AGENCYWIDE DOCUMENTS ACCESS AND MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (ADAMS) USER GROUP MEETING
May 28, 2008
1:00–2:00 p.m.
NRC Headquarters
Room O1 F22

Agenda for ADAMS User Group Meeting #15

1.   General Announcements and Introductions---Anna McGowan (1:05–1:10 p.m.)

2.   Opening remarks—Anna McGowan (1:10–1:20 p.m.)

3.   PARS, Current Operating Status—Anna McGowan (1:20–1:30 p.m.)

4.   Next Generation ADAMS, Status—Tom Smith (1:30–1:45 p.m.)

5.   Member Issues and Questions—Anna McGowan (1:45–1:55 p.m.)

6.   Adjournment (2:00 p.m.)

Meeting Minutes

1.   General announcements and introductions (1:05–1:10 p.m.)

Anna McGowan opened the meeting at 1:05 p.m. She introduced the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) staff in the meeting room. The staff present included public document room (PDR) staff, Tom Smith (Information and Records Services Division (IRSD)), and the IRSD branch secretary. She also asked the users on the telephone bridge to introduce themselves.

Ms. McGowan discussed the changes in the public document room and in division management since the last meeting on November 14, 2007. There is a new Division Director of IRSD, Joseph Holonich, and a new Information Services Branch Chief, Gary Young. Ms. McGowan also noted the recent retirement of a long-standing PDR librarian, Marsha Ward, and introduced Mary Mendiola, a new PDR Librarian.

2.   Opening remarks – Anna McGowan (1:10 – 1:20 p.m.)

Ms. McGowan described the new public service desk rotation in the Public Document Room, which began in February 2008. PDR librarians now work some hours in the NRC Technical Library and the library staff works in the PDR each week. This new shared schedule promotes knowledge transfer within the section and expands the understanding of the respective subject matter for all members of the Technical Information Center Section.

She also reminded everyone about the new telephone reference hours for the PDR. The new phone hours (as of February 1, 2008) are 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., Eastern Time, Monday–Friday (excluding Federal holidays).

Ms. McGowan also explained that the agency is posting the documents that it is receiving as part of the combined operating license applications (COLAs) to the NRC Internet site as soon as possible. Copies of the COLAs that are available on CD or DVD will be sent to the PDR as part of the process.

3.   PARS, Current Operating Status—Anna McGowan (1:20–1:30 p.m.)

Ms. McGowan reported the current ADAMS operating status as stable.

4.   Next Generation ADAMS, Status—Tom Smith (1:30–1:45 p.m.)

Mr. Smith told the ADAMS User Group (AUG) that he became the Communications Manager of the Next-Generation ADAMS Project two months ago. However, he will be on rotation in the NRC Office of the Executive Director of Operations (OEDO) until September 2008.

Mr. Smith then gave a presentation on Next-Generation ADAMS to the group; it is the same one that he gave to the agency's executive steering committee and to the user advisory group. These two NRC groups provide governance, guidance, and direction for NRC's information technology (IT) projects.

Mr. Smith explained that, although the project was initially called Next-Generation ADAMS (or Next-Gen or ngADAMS); it is now called NextGen because the project will incorporate other IT needs of the agency, beyond those of ADAMS. NextGen provides the foundation to replace

core content (ADAMS) and in addition add the integrated capabilities of searching the database, records management, taxonomies to aid database organization, document profiling, and collaboration capabilities.

He also referred to earlier reports on NextGen provided in two previous AUG meetings; AUG Meeting 13, held on May 9, 2007, and AUG Meeting 14, held on November 14, 2007.

During AUG Meeting 13, the NextGen project manager, Jack Montgomery, reported that a governance group is in place to discuss the vision of NextGen, and assured AUG members that the content in ADAMS is not going away.

During AUG Meeting 14, the acting NextGen project manager, Jim Baughman, explained that NextGen is a new Federal information technology investment. He was preparing a business case for the system, which Mr. Smith discussed later in this current meeting. Mr. Smith mentioned that AUG members, as well as members of the public, had participated in the ADAMS survey. The survey results are available on the NRC Internet site.

Mr. Smith then provided the AUG with some definitions.

(a)   ECMP is Enterprise Content Management Project, which in this case refers to NRC agencywide information.

(b)   A business case is part of a project's mandate, and addresses the business need that the project is designed to meet. It includes the reasons for the project, the expected business benefits, the options considered, the expected costs of the project, a gap analysis and the expected risks.

Mr. Smith then discussed the objectives of the NextGen system. He noted that the ADAMS system has aged to the point where the system construction and application software are no longer viable for the NRC's emerging workspace. A modern replacement is required that integrates with current and future NRC systems, processes, and industry workspace and delivers the following benefits:

(a)   Enhanced features that improve each office's effectiveness and productivity. It must also have the ability to grow in the future.
(b)   Address security vulnerabilities associated with the current system.
(c)   Increase the agency's records management effectiveness and efficiency.
(d)   Decrease the complexity and costs of the system.
(e)   Be easy to use.

In other words, we're unifying the technology stack at the NRC.

Mr. Smith then spoke about the overall approach and timing. There are five distinct phases for the Next-Gen project: inception, elaboration, construction, transition, and operations and maintenance (O&M). The NextGen project team has developed a timeline for encompassing each phase of the NextGen project, from inception to retirement.

The inception phase ran from 2007 to 2008, and has now been completed with the development and submission of the business case. We are now currently in the elaboration phase, which is scheduled to last from 2008 to 2009. The construction phase is from 2009 to 2010, the transition phase from 2010 to 2011, and the O&M phase from 2011 to 2012.

Mr. Smith again thanked the AUG and other public ADAMS users for participating and completing the public survey. The results were very helpful in preparing the business case.

The requirements identified during the inception phase were collected from various NRC stakeholders. The NextGen team used several internal and external collection methods, including: interviews, focus groups, a regional site visit, an internal agencywide Web survey (300+ responses), and a public comment Web site survey (59 responses). The survey results identified additional requirements as well as their respective priorities. Respondents ranked the following features based on importance:

(a)   User Friendly interface
(b)   Google-like search functionality
(c)   Real workflow with electronic signatures
(d)   Fix and automate the profiling process
(e)   Easier saving, copying, and moving of documents
(f)   Improved roll-out and training

As part of the information gathering during the inception phase, the project team also spoke to staff of other agencies with similar organizational characteristics to evaluate how they have addressed ECM requirements. The agencies contacted by the project team were: the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration, the U.S Environmental Protection Agency, the National Institutes of Health, and the U.S. General Accountability Office.

Using the information gathered from these collection activities, including the feedback from the public survey, the NextGen team formulated a baseline solution. The baseline solution was reviewed and validated by the ADAMS user advisory group (UAG). After adjusting the baseline as necessary, the ADAMS steering committee reviewed and approved the baseline for inclusion in the business case. The baseline solution will include an interface to the NextGen system for the public. The survey results identified additional requirements as well as their respective priorities. The public's concerns focused on: search function, profiling records, ability to generate reports, and alerts. Respondents both inside and outside the NRC also ranked the following features based on importance:

(a)   Improved search/content retrieval
(b)   Improved ease of use
(c)   Improved performance
(d)   Improved integration with other applications
(e)   Improved file/format compatibility
(f)   Increased automation of tasks
(g)   Increased adaptability to individual/organizational needs

Although the timeline for NextGen was developed over a year ago, it is flexible and will evolve as the project goes forward. The NextGen Team submitted the business case on April 22, 2008

With this accomplished, the NextGen team will focus on the next steps including: statement of work development, the acquisition process, and finally the integration and testing phase, and rollout.

Mr. Smith ended his discussion by stating that ADAMS will be 9 years old in November 2008. There were some questions from the AUG:

Q: Will there be beta-testing in the power plants?
A: Mr. Smith explained that beta-testing will occur about 4 months prior to the rollout.

Q: Will the Legacy Library also be in this process?
A: Yes, both Legacy and PARS will be rolled in together.

5.   Member Issues and Questions—Anna McGowan (1:45–1:55 p.m.)

Participants posed the following questions:

Q: How are the document titles in ADAMS determined?
A: The program offices work with the Office of Information Services (OIS), and they agree on a description that fits the topic of the document.

Q: Why are some public ADAMS packages not complete?
A: The nonpublic parts of packages are not in PARS, but the public can check with the PDR staff about any missing items. The public can request the documents be reviewed by the appropriate program office by contacting the PDR staff. These requests can only be done for nonpublic, nonsensitive documents, not for documents already marked as sensitive.

Q: A public user asked about reviewing older documents, not yet available in PARS.
A: PDR staff can ask the appropriate program office for review as they are the final authority.

Q: Ms. McGowan said that one of the AUG users asked about the government warning when accessing Citrix-PARS. The user could not scroll down to see the entire warning message.
A: She explained that this is a requirement warning on all Government databases, where the user agrees to the conditions set by the government. Ms. McGowan has asked the NRC computer support center for further guidance.

Q: What is the protocol for adding e-mails to and from NRC and the utility to the docket?
A: E-mails can be official records, and should be added to ADAMS. If the plant Project Manager decides that an e-mail message is a record that should be added to ADAMS, then we will add it. The NRC does not have a policy or a procedure for notifying a licensee that a new item has been added.

ACTION ITEM: This will be passed along to OIS management.

Q: Are the dates in the date added field in ADAMS changed? Is a historical date added?
A: The "Date Added" field is automatically generated by the system when a new document is added. NRC staff cannot and do not change this date manually. The date added field retains the historical date.

ACTION ITEM: This will be confirmed.

Q: Is there a timeout limit in Citrix-ADAMS and in Web-ADAMS?
A: Mr. Smith thought the problem had been resolved after Web-based PARS came back online in February 2005.

ACTION ITEM: Ms. McGowan will ask the Infrastructure and Computer Operations Division (ICOD), within OIS, to gather more information on this issue.

Q: Will NextGen be able to create reports, similar to the current ADAMS?
A: Yes.

Q: Can NRC do more for public outreach? If so, then can the agency assign some people to go back and check if packages are complete? Can they search for nonpublic documents that should be public? Can the NRC have an ADAMS ombudsman?
A: Mr. Smith explained that the documents go through a quality control (QC) process at the office level. The author and owner(s) also check their documents. He asked the AUG to report any incorrect information about a document to the PDR staff, who can report it to the appropriate program office. One of the AUG members on the phone bridge agreed that NRC should have an ADAMS ombudsman.
Ms. McGowan explained that the PDR librarians serve the function of an ADAMS ombudsman for the public. They are advocates for the members of the public and can be very persistent in asking the NRC program offices to review documents for public availability.   She also explained that the PDR staff does not do the actual reviews; therefore, the process could take some time.

The next ADAMS user group meeting is planned for November 2008. The staff will call for agenda items before the meeting.

6.   Adjournment (2:00 p.m.)