

March 10, 2000

Volume 3, Issue 16

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.

ORS Calendar

March

St. Patrick's Day ----- 17th
Public School Employees
Board Meeting ----- 23rd
Pension Paydate ----- 24th
ORS All-Staff Meeting -----
----- 30th

April

State Employees Board
Meeting ----- 6th
Judges Board Meeting -- 13th
State Police Board
Meeting ----- 20th
Easter ----- 23rd
Pension Paydate ----- 25th

Business Function owners receive training

Business Process Owners (BPOs) have spent the past four to six weeks identifying and learning about the tasks that make up their specific business process. At the same time, Technology Owners (TOs) from IT/R and the Technology Providers (TPs) from ITSD have been addressing their involvement with these business processes.

However, since the BPOs require assistance from their specific TOs and their TPs, it was important to make sure the individuals could function as teams (Triads) and provide quality customer service.

Starting February 29, consultants from the Lansing-based Senior Technology Partners began a phase two training effort with the BPOs,

TOs, and TPs to help further prepare them for their roles and responsibilities. These sessions are part of an on-going training program to assist in changing ORS into a process-based organization.

The BPOs' sessions focused on defining business requirements and business processes, and how to apply metrics (measurement or evaluation tools). TOs and TPs' sessions focused on their roles and responsibilities, and how to organize and facilitate effective and efficient meetings.

A final day and a half session used case studies to help the triad members learn to work together as teams. One of the objectives of this team-

See Business Function Owners on Page 4

Strategic Team Update – Teams 1 & 3

Team #1 — Improve Leadership and Management Skills

Team Members: **Miriam Bender, Mary Ann Vicini, and Susan Park**
Team Sponsor: **Deb Gearhart**

Team #3 — Establish an Employee Development Plan

Team members: **Grace Bonofiglio, Robert Glennon, and Ken Wright**
Team Sponsor: **Deb Gearhart**

Team one was charged with identifying needed leadership skills for

ORS, and developing a plan to acquire and enhance those skills. Team three was charged with the responsibility of identifying ORS employee development needs and making recommendations for building an effective plan for implementation. Because both teams were working toward similar outcomes it was determined that a common program would be developed to implement these plans.

See Strategic Team Update on Page 3

March pension payments include supplemental amount

Eligible State and Public School Employee pension recipients will see an additional amount in their warrants or EFT payments in March, thanks to solid investments and a strong market. When investment earnings exceed predictions, a portion of these earnings is distributed to qualified pension recipients.

Who is eligible? For the Public School Employees system, the supplemental payment is distributed with no adjustments to retirees (or their survivors) who retired after February 1, 1987 under the Basic Plan. Those who retired prior to February 1, 1987 also receive a supplemental payment that is in excess of their cumulative post-retirement increases.

State employees (or their survivors) who retired prior to

October 1, 1987 will receive a supplemental payment of the amount that exceeds the total of any post-retirement increases they have received.

The dollar amount of the gross supplemental payment (before any reductions) is the unit value (\$27.47 for Public School employees and \$26.87 for State employees) times the retiree's total number of "units". A retiree earns one unit for each whole year of service credit, plus one unit for each year of being retired as of September 30, 1999.

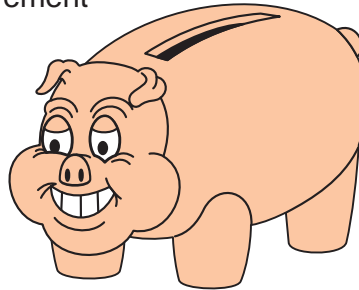
Next week a letter will be sent to those receiving a supplemental payment this year that states how much their supplemental payment will be, and

how it was computed. The actual supplemental payment is included in with the March pension payment and is not sent separately.

This year's Supplement Payment team included ORS co-project leads, **Joyce Buchanan** and **Meg Leonard** from

IT/R, **Dick Pennington** and **Norma Simon** from Operations, ITSD lead, **Mary Jane Cookingham**, and **Tanuj Raizada**, also from ITSD. **Ben McIntire** from Operations, and **Darlene Workman** from Finance and Administration, calculated the unit value used to compute the final payment amounts.

Thanks to all for your hard work to make sure this was completed on time.



IT/R Director's responsibilities reassigned

ORS staff bid a sad farewell to Ginger Bomar February 25, but prior to that, ORS Director **Chris DeRose** and the Leadership Team met to make sure Ginger's special assignments and IT/R's projects were left in good hands.

For the short term, the following reassignments are in effect:

- Chris DeRose, with valuable assistance from **Bob Nemeth** and **Deb Mosher**, will be handling overall IT/R duties.
- Ginger's role as the owner of

the Employer Reporting and Communications Functions will be shared by **Phil Stoddard** and **Laurie Hill**.

- **Deb Gearhart** will assume the sponsorship role on the State Service Providers Strategic Team.

Chris plans to hire a new Project Manager for Vision ORS, and is already looking at resumes. Chris and the Leadership Team are still discussing long term solutions for handling the vacant IT/R Director's position.



Published by: State of Michigan
Department of Management
& Budget
Office of Retirement Services
P.O. Box 30171
Lansing, MI 48909-7671

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Printed by Authority of 1984 P.A. 431
Total number of copies printed: 350
Total cost: \$137.81 Cost per copy: \$0.39

New servers planned for ORS web site

Sometime this month, a new set of “dedicated” DMB servers will host the ORS web site. Currently DMB web sites are accessed from three interconnected servers (large network computers) shared by many other State departments.

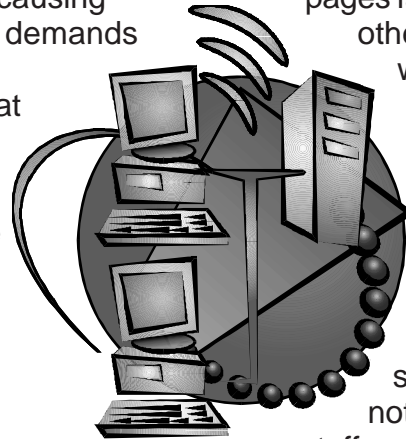
In the past couple of years, the amount of web-related information stored on these servers has increased dramatically, reducing the amount of space available for future additions of information on these various web sites. At the same time, the

number of users trying to reach these web sites has also mushroomed, causing overwhelming demands on the present server system at certain peak times.

For ORS, these increased demands have occasionally slowed or interrupted access to all or parts of our web sites. Using the DMB “dedicated servers” should help customers bring-

ing up specific pages or documents from our web pages faster, and use other features that were not always functioning properly in the past.

The switchover between servers will happen behind-the-scenes, and should not be noticeable to staff or customers. This project is another step in our continuing efforts to improve service to our customers.



Strategic Team Update

Continued from Page 1

To accomplish this, both teams invested time researching Civil Service Classification Descriptions and all ORS Position Descriptions, and looking at other organizations that are working on employee development plans.

These organizations included: Michigan State Police, Michigan Department of Transportation, California State Retirement System, Ohio State Retirement System, and Stratton-Cheeseman Management Company.

In addition to looking at other organizations, the teams looked within ORS, and asked staff members to participate in a survey identifying the competencies they felt were neces-

sary to perform their individual job functions, as well as the knowledge and skills they felt were needed for effective leadership.

Based on this information the teams identified nine competencies that would have the greatest impact on ORS. The competencies are:

- Operating systems and applications
- Word Processing
- Databases and spreadsheets
- Internet
- Leadership (29 qualities identified)
- Written and verbal communication
- Organizational skills
- Mathematical skills

- System structure and/or legislative relationship

To find out what an Employee Development Plan would look like using these competencies, the teams fleshed out the first five to get an idea, and to present to the Leadership Team before proceeding with the entire development plan.

On February 28, the Leadership Team signed off on the proposed method for implementation. The teams are now in the process of defining the remaining competencies. An initial roll out of the plan to the Leadership Team is scheduled for sometime in April.

Both teams would like to thank **Janet Graham** for all of her help on this project.

Business Function Owners receive training

Continued from Page 1

building session was to help them recognize and differentiate the customer's needs, come up with recommendations to satisfy those needs, then determine if they were satisfying the customer's **real needs**.

At the end of the third session,

DMB Director **Janet Phipps** congratulated the participants on their accomplishments. ORS Director **Chris DeRose** and ITSD Director **Dan Lohrmann** distributed certificates to the participants to remind them of their progress and thank them for their

commitment.

Congratulations to all those who attended on their newly acquired skills. Also special thanks to **Lisa Naccarato** from IT/R for designing the certificates, and to **Rosemary Baker, Robert Glennon, and Lisa Schmidt** for their production assistance.



Sometimes it helps to view things from a different perspective. Mary Burmis recently led CIC staff through some "Creativity Training" that SouthWest Airlines used on some of their delayed flights. Staff designed their own "glasses" so they could "see things through different eyes"—an exercise IT/R also enjoyed last fall. The laughter it generated helped relieve some of the built-up tension from answering phones. Those participating are, from the left: (standing) **Kathryn Stehle, Don Dimitroff, Joyce Weber, Mike Novak, Mary Burmis, Fred Doll, Judy McLean, Bill Motz, Patsy Burhans, and Cheryl Moore**; (sitting) **Gordy Hicks, Sue DeBor, Pam Kenney, and Tony Contu**.

Update your personal information

ORS maintains a confidential database of emergency information. In the event of an emergency, a supervisor can contact either **Janet Graham** in Finance & Administration or **Terry Jacobson**, the Director's secretary, to have

access to phone numbers, medical information, etc. If your contact information has changed since the last time you filled out a personal information sheet, please notify Janet Graham of the changes.

New letterhead debuts

The letters going to supplemental payment recipients this year are being printed on a new version of our ORS letterhead. Since ORS is now composed of four specific retirement systems **and** the Defined Contribution and Deferred Compensation Plans, the Leadership Team felt the DC/DC Plans should be included on the ORS letterhead.

When our current supply of letterhead is used up, you will start seeing the new version coming out of your printer trays. Look for the addition of "Defined Contribution Plan" and "Deferred Compensation Plans" in the upper right hand corner of the letterhead.

Thought for the day:

A new idea is first condemned as ridiculous, and then dismissed as trivial, until finally it becomes what everybody knows.

— William James

CIC changes to improve customer service

Imagine our customers hearing a real, live voice rather than a recording when they call ORS during regular business hours.

Approximately a month ago, the ORS phone system was reprogrammed so all incoming calls would flow through CIC, rather than part of them overflowing to another unit through an ACD (Automated Call Distribution) switch. Now *all* incoming calls *stay* in CIC for CIC staff to answer, and customers are transferred

only if they require specific information CIC representatives can't access.

Both internal and external customers benefit from this change. Incoming callers no longer have to listen to long, pre-programmed messages and press numbers on their phone pads before they can talk to a person.

Internally, Operations staff can attend to their daily responsibilities without having to worry about being staffed in to handle general

calls overflowing to them through the ACD lines – interruptions are minimal, and intended to resolve very specific issues.

CIC breaks another call volume record

Calls answered through CIC reached an all-time high on February 29 – **1275** total calls were taken between 8:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Thanks to John Donovan's and Mary Ann Vicini's staffs who came in to help!



Have you had trouble accessing ORS Word templates – like the ORS Letter or ORS Memo templates, or others you need? It's possible that your PC hasn't been "told" where to find those templates. But it's not hard to fix.

Within Word you need to tell it where to find the templates you need. There are two "pointers" – one for "personal" templates you create yourself (usually stored on your hard drive or **c:** drive) – and "workgroup" templates all ORS staff can use.

These files include not only the ORS memo and letter templates, but also the Public Schools memory paragraphs and form letter templates, and a number of other templates

for specialty use. You should not have any *ORS-wide* templates stored on your hard drive (**c:**) because they won't get changed when the master shared drive files are updated.

To tell Word where to find the templates, do the following:

Open Word. Select from the main menus **TOOLS**, then **OPTIONS**, then go to the tab item that says **FILE LOCATIONS** and scroll down the list to the **Work Group Templates** line (make sure it's highlighted). Click on the modify button at the bottom right of the screen.

If the "Folder name" window doesn't have something like **e:/template** or **f:/template** (or the drive name you're pointing to as your shared drive), then

you're probably not pointing to a valid directory. You **SHOULD NOT** be pointing to your hard drive (**c:**).

If the "Folder name" window doesn't show a shared drive Template directory, go to the "Look in" window at the top and click on it to pull down the file directory structure. Maneuver down to the shared drive you are assigned to use (either **MPSERSFiles@MPSERS@DMBRetirement** or **FSRetirementShared@DMBRetirement**), and go to the **TEMPLATE** directory.

Select that and click **OK**. Click **OK** on the "Options" window and return to the blank document in Word.

Select **FILE**, **NEW** from the top menu options, and you should see many template files to choose from.

Comings & Goings in ORS



Kimberly Gilbert

Kimberly Gilbert, a new State employee, joined ORS on March 13 as a general office assistant in Administration. She will be working in the mailroom and records areas. Welcome to ORS, Kimberly!

Ken Theis, IT/R Visions ORS Project Manager and team leader for the New Foundations Team, left March 1 for a new position in Family Independence Agency.

Correction to changing ARS password

Last issue, in the article, *Do you know about ARS?* the procedures for changing your password were misreported. Following is the correct procedure:

After you log on to ARS, on the ARS MAIN MENU screen, enter 90 in the ENTER CHOICE field. To change your password, just follow the instructions on the CHANGE PASSWORD SCREEN.

Updated Policies and Procedures



Check out these new and/or revised Policies and Procedures. You can find them in the pol_proc directory in the FSRetirementShared@DMBRetirement2.

Policy:

ORS 72 Sick Leave

Procedures:

- FA3** New Employee Preparation (for Supervisors, Managers, and F & A)
 - FA28** Adding Incoming Requests to the Automated File Tracker
 - FA43** Viewing MPSERS Member Information Accounts
 - FA51** Tracking Multiple Files in the Automated File Tracker
 - FA57** Processing and Filing Returned MPSERS Paper Updates
 - FA61** Viewing State Retirement Visual System (SRVS)
 - FA96** Receiving Filmed Documents from Offsite
 - FA102** Deleting Payroll Files
 - FA103** Assembling Orientation Booklets
 - FA105** Making Separator Pages for Orientation Booklets
 - FA108** Diazo and Confidential Recycle
 - Oper109** BCBSM Funds Transfer Request
 - Oper166** Determining Billing for Excess Earnings
- The procedure, **Oper218** SERS – Retirement Benefit Estimator is now obsolete.

This Scramble is full of the write stuff!

In his youth, your friendly Scramble editor's brother professed his desire to become a great writer. When asked to define "great" he said, "I want to write stuff that the whole world will read, stuff that people will react to on a truly emotional level, stuff that will make them scream, cry, howl in pain and anger!" He now works for one of the leading software companies, writing error messages!

You might think the following is an error, but it's just this issue's Scramble. You won't want to wait until the answer is printed in the next LookOut, so put on your thinking cap and figure it out!

werheht oyu nitkh uyo nac
ro hatt ouy natc,
uyo rea sylualu girth.
renhy rofd



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