATE CONTROLLER'S BULLETIN

Edward Karass
State Controller

Rebecca M. Wyke, Commissioner
Administrative & Financial Services

Bulletin #FY07-03

SUBJECT: Revision to the Implementation Date for Advantage

DATE: August 10, 2006

TO: All Departments and Agencies

FROM: Edward A. Karass, State Controller

Each day the Advantage project team makes remarkable progress toward the implementation of the State of Maine first enterprise-wide financial management system. As we review our progress weekly, we examine the tasks completed by each functional team assigned to specific project areas and the tasks outstanding that required completion. Within that context, the Steering Committee and the project team leads have identified three key areas that require more time for completion to successfully implement the Advantage System here in Maine.

First and foremost, because the system encompasses three key functions that are totally integrated in Advantage, the entire project management team with concurrence believes that several more weeks beyond October 1st are required for User Acceptance Testing to ensure that the entire system works as we have designed it. This means that we will spend additional time in end-to-end system testing.

We appreciate the fact that Advantage is a very powerful system with many built in tools to help state government better manage its daily business. In order for us to fully take advantage of the new tools, we are certain that all of our trainers must have an above average understanding of how the system works. Because the system is completely different than our current tool, more education and training time is necessary to achieve success. As our cadre is trained, we will provide an environment for them to familiarize themselves with the Advantage System before our trainers take on the leadership roles the education of 1,000 or so employees, who are expected to use the system regularly.

Lastly is the preparation of instructional materials and on-line demos aimed at the education and training of the vendors that supply goods and services to Maine State Government. Each vendor doing business with the State must register through the Vendor Self Service (VSS) system, which is linked to the Advantage system. As our suppliers are critical business partners, we recognize the need to give them sufficient lead time to learn how to use the new purchasing application so that they may continue to provide goods and services to state agencies without interruption. Toward that end, we are setting up and staffing a Vendor Self Service help desk, and will "go live" with the VSS application in November, giving vendors several weeks to register and become familiar with this new, improved system.

We expect that completion of these tasks will take place in the late October to end of November timeframe making a January 1st cutover to production possible.

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