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Stakeholder Webcast

Transcript

July 16, 2008

STAKEHOLDER WEBCAST TRANSCRIPT

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Transcript

>> Welcome to the department of health and human services. Grants.gov Quarterly Stakeholder Meeting.

I'm Michael Pellegrino, Grants.gov outreach coordinator, thank you for joining us.

We have a full agenda for this webcast. First I will give you a contact center update as part of that update you will see the impact on the contact center when we experience system issues.

Dima will address these recent system issues in his discussion.

Then we'll have an overview of the all about grants section of our website.

Next talking about the transition to Adobe, discuss some recent issues and the system build 2008-02.

finally we have a representative from the department of state to give tips on over-seized grant application.

this will be an educational information for most of you.

Let's get started.

Joining me today in studio are Dima Smirnoff, our Grants.gov information technology leader.

Vince Sprouls, Grants.gov program advisor and we welcome Greg young from department of state the our broadcast today.

Welcome to all of you.

I would like to remind you that you can email questions during the broadcast Grants.gov-webcast@HHS.gov.

We will be answering questions after the presentation. After the session we will complete -- we will compile all the questions that come in and place them with the answers on the Grants.gov site.

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Our charts can also be found on the Grants.gov home page under the "What's New this Week..." section by clicking on the webcast stakeholder bullet under "What's New This Week at Grants.gov". remember to email us your questions. Once again, Grants.gov-webcast at HHS.gov, this email address is only active during our session today.

First what we would like to talk about is give you a quarterly update, we would like to talk numbers. As you can see this chart itself, the numbers represent figures through June, the month of June for fiscal year 2007 as well as this fiscal year 2008.

The submissions are through '08 of June, 158,320.

This is an 11% growth over fiscal year '07.

15% of those 158,000 submissions have come through in Adobe.

AOR is the Authorized Organization Representative.

Over the same period last year we increased the AOR 48%.

AORs are people within the organization who have the authority to submit grants.

Our contact center continues to grow in volume as well.

it's a 3% increase over last year from 170,934 contacts.

so what we would like to do now is talk about information, get into numbers a little bit more on the contact time.

before we do this, it's very important to note that Adobe Reader 9.0 has been released, Grants.gov tested it, it is compatible with all of our formats. Adobe Acrobat 9.0, 9 dot 0 is also compatible.

at this time Grants.gov we support Adobe Reader version 9.0, 8.1.1, and 8.1.1.

so now we will jump into some contact center numbers.

What we want to do is we want to show you the impact that our system that has, when we have

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system issues the impact on the call center.

so the chart you're looking at, we taken a time shot of April during a normal operational week when we had no system issues, there were normal closings meaning there wasn't a large spike in closings, and we've taken a shot at the week of June 9 through 13 when we had system issues that DIMA will talk about.

As you can see clearly when the system is slow or we're having issues, the calls spike.

So if you're calling -- if you had calls during this period of time you would have experienced the longer wait times, this is the reason.

The next two charts are just showing a little bit more, you can see here on that same time period in April, same time period being Monday through Friday, normal operational week.

you can see over the same time period -- not the same time period but over the period of time in June when we experienced these system issues calls have spiked 53%.

now, June is a busy month for us but of course when we have system issues you can see the increase.

This chart itself shows you the month of June for calls only.

17% increase.

this is also as we were discussing there were some system issues but as you can see, as the submissions increase, we have seen contact into the contact center increase as well.

one of the things what you're looking at now, this chart, shows you the integrative voice response system today.

this is when you call our 1, (800)518-4726 support number which our contact center is open Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. Eastern Time.

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When you call in today this is the configuration of the voice response.

up front we give a message, if you're calling for financial assistance, we direct people to the small business administration, or GOVbenefits.gov.

the number one call to our contact center are people looking for financial assistance or have general questions around grants.

today we have option number 1, NIH specific call.

NIH is our largest call volume into the contact center.

today the option number 2 is for registration and submission.

Option number 3 is for all other calls.

So effective on July 28th we're going to change the IBR.

what we're doing is getting rid of the up front message that talks about financial assistance and getting right into the options.

so option number 1 people will push that if they do have questions regarding financial assistance. or general questions.

and you can see by the chart you'll have two sub options on that.

NIH will now become option number 2.

option number 3 will be for general questions including registration issues.

these will be questions and comments regarding Don, CCR and Grants.gov.

so look for those changes on July 28th.

what we will do prior, we will pose this information on our website as always and we'll show you our list serve at the end of the presentation but we push the list out via the list service box.

one question we get asked, how do I receive awards?

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Can you give tips?

This is a snapshot of our new all about grants section of the website.

in this section itself you can look for WEBINARS such as this, tips of the month we post on there. we also have a list for each of the agencies in coordination and cooperation with agencies we're working to keep it up to date.

As they update their grant tips or stuff on their website, information and material, we'll update it on ours as well.

So we're taking a look for it.

You can submit success stories.

We get asked about the great things that happen in the grant world.

somebody receives an award, what does the community do with that opportunity?

What benefit did it have on the general public?

If you have a story to share please send it and click on the link, send it to us, we'll contact you and discuss it with you and we may with your approval of course utilize it for our website or we may use it for our news letter or information.

so at this time I would like the turn it over the Vince.

Vince will talk to you about the transition to Adobe.

Vince.

>> Thank you Michael.

I would like to talk to everybody about the transition to the Adobe system.

as you know the target day of June 30th is passed so by and large most of our applications now are

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being posted in pure edge.

there are agencies that have asked for exceptions and they have been granted exemptions and they'll still post so you'll still see some.

and you know the agencies out there that are still using PR edge but by and large most transitioned over by the end of June time frame.

the next -- the next slide will tell you here, we do have a list of the agencies that have 100% of their Adobe submission -- submissions in Adobe, and they're all the way -- and ones that are still have not fully gone over it.

some of them are -- some of the agencies Michael as you know have some still hanging in PR edge but mostly now in Adobe and a handful are still only a couple of still doing all and pure edge.

I would like to finish up with the one question that comes to me a lot about is because we get so many submissions for the members of NIH, NIH did post three pilot funding opportunities due in October.

they -- until the end of the year the rest of all their applications will be in pure edge but they plan on converting all their pure edge opportunities in December into adobe.

That's the NIH update.

because I know we get questions about when is the NIH going to move over the Adobe.

This is the latest information we have and we got it directly from NIH.

>> One final question we know of course but as the agencies transition in their specific dates how can the applicants keep in tune and know specifically when agencies are transitioned?

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>> That chart, the second chart of all agencies we showed is on the website.

We do update that web, that chart on website.

So I would suggest that's the best way.

if they're interested that's where I would look.

where I do look.

>> Thanks.

>> So at this point whether we would like to do is turn it over to DIMA.

he will talk about recent system issue shoes and our next scheduled bill.

What's going to be in that.

>> Thank you very much, Michael.

I would like to start about talking with some of the system issues we have had.

Grants.gov at the present time is separated into what we called the 2006 system and the 2007 system.

2007 system being the one that carries the Adobe application.

By nature of the whole transition you're going to be seeing more and more applications coming in on the 2007 system.

so let me start by presenting the first, it's the -- what we have been calling in house the 500 error.

that's because an applicant will see an error screen saying 500 error and then there's other text involved.

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The point of that is that the applicant was not able to submit in a timely way and it caused a lot of problems including repeat submissions and just led to a very poor applicant experience with Grants.gov.

the dates on that, it started in early May, and the analysis took quite a while.

what we had to do eliminate some things we thought might be causing the problem.

We implemented changes and in fact we were happy with the results.

it took further analysis and finally we were able to identify it as a problem with the default configuration in some of the JAVA script code.

they required us to change that configuration then we no longer had that -- the error.

the end time was May 14th when we implemented the error, put it into production and then applicants no longer suffered under that.

let me move on.

the next one had to do with what we're calling the unable to submit the incident.

this was a problem that started on June 10th.

what applicants were experiencing, they were hitting the submit button, submitting their application and not getting a confirmation that said everything is okay.

and of course that caused a lot of concern.

increased numbers of calls to the help desk and a very poor applicant experience on Grants.gov.

that took also a good deal of analysis to figure out exactly what was going on there.

the unable to submit issue was one that took us a lot of analysis, a lot of work in the Q&A to make sure we were drilling down as deep as with we needed to in order to find the solution to the problem.

it turned out to be a code issue.

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what we call the intake server.

that required bypassing part of the old code in place and writing a bit of new code in order to eliminate that error condition.

that occurred on June 14th.

That's when it went into production after testing and that problem is no longer experienced by our applicants.

Then the final one, this one is unfortunately one that still exists today.

It's one we call the broken pipe issue.

that name comes from the error message users get when they're trying to submit.

some users see a statement on the screen that says broken pipe.

what happens is they don't get a confirmation that their application is submitted successfully.

again, this will result in multiple submissions and poor user experience on Grants.gov.

so what we've done is implement a workaround.

That's because we haven't found the root problem.

I can tell you we have got Adobe engineers involved, our systems integrator contractor is involved and on a day-to-day basis they're still trying to uncover exactly what's going on.

but the number one concern is making sure users can use the system.

so what we've done is implement a workaround.

and we have -- around.

we have got a site on the Grants.gov website that describes this in detail.

but I want to describe it for you here now.

the point is a user needs to use the web browser to submit their application.

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what I mean by this is whether you're using Internet explorer or Netscape or fire fox, what you do is open the browser first then go to the menu at the top where it says file, open.

and in the file open dialogue box what you do is select your application.

the dot PDF document you have on your hard drive of whatever system you're using, open that, then conduct your submit.

If you do that you won't suffer from the broken pipe problem.

I can tell you that even though we're suffering these three incidents so far this year we're working hard to make sure our transition to Adobe goes smoothly.

so we're going to continue to work on that and make whatever system configuration updates and changes that it takes to make this work.

I wanted to talk also about along those lines a new system build we have coming up.

I think actually Michael we have just found out we'll be set to go by -- right now the date is August 9th for our new system build.

that's an update to our software.

and it's going to include a lot of enhancements that are going to be enjoyed by applicants, agencies, and will actually make our system run better because we're moving away from some of the code that is left over from the system years ago.

so it's a valuable update, it's very good.

we have got enhancements there to agencies that uses our system to system capability.

agencies that have their own in house system and link to Grants.gov in an electronic way without using the graphical user interface.

and I think they're going to see some improvements there in their ability to modify and edit synopsis

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for example.

I know that's something they have been wanting for quite a while.

we have also got other enhancements.

Most notably from the final applicant perspective is a Google search capability.

now, right now an applicant can search through Grants.gov and find opportunities that they want to through a nice selection -- dialogue selection on the screen.

what we've added now is an ability for applicant to come in and search our help file, our frequently asked questions, and the website in general, all of our information text, that's now searchable and what they'll see is a very familiar Google-type display, same as you would see if you went to Google.com.

and type in your search term, up will come a list of whatever it finds.

then you can click on it and go to that section of our website that has that information.

it's a nice enhancement and I think people like that.

we have got also another enhancement is improving the consistency on our website to match up our fields and our items, all the different pages so that it's consistent.

that's been something we have wanted to do and now we're going to have it in this release so that's also a user enhancement.

one additional improvement many users have been wanting is what we call the RSS feed, this will help move us away from the enormous quantities of email we're sending out.

RSS feed gives -- anybody who wants to come to the site the ability to select it and then they'll get opportunity listings, announcements, whatever they select from our menu.

I think that's going to be something that users appreciate.

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it's also enhanced with the ability to select -- right down to a granular level the kind of things they receive, what sorts of opportunity announcements.

>> Back to the broken pipe issue.

since it's Adobe, with Adobe applications, and an intermittent.

so how can an applicant identify if in fact grants receives an application?

>> That's a good question.

we'll direct everybody to the home page where there's a track your application link on the left side of our home page.

that gives you the ability to check the status of your application to make sure it's submitted initially through the next several levels so that's an important place to go.

track your application.

couple of other points.

As DIMA mentioned on page 25.

at the home page of our website today we had detailed instructions on the work arounds for the broken pipe issue.

so you can see that by going to the home page.

another thing is if -- what happens just to explain the process to you, if we -- if an applicant receives an error message and contacts our help desk we try to assist that.

if we don't know what that error message is, if it's new, that is escalated to the program management office as well as system integrator general dynamics, we address it, work on a solution including work

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arounds.

so please, if you are experiencing something, contact the contact September center, you get a customer service ticket number and we'll begin to work it.

so at this time we would like to welcome Greg.

it's the first time we have had an agency on our program in some time.

Greg is from department of state.

We'd like to turn it over to you Greg.

Q. Thank you very much.

I appreciate the opportunity to talk to your stakeholders.

Pleasure to be here.

for those that don't know what the department of state does, we're obviously the lead foreign affairs agency.

we advise the President on foreign affairs issues.

we're probably most famous for passports but we also maintain relationships with over 190 countries and physically maintain buildings at 260 locations.

so we're happy to talk to you today about our assistance opportunities.

we have opportunities, we issue over \$5 billion or approximately \$5 billion in U.S. Federal assistance.

most of those organizations are operating overseas.

I can't stress that enough.

we don't do a lot of work here in the United States.

mistakenly we get many phone calls asking what awards are available here in the United States.

There are some but most of the work is done overseas.

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we give primarily to organizations, non-governmental organizations.

We do give a few grants to individuals both foreign and domestic.

for those of you who aren't familiar with how the state department work, the state department has bureaus and those individual bureaus implement their grant programs.

next chart you'll see a listing of several bureaus within the department.

some of the major ones that advertise on Grants.gov very often are the top three.

population refugees and migration, as you can tell by the name their primary purpose is to help refugees in foreign countries and they also do bring refugees here to the United States and help get them acclimated.

bureau of culture affairs.

They're a big player.

they do a lot of work involving education, cultural, teacher exchanges, they might do a program where they bring speakers to a university from perhaps Cairo to the United States into Wisconsin or vice versa.

those types of issues.

the bureau of democracy human rights and labor, their mission is to promote democracy, human rights and fairly boar laws throughout the world.

on the next slide you see that we have some more bureaus.

one of the more interesting ones are political and military affairs office, the office of weapons removal and abatement.

their primary focus is collecting small and light arms and humanitarian de-mining so they go out to places ravaged by war and we give grants to help pick up the land mines so that innocent civilians

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aren't injured or killed.

next slide.

these tips are for -- are overseas applicants hopefully most of the domestic applicants are familiar with Grants.gov, they're registered.

They understand.

for those who are an overseas applicant you should know that just because you are overseas you do follow the same processes as the domestic applicants.

the only issue for the overseas folks is that certain steps in the process that frankly are out of Grants.gov's control take longer than for domestic folks.

so again, it's a three step process, overseas applicants like domestic must obtain a DUnN's number.

they should go to website and obtain that number from the Dunn and Bradstreet website.

There are offices around the world.

that's your second point of contact.

work with the website first to get your DUNN's number.

there is an extra step before you can register with CCR.

for the domestic folks once you register they automatically assign you what's called an N cage code.

if you are overseas you must request that N cage code.

on the next chart we'll talk about how long it takes for that.

this is actually a better case.

these are worse case scenarios.

but again, you need to get a Dunn's number, that could take up to a month.

dunn and Bradstreet promise a 24 hour turn around in the United States.

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Overseas things can take longer.

part of that is physically validating where you are, your physical address.

the N cage code, it could take up to two months if you're in a non-NATO aligned country.

that sounds strange but that requirement is from the Department of Defense and those are the ones that implement the N cage number registration.

Finally you need to get registered in CCR.

that can take up to two weeks.

you can see the quickest time the registering with Grants.gov, that typically can be done within 24 hours.

again, these are worst case scenarios.

okay.

these tips here on these slides are for NGOs yet to receive US Government funding.

we typically work with a lot of NGOs overseas that have never gotten U.S. funding before.

so we need to be satisfied that you are able to responsibly handle the funds and accomplish the goals and objectives set out in the request for applications.

As we mentioned earlier, you will need a Dunn's number.

if you are in the United States you will need an EIN Federal tax ID number.

if you're in the United States you need proof of a 501C 3.

in some other countries they have the same non-profit type of a status certification.

these tips, these typically areas where we have problems in receiving applications from applicants.

can't stress this enough.

do not use any special characters in the names of the attachments with the exception of the

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underscore because typically what happens is folks are waiting until the last day to submit to application.

they're not allowing for the 48 hours of the validation process, if they put in something in the title that will cause it to fail the validation, they then don't have time to go back in, fix the problem, resubmit so that the grant package can get validated by the closing date.

again, these are some best practice tips.

These are specifically from the bureau of population refugees and migration but I believe these apply typically to most bureaus that do grants for your executive summary please limit that, we don't want a very long executive summary.

for those of you NGOs out there, the key these days is accountability, goals and objectives so make sure that you're highlighting measurable goals and objectives in your proposals.

Most bureaus are giving preferential treatment looking at one application versus another application in that goals are measurable and achievable versus something more nebulous, if you will.

again, to summarize what needs to be done for the overseas applicants and to highlight areas that we have some issues, one of the other major problems that we have is that folks mistakenly think they are authorized as the authorized organization representative and they're not.

We review all the trouble ticket calls that go through the contact center, and one of the two most common ones are someone failing validation for putting special characters in attachment and second one folks thinking they're authorized to submit when in reality they're not.

Make sure you're checking with the E-business point of contact and your organization and verify you are authorized to submit that application.

as you saw in a previous slide the department of state has completely moved over to Adobe.

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you should not see any pure edge announcements out there.

if you do, that is a mistake.

feel free to contact me.

I am listed as the department of state agency point of contact on the Grants.gov website.

As you just heard, Adobe release ad new version so please check with Grants.gov to make sure you are using the latest version.

as mentioned today, please print your confirmation page so that we can work with you if there are any errors or issues.

I can't stress this enough.

please contact the contact center and get a trouble ticket.

if you do not contact the contact center and get a truck ticket we have -- trouble ticket we have no way of validating any attempt by you or your organization to try and submit on time.

and I thank you very much for the opportunity to speak to your stakeholders.

>> Thanks, Greg.

Appreciate it.

One final question besides all the great information Greg gave us, where can applicants go the find more information about department of state programs?

>> I'm glad you asked.

it's been a pleasure working with your team.

we help provide a link on your all about grants page through our website, www.stateBUY.state.gov.

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there you will find a individual link to all of the bureaus that go into much more detail about their programs, their particular regulations, their particular rules.

>> Thanks, Greg.

>> So as always, what we're trying to do with this webcast is try to provide information to you.

There's other communication vehicles we have.

on chart number 44 you see those.

We have what's called a quarterly E-news letter which we sent out yesterday.

that list is up to 39,879 people.

so please sign up for that.

we provide detailed information about what's going on with the program.

we also have a grant email update list serve.

we establish that on January 4th.

that is now up to 19,234 people since January 4th.

What we use that one for is the latest communication was when Adobe Reader 9.0 was released.

we told you via that list serve posted on our website also and once we test it and it's compatible we push out a message also.

So we strongly recommend you sign up for both of those.

we are also available to come out and present via webEX if it's local in D.C. we can come out in person.

yesterday I was up at the library of Congress presenting to a Congressman from Texas a regional

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conference with a bunch of leaders, so if you would like us to participate in one of your grant workshops or just to give a find and apply session for your organization, you can set out the outreach request form on our website, submit it to our support@grants.gov, it makes its way to me and we schedule the event.

we also have that webEX tool where we conduct sessions on line now.

via the Internet.

You get to see me and one of my teammates.

As rinse is doing a session you'll see him.

it's interactive which is key.

we're talking to you today but these interactive sessions are great because we give feedback from you, we're able to answer questions live with you.

as all you can call our help December, 1, (800)518-4726 or email us at support@grants.gov, 24/7.

I get the question suppose I emailed you Friday night about 8:59 when you're about ready to turn off the lights? What happens?

On Monday morning 7 a.m. we have three dedicated customer support representatives in the email box ready to answer those emails.

and get them back.

so at this time what we're going to do is ready to open up the floor to questions.

Please submit your questions.

I'm being told we have a few already coming in.

once again, that email address is Grants.gov-webcast@HHS.gov.

this one looks like one for me.

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as contact center part of my responsibilities are the contact center, I oversee the help desk so if you have issues or questions please submit them to me.

the question is, how will the contact center new call-in menu options affect any wait time when I call in for assistance?

The plan is it's going to expedite your wait time.

It will be quick.

there are days for instance on Fridays we have large submissions where if we have a number of callers there maybe the increase in wait time may increase a little bit.

But this new design of the script, the voice of the IBR is to expedite and get it in quicker and answer your question quicker.

for as simple as when I call my credit card or somebody else you have that script up front explaining to you why you're calling.

That's part of the July 28 release is we're eliminating that up front script but we will notify you for regular callers please note, we have out dated our script.

and our selection.

another one.

can I find grant training on the all about grants page?

You can.

for the department of state you can go to all about grants, click on their link and you can see what they have going on.

you can see we're advertising when we have sessions ourselves at Grants.gov.

many sessions you can't participate in, for instance yesterday's was invitation only but keep in mind if

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you want a training session as I mentioned, fill out that request form and we'll schedule something with you.

another one.

does my application need to be validated to be considered or simply submitted on time?

Does my application need to be validated to be considered or simply submitted on time?

Okay.

Greg, that's yours.

>> For the department of state, applications need to be validated to be considered for review with all the other applications.

so simply waiting until the last minute on the day of closing and submitting an application and getting that confirmation from Grants.gov, thank you for submitting your application, we are now validating the system.

that does not qualify you as having gotten your application in on time.

so please allow at least 48 hours before the closing date to submit your application.

if there are any errors you'll be able to work with Grants.gov to get that problem resolved so that the program officers at the department of state will have a validated application that was validated before the closing date of the announcement.

>> Thank you, Greg.

It's important to note whenever we present from the Grants.gov program, we tell people me specifically I design it so I say it three to five times in presentation, register early, if you're not

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registered already, register early and submit early.

if you submit early and you experience problems, we can work with you and the agency to get your application in.

another question, I guess we can turn this one to DIMA, it's a technical question.

When will the broken pipe issue be resolved?

>> Well, I would love it to be today.

I'm afraid I can't say it will be.

it's a difficult problem that's proven to be challenging.

we have engineers from Adobe, general dynamics, we're all taking as close a look at it as possible on a day to day if not hour to hour basis.

We still are working on it.

that's why the work around is so important.

that's why we posted it on the website.

so I don't know when it will be fixed.

the sooner the better and ear continuing to push forward to get a solution for it.

Meantime, please use the work around.

>> So what we'll do on the home page where you see the work around right now for the broken pipe, once we do have resolution we will Post-It on the website.

we do weekly website updates usually Friday morning but in cases like this we do a hot deploy and we'll post a solution on there at the earliest once we do know.

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this one will be for me.

what do you mean by success stories?

What kind of information are you looking for?

We're looking from start to finish honestly.

one example I gave is a small non-profit organization, they were looking to provide training and tools for high school -- people who didn't make it through high school, it wasn't for GED, just provide training and skill sets so they can get administrative jobs.

so in essence what we look to do is just from the start, how did you find the grant opportunity?

Did you find it -- it's on Grants.gov, but did you find it from an agency website or Grants.gov?

How was the apply process?

Did you find the forms easy?

Was it hard to fill out?

When you submit it, was it a timely response?

Did you get the award?

When you got the award, what did occur?

How many people were involved? Did it benefit five people, 5,000 people?

Vince was talking about NIH posting in Adobe.

There's a large national institute of health, there's a lot of research being conducted.

so if something occurs that benefits the public, please let us know.

hopefully that answers your question.

>> What versions of Adobe Acrobat are currently supported?

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>> That's a very good question.

Let me say first off, version 9 which is the latest is supported.

it's also possible to in a previous version of acrobat update the reader version that it uses internally. but I'm going to direct all those users to Adobe to understand exactly what has to be done to upgrade and I also want to direct them to our website that lists out the versions at Grants.gov.

>> Couple of side notes on that also.

on our download software page we list the latest compatible version of Adobe Reader which takes you to their site.

they have -- they do -- they no longer Adobe has the 8.1.1 download on the page.

second, this is the first time we received this question.

will a transcript of this webcast be available?

>> Sure. One thing is when we archive it we do archive it with closed captions so you can see it.

but -- I say sure.

we'll work with the studio to ensure we have a transcript of it.

should we use the work around solution every time we try to submit on Grants.gov until otherwise notified?

I'm going to assume this work around means specifically regarding the broken pipe.

one of the solutions, one of the other solutions we provided to the contact center when you call is in fact that work around.

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one of the parameters we set is if you're submitting in Adobe and you are experiencing a slow submission time, to stop your submission, follow that work around which DIMA walked through, open up another version of explorer, Internet browser, any browser, open up your saved application and submit it through them.

that is a work around.

is Adobe professional?

8.1 still usable for Grants.gov Adobe Reader applications or must I upgrade to acrobat professional 9.0?

>> Actually I'm going to say you really need to make sure you're taking a look at our website and the versions that we say we support.

I believe that one is okay to use.

>> So we'll confirm that, the answer the that question and it will be on our website.

Is there a complete list of enhancements posted on the website?

For those of you new viewers what we have done, the timing worked out perfect for our last webcast.

On our last webcast we had already developed a communication for that first bill.

what we do with that communication is we have it in PDF, we show the existing system, the thing -- way things were, and the new enhancement.

we explain exactly what occurred showing you screen shots.

so with the next build on August 9th, one week prior we will have that communication out via list serve, the grant email update list serve and we'll Post-It on our home page.

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will we be able to leave a message with the contact center if the phone lines are too full?

Actually at this point you cannot do that.

you can do it when the hours are closed but I'll take that back to consideration.

it's the first time we have been asked that question.

we'll look at that.

to my knowledge right now we do not have an option for you to push to go to voice mail.

so we will take that as an action item and address it.

it was mentioned that grant -- proposals, grant application packages need to be validated to be considered on time for submission.

how long does the validation typically take?

I can, Greg, answer that question.

for Grants.gov the validation takes 24 to 48 hours.

you want to add anything from department of state?

>> No, we defer to you guy and how long it could take.

obviously if the system is running slow I'm told it could be take longer.

>> Contractually it's 24 to 48 hours that our system has to validate.

sometimes it's less than ten minutes.

On arch it's -- average it's less than two hours.

Those days we have a large of closing and there's a lot of submission coming through it may take that 24 to 48 hours.

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Vince wants to add something.

>> One thing I think we don't want to leave the impression, most agencies go with the submission, not the validation time frame.

>> Submission date time.

>> correct.

so state does a handful of agencies go with the validation but most go with the submission time frame.

so we don't want to confuse this issue.

I think the user will state that in the announcement.

>> I want to pile in on that one then.

For those applicants should definitely check with the office that's offering the opportunity to make sure they know very clearly what the rules are.

because that's a big distinction that needs to be clear.

>> For applicant immunity, I ran into somebody yesterday who has seen me numerous times.

When I do present that's one thing I say is make sure you clearly read the instructions one of my standard jokes is I am not an instruction reader so I would be out of luck in the grant world but it's important the read instructions because all the agencies may be different.

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There is not standard guidelines and policies across the board.

Anything else, gentleman?

Another broken pipe one.

if we have submission problems, broken pipes and use the work around method will we still receive the submission receipt and all validation emails from Grants.gov to confirm that the submission went through successfully?

>> Yes.

let me answer that very succinctly, yes.

it's valuable to use that work around for right now.

For the time being that's the best way to make sure you get that confirmation and that you get the -- all the associated emails that have to do with passing validation.

>> To be clear, will applicants need to purchase and install Adobe Acrobat standards which will allow us to create dot PDF files to allow us to submit as part of the application?

>> The answer is no, you don't have to patch it, to handle our Grants.gov applications for our opportunities that we post, you can use the free Adobe Reader download.

again, we've got the program on our website, it's a free download from Adobe.com and we have the link on Grants.gov.

>> Once again, Adobe Reader 9.0 is the latest compatible version for downloads 3 on our website.

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so unfortunately we're out of time.

That's the last question we received.

We hope you found the discussion helpful.

We would like to thank you for joining us, for continued updates please visit our website Grants.gov.

if you miss some information and would like to view this webcast again, we will have it -- an archived version posted on our site within a week.

So once again, we appreciate your feedback and we would like you to submit topics of interest for our October 15th webcast.

We want to keep it clear, concise, short and to the point so we want to know what you want us to talk about.

I would like to thank DIMA, Vince, Greg, appreciate you joining us today.

Appreciate you tuning in see you on October 15th.