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CEM reports ORS provides good service at low cost

Every year, ORS participates in a benchmarking survey to find out how we are doing relative to other retirement systems of similar size. We fill out a survey and send it to Cost Effectiveness Measurement, Inc. (CEM), who compiles the results.

Recently the EPC, BPOs, and BPLs attended a presentation of the results from the 2004 benchmarking survey. We were congratulated for being a low-cost system that provides good service to its members. Below are some highlights of the survey results:

- We operate efficiently: ORS's administration cost per member is \$46, while the median cost per member of our peers is \$64.
- We are a large system: ORS has 552,700 active members, while our peers have a median of 403,869 active members.
- Our service levels are comparable to our peers: On a scale of 0 to 100, our service score is 65, and the peer median is 71. While we are slightly below the median, the CEM representative was quick to point out that given our low cost, this is an excellent service score.

If you're interested in more information about the CEM study, please contact your BPO or BPL.

DMB Organizational Survey

Results from the April 2006 DMB Organizational Assessment survey were delivered to ORS leaders last month by **Michael Zingsheim** from the Training process. The survey is conducted annually by DMB to assess the health of the department and each office within DMB.

[Click here](#) to review the report.

The EPC is evaluating the results of the survey and determining the next steps. Stay tuned to the next issue of the *LookOut* for more information!

Calendar

June

State Employees

Sounding Out – Perspectives on Reengineering

With several process mapping sessions now behind them, the reengineering team

Board Meeting	29
Clarety Warranty Ends	30
July	
Independence Day	4
State Police Board Meeting	20
National Hot Dog Day	23
Public School Employees Board Meeting	27

On the Horizon

- ORS Golf Outing August 15
- ORS Picnic August 22
- Fall All-Staff Meeting October 24

Quick Links

- [Email the LookOut staff](#)
- [LookOut Archives](#)
- [ORS Member Website](#)
- [ORS Employer Website](#)
- [Policies and Procedures](#)

Commonly Used Acronyms

AST	Application Support Team
BLA	Business Leadership Assembly (<i>Consists of the EPC, BPOs, and BPLs</i>)
BPD	Benefit Plan Design
BPL	Business Process Leader
BPO	Business Process Owner
CED	Customer Education and Development
CSC	Customer Service Center
DIT	Department of Information Technology

shares a few thoughts about what it's like working on this project.

Andy Kolp

Being part of the reengineering team has been a great learning experience for me. Our office has so many people who carry a great wealth of knowledge. When this knowledge is shared during a mapping session, I enjoy learning (or at least trying to learn!) what is being done and how we can make it better. It really makes me appreciate all of the things our organization does, and the process has only just begun.



Andy Kolp



Jim Rademacher

Jim Rademacher

Since the rollout of Clarety 3.2, there has been a tremendous amount of change in the office. Many people's roles changed as Clarety took the place of some tasks (automated calculations, database management, and created new ones (workflow audits). Many questions have risen such as: *Who does this now? Do we still need to send this? Is there a PIR for that?* I like to think that the reengineering process mapping sessions have not only identified process gaps, but have answered many questions and helped sculpt expectations about what is within the scope of our technology improvements versus

what we need to address within our business processes.

Peggy Shinn

My experience as part of the reengineering team has been both interesting and challenging. I've learned so much being a part of this special project. The SMEs (Subject Matter Experts), BPLs and BPOs that I have worked with have all been very helpful and enthusiastic, even though we're taking time out of their busy days. I'm especially looking forward to seeing all the proposed changes actually being implemented. That's when all of everyone's hard work and diligence will pay off – for our customers as well as for ORS.



Peggy Shinn



Josey McCloud

Josey McCloud

The reengineering team isn't simply made up of a team of five; it includes all of the talented and creative SMEs at ORS. It's challenging to break down a process step-by-step and start designing a new process with a clean slate.

This team has taken on the task of identifying ways to improve processes about which you may shake your head and say, "I know there has to be a better way." Since joining the team, I've come to realize how much we underestimate what our coworkers do and what they know.

Kerrie Vanden Bosch

To me, reengineering is sort of like having a yard sale. When you're getting ready for a yard sale, you clean out the basement, garage, and closets and get rid of all of the extra stuff you don't use that has been sitting around for five years taking up space. When you're done and the stuff is all gone, you feel a huge sense of accomplishment in knowing that you're not loaded down with all kinds of excess anymore. When reengineering a process, you dig into every step along the way and question whether it needs to be done and whether you can find a better way to do it. When you're done, you have a leaner process that is not bogged down by all kinds of extra steps. Thanks to all of the SMEs who have worked hard to help us get rid of our old stuff and build more efficient processes!



Kerrie Vanden Bosch

DMB	Department of Management and Budget
EPC	Executive Process Council (<i>Chris, Laurie, Phil, and Tim</i>)
EPO	Executive Process Owner
ER	Employer Reporting
ORS	Office of Retirement Services
PS	Process Support
T&T	Tools and Technology

Reminder

Mark your calendars for August 22

The annual ORS Picnic is being held at a new location this year—Hawk Island County Park. You won't want to miss all the activities and events planned, so make sure you save the date!

One window or two?

The implementation of Stage 3.2 brought more than 40 system-generated form letters—bringing the grand total of form letters that can be generated from Clarety to over 70! You may notice that some of the recently deployed letters look different. These forms letters were designed to fit a 2-window envelope.



How do you tell if it's a 2-window letter? The new forms letterhead has the ORS logo in the top left corner and the State of Michigan seal near the top right corner. When printing a letter from Clarety that has the ORS logo and state seal, please use the 2-window envelope.

By folding the letter under the salutation, you can ensure that the subject line does not show.

Two-window envelope letterhead



Why the change? Because the envelope is plain and utilizes the address block on the letter for the return address, there are no printing costs to customize it for ORS. This allows DMB-Mailing Services to maintain a mass stock, which reduces our warehousing costs.

You may still see the old letterhead on some letters; please be patient as CED and

T3 work on updating the system-generated letters through the summer.

CED implements Knowledge Partnering

Next week, CED plans to roll out a new “Knowledge Partnering” arrangement designed to leverage business knowledge and functional abilities of its staff.

Formerly, the CED team was structured based on customer education delivery tools: the outreach team conducted seminars and customer appointments, while the communications team managed tools like websites, publications, and forms. Under the Knowledge Partner plan, the process will organize around knowledge: program information like insurances, service credit, and eligibility.

Each topic area will be the responsibility of a Knowledge Partner team that pairs one member from outreach (whose strength is knowing what customers need) and one from communications (whose strength is how to deliver it). BPL **Fred Covert** is excited about the new approach, saying, “Partners with a deep understanding of retirement programs, policies, and procedures will help ensure that information is up-to-date everywhere it resides, and that our language is always clear, precise, and consistent.”

BPO **Kerrie Vanden Bosch** adds, “By pairing up our knowledge and skills, we’ll be better positioned to reach our CED vision of delivering what our customers need to know before they know they need to know it.”

Other benefits of knowledge partnering include:

- Ensures that website information is current and publications are always ready-to-print.
- Helps us meet challenges and demands of Stage 3.3C (member self-service).
- Prepares us for expanding life stage education efforts.
- Builds backups and cross-task capabilities.
- Aligns with knowledge library and reengineering efforts.
- Develops partnerships with our counterparts in other processes.
- Broadens our individual skills and knowledge.

CED is teaming up the following Knowledge Partners and functional areas:

- Insurance: **Kim LaClear** and **Ray Fleming**
- Death and Beneficiary: **Rosemary Baker** and **Pam Kenney**
- Refunds: **Rosemary Baker** and **Joy Bartell**
- Service Credit/TDP: **Angela Schrauben** and **Joy Bartell**
- Applications/Eligibility: **Erica Waltmire** and **Ray Fleming**
- Employer Reporting: **Robert Glennon** and **Pam Kenney**
- Postretirement: **Robert Glennon** and **Chuck Simpson**
- DC/DC: **Chuck Simpson** and **Kim LaClear**

The week of June 26, Pam and Ray will move into the two-unit pod currently occupied by Communications staff. They will join Rosemary, Robert, Kim, Angie, and Erica. **Connie Morse** and **Zach Wight** will move into the one-unit pod across from Fred Covert, which has been used by outreach staff. Additional space will be reserved in the two-unit pod for Detroit outreach staff, Joy and Chuck, to use when they are in the Lansing office.

In coming weeks, CED will roll out additional information on how staff can request changes to our websites, forms, publications, and other customer education materials. Please watch the *LookOut* for this information.

Contractor name changes, but faces will stay the same

Covansys recently announced the sale of its State and Local Government Practice to Saber Consulting, Inc., headquartered in Portland, Oregon. This business group is the division of Covansys that we've been working with on the Vision ORS project. Saber also acquired the Clarety software system we use that was developed by Covansys.

For most of us at ORS, we will see little change other than our consulting partners now work for Saber rather than Covansys. We will continue to work with our same on-site specialists as we move forward on the project.

Saber, founded in 1997, has ongoing customer relationships with state and local government entities across the country, providing them with a variety of information technology solutions.

Comings & Goings

CSC welcomes **Charles Stewart**, a Jackson, Mississippi, native, to ORS. Charles completed two years of course work in computer engineering at the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville and has been doing customer service jobs for the past nine years. He plans to finish his degree at Michigan State University beginning next spring.



Charles Stewart



Daniel Adams

Welcome to **Daniel Adams**. Daniel is also working in the CSC. He owns a small, upscale catering company, LLC, and commented that he is glad to be at ORS.

Congratulations to **Dan Mackey** who recently accepted a departmental analyst position with BPD.

Reminder - July 1 interest posting

On July 1, 2.51 percent interest will be applied to all public school member accounts with MIP contributions. At the same time, 8 percent interest will be charged on the balance of public school members' tax-deferred payment (TDP) agreements established between January 1, 2004 and June 30, 2005.

United we stand

When communicating to our retirement customers, be sure to refer to our office and staff as the Office of Retirement Services and avoid using the individual system acronyms. While we administer four individual retirement systems, to our customers we are ORS. We are not MPSERS or SERS. We are not JRS or SPRS. It is important that we are consistent in how we refer to ourselves and that our customers receive a unified image of our office. This holds true for all correspondence, publications, forms, websites, and phone conversations.

3.2 Clarety warranty expires next week!

The warranty period for Clarety expires in one more week! Anything relating to 3.2 Clarety functionality that isn't working right needs to be conveyed to a member of the Tools and Technology Team (**Steve Crippen, Anthony Estell, Meg Leonard**, or

Laurie Mitchell) or to Lila Christiansen, Jon Seeger, Nonnie Struble, or Pat VerPlanck so they can investigate the issue. Call, email, or stop by and talk to one of them by Wednesday, June 27th.

How long will you work before retiring?

CSC recently received a retirement application from a member who works for the Kalamazoo Public Library. She was born in 1920 (so she's 86 this year), and she's retiring with 64 years of service. No early out for her! Her pension will be about equal to her final average compensation (FAC). Pretty impressive!

ORS rocks Comerica Park



Diane Kelley, Caitlin Hitchcock, and Christina Bishai show off their new Detroit Tigers hats—and their team loyalty.

A bus full of ORS staff, their families and friends enjoyed a wonderful evening of Tiger baseball at Comerica Park on Tuesday, June 13th. The weather was balmy and clear and the Tigers came through with a 6-run 5th inning to provide the fireworks for a 7-1 victory over the Tampa Bay Devil Rays, in front of 20,000+ fans. It was a beautiful night at a beautiful park.

The ORS contingent enjoyed subs, chips, cookies, pop, and water before jumping on the bus where **Bill Motz**, **Maureen Carden**, and **John Davidson** helped entertain everyone on the way to

the game with games and drawings for gift cards. The troop enjoyed the movie "Hoodwinked" on the trip home. Don't miss next year's chance at this fun trip. Click on the link to see pictures from the event.

Enjoy our beautiful flowerbed!

For the second year in a row, ORS staff rolled up their sleeves and got dirty.

Sylvia Maat and **Michelle Thompson** spearheaded the effort to improve our flower garden spot on the north side of the cafeteria and handled all of the planting this year. A number of additional employees participated in the event by donating flowers for the garden. Landscaping mulch was added this past week, thanks to **Bill Motz's** connections and the efforts of several staff members who helped spread it.



Michelle Thompson digs the dirt in the ORS flower garden outside the GOB cafeteria.

ORS employees would like to thank Sylvia and Michelle for donating their time to plant the flowers, along with Bill and everyone who donated flowers or helped spread the landscape mulch.

Salute the stars and stripes

It's that time of year again to celebrate the 4th of July by paying tribute to our country and enjoying our



independence. To celebrate the upcoming holiday many Americans will display red, white, and blue as a sign of their patriotism and wave the colors proudly. Read on to learn fun facts about the flag and how to properly handle it.

History of the flag

The first official United States flag, a 13-star flag, became official on June 14th, 1777, as a result of congressional action. Much evidence points to Congressman Francis Hopkinson as the person responsible for its design. Many historians also believe Betsy Ross, a Philadelphia seamstress, made the first one.

An executive order in June 1912 prescribed the order of the stars and the proportions of the flag. You may find some flags dating before this time that show unusual arrangements of the stars and odd proportions. Before 1912 the features were left to the discretion of the flag maker.

Flag etiquette

The official Flag Code contains specific instructions on flag etiquette. Did you know the following?

- When lowering the flag, no part of it should touch the ground or any other object; someone should be waiting to receive it.
- To store the flag, fold it neatly and ceremoniously.
- The flag should never be used for any type of advertising. It shouldn't be printed or imaged onto items like cushions, napkins, boxes or any type of item that is to be thrown away after a temporary use. In addition, no advertising signs should be attached to the flagpole or staff.
- The flag shouldn't be part of a costume or uniform with the exception that a flag patch may be used on uniforms of military personnel, firemen, policemen, and members of patriotic organizations.

In addition, you should clean your flag and mend it when necessary. When it's so worn that it doesn't properly represent our country, it should be destroyed by burning it in a dignified manner. Many American Legion posts regularly conduct a dignified flag burning ceremony, often on June 14th, Flag Day. Cub Scout packs, Boy Scout troops, and Girl Scout troops may retire your flag as well. If you have a well-worn flag, contact your local American Legion Hall or Scout troop to see if they offer this service.

You can discover more interesting facts about the flag at www.usflag.org, the main source for this article.

ORS Mission:
We deliver pensions, related benefits, and services to promote the future financial security of our customers.

ORS Vision:
Fast, easy access to complete and accurate information and exceptional service.

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Thanks for reading!!

Note: Because some of the links in this newsletter point to resources within ORS, some of the links may not work if you are outside of ORS.